

Illipah Reservoir



Angler Information

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General information: Illipah Reservoir is an enjoyable cold water trout fishery that can produce large wild Brown Trout. Rainbow Trout are stocked in the spring and fall annually. Rainbow Trout will range from 8 to 15 inches. The water record Brown Trout was caught in 2017 at 11 pounds 7 ounces. Best time to fish Illipah Reservoir is in the spring/early summer and in the fall after temperatures cool down. Anglers will have a great time ice fishing once ice conditions permit access.

Location: White Pine County, 42 miles West of Ely off Highway 50. Use our FishNV tool (<https://fish.wildlifenv.com/>) to find waters near you, and buy your fishing license at ndowlicensing.com.

Size: At capacity, Illipah Reservoir is 72 surface acres containing 1300 acre-feet of water with a maximum depth of 39 feet.

Management: Nevada Department of Wildlife manages the fishery as a general Cold Water Fishery. Illipah Reservoir is located on private property and access is allowed for fishing. The campgrounds and restrooms adjacent to the reservoir are managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

Amenities and General Info

- Campsites with covered picnic tables.
- Vault restrooms available
- Fires are permitted at the campground but discouraged anywhere else around the reservoir.
- Unimproved boat launch, no boat ramps
- Covered picnic tables.

Fishing/Boating Regulations

- Season is open all year, any hour of the day or night.
- Daily limit is 5 trout and possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Flat wake restrictions.

Previous stocking

	<u>2024</u>	
Rainbow Trout	13,854	9.3 inches
	<u>2023</u>	
Rainbow Trout	12,531	9.2 inches
	<u>2022</u>	
Rainbow Trout	18,657	9.6 inches
	<u>2021</u>	
Rainbow Trout	22,281	9.4 inches
	<u>2020</u>	
Rainbow Trout	18,596	9.6 inches

Fishing notes

- Best fishing for trout typically occurs in April through June and October through November
- Stripping woolly buggers, leach patterns, and bead head nymph patterns is usually successful for trout
- Casting nightcrawlers or a wetfly below a bubble from shore will be productive
- Casting midges near floating weed mats in late summer under a strike indicator can be effective

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2025 Fishing Forecast

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Water level

As of the writing of this forecast, the reservoir is at capacity and has been spilling since late December 2024. This marks the third time in six years that the reservoir has spilled. The 2023-2024 winter provided average snowpack for the White Pine Range, however, when combined with some monsoonal moisture the reservoir levels remained elevated throughout 2024, setting up good water conditions for 2025. The 2024-2025 winter was less than average for the White Pine Range, which could lead to lower water levels in late summer 2025. It is important to note, that water levels can fluctuate drastically in the reservoir due to irrigation and evaporation during the summer months.

Trout

The predominant fish available to anglers are Rainbow Trout, followed by a wild self-sustaining Brown Trout population. NDOW's Angler Dropbox Questionnaire results revealed a total of 607 Rainbow Trout were caught by anglers, while only 15 Brown Trout were caught. Table 1 shows the composition of reported length ranges caught by anglers in 2024. To improve trout body condition and alleviate over-crowding when reservoir levels are lower, stocking has been reduced the last two years and it has been stocked with ~5,000 fewer Rainbow Trout compared to the four-year average of 18,016 (2020-2023). Based on discussion with anglers and notes left by anglers on the questionnaire forms, trout body condition continued to improve in 2024, a second year of improved body condition. This is likely due to higher water levels that persisted in 2024 and reduced stocking numbers.

In 2024, catch rates returned to more normal levels that anglers had seen historically. The catch rates for anglers in 2024 were 3 fish/hour and 8 fish/angler. Fish per hour catch rates were slightly higher and fish per angler were slightly lower the 5-year average (Table 2). The 5-year catch rates still reflect the excessive stocking that occurred from 2020-2022.

Length Composition Caught by Anglers		
	Rainbow Trout (%)	Brown Trout (%)
< 9 inches	5.9	13.3
9-10.9 inches	33.9	46.7
11.0-12.9 inches	46.3	33.3
13.0-14.9 inches	12.9	6.7
15.0-16.9 inches	0.8	0
17.0-18.9 inches	0.2	0
> 19 inches	0	0

Table 1: Length composition of trout caught by anglers at Illipah Reservoir, 2024.

5-YEAR ANGLER CATCH RATES ILLIPAH RESERVOIR		
Year	fish/hour	fish/angler
2023	2	6.4
2022	4.9	14.3
2021	4.8	12.7
2020	1.5	7.4
2019	1	6.5
Average	2.8	9.5

Table 2: Catch rates by anglers between 2019 through 2023.