

# RUBY LAKE NWR



## ANGLER AND FISH SURVEY INFORMATION

Jeff Petersen – Fisheries Biologist, Elko Field Office  
60 Youth Center Road. Elko, NV 89801 (775) 777-2331

**General information:** Ruby Lake is a natural, spring fed, high elevation marsh, located entirely on the Ruby Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is divided into the South Lake, North Dike Units, the Collection Ditch, and the South Springs. This is a popular fishery for trout in the winter, spring and fall while providing excellent bass fishing as water temperatures increase in the summer. Largemouth Bass can reach 20 inches but are most abundant in the 8 to 13-inch range. Rainbow Trout, Tiger Trout (Brown Trout x Brook Trout hybrid), and Brown Trout regularly exceed 20 inches. Fish water records include a state record Rainbow Trout at 16 lbs 8 oz (2011), state record Tiger Trout at 15 lbs 9 oz (2011), water record Brown Trout at 25 lbs, water record Largemouth Bass at 9 lbs, and a 4 lb 14 oz Brook Trout.

**Location:** Elko and White Pine Counties, 50 miles southeast of Elko, via Hwy 228 and Harrison Pass or Hwy 229/Secret Pass and county road 788. Use our FishNV tool at <https://fish.wildlifenv.com/>.

**Size:** 9,000 acres of lakes, ponds, and waterways intermixed with islands, bulrush stands, and dikes. Maximum depth is 12 feet in the South Lake.

**Management:** Ruby Lake NWR is managed as a General Warmwater Fishery and secondarily as a General Coldwater Fishery, with the Collection Ditch being managed as a Trophy Trout Fishery.

### Fishing/Boating Regulations\*

- Open year round in all areas except as posted. Refuge is open 1 hr. before sunrise to 1 hr. after sunset.
- January 1 – June 14, limit is 5 trout and 5 black bass.
- June 15 – December 31, limit is 5 trout and 10 black bass.
- Possession limit is twice the daily limit.
- Minimum size for black bass is 10 inches.
- Artificial lures only in the Collection Ditch.
- Unlawful to clean or fillet fish within refuge boundaries.
- Refer to regulation book for federal boating regulations on Ruby Lake NWR.

\*See regulation book for more detail

### Amenities and General Info

- 2 boat ramps are available.
- Vault toilets at both ramps and one at Brown Dike.
- Forest Service operated campground.
- Fish Cleaning Station in the summer months.
- Gallagher Hatchery open for site tours.

### Previous stocking

	2024	2023	2022
<b>Rainbow Trout</b>	13,996	19,881	22,633
<b>Brown Trout</b>	593	0	0
<b>Tiger Trout</b>	1,188	2,563	5,199
<b>Total</b>	15,777	22,444	27,832

### Fishing notes

- For bass use soft plastics, plugs, and spinner baits. Fly anglers use streamers, woolly buggers, or poppers.
- Work the edges of the bullrush and focus on shadowed areas in the afternoons.
- For trout use woolly buggers, leech patterns, and bead head nymph patterns.
- Spinners, spoons, and shallow diving crankbaits can be effective for catching trout.
- As summer temperatures increase trout move into spring heads to utilize the cooler waters.

# **RUBY LAKE NWR**



## **2025 FISHING FORECAST**

**Jeff Petersen – Fisheries Biologist, Elko Field Office  
60 Youth Center Road. Elko, NV 89801 (775)-777-2331**

### **Water level**

Snowpack conditions in February 2025 were at 117% of average snow water equivalent for the Clover Valley and Franklin Basin. With two previous good water years, Ruby Lake South Lake is already above objective water levels and with current snowpack conditions water levels should be good for the upcoming fishing season. As is normal, water levels will drop throughout the summer, but projected water conditions should be good through August and have few impacts to boating.

### **South Lake**

In 2024, just under 7,000 Rainbow Trout with an average size of 9.6 inches were stocked in the South Lake. Trout angler success should be fair, with most success coming in June and early July. With consecutive years of good water levels, the number of bass present for anglers is good. A 2024 survey showed that over 28% of the captured bass were 10 inches or greater and after 10 months of growth these fish should continue to provide anglers with a good fishing experience. Catch rates for bass have fluctuated around 20 fish per hour with the average keeper bass being about 11 inches. As with most years, expect to have to fish through 10-20 small bass to catch a keeper.

### **Collection Ditch**

In 2024 there were 5,000 Rainbow Trout, 1,188 Tiger Trout, and 593 Brown Trout stocked in the Collection Ditch. Recent data shows catch rates of 1.5 fish per hour and nearly 20% of captured fish are over 20 inches, with nearly half of those being over 24 inches. A five-year summary shows angler catch composition as 63.8% Rainbow Trout, 7.2% Tiger Trout, 0.7% Brown Trout, and 28.3% unknown trout species. Fishing should continue to be good in the Collection Ditch, with plenty of opportunity for trout over 20 inches. Warming summer temperatures will slow angler success, particularly north of Bressman's Cabin, before picking back up in the fall.

### **Dike Units**

Units 10, 13, 14, 20, and east units have limited bass numbers due to Refuge water management. Angler success will be low.

### **Unit 21**

Fishing will be good in the spring and fall for trout and fair to good for bass during the summer months. Trout anglers typically target the culverts with varying success. Bass fishing should be good in the unit and across the road into neighboring units.

### **South Springs**

Trout fishing will be fair to good in early spring and fall. Stocked with Tiger Trout and Rainbow Trout yearly. Fish exceeding 20 inches can often be caught in these ponds, particularly Ramires Pond and Hidden Springs Pond, although they become quite leery of anglers as they grow.