



This fishing report, provided by Dustin Berg of [Go Unlimited](#) (supporting disabled anglers) and the Department of Game and Fish, has been generated from the best information available from area officers and anglers. Conditions encountered after the report is compiled may differ, as stream, lake and weather conditions alter fish and angler activities.

[Check out the latest stocking report](#)

[Get your New Mexico fishing license](#)

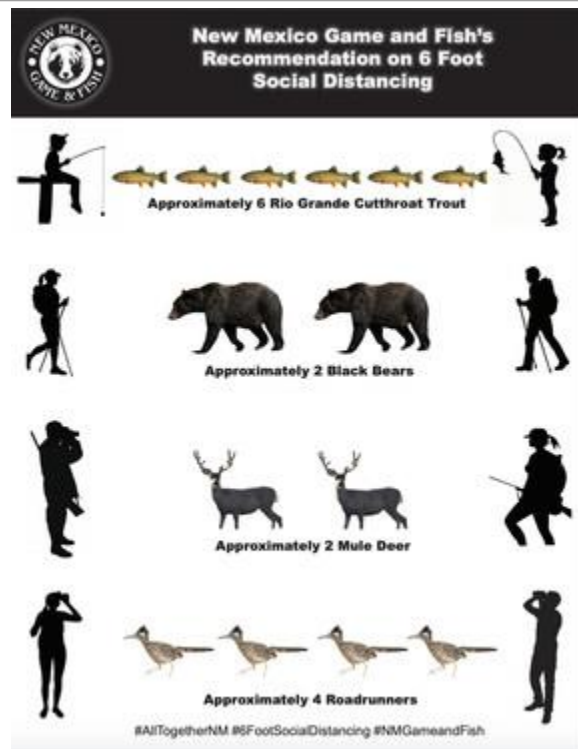
[\(Valid April 1 to March 31; 2020-2021 licenses are on sale\)](#)

A MESSAGE FROM THE DEPARTMENT:

As COVID-19 continues to force all of us to make changes to our daily schedule, the Department would like to remind you that together we can make a difference. To help minimize the spread of the virus:

- Practice social distancing
- Wash your hands regularly
- Avoid non-essential travel
- Wear a face covering
- Avoid interacting with large groups

Click the flyer to the right. Please share it with your friends and family.



Take the Bass and Trout Challenges!

To promote bass and trout fishing opportunities in New Mexico and encourage anglers to branch out and discover new fishing waters and species, anglers can participate in the [New Mexico Bass Challenge](#) and the [New Mexico Trout Challenge](#). Catch all the challenge species that are found throughout New Mexico to receive your certificate and challenge coin.



The Department is continuing to adapt our ways of working to conserve wildlife for all New Mexicans. Through the COVID-19 pandemic, Department biologists and conservation officers continue to conduct wildlife surveys, contact anglers and OHV recreationists and stock fish in open waters throughout the state.

Our teams are wearing personal protective equipment for everyone's safety while working in small groups for maximum social distancing. We ask for your help to keep everyone safe and healthy by following the NMDOH public health emergency order by wearing PPE while staying at least six feet away from staff and equipment.

Closure Information:

The Department reminds anglers it is their responsibility to be aware of closures and contact land managers for properties of interest when restrictions are lifted.

- [Bureau of Land Management \(BLM\)](#)
- [U.S. Forest Service \(USFS\)](#)
- [New Mexico State Lands](#)
- [New Mexico State Parks](#)
- [New Mexico Open Gate Properties](#)
- [New Mexico Wildlife Management Areas](#)
- [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#)



Consult local government websites for information regarding specific city and town fishing access.

Catches of the week

Brantley Lake: Stacy Preston of Artesia caught a 6.8-pound 22.5-inch largemouth bass using a Storm Largo Shad Feb. 25.

Chama River: Crystal Garcia of Albuquerque caught a 22-inch brown trout below El Vado Lake using a minnow imitation swimbait Feb. 27.

Elephant Butte Lake: Alonso Ordaz, age 13, caught and released a 55-pound blue catfish using cut bait shad on a Santee Cooper Rig with a Muddy River Catfishing Demon Dragon Feb. 22. Keith Rogers of Silver City caught 16 white bass in the 2 to 2.5-pound range trolling white/silver shad-color deep-diving crankbaits Feb.27.



Alonso Ordaz caught and released a 55-pound blue catfish using cut bait shad with a Muddy River Catfishing Demon Dragon at Elephant Butte Lake.

Morphy Lake: Jusiah Estrada, age 11, of Las Vegas caught and released a 17-inch cuttbow trout using a brown and gold Joe's Fly Mar. 1.

Rio Grande: William Schroeder of Las Cruces caught and released a 7.5-pound channel catfish near Mesilla using shad bait Feb. 28.

Pecos River: David G. Manning of Santa Fe caught a 28-Inch rainbow trout using a size 10 black Woolly Worm fly Feb. 27.

If you have a catch of the week story or just want to tell us about your latest New Mexico fishing experience, send it to us at funfishingnm@gmail.com. We may include your story in our next report. For catches of the week, include name, age, hometown, date, location, type of fish, length, and weight if possible, and bait, lure or fly used.

Northeast Fishing Report

Cabresto Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Charette Lakes: Closed for the season.

Cimarron River: Stream flow near Cimarron Monday morning was not measured due to ice. Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for trout was good using worms, salmon eggs and peach PowerBait.

Clayton Lake: Closed until March 2021.

Conchas Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Conchas Lake State Park has closed access to all boat ramps due to dropping water levels. The boat ramps on the south side of the lake managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers are open.



Jusiah Estrada, age 11, of Las Vegas caught and released a 17-inch cutthroat trout using a brown and gold Joe's Fly at Morphy Lake.

Costilla Creek: The Department has implemented the final phase of a project to expand Rio Grande cutthroat trout in 120 miles of the Costilla watershed in northern New Mexico. The final phase involved removal of fish within a designated area (Rio Costilla from Costilla Dam downstream to the Valle Vidal Boundary including all tributaries and Comanche Creek from the road culvert crossing on FR 1950 downstream to its confluence with Rio Costilla and all tributaries) with a tentative restocking of Rio Grande cutthroat in spring 2022. Places to fish nearby include Costilla Creek below the fish barrier, Upper Comanche Creek, Shuree Ponds, Middle Ponil Creek, Upper Powderhouse Creek, Little Costilla Creek, Vidal Creek and McCrystal Creek. The Department anticipates completion of this final phase in the fall of 2021. Please check the Department website for additional information on the project and to identify alternative angling opportunities in the interim.

Cowles Ponds: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Coyote Creek: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Eagle Nest Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. The lake is closed to ice fishing due to deteriorating ice conditions.

Eagle Rock Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Fawn Lakes: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Gallinas River: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Hopewell Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Lake Alice: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. The lake is closed to ice fishing due to deteriorating ice conditions.

Lake Maloya: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. The lake is open for ice fishing.

Los Pinos River: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Maxwell Lake 13: Closed for the season.

Monastery Lake: Closed due to COVID-19 health concerns. Check the [Open Gate webpage](#) for future updates.

Morphy Lake: Opened on Mar. 1. Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for trout was good using brown and gold Joe's Flies.

Pecos River: Stream flow near the town of Pecos Monday morning was not measured due to ice. Fishing for trout was fair to good using black Woolly Worm flies.

Red River: Stream flow below the hatchery Monday morning was 29.5 cfs. Fishing for trout near the hatchery was fair using small nymph flies, egg pattern flies and Blue Winged Olive flies on cloudy days.

Rio Grande: Stream flow at the Taos Junction Bridge Monday morning was 417 cfs. Fishing for trout was good using crane flies and Blue Wing Olive flies on cloudy days.

Rio Hondo: Stream flow Monday morning near Valdez was not measured due to ice.

Rio Mora: Stream flow Monday morning was not measured due to ice.

Rio Pueblo: Stream flow near Penasco Monday morning was not measured due to ice.

Santa Cruz Reservoir: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Shuree Ponds: Closed for the season. Opens Jul. 1, 2021.

Springer Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Storrie Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Stubblefield Lake: Fishing for catfish was fair to good using green worms.

Ute Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for all species was slow. The water surface temperature was about 40 degrees Fahrenheit.

Northwest Fishing Report

Abiquiu Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Animas River: Water flow below Aztec Monday morning was 144 cfs.

Albuquerque Area Drains: Fishing for trout was fair to good using salmon eggs. Anglers reported locating trout near the bridges in Albuquerque.

Bluewater Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. It is closed to boating and ice-fishing due to recent weather conditions that have led to unsafe lake surface conditions. The lake is currently closed to all watercraft including canoes, kayaks, inflatables and all types of motorboats.

Brazos River: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Canjilon Lakes: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Chama River: Monday morning flows below El Vado and Abiquiu were 102 cfs and 37.5 cfs, respectively. Fishing for trout below El Vado Lake was good using minnow imitation swimbaits. Fishing for trout below Abiquiu Lake was good using black leaches, orange zebra midges, Warden's Worry flies and salmon eggs.

Cochiti Lake: Visitors to the lake will need to make a reservation by purchasing a ticket at least 24 hours in advance through www.recreation.gov. Tickets and reservations will NOT be sold at the lake.

El Vado Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. The lake is closed to ice fishing due to deteriorating ice conditions.

Fenton Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. The lake is closed to ice fishing due to deteriorating ice conditions.



Crystal Garcia of Albuquerque caught a 22-inch brown trout below El Vado Lake using a minnow imitation swimbait on the Chama River.

Heron Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Heron Lake is open for ice fishing. Ice was reported as 6-inches deep, 3-feet from the shore and 9-inches deep, 20-feet from the shore.

Jemez Waters: Stream flow on the Jemez near the town of Jemez Monday morning was 13.4 cfs. Fishing for trout was fair to good using salmon eggs and corn.

Laguna del Campo: Closed for the season. It opens May 1, 2021.

Lagunitas Lakes: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Lake Farmington: Fishing for trout was fair using garlic trout bait.

Manzano Lake: Closed until further notice.

McGaffey Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Navajo Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Rio Grande: We had no reports from anglers this week.

San Gregorio Lake: Anglers reported that the lake is frozen.

San Juan River: Stream flow Monday morning was 392 cfs. Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for trout in the quality waters was good using leach pattern flies, egg pattern flies, chamois worms, crystal flash midges and red larvae flies.

Seven Springs Brood Pond: Closed due to COVID-19 health concerns. Check the [Department's Alerts page](#) for future updates.

Tingley Beach: Fishing for trout was fair to good using green PowerBait and Pistol Pete flies.

Trout Lakes: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Southwest Fishing Report

Alumni Pond: Fishing for trout was good using pink marshmallows.

Bear Canyon Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Bill Evans Lake: Fishing for trout was good using Rapala lures and PowerBait.

Caballo Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for catfish was good using cut carp bait.

Elephant Butte Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for white bass was good trolling white/silver shad color deep diving crankbait lures and curly tail grubs. Fishing for catfish was fair to good using cut bait and shad.

Escondida Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Gila River: Stream flow Monday morning was 65.3 cfs.

Glenwood Pond: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Lake Roberts: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Percha Dam: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Quemado Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Rancho Grande Ponds: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Rio Grande: Stream flow below Elephant Butte Monday morning was .17 cfs. Fishing for catfish near Radium Springs and Mesilla was fair to good using cut carp bait and shad.

Snow Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Trees Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Young Pond: Fishing for trout was good using red nymph flies, pink marshmallows, Velveeta cheese, garlic scented PowerBait and corn.



William Schroeder of Las Cruces caught and released a 7.5-pound channel catfish near Mesilla using shad bait on the Rio Grande.

Southeast Fishing Report

Alto Lake: Fishing for trout was good using worms, PowerBait and salmon eggs.

Bataan Lake: Fishing for trout was fair to good using dough bait and PowerBait.

Black River: Stream flow at Malaga Monday morning was 3.77 cfs.

Blue Hole Park Pond: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Bonito Lake: Closed until further notice by the city of Alamogordo due to fire damage. It appears now that the lake will be out of commission until 2022.

Bosque Redondo Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Bottomless Lakes: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for trout was good using yellow garlic PowerBait.

Brantley Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information. Fishing for bass was good using Storm Largo Shad lures.

Carlsbad Municipal Lake: Fishing for trout was fair using dough bait and PowerBait.

Chaparral Park Lake: Fishing for trout was fair to good using earthworms and salmon peach PowerBait.

Corona Pond: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Eunice Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Green Meadow Lake: Fishing for trout was very good using salmon peach glitter PowerBait on a 6-pound test line with a slip sinker rig and a #12 single hook.

Greene Acres Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Grindstone Reservoir: Fishing for trout was good using Kastmaster lures and green PowerBait.

Jal Lake: Fishing for trout was good using green PowerBait.

Lake Van: Fishing for trout was good using yellow garlic PowerBait.



Stacy Preston of Artesia caught a 6.8-pound 22.5-inch largemouth bass using a Storm Largo Shad at Brantley Lake.

Oasis Park Lake Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Pecos River: Stream flow below Sumner Lake Monday morning was 105 cfs.

Perch Lake: We had no reports from anglers this week.

Ruidoso River: Stream flow Monday morning at Hollywood was 4.09 cfs. Anglers reported fishing for trout was slow.

Santa Rosa Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Sumner Lake: Effective Feb. 27, NM State Parks are open to all visitors. Please check the State Parks' website for more information.

Tips and Tricks - Peter Watson shares three tips for safe catch and release fishing

Many people enjoy catch and release fishing and want to make sure fish have the highest chance of surviving after they are released. Fish can often be harmed in the process of being caught, and these injuries can lead to death soon after they are put back in the water. Here are three tips to make sure the fish you release has the best chance of survival:

1. Keep the fish in the water as much as possible

Fish need water to breathe, regulate temperature and maintain the protective slime on their skin. Primarily, keeping the fish in the water will allow it to continue to breathe as you take a picture and remove the hook. But, keeping the fish in the water is important for other reasons. If you land a fish by dragging it onto the bank, the protective slime on its skin will be damaged and leave the fish susceptible to die of infection soon after you put it back. Also, even a brief exposure to outside air temperatures on a hot summer day can be enough to raise a fish's body temperature to fatal levels and kill it soon after it is released. A net can be beneficial for keeping the fish in the water; just make sure it is a plastic mesh net rather than a rope net which will damage fish scales.



Fish need water to breathe, regulate temperature and maintain the protective slime on their skin.

2. Release, don't throw

When you are putting a fish back in the water, it may need to catch its breath after the fight before it is able to swim away. By holding it in the water and gently moving it forward, you move water through its gills which allows it to catch its breath. Usually, a fish will only need to be held for a few seconds before it regains the oxygen necessary to swim away on its own. Fish that haven't been allowed to catch their breath generally can't fight the current of a river and risk being swept down and battered in the current.



When you are putting a fish back in the water, it may need to catch its breath after the fight before it is able to swim away.

3. Don't touch the gills

If you plan on releasing a fish, do not hold it by the gills. A fish's gills are fragile, just like our lungs. Touching the gills or holding a fish by its gills can damage them to the point where the fish will slowly suffocate and die soon after it is released. If you plan to release a fish, hold it by its body or its jaw.



If you plan on releasing a fish, do not hold it by the gills.

It may seem difficult at first to imagine getting good pictures and removing the hook while keeping the fish in the water, but it can be done with some patience and practice.

Share your tips and tricks by emailing us at funfishingnm@gmail.com and let us help the next generation of anglers find success.

Clean, Drain and Dry your watercraft.

Stop Aquatic Aliens!

Protect New Mexico Waters.
www.wildlife.state.nm.us/ais





TEST YOUR FISHING SKILLS ON NEW MEXICO'S NEWEST CHALLENGE!

LARGEMOUTH BASS
SMALLMOUTH BASS
SPOTTED BASS
WHITE BASS



For more information go to www.wildlife.state.nm.us/fishing/nmbc/ 1-888-248-6866