



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of November 29.](#)

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

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NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

As of today, the lake was covered with ice. There has been open water under the newly constructed fishing shelter along Ice House Point that is providing good fishing. **Bluegill** - Fair: Anglers have taken fish from the newly constructed fishing shelter along Ice House Point. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A few crappie have been taken from the fishing shelter on Ice House Point.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Ice is unsafe for travel.

[Storm Lake \(including Little Storm Lake\)](#)

Storm Lake has been frozen over, but ice conditions are unsafe for travel. More reports will be available as ice fishing starts.

Most lakes in the Black Hawk District have frozen over, but ice conditions are unsafe for travel. More reports will be available as ice fishing starts. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Beeds Lake

The lake froze over this week.

Blue Pit

The Iowa DNR stocked 2000 rainbow trout Nov. 21st. You must have fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout.

Bluebill Lake

Ice thickness is 5 inches.

Clear Lake

Ice thickness is 2 to 5 inches.

Fin and Feather Lake

Ice thickness is 5 inches.

Lake Cornelia

Ice thickness is 5 inches.

Lake Smith

The lake froze over this week.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 3 to 5 inches.

Most of the lakes in north central Iowa have frozen over. Very little fishing activity has been reported. If you venture out, use extreme caution and check ice thickness as you go. For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Limited fishing activity.

Scharnberg Pond

Brook Trout - Good: 3000 trout were stocked on Nov. 17th. You must have fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout.

Spirit Lake

Anglers are ice fishing Templar Park Lagoon; foot traffic only. Anglers are catching a mixed bag of panfish.

West Okoboji Lake

Lake is ice free. Limited fishing activity.

Area lakes have scattered open water; no activity on the lakes. Ice fishing is not recommended. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Flows remain high. Backwaters are starting to freeze. Check ice depths often, especially where there is current. Ice fishing is not recommended. **Walleye** - Fair: Find walleye in pockets and deeper water. Fish are taking a variety of bright colored lures or jigs tipped with worms or minnows. **Smallmouth Bass** -Slow: Use a slow presentation with a small spinnerbait. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Pike are aggressively taking lures tipped with minnows.

Decorah District Streams

Iowa's trout season stays open all year long. Shotgun deer season opens this weekend. Many trout streams run through wildlife management areas. Wear bright colors and make noise so hunters know you're not a deer. **Brown Trout** - Good: Watch the stream bottom for cleared areas in gravel (trout nests or redds). Avoid stepping in the nests. Use larger flies or lures mimicking minnows. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Fish near bottom if no hatches are occurring. Use a weighted caddis stonefly or mayfly nymph. **Brook Trout** - Good: Brook Trout spawn is here; brook trout build nests in the stream bottom. Good insect hatches occur on warm sunny afternoons. Try nymphs, emerger or topwater patterns.

Lake Hendricks

Lake Hendricks is covered with ice except around the aerator. Keep away from the aerator. Ice fishing is not recommended. No motorized vehicles allowed on the ice.

Lake Meyer

The entire lake is covered with ice. Ice depths vary from 2 to 3 inches with a thin skim of snow. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

The Turkey River water levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. Look for fish in slack water areas. **Smallmouth Bass** – Slow: Use lures mimicking minnows in off channel areas or deeper water. **Walleye** - Fair: Try jigs tipped with a minnow, worms and a variety of lures in current breaks and deeper water.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Water levels are stable with excellent clarity. Ice is forming in slack water areas. Visit the [USGS Water Data website](#) for current information. **Walleye** - Fair: Use crankbaits or a hook tipped with a minnow in eddies and deeper water. Catches are highly variable. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Look for bass in deeper pocket eddies and near undercut banks. A variety of lures and baits are working.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Water levels are stabilizing with excellent clarity. Fish are searching for overwintering holes out of current. **Smallmouth Bass** - Slow: Use bright colored lures fished in deeper water and rock ledges. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a jig tipped with minnow or slow action plastic tail fished deep. Shore fishing should yield better catches.

Volga Lake

Ice is forming. Rain or snow will weaken the ice. Ice fishing is not recommended.

Winter storm warning forecast for Friday night through Sunday. Snow on ice will slow ice formation. Ice fishing will start soon, but is not recommended now. Most ice is not thick enough to hold anglers. For current fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

[Cedar River \(Nashua to La Porte City\)](#)

Few reports this past week due to cold and ice flow conditions.

Manchester District Streams

[Spring Branch Creek](#) has been busy with angling activity as many trout escaped with the recent flooding event.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

Few reports this past week due to cold and ice flow conditions.

Few angling reports this past week on the interior rivers with the recent cold temperatures and ice flows. Smaller lakes and ponds are now starting to ice over, but ice fishing is not recommended. Trout streams remain in excellent condition, but the weekend forecast looks wet and cold. Call the N.E. Iowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

River level at Lansing has fallen to 8.4 feet and is expected to remain stable this week. Water temperature is near freezing with ice forming in the backwaters. **Walleye** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northerners are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

River level at Lynxville has fallen to 15.7 feet and is expected to stabilize this week. Water temperature is 34 degrees at the Lock and Dam 9. **Walleye**- Fair: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike**- Slow: Some northerners are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

River level at Guttenberg is 8.8 feet and is predicted to stabilize near 8 feet next

week. Water temperature is 33 degrees at Lock and Dam 10. **Walleye** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northerns are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

Upper Mississippi River levels have come down and are expected to stabilize this week. Backwater areas continue to make ice. Thickness is variable from 3-4 inches, but many areas have open water. Some ice in the main channel coming down may impact fishing.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

Water levels are receding and are 7.3 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 9.9 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are using three way rigs with a minnow and some are pulling crankbaits.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

Water levels are receding and are 8.1 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. The north ramp at Sabula is not in use this year due to bridge construction. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are using three way rigs with a crawler and some are pulling crankbaits.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

Water levels are receding and are 7.8 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 11.4 feet at Camanche and 6 feet at LeClaire. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 36 degrees. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are using three way rigs with a crawler and some are pulling crankbaits.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

Water level is receding and is 8.6 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 36 degrees.

The water has receded to more normal winter levels, but is still high in many places. Backwater ice of 1-2 inches reported throughout the district. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 15 in Davenport is 8.67 feet and has been falling this past week. Flood stage for Lock and Dam 15 is 15 feet. The Marquette St ramp is snow and ice covered due to the recent heavy snow fall. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports this week for walleye and sauger. Unsafe ice conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 7.39 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling the past few days. The ramps at Muscatine have been plowed open, but the parking lot has some snow cover. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports for walleye and sauger. Unsafe ice conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.30 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is falling. Flood stage is 10 feet at Lock and Dam 18. We have not received any fishing information for this pool this week. Unsafe ice conditions.

River levels have been falling this past week. Main channel water temperature is around 33-34 degrees. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers has been slow. Unsafe ice conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

The lake is now mostly iced over, but not thick enough to walk on.

[Lake Darling](#)

The park is closed this weekend (Dec. 1-2) for the park deer hunt. The lake opened up last weekend due to the rain and wind, but has frozen back over. Unsafe ice.

[Lost Grove Lake](#)

Boat docks were pulled last week. The gate is closed for the winter for the parking lot by the dam.

[Skunk River \(Rose Hill to Coppock\)](#)

The Skunk River remains open and a little over half bank full. Most of the ramps are buried under about a foot of snow.

For more information on the above lakes and rivers, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake level is finally down to winter pool of 683.4 feet. Much of the lake has skimmed over with ice, but is unsafe for travel.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

The lake is currently drained for a lake restoration project.

Lake Macbride

Water temperatures this week have been in the mid 30's. As of Nov. 29, the north arm and east of the causeway are skimmed over, but ice is unsafe. The main lake and part of the south arm are still open. The main ramp and Angler's Ramp are still usable. The fish cleaning station at the primitive campground has been shut down. The boat docks have been removed. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Fish over structure in 15-20 feet of water. There are a lot of 12 inch fish right now. **Walleye** - Fair: Jig in 10-15 feet of water. Fish can be caught shallower towards evening along windblown rock. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** – Fair: Minnows or jigs work best. Most fish have been in 15-20 feet of water.

Pleasant Creek Lake

Most of the perimeter of the lake is skimmed over with ice. The boat dock has been removed.

Many of the smaller lakes are starting to skim over with ice. There is no safe ice in the Macbride District. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

Lake Miami

Fishing pressure has been low with recent colder temperatures. Skim ice has been forming around the shore, making shore fishing difficult.

Lake Sugema

The north ramp is closed due to a parking lot construction project. Fishing pressure has been low with recent colder temperatures. Skim ice is forming around the shore, making fishing from shore difficult.

Lake Wapello

Fishing pressure has been low. Skim ice is forming around the shore, making fishing from shore difficult.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

2000 trout were stocked on Oct. 26th. Skim ice is forming around the shore, making fishing from shore difficult.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 906.11 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Skim ice is forming along the shore in some areas. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body.

Red Haw Lake

Fishing pressure has been low. Skim ice is forming along the shore, making shore fishing difficult.

Skim ice is starting to form around the shore, making shore fishing difficult. The district includes Mahaska, Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, Appanoose, Wapello, Davis and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

Des Moines River (Saylorville to Red Rock)

Walleye - Fair: Some walleyes are being caught below the dams in Des Moines and below the Saylorville and Red Rock spillways. Jig live minnows or cast shad imitating plastics.

Ponds and small lakes in Central Iowa have thin ice. More fishing reports will be added when ice fishing starts. For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.