



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of March 2](#)

- [NORTHWEST](#)
- [NORTHEAST](#)
- [MISSISSIPPI RIVER](#)
- [SOUTHEAST](#)
- [SOUTHWEST](#)

NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 11 inches off of the Ice House Point boat ramp; ice conditions are deteriorating. Ice near the boat ramp has pulled away from shore. The aerators in Town Bay are in operation; expect open water and thin ice in this area. Anglers can also fish open water at the fish house in Town Bay; the area directly underneath the structure is kept open with a small water agitator.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Ice has pulled away from shore in most areas. The quality of any remaining ice is deteriorating fast. Ice fishing opportunities are likely over for the season.

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

The lake is holding ice, but the quality of ice is deteriorating. Shoreline access may be difficult in some areas. Conditions are changing quickly; use caution.

Ice fishing is winding down in most of our areas with a few exceptions. Some of the larger lakes are holding ice, but shoreline access is the issue. The winter aeration system in Town Bay (westernmost bay) of Black Hawk Lake is in operation. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

Ice thickness is 0 to 18 inches. Clear Lake has a protected slot on walleye. All walleye between 17 and 22 inches must be immediately released unharmed. The daily limit is 3 with no more than one walleye longer than 22 inches may be taken per day. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use a small minnow near vegetation in 6 to 8 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with spikes in 2 to 4 feet of water. Best bite is early morning and near sunset. **Walleye** - Slow: Use a jiggling spoon tipped with a minnow head in 6 to 8 feet of water near vegetation. Best bite is low light periods and after sunset. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Stay mobile to find fish. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try live bait and jigs near vegetation. Use a bigger bait to avoid the small fish.

Crystal Lake

Ice thickness is 0 to 18 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with bait near the dredge cut. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a small jig tipped with spikes in 3 to 4 feet of water.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 0 to 18 inches. **Bluegill** - Slow. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try a small jig tipped with bait near vegetation.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Ice thickness is 0 to 18 inches. **Bluegill** - Good: Use a small jig tipped with waxworms near vegetation. Best bite is early morning and sunset. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

Most area lakes still have 18+ inches of ice. Access conditions can change daily this time of year. Winter aeration systems are running at Clear Lake, Crystal Lake, Rice Lake and Silver Lake. For information on the lakes and rivers in north central Iowa, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Ice thickness is around 19+ inches in most areas. **The walleye season is closed.** **Black Crappie** - Good: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow or tube jig and bobber. **Bluegill** - Good: Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-ups are working well. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Minnows are working well; some sorting may be needed.

Five Island Lake

Use caution; the lake aerator has been started up in Town Bay. **Yellow Bass** – Good.

Ingham Lake

Ice thickness is 19+ inches. Use caution; there is an open hole in the lake with the aerator in use. **Walleye** - Fair:

Lost Island Lake

Ice thickness is around 20+ inches in most places. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Walleye** – Good.

Minnewashta Lake

Ice thickness is 20+ inches. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Bluegill** - Good.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Ice thickness is around 19+ inches. Use caution; the lake aerator is in use. This creates an open hole on the east side of the lake. **Walleye** - Good: Best bite is at dusk.

Spirit Lake

The lake is entirely iced over with 18+ inches in most places. The best ice is on the south end and Anglers Bay. Most accesses are clear of heaves and snow. **The walleye season is**

closed. Black Crappie -Good. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Use small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

West Okoboji Lake

West Okoboji is relatively free of any major heaves or hazards. The bluegill bite in Little Emerson Bay and out from Triboji has been slower as fish have been finicky. **The walleye season is closed. Black Crappie** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use tube jigs, plastics, or other small jigs. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. Sorting may be needed.

Most lakes have 18 inches of ice. Getting around the lakes has been easier after recent rain cut down on the majority of the snow cover. **The walleye season on the Iowa Great Lakes is closed until May 6th. Permanent and non-permanent ice shacks must be removed from the ice when not occupied.** For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

No Reports

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

Water level is 8.4 feet at Lansing. A lot of ice is flowing in the channel. Backwater ice is deteriorating. **Areas with current are unsafe.** Open water fishing below the dam is picking up. **Black Crappie**- Slow: Reports of anglers catching crappie. Try live minnows to entice the bite. **Bluegill** - Slow: Ice anglers are sorting for larger gills. Try ice jigs tipped with waxworms. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Reports of some northern pike active in the backwaters. **Sauger** - Good: Try vertical jigging with a minnow in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try Shore Slough near Lansing or Village Creek ramp area to catch perch in the dredge cuts.

Mississippi River Pool 10

Water level has risen to 615.4 feet at Lynxville. The Lynxville boat ramp has been open. Water is muddy with ice chunks moving down. **Backwater ice is becoming unsafe.** Gremore Lake still has ice; avoid any areas with current. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Reports of anglers catching crappie. Try live minnows to entice the bite. **Bluegill** - Slow: Ice anglers are sorting for the larger gills. Try ice jigs tipped with waxworms. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Reports of nice pike near the Greymore area. Try tip-ups in backwater areas; pike will become more active and feeding to prepare for the spring spawn. **Sauger** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** – Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Try a small jig tipped with a waxworm in the vegetation along deeper backwater dredge cuts.

Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level at Guttenberg has risen to 7.3 feet. The south public boat ramp is free of ice and open. Water clarity is muddy after recent rain. Ice flows are floating downstream, making

tailwater fishing a challenge. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Reports of anglers catching crappie. Try live minnows to entice the bite. **Bluegill** - Fair: Varied reports at Mud Lake and Bertrum Lakes. Anglers are moving often and sorting. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Reports of anglers catching northern pike on tip-ups/tip-downs in marina areas. Try tip-ups in backwater areas; pike will become more active and feeding to prepare for the spring spawn. **Sauger** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Walleye** - Fair: Bottom bounce a jig with twister tails in the Lock and Dam tailwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Ice anglers are picking up some nicer perch.

Upper Mississippi River levels are rising after recent rains. Ice conditions are deteriorating fast. The bite has improved this week. Walleye slot length limits now apply on the entire Iowa border of the Mississippi River. All walleyes less than 15 inches long and between 20-27 inches must be immediately released. One walleye over 27 inches may be kept. Walleye/sauger combined daily limit 6/possession 12.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The water level is rising to 7.9 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 10.5 feet at the RR bridge. Water temperature is around 36 degrees; the water is clear. Ice fishing is occurring in very select places. Ice conditions are poor after recent rains; use caution. Hawthorne Ramp is free of ice, but ice flows may persist. **Bluegill** - Good: Only select areas are available for ice fishing; conditions continue to deteriorate after recent rains. As usual, this year's ice fishing catch are all over the board, but in general the catch of bluegills this winter was good. **Sauger** - Good: Hawthorne ramp is open, but ice flows may be an issue especially after recent rains and snows. Most anglers are using jigs and minnows. Some good reports were received before the recent major rains. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Lots of smaller yellow perch are in the system; this is a good indicator for yellow perch fishing this upcoming year.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

The water level is 8.7 feet at Lock and Dam 12 at Bellevue and is rising after recent rains. Water clarity is stained. Water temperature is around 36 degrees. The City of Bellevue Ramp and the Iowa DNR ramp are open, but ice flows may occur. **Bluegill** - Good: We received many good reports on bluegills this ice fishing season, but many small fish were reported. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season opened March 1st and runs through April 15th. Check the paddlefish regulations (page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#)) before you go out snagging. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: The Bellevue kids trout pond is open and vegetation free. It is a nice safe place to fish with kids on warmer winter days. If you plan on keeping fish please only keep two fish per child. **Sauger** - Good: The tailwater is open at Bellevue City ramp and the DNR ramp; both can be subject to ice flows. These ice flows have made fishing difficult at times, but conditions have been good this spring. Most anglers are using jigs and minnow rigs or three-way-weights with a crankbait. **Walleye** - Good: Many small walleye and an occasional keeper are being reported. Better fish are taken on a three-way crankbait rig. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Lots of smaller yellow perch are in the system; this is a good indicator for yellow perch fishing this upcoming year.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level at Fulton is 7.7 feet, 11.2 feet at Camanche, and 6.0 feet at LeClaire. The river is rising throughout the pool. Water clarity has been stained from recent rains. Water temperature is near 36 degrees. Ice flows were reported at some ramps. **Bluegill** - No Report: Ice fishing is all but done in Pool 14; many good fishing reports were received throughout the ice fishing season. **Paddlefish** - No Report: Paddlefish season opened March

1st and runs through April 15th. Check the paddlefish regulations (page 11 of the [Iowa Fishing Regulations](#)) before you go out snagging. **Sauger** - Good: Small walleye and small sauger are being reported with an occasional keeper reported. Most anglers are using a jig and minnow rig.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is 8.5 feet at Rock Island and is rising. Water clarity is stained. Water temperature is 33 degrees.

Ice fishing is mostly over with a few exceptions. The river is rising and most district ramps are ice free, but ice flows may be periodically present near ramps. If you have angling questions, please call the Bellevue Fisheries Management Station at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.18 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has risen close to a foot the past few days. Tailwater stage is forecast to reach 11.3 feet by the end of the week. Flood stage is 15 feet. **Unsafe ice conditions** with recent rains, warmer weather and rising river levels. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers is slow due to rising river levels and muddy water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow due to rising river levels and muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 8.91 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is forecast to reach 10.5 feet by the end of the week. Flood stage is 15 feet. The boat ramps at Muscatine are open. **Unsafe ice conditions** with recent heavy rains, warmer weather and rising river levels. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow with the muddy water conditions. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers below the dam is slow due to muddy water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow due to muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 10.57 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is rising. Tailwater stage is forecast to reach 13.4 feet by the end of the week. Flood stage is 15 feet. The gates are out of the water at the Lock and Dam. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers is slow with the muddy water conditions and the rising water levels. **Unsafe ice conditions**. **Sauger** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for saugers is slow with the rising river levels and muddy water conditions. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes is slow with the rising river levels and muddy water conditions.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 6.53 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is forecast to reach 8.8 feet by the end of the week. Flood stage is 10 feet. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports or ramp condition reports for this pool this week. **Unsafe ice conditions** with recent heavy rains, warmer weather and rising river levels.

Tailwater stages have risen close to 4 feet the past couple days due to recent heavy rains. River stage is forecast to continue to rise. Tailwater fishing for walleyes and saugers has been slow. Main channel water clarity is poor. Water temperature is 40 degrees. There is some debris floating in the main channel. Unsafe ice conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Big Hollow Lake](#)

The boat ramp bay is ice-free, allowing boats to get to the main part of the lake.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

Most of the lake's ice is gone, a little bit back on the south side in the trees remains. Both ramps are open to the rest of the lake.

[Lake Darling](#)

Lake Darling the last of its ice on Monday night. The boat ramp docks won't be in for a while yet. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Pick a warm afternoon and find where the wind is blowing into the rocks and you should be able to find the catfish. Use cut bait as bait.

[Lost Grove Lake](#)

The lake is a mix of open water and rotten ice.

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

[Coralville Reservoir](#)

The lake is starting to tear open. The water is very dirty.

[Diamond Lake](#)

Unsafe ice

[Iowa Lake \(Iowa Co.\)](#)

Unsafe ice

[Lake Macbride](#)

Unsafe ice; portions of the north arm and east of the causeway are starting to open up.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

Unsafe ice

[Rodgers Park Lake](#)

Unsafe ice

[Union Grove Lake](#)

Ice thickness is up to 8 inches; edges are soft or open. The aeration unit is on; there is open water at the south end of the lake. Use caution if venturing out.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Troy Mills to Oxford Junction\)](#)

Dam removal has started at Central City; water levels above the dam may begin to fall. Public access below the dam is not permitted during the project.

Ice conditions in most of the Macbride District are unsafe. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

[Corydon Reservoir](#)

Open water.

[Hawthorn Lake](#)

Open water.

[Lake Miami](#)

Open water.

[Lake Sugema](#)

Open water.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Open water.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 906.11 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. The lake is 99% open water. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels so make sure to properly drain, clean and dry equipment before transporting to another waterbody. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Ice-out catfish are usually caught on the windblown shorelines using dead shad or chubs. **Walleye** - No Report: There is a 15-inch minimum length limit on walleye at Lake Rathbun. This was effective January 1st. All walleyes measuring less than 15-inches must be immediately released unharmed.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Open water. Visitors are asked to avoid the campground area.

Most area lakes have open water. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Areas of thin ice and open pockets. **Ice fishing is not recommended.** **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Catch channel catfish as the ice recedes in the next few weeks using dead gizzard shad. Dead shad are also flowing over the spillway which could trigger a fair catfish bite in the pool below.

[Don Williams Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 7 to 9 inches. There was some weak ice at the edge of the boat ramp. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use waxworms on glow jigs over pallets and brush piles on the lower half of the lake.

Ice conditions are deteriorated; **ice fishing is not recommended.** For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Lake Anita](#)

No Report

[Littlefield Lake](#)

No Report

[Meadow Lake](#)

No Report

Prairie Rose Lake

No Report

Ice fishing is not recommended in the district. For information on lakes in the Southwest District call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Green Valley Lake

Docks are in at the beach and dam boat ramps.

Three Mile Lake

Docks are in at main ramp.

West Lake (Osceola)

Docks are in at main boat ramp.

Mt. Ayr district lakes are ice-free. Water temperature in most lakes is in the upper 30s to low 40s. For more information, call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.

