



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa Fishing Report

Conservation and Recreation



**MISSOURI AND BIG SIOUX RIVERS
PADDLEFISH FISHING SEASON**
FEB. 1 - APRIL 30



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of Feb. 15](#)

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NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

The lake is mostly ice covered. **All remaining ice is unsafe.**

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The lake is partially ice-free. Most of Town Bay has opened up. There is open water around the fish house in Town Bay and near the inlet bridge.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

The lake is partially ice-free.

[Blue Lake](#)

Aerators are in operation off-shore near the park visitor center for the winter season; any remaining ice is unsafe.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

The lake is opening up around the beach area and ice is pulling away from the shorelines. **Any remaining ice is unsafe.** **Bluegill** – Fair. **Yellow Perch** – Fair.

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

Unsafe ice conditions.

Some lakes are partially ice-free. **Any remaining ice in the district is unsafe.** For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

Ice fishing is not recommended. Ice conditions continue to deteriorate. All walleye between 17 and 22 inches must be immediately released unharmed. No more than one walleye longer than 22-inches may be taken per day.

Crystal Lake

Ice fishing is not recommended.

Rice Lake

Ice fishing is not recommended.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Ice fishing is not recommended. The winter aeration system is operating.

Winnebago River

Water level is 4.17 feet. **Northern Pike** - Slow. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a jig head tipped with a minnow along current breaks.

Ice fishing is not recommended. 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

Unsafe ice conditions. The walleye season is closed until May 4. Black Crappie - Fair: Use minnows and plastics. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Sorting will most likely be needed.

Ingham Lake

The lake is completely ice covered; **unsafe ice conditions. Walleye** - Fair: Anglers have been successful morning and evening.

Lost Island Lake

The lake is completely ice covered; **unsafe ice conditions. Black Crappie** - Fair. **Walleye** - Fair.

Minnewashta Lake

The walleye season is closed. Black Crappie - Fair. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Pumpkinseed** - Good.

Scharnberg Pond

Trout were stocked on Feb. 2. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

The lake is completely ice covered; **unsafe ice conditions. Walleye** - Fair.

Spirit Lake

Unsafe ice conditions. The walleye season is closed until May 4th. Black Crappie - Good: Minnows and plastics work well. Many nice-sized fish have been seen lately. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Find good numbers; may need to sort for size.

West Okoboji Lake

Unsafe ice conditions. The walleye season is closed until May 4th. Black Crappie - Fair: Try small jigs tipped with a minnow. **Bluegill** - Good. **Pumpkinseed** - Good. **Walleye** - Good: Minnows and plastics work well. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Sorting may be needed.

Area ice conditions have deteriorated extensively making ice fishing impossible. Shorelines have started to open up. **The walleye season is closed on the Iowa Great Lakes until May 4th.** For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (Nashua to La Porte City)

Anglers are catching a few walleye on the Cedar River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve lead head jigs tipped with plastics and a minnow.

Interior rivers have opened back up with reports of anglers catching a few walleye. **Ice fishing season is over for the winter.** Trout streams remain in excellent condition. For further information contact your local bait shops for the most recent information. Contact the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

Water level is 8 feet at Lansing and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Ice conditions are deteriorating quickly; **ice fishing is not recommended**. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

Water level is near 613.9 feet at Lynxville and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Ice conditions have deteriorated; **ice fishing is not recommended**. The Lynxville boat ramp is open; be cautious of ice flows. **Sauger** - Fair: Nice-sized sauger are being caught on jig and minnow; bite can be slow at times. **Walleye** - Fair: Slow bite at times; nice fish being found on live bait. **Yellow Perch** - Slow.

[Mississippi River Pool 11](#)

Water level is near 5.6 feet at Lynxville and is expected to stabilize over the next week. Ice conditions have deteriorated; **ice fishing is not recommended**. The boat ramps in Guttenberg are open; be cautious of ice flows. **Sauger** - Fair: Nice-sized sauger are being caught on jig and minnow; bite can be slow at times. **Walleye** - Fair: Slow bite at times; nice fish being found on live bait. **Yellow Perch** - Slow.

Ice conditions have deteriorated; **ice fishing is not recommended**. Upper Mississippi River levels have fallen slightly and are expected to stabilize over the next week. The main channel has opened up; many anglers are taking advantage of the early open water tailwater fishing. Results are mixed with some nice catches of walleye and sauger, but many anglers searching for biting fish. Expect the bite to pick up as water temperatures rise. Main channel temperatures are in the upper 30s.

[Mississippi River Pool 12](#)

The river is steady at Dubuque at near 5.7 feet at Lock and Dam 11 and 8.2 feet at the railroad bridge. Water temperature is around 39 degrees. Water clarity is good. Ice fishing is being reported, especially in the various marinas. Ice quality is deteriorating fast. **Ice fishing is not recommended**. **Sauger** - - Good: Sauger and walleye bites have picked up in Pool 12. Anglers are using jigs and minnows or crankbait rigs. Smaller fish are closer to the dam. **Yellow Perch** - No Report: Nice 12-inch plus perch were being reported all fall from backwater areas and shallower water in the tailwaters.

[Mississippi River Pool 13](#)

The water level is steady at near 5.8 feet at Bellevue. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is around 39 degrees. Backwater ice quality is rapidly deteriorating. **Ice fishing is not recommended**. The Bellevue City ramp and DNR ramp are ice-free. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: The kids trout pond north of the

DNR fisheries station is stocked with trout and can provide fun action for kids throughout the winter. If you plan to keep trout, limit yourself to 2 trout per child so we can keep good fishing in the pond throughout the winter. **Walleye** - Slow: Walleye and sauger bite are light. Lots of anglers are using stinger hooks for light biting fish. Lots of small sauger are near the dam.

[Mississippi River Pool 14](#)

The water level is steady at near 5.4 feet at Fulton, 9.7 feet at Camanche and 4.8 feet at LeClair. Temperature is around 40 degrees. **Walleye** - Slow: Weak bite; use live bait with stinger hooks.

[Mississippi River Pool 15](#)

The water level is steady at near 5.9 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is good. Water temperature is 40 degrees. **Sauger** - No Report: Walleye and sauger bites has been tough for most of the river. When fishing is slow, use bait and stinger hooks.

Ice flows have nearly stopped on the river; chunks can occasionally be seen. Ice fishing is taking place, ice is suspect in many places. **Ice fishing is not recommended.** Water levels are slightly rising throughout the district. If you have angling questions, please call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

[Mississippi River Pool 16](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.93 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and has been falling. **Sauger** - Slow: Some boats are fishing below Lock and Dam 15 and in Sylvan Slough. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow.

[Mississippi River Pool 17](#)

Tailwater stage is 4.59 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling this past week. **Sauger** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow.

[Mississippi River Pool 18](#)

Tailwater stage is 5.02 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and has been falling this past week. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers is being reported as hit-or-miss. **Sauger** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - Slow: Tailwater fishing for walleyes has been hit-or-miss.

[Mississippi River Pool 19](#)

Tailwater stage is 2.74 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and has been falling this past week. We have not received any fishing reports for this pool this week. **Sauger** - No Report: Look for saugers below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical

jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows. **Walleye** - No Report: Look for walleyes below the Lock and Dam. Try vertical jigging with minnows or trolling three-way rigs with minnows.

Tailwater stages have been falling this past week. Main channel water temperature is around 39 degrees. Water clarity is fair. Tailwater fishing for walleye and sauger is being reported as slow. There has been some woody debris in the water; use caution when boating. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

While the rest of the lake is open water, the boat ramp bay still has ice on it.

Lake Belva Deer

The lake is open water. Some ice is still hanging around in the campground boat ramp bay, but that shouldn't last long.

Lake Darling

Last night's winds blew out the last of the ice. The lake is open water.

Lake Geode

Open water.

Lost Grove Lake

A mix of open water and ice.

Skunk River (Coppock to Mississippi River)

Open water.

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

Central Park Lake

Unsafe ice conditions.

Coralville Reservoir

the lake level is 383.57 feet. The upper end of the lake is ice-free; the wind is chewing up the remaining ice quickly. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: A few fish are being caught on cut bait around the 380/965 bridge area.

[Diamond Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Hannen Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

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

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Lake Macbride](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Otter Creek Lake](#)

The lake is still empty due to the renovation project; the project is complete and the lake will fill as mother nature allows.

[Pleasant Creek Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Union Grove Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

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

A dredging project in the Pinicon Ridge backwaters will affect ice fishing this winter.

Unsafe ice conditions. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

[Hawthorn Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Lake Miami](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Lake Sugema](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Lake Wapello](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

Unsafe ice conditions. The current lake level is 902.94 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels so make sure to properly drain, clean and dry equipment before transporting to another waterbody.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Unsafe ice conditions.

Unsafe ice conditions on area lakes. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Catch trout as ice recedes from the shoreline with ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics. Trout tend to swim close to shore in depths out to 10 feet. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Big Creek Lake is mostly covered in weak ice.

Des Moines River (Stratford to Saylorville Lake)

Walleye - Fair: Early ice out on the river combined with good water conditions have created an early season opportunity for walleyes. Cast jigs with twister tails, swim baits or live minnows in the deeper pools with slow water.

[Lake Petocka](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Use ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or casting small plastics. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Terra Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Try ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Triumph Park West](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Use ice fishing panfish jigs tipped with waxworms under a float or cast small plastics. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Most ponds and lakes in Central Iowa have poor ice conditions with or open water. For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

Lake Anita

Unsafe ice conditions.

Lake Manawa

Lake Manawa is completely open water.

Littlefield Lake

Unsafe ice conditions.

Prairie Rose Lake

Unsafe ice conditions.

Most district lakes are partially or completely open. For information on lakes in the Southwest District, call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Green Valley Lake

Lake is partially ice-free.

Three Mile Lake

Lake level is 8 feet below normal pool. **Unsafe ice conditions.**

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

Unsafe ice conditions.

Ice conditions have deteriorated on Mount Ayr district lakes. Shoreline edges are open on larger lakes; small ponds and lakes are ice-free. **Unsafe ice conditions.** For more information, call the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.



This year's walleye challenge has been expanded to other states across the Midwest and into Canada as part of a larger fisheries research project funded by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

New this year, participants can choose the free entry option to qualify for non-cash prizes or pay the \$25 fee to qualify for all prizes including cash payouts.

Iowa anglers compete only against other Iowa anglers for biweekly prizes, while all catches from across the Midwest qualify for the grand prize drawings at the end of the event. Grand prizes for 2024 include a week-long fishing trip to Lac Seul Evergreen Lodge in Canada, as well as equipment from companies like St. Croix Rods.

Secret spots stay secret. Specific catch locations from anglers are not listed on public leaderboards.

Learn about the data collected the first two years of the walleye challenge and new incentives for this year's challenge online with the [DNR YouTube video](#).