

Fishing News

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



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NORTHWEST

[Arrowhead Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 6-7 inches near the boat ramp. Areas in the middle of the lake may be thinner. Use caution and check ice thickness often as you move around.

[Bacon Creek Lake](#)

Rainbow trout were stocked this winter. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. Daily limit is 5 trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of 10. Children age 15 or younger can fish for trout with a properly licensed adult, but together, they can only keep one daily limit. Children can pay the trout fee, allowing them to keep their own daily limit. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Use a small hook with a nightcrawler, corn, or powerbait trout bites under a small bobber. A small and shiny jig or spoon tipped with bait also works well.

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

The aeration system in Town Bay is operating. Expect thin ice and open water in Town Bay. Ice thickness is 7 inches off of Ice House Point boat ramp with 4 inches of snow cover. This is the

best ice on the lake - other areas in the middle may be thinner or have large pockets of open water. There is open water fishing at the fish house in Town Bay. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use a waxworm, small minnow, or jigs. Most luck has been around the fish house in Town Bay and near Ice House Point. **Walleye** - Fair: Pick up walleye around Ice House Point boat ramp, near the Gunshot hill area, and in the inlet bridge bay area. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers are picking up some perch with minnows and waxworms. Most are having luck between Denison Beach and Gunshot Hill area.

[Black Hawk Pits](#)

Ice thickness is 6 inches near the boat ramp. Conditions are variable.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Anglers have been out on the north end where ice thickness is 7-9 inches. Conditions are more variable elsewhere on the lake. Expect open areas and weak ice around protruding trees and other structure. Other areas of the lake are thinner or have pockets of open water. Use caution if venturing out; check ice thickness often as you move around. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Pick up crappie on the north end in 20 plus feet of water. **Bluegill** - Slow. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

[Moorland Pond](#)

Rainbow trout were stocked this winter. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. Daily limit is five trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of 10. Children age 15 or younger can fish for trout with a properly licensed adult, but together, they can only keep one daily limit. Children can pay the trout fee, allowing them to keep their own daily limit. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try a small hook with a nightcrawler, corn, or powerbait trout bites under a small bobber. A small shiny jig or spoon tipped with bait also works well.

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

Ice thickness is around 8-10 inches. Conditions are becoming more variable with open area and seams to watch out for. Use caution; check ice thickness often as you make your way out. **Walleye** - Slow: Some fish are being picked up along the dredge cuts. **Yellow Bass** - Fair. **Yellow Perch** - Fair.

ice thickness is 6-9 inches and covered with several inches of recent snow on most district lakes. Ice is becoming more variable with more open areas showing up. Use caution if venturing out. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

[Clear Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 12-16 inches on most of the lake. Use extreme caution if driving on the lake. Areas that were open water a few days ago are now frozen over and covered with snow. Wear safety gear and check ice thickness as you go. **Black Crappie** - Good. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a small jig tipped with waxworm in 2 to 3 feet of water near vegetation. **Walleye** - Fair: Try a minnow near rocky habitat. Best bite is early morning and near sunset. **Yellow Bass** - Slow: Use a jig tipped with bait in 2 to 3 feet of water. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Most perch being caught are 4 to 6 inches. Use a bigger bait to target the larger fish.

[Crystal Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 16-18 inches with open water on the southeast side. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Use a small jig tipped with minnow near the dredge cut. **Bluegill** - Slow. **Walleye** - Slow.

[Lower Pine Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 8 to 10 inches. **Black Crappie** - Good: **Bluegill** - Good: Try a small jig tipped with a waxworm around the island.

[Rice Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 16-18 inches. **Bluegill** - Good: Use a small jig tipped with a waxworm near vegetation. Best bite is early morning. **Walleye** - Slow. Best bite is around sunset. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Try a jig tipped with bait near vegetation. You may have to upsize your bait to avoid the small fish.

[Silver Lake \(Worth\)](#)

Ice thickness is 16-18 inches. **Bluegill** – Fair: Use a small jig tipped with waxworms near vegetation. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Try a jig tipped with bait in 2 to 3 feet of water.

Aeration systems are running at Crystal Lake, Rice Lake and Silver Lake. Use extreme caution if driving on any of the area lakes. Many had open water areas a few days ago that are now frozen over and covered with snow. Check ice thickness often as you move. For information on lakes and rivers in north central Iowa, contact Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

[East Okoboji Lake](#)

Watch for a handful of areas that are open or have just frozen over recently, mainly on the northern most basin. Ice thickness is around 14 inches or more in most areas. **Black Crappie** - Good: **Bluegill** - Good: **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: **Yellow Perch** - Good: Many perch seen; sorting most likely needed.

[Ingham Lake](#)

The lake is fully ice covered with around 15 inches. **Walleye** - Fair: Morning and afternoon bite is best.

[Silver Lake \(Dickinson\)](#)

Caution: The lake aerator is in operation. Ice thickness is more than 13 inches. **Walleye** -Fair: Bite hit-or-miss.

[Spirit Lake](#)

The lake has ice thick enough for fishing, but also has a large open water section off Big Stoney Point. Ice thickness is more than 15 inches. **Black Crappie** - Good: Anglers are finding quality-size crappie up to 14-inches. **Bluegill** - Good. **Walleye** - Good: **Yellow Perch** - Good: Sorting is needed; anglers are finding many of acceptable size.

[West Okoboji Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 14 inches or more in most areas, but there are still many unsafe areas or areas of open water on the main lake. **Black Crappie** - Fair: **Bluegill** - Good.

Most area lakes have 12 or more inches of ice, but many lakes have areas of open water that have persisted throughout the winter. Ice conditions should continue to improve with forecasted temperatures well below freezing. Recent precipitation has left 2 inches of snow covering on the lakes. [The Walleye season on the IGL's closes February 15th](#). For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

[Big Woods Lake](#)

No reports for this week.

[Brinker Lake](#)

Anglers are catching a few crappie. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use electronics to find structure and suspended fish in deep water.

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

No reports for this week.

[George Wyth Lake](#)

Anglers are catching bluegill and crappie, sorting may be needed. Use caution; geese are

keeping an area open on the lake. **Black Crappie** – Fair: Find structure; use an ice jig tipped with a minnow or waxworm. Look for suspended fish near the structure using electronics. **Bluegill** – Fair: Find structure; use an ice jig tipped with a waxworm off of the bottom.

Manchester District Streams

Trout streams are in excellent condition. Next week's forecast calls for high temperatures to be in the single digits which may cause some icing along stream edges and on fishing rods.

Next weeks forecast calls for temperatures in the single digits. Few reports of anglers catching some panfish in the Cedar Falls/Waterloo area. Ice conditions remain around 6-8 inches of good ice on most area lakes. Always use extreme caution on the ice. For more information, contact Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

Mississippi River Pool 9

Water level is 8 feet at Lansing. Recent cold weather has firmed up ice again. Ice thickness is around 15 inches in Shore Slough and Lansing Village Creek. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Occasional nice-sized crappies are being caught. **Bluegill** - Good: Midwinter bite can be mixed with a lot of sorting of smaller fish. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-up fishing has been good this winter with a lot of 20-inch fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch fishing should pick up during late winter.

Mississippi River Pool 10

Water level is 613.5 feet in the tailwaters at Lynxville. Recent cold weather has firmed up ice. Anglers are fishing the dredge cuts above the Marquette bridge. **Avoid ice at Bussey Lake Ramp in Guttenberg ; unsafe ice conditions.** Ice anglers are entering on the island road and reporting around 14 inches of ice. Anglers have been crossing Sny Magill to Norwegian Lake. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Occasional nice-sized fish being caught. **Bluegill** - Good: Midwinter bite can be mixed with a lot of sorting of smaller fish. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-up fishing has been good this winter with a lot of 20-inch fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch fishing should pick up during late winter.

Mississippi River Pool 11

Water level is 5.3 feet at Guttenberg. Recent cold weather has firmed up ice again. Ice thickness is 12-15 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Occasional nice-sized fish being caught. **Bluegill** - Good: Midwinter bite can be mixed with a lot of sorting of smaller fish. **Northern Pike** - Good: Tip-up fishing has been good this winter with a lot of 20 inch fish being caught. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Perch fishing should pick up during late winter.

Most backwater lakes have 12-15+ inches of ice. Recent cold weather has firmed up ice; use caution around areas with current. Main channel ramps remain iced up.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water level is stable at 5.2 feet at Dubuque Lock and Dam and 7.9 feet at the RR bridge. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 33 degrees in the main channel. **Black Crappie** - Good: Anglers are often using tip-downs with a minnow for bait. **Bluegill** - Excellent: Anglers are targeting the various harbor sites within the city of Dubuque. If you have airboats or hovercrafts, several newly dredged backwater area like Stone Lake and Tippy Lake have been good. **Northern Pike** - Excellent: Pike fishing has been very good in the backwaters. Anglers

are using large shiners with tip-ups. **Walleye** - No Report: Very difficult to get to the tailwater as boat ramps are iced in or subject to ice flows.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water level is stable at 5.1 feet at Bellevue. Water temperature is 33 degrees in the main channel. Water is clear. Bellevue City Ramp can be open at times, but subject to freezing and large ice chunks. The DNR ramp is frozen in. The main channel is open below the dam; major ice flows are occurring at times. **Bluegill** - Excellent: Ice thickness is decent. Ice can be sketchy around the south campground in Sabula at times so please check it before going out. The ice itself is very slick so please use cleats to move around. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Lots of big bass have been reported by ice anglers in the Sabula area. **Northern Pike** - Excellent: Pike are being caught in a variety of locations on tips up tipped with larger shiners. May be the best pike fishing seen on the river in years. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: The kids trout pond north of the DNR fisheries station is stocked with trout and should remain good fishing till the April/May time frame when it will weed over. **Walleye** - Good: Some anglers are fishing in the tailwater at Bellevue and launching from the City ramp. Be wary of ice flows. Some good angling has been reported on jigs and minnow rigs. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Many little yellow perch with an occasional nicer fish being seen around the Sabula Lakes area. Some perch also being caught at Millers Landing in lower Pool 13 in some very shallow backwaters.

Mississippi River Pool 14

The water level is stable at 4.5 feet at Fulton, 9.7 feet at Camanche and 4.3 feet at LeClaire. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 33 degrees. **Bluegill** - Good: Ice fishing is occurring at Rock Creek and Cattail Lake. Sorting is needed; some nice fish are being caught. **Northern Pike** - No report: Lots of pikes being caught in the pools above Pool 14 but would not be surprising that they could not be targeted here as well. Pool 14 has a very good pike population. **Walleye** - No report: All boat ramps in Clinton are iced in.

Mississippi River Pool 15

The water level is stable at near 4.6 feet at Rock Island. Water is clear. Water temperature is around 33 degrees.

Ice fishing conditions are generally good in traditional areas; always use caution. Thin ice or even open water has been reported in some traditional areas. If you have angling questions, call Bellevue Fisheries Management at 563-880-8781.

Mississippi River Pool 16

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

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is fairly steady at 3.57 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine. We have not received any reports on ramps conditions in Muscatine. Last week, Big Timber had open water along the boat ramp/parking lot. Ice conditions in Big Timber are extremely variable.

Mississippi River Pool 18

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

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is falling slightly at 1.38 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington. We have not received any boat ramp reports or ice conditions reports for this pool.

Tailwater stages have been fairly steady this past week. Boat ramps are freezing back up with the recent cold weather. We have not received much for ice condition reports this week. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

[Big Hollow Lake](#)

Ice fishing not recommended. The ice at the boat ramp is still about 4 inches thick, but lots of thinner areas out on the lake. The ice around the canoe/kayak Launch area is only about 1 1/2-2 inches thick for about the first 6-7 feet out from shore. Some small areas of open water next to the north shore.

[Lake Belva Deer](#)

Ice fishing not recommended. While the ice at the boat ramp is still about 4-5 inches thick, there is a large area of open water between the two boat ramps that stretches nearly all the way across. Snow is going to hide the thinner areas of ice making it very dangerous to be out on it. **Black Crappie** - Fair: After dark bite is best; daytime bite is slow. **Bluegill** - Fair: Early morning bite is best.

[Lake Darling](#)

Ice fishing not recommended; unsafe ice conditions. Cold weather has frozen back over the open water near the shoreline; the ice is only 1 1/2 inches thick in those areas. Still a fairly large open water area where the geese and swans are staying.

[Lake Geode](#)

Unsafe ice conditions. About half of the lake between the main boat ramp and the dam is completely open water. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Anglers are picking up crappies over the habitat in 8 to 10 feet of water. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bite hit-and-miss. Work the fish habitat in 8 to 10 feet of water.

[Lost Grove Lake](#)

The ice at Upper End (west) is still in decent condition, but is degrading. Avoid the lower end of the lake. **Bluegill** - Slow: Entering the "late ice" part of the season when the bite slows down.

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

[Central Park Lake](#)

No fishing activity reported.

[Diamond Lake](#)

No fishing activity reported. **Unsafe ice conditions.**

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

No fishing activity reported.

[Kent Park Lake](#)

Ice fishing is not recommended; ice thickness is less than 5 inches.

[Lake Macbride](#)

Reports of highly variable ice conditions with open water near points and some shore lines. Use extreme caution if walking on ice now that there is snow.

[Rodgers Park Lake](#)

No fishing activity reported.

[Union Grove Lake](#)

No fishing activity reported.

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

Final stage of dredging at the Pinicon Ridge Park has begun. Some areas will be closed to fishing. Closures are expected to last for about one month.

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

[Hawthorn Lake](#)

Ice conditions are thin with areas of open water along the shoreline.

[Lake Keomah](#)

Lake Keomah is drained for a lake restoration project. Please keep out of the lake bed.

[Lake Miami](#)

Ice conditions are not very good with areas of open water.

[Lake Sugema](#)

The lake has quite a bit of open water; Canada geese are keeping areas open. No fishing activity has been occurring. **Unsafe ice conditions.**

[Lake Wapello](#)

Ice conditions are thin with open water.

[Rathbun Reservoir](#)

The current lake level is 903.41 msl; recreation pool is 904 msl. Ice thickness is not very good; there is open water around the shoreline and some areas in the main lake. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels; [properly drain, clean and dry equipment](#) before transporting to another waterbody.

[Red Haw Lake](#)

Ice thickness is thin with areas of open water.

Ice conditions vary at each lake with open water at some areas. Use caution if going out. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

[Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 10-11 inches. Ice conditions held up well during the warmer weather.

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Trout were stocked through the ice this winter. Use jigging spoons or panfish jigs tipped with waxworms. Trout at Ada Hayden typically school within 20 to 30 yards from shore during ice cover. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Big Creek Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 10 inches. Areas of open water continue to expand. This band of open water arcs from the marina to West Boat Ramp bay and back across lake to Ensign shelter. **Black Crappie** - Fair. A fair population of large crappies is present if you can find schools. Try glow jigs and glow spoons tipped with live minnows, minnow heads or waxworms in the evening near brush piles in water deeper than 15 feet. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use waxworms and spikes near sunken trees.

[Don Williams Lake](#)

Ice thickness is around 10 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try glow jigs with waxworms or glow spoons with live minnows or minnow heads late afternoon and evening.

[Hickory Grove Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 6-9 inches. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch crappies in the late afternoon into the evening on jigging spoons with live minnow or minnow heads or wax worms on golf jigs. Try fishing over cedar tree habitat or the submerged willow and cottonwood that grew while the lake was down. This growth is mostly found on the portion of the lake between the South Boat Ramp and Snow Bunting Lodge. **Bluegill** - Good: Catch on waxworms throughout much of the lake. The best pattern has been a late afternoon into evening bite over the dead willow and cottonwood trees that grew while the lake was drained. The portion of the lake with most of this habitat is between the Snow Bunting Lodge and the South Boat Ramp at depths greater than 12 feet.

[Lake Petocka](#)

Ice conditions are supporting angling. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Trout were stocked through the ice this winter. Try jigging spoons or panfish jigs tipped with a waxworm. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Terra Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Fair: Trout were stocked through the ice on this winter. Try jigging spoons or panfish jigs tipped with a waxworm. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Triumph Park West](#)

Bluegill - Good: Use waxworms. Start by fishing where bottom depths are 6 to 12 feet. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Trout were stocked through the ice this winter in both Triumph East and West Ponds. Try jigging spoons or panfish jigs tipped with a waxworm. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Ice thickness is 6-11 inches on Central Iowa lakes and ponds. Ice is more variable south of Interstate 80. For information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers contact Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Lake Anita](#)

Open water around the beach. Ice is variable, but ice thickness is 6 inches on most of the lake. Use caution. **Black Crappie** - Fair: The bite has picked up around five in the afternoon. Sorting is needed for larger fish. **Bluegill** - Fair: Anglers fishing in 10 feet of water around tree piles are doing well.

[Prairie Rose Lake](#)

Ice thickness is 6 inches. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Move often to find 10- to 12-inch black crappies. **Bluegill** - Slow: Catch bluegill around the cedar tree piles.

Unsafe ice condition. Drill holes often when venturing out and never walk on black ice. For information on lakes in the Southwest District, call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

[Green Valley Lake](#)

Geese are keeping an area open near the campground which is expanding southward.

[Three Mile Lake](#)

Driving is prohibited on any service roads used to access the lakebed and the lakebed itself. Lake level is 11 feet below normal pool. Boat ramp lanes are out of the water at the main boat ramp.

[Twelve Mile Creek Lake](#)

Large area of open water off the Townline Boat Ramp and open water on the south end of the lake.

Ice conditions have deteriorated on Mount Ayr district lakes. Shorelines have deteriorated; areas of open water on the larger lakes have expanded in size. For more information, call Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.



Iowa DNR and Wildlife Forever encourages all Iowans ages 5-18 to enter the Iowa Fish Art Contest! Winning submissions will be featured in the DNR building at the 2025 Iowa State Fair.

The art must include one or more of the following fish species: Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout, Brook Trout, Walleye, Channel Catfish, Flathead Catfish, Bluegill, Crappie, Iowa Darter and/or Muskellunge.

Deadline for submissions is Feb. 28, 2025. Only digital submissions are accepted - one entry per person: [individual form](#) or [group form](#).