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ILLIPAH RESERVOIR

History - Illipah Reservoir was first created in 1953 when Illipah Creek was impounded for irrigation purposes. In an agreement with the landowner that guaranteed a minimum pool, the Department of Wildlife paid for the construction of a new dam and the reservoir was enlarged in 1981. Although located almost entirely on private land, the adjacent land is managed as a recreational area by the BLM under a cooperative agreement with the Department of Wildlife.

Pertinent Information - At capacity, Illipah covers 70 surface acres to a maximum depth of 50 feet. Rainbow trout, stocked twice annually, and a self-sustaining population of brown trout currently inhabit the reservoir. The 2008 catch rates were about 4.0 fish per angler and nearly 1.1 fish per hour, with rainbow trout averaging 11.1 inches in length and brown trout averaging about 11.0 inches. Good fishing can be found year around, but peaks in the spring and fall. Mid-winter ice fishing (December through February) can also be good. A boat is not essential as many fish are captured from shore. Power Bait, night crawlers, and salmon eggs work well for the bait fishermen. The usual selection of spinners and lures (Mepps and Panther Martins) work for the spin fishermen. Fly fishermen should try prince nymphs, wooly buggers, sheep creek specials and pheasant tails on a sinking line. "Hard Water" anglers prefer to use baits with colored jigs. Camping - The BLM maintains campgrounds with picnic tables, fire pits, windscreens, vault toilets, Sani Huts and trash barrels. An undeveloped boat launch is available.

Stocking - Approximately 7,500, 9-inch rainbow trout will be stocked in the spring and an additional 7,500 rainbow trout will be stocked in the fall.

Regulations - Open year around, any time of the day or night. Limit is 5 trout daily or in possession.

Biologist Forecast for 2009 – Although the reservoir has suffered low water conditions in the past 2-years, the rainbow trout carryover has been good. Fish from 12-14 inches should be common, with 16-20 inch trout also present. A gill net survey in 2008 found the most abundant brown trout population of large sizes in over 20 years.

Boating Regulations – A vessel must be operated at a speed that leaves a flat wake, but in no case may a vessel be operated at a speed in excess of 5 nautical miles per hour.



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Access - Travel 34 miles west of Ely on Highway 50, turning south (left) at the sign and follow the dirt road 1 ½ miles to the reservoir.