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**BIG SPRINGS RESERVOIR**

History - Big Springs Reservoir is located at the northern end of the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge, 131 miles northwest of Winnemucca. The reservoir was originally developed as an irrigation impoundment for Lower Virgin Valley and Dufurrena Ponds. Water rights and administrative authority are controlled by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

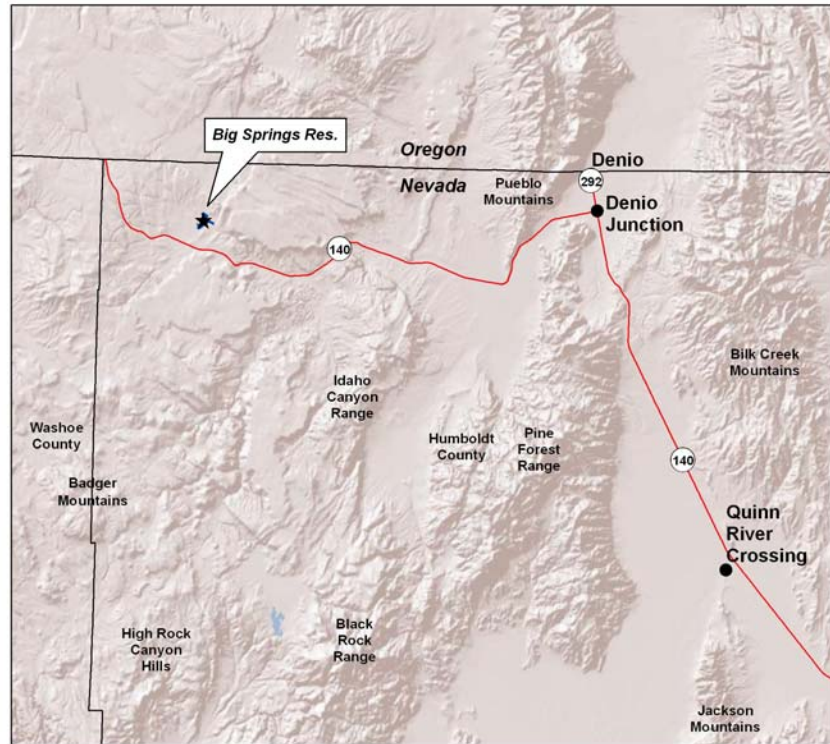
Pertinent Information - Big Springs covers 212 acres with an average depth of 7 feet and a maximum depth of 10 feet at the dam when full. For general information, angler questionnaire data from 1998 found 1,906 anglers fishing 6,208 days and capturing 33,796 fish for a catch rate of 5 fish per day. On the ground creel checks indicate that anglers capture 0.56 fish per hour of fishing. Standing crop fish numbers on an average year are estimated at between 8,000 to 12,000 rainbow trout or bowcutts (rainbow x cutthroat hybrid). Camping - Unimproved camping with outhouses. No formal garbage collection is available. Camping regulations administered by the Sheldon Wildlife Refuge. Best Time of Year to Fish - May, June, September, October and November. Productive Fishing Methods - The usual bait fishing techniques using worms, Power Bait, etc., have proven effective during the spring and fall months. Fly fishing, usually from float tubes, has been successful during those same times (spring and fall). Small green wooly buggers and scud patterns have been the top producing patterns. Big Springs Reservoir is turbid (cloudy) and flashier patterns produce more fish than subdued patterns.

Stocking - The Nevada Department of Wildlife will stock 5,000, 9-inch rainbow trout into Big Springs this spring if the reservoir fills.

Regulations - The season is open the second Saturday in May through the last day of February, any hour of the day or night. Limit is 5 trout per day or in possession.

Boating Regulations - Anglers may use non-motorized boats, boats with electric motors, float tubes and similar flotation devices.

Biologist Forecast for 2009 - Seven years in a row of below normal precipitation has left Big Springs at a very low water level, thus no fish were stocked since 2004. Springs that normally feed the reservoir throughout the year have started flowing at reduced rates. The lake is presently 50% full and is expected to be 75% full by June. If the lake fills, it will be stocked with 9-inch rainbow trout that should be 12 inches by fall and 15 inches by next spring.



No warranty is made by the Nevada Department of Wildlife as to the accuracy, reliability, or completeness of these data for individual use or aggregate use with other data.

Access - Travel 31 miles north of Winnemucca on U.S. 95 to the junction of SR 140, turning left and traveling 104 miles to the Denio Junction turning left again and continuing for another 33 miles along 140 to the Big Springs turnoff (north side of road). It is one mile to the reservoir along a level graveled road.