

## 5. EAST CARSON RIVER

History – The East Carson River originates in the Sierra Nevada Range in California at higher than 10,000 ft. in elevation. Pioneering anglers (mid to late 1800s) originally fished for Lahontan cutthroat trout and mountain whitefish. However, Comstock mining activities, logging, channelization, water diversions, introduction of other fish species, and over harvesting have caused the demise of cutthroat trout and limited the range of the whitefish. Rainbow trout and brown trout have been the primary fish stocked since the early 1900s.

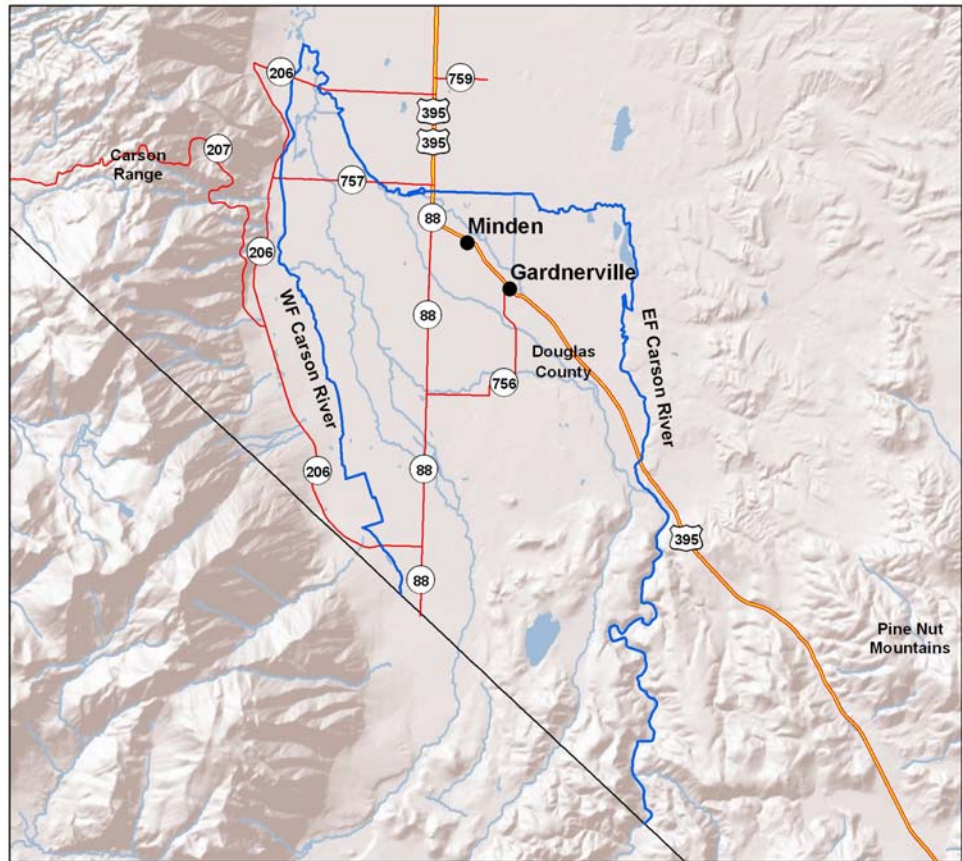
Pertinent Information – The fisheries in the East Carson River in Nevada begin at the State Border and runs 21 miles to its confluence with the West Fork near Genoa. The upper portion of the river downstream to Gardnerville is primarily adjacent to U.S. Forest Service managed land. The river then flows through private lands to its downstream end. However, the State of Nevada owns the river channel, which is open to the public, but be careful not to trespass on private property to access the river. The river is from 30 to 60 ft. wide with tremendous spring flows and is generally unwadeable until summer through the end of winter. Fishing is generally best at trout stocking sites that include Ruhenstroth Dam (a.k.a. Broken Dam) upstream of Gardnerville and Centerville Bridge (a.k.a. Lutheran Bridge) in Gardnerville. This is a put-and-take, urban trout fishery and anglers rarely catch fish greater than 12 inches in length. Trout concentrate at these sites and they are a great place to take children fishing. Fingerling brown trout are stocked in the more remote areas upstream of Ruhenstroth Dam and near the NV-CA Border, but fishing is more challenging in this region. Creel surveys from past years found anglers capturing 2.70 fish per hour in the lower East Carson River and 1.46 fish per hour in the upper East Carson River. The fish ranged between 6 and 14 inches in length.

Stocking – In the spring, 6,500 9-inch rainbow trout are scheduled to be stocked into the river. Stocking generally begins in March and April prior to spring flooding and then again in June and July at the end of the high runoff. A total of 2,000 rainbow are scheduled for the fall.

Regulations – All of the East Carson River has general fishing regulations, fishing is permitted any hour of the day or night and the fishing season is open year round. The limit is 5 trout, 10 mountain whitefish, and 15 warmwater game fish of which not more than 5 may be black bass.

Fishing Forecast for 2009 – Snowpack for the Carson River Drainage is predicted to be 80% of normal for the winter of 2008-09, therefore, flows from spring runoff should be slightly high, with moderate to low flows predicted during summer and fall. Spring and early summer fishing should be good immediately upstream and downstream of Ruhenstroth Dam.

Boating Regulations – There are no special boating regulations for the East Carson River. During spring runoff, raft and kayak trips are a popular recreation and many guided trips begin near Markleeville, CA and end at Ruhenstroth Dam. All rafters must exit above Ruhenstroth Dam.



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 – Access to Ruhenstroth Dam and Lutheran Bridge is excellent for all types of vehicles. On Highway 395 in Gardnerville, turn west on Waterloo Lane, then turn south on Centerville Rd. to reach Lutheran Bridge within 0.1 mi. To reach Ruhenstroth Dam, travel south past Gardnerville on Highway 395. About 0.9 mi. past Lahontan National Fish Hatchery turn west on a paved road that leads to the river. River access to remote sites near the border can be reached from either the China Springs turn off or Leviathan Mine Rd. A 4-wheel drive vehicle with high clearance is highly recommended on these unimproved, dirt roads and there are no facilities within miles of these remote river sites.