

## EAST WALKER RIVER

History – The East Walker River in Nevada flows through Lyon County originating along the eastern slope of the Sierras. Bridgeport Reservoir, located 7 miles upstream of the NV-CA border, stores irrigation water for downstream farmland. Historically, cutthroat trout migrated 140 miles from Walker Lake to the headwaters. A low or nonexistent water supply, poor habitat, poor water quality, and barriers have eliminated any chance of these fish naturally spawning.

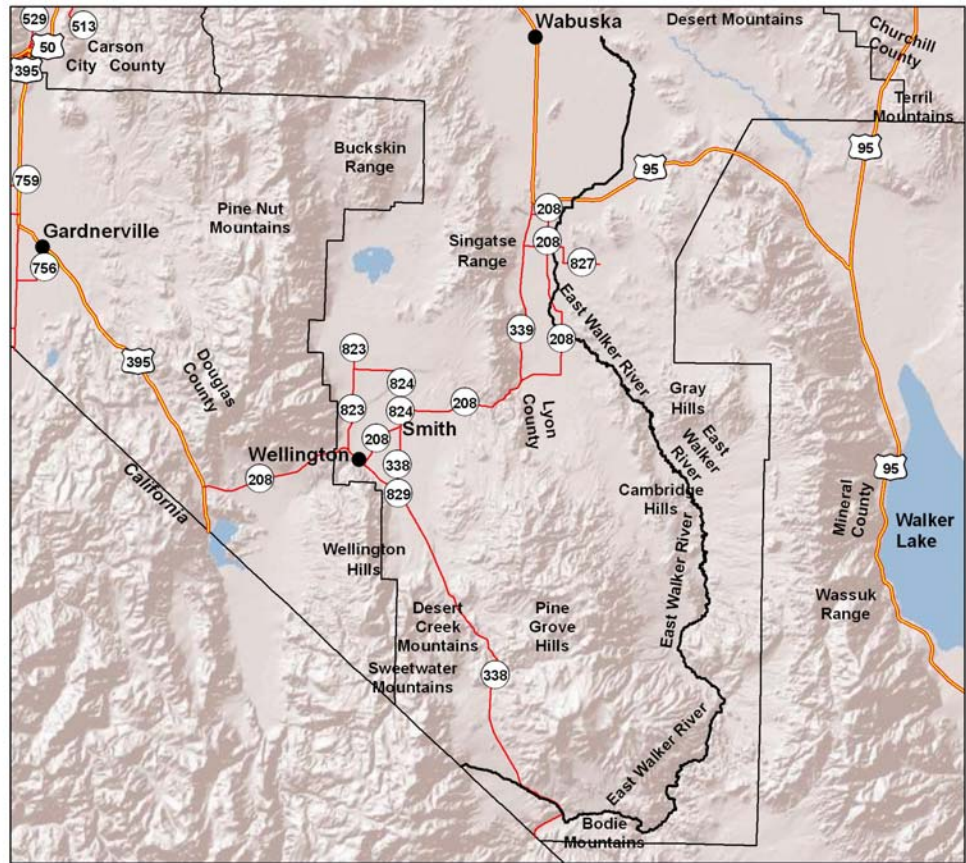
Pertinent Information – Approximately 38% of the East Walker River flows through BLM and Forest Service lands. The upstream public site is Rosaschi Ranch, which has a “No Harvest” fishing regulation and is the most popular for fly and lure fishing anglers. Rainbow and brown trout and mountain whitefish spawn naturally here and populations are the highest compared to downstream populations. Farther downstream is the Elbow, which is stocked with rainbow trout. The habitat conditions there are also suitable for natural trout spawning. Both fly-fishing and bait fishing are popular here. Other common sites are Raccoon Beach and Zanis, which have more difficult access and limited trout stocking. Angler drop-box data for 2008 showed that anglers caught 1.43 fish per hour and 5.82 fish for a day’s fishing. Rainbow trout made up 64% while the remaining were brown trout. Thirteen percent of the rainbow trout were larger than 16 inches. Farmland irrigation generally begins in April and ends in October. Flows reach between 200 to 500 cfs in summer and the river is difficult to wade. Winter flow ranges between 20 and 50 cfs. Finally, the East Walker River is classified as non-navigable, meaning if the river passes through private property, the river itself is considered private property and there is no fishing without permission.

Stocking – NDOW is planning on stocking approximately 12,000 catchable (8 to 12 inches) rainbow trout in 2009. About 4,000 of these will be stocked at Raccoon Beach and Zanis, the remainder will be stocked at the Elbow. Rosaschi Ranch does not get stocked.

Regulations – Rosaschi Ranch is “catch and release” fishing using only artificial lures with single barbless hooks. All other sites have general fishing regulations: the season is open year around, any hour of the day or night; the limit is 5 trout, 10 mountain whitefish, and 15 warmwater game fish of which not more than 5 may be black bass.

Biologist Predictions for 2009 – Summer-time water flows will be moderate to high as a result of irrigation, but this should not deter anglers from fishing. Wading or bank fishing should produce similar catches as during previous years. Angling at Rosaschi Ranch slows during the summer due to the flows, but it picks up at the Elbow due to trout stocking. Fall and winter flows will be low. There is an abundant brown trout population in the river.

Boating Regulations – There are no special boating regulations on the East Walker River. Rafters do fish the river occasionally, but remember you must gain prior permission from private landowners to trespass. Additionally, barbed-wire fences cross the river at property boundaries and extreme caution must be used.



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 – From Wellington on Hwy 208, travel south on the Wellington Cutoff to Hwy 338. Continue south on Hwy 338 for about 23.5 miles, turning east on Sweetwater Road. This is a County maintained dirt road and about the first 3-miles is Rosaschi Ranch. Many anglers park near the County Bridge within 1.5 miles of Highway 338 turnoff. From this bridge, continue east about 4-miles to reach the Elbow, directly adjacent to the road. From the Elbow, travel about 9.5 miles east to a major 4-way intersection. Turn north (towards Yerington) and travel about 7.5 miles to Raccoon Beach’s turnoff; access to the river is about 5.5 miles and 4-wheel drive is recommended. On the main road at the Raccoon Beach turnoff, continue north to Zanis’ turnoff within 6.5 miles; the river is within 2.5 miles and 4-wheel drive is recommended. There are absolutely no facilities once you leave Wellington, so be prepared for anything.