

Spoooner Lake



ANGLER AND FISH SURVEY INFORMATION Sam Sedillo- Fisheries Biologist, Reno Office 1100 Valley Rd, Reno, NV (775)-688-1882

General information: Spooner Lake is a small impoundment constructed in 1927 to store irrigation water. The reservoir, at maximum legal capacity, covers about 78 surface acres and has a depth of nearly 20 feet. Currently, sport fish include Rainbow Trout, Tiger Trout (Brown Trout x Brook Trout) and bowcutt trout (Rainbow x Cutthroat Trout hybrid). Lahontan Tui Chub, however, dominate the lake. Anglers generally catch between 4 and 15 trout per day that range between 10 and 14 inches, but some get as big as 16 inches. Use lures or flies and wade the shoreline or fish from float-tubes. Nevada Division of State Parks charges a fee to enter Lake Tahoe State Park at Spooner Lake. Most angling occurs during the ice-free period from May or June through October. Other activities include mountain biking and hiking the many backcountry trails that begin at Spooner Lake.

Location and Access: Spooner Lake is located in Douglas County and situated within Lake Tahoe Nevada State Park at an elevation of 6,980 feet. Access to Spooner Lake is excellent for all types of vehicles, however, during winter there can be heavy snowfall. From Carson City, travel 3 miles south on US 395 to US 50. Head west on Highway 50 approximately 10 miles to Spooner Summit, along the eastern edge of the Sierras. Turn north on Highway 28 for 1/2 mile to the Spooner Lake Park entrance. Picnic tables, barbecue pits, restrooms, and water are available. Vehicle parking is about 300 yards from the lake and there is a groomed trail with a moderately sloping downhill leading to the lake's edge.

Management: NDOW manages the lake as a put and take fishery under general regulations. The Nevada Division of State Parks manages Spooner Lake and backcountry which is a portal to more than 60 miles of paths and trails spanning 13,000 acres of non-motorized primitive wilderness within the Lake Tahoe Basin.

General Info

- Boats with electric motors are permitted. Float-tube and canoe fishing are popular.
- Please clean, drain, and dry any gear you bring into Spooner to stop aquatic hitchhikers and invasive species, especially any boats you bring to the lake.
- A fee is required to enter the State Park.

Fishing Regulations

- Limit is 5 fish utilizing any legal method (bait included). The season is open to fishing year around, 1 hour before sunrise to 2 hours after sunset. Tui Chub do not count towards your limit.

Previous stocking

2022

Rainbows	1,044	8-12 Inches
Tiger Trout	3,568	8-12 Inches

2021

Rainbows	4,013	8-12 Inches
Tiger Trout	3,010	8-12 Inches
Bowcutt Trout	1,997	8-12 Inches

2020

Rainbows	6,008	8-12 Inches
Tiger Trout	3,794	8-12 Inches

2019

Rainbows	2,019	8-12 Inches
Tiger Trout	999	8-12 Inches
Bowcutt Trout	1,999	8-12 Inches

Fishing notes

- Early season fishing can be excellent as cool water temps and ice off push fish closer to the shoreline, fishing drop offs with either a bobber, floating indicator or powerbait 1-2 feet from your weight, inflated worms, and flies (balanced leeches, midges, or calibaetis flies) 3-6 feet down can be successful. Fishing small panther martins or Kastmasters can catch more aggressive fish such as tiger trout.
- Mid-late season fishing pushes fish towards deeper, cooler water, and the higher water temps keep trout away from the shore. Fish heavier lures (Kastmasters) to get your line to where the fish are. Fish from a boat or float tube to avoid weed beds and get your bait or flies 6-11 feet down under a bobber or indicator. Powerbait, worms and midge flies work well during this time. Fishing from shore can still be good but make sure to find deep water between the weeds. Early morning or evening is best for consistent fishing.

Spooner Lake

2023 Fishing Forecast

Sam Sedillo– Fisheries Biologist
Reno Office



Water levels- Snow pack conditions for winter of 22/23 exceed 200% of average for the Sierra so Spooner Lake should maintain good water levels to allow for fishing throughout the 2023 season.

Rainbow Trout and Bowcutt Trout

In 2022, 1,044 Rainbow Trout were stocked in Spooner Lake with an additional 1,000-4,000 Rainbow and bowcutt trout to be stocked in 2023. Rainbows and bowcutts in Spooner Lake average 8"-12". Holdover stocked Rainbow Trout and bowcutt trout that survive a winter allow for larger fish to be caught throughout the fishing season in the 14"-18" range. Bowcutts tend to fight harder and get larger than your average Rainbow Trout. According to 2022 angler drop box results, Rainbow and bowcutt trout comprised 43% of the trout caught by anglers with bowcutts frequently being misidentified as Rainbow Trout. As with all the fish in Spooner Lake, use bait such as small worms, powerbait and small flies or lures for the most success while targeting these fish.

Tiger Trout

Tiger trout are a cross between Brook Trout and Brown Trout and offer anglers a change to catch a trophy fish for Spooner Lake over 17" in length. Each year, 1,000-4,000 tiger trout are stocked in Spooner Lake and make up about 30% of all fish caught in the lake. Tiger trout tend to be more piscivorous (fish eating) than the other fish species inhabiting Spooner Lake and will eat a retrieved lure or stripped fly with gusto. This is due to the aggressive nature of these fish compared to other trout present in the lake and will give you a good fight if you happen to have one on the end of your line. Fish panther martins, Kastmasters, or wooly buggers for best success.

Tui Chub

Tui Chub are a small, tan/brown native forage fish that inhabit Spooner Lake and feed on small invertebrate and plankton. These fish tend to be small (<6") and will willingly grab the smallest lures, bait or flies you throw at them. Anglers frequently catch Tui Chub while fishing for trout, and in 2022, they comprised 25% of the fish caught by anglers. Tui Chub numbers continue to increase in the reservoir but do not count towards your 5 fish limit since they are not a game fish. Tui Chub are better than trout at surviving warm water temperatures and can be caught close to shore year-round.



Spooner Lake - 2022 Angler Drop Box
Species Composition

