

River Reservoir

Originally built in 1896 on the Little Colorado River, River Reservoir is the largest and deepest of a trio of lakes collectively known as the Greer Lakes. Even though it's been around for over 100 years, it's now like a new lake. Drained since 2004 because of safety issues, the dam at River Reservoir was repaired in 2005. Like the other two Greer Lakes, it also has new amenities.



Location – River Reservoir is located at 8,220 feet on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests. It's about a 45-minute drive from Pinetop-Lakeside via State Highways 260 and 373. At the junction of the two highways, take Hwy. 373 south 3 miles, then turn left on Forest Road 87B. The Greer Lakes, as they are collectively known, include Bunch, Tunnel and River Reservoirs, and are a short distance apart. Each is accessed from FR 87B. River Reservoir is the last lake on FR 87B.

Description – River Reservoir has 50 surface acres with a maximum depth of 45 feet and an average depth of 20 feet. The Arizona Game and Fish Department stocks River Reservoir with fingerling rainbow trout in the spring and catchable-sized rainbow trout in the spring and summer. Like its two neighboring reservoirs, River gets a few brown trout from the LCR diversion that refills it in the winter, but browns are not stocked here. Wild brown trout can get quite big in the lake.

Amenities – There are two paved parking areas near the lake, as well as a boat ramp near the dam, picnic ramadas and barrier-free toilets. There is camping at nearby Benny Creek and Rolfe Hoyer Campgrounds, both operated by the Forest Service. Hoyer has 100 individual sites with top-of-the-line amenities, including barrier-free flush toilets and showers. Both campgrounds charge a fee. Make reservations by going to www.reserveusa.com on the Web or by calling 1-877-444-6777. The nearby town of Greer provides everything in the way of gas, lodging, food and tackle.

Fishing Techniques – Trolling flies, such as brown or black wooly buggers, or spinners is likely to work well. Fly fishermen should try the upper end of the lake where the river comes in and the lake is shallower. Sometimes there's good surface action in the evenings; stick to wet flies like wooly buggers, Montana stones and Semi-Seal leeches. Fishing with night crawlers works well on the east side and upper end of the lake.

Special Notes – Statewide fishing regulations apply and a trout stamp is required. The daily bag limit is six trout; three for unlicensed anglers under the age of 14. Boat motors are restricted to electric or 10 HP motor or less.