



FRESHWATER CAST · FRIDAY CAST

Ridgway: Wet Western Slope, Cool Air & Rainbow Trout Lead

Ridgway Reservoir · Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026 · bank / kayak / boat · times in MT

Mild weekend · Fri ~73° → Sat–Sun ~74–76° MT

Primary: rainbow trout

Verify dam boards before you go

Soft Friday recreational · no named trail event pulled

Ridgway's midweek looks wet and cool — pack real rain gear, fish the first light on bait and inlets, and let the graph tell you when trout are up in the column.

● WEEKEND OUTLOOK

National Weather Service Grand Junction's point forecast for Ridgway Reservoir frames a dry, mild weekend for the **Fri Oct 2 – Sun Oct 4, 2026** window. Read every clock in this Cast as **MT**. Friday opens near **73°F** after overnight air near **41°F** (sunny, 5 mph W). Saturday climbs to about **74°F / 43°F** (sunny, 5 mph NNW). Sunday holds near **76°F / 45°F** (sunny, 0 to 5 mph WSW). No active watches or warnings were highlighted for this pull. Barometer was not logged station-by-station on every arm; treat pressure as steady-fair under this quiet pattern.

For **rainbow trout**, that pattern favors fishing hard around storm edges rather than waiting for a bluebird day. **First light and the hour after a cell clears** are the primary windows when thunder is not overhead. Midday plans should stay flexible — duck into a protected pocket or the truck when radar lights up. Friday is the softer traffic day; Saturday and Sunday recreational pressure builds around popular ramps, and **no named national trail event was pulled** for this water on Oct 2–4.

Carry more layers than you think you need — highs fall through the midweek on many Front Range and plains waters, and wet wind feels colder than the number on the phone. A simple three-rod rotation covers almost every bank you will fish. When a pocket goes quiet, make one short move to the next point that shows bait on the graph rather than a long empty run.

FRIDAY OCT 2

~73°F

Low ~41° · dry · 5 mph W
Sunny

Sunrise ~7:06 AM · Sunset
~6:48 PM MT

*Best bite: first light--~10 AM;
softest weekend traffic*

SATURDAY OCT 3

~74°F

Low ~43° · dry · 5 mph
NNW

Sunny
Sunrise ~7:07 AM · Sunset

~6:46 PM MT
*Best bite: first light--~10 AM;
shade and structure after 11
AM*

SUNDAY OCT 4

~76°F

Low ~45° · dry · 0 to 5 mph
WSW

Sunny
Sunrise ~7:08 AM · Sunset

~6:45 PM MT
*Best bite: dawn edges; mid-
day slow under cover*

● LEVEL & FLOW CHEAT SHEET

Colorado Parks and Wildlife / Ridgway State Park pages are the live source for pool and park notices on Ridgway. Fixed Fri–Sun recreational generator calendars are often thin for Colorado reservoirs — treat any elevation, release, or advisory as live. Failover: check the agency and park page the morning you launch, and call the marina or park desk if you need a same-day condition read. Advisories can change without notice.

WATER	OBSERVED	FLOW / BOARDS	HOW TO FISH IT
Ridgway Dam / pool	Verify live CPW / park pool and recreation notices before you launch	No fixed Fri–Sun recreational release calendar pulled	Fish inlets, points, and bait; treat any advisory as live

Dam and restricted zones stay off-limits whether flows are quiet or moving. If a local advisory, fire restriction, or temporary closure appears on the park or agency page, that overrides any general weekend outlook here.

● HOW TO FISH IT — BANK / KAYAK / BOAT

BANK

Public shoreline inside **Ridgway State Park** puts points, inlets, and riprap in casting range near day-use access. Work first light with a small spinner, spoon, or soft plastic along seams and shade, then slow down once the sun climbs or a shower passes. Stay on posted park shoreline, give trails and swim areas room, and skip closed banks. If fish dimple or birds work a seam, stay and rotate small profiles before hiking farther. Carry a small rain shell on the hike — showers can arrive faster than the walk back to the truck — and keep casts tight to the first break when wind turns a bank on.

KAYAK

Launch early at a park ramp and paddle onto the nearest inlet, point, or bait mark before wind builds. Ridgway rewards a quiet, thorough sector plan in cool wet weather. Wear a PFD, watch Western Slope showers and afternoon wind, and duck into a protected pocket when radar lights up. Keep a small spinner, a soft plastic, and a light spoon or streamer-style softbait ready. Fish the bait you mark thoroughly. If a cell builds while you are mid-lake, turn toward the nearest protected shoreline early rather than finishing “one more cast” under dark sky.

BOAT

Park ramps put you on points, inlets, and main-lake breaks quickly. Start at dawn with small search baits on bait marks and inlet seams, then rotate to slower presentations once the sun climbs. Midday, fish protected water rather than open chop under dark sky. Keep a spotter when running, give other boats space, and honor dam restricted zones. After a cell clears, fish the next stable hour hard on the nearest baited seam. Keep a simple run plan on the graph: launch, fish the nearest baited structure, then expand only if marks stay empty.

● PURE-GAS.ORG E0 · THIS WATER

Closest public **ethanol-free (E0)** listings from Pure-Gas.org near Ridgway. Listings can change — confirm the E0 grade at the pump if that matters for your motor. No pump prices in this Cast.

- Ouray Riverside Resort — Ouray, CO · ~13.9 mi · UNBRANDED · E0 octane 91 · 970-325-4523
- Vp Race Fuels — Montrose, CO · ~15.8 mi · VP RACING · E0 octane 91, 100 · 970-249-1819
- Maverik #616 — Montrose, CO · ~19.4 mi · MAVERIK · E0 octane 88 · 970-323-4234
- Humdingers — Montrose, CO · ~20.4 mi · PHILLIPS 66 · E0 octane 91 · 970-249-1331

Call ahead when you can — E0 availability changes. Distances are rough estimates to this water.

● LURE BOX

TOP

Small spoon or soft plastic when fish dimple on calm seams.

MID

Inline spinner and small softbait along inlet seams and points.

BOTTOM

Light jig or soft plastic slower once the sun climbs or after a cold shower.

Match size to **midges, small baitfish, and any visible surface feeders**. Size down when fish short-strike; size up when you mark bigger bait. Primary species this week is **rainbow trout**.

● RAINBOW TROUT LIFE STAGE

This midweek window is about **cool-weather rainbow trout** feeding on small bait and any surface activity during stable windows between showers. Wet, cloudy hours can help when lightning is not overhead. Match the bait you mark or see dimpling.

What's on the menu: midges, small baitfish, and any visible surface feeders are the most likely menu this week. Public hatch reports are often thin — lead with the forage above, and match the bait you mark on the graph or see dimpling on the surface.

Watch for bait dimpling on calm mornings and for birds working a point or riprap seam. Those clues beat a generic deep-only rule this week. If fish short-strike, downsize before you abandon the spot; if they flash and leave, try one size larger or a different profile on the next cast.

● ALSO HOT / ALSO IN SEASON

Brown trout and bass earn a cast on the same seams for anglers who switch. Lead with rainbow trout for this Cast.

● PRESSURE, CLARITY & BITE WINDOWS

Clarity swings with wind and showers — a stained bank can sit next to clearer main-lake rock. Start with natural colors in clearer water and switch to a darker, slower profile when a pocket muddies. Decision tree for this midweek: **low light / storm edge** = points and riprap with a search bait; **stable cloud** = slower bottom baits on the break; **lightning** = off the water, no debate. Weekday recreation is softer than weekend traffic — launch early, fish the plan, and treat crowd pressure as soft weekday recreation unless a named event shows on the calendar.

Heavy Traffic: no named trail event pulled for Mon–Wed on this water. Soft Friday recreational; Saturday–Sunday builds at popular ramps only.

● WESTERN SLOPE WET-WINDOW GAME PLAN

Expect high rain chances all three days. Fish short, safe windows hard and be willing to wait out lightning. Layers, rain shells, and a simple light-tackle kit matter more than a huge bass box this midweek.

Keep notes on which bank produced and what the graph showed — early-fall patterns often repeat the next morning if nights stay cool and the wind direction holds. If Wednesday's storms arrive early, shorten the open-water window and commit to closer structure sooner.

● ACCESS NOTES & SAFETY

Regs change by water and season. Use the live CPW licensing and regulation pages for bag limits and gear rules before you fish. Mountain weather changes fast — check park notices and radar before you trail in. Wear a PFD when the boat is on plane, keep a spotter in busy lanes, and give swimming beaches room. If lightning builds, get off exposed water early.

Trailer lights, spare PFDs, and a basic tool kit belong in the truck on any midweek hop — small failures cost more fishing time than almost any lure change. Tell someone your launch and return window when you fish alone, and leave with enough daylight for the drive if Wednesday storms run long.

● GEAR & PACING NOTES

On a wet Colorado midweek, pace matters more than covering every mile of shoreline. Fish a productive bank thoroughly, then make one deliberate move to the next point that shows bait on the graph. Keep rain shells, spare socks, and a dry bag in the truck so a soaking cell does not end the day. A calm, safe plan between storms beats a rushed lake-wide tour under lightning risk.

Match lure size to the bait you mark after each shower — cold rain can shrink the bite for an hour, then turn it back on along the same seam. If Wednesday's coverage stays high, shorten the open-water plan and commit to structure you can reach quickly from the ramp.

● LOOKING AHEAD

Next 1–3 weeks: watch the first true cool, stable autumn stretch and any weekend tournament calendars that would stack Heavy Traffic on Ridgway. As nights keep dropping, expect rainbow trout to spend more of the morning on bait and edges. Confirm mussel rules, park hours, and storm patterns as the calendar flips.

● SOURCES

NWS Grand Junction point forecast · Colorado Parks and Wildlife / Ridgway State Park · Pure-Gas.org E0 listings. Elevations, advisories, and station lists change — verify dam boards and pump grade before you go.