

Manistee River Woodpecker Creek



Fish Species

Brown Trout; Rainbow Trout

Species Description

The Manistee River below Hodenpyl Dam is annually stocked with 25,000 rainbow trout and 25,000 brown trout. The reach of the Manistee River between Hodenpyl Dam and Coates Highway (Red Bridge) provides outstanding fishing opportunities for the stocked trout. By midsummer, many of the stocked trout are at or near 10 inches in length. Larger, holdover trout are available as well, with rainbows occasionally approaching 20 inches in length. This reach is also home to some truly huge brown trout, which will even approach 30 inches in length! There are also decent numbers of walleye, smallmouth bass, and northern pike in this reach.

Geographic Coordinates

Lat:44.36615 / Long:-85.82974

Noteworthy

The Manistee River reach from Hodenpyl Dam to Coates Hwy. is approximately 11 miles in length. It is very wild, as it flows primarily through the Manistee National Forest. There are only a couple of structures along this reach. The Manistee River Trail (administered by the US Forest Service) runs along the east bank of the river, and provides campsites for backpackers or canoeists. River Road parallels the river in close proximity for the first 1.5 miles below Hodenpyl Dam, providing hike-in access at several spots. Just upstream from the Woodpecker Creek access site is a footbridge that allows anglers to cross to the east side and access the Manistee River Trail. This river reach consists of gravel riffles punctuated by large, deep holes that sometimes exceed 15 feet in depth. The river can be waded and fished from the bank, although crossing it is out of the question. Float-fishing the reach in canoes, kayaks, or drift boat is a very popular way to fish this reach. Popular techniques include flyfishing, drift fishing with bait, or casting lures like spinners or plugs.

Fishing Regulations

The Manistee River in this area is designated a Type 4 trout stream. Please refer to the Inland Trout and Salmon Stream Regulations in the current Michigan Fishing Guide.

Directions to Site

From M-115 just west of Mesick, turn southeast onto Hodenpyl Dam Road. Proceed 4.5 miles, then turn left (south) onto Hodenpyl Dam Road. Proceed 0.5 miles, then turn right (west) onto River Road. Proceed 0.5 miles to the Woodpecker Creek access site. To access the river at Hodenpyl