

ELEVEN MILE RESERVOIR

JUNE 18-19, 2021

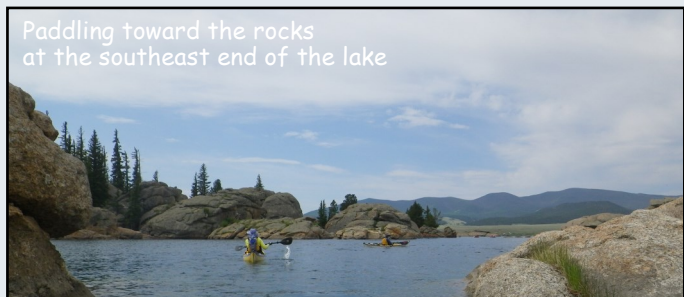
The weekend after the Seminoe paddle Anne Fiore led an exploratory trip to Eleven Mile Reservoir in southern Colorado, west of Colorado Springs. In her trip description she said, "The elevation is just under 9,000 feet so conditions may be more severe than our Front Range outings. Therefore it is important that you have good skills, especially being able to stay upright in wind, and able to access your skills in accordance to conditions."

"Plan to be dressed for the water. I have seen RMSKC people show up in shorts and T-shirts to paddle high lakes. Don't be that guy! Storms with wind, rain, and hail can come up quickly. Boaters have been caught unprepared on Eleven Mile and have been lost. It is best to bring along dry clothes, and foul weather gear to sit out bad weather on shore. A cagoule or tarp can be useful for taking cover. Also, you need to be prepared for chilly evenings."

Jay Gingrich and Jane Lewis, who live in Buena Vista and paddle there frequently added, "Yes, the weather can be ... well, interesting in June. People should definitely be dressed for the water on mountain lakes. When the wind comes up in the afternoon, as it almost always does, it is usually from the northwest or down lake."

Participants found that the 5½ mile lake, with 3,400 acres of water was beautiful, especially the rock formations in the southeast portion. They ate lunch there the first day and explored campsites that were more protected than the ones they had. They also paddled around the bird sanctuary islands, which were full of noisy water birds.

That afternoon, after they were off the water, it rained and blew hard; small motor boats were having trouble making any progress against the wind and big waves. That night it blew so hard that a tent on the upper level of the campground was leveled.



Paddling toward the rocks
at the southeast end of the lake



New member Lin Hark



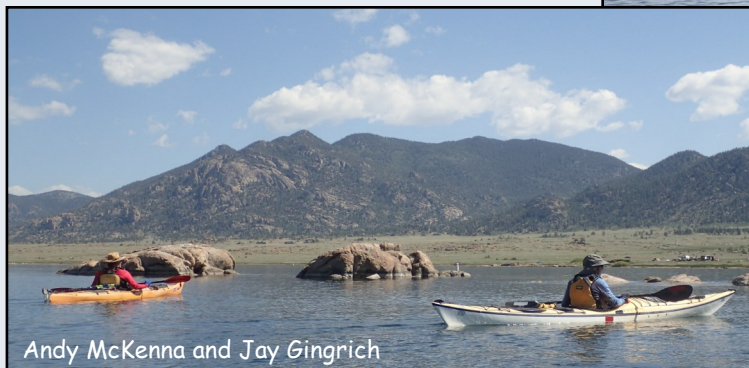
Sunday's report, from Karen Amundson: "Since Dave, Andy, and Sue missed out on the second day's action, let me tell you our story: "Five of us launched by 9:30 and paddled straight across and around a big island and then along three tiny islands. It was beautiful, though more arid than Saturday's scenery. The water was like glass, so we headed straight up the middle of the lake toward Spinney, thinking we might see where the Platte came into Eleven Mile.

"We were three-fourths of the way there when the wind started, we turned around and hustled back toward camp. This was the toughest water I have done in a sea kayak. Small white caps. Sometimes we'd go straight

with the waves, but other times we had to take a 45° or 60° to the right in order to keep away from shore and maintain a bearing to get us into our nice beach landing. I was exhausted for an hour or more afterward.

"After we got off the water we left our camp, found a State Wildlife Area called Tomahawk between Hartsel and Fairplay.

"We had our lunch on a nice log there, using the car to block the wind. It was up on a ridge looking down into a valley with the South Platte winding around between two ridges. That was refreshing."



PARTICIPANTS WERE: Trip Coordinator Anne Fiore and Gary Cage, Karen Amundson, who sent most of the photos, Jay Gingrich and Jane Lewis, Lin Hark, Sue Hughes, Dave Hustvedt and Andy McKenna. Karen's friend Bev Thomas joined the group but did not paddle.

ANNE'S NOTES ON CAMPSITES:

- We had site 258. There was not a lot of level space, just enough for two small tents. As it turned out, it was protected somewhat from the wind, though it helped to move the truck broadside so the sunshade was protected.
- Sites 261 and 262 had a good boat launch between; 262 was somewhat level, 261 was not level. Neither had much protection from the wind.
- Sites 822 and 819 in the Witchers Cove camp area seem like they would be a bit more protected from the wind. 815 and 814 there might work, too.
- The sites at Lazy Boy seemed like they might be a bit protected and you could carry your boat to the water.
- In the Rocking Chair area, sites 610- 613 are flat and in somewhat of a swale so they may be protected from the wind. Also, the shore is close enough that you can carry your boats to the water, and they are off by themselves so they would be a nice spot for a group. These would be my first choice for car camping next time.

MORE INFORMATION: There are park maps and other info on the CPW site: <https://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ElevenMile/Pages/Trails.aspx>