

Fish A Lake ...

Tunnel Reservoir

The smallest of a trio of lakes on the Little Colorado River, Tunnel Reservoir provides just one of many trout fishing opportunities in and around the lovely town of Greer.

Location – Tunnel Reservoir is located at 8,260-foot elevation 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 three 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 from each other. Each is accessed from FR 87B. Tunnel Reservoir is the first lake on the right, immediately after the turnoff on the left to Bunch Reservoir.

Description – Tunnel Reservoir is 15 acres in size, with an average depth of 10 feet. The lake is filled in the winter through a diversion off the Little Colorado River. The Arizona Game and Fish Department stocks catchable-sized rainbow trout in the spring and summer. Occasionally, a few brown trout make it into the lake from the diversion. As it is an irrigation reservoir, the lake is drawn down considerably by late summer, but this doesn't seem to affect water quality.

Amenities – The amenities at Tunnel Reservoir are all new, and include paved parking, a paved boat ramp, picnic ramadas and barrier-free toilets. There is camping at nearby Benny Creek and Rolfe Hoyer Campgrounds, both operated by the U.S. Forest Service. Benny Creek Campground can accommodate two groups of up to 24 and 32 people respectively, while 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 – Early in the season, cast spinners and small spoons such as Panther Martins, small Kastmasters and Z-rays. Fly-fishing with prince nymphs, hare's ear nymphs and peacock ladies works well either by wading or in a float tube. You could also try fishing off the bottom with night crawlers or Power Bait.

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 only. It's illegal to move live fish from one lake or stream to another because of the potential to harm to existing fisheries. Without exception, no live baitfish may be used or be in possession in Apache, Coconino or Navajo Counties.

Please pack out your trash, including discarded fishing line and other tackle.