



DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

• Visitor Services

• Open Lands

• Weed Management & Forestry

1800 South County Road 31

Loveland, CO 80537

(970) 679-4570/ (970) 679-4574 FAX

www.larimer.org/naturalresources

SCUBA DIVING AT HORSETOOTH RESERVOIR & CARTER LAKE

1. Horsetooth Reservoir: Scuba diving is permitted at the South Bay Swim Area within the designated swim area, and at Lower Sunrise. It is also allowed at Dixon, Quarry, and Orchard Coves on weekdays only. See [map](#). If you have questions, contact Horsetooth District Manager, Mark Caughlan, at (970) 498-5600.
2. Carter Lake: Scuba diving is permitted at The Saddle, and along the west shore, from a boat, in the wakeless area. See [map](#). If you have questions, contact Blue Mountain District Manager, Chris Fleming, at (970) 679-4456.
3. **Notification of scuba diving activity to the Larimer County Department of Natural Resources prior to each day's diving is required.** If you are doing an early morning dive, call the day before. For Carter Lake dives, call 679-4572; for Horsetooth Reservoir dives, call 498-5603. If there is no answer, call the Visitor Center at 679-4570 and leave a voicemail message. Visitor Center staff will forward the information to field staff. If leaving a message, it must include the dive leader's name, the type of class being conducted (if applicable), the number of divers in the group, and the anticipated time in and out of the water. This same notification process must be followed at the conclusion of the days' diving to inform the department when the group is out of the water.
4. Scuba diving alone or conducting classes without a certified instructor is prohibited. A short-term concession license is required for anyone conducting business on the reservoirs (call 679-4570 for information).
5. Every person in the water, outside a designated swimming area, using an underwater breathing device often known as scuba gear, shall display a diver's flag, having one diagonal white stripe on a red background and capable of being identified at a distance of not less than one hundred yards. Such flag shall be placed at or near the point of submergence, and shall constitute a warning that a diver is submerged and may be within a radius of one hundred feet from such a flag. Vessels shall keep a distance of one hundred feet from the diver's flag. Scuba divers shall keep a safe distance from dam outlet structures.
6. If a vessel is engaged in diving operations and as a consequence is restricted in its ability to maneuver, a rigid replica of the international code flag "A" or alpha flag shall be displayed. The flag must be not less than one meter in height and the flag must be blue and white in color.
7. The requirement that the alpha flag be displayed from a vessel restricted in its ability to maneuver does not relieve the requirement that the diver's flag also be displayed at or near the point of submergence.
8. Park entrance permits are required for each vehicle and for each boat using the park area.
9. Dogs are not allowed at the swim beaches. In all other areas, dogs must be on a leash no more than 10 feet in length. See [Regulations](#).
10. Night Diving:
 - a) It is suggested that scuba divers remain in water depth less than 40 feet.
 - b) A shore marker emitting sufficient light for scuba divers to see from the furthest point of submergence from shore is required.
 - c) The scuba diver's flag must be lit with a strobe light.
 - d) Scuba divers must have a glow flare attached to the top of their air tanks.