

Special Recreation Permit State Handbook and Forms

DORA Colorado State Parks US Forest Service

Welcome to BLM Colorado Special Recreation Permit Web site. BLM Colorado is committed to offering outstanding recreation opportunities to the public while ensuring good stewardship of public lands. Special Recreation Permits are a tool with which we accomplish this.

SRPs help BLM be responsive to publics' requests for recreation services on public lands while supporting the conservation of Colorado's fish, wildlife, and land resources. By permitting commercial companies, event promoters, and organized groups, the BLM produces opportunities and services to the public that meets public demand, provides for economic development, and meets land use planning objectives.

Who needs to have a Special Recreation Permit?

Why use a permitted outfitter?

What do you do if you find an illegal outfitter?

Colorado State Map with link to a List of Permitted Outfitters

Who Needs To Have A Special Recreation Permit?

Special Recreation Permits (SRP) are required for a variety of recreation activities on BLM public lands. They are used to ensure public health and safety, protect recreation and natural resources, and ensure the public receives a fair monetary return for certain recreation uses of BLM public lands. SRPs are required for commercial activities, competitive events, certain organized group activities and in some designated special areas.

Commercial SRPs are required for any business activities that are recreational in nature. Generally, these permits are for guided recreation activities. These include outfitters that provide visitors opportunities such as guided river trips, hunting trips, jeep tours, bicycle tours, etc. Commercial also includes other recreation business activities such as advertising and/or selling food or merchandise. Check the BLM handbook for a complete definition on commercial activities.

Competitive SRPs are required for events where 2 or more people compete in a recreational activity. A permit is also required when 1 person or team contests an established record. Check with your local field office for details.

Certain organized group events require an SRP. An organized group event is a recreation event that is not commercial and is not competitive. Examples of organized group events include but are not limited to scout campouts, club rides or hikes, church or company picnics, or large family reunions.

To determine if an SRP is required for organized groups, the authorized officer at a field office evaluates a proposal using the following criteria:

1. Will the event create conflicts with other users?
2. Will the event cause resource damage?
3. Will the event be inconsistent with BLM recreation management objectives?
4. Will the event create unacceptable risks to public health and safety?

If the answer to all the questions is no, the authorized officer may determine that the event does not require a permit. If the answer to any of these questions is yes, and the activity requires additional management, a permit may be required. The decision on whether these activities require a permit is made by each individual field office. Check with your local field office for additional information. If an

organized group permit is not required, a Letter of Agreement may be issued at no charge to an organized group. Check with the local field office.

Certain special areas require a permit for individual recreation users. Special areas include any area that has a special designation with specific management objectives. Examples of special areas include wilderness areas, national conservation areas, areas of critical environmental concern, and special recreation management areas.

For example, a permit may be required for private boaters on a river section in a designated wilderness area. Some special area SRPs do not have limits on the number of permits issued, some do; some do not have fees associated with them, some do. Check with your local field office for details on whether special area SRPs apply.

Why Use A Permitted Outfitter?

BENEFITS OF USING PERMITTED COMMERCIAL RECREATION SERVICE PROVIDERS

Outfitters and river guides must be registered and licensed for the taking of game and fish, and bonded and insured to operate in the State of Colorado. In addition, they must also have a permit to operate on BLM and National Forest public lands and related waters. Other commercial recreation service providers such as guided hiking, horse tours, jeep tours who operate on public lands must also be insured and have a permit to operate on BLM and National Forest lands.

Using a licensed and permitted commercial service provider while on public lands not only ensures your recreation service provider is legal, it also assists the visitor to know that their provider has met all the required standards, is familiar with all regulations and laws of the local area regarding outdoor activities and wildlife, and has the professional knowledge and skills to offer a safe recreational experience.

If your outfitter, river guide, or commercial service provider is operating illegally, you run the risk of having your hunt or trip canceled in progress. If you are hunting or fishing, your fish or game can be confiscated if your outfitter or guide is arrested. Knowingly contracting with an illegal outfitter, river guide, or service provider could result in felony convictions for all parties involved. You may not have legal recourse if you are injured or if your service provider does not provide the services you purchased.

Things to ask to be sure your service provider is properly registered:

If it involves the taking of fish and/or game, are you registered with the Colorado Office of Outfitters Registration? If so, what is your Registration number? Will we be hunting or fishing on public lands or related waters at any time?

If so, do you have a Bureau of Land Management or U.S Forest Service permit?

If it involves river running, are you registered with Colorado State Parks?

If so, what is your Rivers Outfitter License number?

Will we be running rivers that are on or through public lands at any time?

If so, do you have a Bureau of Land Management or U.S Forest Service permit?

Other Indications of Illegal providers:

You are not provided a written contract describing what services you purchased.

Service provider counsels you not to talk to State or Federal officers or asks you to say you're just friends or family hunting/fishing/recreating together.

Protect Yourself:

Verify your outfitter's registration if the activity involves the taking of fish or game by contacting the Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies at: www.dora.state.co.us/outfitters/licensing.htm

Verify your river guides license by contacting Colorado State Parks at:

www.parks.state.co.us/Boating/RiverOutfitterLicensing

If any portion of your activity takes place on BLM or National Forest lands, contact the local BLM Field Office or Ranger District.

What Do You Do If You Find An Illegal Outfitter?**Things You Can Do If You Suspect Illegal Outfitting Or Poaching Activity**

(You can remain anonymous.)

- Gather as much information as possible. Write down who, what, when, and where. Record the date, time, location information, vehicle license plate numbers, color, description, how many people, etc.
 - Report suspected illegal activities to your local BLM Field Office or USFS Ranger District
 - If activity involves taking of game, call toll free Operation Game Thief: 1-800-332-4155 or game.thief@state.co.us .
 - You may be entitled to a reward offered by Operation Game Thief or the Colorado Outfitters Association.
-

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING for The Coordination and enhancement of Services to and by the Outfitting Industry in Colorado on National Forest System, BLM and State Public Lands
