



COLORADO

Parks and Wildlife

Department of Natural Resources

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

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CORRECTION: Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area seeks comment on Management Plan revision

This press release has been updated to reflect a corrected address for the open-house meeting in Canon City.

SALIDA, Colo. - Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Forest Service are seeking public input on the management plan revision for recreation use along the Arkansas River. The Arkansas River Headwaters Area Management Plan provides a framework for managing numerous and often conflicting recreation activities along the 152-mile river corridor. The public scoping period started on Jan. 11 and ends on Feb. 12, 2016.

The Arkansas River is the most commercially rafted river in the United States, drawing nearly 240,000 (1) commercial boaters and resulting in an economic impact of more than \$60 million (2). The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area is also popular for camping, wildlife watching, gold panning and numerous other river-related recreation activities, including its Gold Medal Trout Fishery.

"It is important for the public to engage in the Arkansas River Headwaters Area Management Plan because it provides a long-term framework for recreation decisions on the river," said Rob White, CPW Park Manager. "Many of the complex natural resource issues we deal with have long-term consequences. This planning effort enables the AHRA partnership to develop a lasting framework for recreation management decisions."

CPW, BLM, and USFS are inviting the public to a series of meetings to help guide the AHRA partnership as they develop the AHRA Management Plan. The open-house meetings will run from 5:45 p.m. - 8 p.m. and will feature an introduction at 6 p.m. The meetings will also feature a focus-group style station to help the AHRA partnership understand why you value current recreation opportunities on the river. The meeting schedule is:

- Buena Vista (Jan. 25, 5:45-8 p.m., Buena Vista Community Center, 715 E. Main St.)
- Canon City (Jan. 26, 5:45-8 p.m., Harrison Elementary/Middle School, 920 Field St.)
- Colorado Springs (Jan. 27, 5:45-8 p.m., CPW Southeast Regional Office, 4255 Sinton Rd.)
- Denver (Jan. 28, 5:45-8 p.m., REI Flagship Store, 1416 Platte St.)

Based on public comments received during the scoping period, the AHRA partnership will develop a series of alternatives, which will be available for public review. Once those alternatives are revised based on public feedback, a draft environmental assessment will be published for public input (estimated Fall 2016). A final plan is expected to be signed in early 2017.

The current AHRA Management Plan can be found

here: <http://cpw.state.co.us/placetoqo/parks/ArkansasHeadwatersRecreationArea/Pages/publications.aspx>

For more information please contact AHRA at 719-539-7289 or to submit a comment visit the AHRA website at: <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ArkansasHeadwatersRecreationArea/Pages/default.aspx>

Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, be advised that your entire comment -- including your personal identifying information -- may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold from public review your personal identifying information, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

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The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area is recognized as one of the nation's most popular locations for whitewater rafting and kayaking on the Arkansas River - the most commercially rafted river in the United States - and is noted for its world class fishery. The area is collaboratively managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. AHRA consists of 45 recreation sites including 6 camping areas, 26 boat ramps and 18 developed facilities. The 152-mile long corridor sees roughly 800,000 visitors annually.

1 - Colorado Parks and Wildlife - Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area 2014 Annual

Report: http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ArkansasHeadwatersRecreationArea/Documents/2014EOY5_21_15.pdf

2 - Colorado River Outfitters Association - Commercial River Use in the State of Colorado 2014 Year End Report: <http://www.croa.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2014-Commercial-Rafting-Use-Report.pdf>

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CPW is an enterprise agency, relying primarily on license sales, state parks fees and registration fees to support its operations, including: 42 state parks and more than 350 wildlife areas covering approximately 900,000 acres, management of fishing and hunting, wildlife watching, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education. CPW's work contributes approximately \$6 billion in total economic impact annually throughout Colorado.

