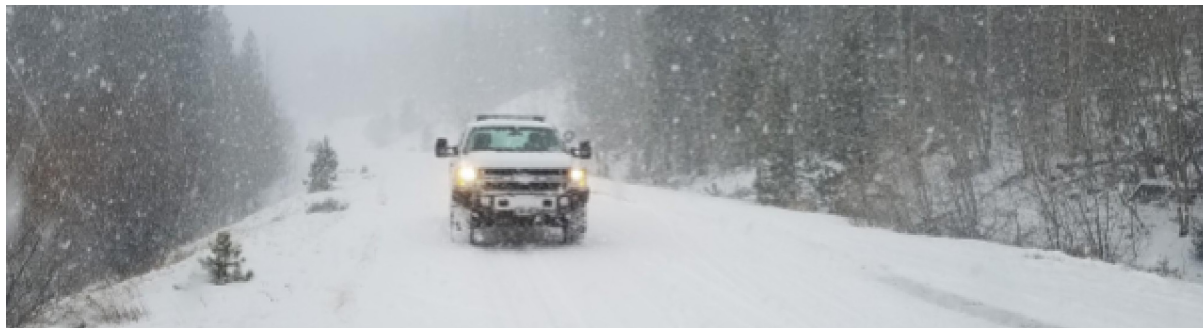


# 2018

## Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Annual Report



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# 2018 OVERVIEW

The Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Annual Report recaps park activity for the period of January 1 through December 31.

## Water and Visitation

An early warm season and resulting run-off caused an early peak in water flow. In late June, July, and through August 15th, Pueblo Water (2,652 af), the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) (13,103 af), Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) (1,000 af), and Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW) (350 af), all released water as part of the Voluntary Flow Management Program (VFMP) to support both the boating community and fish health (17,105 af Total).

## Revenue Comparison

		2018	2017	% of Change
Camping		\$ 242,582.34	\$ 152,560.00	59.01%
Commercial Agreements		\$ 911,534.23	\$ 899,684.46	1.32%
Donation		\$ 62.51	(not reported)	n/a
Gift Certificates		\$ 706.00	(not reported)	n/a
Park Passes (previously divided into Annual, Aspen, Daily)		\$ 179,517.54	\$ 31,800.00	4.87%
			\$ 12,240.00	
			\$ 127,134.00	
Registrations		\$ 40,605.80	\$ 42,650.00	-5.03%
Penalty Assessments	previously "Misc Revenues"	\$ 594.00	\$ 17,809.00	86.76%
Licenses		\$ 29,229.88		
Search and Rescue		\$ 81.00		
Special Activities		\$ 3,355.59		
		<b>\$ 1,408,268.89</b>	<b>\$ 1,283,877.46</b>	<b>9.69%</b>

Chart compares a new method of computation and reporting in 2018 vs 2017 numbers in the historical format.

## Recreational Use Within the AHRA

	2018 people	2017 people	% of change
<b>General Activities</b>	<b>729,996</b>		
Gold Panning	3,356	37,839	179.31%
Hunting	438		
Other	438		
Visitor Center	101,458		
Special Events	312,153		-
Sightseeing	312,153	308,305	1.25%
<b>Interpretation/Education</b>	<b>93,095</b>		
Environmental Education	76,473	19,764	371.03%
Non-Personal Interpretation	8,773		
Personal Interpretation	7,849		
<b>Picnicking</b>	<b>51,355</b>		
Group Picnic	7,849	48,864	5.10%
Picnic	43,506		
<b>Trail Use</b>	<b>46,768</b>		
Biking	13,156	26,355	77.45%
Hiking	22,880		
Horse Riding	4,634		
OHV Riding	6,098		
<b>Water Activities</b>	<b>415,098</b>		
Boat Fishing	8,298	5,570	48.98%
Fishing	97,060	98,113	-1.07%
River Use Commercial*	276,958	282,784	-2.06%
River Use Private	32,782	25,619	27.96%
	<b>1,360,363</b>	<b>912,617</b>	<b>49.06%</b>

Chart compares a new method of computation and reporting in 2018 vs 2017 numbers in the historical format.

\*Actual count: includes guide, trainees and clients

# SPECIAL ACTIVITY AGREEMENTS (SAAS)

## Special Activity Agreements Approved in 2018

Applicant Group Name	Event Type	Location
Timberline Events	Race	Railroad Bridge
Down River Equipment	Equip Demo	Browns, Numbers, Milk Run
Colorado WW Training Camp	Training	River access points
Red 5 Drones	Filming	Various
Paddlefest	Festival	Buena Vista
3P Pole Pedal Paddle	Race	Monarch Pass to Salida
CCVB Filming w/ AA	Filming	Bighorn Sheep Canyon
Jake Mills Productions	Filming	CPO
FIBArk	Race	Salida
Lake County Search and Rescue	SRT	Ark near Clear Creek Res
FIBArk Comm Paddling Center	Race	384A
FIBArk	Festival	Salida
Royal Gorge Whitewater Festival	Festival	Canon City
JC Films	Filming	Bighorn Sheep Canyon
There Be Dragons	Filming	BV - Paddlefest
NOMAD	Race	Big Bend parking lot
Trans Rockies	Race	RR Bridge campground
Spring Canyon Retreat Conf. Center	Filming; Photo	Browns Canyon NM
Breckenridge Tourism	Filming	Browns Canyon NM
Jake Mills	Filming	Pinnacle Rock
The Public Works	Photo	Vallie Bridge
Matt McDonough	SRT	Spikebuck
FIBArk Down-River Canoe/Kayak race	Race	Salida - Rincon
Fremont Fall Heritage Days	Vehicle Tour	Bighorn Sheep Canyon
CPO - Service/Trail construction	Construction	CPO
CMC Photo Shoot	Photo; Drone	Hwy 24 & Road 55

# AHRA WORK SECTIONS

## Leadership Team

AHRA is organized into work sections for the purpose of daily operations. Each of these sections has specific responsibilities and is staffed by both permanent and temporary employees who are designated specific job assignments. A large portion of the visible field-work is completed by our many dedicated temporary employees. In 2018, AHRA employed 27 temporary and 7 permanent staff members.

The following permanent staff members supervised the sections noted below:

Administration	Rose Bayless* and Jennifer Crawford
Senior Ranger	Stewart Pappenfort*, Andrew Maddox*, and Glenn Cottone
Land Ranger Supervisor	Glenn Cottone* and (vacant)
River Ranger Supervisor	Andrew Maddox* and Tappan Brown
Commercial Agreements	John Kreski
Maintenance, Facility	Kenneth Lindbloom
Maintenance, Site	John Fell* and Steve Wyatt
Management	Rob White (CPW), Tom Waters (CPW), John Nahomenuk (BLM)*, and Kalem Lenard (BLM)

\* Left/retired/promoted from position

We would like to extend a heartfelt “thank you” to three of our long-standing employees who retired in 2018: Rose Bayless, Stew Pappenfort, and John “Nomi” Nahomenuk. Your work in making our park what it is today will not soon be forgotten.

## ADMINISTRATION



The administrative section was lead by Rose Bayless until her retirement in April. This vacancy was filled by Jennifer Crawford, previously a seasonal with AHRA.

Responsibilities for the administrative section include greeting visitors, answering phone inquiries, completing sales, handling field revenue, generating administrative reports, and maintaining park-related web and social media pages.

Among the items processed/sold are CPW licenses, registrations, and park passes; BLM fuelwood permits, Christmas tree permits, and mining permits; as well as books, maps, and other items provided for sale by the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA).

Each year, the administrative team organizes and puts on several activities and events including Junior Rangers and Tots on Tuesdays youth programs, Clean Up Green Up, and various campground and environmental education programs. On behalf of CPW and AHRA, we'd like to extend a "thank you" to our many volunteers who donate their time and travel miles to help with these and other opportunities throughout the year.

At the end of 2017, AHRA's Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) and AHRA leadership team attended training for the implementation of a new point-of-sale system which integrated the parks and wildlife systems into one. This new system was put into production effective January 1st, 2018. The administrative team has done a phenomenal job navigating this new system, despite the many glitches IPAWS presented to staff upon its implementation. We hope that it will assist us in providing improved customer service in years to come.

## Community Events

Event Name	Event Type	Location
Cañon City Whitewater Festival	Boating Competition	Cañon City
FIBArk	Boating Competition	Salida
Paddlefest	Boating Competition	Buena Vista
Water Fest	Conservation	Salida & Buena Vista
Holiday Open House	Education, Public	Salida
3rd Grade Field Day	Education, Youth	Salida
4th Grade Raft Trip	Education, Youth	Salida
Conservation Camp	Education, Youth	Buena Vista
Career Fairs	Education, Youth	Salida, BV, & Leadville
Ecology Field Trip	Education, Youth	Buena Vista
Service Learning	Education, Youth	Salida
Junior Rangers Program	Education, Youth	Salida, BV, & Leadville
Fremont Fall Heritage Festival	Hike	Cañon City
Interpretive Hikes	Hike	Multiple Locations
Clean Up Green Up	Impact Mitigation	Multiple Locations
Bike Your Park Day	Trails and Cycling	Hayden Meadows
Project Healing Waters	Veteran Fishing	Rincon
Gathering of the Guides	Workshop	Salida



## Volunteer Hours

Opportunity Name	Hours
Bluebird Project	65
Cleanup-Greenup*	750
Campground Host	2,104
Citizens Task Force (CTF)*	420
Count Crew	25
Naturalist/Environmental Education	510
Poncha Springs Visitor Center Assistance	1,057
Rationing and Agreement Committee (RAAC)*	150
Special Projects	15
Visitor Center/Office Support	3
Statewide Raptor Monitoring Program w/in AHRA	320
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>5,419</b>

\* Numbers adjusted to more accurately reflect actual vs reported hours.

Thank you to all of our volunteers for their contributed time and energy!

The table above reflects only those hours that were reported in our visitor database. We'd like to thank the hundreds of individuals who assisted in our river-wide Clean Up Green Up this year. Your effort represents hundreds of hours of unclaimed work in keeping our river clean.

A special shout out to Bob Hickey, our interpretive geologist and hike leader who reached a lifetime total of 3,000+ volunteer hours for volunteer opportunities with CPW. We sure do appreciate you, Bob!

## COMMERCIAL AGREEMENTS



The Special Use Agreement Section (John P. Kreski) exists to accurately and efficiently administer AHRA Special Use Agreements as well as administer the Rationing Plan for Commercial Boating on the Arkansas River within the AHRA. AHRA had 58 commercial contractors in 2018. Permitted contractors provided various combinations of activities such as whitewater rafting and kayaking, float fishing, walk & wade fishing, shuttle services, rock climbing, hiking, Mt. biking, food vendor, and photo/video imaging to over 221,120 paying clients in 2018. In 2018, the overall commercial use of paying clients at AHRA decreased by 2.26% as compared to 2017. Total Gross Receipts outfitters received from all commercial operations within the AHRA in 2018 was 1.49% above receipts received in 2017. This total includes revenue from total gross receipts and *does not* include administrative and assessment fees. John manages the commercial contractors who contribute a total of \$911,543 in use fees. The Arkansas River within the AHRA remains one of, if not the most commercially rafted rivers in the United States.

John also administers the AHRA Rationing Plan that regulates commercial boat per day (bpd) carrying capacities on thirteen different river sections. In 2018, river sections had commercial bpd carrying capacities ranging from 360 bpd to 10 bpd with differing section specific boating restrictions.

In addition, John develops data control methods and commercial use verification for Contractor Special Use Agreement compliance. Assisting in this program is a two person temporary Count Crew responsible for collecting Spot Checks and maintaining an electronic database for Trip Log comparison. This section also lost one temporary Rationing Program Assistant, Jennifer Crawford, who was promoted to the Administrative Assistant for AHRA.

### Commercial Special Use Agreements by Type

Activity	2018	2017
Boating	48	48
Imaging	27	28
Walk and Wade Fishing	15	15
Shuttle Services	7	7
Rock Climbing, Hiking, and Mtn Biking	3	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>102</b>

## Rationed Days by Section

Section	2018	2017
1c: The Numbers	2	3
2b: Browns Canyon	6	5
2d: Big Bend to Salida	7	9
3: Salida to Vallie Bridge	20	27
4a: Vallie Bridge to Texas Creek	13	17
5: The Royal Gorge	10	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>71</b>

## RANGERS

The ranger section, led by Glenn Cottone, patrols all portions, both land and river, of AHRA throughout the year. The section is divided into three sections: land, river, and off-highway vehicle.

AHRA was down two full-time PM IIs (Park Rangers), therefore, if ever there were a good year to have a low snowpack and resulting river flow, last summer was it. Our seasonal land and river rangers were exceptional last summer. They all did a great job with less than normal supervision.

**Land Rangers**, a team of five temporary staff assigned to land-based operations, are responsible for managing visitor use in the busy recreation sites and campgrounds, and for collecting field revenue which is critical to AHRA operations. These vital field staff are the primary personnel our visitors come into contact with during the summer months.

**River Rangers**, a team of six temporary staff led by (Andrew Maddox and) Tappan Brown, specialize in whitewater boating activities on the river. Since the Arkansas River is one of, if not the most commercially rafted rivers in the United States, much of the river rangers' time is spent administering the State River Outfitter Licensing Program. These rangers actively monitor river flows, mitigate hazards, provide whitewater search and rescue support, inspect commercial and private boat trips for

adequate safety equipment, investigate boat accidents, and provide expert river education to AHRA visitors in the field.

**Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Rangers** are part of a four-person multi-agency trail crew working in the Upper Arkansas River Valley. The trail crew members represent Colorado Parks & Wildlife and the U.S. Forest Service. Funding for this collaborative effort comes from an OHV grant, funded by OHV registrations. The trail crew maintains trails and OHV routes, provides input on new OHV routes, and enforces OHV registration and equipment requirements in the San Isabel National Forest as well as at the Big Bend OHV Track. The trail crew promotes motorized recreation by encouraging safe riding practices and Stay the Trail and Tread Lightly guidelines. The trail crew also works with local OHV riding clubs to promote volunteer opportunities by means of the U.S. Forest Service Adopt a Trail program.

All **Full-Time Rangers** (Park Manager, Operations Manager, and River Ranger Lead) are certified Level I Colorado Peace Officers. All AHRA temporary law enforcement rangers have limited commissions. These Title 33 officers only enforce Colorado Parks and Wildlife laws and regulations. When necessary, all rangers can take appropriate law enforcement action necessary to protect our visitors, preserve the resource and ensure compliance with other administrative regulations. While law enforcement may not be the primary function of any ranger's job, it is an important and necessary responsibility of all rangers. It should also be noted that AHRA rangers work closely with other local, state and federal peace officers and resource managers in the performance of their duties.

In the winter, the full-time rangers continue to patrol AHRA sites along the river corridor. Winter search and rescue activities usually amount to assisting other agencies with motorists that end up in the river. Full-time rangers also conduct snowmobile patrols as well as avalanche rescue activities. Additionally, AHRA rangers manage three snowmobile trail-grooming contracts and patrol snowmobile trails on Bureau of Land Management, National Forest and other public lands in Chaffee, Lake, Gunnison and Saguache counties as part of the Colorado Parks & Wildlife Snowmobile Program responsibilities. Winter is also the ideal time for Rangers to complete most of their training and recertification, to organize and evaluate programs and plan for the upcoming high-use season.

## Investigated and Reported Incidents

	2018	2017
Reportable Commerical Boat Accidents	16	24
Private Boat Accidents	1	4
Commercial Non-Boating Accidents	0	4
Private Non-Boating Accidents	0	0
Medical Assists	0	3
Inter-Agency Assists / SAR	1	7
Vandalism / Theft	1	5
Law Enforcement	1	5
Other Incidents	2	4
Fatalities Investigated (included in totals above)	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>56</b>

## Citations Issued

	2018	2017
Pass / Permit Violations	35	352*
Resource Protection Violations	4	9
Public Safety Violations	3	7
Records / Reporting Violations	0	0
Commercial Outfitter Citations (included in totals above)	2	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>368</b>

\* Includes Notice of Violation citations (windshield citations)

## BUILDING MAINTENANCE



Building Maintenance is lead by Kenneth Lindbloom who supports a team of five seasonal staff. Their primary role is to maintain all AHRA-managed facilities throughout the river corridor: keeping restrooms cleaned, sites picked up, and ensuring that structures and signage are upkept.

Some noteworthy projects completed by this crew in 2018 include the following: Maintenance staff worked to improve AHRA-managed sites by installing channel iron campsite markers in AHRA campsites; designed, manufactured, and installed solar lights in new three-panel sign frames at site entrances; designed and installed custom signage for use throughout the park; and worked with 32 Dept of Corrections labor crew volunteers, spending a total of 160 hours cleaning up sites in preparation for summer visitors. Ken and his team assisted Xcel Energy with the construction of the Arkansas River Ranch osprey bird nest platform. In hopes of conserving energy and reducing cost, Ken initiated a project to convert the Salida Visitor Center and Maintenance Shop to LED lighting.

## SITE MAINTENANCE



Steve Wyatt (and his predecessor John Fell) along with his single seasonal employee work to improve, maintain, and develop sites in those areas managed by the AHRA. Some of site maintenance's responsibilities include managing AHRA's vehicle fleet, maintaining parking lots and campsites, building new boat ramps and other site features, and fabricating custom recreation site amenities for use throughout the park.

The AHRA welcomed Steve (back) to the team as a full-timer in September and he's hit the ground running. In the months he's been here, Steve has attended trainings to support him in his new position; has serviced and repaired AHRA's vehicle fleet including tractors, trailers, and four-wheeler; and has gotten a handle on AHRA's current and upcoming projects.

Some noteworthy projects completed by Steve and his employee include the completion of pay tube installation at AHRA fee sites; custom modification of pay tube mechanics; rock work at Collegiate Peaks overlook; and the custom creation and installation of an evidence locker.

## MANAGEMENT



Park Manager, Rob White, and Operations Manager, Tom Waters oversee and coordinate the daily visitor service and maintenance operations and overall programs and projects for the entire work unit described above. They are the communication link between field staff and the Southeast Region Office in Colorado Springs and Colorado Parks and Wildlife offices in Denver and Littleton. They work closely with the Bureau of Reclamation, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy, Pueblo Water, Colorado Springs Utilities, Arkansas River Outfitters Association (AROA), and Trout Unlimited (TU) to ensure the success of the Voluntary Flow Management Program (VFMP). They also work closely with the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service to ensure that management plan goals and directives are being met and to implement the Upper Arkansas River Voluntary Flow Management Program (VFMP) each year. Most importantly, they work with the public to provide the many community and resource wide coordination activities and efforts needed throughout the 152-mile river corridor and continue to develop and enhance communication and cooperation among visitors as well as current and potential partners.

This year, as in past years, AHRA rangers, count crew and administrative staff continued to maintain the essential quality of management practices and public services that help conserve the Arkansas River and its unique features for everyone's enjoyment.