

2000 Annual Report of the ARKANSAS HEADWATERS RECREATION AREA

Welcome to Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area's (AHRA) Millennium Annual Report. In the past our annual reports have been "End of Season" reports. The reporting period for these seasonal reports was April 1 through September 30, covering only the high-use season of AHRA. Because AHRA is a year round recreation area, we have changed the reporting period to cover the entire year, from January 1 through December 31 of the year 2000. Please note this change when comparing statistics from prior reports to those presented in this report. In many areas, such as boat accidents for example, statistics are directly comparable since virtually all boat accidents occur between April 1 and September 30 anyway. In other areas statistics are significantly different, reflecting our winter operation.

The year 2000 was an important year for the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. This marked the beginning of a new decade of the partnership's management of recreation on the Arkansas River, one of the most popular and important outdoor recreation rivers in the country. Operating under the original *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan* (ARRMP), the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and Colorado State Parks forged a groundbreaking intergovernmental agreement in 1989 proving that, with the support of the public users, this kind of partnership can be very successful. Building on the original ARRMP, a new management plan was developed during the year 2000 to guide the AHRA into the new millennium.

Perhaps the most exciting change with the new Management Plan is the addition of two new partners to the team, the U.S. Forest Service and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. While AHRA has worked with these key agencies in the past, having them as active management partners will contribute tremendously to the effectiveness of the recreation area. The four active partners bring a depth of natural resource knowledge and management skills to the AHRA that can only enhance the resource protection and recreational opportunities already offered.

Recreational Use of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area 10 Year Comparison					
ACTIVITY	1990 PEOPLE	1999 PEOPLE	2000 PEOPLE	99 TO '00 % INCREASE	90 TO '00 % INCREASE
SIGHTSEEING	68,743	247,598	266,676	7.7%	287.9%
FISHING					
Shore	14,102	50,367	66,426	31.9%	371.0%
Boat	853	6,538	6,631	1.4%	677.4%
PICNICKING	14,044	34,524	44,160	27.9%	214.4%
BOATING					
Commercial*	178,690	293,848	301,152	2.5%	68.5%
Private	19,043	28,550	28,105	-1.6%	47.6%
OTHER	6,432	39,793	26,445	-33.5%	311.1%
INTERPRETIVE	(1992) 1,216	10,781	11,574	7.4%	851.8%
CAMPING	8,748	26,618	22,973	-13.7%	162.6%
TOTAL	311,871	738,617	774,142	4.8%	148.2%

* May include participants in multiple activities

Commercial river rafting on the Arkansas River in the year 2000 had an economic impact of \$59,171,055 according to *Commercial River Use in the State Of Colorado 1988-2000* published by The Colorado River Outfitters Association.

AHRA stretches nearly 150 miles from Leadville to Lake Pueblo along the Arkansas River. Although it has not grown in length, there has been steady growth in terms of total visitation to the area. AHRA was established to assist in management of this increased recreational use throughout the valley and to maintain public facilities along the river corridor. AHRA has been anything but stagnant. Revenues, in the form of annual and daily individual parks passes, camping permits, recreational vehicle registrations, and special use concession agreement fees, continue to remain strong so as to provide for budgetary needs for operation, maintenance and development.

AHRA YEAR 2000 REVENUES						
Year 2000	Park Passes	Camping Permits/ Reservations	Registrations	Special Use Agreements	Other: Donations, Misc.	TOTALS
Month						
January	\$1,468.00	\$14.00	\$447.25	\$15,436.13	\$0.00	\$17,365.38
February	\$893.76	\$44.00	\$508.25	\$337.70	\$36.50	\$1,820.21
March	\$1,575.52	\$309.10	\$934.75	\$10,157.63	\$42.50	\$13,019.50
April	\$4,295.39	\$1,172.00	\$1,463.75	\$93,779.05	\$25.35	\$100,735.54
May	\$11,157.77	\$5,954.78	\$1,438.50	\$48,675.87	\$9.75	\$67,236.67
June	\$18,388.70	\$10,194.60	\$2,180.50	\$82,837.35	\$0.00	\$113,601.15
July	\$16,896.51	\$11,071.35	\$2,490.75	\$0.00	\$252.00	\$30,710.61
August	\$9,014.01	\$7,049.80	\$1,514.75	\$0.00	\$161.00	\$17,739.56
September	\$3,760.34	\$3,597.24	\$879.25	\$17,268.94	\$52.00	\$25,557.77
October	\$1,161.49	\$924.00	\$1,209.75	\$39,299.40	\$10.00	\$42,604.64
November	\$599.80	\$341.12	\$1,311.50	\$237,886.24	\$8.51	\$240,147.17
December	\$527.64	\$16.00	\$826.00	\$8,286.82	-\$1.00	\$9,655.46
TOTALS	\$69,738.93	\$40,687.99	\$15,205.00	\$553,965.13	\$596.61	\$680,193.66

AHRA YEAR 2000 EXPENDITURES							
Year 2000	Personnel	Operating	Utilities	Capital Equipment	Controlled Maintenance	Grants & Misc. Accts.	TOTALS
Month							
January	\$40,257.11	\$5,561.38	\$616.81	\$0.00	\$6,391.58	\$22,190.74	\$75,017.62
February	\$39,363.47	\$5,147.07	\$535.54	\$3,148.44	\$3,172.96	\$1,384.06	\$52,751.54
March	\$39,109.73	\$8,697.92	\$499.35	\$0.00	\$3,434.45	\$780.00	\$52,521.45
April	\$43,454.53	\$10,111.52	\$2,972.87	\$0.00	\$759.00	\$219.42	\$57,517.34
May	\$67,233.89	\$10,217.96	\$1,034.49	\$967.49	\$8,813.83	\$6,388.96	\$94,656.62
June	\$103,508.81	\$17,249.84	\$3,892.65	\$998.46	\$13,155.81	\$19,336.45	\$158,142.02
July	\$62,914.73	\$13,241.65	\$4,008.87	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,688.47	\$81,853.72
August	\$62,490.70	\$9,881.73	\$3,159.39	\$119.00	\$524.03	\$1,566.49	\$77,741.34
September	\$62,946.10	\$9,506.53	\$712.89	\$496.31	\$2,221.35	\$2,855.91	\$78,739.09
October	\$51,661.62	\$4,639.59	\$900.55	\$611.14	\$4,507.85	\$947.60	\$63,268.35
November	\$42,240.80	\$10,978.27	\$471.69	\$0.00	\$120.00	\$0.00	\$53,810.76
December	\$36,962.20	\$4,668.20	\$4,739.56	\$273.55	\$884.52	\$5,267.87	\$52,795.90
TOTALS	\$652,143.69	\$109,901.66	\$23,544.66	\$6,614.39	\$43,985.38	\$62,625.97	\$898,815.75

Throughout the first ten years of the AHRA, the **Citizens Task Force** (CTF) has been an instrumental force behind the success of the partnership. This advisory committee meets five times a year and helps advise the management team with many critical and diverse issues facing the recreation area. During the next ten years, the Task Force will continue to play an important role in the partnership. The CTF is composed of two representative members from each of the following AHRA constituency groups:

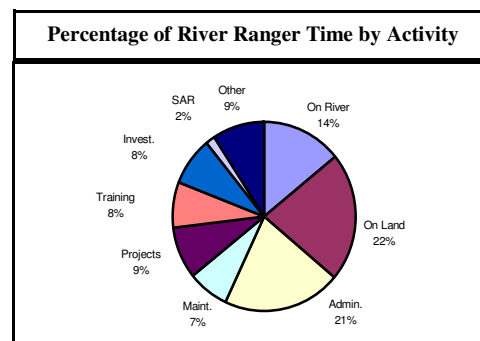
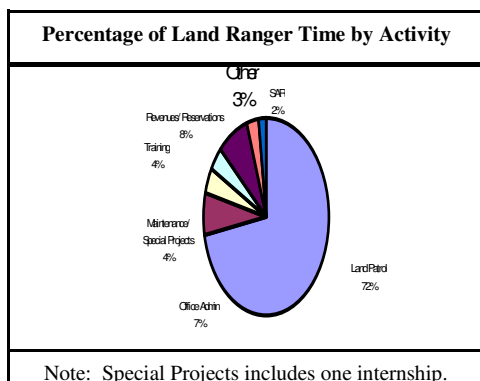
<p>Anglers Commercial Permittees Environmentalists Water Users</p>	<p>Private Boaters Local Governments River Front Property Owners</p>
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For the purpose of daily operation, AHRA is organized into work “sections”. Each of these sections has specific responsibilities and is staffed by both full time and seasonal employees with specific job assignments. The visible field work (the real work) is really accomplished by the many dedicated seasonal employees at AHRA. In the busy season, AHRA employs over 30 seasonals. Each work section is supervised by the following full-time staff members and their primary areas of responsibility include:

<p>Maintenance - Rangers -</p> <p>Administration - Commercial Agreements- Recreation Planning - Management -</p>	<p>Harry Singleton (Parks) Casey Swanson, JW Wilder, and Stew Pappenfort (Parks) Rose Bayless (Parks) Mike Walker (Parks) John Nahomenuk (BLM) Robert White and Dave Spencer (Parks), Dave Taliaferro (BLM)</p>
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The Ranger Section patrols all sections of the AHRA throughout the year. The three full-time staff members typically hire up to twelve seasonal staff members to assist them with their patrol responsibility. Seasonal rangers assigned to land-based operations are responsible for managing visitor use in the busy recreation sites and campgrounds and for collecting field revenue critical to AHRA operations. Because the seasonal staff covers two shifts per day, seven days a week, and are assigned to patrol either upstream or downstream of Salida each day, these vital field staff are the primary resource our visitors come into contact with during the summer months.

Five of the AHRA seasonal rangers specialize in whitewater boating activities on the river. Known as river rangers, they patrol whitewater sections of the Arkansas otherwise inaccessible to AHRA staff. These rangers actively monitor river flows and hazards, provide whitewater search and rescue support, inspect commercial and private boat trips for adequate safety equipment and operations, investigate boat accidents and provide expert river education to AHRA visitors in the field.



Investigated and Reported Incidents for the Year 2000

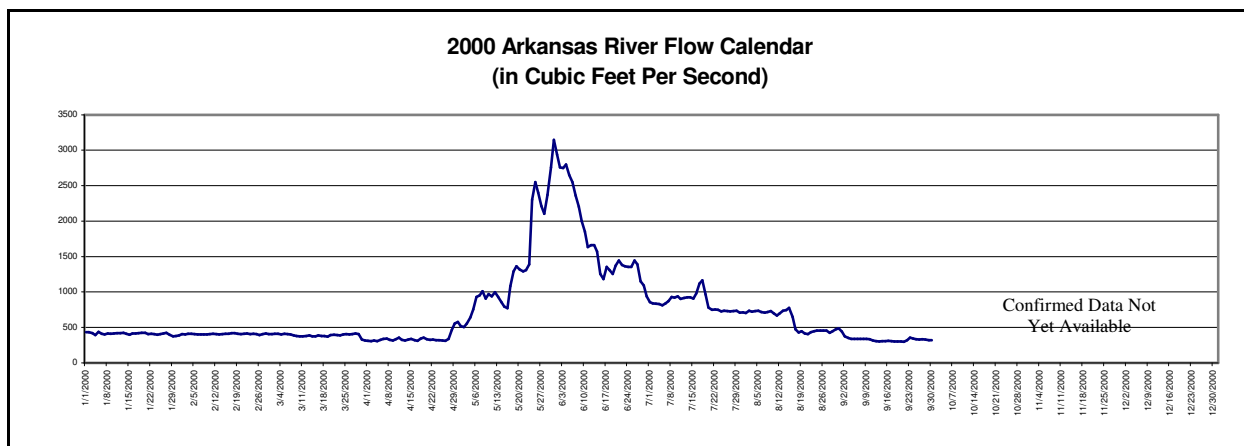
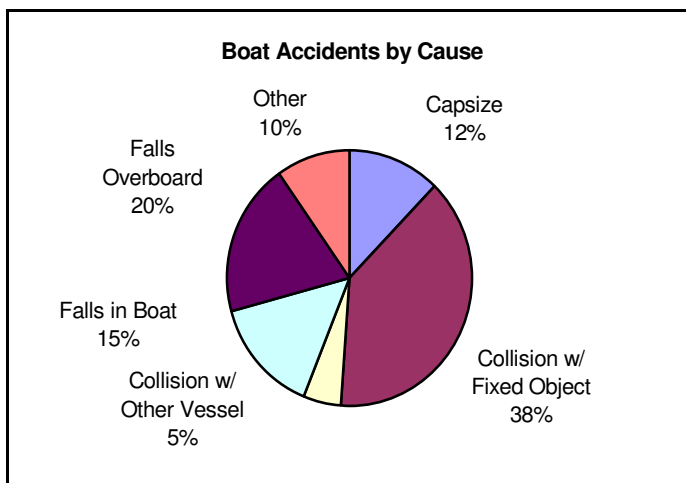
	1999	2000
Reportable* Commercial Boat Accidents.....	60.....	38
Other Commercial Accidents.....	2.....	13
Other Non-Commercial Accidents.....	2.....	8
Interagency Assists / Search and Rescue	2.....	3
Vandalism / Theft	0.....	7
Hazard Removal / HAZMAT	0.....	3
Other	16.....	0
Total	82.....	72

*As required by law

Boat Accidents by Cause

Capsized	5
Collision with Fixed Object	16
Collision with Other Vessel	2
Falls in Boat	6
Falls Overboard	8
Other	4
TOTAL	41
(38 Commercial, 3 Private)	
Fatalities	3

**Note that private boat accidents often go unreported*



Summary of Public Safety Field Actions

	1999	2000
River Outfitter Safety Inspections.....	92.....	109
River Outfitter Office Records Inspections.....	14.....	12
River Assists	104.....	288*
Search, Rescue and Recovery Operations.....	8.....	6
River Hazard Removal Operations	19.....	8

* Note that the increase in river assists in 2000 is largely due to extended low water in the Royal Gorge and rangers assisting many commercial and private boaters during river patrols.

All AHRA law enforcement rangers are commissioned officers. When necessary, they can take appropriate law enforcement action to protect our visitors, preserve the resource and ensure compliance with other administrative regulations. Additionally, four park rangers and two park managers are fully commissioned Colorado peace officers. While law enforcement may not be the primary function of any ranger's job, it is an important and necessary responsibility of all rangers. AHRA rangers work closely with other local, state and federal peace officers and resource managers in the performance of their duties.

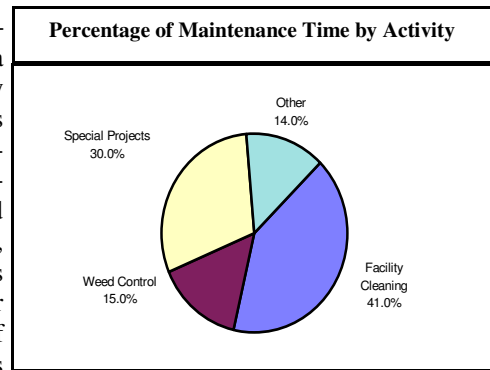
Citations Issued for the Year 2000

	1999	2000
Pass/Permit Violations	58.....	94
Resource Protection Violations.....	11.....	17
Public Safety Violations	10.....	9
Records/Reporting Violations.....	8.....	6
OHV Violations	4.....	20
Snowmobile Violations.....	n/a*.....	23
Other Violations.....	2.....	9
Total	93.....	178
(Citations to Commercial Outfitters.....	15.....	14)

*Note that 1999 statistics are for summer season and 2000 statistics are for the calendar year

In the winter the full time rangers continue to patrol the AHRA sites along the river. Additionally, rangers manage several snowmobile trail-grooming contracts on Bureau of Land Management lands, national forests and other public lands within the river corridor and also patrol snowmobile trails as part of the State Parks Snowmobile Program. Winter is also the ideal time for rangers to complete most of their training and recertifications, to organize programs and plan for the high-use season.

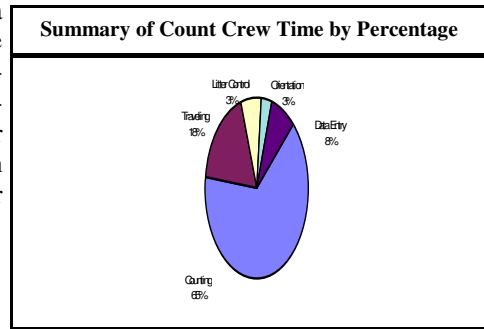
The Maintenance Section is responsible for the routine daily cleaning, repair, improvement and upkeep of the entire recreation area from top to bottom. It takes a great deal of effort to maintain every site from Crystal Lakes to Parkdale every day, yet our staff meets this challenge and continues to excel at it. They are also involved extensively in site improvements and modifications suggested by our visitors, outfitters and staff. During 2000, these improvements included interpretive information displays and signing changes; drainage, trail, and roadway improvements; safety enhancements such as river access trails and steps; and picnic area and campsite upgrades. The summer 2000 staff consisted of one full-time employee and five seasonal staff whereas in the winter there are typically only two seasonal employees working with the full-time maintenance staff.



The AHRA system of restrooms up and down the Arkansas River includes 54 separate concrete vaults. This represents about 50,000 gallons of raw sewage removed from the recreation area annually.

The Commercial Agreements Section exists to accurately and efficiently administer the overall and day-to-day AHRA Special Use Agreements and the Rationing Plan for Commercial Boating on the Arkansas River within the AHRA. Regulated outfitters provide whitewater and float fishing experiences for over 300,000 AHRA guests annually. Use and consequent impacts are increasing at an average annual rate of 7% since 1990. This section also administers the AHRA Rationing Plan that regulates carrying capacities on 12 different river sections that have different carrying capacities ranging from 450 commercial boats per day to 10 commercial boats per day throughout different times of the year. This section designs, develops and utilizes custom computer programs and related

software, written correspondence, computerized reports and data control methods, telephone and personal contacts, commercial use verification methods and physical audits of records to maintain compliance. Assisting in this effort is a 5-person Count Crew who visually count river and site visitors to maintain accurate records of river use and outfitter rationing compliance throughout the recreation area. This section is staffed with one full time position, 5 summer seasonal employees, and 1 winter seasonal employee.



AHRA Commercial Special Use Concession Agreements
by Type

	1999	2000
Boating	60	60
Photography / Video	12	11
Walk and Wade Fishing	9	11
Shuttle Services	3	2
Total	84	84

Rationed Days
by Section

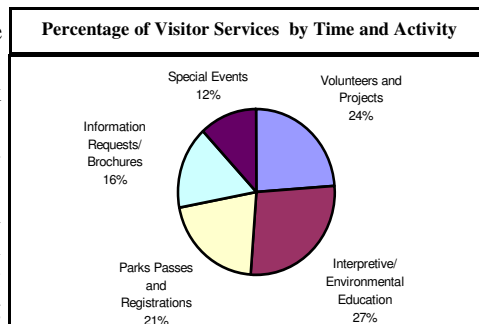
	1999	2000
Section 1c – The Numbers	n/a	9
Section 2b – Brown’s Canyon.....	8	12
Section 2d – Big Bend to Salida.....	8	10
Section 3 – Salida to Vallie Bridge	39	49
Section 4a – Vallie Bridge to Texas Creek	3	14
Section 4b – Texas Creek to Parkdale.....	5	6
Section 5 – The Royal Gorge	17	22
Total	99	122

The Bureau of Land Management Recreation Planner and River Manager work as a team to fulfill BLM’s role in the AHRA partnership. The Recreation Planner works closely with AHRA staff, other agencies and local user groups throughout the valley. Considerable efforts were made this year on a large travel management plan for the Fourmile Area, which is adjacent to AHRA and the Brown’s Canyon Wilderness Study Area. This plan, involving approximately 100,000 acres of public lands, will designate specific roads and trails while closing unauthorized roads and trails that are causing resource degradation. Other projects involving AHRA staff this year include planning for the Big Bend Off-Highway Vehicle Park, designing interpretive exhibits for AHRA’s office lobby and working on the Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan.

The BLM Recreation Planner is also responsible for providing input for all Environmental Analysis that will result in ground disturbing activities on public lands throughout the valley. In addition, BLM also administers 20 Special Recreation Permits for commercial activity on public lands. Permits are issued for a variety of activities such as rock climbing, horseback rides, motorcycle events, foot races, burro races, ATV tours and mountain bike events. One seasonal staff person works six months of the year conducting visitor patrols throughout the valley to assist the Recreation Planner with his duties. These patrols include visitor contacts, road and trail inventory, monitoring two wilderness study areas and upland outfitter compliance. A second seasonal staff member assists with administrative duties.

Resource monitoring of lunch and camp areas throughout Browns Canyon was conducted for the fifth consecutive year. Human waste concerns at these areas continue to be a problem. Impacts from human use are measured each year to determine a trend in resource condition. Education of the commercial outfitters to the problems associated with heavy visitation of these areas has led to a reduction in impacts from use. Continued monitoring and education will determine if stricter regulations are needed at these areas in the canyon.

The Administrative Section provides support services for all State Parks and BLM employees, full-time and seasonal alike. Administrative staff coordinate visitor and customer services; administer park pass and registration programs and sales; oversee field and office revenues and accounting; manage the Volunteer, YNR and Interpretive programs including special projects and grants; assist with purchasing and receiving; take care of personnel and payroll matters; and handle thousands of telephone and radio calls each year. The section is staffed by one full time position and 3.5 seasonal employees during the summer, and one full time and one seasonal staff member during the winter.



No. of People	Administrative Section Visitor Contacts Type of Activity
516	Junior Ranger, Campfire and Story Hour Programs
264	School Programs
389	Environmental Education Presentations to Groups
350	Demonstrations and Community Events
4,310	Visitors to AHRA Headquarters and Visitor Center
5,745	Information Contacts in the Field

Administrative Services, Sales and Revenue Statistics (January through December 2000):		
Statistics	Activity	Compared to 1999
497	Annual and Aspen Leaf Passes Sold	+ 9.69%
\$ 8,985	Revenue from Annual and Aspen Leaf Pass Sales	- 0.46%
987	Boat, Snowmobile, and OHV Registrations	+15.75%
\$ 14,948	Revenue from Registration Sales	+17.57%
\$ 86,479	Revenue from Camp Permits and Daily Individual Passes	+ 3.34%
\$ 503,503	Revenue from Commercial Permits	+1%

Part of the Administrative Section, the **Volunteer Program** continues to provide both AHRA and the public with opportunities to make a positive difference throughout the Upper Arkansas River Valley. One seasonal employee was assigned to coordinate volunteer projects and events and supervise 5 summer Youth in Natural Resources (YNR) employees. Four hundred seventeen volunteers donated a total of 3,914 hours during this reporting period, with an in-kind monetary contribution of \$27,150. Typical projects were burning slash piles on Pike/San Isabel National Forest lands and building stone steps at Hecla Junction. Volunteers played an integral part in the 9th Annual Arkansas River Clean-up/Green-up, which attracted 345 people from ages 2 to 82, who pitched in to keep the Arkansas River clean and green by collecting trash and planting trees and shrubs along the river from Leadville to Canon City. AHRA also hosted the Beckworth Group again, an organization dedicated to bringing inner city kids into the backcountry to experience the wonders of nature. Because a raft trip down the Arkansas River is included as part of their experience, AHRA always comes up at the top of their list of places to visit.

Interpretive and Environmental Education programs and services were an unequivocal success in the year 2000. A second Junior Ranger series was added in the Buena Vista area every Tuesday afternoon to compliment the Salida series held on Saturday mornings. The children’s programs covered such topics as track identification, animal skulls, water pollution, rock art and storytelling through art. AHRA also received a “Best New Partnership” award from the Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education for our weekly story hour, held in cooperation with the Salida Library, which focused on natural resource subjects. AHRA continues to be very active year-round with area schools, recreation programs and other youth clubs to provide environmental education that is consistent with their curriculum. Forty-two specific programs and presentations reached a total of 1,519 people.

AHRA also continues to work with **GARNA** (Greater Arkansas River Nature Association), which helps sponsor many of our educational and interpretive programs, projects and events. Working through GARNA, AHRA is on the threshold of having another illustrated book published, the *Arkansas River Driving Guide*. This is the sister guide to the *Guide's Guide to the Arkansas River* and is funded by AHRA, GO-CO, Colorado State Parks and the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The Guide takes the reader on an enlightening journey through the Upper Arkansas River Valley from Leadville to Pueblo, describing the valley's geology, history, wildlife and people.

AHRA also received funding to complete a Watchable Wildlife kiosk at Canyon Trading Post, informing visitors about the bighorn sheep herds that inhabit the rocky hills across the river. These herds are seen coming down to the water to drink at this and other locations along Highway 50 as it travels through Bighorn Sheep Canyon. In addition, interpretive exhibits and displays for the AHRA headquarters building were installed, providing the public with various mediums to explore and understand the recreation area.

AHRA Special Events and Activity Permits for 2000

- Pole, Pedal and Paddle Race – Monarch to Salida
- Swiftwater Rescue Technician Course – Spikebuck
- Lets Go Gold Panning – Point Bar
- Isgrigg Wedding – Five Points
- Colorado Springs Fire Department Swiftwater Rescue Series
- Whitewater Wednesday – Brown's Canyon
- Rubber Duck Race – Salida
- FIBArk Duck Race – Salida
- FIBArk Boat Races – Salida
- Jack Pot Kayak Races – Salida
- The Columbine Project – Ruby Mountain
- Divers Instruction for River Runners – Lower River
- Tresor TV/ Baughan Productions Video Shoot – Upper River
- Manthey Wedding and Reception – Ruby Mountain
- Cramsey Film Shoot – Browns Canyon

AHRA's State Parks Managers oversee and coordinate the daily operations and overall programs, and projects for the entire work unit described above. They are the communication line between field staff and the South Region office in Colorado Springs and State Park offices in Denver and Littleton. They work closely with the Bureau of Land Management to assure that management plan goals and directives are being met and to implement the Arkansas River Flow Program each year. Most importantly, they work to provide the many community and resource wide coordination activities and efforts needed throughout the 150 mile river corridor, working to develop and enhance communication and cooperation along with new partnership opportunities.

Among the most important accomplishments of this past year has been the completion of the *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan*. The new plan builds on the first 10 successful years of the operation of the AHRA, and provides a vision to serve as a road map for the next 10 years of operation.

The preceding information provided a section by section analysis of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. What follows is the final portion of the annual report, which shows a detailed list of additional accomplishments completed during the year 2000.

This year as in past years, AHRA 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.

AHRA Accomplishments for 2000

- The *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan*
 - ◊ Completed revision of the *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan*
 - ◊ Conducted planning meetings and workshops
 - ◊ Conducted public meetings at Leadville, Buena Vista, Salida, Cotopaxi, Canon City, and Denver
 - ◊ Placed draft of ARRMP on the State Parks website
 - ◊ Completed final draft of the *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan* on January 19, 2001
- Continued to work with the Lake County Open Space Initiative to preserve invaluable lands and provide recreational opportunities along the Arkansas River in Lake County
- Continued to work with the Over the River Project permitting process, including public hearings at Canon City, Cotopaxi and Salida
- Hosted the annual Outfitter Workshop
- Organized the annual Arkansas River Cleanup/Greenup
- Planned and received grant for Big Bend Motorized Use Area
- Worked to resolve issues surrounding the Helena Ditch Dam and Boatchute
- Worked to continue the annual Arkansas River Flow Program
- Completed bank stabilization at Ruby Mountain Campground
- Worked with the Arkansas River Trust on the Salida Riverfront Enhancement Project
- Worked in conjunction with the Department of Corrections to obtain a work crew during the winter to clean and improve sites throughout the area
- Conducted two Swiftwater Rescue Training courses for agencies
- Planted 15 large cottonwood trees at Five Points Campground. Trimmed large trees at Rincon, Trading Post and Five Points. Removed tentworms from trees at five downstream sites. Installed beaver guards on over 100 additional trees at five threatened sites
- Assisted BLM and the Division of Wildlife with the installation of two guzzler units in Bighorn Sheep Canyon for wildlife watering
- Removed the old and hazardous Scott's Bridge from the river in the Numbers during high water
- Coordinated in the administration of level I and level II fire bans in June and July with local sheriffs' departments, the BLM and the USFS
- Directed and supervised a five person Youth in Natural Resources crew at AHRA during the summer months
- Conducted one snowmobile safety and enforcement course for other agency staff
- Toured proposed wilderness areas in the AHRA area (including Brown's Canyon WSA) with Congresswoman Dianne DeGette and BLM State Director Ann Morgan
- Completed design and installation of new exhibits for the AHRA lobby
- Conducted the fifth annual review and assessment of the environmental conditions in Brown's Canyon (Brown's Canyon Human Impact Study)
- Completed significant remodeling of the Texas Creek residence and facility to make it habitable as a ranger substation and seasonal employee residence
- Assisted the Division of Wildlife in two days of fish shocking
- Manned the Hunter Safety Tent in Salida prior to each of the big game seasons
- Rebuilt all campsites at the Rincon Campground
- Actively participated in the Upper Arkansas Weed Management Cooperative
- Completed construction and opened the Canyon Trading Post Recreation Site
- Decreased slope and turn radius of the Parkdale exit road

