

ANRA Newsletter

Arapaho National Recreation Area



USDA Forest Service

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Greetings from the ANRA Manager

Welcome to the 2011 Arapaho National Recreation Area (ANRA) newsletter. This newsletter is intended to keep you informed about the projects on the ANRA and Sulphur Ranger District that may interest you. Thanks to a heavy 2010 spring runoff Lake Granby completely filled for the first time in

a decade. This has been a great benefit for the local businesses and lake users so we hope to receive enough precipitation to continue to return to "full pool" for many years to come.

Dan Matthews, ANRA Manager

The Arapaho National Recreation Area (ANRA)

Quick Facts:

On October 11, 1978, Congress passed Public Law 95-450 creating the ANRA. The bill moved these lands from Rocky Mountain National Park (under the Interior Department) to the Arapaho National Forest (under the Agriculture Department).

The purpose of the Law was "... to preserve and protect the natural, scenic, historic, pastoral, and wildlife resources of the area and to enhance the recreational opportunities provided." The ANRA has approximately 35,000 acres inside its boundary of which 4,000 acres are privately owned. Over 9,000 acres are within the reservoirs' boundaries.

The AA Barn is available for special occasions. The Barn is located on Green Ridge and borders the Colorado River. This beautiful location can be rented during the summer on a day-use only basis for a \$100 per day fee. For information and reservations call (970) 887-4100.

- The ability to charge fees in the ANRA changed from the Fee Demonstration Project to the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act with passage of the 2005 Consolidated Appropriations Act on December 8, 2004.

Your Fees at Work

Fees continue to provide benefits to ANRA users. East Shore Trail, which is part of the Continental Divide Trail system and locally goes through the Town of Grand Lake, the Arapaho National Forest and Rocky Mountain National Park, is just one of those examples. Arapaho National Recreation Area fees which were collected in 2007 were used to pay for a U.S. Forest Service team to design the East Shore Trailhead. These starter funds made it possible for the Forest Service to obtain \$296,000 in grants from Rocky Mountain National Park and the Federal Highways Administration. These funds were used for the East Shore Trailhead improvements to assist the Sulphur Ranger District with their continued effort to improve the East Shore parking lot and trailhead access. This funding helped complete the improvement work started in the past by Rocky Mountain National Park, the Town of Grand Lake, Grand County, Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, and the Headwaters Trails Alliance. Grading, paving and striping the parking lot; landscaping the area; and constructing a new bike rack, entrance sign and information kiosk pavilion completed the project in November 2010.

The fee money collected in 2010 helped fund other projects such as:

- Removed hazard trees from developed recreation sites
- Printed navigation maps
- Conducted public safety patrols on land and on the lakes
- Stained / painted picnic tables, toilets, docks and information boards



Above: New toilet at Monarch Lake

- Cleaned toilets
- Presented interpretive programs to local schoolchildren
- Maintained hiking trails
- Removed noxious weeds

ANRA visitors will benefit from the results of numerous construction projects that were started in the fall of 2010. Four new toilets were completed; one at the Willow Creek Canal picnic area, one at the Monarch Lake Trailhead, and two at the Moraine Loop Campground. Construction has also started on the Sunset Boat Ramp toilet and two toilets in the Roaring Fork campgrounds. These three toilets, however, will not be completed until June 2011.

Work was also completed in fall 2010 on the Point Park Bridge. The Bureau of Reclamation funded the repair of the concrete base, and constructed new stop log support structures and railings. The bridge was widened and a handicapped fishing platform was added to the north end of the bridge. This spring the parking lot and most of the walkway will be resurfaced.

Help stop the spread of Quagga and Zebra Mussels

Before moving to new waters:

- **Clean** everything that came in contact with the water. This includes removing plants and mud.
- **Drain** every drop of water from every part of your boat or water craft.
- **Dry** everything that came in contact with the water: motors, jet drives, live weeds, boat hulls, boots, bait buckets, swimming floats, etc. Let it dry at least five days if changing to new waters, two weeks if leaving infested waters.

For more information:
www.wildlife.state.co.us/WildlifeSpecies/Profiles/InvasiveSpecies/ZebraandQuaggaMussels

or email:

ReportANS@state.co.us

Mountain Pine Beetle

The mountain pine beetle epidemic continues to affect the ANRA and the Sulphur Ranger District (SRD). Over the last decade the SRD has removed numerous hazard trees from campgrounds and picnic areas, and we continue to remove all trees killed by the mountain pine beetle in developed recreation sites.

Reforestation and replanting continues in ANRA campgrounds where trees were lost. In the spring of 2010 over 13,000 seedlings were planted in our campgrounds through a contractor. Contractors also planted 250 trees in the Moraine and 115 trees in St. Louis Creek campgrounds in fall 2010. In September, volunteers planted 250 three-foot-tall trees in the Roaring Fork Campground as part of the National Public Lands Day celebrations.

Sulphur Ranger District plans to plant 250 Engelmann Spruce and lodgepole pine trees on September 24 as part of the 2011 National Public Lands Day celebration (NPLD). If you would like to participate, please contact our office at (970) 887- 4100 for more information.

The SRD will continue to implement a variety of vegetation treatments in response to the mountain pine beetle epidemic. The summer of 2011 will mark the beginning of hazard tree removal and fuels reduction treatments along road segments throughout the National Forest. The SRD intends to focus its initial efforts on high priority road segments throughout the ANRA. If time allows, high priority road segments will also be completed in the Fraser and Winter Park Valley. Sulphur Ranger District expects to complete 70-100 miles of road segments depending on conditions.

Hazard trees will also be removed along high priority motorized and non-motorized trails

WATCH OUT!

Falling trees are always a hazard when traveling in the forest.

Following these guidelines will help recreationists avoid risks.

- Be aware of your surroundings. Avoid dense patches of dead trees. They can fall without warning.
- Stay out of the forest when there are strong winds that could blow down trees. If you are already in the forest when the winds kick up, head to a clearing out of reach of any potential falling trees.
- Place tents and park vehicles in areas where they will not be hit if trees fall.
- When driving in remote areas of the forest, park close to a main road, rather than on a spur or one-way section. If trees fall across the road you may be trapped.
- Bring an ax or a chainsaw to remove fallen trees from roads in case you become trapped.
- Do not rely on cell phones for safety as there is no coverage in many areas of the national forest.

Disclaimer of Liability
 With respect to the identification and removal of all tree hazards found in a forested recreation setting, neither the United States Government nor any of its employees makes any warranty, express or implied, or assumes any legal liability or responsibility for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of the information contained herein, or actions that may be taken by a visitor to the National Forest.

Rocky Mountain Region

in the ANRA. Preventative tree spraying will continue. Approximately 4,000 trees across 69 acres will be sprayed this year, most of which are in the ANRA.

We also will continue to plan and implement large timber sales outside of the ANRA to continue our effort to reduce the risk from wildfires to communities and watersheds in high priority areas.

Quagga and Zebra Mussels

The Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) will continue to inspect boats that use Shadow Mountain Reservoir, Grand Lake and Lake Granby for the presence of zebra and quagga mussels in 2011. It is anticipated that the program will be very similar to the 2010 season with stations being staffed every day at Green Ridge, Stillwater and Sunset ramps from May through October. The Arapaho Bay ramp will

also be staffed during those months but mainly on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. CDOW will also operate an inspection station at the Town of Grand Lake's launch site.

Please remember to adhere to the "Clean, Drain, Dry" procedures before entering new waters. See the box to the left for details.

Ospreys in the ANRA

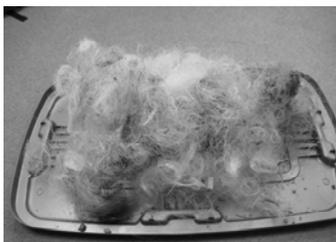
Adverse spring weather took its toll on ospreys (and golden eagles) this year. On the nights of April 29 and May 12 the ANRA received a foot of snow; hampering nesting efforts and the ability of birds to keep their egg clutches warm. On May 24, the ANRA saw 24 hours of sustained wind at 40 to 60 mph causing five nest trees to blow down and damaging numerous other nests. These weather events led to the loss of many egg clutches. Ospreys that lost their nest trees had to choose new nest trees and build new nests. Of the five nest trees lost, four were re-built and only one was successful at fledging chicks.

In addition to these four re-builds, four new osprey nests were found in the ANRA, in dead lodgepole pine trees, during the summer and fall. Two are along the Shadow Mountain Lake shoreline; one is on an old, abandoned nest territory on a Shadow Mountain Lake island, and one is along the south shoreline of Lake Granby. We do not know if they were new pairs or late season nests from pairs that failed to produce young. Both nest platforms installed by Mountain Parks Electric Inc. last fall were active this year and one produced three chicks. Mountain Parks Electric Inc. also cleaned fishing line and other debris out of three nests this fall to reduce the risk of bird entanglement.

In an attempt to reduce avian deaths from

discarded fishing line, we installed monofilament collection stations at Point Park (Grand Lake), Green Ridge Boat Ramp, and Willow Creek Canal Picnic Area (Lake Granby) in 2009 and at Monarch Lake, Willow Creek Reservoir, Shadow Mountain dam spillway, and AA Barn parking area in the fall of 2010. All of the 2009 monofilament bins have been "adopted" by volunteers willing to periodically empty them and drop off collected line at our office. If you are interested in "adopting" a 2010 bin, please contact us. We send all collected line to a facility that makes tackle boxes out of the re-processed line.

We are indebted to the many volunteers, neighbors and visitors who call to report osprey activities, new nests, and to report injured birds. We also greatly appreciate our partners the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Mountain Parks Electric, Inc. and Western Area Power Administration. We are fortunate to have volunteers step forward to 'adopt' osprey nests; observing and recording observations and letting us know if they see problems. If you are interested in adopting an osprey nest from April/ May through September to help us keep track of what's going on, or if you would like to "adopt" one of the new monofilament collection bins, please call Brock McCormick, wildlife biologist, at (970) 887-4108.



Above left to right: (1) Rainbow North island on Lake Granby: all trees blown down on May 24, 2010, including the nest tree. (2) Monofilament line from three collection bins over the course of 1 year. (3) Willow Creek dam osprey nest with chick (fishing line dangling below): Photo courtesy of Carol Hunter, "Adopt-A-Nest" volunteer.

2010 Osprey and Eagle Report

Ospreys

- 4 new nests (3 on Shadow Mountain Lake, 1 on Lake Granby)
- 43 active nests
- 18 successful nests (produced young)
- 32 chicks fledged (down 40% from 2009)

Bald Eagles

- 1 active nest
- 2 chicks fledged

Golden Eagles

- 1 active nest
- 0 chick fledged

Bird Watchers Corner

ANRA 2010 Notable Sightings

- **Horned grebes:** raft of over 225 on the south end of Shadow Mountain Lake during spring migration
- **Western grebes:** raft of over 400 on the south end of Shadow Mountain Lake during spring migration
- **Great blue herons:** 27 active nests on Lake Granby rookery
- **Common loon:** 1 on the south end of Shadow Mountain Lake during spring migration

Wildfire Assistance

Last year's wildland fire season started out slow, with cool wet weather that deterred what can be an active period of time prior to green-up of grasses. However, an above normal number of human caused fires occurred in July and the season wrapped up in October with the Church's Park Fire (473 acres), the largest fire on the Sulphur Ranger District since historic large fires at the turn of the 20th century.

Overall Sulphur Fire Management responded to eleven fires on National Forest System lands. Ten fires were human-caused. Eight of the human-caused fires were started by abandoned campfires, one by charcoal briquettes and one is still undetermined. The natural fire was caused by lightning.

Forest Service fire personnel also responded to six mutual aid assists to local fire departments on private properties. On July 4 the two acre Best Vu Fire in the ANRA caused by discarded charcoal briquettes' threatened

homes but was quickly suppressed with the assistance of Grand Lake and Granby Fire Protection District personnel.

The Church's Park Fire started on October 3 with a full initial attack response from the Sulphur Ranger District and all Grand County Fire Departments, Office of Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services, County Road and Bridge, Colorado State Forest Service, Grand County Sheriff and Winter Park and Fraser Police Departments. A Type 3 Incident Management Team was assigned and took control of the fire on October 4. This incident required national resources including seven 20-person handcrews, six heavy air tankers, four helicopters and numerous fire engines, many of which were supplied by local fire departments. The total cost has not been finalized but is expected to be approximately 1.5 million dollars. Fire investigators determined the fire was human caused.



Left: In 2010 the Arapaho National Recreation Area hosted 150 Grand County 2nd graders at Point Park, and 155 5th graders at Monarch Lake. Students rotated through eight different stations and learned about wildlife, the forest, birds, beetles, canoeing, fire, Leave No Trace ethics, outdoor survival and fishing. Teacher's say these field trips are the highlights of the year. We hope these children will become the future stewards of the land.

Seasonal Closures to Protect Wildlife

Even though the ANRA's main focus is providing safe recreational opportunities for the public, we do have other concerns. One of those concerns is the protection of wildlife and their habitat. Please protect our wildlife by respecting the following closures.

- Osprey nest sites: This closure goes from May 1 to September 1 and includes the area around each nest to minimize disturbance to the young chicks and the parents.
- Kokanee salmon spawn areas: In cooperation with the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Forest Service has a no-fishing zone below the Shadow Mountain Dam in order to protect the spawning kokanee salmon. The fishing ban starts on October 15 and ends on December 31.
- Bald Eagle winter concentration areas: This closure runs from November 15 through March 15. It includes the Colorado River starting about 400 yards below the Shadow Mountain Dam. The area is closed to humans and includes 300 yards on each side of the river downstream to Columbine Creek.
- Elk winter range protection area: There is no human entry into the posted area in the Coffey Divide and Table Mountain areas from December 1 through May 15.

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To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

Contact Us

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Grassland

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Office Hours:
Monday thru Friday
8 a.m.—5 p.m.
Closed Holidays

Mark Your Calendars!!!

Saturday, May 21
is
"Work Your Pass
Off" Day

- Join the ANRA crew from 8 a.m. until noon to collect trash along shorelines, boat launches and picnic areas.
- Receive a free annual pass for your efforts.
- Meet at the Green Ridge or Sunset boat ramps.
- For more information call the Sulphur Ranger District or visit our website:
www.fs.usda.gov/arp