

ANRA News

Serving Colorado's Great Lakes Region

2012 Edition

USDA Forest Service

Volume 12

Welcome to the ANRA

Thank you for your interest in the Arapaho National Recreation Area (ANRA).

Your fees allow us to care for this special recreation area, from maintaining bathrooms and picking up litter, to repairing signs, cutting hazard trees and emptying dumpsters.



Dan Matthews
ANRA manager

The fees allow us to operate our lake management program, which places and moves the hazard buoys as necessary throughout the year. This program also maintains the boat launches and docks, removes debris floating on the lake, conducts safety and security patrols by boat and removes aquatic weeds from Shadow Mountain Reservoir.

In 2011, the ANRA used fees to complete construction on five new toilets, including those at Monarch Lake, Moraine Campground, Willow Creek Canal picnic site and Sunset Boat Ramp. Fees also helped plant 250 trees at Stillwater Campground on National Public Lands Day.

Thank for your support and enjoy your journeys into Colorado's Great Lakes Region!

East Shore Trailhead renovation complete

Located within a residential community in the Town of Grand Lake, the East Shore Trailhead project turned what was a gravel pit into a welcoming portal to the Arapaho National Forest and Rocky Mountain National Park.

A paved parking lot with landscaping and informational signage allows the trailhead to better blend with the surrounding neighborhood. Today, East Shore Trailhead offers bikes, horses, hikers and fishermen direct access from town to the places where they recreate.

The renovation was funded in part by the National Park Service's Connect Parks to Trails Program, which provided \$59,000 to help pay for a new entrance sign, as well as informational and educational signage located in a



East Shore Trailhead ribbon cutting took place Sept. 21, 2011.

newly-constructed kiosk at the trailhead. The Federal Highway Administration provided \$237,000 to improve landscaping, parking, access for bikes and regulatory signage. The U.S. Forest Service spent \$60,000, with help from ANRA fees, on site design. The Town of Grand Lake and Grand County removed excess gravel and graded the parking area while Northern

Colorado Water Conservancy District donated road base and use of its heavy equipment.

"These improvements are a testament to what can be accomplished when we work toward a common goal," said ANRA manager Dan Matthews. "I hope what we have done here will inspire all of us to continue the cooperation that made this possible."

Point Park tapped for 2012 grant

Situated along the shores of Grand Lake, the ANRA's Point Park is located in the Town of Grand Lake within walking and biking distance of many shops and restaurants. A popular picnic area with fabulous views of Mount Baldy, this urban park provides some of the county's only handicap accessible fishing.

Once shaded by old lodgepole, the site was devastated by the mountain pine beetle. Aided by a community tree planting effort, Point Park has since become a warm, inviting location, popular with visitors and locals alike.

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Hazard tree removal projects planned

Over the past decade, the mountain pine beetle epidemic has changed the landscape of the ANRA and Sulphur Ranger District. All told, more than 200,000 acres of lodgepole pine were affected by the beetle.

While the beetle, which is native to the Rocky Mountains has since returned to

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The AA Bar 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 \$100 per day. For more information and reservations call 970-887-4100.

“Osprey fly hundreds if not thousands of miles to breed here and hatch their chicks”

*-Doreen Sumerlin
USFS Biologist*



File photo: Michael Seraphin, DOW

A rare December sighting of trumpeter swans on Lake Granby excited bird enthusiasts. With a wingspan of more than 7 feet and a height of about 4 feet, they are the largest native waterfowl species in North America.

Sulphur Ranger District program outfits kids for adventure

Young explorers can take their outings to a new level through Sulphur Ranger District's new Adventure Backpack Program.

Started in 2011 by wildlife biologist Brock McCormick and Lead Visitor Information Specialist John Simmons, the program is designed to provide children ages 2-12 with the tools to follow their curiosity and discover nature.

Unlike other naturalist programs for children, the adventure backpacks are meant to enable unstructured exploration of the natural world.

There are no booklets to complete, no questions to answer and no scavenger hunts to complete. Children are encouraged to investigate whatever catches their curiosity as they spend the day with their family in the Arapaho National Forest and Arapaho National Recreation Area.

Each backpack includes maps, nature guides, a storybook, a sketch pad and pencils, a collection box to store nature's little treasures, a small net for catching bugs and other curiosities, binoculars, a ruler, a compass and a thermometer.

Use of the backpacks is free, parents are only required to leave their contact information when checking out the packs. Packs are available for day use at the Sulphur visitor's centers in Granby, Winter Park or Monarch Lake.

The Sulphur staff chose to purchase the backpacks with an award it received for being named the region's "District of the Year."

To find out more about the Adventure Backpack Program and backpack pickup locations, contact the Sulphur District Office at 970-887-4100.

ANRA is place to 'Watch the osprey family drama unfold'

A powerful wind event swept through Grand County June 30, 2011, destroying five osprey nests, four of which contained eggs.

"It's so tragic," said Sulphur Wildlife Biologist Doreen Sumerlin. "These birds have flown hundreds if not thousands of miles to breed here and hatch their chicks. When something like this happens, all that effort is lost."

Some of the nesting pairs tried to rebuild after the storm, but with the short summer, "there just wasn't time for them to

breed successfully," Sumerlin said.

The ANRA osprey are the largest breeding population in Colorado and possibly live at the highest elevation of any osprey population in lower 48 states. The highest nest in this area sits above 10,000 feet.

Osprey mate for life and pairs return to the same nest year after year, with most Colorado osprey spending their winters somewhere between Texas and Central America.

"Osprey are so captivating,"

Sumerlin said. "They nest in places where anyone can set up a scope and watch the whole family drama unfold throughout the summer, from the mating to the hatchlings standing on the edge of the nest beating their wings."

There were 48 active osprey nests in the ANRA this year. Twenty-nine osprey chicks survived the windstorm. In addition, two eagle pairs nest in the area, one bald and one golden. The ANRA also is home to a great blue heron rookery that had 17 active nests this summer.

Birds and bees find a feast in the ANRA

Following the recent vegetation management activity on Green Ridge, the U.S. Forest Service implemented a seeding project

to provide the area's hummingbirds, bees, butterflies and other pollinators with a reliable food source from early spring

through fall. Native pollinator species are being threatened by invasive plants that don't appeal to these critical species.

Prescribed burns reduce slash piles in ANRA

Sulphur Ranger District fuels crews have been steadily reducing the number of slash piles remaining from mountain pine beetle mitigation projects across the district.

Good snowpack and prime smoke dispersal conditions

allowed crews to burn more than 4,000 slash piles on nearly 200 acres between the end of October and mid-December 2011.

After fire crews burned some 200 slash piles on Green Ridge, neighbors who had been anx-

ious to see that project completed, wrote: "Our Shores of Shadow Mountain homeowners are very appreciative of your efforts. We're all very excited how much better the area looks and eager to see the progress as grasses and trees revegetate the area over the years to come."



Crews burned more than 4,000 slash piles on the district this fall.

Point Park

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After the U.S. Forest Service removed the old lodgepole, the community rallied, raising funds to plant a total of 40 large trees with an entirely volunteer corps. Sulphur Ranger District contributed 60 additional 3-foot trees. The Town of Grand Lake also partnered in this project, providing landscaping around the paved parking area, annual

flowers at the entrance signs and restrooms and maintaining the onsite restrooms.

This park has become a showcase of how the community has come together to recover from the mountain pine beetle epidemic.

When the hazard tree removal work was complete, a bridge contractor renovated a portion of the park's paved, loop trail. The remaining portion of trail

has deteriorated and does not allow for smooth wheelchair access.

The Arapaho Roosevelt Pawnee Foundation is hoping to help complete the project by resurfacing the remaining trail and picnic pads plus installing new benches and interpretive signs along the path.

To get involved this effort, contact board member Dan Nolan at dnolan829@yahoo.com.

Hazard Trees

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endemic levels, the Arapaho National Forest and ANRA are still working to mitigate the hazards posed by the dead trees along roads, trails and power lines.

In 2012, Sulphur Ranger District will treat approximately 70 miles of high priority road segments in and adjacent to the ANRA. Arapaho Bay Road, which serves numerous campgrounds and trails in the ANRA, is part of the first awarded contract. Contractors will remove many dead and dying trees within 66 feet of the road.

While this work is intended to make travel safer for vehicles, it may cause delays of up to 30 minutes in both directions along Arapaho Bay Road. In other areas where hazard tree removal is planned, roads may be temporarily closed when work is in progress.

If you would like to be placed on a list to receive notices as this work starts progressing, please email Public Affairs Specialist Reid Armstrong: kramstrong@fs.fed.us.

Updates will also be available online at www.fs.usda.gov/arp and through the Arapaho Roosevelt's Twitter account: www.twitter.com/usfsarp.

Elsewhere on the district, trailside

hazard tree projects are underway. More than 25 miles of high priority trail in the Stillwater Pass/Kawuneeche Valley area were treated in 2011, and the district plans to treat an additional 20 miles of trail and 60 miles of road in upcoming contracts.

We appreciate your support and patience during these projects. Please call 970-887-4100 before embarking on your trip for the most up-to-date status on trail and road closures.

Remember your safety is your responsibility. Watch out for falling trees especially in mountain pine beetle infested areas. Dead and live trees can fall without warning. For more safety information visit our website at: www.fs.usda.gov/goto/arp/hazardtrees.

Did you know?

The Arapaho Roosevelt Pawnee Foundation is a 501c3 organization established to help support projects on the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forest and Pawnee National Grasslands. For more information please visit: www.arp-foundation.org.



On National Public Lands Day 2011, volunteers planted 200 lodgepole seedlings and 50 spruce seedlings in Stillwater Campground, an area that was decimated by the mountain pine beetle. Mark your calendars to participate in the next NPLD on Sept. 29, 2012, and call 970-887-4100 to volunteer.

WORK YOUR PASS OFF

What: Help collect trash along the ANRA shoreline, boat launch and picnic areas.

When: 8 a.m. to noon
Saturday, May 19, 2012

Where: Meet at the Green Ridge or Sunset boat ramps.

Why: Earn a free ANRA annual pass for each adult volunteer.

Call 970-887-4100 for more information or visit our website: www.fs.usda.gov/arp.



U.S. Forest Service

Sulphur Ranger District
Arapaho National Forest
PO Box 10
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Granby, CO 80446
Phone: 970-887-4100
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Visitor Center Hours

Winter: Mon.-Fri., 8 a.m.- 5 p.m.
Closed Holidays
Summer: Mon.-Fri. 8 a.m.- 6 p.m.
Open Sat.-Sun. and Holidays
from 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

We're on the web
www.fs.usda.gov/arp

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Serving Colorado's Great Lakes Region

About the Arapaho National Recreation Area

- On Oct. 11, 1978, the United States Congress passed a law that established the Arapaho National Recreation Area and moved these lands from Rocky Mountain National Park (under the Dept. of Interior) to the Arapaho National Forest (under the Dept. of Agriculture).
- 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 comprises approximately 35,000 acres inside its boundary of which 4,000 are privately owned. More than 9,000 acres are located within the reservoirs' boundaries.
- The ability to charge fees in the ANRA changed from the Fee Demonstration Project to the Federal Lands recreation Enhancement Act in December 2004. This authority was granted for 10 years. Congress will have to reauthorize or replace the current fee authority prior to December 2014.



GO GREEN

Help the ANRA save paper, money and resources by signing up for the E-edition of next year's ANRA newsletter. Send your email address to krarmstrong@fs.fed.us with the subject line **ANRA News** or include your email address with your annual pass renewal form.



Is that campfire cold?

Wet spring conditions aided Sulphur Ranger District fire-fighters during 2011. Fire crews responded to four fires this season, three of which were caused by escaped, abandoned campfires. A lightning strike caused the fourth fire. Local fire departments aided in the response.

The slow fire season allowed Sulphur personnel to assist on fires in other parts of the country as well, including Arizona, Georgia, Minnesota, New Mexico, Oregon, South Dakota, Texas and Wyoming. Joining other teams allows our crews to gain valuable experience.

More than 50 abandoned campfires were extinguished by



Smokey Bear helps extinguish an abandoned campfire in the Stillwater area this summer. Smokey issued a ticket to the campers when they returned to their site .

Sulphur Ranger District employees during the 2011 summer season. The fine for abandoning a campfire is \$200,

and if it escapes and causes a wildland fire, the responsible party could be charged with the entire cost of fighting the fire and may have to serve prison time.

Campfires need to be situated in a designated ring, clear of vegetation. A bucket or jug of water should be sitting near the fire before it is ignited. An adult needs to supervise the lit fire at all times.

Extinguish fires by drowning the area with water both inside and out of the ring and stirring the ashes with a stick or tool until the fire is cold to the touch.

Remember, Only you can prevent wildland fires!