

arkansas river tips

- Launch windows for outfitters in most sections are from 8:30am – 3:30pm with the heaviest use between 10:00 and 2:00. Beat the crowds! Try launching before or after these times.
- In the Numbers section from Granite to Railroad Bridge, all commercial trips must launch before 11:00am at Granite and before 2:00pm at the Numbers.
- In the Royal Gorge all commercial trips must launch between 8:30am and 4:00pm.
- If you are boating through Browns Canyon, we suggest launching from the Ruby Mountain Recreation Site. This site's for you! No commercial launches allowed at flows above 700 cfs at Wellsville.
- Float fishing and whitewater boating can co-exist. Launch early or late to avoid crowds and consider utilizing less traveled sections of river.
- Pull in behind the last boat. Commercial river trips are run in 10 boat maximum groups.
- Private boats do not have launch windows.

*Have a great time
on the Arkansas!*



Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

307 West Sackett Avenue
Salida, CO 81201
www.parks.state.co.us

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Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area

RIVER SAFETY



river safety

- The river is powerful and always changing. **Be familiar with current conditions.**
- **Know the section** of river you are boating.
- Your **skills and experience** must equal the river and its conditions.
- Don't be bashful – if you want to scout a rapid, **scout a rapid** if possible.
- Know and **be aware of river "signs"** – both natural and man-made: holes, wrap rocks, undercuts, rock sieves, horizon lines across the river, low head dams as well as significant rapids and "strainers" (trees in the river).
- **Watch your surroundings**, this includes the weather.
- **Be aware of your limitations** and those of your fellow boaters and of your equipment.
- Always **consider the consequences** – an accidental swim is always a possibility.
- **Boating alone is not recommended.** Two or more boat parties are safer.
- You and everyone in your party should **know first aid and CPR.** What if you get hurt?
- **Be prepared for self-rescue** and the rescue of others should an accident occur. It is up to you and everyone in your boat to be able to help each other.
- If you are involved in an **accident**, please report it to:

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area
307 West Sackett Avenue
Salida, CO 81201
(719) 539-7289
Emergency 911

safety gear

- **Wear a properly-sized PFD (life jacket) designed for whitewater river use.**
- **Helmets** are a must for all canoeists, kayakers and river boarders. They are recommended for rafters in Class IV and higher whitewater.
- Equip your kayak with **broach loops** in addition to existing grab loops.
- Always **use good, quality equipment.** Carry a first aid and patch kit, an extra PFD, a spare oar or paddle, a pump, a bailing device and bow-stern line. **Have rescue gear:** rescue ropes/throw lines, a knife, carabiners and a whistle.
- **Dress** for a possible cold water swim and changing weather. Wear pile or fleece (no cotton). Protect your feet with sturdy footwear that won't come off in the river. Carry extra clothing, food and water.
- Bring a **wetsuit or drysuit** – and wear it when conditions merit. Hypothermia is a risk any time of the year while boating on the river.
- State law requires that **all boats be labeled** with the owner's name and address. In addition, please add your phone number. If we find your boat it's easier to return if we know how to reach you.



river ethics

- The river draws many different kinds of people. They are enjoying what they are doing as much as you are enjoying what you're doing. **Please be respectful of others.**
- At low flows, boaters should alert **anglers** to their presence in a quiet and courteous manner. If possible avoid floating through the water being fished by an angler.
- Please **keep noise to a respectable level** – for wildlife, nearby homeowners and others enjoying the river.
- The river passes through areas of private property including railroad tracks and right-of-ways. **Don't trespass!** Be considerate of the river's neighbors!
- **Keep a safe distance** between your boat and others when approaching rapids.
- You can help minimize the damage rafts and feet do to the shoreline by **stopping only at well used sites or rocky areas.**
- **Trash?** Bring it out with you. Someone else left it? Bring it out too!
- The use of **fire pans and human waste containers** is required when camping in undeveloped areas along the river.
- The put-in and take-out sites are often busy places. Please **launch and load your boat as quickly as possible.** Most boat ramps have a **15 minute** load and unload limit. Separate rigging and deflating areas are available at many boat ramps.



watch for these signs




Respect Private Property and Railroad Right-of-Way
Please Do Not Trespass

rating the rapids

- I Moving water, riffles, small waves
- II Easy rapids, waves, clear channels
- III Large waves, obstacles, narrow passages
- IV Long rapids, unavoidable waves, many obstacles
- V Violent rapids, extremely difficult, unseen hazards
- VI Unpredictable, dangerous, nearly impossible to run

River conditions and ratings change with flow levels. Whitewater boating has risks at all ratings and levels.

universal river signals

 **Help! Emergency** - Wave the paddle in a circular motion and/or give three long blasts on a whistle.

Go This Way - Use paddle to point toward direction of travel.

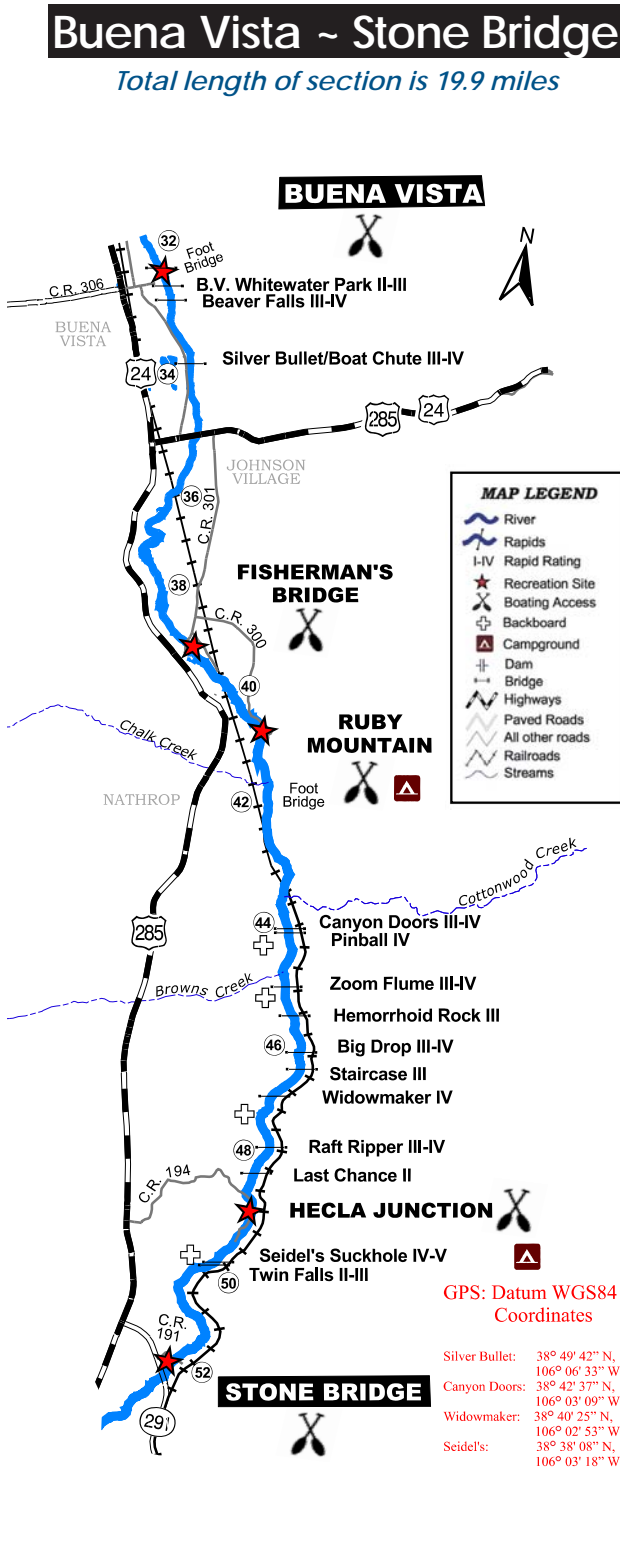
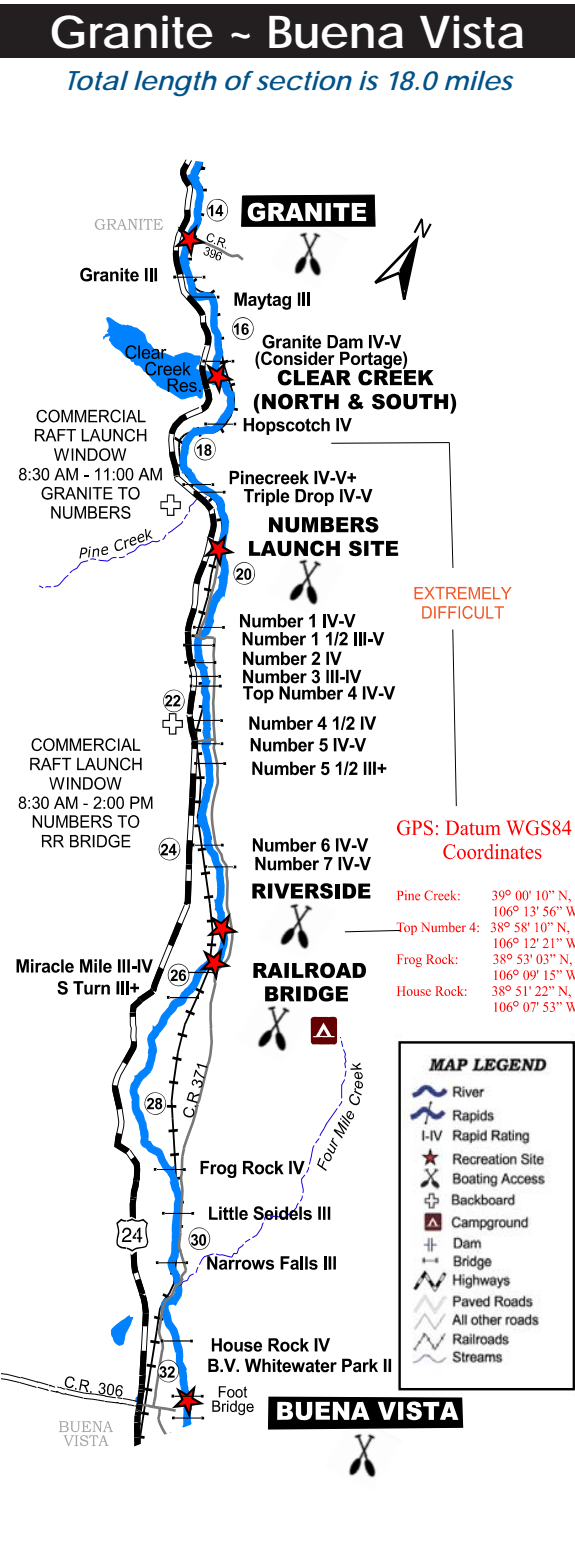
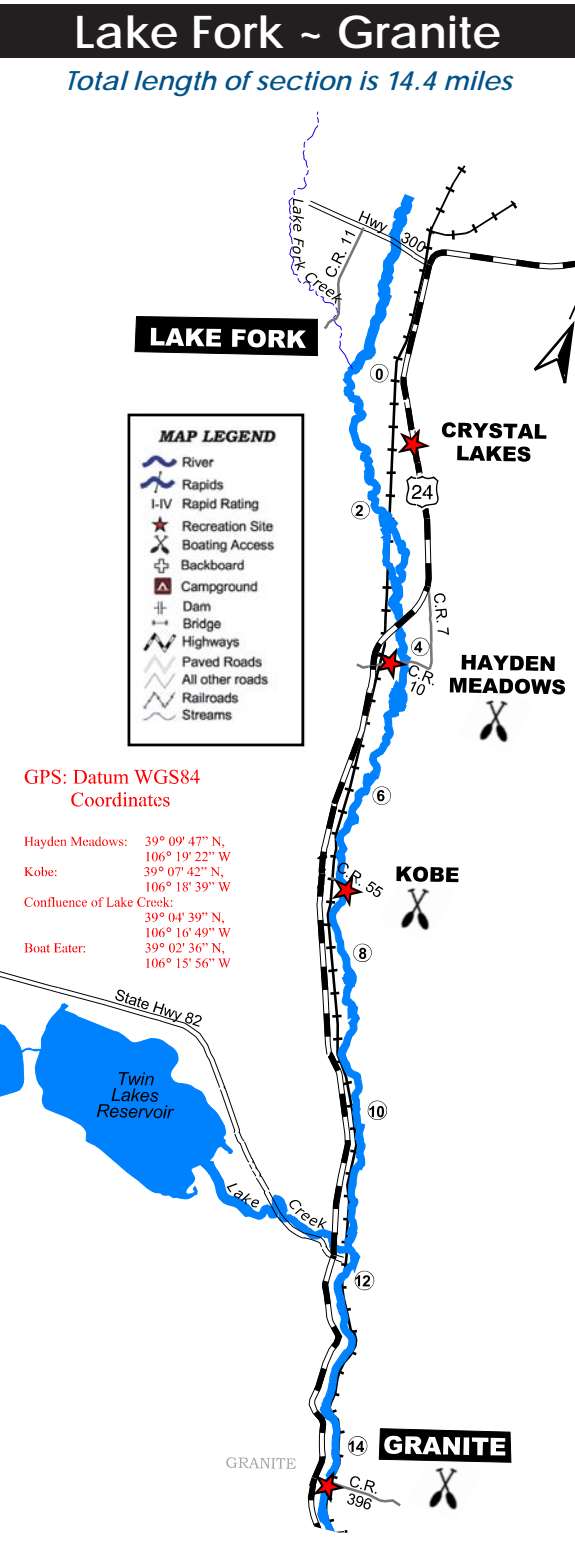
Are You Okay? - Tap the top of your head three times and point to the person whom you are questioning. If they tap their head three times they are okay. Otherwise assistance is needed.

Stop - Hold paddle horizontally overhead.

All Clear - Hold paddle vertical and stationary.

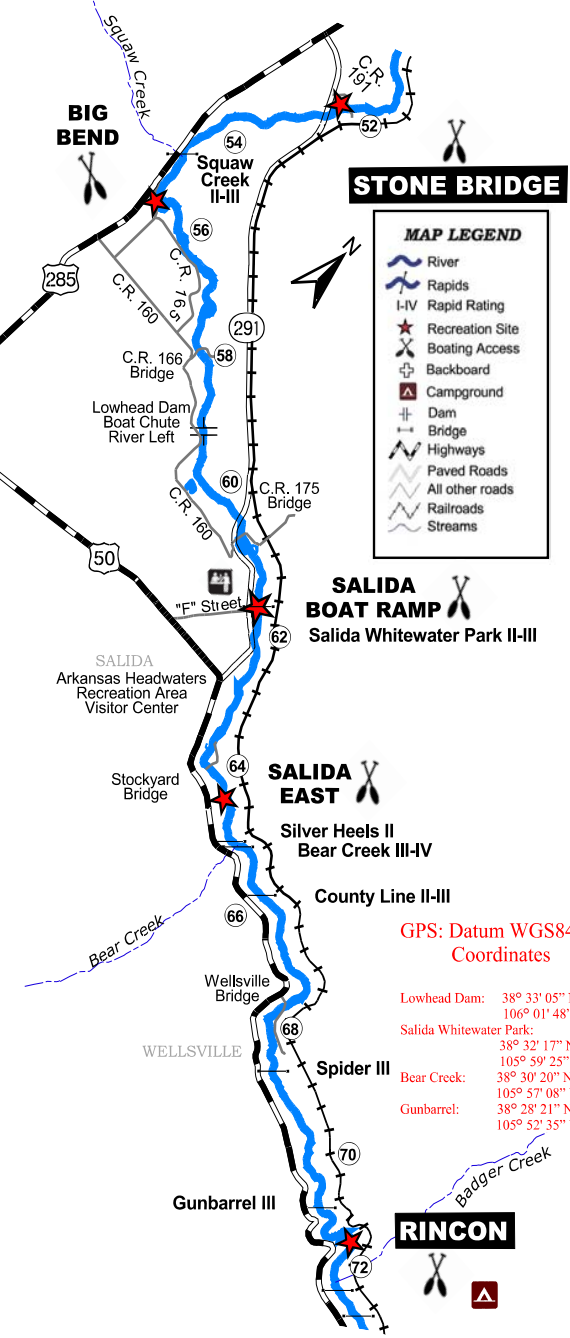


Water Talk, at 303-831-7135, is a computerized phone service maintained by the Colorado Division of Water Resources. It provides recent flows in cfs for most rivers across Colorado. Users must listen to all phone prompts. The Arkansas River is in Division II. The Arkansas River near Nathrop gage is found by pressing 59. The gage near Parkdale is found by pressing 60. The gage at Canon City is 64. The gage at Granite is 65. The gage at Wellsville is 12. The gage at Salida is 67. A guest must press the # key after entering the digit for a computerized cfs message. Find online flows at <http://parks.state.co.us/parks/arkansasheadwaters/riversafetyandflows/riverlevel/>



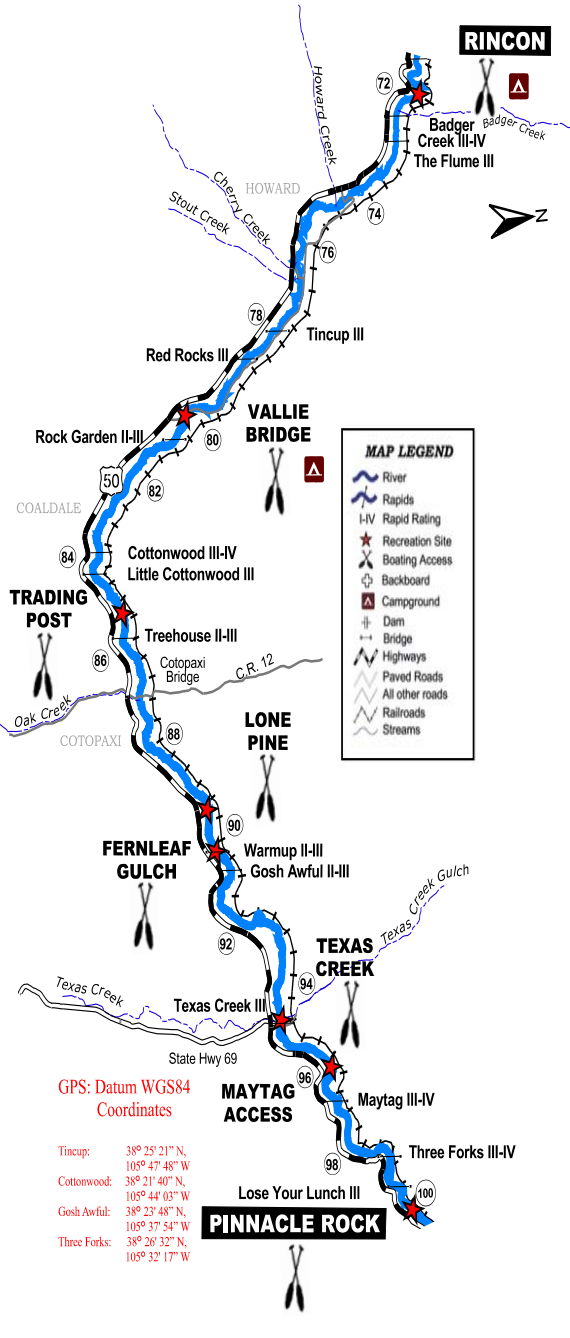
Stone Bridge ~ Rincon

Total length of section is 19.4 miles



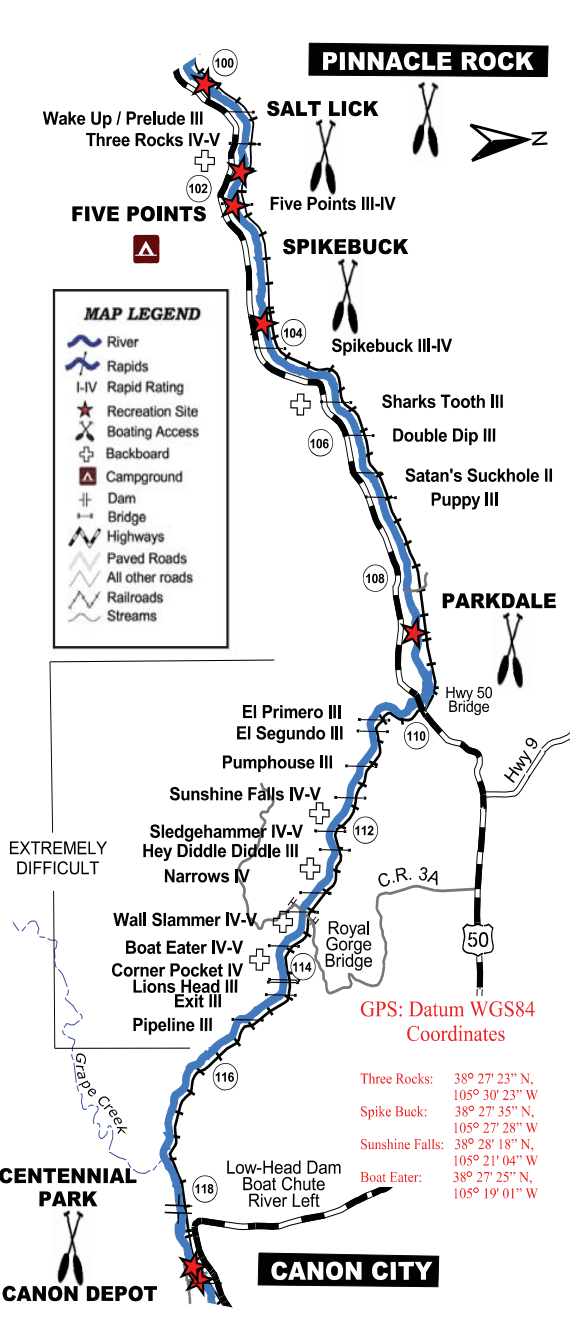
Rincon ~ Pinnacle Rock

Total length of section is 28.4 miles



Pinnacle Rock ~ Cañon City

Total length of section is 18.9 miles



Cañon City ~ Lake Pueblo

Total length of section is 29.7 miles

