

Hiking Trails

Ruby Mountain Trailhead (Ruby Mountain Recreation Site) distances and estimated hiking times:

Roundtrip to river at Little Cottonwood via Turret Trail (#6045): 2.7 miles, 2 hours
 Roundtrip to the river via the River Bench Trail (#6045A): 5.5 miles, 3 hours
 Roundtrip to the river via River Access Trail (#6045B): 9 miles, 4.5 hours
 Roundtrip including Catkin Gulch Loop (#6046): 11.5 miles, 5 hours
 Roundtrip Ruby Mountain Trailhead to Forest Service Road 184: 11 miles, 5 hours

Hecla Junction Trailhead (Hecla Junction Recreation Site) distances and estimated hiking times:

Roundtrip out-and-back along the west bank of the river via Seidel's Suckhole Trail: 2 miles, 1.5 hours

Turret Trail 6045 en route to the Arkansas River at Little Cottonwood Creek is a steep but short 2-mile roundtrip hike with wide views of the area's northern half.

The 5.5-mile "in and out" hike along the gentle dead-end **River Bench Trail 6045A** provides a good sample of the northern Monument with an Arkansas River overlook.

The 11.5-mile **Catkin Gulch Loop 6046** roundtrip via the Turret Trail 6045 goes deep into the Monument for a fuller experience of its wilderness character.

For more information about trails and hiking in the area, visit http://brownscanyon.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/2-Browns-Canyon-Northern-Trails-42_FINAL-OL-lowrez-8.24.14.pdf

Stay on designated trails unless confident in cross-country hiking and navigation skills.

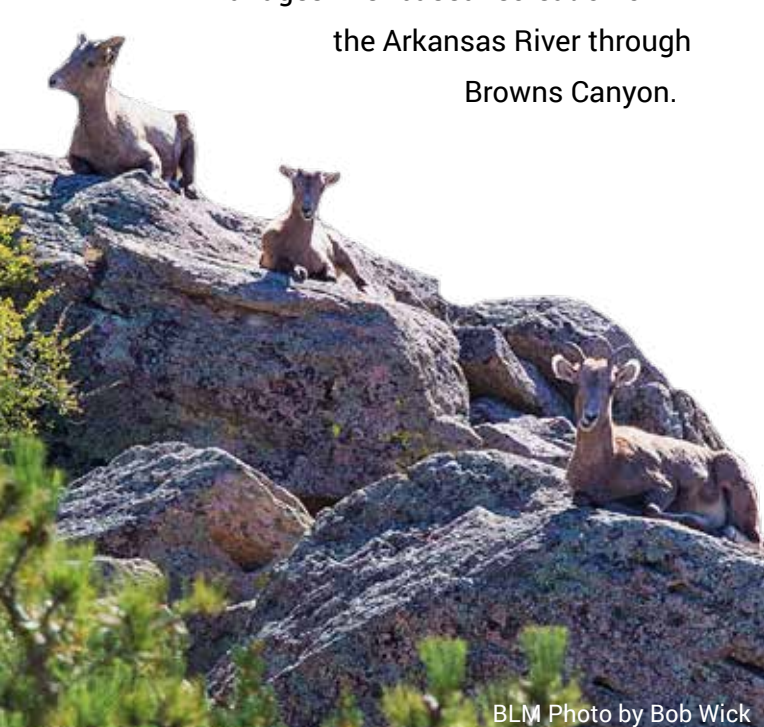


BLM Photo by Bob Wick

Browns Canyon National Monument

For centuries, the rugged granite cliffs, colorful rock outcroppings and stunning mountain vistas of Browns Canyon National Monument have attracted visitors from around the world. The area's unusual geology and roughly 3,000-foot range in elevation support a diversity of life and a wealth of geological, ecological, riparian, cultural and historic resources.

President Obama designated the 21,589-acre Browns Canyon National Monument on February 19, 2015. The Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service jointly manage the Monument. Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW), through the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA), manages river-based recreation on the Arkansas River through Browns Canyon.



BLM Photo by Bob Wick

BLM Photo by Bob Wick

For more information

Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area
 307 W. Sackett Avenue
 Salida, CO 81201
 719-539-7289
<http://bit.ly/1KqEsnW>

BLM Royal Gorge Field Office
 3028 East Main Street
 Cañon City, CO 81212
 719-269-8500
<http://on.doi.gov/1JKWyQU>

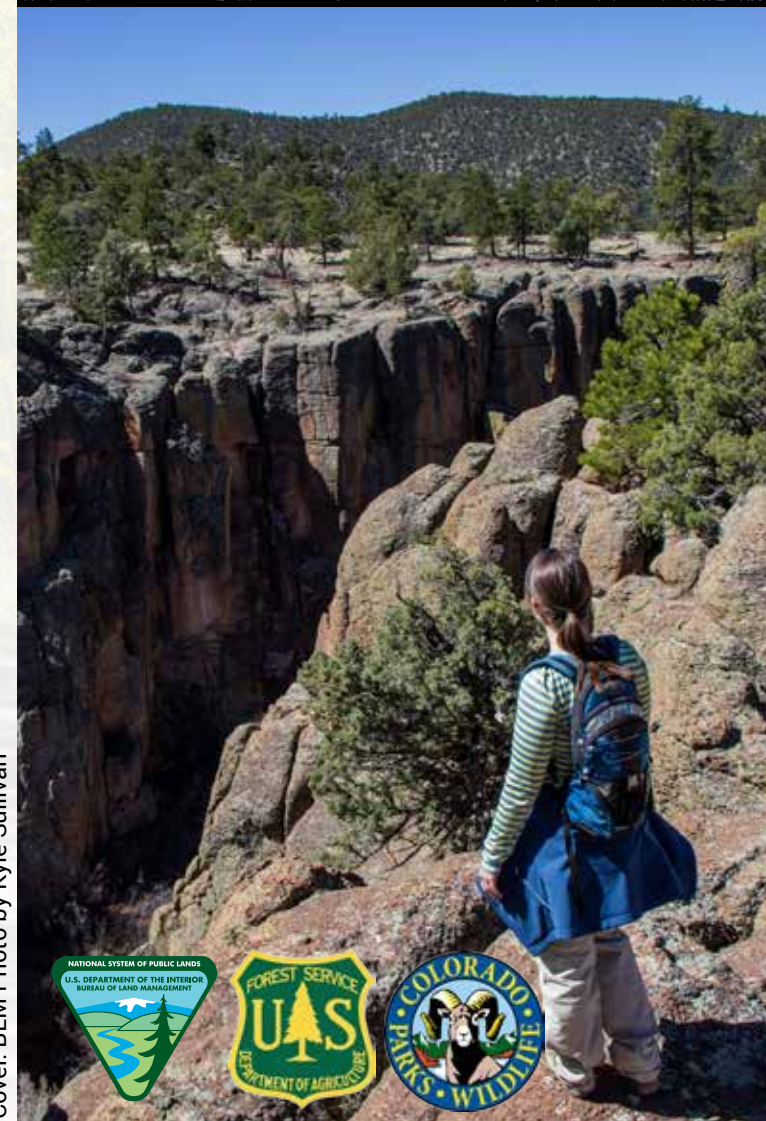
USFS Salida Ranger District
 5575 Cleora Road
 Salida, CO 81201
 719-539-3591
<http://1.usa.gov/1GziZti>

BLM/CO/GI-15/009

Cover: BLM Photo by Kyle Sullivan

NATIONAL
 CONSERVATION
 LANDS

Browns Canyon National Monument



BLM Photo by Kyle Sullivan

Access

All access to Browns Canyon National Monument is via unpaved roads that have blind corners and other hazards.

One of the main trailheads into the Monument is located adjacent to the Ruby Mountain Recreation Site (AHRA), which features a campground with restrooms, changing facilities, a boat ramp and picnic sites.

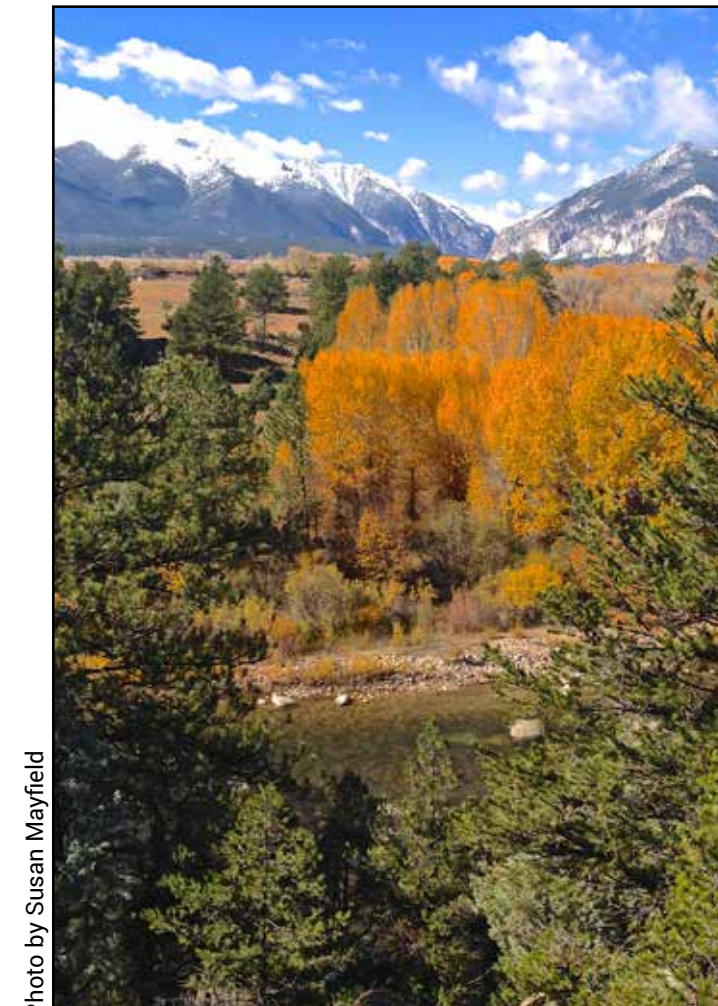
The Hecla Junction Recreation Site (AHRA) is the primary location for taking boats out after floating through Browns Canyon. The area features a campground with restrooms, changing facilities, a boat ramp and picnic sites. The road into Hecla Junction is steep and unpaved.

Forest Service Road 1434A is an ATV route that traverses the northern boundary of the Monument. There is a seasonal gate closure Dec 1 – April 15 every year.

Aspen Ridge Road (Forest Service Road 185) comprises the eastern boundary of the Monument. High clearance 4x4 vehicles recommended. Vehicles must remain within one vehicle length of the road when parking.

Turret Road (Forest Service Road 184) off Aspen Ridge Road provides a rugged 4x4 experience into the heart of the Monument while traveling through open meadows and granite spires with the Collegiate Peaks Wilderness serving as the backdrop.

Photo by Susan Mayfield



Fishing

The Arkansas River within the AHRA is a world class fishery and provides an excellent opportunity for anglers to test their skills at catching brown and rainbow trout. As a testament to the excellent fishery, CPW designated the Arkansas River from the confluence with the Lake Fork of the Arkansas River downstream to Parkdale, Colorado (102 miles), as a Gold Medal Trout Fishery in 2014. This addition to the Gold Medal registry is

the state's longest—nearly a third of Colorado's 322 Gold Medal river miles in a single segment. The Gold Medal designation itself doesn't carry any special fishing regulations; however, a valid Colorado Fishing License is required and other special fishing regulations apply within certain portions of the Gold Medal stretch of river. For more information, please refer to CPW fishing regulations (<http://cpw.state.co.us/Documents/RulesRegs/Brochure/fishing.pdf>).

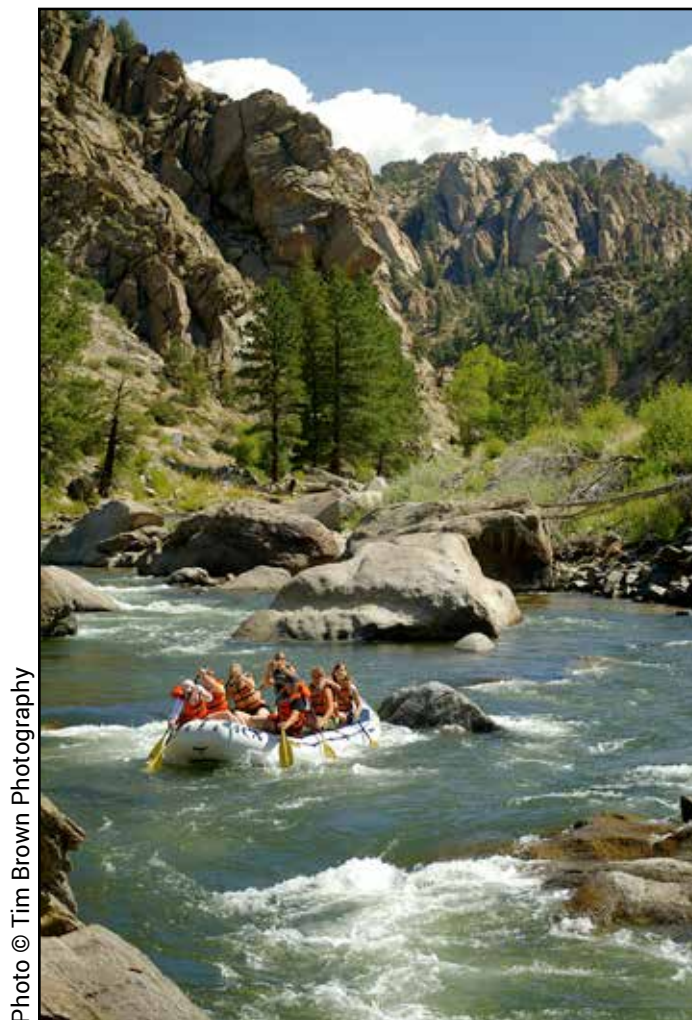


Photo © Tim Brown Photography

Cultural Resources

The story of people living in the upper Arkansas River valley is told through sites and artifacts dating back 11,000 years. Within the monument, evidence of seasonal camps remains, including open campsites, prehistoric stone structures and rock shelter sites, among other features. These sites range from the PaleoIndian (11,000 years before present) to the Late Prehistoric Period (from around 2,000 years ago to the 1700s). The cultural resources within Browns Canyon provide future generations with the opportunity to learn from those who preceded us in exploring this beautiful area.

Discovery of gold near the Arkansas River in 1859 brought an influx of people to the area, along with the need for transportation. While the old Stagecoach Road provided a route to Leadville for many years, it was very rugged and the trip was a long one. The arrival of the Denver and Rio Grande Railroad in 1880 allowed for much easier access to the booming mining area around Leadville. Many interesting historic prospecting sites can still be found throughout the monument.

Browns Canyon has a rich cultural history that we are still investigating. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 prohibits removing, disturbing or defacing archaeological sites or artifacts on federal public lands.

About National Monuments

National Monuments are designated to afford protection, conservation and restoration to landscapes of tremendous beauty, diversity, and historic or scientific interest. The Antiquities Act of 1906 granted the President authority to designate national monuments to protect "objects of historic or scientific interest." While most national monuments are established by the President, Congress has also occasionally established national monuments to protect natural or historic features. Since 1906, the President and Congress have created more than 100 national monuments managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

BLM Photo by Bob Wick



Recreation

Whitewater Activities

Whitewater boating is the most popular recreational activity that occurs in Browns Canyon. Through the AHRA partnership, CPW manages commercial and private boating through Browns Canyon along with all recreational use on the Arkansas River from the confluence of the Lake Fork and the East Fork of the Arkansas River to Lake Pueblo.

The Arkansas River is the most accessible way to enjoy the National Monument. The remote canyon provides a unique type of whitewater boating experience when compared to other segments of the Arkansas River, allowing visitors to experience solitude in a natural setting while enjoying the scenery.

For more information on water flows and float permits, visit <http://bit.ly/1KqEsnW>

Plants

The plant community in this area has repeatedly evolved during periods of climate change since the Eocene Epoch (56-33.9 million years ago). Geologic and climate changes since the Precambrian (4,600-541 million years ago) make the area an important site for research on paleoclimatology and the effects of climate change, wildland fire and other disturbances.

Unique plant species within Browns Canyon include the endemic Brandegee's buckwheat as well as imperiled species such as Fendler's Townsend-daisy, Fendler's false cloak-fern, Livermore fiddleleaf and the endemic Front Range alumroot.

Wildlife

Browns Canyon is home to some of Colorado's most emblematic animal species, including mountain lions, bighorn sheep, elk, mule deer, bobcat, red and gray fox, black bear and coyote, among others. The area's cliffs provide excellent habitat for peregrine falcons, prairie falcons and golden eagles.

The rugged river corridor of Browns Canyon National Monument represents one of the only riparian ecosystems along the Arkansas River that remains relatively undisturbed. Riparian corridors provide very important migration routes for birds and insects. A number of reptile and amphibian species are found in the area, including Woodhouse's toads, chorus frogs, bullsnakes, plains garter snakes, western rattlesnakes, Short-horned lizards, and some other less common species.

Grazing

The Monument contains several active livestock grazing allotments that have been permitted since implementation of the Taylor Grazing Act in 1934. Grazing use in this area supports

the local economy and maintains the historic ranching heritage of Chaffee County. Livestock grazing management practices are conducted in a manner that promotes a balance in use with wildlife needs, protection of riparian areas and healthy plant ecosystems.

Fees

Browns Canyon National Monument does not require fees for entrance. However, parking at the Ruby Mountain Recreation Site and/or the Hecla Junction Recreation Site requires either a CPW annual or daily parks pass. Annual park passes can be obtained at the AHRA Visitor Center in Salida or daily passes can be obtained at self-serve kiosks at the recreation sites.

For more information about fees, visit <http://cpw.state.co.us/placestogo/parks/ArkansasHeadwatersRecreationArea/Pages/Fees.aspx>

Leave No Trace

Following the Leave No Trace principles and combining them with your personal judgment, awareness and experience will help protect natural and cultural resources and preserve the experience for future visitors. Please learn and practice Leave No Trace skills and ethics and pass them on to those you meet. It's easy to enjoy and protect the Monument simultaneously.

- Plan ahead and prepare.
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces.
- Dispose of waste properly.
- Leave what you find.
- Minimize campfire impacts.
- Respect wildlife.
- Be considerate of other visitors.

For more information, visit <https://lnt.org/>



Photo © John Fielder

