



2021 YEAR END REPORT

COMMERCIAL RIVER USE
in the STATE of COLORADO 1988-2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY COMMERCIAL RIVER USE IN COLORADO

2021 Year End Report

Commercial rafting user day numbers included in this report show outfitters had one of the busiest seasons on record. Commercial use showed a 44.6% increase over 2020 (a COVID-19 year). And a 14.7% increase over the prior pre-COVID-19 2019 year. The economic impact of commercial river use totaled \$231,220,186. No other prior year shows such positive economic results.

Early in 2021, many COVID-19 restrictions were still in place. Thus, outfitters had to plan for a season with restrictions and plan for the possibility of a season with relaxed restrictions. By the time the season began, many restrictions were lifted which freed outfitters to better utilize their transportation, boat, and staff capacities. In reviewing the 2021 season, it appears outfitters experienced such high demand due to people wanting to be outside during the last stages of the COVID-19 emergency and due to visitors traveling to Colorado instead of traveling to foreign European vacation locations, Mexico, and Central America. The altered school year and work from home schedules contributed to families being able to travel and partake in rafting adventures outside of the normal days and weeks. Thus, early- and late-season rafting numbers and weekday numbers were much higher than had been anticipated. Additionally, several rivers had adequate flows in late August and early September which allowed for continued boating.

Many rivers had more user days than any previous year. The Arkansas River had the most user days in its history at 256,650. The Animas River, the Colorado River near Glenwood Springs, and Clear Creek had impressive record-breaking numbers as well. Other rivers set records but not by as large a margin.

Labor availability restricted some operations as increased demand put pressure on operations to have the necessary staff to service customers. This is to say that if more staff had been available, additional guests would have been accommodated. Economic pressures seem to not have influenced demand as much as expected.

Looking to the 2022 season, outfitters are hoping for an end to the COVID-19 emergency, favorable economic conditions, and easier staff recruitment. Costs of all kinds are forcing outfitters to examine pricing structures for 2022.

The Colorado River Outfitters Association (CROA) compiled this study. Copies are available by contacting David Costlow at dcostlow@croa.org or Caitlin Wyman at caitlin@croa.org. The report can also be downloaded from the web at: <https://www.croa.org/media.html>. Members of CROA adhere to a Code of Ethics and offer quality trips on Colorado's rivers.

COMMERCIAL USER DAYS IN THE STATE OF COLORADO 1997 - 2021

River	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Animas	37,000	36,000	45,000	29,000	42,000	12,000	34,500	35,470	52,700	42,500	44,322	42,250
Animas - Upper	400	920	989	700	721	300	690	658	872	167	598	533
Arkansas	235,931	250,098	243,709	250,861	252,213	139,178	214,555	203,840	228,091	237,160	239,887	214,234
Blue	5,361	1,300	2,100	2,347	14	0	264	788	1,212	760	2,038	2,906
Clear Creek	11,889	12,908	16,887	13,616	20,798	7,498	24,495	20,115	32,357	36,889	49,190	52,340
Colorado - Glenwood	43,146	59,822	60,191	57,265	55,829	42,581	56,876	58,751	57,712	62,652	65,502	52,738
Colorado - Upper	36,758	40,309	40,000	42,933	34,381	37,801	32,188	33,224	29,449	36,280	37,068	34,769
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	4,875	4,171	4,410	4,508	4,188	2,324	3,222	3,383	3,318	2,810	2,761	3,283
Colorado - Westwater	6,614	7,452	7,208	6,859	6,858	6,626	7,352	7,548	7,043	7,233	7,632	7,624
Dolores	2,333	2,406	439	921	0	0	214	174	936	81	195	868
Eagle - Upper	11,738	6,361	7,290	3,830	3,702	0	1,239	858	3,630	4,621	4,390	4,390
Eagle - Lower	2,825	2,226	2,500	2,167	594	446	1,153	820	1,419	1,441	1,369	1,369
Gore Creek - Vail												
Green/Yampa	7,545	7,938	7,360	8,539	7,825	5,617	7,134	6,826	6,627	6,500	5,813	6,235
Gunnison Gorge	3,289	3,155	3,169	3,928	3,401	3,292	2,328	3,010	3,016	3,800	2,826	4,342
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	1,774	1,420	1,720	1,400	2,690	1,334	1,590	1,982	2,112	2,212	2,500	2,669
Gunnison - Escalante	2,340	899	1,011	1,884	1,887	1,044	2,113	2,988	3,363	2,265	3,272	2,106
Gunnison - Forks to Austin												
Gunnison - Lake Fork	1,850	1,315	1,848	1,310	1,543	0	160	177	195	165	126	369
North Platte	1,232	804	882	165	137	0	312	191	566	511	372	851
Piedra	31	294	305	50	650	0	210	454	725	400	500	547
Poudre	31,981	32,721	32,446	29,012	34,192	26,004	34,164	31,042	36,088	34,533	37,824	37,566
Rio Grande	3,000	2,800	3,100	1,950	3,300	92	1,300	2,800	3,246	1,605	1,402	2,345
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	5,074	4,500	5,000	4,500	2,500	0	2,000	1,500	2,215	2,609	2,834	6,187
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	1,200	1,500	2,000	1,500	1,000	0	500	500	10	79	100	2,500
San Juan - Pagosa	2,680	3,460	3,400	2,200	2,000	138	1,586	2,550	2,500	1,900	1,900	2,280
San Miguel	2,000	2,500	3,442	1,379	3,625	120	1,959	2,212	4,493	2,800	2,943	5,969
South Platte	3,137	3,650	1,306	2,035	2,055	453	935	836	901	655	690	1,150
Taylor	13,612	15,367	15,367	13,989	14,287	11,176	14,734	14,750	14,972	15,127	15,112	14,332
Total User Days	479,615	506,296	513,079	488,848	502,390	298,024	447,773	437,447	499,768	507,755	533,166	506,752
User Day Change From Previous Year	42,232	26,681	6,783	-24,231	13,542	-204,366	149,749	-10,326	62,321	7,987	25,411	6,984

Sources: National Park Service
 US Forest Service
 Bureau of Land Management
 Local Outfitters
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COMMERCIAL USER DAYS IN THE STATE OF COLORADO 1997 - 2021

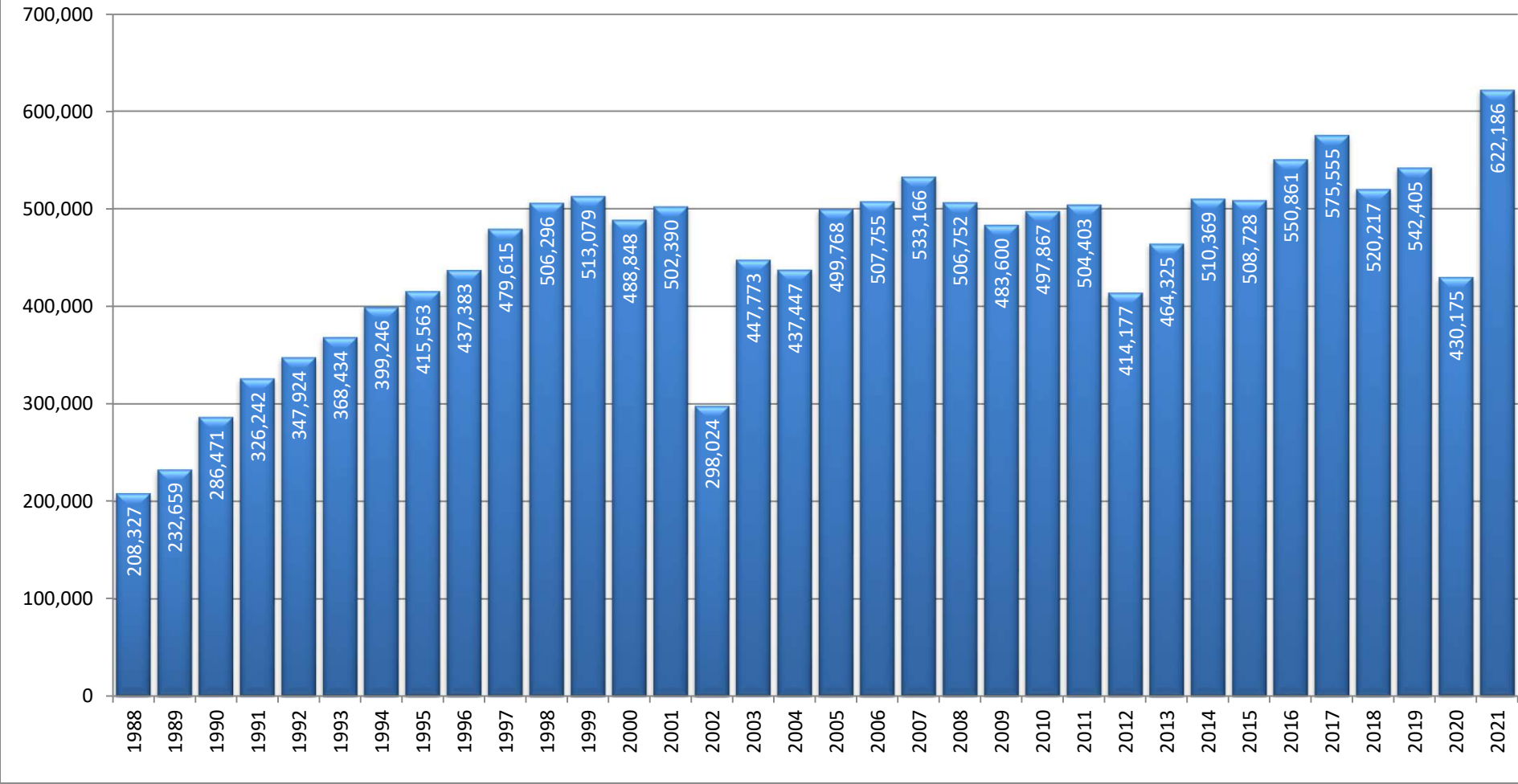
River	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Animas	41,921	41,000	45,000	38,000	33,659	37,000	34,117	35,991	34,069	28,495	37,553	33,120	52,967
Animas - Upper	500	411	411	603	600	678	No report	615	536	71	326	12	387
Arkansas	205,876	211,150	208,329	169,486	179,535	191,307	196,998	223,878	223,271	218,120	190,246	182,005	256,650
Blue	3,089	1,181	6,580	0	0	6,571	6,651	5,301	2,771	1,086	11,006	636	
Clear Creek	50,167	51,301	60,644	35,422	61,172	72,224	65,617	77,783	87,077	66,174	95,063	52,044	100,203
Colorado - Glenwood	52,737	61,890	44,007	64,086	60,757	56,857	57,785	61,880	64,208	62,181	65,302	55,228	70,753
Colorado - Upper	33,077	40,730	39,012	41,811	40,420	40,337	41,352	37,071	47,915	50,681	35,777	46,375	45,433
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	3,090	2,718	2,907	3,099	754	3,535	2,787	1,112	3,978	993	1,122	1,268	820
Colorado - Westwater	6,833	7,621	6,069	5,623	6,992	6,432	6,522	6,478	6,522	6,654	7,324	4,190	6,369
Dolores	536	194	515	35	0	58	26	74	558	0	350	0	
Eagle - Upper (Dowd Chutes)	1,374	1,640	1,286	13	359	1,134	570	606	745	428	399	1,076	266
Eagle (Below Edwards)	1,369	1,710	4,362	227	2,032	5,174	4,971	6,443	6,088	3,549	8,851	4,129	5,233
Gore Creek - Vail	300	1,000	2,500	900	900	500	404	601	500	0	324	98	
Green/Yampa	4,309	4,803	4,218	7,983	9,694	11,581	11,476	10,196	13,917	15,645	No Report	3,755	5,132
Gunnison Gorge	3,956	1,390	2,148	1,579	3,431	2,152	3,205	3,584	3,861	4,787	4,039	4,553	6,110
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	2,669	2,669	2,669	1,150	3,387	3,387	3,083	3,276	3,548	3,276	2,129		4,170
Gunnison - Escalante	2,549	1,784	2,749	3,028	1,434	1,936	1,154	868	1,088	187	149	27	144
Gunnison - Forks to Austin				1,100	303	302	484	305	731	991	1,254	1,617	2,326
Gunnison - Lake Fork	203	149	284	1,123	221	193	304	259	318	267	245	425	348
North Platte	712	482	850	143	265	230	336	179	305	No Report	34	5	
Piedra	547	190	190	54	25	285	No report	337	318	17	249	41	173
Poudre	36,991	37,392	37,869	22,780	37,214	37,225	37,934	41,192	38,134	38,741	37,707	21,481	39,877
Rio Grande	2,313	1,229	1,589	2,103	596	3,691	2,511	2,387	2,694	131	No Report	156	221
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	4,248	2,404	6,672	112	1,696	5,210	5,038	4,377	4,420	560	6,751	1,045	948
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	1,263	1,366	912	736	458	1,070	895	410	869	831	7,245	338	221
San Juan - Pagosa	4,107	4,986	6,171	778	3,475	3,764	4,949	4,850	3,948	1,012	5,517	0	No Report
San Miguel	3,782	1,762	1,900	1,828	1,235	3,921	5,438	5,064	8,097	2,061	9,778	4,899	8,201
South Platte	750	383	430	484	713	371	473	788	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report
Taylor	14,332	14,332	14,130	9,891	12,998	13,244	13,648	14,956	15,069	13,279	13,665	11,652	15,234
Total User Days	483,600	497,867	504,403	414,177	464,325	510,369	508,728	550,861	575,555	520,217	542,405	430,175	622,186
User Day Change From Previous Year	-23,152	14,267	6,536	-90,226	50,148	46,044	-1,641	42,133	24,694	-55,338	22,188	-112,230	192,011

Sources: National Park Service
 US Forest Service
 Bureau of Land Management
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2021 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO

YEAR	TOTAL USER DAYS	INFLATION RATE (CPI)	EXPENDITURES- INFLATION ADJUSTED	DIRECT EXPENDETURES	ECONOMIC IMPACT	% CHANGE
1988	208,327		rt	\$14,166,236	\$36,265,564	
1989	232,659	4.6%	\$66.73	\$15,526,325	\$39,747,392	9.6%
1990	286,471	6.1%	\$70.81	\$20,283,592	\$51,925,995	30.6%
1991	326,242	3.1%	\$73.00	\$23,815,666	\$60,968,105	17.4%
1992	347,924	2.9%	\$75.12	\$26,135,007	\$66,905,618	9.7%
1993	368,434	2.7%	\$77.15	\$28,422,900	\$72,762,623	8.8%
1994	399,246	2.7%	\$79.23	\$31,631,493	\$80,976,623	11.3%
1995	415,563	2.5%	\$81.21	\$33,747,364	\$86,393,253	6.7%
1996	437,383	3.3%	\$83.89	\$36,691,478	\$93,930,184	8.7%
1997	479,615	1.7%	\$85.31	\$40,918,247	\$104,750,712	11.5%
1998	506,296	1.7%	\$86.77	\$43,928,838	\$112,457,824	7.4%
1999	513,079	2.7%	\$89.11	\$45,719,334	\$117,041,496	4.1%
2000	488,848	3.4%	\$92.14	\$45,041,209	\$115,305,495	-1.5%
2001	502,390	1.9%	\$93.89	\$47,168,424	\$120,751,166	4.7%
2002	298,024	2.2%	\$95.95	\$28,596,476	\$73,206,978	-39.4%
2003	447,773	1.9%	\$97.78	\$43,781,775	\$112,081,344	53.1%
2004	437,447	3.3%	\$101.00	\$44,183,613	\$113,110,049	0.9%
2005	499,768	3.4%	\$104.44	\$52,194,503	\$133,617,928	18.1%
2006	507,755	2.0%	\$106.53	\$54,089,218	\$138,468,398	3.6%
2007	533,166	4.1%	\$110.89	\$59,124,798	\$151,359,483	9.3%
2008	506,752	0.1%	\$111.00	\$56,251,845	\$144,004,723	-4.9%
2009	483,600	2.7%	\$114.00	\$55,131,275	\$141,136,064	-2.0%
2010	497,867	1.5%	\$115.71	\$57,609,105	\$147,479,308	4.5%
2011	504,403	3.0%	\$119.18	\$60,116,359	\$153,897,880	4.4%
2012	414,177	1.7%	\$121.21	\$50,202,107	\$128,517,393	-16.5%
2013	464,325	1.5%	\$123.03	\$57,124,719	\$146,239,279	13.8%
2014	510,369	0.8%	\$124.01	\$63,291,709	\$162,026,776	10.8%
2015	508,728	0.7%	\$124.88	\$63,529,824	\$162,636,349	0.4%
2016	550,861	2.1%	\$127.50	\$70,236,001	\$179,804,163	10.6%
2017	575,555	2.1%	\$130.18	\$74,925,616	\$191,809,578	6.7%
2018	520,217	1.9%	\$132.65	\$69,008,441	\$176,661,609	-7.9%
2019	542,405	2.3%	\$133.17	\$72,234,191	\$184,919,528	-3.6%
2020	430,175	1.4%	\$135.04	\$58,090,117	\$148,710,699	-19.6%
2021	622,186	7.5%	\$145.17	\$90,320,385	\$231,220,186	55.5%

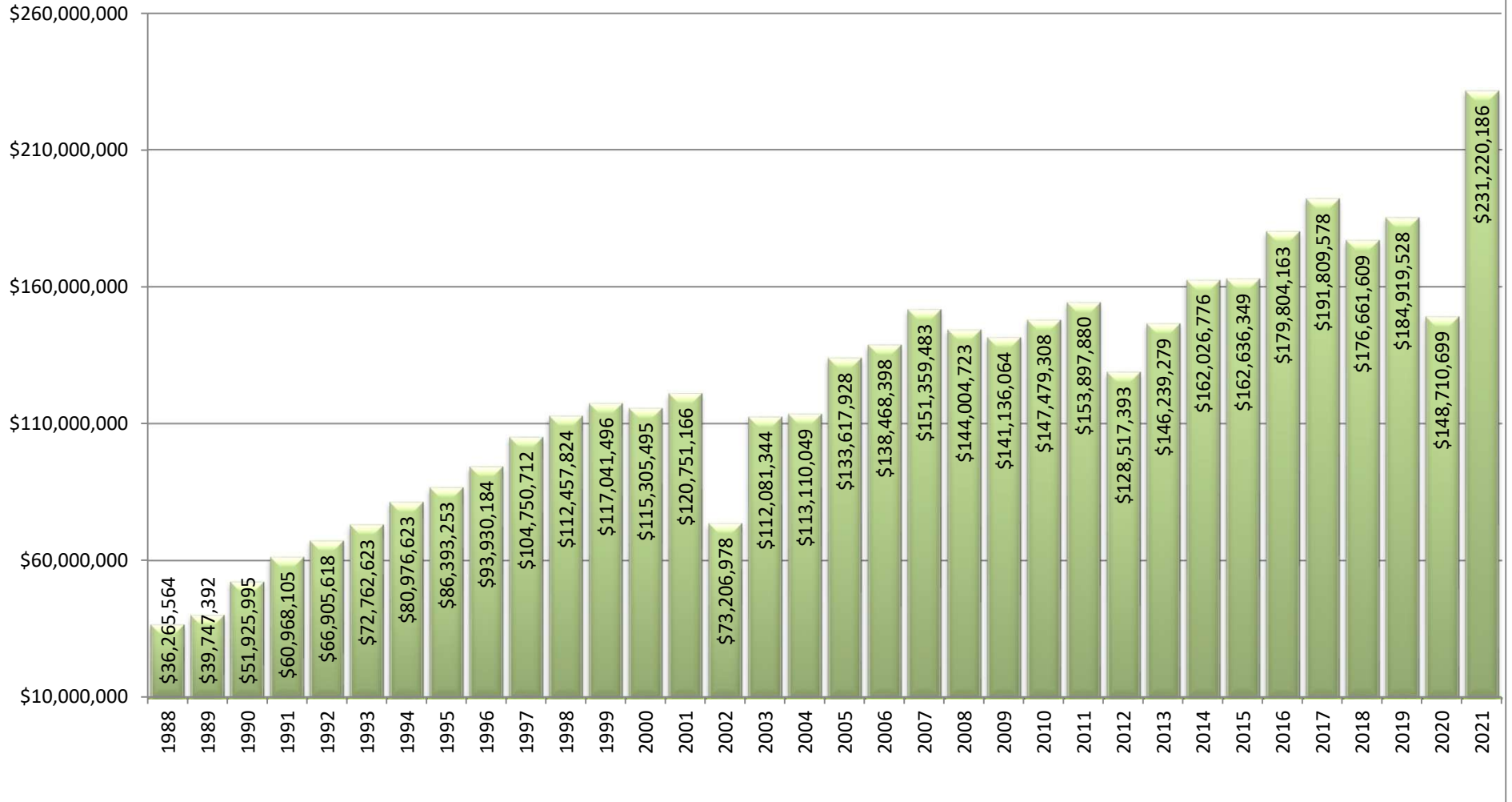
See glossary for above economic impact formulas and sources

Sources: National Park Service
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ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO

1988-2021



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2021 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO

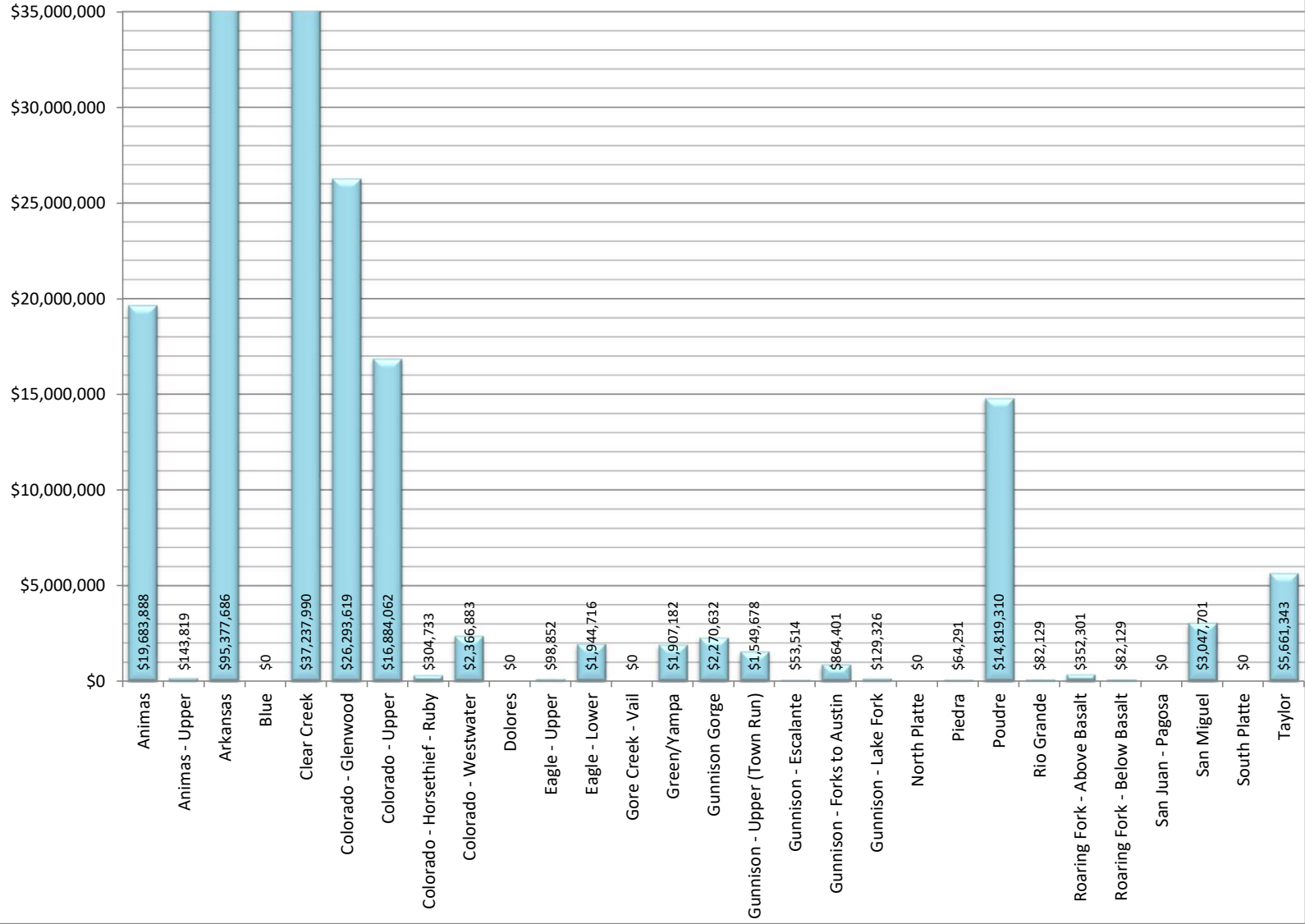
RIVER	USER DAYS	DIRECT EXPENDITURES	ECONOMIC IMPACT
Animas	52,967	\$7,689,019	\$19,683,888
Animas - Upper	387	\$56,179	\$143,819
Arkansas	256,650	\$37,256,908	\$95,377,686
Blue	0	\$0	\$0
Clear Creek	100,203	\$14,546,090	\$37,237,990
Colorado - Glenwood	70,753	\$10,270,945	\$26,293,619
Colorado - Upper	45,433	\$6,595,337	\$16,884,062
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	820	\$119,036	\$304,733
Colorado - Westwater	6,369	\$924,564	\$2,366,883
Dolores	0	\$0	\$0
Eagle - Upper	266	\$38,614	\$98,852
Eagle - Lower	5,233	\$759,655	\$1,944,716
Gore Creek - Vail	0	\$0	\$0
Green/Yampa	5,132	\$744,993	\$1,907,182
Gunnison Gorge	6,110	\$886,966	\$2,270,632
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	4,170	\$605,343	\$1,549,678
Gunnison - Escalante	144	\$20,904	\$53,514
Gunnison - Forks to Austin	2,326	\$337,657	\$864,401
Gunnison - Lake Fork	348	\$50,518	\$129,326
North Platte	0	\$0	\$0
Piedra	173	\$25,114	\$64,291
Poudre	39,877	\$5,788,793	\$14,819,310
Rio Grande	221	\$32,082	\$82,129
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	948	\$137,618	\$352,301
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	221	\$32,082	\$82,129
San Juan - Pagosa	No Report	Not Available	Not Available
San Miguel	8,201	\$1,190,508	\$3,047,701
South Platte	No Report	Not Available	Not Available
Taylor	15,234	\$2,211,462	\$5,661,343
Totals	622,186	\$90,320,385	\$231,220,186

See glossary for above economic impact formulas and sources

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ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO - 2021



INDIVIDUAL RIVER COMMERCIAL RAFTING STATISTICS - 3 YR RANGE

RIVER	2019 USER DAYS	2020 USER DAYS	2021 USER DAYS	% CHANGE '19 - '20	% CHANGE '20 - 21	2019 % MARKET SHARE	2020 % MARKET SHARE	2021 % MARKET SHARE
Animas	37,553	33,120	52,967	-11.8%	59.9%	6.9%	7.7%	8.5%
Animas - Upper	326	12	387	-96.3%	3125.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%
Arkansas	190,246	182,005	256,650	-4.3%	41.0%	35.1%	42.3%	41.2%
Blue	11,006	636	0	-94.2%	-100.0%	2.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Clear Creek	95,063	52,044	100,203	-45.3%	92.5%	17.5%	12.1%	16.1%
Colorado - Glenwood	65,302	55,228	70,753	-15.4%	28.1%	12.0%	12.8%	11.4%
Colorado - Upper	35,777	46,375	45,433	29.6%	-2.0%	6.6%	10.8%	7.3%
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	1,122	1,268	820	13.0%	-35.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.1%
Colorado - Westwater	7,324	4,190	6,369	-42.8%	52.0%	1.4%	1.0%	1.0%
Dolores	350	0	0			0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Eagle - Upper	399	1,076	266	169.7%	-75.3%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%
Eagle - Lower	8,851	4,129	5,233	-53.3%	26.7%	1.6%	1.0%	0.8%
Gore Creek - Vail	324	98	0			0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Green/Yampa	No Report	3,755	5,132				0.9%	0.8%
Gunnison Gorge	4,039	4,553	6,110	12.7%	34.2%	0.7%	1.1%	1.0%
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	2,129	0	4,170	-100.0%		0.4%	0.0%	0.7%
Gunnison - Escalante	149	27	144	-81.9%	433.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Gunnison - Forks to Austin	1,254	1,617	2,326	28.9%	43.8%	0.2%	0.4%	0.4%
Gunnison - Lake Fork	245	425	348	73.5%	-18.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
North Platte	34	5	0					
Piedra	249	41	173	-83.5%	322.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Poudre	37,707	21,481	39,877	-43.0%	85.6%	7.0%	5.0%	6.4%
Rio Grande	No Report	156	221		41.7%		0.0%	0.0%
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	6,751	1,045	948	-84.5%	-9.3%	1.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	7,245	338	221	-95.3%	-34.6%	1.3%	0.1%	0.0%
San Juan - Pagosa	5,517	0	No Report	-100.0%		1.0%	0.0%	
San Miguel	9,778	4,899	8,201	-49.9%	67.4%	1.8%	1.1%	1.3%
South Platte	No Report	No Report	No Report	N/A	N/A			
Taylor	13,665	11,652	15,234	-14.7%	30.7%	2.5%	2.7%	2.4%
Totals	542,405	430,175	622,186	-20.7%	44.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%