



2024 YEAR END REPORT

COMMERCIAL RIVER USE
in the STATE of COLORADO

1988-2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY COMMERCIAL RIVER USE IN COLORADO 2024

Year End Report

The 2024 season proved to be a mixed season for outfitters depending on the river. Rafting in the southwest region was affected by lower runoff, early season low water, overall economic conditions and reduced visitation from out-of-state travelers. Specifically, rafting numbers on the Animas in Durango was down by 19%. Other rivers in the same region saw use days drop by almost 50%. Low water conditions on the San Juan, Rio Grande and Dolores resulted in reduce use day numbers on each river. The Dolores had no activity this season. Conversely, the Arkansas River, still the most rafted river in the state, was only down 5.8% in user day numbers compared to 2023. This decrease was most likely due to economic conditions and lower visitation as water levels remained as expected. Rafting numbers on most Gunnison River sections were similar to 2023. The North Platte in the northern part of the state had water. Outfitters took 1010 rafters during the season, which is the highest number since 1997.

The 2024 commercial river use on all rivers in the State of Colorado totaled 496,999 user days. Compared to 2023, which had 542,511 user days, this was a reduction of 45,512 user days or a decline of 8.4%.

There continues to be pressure on rafting companies to raise prices because costs such as gasoline for vehicles, payroll, insurance, and everyday supplies keep rising. Higher prices tend to reduce bookings. Additionally, during economically challenging times, groups and families tend to make their reservations more last-minute, making staffing and logistics planning a challenge. This also results in frequent situations where there are no openings for a day at the last minute.

The total industry-wide economic impact for 2024 was \$209,289,069. Much rafting occurs in the rural parts of the state which means the economic impact of rafting has a direct effect on the smaller river communities.

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 1999 - 2010

River	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Animas	45,000	29,000	42,000	12,000	34,500	35,470	52,700	42,500	44,322	42,250	41,921	41,000
Animas - Upper	989	700	721	300	690	658	872	167	598	533	500	411
Arkansas	243,709	250,861	252,213	139,178	214,555	203,840	228,091	237,160	239,887	214,234	205,876	211,150
Blue	2,100	2,347	14	0	264	788	1,212	760	2,038	2,906	3,089	1,181
Clear Creek	16,887	13,616	20,798	7,498	24,495	20,115	32,357	36,889	49,190	52,340	50,167	51,301
Colorado - Glenwood	60,191	57,265	55,829	42,581	56,876	58,751	57,712	62,652	65,502	52,738	52,737	61,890
Colorado - Upper	40,000	42,933	34,381	37,801	32,188	33,224	29,449	36,280	37,068	34,769	33,077	40,730
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	4,410	4,508	4,188	2,324	3,222	3,383	3,318	2,810	2,761	3,283	3,090	2,718
Colorado - Westwater	7,208	6,859	6,858	6,626	7,352	7,548	7,043	7,233	7,632	7,624	6,833	7,621
Dolores	439	921	0	0	214	174	936	81	195	868	536	194
Eagle - Upper	7,290	3,830	3,702	0	1,239	858	3,630	4,621	4,390	4,390	1,374	1,640
Eagle - Lower	2,500	2,167	594	446	1,153	820	1,419	1,441	1,369	1,369	1,369	1,710
Gore Creek - Vail											300	1,000
Green/Yampa	7,360	8,539	7,825	5,617	7,134	6,826	6,627	6,500	5,813	6,235	4,309	4,803
Gunnison Gorge	3,169	3,928	3,401	3,292	2,328	3,010	3,016	3,800	2,826	4,342	3,956	1,390
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	1,720	1,400	2,690	1,334	1,590	1,982	2,112	2,212	2,500	2,669	2,669	2,669
Gunnison - Escalante	1,011	1,884	1,887	1,044	2,113	2,988	3,363	2,265	3,272	2,106	2,549	1,784
Gunnison - Forks to Austin												
Gunnison - Lake Fork	1,848	1,310	1,543	0	160	177	195	165	126	369	203	149
North Platte	882	165	137	0	312	191	566	511	372	851	712	482
Piedra	305	50	650	0	210	454	725	400	500	547	547	190
Poudre	32,446	29,012	34,192	26,004	34,164	31,042	36,088	34,533	37,824	37,566	36,991	37,392
Rio Grande	3,100	1,950	3,300	92	1,300	2,800	3,246	1,605	1,402	2,345	2,313	1,229
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	5,000	4,500	2,500	0	2,000	1,500	2,215	2,609	2,834	6,187	4,248	2,404
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	2,000	1,500	1,000	0	500	500	10	79	100	2,500	1,263	1,366
San Juan - Pagosa	3,400	2,200	2,000	138	1,586	2,550	2,500	1,900	1,900	2,280	4,107	4,986
San Miguel	3,442	1,379	3,625	120	1,959	2,212	4,493	2,800	2,943	5,969	3,782	1,762
South Platte	1,306	2,035	2,055	453	935	836	901	655	690	1,150	750	383
Taylor	15,367	13,989	14,287	11,176	14,734	14,750	14,972	15,127	15,112	14,332	14,332	14,332
Total User Days	513,079	488,848	502,390	298,024	447,773	437,447	499,768	507,755	533,166	506,752	483,600	497,867
User Day Change From Previous Year	6,783	-24,231	13,542	-204,366	149,749	-10,326	62,321	7,987	25,411	-26,414	-23,152	14,267

Sources: National Park Service
US Forest Service
Bureau of Land Management
Local Outfitters
Colorado Parks & Wildlife

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PO Box 1711
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COMMERCIAL USER DAYS IN THE STATE OF COLORADO 2011 - 2024

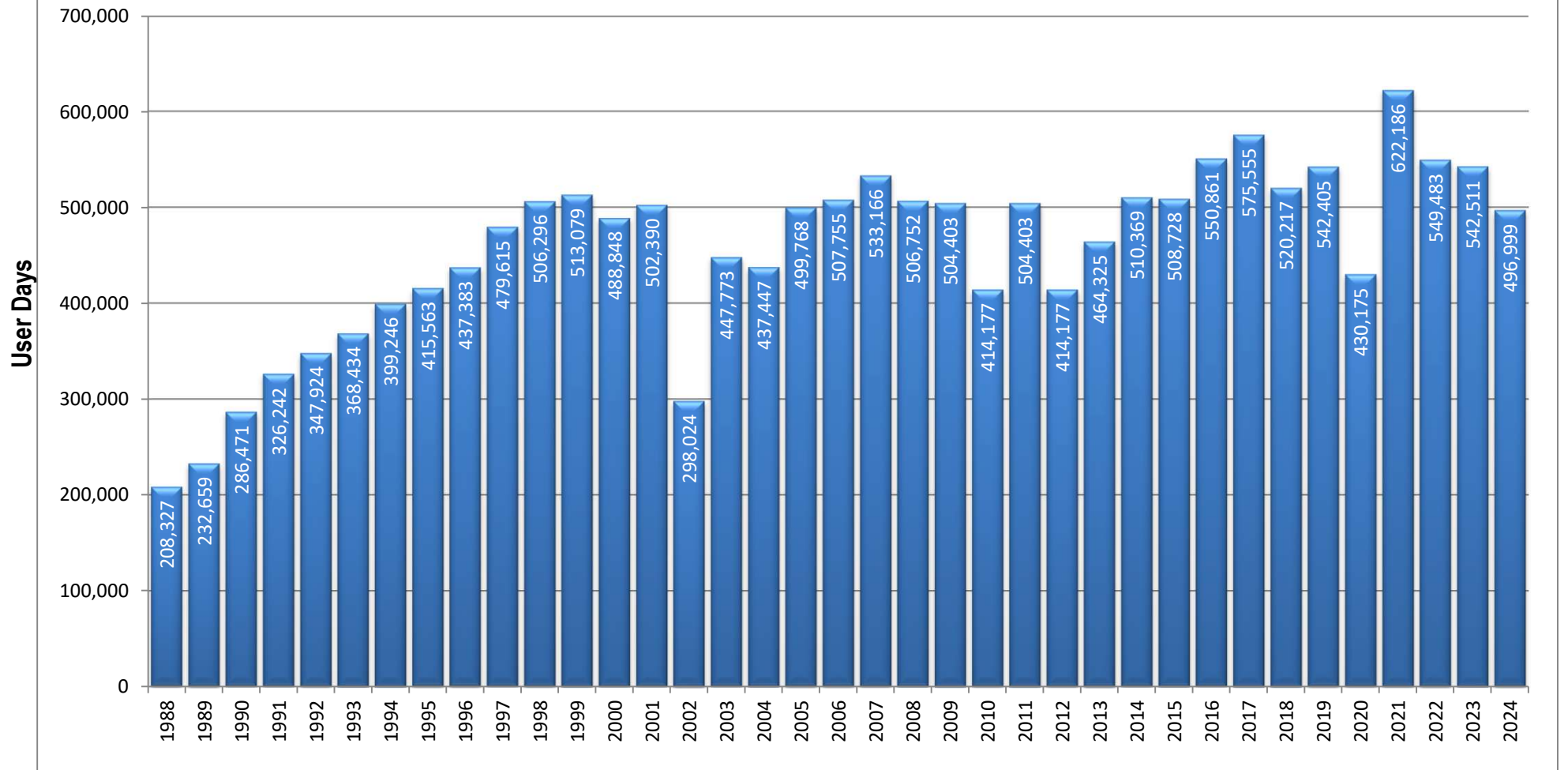
River	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Animas	45,000	38,000	33,659	37,000	34,117	35,991	34,069	28,495	37,553	33,120	52,967	36,132	37,139	30,079
Animas - Upper	411	603	600	678	No report	615	536	71	326	12	387	286	227	128
Arkansas	208,329	169,486	179,535	191,307	196,998	223,878	223,271	218,120	190,246	182,005	256,650	247,721	224,700	211,635
Blue	6,580	0	0	6,571	6,651	5,301	2,771	1,086	11,006	636	0		1,856	2,252
Clear Creek	60,644	35,422	61,172	72,224	65,617	77,783	87,077	66,174	95,063	52,044	100,203	80,364	81,674	67,116
Colorado - Glenwood	44,007	64,086	60,757	56,857	57,785	61,880	64,208	62,181	65,302	55,228	70,753	63,222	64,940	62,137
Colorado - Upper	39,012	41,811	40,420	40,337	41,352	37,071	47,915	50,681	35,777	46,375	45,433	33,866	32,866	35,183
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	2,907	3,099	754	3,535	2,787	1,112	3,978	993	1,122	1,268	820	943	1,158	968
Colorado - Westwater	6,069	5,623	6,992	6,432	6,522	6,478	6,522	6,654	7,324	4,190	6,369	5,299	3,550	3884
Dolores	515	35	0	58	26	74	558	0	350	0		75	940	
Eagle - Upper (Dowd Chutes)	1,286	13	359	1,134	570	606	745	428	399	1,076	266	88	669	399
Eagle (Below Edwards)	4,362	227	2,032	5,174	4,971	6,443	6,088	3,549	8,851	4,129	5,233	7,507	8,776	8,801
Gore Creek - Vail	2,500	900	900	500	404	601	500	0	324	98	0		0	175
Green/Yampa	4,218	7,983	9,694	11,581	11,476	10,196	13,917	15,645	No Report	3,755	5,132	3,085	5,846	5,636
Gunnison Gorge	2,148	1,579	3,431	2,152	3,205	3,584	3,861	4,787	4,039	4,553	6,110	6,096	5,054	5,057
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	2,669	1,150	3,387	3,387	3,083	3,276	3,548	3,276	2,129		4,170	2,883	827	794
Gunnison - Escalante	2,749	3,028	1,434	1,936	1,154	868	1,088	187	149	27	144	241	376	364
Gunnison - Forks to Austin		1,100	303	302	484	305	731	991	1,254	1,617	2,326	2,276	2,162	2,959
Gunnison - Lake Fork	284	1,123	221	193	304	259	318	267	245	425	348	169	217	186
North Platte	850	143	265	230	336	179	305	No Report	34	5			301	1,010
Piedra	190	54	25	285	No report	337	318	17	249	41	173	36	438	38
Poudre	37,869	22,780	37,214	37,225	37,934	41,192	38,134	38,741	37,707	21,481	39,877	33,008	29,921	29,076
Rio Grande	1,589	2,103	596	3,691	2,511	2,387	2,694	131	No Report	156	221	1,469	2,415	1,304
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	6,672	112	1,696	5,210	5,038	4,377	4,420	560	6,751	1,045	948	1,541	2,639	3,726
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	912	736	458	1,070	895	410	869	831	7,245	338	221	655	3,691	2,206
San Juan - Pagosa	6,171	778	3,475	3,764	4,949	4,850	3,948	1,012	5,517	0		4,000	9,340	4,743
San Miguel	1,900	1,828	1,235	3,921	5,438	5,064	8,097	2,061	9,778	4,899	8,201	5,547	7,173	4,152
South Platte	430	484	713	371	473	788	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report	No Report
Taylor	14,130	9,891	12,998	13,244	13,648	14,956	15,069	13,279	13,665	11,652	15,234	12,974	13,616	12,991
Total User Days	504,403	414,177	464,325	510,369	508,728	550,861	575,555	520,217	542,405	430,175	622,186	549,483	542,511	496,999
User Day Change From Previous Year	6,536	-90,226	50,148	46,044	-1,641	42,133	24,694	-55,338	22,188	-112,230	192,011	-72,703	-6,972	-45,512

Sources: National Park Service
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Bureau of Land Management
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2024 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	504,403	2.7%	\$114.00	\$57,502,855	\$147,207,308	2.2%
2010	414,177	1.5%	\$115.71	\$47,925,181	\$122,688,464	-16.7%
2011	504,403	3.0%	\$119.18	\$60,116,359	\$153,897,880	25.4%
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	4.7%
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%
2022	549,483	6.5%	\$154.60	\$84,951,180	\$217,475,020	-5.9%
2023	542,511	3.4%	\$159.86	\$86,724,986	\$222,015,965	2.1%
2024	496,999	2.9%	\$164.49	\$81,753,543	\$209,289,069	-5.7%

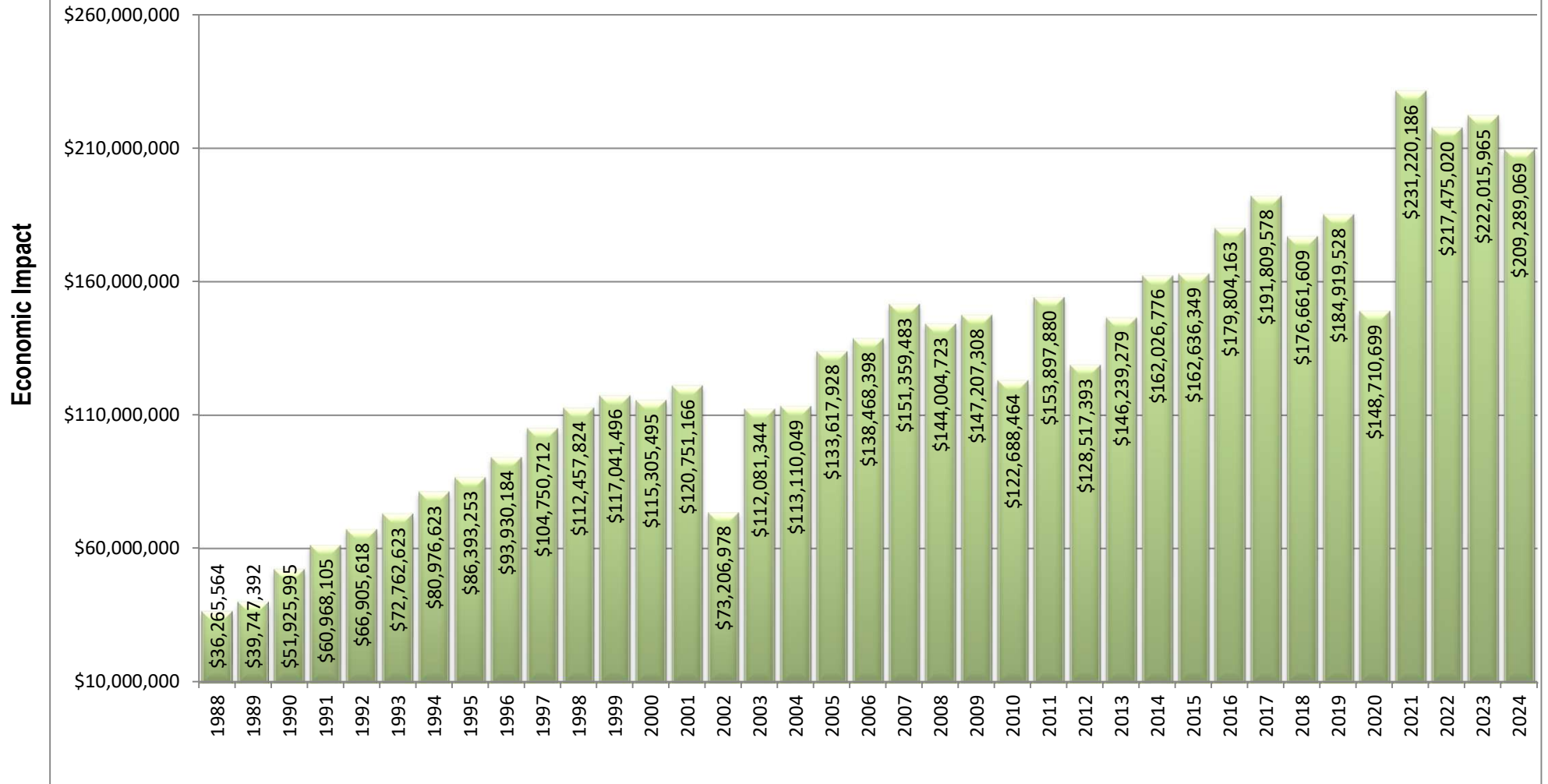
See glossary for above economic impact formulas and sources

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

1988-2024



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2024 ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO

RIVER	USER DAYS	DIRECT EXPENDITURES	ECONOMIC IMPACT
Animas	30,079	\$4,947,826	\$12,666,436
Animas - Upper	128	\$21,055	\$53,902
Arkansas	211,635	\$34,812,768	\$89,120,687
Blue	2,252	\$370,441	\$948,330
Clear Creek	67,116	\$11,040,205	\$28,262,924
Colorado - Glenwood	62,137	\$10,221,187	\$26,166,240
Colorado - Upper	35,183	\$5,787,406	\$14,815,759
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	968	\$159,231	\$407,630
Colorado - Westwater	3,884	\$638,896	\$1,635,574
Dolores	0	\$0	\$0
Eagle - Upper	399	\$65,633	\$168,021
Eagle - Lower	8,801	\$1,447,715	\$3,706,151
Gore Creek - Vail	175	\$28,787	\$73,693
Green/Yampa	5,636	\$927,090	\$2,373,351
Gunnison Gorge	5,057	\$831,848	\$2,129,531
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	794	\$130,609	\$334,358
Gunnison - Escalante	364	\$59,876	\$153,282
Gunnison - Forks to Austin	2,959	\$486,739	\$1,246,052
Gunnison - Lake Fork	186	\$30,596	\$78,326
North Platte	1,010	\$166,139	\$425,317
Piedra	38	\$6,251	\$16,002
Poudre	29,076	\$4,782,839	\$12,244,067
Rio Grande	1,304	\$214,501	\$549,122
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	3,726	\$612,906	\$1,569,040
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	2,206	\$362,875	\$928,959
San Juan - Pagosa	4,743	\$780,197	\$1,997,304
San Miguel	4,152	\$682,981	\$1,748,431
South Platte	No Report	No Report	No Report
Taylor	12,991	\$2,136,947	\$5,470,583
Totals	496,999	\$81,753,543	\$209,289,069

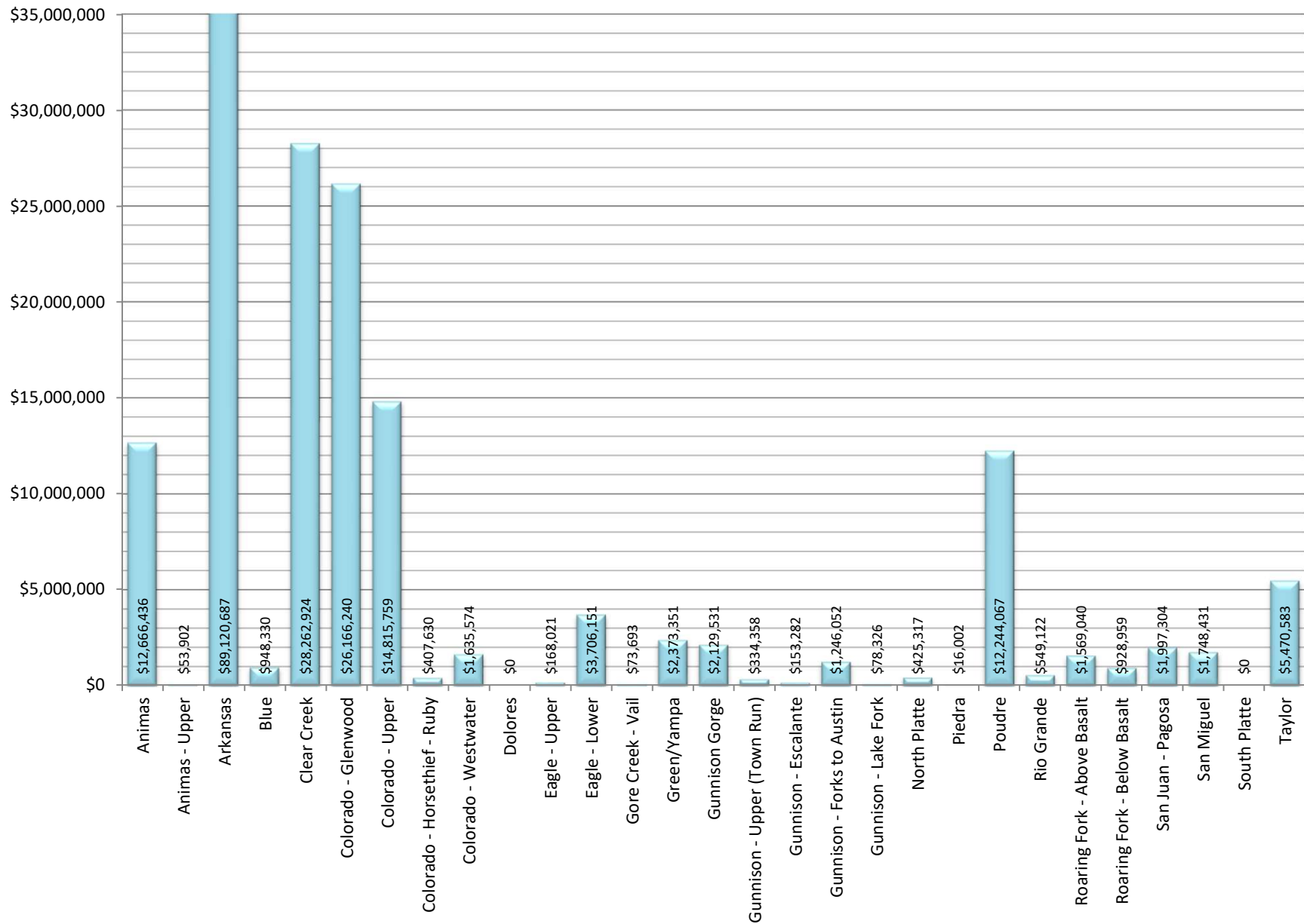
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ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COMMERCIAL RIVER RAFTING IN COLORADO - 2024



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INDIVIDUAL RIVER COMMERCIAL RAFTING STATISTICS - 3 YR RANGE

RIVER	2022 USER DAYS	2023 USER DAYS	2024 USER DAYS	% CHANGE '21 - '22	% CHANGE '22 - '23	% CHANGE '23 - '24	2022 % MARKET SHARE	2023 % MARKET SHARE	2024 % MARKET SHARE
Animas	36,132	37,139	30,079	9.1%	2.8%	-19.0%	6.6%	6.8%	6.1%
Animas - Upper	286	227	128	N/A	-20.6%	-43.6%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Arkansas	247,721	224,700	211,635	36.1%	-9.3%	-5.8%	45.1%	41.4%	42.6%
Blue	0	1,856	2,252	-100.0%	N/A	N/A	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
Clear Creek	80,364	81,674	67,116	54.4%	1.6%	-17.8%	14.6%	15.1%	13.5%
Colorado - Glenwood	63,222	64,940	62,137	14.5%	2.7%	-4.3%	11.5%	12.0%	12.5%
Colorado - Upper	33,866	32,866	35,183	-27.0%	-3.0%	7.0%	6.2%	6.1%	7.1%
Colorado - Horsethief - Ruby	943	1,158	968	-25.6%	22.8%	-16.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Colorado - Westwater	5,299	3,550	3884	26.5%	-33.0%	9.4%	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%
Dolores	75	940		N/A	N/A	-100.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%
Eagle - Upper	88	669	399	-91.8%	660.2%	-40.4%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Eagle - Lower	7,507	8,776	8,801	81.8%	16.9%	0.3%	1.4%	1.6%	1.8%
Gore Creek - Vail	0	0	175	-100.0%	N/A	N/A	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Green/Yampa	3,085	5,846	5,636	-17.8%	89.5%	-3.6%	0.6%	1.1%	1.1%
Gunnison Gorge	6,096	5,054	5,057	33.9%	-17.1%	0.1%	1.1%	0.9%	1.0%
Gunnison - Upper (Town Run)	2,883	827	794	N/A	-71.3%	N/A	0.5%	0.2%	0.2%
Gunnison - Escalante	241	376	364	792.6%	56.0%	-3.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Gunnison - Forks to Austin	2,276	2,162	2,959	40.8%	-5.0%	36.9%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%
Gunnison - Lake Fork	169	217	186	-60.2%	28.4%	-14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
North Platte	0	301	1,010	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Piedra	36	438	38	N/A	1116.7%	-91.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Poudre	33,008	29,921	29,076	53.7%	-9.4%	-2.8%	6.0%	5.5%	5.9%
Rio Grande	1,469	2,415	1,304	841.7%	64.4%	-46.0%	0.3%	0.4%	0.3%
Roaring Fork - Above Basalt	1,541	2,639	3,726	47.5%	71.3%	41.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.7%
Roaring Fork - Below Basalt	655	3,691	2,206	93.8%	463.5%	-40.2%	0.1%	0.7%	0.4%
San Juan - Pagosa	4,000	9,340	4,743	N/A	N/A	-49.2%	0.7%	1.7%	1.0%
San Miguel	5,547	7,173	4,152	13.2%	29.3%	-42.1%	1.0%	1.3%	0.8%
South Platte	No Report	No Report	No Report	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Report	No Report	No Report
Taylor	12,974	13,616	12,991	11.3%	4.9%	-4.6%	2.4%	2.5%	2.6%
Totals	549,483	542,511	496,999	27.7%	-1.3%	-8.4%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Sources: National Park Service
US Forest Service
Bureau of Land Management
Local Outfitters
Colorado Parks & Wildlife

Colorado River Outfitters Assoc.
PO Box 1711
Idaho Springs, CO 80452
720-260-4135

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