

Rifle Falls State Park



Who we are

Colorado Parks and Wildlife utilizes the principles of conservation - the wise use of natural resources - to effectively manage fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, camping, motorized and non-motorized trails, boating and outdoor education for the citizens of Colorado and its visitors. Rifle Falls State Park is extremely popular due to its trio of renowned 60 foot-high waterfalls, named among Sunset magazine's top 10 waterfalls in the West. Fascinating limestone caves to the northeast of the falls provide families with a great introduction to cave exploration. The park's lush vegetation and unique scenery attract hikers, photographers and others from around the country.

Top attractions

- The 60 foot-high waterfalls and caves at Rifle Falls are spectacular and showcase the unique geology of Colorado.
- Campsites and picnic sites are extremely popular with families. The picnic sites have ample shade and are very popular on summer weekends. Reservations for the campsites should be made well ahead of time.
- Campsite #20 is recognized as one of the best campsites in Colorado's state parks. Make a reservation early.

Our partners

- Colorado River Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Numerous local school districts
- Farmers Irrigation Company
- Silt Water Conservancy District

Challenges we face

- Rifle Falls is a small park but has become one of the most popular day-use facilities in the area. The park often reaches capacity on weekends, which means visitors must be turned away.
- Infrastructure needs at the park are significant, and made more troublesome by budget constraints. Without adequate maintenance, visitor satisfaction with park facilities may decline.
- As park visitation increases, staff concerns over natural resource management and protection increase.



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Volunteer Activities

- Camp hosts provide the ability to monitor and manage park campgrounds. Every effort is made to retain quality camp hosts for the next season.
- Local scouts perform a "park clean-up" in spring, summer and fall.

Rifle Falls State Park

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(970) 625-1607 • Email: rifle.gap.park@state.co.us
Park Manager: Brian Palcer

As of July 1, 2022

VIC.SCHENDEL/CPW

Manager's Message

Rifle Falls is a "hidden gem" that isn't so hidden anymore! Our visitation numbers have steadily increased over the last several years. The park itself is very small and parking is limited; we encourage visitors to see the park in the evenings or during the week, when it is easier to find a parking spot. We have made several recent renovations at the park, including a major project renovating the Squirrel Trail. Rifle Falls offer several terrific trails to explore, which will take you to our caves and the fish hatchery, as well to a location over the falls where the views are fantastic! Visitors and staff regularly report bear sightings, and on rare occasions we will also get reports of moose sightings. On the first day of the year, we invite visitors to come out for First Day Hikes. The falls never stop flowing, and we encourage people to visit in the winter when the trees and rocks around the falls are covered in ice.

Geography

Region: Northwest
County: Garfield
Year Acquired: 1966
Elevation: 6,800 ft
Miles From Denver: 210

Acreage

Total Acres: 48

Governmental

US Cong Dist: 3rd
CO Senate: 8th
CO House: 57th

Employees

Permanent: 6
Temporary: 13
Volunteers (FY 22 together with Rifle Gap State Park): 183
Volunteer Hours (FY 22 together with Rifle Gap State Park): 12,443

Annual Visitation

FY 22: ~140,000

Facilities

Amphitheater
Boat Ramps
12 Picnic Sites
Wedding Facilities

Roads

Paved: 0.4 miles
Unpaved: 0.1 miles

Trails

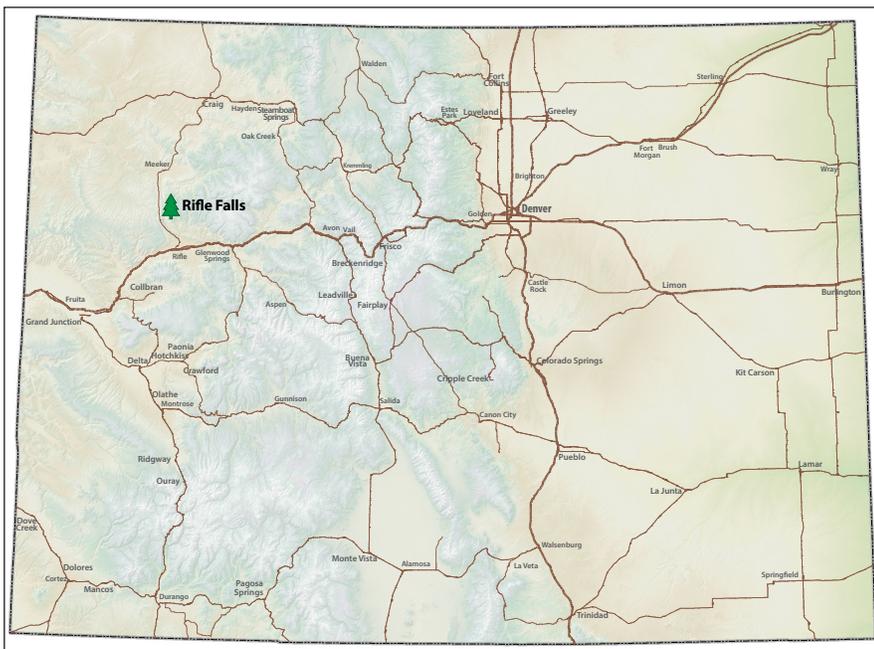
Biking: 1.5 miles
Hiking: 1.5 miles
Cross Country Skiing/
Snowshoeing: 1.5 miles
Total: 4 miles

Recreation

Fishing
Picnicking
Ranger/Nature Programs
Wildlife/Bird Viewing
Winter Camping

Camping

Campsites (basic, year-round): 7
Campsites (electrical, year-round): 13



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