## General Information:
Beginning with Gore Canyon, the Colorado River offers many miles of public access downstream of Kremmling. The Pumphouse recreation area, and other locations downstream from that point, are very popular launching points for floating the river by both anglers and other recreational boaters.

**Location:** West of Kremmling, accessed from Grand County road 1.

**Recreational Management:** Bureau of Land Management. Use fees apply at developed recreational sites.

## Amenities and General Info.
- BLM recreation areas at Pumphouse and Radium offer camping, boat ramps, and pit toilets. New public boat ramps at State Bridge and Two Bridges have expanded access and trip possibilities. Privately owned Rancho Del Rio offers similar facilities.

### Regulations
- The bag and possession limit for trout is two fish. Standard regulations apply otherwise.

## Previous Stocking
None—this reach of the Colorado River is managed as a wild, self-sustaining sport fishery.

## Sportfishing Notes
- One of the largest trout rivers in the state, this reach of river offers a wide diversity of habitat to fish.
- Float fishing is highly popular, although wading is productive as well, especially at lower flows, and for those willing to hike to more secluded locations.
- Large populations of the giant stonefly *Pteronarcy* *californica* inhabit this reach and can produce spectacular fishing. Because this species has a multi-year life cycle in its larval form, nymphs of this species are present virtually year-round and fishing with large salmonfly nymphs can be productive nearly any time.
- In addition to the stoneflies there are many other prey items available to trout including caddis, mayflies, and an assortment of forage fish. Streamer fishing can be productive.
The information contained in this report was obtained from a 2-mile long sampling station which ends at the Radium bridge (above). The Radium hot spring is at middle right and the Sheep Horn Creek confluence is at middle left. This reach of river contains a wide variety of habitat (canyon-type water with large boulders, large riffles, deep pools, long runs, braided channel) and is considered to be a good representation of the river in this area.

Sampling on this reach of river is accomplished using two 16-foot electrofishing rafts such as the one pictured above. There is a generator and control box on the boat behind the rower, and a livewell in front of the rower. A fiberglass boom extending from the bow holds an electrode in the water. The netters capture the stunned fish and place them in the livewell. Fish are weighed, measured, marked, and released. At a later date the survey is repeated. The proportion of marked fish in the second sample yields the statistics necessary to estimate population parameters. Because of the size of this reach of river, two boats working in tandem on opposite sides of the river are necessary.
The table above contains the results of spring electrofishing over the past three years.

The biggest differences seen in the 2012 survey were the increase in total brown trout numbers and the excellent body condition of the brown trout. Both of these observations can probably be explained by the mild winter of 2011-2012. Temperatures remained relatively warm all winter and large sections of the river which normally become ice-bound remained open. This likely allowed the trout to continue feeding and gaining weight throughout the winter. The fish pictured at right is representative of the condition of the brown trout during the survey.

Rainbows continue to constitute a small portion of the total trout population on this reach of river. There are many stocked lakes, reservoirs, and private river reaches upstream of this location that probably all contribute some rainbows to this reach, and whatever population exists here appears to be more or less incidental. The increase in rainbow numbers in 2011 was probably the result of our survey encountering more spawning aggregations at the time. Flows were much higher (thus cooler) than normal during the 2011 survey, which probably had the effect of delaying the rainbow trout spawn. In 2012, all the rainbows that we encountered were done spawning and the estimate probably reflects a more accurate representation of the year-round population. In the future, we may consider stocking whirling disease resistant rainbow trout fingerlings in this reach.

Total number of mountain whitefish caught are reported here. For reasons not fully understood, recapture rates are almost always poor (typically less than 5%) for these fish. Population estimates based on recapture rates that low are unreliable. However it is important to note that this species does contribute significantly to the total fish population. The whitefish were also in excellent body condition.

One factor contributing to the good condition of the fish in this reach is the large population of aquatic insects, in particular the *Pteronarcys californica* stonefly pictured at right. These nymphs are available year-round as a forage source. 2012 seemed to be a particularly good year for them, again probably due to the mild winter.
Brown trout size distribution

Size distribution of the brown trout captured over the previous three years is shown at left. The reduced numbers seen in 2011 are the result of high flows (1,750 CFS) during the survey rather than a reduction in the trout population. While the graphs only display fish up to 24”, brown trout up to 30” have been captured.

The 2012 sample saw the presence of large year classes of age-1 (born in 2011; at 4” on the graph) and age-2 (born in 2010; at 8”) brown trout. Again, this is likely the result of the mild winter in 2011-2012 resulting in high survival rates among small fish. The large 2010 year class is the main contributor to the increased population estimate for brown trout >6” seen on the table on the previous page.

One unique aspect of this fishery is that it contains the most diverse assemblage of fish species of any river in the area. 14 species of fish were captured:

- Brook trout
- Lake trout
- Bluehead sucker
- Colorado River cutthroat
- Longnose sucker
- Mottled sculpin
- Brown trout
- Mountain whitefish
- Rainbow trout
- Rainbow-cutthroat hybrid
- Speckled dace
- Snake River cutthroat
- White sucker
- Flannelmouth sucker

Another brown trout in fine condition.