



Gold Medal

W a t e r s

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Summary

- Gunnison and Taylor Rivers for many decades considered premier trout fisheries
- Water development impacted Gunnison and Taylor Rivers (Aspinall Unit Reservoirs and Taylor Park Reservoir)
- Exchange Agreement allowed optimization of flows
- Coordinated efforts have significantly improved habitat for trout



“For almost half a century, the Gunnison River was rated as the best trout stream in the entire United States...not a rating by Coloradoans, but the studied opinion of a research committee sent out by the National Geographic Society” - 1946 Colorado Conservation Comments



Rail Access in 1881



Lola Hotel and Fishing Resort – one of 16 Resorts or Hotels in place on Gunnison River by 1893



Guests fishing on the Gunnison River



Fishermen near the Dillon Pinnacles

Gunnison and Taylor River habitat significantly impacted by water projects



*Colorado River Project -
Blue Mesa Reservoir*



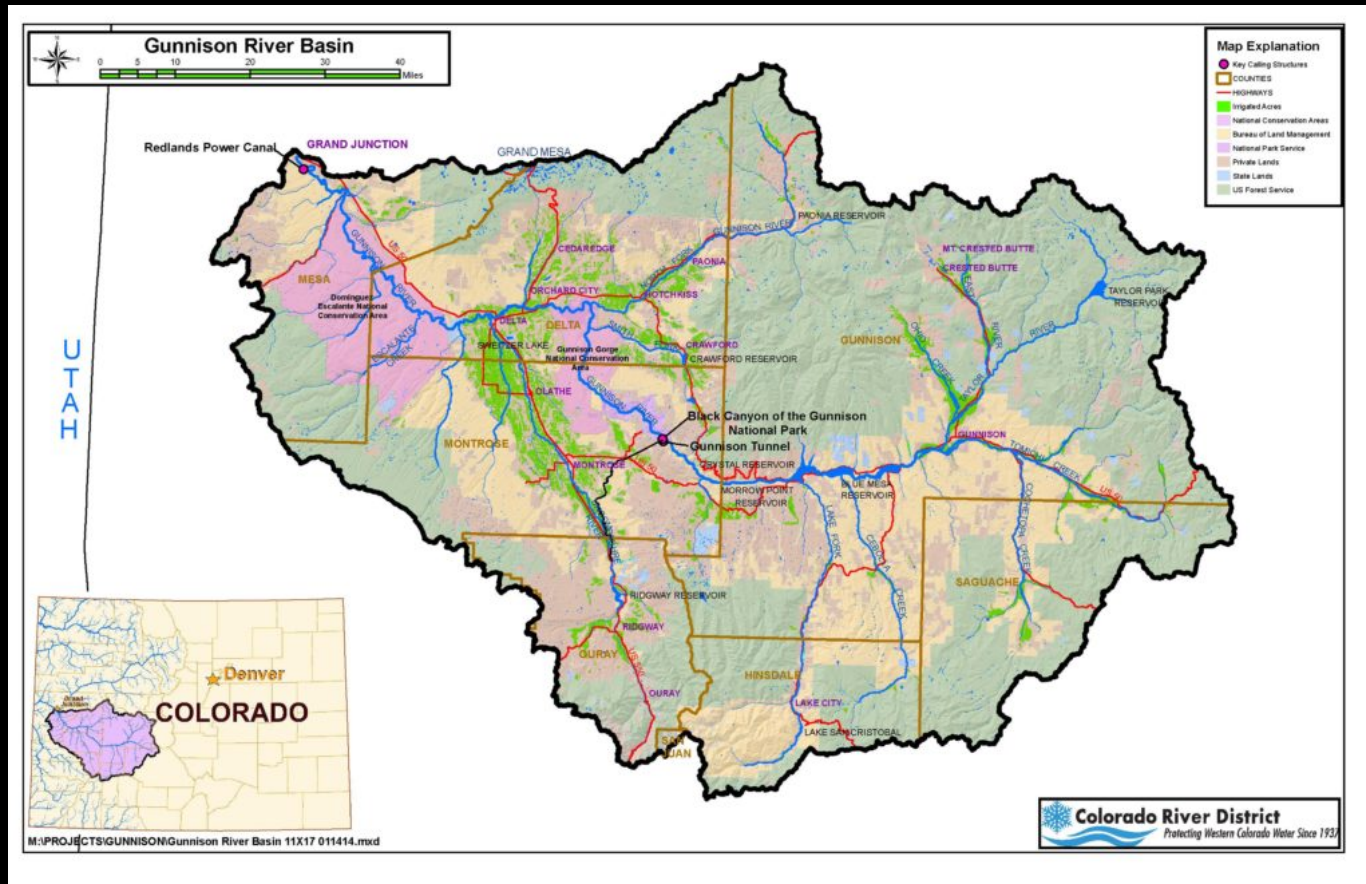
Uncompahgre Project - Taylor Park Reservoir

Uncompahgre Project



Uncompahgre Project

- Includes Taylor Park Reservoir, the Gunnison Tunnel, 7 Diversions, and 566 miles of canals and laterals
- Irrigates 76,000 acres in the Montrose to Delta area
- Operated by the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association



Taylor Park Reservoir



Taylor Dam.

Colorado River Project – Aspinall Unit

- Inundated 38 miles of the Gunnison River
- Extended trout habitat downstream into Lower Gunnison River in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison – Current Gold Medal Water
- Mitigation program created substantial new public access areas and improved aquatic habitat on degraded reaches



1975 Exchange Agreement

- Stabilized winter flow to benefit fish reproduction
- More optimized flows for all fish life stages
- Reduced water temperatures in Gunnison River
- Flows improved for recreational boaters
- Improved water supply for irrigators
- Reduced flooding



Fisheries Habitat Improvement Projects

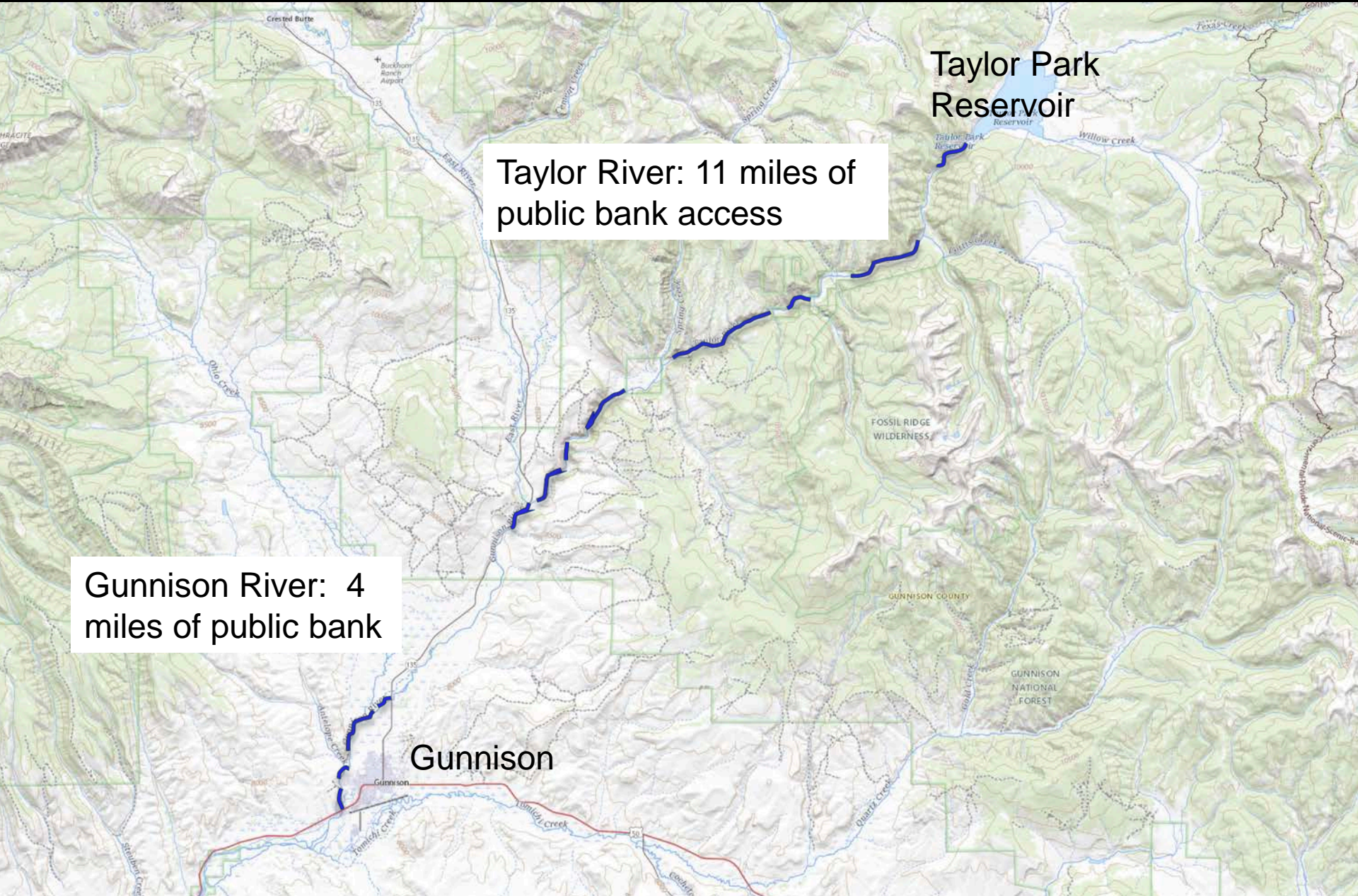


COLORADO
Colorado Water
Conservation Board
Department of Natural Resources



LOR
FOUNDATION

Gunnison and Taylor Rivers



Taylor River: 11 miles of public bank access

Gunnison River: 4 miles of public bank

Taylor Park Reservoir

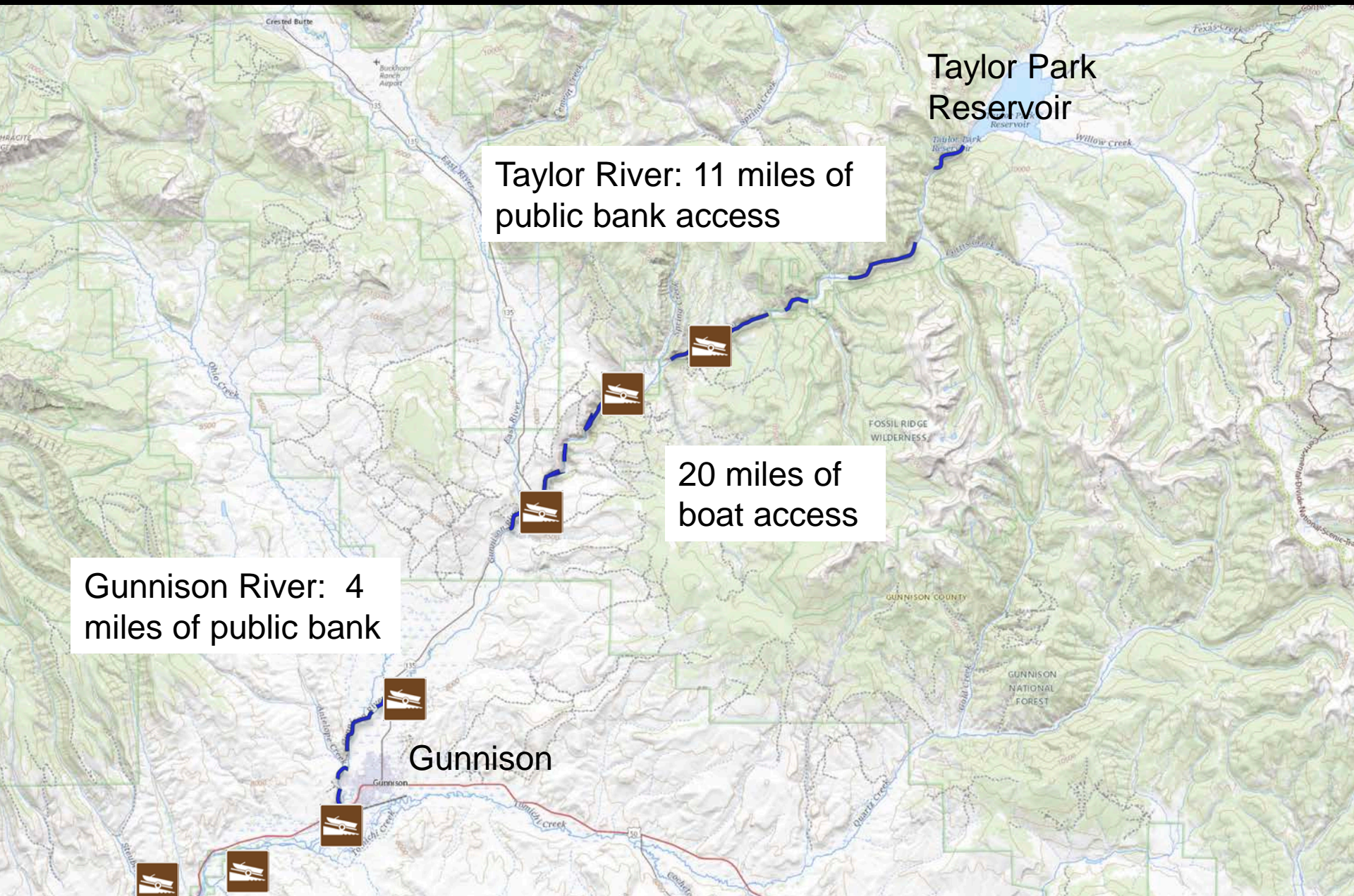
Gunnison

FOSSIL RIDGE WILDERNESS

GUNNISON COUNTY

GUNNISON NATIONAL FOREST

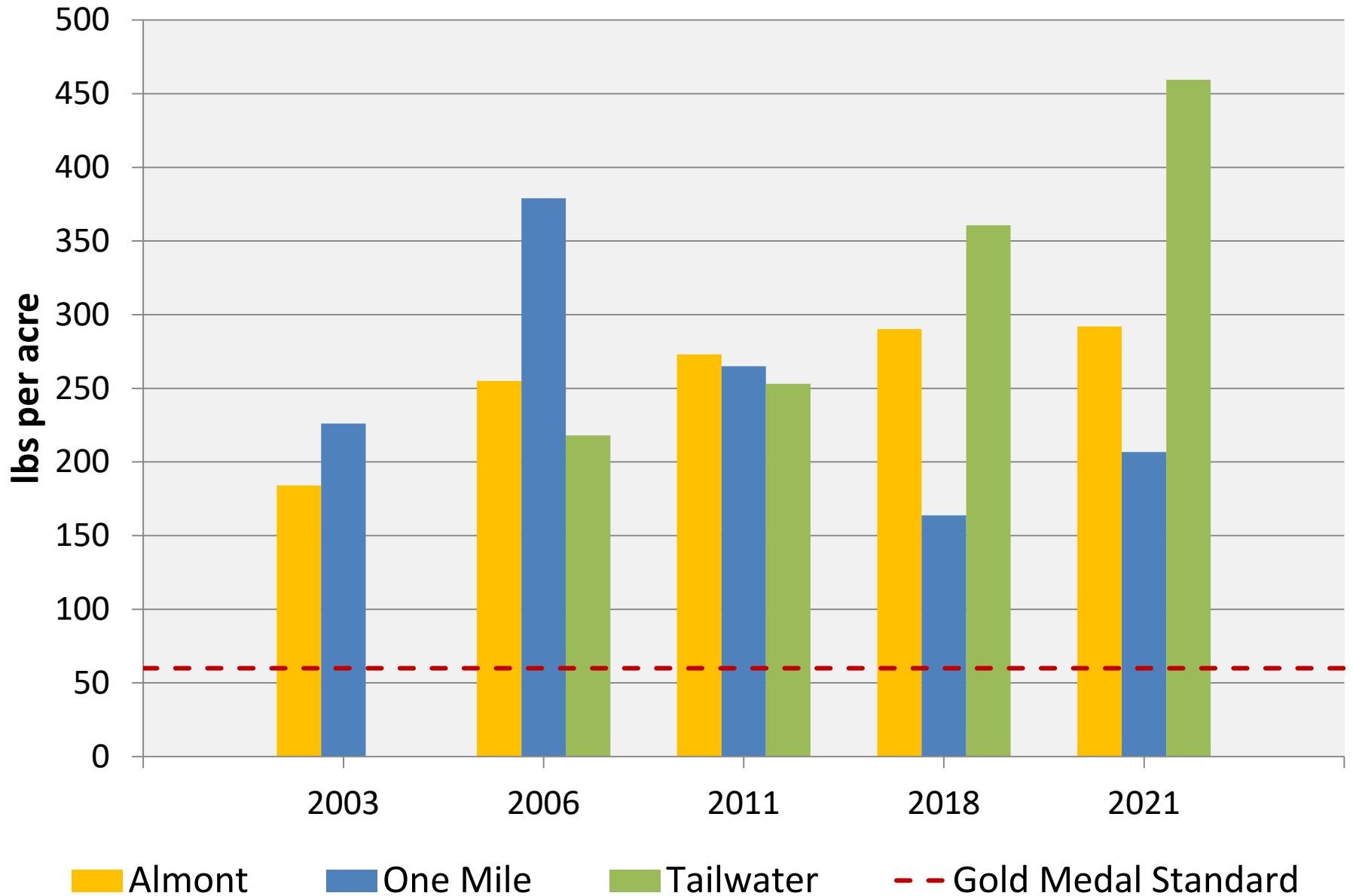
Gunnison and Taylor Rivers



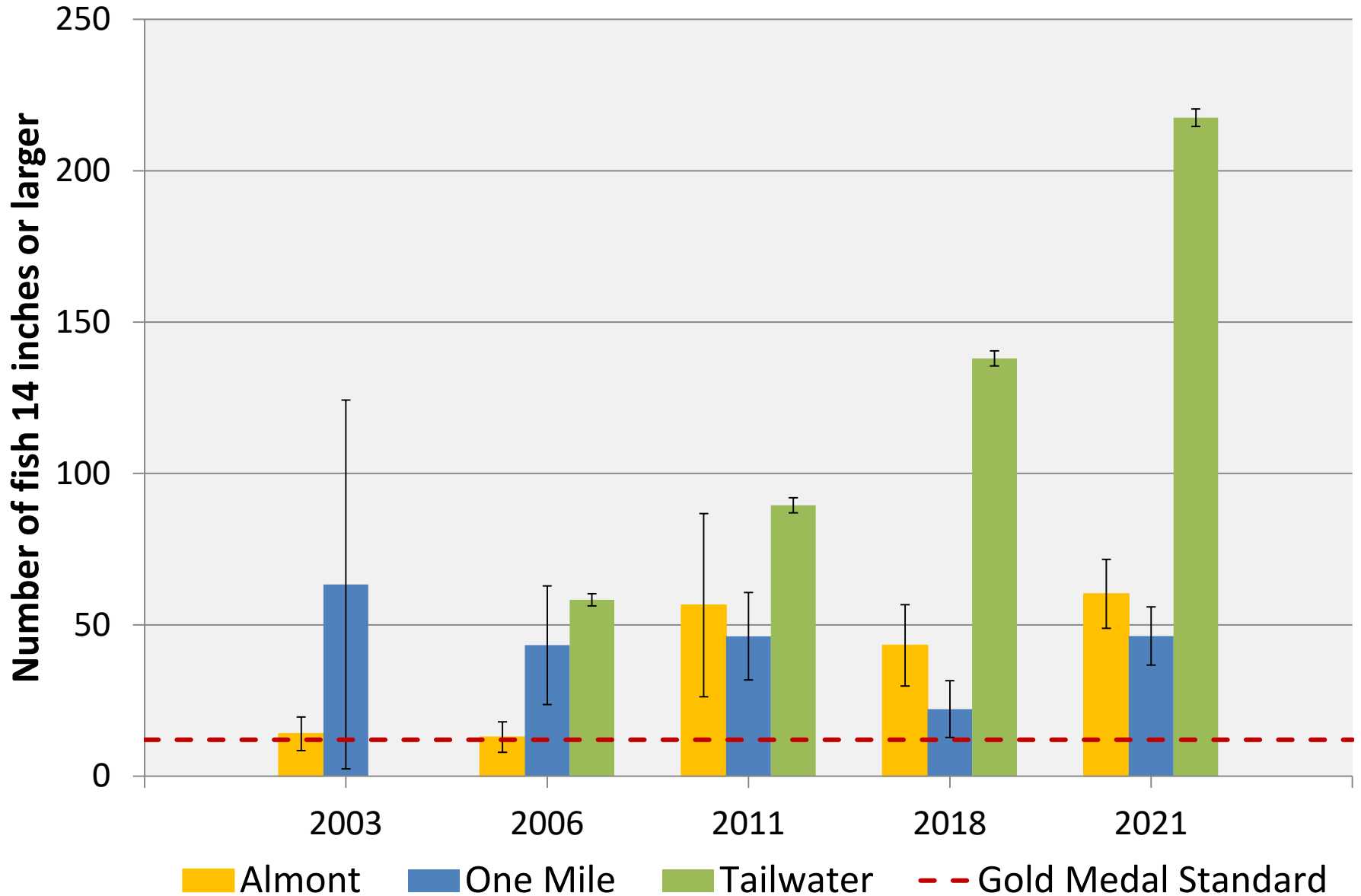
Taylor River Trout Biomass and Density



Taylor River Biomass



Taylor River Quality Trout Density



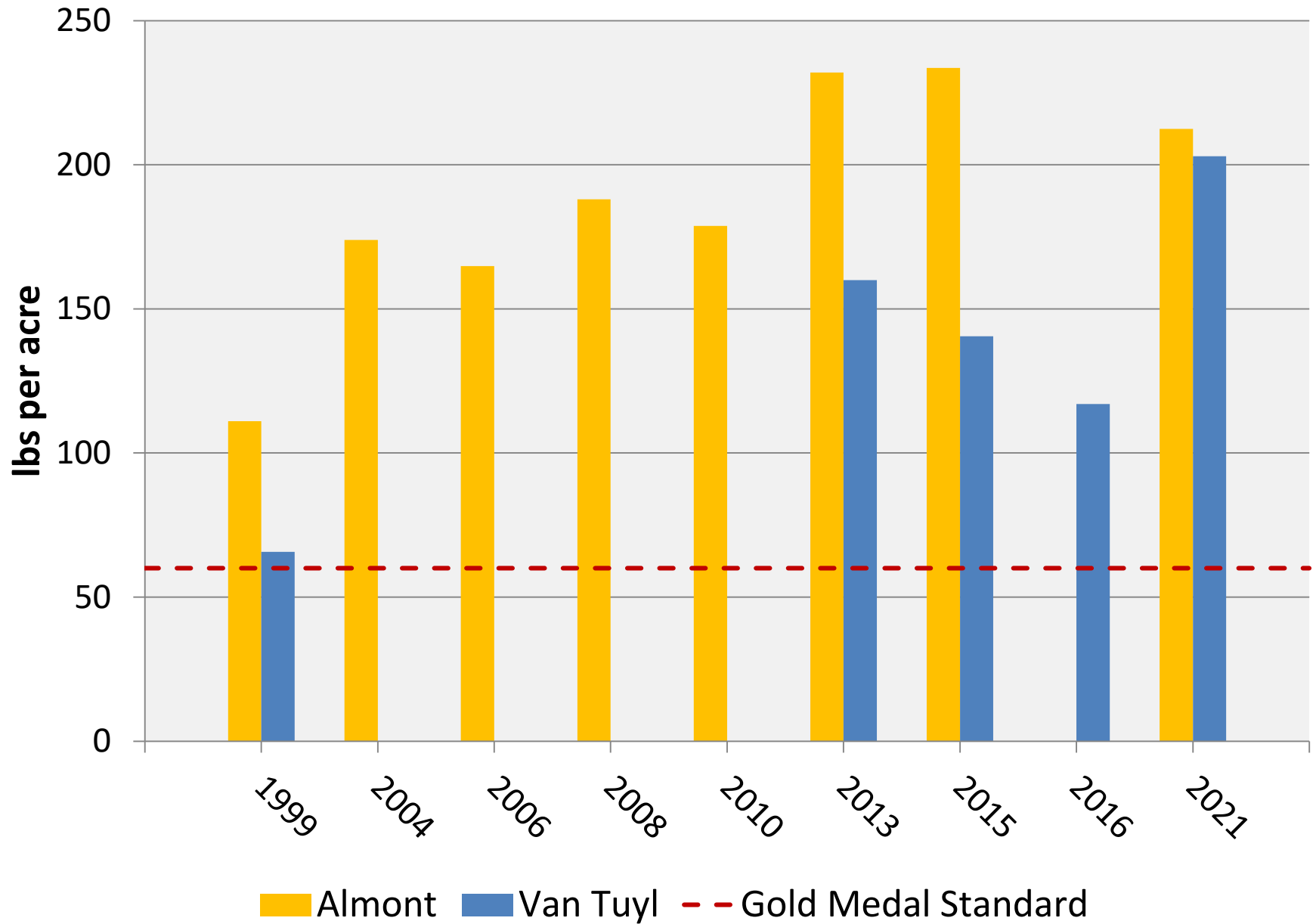




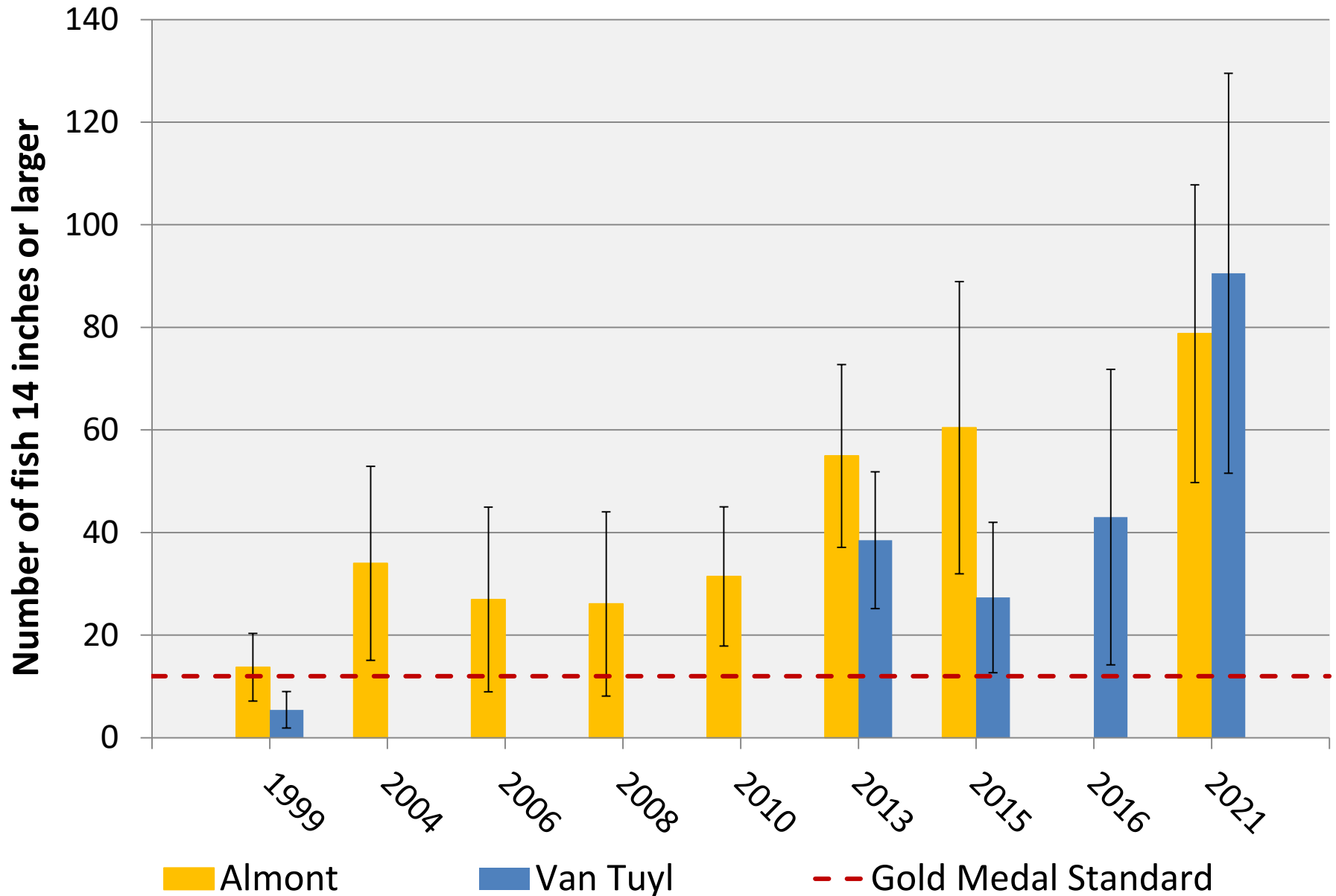
Gunnison River Trout Biomass and Density



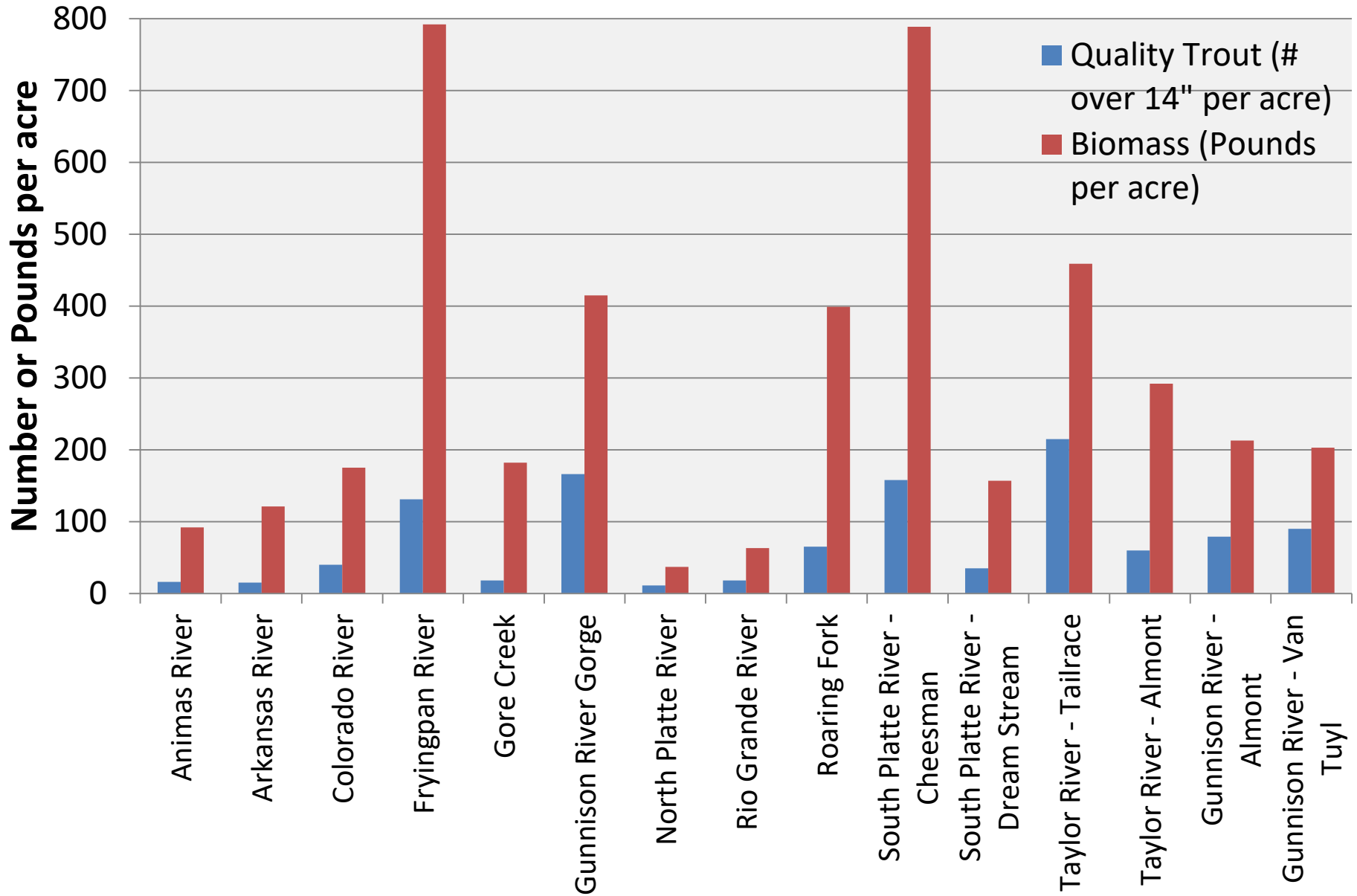
Gunnison River Biomass



Gunnison River Quality Trout Density



Gold Medal Waters





Gunnison River Gold!

Partner Organizations

CPW would like to thank the following for their contributions to **habitat and conservation work** on the Gunnison and Taylor rivers:

Uncompahgre Valley Water Users

Colorado River District

US Bureau of Reclamation

Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District

Colorado Water Conservation Board

City of Gunnison

Goddard Ranch

Trout Unlimited

Gunnison Angling Society

Lor Foundation

United States Forest Service

Gunnison County



Photos courtesy the Denver Public Library, Doug Dillingham, History Colorado, and waterarchives.org.