

Paonia State Park



Who we are

Paonia State Park is located 17 miles northeast of the town of Paonia, near the base of the Ragged Mountains along Highway 133. Paonia State Park was established in 1964. The park consists of 1,523 land acres and 334 surface acres of water. The park is located on the West Elk Loop of Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program. The main activities at the park are camping, fishing, boating and sightseeing. The lake is considered to be excellent for wakeboarding and water skiing. The Ragged Wilderness can be accessed through the park.

Top attractions

- Tree-sheltered camping is available next to a mountain stream.
- Wildlife viewing opportunities are abundant.
- The lake's long narrow shape makes it excellent for water skiing and wake boarding.
- It is located on the West Elk Loop of Colorado Scenic and Historic Byways Program.
- The West Elk Wilderness and Redstone/Marble Historic Districts are close in proximity.

Our partners

- Fire Mountain Canal Water Users
- U.S. Bureau of Reclamation
- Colorado Department of Transportation
- West Elk Scenic Byway

Challenges we face

- Dealing with the impact of drive-by travelers who stop and use the Paonia State Park facilities without paying is a top challenge. There is not enough staff at the park to educate the public or to enforce the rules at the park.
- Maintenance at the park remains a problem because of the lack of adequate staffing and funding.
- The visitation season at Paonia is very short, with the boat ramp often closed before the end of August due to low water levels. Finding ways to increase visitation (and revenues) by creating new recreation opportunities is a challenge.

Volunteer Activities

- Volunteers help with revenue collection, cleaning restrooms and general maintenance.



DUSTIN DOKSCOCIL/CPW

Paonia State Park

1526 County Rd 982, Arboles, CO 81121
(970) 883-2208 • Email: crawford.park@state.co.us
Park Manager: Scott Rist

As of July 1, 2022

KEN PAPA/CPW

Manager's Message

Camp near a babbling stream and water-ski on a mountain reservoir in view of the majestic Ragged Mountains while visiting Paonia State Park. The park features water skiing, boating, wildlife viewing, camping, outdoor photography and some of the most outstanding mountain scenery in Colorado. The park's natural beauty and the abundance of wildflowers make it a "must see" for photographers and nature lovers.

Geography

Region: Southwest
County: Gunnison
Year Acquired: 1967
Elevation: 6,500 ft
Miles From Denver: 214

Acreage

Total Acres: 1,857

Governmental

US Cong Dist: 3rd
CO Senate: 5th
CO House: 58th

Employees

Temporary: 3

Annual Visitation

FY 22: 30,000

Facilities

Boat Ramp
Picnic Sites

Roads

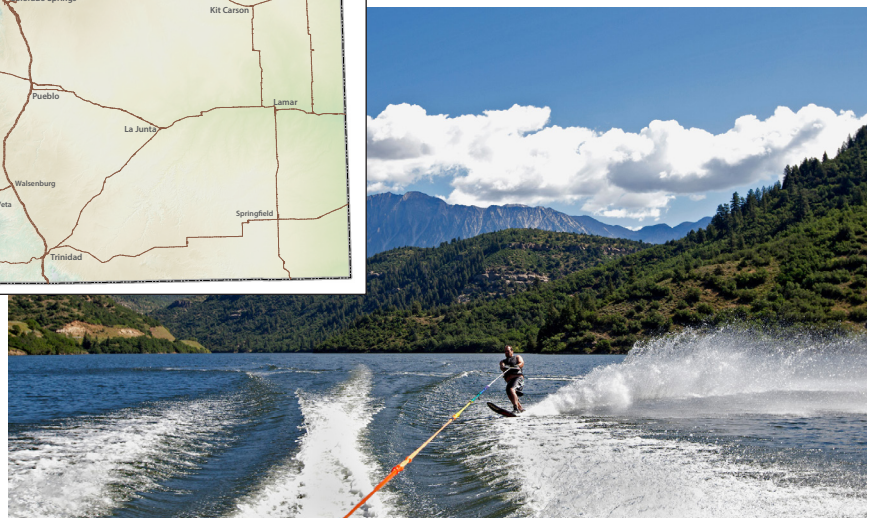
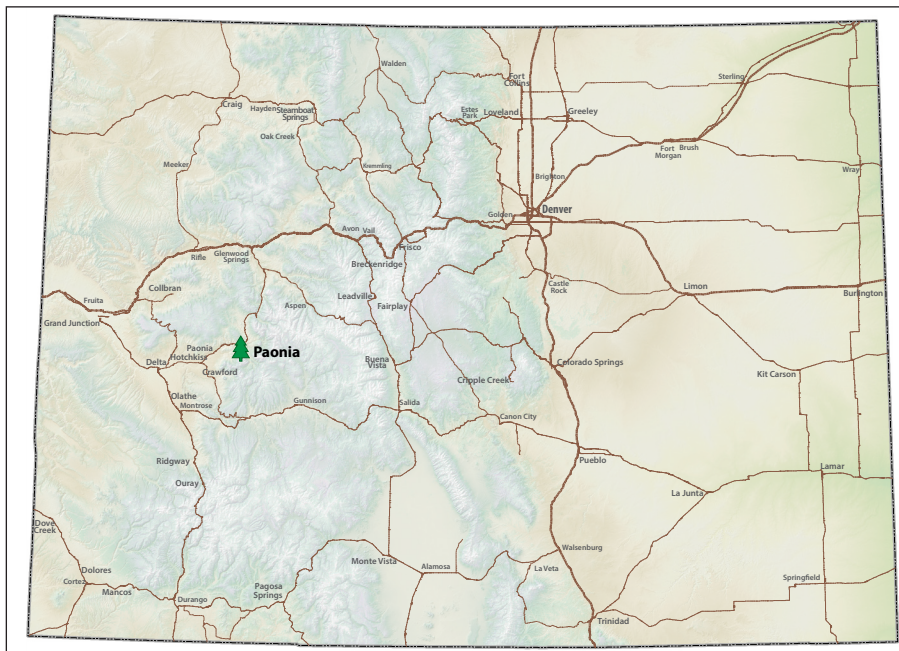
Unpaved: 0.6 miles

Recreation

Boating
Fishing
Hunting
Jet Skiing
Picnicking
Sailboarding
Waterskiing
Wildlife/Bird Viewing

Camping

Campsites (primitive/seasonal): 13
Campsites (electrical/seasonal): 7



KEN PAPA/CPW