



## Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

### Like No Other Canyon

*"...no other North American canyon combines the depth, narrowness, sheerness, and somber countenance of the Black Canyon."*

Geologist Wallace R. Hansen

Once your initial reaction to seeing the Black Canyon settles, it's hard not to question the size and scale of this imposing canyon. Dropping an average of 95 feet per mile in the national park, the Gunnison River is indeed carving a steep canyon. The walls on average are 2,000 feet deep.

Other canyons dwarf its depth, but when combined with Black Canyon's alarming verticality, the view is dizzying. Rock walls, only 40 feet apart, plunge directly into the river at "The Narrows." This is equal to the width of the South Rim Visitor Center.

Contrary to the dramatic view, common and slow geologic forces have been at work on this landscape. Hard rocks, uplifting, ancient volcanoes, and erosion play a role in the past. However, it is the interplay

of timing and proximity that dictates the look of this spectacular wilderness canyon.

Explore the overlooks or hike a trail to observe some of Black Canyon's dazzling rocks up close. Like all natural objects at the park, be sure to leave rocks where you found them.

If you are looking to learn more, consider attending a ranger program or picking up a copy of Building Black Canyon, a free geology brochure.



**Did you know?** Ranger programs are a great way to experience Black Canyon and uncover surprising stories of the natural and cultural history. Talks, walks, and evening programs are available (see page 5).

## Curecanti National Recreation Area

### Range of Recreation

How would you like to spend your time at Curecanti National Recreation Area? There are many obvious activities like boating and fishing on Blue Mesa Reservoir or catching a ride on the Morrow Point Boat Tour. Consider an escape into Curecanti's lesser known and remote areas.

Curecanti has 7 hiking trails, totaling 24 roundtrip miles. Curecanti Creek Trail is a favorite among many (see page 7 for details).

Great fishing isn't restricted to the basins of Blue Mesa Reservoir. Consider casting a lure into the

Gunnison River upstream at Cooper Ranch or downstream along the Mesa Creek Trail at Cimarron.

Don't leave those binoculars behind. Bird watchers can spy colorful songbirds at Neversink, great blue herons spear fishing along lake shores, mergansers floating downstream in the canyon, and peregrine falcons soaring above Pioneer Point.

Want to sleep under the stars in solitude? Consider boating or hiking to a designated backcountry campsite. All 3 reservoirs in Curecanti have

boat-in campsites, including the arms of Blue Mesa Reservoir. Hermits Rest and Curecanti Creek Trails offer camping for backpackers.

Take a trip to the past by discovering the railroading history at Cimarron. Outdoor exhibits, including rail cars and corral, illuminate the role train travel played through the upper reaches of Black Canyon. Visit the many historical wayside exhibit panels throughout Curecanti.



**STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!**  
See Page 7 for Details



**Did you know?** Colorado Parks and Wildlife is hosting a Blue Mesa Reservoir Lake Trout Harvest Tournament to assist with fishery management. The 2020 tournament dates are February 1st through July 31st. Details, rules, and cash prize information are available on their website, [cpw.state.co.us](http://cpw.state.co.us). Good luck and enjoy the great fishing opportunities in Curecanti!



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park & Curecanti**

**National Recreation Area**  
Together, Black Canyon and Curecanti offer nearly 75,000 acres of canyons, knife-edged cliffs, water sports, and beauty.

**Mailing Address**

Black Canyon of the Gunnison NP  
Curecanti NRA  
102 Elk Creek  
Gunnison CO 81230

**Phone and E-mail**

(970) 641-2337 x205  
cure\_info@nps.gov

**We're on the Web**

Visit your public lands on the internet:

**Black Canyon:**

www.nps.gov/blca  
Join us on social media: BlackCanyonNPS



**Curecanti:**

www.nps.gov/cure  
Join us on social media: CurecantiNPS



**Complete List of Rules & Regulations:**

Visit the park websites and look under "Learn About the Park" and then "Management"

**2020 Edition**

Like No Other Canyon..... 1  
Range of Recreation ..... 1  
Superintendent Welcome ..... 2  
Science Spotlight ..... 2  
Deer and Bear Safety ..... 3  
Junior Ranger Programs ..... 3  
Bookstore..... 3  
Black Canyon Information & Services..... 4 & 5  
Curecanti Information & Services..... 6 & 7  
Aquatic Threat Prevention ..... 7  
Area Map ..... 8  
User Fees ..... 8  
Volunteers..... 8



**Welcome from Superintendent Deanna Greco**

Curecanti National Recreation Area each have their own unique character.

President Herbert Hoover first established Black Canyon of the Gunnison as a National Monument in 1933. In 1999, an Act of Congress signed by President Clinton, designated the area as a National Park. The extraordinary natural character of Black Canyon is evident for all to see with half the park's acreage consisting of Congressionally-designated Wilderness. Jaw-dropping scenery abounds at all the overlooks.

Curecanti was created in 1965 through an agreement between the National Park Service and the Bureau of Reclamation. Curecanti

Please allow me to be the first to welcome you to Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area. The outstanding employees at these two national park areas are here to help. I hope you have valuable experiences while at these parks.

Although the two areas connect to each other, Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and

provides a great place for water-based recreational activities and the three reservoirs join Lake Powell and Lake Mead as important pieces of the water supply system of the American West.

Please exercise the utmost caution to make sure that your visit is a safe one. Prepare wisely for the natural conditions and changing weather. Visitation peaks in the summer months so plan extra time for entrance lines, finding parking, and negotiating crowds.

We appreciate your decision to make Black Canyon and Curecanti part of your travel plans in 2020!

**Science Spotlight**

Not everyone likes surprises—especially ones that could harm the plants, water, or wildlife in a national park. To help avoid unpleasant surprises, National Park Service (NPS) scientists are performing long-term studies at parks across the country.

Like a physician monitoring a patient's heartbeat and blood pressure, they collect data on



ecological "vital signs," like plant communities, soils, and the quality and quantity of water. Together, these vital signs can tell us about the "health" of a park ecosystem. By knowing how things are changing over time, scientists can warn park managers about potential problems that are easier—and cheaper—to fix if caught early on.

at Black Canyon, so staff can know which plants they need to target for removal, and where they are. From 2003 to 2017, reed canarygrass, yellow sweetclover, and spotted knapweed were on the rise. Some species have declined along the Gunnison River, possibly due to high flows from dam releases, which were able to sweep them away. On trails and overlooks, invasives have decreased in response to control efforts by park staff. As is true in most parks, the majority of invasive plants are found along roadways and river drainages where they easily spread.

The NCPN also monitors river dynamics, climate, landbirds, and native plant communities at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park. Consistent vital signs monitoring will help park managers continue to make informed decisions about how to protect the park's resources for future generations. To learn more, visit [www.nps.gov/blca/learn/scienceandresearch.htm](http://www.nps.gov/blca/learn/scienceandresearch.htm).



At Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, water is one key resource being monitored by park staff and scientists from the NPS Northern Colorado Plateau Network (NCPN). A recent analysis of data from 2001 to 2014 showed that overall, water quality at both parks was good. Where trends were found, they mostly indicated improvement.

NCPN scientists also monitor invasive plants



**Join Us!**

Become a member and together we support the park.

[BlackCanyonFriends.org](http://BlackCanyonFriends.org)

# Deadly Encounters: Pets, People, & Deer

Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park is enacting a special pet closure for the area in and around the South Rim Campground from June 8 – August 13. The closure prohibits any dog (pet) walking or carrying. Check signage as dates may adjust due to changing conditions.

The closure area includes the campground roads and walkways, amphitheater, dumpster area, adjacent service roads, and the southern portion of the Rim Rock Trail. See map signage posted near the campground registration board. The exception is that dogs are allowed within the confines of a specific

campsite in accordance with existing park rules (most importantly, leashed).

The park wants to provide safe use of these areas for the public, their pets, and resident deer. Deer historically give birth in the campground area and are protective of their young fawns during the closure time. As is the case with many parents, these deer are protective and may viciously attack anything they deem as a threat to their young.

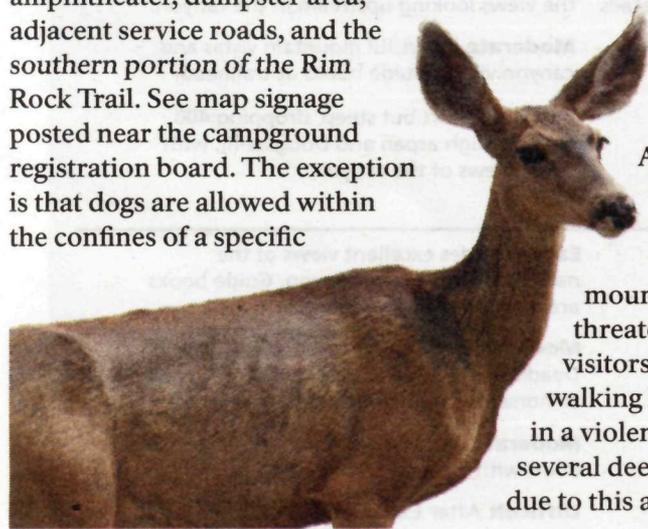
Although you may not typically think of deer as dangerous like other animals (bears, mountain lions, etc.), deer have threatened and attacked park visitors. A few years ago a woman walking her dog was nearly killed in a violent attack. Over the years, several deer have been euthanized due to this aggressive behavior. It is

an unwelcome result for the deer, the orphaned fawns, and the staff involved.

Past park experiences have shown that deer can feel threatened by dog walking/carrying even over long distances and when dogs are not behaving aggressively.

Please protect yourself, your pets, and our resident deer by observing these special restrictions. All visitors, including those without pets, are advised to be cautious and vigilant in the closure area. Keep children close.

- Assume that a doe may have a fawn hidden in the brush nearby.
- Give deer room (at least 100 feet or 30 meters) and time to safely attend to their fawn and move away from you.
- Never approach deer for pictures and never approach or attempt to touch a bedded fawn. They are often left alone, but never abandoned.



## Bear Safety

Black bears are typically shy and avoid humans. They can smell food up to five miles away. Store food and scented items properly in bear proof boxes or inside vehicles. If you see a bear, please follow these guidelines:

### Always:

- Remain calm and keep a safe distance between you and the bear, generally greater than 100 feet (30 meters).
- Speak calmly to make the bear aware of your presence.
- If a bear approaches, make loud noises (shout, clap your hands, or bang pots together) and slowly back away while facing the bear.
- Report your sighting to a ranger.

### Never:

- Chase or follow a bear.
- Leave children unattended or let them run ahead.
- Abandon your food or pack.



## Junior Ranger Programs

Become a Junior Ranger!

Anyone can become a

Junior Ranger at Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area. Ask for a free Junior Ranger book at Elk Creek or South Rim Visitor Centers. Books contain fun and educational activities to complete during your park visit. Families will discover together what makes these places so amazing and special. Receive your Junior Ranger badge upon completion at any visitor center.

Looking for more?

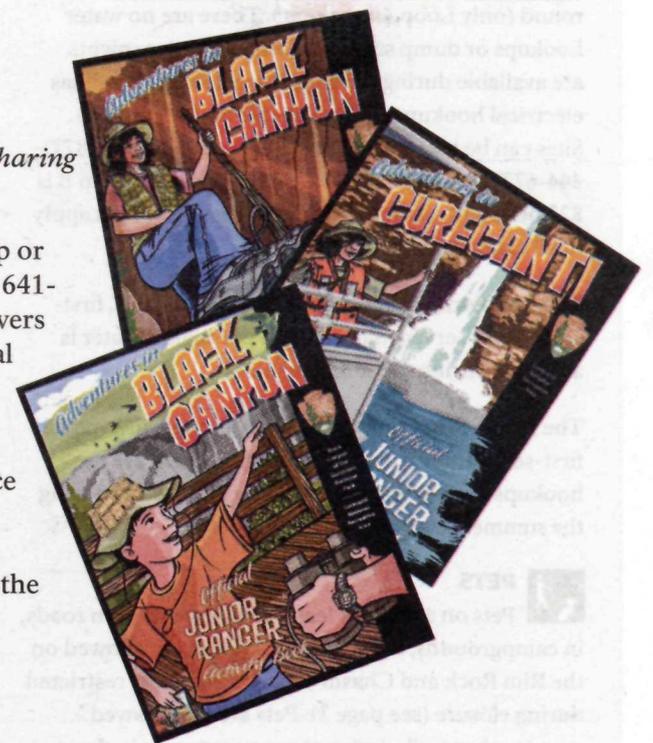
Ask for the Night Explorer (10 and up) and/or Junior Paleontologist (5-12) program. Books are available at no cost to participants, and each has its own badge or patch to earn and add to your collection. When finished, bring your completed book to a visitor center to earn your new badge/patch.

Ranger-led programs for children and families are offered throughout the summer. Ask at any visitor center.

Teachers! Are you interested in sharing the park with your students?

You can schedule a free field trip or classroom visit by calling: (970) 641-2337, ext. 203. Entrance fee waivers are available to most educational groups.

Too far away? We'll meet you in the classroom through a distance learning experience featuring videos, worksheets, and video conferencing. To schedule, call the number above.



## Shop in the Park Store

Visit WESTERN NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION (WNPA) stores at the South Rim and Elk Creek Visitor Centers. WNPA is a non-profit education partner of the National Park Service. Your purchase supports parks!



Ringtail Plush: Ringtails make their home among the rock walls of the Black Canyon. \$17.99



River Otter Plush: River otters can be found anywhere along the Gunnison River. \$17.99



USGS Benchmark Magnet from Black Canyon's Chasm View, elevation 7761' above sea level. \$4.99



Black Canyon and Curecanti: The Story Behind the Scenery: A great introduction to these parks with many beautiful images. \$11.95



Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park Footed Mug by Deneen Pottery. \$21.99



Black Canyon of the Gunnison Poster: A retro design reminiscent of the 1930s and 1940s artwork from the Federal Arts Project. \$7.99 (9x12) \$14.99 (12x18) \$3.99 (Magnet)

Western National Parks Association  
 WNPA  
 10346 Hwy 347  
 Montrose, CO 81401  
 (970) 249-1914 x422  
 www.wnpa.org

# Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park

## FEES AND PASSES

Black Canyon entrance fee is \$25 per vehicle. Motorcycles are \$20. For pedestrians and bicyclists the fee is \$15 per person. A Black Canyon Annual Pass is available for \$45 and is valid for 12 months from the date of purchase. For visitors interested in visiting multiple public lands, the America the Beautiful - National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass is available for \$80. For US citizens 62 and older, Senior Passes are either \$20 for an annual pass or a one time charge of \$80 for a lifetime pass. For those with disabilities, Access Passes are free.

## VISITOR CENTERS

The South Rim Visitor Center is open every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas Day. Summer hours are 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Spring and Fall hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Winter hours are 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The North Rim Ranger Station is open intermittently during the summer. A self-registration board is available to pay your entrance fee and obtain a Wilderness permit if undertaking inner canyon travel.

## CAMPING

The South Rim Campground is open year-round (only Loop A in winter). There are no water hookups or dump stations, although water spigots are available during the summer season. Loop B has electrical hookups (only available in the summer). Sites can be reserved at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or (877) 444-6777. Loops A and C are \$16 per night. Loop B is \$22 per night. Senior and Access Pass discounts apply to all camping areas.

The East Portal Campground has 15 tent sites, first-come, first-served. Sites are \$16 per night. Water is available during the summer season.

The North Rim Campground has 13 sites, first-come, first-served. Sites are \$16 per night. There are no hookups on the North Rim. Water is available during the summer season.

## PETS

Pets on a six-foot leash may be walked on roads, in campgrounds, to the overlooks, and are allowed on the Rim Rock and Chasm View trails, unless restricted during closure (see page 3). Pets are not allowed on any other trails, inner canyon routes, or in the Wilderness. Pets are not allowed on the trail portion of the South Rim Road in the winter. Clean up after your pet. Do not leave your pet unattended; boarding services are available in the local communities.

## ACCESSIBILITY

The South Rim Visitor Center is accessible and the South Rim Campground has accessible campsites. All restrooms on the North and South Rim, and some restrooms at East Portal are accessible. A number of overlooks on the South Rim and North Rim Drives are also accessible.

## GPS COORDINATES

South Rim Visitor Center:  
N 38.5550 W -107.6866  
North Rim Ranger Station:  
N 38.5870 W -107.7048

## Hiking and Trail Guide

TRAIL & TRAILHEAD	ROUNDTrip (mi / km)	Permitted (Animals)	DESCRIPTION
<b>South Rim</b>			
<b>Uplands Trail</b> South Rim Visitor Center	2mi / 3km		<b>Moderate</b> A nice stroll through the oakbrush. Look for mule deer and other wildlife.
<b>Rim Rock Trail</b> South Rim Visitor Center	2mi / 3km	*	<b>Moderate</b> A relatively level trail that takes you along the rim of the canyon. Enjoy the views looking upstream in the canyon.
*See page 3 for details			
<b>Warner Point Trail</b> High Point	1.5mi / 2.5km		<b>Moderate</b> Beautiful mountain vistas and canyon views. Guide books at trailhead.
<b>Oak Flat Loop</b> South Rim Visitor Center	2mi / 3km		<b>Difficult</b> Short but steep, dropping 400 feet through aspen and Douglas-fir, with great views of the canyon.
<b>North Rim</b>			
<b>Chasm View Nature Trail</b> North Rim Campground	0.3mi / 0.5km		<b>Easy</b> Provides excellent views of the narrowest part of the canyon. Guide books are available at the trailhead.
<b>Deadhorse Trail</b> Kneeling Camel View	5mi / 9km		<b>Moderate</b> Provides excellent views of Deadhorse Gulch and East Portal. It is open to horses, only certified weed-free forage.
<b>North Vista Trail</b> North Rim Ranger Station	3mi / 4.5km		<b>Moderate</b> The first section ends at Exclamation Point with a breathtaking view.
	7mi / 11km		<b>Difficult</b> After Exclamation Point, climb 840 feet to the summit of Green Mountain.

### South Rim Trails Near Visitor Center



Trails in Black Canyon offer diverse habitats, sweeping vistas of the sheer canyon walls, and a variety of wildlife and wildflowers. Interpretive signs and nature guides help visitors understand the rich natural and cultural history.

Many of the trails pass by steep cliff edges. Use caution and never throw rocks into the canyon. Even small pebbles can be deadly to the hikers and climbers below.

The canyon rims are around 8,000 feet in elevation. Bring plenty of water and sun protection for your hike.

\*Note that the Warner Point Trail is not included on this map. Also, there is a primitive anglers trail at East Portal. See park brochure.



\*Note that the Deadhorse Trail is not included on this map. See park brochure.

### North Rim Trails Near Ranger Station



Wilderness hiking and camping are available and require a free Wilderness permit. Obtain a permit at the South Rim Visitor Center or North Rim Ranger Station. Remember that routes into the canyon are rugged and unforgiving for the unprepared. More information is provided at the bottom of page 5 and rangers are happy to answer questions.

## If the Clock is Ticking

Below are some suggestions for how you might spend your visit to the South Rim given particular time constraints.

### One hour visit

Visit a few impressive overlooks along the South Rim Drive that have short walks from your car. Don't miss Chasm View, Painted Wall, and Sunset View. If there is still time, stop by the South Rim Visitor Center to meet a ranger, enjoy the exhibits, and browse the bookstore.

### Half day visit

Same as above plus watch the park

movie showing at the visitor center, attend a short ranger talk, and take a hike along either the Warner Point Nature Trail or Oak Flat Trail. If you would rather not hike, consider driving down the East Portal Road to get an up-close view of the Gunnison River.

### Full day visit

Same as above plus consider joining a ranger-led hike to learn even more about the natural and cultural history of this incredible canyon. Ranger programs are posted at the South Rim Visitor Center.

## North Rim

**One hour:** Take the short walk around the Chasm View Nature Trail to view two spectacular overlooks. Drive along the North Rim Drive, stop at overlooks as time allows.

**Half day:** Same as above plus

hike along the North Vista Trail to Exclamation Point.

**Full day:** Same as above plus continue along the North Vista Trail to Green Mountain or hike the Deadhorse Trail. Or, consider a trip into the Wilderness.



## Ranger Guided Programs



Join rangers for one or more of the following activities to find new insight to the incredible canyon. Programs start Memorial Day weekend and continue through September. Schedules are subject to change. Check at the South Rim Visitor Center, campground bulletin boards, the park website, or ask a ranger for activities on specific days.

### CHASM VIEW TALK

Perched at the canyon's edge where the cliffs are steepest, this 20-minute program is held at Chasm View, daily at 2:00 pm.

### ROCK STOMP GEOLOGY WALK

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand the geology of Black Canyon. Know the rocks in depth during these daily 60-minute ranger-led walks. Meet at the South Rim Visitor Center at 9:00 am.

### TUNNEL THROUGH TIME WALK

Follow in the footsteps of the people who forged the town at the bottom of Black Canyon. Meet at the

East Portal Ranger Station for this 60-minute walk, days vary.

### EVENING PROGRAMS

The diversity of canyon stories come to life in the outdoor amphitheater adjacent to the South Rim Campground, held nightly except Tuesdays, times vary (7:00 pm or 7:30 pm).

### ASTRONOMY PROGRAMS

Night sky viewing will be available on Wednesday and Friday nights after sunset (weather permitting). Telescope viewing area is located near the South Rim Campground. Look for temporary signs approximately 1/8 mile southwest of the campground registration board. Also, watch for rangers with solar telescopes at the South Rim Visitor Center.

### ASTRONOMY FESTIVAL

The 11th annual Astronomy Festival will be held September 16–19 with guest speakers, solar viewing, night programs, and children's activities. Daily schedules will be posted.

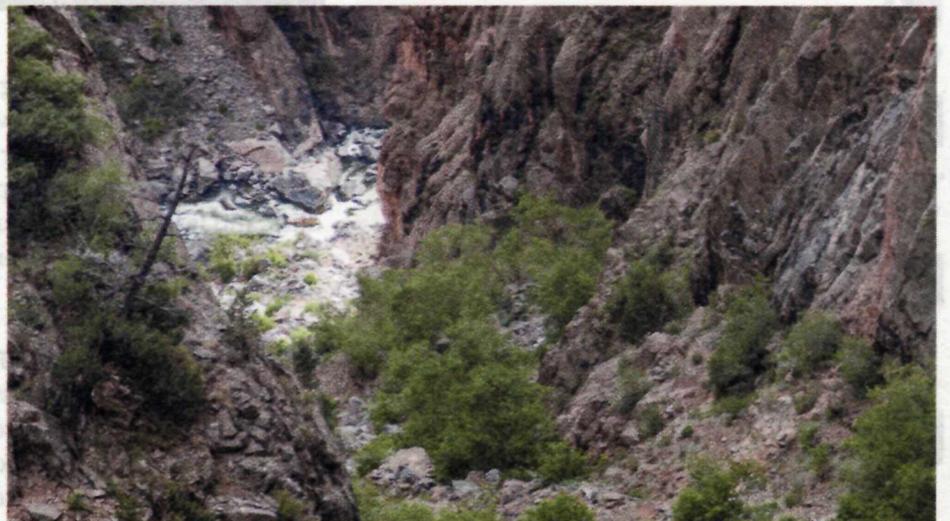
## Wilderness Safety

Prepare for entering this extremely rugged and remote terrain by:

- Checking with rangers for current information on conditions and safety hazards, this includes rapidly changing weather and knowing signs of heat injuries.
- Packing lightweight gear that can be packed back out with you.
- Carrying some contingency supplies: extra clothing, food, headlamp, water and/or bringing a water filter.
- Being prepared for self rescue and cautious around all wildlife, swift water, steep cliffs, and poison ivy.
- Being bear aware by properly storing food and scented items.

## Watch Your Step in the Inner Canyon Wilderness

- Free Wilderness permits are required for ALL inner canyon use.
- **Wood fires are prohibited. Use only camp stoves.**
- Pets are prohibited in the Wilderness area, including inner canyon routes.
- Use pit toilets if available. If not, pack out or bury human waste six inches deep and at least 100 feet away from the river. Use of wag bags is strongly encouraged.
- Hunting is prohibited.
- To reduce risks of broken glass, all glass containers are prohibited.
- Follow "Leave No Trace" ethics that are listed on the back of the permit.
- Collecting anything within the national park is prohibited, including wood, flowers, animals, antlers, artifacts, and rocks.
- A valid Colorado fishing license is required for fishing in the canyon. Gold Medal Waters fishing regulations apply (details online or contact a ranger).
- Fishing licenses may be purchased online or over the phone from Colorado Parks & Wildlife. Call 1-800-244-5613 or visit online at [www.cpw.state.co.us](http://www.cpw.state.co.us)



# Curecanti National Recreation Area

## **\$ FEES AND PASSES**

Curecanti does not charge an entrance fee except at East Portal (which is included in the Black Canyon entrance fee). However, if you plan to launch a boat into Blue Mesa Reservoir, you must purchase a boat permit. Senior and Access Pass discounts apply to all boating and camping fees at Curecanti.

### **Boat Permits:**

\$4 per two days                      \$10 per two weeks  
\$30 per year

For visitors interested in visiting multiple public lands, the America the Beautiful - National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands Pass is available for \$80. For US citizens 62 and older, Senior Passes are either \$20 for an annual pass or \$80 for a lifetime pass. For those with disabilities, Access Passes are free.

## **VISITOR CENTER**

Elk Creek Visitor Center is open year-round. From Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend it is open seven days a week from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Hours and days vary by season for the remainder of the year.

## **CAMPING**

There are several campgrounds around Blue Mesa Reservoir. Camping is available first-come, first-served in all campgrounds and reservations are accepted for Elk Creek, Lake Fork, and Stevens Creek at [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or (877) 444-6777. Summer camping fees are \$16 per night in most sites. Loop D at Elk Creek Campground has electric hookups; fees are \$22 per night. Group camping is available at Red Creek and East Elk by reservation only.

## **SHOWERS**

Concession run showers may be available starting Memorial Day Weekend at Elk Creek and Lake Fork. Issues should be directed to marina staff.

## **FOOD SERVICES**

Pappy's Restaurant at Elk Creek Marina is open May - September. Call (970) 641-0403. Additional food options are available in Montrose and Gunnison.

## **BOAT RENTALS & GUIDES**

Boat rentals, slip rentals, gas, supplies, and other services are available at Elk Creek Marina and Lake Fork Marina. Guided fishing is offered at Blue Mesa and Morrow Point Reservoirs. Visit [www.thebluemesa.com](http://www.thebluemesa.com). Additionally, local companies offer guided fishing on Blue Mesa Reservoir.

## **PETS**

Pets are allowed in Curecanti (except in buildings and boat tour), but must be leashed.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Visitor centers, some overlooks, and most campgrounds and restrooms are accessible. For visitors with disabilities, Lake Fork is most suitable.

## **PHONE NUMBERS**

Elk Creek Visitor Center      (970) 641-2337  
Elk Creek Marina              (970) 641-0707  
Lake Fork Marina              (970) 641-3048

## **GPS COORDINATES**

Elk Creek Visitor Center:  
N 38.4671 W -107.1659

## Boat Tours into Black Canyon of the Gunnison

Join a park ranger for a leisurely 1½ hour boat tour on the Morrow Point Reservoir. Travel seven miles into the Black Canyon of the Gunnison, where the canyon walls will tower above you. Hear the stories of the geologic history, wildlife, early inhabitants, the narrow-gauge railroad, dams, or reservoirs.

### **LOGISTICS**

The National Park Service tour boat is a 42 passenger, 40 foot pontoon boat. Tours are offered twice daily at 10:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m., early June into September, every day of the week except Tuesdays. Tours begin at the Pine Creek Boat Dock, located 35 miles east of Montrose, 25 miles west of Gunnison, at mile marker 130 on US Highway 50. From the Pine Creek parking lot, walk down 232 steps (remember, you'll have to walk back up too), then enjoy an easy ¾-mile walk along the old narrow gauge rail bed to the boat dock. We suggest leaving the trailhead no later than one hour prior to the tour, or allowing more time for a slower pace. Plan to meet the ranger at the boat dock; pre-boarding for the tour begins 15 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time; tours begin promptly at the scheduled departure time.

### **WHAT TO BRING**

Dress for the Colorado mountains, where a sunny day can quickly become stormy. Bring

drinking water, snacks, sun and rain protection, and your camera. Pets, smoking, firearms, and alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the tour. All passengers under 13 must wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD). Children must weigh at least 35 pounds to properly fit the provided PFD.

### **RESERVATIONS**

*Prepaid reservations are required.* Go online to [www.recreation.gov](http://www.recreation.gov) or call 1-877-444-6777. Persons arriving at the boat dock without a reservation will not be permitted on the tour.

### **ACCESSIBILITY**

Due to the rugged nature of the trail leading to the boat dock, the boat tour is inaccessible to most visitors with mobility impairments. Accommodations can be provided for alternative programs with a two week notice. Accommodations for visitors with hearing impairments can also be made with a two week notice.

### **COST**

\$25 for adults  
\$13 for children under 13  
\*Boat tour fees are non-refundable



## Additional Ranger Programs

### **EVENING PROGRAMS**

Evening campground programs are offered at the Elk Creek Amphitheater every night except Friday from May 23 to September 12. Program times vary through the season, but typically begin around dusk and last 30 to 45 minutes. Please check at the Elk Creek Visitor Center or on bulletin boards for program times and topics.

### **GUNNISON VALLEY OBSERVATORY**

Curecanti rangers are guest speakers at the Gunnison Valley Observatory on Friday evenings at 8:30 p.m. from June 12 to September 11. The observatory offers public telescope viewings

through its 30" domed telescope and other smaller scopes guided by knowledgeable volunteers. For more information on the observatory and a schedule of events, please visit [www.gunnisonvalleyobservatory.org](http://www.gunnisonvalleyobservatory.org).

### **DILLON PINNACLES HIKES**

Explore the captivating geologic formations of Dillon Pinnacles with a park ranger and discover amazing views of Blue Mesa on this moderate four mile round trip hike. Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 10:00 a.m. from May 23 to September 5. The interpretive hike lasts one and a half to two hours.

## Boating

Blue Mesa Reservoir is the largest water body in Colorado, and combined with Morrow Point and Crystal Reservoirs, offers great recreational opportunities for motor and sail boating, windsurfing, and paddling in the summer to snowshoeing and ice fishing in the winter.

Marinas and boat ramps are located in designated areas with easy access to Blue Mesa Reservoir. Morrow Point and Crystal Reservoirs are more difficult to access, but many people enjoy kayaking and fishing using small hand-carried crafts.

Check boating and fishing regulations before heading out on the water.



Requirements for Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal Reservoirs:

- All boats launching at Curecanti must be certified as free of aquatic invasive species. Details below.
- USCG approved personal flotation devices are required for all on board and must be worn by kids under 13.
- One Type IV throwable flotation device for boats 16 feet and greater.
- Sound-producing device.
- Lights for dusk to dawn operation.
- A NPS boat permit is required for motorized vessels on Blue Mesa.
- Motorized vessels must be registered in their home state.
- Fire extinguisher (unless boat is of open construction and less than 26 feet long).

## Curecanti Fishing Limits

All Colorado state limits apply; all marinas and visitor centers have complete rules and regulations.

SPECIES	DAILY BAG	POSSESSION
Trout (In aggregate)	4	8
Brook Trout < 8"	10	10
Lake Trout (Blue Mesa)* *Only one lake trout greater than 32" per day	Unlimited*	Unlimited*
Kokanee salmon (Blue Mesa)	5	10
Kokanee salmon (Morrow Point, Crystal)	10	10
Yellow Perch, White Suckers, Crayfish	Unlimited	Unlimited

## Hiking

Curecanti offers a variety of hiking opportunities for all skill levels. Vistas vary from serene walks beside the Gunnison River, to volcanic pinnacles, to steeper paths into the canyon. Remember that you are hiking at high elevation and be prepared for the

changing summer weather. Wear good hiking boots, carry a hat, sunscreen, rain jacket and extra water. Dogs are allowed on all Curecanti trails but must be on a leash at all times. Pets are not allowed on the boat tour.

TRAIL & TRAILHEAD	ROUNDRIP (mi / km)	DESCRIPTION
<b>Highway 50</b>		
<b>Neversink Trail</b> Neversink (milepost 152)	1.5mi / 2.5km	<b>Easy</b> A nice stroll along the Gunnison River. This is a good location for watching wildlife and is in the shade.
<b>Mesa Creek Trail</b> Cimarron Canyon (milepost 112-113)	1.5mi / 2.5km	<b>Easy</b> Follows a foot bridge over the Gunnison River providing access for fishing and views of the sheer canyon walls.
<b>Pine Creek Trail</b> Pine Creek (milepost 130)	2mi / 3km	<b>Moderate</b> This hike descends 232 stairs along Pine Creek to the old railroad bed and Morrow Point Reservoir. This is the access trail for the boat tour.
<b>Dillon Pinnacles Trail</b> Dillon Pinnacles (milepost 136-137)	4mi / 6.5km	<b>Moderate</b> Ascending through sagebrush and conifers this trail offers spectacular views of the weather-sculpted Dillon Pinnacles.
<b>Highway 92</b>		
<b>Curecanti Creek Trail</b> Pioneer Point (milepost 67-68)	4mi / 6.5km	<b>Strenuous</b> Descending 900 feet from the rim of Black Canyon to Morrow Point Reservoir, the trail follows the banks of Curecanti Creek.
<b>Crystal Creek Trail</b> Crystal Creek (milepost 48-49)	5mi / 9km	<b>Strenuous</b> Winding through oak brush and aspen with sweeping views of Cimarron Valley and the West Elk and San Juan Mountains. The trail ends at an overlook, 1800 feet above Crystal Reservoir.
<b>Hermits Rest Trail</b> Hermit's Rest (milepost 55)	6mi / 10km	<b>Very Strenuous</b> Zigzagging through brush and rock, descend 1800 feet to the camp and picnic sites on the shore of Morrow Point Reservoir. There is little shade on trail.

## Boat Inspections: Help Us Prevent an Invasion!

The National Park Service (NPS) and State of Colorado are determined to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species into Blue Mesa and other reservoirs of the Gunnison River Basin. There is no way to eliminate these invasive species once they are established. If they become established, they could significantly impact recreational fishing and the ecosystem at Blue Mesa. Beginning in the late 1980s, zebra and quagga mussels entered the United States and spread throughout much of the country by attaching to boats and trailers.

Zebra and quagga mussels are freshwater mollusks that have a zebra-like pattern on their shells.

When unchecked, they explode in population and then die off en masse, resulting in shorelines littered with sharp shells. Once established, invasive mussels can also cripple successful fisheries.

The NPS and Colorado began an inspection program in the summer of 2009 to prevent mussels from reaching the waters of Curecanti. All motorized and trailered vessels (including personal watercraft and sailboats) must be inspected. These boat inspections are free.

If a boat or trailer is suspected to be carrying mussels, a free decontamination process will be required. Decontamination entails an

on-site hot water rinse of boats and trailers by certified personnel. Boats can be denied access.

Starting in 2019, Colorado has a mandatory (annual) ANS sticker that must be purchased before launching a motorized or sail driven vessel. This ANS fee is automatically added to Colorado watercraft with their registration. It must be purchased separately for nonresident watercraft anywhere you buy fishing licenses.

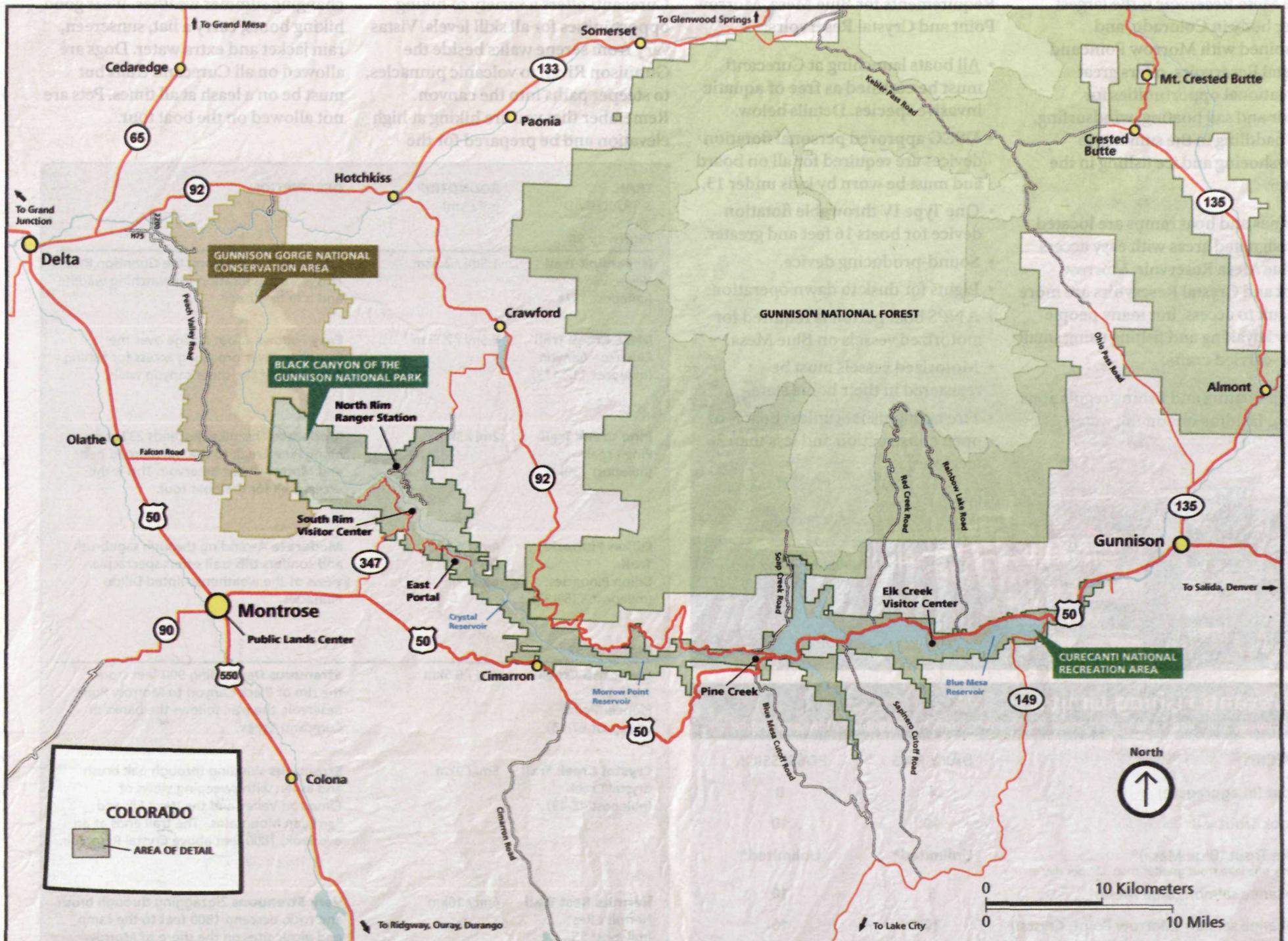
Superintendent Deanna Greco states, "The aquatic invasive species prevention program has been successful because of concerned boaters, anglers and recreationists supporting the efforts."

### Boaters: Clean, Drain, and Dry

Never release or put plants, fish or animals into any water unless it came out of that body of water. Curecanti prohibits the use or possession of live aquatic bait.

- **Clean:** Remove all mud, plants and animals from every part of your boat, trailer and equipment, including your anchor.
- **Drain:** Pull the plug. Before you leave the area, eliminate all waters from your boat, including live wells, ballast and engine cooling water.
- **Dry:** Allow your boat to dry before you launch in any other waters. Your boat's dry time should be at least five days.

# Area Map



## Your User Fees at Work

Managing public lands requires a major financial investment. While most of that investment comes from general tax revenues, those who directly use public lands for recreation derive a greater benefit from, and place a greater burden on, resources and facilities than the public at large. Applying user fees to projects at the area where they were collected assures that actual users pay an increased share of operational costs. These funds have been, and will continue to be, used for maintenance, repair projects, public service programs, signs, and natural and historical resource preservation.

### Current Fee Projects

- Restriping Black Canyon roads
- Repairing North Rim trails
- Rehabilitating tent pads at East Portal and the South Rim
- Restoring disturbed lands with native plants at Black Canyon
- Replacing all drinking fountains with accessible models at Curecanti
- Rehabilitating historic railroad crane car and stock car at Cimarron
- Crack sealing roads and parking areas at Curecanti

Look for these projects and more during your visit!



## Volunteers

If you are looking for a hands-on way to help your parks or public lands, we may have just the job for you! Volunteers for Black Canyon and Curecanti tirelessly put in thousands of hours each year helping to keep our public lands afloat.

There are many ways you can share your enthusiasm and expertise with us. Full- and part-time positions are available throughout the year.

Last year 61 volunteers donated over 7,800 hours to these parks. We are grateful to those who generously donated their time and skills in 2019.

### How to Volunteer

- Opportunities include:
- Camphosts
  - Volunteers-in-Parks (VIPs)
  - Climbing Rangers
  - Student Work Programs

If you are interested in volunteering please give us a call. For Black Canyon or Curecanti, contact our volunteer coordinator at (970) 641-2337, ext. 206.

For student programs visit: [www.nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/jobs-and-internships.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/jobs-and-internships.htm)

For federal volunteering information: [www.volunteer.gov](http://www.volunteer.gov)

