

uniform state waterway marking system

buoys



ALL-BLACK BUOY, indicates boat should pass between it and its companion all-red buoy.



ALL-RED BUOY, indicates boat should pass between it and its all-black buoy.



BLACK-TOPPED WHITE BUOY, indicates boat should pass to north or east (cardinal system).



RED-TOPPED WHITE BUOY, indicates boat should pass to south or west (cardinal system).



ANCHOR BUOY (BLUE BAND)



RED-STRIPED WHITE BUOY, indicates boat should not pass between buoy and nearest shore (cardinal system).

signs



DIVER'S FLAG, indicates presence of a diver. (RED AND WHITE)



SQUARE OR RECTANGLE gives information, names, distances, permitted activities, etc. (ORANGE)



DIAMOND SHAPE warns of DANGER (ORANGE)



SWIM AREA

DIAMOND SHAPE with cross means BOATS KEEP OUT (ORANGE)



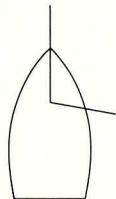
CIRCLE marks CONTROLLED AREA "as indicated" (ORANGE)

whistle signals

ONE LONG BLAST: Warning signal (coming out of slip).
 ONE SHORT BLAST: (meeting)—Pass on my port side.
 (crossing)—(by vessel to starboard) I intend to hold my course and speed.
 (overtaking)—I wish to pass on your starboard side.
 TWO SHORT BLASTS: (meeting)—Pass on my starboard side.
 (overtaking)—I wish to pass on your port side.
 THREE SHORT BLASTS: Engines in reverse.
 FOUR OR MORE BLASTS: Danger signal.
 When answering a signal whistle, use same signal to indicate approval. Use danger signal if you feel it is unsafe.

port

starboard



Yield right-of-way to boats in your DANGER ZONE!

DANGER ZONE (Dead ahead to 2 points abaft your starboard beam)

curecanti

national recreation area • colorado

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The Curecanti Unit, one of four principal authorized elements of the Colorado River Storage Project, is comprised of three reservoirs in the deep canyons of the Gunnison River in western Colorado. It is named for the Ute Indian Chief, Curicata, who with his twin brother Kanneatche, roamed and hunted over the Colorado territory.

The reservoirs formed by Blue Mesa and Morrow Point Dams provide recreational benefits of national significance. Work on the diversion tunnel for Crystal Dam, the third and last dam of the unit, was started in 1972 and the dam is scheduled to be completed in 1976. When Congress authorized the Colorado River Storage Project in 1956, it also directed the Secretary of the Interior to investigate, plan, construct, operate, and maintain recreational facilities on the reservoirs thus created.

The Bureau of Reclamation is constructing and will administer the dams and powerplants. The National Park Service administers the recreation area, supervising activities, plans, and development within the area. Both are agencies of the U.S. Department of the Interior.

Within this province is a variety of scenery sufficient to satisfy nearly every vacationer's taste—forested country in the Gunnison and San Isabel National Forests immediately to the north and east, in the Sawatch Range to the northeast, and in the rugged San Juan Mountains to the south and Southwest. And the precipitous gorge through which the Gunnison River flows in Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument, adjacent to the Curecanti Unit on the west, is one of the dramatic highlights of the region.

Blue Mesa Dam is made up of three sections: the central core, which is impervious to water; the next layer, which is semi-impervious; and the outside layer, of larger rock and riprap on the upstream face, which withstands wave action. It was built by densely compacting thin layers in an inverted wedge-shape only 30 feet wide at its crest but 1,600 feet wide at its base.

Although it is only 342 feet high, Blue Mesa Dam backs up the largest body of water in Colorado, Blue Mesa Lake, which is 20 miles long and contains more than 940,000 acre-feet of water. The lake offers much water-oriented recreation—boating, exploring, fishing, and camping—all within Colorado's superlative mesa country. Developments now include three launching ramps, one major campground at Elk Creek and a visitor center. A concession is operated during the summer season

at the Elk Creek ramp, where boats, motors, and slips may be rented. Boating, fishing, and camping supplies and a fast food service are also provided for the visitor.

Morrow Point Dam was completed in 1967. Morrow Point Lake, 11½ miles long, now occupies a section of the world-famous Black Canyon. The lake can be reached below Blue Mesa Dam via a very primitive trail down Pine Creek. You can fish from the bank at the foot of the trail. A concessioner will rent fishing boats and provide tour boat service at the top of Morrow Point Dam. Controlled access to the top of the dam is necessary and access is to be provided by shuttle bus. Access to the Morrow Point Dam area is from the turnoff at Cimarron. The Bureau of Reclamation provides a self-guiding tour of the Morrow Point powerhouse, which is built into the canyon walls at the base of the dam.

MAN'S USE OF THE AREA

The discovery of artifacts, burials, and habitations indicates that prehistoric Indians lived in the area that now includes Curecanti National Recreation Area.

When Spanish explorers arrived in 1776, they found Ute Indians living in the area. The Utes were still here when miners and ranchers appeared. The ranchers stayed; but the miners and Indians, for the most part, moved on. The Gunnison River Valley was an approach to the Great Basin occasionally used by 18th-century Spanish explorers based in New Mexico; it was a popular stream with the American fur trappers of the early 19th century; and it was part of one of several proposed transcontinental railroad routes explored in the 1850's by the Army's Pacific Railroad Surveys. While making the 40th parallel survey in 1853, Capt. John W. Gunnison was killed by Indians. The river is named for him.

The Rio Grande Railroad came into Gunnison, Colo., in 1881. The next year, the Denver, Rio Grande & Western completed its road bed to Cimarron, a route which took it past the present site of Blue Mesa Dam and 15 miles down the Black Canyon. The old railroad bed can be seen from an observation point below the dam, but most of it is now under water.

AN ERODED VOLCANIC LANDSCAPE

Curecanti's geological story is one of volcanic outpourings and the powerful forces and tremendous heat of metamorphism. The subsequent bandsaw

action of rushing streams incised the Gunnison deep into the landscape.

Gentle slopes, benches, and occasional steep cliff faces characterize most of the landscape seen from the surface of Blue Mesa Lake. From the axis of the lake are views up canyons and valleys to forest-covered mountain slopes, dramatically eroded cliff faces, and snowclad peaks.

The shores of the lake display evidence of what must have been one of the most dramatic geological events in this part of the country. Eroded into spires, pillars, and cones is a soft volcanic material called breccia. Deposits of this material originated from the explosive destruction of previously formed volcanic cones.

Later volcanic activity capped the breccia with layers of superheated volcanic ash which welded it into a rock that is highly resistant to erosion. These rocks form the vertical cliffs just below the mesa tops.

The steep walls of the upper Black Canyon of the Gunnison, although less spectacular than those within that National Monument, have been intricately dissected by the forces of weathering and erosion. Their appearance changes with the viewer's position and with the varying light on sculptured surfaces.

PLANTS AND ANIMALS

The slopes and flats are covered by low-growing vegetation, mostly sagebrush, grass, and some shrub live oak. Trees are restricted almost entirely to cottonwoods along stream channels and to conifers, such as spruce and Douglas-fir, on some sheltered northern slopes. The rocky outcrops so common in the area have many colorful lichens growing on them.

The lands along the lake and river in the Blue Mesa area are important wintering grounds for deer and elk. Drivers are cautioned to watch for these animals, especially on U.S. 50. Small mammals, such as chipmunks, golden-mantled ground squirrels, marmots, prairie dogs, and beaver, are found in various places around Blue Mesa Lake. Pocket gophers, wood rats, and deer mice are common.

The Gunnison River has long been recognized as an outstanding trout stream. Blue Mesa and Morrow Point Lakes have been stocked with lake and rainbow trout and kokanee salmon.

More than 170 species of birds have been recorded. This number will undoubtedly increase when all the birds, especially those requiring a water habitat, have been identified.

ABOUT YOUR VISIT

U.S. 50, a major east-west transcontinental route, parallels the length of Blue Mesa Lake. Airlines and buslines serve Gunnison and Montrose, Colo. Accommodations and services are available in Montrose, Gunnison, and other nearby towns.

The normal visitor season is from mid-May to mid-October. Evening naturalist programs are scheduled in the summer. Schedules are posted in visitor-use areas.

The area has long, cold winters and short, beautiful summers, often punctuated by violent thunderstorms. Late spring and early summer are dry. Moisture, mostly from snow, comes in winter and early spring.

In the winter, temperatures are well below zero, at times dipping to -40° F. The temperature rarely exceeds 85° F. in the summer, and nights are cool.

The National Park Service has constructed an access road, parking facilities, a picnic area, and a launching ramp at Iola. At Elk Creek, an access road, parking facilities, visitor center, campground, and launching ramp have also been provided.

REGULATIONS

We urge you to observe the following:

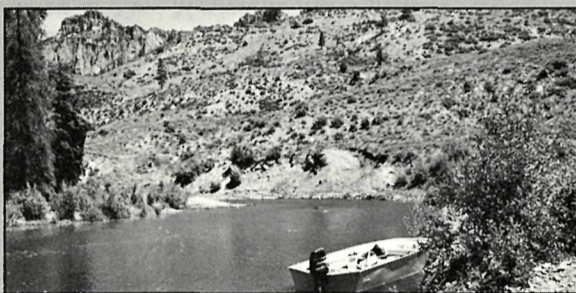
Camping, in designated areas only, is limited to 14 days on a first come, first served basis. Sites cannot be reserved.

Boat launching. Blue Mesa Lake has three developed launching ramps. The Elk Creek ramp is southeast of the Elk Creek camping area; the Iola ramp is on the southeast end of the lake just off Colo. 149; the Lake Fork ramp is near Blue Mesa Dam, just north of U.S. 50. All trailer-launched boats should be launched at these ramps.

Fishing in Blue Mesa Lake is governed by Colorado regulations, and a Colorado license is required. Before fishing, please check current regulations.

Hunting and trapping are permitted at Curecanti in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws except in developed and public-use areas designated by the superintendent. Check for location of these areas.

Swimming. If you plan to swim, be well acquainted with the area. Blue Mesa Lake has many rock ledges not visible from the surface that



Don't overcrowd. An overloaded boat is uncomfortable and unsafe. Conform to the manufacturer's recommended capacity rating.

Carry Coast Guard-approved life preservers for each person on board. Never hesitate to have all persons wear life preservers whenever circumstances cause the slightest doubt of safety.

Be sure that all aboard know what to do in an emergency and where to find safety equipment.

You are responsible for damage caused by your wake. When passing boats, swimmers, or shore facilities, keep your distance.

Learn the "Rules of the Road"—who has the right-of-way and the meaning of buoys.

Bring all refuse to launching ramps where receptacles are available.

Report any accident to the nearest ranger or ranger station.

Make sure that your boating equipment meets standards set forth by Colorado and the National Park Service.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS FOR WATER SKIERS

The law requires that there must be a second person in the boat to act as an observer. This will permit watching both the skier and the waters ahead.

Do not tow a skier in channels or within 500 feet of harbors, swimming beaches, and mooring areas, or within 100 feet of any person swimming or diving.

Make sure that the skier is wearing a proper lifesaving device. If he tumbles, the boat should approach him from the left side. An approved life preserver jacket must be in the boat for each water skier.

In taking the skier on board, be careful not to swamp your boat. In smaller craft, it is normally safer to take a person aboard at the stern—with the motor turned off, of course. Ski boats should give smaller boats wide berth to avoid swamping them.

ADMINISTRATION

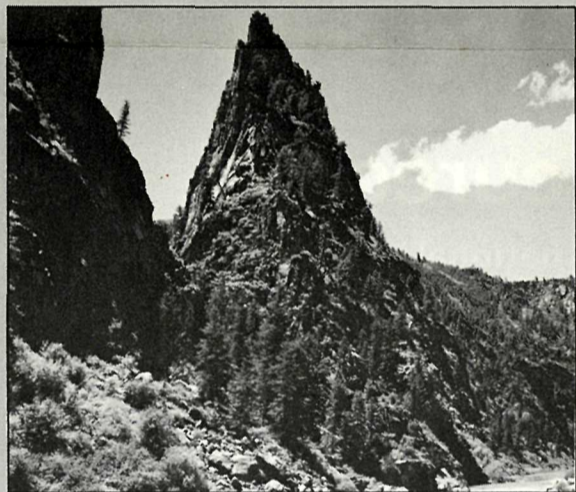
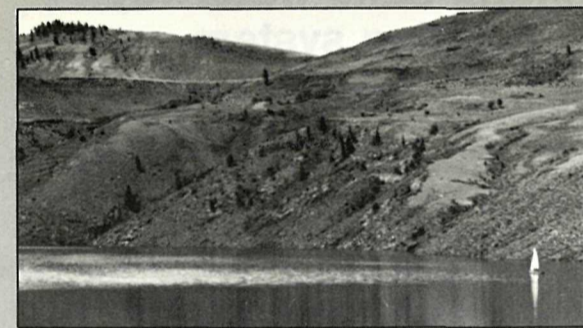
Curecanti National Recreation Area is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, through an agreement with the Bureau of Reclamation.

A superintendent, whose address is P.O. Box 1040, Gunnison, CO 81230, is in charge.

As the Nation's principal conservation agency, the Department of the Interior has basic responsibilities for water, fish, wildlife, mineral, land, park, and recreational resources. Indian and Territorial affairs are other major concerns of America's "Department of Natural Resources." The Department works to assure the wisest choice in managing all our resources so each will make its full contribution to a better United States—now and in the future.

National Park Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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make diving into unexplored waters hazardous. Do not swim from unanchored boats, boat docks, or launching ramps!

Firearms. Carrying or using loaded firearms or explosives in developed and public-use areas is not allowed.

Pets must be kept under physical control when in developed and public-use areas.

Vehicles are allowed on designated roads only.

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR BOATERS

When launching or loading your boat, only the driver should remain in the car.

Be alert to changes in weather and wind. Sudden strong winds are common and can arise without warning. Be ready to head for shore when these changes occur.

