



# 2024 Upper Arkansas River Basin Tour

June 4-5, 2024

*Tour Itinerary*

## Day 1 - June 4, 2024

**7:00-7:30am** Meet at Comfort Inn - 315 E Rainbow Blvd US 50, Salida, CO 81201  
*Check in with WEco, Get Nametag, Pick up Tour Materials*

**7:30am** Pre-Tour Introductions

Discussion Topic

Share your name, organization, and what you hope to get out of the tour

**8:00am** Load Bus for 8:10 Departure to Johnsons Village Collegiate Peaks Overlook

Thank You To Our Bus Sponsor: CoBank

Discussion Topics

Introduction to Water Education Colorado and tour objectives

Speakers

Jayla Poppleton, Executive Director, Water Education Colorado

Sabrina Scherma, Programs Director, Water Education Colorado

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Discussion Topics

Overview of the Arkansas River Basin's geography, hydrological characteristics, and water uses, with a focus on the Upper Arkansas. Water administration challenges and priorities in the Upper Arkansas, including connection to interstate compacts and implications for management

Speakers

Greg Felt, Arkansas River Basin Representative to the Colorado Water Conservation Board and Chaffee County Commissioner

Rachel Zancanella, Division 2 Engineer, Colorado Division of Water Resources



**8:45am Arrive at Johnsons Village Collegiate Peaks Overlook**

Discussion Topics

Connections between surface and groundwater management in the Arkansas Basin, and the water administration tools used in an over-appropriated basin. Understand the role of the Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District, and a proposed project to use alluvial groundwater recharge to provide additional augmentation for groundwater wells.

Speakers

Rachel Zancanella, Division 2 Engineer, Colorado Division of Water Resources  
Greg Felt, Arkansas River Basin Representative to the Colorado Water

**9:20am Load Bus for 9:30am Departure for Turquoise Reservoir, Passing Through Hayden Meadows Recreation Area**

Discussion Topics

Envision Chaffee County initiative and what Chaffee County is doing regarding water administration, outdoor recreation management, agriculture, forest health, and more.

The history of land acquisition and preservation, led by the Lake County Open Space Initiative, to create the Hayden Meadows Recreation Area, to provide public recreation opportunities along the Arkansas River; connections to Lake County economic development and other initiatives.

Speakers

Greg Felt, County Commissioner, Chaffee County  
Bryce Ehrlich, Water Resource Program Manager, Lake County

**10:20am Arrive at Turquoise Reservoir, Boustead Tunnel Overlook**

Discussion Topics

Overview of Fryingpan-Arkansas Project history, infrastructure, operations and beneficiaries, including the role of Boustead Tunnel.

Overview of the Homestake Project history, infrastructure, operations and beneficiaries, plus evolving plans for Homestake II.

Gain understanding of the role of transmountain diversions in the Arkansas River Basin, plus impacts to basins of origin.



Speakers

Chris Woodka, Senior Policy and Issues Manager, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

April Long, Executive Director, Ruedi Water and Power Authority

Kim Gortz, Project Manager Source Water Protection, Colorado Springs Utilities

Rick Kienitz, Water Resources Manager, Aurora Water

**11:05am Load Bus for 11:10am Departure for Lunch**

Thank You To Our Bus Sponsor: Colorado Springs Utilities

Kim Gortz, Project Manager Source Water Protection

**11:25am Lunch at Leadville Ice Palace Park**

Thank You To Our Lunch Sponsor: Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District

**11:55am Load Bus for 12:00pm Departure for California Gulch Superfund Site**

Discussion Topics

Networking

**12:15pm Arrive at California Gulch Superfund Site**

Discussion Topics

History of heavy metals contamination due to mining that resulted in EPA superfund site designation, remediation efforts and their effectiveness in improving water quality to support the longest stretch of Gold-medal fishing waters in the state.

Speaker

Linda Kefir, Project Manager, California Gulch Superfund Site, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Jenelle Stefanic, Water Treatment Supervisor, Leadville Tunnel Treatment Plant, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

**12:55pm Load Bus for 1:05pm Departure for Twin Lakes Reservoir and the Mt. Elbert Power Plant**

Thank You To Our Lunch Sponsor: Northern Water

Brian Craig, Water Resources Engineer



**1:30pm Arrive at Twin Lakes Reservoir and Mt. Elbert Power Plant**

Discussion Topics

Twin Lakes Reservoir's role in three transmountain diversion projects; Tour the Mt. Elbert Power Plant and understand its unique function and operational challenges as a pumped storage plant for hydropower generation.

Speakers

Anna Perea, Public Affairs Specialist, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Christopher Longaker, Facility Manager, Mt. Elbert Power Plant, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Will Huston, Powerplant Supervisor II, Mt. Elbert Power Plant, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

**2:45pm Load Bus for 2:55pm Departure for the Homestake Arkansas River Diversion**

Discussion Topics

How the Roaring Fork River feeds Twin Lakes, the broader system Twin Lakes receives water from, and the impact of the Twin Lakes Diversion on the Upper Roaring Fork through Aspen.

Speaker

April Long, Executive Director, Ruedi Water and Power Authority

**3:10pm Arrive at the Homestake Arkansas River Diversion**

Discussion Topics

The function of the Homestake Arkansas River Diversion, the purpose and process of diversion reconstruction, and the benefits to river function, recreation and fish passage.

Speaker

Kim Gortz, Water Resources Manager, Colorado Springs Utilities

**3:35pm Load Bus for 3:45pm Departure for Otero Pump Station**

Discussion Topics

Networking



**4:00pm Arrive at Otero Pump Station**

Discussion Topics

Tour the pump station and learn about its role in the broader Homestake transmountain diversion system; how the project supplies the cities of Aurora and Colorado Springs, including by diverting both native Arkansas River water and transmountain water.

Speakers

Tom Hankins, Superintendent, Homestake Water Project  
Aaron Griggs, Operations and Maintenance Supervisor, Homestake Water Project

**5:05pm Load Bus for 5:15pm Departure for downtown Salida**

Discussion Topics

Browns Canyon National Monument and the efforts that led to designation, via the Antiquities Act, in 2015.

Speaker

Jill Ozarski, Program Officer - Environmental Program, Walton Family Foundation

**6:05pm Arrive in Salida at the Scout Hut for Dinner**

Thank You To Our Presenting Sponsors: Chaffee County and Lake County

PT Wood, Chair, Chaffee County Board of Commissioners  
Bryce Ehrlich, Water Resource Program Manager, Lake County

Discussion Topics

Salida's whitewater park, including its history, how it was developed, acquisition and function of the Recreational In-Channel Diversions (RICD) water right; Park use and maintenance, and the economic impact to the city.

Speaker

Mike Harvey, Planner and Project Manager, Recreation Engineering and Planning, City of Salida

**7:45pm Load Bus for 7:55pm Departure for Comfort Inn and Browns Canyon Inn**



## Day 2 - June 5, 2024

*Tour attendees, to maximize your time at the end of the day we'll be trying to load onto the bus faster than yesterday. Please be considerate of people's travel home at the end of the day!*

**7:00am**      **Check out of Comfort Inn and Browns Canyon Inn**

**7:20am**      **Load Bus for 7:30am Departure for Five Points Campground**

Discussion Topics

The role of the Arkansas Basin Roundtable and its priority projects as identified in the Basin Implementation Plan, including forest health.

Speaker

Mark Shea, Chair, Arkansas Basin Roundtable and Watershed Planning Supervisor, Colorado Springs Utilities

**8:20am**      **Arrive at Five Points Campground**

Discussion Topics

Recreational use on the Arkansas River, the role of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, low-head dam removal along the river corridor, and how the unique Voluntary Flow Management Program operates to collaboratively improve flow conditions for both recreation and fisheries.

Speakers

Tom Waters, Park Manager, Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Paul Foutz, Senior Aquatic Biologist, Southeast Region, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Bob Hamel, Executive Director, Arkansas River Outfitters Association

**8:55am**      **Load Bus for 9:00am Departure for the Cañon City Hydraulic Ditch**

Discussion Topic

Networking



**9:25am Arrive at the Cañon City Hydraulic Ditch**

Discussion Topics

Quick orientation to Cañon City water infrastructure visible in the area; history and use of the Hydraulic Ditch; current issues for ditches related to stormwater management.

Speakers

Travis Payne, Water Superintendent, City of Cañon City  
Mannie Colon, President, Hydraulic Ditch

**9:50am Load Onto Bus for 9:55am Departure for Cañon City Whitewater Recreation Park**

Discussion Topic

Networking

**10:00am Arrive at the Cañon City Whitewater Recreation Park**

Discussion Topics

Development and use of the whitewater recreation park plus its role in economic development for Cañon City.

Speakers

Emily Tracy, Cañon City Council Member  
Chris Moffett, Director, Royal Gorge RIO  
Andy Neinas, Owner, Echo Canyon River Expeditions

**10:35am Load Bus for 10:40am Departure for Lake Pueblo State Park Visitor Center**

Thank You To Our Bus Sponsor: Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

Chris Woodka, Senior Policy and Issues Manager

Thank You To Our Lunch Sponsor: Southwestern Water Conservation District

Monika Rock, Programs Coordinator

Discussion Topics

Pueblo West's water supply, conditions, and challenges.

Speakers

Jim Blasing, Director of Utilities, Pueblo West Metropolitan District



**11:30am Arrive at Lake Pueblo State Park Visitor Center for Lunch**

Thank You To Our Lunch Sponsor: Pueblo Water  
Alan Ward, Division Manager of Water Resources

Discussion Topics  
State park management and use; aquatic nuisance species management.

Speaker  
Joe Stadterman, Park Manager, Lake Pueblo State Park, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

**12:25pm Load Bus for 12:30pm departure for Pueblo Dam and Hydropower Plant**

Discussion Topics  
Networking

**12:35pm Arrive at Pueblo Dam and James W. Broderick Hydropower Plant**

Discussion Topics  
Pueblo Reservoir Dam construction and function; Pueblo Reservoir storage accounts and the complexities of accounting, including exchanges; management of the hydropower plant and power generation; and purpose and plans for the Arkansas Valley Conduit.

Speakers  
Mike Holmberg, Facility Manager, Pueblo Dam and Field Office, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
Chris Woodka, Senior Policy and Issues Manager, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

**1:10pm Load Bus for 1:15pm departure for the Southern Delivery System Juniper Pump Station**

Discussion Topics  
Networking





**1:20pm Arrive at the Southern Delivery System's Juniper Pump Station**

Discussion Topics

The Southern Delivery System and how it functions to deliver Arkansas River water north from Pueblo Reservoir to Colorado Springs.

Speakers

Garret Richard, Operations Supervisor - Juniper Pump Station, Colorado Springs Utilities

Kim Gortz, Project Manager Source Water Protection, Colorado Springs Utilities

**1:45pm Load Bus for 1:50pm Departure for the Pueblo State Fish Hatchery**

Discussion Topic

Networking

**1:55pm Arrive at the Pueblo State Fish Hatchery**

Discussion Topics

Colorado Parks and Wildlife's network of fish hatcheries and use of fish husbandry for both native and sport fish; the Pueblo State Fish Hatchery's history and operations plus challenges that being located in Pueblo pose to the operation.

Speakers

Jeff Spohn, Hatchery Chief - Pueblo State Fish Hatchery, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Quentin Springer, Manager - Pueblo State Fish Hatchery, Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Katie Rohwer, Wildlife Technician III - Pueblo State Fish Hatchery, Colorado Parks and Wildlife



**2:50pm Load Bus for 3:00pm Departure for Salida - Note, Please Use the Bathroom Before We Depart!**

Thank You To Our Bus Sponsor: Aurora Water  
Rick Kienitz, Water Resources Manager

Discussion Topics

Downstream challenges and approaches to water transfers including the Bessemer Farmland Conservation Project, Aurora Water's proposed exchanges, and more.

Speakers

Matt Heimerich, Former Crowley County Commissioner and Water Education Colorado Board Member

Rick Kienitz, Water Resources Manager, Aurora Water

Chris Woodka, Senior Policy and Issues Manager, Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District

**5:00pm Return to Comfort Inn, Tour Ends**