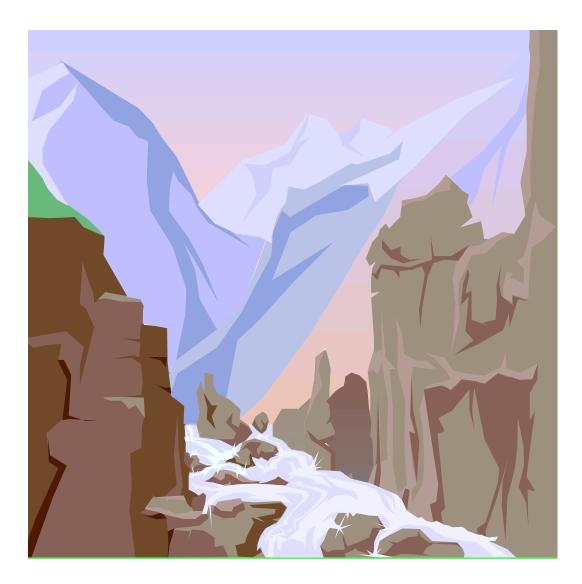
# Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area 2001 Annual Report



ARKANSAS HEADWATERS RECREATION AREA 2001 END OF YEAR REPORT Welcome to the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area's Annual Report for 2001. This annual report covers the activities of the AHRA from January 1, 2001 through December 31, 2001. Please remember when comparing statistics to reports from the 1990's that there will be significant differences in some areas because of the change in reporting periods.

The year 2001 marked the first year of operation under the newly revised *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan (ARRMP)*. Operating under the original *ARRMP*, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and the Colorado State Parks forged a ground breaking intergovernmental agreement in 1989 proving that, with the support of the public users, this kind of partnership can be very successful. Building on the original *ARRMP*, the new management plan has helped AHRA address new challenging issues, and at the same time has given the AHRA new resources and partners including the Colorado Division of Wildlife (CDOW) and the U. S. Forest Service (USFS).

**The Citizens Task Force** (CTF) has been an instrumental force behind the success of the above mentioned partnership. This advisory committee meets five times a year and helps advise the management team on many critical and diverse issues facing the recreation area. During the next ten years, the CTF will continue to play an important role in the partnership. The Citizens Task Force is composed of two representative members from each of the following AHRA constituency groups:

Anglers Commercial Permittees Environmentalists Water Users Private Boaters Local Governments River Front Property Owners

For the purpose of daily operation, AHRA is organized into work "sections". Each of these sections has specific responsibilities and is staffed by both full time and seasonal employees with specific job assignments. The visible field work (the real work) is really accomplished by the many dedicated seasonal employees at AHRA. In the busy season, AHRA employs over 30 seasonal staff members. Each work section is supervised by the following full time staff members and their primary areas of responsibility include:

Maintenance -	Harry Singleton and Tom Talbot (Parks)
Rangers -	Casey Swanson, JW Wilder,
	and Stew Pappenfort (Parks)
Administration -	Rose Bayless (Parks)
	Heather Goodroe (BLM)
<b>Commercial Agreements-</b>	Mike Walker (Parks)
<b>Recreation Planning -</b>	John Nahomenuk (BLM)
Management -	<b>Robert White and Dave Spencer (Parks)</b>
_	and Dave Taliaferro (BLM)

AHRA stretches nearly 150 miles from Leadville to Lake Pueblo along the Arkansas River. Although it has not grown in length, there has been steady growth in terms of total visitation to

the area. AHRA was established to assist in management of this increased recreational use throughout the valley and to maintain public facilities along the river corridor. AHRA has been anything but stagnant. Revenues, in the form of annual and daily individual parks passes, camping permits, recreational vehicle registrations, and special use concession agreement fees, continue to remain strong so as to provide for budgetary needs for operation, maintenance and development.

Year 2001	Park Passes	Camp Permits	Registrations	Special Use	Other: Don -	TOTALS	Gift Certs./
Month		&Reservations		Agreements	ations, Misc.		Over/Short
January	\$1,248.51	\$20.00	\$441.75	\$19,081.26	\$27.00	\$20,818.52	\$55 GC
February	\$738.25	\$20.00	\$603.25	\$797.38	\$14.00	\$2,172.88	
March	\$1,464.90	\$248.00	\$1,359.25	\$10,451.58	\$0.00	\$13,523.73	+\$.25
April	\$4,085.02	\$1,593.89	\$1,779.75	\$88,968.26	\$103.00	\$96,529.92	
May	\$11,190.80	\$4,737.00	\$1,866.75	\$38,316.78	\$180.00	\$56,291.33	+\$23
June	\$19,276.13	\$10,178.85	\$2,792.50	\$122,426.92	\$5,865.00	\$160,539.40	
July	\$19,480.50	\$10,738.36	\$4,530.50	\$100.00	\$500.00	\$35,349.36	\$10 GC
August	\$9,823.82	\$7,823.00	\$3,122.50	\$4,902.83	\$153.00	\$25,825.15	
September	\$3,667.79	\$3,539.15	\$1,472.75	\$9,992.34	\$79.00	\$18,751.03	
October	\$1,416.41	\$978.00	\$1,281.00	\$57,503.14	\$0.00	\$61,178.55	
November	\$829.35	\$401.00	\$737.00	\$223,561.81	\$20.00	\$225,549.16	
December	\$456.81	\$53.00	\$658.50	\$32,013.11	\$0.00	\$33,181.42	\$15 GC
TOTALS	\$73,678.29	\$40,330.25	\$20,645.50	\$608,115.41	\$6,941.00	\$749,710.45	

### AHRA YEAR 2001 REVENUES

### AHRA YEAR 2001 EXPENDITURES

Year 2001	Personnel	Operating	Utilities	Capital	Controlled	Grants &	TOTALS
Month				Equipment	Maintenance	Misc. Accts.	
January	\$34,993.96	\$6,549.00	\$923.28	\$0.00	\$10,207.28	\$14,133.75	\$66,807.27
February	\$29,003.96	\$4,656.16	\$542.55	\$0.00	\$492.55	\$2,977.58	\$37,672.80
March	\$43,589.70	\$7,654.79	\$1,155.01	\$0.00	\$1,137.24	\$3,187.35	\$56,724.09
April	\$38,128.68	(\$708.67)	\$548.00	\$0.00	\$2,656.65	\$21,827.84	\$63,161.17
Мау	\$65,760.63	\$16,029.02	\$1,036.00	\$0.00	\$6,389.70	\$2,234.93	\$91,450.28
June	\$78,220.82	\$22,809.74	\$2,664.66	\$0.00	\$945.14	\$12,704.53	\$117,344.89
July	\$73,394.26	\$11,056.48	\$1,680.51	\$35,691.01	\$1,816.47	\$1,930.82	\$125,569.55
August	\$75,531.33	\$13,646.61	\$5,223.91	\$0.00	\$4,022.71	\$1,768.25	\$100,192.81
September	\$69,099.92	\$10,407.90	\$958.60	\$0.00	\$7,074.83	\$2,505.12	\$90,046.37
October	\$56,358.45	\$10,227.82	\$2,714.28	\$0.00	\$179.50	\$5,090.47	\$74,570.52
November	\$52,103.81	\$4,950.38	\$414.40	\$0.00	\$10,716.29	\$2,057.04	\$70,241.92
December	\$35,672.73	\$4,911.57	(\$2503.99)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$14,045.28	\$54,629.58
TOTALS	\$651,858.25	\$112,899.47	\$17,861.20	\$35,691.01	\$45,638.36	\$84,462.96	\$948,411.25

### Recreational Use of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Two Year Comparison

		2000	2001	'00 TO '01
ACTIVITY*		PEOPLE	PEOPLE	% INCREASE
SIGHTSEEING		266,676	282,472	5.9%
FISHING				
	Shore	66,426	70,011	5.4%
	Boat	6,631	7,089	6.9%
PICNICKING		44,160	44,826	1.5%
BOATING				
	Commercial	301,152	312,784	3.9%
	Private	28,105	30,669	9.1%
TRAIL		26,445	21,646	-18.1%
INTERPRETIVE		11,574	12,753	10.2%
CAMPING		22,973	24,189	5.3%
ACTIVITY TOTAL		774,142	806,439	4.2%

\* May include participants in multiple activities

# **AHRA Ranger Section**

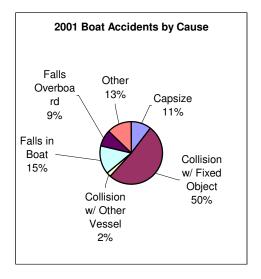
**The Ranger Section** patrols all portions, both land and river, of the AHRA throughout the year. The three full time staff members typically hire up to twelve seasonal staff members to assist them with their patrol responsibility. Seasonal rangers assigned to land-based operations are responsible for managing visitor use in the busy recreation sites and campgrounds and for collecting field revenue critical to AHRA operations. Because the seasonal staff covers two shifts per day, seven days a week, and are assigned to patrol either upstream or downstream of Salida each day, these vital field staff are the primary resource our visitors come into contact with during the summer months.

Six of the AHRA seasonal rangers specialize in whitewater boating activities on the river. Known as river rangers, they patrol whitewater sections of the Arkansas otherwise inaccessible to AHRA staff. These rangers actively monitor river flows and hazards, provide whitewater search and rescue support, inspect commercial and private boat trips for adequate safety equipment and operations, investigate boat accidents and provide expert river education to AHRA visitors in the field.

All AHRA seasonal law enforcement rangers are commissioned officers. When necessary, they can take appropriate law enforcement action to protect our visitors, preserve the resource and ensure compliance with other administrative regulations. Additionally, three full time park rangers, one seasonal ranger and two full time park managers are fully commissioned Colorado peace officers. While law enforcement may not be the primary function of any ranger's job, it is an important and necessary responsibility of all rangers. AHRA rangers work closely with other local, state and federal peace officers and resource managers in the performance of their duties.

In the winter the full time rangers continue to patrol the AHRA sites along the river. Additionally, rangers manage several snowmobile trail-grooming contracts and patrol snowmobile trails on Bureau of Land Management, national forest and other public lands within the river corridor as part of the State Parks Snowmobile Program. Winter is also the ideal time for rangers to complete most of their training and recertifications, to organize programs and plan for the high use season.

2001 Boat Accidents by	
Cause	
TOTALS BY CAUSE	
Capsize	5
Collision w/ Fixed Object	24
Collision w/ Other Vessel	1
Falls in Boat	7
Falls Overboard	4
Other	6
Total	47



Note: Many collision with fixed object accidents resulted in a capsize, fall in boat, or fall overboard.

Investigated and Reported Incidents for the Year 2001	
Reportable Commercial Boat Accidents	46
Other Commercial Accidents	7
Other Non-Commercial Accidents	6
Interagency Assists / SAR	6
Vandalism / Theft	8
Hazard Removal / HAZMAT	2
Other	9
Total	84

# **Summary of Public Safety Field Actions**

River Outfitter Safety Inspections	= 106	
River Outfitter Office Records Inspections	= 13	
River Assists	= 242	
Search, Rescue and Recovery Operations	= 16	
River Hazard Removal Operations	= 14	
<b>River Ranger Section Accomplishments</b>		

- ~ Participated with Rock & Rail, Royal Gorge Scenic Railway and area outfitters in a major river clean-up in the Royal Gorge.
- ~ Rebuilt the stairs at Jump Rock with San Luis Valley Youth Corps.
- ~ Investigated AHRA's first double boat fatality. Following the investigation, completed extensive removal of debris in the slot in Frog Rock Rapids.
- Assisted Colorado State Patrol with the removal of two vehicles from Three Forks Rapid in two separate incidents.
- ~ Recovered the body of a person who jumped off the Royal Gorge Bridge.
- ~ Distributed over 100 recycled lifejackets to Colorado law enforcement and emergency response agencies.
- ~ Assisted DOW with a fish shocking project at LOCSI (Arkansas River Ranch).

### Land Ranger Section Accomplishments

- ~ Investigated a suicide at Salida East.
- ~ Created the Sign Order and Site Plan for the Big Bend OHV Park.
- ~ Coordinated Ranger Training for AHRA Staff and the Statewide River Ranger Team.
- ~ Presentation to the environmental festival at Otero Jr. College in La Junta, 300 Students.
- ~ Completed a successful sting operation on a pirate fishing outfitter.
- ~ Found and arrested a wanted escapee at the Wellsville Bridge.
- ~ Arrested an underage person who was convicted of Boating Under the Influence.
- ~ Rescued a panicked eleven year old boy from the river by swimming to him and getting him to shore and his father.
- ~ Got highway site signs up at our recreation sites in the Durango CDOT District.
- ~ Assisted in the search for and capture of the Stovall Brothers.

### **Citations Issued for the Year 2001**

	2000	2001
Pass/Permit Violations	94	202
Resource Protection Violations	17	23
Public Safety Violations	09	07
Records/Reporting Violations	06	04
OHV Violations	20	33
Snowmobile Violations	23	16
Other Violations	09	06
*Total	178	299
*Total Includes Citations to Commercial Outfitters	14	08

### AHRA Maintenance Section

**The Maintenance Section** is responsible year-round for the routine daily site cleaning, repair, improvement and up keep for the entire recreation area from the Crystal Lakes near Leadville to the Blue Heron recreation site near Lake Pueblo. This takes a great deal of effort and coordination, yet our staff meets this challenge and continues to excel at it. This section is also extensively involved in site improvements and modifications suggested by our visitors, outfitters

and staff. During 2001, these improvements included drainage, signage, weed control/revegetation, fencing, landscaping and roadway/trail maintenance and development.

Full time maintenance staff members increased from one to two positions in September 2001. This increase in staff will improve staffing continuity, reduce redundant training hours, increase efficiency and enhance productivity in the AHRA Maintenance Section. There are now seven maintenance staff in the summer season and three maintenance staff during the winter season including both seasonal and full time employees.

With the addition of one full time maintenance employee, utilization of corrections inmate work crews, volunteer agencies, and youth groups also received greater emphasis during 2001, and will be increased even further in the future, as all parties involved derive great benefits. In addition, the limited maintenance resources of the park are magnified many times over and everybody wins.

#### **AHRA Special Use Agreement Section**

The Special Use Agreement Section exists to accurately and efficiently administer the overall and day-to-day AHRA Special Use Agreements as well as the Rationing Plan for Commercial Boating on the Arkansas River within the AHRA. Regulated outfitters provide whitewater and float fishing experiences to over 300,000 AHRA guests annually. Use and consequent impacts increased by 3.9% from the year 2000 to 2001. This section also administers the AHRA Rationing Plan that regulates carrying capacities on twelve different river sections that have different carrying capacities ranging from 450 commercial boats per day to ten commercial boats per day throughout different times of the year. This section designs, develops and utilizes custom computer programs and related software, written correspondence, computerized reports and data control methods, telephone and personal contacts, commercial use verification methods and physical audits of records to maintain compliance. Assisting in this effort is a Count Crew who visually count river and site visitors (both commercial and private) to maintain accurate records of river use and outfitter rationing compliance throughout the recreation area. This section is staffed with one full time position, six summer seasonal employees, and one winter seasonal employee.

# AHRA Commercial Special Use Agreements

By Type

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	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Boating		60
Photography / Video	11	6
Walk and Wade Fishing		
Shuttle Services	2	1
Total		77

### **Rationed Days**

	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>
Section 1c – The Numbers	9	
Section 2b – Brown's Canyon		7
Section 2d – Big Bend to Salida		
Section 3 – Salida to Vallie Bridge		
Section 4a – Vallie Bridge to Texas Creek		
Section 4b – Texas Creek to Parkdale		
Section 5 – The Royal Gorge		
Fotal		

### By Section

### **AHRA Bureau of Land Management**

**The Bureau of Land Management** staff consists of the Contact Representative, Recreation Technician, Outdoor Recreation Planner and River Manager. These employees work together to fulfill the BLM's role within the AHRA Partnership.

The Contact Representative meets and greets visitors to the AHRA Visitor Center and provides a full range of information services on recreational activities including camping, boating, fishing, gold panning, hiking and biking. This representative handles sales and bookkeeping including revenues from concession agreements, retail GARNA items, parks passes and recreational vehicle registrations. This person acts as radio dispatcher to staff in the field and provides administrative support to all AHRA employees as needed. This staff member files, dockets and maintains the law enforcement penalty assessments, trains seasonal employees during the busy summer season and maintains a database of information on park visitation and revenue. The Contact Representative also maintains two new large wall displays, one of which is a relief map of the entire 150 mile river corridor, showing towns, recreation site locations, etc. The other display is photo collection of different residents of the river corridor, reflecting the users of the river and its water.

The Recreation Technician provides assistance to visitors in the BLM uplands and specifically carries out patrols in the public lands immediately adjacent to the AHRA managed lands along the river corridor. This technician provides support for OHV partnership projects, other volunteer resource improvement projects, as well as carrying out support to AHRA in the Geographical Information System process. This technician provides capabilities related to Geographical Position System efforts related to recording locations of roads, trails and other recreational use sites within the river corridor. Most recently, this geographical data role will be expanded through acquisition of a large mapping plotter. This technician is also part of an AHRA team that carries out resource monitoring {in its sixth year} within resource damaged zones along the river within Browns Canyon. In addition, during the upcoming year this technician will be developing mechanisms and controls to curb some of the river-related resource use impacts within the canyon.

The Outdoor Recreation Planner provides a wide range of professional level expertise to AHRA related to both the BLM upland management as well as the immediate public lands along the river corridor within AHRA. This planner works closely with other AHRA staff, many other federal and state agencies, as well as local entities and user groups on issues tied to public lands within the river corridor. A continuing extensive effort is being made to complete a large-scale

travel management plan for the Four Mile Area. This planner is also continuing to monitor and provide resource protection to the two units of BLM Wilderness Study Areas {WSA's} and to four BLM Areas of Critical Environmental Concern {ACEC's}. In addition, this planner is assisting AHRA staff in bringing the Big Bend OHV riding area into fruition, so that this site will be open to the OHV riding public.

The BLM River Manager is responsible for the overall operations, care and feeding of this unique multi-agency partnership. This individual works closely with the Colorado Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPOR) AHRA Park Manager to assure that the direction provided within the ARRMP is fully implemented. During the last several years a ten-year revision of the original ARRMP was carried out and implemented during 2001. The addition of a vision statement and modifications of 50 + decisions within the plan need to now be fully implemented. This individual is responsible for seeing that the overall health of the public lands along the river corridor is maintained and enhanced as feasible. Most recently a complete reassessment of the potential land acquisitions directed by the management plan was carried out with 28 properties or easements being pursued through BLM, CDPOR, USFS and Cities/Towns within the corridor. Other recent major initiatives worked on are the site management planning for the newly purchased 251 acre Blue Heron Property, the private boater permitting issue, input into the rationing plan modifications, the continued effort with the Lake County Open Space Initiative and the very near purchase of the 2200 acre Hayden Ranch Property.

### **AHRA Administrative Section**

**The Administrative Section** provides support services for all State Parks and BLM employees, full time and seasonal alike. Administrative staff coordinate visitor and customer services; administer park pass and registration programs and sales; oversee field and office revenues and accounting; manage the Environmental Education and Interpretive Program including special projects and grants; assist with purchasing and receiving; take care of personnel and payroll matters; and handle thousands of telephone and radio calls each year. One permanent full time position, one seasonal employee and the BLM Contact Representative staff this section.

Adminis	strative Services, Sales and Revenue Statistics (January throug	h December 2001):
2001	Activity	Compared to 2000
525	Annual and Aspen Leaf Passes Sold	+5.63%
\$10,900	Revenue from Annual and Aspen Leaf Pass Sales	+21.31%
1,302	Boat, Snowmobile and OHV Registrations Sold	+31.91%
\$20,340	Revenue from Registration Sales	+36.07%
\$88,757	Revenue from Camp Permits and Daily Individual Passes	+2.64%
\$608,115	Revenue from Commercial Agreements	+20.78%

### **Administrative Section Visitor Contacts**

No. Of People	Type of Activity
342	Junior Ranger, Campfire and Story Hour Programs
264	School Programs
485	Environmental Education Presentations to Groups
1,450	Demonstrations and Community Events
5,481	Visitors to AHRA Headquarters and Visitor Center
5,244	Information Contacts in the Field

**Interpretive and Environmental Education** programs and services were noteworthy achievements in the year 2001. A second Junior Ranger series was continued in Buena Vista each week to complement the Salida series held on Saturday mornings. The children's programs covered such topics as track and scat identification, fossils, a live snake exhibit and rock hounding. AHRA continues to be very active year-round with area schools, recreation programs and other youth groups to provide environmental education that is consistent with their own curriculum. Thirty-eight specific programs and demonstrations reached a total of 2,541 people. We even included one of our ranger vehicles towing a trailer and raft in the Buena Vista 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, to the cheers of young and old alike.

AHRA continued its partnership with **GARNA** (Greater Arkansas River Nature Association) on many educational and interpretive programs, projects and events. AHRA assisted GARNA in staffing the Poncha Springs Visitor Center, and GARNA helped AHRA with the 2001 River Clean-up/Green-up. GARNA is also instrumental in assisting AHRA with grant writing and administration.

### AHRA State Park Management

**State Park Managers** oversee and coordinate the daily operations and overall programs, and projects for the entire work unit described above. They are the communication line between field staff and the South Region office in Colorado Springs and State Park offices in Denver and Littleton. They work closely with the Bureau of Land Management to insure that management plan goals and directives are being met and to implement the Arkansas River Flow Program each year. Most importantly, they work to provide the many community and resource wide coordination activities and efforts needed throughout the 150 mile river corridor. They continue to develop and enhance communication and cooperation among current partners in addition to pursuing new partnership opportunities.

Among the most important accomplishments of this past year for the management section has been the implementation of the *Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan*. The new plan provides a vision which will serve as a road map for the next 10 years of operation.

This year, as in past years, AHRA staff continued to maintain the essential quality of management practices and public services that help conserve the Arkansas River and its unique features for everyone's enjoyment.

The preceding information provided a section-by-section analysis of the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area. What follows is the final portion of the Annual Report, which shows a detailed list of accomplishments completed during the year 2001.

### 2001 ACCOMPLISHMENTS ARKANSAS HEADWATERS RECREATION AREA

- Implementation of the Arkansas River Recreation Management Plan culminated three years of work by AHRA staff, the Citizens Task Force and members of the public who provided input into the planning process
- ~ New representatives as needed were selected for the Citizens Task Force
- ~ Developed and implemented a new web-based Boat Transfer System
- ~ Conducted the annual Outfitter's Workshop
- ~ In conjunction with the Greater Arkansas River Nature Association, organized and conducted the tenth annual River Clean-up/Green-up
- ~ Completed work on the Texas Creek residence to convert it into a downriver ranger substation and seasonal employee residence
- ~ Took mitigation steps including the construction and re-establishment of several fence lines to prevent future livestock damage to the Ruby Mountain Recreation Site
- ~ Resurfaced the entrance to the Stone Bridge Recreation Site
- Conducted Whitewater Rescue and Swiftwater 1<sup>st</sup> Responder training classes for AHRA and other agency staff
- ~ Conducted a survey and published a report entitled Visitor Characteristics, Perceptions of Crowding and Conflict, and Management Preferences at the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area Summer 2001
- Assisted DOW and BLM in the installation of an additional two guzzlers for wildlife watering in lower Big Horn Sheep Canyon
- ~ Hosted a Youth in Natural Resources crew that completed several improvements at various sites throughout the Recreation Area
- Hosted the San Luis Valley Youth Corp that rebuilt the stairs at Jump Rock and closed several social trails near the Seidel's Suckhole Rapid
- Through cooperative efforts of the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Southeastern Colorado Water Conservancy District (SECWCD), the Pueblo Board of Water Works and the DNR, the Voluntary Flow Program once again mitigated the negative effects of this low water year
- Natural resource partners, including the DOW, US Forest Service, Colorado State Forest Service and NRCS, worked through the conceptual phases of building a "Natural Resources Center" in Salida
- Produced a report on the last 5 years of environmental monitoring of the recreational use in Browns Canyon
- Assisted Pueblo State Park with an extended park closure (for security of the dam) following the terrorists activities of September 11
- ~ Assisted local, state and federal law enforcement agencies in the search and capture of two fugitive killers at Bear Creek
- Began planning for a private boater permit system for Browns Canyon after AHRA count data indicated that private use in that section had surpassed use allocation on three separate occasions

- Purchased the Blue Heron property near Florence which provides over one mile of additional river frontage for AHRA. This property will eventually be developed into a day-use site for boating, fishing, wildlife watching and picnicking.
- ~ Assistant Park Manager Dave Spencer retired on December 31, 2001

# 2001 SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

- ~ Pole, Pedal, Paddle Race
- ~ Let's Go Gold Panning
- ~ Swiftwater Rescue Training
- ~ Goodman Memorial Service
- ~ Memorial Day Coffee Stop
- ~ Student Kayak Trip
- ~ Whitewater Wednesday
- ~ FIBArk Duck Race
- ~ Duck Race
- ~ Whitewater Rodeo
- ~ Advertising Video Shoot
- ~ Kayak Trip
- ~ Freestyle Kayaking
- ~ Geology Field Studies
- ~ Camp Promotional Video Tape
- ~ Colorado Cup Slalom Race
- ~ Arkansas Valley Astronomical Society Star Gazing