



Yampa River Commercial & Voluntary Closures Lifted

Colder Temps & Dissolved Oxygen Levels Coupled with Rising Flows & Low Demand Signal Change

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, COLORADO-October 6, 2021-The commercial and voluntary closures on the Yampa River, implemented earlier this summer, will be lifted starting on Thursday, October 7, 2021. However, the City of Steamboat Springs and Colorado Parks & Wildlife are requesting that the community refrain from entering a small stretch of the Yampa River at the confluence of Fish Creek.

“It definitely takes a village, or in our case, a community, to protect the health and well-being of the Yampa River,” said Parks, Open Space & Trails Manager Craig Robinson. “A huge thank you goes out to the entire community for their continued support of our #1 natural resource. Everyone’s efforts this past summer are greatly appreciated.”

Given the recent moisture and favorable forecasts for cooler daytime air temperatures, combined with significant contributions from upstream reservoir operators, Colorado Parks & Wildlife experts believe that water flows look reasonably stable. Currently, water flows are trending towards the 85 cubic feet per second (cfs) threshold, currently sitting at 69.9 cfs as of 2:15 pm today.

That trend, coupled with colder water temperatures, favorable dissolved oxygen levels, and less recreation demand typically seen this time of year, has led to the reopening of the river for both commercial and recreational use, with the exception of the Fish Creek area voluntary closure.



A voluntary closure will remain in place through October 20 at the confluence of Fish Creek and the Yampa River due to spawning. With the cold water from Fish Creek, and the large concentration of spawning fish in this deep pool, the voluntary closure will run roughly 100 feet upstream and 200 feet downstream on the Yampa River, as well as up Fish Creek to US40. Signage will be in place to alert river users of the continued voluntary closure in this area.

“The fishery has been exposed to challenging environmental conditions over the past several summers,” commented Colorado Parks & Wildlife Aquatic Biologist Bill Atkinson. “As we get back in the water, please practice appropriate fish handling techniques and conservation ethics. Flows are still below average, and fish will be more concentrated, so minimizing fishing pressure in these areas is encouraged.”

The river was closed shortly after the July 4 holiday weekend on Thursday, July 8 and has remained that way throughout the busy summer period. This is the fifth consecutive summer that the community waterway has seen restrictions in place.

When the river dropped below the critical point this summer, several agencies worked together to keep water flowing for the eighth year in the past decade. These releases were made possible through strong relationships and funding contributions from the Yampa River Fund, the Colorado Water Trust, the Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District, the Lake Catamount Metropolitan Water District, and the City of Steamboat Springs.

-WeServeTheCity-

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