



PRESS RELEASE

*Pueblo City Fire Department
Pueblo County Sheriff's Office
Colorado Parks and Wildlife*

For Immediate Release

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Activities Restricted on Arkansas River Due to Dangerous Conditions

Pueblo, CO: The Pueblo City Fire Department, the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office and Colorado Parks and Wildlife announced today restricted use of the Arkansas River from the Pueblo Dam to the Pueblo County/Otero County line due to the dangerously fast flowing and high water on the river. The restrictions are effective on Tuesday, June 11.

Activities prohibited on the river at this time include whitewater canoes, kayaks, recreational swimming (including with a life vest) and use of any single-chambered air-inflated devices to include inner tubes, inflatable mattresses and inflatable rafts and any multiple chamber inflatables. Violators will be cited.

"Water awareness and safety is extremely important this time of year in our community," said Chief of the Pueblo Fire Department Barb Huber. "The Arkansas River is experiencing high volume at this time because of the time of year and the increased rainfall, so we ask everyone to be aware of restrictions, closures and safety hazards as we update the public about announcements."

Trails along the river are still open to pedestrian and bicycle traffic, however, those using the trails will do so at their own risk. Those using the trails are urged to remain cautious and aware of the river flow and to avoid areas where there is water on the trail. Remember, when encountering flooded trails and roads, Turn Around, Don't Drown when encountering water hazards.

"The winter snowmelt and recent heavy rains have created a very hazardous situation on the river," said Pueblo County Sheriff David J. Lucero. "Due to the dangerous condition of the river, we feel that for the safety of the public, we request people stay out of the water until conditions improve."

(MORE)

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“The tailwaters below the Lake Pueblo dam are a popular place to fish and tube,” said Joe Stadterman, CPW’s park manager at Lake Pueblo. “While high flows such as these can be attractive to some recreationists, the current conditions are just too dangerous to allow the river to stay open.”

Earlier today, the National Weather Service issued a flood warning for the Arkansas River above Pueblo and affecting Pueblo County due to increased release from the Pueblo Dam. Minor flooding is expected downstream from the dam. The flood stage this morning was 7.8 feet with the river expected to rise to 8.1 feet this afternoon with additional rises possible thereafter.

The Arkansas River is currently flowing at just over 6,000 cubic feet per second, which is about four times the normal flow. For perspective, one cubic foot is about the size of a basketball which means this is about 6,000 basketballs per second floating past at one given time.

The public is asked to stay away from the banks of the river and streams as saturated banks can break away. In addition to the flow of the river, the cold temperature of the water, much of which is coming from the snowmelt in the mountains, poses a risk to individuals.

Pueblo Fire, Pueblo County Sheriff’s and Colorado Parks and Wildlife officials will continue to monitor the river flows and coordinate the reopening of the river when the water flows return to a safe level.

For future updated information, please follow the Pueblo Fire Department and Pueblo County Sheriff’s Office social media channels of Facebook, X (formerly Twitter) and Instagram.

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