

Memorandum

DATE: August 1, 2024
TO: DOUGLAS COUNTY ADVISORY BOARDS
FROM: AMY KNOPP, MANAGER OF RUETER-HESS RESERVOIR
CC: STEVE SHOULTZ, CPRE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS, TRAILS & BUILDING GROUNDS
SUBJECT: RUETER-HESS RECREATION UPDATE FOR JULY 2024

SUMMARY

This is the Rueter-Hess Recreation update for July 2024.

UPDATES

Noxious Thistle Removal



Douglas County's Invasive Weed Management Program is a great resource for learning about invasive weeds and how to control and eradicate them. The Colorado Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed Program works with local land managers to mitigate noxious weeds. Noxious weeds are categorized into List A Species, List B Species, List C Species, and Watch List Species. List A species have the potential for eradication, whereas the goal for species on the List B is to stop the noxious weeds from spreading. To learn more about the Noxious Weed Program and the plants on each list visit the [Colorado Department of Agriculture's website](#) or [Douglas County's Invasive Weeds Management Program](#).

In July, Rangers have been removing the List B Scotch thistle (*Onopordum acanthium*) seed heads along the trails on the Reuter-Hess Property and bagging them. Each individual plant has about 14,000 seeds, which means that one Scotch thistle can make 14,000 more plants! Once bagged, they are removed from the area, helping to reduce the spread of seeds. Rangers have logged approximately 11 hours combating this invasive plant. By removing these plants, we can help protect the public and their pets from the prickly leaves and stems.

If established, invasive thistles outcompete native plant species for space, water, and nutrients. Thistle seeds are spread by wind, and with the dry summer weather and afternoon winds at Rueter-Hess, it is important that as many of these invasive plants be removed as possible.

Sources:

Colorado Department of Agriculture (2024). Noxious Weeds. Retrieved from

<https://ag.colorado.gov/conservation/noxious-weeds>

Douglas County Colorado (2024). Invasive Weeds Management Program. Retrieved from

<https://ag.colorado.gov/conservation/noxious-weeds>

Girl Scouts Camp

Rueter-Hess Reservoir welcomed 21 Girl Scouts for a week-long camp starting on July 15th. This marks the fifth year that the reservoir has hosted the event. The camp focused on water recreation safety and training. Throughout the week, the scouts learned to use and navigate paddleboards, kayaks, canoes, sailboards, and sailboats under the guidance of trained instructors. The camp culminated in a pirate-themed fun day that featured activities such as walking the plank across canoes, canoe tug-of-war, and relay races.

Enhancing Vendor Performance At Reuter-Hess Reservoir

Over the 2024 summer season, park rangers have met and collaborated with vendors to enhance safety protocols and ensure that the Rueter-Hess Reservoir rules and regulations are followed. A comprehensive assessment of vendor activities was conducted to identify areas needing improvement that focus on visitor safety, protecting water quality, and vendor staff training. Regular meetings between park rangers and vendor leadership facilitated a constructive and ongoing review to improve the following processes: weather and water safety, clean equipment, parking of vehicles and trailers during and after activities, the use of the vessel launch area, practicing water skills without actively swimming, trash removal and vendor staff professionalism. Moving forward, the partnership remains committed to alignment on safety standards and emphasizing the importance of Rueter-Hess Reservoir rule compliance.



OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE UPDATES

- Mowing parking lots and trails
- Noxious weed removal
- Trail and corridor inspections
- E-Bikes purchased for the patrol program
- BOCC approval for Safety Boat
- Entrance Area Planning

Calendar of Events		
Special Use		
All Summer Season	Avid4 Adventure Summer Season Day Camp	Reservoir
6/1/2024	Fransen Pittman Company 5K	Incline
6/1/2024	Colorado Gun Dog Association	Hess Road Access
6/8/2024	Women Inspiring Leadership	Incline
06/21/24 to 6/23/24	Amateur Radio Emergency Service	Hess Road Access
07/15/24 to 07/19/24	Girl Scouts of Colorado Camp Days	Reservoir
RAB /Partner Days		
6/14/2024	PWSD Bring Your Child to Work Day	Reservoir
7/20/2024	The City of Lone Tree Partner Day	Reservoir
7/24/2024	PWSD Family Day 3-6 pm	Reservoir
8/3/2024	The Town of Castle Rock Partner Day	Reservoir
8/17/2024	The Town of Parker Partner Day	Reservoir
8/24/24	The City of Castle Pines Partner Day	Reservoir

Visitation	Jun	Jun	Jul	Jul	ANNUAL	ANNUAL	Change			
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023 (ACT)	2024 (YTD)	2024-2023			
Reservations Made	237	780	519	836	2,531	2,200	-331			
Reservations Attended	167	680	415	703	1,484	1,831	347			
No Show Reservations	70	100	104	133	694	369	-325			
Total Visitors At Reservoir	688	1747	1,294	1,833	4,751	4,612	-139			
RHR Incline	6545	8110	7,631	7,462	68,147	40,012	-28,135			
RHR Coyote Run Loop	631	1565	872	803	7,003	5,195	-1,808			
RHR Newlin Gold Trail	N/A	147	N/A	147	0	534	534			
Total Trails Visitors	7176	9822	8,503	8,412	75,150	45,741	-29,409			
Total Visitors	7864	11569	9,797	10,245	79,901	50,353	-29,548			
Vehicles Allowed In Because They Couldn't Make A Reservation	20	3	12	4	64	9	-55			

Reservation System Feedback	Jun	Jun	Jul	Jul	ANNUAL	ANNUAL	Change			
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023 (ACT)	2024 (YTD)	2024-2023			
Reservation Complaints (In Person)	25	1	31	2	69	6	-63			
Vendor reported reservation complaints	0	1	0	0	31	1	-30			
Complaints Via Email Or Phone	34	3	0	1	49	4	-45			
Total Complaints	59	5	31	3	149	11	-138			

Fishing	Jun	Jun	Jul	Jul	ANNUAL	ANNUAL	Change			
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023 (ACT)	2024 (YTD)	2024-2023			
Adult Anglers	N/A	218	N/A	133	564	671	107			
Youth Anglers	N/A	97	N/A	48	334	239	-95			
Total Anglers	N/A	315	N/A	181	898	910	12			
Tackle Box Inspections	N/A	216	N/A	153	564	673	109			
Fishing Checks	N/A	243	N/A	137	710	739	29			

Special Use	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Partner Days	0	0	0	1	2	1	-1
Partner Days Attendance	0	0	0	148	230	148	-82
Partner Programming Days	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Partner Programming Days Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Special Use	32	26	33	23	101	28	-73
Special USE Attendance	455	1342	401	647	1253	1374	121
Total Special Use	32	26	33	24	101	52	-49
Total Special Use Attendance	455	1342	401	795	1483	2169	686

Public Safety	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Water Assist (just needed some help)	1	23	5	0	17	24	7
Trail assist	N/A	3	N/T	9	0	12	12
Number Of People Helped During Assists	1	26	5	14	22	41	19
Water rescue (dangerous or distressed situations)	1	6	1	1	21	7	-14
Trail Rescue	N/A	0	N/T	0	0	0	0
People Helped During Rescue	1	6	1	1	37	7	-30
Overdue Groups	2	10	2	2	8	15	7
Number Of People Overdue	6	28	5	5	22	39	17
Number Of People Helped To Recreate Safely	2	32	6	15	59	48	-11
EMS Requested	0	1	0	0	0	2	2
Number Of People Helped By EMS	0	1	0	0	0	3	3

Ranger Functions Hours	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Foot Patrol	N/T	175	N/T	153	N/T	919	919
Bike Patrol	N/T	10	N/T	4	N/T	40	40
Boat Patrol	N/T	115	N/T	119	N/T	314	314
Vehicle and ATV Patrol	N/T	99	N/T	81	N/T	627	627
Entrance Station	N/T	239	N/T	236	N/T	1,825	1,825
Training	N/T	5	N/T	2	N/T	357	357
Admin At HHRP	N/T	17	N/T	83	N/T	1,154	1,154
Holiday/Vacation/Sick	N/T	240	N/T	128	N/T	802	802
Total Hours	N/T	900	N/T	806	N/T	6,038	6,038

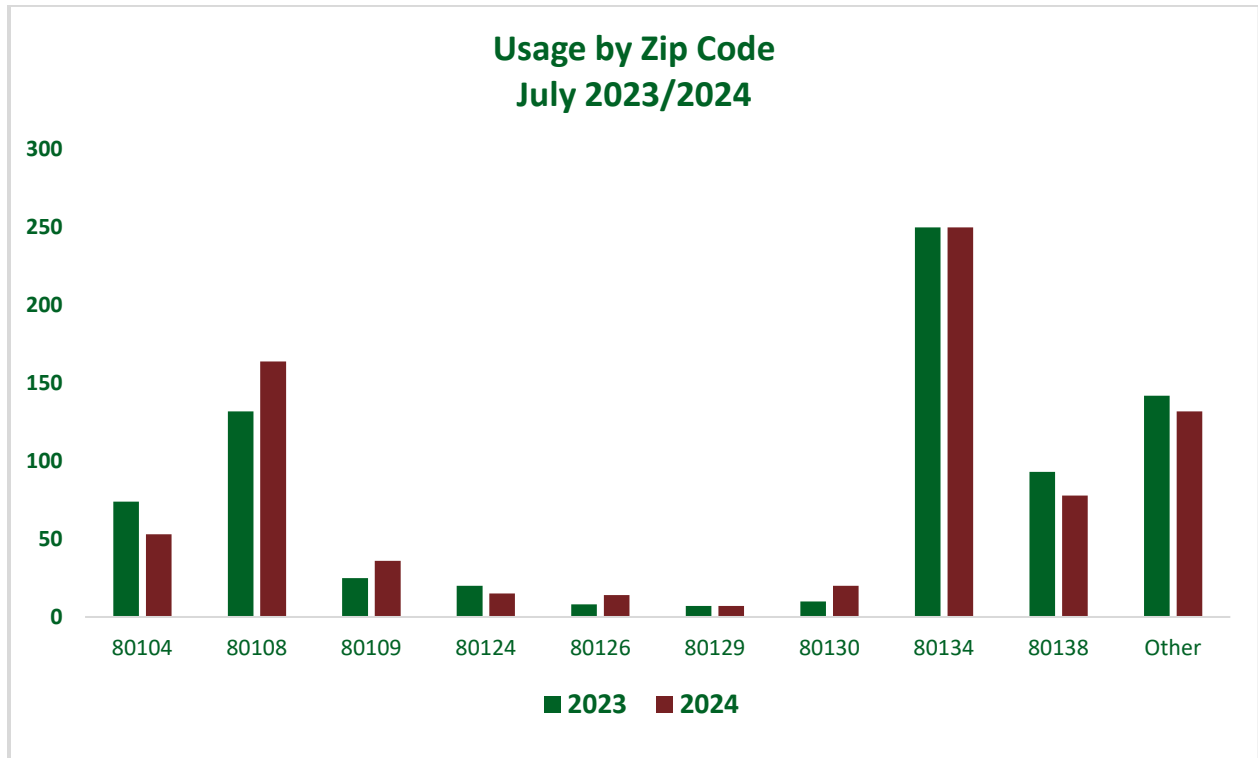
Watercraft Inspections	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Paddleboard	175	719	521	775	1448	1728	280
Canoe	4	11	10	8	46	36	-10
Kayak	30	178	80	201	418	503	85
Windsurf	N/A	0	N/A	0	0	0	0
Other	N/A	0	N/A	1	0	1	1
Total Watercraft Inspections	209	908	611	985	1912	2268	356
Paddleboard Cleaned	N/A	128	N/T	124	N/T	299	299
Canoe Cleaned	N/A	0	N/T	0	N/T	1	1
Kayak Cleaned	N/A	19	N/T	13	N/T	57	57
Windsurf Cleaned	N/A	0	N/T	0	N/T	0	0
Other	N/A	0	N/T	0	N/T	0	0
Total Watercraft Cleaned - Allowed To Launch	N/A	147	N/T	137	N/T	357	357
Failed Paddleboard	35	0	1	0	36	1	-35
Failed Canoe	2	0	0	0	3	0	-3
Failed Kayak	3	0	0	1	5	3	-2
Failed Windsurf	N/A	0	N/A	0	0	0	0
Other	N/A	0	N/A	1	0	1	1
Total Failed Inspections	40	0	1	2	44	5	-39

Rules and Regulations	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
PFD Violations	4	45	31	45	82	105	23
Swim/Wade	0	36	10	41	51	84	33
Dogs On Shore	0	2	0	1	4	5	1
Dogs In Water	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Dogs Off Leash	0	1	0	0	12	19	7
Alcohol On Property	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Parking In Undesignated Area	2	35	0	47	16	125	109
Off Trail Use	0	1	0	0	2	15	13
Bait Violations	0	14	0	0	17	20	3
Hook Violations	0	15	0	2	36	23	-13
Poles Violations	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fishing In Restricted Areas	0	5	0	4	27	39	12
Fishing license Violations	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1
No Fishing Permit Violations	0	0	0	2	1	2	1
Total Rule Violations	6	154	41	142	249	440	191

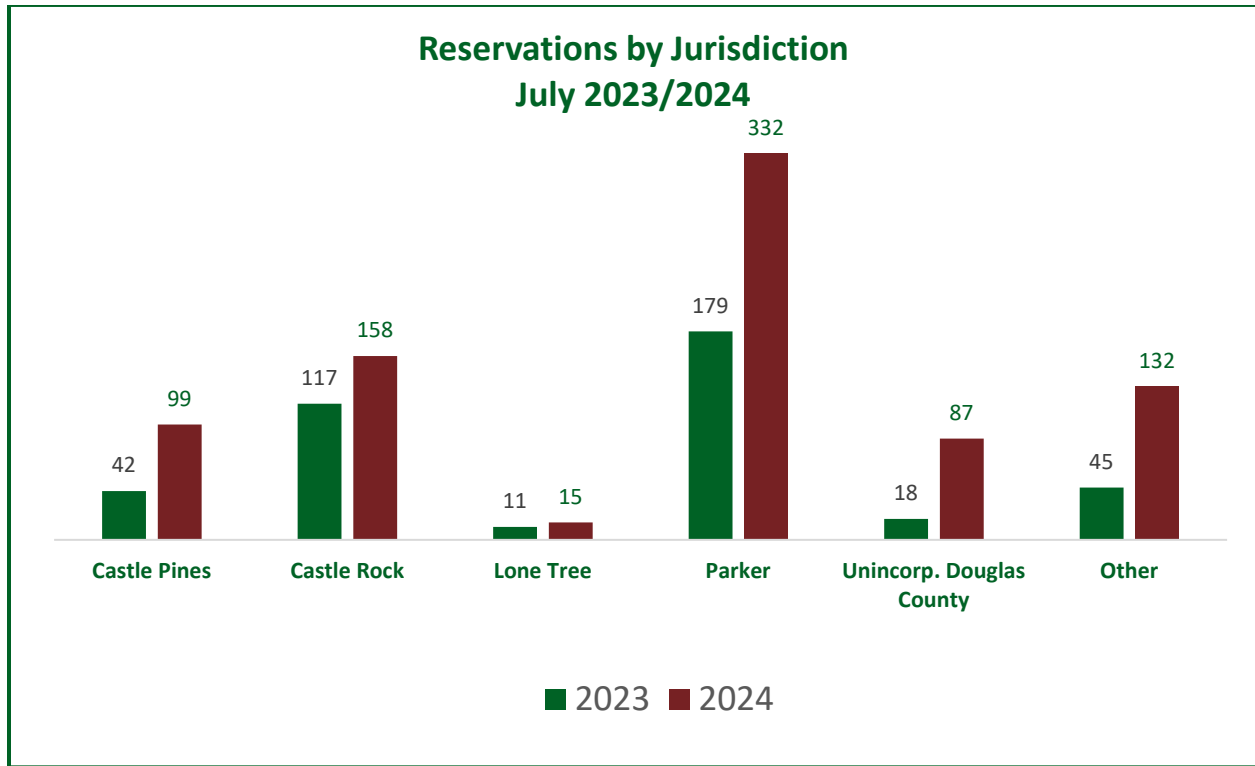
Trail Maintenance Hours	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Trail Maintenance	N/T	48	N/T	30	N/T	194	194
Establish New Trail	N/T	0	N/T	0	N/T	23	23
Fishing Access Maintenance	N/T	0	N/T	1	N/T	4	4
Establish New Fishing Access	N/T	0	N/T	0	N/T	0	0
Parks Tech's With Machinery	N/T	0	N/T	3	N/T	0	0
Total Trail Maintenance Hours	N/T	48	N/T	30	N/T	219	219

Facility Closure	Jun 2023	Jun 2024	Jul 2023	Jul 2024	ANNUAL 2023 (ACT)	ANNUAL 2024 (YTD)	Change 2024-2023
Facility Closure For Water Quality Impacted Reservation	0	0	0	0	1	0	-1
Facility Closure For Weather	0	0	0	0	3	0	-3
Total Number Of Impacted People	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
	0	0	0	0	4	0	-4

Comments & Questions	Jun	Jun	Jul	Jul	ANNUAL	ANNUAL	Change	
	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023 (ACT)	2024 (YTD)	2024-2023	
Allowed Activity	2	5	1	2	13	36	23	
Biking	1	1	1	0	3	2	-1	
Boating	1	0	1	0	4	4	0	
Camping	1	0	1	1	2	1	-1	
Fishing	11	1	1	2	30	36	6	
General Questions	20	9	9	17	67	58	-9	
Hiking	1	0	0	0	1	7	6	
Inspections	1	0	0	0	1	0	-1	
Types of Passes	1	1	0	1	4	12	8	
Refunds	2	13	2	14	7	30	23	
Rentals	0	0	1	2	4	3	-1	
Reservations and Fees	54	22	39	4	162	61	-101	
Special Events	2	3	3	0	7	5	-2	
Trails	3	1	3	2	15	12	-3	
Grand Total	100	56	62	45	320	267	-53	



Rueter-Hess Usage by Zip Code		Number of Registrations	
Zip Code	2023	2024	
80104	74	53	
80108	132	164	
80109	25	36	
80112	-	15	
80116	-	14	
80124	20	15	
80126	8	14	
80129	7	7	
80130	10	20	
80134	250	250	
80138	93	78	
Other	142	132	



Rueter-Hess Reservations by City		
City	2023	2024
Castle Pines	42	99
Castle Rock	117	158
Lone Tree	11	15
Parker	179	332
Unincorporated Douglas County	18	87
Other	45	132