

Memorandum

Date: July 6, 2026
To: Douglas County Advisory Boards
From: Amy Knopp, Manager of Rueter-Hess Recreation
CC: Steven Shoultz, CPRE, Director of Parks and Recreation
Subject: Rueter-Hess Recreation Update June 2026

RUETER-HESS UPDATES

Visitor Assistance on Rueter-Hess Reservoir

On Saturday, May 30th, Park Rangers Matt Aiguier and Bernadette Ortiz responded to assist two visitors who were fishing from a rowboat in the west cove of Rueter-Hess Reservoir. The visitors reported that their trolling motor had begun emitting smoke and was no longer functioning. Although the visitors had oars on board, they would have had to paddle the rowboat a considerable distance from the west cove back to the launch area after losing their trolling motor. Park Rangers responded with the ranger patrol boat to provide assistance. After assessing the situation and ensuring the visitors were safe, the rangers prepared the vessel for a tow. A tow rope was secured from the stern of the patrol boat to the bow of the rowboat in accordance with safe towing practices. Rangers then slowly and carefully towed the disabled vessel from the west cove back to the reservoir launch area. The visitors returned safely to shore without incident, expressed their appreciation for the assistance from the Park Rangers, and were even happy to take home a couple of fish!



Rangers Assisting Disabled Rowboat

Rescue at Rueter-Hess Reservoir

On June 2, 2026, County staff responded to a youth camp operating kayaks on Rueter-Hess Reservoir that required assistance due to strong winds and hazardous water conditions. The Douglas County Sheriff's Office and South Metro Fire Rescue also participated in the response. Fortunately, the incident concluded without any loss of life or serious injuries. This event highlighted the importance of rapid interagency coordination and prudent decision-making to ensure the safety of our visitors.

Snake Avoidance Training Event at Rueter-Hess

The Colorado Gun Dog Association held its annual Snake Avoidance Training event at Rueter-Hess on Saturday, June 6, 2026. This year, nearly 285 dogs and their owners participated in the training as they walked a course designed to simulate snake habitat. This type of training is crucial for those who enjoy hiking along the Front Range. According to the Colorado State University Veterinary Health System, its emergency room treats between 3 and 5 rattlesnake bites each week during the warmer months.

Source: CSU Veterinary Health System. (2026, June 3). What to do if a snake bites your dog. Retrieved from <https://csuveterinaryhealth.org/what-to-do-if-your-dog-is-bitten-by-a-snake/>



Snake Avoidance Course



Snake Avoidance Flag

Rueter-Hess Reservoir Fish Stocking

The fishery at Rueter-Hess Reservoir has recently improved! On June 9, 2026, Parker Water and Sanitation, Douglas County, and the Rueter-Hess Recreation Advisory Board stocked nearly 5,500 fish, including Bluegill and Largemouth Bass. The primary goal of this fishery management is to enhance water quality, with recreational fishing serving as a secondary benefit. The stocking took place in the late evening to minimize stress on the fish and reduce pressure from predators.



Fish Release



Fish Stocking Boat

The details of the stocking are as follows:

- 4,000 Bluegill measuring between 2-3 inches
- 1,000 Bluegill measuring between 4-6 inches
- 500 Largemouth Bass measuring between 4-6 inches

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

Park Rangers report a productive and efficient month of operations. On June 5th, the department welcomed Elisa Friedman as the newest member of the Park Ranger team. Ranger Friedman brings a broad range of experience, including horticulture, small equipment operation, and other skills pertinent to the position. She has initiated the onboarding process and will continue receiving comprehensive training from staff to ensure her full integration into departmental operations.



Ranger Elisa Friedman

In preparation for scheduled events and holiday activities, staff conducted extensive maintenance throughout the park. This work included harrowing and mowing trails, trimming vegetation, and attending to parking lots and fishing access points. These efforts ensured that facilities remained safe, accessible, and prepared for increased visitor use.

The park hosted several groups and activities during the reporting period, including South Metro Fire training, the Colorado Gun Dog Association, a Snake Avoidance Course, the Town of Parker's Dash Across the Dam, and the Amateur Radio Emergency Service Field Days. Additionally, the pavilion was rented for a private baby shower. All events were successfully accommodated and conducted without incident.

Juneteenth and Father's Day led to increased visitation. These periods were managed effectively, and no incidents were reported. Only minor assistance was required at the reservoir, reflecting effective staffing, preparation, and visitor engagement during various weather conditions. On June 27th, the rangers made a record 27 watercraft assists, preventing paddleboarders and kayakers from being overtaken by high winds throughout the day.



Clouds Building Near Rueter-Hess

Rangers have also begun documenting the size and species of legally kept fish. This initiative is intended to support improved data collection and enhance the quality of information provided to Aqua Serria for ongoing resource management.

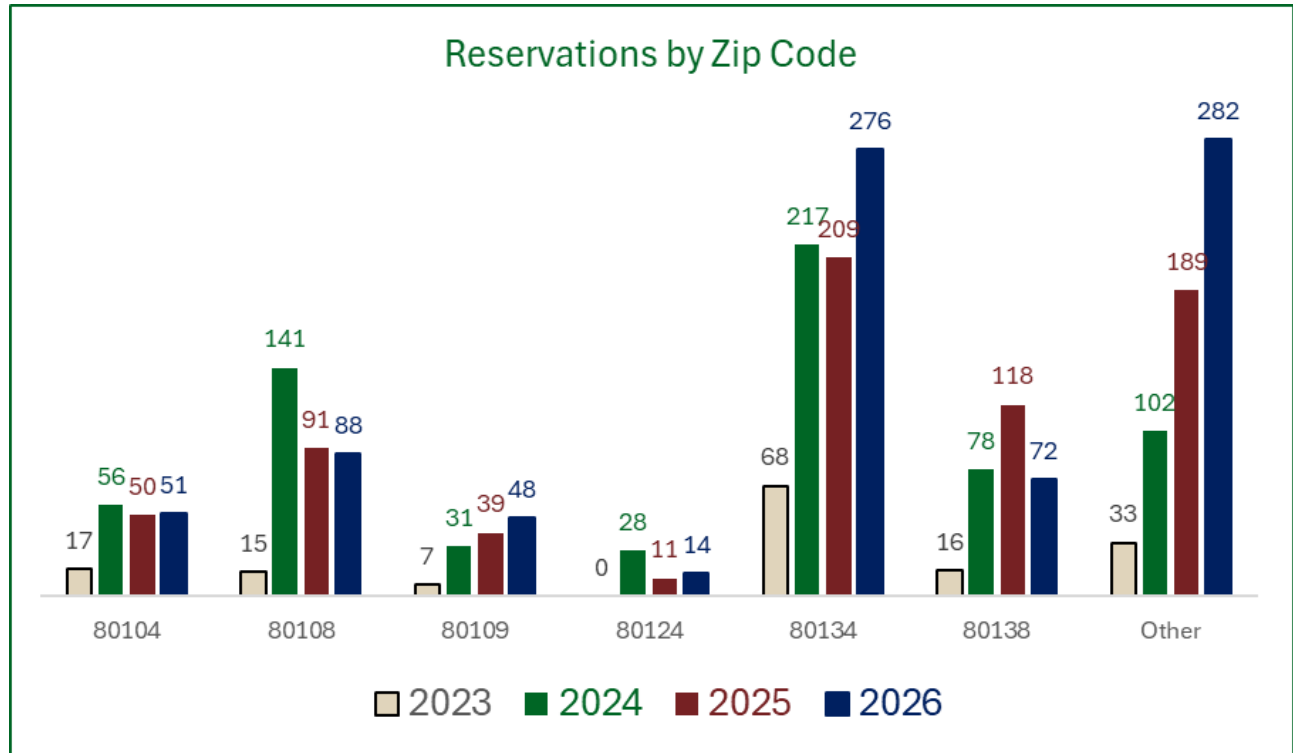
SPECIAL USE CALENDAR

Calendar of Events 2026		
Date	Special Event	Location
5/31/2026	Runuphill Racing	Incline
6/1/2026 to 8/14/2026	Avid4 Adventure Summer Season Day Camp	Reservoir
6/4/2026	South Metro Fire Department S211 "Portable Pumps and Water Use" class	Reservoir
6/6/2026	Colorado Gun Dog Association	Hess Rd. Access
6/20/2026	Baby Shower	Pavilion

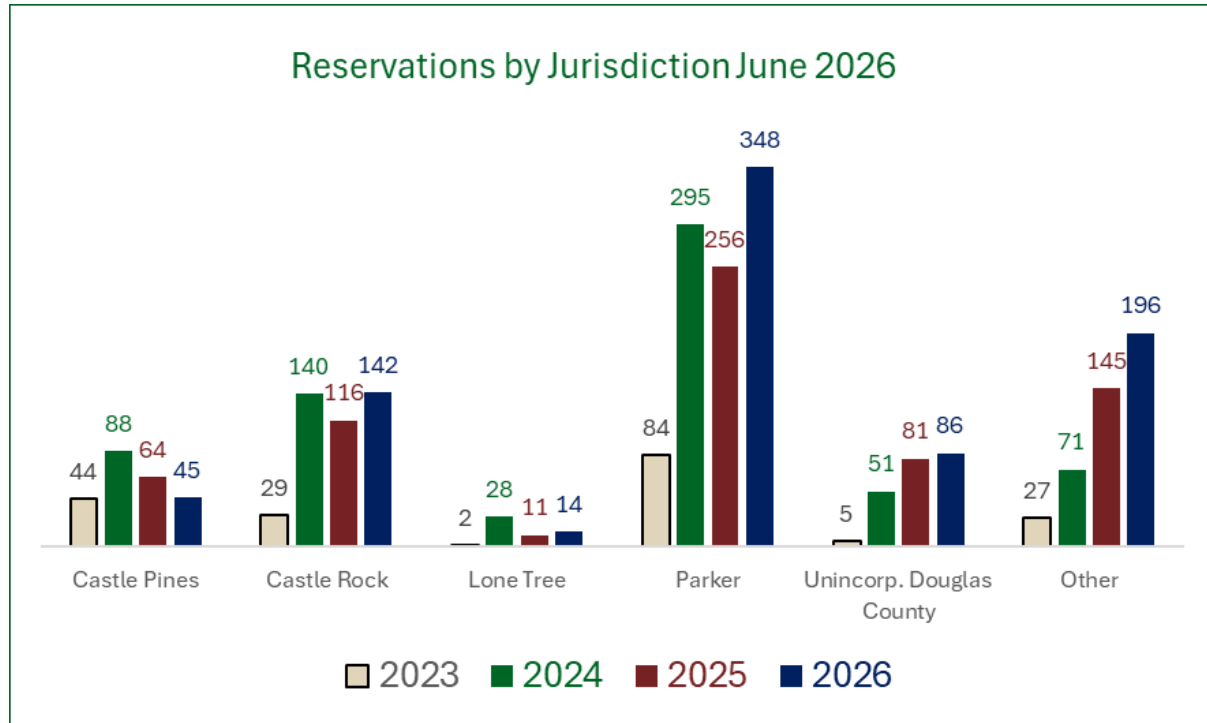
6/26-29/2026	Amateur Radio Emergency Service	Pavilion
07/13-17/2026	Girl Scouts of Colorado Camp Days	Reservoir
7/20/2026	outh Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Trainin	Reservoir
7/22/2026	outh Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Trainin	Reservoir
7/24/2026	outh Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Trainin	Reservoir
8/21/2026	Douglas County Sheriff's Office	Reservoir
	RAB /Partner Days	Location
6/5/2026	PWSD Bring Your Kid to Work Day	Reservoir
7/18/2026	Lone Tree Partner Day	Reservoir
8/9/2026	Castle Pines Partner Day	Reservoir
8/15/2026	Parker Partner Day	Reservoir
8/16/2026	Castle Rock Partner Day	Reservoir
TBD	PWSD Family Day 3-6 pm	Reservoir
TBD	DC Partner Day	Reservoir
	Partner Programing	Location
6/5/2026	Parker Water Bring Your Kid Work Day	Tour
6/19-20/2026	Dash Across the Dam - Parker 5K	Reservoir
	Surf'SUP Vendor Programing	Location
5/31/26	Worship on the Water	Reservoir
6/6/26	Sunset Paddle	Reservoir
June 12, 15, 19, 22, 29	Colorado Academy Day Camps June	Reservoir
6/15-19/2026	Colorado Academy Week Camps	Reservoir
6/20/26	Sunset Paddle	Reservoir
6/22-29/26	Colorado Academy Week Camps	Reservoir
6/28/26	Worship on the Water	Reservoir
7/4/26	Sunset Paddle	Reservoir
July 6, 13, 20, 24, 27, 31	Colorado Academy Day Camps July	Reservoir
7/6-10/26	Colorado Academy Week Camps	Reservoir
7/18/26	Sunset Paddle	Reservoir
7/21/26	Foothills Day Camp	Reservoir
7/26/26	Surf'SUP Worship on the Water	Reservoir
7/27-31/26	Colorado Academy Week Camps	Reservoir
8/1/26	Sunset Paddle	Reservoir
8/30/26	Surf'SUP Worship on the Water	Reservoir
9/27/26	Surf'SUP Worship on the Water	Reservoir

RECREATION STATS (UPDATED 7/3/26)

Visitation	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2026 Total
Reservations Made	30	44	218	206	459	712	1,669
Reservoir Visitors	66	102	393	376	845	1769	4,361
RHR Incline (Reported Monthly)	4520	5580	5883	6660	6817		29,460
RHR Coyote Run Loop (Reported Monthly)	668	904	1027	1034	1136	1295	6,064
RHR Newlin Gold Trail (Reported Monthly)	28	59	76	63	102	116	444
Trails Visitors	5216	6543	6986	7757	8055	1411	35,968
Visitors	5282	6645	7379	8133	8900	3180	40,329
Special Use	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2026
Special Event /Use	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Special Event/Use Attendance	0	0	0	0	0	426	426
Special Activities/Events	0	0	2	1	0	0	3
People Attending Special Activities/Events	0	0	5	0	0	0	5
Fishing	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2026
Adult Anglers	27	18	218	209	327	353	1289
Youth Anglers	3	6	60	63	84	122	406
Total Anglers	30	24	278	272	411	475	1695
Watercraft Inspections	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2026
Watercraft Inspections	0	0	16	74	449	789	1729
Public Safety	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	2026
Trail Assist	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Trail Rescue	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Trail Assist/Rescue	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Water Assists (Needed Help)	0	0	2	3	4	42	66
Water Rescues	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
Total Water Assist/Rescue	0	0	2	3	5	42	69



Reservations by Zip Code June 2023 - 2026				
Zip Code	2023	2024	2025	2026
80104	17	56	50	51
80108	15	141	91	88
80109	7	31	39	48
80124	0	28	11	14
80134	68	217	209	276
80138	16	78	118	72
Other	33	102	189	282



Reservations By Jurisdiction June 2023 - 2026				
City	2023	2024	2025	2026
Castle Pines	44	88	64	45
Castle Rock	29	140	116	142
Lone Tree	2	28	11	14
Parker	84	295	256	348
Unincorporated Douglas County	5	51	81	86
Other	27	71	145	196