

Memorandum

Date: March 5, 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 for February 2026**

RUETER-HESS RESERVOIR OPEN TO FISHING

Winter came and went quickly, as ice lasted only about three weeks in the coves of Rueter-Hess Reservoir. Whereas over the past two years, the fishing closure lasted about 9 weeks. Shoreline fishing officially opened on February 20th, and we are excited



Reservoir Iced Over



Reservoir With Open Water

to report on the first Walleye catch since the opening, measuring 21 inches. As we move toward March, preparations are well underway to ensure a smooth transition into the spring season. The upcoming time change on March 9 will extend daylight hours, allowing visitors to extend their recreation activities.

UPDATE ENTRANCE STATION

On February 2nd, the Rueter-Hess property received its new entrance station. This new entrance station is one of the improvements that will enhance the guests' experience entering the park. To date, the old entrance station has served over 20,000 guests in the past three years. In addition to being more visibly



Old Entrance Shed



New Entrance Shed

inviting, the new entrance station will better enable park rangers to serve guests by providing a faster, safer, friendlier arrival. The new entrance station is expected to be fully functioning and ready by the start of this year's watercraft season.

Special Event Update

The Rueter-Hess property continues to be a highly sought-after destination for community programming, hosting youth day camps that teach safe canoe, kayak, and paddleboard use, as well as signature events like the Town's Dash Across the Dam 5K and community engagement days featuring paddle sports, fishing, and hiking. In 2025, the property successfully supported 27 special events, reflecting strong community interest and growing recreational demand. Looking ahead, we have already received 11 special-use requests for 2026, demonstrating continued enthusiasm for using the site for educational and recreational gatherings. These events play an important role in connecting residents to outdoor experiences while reinforcing the property's value as a regional asset. Our team remains committed to supporting safe, well-organized, and memorable events throughout the upcoming season.



School Group Shoreline Fishing



Youth Day Camp

OPERATIONAL UPDATES

In addition to seasonal readiness, the team has been focused on equipment inventory and inspections. Every asset is being checked to confirm it carries a County Asset Tag, is in proper working order, and is in its designated area.

The Rueter-Hess Sign Project is also progressing. Efforts are concentrated on developing a phased proposal, identifying signage needs, and gathering cost estimates to support future implementation. These improvements will enhance wayfinding and visitor experience throughout the property.



Sign Examples

Additionally, a new vehicle has been added to the fleet to support operational efficiency and meet the demands of the upcoming season. The new vehicle provides reliable response, transportation, safe equipment storage, and the ability to tow boats and UTVs.



New Patrol Truck

Staff development remains a priority. This year, a professional goal is to encourage future leaders within the Ranger program. Members of the Ranger team began the County's Supervisor Bootcamp series, where they will learn valuable skills and tools to effectively manage programs and lead people. Training initiatives have also been a major focus. Staff members attended Colorado Parks and Wildlife's two-day Aquatic Nuisance Species Certification classes to stay up to date and focus on water quality. Plow review training is underway to test staff proficiency in attaching and detaching plow equipment, connecting hydraulics and control boxes, and performing operational functions safely. Looking ahead, several training sessions are scheduled, including Trail Team Lead Training, Radio Procedural Training, and AED/CPR Training. These programs will strengthen operational readiness and ensure staff are equipped with the skills necessary for a successful season.

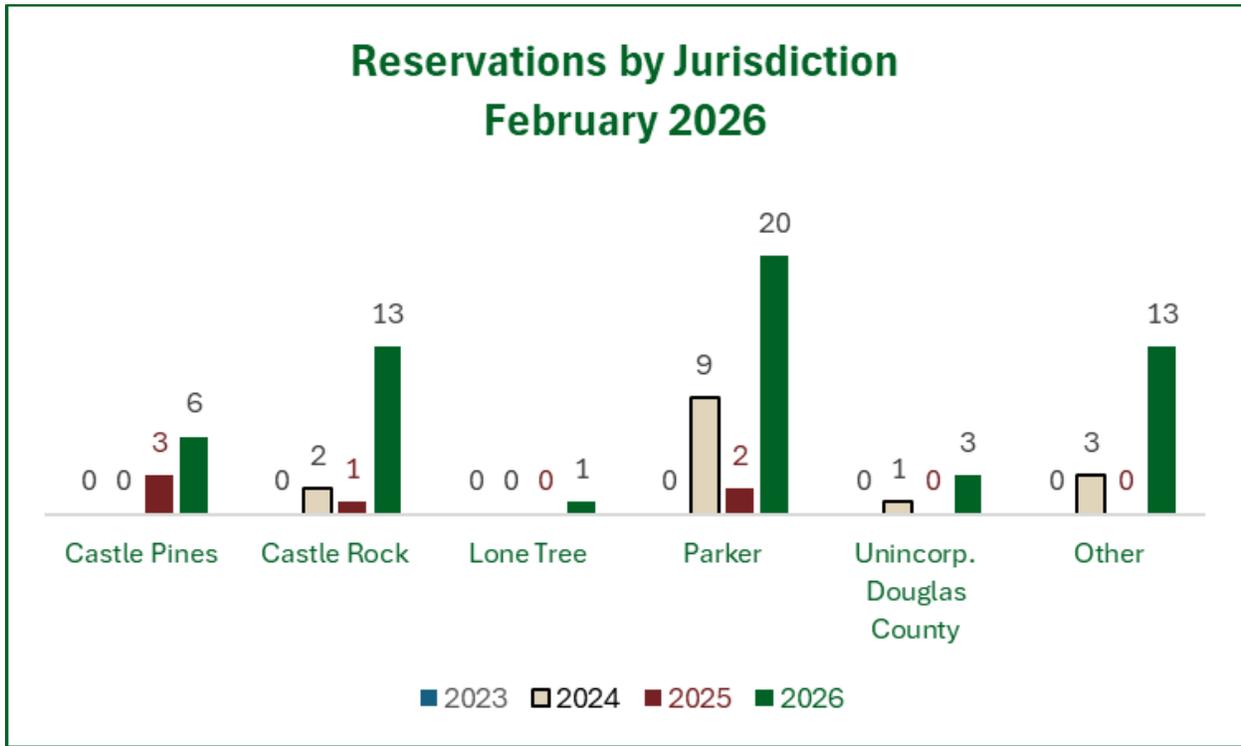
Technology updates include enhancements to Survey123 Patrol Log. The system now features incident reporting capabilities, expanded area location options, and detailed fishing rule information, improving data collection and reporting.

SPECIAL USE CALENDAR

Calendar of Events 2026		
Date	Special Event	Location
6/6/2026	Colorado Gun Dog Association	Hess Rd. Access
6/1/2026 to 8/14/2026	Avid4 Adventure Summer Season Day Camp	Reservoir
6/26-29/2026	Amateur Radio Emergency Service	Pavilion
6/27/2026	Runuphill Racing	Incline
07/13-17/2026	Girl Scouts of Colorado Camp Days	Reservoir
8/21/2026	Douglas County Sheriff's Office	Reservoir
7/20/2026	South Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Training	Reservoir
7/22/2026	South Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Training	Reservoir
7/24/2026	South Metro Fire Department Dive Rescue Training	Reservoir
RAB /Partner Days		
7/18/2026	Lone Tree Partner Day	Reservoir
8/16/2026	Castle Rock Partner Day	Reservoir
TBD	PWSD Family Day 3-6 pm	Reservoir
8/9/2026	Castle Pines Partner Day	Reservoir
8/15/2026	Parker Partner Day	Reservoir
Partner Programing		
6/19-20/2026	Dash Across the Dam - Parker 5K	Reservoir

RECREATION STATS (UPDATED 3/05/26)

Visitation	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026 Total
Reservations Made	30	44	26	100
Total Visitors At Reservoir	66	102	49	217
Total Trails Visitors	5216	6227	0	11443
Total Visitors	5282	6329	49	11660
Special Use	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026 Total
Total Special Activities/Events	0	0	0	0
Total People Attending Special Activities/Events	0	0	0	0
Fishing	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026 Total
Adult Anglers	27	18	18	63
Youth Anglers	3	6	5	14
Total Anglers	30	24	23	77
Watercraft Inspections	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026 Total
Total Watercraft Inspections	0	0	0	0
Public Safety	Jan	Feb	Mar	2026 Total
Trail Assist	0	0	0	0
Trail Rescue	0	0	0	0
Trail Assist/Rescue Total	0	0	0	0
Water Assist (Just Needed Some Help)	0	0	0	0
Water Rescue (Dangerous Or Distressed Situations)	0	0	0	0
Water Assist/Rescue Total	0	0	0	0
Total Assists (Individuals)	0	0	0	0
Total Rescues (Individuals)	0	0	0	0
Total Number Of People Helped (Assists/Rescues)	0	0	0	0
EMS Requested	0	0	0	0
Number Of People Helped By EMS	0	0	0	0
Overdue Groups	1	1	3	5
Number Of People Overdue	2	2	9	13



Usage By Jurisdiction February 2023 - 2026				
City	2023	2024	2025	2026
Castle Pines	0	0	3	6
Castle Rock	0	2	1	13
Lone Tree	0	0	0	1
Parker	0	9	2	20
Unincorporated Douglas County	0	1	0	3
Other	0	3	0	13