

CRYSTAL RIVER VALLEY



Stream Orchid

 Ruedi Water & Power Authority



 Colorado River District
Protecting Western Colorado Water Since 1937



Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep



Bald Eagle



1 TOWN OF CARBONDALE

The Town of Carbondale (pop. 6,500) is located at the confluence of the Crystal and Roaring Fork Rivers. Founded in 1888, the town was named after Carbondale, Pennsylvania, the birthplace of many of its original settlers. Carbondale is the historic agricultural center of the Roaring Fork Valley and annually celebrates Potato Days in honor of its most famous crop. In 2013, Carbondale was recognized by Outside Magazine as one of America's best small towns.

2 CRYSTAL RIVER HATCHERY

The Crystal River Hatchery is a cold water facility operated by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The hatchery raises rainbow and cutthroat trout brood fish (mature fish used to produce and fertilize eggs) and harvests millions of eggs for other fish rearing facilities. The hatchery is open to the public and features a self-guided tour. Public fishing can be accessed near the hatchery along the east side of the Crystal River.

3 AVALANCHE CREEK

A bridge over the Crystal River at mile marker 12 on Highway 133 provides access to the Avalanche Creek Campground and trail. The campsite has 6 first-come-first-served sites. The trail leads deep into the west side of the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness and provides access to Hell Roaring Creek, East Creek, Capital Lake, and Avalanche Lake. Check with the Aspen-Sopris Ranger District Office for seasonal closures, as certain areas are closed in the winter to help protect the bighorn sheep population.

4 PENNY HOT SPRINGS/FILOHA MEADOWS

Open year round, Penny Hot Springs is located at mile marker 13.5 on Highway 133. Across the Crystal River is Filoha Meadows, a thermal wetland that is home to some of Colorado's rarest plants and animals (including orchids and fireflies). Roaring Fork Conservancy (roaringfork.org) leads tours of Filoha during the summer months or one can access by way of a public trail originating in Redstone. Filoha Meadows is only open from July 1-September 30. Both properties are owned by Pitkin County Open Space and Trails.

5 REDSTONE/COAL BASIN

The Coal Basin mines were developed in the late 19th and early 20th century to provide high-grade coal to the Pueblo steel mills. The restored coke ovens along Highway 133 were used in Redstone's early mining days to convert coal to lighter and more energy-efficient coke. In 1909, the mines went into disuse and

the town was largely abandoned until the 1950s when the mines reopened. By the time the mines closed again in 1991, Redstone had established itself as an artist colony, second-home resort, and tourist destination. Coal Creek Road provides access to National Forest lands but please check local maps to ensure respect for private property. Additionally, Redstone Campground located one mile north of Redstone has 37 campsites that can be reserved in advance.

6 REDSTONE CASTLE

Redstone Castle was built in 1897 by mining and steel magnate John Osgood, who also established the town of Redstone and built the Redstone Inn to accommodate workers at his Coal Basin mines. Osgood's Redstone Castle estate was named Cleveholm Manor and was the site of lavish entertainment for prominent visitors such as President Theodore Roosevelt and John D. Rockefeller. For information about tours, please visit redstonecastle.us.

7 MCCLURE PASS

McClure Pass divides the Roaring Fork watershed (of which the Crystal River is a tributary) and the Gunnison River watershed. Although the pass, at 8,763', is low by Colorado standards, it is known for treacherous winter driving and frequent rockfalls.

8 MARBLE

Marble was founded in the 1880s and became a thriving community in the early 1900s with the development of the Yule Marble Quarry. Quieter today, Marble is a gateway to National Forest and Wilderness Areas and is a popular starting point for four-wheel drive touring.

9 YULE MARBLE QUARRY

First developed in the late 1870s, the quarry sits on a steep slope at 9,500' in elevation. The quarry's high quality marble, considered to be on par with Carrara Marble from Italy, was used to build many well-known buildings and memorials including the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. The mine is currently owned and operated by an Italian company and is closed to the public.

10 CRYSTAL MILL

The Crystal Mill was built in 1883 and produced power for the silver-mining town of Crystal City for many years. It was structurally stabilized over the years through community efforts and remains one of the area's most popular scenic attractions. The Mill is located 5 miles east of Marble and can be reached via Gunnison County Road #3 (four-wheel drive, hike, horseback or mountain bike only).

CARBONDALE: HUB OF RECREATION

The Crystal River Valley offers a host of recreational opportunities. Carbondale is a natural jumping off point for exploring Thompson Divide, Spring Gulch, Red Hill, Mt. Sopris and other backcountry areas not readily accessible from Highway 133. Check with the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce and the Aspen-Sopris Ranger District Office for information, maps and directions.

MOUNT SOPRIS

Although not among Colorado's 100 highest peaks, Mt. Sopris is one of the state's most prominent and visible mountains. Overlooking the Town of Carbondale and the confluence of the Crystal River and the Roaring Fork River, Mt. Sopris is visible throughout the valley and is a popular recreational destination for hiking, skiing and snowmobiling. Both of the mountain's twin summits reach 12,953', creating an iconic landmark for the Roaring Fork Valley.

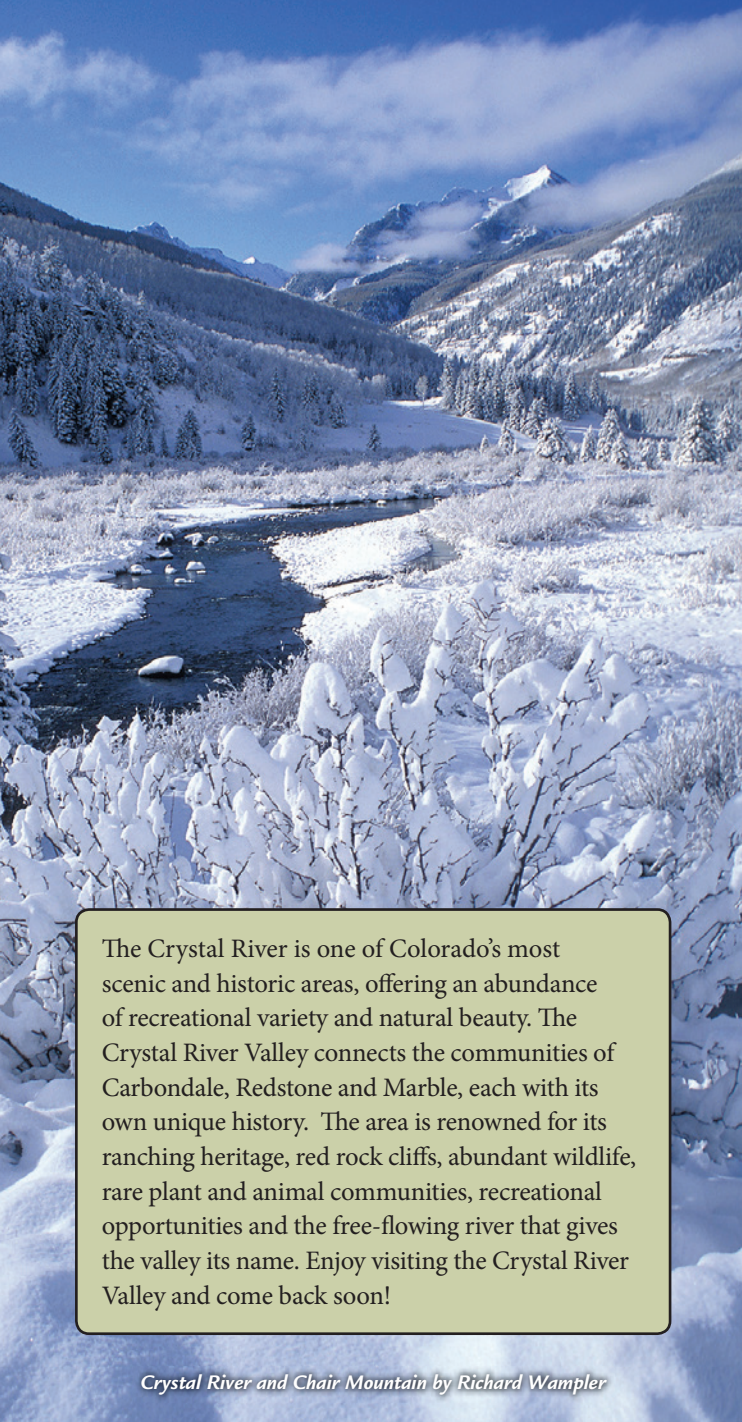
FISHING IN THE CRYSTAL RIVER VALLEY

There are abundant opportunities to fish the Crystal River along Highway 133 with most public access points upstream of the confluence with Nettle Creek. Public fishing access opportunities also exist throughout Carbondale, Redstone and Marble. High-elevation lake fishing in the Crystal River Valley is predominantly accessible by foot. It is an angler's responsibility to know public access points. Please contact the local Colorado Parks and Wildlife Office for maps, regulations, and additional information.



Welcome to the Crystal River Valley

Crystal River Valley Visitor's Guide



Redstone Castle by Eugene Priebe



Crystal Mill by Jeremy Swanson

RESOURCES

Carbondale Chamber of Commerce

☎ (970) 963-1890
 🌐 carbondale.com

Colorado Parks and Wildlife

☎ (970) 947-2920
 🌐 cpw.state.co.us

Crystal Valley Environmental Protection Association

🌐 cvepa.org

Roaring Fork Conservancy

☎ (970) 927-1290
 🌐 roaringfork.org

Ruedi Water and Power Authority

🌐 rwapa.org

White River National Forest: Aspen-Sopris Ranger District Office

☎ (970) 963-2266
 🌐 fs.usda.gov/whiteriver

Special thank you to:

🌐 [Oscar McCollum and Mount Sopris Historical Society](http://mtsoprishistoricalsociety.org)

🌐 [Redstone Historical Society](http://redstonecolorado.com/living_history.html)

Photo Credits: Mark Fuller, Oscar McCollum, Christina Medved, Mount Sopris Historical Society, Eugene Priebe, Jeremy Swanson, Richard Wampler

Map: Colorado River District

Supported by: Roaring Fork Conservancy, Ruedi Water and Power Authority

ROARING FORK WATERSHED PLAN

The Crystal River is one of Colorado's most scenic and historic areas, offering an abundance of recreational variety and natural beauty. The Crystal River Valley connects the communities of Carbondale, Redstone and Marble, each with its own unique history. The area is renowned for its ranching heritage, red rock cliffs, abundant wildlife, rare plant and animal communities, recreational opportunities and the free-flowing river that gives the valley its name. Enjoy visiting the Crystal River Valley and come back soon!

Crystal River and Chair Mountain by Richard Wampler

The Crystal River is one of Colorado's few rivers unaffected by major dams or transbasin diversions. Water storage project proposals have never gone beyond the planning stages due to lack of community support. The Crystal River upstream of the Thompson Creek confluence is eligible for federal designation as a Wild and Scenic River, which would help ensure that it remains free-flowing.

Crystal River Valley
 The Crystal River Valley's geology, while creating the coal and marble resources that brought the valley wealth and development, also contributes to present-day hazards. The sedimentary sandstones and shales that color the valley are subject to sudden erosion events, and landslides have impacted and shaped the valley throughout its history. Present day rockfalls and mudslides close Highway 133 occasionally.

The Marble Mill fell victim to fires and floods. Marble Mill Site Park now holds the ruins of this once vast factory.

The restored coke ovens in Redstone are a reminder of its industrial origins during the early coal mining era. Highway 133 follows the former coal train route.

Mount Sopris looms over Carbondale today just as it did 100 years ago. This view looks south from Red Hill.



Crystal River Valley: Then and Now