

Rifle Falls State Park, with its mysterious caves and beautiful triple waterfall, is one of the gems of the Colorado State Parks system. The breathtaking waterfall, created by the rushing waters of East Rifle Creek, flows year round. The thundering water that sprays out from the cliff creates a misty world of moss covered rocks and lush foliage along the base of the falls. Dark caves lurk in the limestone cliffs under the falls, including a 90-foot room that requires a flashlight for exploration.

Rifle Falls State Park is located along Colorado Highway 325 about 14 miles north of Rifle. "The Falls" is one of Colorado's most unique state parks, and is truly an experience that is not to be missed.

In recent years, the falls have made a spectacular backdrop for weddings and other special occasions.

HISTORY

The falls spill over a limestone cliff that geologists think may have formed in the waters of a beaver dam. The stagnant water behind the dam became saturated with chemicals, forming thick limestone deposits that are now exposed as cliffs.

The area was first opened up to ranching in 1883 and eventually cabins were built and rented to tourists who viewed the falls and explored the caves much like today's visitors. In 1910, the town of Rifle built the Rifle Hydroelectric Plant at the falls which changed the creek's natural flow from one wide waterfall into the three falls seen today. Remnants of the stone hydro-plant can still be seen. This nearly 100-acre state park is managed by Colorado State Parks and serves over 70,000 visitors each year.

ENTRANCE FEES

Fees are charged year-round and pay for the operation of park facilities. Passes are available from the park entrance station or self-service stations. All visitors are required to display a current Colorado State Parks Pass on their vehicle windshield.

A **daily pass** is valid from the day purchased until noon the following day. An **annual pass** provides entry to all Colorado State Parks. **Aspen Leaf** annual passes are available for Colorado seniors 64 and older at a discounted rate.

WILDLIFE

Wildlife watchers can view mule deer, rabbits, chipmunks, and raccoons in the park. Skunks frequent the campground at night and are attracted to food and trash. Please keep a clean campsite and store food and trash in a safe location. The creekside riparian area is a bird-watcher's paradise with narrow-leafed cottonwoods, box-elders, hawthorns and chokecherries attracting many avian species.

WINTER SPORTS

Winter is a special time at Rifle Falls. The mist from the falls forms delicate ice crystals on nearby vegetation. This creates a beautiful and unique scene for visitors to the park. Winter camping and wildlife watching also attract many visitors.



PARK OFFICE

Park staff is available to answer your questions and provide first aid and emergency assistance when needed.

Rifle Falls State Park is managed and operated from Rifle Gap State Park. For information, call (970) 625-1607 or write to:

RIFLE FALLS STATE PARK

COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

c/o Rifle Gap State Park
5775 Highway 325 • Rifle, CO 81650
(970) 625.1607 • E-mail: rifle.gap.park@state.co.us

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COLORADO PARKS & WILDLIFE

RIFLE FALLS STATE PARK

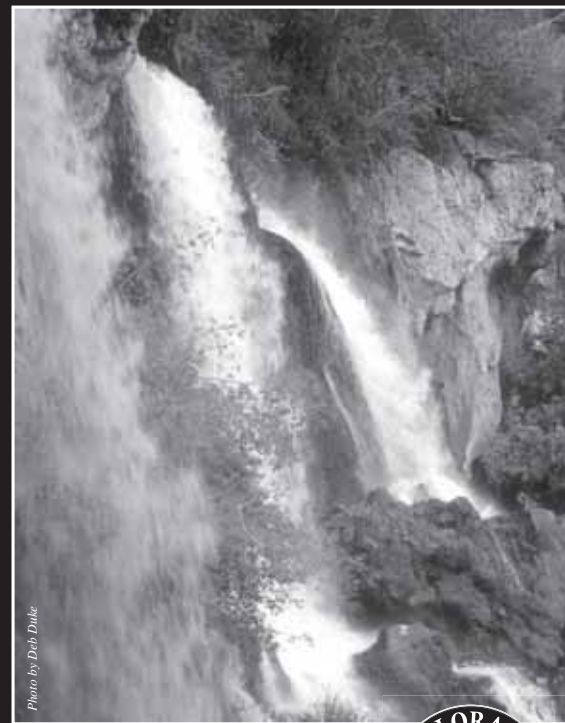
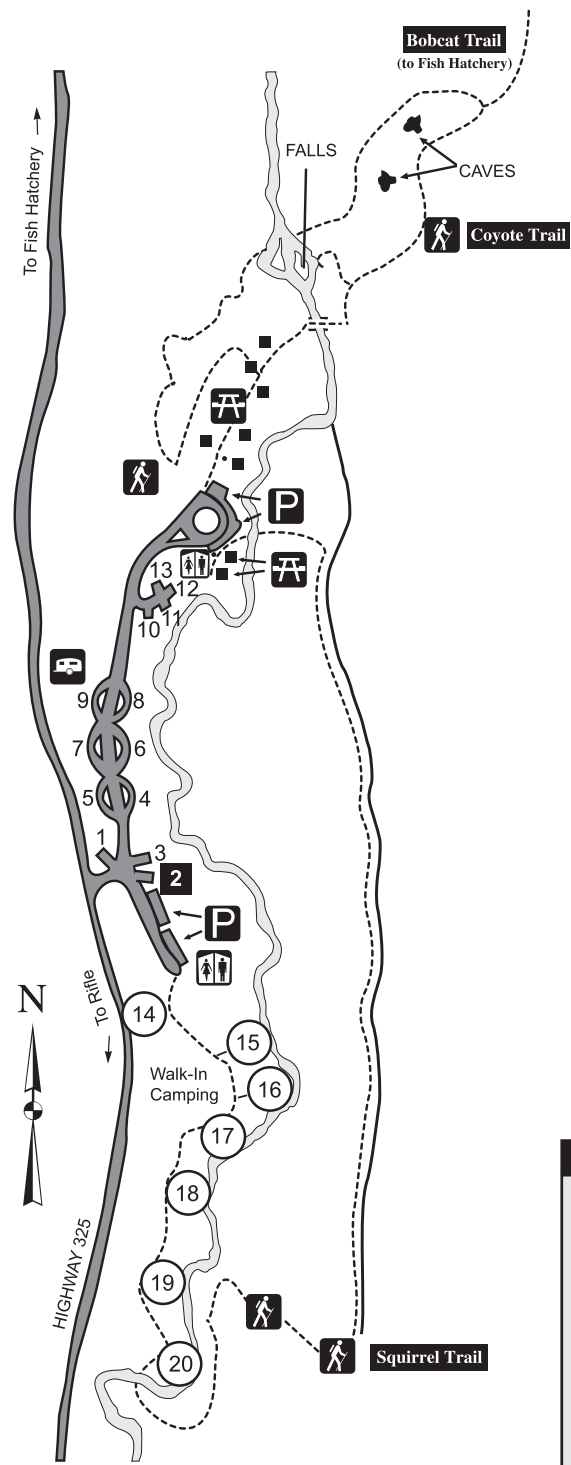


Photo by Deb Drake

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REGULATIONS

It is your responsibility to know and obey park rules and regulations. Please read the rules and regulations available at the park entrance or ask a park ranger for a current copy of park regulations.

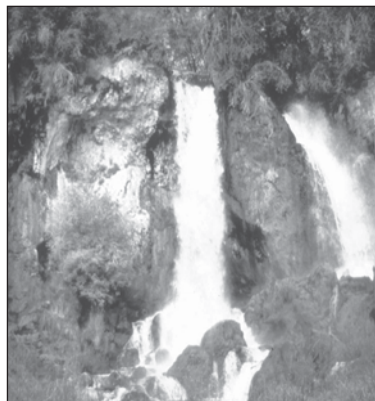
- Respect others – keep noise down near campgrounds and wildlife areas. Observe campground quiet hours between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.
- Do not litter – a clean park is healthier for our visitors and our wildlife. If you pack it in, pack it out, and use the garbage and recycling containers. A dump station is located at Rifle Gap State Park. Please use this facility. It is illegal to dump any waste or sewage elsewhere.
- For your safety and the safety of others and for the protection of wildlife, keep pets under control and on a leash no longer than six feet.
- Pets are not allowed on the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s Fish Hatchery. Please obey all posted restrictions to pets in the park.
- Build fires only in grills provided, tend them constantly, and make sure they are completely extinguished when no longer needed. Firewood cutting or gathering is prohibited within the park.
- Please keep vehicles on designated roadways, and hike only on designated trails.
- Obey all access restrictions and trail closures in the park.

Common sense and common courtesy will help all of us enjoy the park more.

LEGEND

- Parking
- Picnic Area
- Restrooms
- RV Camping
- Trailhead
- Walk-In Tent Sites

----- Trail



PARK ACTIVITIES

HIKING AND BIKING

Three unique hiking trails meander along the creek and through the luxuriant riparian area throughout the park. They provide access to the caves, the top of the falls, and the creek upstream and downstream from the park. The Bobcat Trail follows Rifle Creek to the Colorado Division of Wildlife’s Fish Hatchery.

PICNICKING

Picnic tables are located along the rushing creek below the falls.



FISHING AND HUNTING

Fishing can be lively year-round for small brown and rainbow trout in the waters of East Rifle Creek. Hunting within the park boundaries is prohibited, but the surrounding National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands provide outstanding big game hunting opportunities. Information on regulations and hunting seasons is available from park staff and the park office.

CAMPING

With 13 **drive-in campsites** that can accommodate tents, trailers and campers, and some pull-through sites for larger units, the campground at Rifle Falls is very popular. Each campsite has 30 amp electric outlets, a table and grill; water hydrants and restrooms are found nearby. The campground is open all year.

Seven **walk-in campsites** provide a unique camping opportunity along tree-lined East Rifle Creek just downstream from the campground.

In addition to a parks pass, campers are required to purchase and display a camping permit at their campsite. **Camping permits** are available at the park entrance station and the self-service station. Camping is allowed in designated campsites only.

Campground reservations are recommended and can be made by calling (303) 470-1144 in the Denver metro area, 1-800-678-CAMP(2267) or online at www.parks.state.co.us.

No firewood cutting or gathering is allowed in the park.

The following campsite is accessible: **2**