

FISHING



WATER RECREATION

Montrose is home to some of the best fly fishing in Colorado, offering a combination of uncrowded access, plentiful fish, lack of fishing pressure, great climate, and beautiful vistas. The Gunnison, one of four major rivers in Colorado, runs right past town through the Black Canyon. A basecamp in Montrose affords many opportunities to fish the varied waters of this glorious river.

Black Canyon National Park Summer months provide the easiest access to this grand waterway. Head into the Black Canyon National Park and follow East Portal Road right to the river. There are several parking spots along the three miles of accessible streambank. Anglers will have the most success with an Indicator Nymph rig drifted in the deepest parts of the river. San Juan worm and Copper John patterns have success in the spring, with Stoneflies taking center stage during summer. On a cloudy day, Baetis come off and produce some of the best fishing. Check stream flows as increases often trigger the best fishing.

Gunnison Gorge An adventurous trout chaser can hike into a more remote access point by driving a high-clearance vehicle to Peach Valley east of Olathe and seeking out one of four trails (Chukar, Duncan, Bobcat and Ute Park) into the Gunnison Gorge. This federally managed area will appeal to anglers who like to hike and climb and prefer being well off the beaten path. The least physically demanding is Chukar Trail—a hike of just one mile from parking lot to river. Duncan and Bobcat trails are for those who do not mind a bit of scrambling. Bobcat offers a short section with a very steep descent in the last ½ mile before the river. Ute Park is a longer hike of more than four miles but routes hikers away from steep faces, and the river area at the bottom is more open and sunny. Get maps and additional information at VisitMontrose.com.

The Gunnison River within Black Canyon National Park carries the designation of *Gold Medal Water* and *Wild Trout Water*.



How do I access the river at the Black Canyon National Park?

East Portal Road at the Black Canyon National Park provides the easiest access to the Gunnison River. Take U.S. Highway 50 east from Montrose for about 8 miles, then north via State Highway 347 to the park entrance. East Portal Road is extremely steep (15% grades) with hairpin curves. Vehicles with an overall length (including trailer) greater than 22 feet are prohibited. Fishing within 200 yards downstream of Crystal Dam is prohibited. East Portal Road is closed in winter.

Anglers seeking a more secluded experience can hike one of the inner canyon routes. Due to the steep, rocky terrain, these extremely difficult scrambles should only be attempted by those in excellent physical condition. A free, but required, backcountry permit can be obtained at the South Rim Visitor Center, North Rim Ranger Station, or East Portal registration board. A backcountry permit is not required for day use anglers entering the national park from the East Portal.

How do I access the river at the Gunnison Gorge via Peach Valley?

Head north about 17 miles from Montrose on U.S. Highway 50 to State Highway 92 in Delta County. Head east 6 miles and turn right onto 2200 Road. Continue 1 mile and turn left on H75 Road and travel 3 miles to South River Road, which descends to the Gunnison River. The trailhead to the Gunnison Gorge and Wilderness Area is at the end of South River Road, approximately 5 miles from the turnoff. This is a tricky route, and it is recommended that you pick up a map from the BLM or the Downtown Visitor Center.

Fishing Regulations Regulations apply to the Gunnison River within Black Canyon National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area at the East Portal (between the closure at Crystal Dam and the Black Canyon National Park boundary):

- A Colorado fishing license is required
- Use artificial flies or lures only - NO BAIT
- ALL rainbow trout are CATCH AND RELEASE
- Limits for brown trout: Daily bag - 4 Possession - 8
- Fishing is prohibited within 200 yards downstream of Crystal Dam
- Please see visitmontrose.com/fishing for more information

Check in with the local experts for gear, information, and guide services:

- Toads Guide Shop 309 E Main St 970.249.0408
- CJ's Fly Shop 428 E Main St 970.249.5588

Montrose Visitor Center

107 S Cascade Ave
970.497.8558 or
855.497.8558

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