CRYSTAL RIVER VALLEY

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.

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 broodfish (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.

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 campground 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.

PENNIE HOT SPRINGS/FILOHA MEADOWS

Open year round, Penney Hot Springs is located at mile marker 13.5 on Highway 133. Access to 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.

MARBLE

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

YULE MARBLE QUARRY

First developed in the late 1870s, the quarry sits on a deep slope at 9,300’ 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 marble is currently owned and operated by an Italian company and is closed to the public.

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, bike, horseback or mountain bike only).

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, climbing 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.

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 Creek, Red Hill, Mt. Sopris and other backcountry areas easily accessible by car. Check with the Carbondale Chamber of Commerce and the Aspen-Sopris Ranger District Office for information, maps and directions.

To Glenwood Springs

To Aspen & Snowmass Village

Visit the RFC website and directions.
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!

**RESOURCES**

Carbondale Chamber of Commerce  
(970) 963-1890  
carbondale.com

Colorado Parks and Wildlife  
(970) 947-2030  
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  
mtsoprishistoricalsociety.org

Redstone Historical Society  
redstonecolorado.com/living_history.html

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Map: Colorado River District

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

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.