

**FRIENDS** OF THE **YAMPA**

**Accommodations Tax Reserve Proposal Application**

**PROJECT NAME:** **Bear River Park – Trailered River Access and River Restoration**

Lead Applicant Name /Organization: Friends of the Yampa

Contact Person: Ben Beall, Vice President

Phone: 970-846-1513

Email Address: bensbeall@gmail.com

Total Project Cost: \$513,500

Accommodations Tax \$ Request: \$446,000

Leveraging( $\$Request/\$Total=\%Leverage$ )86.9%

Project Start Date: November 2017

Anticipated Completion Date: May 2019

Physical Location of the Project: Bear River Park

Property Owner: City of Steamboat Springs

Proposed Project Owner: Project Management by FOY, Owner is City of Steamboat Springs

Is the project within Steamboat Springs' city limits?  Yes  No

Is the project identified in a plan that has been adopted by the City of Steamboat Springs? If so, please provide the plan name and page number: Bear River Park Master Plan Update – July 2016 (pgs 15 -17).

Have you worked with city staff on the development of this project? If so, what is the name of the city staff member involved? Craig Robinson – Parks, Open Space, and Trails Manager

Please check the seasons when the project could be used by the public:

Summer  Fall  Winter  Spring

## **Narrative:**

- 1) Briefly Describe the Project: Include a short project description with target audience, expected use data, need, benefit, etc.

This project will establish trailered boat access to the Yampa River at the new Bear River Park. The Yampa River does not currently have adequate public access for rafts and drift boats anywhere in the community. This river access, which includes a concrete ramp adjacent to the river on the southwest corner of the park, is included in the adopted Bear River Park Master Plan. The plan states, "Trailered river access will allow both private and commercial entities to enter and exit the river for recreational activities. This access will also incorporate space for trailered vehicle parking. The Friends of the Yampa will be a valuable resource in the development of this element." There is currently significant demand from April through June for larger rafts to access the Yampa River. This access point could provide the uppermost trailered public access point on the Yampa River. Downstream from Steamboat there are over 140 miles of floatable river miles. Rafting is an activity of growing demand and river runners often drive hundreds of miles to find their adventure. This access point could put the upper section of the Yampa River, and Steamboat Springs, on the map for multi-day, family friendly river trips. Friends of the Yampa have studied multiple locations for providing trailered public access including the Walton Creek/Rivercreek Park, Stockbridge/Transit Center, Fournier, and Hard Rock. This is the preferred option based on existing user conflicts, easement needs, highway access concerns, and river bank slope at each location.

- 2) Please describe how the project meets each of the 1986 ballot criteria listed below. Provide economic data when possible in your response.

- a) Project must be a capital project or capital improvement.

This project is included in the Bear River Park Master Plan and would construct capital improvements as identified in that adopted plan.

- b) Project must promote tourism in Steamboat Springs.

The Yampa River is an amazing feature of our valley that draws visitors to recreate as rafters, kayakers, fly fishermen, stand up paddle boarders, and tubers. Public trailered access to the Yampa River for medium size water craft such as drift boats and inflated rafts does not currently exist. The time period from April to mid-June is currently the nadir in the community's tourist activity. Creating safe and adequate access to a natural amenity such as a free flowing river during a time period when it is at its full grandeur can create a tourist draw to Steamboat during a time when lodging units are empty and restaurant tables are vacant. The stretch of the Yampa River between Steamboat Springs and Hayden that includes the confluence with the Elk River is an incredible fishery prior to peak flows and as the river begins to come down from its peak flow. Fly fisherman and local outfitters that want to float drift boats down the river toward Hayden would benefit tremendously from a trailered public access point. The 2003 Yampa River Management Plan identified "that three-quarters of (river) users are non-resident. Of these users, only half were recreating on the Yampa for their first time."

- c) Project must enhance the vitality of Steamboat Springs as a destination resort.

From April to June the Yampa River consistently flows at rates suitable for larger craft. Colorado State Parks, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service operate thirteen public trailered boat access points downstream of Steamboat Springs. It is currently possible to float a total of 118 miles of the Yampa River from the "Pump Station" boat launch east of Hayden to the "East Cross Mountain" boat launch. Currently there is not a perception that Steamboat Springs is connected to this raftable downstream stretch of the river. The addition of a trailered boat launch in Steamboat would add an

additional 25 miles of floatable class I & II river and would link Steamboat Springs to this amazing stretch of wild, free flowing river. Many people travel to similar family-friendly, raftable sections of river such as the Upper Colorado River and Ruby/Horsethief Canyon and to river stretches near towns such as Salida, Gunnison, Buena Vista, and Durango. As permitted river sections in Desolation Canyon and Dinosaur National Monument become more difficult to obtain, rafters will seek areas to enjoy getting on the river. There are very few places where 140 continuous river miles can be floated. Steamboat can be that jumping off point.

d) Project must enhance the community identity of Steamboat Springs.

The “Curse of the Yampa Valley” is named after the river that creates its form. As much as any feature of our community the Yampa River provides something to residents and visitors alike that is truly unique. The Yampa River is one of the last free flowing rivers in the western United States. Improving the ability to experience the Yampa River in a safe manner will add to the connection between the river and the community. Connection with the river will enhance the understanding within our community that not only our history but also our future is intertwined.

e) Project must enhance the environmental desirability of Steamboat Springs.

The Bear River Park was formally the city’s sewage treatment lagoon. The lagoon was formed by a massive oval berm that cut off the floodplain, diverted the river, and contained the human refuse. While the refuse is long since inert, the impacts from the facility cannot be entirely reversed, this project includes regrading and restoration of some of the river stretch that was previously most impacted including restoration of the riparian habitat along the river banks adjacent to Bear River Park. Additionally, due to lack of adequate access to the river, rafting enthusiasts currently use areas not suitable for boat launch such as at the Stockbridge parking lot or the Fournier parcel. This activity has a negative impact on the river banks in those locations. Formalization of a trailered public access will reduce the negative impacts at other locations along the River. The boat launch will be designed in a manner to minimize impact to the river.

f) Project must enhance the economic health of Steamboat Springs.

The reach of river through Steamboat Springs has been identified by the Yampa/White/Green Basin Roundtable as one of the major recreational reaches of the river in the Basin’s Non-Consumptive Needs Assessment (NCNA). According to the report, the reach of the river through Steamboat Springs has the “Highest recreation use along the entire Yampa River allowing for multiple recreational opportunities and includes the only Recreational In-Channel Diversion in the entire Yampa/White/Green Basin”. Adequate public access for rafts and drift boats should be a priority to facilitate these users along this vital stretch of the Yampa River.

3) Briefly provide information on the individuals who are serving on the project team – their name, expertise, and relevant experience.

Ben Beall is a professional engineer and certified floodplain manager. He has significant experience in project management, traffic engineering, and floodplain and wetland permitting. He has good relationships and understands the processes of permitting agencies such as the Army Corps of Engineers, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, the Colorado Department of Transportation, and City staff. Surveyors, hydrologists, wetland consultants will be identified as the project moves through its various stages of development. Ultimately a contractor will need to be selected to execute the work. (Ben would not be acting on this project in his professional capacity as a city employee. He would be donating his time and expertise as a board member and would be representing FOY)

- 4) Please identify project partners and describe their roles, responsibilities and contributions to the project.

Friends of the Yampa has established a strong relationship with Colorado Parks and Wildlife Yampa River State Park staff. They currently manage 11 trailered boat access points along the Yampa River. The expertise and lessons learned by the Yampa River State Park staff will be invaluable in properly designing a trailered access point that is sustainable over the long term from an environmental, maintenance, and public use perspective. FOY and CSP are partnering on a separate but related project to map and maintain campsites downstream of Steamboat Springs, especially in the Little Yampa Canyon Special Recreation Area.

Craig Robinson, the city Parks, Open Space, and Trails Manager, will be a vital team member. It is projected that his input would be as an advisor with ultimate authority over project direction. If the request is funded, FOY would propose entering into a memorandum of understanding to provide project management services with the intent to limit the time that would be required of Craig but giving him oversight authority. FOY recognizes that PCS staff are already pulled in many directions and this project is not currently in their capital plans.

- 5) Where will this project be located and what is the status of that property? Will land or an easement need to be acquired? Please describe any infrastructure that will need to be completed with the project, including who would be responsible for developing this infrastructure and when it is anticipated to happen?

The project will be located within the Bear River Park. This project is a component of the approved Bear River Park Master Plan that was recently created via public process, endorsed by the Parks and Recreation Commission, and adopted by City Council. As such no easements or property acquisition is anticipated as the project is located entirely on city owned land. The project consists of construction of an asphalt road connecting from the Bear River Park parking lot around the perimeter of the bike park to the river at the southwestern corner of the "active zone" of the approved park concept. A concrete boat ramp would connect the roadway to the river with sufficient area above the boat ramp to turn a vehicle around. Upstream and downstream of the boat ramp, river restoration work would be conducted to reconnect the floodplain, perform restoration of the river banks from the impacts created by the historic city lagoon infrastructure, and improve riparian habitat along the river's edge. River restoration will be performed in keeping with the recommended methods included in the adopted Yampa River Structural Master Plan (November 2008). An informational, fee kiosk would be placed at the top of the ramp to inform river users and collect a user fee for maintenance of the boat ramp. If funded, FOY would commit to providing project management services through design and construction phases under the direction of City staff. If funding notification is provided prior to the onset of winter, survey work can take place before snowfall to enable design and permitting to occur during winter and spring. Construction can then occur during low river flows in the summer and fall of 2018.

- 6) How "ready to go" is this project? What project development work has been completed? What are the remaining key steps or milestones to complete this project? Please describe below and provide a timeline as an attachment.

The project is currently at the conceptual design phase as shown in the Bear River Park Master Plan. Remaining key milestones for 2017 are obtaining wetland delineation and site survey prior to the onset of winter. This would enable completion of development design phase documents to present to Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration and comment. Upon authorization from the Commission,

necessary permitting submittals include: Army Corps of Engineers – wetland permit, the City of Steamboat Springs - floodplain development permit including issuance of a “no-rise” certificate, Routt County Regional Building Department - Grade/Fill permit, and potentially Colorado Department of Transportation – US40 access permit. Completion of these processes by June 2018 would enable selection of a contractor to perform the work during low river flows for substantial completion of the work by November 2018. Anticipating that some riparian plantings may best be planted and/or replanted after winter and prior to spring flows in 2019, it is prudent to plan for some final riparian stream work in April 2019 with project close out in May 2019.

- 7) How will the project/amenity be operated/managed once it is complete? How will operations and maintenance be funded without an additional subsidy from the City? In addition to describing this below, please provide a financial pro-forma as an attachment.

The amenity would be operated and managed by the City of Steamboat Springs. In order to cover the costs of operation and long term maintenance of the trailered access, user fees would be collected on a per use basis. A secure fee kiosk would be installed at the ramp with a per use fee of \$20. Fee collection would be operated similar to a fee station at a State Parks or National Forest campground using an honor system with periodic checks by City staff and FOY representatives during high use periods to ensure payment and promote an understanding of the importance of payment to fund ongoing maintenance. City staff would need to periodically collect the fees from the kiosk. For commercial users that already have entered or may want to enter into special use permits with the City such as tubing rental companies, fly fishing outfitters, and rafting guide companies, an annual charge based on use could be incorporated into their use agreement to avoid the need for per use payments at the kiosk. The Yampa River Management Plan identifies that commercial operators should pay 5% of their revenue for operations and maintenance as part of their user agreement. Conservatively assuming 300 individual private raft launches/landings a year, this would generate \$6,000 per year. Conservatively assuming that the City is able to capture additional user agreements with fly fishing companies and that river guiding services create additional revenue at a \$60,000 level, that equates to revenue sharing with the City of \$3,000 per year. This would result in total annual revenue of \$9,000. Annual city staffing and overhead is assumed at a rate of 33% to collect fees, process, and monitor the location. The trash can would need to be emptied and the kiosk kept in good repair. After those annual costs are factored in, the remaining fee collection would be \$5,200 per year for long term maintenance. This user fee balance should then be placed into a restricted maintenance account designated for the Bear River trailered river access. Over a 20 year period, that would generate \$104,000 for concrete and asphalt repairs, kiosk replacement, and rip rap stabilization of the access at periodic intervals consistent with industry norms. The user fee should be adjusted over time to reflect inflation and cover costs associated with maintenance and overhead as necessary.

**Bear River Park - Trailered River Access and River Restoration  
Accommodations Tax Reserve Application  
Project Budget - Cost Estimate**

	Project Costs	FOY In-Kind
Project Management	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000
Design and Planning	\$ 45,000	\$ 15,000
Floodplain Permitting	\$ 10,000	\$ 5,000
Wetland Permitting	\$ 5,000	\$ 2,500
Traffic Study and Permitting	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Mobilization	\$ 50,000	
Site Grading	\$ 75,000	
Riverbank Stabilization	\$ 50,000	
Concrete Boat Ramp	\$ 35,000	
Fencing	\$ 10,000	
Roadway Construction	\$ 75,000	
Roadway Paving	\$ 100,000	
Informational Kiosk and Fee Box	\$ 2,500	
Bear Proof Trash Can	\$ 1,000	
Riparian Restoration and Planting	\$ 20,000	\$ 10,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 513,500</b>	<b>\$ 67,500</b>
<b>Accommodations Tax Request</b>	<b>\$ 446,000</b>	

**Bear River Park - Trailered River Access and River Restoration  
Accommodations Tax Reserve Application  
Operating Pro-Forma**

<b>Annual Revenue</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Total</b>
Individual User Fees	\$ 20	300	\$ 6,000.00
Commercial User Fees	5%	\$ 60,000	\$ 3,000.00
<b>TOTAL Revenue</b>			<b>\$ 9,000</b>
<b>Annual Expenses</b>			
Fee Collection and Overhead			\$ 1,500.00
Use Monitoring - Staffing			\$ 1,500.00
Trash Collection	\$10/removal	40	\$ 400
Kiosk Maintenance/Upkeep			\$ 400
<b>TOTAL Expense</b>			<b>\$ 3,800</b>
<b>Annual Balance for Maintenance Fund</b>			<b>\$ 5,200</b>
<b>20 year balance accrual</b>			<b>\$ 104,000</b>
<b>Long term Maintenance</b>			
Asphalt roadway overlay	every 20 years		\$ 50,000
Kiosk replacement	every 20 years		\$ 3,500
Concrete pad replacement	every 20 years		\$ 35,000
Repair of rip rap at access interface	every 5 years	\$2,500 x 4	\$ 10,000
<b>20 year maintenance costs</b>			<b>\$ 98,500</b>
<b>Revenue Neutral over 20 years</b>			<b>\$ 5,500</b>



# BEAR RIVER PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE



- 1 MULTI-USE FIELD
- 2 PAVILION
- 3 COMMUNITY SPACE
- 4 PLAYGROUND
- 5 ADDITIONAL PARKING
- 6 BASKETBALL COURTS
- 7 EXPANDED SKATE PARK (TEAM PAIN PLAN)
- 8 EXPANDED BIKE SKILLS PARK (SKILLS COURSE)
- 9 PICNIC / BBQ AREAS
- 10 SEATING
- 11 TRAILORED RIVER ACCESS
- 12 CORE TRAIL EXTENSION (LOOP)
- 13 VOLLEYBALL COURTS
- 14 DRINKING FOUNTAIN
- 15 INTERPRETATIVE OVERLOOK
- 16 HORSESHOE PITS

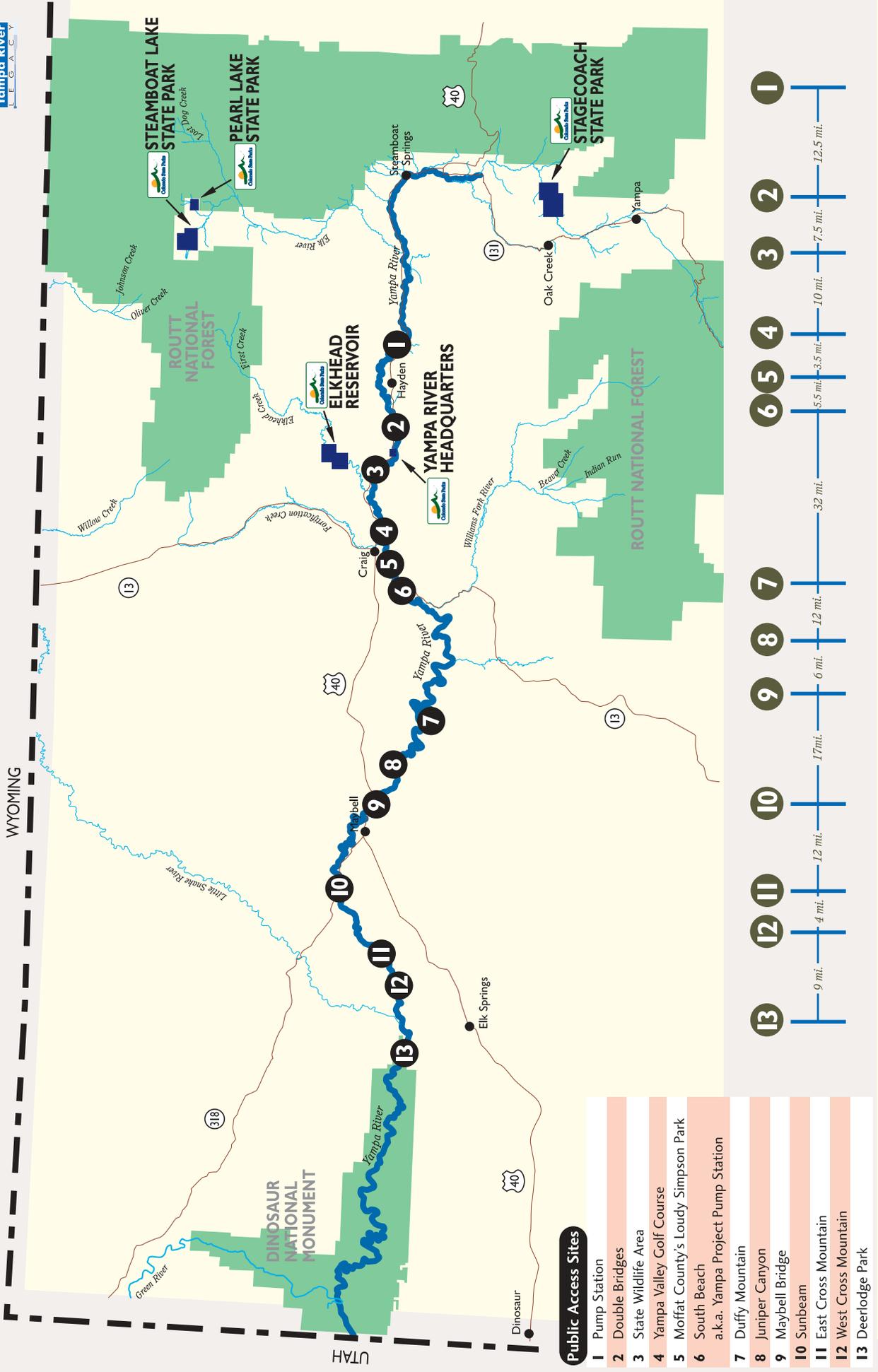
PREPARED FOR:  
CITY OF STEAMBOAT SPRINGS PARKS & RECREATION  
PUBLIC MEETING NUMBER FOUR  
JUNE 22, 2016

FINAL MASTER PLAN  
JUNE 22, 2016





# YAMPA RIVER STATE PARK DESIGNATED PUBLIC ACCESS SITES



The Friends of the Yampa is a river advocacy group and movement based on one common passion, a shared love for the Yampa River. We are a 501(c)(3) organization established in 1981. We have a long standing history of working for the river by organizing clean ups, holding discussions about the Yampa's important and rare attributes, funding and helping build river features/habitats as well as participating in a variety of local, regional and national policy efforts and campaigns. Friends of the Yampa's mission is to protect and enhance the river's environmental and recreational integrity through stewardship, advocacy, education and partnerships.

As stated in the Yampa River Structural Master Plan, "the Yampa River corridor is one of the most important amenities to the City of Steamboat Springs. From its value as an ecological resource to its economic impact on the community from activities associated with stream related recreation to the beauty and character it provides, the Yampa corridor is vital to the City. The community appreciates how important a resource it is and has worked hard to protect and improve the area."

Friends of the Yampa recognizes that recreational connection to the natural environment provides the responsible user with an understanding of the importance to preserve the ecological, biological and chemical integrity of the river. As such the Friends of the Yampa have worked over the years to engage with the City of Steamboat Springs and other land managers to provide recreational opportunity on the Yampa River.

As such we have developed the following objective statements to guide those efforts:

- To enhance/preserve the natural character of the Yampa River through river rehabilitation improvements.
- Improve upon and create additional recreational boating and fishing opportunities in the Yampa River
- To enhance the value of the River as a community amenity through access points and recreational use opportunities.

In line with these objectives, the Yampa River Management Plan, adopted in 2003, identified a number of policies as they relate to how the Yampa River is managed related to recreation.

**Recreation:** Manage resources for public use while protecting the natural values of the river.

**Policies:**

- RE-1. The Yampa River should be managed in a manner that preserves a range of recreational opportunities.
- RE-2. Provide a range of recreational activities that are compatible with the natural environment.  
Allowable uses are:
  - Trail Use
  - Swimming
  - Watchable Wildlife/Educational Features
  - Tubing
  - Fishing
  - Kayaking
  - Canoeing
  - Rafting
- RE-3. Recreational uses should be distributed in a manner that ensures a high quality recreational experience and protects the natural environment.
- RE-4. Provide appropriate river access.

- RE-5. Recreational uses should be managed at sustainable levels that preserve a high quality recreational experience and protect the natural environment.
- RE-6. Specific recreational uses on the Yampa River should be managed in a manner that supports the vision and planning objectives

Throughout the years, Friends of the Yampa has been directly engaged in many of the above efforts as they pertain to recreation and river restoration. However, access for large craft has been largely missing from the various efforts. Friends of the Yampa hopes that can change with this funding request proposal.

As identified in the Yampa River Management Plan, there are different users of the river and different time periods throughout the year that various users are best able to interact with the river. The below table is taken direction from the Yampa River Management Plan and shows the time period for which rafting is best suited. This time period coincides with a slower time period in terms of tourist activity for the City of Steamboat Springs. This proposal present an opportunity to potentially fill a current void in the economic activity calendar in addition to enhancing the experience for those that live and work in the community.

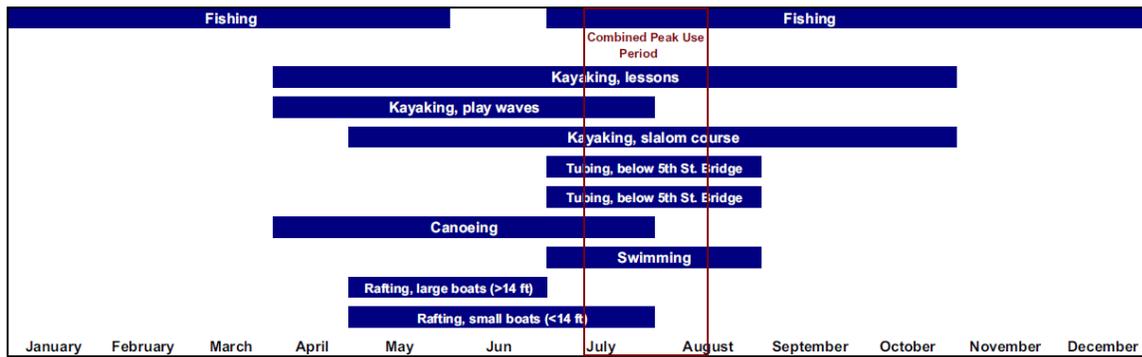


Figure 2-3 Optimal Use Periods by Recreation Activity

As stated previously, the Yampa River Management Plan shows that the vast majority of river users are non-resident thus showing the importance of the river from the standpoint of economic activity in the tourism sector.

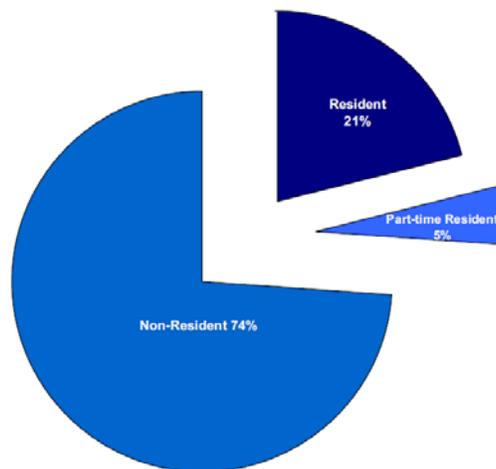


Figure 2-1 Resident vs. Nonresident Use