



## **Leadville and Twin Lakes Commit to Preserving Waters and Land through Arkansas River Community Preserve (ARC Preserve) Partnership**

(LEADVILLE, COLO, December 1, 2022) – Lake County will manage a soon-to-be nature preserve on the Arkansas River, encouraging people to visit who respect and appreciate its natural beauty. The new Arkansas River Community Preserve (ARC Preserve) will protect two miles of riverfront and 271 acres of land between Leadville and Twin Lakes.

While the ARC Preserve is not currently open to the public, it's scheduled to welcome visitors some time in 2024. Once open, visitors will be able to fish in Gold Medal trout waters and hike the banks of this sparkling river.

The preserve is located along Highway 24 south of Leadville at the junction with Highway 82, near the turnoff to Twin Lakes. Travelers can see it today while driving the [Top of the Rockies Scenic Byway](#).

### **A True Success Story**

The ARC Preserve is recognized as a true success story. Here are a few benefits of the preserve.

- **Protects Land from Development:** The ARC Preserve saves one of the last undeveloped stretches of private property along the Arkansas River, a beautiful area and a prime spot for development.
- **Saves Wildlife Habitat:** Bighorn sheep, elk, moose, mule deer, black bear, bobcat, mountain lion call this area home. Their lives depend on this habitat, wintering ground, and wildlife corridor. In addition, bald eagles, ospreys, and red-tailed hawks hunt this stretch to feed themselves and their young.
- **Invites People In:** Two miles of river will be opened to public access for fishing and enjoyment. The [Stage & Rail Trail](#), a regional trail in development, one day will run through the preserve.
- **Tells a Story of Hope:** In the 1980s, mining waste from an old tunnel contaminated this stretch of river, killing all life in it. Since then, cleanups have returned the river to pristine conditions where fish thrive. Today, these waters are designated [Gold Medal trout waters](#), meaning visitors can catch some big fish, trout over 14" long. Just four decades after a devastating spill, the ARC Preserve is protecting this fish-filled area forever.
- **Shows the Power of Partnerships:** The Central Colorado Conservancy's efforts and partnerships brought the preserve into being. Multiple entities across the region and statewide have been involved in this project. A nonprofit, the [Central Colorado Conservancy](#) purchased 110 acres along the upper Arkansas River as a third phase of the

preserve. The ARC Preserve includes the Shawn Andrick Memorial Preserve that the Central Colorado Conservancy previously acquired.

Lake County will manage the land to balance recreation and wildlife habitat protection through a public access easement, and Colorado Open Lands hold a conservation easement. Grants from the Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and the California Gulch Superfund Site Natural Resource Damages (NRD) Recovery Fund and private donations made the preserve possible.

### **Plan a Future Visit**

Visitors are encouraged to check back over the coming months for news of the ARC Preserve's progress.

In the meantime, visitors can fish other portions of the Arkansas River. [Colorado Fly Fishing Guides](#) teaches classes and supplies gear.

In the spring, Leadville and Twin Lakes offer some of [Colorado's best fishing](#).

### **Take the Pledge**

Visitors can join in protecting these lands and waters by taking the [Adventure by Nature Pledge](#).

To learn more about recreating responsibly, watch why locals [love and protect Leadville](#), and follow these suggested [sustainable travel tips](#).

### **About Visit Leadville - Twin Lakes**

Visit Leadville - Twin Lakes (VL-TL) is a Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) comprised of a dedicated group of volunteers and staff appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) who are committed to the stewardship and sustainable growth of tourism in Lake County, Colorado. VL-TL operates with an overarching priority to preserve and enhance the local community member's quality of life. VL-TL is funded by Lake County and the city of Leadville lodging taxes and promotes Lake County through education, advertising, promotional media, and public relations. Learn about their work at [LeadvilleTwinLakes.com/About](http://LeadvilleTwinLakes.com/About).

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