

Over The River / project for Arkansas River, State of Colorado

FAQs

1. What is *Over The River*?

Artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude will suspend horizontally a total of 5.9 miles of silvery, luminous fabric panels high above the Arkansas River along a 40-mile stretch of the river between Salida and Cañon City in south-central Colorado. Fabric panels will be suspended at eight distinct areas of the river that have been selected by the artists for their aesthetic merits and technical viability.

Over The River involves two different experiences: one from the highway, where the fabric will reflect the colors of the sky, from the golden morning sunlight to the various hues of the sunset; the other from the water level, where rafters, kayakers and canoeists will be able to view the clouds and sky through the translucent fabric. While the intent is to exhibit the temporary work of art for two weeks in summer 2012, the specific year will depend upon receiving the necessary governmental permits.

2. How many visitors will *Over The River* bring to Colorado and the Arkansas River Valley?

During the two-week exhibition period, it is estimated that 380,000 people may visit the Arkansas River Valley to experience *Over The River*. An additional 90,000 people may visit the area during *Over The River's* two-year installation, with another 90,000 visitors projected to come during the multi-month removal period. Many visitors will spend the night in areas surrounding the Arkansas Valley, bringing economic benefits to many communities, including Pueblo, Denver, Colorado Springs, the San Luis Valley and a host of smaller towns on the Western Slope. The total number of visitors represents slightly more than twice the number of persons who raft the Arkansas River in any given year and approximately the same number of yearly visitors to Mesa Verde National Park. Three out of five *Over The River* visitors are anticipated to come from out of state, spending an average of 4-5 days in Colorado for their trip.

3. What potential economic impact will *Over The River* have?

Over The River is projected to generate about 180,000 new out-of-state visitors to Colorado – persons who would not otherwise be in the state except for the attraction of *Over The River*. These visitors will spend an average of 4-5 days in Colorado in association with this trip. Some other visitors already vacationing in Colorado are also expected to view the temporary work of art. In total, Colorado may garner more than \$195 million in new direct visitor spending, more than what is projected for the Democratic National Convention (\$160 million) and over twice the impact of the National Western Stock Show (\$84 million).

4. Can US-50 handle the traffic that will be generated by *Over The River*?

The artists understand that traffic is one of the most important concerns of the region and they are working closely with the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to develop a traffic plan to minimize impacts caused by the temporary work of art. In response to concerns from communities in the Valley, the artists have already agreed to exhibit the temporary work of art during a period in the summer when there is no school bus traffic. Analysis to date indicates that there will be minimal traffic impacts during construction, all of which can be mitigated. As part of the *Over The River* Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), appropriate traffic-operations and travel-demand management measures will be identified to effectively minimize any impacts.

5. How will *Over The River* affect wildlife and the environment?

Christo and Jeanne-Claude consider the wildlife and natural environment to be among the Valley's greatest resources. The artists bring to *Over The River* a documented and unwavering commitment to

conservation and are dedicated to avoiding or minimizing all potential impacts related to noise, vegetation, air quality and water quality during the construction period as well as during the two-week viewing period. The artists have developed their artistic design, installation schedule and the viewing period to make *Over The River* sensitive to wildlife and the environment.

6. How will *Over The River* affect the fishing and rafting industries?

Christo and Jeanne-Claude understand the importance of the fishing and rafting industries to the Arkansas River Valley and are committed to working with them in the planning and execution of the temporary work of art.

Because *Over The River* is designed to be experienced both from US-50 and from the river below, the temporary work of art presents great opportunities for the Valley's rafting industry. The viewing period is scheduled to occur after the prime rafting season, which both minimizes impacts to the traditional rafting industry and provides rafting operators with opportunities to extend their traditional busy season. The artists also adjusted the proposed placement of some panels and other design characteristics in response to feedback from the fishing industry. During the EIS and through completion of *Over The River*, the artists will work closely with the rafting and fishing industries.

7. Why use this location for *Over The River*?

Over three years in the early 1990s, the artists traveled 14,000 miles, visiting 89 rivers in seven Rocky Mountain States in search of the location for *Over The River*. They ultimately identified the Arkansas River between Salida and Cañon City as the location for *Over The River* because it provides the following: east/west orientation so the fabric panels capture the variety of contrasting sunlight from morning to evening; high river banks that allow for steel cables to be suspended; a road running continuously along the river to provide viewing; a nearby railroad that provides essential access as well as transportation for supplies, equipment and workers; and rafting conditions that create opportunities to view the work of art from the river.

8. Who will pay for *Over The River*?

Through the sale of Christo's original works of art, the artists fund 100 percent of costs associated with the permitting process, manufacturing, installation and removal of *Over The River*. The temporary work of art will be created without public subsidy or taxpayer support, and the artists do not accept viewing fees, sponsorships or outside investments of any kind. The artists will also work with the BLM, CDOT and the local communities to help enhance visitor services, such as traffic control, trash removal, communications and emergency response during *Over The River's* exhibition.

9. What type of impacts can we expect during the two-year installation?

Christo and Jeanne-Claude are committed to installing *Over The River* with as little interruption to the daily lives of nearby residents as possible. The EIS process will determine the specific details, but the artists anticipate that most impacts associated with installation will be limited to the direct areas where anchors will be drilled and installed. In some instances, this could require temporary shoulder or lane closures, but at most these one-lane closures would involve no more than a 400-foot stretch of the highway in any 10-mile section for a very limited time. All temporary one-lane closures will be enforced with CDOT-approved flagging protocol.

10. What happens after the two-week exhibition?

Crews will begin removing the fabric panels immediately following the exhibition of *Over The River*. The fabric panel removal process is expected to be complete within two to three weeks. Weather permitting, the hardware will be removed within a few months. As in the past, the materials will be industrially recycled. Christo and Jeanne-Claude will leave no lasting signs of the brief existence of this temporary work of art.