

FISH SKAGUAY

HISTORIC POWER SOURCE

SCENIC MOUNTAIN LAKE

Skaguay Reservoir, 7 miles from Victor, is a quiet, mountain get-away worth the trip down a scenic backcountry road. Today it is a popular mountain fishing spot. To find the reservoir, drive about 1 mile down Phantom Canyon Road from Victor to the first left, turn at the sign for reservoir. Fishing is best at the inlet, east shore, and the dam. Boats and camping are allowed. If you need bait, tackle or lunches, stop in Victor before heading out. G&S Sporting Goods sells fishing licenses, and several establishments offer lunches to go.

Beaver Creek is a small stream that makes a 12-mile journey through a secluded canyon, all of which is within Beaver Creek State Wildlife Area. The only way in and out is by hiking. If you're really ambitious, you can hike up or down the canyon, and camp along the way. The trip will take two to three days. Although the canyon is fairly open at the north and south ends, the majority of it is very narrow, with walls as high as 1,000 feet above the stream.

The complete canyon trek requires negotiation of narrow sections and minor rock scrambling. Be prepared to encounter bears as well as mountain lions, bobcats, deer, elk, bighorn sheep, eagles and hawks. Make sure to take water, food, a jacket and be prepared for all types of weather.

Over the 12-mile length, the elevation drops 2,800 feet, so it's more enjoyable to hike down the canyon than up the rugged incline.

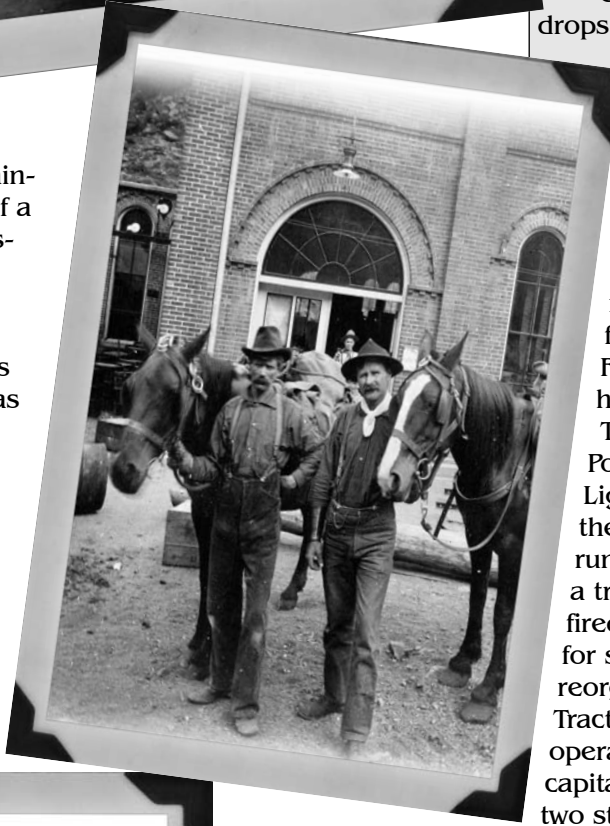
The plant deep in the canyon became operational in 1901 thanks to the efforts of more than 500 men who constructed several miles of pipeline along the steep and rugged canyon wall. Victor received power from the plant in May of 1901, and on the Fourth of July a three-day celebration was held.

The Woods later merged the Pikes Peak Power Company into the Pueblo Traction and Lighting Company. As the supply of water to the Skaguay plant was not always enough to run all of the Pelton wheels, the company built a transmission line to Skaguay from a coal-fired steam plant in Pueblo and on into Victor for supplemental power. The company then reorganized and became the Pueblo Suburban Traction and Lighting Company with plans to operate a trolley system in Pueblo. To raise the capital to complete the construction of the other two stations in the hydroelectric system, the

Woods issued bonds. Due to considerable opposition by bank interests in Pueblo, the Woods were unable to sell any of those bonds, and consequently the rest of the system was never completed. The venture eventually resulted in the demise of the Woods' enterprises.

In 1911, the new Arkansas Valley Railway, Light and Power Company took over the operation of Skaguay. Under the guidance of several owners, the transmission lines were upgraded to serve the increasing demand for electricity in Victor, Cripple Creek and the mining industry.

The hydroelectric plant at Skaguay ceased operation after a cloud burst that broke the dam at Cripple Creek's reservoir above Gillett. The dam held but suffered enough damage that the reservoir had to be drained to complete repairs. That 1965 flood meant the end for the Skaguay power plant and all that is left are the brick ruins and some remnants of a tram that provided a roller coaster access to the island-like location.



Skaguay Reservoir was built in 1900 to power the mining district. The project involved the construction of a large metal-faced dam for water storage, forming a pristine, mountain reservoir.

The Skaguay Hydroelectric plant was opened by the Victor's founders, the Woods family, in 1901, providing power to Victor, Cripple Creek, Pueblo and Canon City as well as the local mines. The water from Beaver Creek was delivered from the Skaguay reservoir via a long wooden pipe. At one time there was a sawmill, laundry, saloon and dance hall around the brick power house plant, which was located downstream a few miles.

The Woods Brothers, founders of Victor, formed the Pikes Peak Power Company to build the hydroelectric system. The plant would power the trolley haulage system in the Economic / Columbine Tunnel at their Gold Coin Mine. The system was intended to have three plants located one below the other on Beaver Creek to provide this power.

