

The Waiting List

the Grand Canyon Private
Boaters Association
Quarterly

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A forum for Independent River Runners

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Increase the Non-commercial Allocation?

It's time to talk about both private and commercial user allocation. "Allocation" is the dividing up of the "river pie." In the 1970's the Park Service identified various groups desiring a slice of the Grand Canyon Pie, and divided it up among the big eaters and the little eaters. Concessionaires, their patrons, and employees got the big piece. Self outfitted and guided (private trippers) got a little piece. Scientists and researchers got some pie, too. Educators, the handicapped, disadvantaged ...well ...they got a few crumbs.

The current Grand Canyon National Park, Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) revision process is like a slow moving river, meandering through multiple channels, obscured from each other by thick forests of willow saplings. One channel for access systems, another for environmental considerations, another for concession operations, all leading to a confluence blocked by the "allocation boulder."

The Park Services efforts to design a plan to solve the numerous problems of river management are commendable. We have had a series of meetings held around the West to discuss the goals, objectives and problems associated with this process, and to involve a wide variety of river users, or user hopefuls. In attendance at those meetings have been a spirited group of folks. Outfitters, privates, guides, educators, commercial patrons, river runners of every persuasion.

Work groups have been formed to meet and deal with the many identified problems and to safely negotiate the meanders of the system.

Conspicuously missing from this process is work group addressing allocation. All the wanderings of the river planning process lead back to the

main channel and the Allocation Boulder." Co-participants, the volunteers in this planning process, struggle within the various workgroups to make sense out of these aimless wanderings. Park Service guides constantly remind their trip participants "that we are not here to reach a consensus." Good advice that is, because without a complete discussion of "allocation" no consensus is possible. And it will not be possible to pass beyond the blockage and onto the waters leading to the promised canyon.

Like a bunch of exhausted flat water paddlers, planning participants have talked and talked and talked.

Hey! We are ready! The paddlers are pooped. The rafts are loaded down with weighty problems that can't be dealt with until we and the National Park Service face up to the challenge and obvious task of re allocating the pie. It's time to get the boat into the main current.

Private users, en masse, want easier access to the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. They want it with less regulation. They want it within a reasonable time frame. They want to be able to configure a trip to meet their needs. They want their trips to be conducted in a wilderness setting. They want privilege for perceived special interest groups set aside.

Ostensibly, there seems to be a great deal of opposition to confronting allocation. Over and over we've heard the cry that expanded use will trash that which we love the most. As our intellectual travels bring us closer to the allocation boulder, like cicadas in the desert summer heat, the cry of "it's fine the way it is, don't change a thing," "what about the resource? It can't handle any more use ... give it a rest" gets louder and louder. The professional guides association, "who knows the 'resource best' objects that increased use will "degrade the quality of the experience." Maybe it would, and maybe it

(continued on the next page)

Allocation (continued from page one) wouldn't.

An examination of the supposition "that increased use will degrade the experience" and "that the canyon can't handle anymore use" is certainly worth pursuing, particularly since the question of "wilderness" designation for the Canyon has become such an important issue.

The Default Acceptable Level of Use

A look at the accompanying chart is quite illuminating. This chart shows how the boat launches in 1998 were grouped. This grouping of use, by the way, isn't just limited to the 1998 season. It is a pattern that has been in place since record keeping on the river began. You'll probably notice that the main "spike" of trips is in a four month

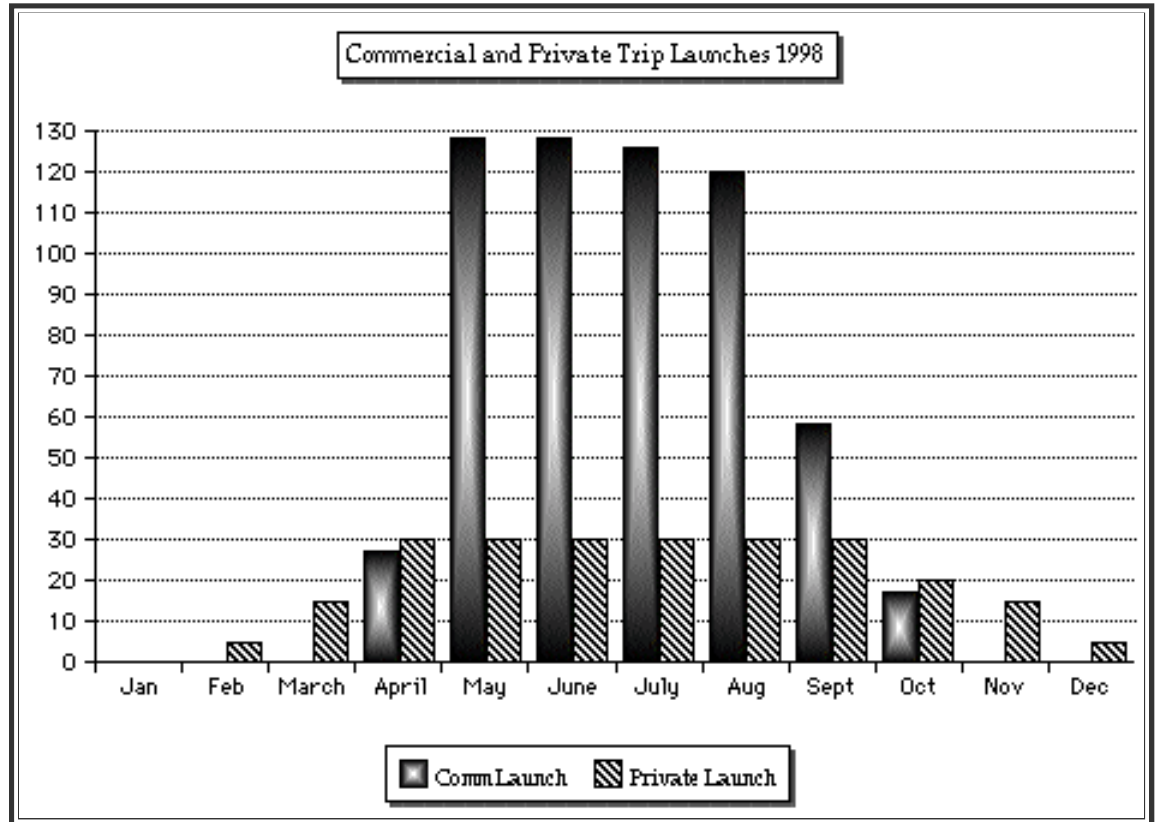
period from May to August. In each of those months nearly 160 trips launch. That is in contrast to March or November, when only five trips per month launch, or January of 1998 when no trips launched. It would be safe to say that the four month "spike flow," of visitors, has become the "default acceptable level of use."

Let's go back to that "degradation of quality of experience" ques-

tion and temper it with a "wilderness" criteria. An important characteristic of a designated Wilderness Area is an outstanding opportunity for solitude. It would appear obvious that the "solitude" criteria is met during nearly eight months of every year, but maybe not during the other four. Is that actually so? Judging from statements made by many special interest or user groups participating in the CRMP process, the quality of the experience, no matter what the season, is excellent. The River Outfitters Association has repeatedly stated that their clients are happy with the experience and that it meets or exceeds their (the clients) expectations. Additionally there is not a large fuss from the private boating community concerning crowding, as negative aspect of their trips.

Based upon the now established pattern of use is another curiously accepted supposition. "The canyon can't handle anymore use?" At what point on the bell curve do we agree it can't handle anymore use? In June or in September or October... January? It's obvious there are enough campsites already established to comfortably accommodate the "default acceptable use level" that floods the canyon every summer. There are almost no reports of double camping, where two trips share the same campsite. The capacity to camp the maximum flow of people is an already established fact.

"The Canyon needs a rest." What kind of rest does it need? A respite from human visitation so, as some claim, the big horn can mate in private. The steady growth of the bighorn population seems to testify to mating success. So that vegetation can regenerate from the pounding of 160 trips a month during the summer



glut season? Both pretty flimsy arguments used to lock in current use levels. These arguments appear especially weak when we consider that the damage already inflicted by human passage in a fragile desert environment would not heal itself for a thousand years, or until some sort of natural calamity (that Glen Canyon Dam is supposed to prevent) occurs.

Balancing all these perspectives I think we come up with an important observation. According to all those folks who "know the Canyon best," the people who work and travel there most frequently, and administer the policies that allow, and actually encourage, those summer spike flows plainly shown in the chart, the peak flow of users must be the actual "default acceptable level of use," meaning that the summer spike is apparently okay. According to the experts, wilderness criteria are being met, no one is complaining, the canyon is not being trampled, in fact, the anthropomorphized Canyon is actually doing just fine. If one is to believe the ideas advanced by various river industry factions, even better than it was twenty years ago, when use levels were significantly lower than they are today. The summer season seems to have become the use standard by which we might measure the potential for additional trip opportunities.

If this be the case, than it is obvious that a great deal more use of the canyon could be made available during those times of charted low use, which might be called "the Valley of Disuse." I propose that the National Park Service fix us up with a bigger pie. One that reflects the potential for the opportunity of year around use levels, based upon the "default acceptable level of use" (May to August) that the experts seem to think is okay. If taken to the extreme, such a policy change could make nearly a thousand trip opportunities available annually, to the private boating community!

With the adoption and implementation of different management techniques, for instance a "launch based" system for dispatching trips, and the spreading out of the commercial season to lower the peak of the "spike," such an increase in allocation could actually improve opportunities for the "wilderness experience" in high use periods. Sure, we would see commercial trips and more private trips during those months we don't now see them, but, basically, so what? One of the pur-

A Glossary of Frequently Used Terms

CRMP - Colorado River Management Plan

NPS - National Park Service

GCPBA - Grand Canyon Private Boaters Assoc. /

Represents members of the boating community, both private and commercial

Private - Non-commercial, not for hire river trip / or trip participant

Commercial - For Hire. For Profit River Trip

DOI - Department of Interior

GCNP - Grand Canyon National Park

GCROA - Grand Canyon River Outfitters Assoc.

/ Represents Park river concessionaires

GCRG - Grand Canyon River Guides / Represents

guides in the employment of Park outfitters

and members of the boating community

CPRG - Colorado Plateau River Guides /

Represents paid guides of the upper basin rivers

CFS - Cubic feet per second. A measurement of water flow at a given per second at a fixed point

GCI - Glen Canyon Institute / Represents interests of the submerged Colorado River in Glen Canyon

PWC - Personal water craft, jetski

"Park" - Grand Canyon National Park

Back Country Office - Section of Park that deals with backcountry activities

River Office - Section of Park that deals with non-commercial river running activities

"Concessions" - Section of Park that deals with concessionaire activities

Science Center - Section of Park that deals with river planning activities

"Flip" - A real river bumper

Wait List - A list of names of trip leader hopefuls maintained by the Park - (1998) 6,700

CRF - Colorado River Fund / A fund of monies collected and administered by the Parks river

concessionaires for capitol improvements in the river corridor

"Pirate Trip" - A river trip run on a non-commercial permit for profit

"Rent A Trip" - A non commercial trip, outfitted by an equipment rental company, which may also

provide menu planning and shopping services

BQR - *Boatmans Quarterly Review*, the quarterly

1999 Board and General Meeting Summary

What's The Point?

"WHAT does the GCPBA stand for?" There's a fair question that seems to reoccur from time to time. The weekend of January 14, 1999 the Board of Directors of the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association converged in Flagstaff, Arizona, known to many of our members as the "center of the universe" to discuss just that question.

We've been working on Grand Canyon boating issues for more than two years now. Right after our 1996 formation with fifteen initial members, the National Park, suddenly, without any public input changed the river access fees. Only weeks before the new plan was announced Park management had pledged to the public that they would take no drastic actions without public involvement. Next, the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) process began. Plenty of meetings to go to. Off to Washington D.C. to testify. Then last summer the Wilderness designation issue reared its head, with all its attendant problems. Allocation, access, motor driven craft, appropriate levels of concession services. Law enforcement, the self independents right to determine their own trip configuration, environmental quality issues Whoa! The issues by themselves would fill up anyone's boat.

What about the inevitable organizational issues that arise? Who is going to do "what," and how much "what" do we want to deal with. Furthermore how will we pay for whatever it is. Time for a meeting.

President Tom Martin's house became home for a long three day weekend to all but one of our board members. Dave Yeamons, our Science Coordinator, was unable to attend due to the sudden passing of his beloved brother Steven, and we missed him. So, the remaining nine of us took on the topics mentioned above, led by member Dave Knutson, facilitator and strategic planner for W.L.Gore, Co.

First, it was time to count the ballots. Nearly eighty of our four hun-

dred members took time to respond by voting on our Board of Directors. The votes to retain the present board were nearly unanimous. Only two dissenting votes were cast, both against Tom, our President (one from his wife hmmm). Plenty of interesting comments were included, shared and considered.

It seems like executive burnout could be an issue for the group, so that was a topic we spent some time on. "Lucky" Willie Odem replaced Byron ("I don't have time for this, I've got a kid") Hayes as Vice President and is now on the fast track to succeed Tom as President, next November. The rest of the Board are "pleased as punch" to continue on forever ... well ... maybe not forever.

Diving directly into a whirlpool of issues your board worked up a few position statements that we all thought we could agree upon. They are listed on the opposite page. These points, or positions, could be considered the ground rules that our organization feels should be the standard that management decisions should be judged by in this process.

The Board meetings adjourned and we zoomed over to the Campus of Northern Arizona University where we reconvened and held a general membership meeting. President Tom Martin presented a slide show illustrating the private boaters dilemma.

Following the slide show presentation a lively discussion was held on proposals for alternative access/reservation systems. Some of these proposals have been featured in past *Waiting List's*. We will continue to present proposals, as offered by our members for examination and discussion. A future issue of the *Waiting List* will feature a summary of the various proposals submitted to us. This issue should be helpful for those folks who can't remember the details of the flurry of ideas presented in the pages of the GCPBA. We hope you'll comment on the thoughts presented.

Of course we remain open to your input on all these matters, and we shall continue to consider all input that we receive

Let Us Be Perfectly Clear

- The currently in place allocation and access system has outlived it's usefulness and is unfair.
- All members of the boating public deserve FAIR, EQUAL, and TIMELY opportunity for access to their river, and for that matter to ALL of their National Parks. That includes commercial patrons, as well as private users.
- MONEY should not be used as a management tool or as a deciding factor in the process of determining who or when someone is able secure an opportunity to access the Colorado River or any other publicly owned natural wonder.
- We shall insist that the management of the Park adheres to the already adopted National Park Service Wilderness Management Policies as regards to the use of "minimum tool" standards in areas of the Grand Canyon National Park that are regarded as "potential designated wilderness." or considered for inclusion into "designated wilderness." As well as minimum presence of law enforcement in accordance with already adopted management policies.



photo by Jim Heenan

EXCLUSIVE SPY PHOTO - NPS JetSki at Crystal

- Park planners include and count, for the purposes of better understanding the actual use level in the river corridor, everyone who travels the river corridor, including private trip participants, commercial trip participants, staff of commercial, science, private and NPS run trips. In essence, all the "heartbeats" that comprise a river trip of any sort.
 - Any existing unused allocation, as determined by GCNP studies used to develop the 1980 wilderness based CRMP, or any additional allocation determined by GCNP management to be acceptable, be made exclusively available to the non-commercial boating public.
 - The 1980 increase in commercial allocation for the purpose of reducing potential financial hardship imposed by the anticipated elimination of motorized trips, be surrendered by concessionaires who continue to operate non-wilderness compatible trips, using the allocation that was specifically intended by the NPS to be used for oar powered, wilderness compatible use. Those user days will be remanded to the private allocation with interest, reducing the commercial allocation to stay within park visitation limits.
 - If a split allocation system is to be maintained, expanded, or for that matter, any allocation/access system that might be adopted, be dynamically adaptable to reflect changes in demand resulting in the appropriate adjustment of allocation.
- ★ **FINALLY - ON THE SUBJECT OF WILDERNESS** - We support the subsequent phase in of wilderness management techniques and policies as described in the 1980 , publicly developed and adopted, though never implemented, Colorado River Management Plan. We recommend that motor use by both private and commercial boat operators be restricted to levels in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964.

Now that's the proverbial mouthful. Let it not be said that GCPBA is afraid to take a stance on the issues that have faced the boating public regarding the use of the Colorado River in the Canyon, since modern boating began.

from anyone who cares to communicate on these subjects. Our editorial pages reflect that policy. If there is anything we have forgotten ... and no

doubt there is then let us know.

Ricardo. with Willie Odem's notes

Wilderness vs. Industrial Tourism / GC 1999

"Wilderness: The word itself is music." - Edward Abbey

The Grand Canyon is a land of music." - John Wesley Powell

"Industrial tourism is a threat to the national parks. But the chief victims of the system are the mechanized tourists - the indolent millions, born on wheels and suckled on gas - being robbed and robbing themselves."

- Edward Abbey

THE first problem with wilderness is not management, but definition. Virtually everyone has a different idea of what this phantom is, which in itself illustrates the anthropocentric and subjective tendencies in the attempt. Regardless, and most significant to our efforts is the fact that the United States Congress has set our present legal standard for wilderness in the Wilderness Act of 1964. "Legal wilderness" is thus articulated as:

"an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence . . . which generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature ... <and where> the Earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man."

In order to qualify for legal wilderness status, the area must be a minimum of 5000 acres, and "be without permanent improvements," and must have "outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation." All Federal agencies are mandated to manage both potential and designated wilderness areas to "preserve the wilderness character of the area . . . and leave them unimpaired for use and enjoyment as wilderness." <16 U.S.C.A. 1131, 1133>. This "use and enjoyment" versus "preservation" paradox is clearly weighted by law, toward preservation, and Congress specifically prohibited (with some narrow exceptions for pre-existing uses) the use of motorized vehicles and boats, as well as commercial enterprises.

In the late 1970's, an exhaustive public process led by the Grand Canyon National Park administration led to a Colorado River Management Plan incorporating wilderness mandates, and providing for the phase-out of motorized boats, finding specifically that they are incompatible with the wilderness experience and legal mandates, and that they cause undue degradation of the Park's resources. To allow pre-existing concessionaires the opportunity to continue operating commercial river tours, under the exemption, the Park Service increased concessionaire use allocations specifically to facilitate the orderly transformation from motorized rafts, to oar-powered boats (a change requiring longer trips, and therefore, ostensibly, more user days). This increase guaranteed not only an "economic base" for existing preference-

based outfitters, but also built in the ability for sufficient profit margins to ensure that outfitters could reasonably make the necessary changeovers in equipment and personnel (and thus, incidentally, increasing the employment base for commercial river guides).

Unfortunately, the overwhelmingly approved plan was subverted in 1980 by an arrogant abuse of power and political favoritism by Senator Hatch, a cousin of the largest river concessionaire, who pushed through a midnight rider on a National Parks appropriations bill, essentially freezing the motor phase-out for one year. Subsequently bending to such political pressure and blatant favoritism, the Park Service shelved the phase-out plan indefinitely, despite the Hatch Amendment's sunset provision. Of equal consequence, however, was the fact that the concessionaires' use allocation increase was retained. These outfitters have thus floated on this windfall to tremendous profits, well beyond the intended, reasonable economic base, at the great expense of both the public and the resource, as larger herds of tourists were now pushed through the Grand Canyon at maximum speed and efficiency per user-day. The public's growing demand for a non-commercial, self-guided "private" trip went underserved to the present, absurd point of a 20-year waiting list, and the Grand Canyon wilderness resource and experience (solitude, clean air and water, unmolested wildlife, small camps and intimate side-canyon experiences, etc.) were degraded by this illegal and imperial, corporate manipulation.

The poles of the spectrum of the perceived, physical human paradigm on this planet are this:

(+) Survival and forbearance (collective and individual) and uncertainties in a state of nature and natural ecological processes, where humans are viewed/recognized as an integral part of the ecological web and larger "agenda" of natural systems predicated upon diversity, food chains, symbioses, interdependence, genetic and cultural adaptation, "shamanic" and "spiritual" relationships with larger and "invisible"

phenomena/consciousness, etc.;

(-) Buffering from nature, through civilization and development, where technologies and human agendas alienate the human form and psyche from direct experience and interaction with natural forces and processes; where humans attempt to change natural forces by denying the interconnectedness of all phenomena, and where nature is the "other" component of a divided and alienated human psyche and activity mode; where material culture/comfort and the cults of individualism, competition, consumerism, acquisition, monopoly and control feed the presently dominant paradigm characterized by unsustainable and malignant growth, disruption and destruction of natural processes and systems, toxic by-products ("externalities") and increasing human alienation, disease and psychosis.

From these reasonable observations and inquiries into the nature of the human relationship with nature, we can reflect on some given realities, and perhaps divine some precepts for human conduct; some "universal values" or guiding principles on how to live, think, perceive, function, die; on how to relate to nature and wilderness.

Placing the Grand Canyon experience on this slide-rule and larger context, then, might reveal some of these apparently elusive values and notions of APPROPRIATE CONDUCT. If commercial outfitters, river guides, administrators, and politicians would set aside, at least for an experimental moment, their socially conditioned ego immersion and narrow and overly materialistic world views and competitive agendas, and cut through the political, economic, and alcoholic fog to reach into their deeper realizations, epiphanies, and ecstasies - which I would like to believe all river-runners have experienced - they would unanimously support a non-motorized wilderness experience for the Grand Canyon ecosystem. I would submit that this paradigm, where human economic agendas, technologies, and artificial assists are minimal to eliminated, would offer all participants in the Grand Canyon experience, an essential, meaningful and truly transformational experience on nature's terms. The ultimate import of such re-encounters with direct experience and holistic education/awareness is nothing short of what is necessary today to achieve sustainability, sanity and the survival of life on this beautiful, but endangered water planet.

I therefore advocate the following plan, which essentially follows the public process articulated 20 years ago, with some significant new additions:

1. Full wilderness protection for the Colorado River through Grand Canyon National Park, with holistic management to incorporate the parkwide wilderness plan with the CRMP, and with a view towards expanding wilderness protection throughout the greater Grand Canyon ecosystem.

2. The advancement of a full feasibility study for the proposed decommissioning of Glen Canyon dam, supported by the National Park Service. This effort would articulate the values of a free-flowing Colorado River, including native species, natural sedimentation cycles, recreation, etc.

3. A five year phaseout period for the removal of all motorized craft on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park, as approved in the 1980 management plan;

4. Other motorized technologies (helicopters, jet skis, etc., would be prohibited, even for rescue purposes. Cell phones, "boomboxes," etc. should be reviewed for prohibition, under wilderness standards.

5. A management plan process to define, delineate, and implement a revised plan for concessionaire services, based upon services and methods that are "necessary and appropriate" for the Grand Canyon wilderness. Guiding services may need to be redefined; large groups need to be downsized, and a "trip ambiance" and ethics policy need to be defined and incorporated into any concessionaire plan.

6. Use allocations need to be redefined and recalculated, based upon wilderness "carrying capacity," trip ambiance, and "appropriate use." Self-guided ("private") trips need to be given highest priority, and thus re-allocated for higher percentage of use, under wilderness standards.

7. Under all of the above, enhancement of PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ETHICS, under wilderness standards, needs to be articulated and required, in re-orienting the river experience to that of a "privilege," carrying enforceable obligations, as opposed to that of an "entitlement," entailing no proactive (continued on page thirteen)

***"The Grand Canyon
situation is a microcosm
and reflection of the
larger human struggle
and journey.
WHAT IS THE HUMAN
VISION?"***



Solo Sojourn

by Bruce McElya Traveller and Photographer

photo: Bruce McElya ©

I mostly shoot large-format black and white photographs on these trips and there isn't much time for socializing, cooking, or writing. Although a little rough, maybe these log and journal entries will give you some insight into how it goes, while alone on the river.

Consider putting whatever is on your mind to rest for a moment, and listen. Listen closely. Can you hear it? It is the unmistakable roar of a wild river. The mighty Colorado is calling.

5/4 - It all starts with a phone call. I begin making calls to river subdistrict office in search of a cancellation. A zillion calls later, I score an Aug. 14 launch date. Large piece of luck. Stage is set.

Whatever criteria you care to judge it by, Grand Canyon is the premier river trip, and it's right here in our own back yard.

I've made the journey thirty-five times, five of those times alone. Have you been down with a group before? Then you know the canyon as a high-contrast kind of place. The placid peace of Marble Canyon on a calm morning is contradicted by the maniacal rage of Horn at low water. Brother, what secret fun I have had jousting with some of those cataracts. And the endless array of visual beauty, it is all there. I remember shoving off the gravel bar at Lees Ferry alone the first time. 300 miles to go, boy this is going to be fabulous! And it was.

If you have drifted the canyon solo before, I would love to hear from you. I've never discussed my trips with another lone boater. If you have always wanted to go by yourself, maybe these paragraphs will help. Once down solo, it will be work to wipe that smile off your face.

A thousand little (and big!) things will happen to you on a solo float which may never come by on a group trip. Maybe a buzz-worm will slither by your feet on its way to drink from the river. One morning in Marble Canyon, I was surrounded by hundreds of violet-green swallows darting about the vessel. I suppose I was just another piece of flotsam to them. A little further on was a huge buck sitting in the shade with a raven about three feet from its nose. They held their ground against the discomfort of my single raft and went about their conversation. This kind of adventure is good for the body and soul. And, considering the cost of Prozac and psychoanalysis, the solo trip may be a cheaper option. I could go on and on with stories, revelations, and antics, but I'm afraid it might be like struggling through the neighbors' vacation slide-show.

Remember how often you run Lava Falls? About once a day, right? Once committed to run solo, you will think about how you are going to

arrange things every day. It is a quagmire of endless details. So let me offer some information on logistics.

7/21 - Brock calls and offers a trip to Egypt, Ireland, Texas, Argentina to shoot stills of off-shore oil rigs. Great opportunity, lavish pay, bad timing. I choose the canyon. I think he was just testing my convictions, the rat.

7/29 - Let the journey begin. Hard to say goodbye to my lover. Will call her often. Next stop, the rest stops. Denver in my sights. Stop early to re-rig tarp, check fridge. Must keep infra-red film cool.

“Security is mostly a superstition. It does not exist in nature, nor do the children of men, as a whole, experience it. Avoiding dangers is no safer in the long run than outright exposure. Life is either a daring adventure or nothing.”

Helen Keller

7/31 - Glenwood Springs. Great stop! Spent the day here. Did the big public springs, vapor caves (extremely nice, a cave that is a steam room), full massage, first rate BBQ, second rate beer. On to a rest stop for the evening. The state of Colorado is a tourist town. Gore Canyon. I consider running it. Class 5 stuff. I just look. The mighty Colorado is building, muscling its way through Westwater, Cataract, and on to the Grand. The power vortex phonies at “Sedony” got it all wrong. Wanna feel power? Jump into “Pearly Gates,” opening rapid at the top of Gore.

Water warm in the river at Moab. I jump in, swim, wash, and contemplate 500k crashing off the walls below. The dam can only (continued on page ten)

Solo Sojourn (continued from page nine)
release 250k. *Floyd Domini, the fool.*

8/13 - *Ed checks me out early, no slide show. Tomorrow is the big day Takes two days to rig. Solo, bah humbug. Smoothest rig yet, however. Ferry unusually quiet, and that helps. ... visit Connie's house. Very dedicated canyon person, airplane mechanic, and river guide. She warns me of Hermit. I smile knowingly. Sleep with rig. Clear night. Persied meteor shower in full bloom. Guitar and singing next door. I sleep like a child waiting for Santa Claus.*

THE VESSEL AND THE RIG

For me, small is better. I have been in command of every kind of boat on the river: Inflatable kayaks, row rafts, snout-rigs, all the way up to a 40' motor-rig. My personal craft is a 16' quad-tube cataraft, light and maneuverable. I can either row it or motor it, which I do (motor) occasionally. I motor only because it gives me tremendous freedom with photography. It works. However, any kind of boat can be made to work

The easiest, most stable boat I have ever rowed is a Riken Shoshone, a heavy 18' self-bailer.

A solo vessel should be rigged to flip. My cat is rigged with all gear above the top of the tubes. By the time violent water pushes against the gear, the "poons" are under water, creating suction against a flip. Strapped to the bottom of my frame is a tube containing all the pieces necessary to set up a six-to-one z-drag, and 200' feet of static line. That is enough to re-flip it without assistance. Also underneath is a 50' throw rope to swim the boat to shore. In an ammo can I have a radio, signal mirror, and minor first-aid, all double bagged, which is accessible when the raft is upside down. You've heard the old adage, there are only two kinds of boatmen on the river; "those that have flipped and those that are going to." I've not seen the bottom-side up yet, but I'm ready. And what the heck, it would be a good time to scrape the barnacles.

Ever woke up to find your boat beached? Most of us have and when you do you will appreciate lightness. Damn dam. My vessel is rigged to sleep and cook on. This affords the ultimate flexibility with camp and schedule, and I use these options once in awhile. I carry an anchor and use it while in certain sections of the canyon. You want something easy to stow with good holding in sand. Altogether, I carry about 500' of line and use it once in awhile when lying to anchor. Once you get the hang of it, you will never again have to push a boat at three a.m.

The main containers on my rig are 30 gal-

lon shipping barrels with cam-over lids (screw-on lids don't work very well). They are very tough and impervious to water. I use four of them to store food, cameras, and anything which can't get wet. I have found that aluminum dry boxes and military boxes can leak if tweaked in a flip. Don't forget to bring the baby grand.

8/16 — *Mostly drifting now. Sunday low water. I stop in at Vaseys to collect escargot to go with my condor egg omelettes. Bighorn river right. Photos. Two young males. Photos at Nautiloid for Maggie. Light day for commercials. Nice drift through part of Marble. Camp at rock beaver caves [dam site]. Windy late. 300' rope dangling at first hole river right. Curious. Storms on rim. Trout, watercress, avo for dinner.*

FOOD - I always start one of these trips with the "eat-like-I-was-at-home" syndrome. At the end, I am tired of the kitchen and will eat just about anything I don't have to cook. Each time, I tell myself that I am going to eat like I was backpacking, but I never do. I have two 80qt Gotts. One of them contains meat, ice, and dry ice. The other is a thaw cooler with vegetables, cheese, etc. In the summer, with wet burlap covers, I can get 16 days use out of the coolers (with a stop for ice at phantom). After October, ice can last 21 days or longer. I catch and eat trout and channel cat for breakfast and dinner for about the first four days or so. After Phantom, the trout become harder to angle. I start with five pounds of hi-pro granola and often make a meal of it when I would rather explore than cook. I never stop for lunch unless someone invites me in. That adds up to 18 extra hours to enjoy the trip. I carry eight MRE's in case the worst happens (whatever that is). Those babies are 4,000 calories, waterproof, and even have their own heaters.

I am usually out of camp by 6:30 in the summer and 7:30 in the winter, with the day's lunch packed away somewhere. Also, to save time, I rig the potty (rocket-box) such that it never comes off the boat, and can be used anytime. Just go while you go. One rocket box is enough to get two people down for 21 days. I try to stick with food that requires little preparation or wet garbage. Although once in awhile, a prime rib sure hits the spot, so I take a few. As Georgie once said to a customer complaining about a meal, "Well, did you come for the food, or did you come for the canyon?" The greatest thief of time on the trip is food preparation and camp duties. If you want to enjoy the canyon, keep the rest of it to a minimum.

8/17 - day 4 - Out of camp 6:30, pass AZRA row trip.

Fabulous drift through Marble Canyon. No wind. Photos. Run into Alan Hayden, "burec" researcher, as I have for the last four years in a row. Great guy ... They have a strange contraption for their research. They explain it. I photograph it. A trout in every eddy and two ravens for every beach. Run into Dave and crew with Sleight. They feed me lunch. ARR double camps me river right just above LCR. Walt offers dinner. I display photos from previous solo trips. Nice bunch. .

8/19 - day 6 - I wait for sun to hit the rapid. Whoa there, Hance big. Waves are high. I go middle right, left run would have been deep enough. Splashy crashy. Too big at this level for my little Ferarri cataraft. I get through okay. Unneroving fun. Good runs so far. Cheat Sock left. Flute photos. Camp Clear Creek. No hike. Flash flood keeps me out.

THE RAPIDS - If it weren't for the white-water, we would have houseboats, jet skis, and all other manner of inappropriate wonders of engineering down there. Some of the rapids are too dangerous for my taste, but run them all we must, unless of course you want to spend three days at a portage, hehe. On a solo, you will probably want to scout more than just the big three, especially at lower water. I take a look at House Rock, 24 mi., Hermit, and Spectre. If the water goes below 8k, you will want to look at 232 mi. and Horn Creek as well. Hell, look at anything you are not 100% sure of.

When I show up at a big one, I will wait for about thirty minutes to an hour for another party for safety. If no one shows, I run it alone. You must decide for yourself what you will do. There is great satisfaction in running a big one solo, but that will be the last thing on your mind if you run it and flip with no help. I skirt all the big holes that I can. The rapids are plenty thrilling enough without going for the gusto.

Granite is my nemesis. It is big at all flows and can't be cheated except by kayak. I go in as close to the wall as I can, ship my right oar, and work the left oar with both hands. This maneuver puts me on the right hand shoulder of those two bitch monster waves at the bottom. It does less damage, but it's a hard thing being that close to a wall at such speed.

8/21 - day 8 - Breakfast trout. ... Granite a brute! Hardest hit I've ever had in there. Frame broken at motor mount. Near disaster. Jagged metal and prop threatening tubes. Limp gingerly to shore. Old friend Ian with Western drops by and gives me a couple hose

clamps. I give him a photo. Took blade off a spare oar and splinted the entire aft section of frame using hose clamps to draw it back straight. The fix looks stable. Must test jury rig in Hermit, not good. More trouble. Front frame piece pulled apart in rapid. Drat! Second repair on beach above Hermit. No more spare straps. No more rowing. Cannibalized all the hose clamps.

HERMIT - THE RUN Two Western rigs come around the corner at 4 pm. Too late in day to run a big one really, but motor-rig backup is best. Hustle to get ready. I run last. They eddy back upstream

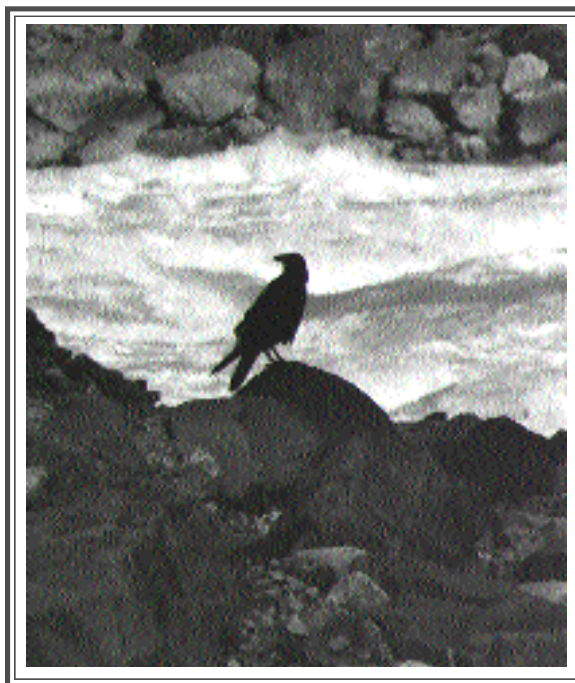


photo: Bruce McElya ©

to watch. Into the maw, god this thing is huge. Waves 3 and 4 stand me on end. Rain and wind gusts compound the difficulty. Fighting to keep the nose. Power in the trough before 5. Holy smokes, it's 25 feet high! I crash through top of breakwater, then catapult straight up, motor whining, no water, vessel airborne. Slam down hard backside of it. She stayed right. Jury rig held. "Smashing," as the Queen would say. Western passengers speechless. I thank them for the safety, they thank me for the show. I've never seen Hermit so high and mighty. The Epinephrine makes my heart scream. I'm an adrenaline junkie, stoned on reality.

Camp below the rapid. Real quiet. Play the flute for awhile. Nice sound off the walls. Two beers with dinner this evening. Sneak left at Hermit next time. Hell no, that would be a sacrilege. Heavily red anted (continued on page twelve)

Solo Sojourn (continued from page eleven) here. I cook in the wet sand. They hate that. Alpenglow on South rim. Darkness, tiredness. I see the flash of cameras from visitors to Hermit's rest, haha! I signal back to them with my flashlight. Pleasant evening after a bitch of a day.

8/23 - day 10 - Half way through rapids now, trip going well. Aircraft radio dead. Must have left it on. ... Very heavy smog. I wish people would quit driving their cars while I'm in the canyon. Best camp in the area, river left above 122 mile rapid, not on the map ... Excellent. Storm comin'. Lightening all night, no rain. Ends up hot. Sleep under a wet sheet, ahh, nice and cool. Best camp on the river so far. Side canyon real nice. Shoot it tomorrow (weather a factor). Drum roll for the morning light...

THE CAMPS - Bruce's camp tip-of-the-week: Just above 122 mi rapid, river left is what I consider the finest camp on the river, and it's not even on the maps! It's about an acre or so of flat tappeats sandstone, sleep overhangs w/shelves, few ants, deep port, and a great side hike. I think it gets overlooked because of all the big beaches just above and below Conquistador Aisle. Personally, I like to get out of the sand once in awhile. There are many wonderful and endearing solo camps on the river. Other parties must have more space, and negotiate for a room for the night. As a solo boater, I never have to worry about camp schedules, meaning I can stay on the river as long as I like. There is always a nice place to stay just around the corner, even in middle granite gorge. How about a huge overhang, out of the weather, with shaded sand, a small waterfall and fern grotto? This camp is just below Redwall, river right. It's always available and it's all yours, but there is only room for one or two.

I have a few criteria for camp. I like a deep port, which allows me to sleep through the night. I hate ants, so I try for a place where I can cook over the wet sand. And in the summer, sleeping on wet sand sure is pleasant. No scorpions, no snake, and it's nice and cool. An overhang or cave is a good option if the weather is bad. I sleep in a tent after November, but not before, although the hanta problem may change my mind. Pitching and striking a tent each day adds another 20-30 hours to the trip.

8/25 - day 12 - Spot the spotted owl research trip at Tappeats. Odd bunch, rather self-important... I drift to Deer [Creek] by noon ... Motor rigs block me in as usual. We all jockey and I'm free. Owl boys sent boat

ahead to snag Ponchos' camp. Bad etiquette. No trouble for me. I'm going to Kanab to avoid the log jam. Nice quiet drift to camp. Current picking up. Storm clouds above. Main channel turns bright red. Big flood upstream. Beautiful.

THE SOLOIST MENTALITY - Are you good? Are you just scared enough of the place to stay sharp? A lot of things have to happen to get down the river. A lot more to go it alone, and number one on the hit parade is safety. I consider skill and experience a prerequisite to a safe journey. If you have not negotiated all the rapids in Grand Canyon at least once, you better think twice about a solo float.

This place is where you will use the other 90% of your brain. I am always focused on the danger or its potential. It's kind of like a computer subroutine running in the background. Stay sharp, and you will find more fun and excitement than you can imagine. Make mistakes, and the time will be consumed just trying to get out alive. Whenever leaving the beach, always take an aircraft radio and signal mirror. Risk is part of the game, but use common sense to reduce it

This kind of trip is an exercise in self-sufficiency and extraordinary adventure. You will be doing all the chores, yes, but it is you who gets to ply this immense journey in peace. At once, you will explore the external world of Grand Canyon, but soon you will go inside to make sense of who you are and why you feel. Maybe you will fine-tune the art of enjoying life in the canyon. Maybe you will break down into tears over the death of someone close. There will be no others around to hedge the emotions. It is a profound personal experience.

8/29 - day 16 - Sleep late. Drift past anvil and on to Falls about 9 am. Big as ever that rapid. Beer in cooler for life below. No one else shows. May run alone. Boat rigged for flip. I don the wetsuit. Life on the river below here changes. Choppers, heat, extraneous racket... Time to run it. Solo. Okay here we go, just me and old Gato Azul. The dory slot open but hard to hit. Check markers, nudge left, and in we go. Caught it just right, great entry. Deafening, the deep guttural roar of that thing. Lava Falls, like riding a mad brahma. Fantastic, fun! Best run of it ever! Beer, lunch, shade, river left just below springs. ...Camp with a magnificent basalt wall across the street. Saw no other vessels all day. Pink cloud sunset. So heavenly and typical of Western Canyon. Half-moon fading in and out of clouds. Water rising, threatening my wet sand sleep spot. I move.

8//31 - day 18 - Good morning self ... No hurry today. Cruising the eddies for beer. Found one! There's Billy beer and there's eddy beer. I like eddy beer 'cuz it's like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get. And an eddy beer is never your last ... Lunch, let's see here, Skippy or Uncle Beach Cliff sardines? By jove, I still have some Ritz crackers ... Afternoon rain and storms. The clap of distant thunder rolling through the canyon is my favorite audio experience. Camp just below Diamond. Refreshingly cool, I proclaim it the first evening of fall. Found a total of 4 eddy beers today. River full of debris from storms.

9/2 - day 20 This rig of mine wearing out after twelve years ... I watch some pretty impressive lumber float by, along with a few grateful deadheads [motor-rig pilots].

9/3 - day 21 - River vibrant red again this morning. I play naked in the flutes. Feel like a kid at the waterslide park. No cares, no worries ... Officially tried of cooking now ... I pass Gneiss Canyon drifting through what once was a rapid. My face grows taught with grimace, as I try to hold back the tears. I never can. I cry out in anger against the two dams. I hiss at all who support them ... The wild animal is enslaved, caged, then killed. It hurts. Another endangered species heading down the tubes.

9/4 - day 22 - Slept well. Set adrift 6 am. Air still. Alone and peaceful. Heavy overcast. I spot a school of large carp waddling upstream in formation. The "carp-mada". Led by Admiral Lips no doubt. My feet look like elephant hide. The sun takes its toll. Beaver slaps echo from a distant wall. I can finally hear where the air is leaking from my "lunch" tube. Sight-seeing choppers at river level. Curses, no stinger missiles left!

IN CLOSING - How many people have summited Everest? Close to the same number that have soloed the Colorado River through Grand Canyon. Are they of equal challenge? Maybe so. I hope to do more of these trips before it's over. And you? There is little doubt that you would be changed to the better forever. The solo sojourn is a great symphony of powerful and mysterious movements. It is the journey beyond fantastic. Go!

9/5 - day 23 - Morning storm clears. Gato Azul de-rigged by 9 am and loaded onto trailer. All gear packed away wet. Mold will ensue ... I gaze at the Grand Wash Cliffs, still sleeping in a blanket of clouds. A boatman's salute and a few words of thanks. Overhead, a hawk screeches to its mate.

Bruce W. McElya

Wilderness (continued from page seven)

feedback or participation.

How to legislate/implement/manage this paradigm shift back to reality and sanity? Interesting, paradoxical legal and practical challenges are obviously encountered; but let's explore the implementation of a system that rewards APPROPRIATENESS, CHARACTER AND EFFORT, DEVOTION AND DEDICATION, and right-minded incentive and will. Let's phase out and abandon the easy and irresponsible notion of buy ins, entertainment, and comfortable accommodations and services ("painless everything").

The bottom line is that industrial tourism in the Grand Canyon is degrading the wilderness resources and potential of the Colorado River experience, and is cheating both the motorized tourist as well as the well intended "private" adventurer (who is assaulted by the clamor and smog of motors, crowding, and herd mentality) out of a potentially life-changing Grand Canyon experience that can return the lost connection and meaning back into the individual and collective lives of otherwise alienated and psychotic 20th century humans.

The Grand Canyon situation is a microcosm and reflection of the larger human struggle and journey. WHAT IS THE HUMAN VISION? What has become of the "idealist" human tradition and side of life? Shouldn't we continue to answer these questions somewhere? Why not start with one of the greatest wilderness/adventure (and politically precedent-setting) experiences on the planet?

In truth and dedication.

Bob Lippman

Bob Lippman is a former Grand Canyon river guide with 29 years experience on the Colorado, and is now a Professor of environmental law at Northern Arizona University.

the Waiting List is published quarterly by the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, Box 2133, Flagstaff, AZ 86003 - 2133. gcpba@flagstaff.az.us Tom Martin, President - Arizona / Willie Odem. Vice President - Arizona / Richard Martin, Editor - Arizona / John "tight bucks" Bachrach, Treasurer - Arizona / Dave Yeaman, Science Coordinator - New Mexico / Marty Wilson, Pacific Northwest Coordinator - Oregon / Jo Johnson, Membership Coordinator - Colorado / Bob Woodward, Arizona - Mailing Coordinator. 410 + General members, and still growing! We welcome and encourage editorial contributions, stories, photos, river news, drawings, cartoons, whatever, and for that we will pay nothing ... but ... we offer our eternal gratitude. Send editorial contributions to: leigh@sedona.net or Editor, GCPBA, Box 43, Jerome, AZ 86331 Made on a Mac, GCPBA is a 501c3 Corporation. Contributions are tax deductible so give us all your money now!

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Newsire / Quarterly Review

gcpba NEWSWIRE / RIVER FUND TRIP IGNORES MINIMUM TOOL January 19, 1999

The Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association (gcpba) has recently learned that the river concessions "equivalent" of the Fee Demonstration Program, The Colorado River Fund (CRF), is being used to operate certain concessions companies motorized rafts on a resource trails maintenance trip in early February. gcpba has also learned that this river trip is not following the Parks current Minimum Requirement Decision Process (MRDP). This process guides all Park activities within proposed wilderness study areas, which includes the river. The MRDP states "Routine nonemergency restoration, visitor contact, monitoring and maintenance in proposed wilderness should consist of nonmechanical tools."

These "minimum tool" policies are the same policies that Superintendent Rob Arnberger was referring to when he commented on the use of a Jet Ski (PWC) by Park personnel last summer. At that time the Superintendent stated "When I heard of the decision to use a PWC in solving a boat wrap, I immediately demanded a formal internal enquiry be conducted, led by the Dep. Supt. and the Chief Ranger. I gave them explicit instructions with objectives to determine why and how a decision of this kind was made in the face of clear policy mandates; in the face of our requirements for minimal tool considerations in wilderness areas."

At the same time, private boaters, also known as independent boaters, who have offered their skills and muscle powered water craft to serve on this trip, have yet to hear on their request for participation.

According to Tom Martin, gcpba president, "This action is very disturbing. We can not find any justification for the use of commercial motor rigs on a resource maintenance trip, nor why CRF monies are being used to support concessionaire owned and operated motorized craft on such a trip. The use of these funds to support an activity outside of the minimum tool process at the exclusion of volunteer participation that would actually follow the minimum tool guidelines leads us to continually question management of the resource as lead by Superintendent Arnberger and his staff. We urge the Superintendent to "walk the walk" and "talk the talk" that National Park Policy clearly outlines in existing minimum tool guidelines."

gcpba NEWSWIRE / WORK GROUP MEETS IN FLAGSTAFF October 27, 1998

The Access Methods and Private Permits workgroups met in Flagstaff this last weekend. The Access Methods work group ran from 10:00 AM Friday to noon Saturday. The Private Permits work group met from 1:30 PM Saturday to noon Sunday.

Roughly 30 people were in attendance, with NPS staff and Jason Robertson of American Whitewater facilitating the discussions. Individual private boaters were in attendance. Representatives from five commercial river concessions and the Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association were present. Non-commercial boating organizations represented at the meeting included the National Organization of Rivers, American Whitewater, North West Rafters Association and the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association.

Five different access plans that require no split allocation system were presented by the non commercial users of the resource, none of which are supported by the river concessions industry. Seven plans to replace the existing waiting list were discussed under an allocation framework, one of which is supported by the river concessions. A number of reservation systems were reviewed.

As plans were being presented during the day, the GCPBA reviewed more plans in meetings held before, during and after the Parks meetings. Seven of the ten GCPBA board of directors were in attendance, traveling from as far away as Portland.

"We are excited about how an overall access system is coming together", said Tom Martin, president of the GCPBA, who went on to note that "Access for the general public should be both timely and as simple as possible to obtain. Individuals who want to use concessions services should have that opportunity, but if they are burdened by high fees, that same burden should not be placed on the public who wants to do it themselves."

The results of the weekends work will be open to comment from all interested parties as soon as it is loaded onto the Grand Canyon web site at <http://www.crmp.com> The GCPBA urges you to visit this site and let your ideas be heard.

gcpba NEWSWIRE / FLOOD UPDATE December 5, 1998

Rumors of flood releases next spring from Glen Canyon Dam have been circulating the boating put-ins. We here at GCPBA have heard talk of floods over one hundred thousand CFS and talk of floods never being done again. The debate over future floods on the Colorado began as soon as scientists emerged from the Canyon after the 1996 45,000 Cubic Feet per Second (CFS) flood. Scientists were excited about the possibility of floods of 60,000 CFS and greater. In an attempt to sort all this out, GCPBA contacted Randy Peterson, Bureau of Reclamation, for a flood update.

According to Peterson, the decision to do a flood flow this spring and subsequent springs in the future, is being decided based on identifiable processes, both biological and hydrological. "We will have a plan in place that will be used to decide if a flood will occur, based on a number of defined criteria" notes Peterson, who went on to identify the three major areas that all have to occur simultaneously for a flood to happen. Those three areas are the anticipated runoff and releases from Glen Canyon Dam, the effects of flooding on endangered species and other wildlife, and the sediment load of the river itself.

There are two hydrologic triggers that are based on the reservoir that could initiate a controlled flood. The first is the January 1 snowpack. If the forecasted spring runoff at that time is 140% of normal or greater, a flood flow could happen in January. The second is based on the monthly flow release from the Dam. If the flow release for any month from January to July is greater than 1.5 Million Acre Feet (MAF), that would also trigger a potential release during that month. Despite the potential for these triggers to be met multiple times in a year, the current thinking among sediment researchers is to not have more than one flood per year.

Besides the snow pack and Dam releases, the effects of a major flood on the trout fishery just below the Dam, juvenile endangered humpback chub, the southwestern willow flycatcher, and the endangered Kanab amber snail, found only at Vasey's Paradise and a location in Utah, are also considered. Peterson points out that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has set the level of "allowable incidental take" during any flood. In this case, this is the amount of any one endangered species or its habitat that is allowed to be destroyed by a flood. "The level set by the Fish and Wildlife Service for the Kanab amber snail is 10%" says Peterson. The 45,000 Cubic Feet per Second (CFS) flood flow of 1996 flooded just over 10% of Vasey's Paradise habitat, and scientists moved snails by hand from the areas that would be flooded to higher ground. Until alternate populations of the snail are established, only floods less than 45,000 CFS may occur. "Current attempts are underway to establish new populations of the snail, at Deer Creek and two other locations" notes Peterson. As these new populations become established, floods of greater magnitude than 45,000 CFS are being contemplated.

Last of all, the "bed load" of sediment in the river, the material that scientists hope will build up into new beaches, needs to be in place as well. "We learned from the seven day 45,000 CFS flood that future floods may only need to be two or three days long" Peterson notes. This sediment is placed in the river channel from side canyons when they flash flood. The Paria Canyon flooded to 6,000 CFS this year, and there may be enough sediment in place for a flood now. But don't hold your breath.

"Everything has to be in place first" says Peterson, who is awaiting a final decision opinion from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in March on what effects a 60,000 CFS flood would have on the endangered fish and wildlife within the Canyon. "The success of the new snail populations is a key part to continued floods in the Canyon" says Peterson, who added "Once sediment and reservoir triggers are met, if the impact on the environment is positive, there will be a spill."

gcpba NEWSWIRE / RADIO CHANGE October 15, 1998

One of the air tour radio frequencies over Grand Canyon has recently been changed. The eastern sector of the Canyon, from Lees Ferry to Havasu/Kanab Creek has changed from 122.850 (continued on page sixteen)

(**NQR** - continued from page fifteen) to 120.050. This is now the frequency that a person would use to contact an overflight of a tour plane/helicopter in Marble Canyon, LCR, and central section of the gorge (Phantom Ranch, Crystal, etc.). Of course, 121.500 is still the "emergency" frequency.

This change was due to conflicts that had arisen due to different uses of frequencies too close together, and has been in the works for about 2 years.

Be aware that the current regs. still show the old frequencies. Once new ones are printed and distributed with new permits, the change will show.

gcpba NEWSWIRE / WINTER TEST RESULTS December 1, 1998

Grand Canyon National Park has completed its Winter Test Launch Dates release. This test, part of the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) review process, was to assess the interest in winter dates for private river trips. Twenty seven river trip launches were offered to individuals on the Waiting List over a seven day period, starting with those individuals numbered 301 to 1000 on the waiting list, and adding an additional 1000 people each day. The last day allowed individuals numbered 301-6500 to phone in. The launches ranged from December 12, 1998, to March 3, 1999. Individuals on the Waiting List were notified a week in advance of the program by a GCNP mailing.

Linda Jalbert, team leader for the CRMP, said "The test was done to look at the public's desire for winter dates and the effect winter trips and additional use have on the resource." Jalbert went on to note that this test will help GCNP planners to further examine use levels during the winter months that have traditionally been low to no-use, while monitoring for unacceptable impacts to the resource and the visitor experience.

GCPBA learned that 7 permits had been claimed half way through the seven day test. According to Pat Hattaway, Chief River Ranger, "In total, thirteen dates were claimed, and the majority of those dates were in the month of February." Ranger Hattaway also noted that a full report on the Winter Test Launch would be made available next year.

gcpba NEWSWIRE / WILDERNESS MEETS WILDERNESS November 20, 1998

On Saturday, November 14, the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association cohosted with the Flagstaff based Grand Canyon Trust a day long meeting on wilderness issues facing Grand Canyon National Park. A total of Eleven environmental organizations were present, representing over 1.5 million members nationwide. This is one of the largest and most powerful environmental coalitions ever assembled for any issue in Arizona. Washington D.C. Conservation Directors for the Wilderness Society, the National Parks and Conservation Association and the Natural Resources Defense Council were among those attending.

The meeting, held on the campus of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, was attended by the following organizations: American Whitewater, the Grand Canyon Trust, the Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club, the Southwest Center for Biological Diversity, the National Parks and Conservation Association, American Rivers, Grand Canyon River Guides, the National Resource Defense Council, the Grand Canyon Wildlands Council and the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association.

The morning session was devoted to an overview of the various wilderness issues in Grand Canyon National park, while the afternoon session was devoted to strategies on addressing these issues. The coalition believes that the Grand Canyon epitomizes the concept of wilderness and the Colorado River that carved and continues to nurture the canyon is the heart and lifeblood of the wilderness. The majority of attendees supported wilderness for Grand Canyon following the guidelines set forth in the 1964 Wilderness Act.

gcpba NEWSWIRE / SEARCH UNSUCCESSFUL November 20, 1998

The Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association has just completed an unsuccessful 5 day search of over 100 miles of river and shoreline in upper Lake Mead, for the body of Robert Tarr III.

The 16 year old, from Philadelphia, PA, was reported missing around 4:00 on the afternoon of Wednesday Aug 12. Tarr had been on a side hike in Havasu Creek with his family and other members of a commercial river trip when he was reported missing. The upper reaches of the lower Granite Gorge, where

the Colorado River flow decreases in upper Lake Mead, had yet to be thoroughly searched.

“A number of volunteers dropped out at the last minute, but the six of us who participated in the search did a great job” said the GCPBA’s editor Richard Martin. “We started at Diamond creek, with two crews searching both sides of the river, and we continued the search all the way to the Grand Wash Cliffs” Martin went on to say.

The searchers had clear calm weather and found good camps, including one night’s camp on small ledges at mile 251 Right. The lake level is within 6 feet of full pool, though a slight current was still present below Columbine Falls.

Bob Poirier was the trip’s coordinator, and other trip participants included GCPBA president Tom Martin, GCPBA editor Richard Martin, and American Whitewater access director Jason Robertson. Other trip participants included Glen Doster, who arranged the food pack, and Elson Miles, both of Flagstaff, AZ.

Much of the equipment loaned and food donated to the searchers was supplied free of charge by Donnie Dove of Canyon REO, who also provided the shuttle for the search. The Hualapai Nation waived the Diamond Creek access fees, and the GCPBA covered the remaining food costs.

Special thanks to Bob Poirier, Glen Doster, Donnie Dove and the Hualapai Nation for making this search effort possible, and to the family of Robert Tarr III, whose support and words of encouragement helped us every second of every day.

**T shirts / Bumper Stickers / Back Issues ...
We’ve Got’em and so can you!**

You’ve probably been dreaming of having short sleeve, beige T shirt with the GCPBA logo printed on it. I know I have! Dream no more. Reality is, you can have one by sending \$18⁵⁰ (including postage) to the GCPBA along with your size (very sorry, no XXL’s - loose weight!). Stickers, for your car, your ammo box, your skateboard, to proudly proclaim your support for private boating, freedom and everything else good. Heck! they’re cheap, send 2⁵⁵ and we’ll send you one. Back issues of *the Waiting List?* we’ve got copies of 1997 editions, One to Four, and 1998, One to Four and they can be yours for just \$2⁰⁰ each. Send your money NOW! and we will send you something whatever you ask for! Cash is okay for stickers and magazines. Send a check for T shirts.

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RUNNING THE "GRAND"**How Hard Is It? & Related Topics**

*..I've never been down the Grand Canyon before, but I have done some of the more popular Northwestern rivers
... Is there a correlation between the 1-10 rating system for the Grand and the 1-6 rating system used every-
where else? ...*

Thanks, Richard

...The grand rating scale is 1-10.

Interestingly enough 10 is Most Difficult, not Unrunable. While not absolutely true to say that everyone has made it through every rapid, it is very close to the literal truth. Thus, if you divide a grand rating by two you get a good approximation of the difficulty. Remember that this is a big water river in behavior at almost every water level.

There's a long time folk saying about how to run the Grand: Entrance is everything, and indeed it is, make the entrance and you make the rapid, miss it and you are likely to be in trouble...

Larry

...if you are running your first trip through the Grand, the book "*Colorado River Briefs*" by Lindemann(sic) provides a few cheat sheets for the major rapids. Of course it does not replace careful scouting .

Good Luck, Mike

**It Is Much Easier To Kayak
And Next Time I'll Row**

... I offer the example of one past trip composed of rafters and kayakers of varying skills and previous big water experience. Two of the kayakers had no previous experience on big water (18K or so on this trip) but were relatively competent on rapids rated 3 to 4- on the 1-6 scale, here in Idaho. They expected to, and did, walk around, or raft through, some of the more difficult rapids on the Grand. But they also swam a lot of smaller rapids and had particular trouble with tail water and eddies. They found the big water intimidating and virtually every day was a great and scary challenge. Their big water skills (aggressive paddling, controlling fear and holding their breath when necessary) improved considerably by the end of the trip. When they got back to Idaho rapids, things seemed considerably easier to them. Two other kayakers (including me) with solid 4 to 5- skills and big water experience had no particular diffi-

culty, not to say there was no pucker factor in scouting or dropping, unscouted, into the larger rapids. When we got back to Idaho's more technical water we had initial difficulty in executing precise, crisp lines and eddy turns. Big, soft (no rocks) water can sort of make you lazy.....

.... I don't know, but the experience did leave me with an opinion about the difference in difficulty between kayaking and rowing boats (at least small ones) in the Grand. I think, assuming equal skill in both craft, it is much easier to kayak and next time I'll row.

Curt Fransen

It's Easier To Scout

Here's my favorite river quote from *Rivers of the Southwest* by Fletcher Anderson and Ann Hopkinson copyright 1982. Hope they don't mind a verbatim quote. "How much rafting ability is required to run the canyon? In 1977 a raft belonging to O.A.R.S. tours came untied at camp near Nankowep (mile 53). Some days later it was recovered in and eddy above Havasu Creek (mile 156). It was still right side up and it still had all its gear aboard - including some life jackets which were not tied in. It had successfully run 40 major rapids of the inner granite gorge (including Hermit and Crystal) without a boatman. Perhaps that establishes the minimum ability required to raft the canyon." Then it goes on to say that even the big baloney boats can and do go over. Two of the best bits of advice I've gotten for rowing the Canyon is 1) It takes less time to scout all the rapids than it does to deal with a flipped boat (thanks JB and Drifter) and 2) Just put the nose of the boat on all the waves.

BW

Can't Compare Rating Systems

As for comparing the rating systems, you can't. That is why there are two different systems. Small water is different than big water. Period. The small

water scale largely rates the technicality of a run. The big water scale basically rates your chance of staying upright. Although big water is mostly all about set up and ride, both of those are far from trivial in some rapids.

For example, I'm sure there are people on this list who have run the "bubble line" run in Lava. A foot either way and you're toast, and you're betting the farm on spotting some minor hydraulics on the lip of a precipice. It's idiotic, but it works if you do it right. As for the "ride" part of it, hitting the waves straight may seem trivial, but there have been more than one boat that has flipped in Granite (I'll count as one to get the total started) because it isn't as trivial as it sounds.

So although it may serve as a starting point to cut the 1-10 scale in half for those who are accustomed to the 1-6 scale, it is only that — a starting point. You must learn what 1-10 means in its own right. This, from a person who learned to row on small water (1,500 CFS) Stanislaus trips, then two months later discovered the 1-10 rating system on the Grand the hard way. Thrashing in Badger (yes, Badger) did wonders to straighten out my perspective.

Roy Tennant

“What I Say Is Not the Truth, And Most of It Is Made Up As I Go Along”

There is also the I can run it drunk (stoned, on acid) rating system (not that I have ever been in a boat intoxicated).

Class 1 is your day to day rapids, these can be thoroughly enjoyed with a good buzz. Unless you screw up and find your body wrapped around a pin after an ugly run at mile 212 (still hurts when I laugh).

Then there is Class 2, this class straightens up the hardest of chemical dependents, usually Hance, Crystal, and Lava. The night before is punctuated with hard drinking and stories of extreme bravado, it's really fun to camp at Hance or Crystal on these nights. The next day rigging takes 2-3 times longer and for some reason you urinate frequently. Some folks like to look at the rapid for hours others, myself included, want to run it right away. The run it right away types usually go first and the watchers get to sit there in horror as their friends get trashed in the rapids. After watching everything that can go wrong they

go and have the same thing happen to them (all waiting does is postpone joy). Then at the bottom you collect everything and crack a beer and move on, all that worrying for nothing.

Joking aside the primary fear I have when I private boat is run order. You can go on a 7 boat trip, but if nobody looks behind them you might as well be on a solo trip. The big danger I have seen on private trips is that the run order is bad. Avoid bad run order at all costs, I don't care if your friends get mad at you. I have thrown fits on the beach, because people aren't running tight together. Good commercial boatmen don't like to run with guys that run loose, and I have seen guides get fired over it.

I hate to sound preachy, but I have seen one death and countless close calls. They usually came down to run order being too lax. Many of these close calls were on class III rivers. The point, if I had a point, is that anyone with solid skills can run the Grand, and some people without solid skills can run the Grand. I've seen it at Lees Ferry, "so Joe, you think you can row a boat," gotta get all that beer down somehow. Every time I've gotten a good beating on a river has been at a small no name kinda rapid, because I was having too much fun or not paying attention. On the Grand there are some massive no name holes in the middle of nowhere.

The classification game is for trophy hunters to a certain extent. If you can boat class III with style and know the fundamentals you'll probably do fine in IV and V water.

Scott Marley

Question. Where Did “1 to 10” Scale Come From?

... I have been wondering about the 10 point scale for a long time... One question ... (excuse the ignorance of an eastern boater from Illinois) but is the 10 point scale only used in the Grand Canyon?... how did it come about that western water is rated that way? I have only done the Grand Canyon once, but found the waters to be about class III with some class V+ consequences if you got in the wrong place. I'm looking at the water there from a kayaker's viewpoint.? In the Appalachians were I paddle, we run very tight, steep and technical rivers. They are some-

(continued on page twenty)

Rating... (continued from page nineteen) times very dangerous, and it is often critical to catch a series of eddies or make essential moves to avoid undercut rocks and so forth. But, the rivers have no volume to them. On my single Grand Canyon trip, I thought the rapids were a joy to paddle. They were like being on a safe roller coaster. I thought they were very easy class III rapids (except Lava which I sneaked river right) but, of course, one always had to look ahead to see and avoid very obvious holes. However, on the days that I had to take my turn rowing one of our rafts, I thought the rapids were pretty hard due to all that volume. It sort of raised my estimation of rafters, a breed that kayakers view as very dangerous amateurs on the rivers in the Appalachians (no offense intended - rafters truly are a different breed on eastern rivers from those I have met in the west). Anyway, thanks for the information and for the interesting dialogue at this web site.? Hope to meet some of you on the river when my number finally comes up on the wait list sometime in the long distant, mystical future.

Ron Youngs

Answer. An Historical Overview

My research suggests but cannot yet prove that Norm Nevills should get primary credit or blame for the 1-10 rating scheme unique to the Grand Canyon. His scheme was considerably disseminated by Les Jones' classic scroll maps wrought from the Birdseye survey's plan and profile charts. The 1-6 scale appears to have been imported from Europe after the Second World War. Because many of the post-war European boaters worked as climbing guides once the spring high flows had slackened, they transferred their climbing scale from the rocks of the Alps to the streams draining the Alps. That the scale perseveres in the alpine streams seems gratifyingly consistent.

Norm Nevills played his cards quite close to his chest, reserving the spotlight for himself to as great a degree as possible. The elaborate scheme of one to ten left him plentiful opportunities to carry on about how difficult the runs would be and how lucky his current clients were to have him along to assure their safety. That said, Nevills was a hell of a boatman, running big water in small hard boats. He knew what was going on, even if he did pump up the excitement when he

thought it in his advantage. After he hired Dock Marston as an occasional boatman, Dock suffered an overwhelming infection by the river virus. Taking the skills and habits of his life work as a stock peddler to his new love, river running, Dock tried to devise what he thought would be a sound and empirical ratings calculation for rapid ratings. Dock and Norm's friendship first began to unravel over Dock's scheme. Norm finally wrote to Dock that Dock simply didn't understand rapids and their running because his calculation could not accommodate how tough things got when the boatman screwed up or got surprised. Marston did not accept that he didn't know as much about running the Grand Canyon as Nevills and their paths diverged thereafter.

Nevills was a prolific letter writer and freely counseled everyone who inquired about running the San Juan and Colorado. His letters are the vehicle that established his one to ten system. Although Nevills experience was limited to small hard boats, he recognized that other craft faced different challenges in big water. Of course, his were the very best boats; but that was a different issue, even to Norm.

Two classic runners of the Grand, in decidedly different boats from Norm's, had distinctive tales of their experiences. Bruce Lium, boatman on the Eggert-Hatch trip in 1956, complained of how damned hard it was to row his 27-foot pontoon out of the eddies. He was still complaining ten years later. He spoke of the rapids respectfully. He just shook his head when remembering the ordeal of the eddies. Bruce never assigned numbers to hassles or thrills.

Walter Kirschbaum told me that he snuck everything in his pioneer kayak run. Admittedly, Walter was world class in a kayak. He was also a pro in an oared pontoon. In his recounting of his Grand run he repeatedly sympathized with pontoon oarsmen because they were denied the easy sneaks by their equipment. Walter did the best at illustrating what Norm couldn't get Dock to comprehend, there are too many variables for a single scheme. Some variations were so significant that equivalencies, between a kayak, a pontoon, and Georgie's Thrill Boat at Lava for example, were nearly absurd.

Given modern standardization of gear, and its superiority over either surplus neoprene or

Questioned Mike: Is this thing a bottomless pit or what?

... Wondering if anyone has tales of going into the big hole at the top right of Serpentine? In early August with flows of 22,000 it was the biggest hole in the river (except for maybe the Ledge). Is this thing a bottomless pit or what? Mike

Here is a short serpentine tale:

A good friend of mine who shall remain nameless has a habit of reading his guide book as he rows along, just to make sure he knows exactly where he is ... hmmm ... he takes prolific notes at every water level he has ever experienced, (and tries to figure water levels down to the minute) so that he will be perfectly prepared. No surprises for this dude. In contrast to some of his other boatmen pals, who might not even bring a guide book along, or at best might read it at the end of the day, "to see where they've been."

My friend, Nameless, while reading his notes and guidebook, looking feverishly back and forth at the landmarks, checking the time, approaches Serpentine, and decides that it's not Serpentine. I guess his brain just checked out, or who knows, whatever, he quits paying attention, and finds himself heading sideways into a hole that would have swallowed a motorhome that day. It swallowed him, his two passengers, his notes, and everything else upright before my astonished eyes.

Everyone flushed out a different time, as did the boat... black side up. We got his boat tied to mine, and I picked up his passengers. It took us till almost the Ross Wheeler to get the whole mess eddied out and flipped back over.

Later, quite sensitive Nameless, got his boat renamed "*Serpentine*." Painted on the side of his boat with his favorite cheese, spray dispensed, "EasyCheese" (gag), while he was snoozing with his gal. He laughed. So did we.

I think the message here is pay more attention to the river, less to the guide books. Actually, what difference does it make what the name and rating of a rapid is? Why care about the water level? Should we turn back now? Are you going to go, or not? Ricardo

Anonymous Tale, For your winter "it's too cold to go boating" reading pleasure

Someone I know decided to run their 18 foot raft right of the serpentine hole. This was on a private trip in June a few years ago. The guy went over to the right boulder pile and in true read and run style, slipped into the tongue between the hole and the right bank. What a kick thought this guy.

A month later, same guy is rowing baggage for GC Dorries. He has the cook on his boat, and his wife is rowing the other baggage boat. As the trip approaches Serpentine, the dorries are all way ahead, and make the run. The two rafts are coming along behind. This guy, thinking the right run is such a blast, tells the cook to hang on, and over to the right they go again....only this time, he comes into the right too fast, and parks the boat on a rock fin about 5 feet from the right shore. There is a sickening "greeeech" as the boat grinds to a stop. He said his wife made the left run, blowing kisses as she rowed by.

He recounts how she kept on rowing, and was soon out of sight. She caught up with the dorries drifting slowly downstream just above Bass rapid, and when questioned as to where the other boat was, said something like "They stopped in the middle of the river just above Serpentine. They waved...I waved back...they stayed, and here I am.

Meanwhile, back upstream, this guy tries the "get the cook to bounce-use the oars" technique, then the "get the cook to walk around the boat-use the oars" technique, then he jumps to shore, rigs up a Z drag with the bow line, and pulls the boat off. As the boat starts to float downstream, he unties the land anchor and jumps for the oars, turns the boat downstream, and makes the run. Total elapsed time, 15 minutes.

Needless to say, he recalls that when he parked the boat at the upper Shinamu beach, the TL was waiting for him. As was the rest of the crew when they turned the boat over to wash the boat bottom at trips end, Pierce Ferry. As was the scheduling manager back at the warehouse. He said the rock didn't go through the floor, but the slide on-Z off groove on the bottom of the floor was impressive. He also recounted that he has never been invited back to do another commercial trip....."

And thus, the ranks of private boating continue to swell. Another name for the wait list.

River Book Review**Invoking the Colorado River Gods***Book and CD Review by Diane Rapaport*

KATIE Lee's book, *All My Rivers Are Gone* (Johnson Books, Boulder, CO) should be read by all wilderness lovers. It beautifully invokes what it is like to have the freedom to explore one's deepest values within the intimacy of nature's rapture. Sadly, this freedom is increasingly diminished by the commercial clutter of a river that is increasingly being managed as a theme park for the wealthy.

In conjunction with the book, Katie has also released two CDs/cassettes. *Colorado River Songs* a compendium of all the river songs Katie has written, collected and sung on river trips. *Glen Canyon River Journeys* features Katie reading excerpts from the book and singing river songs.

Lee's works are paeans to the "wild, sacred heart" of a paradise lost. She was the third woman to run the rapids in the Grand Canyon. For more than a decade, she regularly ran Glen Canyon before it was buried under trillions of tons of water in 1962. Her book recreates the beauty of the Glen, describes the characters that lived there, and tells how it changed her life.

"My trips through Glen Canyon and the river that ran through it changed my life-gave me an understanding of myself, my talent and its limitations; taught me about intimacy and the value of observation. Together they resurrected my spirit and melted my heart with their beauty; showed me time was not my enemy, and, with their power to entertain, mystify, and nearly kill me, diluted my ego to its proper consistency. The Glen gave me roots as tenacious as the willows along its banks."

Katie describes how river runners got to the put-in, at what is now Hite Marina after driving for hundreds of miles on lonely roads, then loaded supplies into their oar boats, and shoved off down river. No pay-for-play permits. No competition for camp sites. No helicopter racket. No buzzing of jet skis. No waterproof river maps. No nothing. Just the smell of a silt laden river, the lilt of the canyon wren, fern grottos, sandstone, and that incandescent canyon light which Katie so beautifully captures in prose.

"Light sets the stage for canyon mood changes. Forever ongoing. . . I enter a space of 'quiet light' where no direct sunlight falls, yet is lambent-a liquid light that comes from all around and underfoot. Far out of sight overhead, it has ricocheted down and spread itself in ways that confuse the senses. It gets so weird in here sometimes I think I'm hearing the light, smelling the temperature and feeling the sound."

In *All My Rivers Are Gone*, Katie recreates the joy of going down river with only cherished friends: schedules set according to feelings; the private banter and jokes; the exuberance of walking and swimming naked; and the love of discovery and exploration of a wilderness largely unknown, since many of the Glen's canyons hadn't heard footfalls since the Anasazi. She and her friends snaked up steep walls on the narrow Moki steps and named many of the side canyons: Driftwood, Cathedral, Dangling Rope, Dungeon, Grotto, Little Arch.

And oh to have heard Katie sing in Music Temple, the first "real" church she ever sang in.

"A song can be heard from beneath that dome to the river, nearly a half mile away. A nostalgic spot, so full of whispers of the past, so lovely-the pool, the stone estrade, the bank of ferns and columbine backing the pool, hanging baskets of them overhead clinging to a seep, and the sandstone spire twisting mysteriously out of sight way above, from where pours a crystal ribbon of water that drops musical notes into the pool."

Throughout the book are the treacherous undercurrents of impending doom-the disbelief at the early rumors that a dam would be built and the futile attempts to protest, an action Lee describes as "trying to put out a wildfire with a teacup." There are excerpts of the correspondence between her and Barry Goldwater, who recanted his position in the 90's.

Today, Katie's invocation to the River Gods to let the Colorado River run free has been given new life by The Glen Canyon Institute. Although the idea of draining Lake Powell is instantly condemned by those who earn a living from it, the reasons why it should be are scientifically sane and, after reading Katie's book, aesthetically eloquent.

Books are available from most bookstores; but not the music. Autographed books and music are available from Katydid Books and Music: PO Box 395, Jerome, AZ 86331. Books: cloth. \$32; paperback, \$20. CDs \$18; cassettes \$14. All prices are postpaid. For speaking engagements or publicity interviews, please call Katie Lee: (520) 634-8075 or contact her at katydid@verdenet.com.

Oooops MISSED THE PULL-IN

Every now and again, on this gcpsba river trip, someone misses the pull-in, the kitchen table collapses and the beef stroganoff becomes beach stroganoff, the boat gets away and runs 10 miles down river all by itself, or the throw bag gets perfectly tossed at the guy who was ejected out of his boat, but the thrower forgets to hold onto the business end of the bag. This quarter's MTP has the following corrections:

In our November issue of *the Waiting List*, on pages ten and eleven we published our first ever table, which showed revenues and user day allocations for the river concessionaires. We made a mistake. We only included user days during the primary season, May to September, and we did not include commercial user days during the secondary season. Therefore, the actual allocations were under reported. Sorry folks.

The following are the corrected user days for

Wilderness ARAMARK -9546
Arizona Raft Adventures - 10, 368
Arizona River Runners - 10,400
Canyoneers - 4403
Can Explorations / Can Expeditions - 7023
Colorado River and Trail Expeditions - 2848
Diamond River Adventures - 7203
Grand Canyon Expeditions - 13,967
Hatch River Expeditions - 11,027
High Desert Adventures - 3323
Moki Mac River Expeditions - 3693
OARS 7355, Outdoors Unlimited - 4821
Tour West - 4823
Western River Expeditions - 14,001

each
grand Canyon river concessionaires:

In our haste to get a *Bulletin* out to our members we for got to mention the exact location of January General Meeting. The General meeting was held in Flagstaff, AZ, on the campus of Northern Arizona University. Thanks to our members for reminding us that Flagstaff is NOT the "center of the universe."

Stinking Hot Hikes Ramparts Cave

The route to Rampart Cave, at river mile 274.5 Left, is a fairly easy stroll and a great way to end your trip. Rampart Cave served as a Shasta ground sloth nursery up until roughly 13 thousand years ago, when the ground sloth and 40 other North American species of big game walked into the mist of extinction. Rampart Cave contains the largest deposit of ground sloth dung, hair, bones and other plant and animal remains from the Pleistocene yet to be discovered in Grand Canyon. The cave's treasure trove of information survived over ten thousand years, only to be partially destroyed by arsonists in the 1970's. As with all caves in Grand Canyon, entry is not allowed without a permit from Grand Canyon National Park. A large pile of Sloth dung is visible from the mouth of the cave, just behind the gated entrance way.

To hike up to the cave, there are two routes, depending on Lake Mead elevation. If the Lake is within 6 feet or so of full pool, access is easiest from the back of the big bay at 275 mile left. Entrance to the bay is through a line of willow at the mouth of the bay. Cross the bay in your raft to the western shore. There is a camp of sorts here, where the slope meets the Lake. From this point, you will need to hike the half mile to the cave. Continue west south west up a gentle slope. The mouth of Rampart cave is clearly visible in the Muav cliff above you.

If Lake Mead is low, the best way to begin this hike is from the mouth of the gravel wash just a quarter mile northwest of Columbine Falls. There is also a camp of sorts here. From the mouth of the wash, you will need to walk a few hundred yards up over a small ridge to the north west, then head for the cave which will now be in view, roughly a half mile away.

No matter from which direction you have come, as you proceed up slope toward the Cave, look for a trail built in the 1940's by cave excavators. Just before the cave, you will need to negotiate a 20 foot section of Muav cliff, which should not pose much difficulty. From the cave mouth, a fine view is seen of the last curve of the Grand Canyon. This is a nice late fall, winter or early spring walk, particularly in the afternoon when the sun has set behind the Redwall ridge to the west.

Tom Martin

Ammo Can Doc / Dr. Tom Meyers, M.D.

A River Runs Through Me

(Part I) Waterborne Disease in Grand Canyon

My group will be doing a 16 day trip in the next couple of weeks. Several of the people in the group are very concerned about getting ill from giardia in the water. I've assured them the ceramic filter we will take is a very good one. I've been several times to the Grand now and I've not known anyone to have that problem. ... They even want to put iodine in the water after we filter it. Question..... My feeling on this is a lot of overkill. There aren't too many things that I know stay alive for long in water that is 45 degrees. Can someone offer input?

Thanks Roger

WHICH is worse? Diarrhea while kayaking in a wet suit or Lava Falls at high water? Both can be unpredictable, explosive and watery, and both could have influenced the name "Squirt Boat." I know which one I'd take, and it usually doesn't require changing pants... (except on occasion, especially at high water but I'll take my chances). Diarrhea no doubt is one of life's more unpleasant experiences. It's bad enough in the privacy of home with an unoccupied bathroom, but it can make life flat-out miserable on a river trip, worse yet, in a kayak. And just like acne, you never know where or when it may rear its ugly head. It is also in the Grand Canyon edition of Murphy's Laws that if you haven't had it in years, you WILL get it during your private trip that you've waited 12 years for. That's the bad news. The good news is if you do, you probably didn't get it from Grand Canyon. Even better, you are more than likely going to recover without any treatment in a few days. So relax. Have a good time. However, if you insist on losing sleep, just pretend your going to Mexico and don't drink the water. Demand the bottled variety for yourself. As for the rest of us, what if we do... (gulp), drink the water? Well, speaking from personal experience since my late teens I've had to drink untreated water from a variety of potholes, sidestreams and the Colorado River in Grand Canyon on quite a few occasions and have yet to get sick (I knock on my head as I say this). Still, I try to drink only treated water when I have the chance. Why? Someone told me to of course. It's because of a problem called "waterborne diseases", which are basically all the nasty bugs and germs that could make you sick by drinking water that isn't treated.

WATERBORNE DISEASE

- ✦ The potential for humans to acquire disease from microorganisms in water exists during recreational activity in/or consumption of water that is polluted by fecal waste (animal or human).
- ✦ Infected animals or humans can transmit more than 150 types of potentially infectious microorganisms through feces or oral secretions.
- ✦ Common infectious waterborne microorganisms include protozoan parasites, enteric bacteria (human or animal) and human enteric viruses.

Fortunately, with regards to the both the wilderness experience and risk for waterborne diseases, the Grand Canyon is difficult to top. The region is remote, dry and relatively inaccessible. Sidestreams emerge through these great natural filters of rock like Redwall limestone. There are no major metropolitan area nearby dumping raw sewage into the river, large herds of grazing animals don't litter the sidestreams, and beaver, which are frequent carriers of the intestinal parasite called Giardia, are uncommon. Additionally, the National Park Service has these neat rules and regulations to protect water sources (and prevent sandbar surprises) from human backcountry users, like making river runners use a portable toilet system on the river and haul out all fecal waste. As a result, the Canyon's waters aren't teeming with infectious causing microorganisms. In fact, in 1997, as part of a five year study of the Colorado River and its tributaries in Grand Canyon between Lees Ferry (RM 0) and Diamond Creek (RM 226); researchers from the University of Arizona's Dept. of Soil,

Water and Environmental Science and the Coconino County Dept. of Public Health concluded:

1. Low occurrence and concentrations of protozoan parasites *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia*, suggest that the waters in the Grand Canyon are RELATIVELY PRISTINE.
2. Human enteroviruses (those that cause illness in man are transmitted only by other humans) were not detected, which indicates little impact of human waste.

The study also found that the highest concentration of *Cryptosporidium* and *Giardia* occurred in water samples from Vasey's Paradise spring in 6/95, with 46.2 and 13.2 cysts/100 liters found respectively. Yet, samples at the same site one month later failed to detect any parasites. So what does this translate to as to risk? Well, with the infective dose of parasite to humans being 10-25 cysts, even if you had been a really thirsty researcher in 6/95 you would have needed to theoretically drink 50 to 100 liters of untreated water from the worst sample at Vasey's to become infected. 50 - 100 liters! So why worry? Well, if the organism is there, the potential risk for infection is there. And when the water is turbid, all bets are off. Turbid water is caused by sediment disruption from activity in or nearby the water source, or increased runoff into the source. Sediments can contain harmful microorganisms. Turbid water should always be considered contaminated (*duh*), as accidental ingestion (during recreational use) or inadequate disinfection prior to drinking poses substantial increase for the risk for infection. In Grand Canyon, tributaries that especially show high bacteria levels during periods of high turbidity and/or discharge include: the Little Colorado River, Tapeats, Havasu, Kanab, Saddle, Deer, Kwagunt and Nankoweap Creeks. Anyway, because of the presence of microorganisms, the researchers recommended all water be treated prior to ingestion. Filtering was recommended as the treatment method of

Shigellosis, Giardia, and Dehydration

Giardia is a great weight-loss technique. The time I decided to let it heal itself lasted 6 weeks and trimmed me about 25 lbs. I won't voluntarily do that again. *Giardia* is an excellent social repellent. You outgas sulfur mercaptans from both ends; nobody loves you. The treatment for *giardia* -- flagyl -- is a great get-on-the-wagon technique. Take it and you don't drink. I seem to recall that flagyl is a teratogen, however. On balance, it is possible your friends are right about not wanting to get it. But I think in Grand Canyon you'd be better off to take precautions against salmonella and shigellosis.

Earl Perry

There was a mini-outbreak in summer 79 of shigella in the Canyon [early groover era]. Four people in our group had it myself being one. I can only say that it was hard to keep hydrated, and you can forget about rowing. We didn't take any drugs and it resolved itself in about 4 days. Good hygiene is now practiced and haven't had any problems in 12 years.

Kestrel

Shigella is a pathogen similar in its effects, methods of transmission, and prevention to salmonella. It usually results from fecal contamination of foodstuffs. *Shigellosis* usually presents initially as watery diarrhea, and may present as mucoid stools or bloody diarrhea. It's one of the main food-borne pathogens that the food sanitation people would rather professional boatman controlled, as it can sweep through an entire river party very quickly, prostrating them and leaving them vulnerable to acute, potentially fatal dehydration.

Chlorine, iodine, boiling for water; but as it is generally vectored by solid items rather than water, more important are non-recycling (non-self-contaminating) handwash systems at the shitter, handwashing at the kitchen, careful rinsing of salad items, adequate coolers, sufficient heat of cooking, and sterilant dishwashing systems.

In midsummer Grand Canyon heat shigellosis can be life-threatening owing to the dehydration, to the speed of infection of a party, and to the potential for detracting from the boatmen's abilities, strength, and educated judgement. You can treat symptomatically with whatever the firstaid kit contains for diarrhea, but this really is one of the diseases where, if you suspect it, you should at least hold a boatman/physician-or-EMT council down on the beach about whether to evacuate. It takes a while to shit yourself to death, but you can check out very quick from desiccation.

Earl Perry

compiled from gcboaters@songbird.com

LETTERS TO THE GCPBA / FLIPPED OUT

“Remove My Name...”

I just received my first issue of “*the Waiting List*” (Nov. 1998). Please remove my name from your mailing list.

I too have some complaints about launch preferences for commercial operators, but the guides, hired hands, and 99% of the passengers are really nice people. They are certainly every bit as “worthy” as you are, even if they happen to be passengers on a motor rig.

I have rowed the canyon many times, but I’m taking a motor rig this summer. It’s my chance to finally take a few family and friends who wouldn’t be able to make it otherwise for various reasons. Again - not a single one of these persons is any less worthy than you are.

It’s selfish, egotistical, arrogant attitudes like yours that make river running an occasional drag. ...

Oh yea, I have a design tip for your publication. Put in photographs of something besides you. *Jack Turner*

Dear GCPBA

Keep up the good work! I keep up by e-mail, so don’t bother sending me newsletters-save your money for higher causes.

Best, *Chris Hill*

Sorry Chris, we’ll just have to send you the newsletter. It’s a bureaucratic thing. Thanks for the support, pass the Waiting List onto a friend! ed.

Park To Change Fees

Congratulations and thanks for all of your hard work. This is definitely a step in the right direction, and justifies my recommendation to so many friends that they join your organization.

Ken Ransford P.C.

Civil Disobedience

When I first learned years ago of the inequitable split commercial vs. private rafting of the Colorado through the Grand Canyon... my blood boiled. The split should be by number of boats per unit time — 50% of the boats private and 50% commercial.

Perhaps an act of civil disobedience would help. Get a group of say 529 private rafters to ‘run’ the Grand Canyon sans permits. That will wake and shake the pin heads in the National Park Service who seem to forget just who the hell owns the national parks...

God saves us from the confused many who can



not separate money from the nature of things.

Robert Zarkin

Privates Have Organized Voice

Rec’d your V2#4 complimentary copy on my return from three fine weeks down in the Canyon. If I’d known, I’d have tried to look you up in Flag. Glad to know private boaters have some kind of organized voice...

Jim Underwood

Name Calling?

So what’s the deal with everyone calling each other names? I have had mostly good and very few bad experiences with commercial groups. Same with privates. I’ve helped commercial trips out, they’ve helped me out. The discussion of motor suitability, commercial vs. private access, fairness,

and unbalanced political representation is healthy and timely but we all float the same water. Whenever you threaten anyone's livelihood, whether it is based on defense spending, health care spending, ranching, or boating, they get defensive. No surprise.

Let's work together to figure out how to best use this place that we all own a part of. Let's focus on finding solutions instead of using this as an excuse to vent frustrations.

Paul Diegel

Great Website

This is a great website; I just went down the Grand for the first time this past October on a private trip. I was pretty unimpressed with the commercial trip we encountered operated by Tour West. I totally support GCPBA's views on wilderness preservation. If there are action alerts that need commenting on, add my name to the list.

Thanks, Karen Jettmar

Finger Pointing?

My wife recently received a copy of *The Waiting List*, (Volume two, #4). As an x member of GCRG unfamiliar with your publication, I picked it up with interest. I was disappointed. Commercial vs. private is an argument motivated by self interest that amounts to little more than finger pointing and fragmentation among those who could do the most for Grand Canyon if they were able to look beyond their own interests. The "Letters to the GCPBA" portion of your journal was like listening to a "My Dad is bigger than your Dad," argument among children.

I have been a Grand Canyon abuser in the past racking up twenty trips in six years through commercial and private means. It happened; I got addicted; I just loved the canyon that much. I still love it deeply. In respect for it, I've stopped using it. ... In the meantime I'd like to love the Canyon by encouraging others to think in terms of what is best for the Canyon.

... I resolved that there were simply too many people using Grand Canyon and the best I could

do was to be one less.

... How can GCRG solicit its membership to attend public hearings on Canyon overflights without first silencing their outboard motors? Is self interest an expression of ignorance or denial?

Please reevaluate your arguments. Please get it together...

Nigel Sparks

Galvanizing Support

The December 21, 1998 issue of *High Country News* ran a wonderful article on the Grand Canyon boaters conflict, entitled 'Grand Canyon Gridlock'.

...This article, and the other related pieces in the issue, paint a wonderful and convincing argument that the system regulating private and commercial use of the Grand Canyon's whitewater is very out of balance. I hope the growing controversy attracts Bruce Babbitt or Al Gore's attention. I also hope that more articles like this find their way to a larger and larger portion of the public at large.

Building support among private boaters is clearly part of the solution. However, galvanizing support for changing the system among the general environmental-minded public is an absolute necessity, and casting the issue in terms of returning the management of Canyon to provide a wilderness experience for its visitors seems key to this quest.

As a private boater, the prospect of waiting nearly 20 years at current estimates for a permit to

run the Canyon is just untenable. I realize there is considerable demand - this is the ultimate and probably spiritual experience for many private boaters and the number of qualified and interested

We welcome your letters and will publish as many opinions as space allows in an effort to represent the variety of viewpoints these issues have generated. We may edit your letters for clarity or brevity.

These are emotional issues so try to include positive suggestions that might bring about clarity and thought. Drink lots of water, have a salty snack, and type away. ed.

private boaters grows yearly and includes a large number in its ranks who, like myself, spent many years as a commercial river guide. Yet, the system seems dramatically inequitable and driven by commercial enterprises seeking to generate as much profit as possible by running the largest number of people into and out of the Canyon.

Some would argue that private boaters can see the Canyon anytime they like by paying the cost

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT



With this edition of the *Waiting List*, the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association begins our third year. There is a lot happening in Grand Canyon. Storm clouds are building in what appears to be the biggest year ever for Congressional Legislation regarding Grand Canyon. We'll try our best to keep you all informed of developments that will affect your access to the Colorado River, not only at Lee's Ferry, but from Deer Lodge on the Yampa to Black Canyon below Hoover Dam as well. It's going to be that kind of year. An "El Niño" of special interest trying to safeguard their business access to our countries river resources, drowning out the independent boaters access.

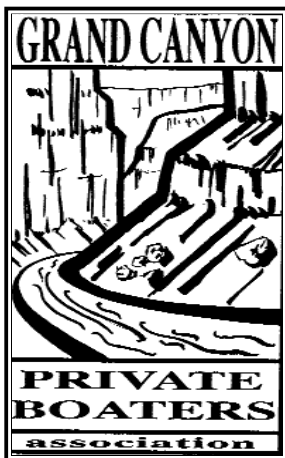
Meanwhile, your little boating club floats along. Thanks to the over 400 of you who have joined up. Without your support, we'd all still be paying \$25 a year to stand in a long line. With your continued support, we intend now to get the line moving a lot faster, as we all work to remove the logjam of inequitable allocation. Thanks also to the GCPBA board, the current gang of 10 who manage to work their tails off on this GCPBA journey while holding down "real" jobs. Special thanks to outgoing board member Jim Heumann, our sterling Web site coordinator.

The GCPBA Web site has been used this last year by a number of college professors around the country teaching courses on public access issues. It was thanks to Jim's hard work on the site that this was possible. To Jim, our hats are off, and good luck on that cabin.

So what else happened this quarter? GCPBA board members Byron Hayes, Richard Martin, Willie Odem and I co-hosted a wilderness meeting on Grand Canyon issues with Tom Robinson of the Grand Canyon Trust. This meeting, facilitated by GCPBA member Dave Knutson, brought together 11 organizations representing almost 2 million members, to look at the current threat to wilderness designation and lock in of allocation, threats solely coming from our river concessions friends. GCPBA board member Dave Yeamans came to Flagstaff from New Mexico to attend the Grand Canyon River Guides Meeting, while board members Jo Johnson, John Bachrach, Bob Woodward and Marty Wilson kept the membership lists, finances, mail and Pacific Northwest connections alive and very well. GCPBA was spotlighted in an article on the access issues in Grand Canyon in the *High Country News* (Vol. 30, #24), and by the time you receive this *Waiting List* GCPBA will have had our first ever General Meeting and board elections.

Lastly, special thanks to Bob Poirier, Glen Doster, Richard Martin, Jason Robertson, Elson Miles, Donnie Dove, Brian Bates, and the Hualapai Nation, for donating a lot of time, money and sweat in looking for the missing commercial passenger Robert Tarr III, from Diamond Creek to Lake Mead. As of this writing, GCNPS rangers are considering the use of side-scan radar to continue the search. We are very fortunate and honored to have been of assistance. Of course, this search could also not have happened without the support of our general membership as well.

Tom Martin, *President GCPBA*



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