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GRAND CANYON RIVER GUIDES

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A Non-profit organization

December 1989

Professional guides dedicated to the quality of the Grand Canyon experience

OUT OF THE FRYING PAN...INTO THE FIRE

Okay, saving the Grand Canyon: good job everybody, fine effort last summer with the letter campaign and all. We got an EIS started.

We are out of the frying pan and into the fire.

In the next six months the government will have scoping sessions to lay out 3 or 4 potential modes of operation for Glen Canyon Dam, including a "no change" alternative. Theoretically, by the end of 1991, one of those alternatives will be chosen and that's it. What we get then, we'll probably have to live with ever after.

So the bottom line for us is: we either get our licks in right now, at these scoping sessions, or we can kiss them goodbye. The sessions will happen between mid-February and mid-March, in Flagstaff, Phoenix, LA, Salt Lake City, and Denver. Chances are they'll be hard to sit through. But we have to go every one of them anyway, as many of us as possible for each town. Not just guides, but whatever passengers we've had and can round up, too. And as guides, we'd better have our act together. We're going to have to be pretty doggone cool about how we present ourselves in order to get our points across. The people we're dealing with aren't villains, they're just people too, and everybody has his own agenda. We're up against a negative image, too: we're "the hippie recreationists" to a lot of people, and we need to be careful not to play into that.

Philosophically, this one is pretty simple. There are only a couple of ways you can view it all.

A: It's hopeless. It's not my table. And why bother?

B: At least we can give this a good try. Because we owe it to the Canyon, or our kids, or somebody. Maybe just ourselves. And if we don't do it now, what right will any of us have to complain later on?

Yeah. That's it. Charge. Or something. We'll keep you posted as to when and where.

1990 GUIDES TRAINING SEMINAR

The 1989 Guides Training Seminar, sponsored jointly by GCRG, the NPS and the Grand Canyon outfitters, was such a resounding success that preparations are already under way for an even better program for 1990. This year the first-aid and CPR will be held March 22-24. Sunday the 25th we get down to business with the GCRG annual spring meeting and ushering in the 90's party. Monday the 26th will commence the two day Flagstaff sessions of the 1990 Guides Training Seminar. The Dam tour and river rescue seminar will be Thursday and Friday the 29th and 30th and the River trip will begin on Saturday the 31st and be eight days to Phantom Ranch. Of course at this point the above dates are all tentative and subject to change, but save a space on your calendar. A final schedule of events will be in the mail by early February.

Same as last year, the GTS will be funded in large part by the Grand Canyon Outfitters. Their voluntary contribution of equipment or funding entitles each of them to send at least one guide representative on the river trip portion of the Seminar. For the best possible river trip we NEED guides from each company on it. If you're interested in participating get in touch with your outfitter now so they can make arrangements for you to join the trip.

HEY YOU GUIDES

GCRG was founded to facilitate communication between GC guides and to serve as a tool for voicing our united viewpoints on issues in a public forum. This is still the goal! The more we put in the more we get out. We need to hear your thoughts and opinions. **Get involved!** Help your organization to work for you. Best of the season.

OH SHIT

In Jan. 1990 the Federal Clean Water Act goes into effect, stating that it is no longer lawful to put human waste together with other garbage in a landfill due to the dangers of groundwater contamination. The poop can still be dumped in a landfill, even in its plastic bags, it simply must be dumped in a site separate from the other garbage and be buried within 24 hours. As of this printing date, none of the landfills contacted will be accepting human waste in 1990 due to the extra maintenance involved. O K, so now we've got a problem. The Park Service estimates that over the course of one river season somewhere around 80,000 pounds of the stuff is generated, yeah that's right, 40 tons. With the new Federal law in effect, disposal of human waste will have to follow the strict mandates of the law. If the waste is stored in a holding tank similar to a R V type hold, disposal is as easy as taking it to the nearest R V dump site. If the waste is containerized in plastic bags, that's were the problem arises. Possible solutions are:

- A) the BLM might give the NPS a square mile of desert near Pierce's and we could dump the waste in a pit there, provided it was buried immediately.
- B) A private contractor could be hired to burn the material in a special waste incinerator (There is a contractor interested IF he could be assured of getting enough of the stuff to make it worth his effort).
- C) The third option is to make arrangements with Coconino County to have a special site available for human waste dumping at the existing landfill that would be buried immediately, since the river business brings millions of tourist dollars to the area every summer.

Ideally a solution can be arrived at soon, or we will all be in deep shit.

STRIPED BASS SIGHTINGS

The Arizona Game and Fish Dept has confirmed the taking of Striped Bass at the mouth of Havasu Creek by angling, and have heard reports of Striped Bass as far upstream as the mouth of Stone Creek. Dennis Kubly of AZ Game and Fish and Dave Wegner of GCES are asking for help from the Grand Canyon Guides by letting both agencies know when and where any Striped Bass are sighted. The bass are voracious piscivores (fish eaters) and will eat almost anything that moves, obviously a threat to the trout, etc. Please report any sightings to: Dennis Kubly, AZ Game and Fish, 2222 West January Rd, Phoenix, AZ 85023 and Dave Wegner, GCES, P O BOX 11928 Salt Lake City, Ut 84147

GUIDE POOL UPDATE

In May of 1989 GCRG instituted the guide pool as a service for guides and outfitters alike. We hooked up a phone line and sent out the sign-up mailing and waited to see what would happen. The results were better than expected.

The guide pool made an overall profit of \$27.46, not bad for it's first year, especially considering that it cost almost \$500.00 to install the separate phone line. The pool had 29 members and generated 12 new members for GCRG. Six guiding positions were found, and there were more calls from outfitters than there were available boatmen.

There were some problems of course, the most recurring was guides not keeping their schedules current. Same old story, you list an open time but later fill the spot on your own and forget to tell the pool...makes us look bad to the outfitters if we give out a name and not have that person available for work. Room for improvement there.

Plans are in the works to continue the service for next season, ideally with more members signed up so we are able to fill the dozen positions we had no guides for this year. By mid April 1990, everyone should receive another piece of unsolicited mail informing you of the opportunity to sign up for this service for the 1990 season. So think about it, it could fill that three week hole in next years schedule. GCRG dues paid members can sign up for \$15.00.

GCRG would like to thank Pam and Tim Whitney who volunteered to man the phone line and did a great job for the 1989 season coordinating freelance guides with job opportunities.

HUH...WHAT DID 'YA SAY?

I know, I know, Georgie says she can still hear a Coors can being opened at Havasu while she's still parked at Deer Creek even after all those years behind a motor. (well maybe we stretched the point but remember her testimony at the motor phase-out hearings in the late 70's?) Searching for hearing protection that works and is comfortable can be frustrating. There will be a lecture by an Audiologist at the 1990 GTS Flagstaff sessions in the spring. Some solutions will be offered, so mark your calender to catch this guy's talk. Cause we all should be able to hear those beer cans opening for a while to come....

Grand Canyon River Guides was saddened to hear of the death of Marty Hunsaker, a guide with Georgie's Royal River Rat's. Marty was a good friend to the canyon, and will be missed on the river.

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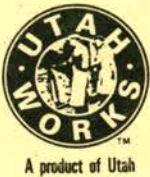
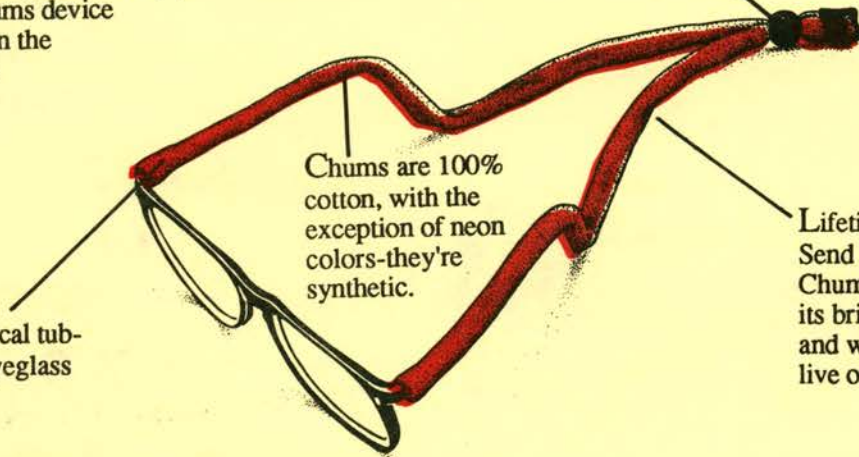
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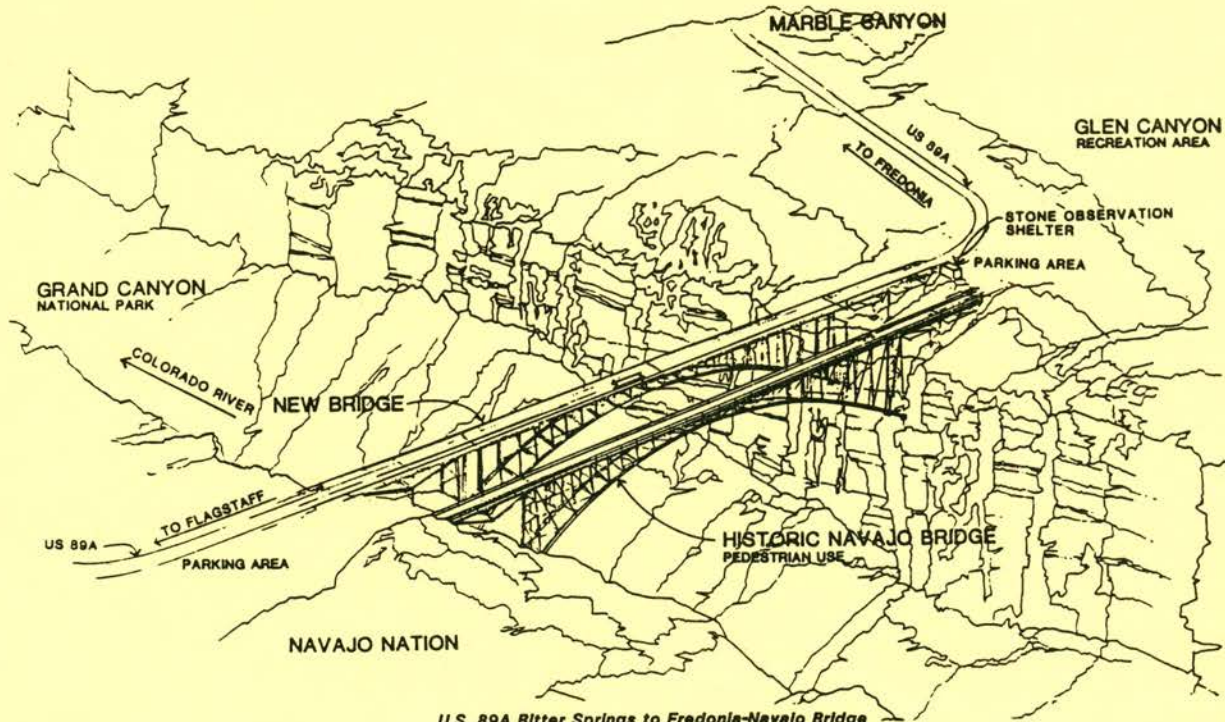
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NAVAJO BRIDGE UPDATE

Update on Navajo Bridge If you've traveled from Bitter Springs to Marble Canyon lately you'll have noticed the improvements being made to HWY 89A. ADOT is in the process of upgrading the road from Bitter Springs to the east edge of the bridge in preparation for bringing heavy equipment over the road to build the new bridge. The map has been reprinted from the Environmental Assessment

with permission from ADOT, and shows a sketch of the area surrounding the Navajo bridge and how the new bridge will look. It will be located approximately 120 feet downstream from Navajo Bridge, and plans call for construction to begin in the summer of 1991. ADOT has taken steps to assure that nothing will fall into the canyon during construction. Wonder what velocity a one pound rock would reach as it fell 500 feet to the river. Terminal probably. Navajo Bridge will be maintained as an overlook and pedestrian walkway. ADOT is planning to place signs along the "pedestrian bridge" asking that nothing be thrown into the canyon. Write to ADOT telling them of your concern over the possibility of objects dropping from either bridge onto a passing river trip. Ask them to let you know of their plans to mitigate this hazard. Write to or call:

William P. Bell Manager
ADOT Environmental Planning Services
205 S. 17th AVE.
Room 240E
Phoenix, AZ 85007
Telephone: 602-255-7768

OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS OF GCRG

3/89 thru 3/90

President: Kenton Grua. V. P. Bill Ellwanger.
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Circle one: Guide member General Member

MEETING NOTES...

The GCRG Fall Meeting happened Nov. 12th and 13th at the Hatch warehouse. The turnout was moderate-- 20, maybe 25 people who talked about the usual things: the Dam, overcrowding, the GTS, the Guide Pool, river etiquette, what to do with all the future poop (40 tons a year?).

Mike Yard gave us the scoop on GCES and the EIS these days. Things are happening pretty fast and furious in that corner. And while it's nice to know we do have scientists like Mike and Larry Stevens and Nancy Brian on the job-- people with integrity, and some real Canyon experience under their belts --it's also clear that they're definitely under the gun of late and are going to need all the help and support we can give them.

We had a nice visit with Mark Law, who summed up the year as he saw it, and went over a variety of NPS concerns. Foremost of which, probably, was the human waste question. He asked us to back the NPS on the more stringent trip leader qualifications that came out in the '88 operating requirements. Seems our old pal Butch Wilson told the outfitters meeting this fall that it was all a communist plot spawned by GCRG, and a couple of them were pretty fired up about that. We reminded Mark that A: GCRG didn't even exist until after the change was on the books and B: a few individual guides supported it when the Park ran it by them, but we'd never voted on it as an

organization. Could be we'll have to take a stand on the deal, one way or another, in the future.

Just before he left, Mark told a couple of us about a close call with Dan Quayle, the Vice President, during his recent fact-finding tour of the Grand Canyon. Three NPS motor rigs are cruising along, with the VP in the rear, and they come upon an AZRA paddle trip. The AZRA trip attacks, they throw water. Mark is on the lead boat and he tells the secret service people on that one to put their Uzi's away and throw a few buckets back. Okay, no problem. But then the AZRA boats line up across the river for the VP, and they're chanting: "Get Quayle! Get Quayle!" and slapping their paddles on the water. The secret service guys with the VP are nervous, and they draw their Uzi's. "Run the gauntlet," they tell the boatman. So he powers on and, boom, he hits one of the AZRA boats. Which happens to have a passenger standing up in it, holding his new Nikon because he's trying to get a photo of Quayle. And... Splash! The Nikon's in the drink. So now that guy is mad. Really mad. But the Vice President is okay, though. And his boat speeds away. Whew. Only back at the office, Mark gets a call from the guy's lawyer...

Chairman of the river etiquette committee this year is the Whale. So, straighten up everybody.

That's about it, really. Adios 1980's. Hello 90's. Here they come. And United We Stand, Divided We Fall. You get out what you put in. God Bless America. Nobody said it was gonna be easy. O'er the Ramparts We Watched... Etc.

Favorite golden quotes:

Gentleman from Chicago during a brief talk at the 39 mile dam test site..."If they did put a dam here, which side would they put the lake on?"

One fellow wanted to know if there were plans to dredge the Colorado river from lee's to lake mead. Now there's an idea.....eh?

After a grueling hike down the Bright Angel trail in mid-summer an exhausted woman joined a river trip. About a half mile past the silver bridge she turned to her guide and asked "How close are we to Hell?"

While stopped at the Unkar delta and hearing a lecture on the archeologic sites there....Client: can you tell us if the river was here when the Anasazi's lived here??

Send us your favorite golden quotes for the next newsletter

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