

# THE GRAND CANYON River Runner

Number One

preserving public access to the Colorado River

Fall, 2005

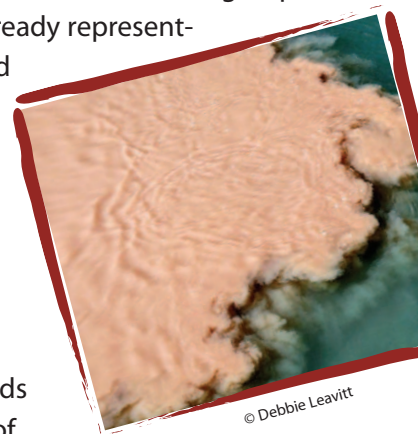


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## A YEAR TO BE PROUD OF

In the summer of 2003 the National Park Service (NPS) held a stakeholder workshop as part of the public process to revise the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP). Momentous decisions were going to be made during this public process, with the potential to affect us greatly, and our opinion was going to be left out.

The stakeholder workshop was the first formal gathering to which we commercial river runners had been invited, and this only because the Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association insisted on our being given seats at the table. Other stakeholder groups (outfitters, private boaters, wilderness, river guides) were already represented by their respective organization. As we were not, we had previously been overlooked. In the past, the outfitters had tried to represent our concerns. But their advocacy on our behalf was being drowned in the heated battle of outfitted use vs. the private permit "wait list."



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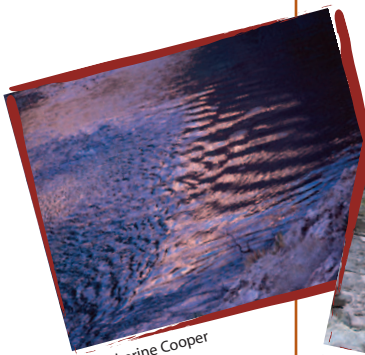
Roughly 22,000 people raft in Grand Canyon every year, of whom 19,000 choose to go with commercial outfitters licensed by the NPS. But we were a silent majority. Our needs and wishes were almost unknown to the NPS until the fall of 2004. Grand Canyon River Runners Association (GCRRA) came to be as a direct result of that 2003 workshop.

We began with an unmistakable fervor, knowing that everyone else had a huge head start. Our efforts began in high gear and were maintained at a blistering pace through the end of the CRMP comment period. The NPS released the "document," the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), for public review and comment in October, 2004, and we submitted our official GCRRA response at the end of January, 2005.

There has been no complacency. As a startup organization we have had to continue in much the same vein as that in which we began. The following is a summary of what we have accomplished in our first year, thanks in large part to the participation of our chapter presidents and members.

*We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your support. Congratulations, we have earned our place at the table!*

*Continued on Page 2*



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## WHAT WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED SO FAR

1. Incorporated in September, 2004, adopting guiding principles and bylaws with an original board of 7, now 8, members
2. Designed website and went online within two months
3. Produced first tri-fold and solicited memberships from the commercial boating public
4. Read and analyzed the CRMP DEIS upon its release in October, 2004
5. Board members represented GCRRA at all 7 NPS sponsored CRMP public meetings; many chapter presidents and members also attended
6. Introduced GCRRA to NPS personnel, other participating stakeholders, and the media
7. Circulated and collected 100's of petitions describing the need for continued public access to the river corridor via commercial outfitters, and mailed them to NPS throughout the comment period
8. Mailed comment forms to our membership to encourage you to send your individual comments
9. Made our first annual contribution (20% of membership dues) to the Grand Canyon Conservation Fund;
10. Joined Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association, Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association, and American Whitewater in signing a Joint Recommendations response to the CRMP DEIS
11. Wrote GCRRA's formal response to the DEIS that resulted in a 25 page document plus 45 pages of appendices
12. Redesigned the GCRRA membership tri-fold for distribution during the 2005 boating season
13. Produced Volume I, Number 1 of The Grand Canyon River Runner
14. And probably the most important point: BECAME THE VOICE OF THE COMMERCIAL PASSENGER, providing, for the first time, a united effort to preserve public access to the Colorado River in Grand Canyon

## FUTURE PLANS

1. Continue to monitor the CRMP process and update members on a continuing basis
2. Produce two newsletters per year featuring contributions from members
3. Meet with other stakeholders and NPS officials when necessary to represent GCRRA membership
4. Generate new memberships (the fight is not over), while sustaining established ones
5. Expand our Board of Directors
6. Look to expand the number of chapters and more fully involve the chapter presidents
7. Discuss development of outreach program to "give back" to Grand Canyon
8. Ongoing development and update of website

## GCRRA Chapter Presidents

<b>Lisa Angell</b> Freedom, CA SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CHAPTER	<b>Guy Kenny</b> East Jordan, MI
<b>Marjorie Beck</b> Eugene, OR	<b>Goetz Landwehr</b> GERMANY
<b>Tim Bell</b> Westbank BC Canada	<b>Peggy Lawrence</b> Concord, MA
<b>Nels Borg &amp; Kayleen Bryson</b> Snohomish, WA SEATTLE, WASHINGTON CHAPTER	<b>Courtney Ledger</b> Boston, MA
<b>Mark Burgess</b> Dennisport, MA	<b>Anne Loring</b> Reno, NV
<b>Alan Cohen</b> Logan, OH COLUMBUS, OHIO CHAPTER	<b>Gary Mercado</b> Houston, TX
<b>Cherril Doty</b> Laguna Beach, CA SO. LOS ANGELES AREA CHAPTER	<b>Bob Patrick</b> Tucson, AZ
<b>Susan Edwards</b> Phoenix, AZ	<b>Bill Potter</b> Princeton, NJ
<b>Barbara Fox Nellis,</b> SM, RBP, CBSP Flagstaff, Arizona	<b>Ron Rudy</b> Grand Junction CO
<b>Anita Gale</b> Nassau Bay, TX	<b>Lucia Scott</b> Auburndale, MA WESTERN BOSTON CHAPTER
<b>Colin J. Hibbert</b> London, England	<b>Michael Sullivan</b> El Cajon, CA
<b>Leslie Higgins</b> Washington, D.C.	<b>Dan Tomsho</b> North Canton, OH
	<b>Linda Wetzel</b> St. Helena, CA NORTH BAY AREA CHAPTER
	<b>Nancy Yocom</b> Douglassville, PA PHILADELPHIA, PA AREA CHAPTER

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## Colorado River Management Plan Update

Last winter the Grand Canyon River Runners Association was very busy analyzing the river management proposals from the National Park Service for the new Colorado River Management Plan. The public comment period came to a close on February 1st, 2005 and we anticipate seeing the final CRMP by the fall of 2005.

The Board of Directors joins in thanking all of you who signed petitions, wrote letters, attended meetings and contributed to spreading the word. Thanks to you GCRRA is now an established organization and will continue to play a role in future management issues concerning the Colorado River in Grand Canyon.

Right before the end of the public comment period, GCRRA signed a ground-breaking agreement with three other stakeholders. The goal was to bring the commercial and private sectors together in a consensual agreement about the river management plan. This collaboration was a first in bringing together these key players. The result was a set of joint recommendations to the NPS. The participants in the coalition include: GCRRA, the Grand Canyon Private

Boaters Association, American Whitewater and the Grand Canyon River Outfitters Association.

The four participating groups formally agreed to: 1) support and advocate for the policy proposals outlined in the joint recommendations document; and 2) to continue to work together to strengthen their collaboration. You can view the full joint recommendation on our website at [www.gcriverrunners.org](http://www.gcriverrunners.org) on our current news page.

We are looking forward to the final CRMP and we are hopeful that our recommendations will be adopted. We do, however, believe that the struggle to maintain public access is far from over. We anticipate that upon release of the CRMP some groups will oppose the plan and proceed with litigation against the NPS. In this case, our role as a recognized voice will become even more important. We need your continued support and dedication. Please continue to spread the word about our efforts and monitor our website ([www.gcriverrunners.org](http://www.gcriverrunners.org)) for updates.

### Lure

By Jeff Morgan

The canyon lures like a drug  
Pulls your sleeve, no gentle tug  
A sand covered rug, dinner with a bug  
Steamy gritty coffee in a mug

A group of friends formerly strangers  
Stow away the worlds dangers  
Check their worries at the door  
Sack out on the canyon floor

Cold hard rains yield to rebirth  
The canyon shows us center earth  
A glimpse of life's eternal battle  
Instead of the normal herd of cattle

The skies of vast innocent blue  
The stories that weave the river through  
The hikes that prove to me  
There is much more for me to see

Yet still they wonder why  
With words I can only try  
To explain the habit I cannot kick  
The lure to the river that makes me tick

I have been on the river trip twice ... so far. I cannot wait until the next time, which is currently planned for 2007, unless someone needs a swamper before then. I have many great memories. This is one of several poems that I wrote on my last trip.

### Rafting the Colorado, by Simon Gillett

Grandeur Point on the South Rim and it is hot. I'm looking back into the Grand Canyon searching for the Colorado five thousand feet below. But the river cannot be found, hidden in the depths of the canyon and not seen since I hiked away from it early this morning. It has become clear that here you are in a place that supercedes its own magnificent stereotypes.

A week earlier our small rafting expedition had put in to the Colorado River at Lees Ferry, ninety river miles to the north east, to begin a journey through the upper reaches of the canyon. I travelled four thousand miles from London to float the river: entire days rafting rapids, hiking side canyons and sleeping under open skies.

I have wanted to raft the Colorado since first running a class V in my home of New Zealand some years ago. But the white water is merely a side order on this journey. Each day you become more immersed in one of the most enthralling environments on earth. Red walls rise up against an impossibly blue sky and divorce you from the outside. The muddied river boils as it runs over rock falls and in its depths the canyon is thrumming with colour and energy.

Part of the allure of Grand Canyon country is that it remains unchanged from when Powell and the early adventurers tumbled their way down the Colorado in wooden dories a century ago and, even today the sense of history and pre-history is pervasive. The Grand Canyon is timeless and isolating but also alarmingly delicate and constantly threatened. It is a unique treasure that warrants preservation and those of us lucky enough to experience the "soul of the desert" are bound to, in some way, become custodians.





In the past few years, I have been involved in Northern Arizona University's (NAU) Grand Canyon Semester, a fall course of study with intense focus on the Colorado Plateau. In my current vocation as The Special Collections Librarian at NAU's Cline Library Special Collections and Archives Department (SCA), combined with my past vocation of professional Colorado River guide, and an ongoing avocation as a river historian, I introduce the students to doing research in SCA and the Library, present an occasional lecture and assist with their research, and am a boatman on their River trip, providing interpretation along the way. It's a tough job, but somebody has to do it.

On one GCS river trip, we stopped at Elves Chasm for some well-deserved frolicking. Most visits there, prior to going to the waterfall, I like to take a slight downstream, and upslope, detour over to what I call "Inscription Cave," really an overhang. Here, many river runners of yesteryear have inscribed their names on the walls with charcoal from their campfires. The overhang is a natural shelter: cool and protected from the sun in the summer; relatively warm and certainly protective from the cold and rain in other seasons. Though not close enough to the River to be a "perfect" campsite, with the overhanging protection, fresh water from Royal Arch Creek, plus the gorgeous ambiance of the side stream, it is possibly as close to perfection as one can get. Nathaniel Galloway's January 24, 1897, is the oldest inscription, from the Galloway and William Richmond trip, the fourth complete Canyon transit. One of the students, a guy from Mexico studying in the U.S., asked, "Who was the first Mexican on a river trip down through Grand Canyon?" Of all the questions, I had never been asked that one before. I thought a few moments, then replied, "Ramón Montéz, in late 1896, with George F. Flavell; the third complete trip through the Canyon"; in addition, Montéz was the 15th person. The answer surprised both of us.

Somewhere in my overhanging memory, there is a recollection that Montéz may have been the first passenger. On the two previous complete trips, John Wesley Powell's in 1869 and Robert Brewster Stanton's in 1890, all the men were either boatmen or crew. Even though this trip was not a commercially outfitted one, according to Carmony and Brown in their introduction to Flavell's *The Log of the Panthon*, "Montéz was Flavell's passenger on their perilous voyage." In *River Runners of the Grand Canyon*, David Lavender wrote, "[Montéz] had a short sweep oar to help with the steering, but apparently he did not use it often." Carmony/Brown added, the *Log* "is a literate narrative written in a lively style with considerable humor." If you haven't read it, be sure you make some time for this highly enjoyable and fun story.

Charlie Russell had just completed his transit in 1908 when on March 17 he wrote to the Kolb Brothers thanking them for their pictures they "took of our boat and my trip through the rapid," photo-

graphs they sent him in response to his March 7 request. As a Post Script on the 17th, Russell queried, "Say why don't you try to work up a scheme among some of the tourists this summer to take the trip down the canyon many would like to do it and you might get some wealthy fellow to put up the expenses for a party." This was when the Kolb Brothers moving picture trip of 1911-12 was still in the planning stages (*Kolb Collection* NAU.MS.197). Russell was prescient in his prediction, for in 1909 wealthy businessman Julius Stone led a trip, not with tourists, but veteran river man Galloway, novice boatman Seymour Dubendorff, and photographer Raymond Cogswell, a trip done almost wholly for Stone's pleasure.



Emery Kolb Collection, Northern Arizona University, Special Collections Library, Kolb Brothers, "Dirty Dozen"

Norman Nevills gets the credit for organizing and leading the first commercial river trip through the Grand Canyon in 1938, with Elzada Clover and Lois Jotter, the first two women and the first two passengers. Rightfully so, and we will get back to that trip in due course. First, let's backtrack a few years to 1934's "The Dusty Dozen." There were only seven of them, not a dozen, but their trip was in the Dust Bowl period on extremely low water of less than 1,800 cubic feet per second, thus making the River very "dusty," indeed. Besides low water, this trip is notable for two other things: finding the first split twig figurines, in Stanton's Cave; and being led by Bus Hatch, the first person to go on the river and later go into the outfitting business. That occurred in 1954 when Bus returned in a motorized ten-man inflatable life boat with two passengers, and old friend Smuss Allen rowed the first pontoon raft through the Canyon, with seven passengers, the beginning of pontoon use to transport commercial passengers. This brought the total boaters to a little over 200 on Dock Marston's lists of people who made their first complete traverse of the Grand Canyon from Lee's Ferry to the Grand Wash Cliffs (*Reilly Collection*, NAU.MS.275). Les "Buckethead" Jones, on a solo rowing canoe trip, caught them at Bedrock Rapid to witness "Smuss hung on the Bedrock point, sweeping the full pontoon under - occupants climbed rock...Allen jumped ten ft. down into boat bottom thru hole to river bottom & up in boat again; surprised & rowed to shore below." It took them all after-

noon to sew and patch a 30' tear but "rarin' to go at 6 a.m. 29 April 1954. Hatch Expeditions make fine yearly runs with no further trouble" (Roy Webb, *Riverman; Les Jones Scroll Map*).

After several years of running trips on the San Juan and Colorado Rivers to Lee's Ferry, in 1937 a visit to the Mexican Hat Lodge by University of Michigan botanist Dr. Elzada Clover precipitated a Nevills Expedition trip in 1938, down the Green River from Green River, Utah, to the confluence of the Colorado River, to Lee's Ferry, and on into the Grand Canyon, the first commercially outfitted Grand Canyon river trip. Graduate student and teaching assistant in botany Lois Jotter accompanied Dr. Clover (what a great name for a botanist!), as did zoology grad student Eugene "Gene" Atkinson. All three passengers also worked the trip doing camp chores and assisting with the lining and portaging. Dissension marked the first portion of the trip to Lee's Ferry. Probably because of time constraints, boatman Don Harris had to return to his U.S.G.S. stream-gaging position. Controversy still surrounds Nevills' decision to tell Gene "that his continued participation was not wanted." Nevills recruited two new boatmen, Lorin Bell and Del Reed, leaving Clover and Jotter as the first two Grand Canyon passengers. This second portion of the trip was much more amiable. In addition, when the group hiked to the South Rim of Grand Canyon National Park to visit legendary boatman Emery Kolb, a traditional venture for most every river party after the Kolb Brother's 1911-12 trip, Emery decided to accompany the trip the rest of the way to Lake Mead. This made him a two-thirds passenger to add to his previous two complete trips as a boatman (Cook, *The Wen, the Botany, and the Mexican Hat*; Nelson, *Any Time, Any Place, Any River*; Staveley, "Norm Nevills"; Webb, *High, Wide, and Handsome*).

Post Script: Lois Jotter Cutter returned in 1994 as a participant/passenger on the Bob Webb-organized U.S.G.S. Old Timers, or Legends, trip. I was fortunate enough to be with Lois and many pre-Glen Canyon Dam river runners on that trip, what boatman/author/historian Brad Dimock called "the coolest trip I'd ever been on." Now that Frank Wright, Don Harris, and Garth Marston have "run the last rapid," Lois is the oldest of the First 100 through Grand Canyon, still going strong in her nineties.

Space considerations do not allow room for an extensive bibliography. Many excellent annotated citations can be found in the set of bibliographies by Francis P. Farquhar, *The Books of the Colorado River & the Grand Canyon: A Selective Bibliography*, and Mike S. Ford, *The Books of the Grand Canyon, the Colorado River, the Green River & the Colorado Plateau, 1953-2003: A Selective Bibliography*; available from Five Quail Books <http://www.fivequail-books.com> and Fretwater Press <http://www.fretwater.com/> Also, Earle E. Spamer's online bibliography is indispensable: <http://www.grandcanyonbiblio.org/> The SCA Colorado Plateau Digital Archives can be searched at <http://www.nau.edu/library/speccoll/index.html>. Information on the Grand Canyon Semester can be found at <http://www.grandcanyonsemester.nau.edu/>.

## Have a Great Trip?

### Share It With the National Park Service!

Most of us need a few days to step out of the clouds and come back to Earth after our river trips. It is a perfectly normal reaction, and one that should be shared. Some of us write letters to our outfitters praising everything from the guides to the cuisine.

Remember, though, that there is someone else who would like to know how much you enjoyed your time in Grand Canyon National Park. Send a copy of your letter to the Superintendent so he hears from us how valuable the NPS' licensed concessionaires are. It is important that the decision makers understand that most of us would not have been able to have this incredible experience without our outfitters and guides.

Send a copy of your letter to:

Superintendent Joseph Alston  
Grand Canyon National Park  
Post Office Box 129  
Grand Canyon, AZ 86023



Split-twig animal figurines are some of the earliest signs of human presence in Grand Canyon. Many have been found in redwall caves and have been radiocarbon dated to 3,200 to 5,000 years old.



## RIVER RATS

Here we go,  
On a run,  
River Rats,  
Havin' fun!  
On the water,  
Every day,  
Shootin' rapids,  
All the way!

Our first stop's a piece of land,  
Just below Glen Canyon Dam.  
Old Lee's Ferry's gonna be,  
Kick-off point for you and me!

First day out we have to see,  
Just how ready we can be.  
House Rock rapid's our first test,  
We show Okie we're the best!

First night's camp it sure was warm,  
Then we had a big sand storm.  
Sand in everything you see,  
Livin' like Anasazi!

Saddle Canyon camp next night,  
No more sand and not much light.  
Dancing spirits on the wall,  
Some folks had themselves a ball!

Side trips break monotony,  
Interesting things to see.  
Scramblin' over rocks each day,  
But we're on the trail they say!

Just when things were goin' well,  
Lost an engine, scared to hell.  
Okie told us not to sweat,  
He can fix it, you can bet!

Some hiked in Bright Angel Trail.  
Made it down, they didn't fail.  
Packed their gear and off we go,  
Where we're headed we don't know!

Crystal rapids was a ten,  
We could all do that again.  
Then at Sapphire we lost Russ,  
Climbed back on without a fuss!

Rapids came and rapids went,  
Our boat rocked and our boat bent.  
Waves came in from every side,  
Man it was a super ride!

Big Horns on the mountainside.  
Never even tried to hide.  
Standin' there for us to see,  
Just like Nature on T.V.

Rob Bighorse our Navajo,  
Storyteller stole the show.  
How his grand-pa got his name,  
Brought him fortune, brought him fame!

Fossil rapids knocked off Dave,  
Okie made another save.  
Grand-pa Joe Broke out the booze,  
This sure is my kind of cruise!

Stopped at Deer Creek, took a hike,  
Waterfall was quite a sight.  
Then we climbed the canyon wall,  
Don was proud he didn't fall!

Bobcat at the riverside,  
Jumped in the tall grass to hide.  
Big ram merely looked our way,  
He was there, and there to stay!

Robbin left her school to be,  
On this river trip with me.  
Does the chores and cooking too,  
There ain't nothin' she can't do!

Susan's pilot number two,  
She's right there to take us through,  
Every rapid every wave,  
Makes us feel like we are brave!

Thirty passengers, four crew,  
Plus one more to pull us through.  
Smelly yellow ammo can,  
Oscar! Oscar, he's our man!

Now we know what we've been told.  
River Runners don't grow old.  
Canyon's Spirits tell the truth,  
We have found the fountain of youth!

Lava's last and Lava's best,  
It would be our final test.  
Made it through without a fear,  
Let's re-book this trip next year!

Okie, Susan, Robin, Mike,  
Four great guides we really like.  
They're the leaders of our band,  
They're what makes this Canyon Grand!

Here we go,  
On a run,  
River Rats,  
Havin' fun!  
On the water,  
Every day,  
Shootin' rapids,  
All the way!

This Chant was written during two separate motor trips with Wilderness River Adventures. There were a few old Marines on my first trip and we started composing verses as we floated down the river. This July I took another trip, this time with my daughter Susan as boatman (a big thrill for a proud dad) and I added a few more verses.

Hank Detering, Pennsylvania  
Grand Canyon National Park  
August 28-September 3, 2002  
July 1-8, 2005

## IMPRESSIONS

by Cherril Doty

Eighteen days?

Thirty people?

I don't like the water that much.

What if I go overboard?

Too much hot sun.

I'll never last. I should not do this.

All my excuses, all my rants, all my rationalizations, and here I was on a combined paddle and rafting trip down the Colorado with Canyon Explorations. Somehow, with the help of my friend Catharine, I had made it here. I could stay with the relative safety of the rafts. I would find a way to go off by myself. The time would pass. Shade could be found somehow.

Before I knew it, it was Day 4, mile 44, and nothing pressed on me. The world as I had known it had disappeared. Everything of that world had been swept aside like flotsam on the steady, flowing current near where I wrote. By Day 8 and mile 110, I was having conversations with the river. We were becoming friends. I liked the people; we were almost halfway through the days, I had gone overboard; I eagerly raised my hand each day to paddle, feeling greedy...it was all good. On this day, I wrote in my journal that I could hear the voices in the river—murmuring, soft, soothing sounds—speaking of courage.

By Day 13, my journal no longer contained whole thoughts. The words from Day 13 to end of trip conjure remembered image and experience while saying so little: "Relentless, rushing sound of river—morning dawns to nothing else.... Silence that isn't...silence that seals new friendships with a light touch, a look...pretenses absent—bruises and bare butts, hands working together, equalizing in wondrous ways....moon overhead gone from new to full in the breadth of the trip...ghosts everywhere...timeless architectural inspiration in rock cathedrals...process and power...water over mossy rocks...magical grottos...simply to be..."

And this last—simply to be—to sit at the river's edge in early morning sunlight as a yellow-green oriole comes to join me on a willow branch. To sit looking across the flowing green water to rock ledges where swallows emerge for a breakfast of bugs flying just above water. To sit as tamarisk trees bow their dusty-pink branches to touch the river, as if to drink in its magic. Simply to be...This is carried away with me in a new-found inner tranquility and peace. I may have left the river, but it didn't leave me and now never will.



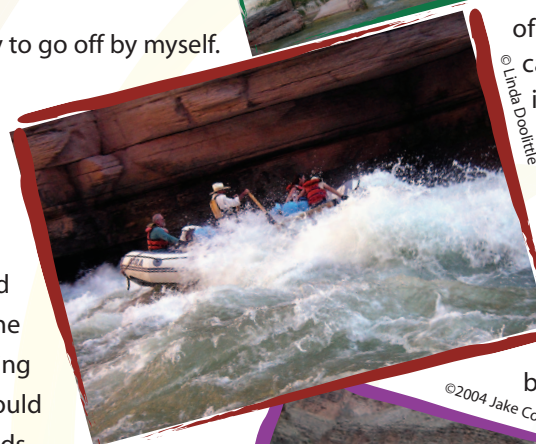
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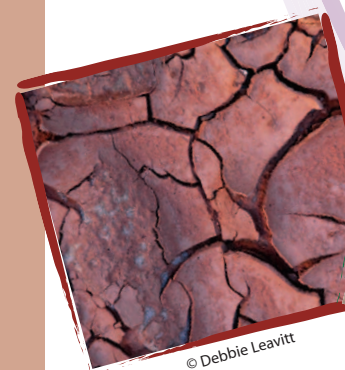
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## I Call It Paradise, by Linda Doolittle

This year I have been fortunate to make two trips. Both were motor trips and with the same company. That's were the similarity ends.

The first, in mid May, was a special geology trip on three rafts with 36 men and women. Once on the river I was curious about the effects of the flood from last November's 3-day water release from Glen Canyon Dam. Campsites had increased in size with large deposits of new sand. As I passed through the canyon, it was very evident and very impressive to see how high the flood had reached.

The wildflowers were abundant. The beavertail cactus was plump from the winter precipitation and loaded with brilliant hot pink blooms. It amazed me how green the canyon was all the way to the rim. Vasey's Paradise was breathtaking with the large volume of water jetting out and cascading down the side of the canyon. The stops for geology lessons were engrossing and fascinating. Nothing disappointed. The trip, the crew, the weather, the canyon, the river, the rapids, the food, and the rafters made for a grand expedition.

July 7th was the start of my second trip. It consisted of 12 women who wanted a vacation from work and family. Once again, the majesty of the canyon was overwhelming. We stopped and walked to the back of the cave excavated when they had considered building another dam in Marble Canyon. When we reached the Little Colorado, unlike in May it was clear and aqua blue, one of Mother Nature's finest gems. We beat feet to the little rapid and went in with abandon.

The Colorado River was running at around 13,000cfs, which provided us with some spectacular rides through Granite, Hermit and Crystal rapids to name a few. We hiked up Shinumo Creek to a waterfall behind which, our guide led us to a shallow cave. There you could see light coming from an

opening in the boulders, which had formed a narrow passage to the top of the waterfall from where you could jump into the deep pool below.

Our guides went first. As I began the struggle, I inched my way up, until I reached a point where my left hip was wedged below a large rock. I was stuck. My head and left arm had just cleared the passage. I huffed and puffed, twisted and contorted. With the patient coaching of the guide and with assistance from below I was able to clear the rock. Then like a cork from a bottle, I popped up and was free from my captivity. Only four of us had made it. One at a time, each carefully maneuvered to a small ledge to make the jump. Finally, it was my turn. With the spirit of 12 year old, I launched myself into the air; up and out over the waterfall, I felt like I was floating until my feet hit the water. I shot straight down like a bullet my feet landing gently on the bottom. As the bubbles rushed past me, I gave a push and broke the surface to a round of applause and cheers. It was pure joy.

Our next stop, Elves Chasm, this time many where able jump and enjoy the exhilaration of leaping into the pool. The next day it continued; Stone Creek, Deer Creek with the hike to "the Patio", and Olo Canyon serene and peaceful, the treasures of the canyon abound. We camped at Upset Rapid in time to watch as a group of oar and paddle rafts skillfully rode the enormous waves that seemed almost to swallow them.

At last, we arrive at Lava Falls Rapid. As we approach, the water seems amazingly calm, and then over we go. Up down, up down, water everywhere. The roar of the rapid vibrates through your body, yet you can still hear the screams of glee from the white knuckled participants. Repeatedly we return upstream to catch another ride to shouts of "one more time." However, we must move on, our last evening is a few hours away.

After dinner, we gathered to reminisce and thanked our guides for showing us the marvels of the canyon and sharing with us a trip of a lifetime. Suddenly in the distance, there was a sound like the crack of thunder and then you could hear the boulders, the rocks and the rolling stones as they tumbled down the side of the canyon. It was time to sleep and dream of returning. The helicopter would arrive at 7am to take us from this paradise.



## Up Kanab, by Catharine Cooper

*"Let the beauty of what we love be what we do. There are a hundred ways to kneel and kiss the ground."*  
—Rumi

Kanab Creek is the largest tributary canyon system on the north side of the Grand Canyon. I've had the remarkable good fortune to hike its lower miles twice in one season. Its rock strewn canyon slips between steep walls colored with mauves, reds, deep browns and golds. Large boulders litter the creek bed, shoved by upstream flashes and rock falls from its vertical slopes. Fresh water seeps provide verdant green plant life that include Crimson Monkey flowers and Maidenhair ferns. The cliffs are home to bighorn sheep and peregrine falcon.

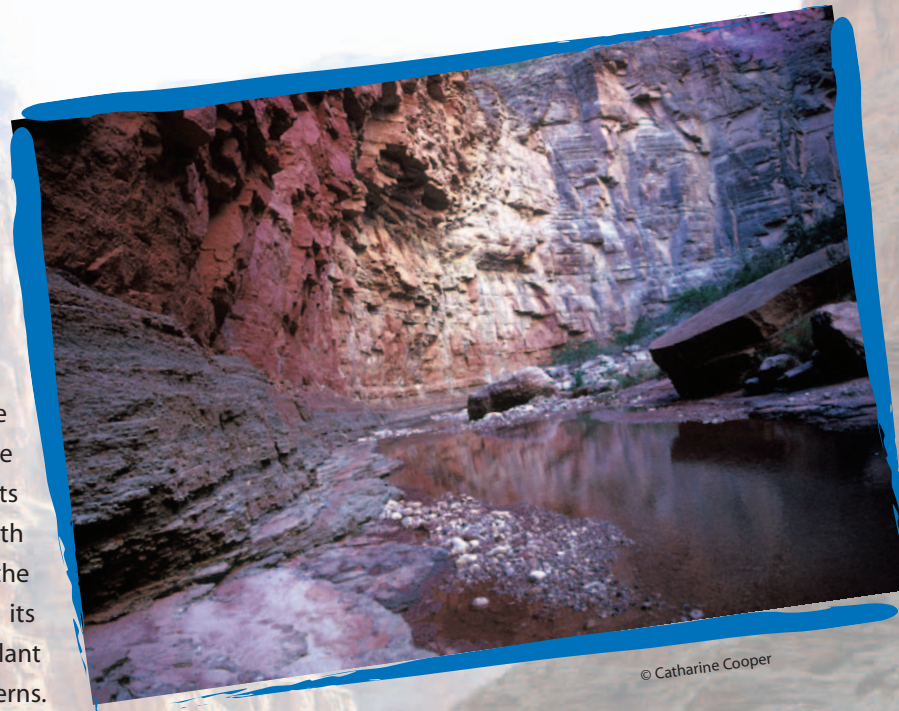
Sunlight casts soft shadows on the canyon's center, teasing me with subtle reflections of the redwall and tapeats. Late September light is seductive and sensuous. Drained of the burning heat of summer and not quite the cooler air of fall, the light and I bridge the seasons as I climb gingerly into the morning.

Stepping through green rushes and heavy red silt, I nearly place my foot upon a sleeping rattlesnake. She lifts her head and rolls an eye. Then, recognizing that I am no threat, she tucks her neck back into coil and resumes her resting. Beyond her, deep tracks of great blue heron and bighorn sheep are deeply etched in the recently flashed mud. I walk up canyon, mesmerized by the quiet broken only by running water and the soft call of the canyon wren.

I've set out alone, leaving the other hikers from the Canyoners rafting trip to organize their gear. I walk in meditation, camera connecting, eyes fixed on the light and shapes of rocks and water. In a Zen-like space, lulled by the creek's flow, I transcend another level of my 'cited' self, and once again am honored as the canyon opens herself to me. Primordial rocks and carved stone pass secrets; carry ghosts of those ancient ones who once called this arid region home.

One by one, the rest of the hikers pass me on their journey to the Whispering Springs. I remain un-swayed by their hurried cadence, exalted in my solitary exploration.

The scent of sheep catches in my nostrils, musky and fresh. Hikers' tracks, those who have just passed me, lie beneath fresh sheep prints. How is this possible? The sheep have come between us without a trace – save these thick cloven prints. I stop and scan the narrow canyon. The sheep's sure-footedness must have carried them onto rock ledges where their soft tan color blends completely with the terrain. I sense they are gazing at me, maybe even



© Catharine Cooper

'sheep' laughing at my attempts to discern them.

I kneel to touch the cool clear water. A Monarch butterfly brushes my arm. A pair of Anna's hummingbirds whiz skyward in a jubilant mating ritual. A blue damselfly lights on a shimmering boulder. I stoop lower, barely breathing, hoping in stillness to gain closer proximity to the silently beating wings. This arid canyon teams with life. I am but one beat.

I join the other hikers at Whispering Springs where clear water spills from a cliff overhang. We swim in the deep pool, snack on fresh fruit, and relax out of the sun's glare. Our 'other' lives continue to slough away as the canyon's magic opens our souls.

The morning softness yields to the brilliance of mid-day as we scramble down rocky faces back to the boats. I linger behind the group, clinging to the sacred space, filled with a sorrow at leaving.

Just before the Colorado, I am again washed by the scent of musk. I turn, and there, just beyond the creek's edge, stands a small female sheep. Could she be the same calf I had seen in the spring? I stop, lower myself close to the ground and reach for my camera. As I am set to release the shutter, she bounds out of view, as if she were never there.

We climb back into the boats and float father downstream. Another side canyon, another hike only increase my hunger to know more of this wild place. Each journey brings me closer to something that continues to be just beyond the reach of my vocabulary, my skills with language. I see the sheep in my memory, laughing. She knows that I'll be back, and that I'll be looking for her up Kanab Creek.

## Back to Civilization

So, I'm back in the city  
And my friends all exclaim,  
"So, you had a good time...  
well, you look 'in pain'  
"Your lips are cracked,  
and your hair's like straw!  
"Your legs are bruised,  
and your knees are raw!  
"Your nails are broken,  
you've gained weight,  
"How can you say  
that your trip was great?  
"Your sunburn's peeling...  
it sure is a "beaut'  
"It looks like you're wearing  
a camouflage suit!  
"So, you had a good time...  
well, you 'tell me'  
"You look like you just came  
through World War Three!"

"Listen, my friend said, carefully,  
and I will tell you what this all means to me."

"My bruises will fade,  
and my bones will heal"  
"My skin will be soft  
underneath the peel"  
"My hair will recover, and so will my lips"  
"And I'll get those 10 pounds off my hips"  
"But the memories I've stored,  
will not fade away"  
"They will be with me,  
to my dying day"  
"The whitewater thrills,  
and the red canyon walls"  
"The Indian ruins,  
and pure waterfalls"  
"The fun with new friends,  
and boatman tall tales:  
"Boatman great cooking  
and whitewater wails"  
"Yes, the memories I've made will  
not fade away"  
"They will be with me,  
to my dying day."

By: Shirley Hopka  
June 21, 1983

## Encountering Archdruids, By Lisa Angell

Because of my commitment to GCRRA I attended one of the public comment meetings hosted by the National Park Service last fall. Joe Alston, Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park, was going to be in San Francisco and I was primed with some "snappy patter" to open things up with him. But when I saw him at the meeting, I mostly found myself waiting for a chance to meet and speak with him. He was busily engaged with a line of people, but he knew I was there waiting my turn. Just when it seemed to be "my time" one of the meeting's organizers brought an elderly, extremely robust white-haired guy over to him and they started up a monster conversation. It was quite animated and Joe was obviously consensually engaged with this guy so I chose to stand (again) off to the side and try to wait another turn.

Finally after what seemed to be a really long time, Joe turned to me and said to his older friend "I should speak with this lady, nicely waiting her turn." I said "yes and if you were a dancer, your card is over full". With that, the older gentleman laughed and mingled on into the crowd and Joe and I sat down to rest his feet.

I expressed my appreciation to him for his efforts to solicit input from a range of people looking for access and use in the Canyon. I thanked him for taking on the responsibility and said I didn't envy him his task, but respected his need/right to accomplish it. I asked also that he seek consensus, not necessarily agreement with the plan -- that ordinary hard-working people like me wouldn't EVER be able to be on the river without a sensible, equitable plan and asked that his office be flexible and also establish a system of checks and balances to evaluate how the plan was working once it was finally settled and underway. He talked about being a pri-

vate boater on the river and how much he loved it. I talked with him about being a commercial passenger who loved it no less.

After that, there were so many more people tugging at Joe's sleeves that we concluded our conversation at the table. I looked over and saw the white-haired guy talking with another group of folks and moved over to apologize for my "squeezing" him out of his more extended conversation with Joe. When I got to his side I saw the other people looking at and listening to him in an awe-struck manner. I wondered who exactly I had squeezed out... It turns out I was meeting Martin Litton for the first time.

I told him I had not realized he was a "legend" and stood there as struck as everyone else seemed to be. He laughed and was very good natured about it saying he was rambling and probably needed some "reining in". I said "right Mr. Litton" and returned his incredibly strong handshake and thanked him for all he had done to introduce the Canyon and to give each of us a love for the Canyon and the river. I asked him when his next trip was and he said he didn't have one planned but that he'd see if he could find someone to take him along. I volunteered immediately, but said that he would have to pull some strings with Joe to make it happen. When he heard that, he laughed and said he'd see what he could do. I said I wouldn't mind waiting and figured nobody else would either.

Time is the truest commodity and it can't necessarily be manipulated with money. Time is also a commodity with the Canyon, even more so than access. GCRRA's efforts to build and sustain influence into a sensible, equitable plan preserves "time" left for the Canyon as well.



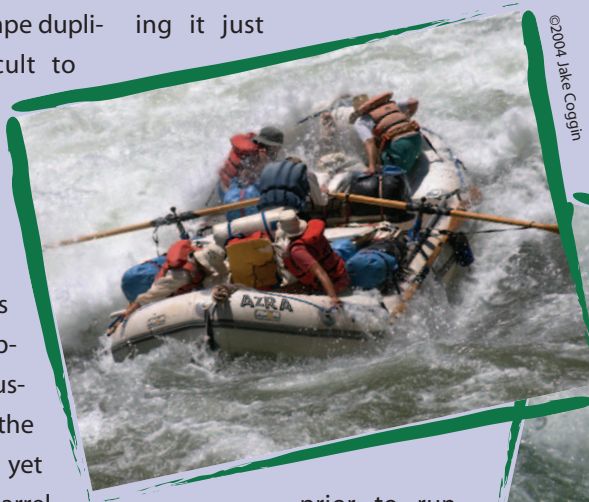
We broke camp at river mile 162 and started the long float to Lava. The TL's talk this morning was brief and to the point, there being little left to say following days of talk about 'the big one'.

As always this stretch of canyon, with its vast lava fields, columnar basalt cliffs, and immense scenery, always excites me. Visually it is outstanding, a landscape duplicated nowhere else, and difficult to digest and comprehend when in the midst of it. Though life has come to it, on the whole the landscape does not lend itself to thoughts of floral proliferation. From the human perspective it is entirely inhospitable and uninhabitable. That other mammals find sustenance here is astonishing, and the same can be said of the flora. And yet there are veritable gardens of barrel and ocotillo cacti, agave and probably hundreds of other, less noticeable plant species above the riparian zone.

The barrel cactus has adapted in unexpected ways, perched on top of lava boulders as black as pitch, even growing from their sides. Moisture here would be among the least anywhere on earth, and no method of water retention is evident. The rock might be given to pockets and fissures that would retain minuscule amounts of rainfall, but it would still be up to the barrel to find a way to entrap these tiny offerings before they evaporate. They do, although the methodology is a complete mystery to me.

All of this musing and observation was just postponing the onset of my Lava dread. By the time we reached Vulcan's Anvil I knew it wouldn't be long, and I tried desperately to think about anything but Lava Falls. Unwanted slow motion images of Crystal keep going through my mind, over and over again. Our run there just a few days prior had been a singularly problematic one, albeit successful in the sense that we

completed it upright and with all hands on board. Still it had not been accomplished without repeated active 'high siding' and fervent, if futile attempts to bail between each of the successive collisions with the left wall of the canyon for the duration of the rapid. It was as close as I have come to swimming Crystal, and reliving it just



prior to running Lava was doing nothing to settle my nerves.

When we finally tied up to scout I decided to go up for a look only because I felt it would enable me to work past Crystal and focus on my unreasonable fear of Lava instead. It worked like a charm. On top of the Lava rock we were able to watch a two boat private trip run. The first boat, with what looked to be a dad and two young girls, had a frenetic but perfectly safe right run, the girls disappearing briefly beneath the V-wave but managing to hang on.

The second boat, with two young men who looked to be in their late teens or early 20's, did not fare so well. The 'spare' draped himself across the bow with paddle in hand. As they found the right tongue he sensed a need for an adjustment and, leaning over the bow, began to paddle fiercely away from the ledge hole. In retrospect this was probably not necessary as the oarsman seemed to have the boat well placed, and in fact the last second paddling may have contributed to their unfortunate experience in the V wave a few seconds later. Once

safely past the ledge hole the paddler began scrambling for handholds, made difficult due to his unwillingness to relinquish his hold on the paddle. The V wave hit their boat with the force of a sledgehammer, washing over them from bow to stern. The poor fellow with the paddle was instantly afloat. The oarsman stayed in the boat a split second longer, but then joined his friend in a swim through Lava. They bobbed in and out of the waves in close proximity to their boat, which had (miraculously) remained upright throughout and actually had a pretty decent



run. The first of the two boats, plus a commercial trip, were in place to help with rescues, and

all seemed pretty much under control by the time they beached on river right prior to Son of Lava.

No matter how mundane the swim, it is always a bit unnerving to witness one just before attempting the same rapid oneself. Things did not improve with the running of our first 3 boats. We watched Howie, the TL, have a valiant run, no worse an encounter with the V wave than is usual. Dave was next and had a different experience. The dynamics of the V wave fluctuate and are never predictable from one second to the next. Whereas Howie had had a fairly standard encounter, Dave hit a deluge. For an instant his boat, his passengers and he all disappeared completely under the Colorado River. But rubber rafts and inflatable tubes being what they are, the inundation lasted only a second and then the boat and passengers popped up and carried on downstream as they were meant to.

Last to go in the first group was Kat and

her paddlers. The paddle boat had an average run in most respects with a solid hit in the V wave. We were still watching from the lava rock, Alan and Teddy and their passengers, when we saw the wave take out the right middle and right back paddlers. They forgot to duck and as a consequence did a synchronized dive off the side of the boat into the heart of Lava. It wasn't until lunch that we learned the identity of the swimmers and heard their stories. John and Paul had been pushed clear to the bottom of the river and told of bumping into boulders and one another as they were flushed downstream. They were the lunchtime heroes, telling and retelling their story to an insatiable audience.

Meanwhile a one boat private had joined us for the run, just a nice looking blonde young man and his athletic looking wife who clung to the bow of their raft as he rowed. My day of witnessing astonishing events was not over yet.

The young man began to set up for his right run, which I expected to look much like Howie's and Dave's. However he looked to be a little left of their entry, and as I watched I realized he was pushing more left. It entered my mind that I was about to see my first flip in the ledge hole, and I watched in abject horror as the sixteen foot boat drew ever closer to the maw. It was the most helpless feeling, and the agonizing seconds dragged by as he drew closer to a certain flip. There were some last-second adjustments, but they looked calmly routine when I was expecting frenzied back rowing in a last attempt at salvation. There he remained, heading straight toward the right edge of the hole and making no attempt to correct his position long after he must have realized the precariousness of it all.

What happened next came as a complete jaw-dropping surprise. Lava actually seemed to propel them away from the hole, even as they made corrections to stay on line with its corner. When it seemed certain they were going in, the current pushed the nose of the boat downstream and they glided over the right side edge and straight into the frothy

backwash behind the ledge hole. It was full of air bubbles, but the current there was nearly stagnant. As if in the eye of a hurricane they were nearly becalmed while surrounded by mayhem on all sides. It was the quietest pocket of the rapid, and they floated onto it without getting a single drop of water in their boat. They had completely cheated Lava Falls!

My own Lava run was a sublime anticlimax after the dramas of Dave, KatMac and the privates. Teddy set us up perfectly for the right run, and she said later that her elation set in on the tongue, when she knew that she had hit her entry exactly. Now it was up to the mood of Vulcan – would the V wave be flexing when we hit, or would it be looking the other way?

This was my 6th right run if memory serves, and was by far the smoothest. Sweet. We skirted the ledge hole and met the V wave at its mellowest, practically given a free pass. We were met by a weak little wash that wouldn't have frightened a sissy. Bailing was minimal, we barely got wet.

Lunch below Lava was an endless string of story telling, everyone comparing runs, adrenalin levels slowly returning to normal. Then we were back in the boats and I began to renew my acquaintance with the ever-widening canyon that characterizes most of the final days. When Lava Falls is behind me I see more and appreciate the special qualities of the lower canyon. It amazes me that so many river runners dismiss this section as thoughts turn prematurely to the end of the trip and hot showers. I find instead that I want to prolong my last days and soak in these little visited side canyons. There is a different kind of drama here, so far from Marble Canyon or Conquistador Aisle, and with all the major rapids behind us. A serenity settles in, with generous skies and the subtle strains of nature so often muted by the anxious river upstream. The float out invites reflection. It is here that I figuratively open an invitation to return, and humbly accept.

## Calling All River Runners:

YOUR LITERARY AND ARTISTIC CONTRIBUTIONS ARE NEEDED FOR THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

Send us your journal entries, poetry, letters to the editor, humorous stories, photos and original artwork for publication in the next newsletter or on the GCRRA website. Electronic submissions are preferred, and MSWord is preferred for text contributions. We can convert from WordPerfect also. Click on "Contact Us" on the GCRRA website: [www.gcriverrunners.org](http://www.gcriverrunners.org) to submit all materials. Technology challenged? Mail your contributions to our PO Box. If you need more information your question will be routed to the Editor.

Deadline for the Spring issue is March 15, 2006.



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## TEN BEST WAYS TO PREPARE FOR A RAFTING TRIP in the GRANDCANYON

10. One week before the trip, have a yard of sand delivered to your home. Sprinkle liberally in your bed, dresser drawers, on kitchen and bathroom counters. Fill your salt shaker, sugar bowl and cereal boxes with sand and use them as usual. Place garbage can lids of sand in front of your fans and run them continuously at maximum speed.

9. After renting a projection TV, illuminate the walls and ceiling of your bedroom with old Dracula movies, especially the snake, spider, lizard and bat infested scenes.

8. Have your friends form a long line then, systematically pass the entire contents of your home out of the front and into the back door of your house.

7. With an industrial size brush and a bottle of bleach, wash, rinse and sterilize the hubcaps of your

car thirty minutes after sunrise and immediately after sunset every day for eight days.

6. With a large meat tenderizer, practice beating beer cans down to the diameter of a hockey puck.

5. Sit on the hood of your car while riding through the car wash.

4. Line your sandals with sandpaper and spend two hours per day on a stair master.

3. Drape the allotted contents of your brown grocery bag on the bushes and rocks in your backyard. Twice a day practice changing while your neighbors watch.

2. With twenty-seven friends standing in the shallow end of your swimming pool, practice looking nonchalant as you carry on a conversation and pee simultaneously.

1. Crap in your upstairs waste paper basket, then, with your pants still around your ankles, run

downstairs and pee in the tub.

### Other helpful hints:

Keep putting out cans of kippers and oil soaked sardines until someone finally eats them. This will usually take around six to seven days.

Hand out free beer to anyone that can Eskimo roll a kayak and looks as if they will rob your house during your eight-day rafting trip.

Put liberal quantities of 'Gun Slinger' hot sauce on everything you eat. Practice saying 'I Love this stuff' without your eyes tearing and your nose running.

Always answer YES to the question "Do you see any rocks?"

Always answer NO to the question "Does anyone want to go on a Power Hike?"

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## JOIN GCRRA

Yes! I want to become a GCRRA member to help ensure my right to visit and enjoy a Grand Canyon river trip facilitated by a professional river outfitter licensed by the National Park Service.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Options:

One-year :  \$15 individual  \$30 family (# family members \_\_\_\_\_)

Three-year :  \$35 individual  \$50 family (# family members \_\_\_\_\_)

LIFETIME :  \$500 individual/family Corporate memberships are available.

I've participated in a professionally-outfitted Grand Canyon river trip (check all that apply):

full canyon motor  full canyon non-motor (oar/paddle/dory/combo)  partial canyon motor

partial canyon non-motor (oar/paddle/dory/combo)  kayak support  haven't participated yet but want to in the future

Mail this form along with your membership dues to:

Grand Canyon River Runners Association, P.O. Box 1833, Flagstaff, AZ 86002

Make your check payable to: "Grand Canyon River Runners Association." Your donation to GCRRA is tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

### Grand Canyon River Runners Association



preserving public access to the colorado river

[www.gcriverrunners.org](http://www.gcriverrunners.org)

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