

Multi-Day River Trips Information Mostly for Lottery Permit Rivers

Notice: Several dates for permits and lottery seasons and fee amounts may be out of date.

Class I-II Rivers

Green River below Flaming Gorge Dam: Great paddle, no permit needed, with a put-in below the dam. For 7 miles, it's a famous trout river, with lots of fishing rafts, crystal-clear waters, and big trout that ignore flies. There are a few nice campsites along here, though most will be taken by fishing parties. Then comes Red Creek Rapid, a 2+ or 3- rapid, easily portaged, then 13 miles farther, comes Swallow Canyon, with a boat ramp and campground. There are nice campsites after Little Hole (7 miles below dam), but you can camp only in the designated camps, which are all quite nice but getting filled—go to Rec.gov and check "Green River Float-In Camps." You can paddle a few miles farther to the NPS campground at Lodore, but you can't go beyond without a permit for the class 3 or 4 Lodore Canyon trip.

Green River in Utah, Canyonlands –

Labyrinth and Stillwater Canyons Website:

<http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/riverpermits.htm> Phone 435-259-4351, opens 8 to noon

Lottery: No lottery Process: Electronic permit system, recreation.gov - can reserve up to four months in advance. Permits needed year-round, but available on request. No one is turned away.

Comments: Both are class 1. First, starting at Green River, UT, or 20 miles below at Ruby Ranch, comes 50-mile Labyrinth Canyon. Takeout for Labyrinth is Mineral Bottom, reachable by auto. It ends with a harrowing descent down cliff faces, doable in good weather.

Then comes Stillwater Canyon, another 50 miles and another four-to-five-day trip. It ends at the confluence of the Colorado, where you must take a jet-boat shuttle up to Moab. Can do both canyons back-to-back Use Tex's Riverways for a shuttle on the Green River, leave your car in their locked parking lot in Moab. Shuttle fees in 2023 for the entire trip were \$260/person plus \$90 for a canoe. Park Service fees for 2023 are \$36 for permit plus \$25/person (no matter how many days).

Smith River in Montana, Camp Baker to Eden Bridge. Website: <http://stateparks.mt.gov/smith-river/> Phone (406) 454-5840 Lottery Season: You need a permit anytime. Peak season May 15 through July 15, but flow can be very low in July. Lottery Deadline: Feb 15h. Lottery Notification: results online in March - successful applicants will be notified by mail. Cost to enter lottery: \$10 (for 2021) Low season process: NA. Call 406-454-5861 after March 13th for open dates. Comments: Rafts need 250 cfs. Canoes need 150 cfs. Generally a five-day-maximum trip length, unless off peak season. Class II. Can apply online or with paper application. To pick up a cancellation call 406 454-5861. Groovers now needed—no more pit toilets. Bear-secure food storage required. Look up Charlie's Think Wild Shuttle for that and for renting a bear-secure electric fence.

Ruby-Horsethief on the Colorado Website: <https://www.recreation.gov/permits/74466> Class I-II. Canoes only recommended below 1,500 cfs. Below 5000 cfs best for families. Generally an

overnight trip. Permits are only for campsites. If you are flexible about campsites, you can usually get something. Worth taking 3-4 days.

Class II-III Rivers

Six Mile Gap on the North Platte in Wyoming No permit needed, 38 miles, usually 3 days. Class II+, although Douglas Rapid may be class III. Need to check camping regulations after the forest fire. Six-Mile Put-in is a very steep quarter-mile trail. Of Six-Mile Campground's 9 sites, 6 are reservable on Rec.gov. Hot Spring at Saratoga often visited after the trip. High water (over 2,000 cfs on stateline Northgate Gauge) can make this a class 3 run!

Rio Chama in New Mexico. El Vado to Big Eddy, 31 miles - updated for 2023. River Phone 575.758.8851, recorded info 888.882.6188, call Lottery Season: May 1 to Labor Day (lottery for Friday and Saturday launches only) Lottery Deadline: January 31st Lottery Notification: March 1st, win or lose. Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Success rate: Approximately 10%. Process: Now on recreation.gov. Call 575 751-4731 after April 1st for weekdays or cancellation. River is dam-controlled; they turn it on for weekends. Flow not predictable, can drop suddenly. Comments: El Vado launch site privately owned, so pay a low fee. It has good camping. Minimum flow around 300 cfs for canoes. Generally a two- day trip, sometimes 3 days. Class II-III. A permit holder can transfer the permit to another person. Launch Friday or Saturday.

San Juan River in Utah. Sand Island to Mexican Hat to Clay Hills crossing. 84 miles combines both sections. <https://www.recreation.gov/permits/250986> Phone 435-587-1544, 8 AM to noon. Lottery Season: April 15 to July 15th Lottery Deadline: received by January 31st Lottery Notification: Feb. 12th Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Process: Rec.gov application. If you're successful, you must pay per-person fees by March 15th or you will lose your permit, so consider paying for a small number of people out front; can add people later. Low season process: For launches before April 15th, can apply December 1st. For launches after July 15th, can book on March 16th. [This may be outdated.] Comments: Class II except III for three rapids, especially Government Rapid, which can be lined or portaged (difficult to portage! Popular in May and June, may be easy to get permit at other times. Can run lower section, upper, or both. Upper section is generally two to three days, lower section generally four to five days, both is generally 6 to 7 days. Some rafters do this faster. Ask about the maximum number of days allowed, perhaps 7 days on the lower section. 500 cfs is reportedly minimum to run rafts [Eric H says more like 700], which could be an issue in August or September. Canoes and kayaks can probably run it year-round. Can designate alternate trip leaders in case the permit holder cannot go on the trip. Consider applying for a tribal permit to hike on reservation, which is river left. Must reserve campgrounds below Government rapid.

Deso-Gray on the Green River Website: <https://www.recreation.gov/permits/233393> Phone 435 636-3600 Lottery Season: May 1 to Sept. 30th - recreation.gov Lottery Deadline: Jan 31 Lottery notification: February 15. Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Success rate: NA, but curiously, July 4 and 24 are often available. August not popular due to heat and bugs, more and more folks going for September's better weather. In May/early June, mosquitos at put-in can be terrible! Non-Lottery season: Apply online starting Dec. 1.. Comments: If you get a launch date, you must accept (pay) by March 15th. Unclaimed launches are available first- come first-serve starting March 16. Cancellations can appear online at any time. The season is mid-March to late November, with water

reliably adequate during that period. High use season is approximately May 15-August 14. Ice dams a problem in March. Generally five to seven days on the river. Generally rated Class II-III, but perhaps IV in high water. You need a tribal permit to camp or hike on Ute lands. Can filter water from creek half way.

Yampa River in Dinosaur National Park. Website: <https://www.nps.gov/dino/planyourvisit/boating-and-rafting.htm> Phone: 970 374-2468 Lottery Season: May 8 to July 8 (for 2023). Lottery Deadline: January 31st. Lottery Notification: February 28th Cost to enter lottery: \$15. If don't win the lottery, can apply the \$15 to non-lottery permit. Non-lottery process: Call March 1st or later. Best time to call for questions 11:30 to noon. You may be able to pick up these dates via recreation.gov starting 8 AM March 1st. Comments: You can put in for the Yampa or Lodore, but not both. Minimum flows 1000 cfs for rafts. Jill Stecker ran canoes at 350-500 cfs, Judy at BLM spoke to one party of canoes that ran at 400 cfs. In 2007, the flow was below 500 cfs by July 4th, below 300 cfs by July 11th. This is big class 3 water in May and June—experts only. Water drops in July, with average streamflow 500 cfs at end of July, as in 2009. 30% cancellation rate for lottery permits. Usually a 5-day trip, but you can pay extra to get 6 days. Note that with the low success rate, the \$15 application fee does not seem like a great investment, but you have to pay the \$15 so you can call in March 1st and get an open date. Class II-III, although Warm Springs rapid can be IV at high water, can be portaged.

Lodore Canyon of the Green River in Dinosaur Nat. Park Website: <https://www.nps.gov/dino/planyourvisit/boating-and-rafting.htm> Phone: 970 374-2468 Lottery Season: May 8 to September 8. Lottery Deadline: January 31st - now online Lottery Notification: February 16th. Cost to enter lottery: \$15. If don't win the lottery, can apply the \$15 to non-lottery permit. Non-lottery process: Call March 1st or later. Best time to call for questions 11:30 to noon. You may be able to pick up these dates via recreation.gov starting 8 AM March 1st. Comments: Can only apply for a Yampa permit or a Lodore permit, not both. Usually 4 days, but you can pay extra to get 5 days. Class III, however Hells Half Mile may be Class IV at higher water levels.

Class IV Rivers

Westwater on the Colorado River in Utah Website: <https://www.recreation.gov/permits/621744>. also <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/passes-and-permits/lotteries/utah/westwatercanyon> Phone 435-259-7012, 8 AM to noon. Lottery Season: NA Process: Online. Available two months prior to launch. Permits needed year-round. Comments: 17 miles: the middle 4-5 miles is the big rapids. Usually done as a two-day trip, but it can be done in one day. Class IV. Reportedly more difficult/dangerous above 13,000 cfs. Can list alternate trip leader on application. Be careful here!

Middle Fork of the Salmon in Idaho: put in at Boundary Creek. updated for 2017 Website: Apply Rec.gov under "four rivers permits." Phone: (208) 879-4101 or 1-877-550-6777 Lottery Season 2023: June 20 - September 7 Lottery Deadline: Jan 31st Lottery Notification: early Feb (check on line) Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Low season process: Log in anytime after October 1st. Comments: Apply on line for lottery, cancellation, or low season on recreation.gov. A tough permit to get in peak season. If you get a permit, you must pay by March 15th. 850 cfs? A two on the Middle Fork gauge is minimum for rafts. Some parties fly in downstream if water is low. Reported that kayaks

and canoes can run in September most or almost all years. Rafters take 4 to 6 days. Class IV at higher water (4 or higher on the gauge), perhaps III+ at lower water. When we ran the Middle Fork in September, 1.7 feet on the gauge, the upper section was tough due to low water, and the trip was hard on gear. As water gets lower, rafters fly their gear to river at Indian Creek.

Main Fork of Salmon Put in at Corn Creek. updated for 2017 Website:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/recreation/4rivers/> , click on passes and permits Phone: (208) 865-2700 or 1-877-550-6777 Lottery Season: June 20 - September 7 Lottery Deadline: Jan 31st. Lottery Notification: early Feb (check on line) Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Success rate: July 1st - 3%. July 15 - 2%, Aug. 1, 3%, Aug 15, 8%, Sept. 1, 30%% (Based on 2013 season). 2016 statistics were not broken down by date, but the overall success rate was 3.8% Low season process: Log in anytime after October 1st. Low season permits unlimited. Comments: Apply online for lottery, cancellation, or low season at recreation.gov. One source says, "The river is never too low for boating." If you get a permit in the lottery, must pay by March 15th. Wilderness River Outfitters runs guided canoe trips in late August. A pool-drop river. Shuttle 400 miles one way, around \$300 per vehicle plus gas. Trip length for rafters is usually 5 to 6 days, maximum trip length 8 days. Class III-IV, harder with higher water..

Selway and Hells Canyon are on the same 4Rivers permit system as the Salmon. You can put in one application for each river. The Selway is class IV, lottery season May 15-July 31. The Selway may be the hardest permit to get, one launch per day. Hells Canyon lottery season late May to Sept. 10, class IV rapids, perhaps easier than Selway.

Salt River In Arizona. Upper Salt river, Highway 60 to 288. Phone (928) 402-6200 or FAX 928 402-6236 Lottery Season: March 1 to May 15 Lottery Deadline: January 31st Cost to enter lottery: \$10 - apply online at Rec/gov. After May 15, non-lottery process: No permits required, but usually no water. Watch for rattlesnakes. Process: Unsuccessful applicants can go to <http://cancellations.saltriverpermits.com> to look for available dates. Anyone can check a box expressing their desire for that date. After 48 hours, a random drawing will be held between those who expressed interest in that date. Notification by email. Comments: Will need Apache tribal permit, available 2022 at Walmart in Show-Low. Water level unpredictable, some years have low water, 2000-3000 cfs preferred. Minimum for (that would be class 4!) 300 cfs [that's very low—more like 500 cfs] for rafts 1200 cfs. Class III-IV. [From Eric H after kayaking it: avoid below 600. Usually too low after April.] The Upper Salt River is 52 miles, usually 4 days. Max group size 15 people. Ranger Don Sullivan canoes, thinks that the river gets harder as it gets lower, sharp rocks, call him at 928 595-1647 for specific low water advice. Cancellations go up as river goes down; look 3 weeks before you want to go, as that is when money is due. Some permits available 10 days before, first come first serve.

Another Note: Salt River, Arizona

Tonto National Forest Upper Salt River boater permit is required to float the Salt River Canyon Wilderness from March 1st to May 15th annually. You also need an Apache tribal permit, which we bought in Show-Low's Walmart. Typically boaters launch on river right from First Campground on Apache Road 1 just down from where the Highway 60 Bridge crosses the

Upper Salt River south of Show-Low. The take-out for the permitted wilderness section is just downstream of the Highway 288 Bridge on river left, 52.3 miles downstream from First Campground. Most people with boater permits plan a four-or-five-day river trip, although the permit does not limit your length of stay. Group size is limited to 15 people. From Eric Hermann: We did this in mid-April, 2022, and found it gorgeous and demanding (class 3, with a bit of 4). Saguaros galore in Sonoran Desert. Very wild! Best is late February to first week of May, when flow is pretty well gone. About 650 cfs when we ran. I easily portaged two spots. Good ducky run. Two of us were packrafters!

Rogue River in Oregon. Grave Creek to Foster Bar - updated for 2017 Website:

<http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/rogue/permit.php> Phone 541-479-3735 - Smullin Visitor Center Lottery Season: May 15 to October 15 Lottery [now Rec.gov] Deadline: January 31st Lottery Notification: approx February 15th. Cost to enter lottery: \$6 Process: Now on Recreation.gov. Can call April 1st for available permits in the "Open Pool". Can pick up unused permits from the Common Pool 10 days in advance. Permit limit based on the number of users rather than number of parties. Can call 541-479-3735 at 7 am Pacific time for cancellations. Early April is a good opportunity to call for a permit. Note that since the limit is the number of users, if a group reduces the number of people, that creates a vacancy that they then can give away, esp. to a small group. No-show permits may be available on the day of launch, especially if your party is small. Rules are complex, study them. Waterway Access Permits required. Comments: 34 miles, Grave Creek to Foster Bar, Class III-IV, Rainie Falls is class IV+ to V, can be portaged, four days typical, milage can be extended with class I-II sections. July-Oct streamflows typically around 2000 cfs, flows below 1200 cfs considered low. 1250 miles Loveland CO to Grants Pass Oregon. Can list alternate leader, if alternate does not also apply for permit. RAF Page of 5 6 December 3, 2020.

Cataract Canyon in Utah through Canyonlands Website:

<http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/riverpermits.htm> Phone 435-259-4351, opens 8 to 12:30 Lottery: No lottery Process: Electronic permit system, recreation.gov - can reserve up to four months in advance. Permits needed year-round, but available on request. No one is turned away. Cataract is generally three to seven days, class III-IV or V; the rapids are reportedly on the same scale as the Grand Canyon, and become difficult above 30,000 or 40,000 cfs. Note that to determine the cfs through Cataract you need to add the Green River and Colorado river flows, as there is no stream gauge in Cataract canyon. A common takeout is near the Dirty Devil River. Takeouts can be muddy. Ask about possible take-out locations relative to the current lake level. Road Runners Shuttle and Coyote Shuttle offer shuttles for Cataract, may not be cheap.

General notes and disclaimers I review the available information each year, and attempt to identify the changes for that year, if any, and update this sheet. However, errors may exist in this sheet; please bring any errors to my attention. This summary is not a substitute for a careful reading of the permit rules, or careful research on each individual river. A phone call to the river office ranger before you file the permit may ensure that you understand the permit rules, as well as helping you assess the advantages and disadvantages of the dates you are considering. I find discussions with

the river rangers during non-rush times to be very helpful. I recommend that you say that your trip is a private trip, even if you do plan to offer it to club members. Richard Ferguson 970 482-5336