

**Multi-Day River Trips Information for 2021 Season**  
Mostly for Lottery Permit Rivers

**Class I-II Rivers**

**Green River in Utah through Canyonlands - Stillwater Canyon**

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](http://recreation.gov) - can reserve up to four months in advance.

Permits needed year round, but available on request. No one is turned away.

Comments: Stillwater and Labyrinth Canyons are generally four to five day trips, Class I. Can do both back to back. I recommend Tex's Riverways for a shuttle on the Green River, leave your car in their locked parking lot in Moab. If you float Stillwater Canyon, the take out will be by jet boat, going up the Colorado.

**Green River in Utah - Labyrinth Canyon**

Website: <https://www.blm.gov/documents/utah/public-room/permits/labyrinth-canyon-trip-permit>

Lottery: No Lottery

Process: Apply on line, fill out form, email to Moab BLM.

Comments: You can arrange your own shuttle, but I recommend Tex's Riverways. There are multiple put ins, including Green River State Park, Crystal Geysers, and Ruby Ranch; the ranch and the park have fees. Generally 4 to 5 days, maybe 4 days if you use Ruby Ranch; the first day is not very scenic, unless you put in at Ruby Ranch. 64 miles from Crystal Geysers, 45 miles from Ruby Ranch. The takeout is Mineral Bottom, which is the put in for Stillwater Canyon.

**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

Lottery Deadline: Feb 16th.

Lottery Notification: results on line in March - successful applicants will be notified by mail

Cost to enter lottery: \$10

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, barely. The biggest challenge at low water is dodging rocks. Can apply on line or with paper application. To pick up a cancellation call 406 454-5861. No groover needed due to pit toilets. Secure food storage required.

**Ruby-Horsethief** on the Colorado

Website: <https://www.recreation.gov/permits/74466>

Permits available 60 days in advance. Class I-II. Canoes only recommended below 10000 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.

## 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 if it can be done after the fires. Hot Spring at Saratoga often visited after the trip.

### **Rio Chama** in New Mexico. El Vado to Big Eddy, 31 miles - updated for 2017

Website: <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/permits-and-passes/lotteries-and-permit-systems/new-mexico/rio-chama-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](http://recreation.gov). Call 575 751-4731 after April 1st for weekdays or cancellation.

River controlled, may turn it on for weekends. Flow not predictable, can drop suddenly.

Comments: El Vado launch site privately owned, fee. 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 for 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: Electronic application. 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.

Comments: Class II except for Government rapid, which can be lined or portaged. 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, 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. 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, better weather.

Non-Lottery season: Apply on line starting Dec. 1

Process: On line.

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 on line 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. The tribe may not permit you to camp or hike on Ute lands, which is a change from the past.

### **Yampa River** in Dinosaur National Park.

Website: <https://www.nps.gov/dino/planyourvisit/boating-and-rafting.htm>

Phone: 970 374-2468

Lottery Season: May 11 to July 11.

Lottery Deadline: January 31st

Lottery Notification: February 28th

Cost to enter lottery: \$15. If don't win the lottery, may 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](https://www.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. Average streamflow is 500 cfs at end of July, as in 2009. Generally hard to get permits unless you go late season and risk cancellation due to low water. 30% cancellation rate for lottery permits. Usually a 5 day trip, but 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 may 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.

### River: **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 11 to September 11.

Lottery Deadline: January 31st - now on line

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](https://www.recreation.gov) starting 8 AM March 1st.

Comments: Can only put in for Yampa or Lodore, not both. Usually 4 days, but 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: On line. Available two months prior to launch. Permits needed year round.

Comments: 17 miles. Usually done as a two day trip, but can be done in one day. Class IV, perhaps lower at lower flows. Reportedly more difficult/dangerous above 13,000 cfs. Can list alternate trip leader on application.

### Middle Fork of Salmon River in Idaho, put in at Boundary Creek. updated for 2017

Website: [http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/scnf/passes-permits/recreation/?cid=fsbdev3\\_029568](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/scnf/passes-permits/recreation/?cid=fsbdev3_029568)

Phone: ( 208) 879-4101 or 1-877-550-6777

Lottery Season: May 28 - September 3

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 get a permit, must pay by March 15th. 850 cfs? minimum for rafts at Middle Fork Lodge gauge. 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, perhaps III+ at lower water. 4 feet or more is big water. When we ran the Middle Fork in September, 1.7 feet, the upper section was tough due to low water, and the trip was hard on gear.

### River: 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 on line for lottery, cancellation, or low season at recreation.gov. One source says "The river is never too low for boating". If 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 permit system as the Salmon. You can put in one application for each river. The Selway is class IV-V, 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.

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/recreation/rec-permits-srpermits.shtml>, then click on "Special Places," and then "Salt River Canyon Wilderness."

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 on line

Success rate:NA

Non-lottery process: No permits required, but usually no water. Watch for rattlesnakes in summer.

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 tribal permit. Water level unpredictable, some years have low water, 2000-3000 cfs preferred. Minimum for canoes 300 cfs, for rafts 1200 cfs. Class III-IV. 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. February and March generally best months to run.

**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 Deadline: January 31st

Lottery Notification: approx February 15th.

Cost to enter lottery: \$6

Process: Now on Recreation.gov. Can call April 1st at 8 am 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, or run the fish ladder, Class III. 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.

## **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](http://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

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