

## River Permit Process and Analysis - 2014 Season

### Arizona

River: **Salt River**, Arizona, upper Salt. Highway 60 to highway 288. No change for 2014.

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto/recreation/rec-permits-srpermits.shtml>, then click on "Passes and Permits"

Phone (928) 402-6200 or FAX 928 402-6236

Lottery Season: March 1 to May 15

Lottery Deadline: **January 15th**

Lottery Notification: by 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.

### Colorado

River: **Yampa** in Dinosaur National Park - electronic application in 2014

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/dino/planyourvisit/permits.htm>

Phone: 970 374-2468

Lottery Season: May 12 to July 12.

Lottery Deadline: January 31st - now apply on line

Lottery Notification: by end of February

Cost to enter lottery: \$15. If don't win the lottery, can apply the \$15 to non-lottery permit.

Success rate: 5/15, 5%. 6/1, 5%. 6/15, 4%. 7/1, 6%. Based on 2012 statistics

Non-lottery process: Call March 1st or later if you put in for the lottery. **Call March 7th or later if you did not put in for the lottery (call and check)**. Best time to call 11:30 to noon? If you call 866-825-2995 after the end of February, you get a recording listing available launch dates. There is also a calendar on the web showing available dates.

<http://www.freeyampa.org/dates/>

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. 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 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 - updated for 2014

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/archive/dino/planyourvisit/privateriverrafting.htm>

Phone: 970 374-2468

Lottery Season: May 13 to September 13.

Lottery Deadline: January 31st - now on line

Lottery Notification: by end of February

Cost to enter lottery: \$15. If don't win the lottery, can apply the \$15 to non-lottery permit.

Success rate: 5/15, 5%. 6/1, 5%. 6/15, 4%. 7/1, 6%. 7/15, 9%. 8/1, 11%. 8/15, 16%, 9/1, 19%, 9/10, 34%, based on 2012 statistics.

Non-lottery process: Call March 1st or later if you put in for the lottery. Call March 7th or later if you did not put in for the lottery (per Kelly). Best time to call for questions 11:30 to noon. If you call 866-825-2995 after the end of February, you get a recording listing available launch dates. There is also a calendar on the web showing available dates.

<http://www.freeyampa.org/dates/>

Comments: Can only put in for Yampa or Lodore, not both. Usually 4 days, but can pay extra to get 5 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 III, however Hells Half mile may be Class IV at higher water levels.

**Ruby-Horsethief** - New rules required camping permits in 2012 on this stretch of the Colorado River. (info updated for 2014 based on phone interview) Call 60 days before you plan to go. (970 244-3050.) Call from 8 to noon. Permits are \$20 for 1 to 5 people, \$50 for 6-14 people, \$100 for 15-25 people. This is a camping fee, on a per night basis; if you plan to paddle it in one day, no permit is required. It should be easy to get a permit Sunday to Thursday; Saturday night permits are in the highest demand. However, if you are not picky about which campsite, you can get a permit most weekends, even a few days before. Class I-II, 25 miles, Loma to Westwater. Easiest below 5000 cfs, challenging for canoes above 10,000 cfs. Off-season, October to May self-register at the Loma boat ramp, no fees. [http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/nca/mcnca/boating/permit\\_information.html](http://www.blm.gov/co/st/en/nca/mcnca/boating/permit_information.html) There is an on-line calendar showing campsite availability.

## Idaho

River: **Middle Fork of Salmon**, put in at Boundary Creek. updated for 2013

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/recreation/4rivers/>

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

Success rate: June 1, 22%, June 15, 2%, July 1, 1.3%, July 15, 1.3%, August 1, 4.5%, August 15th, 16%, Sept 1, 43%, based on 2013 statistics.

Low season process: Log in anytime after October 1st.

Comments: Apply on line for lottery or low season. 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.

River: **Main Fork of Salmon** Put in at Corn Creek. updated for 2013

Website: <http://www.fs.fed.us/r4/sc/recreation/4rivers/>

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).

Low season process: Log in anytime after October 1st. Low season permits unlimited.

Comments: Apply on line for lottery or low season. One source says "The river is never too low for boating". 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, van could be cheaper if figure in gas. Trip length for rafters is usually 5 to 6 days, maximum trip length 8 days. Class III-IV, harder with higher water.

## Montana

River: **Smith** in Montana, Camp Baker to Eden Bridge. 2014 info not posted when I checked

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 15th

Lottery Notification: results on line Feb 25 - successful applicants will be notified by mail

Cost to enter lottery: \$10

Success rate: 5/1, 40%, 5/15, 21%. 6/1, 14%, 6/15, 6%, 7/1, 10%. 7/15, 100%, based on 2009 season

Low season process: NA. Call 406-454-5861 after March 20th for open dates or cancellations.

Comments: Rafts need 250 cfs. Canoes need 150 cfs. Fewer people apply for Sunday launch dates. Generally a five day maximum trip length, unless off peak season. Class II.

## **New Mexico**

River: **Rio Chama**, El Vado to Big Eddy, 31 miles - no change for 2012 per Pat at BLM

Website: [http://www.nm.blm.gov/recreation/taos/rio\\_chama\\_wild\\_scenic\\_river.htm](http://www.nm.blm.gov/recreation/taos/rio_chama_wild_scenic_river.htm)

Phone 575.758.8851, recorded info 888.882.6188, call

Lottery Season: May 1 to Labor Day (lottery for weekends only)

Lottery Deadline: January 31st

Lottery Notification: NA

Cost to enter lottery: \$6

Success rate: NA

Process: Call after April 1st for weekdays or cancellation. River controlled, may turn it on for weekends. Call 575 751-4731 to get a postcard to apply for a launch via the lottery.

Comments: El Vado launch site privately owned, fee. Minimum flow around 100 cfs. Generally a two day trip, sometimes 3 days. Class III. A permit holder can transfer the permit to another person.

## **Oregon**

River: **Rogue River**, Grave Creek to Foster Bar - updated for 2013

Website: <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/rogue/permit.php>

Phone 541-479-3735

Lottery Season: May 15 to October 15

Lottery Deadline: January 31st

Lottery Notification: approx March 1st.

Cost to enter lottery: \$6

Success rate: Success rate in May 55%, June 20%, July 9%, August 10%, September 34%, October 100%, based on 2013 statistics.

Process: 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. No show permits may be available on the day of launch, especially if your party is small.

Comments: 34 miles, Class III-IV, 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.

## Utah

River: **Deso-Gray** on the Green - Updated for 2014, spoke to Amy 12/29/13

Website: <http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/price/recreation/riverinf.html>

Phone 435 636-0975

Lottery Season: May 1 to Sept. 30th

Lottery Deadline: Jan 31

Lottery Notification: mid-Feb

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 beginning 2013, similar to that on the Main Salmon.

Comments: Season is mid-March to late November, with water reliably adequate during that period. High use season 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.

River: **San Juan**, Sand Island to Mexican Hat to Clay Hills crossing. 84 miles for both sections.

Updated for 2014

Website: [http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello/recreation/permits/san\\_juan\\_river.html](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/monticello/recreation/permits/san_juan_river.html)

Phone 435-587-1544, 8 AM to noon.

Lottery Season: April 1 to October 31st

Lottery Deadline: received by January 31st

Lottery Notification: March 1st

Cost to enter lottery: \$6

Success rate:NA

Process: Call after March 1st for open dates or cancellation, but must have application on file.

Comments: Popular in May and June, may be easy to get permit at other times. Off season permit dates can be requested starting Jan. 1. 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.

River: **Westwater on the Colorado River** - updated for 2013.

Website: [http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/moab/recreation/River\\_Recreation/westwater\\_canyon.html](http://www.blm.gov/ut/st/en/fo/moab/recreation/River_Recreation/westwater_canyon.html)

Phone 435-259-7012, 8 AM to noon.

Lottery Season: NA

Lottery Deadline: NA

Lottery Notification: NA

Cost to enter lottery: NA

Success rate: NA

Process: Call two months prior to launch. Permits needed year round. An on line calendar shows available launch dates.

Comments: 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.

River: **Colorado River and Green River - Canyonlands** - updated for 2013

Labyrinth, Stillwater, and Cataract Canyons

Website: <http://www.nps.gov/cany/planyourvisit/reservations.htm>

Phone 435-259-4351, opens 8 to 12:30

Lottery: No lottery

Process: Permits needed year round, but available on request. Mail or Fax at least two weeks early. No one is turned away.

Comments: Stillwater and Labyrinth Canyons are generally four to five day trips, Class I. I recommend Tex's Riverways for a shuttle, leave your car in their locked parking lot in Moab. 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. Cataract canyon ends in Lake Powell; rafts sometimes bring motors to reach the take out at Hite or Dirty Devil, especially if Powell is high. Ask about possible take out locations relative to the current lake level.

## **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.

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