



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

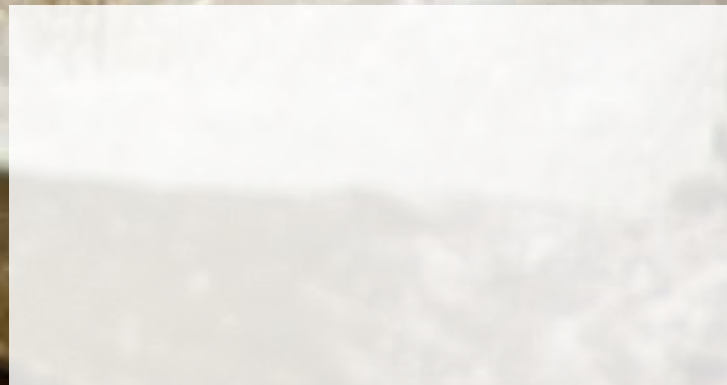
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May/June 2019

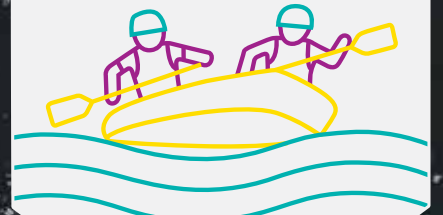
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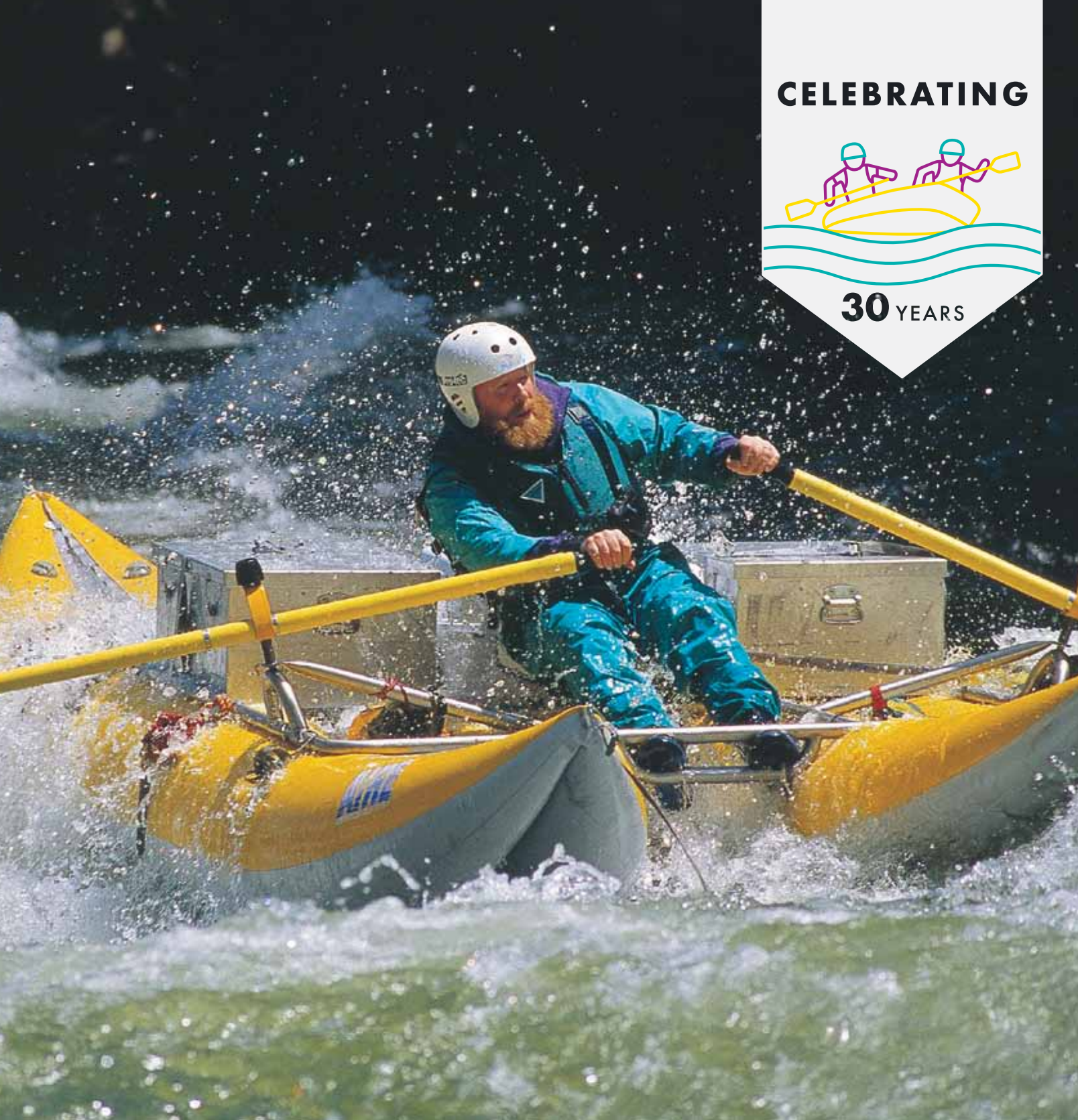
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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American Whitewater Journal May/June 2019 – Volume 59 – Issue 3

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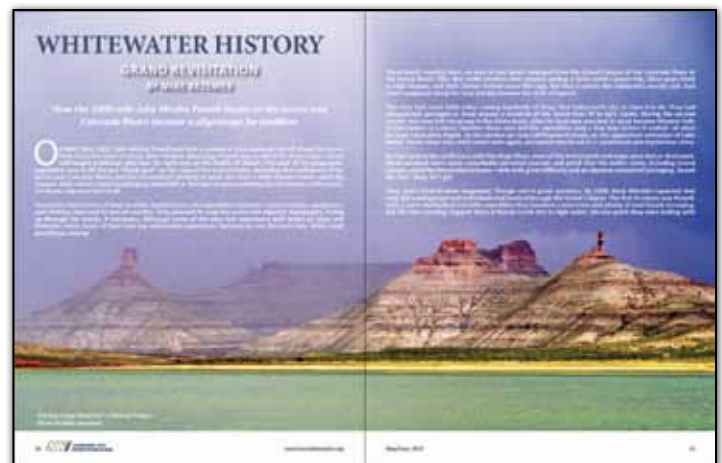
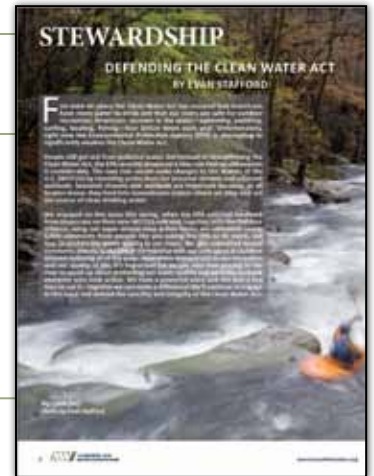
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American Whitewater is working to ensure that potential changes to the beloved Russell Fork River (KY/VA) release schedule enhance instead of diminish recreation opportunities on this whitewater classic. Here, Jamie O'Donnell keeps her eyes on the prize during the annual Lord of the Fork Race.
Photo by Sarah Ruhlen

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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Our mission: "To conserve and restore America's whitewater rivers and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely," is actively pursued through our conservation, access, safety and education efforts under the umbrella of River Stewardship. The only national organization representing the interest of all whitewater paddlers, American Whitewater is the national voice for thousands of individual whitewater enthusiasts, as well as over 100 local paddling club affiliates.

AW's River Stewardship program adheres to the four tenets of our mission statement:

CONSERVATION: AW's professional staff works closely with volunteers and partner organizations to protect the ecological and scenic values of all whitewater rivers. These goals are accomplished through direct participation in public decision-making

processes, grassroots advocacy, coalition building, empowerment of volunteers, public outreach and education, and, when necessary, legal action.

RIVER ACCESS: To assure public access to whitewater rivers pursuant to the guidelines published in its official Access Policy, AW arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on all rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, encourages equitable and responsible management of whitewater rivers on public lands, and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

SAFETY: AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally-recognized American Whitewater Safety Code.

EDUCATION: AW shares information with the general public and the paddling community regarding

whitewater rivers, as well as river recreation, conservation, access, and safety. This is accomplished through our bi-monthly AW Journal, a monthly e-news, americanwhitewater.org, paddling events, educational events, and through direct communication with the press.

Together, AW staff, members, volunteers, and affiliate clubs can achieve our goals of conserving, protecting and restoring America's whitewater resources and enhancing opportunities to safely enjoy these wonderful rivers.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 1540, Cullowhee, NC 28723; phone 1-866-BOAT-4-AW (1-866-262-8429). AW is tax exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service.



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Founded in 1954, American Whitewater is a national non-profit organization (Non-profit # 23-7083760) with a mission "to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely." American Whitewater is a membership organization representing a broad diversity of individual whitewater enthusiasts, river conservationists, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates across America. The organization is the primary advocate for the preservation and protection of whitewater rivers throughout the United States, and connects the interests of human-powered recreational river users with ecological and science-based data to achieve the goals within its mission. All rights to information contained in this publication are reserved.

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The opinions expressed in the features and editorials of American Whitewater are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of American Whitewater or the editors of this publication. On occasion, American Whitewater publishes official organizational policy statements drafted and approved by the Board of Directors. These policy statements will be clearly identified.

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

RECENTLY RETURNED FROM a whirlwind trip to Colorado where I was visiting with regional staff, meeting with program funders, and reaching out to major donors and members. It's no surprise, but water in the arid west, and specifically Colorado, is a big deal. Growth in the state's population, especially on the east slope of the Rockies, is outstripping water supply. This dynamic creates a situation in which each type of water user is looking to stick their straw into the finite water resources (mostly the Colorado River, which drains the east side of the mountains).

Water in Colorado—and flows in its rivers—feeds a number of interest groups; agriculture, ranching, mining, municipalities, and the recreation-based economy are all dependent on water. Balancing these various interests and their needs is a dynamic challenge that requires complex negotiations and processes. Data helps; knowing what the optimal flows are to support our interests (paddling and recreation) is a critical bit of information. A breakthrough came when our staff started using the flow study process developed for hydropower relicensing as a method for identifying preferred flow and usable days on Colorado rivers. The flow study model provided good data for identifying optimal flows for recreation.

Equipped with this methodology, the Colorado boating community has made a huge impact in preserving and protecting flows for the future. Our interests are well represented and organized in a thoughtful way. Our regional stewardship program is strong and making significant contributions to a focused, science-based approach to how water is allocated. Other western states are following Colorado's lead in water allocation, so this approach has value beyond state borders.

With water and the allocation process as a backdrop for my recent travels, I am pleased to announce that Hattie Johnson has been selected as our new Southern Rockies Stewardship Director. Hattie is no

newcomer to rivers in the state. She spent the last six years working as a Landscape Architect for River Restoration (a planning firm that enhances the social, economic, and environmental values of rivers). Hattie also represented private boater interests in the Upper Colorado Wild and Scenic Alternative Management process through the Upper Colorado Private Boaters Association. Seven years ago, she started a river clean-up on Clear Creek, initially supported by the local guiding community, and now integrated into a citywide clean-up day and river season kick-off celebration. Also, those who have spent any time at Gore Fest, will know Hattie as our Gore Fest Event Coordinator. Hattie replaces Nathan Fey, who is now the Acting Director at the Colorado Office of Outdoor Recreation.

Please join me in welcoming Hattie to a very capable team in Colorado that includes American Whitewater Board Member, April Montgomery, located in Telluride, Colorado Stewardship Assistant, Kestrel Kunz, located in Crested Butte, and Communication Director, Evan Stafford, located in Fort Collins. It's this type of strong, on-the-ground presence that helps make all our regional stewardship programs successful.

Our Colorado based team works closely with other American Whitewater regional teams in the Pacific Northwest, Far West, Southeast/Mid-Atlantic, and Northeast. This regional approach to our stewardship projects helps to keep the conversation real within local communities. We can then take those local stories and interests to state and national policy makers

Hattie Johnson, AW's new Southern Rockies Stewardship Director.

Photo by Jessica Marsan

and agencies to best represent boaters' interests. This strong local connection to our stewardship projects is making a real impact in protecting rivers and their flows, now and for future generations.

The key to our success is the strong backing of our members; it is only through your support that we can continue to take the long view on river stewardship. As we look to the future, we appreciate the importance of rivers and their role in supporting the health and wellbeing of the paddling community. At American Whitewater, we remain committed to giving back to these special places through our river stewardship program and appreciate your support of this important work.

Take care of wild rivers and they will take care of you,



Mark Singleton
Executive Director, American Whitewater



STEWARDSHIP

DEFENDING THE CLEAN WATER ACT

BY EVAN STAFFORD

FOR OVER 40 years, the Clean Water Act has ensured that Americans have clean water to drink and that our rivers are safe for outdoor recreation. Americans recreate in the water—swimming, paddling, surfing, boating, fishing—four *billion* times each year. Unfortunately, right now the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is attempting to significantly weaken the Clean Water Act.

People still get sick from polluted water, but instead of strengthening the Clean Water Act, the EPA recently proposed a new rule that would weaken it considerably. The new rule would make changes to the Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS) by removing protections for seasonal streams and adjacent wetlands. Seasonal streams and wetlands are important because, as all boaters know, they feed into downstream waters where we play, and are the source of clean drinking water.

We engaged on this issue this spring, when the EPA solicited feedback from Americans on their new WOTUS rule and, together with the Outdoor Alliance, using our super simple easy action forms, we submitted nearly 3,000 comments from people like you asking the EPA to do more, not less, to protect the water quality in our rivers. We also submitted formal comments directly to the EPA in partnership with our colleagues at Outdoor Alliance outlining all of the ways clean water is important to our recreation and our quality of life. It's important for people who love playing in the river to speak up about protecting our water quality and we'd like to thank everyone who took action. We have a powerful voice and this was a key time to use it – together we can make a difference! We'll continue to engage in this issue and defend the sanctity and integrity of the Clean Water Act.

Big Creek (NC)
Photo by Evan Stafford





WELCOME NEW SOUTHERN ROCKIES STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR HATTIE JOHNSON

BY EVAN STAFFORD

WE'RE EXCITED TO announce that Hattie Johnson has accepted the permanent role as our Southern Rockies Stewardship Director. Hattie grew up canoeing, camping, and hiking around the southeast with her family and a close band of friends. Raft guide training on the Ocoee River sparked her love of and connection to rivers, and she hasn't looked back. Guiding rafts took her around the country, eventually landing her in Colorado, the state she calls home to this day. After a few years of guiding on Clear Creek and ski bumming she found a so-called "real" job with River Restoration, a mission-based engineering firm focused on enhancing and revitalizing the social, economic, and environmental value of rivers. Hattie worked as a Landscape Architect with the company for six years, which provided her experience with resource agencies and collaborative stakeholder processes. Hattie has a Bachelor of Landscape Architecture degree from the University of Georgia and is a licensed Professional Landscape Architect in Colorado. Her training as a landscape architect provides an interesting perspective on humans and their connection to the natural and built environments. For the past four years, Hattie worked with American Whitewater as the event coordinator for the annual Gore Canyon Festival. Hattie is based in Carbondale, Colorado and enjoys paddling, backcountry skiing, and biking.

The Southern Rockies have become one of the regions where American Whitewater has had the greatest impact protecting stream flows and whitewater recreation opportunities. The program was built from the ground up and its influence on Colorado's public lands and rivers management has been so significant that our former Stewardship Director, Nathan Fey, became the State's Deputy Director of the Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry. Over the past decade Nathan built a team that was able to cover an incredible amount of ground, engaging on issues across the region and leading efforts to identify the instream flow levels needed for the wide range of river recreation experiences and craft types. Hattie has been an integral part of this team recently, and over the course of her work with rivers in Colorado she has built an understanding of the connection of western communities to their waterways and how that connection encompasses long-standing law and tradition as well as constant evolution. We're confident that Hattie will do an exceptional job leading the team to maintain our thriving and effective program that has reshaped the way rivers are protected and restored in the Southern Rockies.

We've had incredible success restoring flows and recreation opportunities to the Dolores River (CO) and it is looking very promising for the Dolores in 2019!
Photo by Evan Stafford

PADDLING RESTRICTIONS EASED IN POTOMAC RIVER DISPUTE

BY KEVIN COLBURN



THE US COAST Guard has changed its 2017 decision to close a popular section of the Potomac River whenever high-ranking political officials are using the adjacent Trump National Golf Course. The decision to replace the 2017 rule came in response to over 630 public comments, significant media attention, and a lawsuit filed by the Amercian Whitewater affiliate club Canoe Cruisers Association.

The new interim rule is a big step in the right direction. In place of a full river closure when high-ranking politicians are golfing, the new interim rule proposes a 250-yard “transit lane” down the Maryland side of the river during those times, shrinks the length of the closed reach to enhance public access, and provides public notice of the closures. Specifically regarding the closure length, paddlers have been granted a 170-yard path across the Potomac River from Violettes Lock to the opening of the old George Washington Canal. Paddlers can use the transit lane to pass downstream when a closure is in place only with permission from the Coast Guard, though the new interim rule offers no guidance on why permission would be either granted or denied.



Check our website for a simple map we made depicting the transit zone and boundaries of the security zone as we understand them: <https://arcg.is/1rKL0r>

Paddlers are encouraged to file comments on the new interim rule asking that the transit lane be open unless paddlers are asked to leave for good cause, versus closed unless paddlers are given permission.

We'd like to thank the Coast Guard for meaningfully responding to public concerns, the Canoe Cruisers Association for taking this issue to court, and all the paddlers who submitted a comment back in 2017!

Potomac River (VA/MD), where updated rules for river use take effect
Photo by David Fielding

STEWARDSHIP

AMERICAN WHITEWATER GIVES EXPERT TESTIMONY AT SENATE RECREATION HEARING

BY TANIA LOWN-HECHT, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR, OUTDOOR ALLIANCE



Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director Tom O'Keefe on the Hill.
Photo by Caleb Hargett

ON MARCH 14, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee held a hearing on opportunities to improve outdoor recreation on public lands (it was officially titled “Full Committee Hearing to Examine Opportunities to Improve Access, Infrastructure, and Permitting for Outdoor Recreation,” and you can watch the full hearing on the committee’s website). This hearing was held just two days after the President signed a historic public lands package into law, the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act.

Recreation is an increasingly important use for public lands, yet it gets a fraction of the protection and priority that other uses—including extraction—receive. The hearing explored opportunities to improve management of public lands for recreation, updating the permitting system, building better infrastructure and funding for public land, and growing the protection of important places.

Thomas O’Keefe, the Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director at American

Whitewater and a member of Outdoor Alliance’s Joint Policy Shop, was among those invited to testify.

“When we talk about infrastructure for outdoor recreation, clean water, ancient forests, deep canyons, and majestic vistas found across our country, it represent the most fundamental elements for the recreational experience. The conservation of these special places, where the outdoor recreation experience takes place, is critical,” said O’Keefe. “People may begin visiting a community for outdoor recreation, but we really need to think beyond tourism to build communities that have an economic base for workers and their families who value the opportunities for close-to-home recreation.”

One of the biggest infrastructure challenges for public lands is a lack of funding from Congress. “Increasingly we are facing chronic underfunding of resource agencies to develop and maintain basic infrastructure necessary to access our public lands and waterways. Unmaintained trails, roads, and facilities fall into disrepair, diminish user experiences, and create

public safety issues; ultimately the capital expenditures necessary to address the issues and bring facilities back to standard can greatly exceed the cost of what annual routine maintenance would have been, and is fiscally irresponsible. In my work, finding resources to build a river access or recreational facility is challenging, but being able to commit to or have stable, long-term funding to maintain and manage a facility is often an insurmountable obstacle,” said O’Keefe.

Members of the committee, including Committee Chair Sen. Murkowski (R-AK), Ranking Member Sen. Manchin (D-WV), and Sen. Wyden (D-OR) were instrumental in passing the public lands package, and have been champions of outdoor recreation and conservation issues both in their states and across the country. As recreation grows in popularity and as recreation on public lands becomes increasingly important to local economies, there is more to be done to maximize opportunities for sustainable recreation and balance the needs of conservation.

Deerfield Festival Weekend

Come home to the Deerfield River to celebrate 20+ years of whitewater boating with friends. Show your support for American Whitewater's efforts to protect, restore, and enjoy our treasured rivers for the next 40 years.



DEERFIELD FEST

SATURDAY, JUNE 29

Celebrate the Deerfield with American Whitewater's Annual Deerfield Fest at the Charlemont Fairgrounds. The festival site will be bustling with activity including a whitewater marketplace, live entertainment, beer, and a silent auction with awesome outdoor gear. All proceeds from the festival support American Whitewater's conservation and access work throughout the Northeast.

ZOAR OUTDOOR DEMOFEST

FRIDAY, JUNE 28 – SUNDAY, JUNE 30

Free instruction from top paddlers, demos of the hottest whitewater boats on the market and much more – it's the 16th annual Demofest at Zoar Outdoor.
www.zoaroutdoor.com/demofest



www.americanwhitewater.org/deerfieldfest

STYLING THE SELWAY: (NO PERMIT? NO PROBLEM!)

BY POLLY GREIST



Evening campfire at Tango Bar.
Photo by Bill Cross

DON'T YOU JUST hate it when some stranger crashes your superhero dress-up party? Although we were certainly in a public place, we didn't expect intrusions from the "public." You would think staging your party in the middle of one of the West's largest swaths of wilderness would guarantee privacy, right? Not in this case, apparently. And I am not sure who was more horrified, we (dressed up in homemade versions of Wonder Woman, Captain Obvious, Chewbacca and ... hmmm, let's just call him Sperm Boy) or the "public" (three fly fishermen come to enjoy the renowned crystalline waters of the Selway River)? Awkward.

Among river runners, theme nights are a time-honored tradition on many of the great multi-day Western river trips. They allow escape from the confines of the rational lives we lead off river, promoting uninhibited fun and ribald silliness, and building solid bonds of friendship among a group of the most disparate folks.

Or, in the case of our group of five longtime friends, bonds already tight from many years of river running together, our theme nights (and one in particular) reminded us of the basic absurdity and goofiness of our undertaking: a post-permit trip (read: fish flow) on the Selway ... *with rafts*. A "float" trip? More like a drag fest with our anticipated flows, but, boy, were we ever ready to be festive.

The Selway is on most veteran river runners' bucket list; a Class IV gem of stunning beauty and challenging whitewater, its 47 miles cut through the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. But the trick is winning the golden ticket in the permit lottery, slim odds with only one launch a day in its 60-day permit-only season, and over 5,000 boaters applying for those few spots.

After decades of unsuccessful bids, we had, like many, mostly given up on ever boating the Selway, but then our son Greg hatched what at first seemed a harebrained scheme, countering the hopelessness of the

lottery with the idea to go in early August, soon after the permit season ended, when anyone can launch.

Sounds simple? Well, not really, since the permitted season ends when it does because the snowmelt runs out quickly, and early August features very low flows. Most who show up post-permit season take inflatable or hardshell kayaks, and even then need to work hard to make the miles and puzzle through rapids that seem to be all rocks and no water.

We decided to launch on August 5, hoping the initial rush of post-season boaters on August 1 would have cleared out. To add to the challenge, we intended to take small rafts rather than kayaks; son Greg Cross his nine-foot Mini-Max, Denny Debey his 10-foot Sotar ("Lil' Hottie"), Michael Parker a 10.5-foot Hyside Max, and husband Bill Cross biting the bullet with the "barge," a 12-footer with room up front for me, the rider and seer of the shallows, an early warning system pointing out sticky rocks

WILDERNESS RIVERS

lurking everywhere. The group of four inflatable kayakers launching same day looked on in disbelief at our rafts, shook their heads and wished us good luck. The gauge at Lowell (downstream of the take-out) was under 1,000 cfs, and we figured we had less than 300 cfs of rapidly falling flows at the Paradise put-in.

Thumbing our noses at doubt (and common sense), we dubbed ourselves the “Drag Queens,” since we knew we would be shoving, pushing, and dragging our boats a lot, particularly in the first half of the river, before the fabled “Moose Juice” enters halfway down the run, where the major tributary Moose Creek adds a healthy amount of water just before the meaty succession of Class IV rapids. We planned a generous seven days, taking into account the bump-and-grind nature. Just to be silly, we decided to have three theme dress-up nights, every other night: Spaced-Out, Superhero, and the final, and the highly anticipated, Drag Queen night.

Such bravado shoving off, the rush of victory, feeling we had finally achieved our dream of boating this special river! But of course, there is a price to every victory, and in this case, the bumps, stalls, and rock hang-ups which started within seconds reminded us of the task ahead. For better or worse the crystal clear waters revealed in detail all the different ways in which we could get into trouble. Many times it became a matter of “picking your poison,” since all routes led to impossible outcomes.

Since we hadn’t launched until mid afternoon, we decided to stop at one of the first possible camps, just under three miles downriver, a small spit of sand perfect for our group of five. Going with all freeze-dried meals, plus some beef jerky, we saved time, effort and, most importantly, space for our luxury items: beer, ice (for gin and

tonics), Peets coffee pour-overs, chips and guacamole ... and, of course, our dress-up items. We were all on the same page.

Meal prep was streamlined, thanks to the Jetboil and our freeze-dried meals. Dinner was a shared smorgasbord of the tastiest international cuisine: Chili Mac, Pad Thai, Persian Peach Chicken, Apple-Raspberry Crumble. A stunning river in a vast wilderness with the finest group of comrades all pique the appetite: we felt we were eating like kings. We would have mock arguments about whose turn it was to “do the dishes,” the mere act of zipping closed the empty food pouch and tossing it into the garbage.

Lucky we had stopped for the night when we had, since we needed the fresh wits of a new day to tackle the first series of Class III rapids, Galloping Gertie and her cohorts, Washer Woman, Slalom Slide, Cougar Bluff, and Holy Smokes, all piling on top of each other, and each one a challenge. But even before these, our lead boat had a sticky issue in an unnamed rapid, an oar lodged

in a tight little squeeze, jamming us to a sudden stop and filling our (self-bailing) boat to the brim.

As the boat and I quickly went underwater, I looked quizzically at Bill, like, what is happening? He (un)helpfully noted, “We’re sinking!” Never having sunk before in a fully inflated raft, I pondered my options. But Bill quickly puzzled out that a jammed oar was the problem and managed to jump out and maneuver the oar just so, releasing it and quickly jumped back in. In this early part of the river, jumping out of the boat landed you in less than knee deep water, both a blessing and a curse.

At this point, we were scouting anything and everything, including the unnamed rapids, and learning that sometimes the Class II rapids were more of a problem than the Class IIIs. But Galloping Gertie and her friends ate up many hours of scouting, plotting, scheming, unsticking. The capper to the day was Ping Pong Alley, a shallow boulder garden, difficult even in normal flows. We spread out across the broad



“Spaced Out” on dress up theme night at Ping Pong Camp.
Photos by Bill Cross

WILDERNESS RIVERS

channel, each of us thinking we had found the “better” way through. We were each in our own unique version of low water hell and we were all dragging and shoving rather than floating. Curses and bruises all around.

We pulled into Ping Pong Camp directly below that harrowing experience, exhausted but also laughing that after two days on the river we had made only nine miles. Time for a theme night! Spaced Out was the perfect segue into an evening of laughs and one-upmanship, comparing bruised shins and banged-up toes from the recent drag fest. Beautiful views up and down river made us all again so happy and thankful to be on the Selway, whatever it took. And best of all, Ping Pong Camp was around the bend from its hateful

namesake, so no need to remember the sorrows just past.

Intending to make miles our third day in order to preserve the intended layover day at Moose Creek, we enjoyed the bit of extra flow from Bear Creek and other small tributaries. By now, we had become a crack (or cracked) team of quick scouters and intrepid boat bouncers and grinders. Goat Creek, our first Class IV, was a beautiful S-turn among giant boulders and deep pools. Green Eggs (Class III) and Ham (IV) certainly got our attention, but we all had interesting and successful runs, as we eagerly pushed to make it to our layover camp. We pondered the story of the pioneer runs on the Selway in the late 50s, when one of first groups to run this river lost its ham in the so-named rapid, and the next group a week later dove with

fins and snorkel and found it and enjoyed a fine feast. Or perhaps it’s better to ponder: Would YOU eat a ham that had been sitting at the bottom of the river for a week?

We pulled into Tony Point Bridge Camp, a shaded bench above the river and below the Moose Creek Ranger station (and airstrip), wiped out from our nearly 18-mile day floating (and occasionally dragging) our boats through the continuous whitewater. We shared camp with a pregnant rattlesnake (fun to have Michael the Biology Professor along), and again, marveled at our luck to be exactly where we were—on the SELWAY!—toasting ourselves with icy cold beer (ice still holding up) and cheers all around.

This point halfway down the river is a great place for a layover, since Moose Creek

Melodies at Tee Kim Camp.
Photo by Polly Greist



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Greg enjoys 'coffee in bed,' Tango Bar.
Photo by Polly Greist

multiplies the Selway's flow just before the meaty stretch of Class IV rapids. From there it's easy to jump on the river trail and use the layover day to do some scouting and preparation for the challenge ahead. At regular flow, one guidebook opines, if you flip just below Moose Creek (in Double-Drop Rapid), you might as well get up to the trail on river right and start running, since you are unlikely to catch your boat for a long while, as it flies through Wa-Poots, Ladle, and Little Niagra.

After our scout and refreshed from our layover, we dressed up that night in our Superhero costumes with vigor, and "cooked" dinner. Which was when the three fly fishermen emerged from the trail and walked through our camp. For some reason, I felt the need to "explain," and stammered, "We are having a 'theme' night," which did not, in any event, clarify the scene, and probably made it worse.

Oddly, these three, a father and his two college-aged sons, had no idea really where they were. The father (a private pilot) did know that the Selway was a fly-fisherman's dream, but otherwise was fairly clueless.

He asked where we were from (Southern Oregon), but then wondered whether that is where we had put our boats into the river? After fishing for an hour they retreated back up to camp beside their plane, but not before flying it briefly up and out of the wilderness, then back down, so the younger son could get a cell signal to make a phone call. It all made me feel less crazy in my Wonder (Wander) Woman costume. At least I knew where I was, how I got there (lots of hard work), and where I came from (Paradise).

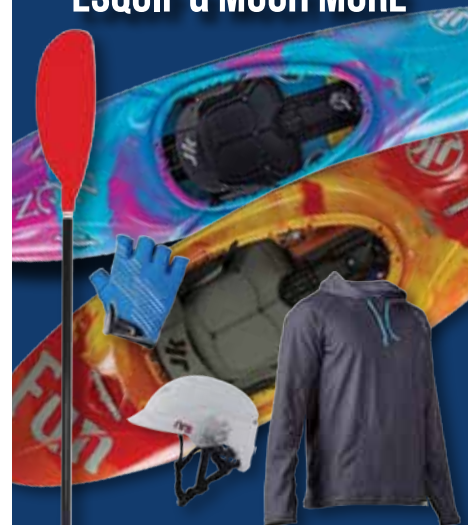
Our shins hardened from our earlier days of dragging, the "big" rapids pretty much passed by quickly and smoothly. Ladle, in particular, was an impressively long puzzle of enormous boulders, with little narrow channels of flow in between. Puzzle Creek was impressively beautiful, its namesake creek tumbling into river left just before a very sharp, steep drop with just enough room on one side to squeak out a clean run.

The highlight of our adventure came when we snagged one of the most desired camps on the Selway, Tango Bar, and doing so by lunch, which gave us all afternoon to enjoy



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WILDERNESS RIVERS



Greg styles the final drop of Wolf Creek Rapid.
Photo by Bill Cross

this special spot. We had brought along the requisite games—Frisbee, cricket, and volleyball—for this massive sand beach, but chose instead to pass the lazy afternoon hours reminding ourselves what “lucky, lucky bastards” we were to be on this river, right now, low flows on not: So incredibly lucky, and we knew it.

Happily renewed from the magic of Tango Bar, we were pumped for Wolf Creek, which many consider the biggest rapid of the run. Definitely a puzzle and challenge, but all four boats had clean runs, which included an unavoidable rock stick just above the tricky final drop. Finally, Jims Creek Rapid (III-IV) was the first and only rapid we lined, since it was hard to see how the falls leading directly into a large boulder could end well for any of us. But then the wonder of our final camp (and Drag Queen dress-up night) awaited us just below, Tee Kim Falls camp.

With an icy creek right there to chill our drinks—our ice now gone—and once again a stunning view up and down river ... plus

Bill, Michael and Denny enjoy early morning coffee at Ping Pong Camp.
Photos by Polly Greist

a good many afternoon hours to enjoy the splendor, we toasted ourselves and the river, and built up the strength to don our drag queen outfits.

Denny, Michael, Greg, and Bill outdid themselves with wigs, lipstick, tight mini-skirts, fishnet stockings, feather boas, and I, as lone female, chose to dress up as their Pimp. I don’t think any of us have ever in our life laughed so hard, sitting there in

those get-ups, so hoping (but not really) that another group would float by...so we could wave and throw kisses. I would love to post a picture, but you will just have to imagine since “what happens on the river, stays on the river.”

Yes, floating the Selway post permit, on no flow, and in rafts: A fool’s game. But oh what fun! The final day with its numerous Class II rapids reminded us to stay on our game, since so many of the “smaller” rapids had as much or more challenge than the Class IVs. My final memory of the Selway is looking back as Michael happily evaded the nasty undercut where all the flow piled in the final, “small” rapid, still wearing his flouncy pink hat from the night before, and a giant grin on his face. Look at us! We are on the Selway! How lucky!

So next February when you receive your latest rejection letter from the Selway lottery, pffle! Just grab your small boats and especially your sense of humor and adventure and experience the wonder of this river—one of the original Wild and Scenic Rivers for good reason. Even late season, low flows, this is one river you need to see.

Just don’t forget your lipstick!



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WHITEWATER HISTORY

GRAND REVISITATION

BY MIKE BEZEMEK

How the 1000-mile John Wesley Powell Route on the Green and Colorado Rivers became a pilgrimage for paddlers

ON MAY 24TH, 1869, John Wesley Powell and nine crewmen in four rowboats set off down the Green River from the town of Green River Station, Wyoming. Powell was a retired US Army major turned self-taught professor who lost his right arm at the Battle of Shiloh. The goal of his geographic expedition was to fill the last “blank spot” on the map of the United States, including the confluence of the Green and Colorado Rivers and the inconsistent plotting of what was then a little-known chasm called Big Canyon. Wild rumors reported plunging waterfalls or the river simply vanishing into the bowels of the earth. You know, big time hero stuff.

Secured in the hatches of their wooden-keeled boats, the expedition members carried rations, equipment, and clothing expected to last 10 months. They planned to map the route and adjacent topography, holing up through the winter, if necessary. Although some of the men had experience with boats on lakes and flatwater rivers, none of them had any whitewater experience, because no one did back then. What could possibly go wrong?



Flaming Gorge Reservoir's Chimney Towers
Photo by Mike Bezemek

Three hectic months later, six men in two boats emerged from the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River at the Grand Wash Cliffs. Not unlike modern river runners ending a three-week Canyon trip, these guys stank to high heaven, and their clothes looked more like rags. But that is where the similarities mostly end. And what happened along the way quickly became the stuff of legend.

The crew had come 1000 miles, rowing hundreds of drops that today we'd rate as Class II to III. They had exhaustively portaged or lined around a hundred of the worst Class III to IV/V rapids. During the second month, one man left the group in the Uinta Basin, after his boat was wrecked in what became Disaster Falls in the Canyon of Lodore. Another three men left the expedition only a few days before it ended—at what became Separation Rapid—in the section we now call Diamond Down, on the uppermost extension of Lake Mead. Those three men were never seen again, presumed murdered in a convoluted and mysterious story.

By trip's end at the confluence with the Virgin River, most of the instruments and maps were lost or destroyed. What survived were some remarkable personal journals and proof that the entire route, including Grand Canyon, could be descended in boats—only with great difficulty and an obscene amount of portaging. Sound like fun? Okay, let's go!

Well, that's kind of what happened. Though not in great numbers. By 1950, Dock Marsten reported that only 100 small groups and individuals had boated through the Grand Canyon. The first to return was Powell, with a more methodical scientific expedition that involved a new crew and plenty of land-based surveying, but the river running stopped short at Kanab Creek due to high water. (At one point they were bailing with



WHITEWATER HISTORY



a tea kettle and, later, their hats!) Next came a disastrous expedition hoping to build a railroad through the depths. More wooden boats followed, beginning with a customized one built by Nathaniel Galloway, whose revolutionary design had the rower facing forward. He tackled the entire route with a friend, reading Powell expedition accounts along the way.

Later, rubber rafts arrived, as surplus from World War II. These quickly became the default choice along the whitewater sections. Kayaks grew in popularity, first handmade fold-boats, then fiberglass, then the plastic whitewater boats of today. Also dories, canoes, packrafts, and paddleboards. Eventually, every rapid along the route was run regularly, with some sections becoming world famous for their wilderness and recreational qualities. Today, the historic route has become something of a pilgrimage for paddlers who travel down the river, reading about the adventures of those early explorers.



Like a lot of pilgrimages on the John Wesley Powell Route, mine started with winning a permit to run the Grand Canyon. Several years ago, I was sitting with friends on a rental cabin porch in the Appalachians of Tennessee during one of our annual kayaking trips. I started raft guiding and kayaking in California, but after relocating to Missouri, I did most of my boating in the Ozarks, the Southeast, and occasionally Colorado. Lately, I'd been suggesting we head to the Southwest for some expedition trips on big desert rivers.

I was one of the last applicants to join the old Grand Canyon waiting list, which meant I'd carried over extra chances into the new lottery system. Some friends and I

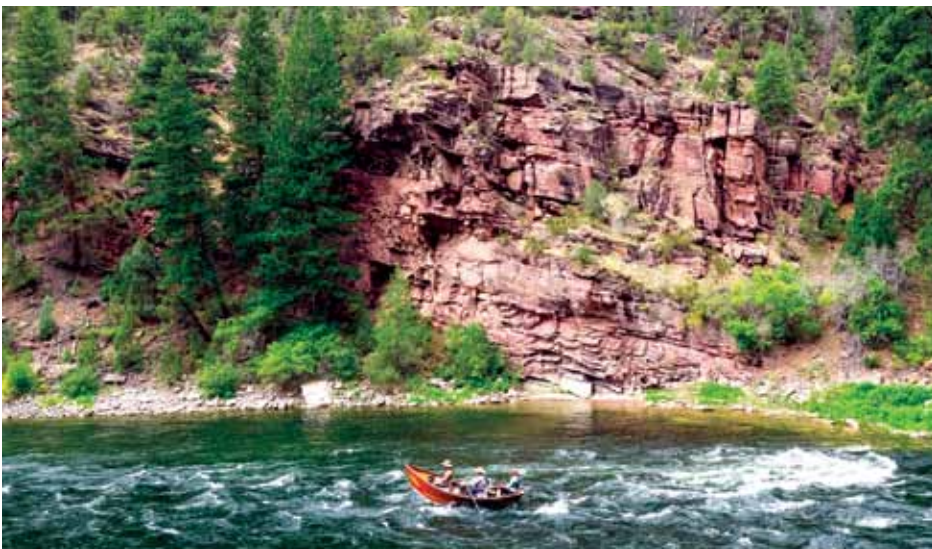
Above: Green River Station, put-in of Powell's first Colorado River expedition, 1871

Below: Gunnison Butte, 1871.

Photos courtesy of the National Archives (archives.gov)



Top: Big Drop, Cataract Canyon
 Middle: Lodore Canyon
 Bottom: Fishing Red Canyon by dory
 Photos by Mike Bezemek



had failed a few times to win a peak-season trip, but now I suggested we instead use my assisted odds to pick an exact date for a winter trip that we could all agree on. Several of us were teachers, so if we pinpointed the dates just right, we could slip a long trip into our Christmas breaks.

The next February, I entered the lottery, and we won a launch date for the second day of winter about 20 months ahead. Then I went one step further (possibly dumber?) and suggested we do the trip as what I now call a “fresh eyes descent,” meaning no one in the group had ever

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boated the river before. For a number of reasons, I didn't want to invite any crusty all-knowing Canyon veterans along to lead us down. I'd met too many already, with their do-this, don't-do-that, this-is-best, that's-overrated attitudes. Instead, for our first Grand Canyon trip, we'd get our own exploratory expedition—sort of like John Wesley Powell.

Soon I had a major realization. *Like Powell*, I'd said. Here was a major historical figure I thought of as a hero of mine. We California raft guides often talked about Powell with the reverence otherwise reserved for saints, or whoever invented the beer coozie. But back then, I knew almost nothing beyond the basics of his story. Powell's team

boated the Grand Canyon first, in 1869, and the crews rowed backwards—a few details available on a postage stamp!

I started reading. Book after book, journals, histories, opinions, and trip reports. Works by authors like Powell, Dellenbaugh, Stegner, Stanton, Ghiglieri, Dolnick, Zwinger, Belknap, Martin, and Fedarko. My head was swimming (sorry, bad pun)! There were two expeditions? Powell embellished or maybe lied? The three crewmen who left at Separation rapid may have been killed by Mormon militiamen who blamed local Shivwits tribesmen? I decided a single Grand trip would not suffice. Like many paddlers, I became infatuated with one of the greatest adventure stories in

U.S. history. I wanted to follow Powell's entire expedition route, which grew in reverence with every new fact I learned. Each controversy only deepened the "fresh eyes" mystery. I wanted to be a Powell route pilgrim.

So, that's what I did, but not as I first had hoped. Some Powell pilgrims will run the entire 1000-mile expedition route in one long trip (or extend by going 1700 miles source-to-sea on the Green and Colorado), but the four to five months needed weren't realistic for me due to teaching. Then I tried to go in segments, in order, but I couldn't get the lottery permits to line up with my time off. Instead, I decided to do what most pilgrims do—run the route in segments

Tanner Rapid, the Grand Canyon
Photo by Mike Bezemek



over several years, in whatever order was possible. And I did them all as fresh eyes descents—sometimes with small groups of friends, with my wife, or solo—using a mix of watercraft, including kayak, raft, paddleboard, and packraft.

One key take-away from my pilgrimage is that the Powell route of today is full of contradictions. The rivers are, collectively, very different places than 150 years ago, but one can still have many experiences similar to what the crew describes in their journals (better food and hopefully fewer sunburns, though). In total, the route spans 1000 miles of rivers and reservoirs across the desert Southwest. Vast segments of the route are protected by various

agencies, including the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Native American reservations. Three major dams—Flaming Gorge, Glen Canyon, and Hoover—have flooded about 40% of the route, drowning some remarkable sections of river but creating ample reservoir opportunities for open-minded paddlers willing to give them a chance.

On the remaining river segments, tens of thousands of boaters annually descend many beloved and permitted sections, some requiring advance lottery applications. Meanwhile, plenty of other sections remain unpermitted or require easy self-issue permits, while other worthy

sections are rarely paddled and seem almost forgotten. The result is a ton of excellent paddling opportunities existing within a complex network of interwoven agencies, regulations, and access points. If this sounds complicated, then—ding, ding, ding—that’s because the Powell route is very complicated. But so worth the effort.

Just below the town of Green River, WY, where Powell and crew began on May 24th, 1869, there are maybe 10 miles of river which give way to another 80 miles of remote lake paddling in Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area. Named for the first major canyon the expedition encountered, Flaming Gorge Reservoir



WHITEWATER HISTORY



Firehole Canyon

Photo by Mike Bezemek

offers plenty of access points for short and long trips.

Below Flaming Gorge Dam, a few sections of Class II whitewater through the ridiculously scenic Red Canyon are perfect for everything from kayaking to paddleboarding to multi-day rafting to even packrafting using the riverside trail. Next come lazy sections flowing through Browns Park and Ouray National Wildlife Refuge that are great for family float trips. The lofty heights of Lodore, Whirlpool, and Split Mountain Canyons, through Dinosaur National Monument, can be combined into four days of possibly the best Class III multiday trip along the entire route (but put on your permit glasses.) Downstream, the Uinta Basin is practically a forgotten segment of the Green River, offering a hundred miles of low bluffs and lazy river perfect for a self-support in touring kayaks.

Marble Canyon of the Grand Canyon
Photo by Mike Bezemek

Desolation and Gray Canyons provide an 86-mile Class II-III trip with plenty of ruins and pictographs—first through a barren desert landscape, then through a hidden red-walled canyon, and finally through a stark but sporty gorge.



Labyrinth and Stillwater are two flatwater canyons each offering three- to four-day trips through the canyonlands region, ideal for a long-weekend canoe trip or a week-long expedition.

Below the confluence with the Colorado River is the foreboding Cataract Canyon, which still rumbles with Class III-IV rapids (becoming even harder at high water), despite the lower rapids being flooded by Lake Powell. And despite controversies regarding Glen Canyon Dam, the reservoir itself offers many paddling options, from countless side canyons to through-paddling the 150-mile length.

Plus, there's a single remaining section of Colorado River flowing through Glen Canyon, the 15 miles just below the dam called the Backhaul section. This abysmal nickname relates to the typical access by motor boat up from Lees Ferry. But there are other ways into this stunning section of Glen Canyon, which floats underneath Arizona's most famous vista, Horseshoe Bend. Both options involve hiking down the little-known Ropes Trail, which descends steeply, almost invisibly, not far from the dam. Meanwhile, a previously unknown packrafting route exists out of Lees Ferry by



Desolation Canyon
Photo by Mike Bezemek

hiking up the Echo Cliffs using the Spencer Trail, then navigating cross-country around a casual spot called the Death Pockets and following a few sandy roads near Ferry Swale Canyon to the top of Ropes.

And all of this brings us back to the Grand Canyon. Starting from Lees Ferry, most trips take a few weeks and stop after 225 miles at Diamond Creek. Below, there's another 15 miles or so of river and another 40 across Lake Mead to Pearce Ferry. For true pilgrims, or source-to-sea through-paddlers, the official ending point of the 1869 expedition now rests under hundreds of feet of water, flooded by Lake Mead in the middle of the eastern half of a wide bay, about ten miles northwest of Temple Bay.

Yes, for many river runners the Grand Canyon is their favorite section along the John Wesley Powell route. How could it not be? It is the trip of a lifetime. But there are so many canyons upstream from Lees Ferry that are well worth exploring. Plus, there are hundreds of miles of flatwater

paddling downstream from Pearce Ferry (just watch out for the recently formed Class V-VI Pearce Ferry rapid tumbling over emerged reservoir sediments). Oh! And another 200 miles of river above the official expedition launch in Green River, Wyoming. For these reasons, source-to-sea or source to "near the Mexico border" has become a regular activity for a few hearty expedition paddlers every year.

In the course of my pilgrimage, I met a lot of fellow Powell route pilgrims and learned how many of us agree that the story of 1869 enhances our experiences on the water today. Early on, I met river advocate and expedition rafter, Jonathan Bowler, on a message board. Jonathan has run many sections of the Powell route repeatedly, including 11 trips on his favorite, Desolation Canyon. "Who hasn't wondered where the crew stole their infamous potato greens?" Jonathan wrote to me, recently. "Or what rock Powell was rescued from by Bradley's britches? I have always enjoyed reading Powell's accounts of a [section] that my

group has just completed. The [Powell expedition] has become a sort of origin story for boaters."

Or take Zak Podmore and Will Stauffer-Norris, two college friends who set out in 2007 to kayak the Colorado and Green Rivers from source to sea. Their intention was simply to run the longest desert river trip possible. As it turned out, if they wanted to paddle a thousand or more miles of wild canyons in the Southwest, they discovered the only real option is the Powell route. "While we didn't set out to trace [the 1869] journey, that history deepened our experience," explained Zak. "Reading Powell's journals around the fire each night certainly made our 113-day river trip feel like an expedition."

Just last fall, Jenny and Mike Fiebig from Bozeman, MT, rented out their house and took leave from their jobs to tackle the same source-to-sea expedition. After backpacking to the headwaters in the Wind River Range and packrafting the shallow

WHITEWATER HISTORY



Lake Powell
Photo by Mike Bezemek

upper river, they descended the route in a custom-built dory over five months. Along the way, they interviewed riverside

residents and other recreational visitors for a project they titled *One River, Many Voices*. “We both read about the Powell

Expeditions while we were on the trip,” said Jenny. “It was nice to read about a section of river they described as we were in the same spot. It helped me to feel and experience the historical story in a deeper way.”

And just as this article appears in print, an academic group out of the University of Wyoming will be launching an expedition down the Powell Route. Called SCREE, for the Sesquicentennial Colorado River Exploring Expedition, they’re departing from Expedition Island on the 150th anniversary, May 24th, 2019. Their goal is to descend the route while discussing the legacy of Powell’s environmental predictions and the future of water resources in the west. (To learn more, including a list of outreach events and podcasts throughout 2019, visit Powell150.org.)

“Powell was the first to connect the known sections of river with the ‘Great Unknown’ that is the Grand Canyon,” says trip leader Professor Tom Minckley. “I think what interests and inspires people today is that the story of his journey is so relatable, even in the comforts of our well-stocked and rigged boats.”



At one time, my interest in following the Powell route was personal curiosity. But over five years of exploring, the endeavor evolved from a few blog posts into some longer articles and eventually a book, after I shared my passion project with an editor at Falcon Guides. Having talked to so many river runners along the way—some of them accomplished Powell pilgrims like I became, others curious outsiders like I once was—I began to realize there is a lot of misinformation and confusion about both the route and the story. Which canyons fall along the route? Where are they located relative to one another? How does one learn more about lotteries, permits, access points, and distances? How does one start to learn the story of the 1869 expedition itself (hint: probably not with JWP’s book, it’s kind of a slog)?

My goal became to create a different type of guidebook. One that didn’t just report take-outs and put-ins but provided much more for both private DIY paddlers and for curious novices seeking guided trips. I wanted to create something that showed the unreal beauty of this paddling route through landscape photography, included



Bowknot Bend, Labyrinth Canyon
Photo by Mike Bezemek

a few interviews and short articles to help flesh out modern explorations, and, ultimately, would become a paddler’s retelling of the original 1869 expedition in a format compact enough to be read by firelight in a riverside camp. The

result is what I call a narrated guide that helps boaters explore the route for themselves while learning the dramatic story of one of the greatest adventures in American history.

After the book came out, a few friends have asked me if all the time and effort over the past five years were worth it. I was away from home a great deal. My hands cracked, bled, and scabbed—I think they aged about twenty years, but not like fine wine. I stopped teaching in large part because of this project and some of the opportunities it led to. I even quit a job to go on the Grand Canyon—not the smartest choice, but there may be some precedent here, as I once skipped a college exam to run the Tuolumne. So, want to say... stay on the rivers, kids?

During my Powell pilgrimage, I missed a lot of my favorite kayak trips with friends. I probably hiked as much as I paddled.



Glen Canyon
Photo by Mike Bezemek



Echo Park
Photo by Mike Bezemek

Can I vent about paper cuts from all those books? We kayaked, paddle-boarded, and rowed so much Class I that I'm pretty sure we each developed some form of flatwater psychosis at one point or another. I'd mention the wind, but my eyes will water from the operant conditioning. Other times we ran amazing rapids, including Cataract Canyon at 35,000 cfs—taller standing waves than I'd ever seen—a flow which I thought was high, but some regulars assured me is just "medium."

Twice, we were hit by microburst-like storms, one of which flung kayaks and oars across a boat ramp while barrel rolling a raft a hundred yards upstream; it was unlike anything I'd ever seen before. Pinned down by hail storms, rain storms, sleet storms, snow storms, thunderstorms—we even watched a lightning strike start a cliffside

forest fire in Deso. Yes, there is a slight chance I may have panicked when a wild mustang charged toward me, but I paid the creature not to talk. I visited the Grand Canyon in every season, ran that segment in all but fall (that's next on my list), and explored every other section, many times more than once. We visited ancient ruins, rock art panels, historic ranches, and unexpected waterfalls and side canyons, watched herds of bighorn sheep trot along cliffs lined by barrel cactuses, followed California Condors soaring high above the river, and stared into unbelievable starry nights that spread above towering rock temples.

So, was it worth becoming a Powell pilgrim? The answer is not just a resounding yes. My answer is I'm still becoming a Powell route pilgrim. And then my questions are usually

what am I reading next (*Romance of the Colorado*) and when am I getting back out there (checking my watch—oh, I might be out there right now)?

The canyons of the Powell route have become a kind of secular Mecca, a real-life Camelot, or an excessively sandy Eden for paddlers (I'd be alright with less sand). And for those of us who become immersed in this story, it begins to feel like we are merely pilgrims making yet another revisit to the grandest of places.

I hope to see you out there.

(p.s. You'll know me. I'm the one constantly slathering medical-grade cream on my busted-up hands.)

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FOR EONS UNTOLD the Usumacinta River of Mesoamerica has been the easiest way to transport people and goods through the dense jungle. As the source of water, irrigation, and food for the entire basin, it remains the connection between the modern and the ancient. The river has connected sophisticated regional centers with millions of citizens who shared and fought over commerce and territory. The most-developed restorations boast of regal architecture, intense cosmological ceremony, irrigated agriculture, and astrological observation—all from peoples who built immense stone monuments without beasts of burden or metal tools. The Maya ruins, largely abandoned by 1000 AD, were left to molder under the engulfing jungle. Today, the descendants of these ancients remain on the move and the Usumacinta is their river of life.

Imagine a seven-day rafting excursion on the frontier between Mexico and Guatemala. Combine serenades by howler monkeys with crocodiles basking on rocks near the water's edge; squadrons of small, blunt-faced green parrots called *loras* chatter overhead; the marvelous waterfall at *Cascada Busiljá* propels itself over travertine boulders into the river. And an epic adventure is born. Add to it the chance to visit two abandoned, ancient Maya kingdom-cities, accessible only from the river, and you have the rafting trip of a lifetime: Usumacinta, the Sacred Monkey River.

Sunset over the river
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

INTERNATIONAL WHITEWATER

THE USUMACINTA RIVER: HIGHWAY OF THE MAYA BY JACK BILLINGS AND LINDA DESPAIN

The Usumacinta begins in the western Guatemala highlands and the mountains and high ground in southern Chiapas, Mexico, forming part of the boundary between the two nations. This aquatic highway that supported the rise of Mayan civilization then flows north-northwest until it reaches the Gulf of Mexico, and one of the richest fisheries in the world.

We found this trip on an outfitter's website months before and were instantly excited. Contact with other boating friends very quickly assembled a group of 11 experienced rafters. Our rallying point was Palenque, Mexico, near the magnificent Maya ruins of the same name.

Though an important Mayan state, at least two other major kingdoms located on the Usumacinta rivaled *Palenque* and dominated the river's vital trade route: *Yaxchilán* and *Piedras Negras*. Today, much of these ruins have been hacked out of the enveloping jungle. Far more are unrevealed.

The Mayan civilization reached its zenith during the classical era, from 300 to 1000 AD. Recent, revolutionary technology known as light detection and ranging (LiDAR) allows researchers to digitally remove the tree

INTERNATIONAL WHITEWATER



Map of Rio Usumacinta
Map by Luis Morales/Victor Ramos CONAP and WCS, Petén, Guatemala

canopy from aerial images of the now-unpopulated landscape. The ruins of a sprawling pre-Colombian civilization have emerged that were far more complex and interconnected than most researchers had supposed.

Assembling in Palenque, our group joined our three guides, Herman, Fernando and René. All our personal gear, coolers, and other supplies were loaded into a large trailer, pulled by a nine-passenger van that carried most of our group. On the morning

of February 20, we departed Palenque for a five-hour drive to the launch site at Frontera Corozal.

At Frontera the river is wide and slow-moving, a deep emerald green. With the help of the guides and a few locals, we inflated all five 16-foot self-bailing rafts with hand pumps, together with two catarafts and three inflatable kayaks. By 4:15 PM, with a few quick strokes, we pulled into the current and began our journey downstream. We had floated only about five kilometers when the fading afternoon light urged us into camp at an unbroken expansive sand beach on the Mexico side of the river. We were on our way!

Running at about 28,000 cubic feet per second, the water was a very comfortable temperature, unlike other rivers we have run. Almost immediately after launch, the howler monkeys took up roaring and bellowing across the river. Theirs is the quintessential sound of the jungle. The voice is deep, loud, and hoarse, something like a gigantic sea lion or a small T-Rex. From perches high in the canopy, they make their distinctive sound carry through the river corridor.

That night the full moon rose over Guatemala, directly across the river. For a time, it was obscured by a large cloud with beams shining through it, toward the river. As it got dark, an impressive frog chorus sprang up across from us. There seemed to be two groups, calling and responding to one another.

The next morning, we resumed our passage to the Yaxchilán ruins, located within a large horseshoe-shaped bend in the river. Though not as extensively excavated and restored as Palenque, this site is particularly known for its well-preserved sculptured stone lintels set above the doorways of the main structures. A large plaza overlooks the river and the lowlands beyond. Yaxchilán was often in conflict with its downstream rival, Piedras Negras, and went to war with Palenque in 654.



Grand Plaza at Yaxchilán
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

Because the Yaxchilán site has been excavated and restored well up the hillside, trails through the jungle bring you to sunlight. Everywhere were new scents, some sweet, others spicy, still others earthy. The density of the jungle at the margins of the ruins reminded us that it never sleeps and is always growing.

An active water taxi service brings tourists from Frontera to these ruins every day. These 25-foot long, narrow, wooden taxis are powered by 60-horsepower motors and are outfitted with an awning over the middle to provide shade and rain protection for travelers. While most of the visitors spoke Spanish, we also heard French and English from the day-trippers.

The river flowed by, mostly silent, an omnipresent force dividing the jungle canopy. Some riparian banks were sandy and brush covered. Elsewhere was a continual jumble of limestone rocks and slabs, often fluted from eons of tides and sediment. An insect chorus called constantly out of the dark.

We could breathe freely on the water while the jungle seemed impossibly dense. Shimmering curtains of strangling, suffocating vines lined both sides of the river. The diversity of canopy layers was striking. A flowering tree sprung forth from the mass of flora, while mysterious scents waft across the river.

Welcome relief from heat of the day and exertion of rowing awaited us at a cascading travertine spring not far downstream. It beckoned to us with the chance to jump off a 15-foot ledge into deep, cool water.

One of our most memorable camps was el Playon, on a beautiful, huge beach somewhere in Guatemala. It is the largest sand expanse of any freshwater setting we have seen. The light at sunrise illuminated a captivating mist that hung over the river upstream and filled the low valleys across the river. The canopy stood in dark contrast on the horizon. Birds began their calls close by and monkeys joined in from a distance of at least half a mile.

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INTERNATIONAL WHITEWATER



About a third of the way into our trip, we were joined by an armed escort disguised in fishermen's clothing. We knew the outfitter had contemplated this assistance. Both Guatemala and Mexico experienced civil war or violent uprisings in years past. Desperate people were still on the move in the river basin. We couldn't say whether the escort was necessary, but we were glad for its presence.

On the fourth morning, we came upon a group of children playing on the Mexican side of the river bank, along with women doing laundry. We pulled in to say hello and the number of kids promptly doubled. We had arrived at the pueblo of Arroyo

Jump-off rock at Big Spring
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

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Jerusalem, where foreigners in outfitted rafts are obviously a novelty. As we followed Herman up the trail to the village, several of the young children guided our elbows, solicitous of our apparently advanced age.

Efforts to communicate with the children were hampered, because their primary language is Chol, a Mayan dialect completely different than Spanish. However, we were able to play string games and pantomime with hand contortions that are universally understood. If children's laughter is a barometer for the health of the pueblo, then this community was doing very well, indeed. While visiting with the locals, Hermann bought a live chicken, which he brought aboard his raft for that night's layover dinner at Piedras Negras.



After a short run to Piedras Negras, we pitched our camp on a terraced 50-foot soft sand bank. The promontory view was worth the effort. We were set to hear rival choruses of monkeys from opposite sides of the river. The recently purchased chicken clucked its way into nearby brush. Before long, it was lured back to the kitchen area by a trail of popcorn seed, then readied for a gargantuan pot of noodles and cabbage. One of the escorts brought us five fish he had caught, and a grille was fashioned to fry them. We joined forces with the makings of a fresh gourmet dinner, then fell asleep eager to explore the following morning.



For many, the camp at Piedras Negras was the most memorable. We were literally in the landing area of this great kingdom-city, where its citizens and explorers accessed the river 1500 years ago. A large glyph engraving faced skyward on a boulder next to camp. And, we had the sweet circumstance of a layover day full of hiking, swimming, and long conversations around the campfire.

Top: Big beach at El Playon
Middle: Mother and daughter at Arroyo Jerusalem
Bottom: Park Ranger at Piedras Negras
Photos by Don Dubin Photography

INTERNATIONAL WHITEWATER

Piedras Negras is too far downstream from Frontera for day trips. Except for resident park employees and conservators, almost no one visits. Four park rangers came down to chat and to appreciate a break from their own cooking.

The ruins here are not as thoroughly excavated as those at Palenque and Yaxchilán. Yet we could see how the design and architecture was every bit as impressive and uniquely influenced. At their height, these kingdom-cities, if known in Europe, would have been wonders of the western hemisphere and would have rivaled or surpassed eastern civilizations in their progress.

After recovering from a drenching rain shower, we pushed on. Regrets over soggy gear faded into our next adventure. Even though our rain fly proved too small, at least we had it in place on time. Plus, we



Flat bottomed canoe in the lower canyon
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

String game, Arroyo Jerusalem
Photo by Don Dubin Photography



could count on the fact that we would always be warm!

A couple of hours below Piedras Negras we pulled into a cove with a most spectacular waterfall, Cascadia Busiljá. Coming down a steep canyon, its source stream plunges over travertine-coated rocks and projects into the river. Most of us hiked up a trail behind the falls to see its origin. Others cooled off below in the spray shower that envelops the outcropping.

Anticipation peaked about 15 kilometers below the cascade, when we entered the Grand Canyon de San José. Here vertical limestone cliffs narrow the river and rise above as high as 1800 feet. Still, the jungle

fills in the river banks and the fissures among the cliffs.

The deep whirling water of the canyon created many eddies. Maintaining headway in this fickle current was challenging. In many of the small swirls we began to see



Repose at Piedras Negras
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

The logo for CKS PADDLEFEST features the letters 'CKS' in red and 'PADDLEFEST' in blue. To the right, it says 'PRESENTED BY ELEVATION BEER CO.' with a circular logo. Below this, it says 'MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND May 24-27, 2019 BUENA VISTA, CO'. The entire graphic is flanked by two grey paddles.



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Grand Canyon de San Jose
Photo by Don Dubin Photography

bobbing plastic bottles, the tell-tale floats attached to purse-like seine nets. These mini-fisheries were managed by families and friends who collectively checked the nets daily.

Nearing our last camp, as the sun dropped lower in the late afternoon sky, we rounded a bend and found a nice sand bar across from the community of Francisco Madero. As we tied off on the bank, fellows from the village paddled across to see us. The common water craft here is a low-draft, 12-foot, flat bottomed canoe with a transom. The boatman stands aft and paddles or poles as circumstances require. Because we hoped to camp directly across from the village, we asked permission, which was readily given. The camp area was obviously frequented by local livestock. Our trusty shovel was handy for flicking manure away from tent sites and walkways.

The next morning a man and his son came across to ply us with hand-made, wooden artesanas. He told us of his workshop and showed us his cutting boards and spatulas

from a local wood, melino. We now have a spatula for our kitchen at home that will always remind us of this trip.

People remain on the move in this corridor. On day one, as we drove to the launch point at Frontera, Herman pointed out migrants from Guatemala or Honduras, small groups of young men trekking in the opposite direction. He identified them by their darker skin, the fact that they were traveling lightly with only backpacks, and carried no machetes or other farm-related hand tools.

During our week on the river, we saw several of the shuttle taxis roaring downstream at full throttle carrying a packed group of other migrants. Frequently passing in the night, these boats plied the river without a light, reflecting their drivers' knowledge of the river and the clandestine nature of their cargo. By pooling their resources and hiring the boat, migrants saved themselves at least a week of hot, humid, dusty plodding along the highway. Both water passenger and overland migrants may not

be headed for the United States. Instead, we understand they are willing to take low-paying Mexican jobs in the fields and for a railroad. It is a telling commentary about the desperation and violence of their own communities that these young men would launch themselves over many weeks, mostly on foot, to leave their homes and come by whatever means available.

We foresee how the future of the ancient and mighty Usamacinta is troubled. Its heart could be broken by a dam the Mexican government energy agency wants to build at Boca del Cerro, our take-out point. This dam would flood the river up to Piedras Negras, drown all the rapids in the main canyon, block the flow of sediment and fish, and forcibly remove all the residents along the river, including the entire pueblo of Francisco Madero. Perhaps the new government of President Lopez Obrador will bring a holistic and existential approach to preservation of this immense cultural and environmental resource for centuries more to come.

RIVER VOICES

PADDLING, PARKS, AND PARENTHOOD

BY JORDAN VICKERS



*The Family: Jordan (Dad), Kristen (Mom), Rowen (Daughter) and Bode (Son).
Photo by Grant WIELER Photography*

ON MAY 30TH 2018 our son Bode was born. It was the start of a new life and a new adventure. As a teacher, I had the summer off and my wife Kristen had the next three months off for maternity leave. It was time for a road trip.

In early July, we left our home in Vermont and flew to Portland, Oregon. The past couple of years we have stored our camper, SUV, kayaks, mountain bikes, car seats, and much more in Portland. We had some previous experience traveling though Colorado, Idaho, Washington, and Alaska with our daughter Rowen (now two years old) when she was just three months old. It was an incredible trip, so we thought, why not do it again?

Day one, landing in Portland was survival mode. We assembled our luggage and I left Kristen with two kids at the airport to go to the storage unit and retrieve our 2003 GMC Yukon XL and 25-foot camper. I made it back in about two hours and we grabbed some supplies then made haste to the

Oregon coast. We spent the next couple of days bouncing between campsites, building sandcastles and surfing ocean waves in a kayak. West Oswald State Park delivered one of the best beaches I have stepped foot on, with a freshwater stream for Rowen to explore and what felt like giant, perfectly-breaking waves! Making our way down the coast we stopped at Devils Punchbowl, a unique rock formation created in the shoreline with waves exploding through the arch. Off in the distance we could see a pod of whales, which added to our excitement. Adjacent to this was a fantastic beach where we spent the rest of the day balancing between playing with Rowen, watching Bode and, yes, surfing a few waves.

We left the coast and drove to Bend through the Willamette National Forest. A morning playboating session on the McKenzie River started the day off as we stopped at Sahalie and Koosaah Falls for lunch and a short hike. Arriving in Bend in the late afternoon, we set up camp near

Mt. Bachelor, where we would stay for the week. We met up with several friends from New York and spent the next several days paddling on the Deschutes River, including Dillon Falls, Lava 1 and 2, the whitewater park, and many laps on Meadowcamp. Kristen enjoyed some nearby trail riding and was back in her kayak for the first time postpartum on the Class III Big Eddy section of the Deschutes. Our daughter Rowen had her first taste of whitewater in mom's lap on the tubing channel at the whitewater park. The recreation surrounding Bend is so available and logistically simple, which, along with the amenities of our camper, made a huge difference in our ability to play while caring for and entertaining young children.

Driving north to Hood River, we parked our rig at a friend's house and enjoyed the Columbia Gorge lifestyle. Over the next several days, we paddled the White Salmon and Little White Salmon. One of the best days of the trip was when our kayaking crew of four offered to watch our kids so

RIVER VOICES

Kristen and I could mountain bike together. Imagine four kayakers in their twenties and thirties watching an infant and a rambunctious toddler. Surprisingly enough, we returned after an amazing ride and all was well. We quickly transitioned from bike gear to paddling gear and headed for the Little White Salmon. Paddling the Little White Salmon is something I look forward to every year. The numerous boulder gardens building into ledges and waterfalls is perfection in whitewater. Standing at the lip of Spirit Falls is an unparalleled, awe-inspiring experience. Watching my friend Greg descend the falls, I cheered him on his first time on a waterfall of that height. Then it was my turn. I walked up to my boat, snapped my skirt on and took a moment. Fear, anxiety, excitement, and anticipation all faded away as I pushed off the bank and into the current. As I approached the lip, my

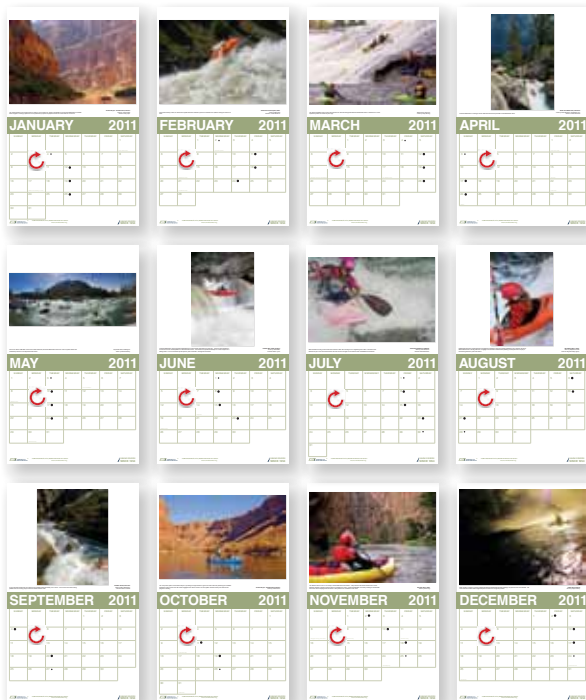
thoughts were clear: "Go slow so you do not go past the aeration; take a slight stroke; tuck and do not boof." A few seconds later, in the pool below, I let out a loud shout of pure joy. Descending Spirit Falls and looking up from the pool below have been some of the best moments in my life. It is a feeling that keeps me driven in kayaking and in life, and I think about it often.

Leaving the rest of the crew in Hood River, we drove north with the family up through Mt. St. Helens and Mt. Rainier. We stayed at the Ohanepecosh Campground for the next three nights. The river was too low to paddle but still beautiful. We hiked up to Silver Falls with the kids and drove into the park adventuring. At night Rowen and I enjoyed the ranger talks around the amphitheater, which echoes a fond memory I have with my parents from my

own childhood. In the morning, as we are packing up to leave for Idaho, we notice Rowen's stuffed moose is missing. Kristen heroically saves the day by driving all the way back to the Jackson Visitors Center at Mt. Rainier, where Rowen had left it. Two hours later she returned with the missing moose named Mortimer—go Mom!

Hours on hours we drove east from the Cascades, passing the Teton River, heading into the flat space between spaces. After a full day of driving, with a stop at Moses Lake for laundry and food, we made it to Idaho on the edge of Lake Pend Oreille. The next day was a big day and perhaps the most gripping of the trip. We were heading to Flathead Lake and on to Glacier National Park, but not without a stop at Kootenai Falls in Montana. Thoughts of a clean waterfall that gets run in a playboat

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Rowing with Rowen in the drift boat on the Kenai River in Alaska.
Photo by Jordan Vickers

down to an awesome surf wave is what I had in mind. Kristen put our two-month-old Bode in the front pack, and I put Rowen in the backpack while shouldering my playboat, paddle, and PFD. Down the trail, over the railroad bridge, and up to the falls we went. The raw power of this place is hard to describe in words. The falls were majestic and vast. The surf wave looked good amidst powerful rapids, however, the chance of not making it back to the eddy was more risk than I was willing to accept. We hiked farther down river to some friendlier surf waves and a swinging suspension bridge. Here is where things got interesting. At the edge of the swinging suspension bridge Kristen and I made eye contact as if wanting the other to object and go back to the car. Neither did. Step by step with my two-year-old we crossed the swinging bridge, looking down at the river 80 to 100 feet below as the water disappeared into the rapids. My focus was on Rowen and taking it one step at a time, hoping Kristen was doing well with Bode but unable to look back. I was uneasy to say the least and the phrase “hold your children

closely” came to mind. A feeling of relief getting safely to the other side was short lived when we realized we would have to repeat this feat to get back. Some fun at the beach and a quick surf session then back across the bridge we went. Safely back at the car, we grabbed some much-deserved popsicles from the camper, then completed the drive to Flathead Lake.

The clarity of the water in Flathead Lake is incredible. We spent the morning paddle boarding at the state campground on the west shore. Standing on the paddleboard we could see schools of cutthroat trout deep below, weaving their way through the caverns and rocks. Driving up that afternoon to Glacier National Park, we spent the evening at McDonald Lake near the west entrance. Waking up early, we headed to the Visitors Center to get Rowen’s National Parks passport stamped and get an early start driving up the Going-to-the-Sun Road. Driving up the winding, scenic road, we stopped at view points and ate lunch at Two Medicine Lake where I had visited with my parents over a decade prior on our

first road trip to Alaska. While enjoying our lunch overlooking the water, we spotted a herd of mountain goats passing through the campground, which gave Rowen a thrill. By the afternoon, we were driving back over the Sun Road, stopping at Logan Pass Visitors Center for a brief hike, or so we thought. Two hours later we were back at the car gearing up for a bike ride down the west side of the sun road at sunset. I started down while Kristen and the kids rode in the car behind, switching roles part way. Dropping thousands of feet in elevation with the mountain wall on one side and sheer cliff on the other into the sunset was stunning. That night we drove to Hungry Horse Reservoir for some much-needed food, beverages, and rest before the long drive to Banff began.

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Ben Dann @ The Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone



Jordan paddles the iconic falls on the Callaghan River in British Columbia.
Photo by Joel Bakken

The drive from Whitefish to Banff ended up being much longer than anticipated as wildfires had closed sections of Route 93. It was tempting to detour through Fernie and check out the Elk River, however, without paddling partners, it seemed a bit ambitious. We detoured through Golden, arriving in Banff late that night. We had two days in Banff exploring the town, hiking, paddling on the Bow River, and biking through town with Rowen in tow. We traveled north to Lake Louise on highway 1A, stopping briefly to watch a big bull elk graze. At Lake Louise, Kristen and I traded turns watching Bode while paddling on Lake Louise with Rowen. Switching kayaks for bikes at the lake we again traded turns on the bike trails down to the valley towing Rowen behind in the bike trailer. It was a busy holiday weekend in one of Canada's most popular national parks but we found it pretty easy to escape the chaos. We took a late drive up to Moraine Lake before driving toward Jasper up the Icefields Parkway. Exploring Jasper with a family and a camper is logistically quite easy. We drove between viewpoints and short hikes with all of our amenities. On the day we left Jasper, we had an early start to fit in what was sure

to be a full day of adventure traveling. In town, I chatted with a raft guide about the Sunwapta River. While scouting the take-out I informed some tourists they were way too close to a black bear (15 feet or, should I say, four and a half meters). Kristen dropped me off on the Sunwapta River for several miles of Class III+ whitewater and a take-out not to be missed (Sunwapta Falls). While solo paddling in the wilderness of Jasper I reflected on our trip so far, feeling the remoteness and taking in the scenery. After I arrived at the take-out, we made a quick lunch in the camper and then a hasty departure for Revelstoke. Driving through Yoho, Mount Revelstoke, and Glacier National Park of Canada we learned of wildfires with smoke consuming much of British Columbia and Washington. Enjoying dinner and live music in Revelstoke we discussed what do to about the smoke and our concern of the air quality for our infant son Bode. Leaving under a smoky sky we drove late into the night to Kamloops. Keep in mind, we woke up that morning in Jasper, nearly 300 miles north.

After a much-needed rest and supply run, we were on our way traveling across

highway 99 toward Pemberton. Highway 99 is not for the faint of heart, nor do I recommend it for vehicles towing. Remote, long pitches in excess of 15% grade were the norm for over four hours. At one point, after navigating through a one-lane construction zone on the edge of a cliff, we passed a mountain goat that looked in its element, albeit a bit confused to see us passing by. First gear and trailer brakes to the max we made it down the valley into Squamish. After breathing a sigh of relief, a new task emerged: finding a campsite. We lucked out, finding one of the last first-come, first-serve spaces at Nairn Falls, near One Mile Lake. This happened to be a perfect place to take Rowen swimming and Kristen stand up paddle boarding before our daily trips into Whistler.

The next day we drove to Whistler to enjoy the town and see what recreation lay ahead.

*Opposite Top: Kristen paddling the Deschutes river in Bend, Oregon
Bottom: Jordan and Rowen at Kootenai Falls, Montana.*

Photo by Kristen Vickers

RIVER VOICES

We met a couple from Colorado (Kristin and Joel) who had just finished mountain biking with a creek boat on the roof and made plans for the Callaghan the next day. By mid-morning we were all at the take-out browsing the guide book for directions, as none of us had run it before. After a good 30 minutes of navigating dirt roads to no avail, Joel and I got cell service and found out the put-in had changed; the run is now

accessed on the opposite side of the river via an easy, paved road. Oh well, we made our way to the river's edge and pushed off the banks at a low level. Since neither of us had run it before it was very much like a first descent. We eddy-hopped boulder gardens and stayed on the lookout for a few memorable horizon lines. We made our way down to the iconic falls and got out to take a look. I cannot emphasize how much

the big falls on the Callaghan is as perfect as a waterfall gets. Trading setting safety and taking pictures, we both landed in the pool with hoots and hollers. Paddling away from the falls we picked apart the puzzle of boulders down to the take-out. Arriving at the Cal-Cheak take-out to see Kristen and Kristin were in good shape with the kids, we had some beverages, loaded gear, and parted ways.



The next day Kristen went mountain biking at Whistler while I explored the village with the kids. Rowen splashed through fountains while Kristen rode in the mountains. Kristen left me one ride on her ticket so I geared up and headed to the lifts. Whistler lift-served is the most jump-filled mountain biking I have ever encountered. Blue squares meant mandatory air time every 30 seconds. We finished biking and had lunch



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RIVER VOICES



Rowing with Rowen in the drift boat on the Kenai River in Alaska.
Photo by Jordan Vickers

in the village in time to meet my friend Nick, who lives in Squamish, for a quick lap on the Cheakamus. The scene at the upper Cheakamus is awesome! What's better than a high quality run with consistent flows just minutes from town? Putting on, I noticed the push of the "BC Class IV." Much can be said about the difficulty, but all in all it was padded, pushy and, at times, technical. I got off the river with a big smile, high fived Rowen, and reset the shuttle before saying goodbye. It was hard to leave such a recreation paradise but we had many miles ahead of us to meet up with cousins for some rest and relaxation in Washington before catching a flight to Alaska.

Arriving in Alaska we joined my parents Mike and Marty in their motorhome for 10 days on the Kenai Peninsula in south-central Alaska. We spent the first couple of

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days fishing Silver Salmon with my brother Kyle and his family who were also visiting. The daily routine now became fly fishing for salmon in the river, halibut fishing on the ocean, and campfires and family stories each night. The ocean fishing became quite adventurous, entailing getting in my “new-to-me” Dagger Mamba and paddling out to drop the bait. Paddling on the Pacific at 11 p.m. in full daylight with volcanoes (Mt. Iliama, Redoubt, Augustine, and Spur) in the background made up for the lack of halibut actually caught. Moving up the Kenai Fjords National Park we drift-fished for Rainbow Trout and Dolley Varden on the Kenai River. We had great luck and Rowen made her personal first descent of the Upper Kenia in the drift boat, becoming the official fish netter of the trip. Rowing with Rowen was very special and something I hope we continue to do for a long time to

come. The next day I paddled the second and third canyon of Six Mile Creek near Hope, Alaska. There are three canyons, all building in difficulty from Class III to V. I try to paddle Six Mile every year, however, this was my first time in a creek boat instead of an edgy old playboat. The ease of access, aesthetic beauty, and quality of the rapids will have me coming back for as long as I can. We left Six Mile at noon in order to make it to Alyeska for Friday evening mountain biking. We stopped at Chair Five in Girdwood for a beer and burger before hitting the trails. Kristen and I spent the next three hours mountain biking the lift-served paradise that is Alyeska and views of the Chugach State Park. Single track next to glaciers while watching the sun set over Turnagain Arm (Pacific Ocean) is an experience I will never forget. We finished the exhausting day of paddling

and mountain biking knowing we had to fly home to Vermont the next day. With the clock running out we rallied three hours north to Talkeetna for a great breakfast, quick shopping/sightseeing, and an amazing paddle down Willow Creek with a great crew. Kristen was packing vigorously when I arrived at the take-out and the race was on to the airport in Anchorage.

The next 24 hours were a blur of airports, diaper changes, toddler entertaining, infant feedings, plane and cab rides, but we eventually made it back to Vermont and our home in the shadow of Mt. Mansfield. The entire trip was forty-eight days traveling through five states, two provinces, eight national parks, and nearly 6,000 miles of driving with a toddler and an infant. Needless to say, we plan on another wild family adventure for the summer of 2019!

What to get for the paddler who has everything?

Give them the gift of rivers with an American Whitewater membership!



Colorado River, Grand Canyon. | Photo: Evan Stafford

AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY BETHANY OVERFIELD

American Whitewater's original purpose since 1954 has included distribution of information among its Affiliate Clubs. We have over 100 current AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf; if you don't belong to a club, consider joining one.

American Whitewater has two levels of Affiliate Clubs - a Supporting Affiliate Club or an Affiliate Club. Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$100 annual level are recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll. In order to be recognized at this level, a Club needs to maintain an annual \$100 contribution.

Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$400 Supporting Affiliate Club annual level are recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll as well as being listed as sponsors of an AW stewardship presentation each year. In order to be recognized at this level, a Club needs to maintain an annual \$400 contribution. A Supporting Affiliate Club can revert to the \$100 Affiliate Club annual level at any time.

An Affiliate Club that is already being recognized as an AW Lifetime member is recognized in the annual Honor Roll as a Lifetime member. They do need to contribute either at the \$100 or the \$400 level annually to be recognized as an Affiliate Club in the AW Journal and under the Affiliate Club heading of the published Honor Roll. Is your club missing from this list? It might have expired. Contact me at membership@americanwhitewater.org to square your club membership away!

Supporting Affiliate Clubs

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks

California

Gold Country Paddlers, Placerville
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Association, Lexington

New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

Ohio

Keelhaulers, Cleveland

South Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Washington

Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

Affiliate Club by State

Alaska

Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Coosa River Paddling Club, Wetumpka
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
River City Whitewater Club, Sacramento
Shasta Paddlers, Redding
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

Colorado Whitewater Assn, Denver
Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center, Buena Vista
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
Team Colorado Whitewater Racing Club, Longmont
Upper Colorado Private Boaters Asso, Glenwood Springs
Western Colorado University Whitewater Club, Gunnison

Connecticut

Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq, Lakeville

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, , Oaks (PA)
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Brownsburg
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

Kentucky

Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Freeport

Maryland

Baltimore Canoe & Kayak Club, Baltimore
Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Rockville
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Hagerstown

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston
Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

Missouri Whitewater Assn, St. Louis
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings
Whitewater Kayak Club at Montana State University, Bozeman

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond
Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks (PA)

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club of New Mexico, Albuquerque

New York

Flow Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Outdoor Education/Base Camp, Hamilton
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Machias

North Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee
Mind Body Play, Asheville

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Friends of the Crooked River, Akron

Oregon

Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
Hells Canyon Shuttle, Halfway
Northwest Rafters Association, Roseburg
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks (PA)
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Centre County, Lemont
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Mach One Slalom Team, State College
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Limestone
Clean Water Expected in East Tennessee,
Sevierville
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Eastman Recreation Club, Kingsport
Tennessee Scenic River Association, Nashville

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston

Utah

High Jim and the A.S.K., Salt Lake City

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Virginia

Float Fishermen of Virginia, Sandy Hook

Washington

BEWET, Bellevue
Northwest Whitewater Association, Spokane
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
The Mountaineers, Seattle

Washington, DC

Canoe Cruisers Association

West Virginia

Dbl Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville
WV Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

North East Wisconsin Paddlers, Inc., Neenah
Rapids Riders, Egan
Sierra Club/John Muir Chapter, Madison

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson
Jackson Hole Kayak Club, Jackson

Ontario

Guelph Kayak Club, Elora
Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

National

Team River Runner

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

AW offers a discounted Affiliate Club membership of \$25, a \$10 savings. If you are renewing your AW membership or joining as a new member, select the Affiliate Club Discounted Personal Membership online at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/> Or, if you are renewing or joining by mail or telephone just mention the name of the Affiliate Club you belong to and you can take advantage of the \$25 membership.

A list of AW Affiliate Clubs can be found on our website at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/>. If you do not see your Club listed here please encourage them to renew their Club membership or to join AW as a new Affiliate Club. Your Club's membership and your personal membership enable our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. When you join or renew your membership your support is helping to meet the many challenges whitewater rivers face.

If you have any questions about the Affiliate Club membership, please contact me. I can be reached at 866_BOAT-4AW or membership@americanwhitewater.org.

JOIN AMERICAN WHITewater AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

1. Support river access and restoration through the AW River Stewardship Team.
2. Be part of a national voice for the protection of the whitewater rivers your club values.
3. Tap into the professional expertise of AW staff for river issues that come up in your backyard.
4. Your club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Receive the American Whitewater Journal, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
6. Your club is recognized in the list of Affiliate Clubs posted to the AW website.
7. Recognize your club in the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly AW Journal.
8. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
9. Gain Club satisfaction from lending support to AW's stewardship efforts.
10. Improve your club members river karma.

For more information, contact Bethany Overfield at membership@americanwhitewater.org or sign-up on line at www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.

AW AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Contribute your text and photos to *American Whitewater*

American Whitewater is a member-driven publication. If you enjoy reading it, please consider letting its pages tell your story. We are looking for articles about whitewater rivers of any variety, so let your imagination flow free!

We're always accepting submissions and we hope you'll consider contributing. For complete submission details, story topics, deadlines, and guidelines, go to:

americanwhitewater.org > Library > AW Journal





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Photo: Alexander Clark's Fort Stockton, © Evan Stafford

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