

# Canyonlands River Management Plan

by Jim Braggs

During the 1994 calendar year, Canyonlands National Park intends to rewrite its River Management Plan. The existing plan was developed and written in the late 1970's and approved by the Park Superintendent and Regional Director in 1981. It is seriously dated as management guidelines require parks to review their plans every ten years. Attitudes and issues have changed and new pressures are being exerted on the park mandating a review.

Beginning early in January, Resource Management Division staff, River District staff, and the Chief Ranger will meet to form a committee and establish task directives. This group will develop a timetable and outline the steps necessary to carry out the task. They will determine whether the plan can be completed in-house or if there is a need to hire a professional staff person.

A Notice of Intent will then be issued to the news media stating that the existing plan will be opened to public review and revision. A Public Scoping period will be established in which the park asks for comments and requests the public to provide current issues for the park to consider. Canyonlands will then develop alternatives based on the comments and issues received, and prepare a draft Environmental Assessment and River Management Plan.

The draft plan will be published and made available for review. For a period of 30 - 60 days comments will be gathered, analyzed, and incorporated in the plan. The final Environmental Assessment and River Management Plan will be developed, approved by the park Superintendent, sent to The Rocky Mountain Regional Director for final approval, and issued to the public. This plan will then become the guiding management tool used to manage the River District for the next decade.

Issues the park feels need to be looked at include, but are not limited to, the following:

- \* Limiting or not allowing motor use on the Green River.
- \* Wild and Scenic status for both the Green and Colorado rivers inside Canyonlands National Park.
- \* Carrying capacities for calm water use, particularly on the Green River.
- \* Commercial and Private allocations for Cataract Canyon and party size.

If all goes according to task directives and high water doesn't take away needed resources, the plan should be completed by the fall of 1994. Since the River District will be guided by this plan

for the next ten years and a truly public process is important, the park needs your comments. Get involved and let the park know how you feel.

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# Commercial River Guiding and Outfitting in Utah

by Tony White

Commercial river running in the state of Utah is big business with approximately 60,000 passengers being carried by commercial outfitters in 1993. The professional river guides and outfitters providing this service to the recreating public must be commended for an outstanding safety record. In preparation for the upcoming season, CPRG and the Utah Division of Parks and Recreation (State Parks) would like to share information relating to commercial river guiding and outfitting in the State of Utah.

The administration and enforcement of the Utah Boating Act is under the supervision and direction of Utah State Parks. It is the policy of the State of Utah to regulate and promote safety for persons and property in and connected with the use, operation and equipment of vessels and to promote uniformity of laws. In fulfilling this policy, State Parks developed a commercial river guide permit program and outfitting company registration program. Under Utah Boating Act, any person who operates a vessel engaged in carrying passengers for hire on any river of the state must possess a Utah River Guide Permit and be employed by a registered outfitting company.

Each year, river outfitting companies must register with State Parks. This process involves a fee, verification of a business license, verification of river trip authorization from the state or federal land managing agency, and a listing of authorized agents' signatures. The outfitting company registration procedure is an effort by the State of Utah to protect the public from unscrupulous "pirate" outfitters who would fail to have business licenses, insurance, river trip authorizations, or professionally licensed guides. Once an outfitting company is registered and recognized by State Parks, the outfitter may send guide permit applicants in their employ to one of three testing and permitting centers (Moab, SLC, and Vernal). The river guide permit application process requires that the applicant be at least 18 years of age, complete the prescribed form with appropriate signatures and registered outfitting company sponsorship, be current in the required first aid and CPR certification, pay a \$10 fee, and have operated a vessel on the required number of