

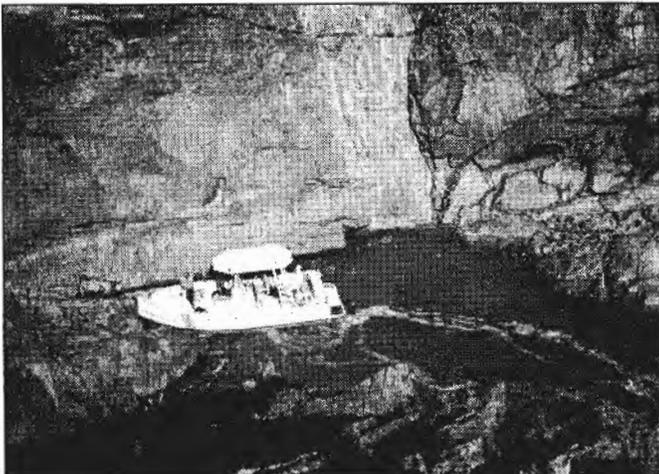
Park Service Replaces Zodiac with a Custom Whitewater Rescue Jet Boat



Park Service operates a jet boat named in honor of Kent Frost.



On 6/17/99 The USNPS Frost upruns the Big Drops. Seen here at Big Drop 2. Operated by Mike Hill.



The Frost in the Room of Doom of Westwater Canyon. Joining Grand County Search and Rescue efforts to locate Max Turner.

This acquisition serves to replace the 19 ft. Zodiac "inflatable" motorboat that has been the trademark of the River District of Canyonlands National Park. The USNPS Frost is a 24 ft Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat (rhIB). It is constructed of aluminum with a rigid foam collar. The Frost's propulsion is a Hamilton 291Jet that is powered by a Mercury Marine 502 V-8.

The boat's transom is hinged to provide decks that lower at the rear to easily retrieve a person in a rescue operation, or to instantly bail the boat in a rough, whitewater environment. The gunnels were designed lower than normal to also facilitate retrieving swimmers over the side. Another feature of the Frost is the windshield, top and rear arch all remove in one piece to lighten the boat a couple of hundred pounds and give the boat a more stable profile in floodwater. With the top on the boat it is able to carry a payload safely and with remarkable stability. The boat's design has a solid foam collar covered with neoprene fabric that was fabricated by Demaree Inflatable Boats. This serves as a fender and added buoyancy.

This craft was created as a whitewater rescue/work boat. Technologies were combined from ocean-going rescue boats (rhIB), and whitewater boats to create this unique hybrid adapted for use in the rivers of our region, primarily the Green and Colorado Rivers and Lake Powell, providing service in extremes of a shallow river to the floodwaters of Cataract Canyon.

The boat is outfitted with a full EMT kit, two backboards, technical rope rescue equipment, reach poles, throw floats, and drinking water. To keep the boat functioning through minor mechanical difficulties, tools, spare parts and fluids are on board, and if that fails there is a small outboard motor that can be mounted on the stern, so the boat can "self rescue" to shore.

In the spirit of multi-agency cooperation, the NPS with the FROST assisted Grand County Search and Rescue in Westwater Canyon. The Frost, operated by Ranger Steve Swanke was able to rescue 9 boaters and four kayakers from just below Skull Rapid in one trip.

MetalCraft Marine of Kingston, Ontario Canada, fabricated the boat. This is one of the many custom boats they have manufactured for the NPS. Ranger Mike Hill of Canyonlands National Park conceived the overall design concept. He, working with the NPS Regional Equipment Specialist and the team at Metal-Craft Marine (naval architect, designers, operators, and fabricators) came up with this unique craft.