



# The Confluence

The Journal of Colorado Plateau River Guides

Number 25



**More Pop's Poetry!**

**Herm Hoops: Editorial**

**Best Expedition:** J.A. McCormick  
on 'Hell To Pay', Music Temple, and a  
Lees Ferry 'day' hike

**The REAL Poop from Roy Webb**  
America Outdoors and YOU

**More Bert Loper Testimony!**

Or-how many times *dig* he pull  
a boat upriver?

**Upcoming Spring Interp  
Trips**

**Guide Education Seminar**



## The Confluence

...wants to be the quarterly journal of Colorado Plateau River Guides, Inc. Colorado Plateau River Guides is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to:

- Protecting the rivers of the Colorado Plateau.
- Setting the highest standards for the river profession.
- Providing the best possible river experience.
- Celebrating the unique spirit of the river community.

**Guide Membership** is open to anyone who works or has worked in the river industry of the Colorado Plateau.

**General Membership** is open to those who love the rivers of the Colorado Plateau.

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- \$ 20 per year
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- \$195 for life
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We need articles, artwork, poetry, photos, stories, and opinions. This journal is composed with Microsoft Word on an IBM PC. If you use a word processor, we can translate most programs. Otherwise, please send your text double-spaced. Please include useful photos, charts, diagrams and artwork. There really is no deadline, but the beginning of each quarter works best.

**Managing editor:** John Weisheit

**Editor this issue:** Dave Focardi

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### DISCLAIMER

The opinions and statements made within the pages of *The Confluence* are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the position of the guide membership, the board of Colorado Plateau River Guides, nor Canyon Country Volunteers. If you have an opposing or supporting viewpoint please send your comments to CPRG. I PUBLISH ANYTHING SUBMITTED, SO GO FOR IT!!

ed. Dave

**Special Thanks To:** Those who submitted articles for this issue!!

**Issue/Numbering:** In keeping with the new numbering system, this is now issue #25. **Thanks for financing this river trip!**

#21—Volume 7, Number 3, Fall 2000, CNP vertebrate survey

#22—David Brower on cover

#23—Dark Canyon Revisited

#24—Bert Loper on Cover

#25—This Issue

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## THE PREZ SEZ

**H**i all and welcome to a new Confluence. Also, greetings from Olympic Hell! Can someone please tell me how and why disapproval of the Olympics somehow became synonymous with lack of patriotism? It's not that I don't enjoy winter sports, I ski three times a week, whenever I am not in school or working on CPRG stuff. And it's not that I don't like Utah. I love Utah, born and raised here and I wouldn't change that for anything. I would just like to clarify that my lack of Olympic enthusiasm has nothing to do with my love of our country. I would just like to be able to park my car. Or alternately, I would like to turn left anywhere in the greater Salt Lake area. Does that make me a poor sport? Does this make me unpatriotic? Sorry, am I on a tangent here? I know that many of you winter here in Salt Lake and are probably feeling the same way right now. So I thought that I would throw that in as a little food for thought. Actually, truth be told, I am being a total hypocrite. I purchased Silver Olympic Hockey tickets. Transportation allowing, I plan on attending.

Far be it from me to pout about silly parking problems. Let's get psyched up for another great year on the river. The CPRG events are as follows:

**Cataract Interpretive Trip:** Sponsored By Western River Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is Dan Phillips. April 28th through May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Westwater Interpretive Trip:** Sponsored by World Wide River Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is Annie Payne. May 8th through 10th (Launch 9<sup>th</sup>).

**San Juan Interpretive Trip:** Sponsored by Wild Rivers Expeditions. CPRG coordinator is John Weisheit. March 15th through 18<sup>th</sup>.

**Yampa Interpretive Trip:** Sponsored by Hatch River Expeditions. CPRG coordinators are Marty Shelp, Joe Keys, Darren Smith (Team AB). May 6th through 9<sup>th</sup>.

**River Education Seminar: River Rescue.** CPRG coordinators are Annie Payne and Molly Taylor @ Big Bend Campground and daily section of the Colorado river. April 19th through 21st.

**Uintah Basin Seminar:** May 28th in the Vernal area. CPRG coordinator is Herm Hoops. Time and place to be determined. Email Herm at <hoops@iwworks.com>.

**General Membership meeting:** TBA.

OK, so is this an all star line up or what? Not bad for a little non profit such as ourselves! If you have questions, or you would like to participate, contact CPRG at 435-259-3598 or by email <cprgutah@hotmail.com>, or contact your outfitter as they often times will pay your way! Space is limited so reserve your spot now! Or, if you have any CPRG related questions, feel free to email me at <anniet@lasal.net> or call 801-220-0350. I love hearing from you guys. Mostly, I am asking all of you, to please get involved. CPRG needs new faces.

## THE VICE PREZ/EDITOR SEZ

**I** hope you enjoy the issue. The addition of Adobe PhotoShop 5.5 has made it easier and harder to put this together—any of you computer phobes will know that the more powerful the program, the harder it is to use (at first).

Don't hesitate to send in your articles, we hardly ever refuse anything—and only rarely edit the content. (Herm!) So send us your stuff and I won't have to type and scan so much original history stuff—although I get a kick out of doing it. Speaking of which, I would like to thank guide member Randy Larsen of Grand Junction for passing on a 1956 USGS Quadrangle 1:250,000 of Escalante, Utah. You will see portions of it all over the place this issue—notably on the cover and page 2. Its basically Glen Canyon before the reservoir.

Go on the interp trips—they are a blast!

By the way, many people ask how I am doing—I would like to say that I am doing pretty damn GREAT! Thanks for your concern—Lance Armstrong and I are going to live to be a hundred!

## America Outdoors Convention

by Herm Hoops

**T**he America Outdoors convention, a "Confluence" of 450 outfitters from around the country (37 states and 50 countries), was held in Denver this past December. Four days of seminars, meetings, parties, and river equipment exhibits highlighted this congregation of the educational, political action and marketing organization. River company owners and exhibitors are the predominate attendees.

Shane Edwards (Moki Mac River Expeditions—Green River) and I (River Runners—Vernal) attended Confluence thanks to the generosity of our employers. Shane and I agree this convention is a real eye-opener for river guides. Any guide who sits in on the agency permitting policies and fee program sessions would have a better insight into what our owners have to endure and how fragile their investments are.

There are a lot of sessions that would be valuable for guides to attend. Sessions on risk management, critical incidents (deaths & serious injuries), maintaining equipment, business management, political action, the regional meetings (UGO business meeting) and others help to keep us up-to-date on old and emerging river issues. The session on critical incidents was particularly valuable—have you ever imagined what happens if someone dies on one of your trips?

Some of the topics can be disturbing. In the emerging risk management session EMS folks explained that they are pressing for ever-higher medical qualifications (and associated costs!). The way it works is that a few companies establish a higher standard, and then others, in fear of lawsuits, follow suit.

There are vast networking possibilities, this is the place to find potential work, and to see what people are paying and requiring in other parts of the country and world. The sponsors hold several large parties which presents opportunity to meet and socialize with other river folk. There is a huge trade show with exhibitors like NRS, Highside, Chaco, and others including river clothing and the newest gear. Many of the purveyors offer significant discounts.

Unfortunately few guides attend the convention, probably because the cost to attend is high (around \$250), and the show is not marketed to the guiding community, though we are welcome participants. Perhaps this is something CPRG should look into, because there is definite value for those of us who earn our livelihood from river running. Next years convention (called Confluence) will be held in December at Biloxi, MS. For information you can contact America Outdoors at <[www.americaoutdoors.org](http://www.americaoutdoors.org)>.

## UINTAH BASIN GUIDE SEMINAR

An Editorial by Herm Hoops

In 2001 CPRG sponsored the first river guide education seminar in the Uintah Basin. Over 50 guides attended the hugely successful day long event. The seminar was successful, largely because of support of companies like ADRIFT ADVENTURES (Dino), COBS, ADVENTURE BOUND and ARTA as well as local businesses like SMITH'S FOOD & DRUG and JUBILEE IGA FOOD & DRUG, and the VERNAL DISTRICT OF BLM.

The Uintah Basin doesn't have the luxury of widespread community, business and government agency support that Moab has. Indeed some employees of Dinosaur National Monument would rather CPRG not succeed in conducting the educational seminars.

One of the issues we needed to solve was efficient handling and accounting of donations and funds. This winter I attempted to work out

an agreement to cooperate with the Dinosaur Nature Association (DNA) to handle funds and help with the seminar. Part of DNA's mission is to become a recognized educational leader in the region. Our educational mission fits nicely with the educational mission of DNA, and they conduct a series of other educational seminars.

The DNA Board of Directors recently rejected our proposed spirit of cooperation. Association and NPS managers chose not to voice strong support for the cooperation. Thus the DNA Board's decision leaned heavily on the advice of their lawyer and officials from Dinosaur National Monument who said that it was not a good idea because blah, blah, blah.

That we produced a quality, valuable seminar is beyond reproach. It seems like the individuals who turn the wheels of education up here would rather spend thousands of dollars of donations on THEIR DNA/NPS seminar (last year drew ONE person) and exert total control of THEIR river trip (draws about 15) than cooperate with us to educate fifty or more. It seems they get more pleasure from letting a historic homestead deteriorate so that they can spend thousands of dollars for publicity to rejuvenate it, than from positive efforts.

Of course the Dinosaur Nature Association and Dinosaur National Monument has a response to these comments: BLAH, BLAH, BLAH.



Elmer Kane, James McCormick, John Jacobs, John Hislop  
Harry McDonald, William Edwards, James Best, Albert Gregory, Luther Jewell

Note: Gregory was not on the river trip.

# A River Runnin' Black

by Pops Smith

I keep having these words hanging around in my head and I have to get them on paper before they go away. This poem is about the most unique trip I have ever experienced. Joe Keyes was the trip leader and I'll bet even with his wide experience it was an unusual one for him, too.

I guess I should have known,  
At the beautiful Gates of Lodore.  
When everything felt so different,  
And my belly it was sore.

This would be an uncommon trip,  
With memories to bring back.  
Of when Coyote, the Trickster's blood,  
Turned a mighty river black.

How can the Green River be mighty,  
When running so little flow?  
Around 750 per the scuttlebutt,  
Now that is really low!

In an 18 foot self-bailing Demaree,  
A rock magnet premier.  
I'll be doing far more sticking,  
Than floating the River I fear.

The crew this trip can't be topped,  
Except by very damned few.  
With Joe as the trip leader,  
Guides Jeff, Beth and Crunch too.

And Pops in the sweep boat,  
I'll be bringing up the rear.  
To pick up all the pieces  
And any left over gear.

Another clue of our demise,  
Came the following morning.  
Our vans with folks are running late,  
Another dire warning.

Still feeling under the weather,  
I really could back off.  
Marcus can run the sweep boat,  
And his driver's hat I'll doff.

But the last trip of my season,  
And maybe of my career?  
I may be leaving forever,  
The cost would be severe.

If fate deems that I can't return,  
I'd better be damned sure.  
My reasons now are valid,  
And I truly cannot endure.

And Beth, a good river friend,  
Her sis and family here.  
Good folks to meet and get to know,  
I really must persevere.

This trip, it will be different,  
An exciting sensation is strong.  
If I don't belly up I'll regret it,  
I'd better go along.

Look around you in awe,  
And then, Pops, revel.  
This river, this canyon is where  
The Ancients often dwell.

What a waste it would be to miss it,  
By looking inside miserably.  
There's yet so much to see and feel,  
Just look outward, lovingly.  
Below the put-in, I'm all alone,

Most everyone chose a duckie.  
At least I'll have some solitude,  
Rowing in the back, so free.

Is this illness just the blues,  
With this great year at an end?  
Can it make you physically sick,  
When feelings so low descend?

Lunch is set up right away,  
So late did we get to start.  
A quiet affair among strangers,  
Guests still staying far apart.

The river soon will change that,  
It's flowing low, but brisk!  
Self rescue drills in the duckies,  
Bring home that there is risk.

Two folks on my boat now,  
Declining after the drill.  
For the security of more rubber,  
And less chance of a rapids spill.

Marge and Chelsea new to the river,  
A lesson they have learned.  
On the Green it's serious business,  
Better cautious and not burned.

But mother Marge is feeling low,  
To fail a seldom thing.  
Usually up in front of the pack,  
An injured arm she's favoring.

Do not fear a boring time,  
There'll be plenty of kicks you see.  
Just bask in His great glory,  
Brahma will challenge relentlessly.

Disaster Falls is just ahead,  
My adrenaline starts to rise.  
Shallow rocks are already clawing,  
That fact is no surprise.

Five big boats, identical,  
Classy scene that's for sure,  
But all five stuck on rocks!  
Don't want that in the brochure.

I've been hard stuck before,  
It's a part of rowing Lodore.  
But never so often or so hard,  
This is a son of a whore.

Why, when given a way out.  
Why did I stay?  
I'm nuts or perhaps delusional,  
I truly cannot say.

Stuck I am, again and again,  
Wild oars popping off'n the pin.  
Settle down Pops, take small strokes,  
Pulling shallow is not a sin.

Stuck once more in Lower Disaster!  
Joe came on back to help.  
Why so run down, so exhausted?  
I'm weaker than a whelp!

The final straw is in the rapid,  
Above little Zenobia Creek.  
I'm so stuck and so is Jeff,  
Oh! But it looks bleak!

Stuck again, this time for good,  
I can't lift this damned boat free.  
Ol' Coyote may have won,  
But why with such obvious glee?

Onto us He brought great Thunderer,  
Roaring loud and striking out.  
Hitting high trees with lightning,  
Starting fires all about.

A stinging hail, a driving rain,  
And no protection, a dilemma!  
Little Chelsea full of fear,  
Marge yelling Enough drama!

A rigorous test from the Trickster,  
Do I have the mettle to succeed?  
Shape up Pops! Get that boat goin,  
Camps around that yonder lead.

Get these people to safe haven,  
And rain gear for to warm 'em.  
To win the war will avenge this battle,  
That'll be the ultimate gem!

As we approach the Pot Creek camp,  
The violent elements recede.  
Bright sun shines upon the sand,  
Seemingly mocking our human need.

Six hours of rowing and just nine miles,  
The toughest I've had to endure.  
Then over a beer, comments Jeff,  
Hardest I've ever worked I'm sure!

I quickly look inside myself,  
Reassured I've not been alone.  
In this feeling of exhaustion,  
That has me nearly prone.

But I feel good! No longer sick!  
Coyote, he started this war!  
Now I'm ready for the rest,  
He'd best bring more to the fore.

I stand and yell toward the heavens,  
You're gonna need more next time!  
Fist raised high in defiance,  
I'm feeling closer to my prime.

Good food cooked for the folks,  
To reward the day they've had.  
750 flow is really really low,  
And on this Green River it's bad.

Day two dawns with a promise,  
It's gonna be dry and hot.  
How will we down along the way,  
Beat this strong and Ancient hotshot?

Boatman Prayer at the launch,  
A good start I missed yesterday.  
Triplet Falls then Hell's Half Mile,  
We may really need to pray!

Stuck once more in Triplet,  
My oar flew out again.  
Calm down and keep 'em shallow,  
You really want to win.

Beth nailed in Hell's Half Mile,  
Boat wrapped 'round Lucifer.  
Family high siding like old pros,  
That made the difference for her.

She's off that rock, Coyote!  
You've met your match this day!  
When were done with this Half Mile,  
You'll really have hell to pay.

I run fast and clean past Lucifer!  
Trickster, you've shot your wad!  
Better get more help today,  
You're not a strong enough God.

Ol' Trickster must have laid back,  
To lick hard every wound.  
We've given him a bad day,  
But he's figuring how were doomed.

Limestone camp, have we beaten him?  
The sun is still shining full.  
It's early and there's time to play,  
But he'll sneak up; No bull!

A leisurely boatmen's meeting,  
Talk of business and later a hike.  
This is what guiding river trips  
Is supposed to always be like.

Start the coals, the dutch oven,  
Also soup, but be vigilant!  
The Ancients live here everywhere,  
And by now they're militant.

Is that a wisp of cloud,  
Peeking over yon canyon wall?  
I'll surely keep one eye upward,  
But it seems so very small.

Cooking coals are nearly ready,  
Is that a little wind I feel?  
Where is the sun, it's getting dark?  
Way too early, what's the deal?

We're in it again, a renewed attack!  
Get a tarp and protect the coals!  
Thunderer roaring, Windbird screaming,  
Rainman opening in the sky, great holes.

Lightning crackling and reverberating,  
Tumult, commotion, uproar and din!  
Are words too mild and inadequate  
To describe their desire to win.

On rages this noble battle,  
Our guests jump into the fray.  
Not another day like yesterday,  
All feeling so much like prey.

So how do you beat 'em,  
They're so powerful you say?  
Just crack a beer and cope,  
Make it fun, go on with your day.

For an hour they raged intensely,  
And then for a half an hour more,  
Till their anger was clearly spent,  
Our affronts had left them sore.

Soup and beer were served in shifts,  
Out from under the tarp.  
And chicken grilled anyway,  
No matter their thunderclaps sharp.

And later after they'd retreated,  
A few drinks near my raft.  
Some folks hiked up the canyon,  
No more fear of these spirits' wrath.

Poems about these vengeful Gods,  
And of the river seemed right.  
As the end of the day faded gracefully,  
Into a lovely moonlit night.

The theme of this is how unique  
And how special is this trip.  
Facing low water and wrathful Gods,  
Unblinking as their ire lets rip.

And the sign they sent that we'd prevailed,  
I was sorely taken aback!  
In the bright full moon around midnight,  
The Green River was flowing jet black.

I took that late walk to the rafts,  
Five white tops in sharp relief.  
Against velvet and obsidian ripples,  
Flashing moonbeams, beyond belief.

Never in all the other times  
I've run this Canyon so primitive.  
Has it been so different, so unmatched,  
So alive and intensely provocative.

Other ethereal things did happen,  
Before we ended our stay.  
Like on the hike up Jones Creek  
After noon the following day.

A herd of bighorn ewes and lambs,  
Were unusually calm and tame.  
A mule deer doe and her new fawn,  
So close to them we came.

The pictographs above the creek,  
Defaced with a shotgun blast.  
Sage ten feet tall along the trail,  
A wonder that in my mind will last.

And the river still flowing black,  
Though it's now late after noon.  
You'd think Coyote, the Trickster,  
Would stop his bleeding soon.

And down below the Compromise camp  
The last day we were out.  
Normally I see full curl rams,  
They're usually all about.

But this time they're very scarce,  
There don't seem to be any.  
Why would they flee water?  
Their absence seems uncanny!

I run clean in Moonshine rapid,  
And especially through S.O.B!  
Every other time they trashed my boat,  
Regular as a ticking clock, you see!

And a noisy and violent rockfall,  
Only the third seen in all these years.  
Definitely a clue this trip has entered  
Into other way-out spheres.

Then approaching Split Mountain takeout,  
That powerful and eerie wind.  
Driving boats against the wall,  
I'm sure the Ancients grinned.

I feel it was a fond farewell,  
And a warning for us to heed.  
You got away this time great foes,  
But hurry back, Godspeed.



And finally, as I write these words,  
Far away in my home so dear.  
I wonder if they're reaching out,  
Somehow to interfere.

For three times my computer,  
Has encountered a strange new glitch.  
Off went the text into cyberspace,  
To find it's own little niche.

I know how badly we beat 'em,  
And now they have to eat crow.  
It should be eaten soon, while hot,  
Hard to choke down cold, I know.

If this was truly my last trip,  
I've the privilege to look back.  
To the time Coyote, the Trickster bled  
And the mighty Green River flowed black.

Paul R. Pops Smith—2001

## **Colorado Plateau River Guides & Grand Canyon River Guides Joint Meeting Report**

**C**olorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG) and Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) met jointly at Sand Island campground near Bluff on November 3 & 4. We had a great time getting to know one another, learned some great natural history and discussed Glen Canyon Dam. Thanks must be conveyed to the presidential organizers, Annie Tueller-Payne and Richard Quartaroli.

Over 60 organizations, including CPRG, have endorsed the campaign to drain the reservoir before Glen Canyon Dam. With this in mind we asked Grand Canyon River Guides to focus on decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam rather than focusing on the collaborative process of the Adaptive Management Working Group. We expressed that we believe the Program is flawed and that habitat restoration cannot be achieved until Glen Canyon Dam is decommissioned. We also appealed to GCRG to understand that as long as Glen Canyon Dam stands, the upper basin's reaches will continue to be impacted by accumulating sediment, which is already problematic on the San Juan River and soon to be on the Colorado River. We cited the recent closure of Pearce's Ferry on Lake Mead as an example.

Our appeal was welcomed by GCRG but was not readily endorsed. Previous to the Sand Island meeting, the board of Colorado Plateau River Guides approved a position paper on Adaptive Management in Grand Canyon. It is printed in the next column for all to review.

Simply stated, a wild and free Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park as soon as possible is what Colorado Plateau River Guides endorses.

*John Weisheit*

## **Colorado Plateau River Guides Statement on Adaptive Management**

**C**olorado Plateau River Guides (CPRG) has been a leader within the river guiding community, in advocating for river protection and restoration. Guides have a special role to play in educating the public about the problems that rivers face and the urgent need for society to address these problems.

CPRG is the only river guides' group to date, that has called for the decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam. We invite other guide groups to join us.

Glen Canyon Dam and its reservoir represent a major, continuing threat to the ecological integrity of the Colorado River besides the Grand Canyon. This includes the lower sections of the San Juan River, Escalante River and Cataract Canyon, and the entirety of Narrow Canyon and Glen Canyon. This also includes the Colorado River delta, which requires immediate instream flows to avoid total ecological collapse.

The U.S. government has recognized some of the dam's negative impacts, and has responded with an "adaptive management" program pursuant to passage, in 1992, of the Grand Canyon Protection Act and the subsequent 1996 Record of Decision on Glen Canyon Dam operations.

CPRG recognizes and appreciates the research and monitoring of Grand Canyon ecosystem conducted under the auspices of the Adaptive Management Program (AMP). We also recognize the contribution that Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) has made to promoting sound science within the AMP.

However, despite the good work and intentions of scientists and the GCRG, CPRG remains very concerned that adaptive management is functioning primarily as a delaying tactic that is diverting attention away from the fact that Glen Canyon Dam is responsible for most of the problems in the Grand Canyon. That the best way we know to address these problems is to eliminate their source, i.e. remove the dam.

### **Problems with the AMP**

A collaborative/stakeholder group, known as the Adaptive Management Working Group (AMWG), is the primary decision-making body of the AMP. Its primary roles are to oversee and direct research and monitoring carried out by the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center, and to make recommendations concerning dam re-operations to the Secretary of Interior.

The AMWG is a body of political appointees, including many of the very interests responsible for the dam's construction and for its continued operation. The AMWG

will never support decommissioning Glen Canyon Dam, nor will it support any serious study of the need for decommissioning.

Any adaptive management program focused on addressing the effects of Glen Canyon Dam on the Grand Canyon ecosystem will have major inherent limitations on its effectiveness if it does not study the relative benefits of decommissioning to other “re-operation” scenarios.

The AMWG does not even focus exclusively on mitigating environmental damage to the native ecosystem. Among the AMWG’s goals in its recently adopted “strategic plan” are the need to increase hydropower production at the dam, and to provide for maintenance of self-reproducing populations of trout, especially in the Lee’s Ferry reach below the dam.

### **CPRG Position on AMWG/AMP**

The Adaptive Management Working Group is a political body, not a scientific body, and thus should not be in the position of directing scientific research and monitoring activities at the Grand Canyon Monitoring & Research Center. Scientists, not representatives of the water, power, and recreation industries (as constitute a significant portion of the AMWG membership) should decide the appropriate range and scope of work.

CPRG opposes participation by river guides, scientists, and environmental interests in the AMWG/AMP process, as such involvement tends to communicate support for the process.

We call on all those who support restoration of the Colorado River to join us in opposing the AMWG/AMP. We call on our colleagues in the Grand Canyon River Guides (GCRG) to withdraw their formal membership/representation in the AMWG, and to publicly join us in supporting decommissioning of Glen Canyon Dam.

We emphasize that we support the need for scientific research on restoring the native ecosystem of the Grand Canyon, free of political interference and manipulation by the water, power, and recreational industries. As CPRG is a part of the recreational industry above Glen Canyon Dam, we feel that it is also important to state that CPRG does not believe there will be any negative impact on the recreational boating community in Grand Canyon when Glen Canyon Dam is decommissioned, for we in the upper basin already operate a full season without it. We enjoy the relatively free-flowing characteristics of the Colorado, Green and San Juan rivers above Glen Canyon Dam and the challenges of seasonal river flows. We also look forward to the day when we will have more miles of natural river ecosystems to enjoy and will not have to deal more and more with the negative impacts of the progressive sediment load building in the reservoir behind Glen Canyon Dam.

# The Poo Song

by Roy Webb

Groover. Porto. Banyo. Shittoon. The Unit. Portable Outdoor Waste Management System. For all the joys of river running, for all the exhilaration of that big rapid successfully run, the subtle glories of the morning canyon light, there is still that one thing that hangs over every river trip, if you're a commercial guide or private boatman: the toilet. It's just one of those things you have to learn to deal with. Everyone who's ever had to has some kind of horror story, like the Scatmaster machine at Lake Mead that supposedly exploded onto the faces of some startled river runners; or cans that weren't properly sealed spilling in a boat, or one tipping over when that fat complainer sat on it (Although you also have to admit that is one of the finer things of boating: finding just that right spot for the groover, screened by tammies, access to a little beach, a beautiful view...) I rowed all the way through the Grand Canyon with two full (and I mean full) rocket box toilets strapped under my front frame, and was grateful for the weight in Lava Falls, but when we got to the lower canyon and it started getting hot one of the cans started to burp gas occasionally; I was hard pressed to get passengers in my boat. I remember a guy on another trip who was tough and mean, muscles rippling on his chest and arms, a college wrestler who liked to hurt people; but when faced with squeezing the air out of the tripled plastic bags (back when we used to do that) he quailed, retched, and ran away sobbing. Another time on one of those glorious Grand Canyon mornings, in the days of the notorious tides caused by releases from the dam, awakening to a swirling noise; the water had come up drastically in the night and I could see one of the boatman standing on shore, his hands on his hips in a characteristic pose, watching an expensive custom portable toilet serenely circling in an eddy that had been a high sandbar the night before. Once I was in a warehouse in Kanab with two of the really old timers of the river, pioneer outfitters with decades of river running experience between them, and they talked for three hours straight about portable toilets. It's just a fact of river running life, and no one wants a return to the bad old days of toilet paper everywhere and cat holes in every beach.

The "Poo Song," below, came about as a result of a private San Juan trip that my two daughters and I were on last summer. I was a last minute add-on to the permit, because they needed an extra boat, so to help out I agreed to rent one of the portos and some other gear from the University of Utah outdoor program. It was one of those two-rocket-box systems, with connections for flushing into a holding tank. In the fullness of time on the trip we used it and indeed filled it up, so at the end of the trip I had to get it emptied and cleaned out so I could return it to the outdoor program office. That sounds easy enough save for two things: I'd never actually done that before, and I had no vehicle. Oh, I'd helped commercial guides set them up, take them down, empty them out at the end of the trip; I figure as a historian if you are going to document the river running experience you might as well see it all, but I'd always just done what the boatmen told me to do, and not paid attention to the fine points of the technique. And my SUV was in the body shop, a result of a traffic accident before the trip.

Since I had a bunch of other stuff including a rolled up raft and paddles to return, using my wife's little station wagon was out of the question, much to her relief. The guy at the body shop, though, knowing he had been dawdling on the repairs, offered me his girlfriend's Nissan Pathfinder. Desperate by this point, I said yes, and drove to her house to get it. It turned out to be one of those nice ones, fancy paint job, leather seats, CD changer, all tricked out for cruising State Street in Salt Lake, but not like my own abused Trooper, which has seen more than its share of mud, river sand, dirt, salt, snow, spilled chocolate shakes, and dog hair. I neglected to tell the girlfriend just what errand I needed to run, and with my two daughters, 8 year old Sarah and 13 year old Rachel, we set off. The younger of the two girls viewed the whole thing with equanimity throughout, but my teenager is of a sensitive bent and was, in a word that doesn't begin to describe her expression, disgusted to be sitting close to a can full of human waste.

Edging as far away as she could get from the cans, she would say, as if I didn't know, "Daddy, there's POO in this can!!" As I turned a corner and the cans bumped together, she would repeat in a stricken voice, to remind me as if I had forgotten, "DADDY! THERE IS POO IN THIS CAN!!" I had heard about a local car wash on 33rd South that had a waste dump, so we went there first, but there was no one around. As I was wondering what to do, along came a man in a big RV on the same errand. He called around on his cell phone and found that you could use the dump tank at a local RV dealership, so we set off there and learned, to my vast relief, that you could indeed dump such cans for a \$5 fee. By this point I would have paid ten times that to be rid of this albatross, so I forked over my fiver and asked the guy if there was anyone to show me how the hoses hooked up. Jerking a dismissive thumb toward the door he said, in effect, you'll figure it out and if you don't just hose yourself off. After that, the events transpired pretty much as described in the song. Rachel got out to help me, although she mostly stood waaaaay off and screamed whenever something went wrong; Sarah I made stay in the car behind glass. I didn't want to have to tell my wife I had doused either child with... you know. I had a hard time figuring out the connections, and the lid did pop off at one point, revealing a hideous sight; I then tried to hose it out by standing it on end and squirting water in, which was not a good idea; and once I did get the hose connections on straight it turned out there were indeed holes in the hoses and the waste was squirting out in the parking lot. You all know how after any river trip your hands are in sad shape with cuts and abrasions (especially word processor hands like mine), and I looked at each little squirt and then to the big cut on my thumb, just imagining the deadly germs crawling into my veins. I considered writing a letter to the health department about it but finally figured that such negligence usually brings its own rewards, although I haven't heard about employees of a local RV dealership being felled with typhoid fever, more's the pity.

Writing an email to my family about the whole trip, the experience with the rocket boxes was so vivid that the words just flowed, so to speak, and we called this the Poo Song. We tried to do it with a sort of bluegrass rhythm, but just about any melody will do.

# THE POO SONG

# The Solution

by Dave Focardi

Well, I'm drivin' down the road, with a can full of Poo;  
Don't know where to go, and I don't know what to do.  
We filled that can up on the ole San Juan,  
and now I can't rest until that Poo is gone.  
I'm drivin' down the road, with a can full of Poo,  
feelin' so forlorn 'cause I don't know what to do  
in the back there's a blonde who's sayin "Daddy Quick!  
if we don't ditch this Poo I'm a-gonna be sick!"

So we're driving down the road with a can full of Poo,  
ask the guy at the car wash "what should I do?"  
He tells me "Son, there's a place nearby I know,  
to get rid of Poo to Motor Sports Land you should go!

So we drive down the road with that can full of Poo,  
get to the Promised Land and ask "What should I do?"  
The guy at the desk takes my Fiver and scoffs,  
"if you spill it on yourself, then just hose yourself off!"

So I'm ready to deal with this big can of Poo,  
I hook up all the hoses, still not knowin' what to do,  
When I start squirtin' water, O! man what a fright,  
that lid falls off and we can see right inside!

Little Sarah wants nothin' to do with that Poo,  
so she's waiting in the car, just I told her too,  
I said, "Sarah watch out, and stay behind that glass,  
If I do this wrong that Poo will go splash!"

Then Rachel she screams "O! Daddy look out!  
that Poo is about to come a-sloshin' out!"  
But I grab the right hose and get that water goin',  
and pretty soon to the tank that ole Poo is a-flowin'.

The hoses they are full from that big can of Poo,  
they're a-flushing and a-gushin',  
just like they're s'posed to do  
then the blonde she screams and says with a shout,  
"there's a hole in the hose and the Poo is squirtin' out!"

But finally o're that Poo we at last do prevail,  
and that really is the end of this here Poo-tale,  
Even though it was gross and yucky and it stank,  
that Poo is now safely poo-red into that tank.

So now I'm driving down the road with no Poo  
in the can, a smile on my face,  
the kids clappin' their hands.

We successfully dealt with that big can of Poo,  
and next time this happens I'll know just what to do.

If you don't want your own "poo" story, then pay attention. The following solution I got from T-Berry after a 30 day private Grand trip last year where we had 5 groovers that had not had ANY water added at all; they were washed 5 days after getting back to town, too. This is also one of the cheapest "groover systems" out there.

You'll need a rocket box (20 mm ammo can) or anything else with a good sealable lid. Rocket boxes work well because of their modularity. This works for privates as well as outfitters. You'll need to modify a lid by putting a 3" male RV outlet on it. Take the lid and remove the corrugated metal piece inside, and cut a hole in the lid at one end a few inches from the edge. Be careful to make the hole as close to 3" as possible without exceeding the square profile of the 3" male piece, otherwise more cut and pasting of unsatisfactory materials will result. Drill \_\_\_ inch holes aligning with the holes in the 3" piece in the lid and use a good silicone caulk to seal the 3" piece and \_\_\_ inch bolts to hold it on the Rocket box lid. This lid will receive the Valterra™ hydroflush thingy for cleaning out the groover. A cap can be put on the 3" male piece on the lid if the lid MUST be used while the groover is in service due to lack of rocket box pieces, but be sure not to load stuff on top of the capped lid as this will weaken the seal and we all know what that means! You'll also need the 3" hose with the RV attachment on the end to direct the copious flow into the sewage hole. One without holes will be better than what Roy had. See if you can get clear 3" hose for that magical touch. The hydroflush will work on Magic Groover™ as well, but you can go back to bare bone plain jane rocket boxes again and recapture that lost space and save a couple C's.

After your trip, when you get back to town, use the lid with the 3" piece, hook up the Hydroflush and a standard garden hose and Voila! ANY groover becomes clean. There is no "**donking**" noise from groovers ready to blow because the hose pressure is outside of the groover. The garden hose creates a swirling vortex of cleaning water pressure churning up the most stubborn logs created by the most dehydrated passenger. Plus, the Hydroflush is CLEAR, so you get to SEE the whole process in action! The boatmun will be fighting for the opportunity to clean the groover—except it will clean out so fast that the TL will know who is a slacker when they don't come back in 10 minutes! No more time for a smoke or that surreptitious nap while the rest of the gang busts out the de-rig!

If I wax poetical, it's because THIS THING WORKS! Five groovers cleaned in less than 25 minutes, no mess, and no fuss. The only caveat is that the Valterra Hydroflush is plastic and is prone to breaking if you run over it with your rig, and it is so desirable that it is prone to theft.

