



## RIVER RUNNER'S ETIQUETTE AND RESPONSIBILITIES



## KNOW BEFORE YOU GO...

- ▶ **Read the river guidebooks**, agency publications and topographical maps before running an unfamiliar section of river. Ask experienced friends, outfitter employees, agency rangers and local law enforcement agencies about unfamiliar runs before you go.
- ▶ **Know the boundaries** of the public lands, managed by federal, state and local agencies, and understand that not all publicly owned lands have unlimited access – check with the managing agency for any restrictions.
- ▶ **Respect Private Property.** River Runners should know which lands are privately owned.
- ▶ **Commercial river guides must understand that criminal trespass** subjects the responsible outfitter to the loss of their Colorado River Outfitting License.

## EQUIPMENT

### EVERY TRIP:

- Must have a solid human waste** carry out system for overnight trips. This system must be adequate for the size of the party and length of trip.
- Must have a fire pan** for overnight trips and a charcoal carry out system, if planning a fire.
- Must have adequate storage** for carrying out garbage and trash.
- Should have first-aid supplies** adequate for the size of the party.
- Should have repair materials** to repair the types of boats on the trip.
- Must comply with all federal, state and local** boating regulations that apply to the river segment.

Endorsed by:

*Arkansas River Outfitters Association  
Colorado River Outfitters Association  
Colorado White Water Association  
Rocky Mountain Canoe Club*

**UNDERSTAND YOUR  
RESPONSIBILITIES AND MAINTAIN  
RIVER ETIQUETTE, IT WILL  
PRESERVE QUALITY RIVER RUNNING  
FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.**



Colorado State Parks

**Department of Natural Resources  
Colorado State Parks**  
1313 Sherman Street, Rm 618  
Denver, CO 80203  
(303) 866-3437  
[www.parks.state.co.us](http://www.parks.state.co.us)

State of Colorado • Governor, Bill Owens  
Department of Natural Resources • Executive Director, Russell George  
Colorado State Parks • Lyle Laverty



## RESPECT OTHERS

- ▶ **Respect other river runners'** and private owners' space, privacy and solitude while on the river, in camp, on hikes and at boat ramps.
- ▶ **Group your boats and equipment**, leaving room for others at put-ins, take-outs and attraction sites. Expect another party to arrive.
- ▶ **Please be particularly considerate of fishermen**, respect their need for space and quiet. River runners, regardless of how careful, can ruin a fishing experience, particularly on small to moderately sized rivers. Try to group when passing a fisherman, avoid splashing paddles and oars and avoid their eddy or general quadrant of the river.
- ▶ **Avoid lunches at attraction sites** or at least move off to the side of the trailhead or boat ramp.
- ▶ **Yield on the river where appropriate.** If other parties are going faster, allow their boats to pass. If you are going faster than the party in front of you, be sure your boats are grouped together before passing. Avoid extensive, unnecessary contacts with other parties while floating.
- ▶ **Abstain from water fights** with other parties.
- ▶ **Radios, tapes and CD's should be turned off** within earshot of other river parties and landowners. Using headsets is appropriate in sections of river that have extensive contact with others.

- ▶ **Noise and loud partying is inconsiderate** within earshot of another group.
- ▶ **Always be discrete when changing;** nudity is inappropriate in a public setting.
- ▶ **Explosives, firearms and fireworks ruin** the solitude of a river trip and present a safety hazard.
- ▶ **When encountering other parties** on the same schedule communicate regarding planned lunch, attraction and camp stops.
- ▶ **If your party is small** consider smaller camps, leaving larger, more impacted camps for large groups when the canyon is busy.

## RESOURCE PROTECTION

- ▶ **River runners must agree** that Colorado River corridors contain extraordinary archaeological, scenic and biological values. River runners tread lightly when traveling Colorado rivers and endeavor to "**leave no trace**" of their river journey.
- ▶ **All garbage is hauled out.** All food scraps are removed to avoid skunks, flies, ants, mice and other pests from congregating. Cigarette butts, twist ties, strings off fabrics, dental floss, candy wrappers and other small traces are to be meticulously disposed of.
- ▶ **Liquid waste** such as leftover beer, pop, juices, coffee and so on must be deposited in the river current.

- ▶ **Solids from dishwater**, soups, coffee and so on should be strained and hauled out. Grease from cooking should be hauled out.
- ▶ **All campfires should be contained** in a fire pan. When practical, fires should be built near the river, away from vegetation. The use of driftwood, charcoal and wood brought from home is appropriate; the use of standing timber is unacceptable. When breaking camp there should be no trace of the fire, all charcoal is hauled out, excess firewood is scattered and unnatural wood (milled, sawed, etc.) is removed. In very arid time frames fires may be restricted or banned altogether, check with local land agencies or the county Sheriff's Department before planning a campfire on a river journey.
- ▶ **River runners carry and use toilet systems.** All solid human waste is removed from river corridors. There are only two places to urinate in the river canyons. One is in the river; the other is far away from any camp or tent site. Urinating in gravels and sands are best, then organic soils. Urinating on hot rocks, compacted soils and in concentrated places cause odors. Urinating in wet sand, silt or shallow water with no current, after the river has peaked and receded, causes algae to flourish.

- ▶ **Tread lightly on land** by using low impact hiking; stay on main trails and avoid fragile soils. Be sensitive to trampling native plants and grasses and refrain from picking wildflowers. Pets should be restrained around other groups.
- ▶ **Respect for wildlife** includes no feeding, harassing, killing or displacing of animals. When encountering wildlife, maintain your distance and remain quiet. Pets should be restrained around wildlife.
- ▶ **Treat archeological sites with respect.** They are sacred places to Native Americans. Petroglyphs and pictographs are not to be touched. Ruins should not be entered, sat on or touched. Potsherds and arrowheads are to remain in place. Report violations to authorities. Historic structures, such as cabins and other buildings should be entered with care and all tools and artifacts are to remain in place.
- ▶ **Leave natural objects where they are found.** Leaving fossils and petrified wood for future generations is the right thing to do.
- ▶ **In some areas river runners must** follow specific rules designed to protect natural and cultural resource values. Ask agency offices and visitor centers if any special rules apply to the river you plan to run.

