



## Colorado State Parks

### River Outfitter Licensing Program

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March 14, 2011

To Whom It May Concern,

There has traditionally been a lot of confusion over whether or not school groups and other organizations are required to have a Colorado River Outfitter License (ROL), just as a for-profit enterprise does. The answer isn't just whether or not an organization is educational or for-profit, but rather how they provide river running services. The easiest test to determine if a license is required for your activities is to review if you're advertising for marketing or messaging OR a fee has been charged. If the answer is yes, a license is needed.

Advertising is defined as "...any message in any printed materials or electronic media used in the marketing and messaging of river outfitter operations." This includes any newsletters, bulletin board announcements, web site or online social postings, flyers, posters, e-mails, etc.

Regardless if the fee has been "charged exclusively for the river trip or as part of a packaged trip, recreational excursion, or camp; or calculated to monetarily profit the river outfitter or is calculated merely to offset some or all of the actual costs of the river trip," it applies. This includes everyone "pitching in" for gas or food for everyone.

There are a number of exceptions to keep in mind; "...any person whose only service is providing motor vehicles, vessels and other equipment for rent, any person whose only service is providing instruction in canoeing or kayaking skills or any person who is providing river-running services exclusively for family or friends." These are the only exceptions to the requirement.

These requirements are not in place to complicate groups wanting to use our state's rivers, but rather provide a measure of safety & security to those same users. If it's difficult to justify purchasing the required safety equipment & license and ensuring your guides/trip leaders meet the state requirements for a low number of trips each year, an alternative is to take advantage of the licensed outfitters who are already probably in your area.

All definitions related to this can be found in Colorado Revised Statute 33-32-102. A way to view it in its entirety is at [www.michie.com/colorado](http://www.michie.com/colorado). If you have further questions or would like more clarification, feel free to contact me anytime at 303-791-1954 x 4127 or at [kris.wahlers@state.co.us](mailto:kris.wahlers@state.co.us). Thanks & stay safe!

Sincerely,

Kris Wahlers  
River Outfitter Licensing Coordinator  
Colorado State Parks

