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Grand Canyon River Guides

Professional guides dedicated to the quality of the Grand Canyon river experience

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 2

MAY 1989

Meeting Notes.....ya should'a been there!

The regular Spring meeting of Grand Canyon River Guides was held March 25 and 26, 1989 at the OARS/Dory warehouse in Flagstaff. There were some 35-40 members in attendance, despite a healthy spring snowstorm. There was lots of discussion, a few tall tales, and even some decisions made. All in all it was another positive step to making this a viable and worthwhile organization. We discussed the successes of the past year, made plans for next, and had a whale of a party to boot. The following is a glimpse of all that went on:

*GCRG implemented a free lance guide pool which is now operating. Any one wishing to add their name to the pool should contact Pam at (602) 526-5869.

*A rousing discussion centered on the present concern within the liability insurance industry over excess in drug and alcohol use. It was decided that GCRG should make a statement on the issue and a Resolution was passed that states that GCRG continues to support all existing state, Federal, and outfitter guidelines concerning drug and alcohol use.

*It was decided to increase the size of the Board of Directors from 4 to 6 to make it easier to get a quorum together during our busy season., And a new set of Directors was elected: you should have been there for the secret ballot. Your new Directors are: **Lew Steiger, Tom Moody, Suzanne Jordan, Jon Stoner, Dave Edwards, and Dennis Silva.**

*Much discussion was centered around the unique

problems we have in getting our scattered members together for a vote. As a partial solution to this the organization's Bylaws were amended to require that all voting members be given 30 days written notice of any Resolution, amendment to the ByLaws, or election of officers before it is brought to a vote. It was also decided that, whenever possible mail votes would be taken on important issues to allow the largest participation by GCRG members.

*A resolution to urge the Park to allow camping at Pipe Creek and at Roy's Beach was tabled to committee for further discussion.

*Three resolutions were passed and directed to be sent to the entire membership for a mail vote. These Resolutions were to express concern and urge the NPS to study present river crowding and congestion; to voice continued support of research river trips as an important tool in developing management plans for the Colorado River through Grand Canyon; and to take all necessary actions to ensure the protection of the Canyon and its beaches recreational opportunities and natural resources by alerting the public to the negative impacts of present Glen Canyon Dam operations on the River corridor and by requesting Congress to take actions which will protect the Canyon.

*Committees were formed to send out the mail-in vote, to publish this newsletter, and to develop a handout for our passengers to inform them of GCRG and encourage them to join our organization. Outside of a dandy party saturday night whose effects lasted well into the meeting sunday morning.....That's all folks.

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A Guides Training Seminar We Can Be Proud Of.....

We can congratulate ourselves for having organized and pulled off a very successful Guides' Training Seminar (GTS), formerly Boatman's Training Seminar (BTS). The Park Service River Subdistrict was happy that GCRG was anxious to take on the GTS for 1989. And they are even happier with the excellent results. The GTS committee of Nancy Brian, Dave Edwards, Kenton Grua, Elena Kirschner, Bob Melville, Tom Moody, Denice Napoletano, Dennis Silva, Mike Walker, and Tom Workman with the cooperation and assistance of Butch Wilson, Mark Law, and Mark O'Neil pulled off as good a GTS as Kim Crumbo has done nearly single-handedly for these past years. The major changes in format of the GTS, moving the lectures to Flagstaff and condensing the on-river portion to an 8 day motor only trip to Phantom Ranch, proved to be a successful modification by all participants and speakers. We had nearly 100% participation on the part of the outfitters sending either a contribution of \$250 or equipment and a representative guide. Only one outfitter did not have a representative on the trip. AzRA, Grand Canyon Expeditions, and Tour West each contributed a motor boat, with a boatman, and the accessory equipment necessary to run the trip. The Park Service provided vehicles for transporting food and equipment, the commissary, a paid cook (Dennis "Kominiski" Silva), and several personnel to speak on management issues, including bringing a helicopter in to the camp at Tanner for an on-river demonstration of proper evacuation procedures. High Country Express provided a bus to transport the participants from the South Rim back to Flagstaff. Dave Edwards was responsible for persisting in getting the distinctive GTS 89 t-shirts designed and printed for the speakers and for sale to the participants and at the lectures in Flagstaff.

The actual cost of the entire program came out only \$21.65 over the actual monies received! 17 separate donors contributed \$250 each for a total of \$4,250 and the total cost of the program was \$4,271.65. The GCRG general fund covered the difference this time; this is not to set a precedent. But we are maintaining a precedent in the excellence of the program as established by Kim Crumbo and other Park Service personnel and other individuals who started and have maintained this valuable program through the years.

Babbitt heads Flagstaff Lecture Series....

The GTS lectures, with Bruce Babbitt the keynote speaker, were conducted in the Flagstaff City Hall Council Chambers, on Tuesday and Wednesday, March 28 and 29, from 8:00 A.M. to after 9:00 P.M. Each day were a success by every measure: the numbers in the audience, over 120 at the beginning to never less than 30; and the quality of the information delivered. Each lecturer had an hour for their presentation and some group discussion. Nearly every lecturer was followed by a group of persistent questioners outside while the next lecturer began the next presentation. Each lecturer gave a synopsis of their presentation to the GTS committee. These summaries were printed up and a copy sent to each contributing outfitter. If you wish to see, or make a copy of the set, ask your employer for their copy.

AIDS in the Grand Canyon??

The risk of exposure to AIDS in the Grand Canyon is extreme. Everyone should take all reasonable precautions to avoid infection as possible. AIDS is the advanced stages of infection by the HIV virus. If one comes infected by HIV one must have the virus introduced into the body fluids of infected people, in greatest concentration in seminal and vaginal fluids. While it has been isolated in blood, it has not been determined to be in great enough concentration in sweat, tears, or saliva. The most likely means of such infection: (1) introduction of the infected blood on an open wound of an uninfected person, or injection into the body by any other sharp instrument; (2) contact in the eyes with infected body fluids. The virus can only survive in the very special conditions of pH, temperature, etc.; it cannot survive in water, food, insect bites, or on surfaces. Far and away the most likely means of contracting AIDS is through an infected victim and through unprotected (no condom) sexual intercourse. In all health care fields we should always protect ourselves with gloves. In the case of a bleeding victim. Safe sex outside of a long term monogamous relationship. In any HIV exposure situation we should take the precautions of proper handling of human waste.

We are professionals and are responsible to give first aid. We should have a pair of latex surgical gloves always immediately available for first aid. While there has never been a record of infection of a person through first aid it is a wise precaution to have available a CPR mask to use in first aid service. Being conscious of the risks of AIDS and taking the necessary precautions without compromising our service to our clients is the

Write your letters.....

As guides we have a responsibility and an opportunity to help mobilize the grass roots campaign to alert Congress to the negative effects of Glen Canyon operations and to effect a positive change in the protection of the river corridor of the Canyon. Encourage your passengers to take this opportunity to participate in the campaign to protect this incredible place, point out the destruction, let them know they can and do make a difference. In addition to Bradley and Miller, it is critically important to get letters to Mo Udall, bring his attention to the problem, and make him aware of the magnitude of the public interest. He potentially can be the most effective Congressman in bringing about legislative protection.

U.S. Congressman Morris K. Udall, Chairman
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

on is extremely low but given the extremely severe consequences to minimize the risk of infection to as close to zero protection by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, HIV. To be introduced into their blood system. The virus is found only in concentrations in the blood, and in contagious concentrations isolated in other body fluids such as saliva and urine, these concentrations to be contagious. There are only three known infected body fluids directly into the blood system, i.e. infection, or injection or incision by an infected needle or razor blade eyes with infected blood; and (3) sexual intercourse with an very special conditions of the body fluids in the human body food, insects, clothing, etc., hence, these are not means of contracting AIDS is by rendering first aid to a bleeding AIDS al intercourse with an AIDS victim. As with professionals in themselves with surgical gloves whenever giving first aid to any onagaous relationship is with condoms. While it is a low risk tions of putting on some sort of protective gloves whenever

ive first aid to any victim in need. It is our responsibility to ately available so that we have no cause to hesitate to give infection of HIV to someone giving mouth to mouth resuscitation mask to further minimize what is already probably a non-risk DS and taking the necessary precautions to minimize those ts is the responsibility of our profession.

Mail Vote is a huge success.....

The mail vote on the Resolutions before GCRG was better than the Board had ever expected. More than 100 votes were returned by the 30 day deadline, proving that the guides do want to make their voice known on the issues. GCRG will do many more mail votes in the future.

Resolution 1: To take all necessary actions to ensure the protection of the Canyon and its beaches recreational opportunities and natural resources by alerting the public to the negative impacts of present Glen Canyon Dam operations on the River corridor and by requesting Congress to take actions which will protect the Canyon.

Passed: 101 Yes.....1 No

Resolution 2: To voice continued support of research river trips as an important tool in developing management plans for the Colorado River through Grand Canyon, and request that the NPS streamline launch procedures to accomodate unusual natural events.

Passed: 100 Yes.....2 No

Resolution 3: To express concern and urge the NPS to study present river crowding and congestion, and urgethat the NPS not allow any increase in launch dates for the commercial or private sector until baseline studies on congestion have been completed.

Passed: 99 Yes.....3 No

Many thanks to all of you who took the time and interest to *get the vote out!!*

Grand Canyon River Guides:

President: Kenton Grua

Vice-President: Bill Ellwanger

Sec./treas.: Denise Napolitano

Directors: Lew Steiger, Tom Moody, Suzanne Jordon, Jon Stoner, Dave Edwards, Dennis Silva.

ACTION ALERT!!

We're losing our beaches in the Grand Canyon.

At first glance the potential headlines seem almost comical: EROSION THREATENS GRAND CANYON (What? How's that again?) SAND SHORTAGE HITS CANYON . . . (Not enough sand? Try telling that to the New York attorney who's just slept through her first good Canyon windstorm and is huddled down behind the lemonade cooler attempting to put her contact lenses in the next morning. . .

"We're losing this sand, here."

"Oh, really?"

"Yep. The sand's all disappearing and lately it's been doing so faster than ever, to the extent that a bunch of us river guides finally realized if everyone who has a stake in the Canyon doesn't get busy and address this problem RIGHT NOW there aren't going to be many beaches left for our children, much less our grandchildren. . ."

"The sand? You're worried about the #@*! sand?"

It's a tough notion to sell, that in these days of oil spills and foreign strife and AIDS, etc. , now we all have to start worrying about the river in Grand Canyon as well. But it's true.

Current operations of Glen Canyon Dam, coupled with the big floods of 83-86, are rapidly destroying the beaches and riparian habitat of the river corridor. Since the Dam closed its gates in 1963 and stopped the flow of silt-laden water through the Canyon, the beaches downstream have eroded. By the late 1970's an equilibrium had more or less been reached, but the long-awaited filling of Lake Powell in 1980 marked a change in Dam strategy few saw coming. We'd lost the extra room to absorb especially large runoffs and consequently, in June of

1983, while all of us held onto our hats, the Bureau of Reclamation was forced to unleash over 90,000 cubic feet per second through the Canyon. That flood drastically changed the balance and structure of the sediments along the river, and the subsequent return to strongly fluctuating flows has accelerated the loss of the beaches. This loss isn't the kind of thing that leaps out at you after a couple of trips, but the comparison between what we have now vs. fifteen years ago is really shocking. Those of us who've been here the longest are the ones most afraid of what we see now. What scares us is the rate of change itself: how many beaches we've seen disappear altogether, how fast it's happened.

Fluctuating flows aren't the only factor here - we've lost alot of beachfront property due to flash floods too - but the extreme fluctuations are clearly the main culprit in de-stabilizing the shoreline.

The problem now is that despite concern by the public and the Bureau's own studies, the Grand Canyon is not a major factor in planning releases from Glen Canyon Dam. It's an old story - criteria for Dam operations are economic and political. . . there are complex and often conflicting interests at work here. The sad thing is, so often these battles get over-simplified and polarization occurs: it's OUR Canyon, it's THEIR Dam. . . when the reality is much grayer than that. The Canyon and the Dam both belong to all of us and the real truth is that it's in OUR best interest to operate OUR Dam in such a way that we take care of OUR Canyon, too. But until the environmental costs downstream are seriously considered, the Canyon as we know it today is really in jeopardy.

Who to write.....

Rep. George Miller, Chairman
House Subcommittee on Water, Power, and
Offshore Resources
1522 Longmore Building
Washington D.C. 20515

Senator Bill Bradley, Chairman
Senate Subcommittee on Energy and Natural
Resources
306 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington D.C. 20510

Rep. Morris K. Udall, Chairman
Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Write your own Congressman, too.

This is critical!!

What to say.....

* Tell them you're concerned about the ongoing degradation of the beaches in Grand Canyon.

* If you've been down the River, tell them. You have a personal interest in the place.

* Tell them what you think about the Grand Canyon; that it's important and should be considered in planning of water releases from Glen Canyon Dam.

* Urge them to do everything in their power to protect the Colorado River corridor through the Canyon.

* Be sure to include your address and ask that your letter be answered.

The Canyon has been a good friend to you over the years, be a good friend to it now. **Write!!!**

Who we are.....

We're the Grand Canyon River Guides. There are 200 of us, we're an association of commercial guides from every company operating in the Canyon. Most of us are better at boating than getting together and worrying about politics, but we're united by a shared concern these days. We love the Grand Canyon and what it can sometimes do for the people who come here. We love being a part of that experience (it's a dirty job, but somebody's gotta do it. . .) and most of us have finally decided we're in it for the long haul. . . we're out to do what we can for the kids and grandkids. The Canyon has already taught us that change is constant and inevitable, we just feel it's our job to try and steer some of that change as best we can. Join us if you want. Send 20 bucks, become a member, get a newsletter. . . you know the drill: Help fight the good fight, and so on.

Grand Canyon River Guides

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The ramp at the Ferry has seen some pretty strange trips rigging out, but this one had to take the prize.....

It almost looked like an elaborate April Fool's joke, it being April 1st that day. But there they were, three of the most dissimilar motor rigs imaginable; AZRA, Tour West and Grand Canyon Expeditions side by side looking like they were loading up for the same trip. Even more bizarre were the guides, the rigs were crawling with them. I counted 25, one or two from just about every company in the Canyon. This was no April Fool's joke but it was no regular river trip either. It was the first annual GCRG Guides' Training Seminar.

It was way past lunch time when Cam, Dave and Bob cranked their respective engines and the three motor rigs pulled out into the current. Spread out between the rigs were the aforementioned boatmen and a dozen or so experts of canyon lore. After lunch, below Navajo Bridge, Ivo Lucchitta set the tone of the trip by discussing his philosophy of learning and teaching and perceiving the world around us with a sense of wonder. He stressed the importance of our role as guides in awakening this sense of wonder in our guests. Stan Beus followed by unrolling a 37 foot long strip of cloth, representing geologic time. Towards the end, here and there, were strips of colored fabric that indicated rocks that are recorded in the walls of the Canyon. We tied up for the evening at Jackass Canyon and after a hearty meal prepared by Dennis Silva aka Chef Kominsky, we listened to Ed Norton of the Grand Canyon Trust talk about our part in educating and involving our clients with Can-

yon issues. Dottie House of the Museum of Northern Arizona spoke on the history of Lee's Ferry. Day one ended at 10:30 pm.

The next seven days were as busy as the first. We heard from Jan Balsom on the latest word in archeology, from Nancy Brian on botany, and Mike Yard on biology and the changes brought about by Glen Canyon Dam. Dennis Kubly talked about fish, Dick White about Glen Canyon Dam operations, Dave Wegner about the Glen Canyon Environmental Study (GCES), Teresa Yates about her bald eagle studies and Bob Melville covered birds. Ivo and Stan were in there geologizing every day and between them and Chuck Barnes (who came in at Tanner Canyon to talk about schist), they pretty much covered the rocks. Wonderful Dottie House gave us the details on every aspect of Canyon history imaginable. Butch and Mark and Mark brought us up to speed on the doings of the river subdistrict (river unit) and Linda Jalbert detailed the future NPS monitoring program that she's been working on.

It wasn't all work, though, can't be really with that many boatmen all together in one spot. We were senedaded each evening with sound of artificial (mostly) "moon rockets". The friendships, comraderie and understanding that developed among the guides and between the guides and the NPS will go a long way towards making it better all the way around in the future.

So here's to the outfitters, the National Park Service and the GCRG Guides' Training Seminar committee (especially Nancy Brian and Tom Moody) who make it all possible . . . THANKS.

Kenton Grua

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