

RMCC Colorado River Ruby Horsethief Canyons Oct 3-4 2020 Trip Report

Our annual fall paddle on the Colorado always attracts a big crowd, and this year of living dangerously was no exception. 20 paddlers in tandem canoes, solo canoes, rec kayaks, and sea kayaks launched without incident (or BLM or Fish and Wildlife inspections) from the Loma boat ramp to bright skies and low water. At 2500 cfs, this was by far the lowest we've seen the Colorado on this annual trip (normal is 3500 – 4000) and close to the historical low in the USGS archives for this date. But with the exception of a drop from the bank to the river at launch, a rise to the concrete ramp at take-out, and some unexpected "growler" rocks upstream from Westwater Station, the low water wasn't a problem.

Along with the mild weather and fall colors, we encountered NONE of the dreaded Colorado River rain squalls with fierce upriver winds we often see on our fall trips. But we were not alone on the river – both the Loma parking lot and the Westwater Station parking lot were overflowing with an unprecedented number of vehicles, hence LOTS of boats on the water. Thank goodness for reserved campsites, no matter how difficult they've gotten to be.

Covid 19 precautions made the shuttle arrangements a little more complicated, but once on the river and in camp social distancing was not difficult to maintain.

Thanks to all the paddlers for their help on the trip and especially Kerry and Pauline, Cynthia and James, and Phil for their trip photos. Let's do it again next year!

Bill and Kathy Ashworth



Launching at the Loma Boat Ramp



On the way to Westwater Station



Lunch at Cottonwood



Approaching Mee Canyon



Dusk at the Mee Canyon campsite



Folding and Faulting on the River



In the Mesozoic in Horsethief Cyn



In the Precambrian at Black Rocks



Take out at Westwater Station