

## Meander Canyon, UT March 27 to 31, 2026

We six paddlers Brookie, Lindsay, Pamela, Natalie, May and Gilbert spent the night of March 26 in Moab and enjoyed a fine night's rest after a team dinner to get to know each other.

We set off the following morning to the Potash put-in at mile 47.4 and about 20 miles driving from Moab. Be careful to park in the "overnight parking" rather than "day parking". The drive to Potash was very scenic with vertical canyon walls on one side and the Colorado river on the other. By 10:00 AM we were ready to start paddling, the first day we covered 12.4 miles. Around 2:00 PM we began to look for a campsite for the night. We found a sandbar on River Left at mile 35 across from Shafer Canyon. We had space for our tents (and the groover which we rented from Tex's) then we set up for dinner and a good rest. We could see vehicles across the river driving the White Rim Road of The Canyonlands National Park.



The next morning we were on the river by 9:30 AM and paddled through stunning scenery. We stopped at The Grotto at mile 33.9. We made a couple of short hikes to see Puebloan structures and rock art; in general, some of the trails were rabbit warren like so look back from time to time so you can find your way back easily!



The second night (Saturday) we camped at mile 23.8 across from Lathrop Canyon, again on River Left. We made a hike up to the Puebloan structures. After another good night of rest, we noticed the river had increased flow and had risen about 12". Fortunately, we had secured our canoes well and that was a good pay-off!

On Sunday morning, we discussed how far down river we wanted to paddle. The main thought was should we do 14 miles each of Sunday and Monday in order to reach a few miles past the Confluence, we agreed to just see how it goes and take it from there. In fact, that day we covered some 18.4 miles, helped of course by increased flow and at times the wind behind us countered occasionally by sudden strong gusts in our faces. We passed Coffee Pot Ruin, and Guillotine Arch. Much of the reason for covering a great distance that day was the difficulty of finding a campsite, while some were



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showing on our maps most were for high water levels which means carrying all your gear up steep sandy slope, maybe with Tamarisk to hold on to.



As time was moving on we then saw The Cove, an “established” campsite with small level spaces but good shade. Always hopeful of a better site, Natalie and May scrambled along the river edge but after 30 minutes came back said we should definitely stay at The Cove.



The images show two tents on each level, upper and lower.

During paddling that day it was good to hear Natalie and Pamela practicing paddling together and sharing knowledge in preparation for their next joint trip.



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On Sunday evening one of the paddlers eyes became very sore and painful. On Monday morning it had intensified, with no vision. We sensibly decided to rest at The Cove for the day and await pick up by Tex's on Tuesday morning. We did a little knot tying practice, Butterfly, Monkeys Fist and attaching a rope to a tarp which has no grommets. Meanwhile, co-paddlers gave excellent first aid and the patient rested.

Tuesday morning we saw Tex's jet boat pass us by to drop off passengers downstream and by 10:00 AM they were back to load us up, that was done swiftly and we could see the crew were well practiced in this.



The trip back to Potash took about two hours and this time we could really relax and enjoy the scenery from and upstream point of view. On the boat ride back, the Lathrop Canyon campsite was completely under water and the Shafer Canyon site was just above the level of the river.

The author/patient thanks the co-paddlers for their first aid treatment; you all received an A+ from the Moab E.R.!

We finished the trip in Singha, a wonderful Thai restaurant. We all spent a further night in Moab and were home the following afternoon.

A few tips:

- >park vehicles in the correct area
- >water levels can and do change overnight, be aware
- > fresh water needs are 1 gallon per person per day, more in the summer season though
- >rent a groover from Tex's (if you don't have one)
- >take a first aid kit
- >there can be quite long gaps for when you can get on shore for a break. Either vertical canyon walls or steep banks with thick Tamarisk prevent shore access.
- > river banks can be very muddy and soft.
- >even in late March the sun was strong, keep hydrated and apply sun protection
- >were bug free and saw only birdlife including American Avocets
- >strong winds can appear momentarily and seemingly out of the blue