

Trip Planning

The 84 mile trip from Sand Wash to Swasey's Rapids offers outstanding scenery, interesting geologic formations, evidence of prehistoric and historic human activity, and whitewater opportunities. The average trip length for private boaters is 6 to 7 days. During the spring season, boaters should be prepared for a wide variety of weather conditions as a single trip may include snow, rain, and cold nights, as well as warm, sunny days. Summer temperatures may exceed 100 degrees. Thunderstorms can build in a matter of hours and produce heavy rain and flash floods. Fall is unpredictable. Ice blocks the river from December through mid-March. Running water is generally available at Rock Creek, Range Creek, Chandler Canyon, and Florence Creek. Springs are available in a forked, side canyon near the second camp around Peters Point, at Dripping Springs, at the south end of Trail Canyon Bottom, and at McPherson Ranch. All water obtained in the canyon should be treated.

Shuttle Information: The one way drive time from Sand Wash to the take-out at Swasey's Beach through Nine Mile Canyon is 4.5 to 5 hours, assuming there are good road and weather conditions. Three hours of the trip are on dirt roads with many twists and blind curves. Be safe, take your time.

Driving US Highway 40, going through Duchesne and Myton takes slightly longer, but with only an hour or so of dirt road. In wet conditions, this is the preferred route.

There is no gasoline, water or services of any kind after you leave the pavement at either Wellington or Myton. Make sure your vehicle is fueled before departing the major highway system. Have the drinking water for your trip on board as water is not available at Sand Wash.

The dirt roads to Sand Wash have an abundance of sharp rocks. Flat tires are a common experience. Your best defense is to: Start the trip with good tires, the more tread, the better. Make sure your tires are properly inflated. Slow down! This gives you more time to avoid rocks and reduces the force of impact on the ones you hit. Make sure you have a good spare and all the tools you need to change a tire. When the inevitable happens, the nearest tire stores are located in Price and Roosevelt.