

Colorado River, Segment 5



ESSENTIAL FACTS

Length: 6.1 miles

Corridor Acres: Approx. 1,100

Classification: Scenic

Outstandingly Remarkable Values: Scenery, Recreation, Wildlife, Fish, Cultural, Ecological

LOCATION

Beginning at the River Mile 44.5 and ending at River Mile 38.5. (Potash ponds to State Land)

Moab Field Office

Canyon Country District

San Juan County, Utah

2nd Congressional District



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General Description

The Colorado River cuts through the Kane Creek Anticline, and the colors and layering of the sedimentary rocks are outstanding. This portion of the river forms the Shafer Basin and much of the internationally recognized view shed for Dead Horse Point State Park. This relatively remote section of the river is popular for boaters, both motorized and non-motorized. Jet boats shuttle canoe trips from the confluence of the Green and Colorado River in Canyonlands National Park using this segment of the river. In addition, outfitters market this section as part of a Cataract Canyon trip both nationally and internationally. Scenic jet boat day tours are also marketed along this part of the river.

The spectacular Wingate canyon in Segment 5 of the Colorado River is the riverine gateway to Cataract Canyon in Canyonlands National Park. The river is home to important wildlife species, including four endangered fish. This stretch of the river is particularly important for wintering waterfowl, and is critical habitat for the Mexican spotted owl, which nest nearby. Shorebirds, songbirds and raptors also depend on this part of the river. This stretch of the river is crucial habitat for the survival of desert bighorn sheep, as the Shafer Basin is home to the "mother herd" of sheep that has been used to re-establish the species in Utah.

Summary

This segment has regionally and nationally significant Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) and designation of this segment would provide a unique scenic and recreation experience to the National System. Future congressional designation would protect free flow and ORVs.

There are no anticipated negative effects from designation because there are no competing resource considerations. The area is managed as no surface occupancy for oil and gas and all other surface disturbing activities in the 2008 Moab Approved Resource Management Plan. Shafer Basin on the north side of the Colorado River is managed as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern to protect the relevant and important values of scenery, wildlife, natural systems and cultural resources. Finally, the segments upstream and downstream on the Moab BLM have been found suitable by the BLM and together these segments represent a significant contribution to the integrity of the Colorado River system.

Rivers Suitable for WSR Designation on Bureau of Land Management Lands in Utah

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