

# Colorado River, Segment 3(b)



ESSENTIAL FACTS

**Length:** 1.9 miles

**Corridor Acres:** Approx. 743

**Classification:** Recreational

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

LOCATION

Beginning at the River Mile 99 and ending at River Mile 96.5 (Cisco Wash to the confluence of the Dolores River)

Moab Field Office

Canyon Country District

Grand County, Utah

2nd Congressional District



# Colorado River, Segment 3(b)

## General Description

Colorado River Segment 3(b), Cisco Wash to the confluence of the Colorado with the Dolores River is similar to Segment 3(a) in its general character. However, this 1.9 miles of river is classified as “Recreational” because State Highway 128 is on the north side of the river. Utah State Highway 128 (a Utah Scenic Byway and part of the Prehistoric Highway National Scenic Byway) provides a high quality scenic driving recreation opportunity because of its views of the river. Thick vegetation along the banks of the river generally screens the highway from being viewed by boaters. Thus, the highway does not dominate the boating experience. In combination with Colorado River Segment 3(a), this section is floatable year round, and can be canoed by beginners making it particularly popular with youth groups. Commercial companies extend their Westwater Canyon trips through this section, especially during high water.

Segment 3(b) of the Colorado provides a rich variety of habitat for many types of avian and terrestrial wildlife species, and is home to four endangered fish species. The confluence of the Colorado with the Dolores River is an important spawning area for the endangered Colorado Pikeminnow, making this river nationally important, as these fish are endemic. Waterfowl, shorebirds and migratory songbirds are abundant on this stretch of the river.

## Summary

This segment has regionally and nationally significant Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) and designation of this segment would provide a unique wildlife and recreation experience to the National System. Future congressional designation would protect free flow and ORVs. The segment is withdrawn from mineral entry under the 1872 Mining Law by Secretarial Order.

Grand County supports the designation of this segment, and sees the economic benefits provided by the rafting industry in the county. There are no anticipated negative effects from designation because there are no competing resource considerations. The entire corridor is managed as no surface occupancy for oil and gas and all other surface disturbing activities in the 2008 Moab Resource Management Plan. Finally, the segments both 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.

It is interesting to note that Colorado River Segment 3(b) was a Study River specifically identified in PL 93-621 (an amendment to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act). It was found to be suitable as “Recreational” in 1979 in an EIS completed by the National Park Service, in cooperation with the Utah Department of Natural Resources.

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

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