



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NEW RIVER GORGE NATIONAL RIVER
GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA
BLUESTONE NATIONAL SCENIC RIVER

104 Main Street
P.O. Box 246
Glen Jean, West Virginia 25846

May 15, 2014

Dear Park Visitor/ River User:

With the main boating season quickly approaching, we would like to take the opportunity to pass along information that will help all of us in the river community manage this year's river activities. Enclosed are the operational guidelines for use of the National Park Service (NPS) managed river access and public use areas, as well as emergency backboard locations on both the New and Gauley Rivers. These operational guidelines will be in effect starting immediately and will remain in effect unless changes are necessary. They can be downloaded from the park's website at www.nps.gov/neri.

Little change was needed to update this year's version. The parking organization at Cunard for commercial rafting companies is unchanged from 2013.

One change to mention that can be found in the guidelines new for this year. The park recognizes that the ACE companies (ACE, North American, and Wildwater) have the same retained rights previously retained by Wildwater at Fayette Station and Dun Glen.

In order to keep the river use areas running smoothly during peak visitation, Canyon District Ranger Frank Sellers and Sandstone District Ranger Jenny Noll will continue to work with you individually and through Bobby Bower, Executive Director of the West Virginia Professional River Outfitters Association (WVPRO). We appreciate your understanding and continued cooperation, self-monitoring, and assistance to keep traffic flowing and public access areas open to everyone.

We hope to join you once again in a safe and successful boating season.

Sincerely,

Trish Kicklighter
Superintendent

Enclosure

**New River Gorge National River
Gauley River National Recreation Area
Bluestone National Scenic River**

**RIVER ACCESS & LAUNCH RAMP AREAS
OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES
Revised May 2014**

In an ongoing effort to improve the operations of our public use areas, it is important that we continue to address our common management concerns. In addition to launch area and traffic control issues, other issues such as camping, visitor safety, and area closures that affect commercial boating operations are also included in this list. Visitor use pressure on these areas continues to grow. It is imperative to observe the operational guidelines and regulations listed below. This will prevent unnecessary disputes and misunderstandings that could negatively affect the experience of our guests and visitors. **Please review this information and distribute it to appropriate staff.**

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- **Speeding**

We will continue our efforts to control vehicle speed on river access roads and other park roads. Congestion, presence of pedestrians and road width/grade will determine specific posted speed limits on park roads, and it is possible for a park road to have different posted speed limits for different sections of the road.

When encountering problems related to excessive speeds or other vehicle/driver behavior related to visitor safety, please contact Rangers with this specific information. All posted speed limits and traffic regulations will be enforced as necessary to help ensure a safer park environment for all park users.

- **Unattended Vehicles**

Leaving unattended commercial or private vehicles at river access and launch ramp areas is prohibited. At all areas, vehicles must have a driver immediately available. **Any unattended commercial or private vehicle is subject to being cited and towed from the areas.**

- **Natural and Cultural Resources**

Park regulations prohibit the possession, collection, removal, destruction, or disturbance of both natural and cultural objects on public land. Protected natural features include plants, trees, roots, rocks, fossils, animal and insect nests, shelf fungus, wildlife products, and other components of the natural environment. Protected cultural objects include Native American and prehistoric artifacts, glass bottles, historic pottery shards, bricks and cut stone blocks, metal objects, and any other remains from past human activity. Collecting, or permitting customers to collect, "souvenirs" from park lands, coal towns, historic ruins, or any other site is prohibited. **The park encourages the commercial rafting community to report incidents of looting and damage to cultural and natural sites in a cooperative effort at protecting these important features of the park.**

RIVER ACCESS & LAUNCH RAMPS

- **Short-Cutting at Ramps**

Short-cutting is not allowed at any river access area. Those launching watercraft must use the appropriate ramp and/or launch site. This will reduce unintended resource damage to the sites.

- **Stacking and Staging on Launch Ramps**

Stacking and staging boats and equipment on launch ramps or in a manner that prevents others from using the ramps is not allowed. All launch ramps and vehicle turnaround areas must remain open for immediate use. **The stacking and staging boats and equipment remains a problem. We prefer that issues of this nature be resolved by extending common courtesy to all, private and commercial user alike, rather than involving the law enforcement Ranger staff.**

- **Lunch Stops**

Please do not serve lunch at river access and launch ramp areas, including the Cunard bus parking lot and staging areas. These areas are not designed to accommodate this use. A lunch spot is now available at the Dun Glen boat launch at the picnic tables under the pavilion beside the NPS boathouse.

- **Camping in Developed Areas**

Camping by commercial groups is not permitted in any **developed** camping area from the third Saturday in May through September 30 each year. This includes Glade Creek, Grandview Sandbar, Army Camp, Thayer, Stonecliff,

Gauley Tailwaters and other developed camping areas. The Dungen and Burnwood group camping areas are by Special Use Permit only.

DEVELOPED AREAS

Meadow Creek Public Access

- The private landowner has agreed to allow **non-commercial** use of her property for river access, including the launching and retrieval of watercraft, through a Memorandum of Agreement between the NPS and the landowner. The private landowner has stipulated this area is only for private, **non-commercial** public use and **only available for commercial use under an annual fee system between the landowner and commercial entities**. Commercial use of the Meadow Creek Public Access area constitutes a trespass in the absence of expressed agreement with the landowner. **It is imperative that all commercial companies inform their staff of the landowner's desires and refrain from any use of the Meadow Creek Public Access area without the required landowner permission.**

Grandview Sandbar

- Commercial use of the Grandview Sandbar developed area for the launching and retrieval of boats will be limited to only allow trips such as fishing or rafting or "duckie" trips with no more than 14 guests each trip. This limitation affects the entire river front property, from the "Upper Day Use/Beach Area" to the "Walk-in Camping Area" on the downstream end of the area.
- Commercial outfitters will be limited to two separate trips per day per company brand, whether two fishing or rafting trips with up to two boats each, or two "duckie" trips with up to the number of boats necessary to accommodate 14 guests, or one "duckie" trip and one fishing or rafting trip.
- Passenger vehicles larger than a short bus will not be allowed to enter the area for the purpose of transporting commercial guests and/or equipment.
- Staging of boats and equipment is prohibited.
- Vehicles will not block access or be left unattended. Unattended vehicles will be towed.
- An exception to allow commercial use at Grandview Sandbar will be during high water periods when the New River is at or above 35,000 cfs.
- Camping by commercial groups is not permitted at Grandview Sandbar from the third Saturday in May through September 30.
- Use of this area for kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

Glade Creek

The same restrictions apply to commercial outfitters at Glade Creek as for the Grandview Sandbar. Commercial overnight camping opportunities in the Glade Creek area are offered upstream of the mouth of Glade Creek, in between the old railroad piers and the mouth of the creek.

- Commercial outfitters will be limited to one trip per day per company brand, with no more than two vehicles per trip. Passenger vehicles larger than a short bus will not be allowed to enter the area for the purpose of transporting commercial guests and/or equipment.
- Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings is allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

Mill Creek

The same restrictions apply to commercial outfitters at Mill Creek as for Grandview Sandbar. Mill Creek launch has been impacted by high water events from the river and the creek and may not be feasible for commercial boating. Scouting beforehand is recommended.

- Mill Creek is a "No Camping" area. Vehicles should not block access or be left unattended.
- Off-loading passengers and boats along the Glade Creek Road and sliding down the bank in the near vicinity of Mill Creek is not allowed. This causes very unsightly resource damage and erosion. **Utilize the gravel river access road at Mill Creek for off-loading and loading passengers and equipment.**
- Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

McCreery

- **Only one bus at a time is allowed at the McCreery launch area from Route 41 to the river and is limited to the minimum time needed to inflate rafts and launch a trip.** To avoid conflict with private boat users and the intervention of law enforcement actions, please keep the boat ramp clear at all times, unless actively launching or retrieving passengers and equipment.

- No parking at any time is allowed at the McCreery launch area from Route 41 to the river. Parking is available across Highway 41 and should be utilized whenever possible instead of using the landing area at the ramp for all day parking.
- **Crossing Highway 41 can be dangerous! Please warn guests to use extreme caution when crossing this highway.**
- Busses should park perpendicular to the road near the former general store building, leaving room for additional busses and vehicles. Park as far back as possible to make the line-of-sight distances as great as possible for crossing Highway 41. **Do not block the front overhead door of the building as this building houses river rescue boats and equipment.**
- Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

Thayer

- The Thayer river access is shared by private boaters, fishermen, campers, other park visitors and Thayer residents. Respect for others will help maintain the mixed use of this river access area. This is a pack-it-in and pack-it-out site. No trash receptacles or pickup are provided. **Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in this area.**
- Thayer is closed to commercial camping which includes the entire river front property, from 100' above the "Walk-in Camping Area" downstream to the end of the "Day Use Area".
- Thayer access will be open to commercial rafting trips not to exceed 1 trip per day per company brand. Conflicts with other users and/or Thayer residents or any other public use complication will result in the modification of this regulation.

Stone Cliff

- Commercial vehicles are not allowed on the upper launch site. In this area, outfitters may carry rafts and equipment to the launch ramp from the commercial parking/staging lot. **Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in this area.**
- During launching, commercial vehicles may stage in the upper parking area and carry rafts and equipment down to the put-in area next to the camping area.
- During takeout, only the lower takeout area at the downstream end of Stone Cliff is to be used for commercial takeout and "express" trips. This is the area on the lower loop of the entrance road below the restroom/changing facilities.
- An exception to the above rule is during periods of high water at or above 18,000cfs when commercial companies can use the upper Stonecliff ramp as a take out.
- Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

Dun Glen

- Commercial use of the upper pavilion and camping area is by Special Use Permit only. **Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in this area.** A waiver of the alcohol closure at the pavilion may be granted on a case by case basis.
- The Dun Glen launch is open to;
 1. Commercial fishing trips not to exceed 15 customers per company brand per day.
 2. Paddleboarding trips not to exceed 15 customers per company brand per day.
 3. Private boater and fishermen use.
- The picnic tables under the lower pavilion nearest to the boat launch are for use as a lunch spot.
- Outfitters may launch boats and drop off equipment at the ramp then park in the upper gravel parking lot adjacent to the picnic pavilion. There is no parking along the lower road.
- The ACE companies (ACE, North American, Wildwater) have a legal, deeded access at Dun Glen for commercial use of the boat launch.
- Use of the group camping area and the picnic shelter area are allowed under Special Use Permits.
- Use of the launch area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

Cunard

- The commercial lot is closed to private vehicles from 6 am to 6 pm.
- Commercial parking arrangements for 2014 are allotted as follows and see the attached map:
 1. Position A Express Lane- WV Adventures
 2. Position B—New and Gauley
 3. Position C- Ultimate
 4. Position D- Blue Ridge Council BSA BROCC
 5. Position E- Alpine. ACE companies on Sundays and prior to 1015 on other days.
 6. Position F, G- ACE companies
 7. Position H- ACE/ AOTG shared

8. Position I, J- AOTG companies
 9. Position L- Rivers Expeditions
 10. Grassy Knoll- ACE on the downstream side. AOTG/Rivermen express trips on the upstream side
- On light visitation days, buses and equipment vehicles can pull forward into the parking slot if not a danger to pedestrians, boats, and equipment at the discretion of the NPS ranger on site.
 - An express lane at the downstream end of the commercial lot is available for use. To use the express lane, operators must have a small trip that can be unloaded from the gear trailer without delay. No staging is allowed in the express lane, and the time limit in the express lane is 15 minutes or the minimum time necessary to launch the trip.
 - A lane must be kept open a minimum of 1-1/2 raft width along the concrete walkway on the river side of the commercial parking area to allow adequate passage to carry rafts to the launch area ramp. This walkway is delineated by a painted line.
 - Commercial use of the private boater ramp is prohibited.
 - Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.
 - The Special Use Ramp is open to:
 1. Private boaters and fishermen
 2. As a commercial take out for upper New River raft trips
 3. Rigged trips such as fishing and overnight trips
 4. Trips involving mobility-impaired guests, elderly guests or small children who otherwise cannot walk up the stairs.
 5. Abuse of the special use ramp by outfitters will result in stricter regulation and closure of the gate.
 - **Eating of lunches is prohibited in the bus parking lot, staging area or launch ramp at Cunard.**

Fayette Station

- Commercial buses must stage in the upper parking lots. The lower beach (commercial takeout) is only open to equipment-carrying vehicles from 6 am to 4 pm. No parking. Unattended vehicles will be towed.
- Private boaters may use the lower take out after 4 pm for picking up boats. No parking. Unattended vehicles will be towed.
- Because of limited space, a maximum of two (2) passenger busses per company brand are allowed in the commercial parking area at any one time. All companies are expected to work together on a bus staging system to reduce congestion. The Burnwood area is also available for staging purposes.
- Only one equipment vehicle per company brand is allowed in the lower beach takeout area at any one time.
- The ACE companies (ACE, North American, Wildwater) have a legal, deeded access to Fayette Station. The ACE companies are granted a reserved space at the takeout. They have the right to drive their passenger pickup bus to the Lower Beach takeout. This reserved space is at the upstream end of the center aisle above the large "table rock". Park staff appreciates other outfitters' compliance in adhering to this deeded, reserved right exception in the Fayette Station area regulations.
- Use of this area for organized events such as kayak/canoe clinics/demos, race events, baptisms and weddings may be allowed under Special Use Permits. Please contact the park's Program Specialist at 304-465-6517 to check available dates and request Special Use Permit applications.

EMERGENCY BACKBOARD LOCATIONS NEW RIVER

Emergency backboard locations are described below. **Each emergency backboard location is marked with fluorescent flagging tape.** In the event that you use a backboard please notify the **NPS River Rangers: 305-574-0165 ext 112. Return the backboard to the Burnwood Ranger Station.** If you need assistance performing an evacuation, Park Rangers can be radio dispatched by calling 304 256 1700 or 911. You are requested to let the national Park Service know any time that you use a backboard.

Brooks-River left below the falls

Sandstone Falls- Under boardwalk overlook, river left

Grassy Shoals-River left below rapid

Picture Rapid-River left in the eddy at the bottom of the rapid, above the culvert

Army Camp – River right in the custodians room at the bathrooms (a NPS key is needed)

Duckie Muncher-River right below rapid at the upper end of the old apple orchard

Dowdy Creek- River left below the rapid on the sandy lunch beach

Ledges-River right below rapid

Silo-River left just downstream of rapid

Dun Glen- next to boat house at kayak storage rack.

Jump Rock-River right on Jump Rock

Surprise-River right in the upstream end of the eddy just downstream of the rapid

Cunard- behind the bathrooms on the access road side

Upper Railroad-River right below the trestle

Lower Railroad-River left in the upstream end of the surfing eddy

Middle Keeney-River left up in the rocks, in the left eddy below the rapid

Lower Keeney-River left up on the bank below Lollygag and river right on the ledges

Jump Rock #2-River right at the Jump Rock

Double Z-River right on top of Vulture rock at the bottom of the rapid, and on river left in 2nd large eddy

Greyhound Bus Stopper-River left at the bottom end of the eddy below the rapid

Miller's Folly-River left just upstream of Fern Creek

Fayette Station-Behind the bathrooms in the upper parking lot

EMERGENCY BACKBOARD LOCATIONS

GAULEY RIVER

Emergency backboard locations are described below. Each emergency backboard location is marked with fluorescent flagging tape. In the event that you use a backboard, please return it to the location from which you obtained it as soon as possible. If you need assistance in performing an evacuation, Park Rangers can be radio dispatched by calling 256-1700 or 911. *You are requested to let the National Park Service know any time that you use a backboard.*

PLEASE REPORT THE USE OF BACKBOARDS TO THE NPS: 574-0165 X 112

TAILWATERS PARKING LOT - Behind bathroom

INITIATION - River right in the upstream end of the eddy below the rapid

INSIGNIFICANT - River right on top of large rocks at the upper end of the recovery eddy

PILLOW ROCK - River left directly across from Recovery Rock and river right near Photographer Rocks

CONFLUENCE – River left next to big tree on beach

LOST PADDLE - 3rd Drop - River right in the upper end of eddy after rapid

- Tumble Home - River left about 100 feet below rapid

IRON RING - River left on rocks at scouting/lunch area

SWEET'S FALLS - River right at REAR's lunch area

- River left at ACE's lunch area

MASON'S BRANCH - River right in commercial parking lot

JUMP ROCK - (Below Gillespie's Hole) - River right on ledges below Jump Rock

WOOD'S FERRY - River left just after rapid

WOOD'S FERRY ACCESS - River right in behind bathroom

KOONTZ'S FLUME - River left in big eddy below rapid

JUNKYARD - River left near NARR's overnight spot

LOWER MASH - River right just above Diagonal Ledges

DIAGONAL LEDGES - River right, about halfway through the rapid on small sandy beach

HEAVEN HELP YOU - River right just below rapid

BFR # 2 - River right on the adjacent beach

PURE SCREAMING HELL - River right just below rapid

- River left just below rapid

Revised June 2013

- A = EXPRESS AREA - WV ADVENTURES
- B = NEW + GAULEY
- C = ULTIMATE
- D = BLUE RIDGE BSA COUNCIL
- E = ALPINE. ACE ON SUNDAYS AND UNTIL 10:15 AM OTHER DAYS
- F = ACE COMPANIES
- G = ACE COMPANIES
- H = ACE | AOTG SHARED
- I, J = AOTG COMPANIES
- L = RIVERS EXPEDITIONS



DESIGNED BY: SMT	TITLE OF SHEET COMMERCIAL PARKING AND LAUNCH AREA
CHECKED BY: ROB ALVA	
TECH. REVIEW:	

LOCATION
GUNNARD

JUNE, 2013

