

LAKE POWELL CAMPING TRIP

SEPTEMBER 18-22, 2015

by Marsha Dougherty



FRIDAY: We were up by 6:45AM, put in at the Bullfrog Marina boat ramp and were ready to go on time. It was a beautiful day! Those attending were Clark Strickland, Tim Fletcher, Sue Hughes, David Hustvedt, Brian Hunter, co-leader, and trip leader Marsha Dougherty.

We paddled up-lake, scouted river right and saw some spots to camp but they were all taken by houseboats. We paddled Moki Canyon up to the end. All the camping spots prior to that were taken by houseboats. At the end is a nice large beach where we camped. My GPS lost reception at the end; David's GPS said 9.25 miles for the day.

SATURDAY: We broke camp and were paddling by 9:10am. We paddled the other arms of Moki [spelled Moqui on some maps] where we saw a beaver. Then we paddled from the mouth of Moki across the channel and then across again diagonally to our lunch spot near buoy marker 102.

That was a fair amount of open water and there was some boat traffic to be aware of. We kept a good pace and we all stayed together, within 15 feet of each other.

I think the trick to staying together is that everyone has to stay side by side and the person in front has to stop paddling if they can't see everyone, well actually each person has to stop paddling if they can't see everyone.



The boats are stacked so it's hard to tell, but the photographer could see all the other five: gray, blue, green, yellow, and a bit of orange.



Then we crossed again and paddled and scouted river right [the west side of the channel] where there were camp spots, but our destination was the mouth of Hansen Canyon [spelled Hanson on this map] where we camped for two nights. My GPS showed 11 miles but I had a loss of reception. Brian's showed 17 miles but he did some extra scouting.

The Hansen camp spot is deluxe with an upper viewing area where it was nice to sit and relax.

SUNDAY: We paddled Hansen (there were small camp spots in there if you are not too fussy and a cell tower, btw) , made a pit stop at camp and then paddled across to Crystal Spring Canyon.

In Crystal Spring the walls are sheer. We saw only one place to get out, but an exquisite alcove and spring at the end.



At the end of Crystal Spring Canyon

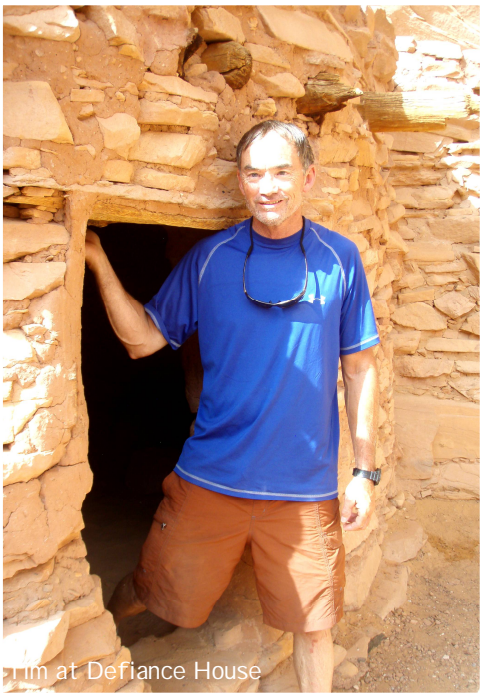


The campsite at the mouth of Hansen Creek had a shallow ledge good for bathing or washing clothes.

MONDAY: We broke camp at Hansen and paddled to the campsite where we camped the year before [the ☆ on the map]. It is on river right and about a half mile before Knowles Canyon; you can see the double arches at Knowles' entrance from the campsite. This year the water was 3 or 4 inches higher than last year and the lower area was under water so everyone camped up on the rocks.

After dropping off some gear, David, Sue and I went back to paddle Smith Fork Canyon. It had a walk or hike at the end that we didn't do and had some beaches and places to camp.





Tim at Defiance House

Brian, Tim, and Clark crossed the channel and paddled Forgotten Canyon because Tim and Clark hadn't seen the Defiance House ruins.

That night we decided to leave a day early because of a possible storm coming in. Our location also meant that in order to paddle unexplored territory we would have to go farther away from Bullfrog, which we hadn't scheduled time to do.



It started blowing really hard around dinnertime but the wind stopped for our paddle the next day.



Luckily rain didn't pour down through the shallow basins that made such nice tent sites.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22: On the paddle out we took the time to explore some fingers on river left that we have never stopped at before. We really had a nice time.



An especially lovely sunset on the last night

NOTES FOR NEXT TIME: The campsite which is in sight of Knowles is 13 miles from Bullfrog; we should plan to camp farther north and then make the paddle out in two days.

Another thing we noticed is that Lake Powell is nearly deserted on Monday so if we make the drive day a Sunday and put-in on Monday we would have first choice to camp just about anywhere.

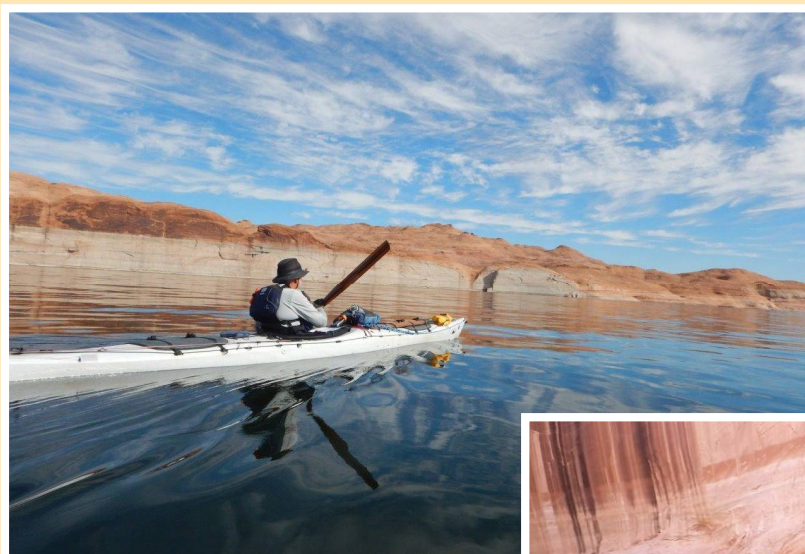
Green River is a good distance for stopping for the night on the drive home, but motel rooms there were sold out; maybe next time we should make a reservation.

We stayed at the Super 8 in Grand Junction for \$63.00 a room. The Comfort Inn was across the street and if I remember right they had a better free breakfast.

I had a lovely time. Thank you to all my camping buddies for making this a memorable trip.



The author in a slot canyon on the way back to Bullfrog; Clark is behind her



LAKE POWELL REFLECTIONS

