

### My Days:

A typical day on the river starts at daylight. Tim is up and into the kitchen to see what is happening and who is making coffee. While he's gone I do my personal am stuff and get dressed into my on-the-boat clothes. Then I start rolling up the cots, stuffing the sleeping stuff, and taking down the tent if we had one up. Sometime in there he brings me a cup of coffee and then lets me know when breakfast is ready. Each time he comes to the tent he carries anything down to the boat that's ready and collects his personal gear. Finally I head for breakfast and bring another load to the boat and any tent trash to the group trash before it gets closed up for the day. Once breakfast is over I have very little left to do at the tent site and can spend time helping to break down camp and load the boat.

Loading the boat can be very frustrating. Like two people packing the car for a road trip some things are better off just left to one. I try to just hand stuff to Tim as he straps things in. I like to reserve my bag, day bag, sun umbrella and wine and tie them on where I like them. After a few days of loading the boat every morning it becomes the same every day and it is easier to help.

OK so that's in theory... I suspect I butt in and give my opinion about the way it is loaded and should be loaded more than I think I do. The concept is that each bag, box, and piece of gear needs to have at least one strap going through it. The stuff we will need the least is way in the rear under the back hatch, the stuff we use every night is in the front or on the top of the hatches.



While Tim's loading the boat I try to help others but you really can't do much for them. So helping closing down the group gear, kitchen, hand wash stations, tables, tarps, trash, and sweeping the camp for micro trash and forgotten items helps.

Finally everyone is ready and we shove off.

We row as well as motor so loading the gear that doesn't fit under the hatches is a bit tricky as we need to leave room for the oars to clear. With two more people on board and their gear it will be a little trickier.



## Pooping and peeing



All pee goes into the river or in the wet sand at the water's edge. Luckily we have a snout rig with two big privacy tubes at the front. So during the day Tim will nose into a beach so I can pee. In camp I just walk down the river away from camp or hold it until after dark. Some women just squat in front of the group at the water in camp. All of the poop goes into a big metal army surplus type metal can called a rocket box. The setup (called a shitter or a groover) has two cans. One for

the poop and one for the toilet supplies. It has a toilet seat and everything. The most important thing is to not pee in the shitter... something that can be very difficult for women. Usually it is set up close to the river just for that reason. If not there will be a pee bucket near.

OK... back to my day...

Pretty much sitting in my chair taking notes on canyons and camps and sometimes reading a book but I miss so much stuff when I am not paying attention so I don't read much. When we come to a rapid worth scouting the boats tie up and everyone hikes up to check it out and determine the best run. In some rapids a few boats will run the rapid while others watch and take photos. Usually we try to go in some sort of order with an experienced person first and another experienced person last as sweep in case someone flips or gets stuck in some way. It's a little frustrating with the oar boats and the motor rig because the Park Service rules say we need to stay together as a group so between rapids we spend a lot of time idling and waiting unless we are in flat water where we can clip them all on and tow them. So we shut off the motor and row. Great exercise!

We will stop every day for a group lunch. Also stop at hikes & attractions with waterfalls & side canyons. Then we find a camp. Sometimes it's one we set out to get and sometimes we are scrambling to find something before dark. It's usually the goal to get to camp in time to eat in the daylight but in August the days are kinda short so we will be on the water late.

When we get to camp first everyone unloads their boats and takes the group kitchen gear up to where the evenings cook crew wants it. Then the rest of the group stuff including the groover, shade or rain tarps, firepan, water jugs, and maybe the water filtration system.

Then most start drinking or smoking or just bullshitting about how great their run was through some rapid. OK... maybe some Frisbee throwing, hiking and horseshoes too. I go set up our nest. Ground tarp on the bottom then tent if we use one that night. Then cots, pads, fleece bags. Then I take my sun shower up or down river to a private spot and get cleaned up. Or sometimes I'll just do a washcloth/wet ones clean and lotion up at the tent site. Put on dry camp clothes, lay out my sleep stuff (t-shirt, heel cream, sox) put my headlamp in my pocket, get my wine glass and bag of wine and head for the kitchen. The cook crew will have the hors de oerves out and hopefully there will be some cocktail ice so maybe a gin and tonic before dinner?... or maybe just hang in my chair with a glass of red.

Dinner is served and the cook crew does all the dishes. Nobody usually stays up much past 9 pm. It starts to get light before 6 so early to bed fits.



It's not always like that. About 4 of the 18 days you will have a task to do. Cook, Assistant cook, dishwasher, or groover set up. It kinda makes a mess of the routine. There will also be lay over days when we stay in the same camp for 2 nights in a row. YAY!

The hardest thing for me trip is split fingers, split heels, and cuts anyplace. Things just do not heal.

**Split fingers** - Once you split one it is very difficult to heal it up. Your hands are never dry and the constant wet/dry causes them to split. The best I have found is Working Hands. Some people wear rubber gloves like from the doctor's office to keep their hands dry all day. Tim uses New-Skin on split fingers but it turns all dark brown and gross before it finally heals. I'd rather suffer!

**Split heels** - Like fingers cracked heels are painful and hard to heal. I sleep every night with cracked heel cream slathered all over my feet and little white crew sox over. The sox get gross so I bring 4 pair. Some people swear by this greasy Vaseline stuff called Bag Balm which has been around for over 100 years and is for cow udders. Have there been improvements in skin care in 100 years? Last year I used Avon Foot Works (thru Amazon.com \$5) and ran out early on. I also see that the Working Hands people make O'Keeffe's Healthy Feet Cream... I'll be getting tons of that too. The best answer is to keep dry shoes and sox on but that is pretty hard what with getting splashed during the day and sand in your shoes at night.

**Gear list:**

So here is my list of stuff I bring on the river and a little explanation of why, etc. This doesn't mean you need to bring it... just thought it might help with your packing.

**Good Life Jacket** – A really big deal mainly because it is required by the Park Service that you wear it at



all times when on the river (YUK!). Not only do you want one that is comfortable but you want one with tons of floatation. If you fall off the boat into a rapid the undertow and currents in the rapid pull you under. The only thing that saves your life is the amount of floatation in your life jacket.



Tim has the two above you

can use - they are the old style of this jacket Dale is wearing without the foam over the shoulders. They



are not as big and not as buoyant. He also has two older life jackets sort of in this style: ugly but buoyant & safe.



Most people have either the newer big style Dale wore or this style that both Tim and I have - It has the same amount of buoyancy but doesn't give me tan lines ☺ Some people have knives on their life jackets so if they fall out of the boat and get tangled in a rope or a strap they can cut themselves loose before drowning... Dale didn't, Tim does...



**Helmet** – Dale always brought a helmet and wore it only in Lave Rapid... but that was in an oar boat. I have never seen Tim wear a helmet on the oar boat or Ol School but some people do though so I thought I'd at least mention it.



**Drag Bag** - A mesh bag with a draw string top that you throw into the water and drag all day with whatever pop and beer you drink. Tim has one but I don't think it's very big... or big enough for three people's drinks. I don't drink pop or beer so it's not my problem! I have some small ones and use one for my bag of wine. I do have a ton of this black mesh. We can make some when you are here if I don't get it done first!



**Hike Boots** - Some trips people are real hikers and other times not so much. I hike best in my hiking boots as they give me better footing on the rocks and boulders



But tennis shoes may work just as well for you. Quite often hikes go through water and then back on the dusty sandy trail so keep that in mind. Most people just have tevas or sandals.

**Tevas or Sandals** – Actually I wear Chacos in this style but you see all brands and styles. I wear these during the day on the boat. They are needed to scout rapids and they should be worn during rapids in case you fall in the river.



**Dry top?** - You will be sitting on the front of the boat... or maybe the middle anyway. There is not enough room in the back for Tim to drive and me to sit as it is. Plus we have way too much weight in the back. So during rapids you will get splashed with cold water but the air will be warm so you will dry off quick. But you may want some type of paddling jacket or dry top... women sitting on the front of oar boats wear them... I never did. I guess the biggest issue is that the air is so hot and the water is soooo cold that splash protection is nice.

**Thermarest & Patch Kit** – I always sleep with a Thermarest on top of my cot. Wimp!

**Sun Umbrella** – I know you are sun lovers but this Arizona August sun could be unbearable. We intend to someday get a bimini or some sort of cover on the boat but for now we are stuck with individual beach umbrellas. I get one for under \$10 and use it for rain as well.

**Hat** - My favorite hat finally died ☹️ I loved it because it folded up flat and fit anywhere. Anyway you will want something and if it covers your neck and shoulders all the better. Straw hats last about 2 days.



**Ground cloth** - Need something to put on the ground under your tent to protect it from the rocks, and to help to keep the water out. August is the rainy season and even though rainstorms are short it can be a lot of water. I use a cheap tarp... the home depot kind with grommets.



**Tent** - I have a 6 man Sierra Designs tent I can stand up in. We usually use it in the beginning of the trip and then get lazy and just sleep out. We always set it up if it looks like rain.

**Stakes** – Really important to have nice long sturdy stakes. It will be sand and the stakes that come with tents are a joke. The wind can be really fierce and can blow the tent (along with everything in it) right into the river. Be a long 18 days with no gear.

**Tent Fly** – Be sure to have enough stakes for it too

**Hammer** – I have a stake hammer but a rock works too

**Alpine Cord** – Lots of string. Always tons of uses for it

**Cots** – Better remind me to pick these up from Denise's

**Fleece Blankets** - We sleep in fleece sleeping bags from Wal-Mart (\$12 ea) zipped together. Some people sleep with just a sheet at this time of year.

**Sleeping Bag** – I'm bringing one for the two of us if it gets cold. We will never use it and I will pack it into a drybag that goes way under everything.

**Pillows** – We bring small, squishable, but regular size pillows.

**2 Water Bottles + Cords** – I used an old soda or tonic bottle with a string tied around the neck last time and I liked it. Tim uses a Gatorade bottle. But we are in the minority as most people use some sort of aluminum or nalgene bottle. You will want to be able to tie a string to it with a carabineer on the other end so you can clip it to the boat and throw it in the river to cool it. I bring 2 big bottles and fill them every morning. Most people have 2 or three.



**Carabineers** - If you have any or can get any it would be great. You will use them to clip on your water bottle or drag bag and it is an easy way to quickly clip on your day bag or ammo can just before a rapid. Also good to clip on your life jacket and sandals when you are not wearing them. Everything either blows away or slips into the water. Even if you have some that are not the heavy duty climber type they could be handy. As a passenger I have 6 big ones and still don't have enough.

**Camp Chair** – Each of you need a chair for camp at night. The accordion umbrella fold type than slip into a tubular bag. Mine has a foot rest attached but I'm weird.

**Boat Chair** – OK I'm really weird... well... I guess my back is weird. I sit on the boat in a lawn chair and even used it on the oar boat. Nobody else does so I suspect it is just me and you guys will be fine with the boxes, bags, cushions and the chairs to the right. Which give a little back support. I wish those ratcheting chairs we use on the boat would work but once they got wet they would be a soggy mess.



When it's hot out and rains the Colorado boys get out their rain gear and tarps. I get out a bar of soap and take a nice clean shower!

**Solar Shower** - Speaking of showers I use a huge 6 gallon sun shower. That way we can hang it up and both shower with the hot water. Tim has a couple that are in various stages of disrepair. We can either make a good one out of those or buy one at REI on the way.

**Coffee Cup** – Everyone needs to bring a coffee cup. I like to take my morning coffee on the boat and the tall type fall over. Also this one has a handle so I can tie it to the boat if necessary and a good no spill lid.



**Wine Glass** - Another weird PV habit... most people drink their cocktails or wine from their coffee cup. I like this one because when the bottom is nestled into the top it stays reasonably clean and is less likely to get broken.



**Ziploc Bags** - Never enough of these in all sizes to keep stuff dry and out of the sand.

**Sew & Knot Kit** – a needle and thread, etc





**Thin Nylon Daypack** – Regular packs and backpacks are bulky and it's just for my water and little stuff

**2 Headlamps** - You really need a headlamp. It doesn't have to be a fancy Black Diamond or Petzel – you can get cheap ones for \$10. Be sure it is easy to turn on and off (practice with it). You will need it in the kitchen after dark. The best way to see while you are doing a task is with it on your head pointed at the task and your hands free.

**AAA batteries** - Or whatever batteries your headlamp takes.

**Books to read** – Don't know what to say about the Kindle thing. I have never seen one on the river. It can be a brutal place on electronics with the heat, water, and the sand. Small cheap throw away paperbacks work well because they will get trashed.

**Ipod** – Speaking of electronics ☺ I bring a little ipod I have had since 2006 that has a AAA battery pack attached to it. I like to listen to it while off on a solo hike or when I am rowing sometimes. It only holds about 50 songs.

**X-word book** – sometimes I just get bored and without video games this is the best I can do

**Stamps & Addresses** – We will stop at Phantom Ranch half way down where we mail post cards. Mailing a post card from there takes a full letter stamp. We can also make phone calls at a pay phone there but you need a calling card to do it – I need to research that.

**Camera** – With 4 charged spare batteries and a bunch of SD cards

**ID/Credit/\$\$** - You need picture ID at the put-in or they will not let you go, credit card in case I need to be air lifted out or something and \$\$ for my lemonade at Phantom Ranch

**Watch** – I think I am the only one that wears one on the river

**Sunglasses + Spares** – Never have needed my spares yet... knock on wood!

**Croakies** – Yep the super strong kind are best for this

**Readers + Spares** – And more spares

**Towel** - I have a super absorbent, lightweight towel from REI but any towel will do. Go for something thin that will take up less room and dry quick.

**Biodegradable Soap** – You need to buy this special biodegradable soap to wash with. I use Camp Suds but some use Dr Bronners peppermint soap. I think it stinks!

**Toothbrush & 2 small toothpastes** – Yep I have even figured out I need 2 small tubes

**Razor, Nail Clippers, Vitamins, Deodorant, Brush, Face Sunscreen, Plastic Mirror, Q-Tips, Emery Board, Hair Ties, Nail Brush** – yea all that stuff

**Shampoo** – Supposed to be biodegradable but that stuff just trashes my hair – Sorry Environment!

**Conditioner** – Same as the shampoo

**Kleenex** – I bring about 6 little mini Kleenex packages for the tent and during the day.

**4 Washcloths** – They get really gross if the river is running brown and muddy

**Lotion + Lots and lots**

**Wet Ones +++** Again never enough. I like to have some handy all day.

**Baby Oil** – When the lotion doesn't quite cut it

**Bug Repellent** – Never had a problem but I do bring a small squirt bottle of Cutters

**Lip Balm** – Not only the sunscreen type for during the day but at night I use this overnight lip balm from Body Works and it completely cures the lips.

**Nail Polish** – the pedi never quite makes it to the take-out

**Personal meds = Benedryl** (bee sting), **222's** (hangover), **Ibuprofen** (aches), **Aloe** (sunburn), **Bactine** (cuts), **Cloth Band-aids** (lots large and small – if split fingers are really bad I put ointment on and sleep with band-aids over them), **Cracked heel cream**, **Lip Pills** (anti cold sore pills), **Bladder and Yeast**

**Infection Pills** (don't want any of that on the river)



**Now for the clothing:**

On the boat during the day I wear quick dry shorts and a swim type top. After a day on the river I shower (or at least get cleaned up) and change to canvas type shorts and a t-shirt type shirt.

**River Shorts** - 4 pair

**Camp Shorts** - 4 pair

**Swim Tops** - 2

**T-Shirts** - 4

**Sun Shirt** – Lightweight long sleeve shirt I can put on if the sun is too much

**Undies** – A gazillion pairs - I wear super expensive quick dry undies under my shorts during the day

**Hiking Boot Socks** - 1 pair

**White Sleep Sox** – 4 pair

**Flip Flops** – Another pair of shoes! Good for around camp

**Lightweight Rain Gear** – Sometimes it is so windy when it rains that my sun umbrella system just doesn't work. Thin windbreaker type with bottoms.

**Sleep Ts** - 2

**Handkerchief** – I really need this if it's hot and humid. Sweat!

**Fleece Top** – One will be packed away with that sleeping bag

**Travel Clothes to leave in car** – Nice to have clean clothes and undies waiting!

**Wine** – No glass bottles allowed so I buy bag wine. I found one I actually really like – you might want to try some out at home before you are stuck drinking the same yucky white stuff!

**Personal Munchies** – They provide way more food than we can eat so I never seem to eat the snacks I bring. But I usually make my little snack bags and bring some protein bars. Maybe some super dark chocolate. Almonds are good. Our meals will have hors d'oeuvres every night so...

**V-8** – Red beer is good in the morning

**Vodka** – Not to mention gin and tonics, rum for the blender drinks, we can get all this when you are here



**Day Bag** – You need something to put stuff in you will want during the day. Sunscreen, book, spare glasses, snack, gum, camera, lotion, pills, lip stuff, pen 7 paper, and more. Lots of people use ammo cans but I think they are heavy, bulky and hard to open so I use a little dry bag. Tim has 2 or 3 ammo cans you can use so no need to get anything.



He might even let you take the bullets out!

So that is all I can think of that you may have to purchase. We will need to look at the dry bag situation. I am sure Tim and I don't have enough so you might have to borrow one from someone Andy? Bob? Cavanaugh? or you can rent one from Canyon REO.