

# Glen Canyon

Official Map and Guide

Glen Canyon National Recreation Area  
Utah and Arizona

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



Cover photo by Jeff Gnass

Throughout history, humans have adapted their surroundings to better suit their needs. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area provides a dramatic example of the combination of one of nature's most inspiring and one of man's most ambitious projects. Impounded behind the Bureau of Reclamation's Glen Canyon Dam, waters of the Colorado River and its tributaries are backed up almost 200 miles, forming Lake Powell. The lake and nearly one million acres of desert-and-canyon country offer memorable leisure-time activities for American and international visitors. Fishing and water sports are the dominant activities. Exploring on foot can provide intimate contact with the natural and cultural features preserved here

for the enjoyment of present and future generations. Earth forces shaped this topography that now appears as talus slopes, buttes and mesas, canyons and cliffs. Prehistoric human inhabitants occupied the area and left scattered indications of their presence.

Early Spanish explorers traveled the area looking for an overland route to California and leaving us a detailed account of their expedition. Major John Wesley Powell also left a well-chronicled account of the first expedition down the Colorado River. Powell named this stretch of the Colorado River Glen Canyon.

Not long after Powell's voyage, permanent settlements were established at the easiest and most reliable river crossings. An early proponent of the need for reclamation activities in this arid country, Powell eventually was honored by having the lake named for him. The dam was born amid great controversy and compromise. It fulfills its goals of water storage and power generation and also provides major recreational opportunities. The resulting lake makes it possible for many people to view natural marvels and cultural features that once were accessible to only a determined few. Construction of the concrete arch dam began in 1956, and the final two generating units began providing power in 1966. The lake reached full

pool level in 1980. The spillways were used in that year and again in 1983 to handle the rising lake level caused by flood waters. Today, Lake Powell is one of the Southwest's finest lake recreation areas, yearly discovered by more and more vacationers. The lake and surrounding area are now inhabited by animal species that were attracted here by the recently created water habitat within this desert landscape.

## Cultural History

The first major human migration into North America from Asia may have taken place from 15,000 to 12,000 years ago. In relatively small groups, these people dispersed quickly throughout North and South America and lived in isolation for thousands of years. The tribes in this area, which we call Desert Archaic people, were hunters and gatherers. Their continuing subsistence needs left little opportunity for development of so-called higher cultural traits or for population growth. About 2,000 years ago a major cultural change—from causes about which we can only speculate—transformed these



**Anasazi**  
The Anasazi, the notable builders here, developed complex stone houses called *pueblos* by Spanish explorers. Their granaries nestle in sandstone alcoves, and their drawings adorn canyon walls in the park. Pottery shards lie scattered about. Climate changes drove out the agricultural Anasazi, probable ancestors of today's Hopi Indians, by about 1300.

nomads into relatively stationary farmers now called Basket-makers. Their weaving materials included cotton, which was introduced to them by groups living to the south. As they incorporated other ideas from the southern cultures, including above-ground houses, these Basket-weavers evolved into the culture we call Anasazi.

**Exploration.** In 1776, two Spanish priests began an expedition that provided the first written record of Glen Canyon. Father Escalante, Father Dominguez, and their party set out from Santa Fe in July to pioneer an overland route to a military garrison on the California coast. After three months, having bypassed the canyon country, the party reached the Great Basin in Utah, where they decided to turn back before the onset of winter. On October 26, the party reached the Colorado River at the mouth of the Paria River. When crossing there proved nearly disastrous, the explorers climbed out of the river bottom and made camp near today's Wahweap Marina. They spent four more days searching for a way across the river. Finally, on November 7, they chopped steps in the sandstone wall at Padre Creek and safely led their pack stock to the banks of the Colorado. Here the crossing was wide, but shallow. The Crossing of the Fathers today lies beneath the waters of Padre Bay.

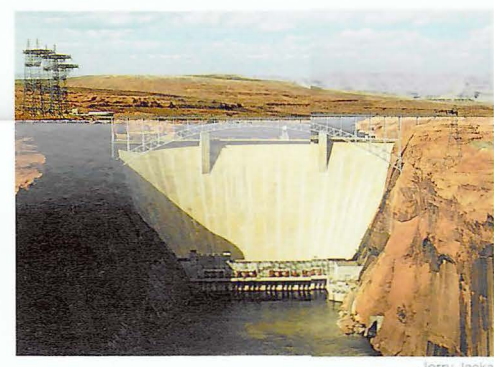
Another journey of discovery began nearly 100 years after the Dominguez-Escalante expedition. Major John Wesley Powell, a one-armed Civil War veteran, set out to learn about the potential for reclamation of these western lands. In May 1869, Powell and his crew of nine men left Green River, Wyoming, to follow the fabled Colorado. On July 28, they entered Glen Canyon and found its waters calm, compared with the rapids of Cataract Canyon. Their trip eventually took them through the Grand Canyon and on to the mouth of the Virgin River in Nevada.

Railroad men with visions of a line from Grand Junction, Colorado, to the Gulf of California explored further along the Colorado River. They concluded that the route was feasible and that the trains could be powered

by electricity generated from the flow of the river, but their backers disagreed. Next came the settlers and, with them, the indispensable ferrymen.

**Settlement.** Although the Colorado River is accessible near the mouth of the Paria, as Dominguez and Escalante discovered, it cannot be easily crossed. John D. Lee was sent there by the Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints, or Mormon Church, to build and operate a ferry. He built the Lonely Dell Ranch for Emma Lee, his 17th wife, and by 1873 had built a ferryboat named the *Colorado*. He was executed in 1877 for his part in the Mountain Meadows Massacre, the attack by Mormons and Paiutes on settlers bound for California. The Mormon Church eventually bought the enterprise from Emma. The ferry ran continuously until 1928. It was replaced by the Navajo Bridge completed across Marble Canyon in 1929.

Mormon settlers sent to colonize the San Juan Valley created a river crossing at Hole-In-The-Rock. At this site, which is just below the confluence of the Colorado and Escalante Rivers, these hardy pioneers blasted, cut, and fabricated a road three-quarters of a mile long that descended nearly 1,000 feet. Charles Hall, a member of that party, later found a somewhat better cross-



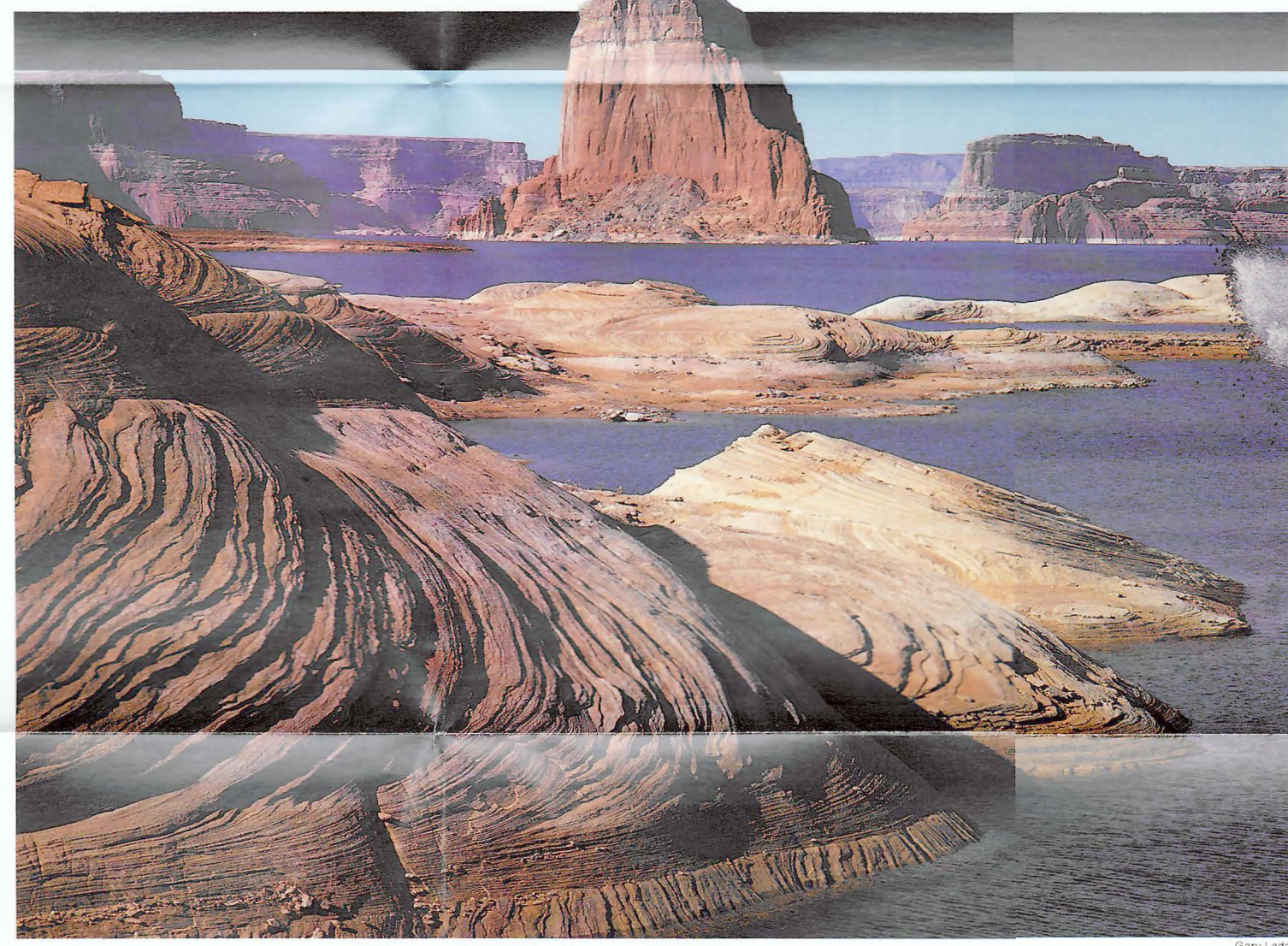
Jerry Jacka

**Glen Canyon Dam**  
The concrete arch dam and power plant together required 5.1 million cubic yards of concrete—poured round the clock for more than three years. The dam's crest is 1,560 feet

long. It lies 710 feet above bedrock and 583 feet above the original river channel. At its full pool elevation of 3,700 feet, Lake Powell holds 27 million acre-feet of water, 560 feet deep at the dam.

ing about 35 miles upstream. He ferried travelers across the Colorado at Halls Crossing until Cass Hite found and developed another crossing that was still more accessible. The ferry and the town of Hite remained active until they were flooded by the rising waters of Lake Powell. Cass Hite also found gold in the river's sands, and prospectors searched the canyons and surrounding plateaus for riches. The gold was generally too fine to be mined commercially, however, so few miners profited from their efforts.

most recently deposited layers. The process was assisted by prevailing winds. These periods of erosion account for missing rock strata—layers that appear elsewhere in sequence. The last uplift of the Colorado Plateau began about 60 million years ago. Uplift made meandering streams of the Colorado River run faster and cut the canyons that



Gary Ladd



**Geology.** The spectacular landscape dominating this canyon country is the product of eons of geologic activity, shifting of continents, global rising and falling of sea levels, and creation of highlands now worn and redeposited. At times, desert dominated the landscape; sometimes, freshwater or saltwater seas invaded, leaving rivers to erode the



Gary Ladd

are Lake Powell's basin. Navajo sandstone, the dominant formation, is made of sand dunes hardened by pressure from deposits above them. The deposits eventually wore away and exposed today's sandstone. Other layers contain sea-deposited sediments; still others hold fossils of land or marine organisms that lived millions of years ago. Petrified



Jeff Gnass

wood and fossils of dinosaur bones, sea shells, and small sea creatures are found in several rock strata in this area.

**Ecology.** Most plants and animals found here are typical of desert species. Cactus, yucca, blackbrush, rabbitbrush, and grasses dominate desert plant communities. Spring or summer precipitation



Jeff Gnass

prompts sand lilies, fleabane, evening primrose, lupine, Indian paintbrush, and globe mallow to bloom. Pinyon and juniper trees grow at higher elevations. Common animal inhabitants include coyotes, foxes, rats, mice, lizards, and insects. In startling contrast, shady spring-fed alcoves in side canyons provide suitable habitat for deer and bea-

## Activities

**Water sports** dominate recreational activities at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Concessioners offer boat tours that last from an hour to all day and provide boat rentals at developed areas. Houseboats provide comfort at a relaxed pace, as well as a chance to sightsee beyond developed areas. Sailing is best at Wahweap, Padre, and Bullfrog Bays. Canoes and kayaks provide access to secluded areas in small canyons. Lake waters are relatively warm from June through September, making swimming, snorkeling, SCUBA diving, and waterskiing enjoyable.



Bonnie Muench

**Fishing** is rewarding all year. Primary game species are largemouth and striped bass, black crappie, catfish, bluegill, trout, and walleye. The cold waters of the Colorado River below the dam provide excellent trophy trout habitat. Fishermen frequently catch very large rainbow trout upstream from Lees Ferry.



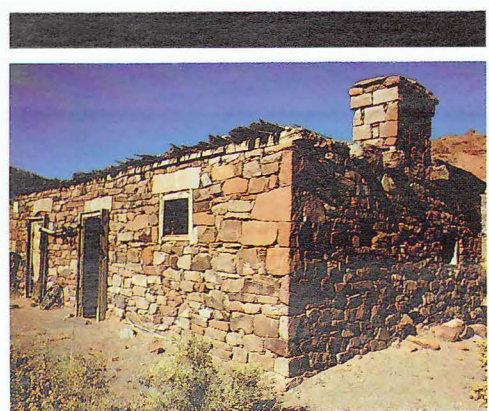
Largemouth bass

Illustration by Dan Feaser

There is excellent camping on flat sites along the lakeshore. You can supplement your water sports with a hike in desert side canyons on trails of your own choosing. Please exercise reasonable caution (see Regulations).

**Backcountry hiking** in the canyon country requires planning and stamina (see Regulations). However, the rewards can far outweigh the efforts of preparation and the exertion of the experience itself.

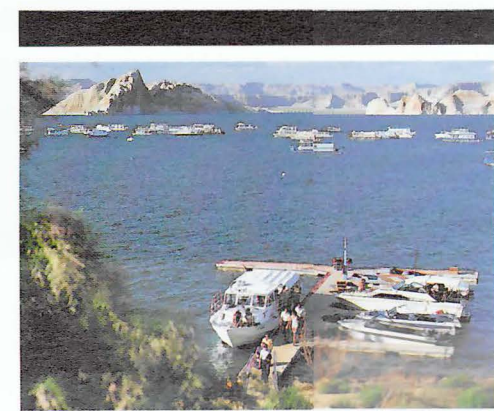
Write to the Superintendent, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, P.O. Box 1507, Page, AZ 86040 for more information about facilities, activities, and regulations. The National Park Service will either answer your questions, or send them to the appropriate concessioner or agency for response.



### Lees Ferry

Downriver from Glen Canyon Dam, Lees Ferry lies in the break between Glen and Marble Canyons. A natural corridor between Utah and Arizona, Lees Ferry figured prominently in the exploration and settlement of the surrounding canyon country. Because of Navajo unrest, a stone fort and trading post were built in 1874. Warren Johnson and his son ran the ferry from 1873 to 1896 for the Mormon Church. The post office established here about 1913 was a focal point for far-flung miners working the canyon country. Remains of the post office and fort persist. Just up the Paria Valley are the Lonely Dell Ranch buildings, an orchard, and a cemetery. The upriver ferry crossing and the Spencer steamboat are still visible.

Today's Lees Ferry offers a ranger station, launch ramp, fish-cleaning station, and campground. Upstream toward the dam is prime trout habitat. Located at Marble Canyon on Highway 89A 3.5 miles from Lees Ferry are a restaurant, service station, post office, and store. River trips through the Grand Canyon begin at Lees Ferry; permits are required and should be secured a year or more in advance. For information on Grand Canyon river trips, contact the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

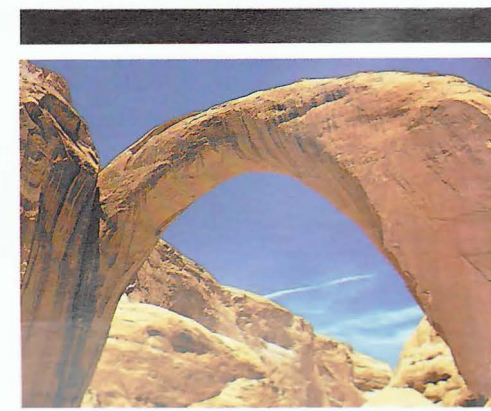


### Carl Hayden Visitor Center, Wahweap, and Page

Carl Hayden Visitor Center, adjacent to the dam and Glen Canyon Bridge, is open daily except Christmas and New Year's Day. The visitor center offers films, a relief map, information services, and scenic views from the large observation deck. Free daily tours of the dam are available.

Wahweap Marina, 4.5 miles from the visitor center along Lakeshore Drive, is the largest marina and lodging facility in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. The concessioner provides boat rentals, boat tours, restaurants, a gift shop, motel, trailer village with utility hook-ups and laundry and shower facilities, and a service station with fuel for both boats and cars. The National Park Service provides a ranger station, information desk, campgrounds (no utility hook-ups), an amphitheater, launch ramps, a fish-cleaning station, picnic shelters, restrooms, drinking water, and charcoal grills.

The town of Page, Arizona, 2 miles from the dam and visitor center, has stores, motels, restaurants, churches, a hospital, and a museum. Page can be reached by surfaced roads year-round, and by air from Phoenix and Las Vegas.

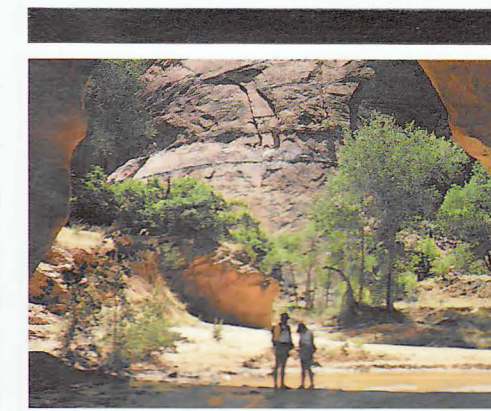


### Dangling Rope And Rainbow Bridge

Dangling Rope Marina, accessible only by boat, offers a ranger station, restrooms, sanitary pump-out station, emergency communications, boat fuel, minor boat repairs, and a supply store. This floating marina, 40 miles uplake from Glen Canyon Dam, replaces the former Rainbow Marina that was in Forbidding Canyon.

Rainbow Bridge National Monument lies about 50 miles by water from Wahweap, Bullfrog, or Halls Crossing. It can also be reached by foot or horse trails across rough canyon country on the Navajo Reservation. The trails are not maintained and are not recommended for beginning or casual hikers. Hiking permits must be acquired from the Navajo Tribe. Motorized vehicles are not allowed on the trails.

The world's largest natural bridge, Rainbow Bridge spans 275 feet and is 290 feet high. The top is 42 feet thick and 33 feet wide. The upper part of the bridge is composed of Navajo sandstone. The base is composed of Kayenta formation, a harder rock not as easily cut by the flowing water. Rainbow Bridge is a sacred place for the Navajo and despite the increase in visitors it is still inspiring to contemplate. Please respect the rights of others and do not swim, dive, or throw rocks within the monument.

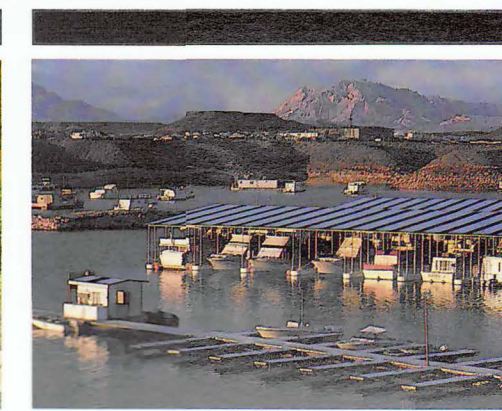


### Escalante

The canyons of the Escalante River and its tributaries have long been favorites of modern-day explorers who want to experience the canyon country at its wildest. The mouth of Escalante Canyon meets Lake Powell about 70 miles uplake from Glen Canyon Dam, and some of its canyons can be explored from small boats.

The backcountry is also accessible to foot travelers by means of trails reached from the unpaved Hole-In-The-Rock road. Natural bridges, arches, narrow canyons, and remains of prehistoric inhabitants are just some of the attractions in the region. Many people feel that the canyons of the Escalante are reminiscent of Glen Canyon before the dam was built. In recognition of their value, portions of Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service lands encompassing the Escalante area are now proposed as wilderness.

A free permit is required for all backcountry camping in the Escalante area, and all travelers should inquire locally before beginning any trip. A National Park Service ranger station is maintained in the town of Escalante, Utah. Minimal impact camping is essential here; leave no trace of your temporary stay.

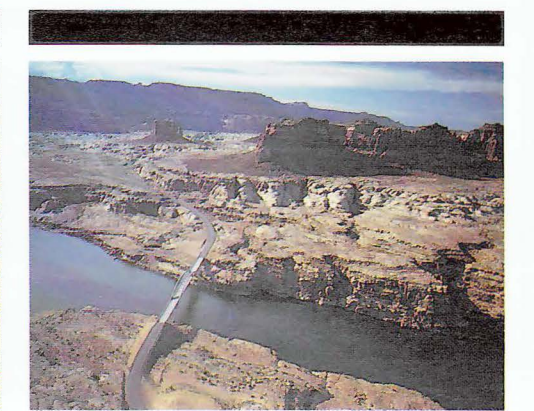


### Halls Crossing And Bullfrog Basin

Halls Crossing, reached from Blanding, Utah, via state highways, offers a ranger station, launch ramp, campground, lodging, boat rentals and tours, boating and camping supplies, store, marina, laundry and showers, and a trailer village with utility hook-ups. Halls Creek Bay, about 90 miles uplake from Glen Canyon Dam, affords excellent bass fishing. Indian ruins dot canyons near Halls Crossing.

Bullfrog Basin is set against the beautiful Waterpocket Fold country of the Escalante backcountry. National Park Service facilities at Bullfrog Basin include a ranger station, launch ramp, campground, fish-cleaning station, picnic area, and aircraft landing strip.

The concessioner offers boat tours and rentals, and operates a service station, restaurant, motel, store, and trailer village with utility hook-ups. Bullfrog Basin can be reached by paved state highways from Hanksville, Utah. A regularly scheduled ferry (fee) runs between Halls Crossing and Bullfrog Basin. Although the water crossing is wider now than when Charles Hall operated his ferry in the 1880s, the ferry can still save travelers many miles.



### Hite

Cass Hite originally named this crossing Dandy Crossing because it was the best ford on the Colorado above Lees Ferry. Prehistoric peoples also used the crossing. Remains of their structures can still be seen nearby. During the 1880s and 1890s, gold miners would rendezvous here, for Hite had the only post office in Glen Canyon.

Many people find the region around Hite to be the most scenic in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. Just uplake from the present site of Hite Marina, the Dirty Devil River meets the Colorado, making good catfish habitat, while the Colorado itself courses through scenic Narrow Canyon. The National Park Service today provides a ranger station and a primitive campground at Hite.

The concessioner provides boat rentals, store, service station, limited lodging, and a marina. Utah State Highway 95 provides paved access across the Dirty Devil River and the narrow arm of Lake Powell near Hite.



# Glen Canyon



## Regulations

**Driving.** Motor vehicles must stay on roads in the park. Unpaved roads may require four-wheel drive. Some roads shown on the map are not regularly maintained and may not be passable. Check road status at a ranger station. **Pets.** Pets must be leashed or caged in or near developed areas. **Sanitation.** Don't drain or dump refuse or garbage into the water. Sanitary pump-out stations are located at each marina. Purify all water before you drink it. **Antiquities.** Removal of any natural elements or cultural artifacts is against the law. While fossil hunting is permitted, fossil collecting is not. Do not sit or walk on walls of prehistoric ruins, remove artifacts from prehistoric sites, or deface ruins. Federal law provides severe penalties, even for a first offense. **Flora and Fauna.** Leave all plants and animals undisturbed. Be alert for cactuses, scorpions, and rattlesnakes (rarely sighted) that may be harmful to you: Avoid them. Hunting and trapping are allowed in accordance with state law. **Swimming.** There are NO LIFEGUARDS in the recreation area. Swim at your own risk. Explore for submerged hazards before you dive.

## Hiking

The best months for hiking are April, May, June, September, and October; July and August are very hot. Winter temperatures can fall below freezing. Established trails are few, but side canyons provide enjoyable access to many desert areas. Flash floods can occur after thunderstorms, so avoid constricted canyons during storms. Each hiker should carry at least one gallon of water per day in warm weather.

Be sure to carry a small camping stove and do not build fires. Purify all drinking water. Bury all human wastes at least 8 inches below the ground and 100 feet from any water source. Rattlesnakes are rare, but watch for them, especially at night. Walk carefully: slickrock is crumbly when dry and slippery when wet. Leave your itinerary with someone who expects you back, and then stick to your itinerary.

## Boating

**Personal Flotation Devices (PFDs).** Every person on board must have a suitable personal flotation device (life jacket) on board and readily accessible. In Utah, children under 12 years of age are required to wear life jackets. **Sniff Your Boat's Bilge.** Make sure that fuel vapors have dispersed before you try to start your motor. Simply running the blower does not guarantee that fumes are no longer present. **Watch the Weather.** If you are caught out on the lake in rough weather, seek a sheltered cove and stay there until the storm subsides. Avoid the middle of the lake in a thunderstorm. **Signaling.** Know standard distress signals and carry simple signaling equipment. **Navigation.** Know standard rules for driving your boat on the lake and how to use the local navigational aids, such as buoys and lights. **Speed.** All boats must be driven at wakeless speed when they are within 150 feet of another boat, a waterskier, a person in the water, and all harbor areas. **Bow Riding.** Assume that bow riding is NEVER safe. Federal regulations prohibit riding the bow of a boat at speeds greater than wakeless. **Waterskiing.** All boats

towing a waterskier must have at least two people on board: a competent observer and the boat's operator. Display the orange flag to indicate that a skier is down in the water. Do not ski in marked channels. **Overloading.** Check the capacity information plate and avoid overloading your boat. Sudden storms and large boat wakes are especially hazardous to overloaded boats. **Don't Drink and Drive.** Similar regulations apply to boating under the influence as to driving under the influence. **Don't do it.** Most serious boating accidents are alcohol-related.

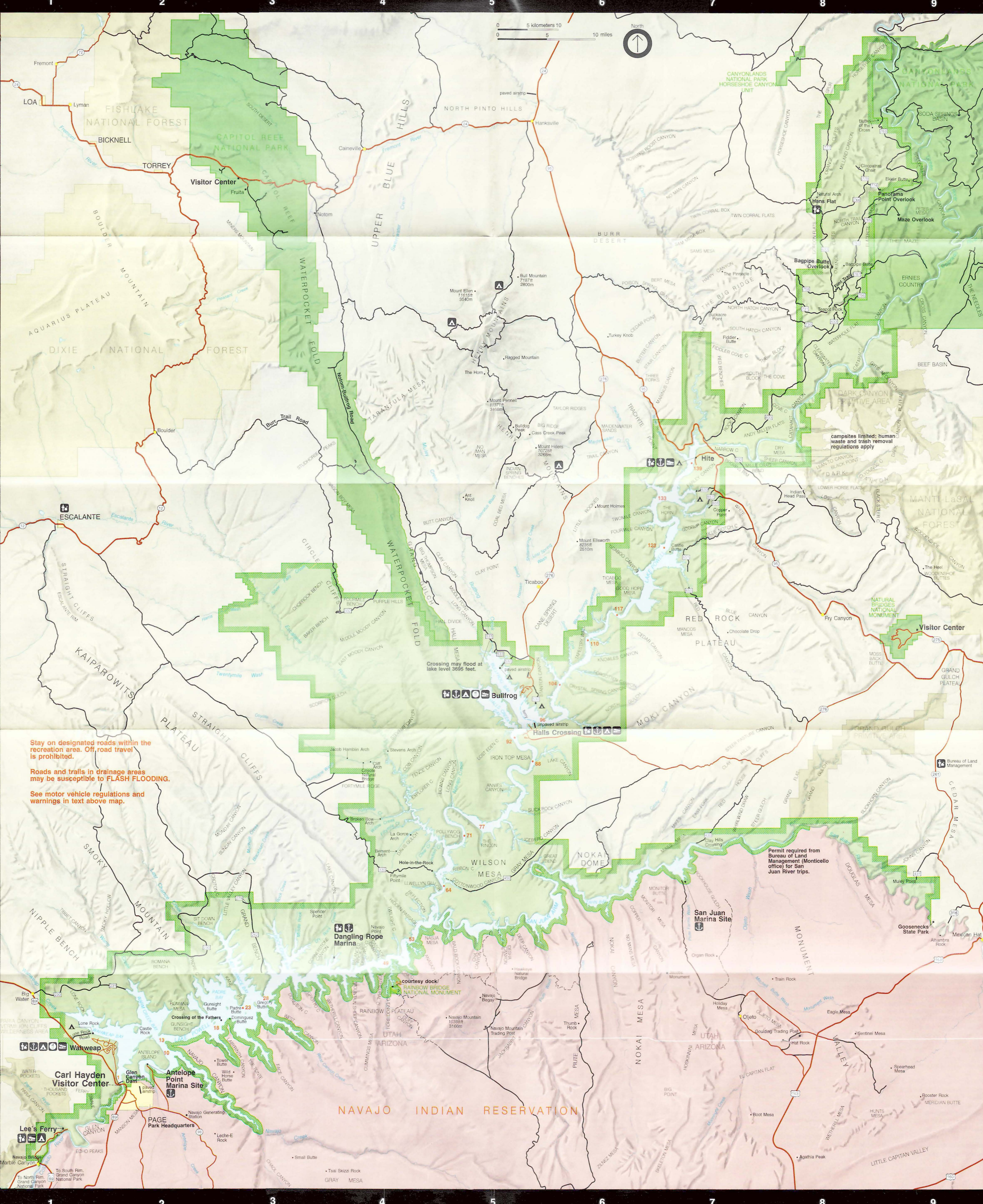
## Camping

At developed areas, camp only in established campgrounds (see map). Do not camp in roadside pull-outs, in picnic areas, or on posted beaches near developed areas. You may camp from your boat at other lakeshore sites one mile or more from developed areas. The limit at any one site is 14 days, and the limit per calendar year is 30 days. Leave a clean site. Take all litter and trash out with you. Do not discharge any refuse into the water. Fires are permitted, but wood fuel is scarce. Use camping stoves instead. If you must build a fire, use an existing fire ring and leave the area as clean as you would like to find it.

## Fishing

An Arizona fishing license is required from Wahweap downstream to Lees Ferry. A Utah license is required upstream from Wahweap. Each state also sells a stamp to extend a license into the other state. Licenses are available at marinas and nearby communities. A few native fish have adjusted to the cold, relatively clear waters of Lake Powell, and other game species have been introduced. A few species, including the flannel-mouth sucker, humpback chub, and Colorado River squawfish, are protected. Their removal from the lake is illegal. Some harbors may be closed to fishing. Ask a ranger about these before you fish.

13 River mile from dam	Unpaved road	Overlook	Ranger station	Restaurant and lodge	Areas with service symbols also offer stores, gas, and sanitary disposal stations. The stores and gas that serve Lee's Ferry are at Marble Canyon.
Do not use this map for navigation. Marinas and visitor centers sell navigational maps.	Most unpaved roads require a 4-wheel-drive vehicle. Inquire locally for current condition.	Trail	Boat launch	Campground	



Stay on designated roads within the recreation area. Off-road travel is prohibited.

Roads and trails in drainage areas may be susceptible to FLASH FLOODING.

See motor vehicle regulations and warnings in text above map.

Permit required from Bureau of Land Management (Monticello office) for San Juan River trips.