



16700  
04 Feb 2013

## MEMORANDUM

From: Robert Lee   
CGD ELEVEN (dpi)

To: DISTRIBUTION

Subj: U. S. COAST GUARD & NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ANNUAL COLORADO RIVER  
MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT (MOA) MEETING - 2013

### 1. Introduction

On January 23rd, 2013 Mr. Rob Lee of the 11<sup>th</sup> Coast Guard District and USCG Sector San Diego facilitated the annual USCG and NPS MOA meeting regarding recreational boating and passenger vessel safety in the Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LAKE), Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GLCA) and Grand Canyon National Park (GRCA). The purpose of the MOA is to facilitate joint agency safety oversight of waterway users in the three National Parks along the Colorado River system (see enclosure 1). This meeting is held annually in conjunction with the Colorado River Law Enforcement Association (CRLEA) meeting.

### 2. Attendees

USCG 11<sup>th</sup> District, USCG Sector San Diego, USCG Auxiliary, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, Grand Canyon National Park, and Lake Mead National Recreation Area (see enclosure 2).

### 3. Old Business

Sector San Diego conducted river running vessel safety examination training February 2012. There was no desire for training in 2013. However, there was interest in USCG vessel examination training in 2014 when there will be an anticipated personnel change and Ms. Jacki Blais, GLCA retires.

### 4. New Business

a. Vessel Examinations: In 2011 approximately 90,000 passengers were carried on river running excursion trips in the three parks. The NPS safety examination program of concessionaire river running vessels continues to work very well, particularly as the examiners have become trained, experienced and as regular vessel examinations by companies have become an institutionalized safety practice. The MOA continues to provide a sound safety oversight framework.

b. Accidents: There were three vessel related accidents reported. These primarily involved physical trauma to personnel such as body impact or torsion due to significant vessel movement through river rapids. SEC SD will follow up with those accidents (marine casualties) that were required to be reported to the USCG due to injuries that required more than first aid treatment.

c. Mutual issues of Concern: None

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5. Briefings

a. USCG Sector San Diego (SEC SD). SEC SD introduced new personnel: CDR Rochester, Chief of Prevention; LT Downing, Senior Investigating Officer; and LTJG Schmid, Enforcement. SEC SD led a discussion concerning casualty reports from GRCA via the State of Arizona and recent joint law enforcement activities with the NPS (discussed below). SEC SD encouraged the continued notifications of on water events (marine events) and also commended everyone for their good work and for the cooperative relationship they share with the three parks.

b. USCG Eleventh District (CGD11). CGD11 Introduced CDR Louie, recently assigned as the Chief of Prevention Inspections and Investigations. Mr. Paul Newman, USCG Recreational Boating Safety Specialist, briefed the significant reduction in travel expenditures imposed on the Coast Guard and recommended holding the 2014 Recreational Boating Safety Workshop in conjunction with CRLEA and cancelling the 2013 workshop. All parties were in favor. Mr. Newman also highlighted the new "Wear It Colorado River" concept to eliminate the "Tri-State Boating Safety Fair" and extend the "Wear It" PFD brand to include all states and NPS entities. Again, all parties were in favor. In discussing recent river running vessel casualties (accidents), it was emphasized that reporting requirements to the Coast Guard exists for some accident cases and that it is important to create a marine casualty investigative case in the USCG database system. This allows for tracking trends with the river running fleet and particularly those that are currently exempt (by policy) from Coast Guard licensing and safety inspection requirements in order to monitor trends. The Coast Guard archives all MOA documents, including this after action report (in their MISLE database system), and can provide copies at any time.

c. Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LAKE). LAKE reported having over 13 million total visitors in 2012. River running vessels carried over 17,000 passengers in 2012. LAKE also provided a briefing of concessionaire business activities in the park (enclosure 3). Coordination of NPS/USCG boating safety worked well during the 2012 boating season between USCG Auxiliary boating safety support and Sector San Diego law enforcement support. LAKE is interested in initiating a NPS/USCG law enforcement MOA. LAKE reported on their boating accident study with findings for the need to post Spanish language PFD information to offset a significant number of fatalities by Spanish speaking boaters. LAKE will offer DOI Motorboat Operator and Motorboat Operator Instructor Certification Courses in February and March and the POC is Ranger Marc Burt.

d. Grand Canyon National Park (GRCA). GRCA reported that approximately 30,000 people were permitted for river running excursions down the Colorado River (20,000 commercial, 10,000 private). It is estimated that over 100,000 people toured the Grand Canyon via Hualapai Native American operations, although not all people elect water tours. GRCA also briefed the 3 commercial accidents and one private excursion fatality. GRCA anticipates offering an interagency river running trip in August 2013.

e. Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GLCA). GLCA reported that the vessel safety examination program with their river running concessionaire, Colorado River Discovery, continues to run smoothly. There were no drydock examinations scheduled for this year. Colorado River Discovery tours carried over 53,000 passengers in 2012 through their twenty vessel fleet (enclosure 4).

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RIVER MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT MEETING

- f. Generally all parties report that communication is working well. Vessel safety activities and coordination are working smoothly including NPS/USCG Auxiliary activities. The annual MOA meeting continues to foster this process.
6. The next MOA meeting will be hosted by the USCG Eleventh District at CRLEA, 2014. For questions or comments regarding this report, please contact Mr. Rob Lee at (510) 437-5960 or by email: [George.R.Lee@uscg.mil](mailto:George.R.Lee@uscg.mil).

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Enclosures: (1) USCG/NPS MOA Background Summary  
(2) 2013 MOA Agenda and Meeting Attendees  
(3) LAKE Notes  
(4) GLCA Notes

Distribution:  
USCG CGD Eleven (d), (dp)  
USCG CG SECTOR San Diego  
USCG AUX  
NPS LAKE  
NPS GRCA  
NPS GLCA

## SUBJECT: USCG/NPS Memorandum of Agreement - Colorado River System

### BACKGROUND

The U.S. Coast Guard, 11<sup>th</sup> District holds a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the three National Park Service (NPS) parks along the Colorado River where it shares joint jurisdiction. The three parks are Lake Mead National Recreation Area (LAKE), Grand Canyon National Park (GRCA) and Glen Canyon National Recreation Area (GLCA). The NPS possesses the resources and authorities to carry out water side activities normally conducted by the USCG (e.g. boating safety, search and rescue, accident investigations, oversight of uninspected passenger vessels, river running/white water passenger vessels etc.). Due to USCG resource limitations for these interior areas and NPS primary presence, the NPS assumes this lead role. In return, the USCG supports the NPS by providing training, USCG Auxiliary activities and funding for aids to navigation. Additionally, the parties meet annually to ensure adequate joint agency public safety oversight. This MOA was signed by all parties in 2006 to formally recognize this arrangement. Every 5 years the MOA is reviewed for revisions.



### MOA REVISION 2012

In early 2011, the parties decided to revise the MOA. The current revisions centered on clarification of language and incorporation of a 2008 USCG Auxiliary addendum. There were no substantial changes affecting the parties or the public. All parties also desired to have the document re-signed because of significant personnel changes at higher levels both within the USCG and NPS. After the MOA was revised, the USCG met with each of the parks in the summer of 2011 and briefed the proposed changes. USCG Legal and the NPS Solicitor General have favorably reviewed the MOA which was officially re-signed in January 2012. The significant revisions include:

- clearer language that the USCG retains casualty investigation responsibilities for river running passenger vessels, emphasizing the need for notification of any casualties, particularly serious marine incidents;
- clarified language pertaining to NPS permitting of park activities by commercial concessionaires; and
- inclusion of a separate 2008 USCG Auxiliary Amendment.

Electronic copies of MOA can be found at: [www.uscg.mil/pvs/nps.asp](http://www.uscg.mil/pvs/nps.asp)

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03 Jan 2013

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MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT MEETING - 2013

The purpose of the USCG & NPS Colorado River MOA is to ensure coordinated public safety oversight of recreational boaters and passenger vessels along the Colorado River system. Required annual MOA meetings held at CRLEA ensure close coordination and communication among both agencies.

**DATE/TIME:** 23 January 2013, 0900-1030

**LOCATION:** CRLEA Laughlin, NV - Aquarius Hotel Pavilion Ballroom

### MEETING AGENDA

- Introductions & Overview
- USCG Sector San Diego Briefing
- NPS GLCA Briefing
- NPS GRCA Briefing
- NPS LAKE Briefing
- MOA Meeting Old Business
- MOA New Business
  - Review of Vessel Safety Examinations
  - Review of Vessel Related Casualties/Accidents & Trends (vessel, people, etc.).
  - Mr. Newman, USCG D11 Recreational Boating Safety
  - Issues of Mutual Concern (e.g. Training needs, Safety, Navigation, Marine Events, Law Enforcement, MOA Amendments etc.) - Open Discussion
- Adjourn

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Dist:  
USCG SEC San Diego  
NPS GLCA  
NPS GRCA  
NPS LAKE

Enclosure (2)

**LAKE Notes for Annual USCG/NPS MOA Meeting in Laughlin, NV**  
**January 23, 2013**

**Lake Mead NRA – Black Canyon River Adventure Operations (float trips):**

- Willow Beach construction has been completed. All services are online (except the café' is closed for the winter season currently). The area has a new store, new café', new 90 rental slip marina, new RV and tent campground, fishing dock, and new river walkway and overlook with covered picnic tables, and new NPS and Concession employee housing units.
- In 2012, the five year BOR / NPS Agreement regarding access to the secure zone of Hoover Dam, Lower Portal Road raft and paddlecraft launching area, was renewed.
- New 10 year Concession Contract was awarded to the existing concessioner, Forever Resorts, Black Canyon River Adventures. This contract began January 1, 2013. The concessioner has a new General Manager that just arrived last week. He is living with his family at Willow Beach. There are several other families now living at Willow Beach, including an NPS LE ranger and his family and NPS maintenance people.
- During 2012, the Bureau of Reclamation lowered the water on Lake Mohave so they could conduct resources studies. From the end of October until early November, the rafts were unable to go upriver from Willow Beach to the Hoover Dam launch site due to the low water. During this time, the concessioner was authorized to start a new raft trip that includes transportation from a hotel on the strip, a tour of a local mine and then transportation to Nelson's Landing, where a raft takes them upriver through Eldorado Canyon to Willow Beach and then they are transported back to their starting point. The raft trip portion of this new tour was conducted several times last fall when the water was too low for rafts to go up to the Hoover Dam launch site, and was considered a success. This new trip will begin again this spring.
- The regular Black Canyon raft trip, that has been in existence for years, was resumed after the Lake Mohave water level was increased in November 2012. This regular trip starts at Hoover Dam and goes down the Colorado 13 miles to the takeout at Willow Beach. Then park visitors are transported back up to their starting point at the raft office or their hotels on the LV strip.
- Lake Mead NRA overall visitation increased 591,586 from 12,277,786 in 2011 to 13,169,372 in 2012. Willow Beach overall visitation increased 32,091, from 208,522 visitors in 2011 to 240,613 visitors in 2012. These numbers were taken from the LAKE visitor use statistics that are derived from automatic vehicle counters.
- In 2012: Willow Beach raft trips, boat rentals, and paddlecraft visitor numbers decreased approximately 5% from 2011, at 29,391 in 2012.
- In 2012: Black Canyon River Adventures Raft trips visitation was down 12% from 2011, with 17,066 visitors.
- In 2012: 9 topside inspections were completed with no drydock inspections due. The rafts looked good and were in compliance. This year, all rafts will receive top side inspections and one raft is due for a drydock inspection.

CUAs: Fishing Guides / scuba / canoe / kayak / marine salvage & survey  
Enclosure (3)

## CRD 2012 Passenger Totals

		<u>Average/Day</u>	<u>(March-November)</u>	
<u>AM half day</u>	29220	106		
<u>PM half day</u>	12963	47		
<u>GCA full day</u>	8359	30		
<u>Sedona</u>	1162	4		
<u>Backhaul</u>	1179	4		
<u>Full day rowing</u>	438	2		
<u>Total</u>	53321	194		
<u>#'s lost to weather</u>	734			
<u>#'s lost to flood</u>	72			