

## **Launch Security Policy and Procedures**

1. The area of the Lower Portal Road and the launch site below Hoover Dam are within a sensitive security zone administered by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). Access to this area is permitted only to BOR employees and their contractors. By virtue of a concession contract with the National Park Service (NPS) and a Memorandum of Agreement with the United States Coast Guard, in cooperation with the BOR, Black Canyon/Willow Beach River Adventures (BC/WBRA) now operates the Black Canyon raft trips. As a condition of that contract, BC/WBRA provides the reservation system for the canoe launch program as well as all of the security escort services for the paddle craft users.
2. Black Canyon/Willow Beach River Adventures understands that access to the secure area is a privilege granted by the BOR. That privilege is based on conducting business in a professional and efficient manner while following the dictates and directions provided by the BOR, the NPS and the USCG.
3. All reservations for launch permits must be made prior to the launch date with the outfitter providing the livery service. On occasion, a self-launching group may arrange permits through the BC/WBRA office. Forty-five paddle craft are allowed to launch from the Hoover Dam launch area every morning. Launches take place three times a day, every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.
4. Launch 1 has an arrival time of 6:30 am and a launch time of 7:00 am. To lessen the impact of additional paddle craft visitors into Black Canyon, this launching time is reserved only for day trips to Willow Beach. The launch group may enter the Lower Portal Road gate at 6:45 am, at the direction of the escort, to travel to the launch site. \*Groups that need additional time to complete pre-launch activity should arrive sufficiently early to be checked in and depart the staging area 15 minutes before their launch time and should be closely coordinated with the assisting livery.
5. Launch 1 was authorized on July 9, 2007 by the NPS. The "objective in authorizing the additional launch (was) to enhance the day use trips by providing more time for exploration. The 7 a.m. launch will allow an additional hour for the trip".
6. Launch 2 has an arrival time of 7:30 am and a launch time of 8:00 am. This is also a good time to launch for paddle craft making a day trip to Willow Beach. The launch group may enter the Portal Road gate at 7:45am, at the direction of the escort, to travel to the launch site. \*Groups that need additional time to complete pre-launch activity should arrive sufficiently early to be checked in and depart the staging area 15 minutes before their launch time and should be closely coordinated with the assisting livery.
7. Launch 3 has an arrival time of 8:30 am and a launch time of 9:00 am. This is the better launch time for groups making overnight or multiple day trips. The launch group may enter the Portal Road gate at 8:45 am, at the direction of the escort, to travel to the launch site. \*Groups that need additional time to complete pre-launch activity should arrive sufficiently early to be checked in and depart the staging area 15 minutes before their launch time and should be closely coordinated with the assisting livery.
8. All launch times are on Nevada time.
9. There is a maximum of 15 paddle craft in each launch, for an absolute maximum of 45 paddle craft per day.
10. Outfitter guides are subject to the launch fee and their guide boats are included in the daily count. All guides MUST have a valid launch permit and the CUA Identification badge issued by the NPS before escorting their group out of the staging area.
11. If a business does not have a permit, they will not have access to the launch area.

12. Many paddle craft liveries around Lake Mead National Recreation Area have a Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) that allow their company access within the recreation area for purposes of livery and guide services. Unauthorized vehicles are no longer permitted within the Hoover Dam security zone at the launch site. A small number of non-profit organizations that have high capacity passenger vans towing paddle craft trailers (trailer brakes encouraged), and group liability insurance (an equivalent standard to liveries to be determined at time of reservation) may not be required to utilize commercial liveries. All other groups must utilize one of the authorized livery services for access to the Portal Road. A list of the CUA operators can be found at [www.nps.gov/lame/parkmgmt/cuadirect.htm](http://www.nps.gov/lame/parkmgmt/cuadirect.htm).
13. Launch permits are available on a first come, first serve basis. In the spring of 2006, BC/WBRA created a reservation system for the CUA outfitters to use to secure permits for their customers. There is detailed information that must be provided when a reservation is made, including the name of the group leader, names of all participants, number of paddle craft, and the requested launch times and dates. Reservation fees are payable by the applicant's credit card and all permits are non-refundable. Any applicant paying for a launch permit and not completing a launch is still obligated to the reservation fee.
14. Once the reservation is processed and payment is received, the reservation becomes the permit and is issued for a specific launch time and date with a unique confirmation number. This permit must be surrendered to the escort person thirty (30) minutes prior to the launch time.
15. The staging area for paddle craft launching is located at the northwest parking lot (to the left of the water tanks) in the Hacienda Hotel & Casino, located at milepost 3.5 on US 93, on the Nevada side of Hoover Dam. A sign will identify the parking lot and staging area and drivers are requested to park in the single spaces on the left as they enter this separate lot. Only vehicles with trailers should use double parking spaces. Trips are either scheduled for launch at 7:00 am, 8:00 am or 9:00 am (all Nevada times) as indicated on the permit. Paddlers meeting a livery delivering rental craft or to transfer equipment, should allow sufficient time to have all logistics completed fifteen minutes prior to the scheduled launch time. **Security policies** require that security personnel at the staging area must inspect all property being taken on the trip before anyone departs to the launch site. This includes equipment, supplies and belongings in "dry bags", personal packs, ice chests, private vessels, or any other container, where the contents cannot be readily determined. Only fully assembled boats and craft that can be hand carried the last 100 yards to the launch site will be accepted. Paddlers that are taking inflatable rafts have been advised that the raft must be filled prior to departing for the launch site. The escort leaves for the launch site fifteen (15) minutes prior to the launch time (6:45a, for the 7am launch, 7:45am for the 8am launch and 8:45am for 9am). **Any party not able to meet this time frame will not be permitted to launch and the permit will be canceled with no refunds.** CUA's have been notified to advise the permit office (702-294-1412) 24 hours prior to a launch if there are any unique considerations associated with a group so that reasonable accommodations can be discussed.
16. CUA Outfitters are not to wait for BC/WBRA security personnel at the lower portal gate for escort. The staging area is the authorized meeting place for all persons involved in paddle craft launching. Following a vehicle other than the BC/WBRA security vehicle through the gate is considered a security breach and grounds for refusal to allow future paddle craft launch.
17. The access road to the launch site is known as the Lower Portal Road and is within a security zone adjacent to Hoover Dam. All equipment, craft, and personal items are subject to search prior to entering this area and is a condition of the permit. After entering the security gate, all vehicles must wait until the gate closes and for the escort to direct continued travel. The destination is the bridge about one and three quarters of a mile distant down a steep, narrow, winding road that is used by workers at the dam. All vehicles must proceed at a slow safe speed, less than twenty (20) miles per hour, and watch for other traffic on blind curves. Livery operators are responsible to insure that all of their vehicles and trailers meet the highest safety standards including adequate brakes for the unique conditions.
18. At the bottom of the paved road, about 100 yards from the security booth, all vehicles will make a sharp, left-hand turn onto the launch access road which is also paved. All vehicles will follow the lead vehicle down the paved road and line up in an orderly fashion to begin off loading passengers, equipment and paddle craft. Passengers are advised to watch where they are standing and to be aware of the sharp drop-offs of the paved road edges.
19. The vehicles should not turn around prior to unloading unless cleared with the escort. As soon as the paddle craft and equipment are unloaded, the driver should move the vehicle ahead to the Nevada Spillway, turn around and park adjacent to the restroom. This will keep the vehicle from obstructing others that need to turn around and depart. It is important to clear the unloading area so that other vehicles also have access if needed. The escort personnel will also direct the departure of the vehicles and the return through the upper gate on the Portal Road.

20. All Hoover Dam rules of conduct must be followed. **Failure to comply with directions from the escort person may lead to cancellation of the trip, with no refunds.**
21. All participants must insure that all areas utilized during the trip are left litter free and all refuse is deposited in appropriate containers at the destination.
22. As soon as all craft launch, they must proceed directly down river beyond the restriction signs on each shore, ¼ mile distant. Launch personnel and the respective CUA Outfitters are required to stay in the launch area until the last paddle craft has left the shoreline and proceeded down river. Occasionally, launch security personnel may need to proceed back to the Hacienda for additional responsibilities. If this happens, Black Canyon raft pilots, as employees of BC/WBRA, may be given the responsibility of monitoring the departure of paddle craft from the launch area. It is the launch security personnel's responsibility to verbally advise the raft pilot(s) that they are now responsible for the paddle craft still at the launch site.
23. On occasion, launch security personnel will temporarily issue a security badge to a CUA outfitter to proceed through the security gate and return to the staging area to meet an additional group. In those cases, the person issued the security badge is responsible for returning the badge immediately to launch security personnel.
24. If for some reason the group leader becomes unable to make the trip, an alternate leader will be designated at the time of the reservation, to take over the trip supervision. Last minute changes in trip manifests should be submitted to the launch security personnel as soon as possible the morning of the launch.
25. Names will be verified as well as checked against photo identification (or other suitable document for children) by the escort at the check-in prior to launch. Any person without some form of identification will not be allowed to proceed to the launch area.