HEADWATERS of the Upper North Platte River originate in the mountains ringing North Park, Colorado, and numerous other tributaries before forming the river as it meanders generally north through the Rocky Mountains. The Wyoming segment is characterized by a narrow, high irregular; rocks, strong eddies, passages clear through narrow, necessary; powerful and precise maneuvering required; maximum safety precautions necessary;

River Flow Levels

LEAVE NO TRACE ON THE RIVER

When you launch yourself and your boat, you become a part of the river. You are instantly free of the noise and bustle of work-a-day life by joining the river and its natural environment. Enjoy your trip, and do your part to ensure that the pristine beauty of the Upper North Platte River is protected while on shore and traveling through with these principles:

BE PREPARED

Much of the Upper North Platte River floating season is during May and June, when air and water temperatures create more comfortable conditions for paddlers. If you must float a river when the water is very cold, equip yourself properly and protect yourself against the hazards of cold water. Some protection against the consequences of cold-water immersion may be obtained by wearing protective clothing. Waterproof outer wear helps protect against wind chill and severe wind. Keep clothes dry and suit, dries quickly, and stays warm under them, and is appropriately rated, sized and fastened life jacket (PFD) are

FLOATING THE RIVER

All of the Upper North Platte River is floatable – over 124 miles of free-floating water from the breakwater, homesteads of the North Platte country near the state line, to the rolling plains between the north end of the town of Newcastle and the Wyoming-South Dakota state line. The river offers numerous boating experiences ranging from white-water thrills to leisurely drifting. The strategically placed access points offer an array of rock cottages and other structures

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS

In Wyoming, THE WATER OVER PRIVATE LAND IS PUBLIC - where the river flows over private land, the river banks and the land under the river are considered PRIVATE Land by state law. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department cannot place easements or use public access on your property. Watch for the Bureau of Land Management and Game and Fish Department signs along the Upper North Platte River and Encampment River, which indicate public lands or easements. Blue 12"x12" squares indicate you are entering public land or an easement where fishing or landing are legal. Red signs indicate you are entering private lands where you must stay in your boat. A portion of the river in is a wilderness area. The use of motor-powered watercraft is prohibited in wilderness areas in Wyoming and Colorado by the Routt Access and Picabo, Pinedale and Prospect Access points. Also, use of motorized watercraft is prohibited on the North Platte River downstream from the Wildness to the Saratoga Irrigation District, Saratoga, Wyoming, Carbon County. Consult current Wyoming Fishing Regulations.

FISHING EASEMENTS

Easements are the purchase of certain rights for public use on private lands and are typically concluded by agreement with the particular landowner at the time of purchase; usually, these rights include road access, riparian rights, and hunting and fishing privileges. Easements are owned on this map by red arrowed lines that indicate the width and extent of easements. If more information regarding the permitted rights on a particular easement, contact the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

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River Flow Levels

BELOW 900 cubic feet/second

Very Marginal for rafts; small rafts and kayaks may be OK down to 600 cfs or so; depends on skill level and knowledge of river.

900 - 1200 cfs

OK for kayaks, smaller oar boats, and paddle boats. Not advised for loaded oar boats (gear boats).

1200 - 2500 cfs

Good water levels for all rafts – a very technical and difficult run.

2500 - 2900 cfs

Getting pretty fast – still suitable for paddle boats.

ABOVE 2900 cfs

Very significant and dangerous at this point! Water levels above 2900 cfs DEMAND expert experience and maneuvering ability for a successful and safe river trip. Advised for very experienced oar boats and kayakers only.

NORTHCANEY RAPIDS RATING

Rapid Rating System

I (Very Easy):

Waves small regular; passages clear; very little maneuvering; riffles.

II (Easy):

Rapids of medium difficulty, some maneuvering necessary; low ledges, slow rock gardens, medium regular waves.

III (Medium):

Medium waves, high irregular; rocks, strong eddies, passages clear through narrow; expertise in maneuvering required, necessary. Getting pretty fast – still suitable for paddle boats.

IV (Difficult):

Long rapids, waves powerful, irregular; rocks, strong eddies, passages clear through narrow, necessary; powerful and precise maneuvering required; maximum safety precautions necessary; necessary.

V (Very Difficult):

Very much larger waves, complex maneuvering required; maximum safety precautions necessary. Risk to boat and life; limits of controlled navigation.

VI (Limits):

Navigation severe, risk to life and boat; rarely, if ever, run.