



2018 Outstanding Contribution to River Management Herm Hoops

This award recognizes a longer history of contributions to the greater field of river management (as opposed to more recent or project/location-specific accomplishments). Herm Hoops was selected for this award in recognition of a life dedicated to the constant care and protection of our nation's rivers. As a federal manager, a river educator, a volunteer, an activist, a mentor, a leader, a change-maker and premiere river management/use historian, Herm has never wavered in his passion and energy for rivers.

Herm began running rivers in 1966. In 1975 he began a federal career with the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; retiring in 1996. He continued following his love of rivers as a guide, naturalist, and historian -- being proactive in protecting the river canyons of the Colorado Plateau. Herm has been acknowledged for his contributions to a large number of river guides and books. He has written many articles for historical journals and magazines, river conservation journals and river guide trade group publications.

He is a lifetime member of the Colorado Plateau River Guides, the Grand Canyon River Guides and recently was made an honorary life member of the Utah Guides and Outfitters Association. Herm has served on the boards of several organizations, including Plateau Restoration, Conservation Adventures and Colorado Plateau River Guides. Herm has always been a mentor leading a willing younger generation into a purposeful life of river stewardship.

In the 1990s, Herm began to realize that unless someone started collecting and documenting the history of the development of river travel as a "thing," we would lose a little each time another river pioneer passed. Herm set himself to this task, at his own expense and on his own time. Herm has devoted thousands of hours and dollars along with weeks of travel gathering the data for his written histories. He has gone to the sources, the principals of the companies that he describes. He unearthed files, lists, photographs, and journals of the people that made the equipment that served the river runners as those early explorers of river canyons helped save the rivers from being dammed.

Herm has always shared his findings free of charge. The University of Utah Special Collections Library took note of his efforts, and placed his findings, notes and other materials in their collections and began funding further efforts. Some publications include: *The Dream Builders: A History of Rubber Fabricators, B.F. Goodrich, Rubber Crafters, and Demaree Inflatable Boats*, *A History of B.A. Hanten, Rogue Inflatables, and The Swanson Boat Oar Company*; histories of Wing, Campways/Riken, Domar, Avon, Hyside, Maravia, and more obscure and now-defunct

companies such as Udisco, Campways, and Leyland. Herm's book, *The History of Inflatable Boats and How They Saved Rivers*, is comprehensive and catalogs the evolution of inflating animal skins as floats to modern day self-bailers. Along the way he reveals the pivotal players and introduces you to the drive and passion that made these pioneers such critical pieces of the puzzle.

Herm has spent a lifetime relentlessly participating in every planning process affecting rivers where he could effect change. He has always been one to participate in river activism. He tends to scold those that just run rivers and don't speak for their protection and care. He is known as the great protector of Desolation Canyon. He knows it better than any other, and has worked passionately to fend off oil and gas development. His latest achievement was reading up on the creation of the large impassible irrigation diversion dam near Green River, Utah, and noticing that the irrigators were charged decades ago with providing boat passage through the dam that was never built. "Well it would be cost prohibitive to retrofit such a thing onto the dam at this point!" they claimed. "Not our problem," said Herm. There is boat passage now. Herm proves what is possible when we are willing to go the extra mile for our rivers.