

# Facts About the Dolores River in Moab Utah

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People know a lot of things about the Dolores River. You may know it's in the southwest area of Colorado. You might be aware that it flows about 250 miles from the San Miguel River, runs through the La Plata Mountains into plunging canyon depths, past the town of Dolores, through Paradox Valley. Finally, at Moab, it connects with the Colorado River. You may also assume that snow melt raises the river level in the spring too. But, did you know that by mid-summer, the river drops and its flow becomes a mere trickle?

Here are some other interesting facts about the Dolores River that a lot of people don't yet know:

- The Dolores River, along with its tributaries are collectively an important resource for irrigation in the region. In fact, the McPhee Dam near the town of Dolores, impounds part of the water from the upper river for this use.
- The river probably got its name Río de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, which is "River of Our Lady of Sorrows," from a Spanish trader in 1765.
- The river re-enters Dolores County below McPhee Dam where it has cut the 40-mile long, 1,100-foot deep Dolores River Canyon.
- The stretch of the Dolores River on the Utah side is bordered by gorgeous natural scenery teeming with wildlife. There is hiking and camping along the side of the canyon.
- The confluence of the Dolores River with the Colorado River is just upriver from the Dewey Bridge on Highway 128 in Utah.

- The lower section of the [Dolores River](#) has little to no boating season and it changes dramatically each year depending on conditions. It's usually sometime from late April to early May.
- The Utah part of the Dolores features technical rapids. The most challenging of all rapids on the Utah side of the river is near the Colorado border.
- Permits are required at any time of year for private boating on the Lower Dolores River year-round. Permits are available at [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov).
- The mile-long section of rock known as the “Stateline Rapid” demands fast maneuvering at every water level and expert-level scouting. There is no margin for error here. Most groups put in somewhere below this point.
- For Dolores River Rafting trips, you need to bring your own drinking water because the water in the Dolores river and the tributaries to it is not suitable for humans to drink.
- The Dolores river flows through a mix of public and private land.
- Boating on the Colorado length of the Dolores River does not require a permit. You can find [streamflow information](#) at the link.

Here's a link to a good printable map of the Dolores River: [Dolores River Map PDF](#).

## **Whitewater Rafting Moab Utah – Red River Adventures**

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