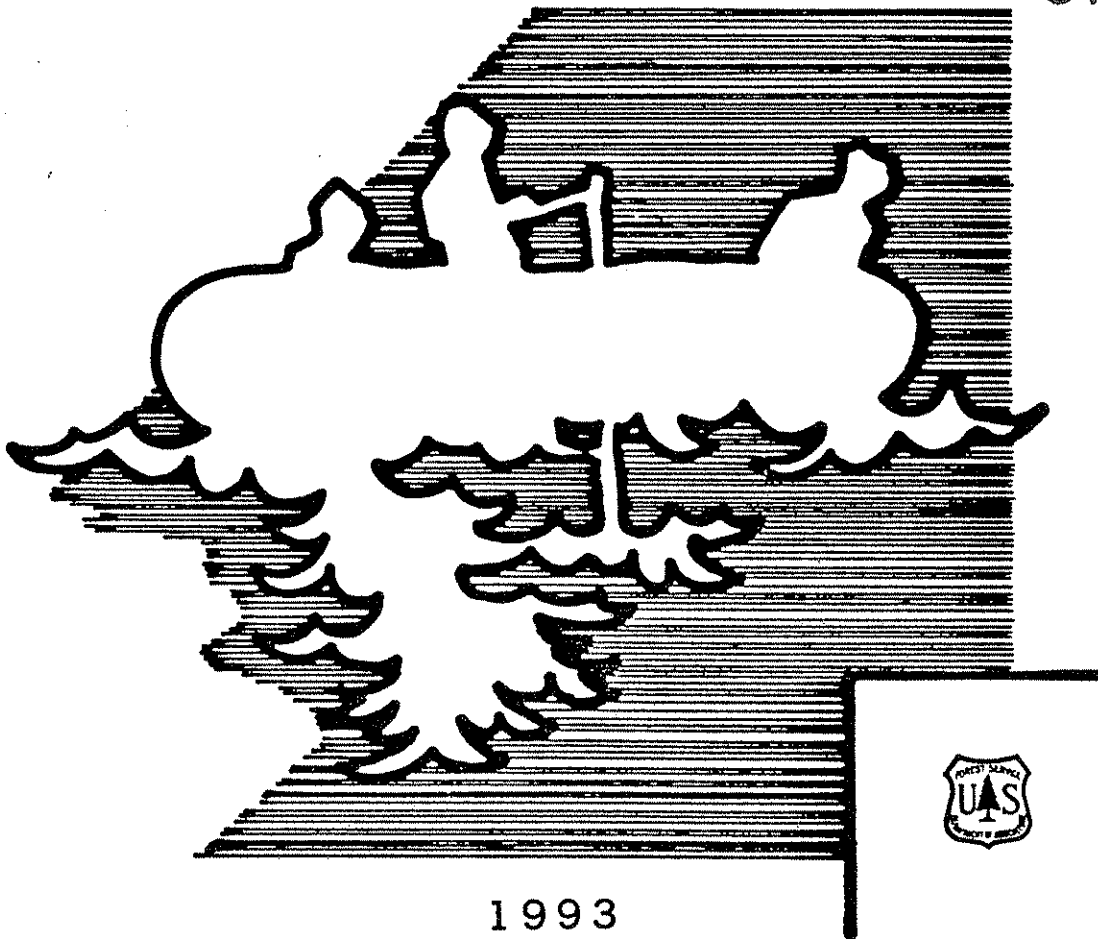


**RECREATION OPPORTUNITY GUIDE**

RECEIVED  
R10-15-97 D

**VERDE RIVER**

ORIGINAL



1993

**COCONINO, PRESCOTT &  
TONTO NATIONAL FORESTS**

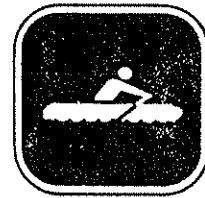
018

## RIVER-RUNNING

## VERDE RIVER (UPPER)

United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service  
Tonto, Coconino, and  
Prescott National Forests



Welcome!

Since we might not have a chance to meet you during your visit, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and to provide some information that will give you a better appreciation of this special river.

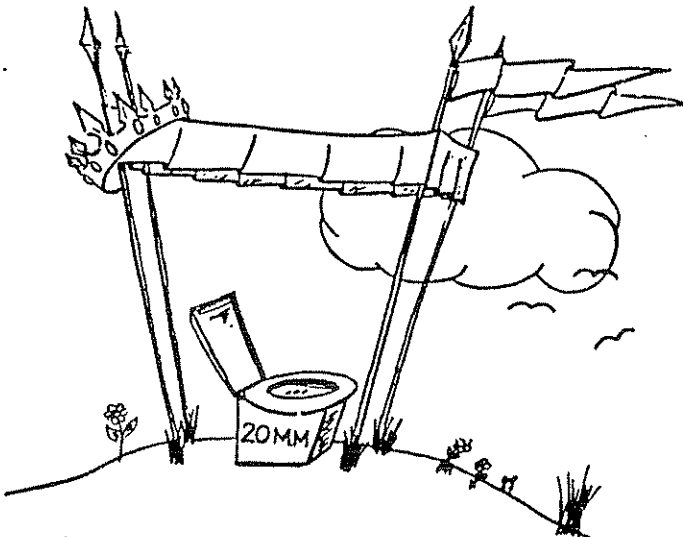
The Arizona Wilderness Act of 1984 established a portion of this river as Arizona's first **WILD RIVER**; at the same time, another portion was designated as Arizona's first **SCENIC RIVER**! The Scenic River begins near Beasley Flat and continues downstream to just below Childs where it enters the Mazatzal Wilderness. At this point, the Wild River section begins; it continues downstream to the mouth of Red Creek. The river remains within the Wilderness until approximately one mile above the Sheep Bridge.

A Group size limitation of not more than **15** people is in effect. As you visit this area, we ask that you respect and help preserve its outstanding scenic and wild characteristics.

### PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

You will be pleased to learn that **no permit is required** for private parties to run this river; however, with added freedom comes added responsibility. We ask that you conduct your trip so that virtually **NO TRACE** is left of your presence along this unique river. With your cooperation and help (and that of others), we hope to be able to continue to welcome visitors without requiring a permit.

While permits are not normally required, under certain circumstances they are. For example, if money changes hands for any reason except for sharing of all costs by all participants, a permit would be required. If you have any question concerning this or if you are approached by a "pirate outfitter" (or if you would like a listing of authorized outfitter/guides), please contact a local Forest Officer.



## SAFE BOATING CONSIDERATIONS

It is difficult to generalize about this river, since much depends on the time of year, water level, boat involved, and certainly the skills of the river runner. It very definitely is not a river meant for beginners or novices.

This river is usually run in rafts and kayaks. It is possible to run it in a white-water canoe, however the number of wrecked canoes that have been left along it clearly show that this can be a high-risk type of trip.

The river-running season is basically March and April, and depends very much on the spring run-off. The amount of flow in the river is critical. Some years the river is virtually unrunnable by rafts due to lack of run-off.

During the late spring and early summer when the water is more manageable, the portion of the river above Beasley Flat is popular with canoers.

Below 500 C.F.S., you will begin having trouble with rocks, etc. It is run at lower levels, but can be very hard on equip-

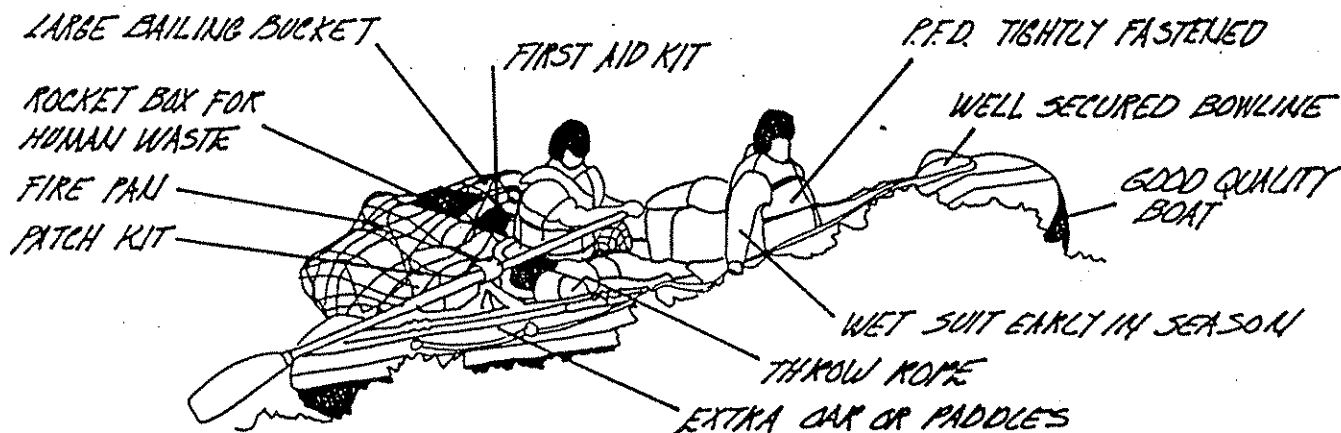
ment if certain rapids are not walked. Inflatable kayaks can also successfully negotiate the river at significantly lower levels. Above 3,000 c.f.s., trees, brush, etc., along the side and in the channels become even more of a hazard, and river-running becomes significantly more dangerous. Information on flow may be obtained from:

Salt River Project - phone (602)236-5929

All safety precautions should be taken when preparing for a trip on this river. Although it does not have the big white water of some rivers, it does have special hazards (such as trees and vegetation blocking channels, etc.). Since these change from flood to flood, it is not possible to accurately show the locations of these hazards on this map.

It should also be recognized that, because of the isolated nature of much of this river, little problems can very quickly become big problems!

The Verde Falls at mile 56.8 presents a special hazard to river runners. It can be a "Class V" under certain conditions, and must be approached with extreme caution.



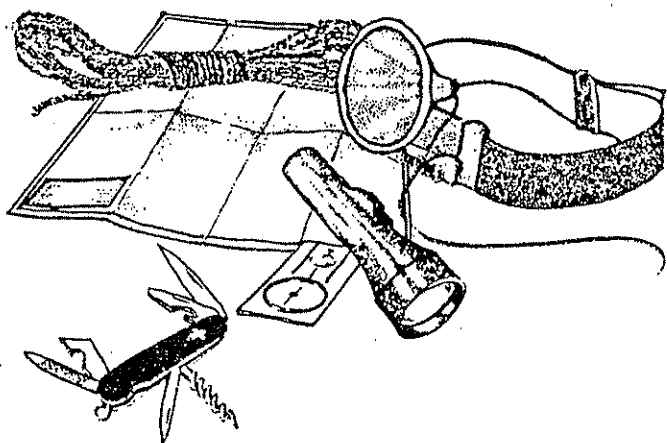
Your personal-flotation-device (life vest) should be high quality and provide flotation equal to at least 10 percent of your body weight. It should be worn *at all times* when on the river.

Because the water in March is snow-melt and very cold, full or partial wet suits are important.

Kayakers should have rescue lines installed on their boats; rafters should have a good throw-rope, and know how to use it.

Responsibility for search and rescue is with the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office. Leave your itinerary with someone who can call them if there is a true emergency.

Call: (602) 771-3260



## A WORD TO THE WISE

The information contained in this guide is for general informational purposes only, and is not meant to be taken as an invitation, nor as a statement of conditions at any one time. Conditions can vary greatly in relation to temperature, weather, water level, and other factors. All persons intending to run this river are responsible for personally assessing these conditions, as well as their own ability to cope with them. You should be aware that all recreational river use of this type involves a degree of risk, and persons engaging in this activity assume the risk associated therewith.

For additional information on river safety, we recommend the A.W.A. Safety Code. If you enclose a stamped self-addressed business-sized envelope, you may obtain a *free* copy from:

American Whitewater Affiliation  
Safety Codes  
146 North Brockway  
Palatine, Illinois 60067

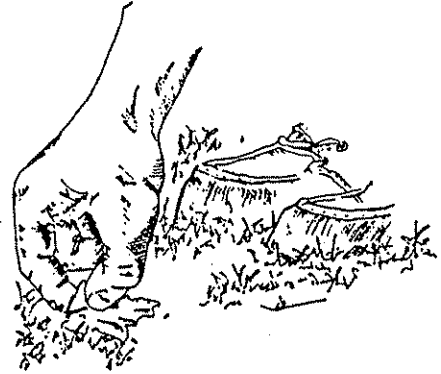
There are also a number of books on the market that can assist you in developing your back country skills. Do not "bite off more than you can chew," since compassion is not one of this river's attributes.



## CULTURAL RESOURCES

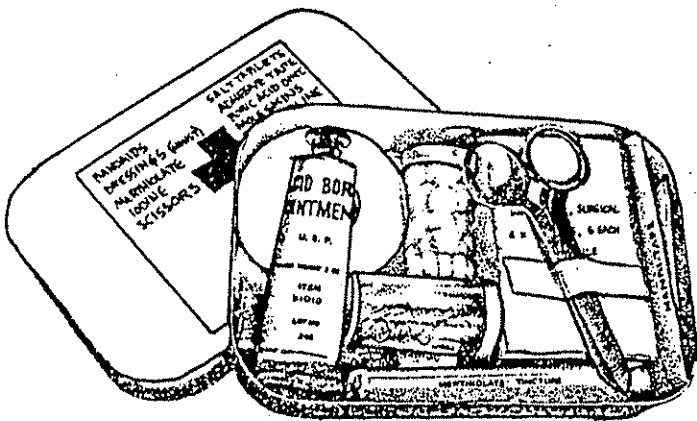
The cultural resources in this area date back into prehistory, over 11,000 years ago. Since no written records were made, archeologists must look for other evidence of the way Man lived in the past.

We need your help to preserve Arizona's past for the future. If you visit a prehistoric or even historic site, please leave everything as you find it. If incidents of recent site destruction are noted, report your discovery to the nearest Forest Service Office.



## WITHOUT A TRACE

No-trace camping is the art of using a piece of land and leaving it as you found it. It also represents an ethic - a respect for the land and the rights of those who follow you. We must learn to use this river wisely or be faced with more and more restrictions as use and damage increases. These ideas will help:



## TRIP PLANNING

1. Much of the land near Camp Verde is privately owned. Respect the rights of these landowners.
2. Keep your party small: not more than 15 people per group are allowed below Childs.
3. Use rocket boxes or garbage bags inside burlap sacks to carry out your trash.
4. Bring a fire-pan for your fire. Take a gas stove to help conserve firewood.
5. Bring an extra rocket box for human waste.

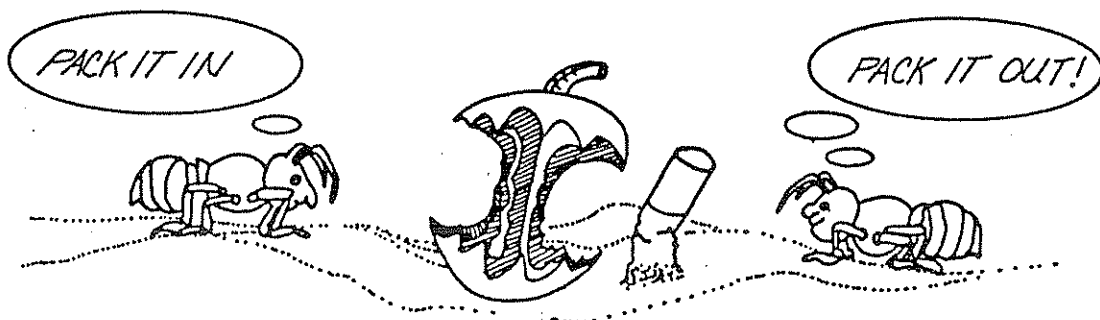
## AROUND CAMP

1. Do not camp around other groups trying to enjoy the solitude.
2. Wash dishes and discard waste water at least 100 feet from the river.
3. Campfires too often result in blackened rocks, hacked logs, partially burned wood, and charcoal-covered beaches. The best way to prevent a campfire scar is not to build a fire at all. If you do, here are some ways to lessen its impact:
  - Use a fire pan. Ashes can then easily be dumped into the river.
  - Use only fallen deadwood or driftwood.
  - Dig a shallow pit for the fire, rather than constructing the traditional "fire ring".
  - Select a safe spot away from rocks that would be blackened by smoke.
4. - Put your fire out - out cold - before you leave. Don't forget to naturalize the site after the out-cold ashes are disposed of.

5. Bring litter bags to carry out all trash that cannot be completely burned. Aluminum foil and aluminum-lined packages *won't* burn; put them in your litter bag.
6. Scout the area before leaving your camp or lunch stop. Be sure nothing has been left behind: try to make it appear as if no one had been there!

## SANITATION

1. Treat and/or filter all water.
2. Biodegradable soap should always be used, but doesn't belong in the river. Bathe well away from the river, using a bucket.
3. Keep litter bags handy during the day for empty beverage cans and incidental trash. Never sink cans or bottles in the river.
4. If you smoke, put the butts in your pocket. They don't belong on the ground or in the river.
5. Everything not totally combustible should be compacted and packed out.



## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Note that each river mile is indicated by a circled number, beginning with Mile 69 near the Camp Verde bridge, and ending down near Mile 10 at the Sheep Bridge (the mileage is from the Horseshoe Reservoir Dam). Allowing time for breaks, scouting rapids, etc., rafters often plan a two-mile per hour schedule.

Not all rapids are shown, but most significant ones have been. Even though this guide has been prepared over a period of years (begun by Pete Weinel in 1973), it cannot cover every situation found. As with any guide, it will only be of use if it is, in fact, in use. It will do little good if packed away where it cannot be referred to regularly. To avoid any nasty surprises, you should make it a policy to know where you are on the river at all times.

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Tonto National Forest  
P.O. Box 5348  
Phoenix, AZ 85010  
Phone: (602)225-5237

Cave Creek Ranger District  
P.O. Box 5068  
Carefree, AZ 85377  
Phone: (602)488-3441

Verde Ranger District  
Prescott National Forest  
P.O. Box 670  
Camp Verde, AZ 86322  
Phone: (602)567-4121

Beaver Cr. Ranger District  
Coconino National Forest  
H.C. 64, Box 240  
Rimrock, AZ 86335  
Phone: (602)567-4501

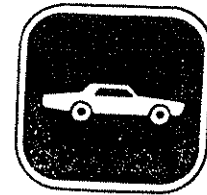
*"No servant brought them meals...No traffic cop whistled them off the hidden rock in the next rapids. No friendly roof kept them dry when they misguessed whether or not to pitch the tent. No guide showed them which camping spots offered a nightlong breeze and which a nightlong misery of mosquitoes; which firewood made clear coals and which would only smoke. The elemental simplicities of wilderness travel were thrills...because they represented complete freedom to make mistakes. The wilderness gave...those rewards and penalties for wise and foolish acts...against which civilization has built a thousand buffers."*

- Aldo Leopold (1887-1948)

RIVER	ACCESS (RAP's)	POINTS
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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Forest Service  
Tonto, Coconino, and  
Prescott National Forests



**Mile 69.2 - Camp Verde Bridge:** The only access via paved road. River below this point is slow, and this section is often by-passed. Drive to the end of the guardrail on the east end of the bridge, turn left (upstream) around the end of the guardrail and follow the dirt road down to a small parking area. A trail leads to the river under the bridge.

**Mile 68-61 - Verde Valley:** There are a number of places to access the river, but be aware that this is all private land, and the rights of the land owners must be respected. Inquire locally to obtain permission to cross private land.

**Mile 60.5 - Beasley Flat:** Just south of the "Y" in Camp Verde, turn west on the Salt Mine Road #574. Follow this road for 8.6 miles to the River Bend Road #334. Turn left on this road, through Camp Verde Acres subdivision to Beasley Flat. An excellent R.A.P.

**Mile 58.9 - Cottonwood:** A rough 4WD road accesses the river at this point. Turn right off the Crook Highway about one mile past West Clear Creek on Forest Road #708. After approximately one mile, turn right onto Forest Road #500. Not passable in wet weather.

**Mile 51.5 - Brown Springs Ranch:** Access at this point requires carrying gear about 1/4 mile to Road #574. This R.A.P. makes a nice one-day float from the Verde Valley, and is an easy car shuttle.

**Mile 43.5 - Verde Hot Springs:** This R.A.P. is now closed to the public, however it is possible to hike down the road/trail to Childs.

**Mile 42.5 - Childs:** This is now the primary access to the river in this area. Can be a take-out for a weekend trip from the Verde Valley, or a put-in for a 2-3 day trip to the Sheep Bridge or Horseshoe. High-clearance vehicles are needed; 4WD recommended if the roads are muddy. From the "Y" in Camp Verde, follow the Gen. Crook Highway east for 7.3 miles. Turn right on Road #708. Follow this road 13.8 miles to the turn-off onto the Childs Road #502. Follow this road to the turn-off to the R.A.P. just before reaching Childs. (Note: This spot is also marginally accessible from the west side via 4WD.)

**Mile 34.4 - Houston Creek:** A very rough 4WD trail comes to within about 1/2 mile of the river. Probably only useful for emergency purposes.

**Mile 19.8 - Red Creek:** A rough 4WD trail comes down Red Creek at this point.

**Mile 9.8 - Sheep Bridge:** Road #269 comes to the river here. Depending on weather and condition, this road may be passable to passenger cars or only 4WD's. Note that Road #479 on the east side of the river is closed at Horseshoe Dam and is only accessible by fording the river at low water.

**Mile 0.1 - Ocotillo Boat Ramp:** A tow across the lake is recommended for use of this R.A.P., but it can also be reached the old-fashioned way.



22 miles to Flagstaff

Verde River

17

Camp Verde

87

FR 574  
Beasley Flat

260

FR 708

FR 708

Strawberry

Childs

Verde River

East Verde River

Payson

FR 269

Sheep Bridge

Horseshoe Reservoir

87

Verde River

FR 205

FR 19

FR 205

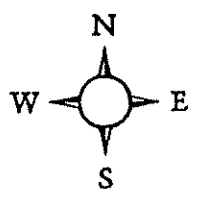
Bartlett Reservoir

Cave Creek Carefree Hwy.

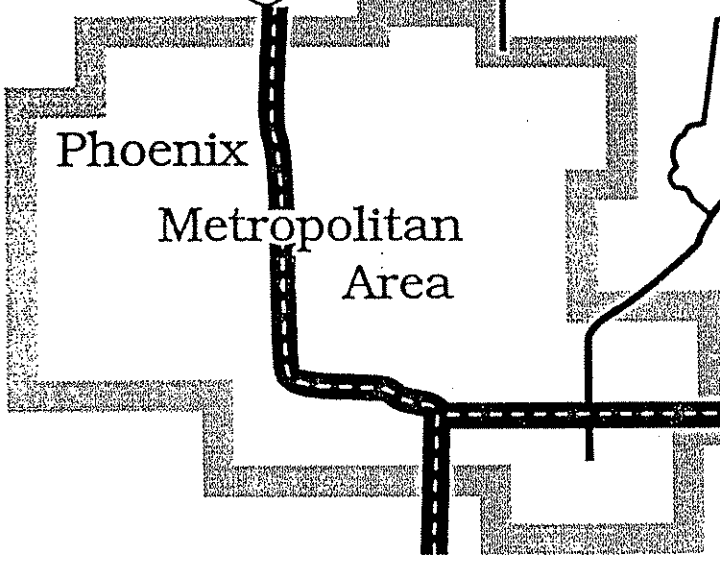
Cave Creek Rd.

17

Phoenix Metropolitan Area

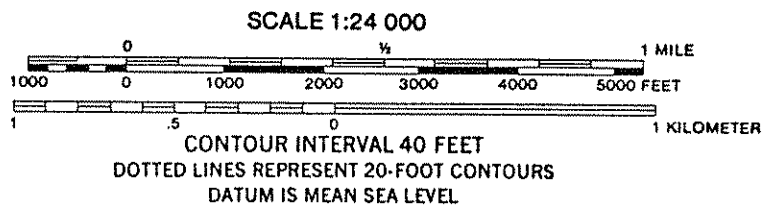


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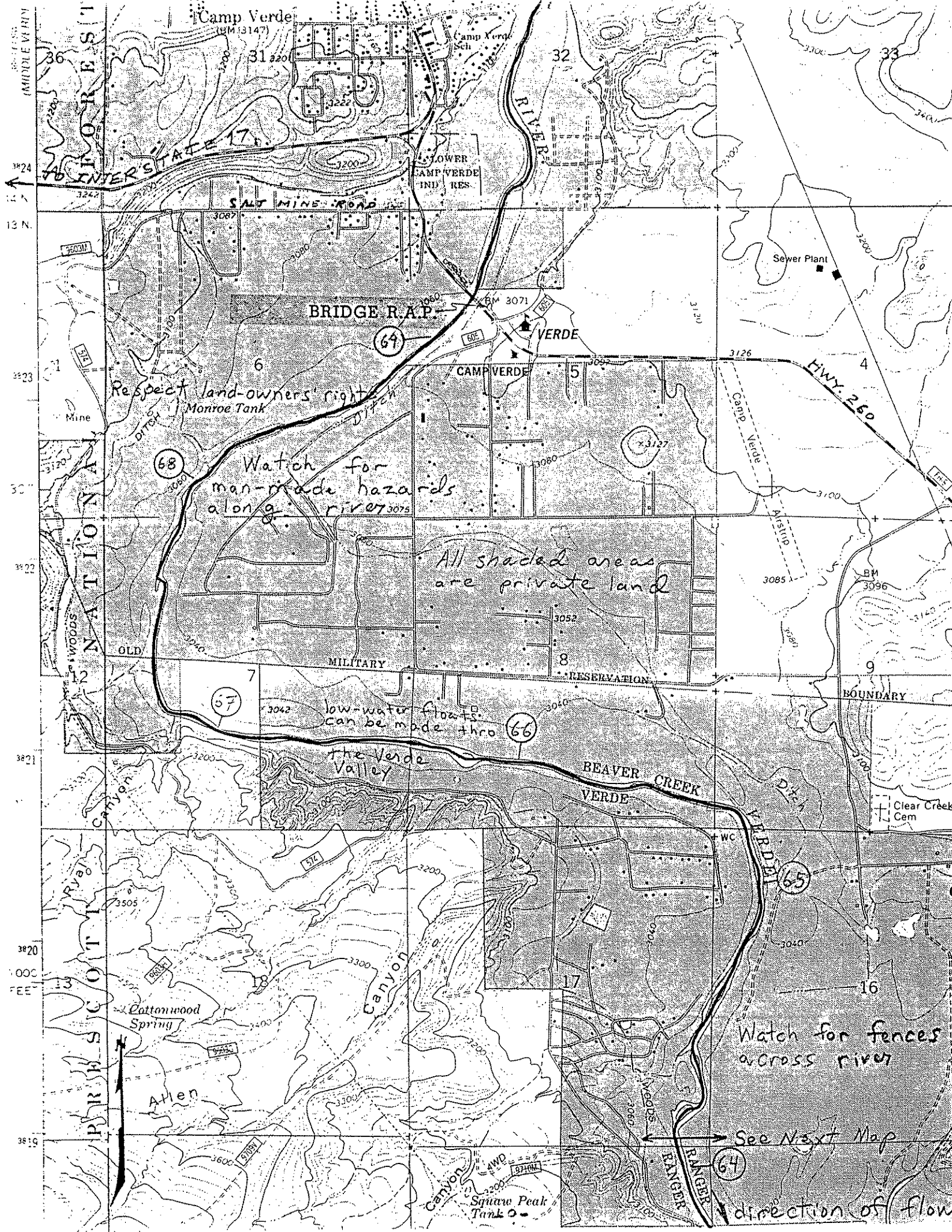
SCALE OF RIVER GUIDE



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information contact:

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
Forest Service  
Tonto National Forest  
P. O. Box 5348  
Phoenix, Arizona 85010



Camp Verde  
(BM 13147)

LOWER  
CAMP VERDE  
IND RES.

BRIDGE R.A.P.

VERDE

CAMP VERDE

Sewer Plant

Respect land-owners' rights  
Monroe Tank

Watch for  
man-made hazards  
along river

All shaded areas  
are private land

low-water floats  
can be made thro

The Verde  
Valley

Watch for fences  
across river

See Next Map

direction of flow

Allen

Cottonwood  
Spring

Squaw Peak  
Tank

Clear Creek  
Cem

BOUNDARY

REAVER CREEK  
VERDE

RANGER  
RANGER

NATIONAL

PRESHOTT

MIDDLE VERDE

STATE 17

13 N.

13 N.

13 N.

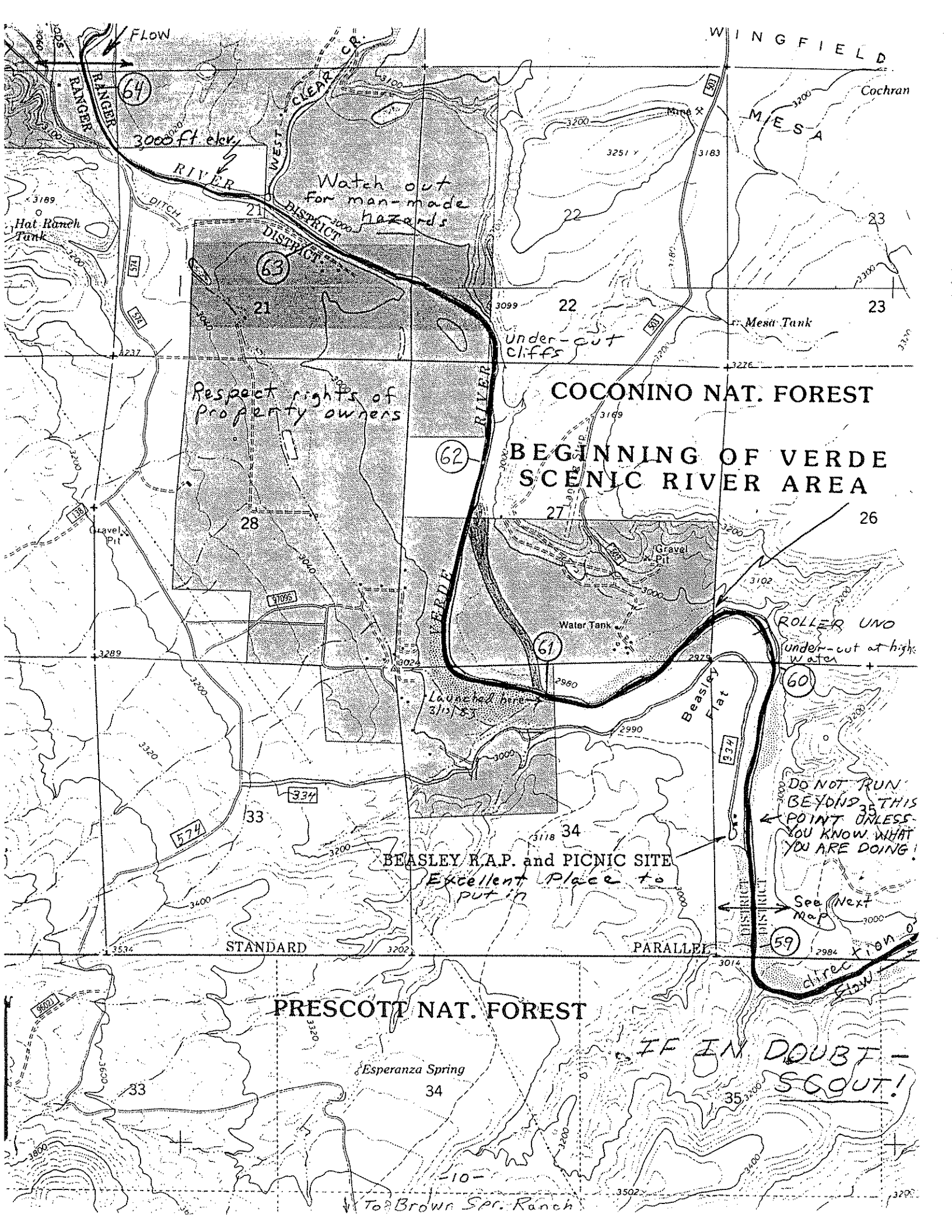
13 N.

13 N.

13 N.

13 N.

13 N.



3000 ft. elev.

Watch out for man-made hazards

Respect rights of property owners

COCONINO NAT. FOREST

BEGINNING OF VERDE SCENIC RIVER AREA

BEASLEY R.A.P. and PICNIC SITE  
Excellent place to put in

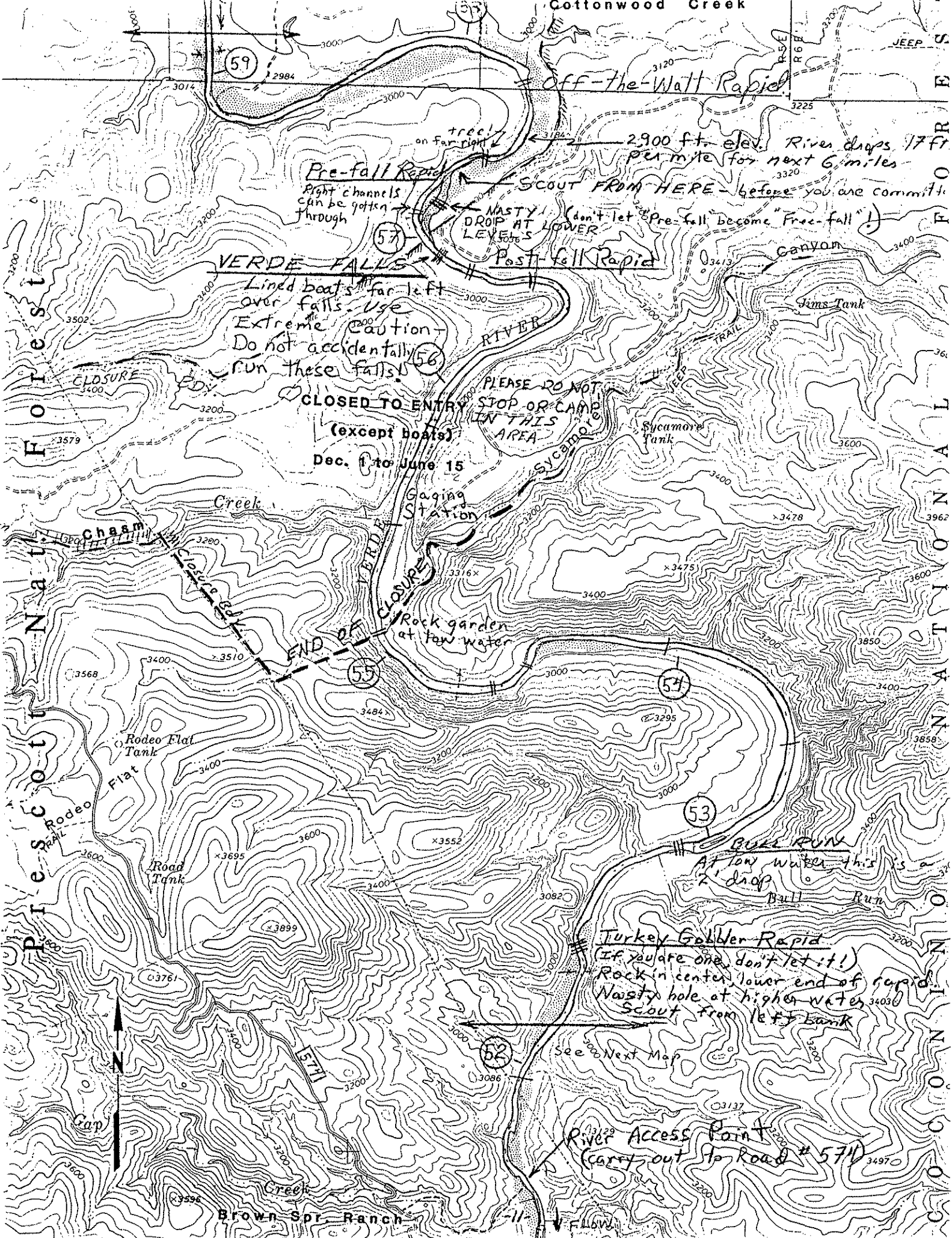
ROLLER UNO  
under-cut at high water

DO NOT RUN BEYOND THIS POINT UNLESS YOU KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING!

See Next Map

IF IN DOUBT - SCOUT!

To Brown Spr. Ranch



Off-the-Watt Rapid

2,900 ft. elev. River drops 17 ft. per mile for next 6 miles

Pre-fall Rapid  
Right channels can be gotten through

SCOUT FROM HERE - before you are committed

NASTY DROP AT LOWER LEVELS (don't let "Pre-fall" become "Free-fall"!)  
56

VERDE FALLS

Lined boats far left over falls. Use Extreme Caution - Do not accidentally run these falls!

Post-fall Rapid

CLOSED TO ENTRY STOP OR CAMP IN THIS AREA (except boats) Dec. 1 to June 15

PLEASE DO NOT STOP OR CAMP IN THIS AREA

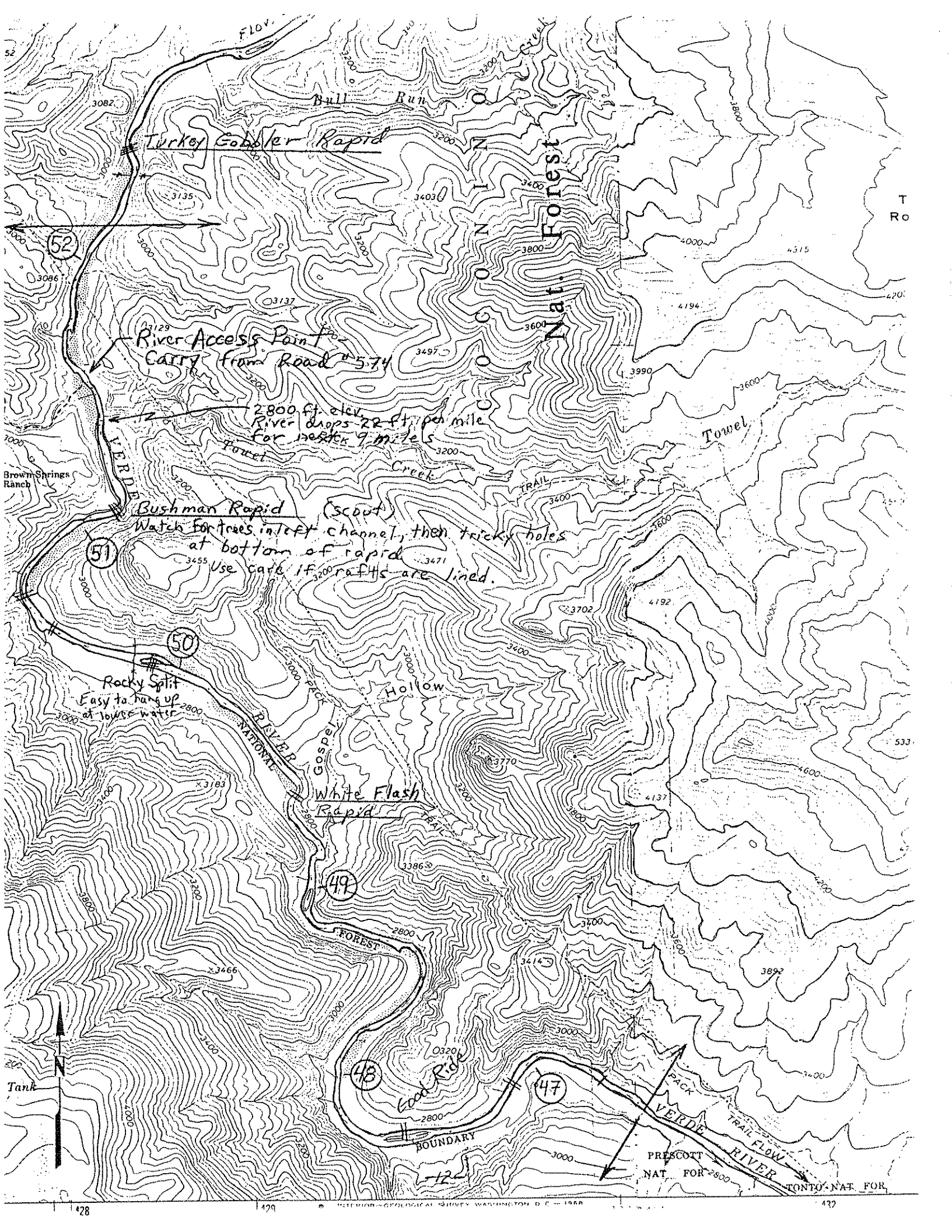
END OF CLOSURE  
Rock garden at low water

Bull Run  
At low water this is a 2' drop

Turkey Gobler Rapid  
(If you are one, don't let it!)  
Rock in center, lower end of rapid. Nasty hole at higher water. Scout from left bank

See Next Map

River Access Point (carry out to Road # 5710)



Turkey Gobbler Rapid

River Access Point for Carry from Road #574

2800 ft. elev. River drops 22 ft. per mile for next 9 miles

Bushman Rapid (scout)  
Watch for trees in left channel, then tricky holes at bottom of rapid  
Use gate if 3200 rafts are lined.

Rocky Split  
Easy to hang up at low water

White Flash Rapid

Good Risk

47

48

49

52

51

50

Tank

Nai Forest

Towel Creek

PRESCOTT NAT. FOR  
TOWEL NAT. FOR

Tonto National Forest

PRESCOTT NATIONAL FOREST

VERDE RIVER

46

45

44

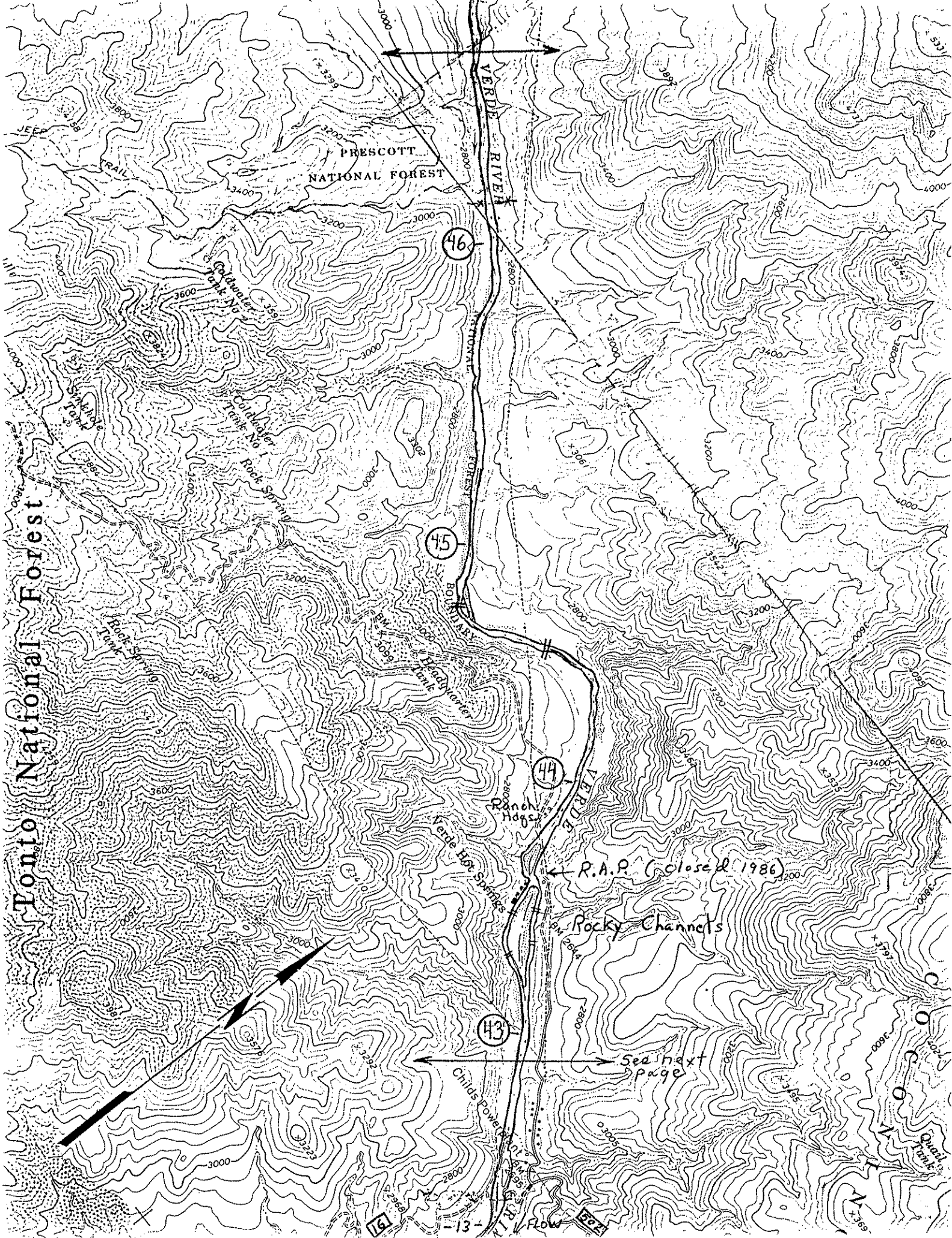
Ranch Hdqs.

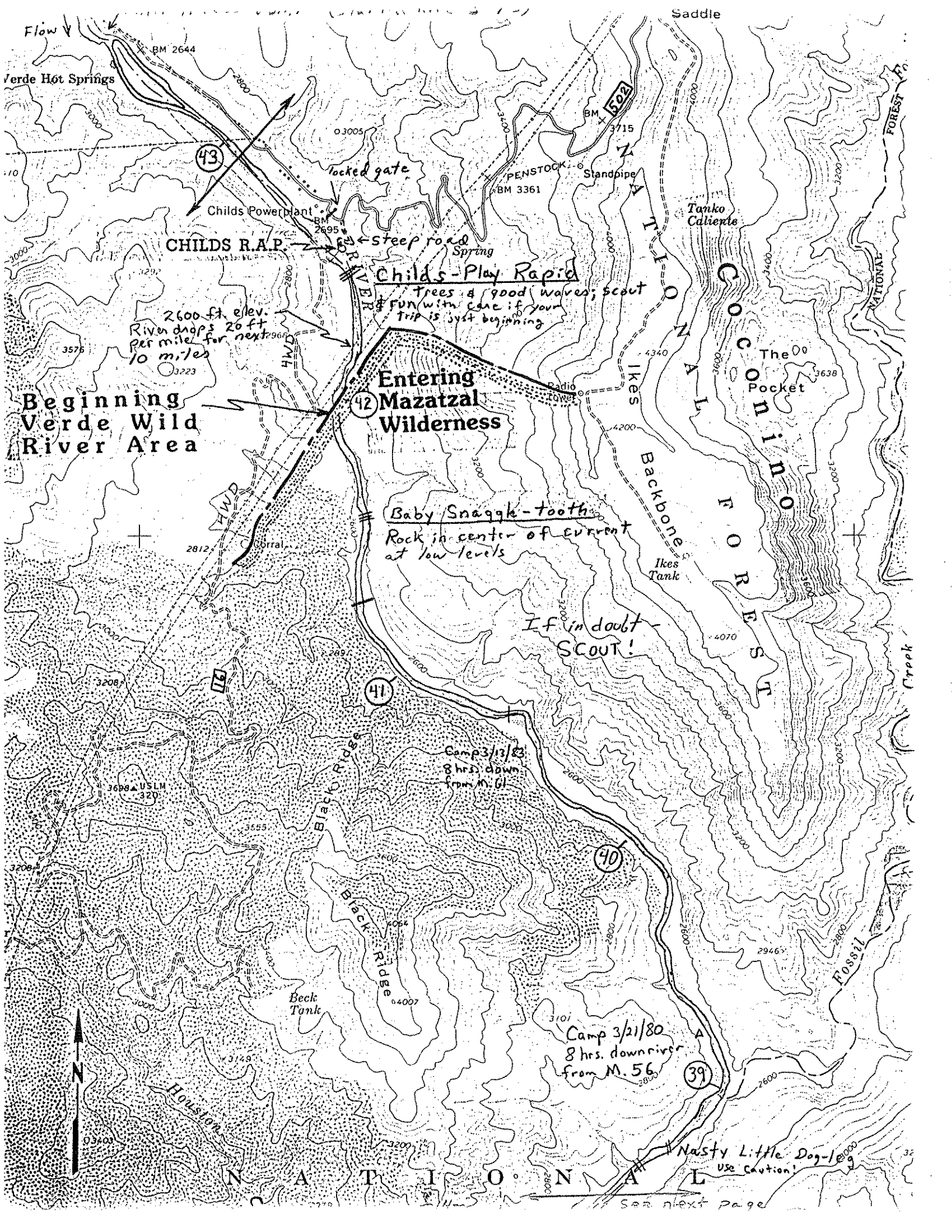
R.A.P. (closed 1986)

Rocky Channels

43

See next page





Flow ↓

Verde Hot Springs

BM 2644

43

locked gate

Childs Power Plant

CHILDS R.A.P.

steep road

Spring

Childs-Play Rapids

trees & good waves, scout  
fun with care if your trip is just beginning

2600 ft. elev.  
River drops 26 ft  
per mile for next  
10 miles

Beginning  
Verde Wild  
River Area

Entering  
Mazatzal  
Wilderness

Baby Snaggle-tooth  
Rock in center of current  
at low levels

If in doubt -  
SCOUT!

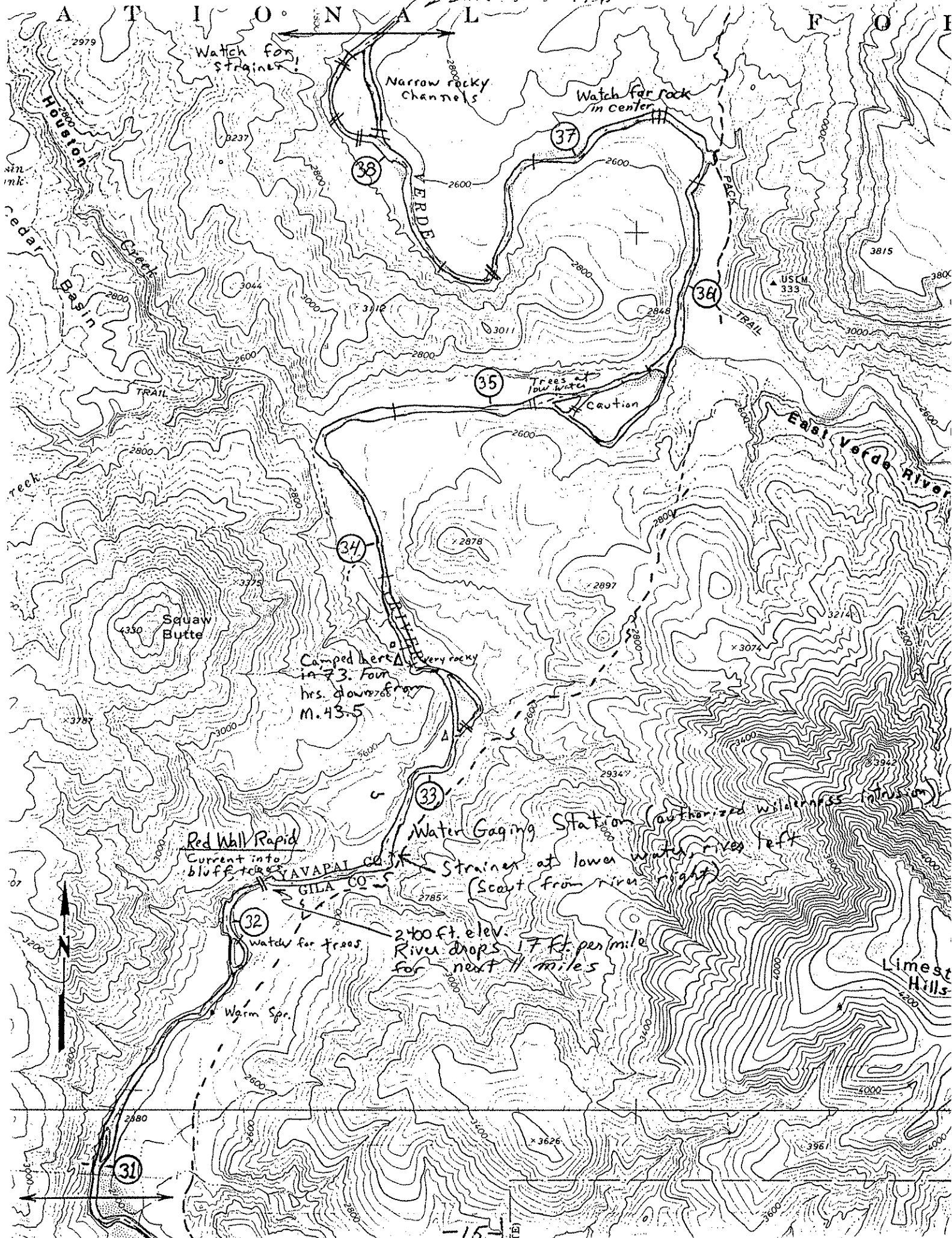
Camp 3/13/83  
8 hrs. down  
from M. 61

Camp 3/21/80  
8 hrs. down river  
from M. 56

Nasty Little Dog-leg  
Use Caution!

See next page





Watch for strainer

Narrow rocky channels

Watch for rock in center

33

37

36

35

34

33

32

31

Red Wall Rapid

Current into bluff faces

Water Gaging Station

Strainer at lower water, river left

(Scout from river right)

2400 ft. elev. River drops 17 ft. per mile for next 1/2 miles

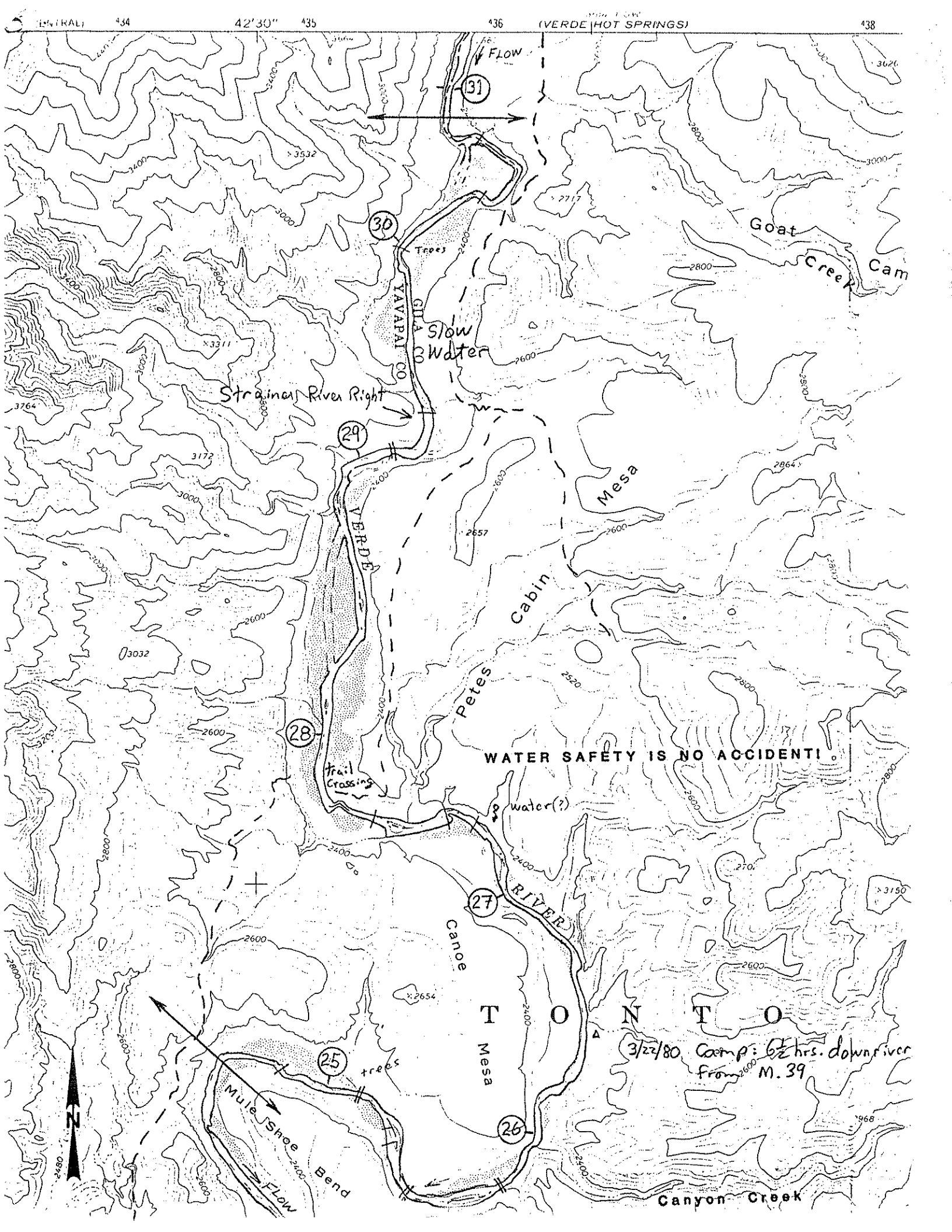
Watch for trees

Warm Spr.

Camped here in 73. Four hrs. down from M. 43.5

authorized wilderness (invasion)

Limest Hills



Strainer River Right

Slow Water

Goat Creek Cam

Mesa

Petes Cabin

WATER SAFETY IS NO ACCIDENT!

water(?)

VERDE RIVER

Canoe

TONTONTO

Mesa

3/22/80 Camp: 6 1/2 hrs. down river from M. 39

Mule Shoe Bend

Canyon Creek



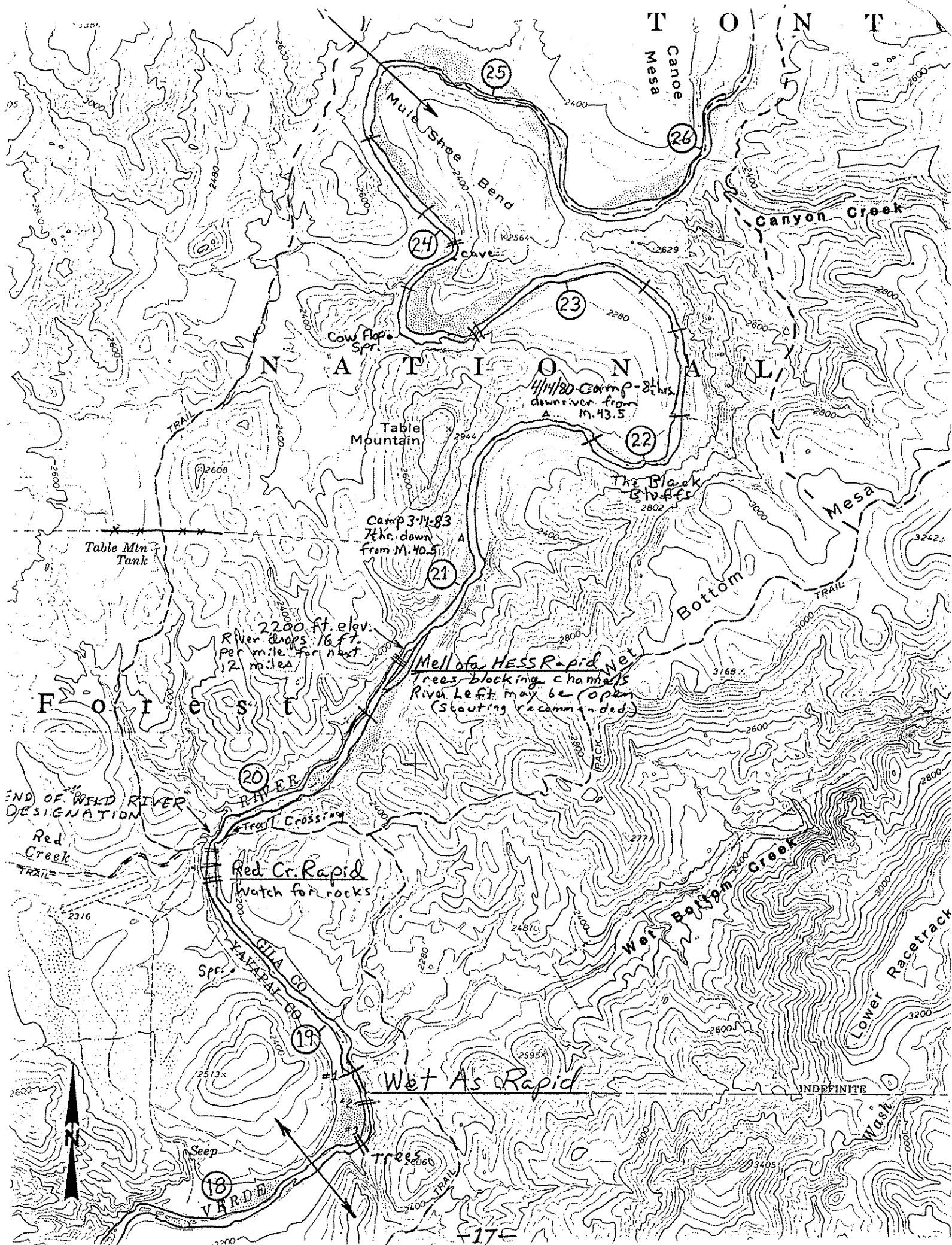


Table Mtn Tank

2200 ft. elev.  
River drops 16 ft.  
per mile for next  
12 miles

Camp 3-14-83  
7hr. down  
from M. 40.5

4/14/80 Camp-8 hrs.  
downriver from  
M. 43.5

Mellofa HESS Rapid Net  
rees blocking channels  
River Left may be open  
(Stouting recommended)

Red Cr. Rapid  
Watch for rocks

Wet As Rapid

INDEFINITE

END OF WILD RIVER  
DESIGNATION





**Wilderness**

32 Miles to I-17

The White Bluffs

Honey Chute

Body

Creek

Road very bad when muddy

SHEEP BRIDGE R.A.P.

RIVER APPEARS TO GO STRAIGHT BUT BEST CHANNEL IS RIGHT GAPING STATION

Scouting Recommended

Out 3/23/80  
6 1/2 hrs. downriver from M. 26.4  
Out 4/15/80  
4 hrs. downriver from M. 21.6

Chalk Mt. Rd # 479  
(Note: Horseshoe Dam crossing closed by S.R.P.)

T o n t o

N a t i o n a l

F o r e s t

2,000 ft. elev.

HORSESHOE RESERVOIR (upper limits)

