



South SWP Hydropower Relicensing, FERC Project No. 2426

Documentation of Interviews with Whitewater boaters are included below in the following order: Kris Schmidt, Rick Norman, Eric Disque, Rocky Contos, Tom Walsh, and Charles Foster followed by Whitewater boater questionnaires by Bryant Burkhardt, Kristin Hacker, Keith Richards Dinger, Paul Macey, Terry Valle, Erskine Hellrigel

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 26 June 2018	Time: 3:31	Duration (approximate): 16 mins
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Ian Garvie, Environmental Engineering Intern Stantec		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Kris Schmidt, former boater, N/A		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization):		
Subject Matter: Piru Creek Whitewater Boating Study		

Brief Summary of Communication

Paddled Piru Last about a year after the boating study

Does not boat anymore, series of injuries

Used a whitewater kayak

Trip took about 2-2.5 hours

Boated sections from pyramid dam until it ran out of water at a bridge where road meets creek and until near the end, depends on amount of water

Rated difficulty as class II-III without hazards (bushes)

Bushes were the largest problem, made it much more difficult and dangerous. Created portages where he went out to move around brush

Also portaged around barbed wire fence

No other hazards besides the wire and brush

Can't remember where he got information from but remembered getting messages about controlled releases. May have been from other boaters/list services as well. Thinks it could've been united water

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Prefers a higher flow on Piru

No secondary activities, just boating (might have picnicked afterwards)

Most positive aspects: location was close to LA, wild creek nature and scenery was quite good, liked seeing the wildlife, beautiful sycamore forest.

Negative aspects: Brush at the top, need to know when the flow is, getting access, logistics of getting on the river in general.

Not likely to return, can't boat anymore due to injury.

Stated that the fly fishing club really likes upper Piru creek, as do some boaters.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 26 June 2019	Time: 10:00am	Duration (approximate): 30 minutes
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: 626-575-8105 <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Kirby Gilbert		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Rick Norman		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization): Whitewater Boater		
Subject Matter: Discussion about and contacts for whitewater boating study		

Brief Summary of Communication

After initial email contact, Rick (ricpatnor@aol.com) expressed interest in the whitewater boating study and was interested in more information regarding the study. In an informal telephone conversation Rick was able to provide the following information but also agreed to follow up in an interview regarding whitewater boating on Pyramid Reach (Middle Piru Creek). Rick provided the following recounts of boating on Piru Creek.

- He has boated middle Piru Creek twice with Charles Foster who had later provided a ricpatnor@aol.com detailed account of the boating resource to Lars Holebeck for his book –
- Rick recalled they tracked storms and considered the timing they were presented with was a very “narrow window” of time to run the river during a storm event. They found a good flow and put in at Frenchman’s Flat where the river ran about 200 cfs. Rick recalled the importance of considering the inflows farther downstream from Fish Creek and Agua Blanca (he did not recall the inflow-creek names) and contribute substantially to the river flow and this is important because it’s an 18-mile trip commitment and the tributary inflows downstream will contribute to the flows released from Pyramid Dam and that contribution has to be considered upon venturing into the river at Frenchman’s Flat otherwise the flows can be too high for boating and there is no easy way out of the canyon, mid-way to Lake Piru. Rick noted the need to put-in at Frenchman’s Flat at a “low boatable flow” in order to not be overwhelmed by tributary inflow contributions on the run below leading to Lake Piru.

- Rick said more than about 200 cfs at Frenchman's Flat would not necessarily help boatability if the tributaries downstream are flowing strong during storm events because a boater is fully committed to the 18-mile reach once entering at Frenchman's Flat.
- In the two runs they made based on storm events they tried to put in at Frenchman's Flat with a flow about 200 cfs to be able to account for higher flows downstream after confluences of the tributaries downstream which can add substantial inflows to ensure they could pass through the river leading to Lake Piru. He recalled the flows downstream reaching more like 300-400 cfs when the releases from Pyramid Dam were only about 200 cfs during his experience which was at the time of storm events.
- Rick stated that any trip down this reach needs to start in the morning, by 8am in order to make it through the whole 18-mile reach in a day. Rick noted he had two short portages on his trips in the early 2000s.
- Rick recalled a boater who had gone into the river-canyon with high flows and had to hike out and yet there are few portages or trails out, so once a boater goes into this reach they are committed and thus it requires a great deal of skill and preparation in order to make the trip. He also recalled there was rumor of a "hydraulic hole" downstream during high flows which could be a hazard to boating.
- Rick participated in the Santa Felicia Hydroelectric Project (FERC No. 2153) relicensing whitewater boating study in the early 2000's. He also had participated in a Kern River whitewater boating study.
- Rick considers middle Piru Creek to be at least a Class III to Class IV experience and this would not be a reach at all for beginner or Class II or below boaters.
- He recalled the middle Piru reach getting narrow in places and he had to portage twice, others might be able to pass on through but he was generally "conservative" in terms of judgement on safety on his trips.
- Rick provided the names – Gary Gunder and Gary Valle as boaters who in the past recorded trips and may have even boated on Agua Blanca Creek. He also mentioned the Los Angeles Kayak Club as a possible source for finding more boaters who may have the skills to run Piru or maybe some might have run it in the past.
- Rick suggested that it would helpful if they could take out at Blue Point Campground rather than paddling through upper Lake Piru as they added a lot to the trip. He stated if they could get a vehicle past the locked gate at Lake Piru (up to Blue Point Campground) it would be a much better boating experience.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 25 June 2018	Time: 2:06	Duration (approximate): 19 Minutes
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: (916) 205-8402 <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Ian Garvie, Environmental Engineering Intern, Stantec		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Eric Disque, whitewater boater, N/A		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization):		
Subject Matter: Piru Creek Whitewater Boating Study		

Brief Summary of Communication

Ran whole section from Pyramid Dam Piru Lake

Stated it ran really fast, possibly more than what AW would have wanted

3.5 hours for 19 miles

Water level was really high

One portage

Used a log jam in the top third

Ran about 8 years ago, ran once, first time.

During rain in flood season, high flows

Shuttle picked up at end at Piru Reservoir

Summer flow releases wouldn't require paddling for Piru Reservoir

Used Kayaks, friend had playboat, Eric had a creek boat

Would consider it a class IV, would not take a class III+ boater down it due to trees and brush

III+ should have an experienced person with them

Phenomenal upper section (above pyramid lake) would like to see scheduled releases (class V)

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Liked flow that they had for middle and lower sections

Not a lot of eddies

Would like to see slightly lower flows to have broader view

No secondary activities, just boating in the rain

Positive aspects: new river, likes seeing fault lines in rock structure, waterfalls,

Negative aspects: Did not have much information beforehand (Piru and cespie)

No specific improvements he can think of

Would like to return one day but can't go because of "nonexistent flows." Would be willing to go at least once a month.

Can see doing cataracting

Would like to have a flow the day before the group interview to get a refresher.

I said I would keep him updated about the group interview

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 22 June 2018	Time: 11:03	Duration (approximate): 18 minutes
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: (206) 484-5820 <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Ian Garvie, Environmental Engineering Intern, Stantec		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Rocky Contos, whitewater boater, N/A		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization):		
Subject Matter: Piru Creek Whitewater Study		

Brief Summary of Communication

Last paddled 18 years ago

Often goes up the stream to paddle where there's more regular water.

Used a runner kayak

Did middle section from pyramid reservoir to Piru lake with a friend

Day trip, coming up from SD, on water for probably 5 hours, rode a bike back to the shuttle

Large natural gas exhaust point towards the end of the run

Very fun run with nice scenery

Information from maps he had seen, was interested in paddling everything he could in SoCal and Baja California

Not sure if he knew what the flow was going to be. Thinks he went in an el nino year, so he assumed there would have been enough rain. Did not remember if online resources were available yet. Not a lot of information available

Other group members may have been able to look up information beforehand from people they knew who did it

Difficulty of IV out of V on the whitewater scale

Big dangers were brush and a few rocky passages

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Mostly fine moving, not too many drags, flow wasn't huge (300 cfs or so)

Stated a preference for a little higher of a flow than before

Cycled to the shuttle after boating but not any other recreational activities other than boating

Stated that it is rare to find a nice creek that's so close to them

Stated that it is in the top 5 in SoCal. Very pretty scenery, somewhat of a challenge but not too difficult

Only negative was the brush making the run too dangerous and wants easier access upstream and take out in Piru lake

Would be great if they had a few scheduled releases through the season. Bundled release with more creeks in the canyon

Overall, very nice creek and canyon, boatable and fun. Suggested that more people would go if there were more releases.

Would like to go to the 25 August 2018 group interview.

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 20 June 2018	Time: 11:35 am	Duration (approximate): 9 minutes
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: (562) 596-9261 <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Tom Walsh, volunteer, Fisheries Resource Volunteer Corps		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Ian Garvie, environmental engineering intern, Stantec		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization): N/A		
Subject Matter: Piru Creek Whitewater Boating Study Responses		

Brief Summary of Communication

Tom called me after I sent an email asking if he would like to participate in the study

Member of Fisheries Resource Volunteer Corps which monitors Piru Creek twice a month.
Usually last 6-9 hours

Concerned about lack of conservation concern from visitors of creek

- Has often seen visitors defecating in creek
- Often lots of trash
- Group takes down “recreational dams” quite often
- Hopes that the new toilet installed by Forestry Service cuts down on human waste

Has never actually seen someone whitewater boat down Piru Creek, only heard of it from others

Too much reed along shoreline and in creek

Concerned about overgrowth of invasive plant species tamarix for ecological and safety reasons

Concerned about the status of Steelhead Trout in the river being harmed by low flow of water

Problem of invasive bullfrogs in the creek disturbing the environment

Has and is potentially willing to share previously collected data on the area

He stated that his concerns about the area are not being heard

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I told him I would relay his concerns about to the invasive species to people involved with the relevant studies

I gave him the study questions to fill out and he said he would also pass them on to other volunteers from his group that are familiar with the area and would give me the responses

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION RECORD

Date: 2 October 2018	Time: 10:00am	Duration (approximate): 30 minutes
Type: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Telephone – Phone number: 310-809-1424 <input type="checkbox"/> In Person – Location:		
Initiated by (Name, Title, Organization): Kirby Gilbert		
Received by (Name, Title, Organization): Charles Foster		
Others included in communication (Name, Title, Organization): Whitewater Boater		
Subject Matter: Discussion about and contacts for whitewater boating study		

Brief Summary of Communication

Charles has provided information to the study team previously about his experiences and this follow up call was to learn more about middle Piru Creek and Charles thoughts on current boating opportunities in that reach. The following are some of the main points Charles noted:

- He has boated middle Piru Creek in the late 1990s.
- Charles contributed a write up about middle Piru Creek to Lars Holbeck who put it in this 1998 book, "Guide to Best Whitewater in the State of California".
- Charles recalled the reach having a fair number of trees in and near the river channel. He noted there is a greater threat of encountering more trees in southern California river reaches like middle Piru, after a prolonged drought period.
- He recalled one mandatory type portage area not far down from Frenchman's Flat in an area of a "boulder pile". Other areas required some scouting, but most of those were more of a "read and run" type activity. Overall, he recalls being able to keep a good pace going as they proceeded through the canyon.
- He described his overall impressions of the run as having some wilderness aspects with some tight, "non-trivial rapids".
- When Charles and Rick Norman ran middle Piru it was after a series of big storms had come through and a lot of woody debris had flushed out of the river into upper Lake Piru so much, so they noted extensive floating mounds of debris in the upper lake areas.
- Charles stated the middle Piru will likely need some major flushing flows to make it more suitable for boating, at least quality boating and to reduce hazards.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: **Bryant Burkhardt**

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? **Yes**
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? **Middle Piru (below Pyramid Lake) March 19 2005, March 2006; Upper Piru (above Pyramid Lake) April 6, 2011**
3. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? **Middle Piru – put in at road access just below Pyramid Lake; Upper Piru put in at Frenchman Flat campground to Pyramid Lake**
4. What were/have been the flows you boated? **I'm not sure exactly, but I believe they were around 400 cfs on the Middle, 500 cfs on the Upper**
5. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information (what gauge as follow up if they note one)? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? **Information from Dreamflows.com**
6. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? **Whitewater kayak**
7. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? **The Middle took about 8 hours, including the paddle across Lake Piru; the upper took about 10 hours.**
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? **The Middle is mostly class II/III, but with lots of brush and hazards, and a few class IV/V rapids; The Upper was harder than the middle but mostly due to more brush in the stream and wood hazards.**
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)? **On the middle we portaged one of the early rapids (class IV+) due to wood, then another (class V-) in a gorge due to more wood. Then there was lots of portaging in the runout above Lake Piru due to wood in class II rapids. There was also a shallow section of flat water leading into the lake were it was easier/faster to get out and walk the boats down the water. The Upper had fewer portages but wood was a frequent hazard.**
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? **Higher flows on the Middle, around 500 cfs would probably be good, but much more than that and it would be more of a flood water experience.**
11. Were there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)? **NO**
12. Please describe the party you participated in this experience with (number of people, organizational affiliation, level of experience, etc.). **The Middle was done with a group of three highly experienced whitewater kayakers each time. The Upper was two experienced kayakers.**

13. Please describe the conditions on the day of your experience, to the best of your memory and ability (temperature, weather, streamflow conditions, etc.) [The weather was fairly warm for early spring, run after recent rains.](#)
14. In your own words, please generally describe the experience that you had on the date in question 1. [The Middle Piru is a very scenic section with a remote feel but the quality of the whitewater is low. Most of the rapids are not that hard or interesting for a highly skilled boater, but the dangers are too severe for a less skilled boater. It requires solid class IV skills with creeking experience to be safe.](#)
15. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. [It was worth doing for the scenery when I lived in Los Angeles and it was only an hour from home. It wouldn't be worth making a long trip to repeat.](#)
16. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. [Lots of wood and manky \(rocky\) rapids, especially at the end. The paddle out across Lake Piru is long and tedious in a whitewater kayak.](#)
17. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? [Regular flows that flush out the wood would help.](#)
18. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again? [I now live in Northern California and am unlikely to boat the Piru again. If I lived in Los Angeles I would probably boat it occasionally, especially if it had regular flows.](#)

[Here is a link to my video from the Upper Piru.](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG6AJ_yXp6A

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Kristin Hacker

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? **Yes, I have run the section from below Pyramid Lake to Lake Piru**
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? **We ran it in 2006. I have not been able to return due to timing and flow.**
3. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? **White water inflatable kayak**
4. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? **We put in downstream from the Pyramid Lake dam. Our total run was 18 miles**
5. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? **It was a day trip. Long paddle out across the lake**
6. What were/have been the flows you boated? **600 CFS.**
7. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? **I don't recall. I usually use Dreamflows.com**
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? **Mostly class IV. I remember most of it being very runnable.**
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)? **We portaged one rapid. The rapid was easy to portage.**
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? **I like the flow we had... a little more water would be good as well.**
11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)? **No. Enjoyed the canyon and views while kayaking.**
12. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. **It is beautiful creek with beautiful scenery and fun rapids.**
13. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. **The creek was a bit brushy. The long paddle across the lake in my inflatable kayak was a little difficult.**
14. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? **It just needs to have enough water for us to kayak. Boatable flows are the only improvement needed.**
15. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in

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recreational boating on Piru Creek again? **Absolutely!** If there was water in the creek I would love to run it again.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Eugene Hacker

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? **Yes, I have run the section from below Pyramid Lake to Lake Piru**
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? **We ran it in 2006. I have tried to get back but it rarely has enough water.**
3. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? **White water kayak.**
4. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? **We put in downstream from the Pyramid Lake dam. Our total run was 18 miles**
5. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? **No it was too long ago and I didn't include that in my notes.**
6. What were/have been the flows you boated? **600 CFS.**
7. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? **I don't recall. I usually use Dreamflows.com**
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? **Mostly class IV. There was one noteworthy rapid that I recall being harder.**
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)? **We portaged one rapid. I recall that after the entrance, all the "doors" ended in constrictions to small for a kayak so we portaged the entire thing. I think one person in our party ran the entrance then got out, but I may be mistaken. I remember the portage being very straight forward.**
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? **My notes from 2006 said "higher flows would be better"**
11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)? **Not really. Just enjoying the river and the amazing canyon.**
12. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. **The scenery was outstanding. I recall paddling behind a waterfall which came in from a sidestream. It is a really amazing place.**

13. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. **The run was brushy but that wouldn't discourage me from doing the run again.**
14. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? **It just needs to have enough water for us to kayak. Boatable flows are the only improvement needed.**
15. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again? **Absolutely! If there was water in the creek I would love to run it again. If there were scheduled releases, I would make plans to be there for each. It would be ideal if the releases were at a time when natural run off at the kern river was not occurring. Having a kayak run with water in the late summer of fall would be amazingly beneficial to the Southern California white water community.**

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Keith Richards Dinger

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? **Yes.**
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? **Middle Piru: March 12, 1995 and one other time, probably in 1996. Upper Piru Cr.: March 1 and 2, 1998.**
3. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? **Whitewater kayak.**
4. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? **Middle Piru put-in: Frenchman's Flat. Middle Piru takeout: Lake Piru. Upper Piru put-in: just above confluence with Cedar Cr. (~4800' elevation). Lower Piru takeout: Pyramid Lake.**
5. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? **Middle Piru: long day (6-8 hours?). Upper Piru: two good days (there is/was intermediate access at Gold Hill Rd. to break it into two days, if desired).**
6. What were/have been the flows you boated? **Middle Piru: 1100 cfs and ~700 cfs (inflow to Lake Piru). Upper Piru: ~300 cfs (CDEC gage PIR just above Pyramid Lake).**
7. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? **Middle Piru: USGS gage 11109600: PIRU CREEK ABOVE LAKE PIRU CA. Upper Piru: CDEC gage PIR: PIRU CREEK BLW BUCK CR NR PYRAMID LAKE. Yes, we checked flow before heading out.**
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? **Class IV/IV+**
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops, or boat drags on your run(s)? **Portages, yes. A few, often due to trees/brush on Middle Piru.**
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? **I would call the flows we had on all our trips good.**
11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)? **Not really.**
12. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. **Spectacular scenery and geology, great whitewater, wilderness.**
13. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. **Difficulty of finding a decent flow on Middle Piru.**

14. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? [Reliable flows on Middle Piru.](#)
15. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again? [Yes and yes.](#)

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Paul Macey

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek?

Yes

2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek?

Two times, several years ago in a high water year

3. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs?

I've paddled below Pyramid Lake to Lake Piru, and the class IV+ section into Pyramid Lake.

4. What were/have been the flows you boated?

Upper was ~275 cfs, lower ~900-1000cfs

5. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information (what gauge as follow up if they note one)? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out?

I forgot, but there was snow melt and recent rain so we knew the flow would be good.

6. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used?

Kayaks

7. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made?

Upper ~6 hours, lower 7 (1 hour lake paddle at end)

8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced?

Upper was class IV+ with some V or portages, lower mostly IV, one IV+-V drop

9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)?

Upper had a couple of portages, lower had one rapid to scout and be careful of (or partage)

10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced?

Upper was awesome at 275 – much higher and it would be very challenging. Lower was a great flow, nice intermediate level. Higher would be fun but for more experienced boaters.

11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)?

Lunch and waterfall viewing

12. Please describe the party you participated in this experience with (number of people, organizational affiliation, level of experience, etc.).

Los Angeles paddlers, friends and club members (2 people on upper, three on lower)

13. Please describe the conditions on the day of your experience, to the best of your memory and ability (temperature, weather, streamflow conditions, etc.)

Both days overcast, with some recent rain on upper (high water conditions); lower was mostly normal flows, although early in the gorge there are a few rapids with water through fast-flow brush on the side that make it trickier for intermediate paddlers.

14. In your own words, please generally describe the experience that you had on the date in question 1.

Upper was an advanced run, lower was a fun adventure. Both are amazing wilderness experiences close to LA. The lower is definitely more relaxing, especially after the upper part of the run and after we got into the steep walled gorge, where the flow evens out.

15. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again.

Again, the chance to have a wilderness experience with some challenge so close to LA is unique.

16. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again.

Not knowing the flow is an issue for much of the time. The paddle out on the lake is a pain, but not really an issue.

17. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall?

Planned flows on the lower would make it much more accessible. Even a couple of days a year – we had a wilderness run in New Zealand that they relaxed water down two weekends a year, and it is a very popular trip.

18. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again?

Yes!

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Terry Valle

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? – *Yes.*
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? *Don't know the dates exactly, was around 10 years ago, approx.*
3. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? *It was the middle Piru creek, don't know the put-in location, but remember taking out on the Lower Piru in the open area away from all the plants and brush.*
4. What were/have been the flows you boated? *Unknown. Was told it was a good flow for the creek when we did it, but I don't remember the amount.*
5. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information (what gauge as follow up if they note one)? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? *All the arrangements were made by the trip leader. I know it had not been running for very long and we had to get special permission to do the creek for the purposes of getting it open for more boating (normally not allowed)*
6. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? *Whitewater Kayak.*
7. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? *Estimate 3 -4 hours. Played in various places.*
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? *Class II water, with Class III-IV hazards.*
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)? *Yes, there was one spot we had to portage due to excessive brush and fallen trees.*
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? *The level we paddled was good. A bit lower would result in class I paddling, higher flow would make the hazards more dangerous*
11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)?
No
12. Please describe the party you participated in this experience with (number of people, organizational affiliation, level of experience, etc.). *We had approximately 10 people, from class III to class V paddlers. All the paddlers that participated were Kern River regulars.*
13. Please describe the conditions on the day of your experience, to the best of your memory and ability (temperature, weather, streamflow conditions, etc.) *It was a very nice day, blue sky, not too hot. Great day for paddling*
14. In your own words, please generally describe the experience that you had on the date in question 1. *This creek was fun to paddle. Not very difficult, skill-wise.*

About 70% did not have any particular problems to deal with, but in several places there are very tight turns with lots and lots of debris, bushes and trees. As the flow was fairly swift, if one makes a mistake in one of the turns and flips, the brush is so close that it's very hard to not get caught upside down in a bad place. This did happen a couple of times and because we had very good support as all the paddlers were experienced, we dealt with it.

15. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. *Fun paddling in a place that is close to home (L.A.), with enough challenges to make it worth going to.*
16. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. *The brush hazard. This could be serious. Also, need to have a decent flow. If the flow level we paddled was normal for a release, then chances are that flow could be a standard and worth traveling to go paddling..*
17. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? *Do work on the brush clearing. That means paddling it, finding the locations where the hazard is dangerous and clean it up.*
18. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again? *If the brush issue is resolved, I would consider going there again. Especially since it is close to L.A. The next closest place to paddle is the Kern and that's a three-hour drive. Both my husband and I always comment that we wish we had someplace within a short drive to go for a paddle for an afternoon. Piru Creek is perfect for that. Hopefully you can do something about it!*

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR BOATERS

Name: Dianne Erskine Hellrigel

1. Have you Paddled Piru Creek? -Yes
2. On what date did your paddling experience occur? (When and how often have you paddled) OR - Prior to that trip how many times have you boated Piru Creek? -1X 2015 cannot recall the date
3. Where did you paddle on this trip, or where have you paddled on other trips to Piru Creek? Put-in and take-outs? Frenchman's Flat to Blue Cut
4. What were/have been the flows you boated? Very high flow
5. When you have boated Piru Creek, what sources of information do you use to obtain flow information (what gauge as follow up if they note one)? Did you know the flow conditions prior to heading out? I had done a clean up at the site, noticed the water....did not know how far I could go.
6. What type of non-motorized watercraft did/have you used? Small single man kayak
7. Can you estimate the time from put-in to take-out to complete the run(s) you made? unknown
8. In general how would you rate the whitewater difficulty of this reach at the flows you experienced? While it was exciting and quick moving, I would not rate it as difficult (3?)
9. Did you have portages, hits, stops or boat drags on you run(s)? Had portage from Blue Cut
10. Would you prefer a higher or lower flow than what you experienced? Higher
Currently the water level is not sufficient to navigate this route.
11. Where there secondary activities you participated in during your boating trip(s)? No
12. Please describe the party you participated in this experience with (number of people, organizational affiliation, level of experience, etc.). Just me
13. Please describe the conditions on the day of your experience, to the best of your memory and ability (temperature, weather, streamflow conditions, etc.)
Temperature probably high 60s, clear/cool, highest water I've seen there yet...El Nino rains
14. In your own words, please generally describe the experience that you had on the date in question 1. – Exhilarating, lots of fun, wet, more than expected from that creek.
15. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were positive, or that would make you want to participate in a similar experience again. – The faster moving water made it a lot of fun to navigate....you were not just calmly floating on the

surface...it took some navigation skills, I would love to do this again. I've done a lot of runs on rivers both here and internationally. The best run was a class 5. While Piru was not a class 5, it gave me more than I expected.

16. Please describe the aspects of this experience that were negative, or that would discourage you from participating in a similar experience again. – Nothing was negative. But the water has not been high enough since then to have the same experience. I'd love to see more water.
17. Are there any specific improvements that you would suggest in order to make recreational boating on Piru Creek a more positive experience overall? Removal of non-native vegetation that would make navigation difficult in some areas. (Tamarisk, Arrundo donax)....
18. Are you likely to return? Given the opportunity, would you participate in recreational boating on Piru Creek again? Yes, of course.