



## THE FORKS OF THE KERN

The Forks is perhaps the best multiple Class V rapid trip in the country (3 & 2 day trips). It offers a combination of remote mountain scenery and thrilling white water. This trip begins high up in the Golden Trout Wilderness and offers heart pounding rapids, enchanting scenery, hiking to beautiful waterfalls and inviting side canyons. Relaxation and quiet solitude await you. Class IV experience necessary!

Trip Dates: May 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, June 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28

Meeting Time: 8:00 am

Meeting Place: Kern River Tours River Place, Kernville (11252 Kernville Road, 93238)

### DIRECTIONS

From Southern California, leave the Los Angeles Basin by Interstate 5 North. Descend the Grapevine Grade and take Highway 99 North to Bakersfield. Take the Lake Isabella/Highway 178 East exit and follow 178 up to the town of Lake Isabella. Take Lake Isabella/Kernville exit. At the off-ramp stop sign, turn left. Continue around the lake (approx. 10 miles) to Kernville. Cross over the river bridge (watch for the River Place), turn right, immediately into driveway, before the Sierra South Store. Proceed and turn right at first road. Immediately turn right to The River Place (11252 Kernville Road, 93238).

From 395, exit at town of Inyokern and turn left at off-ramp stop sign. Continue west until you intersect with Hwy 14. Turn left and backtrack 3-4 miles to Lake Isabella turn-off (Hwy 178). Take a right turn (Sierra Way) towards Kernville. Continue around the Lake for 13 miles. Enter the town of Kernville by turning left on Kernville Rd. Go 1/4 mile. Before the bridge and immediately passing the store Sierra South, enter the parking area on the left. (Watch for The River Place). Proceed and turn right at first road. Turn right again to The River Place (11252 Kernville Road, 93238).

### TRIP DETAILS

The headwaters of the Kern are on the slopes of Mt. Whitney. By the time the river reaches our put-in at the confluence of the Main Fork and the Little Kern, the water temperature is usually in the mid-forties. Use of a wetsuit and paddling jacket is included in your trip fee. We do not provide footwear and recommend neoprene or wool socks, which you should wear with sturdy sneakers. This is the best footwear for stability, moving around on rocky trails, and foot protection. Standard booties don't provide enough support and protection when climbing over boulders. A full-length wetsuit is absolutely essential for your comfort and to avoid hypothermia, the dangerous lowering of the body's temperature.

On the morning of the trip we meet at our rafting center in Kernville at 8:00 am. After registering, we review safety issues relevant to running a river as challenging as the Forks, and to evaluate the ability of guests to deal with situations we might encounter. Paddlers will be asked to take our "Class V Paddler's Evaluation". This test will include basic swimming and safety exercises with a focus on stamina. After the test, we'll board our bus for the 2-hour drive to Lloyd Meadows and the trailhead to the Forks. From there we hike to the river. The hike is virtually all downhill, switch-backing steadily, with a striking view of the canyon. You must carry your own gear, which usually weighs about thirty pounds. The trail is easy going, and the duffels Kern River Tours provides have convenient shoulder straps. Please bring only essential items, so that we can keep the weight of the boats to a minimum.

At the river put-in, you'll meet the rest of the guides, who have helped pack the boats down to the river by horseback. While the boats are readied and the equipment stowed, we'll serve lunch. You'll have a chance to pack

items you'll want during the day in waterproof containers. You'll probably want to bring sunscreen, sunglasses, and perhaps a camera. If you bring a camera, we recommend you obtain insurance for damage. We will also use this time to go over further safety and logistics concerns.

We start floating the river in the afternoon of the first day. During the second and third days, we start in midmorning. Every day takes us through some astounding rapids, all piled one on top of another. Freeman Creek, Vortex, Confusion, the Gauntlet, and Carson Falls are some of the highlights of this 18+ mile stretch of rapids. We reach take-out mid-afternoon of the last day and usually have you back to the Rafting Center and your car by 5 pm.

**Well in advance of your trip, please fill out your Rafting Experience and Medical Questionnaire form and provide the personal information requested, then turn it into the office. Please remember to include your height, weight, and age.**

## **ON-RIVER PROCEDURES**

The Forks of the Kern is a snow-melt river subject to quick changes of high mountain weather conditions, and the water level can rise or fall significantly in a few hours. At some water levels, rapids such as Carson Falls and Vortex may be unsafe to run. At these times, the Trip Leader may elect to line or portage the boats and equipment around these dangerous spots or to have the guides row the boats through with no passengers in them. On most trips, there will be time for hikes up side canyons and streams. Fishing here is world-class. You can try your luck at our overnight camps and lunch stops. If you plan to fish, you must obtain a fishing license.

## **WEATHER**

The Forks of the Kern can experience cold, changeable, high mountain weather. Our experience has shown that fleece or wool clothing with polypropylene underwear provides the best all-weather comfort. Tents will be needed throughout April, May, and June.

## **WHAT TO BRING**

- Sleeping bag, pad, pillow  
(must be polar guard type and compactly stuffer. Do not bring bulky cotton bags)
- Small flashlight
- Sunscreen, lipbalm
- Swimsuit or shorts
- Shoes to wear in boat
- Hiking shoes or sneakers for camp
- Baseball cap or wool cap
- Rain jacket and rain pants
- Polypropylene underwear, tops and bottoms
- Lightweight tent
- Toiletries
- Wool socks
- Water proof camera
- Personal sized water bottle
- Change of clothes
- Sunglasses with safety strap

Please do not bring firearms, pets, or personal lifevests. Our lifevests are approved for rafting and we require that they be worn.

## **PHOTOS OF YOUR TRIP**

Kern River Tours will be on the river to capture your day of fun and excitement. A skilled photographer will take photos of you and your group as you travel down the Kern River. CD's will be available for purchase at the conclusion of your trip containing all of the photos of your raft or, if you prefer, all of the photos taken of the entire trip.

## **WETSUITS**

For early season trips, we sometimes require wetsuits. On the Forks trip they are included in the price of the trip if they are necessary.

## **HELMETS**

Safety helmets are required to be worn on all Kern River Tours Class II - V river rafting trips. Helmets are available at no charge.

## **GUIDES**

Our guides are experienced, skilled whitewater boaters. They are knowledgeable about canyon ecology and natural history. Should the need arise they are trained to administer First Aid.

## **GRATUITIES**

If you enjoyed your trip, gratuities will be shared among all the guides on the trip. This is at your discretion.

## **MEALS**

All on-river meals are provided beginning with lunch the first day and ending with lunch the last day. The food is fresh and hearty and our guides will prepare it for you. We can accommodate special diets with advance notice. We welcome your participation in helping to set up camp, prepare meals, etc. Please feel free to participate in trip work, as much, or as little, as you would like.

## **ALCOHOL**

If you bring alcohol on your trip, we ask that you drink in moderation and only while in camp in the evening. Consumption of alcohol is prohibited while rafting or prior to rafting for your safety and for the safety of your fellow guests and our guides. Please do not bring any glass containers.

## **AGE LIMITS**

The minimum age on our Forks of the Kern trips is sixteen years old. Guests under eighteen must be accompanied by a parent. This age limit is in place for the safety of your child, the safety of our other guests, and our guides.

## **CARE OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

To protect the river, we carry out all trash and use no soap in the river. The guides will instruct you in simple procedures that minimize the impact of our group on the canyon.

## **YOUR HEALTH**

Our Kern River trips are fun, fast and challenging. To participate, you should be in good health. You may also need to perform certain physical activities. These include basic swimming, hiking in rugged or uneven terrain, climbing in and out of rafts and assisting in your rescue, if that becomes necessary. Please let us know if you have any health or dietary restrictions. We will gladly accommodate reasonable dietary restrictions with advanced notice.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

Trip participants should understand that river trips involve known and unknown risks. Kern River Tours assumes no responsibility for injuries, death or loss/damage to client's property while on the river or on Kern River Tours property. ALL clients must sign a Participant Agreement, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form before the trip. Kern River Tours assumes no responsibility for vehicles and/or the contents of vehicles parked during the trip. Because of the risks associated with river trips, including personal injury, death, property loss or damage or financial loss in the event of trip cancellation, we urge all trip participants to supplement their own insurance with vacation insurance.

***Please read and provide the personal information requested on our Participant Agreement, Release, and Assumption of Risk Form and bring it to our office when checking in the day of the trip. The more we know about you in advance (height, weight, age, experience, and special needs) the better the trip we can provide.***

## **ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE AREA**

If you plan to stay in the area before or after your trip, we suggest looking into the local accommodations section on our website.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

We recommend you supplement personal insurance with travel insurance. Policies which include accident, cancellation, and baggage protection are available online at [www.travelguard.com](http://www.travelguard.com), as well as most travel agents. Cancellation initiated by you may result in substantial loss of fees paid. Available insurance protects against the loss of deposits in the event you must cancel because of unforeseen circumstances.

## RESERVATIONS

For trips booked more than 30 days before the trip date the reservation is held 10 days pending receipt of deposit. If no deposit is received within 10 days, the reservation is automatically cancelled. Please call immediately for space available to re-instate. The amount of deposit is due as follows:

Lickety Split/Double Split/Lickety Fun Run.....	Full payment
Upper/Lower Kern.....	\$50 per person
Forks of the Kern.....	\$100 per person

All payments, once received, are non-refundable. The balance (full payment) is due 30 days before the trip date.

For trips booked within 30 days of trip date, payment in full is due immediately. Final payment is non-refundable. Once a credit card has been ran we are unable to transfer or refund on any trip.

## CANCELLATIONS/REFUNDS

Our cancellation policy is firm. We operate under stringent federal regulations which restrict the number of guests per trip and the number of trips per season. We incur substantial expenses before each trip departs. In the event of late cancellations, Kern River Tours cannot recover costs, nor can we make refunds. Cancellations made at any time are subject to complete loss of trip cost. You are responsible to find a replacement person, that replacement person is responsible to refund you.

To change a reservation date you will incur a \$30 flat rate charge per change. If trip is within 10 days of departure, there is no refund or moving to another date.

We do not refund in case of inclement weather (you get wet one way or the other!). Nor do we refund if you are not satisfied with the type of trip you have chosen. We do our best to explain the differences in the trips available, please read the literature and choose wisely.

If your reservation happens to be cancelled due to nonpayment and you would like to reinstate it call our office for availability. Payment must be made in full at the time of your reinstatement.

## PERFORMANCE

It is sometimes necessary to cancel or modify a trip because of unusual circumstances beyond our control. In such cases, we cannot be responsible for paying expenses other than refunding all or part of the fees paid to Kern River Tours. Determination of refunds (if any) will be made after reviewing trip details. Guides and other personnel employed by Kern River Tours are not authorized to make or promise trip refunds or trip credits. Such determinations can only be made by company officers.

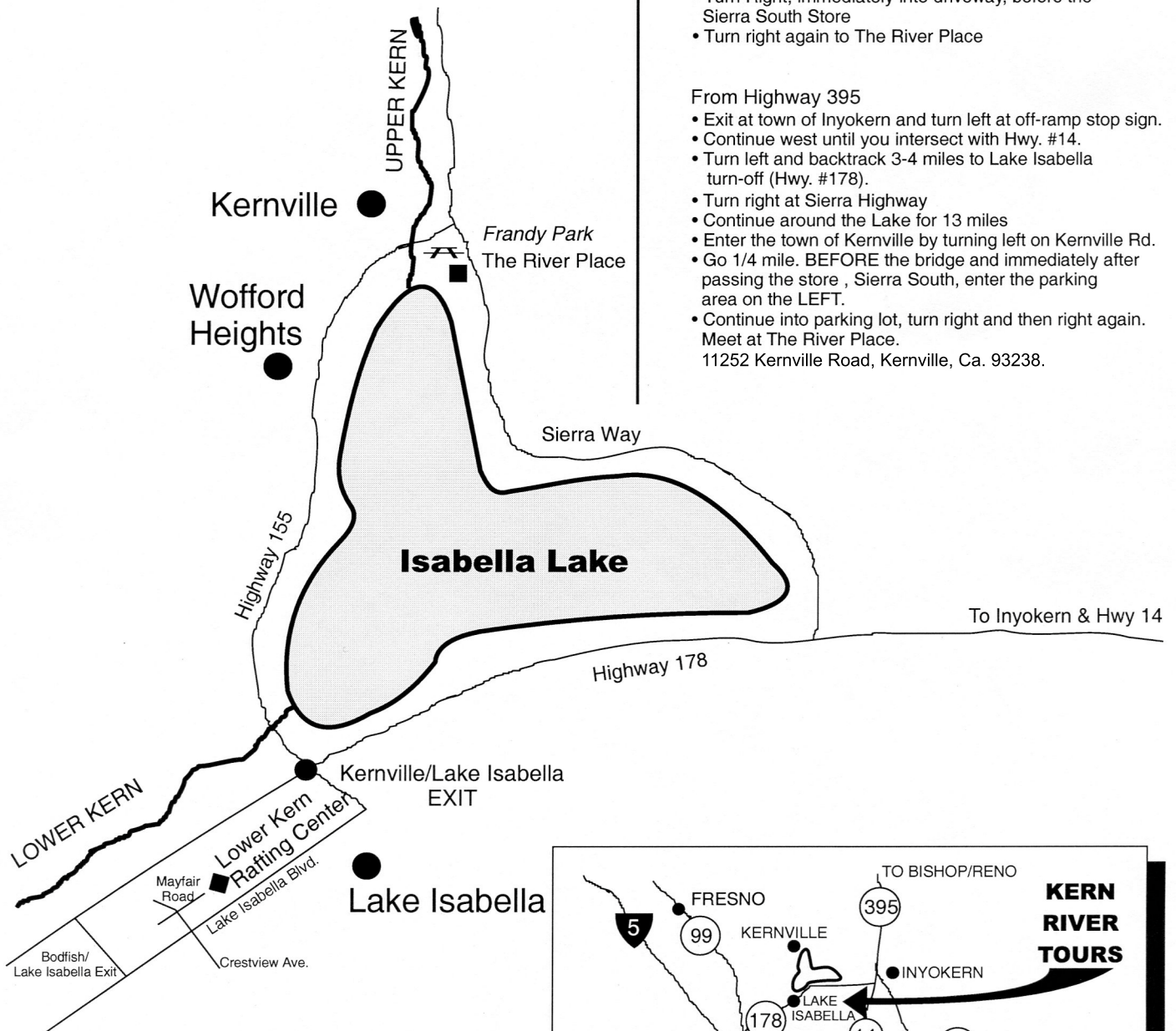
## PERMITS

Our trips are conducted under permit issued by the U.S. National Forest Service, Sequoia National Forest. Our permit is your assurance that Kern River Tours is legally operating on the river. Our operations and facilities are operated on a nondiscriminatory basis.

## PARKING

Kern River Tours' meeting place for all Upper Kern trips is located at 11252 Kernville Road, Kernville, Ca. 93238. This location is a private park called "Frandy Park." There is a parking fee of \$8.00 for vehicles / \$12.00 for Vans / the charge for larger vehicles is at the discretion of Frandy Park (888) 372-6399. This charge is for all rafting customers. You may, therefore, "Pay & Park" or park free on the street and walk down the stairs.

# HOW TO FIND US



## The Forks

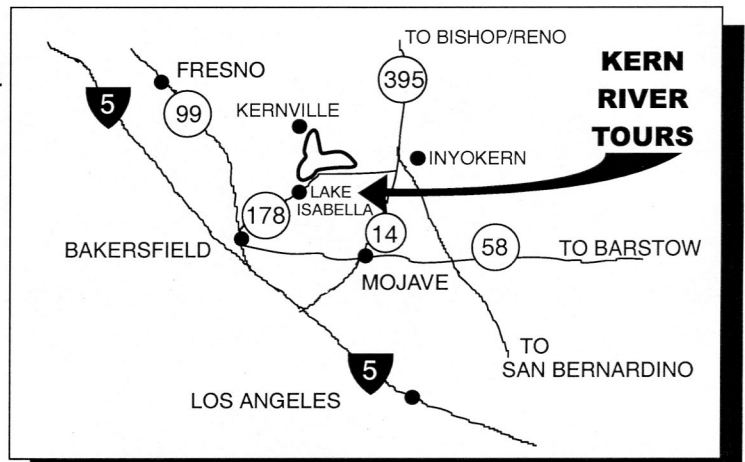
### From Interstate 5

- North to Fwy #99 into Bakersfield
- East on Hwy #178 to Lake Isabella through Kern River Canyon
- Take Lake Isabella - Kernville exit.
- Turn left from the off ramp stop sign
- Continue around the lake (approx.) 10 miles to Kernville
- Cross the river bridge. (watch for Frandy Park)
- Turn Right, immediately into driveway, before the Sierra South Store
- Turn right again to The River Place

### From Highway 395

- Exit at town of Inyokern and turn left at off-ramp stop sign.
  - Continue west until you intersect with Hwy. #14.
  - Turn left and backtrack 3-4 miles to Lake Isabella turn-off (Hwy. #178).
  - Turn right at Sierra Highway
  - Continue around the Lake for 13 miles
  - Enter the town of Kernville by turning left on Kernville Rd.
  - Go 1/4 mile. BEFORE the bridge and immediately after passing the store, Sierra South, enter the parking area on the LEFT.
  - Continue into parking lot, turn right and then right again. Meet at The River Place.
- 11252 Kernville Road, Kernville, Ca. 93238.

Non-discriminatory.  
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and Bureau of Land Management.







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# RAFTING EXPERIENCE

The guides at Kern River Tours respect the awesome glory of Class V rivers and have suggested that strict guidelines be followed when choosing candidates for these runs. For your information and understanding, the following is a brief sketch of what we look for in the people requesting to paddle Class V rivers on the "Thunder Run" or the "Forks of the Kern" trips.

## YOUR PADDLE EXPERIENCE

While it is beneficial to have prior rafting experience before paddling a Class V river, it is not a requirement. By filling out the paddling experience resume below, we will be able to plan your trip according to the experience of the paddlers. Please fill out the resume to the best of your abilities, and if you have no previous paddling experience, please mark the space provided.

BEFORE YOU MAIL IN YOUR RESUME,  
PLEASE ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS.

1. Do I follow the commands of the paddle boat captain to the letter? When I paddle, do I feel resistance against my paddle from the water?

*REASON: Paddling in Class V water must be a very unified, continuous, precise effort with the entire crew contributing. Teamwork will make the trip more enjoyable for everyone.*

2. Am I willing to share the paddling with other qualified people? If I am asked to move from the paddle boat to the oar boat by the paddle captain, will I do so?

*REASON: Occasionally, there will be more qualified Class V paddlers than space in the paddle boat, so rotation will be necessary. Occasionally, a paddler will be asked to leave the Class V paddle boat because he or she is tired, or his or her skill is not up to Class V paddling. This is done for the safety of the crew, the guide, and you. The decision of the paddle captain is final.*

3. Am I a strong swimmer, and do I feel comfortable in turbulent water?

*REASON: Some rapids on the "Thunder Run," and "Forks of the Kern" are long, rocky, and dangerous. It is not unusual for paddlers to be swept out of a paddle boat. While you are in the water, there are other safety issues to consider, such as the people in the boat, so rescue may not be immediate. Some amount of self-rescue may be necessary.*

If you answer "No" to any of the above questions or are unsure of any of the above statements, please call us and we will be happy to assist you in determining your Class V paddling abilities.

## RAFTING EXPERIENCE RESUME

Your Name/Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Name and Date \_\_\_\_\_

I have PADDLED the following rivers:

NAME OF RIVER	CLASS	YEAR/SEASON
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		

\_\_\_\_\_ Please check here if you have no previous paddling experience.



P.O. Box 3444, Lake Isabella, CA 93240 • Telephone (760) 379-4616 • (800) 844-7238 • Fax (760) 379-2103

**PLEASE RETURN A.S.A.P.**

## THUNDER RUN / FORKS OF THE KERN MEDICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

*PLEASE CALL US WITH ANY QUESTIONS*

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ St. \_\_\_\_\_

Trip Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

**PART A - to be completed by the applicant (check correct answer):**

Do you have or have you ever been told by a doctor that you had epilepsy, high blood pressure, heart disease, asthma or lung disease, colitis or intestinal trouble, ulcers or stomach trouble, any significant back, foot or leg problems, any other diseases or conditions? ☐ Yes ☐ No. If Yes, explain:

Do you have significant illnesses which have required the regular care of a doctor? ☐ Yes ☐ No If yes, explain:

Do you take medication regularly? ☐ Yes ☐ No List Medication \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have any allergies including allergic reactions to any drugs? ☐ Yes ☐ No Which ones and what effect?

Have you been hospitalized in the past 5 years? ☐ Yes ☐ No For what reason?

**PART B - to be completed by physician ONLY if over 50 YEARS OLD OR IF OVERWEIGHT:**

Applicant above has been examined on (date) \_\_\_\_\_ and was found to be physically qualified to participate in a class V white water rafting trip (with a 2 mile hike-in, carrying their own gear on the Forks Trips) operated by KERN RIVER TOURS, INC.

PLEASE NOTE THAT EMERGENCY MEDICAL FACILITIES ON THE FORKS OF THE KERN, OR THUNDER RUN ARE REACHED BY AN EVACUATION THAT CAN BE PROLONGED, DIFFICULT, AND EXPENSIVE. Please make any qualifying comments on the reverse.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of physician

Name and address of physician:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Wet Your Appetite For Adventure



PLEASE BRING THIS FORM,  
(SIGNED) TO THE TRIP CHECK-IN



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P.O. Box 3444, Lake Isabella, California 93240

Telephone (800) 844-7238

## PARTICIPANT AGREEMENT, RELEASE AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK

In consideration of the services of Kern River Tours, Inc., their agents, owners, officers, volunteers, participants, employees, and all other persons or entities acting in any capacity on their behalf (hereinafter collectively referred to as "KRT"), I hereby agree to release, indemnify, and discharge KRT, on behalf of myself, my spouse, my children, my parents, my heirs, assigns, personal representative and estate as follows:

1. I acknowledge that my participation in river rafting activities entails known and unanticipated risks that could result in physical or emotional injury, paralysis, death, or damage to myself, to property, or to third parties. I understand that such risks simply cannot be eliminated without jeopardizing the essential qualities of the activity.

**The risks include, among other things:** slipping and falling; accidental drowning; whitewater rapids will be encountered; collision with fixed or moveable objects or other watercraft; being jolted, jarred, bounce, and shaken about; contact with food boxes, other storage containers, or other fixed equipment necessary to the operation of the expedition and the outfitting of the raft; "washed" overboard resulting in having to swim rapids risking collision with rocks and entanglement in trees; damage to equipment or personal injury; exposure to temperature and weather extremes which could cause cold water shock, hypothermia, hyperthermia (heat related illnesses), heat exhaustion, sunburn, dehydration; exposure to sun, strong wind, cold, storms, large waves, eddies and whirlpools, and lightning; exposure to potentially dangerous wild animals, insect bites, and hazardous plant life; equipment failure; improper lifting or carrying; travel in remote areas with poor or no access to emergency and/or medical services; my own physical condition, and the physical exertion associated with this activity.

Furthermore, KRT employees have difficult jobs to perform. They seek safety, but they are not infallible. They might be unaware of a participant's fitness or abilities. They might misjudge the weather or other environmental conditions. They may give incomplete warnings or instructions, and the equipment being used might malfunction.

2. I expressly agree and promise to accept and assume all of the risks existing in this activity. My participation in this activity is purely voluntary, and I elect to participate in spite of the risks. Additionally, I agree to wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (life jacket) while participating in this activity.
3. I hereby voluntarily release, forever discharge, and agree to indemnify and hold harmless KRT from any and all claims, demands, or causes of action, which are in any way connected with my participation in this activity or my use of KRT's equipment or facilities, **including any such claims which allege negligent acts or omissions of KRT.**
4. Should KRT or anyone acting on their behalf, be required to incur attorney's fees and costs to enforce this agreement, I agree to indemnify and hold them harmless for all such fees and costs.
5. I certify that I have adequate insurance to cover any injury or damage I may cause or suffer while participating, or else I agree to bear the costs of such injury or damage myself. I further certify that I am willing to assume the risk of any medical or physical condition I may have.
6. In the event that I file a lawsuit against KRT, I agree to do so solely in the state of California, and I further agree that the substantive law of that state shall apply in that action without regard to the conflict of law rules of that state. I agree that if any portion of this agreement is found to be void or unenforceable, the remaining document shall remain in full force and effect.

By signing this document, I acknowledge that if anyone is hurt or property is damaged during my participation in this activity, I may be found by a court of law to have waived my right to maintain a lawsuit against KRT on the basis of any claim from which I have released them herein.

I have had sufficient opportunity to read this entire document. I have read and understood it, and I agree to be bound by its terms. Please print clearly.

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Trip Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Weight \_\_\_\_\_ Height \_\_\_\_\_

Print Address \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS (APT.)

CITY

STATE

ZIP

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E. MAIL ADDRESS (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

### PARENT'S OR GUARDIAN'S ADDITIONAL INDEMNIFICATION (Must be completed for participants under the age of 18)

In consideration of \_\_\_\_\_ (print minor's name) ("Minor") being permitted by KRT to participate in its activities and to use its equipment and facilities, I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless KRT from any and all Claims which are brought by, or on behalf of Minor, and which are in any way connected with such use or participation by Minor.

Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_