

# Current

*Ada County Parks & Waterways*

Summer 2022





# Current

Current adjective \kúrrənt\  
: happening or existing now; most recent; of the immediate present; in progress

Current noun

: the swiftest part of a stream; a steady, smooth onward movement

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# Introduction & Insight

Welcome to the **Summer 2022** issue of Current magazine created and distributed by **Ada County Parks & Waterways**. My favorite time of the year is beginning. It's sunny, hot, and it's almost time to **float the Boise River**. As the heat starts rising and we begin float season, **Barber Park** will be inundated with floaters of all ages. From children to the elderly, everybody loves to float (myself included)!

In this issue we will highlight **floater safety** and the best way to enjoy the **Boise River**. These include how the river is monitored as we approach **float season**, and some statistics along with frequently asked questions so you know what to expect out on the water. Included is a copy of our floater guide as well which includes parking fee details, equipment rental pricing, shuttle service information, and hours of operation. We also still have our **photo contest** up and running so please submit your photos if you'd like to be featured in an upcoming edition of Current!!!

With that being said as we float into summer, sit back, relax, stay cool, and keep Current.

-Robbie Sosin, Program & Education Specialist



***“ONE MUST MAINTAIN A LITTLE BIT OF SUMMER, EVEN IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER  
— HENRY DAVID THOREAU***

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# Boise River Floating Stats

All of these statistics compare the 2021 Float Season with the 2020 Float Season

There was a **21% increase in the number of parked cars in Barber Park with a total of 33,082**. Although 2021 was the first time in the history of Barber Park that more than 30,000 cars were parked during the float season, as population growth in the Treasure Valley explodes it's likely **Barber Park will need to accommodate at least 30,000 cars in every future float season.**



Compared to the 2020 season, the 2021 season had a **72% increase(!) in shuttle riders** with a total of 52,780 visitors using the Barber Park shuttle service. While 72% is a HUGE increase, some of that is due to shuttles running at half capacity during 2020 COVID restrictions.



**Between 2020 and 2021,**

- **4 person raft rentals increased 35%**
- **6 person raft rentals increased 30%**
- **2 person kayak rental increased 12%**
- **Deluxe tube rentals increased 12%**

For those looking to avoid big crowds, plan your float trip on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday when there are far fewer visitors and vehicles. **Friday, Saturday, Sunday and holidays are the absolute BUSIEST** and most crowded times to visit Barber Park and float the river. The **single busiest day of the season** always occurs on or near the **Independence Day holiday.**

We expect 2022 to be **another record breaking season** at Ada County Parks & Waterways with **as many as 250,000 total Barber Park visitors and Boise River floaters this summer!!!**

Please **avoid peak floating times** if possible and **be patient and friendly** with park staff as we work harder than ever to accommodate all visitors!



# River Floating Season Opening

## How do we decide when to “open” the Boise River for floater recreation?

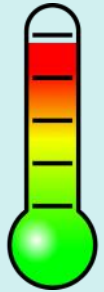
Each year prior to the making the official float season announcement for recreational floating from Barber Park and Ann Morrison Park, Ada County works collaboratively with agency partners to evaluate three key factors and answer several questions related to the upcoming season.

These three key factors are:

### 1. Outside Air Temperature

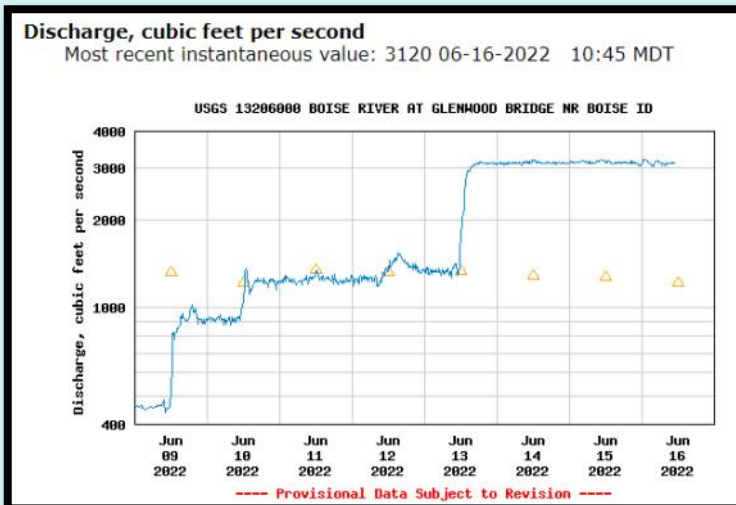
Is the average daily **high** above **80°F**?

Does the **extended forecast** project highs above 80°F for the foreseeable future?



### 2. Existing and projected river flow

Is the **flow** between **700 - 1,500** cubic feet per second (cfs) at BIGI gauge (Glenwood Bridge)?



Are **flows** expected to remain **relatively stable** and between 700 - 1,500 cfs at BIGI?

### 3. River debris and obstructions

With public input and guidance from the **River Debris Team** (Ada County, Boise City, Idaho Fish & Game, Idaho Department of Water Resources), have obvious debris and obstructions in the river been identified?

Has the **Boise Fire Department Dive**

**Rescue Team** and **Boise Forestry** moved or removed the known hazards and debris (limbs, branches, stumps, fallen trees, etc.) in the river?

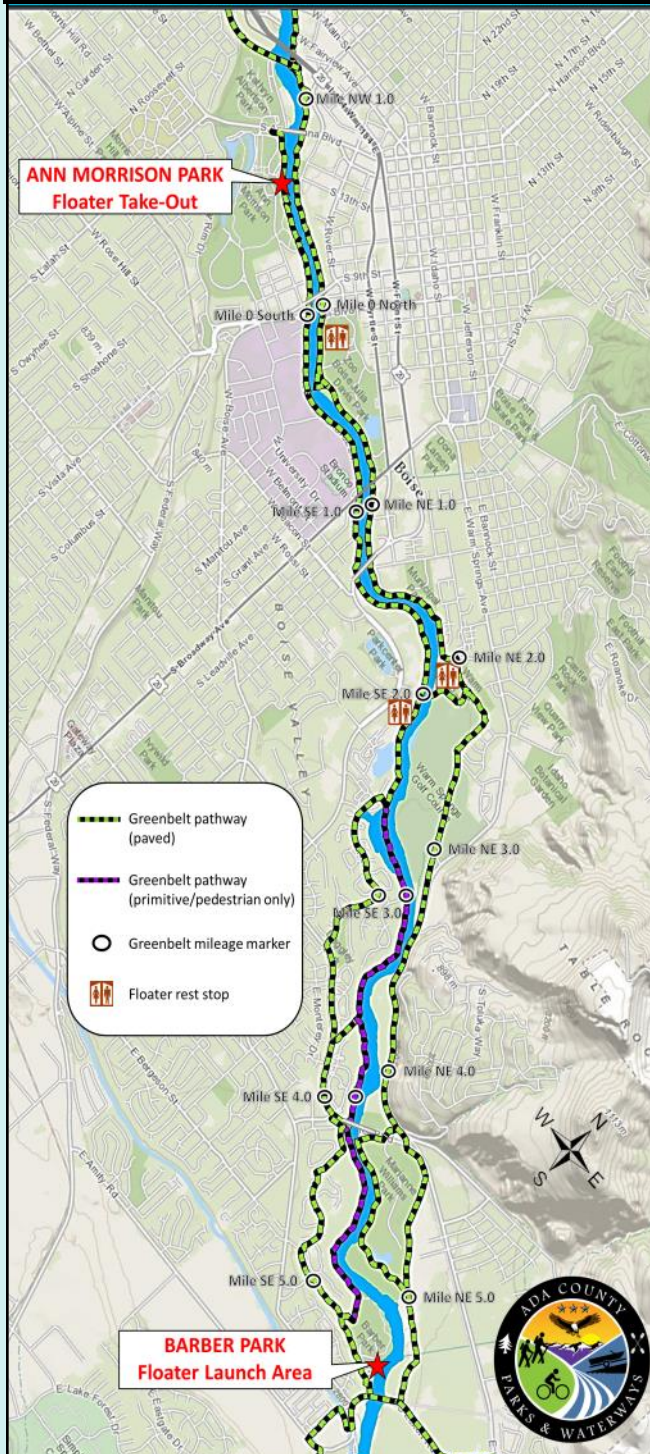
Once the answer to all of these questions is “YES!” (and we’re staffed up and prepared to efficiently operate Barber Park), we’re ready to officially start the float season.





# Boise River Floater Guide

## Boise River Floater Map



### Is the river open?

The Boise River is never “closed” but is always a **float-at-your-own-risk endeavor**. Barber Park floater amenities, equipment rentals, and shuttle service are only available when river and weather conditions are appropriate (typically late June thru Labor Day).

### If I bring my own raft or tube is there a place where I can fill it with air?

The **Barber Park air stations are no longer operational**. Feel free to “show up and blow up” as long as you BRING YOUR OWN EQUIPMENT to inflate your vessel. All floaters should also carry a hand pump during their float in the event of any unplanned deflation.

### Do I have to wear a life vest?

Life vests or personal flotation devices (PFDs) are **required to be worn by children age 14 and under**. Every vessel must be equipped with a PFD for each person on board. Life vests are **recommended to be worn by ALL floaters** regardless of age or skill.

### Are there any rapids?

There are **three splashy diversion drops** during the first half of the float. All floaters should use caution and actively steer their vessel to avoid all obstacles including bridge piers, rocks, debris, and overhanging tree limbs.

### How far is it to the take-out?

The take-out is located **6 miles downstream** from Barber Park on river left in Ann Morrison Park. Floaters **must exit here** before reaching a dangerous and unpassable diversion dam just downstream. The float lasts about 2 hours.

<https://www.facebook.com/FloatTheBoiseRiver>

# River Floating Rentals

## 4 Person Raft



Raft + 2 paddles + 4 vests  
\$75.00 + sales tax

## 6 Person Raft



Raft + 2 paddles + 6 vests  
\$85.00 + sales tax

## Deluxe Tube



Deluxe Tube  
\$27.00 + sales tax

## 2 Person Inflatable Kayak



Kayak + 2 paddles + 2 vests  
\$50.00 + sales tax

## Paddle Rental



\$10.00 + sales tax

## Tubes for Sale



\$30.00 + sales tax

### **\*All Rentals:**

- Credit card deposit required with photo ID (NO PERSONAL CHECKS)
- All items rented for 3 hours
- You are responsible for damage to all equipment
- First come, first served (No Reservations)
- Must be 18 or older to rent
- Rental agreement forms required (everyone 18 and older must sign)
- Rental equipment MUST be returned on time to check in point at Ann Morrison Park or late fees apply
- Rafts/Tubes/Kayaks - late fee of \$30 per hour (per item)
- Tubes/Vests/Paddles - late fee of \$10 per hour (per item)

Located in Barber Park:

4049 S. Eckert Rd., Boise ID 83716

Information Line: (208) 577-4584

Message Line: (208) 577-4588

More info at: <http://www.boiseriverraftandtube.com>



# Barber Park

Education & Event Center

- VENUE FEATURES:**
- Gorgeous natural setting
  - Large covered patio
  - Indoor stone fireplaces
  - Flexible open floor space







## PERFECT FOR:

- Weddings ♦ Receptions ♦ Educational Events
- Business Retreats ♦ Fundraisers ♦ Reunions
- Banquets ♦ Private Parties ♦ Picnics
- ♦ Memorials



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# Preparing for a Float Trip

While **floating the Boise River** can be a fun summer adventure where you can relax and cool off on a hot and sunny day, it's also important to plan ahead and take some simple steps that will make your trip even more enjoyable. Here are a few **river safety**



**tips** and tricks to beat the heat!

## **Wear a well fitted PFD or life jacket**

The Boise River is a natural body of water. It is not a water park and **there are no lifeguards**. No matter how skilled a swimmer you are, if your tube or raft deflates or you take an unexpected swim, the cold water can sap your energy and quickly become an emergency situation. **Your**

**best bet for a safe float** is to make sure everyone in your group wears a PFD.

## **Apply sunscreen and consider wearing a hat**

While floating the Boise River, you will be out in the sunshine with intermittent shade so there is a very good chance **you'll become sunburned** if you're not protecting yourself from those harsh UV rays. We recommend **at least SPF 30 sunscreen**.



## **Stay hydrated!**

Drinking plenty of water and staying hydrated throughout the day is **especially important when you're out on the river**. Sipping on a water bottle during your float can help **prevent cramping**, allow your body to properly **cool down**, and keep you energized!

## **Be an active participant in your float**

The best way to prevent injuries and **avoid potentially dangerous situations** is to be an active participant in your float. This means you should consistently **look downriver** to spot any debris or obstacles, **alert your group** to the hazards, and actively **steer your raft or tube away from the danger**. Always remember, a safe float is a fun float!



# Unexpected Weather

Throughout much of the first part of the year, it seemed like 2022 was going to be one of the **driest springs on record**. March and April were especially disappointing in terms of precipitation and snow pack.



In fact, during a partnership meeting on June 1st, Ada County and other **agency jurisdictions were preparing for draught** after being informed by the Army Corps of Engineers that **Lucky Peak** would remain at about **80% full** throughout the summer and that there would be little to no chance the Boise River would be flowing much higher than about 500 cfs. However, the **late spring storms made a huge difference** in the outlook for lake levels and river flows throughout the Boise River watershed.

By the third week of June it became clear that not only would Lucky Peak Lake fill to 100% capacity, but the upstream reservoirs of Arrowrock and Anderson Ranch would **also fill to nearly 100% capacity**. Then on June 15th as flood releases were made, the **Boise River reached a surprisingly high flow of 3,150 cfs!** That's over twice the volume of what is appropriate for novice floater recreation.



While this unexpected precipitation creates a bit of a delay to the start of the official float season, it also provides HUGE recreational opportunities at Lucky Peak Lake. A full lake during the summer means there will be **less congestion at Barclay Bay, Turner Gulch and Spring Shores Marina** for loading and launching and **all 100 dock strings managed by Ada County Parks & Waterways** will now be floating and available for daily recreational use!



## *Ada County Parks & Waterways*

# 3rd Annual Photo Contest

Thank you for reading this issue of Current Magazine. We hope it was everything you loved about previous iterations and then some. **Whether it is your first time reading or you've been a loyal fan waiting for the next issue, THANK YOU.** We take great pride in putting something out into the community worth a read.

With that being said, we would like to announce our **3rd Annual Photo Contest!**

We will be doing it a little bit differently this year to allow for more time during the Spring and Summer for you to **visit our recreation sites, capture your favorite images, and submit your photos for our contest.**

As always, all photos submitted to Ada County Parks & Waterways will be judged, scored, and ranked by a panel of designated staff. All rules and conditions are posted on the back page of this issue.

### **Categories:**

*1. Landscape/Scenic 2. Wildlife 3. Action 4. Human Interest 5. Abstract/Close-up*

### **Photos must be submitted before September 1st**

*Share your favorite shots from our parks, trails, and waterways for the chance to be declared the winner in the Fall issue of Current!*

Submissions may be posted on our social media pages so send us your best!  
Even if you don't win the contest your photo may be featured!

**Email photos to: [rsosin@adacounty.id.gov](mailto:rsosin@adacounty.id.gov)**

*Include name, date taken, location, and category for each photo*

**To be eligible to win, photos must be taken at a location managed by Ada County Parks & Waterways**



# Past Winners of Photo Contest



**Gary Raney**  
**Five Mile/Victory Wetland**  
**2015 Landscape**



**David Swindler**  
**Corrals Trail (Ridge to Rivers)**  
**2015 Action**



**Elizabeth Lamas**  
**Boise River Riparian Area**  
**2015 Wildlife**



**Jim Culpepper**  
**Boise River**  
**2016 Abstract/Close Up**



**Keith Hyde**  
**Lucky Peak Lake**  
**2016 Human Interest**



**Paul Dawson**  
**Boise River Riparian Area**  
**2016 Wildlife**





**4049 Eckert Road  
Boise, Idaho 83716**

**Eligible photo contest locations:**

Barber Park (including Event Center), Lucky Peak Lake, Ada/Eagle Bike Park, Boise River (float stretch), Boise River Greenbelt (any P&W Segment), Hubbard Reservoir Recreation Area, Oregon Trail Recreation Area, Five Mile/Victory Wetland, Snake River Water Trail, or any Ridge to Rivers Trail

**Judging:**

Photos will be judged by a panel of Ada County Parks & Waterways staff

**Other Info:**

No limit on number of entries. All participants grant Ada County nonexclusive and unlimited use of submitted photos for use in all future digital and/or print outreach materials.