



# Upper Kern Whitewater Run

## Sequoia National Forest

### Kern Wild and Scenic River



An easy drive from Southern California metropolitan areas is a trip to the Upper Kern River, designated by Congress in 1987, as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. This popular section of river is continuous exhilarating whitewater with boulder gardens, pounding rapids and gradients exceeding 30 feet per mile.

#### Location:

The Upper Kern segment begins at the Johnsondale Bridge and ends at Riverkern Beach. This 21-mile stretch of river has four sections of rafting whitewater with varying degrees of difficulty

**Limestone Run:** This northernmost run begins 21 miles north of Kernville, off Mtn. 99, at the Johnsondale Bridge.

Put-In: Johnsondale Bridge or Brush Creek.

Take-Out: Above Fairview Dam at Willow Point.

Class: III & IV (Difficult to Very Difficult) varies according to water level.

Run Length: 2.7 miles.

**Fairview Run:** Begins 17 miles north of Kernville, off Mtn. 99.

Put-In: North of Road's End Resort.

Take-Out: Calkins Flat or Salmon Creek.

Class: III & IV (Difficult to Very Difficult).

Run Length: 4.8 miles.

**Goldledge Run:** Begins 10 miles north of Kernville, off Mtn. 99.

Put-In: North of Goldledge Campground at Ant Canyon Dispersed Area.

Take-Out: Riverkern Beach.

Class: III, IV & V (Difficult to Expert).

Run Length: 10 miles.

**Camp 3 Run:** Begins 5 miles north of Kernville, off Mtn. 99.

Put-In: North end of Thunderbird or south of Camp 3 Campground.

Take-Out: Riverkern Beach.

Class: II, III & IV (Medium to Very Difficult).

Run Length: 3.5 miles.

#### Permit Requirements:

An Annual Kern River Use Permit, good through April 30 of the following year, is required year round. Permits are issued on a first-come, first-served basis and are free of charge. A permit is required for **EACH** craft. Group size cannot exceed 18 people on the river at one time.

To obtain a permit, fill out an application **IN PERSON** at any Forest Service office in Kernville, Lake Isabella, or Springville. Applications will not be mailed out or left in office drop boxes. Upon completion of your application, a waterproof permit may be issued. Issuing you a permit gives us the opportunity to also provide you with information about the river.

A permit is required from Riverkern Beach south to Riverside Park in Kernville.

#### River Use Manifest:

Each day, a completed FOREST SERVICE manifest must be left at a designated drop off point for the specific river run prior to your launch. Manifests are available at each Forest Service office and at designated drop off boxes along the river. The maximum party size for each manifest is 18 people for the Upper Kern River. More than one permit number may appear on a manifest as long as the number of passengers does not exceed the 18 person limit.

If new passengers are added to your trip during the day, a new river use manifest must be completed and left at a designated drop off point prior to the next launch. This information can be useful in search and rescue efforts.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



## Season and Water Flow:

Late spring and summer are recommended for boating the Upper Kern Run (May-July). Water flows are dependent upon snow melt and natural run-off. Spring flows may reach as high as 6,000 cubic feet per second (CFS) or higher in exceptionally wet years. Daily water flow information is available from the Kern River Flow Phone. Flow information can be accessed toll-free at [\(877\)537-6356](tel:8775376356) or locally at [\(760\)376-8821](tel:7603768821).

## Recommended Safety Equipment:

A Coast Guard approved personal flotation device must be readily accessible, properly fit, and in good condition, for each member of the party.

Each raft should have an extra oar or paddle, a 50 foot throw line with bag and a 16 foot mooring line.

## Trip Tips:

- Plan ahead, as parking space is limited at put-in and take-out sites.
- To avoid congestion on the Limestone Run, use the Brush Creek put-in as an alternate to the Johnsondale Bridge.
- Scout rapids before running, to check for hazards.
- Experienced rafting skills are a must.
- Launching from campgrounds and Day Use Areas is **NOT** allowed.

## Camping Regulations:

Camping and the use of campfires are not permitted within 25 feet of the river's edge, streams or trails.

**Thank you for your help in making forest visits enjoyable and safe! Plan ahead by obtaining a National Forest map at one of the following offices:**

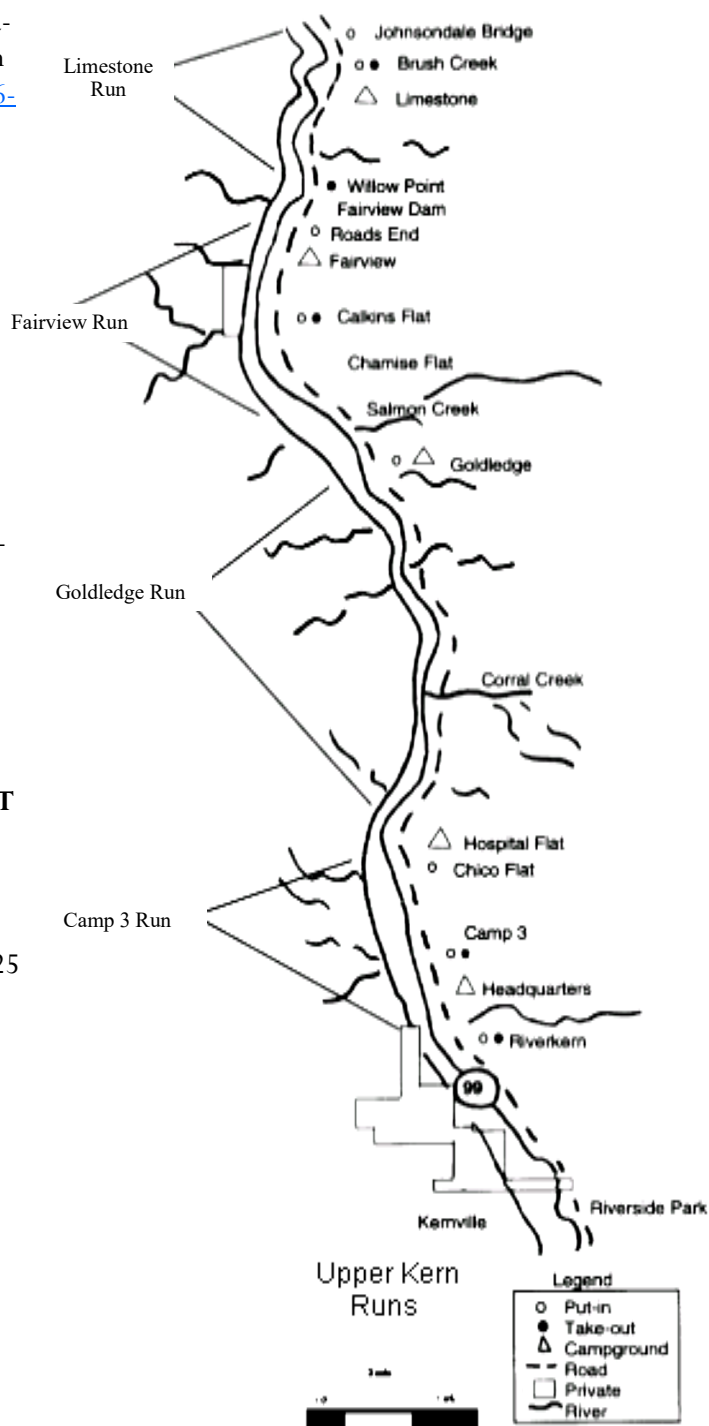
**Kern River Ranger District**  
11380 Kernville Rd.  
Kernville, CA 93238  
[760-376-3781](tel:7603763781)

**Forest Supervisor's Office**  
1839 S. Newcomb Street  
Porterville, CA 93257  
[559-784-1500](tel:5597841500)



## Locations for Manifest Drop Off Boxes:

Kern River District Office in Kernville and all put-ins north of Kernville to the Johnsondale Bridge.



## Practice a Leave No Trace! Ethic.

When you leave your campsite,  
Take all garbage, large and small.

**PACK IT IN!**

**PACK IT OUT!**