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Grand Canyon Youth Cancels All 2020 Expeditions Due to COVID-19

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Flagstaff, AZ -- Grand Canyon Youth (GCY) has canceled all 2020 river expeditions due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"While we are heartbroken by the implications of this decision for our participants, guides, staff, and community, we also know with certainty that the health and safety of those very people must be our top priority," says GCY Executive Director Emma Wharton. "We made this difficult decision because we feel we are not currently able to adequately assess and manage the risks associated with this quickly-changing pandemic based on the science and information currently available to us."

Grand Canyon Youth has provided educational experiences to diverse youth from Flagstaff and across the country on the rivers and canyons of the Southwest for over 20 years. Wharton emphasizes that GCY is well-positioned to make this decision. "Even though we rely on participant fees for approximately half of our annual income, we have undertaken the necessary financial analysis and scenario planning in hopes that GCY will survive this crisis. GCY staff will take this time to further develop our program curricula and refine our operations in order to come back stronger than ever in 2021."

Furthermore, she emphasizes, "We believe that young people will need the powerful, healing connections of nature and community that GCY provides more than ever when this pandemic has subsided. We are committed to being there for generations of young people to come."

For additional information about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Grand Canyon Youth, visit www.gcyouth.org/covid19.