

## International Whitewater Hall of Fame 2005 Nominee Biography



### Candidate: **Rob Lesser**

**Category:** Explorer (Living)  
**Sport:** Whitewater Kayaking  
**Years Active:** Late 1960's to Present  
**Home Base:** Boise, Idaho USA

**Introduction:** (quoted from Affiliate Nomination Form additional information provided by Sue Taft author of *The River Chasers*)

“Rob Lesser set the standard for exploratory kayaking. Besides holding one of the earliest whitewater rodeos on the Payette River in Idaho, Lesser raised the bar in big-water Class V by being the first person to run the Grand Canyon of the Stikine in Northern Canada, the North Fork of the Payette and several other first descents in the U.S. and Canada.”

In the late 1970's, many of the cutting edge boaters from the East headed to Idaho to explore its rivers and in the process, met up with Rob. Using these contacts, Rob traveled East to paddle (and photograph) the top rivers of WV and the SE influencing all he met with his friendly, laid-back manner. Through his connections with the early rodeos in ID he made connections with Bill Masters, owner of Perception, and eventually worked for Perception for almost twenty years as one of their leading reps and ambassadors for the sport. Rob has also been influential in river conservation efforts in Idaho, helping to protect some of Idaho's best whitewater runs from dam development.

**Accomplishments:** (source Affiliate Nomination Form)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Descent Grand Canyon of the Stikine River, Canada
- 1<sup>st</sup> Descent N. Fork of the Payette River, Idaho
- 1<sup>st</sup> Descent Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone River, Wyoming
- 1<sup>st</sup> Descents on Kijak, Hallet and Chakachatna Rivers in Alaska
- 1<sup>st</sup> Descent Homathko River, Canada