



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
Jan/Feb 2011

THE TOP TEN RIVER STEWARDSHIP ISSUES OF 2011

LOVE AND WHITEWATER

STORIES OF WHITEWATER BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER



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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal Jan/Feb 2011 – Volume 51 – Issue 1

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 Floating the Merced River through Yosemite Valley (CA). Currently the majority of the park is closed to paddling, a situation AWW hopes to improve in 2011.

Photo by Paul Martzen



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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

Our mission: "To conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely," is actively pursued through our conservation, access, safety and education efforts under the umbrella of River Stewardship. The only national organization representing the interest of all whitewater paddlers, American Whitewater is the national voice for thousands of individual whitewater enthusiasts, as well as over 100 local paddling club affiliates.

AW's River Stewardship program adheres to the four tenets of our mission statement:

CONSERVATION: AW's professional staff works closely with volunteers and partner organizations to protect the ecological and scenic values of all whitewater rivers. These goals are accomplished through direct participation in public decision-making

processes, grassroots advocacy, coalition building, empowerment of volunteers, public outreach and education, and, when necessary, legal action.

RIVER ACCESS: To assure public access to whitewater rivers pursuant to the guidelines published in its official Access Policy, AW arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on all rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, encourages equitable and responsible management of whitewater rivers on public lands, and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

SAFETY: AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally-recognized American Whitewater Safety Code.

EDUCATION: AW shares information with the general public and the paddling community regarding

whitewater rivers, as well as river recreation, conservation, access, and safety. This is accomplished through our bimonthly *AW Journal*, a monthly e-news, americanwhitewater.org, paddling events, educational events, and through direct communication with the press.

Together, AW staff, members, volunteers, and affiliate clubs can achieve our goals of conserving, protecting and restoring America's whitewater resources and enhancing opportunities to safely enjoy these wonderful rivers.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 1540, Cullowhee, NC 28723; phone 1-866-BOAT-4-AW (1-866-262-8429). AW is tax exempt under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service.

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

AS CONSERVATION ORIENTED paddlers of America's wild rivers we have much to be thankful for in the New Year. Through the efforts and support of American Whitewater members, volunteers, staff, and partners, last year we won some significant battles, undertook some new ones, and held our ground in old conflicts. The coming year is sure to present new opportunities to seize and old challenges to push through.

One of American Whitewater's primary tools for river restoration is to leverage opportunities to reform hydropower dams through the 30 – 50 year hydropower license process. When we improve the operations of hydropower dams, we restore balance to river ecosystems that have been altered for power production. Through this process we restore fish populations, re-establish healthy river environments, protect valuable watershed land, increase recreational opportunities and bring economic benefits to the communities that surround these remarkable rivers.

Miracle Falls

One of the highlights of the past year was watching Dillsboro Dam (NC) come down. Back in 2001, American Whitewater was part of a diverse group of local, regional, and national interests that began meeting with Duke Energy to collaborate on a new plan for operating their dams in the Tuckaseegee and Nantahala watersheds. The outcome of those negotiations was a comprehensive settlement agreement. The agreement called for the removal of Dillsboro Dam and subsequent watershed enhancements including scheduled releases on high gradient headwater reaches, new public river access areas, new parks and trails, and land conservation.

Unfortunately, the removal of Dillsboro Dam became a controversial issue; local county commissioners spent hundreds of thousands of tax-payer dollars and went as far as using their power of condemnation to take the dam. The resulting conflict delayed the dam removal project for well over five

years. The conflict also divided the local community with some residents in favor of removal and others opposed to seeing the outdated and uneconomic dam (the dam had not produced power in over four years) come down.

Now, ten months after the removal of Dillsboro Dam, the local name for the old dam site is "Miracle Falls." As in, "It's a miracle that those rapids were hidden underneath the dam for almost a hundred years!" The conflict that surrounded dam removal is a thing of the past. In an ironic outcome of the November mid-term elections, all of the old county commissioners who opposed the dam removal were replaced with new candidates. Political analysis in local newspapers consistently mentioned the use of county funds to fight dam removal as one of the issues that led to a remaking of the commissioner seats.

As we move into the coming year we are sharing what we learned in the Dillsboro Dam removal with communities in other regions so that they can avoid the pitfalls that delayed the Tuckaseegee and Nantahala relicensing projects.

River Stewardship Top Ten

In this issue of the *American Whitewater Journal* we introduce you, our members, to American Whitewater's Top Ten River Stewardship Issues of 2011. We expect these issues to be important themes in the coming year and American Whitewater staff plays a leadership role in these issues affecting rivers across the country and the headwaters we all enjoy. Starting on page 26, our Top Ten River Stewardship Issues of 2011 takes into consideration a broad geographic cross section of the country and identifies some of the pressures that face our nation's rivers.

As we move through the coming year, the staff at American Whitewater will be pushing for new opportunities to reconnect rivers with paddlers, habitat, and local communities. Who knows, there may

even be another Miracle Falls somewhere out there, buried beneath an outdated, uneconomical dam. If there is, we'll find it!

Happy New Year,

Mark Singleton
Executive Director

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HOPE THAT YOU all had a wonderful holiday season. As I write this message it is December 2, 2010 and Santa has just delivered the paddling community a victory in court on the Chattooga River headwaters! Not a total victory – yet – but United States District Judge Michele Childs denied the Government's motion to dismiss our case and we will finally get our day in court. More importantly, the judge agreed with our argument that floating use is an outstandingly remarkable value (ORV) of the headwaters. This is a major victory because the USFS must manage the river to enhance and protect the ORVs, which was the original reason the river was protected under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Obviously a floating ban is neither protecting nor enhancing that ORV.

This is a major milestone in what has been a frustrating 13-year journey for me, personally, and many others who

have invested countless hours in our efforts to bring nationally consistent river management to the Chattooga River. The Upper Chattooga River is not open to floating yet, but we are significantly closer to reaching that goal with this decision. I have always believed that if we could get our day in court we would prevail. We will have that day. Stay tuned for more news.

Fitting with this most recent news on the Chattooga, the focus of this issue of the *Journal* is our river stewardship work. River stewardship is the reason AW exists, and our 2010 results build on the successes from prior years to add up to something worth celebrating. Our river stewardship staff, led by Kevin Colburn, continues to do a fantastic job protecting rivers and paddlers' interests around the United States.

However, you are the reason AW succeeds in our stewardship work. Your time, sweat and treasure are why AW achieves great things as we pursue our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and enhance your opportunities to enjoy them safely.

Thanks to all of you who belong to and support our organization. With your continued support and passion for rivers we all love, you can expect more great things from AW this year and for many years to come. I hope to see you on the Upper Chattooga or some other gem of an American river soon!

See You on the River,



STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

THE ROGUE REBORN: GOLD RAY REDUCED TO GOLD DUST

BY BILL CROSS

SOMETIMES I FEEL like I'm living in a dream. Thirty-odd years ago, when I was a novice river runner coming of age in an era when rivers were being lost right and left to pork-barrel dams, the notion of removing a dam seemed utterly preposterous. The idea that I might even— even once—boat down a restored river through the site of a demolished dam was sheer fantasy.

Yet in the past three years I have paddled not once, but three times, through the site of a freshly dismantled dam on Oregon's Rogue River—plus had a first descent through a giant notch that the Army Corps of Engineers carved through its dam on Elk Creek, a major Rogue tributary.

Most recently, I spent a day paddling through the spot where, until this summer, Gold Ray Dam blocked the Rogue just north of Medford, Oregon. Since 1904, Gold Ray obstructed both salmon swimming upstream and boaters headed down. The 38-foot-high, 260-foot-long concrete barrier, built to generate electricity, had been derelict since 1972 when Pacific Power let its uneconomical turbines fall silent. In the ensuing years the deteriorating structure became both a safety liability and a notorious fish killer, earning a dubious ranking as Oregon's fifth-worst obstacle for migrating salmon.

Still, the idea of removing Gold Ray was a back-burner issue until the past two years, when two nearby Rogue dams fell to the wrecker's ball. First to be removed in 2008 was Gold Hill Diversion Dam, five miles downstream. A year later the much larger Savage Rapids Dam, 20 miles below Gold Ray, met the same fate. Suddenly,

Opposite: Greg Cross on the Rouge River at the former Gold Ray Dam site.

Photo by Bill Cross



Gold Ray stood alone in the spotlight as the sole remaining dam in a 157-mile stretch of the Rogue extending from the Army Corps' giant Lost Creek Dam all the way to the Pacific Ocean.

Ironically, the economic crisis sealed Gold Ray's fate: in 2009 Congress approved \$5.6 million in stimulus funds to take out the dam, with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board chipping in another \$1 million. Jackson County, owner of the defunct dam, jumped at the chance to demolish the rickety structure, which studies had estimated would cost a whopping \$69.7 million to restore to working condition. In early summer Slayden Construction fired up its jack-hammers, and by mid-October the dam was a dusty memory. For the first time in over a century, the Rogue River ran free for 157 consecutive miles.

First Descent: Salmon In, Sediment Out

On October 16 my son and I were among the first to boat through the dam site. We launched our solo canoes at Tou Velle Park, four miles above Gold Ray. Here the Rogue is a mild-mannered Class II- river, alternating between easy riffles and long pools as it meanders through lush bottomlands. The river was at autumn low

The removal of Gold Ray Dam.

Photo by Bill Cross

flow, slipping quietly past towering stands of cottonwoods turned brilliant yellow by the first cold snap of fall.

As we splashed through the first riffle we found ourselves surrounded by dozens of Chinook salmon. If you've never seen one it's hard to imagine how impressive these fish are—so big and powerful that it's almost intimidating boating among them. Many tip the scales at 30-40 pounds, and 50-pounders are not unheard of. When these massive fish dash through shallow riffles, they actually push up a wave of water over their backs, like submarines cruising just under the surface. As these giants darted around and under our boats we speculated—only half in jest—about whether they could capsize us if they rammed our boats. Over the next few miles we saw literally hundreds. We stopped at one riffle to admire these spectacular creatures, savoring the knowledge that these were the first Rogue River Chinook in 106 years to ascend to their spawning grounds without having to negotiate a single man-made obstacle.

STEWARDSHIP UPDATES

Soon enough we reached the 1.3-mile section that only weeks before had been a silted-in, slack-water impoundment above Gold Ray Dam. With the dam removed, the Rogue's surface has been lowered some 20 feet at the former dam site, giving this reborn stretch a healthy gradient, swift current, and some serious excavating power. We were impressed at how deeply the river had already carved into a century's worth of accumulated sediment. At the upstream end of the former impoundment the river had scoured down to a clean cobbled bed, Chinook were spawning in what had been mud flats just a month earlier.

We passed various artifacts that the river has uncovered as it sluices away 106 years worth of ooze: tires, bottles, boots, scraps of rusted metal—all slated to be cleaned up by volunteers this autumn. By far the most numerous relics were dozens of big cottonwood snags, unearthed from the muck and now scattered along the silty banks. Fortunately none posed a serious boating hazard, though winter high water will undoubtedly shift these strainers around, creating potential risks

for paddlers. But eventually the river will flush this stretch clean.

On our run, the 1.3 miles of reclaimed river was just easy riffles, but there's a chance, given the strong gradient, that as the river erodes down to its original bed over the next few seasons it might expose a shelf or outcrop, revealing a play feature or even a rapid. Just a few miles downstream are two well-known Class III-IV rapids—Nugget Falls and Powerhouse—where the Rogue drops sharply through bedrock chutes. But whether or not a new rapid is uncovered, this restored reach should become popular for boating, since Gold Ray's removal more than doubles the potential trip length on this part of the Rogue. Until now the standard run was a popular 5-mile half-day float below the dam; now a river runner can add 6 additional upriver miles and link the two sections, making full-day runs possible.

At the dam site we stopped to admire Slayden Construction's handiwork. The demo team did a first-class job, leaving only a small concrete buttress on the left bank to mark where Gold Ray once spanned the Rogue. The restored channel was clean

and broad, and although the banks were bare earth, we knew they would soon be turning green: as part of the removal project, the entire area was reseeded with native grasses.

As we paddled the final miles to take-out, we talked about the historic significance of what we had just witnessed. The removal of Gold Ray Dam is the final step in what is arguably the biggest river restoration in U.S. history. The Rogue now runs unimpeded for 157 miles. And that, we agreed, is great news—whether you're a canoeist or a Chinook.

LOWER HOOD RIVER (TUCKER TO MARINA) SANS DAM

BY TIM HARDIN

ON OCT 25, 2010, the rain had finally given us enough water to run the Lower Hood without Powerdale (Copper) Dam to impede our enjoyment.

Three of us, Temira Wagonfeld, Scott Elsworth, and myself put on at Tucker Bridge with the level around 3.85 (it went up to 3.95 during the paddle). This was Temira's first time down the Hood, while Scott and I had run it many times before, but we were excited not to have a dam to portage this time.

As we approached the "lake" above the dam, we noted that there was a fun Class III rapid where the top of the lake had been (we called it "Lake Rapid"). This rapid was partially accessible in the past during high water when the gates on the dam were opened.

We were amazed at how much progress had been made. With the exception of

All that's left of Powerdale Dam is a nice new Class III rapid.

Photo by Tim Hardin



the water intake building, the entire dam structure itself, including the fish passage, had been removed and replaced with boulders and re-seeded soil.

The horizon line where the dam was looked daunting, but as we approached this new Class III rapid (we christened it “Dam Rapid”) we could see that it was a relatively steep gradient with no sharp ledges or big holes and we proceeded down. Read and run was easy enough with plenty of line options; we just avoided the rocks that still stuck out of the water and bounced down the rest.

All told, this may be the most difficult rapid on this section of river, but not by a lot. It felt long and busy, but there did not appear to be any unforeseen problems with it. We did not see any *new* concrete or rebar anywhere (downstream of the dam, the river has always had concrete/rebar). The power company did a great job keeping

man-made objects out of the channel and keeping the rapid consistent with the rest of the river.

ENJOYING A RESTORED SANDY RIVER

BY THOMAS O’KEEFE

■ WAS THERE ON the afternoon in 2007 when Peggy Fowler of Portland General Electric pushed the plunger setting off the charge to blow the top off Marmot Dam. The excavators went to work as we watched, breaking up the concrete and ultimately dismantling the whole dam by the end of the summer. With the first major rain event in October of that year the coffer dam that had diverted water around the construction site was allowed to collapse. To the astonishment of many, much of the sediment that had collected behind the dam over the last several decades washed downstream and by the end of the

weekend what was once a reservoir looked very much like a river—it was an amazing testament to the power of rivers to restore themselves with the simple act of removing the concrete plug.

Three years later it was a real joy to visit the river and once again see what was gained, as old and new friends gathered from around the region to explore the river on a typical Northwest cloud-draped November day. We began our journey at Marmot Bridge and after navigating Alder Creek Rapid we soon entered a living gorge with flora that carpeted the walls and a river that was clearly enjoying its newly-discovered channel. Where once the channel had been the slackwater of a reservoir the river had made continued progress in moving sediment downstream and exposing old ledges and bringing rapids back to life that had never been experienced by whitewater paddlers.

Coming up to the dam site itself, it was hard to even see where the dam had been and one had to look closely for the evidence. All the infrastructure that had been there—the dam, pipes and canals, and the inadequate fish ladders—was gone with only the footbridge that had once framed the dam now framing the river. While much of the focus of this project was on the benefits for the river’s salmon and steelhead, this being one of the major tributaries below the first dam on the Columbia River, it was wonderful to experience the recreational attributes of a restored river.



Three years later, the former site of Marmot Dam looks almost, well, like a natural river.
Photo by Thomas O’Keefe

PADDLER FITNESS

PADDLER HEALTH AND FITNESS: WHAT IS IT?

BY JOHN AMTMANN AND CHRIS TACKE

EVERY WHITEWATER RECREATIONIST who has been at it a while has had an experience on a river that challenged him physically. Just this past weekend some friends and I witnessed a raft flip upstream of us on the Alberton Gorge section of the Clark Fork River (MT). Eventually two of the raft's six crew members swam down to where we had already flipped the raft back over. Three of the other four were scattered but mobile upstream from us. However, one rafter was huddled in a fetal position, not moving, and he stayed that way for about 15 minutes. A full assessment showed no injuries, save for a man completely exhausted from a long swim. He was so spent that he couldn't speak, and I was having a hard time determining whether it was because of exhaustion or if he had a head injury. After about 10 minutes of rest, the man refused medical treatment, and was able to climb back into the captain's seat of the raft. He was fortunate for two main reasons; first, the area he swam in has powerful currents that have claimed the lives of capable people. Second, and maybe more importantly, if any of the rest



of his crew had been in need of immediate help, the exhausted man would have been unable to assist.

Many people will only consider a physical fitness improvement program after an experience like this. We are more likely to make a change in our lives after a significant, sometimes traumatic, event has occurred. However, if you think about it, common sense dictates that we should

be trying to improve, or at least maintain, physical fitness in order to safely run rivers. In future issues, this column will focus on the various components of physical fitness and will guide you in practical assessments and fitness program development to improve your fitness.

Our purpose here is to ask, "What is physical fitness?" The definition I like and that pertains to the river rat in a physically demanding situation is old but worth including here (Clark, 1967): "physical fitness is the ability to last, to bear up, to withstand stress, and to persevere under difficult circumstances where an unfit person would give up."

There are three general components to health-related physical fitness, which include Cardiorespiratory Fitness, Body Composition, and Musculoskeletal Fitness. Cardiorespiratory endurance is usually defined as the ability to perform rhythmic or dynamic exercise involving large muscle groups for prolonged periods. Body composition refers to the body's relative amounts of fat and is usually expressed as a percentage of total body weight.

Whitewater swims test paddler fitness.

Photo by John Amtmann



Opposite: The raft flipped at Split Rock; though there was plenty of time, the man was unable to swim to shore before being swept into Tumbleweed.

Photo by John Amtmann

Musculoskeletal fitness includes strength, muscular endurance and flexibility.

Each of these fitness components can be assessed separately from the others and provide information regarding fitness in the specific category being measured. However, overall physical fitness improves your ability to perform under physical stress on the river, and reduces your risk of developing chronic lifestyle related diseases, such as diabetes, coronary artery disease and hypertension.

It's beneficial to have an idea of where your physical fitness levels are prior to beginning a new exercise program. Of course, make sure to obtain physician's clearance, especially if you are over 45 (men) or 55 (women) years of age, before starting a new exercise program or participating in a fitness assessment.

Two practical approaches to assessing body fatness are the waist circumference and body mass index tests. Waist circumference is a simple way to determine the presence

of abdominal obesity, which can lead to increased risk of heart disease and premature death. The tape should be held evenly at the level of the umbilicus to obtain the measurement. According to published norms, you are at high risk if your waist measurement is greater than 35 (women) or 39 (men) (Bray, 2004).

Another simple method for determining if your weight is where it should be is body mass index (BMI), and the National Heart Lung and Blood Institute has an easy to follow web page that helps you calculate BMI (<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/>) and compare your BMI with established norms.

Cardiorespiratory fitness can be determined by using field tests that allow us to predict VO2 Max. VO2 Max, often expressed in milliliters of oxygen per kilogram of body weight per minute (mlkg-1min-1), can be defined as the maximal amount of oxygen that can be utilized by the body and is one indicator of cardiorespiratory fitness. In practical terms, someone who has a VO2 Max of 60 mlkg-1min-1 will perform better in a 10 Kilometer race compared with someone who has a VO2 Max of 45 mlkg-1min-1, all else being equal. The most practical way to predict VO2 Max, and to

assess cardiorespiratory fitness, is to use the 1.5 mile walk-jog test. The guidelines for this test are as simple as mapping out a 1.5 mile course on flat terrain, and timing your completion of the course. If you haven't exercised on a regular basis for over six months then simply walk the 1.5 miles at a comfortable pace. To predict VO2 Max use the formula:

$VO_2 \text{ Max (mlkg-1min-1)} = 3.5 + 483/\text{Time}^*$
*Time is to the nearest hundredth of a minute

For example, if it took you 10:24 (10 minutes, 24 seconds) to complete the course, the conversion of seconds to tenths of minutes would be .4 (24/60) and the time you would use in the formula would be 10.4 minutes. Your estimated VO2 Max would be 49.9 mlkg-1min-1.

To see how your results fare, visit www.topendsports.com/testing/vo2norms.htm for a comprehensive set of VO2 Max norms.

So, though I'm sure most of you have an entertaining personal river story of how you know whether you are or are not in shape, performing some of these tests will give you an objective measure of your fitness status relative to two of the health related fitness components: body composition and cardiorespiratory fitness. In future issues we will discuss some methods for measuring musculoskeletal fitness, and guidelines for improving fitness in all areas of health-related fitness that will help to prevent injury and improve your overall river navigation and rescue skills.

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After swimming Tumbleweed this rafter was completely exhausted.

Photo by John Amtmann

LOVE & WHITEWATER

THE MAKINGS OF A PROFESSIONAL SHUTTLE BUNNY

BY KRISTINE JACKSON

In 1987, at the age of 17, I met a terrific guy on the banks of the West River in Vermont. Unfortunately he lived in Washington, DC, was a US Slalom team wannabe, and didn't have two nickels to rub together. On what could best be described as our third date, he invited me to go to Maine with him on a road trip to the Kennebec and Dead rivers. As a non-paddler from Long Island, NY I had never seen a tent (not that he had one) and was envisioning a nice little cabin in the woods (I brought my blow dryer). As the female part of this couple, assuming he had a plan for eating, I stuffed \$20 in my wallet and hopped in his 1980 Honda Accord hatchback. We drove the 6 or 7 hours to Maine and stopped at every McDonalds that could be found on route, spending my \$20. We lived on PB&J for all, and I mean all, of the subsequent meals over the next four days. I guess I should have appreciated the McDs a little more.

We arrived in the parking lot of Northern Outdoors Rafting Company just in time to get an awesome night's sleep in the Honda (another first for me!). In the morning, we took the road up to the put-in of the Kennebec River. At this point, my future husband threw me the keys to the car and gave me very specific directions: Drive down the road four or five miles, turn right at the dirt road, drive down this dirt road until you get to a bridge you don't want to drive across and pull the car off to the side. Get out of the car and walk until you hear water, at which point you should head downhill until you get to the water, he would meet me there in 4 or 5 hours. I, as confidently as I could, informed him that I couldn't drive a standard. His reply: "You have five hours to learn."

Still sleeping in the "car."

Photo by Kristine Jackson

The Jackson family 23 years later.

Photo by Corey Rich

I did as I was told and arrived at Magic Falls, complete with PB&J's and some water. My Prince Charming arrived as planned, hung out and ate, thanked me for bringing food, then told me to drive back out, continue down the road and go to the take-out, where he would be meeting me in another four hours or so. I was floored!

But...I drove to the take-out. I met up with a couple of his old New Hampshire pals and accepted their offer of a Budweiser. My future hubby arrived a few hours later, took one look at me with the beer and told me we had to have a talk. He didn't like the fact that I had a beer; I obviously had a drinking problem and he wasn't sure that we could date. I laughed at him and we agreed to table the discussion until a later date.

That night we drove to Northern Outdoors, the owner noticed me walk in with my date (whom he knew), and while he was in the bathroom asked me to deliver a message. "Can you tell your friend that he is invited to dinner with me; there is someone I'd like him to meet." After convincing Eric that it was okay for him to go to dinner without me (even though I didn't mean it—it's a girl thing), he went to dinner with the owner and his wife, and their niece, for what looked to me like a blind date. I



sat on a couch 15 feet away and literally watched them eat (Men are so stupid!). I ate a peanut butter sandwich and fell fast asleep in the car, exhausted.

That was 23 years ago. We got married 15 months after this trip, had three awesome kids, and still sleep in a car, albeit a much larger one. Today he *never* leaves me behind when he gets invited to dinner—or any other place for that matter!



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LOVE & WHITEWATER

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS

BY DANA JOHNSON

HAVE YOU EVER heard of a man taking advantage of the student-teacher relationship? Well, that's exactly what Charlie Johnson did in 1996. Now, well after the statute of limitations has expired, I'm finally able to tell the world how I was flushed into that strainer.

In 1996 I was completing my graduate thesis. I was in need of *one* additional credit of any kind to qualify for a teaching assistant position, so I did what any rational twenty-something does and took "Intro to Adventure Sports" for one credit. The class was designed to have us try all sorts of different activities such as canoeing, mountain biking, climbing etc.... One day we showed up at the pool and there before us was this really huge skin tone kayak. The teacher encouraged us to get in and the instant I felt that "leaf on water" sensation I was hooked. I wanted more.

As luck would have it, one of my fellow teaching assistants belonged to a kayak club. This same club offered fully equipped classes for a mere \$100 for eight weeks. I couldn't beat that and so I signed up two months early for the kayak class. I wouldn't find out until years later that this teaching friend and his wife set up the rosters of the classes for the kayak club. I also wouldn't be informed of their little conspiracy to put me in a particular class under the



instruction of someone with whom they thought I might hit it off. Nope, I was completely blindsided.

Smitten is not the word I'd use to describe our first meeting. I thought he was cute, but WAY too cocky for my tastes. He pretended to ignore me and flirt with other girls in the class. I found out 10 years later that he sensed instantly that I might be "the one." Flirtation was his way of avoiding the sheer terror. Towards the middle of our kayak class session, Charlie asked me out. We tried dating a bit, but I found his flirtation with other students annoying and so I moved on, digging into my studies and doing some flirtation of my own.

As any woman who excels at whitewater kayaking can tell you, there are a *lot* of bachelors in boats on the river. I loved

The kayaking Johnson family.

Photo by Dana Johnson

kayaking so much that my first bonus paycheck from my first job was used to buy a dry suit. Needless to say this was a real turn-on for many of the men I met in the sport. The married ones told Charlie he was nuts if he didn't get his head on straight about the opportunity to date me. Other men were more than happy to run my shuttles. I was having the time of my life enjoying the sport and all it entailed.

Somewhere on the New River a blinding flash of obvious hit Charlie. For the first time in his life he couldn't wait to get home from a kayak trip. He immediately contacted me and asked me out, this time making it clear that we'd be dating exclusively. Within two weeks we were on our way to the Ocoee for an extended weekend and have been kayaking together exclusively ever since. We married in 1999 and have had two children since. In 2009 we doubled our exposure on the river taking our sons down the Wolf River in tandem kayaks. In 2010 the four of us went down the same river, each of us in a solo kayak. That run was the most amazing culmination of love we have ever experienced. To look ahead and see the offspring of a relationship started in kayaks paddling kayaks was just perfect!

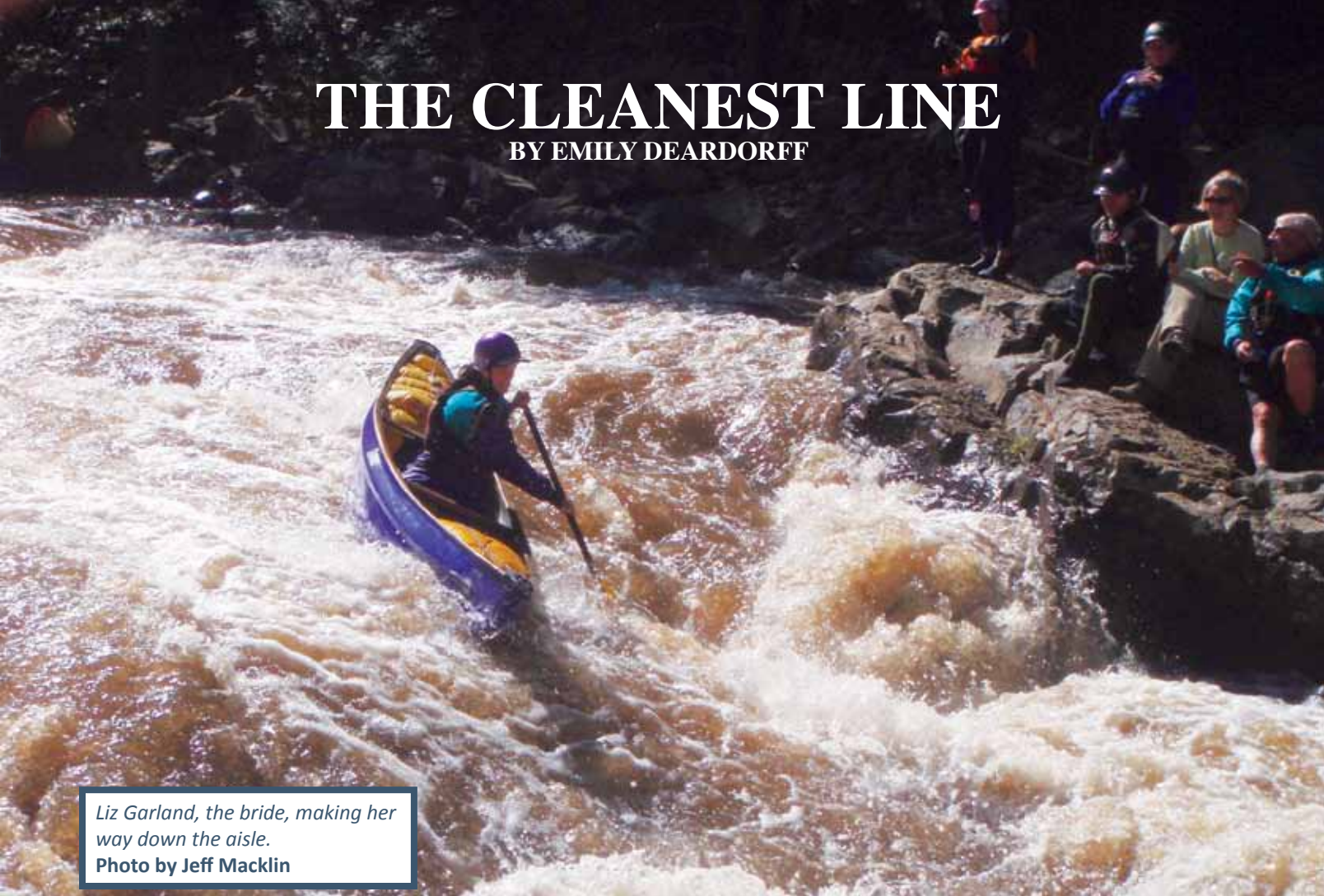
Mom and son on their first river trip.

Photo by Charlie Johnson



THE CLEANEST LINE

BY EMILY DEARDORFF



Liz Garland, the bride, making her way down the aisle.

Photo by Jeff Macklin

IT IS QUIET—AT the break of fall and the break of dawn—where one time meets another—hesitating yet inevitable. A few miles from here my father, John, is assembling damp paddling gear, ratcheting straps down over his beaten Ocoee. His soon-to-be-wife, my soon-to-be-step mom, Liz, is doing the same. Sandy and Taylor, their German shepherd twins who consider themselves exempt from the implications of “yes” and “no,” are stirring up the neighbor’s chickens. And I’m seated on a squared-off piece of lumber beside a fire that won’t start as the coffee loses its heat in the cup beside me. A few hundred yards to my left, the Youghiogheny River shoulders fog and damp air with gravity. I am running on three hours of sleep and I am about to boat the Upper Yough in a ghastly orange, bulbous thing called a Jackson Dynamic Duo.

I wouldn’t have even considered this as an option, but my boyfriend, Colby, was a seasoned paddler. Nonetheless, Colby and

I decided that proper training in our new craft would be critical for a river wedding that could not involve multiple rescues. Our “Duo” preparation went like this: Tuesday afternoon, four days before the wedding: pick up the Duo from our friend Stacy, then head to the Narrows (a nice stretch of ledges on the Susquehanna River) for a session of basic eddy work, ferrying, and a simple roll or two.

Tuesday evening: Colby and I find ourselves diverted en route to the river by a local pizza joint that keeps its taps stocked with distinctive microbrews. The Duo sits, somewhat despondently, on top of the car while we sample the latest features.

Wednesday evening, three days before the wedding: we regroup and make a point to take a different route to the put-in for the Narrows, one that makes is nearly impossible to be thwarted by tasty fermented beverages. We succeed, manage to surf a few waves, and make three

(unsuccessful) attempts at a roll (notably, and to Colby’s credit, the boat was righted on the fourth attempt, though I had already bailed from the front cockpit at that point).

Friday arrives. Day before the wedding. Colby and I both wrangle the afternoon off work to pack frantically with hopes of making it to Ohionpyle with enough daylight for a quick run on the Loop, before arriving late to the wedding festivities.

Saturday: Wedding Day. I find myself strangely nostalgic. All night in sleep I paced a memory treadmill. I saw the farm I grew up on, the animals, the fields, the day my sister and brother and I sat down in the high grass and learned about divorce, about relationships, about the complexity of human relationships. As I got older I watched my father become a lesson in returning to the origins of the exploration impulse. A lifetime of rivers and weather can change you, throw you off course, challenge you, turn you upside down and

LOVE & WHITEWATER



The wedding ceremony at Beer Rock on the Upper Yough (MD).

Photo by Jeff Macklin

re-right you again. You find your way not by the immediate periphery but in concert with the features of the total landscape—rock, hydraulic, water line, tree line. My father and Liz’s relationship was shaped by their one shared teacher, the river.

The put-in for the Upper Yough is a mess of neoprene, plastic, Royalex and people. The river parade included every style of boater and boat for this celebration. My father looks calm. Liz gives hugs and directs her family (many of whom have never seen whitewater) to congregate on the bank and wait for their guides. I’m eyeing up the length of the Duo versus the creek boats and canoes and shredders, thinking of the eddies so limited in number, the lines so narrow, when I notice my father scanning my tense face; he’s already shouldering his Ocoee and heading for the bank when he turns and smiles and says to Colby, who’s standing beside me chewing on whole coffee beans to combat his lack of sleep, “Now Colby, you take care of my daughter—I’d hate to have to kick your ass!”

No pressure.

I’ve got sweaty palms as I snap the spray skirt around the cockpit. Colby eases us into the river, and I can feel the rush even though the first rapid is still a few bends away.

Remember breath. Remember, breathing. Damn, why is everyone else so calm? Colby and I dip our blades down and yeah, it appears we’re committed now.

And then, of course, there are the rapids. I chuckle to myself as I realize that I don’t know whether I remember the lines from the handful of times I’ve shredded this with my dad. We find out really quickly—then, suddenly, Colby gives the cue and we whip the beast of a boat around into a top eddy; we let the other boaters whoosh past, and then he nods, it’s gonna be a hard, I mean HARD, left through that slot—that?!—yeah, I remember now. There’s the pillow, just ride it up, and plant that paddle hard.

Clean.

Good.

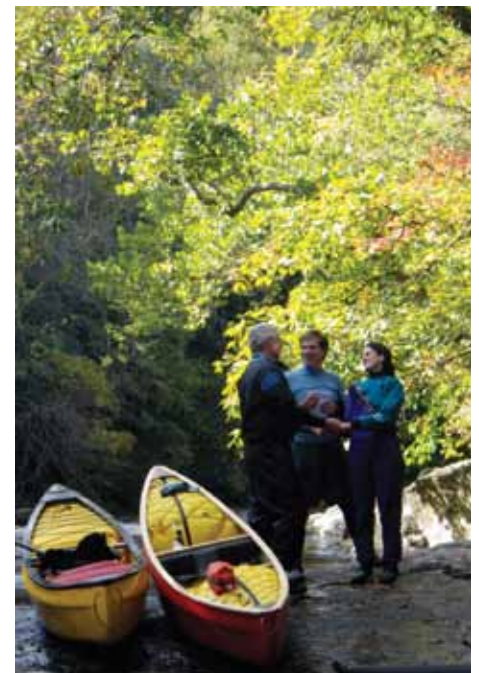
And now we’re doing Indian runs, this menagerie of boaters—switching the leads and the sweeps. Finally, on Beer Rock, below Cheeseburger, I exhale. We’ve managed to navigate the most challenging rapids of the run with some semblance of style. My dad and Liz exhale (albeit inaudibly) as well. They take their helmets off and tug their Ocoees onto the flattest

John and Liz at the altar.

Photo by Steve Arnold

point of the rock nosing out into the river. The bank is a sea of boaters. Someone hands my father a tie. Liz smooths her hair. Gary, the man who will marry them, opens the dry box containing two wedding rings, both embellished with swirls reminiscent of water. A column of early-evening light comes down onto the crowd. I’m flanked by my brother and twin sister. And I could think of about eight million things right now. Like, what the hell was Liz thinking, getting involved with this crazy family of ours?!

The ceremony comes to a close, the people scatter. There are a few more rapids. There’s the flat paddle out. I watch my father go on ahead with his new wife. I give them space, I wait a beat, and then it’s a stroke, forward, forward, and now a seam of water whisks us left and we’re back in the current, going downriver, not because of a first choice, of a clear path, but because of a series of choices, a widening of apertures, and it’s then that the sum of all these parts comes into focus.





LOVING A KAYAKER: A CLASS V CHALLENGE

BY RACHEL SMITH
A First Impression

I AM PERFECTLY AWARE of where I fall on my boyfriend Chris's list of importance. After over four years together, I know that I land second, directly below whitewater. I've accepted that during the summer, when Chris works as a whitewater raft guide and I work in the reservation office, we're too busy to worry about special dinners or family events.

However, two years ago I finally asked Chris to come to dinner with my family. We had been living together for over two years and I had never really asked him to participate in this formal rite of passage every long-term relationship undergoes. So in November of 2007 I asked Chris to come to Thanksgiving at my parents house.

My mom was thrilled to finally spend some time getting to know the man who had moved in with her only daughter. My dad promised to not grill Chris with questions and my brother was excited to finally meet my boyfriend with whom he seemed to have a lot in common.

Monday and Tuesday before Thanksgiving it rained all day. Rivers began to rise and Chris began to watch the gauges every hour. Wednesday we spent the day at the Sandy River Dam Wave, a perfect park and

Sandy River Dam Wave, Sandy River (ME).
 Photo by Chris Colin

play spot only an hour from our house. I sat in the rain shooting video while Chris and six other paddlers spent five straight hours playing on the river.

On Thursday morning we awoke to the phone ringing off the hook. Not only was the Sandy Dam Wave in, but Madison wave, a hidden jewel of Maine play spots, had finally reached perfect levels overnight.

Two of Chris's paddling buddies, Tom and Mark were going paddling. Tom had left his dad alone for the holiday, promising to return for a later dinner. Mark was bailing on his girlfriend's family gathering with the promise of going for Christmas. Chris just stared at me. What could I do but tell him, "Be safe, have fun, and I'll bring home leftovers."

My family was unbelievably understanding. No one in my family really understood what was involved in play boating and after viewing a video in Chris's absence they were more worried that he would flip and hurt his head than angry that he didn't come to dinner.

This past year Chris came to Thanksgiving and Christmas at my parents house. Each time my mom would invite Chris but would wait until he actually walked into the house before setting the table with a fifth seat.

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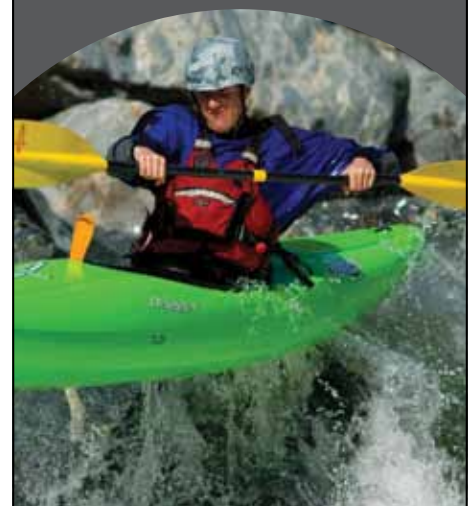
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Scott Ligare, Kokatat Whitewater Ambassador: South Fork Yuba.
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LOVE & WHITEWATER

Sandy River Dam Wave, Sandy River (ME).
Photo by Rachel Smith

In April this year it began to rain again just like it does in any normal spring in Maine. With Easter right around the corner again my mom invited Chris and I to dinner. I was shocked when on Saturday night I got a call from my mom. "So I see that it's been raining for a few days," she said, "and it looks like it's going to keep going, so just make sure Chris knows we totally understand and we hope he has fun kayaking."

Shuttle Bunny Raft Guide

While Chris is a whitewater kayaker at heart, I have spent most of the past three years as a full time shuttle bunny for long river runs, and early spring creek runs; I've even waited patiently at park-and-play spots all day long. Honestly, it's not a bad gig. I pack a lunch, wear a pair of good hiking boots, bring a good book, and a map. So far I have a perfect record for finding take-out parking lots. The only blemish on my record came when I hiked off without leaving a key and Chris waited in the parking lot, freezing in wet gear until I got back.

Well, in spring 2008 Chris and several other of our closest river friends talked me into raft guide training on the Kennebec River. I knew what I was getting into. Ten days camping in Maine during the middle of May. Ten mornings of 5 am wake-up, putting on a cold wetsuits, blowing up stacks of rafts, paddling six miles, hiking up 117 uneven stairs, riding a bus back to the dam and repeating the run five more times each day. Finally, we would return to camp, pile on warm clothes, and eat whatever warm food we could find. In the evening, we would sit in a smelly rundown building for hours of learning evacuation points, company policies, and rules and regulation. Bedtime

Rachel and Chris at Snap Falls, Muddy Creek Delta, Pennsylvania.
Photo by John Rollman

came around midnight, and then five hours later, we got to get up and do it all again.

Chris worked as one of the guide trainers. To avoid a conflict of interest he was never my direct trainer, but I could always tell that he was keeping an eye on me. Worse, I had to stay in my tent each night while Chris returned to OUR apartment to sleep in a warm bed and eat hot dinner, while watching the cable that I was paying for.

On day six I finally snapped. A requirement of each and every training run is to swim at Swimmers Rapid. In the second run of the day we reached Swimmers Rapid and I looked my trainer dead in the eye and simply said, "No." I didn't care if they kicked me out of training, I didn't care if my friends thought I was being difficult or asking for special treatment, I was NOT getting in that thirty-five degree water again.

On the bus ride back to the dam I talked with the head trainer, Joe. We agree that I would sit out this one run and then there would be no more defiance for the rest of training. They were supporting me and Chris was my biggest cheerleader. However

his approach was rough at best. On the next run, the rest of the class climbed up the 117 steps and got back on the bus. For the first time in six days Chris sat right next to me as we rode back to the dam. As everyone else filed off the bus Chris waited. Finally, when even the bus driver had exited, he looked right at me. "Get off the bus," he said. "You are embarrassing yourself, your friends, and me. You will finish training."

Four days later I passed the Maine Whitewater Guide exam with flying colors. I guided once a week for the rest of the summer, but I could have done without it. The pressure of all those people's lives in my hands was overwhelming. I did start to get out in a ducky every now and then and began to have a greater appreciation for whitewater. But the truth is in the end; I'm just not a guide.

I'm grateful that Chris made me get off the bus that day. I am glad that I proved I had the strength to finish something that I never thought I could do. However nowadays I stick to being shuttle bunny and hiking and I let Chris enjoy the whitewater on his own terms.



LOVE IN THE MOUNTAINS

BY ELISE BIRCH

WHITewater HAS ALWAYS given me a sense of peace and fascination. I grew up admiring my family in the mountains—an uncle with incredible river experience and knowledge of the outdoors who ran a paddling school and appears to have stopped aging at 40 and cousins who are not only Olympic-level paddlers, but are also beautiful people who have made successful careers in the whitewater industry. In my early teens I joined a couple of my uncle's kids' camps. I bonded with kids from all over the country while we learned to ferry, catch eddies, and hoped to nail our combat rolls in the sweet new Pirouette S. While some of my fellow campers went on to appear in LVM and attend Whitewater Academy, different goals and an interest in a boy muted my desire to kayak. Although life carried me as far as Ghana, West Africa, and into a teaching career, I often reminisced about my adventures on the Youghiogheny River; I always used a rock from Ramcat Rapid on the Middle Yough as a paperweight.

Almost a year after the dissolution of an eleven-year relationship, I found myself, as people often do, rekindling old friendships, strengthening bonds with family members, and trying to invest more time into what I admired in life. So, returning to the Youghiogheny, spending time with my family in the mountains, and learning to kayak all over again made sense. I had lofty goals of paddling the entire Lower Yough by the end of summer and nailing my combat roll again.

Then, I met Zach, the new kayak instructor from Indiana. We had a conversation about teaching positions in the area, as he brought up his desire to relocate, and honestly, I had no romantic intentions at all. I didn't even know what he looked like under his Liquid Logic hat and sunglasses. Later that evening, however, wearing a purple, 80s prom gown, I watched the Penguins win the Stanley Cup on a laptop computer during



a theme party at my cousin's café. It was a bit of a whirlwind evening. And, a couple days later, while we scouted a local creek and found we shared the same views of the world, I slipped on river rocks and fell for Zach.

That summer I divided my time between playing the character Audrey in a production of *Little Shop of Horrors* and spending time with Zach, which mostly involved him pushing me to get better at kayaking. He kissed me beside waterfalls, smiled at me across eddies, and was there with the hand of God every time I missed a roll. While Zach worked the river, I often spent time alone with the water. I would stare at a rapid, mesmerized by its swirling eddy lines, its green tongue, its frothy boil. I had fallen in love with whitewater all over again, and in the process I had fallen in love with Zach.

In August, nearing summer's end, I realized Zach would return to his flat land to start a new school year. He had given me the most incredible summer of my life, and he helped me discover the connection, depth, and joy that only a paddler can find in the river. And, one starlit evening in the quiet by the Middle Yough, I whispered to him that I didn't want him to go back to Indiana. A week later, when he told me he had called his principal and quit his job, I stared at

Elise and Zach at the bottom of the Great White Slide on the Beaver River (NY).

Photo by Jeff Muston

him in confusion with my mouth hanging open. "This is exactly where I want to be," he said with a smile, "and I couldn't go back to cornfields always wondering what might have come of us."

Today, I have far surpassed my whitewater goals of a couple of summers past. Zach and I have kayaked together from the Penobscot in Maine all the way down to the Chattooga in Georgia. We've hucked waterfalls in New York, paddled the Upper Yough in our own back yard, and I've experienced the anticipation of running creeks when the forecast calls for rain. We survived guide training and both spent this past summer as river guides in Ohiopyle. And, I'm still a sucker for his smile across eddies during our after-work Loop runs on the Lower Yough.

There are so many clichés about love not traveling in straight lines and life having a funny way of working out, and, truly, I never dreamt I would wake up and find myself living the life I always admired. To have found someone I admire to join me in these adventures and share my fascination and love of whitewater is a blessing for which I am forever grateful.

LOVE & WHITEWATER

RAFT GIRL MEETS KAYAK BOY

BY JENNI AND CHARLIE FOUTCH

IT WAS MAY 2006, time to start yet another summer of whitewater. It was a typical summer of rafting for me and a new kind of summer video kayaking for Charlie. I trekked back to West Virginia to begin my fifth year of guiding (with some occasional kayak instruction), my most beloved activity. Charlie saw video kayaking as a means to the opportunity to marry his passion with his bank account. Little did Charlie or I know we would each soon meet the love of our life.

The summer started the same as summers past: move to West Virginia, establish residence in a house made entirely of tarps, and set up life in the woods. I was back to the old haunts and hangouts with my longtime friend and compatriot, Joanna Sturz-Snead. As the jelly to the other's peanut butter, we were infamously known as "JoEnni," a giggling force to be reckoned with. Not



Hiking in Acadia National Park (ME).
Photo by Jenni Foutch

long after arriving, I began to hear stories from Joanna about this cool new kayaker named Charlie. With nary a thought from me, Joanna recounted hilarious stories of video kayak training with Charlie. Day after day, Joanna told more and more adventures and misadventures featuring Charlie, and my curiosity was finally piqued. Who was the mystery new guy? Why hadn't we met yet? Finally, one day after kayaking together, Joanna and I were hanging out near the "Blue Building," or raft house, and there stood the mysterious Charlie Foutch, kayaker extraordinaire. Now, dear reader, you may be thinking that at that moment in time, the world stood still, a cold chill ran through the air, or you could hear the trees recite the poetry of Pablo Neruda. No. Instead, it was just an average day that began a lifetime of friendship.

Over the next few weeks, that friendship grew as JoEnni plus Charlie began to hit all the same old haunts and hangouts and, most importantly, go kayaking every spare minute of the day. As if organically, Charlie and I were not just group buddies,

Backpacking near Glasby Pond in the Adirondacks (NY).

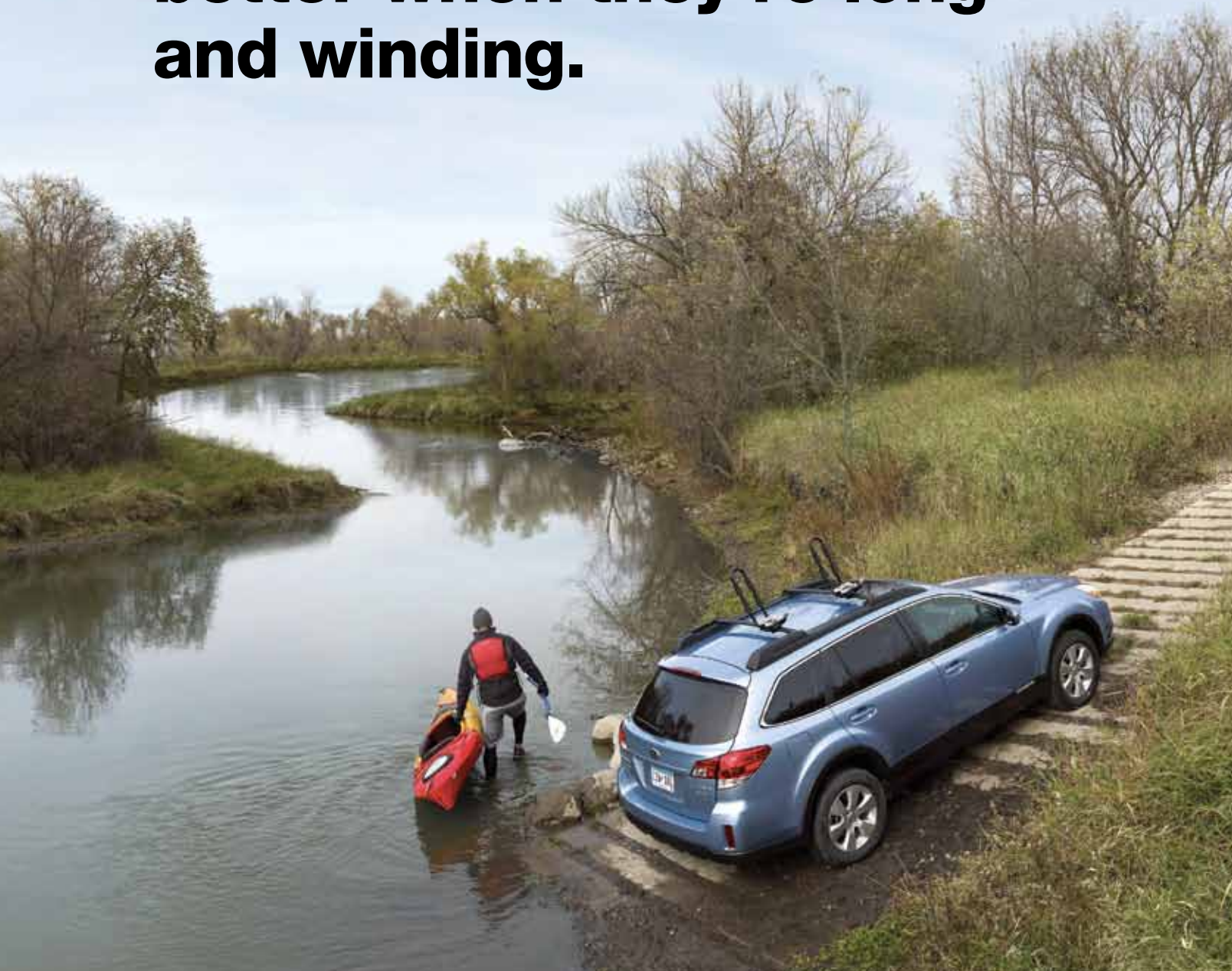
Photo by John Foutch

but true friends, and naturally, easily, we began dating. Enter: world standing still, cold chill in the air, and trees reciting poetry of Pablo Neruda.

The languorous summer soon crept to a close as I sank into Charlie's kind heart and he into my smile. With new school semesters upon us, we parted ways, knowing it would take effort if we wanted our relationship to span the 500 miles that separated us.

Finally, after many phone conversations, emails, letters, and lots of money spent on gas, we took the plunge and got married on June 15, 2008. Since then, it's been a journey packed full of adventures, from the graduate school experience to the real world experience, from fulfilling our passion for exploring rivers and mountains to just plain loving each other. As we continue to grow as husband and wife and best friends, we are continually thankful for the path of the river that lead us together.

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Accessory kayak carrier shown.

LOVE & WHITEWATER

CANOE MAGNETISM

BY RACHEL KURTZ

APPARENTLY, THE SECOND time I met Wayne Mercier I flashed him some neoprene bra cleavage while leaning into his truck window. “You should come paddling,” I suggested suavely. A pained look came over his face and he declined the offer.

We didn’t recognize each other, but we had already met once. It was at West Fest a year or so before and both of us were in long-term relationships at the time. My boyfriend (a kayaker) was paddling the Upper West with most of our kayaker friends, but I wanted something less challenging in the cool weather. I was on my own and I think I just carried my open canoe down to the campground put-in, hoping to hook up with some people who would agree to paddle with me and give me a ride back. Sure enough, I managed to find some open boaters to adopt me. Wayne was one of them, but we didn’t actually meet on the river. At the take-out, he was the only one who had room on his roof rack for my boat, so he gave me a ride back to the campground, and dropped me off with my boyfriend.

Unsatisfied, the river gods arranged a second chance for us. This time we were both paddling closed boats on the Sacandaga River, five minutes away from my house, but we still almost missed each other. When I pulled into the parking lot that afternoon looking for someone to paddle with, Wayne and his friends had already gotten in their three runs and were done for the day. My friend Pete was there, though, and he and I were going to take a run together. For some reason Pete pointed out Wayne across the parking lot and said, “That guy paddles C-1, too.” I looked over. I thought, What luck! I see a cute C-boater when I happened to be both romantically available and looking for a paddling partner. There was something irresistible about another whitewater canoeist.



Having nothing to lose, I sidled right up to the cute canoe guy’s truck and suggest he gear back up and take a run with us. Wayne said—regretfully, I thought—that he had to meet his friends at the campground where they were staying, but he suggested Pete and I meet them at their campsite after paddling.

A loyal friend, Pete agreed to go over with me—and then we waited for about a half an hour for Wayne and his friends to show up at the campground. We all ended up sitting companionably around the blazing campfire: Wayne and his friends, Pete, my dog, and I in camp chairs. Wayne was on one side of me, and Pete, still a good sport, on the other. Suddenly a lit ember flew out of the fire towards Wayne. I watched in slow-motion horror as the tiny flame arced and blazed right into his lap, landing directly in his crotch. He didn’t see it happen and instinctively I raised my hand to swat the fire out. My arm mid-air, I realized I had just met this man and probably shouldn’t be thwacking him in the crotch. Instead, I managed to croak something like, “Your crotch is on fire.”

It took Wayne a moment to realize that I meant it literally, but he was able to put

Wayne Mercier and Rachel Kurtz on the Deerfield River (MA).

Photo by Chuck Still

the ember out before it burned through his pants. A look passed between us. I think we both knew right then what the river gods were trying to tell us. We arranged to paddle the next day.

Three years later we were married, the wedding cake decorated like a whitewater river, according to Wayne’s design. Atop the cake, bride and groom stood under a leafy trellis with crossed canoe paddles that Wayne had assembled. My contribution: the figures wore pfd’s and helmets over the tuxedo and wedding dress, as if ready to ditch the reception and go canoeing at the first opportunity.



Cake top from our wedding.

Photo by Dale Atherton

IT TAKES TWO TO TANDEM

BY JENNIFER BRADLEY

AFTER STUMBLING DOWN a dormitory hallway with a heaping basket of laundry, I dropped my cargo to open the fire door. Taped to the door was a pink flyer that read "Beginning Kayak Instruction: Thursday nights at the Center for Physical Activity." I jerked the flyer off the door, adding it to the top of the laundry pile and proceeded to my little efficiency apartment on the other side of the building. At the time I had no idea that this would be the first step to meeting my future husband.

I enrolled in the class and learned to kayak under the watchful eyes of Randy and Jo Pasqua, local paddlers who have taught many to paddle through their association with Buffalo Mountain Camp. Over the next two years, I kept paddling. Because I am lucky enough to have a dad who is willing to try anything twice, I was able to paddle the lower Nolichucky in Greene County with him as long as the weather held out. I, armed with my kayak, and he in his patched Coleman Renegade tackled this Class I+ section with pride at least two or three afternoons a week.

In December 2007, I was diligently working on my Masters degree and working two part time jobs in addition to a graduate assistantship. Somehow, I managed to shuffle my schedule around to keep attending roll sessions two or three nights a week. It was then that I learned of another pool session in the Tri-Cities on Tuesday nights that offered the opportunity to demo new boats. By this time I had graduated to the level of "new boat buyer" with the purchase of my first playboat. I proudly toted my little green boat to the Freedom Hall pool every Tuesday night to practice my backdeck roll along with what was, and remains to this day, my only real

trick, a stern stall. It was here that I met Wesley Bradley.

Immediately I could tell three things about Wesley. One, at 6'4", he's over a foot taller than me. Two, he is the most enthusiastic kayaker I have ever met. Three, he is really fired up about Jackson Kayaks! Because I was a graduate student, the pool sessions were enough to keep me active without encroaching on my study time. Wesley was determined to change the amount of time kayaking took in my life. In early February of 2008, Wesley asked if I would like to take a river trip on the lower Nolichucky. I declined. "But," I said, "I would like to try the Noli Gorge!"

Saturday morning found me at the Poplar put-in with my never-been-used dry top choking me and my brand new creek boat. With Wesley and another mutual paddling friend by my side, I tackled the Nolichucky Gorge. Thankfully, my scariest incident of the day occurred first thing at Class III Entrance. My boat locked in a side surf immediately and amazingly I didn't panic. After several seconds of bouncing in the hole, I flipped and rolled up again into the side surf. Needless to say, I took a swim. After I made it to the bank with my gear, Wesley asked me if I felt like walking out or continuing on. I think I made him

proud by getting back in my boat and greasing the rest of the run. Looking back, this was probably one of the funniest swims I've ever had and one of the most confidence inspiring.

By mid-April, Wesley and I were dating. Our first official date was, of course, a river trip! The lower Doe was a much less stressful and consequential run than the Noli Gorge and made for an excellent afternoon of paddling. Afterwards a pizza and the Green Race Movie topped off the evening. Wesley made sure that just about every date was paddling related, whether it be a river trip or watching a whitewater flick.

On Memorial Day weekend of that year, Wesley and I set out on our first weekend paddling adventure, a three-day road trip that would hopefully result in four personal first descents for me. I tackled the Pigeon and Tellico on Saturday, the middle Ocoee on Sunday, and finally, the French Broad Section IX on Monday. That epic weekend which introduced me to four amazing rivers and gave me my first waterfall experience remains one of the highlights of our relationship.

One weekend in late July, we made our way back down to the Ocoee. This time, things seemed a little backwards. Being in



Synchronized strokes at Alien Boof on our first Upper Ocoee (TN) run in the Duo.

Photo by Steve Moore

LOVE & WHITEWATER



The wedding party at Ducky Beach, Quarter Mile rapid.

Photo by Jo Anne Pasqua

a full-on playboat for the first time on the Ocoee, I should have been the nervous one. As we paddled through Gonzo Shoals down to Broken Nose I noticed that Wesley was doing something that I had never seen him do before: he was getting stuck in every hole we came to! It was at that point that I had to ask him if he needed to pull off the river for a while. His calm response was, "No, I'll be okay when we get past Table Saw." I thought that was a strange thing for him to say at the time but I took his word for it and kept going. He managed to keep going and eventually we came to Table Saw. Once we ran it and eddied out above Diamond Splitter he started to explain the line we were going to take and told me to make sure to eddy out below the rapid on river left. He went first with clean line and then I followed a few seconds behind. When I made it over to the eddy, I notice him digging around frantically in the pocket on the front of his pfd. I asked, "What in the world are you doing?" "Itching," he responded. Before I could question his ridiculous response, he grabbed the bow of my boat, produced a diamond ring out of his "itchy" pfd pocket, and proposed to me in the eddy. It all made sense now: the momentary lack of paddling skills on the way down, the comment about Table Saw, and the itching pfd. Apparently the fishing

line he had tied to the ring had tangled up inside his pocket on the trip down the river. Come to find out he had polled his friends to find out which rapid would be most appropriate for a proposal; Diamond Splitter was the unanimous response!

Time flew by from this point. In the months that followed I moved to Elizabethton to be closer to my new teaching job and finally got my Master's degree all while adding new personal first descents to my resume. For some reason though, wedding planning was not high on our "to do" list. Then, one Saturday afternoon in October, we stopped at a Mexican restaurant in Pineola, North Carolina to refuel after several laps on Wilson's Creek. Along with us was Andrew Bentley, one of Wesley's longtime friends and paddling pals. We mentioned to Andrew that we hadn't actually chosen a wedding date because we just couldn't find time to sit and discuss it! Andrew, knowing how to add humor to just about any situation, pulled out his cell phone and said, "Well, I just happen to have a calendar right here. Since we're waiting for food we might as well pick a date!" So that settled it. By the time we left the restaurant, the date was set for May 2nd, 2009.

Since I'm not a fan of high-toned and fancy to-do's, I opted for a small, private ceremony of some type. However, the more I thought about planning even a simple ceremony, the more my mind shifted toward a non-traditional wedding. After a while I started to feel like a river wedding was the most appropriate thing for us, particularly a Nolichucky wedding. Of all places on the Noli, I picked what I believed to be the most beautiful section, Quarter Mile. I introduced the idea to Wesley to see how he felt about it, completely expecting him to nix the idea. Surprisingly, he loved it. Now we had a date and a location. All that remained was to make a plan.

Here's where Jackson Kayak comes in. In late 2008, the first whispers of a new

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Wes and Jen at Wesser Falls.
Photo by Julie Bentley

tandem boat were heard in the boating world. The idea was immediately born in our minds; let's paddle down to Quarter Mile in separate boats then paddle out together in a tandem. Wesley and I had paddled tandems before and knew that we would love to own one, but never imagined that we would be married in one. On a trip to the Jackson Kayak factory, we were fortunate enough to get to stay in the Jackson family's home for the night. While eating dinner with the Jacksons, the topic of conversation floated toward the new tandem boat. Wesley, in his excitement, had already made it known that we wanted to use it in our ceremony and that he would like to have the first one that rolled off the line. EJ, in a moment of brilliance said, "We should make it in a special color." A couple of months later, we went back to Sparta and watched our "Wedding Boat" go from black and white plastic pellets to an 85 pound work of whitewater art. Our Dynamic Duo would be the first mixed color boat that Jackson ever created.

Essential to our whitewater wedding was a wedding party that could paddle Class III/IV confidently. We knew that our number one choice for minister was Randy Pasqua. Not only is he a minister, but he and Jo were responsible for teaching both Wes and I to paddle. We would be proud former students paddling down beside the Pasquas in their purple Topo Duo. Closer to the ceremony date, we were excited to add our good friend Wayne Dickert of NOC fame to the pastor roster as well. Andrew and Julie Bentley would be paddling down in an orange Dynamic Duo as our Best

Man and Maid of Honor. Adding to the lightheartedness of the ceremony were a group of several of our paddling friends who agreed to be "ushers," hanging out for a Jaws surf session to delay raft trips until after the ceremony.

The evening before the big day, Wesley and I paddled the Duo down to a spot we had scouted out right above Second Drop. Armed with cloth to keep the snakes out and a cable to secure the boat overnight, we stashed the boat and said a prayer over it that it would be there when we made it down in the morning, then started the hike out. Afterwards we occupied ourselves by checking and rechecking our gear for the morning. Jo Ann Pasqua, ever the crafty art teacher, made a ring pouch for us out of neoprene and took my white Strutter helmet and attached a small veil to the back to give it a little character for the occasion. Little things like these made the day truly unique and unforgettable for us!

The big day rolled along quickly as we geared up and set shuttle with our families and friends surrounding us. On the riverbank, our families saw us off as Wes and I slid into the waters of the Nolicucky in our separate boats, Randy and Jo along with Andrew and Julie in their Duos, and Wayne following solo. People have asked me if I was nervous at this point and my response to them is, "Yes...but not about getting married!" All the way to the first railroad trestle my thoughts were fixed on only one thing: getting through Entrance upright! Entrance came and went, as did On the Rocks and Jaws where we left our ushers to surf.

Pulling up to the rock at the top of Quarter Mile, we worked diligently to get things set up. The guys were busy digging the Duo out of the bushes where it was hidden, Jo was scouting for a place to take pictures,

The wedding ceremony.
Photo by Jo Anne Pasqua

and Randy and Wayne were preparing to deliver a marriage ceremony in wet boating gear. Within minutes we had begun the ceremony. It was at that point that the rain started to fall. There's no more peaceful feeling than being in the Gorge when it's raining. In the presence of God and good friends we said our "I do's." After picture time, we were rejoined by our ushers who surprised us by changing into their Sunday best after we had left them at Jaws. Our stylish ushers were followed closely behind by a commercial raft trip filled with cheering rafters shouting congratulations. Once the raft trip had passed it was time for us to take off as husband and wife for the first time. We peeled out of the eddy followed closely by the entire wedding party and had the best day on the Noli Gorge that anyone could ask for.

A year and a half has passed by since that day. Paddling is still a central theme in our relationship as we continue to add new first descents in our Dynamic Duo to our paddling resume. Just as Wesley took me under his watch in the beginning of my river running career, I have discovered that the enjoyment of leading novice kayakers down familiar rivers is something we both share. I hope that our story is inspiring to other boating couples and boating singles alike.

With a busted creek boat as a fitting flowerpot in the front yard, we have now made our new little log cabin at the base of Holston Mountain in Elizabethton our adventure central, the perfect place to hang our helmets together for the rest of our lives.





TOP TEN RIVER STEWARDSHIP ISSUES OF 2011

*Views of Half Dome from the Merced River in Yosemite National Park (CA).
Photo by Paul Martzen*

AS THE END of each year approaches, the AW river stewardship staff—all four of us—sit down to outline our top 10 issues for the coming year. These are projects where we expect to spend a significant amount of time and effort, and they are also representative of many other similar projects that are a high priority for our organization and for the paddling community. Success on a river stewardship project typically takes years to accomplish. In this year's Top 10 River Issues you will see that we have highlighted some projects in their exciting beginnings, some in their exciting culmination, and some that we are head-down pushing through the middle of. At each stage we rely on volunteer paddlers to be our eyes, ears, and often our voice on the ground, while we, in turn, provide technical, strategic, and advocacy support. We also rely on member contributions to keep our crew working hard to save rivers. We hope you agree that the challenges and opportunities we see coming in 2011 are deeply important to the paddling community and the rivers we all cherish.

YOSEMITE (CA): A JOURNEY IN THE MAKING

BY DAVE STEINDORF

THERE IS NO experience quite like rounding a bend in a river and having the next vista gradually unfold before you. Floating is virtually free of distraction, no looking at your feet, or at your bike tire, or at your headliner, or the car in front of you. Your view is unimpeded, staring up at the canyon walls, watching the next view come into place. Now imagine gliding gently down the river (it happens to be the Merced) and the next view sliding into place is Half Dome or El Capitan of Yosemite fame. This brings a new meaning to the word breathtaking. As a California Stewardship Director for American Whitewater, I was fortunate to have floated the Merced River through Yosemite Valley with staff from the National Park Service. The Park Service is currently working on Wild and Scenic River Management Plans for both the Merced and Tuolumne Rivers. In these

plans the Park Service will be evaluating boating opportunities on each of these rivers. Currently, with the exception of one short reach on the Merced in Yosemite Valley, the Park's rivers are closed to boating. American Whitewater is asking the Park Service to reconsider this blanket closure of the park's river resources to recreational boating.

While there are a number of runs within the park that contain some fabulous Whitewater, the float through Yosemite Valley is not one of them. Most of the reach through the valley is flat as a pancake. Calling it Class I could be a stretch. In the one section that is open, people are often seen floating on air mattresses, inner tubes, and pool toys. One could certainly ask why American Whitewater would consider a river that can be floated on an inflatable dinosaur to be an important river resource. Our view is that while running interesting and exciting rapids is certainly a component of whitewater boating, it is not the only—or even the most important—aspect of

TOP TEN

this activity that we all find near and dear. What is often lost in the discussion is the unique experience of using a river to travel through a particular space. Gaining access to the rivers within Yosemite National Park is not about being able to run and conquer the rapids that are contained in those rivers, but rather to be able to use these rivers as a medium to travel through an unbelievable landscape.

American Whitewater understands that with a place as popular as Yosemite National Park, simply changing the sign from closed to open on all of the rivers within the park is not a good management plan. Managing high use areas, in this case specifically the Merced River through Yosemite Valley, will require initiating a permit system that will allow users to experience the valley in a tranquil manner. Use of other rivers in the park should conform to the standard backcountry practices and permitting for other uses in the park. Managing for impacts rather than regulating modes of travel to the park is the appropriate direction that the Park Service should take in the development of this plan. We look forward to working with the National Park Service in the development of their Wild and Scenic River Management Plans. We hope to help them see whitewater boating as an alternate way to see Yosemite and not just another activity to be managed.

This work is part of a wide ranging effort by AW to ensure that people can connect with nature from their boats on rivers across the nation. At the same time the Obama administration has tasked federal agencies

with the same goal as part of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Throughout 2010 the Initiative sent leaders from the Forest Service, Park Service, BLM, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Army Corps of Engineers across the country to talk with outdoor enthusiasts. American Whitewater saw this as a rare opportunity to discuss river access needs with government leaders on a very high level. With the final reports from the initiative due out soon, We expect 2011 to be a year of action.

CROSSING THE RUBICON (CA)

BY DAVE STEINDORF

IN THE QUINTESSENTIAL California guidebook *The Best Whitewater in California*, Chuck Stanley described the first descent of the Rubicon by he and his intrepid teammates, Lars Holbeck and Richard Montgomery. He also described the other paddlers who thought about running the Rubicon before them, "Many a group of brave paddlers considered the challenge, some even attempted the run, but all failed. It wasn't a lack of courage, skill, guts, determination, fortitude, valor, intrepidity, resoluteness, audacity, prowess, or moral righteousness that kept them from success. No, it wasn't that; it was a lack of water." Twenty years after their first descent we are still working to correct the problem.

American Whitewater has been working on the relicensing of the Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) hydroelectric project since

2006. In addition to the Rubicon River this project includes the Middle Fork American River and a number of smaller tributaries. Working corroboratively with PCWA we have already corrected one of the other issues that thwarted early pioneers: lack of flow information. Until this year determining flows on the Rubicon required driving to the put-in, consulting a shaman or looking at a star chart. Now paddlers have access to real-time flow information online (welcome to the 21st century, Rubicon).

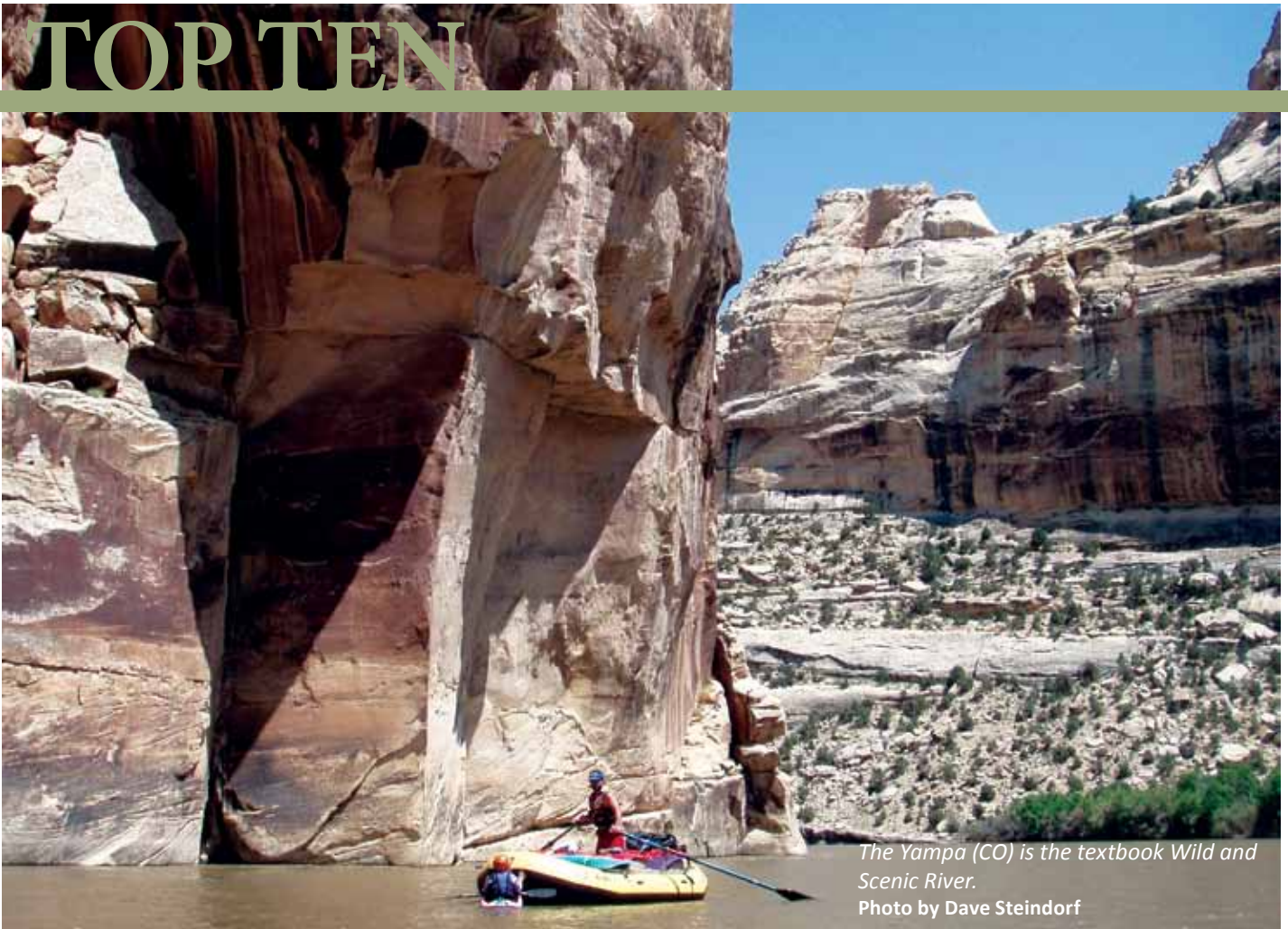
We are also working to create flows on the Rubicon that mimic natural hydrology. This means a flow pulse in the spring that coincides with the snowmelt runoff in May. This type of a flow regime will have benefits to fish, frogs, and whitewater boaters. Having been advocating for this approach for some time, we are pleased that it is gaining acceptance with agencies and utilities.

In 2010, we completed a flow study on the upper reaches of the Middle Fork American and we will conduct a flow study on the Rubicon in 2011. We are also hoping to finalize flow negotiations this year. This is the twentieth relicensing that American Whitewater has worked on in California. As part of the Hydro Power Reform Coalition, a national coalition of conservation groups that work on hydropower relicensing, we have been able to make great strides in restoring rivers in California, and across the country.



*A rare catch, good flows on the Rubicon (CA), will hopefully become more common.
Photo by Dave Steindorf*

TOP TEN



The Yampa (CO) is the textbook Wild and Scenic River.

Photo by Dave Steindorf

YAMPA RIVER (CO): SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES

BY NATHAN FEY

THIS YEAR, THE Yampa River in Northwest Colorado will be the focus of a large study to identify flow regimes needed to support recreational paddling and ecological functions of a healthy river. The study being conducted by AW, with support from the State of Colorado, will help protect flows needed to sustain high quality boating opportunities, and critical ecosystem functions. The results of our assessment will help determine how future projects will impact these values, and what steps the State of Colorado can take to mitigate those impacts.

In 2010, the Yampa River was found suitable for Wild and Scenic River designation by the US Department of Interior, which would

prevent a certain section of the river from being dammed in the future. On other segments of the Yampa River, proposals for more oil and gas development or dams and reservoir storage could divert large amounts of water away from the river. On wild rivers, paddlers enjoy many predictable medium-flow opportunities each year that also cue spawning for aquatic species and riparian germination for riverside vegetation. Paddlers also experience high flows that flush fine sediments, create ideal spawning habitat and inhibit riparian plants from encroaching into the river channel; they even experience occasional floods that maintain and rejuvenate riparian forests. As we have done elsewhere, AW will integrate data from recreational studies with ecological data to develop flow regimes that protect the functions critical to a healthy Yampa River. In this way, recreational interests, led by American Whitewater, provide support and leverage opportunities for ecological protection.

KEEPING WATER IN THE UPPER COLORADO RIVER (CO)

BY NATHAN FEY

THREE YEARS AGO, the possibility of federal protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act for the Upper Colorado River brought a diverse group of stakeholders together to discuss the river's future. Since that time powerful water interests from Colorado's east and west slopes, have worked to develop a new management plan that allows future development of water supplies, while seeking to protect the river's significant fishing and paddling opportunities. Through our Colorado River Stewardship Program, American Whitewater has been actively engaged in this initiative since day one and serves as the lead recreation advocate in high-level negotiations with over 80 entities and groups, all of which have a stake in the iconic Colorado River,

from its headwaters to the confluence with the Roaring Fork.

The Upper Colorado River Stakeholders Group, which includes American Whitewater, submitted a Draft Upper Colorado River Cooperative Management Plan for review by the US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service as an alternative to Wild and Scenic designation. With the submittal of the Draft Management Plan, the stakeholders group has reached a major milestone in balancing competing uses in the Colorado River basin. A significant benefit of the Stakeholders Plan is that through cooperative efforts of Front Range water providers, local governments and other entities, flow-dependant values like fish and recreation can be protected (and perhaps enhanced) in ways that the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act could not achieve under federal management objectives and Colorado Water Law.

Developing the Plan is only the first step. In the next year, we will work to ensure

that powerful interests don't undermine the science-based foundation on which future river management has been built. It is critical, over the next five years of Stakeholder Plan implementation, that management actions be guided by science-based indicators of river health. During this time, American Whitewater will be heavily engaged in the process of clearly defining flows vital to sustaining a vibrant recreation industry and healthy riparian habitats into the future. This year, we will continue to protect what little water remains in the Colorado River below Windy Gap Reservoir. These efforts will help establish state-held instream flow water rights for fish and recreational water rights for Gore Canyon and Glenwood Springs. Our staff will continue to negotiate with Denver Water, Northern Water Conservancy District, Aurora and Colorado Springs Utilities, all of whom divert the Colorado River, to enhance river flows by implementing the management strategy outlined in the Stakeholder Plan.

IMPROVING FLOWS ON THE DOLORES RIVER (CO)

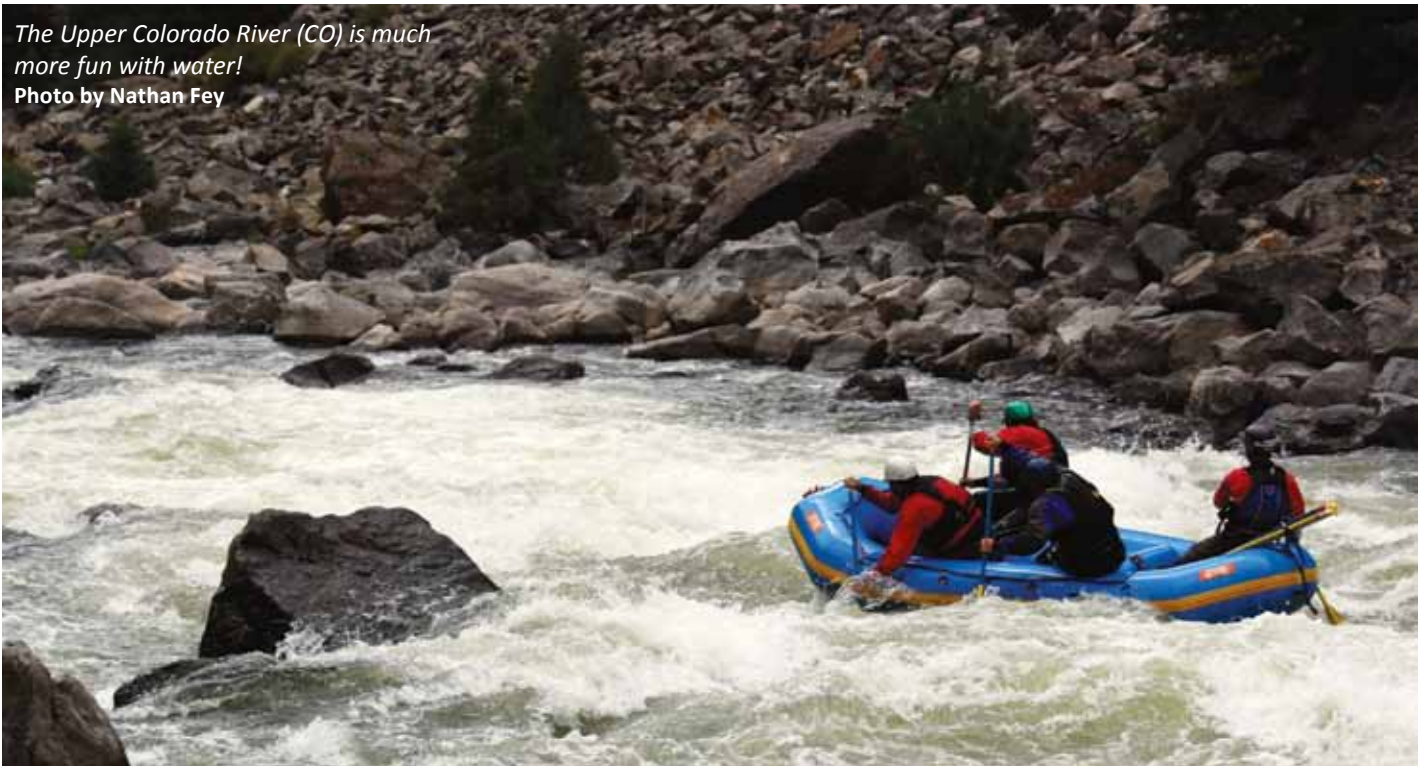
BY NATHAN FEY

OVER THE PAST two years, American Whitewater has received several requests for assistance from our affiliate clubs, volunteers, and partner organizations in the Dolores River basin. Given the current structure and support of our stewardship program, we've successfully engaged key staff and empowered local volunteers to address multiple aspects of river health, including minimum flows for environmental needs, recreational flow requirements, and reservoir spill utilization.

Before McPhee Dam was constructed on the Dolores River, paddlers enjoyed dynamic flows that were available consistently and predictably. Today, McPhee Dam significantly alters flows on the Dolores River; with major impacts on recreational and ecological values that rely on annual spring snowmelt pulse flows. Native fish lack habitat and spawning cues from high

The Upper Colorado River (CO) is much more fun with water!

Photo by Nathan Fey





flows on the Dolores, resulting in declining populations. Vegetation has encroached into the river channel because there are no high flow events to keep them at bay. Commercial rafting and canoeing use has declined significantly over the past 20 years, as the paddling public lacks credible spill forecasting below McPhee Reservoir.

American Whitewater is now bringing a group of stakeholders together to understand the immediate and long-term effects river flows have on native species and high quality recreational opportunities. Armed with whitewater recreation studies, American Whitewater has defined a set of recreational needs in the Dolores, and is working to build consensus among key stakeholders on how federal or state policies, and local management

Lower Dolores River (CO) above Slickrock.
Photo by Nathan Fey

structures can meet these needs. We are working to build a broader awareness and understanding of operational constraints of McPhee Dam, and to improve boating opportunities in the Lower Dolores Canyon. In 2011, we will work with our conservation partners, as well as the US Bureau of Reclamation and Dolores Water Conservation District, to develop flow schedules that meet environmental and recreational needs, and to implement new strategies that improve annual operating forecasts for the Dolores River. These efforts will result in improved forecasts of spills from McPhee Dam, and more reliable flows for boaters seeking to enjoy the Dolores River Canyon.

GREEN RIVER (VT): UNCOVERING NEW ADVENTURES

BY KEVIN COLBURN

IN A REGION that has been explored by paddlers for decades, it came as a great surprise when paddlers stumbled onto a new dam-release steep creek. That is exactly what happened in mid-2010 when representatives of the Vermont Paddlers Club (VPC) first were made aware of a new dam relicensing on the Green River. VPC contacted AW and within a few weeks had hiked the creek at low water, hiked it at high water, and subsequently logged an exploratory descent of the steep little mountain river. What they found was a treasure trove of Class III, IV, and V rapids set in a beautiful forested gorge.

American Whitewater and VPC filed a request with the dam owner for a whitewater flow study and some basic hydrological analysis. We are in the process of learning how the project is operated. We know that the whitewater reach lies downstream of a powerplant that releases water in the optimal range for paddling, making future recreational releases a viable and likely low-cost possibility. The coming year will be filled with study development, implementation, and review, which will require paddlers to work collaboratively with the dam owner, and which will lay the groundwork for negotiations stretching several years into the future.

We are highlighting the Green River in 2011 because it is an exciting new paddling opportunity that we'll be working on throughout the year and for several years to come. It is also a good example of the dozens of other New England rivers where we have negotiated releases, access, and flow information. Lastly, it is a great example of how American Whitewater works with our affiliate clubs to tackle long and complicated processes—a model with proven results that has brightened the lives of paddlers across country.



A lucky paddler eddies out on North Carolina's West Fork of the Tuckasegee during a rare "spill release" through the dam's flood gates.
Photo by Rob Siegel

LONG-AWAITED TIME FOR ACTION ON THE NANTAHALA AND TUCKASEGEE (NC)

BY KEVIN COLBURN

FINALLY, AFTER YEARS of litigation and conflict over the removal of Dillsboro Dam, the Tuckasegee River flows free. State agencies waiting for the dam removal have now issued their permits for new licenses for all the dams on the Tuckasegee and Nantahala rivers and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission is expected to follow suit and issue new licenses by the start of 2011. License issuance will hit a big go-switch for Duke Power, American Whitewater, and for those

still opposed to spring releases on the West Fork of the Tuckasegee.

American Whitewater will have to act quickly with our partners, including Duke Energy, to respond to such challenges, if they arise. These actions may include responding to litigation. If there are no challenges or once challenges fail, we'll have to get to work developing a recreation plan, and implementing the license articles which include new releases and a suite of access improvements to both the West Fork of the Tuck and the Upper Nantahala, as well as new access areas on the main Tuck. We will be reaching out to paddlers for help building trails and for volunteering on other projects. Given the timing of our past agreements, you might not get to

actually paddle these runs for another couple of years; spring of 2013 seems like the most likely outcome.

The Nantahala and the Tuckasegee serve as reminders that bold initiatives take time, steady pressure, and patience. Your membership, donations and volunteerism will provide critical support for our ability to stay engaged over the next couple years as we bring these rivers back from their de-watered states. This summer will mark a decade since a handful of us explored the West Fork Tuck as part of an organized flow study. We remain committed to this project because the recreational opportunities provided by these rivers—ranging from Class I to Class V—are that good.



PERMANENT PROTECTION FOR THE FREE-FLOWING RIVERS OF THE OLYMPIC PENINSULA (WA)

BY THOMAS O'KEEFE

WE ARE CURRENTLY seeing new interest in hydropower development as a "solution" to our nation's energy needs. The problem with many of the proposed projects is that they are a lot more about making money for developers than actually providing a meaningful contribution to our domestic energy needs. Typically small and on headwater streams with seasonal flows and not economically viable without special tax and regulatory incentives, these projects produce very little energy but have a devastating impact on the same headwater creeks that represent some of our most cherished paddling destinations.

One of our best tools to protect intact and free-flowing rivers before the developers start filing their permit applications is the

Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We are currently focused on opportunities throughout the West for designating rivers that represent watersheds of importance to whitewater paddlers and the broader river conservation community. This past summer we launched our **Wild Olympics Campaign** focused on a dozen major river systems on Washington State's Olympic Peninsula that represent important opportunities for river conservation. The region is unique with watersheds receiving several feet of precipitation each year, which provides an incredible number of river miles in a small geographic area, with literally dozens of whitewater runs that pass through towering old-growth forest. Our specific objectives will be the designation of additional river miles for protection through the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, new wilderness areas that protect key watersheds, and additions to Olympic National Park that enhance watershed protection.

We are also working hard on campaigns to protect rivers throughout Montana, the Nooksack River watershed in Washington State, the tributaries of Oregon's Rogue

River and adjoining forest along one of the nation's original Wild and Scenic Rivers, and the spectacular creeks and rivers of Volcano Country in Washington State that flow from the slopes of Mt. St. Helens.

With attention on the economy and a new dynamic in Congress we expect 2011 to be a challenging year to raise the profile of river conservation legislation, but river users, including paddlers and fishermen, can often make the most effective case for the value of river conservation. We played a leadership role in advancing a bipartisan Wild and Scenic River bill for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and Pratt Rivers in Washington State and with your support and through our continued efforts we will be successful in the coming year.

Through our work protecting rivers we have recognized that many individual groups are seeking river protections on their backyard rivers. American Whitewater is part of a newly-forming coalition of groups that will coordinate and communicate on efforts to designate valued free-flowing rivers and improve the management of those already designated. We will work closely with the river managing agencies, Congress, and other groups to protect America's premiere free-flowing rivers using the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We believe this national effort will empower individual paddlers and other river enthusiasts to more effectively work with government agencies to protect and enhance their own favorite rivers. Look for the formal launch of the Coalition in 2011.



Bryan Cunitz on Matheny Creek, WA.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

TOP TEN

DEFENDING NORTHERN ROCKIES CREEKS FROM NEW DAMS

BY KEVIN COLBURN

WHILE WILD AND Scenic designations are a great opportunity to protect some spectacular rivers and creeks from being dammed, designation may not come soon enough (if ever) for many currently threatened rivers. One hotbed for new hydropower development is the Northern Rockies, where steep mountain streams run late into the summer thanks to high mountain snowpack.

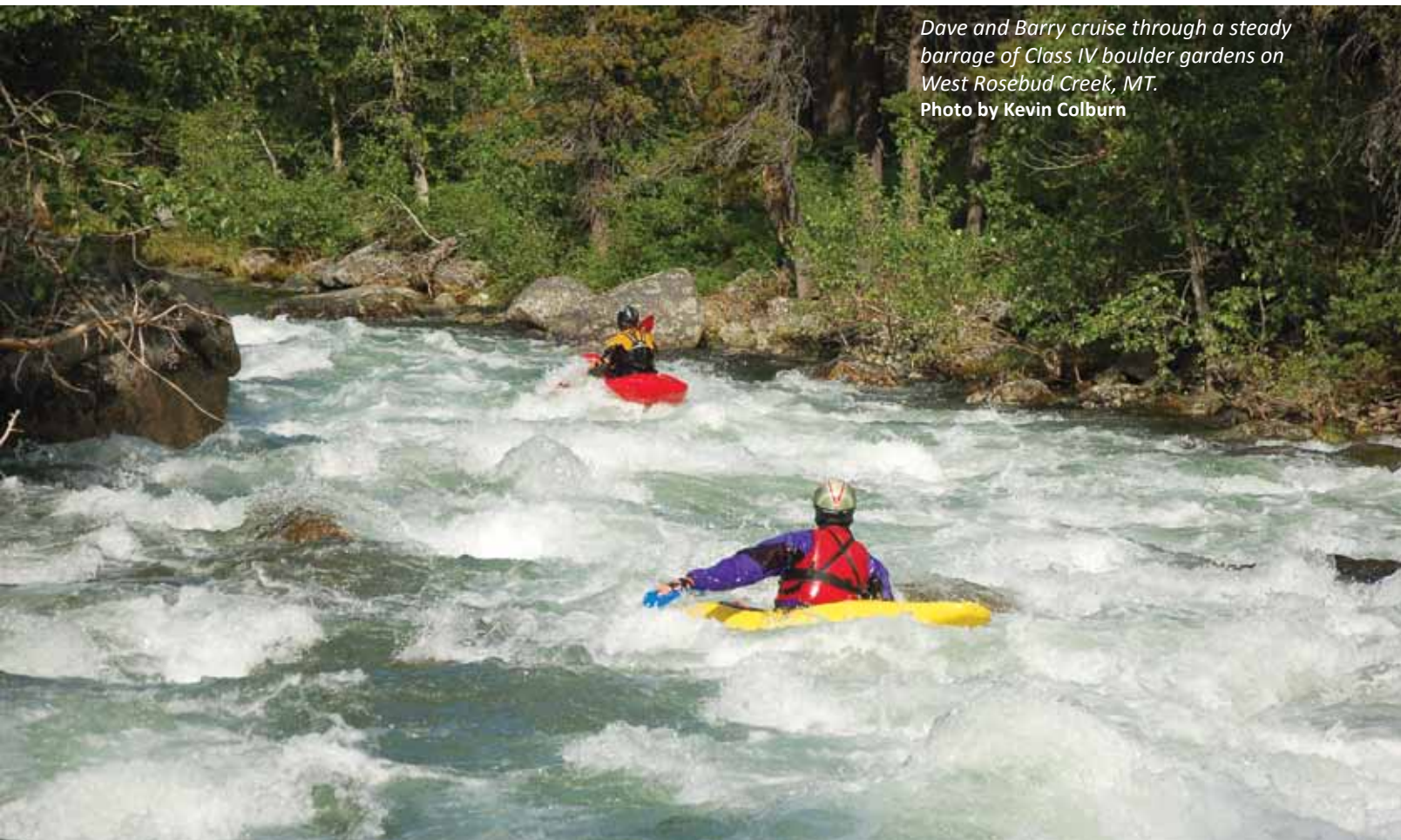
Power companies have initiated studies and secured exclusive rights to apply for a hydropower license for several regional projects. Developers are proposing to de-water significant sections of Montana's East Rosebud Creek and the Madison River, both of which have been found eligible for Wild and Scenic designation. Similar

projects propose to dam sections of West Rosebud Creek (MT) and the Bear River in Idaho, where American Whitewater and others spent the past decade negotiating new flows from existing upstream dams that today are improving river conditions. On Little Potlatch Creek in Idaho developers are proposing a 230-foot tall dam that would inundate a unique granite and basalt canyon to create a pump storage project. The newest proposed project would de-water a spectacular gorge on Northern Idaho's Boulder Creek. Similar projects are being considered, and preliminary permits issued on several streams in Washington State's Cascade Mountains, including tributary streams like Martin Creek in the Skykomish drainage.

American Whitewater is working to share the outstanding recreational and ecological values of these special places with the public and with decision-makers. We are also working to reveal not only the impacts but also the limited benefits of installing century-old technology on small headwater

streams that provide very little power. We have worked with the Hydropower Reform Coalition to push back on the current small-dams agenda being put forward by the hydropower industry. Few know these places as well as paddlers, and few have as much to lose if these rivers are dammed.

In the United States we are fortunate to have a legally-mandated review process through which these projects will be scrutinized by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. North of our borders, however, the scale and speed of hydropower development is staggering and virtually unmitigated. Dams are being proposed and built throughout British Columbia's Coast Range and Kootenay Mountains, as well as throughout Quebec—primarily to export power to California, Vermont, and other densely populated regions of the US. American Whitewater is working to ensure that high-impact Canadian hydropower is not imported into the US under the guise of green energy.



Dave and Barry cruise through a steady barrage of Class IV boulder gardens on West Rosebud Creek, MT.
Photo by Kevin Colburn

TOP TEN

UNPLUGGING THE WHITE SALMON RIVER (WA)

BY THOMAS O'KEEFE

IN THE COMING year we are working to see bigger and more ambitious dam removal projects through to the finish line. One of our most important projects for the coming year will be removal of Condit Dam on the White Salmon River in Washington State. After years of delay many may have wondered if this project would really ever move forward. But while some key steps remain, major regulatory and political hurdles have been cleared that should result in some significant progress on this project. Late last year Washington State issued final approval for dam removal and shortly thereafter the two counties that had opposed dam removal agreed to drop their opposition. Unlike some areas of the country where the local county has taken a philosophical stand against dam removal with only a pile of legal bills to show at the end, the two counties that border the White Salmon finally came to the realization that working with the utility could lead to a better outcome for everyone. The counties received a substantial financial payout, relocation of the city water supply line, reconstruction of a critical bridge, the water rights associated with the project, and a long-term commitment to keep the park that serves as the take-out accessible to the public.



The proposed method for dam removal involves drilling and blasting a 12-foot by 18-foot drain tunnel in the base of the dam to within a few feet of the dam's face. During the month of October, sediment and debris immediately upstream from the dam will be cleared to form a pathway and then the remainder of the tunnel will be blasted to drain the reservoir and flush impounded sediments out of the reservoir as rapidly as possible. Following the final tunnel blast, the drain tunnel will discharge at a rate of 10,000 cubic feet-per-second--approximately 25 percent of the estimated peak discharge during the February 1996 flood event on the White Salmon River. This will drain the reservoir in approximately six hours. Rapid draining of the reservoir is expected to mobilize much of the estimated 2.3-million cubic yards of sediment that have accumulated behind the dam since

Dropping into the Narrows below Condit Dam, White Salmon River (WA).
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

its construction. Once the reservoir is drained the work of dam removal and site restoration will begin. During this time public access to Northwestern Park will be minimal and only for boating take-out purposes. A temporary boat launch for white water rafts and kayaks may be installed in the park that extends to the new waterline, thus avoiding the need to install a new boat launch at a different site upstream from the park. The feasibility of installing the temporary boat launch is partially dependent upon river channel conditions and the amount of sediment that will need to be removed after the reservoir is drawn down, and the time required to complete these activities. The goal is to keep Northwestern Park partially accessible due to its roadway proximity and requirement to allow for boaters to safely exit the river prior to encountering the deconstruction site. Once deconstruction of the dam is complete and sediment has stabilized we all look forward to celebrating the opportunity to paddle another restored river in the Columbia Gorge. Through the coming year American Whitewater will continue to be an engaged stakeholder and party to the settlement representing the voice of paddlers and all who enjoy free-flowing rivers.



Condit Dam, R.I.P.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

LOVE & WHITEWATER

A WHITE(WATER) WEDDING

BY PATRICIA (LABARGE) PINKHAM

IT HAS ALWAYS amazed me that a dog introduced me to the love of my life. On a Wednesday, July 30, 2008, I was working an evening event for Renaissance Adventure Guides at Golden Colorado's Clear Creek Whitewater Park. The whitewater kayaking students were in the water with their guides trying to improve their skills and I had gotten out of my kayak to BBQ and prepare dinner for everyone. As I began flipping burgers and putting hot-dogs on the grill, a large black lab approached with no owner in sight. His tags said his name was "Magic" and all he wanted to do was play in the water and, of course, eat any burger pieces that "accidentally" fell on the ground (which I was happy to provide). After about an hour, a big truck covered in kayaking stickers rolled up and out stepped the man of my dreams looking for his pup. Magic-The-Dog brought us together and we have never looked back.

The following year (2009) was a blur of whitewater kayaking adventures. If there was water, Bart and I were on it (and sometime in it, as well)! I am a full time whitewater kayak instructor for Renaissance Adventure Guides in Denver, CO. I am also on the Board for Colorado Whitewater Association. John "Bart" Pinkham is the owner of Golden River Sport in Golden, CO, a kayaking and fly fishing retail shop. It was a whitewater match made in heaven. In the spring of that year, we bombed the rivers of the Cache la Poudre. We found new runs to explore on Clear Creek near Golden. We made the trip to Idaho for an epic trip on the Middle Fork of the Salmon. And in the summer, we switched our attention to the Arkansas River for warm months of fun with all our friends. Our first love was for the water—our second love was for each other.

In the fall of 2009, our friends had invited Bart and me on an overnight river trip in Westwater Canyon on the Colorado River. We launched on a gorgeous VERY HOT day

with all of our friends and made our way down the river in our kayaks and rafts. We arrived at our campsite, unloaded the rafts, set-up camp and enjoyed a fabulous dinner under the cliffs of "Little Dolores." After dinner, we moved back down to the river to sit on rafts, soak our feet, swim, enjoy the full moon that was rising and generally just attempt to cool off. Since it was still well above 90 degrees, drinking lots of water was very important. I attempted to hand Bart my travel-coffee-mug and asked him to get me some drinking water which was being stored on another raft when he promptly replied, "You should get it yourself." Feeling slightly insulted, I called over to my friend Laurie Maciag who was sitting on the other raft with the drinking water, "Hey Laurie, will you fill this with water for me?" Then I started to toss her the coffee mug. Out of nowhere, Bart caught my arm mid-throw and yelled "NO!!!! DON'T THROW THE MUG!!!" I sat there dumbfounded and slack-jawed with the mug still in my hand wondering what could possess Bart to scream at me just over wanting some drinking water. A moment later Bart had composed himself and he gently leaned over and whispered, "You may want to take the lid off and look inside before you go launching that mug out over the river." There inside the mug was a grey box and inside that box was the most gorgeous engagement ring I had ever seen. Chaos erupted as our friends realized what was happening. Bart managed to find his way down onto one knee to ask me to marry him. "A thousand times YES!" was my prompt reply. And so began a new chapter in our lives.

The best part? Bart had managed to sneak a call to my parents just before we left for our river adventure to ask permission, something that touched me and my family deeply. Also, being surrounded by our friends on one of my favorite rivers in the world made it extra special—best proposal EVER!

The bride and groom enter the reception through a gauntlet of kayak paddles.

Photo by Peter Holcombe/
www.HolcombePhotography.com



LOVE & WHITEWATER

We were married on July 15, 2010 at the Evergreen Lakehouse in Colorado. About 60 family members from the East Coast and 100 kayakers and rafters were in attendance. The wedding was whitewater themed with our kayakers near the head table, a Class IV kayaker cake for all to enjoy and Keen river shoes worn by the entire wedding party. We said our "I do's" at sunset on the lake and went on to enjoy dancing and libations with friends and family members alike. Even the officiant, Patrick Tooley and the photographer, Peter Holcombe, are avid whitewater kayakers.

Two days after the wedding, family members enjoyed a raft trip with The Adventure Company on Brown's Canyon on the Arkansas River at 900 cfs. A record number of kayakers (40) also followed the



Patty and Bart at their engagement party, Little D Campground on Westwater.
Photo by Peter Holcombe/
www.HolcombePhotography.com

trip and a good time was had by all. It was one hell of a shuttle....

I have always followed my love for the river. It moved me to Colorado in the fall of 2004 from Northern New York State in search of more access to the rivers that I loved. Four years later, the river brought me to the man of my dreams and I have never looked back. Bart and I consider ourselves very lucky to have found each other, but we know it was the love of a dog and HIS love for the water that made us what we are today. Thank you, Magic-The-Dog and thank you Colorado for all the blessed whitewater that has made my life perfect.

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2009: THE SUMMER OF LOVE

BY JESSE PISEL

Jesse and Sarah, cooling off with summer flows on the Numbers section of the Arkansas River.

Photo by Terry L. Pisel

IT WAS THE start of summer 2009 and I had just returned the day before to the frigid Colorado high country after spending three weeks surfing and camping in Hawaii when I began talking to all my friends and acquaintances about doing some rafting down the mighty Taylor River. The previous summer I had retired from my career as a professional raft guide on the Arkansas River because I had destroyed my shoulder. After arranging a trip with friends who were training some rookie raft guides, I found myself sitting in a car headed to the river.

The motivator for this trip was a girl named Sarah who I had worked with at the ski area in Crested Butte. She had talked me out of my basement apartment to get my butt on the water. We met up at the put-in and got ready to go rafting. All the way down the river we had good conversation with everyone in the raft, joking and enjoying all the good people and company. I clearly remember Sarah teasing me about never wanting to get married even though I was a

hopeless romantic and joking with me that someday some super awesome girl would knock me down and drag me kicking and screaming to the altar.

We hit it off from that very first day on the river, and quickly started doing after work rafting missions. The evening missions were turning into dates full of stories and talks of how bright our future was together. My favorite memory of our first summer was when Sarah reached over with her T-grip, hooked my PFD shoulder strap and gently pulled me in for a kiss. We spent the rest of the summer rafting nearly every evening until it was dark, just the two of us, my blue Culebra, and sometime my dog.

At the end of the fall we went to our separate ends of the valley. Sarah had convinced me to go back to school instead of being a ski bum, but she stayed in Crested Butte to work and snowboard. The winter was long, dark, and full of busy school days and little snow, and we slowly drifted apart. With less and less time for each other, we sadly split

up at the end of February, but still remained friends. Life went on, though mine was tainted with despair and loneliness in those long weeks without her. As time went by it only seemed to get worse. As the winter of 2010 came to an end, I was off on another tropical vacation to the US Virgin Islands. A few days before I was to come home from vacation everything started to melt in the high country. An unusual warm streak back home in Colorado was melting all the snow so quickly it was setting record high water marks all over the state.

I returned from vacation and couldn't resist. First thing the next morning I called Sarah to see if she wanted to go experience something a little different than the shallow, creekly Taylor. She said that she wanted to go do some boating and I couldn't be happier to spend time with her again. We did a brush up trip just to get my mind back into the rafting game while a gorgeous woman was sitting in the boat next to me. After our little warm up excursion on the Taylor, we packed up the car and headed

LOVE & WHITEWATER

over to my old stomping grounds, Brown's Canyon on the Arkansas. The water was still high, flowing 3900 cfs, and the weather was sunny and warm. Sarah persistently asked me on the way to the put-in what it was going to be like and all I could think of to describe it was that it was going to be big, fast, and pushy.

We cruised through the beginning of the run with me playing the tour guide, telling the whole story about this section of river the way commercial raft guides do. It was just an excuse to talk about something other than the whitewater ahead; I could tell she was pretty nervous. When we finally got to the goods in the canyon, I was sending us into all the meat lines and trying to show Sarah a good scary trip down Browns Canyon at high water, and she loved every second of the insanity! At the bottom of the staircase, we hit one of the biggest waves on the section and made it through somehow, the adrenaline was pumping and I leaned across the boat towards her and we kissed for the first time in months! Regaining my composure quickly as we came around the bend to the next rapid I couldn't believe what was happening. I had been so lonely without her all those months and now we were able to reconnect again. I thought to myself "She's the one." We navigated the rest of the canyon with style and made it to the take out in one piece. At the take-out we immediately

Sweetness after finishing the race at the 2010 Gunnison Whitewater Festival.

Photo by Terry L. Pisel

started talking about everything that had happened that day. We drove back that evening enjoying one another's company for the first time in months.

After our big water run down the Arkansas I convinced Sarah to take a weeklong trip to New Mexico with me to my best friend's wedding, sweetening the deal with a promise to do some boating along the way. Here we were making a whitewater road trip out of a wedding. After the wedding reception, we booked it out of the desert back to Colorado for FiBARK. We drove through the night to reach Salida at 5 am and get a few hours of sleep before we headed down to the play hole to enjoy all the festivities. At this point we might as well have been connected at the paddle. We spent every minute together talking about boating together—where we wanted to go next and what sections had good flows.

Returning to Gunnison, we went down to the whitewater park to check the flow and watch the beautiful summer sunset. While we were sitting at the play hole enjoying the evening air and watching kayakers playing in the hole, I slipped something out of my pocket and held it out in front of Sarah and said "What's this?" She opened up the box and found a diamond ring inside. I proposed



to her at the play park in Gunnison just a month and a half after coming home. She said yes, and we were both so happy and excited about our love for whitewater and for each other.

The following weekend we competed in the Gunnison Whitewater Festival, in the raft rodeo where we placed 3rd with our long, smooth surf times, and the amusing last run where Sarah got bucked out at the end. We paddled the next day in the downriver race against the three time defending champions. We were so close to winning, but ended up just a little slow, placing 2nd in the R2 division. The rest of the summer was filled with as many river, camping, and rock hounding trips as we could fit in all over the state of Colorado. From Idaho Springs to Glenwood Springs, we spent the summer finding new places that we could enjoy our passion for whitewater. As the summer came to a close, we decided that our wedding needed to include our love of whitewater. So here we are waiting for our trip to Costa Rica in December for New Years to spend the beginning of 2011 by the side of the Pacuare River exchanging vows in our PFDs with raft guides looking on as witnesses.

Whitewater introduced me to the love of my life by a chance afternoon run down the Taylor River, and helped me recognize her as my future wife that day on Brown's Canyon at high water, when I realized she was as in love with whitewater as I was with her.

Taking 3rd in the Raft Rodeo at the 2010 Gunnison Whitewater Festival.

Photo by Terry L. Pisel



RICK AND CHESKA

BY RICK THOMPSON

IT ALL BEGAN when I became a certified kayak instructor. As I read through the posts on the Atlanta Whitewater Clubs group forum, I came across a post from a “Cheskab” who was just getting back into kayaking and needed help rolling. I thought to myself, “This would be a good opportunity to put my recent training to use.” I replied back to the post and indicated I planned to attend the upcoming roll practice and was more than willing to help.

When roll practice came that Wednesday, I stood looking around for some new guy to show up asking for me. That’s when *she* entered carrying a shiny red play boat. I could hardly keep from staring, but I was still waiting for some new guy. She signed in and spoke with the coordinator, and I saw the coordinator point in my direction. Gulp. She headed my way, and for some reason I wanted to hide under my kayak. Despite finding myself almost speechless, I managed to choke out an introduction to Francheska. I put aside my attraction for her and began teaching her the roll. She learned quickly, and before long she was

Kayaking with the alligators.
Photo by Rick Thompson

rolling her shiny red play boat. At the end of roll practice, I asked her if she planned to come to the next practice, and she said that she did.

True to her word, Cheska showed up again at the next roll practice. Happy to see her, I helped her work on rolls and managed some flirtatious splashes and oversized smiles. Even when we were at opposite ends of the pool our eyes somehow managed to still find each other. I came to roll practice with a friend that night and decided to ask Cheska to dinner with us. She accepted. It was pleasant conversation, and I found myself falling hard. We parted with the same plan to meet at roll practice the following week for the final roll practice session of the season.

The following week seemed to drag on forever. Cheska’s pretty face, her beautiful dark eyes, her sexy curves, and her shiny red boat were on my mind all week. Cheska showed up, and it was as if we were the only two people in the pool. We played and laughed and even swapped boats with each other at one point. I wanted the night to go on forever. Then it was over. The



coordinator asked everyone if they wanted to get together for dinner at the pub on the corner. I said sure and quickly asked Cheska if she was going. Again she said yes. At the restaurant we found ourselves sitting across from each other still starry eyed and giggling. At the table the group formally introduced themselves. A lady sitting next to us asked, “So how long have you guys been together?” We looked at each other with a grin and both replied that we were only friends and had just recently met at roll practice. The rest of the dinner the lady’s question tugged at my thoughts as I began to wonder if Cheska could possibly feel the same way I did. Dinner ended, and it inevitably came time to say goodbye. As I walked her out to her car, I took a deep breath and asked her for her phone number. She gave me her number, and we discussed getting together to paddle a local river sometime. We said goodbye with a hug.

That night I couldn’t think of anything except the lady asking us how long we had been a couple. I decided that I had to let her know how I felt. The next day I sent her a text She replied back that she felt the same way. We began to get to know each other with phone conversations that lasted all night and with seemingly endless text messages.

Kayak themed wedding.
Photo by Meredith Jones



LOVE & WHITEWATER



Kissing in our boats.
Photo by Debbie Patz

We soon planned our first river trip together on the Cartecay River in Ellijay, Georgia. It was her first time on the river since roll practice in the pool. At one of the rapids Cheska flipped. She missed her first attempt and tried again. As she successfully rolled her kayak, I realized that I had been holding my breath for her. We cheered for joy; she was elated to have hit her first combat roll on the river.

We soon became a couple, and paddling trips became not only our getaways, but our gateway to forging a great relationship. One weekend I took Cheska down the Nantahala River for her first time on Saturday and then the Ocoee River for her first time on Sunday. On a trip to Florida, we stopped at Wekiwa Springs State Park and paddled a river that was packed with alligators. She willingly followed me anywhere. I

knew from that point on that she was the one that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with.

I proposed to her, and just like she did at the end of all those roll practices, she said "yes." We planned our wedding at the Ocoee Whitewater Center outside in front of the waterfall. We both wrote our own vows and mine went like this:

Francheska, you're the one I want to spend the rest of my life with. I promise to love you as much as my kayak; I promise to always be your loving partner and always chose you over the river. I will respect you, encourage you, cherish you, and rescue you when you swim. I will love you faithfully in health and in sickness; I will laugh with you in the good times and cry with you in sad

times. I will share the rest of my life with you to infinity and beyond.

She said "I do." We posed for pictures in our kayaks in our formal wear.

Today we continue our getaways to the river nearly every weekend. Kayaking is our life. Cheska is six months pregnant now. We had to get her a new boat and spray skirt to fit her belly. She still continues to kayak easy rivers with the safety of the baby always in mind.

Jackson David Thompson will arrive in February. We are decorating his room with a kayak theme. He even has his own shiny red play boat and PFD. I understand that kayaking may not be what he wants to do some day...but I have a strange feeling that it will be.

BROTHER WAYNE AND THE PRINCESS OF THE PLATEAU

BY MELISSA STEPHENS

HIS INTRODUCTORY LINE to me was, "If I'm loud, it's because I'm liquored up!" Although we had met several years earlier at TSRA's Winter Paddling Clinic, we met again, at Canoe and Kayak School on the Ocoee River in 2008. He is Brother Wayne, the incredibly funny and most humble Class V instructor, and favorite son of Foothills Paddling Club. I am from the Cumberland Plateau, an avid whitewater paddler; my friends call me the Princess of the Plateau because many times I am the only girl on the river. Both children of Appalachia and passionate whitewater paddlers, this is our love story!

Wayne Poole was wounded—shoulder injury—by a nasty hole on Pennsylvania's great Youghiogeny. And while he was scheduled to teach class that day on the Ocoee, he swapped with another instructor to work the less strenuous Hiwassee River. As fate would have it, Brother Wayne and I met up over and over on the Hiwassee that day. His friends taking his class teased that they were stuck in holes and out of their boats all unknown to Wayne because he was busy striking up conversation with me!

By the end of that day, I was interested in this longhaired, long-bearded man with beautiful teeth and an incredibly smooth surf (with hand paddles, no less), the man who earned his nickname from the blessings he bestows upon all river trips and the friends who are paddling them. Upon departing for the weekend, I made a comment that would change the direction of both our lives. "I like him!" I told Michelle "Mac" Miller. She replied, "Really, he's available!" That was the beginning of an incredible relationship, one that was born on the river. As we discovered, Wayne Poole and I had a lot in common. We both grew up children of nature with a deep heritage that bound us to the Earth, the people, and the ways of Appalachia.



Wayne and Melissa hiking at Whitewater Falls.

Photo by Misti Tolley

We dated on the Nantahala River mostly, meeting from our opposite locales and running it over 20 times that summer. Our first passionate kiss occurred on the river. Then a year later, during the Hypothermia Challenge on the Chattooga River, Wayne Poole, resplendent in pfd and helmet, got down on one knee (Georgia side) in front of 27 friends and told me he loved me, and asked that I be his partner on the river... forever. He placed an incredibly brilliant

diamond on my finger and his friends pulled the champagne from the frigid waters of the Chattooga. We are blessed children of Appalachia, sharing an incredible humor, lots of paddling, many friends and a spiritual connection to the Earth.

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RIVER VOICES

24 ADVANTAGES OF OPEN CANOES IN WHITEWATER

BY DON IVERSON

KAYAKERS VS. CANOEISTS. Snowboarders vs. Skiers. Celtics vs. Lakers. Ironworkers vs. Teamsters. Aussies vs. Kiwis.

These types of rivalries that occur between human breeds are a vestige of the tribal mentality that was once critical for survival. Within individuals, the intensity of the rivalry varies, depending on the relative contributions of healthy passion, innate hostility, self-affirmation through group identity, and egotism.

Our friendly rivalry is properly characterized as “kayakers vs. canoeists” because kayakers have largely instigated and perpetuated it. The late William Nealy fired the first written salvo in his 1986 book *Kayak*, where he characterizes canoeists as “{thought to be} obnoxious and demented by most kayakers...insecure about the capabilities of their chosen river craft” and states that “it is the sacred duty of all kayakers to tease canoeists.”

With their marching orders and rules of engagement in hand, legions of kayakers waged battle around campfires all over North America. A typical scenario: a lone canoeist is innocently minding his own business, charitably darning socks for the homeless. A pack of kayakers, some disguised as friends, begin to circle him. He offers a few ingratiating remarks, which seem only to infuriate the mob. He then claims Federal protection under the Endangered Species Act, but to no avail, as the kayakers have already had several sips of their Chardonnay spritzers. Their heads spin; their lips loosen. But, mercifully, the advantages conferred by their greater manpower and bloodlust are neutralized by their predictable battle strategy and the availability of only three weapons in their lexicographic arsenal: “get a real boat,” “yeah, get a real boat,” and simply “yeah.”



The canoeist mentally formulates a cogent counterattack, but then recognizes that it would likely stupefy them as much as repeated explanations of how babies are made. He re-strategizes. A two-word retort should not overload their collectively delicate brain circuitry, he reckons, as long as the second word is “you.” Predictably, the discussion then degenerates into the same sort of increasingly loud, interruptive diatribe that is broadcast on news talk shows.

Screaming will not resolve this debate. Instead, a definitive resolution will require an objective, formal analysis; a concatenation of inductive logic, case-based reasoning from real world examples, basic Newtonian physics, human anatomy, and psychology. And, in order to sell more copies of *American Whitewater*, it should include some gratuitous SEX! and KAYAKER JOSHING!, which will be clearly labeled for the sake of the sensitive reader.

Before we get to that, a few conciliatory remarks. The company and support of kayakers has enabled me to pull off some of my most difficult runs. Across the continent, they have been generally friendly, treating me with appropriate amounts of curiosity, respect, and forgiveness. In fact, I probably owe my life to a kayaker—a big

Don Iverson probes the depths of Hell Hole, Trinity River, CA.

**Photo by James King/
Rapid Replay Photography**

ol’ Appalachian stud whom I absolutely piledrove, accidentally, while he was surfing on the Ocoee. He rolled up and, before I could begin groveling for my life, he laughed and let out a Rebel yell: “whoooo-wee, you really got me *good!*” (See reasons #18 and 19—your craft as an offensive or defensive weapon).

Furthermore, we must acknowledge that canoeists and kayakers have many more similarities than differences. We both share many facets of the paddling experience—the drive to the put-in, jamming to Jimi, Bob, Sly, Duke, or Bach, as fits to mood; the camaraderie and synergy of shared experience; the reverence for the splendor of the canyon; the ascendance into a state of flow, or “the zone;” the thrilling stoke of a clean run; the wisdom gained from understanding our motivations and limits; and the post-run afterglow.

But let’s not get too lovey-dovey here—this is a macho whitewater magazine, not “Oprah.” Although we have much in common, our differences, not our similarities, are what stratify us in animal hierarchy. And, with 24 evolutionary

advantages of open canoeing, there can be no doubt as to which subspecies of paddler, although outnumbered, is truly the most highly evolved and dominant.

Reasons #1 & #2 Less risk of vertical pinning or leg entrapment

No joking here. A canoe's bow has a much larger cross-section area than even the stubbiest creek boat, making it less likely to wedge into a crack or pothole. Secondly, open canoes do not have a deck that can collapse onto paddlers' legs and entrap them. Enough said.

Reason #3 Don't be a head banging kayaker

My kayaking buddies are better boaters than I am, but they still flip a couple of times per run, because their boats are tippier. Sure, they roll up, but only after their heads have been trawling awhile for rocks, logs, rebar, culvert, and other river detritus.

Canoes are more stable and flip less; if they flip, the pilot can get his or her head above the waterline, beneath the gunwales, until it is time to roll.

CAUTION, Gratuitous Kayaker Joke: Not just boaters, but society as a whole should take an active role in preventing head injury to kayakers. Kayakers are the ideal donors for brain transplantation, as their brains are essentially unused.

Reason #4 Shoulder the load

Canoeists principally rely on the low brace, which transmits force to their powerful chest muscles. Kayakers, however, dislocate their shoulders by high bracing, which transmits force to the much smaller muscles of the rotator cuff. A dislocated shoulder on a wilderness run is a major

problem; unfortunately, dislocations tend to recur.

Reason #5 More comfort

Does anybody sit flat on their butt, with their legs out stretched, for any reason other than kayaking? The kneeling canoeist, on the other hand, has inspired the design of the computer chair, which combines sitting and kneeling.

But we don't just kneel—we can sit, stand, or recline onto our float bags. For a vision of heaven, form a canoe trimaran by draping your legs into the neighboring canoe, lie back on your airbag cushions, and float effortlessly as you gaze upward at the canyon walls.

Reason #6 Stay warmer

Because kayaks ride lower in the water, their pilots spend more time immersed than do canoeists. When the water is cold, you can get cold, which is a drag. Hypothermia, though, is serious. Numb hands drop paddles, cold muscles lose power, and cold brains have impaired reaction times, coordination, and decision-making capabilities. (For more on the

deleterious effects of cold on cognition, see also "Minnesotan").

Reason #7 See where you are going

Canoeists sit about two feet higher than kayakers, giving them better visibility. My kayaking buddies invoke this as a reason for me to go first when the river starts getting loud. But what if 24 inches aren't enough? Picture this scenario....

You are approaching the horizon line of "High Colonic," a reputedly gnarly drop. It's getting late, and scouting would be undesirably time-consuming. If only you could see the drop.... Just then, your canoeing colleague sits up, and then stands. Yes, she is standing in her boat! She peeks over the precipice, finds the line, and guides everyone to safety. Dang!

Reasons #8, 9, and 10 Go longer, go in better style, rescue a friend

Canoeists spawn in rivers or Northwoods lakes. So heroic is the Old Norse saga that its power only grows with each recital. A newly hatched canoe fry is with his father and grandfather, fishing from the damp bottom of a frigid aluminum canoe in the



Don Iverson probes the depths of Bloomer Falls, Salmon River, CA.

Photo by Tom Rydz

RIVER VOICES



last November rain before freeze-up. The wind begins to howl, spraying whitecaps into the boat and piercing his soaked jeans and kapok life jacket. Not yet ready to enter Valhalla, the patriarch and his son paddle furiously into the blackening offshore gale, alternately imploring the grandson to bail, and taking Thors' name in vain. Well after dark they reach shore, where they gorge upon muskie, walleye, and beer, comfort themselves with their Amazonian women, vanquish marauding hordes, etc.

After so many of these epics, the fingerling canoeist begins to contemplate the advantages of gravity for marine propulsion. Slowly, over the years, he or she works their way up from multi-day wilderness Class I and II runs to Class III, or higher.

Kayakers, on the other hand, spawn in swimming pools at the Tuesday night roll session. The combination of chronic chlorine exposure and genetic predisposition can result in questionable behavior. With a tenuous pool roll, they head for a Class III river. Here, their more experienced colleagues have conglomerated upon a single wave, comparing each others' "twisting upenders," or whatever.

The canoeists' heritage leads him or her away from these crowds and into the wilderness, where our souls breathe freely. A trip of 3 or 4 days refreshes; a trip of 3 or 4 weeks is a complete restoration. A trip of this length is out of the range of kayakers, unless they are willing to make the Faustian sacrifice of bringing a raft.

As for shorter trips—why not go in style? If you spare us the sanctimony of the Alpine "fast and light" ethic while you eat your Ramen and bivy in the rain, we may share our steak, beer, or tent with you.

Now, what if you lose a boat on one of these long trips, where hiking out is impossible? Unless you are a genetically engineered human/salmon hybrid, you had better hope that there is a canoe around to give you a lift to the take-out. Don't laugh, it has happened.

**Reasons #11, 12, and 13
Get more chicks/get a real man,
and consummate in your boat**
CAUTION, Erotic Interlude and Kayaker
Joshing

Her hands deftly untie the last truckers' hitch and she slides the battered canoe

Tom Rydz on the East Fork of the North Fork Trinity River, CA.

Photo by Don Iverson

off of her 1957 International flatbed. As she readies her vessel for the day's dance with the Earth Mother, the tranquility is momentarily perturbed by kayakers swarming around her. She remains grounded in her self-reliant goddessness as the little boaters attempt, in vain, to commence their primitive mating ritual with a fusillade of desperate pickup lines: "Uh, this is a whitewater run, babe;" "Dude, wanna check out my ink?" "Like, want some of my free-range tofu?" and so forth. A tight-lipped smile, and the boys are dismissed.

But, within a heartbeat, her gaze warms. She is transfixed by a large form resembling Michelangelo's *David*, version 10.0. He sets down his canoe and says, softly, "I'm by myself, may I join you?" Her eyes meet his, but then avert, for her feelings are suddenly too intense. She catches her breath to say, "I'm overnighing at the hot springs." He smiles and nods. They take their boats and levitate down the riverbank.

Few words are spoken that day, nor need be. Together, they resonate with the rhythm of the river; their laughter and smiles reflect their Zen-like state of tranquil invigoration.

The decision to camp together goes unsaid. They feast, then bask in the glow of the day's gift and the evening's fire. She sings, her voice a mélange of Bonnie Raitt and Nina Simone. He rubs her shoulders and riffs on Shelly and Goethe.

In her eyes, he sees what is on his mind. They board her craft, which rocks sensuously in the moonlit eddy of the susurrating stream. From the confluence of their chakras' wellsprings, the flowing ecstasy of their day is reincarnated, then

Opposite: The author on Section III of the Chattooga (GA).

transcended. As they evaporate into the night air all is bliss, all is bliss.

Reasons #14, 15, and 16 Get in, get out, get back in

Swimming is an eventuality for all boaters. The kayaker/swimmer has to sidestroke his boat to shore, while trying to overcome the sea-anchor effect of his spray skirt. Hopefully for him, the “shore” is not a mossy, undercut cliff.

In the unlikely event of a canoeist swimming, however, he or she can just hop back in the boat via the wet entry, an impossible maneuver for a kayaker. It's just that simple.

Now, say, a kayaker is approaching the horizon line of “Tenesmus,” a wicked, congested drop. He tries to attain the flushing shoreline eddy, pitons a guard rock, and flips. Now upside down and heading for doom, he begins to pray. He prays that his canoe buddy has successfully performed the maneuver that he has admired so many times before, but could never emulate. It is a dynamic move in which the canoeist simultaneously beaches his craft and leaps onto a rock, then grabs his boat, and anybody else's who comes floating by. And

this time the kayaker is in luck—saved by a canoeist!

Now rescued, the kayaker and his savior have to re-enter their boats from their meta-stable location. No problem for the canoeist. He just hops back in and snickers as the kayaker performs a well-choreographed medley of the slippery rock moonwalk, the kayak-reentry limbo, and the spray skirt/paddle hand jive, all the while again drifting towards doom.

Reason #17 Keep on truckin'

Because they are larger and more stable crafts, canoes, like monster trucks, can roll over river features that may trip up a smaller kayak. Ski-jumping pourovers and hole-punching in particular can be easier for canoes, especially with the additional inertia provided by any accumulated aquatic ballast. (While there may be theoretical disadvantages of said ballast, time and space do not permit a discussion of this abstract implausibility.)

Now, if the river feature in question is a kayak, then we are on to a whole other thing...

Reason #18 Your craft as an offensive weapon

Picture yourself quickly approaching a kayaker cluelessly surfing downstream. You have no exit strategy. A collision is imminent. If you, too, are in a kayak, your odds of survival are about 50/50. But, if you're packin' 13 feet of Royalex and 800 pounds of water, spearheaded with jagged, chipped skid plates, then that kayaker is road kill!

We canoeists call this a “flick,” as in: “How'd you get that pink scuff on your hull Don?” “Well, Tom, I guess I must have flicked that kayaker off of that last wave, har, har, hee.”

CAUTION: Non-gratuitous kayaker bashing and strong language.

While the intentional usage of a boat as a weapon is strongly discouraged, there is a rare breed of boater for whom it *might* be justifiably considered: Genus *Paddlerii*, Species *kayakerus*, Subspecies *ass*. Habitat: Northeastern or Western US; hunted to near extinction in Western Canada, Great Lakes and Southeast regions of the US. Subsists on trust funds, inheritances, corporate sponsorships, or a series of employed girlfriends. Paddles 100-200 days per year; views with contempt anybody who doesn't brag about doing Class V. Identifying features: Speaks in self-aggrandizing monologues; typically downgrades river ratings by I-II Classes to make himself look good, while remaining indifferent to the consequences suffered by trusting beginners. Will rescue said beginners with a condescending laugh and a snide remark, often reflecting their own repressed memory of when they were just learning to paddle.

If there are canoeists like this, they should not receive preferential treatment. Any boater with these attitudes should be banished from our ranks and be forced to

Continued on page 50



Class V Sponsor



Since 2006, KEEN's contributions via their Hybrid.Care program have aided American Whitewater's projects all over the US. Keen's long history of support for American Whitewater shows their substantial commitment to our rivers and to our planet.

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American Whitewater is supported by members, donors, foundations, and partners in the whitewater and outdoor industries. In each edition of the *Journal*, we highlight one such partner in this space. American Whitewater urges you not to make purchase decisions blindly. We hope you'll consider a company's commitment to river stewardship when making your next purchase.

Who is Immersion Research?

We are a kayaking gear company based in Confluence, PA. Our business was founded in 1997 by two career kayakers, and since that day we have had one focus: to make the best, most innovative kayaking gear on the planet. Our company is also staffed by kayakers who love the sport as much as you do, and every day we work to make sure that you get the best gear and customer service possible.



Immersion Research is proud to be an AW Corporate Partner. As the first such partner in the industry, we realized the value that AW has in all of our lives. If not for the tireless work and contributions of the fine AW employees, members and stewards, we may not even be in business. If we do not have access to the places we love to paddle,

then there would not be a necessity for great, innovative gear.

We, as a company, have worked closely with AW to promote the value in membership and active participation in its causes, which are ultimately our common cause. We also work with AW as individuals to promote and ensure proper access and egress to and from our favorite places. Currently, co-owner and co-founder of Immersion Research, John Weld, is volunteering a significant amount of time and effort to reach an agreement concerning the rights of paddlers in the Blackwater Canyon, a world class steep creeking destination in the Canaan Valley of West Virginia.

Our corporate and personal contributions are a small part of a much larger whole that we are proud to be a part of. We thank you, the members of the boating community and American Whitewater, for your support of AW and IR.



Join



AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

American Whitewater has been extraordinarily fortunate in our ability to leverage a strong grassroots base—members and other volunteers—to assist our limited staff with many whitewater river conservation and restoration efforts.

Over the years, American Whitewater volunteers have participated in numerous hydropower meetings as well as instream and recreational flow studies; filed comments and assisted with an uncountable number of filings; appeared as expert witnesses; lobbied; worked to fight new dams, remove existing dams, deny licenses, and improve public access to rivers and streams. In nearly every river stewardship issue AW has been involved with, the outcome has been favorable to paddlers. Not only has AW secured favorable decisions for the paddling community, but we are the only national organization representing paddlers as these decisions are being made.

A growing membership base is crucial to our ability to continue with our work. Some studies show that there are currently over 100,000 whitewater paddlers in the US, AW currently has 5,500 active members. When you consider the amount of whitewater river miles that AW has had a direct impact on, this membership number is unimpressive. We need all paddlers to join AW! If you are a member, please be sure that everyone you paddle with understands the work AW does, and how you, as an AW member, value that work.

Membership support is what will determine our ability to continue our river stewardship work in the years to come. Individual annual memberships are only \$35 (\$25 if you are a member of an AW Affiliate Club). This is less than a tank of gas or an inexpensive night out. This is certainly not too much to pay to have a national organization representing your paddling interests all across the country.

It's easy to join or renew an AW membership: Join or renew online today at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-aw/>; call 1-866-BOAT4AW (866-262-8429); or complete the membership form provided in this Journal and mail it to:

Membership
American Whitewater
PO Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

Contact Info

New Member Renewing Member

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

*Note: American Whitewater will never share your information with others

Membership Levels

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| <input type="radio"/> \$25 Member of Affiliate Club
Club: _____ | <input type="radio"/> \$250 Platinum Paddler | Shirt Size: _____ |
| <input type="radio"/> \$25 Student
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RIVER VOICES

Continued from page 45

have a scarlet "A" emblazoned on their low-flotation life jacket.

Reason #19 Your craft as a defensive weapon

Ok, back to the superiority of canoes. Now picture a kayak and a canoe surfing in the sterile mining effluent of an overcrowded Southeastern river. Upstream, careening out of control, is a swamped Army surplus raft filled with 10 plastered Ole Miss dropouts and two tons of water. A collision is, again, imminent. Who is your money on? The canoeist has a two-foot high guardrail of Royalex six feet in front of him, and a drivers' side airbag. The kayaker's sloped bow will serve only to ski jump the raft into his face and thorax. Some would call it natural selection.

Reasons #20-23 Tandem canoes—double your pleasure, achieve perfection, share the love, save thousands on marriage counseling

While tandem kayaks never really caught on, tandem canoes are the standard, original river craft. With two experienced paddlers aboard, the thrill of adventure is amplified by the satisfaction of teamwork. Tandem paddlers, as individuals, can achieve perfection, because any navigational

error is automatically attributable to the other paddler.

Tandem canoes are also the safest way for an experienced paddler to bring along a beginning boater or a child and share your passion for rivers.

Now, some have referred to tandem canoes as "divorce boats," as if that is necessarily a bad thing. Sometimes life has its sad realities—the thrill is gone, and it's time to move on.

With the proper strategizing, a few hours of captivity in a tandem boat can cut the ties that bind even the most ensnared paddler. For the fellas: just let fly with a little destructive criticism like: "What is your problem???! I said reverse sculling cross-bow diagonal draw/pry!" If necessary, get her downstream of the boat for a few long, rocky swims. And ladies: no need for hurtful words. Just feign ignorance, grab the gunwales, cry, and refuse to go any further. If necessary, threaten to start kayaking. Congratulations—you are gonna wash that man right out of your hair.

Reason #24 Broaden your skill set

The frontiers of kayaking have entered the third dimension--the vertical axis—as paddlers run ever-higher and/or more congested waterfalls and slides. The Class V

kayaker looking to explore V+ would do well to first look inwards, strip away distraction, ego, and any need for approval, and then ask himself: Is this really the path I want to take? Where will my quest for ever-greater thrills end?

Maybe it's time to try something different, learn a new skill, get a different perspective. Now you have 24 reasons to move up. It's not too late. We need to repopulate our herd. We'll be nice to you. We promise.

Conclusion

Here, for the first time in history, we have codified 24 variably important but nonetheless distinct advantages of paddling an open canoe in whitewater. This treatise qualifies as the definitive academic reference by which the superiority of canoes is established and any claims to the contrary are refuted. Some kayakers may disagree, but have not published a convincing counterargument. We can expostulate the entirety of their case: canoes are harder to carry, occasionally retain moisture, are possibly harder to master, and are less maneuverable, making them less-suited for extremely difficult whitewater. Points taken.

Final score: 24 reasons for canoeing, 4 reasons for kayaking. A rout by any standard.

Quod erat demonstrandum.

This work is dedicated to the people who have helped me learn the sport I love: Grandpa Don, my Dad, Kent Ford, my best friend Dr. Tom Rydz, the late Humboldt kayaking legend Dr. Jerome Lengyel, and those of his ilk, who catalyzed the writing of this thesis with their incessant ribbing; and, of course, my beloved wife and bow woman Terry Bean Iverson, the inspiration for reasons #11 and 13, but not #23.

Don Iverson, South Fork Falls, South Fork Smith River, CA.

Photo by Tom Rydz



NEWS & NOTES

FRENCH BROAD RIVER FESTIVAL DONATES \$5000 TO AMERICAN WHITEWATER AGAIN.

THE 13TH ANNUAL French Broad River Festival was held on April 30-May 1st, 2010 in beautiful Hot Springs, North Carolina, on the banks of the third oldest river in the world. The festival featured three stages and nearly 30 bands, a whitewater raft race, a mountain bike race, a river clean up, a kid's village with an inflatable obstacle course, a kid's bike race, face painting, a children's parade, a dynamic art gallery, a silent auction, food vendors, arts and crafts, yoga, combustible and aerial artistry and many, many good times. This year's festival was a huge success; it is estimated that between 2000 and 2500 people attended. The folks at the French Broad River Festival have raised many thousands of dollars for AW in the past and have made a \$5000 donation to AW this year. They also donated an additional \$7000 to local charities including the Hot Springs Community Learning Center. The diverse music lineup was headlined by James McMurtry and The Heartless Bastards from Austin, Texas, Zach Deputy, The Blue Rags, Larry Keel & Natural Bridge, Lil' Malcom and The House Rockers and Snake Oil Medicine Show. There were also kid's performances by Sol Driven Train and Secret Agent 23 Skidoo. Planning is already underway for next year's festival, which will be held on April 29-May 1, 2011. The 2011 FBRF will feature musical acts such as Great American Taxi, Ryan Montbleau Band, Sol Driven Train, The Aaron Burdette Band and many more. So bring your boats, bikes, friends, and family and make plans to be there to help us support American Whitewater. Check out the website for additional info, band schedules, and tickets: www.FrenchBroadRiverFestival.com

It's Easy to Support AW!

American Whitewater is proud of the work we have accomplished in our stewardship program but we need your help to sustain our success. Your support through membership and donations enables our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. Donations don't have to be large; each person doing a small part makes a noticeable difference. Many donors fail to take full advantage of federal tax incentives specifically intended to encourage charitable contributions. Such incentives often enable a donor to make a larger gift to AW at little or no additional cost. For more information about maximizing your gift visit the IRS website dedicated to charitable organizations.

American Whitewater is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN# 23-7083760. To learn more about the Giving Options below, contact us at 1-866-262-8429 or visit the "Donate" link under "Support AW" on our website at www.americanwhitewater.org

- Donate online today!
- Monthly Giving: Contribute a minimum of \$10 via credit card or electronic transfer from your bank account.
- Bequests: Include AW in your will or living trust. Bequests to AW are generally exempt from federal or state inheritance taxes, and subject to an unlimited deduction.
- Combined Federal Campaign: Federal employees including federal civilians, military personnel and U.S. Postal Workers can donate to AW through the CFC a once a year charitable fund raising program. Look for AW (Agency #11351) in the official CFC listing of eligible donors.
- Charitable Remainder Trusts: Convert a highly appreciated asset (such as real estate or stocks) into a lifetime income while minimizing income and estate taxes.
- Employer Matching: Many employers will match your donations to non-profit organizations. This includes membership payments, as well as additional contributions. Check to see if your employer has a matching program.
- MissionFish: Sell your items through the MissionFish program on eBay and the proceeds come directly to AW.
- Other Assets: A gift of real estate to AW qualifies you for a tax deduction based on the property's fair market value. If it is not a river access point, AW will sell the property and use the proceeds to protect access and restore rivers. Acceptance of property is subject to certain conditions. You may also be eligible to receive tax benefits for gifts of real property. Art and jewelry are examples of personal property items that may be eligible. Interested donors should check with your financial and tax advisors and AW on the feasibility and tax considerations of such gifts.
- Securities: Donating appreciated stock to AW benefits both the donor and whitewater rivers. The donor receives two tax-related benefits. First, the gain on the stock is not subject to capital gains taxes. Second, the donor can deduct the value of the stock as a charitable contribution.
- United Way: All federal campaigns, and a few of the local campaigns will allow you to donate to AW.
- Vehicle Donations: Turn that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefiting AW.

AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

The Affiliate Club Program lies at the very heart of AW's existence. AW's original purpose since 1954 has been to distribute information among its Affiliate Clubs. AW's relationships with local clubs have provided the backbone for the river conservation and access work it accomplishes. We have over 100 current AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf. If you don't belong to a club, consider joining one.

Our Affiliate Club Spotlight this issue is on the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York an outstanding Affiliate Club and long time supporter of our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.

KCCNY is one of the largest whitewater clubs in the East, and despite their name, serve New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut as well as New York, where they were formed in 1959. KCCNY features a whitewater paddling program with novice, intermediate, or expert trips planned for each weekend of the paddling season, though the die hards paddle year round! They run rivers from Canada to the Carolinas, with most trips within a three-hour drive of New York City.

Off the river, KCCNY is noted for their longstanding efforts at conservation and river management. They also raise and donate funds to organizations such as New York Rivers United and American Whitewater to help their programs in river conservation and paddler access keeping our rivers clean and flowing.

Membership in the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York is open to the public. Annual dues are an affordable \$20 per year for an individual and \$25 per year for a family. To learn more about the KCCNY or to join, check out their website at <http://www.kccny.com/>. And remember, current members of the KCCNY receive a \$10 discount off their AW membership.

Thanks KCCNY for your continued support of American Whitewater!

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks
Nova Riverrunners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Birmingham Canoe Club, Birmingham
Coosa River Paddling Club, Montgomery

Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

California Floaters Society, Cameron Park
Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers,
San Jose
RTS, Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club,
Sherman Oaks
Sequoia Paddlers, Forestville
Sierra Club SF Chapter, Livermore

Colorado

Avid4 Adventure Inc., Boulder
Colorado Whitewater Assn, Englewood
Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs
Grand Canyon Priv. Boat. Asso., Colorado
Springs
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs
Rocky Mountain Canoe/Kayak Club,
Broomfield
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
Stand Up For Rivers, Telluride
University of Colorado Kayak Club,
Boulder

Connecticut

AMC - Connecticut Chapter, Colchester

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks

Georgia

Atlanta Whitewater Club, Atlanta
Georgia Canoeing Assoc, Atlanta
Georgia Tech Outdoor Recreation, Atlanta
Paddlers4Christ, Ellijay

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Assn., Boise
Univ Idaho, Recreation Student Org,
Moscow

Illinois

Team SICK, Carbondale

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des
Moines

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Topsham

Maryland

Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Silver Spring

Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Cockeysville
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Smithsburg

Michigan

RSC Kayak Club at University of Michigan, Ann
Arbor

Minnesota

SCSU Outdoor Endeavors, Saint Cloud
Minnesota Canoe Asso, Minneapolis

Mississippi

Mississippi Outdoor Club, Clinton

Missouri

Missouri Whitewater Assn, St. Louis
Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond
AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover
Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers, Intervale
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Nashua

New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club of NM,
Albuquerque

New York

Colgate University, Hamilton
FLOW Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Hamilton College, Clinton
Housatonic Canoe & Kayak Squad, Ossining
KCCNY, New York
St Lawrence University, Canton
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

N. Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Dixie Division, Tuxedo
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee
Triad River Runners, Winston-Salem

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Keel Haulers Canoe Club, Westlake
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton
Toledo River Gang, Waterville

Oregon

Eugene Kayaker, Eugene
Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
Northwest Rafters Assoc, Portland
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Beaverton
Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre

Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Holtwood Hooligans, Lancaster
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley,
Lehigh Valley Whitewater Inc., Lehigh Valley
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts,
Limestone
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Memphis Whitewater, Memphis
Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing
Club, Kingsport
Tennessee Scenic River Assoc., Nashville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Texas

Houston Canoe Club Inc, Houston

Utah

Utah Whitewater Club, Salt Lake City

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Essex Junction

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynchburg
Canoe Cruisers Assoc, Arlington
Coastal Canoeists, Blacksburg
Creek Freak Paddlers of Franklin County,
Rocky Mount
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Richmond
FORVA, Roanoke
Hollins Outdoor Program, Roanoke
James River Float Co, Madison Heights
Paddlers for Conservation, Vienna

Washington

BEWET, Bellevue
EPIC Adventures, Cheney
Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
RPP Kayak Club, Bellingham
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
University Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

West Virginia

DbI Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville
West VA Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston
WVU Whitewater Club, Morgantown

Wisconsin

Sierra Club / John Muir Chapter, Madison

British Columbia

Thompson Rivers Univ Adventure Studies,
Kamloops

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

AW offers a discounted Affiliate Club membership of \$25, a \$10 savings. If you are renewing your AW membership or joining as a new member, select the Affiliate Club Discounted Personal Membership online at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/> Or, if you are renewing or joining by mail or telephone just mention the name of the Affiliate Club you belong to and you can take advantage of the \$25 membership.

A list of AW Affiliate Clubs can be found on our website at www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Affiliate/view/. If you do not see your Club listed here please encourage them to renew their Club membership or to join AW as a new Affiliate Club. Your Club's membership and your personal membership enable our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. When you join or renew your membership your support is helping to meet the many challenges whitewater rivers face.

If you have any questions about the Affiliate Club membership, please contact me. I can be reached at 866_BOAT-4AW or membership@americanwhitewater.org.

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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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Sep-Oct 2011	June 25, 2011	Regional Issue
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