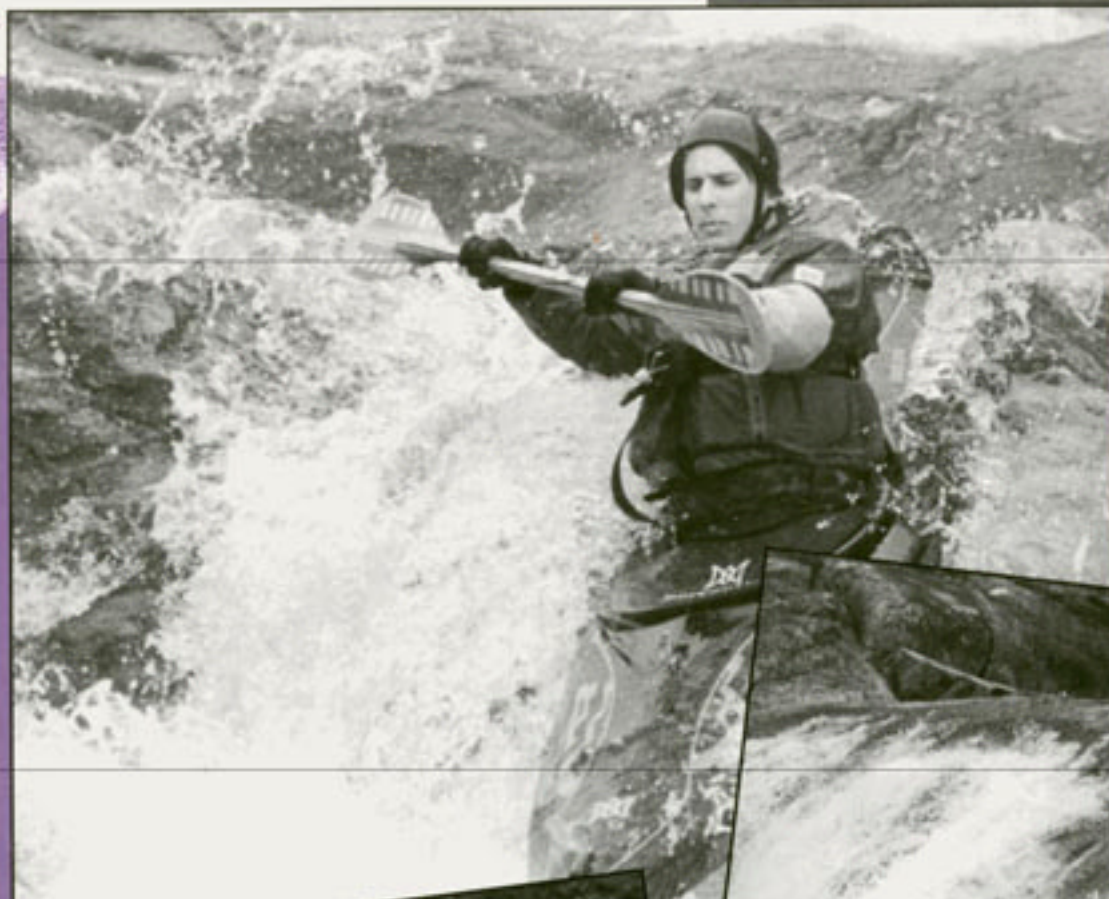


american whitewater

March /April

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The Honeymoon

page 32

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C O N T E N T S

Volume XXXIV, No.2

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Boater or Astronaut Larry Daum breaching just below the Nozzle, Lower Meadow Creek.



Ager Falls on the Bottom Moose

.....
Front Cover: Mike Duggan at Double Drop on the Bottom Moose; Cover left inset: Willie Kern running Double Drop also; Cover right inset: Chuck Kern running Ager Falls on the Moose; Photos by James Swedberg Photography
Back Cover: Boater Gregg Lawley on Meadow Creek; Photo by David Kalange



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Otter Madness

by Bob Gedekoh

Madame Courmier was not having a very good day.

But, then **again**, neither was I.

Madame and I were embroiled in our fourth telephone conversation of the afternoon, a conversation that was becoming less cordial by the second.

"It ees nod my fauld!" Madame exclaimed emphatically, for at least the fiftieth time.

What was not Madame's fault was that my friends and I had spent 12 hours pacing the muddy banks of a black fly infested lake, waiting for a float plane to transport us into the **headwaters** of the Romaine River.

"I do nod get paid **enuff** to pud up wid dis sauce," Madame responded tartly to my persistent and indignant inquiries.

Madame is a crusty old French Canadian who holds court in the remote seaside village of Harve St. Pierre. Madame handles the reservations for Alexandair, a **tiny** air service that **charters** flights into the wilds of Quebec's **Laurentian** Plateau. I had used **Alexandair's** services four times before to access the Magpie, St. Jean, Romaine and **Aquanus** rivers. My departure had never been delayed more than an hour or two on any of those occasions.

But even I had to concede that the circumstances this time were exceptional. That had been apparent from the moment we drove into Harve St. Pierre, the swan song of the road that parallels the north coast of the **Gulf** of St. Laurence. Instead of the relaxed ambience that I had come to expect, we found clusters of French Canadians with tear stained faces engaged in hushed, but intense, discussions.

Since none of our party spoke **French** a tenth as well as Madame Courmier speaks **English**, it took us a while to ascertain what was causing such distress. But when we **managed** to piece the puzzle together, the picture was very disconcerting.

Sadly, on the day before our arrival, five local **miners** had perished in a plane crash less than twenty five miles away. Not surprisingly, nearly every one of the eight hundred residents of **Harve St. Pierre** was either related to or friends with one of the victims.

The only good news was that the plane that had gone down belonged to the other **small** charter service in the village. The bad news that we had contracted to fly in an **Otter**, the **same** model and vintage as the one that had crashed.



It was **unnerving**, but we didn't want to cancel our **plans**. We hadn't spent two days driving more than 2000 miles just to **turn** around and go home. **Our vacations** were scheduled, we had already lost a day. Now we had just nine days left to paddle the 150 miles of breathtaking scenery and **whitewater** that make the **Romaine** one of Canada's most exciting wilderness adventures. Having paddled the Romaine before, I thought we could finish the river in nine days, but not less.

So, although we felt badly about the catastrophe, we needed to get **into** our put-in as quickly as possible.

So where was our Otter?

Madame Courmier maintained from that the delay had nothing to do with the crash. She assured me in no uncertain **terms** that our Otter was not being used to evacuate bodies.

"Zee Otter **eez** in Sept Isle for routine inspection," she said during my **first call**. It was being held hostage by a persnickety federal aviation inspector, she explained. I asked if it **was** the same individual who had inspected the other, ill-fated, Otter. That might explain why he was feeling persnickety.

"Zee plane can not leave Sept Isle until we get a part," Madame said during our second chat. An important part, Madame assured me.

"Like a wing," I speculated, **sarcastically**. Madame was not amused.

During the third call Madame explained that the pilot had taken off from Sept Isle, then turned back because of a technical problem "You wood not **want** to fly in her if she eez not safe," Madame observed wryly. It was **hard** to argue with that.

A terrible **storm** blowing in from the west was blamed for the delay during my fourth call. But Madame **assured** me that if the pilot could beat the **storm** to Harve St. Pierre, they would try to fly us in to the river at daybreak the next morning. Unfortunately that would necessitate flying to the northwest, directly into the **storm**.

Although the sky was clear that evening, the radio reports confirmed Madame's weather prognostication. Portions of Montreal and Quebec City had been extensively damaged by high winds and flash floods. None of us were concerned about surviving the **storm** in our kayaks. We were, however, a little concerned about surviving it in the Otter. We spent a sleepless night camped by the lake, swatting mosquitoes.

The bush pilot, Rene Tanguay, arrived at 4 **a.m.** with the grey light of dawn, urging us, in French, to **hurry**. He

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gestured to the west; **menacing** storm clouds were already **spilling** over the horizon. Within a few minutes our kayaks and gear were loaded and we were... we hoped... on our way.

I had flown with Rene several times and I had never seen him look worried before. Like most bush pilots he had projected a roguish **bragdaccio**. But not today. **This** was not the carefree Rene I had come to expect. **This** was a solemn, anxious Rene.

No doubt one of Rene's friends had been piloting the plane that crashed. But there was more to his demeanor than that. Rene used **pantomime** to explain that he would do his best to get us in, but that if the weather got too bad, we would have to return to **Harve St Pierre**. Having flown with him in turbulent conditions, I knew that he was a skillful pilot. I trusted his judgement; if Rene said we needed to turn back, he would meet no resistance from me.

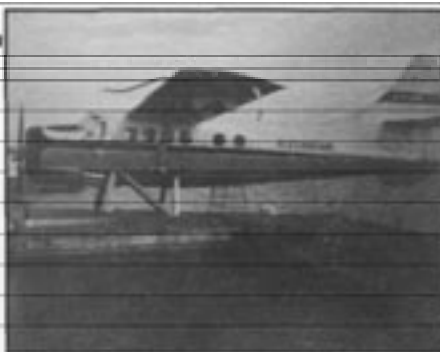
Otters **are** stocky and cumbersome; they look and feel **lunky**. They seem inordinately solid and heavy; it is apparent that they would not glide very far in the event of a loss of power. And they have only one engine.

That Otters are **capable** of flight at all seems to defy the laws of physics.

They are also incredibly **noisy**... there can be no conversation in an Otter in flight. Of course the fact that Rene, manning the controls in the pilot's seat, and I, peering out the window from the copilot's seat, spoke different languages made meaningful communication impossible anyway.

As we taxied across the lake to prepare to take off, I peered over my shoulder at my partners in adventure, straddling the kayaks and gear in the fuselage. None of them had flown in an Otter or paddled in Quebec before, and I could **tell** by their faces that they were wondering what the hell I had gotten them into.

I'm certain Richie Hughes was thinking about his new wife, Debbie, and Charlie Pettygrove was **thinking** about his wife, Inger, who was expecting their third child. I could not be sure what bachelor **Ricky** Blizzard was thinking about... probably his favorite warm southern river... the Green Narrows. No



"Otterly Mad!!" The Chariot of the River Gods! Photo by Charlie Pettygrove

doubt they were all wondering if they had adequate life insurance and if they would ever see their love objects again.

Rene slowly turned the plane, **kicked** the engine into full tilt boogie and off we roared across the lake. It was like riding in the bowels of a gigantic chain saw. By the time we cleared the water every jaw was clenched and every knuckle was blanched. It's amazing there was a dry seat in the house!

Even on a **breezeless sunny afternoon** flying over the Laurentian wilderness is an overwhelming experience. Bush pilots fly with a topographic map in one hand, using natural landmarks to navigate. This is by no means easy, the plateau is a **confusing** mosaic of mountain ranges, bogs, cliffs, lakes and rivers. Once away from the coast there is virtually no evidence of civi-

lization. There are lots of beaver and moose and bear and even wolves, but there aren't any people. **This** is a **harsh** land of terrible splendor.

The **Laurentian** Plateau definitely does not look like good place to go crashing down into.

We had been aloft **fifteen** minutes when we punched through the first column of storm clouds. The Otter **immediately** bounced in the turbulence as we were **swallowed** by a viscous gray mist. Rene calmly allowed the Otter to lose altitude until we dropped below the cloud. I was relieved to see the earth again, although I couldn't help but note that it was considerably closer than before.

Had Rene's initial maneuver been all that was required to dodge the storm, I would have considered the flight uneventful. In fact, it was anything but. The Otter lurched up and down **and fr**om side to side in response to vicious **gusts** of wind. Rene was doing his best to circumvent the pillars and curtains of dark, swirling thunderheads. **As** we flew further and further into the storm front Rene was forced to descend more and more in order to maintain eye contact with the ground.

At the same time he was negotiating this tumultuous maze projecting from above, he was **winding** his way through a geologic labyrinth projecting from below. Soon we were flying between mountain tops and cliffs. More than once I held my eyes closed for several seconds because I couldn't bear to look.

Rene gestured to his altimeter... it read 600... meters? I leaned **forward** for a better look. My worst fears were confirmed.. it was feet!

I didn't need to be reminded that many of the mountain tops of the **Laurentians** soar to more than 2000 feet. He waved his hand in the universal sign for "iffy". We flew into **still** another wall of clouds and Rene shook his head and sent the Otter into a swift arc. I assumed that he had given up; that we were heading back to **Harve St. Pierre**. That was fine my me. I looked over my shoulder at the others, I could tell at a glance that it was fine by them too. These were not happy campers.

By this time I had **com-**



THE GRAND CHUTE OF THE ROMAINE...20,000+ CFS DROPPING 200 FEET.
PHOTO BY CHARLIE PETTYGROVE

FORUM

pletely lost all sense of direction. Fortunately, Rene had not. Suddenly he motioned toward a narrow cleft in the storm front. With a nod he nosed the Otter through this portal and crested a ridge of mountains. A large ribbon of water meandered across the plateau one thousand feet below.

It was too good to be true... but Rene was smiling broadly... yes... it was the Ro-



The Sophisticated and high-tech air terminal at Harve St. Pierre

Photo by Charlie Pettygrove

maine! I turned again and gestured to the others. One by one they got my message and started to beam. The Good Ship Lollipop never sailed with a happier crew.

We followed the Romaine upstream through its serpentine canyon, past the rapids and falls that would entertain and amaze us for the next nine days. The walls of the canyon loomed on either side; for a moment I felt like Indiana Jones in a scene cut from **Raiders of the Lost Ark**.

When we reached the flat water that marked our point of embarkation, Rene banked the plane tightly, pulled back on the throttle and sent the Otter swooping down toward the river. He leveled the plane just before we touched down; our landing was smoother than any I have ever experienced in a jumbo jet. Within a minute he had beached the Otter and, in deference to the unsettled weather, was hurriedly tossing our gear out the door.

Five minutes later the Otter was empty and Rene was ready to head back to town. The storm clouds were swirling around the canyon and they were darker than ever. We thanked Rene profusely; he had gotten us to our destination alive and, more importantly, he had salvaged our vacation. We wished him luck on the flight home and hoped he wouldn't need it. And we tipped him \$50. Considering the circumstances, it was hardly enough. But he nodded his approval, climbed into the Otter and was gone.

After the plane disappeared into the storm we stood silently on the banks of the Romaine, collecting our thoughts and regaining our composure. We were 150 miles from civilization and there was no way out but down the river. Rene and Madame had done their jobs; the rest was up to us.

In retrospect, our expedition on the Romaine was a rousing success. We paddled plenty of booming whitewater and caught native trout by the score. We reverently drifted by verdant mountainsides and precipitous cliffs and camped beside the Grande Chute, a falls where the 20,000+ cfs Romaine plummets hundreds of feet.

The river was memorable, but the flight to the put-in was a hard act to follow. So now, when we reminisce about our Canadian adventure, the conversation inevitably turns to our ride in the Otter. It will be a long time before any of us forgets that journey!.

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LETTERS

Whitewater for Everyone?

Dear Editor,
I must take objection to Chuck Massey's letter in the November/December issue. The idea that "rafting companies are not our allies" and "whitewater boating is not for the masses" is dependent on one's perspective. If you consider that rafting companies offer a consumer service then their numbers reflect public demand. Mr. Massey's attitude seems to be that access to whitewater should be controlled by physical prowess and personal dedication to the sport. An attitude that reminds me of the preservationists whose answer to the overcrowding of our National Parks is to limit access to only those who can hike in. A

pretty self righteous attitude that totally ignores the rights of the elderly, handicapped and disadvantaged who can not afford the time and equipment required. An attitude that will be totally indefensible to the general public; who, by the way, are the rightful owners of our rivers.

If instead, you look at river usage in terms of safety, environmental impact and equal access you will find it a much more defensible position. A position which rafting companies will be forced to compromise with for their own self-interest. The competition between outfitters makes overcrowding as much an issue to them as to the hard boaters. Economic survival is a top priority so rather than wasting energy on confrontation, realize that a forced ally is preferable to an entrenched enemy.

While I sympathize with Mr. Massey's feelings over the

loss of river running as an experience shared with just a few friends, times have changed. I first experienced the Gauley in the early 70s as part of a generations-old family tradition of float fishing and camping trips. It was still a time when you could spend three or four days on the river without seeing another living soul. Pure Screaming Hell was once known as Two Pint Shoals; the reason being obvious with aluminum canoes and wooden john boats. But, what was once a family secret is not a "National Treasure" and we must console ourselves with being one of the privileged few.

Sincerely,
Charley Friddell
Hugheston, West Virginia

New River Jet Skiers Defended

one of the safety boaters for this first (jet ski) descent, and was very impressed with the skill and attitudes of the riders, except for Vanilla Ice, who apparently was out of control and a pest. While I would never use a jet ski myself, I would also never use an oar raft, but that doesn't mean that I should be able to stop those people from using what is rightfully theirs. And on the pollution issue- the exhaust emitted by the skis is nominal compared to that of the cars passing over the New River Bridge, or that of the motor rigs on the Grand Canyon- which is one of the most controlled rivers in the world. Please consider this before continuing your present course of action.

Sincerely,
Corran Addison
Asheville, North Carolina

(Look for photos and a brief article regarding jetskiers on the New in this issue of American Whitewater.)

Dear Stuart Thompson,

I respond to your letter in the November/December edition of American Whitewater. While I do agree with your point of the impact of exhaust fumes produced by the jet skis, the noise pollution and, not least of all, the safety issue, we must consider the possible repercussions of attempting to ban "certain types of river craft" from accessing what in reality belongs to all of us.

The problem is in setting precedents. In the same issue of American Whitewater was a letter concerning the Valley Falls State Park Rangers who were stopping kayakers from using the river in kayaks after a raft descent was televised. They too could start to restrict river usage to only a limited type of craft. Either public access is permitted (and I see no reason to ever restrict that) or it is not. If an individual (Vanilla Ice, for example) is irresponsible, then he should be thrown off the river- but you can not stop responsible river runners from using the river. A good friend of mine was

Editor's Reply

Both of the letters above address the fact that we often find ourselves in a decidedly paradoxical position. On one hand we assert our right to paddle our canoes and kayaks whenever and wherever we please. Then we ask for restrictions that would limit the access of others (rowdy commercial rafters and rambunctious jet skiers, for example) to the very same whitewater resources.

I think the critical question that we need to ask in these situations is this, "Do I want to limit other groups from using the river because they are going to harm the resource, or is my opposition purely a matter of self-interest?"

We should be willing to share the rivers with others who have a genuine appreciation of their beauty and

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LETTERS

challenge. But, at the same time, we must be ready to oppose those who would depreciate or damage our whitewater resources.

Bob Gedekoh

REI Minimizes Liability Concerns

Dear Editor,

This letter is in response to an article titled "Lawsuits Threaten Whitewater Recreation" that appeared in your September/October issue.

While liability suits are a concern throughout the outdoor industry, this is not the reason REI decided to stop renting whitewater kayaks. Only three of our stores were offering whitewater rentals,

and after a review it was determined that inventory and staff costs made the programs financially difficult to support. Further, because of the technical nature of white water paddling and because a majority of renters are beginners in the sport, we felt that the customer would be better served renting from local outfitters that provided hands on instruction

Additionally, REI never considered dropping its mountaineering and climbing products, and over the past several years has worked actively within the climbing industry to try to minimize the negative aspects of liability concerns.

Our position in this area was misinterpreted by a quote in a June issue of the Wall Street Journal that led readers to believe liability concerns were the primary factors in our decisions. Thank you for allowing me to clarify this issue.

Sincerely,
Dan Ducich
Chief Financial Officer
Recreational
Equipment, Inc.

Editor's Reply

One of our sources in preparing the article was, in fact, the piece in the Wall Street Journal. We are glad to hear that REI is working to limit the ill effects that the liability crisis is having on outdoor recreation.

It's interesting to hear that one of the reasons REI stopped renting whitewater boats was because they didn't want to compete with local outfitters who provided similar services. I hope that doesn't mean that REI is going to stop sending me catalogues because there are shoe and clothing stores in my neighborhood!

Bob Gedekoh

Certainly Ms. Domeisen must realize the impact she is having on male readers of this journal. We can accept a run on the Upper Gauley. We can swallow the race entry. But the final blow of the C-1 was uncalled for.

Ms. Domiesen must consider another craft.

Sincerely,
Dr. C.H.B. Noonan

P.S. Do you think Heidi would lead a first-timer through Pillow Rock?

Editor's Reply

I know how you feel. Every year Kara Ruppel and Alice Vernon dust me at the Upper Yough Race. My ego can only hope that this Domeisen woman limits her hair racing to the Gauley!

Bob Gedekoh

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A Woman's Place?!

Dear Editor,

I was just browsing through the November/December issue. My attention was drawn to the Upper Gauley Race results. C1- Women... Heidi Domeisen.. 85:09.



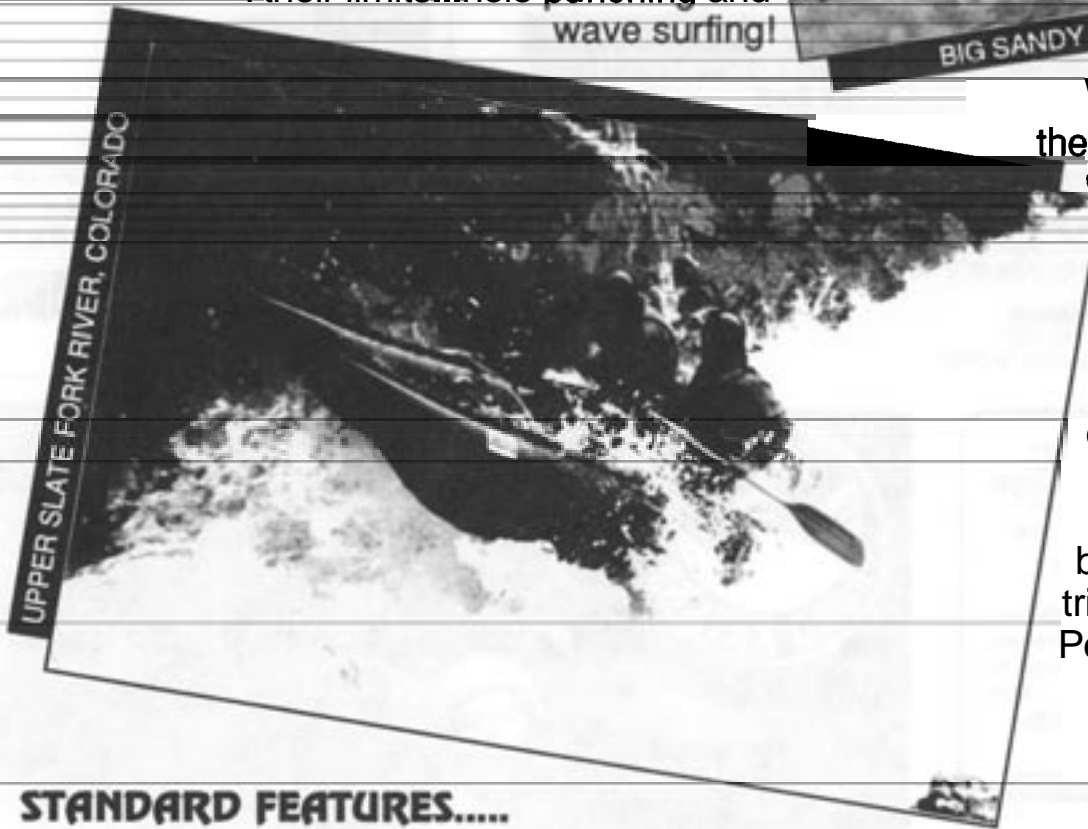
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The American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) is a national organization with a membership of over 3000 individual whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates.

EDUCATION: Through publication of the magazine, American Whitewater, and by other means, the AWA provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

CONSERVATION: AWA maintains a complete national inventory of whitewater rivers, monitors threats to those rivers, publishes information on river conservation, provides technical advice to local groups, works with government agencies, and —when necessary — takes legal action to prevent river abuse.

EVENTS: AWA organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation, including the Ocoee Whitewater Rodeo in Tennessee and the **annual Gauley River Festival** in West Virginia, the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation.

SAFETY: AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains both a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) as well as an internationally recog-

nized whitewater safety code.

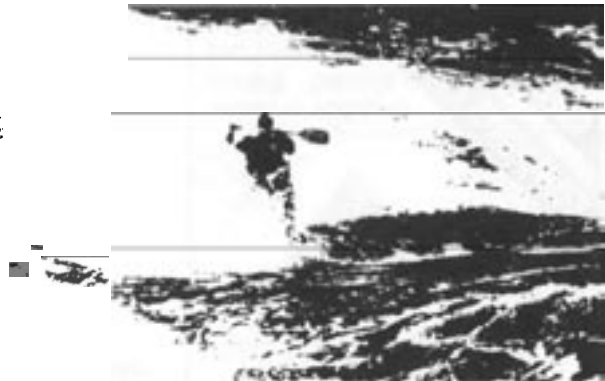
RIVER ACCESS: To assure public access to whitewater rivers AWA arranges for river access through private lands by negotiation or purchase, seeks to protect the right of public passage on **all** rivers and streams navigable by kayak or canoe, and resists unjustified restrictions on **government-managed** whitewater rivers.

AWA was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464. The phone number is 914 688-5569. AWA is tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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The Art of Winter Paddling

by
David Hablewitz

Winter paddling is more art than science. Weather conditions and water levels *can* be unpredictable, and usually the best of the one comes with the worst of the other. But if you want to try winter paddling, with a little preparation you *can* turn a cold, dreary weekend into a god-send. Some of the requisites include:



- 1. The 5 essentials: boat, pfd, helmet, paddle, and sprayskirt. (Open boaters need 4: boat, pfd, helmet, and 2 x 1/2 paddles.)**
- 2. Drytop, drysuit, or wetsuit and paddling jacket. (remember: wet=cold)**
- 3. Insulative layers. 1-3 layers in some combination of thermal underwear and outerwear, usually made of Polypropylene, Polartec 200, or some other warm-when-wet material. NEVER COTTON. Insulative headgear (absolute necessity), neoprene booties and pogies or gloves.**
- 4. A dependable roll or a full drysuit. (wet=cold=no fun)**
- 5. An insatiable lust for padding.**
- 6. Several friends who also have all of the above.**
- 7. The Weather Channel.**

It is also a good idea to carry a breakdown paddle and a well stocked dry bag. Some dry pile, firestarters and matches and a first aid kit may prove invaluable if someone goes for an unexpected swim. Some hedonists even carry thermoses filled with hot cocoa or coffee.

Once outfitted be prepared for the time of your life. Winter and early spring storms bring high water and this is the only time many creeks are runnable. Even with several inches of rain, some of the best creeks are only **runnable** for a day or so. Remember, they **can** be tough as well. Timing is everything. It helps to have a lenient sick leave policy at work

In the winter, those runs that are crowded in summer become remote adventures. The crowds have moved on to ski lift lines and tropical beaches. Gone are the rafts, hibernating until next season. Even the fishermen retreat for the winter. Or perhaps they just trade in their waders and fishing pole for ammo and rifle. The overcrowded parking lots become desolate, save the few **hardcore** boaters that form an inner circle **within** an already-fraternalsport. To these people the summer is "the off season".

As the mass of humanity retreats for the season, the wildlife takes over. Deer, beaver, and even bear might be seen. The air is often clear enough to see 50 miles or more and great views abound running shuttle, since the leaves are off the trees. For those willing to brave the cold to pay homage to the "river gods", winter paddling offers a truly religious experience..

Takes a Licking.... And Keeps on Tricking!

by John Frachella

Midsummer... and 2500 cfs on the West Branch.

Heaven for Mark, a local free lance photographer, and me, just another **adrenalin** junkie, swept **along** by the rush of the mighty Penobscot River.

We were running Abol Rapid. Mt. Katahdin, Maine's tallest and most majestic peak, loomed in the background. Abol is one of those rapids that looks Class II from the road. But hidden rock ledges and long, sticky holes

make it a solid class III with Class V consequences.

As usual we were pretty nonchalant, just whistling our way through the turbulence. Then one of the holes near the top of the rapid sucked me back into its maw and flipped me. No big deal, I thought, but when I went for my roll I couldn't get up.



Wierd. My left wrist felt like it was pinned to my side. I couldn't move my hand. I tugged and pulled, but my hand seemed to be stuck to my waist. I was getting smacked around on the ledges and I was running out of air. Swimming was a distinct possibility... but I wasn't ready to give up yet. My right hand, the only one still free, clenched my cherished, custom-made Doug Wellman paddle. Stubbornly, I told myself to hold on.



But things were getting pretty grim. In a final desperate move, I tucked my head to my waist, grabbed the **cuff** of my paddling jacket with my teeth and ripped with **all my might**.

I was released. My left hand instinctively went for my T grip and I rolled upright.

Gasp! Mark was soon at my side with questions. "What happened? You never miss your roll!"

I didn't have a clue. I was **grateful** that I had not been hurt but, for the life of me, I couldn't figure out what had caused the problem in the **first** place. Neither could Mark. He shrugged and headed **downstream**.

Some of our friends were on shore just below the rapid, sitting **around** on a small **beach**. Mark paddled over to say hello and I followed, **still** dazed. I got out to stretch and bail and one of my friends handed me a beer.

Ten minutes later I saw a very strange **thing**. There on the side of my life vest was my watch, which I usually wear over the cuff of my long sleeved paddling jacket. But now the watch was hanging from the safety carabinier that I keep on the vest.

The timepiece is a dive watch with holes **all** up and down the strap. One side of the strap had separated from the watch and the whole affair just dangled from the carabinier, **looking** innocent. I soon realized what had caused my problem in the rapid; I had handcuffed myself with my watch! It was a one in a thousand chance... and just my luck!

Well, I **still** wear a watch on the river, but I've replaced my life vest carabinier with one of those fancy **locking** types that won't open spontaneously at inopportune times.

I've been boating for twenty years but I never cease to be amazed at how easily I get myself into trouble. And it's always stupid little things that trip me up.

Like a watchband! Makes me wonder, what's next?.

John Frachella is an AWA Regional Coordinator from Bangor, Maine who paddles a C-1. He is also the designer of the Viper, a popular squirt/cruising C-1.

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SCHEME HATCHED FOR NEW CHATTOOGA ROAD

Discussions are being held between the U.S. Forest Service, the Georgia Power Company and others regarding the possible construction of a new road into Tugaloo Lake. The need for such a road, if any, is still in question.

The Chattooga, first made notorious in the film "Deliverance", is one of the southeast's most treasured whitewater runs. The river has been designated a National Wild and Scenic

River and 2/3 of the land on both banks is under U.S. Forest Service management. The famous Five Falls section of the lower Chattooga is also a botanically rich area with important wildlife habitat.

Plans for the new road would severely impact the natural character of this area by making it possible for thousands of people to easily come up into pristine portions of the river which are now accessible only by boat or raft.

Currently, kayakers and rafters paddle out from the end of the whitewater fun across the flatwater of Tugaloo Lake, a chore which few boaters and ever fewer rafters relish, especially when a headwind is blowing. A road penetrating into the roadless area on the Georgia side of the river would eliminate this chore, but the environmental trade offs have some fans of the Chattooga worried.

Three years ago, a similar plan was promoted to build a road on U.S. Forest Service land into the river on the South Carolina side of the river, but that scheme was shelved due to the negative environmental effects of overcrowding.

The uninhabited mountains around the lake serve as a

buffer between civilization and the river, the forest, and the wildlife. Some observers fear that a road into this area would result in the intensive recreational development of private property located near the lake and river. Profits for some, but a big change for the riverine environment.

As a participant in the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing of Georgia Power's North Georgia Project, AWA and local boating clubs (such as the Atlanta Whitewater Club and the Georgia Canoeing Association) have asked for more public review and environmental analysis of the company's plans regarding the proposed road and for more opportunity for boater input. ■

PARTY TIME ON THE DEERFIELD IN 1994

American Whitewater and New England FLOW have scheduled a river festival for the Deerfield River in Massachusetts on August 6 of this year. The festival event will be a fund raiser for FLOW and AWA. Both groups have participated in the National Hydropower Reform Coalition in a lengthy effort to reach a settlement with New England Power on the relicensing of several dams on the Deerfield.

The National Hydropower Reform Coalition was formed to bring boaters, fishermen, and other pro-river groups together to speak with in a single unified voice.

The Coalition is involved in dozens of hydropower relicensings throughout the nation, many of which, like the Salmon and Sacandaga in New York and Tallulah Falls in Georgia, offer the prospect of vastly improved whitewater flows on key whitewater rivers.

Some relicensing negotiations have taken on a combative flavor, but others like the Deerfield have involved power companies with a rational forward-looking management willing to discuss river restoration and environmental amenities with river users and river appreciators of all kinds.

While no permanent settlement has yet been penned for the Deerfield, prospects are good that a settlement will be finalized later in the spring if a disagreement between Trout Unlimited and other coalition members can be resolved.

The final settlement is expected to provide for 32 release days each year with varying flows between 900-1100 c.f.s., and with Saturday releases of five hours.

Meanwhile, New England Power has announced the 1994 release schedule for the Monroe Bridge section. Each release will be 900 c.f.s. for four hours apiece.

Here's the schedule:

June 4-5 weekend
 June 26 Sunday
 July 4-10 weekend
 July 17 Sunday
 July 23-24 weekend
 July 30-31 weekend
 August 6-7 weekend (Festival Weekend)
 August 20-21 weekend
 August 27-28 weekend
 September 4 Sunday
 September 17 Saturday
 October 2 Sunday
 October 8 Saturday

The August 6 Deerfield River Festival will feature music, refreshments, equipment displays, and much more. It will be located in the open field on the west end of Charlemont directly across from Zoar Outdoor.

New England Power Co. will also provide 106 scheduled releases on the Fife Brook section of the Deerfield River, which includes the Zoar Gap rapid. This includes every Saturday and Sunday between April 18 to September 18.

For more exact times and flows, call the Deerfield River Flow information line, (413) 625 8414, the evening before. ■

AWA EXPWNS HOW TO TEST THE WATERS

AWA's Conservation Program Director has been selling the benefits of whitewater to dam builders, fishery experts, and electric utilities around the country.

Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Program Director, recently released a paper entitled "A Nuts and Bolts Approach to Whitewater Recreation Studies" and has been a featured speaker at a conferences on river restoration and dam safety.

Recently, at the San Francisco In-Stream Flow Seminar, Bowers explained the how "varied flows" contribute to river restoration. According to Bowers, just having a trickle run out the bottom of a dam to keep a few fish alive does not qualify as river restoration.

Bowers addressed the benefits of elevated flow releases (often usable by whitewater boaters) in river restoration efforts. He also unveiled his paper on how to conduct a successful whitewater flow test on bypassed river reaches which have never before been boated.

For years, the science of river restoration has been gauged almost exclusively by the restoration of fish species and fishery habitat. Fishery management in these situations has usually depended on identifying minimum flows. Often these projects have targeted a single popular species of fish, frequently a non native

species. In some instances, these efforts have had disastrous effects on native species.

In many situations the limited minimum flow approach to river restoration has disappointed those who would like to see rivers return to a more natural pattern of flows with a wider range of benefits for all kinds of aquatic life as well as outdoor recreation such as kayaking and canoeing.

The December 1993 San Francisco workshop (co-sponsored by EA Engineering, Science and Technology and the National Park Service) highlighted the growth of knowledge, and redirection of focus, regarding river restoration efforts today.

Bowers focused on the benefits provided by downstream recreation to the overall goal of river restoration. He discussed the way natural stream ecosystem systems are maintained by different magnitudes of flow, occurring at different times and due to different reasons.

According to Bowers "Artificially varied flows are sometimes the only process available for restoring natural processes downstream of hydroelectric dams."

The workshop was attended by many of individuals who are responsible for setting river policy. These included federal and state fish and wildlife agencies and numerous developers who control dam operations around the country.

Copies of Bowers' paper, "A Nuts and Bolts Approach to Whitewater Recreation Studies", are available by calling the AWA Conservation Program Office at (301) 589-9453.

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HYDRO UPDATE

by AWA Staff

In some ways, **1993** was a good year for whitewater rivers. The greatest boost came for those rivers controlled by hydropower **dams**.

Conditions on dam controlled rivers began to look promising when the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) took a new look at its mandate to manage rivers in the public interest addressing several important issues for the first time:

- unwanted and unsafe dams (de commissioning) o watershed management versus project-by-project review o rejection of uneconomical projects
- **refusal** to license new dams with unacceptable esthetic effects (i.e. too ugly !)

FERC watchers credit the agency's new attitude to FERC's new Chairperson, Elizabeth Moler. Ms. Moler seems to have an unusually **forward-looking** approach for a FERC Commissioner. In addition, she has been open to suggestions from a wide range of river interests.

With this change in the regulatory tide, **whitewater** recreation advocates had some sweet victories in **1993**. Indications are that access and recreation flows will be soon restored to rivers such as the Deerfield (MA), **Tallulah** (GA), the **Sacandaga** and the Mongaup (NY).

Recreational improvements at these projects have come about because of the new attitudes at FERC and because of a growing recognition (by electric utility companies and State agencies) of the importance of downstream river **use**—its economic benefits and its growth in popularity. **This** has led to a better understanding of the values associated with river use. However, there is **still** work to be done in this area, and recognition is a far cry from either fair or **useful** policies.

The key to much of this success was a pooling of resources among river recreation and conservation interests, and the **growth** of the newly named "National Hydropower Reform Coalition".

This coalition is made up of **over 19** national, regional and local grassroots groups working on improving our rivers. AWA holds the primary responsibility for recreational improvements, but our success has been aided by other organizations, especially American Rivers.

American Rivers provided key leadership for the Coalition and has raised virtually all of the funds for more than a dozen participating groups. In addition, American Rivers offered office space, administrative support, credibility and expertise to early AWA efforts. For the AWA, this has resulted in approximately \$40,000 in grants, over a three year period, from foundations such as George Gund, Carolyn, Surdna, and the Pew Charitable Trusts.

Trout Unlimited is another national coalition member offering strong support for river recreation. While fishing and boating sometimes seem to conflict, the combined efforts of Trout Unlimited at the national level with AWA and others could result in better access, better acceptance of river recreation, and in many cases, more balanced flows which will enhance both fishing and boating.

On a regional level, New England FLOW has contributed significantly to the National Hydropower Reform Coalition effort by coordinating the various organizations in New England. One rewarding effort is a draft agreement with New England Power to restore fishery flows on the Deerfield as well as whitewater releases on the Fife Brook and Monroe Bridge sections of this river. (See the article elsewhere in this issue announcing the **interim** release

schedule and river festival.)

The National Hydropower Reform Coalition is now gearing up for more major battles with hydropower in **1994**. Many of these will be waged on nationally recognized whitewater resources such as the North Fork Payette (ID), the Clavey (CA), the Kennebec (ME), and the Upper Youghiogheny (MD).

Here is a run down on some of the "hot" issues in hydropower for **1994**:

MOKELUMNE (CA)

In a precedent-setting decision, FERC dismissed the application for the Devil's Nose water supply/hydro project on the North Fork Mokelumne River in California.

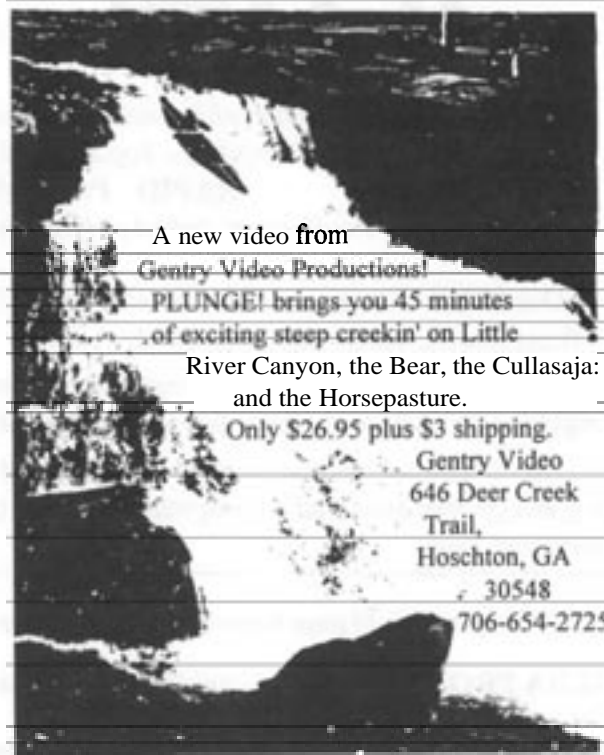
FERC took this unusual action because, among other reasons, "The need for the project is questionable.."

This is an exciting development because river interests for years have unsuccessfully attempted to have licenses **denied** which were marginal, or totally without merit. In the past, FERC issued the license and let the project flounder in its own economic mess, often **wrecking** the affected waterway in the process.

According to AWA's Rich Bowers, "We now have a track record for denial of other similar uneconomic projects across the country."

The applicant, **Amador** County, has spent **13** years and approximately \$2 million dollars on this project so far. In a December meeting before the FERC, **Amador** admitted that they did not have funds to undertake required **environmental** and recreational studies. They also admitted that hydro development was incidental, and that they sought a water

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supply source for the future, even though this water would not be needed for another thirty years!

AWA, Friends of the River, and the Foothill Conservancy in California actively opposed Devil's Nose project due to concerns over how the County would pay for damage to the river, given that they couldn't even afford to study the possibility of damages.

In addition, potential access and recreational damage would have occurred on the Electra, Middle Bar, and upper Bear Creek runs of the Mokelumne.

The fight is not yet over. On January 12, the County voted to appeal FERC's decision. In addition, recreation on the Mokelumne is still threatened by projects under Pacific Gas and Electric, and East Bay Municipal Utility District.

CARMEL RIVER (CA)

A proposed Army Corps of Engineers plan to build a New Los Padres Dam and expand the existing Reservoir is in the works for the Carmel River in California

The dam is under study to provide additional water supply for the Monterey Peninsula. Cost of the project is estimated at \$100 million, and plans would flood the existing whitewater run, Native American cultural sites, and potentially harm fishery resources.

The Carmel is a coastal river which California boaters paddle in winter when things are frozen in the Sierras and high flows are frequent along the California coast.

For more information, contact AWA regional coordinator Susan Schefule at (408) 459-7978.

NORTH FORK PAYETTE (ID)

For many, the North Fork of the Payette in western Idaho is considered one of the best whitewater rivers in the nation. As with many boating rivers, outstanding gradient (125 feet per mile for 15 miles between

Smiths Ferry and Banks) and water velocity have also attracted numerous hydropower interests.

The currently proposed Gem Irrigation Project would create a 13.5 mile tunnel in this area, with the capacity to carry all of the river in a normal year. In short, the aesthetic and recreational aspects of the river

would be gone forever.

The North Fork is now protected by the Payette River Plan, a State protection enacted in 1991 which designates this section as a recreational river. However, FERC holds the cards on hydroelectric power licenses. And FERC is making it clear that it will NOT defer to State authority.

With the State plan being ignored by FERC, the only way to protect the North Fork is by an Act of Congress.

Fortunately, Idaho Congressman Larry LaRocco has introduced a bill, H.R. 233, which would have the effect of banning hydropower on the 25 mile section between Carbarton Bridge and Banks. It

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does not place the North Fork in the Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or include any other management restrictions, but it applies certain key provisions of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to the North Fork of the Payette.

HR. 233 had been scheduled for hearings during February. It needs the support of all boaters who are interested in protecting a whitewater river of this caliber.

What You Can Do.

A simple letter or fax explaining why the **LaRocco bill (H.R. 233)** is critical to whitewater interests, and asking for support, would be a big help. Letters should be addressed to Idaho Senators Dirk Kempthorne and Larry Craig, and to Congressman Bruce Vento with copies sent to Congressman **LaRocco**, thanking him for his leadership on this issue.

Addresses:
 Senator Larry Craig, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510 Fax No. (202) 224-2752.

Senator Dirk Kempthorne, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510 Fax No. (202) 224-5893

Congressman Larry LaRocco, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20105 Fax No. (202) 228-1213

Congressman Bruce Vento, US House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20105 Fax No. (202) 226-1213

For more information contact AWA at (301) 589-9453 or Idaho Rivers United at (208) 343-7481.

CLAVEY RIVER (CA)

When boaters dream of the perfect river, they dream of a river like the Clavey.

Dropping 7,000 feet in 48

miles, the Clavey is the quintessential Sierra class IV-V decent. It is also the last free flowing tributary of the Wild and Scenic Tuolumne, and a California Wild Trout Stream. In other words, an almost perfect wild river.

Sadly, the Turlock Irrigation District (TID) is studying a \$707 million Clavey River Project which consists of 5 dams, 2 reservoirs, a power plant, tunnels, transmission lines, and roads.

TID has spent \$8.6 million on studies to date. These studies are typical of ones completed from a biased viewpoint, and have actually stated that the project will enhance the wild fishery, since rainbow trout prefer zero velocity water flows!

To find out how you can help save the Clavey, call AWA at (301) 589-9453 or the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust at (209) 634-5460.

MONGAUP

The Kayak and Canoe Club of New York, and the AWA, have requested that FERC conduct new studies to determine the feasibility and safety of increasing releases on New York's Mongaup River to two turbine releases.

Tests conducted during 1990 determined that two turbine releases provided better whitewater recreation. However, certain officials in the National Park Service believe that this level could push novice boaters on the downstream Delaware River into the "Mongaup Wave", a class II rapid. FERC initially agreed with this conclusion, despite the conflicting documentation.

A more recent FERC decision reverses the prior decision and agrees with boating interests who considered the 1990 studies "flawed." According to FERC, new testing will be completed in the future. Objections by the NPS and the Upper Delaware Council have delayed scheduling of these tests.


DAM REMOVAL ADDRESSED FOR OVER 1,800 DAMS

On January 19, the National Hydropower Reform Coalition urged the FERC to adopt tough new policies on dams which are no longer wanted, are uneconomical, or are unsafe. The Coalition includes the AWA and 18 other national and regional organizations. The new policies could affect over 1,800 existing dams and all future non-federal dams under FERC regulatory control.

According to AWA Conservation Director, Rich Bowers, "Dam decommissioning is not a theoretical problem. It is here now, today!"

Several projects, now seeking new licenses, present dam decommissioning concerns and will directly affect

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whitewater rivers such as Moxie Stream (ME), Pine (WT), White Salmon (WA) and the James (VA).

Recently, the licensee of the Moxie Project, Central Maine Power, signalled its desire to abandon the project. To protect local lake interests, the local community (population - 1000) has voted to seek either a power or non power license. The question, however, is "How can this town protect environmental, recreational, and safety concerns?"

In September of 1993 FERC issued a Notice of Inquiry regarding Dam Decommissioning. The inquiry was prompted due to hundreds of dams seeking new licenses. Many of these dams are between 50 and 100 years old. Hundreds, if not thousands, of hydropower developers and river conservationists have responded to the Notice of Inquiry with their suggestions as to what to do about old dams.

Decommissioning can mean discontinuing energy production, removing or breaching the project, restoration of the river to a natural condition, and any measure in between.

FRENCH HEROINE RESCUES LOIRE

In a stunning victory for European river conservationists, the French government announced in January that it was abandoning plans to dam the Loire River. Instead the government announced a plan to adopt a non-structural flood control management program and demolish two existing dams.

According to Leonard Sklar of International River Network in Berkley, California, this decision signals the end of the

"age of dam building" and a recognition by governments and engineers around the world that structural flood control has "failed to stop floods while contributing to the destruction of river ecosystems". Sklar said that the French government learned an important

lesson from the devastating floods on the Mississippi last summer and from more recent winter flooding in Europe.

The campaign to save the Loire, the longest river in France, was spearhead by Europe's most celebrated river conservationist, Christine Jean.

Christine is a housewife and a passionate, crusading ecologist. She founded Loire Vivante (Living Loire) in 1986 to combat an ambitious plan to control and "domesticate" the entire Loire River valley and its tributaries in southwestern France.

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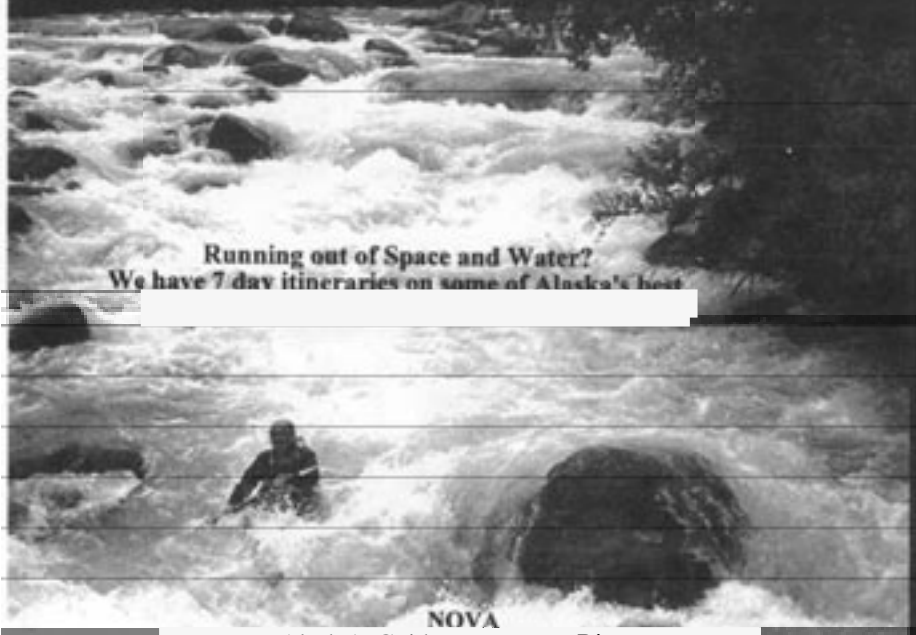
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The **Loire** serves as the migratory route for spawning Salmon and a haven for bird., **otters**, beavers, eel, and trout, not to mention kayakers and tourists from around the world. Originally, at least 7 new dams were proposed to be constructed on the **Loire** and its tributaries, together with **numerous** other structure "improvements". These schemes would have resulted in the complete destruction the entire ecological balance of the river system.

The diminutive but persistent Christine Jean, and her volunteer troops, succeeded in bringing this destructive program to an end and - in the process- capturing the imagination of the French **environmental** movement in a way that no other **environmental** issue in recent years has done. At one point during the campaign in 1989, Christine brought **10,000** marchers to the remote village of **Le Puy** to demonstrate against the project.

New Whitewater Rapids May

Appear in Michigan and Maryland

A new man-made 70-foot wide, class II rapid, complete with surfing waves, **turns**, eddies and holes may soon appear on the Red Cedar River in **Williamston**, Michigan (pop. 2,922), just 15 miles east of Lansing.

If approved by the City Council (hearing set for January 24), rock construction would start in the spring of this year and be finished by early summer. A whitewater study panel, including the **Lansing** Oar and Paddle Club, originated and developed the whitewater rapids proposal.

A similar project is also under consideration for Broolunont Dam in Maryland, upstream of Little Falls on the Potomac where a consortium of Federal and State agencies is considering relocation and reconstruction of the ineffective fish ladder at Brookmont Dam. Here the basic objective is to improve fish passage. The old fish ladder, located too far the river's main channel, never **attracted** migrating fish. It also presented a hazard to boaters.

Local Potomac River paddlers, and a new conservation group, the Potomac

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River Conservancy, have asked the agencies to investigate the feasibility of designing the new fish ladder so that it would have a dual purpose: a whitewater rapid allowing downstream passage by canoes, kayaks, and rafts as well as providing a more natural appearing fish ladder. The extra benefit would be a reduction in the dangerous **hazards** to boaters posed by Brookmont Dam.

In both the Michigan and Maryland

situations, a breached or collapsed dam in need of reconstruction could be repaired in a way which would simultaneously improve a fishery and recreational boating.

On Michigan's Red Cedar River, during 1976, high water collapsed a **forty-foot** section of a dam on the Red Cedar River. The dam was originally built in 1840. The downtown development authority in **Williamston** has discussed plans to rebuild the dam and restore the former river

level for year. However, the Dept. of Natural Resources has the final say, and is seeking to ensure protection for fish, wildlife and shore land.

Boaters have offered an economical dual purpose answer to rebuilding the dam, construction of a small-scale version of the **whitewater** race courses which were built in South Bend, Indiana, and **Wausau**, Wisconsin. In addition to providing a whitewater resource, this **plan** could save approximately **\$150,000** over dam reconstruction, would restore the impoundment to its original level, and contribute a municipal park for **Williamston**.

John Anderson, the Bethesda, Maryland, architect who designed the **Dickerson whitewater** race course in Maryland, has been helping with the design of the Michigan project, as well as encouraging the State and Federal agencies involved with the Brookmont Dam remodeling to build in a **whitewater** boat passage.

Extensive Nantahala River Project Slated

The U.S. Forest Service has announced the details of a plan to "rehabilitate" the Nantahala River corridor in Western North Carolina. According to Michael **Wilkins**, District Ranger for the **Wayah** Ranger District a Draft Environmental Assessment for the project has been completed and is now **available** for public review and comments.

The Forest Service has expressed a preference for Alternative 2 described in the Draft EIS. **This** Alternative involves numerous changes to the **Nantahala** River Launch Site, the take out and other areas along the river.

At the launch site, the Forest Service plans to install flush toilets and changing room facilities with drinking water, redesign the launch pool area to reduce existing erosion and upstream sediment and to disperse use, stabilize the banks of Rowlin Creek; build an observation deck, and place signs and an information **kiosk** on **Highway 19**.

Across the from the current launch site, other improvements are proposed including a commercial **raft** launching facility, a new **toilet/changing** room facility, and a bridge to access the area from State Road 1310.

Various improvements are also proposed for **Patton's Run Overlook**, Ferebee Memorial Picnic Area, and at the takeout site.

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The commercial take out would be expanded and paved and a takeout deck would be constructed. There will also be an 11-14 foot wide walkway with turnouts and steps down to the River from the commercial takeout to the beaching area above Nantahala Falls, barriers along Highway 19 as well as an observation area, a natural stone and wood seating area, and a small platform area for commercial photographers all in view of the Falls.

The riverbank near the Falls would be stabilized by constructing a natural rock

wall, and a paved parking area would be built above the beaching area. In addition there would be road improvements along Highway 19 (including a turning lane) and a reconstructed trail from the beaching area to the Nantahala Falls walkway.

Plans also call for reconstruction of the existing takeout at Silvermine Creek with a paved parking area, a takeout ramp, and a takeout deck.

Copies of the Draft EIS are available from the Wayah Ranger District, US Forest Service, Sloan Road, Franklin, NC 28734.1

Rivers National Forest, and other local environmental interests to develop a strategy on protecting access to the Smith

The Smith River has been designated a Recreational River within a National Recreation Area. However, the only public access to this resource is across private land, a 59-acre parcel completely surrounded by National Forest.

Forty-nine acres are available for sale by the owner. The problem lies in that the USFS has not included this purchase in Land and Water Conservation appropriations through 1995. The owner is being pressed to sell for development, and this opportunity may be lost for good.

AWA is working with the USFS's recreation office in DC, with the regional office in San Francisco, and Senator Hamburg's staff to appropriate emergency funding for this purchase.

AWA is also looking into the possibility of raising private funds to purchase this parcel with an eventual resale to the USFS. This action would provide river access for kayaking, canoeing, swimming, and fishing.

Anyone interested in helping with this purchase is urged to contact AWA at (301) 589-9453. ■



Above: South Fork Smith River
Photo by Rich Bowers



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Access North Fork Smith River (CA) Threatened

In December, AWA Conservation program Director, Rich Bowers, met with Forest Service personnel (USFS) in the Six

REI Bankrolls River Conservation Efforts

The Seattle-based cooperative outdoor gear store, Recreational Equipment Inc (REI) continues to be the leading (often the ONLY) funding source for small grass roots river conservation organizations throughout the country.

For almost a decade REI has provided small but critical seed money grants to a carefully selected group of grass roots river conservation organizations.

Last year, REI gave approximately \$75,000 to 70 separate local groups involved in river restoration and conservation work.

With a few more good corporate citizens like REI, river conservationists could really make some progress!

Many of the groups receiving grants in 1993 were directly involved in efforts to preserve and protect important whitewater rivers, including: the

ACCESS

Yellowstone (WY), South Fork Yuba (CA), Locust Fork (AL), Potomac (MD), and numerous creeks and streams in West Virginia, Idaho and elsewhere.

REI is expected to expand funding for this essential and effective program for 1994. In '94 river access will — for the first time — be an issue for which grants will be targeted.

Last year more than \$14,000 was given to efforts addressing hydro projects, \$10,000 for lobbying on river issues, \$11,000 for state river programs, \$12,000 for Wild and Scenic efforts, another \$28,000 for Omnibus Wild and Scenic programs.

REI selects projects for funding through a panel of experts from national recreation and conservation organizations, including American Rivers (which provides all administrative support), American Whitewater Affiliation, Audubon, River Network, and several others.

Anyone interested in being considered for a grant should contact Rich Bowers at (301) 589-9453 for further information.

RIVER ACCESS UPDATE

by Rich Bowers

AGREEMENT REACHED ON LOWER YOUGHIOCHENY

Negotiations to end the reservation fee on the Lower Yough (PA), have finally begun to yield a solution to this long and ugly dispute. Over the last two years, the Lower Yough reservation fee has attracted national attention from whitewater boaters.

After numerous meetings, representatives of the AWA, ACA, Friends of the Lower Yough, commercial interests, and the PA Bureau of State Parks have agreed on the following interim 1994 system: -On non-holiday weekdays when the shuttle operates, unguided boaters will have the option of either making a reservation for a

specific time, or using the river on a free, space available basis. Walk on access times will be limited to two hours before launch. -There are no changes for weekend and holiday procedures used during 1993, except that the 3:15 non-guided, inflatable launch time has been eliminated.

-No cost walk-ons will continue when the shuttle is not operating, and during nonquota hours. A sign up sheet will be required.

-For 1994, a temporary fee reduction is in place for annual permits, reducing this fee from \$25 to \$15.



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-As in 1993, hard-boaters putting on after 3:00 Pm do not require a permit.

"The main concern for boaters with this reservation system has been that the fee singles out and discriminates against boaters", reports Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Director. "While this interim plan does not eliminate discrimination, it moves this fee closer towards a true reservation fee, and provides boaters and park personnel a season in which to work together on a permanent, and mutually acceptable system".

How well these two entities can get along will be the critical test as to whether, at season's end, we have a workable solution or more picket lines. The responsibility for this outcome is not discriminatory, it lies equally between park personnel and river users of all types.

Meeting dates have already been established for August, and a whitewater advisory panel will be reestablished, to determine the success of this interim plan

In August, decisions will be made hopefully to expand the weekday system to weekends, and to look at other critical issues on the Yough: running Ohiopyle Falls; quota breakouts between commercial raft rentals and private boaters; and differentiating between commercial

inflatables and self-owned inflatables (including duckies, thrill-seekers, etc.).

This interim solution highlights the need for PA State Parks to include river users in future issues which affect them,

while at the same time allowing boaters to recognize Park concerns with managing a river with incredible use levels.

For more information, call Barry Toscano at 412-676-4713. ■

Boater's Access in West Virginia State Parks

Past journal editorials have dealt with concerns over boater access at West Virginia's Valley Falls and Blackwater State Parks, and more recently, concerns at Audra State Park on the Middle Fork of the Tygart.

These problems may be at an end.

Roger Harrison of the West Virginia Rivers Coalition reports that Valley Falls Park Superintendent, Al Dean, has downplayed the problem "We have no problems with kayakers running the river as long as they put in and take out outside of park property", said Dean. After some discussion on safety and state liability, Mr. Dean conceded that, "It would be OK for boaters to stop and scout Valley Falls prior to running it; we just don't want folks

to be carrying their boats up and down the river running the falls numerous times."

The State liability situation was quickly recognized by WV State Park administrators in a previous October meeting with WVRC and AWA.

The problems at Blackwater State Park developed when expert boaters began entering the Upper Blackwater from a popular overlook. The problem was resolved with a reasonable compromise - boaters now use a discreet, primitive trail from the other side of the river.

Worries at Audra State Park seem to be unsubstantiated. Kevin Wolfe, Audra State Park Superintendent, says boaters are welcome at his park. "Although the river is usually only runnable in April and May,

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boaters **are** free to access the river at Audra State Park anytime of the year," says Wolfe.

In an effort to **gain** some consistency by which the parks are managed regarding boating and access, the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and AWA have initiated negotiations with the State to draft a clear, consistent policy for all parks regarding boaters rights to access rivers from park property, travel through waters within park boundaries, and to scout difficult rapids from park property.

A **draft** policy is expected in the next few months. For more information, contact AWA at (301) 589-9453. ■



Route 299 along the Wild & Scenic Trinity River - N. California Photo by Rich Bowers

Trinity River (CA)

New landowners on the western side of the Wild and Scenic South Fork of the Trinity have gated and locked the heavily used "Low Bridge River Access" road.

This bridge was originally built in 1947, and is used extensively by boaters, fishermen, and swimmers. Other river access sites are rare due to the steep river canyon.

Nearly all boaters use this bridge, either as the **take-out** for the challenging "Bears" run, or the easier "Low Bridge Run".

The eastern bank is primarily owned by the Forest Service, and this agency has expressed an interest in providing alternate access on their property. However, the landowners have threatened legal action if this is done, and such an undertaking would take many years to approve, fund and build.

In December, AWA met with the Six Rivers Paddling Club, the USFS, and other local paddling interests to look at ways to remedy this situation. The options are few. If negotiations cannot resolve this situation, the only option remaining may be litigation.

Since the State of California owns fee title to the river bed, and a public trust easement to the high water mark, litigation may be successful. Gating and posting this bridge may also open the landowners to risk of **liability** under the California **recreation** statute. Litigation however, is never a cheap solution.

For more information, contact AWA at (301) 589-9453, or Dave Kruger at (707) 442-9598.

Georgia Access Update

The case **determining** the navigability of Georgia's Armuchee Creek is now dragging into its fourth year. And each year the situation seems to deteriorate.

Initial hearings in April of 1991 ruled in favor of influential landowners with holdings on both sides of the creek. The court found that since the river was not navigable by everyone (farmers, local residents, etc.) it should be treated as non navigable and, therefore, closed to public access.

Landowners were able to prevent boaters from obtaining a jury trial. Boaters felt that a jury would have been more impartial on this issue than a judge.

The dispute was expected to be back before the State Supreme Court in the fall of 1994, but recent events make this unlikely.

Frustrated by the interminable legal wrangling, the Georgia Canoeing Association has spearheaded an effort to pass State legislation to clarify the right of common passage while simultaneously offering protection for stream side landowners.

The proposed bill, entitled "The Georgia Family River Act", is a cooperative effort between the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (the agency with jurisdiction over river access) and the Georgia Canoeing Association.

Despite the efforts of a full time lobbyist, and several river trips for critical decision makers, considerable opposition to the bill has surfaced. The Georgia Farm Bureau, the Cattlemen's Association, and other business representatives mounted a campaign to derail the bill. They succeeded in convincing State Senators that the bill would result in excessive damage to stream side property.

The campaign against the bill seems also to have cooled the enthusiasm of the State DNR

The result, so far, is that six sections of six rivers have been closed, and more are threatened.

For more information, contact AWA regional coordinator Andy **Warsaw**, (404) 373-6683.

Virginia's "Partners In River Access" Program

The Virginia Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries, and the Dept. of Conservation and Recreation, have announced a new program to improve river access, specifically within the hydro relicensing process.

This program, to be finalized in a Memorandum of Agreement, would work **with** hydro applicants to provide enhanced recreational opportunities in the James River Basin. Of primary im-

portance would be acquiring additional river access sites.

A draft agreement with Appalachian Power Company would offer a series of cooperatively funded access sites which would mitigate access problems caused by hydropower projects, and the absence of publicly owned access sites on the James, New and Roanoke Rivers.

This emphasis on access is based on re-

sults from a 1992 Outdoors Survey, which **determined** that five of the top fifteen activities within the state are **water-based**, and require access considerations. Fully **89%** of those surveyed stated that it was important to them to have outdoor recreation opportunities.

For more information, contact AWA Regional Coordinator Charles Ware, at (804) 231-0118.

NEW WATERSHED PROGRAM UNDERWAY IN WASHINGTON STATE

The Rivers Council of Washington (formerly the Northwest Rivers Council) has announced a new 6-year objective "to create a mutually supportive network of 62 watershed communities that invests the social and political will of local people in a sustainable relationship with their natural ecosystem".

The Rivers Council of Washington is a renovation and reinvigoration of the former Northwest Rivers Council. It will be more focused on the rivers within Washington and brings some new energy to the organization.

Joy Huber, the new Executive Director, brings some 20 years of **grassroots** organizing experience. Brooke Martic, a newly minted lawyer with an extensive hydropower background, is an whitewater avid boater.

The Council, like other statewide groups in New York, West Virginia, and Idaho, is composed of people willing and able to do the **hardgrassroots** work which is necessary to make river conservation a reality. RCW, like other effective Statewide river groups includes a healthy

sprinkling of **whitewater** boaters, together with a broad spectrum of other concerned individuals.

The watershed approach being taken by RCW is in sync with the strategies now coming to the forefront for river conservation at the national level. (See the article elsewhere in this issue on the proposed River and Watershed Protection and Restoration Act)

Anyone with an interest in Washington river should join RCW. To learn more about the organization, give them a call at (206) 283-4988. ■



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Royal Robbins Returns to West Virginia

AWA has arranged for the noted rock climber, kayaker, and outdoor clothing manufacturer, Royal Robbins to return to West Virginia as the keynote speaker at the upcoming Appalachian Rivers And Watershed Symposium on June 3.

Robbins was born in Point Pleasant, West Virginia, but earned his fame on the smooth rock cliffs of Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. As one of America's premier rock climbers and kayakers, his achievements include many first ascents and descents throughout the world.

Robbins is an inspirational speaker. His address will deal with success as a **state** of mind, and with development of an attitude that anyone can use to climb the mountains of their choice, real or metaphorical.

Included in his slide presentation are photos of the first ascent of **Half** Dome and all three faces of El Capitan in Yosemite National Park, as well as more than 25 first descents on rivers in California and Chile, including the headwaters of the San Joaquin, the Kern, and the Kings.

Mr. Robbins is also recognized as the owner of the Royal Robbins Company, a manufacturer and distributor of extremely high quality outdoor gear and clothing.

The symposium, to be held on June 2 through 5, on Shared Perspectives and Sharing Solutions was arranged by the West Virginia Rivers Coalition and the West Virginia Dept. of Commerce, Labor, and Environmental Resources. It is sponsored by AWA and a number of West Virginia and national river conservation organizations.

The symposium is expected to bring together various river interests to discuss issues and solutions to problems facing the rivers and watersheds of Appalachia. Themes include water quality and quantity, biodiversity, tourism and recreation, people (the human element in rivers), and river and watershed management.

For registration information, contact Debbie Wise, WV Division of Forestry, PO Box 6125, Morgantown, WV, 26506-6125, (304) 2933721 x 445. For more information, see the article elsewhere in *this* magazine.

Arkansas Plan Will Not Protect Resource

On January 7, AWA criticized the new Bureau of Land Management (BLM) plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Arkansas River in Colorado.

Other organizations, including the Colorado White Water Association (CWWA), also faulted the plan. Extensive comments were submitted by Bill Baker on behalf of the CWWA.

According to AWA Conservation Program Director, Rich Bowers, the plan "will not adequately protect the resource, recognize private boater interests on the river, or address the BLM's own recent recreation policy goals (Recreation 2000)".

The Arkansas is one of the nation's most important whitewater resources. It is one of the most heavily used recreational rivers in the nation, providing 8 separate runs and over 109 miles of whitewater.

AWA objected to the new BLM plan (and the accompanying EIS) noting at least 7 deficiencies. The plan and EIS fail to:

1. Provide quality outdoor recreation opportunities while protecting sensitive resources from mining in the headwaters; erosion from logging; overgrazing and irrigation practices; and off-road vehicle use.
2. Offer the Arkansas Wild and Scenic status, even though the Wild and Scenic Study Report, an appendix to the plan, determined that "Segments 1,2,3, and 4 are eligible and suitable for wild and scenic designation." The plan does recommend designation of the Arkansas as a National Recreation Area.
3. Recommend the Royal Gorge area for Wild and Scenic eligibility.
4. Adequately protect the Beaver Creek watershed.
5. Protect the Arkansas from its most pressing threat today - the proposed Princeton Dam and Elephant Rock Reservoir projects. Without specific language to protect the Arkansas from dams, NRA status is not enough to protect this resource.
6. Balance river use or enhance recreational opportunities for noncommercial river users. Without this balance, the draft fails to manage the existing problems or future needs of the resource.
7. Provide access to Segment One, "the Numbers".

For more information, contact Rich Bowers at (301) 689-9453, or Bill Baker at (303) 399-6821.

NEW TAX ON BOATING GEAR POSSIBLE

Editorial by Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Program Director

A "Summit on Outdoor Recreation" will be held in Washington, D.C. in April of this year to discuss issues facing outdoor recreationists in the United States. A key issue to be kicked around at his event will be a scheme to impose a new excise tax on all outdoor equipment: tents, backpacks, binoculars, boats, paddles, and similar items.

The tax would be paid by retailers selling outdoor equip-

ment. The idea is to provide a large and stable source of funding for government programs run by State and Federal Fish and Wildlife agencies to improve wildlife diversity and habitat. The money would be used for "non game" wildlife species programs, nature tourism, fish and wildlife information, and wildlife habitat acquisition.

Government programs to support wildlife species which

are hunted or fished (such as ducks, deer, and hatchery trout) are currently funded by taxes on hunting and fishing equipment.

When the excise tax was first presented to the outdoor community at last year's Reno Outdoor Equipment Show, many questions were raised about the proposal. At that time tax proponents did not have answers to these questions, and many retailers and

user groups thought that the idea was headed for oblivion. But not yet apparently.

Supporters of the new tax are exerting enormous political pressure to find new sources of funding for non game wildlife programs. A recent letter from the International Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies made it very clear that the outdoor equipment tax is far from a dead issue. *continued next page*

AMERICAN WHITEWATER AFFILIATION

1993 RIVER ACCESS SURVEY

Your Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Phone No. (W) _____ (H) _____

Primary boating activity: (please circle one)
K1 C1 OC SQ Raft Other

ACCESS THREAT OR OPPORTUNITY:

Name of River: _____

Threatened segment(s): _____

State: _____ Counties: _____

Type of Recreation Resource - (please circle)
Class I II III IV V V+

Potential popularity of river area if access were available: Low Medium High
Name of Developer, Agency, Utility or other Landowner: _____

River access problems are rapidly becoming the number one threat to whitewater recreation. AWA is expanding its efforts to secure and improve access to whitewater rivers throughout the country, and we need your help. We want to identify specific river access problems in your area as well as opportunities to secure improved access for boaters. You can help by filling in the survey below and returning it to the AWA.

Brief description of access problem or opportunity, and potential resource: _____

Can you recommend other boaters involved with this issue?

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, Zip _____
Phone No. (W/H) _____
Club Affiliation? _____

How can the American Whitewater Affiliation help in this situation? _____

Additional comments: _____

Please return the AWA Access Survey to:
Rich Powers, Conservation Program Director
American Whitewater Affiliation, 8920 Penton Street, Suite 910
Silver Spring, MD 20910 Phone: (301) 584-9453

Cut and mail today

Few user groups have been plugged into the political equation by the proponents of the **tax**, yet the tax would directly affect all outdoor users, including recreational boaters. Although paid by retailers, the tax **will** be immediately passed along to purchasers.

Boater groups do not **oppose** new excise taxes per se. Nor do boaters argue that wildlife is unimportant to our sport. But this tax needs to be redesigned from the ground up if it is going to gain the support of AWA or any other user group. The present scheme has numerous drawbacks.

Wildlife viewing and diversity are an important portion of the overall river experience for boaters, but pressing problems such as access, river restoration, recreation flows, watershed management and hydro impacts have a more critical and immediate impact on our sport. As proposed, this tax will divert needed funds away from these important issues.

Issues such as access and flow management for recreation are now dealt with mostly by nonprofit groups like AWA. Funding for their

programs comes from donations of members and, increasingly, from the outdoor industry.

Money for river conservation and river access work is very hard to come by these days, especially in the case of recreational issues. Retailers and equipment manufacturers, like the Patagonia Company, R.E.I., and the Conservation Alliance (a consortium of over 2 dozen outdoor companies), have been almost the sole source of dollars for groups like AWA. Without their help, we could not carry on our work advocating the interests of whitewater boaters.

The proposed excise tax would divert this money into the Federal Treasury.

One the funds are in the Treasury, the next question is where does it go from there? The answer seems to be that **anything** not used to reduce the deficit or siphoned off to cover bureaucratic costs **will** wind up in the budgets of State and Federal wildlife agencies.

State and Federal wildlife agencies generally do not address the needs of recreational boaters. In fact, there is no real

advocate for recreational river users in any State government (with the **exception** of one State employee in California), and only a small group in the National Park **Service** addresses the needs of the boating community at the Federal level.

Unfortunately some of the agencies to be funded by the proposed tax (in States like West Virginia and Maryland, just to name two) have **frequently** opposed boating groups. The animosity has been particularly acute in cases where boaters have advocated wild and scenic river studies or whitewater flows at hydroelectric dams. Unless boaters can be made to feel more welcome on the river by these agencies, funding their efforts to protect non game wildlife at our expense seems like a bad investment.

There are technical problems with the **tax** as well. Some sports, like whitewater, are gear intensive. Some, like bird watching, do not involve the purchase of much equipment. The proposed tax would have disproportionate effect on different activities. Boaters

will wind up paying a much larger portion than less costly outdoor activities, even those directly linked to **wildlife** viewing.

WHAT CAN BOATERS DO?

At this point, the excise **tax** is still in a planning stage. Unfortunately, it is being planned without input from those who will pay the tax. Boaters need to be aware of the issue and its possible impacts on our sport. Discuss this issue with other boaters, retailers in your area, and government representatives both locally and in Washington, DC.

AWA **will** continue to keep our members informed of changes in direction, or intent.

The upcoming April "Summit on Outdoor Recreation" is the next step for tax advocates. At the **Summit** a clear picture of the tax should emerge and we should be able to tell where it is headed and whether the concerns of whitewater boaters **will** be addressed. ■

LOCKOUT AT TOHICKON CREEK ?

Each year, on two week ends, a **small**, obscure tributary of the Delaware, just above New Hope, PA, is transformed into a **whitewater** mecca. The waterway is **Tohickon** Creek. Each year, once in the fall and once in the spring, scheduled **draw-downs** of Lake **Nockamixon** attract hundreds of boaters to **Tohickon** Creek, Ralph Stover State Park, and the nearby town of Point Pleasant.

Now the Bucks County Tourist Commission has plans to increase the number of releases by 38 days. Depending on water availability, releases from the lake on 8 weekends each fall, 8 more each spring, and 6 weekdays in the summer could be provided for whitewater.

Tohickon is close to the Philadelphia urban area, and **with** 38 additional releases a year, the creek could offer a dependable, intermediate (class **III+**) resource for boaters in the Mid-Atlantic area. Reliable whitewater of this caliber is hard to come by in the Philadelphia region.

Add this all up and you begin to get the feeling that boaters may be **striking** gold on **Tohickon** Creek.

Maybe someone is striking gold, but the current plan may prove to be a total bust for boaters. Why? Incredibly, the plan suggests that private boaters may not be welcome at scheduled releases!

As now drafted, the plan states that "The **Tohickon** plan does not interfere with existing private boater use of the creek...", since "...the **Tohickon** is used by private boaters after heavy rains, and during the reservoir releases... Those two dates of release would still re-

main available, and of course there would be no interference with running the creek on natural high flows from rain, which require no reservoir release."

The key to the puzzle seems to be a noncompetitive deal struck by the Tourism board with one local rafting company, **Tohickon** Whitewater. Under the plan, the company will control shuttles, **parking** and, possibly the key river **access** points.

The Tourism board is expecting big bucks in tourist visitation, basing their economic projections on **whitewater** dollars generated

on the Lower **Youghiogheny**, the **Gauley**, and the **Ocoee**. According to the plan "A successful operation on the **Tohickon** would involve gross receipts of over \$2 million per year...The total benefit to the county would be near \$6 million in new economic activity."

This involves some serious optimism. The 3.5 mile **run**, and the upstream 4.7 mile section could never rival the **Yough**, **Ocoee**, or **Gauley**. It is too short, too tame, and too **small**.

However, if approved, the **Tohickon** may be the rival of any river anywhere in the

world in terms of congestion. The Tourism board plans to allow **Tohickon** Whitewater to provide 300 commercial rafts **per day**.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers at (301) 589-9453, or Charlie Walbridge at Wildwater Designs (215) 646-5034. You can also write to express your views to the following address:

Bucks County Tourist Commission, Inc., 152 Swamp Road, **Doylestown**, PA 18901, or Pennsylvania State Parks, Dept. of Environmental Resources, PO Box 8551, Harrisburg, PA, 17105-6640. ■

Thank you for your support



Belinda Sanda of Backpacker's Pantry Inc. representing The Conservation Alliance presents Rich Bowers, AWA with a \$40,000 check to support AWA's River Access Program!



After the wedding... COMES THE HONEYMOOSE

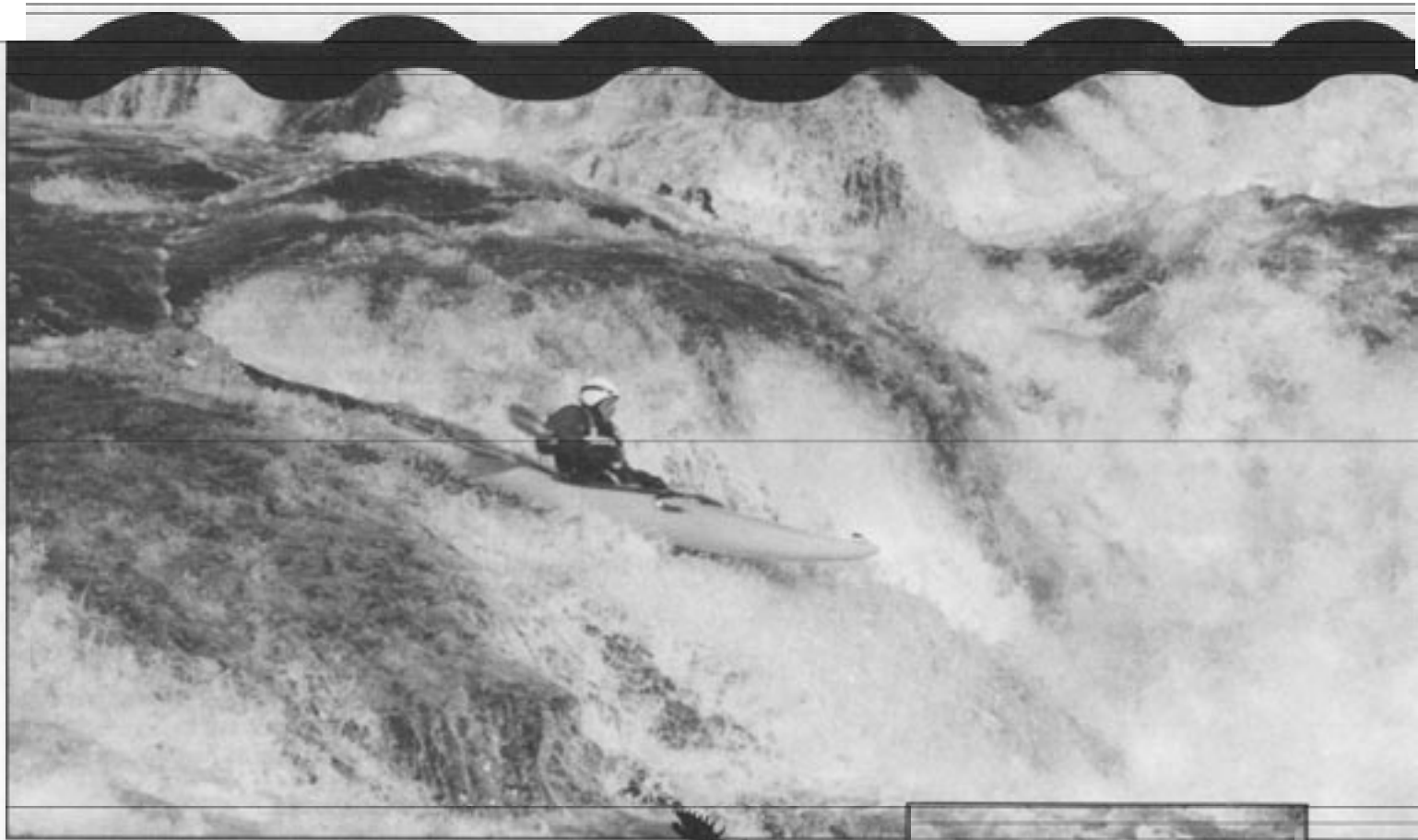
by Chris Koll

From the small pool below, I couldn't see my new wife until the blunt nose of her creek boat poked over the lip of the drop. Caron was about to take her second plunge in the span of 20 hours.

But as she launched from the smooth tongue of green water, Caron's boat twisted to the left at a slight angle into the foam at the base of the falls.

The high-volume Mountain Bat entered instantaneously back into the drop and a curtain of water enveloped her. Caron slammed against the face of the falls and when her boat emerged from the hydraulic, Caron dangled half out of the keyhole cockpit.

At the edge of the pool, a couple of boat lengths from the falls, the river dropped over a jagged 20-foot slide. As I watched, Caron clung to a boulder at the brink of the slide and vainly attempted to haul her boat out of the current.



"Maybe," I thought at that instant, "planning a paddling party on the Bottom Moose the morning after your wedding wasn't such a hor. idea..."

But then, what else can you do on a day when the best whitewater run in New York is up?

We had planned for ceremony to be held in Old Forge—a quaint little village in the central Adirondacks. Located 10 minutes from the Moose, an hour from the Hudson River Gorge, and seconds away from our favorite ski area, Old Forge served as our weekend home.

And since we scheduled the event for the afternoon of Halloween—at the tail end of the fall water release season on the Bottom Moose—we were reasonably assured that our many paddling friends would be particularly encouraged to attend...they wouldn't have to blow off an entire weekend of boating to attend the wedding.

Most of those same paddlers were sitting in the eddy, already loitering at the bottom of slide, or peering over the edge of the 18-foot Agers Falls, as Caron played tug-of-war with the river for her boat. The group was understandably slow to respond. After the reception, a raft company bus shuttled the celebrants around Old Forge from bistro to bistro until the festivities



Left: Crystal - Bottom Moose Me, note approach of the ledges leading to final drop Photo by James Swedenberg
Above: Pete Skinner...the Godfather of the Moose...charges Crystal Falls. Photo by Jon Gellman
Right: Barry Robinson in the Funnel...Bottom Moose. Photo by C. Koll



played out early in the morning. As a consequence, most of the boaters still sported distinctly green complexions.

Besides, didn't those vows I had taken include a promise to "protect"? I figured it was my responsibility to give Caron a hand. And if she washed over the slide, I'd probably have to return all the wedding gifts...

I quickly paddled over.

"My spray skirt popped off," Caron panted as I approached.

"Hold on. I'll be right there," I said, beaching my boat on the rock.

"I can get it," she said, still engaged in the fruitless struggle.

"Let me give you a hand."

"I can do it myself!"

It was my first lesson in being a husband.

Caron escaped from the experience with only a black eye caused when her

paddle ricocheted into her face.

I didn't fare as well. When Caron returned from the paddling trip, my in-laws immediately assumed her daughter had married a wife-beater.

The 30-or-so boaters who shared the Bottom Moose with us on that November first, 1992 probably represented the largest number of paddlers to ever navigate that section of river on a single day.

Which, in its own right, is as surprising as the fact that I finally got married. After all, the Bottom Moose is a challenging class IV-V run that features dependable flows during the spring and fall, an easy shuttle, some breathtaking scenery and a lively nearby resort community (as our wedding guests could attest) with a number of funky Adirondack restaurants and taverns.



You'd think that the Bottom Moose would be as much a paddling destination as the Gauley, Russell Fork or Dead Rivers during their scheduled releases.

Not that I'm complaining, mind you. Since our wedding, Caron and I have built our own weekend home in Old Forge. And it's rather comfortable having your own private class IV-V run just minutes from a warm shower and a cold beer. In fact, during the entire 1993 spring release schedule (while Caron was pregnant with our new daughter), I only had to share the river with four other boaters.

But as the future of continued releases may depend on use of the river, I realize I need to open the doors of my home river to new paddlers. My only hope is that—like polite house guests—they won't stay too long.

Jeez...listen to me. To hear me talk, you'd think I was some cantankerous local born on the Moose...that I owned the banks of the river...and that I was the first to explore its magnificent drops.

That isn't the case at all.

In fact, the Bottom Moose was first run by a group of Albany, NY paddlers back in 1979. I didn't see the river until the spring of 1982 during my first season of boating.

Actually, I ended up on the Moose by accident. I had driven to the Adirondacks from northcentral Pennsylvania with every intention of running the class 3 Hudson River Gorge. It was purely by chance that I turned on to an unpaved road off NY Route 28 late Friday night to catch a few hours of sleep.

I was awakened the next morning by the sound of a car pulling in beside me. Then the sound of another..and another. And when I was finally able to untangle myself from the sleeping bag and gaze up out of the window—I saw they all carried kayaks.

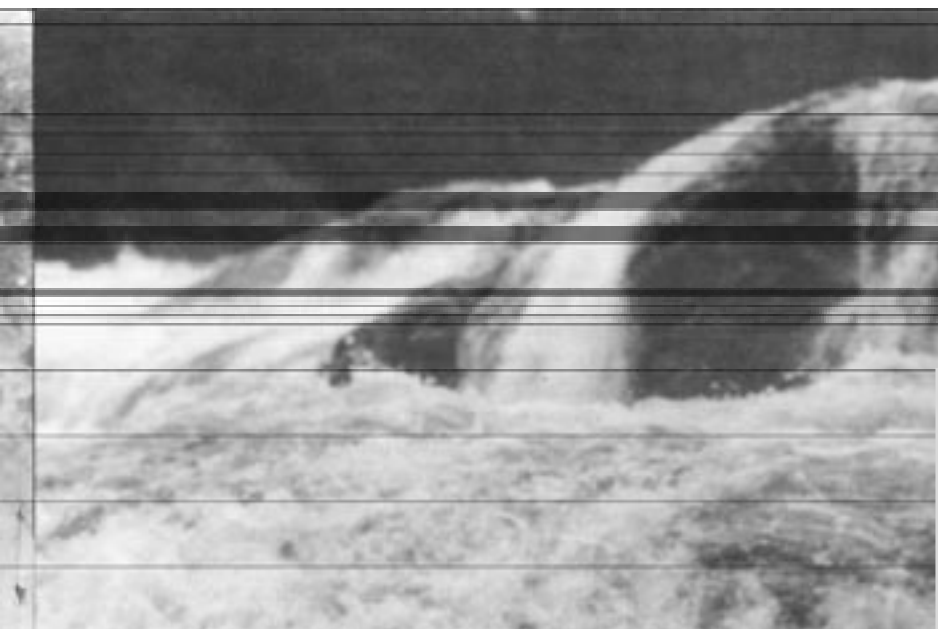
There was a total of 17 boaters after everyone had arrived. I had never met any of them—but I recognized names like Pete Skinner and Risa Shimoda from the pages of Canoe. I just pretended to be part of the group and tagged along with the shuttle.

We put in 11 miles above the Bottom ran the class 4 section known as the Lower Moose. I was clearly out of my league—even on the Lower sec-



Left: Mike Duggan boofing Crystal's final drop
Photo by James Swedenberg

Right: Me—leaning wrong way at boof at Crystal's final drop. Photo by James Swedenberg



tion—but in each rapid I'd pick out a paddler who seemed to exude confidence and follow him through the drop like a baby duck trails its mother.

That strategy worked until passed under an old green bridge and approached a horizon line where the river dropped away in a cloud of mist. I didn't know it then—but the bridge marked the end of the Lower Moose and the beginning of the Bottom. Like the other boaters, I beached my boat by an old stone wall and scrambled out to take a look

What I saw was stunning.

The river rushed over a 10-foot slide and slammed against a large boulder, creating a pillow fronte6 by a hydraulic. Most of the water escaped to the left into a small eddy, but at the end of the eddy the river dropped again—this time in a 45-foot descent down a sheer 60-degree slide.

From the top of the first drop I couldn't see the bottom of the slide so I scrambled around the right side. The view from that perspective wasn't any more reassuring. The river coursed down the rock face in a shallow sheet of water, erupting in roostertails as it rushed over small ledges, then smashed into the pool below. At the base, a deadly looking hydraulic formed from shore to shore.

"This can't be done," I said to myself. But no sooner had that thought crossed my mind, that I glanced up to see Skinner launching himself into the tongue of the first drop.

We scouted every major drop from that point on...and at every major drop I found myself thinking, "No way...this can't be done." But the hollow feeling in my stomach told me that my new paddling partners didn't share my opinion.

It was at a rapid called Knife Edge when I found myself standing next to Skinner. Below us the river narrowed to 20 feet and dropped over a ten foot U-shaped ledge into a foamy cauldron, then flushed over a second 10-foot drop. At the lip of the drop, a ski-jump rock produced a tiny tongue that might enable a boater to boof the worst of the top hole—but the approach was blind...

The first boater through shot through the sluice effortlessly.

Skinner turned his head, grinned, and said: "It sort of redefines what is runnable, eh?"

It certainly did for me. Because although I was able to sneak a few of the rapids, I actually ran most of the drops on the Bottom Moose that day. And although I realized that it was pure luck that enabled me to survive with just a single swim and no permanent damage, I went back to Pennsylvania and my normal haunts in West Virginia a changed paddler.

The Lower Yough just didn't seem intimidating anymore.





Above: Pete Skinner at Powerline on the Bottom Moose

Below: Funnel- Bottom Moose



Ironically, a year later my career moved me to central New York. With the Moose only 90 minutes away, it became my home river.

But although I boated the Bottom Moose as many as ten times a year, I never again encountered a group of paddlers as large as that first day.

Over the years there were some changes to the river. In 1985, a paddler attempted to punch through the top hole at Knife Edge, was pulled from his boat and flushed into an undercut in the middle of the second ledge.

His body remained wedged in the rocks for four weeks while local volunteer firemen poked and prodded with pikes and grappling hooks. In desperation, they blew a hole in the sheer rock wall of the river bank in an attempt to siphon away some of the flow.

Nothing worked until Ben Woodard, a state forest ranger who is also a whitewater boater, gave it a try. Ben retrieved the body in half an hour.

Fortunately, the new channel blown in the rock created a perfect sneak route around the rapid. It's now an easy class 4 move.

But in 1986 came another change--and this alteration didn't make the river easier to run. The Long Lake Hydroelectric Corp. succeeded in building a power project that dewatered the Bottom's final miles along

with four of the river's best rapids.

Skinner and the AWA did not let the project go uncontested. And as part of its license settlement, Long Lake agreed to spill water back into the river for recreational purposes on 20 days during the year—eight Sundays in succession starting the third Sunday in April, the first two Sundays in October; and 10 optional Saturdays or Sundays between April and October.

That might sound simple enough. But just because the power company agreed to let the river flow on a specific day didn't guarantee that the river was runnable. The project doesn't store water—it just uses the natural flow. So if the river wasn't running at a decent level—usually figured at between 3' and 4.5' on the McKeever gauge—the release day was wasted.

Maybe it was the lack of spontaneity of the system. Or perhaps predicting optimal levels on release dates proved too difficult. But whatever the reason, every year, fewer paddlers seemed to show up on the Bottom.

And after a while, the process even seemed to complicated for me. I'd just boat the Lower Moose—and maybe run the first half of the Bottom as well—taking out at Lyonsdale above the project.

To be perfectly honest, at first I was ambivalent about missing the rapids in the second half of the Bottom—known to local boaters as the Bottom Bottom. For a long time, they scared me to death.

Now, I never minded Agers Falls. Despite my wife's misfortune there—Agers remains as innocuous as a 18 foot freefall can be. It's been run frontwards, backwards and sideways. But the rapids downstream—Shurform, Powerline and Crystal—filled me with dread, even after years on the river.

Shurform starts when a rocky island divides the river in half. On the right side, the drop starts with a narrow sluice. Midway down the sluice a reaction wave from the island pushes you right, where the river drops 30 feet over 50 yards around a jumble of car-sized pinning rocks. However, if the boater is able to punch through the reaction wave and move to the left, he is rocketed down a shallow slide before negotiating a final slot.

It's only a single **move**—but the consequences of failure are ugly.

Powerline begins around the next bend. It's **actually** a joyful class 4 **rapid**—100 yards of compressed **channel** with steep chutes and hydraulic obstacles. Normally, an advanced boater would greet Powerline with a hoot and holler—if only Crystal didn't begin 20 yards downstream from the final hole...

Crystal is arguably the most spectacular runnable rapid in the Northeast. Spread over an eighth mile, the river **drops** 50 feet in a series of four ledges.

The final drop is the **crux** move. On the **left** the river thunders in a 20-foot **cataract** over jagged boulders. But on the **right**, there is a slide into an eddy, then a **ski** jump rock they enable you to boof 10 feet down onto the aerated pillow of a submerged boulder.

At the bottom, you realize you've fallen into a miniature gorge. Sheer rock walls of **Adirondack** granite flank both sides of the river, **framing** the multi-tiered cascade of water from which you have descended. And above the cliffs, dense stands of cedar trees enclose the canyon with a green **canopy**.

No, although I *still* thought of the Bottom Moose with trepidation—it was easy to understand why I had to keep coming back

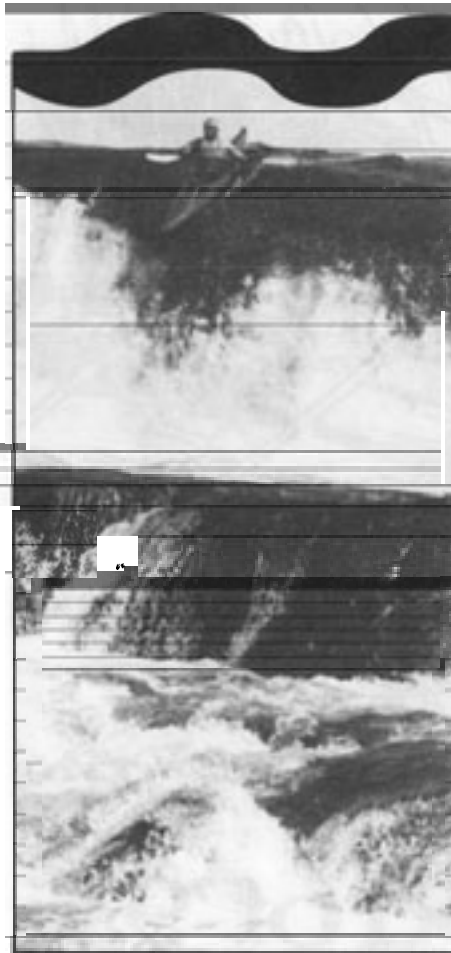
Of course, during the fall of 1993, I didn't have much of a choice. It was boat the Bottom **Moose**—or not boat at all.

With a new baby in the house, and **Caron** *still* recovering from the delivery, taking off for a Gauley weekend was not an option. Fortunately, I had the Moose half an hour away.

Starting on Columbus Day weekend, the small **dam** on the North Chain of Lakes is opened wide, dumping an extra 400 cfs into the Middle Branch of the Moose. The extra water, combined with **normal** flows on the South and North Branches of the river, produce predictable optimal levels for the Bottom Moose during the final three weekends of October.

Now if there would be people to paddle with...

I expected four or five boaters to show up the Sunday after Columbus



Day. So it was quite a surprise to see a dozen vehicles bearing kayaks and canoes waiting at the put-in.

There were **20-some** paddlers ready to challenge the Bottom and, except for a few familiar regulars, most were fresh faces.

The similarity of the scene to my **first run**—some 10 years in the **past**—was striking. But unlike my first experience on the Bottom Moose, there was little trepidation among these newcomers. Most of them quickly sized up the rapids, watched a few probes negotiate the lines, and cleanly followed the same routes.

And none of them **ran** for home after the run, not to return for several years. Most were back the following weekend...and for the weekend after that. And by the time October ended, the Bottom Moose had witnessed its busiest month in history.

Hopefully, Moose Season has been **born**.

MOOSE FACTS

Releases on the Bottom Moose **are** scheduled for eight Sundays in succession beginning the third Sunday in April and the **first** two Sundays in October.

Generally **speaking**, **optimal** water levels (between 3' and 4.5' on the **McKeever** gauge) are encountered through early May and the second October Sunday.

There are also 10 optional dates which are generally scheduled for October weekends **starting** on Columbus Day.

High water can render the Bottom Moose dangerous at any time during the season. However, the first half of the Bottom Moose is commonly run at levels up to 5.5 and can be combined with a Lower Moose trip at high water.

Boaters who wish to run the Bottom Moose must sign in with the power company before putting on. During release days, a power company representative is at the Agers Falls intake site starting at 10 am. Sign in during the shuttle.

The author is usually aware of paddling plans on the Bottom Moose and can be reached during the evening at (315) 652-8397.



Above: Cresting Ager Falls on the Bottom Moose

Below: Emeritus Editor Chris Koll with newborn daughter Carly Ann. "An Attentive Baby Sitter!"





the snow crept out onto the road. I slipped the Cherokee into four wheel drive. Even so, we started to spin and slide.

We were halfway down a steep grade when we hit some ice and, like a fool, I locked the brakes. Sara let out a screech and Jack nearly jumped through the windshield before I regained my senses and started to pump the pedal. We came to a halt where the road turns abruptly to the left, just a foot shy of the edge of a cliff. Needless to say, there were no guardrails. Sara's kayak rocketed off the roof of the Cherokee and sailed over the hood, **disappearing** over the edge of the precipice.

Fortunately the bow line was tied to my bumper and, after we regained our composure, we hauled her boat up from the abyss and secured it again. We decided we had come far enough and vowed to pull over and camp at the next suitable spot. And so we pitched our tents about a quarter of a mile down the road, shivering as we struggled to drive the stakes into the ground, still frozen just a few inches below the surface. A few minutes and a lot of cursing later we climbed into our sleeping bags and soon we were asleep.

The sky above was still clear when we bedded down, so I was surprised to be aroused by the sound of rain on my roof. The wind was whistling through the trees. It was one hell of a storm; soon the water seeped through the seams of my tent and before long it was lapping at the edge of my thinnest mattress. Realizing that my sleeping bag would soon be soaked, I cursed the weatherman and decided to make a dash for the Cherokee.

By the time I got there I was drenched. I found a dry sweater lying on the back seat and tried to sleep, but I couldn't get comfortable. The window glass steamed with condensation and the rain sounded like a roller coaster running over the roof of the car. I thrashed about, **finally** recognizing what was wrong. **Rain** or no rain, there was no denying it; I had to take a leak. I grabbed the flashlight and stepped out **into** the storm.

I started back to the car after I finished, but stopped when I heard the roar of rushing water. Some lights were blinking through the trees from the valley below. I surmised that we must have nearly reached the point where the road trails down the mountain to the level of the river...our put in...and I was surprised ~~that~~ we hadn't noticed the lights when we had pitched our tents.

The Shaver's Fork was making a terrible racket; it was surely in flood, and I wondered if we would dare kayak it at all.

Ignoring the storm, I decided to hike down the road. I was already drenched and I wanted to take a look at the river and the lights. I had never heard that **any-**

The Flood of '93

by Lee Roberts

If you've been to Sara's house you must have noticed it... the old-fashioned porcelain doll secured in her china cupboard. Nearly the size of a three-year-old, dressed in gingham and lace. A little girl doll with a luminous face and golden curls in ringlets and eyes like robins' eggs. Sara is **really** proud of it; understandably so, for it is surely a valuable antique. Sara wouldn't part with it for the world.

But I wish she'd get rid of it.

Not that I find it unattractive. In a way it's very pretty. But I was with Sara when she found it, though I know a bit more about it than she does.

Quite a bit more.

And so when I sit in Sara's house, watching TV or making small talk, I feel its eyes on me, staring through the glass. And **try** as I might, I can't shake the feeling that it's reaching out through ~~that~~ locked door, pulling me backwards toward some time and place ~~that~~ I'd just as soon forget.

Ill tell you why, if you promise not to laugh.

Sara came by the doll early last spring while she and Jack and I were kayaking in central West Virginia. It was the evening of Friday, March 13th, to be exact, when we drove up from Baltimore, anxious to paddle some seldom run stream. The gauge at Parsons on the Cheat was 8.4 feet and rising and the weatherman promised a balmy spring weekend, one that would

snap the spell of winter.

How eerie those early spring days can be—the trees barren against the sky, the ground lifeless except for an occasional skunk cabbage **poking** its nose through the dead leaves, trying to get a jump on the competition. At night the coons and possums wander stupidly about on the **backcountry** roads, **looking** for sex, but more often finding the ultimate fulfillment under the wheels of a speeding pickup.

On the way we decided to run the Shaver's Fork, the Cheat's most inaccessible tributary. It was said to be a spectacular spring run and none of us had done it before. We didn't get to **Elkins** until nearly 9 p.m.; Jack had a late class and Sara had to find a sitter for her dogs. It was well past ten by the time we left Sara's pickup at the takeout in **Bowden**. We elected to drive on for a while toward the kayaker's put-in up on Cheat Mountain. That way we'd get an early start on the river.

I was getting drowsy as we negotiated the serpentine **cowpath** that masquerades as a road on the **Randolf** County map, so Jack told ghoststories to keep me awake. A full moon hovered above the mountaintops as the fog settled into the valleys. Soon Jack's tales turned ghastly and perverse... **I**ll Sara got really scared and lost her temper and put a stop to it.

As our elevation increased we noticed some sizeable drifts in the woods and soon

one lived along the Shaver's Fork and there was no mention of a town on the topographic maps.

It was quite a ways down the mountain, nearly a mile, and the further I sloshed, the louder the clamour. The road forked, the larger branch zigzagging back up Cheat Mountain, while a smaller branch, nearly overgrown, trailed off toward the swollen river.

I followed that road about a quarter of a mile; now the sound of the river was deafening. I felt a chill; someone had walked across my grave. My instincts were to turn back, but I forced myself on, telling myself there was nothing to fear.

Finally I reached a rickety wood bridge that spanned the Shaver's Fork, one that I would never cross with the Cherokee, even on a summer day with the river running at a trickle. Now the floodwaters were ripping at the pilings and splashing over the deck, causing the whole affair to vibrate.

I started across but the infrastructure let out a groan and the deck seemed to shift as the water poured around my feet. I directed my light over the edge. The river had a viscious demeanor; the cauldron under me boiled furiously, raging as it struggled to tear the bridge away. I caught a glimpse of a terrified doe, struggling to keep her head above water as she was swept along to certain death.

For a time I stood transfixed, then I gingerly backed off the bridge. When I was sure of my footing I paused to survey the lights across the river.

There were more than I expected, perhaps not enough to call a town, but at least a village by Randolph County standards. The homes were tiny, delapidated shanties. The lights inside flickered, suggesting that the houses were not illuminated by electricity but rather by gas flame or wood fires. I checked my watch; it was after midnight. Considering the hour I was surprised to see any lights at all.

The town was built on a flood plain and I could see that if the river rose much more the homes would be lost. That's probably why the lights are on, I thought. No doubt they're keeping an eye on the flood.

I spotted a building downstream, larger and more brightly lit than the others. At first I thought it was a church, but then I heard the whine of fiddles and saw silhouettes whirling and spinning through the windows. Apparently it was a community hall, perhaps a grange. Inside they were dancing up a storm, creating a ruckus so loud that I could hear it across the raging river.

The building seemed to pulsate in time to the music, an old Appalachian reel, and I surmised that every man, woman and child in town must have been there.

How could they be so foolish, I wondered, and then it hit me. They had apparently been in there so long that they were oblivious to the danger outside.

It was up to me to warn them. I checked the bridge; the water was even higher than before. More than a foot of water was streaming over the deck. The span groaned and swayed and I knew that it was now or never. I mustered my courage and charged across, the water sucking at my feet and then my ankles and finally my knees. I could hear the beams splinter. Certain that the bridge was about to collapse, I ran even faster.

When I reached the other side I paused to catch my breath and I looked back just in time to see the bridge fold into the maelstrom. It was gone in an instant. Unsatiated, the Shaver's Fork continued to rise even faster than before. I was tempted to head for higher ground but then I saw the river spilling over its banks, coming closer and closer to the community hall.

I sloshed through the mud toward the brightly lit building, the music ever louder ahead, the floodwaters ever louder behind. I didn't hesitate when I reached the door but burst through, not for a moment considering the consequences of my intrusion. The door slammed behind me.

As I staggered to the center of the floor, covered with mud, the music came to a jarring halt and the dancers gasped and stepped backward, eyeing me with surprise and suspicion. They stared as if I were from outer space, their eyes coming to rest on my flashlight as if it were a loaded gun.

I didn't take much time to look around but I remember there were no electric lights, just lanterns, and there was a blaze in the big stone fireplace at the far end of the hall. The people were strangely clad; the men tall and rawboned in buckskin, the women diminutive in coarse woolen dresses and shawls. I wondered if it was a costume ball. The younger children were huddled in a corner napping on blankets spread over the floor, while the older children sat in front of the fire, staring wide-eyed at me, the mysterious intruder.

I don't know why but one child in particular caught my eye. A blue-eyed girl, perhaps four years old, standing alone, sucking her thumb. Different from the others—pale, fragile, and somber. She was wearing a gingham dress decorated with lace and she had long blond hair in ringlets. In her arms she clutched a porcelain doll, not quite her size, but in every other respect her twin.

For an instant she held me with her gaze. Then I remembered why I was there.

"There's a flood coming," I shouted, "the river's rising fast."

They looked as if they didn't understand a word I said. I tried again.

"Flash flood...it's swept the bridge away and this place is next. Head for higher ground!"

None of them stirred. I ran to the door and pulled it open so they could see for themselves. Two feet of water immediately swamped the floor, but they just stood there, up to their knees, with their mouths agape. The water swirled around the room and extinguished the fire with a terrible hissing sound. The children and the women started to scream.

I directed my light back through the door and then I saw it coming, a great black swell of water, twenty feet high. I turned toward the villagers...I will never forget the surprise and the terror in those faces as the deluge crashed through the wall.

The building filled in a matter of seconds. One by one the lights went out and soon I was treading water with my head bouncing off the ceiling. I could hear the shrieks of the woman and children and the shouts of the men. Suddenly the roof was torn away and the whole building was swept off its foundation. I was tumbling, over and over, in the icy black water.

Lighting flashed as I surfaced and the face of a child appeared before me—the little girl with the gingham dress. I lunged and grabbed her but she was cold and stiff and, as she was torn from my hands, I realized that I had not held the child at all, only her porcelain doll.

Then I was drawn under again. I had to struggle to surface even for an instant. Unable to direct my course, I bobbed downriver at an unbelievable pace. I coughed and sputtered but couldn't catch my breath. Finally I was swept against a fallen tree.

I clutched the branches, trying to save myself, but the floodwaters sucked at my legs and pulled me down with a merciless force that I could never hope to overcome.

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The Flood of '93

My **strength** was going fast.

It was so damned cold. I **finally** realized it was futile to struggle and with that knowledge came a strange feeling of relief. I let go of the tree and **disappeared** beneath the surface. My will to live was gone.

I felt the frigid water streaming into my lungs, and I thought "So this is it." as the darkness swallowed me.

And then I wasn't thinking anymore.

When I came to it was early morning and I **was** in my sleeping bag inside my tent. My bag was **dry** and the floor was **dry**, and, as I scrambled to put on my shoes, I discovered they were **dry** as well. I crawled out into the open air. There had been a heavy frost, but the sky was crystal clear and the sun was **already** rising over Cheat Mountain.

How had I **gotten** back to the tent, I wondered, and then, how could the ground be so **dry**? The leaves crackled **beneath** my feet...as if there hadn't been any **rain** at all. I **started** to call Sara and Jack, but the sound caught in my throat. I realized something was **terribly** wrong.

I ran down that road as fast as I could, trying to figure out what the hell was going on. I turned down the fork that led to the river; the mad was even worse than I remembered.

When I reached the Shaver's Fork I stopped dead. The river was running at a moderate level, the water gurgling on the rocks, not with **one-twentieth** the **fury** of the night before. The bridge and the town were gone, **all** that remained were the abutments and a few foundations on **the** opposite shore. Downstream I could **see** the column of stone that had been the chimney of the community hall, **all** that was left to mark its passing.

There was no mud, no debris, no clothing, no bodies. Nothing to bear witness to the catastrophe that I had experienced.

I sat on a boulder, stunned, my mind spinning.

And then I saw the rusty historical marker, peeping through the thicket along the road. I read the sign several times **before** I understood.

BEMIS

On March 13, 1793 the logging town of Bemis and its inhabitants were swept away by a flash flood of the Shaver's Fork River. There were no known survivors.

I didn't run the Shaver's Fork that day, nor have I since. I told Sara and Jack that I hadn't slept well and that I was under the weather. But I was there when they came off the river that **afternoon**, dragging their boats up the hill to the **cars** in **Bowden**, teasing me for **wimping** out.

"You should have come along," Jack announced. "It was a piece of cake. Not **half** as hard as the guidebook implies."

"No doubt," I muttered, **staring** at the murky water below.

"And wait til you **see** what I found," Sara **said**, reaching into the cockpit of her boat.

I felt a sudden **chill**; someone had walked across my grave.

I didn't need to look. I knew what she had even before she held it up.

The other survivor of the **flood** of '93. A porcelain doll, dressed in gingham and lace, with golden curls in ringlets and eyes like robins' **eggs**.■

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AGONY



Idaho's
Meadow
Creek

Ecstasy

*Story by Gregg Lawley
Photos by Gregg Lawley,
Don McClaran, and
David Kalange*

As we neared the end of my second successful expedition down of Meadow Creek I reflected upon to the observations that Larry had made a few hours earlier. With Don waving the video camera in his face, Larry Daum had described Meadow Creek as the agony and the ecstasy of creek runs. "It has portages from Hell, incredible whitewater, and, without a doubt, is one of the most beautiful places any of us has ever seen."

Larry went on to compare the cedar and fern covered hillside we had just wrestled our boats across to a fantasy forest that might be inhabited by elves. My own recollections of that difficult portage focus on the sweat stinging my eyes and the voracious horse flies that always seemed to know when both my **hands** were occupied.

Meadow Creek, a major tributary of the Selway River in north-central Idaho, flows **43** miles through one of the largest **defacto** wilderness areas left in the country. The most impressive statistic about this creek is the **vertical** drop, for the **runnable 38** miles the average is 106' per mile. Just below the **confluence** with East Meadow Creek, in the upper canyon, the water plummets 440' in two miles. Don said this section reminded him of plunging down an challenging slope at a downhill **ski** area.. in a kayak!

Meadow Creek is a three to five day, self contained, steep creek run that is as good as anything in the country. Spectacular scenery, truly wild wildlife, and innumerable granite boulder bed rapids make for an incredible adventure. The difficult portages and the bushy boat **drag** to the put-in are the only negative aspects to this trip. The price of admission into this wilderness **Disneyland** is **high**, but the payoffs are "oooh soo sweet".

I **first** paddled Meadow Creek in mid June of '92 with David Kalange, another paddler from **McCall**, Idaho. To my knowledge, our's was the second descent. The first had been made by another party of Idaho boaters a couple of weeks before: Grant Amaral, Dawn Benner, Jim Ciardelli, Craig Stoenner and Tony **Brennan**. Based on their verbal reports, I anticipated that Meadow Creek would be difficult, but **runnable**. David and I didn't have much time so our's was a rushed affair. We took only 2 1/2 days to paddle and portage **38** miles. During this **first** trip I vowed to return and spend more time savoring **this** awesome creek, which flows through what may be the most pristine major watershed left in the state of Idaho.

The group that I drafted for my '93 trip consisted of Don **McClaran**, Larry Daum, Troy **Merrill** and myself. Dur-



Left: Lower Meadow Creek Gorge
Photo by Don McClaran
Above: Boater David Kalange, Lower Meadow Creek gorge
Photo by Gregg Lawley

ing the spring and summer of '93 central Idaho saw much higher flows than usual in most all rivers. Close to normal snowfall in the winter coupled with an extremely rainy spring and early summer left Meadow Creek flowing too high through May and June. Finally, by early July, the water volume in Meadow Creek dropped to what I considered a sane level. So off we went on what I hoped would be **Gregg's Excellent Adventure Part Two**.

Don's father in law, **Binx** Sandahl, had agreed to help us with the shuttle. He was at the Granite Springs campground when we were **packing** and organizing our kayaks for the trip. His comment that our plastic boats were the funniest **looking** backpacks he had ever seen got a big laugh from the four of us.

My second kayak dragging trip down the heavily forested slope to the creek was, if **anything**, more hideous

than the **first**. Boaters attempting this route to the middle section of the meadows should come prepared with long pants, bug juice, and a piece of webbing for a tow line. We **finally** got to the creek at dark, whereupon we were treated to a four hour thunder and lighting show that made sleep impossible.

Our major goal the next morning was to get all of our wet gear into our boats, then beat feet down to an old trapper's cabin located towards the north end of the meadows. Since Larry and Don had decided that my **Invader** was the principal gear boat of the expedition, and because it had been my idea to purchase the fresh, whole salmon that we hadn't had the daylight or the energy to cook the night before, I was elected to lug it to the cabin.

Having a large, slimy **fish** sliding around **inside** my boat seemed paradoxical; I though the fish were supposed to be in the creek

The **cooking** facilities at the cabin were bound to be more appropriate for gourmet **cooking than anything** I had **onboard**, so it didn't take much to convince me to head for the cabin. Knowing the energy needed to portage our boats around the first steep boul-



*Left: Boater David Kalange, Upper Meadow Creek gorge
Photo by Gregg Lawley*

*Below: Portager David Kalange, Lower Meadow Creek, Second Boulder Pile Portage
Photo Gregg Lawley*

der choked section of the canyon, we didn't hesitate to gorge ourselves on fresh Salmon, potato's and onions.

The character of this creek changes **dramatically** about a mile below the cabin. The stream rounds a right turn and disappears into a pile of logs and rocks. **Just** on the other side of the logs the gradient accelerates to about 200 feet per mile. The whole scene is pretty ominous. The carry around this mess wasn't nearly as damaging psychologically the second time as the **first**, because this time I knew that there was big fun ahead. Sitting in the eddy at the bottom of the first **runnable** section, my budding excitement hit the **skids** when Larry and I spotted Troy's empty boat careening down through the rocks. **This** was my first inkling that maybe **this** type of paddling was a little bit more than Troy had bargained for. We collected his gear, got him back together, and proceeded on, cautiously.

The smiles on their faces **just** got bigger and bigger as my paddling companions experienced one tight, technical rapid after another. We found a pleasant campsite, just as it was getting dark. It was **Larry's** turn to cook dinner and between his tasty **tostados** and his trademark Doggaritas (a very flavorful combination of Tequila and Pink Lemonade) we hit the sack full and satisfied.

The next day we were treated to more great whitewater and excellent scenery. After a while you get complacent on the 100' per mile sections until steeper stuff comes up. **And** come up it does. The rapids in the three mile stretch below the confluence with the East Fork of Meadow Creek are some kind of steep.

The creek does a full 180 degree turn and it's one big drop **after** another all around the bend. Most of these rapids have potential penalties. On my first trip David and I stood tall and ran this entire section. On my second run I was a little more cautious and

elected to portage one particularly treacherous rapid that rears its ugly head not far below Meadow Creek

This is a very impressive piece of whitewater and definitely one of the most difficult **runnable** rapids on the run. My enthusiasm for this drop was tempered by watching Troy make a mad swim for an eddy **after** getting fouled up in the big pourover, **just** above it. The large boulders that completely block the channel here are bad enough, but the congested approach ramp is guarded by a corkscrewing hole that keeps one from taking a direct line over the ledge. The rest of



the line through this monster is exceedingly devious and not for the faint of heart.

As we dropped deeper and deeper into the canyon I was more and more impressed. Meadow Creek is definitely one of the "Best Places". The adventurous American paddler doesn't have to go outside the borders of this country to find pristine, wild rivers to paddle.

As we approached the confluence with Schwar Creek Larry suddenly started paddling hard for the left bank. I couldn't figure out what was wrong. He proceeded to climb out of his boat and, after dumping, he examined the bottom very intently. He had been complaining about excessive leakage for most of the day, but I hadn't thought too much about it.

Oops, there was an all too obvious reason for the water in his boat—a six inch gash! This was definitely not good.

We still had twenty plus miles of very rocky creek to run and we were a long way where from nowhere. We located an excellent campsite not far below this spot and started to discuss our options.

Over dinner and doggaritas we came to the conclusion that Larry would try to get his boat dry in the morning and give the rip a good duct taping. Then we would see what happened. "Stuck in Meadow Creek with the ripped boat blues" became Larry's lament

Ultimately, he managed to complete the trip in fine form. But his duct taping job forced him to shoulder his boat on the portages, rather than dragging like the rest of us.

The next morning Troy and I launched ahead of Don and Larry to get downstream and set up to video. I was leading and realized too late that the innocuous looking little chute that I had chosen was blocked by a small log, bridged between the rocks at the bottom. At first I thought I could jump over it on the right, but at the last instant the nose of my boat acted like it had an anchor. "Whumph", my chest slammed up against the log. My immediate reaction was to tip over and paw my way under. Mercifully, this maneuver worked and, after getting my loaded boat to shore, I walked back up the bank and informed Don that I

would be needing the breakdown paddle.

I had neglected to hang on to mine in my haste to escape the log. After what seemed an eternity Don got the breakdown together. While I waited I conjured up terrible scenarios regarding the destiny of my paddle. I was in a big sweat to get downstream and see if I could find it.

I didn't pay any attention to the breakdown; I just got in my boat and

started out of the eddy.

"Whoa!" That right side stroke was okay, but there was something very wrong with my left stroke. It just sliced through the water. It took a minute for this to register and I almost flipped before I got back to the eddy and took stock of my situation. I was relieved to discover that Don had inadvertently set the paddle for left handed control. Once I got the paddle riddle solved I was able to cruise down the

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Above: Larry Daum about to take the plunge, The Nozzle, Lower Meadow Creek
 Photo Don McClaran
 Right: David Kalange just below the Nozzle, Lower Meadow Creek Photo Gregg Lawley

cabin in the upper meadows, these Forest Service buildings are the only structures to be seen in this entire drainage.

The final day on Meadow Creek starts out very mellow. But knowledge of what follows downstream prompted me to try to get the group on the water at early hour. I met only limited success. Larry was a great guy to have on the trip, but his idea of an early start was "anytime before noon". I knew that once we started into the lower gorge we were committed to finishing the run. There just aren't many places to camp in this section.

I also did my best to impress upon Troy the necessity of catching critical eddies in this section! Not far below the Guard Station we chased a cow and a calf Moose out of the creek, then a cow and calf Elk! Meadow Creek really does have a wealth of wildlife.

It is fortuitous that the first five or six miles below the Guard Station are easy, because, as the gorge starts to close in, it gets more spectacular. Groves of towering trees, colorful moss and ferns and, if you are really quiet and sneaky, maybe even some of Larry's elves. There are plenty of gnarly, rapids to deal with later on and it is a luxury to be able to lean back and soak up a large dose of Meadow Creek's remarkable scenery.

Now, about those big rapids. The big stuff starts off with two boulder pile rapids, featuring numerous logs and impressive gradient. I've portaged these two on the right and on the left. The left is better. Both carries are difficult thrashes, but on the left you can pick your spot to return to the water, rather than being "cliffed out". After these two grunts the rapids continue to come fast and furious for the next five or six miles. This lower gorge contains every variety of drop you could imagine.

There are complex boulder gardens, steep chutes, low waterfalls, and last, but not least, the Nozzle. This is the name we gave to the big plunging pourover that is one of the last rapids before the Slims Campground. This plunge is about ten feet into a very deep aerated pool. It's big fun. Unfortunately, there are a few short portages in this section, but they aren't

river about a quarter mile to where Don, Larry, Troy and, oh yes, my paddle, were waiting. I was glad that my bout with brain lock seemed to be over.

The middle section of Meadow Creek does not contain any big rapids. There is, however, one short section with a half a dozen bedrock type drops in a mossy little gorge. That gets the fun meter cranked up once again. Also, there are some really impressive cedar groves along this section of Meadow Creek. These huge trees appear to have escaped the wildfires that have had such an impact in other areas of the Selway drainage.

Wandering around in these majestic groves will impress even the most jaded tree hugger—there are some really majestic trees in this canyon.

At about the two thirds mark one finds the Meadow Creek Guard Station. This old ranger station has a great deal of historical significance and it is one of the finest examples of backcountry architecture to be found in the West. The buildings were originally built in the 1920's and they were fully restored in the mid 80's. The grassy areas around the buildings make a great campsite.

The only drawback to camping in the grass around the cabin is the family of deer that have taken up permanent residence. They are so tame that they are pesky. Other than the old trapper's

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too bad. In the last miles above the **Slims** Campground you feel like you've been transported to a creek in the coast range of British Columbia... lush and green, **with** a feeling of remoteness and inaccessibility. This lower section is very demanding. The **kayaking** is **difficult**, diverse and **tiring**. When the Selway **finally** comes into view, it is a welcome site.

I encourage strong competent groups to take up the challenge of Meadow Creek. Due to the drainage's precarious land **use** designation, Meadow Creek is in desperate need of a **kayaking** constituency that is willing to voice its support for **this** truly precious gem. At the lower water levels that I recommend boaters don't have to be supermen. They need to be experienced in dealing **with** situations that may come up in a very remote, inaccessible wilderness environment.

Parties attempting this run are definitely on their own! Self rescue is the only option here. In the canyon at the end of the meadows there are few places where a helicopter could land. **Kayakers** here are as isolated as it is possible to be in the lower 48 states. Be careful.

Don't attempt Meadow Creek just for the excellent **whitewater**; go there rather for the experience of using your kayak to transport you down a creek that **will** simply amaze and entertain you beyond belief. The physical demands of a **run** down Meadow Creek are high, but there isn't a finer multiday, steep creek run anywhere.

ACTION-ALERT

The Meadow Creek drainage is currently involved in multiple land use designation studies. It is at the center of a controversial "Wilderness" debate involving the remaining **roadless** lands in the **State** of Idaho. This drainage is the largest non-roaded, non "wilderness designated" piece of real estate **left** in the entire state. The present governor doesn't want any of this watershed to be designated as "wilderness" because of some agreements he made **with** the logging industry back in the late 70's. Congressman **Larry LaRocco** has recommended that most of the drainage be declared wilderness in his pending wilderness bill. The rest of the Idaho congressional delegation

is still **sitting** on the fence.

THIS AREA SIMPLY HAS TO BE SET ASIDE AS WILDERNESS! Meadow Creek is *still* so wild that it just screams out to be preserved.

In addition to the wilderness negotiations that are pending, the Nez Perce National Forest is in the process of studying Meadow Creek for suitability as an addition to the Federal Wild and Scenic Rivers system. The study team has announced that their recommendations **will** be out sometime in early '95.

The individual in charge of these studies is: Ranger Jerry Bird, Selway Ranger District, **HCR75**, Box 91, **Kooskia**, Idaho 83539. Ask to be placed on his mailing list for the "Currents" newsletter (not the same as the **NORS** magazine), which they are publishing to inform the public informed about the study process. This flier **will** include updated **information** regarding the progress of the planning team and **will** tell you who to submit comments to.

In reference to the Wilderness designation legislation, the addresses of the Idaho Congressional delegation are:

Senator Larry Craig
U.S. Senate, 302 Hart Building
750 West Bannock, Rm. 149
Washington D.C. 20510
Boise, ID. 83702
202-334-2752
208-342-7985

Senator Dirk Kempthorne
U.S. Senate
750 West Bannock, Rm. 338
Washington D.C. 20510
Boise, ID. 83702
202-224-6142
208-334-1776

Representative Michael Crapo
437 Cannon House Building
750 West Bannock, Rm. 444
Washington D.C. 20510
Boise, ID. 83702
202-225-5531
208-334-1953

Representative Larry LaRocco
1117 Longworth House Building
750 West Bannock, Rm. 136
Washington D.C. 20510
Boise, ID. 83702
202-225-6611
208-343-3300

Ultimately the best source of information is probably Idaho Rivers United. This Boise based group deals **with** river conservation issues throughout the entire state of Idaho. Their address is: Idaho Rivers United, P.O. Box **633**, Boise, ID. 83701.

Boaters interested in running Meadow Creek should include \$4.00. **IRU will** then send them a detailed trip description written by **Gregg Lawley** that presents a broad **data** base as well as the logistical considerations that need to be addressed by prospective Meadow Creekers. ■



Jack Moss and Paul Butler in the Grand Canyon of the Elwha



Let the Salmon Run A Reprieve from Dam/nation?

AN *by Gary Korb*
ELWHA
STORY

Competing
with the
roar of the
river I shout

to Carol, "Catch the eddy on the left after the first drop. We have to scout Nightmare." Then I plummet over the first drop and am stopped cold in a powerful riverwide hole. I pull hard and manage to escape, muscling into the small eddy. Mike is already there, trying to make room for me.

"WOW! I didn't even see that hole."

"I didn't either," Mike replies. We anxiously stare at the horizon line, **waiting** for Carol. I turn downstream and **am** terrified by what I see. The river **falls** over a huge drop; most of the water crashes into the left wall, then disappears from view. We are past the point of no return. There can be no turning back or portaging, just commitment to the Elwha, disappearing downstream between smooth black walls.

Carol comes into view and I give her the "paddle hard" signal. She crashes right through the hole, but is blown by the eddy. We watch as she becomes our involuntary probe, careening off the cushion and disappearing into Nightmare. We see her next

as she flips going through the lower drop. Thankfully, she **rolls** up.

I'm envious that she has the rapid behind her. I follow her lead and go high on the cushion against the left wall. As I come over the edge I see that I'm narrowly skirting a gigantic hole.

"YAHOOO!"

Mike follows with an exciting backwards run through the bottom chute. We stop for lunch on a rock the size of a motor home in the middle of the river.

We are in the heart of the "Grand Canyon of the Elwha" in Washington's Olympic National Park, one of the most beautiful places on the planet. As we eat lunch I imagine 50-pound salmon making their way up "Nightmare" on their journey to

spawn. Unfortunately for the salmon mankind has selfishly blocked this sacred journey. Although the Elwha has one of the **few** pristine watersheds suitable for spawning large numbers of fish in the entire Northwest, we continue to allow two illegal dams to deny the passage of salmon. These two dams are used to supply a percentage of power to a paper mill in Port Angeles.

I muse to myself, the time has come to prioritize. What do we want salmon, or a few megawatts of power generated at an enormous cost?

Below: Paul Butler runs a sticky hole on the Elwha



I know what I want.

I WANT SALMON!

(Anyone owning missiles please contact me. Or, better yet, read the "Elwha Update", below.)

This is the second day of our three-day expedition. Yesterday we toted the boats 8.5 miles to the first spot the trail meets the river. This morning we have only come 2.5 miles, but we've cleared the most dangerous part of the canyon. We spend the rest of the day in a remarkable playground.

We run "Pebbles" and "Bam Bam", a couple of big, amusing drops, and carry the lower part of the big slide at the end of the canyon. Here the river opens up into "Geyser Valley", diminishing to Class II. We camp in a spec-

tacular, grassy meadow surrounded by deer and a verdant old growth forest.

On day three we silently pack the boats while butterflies flutter about in my stomach. I know from previous trips that "Goblin's Gate" is just a mile downstream. It marks the beginning of "Rica Canyon," a demanding 2 miles of

Class IV and V boating.

Soon after passing through "Goblin's Gate" we're committed to the canyon. We cling to the walls, trying to scout the final 8 foot drop of the approach, and we pray there isn't a tree in it. I calculate that with my loaded boat I'll hit the bottom drop with so much momentum that I will blast through any hole.

I clear the upper drop and set my angle for a good launch. . . paddle hard... harder... faster... Off the lip I go, flying right into the foamy maw. I hit

it perfectly, but I'm still stopped dead. I dig deep, grab some water and pull free.

"YEAH!"

We pull in to scout the next drop . . . a Class V+ boulder pile with a small by-pass on the right we call the "Secret Chute." The chute is just wide enough for a kayak, so you must hold your paddle straight as you drop down an 8-foot slide, disappearing into the foam, then popping up while the river tries to push you into a wall.

This is my favorite drop in Rica Canyon and I linger, savoring the dance I've just shared with a very special river. Moving on through the remaining rapids, we hit the upper end of Lake Mills and the river dies a miserable and sudden death.

At the head of the lake Carol hikes up the trail to get the truck as I tow her boat across the lake. A strong head wind and whitecaps slow my progress and my hatred for Lake Mills and the Glines Canyon Dam has never been so strong!

ELWHA UPDATE:

The Elwha and Glines Canyon dams block anadromous fish passage to more than 70 upstream miles of pristine habitat. In 1992, Congress passed the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act.

It is a powerful act because it is an agreement reached by ALL involved parties—the dam owners, the local mill that uses the hydropower, the Elwha Tribe, fish interests, Federal, State and Local governments, and environmentalists. The goal of the Act is the "Full restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem and native anadromous fisheries."

In October '93, the Secretary of Interior released its Draft Report detailing how restoration can be achieved. Some excerpts from the Draft Report:

•The removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dams is the only alternative that would result in the "full restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem and native anadromous fisheries" as prescribed by the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act."

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Glines Canyon dams, while protecting water users and accomplishing fish and habitat restoration, is feasible. The cost to fully restore the Elwha River ecosystem and native fisheries are generally on a par with restoration activities elsewhere in the region"

"Because it is a negotiated solution rather than a litigated decision, the Elwha River Ecosystem and Fisheries Restoration Act provides a rare "win-win" opportunity for all affected parties."

Not only would dam removal provide upstream passage for salmon—it would provide downstream passage for whitewater boaters! What a grand opportunity we have to "apologize" to our Earth by restoring the Elwha!

So please, **Speak up** for recreation and the **environment**—drop a note to your legislators and to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt in Washington, D.C.—ask them to come up with the money to remove the Elwha dams! ■

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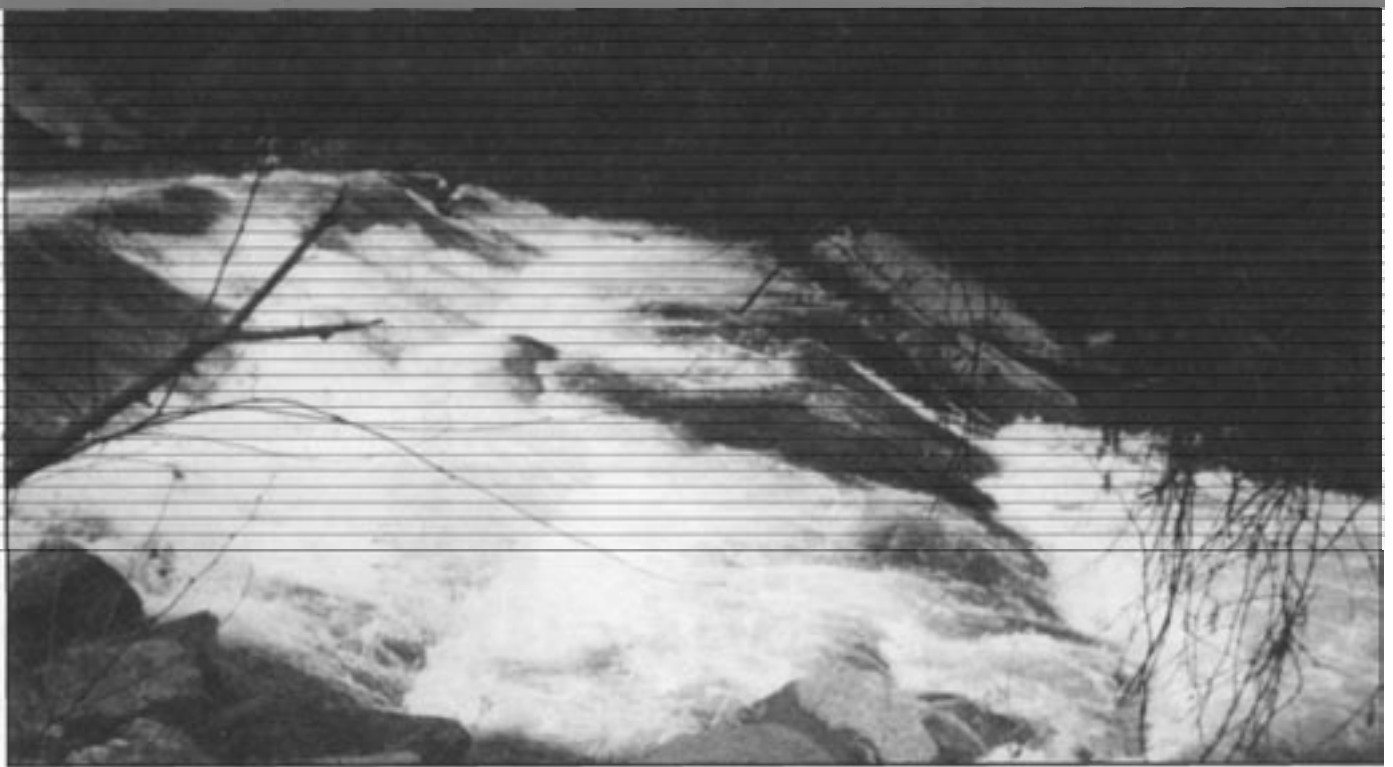
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Mama Told Me Not to Come

Two Days on the New Haven

by *Chuck Kern*



The First decent of Lost Legs on the New Haven

My friend, Mike, is on the opposite shore making an accordion motion with his **hands** and shrugging his shoulders. This is his first day on the New Haven, but it is our second run. The Class V+ rapid that he is intelligently portaging while I scout is Toaster Falls, a fifteen foot vertical plunge into a pool which is only five feet deep, even in the "right" spot. To **find** that sweet spot one must maintain control while dropping off the ancient six foot dam... built on top of the shelf that leads to the brink of the falls. Then a **boof** is in order.

Mike is signaling that the water has come up **significantly** since our morning descent. I **am** **painfully** aware of that fact as I **try** to decide whether I will be able to duplicate my perfect

morning run of Toaster. As the demons of uncertainty play in my head, I think back a few years to my first descent of this section of the New Haven, a run that has since become a playground to my brother and me.

People who paddle whitewater learn at different paces. As the ambitious novice begins to paddle **difficult whitewater**, there is one experience that he or she is bound to encounter. I **am** speaking of situations where, knowingly or otherwise, people end up in over their heads.

Many will not admit to making such a blunder, saying, "Well, I was near the edge, but in **control** the whole time;" but deep down the knowledge is there.

Some people are coaxed and pres-

sured **into** these situations by better boaters. Common is the situation where the Class V paddler convinces himself that his Class IV friend can handle a more **difficult** run, because that is where the more **skilled** boater wants to paddle. This, however, is a story about some paddlers getting into the deep end... **all** by themselves.

A few springs ago my brother Willie and I were decent Class IV squirt boaters. We hadn't felt the need to paddle our plastic kayaks much in the year or two since we bought our glittery little boats.

On this **warm** Sunday in April, however, we loaded our dusty old Dancers on top of the car and took our mother and dog along to find some whitewater closer to home. Vermont

Mama Told Me

does not have a lot of great squirt runs, to say the least.

We drove to the First Branch of the White River, a Class III-IV run that we had read about in the guide book. When we arrived, the little stream looked so unexciting that we didn't even take the boats off the car. We decided that we would drive over the Green Mountains to a section of the New Haven River near **Bristol**, Vermont. We were familiar with *this* section of the New Haven because it runs right along the Lincoln Gap Road just before it meets Route 17. The pools and flat rocks are popular with swimmers and picnickers in the heat of our short Vermont summers.

As we drove slowly upstream along the New Haven, we could **hardly** believe our eyes. The bubbling little stream of summer had turned into a rowdy, churning mess. This was a steep, technical Class IV-V river. We remained undaunted; hey, if we could run the big Class IV rapids of the Ottawa, the Hudson, and the Black in our little squirt boats, we could certainly handle *this* in Dancers.

Paddling the first half mile of Class III and IV rapids, we both felt in control, despite a few rolls in the icy **snowmelt**, which we attributed to our **readjustment** to surface craft. At the first difficult rapid our support crew of Mother and dog were waiting. Willie paddled through the slot and made the hard right turn to finish the second drop, just like we had planned. I entered a little higher and hit a submerged rock that spun me around, sending me through the remaining drop backwards, bracing frantically.

This was, by no means, a major incident; but I knew that more dangerous and difficult rapids lay downstream. I asked Willie to wait while I ran to the car and dug through our paddling gear until I found a couple of throwbags that had never seen the inside of a kayak. Not that they hadn't been used. We found that they made excellent clothes lines. My mother flashed me a strange look as we stuffed the bags into our boats and headed **downstream** into the continuous, technical Class IV rapids.

In the next quarter mile we took turns leading, learning from each other's mistakes. The river seemed



Left: The Author on the brink at Toaster
Below: Chuck Kern paddles Sick 'em Dogger

forgiving. Despite our blunders, we were having fun. The next big rapid featured a series of smooth, 45 degree slides that we have since come to call Lost Legs. This is a beautiful rapid that becomes a Class V when there is enough water to make the holes beefy. I punched through the corner of the **first** hole into an eddy, just in time to turn and see Willie plop into the sticky hydraulic. After forty-five seconds and some high powered paddling, he **joined** me in the eddy, huffing and puffing. Not about to make the same mistake twice, he blasted straight through the second hole.

This time it was my turn. Willie watched me battle my way out of the hole with a satisfied grin on his face. After we both cleared the final slide, I **stopped** to empty my leaky old Dancer. Willie didn't see me stop and continued into the next section of continuous Class IV. I was slow getting back into my boat; feeling accomplished, yet wary of what lay ahead.

Paddling into the next rapid, I could see Willie standing up in the middle of the river. He was dragging a boat **full** of water to shore. Pulling into an eddy near him, I saw that his Dancer was bent almost ninety degrees. He explained that he had broached on a midstream rock and



Mama Told Me



Right: Willie Kern at Mama Tried

had exited the boat as he felt if start to bend. The best thing that I, his inspirational big brother, could come up with was, "At least it's not your squirt boat."

After a pep talk to reassure our support crew (and ourselves) we leveled the boat to its original shape with the help of a tree and continued cautiously downstream.

We exited the river well above the big Class V+ waterfall that we now call Toaster Falls. We had deemed this rapid unrunable without even getting out of the car. We walked downstream to scout the last quarter mile of rapids, knowing that this section would be the most difficult. This stretch contained three great Class IV+ rapids that merited a Class V because they were stacked so neatly on top of one another. These three rapids are now called Sick-em Dogger, Squared Off, and Mama Tried. Two of these names came from the antics of our first descent.

As we scrambled around scouting the steep boulder garden that is Sick-em Dogger, our half blind little dog barked incessantly at us from the road above.

We ignored the dog and Willie set safety with his rope while I went back to my boat. I made it over to river left and ran a clean slot. Then, misjudging the force of the current, I failed to make a planned ninety degree turn. As a consequence I slammed into a rock and flipped. After missing a roll in the shallow water, I found myself upside down on top of the very rock I had

planned to boof off of.

My paddle had hooked around the upstream side of the rock and I was facing the current with my boat on top of me. I tried to retrieve the paddle with one hand, but it was jammed. I can still remember very clearly what it

felt like to be perched there, not wanting to let go of my paddle, as the current tried to pry me away. Finally, releasing my hold on the paddle, I pushed off of the rock and miraculously handrolled as I floated clear of the pourover.



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Mama Told Me

I bounced out of control through the last drop of **Sick-em Dogger** and **flipped** again. Not trusting my **handroll** and knowing that Squared Off was about two boat lengths away, I got out fast, found a foot hold, and stood up.

The dog hadn't stopped yapping the whole time and my **normally** understanding and patient Mother was as white as a ghost. After half an hour of unsuccessful searching for my paddle, Willie put in below the first slot and ran most of **Sick-em Dogger**.

Squared Off is a six foot vertical ledge. Most of the water drops into a nasty corner on the right side. I watched Willie drive left into the big deep pool and decided it was too good to pass up. **Willie** tossed me his paddle without getting out his boat and I **ran** the drop without incident.

Our Mother was waiting when we got out **just** above Mama Tried. For the **first time in years she was trying** to convince us to get off of a river while our hides were still intact. A little shook up and without a paddle, I was quick to comply.

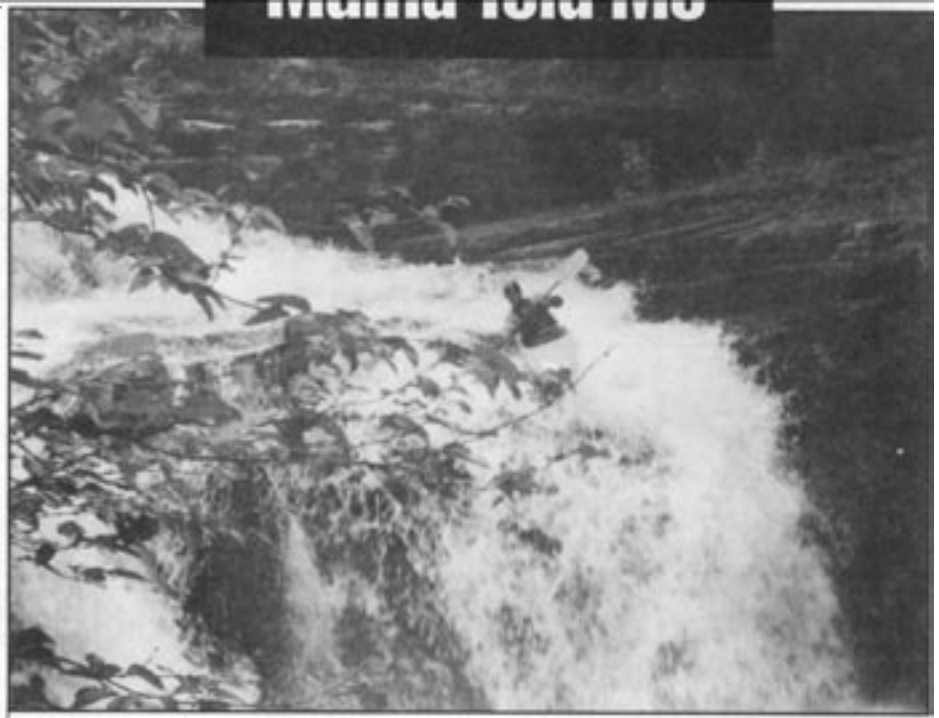
Mama Tried is a great little Class V that looks a lot worse than it is. Willie had a good run at Mama Tried, then hit a log and bruised his side in a Class IV called "Hipshot" **just** above the Route 17 bridge.

Driving home that day we chattered about the lessons that New Haven had taught us. We named a few rapids and decided that we should definitely work up to the New Haven before returning to run it again. We speculated about whether Toaster would ever be run.

These days Willie and I go to the New Haven to play. Sometimes we play follow the leader, trying new lines and catching tiny eddies in the middle of the drops that once intimidated us. Sometimes we race down the river without catching any eddies at **all, just** to get our blood pumping. Taking friends down this river that I have enjoyed so immensely and seeing their grins is one of my greatest joys.

Willie and I have explored more rivers over the years, some of them more difficult, but the New Haven will always have a very special place in my memory.

Back at Toaster, I **am** giving Mike



Above: Willie Kern tackles Vermont's Toaster Falls
Below: The Brothers Kern

the signal that I **am** going to run, despite my uncertainties. I line up on my marker wave and paddle into the slot in the old mill dam. The landing on the shelf seems soft and before I figure out how fast I am going, I pencil over the falls with no time to boof.

"This one's **gonna** hurt," I think as my ten foot long boat plunges vertically into **half** as much water. The padded bulkhead of my modern creek boat protects my ankles, but my knees **slam** into the braces with enough force to make me limp.

Peeling my glasses out of my eye sockets, I see that **the** front of my boat is bent up at a ridiculous angle. I look up at Mike on the shore and, for a moment, he looks a lot like my Mom.

And, once again, I hear the dog bark..



NEW HAVEN RIVER, BRISTOL, VERMONT

Where to go - Just northeast of Bristol on Rte. 17, is a white church by a narrow bridge. This is the take out. To scout the river and locate a put-in, cross the bridge and turn right towards Lincoln. All of the rapids can be **seen from the road** and there are a number of **pull-offs**. We **generally** launch about a mile upstream, but for a warm-up, there is a put-in higher up which adds some Class II and III when there is enough water.

When to go - The New Haven usually runs from the end of the March through the end of April from snowmelt. Heavy rains at other time of the year can also bring it up to runnable levels.

Levels - We have run from Toaster to the take out at fairly low levels. We have also run the New Haven at flood stage. This is very demanding and for experts only. There is no gauge, so use your best judgment.

1993 AWA HONOR ROLL

What a banner year 1993 has been for AWA, the **Whitewater Defense Project** and the **Access Fund!** Thanks to the generosity of our friends, members and supporters, we raised almost \$15,000 in WDP contributions and \$60,000 in major grants. This **impressive** transfusion of funds has allowed us to **plan** big for

The AWA Directors and **Staff** would like to take a moment to thank everyone who helped during the past year — regardless of size of **gift**. There are many more not listed here who helped bring us closer to our goals. There are also many who gave the gift of time. No matter how you stood behind us, AWA **appreciates** your contribution and vote of confidence!

1994

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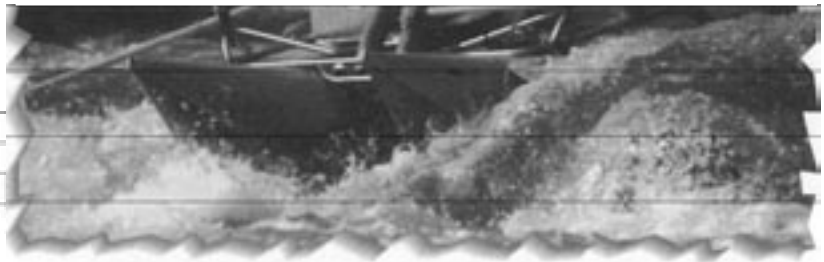
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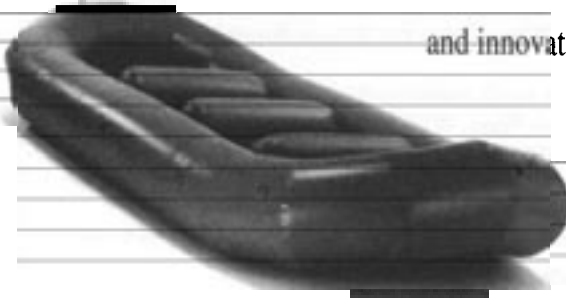
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West Virginia to Host Appalachian Rivers Symposium

An **Appalachian Rivers and Watershed Symposium** has been scheduled for June 3-5, 1994 at West Virginia University's Mountainlair in Morgantown. The host for the symposium is the **Division of Forestry** of the West Virginia University. The **principal** topics to be covered are water quality and **quantity**, river ecology, river and watershed management and recreation. **Field trips will include visits to mine acid drainage treatment sites, waste water treatment systems, areas of riparian destruction, restoration and protection, water quality monitoring stations, and river access areas amenable to fishing, swimming, canoeing, rafting and kayaking.**

Featured speakers **will include** Roderick Nash, a **leading** scholar on wilderness and river conservation and author of **Wilderness in the American Mind**. Royal Robbins, a prominent adventurer and outdoor business entrepreneur **will be the keynote speaker on Friday**. The West Virginia Rivers Coalition, who is **cosponsoring** the conference with the West Virginia Department of Commerce, Labor and **Environmental Resources**, will host a reception **Friday night** that **will include an art exhibit and a raffle for Mad River Canoe**. A gala banquet **will be held in the Mountainlair ballroom Saturday night**.

For **registration information** send a postcard with your name, address and telephone number to Debbie Wise, WVU Division of Forestry, P.O. box 6125, Morgantown, W.V. 26506-6125 or call (304) 293-3721 ext. 445. ■

Ocoee Races Scheduled

The Atlanta **Whitewater Club** has announced that the Ocoee Double Header and Olympic Festival Regional **Trials** will be held **April 2 and 3** on the Ocoee River in Ducktown, Tennessee. Atlanta **Whitewater Club** President Beth Wilson said that the club has a long-standing commitment to support **whitewater athletes**.

The **first annual Ocoee spring race** for both slalom and **wildwater** was in **1978**. **Since that time**, the race has become more **polished** with the assistance of the Ocoee Regional Canoe and Kayak **Association** and the Nantahala Outdoor Center. Last year over **120** racers competed and seven countries were represented in the two day event.

This year's race will be particularly important since it will serve as an Olympic Festival Regional Trial and will allow whitewater athletes a chance to warm up on the waters to be used in the 1996 Olympics.

"Racers from all over the country and the **international field will be at this event because this is the site of the 1996 Olympics**," said Mike Larimer, Olympic Coach for the Atlanta Center of Excellence, a co-sponsor of the event.

Cornell Slates Fall Creek Slalom

A slalom race for open boats, decked canoes and kayaks **will be held on Fall Creek in Ithaca, New York on Sunday, April 10 at 10 a.m.** **Registration packets and information are available from Barry Butterfield at (607) 659-5389 or by writing to the Fall Creek Slalom at Cornell, Cornell Outdoor Education, Teagle Hall, Ithaca, New York 14853.** ■

Potomac Whitewater Festival Slated

The Fifth Annual Potomac **Whitewater Festival** has been slated for May 22 and 23. The event, **co-sponsored** by the Bethesda Center of Excellence (BCE) and the **National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos (NOWR)**, **will feature both surface and squirt boat competitions, an open boat competition and a downriver sprint.**

Preregistration is recommended for the **competition** and for the banquet to be held on Saturday night. **Late registration will occur on the morning of May 22** at the Great Fall Park in Virginia.

Additional information and registration forms are available from Norwood Scott (703) 892-6915 or from Ricky Rodriguez (703) 790-9180.

Symposium on Youth Instruction Announced

The **first Symposium on Youth Instruction will be held on March 11-13** at the Nantahala Outdoor Center in Bryson City, NC. Several well-known **instructors** and coaches from both the United States and abroad **will convene to share their expertise and develop teaching strategies for the future.**

"We are very pleased to be the location for this symposium,"

says Gordon Black, N.O.C. Head of **Instruction**. "Speakers **will be traveling** from all over the world for the event and we are all **going to learn a lot.**"

"Many great youth programs have started around the country," comments Risa Shimoda Callaway, organizer of the event. "Outside of the **racing network**, there is no **mechanism** for cross **pollinating the experiences** of the program founders, who are all quite **inspiring!** Both the speakers and those who have **indicated an interest in attending** are equally excited about **learning** from each other."

Guests **will include** Wayne Dickert and Maylon Hanold, former members of the U.S. Slalom Team; Richard Fox, five time world champion in slalom; Tom Long, Founder of the Cascade Kayak School; Shelley Johnson, Director of the Maine Sport Outdoor School; and Gordon Grant, former N.O.C. Head of **Instruction** and member of the Asheville YMCA ACES Program.

The cost of the program will be \$140; this **will include shared cabin lodging and meals.**

Contact the N.O.C. Programs Office at **(704) 488-6737 for additional information.** ■

Jet Skiers Assault New River

Background to Controversy

by David Hablewitz

Being with paddlers not yet ready for the challenge of the Upper Gauley, we chose the New River on the Sunday **after** Gauley Festival. Not surprisingly, there were very few other paddlers on the river that day. In fact, we saw no other boaters, including rafts, until the last insignificant rapid before the bridge.

Actually, we could smell them before anything else. The distinct odor of burning oil. It reminded me of the time we were **surfing** at the beach and **jetskiers** came and hounded us. Sure enough, as we rounded the corner we saw several **jetskiers** eddy-hopping upstream, moving through the rapids like salmon going to spawn. We cautiously ran the rapid, keeping our distance.

While my friends continued, disgusted with the whole affair, my disgust was tempered by curiosity when I noticed the movie cameras poised on the boulders on the side. I pulled into an eddy next to a **jetskier** and a large raft with gas cans **strapped** to the air chambers. I struck up a conversation with the **jetskier** beside me.

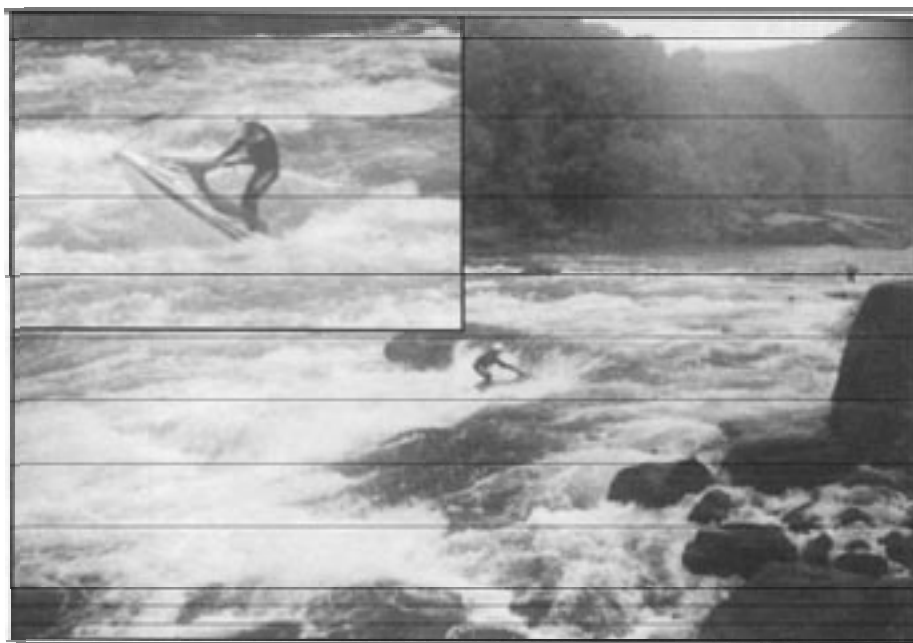
Later I learned he was the men's world champion **sit-down jetskier**. Also present were the men's stand-up world champ, women's stand-up world champ and a rap musician undeserving of any free publicity. The **skier** told me he would never do the New on his own **ski**, leaning it over to reveal huge gouges in its hull. They made the scars in my kayak look like little nicks.

I hoped that other **jetskiers** will feel this way too and stay away.

I learned from one of the photographers that The Discovery Channel received a special permit from the park service to **film** this first (and hopefully last) **ascent/descent** of the river. They were given permission on this day specifically because of the lack of commercial and **private** boaters expected on the New during the Gauley Festival.

Given the fact that most whitewater rivers **are** either too low volume, have **put-ins** located a good hike from the **parking** lot, or **are** closely regulated, I don't expect we **will** see them on the river again anytime soon. The true test **will** be how The Discovery Channel presents the whole affair. I was told the episode would air sometime in January of February.

Editors note: See the Letters to the Editor Section of this issue and the November/December issue for more on this.



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Northwest River Runners Conference Slated

The Second Annual Northwest River Runners Conference has been scheduled for April 13 at the University of Oregon in Eugene. The meeting is billed as "A public recreational river runners conference aimed at increasing the visibility of the noncommercial boater and at providing an open forum to help build a coalition among public recreational boaters, managing agencies, elected officials and environmental organizations."

The conference is being sponsored by the Northwest River Runners Conference

Coalition and the University of Oregon's Outdoor Program. Featured speakers will include former state senator John **Kitzhaber**, a boater, physician and gubernatorial candidate, and Verne **Huser**, a nationally known river advocate and outdoor writer.

Display space is available for authors, clubs, rescue clinics, commercial retailers and organizations.

For information and a reservation form contact the University of Oregon Outdoor Program Office at 503-346-4365 or Al **Ainsworth** at 503-246-0386. ■

1994 NOWR Whitewater Rodeo Schedule

4/23-24 New River Rodeo
Bill Sgrinia 703 387-6172

4/23-24 North Idaho Fest.
Willie Accola 208 882-2383

4/30-5/1 Bob's Hole Rodeo
Cindy Scherrer 503 285-0464

5/7-8 Lochsa Rodeo
Amy Smith 406 728-7609

5/14-15 Coosa River Fest.
Lonnie Carden 205 272-1207

5/21-22 Big Fork Fest.
Kelly Mull 406 752-1168

5/21-22 Potomac Festival
Norwood Scott 703-892-6915

6/11-12 Ocoee Rodeo
Susan Gentry 706 654-2725

6/24-26 Animas River Days
L. McGlothlin 303 259-3893

7/2-4 Gallatin WW Fest.
Guy Erb 406 587-7575

7/10-11 Payette Roundup
Bruce Bistline 208 345-3654

9/17-18 American River
Susan Debret 916 626-3435

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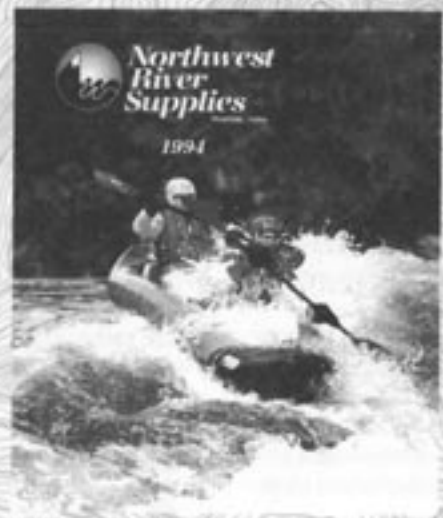
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Questions & Answers

About the River and Watershed Protection and Restoration Act

Q What is the purpose of this bill?

A To provide a new, unique mechanism to empower local river and watershed conservation advocates, communities, businesses and landowners to protect and restore aquatic resource values in rivers and watersheds of importance to them. The bill provides a means for these local conservationists to tailor and integrate local, state and federal incentive and regulatory tools for the benefit of rivers and watersheds of both high and low quality.

Q What is in the bill that **will** help local river and watershed conservationists?

A The bill provides local, **grassroots** conservationists a mechanism that gives state and federal authority to their own protection and restoration strategies. This works through placement of watershed or river on a National River and Watershed **Registry**. Placement on the registry **will** allow local conservationists to obtain federal funding, technical assistance from federal and state aquatic resource agencies, and protection from activities that are inconsistent with the river or watershed conservation strategy.

Q How does this mechanism work?

A To get a watershed or river placed on the registry, a state, local government, watershed council, or local citizens may **nominate** a watershed, river, or river segment of interest for registry inclusion to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The nomination must include a map of the watershed, a description of the protection or restoration strategy for the watershed, description of the aquatic values that are to be protected or restored by the strategy, a description of the types of assistance needed to implement the strategy, and proof that the nominating entity has the authority to **carry-out** the strategy. Following full public review and comment on the nomination and careful review by the appropriate state agency, EPA must place the watershed on the registry unless the agency determines the nomination to be inadequate.

Q What distinguishes the Registry bill from the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the Clean Water Act?

A The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act gives protection for high quality rivers. The Clean Water Act is a federal and state regulatory program controlling discharge of pollution into all waters of the United States for the purpose of protecting and restoring all waters. Generally, both of these programs are "**top-down**", federal mandates. In contrast, the Registry bill provides a "**bottom-up**", local **conservationist-driven** river and watershed conservation program. Unlike the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the Registry bill allows for restoration of rivers. Further, the Registry bill emphasizes protection of rivers and watersheds, not just rivers and **adjacent** riparian areas. Unlike the Clean Water Act, the Registry bill is not a regulatory approach to conserving rivers and watersheds. It is largely a planning, local cooperation, and financial incentive driven approach to river protection. It is also entirely voluntary. Finally, the Registry bill emphasizes watershed protection and restoration, rather than direct control of pollution entering waterways and wetlands as does the current Clean Water Act.

Q Aren't state river protection programs already doing what the bill proposes to do?

A A few states do have small but relatively effective river conservation programs, such as South Carolina, Oregon, and Massachusetts, most states do not. No state has a truly vigorous, comprehensive river conservation program. Although the **Registry** bill does not provide for such a comprehensive program either, it **will** invigorate and improve existing programs, and it **will** foster state programs where there are now none. Why? Because of the bill's Registry conservation mechanism and the funding it offers.

! Why was EPA chosen as the federal agency to administer the law?

A By virtue of EPA's considerable experience with watershed management and water quality programs, EPA is probably best suited to administering this program. However the Registry bill also includes **significant** coordination and consultation roles for the Interior and Soil Conservation Service.

Q How much will implementation of the bill cost?

A The bill authorizes \$13 million to be invested in this program. This figure is based on anticipated need of several hundred thousand dollars for the federal agencies to begin program implementation and several million dollars in initial grants to local watershed councils and other eligible entities to commence conservation activities on approved registry rivers and watersheds. It is anticipated that additional funding will be required to fuel the Registry programs in each state once the program hits full stride.

Q What are prudent and feasible alternative determinations?

A This provision of the bill provides federal protection to a strategy developed by local communities and conservationists that has been approved and placed on the Registry. It provides a mechanism to help ensure that federally and state permitted or funded activities do not adversely affect implementation of the protection and restoration strategies. For example, developers of a proposed new, federally-permitted dam that would adversely affect implementation of a watershed strategy would have to prove that there was no prudent and feasible alternative to dam construction. Upon public notice and comment and review of the developer's application, EPA may determine that a prudent and feasible alternative does exist and deny the federal permits, disallowing the dam.

Q What do the terms "feasible" and "prudent" really mean?

A These terms have been developed and used for many years in other federal programs, such as the Federal Highway Act, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the Clean Water Act. Agencies implementing these terms weigh carefully several factors, including relative costs associated with various alternatives and environmental values to be adversely affected by the alternative approaches, before making these determinations. We envision similar application of these terms in this bill.

Q What is the purpose of watershed protection and restoration standards?

A The bill directs EPA to contract with the National Academy of Sciences to develop watershed protection and restoration standards. The proposed standards would be subject to full peer and public review. The purpose of these standards is to ensure that protection and restoration strategies are scientifically sound, ensure quality control on implementation of the strategies, and to help guide "feasible and prudent alternative" decisions for activities potentially posing an adverse impact on the strategy.

Q How will the Registry program be financed?

A The bill proposes three methods of funding the registry program:

- 1) establishment of a new State Revolving Fund for the program;
- 2) establishment of a river and watershed stamp program, modeled after the federal Duck Stamp program, with revenues transferred back through to the states from which the stamps were sold; and
- 3) re-allocation of some funds from several existing programs.

Q Does this bill authorize federal land acquisition, condemnation, or land use control?

A No, the bill does not authorize any of these, nor does it modify, in any way, existing regulatory authorities of local, state, and federal agencies.

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FIRST DESCENT?

by Jonathan Katz

Kennebec Gorge takeout...
"Hallelujah, I am saved!!"

Bam Bam McBride and accomplices had taken me on my maiden voyage down the "big, friendly four" of Maine, and it had been a tough day on the river. I'd gone bye-bye in Goodbye Hole and fallen off the Highway into Maytag, where I got cleaned and pressed, then cleaned and jerked. Now every aching fiber of my being craved Advil, and all McBride and his river-addled sidekicks wanted to do was lounge around, drink Keystone beer and talk about Ken Omaha. The Great One had missing for two weeks and people were earnestly worried.

"I can't imagine Omaha getting that hung up about any woman, even Arden. He's just too big a pig," said P.T., McBride-Omaha Chemical Company's Resident Professor of Tropical Medicine.

P.T. spent half her time treating river injuries and the other half curing the social diseases Omaha kept catching. She'd killed more crabs than a Maryland fisherman, but now that Kenny had disappeared, her business was slow. If she called Ken Omaha a porker, it wasn't an insult, but a diagnosis.

McBride disagreed. "Kenny knows Arden's special. She's smart, pretty, resourceful, stacked, horny, and a damn good paddler. That's a rare bird."

McBride understood his partner, and knew how much it hurt him when the voluptuous Ms. Tygart rode off on the back of Mark Chopper's Harley-Davidson after the Ohiopyle raid. Chopper said he preferred explosives to women—"they're safer"—but he'd made no effort to resist Arden's advances. She simply switched men, like a kayaker changing from a glass boat to plastic. Chopper was 130 pounds heavier than Omaha, but Arden never complained.

She also never complained about Chopper's whitewater skills, which was a surprise. Omaha was a truly masterful open boater, powerful, graceful, elegant, a delight to watch. Chopper, on the other hand, was dangerously mediocre. He packed his 290 pounds into a Crossfire, nearly sinking it.

"I paddle a Crossfire because I like the name," he said. "It reminds me of my nights with the Klan." Whatever the reason, he could squirt the bow sitting still and his roll was occasional at best.

"I don't have a roll because I don't need a roll," Chopper said.

"Oh my God, does he have a roll," Arden replied, and that about summed up their relationship.

So Ken Omaha was the odd man out, and he took it hard. Normally a happy drunk, always willing to flash his incomparable skills with the paddle and the nine millimeter automatic, Kenny became depressed, withdrawn, silent. He stopped drinking and shooting, then he stopped boating and talking. Finally he stopped coming around. Nobody had seen him for weeks and he was missed.

Moose Gunsmith had been the last of McBride's crew to see Omaha, and he recalled their conversation. "He kept talking about doing something to win Arden back, something spectacular, paddling some humongous rapid that had never been run in an open canoe before. He called it 'dropping the big one', but he would never come right out and say which one it was. He did say it wasn't Big Splat on the Sandy and it wasn't Great Falls."

"Those get done all the time," McBride replied. "Hell, he's boated both of those with his guns on."

"Maybe he's going to do Niagara Gorge," said P.T. "He used to talk about the Niagara a lot."

"That's been done too. Roland Hardsell open boated it in 1987 and made a video."

"Maybe he's going to run the Falls, I mused.

"That's a ridiculous idea," said McBride.

"No its not," said P.T. "Not for Ken Omaha it isn't."

McBride called me at work three days later. "Omaha left a phone message for Arden. He told her to meet him at Niagara Falls tomorrow afternoon at 3:00 or else he'll run the Falls."

"She's going, isn't she?" I asked.

"No, she's not. She's in Costa Rica, on assignment modeling wetsuits. She's totally out of reach."

HUMOR

My memory flashed to **Niagara Falls**, the tacky honeymoon suites with **heart-shaped** bathtubs and mirrored ceilings, the newlyweds groping each other in public, the awesome, crushing vertical drop of the Falls. "He can't do **that**," I said, "He'll kill himself."

"We've got to stop him. Grab whoever you **can** and meet me in Upper Rapids Park **at** nine tomorrow."

The next day we searched the town of **Niagara Falls**. We tried all the hotels, which was useless because Omaha lives in his van. We scoured the park and combed the woods on Goat Island. We checked all the bars and all the usual places where the **bar-reldroppers** launch. We even called both species of police, American and Canadian. Nobody found Omaha or sighted a mysterious stranger with a Dagger Impulse balanced on his head.

Three o'clock came and went with no sign of Omaha. We began to feel like we'd been had and to talk about going over to the Canadian side for some real beer. Chopper was acting apologetic for all the trouble he'd caused, and for driving Omaha and his endless supply of free Keystone away from **us**.

"I'm sorry I ever met Arden," he said, "I was happier **all** alone." We decided to pack it in: a long drive for a false alarm, or for one of Omaha's practical jokes.

As we turned to leave Chopper took one last glance over his shoulder at the heavy rapids that **mark** the approach to **the lip** of **Niagara Falls**. Suddenly he yelled and hit the deck. The bullet whined overhead and the crack of the automatic sounded above the roar of the rapids. Then I saw the canoe. Omaha was in the middle of the river in the biggest water, nearly a hundred yards away. He was paddling hard and purposefully toward the brink of the falls. I could see the **gun** in his hand.

"He tried to **kill** me," cried Chopper, belly crawling toward the river.

"No he **didn't**. That was a warning shot. If he wanted to he could put a bullet up your nostril," **McBride** replied.

We crawled toward the riverbank screaming, begging him to eddy out,

paddle for shore, **save** himself. But you cannot save a man bent on his own destruction. Omaha shot no more, but he paddled fast and hard. The **swift** current and pounding whitewaterswept him past Green Island, under the pedestrian walkway where the startled tourists pointed

cameras **at** him, and through the Luna Islands to the Falls.

Running now, we chased him, trailing throw ropes and other useless rescue gear, pleading with him to stop. But he dug his blade into the raging water and pulled harder and harder, stroking fast and well for the very **cen-**

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ter of the thundering drop. At the last moment he turned and waved his paddle over his head and we heard his final scream:

"AAAAARRRRRDENNNN!!!"

Then he slid over the Falls.

Omaha's canoe ran straight over the drop and down the face of the Falls in perfect form, Omaha leaning back with his paddle held in both hands over his head. Halfway down Omaha jammed his paddle into the water. The boat lurched to the right and snapped around upstream. It hung for a second, suspended vertically against the plummeting froth of the giant waterfall.

Incredibly, a scant second away from inescapable collision with the brute force of Nature, Omaha had caught an eddy!

Then Omaha peeled out and dropped. His canoe hit the ungodly churning maelstrom at the bottom of the American Falls and disappeared. Omaha in his orange lifejacket recirculated once, twice. Both times he flailed his arms, swimming, or, perhaps waving to us. The torrent sucked

him down again and we saw him no more. His empty boat flushed out ten minutes later and was recovered, intact, by the Maid of the Mist.

Omaha's body was gone.

After the police finished questioning us we made our way back to McBride-Omaha Headquarters. We lowered the flag to half-staff and set to work getting rid of the twenty cases of Keystone stockpiled in Omaha's office. We needed to drink it before the brewer reclaimed it, and we needed to talk our way through the tragedy. We decided that Omaha's gesture to Arden transcended romance. We agreed that his final whitewater run had been truly magnificent, a spectacular, heroic demise. But we were stuck on the question of whether to grant Omaha credit for a first descent.

McBride was adamant. "In order to get credit for a first descent you have to survive. It's mandatory. If you die on the way down it doesn't count."

Chopper violently disagreed. "He lived. He was alive at the bottom. We saw him wave to us while he was get-

ting trashed. That man made the first open boat descent of Niagara Falls and he deserves all the credit in the world."

I tried to placate them. "Take a middle ground. Give him credit for running the rapid, but not for finishing the river." But reasoning with them was like trying to reason with a couple of rutting bucks. After a while I gave up and went back to work on Omaha's beer.

We put Omaha's canoe up on blocks in the lobby, and spray-painted a eulogy on the hull. It read:

KENNETH OMAHA
1951-1994

DRINKER, BOATER, MARKSMAN,
LOVER
CLASS SIX GUY

We also found a silver lining in the cloud. One of the tourists had a camcorder and captured Omaha's final run on videotape. We sent it off to Keystone. They're going to release it as another commercial. Any day now they should deliver the next shipment of beer.

Guidelines for Contributors

The editorial staff of American Whitewater carefully reviews all material submitted for publication. We are particularly interested in receiving full length feature articles, conservation and club news, articles pertaining to whitewater safety and short, humorous pieces.

Articles should fit our established format; that is, they should be stylistically patterned to fit into our Features, AWA Briefs, Conservation Currents, Safety Lines, Big Swims or End Notes sections. Exceptional photographs and whitewater cartoons are also welcomed.

If possible articles should be submitted using Wordperfect 5.0 on a 5 1/4" single sided flexible disc. Please use the standard Wordperfect default settings; do not alter the margin or spacing parameters. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

Those without access to a word processor may submit their articles neatly typed and double spaced.

Photos should be submitted in the form of color or black and white prints. Keep your originals and send us duplicates if possible; we can not guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures,

include a self addressed stamped envelope with your submission. If you have slides, it is best to have prints made and to mail these instead. Because we publish in black and white, photos with a lot of contrast work best.

American Whitewater Feature articles should relate to some aspect of whitewater boating. Please do not submit articles pertaining to sea kayaking or flatwater. The best features have a definite slant... or theme. They are not merely chronological recountings of river trips.

Open the story with an eye catching lead, perhaps by telling an interesting anecdote. Dialogue should be used to heighten the reader's interest. Don't just tell us about the river... tell us about the people on the river... develop them as characters. Feature articles should not be written in the style of a local club newsletter.

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled or exotic rivers are given special consideration. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome.

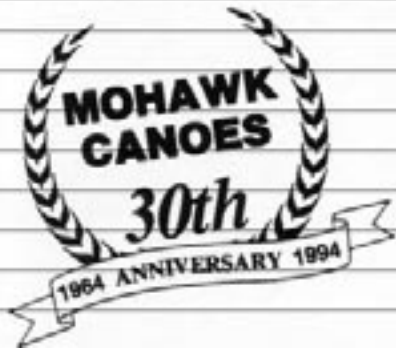
Don't be afraid to let your personality shine through and don't be afraid to poke a little fun at yourself... and your paddling partners.

Profanity should be used only when it is absolutely necessary to effectively tell a story; it is not our intent to intentionally offend our more sensitive members and readers.

Please check all facts carefully, particularly those regarding individuals, government agencies and corporations involved in river access and environmental matters. You are legally responsible for the accuracy of such material. Make sure names are spelled correctly and river gradients and distances are correctly calculated.

Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editors to fit our format, length and style. Expect to see changes in your article.

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NOVA 17	17'
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INTREPID17	17'3"

NOVA 16	16'
SPORT 14	14'
SOLO 13	13'



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