



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
Mar/Apr 2013

WATER WARS HEATING UP AGAIN IN CALIFORNIA

WEST MAGPIE BY TRAIN

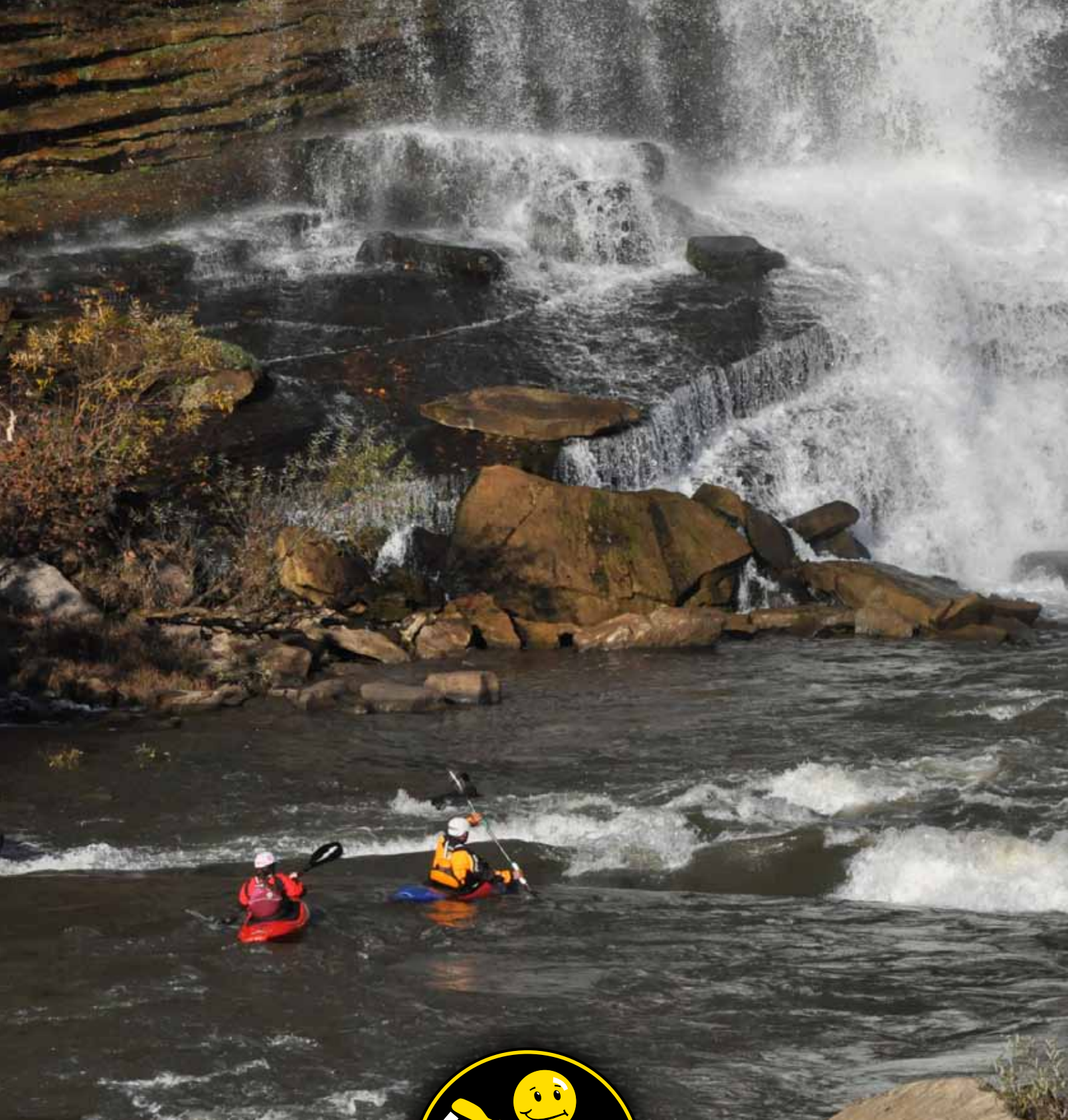
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

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The McCloud River in northern California could be further threatened by proposed increases in the height of Shasta Dam.

Photo by **Dave Steindorf**

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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

At American Whitewater our staff members come from many backgrounds and skills. The one identity that our staff most commonly shares is “whitewater paddler.” As paddlers, we are experienced in linking complex logistics and shuttles together with little more than duct tape and bailing wire. So it should be no surprise that we like to think of ourselves as providing good value for your membership dues. One way we do that is with a lean organizational model; with just eleven staff members, American Whitewater is a relatively small organization, but we leave a huge footprint in river conservation. Our decentralized model—where staff live and work in regions where we have active projects—has allowed us to engage our community to make a significant impact on river conservation across the country. One of the key metrics we look at to evaluate our effectiveness is the ratio between our overhead costs and stewardship efforts and expenses. We have a culture of keeping administrative and overhead costs low; \$0.84 of every dollar goes directly to Stewardship efforts. For nonprofits, that’s a very respectable ratio.

In our national stewardship project work we have some major buckets that our work falls into. One of the simplest ways to break these buckets down is to think of them as categories represented by the words Protect, Restore, and Enjoy. Our community knows firsthand that you can’t love what you don’t know. It’s our common love of whitewater that makes us such passionate defenders of rivers. Here is an outline of historic and current project work that provides an illustration of how we function and the impacts of our collective efforts.

Protect

American Whitewater has been a key player in protecting our treasured free-flowing rivers through growing the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. From our early advocacy in support of protecting the Selway River in Idaho, to our recent invitation to testify before Congress on the

value of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River in Washington State, we are a consistent voice for those who experience first-hand and value the beauty and joy of free-flowing rivers.

Restore

American Whitewater has restored flows to dry rivers below dams all across the country, and is a pioneer in bringing political and scientific legitimacy to restoring flows in a way that both improves riparian habitat and connects people to rivers. Rivers like the Feather in California, the Chelan in Washington, the Fox in Wisconsin, and the Cheoah in North Carolina were once dry, but now are living rivers again thanks to our leadership. We’ve also worked with fellow river advocates to remove dams that have outlived their useful life, restoring fish habitat and recreation opportunities to rivers throughout the country, including Washington’s White Salmon River (Condit Dam), North Carolina’s Tuckasegee River (Dillsboro Dam), and Montana’s Clark Fork River (Milltown Dam). We are currently engaged in advocating for recreational flows on the New River Dries (WV), something that could bring tremendous value to an economically depressed area by creating new recreational opportunities for adventure based tourism.

Enjoy

American Whitewater knows that those who have a personal connection to rivers are the most powerful and effective river conservation advocates. We connect the public with rivers through promoting whitewater safety and improving public access to waterways. We also maintain the National Whitewater Inventory – a comprehensive database of over 7,000 whitewater runs, representing the nation’s most extensive atlas of whitewater rivers.

This compelling mix of stewardship project outcomes allowed American Whitewater to foster strong additional corporate and foundation support. In 2012, we were able to solicit three additional dollars for every membership dollar we received. That three

to one match allows us to stretch your membership investment. Where else can you make a one-dollar investment and immediately stretch it to four-dollars in support of river conservation? This match, combined with a lean organizational model, allows American Whitewater to leave a footprint much larger than our actual shoe size.

This work is made possible through your membership support. We appreciate the importance of rivers and their role in supporting the health and well being of the paddling community. At American Whitewater, we remain committed to giving back to these special places through river stewardship, and we believe that if we take care of our rivers, our rivers will take care of our paddling and us.

See you on the river,



Mark Singleton

Executive Director, American Whitewater

PS – If you have boating friends who are not members of American Whitewater, please share this issue of the *Journal* with them and encourage them to join. Together all members of the boating community can speak on behalf of rivers with increased clout.

STEWARDSHIP

AMERICAN WHITEWATER WELCOMES TWO NEW STAFF MEMBERS

AMERICAN WHITEWATER HAS grown! At the end of 2012, we brought on two new staff members, bringing our team from nine to 11. We welcome Bob Nasdor, our new Northeast Stewardship Director, and Chris Menges, who will be the go-to person for our work in the Gunnison River Basin in Colorado. Curious about who they are and what makes them tick? Read on!

Bob Nasdor – Northeast Stewardship Director

Bob has a long history of advocacy work as a public interest attorney, and brings a wealth of experience to American Whitewater. His work has focused on improving policies and services for low-income and homeless families in Massachusetts, New Jersey, Maryland and DC, and he also served as the Assistant Attorney General for the State of Massachusetts in 2010-11. Since that time, he formed his own private law practice, and he continues to be an advocate as he focuses on employment discrimination, Americans with Disabilities Act, and civil rights issues. Bob has been an avid paddler in the Northeast for over ten years, and is excited to bring his skills in advocacy, legislative reform, law, grassroots organizing and outreach to American Whitewater.

You have a lot of experience as a lawyer and with non-profits. How does this play into your role as the Northeast Stewardship Director?

Working with AW is a tremendous opportunity for me to bring my legal skills working with non-profits together with my passion for whitewater. Through my work on issues involving homeless and other disadvantaged groups, I've developed a great deal of experience working with community groups and advocating with government agencies and legislative bodies. Effective legal advocacy with non-profits is ultimately about believing passionately in an issue, finding legal support for your position, and effectively advocating for your cause in the appropriate forum. This is what AW does so effectively.

What is your favorite river?

The Ottawa (Ontario) and the Pacuare (Costa Rica) are my favorites, but my home rivers in the Northeast offer great paddling opportunities on the Deerfield, the Hudson and the Kennebec, to name a few.

What excites you most about your position with AW?

I'm really looking forward to working with the dedicated and capable AW staff, veterans of past dam relicensing campaigns, and new volunteers in an effort to expand paddling opportunities in the Northeast. I am excited by the opportunity to have an

impact on issues that are important to the boating community here.

How did you get into boating?

I dated a woman a while back who was into paddling, and I took a two-day class at Zoar Outdoor in Charlemont, MA. I stuck with paddling, but not the old girlfriend.

Where do you live? What do you love about New England?

I live in Sudbury, Mass, just west of Boston. I love the outdoor recreation opportunities in New England year round—paddling, biking, hiking, XC skiing. I'm originally from Baltimore, and lived in New Jersey where I went to college, law school, practiced law, and was deeply involved in advocacy around housing and homelessness issues.

Where did you first hear about AW?

I often paddle with friends who are active in the Connecticut AMC Chapter. They are affiliated with AW and introduced me to the organization and its work in the Northeast, including its successful efforts on the Deerfield River.

What do you love most about paddling?

That Zen-like feeling of tranquility that you get on the river, when, despite the chaos surrounding you, you feel balanced, relaxed and in complete control of yourself, your boat, and the river. I think that happened twice.

What do you hate the most?

The smell of old neoprene booties.



AW's Northeast Stewardship Director Bob Nasdor having a great time on one of his favorite international rivers, the Pacuare in Costa Rica.

Photo courtesy of Bob Nasdor

Chris Menges – Gunnison River Stewardship Assistant

Chris's love for rivers began to take root in Colorado's Gunnison River Basin when he was a student at Western State College in Gunnison. There, he learned to paddle as he majored in Environmental Studies and minored in Political Science. Since then, his professional career has involved working on climate and clean energy issues in Colorado and the Northwest, and he's established connections in the paddling community through his work with industry partners. Chris recently completed a Masters of Science in Climate Science and Solutions at Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ. He will be working with AW staff on ongoing strategic efforts to define recreational flow needs across the Colorado River Basin.

When and how did you become interested in river conservation?

I first became interested in river conservation in the late 1990s. At the time, I was new to the West, new to paddling and was pursuing an undergraduate degree in environmental policy. As I became directly exposed to, fascinated by, and connected with rivers as a paddler, my broader resource conservation aspirations became oriented towards them. As I have grown as a paddler, my appreciation for rivers has deepened. As I have grown as a professional, so has my understanding of the diverse interests relating to water management and the complex processes governing allocations and management regimes.

You just finished a master's degree at NAU. How well does what you learned play into your role with AW?

Most broadly, attending graduate school with a diverse and dedicated group of students reinforced the reality that working with a range of interests, perspectives, and expertise leads to better decision-making. Also, informing policy with science alone is challenging, and better outcomes occur



Chris Menges, AW's Gunnison River Stewardship Assistant, enjoys Big Sur, the outstanding wave that forms when flows on the Colorado River near Grand Junction reach 20,000 cfs. This last occurred during the summer of 2010.

Photo by Morgan Mason

when science is combined with bringing everyone to the table. Local knowledge is critical, and I intend to integrate local voices into my work.

Climate change will likely underscore the Southwest's natural and hydrologic resource challenges for the foreseeable future. The amount of water in the region's rivers and streams will almost definitely decrease as less precipitation falls as snow and runoff occurs earlier. Combining a more arid climate with anticipated population growth will further stress the already over-allocated Colorado River system. At the same time, innovative and inclusive management strategies continue to evolve and show some promise of meeting future municipal and industrial needs while still protecting environmental and recreational interests. My degree and professional experience has given me an understanding of the perspectives of many of the stakeholders involved, which will help me be a credible participant in the processes.

What excites you most about your position with AW?

I am most excited about the opportunity to do good work on behalf of a river basin that has given me and many others so much. Accordingly, I hope to help arrange a lasting recreational benefit for local and

visiting paddlers. I am also very excited about working with regional paddlers—both private and commercial—and collaborating with other stakeholders and decision makers.

Where do you live? What do you love about the Southwest?

I have primarily been based out of Crested Butte, CO since the late 1990s, and was excited to return earlier this year. Getting to live in Flagstaff during graduate school was great, and a real opportunity to learn about water resource issues faced by Lower Basin states. As a region, I love the Southwest's rich history, cultural diversity, opportunistic mindset, regional individuality, varying climates and ecosystems, and outstanding natural beauty.

What's is your favorite river?

It sounds a bit cliché, but honestly my favorite river is whichever one I am lucky enough to be paddling. I love everything from scenic floats through Class V creeking. The Black Canyon is an incredibly beautiful and intense place in the Gunnison Basin, and my favorites there include Escalante Creek and the Crested Butte Creeks. We are extremely fortunate to have lifetimes of paddling opportunities here in the U.S. and with AW's help, we'll keep it that way.

STEWARDSHIP

CALIFORNIA'S WATER WARS HEATING UP

BY DAVE STEINDORF

SEVERAL NEWLY PROPOSED water storage projects in California have rekindled water wars in the state that have been smoldering for decades. Fueled by large donations from powerful water districts to our political representatives, these projects are moving forward despite the fact that they will do little to cure California's water woes. It is well known that California has always faced water challenges—most of the state has a relatively arid climate, and most of the water comes from the annual snowfall in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Mountains. What is less well known is that the state has already promised more water to various people and entities than is available. Even if we dammed up, stored, and delivered every drop of water that flows in California, we would still not be able to satisfy all of the claims that have been given out by the state in the form of water rights. The problem with this “paper water” is driven home by the fact that on average, the total of all of the water claims in the state is over five times the amount of actual water that flows through all of California's rivers and streams. Many projects are currently being proposed in the name of creating additional water storage, but in reality they only solidify claims to “paper water” instead.

Two examples of this reality can be seen in the proposals to raise New Exchequer Dam on the Merced River and Shasta Dam at the headwaters of the Sacramento River. The dam builders that constructed these projects over a half-century ago clearly did their homework in determining the appropriate size for each of these dams because they can capture most of the runoff that flows into each of their reservoirs. As a result, Shasta Dam in its current configuration fills only in the wettest of years, approximately once every four years. New Exchequer Dam can capture virtually all of the runoff from the Merced River, as is demonstrated by the fact that it has never

filled and spilled in its 46-year history. So, while it is certainly technically feasible to build these dams taller, the reality is that just building the dams taller will not create more water. A dam with no water stored behind it is simply a wall. The actual annual yield, the actual amount of water that we can count on annually, would be a small fraction of the theoretical increase in storage. It is this theoretical increase in water storage that is being sold to the public, and at great expense. The estimates in the Bureau of Reclamation's own feasibility report says that raising Shasta Dam will cost one billion dollars. But to be sure, this theoretical storage would be divvied up and allocated to interests that have already made fortunes by drowning and diverting California's rivers.

Of course, the brunt of this battle is again being borne by California's rivers. This is a battle that we assumed we had already fought: we had accepted our losses, and signed a peace treaty to protect those rivers that were most special. It was the rampant dam building of a half-century ago that brought about the need for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. It is important to recognize that while we all revere the importance of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the rivers that it has protected, most of these protections came about as part of deals that allowed for dam construction to occur in one area while we set aside other rivers for protection. Perhaps the most notable of these deals came when the Sierra Club and David Brower made a deal to save the rivers of Dinosaur National Park while agreeing not to oppose Glen Canyon Dam on the Colorado. We all tend to view our legacy of river and resource protection as noble fights that are won or lost, but the reality is that the business of protecting free flowing rivers can be more of a sausage grinding affair than a targeted effort. Often, there's much more “give and take” and “this for that” that happens behind the scenes.

The free-flowing Merced River above Lake McClure and McCloud River flowing into

Lake Shasta are two rivers that were to be protected from any future sausage-making. We've already given this for that on these rivers, and we agreed that the Merced River would be protected as a federally designated Wild and Scenic River and the McCloud River would be protected under California state law. The intent of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is to protect the free-flowing condition of special rivers throughout the country for current and future generations, and the proposals to raise these two dams are effectively throwing both of these rivers back into the sausage grinder yet again. The Shasta Dam raise would inundate up to two miles of the McCloud and Upper Sacramento Rivers, and raising the New Exchequer Dam would inundate approximately a half-mile of the Merced. Proponents of these projects note that this inundation would affect a relatively small percentage of the overall river. We have pointed out to congressional representatives that these projects will also increase water storage in California by miniscule amounts. The Shasta Dam raise will increase water storage in California on an annual basis by a miniscule 0.003%, and raising New Exchequer Dam would increase water storage in California by just 0.02%.

There are many ways to eliminate the need for additional dam construction in California. The most obvious is to allow for a small increase in the price of water, which will in turn be met by changes in people's behavior to eliminate the need for additional water infrastructure. For instance, an increase in the price of water would likely lead some alfalfa farmers to change to a less water intensive crop. Alfalfa is the most water intensive crop in California, consuming almost a quarter of all the water used for agriculture, while producing only 4% of farming income. It is flawed and presumptuous to assume that keeping the current allocation of the most water consumptive crops is in the public interest, particularly when it is the public that will bear most of the cost of these projects—both in terms of tax-payer dollars and in lost river resources.



Shasta Dam under construction in June of 1942. The empty middle space is where the spillway is today. Proposals to raise the dam would only increase California's water storage by 0.003% each year.

Photo courtesy Library of Congress; by Russell Lee, U.S. Farm Security Administration – Office of War Information Collection.

It is often argued that we simply do not have enough water in California to meet our various needs. American Whitewater disagrees, and we believe that we can find alternatives to solving the state's water problems that involve creative ideas beyond increasing California's reservoir water storage capacity. What we cannot replace are the last protected rivers such as the McCloud and the Merced. It is also clear that building taller dams at great expense to capture water that does not exist is a fool's errand. We encourage all of you to join with American Whitewater and other conservation organizations to make it clear to members of Congress that we oppose further degradation to our last remaining precious rivers in order to shore up an unsustainable water culture.

At risk again. Northern California's McCloud River was to be protected from future impacts from further dam building.

Photo by Dave Steindorf



VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP

WISCONSIN'S PENOKEE HILLS: AT THE CONFLUENCE OF WHITEWATER, MINING, AND CONSERVATION

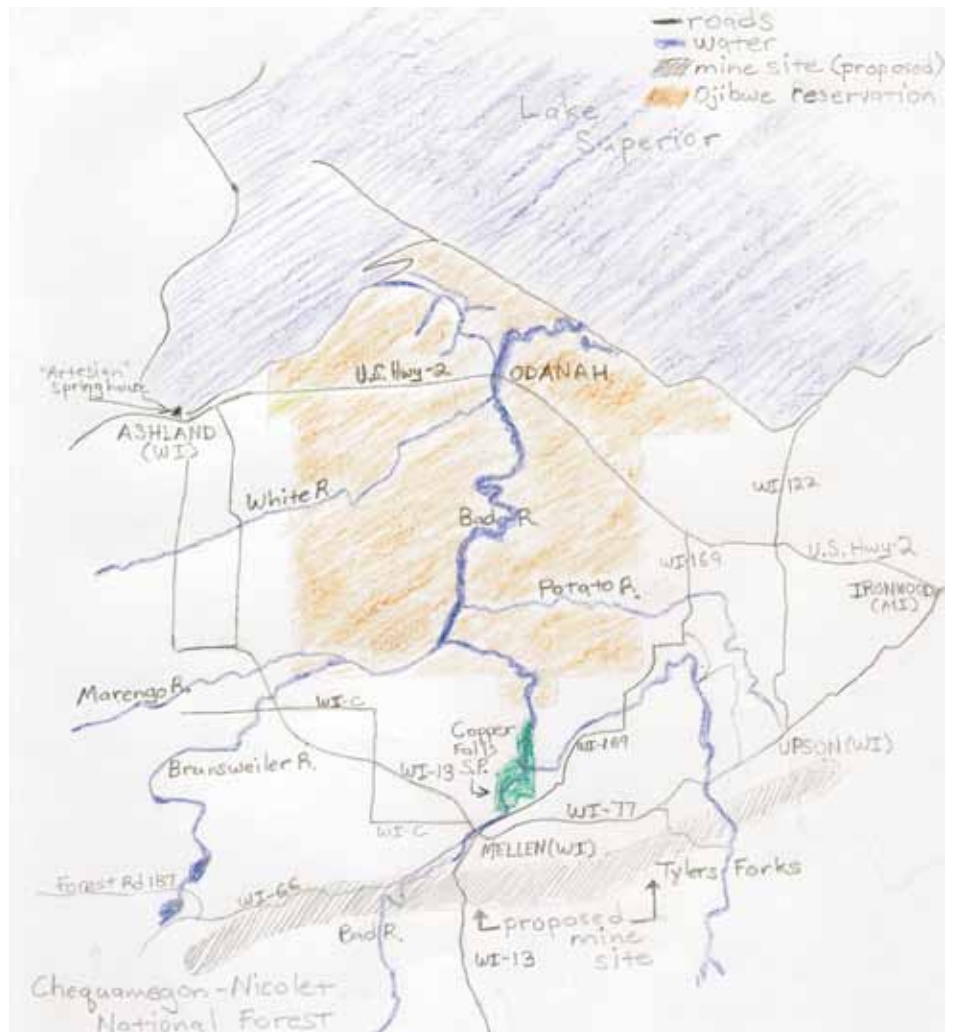
BY KENNEDY RUBERT-NASON

A view from the hill

LATE IN THE winter of 2011 I stopped at a small ski shop in Seeley, WI to look for some end-of-season gear bargains. I ended up speaking with the proprietor for some time, mostly because the conversation morphed into his ranting about a huge mine that was planned for the area to the east of his shop. I knew a bit about the area of which he spoke, having kayaked on the Brunswelier River the previous year. Being curious, I decided to investigate upon returning to my home in Madison.

A Google search easily validated the proprietor's account of the proposed mine, but provided little detailed information. Indeed, a mining company calling itself Gogebic Taconite (GTAC) was seeking a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to construct an open-pit iron ore mine in the area around Mellen, WI. The initial proposal was to construct a mine approximately 2 miles wide, 5 miles long and 1000 feet deep, extending from Mellen, WI on the west, toward Upson, WI on the east; eventually, the mine proposal stated intent to extend the excavation up to 20 miles in length. If constructed, the mine would cut through the backbone of the Penokee Hills and disrupt many of the local drainages (including some spectacular whitewater runs).

The Penokee Hills consist of a series of ridges along the south shore of Lake Superior that are the eroded remnants of an ancient mountain range. The hills are dissected by numerous streams of exceptional water quality, such as the Bad, Tylers Forks, Brunswelier, and Marengo Rivers (see Map). The Bad River/Kakagon



The Bad River and its tributaries drain the Penokee Hills, flowing through Ojibwe tribal lands (brown) en-route to Lake Superior. Note the presence of the proposed mining site (gray hatched area) in relation to the rivers, Ojibwe reservation and protected lands (Copper Falls State Park and Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest).

Original artwork by Kennedy Rubert-Nason

provides habitat to many threatened species (gray wolves, loons, wood ducks, etc.) (http://dnr.wi.gov/files/PDF/pubs/wm/WMO220_a.pdf; <http://wsobirds.org>), and includes area that is part of the Ojibwe people's ancestral territory (Bieder, R. E., Native American Communities in Wisconsin 1600-1960, University of Wisconsin Press © 1995). The exceptionally high quality groundwater in this region provides drinking water in the City of Ashland, and flows into rivers, where it nourishes fish and wild rice, and provides seasonal whitewater boating opportunities.

During the recent Penokee Hills mining initiative, the Cline Group (a West Virginia coal mining company) founded GTAC in order to diversify their business to exploit rising iron ore prices. In early 2012, the GTAC website touted a novel and supposedly safe process for extracting iron ore from pulverized rocks using magnets. Even if GTAC held true to its plans of not using chemicals in the extraction process, any operation that pulverizes rock will ultimately expose surface area of the rock that can leach minerals. The company also aggressively advertised its plans to bring

700 jobs to the area, and to restore the landscape following mining. Unfortunately, GTAC neglected to consider the permanent changes that the mine would cause to a landscape of unparalleled aesthetic value and which is of great importance to the Ojibwe. After 30-50 years of mining, the geography would undoubtedly be quite unlike it is today.

Worse yet, lobbyists from the mining industry at large (exactly who these people were or which business they represented remained a mystery) were rumored to be contriving with Wisconsin State legislators to change state mining laws to make permitting of this mine possible. Legislation (LRB-3520/1, RCT/MGG/RK/JK:kj/nn/cs:rs) bearing no authors was indeed introduced and debated at the Wisconsin Capital between fall 2011 and spring 2012; it was defeated by the narrow margin of one vote in spring 2011. While the debate raged in the legislature and protests sprung up in small towns across northern Wisconsin, the snow melted and it was time for spring kayaking.

A view from the river

Brunswweiler. The classic whitewater section of the Brunswweiler River is a Class II-IV wilderness run of approximately 10 miles. The river runs near the western boundary of the proposed GTAC mine site. At higher flows the whitewater is fairly continuous, except for a mile or so of flatwater crossing Beaverdam Lake. During a run with my friends in 2011, we had the luxury of bloodying our knuckles pushing our boats across that lake, which was still iced over in mid-April. On the bright side,

we had the privilege of seeing a family of river otters follow us partway across the lake, watching us intently as they popped their heads up through the melted-out ice fishing holes left behind from the previous winter. Downstream of the lake is a nice Class IV+ dells section, which is runnable with extreme caution. For the most part, the river flows through a shallow gorge with scenery dominated by craggy bluffs covered with white pine, interspersed with alder and spruce bogs. These bogs provide the river with its summer base flow, which is insufficient for whitewater boating, but provides ample cold, clean water for a healthy fish population.

Upper Bad River. The boatable section of the Bad River upstream of the Ojibwe tribal lands (Cayuga Rd. to Hwy-GG) is primarily swiftwater Class III. Rocket Railroad is the iconic rapid of the run, so named for the railroad that parallels the river. The scenery along this reach is typical of many rivers of the region: numerous rock outcroppings populated by spruce and white pine, interspersed with boggy lowlands. Compared with other Mellen area creeks, the Upper Bad has a larger catchment and therefore maintains more consistently boatable flows. Most importantly, the Bad River flows through the Ojibwe tribal lands on its way to Lake Superior, providing the tribe with abundant water, fish and wild rice beds. Removal of iron ore in this region would require rerouting of the Upper Bad River, an act that would destroy a valuable whitewater resource and compromise tribal culture and food security.

Tylers Forks. Of the boatable streams in northwestern WI, the remote Tylers Forks is probably the most scenic and also likely to

be the most severely impacted by mining. The 7.6-mile whitewater reach from WI Hwy-77 to the intersection of Vogues Rd. and Casey Sag Rd. is of comparable size to the Brunswweiler, and boasts a series of spectacular Class III/IV rapids (including the iconic Wren Falls). The major rapids occur when the river cuts its way through each of several ridges comprising the Penokees. Many of the rapids also expose grand views of the dark, angular rocks of the Penokee taconite (iron ore) formation.

Between the ridges of the Penokee Hills, the river fans out into grassy alder swamps (perhaps also supporting wild rice), and yielding panoramic views of the ridges in the background. Countless migratory birds make this remote area their breeding ground. The downside to whitewater boating on this run is not the flat water—for the scenery is stunning—but rather that the vegetation in the swamps can be so thick that even a kayak must be high sided to get through. The proposed mine would remove the ridge upstream of Hwy-77, removing some runnable waterfalls along that section of river and potentially contaminating the water downstream.

Marengo. The Marengo River flows along the western fringe of the proposed mining site. Compared with the other rivers of this region, the Marengo is deficient in major rapids (except for one Class V waterfall), and its scenery is not so austere. Using the put-in and take-out along Four Corners Store Road avoids the waterfall altogether, and sends one down a scenic Class I-II run of around 10 miles. The run begins and ends in patchy, mixed hardwood forest, and the sandy river bottom is more characteristic of the rivers of central Wisconsin. Floating along, the river takes one through a dense forest of spruce and white pine; the river bottom becomes rocky and bluffs rise on each bank. Our run was marked by abundant wildlife: we saw wood ducks, beavers, muskrats, a turtle, and a number of other waterfowl that we did not recognize. In addition to supporting wildlife, the Marengo has



The author (Kennedy “Ned” Rubert-Nason) gathering a daily supply of drinking water from the springhouse in Ashland (WI). The water flows north from the Penokee Hills, and exits the ground near the Lake Superior shoreline (backdrop).

Photo by Dan Cornelius

VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP



Rocket Railroad, the iconic rapid on the Upper Bad River, as it appeared during snowmelt in March, 2012.

Photo by Kennedy Rubert-Nason

potential to be a great run for beginning whitewater paddlers.

Down the river

My encounter with the otters on the Brunswailer River inspired me to protect the Penokee Hills. Thanks to the devoted opposition of many civic groups sharing my vision (including the Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters, the Sierra Club and the Madison Environmental Action Coalition), and also the Bad River Band of the Ojibwe, and Wisconsin Senator Dale Schultz who opposed the recent mining legislation, GTAC withdrew its mining permit application and ended the immediate threat to the Penokees. By November, 2012, GTAC had also removed its web site (<http://www.gobectaconite.com>) and all information regarding the proposed mine.

Unfortunately, restructuring of the Wisconsin state legislature following the November, 2012 elections is inspiring new

The Tylers Forks is characterized by spectacular scenery and many unnamed Class II/III rapids. Kayakers enjoy a springtime treat during this river's short season.

Photo by Kennedy Rubert-Nason

initiatives to roll back mining laws protecting precious landscapes like the Penokee Hills. The initial mining opposition movement was slow to mobilize, but nonetheless taught the industry at large a valuable lesson. The next time the mining issue comes to the table, the lobbyists will be better prepared. Therefore, all concerned about preservation of the Penokee Hills for future generations should continue to track mining initiatives, and maintain ties with their legislators and community action groups.

Those interested in paddling in the Penokees should first become familiar with the rivers in this region. Water levels

are tenuous and often too low for boating. The most reliable flows occur during spring snowmelt, when conditions are cold and the gravel roads used for river access are soft and muddy. The rivers are curvy and fast-flowing, and boaters must be ready to contend with obstructions around any curve. The lower reaches of the Bad River and its tributaries (in Ashland County, WI) are closed to boating pursuant to Ojibwe Tribal edict. One of the best ways for boaters to show support for the First Nations is by respecting their laws. More information is available on the American Whitewater web site, and in Jim Rada's book (*Northwoods Whitewater*, Sangfroid Press, 2006).

Editor's Note: *As we head to press the following details have come to light. A new mining bill (SB/AB 1) was introduced into the Wisconsin legislature in late January, 2013 (<http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/proposals/sb1>). This bill is a revised version of one that was narrowly defeated in 2012, and still contains many provisions that could open the way for extraction of iron ore from the Penokees. There is widespread speculation that both houses of the legislature will vote on, and likely pass, this bill sometime in March. The governor has already declared his support for bringing mining jobs to the state. If the new bill becomes law, mining companies are anticipated to again take up interest in the resources buried beneath the Penokee Hills.*



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WEST MAGPIE BY TRAIN

STORY BY CHRIS HARJES

PHOTOS BY JOE BARKLEY



Traveling in style. Living out of a kayak on one of Northern Quebec's classic wilderness runs.

Editor's Note: This story was previously published at *Paddlinglife.net* in December 2012. Our thanks to them for letting us re-print it!

EVER SPEND VAST sums of time and money on a big trip, only to see your hopes crushed in a flash? We could not have been more ready, or more fired up, to jump in the floatplane and fly 120 miles to Lac Vital, Quebec to run the West Magpie. We had spent 35 hours driving, and countless more cramming a week's worth of food and foul-weather gear into our boats. I even had six pounds of pepperoni and cheese stuffed under my seat. The pissy weather we fought as we packed turned out to be the leading edge of a three-day soaker, drowning all hopes of flying a tiny plane with ancient navigation systems over the mountains and into the lake.

Nate Warren had planned the trip for us, my wife Natalie convinced me to go big for graduation, and Asheville Adventure

Rentals set me up with some much-needed new gear. Three weeks later Joe Barkley showed up in his 1988 Toyota Town Ace, a specialized mail delivery truck with the driver's seat on the right, a finicky five-on-a-tree gear shifter, a newly-re-re-built fuel pump and no speedometer or emergency brake. We stacked our kayaks in the back and headed north. We were stoked to meet the crew, run the Taureau, then hop a flight to the Middle of Nowhere. We arrived at 5 am thanks to a Canadian border agent with a particularly sexy French accent who insisted that we must have something illegal in the quagmire of gear behind the cab. A surprisingly refreshing dirt nap in the Taureau take-out parking lot and a delicious brunch of hot poutine (French fries with gravy and cheese curds) helped us keep pace with Nate Warren, Tom Perkins and a fired-up crew of young Quebecois on the juicy southern Quebec classic. Another monster drive brought us to Labrador Air Safari headquarters in Sept Iles, Quebec to meet Jake Risch and Mike Dowell.

Kayakers on a mission are nothing if not determined. After crying softly for a few minutes about the rainy destruction of Plan A, we collected our wits and pored over Labrador Air Safaris' giant wall map of Quebec and Labrador in search of road-accessible multiday runs. We stumbled across a road leading into what might be a put-in for the nine-day Moisie run, reputed to be the Grand Canyon of Quebec. We ruled it out because that same spot might just as well be the put-in for paddling in circles on a giant lake for nine days.

Further map study and local beta revealed a commuter train crossing the West Magpie enroute to the mining operations of northern Labrador. This made us wonder why dirtbag kayakers would pay for a floatplane when the train offered a much cheaper way in. A painstaking tracing of the bends and oxbows upstream of Lac Vital revealed the answer: 57 miles of flatwater—IF you managed to shortcut the top eight by paddling in on a tiny creek, and IF you didn't get lost in any of the lakes on

WILDERNESS BOATING

the way. Jake and Nate bailed at this point due to time constraints, which was a sad loss for the crew.

Bummed but undaunted, the remaining four of us stuffed more food into our already overloaded boats, set the take-out shuttle (two hours of driving each way), and climbed on board the train the next morning at 8 am. The ride was gorgeous. The tracks ran up the lower canyons of the Moisie and along the Canada-sized waterfalls of the Nipissis, then out the top of the drainage into a vast area of incredibly flat tundra smattered with lakes and streams running in completely random directions.

The spot the conductor dropped us off didn't look much like the map's depiction of where we needed to be, but he assured us it was right. Even if we had shared his confidence in our placement, we would have still questioned our judgment at being dropped off this far from nowhere. As the train faded into the distance, we digested the finality of our decision, and started paddling around the marsh and bogs looking for the tiny creek we hoped would deliver us into the West Magpie. After



Tarp sweet home.

some intricate discussion that could have gone badly with a weaker crew, we finally found it—about 12 cfs flowing east through chunky rocks made of sandpaper and super glue. We walked down most of it to save our boats from being cheese-grated, and were stoked beyond belief when it dumped us into a real river.

The West Magpie that far up was about 2,000 cfs of incredibly slow-moving shallow water interspersed with confusing lakes and half-mile wide upstream wind tunnels. Every day streams large and small joined in, the trees on shore got bigger, and the banks got higher, but the river and landscape remained oppressively flat.

The rain continued for three days as promised, with short breaks but not a peep of sun. We paddled until our arms fell off, camped in the rain, repacked our boats in the rain, and paddled more. I have never struggled through so much flatwater in my life—even on sea kayaking trips. Upstream winds blasted our faces and fought our progress. Massive sandbars ground us to a halt and forced us to take painful detours around the farthest edges of wide river bends. Voracious hordes of black flies

No turning back now...

chewed us to insanity any time we got too close to the brushy banks during the day. The occasional rapids even felt awkward, out of control and not so fun in our low-riding torpedoes, and the absurd weight of nine days of food, breakdowns, stoves, shelter and clothes made our boats so heavy that dragging them up the banks to camp took all the strength we had.

Despite the suboptimal conditions, Joe Barkley, Tom Perkins, Mike Dowell and I kept our morale impressively high and even had some fun up there. We took frequent breaks on beaches upwind of the bugs, mixed cranberries and blueberries with our rum rations, slept late and gorged ourselves in an effort to lighten our boats for the rapids ahead. Brutal mile-long sandbar mazes would spark increasingly falsetto choruses of "Flatwater warriors—charge!!!" as we struggled to redefine gnar by how many blisters and bug bites we could accumulate each day. We celebrated the occasional option to shortcut vast serpentine meanders, crashing through 20 feet of reindeer moss and stunted fir trees to make two miles of instant progress. On the third day, I got ahead of the crew, caught a few trout in the rain, saw a wolf up close, and realized I was farther from civilization than I have ever been. The depths of the Middle Kings Canyon are

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but a stone's throw from the highway by Magpie standards.

Tom was attacked by geese (really), and we were craving real meat by then, so we chased down one of the many Canada Geese on the riverbanks, roasted it on a stick and ate every bit of it with a well-garnished surf-and turf of trout and blueberries. The heart was especially tasty. Two other wonderful things happened that evening: the rain stopped and the whitewater began. Day four started with us running amazing rapids and surfing glassy overhead bowls, all immersed in brilliant sunshine and stunning scenery.

The four of us established a casual rhythm of playful downstream motion: sleep late, chill by the riverside with coffee and freeze-dried bacon and eggs, run a few rapids,

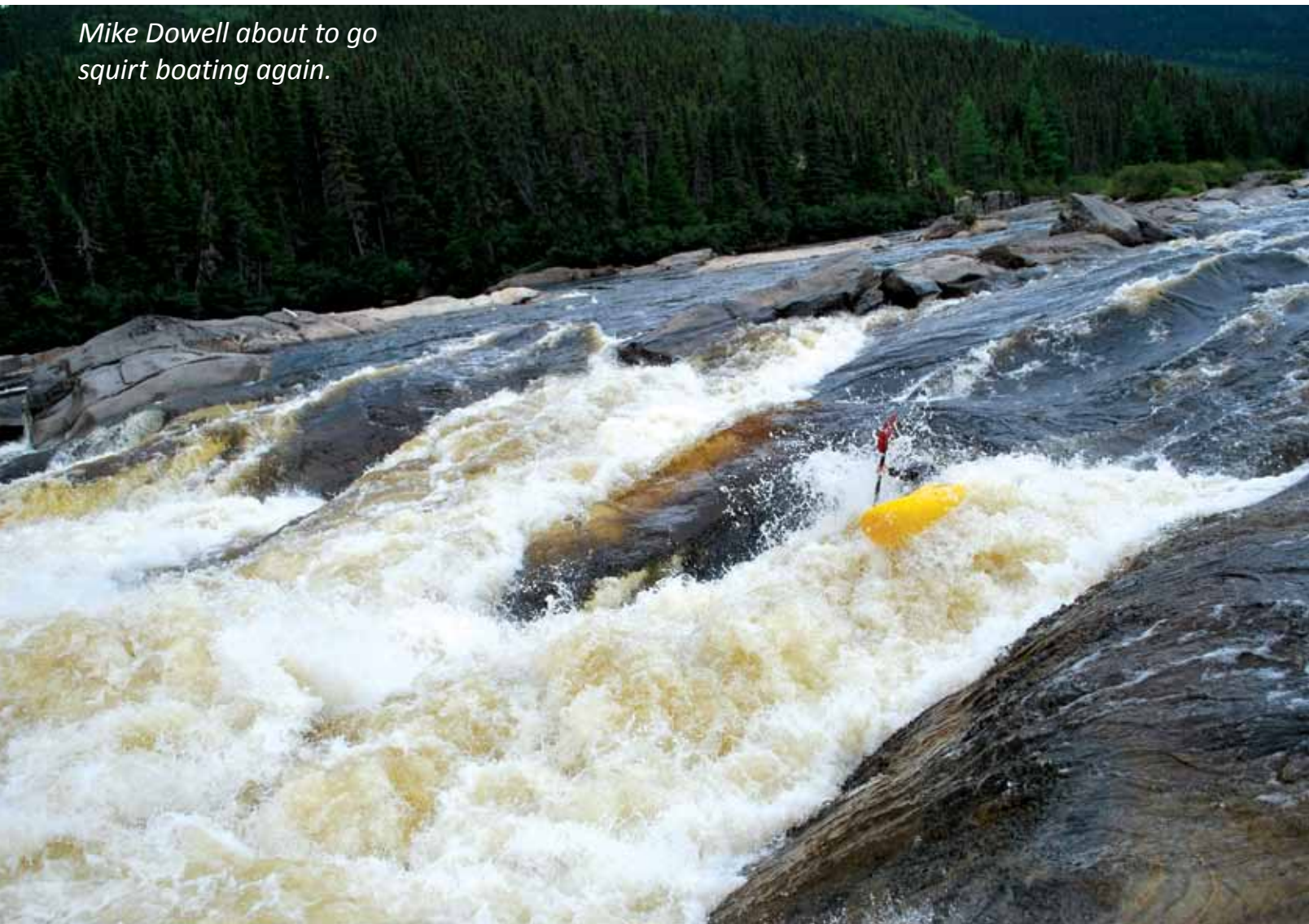
paddle some flatwater, take a long lunch break, dry our gear, roast trout on sticks, take a nap and eat more. Long afternoons of paddling offered plenty of time to scout, set safety, take photos, try alternate lines and surf our brains out. A few of the play features allowed us to blunt, spin and loop in creek boats loaded with far more weight than I have carried on any river trip—even on the Oyocachi where we packed machetes and a home-made tube tent from the hardware store.

The rapids ranged from big splashy wave trains with playful slots and boofs mixed in, to enormous churning drops that pro boaters would drool over. Some of the holes were bigger than my apartment. Evenings brought more trout, cheery campfires, a tasty buzz, jokes and stories, huge piles of food and a night under the stars—right into

another morning of cowboy coffee by the riverside. The Magpie provided surprisingly comfortable accommodations: plentiful trout and blueberries, a few natural lounge chairs and several well-arched back cracker rocks—much needed after the heavy days of paddling in the upper section.

The fourth night's camp was a weird little bedrock peninsula below a stompin' broken waterslide that we scouted at length but all chose to walk. The river was so close that it occasionally surged into a channel that flowed into the fire, sending up a cloud of steam and sparks. Morning brought an incredible foggy sunrise and one of the fastest, rowdiest boogie rapids of the run, followed by many more. Night five left us scrambling into the last eddy right above an intimidating portage at dusk, to the fortunate welcome of a smooth spit of flat

Mike Dowell about to go squirt boating again.



Yet another awesome rapid on the West Magpie; if only we were willing to run something that big so far out in the woods.

rock far enough out in the riverbed to save us from the bugs, and with enough driftwood to rage a silly white man's fire while pillaging our remaining liquor stash. The mix of deep Southeastern and northern New England cultures spurred the playful intensity of kayakers on the loose, and got us laughing so hard we nearly tumbled into the river.

At 220 cumecs (7,770 cfs) the West and Main Magpie were surprisingly easy to scout and portage, even with a bit of a hangover. Ferrying across to scout alternate lines still took quite a while, and we often had to climb and attain back upstream to access lines that made sense.

Fortunately the casual group dynamic and the ready support of the entire crew for the choice to run or portage made the process of finding our place in the massive, branching riverbed more fun than work.

The one exception was an unusually committing gorge late in the fifth evening. It looked like it would take well over an hour to portage, which would have left us camping in the buggy brush and fighting the mid-afternoon winds on the lake the next day. Adam Herzog had told us that paddling across Lac Magpie in an afternoon upstream wind was one of the hardest things he's ever done. Twenty-five miles of dead flat water against four-

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Old-school fire-making with new-school Crocs at the last camp.

foot whitecaps kicked the Linville Triple Crown holder's butt. His accounts of the experience instilled in us a mortal fear of cursing for days on a liquid treadmill. No amount of Flatwater Warrior rallying cries would make that experience fun.

With all that in mind, we seal-launched into the gorge hoping for the best. My aversion to locked-in burl evaporated as I landed in a huge backender, blasted into a giant walled-in rapid, and celebrated with cheers, hugs, and even an awkward bit of dancing around on shore when it finally opened up. 'Zog told us later that there's a good portage trail on the left, which we would have gladly taken had we found it. Joe threw an absolutely perfect monster kickflip in the next wave train, and we cruised victorious into a gigantic valley ringed with bright green, granite-topped mountains.

We paddled into the night, camped on a sandbar right where the lake opened up, and awoke at 3 am to the most pleasant surprise of the trip: a gentle tailwind that pushed/surfed us across the lake in a surprisingly easy eight hours. The dreaded afternoon upstream wind kicked up right as we reached the shelter of the far side. That night's camp brought more and bigger trout in an even bigger river—welcome protein after a near marathon of dead flat water in loaded creek boats. Even with the help of the blessed tailwind, we were all beat. We fell asleep under the stars only to wake to a pitter-patter of rain that turned into a good soaker. I was so dead asleep that I would

have awoken drenched and freezing if Joe hadn't scrambled to pitch his tarp over both of us. Another chilly morning packing in the rain led into such a fun set of wave trains and water boofs that we didn't care how wet our camping gear was.



Fire-roasted goose, caveman style.

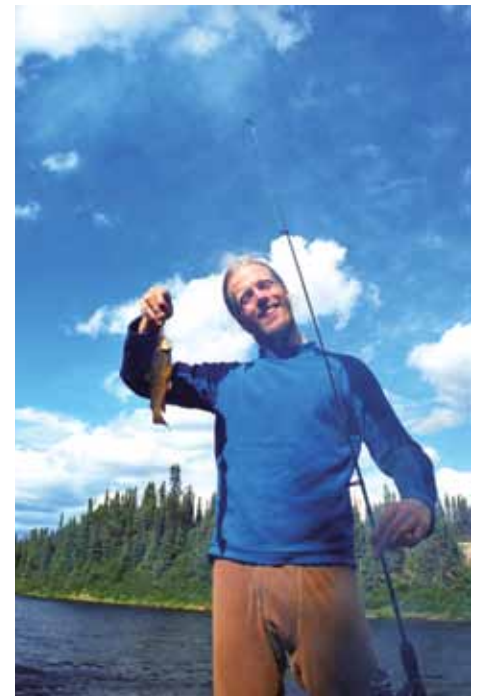
That evening brought a return of sun at our final campsite, an island beach carpeted with perfectly round, smooth little river stones. We passed around the last of our food and liquor, and somehow had enough of everything between us to feast quite nicely. Despite our best efforts to pack everything we would need, each of us would have run out of food, coffee, liquor, sunscreen, bug dope, or some other crucial provision. Between the four of us though, we had creative family style potluck meals, plenty of everything and an amazingly comfortable nine days in some rather inhospitable wilderness. I think the best

Chris Harjes stoked on catching his first trout of the trip.

dish that night was Tom's mashed potatoes and gravy with powdered cheese sauce donated from Mike's macaroni, a handful of freeze-dried bacon from my breakfast stash, and a fat smoked trout Joe filleted into the mix.

We were sad to see the end, but the promise of cold beer, a day off and a meal that hadn't spent nine days stuffed in the back of a kayak urged us through the last day of running big rapids and portaging huge ones. The scale of rock, water and gradient on the lower Magpie is mind-boggling. The massive bends, islands and braided channels in the flat reaches provided the novel challenge of actually navigating a river. The larger drops would still be really intimidating even if scaled down to a fifth of their size. We felt like foam boaters tossed into overgrown creeks, dwarfed to insignificance by the volume and complexity of churning water surrounding us. Dozens of our rapid photos turned out to be just a paddle blade sticking out of the foam, or nothing at all.

We thought that after our strenuous nine-day wilderness adventure that we could





The Crew stoked to have made it through the first of two big portages on the final day.

look forward to some more relaxed days ahead, but on our second night out of the woods, I was attacked by the Town Ace. I awoke to find her bumper directly over my head after she rolled 25 feet and mushed my tent into an awkward triangle. Joe slept right through the bouncy ride, and thought I was crazy when I opened the canvas to ask him to move his truck out of my tent. I guess that's what I get for laughing at the raggedy-looking old Ace when she showed up at my house to take me to Canada. Despite her homicidal tendencies and insanely quirky controls, she turned out to be the perfect vehicle for our road trip.

The next day brought us to the Rocheres, perhaps the most interesting river I've ever done. Each of its seven rapids braids into three to five channels, all with plenty of water and at least one amazing rapid. We explored as many routes as we could, often running one channel and attaining/climbing back up to run something even better in another channel. One of these exploratory attains brought us to the bottom of a beautiful little rapid that looked really awkward to carry a boat up. My answer was to pull a Jason Hale and just swim the thing,

but an unseen rock painfully reminded my butt that I am not Jason Hale.

After two glorious days exploring the Rocheres, we bid Mike and Tom a sad farewell, camped on a gorgeous rocky beach enroute to Montreal, and drove to Lachine. We had a bit of a misunderstanding with the directions the mostly French-speaking surfers at the put-in scratched into the dirt for us, and ended up swirling around in giant whirlpools over a mile away from the legendary waves we had come to surf. We got so disoriented in the two-mile-wide riverbed that we spent about an hour wandering around the backyards of quaint little vacation homes on a series of islands, disrupting the residents in the middle of their morning crepes and wine. By luck, we finally stumbled across Norm Bachand, an English-speaking kayaker who gave us a grand tour of the area in his homemade, carbon and cedar motorboat, then dropped us off at Big Joe's, a river wave so clean that surfers swim the St. Lawrence's rapids to get to it.

Once there, Little Joe spun, blunted, and looped Big Joe over and over again. I had the novel experience of kayak surfing right

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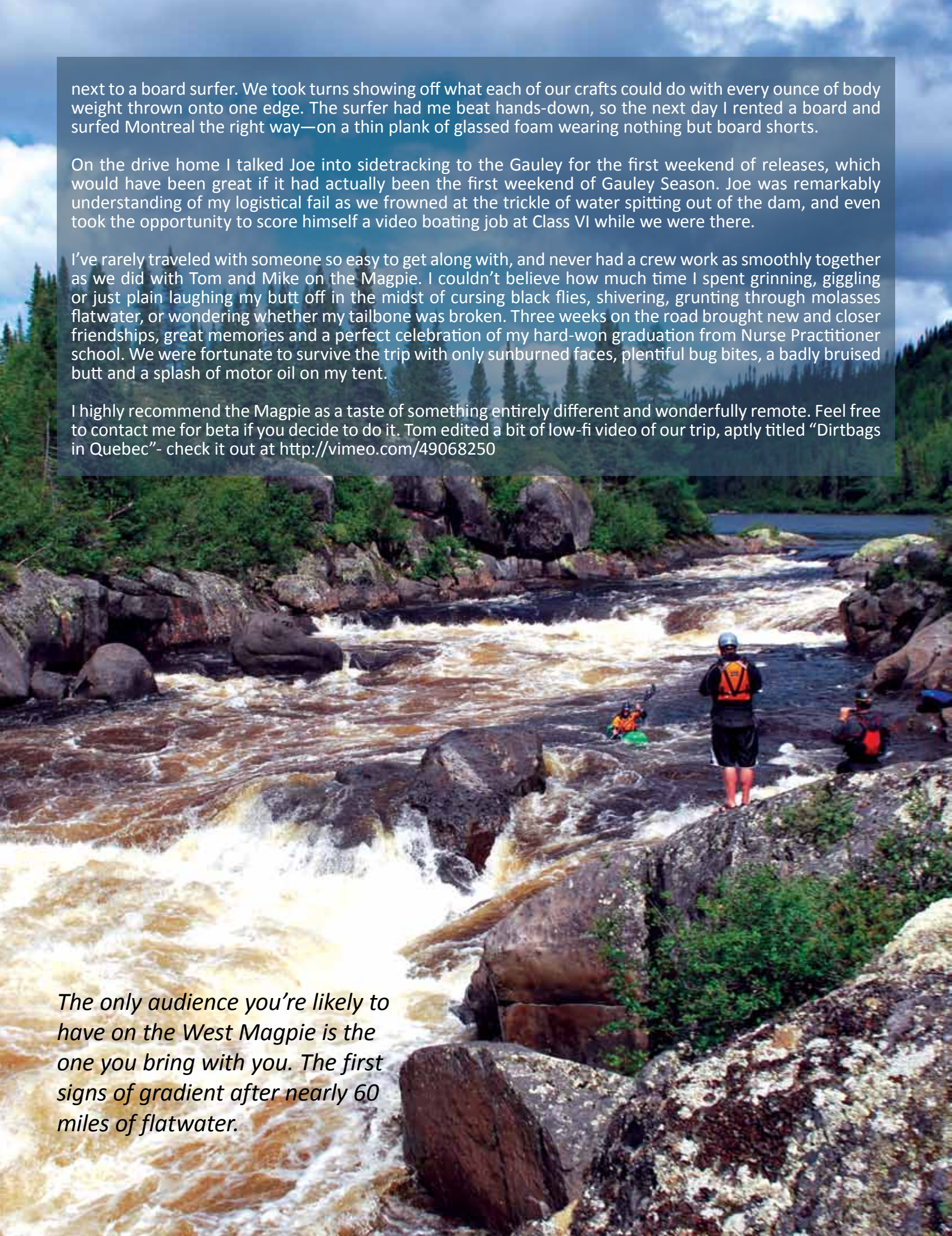
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next to a board surfer. We took turns showing off what each of our crafts could do with every ounce of body weight thrown onto one edge. The surfer had me beat hands-down, so the next day I rented a board and surfed Montreal the right way—on a thin plank of glassed foam wearing nothing but board shorts.

On the drive home I talked Joe into sidetracking to the Gauley for the first weekend of releases, which would have been great if it had actually been the first weekend of Gauley Season. Joe was remarkably understanding of my logistical fail as we frowned at the trickle of water spitting out of the dam, and even took the opportunity to score himself a video boating job at Class VI while we were there.

I've rarely traveled with someone so easy to get along with, and never had a crew work as smoothly together as we did with Tom and Mike on the Magpie. I couldn't believe how much time I spent grinning, giggling or just plain laughing my butt off in the midst of cursing black flies, shivering, grunting through molasses flatwater, or wondering whether my tailbone was broken. Three weeks on the road brought new and closer friendships, great memories and a perfect celebration of my hard-won graduation from Nurse Practitioner school. We were fortunate to survive the trip with only sunburned faces, plentiful bug bites, a badly bruised butt and a splash of motor oil on my tent.

I highly recommend the Magpie as a taste of something entirely different and wonderfully remote. Feel free to contact me for beta if you decide to do it. Tom edited a bit of low-fi video of our trip, aptly titled "Dirtbags in Quebec"—check it out at <http://vimeo.com/49068250>

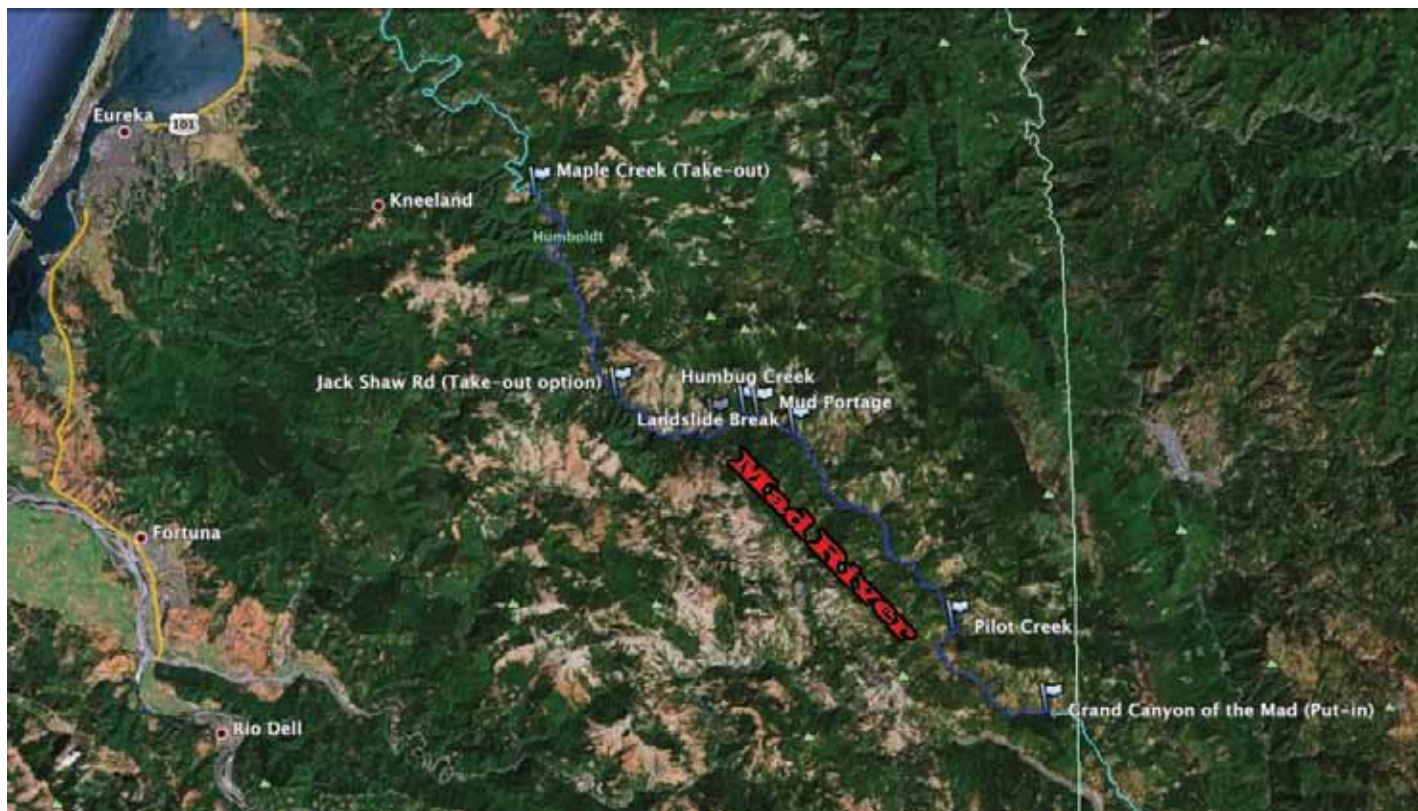
A photograph of a river with rapids and several people in kayaking gear standing on rocks. The river is turbulent with white water rapids. In the foreground, a person in a black shirt and orange life vest stands on a large rock, looking towards the rapids. Other people in kayaking gear are visible further down the river. The background shows a dense forest of evergreen trees under a cloudy sky.

The only audience you're likely to have on the West Magpie is the one you bring with you. The first signs of gradient after nearly 60 miles of flatwater.

WILDERNESS BOATING

STORIES FROM EXPLORE SIX RIVERS: THE GRAND CANYON OF THE MAD

BY PAUL GAMACHE



IN JANUARY OF 2008, Charlie Center, Ben Wartburg, and Alex Wolfram attempted the first descent of the Grand Canyon of the Mad. They were going for a one-day descent of this 25-mile section with no beta, no flow knowledge, and no Technu. At least it was before noon, barely. Driving to the take-out on Jack Shaw Road I sat and waited for them to arrive. As night fell, the thought of being hacked to death by a local tweaker made me more nervous for my own safety than for the guys nighted out on the river. The next day came and by late afternoon Charlie drove out to get me. They had hiked out through a hillside of poison oak and hitchhiked back to Arcata.

Over four years later I find myself crammed into Wes's truck. This time Jon Hyland is helping with shuttle. As Mike Lee, Wes Smith, Wes Schrecongost, Dan Menten, and

I gear up, we hear a groan from Will Parham. He just ripped the only pair of contacts he had with him. Sadly, Will resigns himself to keeping Jon company for the drive back to Arcata. With boats loaded we push off for the fourth attempt of the Grand Canyon of the Mad River.

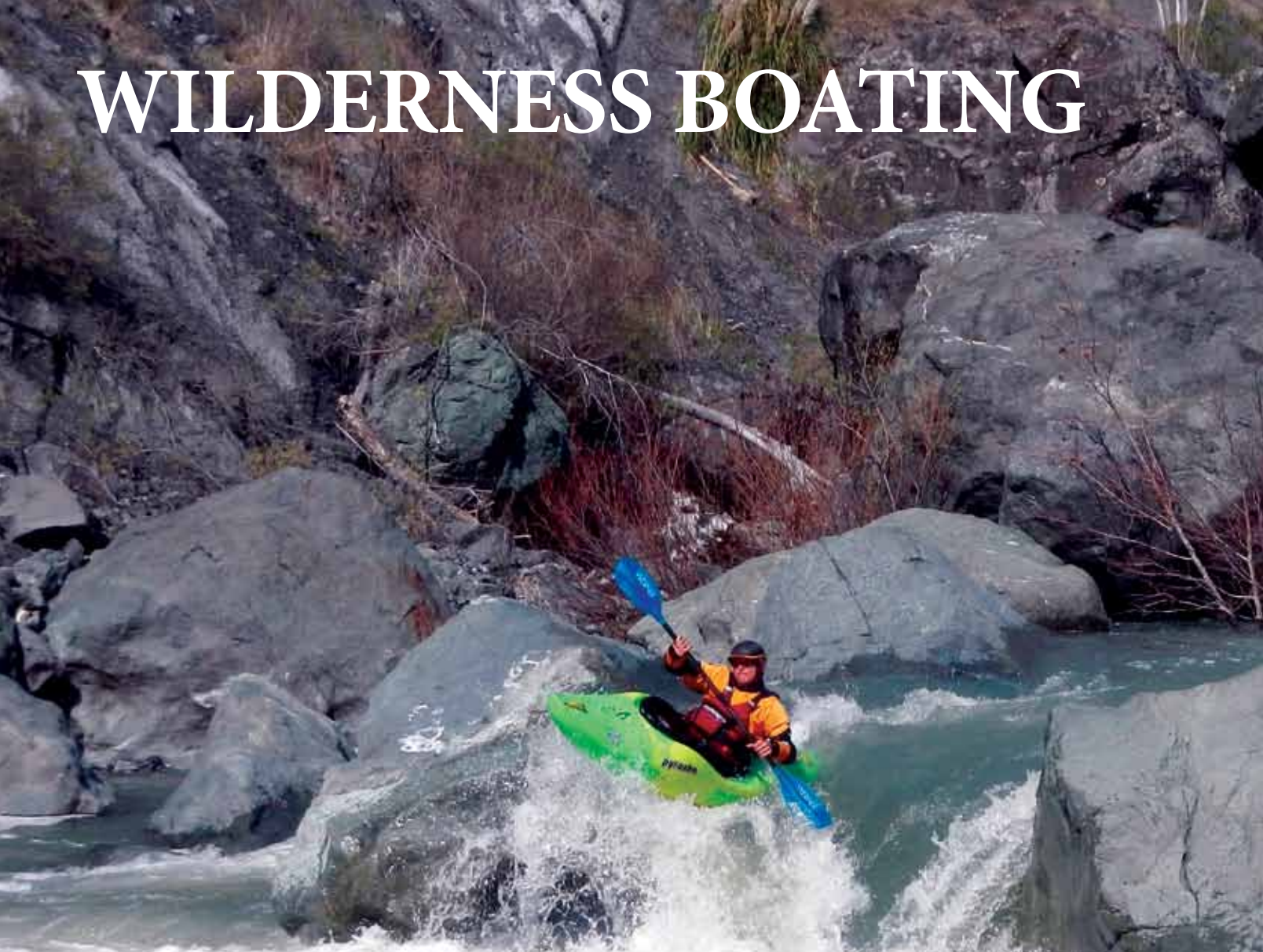
After Charlie, Ben, and Alex there have been two other descents of this section. Dustin Stoenner and Martin Belden pulled off the second descent (first complete) in 2009. The flow was less than half of the 2200 cfs faced by the first attempt crew. The general consensus was that the run needed more water. So in 2010, Ben Stookesberry and Taylor Robertson put on with 4200 cfs on the Arcata gauge. What they encountered reminded Ben of some of the larger rapids he had paddled in the Himalayas a few weeks prior. Taylor claimed it was some of

the biggest Class V+ he had ever run. With positive beta and a seemingly "what could go wrong" mind set we headed off for our descent, hoping that 1,500 cfs would be an optimum level.

The start of the Grand Canyon of the Mad is a fun and enjoyable stretch. The rapids are mostly Class II/III with only a few III+/IV- rapids mixed in. We know there are going to be large rapids downstream but the Bluebird skies coax us into carefree comfort. For some reason it's just easier heading into the unknown when it's sunny out. We take a break at the confluence with Pilot Creek, which increases the flow by about 30-40%.

Below Pilot Creek the rapids pick up a bit. The additional water pads out the rocks and creates a few holes but mostly fun "good-

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to-go” boofs. Surprisingly, the rapids are more fun than terrifying.

Then, suddenly, what starts as a portage becomes much more serious. As I step onto a ledge to begin portaging on river right, Wes Smith calls my name from river left. I turn to respond and the weight of the loaded creek boat on my shoulder pulls me backward. I try to maintain my balance but end up falling a foot or two into the eddy below me. The fall causes me to go underwater. I’m floating on the eddy line above the portage; the seriousness of the situation is startling. Grabbing my boat I start swimming the few feet to shore. Once safely out of the water I look back over at Wes who signals that the portage is much easier on his side. Not long after we stop for lunch along the banks of a landslide.

After lunch we portage twice more. One was short and easy, the other up a muddy hill that would be a

nightmare to deal with if it were raining. The Mad River is famous for thick, shoe-stealing mud and heinous poison oak. Below the “Mud Portage” the river returns to fun, read and run Class IV/V.

We portage once again around a rapid that will one day be run. For us the undercut wall at the bottom of the drop isn’t worth the risk that day. Soon after, we are at another horizon line. Technically, a rock outcropping in the middle of the river creates two channels. Dan feels good about the right side and drops over. Curious, I paddle over to the left channel. Dan signals it’s clean and it turns out to be a straightforward sliding boof.

Back on the right, Mike misses his boof stroke. His boat subs out in the hole and then is launched up into the air in a stern-squirt. Pushed up against the right wall Mike forgoes any more roll attempts and pulls his skirt. He comes up quickly and begins aggressively swimming against the re-circulating hole. Thankfully,



Some surprisingly fun, easy boogie water on the GC of the Mad.
Photo by Wes Schrecongost

Mike is able to grab the back of my boat and takes the free ride to safety. His boat and paddle aren't so lucky. The rinse-cycle begins and unclipped items in Mike's boat begin popping free. Wes yells as he sees the water-filter that Mike was carrying for him. It sinks soon after. By this point Dan is back in his boat from taking photos and is chasing a recently resurfaced paddle downriver. I head into the current just in time to see Mike's yellow dry box come to the surface and begin heading downstream. I paddle after it knowing there must be something inside worth saving. Why else would it be in a drybox? Pulling the clear-case box from the water I take a look inside; along with standard safety gear Mike has his entire insulin kit. It is a good reminder that not only should everyone in the group know of important medical issues with their companions, but there should always be a spare set of medications split amongst the group.

The incident shakes the group. Tensions are high due to a lack of communication, frustration, and the stress of what may or may not be lurking downstream. Mike is upset. He was tired going into the drop and apparently wanted to camp upstream on a beach he saw. Not knowing this was the situation the rest of the group was focused on going downstream. We all apologize and try to make sure he knows it wasn't personal. It's 5:30 pm. We have about an hour of daylight left; downstream is another rapid requiring a scout and who-knows-what-else below it. We decide to call it camp on the banks of Humbug Creek. Oddly, it seems almost fitting. We quickly make the area camp-worthy and are soon back into good spirits as a group.

In less than a quarter-mile we are at our first portage of the day. We quickly make our way around the picket fence of house-sized boulders. Below here nearly every rapid has a fun boof.

WILDERNESS BOATING

Just when we started getting into a groove, “The Kiegler” gets us. Pulling up to a slot horizon line I paddle as close as possible to the lip without committing. There’s a rock in the run-out of the landing zone but it’s a blind landing. I can’t see what is directly below the boof. Dan is out of his boat scouting the 4-foot drop from river-right. He too cannot see the bottom but signals that it’s clear besides that. Just as I’m committing to a boof stroke I notice a rock in the landing on the right. Luckily, I’m able to adjust the angle of the bow to avoid the hazard. I signal up to Dan about the rock in the landing. Wes Schrek thinks this is referring to the larger more visible rock. He comes over knowing to head right at the bottom and is rejected back into the hole by the rock in the landing. He manages to grab the wall on river left, barely avoiding being pulled into an undercut. Wes Smith has a good line followed by Mike Lee who unfortunately

pulls a move similar to Wes Schrek. After a short hole-ride Mike opts for the swim and is quickly out of the water.

The Kiegler has its dangers and shouldn’t be taken lightly. The undercut wall on the left of the drop has the potential to pull swimmers underneath. Future groups attempting this stretch should definitely scout and set solid safety here.

We eat lunch and begin our next portage. Following Wes Shrek up the hill we make our way around a gully carved into the hillside. Just as I’m passing a clump of grass the dirt under my left foot gives out. I fall to the ground and begin sliding down the 30-foot cliff. The boat that used to be on my shoulder misses my head by a few inches. Reality slows down as the ground opens up below me into a 10-15-foot freefall. “This is pretty serious,” I can hear myself thinking just as I begin to plummet. The

thought doesn’t do anything to slow me down or prevent the pain in my rear at the bottom. The creek boat takes off down the rest of the gully and Wes Schrek stops the borrowed Burn with his shin. Not only did I drop the guy’s boat off a cliff but I managed to slam it into his shin as well. Nice one.

We assess the injuries and are grateful (myself especially) that no one is seriously injured. If the fall had broken my tailbone or the boat broken Wes’ leg, getting out of the canyon would have gotten a lot more complicated. Regardless, the fall has shaken me. I notice a twitching in my hands and my heart is racing. I sit down and drink some water hoping I won’t make any more reckless falls on this trip.

Downstream of this portage we are greeted with one of the best rapids on the run. A fun boof down the middle followed by a move into another kicker style launch.



The GC of the Mad has some gnarly whitewater and some high quality Class IV too.
Photo by Wes Schrecongost



Both Wes' enjoying the Grand Canyon of the Mad
 Photo by Wes Schrek

We rally a few miles of Class III/IV whitewater before hitting a scout worthy horizon line. Getting out on the right we walk downriver to scout the drop. There's a line but it's not really ideal flows to make the drop worth the consequences. As we begin heading back to our boats to portage I start becoming nervous about falling again. I decide to go up and around the rock we had climbed up and am immediately threatened with the sound of a rattlesnake. Climb down a sketchy rock or walk by a pissed off rattlesnake? I opt for the sketchy rock.

After a couple of miles of Class II/III with the occasional III+/IV- we realize we're through the Grand Canyon. It's 2:30 pm. We have about two miles to the put-in of the Swinging Bridge run, four miles of Class III/IV followed by six miles of Class I/II. To our right is a really nice beach that would make an ideal campsite for the night. We decide to call it a day and enjoy the warm sun and no rush mentality.

In the morning we are able to make quick work of the Swinging Bridge run (2.5 hours) and are all relieved when the Maple Creek Bridge comes into view.

We've made it. The relief washes over all of us. It's made even better when Wes' truck is spotted. Thankfully, all the windows are still intact. Little did we know at the time but exactly a week later we would be putting in here to paddle the largest rapid of the entire Explore Six Rivers Project. But that story is for another day.

About Explore Six Rivers: Six Rivers National Forest in Northern California is named after the Smith, Klamath, Trinity, Eel, Van Duzen, and Mad rivers. In February of 2012, the team consisting of Will Parham, Wes Schrecongost, Dan Menten and Paul Gamache began their goal of paddling all six rivers from source to sea in a single season. The purpose of the expedition was to explore and promote paddling in and around the North Coast. This is one story, from one section, of one river. For more information and an online video of this section please visit: ExploreSixRivers.com

Paul Gamache is currently in Cameroon on a Sperry Top-Sider supported expedition. For more on this go to ChutesDuCameroun.com



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LOVE & WHITEWATER

CLASS V CANINE A MOUNTAIN MUTT'S UNEXPECTED JOURNEY FROM THE SHORES OF THE OCOEE RIVER.

BY JEFF JOHNSON

THIS ROAD IS unlike any I have been on before. Colorfully modified buses overloaded with excited passengers snake their way down the mountain, narrowly missing rocky outcrops that are within arms reach of the passengers inside. Wood decks, much like boat docks over water, cover the entire roof of the buses; rafts are stacked and secured to these three high. These buses would never pass under a bridge of any height, which reveals the utilitarian nature of their existence and minimal distances they travel.

There is a nervous excitement in the air, an excitement normally reserved for the line of a roller coaster in a suburban theme park. It seems out of place in this wilderness of sorts. It's commercialization in the outdoors like I have never seen. It's a new day on US Highway 64. The business is adventure, the product is rafting trips on the Ocoee River and the customers are students packed onto buses on their way to have promises of exhilaration and excitement fulfilled. As for us, today we are simply passing by; observers of this mayhem. But for the next three months, this river becomes our way of life.

The summer of 2000 was to be a summer like none other. My wife Becki (fiancé at the time) and I made our way from Ontario, Canada to the Ocoee River in Tennessee to work for a whitewater rafting company based out of a nearby camp. For three months we had plans to enjoy the people, culture and recreational opportunities of the area; spending time on the rivers and in the mountains, exploring the nearby towns and making new friends. This was going to be one final summer of travel and adventure before we were to be



Toccoa, at the rafting camp in Tennessee, shortly after her adoption, summer of 2000.
Photo by Jeff Johnson

married upon returning home to Canada in September.

The first half of the summer involved long hot days working in the sun; hauling rafts, belaying first time rock climbers and tending to the endless needs of the camp guests. The nights were equally long and tiring as heavy rain and dramatic thunderstorms rolled through the mountains just about every night. It was a phenomenon that we couldn't understand. Beautiful blue skies by day and dark and stormy by night. Although the work was hard and sleep was minimal, we were happy. We were together in the mountains, doing the things we loved to do.

Halfway through the summer, two small puppies appeared at the camp. One was black and the other golden brown. Rumor had it they were from a litter of eleven, these two being the smallest and last to find homes. They were "mountain mutts" the locals said, a term given to the lab and hound mix of dog that seemed prevalent in the area. Their medium size and boisterous howl came from their hound side and their gentle, playful temperament came from their lab side. During our trips into the mountain towns of Ducktown, Copperhill

and Blue Ridge we would see these mountain mutts hanging around town, playing with kids and searching for scraps of food.

Shortly after their arrival, the black pup was tied to a tree and labeled with a handwritten "take me home" sign. Evidently someone felt it was time to work a little harder to get these pups a new home. The puppy sat there patiently for a couple hours, people oohing and awing at the astounding cuteness of the situation. Eventually it was freed, once again to enjoy the life around camp that it was starting to get used to. For a day or so it ran around the camp, enjoying the company of the daily groups of rafters that would come and go each day. Endless pats on the head, scratches under the chin and belly rubs were enjoyed between playful jaunts through the nearby creeks and fields. When meal time came around, the puppies would head to the open air dining hall, where they would sit on the floor next to the river-drenched Teva sandals of hungry adventurers, batting their eyes until scraps were tossed into their salivating mouths.

I certainly enjoyed the company of these dogs around the camp. They added a special touch to the experience for our guests. Becki began to become a little too friendly with one of the pups. It happened quickly but at first it was subtle. She liked the black one with the little white spot on her chest. She made her a leash out of some old yellow climbing rope. A collar was secretly purchased at the Dollar General in Copperhill while I waited for our laundry to be done at the nearby laundromat. A water bowl was found and filled with fresh water, to the pup's delight. Dog food we couldn't afford was purchased with money we didn't have, but it was neither needed or wanted because the puppy was getting her fill three times a day at the dining hall.

Eventually, the time came to have "the talk." Becki really wanted to keep the dog. I, on the hand, could not figure out how we could possibly keep the dog. Would the camp management be ok with another camp dog? How would we get it back to Canada? Was it even legal to bring a dog across the border? I mean this wasn't just a dog purchased from the pet shop. This was a true mountain mutt from the backwoods of Tennessee!



The biggest question of all was whether or not we even wanted a dog to worry about as we returned home to get married. There seemed to be enough to worry about already. But, eventually, with a lot convincing, I reluctantly agreed to take ownership of the dog. She was now ours. This would be first of many times Becki's spontaneity would overshadow my attempts to bring logic and order into our relationship.

The first thing you have to do when you get a new dog is name it. The usual suspects like Skippy, Buddy and Rex came to mind, but we quickly agreed that we could do better. We loved the name Ocoee, the name of the nearby river that we had spent the summer rafting on, swimming in, and hiking around. But unfortunately, a big German shepherd that was owned by one of the raft guides already had that name, and Ocoee was a mean dog, so there was no hope to name our puppy after it.

At one point in the summer, a friend from the camp invited us to spend our day off floating down the Toccoa River in tubes. The Toccoa is actually the same river as the Ocoee, but the river changes name as it crosses the Georgia/Tennessee state line in Copperhill.

We had a great day on the Toccoa. We rented some old beat-up tubes for a couple of dollars from a waterfront shack next to a bridge. A part of the rental agreement was a shuttle back up to our parked car when we

On guard while camping in Baxter State Park.

Photo by Jeff Johnson



A pre-wedding photo with Becki back in Canada.
Photo by Jon Loyd

were done. We had a great time splashing through the rapids and meandering down the river to meet our awaiting shuttle. After about three hours on the river we saw an old rusty van with a trailer full of tubes. This was our ride. We climbed out of the river, threw tubes in the trailer and held on tight for the return trip in a vehicle that should have been in a junkyard years ago.

That trip and our experiences on the river lead us settle on the name Toccoa for our newly found friend. It wasn't the name Ocoee, but maybe for good reason. As previously mentioned, the other local dog named Ocoee was, at times, feisty and unpredictable just like the Ocoee River itself.

LOVE & WHITEWATER

On our first training run down the Ocoee with a group of other want-to-be river guides, we found ourselves stranded on "Whiteface Rock," a large pale colored rock 100 yards past Ocoee Dam No. 2 where rafters have easy access to the middle section of the Ocoee. Whiteface is a landmark on the middle Ocoee because it is legendary for wreaking havoc on newbies just like us. In our case, the "guide" failed to steer far left of the rock as instructed and our raft was t-boned against Whiteface, dumping us into the river. Becki and I clung to Whiteface while our raft and raft-mates were sent 100 yards down the river. We sat clinging to each other as Class III rapids surrounded us on both sides. We waited for someone to toss us a throw rope and drag us to the shore. Curious tourists parked their cars and gathered to watch the spectacle from the nearby road. After



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Opposite: On the summit of Mount Washington.

Photo by Becki Johnson

reflecting on this experience, we realized Toccoa was the perfect name for our dog: she turned out to be far more peaceful and pleasant—like the Toccoa River—nothing like the mighty Ocoee.

After the naming was done, I declared that I would be the one to train Toccoa. I never had a dog before but I was confident that I could train one. Every evening after work I would grab the leash and head to a quiet place in the forest for our training sessions. The first thing she learned was how to sit. This came easy for her. After giving her the command to “sit” and forcing her rear-end to the ground several times, she caught on quickly to the routine. “That was easy,” I thought to myself.

Next, I would have her sit and then I would take a few steps back. At my command I would tell her to “come” with the hopes she would walk to me. This is when we started to have some problems. I would tell her to sit and she would comply with ease. I would then slowly take three or four steps back, working hard to maintain eye contact and control of the situation. But without fail, she would turn and run. She would run as fast as she could, always in the direction of the dining hall. It didn’t matter where we were on the camp property, she always knew where that dining hall was. No matter how discrete and isolated I tried to make our training sessions, I would eventually find myself running through the camp, dodging excited rafters, hopping over piles of wet life jackets in pursuit of that hungry young pup. This would not be a habit we would break until we left the camp and returned to Canada.

In spite of the training difficulties, the last month or so at camp with our dog was a lot of fun. Toccoa spent our work days napping in the shady areas next to the ropes course and climbing wall. In the evenings, she would assist me in my duties around the camp, tending to the needs of

our guests. If there was a toilet to be fixed, she was there. If help was needed at the horse stables, she would run around the giant hooves of those horses, narrowly dodging a kick to her curious little face on numerous occasions.

We spent days off with her exploring the Ocoee Olympic Whitewater Centre and swimming at nearby Blue Hole. When I had to leave camp for five days to lead a boy scout troop on an Appalachian Mountain backpacking trip in the Nantahala National Forest, I was assured that Becki would have a constant companion in Toccoa during my time away.

As kids started to head back to school in late August, we were relieved of our duties and the three of us made the long trip home to Canada. Before leaving, to ensure we wouldn’t have any trouble getting through customs, we took Toccoa to a vet to get all her first set of shots. She was ready and so were we. We wound our way along the Ocoee River on US Highway 64 one last time, Toccoa sleeping blissfully on the car floor. The colorful buses, the excited rafters and the curious tourists were long gone. From the road we saw a river that was quiet and serene; nearly opposite of the amusement park atmosphere we experienced upon arrival almost three months earlier. Our summer adventures were over and new adventures awaited back in Canada.

Back home, Toccoa quickly settled into life as a Canadian. She was there on our wedding day, posing for photos with Becki, her shiny black a striking contrast to Becki’s beautiful white dress. She was not impressed with our tiny one-bedroom apartment in the middle of a busy city, proving the point by running into traffic and taking a bumper to the back side as I watched in disbelief. But

Her final hike around the summer camp in Ontario, Canada were she spent 12 summers. December 2012.

Photo by Jeff Johnson

she was fine and life got better for all of us. Shortly after the bumper incident, she once again got to enjoy the camp life as we spent the next 12 years working at summer camps. She was a loyal dog, rarely leaving my side as I conducted my duties around camp. She met thousands of kids over the years, patiently being chased around the camp by kids from inner-city Toronto, hopelessly trying to pronounce her name and constantly surprised that a dog could be left to roam freely without the need for a chain or leash.

She curiously greeted our daughter and three sons as they were born over the years, accepting each with the peace and tranquility of the Toccoa River. As each child was born, Toccoa slowly lost more and more of our attention, but she was never forgotten. She was always there, watching and following from a distance.

Years of adventure and misadventure began to take a toll on the old mountain mutt. Sore old legs and diminishing sight and hearing made life difficult. The decision was made to let her go. But the memories live on, memories of a life begun on the shores of Ocoee River.

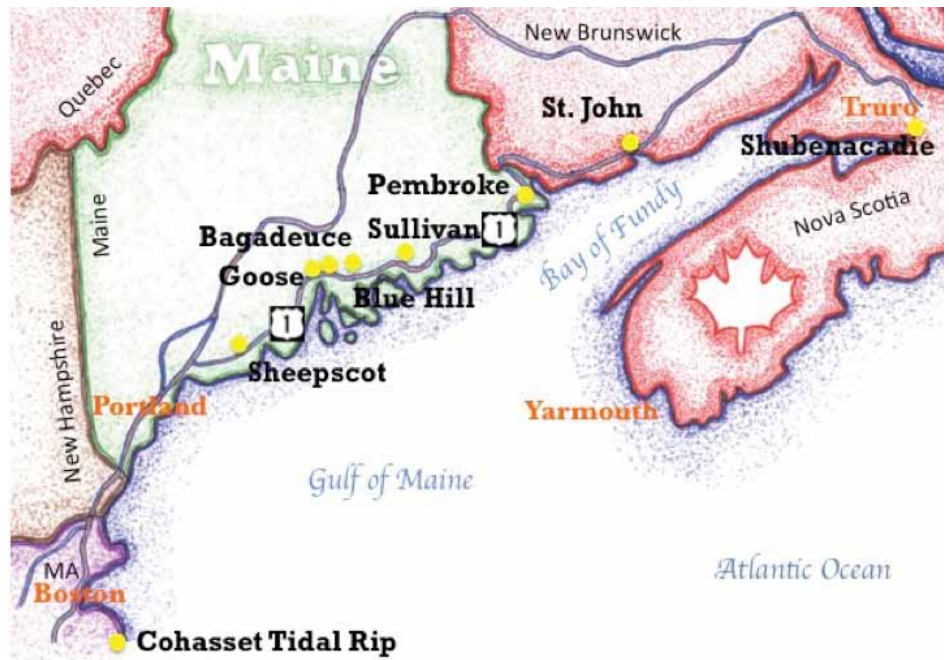


EAST COAST REVERSING FALLS: TIDAL SURFING GEMS

BY REUBEN HUDSON

SNOWPACK, RAINFALL, DIRECTIONALITY of the watershed drainage, and temperature can all affect the flow of your favorite spring creek run. At the bottom of the watershed, where the river slows and meets the sea, the sun's primary influence is no longer the extent to which it facilitates snowmelt, but it works in tandem with the moon to control the tides. Far from the mountains where the water began to run, far from the steep gradient where we know most of the best whitewater to exist, down on the coast, the regularity of the tides provides a predictable and dependable flow to many whitewater gems. While folks living inland think about the river level in terms of depth or cubic feet per second, the coastal flatlanders will mull over the height or differential of the day's tide.

Every playboater has heard of, dreamt about, or even been blessed with the opportunity to surf at Skookumchuck reversing falls in British Columbia. Less known are the numerous tidal falls spattered up and down the East Coast of North America. Heraclitus' observation that "Nobody [paddles] the same river twice, for its not the same river, and its not the same person" is nowhere more apparent than these spots. From surf to surf you will never ride the same wave more than once. The quickly changing water level is probably what non-locals have the hardest time adjusting to. At a spot that sets up on the outgoing tide, the water bottle that you left on shore may not be reachable from the water after a few minutes unattended. Likewise, at spots that set up on the incoming tide, the video camera you carefully positioned to take a time-lapse of the event may submerge if not placed far enough up the bank. To avoid significant rust damage, don't forget to diligently rinse your boat, especially all



Map of East Coast Tidal Rapids.
Map by Reuben Hudson

the nuts and bolts, and do the same for your river knife—or just leave it behind. Given that these spots set up only twice a day with an acute timing window, you may be playing bumper boats in the eddy, since everyone shows up at the same time.

The following spots can all be paddled in a single week, and none are more than 15 miles from Coastal Route 1, making it easy to combine your play boating with a scenic road trip.

Cohasset Tidal Rip

The trip's southernmost reversing falls is the Cohasset Tidal Rip. On the incoming tide, about three hours before high, the Gulf River slacks out and soon thereafter begins to flow the opposite direction as the incoming tide pushes back. Depending on the height and differential of the tide, the wave will steadily rise to a height of 2-4 feet before dropping back down as the tide gets closer to high.

Sheepscot Reversing Falls

Sheepscot is the first stop after Cohasset on the road to New Brunswick. The incoming

tide fills the estuary upstream. The falls set up on the outgoing tide (roughly 2.5 hours after high) as the rushing brackish water reaches a constriction in the river. After some quality time with a powerful eddyline, an opportunity for long surfs on a glassy wave presents itself. Another half hour later, one of the best loop-holes in the region sets up behind the glassy wave. When these two features flush out, a righty hole sets up on the other side of the river. All told, there are about two hours of boating to be had on each outgoing tide.

A couple of local paddlers own and operate Treats in the heart of downtown Wiscasset. Stop in for a bite to eat on your way through.

Blue Hill Reversing Falls

If you haven't got a boat longer than seven feet, then this isn't the spot for you. Over the years, folks have complained about the spot changing, rocks moving, eroding, etc. Truth be told, while little about the spot itself has changed, the same can't be said for whitewater playboats—getting shorter, slower, and less suitable for Blue Hill year by year. Don't come to here hoping to

throw blunts, helixes, pan ams, or whatever the young whippersnappers are doing these days. Come to Blue Hill for a good old-fashioned soul surf with a long boat on a fast glassy wave. The wave sets up on incoming tides about three hours before high. The tide differential (larger the better) is the key to Blue Hill, rather than simply the height.

Sullivan Falls

Just up the coast from Blue Hill, on the other side of Acadia National Park, sits Sullivan falls. This feature sets up on an outgoing tide, so it makes for easy double sessions with Blue Hill. Or, if the daylight lines up just right with the tides, throw Sheepscot into the mix (outgoing-incoming-outgoing). There are a few dynamic surf waves with good eddy access here.

Goose, Bagaduce, and Pembroke Reversing Falls

Though not known as popular surf destinations, Goose, Bagaduce, and Pembroke Reversing Falls offer a few more opportunities for paddling, fishing, or sightseeing to break up the drive. However, if time is of the essence, skip these and head straight for New Brunswick.

Saint John Reversing Falls

Saint John Reversing Falls is to this roadtrip as Kahtadin is to the Appalachian Trail: it's the reason to travel from South to North—heck, it's the reason to make the trip at all. St. John is located in the heart of the Bay of Fundy, whose funnel shape enables an effect known as tidal resonance—the reason for the bay's record tide differential. In contrast to the rest of the trip, the setting

is quite urban, though you'll likely forget your surroundings after a few surfs at this truly world-class location. Of the spots listed here, St. John is the only one to hold true to its name as a 'reversing falls,' providing excellent surf on both incoming and outgoing tides, depending on the season and height of the tides. Be sure to keep on your toes because the Greasy Chicken and Cookie Monster waves that make for dynamic, aerial moves one minute will be serving pummelings as nasty holes a few minutes later.

Shubenacadie Tidal Bore

If there's gas in the tank after St. John Reversing Falls and you feel like pushing on, continue down the coast to Nova Scotia where another tidal phenomenon awaits, the Shubenacadie Bore. Unlike all



Airborne in downtown St. John.
Photo by Timothy Cox

PLAY



Jeff Bates plugs for a loop at Sheepscot reversing falls.
Photo by Alex Kerney

the previous park-n-play destinations, the tide at Shubenacadie forces itself upstream all at once in the form of a wave—something between a standing river wave and those in the ocean. Local outfitters raft the bore with zodiacs, while some in longer boats come to surf. Only a handful of tidal bores dot the globe (Nova Scotia, Alaska, Brazil, England, and China), so catching this unique phenomenon makes the extra drive worthwhile.



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MENTAL GAME

HEAT EXHAUSTION ON THE UPPER TAOS BOX

BY ALAN CAMMACK

LATE LAST MONTH I ran the Upper Taos Box section of the Rio Grande. I have been down this stretch many times and this day was with a crew of good solid boaters. River running hardly gets much better. To start off with, I love the Rio Grande and all the terrain in northern New Mexico. Waking up in the back of my truck in a beautiful place like the Wild and Scenic Rivers Area near Questa is one my favorite feelings in the world. Even though it was still just March 26, the day was sunny and warm; the Rio was running just over 600 cfs, so it was low, but still fast, fun, and technically challenging.

The Upper Taos Box can be a rewarding day, but you have to work for it and carnage is not uncommon. The run itself is 7.5 miles of fast and busy Class IV and V with sieves being the major hazard. The most daunting aspect of this section though, is the hiking. The hike in is a steep and rocky trail that drops some 600 vertical feet in about a quarter of a mile down to the river. The hike out is closer to 800 vertical feet over about 0.8 miles. Remember, you have to carry your 50-pound creek boat with all your

wet gear, pin kit, med kit, spare paddle, and whatever else you brought along for the day. Fun!

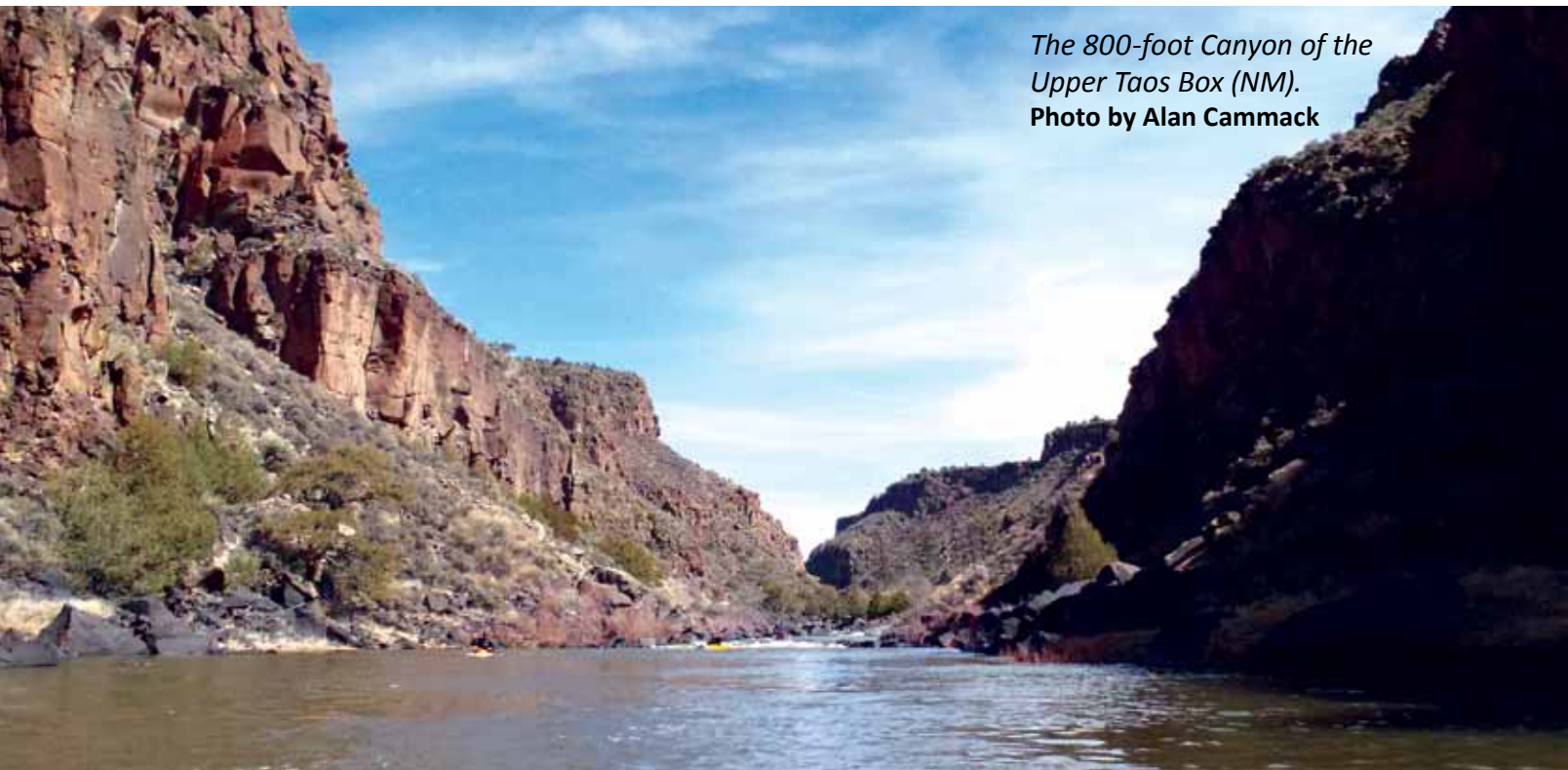
So as I said, I had been feeling good and strong on this particular day. I didn't feel at all tired when I first hoisted my boat to head up and out. I was even experimenting with a new backpack system to carry the boat, but more about that later on.

Now here is where my day got interesting. Almost immediately, I began feeling the sun very intensely and felt like I was just sapped right away of all energy. The boat on my back seemed to increase in weight tenfold and my legs felt like noodles. Even at the top of the first pitch, I had a sneaking suspicion that something was wrong. Although the last thing I wanted was to carry more weight on my back, I had to sit and take off my dry pants as I was so very hot. I drank much of the little bit of water I had left (I had chugged much of it at the river) and felt better when I set off again in my long underwear pulled up to my knees. As soon as the trail turned upward again however, the heat and fatigue set in with a vengeance.

At this point I was worried, but I knew what I had to do: I had to get out of the canyon.

There was only one way to go: up. I trudged on. Everything hurt. This was more than just feeling tired; there was a very menacing aspect to my situation. I was getting weaker and shakier with every step. The day, which was really not all that hot, felt like an oven, the sun was like a giant heat lamp. I allowed myself frequent stops to rest, but in the process discovered the problem with the backpack harness. It took (or seemed to take...) so much work to take the thing off and put it back on that I had to resort to plopping the bow down in the dirt and leaning back against it in a very precarious manner. So that was my pattern. I'd hike for two or three minutes, until I became too uncoordinated to continue, and then I'd have to rest for three or four minutes. And it all got worse as time went on. Soon, I was getting very dizzy, headachy, crampy, and nauseated. I think the frequent little rests in whatever shade I could find were my only saving grace, and they probably prevented me from vomiting. Before long, the dehydration set in; my throat and tongue were sticking together and I had nothing to spit or swallow. I was in survival mode. But the rim was so close; I had to press on.

Finally, I did make it out. In the parking lot I essentially collapsed on the cool concrete



The 800-foot Canyon of the Upper Taos Box (NM).
Photo by Alan Cammack



Setting safety at Big Arsenic Rapid.
Photo by Alan Cammack

under a tree and passed out for about 20 minutes. When I got myself up and moving, I was still not quite right. I felt very heavy, utterly exhausted and slow. It seemed to take me forever to pack up the truck and make ready for the three-hour drive back to Salida.

This experience came as a complete surprise. I've done this exact hike many times before, and knew I was not in for a particularly fun time, but this was different. The mind turns into a funny thing when it gets out of whack. I'm trained as a Wilderness EMT and all the while little alarms were going off in my head, but being so affected, I wasn't listening to them very well.

Maybe it was just a perfect storm. I hadn't slept well the night before (though I didn't feel tired), and I'll admit I didn't really have my usual summer hiking legs back under me as it was still early season. I also know that it is possible for this type of heat exhaustion to come on a person with no exact cause. It certainly just hit me out of blue. I never would have expected that eight tenths of a mile could stretch on for so long.

My big mistake was not carrying enough water. Trying to cut down on my carry weight, I had nearly finished what water I had at the river. My second poor choice was that I didn't set my boat down, carry out just my gear, then eat some food and rest for a while back at camp. There was no rush, I could have gone back down for the boat later. But no, I had told myself I was going to do the hike.

What I did right was at least allowing myself the grace to go slowly. All the little stops I took probably saved me from a worse outcome.

So the moral of my story is to be kind to yourself. Be aware of yourself. Also be aware of the other people out there with you. The best I felt during the whole experience was when one of the other guys I had been boating with came back down to check on me after I hadn't appeared up at the rim for so long. We love to get out there and push ourselves hard in the elements and sometimes our bodies just don't respond the way we expect. That's okay. Allow yourself the leeway to go slowly if you need to. No point in pushing yourself on the trail. Save that for on the water!



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MENTAL GAME

LIFE LESSONS ON THE RIVER—THE HARD WAY

BY TAYLOR DWYER

SOMETIMES THINGS JUST don't go your way. On my first time leading a first timer down the Class IV/V Tobin section of the NF Feather drainage several things went wrong at once: a terrifying swim, a lost paddle (borrowed), a pinned boat (borrowed), and a severely injured ego. All of the above events were not the errors of the first timer; no, the (now) comedy of errors was mine.

It was early one evening in January that I decided to step up and lead a boater down this section. I was so excited. I had run Tobin a handful of times, I'd been instructing for a couple of years, I had even won the race on this section at Feather Fest 2011 that previous September. Not a problem, I thought. Let's charge.

At the first slot boof on the boulder section I took a stroke onto a surprising, though known, rock and was soon left paddleless, cartwheeling, and inevitably swimming through the steep rock garden.



Self portrait: The author as junior guide and Phil DeRiemer head guide at the take-out of the Dang Chu, Trongsa, Bhutan with DeRiemer Adventure Kayaking.

Thinking each slot might be the sieve that would end it—swimming, clinging, and sliding further—I found footing 25 feet downstream and was able to climb up a rock in the middle of the river. From there, I called out the correct lines to my crew member, since myself and all my gear had yard-sailed away, confusing him by taking three separate lines.

In the middle of the embarrassment and fear, I did have time to spot and appreciate my loaner boat pinned in the best of places downstream, river left. *Stay there baby*, I told her, *I'll get you later*. In the meantime, my partner was able to get down to me, dock, and grab his rope. I jumped into the next eddy river right to be a closer target for his rope. *Thank God*, I thought, *almost out of here*. But when his throw smacked an unimpressive 10 yards too short, I wasn't ready to look up. Eventually, scanning from his hands to his face, I realized with horror that the entire rope (bag and all) had been thrown and my saving grace was strung out downstream somewhere.

Shoulder deep in the eddy, with the sun setting below the canyon rim, having spent 45 minutes in the water already, I began to accept the fact that I had gotten myself into this situation and I was going to have to get me out. The only option was to find a rock in the current that I could stand on without getting swept further downstream and use it to hop up onto the surging eddy rock overhead. After a dozen fails and only a couple of minutes before I got too tired

The author and two Nepali boys, Fishling, Nepal. November 2012.

Photo by Unknown local Nepali.



by the cold and the exertion to continue fighting to stay in the eddy, I found my saving grace rock mid-current and was able to time the surge. One more look at the downstream sieves and—Lunge! I can't say I've ever belly flopped for my life like I did into this eddy, swimming as hard as possible for shore.

Even though I'd made it safely back to dry land, there were still consequences of my swim I had to deal with. Insert an hour-long hike to the train track through thick blackberry vines, a ruined drysuit, a run to the car parked at the take-out, a boat extraction via cam straps, then a look to the cliff above the river to see the same boaters watching me unpin my boat who had given us the, "I don't think you're good enough for Tobin" look while we were setting shuttle. I could already imagine the future posts

on boof.com. But before that I still had to endure many paddle/rope searches in the lower sections of the North Feather and the reservoir, a mentally broken mindset and self-confidence, and the lost confidence of my crew member who no longer looked up to me as a boater.

Quite the recipe for making someone put their boat away for a while and shamefully hide their face from the boating community. True, but this was also the perfect recipe for a comeback. My friend Scott Yoder told me, "You need to decide—and quick—whether you are a boater, or someone who owns a boat."

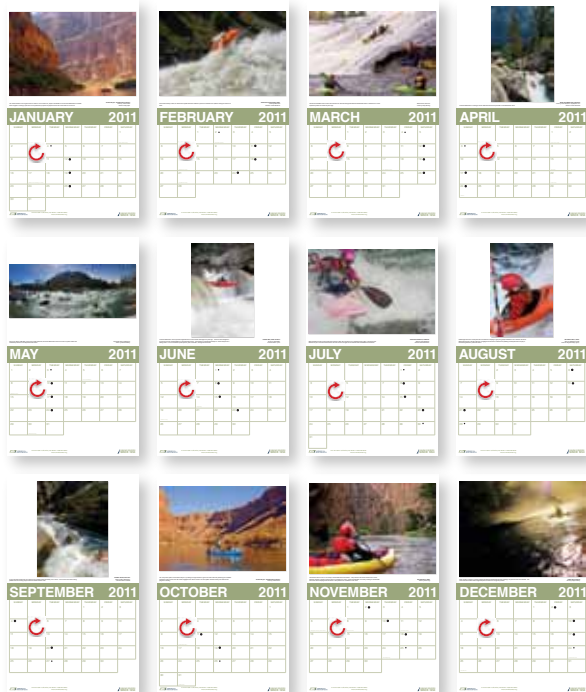
One week later I got back in my boat, got back to Tobin, and though near tears with hesitation when I reached the infamous drop, ran it. I learned what it was to be

a boater that day. What I realized after talking to a couple of paddlers and trading carnage stories was that we don't learn and grow from our successes; we learn from our mishaps and we grow from our decisions about how we choose to deal with them.

There's a taboo about not being perfect on the water, but the fact of the matter is, we aren't perfect, we're learning, and if we want to grow we have to be willing to take risks that may leave us humbled.

This story is inspired by all the paddlers out there willing to take risks, get a little embarrassed, and keep faith in themselves and in what it really means to be a boater. Remember, if you haven't yet failed, you're not trying hard enough.

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LOVE & WHITEWATER

A WHITEWATER LOVE STORY

BY ANDREW GUNNOE



A River Kiss, the day after our wedding.
Photo by Elizabeth Hanke

FOR MOST WHITEWATER paddlers the words love and whitewater are seen as conflicting pursuits, with the desire to follow the latter often undermining the possibilities of the former. However for some lucky souls, whitewater provides a medium that not only brings two souls together, but binds them in a life-long commitment to traveling downstream together, as a team. My wife and I are two of the lucky ones.

I met my wife, Stacy, in 2008 while mountain biking in a park in South Knoxville, TN. I was resting at a bridge spanning a small creek, waiting for a friend, when she came walking through the woods, wearing blue-

jean overalls with a couple dogs in tow. Stacy and I chatted for a minute before my friend appeared, and, as it turned out, my friend and Stacy knew each other. They had met a year or two earlier while in Colorado kayaking Oh Be Joyful. As we rode away I asked my friend, "Who was that?" He repeated her name and told me she was a paddler. "Really..." I thought as we continued down the trail.

It took another year or so before Stacy and I became a couple. During that time we met on several occasions and our conversations often turned to whitewater, as paddlers' discussions are wont to do. When we did start to date, we soon headed out for a

weekend of paddling and camping in the New River Gorge of West Virginia. It was while paddling on the New that we both came to the realization that we had found our life partner.

Less than two years later, in the fall of 2010, I was ready to ask Stacy to marry me. All I needed was a ring and the perfect spot for a proposal. The ring would be relatively easy; but finding the perfect location would be less so. The obvious spot would be on a river; however, running a river requires rain and that, as we know, is hard to predict. We'd been planning a trip for the end of October and I decided that I was going to propose before we left. As luck would have it, the week before our trip a storm rolled across the Tennessee Valley and dumped several inches of rain on top of the Smoky Mountains. That Wednesday I woke up to find that that not only was there water, but there was plenty of water! In fact, there was enough water to bring up the Middle Prong of the Little River (a.k.a. Tremont),



Opposite: Stacy SUPing on the Colorado River in her wedding dress the day after our wedding.

Photo by Andrew Gunnoe

Left: Stacy showing her bling on the day of our engagement, Tremont River

Photo by Andrew Gunnoe

one of the finest stretches of Class III-IV in the Southeast. Everything was falling into place!

When we arrived at the put-in we were greeted by the full array of fall colors—the reds, yellows, and oranges were all on display. As we pulled on our gear, I slipped around the side of the car and put the ring inside a ziplock and tucked it away in my pfd. When we were ready to go, we made the short walk to the put-in, slid down the bank, and readied ourselves for the river. At the river's edge, I looked around at the colorful canopy above and then to the moving water as it passed by the green, moss-covered rocks of the Tremont. I had found the perfect spot! I walked up to Stacy, told her I loved her, pulled the ring out of my pfd, then got down on one knee and asked her if she would marry me. She said yes, as tears filled both our eyes. After taking a few minutes to collect ourselves, we shoved off into the water and headed downstream.



Wedding Day, National Canyon in the Grand Canyon National Park.
Photo by Tony Desmond

back of National Canyon, deep within the Grand Canyon.

The following March, as luck would have it, we landed a cancellation trip for a private boater permit to run the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon. Seeing that running the Canyon was a life-long goal for both of us, we quickly decided that we would get married while on the river. On June 9th, 2011 (Stacy's 30th birthday!), we were joined as husband and wife at the

Today, less than two years later, Stacy and I continue to share our love of rivers. We've been fortunate enough to get to paddle rivers from Peru to Alaska and we're always looking for our next trip downstream. Our passion for river running is what brought us together and it continues to be a revitalizing source for both of us as individuals, and as husband and wife.



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CAVEMAN KAYAKING: THE VERDON GORGE

STORY & PHOTO BY RAOUL ADAMCHAK

IN AUGUST OF 2012 I was enjoying an active summer of kayaking in California. On the 21st of the month, I had a great trip on the Tuolumne with friends. Two days later I was on a plane to Montpellier, France, where I was meeting my family for a four-month stay. Montpellier is located on the Mediterranean, halfway between Toulouse and Nice. I had been boating well all summer, and didn't want to stop. I had brought all my essential whitewater gear with me, except a boat, and was optimistic that I could find somewhere in France to get wet. A friend in California who had boated in Europe recently let me know about Gene17, a British based kayaking group. I contacted them within days of my arrival. An email resulted in a gracious response from Simon Westgarth, who said that Gene 17 trips were finished in France for the year, but Phillipe Doux, the Kayak Sessions editor in Lyon, might know of something else going on. I contacted Phillipe and he gave me the email address of Raphael Thiebaut. It turned out that Raph was in the process of organizing a self-support kayak trip down the Verdon Gorge, which was only a couple of hours east of Montpellier. The trip would cost money. Raph leads these trips to raise funds for his own kayaking adventures. Was I desperate enough to pay to go kayaking? You bet.

The Verdon River is bright green and cuts through a couple of thousand feet of limestone on its way to the ocean. There are 700-meter vertical walls, caves, incredibly narrow passages, fun Class III-IV rapids, and lots of sieves. Normally at this time of year there wouldn't be any water, but on September 29th and 30th there was a dam release of 25 cubic meters/second that was organized by the French national kayaking association. For all intents and purposes, the Verdon is a hard shell only river. Parts of the run are only four feet wide and thus too narrow for rafts. There is also a portage and/or cave or two where

rafts would have to be deflated in order to make it through. Still, for a kayaker it is a magical place.

I walked to the train station in Montpellier pulling a large-sized, rolling suitcase filled with kayaking gear, and felt like a very civilized adventurer. I took the train to Aix-en-Provence and checked into a hotel near the city center. I had dinner in a café on a major pedestrian boulevard. Hundreds of people were out strolling and having a late dinner. The French mostly ate outside of the restaurants because they are allowed to smoke there. I ate inside with the other tourists who didn't like cigarette smoke with their food.

The next morning, Raph, along with Dave, another client, picked me up at the hotel, loaded my gear into his small van and kayak trailer, and zipped off to the Verdon Gorge. Raph is one of those people who has chosen outdoor adventures as a career. He is a Class V kayaker who, after this trip, was planning to fly to Nepal for a 30-day self-support kayak trip. In the winter he is a member of the ski patrol at a resort in the Alps. Raph is French, but speaks English very well. For this trip, he provided me with a large creek boat to carry me and all my camping gear. The only down-side to the

boat was that it had a cracked, leaking hull, so I had to stop and empty it out every now and then.

On the trip were Raph, myself, David, and Jasper—another Class V boater who had driven all the way from Holland. It turned out that the weekend of our Verdon expedition was the only rainy weekend in a month. The rain came down hard, but we found a campsite in the grotto on the side of the river. We stayed dry and had a great time. Raph brought a grill and cooked lamb chops on hot coals. It was a cave man experience.

Our run on the Verdon was about 30 km in length, split pretty evenly between the two days. On the first day we did the upper gorge, which had quite a few rapids, but no portages or caves. On the second day, there was a second gorge, and rapids continued, along with the caves and vertical canyons. I didn't get any photos of the rapids because Raph knew the lines and we rarely stopped to scout. At most, it was easy Class IV, but the sieve hazards were significant. The water cuts through the limestone like... well, like water through limestone, and I could easily imagine that everything was undercut or sieved, some places worse than others. Apparently, 25 cms was a good flow. If lower, there are more portages and more sieves exposed, and if higher, getting through the caves would be scary. At the end of the run there was a reservoir, and a kilometer or so of flatwater to cross to get to the take-out. In the summer the reservoir is a little higher and would be filled with tourists.

During the summer there are releases on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and one would have to do the run as day trip or spend any extra day in the canyon. Because of the hazards, it would be wise to go with someone who knows the run well. If you are in France, the Verdon is worth running. It was remarkably beautiful.



The entrance to the Verdon Gorge

INSTRUCTION

EZ ROLLING: PREWIRING YOUR KAYAK ROLL FOR SUCCESS

BY RALPH SCOVILLE

Editor's Note: This and other instructional tips that American Whitewater prints are the views of their respective authors, not the official position of American Whitewater. Such articles are intended to offer our readers new perspectives on techniques, mechanics, and tactics of whitewater paddlesports. If any of these instructional articles seems erroneous or misguided to you, feel free to ignore the advice, or, better yet, write us and explain your position on the subject.

ROLLING A KAYAK can be difficult, yet it requires little physical energy. This means that rolling is primarily an act of coordination. Coordination is composed half by what you don't do; the rest is proper sequence.

Learning to roll is traditionally taught live, perhaps preceded by reading about it and viewing how it's done via online video or DVD. Yet even with such help, the lesson has remained difficult for many.

Prewiring starts on dry land, preferably on a cushy surface. You can start by lying on your back and performing an abdominal crunch. If you want to bring your knees up and hook your toes under the couch, fine. But for this first time begin by tightening your neck, shoulders and upper back. Then crunch away. Not much happening? You are experiencing the mechanical failure of an unsuccessful roll, very probably with far more awareness of what went wrong than someone in a kayak. OK, begin again by letting your upper torso relax and gradually tighten the core muscles of your lower abs and your lower back while flattening your lumbar spine against the floor by scrunching your tailbone down, then up. (Yes, there are multiple components to this and attention to each one is important for attaining success and avoiding injury.) Slowly start your crunch again, noticing



The author, upright, on the Lower Yough (PA).

the flow of effort upwards through your torso. Keep your upper torso as relaxed as possible as you rise. Repeat this a few more times until it feels natural.

The next step is to flip over, belly down and head to either side, with your arms close to your sides. Wriggle your knees out to either side a little so that you feel like you're riding a horse or maybe sitting in a kayak. Let your neck and upper torso relax, then drive your knee on the same side as you're looking towards into the carpet while extending the other leg straight. As you roll over, keep your neck relaxed and continue your gaze into the carpet for as long as you can. **Wait, that wasn't a carpet, it was the bottom of a river!** Yeah, keep practicing this move with an active imagination and attention to each detail.

After doing three to five repetitions you can alternate and begin prewiring the other side. This will prepare you to roll up from either side. This is important for several reasons, including being able to roll up quickly from the side you just capsized on, water currents making it impossible to roll

up on a given side (but making it unusually easy on the other) and maintaining and building symmetrical strength.

Before advancing further, the number of times you practice this flip on each side and over what duration of time is up to you. You are best-positioned to know when the move feels natural, relaxed, and pretty effortless. The importance of not rushing it is that you are undoing a powerful reflex developed over time for coming out of submersion in water: stiffening our necks and upper spines to lift our heads up to breathe or to grab the ladder at the side of the pool.

The last drill simulates it all. Leaving your pelvis on the floor (your boat's upside down), knees still cocked outwards, twist your upper body towards the ceiling, holding your imaginary paddle slightly above your "boat." It's necessary to put tension in your torso to do this, but keep your arms relaxed: nobody pulls themselves up with their arms because attempting to do so engages sustained, bilateral contraction of the upper torso (remember

the crunch?). You are actively lifting your head as close as you can to the surface of the water (aim for at least as high as your butt), then as you fire your knee and hip for the roll, let your neck and upper torso relax as you flip and let (not make) your head turn and try to catch a glimpse of the rocks at the bottom as you come over. (Once you're an expert, you may not persist with this exaggerated gaze, but stick with it until experience convinces you otherwise.) Imagine the water cradling your face for an instant. You know it will, because at a given depth, water exerts its pressure equally in all directions. Continue to extend the nonfiring knee each time. This provides for further movement through the hips and a coordinated relaxation to the hip which is leading the way topside, enabling the flow of energy up the spine.

A few words on paddle position and movement complete the drill. Your default posture at all times is elbows in, forearms at 90 degrees with the upper arms. Your arms will be extended slightly beyond this as you start the roll, then as your knee/hip fires, the paddle will sweep out at a right angle to the boat on the surface of the water. Your outside arm will extend somewhat for maximum leverage (**but it's a sliding fulcrum, not a force**). Sweeping towards the back of the boat is a common early error. This extension is always, in all situations, limited by your inside hand not passing the midline. This will protect your shoulders from what seems to be the most common injury of kayakers: a torn rotator cuff. Also as you lift your paddle up over the bottom of your imaginary boat, give some focus to keeping your hand free from the edge of the boat as it comes up. Binding here will impede your roll and abrade the knuckle at the base of your thumb.

If the above seems overly challenging but you remain determined, then I suggest some pre-pre-conditioning. There is nothing like yoga to make these moves feel natural. The best source of yoga instruction I know of is provided by yogi Wade at www.yogiwade.com. His films are produced in Ohiopyle,

Pennsylvania. They're free, but mainly good—no **excellent!** At any rate, thanks, Wade! Of course, many kayakers already do yoga to build strength, flexibility, and balance, all of which promote safety and enjoyment. This site catalogues sessions by degree of difficulty, including "Easy" and Wade provides frequent encouragement to take it at your own pace.

My goal for you is that you will roll up the first time and every time because you will put on the water with a positive attitude and a plan built around a conditioned reflex. I emphasize that this has been a presentation on preconditioning and recommend professional or other expert instruction as you proceed to the water, as well as joining your local kayaking club.

When I first wrote this, I was a 64-year-old entering his fourth season of kayaking. I skipped winter roll sessions that year (old people need their rest, the sessions are scheduled sooo late), but continued thinking about my problems with rolling. After devising the last step in the technique and practicing on the floor for a few days, I went to the water with the plan to roll up on both sides, three times each. It felt natural.

Attributions and thanks are warranted. I have benefited greatly by instruction from Mike Betts of the Conowago Canoe Club, Rob Jenkins of the Baltimore Canoe Club, and Jeremy Sechrist, formerly of Whitewater Adventurers of Ohiopyle. Supplementing this instruction have been two excellent DVDs: *Grace Under Pressure* by Kathy Boly, Joe Holt and Tom DeCuir, and also *EJ's Rolling and Bracing* by Eric Jackson. Primary appreciation goes to my son, Benjamin, and the rest of the management and staff of Wilderness Voyageurs, Ohiopyle, PA who have rafted, pulled me out of, and led me down the Youghiogheny countless times.

I want to add a tail to this tale. I was observed to be struggling with my roll this year by Josh Lawrey, also from Wilderness

Voyageurs. He told me that I was holding my hands too low and that it would help if I brought my inside hand up near my jaw. (My association was protecting my jaw in a martial arts stance.) I believe that the reason it helps is that this position more efficiently engages the torque from the thoracic spine, a bit like getting the tail of a fish at the end instead of the middle.

Ralph Scoville is a 65-year-old child psychiatrist, from Havre de Grace, Maryland, married with two adult children, one of whom, Ben, is operations manager at Wilderness Voyageurs, Ohiopyle, PA. To see a video of him working through the exercises outlined above, search YouTube for "EZ Kayak Rolling."

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REMEMBRANCE

DICK SISSON, LONG TIME NORTHWEST PADDLER, REMEMBERED

BY RUSS PASCOE AND
COURTNEY WILTON

WHITewater KAYAKING LOST a good friend when Dick Sisson died on Christmas day, 2012. He was 69 years old.

Dick was a long-time member of American Whitewater (he joined in 1992!) and semi-regular contributor to *Paddler* magazine and the *American Whitewater Journal*. He loved kayaking and paddled often. A chemical engineer by training and profession, he kept meticulous records of practically every run he ever did, including date, level, fellow paddlers and general comments. He lived on the Washougal River in Washington State and knew certain sections better than anyone. I asked him recently about how many times he had run the Washougal. Of course he emailed me a few days later with an exact number: 681. He literally knew every obstacle and fun feature at every water level and was fond of introducing new paddlers to the river. See <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Journal/index/issue/1/year/2012/> for an article he wrote last year on the Washougal. It was fitting that Dick spent his last days watching it flow past his home.

In addition to the Washougal, he made a habit of kayaking many of the western classics including almost annual runs on the Rogue, Middle Fork Salmon, Main Salmon and the Colorado (Grand Canyon). He also boated internationally in Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, France, and Bhutan. He was an organized and a meticulous trip planner, putting together numerous trips for himself and friends that otherwise never would have happened.

While his paddling resume was impressive, so too was his generosity; he gave back to the sport in many ways. In the past he served as board member and president



Dick Sisson at a June 19, 2011 launch on the Lower Owyhee (OR).
Photo by Russ Pascoe

of both the Lower Columbia Canoe and Oregon Kayak and Canoe Clubs. He successfully mentored many beginning boaters with his calm demeanor, analytical mind, and wry sense of humor.

When a good friend of his finally received a coveted Grand Canyon private permit only to then suffer a serious stroke and give up hope due to physical limitations, Dick analyzed the risks, took appropriate safety precautions, and made the trip happen by taking over leadership and flawlessly rowing the whole canyon with his friend as a raft passenger.

Dick was also extremely safety conscious—the kind of guy you wanted with you in a crunch. He and I were the lone kayakers on a low water Middle Fork Salmon trip a couple of years ago. Joining us were four rafts, two of which were significantly overloaded for the water level. Suffice to say Dick and I spent much of the first few days on rope duty, which was somewhat stressful and frustrating. Dick's expertise with the z-drag literally saved the day. He

didn't complain and saw his contributions as river karma. He also had a fantastic river memory and was generous in leading others whose knowledge of rivers and rapids wasn't as good.

Finally, he was also simply a fun and interesting guy. For someone so linear, he also had a wonderfully creative side and a great appreciation of nature, art, culture, and music—especially Neil Young and Bob Dylan. He was the kind of person you could enjoy spending hours with on the river or around the campfire.

Fare thee well, Dick Sisson. You will be missed. He is survived by his wife Cindy, a son, daughter, granddaughter and a garage full of kayaks. As Dick always signed off: SYOTR (See you on the river).

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NEWS & NOTES

FRENCH BROAD RIVER FESTIVAL 2013

BY FBRF VOLUNTEERS

LAST YEAR WE said 2011 was the best French Broad River Fest, but 2012 proved that it just keeps getting better! At the 15th River Fest in the spring, the river was again up, the weather was perfect, and the music was outstanding. Balsam Range started the weekend off right and Lukas Nelson closed it down late Saturday with one of the best live shows I've ever seen. In between there was whitewater racing, biking, hiking, kids' activities, mariachi, and a lot more great music.

The 2nd French Broad Fall Fest was held on the fall equinox. What a great time of year to be on the riverbank in Hot Springs.



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Opposite: The kids parade at FBRF. One of the many family friendly events of the weekend.

Photo by Great Smokies Photography

The Fall Fest is all about the beer, great food, and music and it was all that and more thanks to Abita, Asheville Brewing, Boulder Beer, French Broad Brewing, Highland Brewing, Holy City Brewing, New Belgium Brewing, Natty Greene's Brewing, Oscar Blues Brewing, Shock Top, Sierra Nevada, Sweetwater Brewing, and Widmer Brothers.

The 16th annual French Broad River Festival is set for May 3-5, 2013 where the French Broad River meets the Appalachian Trail at the beautiful Hot Springs Campground & Spa.

The festival begins at 4:00 pm on Friday, May 3 and ends Sunday, May 5. Early Bird tickets are \$70 online (www.FrenchBroadRiverFestival.com). See the website, FB or Twitter for details.

Musical acts include Langhorne Slim and The Law, Sol Driven Train, Yarn, Col Bruce Hampton and the Realms of Ventilation, The Jeff Sipe Group, Marley Carrol, Snake Oil Medicine Show, The Mosier Brothers, The Reckoning, Hank West and the Smokin' Hots, Kovaks & The Polar Bear, Brushfire Stankgrass, Evergreen Multicultural Beat Ensemble, Chalwa, Hillstomp, The Hermit Kings, Paperhand Puppet Intervention and more. This festival always has a few surprises such as a juggling fire show, kids' parade, trapeze artists, fireworks, late night acoustic jams, and watch out for flying marshmallows! Proceeds from this year's festival will be donated to American Whitewater and the Hot Springs Community Learning Center.

It's Easy to Support AW!

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

American Whitewater is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN# 23-7083760. To learn more about the Giving Options below, contact us at 866-BOAT4AW or visit the "Donate" link under "Support AW" on our website at www.americanwhitewater.org

- Donate online today!
- Monthly Giving: Contribute a minimum of \$10 via credit card or electronic transfer from your bank account.
- Bequests: Include AW in your will or living trust. Bequests to AW are generally exempt from federal or state inheritance taxes, and subject to an unlimited deduction.
- Combined Federal Campaign: Federal employees including federal civilians, military personnel and U.S. Postal Workers can donate to AW through the CFC a once a year charitable fund raising program. Look for AW (Agency #11351) in the official CFC listing of eligible donors.
- Charitable Remainder Trusts: Convert a highly appreciated asset (such as real estate or stocks) into a lifetime income while minimizing income and estate taxes.
- Employer Matching: Many employers will match your donations to non-profit organizations. This includes membership payments, as well as additional contributions. Check to see if your employer has a matching program.
- MissionFish: Sell your items through the MissionFish program on eBay and the proceeds come directly to AW.
- Other Assets: A gift of real estate to AW qualifies you for a tax deduction based on the property's fair market value. If it is not a river access point, AW will sell the property and use the proceeds to protect access and restore rivers. Acceptance of property is subject to certain conditions. You may also be eligible to receive tax benefits for gifts of real property. Art and jewelry are examples of personal property items that may be eligible. Interested donors should check with your financial and tax advisors and AW on the feasibility and tax considerations of such gifts.
- Securities: Donating appreciated stock to AW benefits both the donor and whitewater rivers. The donor receives two tax-related benefits. First, the gain on the stock is not subject to capital gains taxes. Second, the donor can deduct the value of the stock as a charitable contribution.
- United Way: All federal campaigns, and a few of the local campaigns will allow you to donate to AW. AW's UNITED WAY member # is 2302.
- Vehicle Donations: Turn that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefiting AW.

AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

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

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

Do you want to get into whitewater kayaking, improve your skills, or meet fun people to paddle with? Then, the Kayak and Canoe Club of New York (KCCNY) is your answer. They are one of the largest whitewater clubs in the East, and despite their name, serve New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Connecticut as well as New York, where they were formed in 1959. KCCNY features a whitewater paddling program with novice, intermediate, or expert trips planned on rivers from Canada to the Carolinas, with most trips within a three-hour drive of New York City. They also offer instructional opportunities for everyone from beginner through advanced paddler.

In addition to their paddling program and instructional opportunities, KCCNY is noted for their longstanding efforts at conservation and river management. They continue to be a force in negotiating with area hydropower producers and government agencies to make river resources available for recreational use. They raise and donate funds to various organizations to help with programs geared toward river conservation and paddler access and to keep our rivers clean and flowing.

Club membership is only \$20 a year for an individual and \$25 for a family. The club welcomes new members and encourages their involvement in the club. Check out the club's website at <http://www.kccny.com/> to learn more.

Thank you KCCNY for your continued support of American Whitewater!

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks
Nova Riverrunners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Birmingham Canoe Club, Birmingham
Coosa River Paddling Club, Montgomery
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
Guides House, Laytonville
Sequoia Paddlers, Forestville
Shasta Paddlers, Redding

Colorado

Avid4 Adventure Inc., Boulder
Grand Canyon Private Boaters Assn,
Colorado Springs
Dolores River Boating Advocates, Dolores
Outdoor Pursuits, Durango
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride

Connecticut

AMC - Connecticut Chapter, Waterbury

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Georgia

Atlanta Whitewater Club, Atlanta
Georgia Canoeing Asso, Atlanta
Paddlers4Christ, Ellijay

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des
Moines

Kentucky

Bardstown Boaters, Bardstown,
Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington
Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Louisiana

Sabine Whitewater Club, Lake Charles

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Troy

Maryland

Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Silver Spring
Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Baltimore
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Boonsboro
Monocacy Canoe Club, Frederick

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter Paddlers, Boston
UMass Outing Club - Whitewater
Kayaking, Amherst

Minnesota

Minnesota Canoe Asso, Minneapolis
SCSU Outdoor Endeavors, Saint Cloud

Missouri

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

Montana

Butte-Anaconda River Runners, Butte

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

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

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
KCCNY, Flanders

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club of New Mexico,
Albuquerque

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady
AMC NY/NJ Chapter, New York
Colgate University, Hamilton
FLOW Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Hamilton College, Clinton
Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq.,
Ossining
St Lawrence University, Canton
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

North Carolina

Base Camp Cullowhee, Cullowhee
Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee
Mecklenburg Regional Paddlers, Charlotte
Triad River Runners, Winston-Salem
Western Carolina Paddlers, Asheville

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Keelhauler Canoe Club, Cleveland
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton
Toledo River Gang, Haskins

Oregon

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

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks

Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg,
Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Holtwood Hooligans, Paradise
Lehigh Valley Whitewater Inc., Lehigh Valley
Mach One Slalom Team, State College
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts,
Limestone
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Tennessee Eastman Hiking and Canoeing
Club, Kingsport
Tennessee Scenic River Association,
Nashville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Texas

Rockin 'R' River Rides, New Braunfels

Utah

High Jim and the A.S.K., Salt Lake City
Utah Whitewater Club, Salt Lake City

Vermont

University of Vermont, Burlington
Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners

Washington

BEWET- Boeing Employees Whitewater &
Touring Club, Bellevue
EPIC Adventures, Cheney
Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
University Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

West Virginia

Dbl Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville
Redneck Kayak Club, Beckley
WVU Whitewater Club, Morgantown
West VA Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

North East Wisconsin Paddlers, Inc.,
Neenah
Sierra Club/John Muir Chapter, Madison

Ontario

Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers,
Bobcaygeon

British Columbia

Thompson Rivers Univ Adventure Studies,
Kamloops
Vancouver Kayak Club, N Vancouver

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

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

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

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

JOIN AMERICAN WHITEWATER AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

1. Support river access and restoration through the AW River Stewardship Team.
2. Be part of a national voice for the protection of the whitewater rivers your club values.
3. Tap into the professional expertise of AW staff for river issues that come up in your backyard.
4. Your club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Receive the American Whitewater Journal, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
6. Your club is recognized in the list of Affiliate Clubs posted to the AW website.
7. Recognize your club in the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly AW Journal.
8. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
9. Gain Club satisfaction from lending support to AW's stewardship efforts.
10. Improve your club members river karma.

For more information, contact Carla Miner at membership@americanwhitewater.org or sign-up on line at www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.

AW AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Contribute your text and photos to *American Whitewater*

American Whitewater is a member-driven publication. If you enjoy reading it, please consider letting its pages tell your story. We are looking for articles about whitewater rivers of any variety, so let your imagination flow free!

We're always accepting submissions and we hope you'll consider contributing. For complete submission details, story topics, deadlines, and guidelines, go to:

americanwhitewater.org > Library > AW Journal



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Saving Rivers Since 1954

Rok Sribar and friends, East Fork Kaweah, CA. © Darin McQuoid

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