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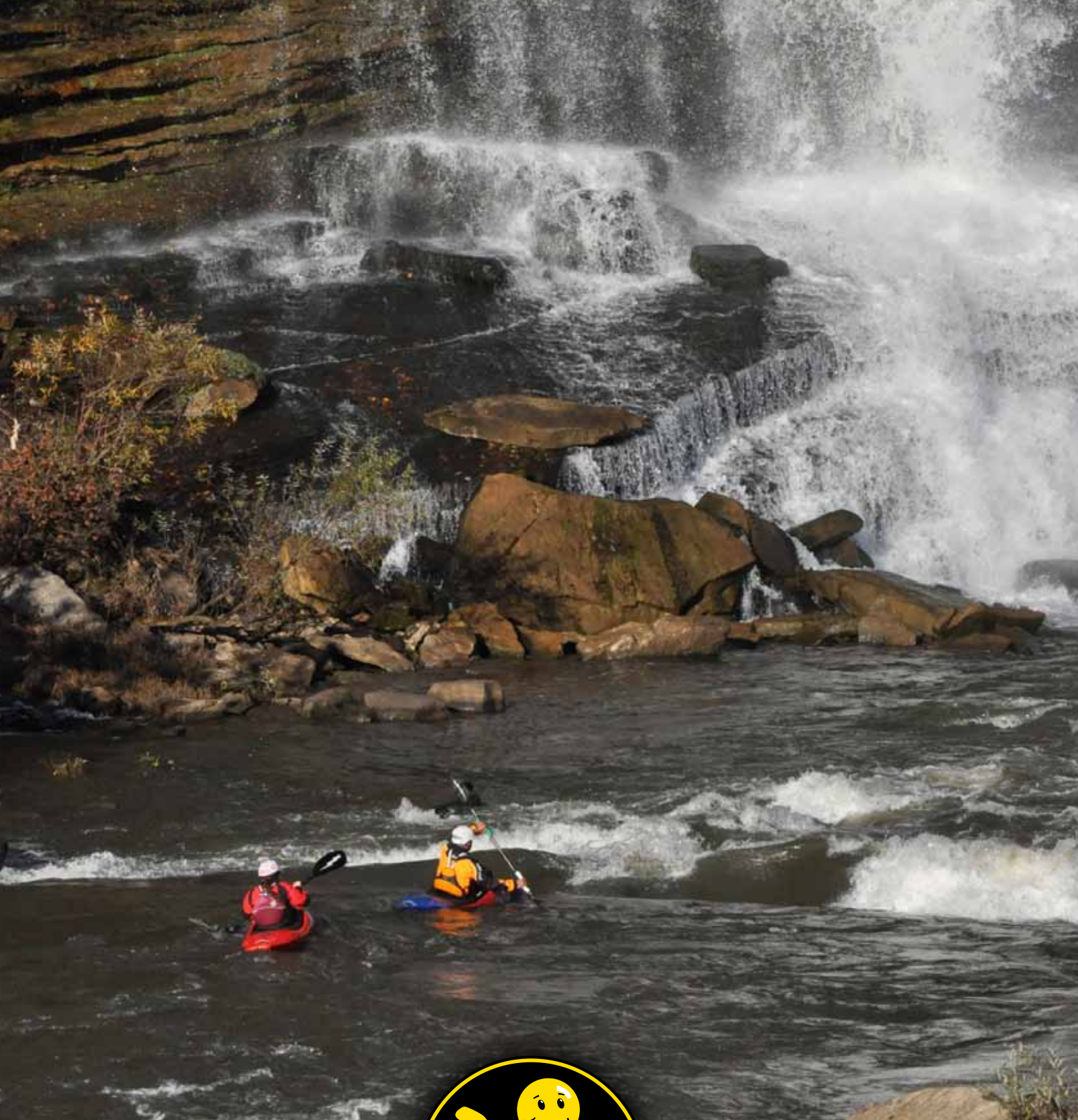
BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
May/June 2017

AMERICAN WHITEWATER GOES TO WASHINGTON D.C.

SELF-SUPPORT KAYAKING

THE FIGHT TO SAVE THE RIO MARAÑÓN





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A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal May/June 2017 – Volume 57 – Issue 3

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People travel from across the globe to experience the majesty and splendor of the United States Public Lands. Our public lands offer a chance for solitude, rejuvenation and exploration, but they are increasingly facing threats from groups pushing legislation which attempts to dispose of our lands to states and private interests. Here, Austin Woody finishes out a Cataract Canyon trip through Canyonlands National Park.

Photo Evan Stafford

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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 bi-monthly 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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Founded in 1954, American Whitewater is a national non-profit organization (Non-profit # 23-7083760) with a mission "to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely." American Whitewater is a membership organization representing a broad diversity of individual whitewater enthusiasts, river conservationists, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates across America. The organization is the primary advocate for the preservation and protection of whitewater rivers throughout the United States, and connects the interests of human-powered recreational river users with ecological and science-based data to achieve the goals within its mission. All rights to information contained in this publication are reserved.

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The opinions expressed in the features and editorials of American Whitewater are those of the individual authors. They do not necessarily represent those of the Directors of American Whitewater or the editors of this publication. On occasion, American Whitewater publishes official organizational policy statements drafted and approved by the Board of Directors. These policy statements will be clearly identified.

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

LAST WEEKEND, I found myself where I often am in the spring, at the put-in of the Cheoah River with a small group of friends, getting ready to go paddling. Being there reminded me of the part American Whitewater played in making the Cheoah a success story.

Located in the extreme southwestern corner of North Carolina, the Cheoah had its waters diverted for hydropower for 77 years until scheduled releases started in 2005, bringing the river back to life. During the 90s, I lived in the nearby Nantahala River Gorge and would ride my road bike up along the Cheoah and wonder what paddling it would be like. In those years there was no water in the riverbed; water released from the reservoir was always used for hydropower production. Today, when the water flows, the Cheoah is a vibrant Class IV whitewater run that hits the sweet spot for many paddlers.

Through the federal hydropower relicensing process of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), American Whitewater began investigating the whitewater potential of the Cheoah River in 1999. The organization advocated for a controlled whitewater flow study in 2000, which formed the basis of the next four years of negotiating for releases, access areas, and land protection. It took thousands of hours attending meetings and writing technical comments, but eventually efforts restoring flows were successful. On September 17, 2005, paddlers celebrated the first recreational release on the river. There are now 18 releases annually for the 40-year term of the operating license. In addition, new access areas were built, thousands of acres of critical wildlands were protected, and improved base flows restored aquatic habitat.

Nationally, hydropower dams have dried up riverbeds that provide fishing and paddling opportunities for local residents and visitors, inundated towns and farmlands under reservoirs, and blocked the migration of fish—including many species



Bear Creek Falls on the Cheoah River.
Photos by Chris@freeriverpic

that provide economic and cultural value for local and regional communities. Many rural communities still suffer today from these enduring losses. Through the FERC framework, American Whitewater has worked as a public interest advocate to restore water and economic opportunities to communities across the country.

Nearby, power generation releases on North Carolina's Nantahala and Tuckasegee rivers are scheduled in advance to allow for profitable power generation as well as predictable rafting, canoeing, and kayaking. These releases support a large number of tourism related jobs in this rural Appalachian region, and are the result of collaboratively developed licenses that American Whitewater helped craft. A 2009 economic impact study found that outfitters in the area created and maintained 579 jobs and contributed a total of \$48,073,691 to the local economy.

In the early part of the 20th century, the Feather River in California was known as a world-class trout fishery until a series of dams either inundated or dewatered the river for much of its length. American Whitewater engaged in the relicensing process and was successful at securing new flows in several reaches that restore

vital ecological functions to the river. The result has been a 30% increase in flows, better fishing, and popular kayaking and rafting opportunities, with only a modest 6% reduction in power production.

Examples like the Feather, Cheoah, Nantahala, Tuckasegee, and many other rivers around the country illustrate the positive impacts of the modern relicensing process. A process that is capable of producing outcomes that allow for power generation while restoring ecological, recreational, and economic values with direct benefit to local communities. Through the FERC hydropower relicensing process our efforts as a public interest advocate have restored water and economic opportunities to communities across the country.

In a political climate favorable to reducing regulations on energy development, frameworks like the FERC hydropower relicensing process can wind up in Congress's crosshairs. It's fair to say that there are few organizations with as much experience in hydropower relicensing as American Whitewater. There are opportunities to improve the hydropower licensing process and the health of our rivers; this includes incentivizing collaboration and ensuring

THE JOURNEY AHEAD

that resource agencies have the funding and information they need to fulfill their statutory obligations. It also involves recognizing the role that hydropower plays in a rapidly changing energy market and ensuring it meets the needs of the grid while maintaining or improving the integrity of the aquatic environment and recreational values of rivers. Finally, as we consider modernizing hydropower we need to focus on maintaining and upgrading existing infrastructure.

American Whitewater staffer, Dave Steindorf, provided the above comments to Congress during testimony this spring to the *United States House of Representatives Energy and Commerce Committee Energy Subcommittee hearing on "Modernizing Energy Infrastructure: Challenges and Opportunities to Expanding Hydropower Generation"*

Dave's testimony focused on the fact that hydropower is a mature, built out energy source and is appropriately challenged by competition from younger energy sources like wind and solar that have ample room for growth. Last year alone more than 14 GW of new solar power and 8 GW of wind power was brought online in the United States, while the Department of Energy estimates new conventional hydropower potential over the next 34 years only totals

5.2 to 12.8 GW. Almost all of this potential new hydropower is accomplished through retrofitting existing dams—not building new dams.

As we look to the future, we continue to appreciate the importance of rivers and their role in supporting the health and well being of the paddling community as well as the adjacent rural communities. At American Whitewater, we remain committed to resisting new hydropower development that relies on new dams or attempts to weaken our ability to engage in the hydropower relicensing process.

And we will continue to meet at special places, like the put-in of the Cheoah, to gather the tribe and celebrate time spent on the water.

See you on the river,



PS: If you have boating friends who are not members of American Whitewater, please share this issue of the *Journal* with them. Together all members of the boating community can speak out with increased clout.



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Journal!

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Contact Mark Singleton
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828-586-1930

Tallulah Race 2016. | Photo: Emrie Canen

Deerfield Festival Weekend

Charlemont, MA June 24-26, 2017



Deerfield Fest, Saturday, June 24

Celebrate the Deerfield with American Whitewater's Annual Deerfield Fest. The festival site will be bustling with activity including a whitewater marketplace, live entertainment, beer, and a silent auction with awesome outdoor gear. All proceeds from the festival support American Whitewater's conservation and access work throughout the Northeast.

Zoar Outdoor DemoFest, Friday-Sunday, June 23 – 25

Free instruction from top paddlers, demos of the hottest whitewater boats on the market and much more – it's the 14th annual Demofest at Zoar Outdoor. www.zoaroutdoor.com/demofest

www.americanwhitewater.org/deerfieldfest

STEWARDSHIP

AS THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS BLOOM, AMERICAN WHITEWATER GOES TO WASHINGTON – HYDROPOWER POLICY UPDATE

BY THOMAS O'KEEFE AND MEGAN HOOKER



As the cherry blossoms bloomed, Congress was busy with hearings on hydropower.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

AS CONGRESS AND a new Administration have jumped in to tackle a host of policy issues that affect our nation's public lands and waters, the national news media has paid limited attention to the conversation on hydropower. Thanks to the generous support of our membership we are fully engaged; we have been able to join the dialogue at a high level, and this spring, four members of our staff visited the nation's capitol three separate times.

Meetings of the Hydropower Reform Coalition

In early March we gathered for the annual policy meeting of the Hydropower Reform Coalition. This highly successful coalition now comprises 160 organizations from all across the country. Our Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director, Thomas O'Keefe, serves as the national chair for the group,

and Associate Stewardship Director Megan Hooker coordinates HRC organizations in the Pacific Northwest. With our steering committee gathering in Washington DC, at the American Rivers office, we engaged in policy discussions with some of the most experienced minds in hydropower licensing from across the country. Kevin Colburn, our National Stewardship Director, and Theresa Simsiman, our California Stewardship Director, joined with Thomas in DC, and we collectively visited a number of key Congressional offices to educate them on how hydropower affects rivers and the importance of laws and regulations that give equal consideration to non power values that include recreation.

Testifying Before Congress

The following week we were back at it as Dave Steindorf, our Special Projects Director, was invited to testify before the

House Energy and Commerce Committee on hydropower licensing. With more than two decades of experience in hydropower licensing on dozens of projects throughout California, Dave was able to share first-hand knowledge of how the process works on the ground, drawing from a wealth of experience. Dave testified on behalf of the Hydropower Reform Coalition and we received significant support from our colleagues at American Rivers and Trout Unlimited in crafting our message. While it may at first seem odd to have a whitewater paddler as the witness before Congress explaining hydropower and the role of this energy source in rapidly changing energy markets, it reflects a fact many of us know to be true of anyone trying to plan the optimal destination and timing for a boating trip: paddlers know quite a bit about rivers, and we pay attention to data.



Dave Steindorf testifies before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Energy Subcommittee in March in Washington DC, sharing what he's learned from participating in over 20 hydropower relicensing projects in California.

Photo by Alex Miller

During the last session of Congress, hydropower interests were pushing hard to roll back environmental protections for rivers with hydropower dams on them. American Whitewater joined with others in the river community to stop these efforts because they would have severely compromised the tools that we have used for decades to protect and restore flows to rivers affected by hydropower projects across the country.

The industry sought to take the responsibility of agencies that focus on fish, wildlife, water quality, and recreation and place it in the hands of the Federal

Katherine Hollis with The Mountaineers, one of our partners with the Hydropower Reform Coalition, joined Thomas O'Keefe for a series of meetings on Capitol Hill on river conservation, hydropower, and promoting the outdoor recreation economy.

Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

Energy Regulatory Commission, which is responsible for regulating interstate

electricity transmission and licensing gas, oil, and hydropower projects. The Commission has limited experience in managing fish and wildlife or recreation. The legislation from the last Congress also sought to weaken Clean Water Act and Endangered Species Act protections.

Many of you joined the effort, reaching out to your senators and representatives. Together, we were able to protect the current process for relicensing hydropower dams. These issues do not go away, and Congress continues to pursue legislation relating to hydropower. Just as in the last session, we're tracking the issue closely, and stepping up to the plate to ensure that our rivers keep flowing well into the future.



STEWARDSHIP



Theresa Simsiman, California Stewardship Director.

Photo by Theresa Simsiman

Appearing Before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Our third trip to Washington occurred later in March when Thomas O’Keefe was invited to serve on a panel discussion at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The discussion focused on the Hydropower Regulatory Efficiency Act of 2013 that, in part, directed the Commission to evaluate a pilot program to expedite opportunities to install hydropower on non-powered dams used for flood control, navigation, and water storage. With the two Commissioners attending along with many of the senior staff from the Commission, it was an important opportunity for our organization to share our experience and knowledge in hydropower licensing on behalf of the entire Hydropower Reform Coalition.

The last century saw dam-building at a fevered pace on rivers across the country,

and as a result, most of the sites that can produce hydropower already do. But like most industries, hydropower continues to seek opportunities for growth. As evidence that great potential exists for growing hydropower capacity in the US, the industry likes to point to the fact that of the 80,000 dams in the United States only 3% have hydropower generation facilities. While opportunity exists to add power to some of these non-powered dams, it is unrealistic to believe that we can add power to all or even most of them. Many of these dams are challenged by basic physics—they are either low head and/or release low volumes of water because of existing needs for flood control, storage, and navigation. Further, these projects provide less operational flexibility and therefore limited grid regulation benefits that are key to bringing more renewable energy on the grid.

Renewable energy sources like wind and solar provide much greater growth potential than hydropower. In 2016 alone, more than 14 GW of new solar power and 8 GW of wind power were brought online in the United States. This compares to only 11.1 GW of potential new hydropower capacity by upgrading existing projects and retrofitting non-powered dams with hydropower capabilities by 2050. Even this optimistic projection assumes new technology and financing that is unavailable today. A couple of years ago, the industry claimed that we could double hydropower production. These claims have quietly shifted to a possibility to increase it by 50% instead, and they will likely further shrink as the reality of energy markets sets in.

Based on informal comments from the industry, we anticipate that one of the real motivations for this pilot program will be to establish a two-year licensing process that more traditional hydropower projects will seek to make use of. We will remain alert to attempts by some in the industry who seek to strip away agency authority for non-power values and compromise public values for rivers in the name of expediting hydropower licensing. Decisions in hydropower licensing affect how a river is managed for a generation and we need to get it right.

Your Role

We are proud of the leadership role we have already played with this Congress in the discussion about hydropower. Members of Congress from both ends of the political spectrum have sought our insight, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has been receptive, and we have a great Coalition with gifted minds who know how to be effective.

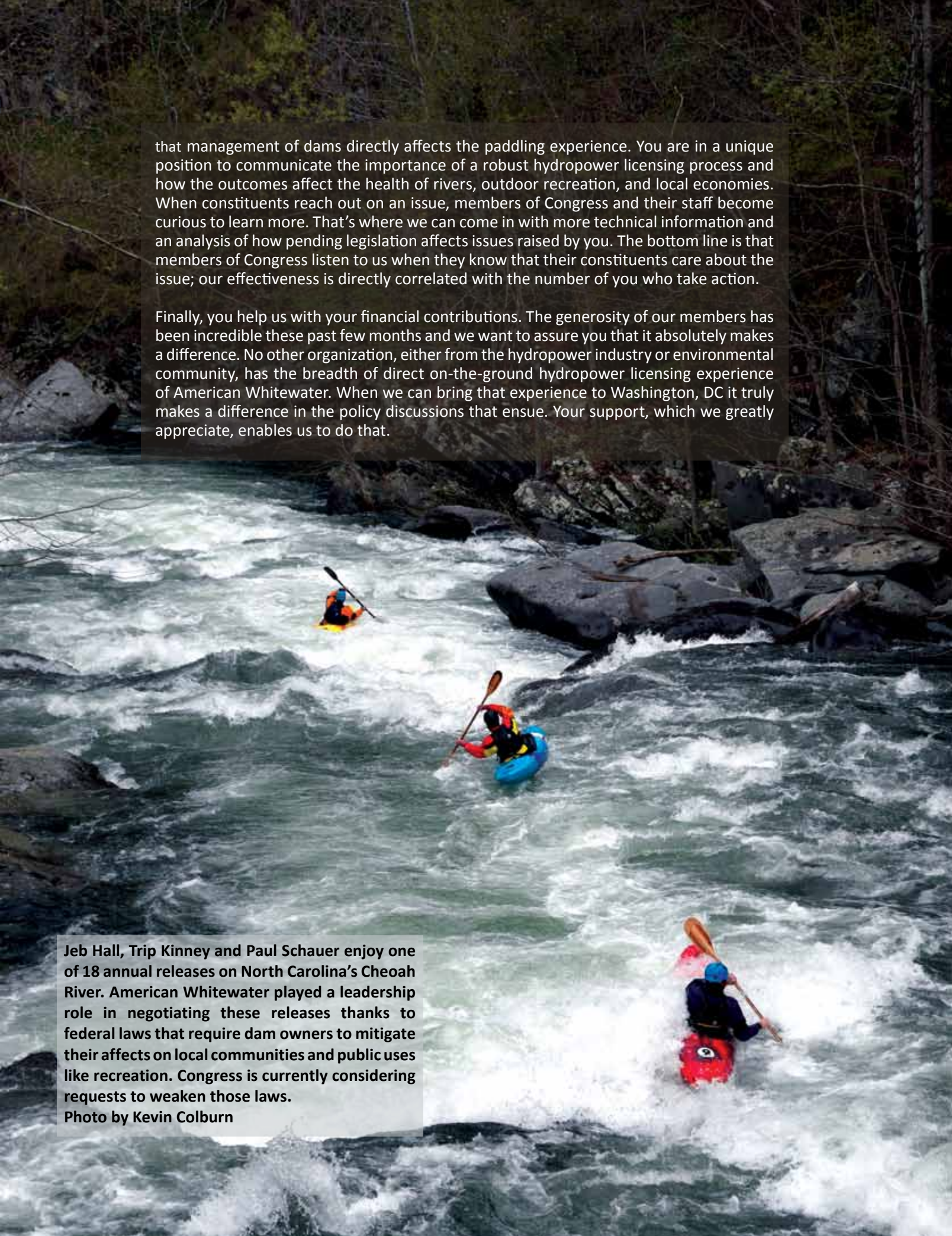
As a citizen with an interest in whitewater recreation, you can help us in a couple of important ways. First, we regularly put out action alerts on our website and social media channels. Not many people care about hydropower licensing but nearly all of our members understand

that management of dams directly affects the paddling experience. You are in a unique position to communicate the importance of a robust hydropower licensing process and how the outcomes affect the health of rivers, outdoor recreation, and local economies. When constituents reach out on an issue, members of Congress and their staff become curious to learn more. That's where we can come in with more technical information and an analysis of how pending legislation affects issues raised by you. The bottom line is that members of Congress listen to us when they know that their constituents care about the issue; our effectiveness is directly correlated with the number of you who take action.

Finally, you help us with your financial contributions. The generosity of our members has been incredible these past few months and we want to assure you that it absolutely makes a difference. No other organization, either from the hydropower industry or environmental community, has the breadth of direct on-the-ground hydropower licensing experience of American Whitewater. When we can bring that experience to Washington, DC it truly makes a difference in the policy discussions that ensue. Your support, which we greatly appreciate, enables us to do that.

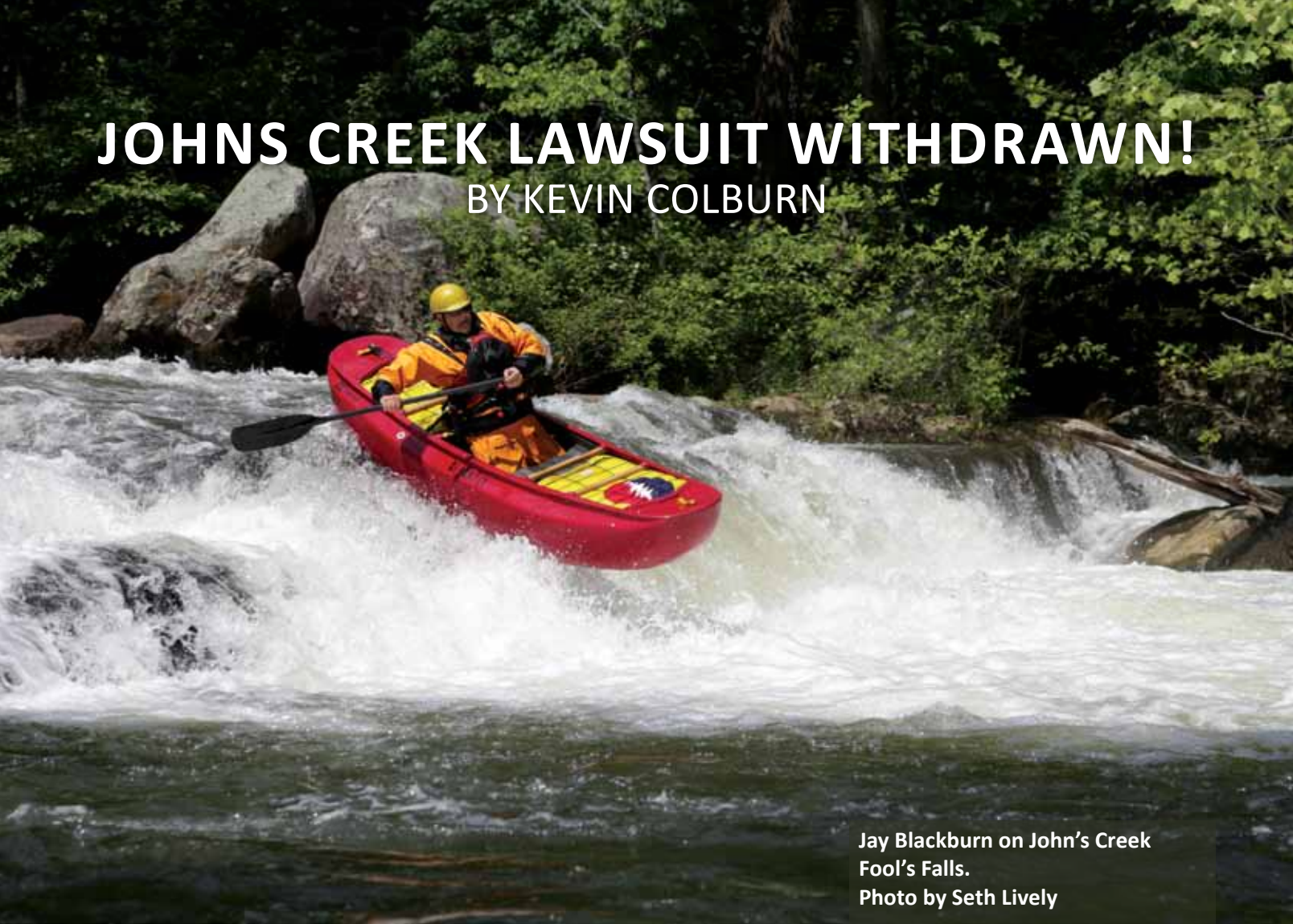
Jeb Hall, Trip Kinney and Paul Schauer enjoy one of 18 annual releases on North Carolina's Cheoah River. American Whitewater played a leadership role in negotiating these releases thanks to federal laws that require dam owners to mitigate their affects on local communities and public uses like recreation. Congress is currently considering requests to weaken those laws.

Photo by Kevin Colburn



JOHNS CREEK LAWSUIT WITHDRAWN!

BY KEVIN COLBURN



Jay Blackburn on John's Creek
Fool's Falls.

Photo by Seth Lively

A LAWSUIT THAT AIMED to eliminate paddling on Virginia's Johns Creek was withdrawn in March. Two landowners filed the lawsuit last year, charging that Virginia was wrong in affirming Commonwealth jurisdiction over the stream in 2015. Along with that jurisdiction came the public right to paddle Johns Creek, which paddlers had avoided because of legal ambiguity for over a decade. Paddlers began boating Johns Creek again when their rights were affirmed, and in response landowners lawyered up, seeking exclusive rights to the stream. American Whitewater anticipated joining the lawsuit this year if necessary.

While the withdrawal of the lawsuit is great news for paddlers, it comes as the result of the unfortunate death of one of the plaintiffs. According to an article in the *Roanoke Times*, the family of the plaintiff decided not to continue the court challenge

following his passing. With the withdrawal of the case, paddlers will presumably continue to have the right to respectfully float it without fear of prosecution for trespassing for the foreseeable future.

Paddlers have been frequently enjoying Johns Creek over the past 18 months or so without incident. The regional paddling community has taken great care to avoid contact with the private lands bordering Johns Creek, to patronize local businesses in New Castle, and to be respectful of visitors to the area. Paddlers have also taken good care of the take-out, which is owned by American Whitewater. Surely some of the misgivings about paddlers floating down Johns and other small Virginia creeks remain, and the best thing we can do is follow the lead of the local paddling community in visiting these streams with care and respect.

Agreement on Ocoee Releases Pitched in Tennessee

The Ocoee River is one of the most popular paddling destinations in the United States and even the world. Whitewater boating on the Ocoee began when the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) flume that normally dewatered the river broke in 1976 and water rushed down the riverbed. It had seldom done so since the river was dammed in 1913. A rafting industry sprang up around the river, and when the flume was finally repaired in 1983, the outfitters were forced to cut a unique deal with the TVA for releases. The deal required the outfitters to pay TVA for releases, something otherwise unheard of, then and now. A later agreement following the 1996 Olympics on the Upper Ocoee secured a similar agreement for that stretch. Both agreements expire in the spring of 2019, marking a high stakes deadline for determining the future of the Ocoee River.

STEWARDSHIP

Over the past couple of years the outfitters have been in closed negotiations with the TVA seeking a new agreement. Those negotiations bore fruit in early April when a strategy was announced to continue the releases for another 15-20 years. Under the plan, state legislation would set up a dedicated fund to pay TVA for releases and promotion, and the state would charge outfitters a total fee of 10% of rafting revenue to keep the fund flush. The fund would be managed by an 11-person board, which includes one private boating representative. Rafting caps would be raised on certain peak days allowing for more use. The legislation has been introduced, and is titled the Ocoee River Recreation and Economic Development Fund Act.

On a separate track, the state, the outfitters, the Forest Service, and TVA signed a letter of interest focused on their various responsibilities and a draft schedule of releases to be provided. The draft release schedule is similar (though not identical) to the releases paddlers have enjoyed for the past decade or so. This agreement will be analyzed by the TVA over the next year or so, and compared with other alternatives. When this analysis is complete, the TVA will issue a decision, the parties will sign



Tablesaw rapid on the Ocoee River.

Photo by Christy Johnson

the contract, and money and water will start flowing.

Paddlers will have at least three opportunities to weigh in:

STEP 1 – Spring: If you live in Tennessee, you can reach out to your state legislators and tell them what you think about the bill. Check the AW website to see if this opportunity has passed or is still important.

STEP 2 – Early Summer 2017 and in 2018:

No matter where you live, when TVA studies the fate of the Ocoee you will have opportunities to comment at least twice: once on what issues and alternatives should be studied and preferred (early summer), and then on their draft analysis and draft decision (likely 2018).

STEP 3 – This Summer and Beyond:

If the bill passes, you will be able to contact the private boating representative and other members of the fund board to advocate for your interests.



Here at American Whitewater we do not believe the public should have to pay a public agency for public water to be released from public dams. With this said, the historical pay-for-water status quo is unlikely to change as long as there are willing payers, and therefore, we look at this legislation pragmatically. This is the path the outfitters have chosen to take to protect Ocoee releases, at their own expense, and it stands to protect these very important releases for all paddlers.

Shubaloo Rapid on John's Creek.

Photo by Seth Lively

STEWARDSHIP



Hell Hole Wave on the Ocoee River.
Photo by Edgar Peck

While we should remain vigilant regarding potential new fees on private boaters, this legislation does not include or envision such fees. We support this legislation

as a means of funding Ocoee River management. American Whitewater wants to see no net loss in Ocoee releases. We'll be advocating for the continuation of the

historic schedule or something very close in TVA's public process. If the request from outfitters falls short of this goal, we'll ask TVA to make up the shortfall by providing releases free of compensation. Over 750 paddlers participated in our Ocoee River-related survey late last year and we have a wealth of data to support the value of releases.

American Whitewater will help keep paddlers aware of all opportunities to weigh in, and make commenting easy at each step. We view this as an issue of national importance, and will be highly involved now that public processes have begun. We'd like to thank NRS for supporting our efforts to secure a good outcome on the Ocoee.

GUNNISON RIVER FESTIVAL

Gunnison Colorado 2017

June 22 Summer Solstice Kickoff - IBAR Ranch
June 23 Rocky Mountain Rafts Downriver Races
June 24 Whitewater Events - Gunnison Town Party

Gunnison County Whitewater Park
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DETAILS gunnisonriverfestival.com



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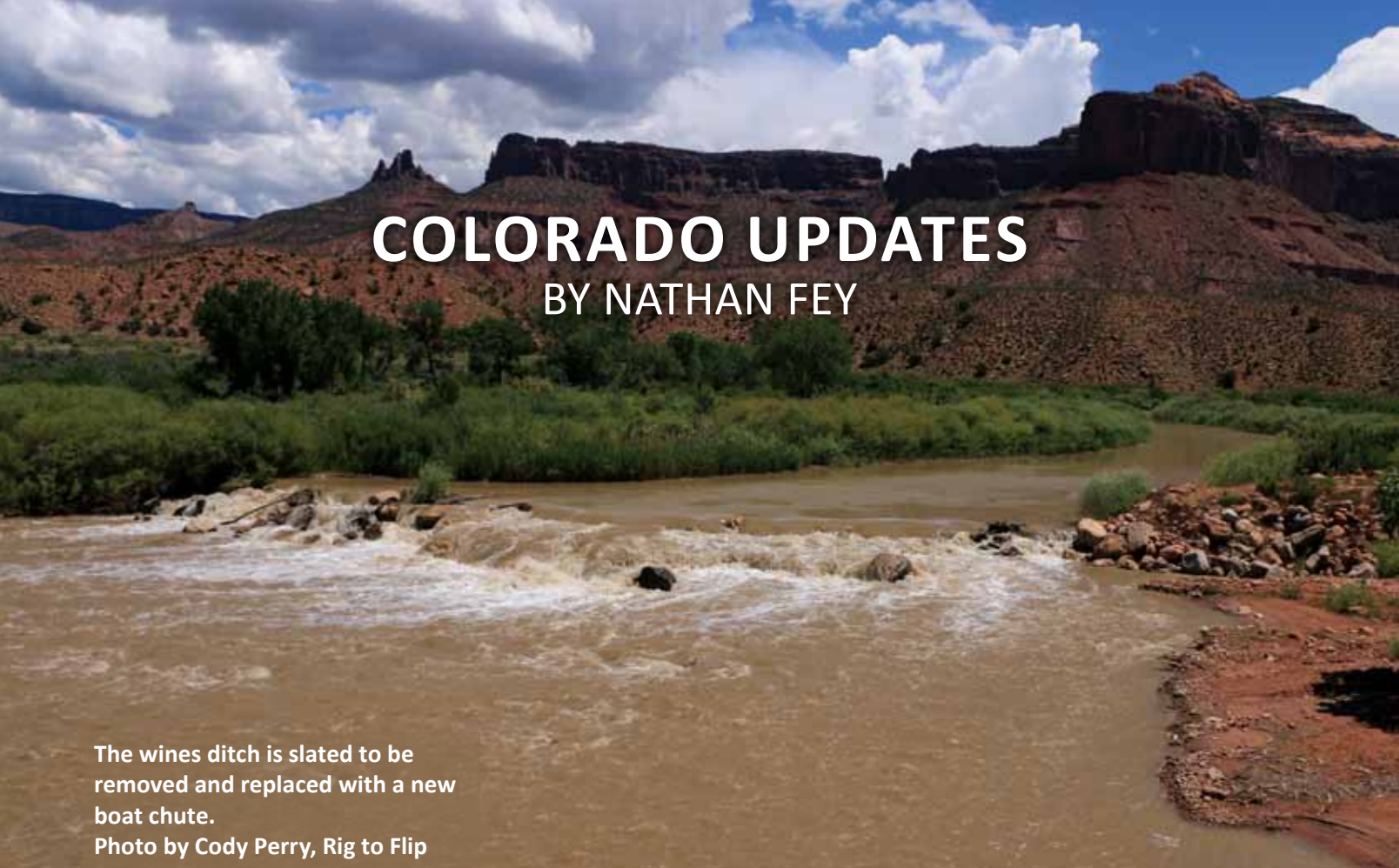
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COLORADO UPDATES

BY NATHAN FEY

The wines ditch is slated to be removed and replaced with a new boat chute.

Photo by Cody Perry, Rig to Flip

OUR COLORADO RIVER Stewardship Program has been working at a furious pace as we get ready for a 2017 paddling season that promises to be epic. Many hours and several months of negotiations and meetings with our members, and then with policy-makers across the region, have made our rivers safer, streamflows more certain, and given paddlers the chance to lead on issues important to them, like river access, new dam proposals, and recreation liability. Here are a few updates at the time this edition of the Journal goes to print:

Dolores River Releases in 2017

Every spring, American Whitewater and local interests in Dolores Water sit down with the latest data on snowpack, water supply, and McPhee Reservoir storage, to determine how releases, if possible, can be timed to provide the best paddling opportunities, while doing good things for fish, and the health of the river.

Releases for the Lower Dolores River are certain in 2017, and the most probable February forecasts indicate 61 days of

streamflow below McPhee Dam above 800 cfs! Included in this season's preliminary release schedule are 39 days above 2000 cfs and four days at 4000 cfs.

The last time McPhee Dam "spilled" was 2011. In 2016, a small release was made from McPhee Dam after Memorial Day. This year, there should be plenty of opportunity for paddlers to get on the water and experience one of the most iconic rivers in the southwest. Heavy snowpack and elevated carry-over storage in McPhee Reservoir this year have provided over 275,000 acre-feet of water to release to the Lower Dolores that we aim to manage for ample paddling opportunities, to benefit native fish, and to restore a healthy river channel.

Since 2007, American Whitewater has played a leading role in building consensus on improved reservoir operations at McPhee Dam and in restoring recreational streamflows to the Lower Dolores River. Twenty seventeen is the first year that our new release guidelines have informed the schedule of releases from McPhee Dam.

American Whitewater is working with the Dolores Water Conservancy District, the Bureau of Reclamation, Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company, Southwest Water Conservation District, and local conservation groups to ensure that releases meet these downstream goals. This partnership needs input from paddlers who floated the Dolores River this year so that we can better understand how management actions affected your experiences on the river.

If you have run the Dolores, or plan to this season, your participation in this study will help us understand if these goals are being met, and directly guide American Whitewater's advocacy for improvements in how the reservoir is managed in the future.

Opposite: SnaggleTooth Rapid on the Dolores River, at 4800cfs. A high flow event of 4000cfs is being planned for May 2017, the first time in five years that flows will provide high-water boating.

Photo by Nathan Fey

STEWARDSHIP

Dolores River Diversion Rehabilitation

American Whitewater and our partners have begun a multi-phase project to reconstruct the Wines Ditch No. 1 Diversion Structure, located on the Dolores River near Gateway, Colorado. The project will address multiple agricultural, environmental, and recreational water interests, including water delivery improvement, sensitive species enhancement and protection, channel stabilization, riparian improvement, and improved public safety and paddling opportunities.

The Wines Ditch No. 1 Diversion Structure, located approximately 3.5 miles downstream from the put-in at the town of Gateway, does not allow for boat passage, forcing boaters floating the Dolores River from Gateway to portage around the structure at most water levels. The planning project is considering redevelopment options that will allow for regular boat passage and access to the 32-mile stretch of the Dolores River from the town of Gateway to Dewey Bridge at the confluence with the Colorado River. This segment of the Dolores River takes paddlers through the Gateway Canyon

Recreation Area and into several proposed wilderness areas in Utah.

Currently, the Wines Ditch No. 1 diversion structure requires substantial maintenance to provide full delivery of a water right, does not allow for regular boat passage, and may create stream bank erosion in a highly sensitive reach of the Dolores River. In its current condition, the diversion structure is only passable by rafts during high water events when the diversion structure is typically breached. Improvements to the structure will reduce its non-navigability. In addition, during high water events, the diversion structure is typically breached and no longer acts as a fish barrier, thus increasing the potential for introgression and hybridization of sensitive native upstream species in the San Miguel and Dolores Rivers.

American Whitewater, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and project engineers are evaluating use of a “Boat Chute,” or whitewater feature, as a velocity barrier for non-native fish. This opportunity will serve as a milestone in the “fish vs. boats” debate, and will improve public safety

while reducing the upstream migration of predatory and invasive fish species.

We are working with local property owners, BLM, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and The Nature Conservancy, with funds provided by the State of Colorado Water Supply Reserve Account, on preliminary design for construction of an improved diversion structure.

The Project is supported by many interests, including the BLM Grand Junction Field Office, which has stated the project will meet multiple management objectives including “improving recreational opportunities by modifying a portion of the structure that creates a barrier for raft passage.”

American Whitewater is committed to supporting the Project with technical expertise and input from our broader membership to complement funding from Colorado Water Conservation Board Water Supply Reserve Account. The first phase of this multi-phase project started last month. Phase 1 includes scoping, alternatives analysis, and the development of a preliminary design. Phase 2 will include the final design, permitting, contractor selection, and construction. Stay tuned for updates and opportunities to support this effort.

San Miguel River

American Whitewater has released a new study on whitewater recreation in the San Miguel River Basin in Southwest Colorado. As a product of our dedicated work defining recreational flows and representing whitewater recreation interests for the Colorado Water Plan, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) requested that Montrose County consult with American Whitewater on recreational needs and future impacts for the San Miguel River, one of the last free-flowing rivers in the West.

The river flows through western Montrose County, which acquired conditional water



STEWARDSHIP

rights to the San Miguel River in hopes of building multiple new reservoirs to support a booming Uranium market on BLM land. American Whitewater worked with Montrose County's agents to assess the impact its conditional storage proposals would have on existing recreational opportunities. We found no reduction in boatable days due to the simulated depletions to historic flows for any of the alternatives provided for the San Miguel River—the three alternatives only resulted in average annual changes in flow of about 1% and average daily depletions of under four cfs.

This study sets a new precedent for American Whitewater's involvement in assessing the future impacts new water projects will have on recreation opportunities in Colorado and, possibly,

across the country. Developing the Boatable Days metric provides the best quantification of river-related recreation opportunities and enables decision-makers to assess and address the impacts to whitewater boating attributes in future water rights development and water demand scenarios. We are proud to have put this assessment to use for the first time in a state-sponsored consulting role and are excited to use this method in the analysis of impacts on recreation from proposed future water projects.

Green River, Utah

In March, American Whitewater celebrated the official opening of the new boat passage through the Green River Diversion (Tusher Dam) in Green River, Utah. Completion of the boat passage has freed the Green River from its last in-stream obstruction

between the Flaming Gorge Dam (WY) and the confluence with the Colorado River—a stretch of over 400 river miles through iconic canyons and historic landmarks. Since the original diversion structure was damaged in the 2010-2011 floods, American Whitewater has worked with state and federal agencies, private water users, the local boating community, and dedicated AW volunteers to secure safe passage for boaters and fish through the new diversion structure. We have updated the river beta page for section 4 and section 5 of the Green River to include a description of the new boat passage, boater warning signs, and portage trail. If you have any concerns about the safety or function of the boat passage, including debris obstructing the passage, please contact Eli Tome (State of Utah) directly at (435) 210-0362.

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WEST RIVER RELEASES RESTORED

BY BOB NASDOR



Jim Michaud enjoys the West River in Jamaica, VT along with a couple of thousand friends courtesy of the Army Corps of Engineers.
Photo by Jayne Todd

AFTER NEARLY TWO decades of advocacy focused on restoring whitewater boating releases on the West River in Vermont, the Army Corps of Engineers has restored whitewater boating opportunities below the Ball Mountain Dam. During peak weekend releases, as many as 2,000 boaters used to gather at the Jamaica State Park to enjoy a weekend of Class II-IV boating on two river sections. But for the past dozen years, only a single scheduled boating

day was provided annually. The Corps eliminated releases at the request of the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources and others based on the unfounded belief that they were getting in the way of the success of a regional program to restore Atlantic Salmon to the Connecticut River Watershed. Whether due to the presence of dams, pollution, climate change, or other factors unrelated to boating, the program effectively ended with the withdrawal of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The

Corps has expanded whitewater boating opportunities on the West River over the past two years, and for the first time this year has scheduled weekend releases on May 6-7 and September 23-24. American Whitewater credits the work of the many organizations and individuals who have worked to restore releases on the West River.

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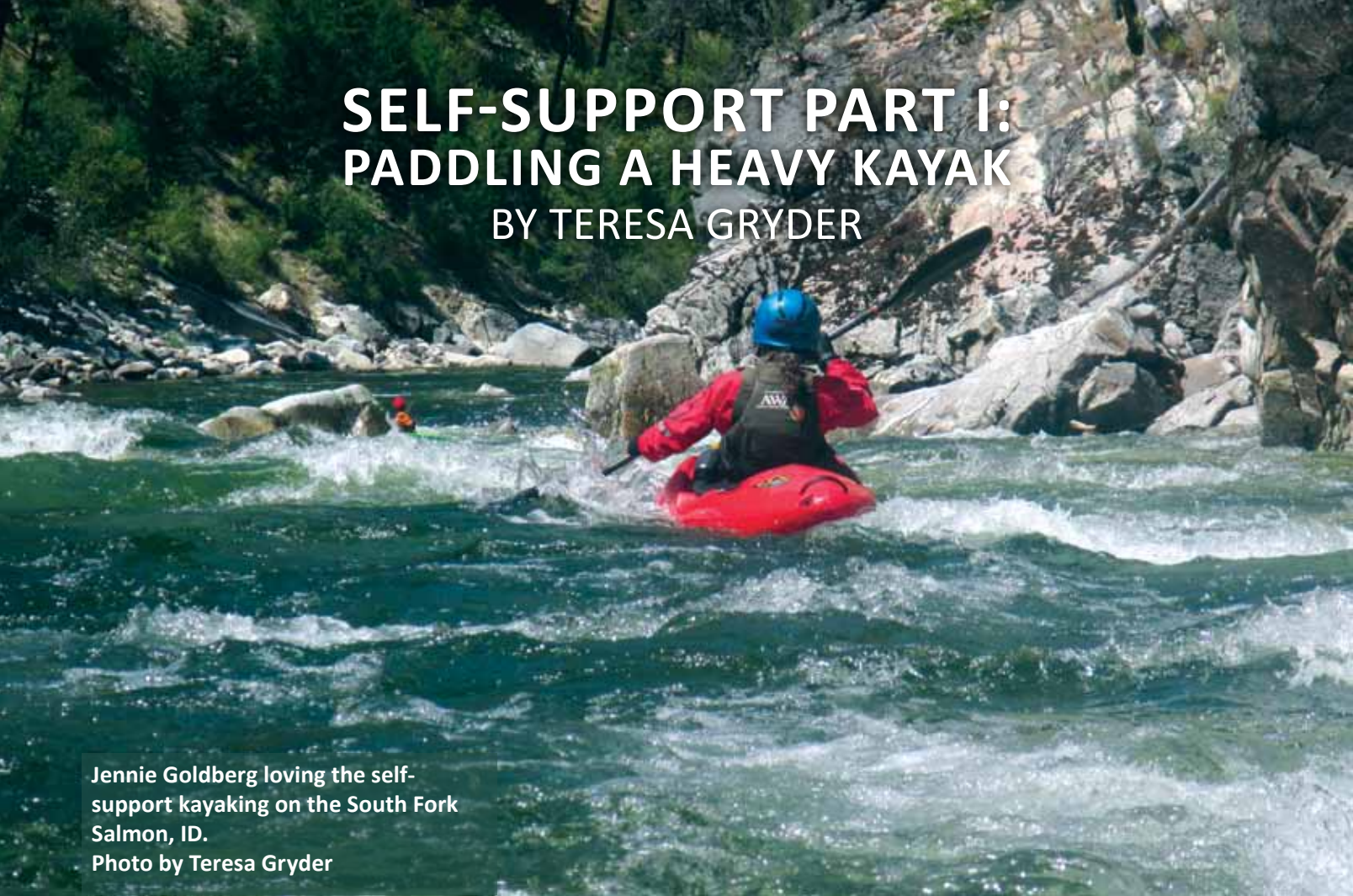


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SELF-SUPPORT PART I: PADDLING A HEAVY KAYAK

BY TERESA GRYDER



Jennie Goldberg loving the self-support kayaking on the South Fork Salmon, ID.
Photo by Teresa Gryder

Editor's Note: This is the first of several installments by Ms. Gryder on self-support wilderness paddling. Stay tuned to the Jul/Aug issue for more on the topic.

I'M NOT AN expert on self-support kayaking, I'm just one of the few who goes. I know that most paddlers don't go because I ask most boaters I meet if they do, and the standard answer is "No, but I'd love to!" If you are one of those who would love to explore rivers with your camping kit inside your kayak, this is for you.

About Rafts

The first time I went on a kayak self-support trip, just two of us launched at the Gates of Lodore on the Green River in northern Colorado. It was low water and late in the fall, and nobody was at the boat ramp, definitely no ranger. Wisps of clouds hung on the Gates where the river narrows from alluvial flats into a chasm of burgundy rock and incandescent spruce. A chilly drizzle saturated the sagebrush and kept us from dawdling. I felt acutely alive. The Gates,

shrouded in clouds, seemed to guard a magical world in which monsters might pop out at any moment. Thankfully Renee had seen this river before. Our kayaks slipped silently down the river and we entered a wilderness where we would see no one for the next three days. I was already hooked.

Self-support or self-contained boating means bringing your entire camping setup—food and all—in your own boat, instead of relying on someone else to haul your stuff. Sea kayakers have been doing it for a long time, and hunters and trappers used to travel for months by canoe, but on the river in modern times, most every trip that goes overnight has rafts along. Most of us first learn to love extended river camping trips from going on multi-day trips with raft support. But now in the age of titanium spoons and down blankets, you can camp comfortably using what will fit inside a much more nimble craft.

Floating down a wilderness river is a special kind of magic. The scenery goes by

effortlessly and worries from one's other life are soon forgotten. If you go down river long enough you might even forget about the driving and the shuttle. The forests, canyons, and cascades of a river are balm for a troubled soul, and going with dear friends into such a place can be transcendent.

Some will argue that raft-supported river trips can be transcendent too. Well of course they can. As special as these trips can be, the downsides come into clearer focus the more often you do them. I have done my share. I have rowed a bit too. My trip down the Rio Bio Bio in 1992 was particularly educational for me.

We had three 18-foot rafts and seven kayaks, and about a week to find our way down a famous and unfamiliar river that would soon be dammed. We were all river guides, though, and we were confident.

We did fine until day four or so when we got to Jugbuster rapid, where Endeco

WILDERNESS PADDLING

(the Chilean power company) had started blasting the canyon walls in preparation to build a dam. A jagged boulder had tumbled from the blasted walls and lodged in the only obvious line through the rapid. We decided not to run it. We portaged the kayaks then convened on shore to line the rafts through a tight right channel. There were 11 of us on shore, 10 holding the line that went to the raft, and me on the camera. I still feel guilty about that. I remember watching Taz's face as the raft caught the current and swung with more force than expected to the left. It plastered like a postage stamp on a giant boulder, and one end of the raft was immediately sucked into a toaster slot on the left. Curses! This was not how it was supposed to go. We were raft guides, remember?



Anyway, now we had a pinned raft, and we knew what to do about that. We tried every rope trick in the book. We Z-dragged and vector pulled and tried all manner of heroics that afternoon, but we were unable to budge it. Finally we retrieved our drybags and prepared to camp, except there was no camp, just a bunch of freshly blasted boulders. We were so depressed that by

While going light may sound barbaric, it's still possible to camp comfortably this way.
Photo by Teresa Gryder

dark we were already drunk on boxed wine and having a dinner of sausage and chocolate. We spent a sleepless night on a manmade scree slope wondering if we'd ever get that raft out.

The next morning we took the raft extraction project to the next level. A bold guide named Monk shimmied across a zip line to de-rig the entire boat. We held our breath, watching as he dove underwater to release straps and free the boxes, cooler, and frames, which we zip-lined to shore one by one. When the frames were removed, we Z-dragged some more, to no avail. Finally we decided to deflate the thwarts, even though they were underwater and could get water inside the tubes. When we did, the 18-footer squished to the surface and we easily pulled it to shore. By the time we got the boat out the next day it had been pinned in heavy current for almost 24 hours. We then re-rigged and floated down to the first available camp where we de-rigged it, tried to get the water out of the thwarts, and patched all the abrasions. We spent another evening and morning repairing and re-rigging the raft before we were able to move on downstream.



Shouldering the loaded boat to portage. Scott Gerber on the Jarbidge (ID), hiking around Sevy Falls.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

WILDERNESS PADDLING



That one time on the Bio Bio; extreme measures taken to free a very pinned raft.

Photo by David Kareken

Hindsight being what it is, there are lots of things we could have done better. From my newfound perspective as a self-support kayaker, I know that if we'd been traveling with kayaks only, the whole epic would have been avoided. Sure, kayaks can have their own epics, but I have never seen a kayak pinned nearly as bad as a raft.

You may not mind rigging, de-rigging, topping, unpinning, repairing, deflating and loading rafts. You may be OK with hauling

drybags and boxes, setting up and breaking down kitchens, groovers, and fire pans. Maybe you like to row. Perhaps you have your own raft and take a certain pleasure in rigging it well. If you're a foodie, you might pack a chef's kitchen, complete with Dutch ovens. You could be so Zen that you don't mind kneeling in the sand washing greasy dishes in slimy dishwater. If these chores aren't drudgery to you, and you don't participate in the resentments that arise in groups with an uneven workload, you're a much more enlightened person than I am.

Or maybe, after finishing your third or tenth Grand Canyon trip, you can't even imagine going on another "heavy metal" raft trip, because it is so exhausting. Sure, the place is amazing, but in my view the way most private boaters are doing it is too laborious and contentious. Group sizes are too large for group coherence, foodpacks are gluttonous, rafts are overloaded with useless crap, and heavy military surplus rocket boxes are still state-of-the-art for dry storage. I agree that rowing is fun, but we can do better than this. Even with rafts, our enjoyment is increased when the complexity and weight of our baggage is reduced.

Kayakers often get invited on raft trips to rescue swimmers and snag lost gear, help split trip costs, and serve as slave labor. Carry this, fetch that. Set up this, chop that. Like a well-trained dog, you are eager to please, for a while. But as you become an older kayaker, you might get less agreeable, and start snapping if your off-river time doesn't include hiking and napping.

It is possible to drastically reduce the amount of gear involved in river tripping. Self-support kayaking automatically limits baggage and allows for smaller group sizes and simpler shuttles without increasing trip costs. You can carry four kayaks, people, and all their gear in one vehicle. Get the mandatory permits, pack your kits, hire a driver or pilot to run shuttle, and Voila!, you have a trip.

If you enjoy kayaking and have solid skills, I encourage you to claim your freedom and leave the rafts behind. You do not need huge drybags full of outfits. You can live without gourmet food for a few days. You don't need boom boxes, folding chairs, or bocce balls. You may not even need 10 extra people to get to know.

Opposite: The beauty of wilderness whitewater trips of all kinds is why we go.
Photo by Teresa Gryder

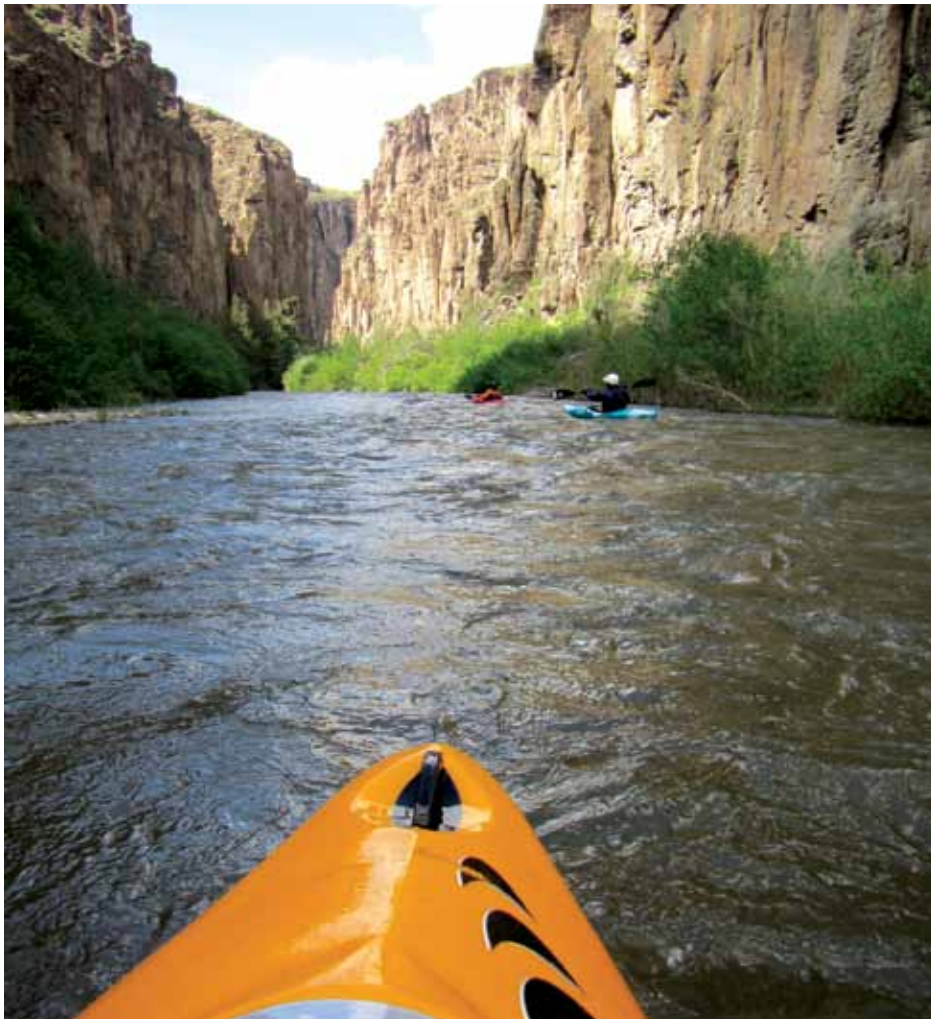
Ultralight backpackers know the freedom of minimalism. When you get your load down to the basics, you won't spend precious time searching for missing items in bottomless bags and boxes. You can get on the water faster each morning, travel more miles, and make it to camp early. A little wind won't stall you out, and you can make good time downriver if you need to. In a kayak you can reasonably run rivers at both high and low water extremes, when many rafters would not even consider going. A flipped kayak is no big deal because you can roll it up. You can drag your whole boat up to your campsite. In the morning, you can pack your boat underneath your tarp if it's raining and in the shade of a tree if it's sunny. The more river trips I do without rafts, the less I want to go back to having rafts along. Leaving behind the

rafts and their associated overload allows me to spend more time watching the sky and water, and hanging out with people I really enjoy.

If you want, you can cooperate and share meals and shelters. I prefer to be self-reliant. I have everything I need to survive in my boat, and a little extra just in case. Self-reliance makes it simple for groups to combine or separate without worries about not having a kitchen, shelter, or a first aid kit. There is a delicious integrity to being completely prepared to take care of yourself.

Boat Types

I know I sound like a kayak snob, but there are many kinds of craft that can be made to haul your camping kit, and for any given



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WILDERNESS PADDING

river expedition there are reasons you might want to choose a different boat. For those who decide they want to try kayak self-support, we'll dig into choosing a specific kayak in a future installment. Before we get that far, let's consider other types of boats and their advantages and disadvantages.

Canoes are great for multi-day voyages on easy water. They have elegance that inflatables lack, and canoes can be fast when paddled tandem. Canoes can be rolled up after capsizing, though even if

they are rolled successfully, they will be swamped. They also can haul large and bulky loads. Trips work great if everybody is in canoes, and if you paddle a big enough canoe you can carry your chair, a cot, and maybe even a cooler. If a heavy headwind kicks up you might have to make camp early, and you will have to stop regularly to empty water when the rapids get good. Canoes mix OK with rafts as long as you don't want to put your canoe on the raft when there's a head wind. I think canoeing is great, as long as the water is easy enough that I'm not bailing continuously or swimming all day.

Last summer we floated the lower Owyhee and the Rogue in Oregon with all-canoe groups and it was glorious (except for me not being able to walk after getting out of the boat).

Decked canoes (C-1s) are seldom used for self-support, but they are an option. They have many of the advantages of the kayak, including having a spray skirt to keep water out, and being possible to roll. The disadvantages of having to kneel all day, and being able to brace solidly and roll on just one side instead of two, seems to be enough to keep people from choosing this craft for self-support. If you paddle a canoe, you'll probably choose the versatility of an open boat for self-support purposes.

Inflatable kayaks (IKs or duckies) are a great option because they are very stable and if oversized they can haul your drybags and plenty of water. I used to float the Verde in Arizona in a two-man IK with my large drybag in the bow paddler's position. He (my drybag) was a predictable paddling partner with a low center of gravity. If you paddle IK, always bring your own repair kit because nobody else will have the right patch material or adhesive for your boat. An IK makes a great camp sofa, and can even be a comfortable bed. The disadvantages of slower hull speed and higher wind profile only matter if you're with kayakers. An IK is also difficult to flip back upright after capsizing when it is loaded: you will probably have to get to shore and get assistance.

Packrafts are the new hot technology for self-support. Weighing as little as seven pounds, and having dry storage integral to the boat itself, these ingenious inflatables enable people to backpack their boats into to launch sites where they simply would not carry a kayak, canoe, ducky, or raft. Being



My self support kayak on top of my 18-foot row rig in the Grand Canyon: A comparison of boat size.

Photo by Teresa Gryder



Author's kit on Jarbridge featuring flip-flops in the foreground (bad idea).
 Photo by Teresa Gryder

able to pack it up might even make up for the fact that you can't drag it anywhere without hurting it. Packrafts are rollable and behave well in whitewater, but the jury is still out on their hull speed for covering distances on flat water, and their repairability and durability for whitewater. They also will empty your pockets, but if I had the dough, this is the next self-support boat I'd try.

I've been dissing rafts but, if you've got one, you know the advantages. Paddle rafting is a great way to keep a bunch of people entertained while running whitewater. Rowing is enjoyable and great for core fitness. You can get away with having minimal skills because most of the time rafts plow through holes and bounce off rocks. You can change positions, stand up, stretch, and urinate without going to shore. You can even sleep on the boat if a camp doesn't come along soon enough. You can bring your kids, your dog, all your water from home, a regulation groover, a kayak, fireworks, and enough alcohol to host a rambunctious party. You can rescue

swimmers better than any other type of boat can. So, yes, there are advantages to rafts on wilderness rivers, and I won't hold it against you if you keep doing river trips this way.

My point is that even just one raft changes a river trip into a raft trip. Rafts dictate camp choices and carry stuff for you whether you want them to or not. Rafter who "go light" are still likely to bring a massive foodpack, a two- (or more) burner stove, an assortment of knives, a coffee pot, and lots of tables. Rafts require bigger shuttle rigs and the usual futzing with masses of gear.

No matter what kind of boats you use, trips flow better when the boats move at a similar pace and carry similar loads. Just as you don't want to be the sole mountain biker on a century road ride, you don't want to be the only one in a creek boat when everyone else is in a sea kayak, or the only canoe or raft when the wind picks up. The smoothest trips happen when people shares similar tastes and agree about how the trip should go.

For the true whitewater addict, kayaks are hard to beat. A kayak-only fleet allows us to travel with a few good friends and run challenging whitewater. A small, lean group of kayakers is well suited for exploring uncommon places without breaking the bank. Kayakers can be excellent safety boats for other kinds of craft, but what can those other craft do for kayakers that kayakers can't do for themselves?

Maneuvering and Rolling a Loaded Kayak

But wait. I can hear the question in your head. Won't the kayak be heavy??! Yep, it will. People worry about being able to paddle whitewater in a loaded boat. Well guess what. It's easier than you think for several reasons, including how the boat holds a line, punches holes, and rolls.

Ben Dann @ The Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone

WILDERNESS PADDLING



Camp 2 on the Imnaha River (OR), at the Snake confluence.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

First of all, a loaded kayak in whitewater holds a line steadily like a torpedo. The experienced whitewater kayaker will come to enjoy this characteristic, but the rookie may not. Desperate late-minute moves are out of the question as a loaded boat will always have more inertia than an unloaded one. You must pick smart lines and execute decisively when self-supporting in a kayak. It helps to be in good paddling shape because it will take more strokes to get your boat moving. It also helps to scout when the whitewater is tricky. When you read water and manage your momentum well, running rapids with a loaded kayak can be effortless. You do not get tossed around. A heavy boat helps the advanced whitewater paddler refine her use of river currents—instead of working like a farmer to move the boat.

Demonstrating the hole punching ability of loaded boat; Jim Reed on the South Fork Salmon.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

kayak had so much momentum that holes barely touched it. All I had to do was keep moving downstream at river speed, with my body weight forward and enough gear in my bow. With proper weight distribution in a loaded kayak I can punch much larger holes than I can without a load—and you can too.

A loaded kayak is surprisingly easy to roll. You'd think it would be harder, but really you are not moving the load very much, you are just pivoting it on its long axis. If your hip-snap is decent, you'll have no trouble. If your hip-snap is only halfway decent, having some gear in there may actually improve your roll by facilitating the follow-through. Packing your load with the heavy stuff on the bottom (ballasting) makes the boat very stable and almost self-righting. Most folks do a practice roll or three as soon as they launch with a load, because it is so reassuring.

Moving the Kayak on Land

One last major concern about carrying camping gear in a kayak is moving the loaded boat around on land—for example, up to camp, or to portage around that Class V you don't want to run. The good news is





Sevy portage (on the Jarbidge).
Photo by Teresa Gryder

that modern plastic kayakers can be dragged some distance before they wear out, so when carrying the boat is impossible, we drag. There are three important tools for this mission: a sponge, guide belt, and solid footwear.

Sponge

I know a sponge is useful because of how many people ask to borrow mine. Even more so than on day runs, a sponge is key for self-support because it is hard to pick up a loaded kayak to use the drain-plug. You don't need to risk injuring your back every time your sprayskirt allows a little water into the boat. Using a sponge, you can keep the slosh down during the day and make your boat light as possible before you drag it up to camp. After you unload you can use the sponge to get every last drop out to dry the boat to make a varmint- and water-proof container for stashing food and gear at night. I cover the cockpit with my sprayskirt and plug the waist opening with my life jacket to obscure any food odors that might bring a bear or raccoon.

I've gotten most of my best sponges by finding them on portages. It's really easy to misplace a sponge if you don't have it securely attached to your boat. Keep yours secure with bungee cord so it doesn't become my next sponge!

Guide Belt

The "guide belt" is my name for a loop of webbing that I wear around my waist attached by a carabiner whenever I'm on the river. When I was a raft guide, I'd use it to empty my bucket boat, or to pull it back right-side-up after an accidental inversion. As I learned once I started self-support kayaking, the guide belt turns out to be very handy for dragging a kayak around on shore. The webbing extends my grip so that I don't have to bend down or lift half of my loaded boat just to drag it up to my camp site. It's also useful for lowering the boat down steep slopes or short cliffs, and for attaching the boat to an anchor when boat parking is at a premium. If the shore is inhospitable you can use your webbing to clip the boat to something and climb out of the boat without having to drag it up on shore. You can scout then jump back



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in the boat, put on your skirt, unclip the webbing from the tree and put it around your waist, and shove off. And yes, for you sharp thinkers, there is a risk involved in having webbing and a biner around your waist, so use a locking carabiner or stow your webbing somewhere else if it feels safer to you.

Footwear

Lots of people skimp on footwear for kayaking. Guides and hotshot kayakers can be the worst on this account. They think that because they can guide day trips without shoes, or because they can kayak day after day with just a pair of flip-flops stashed in the boat, that they don't or won't need real shoes. But going into the wilderness without real shoes is just plain old foolish. Carrying a heavy boat wearing flip-flops is painful and dangerous. Hiking 20 miles through thickets, lava rock, or other rough terrain is approaching impossible. In my opinion, self-supporting paddlers ought to

have excellent footwear for paddling and another pair of sturdy shoes for camp.

Good paddling footwear should have a sturdy sole and protect the feet and ankles from rock bites. We know from experience that boating shoes also need to have soft enough rubber to grip smooth, wet rocks, and they must stay on during a whitewater swim. There used to be creek booties and other great footwear made specifically for kayaking, but lately the options seem to be limited to thin-soled neoprene booties or low-top sneaker type shoes that can be hard to fit inside a kayak. You may be able to repurpose some old climbing shoes or high-tops to work better than much of what is available currently.

Portaging

There are some amazing self-support runs out there that have a rapid or two that most folks don't run. The glory of self-support kayaking is that you CAN do portages that would be approaching impossible with a

raft, opening up a range of runs that you will never see any other way. The Middle Fork of the Feather in California and the Jarbidge in Idaho come to mind. Even when you don't expect you'll have to portage, it's best to be ready to anyway, because rivers change and maps can be misread.

Once upon a time we launched for a three-day on what we thought was the Clackamas River (OR) only to learn that we had launched in Estacada Reservoir instead, and our first and only portage was around the dam(n). The fisher-people were hostile and we didn't even know which side of the river to portage on. On that trip I'd assumed that we wouldn't have to portage and I'd worn neoprene socks for my paddling footwear. I suffered on that portage, but I'm the sort who has to learn the hard way.

There are three major options for portaging. If your group is cooperative, you can team up and double-carry every boat so that nobody has to unload. This is the best



Low water South Fork
Salmon scenic shot.
Photo by Teresa Gryder



Top: Hammock at camp 2 on South Fork Salmon (flip-flops again in view).

Bottom: Larry Dunn practicing his roll in loaded boat (it works!)

Photo by Teresa Gryder

option when there is climbing and technical rope work involved. If you are strong and pack light, you may be able to just shoulder your loaded boat and walk it where it needs to go. This is by far the fastest option. Finally, if your boat is too heavy for you to carry but you still have to portage it on your own, you can make two trips. If I'm making two trips I like to carry bags first to scout the route. If a run has multiple portages I sometimes find myself making two trips early in the trip, and carrying my boat later when I've consumed my adult beverages and I've become stronger from living right.

The Joy of Going Light

If you kayak and are independent with a survivalist edge, you're already a self-supporter, even if you haven't tried it yet. If you can happily improvise a chair, set up your own shelter, and pack your own food, then you will be able to bring what you need and make it work your way. You eat when you are hungry, and lick your spoon clean if you please. You decide when to use the first chapter of your novel for a fire starter, and you deal with your own poo. It's delightfully simple when you don't have to negotiate every decision with others.

There's a feeling of freedom that you get when you leave behind the two-burner stove and embrace minimalism. Suddenly the river is that much closer, and you are that much deeper in the wilderness. The heavy boat becomes feather light compared to the complexities of raft support. There is no better way to run a wild river than in your own comfy kayak with everything you need inside.

Disclaimer: Self-support kayaking is not for the rookie kayaker. If you are not sure of your roll, or if your river skills and survival equipment aren't more than adequate for the river to be attempted, pick a different adventure.

Teresa Gryder is a holistic doctor and lifelong paddler currently living in Portland, Oregon (a.k.a. whitewater heaven).

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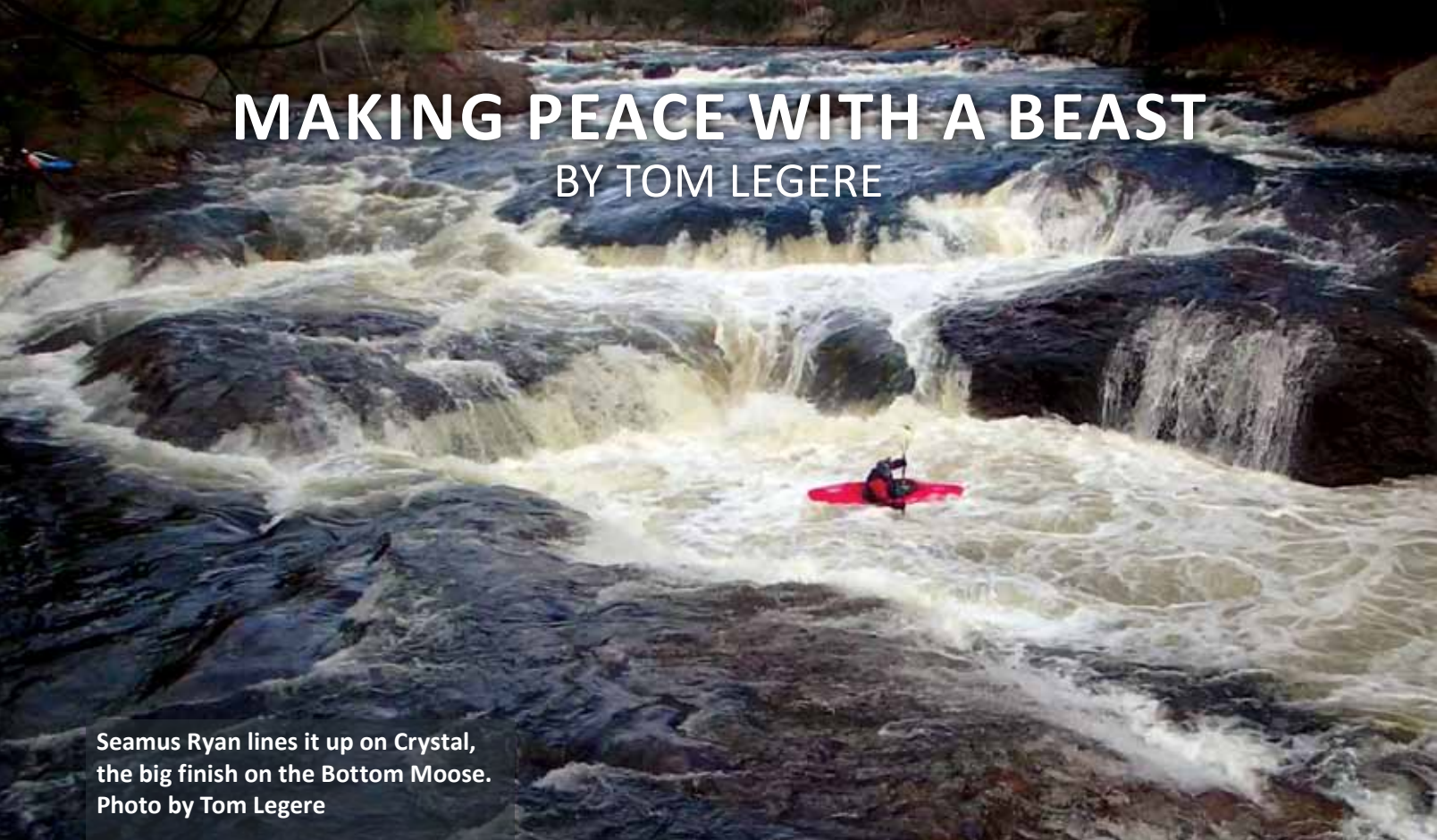


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MAKING PEACE WITH A BEAST

BY TOM LEGERE



Seamus Ryan lines it up on Crystal, the big finish on the Bottom Moose. Photo by Tom Legere

IT WAS A dark and stormy night. Really, it was.

After a week of tossing and turning, of trying to convince myself I had what it took to challenge the Bottom section of New York's famous Moose River, I threw it down, packed my gear and left work early on a rainy Friday afternoon for the longish ride to upstate New York from Central Ontario. Riding shotgun was a river buddy of mine, attracted to the trip more for the partying and photo ops than paddling, anxious to experience the notorious off-water Moosefest shenanigans for himself. Not having to worry about a challenging physical and mental personal first descent in the morning, his stress level was negative five and falling on the road that night as mine continued to rise the closer we got to Old Forge, NY. Navigating dark, unfamiliar, twisting two-lane roads through driving rain while dodging rogue deer didn't help.

To say I had no idea of what lay ahead would be a bit of an understatement. Anyone who was there that weekend could not have possibly forgotten it. By the end of it all, one man was dead, a few came

close to joining him, and a couple dozen more were hospitalized. I personally saw someone taken away by ambulance, my paddle was lost to the river, my Pyranha Ammo was cracked and deformed beyond reasonable repair, and I'd simultaneously shared a small vicious hole with four other paddlers, one of whom churned away in its depth for almost a whole minute (which, as anyone who's been in a bad hole knows, feels like eternity). It remains the single most traumatizing event of my now 10 years on the river. One member of our crew who dodged the hole and made it to shore later said he initially just stood there, the scope of what he was facing as sole rescuer temporarily paralyzing him. He still loves to tell the story of how I, having finally made it to safety, flopped on the shore and frantically panted that I had had enough, that I was done for the day, the punch line being that I didn't have much choice, as my boat and paddle had been swept down the mighty Crystal rapid.

Despite the literal carnage of the weekend, I was proud of myself for "stepping up," surviving the river, and for the few actual solid paddling moves I'd pulled off. After

celebrating the day long into the night in hard-core, festival mode, I groggily awoke, bought a new boat at a great year-end discount from the local shop in town, and headed home, anxious to share my war stories with anyone who would listen. After all, isn't that what we look forward to the most after making it home safely from our paddling weekends?

That year's edition of Moosefest had people talking, posting, and writing. *Rapid* magazine weighed in with a piece entitled, "Why Moosefest Is Out Of Control," which pretty much summed things up. Although I hate to admit it, as I read the article a strange mix of pride and shame came over me. I had survived the Moose, but how much of my survival had been due to luck? Skill? The experience and quick-thinking of those around me? Only one thing can be sure—it certainly wasn't an overabundance of personal knowledge and paddling finesse that saved me that day.

That year, 2011, had been a watershed one for me. It was my fourth full season, the type all paddlers hit if they stick with the sport long enough. I ran more new

MENTAL GAME



A much better takeout scene in 2015.

Photo by Tom Legere

ivers (12) than I likely ever will again in a single year and stepped up the difficulty and risk level considerably. My successful progression that season probably pushed me to head to the Moose for a final season-ending, ego-bolstering river conquest. Without being overly dramatic, I was lucky to have left with only a battered boat and the loss of one paddle.

I've thought about that weekend plenty in the years since, specifically, what my crew and I did wrong and what we could have done differently. The whole ordeal has never really stopped haunting me but I always wanted to return and run the Moose better prepared. What went wrong that day?

To start with, a couple of guys leading the group had run it multiple times before, so assuming the river would be similar to prior trips was mistake number one. The overnight rain and broken dam had turned it, in the words of Chris Koll, whitewater pioneer, advocate and acknowledged father of Moosefest, "from an easy Class V into a full-on Class V monster." Lesson

learned—assuming things will be the same as last time leads to bad outcomes.

Working hand-in-hand with this assumption was a lack of scouting. While some of the other paddlers in our group were OK with running the fairly straightforward pool-drop river blind, I certainly wasn't. Scouting definitely would have saved me some beat downs (there was more than one), resulting in more self confidence and preserved energy, which would have definitely come in handy later on. Lesson learned—insist on scouting if you feel the need. It's too late when you're getting trashed in a hydraulic after blowing a line. And though it's certainly not a new thing, what I call "festivalism" was a huge factor—basically, the river was packed, everyone seemed to be running everything...the vibe was just super fantastic. That meant it must have been safe. Though I've since become aware of this phenomenon, I still need to guard against it at every festival I attend, because it's just too easy to feel as if you are wrapped in some sort of communal safety blanket due to a hyper-charged festival atmosphere. Lesson learned—the river still presents the same dangers as

ever, despite the warm and fuzzy vibes of peace, love, and grooviness your fellow paddlers may be sending you.

As the years passed from 2011, the Moose never left my mind, but various things, not the least being fear, stopped me from heading back. The fall of 2015 was no different and as mid-October drew closer, the stay-or-go dance once again ran through my head for weeks until I committed, just a couple of days before put-in. On another dark and rainy mid-October Friday night (no lie—I think it's some kind of Moosefest voodoo), I again found myself headed southbound to the border, wondering why I and other whitewater lovers willingly torture ourselves in this manner, time and time again. Many paddlers seem to return to the scene of former river fiascos, either to even the score after being humbled in

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MENTAL GAME



High water and poor choices led to many bad outcomes at 2011's Moosefest.

Photo by Tom Legere

the past or to pay the river the respect they now realize is due. The way you look at the return visit depends on many things, but I prefer to see it as the latter.

As for my return trip—success all around. Not only was the river at a more manageable level, but I witnessed a real sense of safety consciousness among the paddlers I met. Lots of scouting, much beta sharing, and an overall respect for the Moose that I hadn't seen on my previous visit. I was better prepared too, having completed a couple of safety courses, having logged many more hours on rivers of all types and having gained what I hope is an improved ability to assess situations and make better decisions.

I like to think that the paddling community has also learned from the recent past. There haven't been any additional fatalities since the tragic 2011 weekend on the Moose that I know of. From what I've heard, many Moosefest-bound paddlers in subsequent years who found themselves facing seriously high and dangerous levels

have opted for other local options instead. Sudden rainfall, local geography, and erratic dam flows all mean that levels can change quickly and that although it may be disappointing, stubbornly putting on to the river you planned on paddling might not always be the best option.

Is it really possible that people are starting to play safer? Are more river junkies beginning to pay increased attention to

risk management experts, who advocate for following rules, proven safety systems, and common sense? If so, it can't help but improve the outlook for our chronically participant-challenged sport, where gnar, carnage, and serious injury or death aren't exactly the building blocks of future growth. It was fantastic to see so many people paddling on that beautiful weekend when I returned to the Bottom Moose, a tangible sign to me that the magic of whitewater is alive and that our sport isn't in an irreversible death spiral. The proof that people love the water is out there (rec kayak or SUP anyone?). Some of those people are whitewater paddlers, they just don't know it yet. It's our job to show them the way.

My return trip to the Moose by the numbers? I ran the Bottom Moose twice, the whole thing, zero walks, zero swims, and a total of four rolls. Not always with the most graceful moves, but I'm working on it. And I didn't have to buy a new boat on the way out of town.

Tom Legere is a member of the Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, an AW affiliate club having fun and throwing down in Central Ontario.



The author running Agers Falls on the Bottom Moose.

Photo by Seamus Ryan

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WHY WE REPORT ACCIDENTS (AND HOW YOU CAN HELP)

BY CHARLIE WALBRIDGE



*The author demonstrating swiftwater rescue technique. Much of what is considered best practice in whitewater safety today was developed or improved as a result of accident reports.
Photo by Steve Barber*

AFTER ALMOST A year's work, American Whitewater has released an upgraded version of our Whitewater Accident Database. It's the largest collection of its kind in the world, with over 1600 reports dating back to 1972. Each report was checked to be sure that it was accurately entered as part of the upgrade. AW's web manager Ryan Groth upgraded the search capacity, allowing users to look for accidents by a dozen different categories and characteristics.

So let's talk about how this project came about, how it evolved, why American Whitewater reports accidents, and how you can help us keep this project going in the coming years.

In 1975 I was on the water when a drowning occurred at a Class II slalom race. The paddler was well equipped and experienced and no one could explain exactly how it happened. I was upset, and curious enough to start asking questions. I knew many of the paddlers who tried to make the rescue

American Whitewater Accident Database Statistics: 1975 - 2016		
Total Records	1588	
Fatalities	126	79%
Near Misses	268	17%
Injuries	58	3%
Fatalities by Country		
United States	1192	95%
Canada	30	2%
All Other	40	3%
Fatalities by Boat Type		
Kayak	446	35%
Canoe	182	14%
Raft and IK	486	39%
Other	146	12%
Commercial	231	18%
Private	1031	82%
Fatalities by Age		
Under 18	97	9%
18-34	413	39%
35-65	485	46%
over 65	69	6%

Fatalities by Cause		
Cold Water	326	26%
Flush Drowning	310	25%
High Water	290	23%
No PFD	201	16%
Strainer	196	16%
Entrapment	175	14%
One Boat Trip	166	13%
Undercuts/ Sieves	159	13%
Near Drown (Nonfatal)	147	12%
Caught in Dam Hydraulic	116	9%
Failed Rescue	88	7%
Caught by Nat. Hydraulic	70	6%
Equipment Trap	63	5%
Solo Paddler	55	4%
Health Problem	53	4%
Head Injury	52	4%
Heart Attack	48	4%
Foot Entrapment	45	4%
Impact/ Trauma	42	3%
Spinal Injury (nonfatal)	26	2%
Vertical Pin	13	1%

Fatalities by River Difficulty		
Class I-II	128	16%
Class III	280	36%
Class IV	200	26%
Class V	173	22%
Fatalities by Decade		
1977-1986	48	3%
1987-1996	219	18%
1997-2008	453	36%
2007-2016	530	43%
Fatalities by Water Level		
Low	94	10%
Medium	370	40%
High	420	46%
Flood	33	4%
<p>These numbers do not always add up for various reasons. For example: most accidents have multiple causes; in some reports ages, difficulty, or water levels are missing</p>		

and talked with them at the race the next day. Later someone told me about a similar accident that happened a few months earlier. My report, published in the *AW Journal*, described the risks of foot entrapment for the first time. It resulted in the well-known caution not to stand up in fast-moving water.

After writing this report, I received others. For a long time we only heard about a handful of accidents each year. The sport was very small then; I knew many of the people involved personally, and they trusted me to help them explain what happened. Later I started studying accidents outside the paddling community to support AW's work with state and federal boating regulators. Any incident occurring on fast moving water was now of interest since whitewater dynamics were in

play. I also encouraged paddlers to submit accounts of near misses, serious injuries, and successful rescues. While many of us are too embarrassed or shaken to discuss these events publicly, we all benefit tremendously from the accounts of those who do.

In the late 1990s the huge "new school" growth spurt in kayaking arrived and the Internet came of age. Emails, chat rooms, and social media made it easier than ever to share accident reports, to research leads, and communicate with those involved. Today we get reports of 30-40 moving water deaths per year with a high of 77 fatalities in 2011. The Accident Database, started by Safety Chair Tim Kelly in 2002, makes this information accessible to anyone.

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Colorado River, Grand Canyon. | Photo: Evan Stafford

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SAFETY

American Whitewater Accident Database Statistics: 1975 - 2016		
Fatalities by State		
Alabama	16	1.3%
Alaska	26	2%
Arizona	21	1.8%
Arkansas	13	1%
California	109	9%
Colorado	155	13%
Connecticut	9	0.7%
Georgia	7	0.6%
Hawaii	1	0.01%
Idaho	74	6%
Illinois	10	0.8%
Indiana	11	0.9%
Iowa	3	0.9%
Kansas	7	0.6%
Kentucky	11	0.9%
Maine	14	1.1%
Maryland	14	1.1%
Massachusetts	7	0.6%
Michigan	14	1.1%
Minnesota	6	0.5%
Missouri	7	0.6%
Montana	50	4%
Nevada	2	0.02%
New Hampshire	14	1.1%
New Jersey	16	1.3%
New Mexico	10	0.8%
New York	52	4%
North Carolina	33	3%
North Dakota	2	0.02%
Ohio	16	1.3%
Oklahoma	3	0.02
Oregon	60	5%
Pennsylvania	66	6%
Rhode Island	2	0.02%
South Carolina	29	2%
Tennessee	36	3%
Texas	22	1.8%

Utah	29	2%
Vermont	6	0.5%
Virginia	30	3%
Washington	69	6%
West Virginia	78	7%
Wisconsin	12	1%
Wyoming	20	1.6%
No Whitewater Fatalities were reported in Delaware, DC, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Nebraska, & South Dakota		
Top 10 States for Fatalities		
1. Colorado	155	13%
2. California	109	9%
3. West Virginia	78	7%
4. Idaho	74	6%
5. Washington	69	6%
6. Pennsylvania	66	6%
7. Oregon	60	5%
8. Montana	50	4%
9. Tennessee	36	3%
10. North Carolina	33	3%
Top 10 Fatal Accident Causes		
Cold Water	326	26%
Flush Drowning	310	25%
High Water	290	23%
No PFD	201	16%
Strainer	196	16%
Entrapment	175	14%

One Boat Trip	166	13%
Undercuts/ Sieves	159	13%
Caught in Dam Hydraulic	116	9%
Caught by Nat. Hydraulic	70	6%

There are three good reasons for writing (or sending in) a whitewater accident report:

First, to get the real story out. People will talk about fatalities or near misses, and the rumor mill quickly fills in the gaps in what is known. Some people who weren't there might make up an unflattering version of what happened just to get attention. Thanks to the Internet these negative accounts can gain wide circulation. When those involved get a good report out quickly, it puts those negative rumors to rest.

Second, to learn from what happened. Since most paddlers won't encounter a fatal accident first hand, these reports are a unique learning opportunity. Each accident, near miss, or serious injury can help paddlers figure out what works and what doesn't, what is safe and what isn't. These accounts help us improve equipment, modify skills and decision making, and increase awareness of specific hazards.

Lastly, this work supports American Whitewater's access and conservation



Rescuing a pinned raft at the Feather River Fest.
Photo by Dave Steindorf

SAFETY



Some “near miss” river rescue situations combine the opportunity to learn about what went wrong initially with the solution to avoiding a worse crisis.

negotiations with government agencies. Since river running skills are not well known outside the paddling community, our sport may seem reckless and irresponsible to ordinary people. Government officials who, frequently, are no better informed than the average citizen, can be tempted to close off or restrict river access for “public safety” reasons. AW staff and volunteers counter this with a fact-based approach to whitewater safety based on our long history of work in the field. We then encourage government officials to think about “education, not regulation.”

We get reports from many sources. There are detailed accounts written by paddlers present at the scene of the accident, and summaries from paddlers discussing an accident in emails or chat rooms. Then there are newspaper articles, good for names and dates, but beyond that their quality varies widely. Some are very well written and quite detailed; others are sketchy or omit important facts. Often the person forwarding the article writes a few sentences about what the river is like, that is really helpful. Sometimes all we get is an email saying that the sender thinks someone died on a river nearby. American Whitewater depends on its

members to forward the reports that they encounter. Search engines are no match for knowledgeable paddlers with their ears to the ground! Don’t worry, we don’t mind duplicate submissions, and we’re ready to track down rumors and find out what happened.

If you’re putting a report together, start with the basics: The date the accident happened, the river and location (section, name of rapid or feature if possible), river level and difficulty, and the name and age of the victim. Then follow up with a straightforward description of what happened. If you weren’t there, tell me what you know. If you’re forwarding newspaper articles or chat room posts, cut and paste the text, rather than providing links which often stop working without warning. A description of the accident site from an experienced boater is always useful, so don’t hesitate to add your observations. You can go to <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Safety/view/> and hit the link marked “Report an Accident,” to start filling out a report. Or you can send the material to me, Charlie Walbridge, at ccwalbridge@cs.com. I can also edit or help prepare a report. It’s your story; tell it well.

American Whitewater Accident Database Statistics: The Last 10 Years: 2007-2016		
Fatalities by Boat Type		
Kayak	166	32%
Canoe	65	12%
Raft and IK	208	40%
Other	84	16%
Total	529	
Commercial	101	19%
Private	428	81%
Fatalities by Cause		
Left causes in the same order as the 40-year chart so you can recognize changes (very few)		
Cold Water	159	30%
Flush Drowning	146	28%
High Water	126	24%
No PFD	97	18%
Strainer	84	16%
Entrapment	51	10%
One Boat Trip	64	12%
Near Drown'g (Nonfatal)	62	12%
Undercuts/ Sieves	47	9%
Dam Hydraulic	48	9%
Failed Rescue	13	2%
Caught in Nat. Hydraulic	31	6%
Equipment Trap	23	5%
Solo Paddler	18	3%
Health Problem	26	5%
Head Injury	16	3%
Heart Attack	25	5%
Foot Entrapment	12	2%
Impact/ Trauma	11	2%
Spinal Injury (nonfatal)	16	3%
Vertical Pin	3	0.5%
Fatalities by Difficulty		
Class II	35	15%
Class III	51	21%
Class IV	95	40%
Class V	59	24%
Fatalities by Age		
Under 18	65	12%
18-34	165	32%
35-65	255	48%
over 65	44	8%

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FIGHTING TO SAVE THE RIO MARAÑÓN, IN PERU AND BEYOND

BY LACEY ANDERSON



The author (red cataract) and Edgar Vicente (yellow raft), a Peruvian whitewater raft company owner, volunteering for the Remando Juntos Marañón expedition.
Photo by Danielle Villasana, daniellevillasana.com/

THE RIO MARAÑÓN is located in the Peruvian Andes and is the westernmost and one of the largest tributaries of the Amazon River. The Marañón is sometimes referred to as the “main stem source of the Amazon River,” due to its high annual discharge rates. In 2013 I traveled to the far reaches of Peru to experience rowing the Rio Marañón for myself. I packed up my complete cataract (tubes, frame, dropbag, and oars) and flew with all of my boating equipment to Peru. From the capital city of Lima we bussed to one of the put-ins near Rio Puchka. Exiting the river 30 days later, I was left with a profound impression of this unique river; I have returned every year since.

I initially went for the thrill of whitewater and to explore an exotic and little known river that’s threatened by the development of 20 dams. I walked away from that first trip with a much more powerful feeling than the fleeting adrenaline rush of running whitewater. I realized just how important the river is to the indigenous Awajun living in the jungle and the rural people living

upstream in the Andean seasonally dry forest. Members of both groups lead self-sufficient lives in harmony with nature. They have a simple yet sustainable lifestyle due, in part, to the healthy and still intact river ecosystem of the Rio Marañón.

Over the last few years, I’ve been spreading the word about this magnificent river corridor, helping more people become aware of it and even float the river to experience the grandeur for themselves. However, I believe the most effective agents of change are those who live in-country. Therefore, I have volunteered for and participated in a number of conservation-oriented river trips involving Peruvian activists and conservation organizations. In the fall of 2016 I contracted with three Peruvian outfitters (Mayuc, Peru Rafting, Vive Aventura) to run expeditions on the Rio Marañón. I thought that if Peruvian outfitters could demonstrate to the Peruvian government that commercial rafting is viable and beneficial for the Peruvian economy, then the government would be less likely to dam the river.

Taking a trip down the Rio Marañón with a Peruvian outfitter is just one avenue that helps support the conservation efforts underway in Peru for the Rio Marañón. There are a number of Peruvian organizations that are working to halt the development of hydropower dams on the Rio Marañón and other tributaries of the Amazon. Over the last few years, this conservation effort has grown and there have been many successful campaigns. Here is a brief history of those efforts and where things are headed in the future.

In the summer of 2014, a group of young, urban Peruvian activists were recruited to participate in a 200-mile river trip down the Rio Marañón organized through Paddling with Purpose and Remando Juntos (Paddling Together). The core 2015 Remando Juntos team was a dynamic mix of 10 Peruvians. A local kayaker named Luigi, who operates a Lima-based adventure company, was the only team member with prior river experience. Heading this crew of talented young people was Bruno Monteferrri, a Peruvian environmental

INTERNATIONAL PADDLING

lawyer and activist, and the founder and director of Conservamos por Naturaleza. For the past 10 years, he has worked for Peruvian Society for Environmental Law (SPDA). The SPDA seeks to defend the public interest and to contribute to sustainable societies through environmental law and policies within Peru. When I heard about the Paddling with Purpose/Remando Juntos trip, I immediately joined the international team of volunteer river guides supporting the team.

During the three-week river journey in 2015 we stopped in many villages and usually camped a night or two on a beach near each village. A pattern of interaction with the locals quickly developed. First the Remando Juntos team would build rapport with the villagers; generally, a meal was shared, followed by socializing and a rousing game of soccer or volleyball. In the evenings, the Remando Juntos team would use a laptop, a projector, and a basic white bed sheet as a screen to give a presentation about the effects of dams. One short animated film about how mega-dams damage the environment and kill off fish populations seemed to really reach a lot of the villagers; I could see many figurative light-bulbs flicker on above the local audience members as



International crew from Peru, Argentina, Chili, USA and Australia, all volunteering to help the conservation efforts of the Peruvian NGO Remando Juntos.

Photo by Lacey Anderson

the film played. Many of these villagers depend on the local fish for food. As they watched this video, their eyes grew bigger and mouths dropped as they came to the realization of what would happen to their local fish populations once a mega-dam was installed on the Marañón.

This monumental event, during which an international crew of river guides supported a group of Peruvian activists

while they rafted the Rio Marañón and interacted with the locals living along the river, was captured on film. The film is currently being finalized and will be used for educational purposes within Peru. With the success of the initial Remando Juntos trip, more and more urban Peruvians are teaming with their rural and indigenous countrymen to protect the Marañón from mega-dam projects that have the potential to destroy the entire Amazon ecosystem.



INTERNATIONAL PADDLING



In 2016, the Peruvian conservation efforts continued to grow. A major addition to the conservation effort was achieved when the Waterkeeper Alliance joined in. After Ben Webb, the founder of Paddling with Purpose, completed the application process to join the Waterkeeper Alliance, an agreement was finalized establishing a Marañón River Waterkeeper staffed by Peruvians and supported by a strong network of international conservationists. Bruno Monteferri is the current Marañón River Waterkeeper.



During October 2016 a high-level meeting was held to discuss the future of the Marañón River. Prominent attendees included the Peruvian Minister of Environment and the Minister of Energy and Mines, Ben Webb of Paddling with Purpose, several other key Peruvian officials, and the chief prosecuting attorney for Waterkeeper Alliance, Robert F. Kennedy Jr. Following that meeting, the Minister of Energy announced in the newspaper *Gestión* that large dams in Amazonia were not on the agenda of the newly-elected government of Peru. Astonishingly, the newly-elected Peruvian president stated that under his term, the government would not proceed with dams in the jungle; this would include not constructing the three most destructive dams on the lower Marañón.



Top: Bruno Monteferri, the director/founder of Conservamos por Naturaleza and the director of Marañón River Waterkeeper.

Photo by Francisco Campos-Lopez
Middle: Behind the children of Mendán the writing on the wall translates: "NO Chadín Two Dam, Let the River Live Without a Dam." Mendán is one of the first villages that will be inundated if the dam is built.

Photo by Jake Risch
Bottom: Filming during the Peruvian NGOs Remando Juntos and Conservamos por Naturaleza's expeditions for educational purposes.

Photo by Luis Herrera



Ben Webb meeting with Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in Lima, Peru to establish a Peruvian Marañón Waterkeeper.

Photo by Ben Webb

While this is a very promising development, we cannot let up on the efforts to save the Upper Amazon (Rio Marañón). As Ben Webb points out: "...it is a far stretch from protecting the whole river or even just the jungle section, as these projects are still undergoing feasibility studies. The announcement did not include the other approximately 16 dams on the upper Marañón, which are currently stalled due to lack of economic incentive because of Peru's current energy oversupply. This will probably last for the next five years as indicated by government; [however], studies are still advancing on many of these projects, with two large dams undergoing EIA approval process by this government as we speak." So, the river is not out of danger yet. Our strong resistance to new Marañón dams and support of Peruvian activism needs to continue. If you or someone you know is motivated to help in this effort, here are some possible ways you can make a difference:

Make a U.S tax-deductible donation to the Marañón River Keeper for their conservation campaign (under the umbrella of the American non-profit Waterkeeper Alliance). Or, if you are a river person, go on a Marañón Waterkeeper Patrol Expedition. This summer there will be a

fun trip with Peruvian guides, and a film crew for a Peruvian travel show. They will be highlighting the Marañón River as a national treasure of Peru. Participating in a Waterkeeper Patrol means that 10% of the trip cost goes directly to funding the campaign to protect the river, while also supporting river tourism on the Rio Marañón. Helping to establish a tourism industry makes it harder for the proponents of the dams to ignore the cost of cutting off a potential source of millions of dollars of local investment and tax revenue for the government by the construction of dams. This is important because the Peruvian government has invested heavily in bringing tourism to northern Peru and the Marañón can easily complement and become part of the northern Peru tourism circuit. With the participation of Peruvian outfitters, Peruvian guides and Peruvian support staff (through running rafting and kayak trips), the local conservation movement is being made stronger.

The Peruvian NGO Conservamos por Naturaleza (CxN) is making great headway with conservation, but they can still use your support. According to founder/director attorney Bruno Monteferrri, it is best for people to contact them directly before sending a donation. You can also

10TH Annual



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\$5,000 - Boof



WERNER



\$2,500 - Wave





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AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

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

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

A growing membership base is crucial to our ability to continue with our work. Some studies show that there are currently over 100,000 whitewater paddlers in the U.S. American Whitewater currently has 6,300 active members. When considering the amount of whitewater river miles that AW has had a direct impact on, this membership number is unimpressive. We need all paddlers to join American Whitewater. If you are a member, please be sure that everyone you paddle with understands the work AW does, and how you, as an AW member, value that work.

Membership support is what will determine our ability to continue our river stewardship work in the years to come. Individual Annual Memberships are only \$35. If you are a member of your local paddling club and your club is an Affiliate Club member of AW, join as a Club Affiliate Individual for \$25. This is less than a tank of gas or an inexpensive night out. This is certainly not too much to pay to have a national organization representing your paddling interests all across the country.

Join on-line today at <http://americanwhitewater.org/content/Membership/join-AW/>, call 1-866-BOAT4AW (866-262-8429), or fill out the form on the back of this page and mail it to:

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

*Note: AW will never share your information with others

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____ Member Number: _____

↑ _____ if you have one and know it

Membership Level

\$35 Standard

\$25 Member of Affiliate Club

Club: _____

\$25 Student

School: _____

\$50 Family

\$100 Affiliate Club

\$125 Ender Club (Shirt Size: _____)

\$250 Platinum Paddler (Hoodie Size: _____)

\$400 Supporting Affilitate Club

\$500 Explorer

\$750 Lifetime

\$1,000 Legacy

\$2,500 Steward

**For current member rewards
go to:
americanwhitewater.org**

Donation

Donation of \$ _____

Additional Subscriptions

\$30 Kayak Session Magazine - 4 issues per year (KS donates \$5 to AW!)

Journal Options

Do NOT mail me the AW Journal, email it to me <- Saves AW money, and trees! :)

Auto-Renew (No Renewal Notices!)

Auto-renew my membership each year on the credit card below

Payment

Credit Card Cash Check # _____

Card Number: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

INTERNATIONAL PADDLING

earmark a contribution to Remando Juntos through CxN.

Here is an quick and easy one: You can sign a petition to urge the Peruvian government, through the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Energy and Mines, and the Ministry of Culture to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment and studies of social impacts involving the basin Rio Marañón before hydroelectric projects are carried out and it is too late. This petition was created by the Peruvian NGO Remando Juntos and is in Spanish. If you do not read Spanish you can use Google Translate to easily translate it into English.

If you simply want to make a tax-deductible contribution (within the United States), there are a number of non-profit organizations here that support river conservation efforts in general and some

are involved directly with the Rio Marañón and will allow you to earmark your donation for conservation efforts along the Rio Marañón. First on the list is the Marañón Waterkeeper, but also consider a donation to International Rivers, which has a program specifically for the Peruvian Amazon. If your concern is the indigenous populations along the Marañón, the NGO Nature and Culture International has ongoing work with the Awajun. If wildlife is your main concern, World Wild Life has an Amazon campaign. As with any charitable donation, it is prudent to practice thorough due diligence by researching both the purpose and follow-through of your chosen charity to ensure your contribution is being used wisely.

The Marañón is a major tributary of the Amazon River; this makes it one of the most important rivers in the country of

Peru—and in the world. As more and more scientific studies emerge, it is becoming clear that the Marañón Valley is one of the world's most important biodiversity hot spots, possessing one of the highest levels of endemism to be found anywhere on Earth. The Rio Marañón is one of the most threatened rivers of our time. It is possible that we will lose it to dams if we do not act now. The Peruvian people, supported by local and international NGOs, are doing what they can and working very hard at saving this river, but they can use our help. If you would like more information about the Marañón, contact the author (Lacey Anderson) through her No Coolers website or contact the organizations mentioned in this article directly.

KAYAK CLUB CAMP WEEKS

One hour west of Canada's Capital, its namesake river runs wild through an island paradise known as the Rocher-Fendu. With perfect waves, warm water and spectacular shoreline, it's no wonder the Ottawa has been the venue for 3 Freestyle World Championships.

The Camp Week is 2 free nights of 7 for any club or group of 12+. It's a 25% savings plus the week is free for the organizer. Besides special rates, included is riverside campsites, hot showers, covered pavilion, campfires and weekend entertainment. Also available are beer/pizza deliveries, cabin rentals, shuttle services and several great restaurants just minutes away.

For non-paddlers, there is beginner kayak instruction, rafting, fishing, SUP, tubing, horseback riding, hiking, road/mountain biking and more.

You can't find a better destination for your club's paddling vacation. It's well worth the journey!

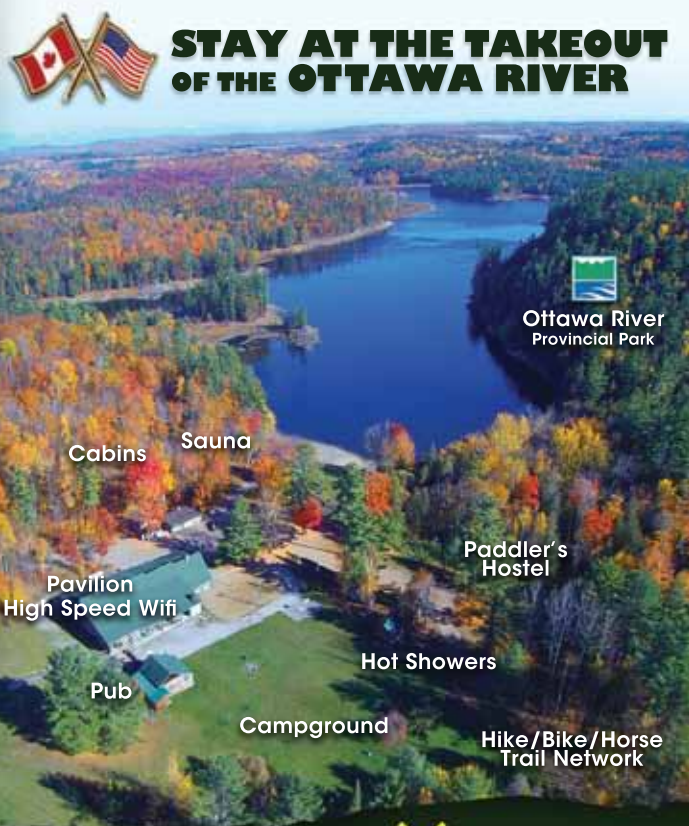


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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

I was recently pointed to an article in the March/April issue of the *American Whitewater Journal* about a trip on the Rio Marañón by Jack Billings. This is a river I have been down twice and I wholeheartedly support its conservation and oppose the many planned hydropower developments along its length. While I think Jack did a wonderful job telling about the river and his experience running it, what prompted me to write this letter was the editorial oversight (or lack thereof) that allowed the inclusion of a section on the outfitter that (in my opinion) was little more than free publicity for a commercial operation and contributed very little to what was otherwise an incredibly well-written and informative article about the Rio Marañón. I hope that, in the future, there will be a bit more editorial control when it comes to promoting a commercial enterprise within articles published in the *AW Journal*.

I think that *Journal* readers should know that there are a number of established Peruvian rafting outfitters that offer trips on the Rio Marañón as well as Peruvian and U.S.-based conservation organizations that are working to halt the development

of hydropower dams, as well as mining and other destructive industries on the Rio Marañón, other tributaries of the Amazon, and in the Amazonas region of Peru and Ecuador.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my feelings,

Neil Nikirk

Dear Neil,

Thanks for asking about our policy on promoting commercial enterprises within our pages. After reviewing Jack Billings' article on the Rio Marañón, it is clear to me that we should have done a better job of neutralizing implicit and explicit promotion of the outfitter, as you note. This oversight was certainly not our intent, nor do I think such promotion was the author's intent. Still, a mistake is a mistake, and we are owning up to this one.

The silver lining to this episode is that, largely on the basis of your letter, we've redoubled our efforts to scrutinize all Journal submissions for possible instances of commercial promotion of any type, which have no place in a publication promoting

the interests of the whitewater community in River Stewardship. While I'd like to say I'm confident that we'll never make a mistake in this vein again, I also applaud you for raising a red flag and holding us accountable, and hope you and others will continue to do so in the future.

American Whitewater is incredibly efficient and effective as an organization advocating for the interests of whitewater paddlers; the Journal is just a very minor component of what AW does. While we want the Journal to achieve the highest standards of journalistic integrity and neutrality, the magazine is also run by a skeleton, mostly volunteer staff, and we're not always able to spend as much time on things like editing and fact-checking as larger publications do. But thanks to members like you who demand accountability, we will continue to improve in this respect.

For more information on the Rio Marañón, the threats it faces, and the fight to save it, please see the previous article in this issue.

Sincerely,

Ambrose Tuscano, Editor

The Rio Marañón's scenery is just one of many reasons it deserves to remain free-flowing.

Photo by Lacey Anderson



AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

American Whitewater has introduced a new Affiliate Club contributor level “Supporting Affiliate Club”. Affiliate Clubs can now join or renew their membership at the annual giving level of \$100 or at the newly created Supporting Affiliate Club level for an annual contribution of \$400.

Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$100 annual level will be recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll. In order to be recognized at this level, a Club needs to maintain their annual \$100 contribution.

Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$400 “Supporting Affiliate Club” annual level will be recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll as well as being listed as sponsors of two AW stewardship presentations each year. A “Supporting Affiliate Club” can revert to the \$100 Affiliate Club level at any time.

An Affiliate Club that is already being recognized as an AW Lifetime member will continue to be recognized in the annual Honor Roll as a Lifetime member. They will, however, need to contribute either at the \$100 or the \$400 level annually in order to be recognized as an Affiliate Club in the AW Journal and under the Affiliate Club heading of the published Honor Roll.

We are excited about this newly created Supporting Affiliate Club as a way of recognizing those Club's that contribute at a higher level both through their monetary support as well as their considerable volunteer efforts in behalf of AW and our nation's whitewater rivers.

Supporting Affiliate Clubs

California

Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus

Colorado

Dolores River Boating Advocates, Dolores

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington

Ohio

Keelhaulers, Cleveland

Affiliate Club by State

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks
Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Coosa River Paddling Club, Wetumpka
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff
Southern Arizona Paddlers Club, Tucson
Thunderbird Outdoor Restoration
Organization, Glendale

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Shasta Paddlers, Redding
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

Blue River Watershed Group
Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs
High Country River Rafters, Wheatridge
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
Team Colorado Whitewater Racing Club,
Longmont
Upper Colorado Private Boaters Asso, Glenwood
Springs

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Georgia

Atlanta Whitewater Club
Georgia Canoeing Asso, Atlanta

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

Illinois

Chicago Whitewater Assn, Chicago

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Brownsburg
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

Kentucky

Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maryland

Baltimore Canoe & Kayak Club, Baltimore
Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Silver Spring
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Hagerstown
Monocacy Canoe Club, Frederick

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston
Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

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

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond
Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Merrimack

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
KCCNY, Flanders

New York

FLOW Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq., Ossining
KCCNY, Flanders
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

North Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee
Tuckasegee Paddlers, Cullowhee

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Friends of the Crooked River, Akron
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton

Oregon

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

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oak
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Centre County, Lemont
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Holtwood Hooligans, Paradise
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Mach One Slalom Team, State College
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia

Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh
Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters, Ohio

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Limestone
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Clean Water Expected in East TN, Sevierville
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Eastman Recreation Club, Kingsport
Ocoee River Council, Knoxville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston

Utah

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

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Virginia

Canoe Cruisers Association, Herndon
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Roanoke

Washington

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

West Virginia

Dbl Z! Whitewater Club, Fayetteville
WV Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

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

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson

Ontario

Guelph Kayak Club, Elora
Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

Quebec

Montreal Kayak Club, Montreal

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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