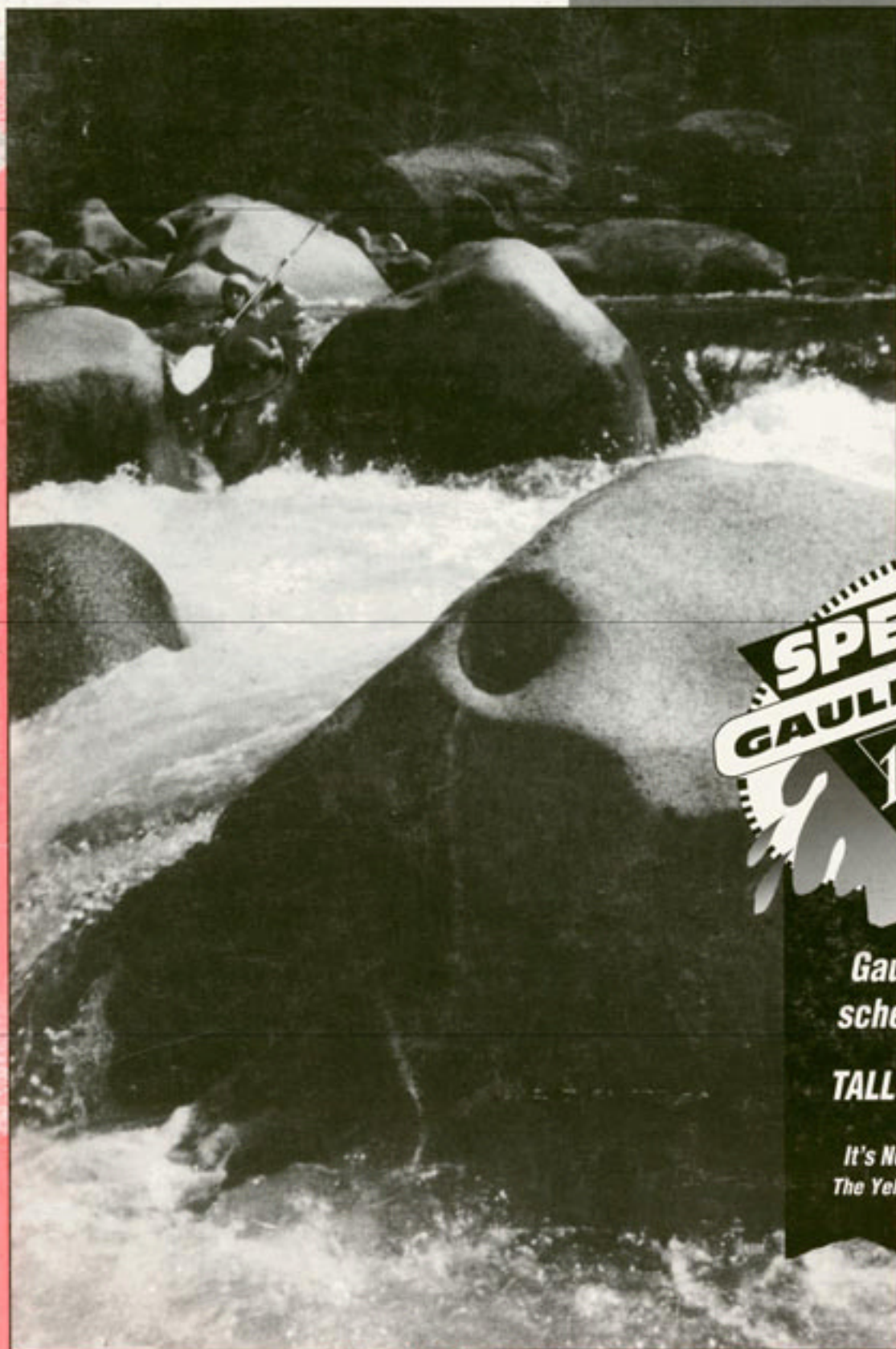


# american whitewater

September  
October 1993



**SPECIAL**  
**GAULEY FEST**  
**1993**

*Gauley Fest  
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**TALLULAH!** pg. 49

*It's No Pic-A-Nic ...  
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Journal of the American Whitewater Affiliation

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Volume XXXVIII, No.5

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## Humble Pie

I spent the third week of June eating humble pie in the Wild, Wild West... the Arkansas at 5', the Roaring Fork at 2500 cfs, the Piedra at 3000, the Animas at 6000. Yes, after several years of mediocre melt-downs, Colorado's rivers were raging. As Carla would say, it was the Big Wahoo. But it wasn't just the tremendous flows that put me in my place. It was the company I was keeping...

To be more specific, it was the company of my buddy Snake, a young man known to the non-boating world as Dave Pizzuti.

Let me explain.

I first met Snake in the late winter of 1990 on Indian Creek, a tiny tributary of the Youghiogeny River near Ohiopyle. Indian Creek doesn't run often; it takes a lot of rain to bring it up. But when it is really clipping, like it was that day, it is a vigorous class IV, demanding and exciting, though not truly deserving the class V rating bestowed upon it in the very conservative, local guide book.

But Snake didn't know that. He was



fresh out of college and new to whitewater. Indian Creek was, by far, the most difficult run he had attempted. He appeared at the put-in with a mutual friend, Jan Matthew, full of anticipation and enthusiasm.

I'm generally not wild about nursing novices down rivers, especially those who whine or snivel, but Snake wasn't like that. Although he took one swim and his technique was raw, he was athletic as hell, with a promising roll and a gutsy, go for broke attitude.

You could tell that he was one of those boaters who was destined to improve quickly. And, he had a great personality and was a lot of fun. You couldn't help but like him.

So it came to pass that Snake followed me down a number of increasingly difficult rivers that spring and summer. The Middle Fork of the Tygart... the Big Sandy... the Upper Yough. I introduced him to class V water. As the season pro-

gressed his confidence and skill increased exponentially, so that eventually, he became just one of the gang, not requiring any special attention.

During the next couple of years I boated with Snake once in a while, but not on a regular basis. First he was living in Detroit, then he moved to Aspen. I heard that he was getting good, but I didn't realize just how good he was getting.

I found that out this summer in Colorado. It was a real eye-opener.


It was our second day together and we were on the Lower Piedra at an uncommonly high level. Snake had never experienced the Piedra before. I had paddled the Piedra a number of times over the years, but I had never seen it like this.

At more typical flows I consider the Piedra an interesting, but not particularly challenging, river. But as we were swept downstream toward the final box canyon by the booming, brown water, I started to get anxious. I knew that the most difficult drops on the river lie within and immediately below the congested, inescapable box. And it was becoming increasingly clear that, at this level, they were not going to be very forgiving.


By the time we entered the box my anxiety had given way to genuine concern. I was hugging the shore and catching every eddy, then peering downstream, searching for the holes and pourovers that I knew were surely lurking in the wavetrains, waiting to ambush the unwary.

Snake, on the other hand, was having a ball... paddling through the heart of every rapid, occasionally spinning around to nonchalantly surf the ten foot exploding waves. It seemed downright reckless to me, but he never had a lick of trouble. Snake was clearly quite comfortable on big water; he had no problem dodging the Piedra's mantraps.

But it was when we stopped to scout



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## STAFF

**Editor:** Bob Gedekoh, Box 228, R.D.#4, Elizabeth, Pa 15037

**Emeritus Editor:** Chris Koll

**Graphic design:** John K. Victor, 29080 Westfall Rd., Williamsport, OH 43164

**Advertising Director:** Phyllis Horowitz, Box 85, Phoenicia, New York 12464 (914) 688-5569

**Safety:** Charlie Walbridge

**Conservation:** Rich Bowers, 1609 Northcrest Dr., Silver Spring, MD 20904

**Address Changes:** Keith Morgan, 2601 Tanglewood Dr., Durham, NC 27705

**Missing Copies:** Contact Phyllis Horowitz

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the Eye of the Needle that I really got worried. As you might surmise by its name, the line through this rapid is a fine one, skirting a log on the left and then, almost immediately, a recirculating cauldron on the right. At lower levels it is intimidating, but I have negotiated it a number of times without a mishap. But on that day, at 3000 cfs, the rapid looked particularly vicious. The log was surging up and down in the tremendous current and the cauldron looked inescapable. Brian Hopkins, an accomplished, veteran paddler, and I took a quick look at it and shouldered our boats. Snake studied the rapid a bit longer, and then calmly started to climb into his.

I was surprised and alarmed. I cornered him in the eddy above the drop.

"Are you sure you want to do this?" I asked nervously. "If you miss the line you could be in big trouble."

He looked a bit surprised. I reminded him that the Piedra was flowing at an extraordinary level and that we had been told that all the local paddlers who had paddled the Piedra earlier that day had portaged the drop. I pointed out that if he wrapped on the tree, or got sucked back into the cauldron, there would be little we could do to save him.

He just smiled and nodded, saying that he didn't expect that he would have much trouble.

And so as Brian and I apprehensively set safety, Snake traversed the Eye of the Needle on an impeccable line.

The situation was much the same at the next major drop, Mudslide. In this case a technical approach led to an eight foot vertical ledge with a treacherous backwash. Once again, Brian and I stood by with our hearts in our throats while Snake powered through the monster. He seemed thoroughly nonplussed.

Later, on the shuttle, I paid a little more attention to Snake than usual. I discovered that the boy had been getting around... the Bottom Moose, the Russell Fork, Gore Canyon at high water, the Upper Box of the Rio Grande. He had fared well at the Great Falls race on the



Potomac; in fact, the first time he ran the falls was during the race.

He had even tackled the Narrows of the Green a number of times. Snake said that he thought it was "a lot of fun". Now, I've never experienced the Narrows of the Green, but I have scrutinized a number of videos and listened to the tales of a number of survivors. Many of them said they would never go back. Someday soon, perhaps in ten or fifteen years, I hope to run the Green Narrows. Provided I'm not too busy washing my car or painting my mailbox.

Late that night as I slid into my sleeping bag I came to several sobering realizations. At some point in time Snake's sense of daring had far surpassed my own. He had joined that cadre of boaters pushing the limits far beyond what most of us would have deemed possible five years ago. Snake was willing to take chances that I would not take... there was no use denying it; he had more guts than I do.

But there was more to it than that. It wasn't easy to admit it, but the simple truth was that Snake's willingness to paddle more difficult water was not just a function of his youth, recklessness or testosterone level. To put it bluntly, Snake had become a far better boater than I will ever be.

This was apparent the next day on the Animas at 6000 cfs; while the rest of us were struggling to stay in our boats and out of big trouble, Snake was driving through the meat of the maelstrom.

It was apparent on the Roaring Fork at 2500, where I toiled breathlessly to mimic Snake's impeccable lines through an intense maze of rocks and holes.

*Continued on page 97*

**Page 6: Bob on the Uncompahgre River**  
**Page 7: Snake on the Uncompahgre River**



# LETTERS.....

## ED GERTLER ON OHIOPLYE

Dear Editor.

I would like to present my point of view on the **Yough fee/boycott**/protest controversy. I have been **enjoying** the Yough since 1967. I have seen a lot of changes since that time. I think I have some familiarity with the issues.

I feel that it is incorrect to portray the issue of **Yough** fees as just a question of whether paddlers are cheapskates (we already know that). The real concerns center on our ability to control our destiny, whether we are being treated fairly, and correctness of purpose.

Regarding control. Most of us expect government to allow citizen participation in its decision **making** process. Supposedly, the management of Ohioplye State Park promised to abide by such a practice.

Accordingly, a variety of users (boaters, hikers, bikers) have been participating with park management in a committee to assure that the park understands our needs.

Yet, as I understand it, every major change that has affected boating in the last few **years** (fees, reservations, allocations) was implemented without prior consultation with park users. (How would you like it if the highway department built a freeway by your house and then held public hearings to see how you and your neighbors felt about it?) So, as impacted parties, we are insisting on some control of **our** fate. It is clear that the Park is not out to **champion** our best interests.

Regarding equity. We private boaters **are** being told to pay, while other users of the park are not. Ohioplye is a popular park, every bit as much a destination for hikers, bikers, **skiers** and **tourists** as it is for boaters. If it is indeed

time to pay the piper for these facilities, paddlers **are asking** why everybody is not being asked to shoulder the burden. Park entry fees **are** common around the country. We have them at Great Falls. Why not at Ohioplye?

Regarding purpose. Paddler fees are not being dedicated to paddling needs. They will go into a general fund. While I can appreciate other **parks'** and state agencies' needs, why are boaters being told to be the sole financier?

I **personally** can live with the fees and would actually welcome user fees if they were dedicated to protecting more scenic rivers or park land, securing access and supporting the accompanying infrastructure. I am not particularly convinced that a boycott is the right tactic to solve our problems. But I have honored the boycott rules, supported the protest, and urge all of you to support the effort **too** — if for no other reason **than** solidarity.

Let me explain.

Most of the protest is the effort of the Three Rivers Paddling Club and the Keystone River Runners, Pittsburgh area clubs whose members are most dearly impacted by fees and other park decisions. We are fortunate that they are putting forth the incredible amount of energy to protect our mutual interests. I can not emphasize enough the importance of local grass routes activism in influencing local **mat-**ters. The **affairs** of Ohioplye State Park are 100% Pennsylvanian. The chain of command involved in park decisions is answerable purely to Pennsylvania voters, particularly **west-**ern Pennsylvanian boaters, not those of us who live in D.C. So, if we in D.C., Cleveland, Philadelphia or anywhere else want to see to it that someone stands up for our interests at Ohioplye, if behooves us to support the people who can do **SO**.

All that these groups **are**

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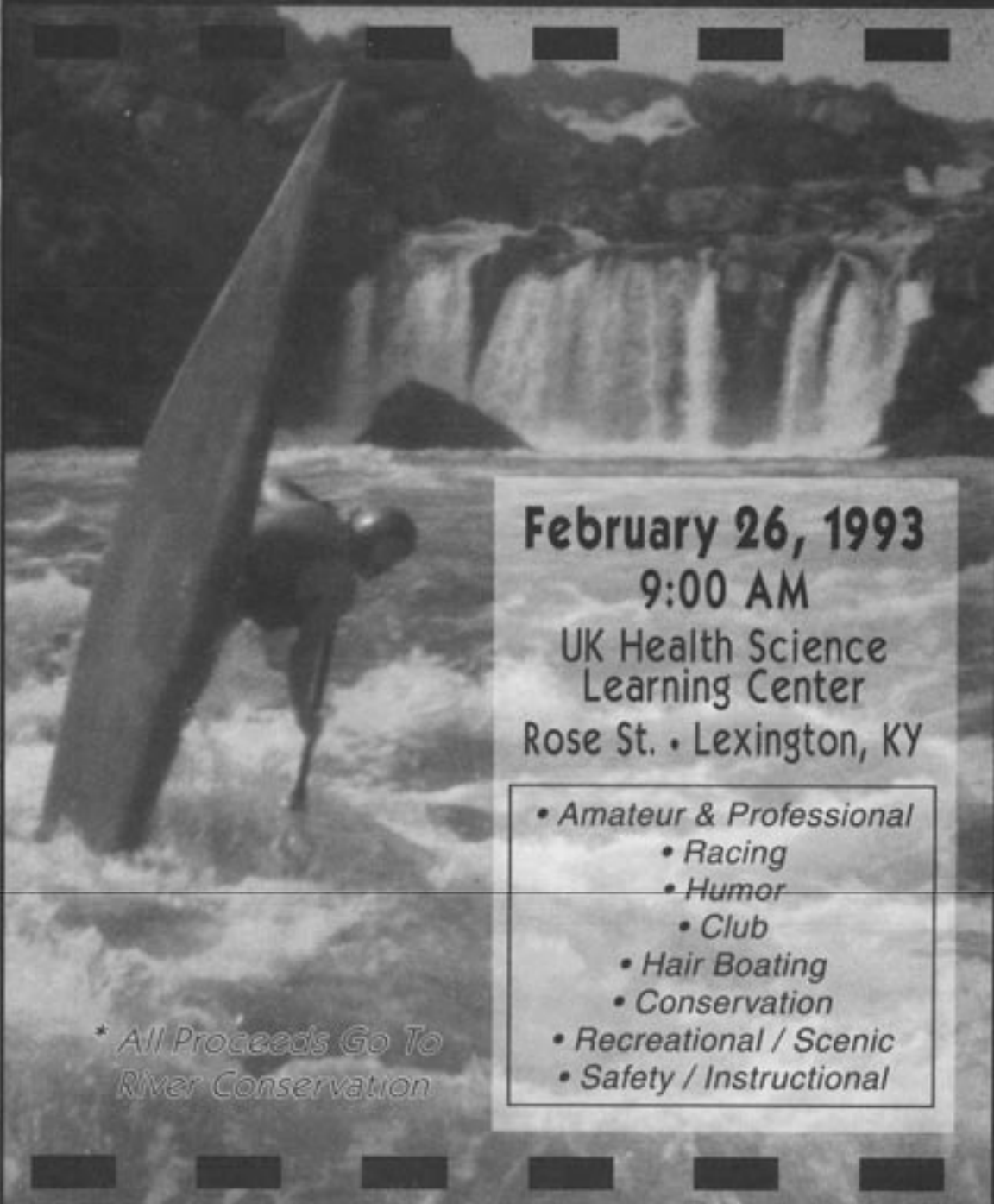
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asking of us is the privilege of representing the paddling community in a united front. **Cliche** that may be, but there is strength in numbers. **Individuals** do not count. Every time one of us crosses the picket line, we undermine their efforts, and the park can **better** continue to ignore paddlers.

A prominent member of a distant canoe club once told me that there was no interest in political activism in that club because the whole reason they canoe is to get away from all the problems and **conflicts** of the real world. Unfortunately, the real world is in **hot** pursuit. There are those who wish to dam our rivers, develop their banks and deny **w** access.

Ironically, even parks can be hostile parties, when **their** managers see us not as just another patron but as a headache. Look at what has happened at Harper's Ferry. Just try to paddle the spectacular **Genessee** Gorge in New York's Letchworth State Park. Believe it or not, back in the '60s the National Park Service was proposing to deny boaters access to the Potomac. Maybe you just want to go out and play. Fine. But, please, at least let the activists know that you appreciate their work on **your behalf** and don't sabotage their efforts.

Thanks,  
Ed Gertler

*Editor's Note: Ed Gertler is a prominent river enthusiast from Washington, D.C., who has authored several comprehensive guidebooks to the rivers of the mid-Atlantic states. When someone as insightful and experienced as Ed offers an opinion, it really behooves us all to listen! This letter was first published in the Canoe Cruisers' newsletter and is reprinted with his permission.*

## SORRY, NO BUSES

Dear Editor:

Let us talk about the Youth Fees some more. I agree that two or three dollars is not worth complaining about. I also hate to see rivers **overrun** with people. Ohio's State Park provides worthwhile services to boaters.

Stop. Last week I took my first trip to Ohio's State Park. I was **looking forward** to the token and the fees. The car ride was almost six hours. There was nobody at the put-in. The time was about 5:45 p.m. What was I to do?

Paddle, right? The sign says the buses **run** until 8:00 p.m. Great! Let's paddle. At 7:50 p.m. my partner and I are at the take-out. Not to worry, **we** have money. The driver **will** certainly take our money, **won't** he? We signed the **clipboard** at the put-in. They **will** give us a ride.

Sorry, but no buses, no trailers, nobody.

We did have someone **waiting** at the lot at the top of the **hill**. Too bad they could not **drive** down to get us. (Editor's note... locked gate.) That is a **long** hill. Thank you, Mr. Ranger, wherever you were.

By God, the following day I **got a token and a bus ride**.

Enough already, makes me sick. Does the park and the river belong to the people or the rangers and the outfitters? I am sad.

Sincerely,  
Thomas Flipse  
Fostoria, Ohio

Editor's reply:

What is going on at **Chiopyle** has made a lot of us **sad**. Right now we don't **know** who the river belongs to, but we know that it **damned** sure isn't us.

You put on **later** than most boaters, but still had **plenty** of time to get to the take-out. I would consider **that** laudable behavior, since

it reduced congestion on the river. **One** would think that the system would encourage private boaters to do this. **AG** legedly, reducing congestion was **one** of the principal goals of the "reservation" fee system.

Another goal of the system was to monitor river usage, *ie.* to enhance river safety by keeping track of folks on the river and to make sure that no one was missing. We all knew that this was a ridiculous and unwieldy idea, and your experience proves it.

You came a long way to enjoy **one** of Pennsylvania's top tourist attractions. To pump **money** into the depressed Laurel Highlands economy. As a Pennsylvania state resident, I'm **sorry** that you didn't have a better time. **Actually**, you were lucky. **Re-voice** in the fact that they

didn't find some excuse to give you a ticket!

Bob Gedekoh

turn heads in any macho **backroad** bar, I would rather hear about **Rapidus** horriblis, not **Ursus horriblis**. Big bad bears are easy to find (in Alaska), but where are the monster waterfalls and the Class V granite boulder gardens! Hopefully, when the authors have exhausted the thrills of float planes and shotgun slugs they will discover some whitewater. **If** not, well, there is always **Field and Stream**.

I submit my AWA membership fee along with a request. Please leave the sensationalism for the glossy adverzines; it does not benefit "the best semi-professional whitewater magazine in the world".

Sincerely,  
Gary Holton  
Eugene, Oregon

## ALASKAN SECTION PRAISED

Dear Editor:

I have always dreamed of paddling in Alaska (and other exotic locales). But, because money is tight and I have a family, I know that I will probably never really get to go. I try to tell myself that rivers are rivers, waterfalls are waterfalls and rapids are rapids, be they here in Virginia or far away in the Yukon. But your recent section on Alaska reminded me that I am **missing** a different kind or river experience. It was great, keep up the good work.

Sincerely,  
Jason Tolliver  
Wytheville, Virginia

## STICK TO THE BASICS!

To the Editor:

In the **May/June** issue you devoted 13 pages to Alaska **whitewater**, yet I found only a few lines describing the water. For a moment, I thought I had mistakenly picked up an issue of **Field and Stream**. Though some of the photos gave glimpses of enticing whitewater, the text convinced me that Alaskans would rather get their adrenaline rushes from bush planes and brown bears. I am not convinced that this magazine is the proper **forum** to discuss the landing **abilities** of Super Cubs and 206's. Let's hear about the **whitewater**, not the **roostertail** behind the floats! And though a bear story would certainly

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## Bill Baker

2953 Birch Street  
Denver, CO 80207

## Pope Barrow

136 13th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

## Lee Belknap

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## Risa Shimoda Callaway

P.O. Box 375  
Denver, NC 28037

## Tom Christopher

931 Union Street Rear  
Leominster, MA 01453

## Bob Gedekoh

Box 228, RD 4  
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## Susan Gentry

252 Deer Creek Trail  
Hoschton, GA 30548

## Bob Glanville

66 Deer Run  
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241 East 5th Avenue  
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## Bill Hildreth

78 Beechwood Street  
Cohasset, MA 02025

## Lars Holbek

Box 63  
Coloma, CA 95613

## Diana Holloran

Route 1, Box 90  
Fairview Mountain Road  
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## Chris Koll

MCK Building Associates  
221 West Division Street  
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## Jim Scott

3715 Jocelyn Street NW  
Washington, DC 20015

## Pete Skinner

Box 272, Snyder Road  
West Sand Lake, NY 12196

## Mac Thornton

322 10th Street SE  
Washington, DC 20003

## Charlie Walbridge

230 Penlyn Pike  
Penlyn, PA 19422

## Executive Director Phyllis B. Horowitz,

P.O. Box 85  
Phoenicia, NY 12464  
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## AWA OFFICERS

President: Risa Shimoda Callaway  
Vice President: Mac Thornton  
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## AWA STAFF

Phyllis B. Horowitz, Executive Director  
P.O. Box 85  
Phoenicia, NY 12464  
(914) 688-5569

Rich Bowers, Conservation Program Director  
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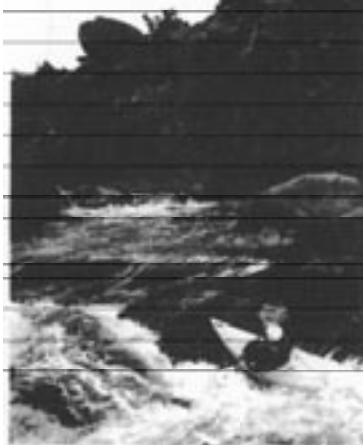
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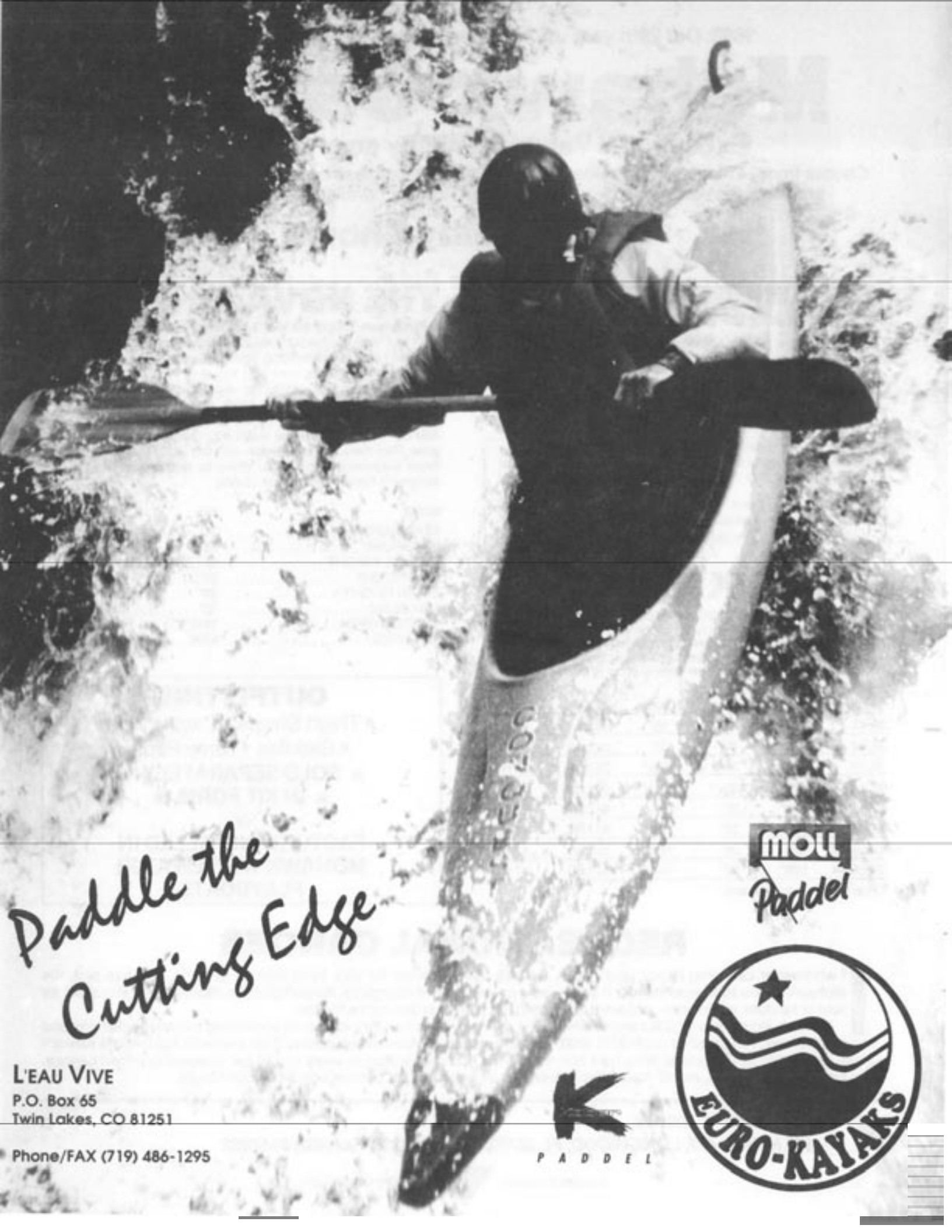
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# PURPOSE.....

## The American Whitewater

### Affiliation

**Our mission is to conserve America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to safely enjoy them.**

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

**EDUCATION:** Through publication of the magazine, American Whitewater, and by other means, the

AWA provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

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

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

**SAFETY:** AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains

both a uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) as well as an internationally recognized whitewater safety code.

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

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

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## AWA CONSERVATION PROGRAM MOVES TO NEW OFFICE

After spending over a year at the American Rivers office in Washington DC, the AWA Conservation Office has moved to the suburbs! This new location, while still close to Capitol Hill and other river organizations, offers a larger space, less travel time, and increased technical resources.

The office is shared with the River Federation, a national organization working with state river managers, Hoffman/Williams, a consulting group working on watershed management and other river issues, and World Waters, working on rivers in Eastern Europe and Russia. The new address is:

American Whitewater Affiliation  
Conservation Program Office  
8630 Fenton Street, Suite 910  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Phone: (301) 589-9455  
Fax: (301) 589-6121

## AWA INVESTIGATES POTENTIAL WHITEWATER RESOURCES ACROSS THE NATION

### What do you do when you run out of rivers?

According to AWA Conservation Director Rich Bowers, you find new ones! After a century of dam construction, locking away hidden canyons with access restrictions, and bypassing whole sections of riverbeds, new outlooks on the value of recreation, aesthetics and biodiversity of rivers is making this both possible and productive.

No longer should we be satisfied with maintaining the status quo on our declining whitewater rivers. We now have a very real opportunity to actually "win" back rivers which have been lost and forgotten, in some cases for over 80 years.

For rivers which have been developed for hydroelectricity, the opportunities are even greater. It seems that power producers are attracted to the same rivers as are whitewater

boaters. The greater the gradient the better; let's look for those 200 foot per mile head-water creeks and fast water.

The AWA has been doing exactly that. And some real prizes are out there just waiting to be restored. Some have never been run, some have been run only in flood, after dark, or after climbing over fences.

For the last year AWA staff and regional directors have researched, investigated, and helped conduct whitewater studies on Moxie Stream (ME), Pemigewasset (NH), Deerfield (VT-MA), Tallulah Gorge (GA), Piers Gorge on the Menominee (MI), Nisqually and Nooksack (WA), New (VA), Raquette, Black and Beaver Rivers (NY), Niangua (MO), and the Mokelumne (CA).

Each of these represents restored recreational river re-

sources. AWA is working to guarantee annual recreational flows in these areas, permanent access, and a better paddling environment for boaters. Some represent beginner runs such as Niangua and New Rivers, some like the Nooksack and the Colton bypass on the Raquette are cutting edge Class V+. All are whitewater.

And the AWA has been doggedly successful with each involvement. Sometimes the results are dramatic (32 summer releases on the Deerfield), sometimes subtle (local good will on the Tallulah), and many times frustrating. But we keep inching towards that ultimate goal...more rivers...more whitewater...more wilderness...better environment. And in the end, boaters win - more rivers to play on! And, if we can better the water quality, biodiversity, and use and recognition of river values, so much the better! ■

## AWA REPRESENTS NATIONAL RIVER INTERESTS BEFORE THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION (FERC) ROUNDTABLE

On June 17, 1993, Rich Bowers, Conservation Director of the AWA, along with American Rivers and Trout Unlimited, represented a coalition of over 30 river interests across the nation in discussing the future of hydroelectric dam relicensing.

This meeting was the first time that FERC has ever convened a public discussion of this kind. The need for this was brought about by the 157 relicensing applications (affecting over 100 rivers) up for renewal in 1993. According to Chairwoman Elizabeth A. Moler "It is an unprecedented situation in our history. I am hoping... to truly... balance competing concerns and to protect the public interest."

In addition to these three conservation/recreation orga-

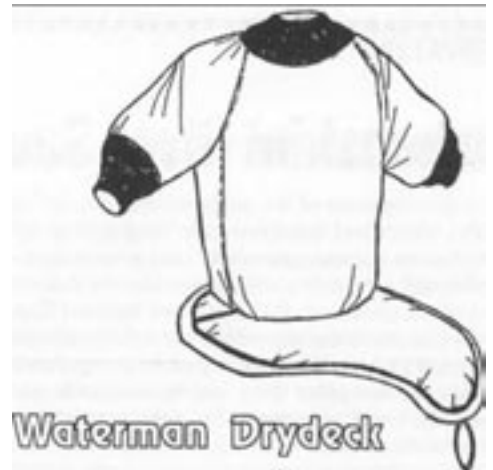
nizations, the Roundtable was composed of representatives of select Federal and State Agencies, Native Indian Rights groups, hydropower developers, and each of the four newly elected FERC Commissioners, including Chairwoman Moler.

During this Roundtable, conservation/recreation representatives outlined the critical issues needed to restore the health and use of our river systems, and highlighted the adverse affects of hydro development on these rivers. "...right now, in the relicensings, the projects need to be accountable to a new environmental and recreational awareness" said Rich Bowers, these relicenses provide an "opportunity to reflect and redefine the modern public vision of what our river values are right now."

### Discussion topics during this all day meeting included:

- The fact that the Federal Power Act only leased the right to use rivers for power. These leases are now up, and the public must reconsider the best use of their river resources.
- The right and extent of state agencies to determine the best use of the rivers in their state.
- The need to
  - better include the public in future proceedings
  - address dam decommissioning and removal responsibilities in 1992.
  - address basin wide impacts of dams on our river systems (of the river basins affected by the 1993 relicensings, 28 river basins contain six or more projects).
- better follow the National Environmental Policy Act
- [guarantee public access to out rivers.
- hold additional meetings of this kind.





Waterman Drydeck

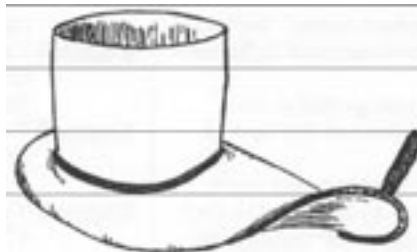
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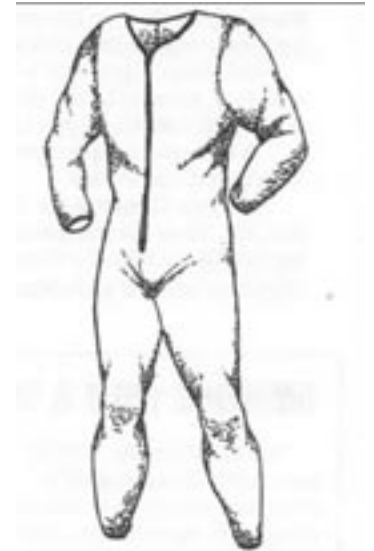
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# Tatshenshini River Saved!

The development of the controversial Windy Craggy copper mine, which had threatened the Tatshenshini River, has been halted by the announcement that government of British Columbia will establish a wilderness reserve in the northwest section of the province. B.C. Premier Michael Harcourt announced that the company which owned the mineral rights and had planned to open the mine would be compensated.

"While we recognize there will be economic costs from this decision, the benefits to the global environment from this world wilderness reserve are unmatched," Harcourt said.

"This is wilderness on a truly grand scale, and it has been saved," celebrated Tom Cassidy, General Counsel for American Rivers. "The only other conservation victory comparable to this one was the one stopping the dams in the Grand Canyon in the 1960s."

The new provincial park will encompass the 2.5 million acre watershed of the Alsek and Tatshenshini rivers, an area two times the size of the Grand Canyon. The park will adjoin existing parks in Alaska and the Yukon; the total protected area will be 21 million acres.

Environmentalists and river conservationists had argued that the run off from the mine would have had devastating consequences to the massive watersheds. It had been projected that the mine would have produced 1 percent of the world's copper during the next 25 years. It would have been the hemisphere's largest open pit copper and gold mine.

Political reaction to the decision to block the mine and create the park was predictably mixed.

Vice President Al Gore complimented Harcourt for acting "boldly and with foresight to protect and preserve the natural heritage of one of the world's most important rivers." He had earlier termed the proposed mine "an environmental nightmare waiting to happen."

But Alaska Governor Walter Hickel was quoted in the **Washington Post** as lamenting the decision and the "loss of tremendous potential economic value."

And Wayne Spilsbury, a Canadian mining industry representative, reportedly told the Reuter news agency that the decision would cost the region 2500 construction and mining jobs.

"A thousand people a year go in there. Who are they? They're rich Americans."

Last year Canadian Ric Careless was named the Perception, Inc. River Conservationist of the Year for his role in leading the fight to stop the mine and save the Tatshenshini. (See May/June issue of **American Whitewater**.) ■

## AWA/FOREST SERVICE MEETING HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC

Pope Barrow and Rich Bowers of the AWA's Conservation Program met on June 15 with Lyle Laverty, Director, and Dean Lundeen and Randall Sheffield of the US Forest Service's Division of Recreation, Cultural Resources and Wilderness Management. Discussion centered around how to better represent non-commercial boaters in USFS policies and management plans, how to assure private access to rivers under USFS jurisdiction, and possible development of a future AWA/Forest Service partnership program to implement these concerns. At this time Director Laverty is reviewing the AWA Access Policy.

To best improve communications between these two groups, Dean Lundeen (USFS Wild & Scenic Program) recommended that AWA regional directors, and private boaters in general, contact USFS Supervisor's in their area. At this time, input on management plans, access concerns, and priority land acquisitions needed to assure river access could be discussed. A listing of USFS Regional Planning Directors follows:

**Region 1** James Hagemeier, Northern Region - USFS

Federal Bldg., PO Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807 (406) 3293511

**Region 2** David Anderson, Rocky Mtn. Region - USFS

11177 W. 8th Ave., PO Box 25127  
Lakewood, CO 80255 (303) 236-9427

**Region 3** Art Briggs, Southwest Region - Forest Service

Federal Bldg., 517 Gold Ave., SW  
Albuquerque, NM 87102 (505) 8423292

**Region 4** John P. Butt, Intermountain Region - Forest Service

Federal Bldg., 324 25th Street  
Ogden, UT (801) 6255605

**Region 5** Kathy Clement, Pacific Southwest Region - USFS

630 Sansome Street  
San Francisco, CA 94111 (505) 8423292

**Region 6** Tom Nygren, Pacific Northwest Region - USFS

319 SW Pine Street, PO Box 3623  
Portland, OR 972208 (503) 326-3625

**Region 8** John Rich, Southern Region - Forest Service

1720 Peachtree Road  
Atlanta, GA 30367 (404) 347-4177

**Region 9** Don Myer, Eastern Region - Forest Service

310 W. Wisconsin Ave., Room 500  
Milwaukee, WI 53203 (414) 2913693

**Region 10** Fred Norbury, Alaska Region - Forest Service

PO Box 21628  
Juneau, AK 99802-1628 (907) 586-8886

## OMNIBUS WILD & SCENIC LEGISLATION FOR CALIFORNIA

Friends of the River (FOR) have compiled a listing of 75 rivers and streams in California which they are recommending for inclusion in the upcoming Wild & Scenic legislation. At stake are some of the wildest, most ecologically and recreationally significant, and most threatened rivers in California. Included in this listing are each of the California Riv-

ers listed in the AWA's top whitewater issues of 1993 (elsewhere in this journal) and many of the 2,517 total whitewater river miles contained in this state. Whitewater rivers such as the Trinity, Rubicon, and Clavey are only a few which could be protected.

It looks like legislation could be introduced in the House of Representatives as

early as this summer. Interested boaters and clubs should write brief letters to Representative Miller, Senator Feinstein and Senator Boxer urging them to include your wildest river or stream in this Wild & Scenic legislation. For those of you who are natives, a letter to your representative would also help. Representatives with rivers on FOR's list include Dave Dreier,

John Doolittle, Vic Fazio, Elton Gallegly, Dan Hamburg, Wally Herger, Rick Lehman, Ron Packard and Bill Thomas.

For additional information on which rivers are listed and how to help, contact:

Steve Evans, FOR  
(916) 4423155  
or Susan Scheufele, AWA  
(408) 459-7978.



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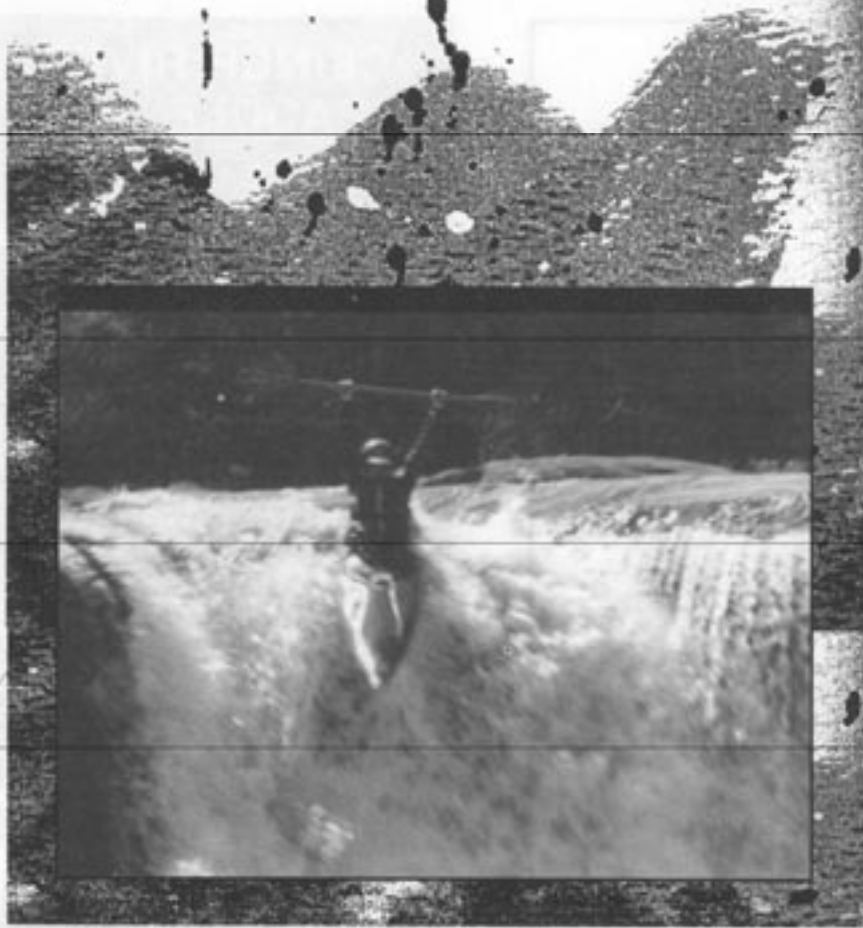
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Left: AWA-Whitewater study  
Moshier Bypass-Beaver River N.Y.

# TOP 40 WHITEWATER ISSUES FOR 1993

by Pope Barrow and Rich Bowers

**Each** year AWA surveys regional coordinators and whitewater groups around the nation to identify the top 40 whitewater conservation and river access issues of the year. Our picks for 1993 are listed below.

**L**ooking back at the "oldies" of 1992, there have been some notable hits, some bombs, some 1992 top 40's are still on the charts this year, and a few new issues have moved up in priority.

First, the hits. AWA's aggressive focus on hydropower relicensing has begun to pay some dividends. This is a **once-in-a-lifetime** opportunity so AWA's staff and volunteers have been jumping on it hard. We have been successful in persuading the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to

force power companies to do whitewater studies at a number of outstanding sites, the **Tallulah** Gorge in Georgia, the Pine in Wisconsin, the Deerfield in Massachusetts, and several in New York State. Under an interim plan already in effect for the Deerfield, there are 20 whitewater releases this year!

One of the most exciting victories was the passage of Congressman Tom **Bevill's** bill to make Alabama's Little River Canyon a National Preserve.

An equally exciting victory was the new Federal law requiring the removal of 2 existing hydropower dams (Gliies Canyon and Elwha) on the Elwah River in the Olympic Peninsula. This is a great precedent for other possible dam removals.

Probably the biggest hit from the 1992 top 40 list was the defeat in Congress of the Auburn Dam proposal which would have flooded out large segments of the North and Middle Forks of the American and greatly damaged the scenic, ecological, and recreational qualities of the river.

Thirty-one miles of Sespe Creek in California was also designated as a national wild and scenic river.

In the midst of these sensational victories, there were a few disappointments. Statewide wild and scenic campaigns are still **stalled** in Washington State and West Virginia and only a few rivers have been added to the Federal wild and scenic rivers system since last year's top 40 report.

The National Energy Act was mostly a hit. The most sought after provision, the State protected rivers section, was yanked out of the bill at the last moment by **pro-hydro** Senators, but the hydropower industry was totally blown away in its efforts to insert language in the bill to streamline (i.e. short circuit) the licensing of new hydro dams.

Hydropower development continues to be one of the major threats to some of our



best whitewater runs; the Klamath in Oregon, the North Fork of the Payette and the Falls River in Idaho, the Kern, Clavey, and Mokelumne in California, and in many other locations.

Internationally, there were huge victories involving rivers in Canada and Chile. The Bio was given a reprieve just several months ago when the courts in Chile ruled that the **Endesa** Electric Company lacked the water rights it needed to construct or operate the Pangué Dam on the Bio.

On the same day as the Bio victory, the Canadian authorities declared the watershed of the **Tatshenshini** River to be off-limits to the proposed **Windy Craggy** mine. The mine would have severely damaged the wilderness quality of this **amazing** wild and beautiful river by dynamiting the top off **Windy Craggy Mtn**, creating a huge open pit mine, storing 18,500 tons of highly acid waste rock each day in a 4 1/2 mile long reservoir, and earthen dam located on three earthquake faults.

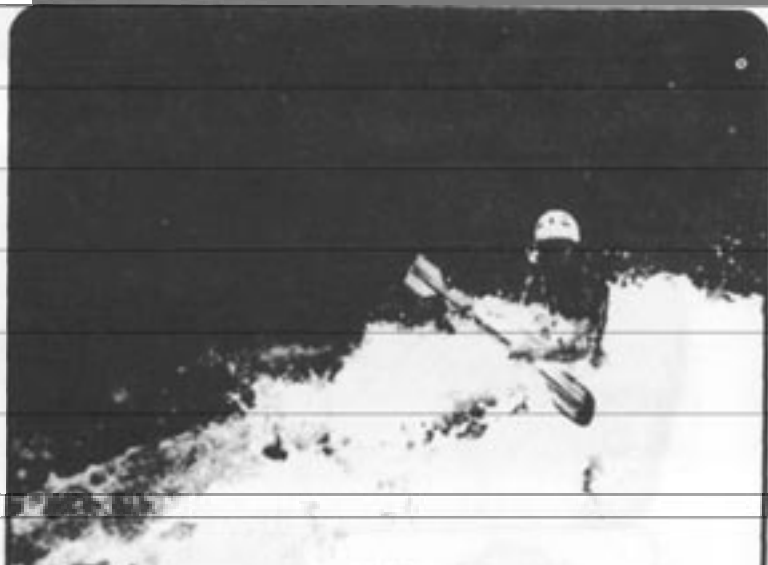
But battles with harmful hydropower development continue on some of the best whitewater in the world in **Costa Rica** and **Kenya**.

As in 1992, river access problems continue to plague the whitewater boating community. The rights of **noncommercial** boaters to **enjoy** free - and fair - access to whitewater runs continues to be threatened at numerous locations, including **Letchworth Gorge** (NY), the **Youghiogheny** (PA), the **Kennebec** (ME), the **Mokelumne** (CA), the rivers of Georgia, and on countless Federal and State-regulated Western streams. A potentially troublesome access problem on the Upper Blackwater in West Virginia was resolved by boaters through quiet negotiation with State Park officials, but then a similar issue arose just one county away at Valley Falls State Park involving the **Tygart**.

## 1. Kennebec, Maine

### Issue: Access

Current Status: The Central Maine Power Company (CMP), which owns the access to the Kennebec River, began imposing access fees on private boaters and fishermen in 1992. Initially set at \$5 per day, the private boater fee was reduced to \$1 per day, but the amount to be charged in the future is totally left to the company's discretion. Worried about the precedent, AWA and local boaters continue to resist the fee. In a disappointing ruling, FERC enforcement personnel held that the company's FERC license did not disallow the fee despite language requiring the company to provide "free public access" to the river. New strategies are in the works,



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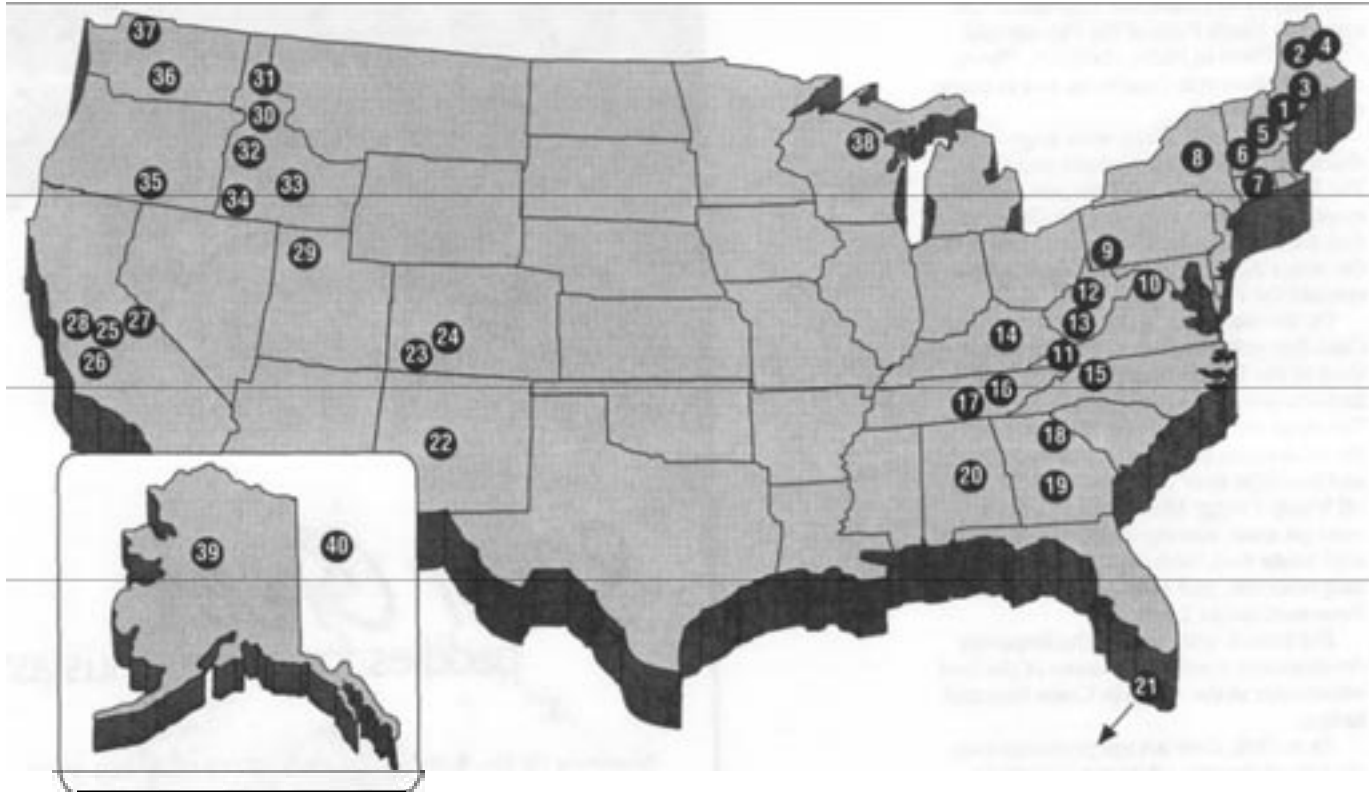
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however. Boaters will be submitting a stockholders proposal to be voted on at the next shareholders meeting for CMP. Adding insult to injury, CMP has begun to draft their preliminary recreation plan for the eventual relicensing of Harris Dam Station, the site of the access problems. To date, the company has refused to even recognize downstream access as a concern at this project.

*For more information, contact Tom Christopher (508-537-4285)*

## 2. West Branch Penobscot, Maine

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower project.

**Current Status:** The relicensing of a paper company hydro project which controls flows in Ripogenous Gorge is a "Flagship" relicensing case. Groups of every ilk are involved, from the AWA to the National Park Service, New England Flow, the Conservation Law Foundation, and the Appalachian Mountain Club. Whitewater flows in the Gorge seem secure at the moment, and most of the groups involved are **looking** to achieve much more from the relicensing of this project, including flows in other whitewater reaches impacted by the project (like the Back Channel and the

**Dryway**). Protection of streamside lands and scenic easements on thousands of acres of forest lands owned by the paper company elsewhere in Maine is also at issue. This is an ambitious effort which is already out in front of the relicensing tidal wave. Whatever happens, this case will be a landmark in the relicensing process for

**years** to come. **As** we go to press, preliminary settlement discussions are beginning among the various parties involved. *For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)*

## 3. Moxie Stream, Maine

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower project.

**Current Status:** Moxie has been described as the best class IV run in Maine, with at least 4 **runnable** class V rapids and an exciting take out above the 80 foot drop of Moxie Falls. The whitewater is **all** in a 2-mile reach of the river downstream of the dam which normally has no **runnable** flow. The AWA has worked with local landowners, agencies, conservation and fishing interests, and **with** the applicant (Central Maine Power), and was successful in drafting a plan which would manage Moxie as an environmental and recreational area (including six weekends of whitewater releases). At the last minute,

the applicant, faced with additional costs, pulled the rug out from under this plan. The applicant is now surrendering its license and the fate of Moxie Stream is still uncertain.

*For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)*

## 4. Dead River, Maine

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower project,

**Current status:** Central Maine Power's current license for its Flagstaff Storage Project expires December 31, 1995. This project controls the flow for the 16 mile whitewater section of the Dead to its confluence with the Kennebec. AWA has participated in scoping sessions and provided comments on the project, which include improving access, an economic study of recreation on the area, and **drawdown** studies. The problem is that the owner is faced with **re-managing** its summer draw-down schedule, which may affect recreational releases. CMP is also toying with surrendering its license which could seriously jeopardize recreation.

*For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)*

## 5. Pemigewasset, New Hampshire

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower project.

Current status.. A coalition of 16 recreation groups, including the AWA and the Merrimack Valley Paddlers, have intervened in the Ayers Island Project. To date, a general agreement with the owners, Public Service of N.H., has been reached for improvements including: better parking, portage trails, and access. However, a flow schedule has not been agreed upon, and this summer a survey is being conducted to determine the economic value of recreation on this river.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)

## 6. Deerfield, Massachusetts

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower project.

Current Status: After many public and private meetings and an extended period of negotiation, an agreement has been reached between recreational/environmental interests, led by New England Flow (a coalition of all concerned groups), and the New England Power Company. The agreement will provide for flows for recreational use and will establish a fund, which the company will pay into annually, to be used for environmental mitigation and scenic enhancement. It is expected that FERC will include this agreement in a new license to be issued to the power company for three dams on the Deerfield. An interim agreement is already in effect; boaters are requesting 32 weekend releases per year. The National Canoeing Championships were held on the Deerfield in July, with the slalom and wildwater events scheduled for Sept. 17-18-19.

For more information, contact Tom Christopher (508-537-4285)

## 7. Farmington, Connecticut

### Issue: Wild and Scenic

Current status.. A proposal by Congresswoman Nancy Johnson would designate 14 miles of the West Branch and main stem Farmington (CT) as Wild and Scenic. Protected on the main stem is the section from Goodwin Dam in Hartford, to the New Hartford - Canton town line. If established, the river would be managed under

a unique system of local coordinating committees rather than the National Park Service.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

## 8. New York Rivers

### Issue: Relicensing of hydropower projects.

Current status: In the last year, the upper management of the state's largest hydro developer (Niagara Mohawk) has changed, and river interests are increasingly optimistic over their ability to improve existing conditions. The AWA has continued to work to improve whitewater releases, access, and scenic improvements at a large number of hydro sites owned by NIMO and now engaged in relicensing. Whitewater studies, requested by the AWA, have taken place on the Beaver, Black, and Raquette Rivers, and look to offer scheduled releases on each of these in the future. The AWA is now immersed in negotiations to protect and improve whitewater releases on the Salmon River. The statewide river conservation organization, New York Rivers UNITED, of which

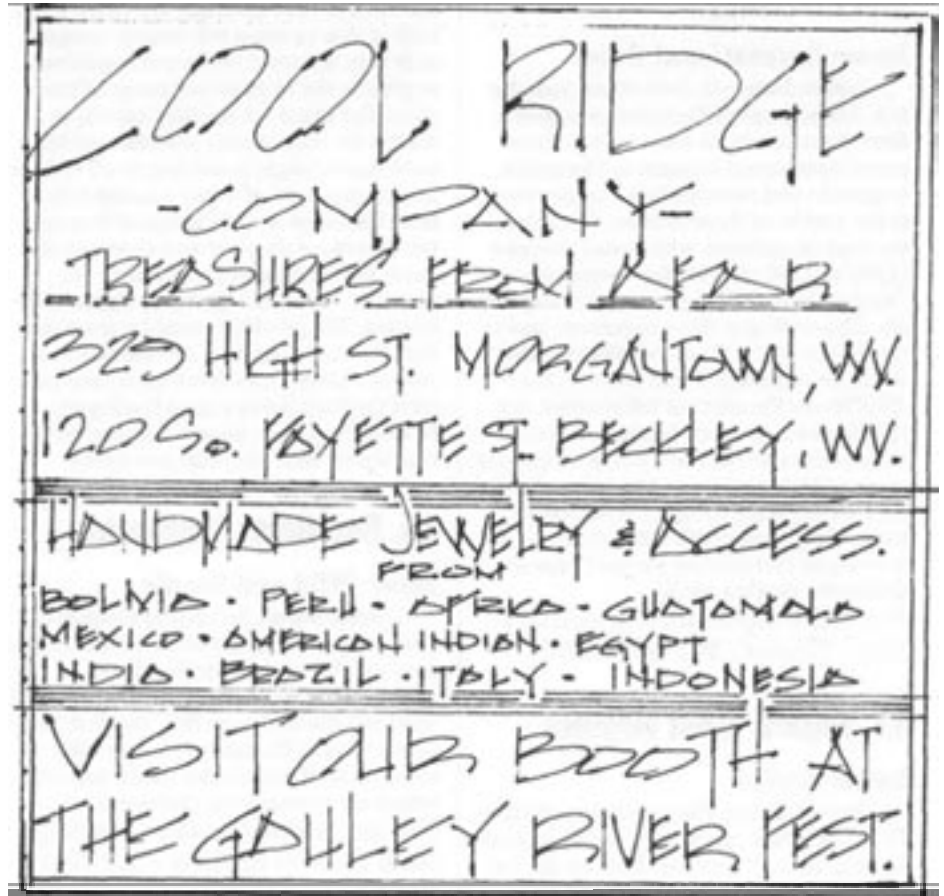
the AWA is a founding member, has been extremely successful in establishing itself as a player in New York politics, policies, and related issues. Besides working on relicensing issues, this group has been involved in settlements to protect riparian lands, and has begun to create a strong, balanced coalition of river interests in New York.

For more information, contact Pete Skinner (518-585-7580)

## 9. Youghiogheny, Pennsylvania

### Issue: Access

Current Status: Like the Genessee in New York, the Lower Yough in Ohio State Park has become a case study in over-regulation. There are astronomical fines now in place for running Ohio State Falls and private boaters are continuously persecuted and subjected to a humiliating tangle of fees and red tape by the State Parks authorities. Local clubs conducted a second "boat-in" on July 17 to highlight this problem. The AWA is working in Harrisburg to try to permanently end this situation through future legislation.



For more information, contact Barry Toscano, AWA, or Tom Irwin (412-676-4713)

## 10. Shenandoah

### Issue: Access

Current status: For years the put-in for this river has been plagued by break-ins, theft, and vandalism. Recently the only safe area was sold to a new owner and its status as a put-in is in question. The state of West Virginia is interested in working out a solution if access can be found. The number of accessible take-outs are becoming fewer and fewer also. The administrator of the Harpers Ferry National Park wants only "historical" rather than recreational uses of the park, and has banned boating or tubing take-outs at the park. A parking lot on river left at Knoxville, used by fishermen and boaters, has been locked by the National Park Service personnel on the C&O Canal.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

## 11. Russell Fork, Virginia and Kentucky

### Issue: Recreational flows

Current Status: In June of last year the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers released a Draft Environmental Assessment of proposed operational changes to Flannagan Reservoir, and reduced flows to the river in the middle of these studies. Since then the days of optimum whitewater releases (1,000 to 1,500 cfs.) for four weekends in October, have been replaced with only 860 cfs. Responding to this assessment, and to the defective U.S. Fish and Wildlife studies which recommended only 300 cfs., the AWA filed a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request, which has just recently been responded to. The AWA is continuing to research both flow and technical fish issues on the Russell Fork. On the local front, Congressman Rick Boucher (D-VA) is trying to find funding for the Corps to undertake another study.

For more information, contact Steve Taylor (301-587-1204)

## 12. Tygart, West Virginia

### Issue: Access

Current Status: The supervisor of Valley Falls State Park has warned kayakers that boating through the State Park on the Valley Falls section of the Tygart will no longer be permitted. AWA and the West

Virginia Rivers Coalition are planning to open negotiations with the supervisor and with other officials in West Virginia State government to resolve the dispute.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)

## 13. Gauley and New Rivers, West Virginia

### Issue: Expansion of National River and Recreation Area. Possible hydro development at Gauley Dam

Current Status: The House of Representatives held hearings and passed a bill sponsored by NICK RAHALL of West Virginia to expand the GAULEY RIVER National Recreation Area and the NEW RIVER Gorge National River by more than 12,000 acres. Most of the land, 8,819 acres, would be added to the Gauley NRA. The State park at Carnifax Ferry would also be included. Pipestem State Park would be added to the New River National River. The possibility of hydroelectric power development at the base of the Summersville Dam is still alive although any hydro plant built at that location will have to comply with very stringent terms and conditions to protect the recreational usage of the river. The put-in for private boaters, as well as for commercial boaters, may have to be moved slightly and improved and the astounding sight of water pouring forth from the tubes would disappear forever, but otherwise the river would remain the same. One provision in the Rahall bill, however, has been vigorously opposed by boaters. The provision would require the Park Service to provide private boater access at Woods Ferry (river right) and prohibit the Park Service from buying any lands in the Gorge for any purpose until that access land has been purchased.

## 14. Red River, Kentucky

### Issue: Wild and Scenic

Current status: Senator McConnell of Kentucky recently introduced bill S. 250 to protect 19.4 miles of the Red River, downstream of highway 746, under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Bill. The Red River offers Class II-III rapids in a state with only 510 total whitewater miles, none of which are permanently protected.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers at AWA (301-589-9455)

## 15. Pigeon River, North Carolina

### Issue: Hydropower relicensing

Current status: North Carolina Power and Light holds access rights to the put-in for this whitewater section on the North Carolina-Tennessee border. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has not made a final ruling on the terms of a new license, but preliminary rumors list three days of releases per year. For years the Pigeon has been an untapped whitewater resource due to hydro projects and water quality problems.

For more information, contact Dave Brown (615) 524-4814.

## 16. Clear Creek, Tennessee

### Issue: Water supply reservoir

Current status: The Farmers Home Administration is looking to loan and grant the Catoosa Utility District \$3,370,000 to dam Clear Creek above its National Wild and Scenic area. The dam would remove a minimum of 1.5 million gallons a day of water from the river and construction of the reservoir would degrade water quality in the entire downstream reach. Besides an outstanding wilderness area, Clear Creek offers of the state's finest fishing and whitewater boating streams. There has been no public participation.

For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

## 17. North Chickamauga Creek, Tennessee

### Issue: Protected status

Current status: This 12 mile Class IV-V creek has come under protection from Bowater Inc.'s "Pocket Wilderness" Program. AWA, The Conservation Fund and other interests are working to gain permanent protection for the entire watershed which offers outstanding hiking, boating, climbing, and wilderness just outside of Chattanooga.

For more information, contact Ron Stewart (615-756-3170)

## 18. Tallulah, Georgia

### Issue: Hydropower relicensing

Current Status: Tallulah Canyon below the Georgia Power Company's Tallulah Falls Power Project is an incredible place.

Before the project was built, it was the most popular scenic attraction in north Georgia. In addition to the scenic beauty, this gorge has 2 miles of class IV whitewater which is bypassed by the project diversion. The run includes 15 to 50 foot (Oceana) runnable waterfalls, and begins at the base of 96 foot Hurricane Falls. AWA persuaded FERC to conduct a fantastically successful whitewater study of the Tallulah earlier this year and is now

asking for whitewater flows in this section as a condition of relicensing the project. (See Tallulah article elsewhere in the Journal)

For ~~more~~ information, contact

Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

### 19. Armuchee Creek,

## Georgia

### Issue: River access problems

Current Status: A legal case to deny recreational access was brought by a river-side landowner against kayakers and canoeists who allegedly behaved badly on streamside lands. The State Supreme Court has already upheld a lower court opinion that Armuchee Creek is nonnavigable and can therefore be closed to recreational boating by landowners. This decision suggests that no whitewater river in Georgia would be considered legally open to recreational boating. A jury trial was scheduled for August 9th, but the opposing lawyer was attempting to only seek a hearing with the Judge that ruled against boaters before. The Georgia Canoeing Association has hired Attorney Bobby Lee Cook to work on this jury trial. The bottom line: Georgia has the worst access situation in the nation so far as river runners are concerned. Update: Just after the July 4th holiday, a Superior Court Judge ruled that the GA DNR had no legal jurisdiction to close 14 mile of Ichauway notchaway Creek.

For more information, contact Andy Warshaw (404-373-6683)



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### 20. Coosa, Alabama

### Issue: Hydropower relicensing

Current status: For 10 years boating interests have been attempting to secure boating releases on the Coosa river in the Jordan Dam tailwater. During this time Alabama Power Company has been doing everything possible to skirt the question. Their most recent attempt was to use a fishery consultant, and a Sport Fishing Survey to develop a whitewater feasibility study. From the preliminary work the AWA has done, this study does not do justice even to sport fishing interests.

For more information, contact: Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

### 21. Pacquare-Reventaton, Costa Rica, Bio, Chile

### Issue: Hydropower

Current status: An environmental impact statement will be begun in December for the Pacquare. Thus far, boaters have had little influence over the proposed dam plans and the feasibility studies now being carried out involve almost no public input. However, financing has not yet been approved and river conservationists believe that the project may be in trouble. For the





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Reventazon, the all-powerful Costa Rican utility, **Instituto Costa Ricense de Electricidad (ICE)** has joined forces with one of Costa Rica's most powerful families, the Rojas family, to build a very destructive dam and diversion on Reventazon. The project would take water around the best 12 miles of whitewater in Costa Rica and divert flows into the **Pacaura**. All of this is being built within an area with a high level of seismic activity. The project is being **financed** by the Rojas family which owns most of the land along the Reventazon. They are already building a huge hotel which is coincidentally just above the level where the lake **will** be. In Chile, the fabulous Bio river has gained a reprieve, and river interests hope this will be permanent (see Top 40 opening paragraph).

*For more information, contact: River Conservation International (202-463-4378)*

## 22. Rio Grande, New Mexico

### Issue: Wild and Scenic

Current status: New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman has proposed legislation to designate 12 headwater miles of the Rio Grande as Wild and Scenic. Senate Bill 375 would offer protection just downstream of the currently protected Wild and Scenic Rio Grande.

*For more information, contact: Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)*

## 23. Animas, Colorado

### Issue: Possible irrigation diversion

Current Status: The proposed \$640 million Animas La Plata Project would divert water from the Animas near Durango into the LaPlata to provide agricultural water to farmers south of Durango and for the Ute Indian Reservation. A groundbreaking ceremony was recently held although funding for the project is not yet available and the whole project is temporarily jammed up by a lawsuit brought by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund to require the Bureau of Reclamation to study the effects on fisheries in the San Juan River.

*For more information, contact Bill Baker (303-972-8437)*

## 24. Arkansas, Colorado

### Issue: Almost everything.

Current Status: With more than 190,000 commercial passengers and an additional 18,000 private boaters floating the Arkan-

sas every year, the Arkansas is not only the most popular whitewater run in the nation, but one of the most troubled. Commercial use has been growing at 18% per year in recent years. With so many river users, the management plan must now be supplemented to allocate outfitter user days. Private boaters are indirectly affected since the system for commercial boaters will one-day be regulated. There are other problems. Several dam proposals (City of Colorado Springs and Aurora) are pending, a wild and scenic study is underway and local boaters are working to improve private boater access. Nothing in the State river management plan prevents dam construction and the city of Colorado Springs has proposed 2 different dams (the Mount Princeton and Elephant Rock dams) above Buena Vista, each of which would divert up to 1/3 of the river. The BLM wild and scenic study ignored the incredibly scenic Royal Gorge section.

*For more information, contact Ric Alesch (303-985-8620)*

## 25. Stanislaus, Main Stem and North Fork, California

### Issue: Water project and possible hydropower project

Current Status: Irrigation districts in the San Joaquin Valley have plans to divert water from the Main Stem of the Stanislaus just upstream of the Goodwin Dam run, which includes Mr. Toads Wild Ride, a class IV-V run. They have already invested over \$70,000,000 in a canal and tunnel to take the water, speculating that the diversion will receive regulatory approval. The whitewater character of this run would be dramatically altered if these plans go forward. The

Calaveras Co. Water District and Northern Cal. Power Agency have applied for preliminary permits to build the Ramsey-French Meadows hydro project which would eliminate the Boards Crossing Run on the N.Fork of the Stan. This project really has conservationists worried since, at an estimated 4 cents per kilowatt hour, this would be the cheapest big hydro project built in California in recent years. The U.S. Forest Service has recommended the affected section for Federal wild and scenic designation, but the agency is under a lot of political pressure to reverse its decision.

*For more information, contact Steve Evans (916-442-3155)*

## 26. Kern, California

### Issue: Hydropower relicensing; access.

Current Status: One relicensing case is now pending before FERC with 3 others due in 1996. The minimum streamflow in the Kern is now 0 cfs in winter and summer flows for whitewater are not what they could be. It is clear that changes in

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power plant operations to provide minimum **streamflows**, together with episodic releases for recreation, would improve this river's ecosystem and recreational potential. Meanwhile, on the wild and scenic section of the river a new Forest Service management plan has raised commercial **limits** from 125 passengers to 180 per day. That plan also established new private and commercial limits for the North Fork of the Kern. The plan increases private and commercial per day levels from 15 boaters each to 18 each. Permits are first come first served.

*For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)*

## 27. Clavey; California

### Issue: hydropower proposal; possible wild and scenic.

Current status: The Clavey, is a scenic class V whitewater run and the longest free-flowing stream still remaining in the Sierra Nevada mountains. The Forest Service has refused to grant wild and scenic status claiming prohibitive costs of managing such a remote wilderness river. The Turlock Irrigation District has applied to build a 423 foot high dam and reservoir, drowning 2.8 miles and all but eliminating the flow in the remaining 19 miles below the dam. TID has also proposed a 105 foot dam and powerhouse just upstream of the Clavey's confluence with the Wild and Scenic section of the Tuolumne, three smaller diversions on tributaries, two miles of pipeline, 11 miles of tunnel, and miles of transmission lines and roads.

*For more information, contact Susan Sheufole (408-459-7978)*

## 28. Mokelumne, California

### Issues: Proposed hydropower projects; access restrictions, water projects.

Current Status: Amador County's license application before FERC to build the Devils Nose Dam is still pending and a preliminary permit has been obtained to investigate construction of a Middle Bar Dam. Both dams are environmental nightmares. The Middle Bar dam would wreck a 2.5 mile class II-III whitewater section just downstream of the Electra run (and possibly the Electra Run as well) while the Devil's Nose project would ruin a class II-V segment. Meanwhile the shoreline of the Middle Bar run remains closed to all recreation due to restrictions by the East Bay Municipal Utilities District (EMUD). This is a navigable waterway

and the shoreline is subject to FERC authority. EMUD is reluctant to let boating get a serious foothold on this run since they want to raise the Pardee Dam to bring more water to Oakland. This would completely flood out the Middle Bar run.

The AWA will be participating in whitewater studies this summer on the Mokelumne, in order to gauge the economic benefits of recreation on this area. *For more information, contact Susan Sheufole (408-459-7978)*

## 29. Sixth Water, Utah

### Issue: Irrigation diversion

Current status: Terminal - Originally created by piping water 3.5 miles from the Strawberry Reservoir to irrigate the Spanish Fork region, a Central Utah Project has built an alternate transport pipe which will bypass the upper six miles, but leave intact the lower three miles. Project construction has started.

*For more information, contact Mark White (801-582-3445)*

## 30. Meadow Creek, Idaho

### Issue: Wilderness designation

Current status: congressman Larry LaRocco has proposed the Idaho Wilderness Bill (HR 1570) which will protect certain critical lands as wilderness or special management areas. Unfortunately, Governor Andrus, remaining true to pledges made during the 1980's, opposes wilderness designation for the Meadow Creek drainage. Meadow Creek is a 38 mile, Class V-VI steep creek (average drop 161 foot per mile, two miles at 240 fpm.) which flows into the Selway just above Selway Falls. Meadow Creek offers true wilderness qualities and continuous whitewater. If exempted from protection, this area is prime for exploitation by timber interests.

*For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)*

## 31. Clearwater, Idaho

### Issue: Wild and Scenic

Current status: 20 wild and scenic suitability studies have just commenced in the Nez Pierce and Clearwater National Forests. Whitewater rivers which could benefit from this include: South, North and Little North Fork Clearwater, White Sand Creek, Brushy Fork, the Bear Creek drainage, and both Moose and Meadow Creeks.

*For more information, contact Wendy Wilson (208-343-7481)*

## 32. Payette, Idaho

### Issue: Wild and Scenic, hydrodevelopment

Current status: Congressman Larry LaRocco has offered legislation (HR 233) to protect 25 miles of the N. Fork Payette, Cabarton Bridge to Banks, under Wild and Scenic designation. To support this, write: Chairman Bruce Vento, Sub-Committee on Natural Resources, US House of Representatives, 812 House Annex 1, US Capitol, Washington, DC, 20515. On the South Fork, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission denied the petition of Inter Mountain Power Corp. to rehear the application for the 3.1 megawatt Oxbow project. This denial saves the proposed dewatered, one mile stretch of canyon.

*For more information, contact Wendy Wilson (208-343-7481)*

## 33. Mid-Snake, Idaho

### Issue: Hydro relicensing


Current status: For the first time in seven years, there was enough water this spring to run the Murtaugh section of the Mid Snake. In the last few months, the AWA has joined with other river interests to comment and participate in the recent comprehensive plan put forth by the Idaho Water Resource Board. Of primary concern was the multitude of whitewater resources possible on this stretch of the Snake, including the Murtaugh section. The AWA also intervened on the Kanaka Rapids project. Also up for relicensing is the Boulder, Star and Empire projects.

*For more information, contact Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)*

## 34. East Fork of Owyhee-Bruneau-Jarbridge, Idaho

### Issue: Environmental degradation due to bombing range

Current Status: The Air Force is proposing a 1.5 million acre electronic combat zone which will impact on the East and South Fork Owyhee rivers, and on the Bruneau and Jarbridge basins. Under this proposal, 80 planes a day would be involved in wargames over these canyons. Local groups, led by Idaho Rivers United, are vigorously opposing the Air Force plans and are targeting Secretary Bruce Babbitt to put a moratorium on this type of Federal land grant. An environmental impact statement is expected in the fall.



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### 35. Klamath, Oregon

#### Issue: Possible hydropower development (Salt Caves Project)

Current Status: Last year, the State of Oregon denied the City of Klamath Falls a 401 water quality permit on technical grounds (water temperature). Just recently, the Oregon Court of Appeals upheld this denial. This case may well go to the Supreme Court, but unless a total reversal is delivered, this heavily contested project should finally be dead.

For more information, contact  
Bob Doppelt (503-345-0119)

### 36. Nisqually, Washington

#### Issue: Hydroelectric relicensing

Current status: The AWA has filed an intervention in this City of Tacoma project. At stake is a incredible two mile canyon which is totally devoid of water, and is off-limits to the public. Within this canyon are continuous Class IV-V-VI rapids. The FERC has ordered Tacoma to conduct whitewater studies, but the applicant has told the Agency (and the AWA) that they never allow access to the canyon, and refuse to conduct the tests.

For more information, contact  
Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

### 37. Middle Fork Nooksack, Washington

#### Issue: Hydro proposal

Current status: The City of Bellingham operates an existing diversion project on this river, a tunnel takes approximately 400 cfs. out of the river and through the adjacent mountain, where it connects with a 70 cfs. pipe. STS Hydro proposes to use this excess flow for power which would change the boating season on this river. The Middle Fork Nooksack flows from the glaciers of Mt. Baker, and offers a 4.5 mile run dropping 700 feet. Starting with Class III rapids, the Nooksack boasts a solid mile of continuous Class V rapids with a gradient over 200 fpm.

For more information, contact  
Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

### 38. Pine River, Wisconsin

#### Issue: Hydroelectric relicensing

Current Status: Boaters and river conservationists are trying to improve the recreational opportunities on several rivers in

the Mid-West including the Pine River.

This project has recently been found ready for environmental analysis (which means the last chance has passed for public comment), and the AWA has filed requests and recommendations along with many local recreational clubs. Other area whitewater rivers in the FERC relicensing process include the St. Louis through Jay Cook State Park (MN), Piers Gorge on the Menominee (MI), and the Peshtigo (WI). A recreational flow study will be conducted on the Menominee this summer, as water levels permit.

For more information, contact  
Rich Bowers (301-589-9455)

### 39. Alaskan Rivers

#### Issue: Ownership

Current status: Alaska's Governor Hickel is planning to file a comprehensive "quiet title" lawsuit to assert state ownership of lands beneath most rivers on public (Federal) lands. If upheld, this would open dozens of rivers (including whitewater rivers) now protected within National Parks, wildlife refuges, and those protected under Federal Wild and Scenic status (about 1/3 of Alaska's land base).

This move would effectively repeal the river protection provided by the Alaska Lands Act of 1980, and open rivers for mining and oil exploitation. It would also allow the unrestricted use of motorized craft on these rivers, including motor and increasingly popular jet boats.

For more information, contact  
Jack Hession (907-276-4048)

### 40. Tatshinshini

#### Issue: Designation as a Class A Provincial Park

Current status: On June 22, British Columbia Premier Mike Harcourt announced that the entire 2.3 million acre Alsek/Tatshinshini watershed would be permanently preserved, and called for the entire area to be nominated as a United Nations World Heritage Site. In combination with adjacent existing parks in Alaska and Canada's Yukon Territory, the region's 21 million acres would constitute the world's largest protected area which crosses national boundaries. A landmark environmental "win", this action effectively kills plans to build the Windy Craggy Project for copper, gold and cobalt. The owner claims to have spent over \$39 million in exploration of the site. The "Tat" is considered to be one of the world's top ten rafting adventures, and the Alsek Canyon is legendary among whitewater boaters.

For more information, contact  
Rich Bowers (301-589-9455) ■

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# International Activists Fighting Massive Hydro Project in China



Environmental and human rights activists from around the world are banding together in opposition to the Chinese government's plan to build a dam on the Yangtze, the third longest river in the world. The proposed Three Gorges Dam would inundate a spectacular 200 km. stretch of deep canyons, which for centuries has captured the imagination of Chinese artists and poets. The project would also flood six counties and displace 1.2 million people, a move activists claim is an unacceptable human rights violation.

The dam would be the largest hydropower project in the world, Chinese opposed to the project have been denied the right to speak against it. Opponents to the project, including engineers, scientists and journalists, have been silenced by government threats and by the imprisonment of Dai Cheng, one of China's most influential and respected writers. The writer was imprisoned and kept in solitary confinement for ten months because of her public opposition to the dam. At one point during her incarceration Dai Cheng was threatened with execution.

**"I have already  
conquered the fear  
of death," she says.**

**"They can not take  
my spirit away  
from me."**

Dai Cheng, who is a recent winner of the \$60,000 Goldman prize for environmental activism, is free now, but is not permitted to publish in China. Copies of her book, *Yangtze Yangtze*, have been destroyed by the government.

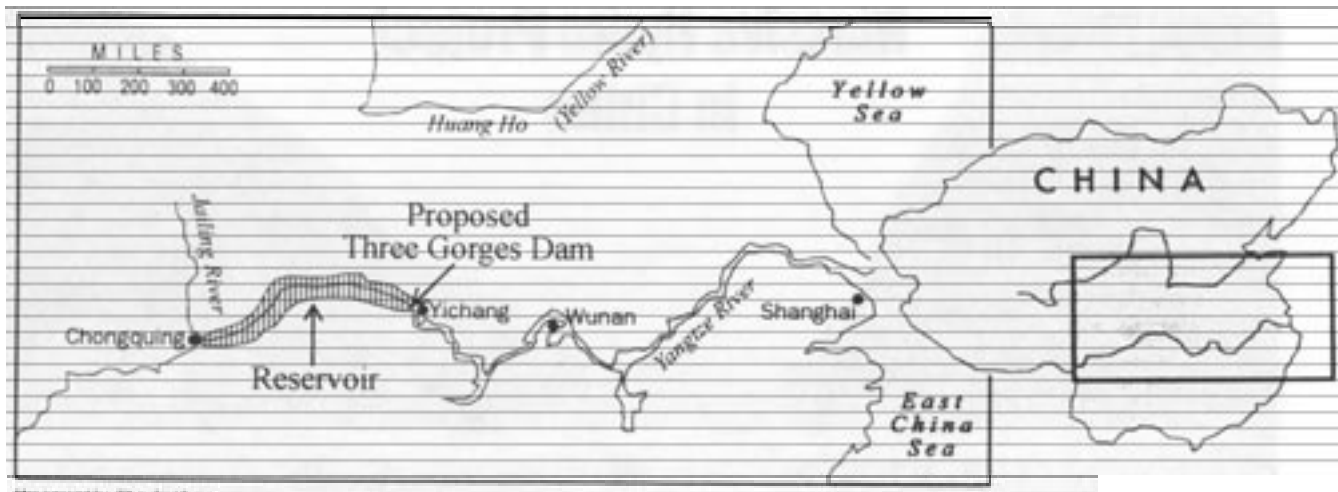
In its determination to harness the power of China's greatest river, the Chinese government is relying on a feasibility study which activists claim is seriously flawed. The dam would be constructed in a potentially active seismic region. No plan has been announced for the 1.2 million refugees that the project would create. A tentative plan would have resettled 400,000 Chinese into the Kashgar prefecture in the Xinjiang Province, more than 300 km away.

Critics of that plan charged that the move was intended to control the border area, an independent Turkistani state until taken over by the Chinese government in 1949. Tensions already run high between ethnic minorities and the Chinese government in that region.

One of the principal proponents of the plan is Ki Si-gang, a hard line Communist politician, who reportedly played a key role in the crackdown on pro-democracy students in Tiananmen Square four years ago. The actual death toll from the Tiananmen massacre remains uncertain, but the Chinese government has admitted to close to 300 deaths.



CONSERVATION



Area of detail

Owen Lammers, the executive director of the International Rivers Network, says, "At Tiananmen Square there were cameras and the world watched the violation of the students' rights. Who is watching out for the rights of the one million people who have no say in their future along the

Yangtze? The U.S. government is in a very good position to call attention to this tragedy before it happens, and we are calling on the Clinton administration to see that it does."

"We are calling on Clinton to consider forced relocation a human rights violation,

and as such an area in which demonstrable improvement is necessary to ensure the extension of China's Most Favored Nation Status beyond June of 1994."

The cost of the project is estimated to be between 1230 billion dollars and the project would be largely funded by loans from other nations. International financing has yet to be secured. But in August of 1992 Merrill Lynch and a group of Indonesian and Taiwanese investors were granted access to China's finance and insurance market on the condition that they provide key financial support for the dam.

Meanwhile, officials of BC Hydro of the Canadian consortium CYJV participated in the feasibility study for the project, a study that has been intensely criticized by the International Water Tribunal because the environmental and resettlement plan were deemed incomplete. China's Vice Premier Zhy Rongji, an engineer and proponent of the dam, recently toured Canada and lobbied for the project with British Columbia Premier Michael Harcourt and Quebec Premier Robert Bourassa.

And, in December of 1991, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation signed a contract to provide consulting services for the dam, with commitments from the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to assist with the project. American activists are seeking legal means to block these agencies from participating in the project.

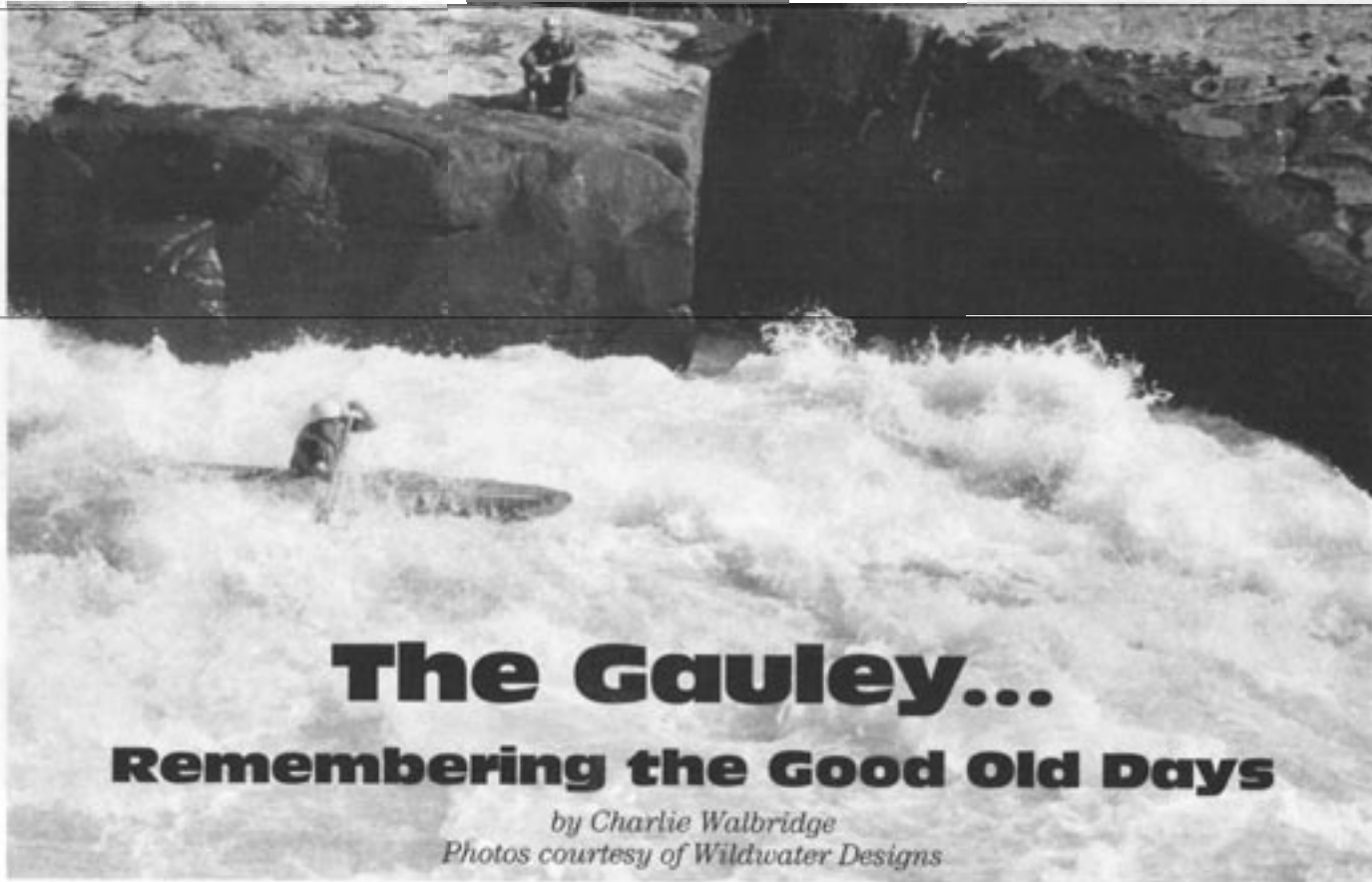
Individuals interested in opposing the Chinese plan to dam the Yangtze may contact the International Rivers Network at 1847 Berkeley Way, Berkeley, California 94703 (510) 848-1008.

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# The Gauley...

## Remembering the Good Old Days

by Charlie Walbridge  
Photos courtesy of Wildwater Designs

Tom Irwin fights his way down Pillow Rock

I've always enjoyed listening to other people's recollections of their first runs down the Gauley River, but they're usually very different from my own. For although I can not claim to have been among the very first to tackle this whitewater classic, I knew most of the pioneers who did, and I came onto the Gauley scene not long after their initial explorations.

John Berry ran the river in open canoes sometime before the dam was built during the mid 60's. The first closed boat run was in the summer of 1968. Over the next couple of years a **handful** of boaters followed.

My first run on the Gauley was in October of 1971. A recent college graduate, I'd been hired to teach seventh grade Biology in the Washington, D.C. area. I'd taught myself to paddle with friends in a college outing club, first in open canoe and then C-1. I was looking forward to trying new rivers, and I had deliberately moved into the vital center of **East Coast** whitewater



paddling.

Back then racing was a great way to meet good boaters. I'd heard about the Gauley and was interested, but wary. The river was spoken of respectfully by John Sweet, Tom Irwin, and the other Penn State paddling gods I'd met at the **Loyalsock Slalom**. Then at the Fall Savage Race I got into a team run with **Ed Gertler**. (Editor's Note: Read Ed Gertler's letter to the editor in this issue.)

After the race he asked me if I was planning to run the Gauley. When I

questioned my fitness, he admitted that he was triple leader for the CCA and that he thought I could handle it. That was all I needed to hear. I think this was the third "club trip" to run the river.

Twenty-two years ago the West Virginia highway system was a bit more basic. Route 19 did not exist in its current form, and its junction with Route 60 was a battered meeting of two-lane country roads. Coming in from Clifton Forge at midnight, I had to get out of the car, push the undergrowth aside, and read the faded road signs with a flashlight. We found **Summersville Dam** at 2 AM after getting lost several times. There were only a handful of us, so the Corps let us sleep in the pavilion near the playground.

The next morning sixteen of us from CCA met Ed and Barb Brown in the grey morning mist at the base of the dam. In addition to the **hard-boaters**, John **Dragan's** Wildwater Unlimited was running a few of his **rafts**



*Laslo Berti and Dave Gunther  
run Insignificant*

down. At the time he was the only outfitter on the New River, and he was doing the Gauley with some of his most experienced customers. A **handful** of others put in later. No one else was there.

The rapids at **first** seemed powerful, but manageable. I was doing **fine** until Pillow Rock Rapid. We scouted, but I had no idea what I was getting into. Once in the rapid, I found out too late that it was the biggest water I'd ever seen! I **ran** up against the big pillow near the left-hand rock wall, flipped instantly, and swam. My foot caught in a thigh strap; the C-1 went to one side of Volkswagen Rock and I went to the other. I got dragged over the top of the rock and was driven down to the bottom of the river like a pile driver. I guess I was too stupid to let it shake me up.

The only takeout we knew of was the railroad bridge at Peter's Creek. It made for a long day, especially with swimmers in every major rapid. We portaged Iron Ring without question, noting the corpse of a horribly battered deer in an eddy below.

Approaching Sweet's Falls, I was warned in no uncertain **terms** that the hole at the bottom was an absolute keeper. Bill **Funk** had kayaked the drop the previous year, but he refused to discuss his route. He said only that the line was only 6" wide and to miss it

meant certain death. **As** we approached, mist rose up from the lip of the drop, turning my bowels to jelly. Terrified, I grabbed the center eddy and hustled **carefully** over to the far left chute. I'd never seen anything so **mean-looking!**

Below here, it was a hard push to make the **tracks** before sunset. Koontz's Bend passed **quickly**, since we were too tired to play. I finished the day physically exhausted and mentally drained. I wasn't sure that I ever wanted to do that **again!** The Lower Gauley the next day was easier, but I came around a corner and found an eddy **full** of boats. A swim of Lower Mash followed. After a tough run I close my eyes and see the river unfold ahead of me. I rode home that night dreaming of enormous holes and waves. But soon I forgot my fear and looked forward to getting back.

Pillow Rock was always my nemesis. For years no one knew how to run it, and almost everyone rolled or **swam**. I was always pleased to roll back up, but stayed in my boat only **half** the time during the years it took me to figure things out. **All** this aquatic activity, combined with the words of Idaho's Dr. Walt Blackadar, inspired

the development of the HiFloat Life Vest.

In later years, as more people came to the river, the show continued unabated. I started running without air bags because I felt it gave me "added incentive" to roll. On one run of Pillow, I popped my **sprayskirt** halfway down. The stern quickly **filled** with water, and a decade before the **first** squirt boats, I paddled my **Hahn** vertically through the big waves. It was only when the boat started to sink that I decided to bail out.

I continued to sneak Sweet's Falls. Boaters gradually learned that the "killer hole" was an exploding wave in disguise. **Dragan** at first lined his rafts, empty of customers, around the drop, but eventually the rafts started going over. A few hard-boaters made the run, then many. Intimidated by **first-run** lore, I was one of the last holdouts.

**As** I was scouting Sweet's Falls one **afternoon**, Susie Lilly, the 15 year-old daughter of a West Virginia paddler I'd boated with occasionally, came up and asked me how to run it. I told her I didn't, but pointed out the line. She smiled, said "O.K.", and skipped back to her boat. She ran the big ledge almost sideways, bouncing off of what is now called Dildo Rock and flipping in the frothy mess at the bottom. She quickly rolled up, yelled "Whoopie", tossed her paddle, and continued

downstream. I figured I could paddle at least as well as that, and while the drop still scares me I've been doing so ever since.

Iron Ring retained its evil reputation. During the early years few ran it and many carried. On my second run only Jim Snyder, 16, handled it **with** any style. Now the situation is reversed; almost no one makes that portage. Even though I can see the line and realize that the drop is probably easier than it looks, I'll still walk. The Gauley makes me awfully mellow, and all that adrenaline would ruin the mood. And I just can't get that dead deer out of my mind.

We kept hearing rumors of plans to **dam** the river. We expected a big **political** battle, so strange as it might seem today, several of us conspired to lure more boaters to the river. I wrote about the Gauley in the AWA Journal

in 1972, and several of us offered to guide groups down the river the following fall. In 1973 I took sixteen Southeastern boaters down the run, including Claude **Terry** and his son, Mike. With only two runs under my belt I didn't know the river all that well, but I felt comfortable moving from eddy to eddy. Making a key stop above drop two of Lost Paddle, I was immediately pinned to the shore by a horde of following boaters. I had to fight my way through the crowds to peel out into the next drop. Mike Terry was fearless and I spent the day wondering if he was going to kill himself. His attitude would be pretty **normal** today.

One of the things we did was sponsor a downriver race from the top of Mash to the pool at the base of Pure Screaming Hell. I tried it once, but decided that the Gauley was a thing of

beauty to be savored, not **rushed**. Wally Dyer and his partner, Ben Cass, were a top-ranked doubles team from Philadelphia. Wally was an intense, competitive man, but not exactly a big-water paddler. Naturally I delighted in telling him all my Gauley River horror stories before his first race. **Looking** at the starting **list**, he saw a pair listed he didn't recognize. He turned to me and asked pointedly, "Who's **this** Singley and **Wilkinson**?"

Now they were friends of mine, a couple from Blacksburg who raced in the men's class because there weren't enough boats around to **form** a mixed division. But I made up a story about a hot British team that had won all the races in Canada that summer. I though

*Al Louande in Iron Ring-Note Mae West PFD and Iliad Paddle!*





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**Bob Taylor does a Pop-Up at Warmup Rapids, Bob drowned in Lost Paddle in 1977**

Wally was going to swallow his trademark cigar! Later his partner came to me and begged me to lay off so he could get some sleep.

Over the next few years the numbers of paddlers steadily increased. The boating community was *still* relatively tiny, and the quantity of Gauley Boaters smaller still. But now you didn't have to *arrange* to meet someone to have a shuttle.

We knew who was already on the river by the cars at the parking lot. We could tell who was paddling at a distance by the colors of their boats and gear. If we didn't know you and you weren't with someone we did, you probably didn't belong here.

One year two small, inexpensive rafts were beached below Insignificant, their floors ripped out from under them by the force of the water. Another year saw a horribly mangled Blue Hole canoe washed on the shore near the head of Pillow Rock Rapid. We chuckled knowingly at these wrecks, and paddled on.

Then one fall the number of boaters jumped from dozens to several hundred. For the *first* time there were lots of people around who I didn't know. And most of them were capable boaters who handled the river with class. All these new people came

as something of a shock to the old timers. There were three very attractive women serving as shuttle bunnies for a group from South Carolina. We got down to Lost Paddle only to find them nude sunbathing on rocks dispersed throughout the rapid. Definitely unsafe, we agreed. Could cause accidents!

We soon outgrew the capacity of the pavilion at the top of the dam. One weekend I arrived in a driving rain. The pavilion was jammed, and we spent a sleepless night greeting new arrivals and telling lies to each other. The next day a few idiots backed their cars over the saturated lawn to load their gear, getting stuck and leaving huge ruts. This motivated the Corps to keep Battle Run Campground open in *future* years, but we were banned from the pavilion forever.

That morning the Gauley was running at 5,000 cfs and the Meadow was putting out 10,000 or so. Route 19, which we called "Corridor L", had just been completed. Many folks hiked into the Lower Meadow to view the chaos. The few who tried the Gauley had wild stories. Tom McEwan hit the hole in the bottom of Pillow Rock and lost his helmet and glasses. He carried out. "Fearless" Fred Young and his group of midwest maniacs ended up carrying

all of Lost Paddle Rapid along the railroad tracks.

Lower down Chip Queitzsch, a fellow C-boater, was surfing a big hole at Koontz's Flume when he noticed his air bags floating downstream. The seams of his fiberglass boat had parted! Later the day turned bitterly cold. After looking at all the flooded upper tributaries, we settled on the North Fork of the Cherry only to get snowed on. I stayed up in the headwaters for the rest of the weekend.

Commercial rafting on the Gauley began in the mid 70's. The owners were people we'd boated with, and we weren't shy about *telling* them that they were *making* a big mistake. I remember sitting in eddies with my buddies in Lost Paddle, *chuckling* as those big rubber boats swamped and floundered, totally out of control. Their sweep oars broke, the guides lost control, and guests fell out of the rafts by the score. Pure entertainment!

We felt that they'd never be able to make rafting on the Gauley a success. Today, as the guides hold their smooth, precise lines through the rapids, I realize that we underestimated, as usual, the ability of river runners to improve their equipment and skills. I certainly never visualized the crowds that we have today.

During the *first* few years we left our boats at the mouth of Peter's Creek, *walking* in along the tracks the next day to run the "Lower" down to Swiss. After several people had boats stolen some of us began leaving our craft above Koontz's Bend and walking out through the mile-long railroad tunnel under the ridge. This split the river distance nicely, *allowing* us to run the great play rapids downstream at the beginning of day two.

The walk through the mile-long tunnel, however, was spooky at best. It took about twenty minutes to get through. We almost never remembered to bring flashlights, so we

stumbled about in the dark, stubbed our toes on the ties, and floundered in the filthy puddles all the way to the other end. One clown brought a small compressed-air horn and almost scared us to death! I never got caught by a train, but those who did described in detail the unpleasantness of lying face down in the mud as the cars roared by, close enough to touch. So, even though the road is unsightly, I was not totally unhappy to see Appalachian Whitewater's develop an access at Mason Branch.

Another year we were hanging around at Swiss waiting for our shuttles. Not knowing that railroad cars stick out well past the tracks, two fools had parked their vans right next to the rails. A local man drove up and said, "You'd better move them things, 'cause there's a train a-comin', and they wrecked some feller's car last week." Spurred by the approaching whistle, we did what we had to. One van was easy; we broke in through the side window, released the brake, and pushed it away.

But, to our horror, we discovered that the second one had a locking steering column. We got all the people we could find, thirty or forty strong: boaters, guides, customers, and the local man who'd warned us. We grabbed the van and muscled first one end over, then the other. The front end was really heavy, and we had to bounce and skid it a few inches at a time. Now you understand why I don't mind paying a few bucks to park!

The commercial rafting business on the Gauley Continued to grow. Today the need for extra guides is met by Western boatmen who travel east for Gauley Season, but during the late 70's it was not unusual for company managers to cruise around the paddler camping slots below the dam offering \$120 or more to experienced paddlers who would guide for a day. That was real money, but I came to play, and the idea of being on the Gauley in a boat full of guests made me nervous.

But while the crowds are a nuisance, they helped save the river by turning it into a major tourist attraction. Dave Brown recalls being ushered into West Virginia Senator Byrd's office on Capitol Hill. This was the beginning of the Reagan Era and this

venerable politician told him that he "didn't have much to give to environmentalists today." Brown countered by explaining that outfitters were bringing over \$10 million into the area during the four week Gauley season. That got the Senator's attention! The efforts of AWA and Citizens For Gauley River, which coordinated opposition to the project from kayakers, outfitters, and local businessmen, eventually bore fruit. There's still much to do, but in theory the river and its flows are protected.

By the mid 1980's the scene had changed. The season moved from October to September, trading the majesty of changing foliage for warmer air temperatures. Traffic increased. Cars entering the parking lot below the dam were tightly controlled, and traffic jams at other access points became normal, not unusual. In previous years the area below the dam was like old home week, a huge reunion of East Coast paddlers. Now, rather than seeking out places where boaters congregate, I try to avoid the crowds by using off-peak put-in times and access points.

But crowds are not the whole story. The Gauley during the Fall is an amazing display of the latest high-tech plastic and rubber gear. People have surprisingly good skills, and swims are rare. Innumerable access points and lunch stops, complete with tents,

cooking facilities, and graded roads have taken away the wilderness feel. The river is more accessible, and untold thousands have gathered strength and sanity from passing through. But something very special has been lost.

While I still enjoy the river immensely, I miss the wildness we found in the 70's. The precious sense of exploration and wonder felt by our small, self-reliant groups as they moved carefully and respectfully down a wild, trackless canyon seems indescribably distant today.

While I regret the loss of the marvelous camaraderie we shared in the days when everyone knew each other, I meet new people who become friends every year. And, when I put on late in the day, about the time that most of the other boats are nearing the end of their run, the years slip silently away, as the solitude and majesty of the Gauley Canyon closes in around me once again.

The "good old days" may be gone, but the Gauley will always be a special place. So get some friends together and enjoy! ■

*Todays boaters approach Sweet's Falls with a more cavalier attitude than in the Good Old days. Photo: Keith Unfried at Sweet's Falls taken by Jim Cavo, 1992*



## BOAT-IN AT OHIOPLYE A SUCCESS

Boaters from all over the East gathered in OhioPyle State Park on July 17 to voice their displeasure with Park policies. Top among their gripes was the user fee instituted in 1991 by the Pennsylvania DER.

Over 100 people participated in picketing and dialogue with Park users. Carrying signs with slogans like "FREE THE RIVER", people walked the pavement in the boaters parking lot from 7:00 A.M. until 3:00. At 3:00 paddles replaced placards.



A new organization was recruiting members and taking a survey of issues. FRIENDS OF THE YOUGH signed up about 250 people during the Boat-In. Mark Sargable of Canowingo, MD became the happiest Friend of the Yough, when at 3:00 his name was drawn as winner of a New Wave Infinity Cruise Control kayak.

Mark, who comes to OhioPyle a couple of times a year with the Conewago Canoe Club, said, "I have a problem with paying a fee that doesn't get used in OhioPyle. Boaters shouldn't be singled out to pay, when other Park users don't."

Debbie Patz, President of Keystone River Runners (a local club), said, "We just want to be included in the decision-making process here. We're hoping to open some dialogue with the State Park and the DER. I think that private boaters can contribute some valuable input to the management of a river."

Tom Irwin was acting as spokesperson for the Friends of the Yough, when a Pittsburgh TV news crew and three newspapers interviewed him. "Our key complaints are overregulation, river safety and discrimination," he explained. "When the Park issues decrees that limit access to the river, charges fees or creates bureaucratic hassles, the best boaters just stay away. Under the present quota system, these slots are being used by unguided rental rafts, creating a dangerous imbalance between experienced and inexperienced people on the river."

Tom also made the point that private boaters are using no more of the facilities in the Park than other users who pay nothing.

When invited to speak on a Pittsburgh radio talk show, Tom explained, "Although the Park calls it a reservation fee, boaters who don't need a reservation still have to pay. We wouldn't object to a reservation fee, if it were for reservations only. If they call access to the Park a reservation, then everybody should be paying."

AWA Regional

Coordinator Barry Tuscano was manning the Friends of the Yough table for most of the day. People were asked to fill out a survey to determine their feelings about the issues. Then they were entered in the drawing for prizes. Besides the boat, Karen Yotter of

Magadore, OH won a Patagonia T-shirt, and Jan Matthews from Pittsburgh won a paddling jacket, both contributed by Riversport in Confluence, PA. Peter Disroth of Hazelton, PA won a spray skirt contributed by Mountain Surf of Friendsville, MD.

"We want to survey boaters so we can accurately say what the important issues are and so we can act as true representatives," Tuscano commented. "Maybe we'll get the Park to talk with us now."

Park Supervisor Doug Hoehn did very little talking. When asked about the safety issue, he said, "I'd rather count on the raft guides for safety on the river. I know what the training is for the guides; I don't know what the training is for the private boaters."

But many of the guides must consider themselves to be private boaters also, because they too were lining up to register their opinions with the Friends of the Yough. ■







## JUST WHO ARE M E "FRIENDS OF M E YOUGH"?

By Barry Tuscano

We started out as a motley crew. We came from all walks of life and varying levels of commitment. The group changed from month to month, and the energy level was constantly waxing and waning. We never called ourselves by name, although occasionally we referred to ourselves as the "Ohiopyle Troublemakers". This is

what Park Management called us too, but I think they gave us more credit than we deserved.

Debbie and Phil Patz started things. Debbie was the newly elected President of Keystone River Runners when the Pennsylvania DER slipped in a private boater user fee like thieves in the night.

At a hastily called meeting at the Patz house, we discussed everything from legal action to boycotts.

Over the next few months, we slowly evolved a piecemeal strategy of confronting the DER in Ohiopyle, while working the political scene in Harrisburg. Debbie was the catalyst. This diminutive mother of two who works in public relations was able to mobilize almost every member of the Keystone.

At the same time Tom Irwin, representing Three Rivers Paddling Club, was a steadying influence with years of experience in battling the Harrisburg bureaucracy. An engineer during the day, he spent his evenings firing off letters or compiling data on the computer.

Ron Gardener, a machinist who admits to being an ex-coal miner with a red neck, was able to muster a crowd simply by bringing his family. Ron, who is deeply religious, says he knows when something is wrong and feels compelled to work to right it.

Don Frew, a perennial in the National Open Canoe competitions, has been one of the work horses. Always available with

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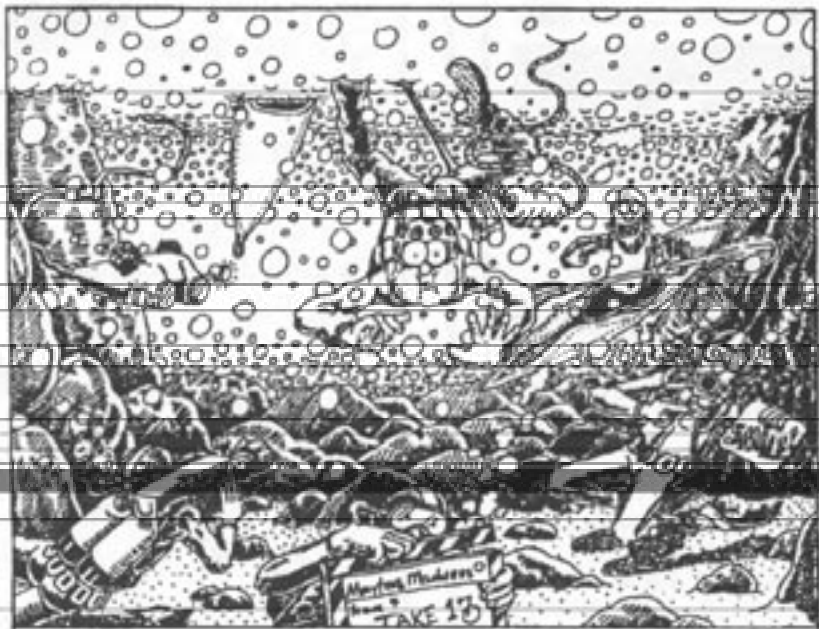
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## BRIEFS

his time and sweat, Don could be counted on to get things done.

Bob Sioa and I became actively involved in this group after being arrested by Park Rangers for sign-in violations. People had been using the sign-in sheets to express their outrage with Park policies. We believe the Rangers wanted to make an example of us. Bob, a former Park volunteer, has been a leader in the paddling community for over 20 years.

When I agreed to become the AWA Regional Coordinator for this area, I was committed to working to protect the Upper Yough from the kind of bureaucracy that had taken over Ohio. It seemed to me that the battle in Ohio should be fought by those who use the river. But then, my 14-year-old son caught the paddling bug, and the lower Yough was the only intermediate summertime option in the area. So for the sake of future generations of boaters and fueled by the pain of the unjust lash of the law, I jumped into the fray.

Bob Ruppel, owner of Riversport Outfitters and Paddling School, became involved after resisting the current of Park regulations on his own for years. He was our local connection.



There were others too. Jeff Pryel made his office available for our monthly meetings. Mike Bailey and Neal Dana were both involved from the early days.

We were small in numbers, but we were committed and managed to get some things accomplished. We consulted with a lawyer on the legality of the DER actions. We gathered data on Park use and safety records. We wrote letters to state officials. We met personally with local elected officials and then travelled to Harrisburg to meet with more. We arranged a meeting with the head of the Bureau of State Parks. We waited some more.

As summer boating season neared, we decided that we had to change our approach. Fifty people demonstrating or ten

people writing letters wasn't going to further our goals. We needed to broaden our base to include the out-of-town crowd. We needed to show that we did represent the interests of all private boaters in Ohio. We also needed to get more people involved.

From my experience in AWA, I knew that the way to get a boater's attention is to give away a boat. Once John Schreiner agreed to supply a boat, we decided that we had to define the primary issues that boaters care about.

And then we needed a name. The finalists were "The Yough Supporters" and "The Friends of the Yough".

And so we became The Friends of the Yough! ■

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# ME ISSUES AS SEEN BY THE FRIENDS OF THE YOUGH

1) The Park calls it a reservation fee. It's not. If you go to Ohioypyle on a weekday or even after noon on weekends, there is no need for a reservation. But you still must pay the fee. It is a user fee, and boaters are being charged only because boating is convenient to regulate. No other users in the park are charged for using the same facilities that we use.

2) The numbers that the Park has collected over the past years clearly show that there is no need for quotas on weekdays. The same argument can be made for most Sundays and many Saturdays. These figures have been available to the Park; why haven't they figured it out?

3) Ohioypyle Falls in low water is a Class IV rapid. Many of the long-time residents of Ohioypyle have jumped, swum or paddled the falls at one time. A birchbark canoe was filmed making the run for the 1935 version of "The Last Mohicans". But Doug Hoehn says that anyone caught turning the falls will be prosecuted under a



Fish Commission law dealing with the hazardous operation of a boat and fined up to \$2,000.

4) Four pages of regulations concerning private access to the river provide for summary penalties for offenders. Most of the rules have nothing to do with safe or efficient management of river use.

5) At no time since the imposition of the quota system have private boater interests been solicited when decisions concerning private boaters were being made.

6) On any summer day hundreds of people swim in the river above the falls or in Entrance Rapid, a clear violation of Park rules. Meanwhile, private boaters are arrested for incorrectly filling in the sign-in sheet. Two cars are left in the parking lot after dark — the one with boat racks gets a ticket; the one with gun racks doesn't. (Actually happened!)

7&8) Anyone who has been there recently knows what a circus the rental scene is. Anyone with a credit card can rent a raft, and most don't know how to hold a paddle. If private boaters didn't help them out, there would be many more tragedies in Ohioypyle. Rentals could be required to be accompanied by a minimum number of experienced boaters or made to take a guided trip.

9) River use was supposed to be split 50% commercial/50% private. Now, with the unguided commercial trips (rentals), usage is over 90% commercial.

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## Lawsuits Threaten Whitewater Recreation

A Bucks County, Pa jury recently awarded \$800,000 to the family of a man who drowned on a family outing. The jury ruled that the canoe and inertube rental company, Point Pleasant Canoe Rental and Sales, Inc., was negligent in not supervising the trip, by providing lifeguards along the river. The company asked the judge to overturn the verdict, but before he could rule, the case was settled out of court for an undisclosed amount.

Other outfitters and canoe liveries around the country have expressed concern about the implications of the ruling. They argue that it will be inordinately expensive to provide riverside monitors to

avoid such liability. Outfitters maintain that providing such protection would make that cost of such river trips prohibitively expensive.

Just two years ago REI decided to quit renting whitewater kayaks because of liability concerns. The company maintains that because renters tend to be less experience, they are more prone to accidents and subsequent litigation. REI is also considering dropping its line of mountaineering gear, in response to the series of personal injury lawsuits that led Chouinard, Equipment, Ltd. to file for bankruptcy law protection.

## National Park Service Publishes Guide to River Assessment

The National Park Service has published a 100 page handbook that serves as a guide for conducting recreational assessments for streams and rivers. The handbook, **Instream Flows for Recreation**, provides a framework for designing studies, exploring the effects of flow on resource conditions, evaluating flows and adopting protection strategies. For a free copy of the handbook contact: Doug Whittaker, River Trails and Conservation Assistance Program, NPS, Alaska Regional Office, 2525 Gambell St., Anchorage, Alaska 99503 (907) 257-2654. ■

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## DEERFIELD RIVER RELEASE DATES

The New England Power Company and New England FLOW have announced the following release dates for the Deerfield River in New England.

900 c.f.s., four hour releases are slated at Monroe Bridge on July 10-11, July 17-18, July 24-25, July 31-August 1, August 7-8, August 14, August 21-22, August 28, September 5 and September 17, 18, 19. The National Championship Downriver Race is slated for September 19 at Monroe Bridge and recreational boaters are asked to use the river only when racers are not on the course. The Open Boat National Championships and the Slalom National Championships are slated at Zoar Gap on July 7-9 and September 16-18, respectively.

Releases on the Fife Brook section are scheduled at a minimum of 700 cfs for 3 hours starting between 9:30 am. and noon on the following dates: July 7-11, 14-18, 21-25, 31, August 1, 5-8, 12-15, 19-22, 26-29, September 1-5, 15-19, 22-24, 29-30, October 1-3, 6-10, and 13-17.

For additional information including the exact release time call the Deerfield River Flow Information Line at 413-625 8414. ■



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## Humor

# Wildwater Biathlon Slated for '96 Olympics

by Jonathan Katz



The National Olympic Committee has **announced** that it **will** include whitewater biathlon as a demonstration sport in the 1996 Summer Olympics. Races **will** be staged at the slalom **course** on the Ocoee River. Paddlers **will** compete in men's and women's G1, K-1 and OC-1. Mixed double teams (1 man/1 woman, in an 0-2) **will** also be eligible. The event is made possible by a \$250,000 grant from Smith and Wesson, which **will** also supply equipment.

Whitewater biathlon originated in Arkansas and evolved rapidly in Kentucky and West Virginia. Its popularity grew exponentially as a result of the Colt .45 Challenge Series last summer; a series sponsored by Colt, Industries, Inc., makers of the AR-15 and M-16 sporting rifles, and by the G. Heilman Brewing Company, bottler of Colt .45 Malt Liquor. These companies **underwrote** the three races that were held on the Monroe Bridge section of the Deerfield in Massachusetts, the Russell Fork in Kentucky, and the North Fork of the Payette in Idaho.

Dr. Theodore "Bam Bam" McBride, who **will** no doubt be a force to be reckoned **with** at the Olympics, won the Monroe Bridge race **with** a

**time** of 35:35; a raw score of 37 into 30, and an adjusted time of 35:00 flat.

McBride is convinced that the inclusion of the event in the Olympics **will** give wildwater biathlon international recognition.

"Biathlon combines the best of downriver racing and practical **marks-**manship. It has done wonders for my eye-hand coordination, as well as my **sidesurfing**. And it's fun for the whole family," McBride said, as he accepted the \$5000 **first** prize at the Monroe Bridge competition.

"I love whitewater biathlon and only wish it had been around when I was in my fifties."

Wildwater biathlon contestants race the clock downriver on a staggered **start**. There are no gates. Targets consist of beer bottles filled **with** a red solution, placed in clusters of one to five, positioned along the shore and on midstream boulders. Contestants **are** aware of the target placements in advance, but they are often difficult. Frequently targets are positioned in the midst of large rapids, where it is impossible to eddy out to aim.

On the Deerfield, for instance, three bottles **had** to be hit on the fly in

the crux of the Dragon's Tooth. At the Russell Fork the toughest target placement necessitated **sidesurfing** immediately above El Horrendo to make a hit. Surprisingly, most contestants in these races managed to "make these kills", although it took an average of four shots for each target.

Whitewater biathlon paddlers **are** armed with standard **sidearms**... nine millimeter automatics in shoulder holsters. They are allotted a limited amount to **m u n i t i o n**, 90 rounds in 6 clips. They must hit all 30 targets with the fewest shots possible; a perfect score is 30 out of 30. Each miss carries a 5 second penalty. Contestants who **miss** a target completely or run out off **m u n i t i o n** are **disqualified**.

Though some contestants carry their **guns** in their control hand, most elect to **reholster** between target zones. The pistol is tethered to the paddler's neck with a safety line. Ammo is stashed in packets in the PFD. Reloading requires two hands and is difficult.

With 100% accuracy a contestant may be able to hit all 30 targets **with** only one reload, but perfect **marks-**manship is virtually unheard of and a single miss mandates a second reload.

Dropped clips, swept into the river, reduce firepower and carry a 75 second penalty. Jammed weapons can be cleared on the water, but are costly in terms of lost time.

According to enthusiasts virtually everyone who tries whitewater biathlon becomes addicted. Ken Omaha, who won the Class 5+ North Fork Race in an open boat with an adjusted time of 43:25 and a 46 into 30 shooting day, waxed ecstatic while receiving his award check

"Paddling down a big river...blasting away... Hell, it's better than sex! On my second roll in Jacob's Ladder I came up *fling* and had two in the red before my head broke the surface!"

The targeting on the Ocoee is expected to test the limits of the sport. Boaters will have to kill five targets "on the wing" while running Broken Nose, and blow away another five while side surfing Hell Hole. OG2 mixed teams generally have an **advantage** since the

lighter, female bow paddlers usually do the shooting.

**"No way is he getting behind me with a gun!" says Becky Oakley, who competes in the OC-2 division with her husband Paul. Becky is a deadly one handed shot, who popped 30 bottles with 33 shots on the Deerfield.**

It is expected that at least **fifteen** countries will compete in the two day long Olympic demonstration on the Ocoee, with the Cambodians and Bosnians being favored.

Smith and Wesson **will** be supplying the 9 mm automatic weapons for the Olympic event. Budweiser and Heineken are bidding for the beer concession and the exclusive right to **sup-**

ply targets. The American Rifle Association is contributing heavily to the development fund and lobbying extensively for live TV coverage.

"We're delighted to help sponsor this event," said ARA representative Bud "Bubba" Cracker. "The Ocoee is the most dangerous small river in America. Last year three people were shot out there. If we can teach boaters to paddle safely with firearms, we can make the country a better place to live in. And, we can help foster this new sport, one which everyone should get a real bang out of. Ow motto is: 'An armed paddler is a safe paddler!'"

Of course, wildwater biathlon is still a dangerous sport, almost as risky as paddling without a **gun**. Fortunately, the only casualty so far has been competitor William Nealy, who shot himself in the foot on a competition on the Narrows of the Green.

Final details regarding the qualifying rounds and mandatory drug testing program (for reds, **roids** and crack) for the Olympic event **will** be published soon.

Meanwhile, interest is increasing in a new variant of the sport known as the Reverse Biathlon. In this event teams of two paddlers take turns running the river. First the members of the Blue team paddle while the Red Team shoots at them from shore. Then the teams switch roles. Scoring is complex, with points awarded for hitting paddlers and boats, while penalty points are added for each hit a team sustains. In Reverse Biathlon paintball guns are used instead of real weapons..

# ALASKA!



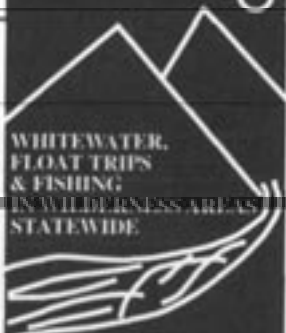
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# TALLULAH!

*by Rich Bowers*

**1821** -Initials are found carved on trees around Tallulah Falls. An old settler tells of an Indian trader who had carved those initials sixty years before.

**1882** -The Tallulah Falls Railroad is completed. Weekend excursions from Atlanta and Athens connect to the "Niagara of the South", and bands welcome guests to the station.

**1912** -A merger to form the Georgia Railway and Power Company provides the capital to construct a 116 foot high, 400 foot long dam. The Tallulah Gorge is silenced.

**1970** -In an effort to revitalize the local economy, Karl Wallenda performs a high-wire act over the Gorge.

**1993** -For two days, the magnificence of the gorge is restored as conservation/recreation groups, working through the Federal dam relicensing process, seek to study the recreational potential of the Tallulah River.

Long before man, before whitewater boating...the modern day conservation movement...and the need for more and more power generation, there was the Tallulah River Gorge.



*Mike Hipsher (NOC)  
50' Oceana Falls*



# TALLULAH!

**R**unning white for just over two miles in Northeastern Georgia, the Gorge dropped 650 feet in the first half mile, over waterfalls such as Tempesta (76 ft.), Hurricane (96 ft.), Oceana (50 ft.), and Bridal Veil (17 ft.). With the assistance of numerous side falls dropping over 1000 feet into the Gorge, falls such as Caledonia, Stairway, Ribbon, Hawthorne, and Vandevere, the Tallulah River ran an average of 600 cubic feet per second. According to early visitors it could be heard from over a mile away.

The volume and intensity of the river was well respected by the original inhabitants of the Tallulah area, the Cherokee, who created many myths about the Gorge. Little people, Yunwi Tsundi, were said to live in crevices and caves deep in the gorge and in grottoes under the waterfalls (called Ugunyl). Whitewater boaters have, on numerous occasions and on various rivers, claimed to have seen these or similar creatures, usually snagging paddles!

From 1882, and the completion of the railroad, to 1913, the enormous popularity of the natural wonders of this gorge allowed the town of Tallulah Falls to grow into one of the largest tourist attractions in the Southeast. At its peak, there were seventeen hotels and boarding houses in and around town, the largest, Cliff House, had room for 300 guests. In 1877, it is estimated that 1,800 visitors made the trip to the falls.

Unfortunately for the Tallulah, the beginning of this century also signaled the beginning of the industrial revolution and hydropower development in the United States. The Tallulah Gorge, as well as many other rivers across the country, fell victim to an age when the beauty of nature was often overshadowed by the power of man. In September 1913, in order to provide the expanding city of Atlanta with light and power, 18,000 horsepower of electricity was sent from the Tallulah Falls dam, and the river ran no more.

As with most of the dams built during this time, Georgia Power's Tallulah

dam was considered a technological wonder. The Tallulah project had succeeded in blasting a 6,666 foot tunnel through solid rock and diverting the entire river to create, at the time of its construction, the plant with the highest head (drop) east of the Rocky Mountains. At this time Tallulah Falls dam was the biggest power development in America, with the exception of Niagara Falls and the Keokuk on the upper Mississippi.

While industrial development and energy production provided society with growth and improvements, it did not come without cost. Today we realize the negative effects of this growth; hydropower on rivers, steel production on air quality, strip mining on our landscape, and overgrazing. In the early 1900's, the costs were not as visible. However, even then, while Atlanta was flourishing with power from the Tallulah River, the town of Tallulah Falls was rapidly declining

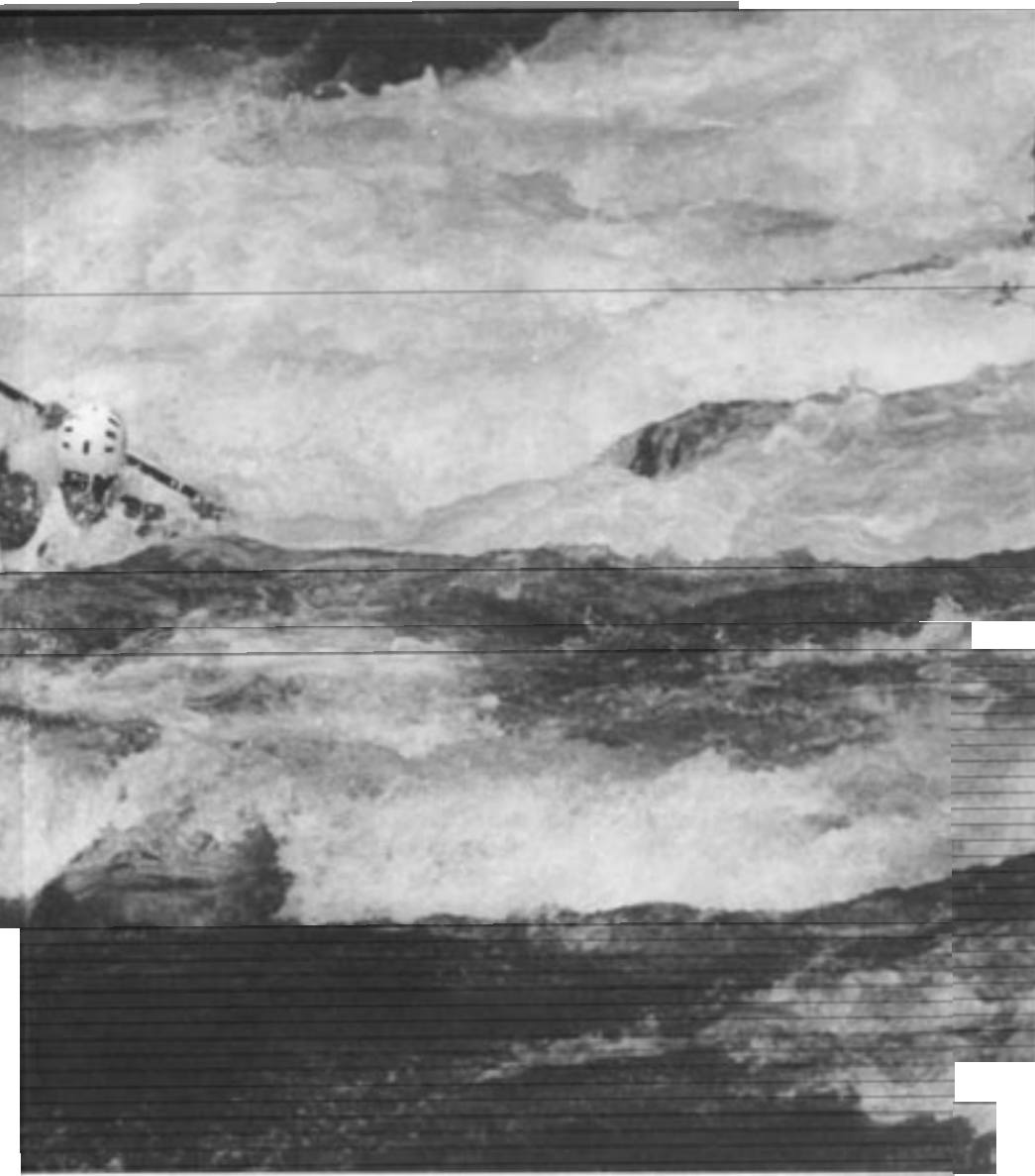
*Mike Hipsher (NOC)  
below 96' Hurricane Falls*

from the loss of its natural resources.

In time, the growing need for power harnessed the remaining power of the Tallulah and Tugalo rivers (formed by the confluence of the Tallulah and Chattooga). Today, fully six dams (Burton, Nacoochee, Mathis, Tallulah and Tugalo, also the takeout for Section 4 of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga) impact the flow and scenic beauty of this area.

Today, the Tallulah Gorge, Georgia's deepest river canyon, is dry. Only about 5 cfs., or leakage, resides in the Gorge. The only fish are a few pool locked species. Very few people come to see this once great natural attraction, and even fewer come to experience it first hand. Besides being robbed of its flow, the Tallulah Gorge





On December 18, 1991, Georgia Power filed for a new license for their North Georgia Project (which includes all six listed dams including Tallulah). In February of the following year, the American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) requested, with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, that additional studies be performed to determine the ecological and recreational values present in the Tallulah Gorge. In November of 1992, the AWA met with Georgia Power, and state and federal agencies, on how to best carry out the recreational sections of these studies. On January 7, 1993, American Rivers, Georgia Canoeing Association, Atlanta Whitewater Club, and America Outdoors joined the AWA in a motion to intervene in the North Georgia Project and in the future of the Tallulah Gorge. Through this process, these organi-

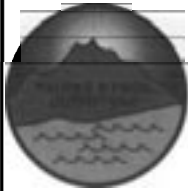
*Jerry Jascomb  
Atlanta W.W. Club*

has also been legally closed to the public due to concerns over safety, liability, and endangered species (Trillium persists).

The town of Tallulah Falls, just off U.S. Highway 23 and 441, and South of the North Carolina line, now has a population of approximately 142, and the local counties of Rabun and Habersham are among the poorest in Georgia. In ruins today, the Glenbrook Cottage is the only hotel still standing from Tallulah's resort era.

However, nature, through time, and those most affected by its treasures, through patience and/or persistence, have a way of regaining their lost strength and glory. In the case of the Tallulah Gorge, there now exists a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to restore much of the scenic, environmental and recreational potential of this area, and in so doing, perhaps help restore the economic health of this region also.





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# TALLULAH!

Nolan Whitesell on the Tallulah!



zations hope to successfully protect the non-power values of the Tallulah River. Included in this is the restoration of flow, both for whitewater recreation and as a daily minimum for aesthetics, fish habitat and ecological balance; development of a systemwide plan for the Tallulah watershed (which looks at managing all six dams to benefit the river and its use); and guaranteed public access to the gorge for recreation.

Both bureaucratic red-tape and short time frames for public participation have kept this process as a little known opportunity. In Georgia, these issues, combined with a unique political climate, has kept all but recreational interests from signing "on the dotted line". Fortunately, whitewater boaters and hydropower developers usually look for similar characteristics in rivers - gradient and speed - and so, for once, boaters were ahead of the curve on this issue. With remarkable results so far!

On Wednesday May 26th and Thursday May 27th, the AWA requested whitewater studies were conducted in the Gorge. For the first time since 1913, the Tallulah River was restored for a few hours to its original grandeur. Ten boaters, representing each of the intervening parties, were able to make the first "official" whitewater descent of the river.

The Tallulah proved to be an incredibly fantastic whitewater run. Described by the Atlanta Constitution as a "1.8 mile stretch of almost non-stop falls, cascades, and shoals", the Tallulah provided continuous Class IV entertainment, capped by Class V Oceana Falls, a runnable 50 foot waterfall. While short in length, the Tallulah provided play spot after play spot in an incredibly beautiful setting. According to John Bell of the Atlanta

Whitewater Club "the Tallulah packs more quality whitewater per mile, than any river I have boated."

Nolan Whitesell, representing the public "at large" commented that "I don't know of any more beautiful, challenging whitewater run than what we've been on — in the East".

On Wednesday, amid full media attention from major local TV stations and newspapers out of Atlanta, boaters carried their boats down Wallenda's Walk (600 feet in less than half a mile) to the top of Bridal Veil Falls, known locally as Sliding Rock, and bushwacked to the base of Hurricane Falls (considered by most to be un-runnable at present). For the first run down to the Tallulah powerhouse, the river was at 427 cfs.

After lunch, this scenario was repeated at 751 cfs., considered by many to be the optimum level studied. But at this time the participants were able to access a narrow trail which ran directly from Tallulah Park to the base of Hurricane. This is the route of choice for boaters, as it eliminates Wallenda's Walk and the carry up-river. However, this is privately owned and not under Georgia Power's license agreement. It remains to be seen if this access route can be opened either through the relicensing process or private negotiation. On Thursday, a third run at 513 cfs. was conducted.

The run above Hurricane Falls was not within the scope of this study. This area, which would offer another short section of whitewater, including Ledore and Tempesta Falls, the water-

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# TALLULAH!

fall was made famous in 1972 during the filming of "Deliverance".

Overall, the Tallulah offers a true wilderness experience for the advanced boater. Besides the "rush" of running, and re-running (or thinking of running) Oceana Falls, boaters can easily spend the day dropping over 17 foot Bridal Veil, or playing in any of the numerous surfingspots on this run. In the lower quarter of this run, boaters enter into one of the most beautiful river panoramas anywhere. Against a right bank turn, the Tallulah has cut out a 1500 foot natural area called the Amphitheater, a natural bowl that, during local showers, hosts numerous ribbons of falls. In the middle of all this splendor, is a spot named the "Rodeo Hole". Surfing, blasting, and a general good time can be had here. And, when executing one of your better moves (or blunders), you can also here the roar of the spectators in nature's arena

A special note needs to be made about Oceana Falls - this is one "awesome" rapid. Similar to other drops in the gorge, Oceana is a long sloping drop over a smooth ledge. But it is BIG! A 50 foot drop and running 150 to 200 foot in length. Running Oceana is a lot like running other waterfalls, its easy to do, just paddle over the edge. But three quarters of the way down it gets interesting. Stretching from right to left is an upthrust ledge (upstream is more accurate, a painful view with no water as the ledge is about head high to a boater) which funnels most of the water left into what John Bell, of the GA. Canoeing Association, describes as "the Thing".

The Thing is an incredible roostertail/wave that pulses 12 to 15 foot in the air, and is equally wide. Boaters, including open boats, actually disappear into this explosion of water, brace off the tip of the ledge, and blast out the left side - directly into the huge hole at the base of the falls. Fortunately, if you have managed to reach the bottom in one piece you are moving so fast that the hole seems inconsequential, at least during the study.

Of course, most rapids offer several possible routes; this approach is just the one taken by most of the paddlers. AWA's Kent Wigington also ran

the center route. This route drops you 35 foot through trees, into the edge of the upthrust ledge. This ledge then provides a "dynamic" surf (stage left), and into the far side of the Thing. At this point you are dropped another 15 foot into the hole. Given the trees and the bodies limited ability to immediately surf left after this drop, I'd give this route a good Class VI rating. Not for the faint hearted!

There is no doubt in the minds of those who ran this gorge, that it offers a fantastic whitewater run. The goal is to get scheduled releases each year, perhaps in mid-summer when nothing else is running. At times, the problems encountered in reaching this goal seem insurmountable. It was incredible to read the local news stories, Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) reports, and Georgia Power's comments, each of which stated that this run was suitable only for a small group of expert boaters. Nothing could have been further from the truth. If releases are provided under a new li-

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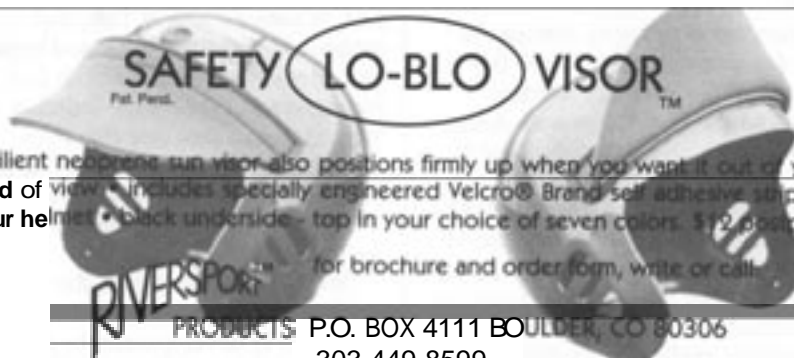
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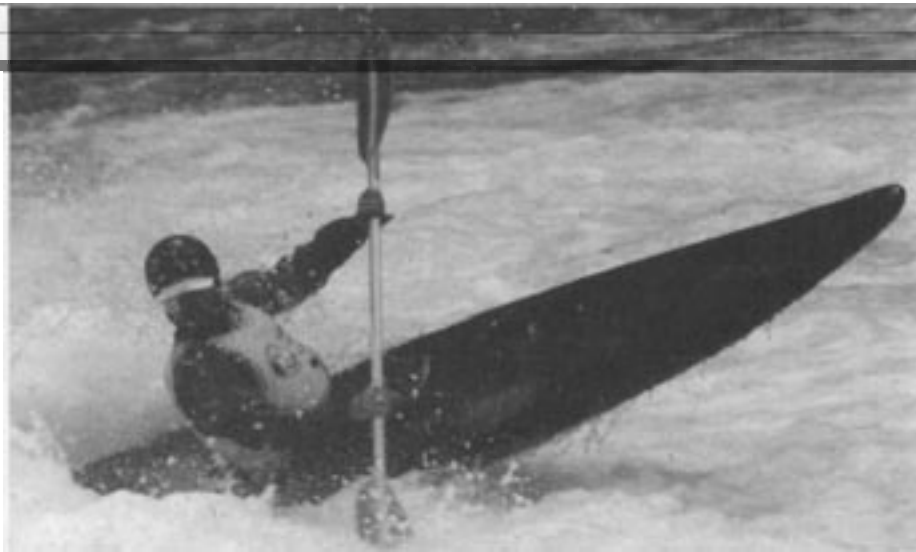


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# TALLULAH!



cense, hundreds of advanced and expert boaters would participate at each release.

As this article is written, two months after this release, we are beginning to understand the true success of this effort. First, getting Georgia Power to provide test releases was a big success in itself, and boaters now know the real value of the Tallulah Gorge.

But the real beauty and success is that now everyone knows the value of this outstanding area. Since the release, conservation groups throughout the state are attempting to become a part of this license proceeding. DNR, originally opposed to any release of water, is now **talking** about a **minimum** flow of up to 100 cfs. daily, with 400 to 600 cfs. on holidays. Unfortunately, they are still adamantly opposed to whitewater boating. The National Park Service has also weighed in on the importance of the Gorge for recreation. Finally, the local residents of the area, who have been trying to restore the water for many years, now see the prospect of the return of tourism.

As boaters continue to seek future releases, both on the Tallulah and at other sites, each of these factors **will** play an important part. There **will** always be those opposed to any use of this area, but others are recognizing that a short but **critical** opportunity exists to **restore** this river. In the end, this recognition, and the partnerships which **will** evolve, is good news for anyone who spends time on the water.

## THUMBNAIL HISTORY OF RELICENSING ON THE TALLULAH

How this relicensing opportunity came about on the Tallulah is also rooted in history. The conservation movement is sometimes considered a recent phenomenon, but there have always been those who looked ahead or looked at the larger picture in man's development. To provide reference, Yellowstone National Park was **established** in 1872, the Yosemite Act passed in 1890, and in 1901, the city of San Francisco applied for permission to dam Hetch Hetchy.

In Georgia, as a precursor to today's **grassroots** environmental concerns, a movement was begun in 1900 to make Tallulah Falls into a national park. The Tallulah Falls Conservation Society attempted to enlist the support of then President Taft, and mounted a large publicity and legal campaign to save the Falls. In fact, the movement to protect the Tallulah started from a fear that this river would share the same fate as **Niagara** Falls. Efforts were made to tie the Tallulah movement to the campaign to save **Niagara** Falls.

While this effort failed, the plight of the Tallulah River, and the larger picture of river development, began to strike the right chords at certain higher levels of influence.

In 1920, the Federal Water Power Act, renamed the Federal Power Act in 1935, was established by Congress to reduce administrative confusion in planning and regulating hydropower sites. While this was largely an attempt to encourage hydro development, many of the proponents of this legislation, such as President Theodore Roosevelt and Gifford Pinchot, saw the need to provide both a license term which would allow a generous **return** on investment for developers, and provide a long-term method to reevaluate the needs of the public interest and guarantee the public's control over the use of their rivers.

Congress resolved these conflicting objectives by authorizing the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to issue private developer licenses **with** a maximum life of 50 years. In 1962, a legal case (**Androscoggin** Case) made in clear that all projects on navigable waters must be licensed. The Commission ruled that the modern definition of navigability, **log-driving** and rafting, only began in 1943, and **determined** to grant 50 year licenses for all pre-1935 (the change to the Federal Power Act) projects from the last day of that year. Fifty years from 1943 is 1993, and so today, over 150 licenses, such as Tallulah Falls, have expired **and** are **seeking** new licenses for the future.

Through these efforts and decisions, the public now has a short, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to get involved in restoring these rivers and their use. Many have **had** no flows for



# TALLULAH!

many years (no water means no recreation, no fish, little wildlife, and limited biodiversity), and most have been locked away from the public.

Now is the time to get involved. Peek into those canyons you have always wondered about, crawl under that fence, or simply talk to the dam managers. Get a project number and call the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in DC. (202) 208-0200. With this project number you can track down the project manager, and find out the status of the license and how you can participate.

For those interested in additional information about the Tallulah area, the AWA recommends *The Life & Times of Tallulah...The Falls, The Gorge, The Town*, by John Saye. Much of the historical facts contained in this article was directly provided by this booklet. ■

Left: Bill Hester  
Bottom: Nolan Whitesell

## TALLULAH WHITEWATER PARTICIPANTS

Rich Bowers, AWA and study coordinator.

Boating members:

- Jim Silavent, Georgia Canoeing Association
- Mark Levine, Georgia Canoeing Association
- John Bell, Georgia Canoeing Association
- Charles Brewer, Atlanta Whitewater Club
- Jerry Jascomb, Atlanta Whitewater Club
- Ron Stewart, AWA Regional Coordinator
- Kent Wigington, AWA
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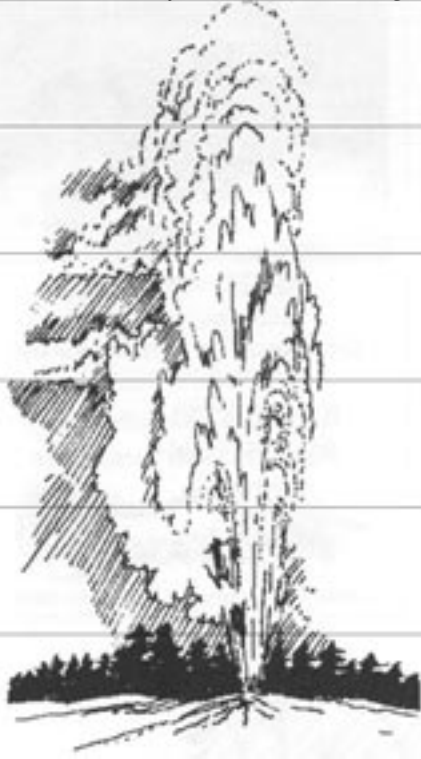
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# IT'S NO PIC-A-NIC, BOO BOO... A YELLOWSTONE ADVENTURE

by *Markus Whiting*



*Editors note:  
Yellowstone.*

*The name conjures up images of jagged mountains, wild, roaming animals, wondrous thermal features and ... of course... Yogi Bear. But to a handful of hard core western kayakers there is a lot more to Yellowstone than meets the eye. For these individuals the name Yellowstone elicits an almost mystical sense of intrigue.*

*It seems there is a river flowing through the park... Those who claim to have paddled this river... the Yellowstone... maintain that it is as exceptionally difficult as it is spectacular. But there is no question about one thing. Paddling the river within the park boundaries is quite illegal.*

*The following account of an expedition on the Yellowstone may or may not be true. We suspect that it is, but you decide for yourself.*

*In any case the author, who remains anonymous, assured us in his cover letter that all of the names have been changed... to protect those innocent at heart, but guilty by law.*



**FORBIDDEN FRUIT**

For about a decade I had been hearing hair raising stories about the secluded Yellowstone River, which flows through the heart of the two million acre National Park. The section of the river in question **started** a bit below the massive falls in the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone and ended at the park's northern boundary. Rumor had it that the run was solid Class V, a real adventure. It was no rumor that running it was very illegal.

Unfortunately for **aquaholics**, the National Park Service had a policy of "No river running in the park". They offered many reasons; foremost among them was the need to keep the park "pristine". **Ironically**, upstream on the Yellowstone Lake, motor boats,

yachts jet **skis** and sail boards filled the senses with commotion. **RVs**, campers, trailers and poodles with fat ladies in tow crowded the shoreline.

But downstream the river had been, for the most part, untouched by humanity, and, of course, most conscientious people, including myself, wanted to preserve it as a low **impact** area. However, the idea that river would be decimated by a few **kayakers** drifting down it every year seemed to me a bit far fetched.

My interest in the Yellowstone continued to grow over the years, but the

fear of a felony conviction always convinced me to boat elsewhere. I **geuss** not all **kayakers** are born to be out-laws.

Nonetheless, a complete dissolution of my moral turpitude occurred when Ray **Piskadson** called to announce that **Thomas Charleson** was willing to "guide\*us down the Yellowstone.

Having run the river a dozen times without capture, Thomas was generally considered to be the Yellowstone River Guru. With this in mind, Ray and I bowed to temptation and started to make clandestine plans.

As we **slinkd** into the park under the cover of **darkness**, Thomas regaled us with the **legal** ramifications of our intended adventure. Three of his **Jack-son Hole** buddies had been the most recent miscreants caught doing the illegal aquatic act. They were forced to

*Left: The Yellowstone Gorge: Forbidden Fruit*



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about the run, carry their boats four miles, fined \$250 each, spent a night in jail, and, worst of all, had all their whitewater gear impounded.

I started to have serious misgivings and I could tell that Ray was having them too. Charleson then told us the tale of a well known kayak rep who turned himself in while on the Yellowstone to report an accomplice's injury and to request a helicopter rescue. Both were subsequently convicted and ordered never to return.

But, being an adventurous kind of guy, or maybe just a slow learner, the boat rep did return... the very next season. As fate would have it, a back country ranger spotted our hero and ordered him to pull over to shore. Knowing that a second capture would have unpleasant consequences, he decided to make run for it. As might be expected, armed officers were waiting for him at the take out and soon he was hand cuffed and on his way to the pokey.

At about this time Ray and I were convinced that running the Yellowstone was not appropriate for rational, respectable river runners. We figured it probably wasn't appropriate for us either, but that wasn't the point.

I wasn't about to be the one to back away from the challenge; I figured I would let Ray chicken out first, then I could begrudgingly agree to turn around and go home with him. Little did I know that Ray was secretly waiting for me to throw in the towel. Hence neither one of us spoke up to express our concerns. Meanwhile, Thomas continued his litany of horror stories as we continued on our way.

A word about Thomas is in order. He was renowned for his epic adventures. Simple day trips had reputedly been transformed into survival epics that compared with the exploits of the Donner Party. A whole chapter in *Tales of Terror* could reportedly have been dedicated to our fearless guide and leader, Thomas Charleson.

About thirty miles from the put in, Thomas navigated our vehicle into the Yellowstone employee housing area, where he informed us, we would be staying. On the floor of the cabin of a ranger friend's cabin, no less! This sounded to me like sleeping with the banker's wife the night before a heist, but like teenagers bowing to peer pressure, Ray and I acquiesced.



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## WAKE UP CALL

We climbed into our bags at 11 p.m. and set our wrist watch alarms for 3:30 a.m. The plan was to get some sleep, then be up and on the river, half way through the sixteen mile run, before the rangers awakened from their slumbers.

But, as I lie on that floor, contemplating my future life behind bars, I heard the 12 o'clock beep. The 1 and 2 a.m. beeps seemed to follow not long thereafter.

"Ray! Are you awake?" I whispered.

"Uh huh," came the reply. "What the hell are we doing this for?"

A long silence followed.

"Because we really have to," I said.

Ray sighed, "I know... we really do owe it to ourselves."

All too soon the 330 alarm sounded, waking Thomas with a start, but merely annoying Ray and myself, for we were still wide awake. We quietly climbed into the car and stole away.

At the dark put in the Yellowstone was mysterious and intimidating. A steamy mist rose from the surface of the water into the cold night air. Thomas pointed out that the water was at an unusually high level. By 5 a.m. we were tackling big, class IV rapids. Although the day was just dawning, I was already exhausted and I knew that Ray felt just as lousy.

Several miles into the run the canyon walls began to tower above us and the gradient increased. This created extremely big and violent drops.

In an innocuous place the fast moving water slammed Ray onto a rock just under the foamy surface. He was immediately pinned, the water bent both the bow and the stem of his boat downward. As the boat folded, it trapped Ray's legs, creating a grave situation. With a mighty drawstroke Ray pulled himself off the potentially lethal rock and back into the flow.

We eddied out to regroup and inspect the damage. Ray was okay, but his boat was pretzelized. He faced a difficult decision, to attempt the remaining 21 miles of difficult whitewater in a damaged boat, or to walk five miles back to the car. Ray made the prudent choice, shouldered



Above: Scouting the mighty Yellowstone

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his boat, and started hiking.

Charleson and I continued on. Within a quarter mile Hell Roaring Fork spilled more volume into the Yellowstone, boosting it to around 6,000 cfs. The rapids became extremely powerful, tossing our boats around like tiny corks. About two miles after we lost Ray, we came upon a horrific drop which I chose to portage. Now I like to think that I have the "right stuff" as a boater, but at the level we were running, the drop was a thundering class VI. Predictably, Thomas decided to go for it.

## THE THOMAS FACTOR

I should have seen the "Thomas Factor" taking shape. Halfway through the portage, I looked over my shoulder to see a tiny Thomas, miniturized by the immensity of the rapid, struggling valiantly to stay on line. At the critical last move, a deceptively powerful current shoved him toward a giant boulder which separated the good (Class V+) side of the rapid from the bad (Class VI) side.

For a time Thomas stalled there, side surfing a fifteen foot pillow, hoping that fate would flush him in the right direction. He dug his paddle hard into the foam and fought to reach the favorable route. Then he was gone.

He had flushed down a far left chute into a vertical rock jumble with about 1,000 cfs pumping through it. Water gushed out from under the boulders fifty feet below the spot where Thomas had disappeared. Horrified, I waited. And waited. There was absolutely nothing I could do to help. After 45 very long seconds his kayak exploded from a viciously recycling hole at the bottom of the rapid. It rose from the surface like a breaching whale. A few seconds later Thomas popped to the surface as well. I could see that he was shaken, but coherent.

But the river was not done with him yet. It sucked him back into the heinous pourover, where he recirculated for ten more seconds.

I finished the portage and scrambled back to the river as quickly as possible so that I might help. I chased him through some easy Class V water (sounds like a contradiction in terms, doesn't it?) and caught him



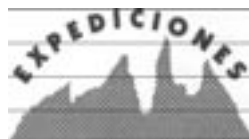
The Yellowstone- running a bit on the high side

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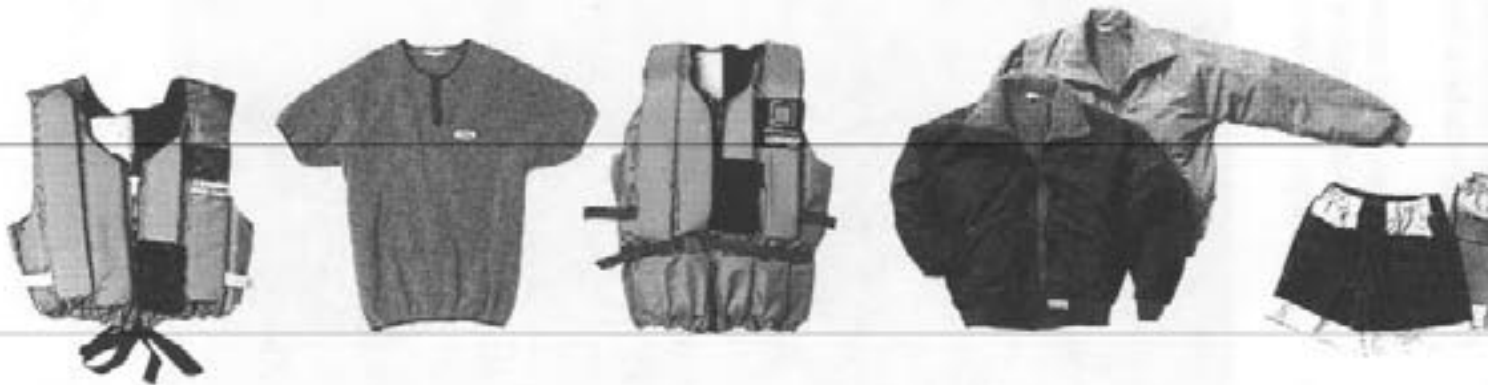


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Not

about a half mile downstream. He had managed to drag **his** boat to shore. In spite of a very thorough thrashing, he was **surprisingly** intact.

Unfortunately, his paddle had been lost to the river. We looked at each other with the same sick realization; Ray had been **carrying** the breakdown paddle in **his** boat.

After a quick assessment of our situation, I sprinted downstream, hoping to retrieve the lost paddle. The river widened, and now it consisted of big, rolling class IV waves punctuated by an occasional hole. I stroked as hard as I could for about four miles, knowing very well that the success or failure of our expedition hinged upon locating Thomas's yellow bladed paddle.

Directly above the ranger outpost, about which Thomas had warned me, I crept into an eddy to hide from the authorities. Having not spotted the paddle and not wanting to be spotted myself, I decided to stay put and wait for Thomas.

While devouring a pre dawn break-

fast of an orange and a chocolate **Powerbar**, I took in the Yellowstone scenery. Only now did the stunning beauty of my surroundings sink in. Bird songs **filled** the fresh air. There were no road scars, no powerlines, no litter; just trees and mountains that never seemed to end... and, best of all, the river. As I pondered this pristine setting, my accomplice appeared, slowly hand paddling down the Yellowstone.

As he approached, I could see that he was shivering.

"Are you alright?" I blurted out. I had, of course, assumed that he would walk downstream.

"I'm fine... just chilled," he replied. "I took two more swims."

After Thomas **warmed** up and added a few more layers of clothing, we faced some serious decision making. We were quite literally up a very big creek without a paddle.

The first option was obvious; to carry our boats several miles to the highway. This would result in near certain apprehension, not to mention

blisters. The second option was to remain on the river, hand paddle the easy sections, and take turns soloing the tough stuff with my paddle. This would **definitely** be more dangerous, but the odds of an unfortunate encounter with the law would be less. And so our decision was made.

## AN ADVENTURE OF HIS OWN

At about the time that we were debating all of this, Ray experienced an adventure of **his** own. While slowly trudging back to the car he had come across several large herds of deer and elk nibbling on the lush grass. Ripe blackberries were everywhere. "With all of this to eat, it would be a great place to be a bear," Ray observed silently.

At that exact moment, he glanced across a tiny meadow and spotted a very large, very formidable grizzly **glar-**

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ing at him.

Ray froze and stared back. The bear did not budge. Ray decided to be assertive, so he beat his paddle against his boat and yelled. The bear did not have a boat or paddle, but he wanted to be assertive too, so he growled back.

At that time Ray decided to alter his strategy and to assume a submissive role. He quickly scrambled up the nearest tree.

Luckily, the bear eventually lost interest in this game and wandered off. After a respectable time, Ray shimmed back down to the ground from his perch, picked up his boat, and resumed the trek

## CLOSE CALLS

Back on the river, Thomas and I silently stole past the rangers' outpost as the sun's first rays broke over the horizon. Almost all of those apprehended kayaking the river had been nailed here. At any moment I expected some green uniformed Dudley Dooright to start yelling and radioing us in. There was even the possibility that he would shoot at us!

"This is going to be it," I thought. "I'm going to jail."

But absolutely nothing happened. We just silently drifted by.

Not far below the outpost we entered the second canyon. Once we had entered the granite walled gorge we were committed to finishing the run, irrespective of our ongoing paddle shortage. Throughout this five mile canyon the rapids were immense.

Thomas and I approached each drop very deliberately, ready to eddy out at the mere suggestion that a portage might be in order. Thomas fierced up and was hand paddling strongly. To add some degree of safety, I stayed slightly ahead, so that I might determine what lie downstream and to better be able to assist him in case of a swim.

When we encountered a rapid which could not be hand paddled, I would boat on through, then carry the paddle back to Thomas. He would then run the rapid, leapfrog past me, then bring the paddle back. Using this process, we negotiated some very exciting class V whitewater.



Fighting hard to stay on line on the turbulent Yellowstone

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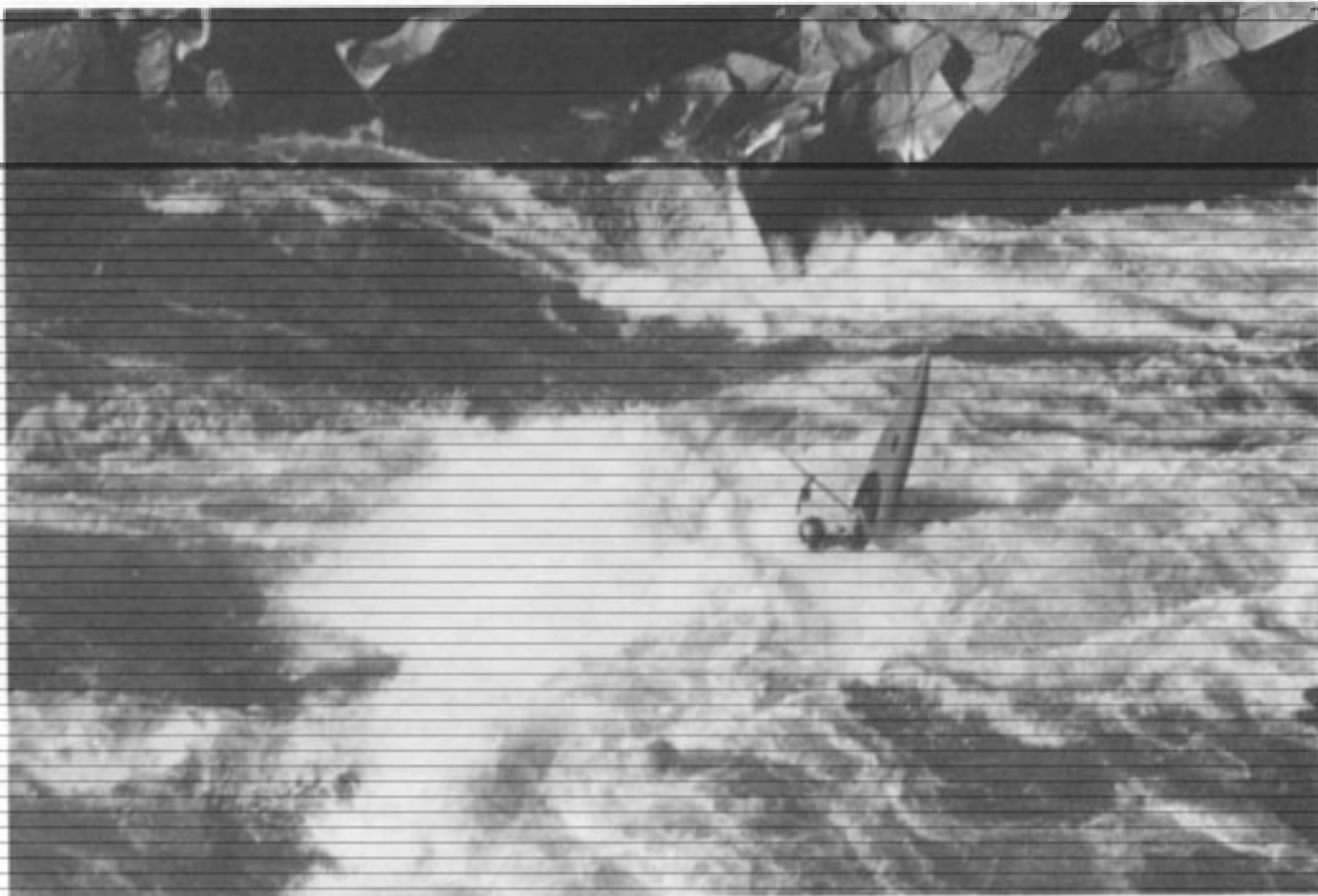


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*Shot into the air like a wet bar of soap out of a clenched fist*

Although this technique worked, it was a dangerous one. The individual with the paddle was definitely on his own, unable to count on any rescue assistance.

While I was in the middle of a particularly gnarly set, Thomas paused to shoot some pictures. A monstrous wave broke over me, completely burying me and my boat. A second later the buoyancy of my boat had its way and the kayak exploded from the water.

This was no ordinary back ender! I rocketed skyward like a wet bar of soap ejected from a clenched fist. **This** was big, wild *stuff*!

Soon we encountered two more drops which were genuine bone crushers; each required a substantial portage. Both of us agreed that, if we didn't wind up in **jail**, we would return at lower water and **run** all of the rapids.

Finally the gradient mellowed to

the point where we felt comfortable hanging on to one another **and** floating cata-yak style through some of the drops. We laughed as our boats and bodies bashed off each other, as we spun about clumsily in the swirling current.

Our adrenaline levels subsided once we knew we had survived the heaviest of the water and that we **had** reached a point where we could comfortably hand paddle the rest of the run to Gardner, **Montana**.

Unfortunately, the take out was in a populated area, crammed with tourists, hikers, fisherman and... rangers. Through the last mile the river was slow and wide. **All** we could do was **drift** along and try to be inconspicuous. A few fishermen waved and we nervously waved back.

Once we arrived at the take out, we quickly scrambled up the hill, stashed our **kayaks** and slipped into our street clothes.

As we relaxed on the roadside, **basking** in the glory of having "done something wrong" and gotten away with it, we spotted a ranger driving our way. Suddenly I wasn't gloating anymore; despair set in. The ranger fixed his eyes on us and thrust his arm out the window. Our hearts raced and our **palms** began to sweat.

"Damn," I muttered. "We almost pulled this off."

Then suddenly the ranger smiled, gave us a big, **warm** "Have a nice day" kind of wave, and drove right by!

We were home free! We **had** successfully tackled the Yellowstone, a truly great river, and we weren't even facing hard time! And, we had generated another great, colorful pile of B.S. to add to our book of **Absolutely Ridiculous River Adventures**.

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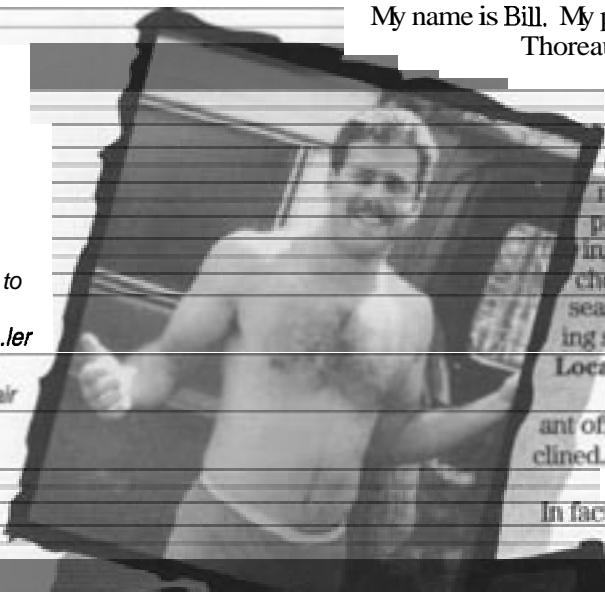


# AN ODE TO LOCAL HAIR

## Tackling New Hampshire's Fowler River

by Bill

Top: Addicted to hair Bottom: Fowwwwwww...ler Right: Playing the odds at Hair Jordan



My name is Bill. My passion is whitewater. Thoreau once said, "Nature is my mistress." Hair is mine.

But ~~hair~~ Boating is an ephemeral sport, I need a substitute during those times too hot or too cold. Others in my position, and I know there are many, choose to prostitute themselves figuratively by pursuing alternative activities such as skiing or climbing. And, of course, there are those unfortunates who choose to prostitute themselves literally during the off-season. (For a frank and disquieting account of this growing sub-culture see my **Field Notes From Urban-Hair Locations.**)

Others while away the hours in discotheques, pursuing whatever sexual diversion to which they may be inclined.

But me... I spend my down time writing about rivers. In fact, over the years I've managed to overwhelm the shelves of my study with thousands of pages of incoherent whitewater babble. The dark, impenetrable musings of an obsessed mind in need, taking the written word on a holiday through my own personal hell.

But now, for the first time, I am determined to rise above my past... to produce not ravings and rantings, but a publicly accessible script. I have been gripped, perhaps even seized, by an ethic as powerful as a well spring. Consumed by the need to share... to communicate with others of my kind... the ecstasy of LOCAL HAIR!

I was aroused early that morning by the clamor of the telephone. Expecting my course but enthusiastic boating partner, Rich, I was surprised to hear the voice of Alzheimer, another of my paddling buddies. He sounded concerned.

"Hello, Bill? Something's wrong with Rich! He says he doesn't want to go boating!"

"Fear not, Alzheimer," I replied confidently. "He just needs to hear that the Smith is running three feet."

But, when I phoned Rich and told him the good news about the Smith, he muttered in an eerie monotone, "Bill, I hate the Smith."

I must tell you, dear reader, that the uncharacteristic tone of his voice raised the

## AN ODE TO LOCAL HAIR

hair on the back of my neck.

Gamely I replied, "Well how about the Swift? Or perhaps the Contoocook?"

The bark that emanated from the receiver sent my faithful dog Ephus scurrying behind the T.V.

"If I wanted my \* — pulled, I'd do it myself," Rich roared. "The Contoocook sucks and the Swift is even worse for its pretense of beauty! Listen to me, and listen to me good.

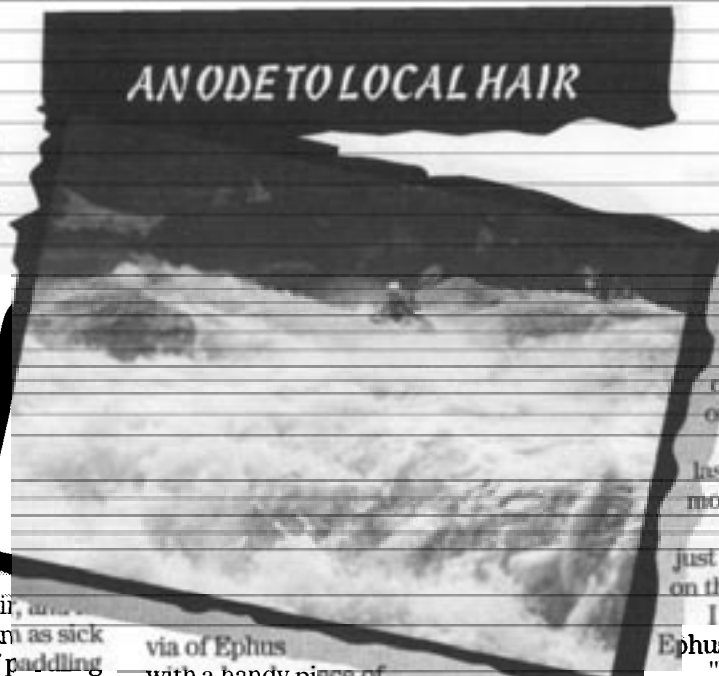
We have got to find some Hair, and better be nearby, because I am as sick to death of driving as I am of paddling class 3/4 rivers!"

I pointed out, timidly, that the Smith was, in actuality, a continuous class 4 run.

"Continuous class 4 my ass," Rich replied scornfully. "Its one long rapid all right, and its called Piss Rapid. Get me Hair, Bill, real Hair, or I swear it will be that demented excuse for a dog of yours that pays for my wrath!"

Ephus clearly heard and understood this threat, for soon I noticed a streamlet flowing from behind the T.V., imminently threatening one of my favorite rugs.

As I pondered Rich's demands I absent-mindedly dammed the vile efflu-



via of Ephus with a handy piece of polypropylene. This was a strange turn of events. Ordinarily Rich was a good natured fellow, and I realized that the symptoms he was manifesting could only be those of a serious boater's Life Crisis. I had seen this before and you probably have too. It invariably presents with a boredom with one's usual rivers, loss of appetite, refusal to travel and, of course, nihilism. Many of our greatest Hair boaters have suffered from such Life Crises at one

time or another.

To be certain of my diagnosis, I had to ask but one more question.

"Rich, when was the last time you had a bowel movement?"

"Three weeks ago—just before we ran Swallow Falls on the Top Yough," he groaned.

I let out a low whistle and Ephus started to howl.

"Rich," I said, "I want you to know that I understand what you are going through. And though it may offer little consolation, there are other boaters out there going through the same thing. There is a medical procedure that you could have. But... if you are willing to take a chance, there is a Hair Creek nearby that may be up. It's got a name and its name is Fowler. The Mighty Fowler!"

Thus, faithful AWA reader, it was the inexorable workings of our pas-

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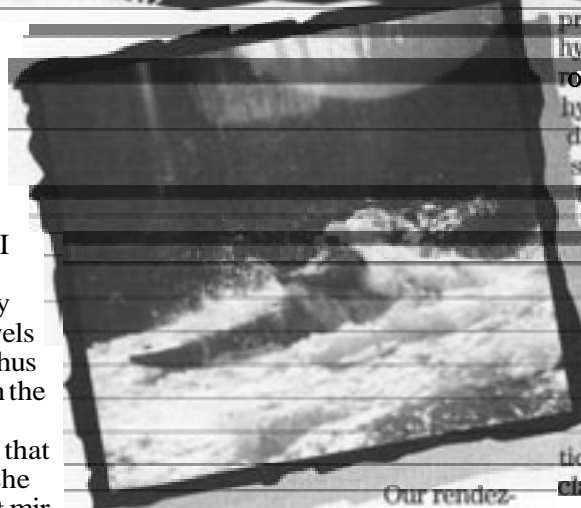
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Right: *Snowmelt on the Fabulous Fowler.* Right page: *Ned Brown above Sexual Telepathy on the Fowler!* Page 70: *Phill the Drill, DMD. on the Fowler*

sions which led us to New Hampshire's Mount Cardigan, the source of the Fowler. Ephus and I steered an erratic path driving up from Alexandria I was craning my neck trying to gauge the water levels in the roadside streams, while Ephus oscillated back and forth between the front seat windows of my pickup.

During the entire fifteen years that Ephus and I have spent together she has insisted, with an intensity that mirrors her excitement, in panting for breath on alternate sides of the front seat. It is by this unfortunate habit that Ephus has come to incur the everlasting scorn of Rich, as well as her nickname. But I must admit, on that particular day, I was most certainly the most excited beast in the truck.



Our rendezvous was the Appalachian Mountain Club Hut, at the very base of Cardigan. Arriving at the generous parking lot we spotted Rich's Suburu, but neither he nor Alzheimer were at hand. Boldly I entered the lair of the AMCs, an assemblage I've always viewed as spiritually akin to kayakers because of the intensity of their passion. I found them happily listening to an environmental lecture—at 8 a.m. on a Saturday!

Like Darwin on the Canaries I considered this epiphany, "Here, save several evolutionary giant steps, goeth I." Among these AMC fanatics I felt like Charlton Heston in the Planet of the Apes, isolated in a world populated only by cruel and horrifying caricatures of myself.

I staggered out of their lair and set off towards the Fowler. Deep in thought, I almost bumped into my erstwhile companions. Rich appeared to be in a state of agitation.

"Hair!" he roared, by way of salutation.

The spectacle of the Fowler that day put us all into a dither. Some

a primitive part of our brains had been hyperstimulated and some potent neurotransmitter had been thereby hypersecreted, so that we were all driven quite mad! As we stood awe-struck by the Fowler's mad rush to the flatlands, we concluded that it had reached its crest, less than ten hours after the rain had ceased.

From the put-in at the AMC Lodge the Fowler dropped at 200 feet/mile for one and a half miles. Though primarily class IV, this section contained two closely placed slides, Frequent Micturitions and Revisited, which approached class VI in difficulty when the river was in flood. Near the end of the run lurked Welton Falls, invariably a class VI. This two staged, thirty five foot falls plummeted into a beautiful tear shaped grotto bounded by steep cliffs.

On that day we hastily domed our whitewater gear and launched over the snow banks into a roadside pool. Here the Fowler was but eight feet wide- Rich's proverbial Piss Creek- but that would change quickly. Almost immediately the Fowler dropped into another creek of equal magnitude, then roared off through a culvert under the road.

The balmy air of our sunny pool receded quickly as we peeled out into the current, experiencing that familiar, exhilarating acceleration of falling water. Enveloped by swirling vapors, we were swallowed by the ominous darkness of the culvert, and then, just as suddenly, we were ejected into the dim bastion of the Upper Fowler. The Fowler's steep banks were covered with evergreens; they raced by as we braced over pourovers, boofed log-jams and boat scouted congested routes.

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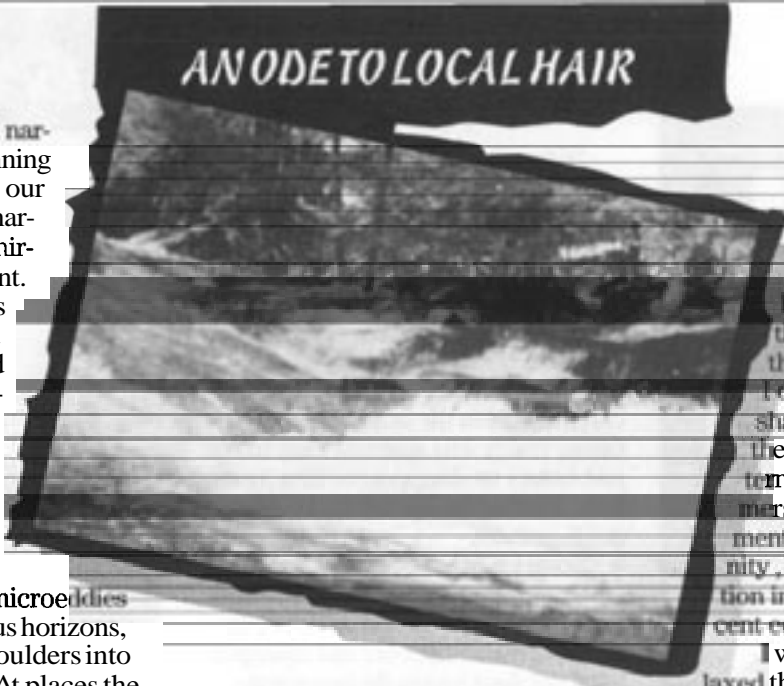
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## AN ODE TO LOCAL HAIR



Waves exploded and narrow chutes ripe with pinning potential materialized at our very bows. Overhead a narrow ribbon of blue sky mirrored our class IV descent. We squeezed our vessels through slots less than a meter wide, we clutched onto foliage in eddies inadequate to offer true refuge from the maelstrom, we executed wild maneuvers to escape the infamous broach.

We hammered into microeddies just upstream of ominous horizons, then peered over our shoulders into the glorious unknown. At places the forest provided a complete canopy over the **narrow** Fowler. We slid over bedrock, plunged through holes and zoomed along the moss covered banks. We cranked to the left and then to the right, ferrying just above menacing drops.

Soon we found ourselves at Frequent Micturations and Revisited, the hardest **runnable** rapids on the Fowler. Each one a hundred feet long and twenty-five feet high, each featuring its own brand of peril: the first- an under-

cut, the second- a nasty hole. **Alzheimer** started to raise objections to Rich's intention to plunge on... Wasn't this the very place where someone had drowned during a hurricane? But Rich just dismissed his concerns with a snort.

I ski jumped over the preliminary edge into a small eddy, then peeled out toward the horizon, aligning my

paddle closely with my boat as I squeaked through the narrow entrance slot. I threw several braces, first as I dropped onto a slab of shale, then as I crashed into the foul tempered hole at the terminus of the drop. Immersed in froth, I felt my momentum dissipate. After an eternity, I back-ended in slow motion into the sanctuary of an adjacent eddy.

I whooped with joy and relaxed the death grip on my paddle.

Radiantly, I gave the okay signal to my friends above, followed by the three digits of my hand, raising the mock conceit that Frequent Micturations was only a class III.

Rich confidently hammered into view and I glimpsed the colorful hull of his kayak as he boofed the initial drop. He landed on the slide, then shot through the hole, careening into the eddy where I sat waiting.



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## ANODE TO LOCAL HAIR

"Fowwww...ler," he howled, and I knew his Life Crisis was in resolution.

But, **alas**, Alzheimer was not so fortunate. He failed to tuck his paddle adequately on the approach. We could almost feel his agony as his knuckles scraped along the bedrock walls of the initial slot. He cartwheeled in the hole a couple of times, finally was spat out, only to roll just before he disappeared into Revisited. Fearing for his safety, I peeled out in pursuit.

Soon I was bracing off pillows and holes, stroking strategically to weave my way through the monster. I spotted Al safe downstream as I emerged from the final hydraulic into a soft eddy. Rich joined me a few seconds later.

Knowing that the worst was behind us, we enjoyed a mile of class IV water before approaching the vertical defile on river right which marks the portage around one of the most seductive

class VI drops I have ever seen... **Welton Falls**. **Alas**, a detailed description of the allure of **Welton** lies beyond the scope of the simple missive.

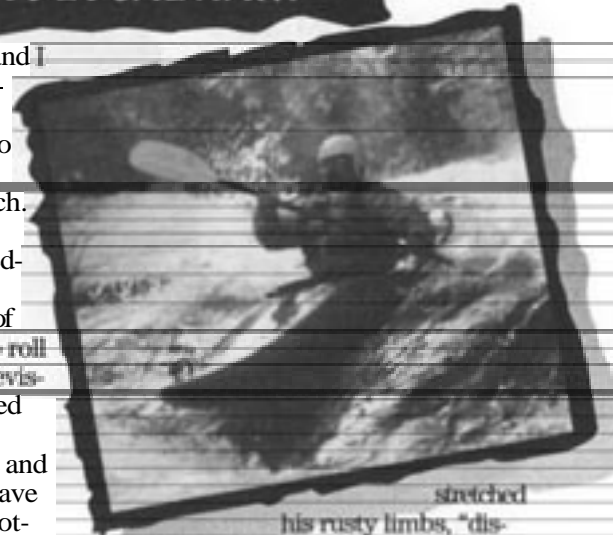
And **so**, gentle AWA reader, **dreams** came true that day on the Upper Fowler. True love was realized.

Below **Welton Falls** the Lower Section of the Fowler began, dropping **100 feet/mile** for five miles. Accessible from a road via a spur of the Manning **Trail**, the Lower Fowler lie waiting for those not ready to challenge the Upper.

While the Upper Fowler was tight and boulder congested, the Lower was all slides and bedrock. The initial segment, known as the Tumescence Mile, gradient **150 feet/mile**, proved to be the most difficult... a scaled down Chatooga Section IV.

Sexual Telepathy lie **just 100 yards** below **Welton Falls**, where the creek funneled into a powerful locus of cross currents. Immediately thereafter was Hair Jordan, the most memorable of the drops in the Turnescent Mile. Here the Fowler poured over a ledge, **runnable** on the right, dropping into a tight chute flowing perpendicularly to the left. **As** this chute opened, the flow slides ten feet into a hole.

**As Alzheimer** and I nervously scouted Hair Jordan, Rich waxed eloquent and ecstatic about the glory of our spring Hair run. And as Alzheimer



stretched his rusty limbs, "dislodging adhesions" as he would say, Rich did the same, but in supplication to the river.

"Oh Great Fowwww...ler!" he howled again and again. "This creek is so sweet. Fowwww...ler!"

Rich was beginning to get on poor Al's frayed nerves. Not only had Al been trashed at Frequent Micturitions, but he had broached at another spot, necessitating a rescue at the hands of the beaming Rich.

Fortunately Hair Jordan was the type of rapid, thrilling, but forgiving, that could turn any day around. We all had clean runs.

We paddled through **Last Resort**, a dynamic slide with the potential to pin, and out of the Tumescence Mile. The Fowler was still dropping, but the tough stuff was over. We stopped at a five foot ledge to catch some **endoes** and some **rays**. Then we floated through some class III/IV rapids, around some meanders, exchanging pleasantries and gloating.

Two miles below the bottom of Tumescence we walked Sphincter Insufficiency, a rapid with a final aperture which is a bit too garbled and undercut for my taste. It didn't matter. We were at peace and we didn't need it. Even Rich **had** his fill.

We leaned back on our decks and relaxed as we bobbed along. Below a set of power lines we reached the Fowler Gorge, the **final** half mile section of whitewater that served as the dessert to the meat **upstream**. Playfully we challenged one another to catch eddies and to boof tiny drops. And, all too soon, we reached the **take-out**, a bridge by the Fowler River Bluffs development.

**As** we stood by, idly watching the ever dependable Alzheimer loading



# AN ODE TO LOCAL HAIR

our boats, Rich bellowed a final "Fowwww...ler!"

Then, after a moment of deep thought, he offered an interesting proposition.

"You know, we should all chip in and buy one of these dilapidated farm houses. It could be a home base for an outfit like the AMC, only for Hair Boaters. Maybe the state would even build a dam for us, so that we could have outrageous parties with guaranteed big water releases on the Fowler the next day."

"Alzheimer," he continued, "you could operate the dam and coordinate the flows. Of course, we would have to

flood the land upstream, and that would include the lair of the AMCCers... I suppose they might turn mean... but Ephus could guard our place from interlopers."

Such was the whimsical nature of our conversation at the take-out, and again, back at the put-in, when we arrived to claim my car. Fortunately the Upper Fowler had fallen to an unnavigable level, because, had it still been running, we would, like Pavlov's dogs, all have lapsed into a state of agitation again.

And so we parted company, Al and Rich going one direction, while Ephus and I headed another. Driving home

across the plateau surrounding Cardigan I hammered down hills, leaned into my turns and boofed over pot-holes, barely managing to stay within the white lines.

In truth, my mind was already starting to ponder the Cascade Section of the Fowler, located upstream of the Upper Fowler, a section which is rumored to drop at 500 feet/mile.

*Editor's Note: Bill is a Hair Boater from Cambridge, Massachusetts. Sometimes he boats with Rich and sometimes with Alzheimer, but his closest boating companion is Craig Gunderson, from whom he is inseparable..*

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# Paddling the Twilight Zone

## Exploring California's North Coast

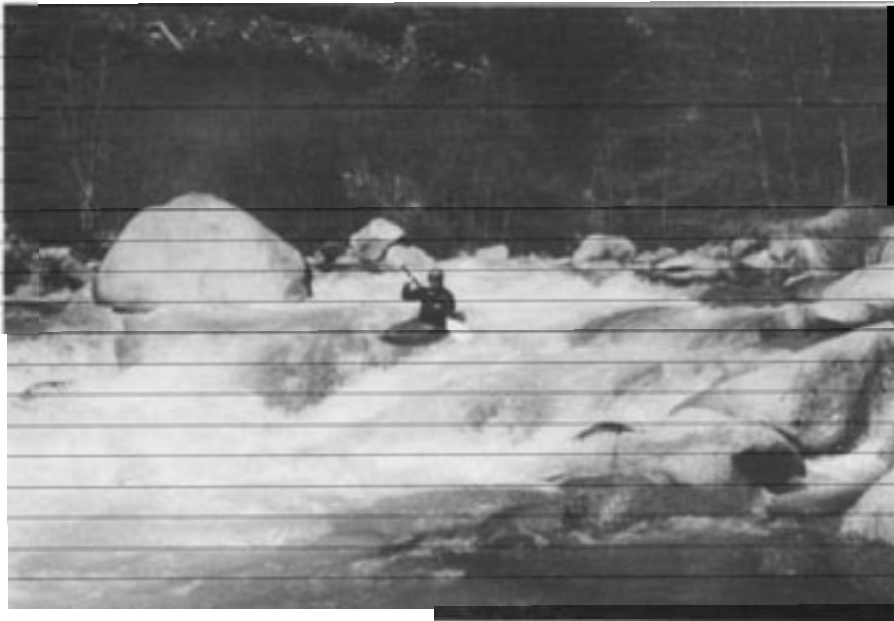
*By Howard Davidson  
Photos by Howard Davidson,  
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Somewhere down at the bottom of the canyon, next to the river and beneath an enormous pile of rocks and boulders, lies Poco's car - or what's left of it at any rate. It was a Toyota, a red Tercel with a pair of kayaks and a couple paddles tied to the roof; stashed inside were two drysuits, helmets, life jackets and assorted other gear. Everything, the car and all its contents, is gone now, buried beneath the landslide. Peering down from the road above, you can't see the slightest hint of it; no flash of paint, no splintered blades, no crumpled bow protruding from the rubble.

It's exactly as if the whole rig never existed in the first place. At least that's what Poco's insurance agent must have been thinking when he refused to cut a check. But who could really blame him? After all, this is the far North Coast of California, a land of swift rivers and lush mountains, enormous trees and lonely, surf-pounded beaches. Up here, in this beautiful - almost dreamlike - landscape, people often find it difficult to separate reality from illusion.

Now don't get me wrong. When I say reality can be rather slippery hereabouts, I'm not making some sort of clandestine Alice in Wonderland-style drug reference.





Though, admittedly, there are an awful lot of counterculture types around. You see them from time to time when you're running shuttle, their rainbow-painted converted school buses emerging from the fog like ghosts from the Summer of Love.

But like I said, that's not really my point. What I'm trying to get at is something a bit more...well...supernatural. It's a weird kind of energy, a sort of pulse if you will, that boaters can feel at certain times and places in this remote, magnificent land. Sometimes this energy stays quietly in the background, more or less minding its own business. But other times it manifests itself in less subtle - even frightening - ways.

I guess what I'm really trying to say is that the far North Coast is haunted.

I know that may sound silly. But come boating here for a week or two and you might just end up agreeing with me.

First off, you'll need to know just exactly where "here" is. When you get a chance sometime, refer to any map or atlas of California. Notice all those large, brown blobs, scattered about like some sort of blight? Those are the mega-cities of the most populous state in the nation. There's a huge one about a fourth of the way up from the Mexican border. This, of course, is the Los Angeles region, a post-modern nightmare, a vast, out-of-control urban sprawl.

Now move north a couple hundred

miles to the next blob. This is the San Francisco Bay Area and, though not quite as dense as the LA. blob, it is a blob nonetheless (and, to make matters worse, one sprinkled generously with chardonnay-sipping, BMW-driving, cellular phone-gabbing yuppies).

Now, finally, move all the way north, from the Oregon border down the coast to Cape Mendocino and then inland roughly a quarter of the way towards Nevada. You have just traced the outlines of a vast rectangle and you will note that it contains no brown blobs whatsoever. Not one. What it does have, on the contrary, is lots and lots of bumpy green background crisscrossed with a network of little blue lines.

And any whitewater paddler knows what that means.

That's right, there's rivers in these mountains, and lots of them. Big booming, wide open rivers. Super-steep, hyper-technical, boulder-choked creeks. And everything in between. It's a whitewater smorgasbord to satisfy even the most voracious appetite.

And, as with many all-you-can-eat buffets, the biggest problem is simply knowing where to start. Often, the best advice is to go with whatever is in season. In wintertime, that typically means the Smith, a crisp, invigorating treat only a handful of miles from the sea. In spring, the Salmon is usually excellent, as are the many other rivers and creeks that drain snowmelt from the region's higher, more inland moun-

tains. And in summer and fall, before the annual rains begin, you should head to the largest watersheds, the Klamath and Trinity, both of which are supplemented by regular dam releases.

With that basic plan in mind, you're ready to tackle the wild North Coast - provided it doesn't tackle you first. Make no mistake. Many of the rivers and creeks here are tough and demand solid skills and judgement. The water's cold, the rapids continuous and the more challenging runs tend to be remote, with little chance of outside help - at least for a long time.

But none of that should pose too much of a problem for veteran boaters. Really, all that stuff is fairly routine, nothing you haven't seen before in West Virginia, or Idaho or wherever you're normal stomping grounds might be. No, it's not the rivers themselves that are likely to prove you're undoing. It's the...shall we say...extracurricular activities.

Are you afraid of ghosts? Do you shiver at the thought of goblins and ghouls and long-legged beasts and things that go bump in the night? If so, then you'll definitely want to stay away



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from certain parts of the North Coast. Like Bluff Creek, for example. This frothy stream, a tributary of the Klamath, is one of the most intense steep runs on the North Coast, if not anywhere. And it was here, on an overcast spring day a number of years ago, that a pair of horse packers made a discovery that changed their lives.

The pair had been heading **up** stream alongside the creek, using the edges of the stream-bed as a natural trail into the wilderness. Things were going well; the wildflowers were in bloom and the snow melt was on, the roar of the creek creating a soothing white noise, the **kind** that **lulls** you into a **tranquil**, almost dreamlike, state.

And then they saw it. It was a large creature, as big as an NFL lineman. And it was hairy and naked and loping across the far side of a meadow with a long, gangling stride. No, it wasn't a **raft** guide, nor was it some overgrown hippie; this was the early 1960s, several years before the evolution of either of those life forms.

It was a Sasquatch.

Skeptics, of course, will have a hard time believing this. **Luckily**, the horse packers had a home movie camera with them and, after their initial shock, they whipped it out and started filming.

Today, some 30 years later, no one - not any of the many scientists and film experts who have examined the footage - has been able to prove it a fake. No one really knows what to make of it. But every once in a while



someone else - typically a camper or a logger - will emerge from these woods shaken and ashen faced. Or so the stories go.

To my knowledge, none of the handful of paddlers who has descended Bluff Creek has ever spotted a Sasquatch but, then **again**, how could they? They've been far too busy simply trying to stay alive.

Like the Green Narrows and other cutting edge descents, Bluff Creek is outrageously steep, up to 400 feet per mile. But it is also much more pushy than most of its counterparts. And, like many salmon streams, it is numbing.

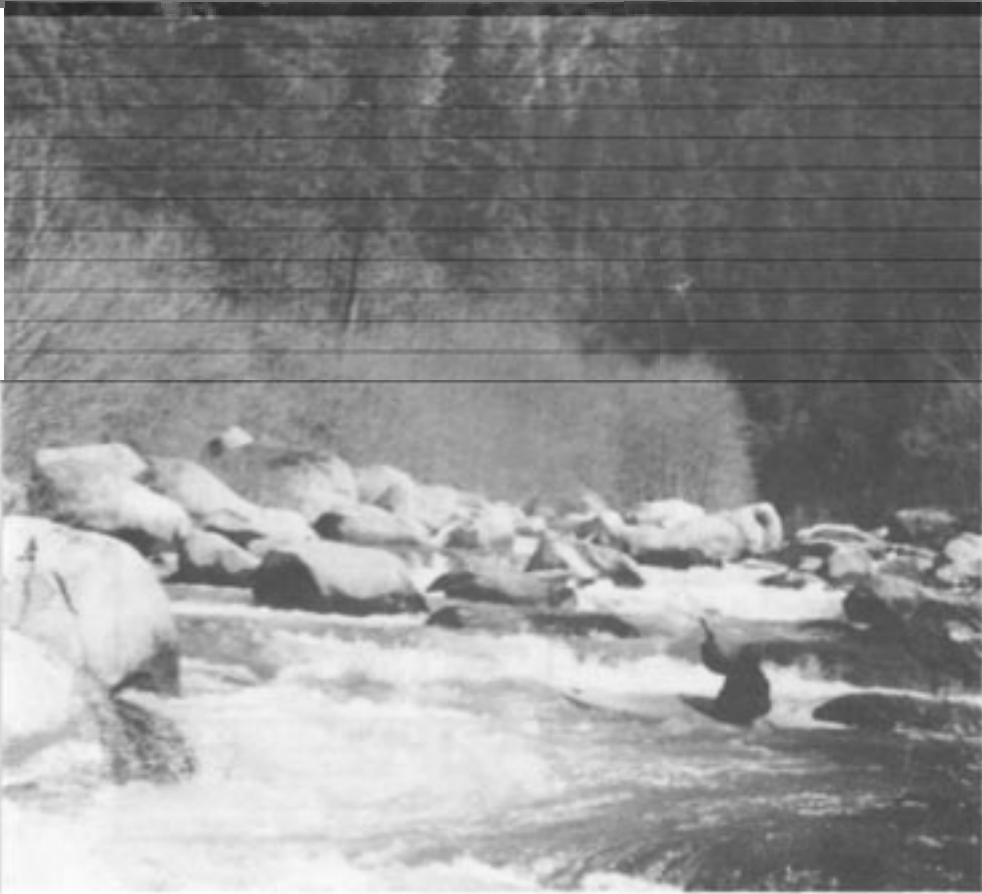
Every spring, these incredible fish somehow battle their way up the falls and drops of Bluff Creek to the hatchery at its headwaters. Roughly during the same season, a few kayakers fight their way in the opposite direction.

The two journeys - of the fish and









should probably head elsewhere (specifically to Burnt Ranch Gorge on the Trinity or, if you prefer, to the ever-pounding ocean surf).

But for those with a more balanced diet, the Klamath is well worth savoring.

There certainly is an awful lot to savor. In its march to the sea - a voyage that spans more than 100 miles of the North Coast's latitude but no more than half that in longitude - the Klamath traverses several distinct geological zones. Desert-looking high country quickly gives way to lush forest land which, in turn, yields to a narrow coastal plain. The overall effect is an apparent compression of time and space, as if the middle, of some vast, mountainous continent were somehow thrust up against the ocean.

In a manner of speaking, this is exactly what happened. The mountains of the North Coast were formed when the floor of the Pacific Ocean slammed head-on into the western edge of North America. As the sea bottom dove under the continent, huge chunks of crust were scraped free and piled skyward.

Boaters can get a first-hand sense of this awesome geological event by

floating the various parts of the Klamath. Most will probably choose to confine their journey to one of two sections. The first is not technically on the North Coast, but above it and inland a bit. It is the so-called "Upper Klamath," a Class IV wilderness run through the dry, rugged terrain along the Oregon-California border.

The second stretch is way gentler, more lush and much more accessible; it is basically anywhere along the 100 miles or so of river between the Sarah Toten Campground and the village of Weitchpec. Two-lane highway 96 follows this span of river, allowing for any number of possible put-ins and take-outs. But you probably won't notice the road from the water. You'll be too busy gazing at the scenery - a series of dark, green ridges, jumbled and erratic like a storm-tossed sea. No wonder certain parts of the river here are sacred to local Karok Indians who, every year, perform a World Renewal Ceremony along its banks.

Squirt boaters should be particularly pleased with a section of the Klamath known as the Ikes. Starting just below the Klamath's confluence with the Salmon, the Ikes run is deep and

swirly - even in late summer. But beware of overly prolonged mystery moves; some of the pools in this stretch harbor monstrously large, sinister-looking creatures. I am referring to sturgeon, an ancient breed of armor-plated, bottom dwelling fish that can easily reach several hundred pounds. If there truly are Sasquatch around, maybe this is what they eat.

Then again, maybe they've vegetarians. There's certainly no shortage of plant life along the far North Coast. Many local rivers are lined by extremely dense vegetation, a tangled mass of ferns and other undergrowth presided over by towering trees, most notably Redwood near the coast and Douglas Fir more inland. Such terrain would, no doubt, provide excellent camouflage - if not for a Sasquatch then at least for another legendary denizen that haunts these woods. And this latter creature is one I ~~have~~ encountered personally.

It was an overcast day near the Salmon River, perhaps the least appreciated whitewater drainage in the entire state. While thousands of California boaters know all about - and flock to - Sierra Nevada runs like the North Fork American, few make regular trips to the Salmon.

No wonder. It's a long way off (up to eight or nine hours from the Bay Area and God knows how far from L.A.). But it's also worth the hassle. The reason is simple. Unlike the vast majority of runs in the closer Sierra, the Salmon has not been tampered with by misguided engineers. Its two major forks and the main canyon they form remain completely unencumbered by dams and other water projects. The result is at least 50 miles of free-flowing whitewater (more if you count the Salmon's many tributaries, including Wooley Creek, a full-fledged Class N-V river in its own right).

And what whitewater the Salmon has: Perrier-clear, granite-strewn, ever-changing. Indeed, the Salmon is like a whole collection of rivers rolled into one. Its upper South Fork, for example, is a serious test for even highly skilled boaters, a furiously paced yet technical descent through a narrow, walled-out canyon. Immediately below is the tamer Methodist Creek run, Class III ledges and shoals framed by lush forestland. Further downstream-



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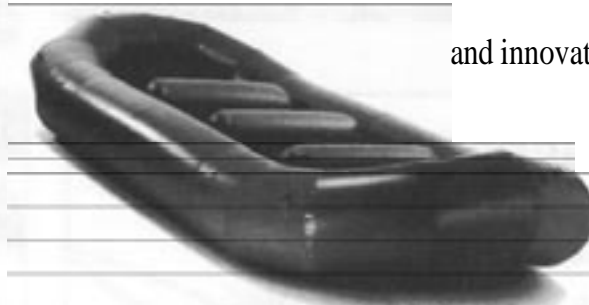
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in the main canyon - is the big enclada, the Nordheimer section which, when the melt is on becomes a thumping series of waves and holes, a place where rapids have overly macho names like Achilles, Airplane Turn and Freight Train.

Then there's the North Fork. This one is an amalgam of all the above, a mixture of power and technicality, a non-stop, boulder-strewn slalom course sprinkled with extremely clean ledges in the two to five foot range.

And it was here - on a windy little road bordering the river - that I had my own Close Encounter of the North Coast Kind.

I had been running (actually walking) the shuttle, when - out of nowhere - THEY appeared. They were somewhat strange-looking creatures - humanoid, to be sure - but beyond that I wasn't sure what to make of them.

The feeling was, no doubt, mutual. Sealed into my red and blue drysuit with its black latex cuffs, I must have looked like some sort of reject from



NASA. They eyed me suspiciously from the confines of their vehicle, a battered old Ford pickup. They were bumping along behind me and, as they swung wide to pass, I stuck out my thumb.

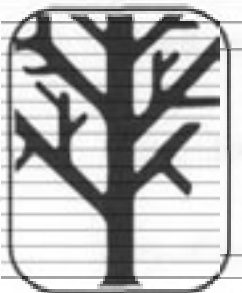
They slowed, then stopped.

"Where you goin?" said the driver. He was a long-haired, bearded man with deep furrows around his eyes and on his forehead.

"Forks of Salmon," I said.

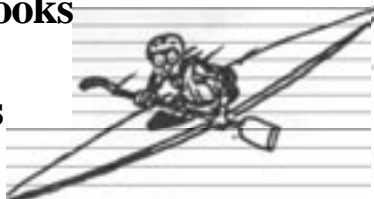
His companion in the passenger seat opened the door and slid over. He was practically a mirror image of the driver, only his furrows weren't quite as deep. "Hop in," he said with a gap-toothed smile.

I did, but as we headed off down the road I couldn't help but be alarmed by the driver's style - or lack thereof. As we cruised along, he was holding the wheel like a cigarette stub pinched lightly between his thumb and forefinger. He seemed totally unconcerned that whole sections of the road, large



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semicircles, were eroded away and had fallen into the river below.

I thought about how Poco **had** lost his car, just **10** or **15** miles downstream from here.

It **had** been a sort of comedy of errors, I am told. First some rocks fell in front of the Tercel, **blocking** the road and bashing the windshield and front end. Poco's girlfriend, who was driving, stopped. The pair got out to investigate and, much to their horror, saw more rocks falling. Poco yelled for his girlfriend to run away while he himself made a beeline for the car, in order to rescue his beloved dog, a half Irish Setter half Golden Retriever. He got him out and the pair bolted for safety. They made it, but the car didn't. At some point over the next **several** hours, while Poco and crew were hiking along, **looking** for help, a wave of debris came crashing down from above the car and swept it into oblivion.

About the closest anyone's gotten to it since is by running far river left on the rapid created by the landslide.

All of a sudden, my **musings** were rudely **interrupted**. The driver, both hands now on the wheel, was swerving hard right and aiming for a small cul de sac next to the road. We stopped and he hopped out. "We **gotta** run a little errand," he said.

I watched as he and the passenger grabbed shovels and started scooping mounds of wet, grey dirt into the open bed of the truck.

"**This stuff's** volcanic in origin," the driver explained to me. "It's great for **growin** things."

I scratched my head and, sure enough, the little lightbulb went on.

"What are you growing?" I asked, trying to sound as innocent as possible.

The driver stared at me for a second or two. "Lawns," he said. Then he smiled. "You know. Like for landscaping and stuff."

I nodded. "Lawns," I repeated slowly, fairly certain that there was no major housing construction going on for at least **50** road miles away.

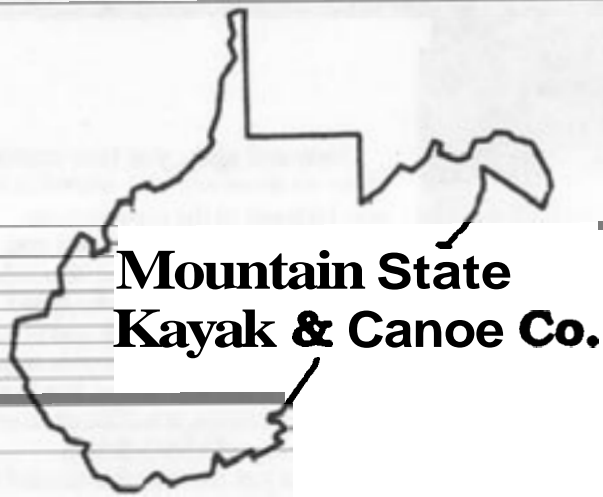
"Lawns," he said again, with a little laugh.

I grabbed a shovel and helped them dig. Fifteen minutes later we were on our way. When we got to the take-out and I watched them drive off, I couldn't help but wonder: were those **guys** the real thing? Not just dope growers, mind you. They're a dime a dozen on the North Coast. No, I meant were those guys growers of a very particular **kind**, a sort that has been more or less mythologized around the North Coast.

Now and again, you hear stories about recluses who, for whatever reason, hide out in the most remote mountains of the North Coast and grow their crops. And you also hear about how they supposedly guard their plants with tiger pits and **pungie** sticks and other exotic boobie traps worthy of a **Rambo** movie. But like the Sasquatch stories, it's difficult to tell what's real and what's fiction.

That's just the way it is around the North Coast. These fog-shrouded forests seem custom-built for perpetuating myths and legends. Maybe you can even contribute to the regional lore yourself. If you come boating up here and run into some local paddlers, tell them all about the strange sight you witnessed out on the main Salmon. You know, that battered red **Toyota**, with a couple kayaks tied to the roof, just floating along, driverless, taking a perfect line through Freight Train—





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# ONCE LOST, NOW FOUND

## Return of the River

By Peter N. Skinner P.E.  
Photos : Todd Waddell

*Editor's note: Pete Skinner is a long time AWA Director and whitewater paddler from New York State. A winner of Perception's River Conservationist of the Year for his work on hydro licensing, he divides his time among his family, river advocacy, environmental engineering, and teaching at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.*

*Right: Bill Kiepers of Rochester emerges from the Cuisinart for the final descent into the keeper. Steve Massaro looks on for safety.*

*Left: New Hampshire boater, John Best, boofs Stone Valley Falls as Barry Robinson looks on.*

*Bottom: Steve Massaro, AKA the Manchild, pilots the big raft down Stone Valley Falls.*

Over the last two decades, I've done my share of steep creeks and big water. Each run was less of an experiment and more of a validation of what I believed to be reasonable river running. Nothing is more satisfying than demonstrating a mastery of the calculus of proper interpretation of local hydraulics and application of appropriate athletics and skills resulting in a fine run. Sure, we all have had those ugly surprises, but usually the math has worked for me. I've always assumed that when my calculus shows a run is unrunnable, I'm right....

Given this engineering approach to river running, there have always been icons of unrunnability in my diary - like the Sept Soeurs waterfalls on the Rouge near Ottawa. Imagine then my amazement and chagrin a couple of years ago when I viewed the video of half a dozen Canadian boaters tumbling effortlessly down the drops without major incident. Heck, even one of our senior boaters swam the drops with little more injury than his pride. Image after image of kayakers falling 20 feet into killer keepers only to re-emerge ready for the immediately following waterfall befuddled my calculus. I can only conclude that paddlers and their equipment continue

to change unreasonable to everyday fun....

Consider, if you will, John Best of New Hampshire... Until last month, I had never heard of the guy. But now, he's poised alone at the top of the 70 foot waterfall - Big Mama on the Raquette River's Colton reach. Like a golfer sizing up an all important putt, he seems remarkably calm considering that some 1300 cfs are plunging down the drop, creating a carpet of froth interlaced with hydraulics, super fast flumes, and a dreadful looking keeper at the bottom with only a small sneak route around it. I can't believe it - neither I nor anyone else has any interest in running this one. In fact, this is the same falls that my long time paddling buddy, Barry, and I walked and agreed would never be run by anyone in this decade and here is some guy actually thinking of doing it RIGHT NOW - in front of all kinds of power company people, who are making the release possible for a relicensing test. We've staked out every possible site with throw ropes, cameras are poised and the suspense is palpable. Thank heavens, I think, the first run at half the flow this morning was remarkably successful, considering the nature of the beast. Best better be good...

## Feasibility Study

*The Colton section of the Raquette is actually but one of several feasibility study sites around New York. The Moshier section of the Beaver is another as are two other sites on the Raquette. And there are more too! AWA's mission is to work with the resource agencies and the power company to create a constellation of new runs and special releases at old sites across the state - largely as a result of relicensing. In fact, even the staid Niagara Mohawk crew has gotten excited, creating a holistic look at whitewater resources at all of their many facilities through a "Systemwide Whitewater Plan."*

*The Colton study has been perhaps the most ambitious. Thanks to extensive pre-planning between Todd Waddell from the-Company and Caren Koll of AWA, two paddling teams simultaneously tested different parts of the bypassed reach - the steeper upper part and the Lower Class II - IV section. Both groups filled out questionnaires after each run and participated in a video taped assessment of the day's experience. In addition to the water flow, the Company supplied a shuttle truck and other amenities. To say the test was a success would be an understatement.*

Whitewater paddling in states like New York has gotten kind of ho-hum to some of the more experienced paddlers. In fact, the word 'jaded' might even describe a kind of vague experiential malaise which has intruded itself upon the psyche. I mean, how many times can you paddle the Hudson Gorge and still get that same first time buzz?

So, when someone says - "Hey, want to try a dynamite new stream?" - people sit up and take notice. And so it was that here in olde New York, Caren Koll's excellent organizing and the pro-active [see box] cooperation of Niagara Mohawk have put a bunch of us standing atop a 70 or so foot high waterfall wondering whether it could be run. The river is about as well known a New York River as you could get (save the Hudson and Niagara) - the Raquette - but this run is essentially a first descent.

Normally, the Colton power plant de-waters a three plus mile segment that we are now preparing to try out. The 650 cfs of water gushing over the straight falls and steep slides today for the first run came courtesy of the company. We are all here

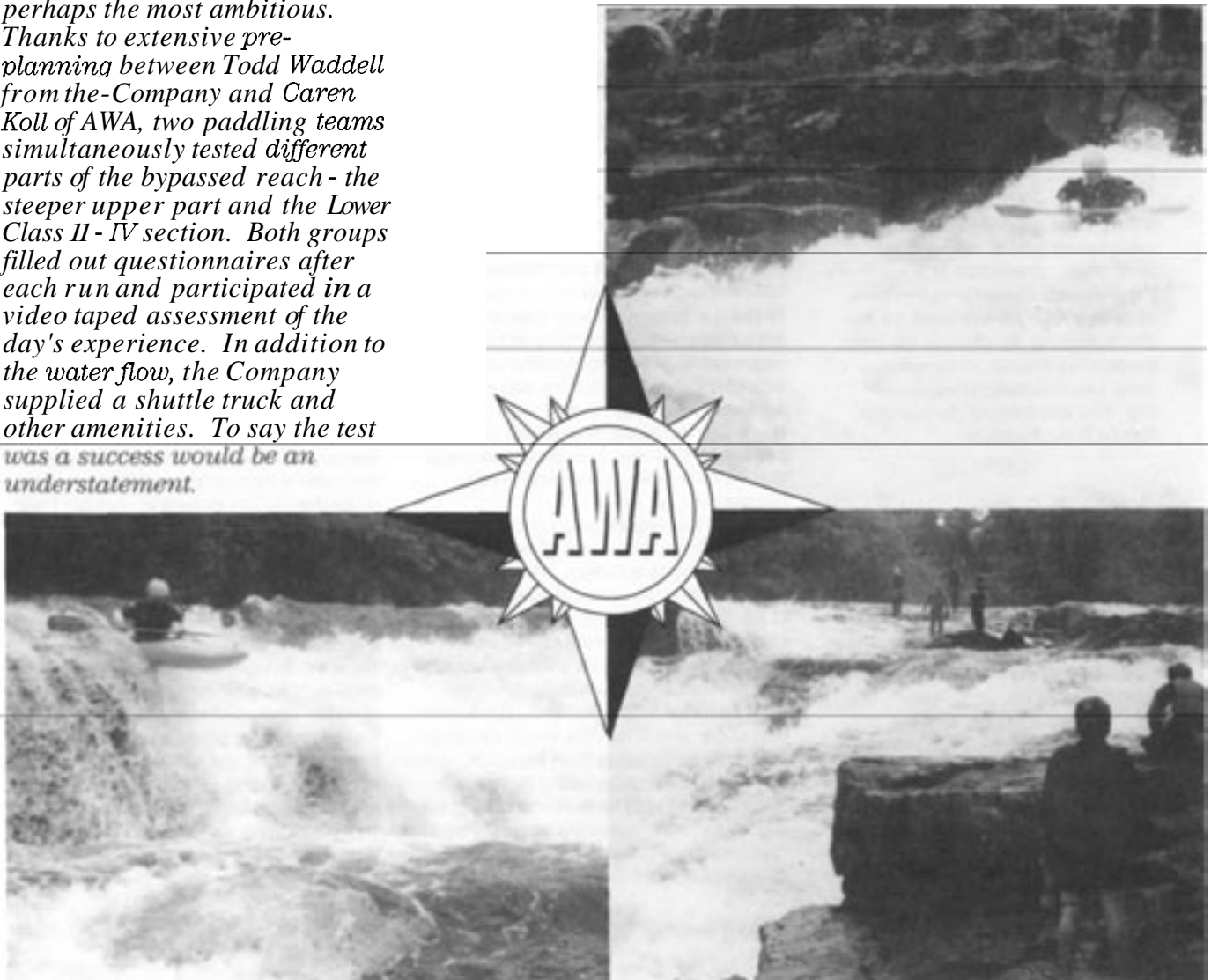
to help determine the "feasibility" of re-creating a paddling resource on this segment of the Raquette.

To be honest, I and Barry, felt a bit put out. We had actually run fragments of this very segment several years earlier and had hiked around this and other waterfalls. What were these people doing even thinking about running this huge drop? Heck, our calculus had clearly showed that this falls was out of the question - at least during the next decade or so.... Sighing, I decided to keep my mouth shut, let the others come to the same conclusion, and bypass it as we had done before. Really, making such decisions is exactly what a feasibility study is for anyway.

*Top: John Best of New Hampshire flies down the last part of the Big Falls at 1300 cfs.*

*Bottom: The Upper section team reconnoiters the Big Falls as it flows at 650 cfs*

*Left: John Best catches some air on the Big Falls on the Raquette enroute to its first (and only) descent at 1300 cfs.*



# ONCE LOST, NOW FOUND



The banks and face of the falls are literally swarming with curious locals, power company staff and consultants and yes, a dozen or so paddlers. A smooth tongue of water jets out from the base of the large taintor gate at the dam, spreading recreational wealth across the river. We slip and slide between *dry* places on the defile, peering over the ledges and hanging plunge pools which make up this challenge. I must admit that as time **drags** on, what looked impossible three years ago seems more reasonable every minute. Some of the fellows are actually beginning to reject impossible routes and prioritize the more reasonable ones. Jeez, I think even I might **try** it down this way.... So much for that calculus....

It's at that very moment that Barry suddenly appears at the crest - in **his** boat. Gosh - he's **gonna** run it first - I never got a chance to talk to him first! But what a route he's chosen.... down a diagonal cross falls flume that dumps its flow into a high rock walled caldron of foam half way down the drop. Boy, that's not how I'd do it I think just as Barry disappears over the penultimate lip into the maelstrom.

Out of sight from everyone but me and one other paddler, Barry's boat emerges upside down. Battered by tumbling water on two sides, Barry attempts roll after roll in this room of doom halfway down a waterfall. Suddenly he's up, but now bridged between the walls perpendicular to the flow. His paddle flails against foam and rock. High above him, we shout encouragement as he fights the conflicting currents, battering water from above, and treacherous foam piles. Finally, a herculean effort extracts boat and paddler into a sheltered part of the pool atop the big slide. We cheer with elation and relief. A swim here on the first run would not make this feasibility the success that we were all hoping for. We learned one thing.... Barry's route is relatively infeasible!

*Above: The author finds a clean route at Name Your Poison. Steve Massaro supplies safety.*

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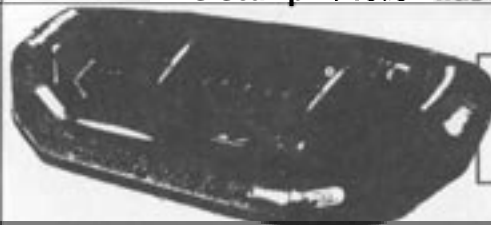
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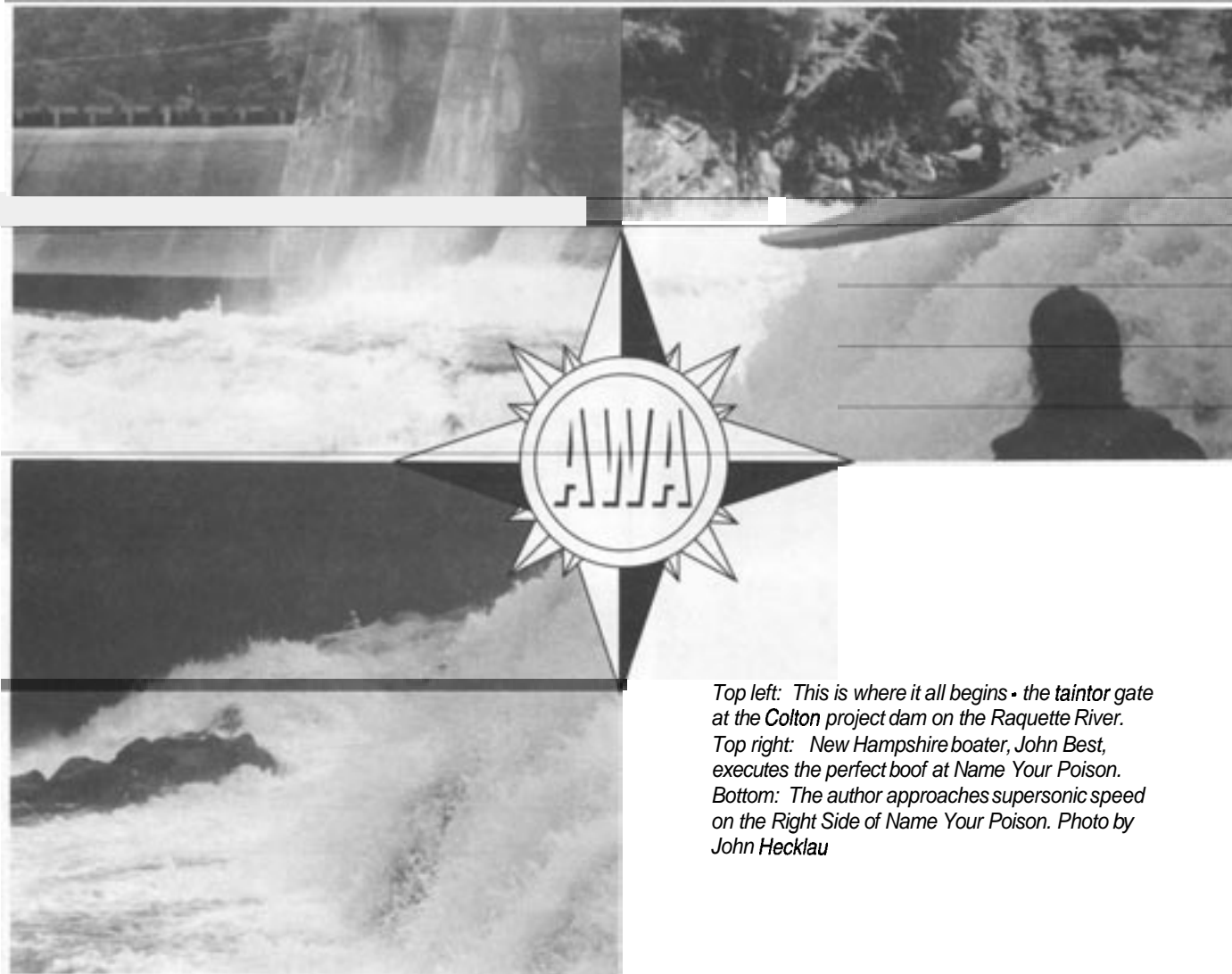
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Top left: This is where it all begins - the taintor gate at the Colton project dam on the Raquette River.  
 Top right: New Hampshire boater, John Best, executes the perfect boof at Name Your Poison.  
 Bottom: The author approaches supersonic speed on the Right Side of Name Your Poison. Photo by John Hecklau

By now, the other paddlers have staked claims to particular routes. One by one they try various approaches to the halfway pool, all of them making it without incident. Soon one attempts the final big slide, deftly avoiding the mean looking hydraulic at the base of the drop. My run seems anti-climatic after all that has happened. Heck, even the Manchild pilots an 18 foot raft down the falls. Where have I been for the last few years, anyway? At some kiddie pool?

Well over an hour has elapsed and the entourage moves downriver to the next "problem," a complicated 15 foot ledge. We bump and grind uneventfully over it and the next one down as well. We arrive at Stone Valley Falls - a spectacular Adirondack river jewel featuring a triple channel and multiplicity of waterfalls. The crux falls is the last one on the far end of an island. Water pours over one ledge, falling some ten feet, into a nasty growler hydraulic. After swirling and regurgitating what falls into it, the beast discharges its contents like projectile vomit over another 15 foot falls into a recirculating keeper - or so it seems to me. Heck, I figure this one's out of the question - I'll walk it with everyone else. No sooner done, then I hear a call for a throw rope station. "What, I

wonder, is this?" Some paddler nut from New England plans to run it I'm told, and so is one of New York's preeminent open boaters, Bill Kiepers! Wow, what's happening to my runnability calculus? Are there some critical parameters missing in the equation?

Poised on a rock next to the swirling cuisinart, I marvel that anyone thinks they can emerge unscathed from this thing, much less the hungry beast at the bottom of the second ledge. Suddenly, the cameras go up and the kayak appears on the lip. It falls gracefully into the center of the gyre, disappears, then magically re-emerges upright along with tons of water for the final flight to the pool below. Better yet, the boat does not get stuck! More or less the same thing happens soon after to Bill in his open canoe. Well, I'll be.... it appears that the sport has definitely fast forwarded, leaving me and my outdated calculus in one of this sport's eddies. Must be some 'new math'!

The final problem is the island drop - Name Your Poison. The Right Side is a Class II-III drop leading to a zoom shoot over a diagonal slide on the right or a nasty flume next to a wall on the left. The Left Side falls 20 feet off a bumpy drop into a pretty pool. By now, I am getting a

bit confused about what is really do-able. I elect to try the Right Side - it looks more challenging. So does Barry. His run includes an impromptu spin at the crux from which he masterfully recovers. I avoid his move and accelerate nearly out of control over the right side ledge - albeit with dreadful scrapes from sharp rocks. Others joyfully find a number of neat approaches to the Left Side too.

We hike out for lunch in the powerhouse as the operators jack the gate to allow 1300 cfs to escape for the second run of the day. The powerhouse which heretofore had probably never seen the likes of us paddlers becomes an impromptu forum for tales of exciting and enjoyable paddling from top to bottom.

Oh yeah, you may have been wondering about John Best at Big Mama... He makes the right moves all the way down, including a short surf in a hole at the top and a jarring collision with the wall at the bottom, just skirting the giant hole. No one else tried it, though. I still think this falls at 1300 cfs is unreasonable, but now obviously runnable. Maybe its time to look into a field study course in the new math.... I'll talk to the wife about a little trip down South to see the Gorilla....

## **PRO-ACTIVE**

***PRO-ACTIVE**, a., a descriptor applied to initiatives taken to prevent or minimize problems and create and/or enhance positive outcomes.*

*In the world of business, "pro-active" planning is the new management buzz word. Proper exercise of pro-active programs results in a kind of pre-emptive strike against competitors. When government regulation is involved, pro-active management can create a 'beyond compliance' scheme for their environmental or worker safety programs - schemes which sell well not only to regulators, but also to the public.*

*AWA's whitewater release requests, especially in relicensing, are one place where pro-active companies can shine their image. Photographs and video clips of paddlers cavorting in whitewater made possible by power companies can grace stockholder's reports and public service spots. Programs like river sports facilitation also create a positive aura among non-paddlers and other regulators as well, especially when rate increases become unavoidable. Best of all, the costs to the company for such releases are generally small, compared to the costs of fuel, transmission lines, payroll, power plants and the like. Sometimes, achievement of power generation goals actually can be enhanced because of release arrangements.*

*Niagara Mohawk is one company which appears to be seizing the pro-active concept with conviction. Besides all the feasibility studies, this Company has created the Sacandaga Whitewater Recreation Area, complete with a low profile river manager, free take out and put in facilities, and low cost shuttle. Thanks to the creation of a paddler/local representative/outfitter advisory committee, operational issues are dealt with effectively before disputes become problems. The Niagara Mohawk is already far ahead of the curve. Hopefully, as relicensing process proceeds and commitments for releases across its system appear front and center, their pro-active vision will manifest itself in a new universe of river recreation opportunities across the state.*

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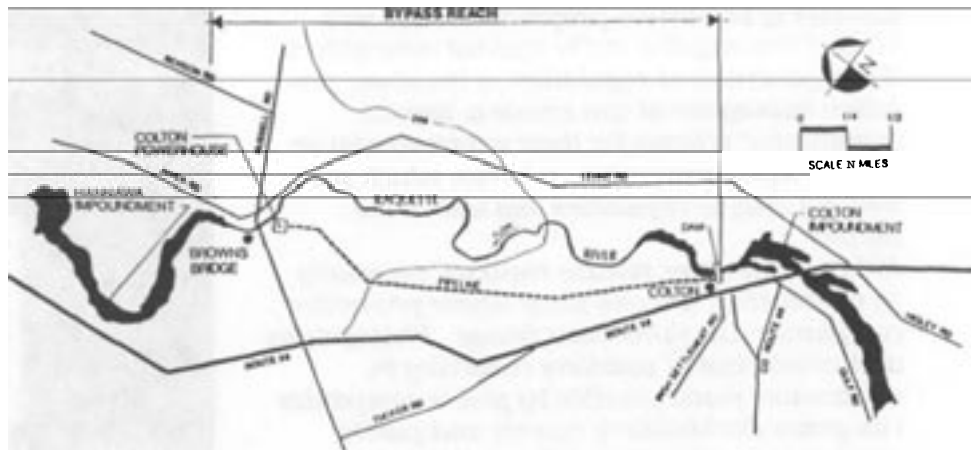




## ONCE LOST, NOW FOUND



*The Raquette River, dubbed the workhorse of the North, arises in the heart of New York's Adirondack wilderness regions. After dozens of impoundments and powerplants, it flows placidly into the St. Lawrence River near Massena. This river was an important fur trading route and later became the site of many mills and power plants and river corridor prosperity in years gone by. Most of the power plants on this and other Adirondack Rivers will get new licenses from the Federal Government in the next few years. Special conditions attached to these licenses could open up a whole new array of recreational and scenic opportunities. (see the map)*



### **NYRU Formed**

*AWA is no longer alone in its quest of hydropower plant reform in New York. Thanks to grants by American Rivers, River Network, AWA and others, a new river advocacy group has been formed in New York - New York Rivers UNITED. Under the energetic guidance of Bruce Carpenter, this Rome, New York, based operation pushes for river corridor conservation and enhancement, especially through relicensing. Among its goals are better recreation and access opportunities, scenic enhancement, more enlightened land use and fishery management, and bio-diversity programs. ■*



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Please rank these issues on a scale of 1-5 according to how strongly you feel about each issue. i.e.

- 1 NOT IMPORTANT / NOT AN ISSUE
- 2 SLIGHTLY IMPORTANT / MINOR ISSUE
- 3 IMPORTANT
- 4 VERY IMPORTANT / DESERVES ATTENTION
- 5 EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ■ MAJOR ISSUE

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 Imposition of user fees on private boaters and not other park users.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2 Quotas on weekdays.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Illegal to run Ohio Falls.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4 Over regulation of private access to the river.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5 Exclusion of private boater input into relevant park administrative decisions and regulations.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6 Harassment of private boaters by park officials.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7 Decline of safety record in recent years.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Unregulated **raft** rentals to unskilled paddle
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9 Commercial domination of the river.

Other concerns:

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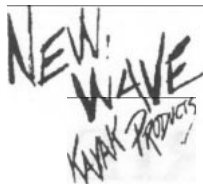
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## Near Drowning- It Isn't Over Till the Doctor Bill Arrives

by Wayne A. Sundmacher, Sr.  
President, Rescue 3 East, Inc.

When a near drowning occurs, paddlers may not realize the seriousness of the situation once the victim has revived. Even when a near drowning victim exhibits no apparent problems, hidden life threatening complications may still be at work. Untrained rescuers may let the level of care diminish with time, **thinking** that the victim has come through the worst of the incident and is out of danger. What is generally not known is how long a near-drowning victim should be monitored, or the complications which can affect a near-drowning victim hours **after** the incident.

What happens when a person is drowning?

Drowning is most commonly thought of as asphyxia, or suffocation due to submersion. But other problems can be present.

A drowning can be categorized as either wet or dry, depending on whether water has been drawn into the lungs. Only about ten percent of drowning victims die from true asphyxia, or **dry** drowning. The rest either draw in water during a **final** attempt to get air, or have water pass into their lungs while unconscious.

Usually a drowning victim will make every attempt to gulp in large breaths of air. The timing of these gasps may allow water to enter the airway. Once the victim begins to cough, more water can be involuntarily inhaled.

Water passing the larynx, or voice box, initiates the **choking** reflex, which we have all experienced when drinking too fast. During a drowning the strength of this spasm may be so great that it will seal the airway. In this situation very little water

may be allowed into the lungs, but the air that the victim desperately needs doesn't get in either. Unconsciousness from lack of oxygen soon follows.

In other cases, such as being recirculated in a hydraulic, the victim may voluntarily hold his breath. While the urge to breath is **strong**, the victim persists. With the physical exertion of attempting to stay at the surface, the oxygen levels in the blood drop and the victim slips into unconsciousness.

**Hypoxia**, or lack of oxygen in the blood, causes the victim's **skin** to have a bluish **tint**. As the oxygen level of the blood decreases, the brain is deprived of oxygen as well. The victim loses consciousness and the brain begins to die. Also, without adequate oxygen, an irregular and ineffective heartbeat known as ventricular fibrillation can occur, ultimately leading to cardiac arrest.

Concurrent with the decrease in the oxygen level in the blood, the level of carbon dioxide increases, lowering the pH of the blood and making it more acidic.

If the **laryngospasm** which closed off the airway relaxes after the victim becomes unconscious, allowing water to enter, or if water enters the lungs during a last desperate attempt to draw in air, the



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lungs may be damaged. Freshwater removes the chemical surfactant which covers the inside of the alveoli, the small sac-like structures in the lungs where gasses are exchanged between the air and the blood. Surfactant is important because it maintains the elasticity of the lungs and helps keep the alveoli open. If too much surfactant is flushed away, portions of the lungs may collapse, so that normal gas exchange can not occur.

Another process which begins after water enters the lungs is known as osmosis. During osmosis freshwater can be drawn across the walls of the alveoli into the bloodstream. This extra water dilutes the important electrolytes, sodium and potassium, and can cause the red blood cells to rupture. The amount of osmosis that occurs varies from case to case, but it is present to some degree in most cases of wet drowning.

In particularly muddy water or in salt-water osmosis may cause water to shift the other way, from the bloodstream into the lungs. This may lead to shock, due to the decrease in the volume of the blood, or to ongoing hypoxia, because lungs full of fluid and debris can't exchange gasses well. This process may continue long after

the victim has revived.

Contaminants in the water, such as bacteria or chemicals, present additional problems. Bacteria may cause pneumonia to develop, while chemicals may cause damage to the alveoli and airways directly. Either of these problems can be life threatening, but may not be apparent until many hours after the incident.

Understanding the complexities of drowning gives us a list of potential complications that may or may not occur in any given case. But it is important to note that many of these complications can develop or continue for some time after the victim has revived. In some cases they may not become apparent for twenty-four hours or more. They include life threatening problems such as pulmonary edema (accumulation of fluid in the lungs), aspiration pneumonia, chemical (electrolyte) imbalances in the blood and irregular heart rhythms.

That is why in a near drowning if there is any question as to whether the victim may have drawn fluid into their lungs or if the victim lost consciousness for any period of time, they should be examined by a physician.

Unfortunately, because some physi-

cians don't deal with water related injuries very often, they too may underestimate the seriousness of the situation. So if the exam seems a little incomplete, don't hesitate to ask questions. Make sure the physician understands the seriousness of the situation..

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# NOVEMBER 2 DEADLINE FOR BOATING SAFETY GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications are now being accepted for boating safety project grants to be awarded in early 1994 by the BOAT/U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety. The deadline is November 2.

Since 1988 the Foundation's Grassroots Grants Program has awarded nearly \$175,000 to volunteer boating groups and other non-profit organizations to support boating safety projects at the local level.

**"We encourage community organizations to submit grant applications for projects reflecting a unique and repeatable way to reach the public with boating safety programs," said BOAT/U.S. Foundation Director Jim Ellis.**

**"For example, the variety of innovative projects we supported this year ranged from billboards promoting personal watercraft safety in Mississippi, to a direct mail boating safety campaign in California, to a program in Maryland that rewards children for wearing their lifejackets."**

Organizations wishing to receive a Grassroots Grant application packet should write BOAT/U.S. Foundation, 880 South Picket Street, Alexandria, VA 22304.

The BOAT/U.S. Foundation for Boating Safety is a non-profit education and research organization funded by voluntary contributions from boat owners.

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The **Tourer** (not pictured) is a flat water kayak that resembles a sea kayak except the Tourer has a much larger cockpit. This is a very fast and stable kayak due to its long keel line and U shaped hull.

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# OCOEE RODEO FEVER — CATCH IT!

By *Tim Kelly*

Photos by *Sandi Lofti*

*Susan Gentry*

The 1993 Ocoee Rodeo will be remembered as the flood waters that marked whitewaterrodeo as a sport! An incredible 141 competitors — the most ever — mystified, cartwheeled and pirouetted like never before. The winners came away with more than the usual prizes and bragging rights. This year the finalists became members of the Eastern U.S. Freestyle Team and will compete in the 1993 World Championship Whitewater Rodeo on the Ocoee October 16 and 17.

But what was the rodeo really like?

The Ocoee Rodeo is scheduled as a two-day competition, but for most it has become a three-, or even four-day, paddling orgy. Make no mistake about it; these whitewater cowboys spend all spring practicing their moves. But despite the excitement of the competition, it seems most paddlers just come to be part of the event.

By Friday things are in full swing. From water's release to shut off, Torpedo



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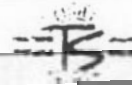
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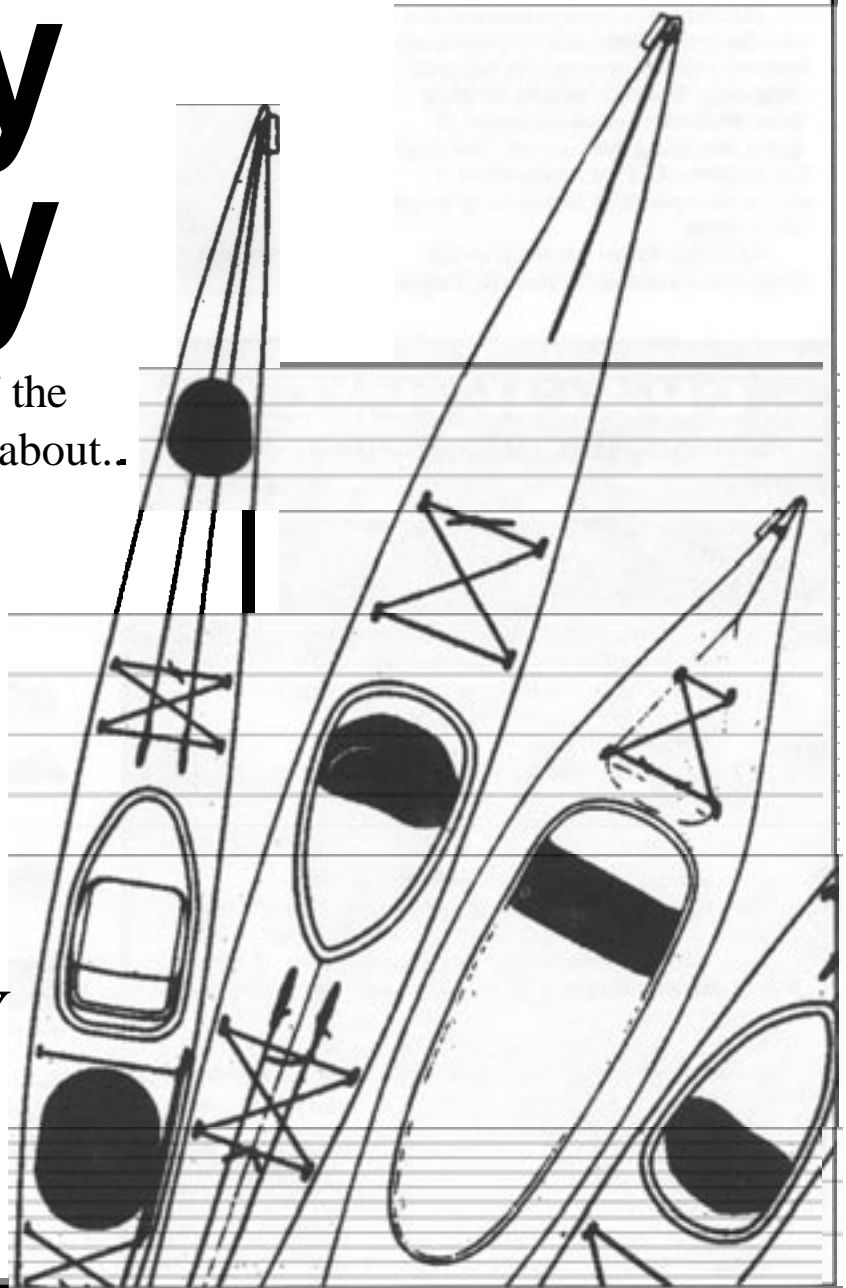
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## OCOOE RODEO FEVER

and Hell Hole showcase nonstop squirting and play boat acrobatics. That night the campground at Ocoee Rafting resembles the Tailwaters the night before Gauley Fest. Boaters move from fire to fire, swapping epic stories about spring runs or winter trips taken south of the border. You know, Good Old Boater bonding.

AWA Director/Rodeo Coordinator Susan Gentry and her volunteers have organized the rodeo into a real class act. Competitors, boats and spectators are shuttled to Hell's Hole to help ease the traffic problems. Stepping off the bus, you hear tunes echoing off the canyon walls. Sponsor banners color the backdrop, as the Ocoee's rocky banks are transformed into a whitewater arena.

The formalities begin with a competitors meeting. Judges are introduced and rules explained. A total of five judges will evaluate three areas: two judge technical difficulty, two judge style and one judges variety. Scores range from one to ten.

Each contestant makes three runs and drops his lowest score. This process serves as the preliminaries for the expert classes. The top eight in these classes then shoot it out head to head in a single elimination bracket.

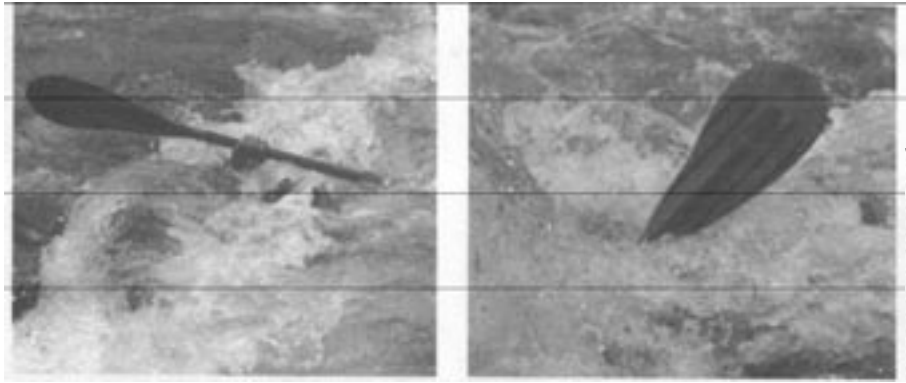
There are a few differences between squirting and freestyle competition besides the obvious. Although both have a time limit for each run, when a freestylist washes out of a hydraulic, he has the option to end his run or make it back to the hole within 15 seconds. This keeps things action packed for the spectators.

And spectators there are! The number of neon bikinis on shore make the banks of the Ocoee look like the beaches of Fort Lauderdale. Although this doesn't seem to distract contestants, I saw a couple of judges staring the wrong way during a few not-so-spectacular runs.

The increase in "fans" is probably the largest area of growth the rodeo has seen over the past few years, and no doubt will be the keystone to whitewater rodeo growing as a sport. Keeping the action flowing and the fans entertained will be a major factor in any future format changes.

On Saturday the water was late in arriving. Little was happening, when Woody Callaway, the voice of the Ocoee Rodeo, came across the PA. "Jimmy, everybody's watching.." Woody was referring to the master of the mystery cult, Jim Snyder. In a class of his own, Jim gave us all a lesson.

This was Jim's first rodeo as a contestant, and he was not ashamed to admit he was a bit nervous. I said, "Jim, even if you have three "bad" runs, the rest of us are still just battling for second place." How



Photos by Rich Bowers

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## OCOEE RODEO FEVER



Tony Reeves



Bob McDonough

true those words would be. For a bad day to the father of squirt boating is still more spectacular than the best day for any mere mortal **squirthead**.

Jim worked all facets of the rapid with about every move in "The Book" to include a few Schnitzel throws and a couple **Atilas** (page 125/126). Mostly though, he focused on mysteries along flatwater seams. The seams never really opened for Jim, but he would transition from these flatwater mysteries to flashy washouts, work in some **screw in'** around and finish with crisp cartwheels.

Tony Reeves gave Jim a run for his money, as he showed off spectacular hand-paddle cartwheels. He combined this with good seam work and added some past-vertical screw ups. Tony came the closest to **matching** the fluid moves of the master. **Wayne Gentry**, producer of "Southern Fried Creekin'", flashed one-armed bandits mixed with **killer** washouts on top of some serious down time to capture the third and final spot on the Eastern team.

The water delay and large number of contestants forced the finals to be modified. Only the top six made the finals. And **instead** of going head to head, finalists made two runs with only their best score counting.

David Frierson and Woody Callaway

tyed for fourth and fifth, with David winning on the tie breaker. Clay Wright finished sixth.

Fred Davis hit the deepest, darkest and longest mystery of the day, **winning** both a "**Lizardhead**" helmet and the most cherished prize, a custom paddle made and presented by Jim Snyder for the best

move of the day.

The women's expert class continues to be dominated by Susan **Wilson-Gentry** and Risa Shimoda Callaway. **Jocelyn Hernied** finished third.

Young Kirby Erdely ran away with the C-1 Expert title, as he **stunned** all with spectacular cartwheels. Chris **Manderson** and **Norwood Scott** battled it out for second and third to round out the Eastern C-1 Squirt Team.

**Following** the squirt competition, everything was moved to Hell Hole, and open canoes took center stage. These canoeists showed what real boaters can do with half the paddle and twice the volume. They surfed, ended and pirouetted for the top three male and top two female spots.

When all was said and done, Bob Beazley, Billy Davis and **Dale Johnson** finished one, two and three from a field of 21, while Kathy **Howerton** and Brenda Dent claimed **first** and second in the women's event.

The 0G2 competition had eight teams with Bob Beazley and Shane Benedict winning, Brian and Judy Anderson taking second, and Dick **Conner** and David Rose placing third.

As soon as the competition ended, the party was **rockin'** back at Ocoee **Rafting** in Ducktown, TN. As usual, the lasagna dinner was fantastic, and the silent auction was a huge success.

Shortly after dark, prizes for the day were awarded and the serious partying got under way. The Greasy Creek Band played backup for the toe choppin', harmonica playing Francis **Mallory**. Francis

**Norwood Scott**



## OCOEE RODEO FEVER

had the packed campground stompin'!

Sunday featured the C-1 and K-1 play boat competitions. Scott Shoup ran away with the C-1 title, followed by Alan Braswell. It was a close battle for the final spot on the team, as Tim Maisincupp edged out Norwood Scott.

The K-1 Expert classes were real shoot outs. Only the top five women and top six men would make the Eastern Team

Roxanne McDonough won the preliminaries with a commanding margin, followed by Susan Gentry, Rebecca Weis, Hannah Swayze, Karen Mann, Lythia Metzmer, Barbara Moore and Elizabeth Cheek. The showdown then commenced, as the top four women shuffled to make the semi-finals. Susan now held the top spot, followed by Hannah, Rebecca and Roxanne.

The pressure intensified. All four had solid runs, but only Susan and Roxanne would advance to the finals. The two had swapped the lead all day, but Roxanne went on to win the title with her best run

of the day. Karen Mann had done well enough in the quarter finals to remain fifth and make the team.

The final event of the rodeo was the K-1 Men's Expert class. Here 23 "aquabats" bid for a shot at World Whitewater Gold. Lee Bonfiglio, Corran Addison, Marc Lyle, Doug Wellman, Bob McDonough, Chris Spelius, Shane Benedict and Brian "Lone Wolf" Fischer made the quarter finals.

Bob, Lee, Corran and Doug advanced to be the final four. Bob and Corran turned up the heat with great runs to make the finals.

A repeat of the 1991 Ocoee Rodeo? Not this time. Corran edged out Bob by half a point! No doubt, Bob will be looking for a rematch come October. The final standings were Corran, Bob, Doug, Lee, Marc, Chris, Shane and Brian.

So there you have it. The crown jewel of whitewater rodeo has set the stage for the 1993 World Championships.

Who will be whitewater rodeo's Mr. October?



Bob Beasley

## OCOEE RODEO FINAL RESULTS

### Playboat Freestyle Competition

#### K-1 Men Expert

1. Corran Addison
2. Bob McDonough
3. Doug Wellman

#### K-1 Women Expert

1. Roxanne McDonough
2. Susan Wilson-Gentry
3. Rebecca Weis

#### K-1 Men Intermediate

1. John Grumbine
2. Jeff West
3. Mark Travis

#### K-1 Women Intermediate

1. Dottie Kibler
2. Christy Coggin
3. Ava Carr

#### C-1 Men Expert

1. Scott Shoup
2. Alan Draswell
3. Tim Maisincupp

### National Squirt Boating Championship

#### K-1 Expert Men Squirt

1. Jim Snyder
2. Tony Reeves
3. Wayne Gentry

#### K-1 Expert Women Squirt

1. Susan Wilson-Gentry
2. Risa Shimoda Callaway
3. Jocelyn Hemried

#### K-1 Intermediate Men Squirt

1. Preston Orr
2. Tim Daly
3. Cameron Stewart

#### K-1 Intermediate Women Squirt

1. Jennifer Wiger
2. Karen Morton Curvin
3. Diana Holloran

#### C-1 Expert Men Squirt

1. Kirby Erdely
2. Chris Manderson
3. Norwood Scott

### Open Canoe

#### OC-1 Men Expert

1. Bob Beasley
2. Billy Davis
3. Dale Johnson

#### OC-1 Women Expert

1. Kathy Howerton
2. Brenda Dent
3. Judy Anderson

#### OG2 Expert

1. Bob Beasley and Shane Benedict
2. Brian and Judy Anderson
3. Rick Connor and David Rose



Kathy Howerton



Dale Johnson



# GOLLY! IT'S GAULEY SEASON ALREADY

Join the American Whitewater Affiliation on Saturday evening, September 25, for the 1993 Gauley River Festival. Hosted again by the Nicholas County Veterans Memorial Park on Route 19 in Summersville, the Festival will rock from 5:00 pm to midnight. Admission is still only \$5.

In addition to its usual highlights — the Marketplace, Silent Auction, Raffle, Non-Stop Videos and live music of the coolest variety provided this year by the Michael Starr Band — AWA has a few new surprises for Festival goers this year.

Guitar-strumming, harmonica-blowing Brant Miller from Rockwood, Tennessee will take a little time out to perform songs from his new cassette, Music River: Original

Whitewater Songs and River Ballads. These selections of all original music and lyrics by Brant Miller and Tom Joy should introduce a little extra levity to the proceedings.

This year's Gauley Festival followers should also plan to roll up their sleeves and participate in some whitewater carnival games and perhaps even seek an audience with the world-famous John Zdrozny, whitewater seer supreme.

Camping with full bathhouse facilities will be available at the Festival site both Friday and Saturday nights for \$3 per person per night.

Please note that no cans or bottles will be admitted to the Gauley Festival. So bring your beverages in cups. Thanks.

## GAULEY FESTIVAL MARKETPLACE



While cruising the Festival, spend some time with these exhibitors. They'll be happy see you, whether you want to check out the latest in whitewater and outdoor gear, ask a bunch of questions or shop til you drop.

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- Wildwasser Sport USA

## GAULEY FESTIVAL VIDEOS

### A VISUAL FEAST

As always, the Gauley Festival's non-stop video action will be presented by the Bluegrass Wildwater Association and will include a selection of their Annual Paddling Film Festival's finest.

Scott Smalley, Gauley Fest Video Coordinator both this year and last, invites you to join him in the pavillion to sample from the following sensational smorgasbord:

7:00 pm	Green Summer
7:30 pm	Southern Hair
7:50 pm	Waterfall Kayak
8:05 pm	Spe's Expeditiones Chile
8:35 pm	One Winter and a Few Falls
9:00 pm	Wid Americans
9:55 pm	Trapper
10:00 pm	Southern Fried Steep Creek'n
10:30 pm	Revenge of the Russell Fork

## 1993 GAULEY FESTIVAL AUCTION

### SANTA IN SEPTEMBER

The Gauley Festival's Silent Auction has a reputation for its bargains in brand new, top-of-the-line gear. Come browse.

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- Custom Inflatables
- Dagger Canoe
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- Nantahala Outdoor Center
- New Wave Kayaks
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And it was particularly apparent on the Uncompagre, when Snake calmly announced that he intended to run a steep, serpentine class 5 rapid in which an unfortunate Tennessee boater named Gary Stacks had perished two days before. We studied the rapid for some time. The Uncompagre was thundering and, although we did not know the specifics, I could imagine at least ten different scenarios that might have led to Gary Stack's death.

After some serious soul searching I decided to pass on the rapid; I would set safety along shore with the others. But then, just as Snake was getting ready to put on, my adrenalin surged in that old familiar way, and I shouldered my kayak and followed Snake over the riverbank. Although we had not spoken of it, we both knew that there had been a reversal in our roles. When it came to running rivers things had changed forever. Now Snake would lead, and I would follow.

And as we paddled the screaming mile long approach to the rapid- it took about three minutes- I was right on his tail.

We caught a swirling eddy at the lip of the drop. Snake flashed a confident smile and a thumbs up.

I swallowed hard... several times. I wasn't swallowing water. I was swallowing my pride. And there, on the brink of a potential disaster, it went down easy.

Snake peeled out and, a few seconds

later, I followed.

His line was flawless, and so, as a consequence, was mine.

At the bottom of the drop we were both beaming.

When I think back on my early days in a kayak, I can remember several times when it became obvious that my skills had surpassed those of one of my mentors. Most of those folks were really gracious about it.

In fact, surprisingly so. It isn't easy to come to terms with the fact that someone who used to follow you like a puppy is now the point dog. But it is an inevitable

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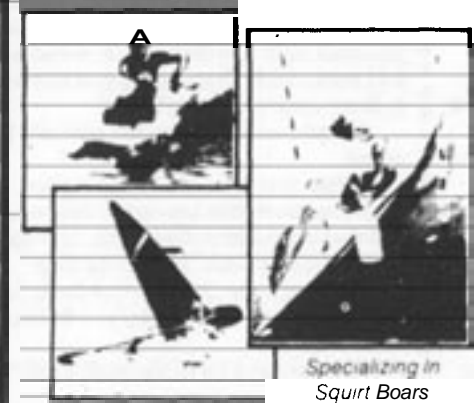
experience. Snake is not the first young whippersnapper to leave me in the dust, and I know he won't be the last.

And, although there is something sad about that, there is something gratifying about it too. Because every time Snake pushes the limits a little further, I take comfort in the fact that some small part of his accomplishment is mine.

So, Snake, go for it! Do me proud.

Just give me a quick wink as you glide by. I'll be there in the eddy with the other old fogies, telling them that I knew you when!

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# End Notes

## Girls Just Wanna Have Fun

by Carla Garrison

My friend Jody is a lot like me. Loves to have fun. Always game to toss the boats on the roof and streak off to the latest steep creek. There is nothing we like more than to pioneer hair.

So when Jody calls with the scoop on a hot new run, I listen. Take last Monday, for instance.

"Damn, Carla, I'm sorry you couldn't make it," Jody said. "This one is a real beaut! Steepest section drops 1900 feet in less than four miles. It makes the Green Narrows look like Vacation Bible School! Makes the Big South look like a Love Boat Cruise!"

Well, you best believe my interest was piqued.

"And you say it's less than twelve miles from the interstate and that this was the first descent? Wonder how we overlooked it all these years?"

"Well, it's kind of hard to find. You need a four wheel drive with real high clearance. Fact is, we tore the oil pan out from under Gary's 4X4 on the shuttle. And the put in lies within some kind of private reserve, owned by one of those fanatic skinhead survivalist cults. Like those goons we kicked the crap out of in Idaho."

The memory of that confrontation put a big smile on my face. God, how I love to beat up neo-Nazis!

"But you've got to hand it to these guys, they have a crazy sense of humor," Jody continued. "No wimpy 'No Trespassing' signs for them! They've posted signs that say, 'Do You Believe in Life After Death?? Trespass Here and See!!!"

"Cool!" I replied. "But were you ready to handle those nuts on their own turf? That ilk keeps a lot of firepower stashed away. Machine guns and even grenades. And they're just itching for the chance to use them."

"No big whoop. I had my 44 with me. Besides, I doubt they'd ever spot us. The brush is so thick that you can't even see your own feet. Thickets of greenbriar and red haws and stinging nettle. Poison sumac growing thirty feet high! Five times more poison ivy than in the Black Canyon, and you know how that is."

The mere mention of it made me itch with pleasure.

"Fortunately there is a semblance of a trail to the put in. Reminds me of that three mile Death March into the Giant Gap section of the North Fork of the American.

Only this one is five miles longer and twice

as steep. And the blackflies! Worse than anything I've seen in Quebec, even on the Taureau in July!"

Jody continued, "I'll tell you, ain't nobody gonna survive a hike out of there.

But that's okay, cause everything on the river is runnable!"

"Wow!" I exclaimed. "And with that gradient. Guess you had to scout quite a bit."

"Nah," Jody whistled. "You can't. The whole river lies in a box canyon, like the one on the Animas, only deeper. Cliff faces plummet right into the river. It would be a 5 1 1 rock climb. Nope, once you start into it, there ain't no turning back."

"So you scouted from the eddies?" I asked.

"What few there are," Jody replied. "Can't be more than ten on the entire run, and they're as squirrely as hell. Like that one just above Suck Hole on the Top Yough. You know, the one that feeds back into the siphon. Except they're a fraction of the size."

"So you ran a lot of the stuff blind?" I inquired.

"Yeah, most of it. You have to. The whole river is like Let's Make a Deal on the Lower Meadow. You pick a slot, charge into it, and hope for the best. Most of the time we were pretty lucky."

"Most of the time?"

"Oh, except for C.G. He had no way of knowing about those falls. Poor sucker really got hammered. I would have been right behind him except I heard the noise."

"The noise?"

"Yeah, the sound of the snout of his boat being crushed. I never heard anyone piton that hard. Not even at Gluteal Mash on the North Fork of the Blackwater. Course this drop was nearly twice that high."

"Is C.G. okay?" I asked.

"Yeah. He's fine. Doctor said he might even be off the crutches by Gauley Season. Course being laid up again is gonna cost him his job. So he'll probably loose the house."

"Too bad," I replied. "I'll bet his wife is peeved."

"For sure," Jody whispered. "She packed up the kids and left. Looks like she's gone for good this time."

"Good riddance," I replied. "Tell me more."

"Okay... You know Gerilla, on the Green? Where no matter how good you are, surviving is still a matter of chance.

Well this river has a similar rapid that we named the Annihilator. But it is twice as nasty. I tell you, the odds of getting through the Annihilator without getting hurt have got to be less than fifty percent. And, catch this, you have to run it! It can't be portaged!"

"Gaaa...roovey!" I replied.

"And just below that there's a must make class 5 ferry right at the lip of a real Horrendioma. Like that ferry above Atom Bomb Falls on the Middle Fork of the Feather, only harder. And the rapid below is just like Lumsden Falls on Cherry Creek; it terminates in a hole that feeds into a deeply undercut rock face. But this hole runs clear across the river and the undercut is the entrance to a

cave."

"Sounds like fun!"

"Oh, it is!" Jody exclaimed. "Your sister Heather cartwheeled in that hole four times before I got the throw rope to her. Good thing Heather caught it cause if she had gone into that Cavity of Depravity she would surely be taking a shortcut to China this very minute."

"Sounds too good to be true!" I replied. "I can't wait to see it."

"Oh, I haven't even told you about the gnarly stuff. It goes on for mile after mile."

"No kidding. Bet it's really pretty in there."

Jody paused. "Well, in a wierd way. With the iron and mercury deposits on all the rocks. That uranium mine upstream really must be a big one. Bigger than those ones in Nevada."

"Hell, the crayfish actually glow in the dark!"

"Fair 'nuff. So you finished the river late?"

"Yeah. Might as well have been paddling in a tomb those last two miles. Too dad. I would have loved to have seen the look on Gary's face when he tripped over that rattler at the take-out. Maybe we'll get an earlier start next time."

"Gee, it sounds like everyone had a really great time! So we're going this weekend?" I demanded eagerly.

"Sure 'nuff. I'll pick you up on four, Saturday morning. Just don't get too tanked at that party Friday night."

"Moi!" I exclaimed. "You know that I do my best work when I'm badly hung over."

"That's when I really don't care if I live or die." "That's good," Jody chuckled. "Cause if it

keeps raining like this, there's a chance that we can catch something even better. Asister creek that parallels this one. No one has laid eyes on it yet, but according to the topos it is twice as steep, has three times the watershed and is four times as long!"

"Oooohhh," I moaned with anticipation.

"Please... not another word! I'll see you Saturday." By this time I was practically orgasmic. Who could blame me?

Like I said, Jody knows what I like.

I like to have fun.

And something tells me I'm in for something good!

*Editor's Note: Carla Garrison is a regular columnist who is apparently off her medication again.* ■

# WHY SAVE WILD SALMON?

*For the past twenty years, our nation has been committed to cleaning its rivers, the arteries of the continent, and bringing them back to life.*

*We can be proud that Eastern rivers whose toxicity once peeled the paint from nearby houses are now clean, and that funding a new dam regardless of merit is no longer the Western senator's rite of passage into largesse and clout.*

**B**ut thoughtful citizens should know what until now has

concerned mostly biologists and anglers. Wild salmon are going the way of the buffalo: their numbers are declining at an astonishing rate. The loss of wild salmon would be serious in itself, but biologists are especially alarmed because salmon are an indicator species: their ability to survive is a test of the capacity of our waters to support life. What threatens salmon endangers the environment as a whole.

Wild salmon can survive in American rivers. What will save them will save other forms of aquatic wildlife: protection of streambanks from grazing cattle, alteration of logging and road-construction techniques that silt over spawning grounds, and cessation of overfishing.

But arguably the greatest threat to wild salmon (and other sea-run species) comes from dams- from excessive releases that raise water temperature and kill fish, from inadequate (or nonexistent) fishways that block passage to spawning grounds, from turbine blades that grind up young salmon



Young Salmon swimming to the ocean

Photo: GLENN VAN RYCKHOVE

making their way back to the sea.

In many places dams and wild salmon must coexist, and the efforts to manage this coexistence are and will be complex and expensive. Yet elsewhere we currently allow a simpler solution to escape our notice: that it is to tear down the dams we don't need.

We have been damming our rivers for two hundred years: a large share of these structures are obsolete, many more are marginal and no longer do what they were built to do-- they would never be built today. These dams should be identified, and breached, or removed. We ask for your support for two current efforts to restore the Rogue in Oregon, and the Kennebec in Maine as examples of what can be done across the country.

**For more information on the Rogue and Kennebec campaigns, and on American wild salmon and what you can do to help the local and national groups working to save them, call the Patagonia Guide Line at (800) 523-9597**

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