



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

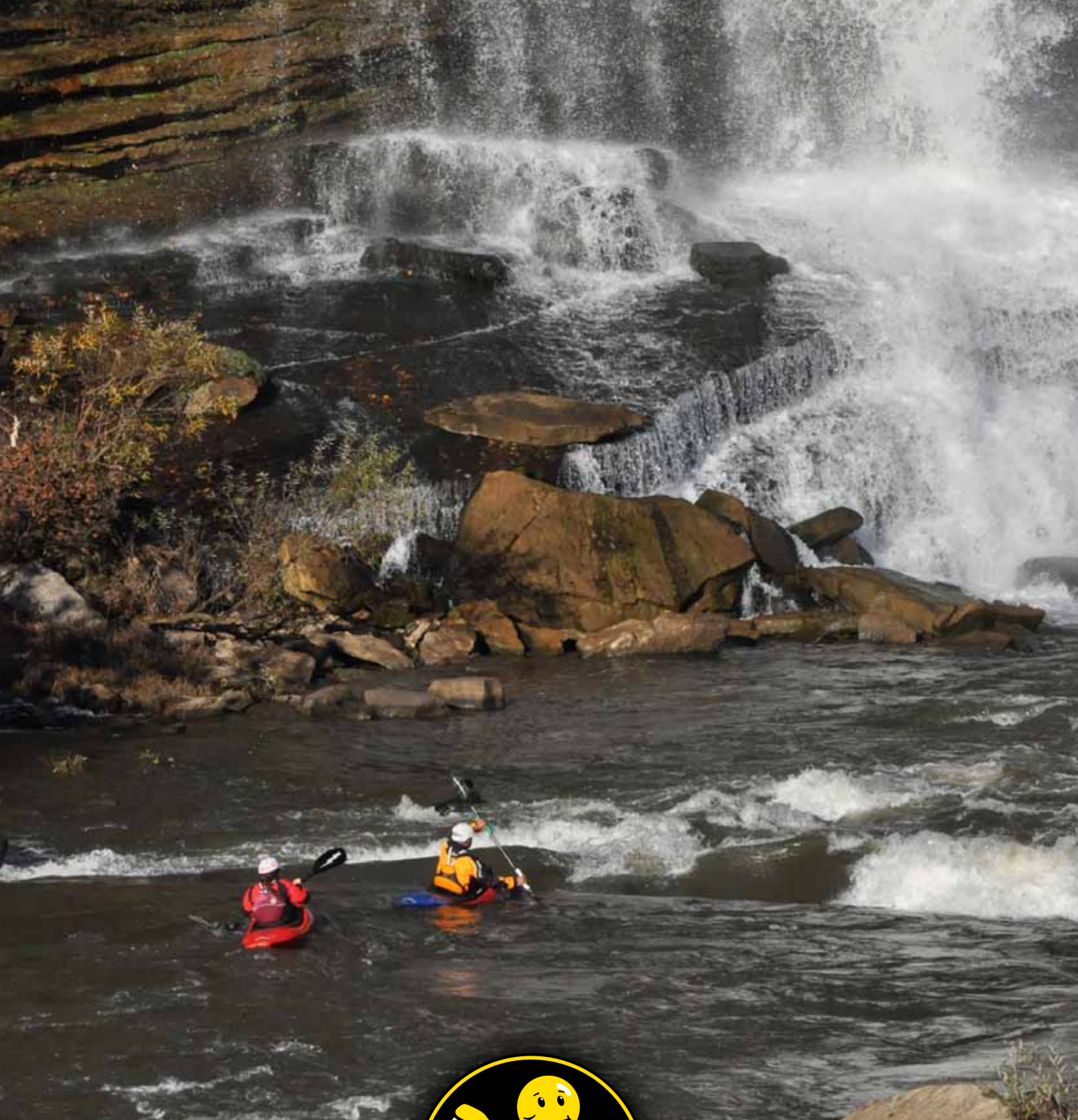
Conservation • Access • Events • Adventure • Safety

BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
Sep/Oct 2017

A photograph of a kayaker in a red jacket and green helmet navigating a turbulent white-water rapids in a rocky river. The water is churning and white with foam, surrounded by large, dark, jagged rocks. The background shows a dense forest of green trees.

SELF-SUPPORT KAYAKING ANSWERING THE QUESTION

THE VALUE OF CLEAN WATER SAVING THE KARNALI



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AW AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal Sep/Oct 2017 – Volume 57 – Issue 5

COLUMNS

- 5 The Journey Ahead by **Mark Singleton**
- 35 Letter to the Editor by **Jim Sindelar**
- 36 Safety by **Charlie Walbridge**

STEWARDSHIP

- 6 Clean Water is Essential to River Based Recreation By **Evan Stafford & Thomas O’Keefe**
- 10 North Fork Smith River by **Evan Stafford & Megan Hooker**
- 11 A Successful River Cleanup On The St. Vrain By **Kestrel Kunz**
- 12 Save the Karnali By **Karen Bennett and Megh Ale**

FEATURE ARTICLES

WILDERNESS PADDLING

- 16 Self-Support Part II: Boats & Gear By **Teresa Gryder**

REFLECTIONS

- 30 When the Time Comes: Addressing the Question By **Ambrose Tuscano**
- 42 River of Death, River of Life By **Patti Rutka**

WHITEWATER POETRY

- 50 On Returning from the River By **Mark Taratoot**



Earlier this summer the Oregon Environmental Quality Commission designated the North Fork Smith River in southwest Oregon as the first Outstanding Resource Water in the Pacific Northwest.

Photo by Zachary Collier

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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



American Whitewater Journal Staff

Editor Ambrose Tuscano
P.O. Box 913, Soda Springs, California 95728
e-mail: editor@americanwhitewater.org

Graphic Design/Production/Photo Editor Megan Seifert

Assistant Editors Patricia Rutka, Erica J. Seifert, Barry Tuscano

Contributing Writers

Mark Singleton, Evan Stafford, Thomas O'Keefe, Megan Hooker, Kestrel Kunz, Karen Bennett, Megh Ale, Teresa Gryder, Ambrose Tuscano, Jim Sindelar, Charlie Walbridge, Patti Rutka, Mark Taratoot

Photo Contributors

Zachary Collier, Thomas O'Keefe, Evan Stafford, John E. Putnam, Ultimate Descents Nepal, Michael Buckley, Gary Wockner, Teresa Gryder, Will Gehr, Ambrose Tuscano, Megan Seifert, Cathy Howard, Rok Sribar, David Haas, Cheryl Daigle, Kyle Duckworth

Industry Partnerships and Advertising: Mark Singleton
e-mail: mark@americanwhitewater.org

Safety Editor Charlie Walbridge
Route 1, Box 329F, Bruceton Mills, WV 26525
e-mail: ccwalbridge@cs.com

Stewardship Reports Editor
Evan Stafford evan@americanwhitewater.org

Missing Copies and Address Changes
Carla Miner, carla@americanwhitewater.org

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

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

Board of Directors & Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brent Austin
Lexington, KY
baustin@jbrentaustin.com

Erin Savage
Asheville, NC
savage.ee@gmail.com

Ed Clark
Lincoln, VT
rise@madriver.com

Chris Tulley
Folsom, CA
chris.tulley@gmail.com

Kent Ford
wkentford@gmail.com
Durango, CO

Christopher Hest
kayakasia@yahoo.com
San Francisco, CA

Susan Hollingsworth Elliott
Corvallis, OR
smhollings@gmail.com

Brian Jacobson
Long Creek, SC
briandjacobson@gmail.com

Megi Morishita
megi1971@gmail.com
Newport, Oregon

Chris Neuenschwander
Chris.Neuenschwander@jackson-thornton.com
Pike Road, AL

Melissa Pennscott
MelissaPennscott@gmail.com
Asheville, NC

Charlie Walbridge, Honorary
ccwalbridge@cs.com
Bruceton Mills, WV

Courtney Wilton
courtneywilton@gmail.com
Portland, OR

BOARD OFFICERS

President: Courtney Wilton

Vice President: Christopher Hest

Secretary: Susan Hollingsworth Elliott

Treasurer: Chris Neuenschwander
At Large: Brian Jacobson & Melissa Pennscott

AW STAFF

Kevin Colburn
National Stewardship Director
Asheville, NC
kevin@americanwhitewater.org

Nathan Fey
Colorado Stewardship Director
Longmont, CO
nathan@americanwhitewater.org

Megan Hooker
Associate Stewardship Director
Bend, OR
megan@americanwhitewater.org

Kestrel Kunz
Colorado Assistant
Buena Vista, CO
kestrel@americanwhitewater.org

Carla Miner
Membership Director
West Valley City, UT
carla@americanwhitewater.org

Bob Nasdor
NE Stewardship Director
Sudbury, MA
bob@americanwhitewater.org

Thomas O'Keefe
Pacific NW Stewardship Director
Seattle, WA
okeefe@americanwhitewater.org

Theresa Simsiman
California Stewardship Director
Sacramento, CA
theresa@americanwhitewater.org

Mark Singleton
Executive Director
Cullowhee, NC
mark@americanwhitewater.org

Evan Stafford
Outreach Contractor
Fort Collins, CO
evan@americanwhitewater.org

Dave Steindorf
Special Projects Director
Chico, CA
dave@americanwhitewater.org

Laura Wilson
Finance Manager
Cullowhee, NC
laura@americanwhitewater.org

**TOLL FREE NUMBER
1-866-262-8429**

THE JOURNEY AHEAD

THE SUMMER BOATING season just seems to go by too quickly. This summer we saw one of the longest water seasons in recent memory, thanks to a solid winter snowpack in western states. As the days get shorter and the nights cooler, we move into a season fed by classic dam-release rivers. Releases on the Gauley River (WV) and the Feather River (CA) came about after paddlers leaned forward and engaged in public processes that advocated for flows. Channeling this energy and directing that input to advocate for water in rivers is a central component of the American Whitewater river stewardship program. American Whitewater has restored flows to dry rivers below dams across the country, and is a pioneer in bringing political and scientific legitimacy to restoring flows and providing access in a way that connects people to rivers.

To celebrate these successful projects, American Whitewater hosts two upcoming river festivals.

Gauley Festival (WV) - September 14-17, 2017

Dropping more than 668 feet through 26 miles of rugged terrain, the Gauley River's energetic rapids and scenic quality combine to make the Gauley a classic eastern whitewater run. Largely protected by the National Park Service, the river flows through a beautiful forested canyon among towering house-sized boulders. The Gauley, and its sister river the New, have become the economic backbone of an otherwise underdeveloped region of West Virginia. American Whitewater leases the Legg family field, above the Mason Branch access point, from a local landowner to provide parking for private boaters. In partnership with the Gauley River National Recreation Area (part of the National Park Service), a shuttle is provided on busy weekends from the river corridor to the Legg field parking area.

Over the last 30-plus years, Gauley Fest has grown to become the largest river festival in the world. The festival is a showcase for

American Whitewater and top vendors in the boating community. All proceeds from the festival support American Whitewater's national stewardship work. Gauley Fest features live entertainment, a whitewater marketplace, onsite camping, raffle, and a silent auction where you can pick up some awesome outdoor gear. Gauley Fest is also the largest membership drive for American Whitewater. Your support feeds our national river stewardship efforts, so come out with your friends and join American Whitewater staff and volunteers on September 14-17 (Gauley Fest is always the third weekend of September) for a weekend of great paddling, exciting camaraderie, live entertainment, onsite camping, killer boat raffles, and the American Whitewater membership drive.

Feather River Festival (CA) - September 22-24, 2017

In California, the North Fork Feather River watershed is part of a Rube Goldberg-like hydroelectric scheme in the Sierra Nevada. It consists of multiple dams, power plants, and trans-basin diversion tunnels in the headwaters of the Feather River. For decades, flows from the North Fork Feather were diverted for hydropower and only 50 cfs flowed through the river channel. Unscheduled spring and winter releases were erratic and difficult to catch. All this changed in June 2002 with a new hydropower license that required recreational releases. The staff and volunteers of American Whitewater, Chico PaddleHeads, and Shasta Paddlers spent a decade, thousands of dollars, and countless of hours negotiating through the FERC hydropower relicensing process to make these recreational releases a reality.

The annual Feather River Festival will be held to celebrate this victory, during scheduled releases September 22-24. The fundraiser event for American Whitewater will be held at "Indian Jim School" Campground, located two miles upstream from the small town of Tobin and one mile upstream from Tobin Vista. Feather Fest continues the tradition of a

film festival on Friday night featuring the latest films from local paddling filmmakers. Saturday's festivities will include free class II slalom course appropriate for all skill levels, ages, and a variety of craft, and also a downriver race on the Tobin stretch. That evening there will be a benefit party with live music, food and beverages, complete with raffle prizes, race prizes, silent auction items, and the American Whitewater membership drive.

Both the Gauley and the Feather represent significant milestones in river conservation and stewardship for American Whitewater. Each fall we come together to celebrate these rivers—we hope to see you there!

Wherever your boating adventures take you this fall, remember that American Whitewater's river stewardship program is made possible through your membership support. We continue to appreciate the importance of rivers and their role in supporting the health and well being of the paddling community. At American Whitewater, we remain committed to giving back to these special places through river stewardship.

See you on the river,



Mark Singleton
Executive Director

P.S. On your way to the Gauley please know that the local Summersville police department takes their speed limit seriously. Drive at or below the limit through Summersville and be safe out there.

STEWARDSHIP

CLEAN WATER IS ESSENTIAL TO RIVER BASED RECREATION

BY EVAN STAFFORD AND THOMAS O'KEEFE



The next generation of paddlers is counting on us to defend the Clean Water Act.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

AERICAN WHITEWATER WORKS to defend and strengthen our rivers' water quality protections for the health and safety of all who recreate in them. Water quality directly affects whitewater boaters as they get splashed, flip over, and occasionally swim. While all of this is part of the fun, it's less so if the water that gets into paddler's mouths, ears, and noses is polluted. Most whitewater rivers and streams can only be descended during higher than normal flows caused by rainfall or during snowmelt. Surface runoff and pollution often spike during these times, putting paddlers at higher risk of contamination.

Good water quality is also important to rural communities that depend on recreation and tourism as the foundation

for their economies, as well as businesses that are connected to watersports. A 2017 report by the Outdoor Industry Association found that, annually, watersports directly generate:

\$139,971,810,172 in retail spending
1,234,876 jobs
\$43,893,049,709 in salaries and wages
\$10,618,742,884 in federal taxes
\$9,601,521,150 in state and local taxes

Since the passage and implementation of the Clean Water Act in 1972, our nation's river water quality has improved in remarkable ways. However, we're far from meeting the Act's goal of making all of our waterways fishable, swimmable, and drinkable. Our rivers often flow with a tenuous balance between pollution

discharges and public and riparian health. Many rivers and streams are far from thriving, and some are very near critical thresholds for public health and ecological function.

Historically, the Clean Water Act protected our nation's headwater streams and wetlands from pollution. Two Supreme Court cases in 2001 and 2006 created uncertainty about which streams and wetlands the Clean Water Act protects. This uncertainty affects over 60% of streams and millions of acres of wetlands across the country. Not only are these the streams that we boat on (and swim in), but these streams are where one in three Americans get their drinking water. In 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency reviewed and synthesized the scientific

information about the connectivity of these headwater streams and wetlands to downstream waters. Their conclusion: watersheds are undeniably connected from top to bottom, including the uppermost headwater streams, riparian zones and even ephemeral waterways that at times do not have water flowing down them.

American Whitewater has long supported clarifying protections for these headwater streams, creeks, and wetlands because it means healthier rivers downstream, greater flood protection, improved habitat for fish and wildlife, and safer boating opportunities.

Following years of ambiguity about exactly which streams and wetlands are covered under the Clean Water Act, in 2015 the Obama Administration enacted the Clean Water Rule. It was based on extensive public outreach and scientific review. The input of the whitewater paddling community and those who recreate on our nation's headwater streams was actively solicited and the input of American Whitewater was considered in the development of the rule.



Paddlers enjoying the clean water of the North Fork of the South Platte River(CO).
Photo by Evan Stafford

Earlier this June, the Environmental Protection Agency announced its intention to begin the process of repealing and replacing the Clean Water Rule. This

is deeply troubling to us at American Whitewater. We invested considerable capacity in the development of this rule that reflected the input of the whitewater boating community. The Clean Water Rule clarified protections for headwater streams where the majority of whitewater recreation takes place. Healthy headwater areas are not only important for recreation, clean drinking water, and healthy ecosystems, but also for local economies. We cheered the passage of this rule based on years of scientific study, sound economic arguments, and wide public support, and we view withdrawing this rule as a significant threat to the health of our most cherished waterways and those who enjoy the recreational opportunities they provide.



Surfing the clean water of the Main Salmon River (ID).
Photo by Evan Stafford

STEWARDSHIP



Paddlers are frequently fully immersed by the river's water. "Face shots," in the common vernacular.
Photo by Evan Stafford

The Clean Water Rule regulates the discharge of pollution into all streams with a defined bed and bank (since water flows downstream) as well as certain types of wetlands. American Whitewater will continue to support the Clean Water Rule and has helped defend it from previous challenges. The nation's preeminent scientists likewise actively support the Clean Water Rule.

As river runners, we know that pollution dumped in creek beds that occasionally run dry ends up downstream when it rains. The Clean Water Act must apply to our nation's headwaters if the goal is to protect downstream states, people, fish, and property rights. Paddlers also know that healthy rivers attract and inspire new businesses, revitalize communities, and

create boons to public health, fitness, and happiness.

You can speak up in defense of clean water, from our nation's headwaters to the estuaries along our coastlines, by going to bit.ly/DefendCWA and using our super easy comment form to contact the EPA and your local congressional representatives. Let them know how important clean water is to your recreation experience, and to you and your neighbor's health. As paddlers we're intimately familiar with the connectivity of river ecosystems and relaying these first hand experiences can help put context to the benefits of the Clean Water Rule for their constituents. Please personalize your message. It makes a big difference. The deadline for comments is September 27, 2017 [This reflects of a 30-day extension from the original deadline].

What to get for the paddler who has everything?

Give them the gift of rivers with an American Whitewater membership!



Colorado River, Grand Canyon. | Photo: Evan Stafford



GAULEY

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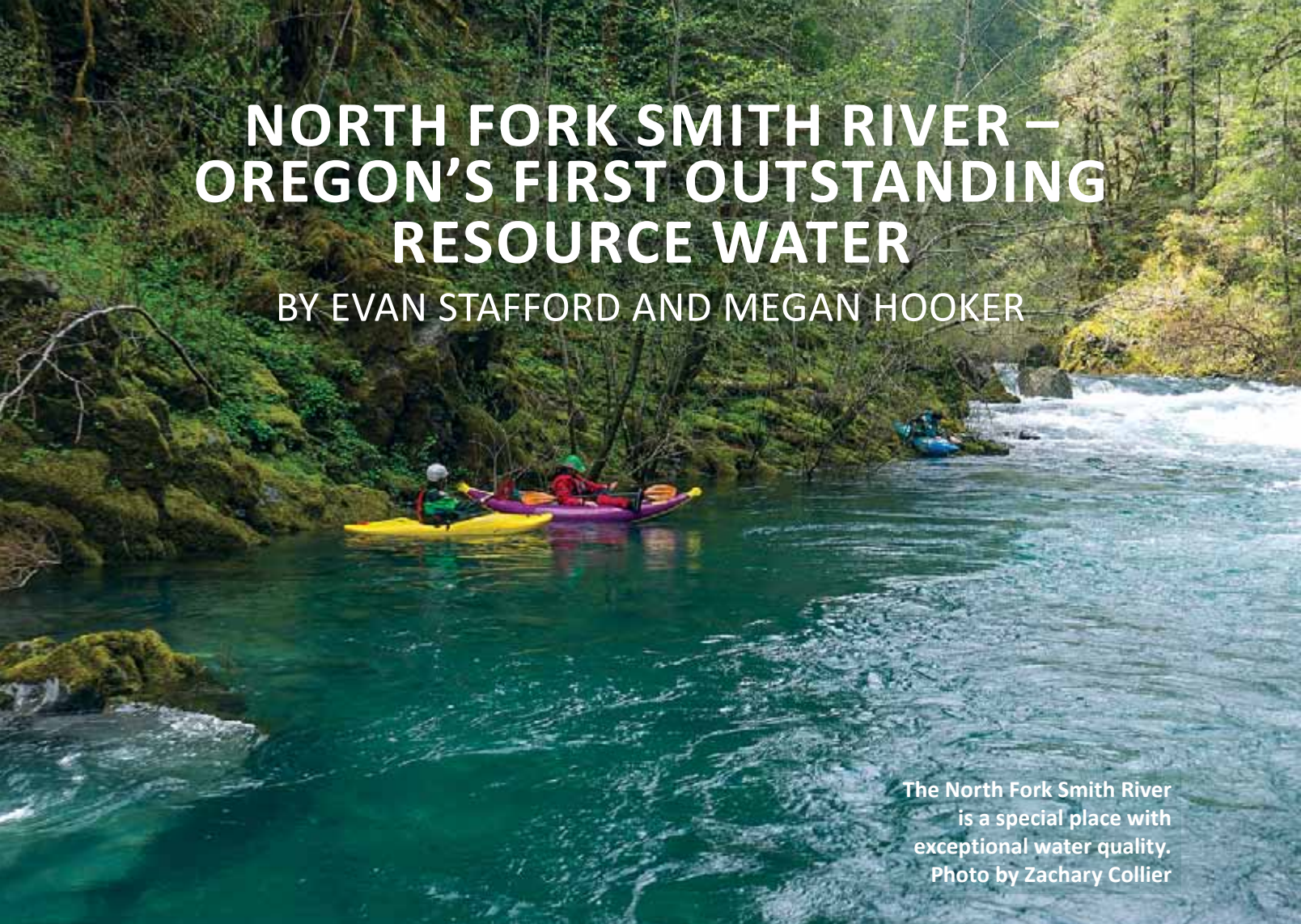


Sept. 14-17, 2017
Summersville, WV

More info: <http://gauleyfest.americanwhitewater.org>

NORTH FORK SMITH RIVER – OREGON'S FIRST OUTSTANDING RESOURCE WATER

BY EVAN STAFFORD AND MEGAN HOOKER



The North Fork Smith River
is a special place with
exceptional water quality.
Photo by Zachary Collier

THIS PAST JULY the five-member panel of the Oregon Environmental Quality Commission unanimously voted to designate the North Fork Smith River in southwest Oregon as the first Outstanding Resource Water in the Pacific Northwest. An Outstanding Resource Water (ORW) designation is a part of the Clean Water Act, which allows states to protect water bodies that have extraordinary or unique character or value, or are critical habitat areas that are an outstanding state resource. This exciting ORW designation prevents any new pollution or degradation from entering and impacting one of the cleanest and most beautiful waterways in Oregon and California.

The Smith River watershed provides pristine habitat for world-class salmon fisheries, supplies drinking water for downstream communities, and draws visitors from around the world. The North

Fork Smith is legendary among river runners for its high quality whitewater, exceptional water quality, and the remote experience it provides. In an area of the country with many spectacular rivers, the North Fork Smith still stands out as a river with great rapids, incredible scenery, and unforgettable crystal clear water. Hundreds of paddlers who know of the exceptional quality of the North Fork Smith River weighed in to support an Outstanding Resource Water designation. American Whitewater and our many partners also threw support behind the proposal as part of a robust public process to establish this protective designation.

It's important to thank our representatives when they work collaboratively with our community to secure protections for rivers we cherish. The North Fork Smith River is certainly one of these cherished places. Red Flat Nickel Corporation—

an international mining company—was proposing an industrial-scale nickel strip mine in the Baldface Creek watershed, a key tributary to the North Fork Smith. This ORW designation provides protection for the entire North Fork Smith drainage, shielding the river's outstanding water quality from degradation. This action by the state complements the recent administrative ban on new mining claims for the watershed that was adopted in January of 2017, as well as the efforts of U.S. Senators Wyden (D-OR) and Merkley (D-OR) and U.S. Representatives DeFazio (D-OR) and Huffman (D-CA) to support designating it as an Outstanding Resource Water.

STEWARDSHIP

A SUCCESSFUL RIVER CLEANUP ON THE ST. VRAIN (LYONS, CO)

BY KESTREL KUNZ



Open boats make for great clean-up vehicles.
Photo by John E. Putnam

EARLIER THIS SUMMER, American Whitewater organized a gathering on the banks of the St. Vrain River in Lyons, Colorado to pick up trash from the water and shoreline. We started the day off with Hotbox Roasters coffee and donuts, and a few words about river stewardship – the common cause that brought us all together. As the locals know all too well, the Town of Lyons was devastated during the 2013 floods. Major changes to the river channel, heavy bank erosion, and even houses were swept into the mighty St. Vrain during the historic flooding. Although much progress has been made to restore the river and its surrounding community, the Town of Lyons is still recovering, with trash tangled up along the river banks and segments of the shoreline closed off for restoration. However small, our cleanup efforts have taken the St. Vrain one step closer to its clean, healthy nature.

With the help of our partners at the CAN'd Aid Foundation, Avid4 Adventure, and Team Colorado Whitewater Racing Club, we left the St. Vrain River looking cleaner than ever. We split into two land crews and one river crew to scavenge for trash between Apple Valley and the Town of Lyons. We found bedframes, rusty nails, lawn chairs, car doors, plastic water bottles, candy wrappers, fast food containers, everything but the kitchen sink. Our findings are likely a combination of leftover debris from the floods, illegal waste dumping along the river, and built up trash from years of careless passers-by.

The best part was the community's immediate reaction to our cleanup efforts. At one point, we left our boats to gather trash on the bank and the landowner across the river raised his head from his garden and called over to us, "thank you

for all your hard work! You boaters are awesome – come back anytime!" Moments later, we passed under a group of kids that were zip-lining across the river and they shouted, "Thank you for cleaning the river!" It was these moments that reminded us that Lyons truly is a river community, and the river is why many of its community members have chosen to live here.

Thank you to all those who came out for the river cleanup! American Whitewater depends on our affiliate clubs, members, and dedicated volunteers in order to tackle our many river stewardship projects and it's so rewarding when we can see such immediate tangible results.

STEWARDSHIP

SAVE THE KARNALI, NEPAL'S LAST AND MOST PRISTINE FREE-FLOWING RIVER

BY KAREN BENNETT AND MEGH ALE



THE MIGHTY KARNALI, Nepal's longest, largest, and least known river system is in peril. Of the three major river basins emerging from the Nepal Himalaya—the Koshi, Gandaki, and Karnali—the Karnali is the only river that remains free-flowing. All others have been dammed for hydropower generation that reflects an increasingly intensive pattern of hydropower development across Nepal. There are currently three mega hydropower dams planned for the Karnali River with 28 more sites being surveyed. Construction of any one of these dams will forever change the essence and flow of the Karnali River. The construction of all three will devastate the river system and the cultures, species, and economies that depend on it. A dedicated group of people are working to protect the free-flowing Karnali. In spring 2018, a group of scientists, river adventurers, and a film crew will undertake an expedition along its entire length. Together, they will document

the river's values and use what they learn to educate the public and decision-makers about the importance of protecting it.

The Karnali rises from Mt. Kailash on the Tibetan Plateau and flows 671 miles to its confluence with the Ganges River in India. The river provides water for millions of people, provides for fish and wildlife resources, and has a high value for ecotourism especially in the form of whitewater rafting and as an approach corridor to the Sacred Mt. Kailash. These ecological services sustain livelihoods throughout the Karnali River Basin.

An ancient river, the Karnali was in place as the Himalayan Mountains were thrust up by the collision of the Eurasian and the Indian tectonic plates. As the mountains rose, the river downcut into the landscape, the sinuous channel already in place. Hard rock ledges, as well as ancient and current day landslides create steep stream gradients,

boulder strewn reaches, and world-class whitewater. Fed by glacial meltwaters and strong monsoon rains, this powerfully erosive river provides water, nutrients, and sediments to the lands along its path, and creates fertile agricultural plains along its floodplain.

Ultimate Descents Nepal, founded by Megh Ale, "Nepal's River Man," did the first commercial descent of the Karnali River in 1991 with David Allardice, Anders

Above: The Karnali River starts near Holy Mt. Kailash on the Tibetan Plateau as do three other great Holy Rivers of Asia, the Indus (Sutlej) into Pakistan, the Ganges through India, and the Brahmaputra to Bangladesh. Hundreds of thousands of worshippers travel to Holy Mt. Kailash for a spiritual renewal each year.

Map © Michael Buckley
www.MeltdowninTibet.com

Blunquest and James Venimore. Together, they named almost all the rapids on the river. Megh describes the Karnali as a premier whitewater river and Nepal's "Last Best Place." Megh went on to form the Nepal River Conservation Trust in 1995 to conserve Nepal's Himalayan river system, preserve Nepal's cultural heritage, and develop an environmentally responsible river tourism industry. His vision and dreams today are focused on saving the Karnali's premier rafting section from proposed hydropower projects.

Others soon discovered the Karnali River. Hamish McMaster, owner of another international commercial outfitter, describes the Karnali River as one of the top 10 whitewater rivers in the world. He says, "Post monsoon, when rivers are at their best in Nepal, we head out to the Karnali River in the western part of Nepal, with all its incredible whitewater and remote beaches. One of the highlights on the Karnali for guests and guides alike is Gods House, a grade V rapid that offers a world-class challenge. Guides tend to scout this rapid and set up safety below. Rafts start center left and paddle hard toward the right of the river, dissecting two enormous holes.



Above: A river guide and his crew set up to shoot Jail House Rapid on the Karnali
Photos by Ultimate Descents Nepal

Massive waves are a common occurrence at medium to high flows when challenging Gods House. Immediately afterward, you'll be treated to a number of other Grade IV and V rapids such as Juicer, Flip 'n Strip, and Freight Train." These and other world-

class rapids are at risk of being either dewatered or flooded with progressively more aggressive hydropower development proposals on the Karnali River.

Nepal and Hydropower

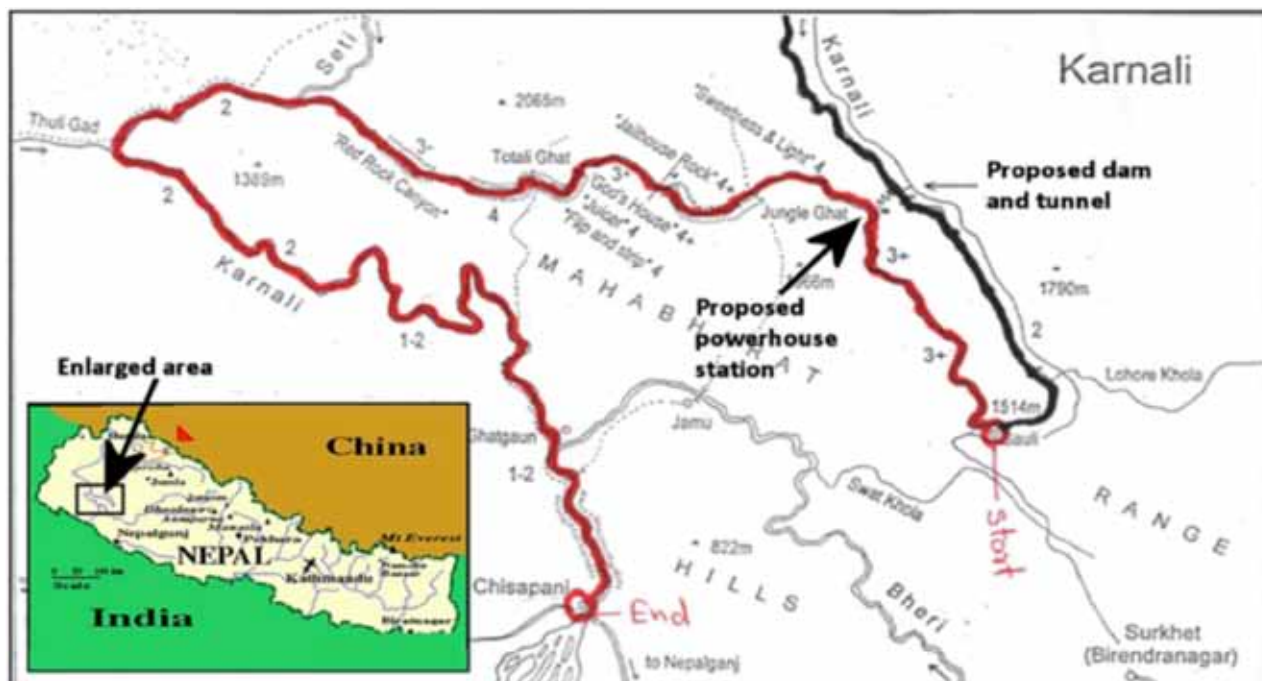
Energy development is critical to the people of Nepal. Electricity and road access will open their society and enhance their livelihoods in many ways. Hydropower development of every river, however, with disregard to the social and environmental impacts, is unjustified. The *Wall Street Journal* recently characterized Nepal as a "Himalayan nation [that] is betting that a new energy gold rush, borne of its thousands of rivers and craggy peaks, will establish it as a major Asian electricity source" (Stacey 2017). However, rather



Having set up camp above God's House Rapids, on one of the many white sand beaches on the Karnali, rafting clients gather for morning coffee and conversation as breakfast is prepared and local villagers gather in the distance.

Photo by Ultimate Descents Nepal

STEWARDSHIP



Area map of Karnali River whitewater, overlaid with proposed dam and power station sites
Courtesy of Gary Wockner

than providing power to Nepal, most of the dams built during this imminent “gold rush”—especially the large ones—will provide power to India, Bangladesh, and possibly other South Asian neighbors instead. All the while, Nepal will bear the social, environmental, and economic costs of hydropower development.

Throughout Nepal, there are currently 43 hydropower dams in operation and another 83 dams currently under construction. In total, over 350 hydropower dams are slated for development—in fact, the licenses have already been sold (Niti Foundation, 2015). These licensed dams represent only 55% of the government’s ultimate goal of producing 42,000 MW of hydropower. In no uncertain terms, hydropower development at this scale will affect every river basin in Nepal, with significant, highly uncertain impacts. And yet, tellingly, there is no national hydropower development strategy in Nepal that attempts to describe or mitigate cumulative environmental impacts of these projects (Lord, 2016) or that fully accounts for the significant

risk that earthquakes or other geologic hazards will have on them (Rest, Lord, & Butler, 2015). Put simply, while Nepal still needs electricity, it does not need 350 hydropower dams.

The Nepal Ministry of Energy reports that, within two years, Nepal will produce sufficient energy to power the country and will be able to sell some of the energy to other parts of Asia during the high monsoon flows. So even without damming the Karnali and many other rivers, Nepal will soon be energy independent. In the long run, by keeping the Karnali River free-flowing, Nepal will gain much more in ecology and biodiversity, eco-adventure tourism, and in maintaining cultural heritage.

Efforts to Save the Karnali

While the Upper Karnali Hydropower Project has been highly contested for several years by a variety of different parties—ranging from locals organizing protests to cases filed in the Nepal Supreme Court by concerned scientists and civil society groups (Butler 2016; Pandit et al.

2014)—the project is now quickly moving forward with the GMR Consortium of India at the helm. Further, local populations are increasingly divided over the project, as the circulation of information about the project and its potential impacts is highly uneven (Butler 2016). As it stands, there is a great need both to understand the diverse perspectives of locals and to create different kinds of educational/narrative materials that can speak to a variety of audiences. Amid these uncertainties, recent news (*Kathmandu Post* 2017) suggests that land acquisition for the project will begin in the summer months of 2017.

Now is the time to convince the prime minister of Nepal to halt dam construction in the Karnali River until a basin-wide, environmentally sound and safe hydropower dam strategy can be developed.

Opposite: Boaters relax on the smooth blue waters of the Karnali River below the Seti River confluence

Photo by Ultimate Descents Nepal

If built, the Upper Karnali Hydropower Project will disrupt environmental flows and livelihoods, introduce new risks, and heighten vulnerability throughout the river corridor.

To capitalize on this precious chance to save the Karnali River, Nepal River Conservation Trust and Karnali River Waterkeeper is gathering local and international scientists from a variety of disciplines, including ecology, fisheries, and wildlife biology, soil science/geomorphology, hydrology, anthropology, rafting and kayaking experts, and an ecotourism specialist to undertake a 618 mile expedition from the headwaters of the Karnali River in China to the confluence with the Ganges River in India. Together they will collect information and describe the resources and ecological values along the entire route. This work will include mapping key features, sampling fish and water quality, assessing sediment source zones, and conducting interviews and focus groups with local citizens to understand

their relationship to the landscape and to the river. The economic benefits of whitewater rafting in a pristine environment will be highlighted. The goal is to assess the natural processes that shape the river and its habitats, and understand the impacts that hydropower dam construction will have throughout the watershed. The Karnali Expedition, Spring 2018, will bring a scientific understanding to the river and surrounding landscapes, highlighting critical aspects that make the river what it is. The team's collective efforts will present an alternative "Sacred River Corridor" plan to the Government of Nepal, thus promoting both awareness and informed decision-making during these crucial moments of hydropower development.

The fate of this river, without international support, is the loss of this world-class resource. You can learn more about efforts to save the Karnali and how to support this work at: <http://www.nrct.org.np/>.



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SELF-SUPPORT PART II: BOATS & GEAR

BY TERESA GRYDER



The author and her self-support kit on the East Fork Owyhee, making notes.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

In Part I of this series, published in this year's May/June issue, we mentioned some of the reasons that people love self-support kayaking, discussed paddling, rolling, and portaging a heavy boat, and contrasted the kayak with other boat options for wilderness rivers. That article also mentioned three essential pieces of gear: a "guide belt" (a length of webbing and a carabiner), a sponge, and solid footwear. In Part II we will dig far deeper into equipment, with an overview of kayaks, sleeping kits, clothing, shelter, water purifiers, chairs, cook kits and food, toilet, and dry storage. In Part III (Winter, 2018 issue) we'll think about how to mitigate the risks inherent in minimalist wilderness travel.

IF YOU'RE READING Part II, I'll assume that you are interested in doing wilderness trips with your camping gear in a kayak. Perhaps you've already been wilderness camping and have stories to tell. Perhaps

you've never been. The art of self-support kayaking is evolving, so no matter where you are, there's more to learn.

It's a little ironic that minimalism requires such a focus on gear. If you have to fit everything into a whitewater kayak, you can't carry much. Each item you bring needs to be functional, and there's not a lot of room for extras. You also need to find ways to keep things dry.

This overview covers equipment that works, and explains why. I have not seen it all; I learn about something new on every trip. There are ways to approach camping, and you may have your own way that is completely unique. If you aren't set in stone about it yet, there may be some ideas for you here. The only necessary overnight gear not covered here is first aid, rescue, and repair equipment, which will be addressed in the final article in the series.

Kayak Considerations

For my first self-support kayak trip I borrowed a Dancer XT, which seemed like a big boat at the time (1980s). To fit my gear in the stern of the boat I had to remove the stern wall, which involved cutting the foam. Packing the bow involved wiggling each small item past the metal foot braces. I managed to stuff a few items up front, but not enough. Once loaded, my boat was stern heavy and sluggish in the water. I also paddled with a drybag sitting in my lap. I could not stretch out my legs, and I was taking a chance of losing my drybag or getting stuck in the boat in an emergency. Packing and unpacking the boat was laborious, and I was uncomfortable while on the water.

If your first experience was like this, I have good news for you: it's gotten better. You can camp out of a large river-running or creek boat for several days to a week

without having clutter in the cockpit area or poor trim. A crossover kayak with a hatch can haul supplies for a couple weeks

To easily fit your camping kit in a whitewater kayak you need a big boat with at least 80 gallons of volume. There's no point in trying to haul camping gear in a play boat; it's no fun to paddle, and you won't be able to bring enough beer, either. Consider a creek boat, large river runner, or cross-over boat that has a capacity of 30 to 100 pounds more than your day-boating weight. The longer the trip, the more volume and weight capacity you will need to carry your food and waste. A boat that fits you for self-support will probably feel oversized when you paddle it empty. When you load it down, it will behave better.

Folks with money to spend might decide to throw down for one of the newer crossover boats that has a rear hatch, watertight bulkheads, and possibly a drop skeg. Hatches make loading easy, though you want to know that your hatches won't leak or blow open. Bulkheads keep segments of the boat from filling with water, making the boat easier to rescue if you swim. Each major whitewater boat manufacturer is making at least one cross-over model these days, and we are entering into the second and third generations of these designs. Most of them are marketed for flatwater up to Class III. Some are designed to be fast while others are more stable or maneuverable. Rather than going into the wormhole of specific brands and models, let me just say that for longer trips like the

Grand Canyon, these boats are the way to go, even if you have to rent one.

If you're a typical dirtbag paddler, however, you're probably looking to use a boat you already have, borrow one, or buy a cheap used boat that's good for self-support. You can make any large boat work, so pick one that is more than big enough and has the kind of handling characteristics you enjoy. You might choose a longer boat for its speed, or a shorter boat with a lot of rocker so that you can boof. Many modern creek boats are heavy and painfully slow—and even slower when loaded. You might be much happier in a 20-plus year-old river runner out of someone's garage, as long as you can adapt your paddling style. If it's intact after 20 years, it might last another 20. Whatever boat you come up with, you

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will definitely want to get familiar with it before you commit to using it on a major trip. Take it out for at least one day run to be sure you can paddle it, and to tune up the outfitting.

Ease of packing the boat is especially important. Before you commit to a boat, try loading and unloading it. If you can't pack the bow your boat will be imbalanced and will handle poorly in some situations. Lots of modern boats have foot brace systems that are difficult to remove, making the bow hard to pack. Some also have low cockpits or backbands that make it hard to stuff your biggest bags into the stern. Test load and unload before you buy, and before you use a new boat on an overnight trip.

Comparing Kayak Plastic

There are two main types of production processes that are used for making whitewater kayaks. Blow-molded whitewater boats are less common because they are only manufactured in Europe, whereas all American manufacturers (and some in other parts of the world, too) make roto-molded kayaks. Either type can work for self-support trips, but there are some important differences.



Blow-molded kayaks tend to shine as self-support boats because their stiff plastic allows manufacturers to skip internal structural support walls. Blow-molded boats are all recyclable once they've reached the end of their useful lifetime. However, blow-molded designs cannot be made with the same ultra sharp edges as roto-molded ones, because the production process does not allow it. But they are tough.

Top: A wood-fueled stove. Must feed continuously to boil water in 10 minutes. Nice to have when you don't want to carry fuel.

Bottom: A tiny alcohol stove, using denatured alcohol or PGA. Almost weightless besides the fuel.

Photos by Teresa Gryder



The view from under our small tarp, set up using a canoe paddle and junipers, on the East Fork Owyhee.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

Many old but intact blow-molded boats show up on Craigslist every year. A dirtbag paddler can pick one up for cheap, reserve it for self-support, and come to love it. My blow-molded boat has been turned practically inside out and popped back to its original shape and it still floats. Blow-molded kayaks have been sold in the US for well over 30 years; there are lots of them still out there given their durability. Keep your eyes open and you may find one stashed in the barn of someone you know.

The most common process for making plastic kayaks is roto-molding. The reason roto-molded kayaks are probably a second choice for a self-support boat is that they all require internal support walls, which cut down on and divide usable space for gear. The other caveats about buying a roto-molded kayak is that cross-linked plastic (one of two common types of roto-molded plastic) is not recyclable and is more difficult to repair in the field than linear plastic (the other common type). While it's

also more durable than linear roto-molded plastic, cross-linked material may present a bigger problem if a boat breaks during a wilderness trip. And, once broken, a cross-linked boat is destined for the landfill, not another life as a plastic bottle.

Older roto-molded boats can also be strong contenders for self-support craft. One friend recently put a second crack in his 20-plus year-old Corsica and was sad to retire it for this very reason. This generation of boats was made of thinner, denser plastic, so they weigh less than modern boats. While it may be tempting to take out the rear wall, cross-linked plastic can get pretty soft so I do not recommend removing it entirely. The ultralight boat packer can fit his kit on either side of a wall.

Your ability to load gear in the bow depends on the design of your foot brace system. Look for a bulkhead or foot braces that are easily removed and replaced. Many modern creek boats have complicated foot

brace systems, so instead of removing them people are forced to slip things through narrow slots into the bow, and then rattle and fight to get it back out at camp each night. This is reason enough to shop for another boat. Removing the foot brace entirely and putting your feet on the gear up there is great until you take a long swim and lose your sleeping bag. Lots of boats fail the easy loading criterion so check the boat before you buy: be picky.

Small Enough to Fit

Once you've considered your kayak, each piece of gear deserves careful thought. Backpackers have a head start on ultralight equipment, but for the purposes of fitting your gear in a kayak, the size matters just as much as the weight. Your transition to self-support boating will mean reducing

Ben Dann @ The Clark's Fork of the Yellowstone

WILDERNESS PADDLING

both the weight and the overall volume of your camping setup.

If you are a nerd like me, you probably have a scale at home. I actually weigh things and make an effort to lighten my kit a little bit each time I go. I also compare the bulk of clothing items and try to find the ones that pack smallest.

The trick is choosing gear that works, and is light and small, and that your budget will allow. No matter what setup you use, you must fully load the boat ahead of time to be sure it will all fit. Do not strap bulky items on your rear deck because it compromises your ability to roll, could result in lost gear, and could complicate a rescue.

With that said, let's dig into the essential equipment, one category at a time.

Sleeping Kit and Clothing

There's some overlap between what you wear and what you use to sleep, so I lump them together.

Sleeping bags and clothing can be bulky, and you don't want to fill up the boat with these alone. The trick with clothing is not to bring too much. I personally use goose down insulation because it offers the greatest amount of warmth per weight, and it is very compressible. I make sure to keep it dry. My sleeping setup is a zipperless down quilt and a hooded down jacket used together when it's cold, and separately when it's only cool.

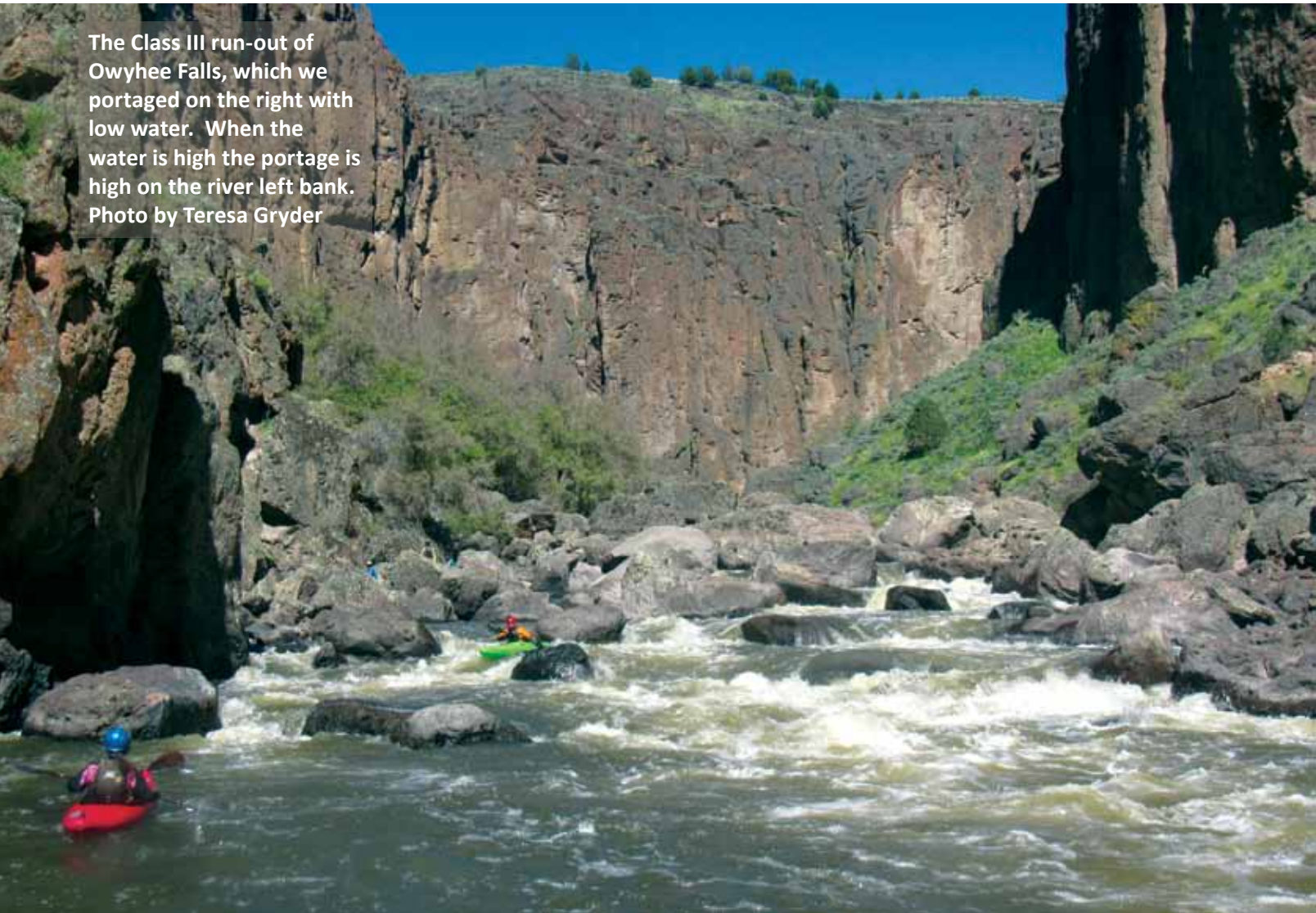
Basic clothing includes a warm base layer for top and bottom, shorts and a light top for warm weather, and a sweater or fleece. Sometimes I'll throw in a vest, sun shirt,

or rain shell. Hats are small and essential: I bring both a warm hat and a baseball cap or sun hat. Socks and underwear are small too, so bring a spare so you can wash one while you wear the other.

Any clothing not in use can be rolled up to make a pillow, and if it's so cold that you're wearing it all, you can make a pillow from a drybag or life jacket. Ideally you should bring a little more clothing than you absolutely need (but not too much!).

Footwear is important. In Part I we talked about the importance of good footwear for the river. Camp footwear should be separate and work for hiking and scrambling out of a wilderness. Running shoes, lightweight trail shoes, plastic clogs, or durable sandals can work. I like to wear

The Class III run-out of Owyhee Falls, which we portaged on the right with low water. When the water is high the portage is high on the river left bank. Photo by Teresa Gryder



KAYAK SELF-SUPPORT CHECKLIST

River Essentials

Rescue

- Rope
- Carabiners
- Webbing
- Prusiks

Helmet

PFD

Sprayskirt

Boat

Paddle

Breakdown paddle

Sponge

Wetsuit/drysuit

Water bottle(s)

River shoes

Cold Weather Gear

- Pogies
- Skullcap
- Gloves

Whistle

Sunscreen and lip balm

Sun glasses with tether

Drybags

- Day bag(s) easy access
- Stern and bow bag(s)
- WP stuff sacks, Ziplocs

Personal gear

Shelter

- Ground cloth
- Tent, tarp, cord, stakes
- Bivvy sack, hammock

Sleeping Kit

- Sleeping bag
- Sleeping pad

Water purification system(s)

- Iodine, chlorine, UVC, or filter
- Spare batteries for UVC

Headlamp and spare batteries

Toilet Kit

- Toothbrush, paste, floss
- Personal needs
- Soap, brush, salve
- Toilet paper and shovel

Cook kit

- Stove, fuel, lighter
- Pot with lid
- Cup
- Long handled spoon
- Pocket knife

Clothing

- Long johns and top
- Sweater/jacket
- T-shirt, shorts
- Camp shoes, socks
- Underwear, bandana(s)
- Rain poncho or jacket?
- Sun shirt, bug protection?

Emergency Preparedness

- Maps, compass, information
- GPS, Spot, sat or cell phone
- Note pad, pen
- Watch
- Fire starters

First Aid Kit(s)

- Owie kit:** bandaids, ointment, ibuprofen
- Major first aid:** trauma kit, meds

Repair Kit

- Gorilla tape and/or Bituthene tape
- Lighter, knife
- Aquaseal, vinyl glue
- Sewing kit

Optional Personal Gear

- Camera, spare batteries
- Sewing kit
- Day or fanny pack
- Pillow or pillow case
- Deck of cards, Frisbee
- Chair, sit-upon
- Paperback book (fire starter)
- Candles/ lantern
- Fork and flask
- Swim suit and small towel
- Binoculars
- Insect repellent
- Mosquito net
- Lotion
- Musical instrument

Food & Beverages

Don't over-pack. Calculate.

Breakfasts

- Coffee or drinks
- Oatmeal, bars, freeze dried eggs

Lunches

- Nuts, fruit, bars, carbs
- Salami/cheese, PB/jelly
- Powdered drink mix w sugar

Dinners

Freeze-dried or grocery

- Carbs:** rice, pasta, breads
- Protein:** tuna/salmon, salami, cheese, eggs, nuts
- Drinks:** Booze, beer

WILDERNESS PADDLING



Teresa Gryder collecting spring water to treat with the steri pen.
Photo by Will Gehr

full coverage shoes to protect my toes in case I'm tripping over things after dark.

Of course you also have whatever you are wearing to paddle. Drysuits are great because whatever you wear underneath is not very wet and relatively easy to dry for the next day. If you don't wear a drysuit, choose paddling clothes that dry quickly.

The rest of your sleeping kit is a sleeping pad and a ground cloth. The new lightweight inflatable pads pack small, just don't forget your repair kit. A hammock is a good option where there are trees, however, hammocks have their own learning curve. Depending on the weather where you're going, you may need a pad in the hammock to keep warm. Sleep is important, so test your setup for comfort and warmth before committing to an extended trip.

Shelter

Sleeping under the stars is fine as long as the weather is good. When space is tight and the weather predictions are fine, the tendency is to skimp on shelter. The

problem is that weather predictions have inherent uncertainty, especially more than a week out. No matter what the forecast says, weather happens.

My philosophy is that one should always bring at least a minimalist shelter such as a tarp, bivy sack or ultralight tent. You may be so lucky as to find natural shelters, but you can't count on them. You can also improvise shelters using garbage bags, pack covers, umbrellas, and such. These are light and sound good on paper, but you will regret them in a storm.

For overhead shelter I bring an ultralight tent and/or a silicone-coated nylon tarp. The tarp is best for a real drencher of a storm because it creates ample functional space for cooking, drip-drying gear, hanging out, and sleeping. Setting up tarps is a skill of its own. If you're a tarp rookie you might want to study under a tarp master for a while before committing. You can set up a tarp without trees, using paddles or a high anchor on a tall rock or cliff. The only time a tarp is problematic is in gusty winds, and

you can survive those with a little ingenuity and a lot of cord.

If the weather might be cold I bring a tent, and if it might snow, I bring both a tent and a tarp. The Middle Fork Salmon has blessed me with snow at the put-in three times in a row. Tent poles don't have to be dry but I pack them in a storage floatation bag for security. The fabric parts of the tarp and tent get packed inside a waterproof stuff sack and ride in the bow where, if I don't need them, I can just leave them in there.

Your ability to construct a proper shelter adds a safety margin for your trip. If something goes wrong and you must hole up until help arrives, or if you need to survive extreme weather, having the skills to construct a comfortable nest is critical.

Water Purification

Your water purification system may not be the biggest thing in your kit, but it is key to your survival. You should always treat river water before consuming it. There's nothing like diarrhea to take the fun right out of a kayaking trip. You can boil water, treat it with chemicals like iodine or chlorine, shine a UVC light through it, or run it through a pump or gravity feed filter.

If you use gravity or pump water filters, your main challenge is suspended sediment in the water. Get the clearest water you can to limit the impact on your filter (i.e., keep it from plugging up), and let it settle for a while or use alum if you need to. Side streams often carry less sediment than big rivers, so look to creeks or springs for your water source.

I was recently on a trip during which two of my four water purification systems failed. I recommend as much redundancy as possible in water systems. First, I use a UVC light that I can shine into a bottle of clear water and kill all the infectious things that are in there. It doesn't work for murky water, and it depends on batteries and can fail in all the ways electronics can. For longer trips I bring a gravity feed

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filter, which is terrific for group water as long as you don't clog it up (which we did). Third, I boil all my cooking water, and I boil drinking water when I can't get clear water. Boiling requires fuel, or at least a pot you are willing to put on a wood fire. And last but not least, I carry iodine tablets so that I can make a quart of drinkable water any time I need it.

Chairs

In my paddling circles, many folks bring chairs that work with their sleeping pads, or lightweight sling chairs with folding

poles. I like to try them out when their owners get up, and some of them are quite comfortable. So far the chairs have not convinced me that there's anything wrong with sitting on the ground or on a boat—but I'm not 60 yet. I bring a sit-upon that is a rectangle of closed cell foam just big enough for me. It weighs almost nothing and serves multiple purposes. It pads my hind end when I'm paddling, and my knees when I kneel to unload on the rocks, and it serves as a windshield for my stove. You can bring a chair, but only if there's room after the essentials are packed.

Food

Food is personal; no two people will bring the same food. For this reason alone we usually do our own thing instead of sharing meals. The most common mistake is bringing too much, so calculate, measure, and count it out ahead of time. Bring what you need plus a day, for emergencies.

Coffee is the main reason many paddlers bring a stove. Coffee aficionados might want to bring fresh grounds and filters or an aluminum espresso maker. Most, however, tolerate instant coffee packets for their simplicity, size, and minimal waste burden. Another maintenance option for the caffeine addict is chocolate-covered espresso beans.

Simple dinners such as freeze-dried meals are popular in spite of their cost because they require just boiling water, they are waterproof, quick, don't make dirty dishes, and generate their own trash bag when consumed. Most of them are less than delicious, and there are many grocery-store foods that can also suffice. My food-pack is a combination of freeze-dried, grocery packaged, and fresh foods. I bring veggies, condiments, and cheese to improve the flavor of bland meals. Freeze-dried eggs on a tortilla with cheese, onions, and peppers is a favorite for dinner. Tortillas are already flat, and bagels are relatively resilient, whereas crackers and bread are hard pressed (ha, ha) to maintain their original form. I like to bring small citrus (clementines, lemons, limes) which are waterproof in their own skin. You can keep perishables cool by keeping them in or near the river day and night.

I eat big dinners and light breakfasts and lunches for paddling, keeping bars and snacks handy for whenever I get hungry. Two instant oatmeal packets make for



Cooking over an open fire using a pot hanging on piano wire on the Illinois River, 2017.

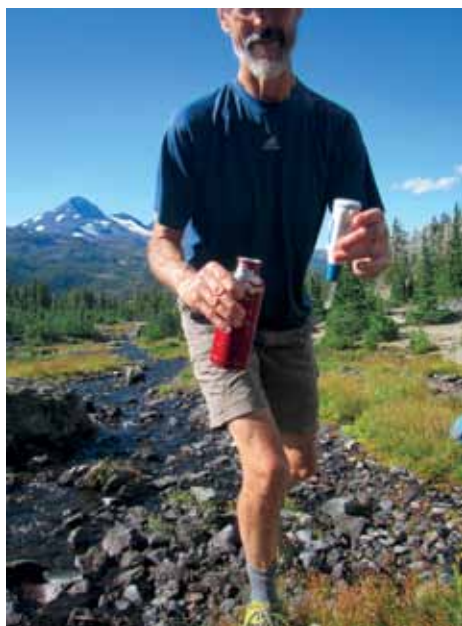
Photo by Teresa Gryder

a quick breakfast, though sometimes a bar is enough. Packaged foods in tough watertight packaging don't even have to go in a drybag—they can travel in a mesh bag. Food that contains some water, like citrus, packaged Indian food, tuna, or smoked salmon and fresh ravioli or tortellini make excellent ballast. High-calorie fatty foods like nuts, butter, olive oil, cream cheese, hardboiled eggs, bacon, and salami are high calorie fuel for long or cold trips, but are heavy.

Of course, it's possible to eat even more simply. In the summertime you can forego the stove and consume your food cold. You could eat dried fruit and nuts for a week and be just fine. You could fast, or forage for miner's lettuce, pine nuts and berries swiped from the bears—but if you do, be sure you're able to identify safe foraging items. It's totally up to you.

Cook Kit

My cook kit is just a canister stove, pot and lid, spoon, knife, and mug. My stove fits inside my mug and has its own sparker. Canister fuel is either propane or isobutane, and stoves using this fuel are most popular because they are so easy. Lately I've been seeing more alcohol stoves, which are tiny



Jennie Goldberg punching a hole on the South Fork Salmon (ID).

Photo by Teresa Gryder

and light, but they are a little slower than propane stoves and are troublesome in temperature extremes. You could also use a wood-burning stove, which eliminates the need to carry fuel, but requires that you gather twigs and feed the stove for 10 minutes while your water comes to a boil. One friend brings pistachios for an appetizer and fuels his stove with the shells as he eats them, taking care of the trash as well. I haven't run across anyone lately who is still using a white gas stove, but I'm sure they're out there.

If your stove fails for any reason you can cook with a wood fire. There are several downsides to cooking with fire, and some folks won't tolerate it. Picture wire tied to a pot handle makes it possible to set the

Will Gehr using the steri pen in the Sisters area.

Photos by Teresa Gryder

pot in the fire without singeing the hair off your knuckles.

Open fires are banned in some locations and some seasons; please avoid flouting the rules. If a fire pan is required, there's guidance online for building a lightweight take-apart version. If a fire pan is not required, please still keep your fires contained and eliminate all signs of burning when you are done. A simple way to do this is to keep fire close to the river's edge so that you can easily kick it into the water and douse any hot spots with river water when you are done.

What Goes In Must Come Out

Poo is a daily reality, and yet some people do get to the river without a plan for dealing with it. Regulations about human waste disposal vary from river to river. Know the rules and find a way to be on the same page with your group. This of course means you have to talk about it. It should go without

WILDERNESS PADDLING

saying, but hand washing is important for preventing disease, so bring a soap or disinfectant.

On some runs the regulations require that you carry out your human waste. There are two main options for getting this done: bags or a container. For short trips you can buy containment bags for about \$3 each that are generally accepted by managing agencies. These waste containment bags are intended for single use, and include toilet paper and a powder to keep it sweet smelling. To be legal you must store the used bags in a watertight container, and for health reasons you'd like to keep it as far away from food and kitchen as a kayak will allow. The other acceptable option is to use a wide-mouthed screw-top food container

and dump your waste into the toilet when you get home. This is more unpleasant to do than it is to write about. You must satisfy the managing agency's requirements about the size of your container, especially for Grand Canyon, for which most people build a 6-inch PVC pipe groover.

When you are not required to carry out your waste, you still have to put it somewhere. It doesn't hurt to map out riverside stops that have toilets, but that isn't enough. If you have to go out in the wilds, cat-holing is the preferred method. Please dig a proper cat-hole; putting a rock on your feces is cheating. To dig deep enough you need a sturdy stick or shovel. It doesn't matter if you dig the hole before or after you go, as long as you dig it six inches deep and bury

your feces in there. Avoid burying feces in sand beaches (it won't decompose) or close to freshwater streams or trails. Take a nature hike, or even ferry across the river to a non-camp area, to keep your deposit as far as possible from camps, streams, and trails.

Dry Storage

Dry camp gear makes for happy paddlers. There are two secrets to keeping your stuff dry. One is having the right kinds of bags, and the other is to pack and seal them correctly. My sprayskirt has popped off two different times when running Green Wall Rapid on the Illinois River, but none of my stuff got wet either time. I bring a down sleeping bag and jacket, but I'm not worried. Feathers get two layers of waterproofness; first they are stuffed into a waterproof stuff sack, which then goes inside a storage floatation bag. Stuff that can get a little wet, like tent poles and my coffee mug, travel inside just one waterproof layer. My wallet, on the other hand, is inside a brand new Ziploc bag for each trip. Keeping things dry is just not that hard as long as you're careful.

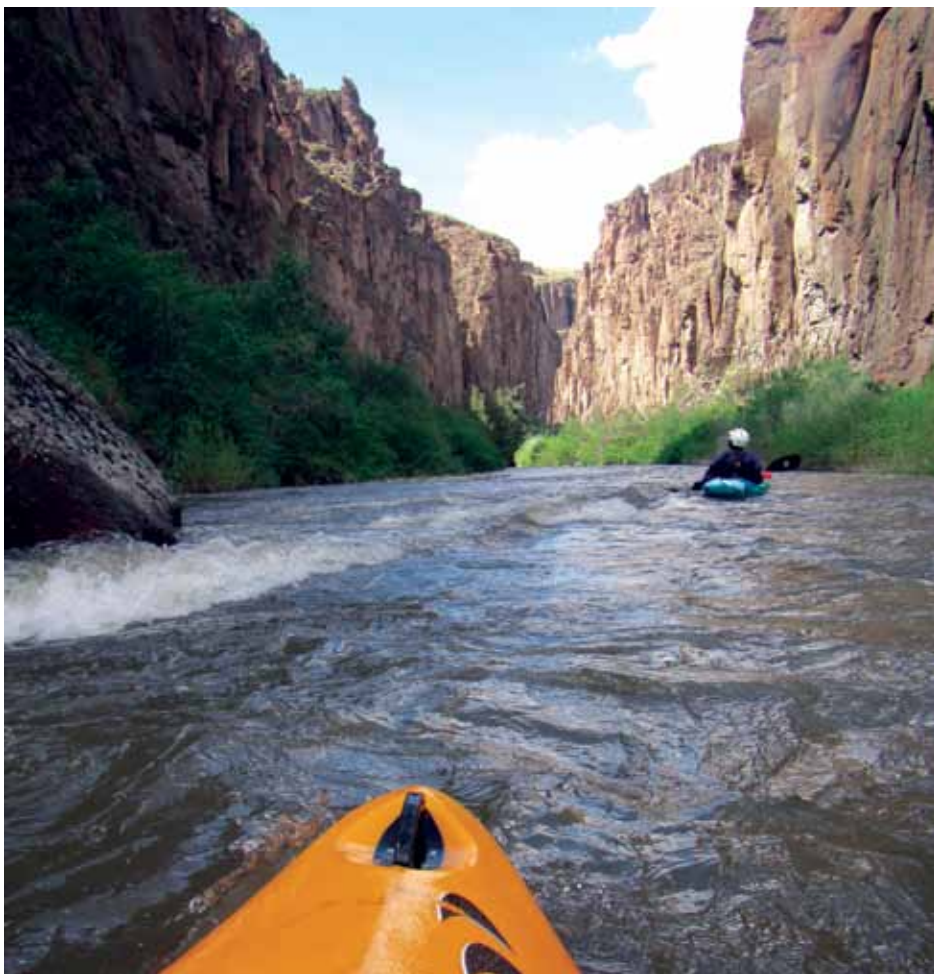
It's useful to have an assortment of small and medium drybags. Large drybags won't fit inside a kayak and are reserved for rafts, canoes, and duckies. Storage floatation bags (sto-floats for short) can be loaded, packed into the kayak, and then further inflated. I tend to pack mine all the way full, so I have switched to tapered drybags without the inflation hose. Every type is a little different, so shop around and talk to people before you buy something.

You will need more drybags for the bow and for your easy access "day" bag(s). I use a mesh bag in the bow to contain freeze-dried and other waterproof meals. Things that need to stay dry in the bow get packed inside one or two layers of waterproof stuff

Scott Gerber dragging boat at end of Sevy portage, Jarbridge River, ID.

Photo by Teresa Gryder





Bruce Schnapp in the Bruneau Canyon.
Photo by Teresa Gryder

sacks. These are as waterproof as a drybag when they are new, at a fraction of the weight and often cost less. You also need easy access bags for daytime use. These should stay handy (right behind the cockpit) and hold the day's food, sunscreen, your owie kit, toilet paper, a map, and water treatment supplies. In my other easy access bag I pack my toothbrush, novel, dry shorts, and T-shirt, and other items that I use last and want first when I get to camp.

There are other ways to keep things dry, so be creative. A drysuit is also a drybag. You can stick a bagged sandwich down the leg of your suit and it probably won't get as smashed as it would in a dry bag.

Loading the Boat

The first time is definitely the hardest. Don't wait until the last minute to see if it fits. Collect your bags, rescue gear, food, kitchen, shelter, sleep kit, and clothing well before the trip, and experiment with packing it all in the boat. You may have to pack and unpack a few times before it gets easy, so do it on your living room floor, instead of at the put-in. Spread it out and cogitate about it. Do I really need this? Which pair of shoes weighs less? What is the minimum clothing for maximum comfort? Figure out how to smash down the things that compress. Pack just what you need, and then decide if you have space for the extras. The next project is getting your weight distribution right. Rookies

usually end up stern-heavy. If you're using a whitewater boat that is not designed for self-support, you'll probably need to move your seat and foot braces forward before you even start loading. Moving your body weight forward helps bring the balance point forward, even though you are shrinking the bow capacity. If you have space to put air bags in the point of the stern, this will keep the load centered for better maneuverability. The goal is to end up with even trim for flatwater or slightly bow-light for whitewater.

The secret to loading for self-support is to put high density items in the bow so that you balance the weight from the higher volume spaces of the stern. Beer and fuel are good candidates. If you have more space in the bow you can fill it with medium density items. I keep my food/

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WILDERNESS PADDLING

trash, tarp, and major first aid/emergency kit in the bow, and I plan ahead so I only have to open it every other day, barring rain or emergencies. Proper trim from a correctly packed bow is your secret weapon for punching holes—get that mass moving in the right direction and it will drag you through.

In the stern you want to have the heaviest items immediately behind the seat. Water bottles, canned beverages, and bags of G.O.R.P. make good ballast and should be on the bottom of the boat behind the seat. Some boats have slots beside or under the seat that can take up to six cans, so look for those. Light things like shoes and down jackets should be above. Light things like your mug, toothbrush, and inflatable pad can go in the tip of the stern to keep the boat maneuverable.

If you load it properly, your boat will be easy to steer and roll. Once you are in the water you can check the trim and rearrange gear the next time you load. As you eat your food, adjust to the boat and its load, and

get stronger over the course of a trip, your boat will begin to feel normal. Afterward, when you paddle an unloaded boat, you will feel the same kind of springy strength that you feel when you walk after removing a heavy pack.

Finally, remember to secure your bags to the boat. It's easy to assume that bags that are in deeper can't possibly get out because other stuff is in front of or on top of them, but if you think this, you haven't seen a big hole tear a boat to 50 pieces. Everybody swims sometimes, and the magnitude of the yard sale is an indication of your predictive abilities. It's simple to use a piece of nylon cord and a couple of mini carabiners to lace up every item in each compartment of your boat. That way you can be relatively sure that it will all be there after a swim.

What Are You Waiting For?

Self-support boating is not rocket science, but it pays to think it through. Make your own checklist and improve it over time. Bring more than the bare minimum

because a certain amount of redundancy is insurance against loss and breakage. Make sure that it all fits. Bring shelter and sleeping kit adequate for the weather. Go with a solid crew of folks who know the river, choose optimal weather and flow conditions, and set up a smart shuttle. All this preparation will allow you to go into the wilderness where few ever go, and have magnificent adventures from your kayak.

So, why are you still reading this? Get out there and start gearing up for your next wilderness self-support kayak trip!

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

About the Author: Teresa Gryder is an integrative physician and lifelong paddler currently residing in the whitewater Mecca of Portland, Oregon.



Camp Two on the Middle Owyhee River, Oregon, with Lorenzo Bergamin dancing. Photo by Teresa Gryder

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WHEN THE TIME COMES: ADDRESSING THE QUESTION

BY AMBROSE TUSCANO



The author before facing his own question.
Photo by Cathy Howard

Editor's Note: This article is written from a male perspective and uses exclusively male pronouns because that's the perspective from which the author experienced this episode in his life. We realize the issues raised in this article also affect women and we would love to hear from women with similar stories and experiences to balance this narrative.

“WHY DOESN'T HE paddle anymore?”

As a young kayaker, I remember hearing this question, or a variation of it, many times. I grew up paddling in the early 90s as a teenager, and by the time I was tackling Class IV my paddling partners, mostly men in their late 20s and older, would talk about former kayakers, often in muted tones, like they were discussing the deceased.

Answering the “why” felt important to us, the still-active paddlers. We were so convinced that there was nothing in this world better or more important than paddling whitewater rivers, that it felt like anytime someone with the skill and determination for the sport willingly walked away, something must be wrong with them. Of course, there were only ever two answers provided to the “why”: fear or love.

In some cases, a kayaker might find him/herself in a life-threatening situation on the river, or might suffer the loss of someone close to them and “get scared.” Interestingly, in the predominantly male, highly masculine world of kayaking I grew up in, a tale of someone who became truly afraid of the river was more acceptable than its alternative. I don't remember anyone belittling those who retired from whitewater due to fear.

But toward those who exited the sport because they wanted to invest time and energy in a romantic relationship, or heaven forbid, start a family, there was always an attitude of unspoken derision. So, too, was there confusion among the survivors in the wake of a friend quitting the sport. Many heads were shaken, most wearing looks of baffled consternation. Whitewater was just so much fun, so satisfying. How could someone choose to walk away from it?

And then, many years later, and not without a lot of self-awareness that it was coming, I faced my own retirement from kayaking. I left for love. It wasn't so much that I had met someone who pulled me away from whitewater, or forced me to choose. My wife and I had been together for a decade before my retirement began. And it wasn't a pregnancy that heralded the end. It was a hot real estate market.

REFLECTIONS

We lived in a mountain/resort town and as we entered the second half of our 20s, we looked around and realized we needed to be ok with living in ski bum housing forever, or start to find a home of our own. A thorough survey of the housing market circa 2007, at the height of the bubble, told us that we could not afford to buy a house there, so we chose to build one instead.

We did 90% of the work ourselves, and the project was all-consuming. For three years my kayak barely got wet. All through the building process I would think longingly of how great it would feel frolicking in the river instead of being grimy, hot, and stressed, pecking away at some small task. Surely one day away wouldn't be a big deal...but it was a big deal, I knew. The house wasn't going to build itself. And so my kayaking days plummeted from 30-plus in 2007 to approximately zero the next year.

Then, just as we were entering our third and final year of house construction we learned that my wife was pregnant. Our son was born less than a month after we completed our last house project. We didn't finish the house so much as we lost all time and motivation to continue working on it in the face of our exciting new arrival.

So one reason for "going dry" bled straight into another. After a few years I rarely missed kayaking anymore. Instead, I focused on parenting and I picked up some different hobbies that required less time in the car and kept me closer to home, which was more important than ever. Trail running, Nordic skiing, flatwater paddling, backpacking, these were all activities that attracted me because of where they could take me, something they shared with whitewater kayaking. Really, this phase of my life has been even more about

Life "after" paddling doesn't have to mean no rivers. At right, the author and his extended family enjoy Montana's scenic Smith River.

Photos by Ambrose Tuscano and Megan Seifert



REFLECTIONS



Two weeks paddling in the Alps? Why not? The author, summer 2006.

Photo by Rok Sribar

getting outside and seeing inspiring wild places than the whitewater chapter ever was. The missing piece, of course, was the adrenaline rush, though as my son is about to turn seven, I'm getting to appreciate the special kind of horrified thrill that a parent has when their child is doing something physically risky.

I'd like to say more about how very possible it is to change one's central purpose or focus in life, but I don't have the space to do so today. Instead, I'd like to return to the opening premise: Why did I quit whitewater?

For me, this issue looked so different when I was young and confused by other guys who walked away. I used to think the best time in a paddler's life was when he

was at the top of his game, running the hardest, most exciting whitewater. But after my retirement, looking back at it, I realized that quite possibly, the best times had come between the time I hit my first whitewater roll and when I did my first Class V+ river. Those years of noticeable improvement brought me great fulfillment because I could see myself changing. Maybe that's why I was later ok with seeing myself change again, from someone who identified hugely as a whitewater kayaker, to someone who defined himself in other ways. Before I had kids, I didn't really have very time-intensive commitments in my life—at least nothing compared to building a house or being a father. Now that I've had those commitments I realize that I am just as happy and more fulfilled than I was when I was solely focused on kayaking.

So, definitely no regrets about my path in life so far, but that doesn't mean I don't still want to get out on the water. In the past handful of years we've started taking our kids out on some easy Class II in rafts. While this is more of a parenting experience than a whitewater one, it has been a really satisfying way to bring those two parts of my life together. And I can already see that as our kids grow up, I'll have the chance to be reborn as a kayaker, starting over again with our oldest, and then yet again with our younger daughter. I'm excited to

start out at the beginning again, instead of feeling stuck between easy Class V+ and hard Class V+ like I was when I retired, to help my kids get comfortable on lakes, then moving current, then Class II, then... whatever they decide they want to do. I would like to say more about the process of introducing one's kids to whitewater, but that will also have to wait for another time.

To wrap up this musing, I'd like to suggest this: before you judge someone for putting kayaking aside—for any reason—try to honestly understand their perspective and the forces at work in their life. If you think you might also want or need to step away from whitewater someday, maybe try to learn something from your friend's experience that you can use like a blueprint for your own eventual exit. And, before simply walking away from a paddling community, I recommend soon-to-be whitewater retirees talk to their friends to try to explain what they're going through and what they're feeling.

We've printed an extensive array of articles in this publication about why individuals continue to seek out whitewater, even after the tragic loss of a loved one, but we've said much less about why some people stop paddling. To me, sometimes, that silence has felt like a weight, a judgment of those who walked away, even though that



certainly was never the intent. But there is nothing shameful about changing priorities. Like anything else in this world, a kayaking career is temporary. But the lessons and values gained from paddling wild rivers—even for a short period of time—can have a positive effect on a person for a lifetime.

These days, I don't hear the question, "Why doesn't he paddle anymore?" but I assume it still gets asked—perhaps occasionally I'm the "he" in someone else's question. If you are the one hearing

Opposite: the move in Jacob's Ladder (NF Payette, Idaho) can't be made forever. Right: Who knows what's around life's blind corners?

Photo by Rok Sribar

or asking this question, try striking up a conversation, try getting to know the person in question better, or as a last resort, ask me. I'm happy to talk about this anytime. What isn't healthy is assuming that kayaking is better—or worse—for someone than raising a family. In many ways they're two of the most challenging and rewarding things a person could do and I count myself fortunate to have gotten the opportunity to have done both in my life.



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WHITewater ACCIDENT REPORTS: JANUARY-JUNE 2017

BY CHARLIE WALBRIDGE

BETWEEN HEAVY WESTERN snowpack and relentless Eastern rain, 2017 has been an unusually wet year in the United States. Widespread high water means more accidents to report. Our six-month death toll now stands at 31, including 10 kayak, three canoe, and 13 rafting fatalities, plus two involving inflatable kayaks and two in “miscellaneous” craft. Nine of the victims were over 60; only four were under 30. This is a reversal of trends we saw decades ago, and reflects the added risks that come with aging and the graying of outdoor sports generally. Accident causes included seven flush drownings, six boaters caught in dam hydraulics, five paddlers who weren’t wearing life vests, and three incidents involving strainers. There were also five accidents linked to health problems, mostly heart attacks, all but one of these involved individuals in the over-60 category. While not an all-inclusive list, it does give a reasonable snapshot of what’s happening out there.

Flush Drownings

Flush drownings happen when paddlers die in a river while wearing life vests, and reflect the challenge of swimming whitewater, even with a PFD. High water is often part of the story. For example: on February 12th Oregon’s Class IV North Unpqua River was running at 6,000 cfs, a very high flow. Two men, both very experienced, launched a small raft that capsized in “The Bath Tub.” One of the men got back into the raft only to capsize again. He climbed back into the raft a second time and took off after his partner, Scotty Jarrell, 38. A second boat could have made a critical difference here! Witnesses on Highway 138 called 911 and helped the surviving rafter locate Mr. Jarrell, who died despite resuscitation efforts.

On May 8th James Harston, 60, died after his cataraft flipped on North Idaho’s Moyie River. The river was running at 5000 cfs, a high level. A raft accompanying him also flipped, so there was no back-up. His body was found floating some distance downstream. On May 11th Daniel Willard, 67, fell out of his raft at Albert’s Falls in New Mexico’s Rio Grande Gorge. This popular Class III-IV river was running at 3000 cfs, also, a high level. He was picked up in Big Eddy, one-quarter of a mile downstream, where rescuers performed CPR for two hours. Lastly, Sarah Duncan, 32, drowned on June 22nd after falling from a raft in Nevada’s Truckee River near Crystal

I-II), water levels were high enough to make rescue difficult. Although the group picked up his partner quickly, Mr. Piefer, 60, was not found until May 12th.

Low Head Dams

This has been a frightfully busy year for low-head dam accidents. These structures typically create nasty recirculating currents at their base which are much more dangerous than they look. Two incidents involved entire families where none of the adults were wearing life vests. On April 23rd a family of four in a john boat washed over Lock 14 Dam on the Arkansas River near Little Rock, Arkansas. William, Christy and Physher (age six) Farhat died; four-year-old Weston Farhat managed to survive. On June 1st, two adults and four children in a “raft” (really a huge inner tube with mesh seats and floor) got stuck in a mean hydraulic at Enka Low-Head Dam on Tennessee’s Nolichucky River. This dangerous structure is

“Nine of the victims were over 60; only four were under 30. This is a reversal of trends we saw decades ago, and reflects the added risks that come with aging and the graying of outdoor sports generally.”

located well below the popular whitewater run. The group had tried to hand paddle their raft to shore, but were swept over the lip. Hamblin County Sherriff’s Deputies were able to use throw lines to save most of the group, but Anna Last, 29, fell out and was pulled under.

Moving eastward, Aaron “Ricky” Norber and three friends defied warnings and launched their canoes on Arkansas’ Buffalo River just ahead of a thousand-year flood. The river continued to rise, and they left a rapidly flooding campsite on April 28th. Downstream, two of their four canoes flipped in large waves at Grey Rock Shoals. Mr. Norber, 65, was last seen floating past Kyle’s Landing. Rescue teams were called in, and they found his body eight days later. Then, on May 6th, Larry Piefer was swept away after his K-2 hit a tree in Central Pennsylvania’s Pine Creek Gorge. Although the rapids in “the Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania” are easy (Class

Ronald B. Sley, 77, was paddling solo when he became caught in the backwash of a broken dam on a lower section of White Top Laurel Creek near Damascus, VA. Mr. Sley was a skilled paddler who often paddled solo and ran this section frequently. Water levels on May 16th were low. Witnesses saw him recirculating face-down in the hydraulic and called 911. He was caught there for some time before floating free. Firefighters arrived, launched a raft, and recovered his body.

The next two accidents involved recreational kayakers, whose numbers keep growing every year. With cheap kayakers on sale at all the big box stores it's easy for people with no river experience to buy one and get into trouble. The first incident occurred at Dashields Dam on the Ohio River downstream of Pittsburgh, PA. It has one of the worst hydraulics I've ever seen! On May 20th two recreational kayakers, Helen Brandy and Brittany Evans, drifted past the warning buoys in their double kayak and washed over the edge. Neither of the two 25-year-old women were wearing life vests, but it probably would have made no difference. One of the women was found a few hours afterwards; the other turned up a week later. On May 23rd, two recreational kayakers died at O'Shaughnessy Dam on the Scioto River near Columbus, Ohio. Tyler Webb and Raymond Williams, 28 and 29 respectively, were dropped off above the dam; they ignored warning signs and paddled over the drop. A fisherman witnessed the accident and called for help. One body was recovered quickly; the other wasn't found until the next day.

And finally, on June 18th, two young men in inner tubes washed over an irrigation dam on Colorado's Lower Poudre River near Fort Collins, CO. Neither one was wearing a life vest; both were caught in the backwash. Maxamillian Lopez, 18, died. His cousin was pulled from the water by first responders and hospitalized.

Caught in Holes

Two other deaths occurred after a paddler was caught in a powerful natural reversal. Joe Giffune, an experienced kayaker and guide, was enjoying a late afternoon run on the West Branch of the Penobscot in Maine. According to Matt Polstein, a local outfitter, he and a friend elected to portage up Nesowadnehunk Stream, a small, steep side creek, to run the last few rapids. They scouted the drops and the first boater ran them successfully. Mr. Giffune, 25, was caught in a keeper in the last drop, a small falls with a hole at the bottom. He failed to roll and wet exited. His

companion, who didn't have a throw rope, tried unsuccessfully to reach his friend with a tree limb. Eventually Mr. Giffune washed free and was picked up; CPR was attempted without success.

On June 3rd a commercial rafting guest drowned during a 5000 cfs release on Maine's Dead River. A report from Jim Murton tells the story. One raft flipped at the bottom of Mile Long rapid on the Dead River. The remaining four rafts in the group moved in, and all guests were recovered quickly. Richard Sanders, 67, was not breathing. Guides began CPR and notified authorities. They could not revive him.

I note in passing the death of Kirk R. Jones at Niagara Falls. Mr. Jones, 53, deliberately swam over Niagara Falls in 2003 and lived. He was clearly living a troubled life before and after this stunt. This year, on April 19th, he went over the edge in a large inflatable ball. He did not survive.

Health Problems

A number of this year's deaths can be traced to underlying health problems, especially heart attacks brought on by unaccustomed exertion. Most victims were over 60, illustrating added risks for older people like myself. Sometimes the actual cause of death is discovered in autopsies, but these are not always performed. In other cases, like when the death occurs after a short, easily survivable swim, an underlying problem can be assumed.

Several incidents occurred on high-water commercial rafting trips. On May 27th Shane Ornelas, 40, died after falling out of a raft in "Cable Run," a Class IV rapid on California's Kern River. He was unresponsive when pulled out of the river; the coroner thinks a heart attack might have been involved. On June 10th a guest in an inflatable kayak flipped in Class II Winnie's Rapid on Lodore Canyon of the Colorado River. The 60-year-old man seemed fine at first, but lost consciousness as rescuers approached. Then a man rafting Colorado's Poudre River drowned after a

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Tallulah Race 2016. | Photo: Emrie Canen

SAFETY

guided raft flipped on June 27th. Water levels here were moderate. All the other rafters reached shore safely, but William McHarg, 64, was unresponsive and could not be revived.

In New Mexico, John McDonough, 71, was kayaking the Rio Grande with a friend on June 11th when he flipped, failed to roll, and swam. He made it ashore without trouble and his partner left to chase down his boat. Mr. McDonough was later found floating unconscious in the river and died despite lengthy resuscitation efforts. It's not clear why he got back into the river, but authorities suspect an underlying health problem.

No PFDs

Although readers of the *AW Journal* use life jackets routinely, this practice does not extend to the general public. This proved to be a deadly oversight in four instances this year. On April 8th Jake Rodriguez was paddling with three friends on Illinois' Class II Vermillion River at high water. He was not wearing a PFD when his boat capsized. Two kayakers with Mr. Rodriguez saw him swim "a bit," but he was unable to reach a life jacket thrown to him and he disappeared under water. Wearing a PFD would have saved his life!

A lack of PFDs was the cause of a tragic double drowning on Alabama's Tallapoosa River on May 28th. Jason Smith and his three-year-old son were kayaking below Thurlow Dam when Mr. Smith grabbed an overhanging tree branch. Their kayak flipped and both drowned. His 12-year-old son, paddling alongside, managed to save his four-year-old brother. In a similar incident on June 25th Ernest Lee Wade, 59, died after his sit-on-top kayak tangled with an overhanging tree on Tennessee's Collins River. Mr. Wade, who was not wearing a PFD, washed away in the unusually high water.

Experienced paddlers are not immune to this deadly oversight! On April 23rd a strong group of Idaho paddlers reached Hance Rapid on Colorado's Grand Canyon. In what would later be labelled the "trip from hell," the group had already experienced a nasty outbreak of stomach virus and a broken leg suffered while cliff jumping. Now Jimmy Blair, 69, inexplicably forgot to put his PFD back on after scouting Hance. According to a report from Jill Fry, who was on the trip, Mr. Blair's raft washed over a pour-over that threw him into the water. Another member of his party in a large raft tried to help, but there were no lifejacket straps at Blair's shoulders to grab hold of. Then the rescue raft hit a series of rocks and broke an oar. Mr. Blair attempted to swim to shore, but was pulled underwater. Other members of the group saw him floating face down in the river, got him ashore, and performed CPR without success.

"Although readers of the AW Journal use life jackets routinely, this practice does not extend to the general public."

In two other instances a paddler drowned after their PFD came off in the water. On May 30th Cameron Deane, 31, drowned after his inflatable kayak flipped in Bullseye Rapid on the Oregon's Owyhee River. His companions found his life vest, but not him. His body was spotted by other rafters a week later. A few days later, on June 3rd, Lindsay Rice, 31, drowned on Idaho's Class IV Little Salmon River after she and a second paddler were ejected from a cataraft. Her PFD came off, and she was unresponsive when pulled from the water. These incidents should remind us all to make sure our PFDs fit snugly!

Strainers and Sieves

Strainers and sieves remain deadly traps for whitewater paddlers. On April 30th there was a commercial rafting trip on Colorado's Royal Gorge. The water level was low, 550 cfs, making the move at the top of Sunshine Rapid extremely tight. At

the top of Sunshine Falls a raft high sided on the entrance rock and a guest fell into the main channel. He was body pinned head down on an undercut rock with his ankle barely visible beneath the surface. After the safety kayaker tied a rope to his leg it took the guides 20 minutes to pull their guest free.

On May 1st Stacy Langford, 58, was running the Allen Fork of the Class III Seline River in Arkansas below Lake Winona at high water. This three-boat group suddenly encountered a pole-like tree across the river. Mr. Langford flipped and broached in deep, swift current with his cockpit against the tree. He could not release his sprayskirt and was trapped. His companions held his head above water for over an hour before he was pulled underwater. Rescuers freed his body the following day.

The Saco River above Freyburg, Maine is a popular float trip with only one Class II rapid. According to Darren Laughland the river was running medium high on May 27th when Jennifer Bousquet, 42, was paddling with

her boyfriend and another couple. Both of their canoes hit a strainer and capsized. The others made it ashore, but Ms. Bosquet drowned. A rescue team responding in a jet boat hit an "unexpected obstacle", throwing both men into the river. Officer Nathan Desjardins, 20, was killed. His partner was badly injured and had to be hospitalized.

Between a Rock and a Hard Place

When a paddler gets caught between a pinned boat and a strainer, the results can be deadly. Such was the case on June 5th on the Upper Colorado River, downstream of Gore Canyon where a fiberglass drift boat had been pinned in Class II Boneyard Rapid for weeks. A post to Mountainbuzz.com said that Ellysa McCreight, 32, and her group arrived there on June 5th. Her raft hit the drift boat and she was pinned between the drift boat, the raft, and the

rocks, and entangled in the raft's bow line. When paddlers unspinned the raft she floated free, but it was too late to save her. A few weeks later, on June 20th, trouble struck on the Upper James River south of Charlottesville, VA. This stretch has good current but few rapids. A canoe paddled by Deborah Stancil, 58, and another woman broached and pinned on a downed tree. Ms. Stancil was caught underneath the canoe and drowned. Three other boaters freed the canoe, but they came too late.

Equipment Trap

There was yet another instance of a standup paddleboarder fatally entangled in a tether line this year. On June 8th Stephanie Waggoner, 49, was paddling on the upper reaches of the Truckee River, just downstream of Lake Tahoe (CA) using a leash attached to her ankle. Flows were

high on this Class I run, over 1500 cfs. When she fell off her board her tether got caught and pulled her underwater. A police officer responding to a 911 call freed her, but it was too late. She died after several days in the hospital. The lesson is clear: standup paddlers should NEVER wear an ankle leash while paddling on moving water. No matter how tame the river seems, the leash can snag, pulling you underwater. The force of the water can also keep you from releasing the strap.

Near Misses and Rescues

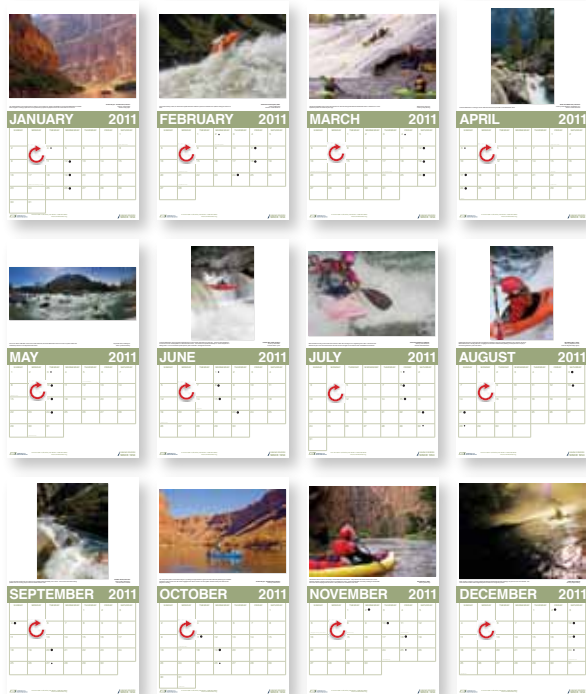
This year we heard about a number of noteworthy rescues.

Tauranga-Taupo Falls is a remote 70-foot-plus waterfall in New Zealand's North Island. It's a two-hour hike from the end of a remote forestry road with a five-mile

paddle out on Class III-IV whitewater. On February 2nd Ryan Lucas launched off the lip, threw away his paddle, and thrust his body weight forward. Despite this, he landed flat, striking his head on his cockpit rim. He was knocked out cold. Mike Roy, his partner, made a harrowing rescue, resuscitated him, sent for help, and kept him alive throughout the long night. What an inspiring performance! You can read the full story in the American Whitewater Accident Database.

On the evening of April 4th a group got into trouble during an evening run on North Carolina's Neuse River. A canoe carrying a man, woman, two dogs and a child hit a downed tree and pinned. A kayak carrying Isaac Evans and the child's mother also flipped. The mother jumped out of the kayak to help her child (who was wearing

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SAFETY

a life vest) and the pair swam to safety. Mr. Evans was separated from the group and reached the other shore. He hitched a ride home and reported for work the next morning. Rescue teams arrived at 2 am to untangle the mess. The Youngsville Police, who thought he might still be in the river, finally tracked him down.

Two Albuquerque law school students came to Taos, New Mexico on May 13th for a trip down what they thought was an “intermediate” section of the Río Grande. But the river was running unusually high and in late afternoon their inflatable kayak capsized. The men were stranded on opposite banks of the river, unable to climb out. A search began at 6 pm after a paddle and an unmanned kayak floated past the John Dunn Bridge. The effort became more urgent as night fell and temperatures dropped below 50 degrees. The Taos County Sheriff’s Office, a vertical rescue team from Los Alamos, and several fire departments were called out. They discussed both a vertical rescue and a helicopter evacuation, but decided to use an airboat. This craft, piloted by three veteran river guides, brought the two men back safely.

On May 21st Darren Vancil, designer of the Creature Craft, (a self-righting raft) was badly injured running Sunset Falls, a massive drop (104 feet of drop over 475 feet of run at 11,000 cfs!) on the South Fork of the Skykomish River in Washington State. Although the boat made it through the falls without tipping over, the sheer violence of the passage threw him around with great force. He suffered a fractured pelvis and his oar struck him behind the ear, knocking him unconscious. Videos of the run show just how rough it was! He was rushed to a nearby hospital where he is expected to make a full recovery.

South Hadley, Massachusetts firefighters rescued a stranded kayaker on the wide, fast-flowing Connecticut River on June 8th. The water was extremely high when he put in at the Chicopee boat launch and headed upstream. He tipped over, lost his paddle, and ended up clinging to a tree on a flooded island. Some fishermen saw him and called for help. Emergency responders used a motorized Zodiac life boat to rescue him. “He’s lucky people were out there,” the Fire Chief said.

A 9-year-old boy was rescued by two customers of the Oar House riverside restaurant on Georgia’s Chestatee River, which was running high from recent rains. The youngster and his two older siblings

making my way back upstream...I was able to swim and wade the 15 feet out to the victim.... Once I pulled her head out of the water, I asked her what was stuck and she said it was her spraydeck.... She was lethargic, tired, and her lips were blue.... As I held her head out of the water, I was able to reach around and feel that the back of her spraydeck was wrapped around a stick that was...stuck in some rocks. I wasn’t able to get her skirt free and hold her head out of the water at the same time, so I called for a guide from the company (which had landed nearby) to help me. Once the guide arrived, she took over holding the victim’s head out of the water, and I was able to reach around with both hands and pull the spray deck up and off the stick. When the victim came loose, I was able to turn around and hold her in the eddy behind my body.... She was still verbally responsive, but clearly exhausted and almost limp. The other guides from shore lowered a boat down to us and we loaded her into the raft.... One of the guides was a doctor and took over medical treatment from there.”

“American Whitewater needs your help collecting accident information so we can share these accounts and learn from them. Serious incidents involving skilled whitewater paddlers are quite rare, but they can teach the rest of us how to avoid trouble and manage emergencies.”

had launched their tubes upstream. Diners heard screams that they thought were squeals of excitement, but Mark Pickens, a former Army Ranger, realized what was happening. The older children got off the river but the youngest child was still floating downstream. He grabbed an overhanging branch, giving Mr. Pickens time to swim out to him. Mr. Pickens and Drew Bickers, a college student, brought the boy to safety. The two rescuers then returned—soaking wet—to their tables at the Oar House.

Lastly, I received an unsigned report (abridged version below) describing an outstanding rescue on the South Fork of the American River below Coloma, CA. “As we reached the bottom of the rapid...I heard someone yell, “Her foot is stuck!” ...I saw the victim stuck near the river right shore with the water surging over her head.... I immediately pulled over...and started

American Whitewater needs your help collecting accident information so we can share these accounts and learn from them. Serious incidents involving skilled whitewater paddlers are quite rare, but they can teach the rest of us how to avoid trouble and manage emergencies. They also help keep ugly rumors from starting. To report a whitewater accident, near miss, or serious injury, please go to the Safety page on the American Whitewater site, click “report an accident,” and enter your information. You can also pass on links to newspaper articles, chat room posts, and even rumors to the safety editor at ccwalbridge@cs.com or message “Charlie Walbridge” on Facebook. I’m not a professional investigator, but I’ll often run down leads to help find out what happened. I can also help you prepare a report if needed.

*Leave a lasting legacy to the
special places that made
a difference in your life.*



Become a member of the American Whitewater Enduring Rivers Circle, created exclusively to honor and recognize people who have helped to continue our river stewardship efforts through a gift to American Whitewater in their estate plans.

For more information about making a bequest to American Whitewater
CONTACT Carla Miner: 1.866.262.8429 or carla@americanwhitewater.org



REFLECTIONS

RIVER OF DEATH, RIVER OF LIFE

BY PATTI RUTKA



*The location of the tragic drowning on the Little River, Tennessee.
Photo by David Haas Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons*

IN THE ARCHIVES of some community newspaper in Tennessee there's a photograph of a man with his arm sticking up out of water, thrusting an Excalibur made of air above the surface. Mike Junior reached to breathe, but sank and drowned on Tennessee's Little River on a rainy spring day in the Great Smoky Mountains.

Soon after putting on the Little River gorge with some expert boaters, Junior swam out of his kayak, but did the big no-no: he made an effort to stand in whitewater. In an area known for a sieve that had claimed lives before, his feet tangled with undercut and potholed rocks beneath the water. In a pounding instant, the crushing current forced his head underwater.

Boaters scrambled. A belayed rescuer waded out to Mike Junior and tugged on the now-limp arm just under the surface. After half an hour of trying, the rescuer

dove down to free Junior's broken and purple ankles from their rocky entrapment.

The local media had arrived on the body recovery scene mid-rescue. It left its sensibilities behind and snapped the gruesome photograph of Junior's arm.

Farther down river on that drizzly morning, a group of paddlers from Maine slid our canoes into the water, oblivious to the drama unfolding upstream. As we eddy-hopped down, ambulances and police cars sped, sirens blaring, up the twisting, narrow road overhung by rock walls to the put-in parking lot just below where Mike Junior was drowning. In undertones we asked one another, "Do you think it's for a boater, or a car crash?" We tightened up as a group.

"Mike Junior was ready to run that drop," commented one boater in the gushy online chat in the wake of his death. The defense meant one thing, of course: doubt existed

as to whether or not he really was ready for such a test of his whitewater skills.

Off-river, after we watched Mike's car flat-bedded down the narrow road because there was no one to drive it back to his native Quebec, I discovered I'd lost my car keys. In the mist and spattering rain I drove back up to the parking lot with my spare key. All the other cars were gone. Rain came down in sheets, running off the asphalt into the riverbed. My untouched keys lay on the pavement. Drenched, I walked up to the bridge and looked at where, just an hour before, a man had lost his life underwater. The river we considered so life-giving continued on its course, replenishing itself with the rains, oblivious and unaware of the best efforts of expert paddlers and emergency medical teams, and a media crew more unspeakably crass than boaters could ever be. Staring, shivering in the wet, I got in my car and drove back down the twisting road.

Miraculously, Mike revived in the ambulance, only to die later that night in the local hospital, brain dead from being oxygen deprived for too long. At 65, he left a wife and two grown children.

**

We run rivers because water is life; there is no more fluid comparison. Water calls: it lives, it dances, it breathes life into every whitewater paddler who puts on it. Even folks who don't paddle get the metaphor inherent in water.

Like people, rivers can live or die, can choke or be resuscitated. If a polluted river is caught in time, usually with enough committed advocates to fight for it, it can live, even if its quality of life is lessened in the pollution's aftermath. How hard do we try to resuscitate a river's life?

In 1972 the Clean Water Act regulated toxins discharged into navigable rivers. It was born because in 1948 concerned citizens were alarmed at the gunk that industry was dumping into our nation's rivers. Sewage treatment plants were also funded under this legislation. In a show of international cooperation to address toxic contaminants affecting aquatic life, wildlife, and humans, Canada joined with the U.S. in 1978 under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. Rivers revived.

When my parents bought their first retirement home on the Wisconsin River in the early 1970s, big, smelly, A-bomb patties of pulp floated in the main current downstream of a local paper mill. By the time I was a junior in high school, those greenish-gray glops had vanished because of the Clean Water Act. Early morning, mist-rising-off-the-water canoe trips in my mother's lemon-yellow canoe named Maude gifted us deer, cattails,

Penobscot River Race after dam removal and restoration.

Photo by Cheryl Daigle

frogs, beaver, the deep brown tannin waters of Wisconsin—and no more pulpy masses. We had cleaner water, thanks to environmental legislation.

The lead-up to the clean-up took a long time. Since Europeans had arrived on the continent, rivers across North America were used for the mass discharge of waste, for transport, and for shipping and trading. In the 20th century, a new fate befell many of our nation's rivers: damming for energy generation or flood control. In many ways, dams have choked off rivers, causing damage mirroring that done by pollution.

While U.S. Secretary of Energy Muniz in 2015 was busy proposing construction of dams cross-country for more hydropower generation, Maine had decided to deconstruct several of its dams, two of them on the Penobscot River.

The Penobscot is the second largest watershed in the Northeast, behind only the Connecticut River. The Penobscot Indian Nation had asserted its rights with the U.S. government over its historic fishing grounds on the grounds that removing dams from the river would allow diadromous fish, migrating between fresh

and salt water, to perpetuate their life cycles. Dams prevent fish from swimming back upstream to their spawning grounds. When fish die off because they can't get to spawning grounds, there is an ecological domino effect, a fact the Penobscot Indians knew well.

For several years the dams at Great Works and Veazie on the Penobscot had been in a deconstruction process to aid the return of fish. In a move made partly to raise political awareness, the Penobscot Indian Nation had decided to hold a downriver canoe race on the newly freed section of the Penobscot. On a cool August morning, some of us whitewater paddlers from the Penobscot Paddle and Chowder Society had offered to help set safety as the racers came barreling through whitewater unleashed and no longer sunken under the dammed river.

The Penobscot is about two football fields wide near the ocean at Bangor in Maine, too wide for rescue ropes to reach across. So, providing safety from boats on the water was the only real way for us to offer security, unless we could do it from the island we'd be stationed at. My husband, Tom, and I put in just below the Great



REFLECTIONS

Works Dam paddling a Tripper, a long trekking canoe. We drifted lazily down the first few miles, though the river pushed 6,000 cfs down to the sea.

The boat had been designed and built just two miles upstream, in Old Town, Maine. Weighing 80 pounds, the Tripper was a flat-bottom queen for carrying gear to facilitate camping. It wasn't purty, but it was a mature boat with a noble history.

Traversing a newly freed-up river, beautiful or not, the Tripper showed the concept behind its regal lines, having been a popular river canoe for decades. Tom provided our motor in the bow; I steered in the stern. Under the hawkish gaze of two eagles looking for fish food, the canoe drifted on meandering current lines across a wide river on its way to its mother-sea. Briefly I held my paddle out of the water and realized that this boat, this barge queen I had considered with disdain as little more than a cargo carrier on a lake, was picking its own route. Finding the deepest channels in the non-whitewater sections was like finding caramels in a box of chocolates—one had to poke to be sure. But somehow, the Tripper knew the river's sweet spots.



Setting safety for the Penobscot Race below the former Great Works dam in Old Town—Bradley, Maine.

Photo by Kyle Duckworth

The boat whispered its way along, winding, moving from mid-river to the bank and back on its own. I barely had to touch my paddle to the current.

The boat was beautiful in its native setting, but the river wheezing back to life told another story. The Penobscot's air stank from a pulp mill as we drifted toward the first rapid. Worse, the rapid we intended to set safety at could easily have become a death trap for the racers because of all the junk and metal spikes that remained from log drives. A subsequent news story would show a paddler's canoe speared by such a spike.

Indecisive about which line to take as we approached our target rapid, Tom and I let the Tripper decide. The canoe pointed straight for the heaviest wave train, shaking off its flat-water meandering. Blasting down the waves as water piled up in great haystacks, we filled to the gunwales.



Penobscot River Race after dam removal and restoration.

Photo by Cheryl Daigle

“Steady! Stable!” I yelled at my husband, an all-too-common occurrence when we paddled tandem.

“Bring it in! Bring it in! Paddle forward!” he yelled back at me. I wasn’t the only one nervous about the boat’s—and our—abilities.

But the boat knew better than we how to handle the river, despite not being a whitewater craft. Even so, as we hurtled toward the shore the Tripper wobbled, full of water, and nearly flipped.

The dam at our rescue island was gone. In gap-toothed emptiness there stuck out a 100-year-old crib works with iron spikes, constructed for logging in an earlier era that had worked the river hard. The riverbank was littered with barbs both blunt-nosed and sharp, threatening tetanus. Iron daggers like those could rip a boat apart, not to mention mangle a body. I scrambled over the gunwale, grasping at grasses, slipping on slime-covered rocks. Tom crawled out and hitched the boat to a spike. As we contemplated setting safety for the racers, we realized that pulling upset canoes into shore here would be more dangerous than catching them mid-wave-train. We’d set our safety at the bottom of

the wave train and simply coach swimmers to a lower shoreline without cribworks.

It was a bang-up day with few rescues, in spite of the river’s struggles to regain its stature as a historic fishing ground, despite the smell and junk and danger. Peoples’ efforts to bring the river back to the cycle of life were paying off; the river proved an exciting racecourse. But as I looked downriver, glimpsed old iron everywhere, smelled the acrid burn of pulp, paddled past an overshadowing mill and crumbling cribbing that was too expensive to remove, as so many hoped and waited on the return of fish to its waters, I looked at a waning and withered queen, just like the Tripper. While the Penobscot Indian Nation, which owned the islands stretching upriver for several miles, battled for all the rights to fishing on the Penobscot based on old treaties, I wondered if the river might yet survive, or if it was dying, or if it could find balance in its altered form. I wondered how much pollution a river could recover from. I wondered how many dams could be built and removed before fish forgot in their very cells where they came from, and where they were going, just as I had wondered how many brain cells could survive oxygen deprivation the night Mike Junior had died for real.

**

We cheer recovery efforts; we need returning fish and healthy ecosystems. But perhaps it’s understandable to want to leave rivers, like people, in the public’s eye as they were last remembered, water covering ugly spikes and cribbing, Elizabeth Taylor holed up at home in her final days, finally off tabloid covers. Or local papers. Left with whatever dignity remains in the final years, un-photographed in the last gasp and dying moments, a landscape forever altered. Maybe rivers and people should be relinquished gently, no tugging and torture at the end, as on Mike Junior’s arm, no drastic heroic efforts, no removal of antiquated structures. Still, a body must be freed, human or water. Life demands it, though thin be the veil between intervention and grace for the living.

Editor’s Note: Some details have been intentionally changed to protect the identity of the drowned man in the opening scene of this story.



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PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Each day American Whitewater faces new challenges that threaten our whitewater rivers. To aid us in this fight, we rely on support from members, donors, foundations, and partners in the industry. Companies throughout the whitewater and outdoor industries are stepping forward to support AW's River Stewardship work. American Whitewater urges you not to make purchase decisions blindly. When you buy your next piece of outdoor gear there are many factors to consider: quality, dependability, comfort, safety, and fashion. American Whitewater hopes you will add one more consideration to this list: corporate responsibility. Support companies that support your rivers.

NORTHWEST RAFTING COMPANY offers guided multi-day whitewater rafting trips on select National Wild and Scenic rivers most of which flow through designated federal wilderness areas.

We are exclusively focused on offering the best whitewater rafting trips in the West. Our truly expeditionary whitewater experiences on the Illinois and Chetco rivers cross the vast Kalmiopsis Wilderness. Our trips on the Rogue and Middle Fork of the Salmon are high energy, family-friendly adventures on two of the most incredible and beloved rivers in the northwest. Our rafting and cultural tour in Bhutan gives the intrepid traveler an unforgettable, soul-stirring understanding of a country that warmly welcomes its visitors but actively protects itself from becoming over-touristed.

Our selective size enables us to offer exceptional whitewater rafting and kayaking trips that adhere to the highest standards of safety, guide experience, and knowledge, and guest comfort on the water and off.

We strive for professionalism and consideration in everything we do, from the first time you contact us until you're home again. With many of our guests repeat customers, and recognition from such leading industry organizations as *National Geographic*, *Traveler*, and *Outside*

Magazine, we are confident you'll find a NWRC trip is a one-of-a-kind, when-can-we-do-this-again adventure.

We believe sharing wilderness and wild rivers is the best way for people to understand the value of our public lands and to become advocates for their conservation and preservation. Unless people know about these pristine places and can experience their transformative power, the wilderness is nothing more than an abstract thought with the potential to be easily consumed by privatization and careless development.

We are inspired by a vision of a country in which our Wild & Scenic rivers are enjoyed and respected, from both intimate and distant perspectives. Our guests build and strengthen their connections with nature, with their fellow travelers, and most especially with themselves.

For the past few years, America Whitewater has partnered with Northwest Rafting Company for a trip on the Wild and Scenic Rogue River focused on our stewardship activities. This trip provides a great opportunity to connect with members in ways that build a lasting understanding of the role of recreation in fostering a stewardship ethic. Join us June 14 - 17, 2018, on the Wild and Scenic Rogue River. Bookings can be made on the Northwest Rafting Company website.



Join



AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

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

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

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

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

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

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

*Note: AW will never share your information with others

Name _____

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\$35 Standard

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ON RETURNING FROM THE RIVER

BY MARK TARATOOT

Home.
But not home.

In my space.
Yet displaced.

My true love is at home; she is in the canyon.
My life's travels take me far from her.
Our passionate visits are joyful but brief.

The sun sets over town; a glowing orange orb—a vision unseen from the
depths of the canyon. The breezes in town still blow cool.

Yet something is missing—something big.
The whispers and roars of the wind and water are replaced by the whoosh of
cars breaking the still air.

The cascade of warm water is welcome as it washes away grit and dirt and
brings me back to the world of the clean. The sharp blade can bring me to the
world of the neat and tidy. My love cares not about grit in my hair or hair on
my face.

My garden is ripe with a bountiful harvest, yet already I hunger for sustenance
that only water, rock and gravity can provide.

Yes, my sister the river is my love, my sustenance, and my home. The time
we spend apart is long. As the time passes, the longing grows. May the time
be short until once again I am in the arms of the river as she cradles me and
carries me with gravity towards the center.



Photo by Cathy Howard



AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

American Whitewater is introducing a new Affiliate Club contributor level “Supporting Affiliate Club”. Beginning in 2017 Affiliate Clubs can now join or renew their membership at the annual giving level of \$100 or at the newly created Supporting Affiliate Club level for an annual contribution of \$400.

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

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

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

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

Supporting Affiliate Clubs

California

Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus

Colorado

Dolores River Boating Advocates, Dolores

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington

Ohio

Keelhaulers, Cleveland

Affiliate Club by State

Alaska

Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Coosa River Paddling Club, Wetumpka
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

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

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

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

Colorado

Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs
High Country River Rafters, Wheatridge
Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center, Buena Vista
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
Team Colorado Whitewater Racing Club, Longmont
Upper Colorado Private Boaters Asso, Glenwood Springs

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Georgia

Georgia Canoeing Asso, Atlanta

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

Indiana

Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

Kentucky

Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Freeport

Maryland

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

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston
Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

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

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

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

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks
KCCNY, Flanders

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady
FLOW Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq., Ossining
KCCNY, Flanders

North Carolina

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

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Friends of the Crooked River, Akron

Oregon

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

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oak
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Centre County, Lemont
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Mach One Slalom Team, State College
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh
Wilderness Voyageurs Outfitters, Ohiopyle

South Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville

Tennessee

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

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston
Team River Runner, San Antonio

Utah

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

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Washington

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

West Virginia

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

Wisconsin

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

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson

Ontario

Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

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

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

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

JOIN AMERICAN WHITEWATER AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

1. Support river access and restoration through the AW River Stewardship Team.
2. Be part of a national voice for the protection of the whitewater rivers your club values.
3. Tap into the professional expertise of AW staff for river issues that come up in your backyard.
4. Your club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
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For more information, contact Carla Miner at membership@americanwhitewater.org or sign-up on line at www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.



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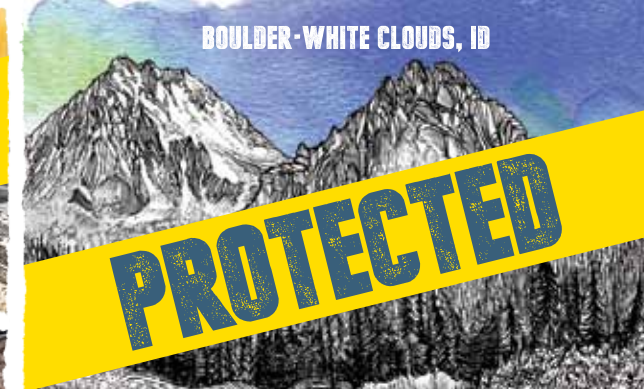
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