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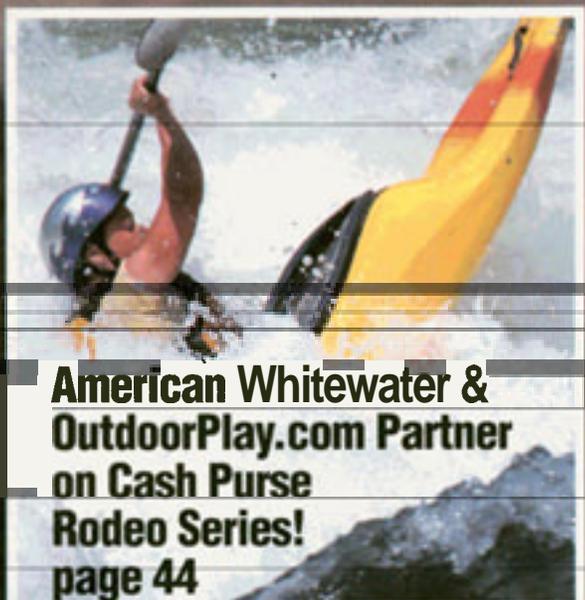
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## The Hotel Interamericano

By Bob Gedekoh

No one could mistake the Hotel Interamericano of Turrialba, Costa Rica for the Hyatt Regency. It does not feature a five star restaurant, a luxurious swimming pool, or a championship golf course. You will not find any fancy mints on your pillow and travelers who wish to take showers need to bring their own soap—a brand that works in cold water. Located next to an abandoned train station a stones throw away from a raucous street market, in a country where drivers blast their horns

every time they touch their gas pedals or brakes, the Interamericano is not the place to stay if you want quiet solitude or to be pampered. The disco down the street booms past midnight and the neighborhood dogs don't stop howling until the neighborhood roosters start crowing.

But if you're a whitewater boater visiting Costa Rica, the Interamericano is the place to be. Two of that tropical central American paradise's finest rivers, the Reventezon and the Pacuare, are easily accessed from the busy little city of Turrialba, making it the epicenter for Costa Rican boating. And the lobby of the Interamericano is the hub of the Turrialba kayaking scene.

Presiding over the Hotel Interamericano is Blanca Rosa Vasquez Aguilar, an energetic and motherly Costa Rican who spent several decades in the United States working in the human resources department of a large American corporation. As comfortable in front of her computer as she is in front of her sewing machine, which sit side-by-side in the hotel lobby, Blanca runs a tight ship. The Interamericano may cater to budget travelers; miserly kayakers, backpackers, and bird watchers, but it is clean, secure and efficient. Blanca is on a first-name basis with most of her guests within a few hours of their arrival. She seems to be



everyone's friend and is an invaluable source of information about Turrialba in particular and Costa Rica in general. She knows where to find boats and how to arrange shuttles. Blanca can tell you how to stay out of trouble and how to get out of trouble. She could probably tell you how to get into trouble as well... if you are so inclined.

The Interamericano attracts whitewater boaters from all over the world. During my recent stay, I met kayakers from New Zealand, three Canadian provinces, Germany, Switzerland, and from every corner of the United States. There were familiar faces as well—video boaters and raft guides from West Virginia, California, Maine, and Colorado, who were wintering in Costa Rica. After dinner we would converge in the hotel's lobby, swapping whitewater tales from around the world. Two accomplished German boaters, Raymond Bulczak and Andreas Schultz, regaled us with tales of boating in Corsica, Italy, Morocco, Chile, and their new favorite, Norway. Later in the week Stewart Smith, a Class V boater who has

authored whitewater guides to the Canadian Rockies, joined us.

Come morning, the Interamericano kayak team would congregate again to organize impromptu river trips and shuttles. Several expatriates from the United States have settled in Turrialba and opened whitewater operations: Loco Lee Poundstone, Ray McLain, and Phil Coleman. All are friends of Blanca: they stop by the hotel almost every day to shoot the breeze and drum up business for their rafting operations and kayaking schools. Happily, they were willing to share their knowledge of local whitewater runs, weather conditions, and flows with private kayakers just looking for free advice. Unlike some of the large rafting companies, who bus their customers to the Reventezon and Pacuare from their headquarters in the capital city of San Jose, two hours away, Loco Lee, Ray McLain, and Phil Coleman cater to guests staying in Turrialba. Their businesses visibly pump money into the local economy, not an inconsequential matter in a region whose riv-

ers are threatened with hydropower development.

After these consultations the team would select the day's whitewater destination and call Diego Rodriguez Solano, our trusty shuttle driver. Diego has worked as a river guide and knows the complex and rugged Reventazon and Pacuare shuttles like Scott Shipley knows gates. On a couple of occasions when Diego could con his wife or a friend into driving the truck, he kayaked along with us, proudly sharing his knowledge of his home rivers and leading us on hikes up some of the side canyons. One day when heavy rains turned the Lower Pacuare into a raging torrent, Diego said that he would have liked to paddle with us, but that his worried wife would not let him. By the end of that eventful day we all agreed that Diego's wife was a wise woman indeed! Riding shotgun in the shuttle truck was to be an interesting multicultural experience. Diego was, of course, fluent in Spanish. He spoke only a little English, but was determined to learn more. Like most Germans, Andreas seemed fluent in every language; his English was excellent and, as best I could tell, his Spanish was too. Of course I couldn't tell for sure, since my Spanish is so rudimentary that when I ordered food in a restaurant I never knew what to expect. My knowledge of German is a tad better. But I was in Costa Rica; I wanted to speak Spanish, not German. Somehow our mutual interest in rivers overcame these language barriers; when there is whitewater to be discussed, kayakers will find a way. In the evenings we would wander around Turrialba, sampling the tropical fruit and ice cream, watching the sloths hanging from the trees in the town park, and joining the locals in last-minute Christmas shopping. We went to the movies and to a holiday mass. By the end of the week Turrialba was starting to feel like home.

All things considered, my Costa Rican whitewater vacation was one of the best I have ever taken.

It is easy to see what attracts boaters from around the world to Costa Rica. The people are friendly, the cli-

mate is wonderful and the whitewater is superb. Costa Rica has a long-standing democratic tradition and its literacy rate is said to be higher than that of the United States. Ecotourism has replaced banana and coffee farming as the largest source of revenue; the Costa Ricans have responded by establishing a phenomenal National Park System. Costa Ricans are understandably proud of their country and are very gracious hosts.

Many American kayakers who travel to Costa Rica do so as part of packaged tours that cater to whitewater boaters. Expenses are prepaid; there is no need to negotiate ground transportation or lodging and restaurants are pre-selected. No doubt the trip leaders translate the menus; their customers know what they will be eating. The trip organizers choose runs appropriate for their clients' abilities and arrange the shuttles. The guides, usually Ameri-

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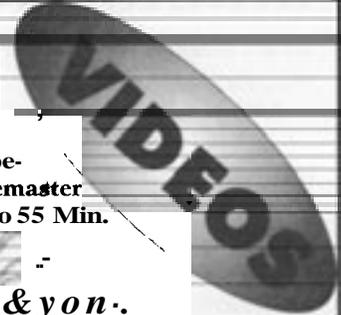
can, nurse the guests safely down the river. Traveling in the company of a large group of like-minded individuals led by professionals, no doubt provides a shield from the inevitable hassles and culture shock that comes with foreign travel. There is a lot to be said for this. But I'm glad I didn't do it that way. I had a lot more fun staying at the Interamericano, riding the local buses, and eating in the local Sodas. Admittedly, I didn't always know what I was swallowing, but it always tasted good. Yes, we put on a couple of rivers that were probably running a bit too high. And, yes, we spent a little time scouting rapids that none of us had seen before. But these were learning experiences and, all in all, we did okay. And I will remember the people I met and the friends I made in Costa Rica long after I have forgotten the lines through the rapids on the Middle Pacuare.

I know one thing for sure about Costa Rica. Soon as I can, I'm going back.

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## The Kids Are Alright!

Dear Bob,

I just read your article in AW Sept/Oct issue and I wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed your article. It was great! We have been paddling together as a family for the last 5 years. It is such an important part of our life. The best break from all the pressures in the world is to load up the truck with boats and the kids and go paddling. It is like therapy!

When we first started we used to get some really weird looks because our youngest son was less than a year old. We still get some weird looks but our 2 sons are now 6 and 8 years old. The 8 year old has been paddling his own yak for the last year (and is perfecting his river roll) and I'm sure the other will be getting a kayak soon!

I never quite understood talking to people on the river and they would say that they never get to paddle anymore since they had kids. What's up with that?!? Kids LOVE to be outside and they learn so much being ex-

posed to this sport! Include them and you can paddle all you want! Like you said in your article, they also learn how to act around adults, take responsibility and learn a world of other things!!

Anyway...I am very glad to see the Kids Korner included now. You don't see much about kids in any of the paddling mags, and if there is, it is only about basic stuff. My son was thrilled about the Kids Korner and wants to know how he can have his own article published one day in that forum.

Thanks for the great article. I know you will probably get a little flack from those supposed "safety conscious" parents but they have NO IDEA what they are missing!

Lorena Josephs

Greensboro, NC

Editors reply: Thanks for the compliment. Tell your son we would be happy to turn him into a whitewater Hemingway. Just have him mail his submission to me, with any pictures or drawings he might have to: 8245 Mentor Road, Elizabeth, PA 15037. (We desperately need Kids Korner submissions.)

## Grazie Mille Americani!

Italian thanks for a paddling season in New England

I landed at the Boston Logan Airport just a few minutes after 3pm on March 6 1998, facing the first day of my one-year-fellowship in orthopaedic oncology at the Mass. General Hospital.

I'm not only an MD, I'm a paddler, too; I need to paddle. I guess, as for almost every river rat, it's in my own genetic code. But, what if you are completely alone in such a big country, with a bad knowledge of the language, completely submerged by cultural shock, a busy hospital schedule, and no boat or paddle, just your helmet and the PFD??!! Well there's nothing to do but pray to find some angel, a paddler-angel. And that's what happened to me! Actually I met more than one of these people. All these guys showed me their nice rivers, gave me their boats (and paddles, sometimes houses and cars too), tons of beer and hot dogs, they taught me their songs and brought me to wonderful places. More than any other thing, they gave me their friendship.

Thank-you to George, my first contact in the States, who opened the doors to the rivers. Thank-you to Mike for your generosity in any situation. Thank-you to Sean Farrell for loaning me your boat and car so many times. Thank-you to Jeff and his guitar. Thank-you to Evie and all the guys at Zoar outdoor in Charlemont, MA. Thank-you to Phil and Bill, two authentic Americans (pictures taken with them is the best proof I've been in the USA). Thank-you to Bruce, Janet, Jan, Amy, Tom, Dianna, Heather, Mike & Kim, Richard... and all the other kids I've met during that paddling season.

I came to the States not only to improve my knowledge and try to become a good physician, but more than any other thing, I was looking for a great human experience. I did, and a big part of this success is due to my kayak buddies.

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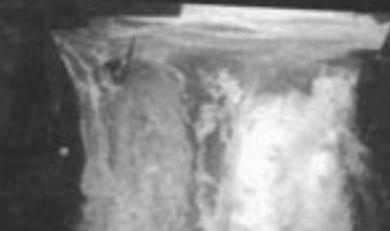
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Please **read** this **carefully** before **sending us your** articles and photos! This is a volunteer publication, please cooperate and help us out. *Do not send us your material without a release - signed by all authors and photographers (attached)!!*

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

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

If possible, articles should be submitted on a 3-inch computer cassette. (*Word Perfect* preferred - others accepted.) Please do not alter the margins or spacing parameters; use the standard default settings. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

Those without access to a word processor may submit their articles typed. Please double space.

Photos may be submitted as slides, black or white prints, or color prints. Keep your originals

and **send us duplicates** if possible; we **cannot** guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures, include self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. Because we publish in black and white, photos with a lot of contrast work best.

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

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

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled, or exotic rivers are given special consideration. But we are also interested in well written, unusual articles pertaining to Class III and IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personali-

ties are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

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

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

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

Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editors to fit our format, length, and style. *Expect to see changes in your article. If you don't want us to edit your article, don't send it to us!* Because of our deadlines you will not be able to review the editorial changes we make prior to publication.

*American Whitewater* is nonprofit; the editors and contributors to *American Whitewater* are not reimbursed. On rare occasions, by *prearrangement*, professional writers receive a small honorarium when they submit stories at our request. Generally, our contributors do **not** expect payment, since most are members of AW, which is a *volunteer* conservation and safety organization.

## Release For Publication

- I hereby release my work (literary, graphic or photographic) for publication in **American Whitewater** magazine.
- I understand that my work may be edited or cropped at the editors' discretion.
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Signed \_\_\_\_\_

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This release must be signed by *all* the contributing author(s), photographer(s) and graphic artist(s).

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## Purpose

### American Whitewater

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

The American Whitewater (AW) is a national organization with a membership consisting of thousands of individual whitewater boating enthusiasts, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates.

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

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**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, resists unjustified restrictions on government managed whitewater rivers and works with government agencies and other river users to achieve these goals.

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

**SAFETY:** AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a uniform national ranking system for whitewater

rivers (the International Scale of Whittewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally recognized AW Whitewater Safety Code.

**EVENTS:** AW organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation, including the Ocoee Whitewater Rodeo in Tennessee, the Gauley River Festival in West Virginia (the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation), the Arkansas River Festival in Colorado, the Kennebec Festival in Maine and the Deerfield Festival in Massachusetts

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at 1430 Fenwick Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301) 589-9453. AW is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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## EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

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.

# Director's Cut

by Rich Bowers

Sometimes I forget that paddling is supposed to be fun. While this is easy to remember when you're in the water, it's harder to do sitting at a desk and facing new problems on rivers. OK, OK—they're not problems! They're great and exciting new opportunities. Opportunities?—maybe. Fun?—no way.

Then, something comes along to remind you about the fun. For me, it was Bob Gedekoh's last Forum article. I started reading it and just broke into the biggest grin. Now here's a guy who knows how to have fun! I called to tell him I enjoyed the piece, but of course Bob was off to Costa Rica to have more fun. Serious fun, I suppose, since Bob had the forethought to unplug the answering machine and really disconnect from the daily grind.

Last October, the fun part of paddling hit a high note with the first-ever race over Pennsylvania's Ohiopyle Falls (see Barry Tuscano's article in this edition). Sure, American Whitewater got involved because running the falls is illegal and just a pain for paddlers. But the reason for doing this, as well as the competitive nature of any race, was quickly buried as some 250 paddlers made the drop and the fun meter went off the scale. Barry, you called it, the race was a hoot!

As 1999 wrapped up, here are just a few of the topics that, sooner or later, will translate into fun for whitewater paddlers:

The White Salmon



Left to Right: "Tree" Trujillo, Rich Bowers, Paul Burton, Jayne Abbot

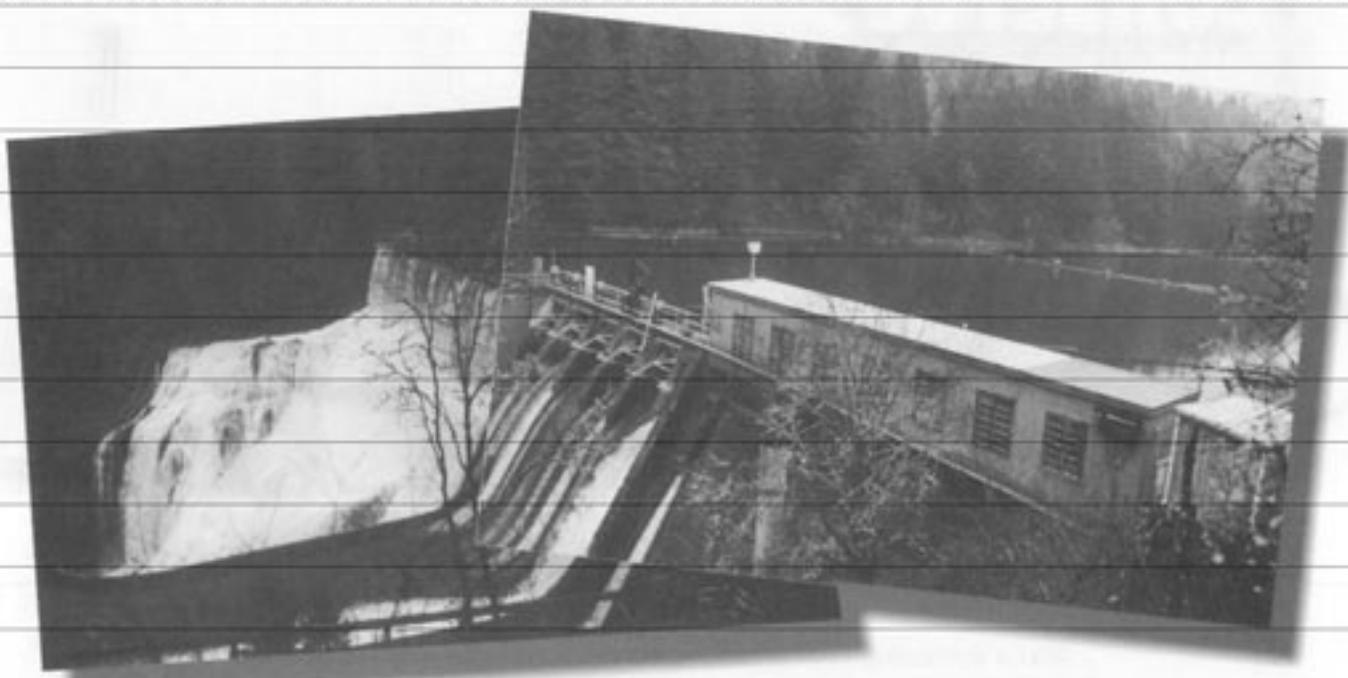
In November, American Whitewater signed an events sponsorship deal with Oregon's Hood River based Outdoorplay.com (see article in Events Central). From pros to beginners, this deal provides American Whitewater with the resources to improve

our events. More resources means better events. Better means less hassle for volunteers, more involvement by spectators, more support for American Whitewater's programs, and more fun for those paddling.



While Jayne and I were out signing this deal, we slipped across the Columbia to visit Washington's White Salmon River. Site of the annual Gorge Games, the White Salmon is also home to Condit Dam — scheduled to be removed in seven years. I'm not sure how much fun fish have spawning, but I'm sure it has been less fun with a 125-foot dam blocking the way. For paddlers, the fun will come from eventually paddling the whitewater under what is now Northwestern Lake and continuing on down the lower gorge to the Columbia.

November releases on Georgia's Tallulah Gorge are always fun. Running Oceana Falls has a grin factor even greater than Ohiopyle Falls, although it sometimes takes longer for the smiles to replace the awestruck look that accompanies each first-time run. During the last set of releases, boaters generated more than 300 letters requesting that the US Forest Service open the upper sections of the Chattooga for whitewater (one watershed over from Tallulah). Expect the fun factor to grow when boaters are successful in opening limited access to these outstanding river sections.



Condit Dam on the White Salmon.

December, paddling sessions individual boaters, and American Whitewater locked in the purchase of a take-out on Kentucky's Elkhorn Creek. This Class II-III creek is just pure fun, and having legal access for boaters will make it even more enjoyable. Legal fun is hard to come by!

2000: No bull, no politics — save rivers and have fun!

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## Celebrating

# Tallulah!

## An Eye for the Future

After a demanding week of meetings in DC working on river conservation issues, I got a chance to head down to Tallulah enroute to home. This was an opportunity to observe firsthand a successful outcome of American Whitewater's efforts to restore whitewater flows in a hydro power relicense.

... I learned a lot. . .

Securing annual releases on Tallulah was a significant effort. Prior to the present schedule of releases at Tallulah, the now infamous run was dry for much of the time except those rare occasions when heavy rains forced Georgia Power to spill water from their storage reservoirs. The infrequent spill flows coupled with the difficult access left Tallulah largely unused by the paddling community.

The relicense process initiated in the early 1990s brought new hope for whitewater in Tallulah. Initially, whitewater releases into Tallulah were met with strong opposition. Lake homeowners rejected the idea fearing releases would draw down reservoir pool levels. Georgia Power had concerns as well. Spilling

water into the Tallulah gorge bypassed their powerhouses — termed foregone power generation by those in the industry.

Paddlers, no different than you and I, were able to turn the tide of opposition by devoting themselves to the relicense process. Boaters with day jobs took the time to travel to evening meetings. These boaters studied project operations, conducted flow studies, and met with locals. This required significant time commitments. These boaters were motivated by a vision of a Tallulah Gorge with whitewater. The unremitting commitment by the paddlers impacted Georgia Power. Recognizing that paddlers weren't just

going to walk away, Georgia Power reversed their original opposition and elected to work with the paddling community to reach a mutually-agreeable outcome. Georgia Power staff are so enamored with the paddling community that a number of staff go out of their way to help out with the annual fall and spring releases that



Photo by Kase Nietert



resulted in the final settlement agreement.

The team of boaters that dedicated themselves to this process sacrificing their own free time are present-day heroes. They are joined by those volunteers that helped construct the stairs and those individuals that dedicate themselves each



release weekend to implementing the permit system often times foregoing paddling opportunities themselves. These individuals dedicate themselves so we can run Oceana — true heroes in our paddling community.

Tallulah ushered a wave of opportunities to restore whitewater on rivers regulated by hydro project operations. In the next ten years, an additional 34 hydro projects will enter into the relicense phase in the Southeast. A number of the projects dewater valuable whitewater resources. The Cheoah River with its 8-112 miles of Class IV whitewater is one of the first of these projects. Like Tallulah, American Whitewater is working closely with local boaters to make certain whitewater issues are well represented. We need local paddlers to help take on other hydro-power relicensings. Study the hydro projects in your area. Voice your opinion for whitewater restoration on your local river. Advocating whitewater use is particularly critical in the early phases of the relicense process. Step up to the plate—take a role in the outcome of your whitewater resources. The paddling community needs some new heroes.

For information on hydropower projects in your area contact John Gangemi (406)837-3155, e-mail @ans!emi@dis!isvs.net.

release weekend to implementing the permit system often times foregoing paddling opportunities themselves. These individuals dedicate themselves so we can run Oceana — true heroes in our paddling community.

access with Georgia State Parks, Georgia Power Company, American Whitewater, and local boating groups. The demand for Tallulah as well as the carrying capacity on the river was uncertain at that point in the process. A combination of factors including whitewater difficulty, limited access, the fragile nature of the gorge, and the existence of several federally-endangered species lead some parties to believe caps were necessary for whitewater use. The present cap of 120 was established. Georgia State Parks has since applied that number to hikers entering the gorge as well.

The whitewater demand for Tallulah has exceeded the permit system. Some boaters are trying to work around the permit system. And many of them have been caught. It's critical that the boating community abides by the permit system established for Tallulah. The permit system was established as part of the agreement for the new hydro license. Boaters violating the current permit system may jeopardize future whitewater releases in this incredibly beautiful gorge.

Demand for Tallulah exceeded expectations. American Whitewater and local boating groups have initiated promising discussions with Georgia State Parks and Georgia Power Company about the potential for expanding permits. In the meantime, the current permit system must be followed. Tallulah symbolizes the river restoration the paddling community can achieve through hydropower relicensing. Many more dewatered rivers need restoring. Tallulah illustrates to utilities and agencies alike the paddling community's goals to reestablish whitewater flows. As paddlers, we should uphold the Tallulah agreement so the river can serve as our icon.

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# You're an AW Volunteer? You Rule.

In case you've been under, or between a rock and a hard place that's pitch black and silent, you know that American Whitewater is...YOU. And me. And other volunteers like you who, led by a lean and mean, stellar staff, have woven a tapestry of fabric to create the most awesome grassroots nonprofit organization around. American Whitewater wants to be able to acknowledge your contribution, benefit from your valuable experience, and expand the list of paddlers who volunteer!

AW has created a River Activist Database (RAD), a list of members and their addresses who have helped AW in some type of volunteer capacity—from selling raffle tickets or parking cars at a rodeo, to providing legal expertise in a hydro relicensing intervention. Just think: we river rats are also high school jocks, emergency room physicians, psychology professors, ski instructors, and financial investment gurus. What an awesome group, working together to create (recreate) or protect whitewater, its access and celebration via education and events. Members of this group of volunteers have made the difference between losing a whitewater resource and securing it for

future generations. There are a variety of volunteer niches listed in the RAD, one of which will surely match your unique skill set. Formalizing this list of volunteers and adding additional names will help the paddling community respond quickly to issues presently threatening our valuable whitewater resources or those future threats none of us yet foresee.

The RAD is a confidential database, used exclusively by AW Staff to call on members like you when a volunteer need arises that fits your interests, experience, and skills. Join the RAD and know that you are in great company. Occasionally, we'll contact RAD members and ask how we're doing, and request suggestions for improving AW program effectiveness.

Visit American Whitewater's website [www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org) to view the RAD form. The form can be downloaded to your local printer and mailed to the Bigfork office. Alternatively, you can request a form from the Bigfork office. Call Carla at (406)837-3155 or e-mail [cminer@diflisvs.net](mailto:cminer@diflisvs.net).



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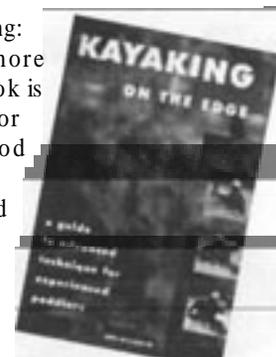
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# Proposed Amendments to Federal Power Act Undermine Environmental Protection in Hydropower Relicensing Process

Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) introduced the Hydroelectric Licensing Process Improvement Act in the fall of 1999. Representative Ed Towns (D-NY) introduced a companion bill in the House. This legislation is part of an attempt to "reform" the hydropower relicensing process. The reform legislation will undermine basic environmental protection for our nation's rivers. In the current relicensing process, the resource agencies prescribe river protection measures. The reform legislation would in essence strip the resource agencies of this regulatory authority. In this scenario, rivers would be vulnerable to overexploitation by the highly-profitable private hydropower industry. There would be few environmental checks and balances to guarantee protection or use for any purpose other than hydro.

The reform legislation, sponsored largely by a dissatisfied faction within the hydropower industry, asserts that the licensing process is convoluted and places excessive burdens on the industry. The heart of the debate is the ability of resource agencies to exercise their conditioning authority in the relicense process to protect fish, wildlife, and lands under their jurisdiction. The utility industry casts blame on the resource agencies for delaying relicense proceedings and placing excessive mitigation burdens on the licensees. Opponents to the reform legislation claim that the resource agencies are not to be blamed for licensing delays. Furthermore, environmental mitigation during relicensing has resulted in virtually no change in overall generating capacity. Most parties including FERC and the resource agencies propose administrative solutions rather than

reform legislation to improve the relicensing process. In fact, the proposed legislation will likely further complicate hydropower licensing rather than streamline it.

American Whitewater sees the Craig-Towns legislation as a serious threat to our nation's rivers. American Whitewater has restored whitewater to numerous rivers through the relicense process. The reform legislation is a further attempt of certain members of the hydropower industry to monopolize rivers for the single purpose of generating hydropower at the expense of all other uses. We've learned through countless relicensings that hydropower generation can be balanced with environmental protection and other river uses. Resource agency regulatory authority in relicensing is critical to ensure environmental protection. Regulatory statutes enable agencies to require fish passage facilities, enforce clean water standards, protect aquatic and terrestrial organisms, and ensure adequate protection of habitat.

Senator Craig and Representative Towns will likely push this reform legislation in the next legislative session. American Whitewater, along with other river conservation organizations, will be gearing up to defeat this unnecessary reform legislation. We need support within the boating community to ensure adequate protection of your rivers. Check the American Whitewater website [www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org) for updates and actions you can take to help defeat this proposed legislation.

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# Whitewater Restored in Wisconsin

Northern Paddle & Trail (NPT), with assistance from American Whitewater and the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Program, signed an agreement in December with Rhinelander Paper Company (RPC) for annual whitewater releases into the Wisconsin River. RPC currently bypasses the river channel diverting the water to generators that partially power the paper mill. The whitewater release agreement evolved as part of a settlement in the relicense proceeding for the RPC hydro facilities.

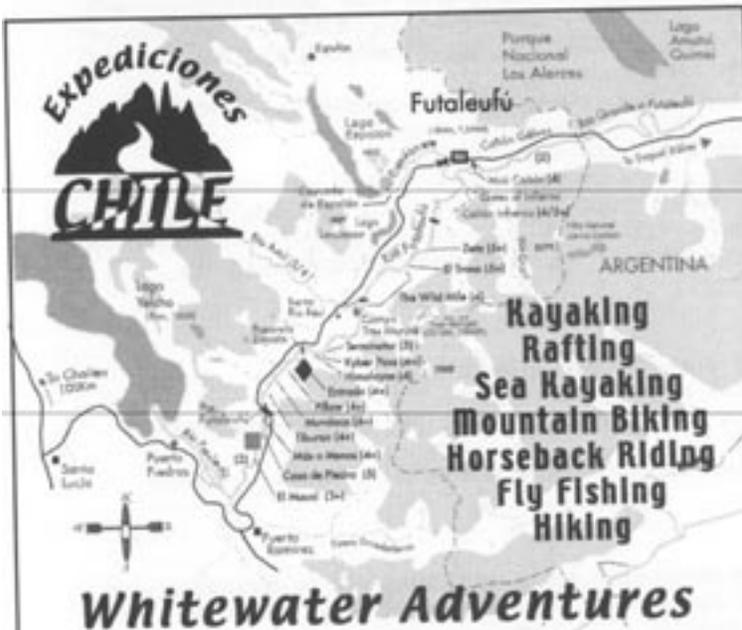
The whitewater reach is approximately 600 yards in length. The reach is Class II-III with a good play spot. The agreement calls for 80 hours of whitewater releases per year into the river channel. Most releases will be in four hour increments due to the short length of the run. Timing of

the releases is dependent on inflow to the project. The agreement also permits NPT to fix gates for a slalom course. "Members of NPT seized an opportunity to restore whitewater to their local river," said John Gangemi, American Whitewater's Con-

**Scott Watson, a principal author of the agreement and representative of NPT was delighted with the signing of the agreement, "These releases will provide an excellent training site for local paddlers and afford opportunities to introduce people into paddle sports."**

servation Director. Gangemi added, "American Whitewater gave NPT some insights on hydro relicensing settlements elsewhere but the local group did much of the negotiating themselves. This is an ideal relationship where a local group adds credibility to a river restoration effort."

The agreement will take effect in January 2000. NPT plans to get release information posted on an existing website for the Wisconsin River. For more information on this agreement and future whitewater releases contact Scott Watson of NPT 715-282-6025.



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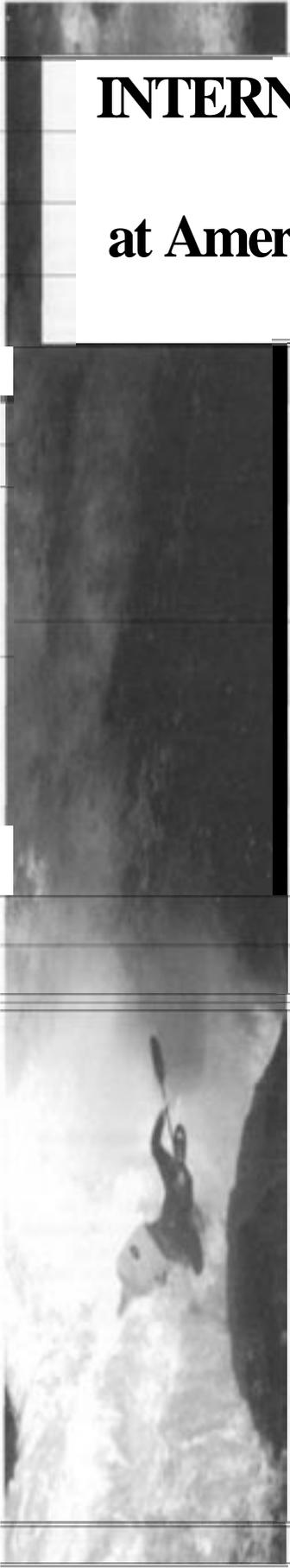
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## **American Whitewater**

Organized in 1957, American Whitewater's mission is to "conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely." American Whitewater is a national boating organization with a membership of more than 8,000 individual members and 180 local kayak and canoe club affiliates, representing some 80,000 whitewater paddlers across the country.

## **National Office Internship**

The National Office Internship is a six-month position that can be scheduled throughout the year to meet a variety of schedules. The position may include a stipend depending on need and qualifications. Our goals for the internship are threefold: to provide real world experience to our interns that will better position them for full time employment in recreation and the environment; to increase the productivity and effectiveness of American Whitewater; and to make a real difference in protecting whitewater rivers.

## **Responsibilities**

The National Office Intern's main responsibility will be to assist the access, conservation, and safety Program Directors, and to assist and strengthen American Whitewater's volunteers. There is also an opportunity to assist the Executive Director on administrative programs including funding and membership. Specifically, interns will help Program Directors with:

- \*Research topics related to rivers, safety, public access, recreation, and program development
- \*Production of American Whitewater Publications and program reports
- \*Responding to requests for assistance from activists and members
- \*Administrative duties such as filing, photocopying, database entry, phone answering, etc.

The National Office Intern will take on several long-range projects during the course of the internship. American Whitewater staff will work with the intern to select projects which incorporate his/her special interests and talents, provide experience, and meet the goals of our strategic plan.

## **Qualifications**

Interns should possess the following qualifications and skills:

- \*College Degree (or working on one)
- \*Computer skills (Word 6.0, desktop publishing) and experience with Internet communications
- \*Strong research and writing skills
- \*Demonstrated interest in river conservation, whitewater boating, and/or outdoor recreation

## **To Apply**

Send a cover letter describing why you are interested in an internship with American Whitewater, your major areas of interest, and when you can start. Include a resume, a writing sample, and a list of three references. **Please do not call!** Send to:

National Office Internship  
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## CRMP EDDIED OUT IN GRAND CANYON (AZ)

By Jason Robertson

**"We're already talking about generational delays. At this rate my 5-year old daughter will be 30 before she ever sees the river - I'll be too old to enjoy the trip with her."**

**-Overheard**

PHOTO BY MARISSE VICKI

Laurie Domler, a planner at Grand Canyon National Park took time on a sunny Sunday afternoon in November to address the 2nd Annual GCPBA board & general membership meeting in Flagstaff, Arizona. During this presentation, Laurie explained that the Park has decided to fold the Colorado River Management Plan (CRMP) into a Comprehensive Plan for Proposed Wilder-

This latest delay is the result

of public comments that the CRMP should be a component of any Wilderness Management Plan. American Whitewater endorses the inclusion of the river within the wilderness plan. However, we contend that issues related to the river management planning process, wilderness eligibility, and backcountry management have been thoroughly scoped, discussed, modeled, poked, and prodded over the past 25 years. It is time for Superin-

tendent Arnberger to step forward and provide the leadership necessary to address the fractious issues facing the public use of the canyon while simultaneously protecting the river for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

The Park's management gives the appearance that it is using national environmental regulations such as NEPA to avoid making controversial management decisions. However, it is critical

for the park, the public, and the administration to recall that the purpose of NEPA is "not to generate paperwork - even excellent paperwork - but to foster excellent action," and that the failure to act is itself an "action." Furthermore, NEPA's regulations are designed to reduce paperwork and delay. The latest planning delays appears to violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the law.

Funding is available for the CRMP component of the new

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planning process; however the Park has submitted a funding request for the comprehensive effort. This funding is expected to come, at least in part, from the collection of Recreation Fee Demo funds. Once the funding is arranged, planners will file a notice of intent, which will include an additional 3-month scoping process. Park planners estimate that it could take 6 to 7 months to present a workbook of alternatives for public review, then forecast 12 months to compile these alternatives, and another 12 months to complete the Draft and Final EIS process. Therefore the Park predicts an additional 3 to 4-year planning process before any substantial changes are made in the management of the river. This is merely the latest

delay in a long string of delays that the park has impressed upon the public during more than 25 years of obfuscation, lack of compliance with the Wilderness Act, and NEPA violations. Meanwhile, Park employees now estimate publicly a minimum wait of 14-years for private boaters to receive permits, and privately estimate a maximum 26-year wait.

The Park can facilitate the process and develop the EIS for the CRMP if it is committed to the principle of addressing river management. The Park has the funding, they have the staff, they have the information, and they have the law to let them take this action. The Park should be using NEPA to help the public by "tiering" the planning process and picking off issues that are ripe

for decisions, such as how to effectively manage the private boater waiting list. Tiering allows the Park the ability to make quick decisions on management components while avoiding those issues that are premature or have already been analyzed.

Of additional concern is the fact that the present river concessions' contracts, set to expire in 2001, will have to be dealt with before the planning process is completed. Laurie noted that service-wide concessions' regulations are currently being revised and are not approved at this point.

In short, we'll see a continuation of the present system for private boaters for at least 3 more boating seasons. Laurie did point out that the Park planners are looking at, and have imple-

mented, limited interim changes for improving private boater access between now and 2004. She pointed to the recent modifications in the cancellation policy as a step in that direction.

The GCPBA and American Whitewater would like to thank Laurie Domler for bringing us up-to-date on the CRMP and wilderness planning process. Though the level of frustration in the room was rather high, Laurie did an excellent job of answering our questions honestly and demonstrated her commitment to the planning process.

For more information check out [www.gcpba.org](http://www.gcpba.org).



## Whitewater Access Site Secured on Elkhorn Creek (KY)

By Jason Robertson

As we are headed to press, American Whitewater has successfully acquired land for a take-out on Kentucky's Elkhorn Creek. This Class II-III creek is located in central Kentucky and

provides some of the closest and most dependable whitewater for whitewater boaters in Kentucky, Ohio, and Indiana. Confronted with a surprise auction of 4+ acres of land including both creek and

road frontage at Knight's Bridge on Peaks Mill Road near Frankfort, KY, paddlers from around the region dug deep in their pockets, quickly spread the word, and raised over \$32,000 in a matter of

days to secure the property for American Whitewater. This has been a huge success, and clearly demonstrates the powerful ability of the paddling community to quickly join together to enhance and secure whitewater opportunities.

A group composed of individuals and paddling organizations have agreed to manage the property, but they still need help and additional funds to improve and prepare the property for use. Please consider making a donation. Contact Jason Robertson at 301-589-9453 or [Access@amwhitewater.org](mailto:Access@amwhitewater.org) for more information. You can make a tax-deductible donation by credit card by visiting the American Whitewater web site: <http://www.awa.org/awa/membership.html>

Please choose "contribute more" and be sure to include your name, address, amount donated, and indicate in the comments section that the funds are for the "Elkhorn Creek Fund."

Note: There will be more information on this effort, and the incredible saga of preserving whitewater access on the Elkhorn Creek in the March/April edition of the Journal.

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## State Acquires Land to Protect the Upper Yough (MD)

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By Jason Robertson

The State of Maryland is purchasing 783 acres on the wild and scenic portion of the Youghiogheny River. The Baltimore Sun reported that the purchase will "substantially complete the state's program of preserving one of the nation's most famous stretches of whitewater." The acquisition will preserve more than 4,300 acres along the river. The "Upper Yough" is one of the premier Class IV-V whitewater runs in the Middle Atlantic.

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## New State Park Protects the Chattahoochee River (GA)

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By Jason Robertson

The Georgia State Properties Commission has agreed to purchase nearly 1,100 acres in Coweta and Heard counties for the Chattahoochee Bend State Park to protect this area from development. At \$2.7 million, this was one of the largest state acquisitions to date. Additional protection may be coming from another source - Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt is advocating for the creation of a permanent fund to purchase land along the Chattahoochee River. If approved, Georgia would receive almost \$10.3 million a year from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) as part of the Lands Legacy program.

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## Little Falls Dam on the Potomac River (MD)

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By Jason Robertson

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt recently announced a \$2 million project creating a 24-foot notch in the Potomac's Little Falls Dam to facilitate shad passage. At very high water, the 1,400-foot wide dam forms the river-wide "Perfect Wave" that Olympic canoer Davey Hearn was arrested for surfing when the Potomac flooded in 1996. Construction of the notch may offer a new surfing spot for boaters as well as a safer means for navigating the dam. A fish ladder was built in the dam in 1959; however, fish were unable to use it. The shad population crashed as a result of the construction of this dam, overfishing, pollution, and the construction of additional dams on rivers in the headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The notch is expected to help restore the fishery.

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## Mountaintop Mining Removal Dumped On By Judge (WV)

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By Jason Robertson

The Charleston Gazette (10114) reported that mountaintop mining removal projects will not be permitted in West Virginia, unless "coal operators propose post-mining land uses that will provide increased economic or public benefits." The U.S. Office of Surface Mining stated this week that coal companies can't merely propose "fish and wildlife habitat" as the future use for mined land, but must instead propose uses with increased economic or public benefits beyond agricultural uses. Mountaintop mining removal allows mining companies to dump tailings directly in small creeks and rivers. This process potentially threatened hundreds of classic West Virginia rivers and creeks.

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## Retiree Cleo Smith is a Boater's Best Friend in Carolina: Haw River (NC)

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By Jason Robertson

On November 1<sup>st</sup> 1999, the Chatham County Board of Supervisors (NC) agreed to maintain another Haw River access point at U.S. Highway 64. This decision comes hard on the heels of the Board's decision in October accepting responsibility for maintaining a similar site upriver near Bynum at U.S. Highway 15-501. The Carolina Canoe Club has agreed to regularly police both sites for trash. The only step remaining is a formality in which the state DOT actually turns over the land to the County.

This agreement settles more than 30-years of uncertainty about accessing the Haw. Road-widening projects, bridge construction projects, and the closure of the Bynum Mill have posed continuous threats to the public's ability to park and visit the river for as long as I've lived near it. The access agreements are largely the result of years of hard work by Cleo Smith and the Carolina Canoe Club. Cleo, a retired DOT employee, has used his experience to convince the DOT, Chatham County, the Corps of Engineers, and the State Parks that the

Haw is the whitewater treasure of the Piedmont, and that the public needs to be able to visit it.

Growing up about 5 miles from the river, I often heard stories about crazy hippies canoeing the river at flood level. By the time I was 16, I'd started driving my bug down to Bynum after big rainstorms. I'd walk down the trail past the sign that read "Dangerous waters, 24 have drowned" referring to fishermen and waders. I spent hours watching muddy-orange waters pour over the low-head dam and roil down the river. I remember gasping in amazement as 20-foot logs recirculated end-over-end and tires popped 15-feet into the air like watermelon seeds in the dam's terminal hydraulic. I also remember watching footage on Channel 11 of canoers getting airlifted out of the trees by the Marines as the river flashed.

By the time I was 19, I'd decided that kayaking was for me. I'd moved back to Chapel Hill after spending a few years at Warren

river at increasingly flooded levels. My education culminated in an amazing day when the water reached 9-feet after a hurricane, and I realized that I felt comfortable surfing in the largest and cleanest hole in the Southeast at Gabriel's. What my education didn't include was the knowledge that the new take-out site at Robeson Creek, which cut off a mile of paddling on Jordan Lake had been one of Cleo's earliest commitments to boaters.

The new access agreements at US-64 & US-15-501 preserve the river running opportunity for the folks that like tooling around at minus-one-foot, as well as those of us that like it when the waters are a little muddier, and a whole lot higher.

As usual, Cleo's not content with sitting on his laurels. He's still working with the county to ensure river access to Chicken Bridge, where local legend tells of a chicken truck that plummeted into the river and local tradition includes the annual Halloween reunion of

*"By the time I was 19, I'd decided that kayaking was for me. I'd moved back to Chapel Hill after spending a few years at Warren Wilson College and began spending virtually every afternoon negotiating the rapids below the dam or surfing the holes below US-64 in Gabriel's Bend. School may have suffered..."*

Wilson College and began spending virtually every afternoon negotiating the rapids below the dam or surfing the holes below US-64 in Gabriel's Bend. School may have suffered, but my education continued. Within a year, I'd learned how to feel comfortable running the

pumpkins, and Cleo's continuing to strive for legislation allowing the NC-DOT to provide river access at all new bridge construction sites in the state.

Thanks Cleo, we wish you well!

## Trouble on the Waters

If you had trouble getting to the river, let us know. Use this form to report access problems so that AW can convince legislators and government authorities where and when river access is a problem. If you have met an irate landowner, noticed signs forbidding access, or were stopped by a landowner, barbed wire fence or a locked gate, tell us about it on this form. If several boaters are arrested or involved, only one form should be filled out per incident naming a boater available for future contact.

River \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Date of incident \_\_\_\_\_

Access code categories: List below or circle the categories, multiple categories are OK.

Brief description of incident:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Boater contact \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Landowner/Agency/Sheriff contact (if known)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I. Trespass, Ticket, warning or arrest for:

- 1.01 Trespass on private property
- 1.02 Trespass on public property
- 1.03 Criminal trespass
- 1.04 Civil trespass

2. Public Access Closure

- 2.01 Denied by federal law
- 2.01.01 Denied by BLM
- 2.01.02 Denied by Forest Service
- 2.01.03 Denied by Nat'l Park Service
- 2.02 Denied by state
- 2.03 Denied by local authority
- 2.04 Denied by administrative edict

3. Injury from man-made obstacles

- 3.01 Barbed wire or fence
- 3.02 Low head dam

- 4. Obstacles running river, scouting or portaging
- 4.01 Fence or chain on land blocking access
- 4.02 Fence, wire, or tree on river blocking access
- 4.03 Posted no trespassing sign
- 4.04 Vehicle towed, ticketed, or vandalized
- 4.05 Threats or acts of violence

5. Closures: Rivers closed that were once open

- 5.01 Closed by private landowner
- 5.02 Closed by government agency
- 5.02.01 Federal
- 5.02.02 State
- 5.02.03 Local
- 5.03 High water closure

New access fees

- 6.01 Charged by private landowner
- 6.02 Charged by government agency
- 6.02.01 Federal
- 6.02.02 State
- 6.02.03 Local

Dam controlled rivers

- 7.01 Water turned off
- 7.02 Inconsistent flow: too much or too little
- 7.03 No notice of releases

Send to Ken Ransford, 475 Sierra Vista, Carbondale, CO 81623, 970-963-6800, FAX 970-963-6700. ransford@csn.net

Access is a constant struggle. The AW Access Committee needs your help.

# John's Creek Update (VA)

By Liz Garland

One year ago, a group of local boaters completed improvements to the new American Whitewater access in New Castle, Virginia on the popular Class III-IV John's Creek. American Whitewater secured the access site with the specific intent of allowing boaters continued access to John's Creek without infringing on the rights of riparian landowners or the good nature of the New Castle community. Despite our good intentions, in March of 1999, one defiant boater was charged with trespassing while paddling John's Creek.



The boater has since dropped his appeal of the trespassing charge, and the issue of access to the John's Creek gorge remains one for further negotiation or litigation. The landowner that precipitated the trespassing arrest is claiming title to a King's Grant. King's Grants frequently granted deed holders broad ownership of all property resources including streambeds, banks, and the water. The

access remains delicate. A team of boaters, consultants, and legal advisors continues to pursue negotiation and litigation options. In the meantime, AW requests that boaters refrain from paddling the John's Creek gorge. Please share the message that any further trespassing charges, at this point, could jeopardize access to John's Creek and affect precedent for other rivers in Virginia and the East.

Please contact Jason Robertson, American Whitewater's Access Director, for any further information. Jason may be reached at (301) 589-9453 or [access@amwhitewater.org](mailto:access@amwhitewater.org).

exclusiveness of John's Creek landowner rights are still unknown despite earlier reports. And, although the King's Grants originated from a King who no longer rules and whose government no longer domains, the concept of English Common Law is still deeply protected in conservative Virginia, especially as it pertains to resource and property rights.

Because the task of defining ownership is complicated and arduous, and because of the legal mind set in Virginia, the issue of John's Creek ac-

# Kaweah River Navigability Threatened? (CA)

By Jason Robertson

**"The Kaweah could be one of the most popular small rivers in California. I paddled it three days last spring and loved it. It has a lot of variety, from 'you will die right now' water to 'we can go here and learn' water... We found the local private campground/motel people to be paddler friendly... This is, in terms of driving time, the closest dependable whitewater to LA. I am amazed that it has not become a bigger destination river. Paddlers could represent a huge economic bonus to the area. Access to the river is a problem, but it can be solved. The county should be encouraging the use of the resource, rather than chasing people away."**

—Chris Kelly, American Whitewater Board Member

As we were headed to press in December, Bill Pooley reported that a small number of Three Rivers residents were trying to have the Kaweah River declared "nonnavigable." The locals were apparently trying to prohibit rafting and kayaking on the Kaweah River as well as swimming, picnicking, and fishing. The issue was the subject of a Town Meeting on Nov. 16, and a Tulare County Board of Supervisors meeting on Dec. 7, 1999.

California's navigability laws and state constitution clearly contradict the efforts of the streamside landowners. Therefore any regulations restricting the public right of navigation and access would certainly be overturned on appeal.

Jennifer Munn, a project planner for the county, explained that her office has not received any formal complaints from the public since commercial rafting was first regulated in 1997 under a county ordinance recognizing the Kaweah as a navigable river. In fact, the primary complaints of the landowners have been premised on crowds of picnickers gathering on the banks and swimming on the weekends late in the summer.

The Kaweah flows out of Sequoia National Park, and then passes entirely through private property in Tulare County, with the exception of two county-owned bridges. While the county has not addressed the issue of providing river access at these bridges, it has obtained permission from landowners to provide access and egress

sites on private property for commercial rafters; all access sites have been zoned commercially in order to accommodate the commercial rafting industry under the 1997 river management plan. Unfortunately, the county has not been as proactive in negotiating for noncommercial access.

The fact that the landowners have felt compelled to suggest changes to the law indicates the existence of a social problem that should be addressed. The root issue is whether the public can balance its rights to use the river with the residents' rights as landowners. The county should manage the underlying issues in a responsible manner through education and encouraging community involvement. In turn, American Whitewater is encouraging the residents of Three Rivers to work together as a community to create an environment in which the Kaweah is respected as a shared resource.

After receiving a letter on California's navigability law from American Whitewater, Supervisor Bill Sanders told the landowners that the county would not consider changes in the navigability status, and that the owners would have to pursue changes in the law through the courts. California's laws clearly encourage navigation and the public rights on streams; therefore we are confident that the owners will not pursue or win a legal challenge.

For more information on California's navigability laws, check out our website, at: [www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org)

# Institutional Forgetfulness on Rock Creek (DC)

By Jason Robertson

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, two canoers, Mark Halle and Ron Knipling, were forced to leave Rock Creek by one of the Park's enforcement officers. In November, kayakers Martin Radigan and a friend were ordered not to paddle the creek because "it looked dangerous." Both actions appear to have been the result of a misunderstanding of the regulations on the officer's part.

American Whitewater responded by asking Superintendent Adrienne Coleman to look into this matter. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, I received a call from Assistant Superintendent Cox, who explained that she was working on the issue. Ms. Cox reported that the officer in question was new to the staff, and that she would talk the matter over with him. She added that her initial reaction was that no changes needed to be made for managing boating on the river, but that it might be appropriate to limit use at high water when the coliform count was bad.

While it may not be the cleanest creek in the world, many local boaters, including myself, still enjoy the experience of running this urban river, and the explanation that the creek was closed due to flooding (pardon the expression) doesn't hold water. In fact, the creek is most suitable for boating when it's flooded. The two best gauges for running the creek are whether water is completely covering Pierce Mill Dam and whether Beech Drive has been closed to vehicle traffic due to flooding.

Unlike other regional tributaries to the Potomac, such as Difficult Run in Virginia, the whitewater on Rock Creek is of consistently moderate difficulty. Most of the rapids on the creek are rated Class I-II, with a couple of Class III drops located immediately downstream

of the Rock Creek Ranger Station. Depending on water level, the waterfall created by the 7-foot dam at Pierce Mill ranges from Class III-V.

The creek is generally runnable in the immediate hours after a thundershower or for 1-3 days after extended rainstorms. I have enjoyed paddling the creek at relatively low levels such as the day Ron was ordered off the river. However, I have also enjoyed running the creek at higher levels when Beech Drive, which parallels the creek, was actually submerged under water. The relative dangers were not appreciably different at the two levels and no rapid exceeded Class III with the possible exception of the waterfall at Pierce Mill.

There is a long tradition of boating on Rock Creek, and the unrestricted system for boating the creek has worked flawlessly for more than a decade. The system should not be changed simply because the Park has hired new staff that are neither familiar with the history of use in the Park, nor expert in gauging river safety.

While float permits were required for several years, the permit restriction was lifted in 1986. Mac Thornton, a local boater and river conservationist, reminded us that the registration system "was abandoned because it wasn't accomplishing anything. The Park was just generating paperwork, and the registration was eating up man-hours. There have been no problems with the current system for the past fifteen years." Since then, American Whitewater estimates that a few thousand boaters have floated through Rock Creek without incident.

Rock Creek is a unique urban sanctuary for recreationists and nature lovers within Washington, DC. It offers locals the chance to hike, jog, bike, rollerblade, tour, and picnic. It also offers limited opportunities for fishing, cross country skiing, canoeing, kayaking, climbing, and even ice-skating depending on the weather and season.

Rock Creek is one of the most popular urban parks in America and receives millions of visitors every year. It has effectively addressed use and recreation in an urban setting for decades, and even closed roads on the weekends to encourage pedestrian use of the park. The continued tradition of allowing boater access is essential to many visitors' enjoyment of the Park. It would be a tragedy for us to lose this opportunity through a misunderstanding or from institutional absentmindedness.



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For the Benefit and Enjoyment of Present and Future Generations:

## Access to the South Fork of the Trinity Wild and Scenic River

By Aida Parkinson, Regional Coordinator

When I became an American Whitewater regional coordinator in 1996, I was advised by a kindly director to pick a project that interested me. I wasn't planning on working on local access issues, because I'm lucky enough to live in northwestern California where all the rivers I boat are designated Wild and Scenic. However, the project that's taken most of my time as a regional coordinator has been trying to guarantee access to the Wild and Scenic South Fork Trinity.

Congress directed that rivers should be included in the Wild and Scenic River System based on their outstandingly remarkable values and declared that they would be protected "for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations." Unfortunately, it's

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hard to enjoy the remarkable values of the wild and scenic South Fork of the Trinity since it's difficult to even get there. Boaters can either negotiate a steep, dangerous, poison-oak-laden trail or trespass on a low-water bridge that has been gated in recent years by a new property owner to prevent vehicles and boaters from visiting the area.

In fact, the landowner has gone to greater and greater lengths to prevent the public from getting to the river. First, the owner gated and fenced the road with barbed wire. When that gate didn't deter use, a taller gate was added — then more barbed wire was strung along the top of the gate — then wings of barbed wire were wrapped around the ends of the fence — then a guard appeared who kept records of vehicle license numbers of boaters. After several unauthorized modifications to the fence by unknown members of the public, the owner spread axle grease on the fence to prevent folks from cutting the fence with bolt cutters. Finally, in the quiet but escalating battle for access, we recently discovered the most recent unauthorized modification to the gate. This was a more ambitious modification than any previously encountered — someone had removed the entire fence, and thoughtfully hauled the debris out of the river corridor. The conscientious deconstruction crew left the gate in place, so no one would unwittingly drive a vehicle down the road into the river or onto the private property.

After discovering that the gate had finally been removed, I thought I could write a success story updating American Whitewater members on the status of an issue listed among the "Top 40 Whitewater Issues for 1997" (AW, Sept./Oct. 1997). While I can write a story, and give it a happy ending, the final chapter doesn't resemble the tale that I thought I'd be telling when I started working on this project three years ago. Instead, a story about a gate has become a prologue to a story about how the Forest Service is finally planning on establishing safe, legal access for the Class IV Three Bears run upstream of Low Water Crossing, and the Class II South Fork run downstream.

The Forest Service is going to take action; but we need your help to make sure that their plans don't get lost in the abyss of the bureaucracy. It will be up to you and me to help write the final chapter.

Here's the story.

The Low Water Crossing on the South Fork of the Trinity River was named for a low-water bridge that crossed to private land from Six Rivers National Forest land. When the Forest Service gave permission to the landowner to construct the bridge in the 1940s, a survey error led to the construction of the bridge and a portion of the access road on private land, rather than on Forest Service land. For almost 50 years, the landowner allowed boaters and other river enthusiasts to hike down the road to the river from their vehicles, which were parked further up the hill on Forest Service land.

The original landowner sold the property across the river in 1993 and the new owner, who wanted to develop the property with vacation homes, promptly erected the fence and gate described earlier. Our local Six Rivers Paddling Club, POST (a canoe club from the San Francisco bay area), and several commercial rafting outfitters obtained gate keys with the understanding that their group insurance would hold the landowner's liability concerns at bay. The rest of us found ways of getting around the gate. (Disclaimer: Trespassing is a crime and is not encouraged, recommended, or condoned.)

Members of the canoe clubs were astonished to suddenly find that the locks had been changed without their knowledge, and that the landowner had decided that there would be no further access by anyone. While the trail on USFS land was marginally negotiable by tall kayakers with strong legs and an immunity to poison oak, the rest of us, especially the open canoeists and the rafters, were faced with an essentially impossible access route, if we wanted to get to the river legally. Even if we were willing to trespass, climbing over a barbed-wire-topped gate with our boats was an incredible hassle.

Kayakers, canoeists, and commercial outfitters began encouraging the Forest Service District Ranger to resolve the access issue. We wanted the Forest Service to either get the landowner to grant an easement for public access to our Wild and Scenic River or build a trail

for the public across Forest Service property. Unfortunately, the Forest Service was slow to develop the trail, and the occasional volunteer work parties that "improved" access to the river didn't worry much about trail standards.

Then, the river gods weighed in with an opinion on January 1, 1997, when the river rose dramatically from a major winter storm. When the river subsided, the low water bridge, which had been in place since 1948, was gone. All that remained was a concrete abutment, an asphalt apron, and a locked gate.

Environmental laws enacted since the bridge was first constructed protect the threatened coho, steelhead, and Chinook salmon that occupy the river. The law requires that riverside construction avoid affecting these species, and that new bridges be able to withstand the hydraulic forces of a 100-year-flood. The 100-year-flood is estimated to be in the vicinity of 280,000 cfs and the corresponding water height approximately 50 vertical feet above the usual height of the river during boating season (I usually boat the river in the 2,000 to 4,000 cfs range). In effect, the new landowner suddenly lost the primary access to the property and had to give up dreams of developing vacation homes on the property because a new bridge would have been prohibitively expensive.

Local boaters thought the landowner would surely grant an easement for river access on the remaining portion of the road. But, land developers apparently think differently than boaters. Though the Forest Service attempted to negotiate for an easement, or arrange a land exchange with the landowner, negotiations fell through.

As a result, the District Ranger then developed plans for improving parking and constructing a trail on USFS land.

In June 1997, I drafted an environmental assessment for developing the parking site and trail, and delivered it to the Forest Service District Ranger, hoping the USFS would quit stalling on the grounds that they didn't have the staff available to do the environmental document. But the draft environmental document went nowhere, along with subsequent talks about a land exchange.

Then, early in 1999, the rumors of a land exchange developed into rumors of a lawsuit between the current and former landowners. Apparently, the current landowner was suing the former landowner over the failure to disclose that the low-water crossing was used as public access to the river. In July 1999, the rumors were confirmed when the former landowner agreed to take back the land. Unfortunately, the former landowner didn't remove the gate, which set up the aforementioned story about the conscientious citizen who helped the landowner with his decision.

Regardless, the USFS District Ranger has finally made access to the South Fork of the Trinity one of his priorities, thanks to tireless efforts by Pam Loudenslager and Dave Krueger, a couple of the local canoeists, along with Dave Nakamura, a kayaker who happens to be the director of the Humboldt State University outdoor activity center, and Frank Gratz, one of the boaters who lives on the river. These dedicated boaters have gone beyond finding a way of convincing the Forest Service that access is important — they actually convinced the California Department of Boating and Waterways to fund the construction of trail access, parking, and restrooms. A Boating and Waterways representative met with Dave Nakamura, Pam, and John Larson, the Forest Service District Ranger, in August to look at the site and discuss what the Forest Service would like to construct. His only question was "How much money do you need?"

Now that's progress.

The 2000 river season will be here when the rainy season starts, and this year we want access.

Editor's Note: *To make sure the Forest Service keeps its momentum, write or call Six Rivers National Forest Supervisor Lou Woltering, 1330 Bayshore Way, Eureka CA 95501 (707-441-3534) or District Ranger John Larson, Lower Trinity Ranger District, P.O. Box 68, Willow Creek, CA 95573 (530-629-2118) and tell them you want safe, legal access at Low Water Crossing on the South Fork of the Trinity River. For more information, call regional coordinator Aida Parkinson at (707)839-2101.*



# Glickman Proposes New Rules for Managing the National Forests

Washington, Sept. 30, 1999. Citing it as one more example of how the Forest Service is changing the way it does business. Agriculture Secretary Dan Glickman unveiled new proposed rules for managing the National Forests. Glickman said, "we are announcing more than just a change in policy. This is a fundamental change in philosophy. We are attempting to get beyond the bureaucratic models of the past and develop a new approach to problem solving and decision making. This rule involves all Americans in the stewardship of their lands."

The planning regulation will focus on four key areas for ensuring that national forests are properly managed for multiple uses. The new forest plans developed under this rule will: 1) involve the public earlier in defining the issues and goals of individual national forests; 2) ensure the sustainable use of the forests to protect the environment while fulfilling the country's economic, social, and leisure needs; 3) improve the use of science in planning and project decisions; 4) make forest planning dynamic and responsive to new information and opportunities.

American Whitewater's Access Director, Jason Robertson, observed that the new regulations addressed many concerns about the planning process. The new rules emphasize the use of science in making informed policy decisions. The rules also encourage managers to proactively head off problems before they escalate into major conflicts, and facilitate communication between stakeholders and the Forest Service.

Chief Mike Dombeck said that the new regulations are more consistent with the goals of the Forest Service's natural resources agenda. "As we work to improve watershed health, recreation opportunities, sustainable forestry, and the forests' transportation systems, we need to im-

prove public and scientific input into the process," said Dombeck. "With this proposal, we've tried to capture the innovative and successful things our people are doing in the field to work more closely with the American people and to sustain more effectively the health, biological diversity, and productivity of the nation's lands and waters."

Existing land and resource management plans would remain in effect until amended or revised under this proposal. Plans that are already being revised or amended under the current regulation, will have one year to be completed from the date this proposed regulation is finalized. Therefore, the new plan is unlikely to help with management decisions on the Chattooga River or Middle Fork. The USDA Forest Service will provide a 90-day public review and comment period for the proposed regulation. The proposed regulation affects all of the nation's 175 national forests and grasslands. More information about the proposed regulation is available at: [www.fs.fed.us/forum/nena/rule](http://www.fs.fed.us/forum/nena/rule). The proposed regulation also implements statutory requirements of the National Forest Management Act of 1976.

## President Clinton and Vice President Gore: Preserving Roadless Areas in Our Forests for Future Generations

By Jason Robertson

On October 13<sup>th</sup>, President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore announced a sweeping new effort to preserve millions of acres within America's national forests for future generations. In a prepared statement, President Clinton said, "*we are launching one of the largest land-preservation efforts in America's history...Through this action, we will protect more than 40 million acres — 20 percent of the total forestland in America's national forests — from activities such as new road construction which would degrade the land. We will live up to the challenge Theodore Roosevelt laid down a century ago to leave this land even a better land for our descendants than it is for us.*"

The President directed the Forest Service to propose regulations prohibiting road building in more than 40 million acres of "roadless" area across the country.

The National Forest system, established in 1905, today encompasses 192 million acres in 46 states and territories. Although much of the land within the national forests has been logged or otherwise developed, large portions remain relatively untouched. More than 40 million of these "roadless" acres have been identified. These remote, pristine lands produce high-quality drinking water, provide critical wildlife habitat, and offer extraordinary recreational opportunities such as whitewater boating.

The President's announcement follows on the heels of the Forest Service's decision in February 1999 placing an 18-month moratorium on road building within most "roadless" areas while it evaluated long-term options for management. The President's announcement takes the moratorium one step further and directs the Forest Service to develop and propose regulations to provide long-term protection for most of these "roadless" areas; and determine whether and how such protections should be extended to smaller "roadless" areas. The proposed regulations would ban road building and could also prohibit logging or other activities that harm their unique ecological values. The Forest Service aims to release the proposed rule this Spring and adopt a final rule before 2001.

American Whitewater is following this rule-making process closely, since it has the potential to protect hundreds of miles of whitewater rivers in these roadless areas from development. There is also a limited possibility for reducing access to some areas. However, the need for road access must be weighed beside the importance of protecting these special areas. The fact is that most of the rivers along these sections have existing trail systems that fill the need for river access, and that roads are not necessary for recreation.

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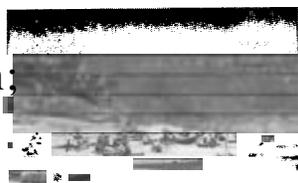
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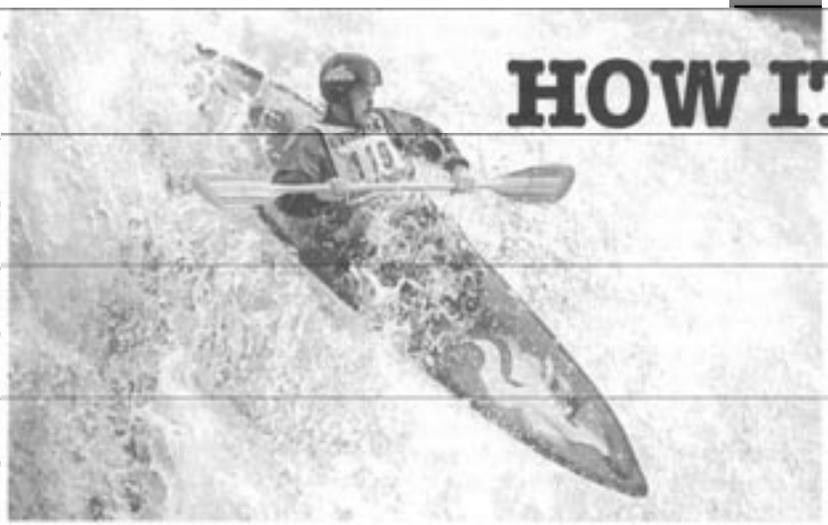
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**THE HELICONIA PRESS**

On Nov. 13, 1999 American Whitewater sponsored the first ever Ohio Pyle Falls Race. On a sunny, 60 degree day with the river running at 1.4 feet, more than 250 participants made more than a thousand runs of the falls. It was agreed by everyone present that there had never been more smiling faces at one time in a Pennsylvania State Park. It was even reported that Brian Kulp, head ranger who has arrested several boaters for running the falls, was seen smiling.



The day began with practice runs-hundreds of them. At its height there was as many as 70 boats waiting in the pool above the falls and a run every eight seconds. At noon the race began with a boat starting every minute. At 3:30 the freestyle competition began and around 5:30 an awards ceremony was held in the firehall. Participants ranged in age from 14 to 63, and in skill level from intermediate to pro-expert. Despite the crowd there were no serious mishaps.



## HOW IT CAME TO BE

By Barry Tuscano

There's a great practical joke that happens every year in Ohio Pyle State Park. Someone posts a bunch of flyers announcing a race over the falls, and then all the boaters watch the nervous behavior of the park rangers as the announced date approaches. Of course no one shows up for the event because they would be arrested by the diligent protectors of the public safety. That's not to say that some boaters don't hold their own little event at a time when the rangers aren't watching.

When a flyer appeared in August of this year, of course everyone assumed that it was another hoax. But there was something

different about this announcement. It was tied to an adventure race scheduled for the weekend of Nov. 13-14, and there were what appeared to be legitimate sponsors listed.

I've been trying to open Ohiopyle Falls to boaters for more than ten years, so my curiosity was aroused immediately. After making several phone calls to the people listed on the flyer, I was convinced that the whole thing was a hoax. No one listed on the announcement knew anything about a falls race, and only after numerous attempts was I able to track down the organizer of the adventure race, which was for real, but was postponed until Spring. Doug Crytzer, an avid adventure racer contacted me in early September with a letter from Doug Hoehn, the park supervisor. The letter outlined what Doug believed would be the minimum requirements for the proposed event to take place. He wanted five things: a reputable sponsoring organization; involvement from a local group; insurance; and completed permit applications from both the PA Dept. of Natural Resources (DCNR) and the Fish and Boat Commission.

This was truly an exciting news. Doug Hoehn was on record saying that Ohiopyle Falls would never be run legally as long as he managed the park. When I contacted him he repeated his opposition to any falls event, but told me that if I filled out the permit applications that he would forward them to his superiors. I was sure that American Whitewater could sponsor and insure the race, and getting a local group involved (Doug mentioned the volunteer firemen) should be no problem. The special use permit applications were easy to fill out, but what were the chances for approval by the bureaucrats in Harrisburg over the objections of Doug Hoehne.

Enter Jim Greenbaum. Jim manages the rafting operations for Whitewater Adventurers, one of the Ohiopyle outfitters. He was the one responsible for circulating the flyers and proposing the falls event be included in the adventure race weekend. Jim has worked with officials from DCNR over the years and is familiar with the statewide network of agencies and bureaus. Now he was telling me that if AW could sponsor and insure the race, he could get the permit approved. He claimed to have connections in the governor's office, and a verbal commitment from John Oliver, the Secretary of DCNR. Although I was still skeptical, after consulting with Rich Bowers and Jason Robertson, we decided to go ahead with the applications. At this point we had less than two months before the proposed date and we didn't feel that pushing the date back was an option. I was willing to work for the possibility even though I had the feeling that there were many ways for the application to be bushwhacked without the support of the local officials. I imagine that Doug was counting on us not being able to clear all these hurdles in the short time allowed. We thought it was worth trying for the opportunity to open the falls.

I enlisted the help of Charley Walbridge to design the safety and rescue plan that the state needed. And I contacted Mark McCarty, the owner of Laurel Highlands Rafting, who is the second in command of the fire company. He agreed to provide help in controlling spectators and other logistical needs. With support coming from all directions, I completed the applications and sent them in.

About three weeks later I called the park office to find out if any

action had been taken. Doug informed me that he had sent everything to his superiors, although the application for Fish and Boat had come back disapproved by the local officer. I called Jim Greenbaum and told him that if he had any strings in Harrisburg, he'd better start pulling them.

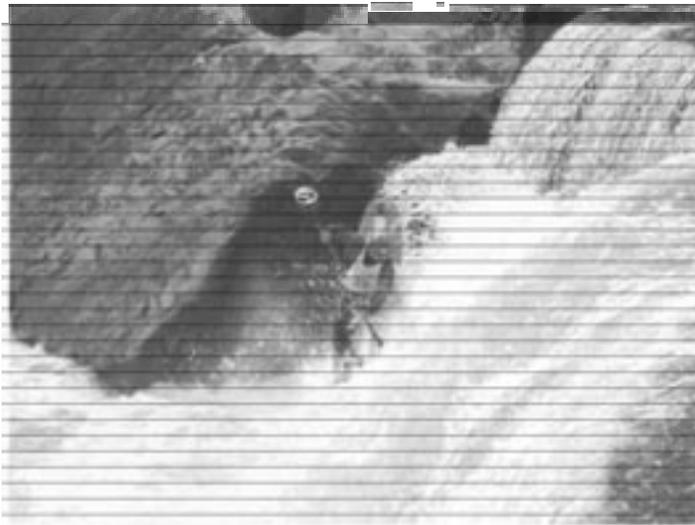
Jim made some phone calls, and a week later I got a call from Doug. There was a minor technicality on the application that needed to be fixed. The form was signed by our executive director where it was supposed to be signed by our president, and faxed signatures were not allowed. When I found out that Ric Alesch, who lives in Colorado, was out of town I began to despair that we would be beaten in the red tape game. After several more phone calls we were able to satisfy the lawyers with a board resolution, which I quickly circulated and returned. Now it seemed that things were rolling. That weekend the paperwork came back to the AW office. It still needed one more round of approvals by the head of State Parks. There was less than three weeks until race day. I called Doug and asked him if we could set up an organizing meeting. He agreed and that Wednesday, Jim Greenbaum, Mark McCarty, Jason Robertson, Pat Norton, Brian Homberg, and I met in Doug's office and actually ironed out the logistics of putting on the race. Doug must have been hearing rumors that it was going to fly because although he stated that he was still opposed to it he graciously participated in the planning.

Jason got a notice posted on our web page. Brian agreed to design and produce t-shirts at Ohiopyle Prints. Mark (and Doug who is also a fireman) offered the firehall for registration and a dinner. We all went down to the falls and discussed access points and safety.

A week later I got a letter from a lawyer in the Fish and Boat office in Harrisburg. Basically they were saying that the idea of a race over the falls was dangerous and illegal and that the paperwork wasn't filled out right. I immediately called back and was told that if I completed the forms, the permit would be approved. Because fax copies were not acceptable I had him overnight the correct form to me, which I filled out. There was a place on the back that needed to be signed by someone from DCNR. This meant sending it back through the bureaucracy for another round with only ten days remaining. I considered driving it to Harrisburg and hand delivering it, but decided to try another avenue first.

The next day I went to Ohiopyle and found Doug at his house. I explained the problem and asked him if he would sign the form. To my great surprise he agreed. It seems that his boss had told him that the permit would be issued whether Fish and Boat approved or not, and he decided to accept the inevitable. I had the paperwork in the mail that morning and several days later I got the word that the permit was approved. The actual hard copy was in the park office on the Monday before the race.

Meanwhile, organizing was moving along. My wife, Kitty, and our friend Jan Matthew agreed to act as spotter and traffic controller. I asked Jesse Whitemore and Amy Conger to set up the timing. Joe Braden offered to bring a truckload of volunteers to work safety and registration. I called Kara and John Weld for help in judging the freestyle event. Chuck Stump offered to get some trophies together. I was fielding dozens of phone calls from anxious participants. I began to realize that this was going to be big, and I started to get nervous. This was a first-ever event and it was so important that there wouldn't be any problems. I knew that the falls was easily runnable, but I didn't know what could happen in the course of hundreds of descents. I know boaters are always polite and cooperative, but what if someone got





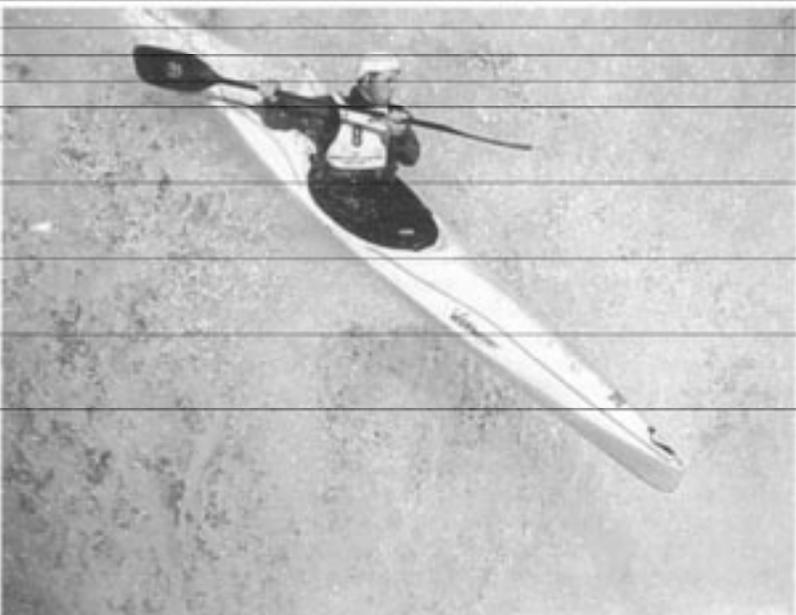
## THE RESULTS

Finish.	Name	Time	Class	Class.Rnk	Gender	Age
1	Brian Homberg	01:13.9	K1L	1	M	35
2	Chris Iezzoni	01:18.5	K1L	2	M	34
3	Steve Kauffman	01:21.8	K1L	3	M	30
4	Eric Martin	01:24.2	K1L	4	M	30
5	John Weld	01:25.1	K1L	5	M	31
6	Rick Gusic	01:25.1	K1L	6	M	32
7	Jeff Snyder	01:28.2	K1L	7	M	38
8	Mike Moore	01:29.6	K1L	8	M	32
9	Robbie Fulton	01:32.9	K1L	9	M	16
10	Jess Whittemore	01:33.0	K1L	10	M	41
11	Kara Weld	01:33.0	K1L	11	F	30
12	Clay Wright	01:34.4	K1L	12	M	32
13	Greg Akins	01:34.5	K1L	13	M	32
14	Ken Kyser	01:34.8	K1L	14	M	40

grouchy in big crowds. Although water levels had not been too high since spring, I contacted the Corps of Engineers and requested their help in controlling water if necessary. Mostly I worried about crowds of spectators overwhelming park facilities. I talked to a half dozen news reporters. I asked them to report on the event, but not to announce it beforehand.

Friday, the day before, all the organizers met in Ohiopyle to go over the final preparations. Everything was done that could be done, and we agreed to meet back at the firehall early the next morning. That night at dinner we met Bill Calatoni, a long time park ranger, and even he offered encouragement. I finally started to relax, knowing that things were rolling along on their own and that nothing could stop the momentum.

That's how the First Ever Ohiopyle Falls Race came about. What happened that day? Exactly what everyone wanted to happen. I tried to explain it to a newspaper reporter by saying that if you combine a big rapid with a big audience, the boaters will crawl out of the woodwork. But I think it really had more to do with restoring a stretch of river to it's rightful place. All of those smiles confirmed that the Yough was reconnected and whole again.



Finish.	Name	Time	Class	Class.Rnk	Gender	Age
15	Jim Werkman	01:35.0	K1S	1	M	36
16	Mark Moore	01:37.0	K1L	15	M	38
17	Bruce Berman	01:37.3	K1S	2	M	49
18	Bill Hall	01:37.4	K1L	16	M	30
19	Jerry Lechowick	01:37.6	K1S	3	M	49
20	Tarion O'Carroll	01:37.8	K1S	4	M	25
21	Scott McElroy	01:38.2	K1S	5	M	34
22	T Richard Yester	01:38.6	K1S	6	M	25
23	Roger Zbel	01:38.7	K1L	17	M	43
24	JD Batove	01:38.7	K1S	7	M	22
25	Chuck Morris	01:38.9	K1S	8	M	26

## FREESTYLE WINNERS

- 1<sup>st</sup> place: Ted Devoe
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place: Clay Wright
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place: Spencer Cooke
- 4<sup>th</sup> place: Bobby Miller
- 5<sup>th</sup> place: John Groth
- 6<sup>th</sup> place: Chuck Morris

# Management Alternatives Proposed for Salmon and M.F. Salmon

## Public Comments Sought Until Feb. 1

By GREG MOORE



Photo by Melissa Victor

The public has four new alternatives to consider for management of boating on the Salmon and Middle Fork of the Salmon Rivers. Some of those could increase the opportunities for noncommercial boaters to get on the rivers.

The U.S. Forest Service recently released a supplemental draft Environmental Impact Statement that adds the alternatives to a previous list of six.

The alternatives are part of a proposed management plan for the 2.4-million acre Frank Church—River of No Return Wilderness. The proposed plan also contains management direction for aviation, land-based recreation, and noxious weed control.

The Forest Service stated in its draft EIS that its goals for river recreation planning are to determine the acceptable level of use on the rivers, to decide whether and how much to reallocate use between commercial and noncommercial boating, and

to set management policies for the rivers' tributaries, which are currently unregulated. The tributaries include the South Fork of the Salmon, a popular spring and early summer run.

"The new alternatives were developed from the more than 1,400 public comments received, and in some cases, used verbatim," said wilderness supervisor George Matejko in a press release.

The Forest Service reported that public comments on the original six alternatives indicated resentment among some noncommercial boaters that they are required to participate in a lottery that gives them only 1-in-23 odds of getting a permit on the Middle Fork while commercial customers can simply call an outfitter and reserve a space for the upcoming season.

As a solution to that perceived unfairness, noncommercial boaters have for some time proposed a "freedom-of-choice" system under which everyone

would compete in the same permit pool and then, if successful, decide whether to go with an outfitter or not. A "freedom-of-

choice" permit system is incorporated into one of the four new alternatives.

The new alternatives are as follows:

**Alternative #6:** Under this option, noncommercial applicants would enter the lottery as a group, rather than as individuals. Smaller parties would be allowed to stay on the river longer.

**Alternative #7:** This would implement a system of "faucets"—options that the Forest Service could use to decrease use during peak periods. It would leave river management flexible, to be steered by a committee of Forest Service personnel, outfitters and noncommercial boaters. The primary "faucets" mentioned are flexibility in not reallocating canceled trips and reducing maximum trip length from eight to six days.

**Alternative #8:** This would replace the noncommercial lottery system with a reservation system. Reservations could be made any time within six months of the requested launch date. The agency points out that a drawback to this system is that its phones would be flooded with calls six months before popular launch dates. The alternative would also use existing Forest Service authority to retire some commercial launch dates and reallocate them to noncommercial use.

**Alternative #9:** This is the "freedom-of-choice" alternative. In its draft EIS, the Forest Service states that "the Freedom of Choice Lottery would have a major impact on the commercial industry tied to floating the Middle Fork. Under the best case scenario, with all 4,447 of their 1998 commercial clients applying in a Freedom of Choice Lottery along with the 8,526 applicants for noncommercial

launches, outfitters would likely lose 71 percent of their client base." As presented, the alternative also proposes to reduce launches on the Middle Fork from the current seven per day to five per day, and reduce maximum party size from the current 24 to 10.

Alternative #10: This alternative would increase the number of launches available to noncommercial boaters from four per day to seven. Odds for getting a permit would increase to 1 in 13.

Under all the alternatives but #9, boaters running the rivers' tributaries, including the South Fork of the Salmon, would not need a Middle Fork or Main Salmon permit as long as they did not camp on those rivers. Alternative #9 would prohibit floating of tributaries until a monitoring plan for sensitive species were implemented.

Forest Service spokesman Kent Fuellenbach said in an interview that the option chosen by the agency could consist of parts of several of the proposed alternatives.

"Each of the alternatives was taken from proposals by various user groups," Fuellenbach said. "We were trying to stay as true as we could to the alternatives presented."

The alternatives previously drawn up by the Forest Service, and released in a draft EIS in January 1998, are:

Alternative #1: No action. Current management would continue.

Alternative #2: Reduce use. Middle Fork launches would be decreased to two total per day. No boating would be allowed on the tributaries.

Alternative #3: Restrict use to current average use. Middle Fork and main Salmon launches would be reduced to three noncommer-

cial and two commercial per day. Tributary use would be limited to one noncommercial launch per week on one Middle Fork tributary and one per week on the South Fork.

Alternative #4: Would allow use to increase. Eight launches per day would be permitted on the Middle Fork and on the main Salmon. Tributary use would be limited to one launch per day on each tributary in the spring and two per week in the summer.

Alternative #5: Combines elements of the first four alternatives. Seven launches per day would be permitted on the Middle Fork and eight per day on the main Salmon. Tributary launches would be limited to three per week on each. This was previously declared the preferred alternative. The Forest Service says there is now no preferred alternative.

The Forest Service invites comments from the public. Comments should be sent to:

Salmon-Challis National Forest; Attn: FC-RONRW SEIS, Box 600, Salmon, ID 83467

Comments should be received by Feb. 1. Fuellenbach said the Forest service hopes to have a new management plan in place by the summer of 2001.

Article Courtesy of Idaho Mountain Express Newspaper

Editor's Note: Greg Moore is a well-known river conservationist and the coauthor of a guidebook, *Idaho Whitewater*, by Moore and McLaren.



## N.F. Payette Hydropower Proposal Dead

By Greg Moore

A long dormant proposal for a hydroelectric facility on the North Fork of the Payette River has been declared dead in the water.

Gem Irrigation District had applied to the Idaho Department of Water Resources (IDWR) to withdraw 100 cfs from the river upstream from the town of Banks, within the well known Class IV-V section.

The river had been included by the Idaho Legislature as a protected river under the Idaho Comprehensive State Water Plan in 1991. However, a water rights application had already been filed for the proposed project, and was therefore grandfathered in.

IDWR public information officer Dick Larsen said Gem informed the agency on Oct. 18 that it was withdrawing its application.

"That ends the discussion on the whole issue," Larsen said.

The original permit was held by Western Power, Inc. for 2,200 cfs. That was transferred to Gem, which modified it in 1995 to request only 100 cfs, Larsen said.

Larsen said the application was protested, requiring it to go through a public hearing.

"We don't take it to a public hearing until the applicant asks us to do it," Larsen said. "They never did, so it sat there from 1995 onward."

Larsen said Gem had also not yet obtained the required federal permit to construct the dam.

Liz Paul, conservation director with Idaho Rivers United, said the application withdrawal was one of the most significant river protection events in the state's history.

"This has been a long-fought campaign with a happy ending," Paul said. "This was a broad-based community effort to protect one of Idaho's premier scenic and recreational rivers."

(Article courtesy of Idaho Mountain Express Newspaper.)

# The New Megalloway Class V New England Whitewater Reclaimed

By Tom Christopher  
AW Director

A trip to the border of northern New Hampshire and western Maine, the headwaters of the mighty Androscoggin River, is a step back in time. A time when eagles and osprey soared across the horizon and the rivers and lakes were teeming with giant brook trout and salmon. The forests of years ago abounded with deer, bear, moose, and even wolves in an ecosystem that keeps itself in balance. For a long time this was a place between towering mountains and sparkling streams, the forest rolling on as a green carpet in the summer months, then turning into a kaleidoscope of color as the cool autumn days became nature's paintbrush.

The waters of the Big Megalloway River have their source in a small lake located in the very northern tip of New Hampshire, about one and a half miles southwest of the Crown Monument. The Crown Monument was placed by the Commissioners who established the boundary between the United States and the Canadian Provinces. The lake's area is 320 acres and the stream that forms its outlet almost immediately drops 20 feet in a beautiful waterfall. It is soon joined by many small streams and tributaries from both Maine and New Hampshire to flow southerly away from the Canadian border.

Most of the early settlers came from southern Maine or nearby New England. They were a sturdy people of Irish, Scotch, and English descent. They brought with them the customs and habits of their forbears, determined to extract wealth from the natural forest bounty of the region. The names of Bennett, Littlehale, Lombard, Wilson, Linnell, and Flint remain dominant in the region, as succeeding generations work the same way as their ancestors did.

The early days were the time of Metalluk, son of the chief of the Cooshaukes tribe. Metalluk became the last Abenaki chief of his tribe. Metalluk married twice and had a daughter, Parmarchenee, and two sons. One son was killed by a wolf. From that time on Metalluk killed every wolf he could find, cut their heads off, and impaled them on poles. He lived along the Megalloway, hunting, fishing, and trapping, until blinded in 1836. Then Metalluk was forced to live on the public dole in Stewartstown, NH until his death in 1847 at the age of 120 years. The thousands of acres he owned in Coos County, NH had to be turned over to the government when he became a ward of the state. As was the custom of those days his upkeep was bid off to a local resident for 40 dollars a year.

Captain John Wilson was born in Westbrook, ME in 1799 and attracted to this region by timberland speculation. He soon had the entire township at his disposal, and began processing the valuable pine. At Aziscohos Falls, which eventually became the town of Wilson's Mills, he erected a dam with a sawmill on one side of the river and a gristmill on the other. It was at this place the hand of man made its first indelible imprint on the Megalloway River. The many mills that followed would change this wild and free watercourse into another tool for man's exploitation of the region's resources.

Later, additional dams were built to allow a controlled release of water to flush logs over the falls. It was the severe drought of 1903 which brought the construction of a major concrete dam that would block the Megalloway forever. So severe was this drought that the mighty Androscoggin was reduced to a trickle as far south as Lewiiston, ME.

In 1910 Waiter H. Sawyer of the Union Water Power Company and Seth P. Moulton, an engineer, designed and built a new dam under difficult and extraordinary working conditions. It was not unusual to see teams of horses half a mile long slogging through the mud bringing supplies from Colebrook, NH, the nearest railhead to Aziscohos. When the dam was completed with its two-mile log sluice in 1911, Aziscohos Lake, 12 square miles with a watershed of 214 square miles was formed, impounding 9.5 billion cubic feet of water. The lake drowned the Big Megalloway River and the Aziscohos Valley.

In the coming years Aziscohos Dam was retrofitted to include a penstock and a powerhouse for hydroelectric generation a little over half a mile downstream at the base of the falls. Since the river no longer used to transport logs, it was now desirable to spill as little water as possible in order to facilitate power generation. The Big Megalloway was reduced to a minimal flow for the maintenance of fisheries habitat below the powerhouse. The once-flowing powerful and treacherous rapids between the dam and the powerhouse ran dry.

In 1989 the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ruled that Aziscohos Dam fell under their jurisdiction and needed to be licensed. At that time license articles established criteria for the hydro operations at this dam, but did not make any provisions to return water for fishing or whitewater recreation in the dryway between the dam and the powerhouse. Instead they focused on the reach of the Megalloway River below the powerhouse. Little consideration was given to the river's whitewater boating potential. As part of that decision FERC ruled that if and when dams on the Rapid River became jurisdictional, the water-use and flow issues of the Megalloway would have to be revisited. That is because they were also part of the Androscoggin watershed.

Relicensing of the Rapid River Dams in 1995 provided a golden opportunity to establish whitewater recreation on the Megalloway. Paddling the river had been impossible except during rare episodes of high seasonal flows. The rapids had largely been ignored and forgotten. Those who hiked down through this riverbed were intimidated by its steep gradient and ugly boulder-strewn character.

American Whitewater, New England FLOW, and others had entered into settlement discussions with the Union Water Power Co. for the purpose of crafting an agreement which would balance the competing uses of the multiple resources of the Upper Androscoggin Basin. It was clear that several other user groups did

not want any expanded whitewater recreation in this region. In fact, they would have been very happy to eliminate existing boater use of the Rapid River, a use which dated to the years following World War II. After many months of heated testimony, resource analysis, conflict resolution, and "in your face" politics, Union Water Power agreed to conduct a whitewater feasibility study on the upper section of the Megalloway Dryway in an attempt to develop an overall mitigation package which would help balance the competing resource uses of the region.

American Whitewater helped to develop the study use criteria and agreed to provide experienced boaters capable of running this reach of the river safely and who could also evaluate the resource accurately for future public use. There was only one drawback to this scenario. The riverbed was filled with rebar, pieces of steel of different lengths drilled and cemented into the rocky riverbed that were used in the construction of mills located on the site over a period of 150 years. Many had been worn into sharp points by the weathering action of time and presented an imminent danger for any attempt to boat this section of the river. Depending on the flows to be tested, it was impossible to guess what might happen if they remained exposed or lie hidden just below the waterline. The risk to boaters was much too significant to safely conduct this test, so the decision was made to remove all of the rebar from the riverbed from the put-in below the dam all the way down to the powerhouse.

An AW team consisting of Frank Amao, Lionel Heering, and me and several Union Water Power employees including Peter Poor and Nick Weaver carried oxygen and acetylene tanks down the steep embankment next to the penstock and into the riverbed. Leakage from the dam was putting about 50 cfs of water into the riverbed and the water, although moving slowly, trickled and drained over the moss and algae-covered granite boulders, making our footing precarious. The steep gradient made carrying the heavy tanks difficult and we all wore life jackets in case someone slipped and fell into one of the deep pools. As we explored the riverbed I was beginning to have misgivings because of the unforgiving nature of the geology. Working in teams, we took turns burning out the steel and carrying the



tanks. I brought cans of bright orange spray paint to mark the steel in the riverbed while Frank and the others did the cutting.

There was so much rebar it became apparent that we were going to run out of gas. The Union boys arranged to have additional supplies run up from Berlin, NH. The day was boiling and we were struggling with a hot torch to cut away steel, which had been embedded in rock for a century. Another problem came to our attention—you cannot cut steel with water swirling around its base, because the water conducts the heat away. To make matters worse, small heated steel chips would explode once they hit the water, sometimes striking our arms and legs causing small micro-burns that went deep.

The task of removal seemed doomed to failure and I was concerned that our team of boaters who were to arrive the next day would be disappointed because we would not be able to complete the test. We could not cut the rebar sticking up out of even two inches of water. We tried building diversionary dams with stones and mud, but that failed. Since most of the steel bars protruded out of the riverbed 12 to 18 inches, I thought perhaps they could be bent forward 90 degrees downstream, thereby reducing the risk to boaters substantially. Most of the heavy rebar was an inch and a half or larger in diameter, so I asked the boys from Union Water if they might have a six foot length of 2-inch diameter steel pipe. Nick Weaver ran up to the shop at the dam and returned with just what I requested.

I slipped the pipe over the first length of rebar and gave a pull, but it didn't budge. I tried even harder, but it just wouldn't move. Finally, out of frustration, I backed up six feet and ran directly into the steel pipe with my shoulder and chest, throwing all my weight into it. The rebar bent about 15 degrees. Success! I was then able to get all of my body weight over the pipe and bend the rebar into a 90 degree angle. As I was pulling the pipe off the first piece of rebar I discovered that I could twist and spin the now bent rebar in a 360 degree circle. I wondered if I could loosen it enough to pull it completely out of the rock. After several minutes of working the pipe back and forth, with the rebar screeching in its concrete anchor, the stone released its century long grasp on the steel rod. Using this method and our torch for seven long, hard, broiling hours we were able to completely remove 47 pieces of steel rebar from the riverbed of the Upper Megalloway.

The following morning the AW evaluation team met in Errol, NH for a hearty breakfast and to discuss the criteria and the potential difficulties we might encounter. I suggested the team walk and scout the gorge before any water was released, just to reinforce my judgment about the hazards involved and to make them aware of the undercuts, rock fractures, and potential pins.



The team consisted of Boyce Greer, Scott Murray, Tom LaJoie, J.J. Valera, Bryan Budd, and Lionel Heering. Frank Arnao, Pat Wyman, Shannon Valera and I would be setting safety on both sides of the river at all the critical drops. When we arrived at the dam site we were met by a team of EMTs provided by Union Water Power, as well as other staff who would be recording the runs on videotape and helping with the evaluation and safety. Union had set up radio communications directly to the dam to shut off the water in case we had an accident. After walking the drops there was no doubt in anyone's mind that this river was serious business and the potential for injury was real. There was no lighthearted, testosterone-filled banter, only serious analysis of the safe way to run the drops. After all, we had no idea how it would look like with water in it.

We made the decision to add 100 cfs and take a look. Ten minutes later water came rushing down the gorge to form an intricate collection of drops that culminated in a 15 foot waterfall. It poured over a huge van-sized boulder and cascaded into a deep swirling pool at its base. Running this drop at this level would be problematic because at it's top a large fracture was waiting to catch off-line boaters in an inextricable pin. On the right side of the boulder there was a long narrow shelf with enough water to run. But if you dropped off the shelf prematurely, you would be wedged lengthwise in a deep V-grooved cut and would surely suffer serious consequences.

The best way to run this drop was off the top of the boulder with the front of your boat angled left. With good forward speed you could jet off the boulder and land on a soft foamy pillow.

The entrance to this rapid was extremely complex, dropping 35 feet over a distance of 40 or 50 yards in a series of difficult Class IV cascades. The riverbed, was unnatural and filled with sharp-edged boulders that had been dynamited over the last century. The team took one last long, hard look, and then geared up for the run. It was the most intimidated I had ever been looking at a drop. Even though I had a lot of confidence in the team, I was concerned that there might be a pin.

They put in at the base of the dam and warmed up in a Class II section, which we now call "Creamcheese," darting back and forth with crisp ferries between the rocks and eddies along the riverbank. As they entered the series of cascades we named "Washerboard," there was a "must catch" eddy just above the big drop. We stood by, throw ropes in hand, watching them get the feel of the water. They all made the eddy safely, got out and looked again, and decided to catch a micro eddy on river right and set up from there. Scott Murray did it first in his inflatable kayak, running the ledge on river right its entire length to drop safely off the end and into the pool. Boyce Greer was next, running the opposite side on river left, to float off the surging pillow and boof the large flat rock at the bottom. The rest of the team followed, one by one, each gauging his skill and technique with the awesome responsibility of making their run a safe one.



There was no doubt that the drop was navigable. The team took out at the bottom of the pool, carried back up and continued to make additional runs. It was serious business but it was beginning to look like fun. We decided to call this drop "The Thong" because the ribbon of water over the top of boulder provided a glimpse of two cheeks. Although sweet to look at, the crack between them could provide enough trouble to last a lifetime. Although runnable at 100 cfs, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that it would be safer with more water in the channel. More water would reduce the pinning potential and provide larger pillows in the dangerous V-grooves on either side of the Thong.

On the next test we kicked it up a notch—to 300 cfs. It was superb. The run was definitely much safer, but with a much different dynamic. The water was pushy and formed holes at the bottoms of the entrance cascades of Washerboard. To run the Thong you would have to set up and go—no mistakes, no off line, definitely no upside-downs, —but lots of forward speed. Against my better judgment (I had spent very little time in my boat that year), I was finally convinced to give The Thong a run. I geared up, did a very brief warm-up, ran Washerboard badly and barely caught the eddy above the Thong. I got out to take my final look, my heart pounding. But there was no turning back. I gauged my line, jumped back in and ran the most difficult drop I had ever attempted in my life, flying off the left side of the Thong, catching air, and falling into the pool at the bottom. As I rolled up I was met with the cheers from the other members of the team and the Union Water Power folks. We all realized at that moment the test was a success.

From there to the powerhouse was an absolutely wonderful stretch of nonstop Class IV rapids about three hundred yards long which we named "Pinball." This was a New England creeking heaven, a natural river bed with smooth rounded boulders, lots of three and four foot drops, and plenty of eddies. Pinball ends at the powerhouse discharge tube, but the tube pours another 600 cfs into the channel so there is still plenty of boating to do.

From the powerhouse the river angles down 120 yards and drops another 20 feet into a nasty-looking Class IV drop with a protruding ledge and several three and four-foot wave holes at the bottom. There is a distinct tongue, which can provide momentum to punch the waves at the bottom. From here the river widens to about 75 feet and provides continuous Class III rapids for the next two miles, with plenty of waves, eddies, and ferries. It is an absolutely ideal training river at this level.

As the Megalloway travels on, the gradient flattens out and the last mile consists of Class II small waves. It finally becomes a gently flowing stream near the grassy-green take-out just off Route 16. What makes this river so valuable is its accessibility. It parallels Route 16 from the take-out to the put-ins at either the dam for the upper section, or the powerhouse for the lower section. It would be easy to make multiple runs on the lower section at 900 or 1,200 cfs, or make just one run in the morning and then go watch the hair-boaters run the Thong in the afternoon. There are plenty of places to watch, take pictures, picnic, or just scramble over the unusual rock formations.

The Megalloway has been reborn from a river exploited to a river which represents an important resource to those who would like to use it for whitewater boating, fishing, aquatic and wildlife habitat, or just to enjoy its aesthetic beauty. It will never be exactly the way it was before man tinkered with it, but the new Megalloway will serve as an important and historic example of river restoration, made possible by the relicensing procedure. It will be up to those to continue its protection and restoration.

Author's Note: The Thong Rapid of the Upper Megalloway Gorge is a serious Class V-plus drop with extreme consequences. It should only be attempted by expert boaters. It is recommended that at least five people take part in any descent with safety being set up on both sides of the drop. Flow level and release schedule for year 2000 will be posted later.

# Intern completes first draft of Hydropower Handbook

By Scott Blankenfeld

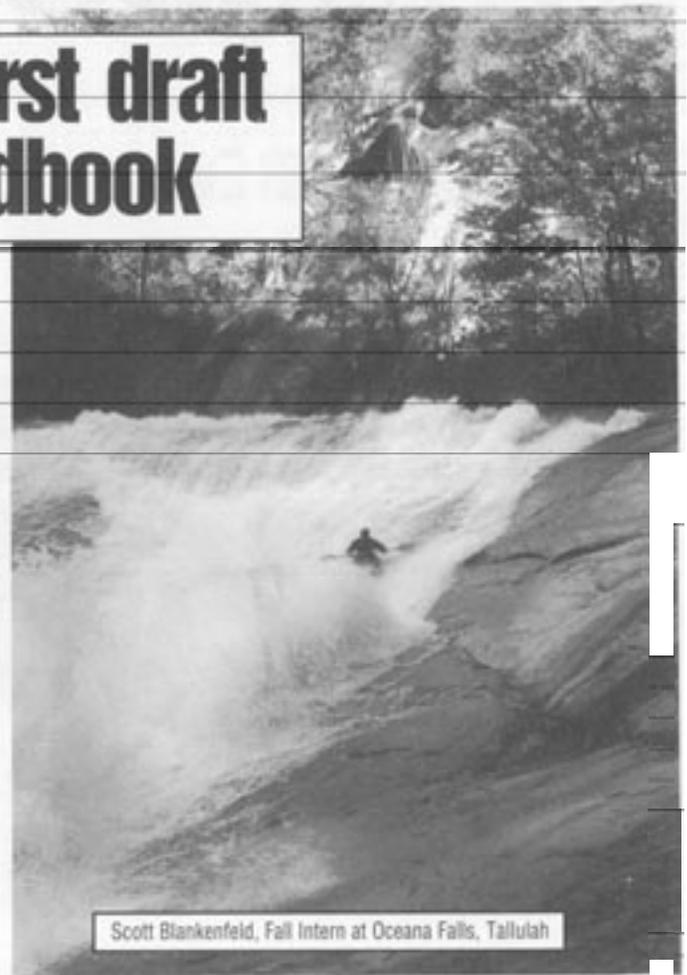
Washington D.C. - The trip from Washington D.C. to the Tallulah River Gorge takes about ten hours by car. I made this drive during the first weekend in November to help with registration of the biannual release, and to go boating, of course. While I was in North Georgia, I couldn't help but think about my home in Chico, California and driving ten hours south from there. I would end up in Rosarito Beach, Mexico. I thought to myself, "I would never even fathom driving to Baja for a weekend. It's just too far." But for some reason, I drove to the Tallulah without thinking twice about the distance I was about to take on. This is because the Tallulah is such a significant place. It is the very reason my internship at American Whitewater (AW) is important to me.

Besides assisting with administrative duties in the Silver Spring, MD office, I helped compile a national list of hydropower dams impacting whitewater. American Whitewater now has a master list of 1,668 FERC licensed and exempted hydropower projects. I've spent the better part of 14 weeks sorting this list state-by-state to determine which hydropower dams impact whitewater resources. I worked with paddlers across the nation and searched through nearly every whitewater paddling guidebook, gathering descriptions of rivers with hydropower projects. Unfortunately, many of the rivers dewatered by hydro dams are not included in guides due to infrequent flows. As a result, I relied on networks of local boaters to gather information on local resources. As you can imagine, this was a time consuming process. A number of states still need sorting. You can help finalize this database by reviewing the list soon to be posted on American Whitewater's web site. Scroll through the database for your state and listing of rivers in your area. Identify the location of the dams on a topographic map then start counting the contour lines downstream of the project. You know how to identify whitewater potential! Confirm your suspicions in the field—you might have a first descent. Contact American Whitewater's conservation office with the results of your information gathering. Notifying us of rivers that do not contain whitewater is equally important so that we can remove those hydro projects from our list.

This list of hydropower dams is so important because one of your local runs may be dam released or dewatered by dams and bypass canals. Imagine the runs in your area that you've never paddled because they've never had water in the natural river channel. American Whitewater is highly effective at restoring dewatered rivers through the relicensing process. By identifying those hydro dams that impact whitewater the conservation office can prioritize workloads as well as mobilize grassroots activists to participate in the relicensing proceedings. Boater involvement is critical for restoring additional whitewater rivers similar to Tallulah. The paddling community benefits directly with increased whitewater opportunities.

The list of hydropower dams impacting whitewater resources is part of a larger hydropower-relicensing handbook being compiled by the conservation program for instructional purposes. The handbook will be available as a tool for boaters so they may learn how to participate effectively in the relicensing process.

AW has made rivers, such as Tallulah, happen for whitewater enthusiasts through their conservation efforts. I will endure the drive and return to Georgia if I ever get the chance. I also look forward to paddling not only some of the other rivers that have scheduled releases because of AW, but to paddle the many rivers I found, in my



Scott Blankenfeld, Fall intern at Oceana Falls, Tallulah

project, to potentially have whitewater after the relicensing process takes place. I have learned so much during this internship. I only hope my contribution to AW equals that in which AW has contributed to me. I would like to thank everyone who supported me with this project. Without the help of paddlers across the nation, I would never have survived the 14 weeks.

For all those student boaters out there, consider American Whitewater for a possible internship, and open your road to Rivers. Just think! What better place is there to finish your education than the only organization dedicated solely to whitewater boating.

The list of hydropower projects can be viewed at: [www.awa.org](http://www.awa.org) Send your information regarding the presence or absence of whitewater for the rivers on the list to: [jgans!emi@dis!isvs.net](mailto:jgans!emi@dis!isvs.net)

Scott Blankenfeld graduated from California State University, Chico upon completion of his internship at AW. He obtained a Bachelor of Science in Recreation Administration, specializing in Commercial and community recreation. He has returned to California where he hopes to continue working with rivers.



Scott Blankenfeld smiling at the bottom of Oceana Falls, Tallulah

## New for 2000: Standardized Competitor Classification System for NOWR Events

By Jayne H. Abbot

**NOTICE TO PRO's: READ THIS CAREFULLY!! YOU MUST BE REGISTERED WITH NOWR TO PARTICIPATE AS A PRO ATHLETE AT AN NOWR EVENT, INCLUDING THE OUTDOORPLAY.COM FREESTYLE CHAMPIONSHIP SERIES EVENTS!**



NOWR is beginning a new standardized competitor classification system designed to provide competitors with a visible "progression," i.e., a defined means of moving through the ranks that will help events build a better foundation of amateur/local competitors in addition to placing more credibility in defining "Pro" level competitors. The following is a brief description of the system. Visit our web site at [www.nowr.org](http://www.nowr.org) for more detailed information or contact the Events Office at 828-645-5299.

**Competitors classify themselves based on their age and skill level. There are three age classifications:**

Junior (18 and under)  
Senior (19-39)  
Masters (40 and up)

And four skill levels:

Pro	Highest national/international competitor (only available to Senior class)
Expert	Advanced national/regional competitor
Sport	Intermediate regional competitor
Beginner	Casual, first time or local competitor

All 2000 NOWR events will offer some mixture of these classes. Some may only offer Sport and Beginner, some may offer all four classes but all events will use this standardized system in describing their rodeo freestyle class offering. Competitors can initially choose their own skill level category (accept Pro where qualifications must be met). A new competitor could choose to start in Beginner, Sport or Expert. Once a level has been chosen, a competitor must meet certain requirements of that skill level category to move to the next level.

In 2000, competitors at the Beginner, Sport and Expert level are not required to register with NOWR to participate at NOWR events. Those competitors wishing to enter the Pro class, however, must meet certain qualifications and be registered with NOWR (see registration form for details). If you would like to register as a Beginner, Sport or Expert, please contact the Events Office for a registration form.



Photo by Tim Reesep



Photo by Tim Reesep



Photo by Tim Reesep

## 2000 NOWR Competitor Registration Form - Pro Only

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number:( \_\_\_\_\_ )- \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

- Male
- Female

Indicate Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate Category: \_\_\_\_\_

- K-1
- C-1
- OC-1

### Qualifications

For Men's K-1:  
 1) Placed in the TOP TEN at any TWO 1998 or 1999 NOWR Rodeo in the Pro/Elite class (or highest level offering).  
 2) Been a member of the 1997 or 1999 US Freestyle Kayak Team (USFKT), or a member of your home country's team.

For Women's K-1 and C-1:  
 1) Placed in the TOP FIVE at any ONE 1998 or 1999 NOWR Rodeo in the Pro/Elite class (or highest level offering).  
 2) Been a member of the 1997 or 1999 US Freestyle Kayak Team (USFKT), or a member of your home country's team.

For OC-1: This class has no prerequisites.

Your Sponsors: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\*Note that all Pro's regardless of age participate in Senior age category.

### Are you a current American Whitewater member?

(circle one)      Yes                  No

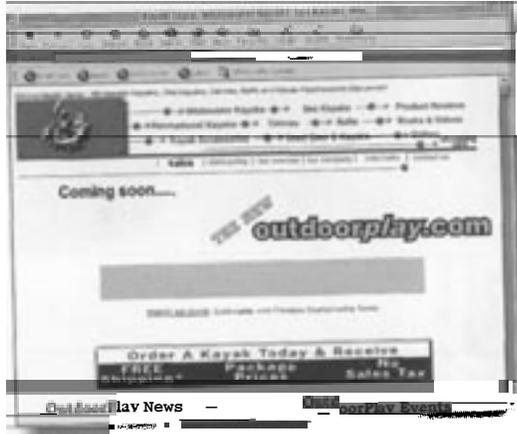
**Cost:** \$20.00 per boat category for American Whitewater members. \$30 per boat category for non-American Whitewater members. If you are not an American Whitewater member, you can join for a reduced price:

- \$15 (US) - Regularly \$25
- \$20 (Canadian) - Regularly \$30
- \$25 (foreign) - Regularly \$35
- \$10 (under 21) - Regularly \$15

Return this form by March 31, 2000 and include a check payable to American Whitewater and mail to:  
 American Whitewater - Events  
 P.O. Box 842  
 Weaverville, NC 28787

\*\* American dollars only accepted \*\*  
 Please call 828-645-5299, or e-mail [JHAbbot@aol.com](mailto:JHAbbot@aol.com) with questions.

# New for 2000: The Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Championship Series



American Whitewater and Outdoorplay.com, the paddlesports community, have partnered to produce the first of its kind National Championship: **The Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Championship Series**. With some serious cash prizes at

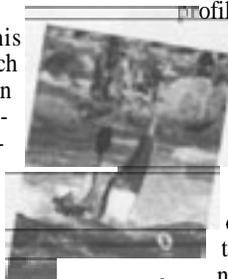
stake, the Series is guaranteed to bring a new level of excitement for the competitors and publicity to the sport of rodeo freestyle kayaking. In addition, the series will crown the NOWR Freestyle National Champions for 2000.

"We have two goals for this first-ever series," explains Rich Bowers, American Whitewater executive director. "First, to raise awareness and funding for efforts to protect our precious whitewater resources. And

second, to raise awareness of the rapidly growing sport of freestyle kayaking and the world-class athletes who are pushing it to unimaginable levels."

John "Tree" Trujillo, world-class kayaker and Outdoorplay.com CEO agrees: "In the last few years, there's been an explosion of

interest in paddlesports, and freestyle kayaking has really reached maturity as a competitive sport. People love to watch rodeo paddling, so the Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Championship Series is the perfect opportunity to help American Whitewater raise the

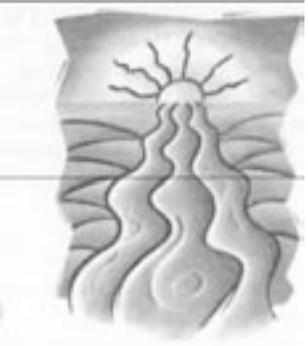


profile of its education and conservation work, while also supporting development of the sport itself."

As the title sponsor, Outdoorplay.com has committed more than \$150,000 cash and in-kind to the Series, including a significant donation to river conservation and organizational services to make the Series a success. "This infusion of support is just what this sport has needed," says Jayne Abbot, Events Manager for American Whitewater. "It's going to be a really exciting season for the sport as we gear up to a new level of professionalism."

*Run With Run Free!*

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*Friends of the River — California's Statewide River Conservation Organization*

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or e-mail [helenlivni@friendsoftheriver.org](mailto:helenlivni@friendsoftheriver.org)  
[www.friendsoftheriver.org](http://www.friendsoftheriver.org)

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- *Over 30 conservation and recreation workshops*
- *Dynamic keynote speakers*
- *over 70 outdoor and adventure equipment manufacturers, retailers and conservation exhibitors*
- *Children's activities and more!*
- *Swap meet of used paddle equipment*

**Rodeo, Boat,  
Creek, Boat,  
Race, Boat,  
Boof, Boat,  
Eddy, Boat,**

**Just Boat.**

**Join American Whitewater.**

The Outdoorplay.com Freestyle Championship Series consists of five incredible events on the National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos (NOWR)2000 competition schedule:

- Ocoee Whitewater Rodeo, Ocoee River, Ducktown, TN, May 19-21
- Animas River Days, Animas River, Durango, CO, June 23-25
- Gorge Games, White Salmon River, Hood River, OR, July 8-15
- South Bend, East Race Waterway, South Bend, IN, August 18-21
- Wausau Freestyle Championship, Wausau Whitewater Course, Wausau, WI, August 25-27

A cash purse totaling \$5,000 will be awarded at each event in the Men's K-1 Pro, Women's K-1 Pro, C-1 Pro, and OC-1 Pro categories. Overall category champions will split a \$7,500 cash purse. Tents and booths set up by participating paddlesports industry players, along with entertainment and clinics, will create a festive atmosphere at each event.

Outdoorplay.com, one of paddlesports' most successful online retailers, is poised to become THE online resource for the paddlesports community.



Photo by Tim Ressee

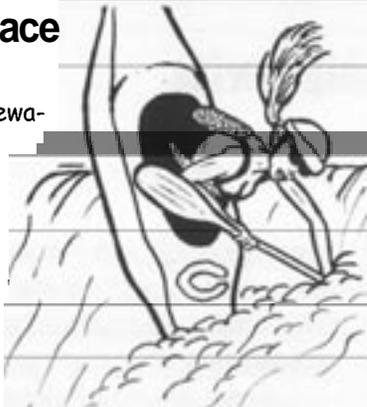
Photo by Tim Ressee

A soon-to-be released, completely redesigned Outdoorplay.com site will redefine the fabric of paddlesports on the World Wide Web. Outdoorplay.com is committed to customer service, with an expert staff of paddlers, a philosophy of including and embracing

all paddlers and paddlesports, and a devotion to developing a true community environment for people who are just learning to paddle or already love the sport. For information, go to [outdoorplay.com](http://outdoorplay.com) or call toll free 800-99-4GEAR.

## Ohiopyle Falls Race Videos

Thanks to American Whitewater, a special offer is now available for two new videos from the event. Purchase the first and receive the second for free. Two videos for only \$12 (plus postage)



### VIDEO NUMBER ONE- \$12

~ h i s is an immense tape with EVERY contestant's race run, plus 90% of all the practice runs from throughout the day. This tape contains the raw footage shot during the day, with some editing.

### VIDEO NUMBER TWO- FREE

This is an edited, fast paced documentary style video utilizing six different cameras. Includes behind the scenes stories, interviews (including the rangers) and all the spills and thrills. Also included is rare archive footage of the very first "swim" attempts. Produced and edited by Buzzelmania Productions, creators of the award winning "Spreading the Disease" and "Silent Thunder"

**To purchase the videos, please call:  
Immersion Research 814-395-9191**

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Showcasing Paddlesports image artists from around the world!  
Enter your videos, slides, digital images and river safety posters. Includes raffle, silent auction, and party.

**February 25-26, 2000 Lexington, Kentucky**  
For entry deadline and other information:  
[www.pwrra.com/pff](http://www.pwrra.com/pff) or NPFF, 120 Victory Ave., Lexington, Ky. 40502

All profits go to ACA, AW, and River Conservation

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Pacific Water Sports	Paddler	Perception
Performance Video	Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center	
Riot Savage	Spyderco	Wave Sport

Photo: NPFF1999 Best Paddling Image Winner by Julie Keller

# AMERICAN WHITEWATER'S 2000 SCHEDULE OF RIVER EVENTS

**Come celebrate whitewater rivers across the country through American Whitewater's world famous festivals and competitions.**

## AMERICAN WHITEWATER FESTIVALS

National Paddling Film Festival	February 25-26	Lexington, KY	Zina Merkin	606-258-2508	zmerkin@ca.uky.edu
Tallulah Festival	April 1	Tallulah, GA / Mary Beth Bundrick	706-754-4318	/tallulahfalls@georgiamountains.com	
Tennessee Paddle 2K	April 7-9	Wartburg, TN	Dale Robinson	423-637-8193	daler@planet.com
Stoney Creek Rendezvous	April TBA	Johnstown, PA	Steve Podratsky	814-266-9744	mantonik@surfshop.net
Sacandaga Festival	July TBA	Hadley, NY	John Duncan	518-696-5710	
Black River Festival	July 22-23	Watertown, NY	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	cko111234@aol.com
Deerfield Festival	July 29	Charlemont, MA	Mike Coleman	781-646-6744	colemanm@beaconarch.com
Don't Call This a Festival River Rendezvous!	September 2-4	Belfort, NY/Beaver River	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	cko111234@aol.com
Gauley Festival	September 16	Summersville, WV	Phyllis Horowitz	914-586-2355	whiteh2o@catskiH.net
Russell Fork Rendezvous	October 6-8	Haysi, VA	Brent Austin	606-278-2011	surfin@kymtnnet.org
Moose River Festival	October 14	Old Forge, NY	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	ckoll1234@aol.com

## OutdoorPlay.com Freestyle Championship Series

In partnership with American Whitewater

Where the Pro's compete for \$5,000 in CASH PRIZES per event! Overall winner's CASH PURSE of \$7,500! (applies to Pro K-1M, K-1W, C-1 & OC-1 only)

Ocoee Whitewater Festival	May 19-21	Ducktown, TN	Jayne Abbot	828-645-5299	jhabbot@aol.com
Animas River Days	June 23-25	Durango, CO	Nancy Wiley	970-259-3893	info@riversports.com
Gorge Games Freestyle Event	July 10-11	Hood River, OR	John Trujillo (Tree)	541-386-8751	info@outdoorplay.com
South Bend Freestyle Championship	August 18-20	South Bend, IN	Outpost Sports	219-259-1000	info@outpostsports.com
Wausau Freestyle Kayak Championship	August 25-27	Wausau, WI	Julie Walraven	715-845-5664	design@dwave.net

## American Whitewater Cascade Series

A series of American Whitewater premier level races from mild(er) to wilder held across the country.

Chuck's Race @ South Yuba Gathering	April 22	Nevada County, CA	Dave Good	530-477-2722	woltcreek@gv.net
Black River Race	July 22	Watertown, NY	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	cko111234@aol.com
Gore Canyon Race	August 19-20	Kremmling, CO	Paul Tefft	970-923-3955	enviro@rof.net
Russell Fork Race	October 7	Haysi, VA	Brent Austin	606-278-2011	surfin@kymtnnet.org
Gauley River Race	September 25	Summersville, WV	Donnie Hudspeth	304-658-5016	dhud@geoweb.net
Moose River Race	October 15	Old Forge, NY	Chris Koll	315-652-8397	cko111234@aol.com
Canyon Creek Extreme Race	May 4	Clark County, WA	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com

# RiversLiv 2000 Series

## American Whitewater's NOWR Schedule

<b>Kern River Festival</b>	April 14-16	Kernville, CA	Terry Valle	818-340-3083	tvalle@ix.netcom.com
Gillman Falls Rodeo	April 15	Old Town, ME	John Miligan	207-827-6111	otoymca@aol.com
Trinity River Freestyle Rodeo	April 21-22	Big Flat, CA	David Steinhauer	530-623-6293	splashdtrinityriverrafting.com
New River Rodeo	April 28-30	McCoy, VA/Roanoke Co.	Pks/Rec	540-387-6078 x251	rshowalter@co.roanoke.va.us
<b>Oregon Cup</b>	April 29 - May 7				
Maupin Daze	April 29-30	Maupin, OR	Dave Slover	541-395-2201	allstar@telesport.com
<b>Oregon Surf Off</b>	May 2	Pacific City, OR	Dave Slover	541-395-2201	allstar@telesport.com
Canyon Creek Extreme Race	May 4	Clark County, WA	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com
Sunset Falls or the Wheel Rodeo	May 5	Clark County, WA	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com
<b>Bob's Hole Rodeo</b>	May 6-11	Estacada, VK	Keith Jensen	503-285-0464	acks@teleport.com
<b>Bigfork Whitewater Festival</b>	May 26-29	Bigfork, MT	Linda Woods	406-862-2801	wildmile@hotmail.com
Coosa River Whitewater Festival	May 26-28	Wetumpka, AL	Lonnie Carden	334-272-0952	knewton@bellsouth.net
Wyoming Whitewater Championship	June 3-4	Jackson Hole, WY	Aaron Pruzan	307-733-2471	jacksonholekayak@wyoming.com
Potomac Whitewater Festival	June 2-4	Great Falls, VA	Chris Cook	202-965-1917	ccindc@patriot.net
Union Chutes Freestyle Festival	June 9-11	Englewood, CO	Shawn Hartje	304-292-6679	wvhartje@aol.com
Boulder Rodeo	CANCELLED	Boulder, CO			
Headwaters Championship / FiBARK	June 15-18	Salida, CO	Mike Harvey	719-530-0360	fatface@amigo.net
<b>Skyfest</b>	June 24-25	Index, WA	Jock Bradley	206-368-5648	whiteZo@home.com
Black River Festival Rodeo	July 23	Watertown, NY	Nancy Weal	315-592-4576	fishinsp@hotmail.com
Ottawa River Rodeo	September 2-4	Bryson, QB	Paul Sevcik	416-222-2223	paul@equinoxadventures.com
Kootenay Rodeo	September 2-4	Castlegar, BC	Gerry Harmon	250-362-2128	gharmon@bcgas.com

**RiversLiv 2000 Series: NOWR** registered Pro's earn points at all events offering a pro class with their top four placements counting towards their season's ranking.

## OTHER EVENTS

### Y2K Ultra-Galactic Triple Crown

<b>Watauga Gorge Race and Rodeo (exp/pro)</b>	April 8-9	Watauga County, NC	Spencer Cook or	828-297-1257	
<b>Nolichucky Rodeo (adv/exp/pro)</b>	April 15-16	Erwin, TN	Clem Newbold	828-295-4441	
South Yuba Gathering	April 22-23	Nevada County, CA	Dave Good	530-477-2722	woltcreek@gv.net
Cheat River Festival and Race	May 6	Albright, WV	Kerry Manier	304-329-3621	foc@cheat.org
3rd Annual French Broad River Festival	May 5-6	Asheville, NC	Chris Donochod	828-236-1209	
Kananaskis Whitewater Kodeo	YHA	Calgary, AB	Tony Palmer		tpalmer@telusplanet.ent
Lochsa Festival	June 2-4	Northern Idaho	Linda Woods	406-862-2801	wildmile@hotmail.com
Clear Creek Festival	June 3-4	Golden, CO	Chuck Cremer	303-277-0133	
Willow River Paddlefest	June 16-18	Prince George, BC	Rick Brine	250-964-7400	
American River Festival	TBA	Placerville, CA	Susan Debret-Welter	530-626-3435	

### East Coast Rodeo Surf Circuit

Outer Banks Surf Kayak Rodeo	October 6-8	Nags Head, NC	Pam Malec	252-441-6800	pam@khsports.com
Folly Beach Surf Kayak Rodeo	October 14-15	Folly Beach, SC	Mark Contois	843-762-8106	prch2o@bellsouth.net
North Myrtle Beach Surf Kayak Rodeo	October 28	No. Myrtle Beach, SC	Rick Gardner	843-272-4420	



## AMERICAN WHITEWATER VOLUNTEERS RULE!

### At Gauley Fest and Everywhere?

by Phyllis Horowitz

It takes a lot of people power to successfully run an event the size of the Gauley Festival, and our members have never let us down yet. This year's dedicated volunteer work force approached 150!

Now that's truly amazing when you consider that most folks travel a good distance to get to Summersville and could be spending the time they put in for us either paddling or hanging out with friends at the Festival. Even more

amazing – they all seem to be having fun at their appointed tasks! And many come back for more year after year.

This year's volunteer crew was particularly noteworthy. Their initiative and energy were exceptional. We even had the Festival site ready to go a day early. And that is an unprecedented achievement.

So we'd like to take a moment to thank each and every one of you for

your individual efforts. You know who you are. We know who you are. And we couldn't do it without you. Please accept our deepest appreciation.

Interested in helping out next year? Let us know now, and we'll get in touch next September.

Contact either Phyllis Horowitz, 914-586-2355; [whiteh2o@catskill.net](mailto:whiteh2o@catskill.net) or Joe Greiner, 919-847-4704; [joekavak@worldnet.att.net](mailto:joekavak@worldnet.att.net)

## Any Electricians in the Crowd???

Gauley Fest Electrical Guru Denis McLane has been hard at it since 1992 lighting up the event. It's grown to be too much of a responsibility for one person to handle, and we're looking for one or (preferably) two electrical types to assist Denis and keep him from completely burning out. You needn't be a licensed electrician to volunteer. Interested? We could really use your help. Contact Phyllis Horowitz for details (914-586-2355; [whiteh2o@catskill.net](mailto:whiteh2o@catskill.net)).



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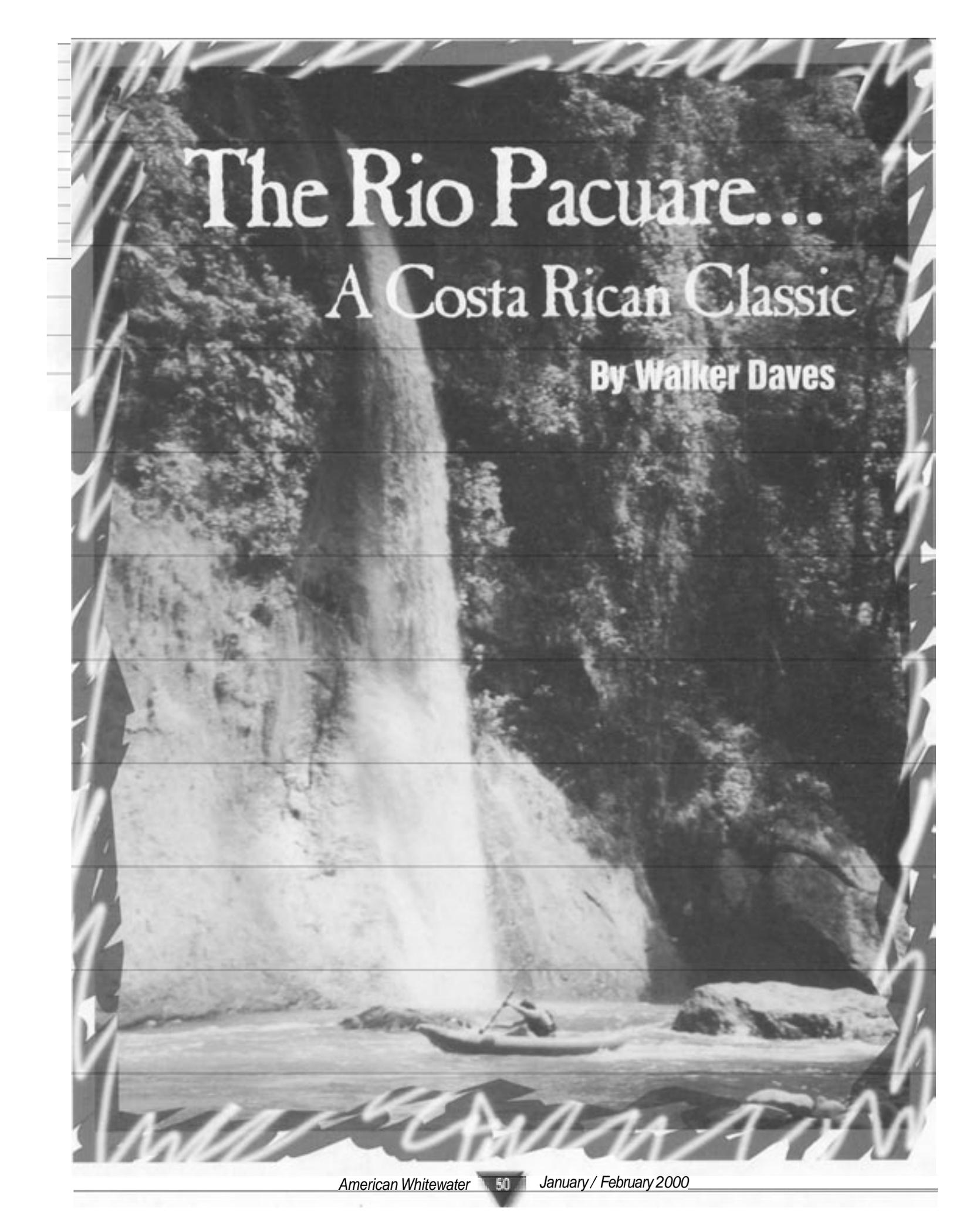
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# The Rio Pacuare...

## A Costa Rican Classic

By Walker Daves

**A**fter spending a month wandering across Costa Rica we found ourselves strolling through the busy streets of Turrialba, located in the depths of the Talamanca mountain range. The countless hours spent riding old, albeit animated school busses that provide public transit in this friendly Central American nation had come to an end. We decided to wash the dust out of our scraggly beards in the pristine waters of the Rio Pacuare, located a short hour away. Turrialba has become the boater's Mecca of Costa Rica because of its close proximity to so much challenging whitewater. There are numerous whitewater outfitters in the area. After exploring several options, I scheduled a reasonably-priced guided trip for the following morning with Jungle Adventures.

At the crack of dawn Loyd, my partner-in-crime and traveling companion, and I met our fearless guide, Mike. Mike was equipped with the boats, Loyd's ducky, and the shuttle that was nothing short of a lowrider. By coincidence, Mike hailed from a small town in South Carolina close to where we spent our days as crafty youngsters. With that in mind, we hoped it wouldn't be the blind leading the blind on the Pacuare.

Roughly one hour after leaving the little mountain town of Turrialba, we reached the steep descent to the put-in, and not a moment too soon. The difficult roads had administered what the locals affectionately term a "Costa Rican Massage," by virtue of gargantuan potholes and ruthless washboards. The put-in is located in a small area named Tres Equis, where we had to pay a 300 colones (Costa Rican currency equivalent to roughly \$1) access fee before launching. We were greeted by a sunny day and, happily, the water level had retreated to a moderate flow after several weeks of heavy rains.

It was a perfect day for a swim, which is exactly what I managed to do in the first rapid of any consequence. I hoped we weren't in for a long day of



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Left: Loyd lounging in front of Pig Falls  
Right: Walker on Lower Huacas

"yard sales" with paddles/people/boats floating in all directions. But as the day progressed, I was able to relax and enjoy the sights and sounds of this classic tropical river. During the first half of the day we paddled enjoyable Class III whitewater. We stopped for a break at the Rios Tropicales jungle lodge, a lovely spot nestled in the edge of the forest overlooking the river. The local family, sewing as caretakers for the lodge, greeted us. They were all out playing in the river. I chatted in broken Spanish with the 16-year-old son who was playing on a large wave conveniently located just in front of his house. He was an impressive boater and he gave us some tips on playing his wave. I looked at the wave and thought to myself, this is one lucky kid. We stayed and surfed with him for a while, then continued down into the Pacuare Gorge.

## The gradient increased as we entered the Gorge, making the second half of the day a bit more eventful.

There were a handful of Class IV rapids, including Upper and Lower Huacas "Cemetery," Dos Montanes, and Cimarron. With surgical precision, Mike led the way through these rapids and their tricky cross currents and sticky, thumping holes. Below Lower Huacas, we passed a beautiful cascade that tumbled over a 70-foot cliff. Mike related a tale about these falls that he had heard from some of the indigenous Bribri Indians who inhabit the Pacuare's banks. With squealing sound effects and dramatic gestures, Mike explained that a wild pig had recently toppled over this cascade and drowned in the rapid below. It must have been quite a sight. Not wanting to get hit in

the head with a flying pig, we continued downriver!

Not only does the Pacuare boast excellent whitewater, but also the wildlife is amazing. This is best appreciated during breaks in the whitewater. During one such lull in the action, Loyd, lounging in his ducky with popcorn and remote in hand, managed to spot an elusive 3-toed sloth high in a spindly Guarumo tree. Mike told us that the sloth eat: the leaves from the Guarumo tree, which act as a sedative elixir and contributes to the animals' slow, deliberate motions. The Montezuma Oriole is also frequently seen flying in and out of its elongated nest. According to local lore, the male builds the nest to the female's liking. If she is dissatisfied with the outcome, she tears it down and makes the male start over. With a hint of sarcasm in his silky southern drawl, Mike commented, "Sounds like one of my previous relationships."

Below: Mike at the site of proposed dam.





After we had dismissed the idea that Mike had previously had relations with a Montezuma Oriole, we noticed we were entering a part of the river where the gorge walls constrict and form sheer rock faces 60 feet high. It was an eerie place, though the river here was mostly flat. It reminded me of a classic scene from *Apocalypse Now*. Unfortunately there was evidence of government activity in this stretch of the river: footbridges, gages, and power lines... remnants of a feasibility study for a hydroelectric project. This project is supposed to begin in 2000. It is hard to imagine how anyone could destroy the spectacular scenery and challenging whitewater we had just experienced. I was glad to have had the opportunity to paddle the Pacuare before disaster strikes.

As the sun reappeared from behind the declining rock faces, Mike told us that our day on the river was nearly over. The last whitewater was leisurely Class III. We passed under the historic remains of the "Jungle Train" just above the take-out in Siquirres. The Jungle Train was the lifeline of Costa Rica until 1990, used to transport bananas and coffee to ports on the Caribbean. It is no longer in use and tropical flora, clever graffiti, and discarded alcoholic beverage containers are engulfing the trestles.

Our 15-mile day had come to an end. On the ride back to Turrialba the warm and satisfying euphoria of post-trip exhaustion set in. We all agreed that the Pacuare was one of the most picturesque rivers we had ever seen. Our day was everything we had imagined; the Pacuare truly is the soul of beauty.

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Above: *Walken* on the Lower Huacas.

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*Editor's note: Walter Daves served as an intern for American Whitewater this summer, working with Events Manager Jane Abbot. More information about opposition to the proposed hydro project on the Pacuare is available from Rio Tropicales ([www.riotropicales.com](http://www.riotropicales.com)).*



# BOATBALL ... A Whole New Game!

Story and photos

Sonny Salomon

Cartoons

Greg Cravens

To explain what boatball is, first understand what it's not. It's not kayak polo. Although that is what Memphis boaters called it when they started, it has evolved into a new and very different paddle sport. Boatball is to kayak polo, as American football is to soccer... similar, but different. Kayak polo and boatball both involve kayaks, teams, and a ball, but that is the end of the similarity.

Another note: it's not for your kayaking group, if you live near whitewater...you just don't need it, and you will have trouble getting enough people to play regularly. If, however, you are unfortunate enough to live in a community with an active group of paddlers; and you are far enough away from the river to get "whitewater horny," you are going to love this game!

Kayak polo is an "off-season" game usually played in a swimming pool.

There is specialized equipment, a lot of rules, referees, and beyond the reach of the average boater. Boatball, however, is a warm-weather game played on a lake or wide flatwater...it is too wide and too fast for a pool. It is simple, cheap, and adaptable...the touch football of boating. If you are still reading because you live some distance from whitewater, you already know that paddling every other weekend just isn't enough to stay in shape for real whitewater paddling. Playing boatball, twice a week, will make you a prince among paddlers and a king of the river!

**THE FIELD:** The field is marked simply with two buoys. We use two, anchored, large, plastic balls. These are the sit-on and bounce-type balls with handles. These anchored balls mark the goal lines. The distance be-

tween the goals is variable depending on the number of players ... approximately 50 to 100 yards? The more players, the longer the field. There are no sidelines. We use a miniature basketball (souvenir type). It is easy to grasp when wet and easy to throw. These two simple goal markers and the ball are all the "special equipment" you need to play boatball.

**THE GAME:** Two teams are picked in the time-honored tradition of sandlot football. Two captains are chosen (always different). They pick teams with alternating "picks" from the group. The captain who got "second pick" gets the ball and the goal of his choice. The other team goes to the opposite end. This separation of teams is only necessary at the very beginning of the game or when new players join the game. The ball is brought into play

## B O A T B A L L ... A Whole New Game!

from behind the goal line. The object is to advance the ball down the field to the other goal line, by passing and dribbling, to score. Once in possession of the ball, a player cannot paddle, only pass or dribble. A goal is scored by passing to a teammate beyond the goal line (an imaginary line formed by the buoy). The ball must be caught "in the air." Once the ball crosses the goal line and hits the water, the play is "dead," and the ball goes over to the other team. The ball is always "in play" between the goal lines...there is no "time out." The exception to this is if a player capsizes. If the player rolls, the play continues. If not, all play stops to facilitate an Eskimo rescue or swimmer retrieval. Otherwise, the play stops momentarily after a successful goal or an unsuccessful attempt at a goal when the ball is "dead." At these pauses, captains can call for a "water break" or a "spandex break." A "spandex break" is to admire a fit jogger or rollerblader on the perimeter trail of our lake. When everybody is ready to play again, the game continues.

**THE RULES:** Remember, we are dealing with kayakers — there are not many.



1. **THE MAIN RULE:** No paddling with the ball. Once in possession of the ball, a player can only pass or "dribble." A dribble is simply throwing the ball ahead on the water and paddling to it.

2. No "mauling." Mauling is interpreted by the nature of your particular group. This would be analogous to "personal fouls." Common sense and good sportsmanship are the keys here. Boat collisions are inevitable and blocking a boat with a boat is okay. Paddle blocking a pass or a reception is okay. However, players should avoid amidships collisions, which could result in spearing. Blocking should be

done on the ball, not on hands.

3. No "grabbing." Pushing off another boat or paddle with the hands is okay...just do not "grab" skirts, loops, paddles etc. This would be analogous to "holding" in football.

4. No paddle throwing.

That's all the rules. The rest is simply common sense. In deference to my son, the kayak instructor and law student, all players must wear a PFD and helmet...duh! Players should know and consider the paddling skill levels of others. Excellent paddlers are more aggressive with other expert paddlers and lay off beginners. If another capsizes a player, good sportsmanship would dictate helping him up and giving him the ball.

There are no referees, and violators of the rules are subject to the "shame" and ridicule of everyone. Repeat offenders of the rules and poor sports should be taken into the parking lot and beaten senseless.

**THE PLAY:** Bringing the ball in and moving the ball up the field is much like basketball. It is quick, precise passing and fast-break paddling. Play can involve familiar basketball terms such as "fast breaks," "dribbling," "picks," "give and go," etc. Defenses can be "zones," "man to man," "presses", etc. As the

# B O A T B A L L ... A Whole New Game!



ball nears the goal, offenses and defenses resemble football pass plays into the end zone. Boat types have definite advantages and disadvantages. Long boats have speed, but short boats can turn quickly. As a rule, players tend to

defend boats and boaters with similar characteristics and abilities. Speed paddling is the norm in this game. The fact that the ball is always "in play" results in nonstop paddling where blocks and steals can immediately re-

verse the direction of the play. Paddling 40 yards as fast as you can, or trying to outmaneuver a defender in the end zone 20 to 30 times, twice a week will give you paddling power you never knew you possessed. Paddling endurance increases phenomenally. There are no eddies in boatball. A good boatball game with 8 to 12 players for an hour or two will leave you more exhausted than any river paddling.

Our season is during Daylight Savings Time, Tuesday and Thursday, after work, until sundown.

Because there are no expenses, we do not need sponsorship or organization; therefore, no one is legally liable. An interesting fact is boatball is the only game played in the Memphis parks where all the players carry sticks and wear big knives!

There are also a few unexpected benefits of boatball. Our game has become a fixture in a park lake surrounded by walkers, joggers, bikers, and rollerbladers. Our game has been featured in news and sports stories on all the local TV stations. If you play boatball in a public place, your game will grow. People, who want to know about kayaking make first contact with the boatball players just because we are out there in plain view. The local outfitter, sponsor of the largest bicycle race in Tennessee, has included an exhibition boatball tournament in this year's race events. Who knows? If this catches on in another city, let me know. Your team can come to Memphis, eat barbecue, and be in the historic first intercity boatball game. There is only one small problem for spectators of this game. After watching the fierce competition and nonstop paddling action, a bystander will come up after the game and ask, "Who won?"

"Win? Heck, we've never kept score!"

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# FOLLOW THE



PHOTO: CHUCK

## THE MANIAC

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PHOTO: JED WEINGARTER © 1998

## THE SKREEM

A quick, responsive, comfortable, stable and forgiving creekboat.

PHOTO: CHUCK



## THE BEAST

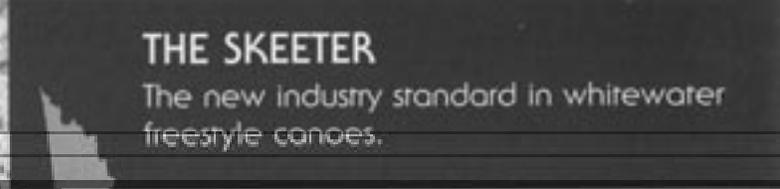
A high performance playboat comfortable enough for bigger paddlers.



PHOTO: JED WEINGARTER © 1998

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The Sesia Rodeo in Italy.  
Photo by Sam Drevo.



This summer I traveled overseas with some of my closest friends to compete on the European Freestyle Kayaking Circuit. For a month and a half, Eric Southwick, Dan Gavere, Sam Drevo, Astrid Ensign and I were fortunate enough to kayak and compete on the beautiful and scenic rivers of Austria, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, France, and Germany.

## Solid Gold on the European Freestyle Circuit



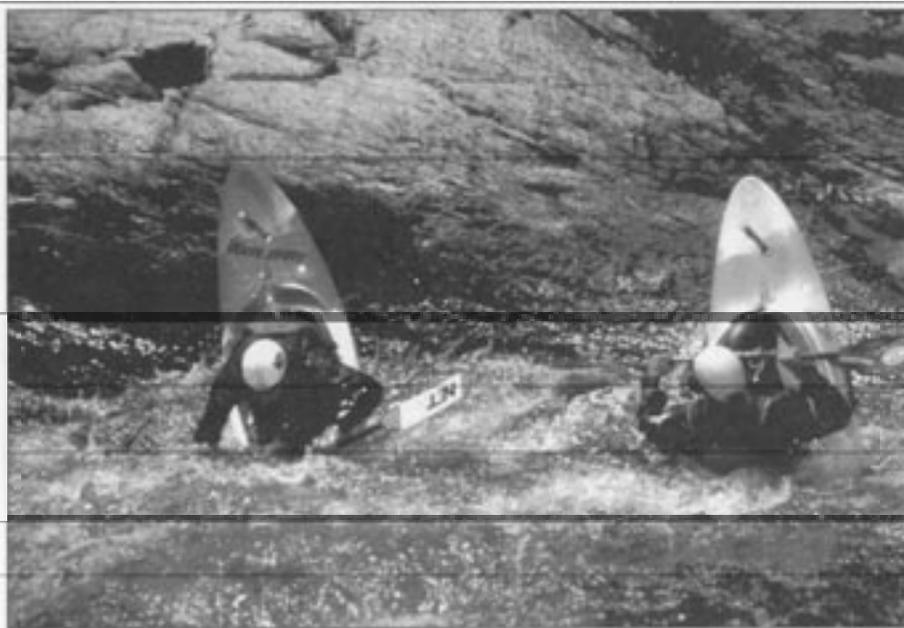
by Tanya Shuman



Top down: Erik Southwick throwing down in Lofar, Austria. Photo by Tanya Shuman. Dan Gavere and Wick having fun together. Photo by Tanya Shuman. Dan Gavere cartwheeling away in Bermgarten, Switzerland. Photo by Tanya Shuman.

I can't decide what I enjoyed most about Europe; the people, the culture, the food, the rivers.... the list is endless. In fact, most of us were contemplating citizenship before our return home. Needless to say, the freestyle kayaking events in each country elicited an enthusiastic thumbs up from us Yankees.

So that you may fully understand our European experience, I will go into a little more detail. European freestyle kayaking competitions are accompanied by a festival, not just a whitewater festival, but a town celebration that may attract hundreds to thousands of people. The spectators line the banks of the river drinking beer and wine, and dancing while cheering us on. The timing of the event schedule is essential for crowd participation. European competitions don't begin until at least two in the afternoon. They start their competitions in the afternoon and are still able to finish much before dark. The reason is quite simple. No practice rides and no wasted time between competition rides. In other words, once one ride is done, the next competitor immediately enters the hole ready or not. If you're not ready, you're out of luck. Their philosophy is that you've had all day to practice so why waste time. I would definitely have to agree. With this schedule, I can sleep until eleven in the morning, get a cup of cappuccino, take a couple of practice rides, and still not be late for the competition. How wonderful!!



A key element to these spectacular events, especially to a disco queen like me, is the music selection. The DJ turns up the heat of the competition with the music. You can't help wanting to cut the latest moves on or off the shore. You feel as though you are at a nightclub with everyone dancing and partying. As a competi-



tor, you're the solid gold dancer performing in front of a live audience. With the quick change over of competitors and no practice rides, you're basically watching a film in fast forward. There is no time to get bored especially with the rhythm of the music.

Another essential ingredient to these freestyle competitions is the splendid celebrations that occur after the preliminaries and finals. Following the preliminaries on Saturday, the competitors are treated to an incredible dinner. Food is served on heartwood tables about 20 yards long with a keg of wine at the end of each table. The atmosphere is filled with joyous laughter and entertainment. My favorite dinner was in Spain where supper was served at the base of a beautiful castle. After the dinner, usually around ten at night, everyone heads to the Town Square and joins in the carnival of events, which almost always end at the disco.

Finals are not until three on Sunday afternoon allowing one to fully experience the European festivities. After the finals, another celebration occurs for the victorious contestants. The winners are presented with medals on a stage in front of cheering fans. You almost feel as though you are in the Olympics winning the gold medal.



Clockwise: Astrid Ensign, Lisa Beck, and Tanya Shuman hanging out before competition in Austria. The author, Tanya Shuman, getting vertical in Sort, Spain. Photo by Eric Southwick. Sam Drevo competing in the Italian Competitions. Photo by Tanya Shuman

I hope to return to Europe soon. I made many wonderful friends overseas. I can only hope to repay them with the same hospitality that they gave me when they come to the United States. Thank you, my friends in Europe, for such a splendid time.



Featured Werner "Side Kick" on Tracy Clapp photo by  Wolfin Reagher

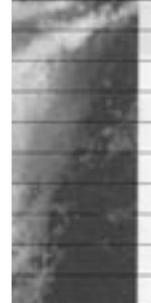
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Outside the Duluth, Minnesota hospital John Kiffmeyer had a lot on his mind. In two days he would fly to Perth, Australia to surprise his girlfriend with a marriage proposal. Tonight his paddling partner, a visiting expert boater from the Southeast, had broken an ankle and fractured a heel after pitoning at the bottom of a 30-foot slide on the Beaver River. John's truck and boat were still 60 miles away up the sparsely populated Lake Superior shoreline. It was dark, cold, and he hadn't had any dinner.



ck,

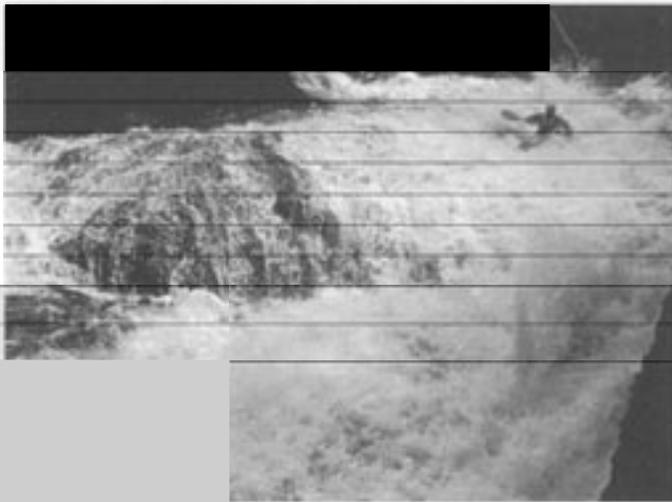
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Worse still, Minnesota's premier creek run, the Cascade River, was running and most paddlers were already camped out near the put-in, 2 hours away. John was praying for salvation. They say salvation comes in mysterious shapes, but a failing Volkswagen water pump?

Earlier that evening in the Twin Cities, Jim Rada, Tim Hebrink, Paul Everson, and I loaded "Bessie," Paul's VW bus, for a weekend of paddling. Tim tied down the last boat and Paul turned the key, but a terrible death rattle issued from Bessie's engine instead of the steady thump-thump-thump Minnesota paddlers have come to count on after 285,000 miles. The consensus was imminent water pump failure. It was nearly dark by the time we repacked our tents, gear, stoves, food, beer, and bodies into Tim's Jeep for the long ride north.





My apprehension hadn't waned by the cool, overcast late May dawn. I glanced nervously at a narrow tongue of dark water that gave way to an explosion of white, as the riverbed dipped and ducked out of sight. Across the river bobbed a comforting sight, a luxuriant foliage of old growth beard and long hair splaying from a Butch Goring-style hockey helmet, which flaked red and green paint the color of the ancient moss-covered rocks in this part of Minnesota's North Shore. The helmet, fastened by an old shoe string, protected Jim Rada's head. The helmet's vestigial design was a holdover from the early days of boating when careening down Class III snowmelt in an aluminum canoe was all the excitement a body needed on a cold spring day. Jim, a pioneering Minnesota creek boater, is a smooth expert paddler who explored most of the now popular runs when the current crop of boaters were still learning to read. But in all his years of paddling he had never run the drop that waited below us. Nor had I.

With good reason, I said to myself. Below us howled Hidden Falls, a 150-foot long slide losing 60 feet down a warped streambed. The current twisted over two rooster tails that aerated the water to a sheer white and then thundered into a



*Top down: John Linn running Hidden Falls. John Alt in Discretion Drop. Tim Hebrink dropping over Chastity.*

river-wide hole. This falls, which kicks off three miles of superb Class IV-V+ creeking on the Cascade River just south of the old Lake Superior fishing port of Grand Marais, was run for the first time by Robert Ruffner in 1994. I first saw Hidden Falls in 1998 when I scouted it with a dozen or so other paddlers. The river was running high and the large hole at the bottom rumbled hungrily. I watched as Dan Monskey, a daring paddler, exploded across the top rooster tail and buried his nose in the large stopper wave above the monster hole. The boat quivered through the wave and skipped harmlessly across the top of the hole.

I shrugged. "Not bad," I declared to Rod Thompson, who was getting set to videotape the entire run. Just then, Kevin Crochetiere came rocketing around the corner. A shallow spot caught his stern, sending him skidding backwards into the white void below, like a Geo Metro dancing uncontrollably across black ice into the oncoming path of a twenty-ton MNDOT snowplow. The hole snatched him in its jaws like a grizzly seizing an unlucky salmon.

"Uh-oh," muttered Rod, eagerly focusing on Kevin.

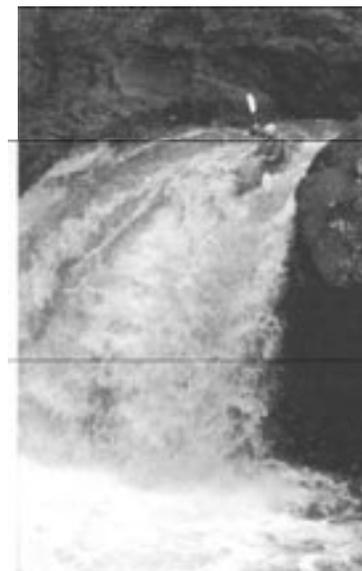
"Uh-oh," I echoed. I was glad to be on shore and not in the hole.

Kevin struggled to stay upright in the

icy water. His cheeks puffed out as he wrestled with the backwash and eyed the edge of the ledge that waited patiently to windowshade him.

The struggle continued. Throw ropes came out.

But Kevin's perseverance was rewarded. He sculled slowly toward a tongue of water jetting out the right side of the drop, and, at



*The current twisted over two rooster tails that aerated the water to a sheer white and then thundered into a river-wide hole.*

last, spun clear. That was enough excitement for me. I dragged my boat through the trees to seal launch into the pool, safely below the threat of the rumbling hole.

But today, one year later, the water was lower, and after watching a handful of other kayakers skip across the top of the hole, I returned to my boat, heart pounding. From my small eddy at the lip of the falls, I could just make out a raised paddle blade far below. I tried not to think about the fact that I had not paddled in two months, or that I had only paddled about a quarter mile of river to reach the falls, or that a flip in this rapid would result in a violent beating on the rasp-like riverbed. Practicing the deep breathing exercises I learned at a beginning Yoga class, I visualized slipping out of the eddy into the smooth dark water, taking a few strong strokes, and letting the water launch me off the lip of the first rooster tail. I would cleave through the second, boat scrabbling madly across the shallow spots, crank a quick left sweep into an exploding typewriter wave, and



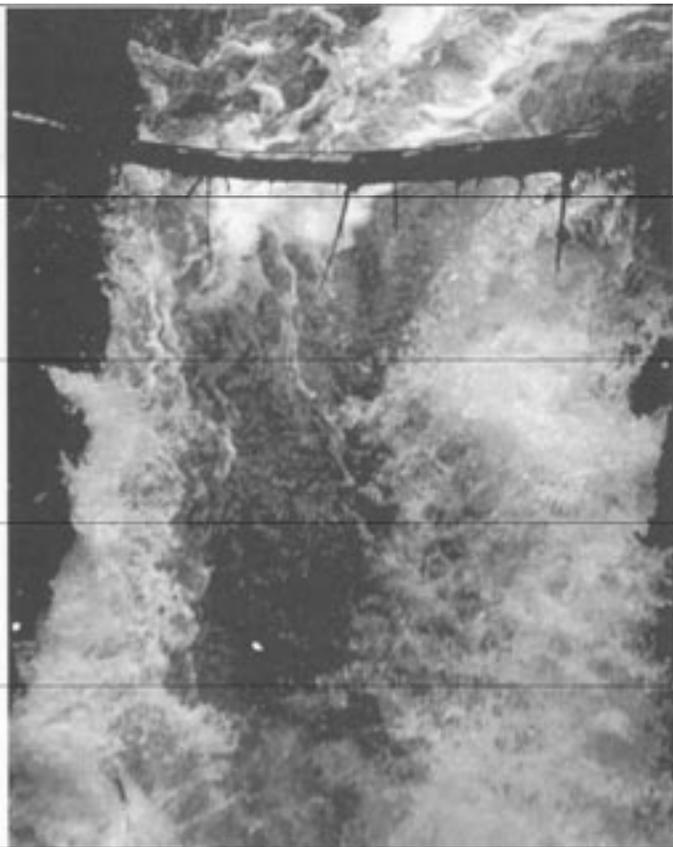
make the final shot over the last ledge and through the hole. The cold fish curry I had for breakfast was chemically altering itself into small bits of cotton that I tried to spit out, one after the other.

The nose of my Rokit porpoised into the current and I was off, accelerating like a dragster down the rock face. I was ejected from the water once, then twice. Spray flew. Trees sped by. Water detonated. A wall of white rushed up at me. My boat bashed through and suddenly I was at the bottom. A second passed while my brain caught up to my body, which seemed to have passed through space faster than my mind could register. My flesh tingled from the fine warmth of adrenaline seeping across new endings.

Our party watched for Jim's Creamsickle orange Necky Jive to appear. Soon, he too was grinning in the pool below after a successful first run, drinking in the moment. A ribbon of water spilled over the lip of the canyon to shower into the river. Downstream awaited a deep canyon containing an exotic smorgasbord of waterfalls, steep slides curling across rock the color of dried blood, and sprawling ledges cloaked in the cedar-scented shadows of the boreal forest.

The spray-laden air was heavy with anticipation. Around the corner lay Discretion Drop, a fine V- combination of ledges and holes, with one particularly sticky hydraulic notorious for forcing hard choices: air or ego. Even the proudest paddlers stuck upside down here struggle to explain the involuntary death clutch that peels back spray skirt and initiates a violent tumble through a silent icy world in search of precious air.

The canyon soon envelops us. Rock above, below, and on either side is tethered to the writhing sinews of the water, which dissolve into horizon line after horizon line showing only more rock. We're paddling on words and trust. Scout-



*Top down: Jethro Hollady after a successful first Pre-K descent.*

*Pete Roth in the drop below Chastity.*



*Counterclockwise: John Linn looking over Libido. Steve Smith and Hal Crimmel looking at Hidden Falls. John Kiffmeyer on his way to Australia.*

*Right page: Lover's Leap*

ing is nearly impossible in the steep canyon, and as we paddle through the misty cool the lines are passed upstream via muffled voices:

"Moose Rock. Start left, go middle. Follow me."

"Seven Foot Falls. Run left of the rock, boof right."

"Short John. Follow the main current over the lip. Land angled right." A flip below Short John and the sharp riverbed instantly tears the flesh from the knuckles of my left hand. Skin hangs in strips. My hand shakes as crimson drips into the water.

Long John soon presses the group up against a crumbling rock face, daring us to lose control as it skitters down 20 feet around a banked luge-like slide. More ledges wait downstream and we slip silently over water that tugs our boats softly down glassy planes into calm pools, again and again, in a soothing section of Class IV. The river moderates briefly, twisting through short rocky drops bristling in places with giant softwood tree trunks.

"Start next to the small birch overhanging the river. Watch for trees." The word passes upstream. Brightly colored kayaks disappear over the blind entrance to Vegetable Grater, a shallow boat-beating slide. My blue Rockit careens through a small hole, plastic shredding on barely submerged rock as I knock down the slide. A powerful ledge hole soon sweeps to the right and suddenly the canyon broadens into Class II, where the river proffers a take-out.

Those rejecting the offering have a short respite, before the water gathers its strength and pushes through a small, treacherous slot just a dozen yards upstream from a short waterfall-studded section inside state park boundaries. From here to Lake Superior the Cascade does a St. Vitus dance in an exuberant celebration of rock, water, and gravity. The first drop swirls around an island of stone into a long deep pool that lies just above a sleek waterfall christened Deep Throat. Here the river pinches down to a boat length, then sinks 20 feet.

On shore, a hiking trail attracts visitors to a fenced overlook. There a curious middle-aged couple wearing matching white designer jogging suits asked me why the drop was called Deep Throat. "Watch," I entreated. But Tim Hebrink's line provided them with no clues, for Tim sailed so cleanly off the drop he didn't even get his face wet. The next two boaters, however, provided kinetic answers that would make even Monica Lewinsky blush. Deep Throat gently fondled Paul Everson and his boat and expertly swallowed them out of sight. Seconds later John Linn grazed the drop's watery skin, and his Whiplash instantly disappeared into the water's hungry dark mouth. Seconds passed until John, released from Deep Throat's seductive caress, limply squirted out upside down.

The designer jogging suits eyed each other knowingly.

In the gorge below the stern of John's boat pinned against the rock wall,



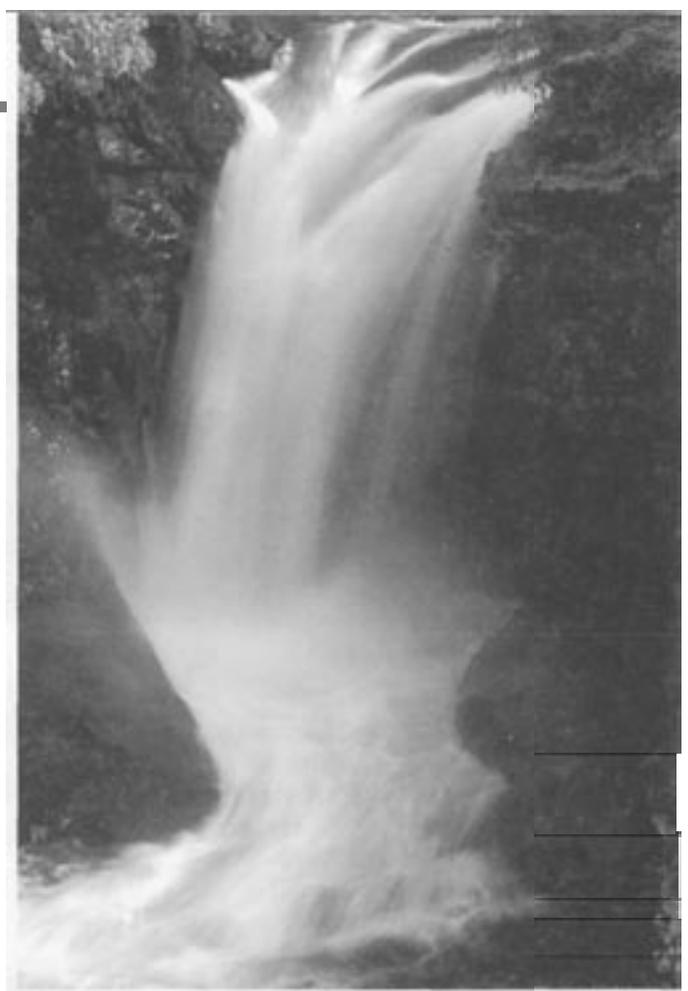
leaving his torso hanging half out of the water and his head underwater in a position that made rolling or breathing impossible. Seconds ticked by. Finally he worked free and set up to roll, missing once, missing twice, then again, the current carrying him swiftly towards the next cascade. "Come on," whispered a voice behind me, and on the next try he popped up, straightened the boat, and stroked hard toward Chastity/Sodomy.

The most technically difficult drop on the river, Chastity/Sodomy brings the Cascade to a furious boil, as it slides into a small box canyon directly above a 20-foot falls. The clean line is to stay upright while negotiating a 90-degree bend in the river, then to quickly scurry left and drop over Chastity. One missed stroke or flip and the current violently flushes the boat and paddler to Sodomy. This meatgrinder drives 15 feet into a rock wall, seethes into a narrow cleft, and exits painfully over a ten-foot drop into the pool below. Several unfortunate local paddlers have been, well, sodomized, and those that have, religiously carry the drop today.

I watched Tim and Paul run cleanly, then stroke hard to shoot under a downed tree and over another falls that drops six feet into a powerful hole. Then John Linn came into Chastity/Sodomy, his boat twisting slightly as the current piled into the canyon wall; suddenly it flipped just feet above the falls. Those on shore watched with horrified intensity. Another second and John would be swept upside down into Sodomy and worked over the bony rock face. Fortunately, displaying the reflexes that he had come to rely on as a professional water skier, John rolled up in an impossibly fashioned quick response and made two deft strokes that carried him over Chastity into the waiting pool. A few more strokes took him over the next drop and safely to the eddy above the final section. This solid Class V+ stretch packs a potent one-two combination: *Libido*, an 18 foot drop into a narrow rock kettle, which discharges into *Lover's Leap*, a thundering 35 foot grand finale near the Lake Superior shoreline.

Boaters were milling on the shore above *Libido*, pointing and frowning. As I approached, Paul Everson was trying to persuade John Kiffmeyer not to run, due to the dangerous eddy fence that could trap a paddler in the cauldron-like plunge pool. John was confident he could escape the cauldron and determined to run both falls. Paul reminded John that his ticket to Australia was non-refundable, but generously offered to go in his stead and offer the proposal *in absentia* to his pretty girlfriend. "Hmm," grunted John, tugging gently on his goatee, "That cauldron *does* look bad at this level."

Last I heard, John's nuptial errand was favorably received, and his new bride-to-be has set a wedding date...outside paddling season.



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# Exploring Panamanian Whitewater— A Timeless

## Frontier

By Ian Andrews

John shouted for me to take up slack as I belayed his Freefall up the edge of the almost vertical forested gorge. I was overlooking the Lower Rio Caldera, which dropped out 150 feet below me. The Rio Caldera flows steep south out of the rough neck mountain town of Boquete, Panama. We had started our day late, about noon, and had come upon a narrow gorge while the light of the late afternoon faded. We learned later it was an unboatable slot canyon that lasted for miles. Of course we had forgotten the essential pieces of Panamanian boating gear: food, water, long trousers, and the ever important sharp machete. We took apart our breakdown paddles to hack up the hill, talking loudly so as not to alarm any large snakes.

When the walls of the canyon became too steep (70 degrees) to drag our heavy boats, we clipped them off to a leaning tree and gained the ridge unencumbered. We kicked loose fist-sized chunks of basalt that ripped downward through the heart of jungle sprawl. Relieved to attain the plateau, John descended again to clip in the boats and I belayed them to the rim. The moon was rising as we bushwhacked over the base of Volcan Baru toward the sound of cars and squawking diesel chicken trucks.



*Ian Andrews focused on the eddy and tearin' it up.*

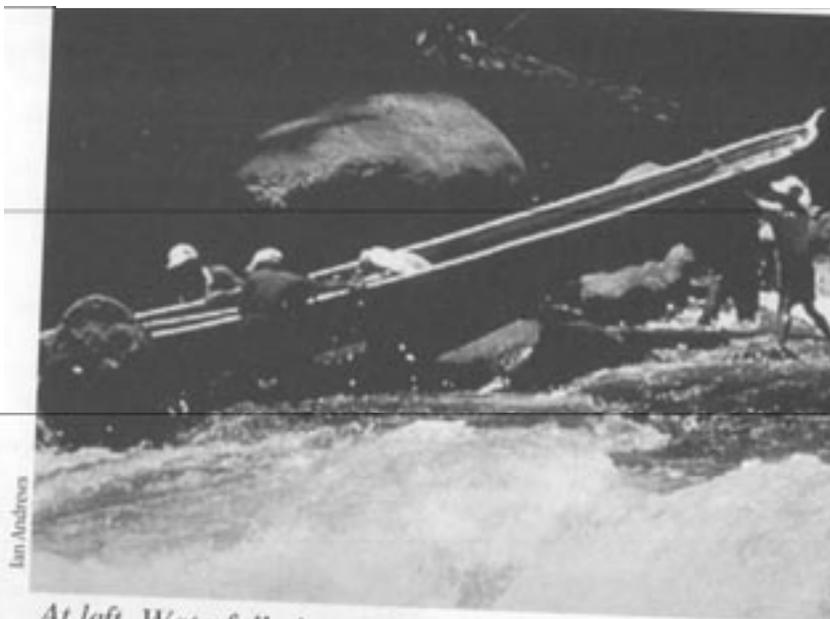
Darryl Kniskern



*Ian Andrews dropping off "White Rabbit," Rio Teribe.*

Darryl Kniskern

The first few months we spent in Panama were incredibly hectic. Three of us, Hugh Bailey, John Miller, and I, left Nantahala Outdoor Center last fall to help train raft guides working for Chiriqui River Rafting in the small town of Boquete. The town lies high on the slopes of Vocan Baru, which forms the country's continental divide. It takes water that falls on the top of the



Ian Andrews

*Above, Portaging upstream, like a fish out of water, along the Rio Teribe (White Rabbit rapid).*



Hugh Bailey

a makeshift base camp. Hector Sanchez, expert Panamanian whitewater and nature guide, directed our attention to the contour lines around the base of the Volcano.

We asked Hector to scare us a little. So he took us to Gauley-like big water on the Chiriqui Viejo. Later, while exploring the headwaters of the Viejo, we almost wound up spending the night out, after a "15 mile day" turned into a 25 mile day of continuous Class IV. We had just ten minutes of light when we reached the take-out. Our shuttle driver had lost faith and left.

We asked Hector about 15 foot waterfalls. So he led us to a isolated first descent of the Rio Macho de Monte near his childhood home. That first descent ended as many of our explorations had, on foot, boats in tow. After running a 10 foot wide slot canyon ripe with 10 ft vertical ledges, the gorge opened up. I eddied out after bopping down some Class III and scouted the next horizon line. We had come upon a 150 foot vertical drop. We portaged, only to find an armed guard from a nearby dam who would not let us launch to run the rest of the river. That day of paddling had ended.

## February, 1999 Rio Teribe, Bocas Del Toro Province

After spending most of the winter on the south side of the country, we turned our sights to the Caribbean side of Panama. Specifically, the Rio Teribe, which starts high upon the northern flanks of Cerro Fabrega (3335 m), part of the same chain of mountains as Baru. This is an extremely remote region. This fact makes running the Rio Teribe a major undertaking requiring weeks of logistical planning. The upper sections of this river cannot be accessed in a day, unlike the creeks we had been exploring earlier in the winter. We needed to rely on each other, since help would be far away. Trust between everyone in our large group of porters and expeditioners would be critical. It became apparent to me that even though we were leaving the urban sprawl for the back country, human issues would be far more important than if we were just making a day run.

The Rio Teribe is home to a band of

3,475 m volcano less than 80 km to reach the ocean. This creates an average gradient of 43 m/km (200 ft/mile), which in boating terms is Class IVN. The rainy season was in full effect and the creeks were all raging.

## November, 1998 Rio Macho de Monte Gorge, Lower Rio Caldera, Upper Rio Chiriqui Viejo.

Detailed geologic maps were spread all over the kitchen. Glasses and candles held the straining corners as we poured over the contour lines of the US Military survey maps. We had turned the Sanchez's Coffee Farm into



Ian Andrews

*ABOVE, Trying to find out where we are. Ancient knowledge and a GPS combine. Abilino pointing, John Miller, and Doug Geiger look on. AT RIGHT, Ian Andrews catching an eddy, "Girl Scout Killer" rapid, Rio Teribe.*

whitewashed office. They listened intently as we tried to come to an agreement with the King and his advisors. It was hard to dicker with a King, especially when surrounded by his people. After heated negotiations about pay and time frames, he agreed to let us trek above the palace. The "story" the Teribe told, about how long it would take to reach the upper sections of the river kept changing. This frustrated us, but they knew the terrain better than anyone. So, to ar-

What was unique about this trip was the way we reached the put-in. There were no trails, so we used the river to move upstream. A previous expedition to the nearby Rio Changuinola had planned to drop over the ridge from the south side of the country during the rainy season. Gravity was on their side, but they had trouble locating their put-in once they started to descend through the jungle.

Our "ascent" reminded me of

people who call themselves the Teribe. They have a king who lives in the town of Seiyik. His palace is built along the clear flowing river. Special permission had to be gained from the King to allow us access to the upper reaches of the river. We were told that we were the first non-Teribe to be allowed to go there. The Teribe had once lived far up the watershed, but only to hide from the Spanish Conquistadors 200 years ago. Now only a hand full of the old timers had been that far up the river.

The Palace where Tito Santana (King of all Teribe) resides is also Police Headquarters, jail, and general meeting place for his people. Tito's office phone is a solar-powered pay phone that stands out back near the graveyard. He is a great listener and gives everyone a chance to voice their concerns before presenting his thoughts. The first time I met him, we were negotiating a price for the motor drivers and other Palenqueros (one who Palenques or Poles). He sat behind his small desk in a T-shirt and trousers, flanked by his chief of police and a rearing cardboard Jaguar cutout. I caught his piercing glance and noticed his eyes were dark and stoic.

Children giggled in the window behind us as the town elders huddled close to the only doorway in the small



Darryl Knudsen

gue about money was pointless. We were out of our element and we needed their help. Understandably Tito wanted the opportunity for his community to make some money. But, as gringos, we were guarded about their motivations. We were paying them to guide and protect us, although many of them had never been where we were headed. It shocked me that there were still places so remote on this continent.

Our team consisted of Doug Gieger, John Miller, Darryl Knudsen, and me. Our plan was to hike/motor/pole upstream as high as we could get. When we could go no higher with the dugout cayuco support team, we hoped to stash extra gear and make an alpine style ascent, with only our kayaks and enough food for a couple of days.

backcountry skiing. Going upstream we rode dugout cayucos, then hiked the shore as the Teribe motored or poled their craft up the edge of Class IV drops with our food and gear. If the rapids could not be poled, the boats were lined upstream around the rapids. If there was no way to line the boats, all of the gear, including motors, had to be carried around the rapids. Every once in a while the whole group would stop so the Teribe scouts could hunt or fish for dinner. If a pig or deer was spotted drinking from the river, one of the Palenqueros would quickly raise his rifle.

We started at sea level and climbed until it became too dangerous for everyone involved. It would be the highest upstream that any of our Teribe guides had been with their dugouts.

They were quite interested in the maps we had brought with us. They had never seen the topography they knew firsthand, so well documented and quantified. There were loud discussions over the "real" names of creeks and the location of their hunting camps amid the contour lines and greenery of the map. On our way upstream we passed the former dictator Manuel Noreiga's defunct jungle warfare camp and, to our surprise, a gauging station.

For three days we had traveled upstream, cut off from all signs of human existence, only to be confronted with a shiny silver gauge. It was there to monitor river levels for its eventual

all supported this expedition in hopes of saving the region from irresponsible development.

On the fifth day, we ditched our extra gear and made the final push to our "put-in," a place called Porto Palenque

it started to rain. We scattered to put gear away.

We have been out of our element. We feel like uncoordinated fools as we try to walk against the strong current on the slick river bed. Meanwhile, our Teribe guides move sure footedly and do not falter as they line their 600 lb. cayukas up Class IV water. They have no doubt been dubious about our ungraceful maneuvers and all the gear



Viejo. Here, the gorge widened. We spent the night under a quarter moon on a white gravel bar in the middle of the main river channel. We had no sleeping bags or ground pads and slept on banana leaves, bundled in everything we had with us. Even though we were in the jungle, the night was cold. I could not sleep past four in the morning because of the chill. After several cups of cowboy coffee on the morning of March 2, I sat beside the river and wrote in my journal:

*"I sit beside the river this morning as the clouds lift through the forest. The Teribe camp upstream is bustling and we are slowly coming alive in our camp as well. We are in a place that even the most experienced of our guides has seen only ten times. The sound of the river was with me all night. I couldn't write last night, because we were warned that lights attract large venomous snakes. Our guides routed out and killed a Ferdelance from under the banana leaves in their campsite. There is no anti-venom for this snake. Its bite is instantly fatal and they are very aggressive about their territory. Somewhere in between breaking the snakes back and roasting the boar that had been killed at lunch,*

*and food we haul with us upstream. They carry very little besides a back pack and some laundry soap, which they use every day to wash their clothes. They subsidize their light loads of rice, flour, and oil with fresh fish and the deer, pigs and rabbits that they kill.*

*We have been asked on several occasions what we are going to do once we get to the top. They are puzzled as to what we are up to. We know this, so*

damming. We discovered before we left Panama that the Rio Teribe and the neighboring Rio Changuinola hold 90% of Panama's hydroelectric potential. This gave us another impetus to run and document the ecological value of the Rio Teribe before a hydroelectric project could be mobilized. Patagonia Inc., Lotus Designs, Salamander, Chiriqui River Rafting, and NOC had

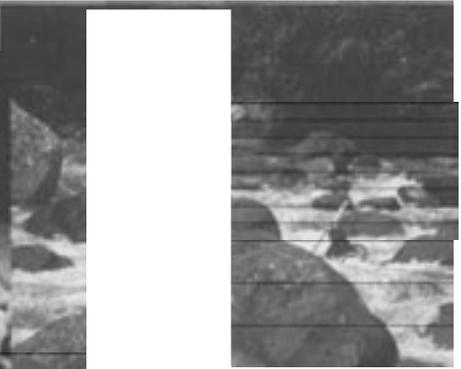
**ABOVE LEFT.** By land and sea—arriving in Chiriqui Grande, looking to find a water taxi. Hector Sanchez in foreground, John Miller helps out. **ABOVE MIDDLE.** Dugout canoes and gear photographed while stopped at Felix's home. **ABOVE RIGHT.** Solomon, the hunter of the group, with a freshly caught Bocas Chica or smallmouth.



*Gauging Station at Porto Palenque.*



*Saino (wild boar) hunted and killed while we ate lunch.*



*Lower Rio Caldera. Ian Andrews paddles late in the afternoon.*

once camp was set up we hopped in our boats and weaved our way through a rapid to show them what we are planning on doing once we reach the 'put-in.' After having run the drop, we surfed and played below the rapid. Finally I felt a little more in my element. Then I looked up to see a well-tanned body complete with mask, snorkel, and 4 foot metal spear crest the wave in front of me. I continue to be humbled.

After the rain let up, we saw flashlight beams as our guides made their way toward us. They were most likely expecting to see us wet and huddled. When they arrived to find us dry and warm under our tarp, they seemed pleasantly surprised. We invited them in and traded stories. We sat close to each other as the Teribe lounged. The fist sized pebbles of the gravel bar we sat on made it hard to relax.

Solomon, the most prolific hunter of the group, with the light from the fire catching his brow, told us about mishaps they've had in the jungle. Meanwhile, flashlights scanned the forested banks for jaguars. The moving beams momentarily caught his attention and he turned to follow them with his gaze.

Solomon told us that his brother had been attacked by a Jaguar recently. His brother had been out hunting birds with their father. They were using a boomerang to bring down their prey. As his brother went to collect a bird he had knocked from the air, Solomon noticed a Jaguar stalking his

brother. Before he could warn him, the cat pounced and knocked his brother down a small hill. He came to rest under a log as the cat jumped above him. Perched on the log, the Jaguar batted his brother's face back and forth with its paws until there was just blood where his mouth and nose should have been. Solomon yelled and raised his bow. The Jaguar fled. They rushed his brother to Panama City, where he is still rehabilitating. They were able to reconstruct his face, but he is still unable to visit home because the sun makes it swell.

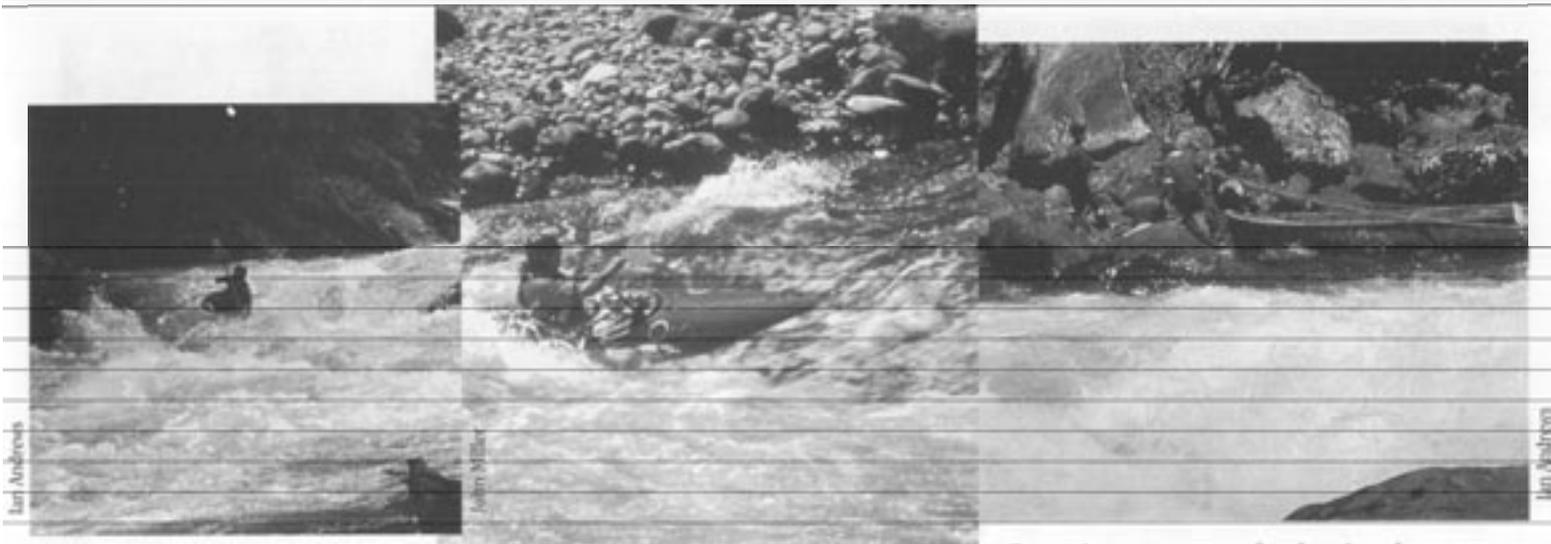
We all shifted uneasily in our gavel bar chairs. We were told that there would be a sentry posted all night to watch for Jaguars. Solomon pointed to a hammock strung between two strainers on the bank. He wanted to know who was sleeping there. Doug told him it was mine. Solomon said I had to move, I was too close to the forest. I would be an easy target for an attack since this was a well known Jaguar crossing. Needless to say, I quickly obliged and moved in under the tarp.

The topic of the gauging station we had passed the day before came up. One of the things we were trying to accomplish was to lay the ground work for some sort of future sustainable economic alternative to logging or dam building for these people. We asked them if they knew what the gauging station was for. They under-

stood it was for taking measurements, but had no idea why. When we told them of the future plans for a dam there, our shelter went momentarily silent. Then talk of organizing to oppose such a project carried into the night."

This had been a watershed moment, the continental divide of our trip. We started to share more responsibilities and food with the Teribe. The Teribe offered us smoked pork and freshly caught fish and we shared selections from our MREs (battle ready meals for US soldiers). On the morning of the fifth day we started downstream together. We could have kayaked back to the Palace in a day, but we went slowly and kept an eye out for the Teribe, as they had done for us. We watched them navigate the river effortlessly while on their feet. I watched them do cross bow poling moves to catch eddies. Jeff Snyder would be proud!

They would stop periodically to hunt and cut new poles from the jungle. They explained that the poles from the Canya Brava tree were the strongest and most flexible. I started to realize how our separate technologies had kept us isolated from each other. We had our plastic, lightweight gear for the specific task of kayaking downstream, while the Teribe used the land by hunting and fishing to go light and fast. We approached the same goal from different ends of the technologi-



*Doug Geiger kickin' ass.*

*Surfing the Rio Teribe, paddler Ian Andrews.*

*Portaging upstream after leaving the motor rigs behind.*

cal spectrum. They used knowledge of the land, while we chose knowledge of lightweight tools. This may explain why early on we spent the nights in separate camps. We weren't opposed to sharing our skills on or off the river, but there was a cultural gap between us that took some time to span.

I became known as the doctor because I ministered to the wounded. The Teribe quickly discovered the joys of Advil and I soon had to limit its distribution. Luckily no one got seriously hurt. Some of the river rocks were sharp and would slice right through the heel of the Teribe's heavy black rubber Welligtons. Such a rock left a two inch gash in one callused heel. Duct Tape was popular for taping wounds. Every morning there would be a meeting in our camp to tape up everyone's hot spots. This gave me a chance to get to know a few of our Palenqueros. The trust within the group grew stronger as we descended. The whitewater was excellent Class IV, but this became secondary to the friendships we had been building.

Most of our Palenqueros lived on the river above the Palace, so as we descended we were invited into their homes to meet their kin. They live on their own terms, near a clear blue river that brings them what they need. This expedition may have been a first kayak descent for us, but as we visited in their homes, I realized how long these people have lived along the Rio Teribe.

Their ancient knowledge transcends ours. Our "first descent" necessitated a pooling of knowledge and experiences.

We returned to "civilization" (Changuinola) without incident. When we parted at the end of our expedition, I gave my lucky cap to Ricardo, the Palenquero who safely poled my Overflow to the "put-in." He gave me two small turtles that he had cawed. This exchange exemplified to me what exploring unrun rivers should be about.

An "adventure" has been described as an experience during which you ask yourself at least twice, "What the hell am I doing here?" It isn't until we return to day-to-day activities that we gain perspective on the remote reality of the adventure experience. My expectations of the Panamanian wilderness and what I found were quite different.

I had expected to move through a remote jungle far away from other humans. What I learned as I traveled up the river bed was that human concerns, like trust and communication, followed me. On the river these human issues became far more important to me than they would have been if I were surrounded by people on a city street.

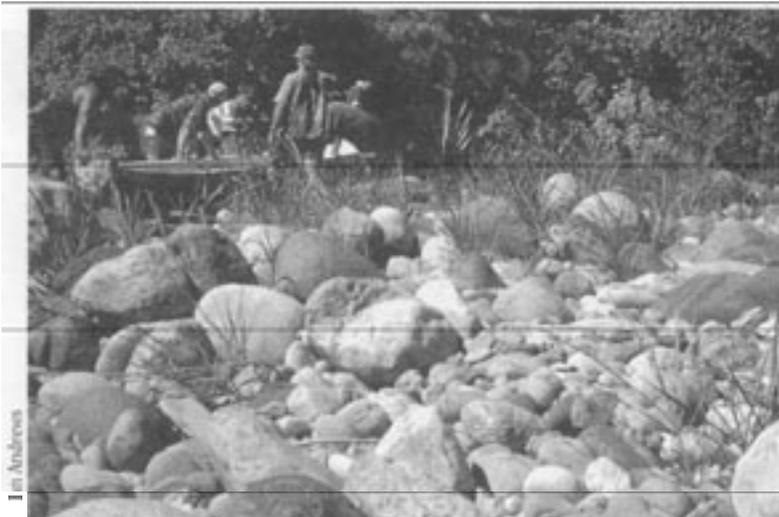
By moving between the modern world and the wilderness, we can learn about the importance of human bonds and come to understand our own personal motivations. And by experiencing a different and strange environment, we can gain insight into the reality of our existences.

## Motivations to Exploration

By **Ian Andrews**

When I was learning to paddle in the southeastern US, a first descent seemed like a mythical holy grail. I soon realized that such possibilities were all around me. This awareness drove me to explore the region. I quickly learned that first descents can be an ego driven game of hide and seek for those looking to create a piece of human history. This type of motivation can be bought and sold. It has become a coveted experience to be the first to kayak through a gorge. But this motivation loses sight of the reasons we boat. Being in a place no human has been, and experiencing systems and patterns that depend on themselves is an age-old pilgrimage. This can be lost in the race to tag a first descent.

Now my quest is cut from a different cloth. I go to remote places so that I may truly see life without filters. The Alaskan backcountry, hidden valleys off the Tibetan Plateau, the Panamanian jungle, all these places have their own "nonhuman" utility, their own use. These places are also where I gain perspective on my position in the human world. Paddling is an individual act but a group endeavor. You must work as a team and personally trust the boaters you paddle with, because your life of-



Ian Andrews

*Portaging upstream while the Teribe scout looks for fish ahead.*



Ian Andrews

*Poling Class IV. Tight and technical with a really long boat.*

ten depends on it. Without this trust, a first descent is a hollow achievement. Our group was looking for places not many people get to see. I was looking for a chance to examine my own motivations, not to prove something.

I have found that paddling remote rivers allows me to see the patterns of my life within a different light, a simplified light. I continually leave and return from wild places to a more physi-

cally comfortable existence among people. "Only from the extreme of comfort and leisure do we return willingly to adversity." (Yvon Chouinard).

The very idea of "wilderness" is a result of urban thinking. A "wilderness" is land set aside by city dwellers as a place to momentarily retreat from their urban reality. Without the city there would be no such thing as wilderness, only landscape. We go to this

wilderness, hoping for some enlightenment by passing from one extreme to another. This cycle of leaving and returning to remote places brings me a kind of balance. This movement has become my well.

*For more information about The Rio Teribe and the proposed dam contact Kara Sanchez at: [rafting@panama-rafting.com](mailto:rafting@panama-rafting.com)*



Ian Andrews

*The final upstream portage to our put-in at Porto Palenque Viejo.*

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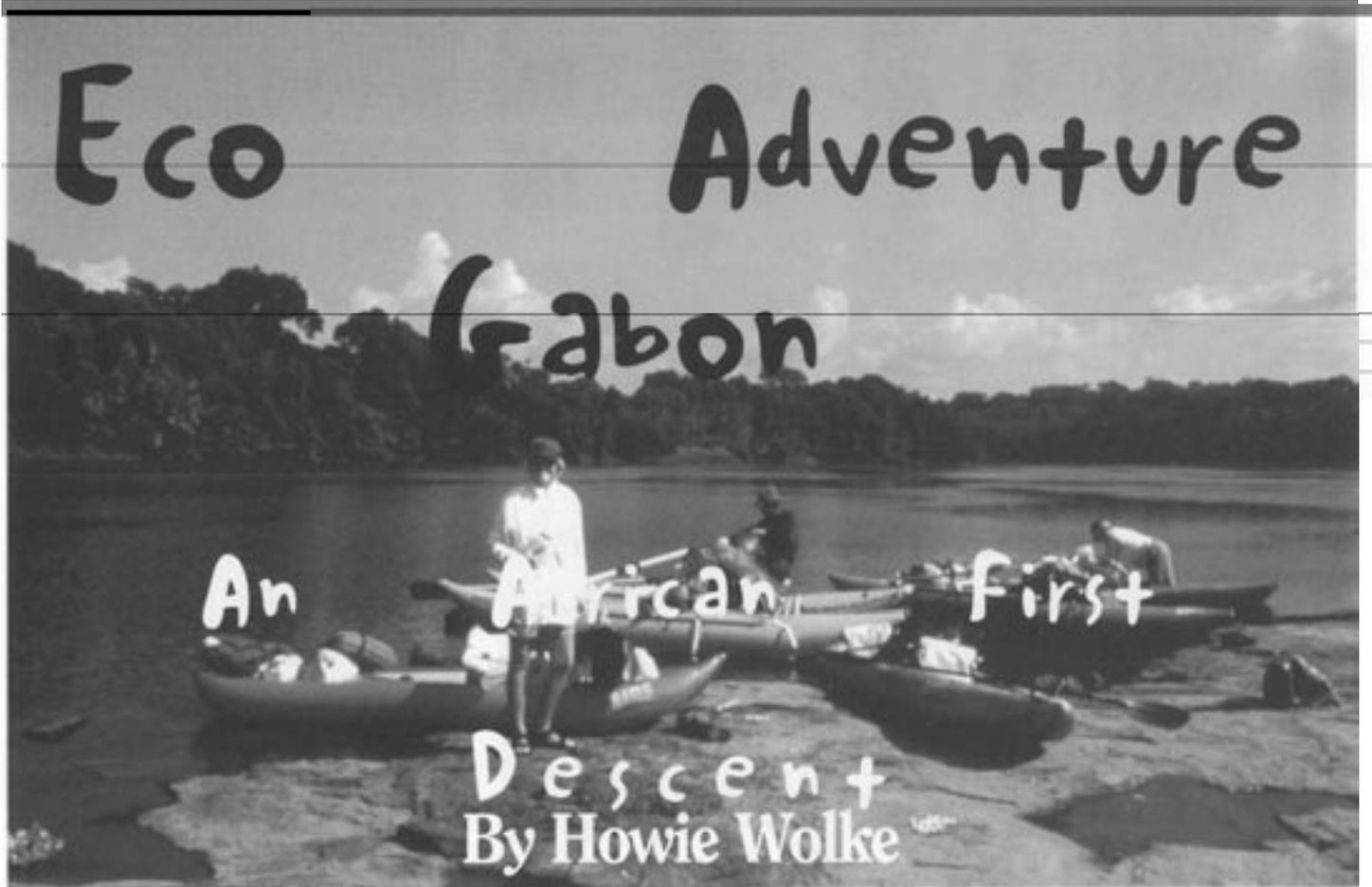
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A shotgun blast pierces the sultry air of the tropical rainforest. Immediately, the squealing begins. Olivier' just shot something, but I'm too busy to worry about it, moving a heavy bag of river gear up out of the drainage to a level area where I'll wait for Chris. Chris is squatting a few yards off the trail, attempting to expel some annoying African microbe from his intestines.

Blinded by sweat, I reach level ground and drop the bag. More squealing: the downside of life in the food chain. Soon Chris returns to the trail and a second blast silences the prey. We're curious, but in the tropical heat we expend no unnecessary energy by walking up the small creek to inspect the kill. Soon enough, Olivier' explains that he noticed "troubled" (muddy) water, so he dropped his load and stealthed up the creek to ambush the doomed bush pig. The beast had disturbed the streambed with its hooves while taking its final fatal drink.

At this moment, I realize that there's no turning back. As we toil through the first leg of this 2% mile portage around

Kongue Falls, I am determined to complete this first descent of Gabon's Ivindo River. No way will I head back uptrail or upriver with all this gear. It's downriver, with gravity, or die. Which is not entirely out of the question.

The Ivindo River drains the Mingouli Rainforest of the Ipassa Plateau in northeastern Gabon, a sparsely populated former French colony on the west coast of central Africa. The Ipassa-Mingouli is a frontier wilderness, one of the Earth's great remaining expanses of wild tropical rainforest. The equator bisects Gabon, crossing the Ivindo about 20 miles above its confluence with the bigger Ogooue, a Columbia-sized river that's Gabon's major waterway.

The lower Ivindo from Makokou to the Ogooue is one of Africa's great remaining uninhabited river corridors. There are no Pygmy villages here, just the occasional hunter. And the Ivindo is one of the largest rivers on Earth yet to be fully explored, ripe for a first descent.

Of course, terms such as "fully explored" and "first descent" are subjective. Most of the Ivindo has been hunted and fished. And, with local guides, a few westerners have floated various river segments. But nobody has ever run the entire 100 mile lower Ivindo from Makokou to the Ogooue, primarily because of at least three major waterfalls and various unknown rapids.

So, when our friend Jackson, Wyoming physician Bruce Hayse called one late autumn evening to ask if my wife, Marilyn Olsen, and I would join him and his partner Louise Lasley on a float down the Ivindo, our knee-jerk reaction was "sure." Jackson orthopedic surgeon Chris Guier and river guide Rick Sievers would round out the six person expedition (A Montreal native, Chris would prove to be a great and patient translator in this French speaking country.) We would run the river with two catarafts and two inflatable kayaks during the latter half of May, a transition time between Gabon's long rainy



Ivindo River Rainforest. Photo by Howie Wolke.

season and the generally cloudy but dry period from June through August.

Makokou, Gabon is a sprawling little jungle town best known for a 1997 outbreak of Ebola (hemorrhagic fever) that quickly and brutally killed dozens of its residents. Although nobody knows with certainty how Ebola is spread, some scientists believe that it is endemic in populations of jungle primates who spread it to humans via meat, blood, and other body fluids. With road-building and logging, hunters gain access to remote areas where they begin to prey upon monkeys and apes. Hello Ebola. If this theory is correct, then it may be no coincidence that in 1995, shortly before the local outbreak, the giant French logging firm Rougier began to road and log previously unspoiled areas near Makokou. Some scientists also believe that Ebola is just the tip of a viral iceberg that will become fearfully familiar as rainforests are cut and developed.

Our expedition begins in Makokou, and the put-in is right next to the only motel in town, our local base of operations. In unfamiliar equatorial heat we toil at the river's edge assembling frames, pumping up boats, and organizing gear. Given Makokou's recent medical history, I'm relieved to finally get on the water under a scorching noon sun.

The Ivindo is a big translucent blackwater river, rich in tannic acids like the waters of Georgia's Okefenokee. Its main channel is about a quarter mile wide, but the Ivindo's width often swells to over a mile where it braids into three or more various-sized channels. It is sluggish at first, so we paddle and row, struggling to cover 9 or 10

miles each day.

We spend the first night in a tiny jungle clearing that feels more like a steam bath than a forest. The saturated air is stifling and we sweat like pigs, but evaporative cooling eludes us. My Montana-adapted body feels ready to explode

from the heat. Nonetheless, this strange new place is enthralling and we're all excited about the unknowns facing us. The orgasmic sounding screams of tree hyraxes ring across the early evening forest canopy, my first night ever in a tropical rainforest. I'm sweat-soaked and exhausted under a starry African sky.

Rainforest dawn: mist cloaks the treetops. From the open river the forest appears as an impenetrable green wall, a barrier to untold secrets and dramas. Inside the wall, here, the air remains sultry and still, alive with odors of growth and decay, life and rot. It's a three-dimensional world of tunnels and enclaves and hidden passages framed by dozens of species of big and small trees, a steamy seething world of unrelenting greenness that nearly overwhelms the senses. As much as I would like to slowly poke around this foreign forest, I must wait because we've barely begun the journey. Who knows what problems and obstacles we'll encounter farther down the Ivindo?

Down the River. Our second camp is on a lovely sandbar shadowed by an approaching thunderstorm. The beach is beautiful and we enjoy cooling off in the river. Soon, though, swarms of honeybees appear. Africa's so-called 'killer bees' are reputed to be very aggressive, and they congregate on our gear,

boats, and sweaty bodies. They're also attracted to urine residue on the sand. But they're temporarily driven off by the brief but howling deluge. We take refuge in our tents. Rain abates. Out of the tent. Bees again. We build a fire, get stung, cook dinner. With the brief tropical dusk the swarm disappears, but at dawn it returns, swarming upon our mesh tent walls. We emerge to pack gear and load boats, moving our bee-buzzed bodies slowly, deliberately. We waste no time and we're floating at 7:15 AM, which proves to be our journey's earliest start. Marilyn and Rick remain unstung, but the rest of us each take a few hits. So long, Honeybee Beach.

Morning fog dissolves into another scorching afternoon. We plan to portage Kongue Falls on the right, but we meet two hunters from Makokou who convince us to go left. They are in a wooden dugout canoe-like *pirogue*, the Ivindo's common river craft. Generously, they invite us to spend the night at their camp. Rowing Bruce's partially deflated leaky cataraft upriver for two or three sun-baked miles, I'm dehydrated and exhausted as we enter the camp of open-sided huts, boiling pig guts, and a ten foot long staked out python skin. Our hunting clan graciously remove the snake skin and sweep the ground clean for our tents. They offer to share their pig guts, but we decline, opting instead for our freeze-dried mush and a good dose of



Simon, local hunter helped with portage. Photo by Howie Wolke.



Ivindo River. Photo by Howie Wolke.

after dinner booze. Eventually, we head for our tents, anxious about tomorrow's portage. Despite the heat, Marilyn and I sleep like the dead, grateful for a pleasant evening breeze blowing into this small clearing from the big river.

Compared with the rainforests of the Neotropics (Central and South America), the biodiversity of the equatorial African jungle pales. There are fewer species, especially plants. Various theories struggle to explain this disparity, but they provide no clear answer. Yet there are more species of large mammals in the African rainforest than in the Neotropics. And within the African realm the jungles of Gabon are an anomaly, where overall species diversity is high. One possible explanation for the local richness is that this region remained moist and forested during the Pleistocene, when many African rainforests dried out and became savannahs.

Unfortunately, Gabon's government has granted timber concessions covering the entire wild Mingouli, and Rougier may already have begun to bulldoze and cut the lower Ivindo. Of course, uncontrolled logging in places like the Ipassa-Mingouli provides just a short term economic fix that in the long run leaves both the land and the people worse off. At least a few people are beginning to understand this.

Giuseppi Vasallo is one such man, an Italian who has spent much time in Gabon. As Gabon's honorary Consul to Milan, Italy, he is fiercely devoted to saving the Mingouli, working to create a protected reserve along the Ivindo.

The problem is that Gabon's resource-based economy lacks diversity. The development of a viable tourist industry would begin to provide economic incentives for preservation, but

so far there is none. Until very recently, Gabon allowed logging in most of its nature reserves, reserves only in the sense that hunting was outlawed. Moreover, much of Gabon's populace is poor, so any wild animal is potential meat, legal or not. On a hopeful note, Gabon's leader, President Bongo, recently announced a conservation initiative setting aside a number of new reserves off limits to resource extraction. But there's still no protection for the Ipassa-Mingouli. Indeed, the battle begun by Vasallo is uphill. It is tragic yet mundanely predictable that if uncontrolled logging proceeds, untold undiscovered species will likely perish in a flash from this teeming cauldron of rich tropical life.

In the morning we follow the hunters, Olivier and Simon, down the river to the portage, where we break down our gear—rafts, frames, oars, deflated kayaks, food, personal items—into manageable-sized pieces. Then the sweaty toil begins. The trail is indistinct with many elephant paths branching off, so we hack with machetes to widen and mark it as necessary. Over the better part of two days we each make three or four trips, sleeping below the falls at an old hunting camp, occupied by a giant lobster-like black scorpion. During one por-



Forest elephant on the Ivindo. Photo by Howie Wolke.



On a long river trip, a good elephant always packs his own trunk. Photo by Howie Wolke.

tage haul, Olivier shoots the bush pig.

We never get a good view of the falls, but we're glad to finally finish the haul and reassemble the gear. Before shoving off, we pay Olivier and Simon in Gabonaise francs; Bruce and Chris also dispense drugs for the various parasites afflicting these two generous men. Chris gives Simon some condoms and describes their use. Wide-eyed and incredulous, neither African had ever heard of such a thing.

River time begins to set in; days drift by like afternoon cumuli. The weather cools just a bit, and I begin to acclimatize just a little. The sluggish Ivindo is now punctuated with rapids of varying difficulty. Scouting rapids is sometimes tough because of dense shoreline vegetation including dagger-sharp palmettos and spiny lianas. In addition, the sharp dark slippery rocks hidden in the blackwater make wading about quite treacherous. At one rapid we slide into a channel that continues to divide into smaller streams until ours becomes too small and rocky to navigate. So we're forced to pull the boats back upstream to a larger channel, fighting slick hidden rocks and strong current. This exercise covers under a half mile, but it seems like ten.

We run the whitewater and those of us in the kayaks occasionally get tossed into the waves, hoping that the local crocodiles have better taste than to covet our rapidly thinning western flesh. We begin to notice a general weather pattern: sunny mornings bring afternoon thunderstorms; foggy or cloudy mornings burn off into sunny afternoons that are hot but pleasantly

breezy on the open river.

On day six we photograph a big herd of forest elephants and later we camp in a riverside elephant clearing with lots of fresh tracks and droppings. Because we are vulnerable to being trampled in our tents, we burn fires all night. Next day, we portage a dangerous rapid and camp on an elephant-free beach. And on day eight we begin to approach Mingouli Falls.

Mingouli Falls drops a couple hundred feet off the plateau. But because the river first splits into numerous channels, it is actually a complex of falls, each dropping over a series of ledges interspersed with pools and rapids. This is typical of the Ivindo's cascades. Prior to the falls we portage another dangerous rapid. Then, riding on the rafts with the deflated kayaks lashed on, we are all nearly dumped by a deceptive rapid with tricky waves and deep holes. It's a sobering ride because we are unaware that some calm pools buffer this rapid from the brink of Mingouli Falls.

We survive the rapid. But atop the falls is a daunting green wall of impenetrable jungle, and for a while we are unable to locate a portage. Steep swampy tangles flank the falling water channels. I wonder if we'll be stranded here with no way out except overland through the forest. Finally, we locate a convenient game trail and again fire up the machetes. Though the portage is less than a mile, Bruce and I haul gear long into the black African night in hopes of getting back on the river early the next day. At camp, our crew is uncharacteristically quiet; everyone is exhausted. For the first time I wonder what my high-country adapted body and psyche are doing in this fascinatingly fecund but potentially fatal foreign forest.

By noon we're back on the Ivindo, humbled by untold unknowns. Late in the day a hurricane like thunderstorm traps us on the river with lightning exploding in our midst. Bruce and Rick navigate a big rapid in the rafts; they signal Marilyn and myself and Chris and Louise to get the kayaks into a safer channel to the left. Too late. The current is stronger than our paddling, so I jump out of the kayak. I slide over

rocks and plunge into deep holes vainly trying to pull the craft against the current to the safer channel. I am certain that I'm about to be zapped by lightning. The rain and wind are furious, the interface of rain and river blurred, and the visibility almost nil. Deceived in the blinding rain by some smooth looking water, I jump back into the kayak and suddenly Marilyn and I are swept into the boulder-studded rapid, paddling for our lives. Bruce and Rick wait below poised to rescue our bobbing or lightning-fried bodies.

Somehow, the lightning misses us and we remain upright through the rapid, gaining safety in a swampy thicket alongside the river. As the storm subsides, Louise and Chris join us; they had successfully made the left channel, thus avoiding the intense rapid. We rejoin the rafters and camp on a nearby sandbar. We string a tarp, light a fire, cook dinner, and collapse to the sound of steady gentle tropical rain upon our tents.

Morning begets a team meeting in which we all agree to communicate



The Ivindo River, day 4 or 5 of the journey. Photo by Howie Wolke.

better and to get the hell off the water before another mini hurricane catches us in the drink. With renewed enthusiasm, we continue down the Ivindo.

To call the African rainforest "impoverished" is misleading, even though the wet woods of the neotropics have more species. African rainforests support a plethora of life: big and small, visible and microscopic, hidden and obvious. Gabon's relatively rich rainforests support at least 8,000 plant species, 600 birds, and over 150

mammals including at least 19 primates. The most obvious critter here is the forest elephant, a relatively small subspecies that's still very large. Gabon is the major remaining stronghold for forest elephants, wild chimpanzees, and lowland gorillas. So similar to ours are chimp genes that, were it not for human chauvinism, they would probably be classified with us in the genus *Homo*. Should the Mingouli forest fall to Rougier, it'll probably be goodbye Mr. Chimp.

Lots of other creatures thrive here including forest buffalo, bush pig, 600-pound giant forest hogs, tree hyrax, various monkeys, two baboons (drill and mandrill), plus numerous squirrels, rats, bats, and otters. There are about a dozen members of the weasel-like mongoose family and a half dozen or so duikers, tiny antelope-like forest browsers. Bushbucks and bongos are among the larger hoofed critters. African golden cats and leopards sleuth through the dank rainforest shadows.

The great variety of habitats along the Ivindo—Ancient rainforest, wetlands, rock outcrops, riparian jungle, big rapids, calm water, small side-



Howie and Marilyn on the Ivindo River. Photo by Chris Gentry.

streams, and more—support a great diversity of birdlife. Along the river we see a good cross section of central African riparian birds including African darter, pied wagtail, collared pratincole, three species of kingfisher, red-eyed dove, and white-headed plover. The African river eagle resembles our bald eagle. The goliath heron is spectacular and dwarfs our great blue. We also identify two hornbill species—the black-cacqued and black and white—large hawkish

birds with absurd looking enlarged bills. We also spot the black kite and paint nut vulture. Other native birds include hawks, owls, ibises, bulbuls, flycatchers, sunbirds, swallows, barbets, and more. The Mingouli forest also provides seasonal habitat for numerous winter migrants from Europe.

The local reptiles include slender-snouted and dwarf crocodiles, but probably not the more dangerous Nile croc. Venomous water snakes, green mambas, Gabon vipers, and pythons are here too, though they're rarely seen. The most ubiquitous group of organisms are the insects—hence the term "bug-infested jungle." Insects well-illustrate our lack of knowledge about life on Earth.

Scientists estimate that our planet supports somewhere between 10 to 100 million species of living organisms. That's a big disparity. Imagine a census estimate of 26 to 260 million Americans. Of course, Americans are easier to count than tropical insects, which are responsible for most of the disparity. Multitudes of unknown arthropods thrive in the tropical forest canopy. And how they all interact with each

other and with other organisms is anybody's guess. But tropical biodiversity isn't just a function of bugs. Vertebrates are still being discovered, too. A few years ago a "new" monkey was discovered right here in Gabon's bush. In fact, life on Earth is poorly understood, and the detailed workings of ecosystems are even less well known.

Tropical rainforests support numerous

endemics, species with ranges restricted to limited areas. Because the distribution of some species is limited to small patches of forest, as trees fall extinctions rise. Tropical deforestation is primarily why renowned ecologist E.O. Wilson estimates that by the year 2030, 20% of all existing species will be extinct, unless the rate of habitat destruction abates. Gabon's biodiversity is particularly imperiled because her rainforests are within the "Guineo-



Howie deep in the Rainforest. Photo by Howie Walker.

Congolian center," a region of an unusually high concentration of endemics.

Typical pleas to save biodiversity reflect upon the potential health and economic benefits of imperiled species: for example, a cancer cure or a new food crop. Better yet, I imagine the perfect birth control substance photosynthesizing away in some remote Amazonian cranny.

Yet these concerns leave me cold. Are efforts to save wild nature purely a function of utilitarian potential? I doubt it. World-renowned demographer-ecologist Dr. Paul Ehrlich looked at it this way: he compared the loss of species with the removal of rivets from an airplane wing. At first, no problem. But continue to remove rivets, and things get ugly.

Still, we continue to remove the Earth's living rivets. Global ecological systems are already failing as our population explodes. Greenhouse warming, dissolving ozone, famine, soil depletion, floods, weed infestations, and even some wars and maybe Ebola are all directly related to the destruction of native biodiversity.

One reason that it's sometimes difficult to convince society to alter its behavior is that we conservationists are a strident bunch; this can create the impression that we exaggerate, so it be-

comes easy for many folks to dismiss our concerns. "The planet is dying," we say, which is basically true.

Yet despite the biological meltdown, humanity appears to thrive—at least in terms of biomass. We have created Phoenix, Calcutta, and many other depleted, polluted, violent, and disease ridden places, oblivious to the dying ecosystems that temporarily sustain them. We may be headed for a world of rats and roaches (and perhaps the progeny of Keith Richards), but I suspect that humans can tolerate a lot more filth, squalor, hunger, and biodiversity depletion than today's levels, a prospect that I find appalling. Hell, humans not only live in places like Phoenix and Calcutta, and at least some of them appear to be *happy*. So no, I do not claim that the demise of the Earth's native biota will result in our own extinction in the foreseeable future.

Of course, the most fundamental reason for saving species is intrinsic value, an argument that has occupied the periphery of mainstream thought for a long time. Life for its own sake. River eagles for their own intrinsic worth. I am comfortable with this answer; few would dispute it.

Yet when confronted with trade-offs, humans often choose profit or convenience or short term solutions or simple momentum against change over

zleared forestland are immediate tangible benefits. But the destruction of wild habitat is also insidious in that the zumulative effects sneak up on you as local extirpations accumulate. In other words, there's a time lag before lots of things become extinct; this obfuscates the cause. So we fail to connect species loss with the loss of *wildness*.

As our six person flotilla continues down the Ivindo, I wonder if after all, we've been asking the wrong question. I suspect that more basic than saving individual species or biodiversity in general is the question of saving *real wilderness*, the only habitat in which we know that life can be sustained for many millennia, and the only habitat that still provides space enough for the basic processes (fire, flood, disease, predation, adaptation to changing native habitats, etc.) upon which the continuing evolution of diverse life depends.

The Ivindo's current is greater now, and the rapids are more frequent. We knock off the miles. Suddenly the land falls away and we pull over atop a big unexpected unmapped waterfall. We camp atop the cascade and complete a relatively easy half mile portage by late the next morning. We're floating by noon, day ten, and afternoon brings sightings of more elephants and forest-buffalo, troops of black colobus monkeys, and some live bush pigs. We cross the equator and layover for two nights on a sandy beach, exploring the adjacent rainforest on day 12, utilizing various elephant trails that dissect this ancient wood.

As I stroll and grope my way through the leaves and vines, my first leisurely rainforest exploration of the trip helps to solidify a rainforest neophyte's early impressions. First, the forest is thick and dank with lots of vines and lianas, but not too many epiphytes. Massive trees are scattered, not common, and for the most part enough light filters through the canopy to support a thick undergrowth of woody shrubs, vines, and understory trees. I see no dangerous vipers hanging from tree limbs, but the arthropods are ubiquitous, including an array of scorpions, spiders, stinging ants, wasps, bees,

mosquitoes, tsetse, and other biting flies and more—although the biting insects are more of a problem on riverside beaches and in clearings than under the forest canopy.

Despite the invertebrate fecundity, insects are generally no more annoying than during the fly and mosquito season in Yellowstone or the Bitterroots. What's really unique to the jungle, though, is what you can't see but can



A local shows off his catch. Photo by Marilyn Olsen.

*feel*: the overwhelming presence of microbes. Bacteria, viruses, rickettsia, parasitic nematodes, and who knows what else are all poised to getcha. Every little wound quickly becomes infected here, little healing allowed. Even with all of its teeming life, during the day the rainforest is quite quiet; by contrast, for a couple of hours after dusk and before dawn, the tree hyraxes and other critters including lots of insects really crank up the sound.

Next morning we leave Equator Beach, rested and relaxed. We float for about a mile, round a bend, and suddenly come upon a freshly-bulldozed logging road that goes right down to each shore of the Ivindo. The right-of-way is damn near wide enough for an American interstate highway: Rougier is here. Big industry has invaded the Ivindo, big time. This is the only overt sign of industrial civilization that we've seen since Makokou, happily, we'll see no more until the end of the trip. We photograph the destruction and then silently, sadly float away, back into the wilds.

The river falls off the Ipassa Plateau



Lush growth of the Ivindo River rainforest.

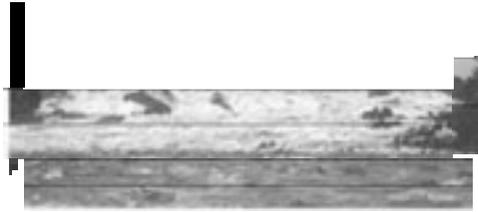
saving species. So here's the quandary: we purport to value life but we fail to value the *wildness* upon which so much life depends. The destruction of wilderness is immediate and the quick profits from a logging operation or the first harvest of a crop grown on recently

and we float through a deepening gorge of misty Appalachian-like wooded ridges and hills. Now confident of success, morale is high and the rapids are fun. We begin to encounter more fishermen, with whom Chris discusses what lies ahead. We learn little of use, though one man recounts that on a recent night he had to use his pirogue paddle to repel a leopard intent upon eating his dog.

Our final obstacle is Tsengue-Leledi Falls, which we portage on a good trail just a quarter mile long. Our final camp is at the Ivindo's confluence with the Ogooue, and our final river day is a 20 mile float down the big Ogooue to a filthy rat and cockroach-infested motel in the town of Rooue, the great anticlimax.

In our room the stench of human waste is overwhelming. We keep the bathroom door shut. Late at night, Marilyn is startled by a giant cockroach crawling out of my bathroom kit. I ponder the symbolism. In less than a day we've gone from unspoiled wilderness to the civilized grime of cockroaches, ratshit, and worse. Is this a symbolic microcosm of time, a compressed metaphor for a few thousand years culminating in civilization's ultimate fate?

Which brings me back to my earlier point: saying individual species and biodiversity in general is a lost cause unless humanity begins to regain its awe of and respect for *wildness*. Call it what you will—wilderness, wild country, wildlands, unspoiled nature, roadless areas, etc.—I don't think that life on Earth has much of a chance unless we can begin to re-wild our collective psyche. We need wilderness, it seems to me, because we think we know so much but in fact we know so little. No matter how carefully we attempt to utilize our scant knowledge to protect key species and habitats and to reform resource extraction into utilizing more benign techniques, real wilderness remains our only true baseline, the only real hedge against all that we don't and may never know. Ten million species... or a hundred million species: all we can do is guess. Henry David Thoreau hit paydirt with his exquisitely



TOP PHOTO: Tsengue Leledi Falls. Photo by Howie Wolke. MIDDLE PHOTO LEFT TO RIGHT: Howie, Louise, Bruce, Marilyn, and Rick. Chris seated. Photo by Howie Wolke. BOTTOM PHOTO: Howie grinnin' ear as ear nearing the end of the adventure. Photo by Marilyn Olsen.

simple statement, "In wildness is the preservation of the world."

I think about the wild Ivindo a lot. Like ours, its fate remains undetermined. Life is a series of complex choices, but that doesn't mean that there aren't some simple truths. As Aldo Leopold wrote, "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the natural community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise." That's another of my favorite simple truths.

Still, to save places like the Mingouli requires going beyond the wisdom of Henry David and Aldo. Practical alternatives to cutting, digging, bulldozing and shooting are essential. Small scale value-added industries hold some promise. "Ecotourism" has become a cliché, but without Gringo greenbacks,

resource extraction will continue to be the economic mainstay of most developing countries. New ideas for harvesting fruits, nuts, fungi, and other non-timber renewable forest products will help. Of course, better education, sanitation, and health care will make the humans less likely to cut, shoot, and mine everything in sight. Let's face it: bald eagle stew with a side of black rhino would look pretty good to a hungry family be they in Gabon, Calcutta, or rural Appalachia.

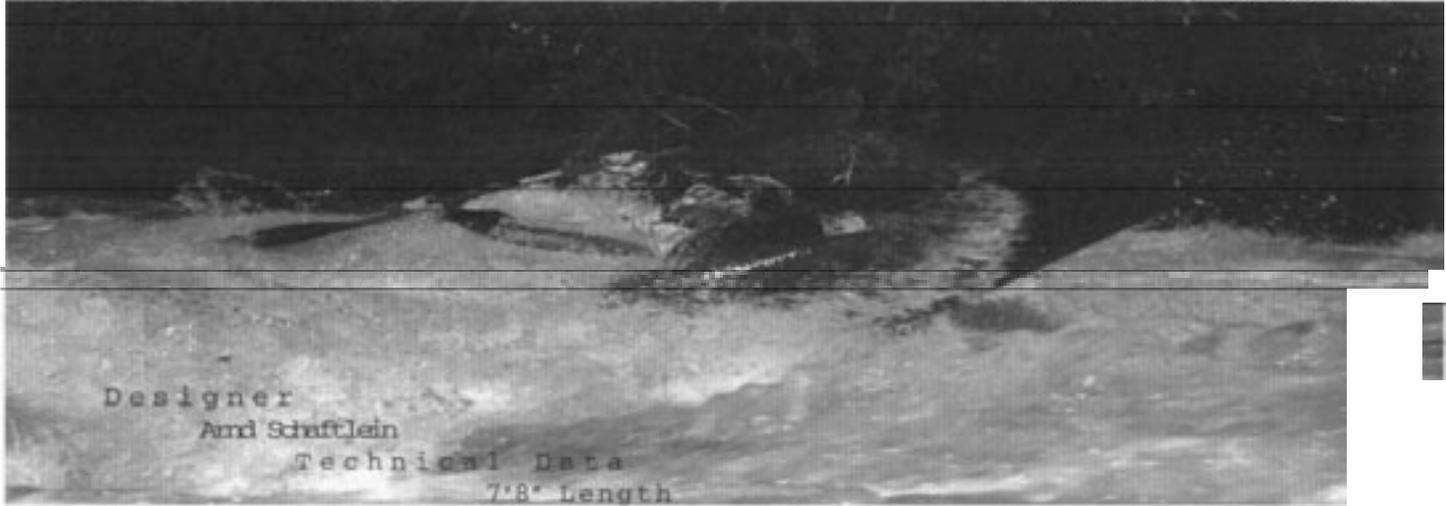
Most of all, we'd better get a handle on human overpopulation and crank that handle down, or ultimately all other efforts will be negated. It's flat out nuts that central Africans and millions of other people are taught to read the Bible and run a bulldozer but they know nothing about the use of a goddamned condom.

So, potential solutions are a complex mix; nonetheless, we shouldn't belittle the simple wisdom of Henry and Aldo. Cut through the rhetoric and you will discover that most folks value life. The challenge is to create a paradigm in which wild nature, for its own sake, is deemed to be good. Otherwise, efforts to maintain biodiversity will fail. Efforts to maintain clean air and water will fail. Efforts to better utilize resources will also fail, because again, real wilderness is our only baseline for the human

experiment of agricultural/industrial civilization. And, efforts to maintain a semblance of our own basic humanity—which we tend to forget is wilderness-derived—will fail too.

After all is said and done, little of value will remain once the *wild* is gone. That's the essential connection upon which the fate of the Ipassa-Mingouli and so many other places ultimately depends. And it's the connection upon which our own fate, one way or another, also depends.

*Editor's note: Howie Wolke is a long time conservationist and writer. His books include Wilderness on the Rocks and The Big Outside. With his wife, Marilyn Olsen, he runs Big Wild Adventures, a backpacking guide service, from their home in Darby, Montana.*



Designer

And Schafflein

Technical Data

7'8" Length

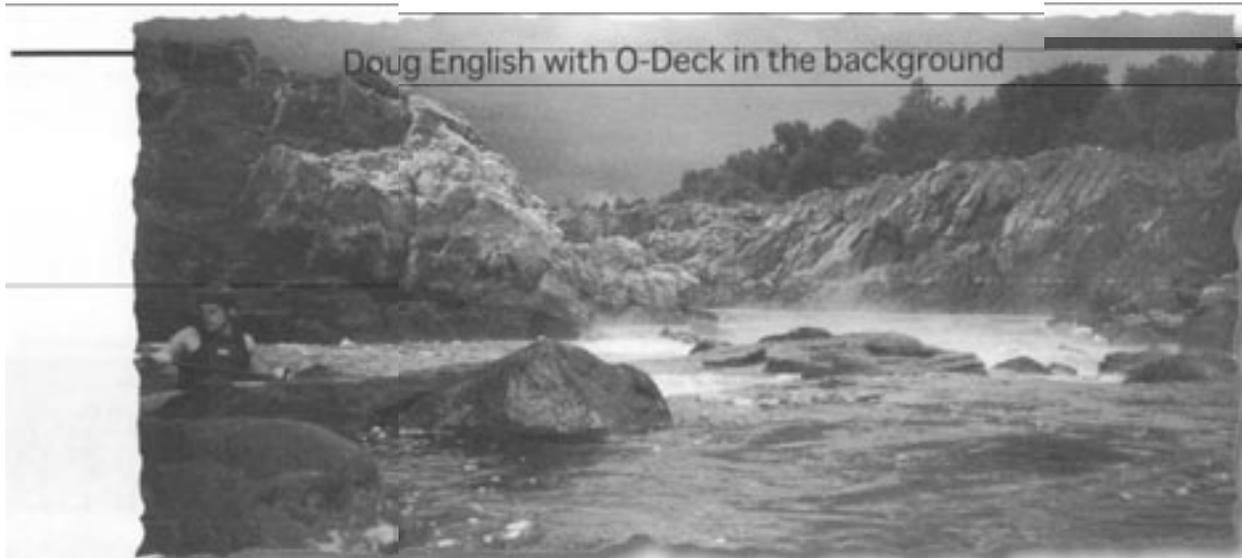
26" Width

31 lb Weight



Coming Soon: The Quadro

Doug English with O-Deck in the background



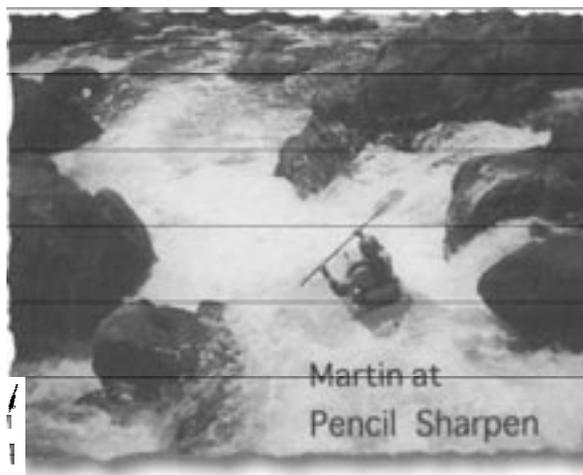
# The Mid-Atlantic Drought Brought New Discoveries to Great Falls

By Greg Morrison and Martin Radigan

**By July** we couldn't believe our eyes. The Potomac approached levels that hadn't been seen for over 30 years. Low water play holes dried up and the eddy lines lost their power. The river was at a 30 year low, exposing rocks that have not seen sunlight in 3 decades! The drought was not exclusive to the Potomac. Steve Taylor, a local veteran in the paddling community, was sending out e-mails notifying paddlers that most of the popular Upper Yough summer releases were canceled. It was going to be a long summer.

Fortunately, when everybody else is dreaming about water, the Potomac can still deliver some great Class V action. Sweltering in the heat, laughing at the 4-inch high ripple that was once a favorite play spot, it was time for some fun at Great Falls. Drew Vanderchain, Martin Radigan, Greg Morrison, Jim Buley, Chris Good, and Dave Collins decided to head out for a look. Although Great Falls is now regularly run by experts, (and some yahoo's), it has never been paddled at

such hideously low levels. There are 3 main lines through the falls, the MD line, the VA line and the middle line. Since the VA and middle lines were almost dry, we set our sights on the MD side. But first, we decided to take a closer look at the river features we float over when paddling the VA and middle lines at normal levels. What we found was interesting and scary. The undercuts were deeper than we had



thought. We saw massive potholes, sieves, a log in the bottom drop of the middle line, a nasty sieve at the top of

Subway, and many other not so inviting river features.

The MD line was the most undercut, followed closely by the VA line. The middle lines don't get as much water, particularly at summer levels, when they are almost dry. A low-water look at Charlie's hole revealed what most had suspected. There is at least one sieve directly below the hole, and it appears that a large boulder washed down through the hole, settling right below. That combined with the boulder strewn, pot hole-ridden Potomac River riverbed is what creates the deadly sieve(s). Charlie's was worse than we had thought.

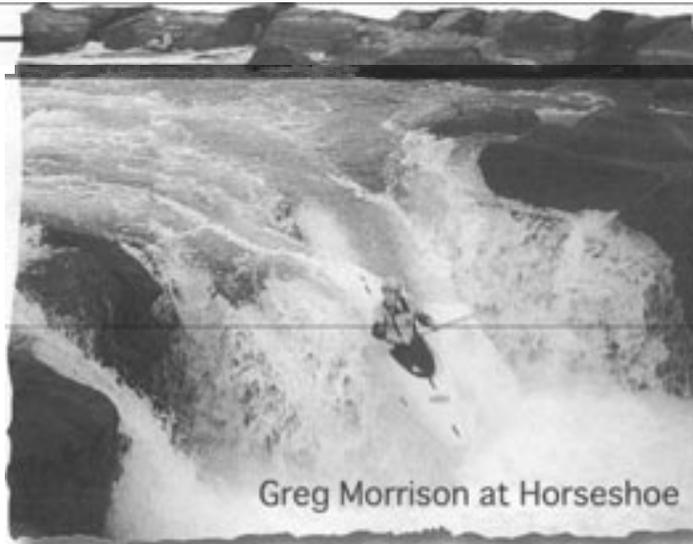
The first drop on the MD side, Pummel, was completely different at this level. The normal low water line is down the center or right of center, avoiding the left at all costs. The river left side of Pummel had eaten a couple of boats several weeks before when the water was a little higher.

Fortunately these boats were found a mile or two downstream! The new line was much different. There was no wa-

ter going over the middle and only a trickle on the right side. So it had to be left! Fairly straight forward approach. The hole at the bottom didn't look too bad, but how deep was it? Drew, the guinea pig, went first. No problem. A sort of a first descent, I guess. The rest of us ran the drop without incident.

On to the second drop, Z-Turn. The standard line was way too low, so it would have to be Pencil Sharpener. There was a large log in the river left slot that we attempted to remove, and succeeded only slightly, as it was re-wedged at the bottom of the river on the drop's left side. Scouting Pencil Sharpener revealed that almost no water poured over the small rockslide that is the normal line. Most of the water went off to the left into a piton rock. After some scrapey, sloppy runs everything was cool...with one exception, Jim's bow. He smacked the piton rock and the hungry Potomac laughed as it put a softball-sized dent in his Free Fall LT. At least he didn't pin, and he certainly came out with a smile.

We all moved on to Horseshoe. The Horseshoe Hotel, where there is always a vacancy, is one of the sketchiest drops on the falls. At normal summer levels it's a horseshoe shaped, 8-foot ledge with lots of water pouring

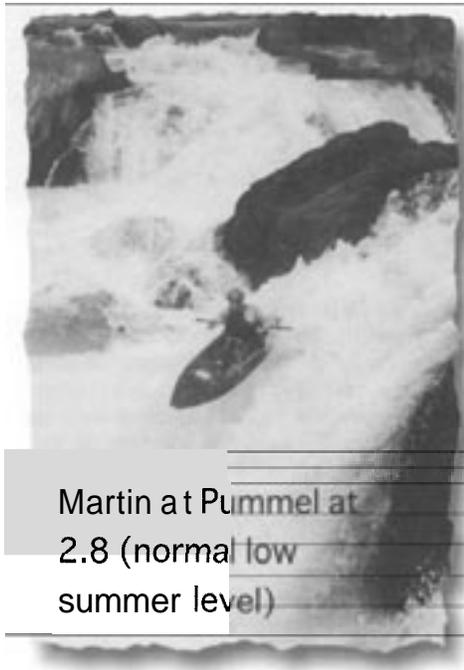


Greg Morrison at Horseshoe

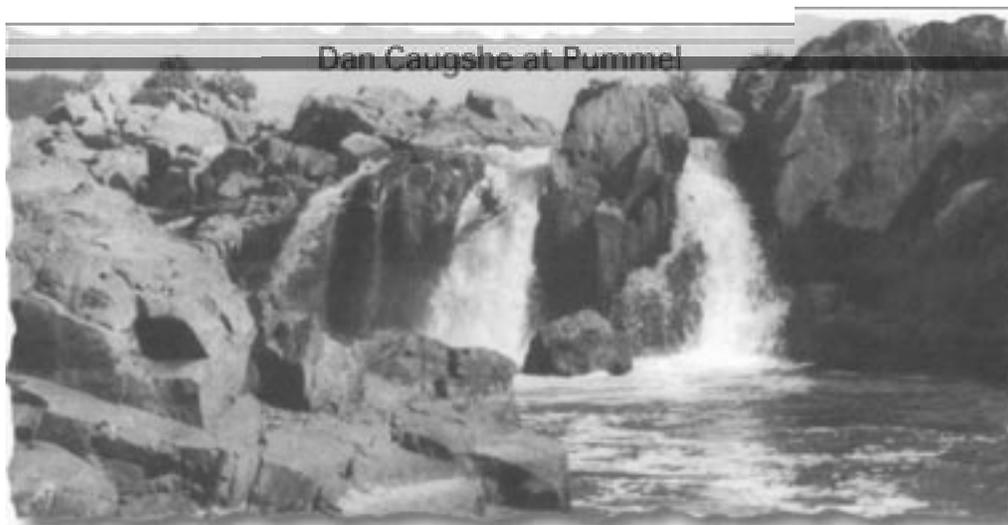
over it. On this day it was the same, but with not as much water. The hole still looked beefy, and getting surfed behind the curtain appeared possible. The normal route is to boof right, far, far right. This line looked doable, but another interesting line appeared. We scouted the tongue in the middle. How to get there, why yes, the "hairy (sometimes scary) ferry!" This line consisted of surfing all the way across the top of the drop to get to an eddy from which we could

run the tongue. The thing that sucks about the hairy ferry is if you miss it, you run Horseshoe in the wrong spot and backwards; then you pay homage to the Shoe's power. The incentive to make the ferry proved to be plenty; clean lines are had by all.

The day proved to be enjoyable. There were no guide books or old timers to give us reliable info on the hazards of these ridiculously low water levels. We learned a lot about the river's hazards, and we had a lot of fun running down the "new" MD line. Like most rapids, the low water made the lines a little easier in some respects, but much harder in others. We learned about the hazards of our favorite runs, and the impetus for all boaters to be careful at Great Falls. It is not a rapid to be taken lightly.



Martin at Pummel at 2.8 (normal low summer level)



Dan Caushe at Pummel

# Highway Blues



Author at Screamin Left, Chattooga River, GA

By Justin Beckwith

As I lounged in the back of my friend Brian's Toyota pickup, listening to the highway click slowly underneath me, I am driven to contemplate the last week and its significance to my life. Without trying to be too philosophical, here we go.

Sometimes it takes a different perspective to see what you truly enjoy about a sport, activity, or job. For me that came in the form of a week-long trip/ lesson that my friend Brian Totten was teaching to a group of Middlebury College students, one that I was fortunate enough to participate in, as a quasi assistant instructor. As a competitive nordic ski racer, I always look forward to the spring, when I can put aside my competitive drive and surf the melted snow I raced on down rivers that remind me of whitewater fun parks. Brian's call was one of the pleasant serendipidies that makes life wonderful. How could anyone refuse these three words: Sun, Water, and Paddling?

So I headed to Brian's house where we loaded his truck's rack full of boats and camping gear. Soon we started the 20 plus hour car drive to the land where bumper stickers and license plates read, "Buckle up for Jesus" and "It's not to late, the Lord can still help you." The idea of shedding my flannel-lined Carharts for Patagucci Baggies had an auspicious ring to it. Soon we were in the parking lot at Earl's Ford on the upper stretches of the Chattooga River.

After two days warm-up on the mellow sections of the river, the group was ready to tackle Section IV. Naturally, as we woke that

morning the thunderclouds rolled in and the temperature dropped nearly 20 degrees. But, that did not slow the eager students we were teaching, or the teachers! All paddlers know the feeling of waking up in a soaked sleeping bag with tired heads and confronting the grim challenge of climbing into wet boating gear. After a miserable minute, the well designed clothes warm and the skirts are slapped over the cockpit rim.

Splash! After a fun little seal launch I landed in the current facing a strong, cold upstream wind. "What a day, lets go back to bed, man!"

Yes, the day started out miserably. Everyone was cold and missing lines, rolls, and surfs they would normally have caught. As an instructor and safety boater, this concerned me. As we approached Woodall Shoals, the last takeout before the harder part of Section IV, I was hopeful that the majority of our class would end their day and allow a smaller group to have a more relaxed trip down the more difficult water below.

What I was about to witness was the most refreshing and exciting part of the trip. As we left Woodall there were only two students left, the others had opted for dry clothes and a good meal. As we hit Seven Foot it was apparent our remaining students were focused and psyched to be on some solid whitewater. Stares sharpened, strokes strengthened and smiles started flying. It was amazing to watch these guys improve their new found skills against the Chattooga. Zach and Ben rule the whitewa-

ter learning curve as far as I am concerned! Teaching them was a pleasure. Their enthusiasm made the sun shine.

As Five Falls approached, Brian and I decided to run their boats through because of the potentially-stiff consequences below. As we ran the drops, they watched with smiles and cheers, reminding me why I began paddling. I love to interact with rivers at such an intimate level. To feel its power, harness it, and then hoot in ecstasy as the intercourse finishes.

Well, it's my turn to drive...

Author running the first drop on the way to Uncle Bucks, Wolcott Vermont.





# Fast Floaters

By Jamie McEwan

I attended the Olympic whitewater race on the Ocoee in 1996, and Lukás Pollart's second run has been haunting me ever since. Every time I go out on the water the Czech C-1 paddler's image comes along with me: a ten-second period in which he seemed to have given up—and during which he covered a difficult section of gates faster than anyone in the world. I keep pondering how he did it, convinced that the answer relates both to better paddling, and to better living.

Pollart had won the Olympic gold medal four years earlier on a disputed call. That morning on the Ocoee he had posted the leading time with an exquisitely precise run that I considered unbeatable. But with a second-run all-out, do-or-die effort, Michal Martikan had taken the lead, one-tenth of a second ahead of Pollart. (The rules have changed, but at the time only the better of a racer's two runs counted.)

Then Pollart came down in his second run, moving with the unhurried nonchalance that is his trademark. His first split was good; could he possibly leapfrog Martikan? No!—For then he hit one of the upper gates hard, leaving it swinging.

Immediately Pollart's stroke rate slowed until it seemed just barely fast enough to keep him in the gates. "He's given up," said a spectator beside me, and I nodded. It would hardly have been surprising, for with a five-second penalty he couldn't possibly improve on his impressive first run.

And then his second split time came up on the display! Pollart had gained almost a second on the first run splits!

Soon he hit another gate and his stroke rate slowed even more until he did, finally, begin to fall back on the split board. Yet still, loafing along, he completed his run faster than many hard-working, accomplished paddlers from whitewater powers like the United States and Canada.

At the time I felt chagrined that I had been fooled, that I hadn't been able to see that he was going faster. Not only was I no longer a top competitor; I wasn't even proving to be much of an spectator. But that night Chris Spelius, a veteran racer and former rodeo World Champion, came up to me and asked about that very same ten-second stretch of time. "You're a C-1 paddler, Jamie; how did Pollart do that?"

I could only say that I had been amazed as well. But I felt somewhat vindicated. Ignorance loves company.

Martikan and Pollart, with respective

ing straight ahead, Fox's strokes were subtly different one side to the other. For years he was the least rhythmic kayaker on the circuit. Also the winningest.

On flatwater it is natural and effective for our strokes to fall into an even rhythm, just as our steps do as we walk on a flat surface. But on whitewater—or in any set of irregular waves, whether on rapids or on windy lakes or open ocean—that metronome in our heads strives to apply its self-generated regularity to a chaotic, unsymmetrical outer reality. It's a bad fit. The best paddlers are willing to allow external circumstances to dictate their

rhythms, rather than trying to impose themselves on the outside world. Pollart's run was the most startling example of that ancient but newly-popular maxim: Less is more.

If this observation only pertained to whitewater racing, I would have filed it away in the back of my mind and only thought of it while paddling gates. But it's not

just faster and more efficient to stay in touch with our watery environment as we paddle; it's more satisfying, too. So it applies to every pleasure cruise, and even off the water! After all, life is just a metaphor for paddling, isn't it? Something like that.

Editors note: Jamie McEwan won a bronze medal in C-1 Slalom in the 1972 Olympics. Twenty years later, in 1992, he placed 4<sup>th</sup> in C-2 during the Barcelona Olympics.

**Fox could sprint awfully hard—but he could also wait. In the midst of the water's chaos, with the clock running and the crowd cheering, he would interrupt the blur of his flashing blades to hold his paddle, motionless in the air, frozen for a long suspended moment, waiting... Then he would pounce...**

runs within fourteen one-hundredth's of a second, were continuing a long-standing dialogue in slalom sport: the hard charger versus the "fast floater." American football versus European soccer, Lugbill versus Hearn. It is a dialogue in which each "side" borrows from the other, adding precision to aggression, explosiveness to technique. Perhaps it was the legendary British kayaker, Richard Fox, who most dramatically demonstrated the best of each style every time he raced.

Fox could sprint awfully hard—but he could also wait. In the midst of the water's chaos, with the clock running and the crowd cheering, he would interrupt the blur of his flashing blades to hold his paddle, motionless in the air, frozen for a long suspended moment, waiting... Then he would pounce on one cawing pull that would do the work of five of his competitors' frantic strokes. Sometimes he took two, three, even four or five strokes on one side before putting his opposite blade into the water. Even when sprint-



# A Tribute to Probes

By Tim Laramore

Holes, like many of God's creations, are interesting little wonders of the world. As I ponder the whitewater hydraulic, I find myself viewing holes like I view mosquitoes, poison ivy, and chicken pox. There is no doubt that they exist, but why? What part of the creation story told about why God made holes, and when was it lost? My best theory is simply that the ongoing battle between eternal Good and Evil goes on within the boiling mass of whitewater that is commonplace in every shallow body of moving water.

Such were my thoughts as my good friends and I stood on the banks of the Futaleufu River under the brilliant Chilean sun and looked at a churning mass of whitewater aptly named Asleep at the Wheel. Asleep at the Wheel is by no means the most intimidating or difficult rapid on this glorious river, but it has a certain satanic personality that makes it quite notable. Ironically, this rapid gains its title not from the furious hole, but from the short section of river above the hole. The flatwater section that precedes Asleep at the Wheel lulls the innocent paddler—or, more appropriately, the victim—into a sort of dull complacency. In doing so it sets the poor, helpless creature up for a heart-wrenching shock as the innocent paddler—or prey—goes careening headlong into a ten-foot high hole that seems to have spontaneously emerged from the deep blue water of the Futaleufu. Luckily, our guide had warned the group of this curiously malicious creation long before we were ever in danger of entering that particular level of Hell.

As we exited our boats on the river's rocky edge and viewed the hydraulic, all seven of us felt the peculiar sensation of seismic waves being sent out by the incessant pounding of the hole. Further analysis revealed, however, that the oscillating sensation was actually a function of our legs quivering with fear. One of our guides, the elder no doubt, began to smirk and ask, "Sooooo, who wants to run it?" After the initial shock of the question passed, instinct took over, and each male member of the group proudly raised his hand with a look of pure machismo. Little did we know that we had sealed the horrible fate of the younger guide, Matt—"The Probe." Our elder guide allowed his smirk to widen as he turned to The Probe and shouted over the roar, "Okay, then. Matt will just go ahead and run it for us. He'll let us know if it is okay."

At that moment, we all saw something behind Matt's eyes break. It was as if his soul was trying to escape and in so doing avoid the thrashing that would punish the mortal body. Nevertheless, Matt hung his head and ambled over to his boat. We watched as Matt moved into the eddy and glanced over his shoulder at the hole. I don't know of Matt's religion, but at that moment, I think I saw him silently pleading for some deity to save his meager life. He pealed out of the eddy and headed straight for the monster that emitted a roar of pure indifference at him.

Back on the bank, our guide continued to smirk. The rest of us stood terrified and guilty, wishing that we could repeal our decision, but knowing that it was far too late. Tourism would claim another life. Surely.

As the river carried our guide swiftly toward the belly of the beast, Matt appeared to have bowed to the hole. Upon closer examination, however, I realized that our poor hero had simply set up to roll before hitting the hole. He disappeared. The thing swallowed him. An alert driver had been caught "Asleep at the Wheel." For the next ten seconds we saw traces of him: a paddle blade here, the end of his boat there, but we had already closed the book on our old friend and worthy guide of six days, Matt, The Probe. He had been a nice guy; he even let my friend wear his dry top. But now he was gone.

Just as we turned around to cry and console each other, we saw a green whitewater missile bearing the Wave Sport logo rocket out of the cerulean water beyond the foaming outwash and begin a glorious trajectory toward the heavens. "Look," someone said, "Matt's going to heaven in his boat."

But he fell. He returned to the river. As he turned for the nearest eddy, his arms writhed like agitated but weak serpents pulling the paddle blades through the water. The level of the river grew noticeably higher as water streamed from Matt's facial orifices. His vigor inspired us all as he tenuously reached the eddy. Our elation soon faded, however, as he pronounced the verdict on our lives by meagerly lowering his head and giving the fateful thumbs up.

The elder guide, still watching in evil amusement, widened his grin further, looked upon our horrified faces and said, "It's clean. Who's next?"

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to bounce on waves  
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Marion Boyer  
Kalamazoo, Michigan



Days that used to be...

# The Good (h)Ole Days

By Terry Rose

In 1979 I'd only been paddling about a year. The Mirage was still the hottest boat on the river, but the Dancer was making the scene and so was the Jeti. It was nothing for my friends and I to lean back in a high brace and ride the waves of some big water. It seemed as though every time we went to West Virginia, which was at least once a week, the roadside ditches were full of rainwater and the New and Gauley would be running at terribly high levels. Jumping on the New at 8 feet early into my paddling career forced me to go from novice kayaker to expert swimmer in a short time. We soon did the New at 18 feet and the Lower Gauley at 22,000; we thought we were ready to tackle anything that Mother Nature had to offer. And then came creekin'.

Whatsat?

One Easter weekend when it was snowing pretty hard, Rodney Goodwill suggested going to this Cranberry River that he'd heard about. He said it probably wouldn't be that bad. When we got to the put-in the wind was gusting so hard that the snow was blowing horizontally. Guess that explained why Donnie Hudspeth and a fellow I'd never met, Woody Calloway, decided to sit in the van and think about it. Even though this was my first creek run ever I had no real concern, even when Bob Vernon said, "Damn, I've never seen it this high!!" I pulled on my farmer John, mounted that Mirage, and went for it.

The run was going pretty well with a few tight turns and some windmill paddle strokes over some ledges. Though the river had my undivided attention I was getting pretty good at high bracing into those eddies. But I was about to find out what creekin' was all about.

We were approaching a rapid called S Turn and I had caught an eddy beside the road a few hundred yards up river. While I was sitting there doing some leisurely boat scouting a van slid up. To my surprise Hud and Woody unloaded their boats and put-on. Now why would these guys suddenly decide to put-on for one rapid? Uhh! I was amazed that a big guy like Woody could cram himself into a small boat like that Jeti. And I couldn't see why anyone would want one of those little spud boats. It didn't look

safe to me.

Woody headed river left, bumped against the left side of a rock and dropped over a small chute that looked pretty hairy to me. Did this guy know how to paddle? It looked to me like he should have gone off the right side of that rock; a nice 6 foot wide horizon line for a launch pad, no visible turbulence down below, good smooth backwash. I couldn't fig-

**"As I approached the brink I suspected there might be a problem when the four guys sitting in the eddy below gave me the double halt sign."**

ure out why Woody didn't go right, but that's where I was going. What followed remains the worse swim I've taken in 20 years.

As I approached the brink I suspected there might be a problem when the four guys sitting in the eddy below gave me the double halt sign. Too late! Then Brian Wham gave me a paddle hard sign, but it was too late for that too. I dropped off the left side of the ledge, floundered up against the rock, and then backed into the hole. Surfing was not an option; there was too much slick water coming from both directions. When I got drawn in sideways to the ledge, the nose of that boat went down and the lights went out. Usually when a paddler ejects he can hang on to the cockpit to help him get air and wash free of a hole. It didn't happen that way this time. I hung on to the cockpit for a long time, but when I pulled myself to the surface I was still in the vortex. I let go of the boat, thinking I would wash downstream, but when I resurfaced I was recirculating back into the pour over. I could see my buddies sitting in the eddy, eyes as big as silver dollars.

When I reached the pour over I thrashed around with my boat for a few seconds. Then the lights went out. I broke the surface again, still recirculating. I could see Bob Vernon grabbing a throw rope from his boat. The lights went out again.

A person doesn't realize how long he can hold his breath until he's in a life-threatening situation. But I had reached my limit.

I'm convinced that when someone is near drowning that panic never sets in, unless he breaks the surface. By this time things were becoming warm and peaceful. My arms were drifting upward and there seemed to be no real cause for alarm. Then I saw the nose of another kayak overhead.

I only wish I had been able to see the expression on Lee Belknp's face when he came busting over the ledge, just in time to see two hands reach up from the black hole and grab his bow. When I broke the surface my lungs were taking in air so fast that the tree tops seemed to bend over and touch the water. The only sound I could make was "~hhhhhhhh!!!!!!Uuhhhhhhhhh!!!!!" Lee was back paddling for all he was worth, screaming "Kick, dammit, kick,

kick, dammit, kick!." We finally broke free from the ledge, but just a few yards downstream the water pillowed up on a big boulder and broke both ways. I was still holding the front of Lee's boat when we washed backwards onto the boulder. My lungs went from "Uuhhhh" to "Oohhhh God, help!!!!" We washed downstream for 50 yards; I finally managed to grab a log and climb out.

Later I got some good words of encouragement from Mike Mcquade. He said it was not good to have a road following the river; it makes it too easy to take off. He took off and put back on the Cranberry several times that day and said the next time he paddled the Cranberry he'd have someone walking the bank with rattle snakes on a leash to make him stay in the water.

I've thanked Lee several times over the years for his rescue, even if he just happened to be in the wrong place at the right time. And I may have gotten a throw line before the curtain fell but without either, I'm certain the outcome would not have been pretty.

Editor's note: Even by my standards, Terry Rose is an old timer. Old...but good!

## Off the Deep End

### Video Review by Greg Akins

*If I were making my own paddling video, I'd assemble some big name paddlers and travel to exotic locations. Then, to make my video truly unique from the other big name, exotic videos, I'd film some cute girls and get a couple shots of young kayakers with their shirts off. Finally, I'd add some cool music and a couple ridiculous snowmobile stunts to round out the entertainment.*

Eric Voake and **Loaded Gun Productions** beat me to the punch, delivering all this and more with *Off the Deep End*. Definitely one of the most entertaining videos I have in my collections, it's the one that gets pulled out first when my kayaking friends come to visit.

**Loaded Gun Productions** recruits most of the big name paddlers (Eric Jackson, Clay Wright, Shannon Carroll, Brad Ludden, just to name a few) and travels to New Zealand, Northern California (now that's exotic), and Germany, for the European Nationals. The result is mostly flawless and always entertaining footage of some of the best kayakers running some of the best whitewater on the planet.

Typical of past kayaking videos, the action switches between Class V+ hair boating

and fast paced rodeo paddling. Some great footage of Eric Jackson and Rusty Sage no-paddle cartwheeling and great squirt boating from Angst's Eric Zitzow is mixed with the exploration of monster drops paddled by the new steep creek wonder twins Shannon Carroll and Tao Berman. But the highlight of this video is some sick footage of Sam Drvo and others sliding down a 100 feet plus spillway, launching into the air at the bottom.

These breaks from the standard big drop/gnarly hole formula give this video a distinct characteristic. A short break from paddling allows the viewer to wonder if getting run over by a snowmobile might be more extreme than paddling off 20 foot waterfalls. Likewise, some alternative approaches to kayaking are explored, like the 100 foot spillway and the new sport of car-towed kayaking.

Like most videos the soundtrack is filled with cutting-edge alternative music, though this soundtrack is a little edgier than most (angst-ridden music to accompany an Angst ridden video?).

Well, considering that I'm not much of a videographer, can't afford to travel to exotic locations, and don't own a snowmobile, it's a good thing Eric Voake beat me to the punch. With talented boaters, fantastic whitewater, and entertaining filler, it's no wonder this video gets played so frequently at my house. *Off the Deep End* is one of the best offerings of 1999. If you haven't started your winter video collection yet, start with this one. *Off the Deep End* can be ordered by calling **Loaded Gun Productions** at 970.349.7572, or go to their web site ([www.liquidlunatics.com](http://www.liquidlunatics.com)).

## New Video Examines Polluted Urban Runoff

*"Do you drive a car? Have you fertilized your lawn or garden lately? Do you leave pet waste where it can wash into nearby streams, storm drains, or ground water?" asks Miner.*

Is the water that flows from your tap safe to drink? Are the fish you buy or catch safe to eat? Can you recreate in nearby rivers, lakes, or streams without facing serious health hazards?

Residents of towns and cities across America are facing these questions with greater frequency, as growing populations, sprawling development, and pollution threaten the purity of our fresh water supplies.

In an effort to help communities deal with these issues, the Oregon State University Extension Service has produced a new video titled *After the Rain: Urban Runoff*.

"This program explores the importance

of water, the pressures our towns and cities are placing on this precious resource, and ways that individuals can protect local drinking water supplies," says Ron Miner, OSU Extension Service water quality specialist. "The video should prove useful to anyone who is concerned about drinking water safety and improving the natural world around us."

For years, industry and inadequate wastewater treatment plants were the primary polluters of surface and ground water. They continue to play a role, but it may surprise you to learn that individuals are now the main problem.

"Do you drive a car? Have you fertilized your lawn or garden lately? Do you leave pet

waste where it can wash into nearby streams, storm drains, or ground water?" asks Miner. "Most people do not understand that these seemingly harmless activities are polluting our fresh water supplies."

*After the Rain: Urban Runoff* (VTP 029) costs \$19.95 (including shipping) per copy. Send your request and check or money order payable to Oregon State University to: Publication Orders, Extension & Experiment Station Communications, Oregon State University, 422 Kerr Administration Building, Corvallis, OR 97331-2119. Further information about the video and other water-related educational materials is available on the Web at: <http://eesc.ovst.edu>

# Midwestern Boater Pete Carey Remembered

By Paul Everson

Midwestern boaters are greatly saddened by the passing of our friend and patriarch Pete Carey at the age of 54. He took his own life this July.

Known for his smooth paddling style and generosity, Pete guided dozens of paddlers down their first difficult Minnesota creek runs. His house in Beaver Bay often sewed as North Shore Creeking Central, and he inspired a friendly, communal mood in those who enjoyed his hospitality. I first met several of my best boating companions among the riffraff bivouacking there on snowy spring mornings. An eagerly aspiring boater, I once expressed a premature interest in kayaking the Class V Split Rock River at wickedly high water. Pete told me that I'd be well advised to first consume my own gonads for breakfast in preparation. I heeded his message (if not his literal advice) and ran the Baptism, leaving the high water Split Rock run for another day.

Pete was instrumental in organizing the St. Croix River whitewater slalom races in

the late 1960s. He brought one of the first kayak molds to the region in 1966, enabling more people to take up the sport. In 1973, after sewing in the Nay, he moved to Beaver Bay where he set up a successful dental practice. In the following years, he helped to pioneer many of the best runs on the North and South shores of Lake Superior, often in the company of "Fearless" Fred Young, Al Button, and Jim Rada. Some firsts included the Knife, Beaver, Cascade, and Brule in Minnesota, and the Black and Presque Isle Rivers in the Upper Peninsula.

On a 1974 solo exploratory, thinking he was on a tributary of the Beaver, Pete ended up descending the Split Rock River. One can only imagine his surprise and consternation, contending with the steep slides in a fiberglass boat! In the mid 1970s, after doing a wildwater race on the Numbers section of the Arkansas, he was inspired to organize the first Minnesota hair race on the Baptism River, from Finland to Illgen Falls. He invited his friendly rivals, the Wisconsin Hoof-

ers Outing Club. Pete was indeed guilty of consorting with Hoofers; he married Lorene Vedder of Marshfield Wisconsin in 1976. In 1986, after some serious training, Pete took a silver medal in a National K1 slalom competition at the master's level.

The hardest thing for survivors of a suicide is that we all wonder what we could have done to prevent it. Pete, like many of us, suffered from periodic bouts of depression. His depression was aggravated by health problems and complications with his dental practice. While he always seemed genuinely delighted to see visiting boaters at his doorstep, it was sometimes obvious that he was suffering inside. I don't think that any of us realized how much pain Pete must have been in, to leave behind his 19 year old son and kayaking companion, John; 21 year old daughter, Katie; and other close family and friends.

Pete's ashes will come to rest in the clear waters of the greatest of the lakes, the endpoint of the rivers he loved dearly. I'll always remember him completely at ease on the Baptism River, spouting wisecracks, with an intense, yet playful grin on his face. Or pulling one of his favorite pranks: luring hapless first timers like myself into the sticky, but benign "Gauge Hole" to be properly and thoroughly baptized. We'll seriously miss you Pete!

## For Those Times

when it's just too dark to boat

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# South Yuba Gathering, Race Big Success

The South Yuba Gathering showed strong signs of maturity this third year. Good weather, flows and folks made for a top notch event. The Class V downriver race held in Chuck Kern's memory was a smash and the mountain bike/kayak relay attracted some serious talent. Scheduling of the event the weekend after the Kern River Festival proved to be a good idea and will be maintained for next year. The 2000 dates will be April 22 and 23. The event takes place near Grass Valley and Nevada City in the Tahoe foothills.

Chuck's Race drew 22 Class V paddlers. The race is held on the classic '49 to Bridgeport' run on the South Yuba River. The race starts at Jones Bar a mile below the 49 bridge in order to avoid a portage (a Class VI drop that Tao Berman ran in his InaZone 220 on race day). The race ends 6.5 miles later at a beach above the longest covered bridge in America. The race started at high noon and paddlers left at 30 second intervals with the option of paddling in small groups.

A moment before the race, Clay Wright, uncertain of the lines, was still dredging for a partner. He struck gold in Don Beveridge, an outstanding international kayaking guide who knows the Yuba well. Don tipped over in a no-name rapid minutes above the finish line, surrendering third to Clay.

Then there was the saga of the local boys and their slalom boats. An over 40 favorite, Brent Essmon was seen boosting his confidence with some practice rolls in an eddy during the race. It seems his Reflex did not remember to roll itself quite like his Freefall. Earlier in the day, Dave Kemp asked if we had any fast boats left at the shop (Wolf Creek Wilderness). What was left looked really fast! A Perception Fox. It was in great shape, but had no Class V experience. Luckily, the foot peg broke instead of Dave's ankle when he pitched over Ski Jump Falls. Dave posted the slowest time with a personal record number of portages.

Winner Dan Gavere was seen mid-race with a beet-red face, spinning blades like a helicopter. But it was still hard to believe he beat Davison Collins by almost a minute. But, Davison's MA in English, with the help of Clay's world-renowned gas mileage calculating ability, couldn't dispute Torrey Carroll's math. Gavere went home with the grand prize Eskimo Zwo, kindly donated by Terry and Urte.

The Girl Power Clan (Mela, Jamie, and Buffy) made the course look like a walk in the park. Of course they didn't want to shame any

of the gnarly men by paddling fast boats. Admittedly, they were distracted by a nekkid C-1er swinging a really short throw line at "Eat the Meat" rapid.

The South Yuba Gathering continued Sunday with the Pedal Paddle Relay. Last year's impressive showing by aging California hardmen Lee Wilhelm, Lars Holbek, and Dieter King inspired a record number of soloists to partake of this challenging race. The mountain bike ride starts at Purdon Crossing and climbs immediately out of the canyon to the top of Round Mountain, over 1,000 feet above. The descent into the canyon begins with a blissfully smooth switch-backing trail through a cool forest. The trail upstream along the river entails the 150-yard 'technical rock climb' that left most of us dead in our tracks with a bike on our shoulders. Twelve miles later the put-in is in sight and the river waits. I could not resist a quick roll to shed sweat and dust. Four miles of Class IV to the finish line.

I thought the race would be won on the bike, but Davison was able to pass Steffan Long on the river in his Wavehopper. Gavere, unable to hand roll a Beluga with a blown skirt, still managed a great finish after being passed while emptying the 'whale of a boat.' Next year we are keeping the boats under 12 feet.

Then there was the Soul Tour. 'Got Soul but ain't got no legs' Chris Emerick and Ed Lucero may suck a lot of wind, but they do it with meaning. They spread the spirit of fun for all and they were only a day late!

Elizabeth Collins dominated the women. Let's get some more ladies out next year and give her a run for her money. It was great to see Buffy on a bike and Evans Phelps showed

Left: Davidson Collins. Photo by Scott Kazmar.  
Right: Lars Holbek and Dieter King, Photo by Scott Kazmar





Above: Dave Good and Polk Deters, Photo by Mike Stewart  
 Below: Don Beveridge, Photo by Scott Kazmar.

her talents for the third year in a row.

The South Yuba Gathering benefits the South Yuba River Citizens League (SYRCL, pronounced circle) and is held in the spirit of conservation. The money we raised was used to help pass a State Wild and Scenic River Bill to protect the river from further development. The bill, State Bill 496, was signed into

law by the Governor Gray Davis on October 10<sup>th</sup>. Activists are encouraged to check out [www.syrcl.org](http://www.syrcl.org) and get to know this excellent and powerful organization.

We hope that you can make it out for the Gathering next year. Northern California is the best place in the world to be paddling in the spring.

### PEDAL PADDLE RELAY, April 25, 1999 South Yuba Gathering

<u>Mens Solo</u>	<u>bike</u>	<u>total</u>
1. Davison Collins	1:08:20	1:40:42
2. Steffan Long	1:04:00	1:42:12
3. Lee Wilhelm	1:07:50	1:43:56
4. Dan Gavere	1:08:20	1:45:24
5. Dave Good	1:11:20	1:48:40
6. Lars Holbek	1:15:20	1:53:04
7. Chris Emerick	1:17:41	1:53:50
8. Dieter King	1:17:41	1:54:14
9. Dave Kemp	1:27:28	2:03:50
10. Bill Bridger	1:27:50	2:09:28
11. Ed Lucero	1:33:10	2:11:51
12. Chris Abess	1:31:53	2:11:56
13. Dan Englehard	1:37:41	2:31:29
14. JP Wollersheim	flat tire	2:39:48

<u>Womens Solo</u>	<u>bike</u>	<u>total</u>
1. Elizabeth Collins	1:18:13	2:08:04
2. Mela Breen	1:23:10	2:16:13
3. Evans Phelps	1:46:00	2:31:16
4. Buffy Bailey	1:55:20	2:39:20

#### Womens Team

<u>biker</u>	<u>total</u>
1. Natalie Karwowski	1:13:50
<u>boater</u> Wanda Shiotsuka	2:00:05
2. Lynn May	1:23:40
<u>boater</u> Pam Esmon	2:01:58

### CHUCKS RACE, April 24, 1999, South Yuba Gathering

1. Dan Gavere	45:11	Excel
2. Davison Collins	46:31	Excel
3. Clay Wright	46:36	Pirouette S
4. Don Beveridge	46:41	Pirouette
5. Jimmy Blakeney	47:03	Laser
6. Lars Holbek	47:18	Freefall
7. Johny Kern	47:23	Tornado
8. Joel Passovoy	48:01	Hurricane
9. Torrey Carroll	48:58	Crossfire
10. Kevin Gregorson	49:06	Laser
11. Dieter King	49:20	Pirouette
12. Lee Wilhelm	49:53	Freefall
13. Robert Hogg	49:59	Hurricane
14. John Lambert	52:16	Rockit
15. Steve Wallace	53:14	Phat
16. Polk Deters	53:16	OX
16. Dave Good	53:16	Diablo
17. Mela Breen	56:20	Piedra
17. Buffy Bailey	56:20	OX
17. Jamie Simon	56:20	Y
18. Brent Esmon	1:20:10	Reflex
19. Dave Hemp	1:30:30	Fox

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## 1999 Moose Race Results

*In a stunning upset at the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Bottom Moose Extreme Race, youngster Justin Beckwith edged wily veteran Jeff Snyder by 15 seconds to claim the Brothers Cup for the fastest overall time in the class 5 competition as well as first place in the Cruising Boat class.*

The Brothers Cup is annually awarded in memory of Chuck Kern and Luka Sribar who perished paddling Class V water in Colorado and California. Willie and John Kern and Rok Sribar—surviving brothers of the pair—are all longtime Bottom Moose regulars.

The result was particularly surprising because Beckwith, of Holland Patent, NY, finished the five-mile run in 30:20 while paddling a Prijon Taifon—a 13-foot plastic touring boat. Snyder's time of 30:35 was completed in a fiberglass downriver kayak.

Beckwith is a highly regarded Nordic ski racer for Middlebury College and his training regime might have proven slightly more intensive than that of the 37-year old Snyder. Snyder's effort was good enough for first place in the Race Boat division.

Shannon Carroll captured first place in the women's division in a Prijon Cyclone

with a time of 34:20—good enough for a fifth place overall finish.

The Bottom Moose Extreme race starts with competitors plunging over the 48-high Fowlersville Falls and concludes at the base of the Class V Crystal Rapid. In between, racers negotiate six other Class IV-V rapids. Levels for the Moose on race day were 4.26 feet—a high flow.

Rok Sribar and Andy Opler turned in the best wipe-out of the day when they pinned their Eskimo Topo-Duo while attempting the challenging Alpine line at Crystal. The two self-rescued, but the nine minute delay dropped the pair from fifth to last place in the standings.

The results of the race:

1. Justin Beckwith (CR) 30:20
2. Jeff Snyder (R) 30:35
3. Fred Coriell (CR) 32:13
4. Mike Burns (R) 33:21
5. Shannon Carroll (W) 34:20
6. Al Baker (CR) 35:24
7. Lance Alpi (CR) 35:56
8. Tim Holmberg (CR) 36:00
9. Pete Iscaro (CR) 36:15
10. Teresa Rogerson (W) 37:10
11. Bob Baker (CR) 37:55
12. Jessica Marsan (W) 38:20
13. Chris Koll (CR) 38:39
14. Tyler Mayhew (CR) 38:45
15. Rok Sribar/Andy Opler (Duo) 44:15

## River, Mountain, and Town

By Joe Napora

*Film Review: The Breaks of the Mountain: the Russell Fork Gorge, produced, directed, and edited by Tom Hansell, an Appalshop Film Production [thansell@appalshop.org/606-673-0108] 91 Madison Ave. Whitesburg, KY 41858. Price: \$30 home; \$150 institutions*

Tom Hansell's film *The Breaks of the Mountain: the Russell Fork Gorge* is less than a half hour long, but it is a big and important film. It presents the environmental issues that affect the whitewater paddling community in a way that will appeal to anyone with an interest in mountains and rivers. Hansell's film elucidates the balance of interests that must be maintained between those who come from the outside to enjoy the river and those who live near the river,

who need to utilize this natural resource for the long-term health of their community.

It's a fun film to watch, since Hansell has documented the points of view of children at play, fishermen, local merchants, recreational rafters, beginner through expert kayakers, and those who simply like to drive by and stop at the overlook and gaze at the river as it cuts its way through the Russell Fork Gorge, two thousand feet below.

The resulting story is best articulated by Susan Coleman of the Headwaters Association: the river must be used for it not to be abused. Upstream degradation from extraction industries, coal and timber have a negative effect upon recreation. This will degrade the economies of communities all along the river. Coleman's message is that the economics of the river demand conservation. And economics is inherently political. Boaters vote, and so do the people of Elkhorn City.

The pictures Hansell includes of the river when it was once used for hauling timbers are sobering. Once the rivers we love most

were only conduits, linking resource to factory. They still are used as sewers by industries and homeowners, as we know all too well. But the people of Elkhorn City have the opportunity to use the river for their own economic interests, by catering to the recreational interests of boaters, hikers, mountain bikers and others who are attracted to their community because of the river. As those who have boated on the Russell Fork know, there isn't a community anywhere that appreciates boaters more than the people of Elkhorn City. One of the most enduring scenes from Hansell's film is not a spectacular shot of kayakers dropping through Triple

Drop; it is the shot of the Gateway Motel, cars in the lot loaded with kayaks and rafts, the balcony lined with kayakers before each door, people, young and old, milling about getting their gear ready for their run on the river.

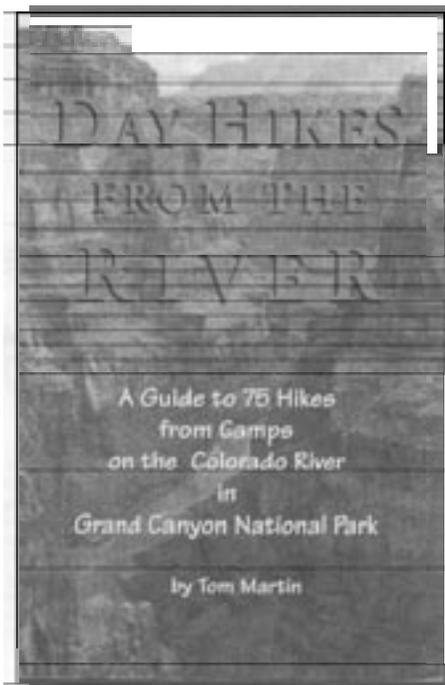
And what a river it is! Hansell gives the viewer not only breathtaking shots from 2,000 feet above the Russell Fork, but river level shots of kayakers surfing and shots of rafts, kayaks, canoes, and a strider running through the Class V section of the gorge. It's a world-class river that has found its world-class filmmaker.

I anticipate that many communities trying to do what Elkhorn City is attempting

will find this film useful. Boaters, for instance, are currently trying to get the New River Dries scheduled for regular releases. The people of Gauley Bridge, WV will be soon be facing the same issues, as those of Elkhorn City.

As our society continues to rely less on extractive industries and more on service industries, more and more communities will be facing similar decisions. I can think of no better way to get the dialogue on the right track, or the right line, than viewing Tom Hansell's *The Breaks of the Mountain: the Russell Fork Gorge*.

B O O K R E V I E W



## DAY HIKES FROM THE RIVER: A Guide to 75 Hikes from Camps on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park

By Tom Martin

Ever wonder where Harry McDonald carved his initials on a tree during the ill fated 1889 Stanton Brown Expedition through Grand Canyon? Did you know you could hike out to the Rim at South Canyon? How about the short hike to the petroglyphs at Tanner, or the location of the water jug filling spot at Phantom Ranch? Do you know there are three pull-in spots to access Matkatamiba Canyon? Ever wonder what the hike to Mooney Falls in Havasu is like, or about the winter sun potential at Tuckup? Did you know there are some amazing narrows at 193 Mile? Have you seen the rock art at 202 Mile, and did you know there's a water source just a few miles downriver from there?

In *DAY HIKES FROM THE RIVER*, author, hiker, river runner, and outgoing president of the GCPBA, Tom Martin offers river runners through Grand Canyon National Park the first text on exploring Grand Canyon National Park from the Colorado River. This book was written by a river runner for river runners, and carries on the best traditions of hiking and sharing information among the do-it-yourself boaters that was first begun in 1869 by Major John Wesley Powell, one of the most prolific hikers the Canyon has ever seen. Besides providing a description of each hike, the text includes the best camps to stage the hike from. Information on winter and summer sun exposure, along with pertinent pull-in information is also provided where needed. Each hike description includes a USGS [topo](#) map with the hike clearly marked on the map.

This book is for the river runner who wants to increase their options for activities and gain a greater appreciation of what rafting in Grand Canyon has to offer, besides running great whitewater. This guide identifies many camps that are not listed in any other guidebook. This book is intended for use by river runners to expand their knowledge base beyond the most heavily visited attraction sites on the river. While this book includes every popular site on the river, it expands river runners options and includes 60 other wonderful places to visit in the Grandest of Canyons.

Available for \$16.95 plus \$3.05 shipping (US and Canada, \$1.05 for each additional book), from the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association: Day Hikes, PO Box 2133, Flagstaff, AZ 86003. Sorry, no credit card orders or cash please. Proceeds from the sale of this book benefit the GCPBA.

*Sales benefit the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association (GCPBA)  
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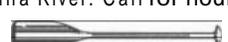
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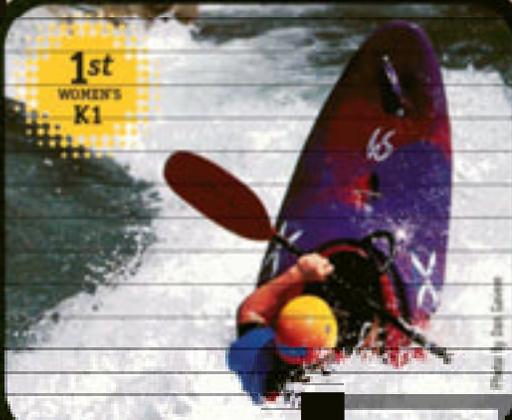
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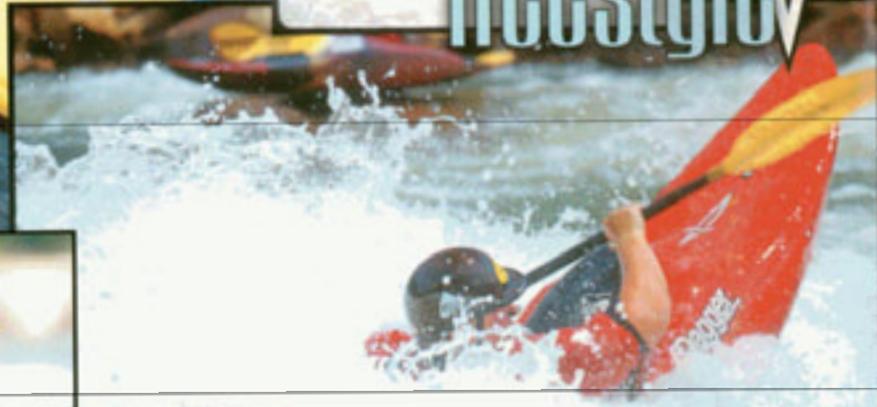
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