



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Conservation • Access • Events • Adventure • Safety

BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS

January/February 2008

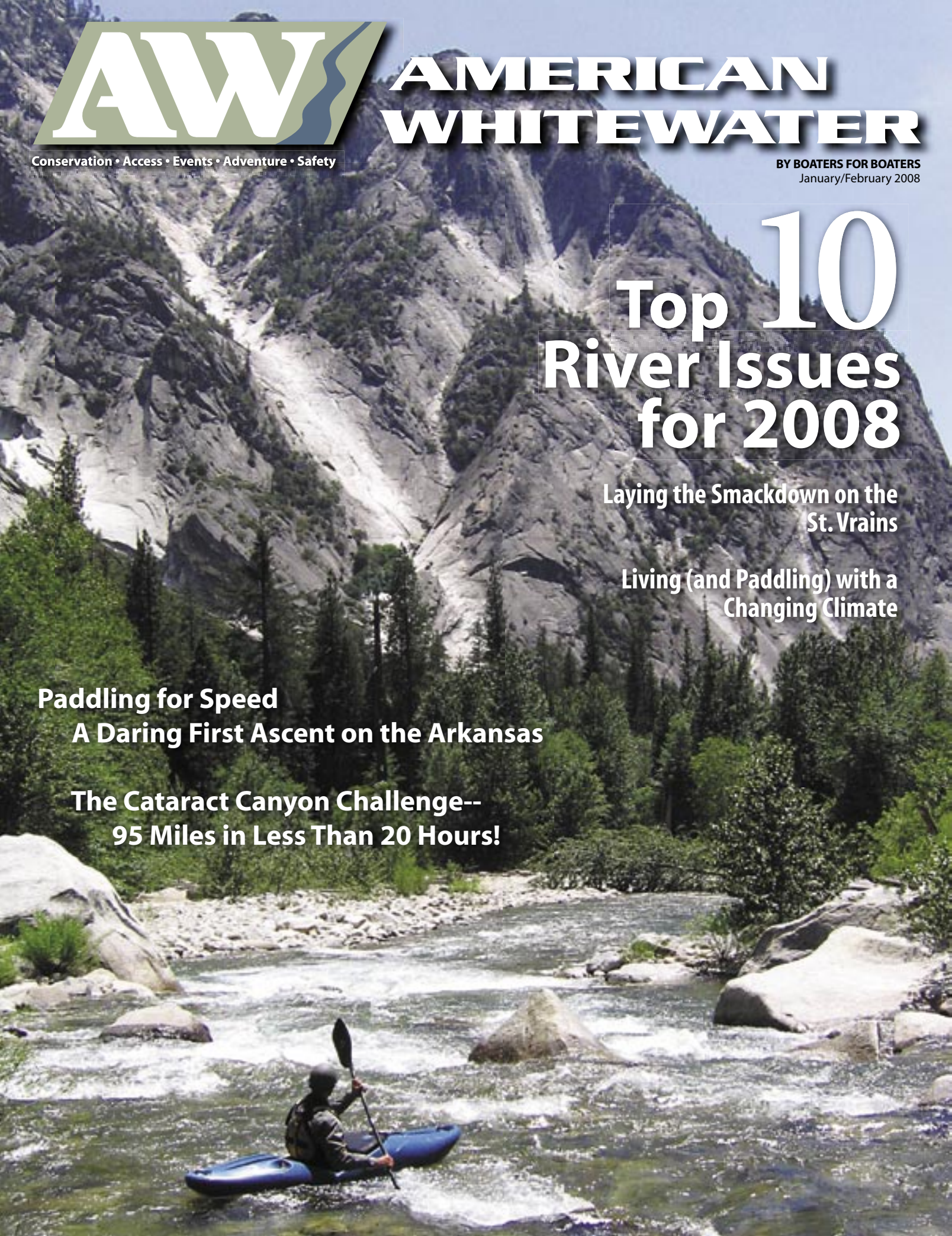
Top 10 River Issues for 2008

Laying the Smackdown on the
St. Vrain

Living (and Paddling) with a
Changing Climate

Paddling for Speed
A Daring First Ascent on the Arkansas

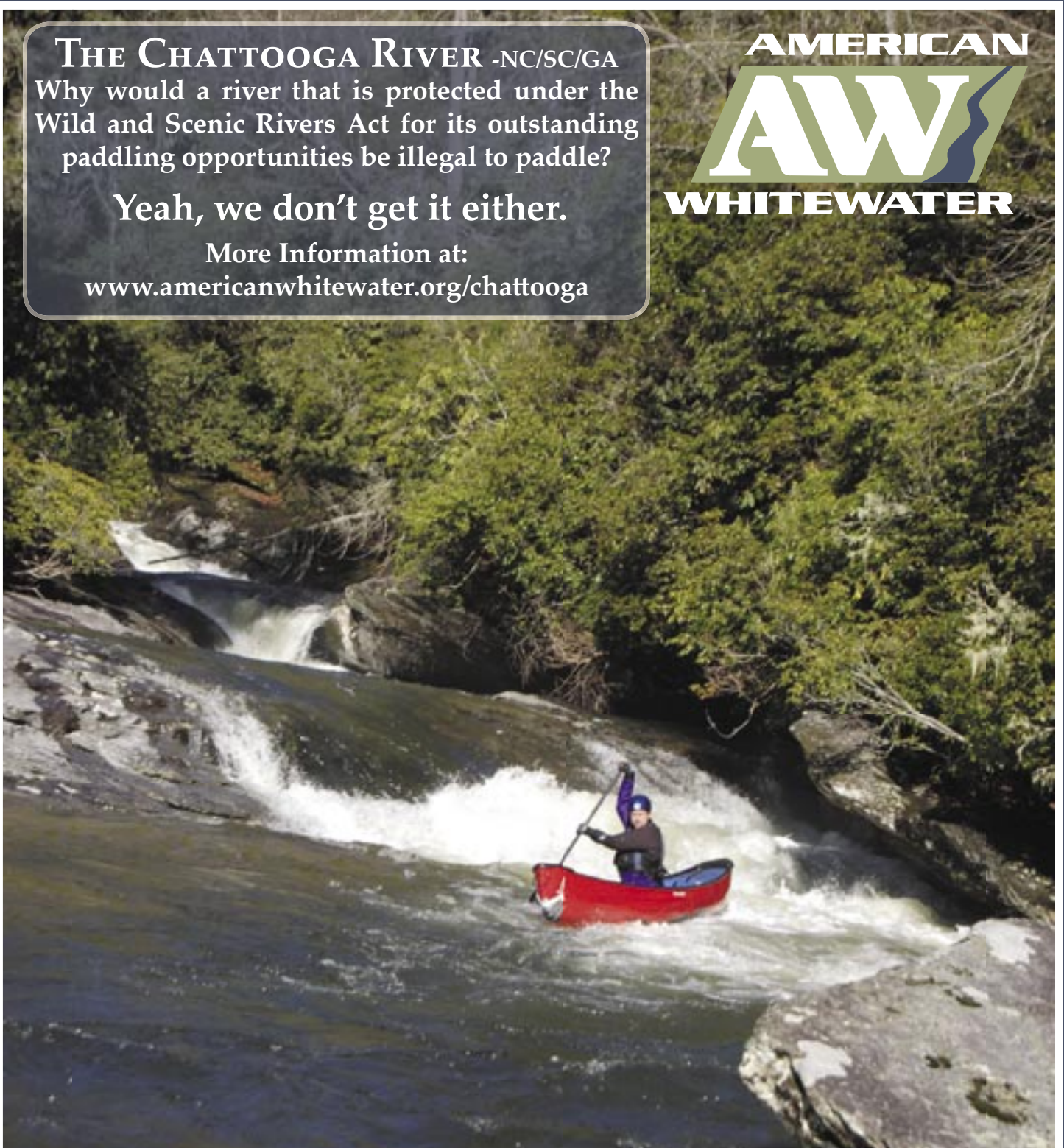
The Cataract Canyon Challenge--
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal

January/February 2008 - Volume #48 - Issue #1

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Support American Whitewater through CFC or United Way

All of the Federal CFC campaigns (CFC # 11351) and a few of the local United Way campaigns will allow you to donate through them to AW.
Also, check to see if your employer will match your charitable contributions: double your giving ... double your fun!



Cover shot: Johnnie Kern
enjoying the beauty of the
Middle Kings in one of the
rare mellow sections
photo by Ambrose Tuscano



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Purpose American Whitewater

River Stewardship: An Integrated Approach

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The Journey Ahead

By Mark Singleton

As river stewards and paddlers of America's rivers, we have much to be thankful for in the New Year. Through the efforts and support of American Whitewater members, volunteers, staff and partners we won some significant battles last year, undertook some new ones, and held our ground on old conflicts. The coming year will present new challenges to rivers across the country.

Top Ten

In this issue of American Whitewater we introduce you to the Top Ten River Issues of 2008. At the start of each year, our staff looks into their crystal ball, and based on experience, upcoming issues, current trends and national policy direction, outlines the top issues facing whitewater rivers. Our Top Ten River Issues of 2008 takes into consideration a broad geographic cross section of the country and identifies some of the pressures that our nation's rivers are under. See page 28 for an overview of these issues.

Board Elections

The last three years have been a remarkable period of transformation for American Whitewater. We moved from the Washington DC area to western North Carolina (where the cost of running an enterprise is significantly lower), staff positions were reorganized around the stewardship mission of the organization, and our financial reporting systems were reengineered. Along with these changes we are in the process of deliberately reducing the size of the American Whitewater Board of Directors. In 2005 we had 26 board members, at the completion of this election cycle we should be at 13 board members. While we are asking more time and participation from our current board members, this reduction in size represents a more efficient board structure that mirrors the lean efficiency of the current organization. Please take a moment to

review the current candidates for the board and fill out a ballot on page 58.

40th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act celebrates its 40th Anniversary in 2008. The Act, signed into law by President Lyndon Johnson in 1968, protects designated free flowing rivers. The Act is notable for safeguarding the special character of these rivers, and provides management to protect the public's enjoyment of these heritage resources for present and future generations. The Act provides permanent protection for the country's outstanding free flowing rivers. Specifically the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act:


- Protects outstanding natural, cultural, or recreational values.
- Requires the creation of a comprehensive river management plan.
- Ensures water quality is maintained.
- Prohibits dams and other federally assisted water projects that would adversely affect river values.

Key Text of Wild and Scenic Rivers Act:

It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.

By the time you read this, we will be asking for boater comments on the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River. The upper section of the Chattooga has been eviscerated of the outstanding remarkable value of whitewater recreation. Over the past decade American Whitewater has been leading the effort to open the upper Wild and Scenic Chattooga to canoeing

and kayaking. We look forward to the 40th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as the year we conclude our efforts on the Chattooga with a management plan that allows for whitewater recreation on the upper river.

The coming year presents many opportunities to build on our 50-plus year legacy of river stewardship. With a strong organization and relevant workplan we are well positioned to face these challenges squarely. 

See you on the river,



Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

Why would you devote a full page to the open letter to the US Forest Service from Ms. Lewandowski (Nov/Dec, 2007)? With an unnecessary over-use of Latin, Ms. Lewandowski argues that the decision of the US Forest Service (USFS) to limit or prevent boaters from using the Upper Chattooga is based on faulty logic. She argues that the USFS has made a “hasty generalization” by drawing a conclusion based on a sample size that is not large enough, using examples such as USFS concerns that kayakers may leave garbage on the river, or injure swimmers. Apparently, Ms. Lewandowski feels that it is “erroneous logic” because such claims do not apply to all boaters, and are not backed by “well-researched evidence.” Ms. Lewandowski teaches a college composition class; the rigorous standards of logic she teaches are not appropriate for setting environmental policies. On the contrary, to be effective, policies to protect the environment must be established before evidence of widespread or irreversible harm occurs. By the time the “facts and evidence” have become irrefutable (i.e. the statistical sample size that Ms. Lewandowski argues for), it’s probably too late. Thankfully, it is not necessary to prove that every boater (or factory, or tailpipe, or smokestack) cause harm before the federal government should take action. In fact, every boater performs this same risk calculation every time we look at a tough line. We ask ourselves, “what is the probability that I’ll miss my line?” and, “how bad will it be if I miss it?” If death is the consequence, then we may choose to walk that section of the river, even though the probability of missing the line may be less than certain. We buckle our kids safely in the car, even though not every car trip results in a crash. Policies that protect human and environmental health are no different; waiting for evidence may work in a logic class, but it makes lousy environmental policy.

This is not to say that the USFS is right or wrong in its policy regarding boating access on the Chattooga. But, the final

decision should be based on precaution and environmental protection, and not on scientific standards of certainty.

Jennifer Sass, Ph.D.
Garrett Park, Maryland

Dr. Sass,

I agree that sound environmental policy must be preventative, not reactive. We elected to publish Ms. Lewandowski’s letter because we feel that her point is pertinent to this issue. The repeated attempts by the Forest Service to restrict boaters’ access to the headwaters of the Chattooga seem particularly biased, unfair, and erroneous because the USFS freely allows other types of use in the area that are equally, if not more likely to cause environmental degradation. Thus, it appears that the Forest Service has made a “hasty generalization” about paddlers, electing to see us as disproportionately prone to impact wilderness.

If the Forest Service wants to truly protect wilderness, they need to begin by keeping all humans out; short of that progressive measure, which no U.S. land management agency has seen fit to implement, they should allow equal access to all non-motorized wilderness users—that is, unless they have well-documented “facts and evidence” showing that one group of users is abusing its right to enjoy wilderness lands. To date, the USFS has presented no such data.

Respectfully,

Ambrose Tuscano

Dear AW,

On page 43 of the September/October issue of *American Whitewater*, Matt Farrar fantasizes about putting a “kayaker on a Wheaties box.” As I’m sure you’ve heard from others, Jon Lugbill appeared on the Wheaties box. I think it was sometime in the 1980s. I know he is a C-1 paddler, but surely he qualifies as a kayaker for this purpose! Best regards, and keep up the good work!

Jerry Meral

Editor’s Note: This letter was submitted in response to Scott Weems’ article on hand paddling the Grand Canyon in our July/August issue.

Scott,

I just wanted to tell you that you are not alone. I too am a hand paddler in a playboat. I did start on a different path than you. I can’t do very many play moves, but I can run rivers great. While you were park and playing, I was learning how to make the hand paddles work in the big water and in the tight slots. I just wanted to let you know that the Upper Gauley & Yough are attainable with hand paddles. I’ve run both. And while I feel I need more control to feel comfortable on the Upper Yough, I’m sure I can gain that using the hand paddles. The Upper and Lower Gauley are my current favorite rivers, and I have no problem with either.

Us hand paddlers have a huge advantage that is only slowly starting to be realized by the paddling community at large. Sure we lack the brute force of the stick, but we get extremely tight maneuverability with dual hand advantage. While most people feel more comfy in that big hole with a stick, we get the advantage of never having to worry about pulling out our shoulders because our paddles were violently thrashed. And if we flip upstream, we get a guaranteed barrel roll if we want it. And we can do it in two inches of water without

hurting ourselves because those hand paddles double as face protection! And no one doubts that we can roll quicker in nastier water than any other type of paddler. While we may be more likely to flip at the top of Iron Ring, we will also be back upright before the second drop. Boofing is easy and flawless when you can two hand it. No positioning required.

So don't let any one tell you that you aren't cool. You're on the cutting edge in the evolving sport that is white water kayaking!

Jimi Nixon

Editor's Note: We received several letters about our recent Women's Issue. Below is a representative sample.

Dear Editor,

Please no more "women's" issues.

I think it is insulting and counter-productive. Gender is just is not worth editorial notice.

AW should be a better role model.

Anthony Edwards

Dear Editor,

Your articles on Women in Whitewater in the September/October issue were a real pleasure to read. I especially enjoyed the article about Shelly Becker and her cata-raft. While I have never met Shelly, I have seen many videos of her and have been truly impressed. The other articles were interesting too but you missed one important (to me) whitewater craft: a canoe. Are there none of us left? Have our knees all gotten so bad that we have abandoned the sport? True, there is no Olympic Sport that features open canoeing on whitewater, but surely you could have found someone to profile, such as Bunny Johns or Aurelia Kennedy, the real pioneers. While there aren't many of us out west (never have been), surely there still must be some left on the East Coast and in the Southeast.

My first trip on moving water was in 1962 on the Escatawpa River in Alabama. I had a counselor from Memphis in my canoe named Joy. She showed me how to read the water and avoid the rocks. From then on I was hooked. I memorized the chapter in the Red Cross Canoeing book on moving water. I was fortunate to get a job teaching canoeing at Camp Merrie-Woode in North Carolina (Fritz Orr's camp) during the summers while I was in college in Atlanta. One day in 1967 I snuck off campus to join Payson Kennedy and other legends on a trip down Section III of the Chattooga. I joined the Georgia Canoeing Association (another place to still find some female open boaters) and was truly disappointed that I was already married and with child when Payson founded the NOC. But I made the best of it, finally purchasing a Sears Aluminum canoe in the early 70s. When Sears wouldn't take it back after my husband and brother bent it in Bull Sluice, I tried kayaking, but could never figure out what to do that other blade. When the small Hahn C-1s came out (around 1975) I got one of those. After 15 years in a C-1 (not many girls in those either) I went back to the open canoe and was very successful, even paddling the Grand Canyon.


After moving to Idaho in 1998, I discovered that there weren't many open boaters out here and we were all old. At the launch ramp on the Main Salmon in Idaho one April, the wind blew my canoe onto a kayaker. She immediately said "I guess that's one reason there aren't too many of those boats out here." On one multi-day trip on the John Day River in Oregon, the two of us in canoes were sent down to check out the overnight camp. We found the camp but were still trying to stand up by the time everyone else got there.

Several years ago I bought a small cataraft, but because I prefer my canoe and still paddle it, I am not very good in the raft (those dang oars are so long—and there are two of them!).

Thanks for letting me share...

Bronwyn (Fowlkes) Myers
Boise, Idaho

Dear Editor,

Steve from Endless River Adventures here. Just writing to make a correction and give some news regarding an article in your Nov/Dec issue. The section of river mentioned in the Humor Contest category winner was actually the Casa Maquina section of the Rio Toro not Rio Sarapiquí. This section is actually one of the most beautiful stretches of river in Costa Rica, with challenging Class IV-V whitewater and more waterfalls coming into the river than can be counted. Sadly Mr. Maurier and his group may have been one of the last to paddle this section. ICE, the Costa Rican power utility, is building another powerhouse on the Toro. Not coincidentally, casa maquina translates as "powerhouse." So I guess it is a Spanish horror movie, as there will be no more water on this section of river. All flows are to be pulled from the powerhouse at the put-in (the one in the picture), and run underground to another powerhouse downstream. Consider yourself lucky if you've ever paddled this stretch. I know I will always remember the few chances I got to explore this paradise. 

Sincerely,

Steve Augustine

News & Notes

In Memoriam: Marge Cline

By Randy Hetfield, President, Chicago Whitewater Association and Sigrid Pilgrim, Director, Illinois Paddling Council

In his 1908 classic, *The Wind in the Willows*, Kenneth Grahame writes: "There is nothing—absolutely nothing—half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats."

Marge Cline, President of American Whitewater from 1982 to 1988, and a 2006 candidate for the International Whitewater Hall of Fame, made sure that paddlers in her charge could "mess about in boats," and not mess up in boats!

Marge started paddling in the 1970s with the family. A few years later, a near drowning on a whitewater river resulted in Marge needing to be resuscitated. She resolved to make sure that nobody would ever experience that. And when Marge decided on something, it was going to happen! Marge would not take "no" for an answer, as one of the many tributes on the Chicago Whitewater Association's (CWA) website reads: "I just remember Marge was like the drill sergeant I had in Special Forces: demanding, yet kind; arrogant, yet considerate; and often getting me to do more than what I wanted to commit to. Marge said way back that her students are her children and she cares about each and every one of us. Since that time, I've called her 'Mom.'"

Marge brought the American Canoe Association (ACA) instruction program to the Midwest, certifying many paddlers in the skill of canoeing and kayaking, and through them, providing education and instruction to thousands of others, greatly contributing to safety on the waterways.

Over time, she became one of fewer than two dozen Instructor-Trainer-Educators in the US. Her function in this role was to train the Instructor-Trainers who would in turn train the Instructors who

would teach the sport to paddlers and the general public. Marge was also on ACA's Safety, Education and Instruction Council board, which established national policy on paddler education. So she not only taught paddling, but also influenced the way paddling was taught.

Marge may not have been an accomplished Class IV and beyond kayak paddler, but her skills stretched to many crafts and styles: solo whitewater kayak, tandem kayak, solo or tandem canoe; her passions also included "freestyle canoeing," a sort of aquatic ballet in a boat, with named moves, choreographed to music, one of which is to maneuver the canoe on edge up to the gunnels without making so much as a ripple or gurgle in the water.

Marge was especially famous for her headstands through which she liked to demonstrate how safe and stable a canoe could be. She would do so usually while surfing in the middle of some Class II rapid.

Marge also was an accomplished film and video producer, and was the winner of the 8mm film entry at the 1983 National Paddling Film Festival (NPF) in the recreational scenic category with: "Gallatin and Yellowstone River." In addition to creating her own entries, she also was a great supporter of the NPF and for many years acted as a judge.

Marge was active in many paddling organizations. She was one of the earliest CWA members and for 28.5 years she served as the club's newsletter editor—surely a record among not-for-profit, volunteer based paddling organizations. She sent the CWA Gradient to many other clubs in exchange for copies of their newsletter, over time assembling



what surely is the largest paddling club newsletter library in the country.

CWA introduced many hundreds, if not thousands of people to paddling kayaks in the many pool sessions the club organizes in the winter. One year the need for spray skirts came up. Marge drew up a pattern, bought material, and sewed up over 80 of the red nylon style skirts now familiar to CWA members. Most of these are still in use today, having outlasted much newer store-bought skirts.

For many years, Marge was also Chair of the Midwest Division of the American Canoe Association, regularly attending the association's national board meetings in Springfield, Virginia, where she greatly influenced the activities of ACA to the benefit of paddlesport.

Marge also liked to cook. Lasagna in the woods for 75 hungry paddlers was one of her trademarks. There were also weird food contests during trips; once she even cooked and served a raccoon.

Marge's was widely known as Rivermom,

which was also the title of her license plate. The nickname was the result of Marge taking a young paddler whose parents didn't enjoy paddling as much as Marge did down the river. As she recounted in an article in the AW Journal in 1982, young David would soon call Marge his "river mom." He even surprised her with a Christmas gift, a shirt with "RIVERMOM" emblazoned in bright red letters.

Marge took the role of river mom very seriously, and began to think of all paddlers she taught or associated with as her children. For many years she taught at the Chicago Whitewater Association's winter pool sessions and beginner trips.

Many paddlers found their first encounter with Marge to be a surprise. After all, who expects that a whitewater course will be taught by a small, gray haired, elderly lady. But her many years of experience as a competent paddler in many disciplines allowed her to give flawless demonstrations. From even across the noisiest pool she could give advice and instructions to struggling students. Few were as efficient at teaching the roll as Marge was.

And Marge demanded precision. In her certification courses she often noted that she was not going to pass anyone who did not meet her expectations in demonstrating the theoretical knowledge and on-water skills. It was her reputation that was on the line, she would say. As an example, she would ask her students to practice the forward stroke. The requirement was to paddle flawlessly for several hundred yards on a lake: one stroke per side, evenly for the entire run; no fishtailing allowed. Students were to paddle every bit as straight and smooth in their whitewater boats as the Sea Kayak instructor, setting pace ahead in an 18-foot expedition boat.

For twelve years, Midwest ACA sponsored a major introductory event called Paddling in the Park. Marge headed up


the instructional program at the two-day event. Each year, Marge and more than 30 instructors and aides would teach hundreds of prospective paddlers the basics of canoe or kayak in two-hour quick start sessions. This event offered participants their first experience in canoes and kayaks and also was a great outreach opportunity for clubs, businesses and other paddling related organizations.

In addition to Marge's love of and excellence in paddlesport, she also had a great many other talents. Marge enjoyed painting, often working on riverscapes on canoeing trips and giving away special presents such as small painted paddles to friends who had babies or grandchildren. Marge also played the bassoon with a local community orchestra. She accompanied a chorus of CWA'ers singing Christmas carols on the piano at the annual club gathering, and her polka dancing around a campfire with friends into the wee hours of the morning was legendary!

Poor health caused Marge to slow down in her last years, but she never quit. She bounced back from multiple heart attacks to continue paddling, often within a few weeks of being released from the hospital. When she couldn't get in a boat, she would come to the edge of the water, sometimes with a walker and sometimes with oxygen to shout instructions. At least once, she paddled with the oxygen tank in the boat

with her. She continued to attend CWA meetings right up to the end.

Marge had arranged to paddle down the Fox River in support a proposed Aurora, Illinois, Whitewater Park and had confirmed her intentions in the middle of the week. Later she cancelled due to illness (she felt that it would look bad to paddle on a cold, wet day after canceling out on a family Halloween party). She passed away only two days after we paddled without her. Her husband Bob, also in poor health followed her only nine days later. Marge had often said that she could not leave Bob alone ... she had lost her son Michael, also an avid paddler some eight years earlier, as well as an infant daughter. She is survived by a daughter, two sons and a sister.

In the year 2000, Marge Cline was named as one of Paddler Magazine's top 100 Paddlers of the Century; in 1990, she was given the ACA Legend of Paddling award. The Chicago Whitewater Association has established a memorial tribute page on their website (<http://www.chicagowhitewater.org/cwa/margecline.asp>) and anyone who has known Marge is encouraged to add their own pictures, stories, memories or tributes, or to send them by e-mail to signpilgr@comcast.net. 



John Schneller

October, 1951 – October, 2007

by Jerry McAward

Read through the pages of American Whitewater and you'll see stories of many unlikely heroes rising to a cause. The story of John Schneller and the life he led on and near the Lehigh River in eastern Pennsylvania is also about someone making a difference.

You want passion? Drive by John and son Tom's home on the main road on which they live and you'll understand passion. Their mailbox juts out from the cockpit of a pink kayak standing on its stern, buried deep in the ground, at the end of their driveway for thousands to see every day. A pink kayak mailbox ... now that's passion. John was a boater to the core—and a secure male, too.

A long-time supporter of AW, John would playfully snap at people who paddled rivers but did not belong to his favorite organization. He believed in having fun, he believed in the river, and he walked the walk. One of his joys was introducing his son Tom to the world of whitewater kayaking on the river that ran a quarter mile from his home. John was always very proud to talk about his son becoming a hotshot kayaker, and through it, becoming a well-balanced man.

Besides being a good father, John made a huge difference in the Lehigh River paddling community. He always recognized the river as a place to have fun, and that needed to be preserved. He also knew that the proper management of the annual flow of water from the Francis E. Walter Dam would foster these goals. For decades he was a member and officer of the Lehigh Valley Canoe Club. He formed an advocacy group called Lehigh Lovers United, and with the help of several members created a Position Statement

(with the help of AW) that properly stated the mission and goals of the private paddling community. There are many interest groups and it was important to John that the private boater have a voice in the dialogue with rafting companies, fishermen's groups, water quality advocates, and government entities. John and the paddling community wanted more paddling days and this worked hand-in-hand with the mission of the sportsmen and water quality groups. The Lehigh River was his passion, and John made it his life's work for his last few years to make it more accessible to paddlers.

The mission made sense, and John's forceful and at times cantankerous personality helped make things happen. Three years ago, the Army Corps of Engineers announced its Flow Management Plan and operational guidelines for the Walter Dam to include as many as 22 water release days per year, where there had previously been only seven.

Recently the Army Corps of Engineers gave John an award of recognition for service and commitment for his work on the Lehigh River Plan. As near as we know, almost 90,000 people enjoyed paddling the Lehigh this year—in part because of John's energy and fortitude.

John started enjoying rivers as a river guide, quickly learned to kayak, then boated everywhere, and eventually with his son. He looked forward to social gatherings, and introducing people to boating on the Lehigh. Early on he found out that kayakers like to travel, and soon he was doing it too, visiting places like the Grand Canyon, Costa Rica, Belize, Alaska, Canada, and many locations across the United States. John was happiest on the

river, with Tom, and with his paddling friends who were many.

In the last few weeks of his life, John went to Jamaica for a vacation with Tom. They swam in the pool, had fresh lobster on the beach, did a rainy waterfall trip, drank rum, talked to the locals—a week laughing and relaxing in paradise. One of John's favorite phrases, "It's All Good!" typified his love of life right to the end. He never let the cancer take charge—he was the boss and his spirits stayed high.

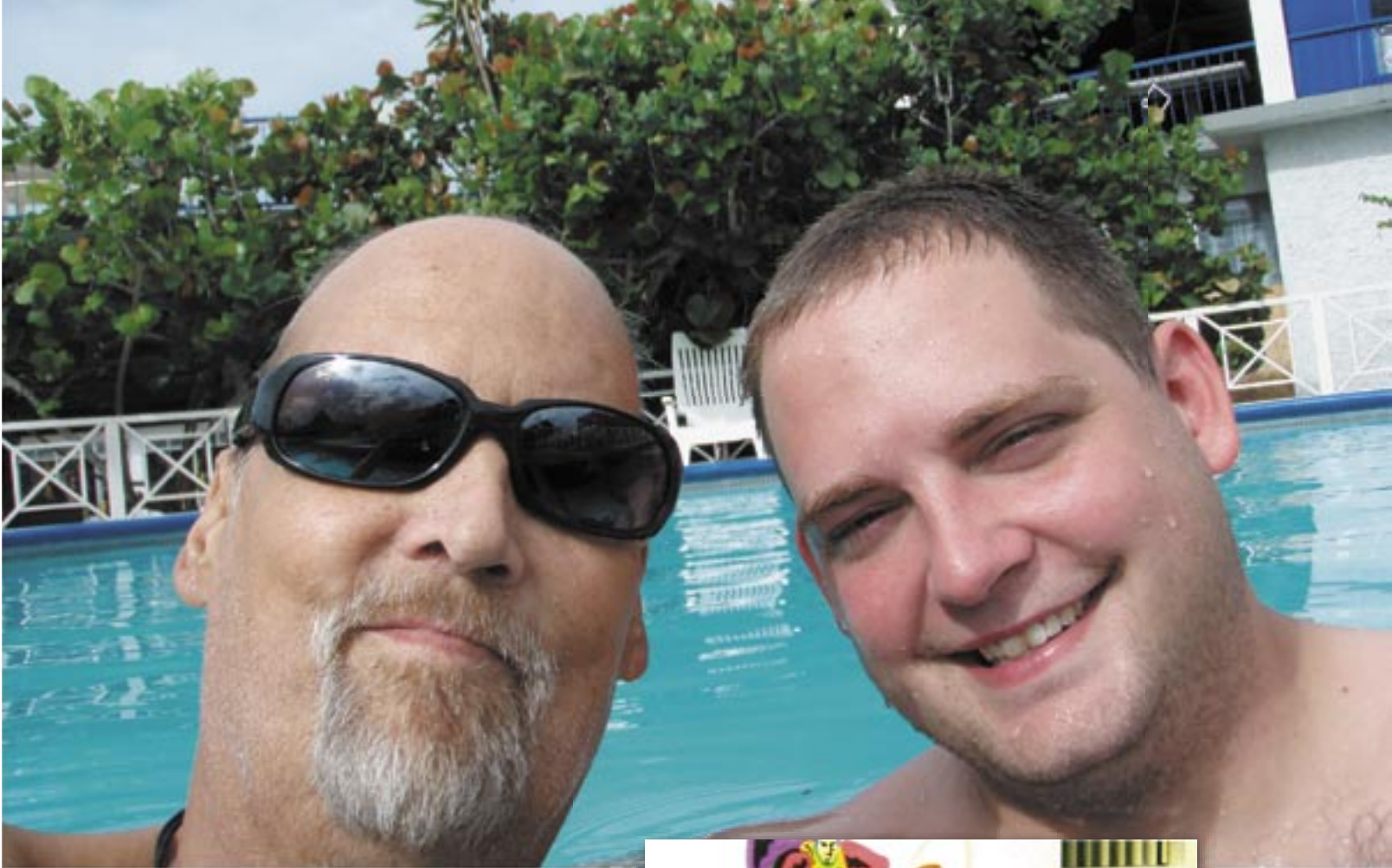
John was satisfied with the directions things took for the Lehigh River and the Flow Management plan, but he had plans. Others will take up his cause and carry it further – Tom is already working closely with others to keep John's dream alive.

American Whitewater's executive director, Mark Singleton, sent a message that was read at John's Memorial Service on the banks of the Lehigh River. Boaters, family, and friends filled the pavilion. It was, after all, a catered party that John wanted to take place upon his passing.

Here are some memories of John through the eyes of his friends and family:


"In 1982 I watched John get his first taste of kayaking on the Salmon River in Idaho. He got in a kayak and paddled over what seemed to be an impassable waterfall. It looked huge, and he looked so little in his kayak going over the falls, but he loved it!"

"I believe the first time I met John was shortly after I returned to paddling, which was several years ago now. I joined up with some LVCC'ers on the Nescopeck and pulled up next to John at the bottom of a chute near the beginning of the



run. John said something to me and although I no longer recall what it was, I do remember being struck by his devilish grin and thinking “who’s this smart-ass?” As I got to know John, I came to appreciate that devilish smile.”

“John, Tom, and I did a classic southern rivers trip in the spring of 2007. We ran with a group of others from the Lehigh Valley Canoe Club on a different river every day for a week in eastern Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia. John rented a 30’ motor home for the week and off we went! He did not get to paddle, but shared in the glory and stories around the campfire each night. John knew his time was short and wanted to live his life to the fullest.”

In closing, your Lehigh River paddling family remembers you, John Schneller. We thank you for your work, your energy, your drive, and for helping bringing many more days of river running to thousands of paddlers. We’ll carry the torch. “No Worries.” 



Whitewater Symposium: “The Spirit of Whitewater”

By David Hughes

This past fall I attended the Whitewater Symposium with the goal of further developing instructional skills and programming for Huge Experiences kayak programs. Little did I realize how much the Whitewater Symposium had to offer.

During the symposium’s final panel discussion, “The Future of the Whitewater Symposium” directors Bob Campbell and Bruce Lessels asked an audience, “What is the Whitewater Symposium.” The kayak industry’s leaders brainstormed on the question with the goal of encompassing the answers in one all-telling sentence.

The Whitewater Symposium might be described as a collection of the kayak industry leaders assembled in a series of three-day events. Kayak schools, manufacturers, magazines and web developers, safety instructors, athletes, whitewater park developers, video producers, and service project leaders all collaborated and shared information.

For each attendee, the symposium offers something unique. For example, Woody Calloway stated that Liquid Logic’s impressive new river runner, the Remix, was a direct result of instructor input he gained from his attendance during the 2005 symposium. Kayak schools and manufacturers plan their marketing around a positive and fun image that industry leaders have researched as productive, exciting, and inspirational to everyone from families to adrenaline seekers.

Kayak industry owners with their top instructors and employees were present to improve their instructional models, plan for the future of kayaking, improve their business models, and to share their wealth of knowledge.

Where else could one gain so much instruction and information about the

sport within even a period of a month, and this was all happening in three days. I thought, “Wow! Now I understand why these companies are so successful.” Their presence alone was motivating, to say the least.

Kent Ford lead the symposium’s opening discussion regarding changing the public’s image of kayaking with a documentary video of kayaking history. Kent’s video entertained and clearly illustrated an image of a scary and dangerous sport to those who are not familiar with kayaking. And while the sport is extraordinarily fun and user-friendly there is a continual presentation of this type of story that has consistently branded a dangerous, extreme image to the public. Kent went on to illustrate a recent change in the “kayak image.” A growing television presence has kayak companies opting to advertise ease of use and fun adventure, while manufacturers are marketing a quality of life to contribute to a more positive image for kayakers.

Kent then moderated a discussion with panel members: Mark Singleton of AmericanWhitewater, Eugene Buchanon of Paddling Life, Anna Levesque of Girls at Play, and myself, David Hughes of Huge Experiences’ New River Academy. Each panelist spoke on his or her perspective regarding the future of kayaking. Finally, the audience took turns asking directed questions.

The symposium began each day at 9 am with a four simultaneous 90-minute events. Moderators and speakers addressed the kayak industry with topics such as: “Use of the Internet,” a variety of kayak skills courses, instructor updates, safety and rescue courses, youth and teen development roundtables, American Whitewater presentations, “Mental Components of Kayaking,” expedition planning, and more.

*Charlie Walbridge teaches a course
on “Foot Entrapment”*

photo by David Hughes



Surfer's Ear Tour 2008

by Ryan Moore


The list of presenting instructors is the who's who of kayaking. Making a decision between two or three events became tough. When I missed events that I wanted to attend such as Heather Herbek's (Wetplanet) "Mental Side of Kayaking," or Janet Cowie's (Zoar) "Game On," I was able to ask them at dinner to brief me with their discussion or get a copy of their presentation.

Another great thing about the symposium was that we could attend a session and then walk 30 seconds and put on great whitewater. Attendees would play on the wave where the freestyle National Championships were held just a month prior, and kayak instructors and pro-athletes would present instructional courses to learning instructors.

The symposium was all but over as leaders began to depart for airports and extended drives to their homes. I was lucky enough to paddle with NOC, Zoar, and US National Whitewater Center instructors one last time before our departures. Anna

Levesque was there and it was not long before we were reminded of her playful mischievous nature. Soon a wave war evolved into trying to keep each other on the wave.

The surf consisted of ten paddlers from different parts of the world smiling, hooting, and helping each other stay on the wave for 30 minutes. Owners and spectators snapped photos of us laughing, surfing, and flipping.


The surf had embodied everything Kent Ford during his original and Joe Pulliam in his keynote presentation expressed that the kayak image should be: "The Spirit of Whitewater." 

David is the founder and director of Huge Experiences and the New River Academy. For more reports by David surf to www.kayakschool.org

Several weeks ago my friend Tim and I were discussing Surfer's Ear while hiking into our favorite creek. We were talking about the associated hearing loss when someone caught up to us and said, "Yeah, Surfer's Ear sucks. It's only a good thing if you're married." This caught Tim a bit off guard since he was three weeks away from his wedding, but I think it's safe to say that Surfer's Ear is bad for anyone.

Surfer's Ear, or exostoses, is abnormal bone growth in the ear canal caused by repeated exposure to cold water. The condition leads to hearing loss and frequent ear infections. Several well-known athletes have recently needed painful surgery to chip away the extra bone. In 1999, AW Board member and physician Eric Nies examined people at Gauley Fest. He found that about half of those he examined had varying degrees of Surfer's Ear. Most kayakers protect themselves with helmets, PFD's, and elbow pads. Very few use ear protection.

That's why Vanderbilt Medical Center and American Whitewater have teamed up to bring you The Surfer's Ear Tour 2008. Booths will be set up at numerous whitewater events across the nation to educate people about this mysterious condition. Kayakers will be offered free ear exams that can be seen live on a video screen. Information will be available on ear protection, ways to prevent further damage, and the best ways to treat symptoms.

Are you developing exostoses? Should you wear earplugs or skullcaps? Should you use eardrops, and what mixture works best? What regions, seasons, and types of kayaking put you most at risk? Keep an eye out for AW regional emails to see when the Surfer's Ear Tour will be in your neck of the woods. 


Instructors utilized the whitewater course for instructionals and attendees enjoyed the whitewater between sessions

photo by Janet Cowie



Missouri Whitewater Championships

By John Niebling

The time is approaching for the 41st annual Missouri Whitewater Championships! The dates are March 15-16, 2008, once again held on the beautiful St. Francis River near Fredericktown, Missouri. This event will consist of slalom and downriver races for most ages, skill levels, and boat classes (including a short boat division) on Class II-III water, and plans are in the works for a possible boatercross event. 

Please visit missouriwhitewater.org/mwc.html for more information and updates.

41st Annual Missouri Whitewater Championships

When: March 15-16, 2008.

Where: St. Francis River, Missouri, Millstream Gardens Conservation Area. Hosted by the Missouri Whitewater Association.

Sanctioned by the ACA.

Website: <http://missouriwhitewater.org/mwc.html>

email: racedirector@missouriwhitewater.org

Reno River Festival Better Than Ever in its Fifth Year

RENO, Nev. – Known for attracting top professional kayakers and amateur athletes from around the world, the Reno River Festival returns in 2008 to celebrate five years on the Truckee River. With a new vision and new ownership, the three-day event will venture beyond whitewater and boating competitions to showcase a new avenue for adventure. Expect land-based competitions, including a freestyle bike race and fun run, bringing a whole new class of competitive athletes to downtown Reno. The adventure begins May 9, 2008.

The 5th annual Reno River Festival is held in the heart of downtown Reno in the booming Riverwalk district at the city's \$1.5-million Truckee River Whitewater Park. The Festival has earned a reputation for showcasing world-class kayaking at its best. This year, the free downtown event expands to not only include additional competitions, but also high-energy concerts, food for every craving and a beer garden featuring hand-crafted microbrews.


"We have high expectations for ourselves and we are taking this year's event to a whole new level," said Jim Litchfield, co-owner of Reno River Festival LLC and one of the designers of the Truckee River Whitewater Park. "It's already known as one of the premier, first-class whitewater events in the country, and with the decision to expand and include new events, we'll attract a wider range of participants and hopefully more spectators who will see that it's Reno's most exciting event of the year."

Litchfield made the jump from competition coordinator to co-owner of the Reno River Festival, partnering with marketing and special event consultant Jim Bauserman. Bauserman's company, Seismic Events, previously sold sponsorships for the Reno River Festival.

"This is our opportunity to show off everything Reno has to offer in one

dynamic weekend," said Bauserman. "This event will appeal to young and experienced athletes, families, professionals and everyone else you can think of, from all over the country. It will showcase the area's amenities and really get locals and visitors excited about the Reno-Tahoe area."

The Reno River Festival will be held May 9-11 at Wingfield Park in downtown Reno. The event includes open and professional kayaking competitions, whitewater clinics, mountain bike speed trials, a fun run and an expo featuring the hottest outdoor products on the market.

The Truckee River Whitewater Park is located just blocks from Reno's 24-hour gaming excitement and other America's Adventure Place attractions including golf, skiing, hiking and bike trails, lakes and a selection of art museums and galleries. 

For more details about the 5th annual Reno River Festival, please visit www.RenoRiverFestival.com or call 775-784-9400 x 119.

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Paddling For Speed

Grabbing a First Ascent on the Arkansas River

By Conor Ross

"It's the new downriver."

That's what Andre told the inquisitive man with the whisker-speckled face. The man looked at our boats again and acknowledged that they did look pretty fast. Andre calls it "attaining" and said it's pretty big in China. They even have races on the east coast, where competitors paddle up boulder garden rapids in stair-step fashion.

I'd never heard of it before, until earlier today when he told me to grab the Pyranha Speeder from the shop and meet him after work and now here we were, putting in at the play park and paddling upstream until we get too tired to go on.

"The good thing," he said, "is that when you don't want to go anymore you just float back downstream."

The guy with whiskers agreed with him completely.

To the best of Andre's knowledge he was the only person who had yet attempted to paddle up this particular section of river. Last time he tried the water was higher and he almost made it to House Rapid—a mile, maybe. We speculated that if paddling upriver really was the future of kayaking, that we could some day bask in glory of everyone knowing that we were the first ones to paddle this particular section.

"Let's go make history!" he said as he paddled out of the eddy and up the first move of our quest. It didn't seem to matter that this was only one of the many sections in the Arkansas river, which is only one of many rivers in Colorado, which is only one

little state in a whole world of geographic political entities containing endless other rivers that people would some day "attain" their way up.

We were on a mission.

We were stoked.

The first rule of "attaining" is that you need a fast boat. The Speeder is a fast boat, weighing in at about the same as your average creeker and measuring about twice as long. Sometimes, after scouting lines that involve multiple eddy-hops, we found to our delight that it was easier to just paddle straight up the main body of current. I've never seen a river from this perspective—moving two miles per hour up wave trains and little ledge holes. It felt like the hand of god was parting the water in front of my bow while my Egyptian pursuers struggled in their little play boats and eventually drowned.

The second rule of "attaining" is one that Andre explained to me directly: "Don't angle too much." And after saying this he ferried across the river to land in an eddy upstream above a few rocks. "Don't angle too much," I said to myself as I angled too much and pinned that beast of a boat against those same rocks. Once freed, I sank back into an eddy and spend the better part of a minute trying to aim back upstream.

Even with a few mishaps here and there we were still making fairly good progress. A fisherman in a pool about halfway up smiled just a little bit brighter than he would had we been traveling the other way. To him we were doing something, something that involved skill and a spiritual kinship to the water; unlike those lazy bastards you see riding the current downstream and throwing up fist pounds every time they plop off a new waterfall. He probably knew we were making history, and it was probably his blessing that drove us up the next rapid, the easy-looking one,

that almost put a stop to our visions of eternal glory. Almost, but not quite.

It looked easy enough from the bottom—all we had to do was push ourselves between two rocks and scrape up a shallow gravel bar for a few feet—but the Speeder has a peculiar way of dealing with eddy-lines and cross currents that didn't agree with this particular maneuver.

For one, the tail is so long that you can't forget about it or else it will catch on a rock you think you already passed and you will turn sideways and pin and die and be rejected in heaven because St. Peter will consider it suicide by idiocy. The same concept applies to eddy lines. Because of the length, the Speeder likes to sit right on top of the eddy fence and won't be bothered to move. When I tried to turn into the eddy line the tail moved out into the current and the boat when back to resting perfectly sandwiched between the eddy and the current. The only escape in this situation is to turn out into the current and re-enter for another try. And yes, peel-outs are a little scary with a V-hull underneath you.

On my fourth attempt I made it up through the two rocks and proceeded to beat my poor little paddle against the shallow riverbed with the ferocity of a wounded animal. I passed a little rock on my right and aimed deadeye for a safe spot on the same side. Well, my tail hadn't cleared the rock yet so I turned sideways and pinned again. I retreated into that same frustrating little eddy and the boat gladly moved to its favorite spot along the eddy fence. Three peel-outs later and a few more dents in my paddle blades landed me in the upper eddy with Andre, where I took a break and tried to control my breathing.

"That's House Rapid around the corner," he said, and I looked up at the narrowing of the canyon upstream. The way looked steep; not steep like a creek or even an

easy Class III, but steep like exhaustion and apathy mixed into a series of Class II drops. Still, the allure of eternal glory added zing to my paddle strokes and I followed Andre zealously up every little jump. I kept my head down and tried not to angle too much.

"We made it," he said when I looked up, "I've never come this far before." Behind him a house-sized boulder splits the river in two, and the walls on either side seem to have been constructed solely to frame that rock like an inspirational poster. "Stay strong, like a rock..." it seems to say.

Without a moment's hesitation Andre sprinted up the left channel. He pitoned against the wall and drifted into a pocket eddy where he could work on angling his boat in the right direction. He left the eddy line with a vengeance. After a few more heavy strokes he was upstream of the rock and out of my sight.

I copied his first move, piton and all, and watched him fight the current from my comfy little pocket eddy. His bow swung just so slightly to the right and he flushed sideways into the river-wide rock. I saw him let go of his paddle with one hand before disappearing again. There were a few harrowing seconds in which I wished I had brought a rope or two, but then he floated into sight on the other side of the boulder and eddied out again. He had one of those "good-thing-nothing-bad-happened" kind of smiles. It was my turn.

The rock in the middle of the river creates a backwash that appears almost strong enough to propel a thoughtful kayaker up the two-foot tall green tongue that feeds into it. Beyond that lies flat water and, of course, eternal glory.

I ferried above the rock with my nose in the green, preparing for the blast upstream, when my extra-long tail found something behind me that it could get stuck in. The combination of a pinned tail and my little

bit of ferry angle sent my nose perfectly parallel into a little curling reversal. It's the only time I've ever been stuck in a hole and pinned at the same time, with a good six feet or two between the two features.

This called for some heroic moves, which, unfortunately, I was incapable of performing. When I did managed to flip myself by my own efforts the release of weight cleared the tail and I flushed upside down into the eddy with Andre. I rolled up, and he joined me with a sigh of relief, as soon as he stopped laughing.


Andre tried again from the other side, but much to the same result. We decided that a 16-foot boat could wrap pretty seriously around a 16-foot boulder and the results would be something neither of us wanted to deal with at the moment. It was time to go back.

Once pointed downriver, the Speeder seemed like a completely different kayak. For one, it seemed like obstacles came at us a little bit faster. Rocks we passed at two miles per hour on the way up became either blurs or butt-bruising off-ramps, depending on whether we spotted them in time. The lone fisherman didn't seem to like us as much anymore but he still waved, and before I could wave back I saw the bridge that marked the play park where we started.

We blasted through the first feature, a wave hole with unretentive tendencies, and careened past the jealous play-boaters in their cute little matching outfits. As we walked back to Andres house with the monsters on our shoulders I wondered if in ten years there would be mobs of paddlers "attaining" their way up the same section we just did.

Would their dry-tops match their boats? Would they have special paddles just for attaining? Andre thinks they might. But the real question remains: If somebody makes it all the way up past House Rapid and into the flat water above it, will they holler and pound a fist into the air?

I hope so. *AW*



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Paddling For Speed



*The author during a rare break
in the action, 8:30am, mile 21 or 23*

photo by Unknown paddler with group from New Mexico

The Cataract Canyon Challenge

By Paul Gamache

Author's Disclaimer: *Please note that in no way whatsoever am I promoting solo paddling. Paddling is inherently dangerous and to paddle solo is simply creating unnecessary risks.*

Whenever you do a run for the first time there is an ominous feeling of apprehension associated with the unknown. Now take that feeling and exacerbate it by being by yourself in a 14-foot whitewater race boat. In addition, you must arrive at the takeout 95 miles downriver within 20 hours or it will cost you over \$1,600. This was the situation I was trying to stomach as I put on the Colorado River for a fundraiser for American Whitewater.

About two weeks earlier, while working at Colorado Kayak Supply I decided it would be nice to get on Cataract Canyon before the end of the summer. With only

a few days off each week, I opted to try to paddle the entire canyon in three days. However, the more I thought of it the more challenging it sounded to try to do the entire thing in a day. This was about the time the bets started coming in. For those you who have not heard, the bet was that I could paddle the entire canyon in under 20 hours. If I did not make it in time, I would donate whatever amount anyone pledged to American Whitewater, if I did make it then they would have to donate to the amount of their pledge AW. After posting on several websites including Boof, Mountainbuzz, Playak, Canoe and Kayak, the Colorado Kayak Supply Blog, Boatertalk, and the Caliproduct forum, more and more people were adding to the list of pledges. By the time I was on my way to Cataract more than 130 people had signed up and over \$1,600 was pledged. Thus began the Cataract

Canyon Challenge

I was awoken around 2:15 am. My friend Jed Woolley, who rallied the shuttle and made this whole thing possible began cooking breakfast, while I loaded up my boat for its maiden voyage down Cataract Canyon. We arrived at the Potash boat ramp at 11 pm the night before and were suffering the effects of less than three hours of sleep. That evening the Moab area was caught smack dab in the middle of an intense thunderstorm, which caused the roads to slide and mud to flow. As we loaded up the boat and prepared to launch around 4am, Jed heard a strange noise in the water and focused his headlamp to the opposite bank of the Colorado. While Jed spotlighted the river, I worked on adjusting the boat and wrapping the spray skirt around the cockpit. With a slight tremble in his voice, he called my attention to the

conveyor belt of wood floating down the river. Apparently, the earlier downpour was enough to funnel a large amount of debris into the already muddy Colorado. As we stared in disbelief, we questioned the feasibility of putting on under such hazardous conditions, adding to the already heavy weight on my shoulders. After a few minutes of calculating the risks of such an endeavor I pushed off.

As I entered the current in nearly complete darkness, the tiny beam from my failing headlamp and the constant unnatural existence of the glow bracelets made it at least possible to see the shores of the Colorado. The mess of sticks and debris floating down the river had stopped within the first couple hundred yards and I was now alone with my thoughts and an unstoppable timer. Making good speed, I paddled straight for several hours

stopping for the first time when the sun began beaming down into the canyon. I quickly prepared myself for the desert heat and continued on, rocking out to a borrowed Ipod full of Lawrance Simpson's personal favorites.

Around 8:30 am, I pulled over to talk to the first group I saw. They were making breakfast so I stopped to see if they knew the approximate mile marker of their camp. The group from New Mexico estimated we were around mile 21 or 23 and after doing some quick math I realized just how close I was going to be to making it to take-out in time. Inevitably, I explained what I had gotten myself into and mentioned I needed to get back to knocking off miles. As I was pulling out a paddler in the group handed me warm pancakes with strawberries and walnuts, placing them on my spray skirt I thanked them and continued downriver.

Within a few miles, I reached another group and on the fly asked them what mile they thought we were at. "Around mile 17," was their answer. A sudden fear hit me and I was unsure which group was more accurate, so I did the only thing I could—paddle harder.

The sun does not just shine in Cataract Canyon it punishes and burns. There is almost no escaping the constant bombardment of heat and suffering, unless of course you are on one of the giant high-speed motorboats flying downriver at 30 miles an hour. The idea of sticking out my thumb crossed my mind several times. Around mile 40, I caught up to a women's rafting group. One of the guides' husbands had heard about the bet, and after pledging

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Paddling For Speed

his name to the list, told his wife to keep an eye out for me. As I pulled up, they immediately asked if I would like some cold water. Not wanting to stop and kill my pace, I asked how much farther it was to the confluence of the Green. With only 11 more miles to the confluence, I paddled on, hoping to make it there for lunch.

About this time, a motorboat was coming up behind me. The boat seemed not to be gaining on me very quickly, so when it eventually passed, I asked them how fast they were going. The guide estimated about six or seven miles per hour and for the next eight or nine miles I paced myself off the motorboat, knowing that it was traveling the speed I needed to keep if I wanted to make it to Lake Powell in time. About a mile from the confluence I

began to bonk from hunger and decided it was the time to pull over and have lunch. Pulling out a ½ pounder with cheese that was soft from its own juicy goodness, a Red Bull, an energy supplement called Royal Jelly, and some cashews, I sat down for my first real break of the day.

As I ate lunch, I fought off my fear of the rapids that lay shortly below the confluence. Having never seen this section before I was becoming increasingly nervous of how the racing boat would perform in the big water and just how big that water actually was. After only 25 minutes, which was about how long it took me to finish the soggy cheeseburger, I pushed back out into the enormous flat-water pool. Rounding several bends in the river, I came upon the confluence with the Green.

Thoughts of the Powell expedition and what it must have felt like to be on that adventure crossed my mind as I paddled towards my own unknown destiny.

For some reason I really thought the confluence was going to be more exciting, people partying on the banks, billboards declaring the merging of the rivers, but no, I was alone with my thoughts of history and grandeur, and had nothing but the canyon walls with which to share the excitement. A few hundred yards downriver, I saw a raft transitioning from flat-water floater to whitewater machine. "How far do we have 'till the rapids," I asked. The rafter guessed about three miles and offered me a sandwich. I declined not wanting to mess with the brick of moist cheeseburger still rotting in my gut.

Another mile or so passed and I came upon a sign warning paddlers of the rapids below. For the first time since put-in, I felt an actual current beneath my boat. My enjoyment of making better time was quickly deflated by the thunderous sound of the first rapid of Cataract Canyon. As I listened to the approaching rapid, I struggled to not let the tremendous roar deter me from continuing. Coming to the entrance of the first rapid I dropped in and managed to turn the Class III big water into a must-make Class V move. Rapid after rapid passed. Seemingly simple rapids transformed into extremely serious life-threatening rapids—at least that's what I was telling myself. For a time I actually questioned whether I was going to make it out of the canyon. It wasn't that I was having difficulties or flailing around. I was actually doing really well taking the sneak lines through Class III, however one wrong move, one nasty hole, and I was done for. A swim here not only meant the potential of losing the boat and being stuck in the middle of nowhere, but also the danger of tiredly swimming the remainder of the rapid.

All the while, that evil stop clock would have no sympathy for me, but was mercilessly ticking down the seconds towards failure. Around what I thought was rapid 15 of 27 I came across a rafter who informed me we were actually only at rapid nine. He invited me to run the canyon with them and I took him up on the offer for a few rapids. As we approached rapid #10, the guide told me to go left for some big fun surf waves. I paddled like hell to the right. Not wanting to even chance a swim or get stuck in a hole, I flew past a wave, which would have been an extremely high quality, park and play spot, had I thought to bring my playboat. Once through number 11 or 12 I began having difficulty waiting for the rafters who seemed to actually want to enjoy the canyon's whitewater. Unfortunately, I was forced to continue downriver without them. Running several more rapids solo,

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During the paddle out post-rapids

photo by Paul Gamache

Paddling For Speed

I finally caught up to another group of rafters just before the three big drops.

The rafts were enormous, at least 20' long with clients simply straddling gigantic banana shaped tubes. The guide steered from the stern with a motor and did an outstanding job negotiating the rapids. One of the rafts saw me coming from the bottom of Big Drop 1 and waited for me to get down. Not having any trouble in the first drop, I caught up with the rafts and began to be questioned by their clients above the second big drop. They were asking if I had trouble rolling my odd-looking race boat and I told them that I was not sure since I had yet to actually attempt to roll the boat. This was about the time the guide of the boat began to ask me what I was doing solo in the canyon. "So you're running the canyon for the first time, by yourself, in a boat you have yet to roll, and you have to do it in 20 hours or you owe \$1,600," she asked, wanting to make sure she understood what was going on. I could tell from her voice that she was not impressed. "Who is this fundraiser for?" she asked. When I told her, her mood

immediately brightened. She still seemed to think it was an idea of questionable intelligence, but at least it was for a good cause. I asked her for some beta on the second big drop and she told me where I wanted to be, and then peeled out to run the rapid. I followed behind making it through without much trouble. Big Drop #3, which is the largest and generally most feared, came next. As the guides motored up to the lip of the drop, they attempted to boat scout and then run the drop once they found their line. Curious of the magnitude of the drop I also paddled to the lip in hopes of seeing what lay below. I could see the entrance and the exit but was unclear of where exactly to go in the middle of the drop. It looked like there was a seam with two holes and then the bottom run out of the rapid. As I waited for the raft to go, I noticed the name of the company they worked for on the side of their boat, "Tagalong." How appropriate, I thought. After a long time, it became clear the guide was unsure of her exact line and decided to eddy out and scout the drop from shore.

One last time I peeled up to the lip of the drop and with a feeling of confidence, I paddled into the current and committed to the rapid.

As I dropped into the seam of the first hole, I braced and charged hard to have speed for the second. In about five seconds, the rapid was over along with my feeling of dread for the rapids of cataract canyon. With about 40 miles left to go, I continued on solo, bouncing through several more rapids before once again being stalled out by flat-water. From the bottom of the last rapid to the Hite Marina is about 33 miles, however, the headwind I was battling against made it feel more like 1,000.

Mile after mile passed and I became increasingly exhausted and eager to reach the bridge at highway 95, which signaled the near completion of the run. After a while, it all looked the same: another bend in the river with no bridge in sight. At one point, my head actually began to bob and I fought off sleep as I paddled. Having no other choice, I stopped and took another break. I tried to eat the second of the Quarter Pounders I had brought with me but could only stomach a few bites. After eating more of the Royal Jelly, which is a kind of energy gel, I felt instantly better, awake, alert, and ready to keep on keeping on. More miles and more bends passed and finally I saw a raft group on the side of the river. Immediately I knew this was a bad sign, if we were close to take-out




Celebrating the completion of the Cataract Challenge

they would have just paddled on instead of camping. Nervously I asked how much farther it was to the bridge, not sure if I wanted to know the answer. "About 12 more miles," the guide said as he took a break from cooking dinner for his clients. He asked whether I was going to try to make it there tonight and if I would like to join them for a quick snack. I declined, knowing I had to make it to take-out within the next five hours.

Having only another hour of daylight left, I paddled hard trying to count down the miles as I went. Around 8:45 pm the Canyon went dark. The situation felt eerily familiar and I wanted nothing so much as to get off the water. Just about the time the sun had fully gone down the lightning storms came out. Randomly the lightning would brighten the river ahead of me and while it was nice to temporarily see where I was going, it was painful to not see the bridge. During this time I paddled as hard as I could knowing that while I was close I was still not at the take-out and thus still not clear of the challenge. Digging in mile after mile my muscles began to tighten and everything from my fingers to shoulders began to stiffen.

As I rounded one final turn, I looked up and noticed the canyon walls were dropping out in the distance. The bridge must be close.

After what felt like an eternity, I saw the finish line crossing the river. Now came the logistical problem, I was not sure exactly where Jed was. I began yelling his name and blowing my whistle looking up at the bridge in hope of some sign that he was there. Minutes passed and still there

was no answer. I became increasingly worried he had left after the sun had gone down. Yelling his name again, I stopped paddling and floated closer to the bridge. Apparently, Jed was sitting in my car just across the bridge listening to music. Turning down the tunes, he heard my yelling and whistle blasts. Getting out of the car Jed blew a whistle and yelled my name and eventually we both realized that the wait was over and the challenge was nearly complete. He yelled out that he would pick me up at the alternate Hite Marina on river right (or lake right, since at this point we had definitely entered Lake Powell). I floated along the lake being pushed by a sudden and favorable heavy downriver wind. Having absolutely no idea what Jed's plan for takeout was, I floated by the bank looking for any sort of landing. Eventually in the distance, I saw a pair of headlights pointing out to the lake. Paddling over to the lights, I got out and looked at my watch: two hours to spare. Climbing out of my boat, I gave Jed a high-five and was handed an ice-cold Pacifico, which we used to toast the successful completion of the Cataract Canyon Challenge. 



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Stewardship Updates

By AW Stewardship Staff

Representing Paddlers in Washington DC

American Whitewater takes local river issues and transforms them into a national agenda. Though the majority of our work will always be on local river issues, we also have a long-standing history of taking these issues to our nation's Capitol.

Testifying on the Clean Water Act

On the 35th Anniversary of the Clean Water Act this past fall, AW Executive Director Mark Singleton was invited to testify on the successes of and future challenges to the Clean Water Act before the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

People have used waterways for exploration, travel, and commerce for thousands of years. However, during and ever since the industrial revolution, rivers have become conduits for waste disposal, leading to conditions that threaten public safety and preclude opportunities to enjoy rivers. In the years leading up to the 1972 passage of clean water legislation that ultimately came to be known as the Clean Water Act, many rivers were simply unsafe to paddle.

In his testimony on Capitol Hill, Mark told the story of rivers like the Potomac just outside Washington DC, the Cheat in West Virginia, the Menominee in Wisconsin, and the Black River in New York—rivers that were so polluted they became generally undesirable for outdoor recreation and were avoided by paddlers. There have been significant clean up efforts on each of these rivers, and they have since become favorite destinations for the paddling community. This not only makes whitewater activities more enjoyable but

also benefits fish and wildlife that depend on these rivers. While some rivers have seen significant improvements, we are still working to combat and eliminate pollution in all our nation's rivers.

The Clean Water Act has also allowed us to breathe new life into rivers by restoring previously impounded flows. Mark told congressmen about the newly restored Cheoah River in North Carolina to illustrate how the benefits of the Clean Water Act represents a triple bottom line. The Act has been good for rivers and their ecosystems, it's been good for recreational users who spend their wet dollars in local communities, and it's been good for communities that are dependent on experience-based economies, where clean rivers are the destinations.

Recent Supreme Court decisions have weakened provisions in the Clean Water Act that are most important to paddlers—in particular the protection of headwater streams. In the coming months we will be working to restore the full protections afforded by the Clean Water Act by continuing to tell the story of how paddlers and all recreational river users benefit from this important legislation. You can stand up for rivers today by asking your representatives to support the Clean Water Restoration Act of 2007 (H.R. 2421/S. 1870).

Hydropower Reform Coalition

At this November's annual Hydropower Reform Coalition meeting in Washington DC, American Whitewater, along with many other river advocacy organizations, discussed national issues related to

hydropower projects. As the defining issue of our time, climate change was one of the key topics of discussion. Particularly, the increased pressure for the development of hydropower projects represents a serious concern for paddlers. For example, British Columbia has proposed 500 new hydropower projects, which represents new hydro development on an unprecedented scale that is certain to have serious impacts on headwater streams and rivers in BC.

We recognized that some new hydro development is likely to occur and highlighted the need to agree on standards for new and existing hydro projects in order to minimize their impact. Utilities are very interested in hydropower as one means to meet the renewable energy portfolio standards that have been set by many states, including California. American Whitewater supports the development of more green energy, but not at the expense of our free-flowing rivers.

During the meeting, AW also met with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) staff and commissioners to talk about a FERC relicensing and implementation of new agreements. In those talks we stressed the importance of FERC support for settlements. Currently the settlements on the South Fork of the American River, the Feather River in Oroville, and the San Joaquin River—all in California—are all being reviewed by FERC. These agreements represent years of hard work by American Whitewater and other members of the paddling community. They also represent the critical resource balancing that results from the arduous negotiation process. We impressed upon FERC commissioners and top-level staff members how important it is to maintain



the integrity of these agreements in their review process. We also expressed concern for agreements that have been eroded over time. Currently American Whitewater is battling to preserve the agreements on licenses that have already been issued for rivers such as the Feather, the Pit, and the Kern. Being able to meet directly with FERC staff and commissioners enables us to give feedback into the FERC process at the highest levels.

American Whitewater Participates in Second Annual Agency Summit

This past November American Whitewater joined our coalition partners in the Outdoor Alliance, including Access Fund, American Canoe Association, American Hiking Society, International Mountain Biking Association, and Winter Wildlands Alliance for our second annual agency summit. Executive Directors and Policy Chiefs from our respective organizations joined together in Washington DC and met with senior agency staff from Army Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land

Management, National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and US Forest Service, who oversee recreation on public lands.

Through the Outdoor Alliance we were able to directly express our interests in resource stewardship and improved opportunities for human-powered recreation on public lands. Our federal agencies are facing some challenging funding issues and the Outdoor Alliance has been able to provide support for these agencies in the form of direct testimony and comments before Congress. It is clear that this coalition is gaining important influence as the voice in Washington DC for human-powered recreation.

One Step Closer to Restoring the Elwha River

For over 30 years river advocates have worked to restore Washington State's Elwha River. This vision came one step closer to reality this past fall when the National Park Service awarded a \$24 million contract to begin construction of a water treatment facility that must be completed prior to dam removal. With ground breaking in

Marianne Mitchell, Kitsap Fly Anglers; Thomas O'Keefe, American Whitewater; Congressman Norm Dicks; Rebecca Wodder, American Rivers; and Brian Walker, Lands Council"

September 2007, Congressman Norm Dicks remarked, "it seems the light finally is visible at the end of this long tunnel." Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director Thomas O'Keefe joined colleagues from the river conservation community as part of the 2007 River Action Day in Washington DC to thank Congressman Dicks for his longstanding commitment to this project. American Whitewater also thanked the Congressman for ongoing efforts to restore funding necessary for the protection and stewardship of public lands through his position as Chair of the House Interior Appropriations Committee.

Stewardship Updates

Wild Rogue: Will Logging Destroy World-class Recreation? Timber vs. Tourism: Today's 'Rogue River Feud'

by Camilla Mortensen

Rainie Falls on the Rogue River gives meaning to the word “whitewater.” The water froths and boils, tumbling hard over the rocks. It’s only about a six-foot drop, but river rafters will tell you it’s a long six feet when the only thing between you and a long violent swim is a bright yellow rubber raft. If you sit by Rainie Falls long enough in the late summer, you are assured of seeing at least one group of rafters flip trying to maneuver through the churning river. That is why many choose to bump down the nearby fish ladder or walk around the falls rather than navigate this rapid.

As the season moves to autumn, you can watch salmon and steelhead slamming their silvery bodies up the falls in a mission to swim up the river to spawn before dying. As you sit by the falls, you may see a lucky fisherman walking up the trail that leads to the falls lugging a 50-pound salmon strapped to his backpack; you will certainly hear the echoes of the shouts of swimmers up river, playing in the current. But environmentalists and business owners along the Rogue and in nearby Eugene are worried that if plans to log along the Rogue go through, all this is going to change.

Conservationists have long been fighting timber sales near the Rogue River, and their battle will be harder than ever now that the BLM has released its plan for Oregon’s public forests: the Western Oregon Plan Revisions or WOPR (pronounced whopper). The WOPR comes out of a complex legal history, and timber battles over Oregon’s so-called O&C lands that



date back to the 1800s. But environmental groups across Oregon have come up with a plan to “Save the Wild Rogue” by allying with businesses that rely on the Rogue and Oregon’s natural resources. Both the businesses and the conservationists want to use legislation to preserve the land and river that novelist Zane Grey popularized in his novel *Rogue River Feud*, and tourists and adventurers come from all over the country to visit, raft, fish and hike.

The Rogue River

The very name “rogue” speaks of rebellion. The river gets its name from the French fur trappers who fought with Native Americans on the river in the 1920s. The French called the native tribes collectively, “les Coquins” (the Rogues). The river thus became known as “La Riviere aux Coquins” (the Rogue River).

Zane Grey, famed for his western novel, *Riders of the Purple Sage*, immortalized the Rogue in his “Northwestern” novel, *Rogue River Feud*. It is a romantic tale that manages to bring together elegant descriptions of the river, efforts to stop illegal fishing operations, bad 19th century dentistry and plenty of complaints about old-growth logging. Grey also drew fishing enthusiasts to the area through works like *Tales of Freshwater Fishing*. The Zane Grey Roadless area is named for the author and his preserved, rustic fishing cabin sits in the heart of it. Roadless areas

are just that—places where no roads have been built, and thus are usually not spoiled by logging and industry. The Bush administration has attempted to repeal the roadless rule in order to begin oil, gas and timber projects, but the repeal was overturned by a federal judge who found it violated the Endangered Species Act and NEPA. The case continues to be fought in the courts.

Grey describes the river in lyrical prose: “The dark green slopes, the darker green river, sliding, whirling, foaming around the shaded bend, the grand bronze and fern festooned cliffs ... these seemed alive under the purple mantle of the lifting mist.” His descriptions hold true today, but those who love the Rogue worry that if logging begins upslope from the river and its tributaries the water will turn warm and muddy, killing off salmon as well as the tourist industry. The more than 200-mile river starts near beautiful Crater Lake and then tumbles through the Cascades, southern Oregon, and the coastal mountains to its ocean outlet near Gold Beach.

About 84 miles of the river are designated “Wild and Scenic,” which Joseph Vaile, of the Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center (aka KS Wild), likens to a watery national park. A Wild and Scenic designation means that a portion of the river, in this case the lower Rogue, is protected from dams and development and regulated to preserve its natural resources but kept open to public recreation such as whitewater rafting and kayaking. Some of the areas around the lower Rogue are currently protected from logging as a federally designated Wilderness Area. Wilderness Areas are generally protected from invasive human activities like logging or mechanized vehicles; Oregon currently has 40 such areas.

This may seem like a lot of protection, but it’s not enough to save the river from destruction, according to KS Wild and

the Cascadia Wildlands Project (CWP). Only a quarter mile strip of land on either side of the river is protected under the Wild and Scenic designation. Thanks to acts of Congress dating back to 1866 and the O&C Railroad, the nearly pristine forests just out of the river corridor and surrounding the river's tributaries are up for logging.

O&C Lands

The phrase "O&C lands" probably doesn't mean much to the average American, and has only recently become familiar to the average Oregonian. Now those lands are at the center of the county timber payments debate. County payments mean the difference between a fully funded county government, and cutbacks of essential services such as law enforcement and aid for the elderly in large portions of Oregon.

The O&C Land saga begins in the late 1800s when Congress gave a land grant to the O&C (Oregon and California) Railroad Company to encourage completion of the railway from Portland to San Francisco. Congress deeded the railroad about 12,800 acres per mile of track laid. In the early 1900s, over 2 million acres were taken back when the railroad failed to sell portions of the land to qualified settlers as mandated by the grant.

In 1937 Congress enacted the Oregon and California Railroad and Coos Bay Wagon Road Grant Lands Act of 1937 (O&C Lands Act). This act, like the others before it focusing on the O&C lands, dealt with the distribution of timber sale revenues. The 1937 act essentially paid 75 percent of timber revenues to the O&C counties, which includes the counties encompassing the lower Rogue and across Oregon. This was later reduced to 50 percent in 1953. The O&C Act tied logging to county revenues, a tie that continues today.

After Oregon timber harvests began to slow in the late 1980s, Congress began to stabilize payments to the counties to decrease financial uncertainty. The "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000" tried to untie the timber/county payments knot by providing direct payment to counties from the federal government. However, those payments ended in 2006, leaving county funding uncertain and some parties clamoring to ramp up logging and clearcutting once again.

Around this same time period, the 1994 Northwest Forest Plan came into being. The Plan, which included the O&C lands, allowed for logging but provided for the preservation of old-growth forests (known as late-successional reserves, LSRs). However, a lawsuit filed by the American Forest Resource Council, a timber industry group, removed those protections.

The 1995 lawsuit alleged the Resource Management Plan for the Northwest Forest Plan violated the O&C Lands Act and other laws. According to the O&C Lands Act, the lands must be logged at a "sustainable yield." However, the timber industry's view of what is sustainable and "permanent forest production" is very different from what conservationists envision.

In August 2003, the secretary of the interior, the secretary of agriculture, the AFRC and the Association of O&C Counties agreed to settle the lawsuit out of court. In the settlement, the Bush administration agreed to have the BLM revise the management plan for the O&C lands. The BLM must consider at least one option that does away with all LSRs. The only exception would be the bare minimums necessary to avoid violating the Endangered Species Act.

The recently released WOPR does just that. It guts the Forest Plan and turns these areas

into what the CWP calls "ground-zero for old-growth logging." This is something Zane Grey would have found appalling as did his character Garry in *Rogue River Feud*, published less than 10 years before the 1937 O&C Act: "Our finest lumber. Lord Almighty! Can you beat that? All for dirty rotten money ... It takes ten lifetimes for such trees to grow. It's a horrible waste. It'll dry up our rivers. Will the government do anythin'? Nix, no, never!"

Saving the Wild Rogue

If the government won't stop the logging, then who will? Environmentalists around the Rogue are more known for blockading roads and hanging from bridges than cozying up to businesses and the federal government. More than a few activists have found themselves in handcuffs while protesting the logging of the Rogue area. But now saving the river and its surrounding forest is more about handshakes than handcuffs.

The "Save the Wild Rogue" campaign is a coalition of environmental groups, rafters, anglers, businesses and various and sundry others that have gotten together to try to save the wild river. The other conservation groups in addition to CWP and KS Wild include Oregon Wild, the Siskiyou Project, American Rivers and American Whitewater. In addition to the non-profits involved in the campaign, there are 46 businesses involved.

Lesley Adams of KS Wild, a straightforward and upbeat self-described river lover with "a fire in my belly," has been expanding seemingly limitless time and energy on the campaign, trying to save the river. According to Adams, this campaign to save the Rogue has been around in some form or another since the 1970s. It started with the Oregon Wilderness Coalition, a network of small wilderness groups around the state. The current campaign got under way in 2002 when the BLM

Stewardship Updates

proposed to log old growth in the area, she says.

The “Save the Wild Rogue” coalition is proposing to add almost 60,000 acres to the Wild Rogue Wilderness. They want to add almost 100 miles of Wild and Scenic designation to seven creeks that feed into the Wild and Scenic Rogue: Kelsey, Whisky, Dulog, Big Windy, East Fork Windy and Howard Creeks.

The proposal would stop the proposed Kelsey-Whisky timber sale (imaginatively named for the nearby Kelsey and Whisky creeks it would muddy). If it isn’t stopped, the sale would mean the clearcutting of old-growth forest in the Zane Grey Roadless area, says wiry and energetic Josh Laughlin of the CWP. Laughlin predicts if logging is allowed, salmon-bearing streams such as Kelsey and Whisky creeks will become choked with sediment which would then wash into the Rogue, killing the salmon and turning the clear water to a murky brown flow. The WOPR, which calls for increased “regeneration harvests” (BLM-speak for clearcutting then replanting with a tree plantation) and opens the formerly somewhat protected O&C lands to voracious logging, endangers the future health of the Wild Rogue as well as forests across Oregon, says Laughlin.

Joseph Vaile, the tall, dark and softspoken campaign director for KS Wild, adds to Laughlin’s comments. “Even the supposed protected areas under the WOPR are in danger,” he says. “In a natural disturbance, such as wildfire or an insect outbreak, those areas would be logged.” A wilderness designation is the only way to save the area for the long term. The government and the logging companies would have to “let nature take its own course in Wilderness areas,” says Vaile.

“Zane Grey would be rolling in his grave if he knew of the BLM’s logging plans for the lower Rogue,” says Laughlin.

The Business of Saving the River

It’s really not all that remarkable to hear that a bunch of environmentalists have gotten together to save a forest or a river — after all, that’s what they are supposed to do. What’s impressive is when those groups are able to pull together almost 50 businesses to support the project in a short period of time. It’s this possibility of harm to this river, which fishermen like Zane Grey made into a fabled angling destination, that has spurred businesses into action.

Beverly Moore, who owns and runs Rogue Forest Bed and Breakfast, manages to look at once warm and homey and, simultaneously, like the rough and tumble whitewater-rafting guide she is. Her B&B is the same, outdoorsy and inviting. The inn is fully booked all summer, she says, and open year-round with guests coming to raft the river from Oregon and all over the world.

“I’m not against logging,” she says, “I live in a wooden house. But there’s no long-term value in logging this area.”

She points out the value in the Rogue and its surrounding area lies in the rafting, fishing and tourist industry. She also says it’s difficult for businesses like her own and others on the Rogue to speak out against the BLM—their livelihood depend on permits from the BLM for their river-based businesses. But it’s so important to Moore and others like her that they are willing to speak up and even promote the project to their guests. The river “calls to the human spirit,” she says. “When the blackberries ripen and the air smells like sugar, it’s calming to see across the canyon to a peak. Nothing blocks the view. We need to have a place like this to come to.”

Rich Wilkinson, proprietor of Rogue Klamath River Adventures, is another businessman willing to challenge the

BLMS’s proposal for the river. Vaguely piratical with sunglasses covering a bandaged eye as a result of recent mountain bike wreck, Wilkinson depends on the river for his business, too. And he is also willing to put his business on the line to save the Rogue.

People come to southern Oregon for the Shakespeare Festival, music festivals and other attractions, he says, “but they’ve all heard of the Rogue.” He takes tourists on spontaneous half-day trips as well as longer, planned out, whitewater trips down the river. He worries that logging will affect these floats because right now, “the Rogue has more wildlife than any other place. You’re guaranteed to see it on the lower Rogue — we’re selling that.”

In addition to five runs of Pacific salmon, the Rogue and its environs host northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets. Rafters will see mergansers, river otter, osprey, black bear and, if they’re lucky, a peregrine falcon or a bald eagle.

For both Wilkinson and Moore, logging is a short-sighted way to raise money. The thriving \$13 million tourist industry is a better long-term bet, they say.

Like Moore, Wilkinson is passionate on the subject of the river. “I tell each one of our customers, the experience you’re having today you may not have tomorrow unless you step up and contact your congressman.

Legislating the Wild Rogue

And where do Oregon’s congressmen fall on the issue of the Rogue? The “Save the Wild Rogue” campaign wants legislation introduced, and the sooner the better. Sen. Gordon Smith is notorious for his support of the timber industry, but Rep. Peter DeFazio’s natural resources counsel and Sen. Ron Wyden’s chief of staff have ventured down to the Rogue to check it out.

Wyden's Deputy Press Secretary, Alec Oveis, says Wyden is currently open to both Wild and Scenic and Wilderness proposals.

DeFazio is more detailed though very cautious. He said he thinks it's possible the Wild and Scenic designation that would protect the Rogue's tributaries would be "more easily definable and defensible in the context of a larger bill."

He has not seen a "well-formed legislative proposal" for the wilderness area, he says, and points out the Copper-Salmon Wilderness, which he and Wyden recently proposed, took 10 years to come about. Ironically, the proposed Copper-Salmon Wilderness is downstream of the logging the BLM proposes around the Rogue.


Of the "Save the Wild Rogue" proposal, DeFazio says, "I don't believe we're going to pop a wilderness bill full blown out of thin air."

When he met with conservationists about

the wild Rogue proposal a few months ago, he told them it would take, "time, energy, effort, planning and building of local support." And, he adds, "very little of that has taken place."

The more than 50 Oregon businesses, sportsmen and conservation groups are undaunted by the challenge. Frank Armendariz, manager of Oregon River Sports, based two hours north of the Rogue in Eugene, has spent days on the phone, he says, promoting the proposal. The Rogue is so important to Oregon's water sports community that the owners of the shop have let him take work time to promote the campaign. The shop doesn't do guided trips on the Rogue, but Armendariz says 20 to 30 percent of their weekend rental business is destined for the Rogue.

"When you stand on the bank of a river and look down it, it's almost always beautiful," says Armendariz. "Not every person gets a chance to float down the river and look back up the other direction."

If Cascadia Wildlands, KS Wild and the myriad of other groups and businesses have their way, the Rogue will always be there, wild and pristine, like Rainie Falls, for everyone to float, fish, or just look at the view. 

This story first appeared in the Eugene Weekly.



Wild Rogue Resources

- Interested in hiking the Rogue? See a recent EW Outdoors column www.eugeneweekly.com/2007/04/19/outdoors.html
- Want to know more about the Save the Wild Rogue Campaign and its businesses? Visit www.savethewildrogue.org
- O&C Lands history: www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr/files/OChistory.htm and www.oregonheritageforests.org/history/legal
- More on the WOPR: www.blm.gov/or/plans/wopr

Top Ten River Issues

Every year the American Whitewater stewardship staff takes some time to reflect on the coming year's challenges. We pick ten high priority projects that we feel are representative of the nearly 100 projects on our staff's collective workplans. The good news is that right now 2008 is looking pretty amazing. We have remarkable legislative opportunities that will protect this great country's rivers for future generations. We have opportunities to celebrate past successes and leverage them to create future river restoration achievements. We face challenges—some big, bad, nasty challenges. On all of our projects, AW is looking forward to leading, supporting, and working closely with

the paddling community. Member of the paddling community are what make our organization special and effective and our work fun and fulfilling. We hope that you'll recognize that these projects will benefit you and the rivers you enjoy paddling, and that they are just the tip of the iceberg. We hope that you'll join us in making 2008 a successful one for the paddling community and the rivers we cherish!

1 40th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act

In the 1960s, Americans began to realize that our rivers were being dammed, dredged, diked, diverted, and degraded at an alarming rate. To help balance our nation's history of use and abuse of its waterways, Congress created the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in October 1968. Paddlers were involved in promoting the concepts of river protection that the Act embraces, and we continue to be at the forefront of efforts to protect additional river miles, engage in efforts to bring consistent and effective management to Wild and Scenic Rivers, and highlight opportunities to enjoy these iconic rivers representing our nation's heritage. As we

celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, we will be focusing on projects to protect rivers like the Wild Rogue, the rivers of Mt. Hood, the Snake Headwaters, and many others. We will also continue our efforts at the national and regional level to bring consistent river management to rivers like the Chattooga and advocate for adequate funding for management and protection of all rivers in the system. We will continue to use our Journal and website to highlight opportunities to enjoy Wild and Scenic Rivers and the experiences they provide—from multi-day float trips on rivers like the Rogue, to Class V adventures on rivers like the Middle Fork Feather, to great day trips on rivers like Wilson Creek.

2 Colorado Water Allocation

2008 will bring to a close the comprehensive assessments of Colorado's water use and availability, which was mandated by the Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act in 2005. This search for more water in Colorado—water that is still available for delivery to growing municipal and industrial needs, will use the information collected in each of the state's nine basin assessments to identify ways that Colorado can divert water to growing urban needs, and define how much water the state can remove from Colorado's rivers. By the end of 2008, the state aims to have in hand complete reports from all nine Basin Roundtables, which list their respective water consumption for agriculture, industry, and household use. In addition, each basin is required to quantify the Environmental and Recreational water needs necessary to protect functioning rivers and Colorado's outdoor recreation industry.

By the start of 2008, Colorado's Basin Roundtables will have agreed to a single

method for evaluating the water needs of healthy rivers and flow-dependent recreational opportunities statewide. With the methodology in place, each basin will work at a breakneck pace this year to complete their water needs assessments by December 2008 and present its report to the Office of Interbasin Compact Negotiations and the Interbasin Compact Committee. AW's focus for the next 12 months will be to ensure that each basin has sufficient data on flows necessary to sustain private and commercial river recreation, and that this data is used to protect dynamic river flows (which have significant environmental benefits). As the assessment phase draws to a close, we will work to ensure that new dams and pipelines, specific water transfers, and flow management options do not threaten flows that sustain the ecological integrity of rivers like the Colorado, the Yampa, the Gunnison, and the Dolores. These will be tough decisions, requiring innovative and comprehensive paddler involvement, and grassroots river advocacy at every step of the process.

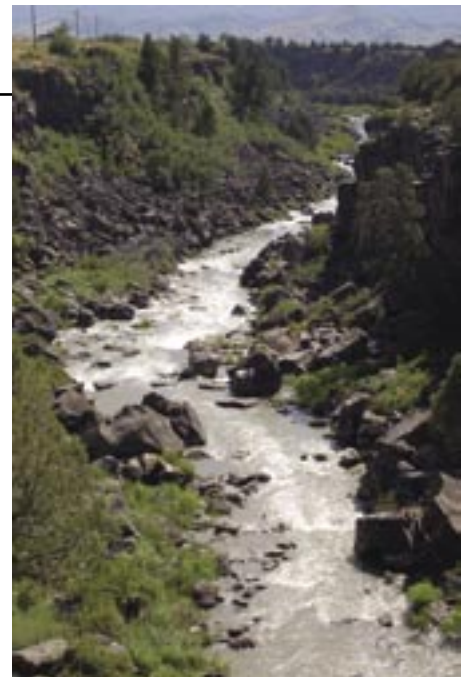
3 Protect the Headwaters

In 2008 AW will launch our Protect the Headwaters Campaign. The same high-gradient streams that paddlers enjoy represent the headwaters of our nation's river systems. Over the past few years we have seen erosion in basic land use policy and river management designed to protect our nation's headwaters. While we will work with many partner organizations in the conservation and recreation community, particularly through our membership in the Outdoor Alliance, we are a national organization with an exclusive focus on the high-gradient streams where rivers begin, and so AW will take a leadership role in several headwater protection efforts in the coming year.



Grace Falls on the Bear River, Idaho

photo by Kevin Colburn



Bear River, Idaho below Turner Bridge

photo by Kevin Colburn

We will educate public officials on our use of headwater streams and on the need to protect these places for human and ecosystem health through the Clean Water Restoration Act. The Clean Water Act has been a tremendous benefit to the paddling community and we cannot afford to allow further erosion of this landmark environmental legislation.

The federal statute governing hardrock mining (e.g., gold, uranium, and copper) has been basically the same since 1872, while many other things in our country have changed—especially how Americans relate to their public lands and waters. AW is committed to protecting our nation's headwaters and the places we love to paddle by supporting legislation that leads to a balanced approach to mining on federal lands. Specifically we will advocate for (1) reforming the patenting system, (2) protecting special places that include Wild and Scenic Rivers, and (3) environmental protection standards that explicitly recognize the value of our public lands beyond what can be extracted by mining interests.

For the past decade American Whitewater has been engaged in the effort to protect Roadless Areas, and we see new opportunities to present the unique perspective of recreational users in the coming year. Currently 18% of our National Forests lands are protected as designated Wilderness, and 51% are open to drilling, logging and mining. The fate of the remaining 31% of wild intact forest—known as Roadless Areas—remains uncertain. Rivers that flow through Roadless Areas include Snowbird Creek in the southeast, the headwaters of the Cheat in the mid-Atlantic, Cascade Brook in the northeast, Midwestern runs in the Ozarks, and dozens of classics in the western US like Dry Meadow Creek, the Middle Fork Feather, the South Fork Salmon, and Big Timber Creek. Given the challenges the Forest Service faces in maintaining a road network of over 380,000 miles, we do not need to expand our road network into these special places that remain wild. Roadless Areas provide a host of ecosystem services including clean drinking water and refugia for many imperiled species, but they also possess extremely high value

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as recreational lands. Approximately 85% of the revenue generated from National Forests comes from recreational activities, and now, more than ever, these wild, roadless forests need the help of those who enjoy them most—outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

4 Bear River, Idaho

The Bear River is a victim of the French fry. Flowing through a parched agricultural valley in southeastern Idaho dominated by potato fields, the river has been described quite correctly as an irrigation conveyance system. What is left is a string of reservoirs, irrigation canals, and remnant river reaches nestled in basalt canyons and meandering across

open valley floors. American Whitewater began efforts to restore ecological and recreational values to the Bear River over a decade ago through a dam relicensing process. Those efforts have resulted in some great river conservation successes so far, and 2008 will mark another major milestone: the introduction of pulse flows to the Black Canyon of the Bear.

Our work on the Bear has been lead by local volunteer Charlie Vincent with AW staff support, and has included over a decade of filing comments, participating in studies, collaborative work on conservation initiatives, and gearing up for boatable pulse flows. We have worked on this project with other stakeholders like Idaho Rivers United, Trout Unlimited, the power company, and state and federal agencies based on a settlement that AW

Kathryn Tuscano at Swimmers Rapid on the Lower Yough

photo by Megan Seifert

signed with these groups. Over the years we have helped to protect several hundred acres of watershed lands, control grazing of riparian areas, and to exclude fish from irrigation canals. In the fall of 2006 we were very excited by the removal of the Cove Dam on the Bear River, which we strongly supported from the idea's inception. We have also joined forces with the other settlement parties to oppose a new dam that would flood one of the last remaining flowing sections of the river.

The settlement agreement calls for several new boatable pulse flows on the river. The 2008 Black Canyon of the Bear whitewater

release schedule will be finalized in March of '08. There will be 16 potential (based on water availability in the river) releases scheduled before each season for the next several years (2008 thru 2010) and for decades to come as long as the biological response to the releases is neutral or favorable. The releases will be scheduled to occur between April 1 and July 15th, and will provide a Class IV or V paddling experience depending on flows. American Whitewater will be actively participating in ecological monitoring during these releases, and also analysis of the monitoring data throughout the year. We are excited to welcome paddlers to the normally dewatered Bear River this year! We'll be posting the release dates in the next few months, when they are selected.

5 Connecting Mid-atlantic Residents with Rivers

No matter where you live, you can surely appreciate the value of having accessible and enjoyable whitewater rivers in close proximity to a majority of our nation's population—and to the leaders of our country. The paddling community is working throughout the Mid-atlantic region to improve flows and public access to the region's whitewater staples. American Whitewater is playing a supporting role in many of these projects and will stay committed to them throughout 2008. Negotiations are ongoing to maintain and enhance recreational releases on the Upper Yough, Savage, and North Branch Potomac, which were new in 2007. We'll be working to improve upon recent agreements on both the Upper Yough and Lehigh. We will continue our efforts to maintain access areas on the Upper Yough, Cheat, and Blackwater rivers, and seek new access on the Gauley. On Pennsylvania's Susquehanna River we look forward to reaching a unique and creative



Country Line Rapid on the North Fork of the Feather River

photo by Thomas O'Keefe

agreement that will create new river access, flows, and even waves below the Holtwood Dam, while enhancing fish passage. The outlook is bright for more opportunities to run Ohiopyle Falls as well. 2007 was really a landmark year in the region and we are excited to keep the momentum of these regional initiatives.

6 Headwaters of the Little Tennessee Campaign

We are not always in control of the timeline for our projects, which bounce between the jurisdiction of a half dozen federal and state agencies. As paddlers and as an organization we play critical roles, fully utilize the power we do have, and do what we can to keep river restoration efforts moving in the right direction. The relicensing of numerous dams on North Carolina's Nantahala and Tuckasegee rivers are certainly great examples of this reality. We have worked consistently for over seven years to bring sweeping changes to these rivers, and still some reaches remain dry, access areas remain un-built, a dam slated for removal remains in place, and the hydropower projects lack the new licenses that will make all of this possible. While this is frustrating, it is not indicative of failure or even tangible setbacks. These complex and

interrelated projects are simply making their way through the regulatory gauntlet a bit slower than normal. We will keep the pressure on throughout 2008, and maintain our role as strong supporters of the settlement agreements we signed several years ago.

Across the Little Tennessee watershed AW will stay involved in the management of the Cheoah River. This will include working with Graham County on an environmental assessment of additional live-tree removal, and carrying out a review of the ecological monitoring data collected over the last three years. Farther east we'll be responding to FERC's review of the Catawba River and supporting our settlement agreement on that project.

7 Restoring Rivers for Fish and Paddlers

Our river restoration work has focused on a dual approach of restoring rivers for the benefit of the fish and wildlife that make their home in and along free-flowing rivers, while providing opportunities for paddlers to share and enjoy these resource on the weekends. Recreation can be a great vehicle to

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highlight the benefits of restored rivers, and we are in a unique position to use this tool to restore natural flows to impounded rivers. This past year we witnessed the removal of Marmot Dam on the Sandy River in Oregon, but this is just one of many projects in which we are partnering with advocates for fish recovery. We will continue our efforts on a number of projects, like the White Salmon River in Washington, where we are working to remove outdated and uneconomic dams; we will broaden the discussion of salmon recovery to one of river restoration for rivers like the Snake in Washington, where we will highlight benefits of restored rivers for recreation; and we will continue to advocate for improved flow regimes for fish and paddlers on rivers that can economically produce hydropower.

Our efforts to restore rivers for fish and paddlers are not limited to the Pacific Northwest, and we will continue to work to restore dozens of rivers in California and in the Headwaters of the Little Tennessee.

8 Holding the Line in California

Over the past ten years, American Whitewater has negotiated many important agreements in California on rivers such as the Pit, Feather, South Fork American, Stanislaus, San Joaquin and the Kern. These agreements have and will continue to reshape paddling opportunities and restore these rivers for the next 30 to 50 years. We had thought that most of the hard work would be done

Barry Tuscano exiting Heinzerling Rapid on the Upper Yough during the annual downriver race

photo by Kathryn Tuscano

after negotiations and relicensing were complete. Unfortunately, this has not been the case.

Almost every one of these agreements has required constant attention in order to keep our hard won gains. The cancellations of flows on the Feather River and the inconsistent standard that is being applied to whitewater recreation has been documented previously in the AW Journal (see Whitewater Witch Hunt in the September/October 2006 issue of American Whitewater). The Feather is not the only river whose license has been interpreted inconsistently. The new agreement on the South Fork American



*A paddler heading over the lip of
Ohiopyle Falls on race day*

photo by Kathryn Tuscano

includes language that limits recreation flows in order to protect frogs; we support this protection, particularly during the breeding season. However, the ramping rates in the agreement that allow flows to vary 12 feet per day are clearly not protective of frogs. Our goal is to have a consistent standard applied to both whitewater recreation and power companies.

More recently we have encountered similar challenges on the Pit River in Northern California. Releases on the Pit 1 reach have been very popular over the

past several years. Studies were conducted in 2006 to measure potential stranding of fish during summer flushing flows. No stranding was detected during the releases. Case closed, right? Wrong. Now some of the consultants working for PG&E are claiming that these releases have effects on freshwater mussels. What is interesting is that these same mussels are found in the reach below the Pit 1 powerhouse, and that this reach sees flow fluctuations for 400 cfs to 2000 cfs every single day. Again we are looking for a consistent standard for all beneficial uses of the river.

On the Pit 3,4,5 license, which was issued in July 2007, American Whitewater negotiated releases that were to begin two years after the new license was issued. Unfortunately, in the time between when this agreement was sent to FERC for

review and when the license was issued, PG&E found that they did not have the ability to release the minimum instream flows through their existing gates at the dams. PG&E has been given three years to fix their dams, which, will unfortunately push back whitewater releases for five years. We have let PG&E know that we have no choice but to accept this delay, however, any additional delays will be unacceptable.


Further south on the Kern River, American Whitewater successfully negotiated releases below Lake Isabella. Southern California Edison, the powerhouse operator, is willing and required to make the releases under their new license. Unfortunately, the dam operator, who works for the Army Corps of Engineers, refuses to release the water. While the FERC license clearly states that

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these releases are to occur however the dam operator for the Corps is claiming that the releases are unsafe because their dam has developed a leak over the past few years. Our position is that if the dam is unsafe it should get fixed, pronto; we feel that FERC does have the ability to require them to make these releases. We are also exploring other whitewater opportunities that we would consider pursuing in lieu of these releases.

American Whitewater can use your help in making sure that these agreements are being followed. If you are interested in attending meetings or finding other ways to support AW's efforts to protect your paddling opportunities, contact California Stewardship Director, Dave Steindorf. dave@americanwhitewater.org

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9 Reducing Energy Footprints

Like it or not, ready or not, global climate change is posing a host of new threats to whitewater rivers. Many of these threats are direct ecological impacts already underway that could result in earlier spring flows, higher water temperatures, and lower summer flows, that can all collectively result in changes to species assemblages. A second set of impacts also underway result from human reactions to these ecological changes and predictions. These reactions may include the creation of new water storage and delivery systems, creation of new hydroelectric dams, prioritization of maximized power production at existing dams, and hopefully water and electricity conservation. So what is a climate conscious person that loves rivers supposed to do? Should rivers be sacrificed to reduce our carbon emissions? We think that would be a bad idea.

American Whitewater feels that it is vitally important for our organization and our membership to proactively seek solutions to climate change and its related problems that are socially and ecologically responsible. These efforts will permeate many aspects of our work and activism including our work on Colorado's water supply issues, our national advocacy, science research projects, and on-the-ground local projects. Rest assured though, we do not have to sacrifice rivers to save the planet, and will oppose any such proposals.

First, let's get something clear about dams. Reservoirs emit greenhouse gasses, primarily methane, which produces more than 20 times the greenhouse effect than CO₂. Methane is produced when organic material decays underwater. The effect is more pronounced in warmer climates where decomposition is more rapid, and in newer reservoirs, which have more

organic matter (ie leaves, trees, soil, insects, etc) under their surface. Still, all reservoirs emit methane, and some are estimated to be as bad as, or worse than, coal-fired power plants in terms of impact on climate change. Thus, hydropower is not greenhouse gas free.

Secondly, sacrificing rivers does not one any favors. History has taught us that maximizing hydro generation or consumptive water use from a river has severe impacts to the ecology of that river, river recreation, downstream water users, local economies, and local food supplies (e.g. Salmon). Rivers are simply too valuable to sacrifice. In the past couple decades we have proven this by restoring rivers that were previously monopolized by consumptive withdrawals or hydro generation. The results of these restoration efforts are clear: healthier communities of people and of river organisms. A world without healthy rivers would not be a healthy world.

As a community that cares about rivers and has had unique experience with river restoration, it is our responsibility as paddlers to object to a knee-jerk response to climate change that sacrifices rivers. It is also our responsibility to work on solutions to climate change and its impacts on a personal and community level. With or without hydropower as part of the answer, a lot needs to be done to slow our impacts on the planet's climate.


In the coming year and beyond, American Whitewater will be working closely with our Hydropower Reform Coalition partners to educate the public and our political representatives on the role we feel hydropower should play in climate change solutions. We will continue to advocate for balanced management of existing dams and the removal of outdated dams through dam relicensings and our outreach efforts. We'll be telling the stories of rivers like the Cheoah that show a clear relationship between the

health of a river and the health of nearby human communities. We'll be using Colorado as a test of how we can manage finite freshwater resources as mountains lose snowpack and gain population. And within AW, we'll continue to find ways of reducing our own carbon footprint.

Surely you have been bombarded with information on how to reduce your own contribution to climate change recently. Maybe you are starting to change your lifestyle to make it more efficient. You likely know that carpooling, increasing your home's energy efficiency, riding your bike, and buying local products are all strategies that are good for the planet, your health, and your wallet. So enjoy being part of the sustainability movement that might just save the world as we know it, and help us promote a vision of a future with healthy rivers.

10 Management of Northeast Army Corps of Engineers Dams

Management of pulse flows for recreational and ecological values in New England is an ever more challenging task. American Whitewater is gearing up to support local paddlers at a higher level in 2008. The main issue involves the potential loss of pulse flows at Army Corps of Engineers (ACE) dams on various rivers in New Hampshire (Blackwater), Massachusetts (Upper Millers) and on the West River in Vermont. American Whitewater hopes to introduce sound science and paddlers' interests into these decisions through

sharing analyses of flows using the Nature Conservancy's Indicators of Hydrologic Alteration model. While the rivers regulated by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission are generally managed in a way that mitigates the impact of dams on rivers, ACE dams have a mixed history of protecting and restoring ecological and social values. We hope that rivers like the Lehigh, Russell Fork, and Yough can serve as examples of ACE projects that support public enjoyment of rivers. 



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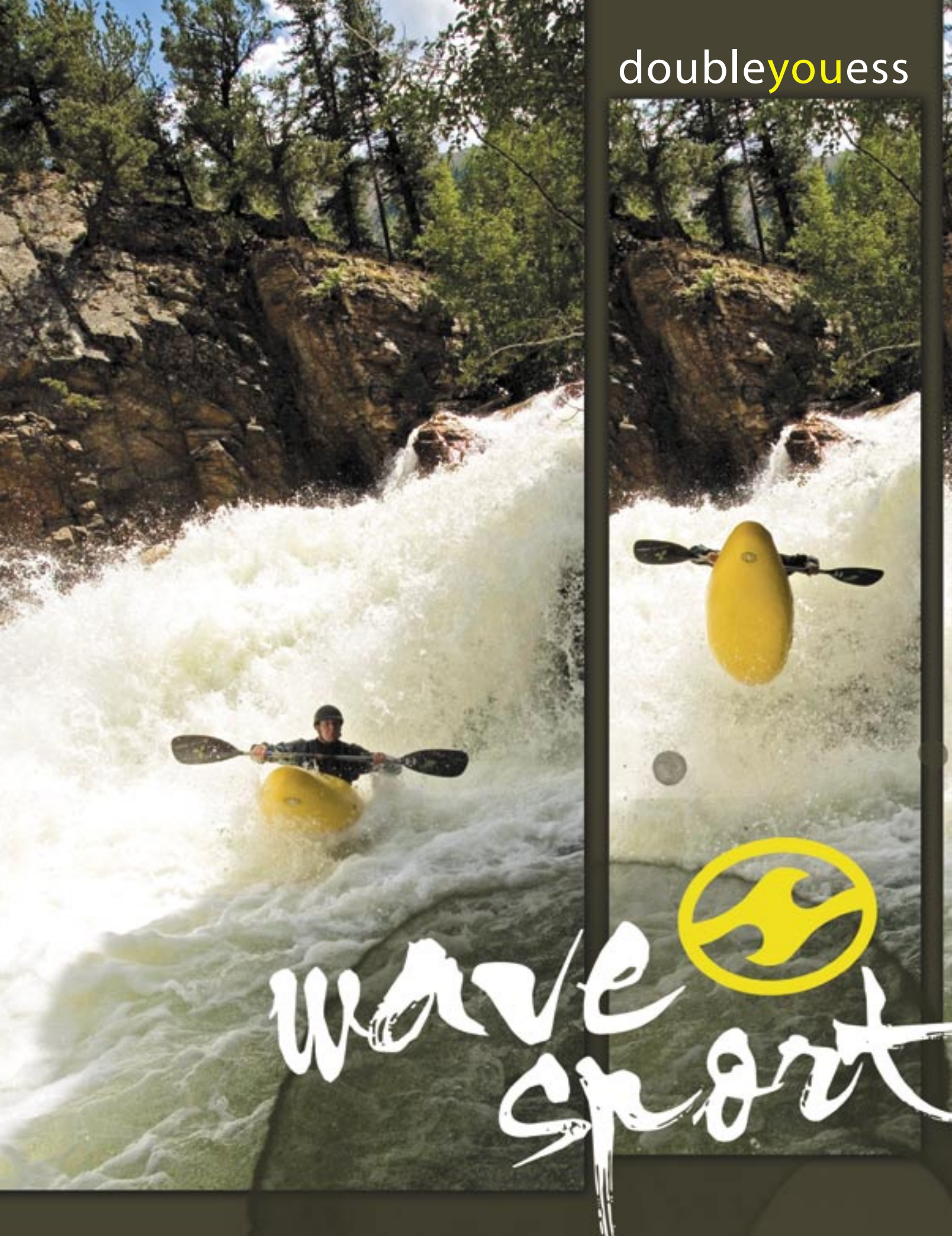


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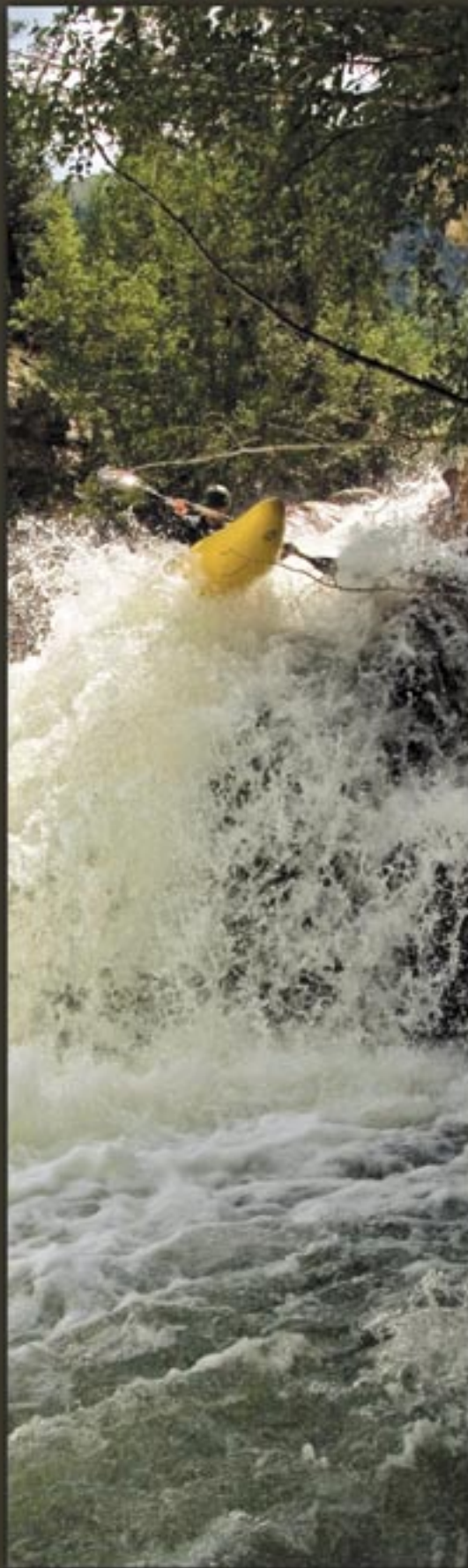
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River Voices

Odyssey on Seneca Creek

By Elam Leed

As I hiked alone through the woods, I had plenty of time to think about the wonders of Seneca Creek. Thoughts of floating through space off of the 30-footer that seems to have been designed specifically with kayaking in mind (it might only be a 25-foot waterfall, but it is always called the 30 footer). Still, it's not just about the beautiful clean waterfalls, or the unique rock formations, or the complete wilderness setting, or the 100-foot tall ribbons of water pouring off of the side walls. It's all of these things together, and more that make the upper reaches of one of the highest streams in West Virginia a very special place. When paddling Seneca Creek, you feel as if you are only passing through. Time spent inside the deep forested gorge is time spent totally disconnected from everything else we know in the world—it's as if we're in a different world altogether.

At this particular moment in time I was not enjoying miles of waterfalls in beautiful, remote geology. Instead I was dragging my boat back up the mountain that I had just hiked four miles down with the same boat and gear. As the boat seemed to become heavier and my pace slowed, I had plenty of time to consider the incredible amount of effort involved in getting to the put-in with good water and daylight. First, the creek has boatable flows only a few days in a typical spring paddling season, and second, the run is a long way from anywhere. Your best chance is late winter/early spring when there is a good heavy rain on top of melting snowpack. The few times I have made it to the put-in with boatable flows have gone something like this:

Alarm goes off in State College, Pennsylvania at 3:30 am. Leave town at 4 am. The four-hour drive in pouring rain to Seneca Rocks, WV involves the following

internal dialog, forecasting the possibility of boatable flows: "That side stream is muddy, Seneca must be running"; "There is no snow left on that mountain, Seneca must not be running"; "That driveway is washed out, Seneca must be running"; "That drainage ditch is dry, Seneca must not be running" And so on, and so forth, agonizing the entire drive. Arrive at Seneca Rocks shortly after 8 am, stop to buy Snickers bars for emergency rations and to get first glimpse of the lower reaches of Seneca Creek. Arrive at the take-out by 9 am, very disappointed because the amount of flow looks too low to float a boat here, let alone 12 miles upstream. Remember that it always looks low at the take-out, decide to go for it, begin one-hour drive on dirt roads toward the put-in. Drive up the side of Spruce Knob, the highest mountain in WV at 4880 ft, getting more and more anxious about the possibility of snow blocking our road around the next corner, or the next.

After a few interesting moments of plowing through the deeper sections of snow, we arrive at the pull-off at 10 am, quickly unloading and preparing for the hike in. Looking around the parking area, it feels somewhat absurd to be putting on paddling gear on the side of a mountain where the only flowing water is a few rivulets of melting snow. The hike in can be anywhere from two to four miles, depending on how far you feel like carrying/dragging your boat and how much you enjoy paddling through the thick strainers that occupy the uppermost reaches of the creek. The trail down the mountain usually holds over a foot of snow in sections where the thick evergreens form a tunnel. The snow is usually welcomed because it allows for easy kayak sliding, and even a few sections where you can use the kayak as a sled. It is usually between 11 am and



Seneca Falls, the big one

photo by Elam Leed

noon when we reach the actual put-in and can begin boating. With less than seven hours of daylight left, there is a feeling of apprehension knowing that it could easily take every minute of that and more to reach the take-out.

So, why am I hiking back up the mountain with my kayak? Well, on this day, I carried/dragged my boat the full four miles down the mountain before putting on, because of my aversion to strainer infested waters. Perhaps I should have done more of the carrying part and less of the dragging part. Today is one of the rare occasions when hurricane remnants dump enough rain in WV to allow a brief window (less than 12 hours) of flow on Seneca Creek in the fall. So instead of dragging our boats over the snow, there is nothing but wet rock beneath our feet. And wet rock is not a whole lot better on boats than dry rock. So after putting on and paddling about ¼ mile of warm-ups (at this point the creek is about eight feet wide and about five inches deep), I start to feel the dreaded cold water splashing around inside my boat. I pull over, and to my dismay, find a 1½-inch crack right under the seat. I try a futile duct-tape-melted-in-with-lighter repair and get another 100 yards

2007 AW Story & Photo Contest Entry!

Floating through space, Seneca Falls

photo by Elam Leed



downstream before admitting defeat. Our party of three becomes a party of two as I abandon the creek and begin my four plus mile climb back up to the road.

As I walk back, I don't even bother to carry the boat anymore. It's well beyond repair and I accept the fact that I will have to start looking for a new creek boat. So now instead of running the rapids, I try to imagine running them. By now my buddies are probably hitting the first smooth bedrock slides. Keep your nose up and try not to end up center at the

bottom or you might not make it through the holes. OK, I can't take it anymore. I drop my boat and run downstream along the trail that follows the creek. After two miles of running and slipping on rocks in wet booties, I catch them as they are reaching Seneca Falls, AKA the 30 footer. Just in time, I watch their runs and then carry one of their boats back up to get in a run of my own. For that brief moment of floating through space, I completely forget my predicament and enjoy the as-good-as-it-gets Seneca kayaking.

When I get back to my crippled boat, I am now lacking much of the energy that I was counting on to get myself up the mountain. I am also down to my last drop of water. It's starting to feel like a long day, but there's nothing like the solitude of the woods to let the mind wander to pass the time of the monotonous placement of one foot in front of the other. I think of my first run of Seneca Creek.

I was shown down Seneca by Bruce Musser, who a decade earlier had been shown down by some of the guys who



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River Voices

pioneered the run. There were only two of us, and the labor of scouting every horizon line and setting safety made the run over eight hours long. We ended up hiking the last ½ mile to the takeout in the dark. I felt as if I had just climbed Everest. I hadn't been creeking for very long, and it was by far the longest, steepest, most amazing set of rapids and waterfalls I had paddled. I couldn't stop playing the entire day over in my head for the next week.

Trudging along, my back hurting from pulling 50 pounds of scrap plastic, I find myself zoning out staring at the ground. I feel like giving up and lying down inside my boat. In a daze, I say to myself, "That's funny, why would someone drop a plastic crayfish on the trail here in the middle of nowhere?" I stop to look closer, and realize that the bright, completely blue colored crayfish is alive and real. I can hardly believe my eyes. I've seen brown ones with a slight blue tint here and there, but nothing like this. It truly looked like it was painted or made of plastic. The crayfish is pretty, all blue on top and bright white on the underside. I see it as a gift in exchange for my trials and tribulations of the day, something to help me keep going. So I fill my empty Nalgene with creek water, scoop up the crayfish, stow it in the kayak, and continued on my journey with my newfound partner.

You just never know what to expect on a Seneca adventure. Just like you never know what is beyond each horizon line or bend on the creek. It could be a four-foot ledge, or it could be the 20-foot waterfall that has an ugly shelf halfway down and a decapitation rock on the left. I don't know if it has ever been run (ZoneDogg?), but I'm not going to be the one to give it a try. It is definitely something to be on the lookout for, somewhere between the 30-footer and Knife's Edge.

While the 30-footer is one of the best waterfalls around, the rapid called Knife's Edge is one of the most unique drops I've ever paddled. On the approach, it looks like one of the endless three- to six-foot ledges that fill the run, but after dropping the first ledge and coming around a slight right-hand bend in the creek, you quickly realize that this is something to get out and look at. In fact at this point, you are already passing the best opportunity for scouting and portaging on river right, which is best accessed before running the first drop. The left bank of the river becomes a steep rock face rising directly out of the water; you are in a deep channel of slow moving water that is narrowing, and on river right is sort of a natural rock dike running parallel to the channel of water. The rock dike starts out extending a foot or more above the level of the channel, but as the channel progresses downstream, the top of the dike gradually lowers to the point where water is spilling over it. If you are in your boat at this time drifting along the narrow channel, you must turn 90 degrees to your right, launch over the dike, and attempt to then turn back 90 degrees to your left as you are dropping the six- to eight-foot dike, and land facing the same direction as you were originally. You are now in a channel similar in size to the one above, but this one is all white and rapidly accelerating toward a large creek-wide hole, 25 steep feet ahead of you (creek-wide at this point is at most a boat length). This is one you gotta see—very unique.

It is the geology of Seneca Creek that helps set it apart from many other runs in the area. Much of the rock in the gorge has oriented itself parallel to the creek, so instead of paddling over layers of rock, creating uniform ledges, you may find yourself paddling along or over ridges of rock aligned with the creek. The section of creek below Knife's Edge is one of the best

sections of steep rapids on the entire run, with many of the same features as Knife's Edge. Keep on your toes because at this point your energy level will be starting to drop, especially if it is a cold day.

Speaking of energy level dropping, I still have not finished my hike out. I stop every now and then to check on the bright blue crayfish to see how he is coping with the bumpy ride inside my useless piece of orange plastic. Even with periodic interruptions, I get to the point of wanting to give up. I am exhausted, I have long since run out of water, I have twisted my ankles several times, and I am now famished. Somehow, I've managed to forget to bring any food. I stop for one of my now frequent rest breaks at the edge

The unique geology of Knife's Edge


photo by Elam Leed



of a small meadow (the “I’ll go to that next tree and then stop” approach). I would give anything for some food. I look around for a place to lie down and die, but then I can’t believe my eyes. I see an apple on the ground, and another, and another. Looking up, I realize I’ve stopped under an apple tree loaded with perfectly ripe fruit. Call it what you like—Eden, El Dorado—but here, in the middle of nowhere, tens of miles from any habitation, deep in national forest land on the side of the highest mountain in the state: an apple tree. I would have never noticed it if I had not stopped at this particular spot. I sit on my kayak and make quick work of four apples. I feel better already. I sit on the edge of the meadow and enjoy the solitude for the moment, trying to comprehend

the sequence of events that transpired to bring me here, alone, far from water, sitting on a bright orange piece of plastic, in a remote wilderness, dressed in funny looking gear, eating apples, and talking to a blue crayfish.

It’s beyond my ability to make sense of, so after a good long rest, I shove another four apples in my boat, which turn out to be just enough to get me back to the road and my truck. When I finally rejoin my buddies at the take-out hours later, the conversation begins something like, “You’re never going to believe this, but” After my recounting of the mystical if not mythical events, their stories were nothing special—just a great day of paddling on a rare wilderness run packed with waterfalls.

We get on the road in time to make it back to State College, PA by 2 am—a 22-hour adventure that I wouldn’t trade for anything, except maybe a new creek boat and another day on Seneca. 

Note: *The crayfish lived happily with the author for several years, digging deep holes and trenches in the bottom of a large aquarium. The author still considers Seneca Creek to be his favorite kayak run, even after moving halfway across the country to the mountains of Colorado.*



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Erin Clancey surfing on the Lochsa, ID © David Blue/NRS

River Voices

Memories of Notable C-1ers

By Charlie Walbridge

Seeing Norm Holcome and Tom Irwin at the 30th anniversary bash for Pittsburgh's Three Rivers Paddling Club sure brought back a lot of memories!

I first met Norm and Tom at the Penn State Pool in the winter of 1969. I'd gotten an invitation from John Sweet, the de-facto leader of Penn State's closed boat paddlers. For me and my friends from the Bucknell Outing Club, it was a unique learning opportunity. Good whitewater instruction was impossible to find and we were trying to teach

ourselves how to paddle from books. For the next two years I made the hour-long drive to State College regularly all winter.

Norm, a grad student at Penn State, was a strong C-1er from an active DC paddling family. He'd learned to roll by taping pictures from the AMC Whitewater Handbook on the side of his hull. If he missed a roll, he'd slide part way out of his straps, look at the drawings, then crawl back in and try again—and he did all this while floating down the West Branch of the Susquehanna! When I met him, Norm was a top C-1 racer who also paddled world-class doubles with his wife, Barb.

I showed up at the Penn State pool with a Klepper kayak. Back then, State College was the center of C-1 racing, and C-

boats outnumbered kayaks 15 to one. Norm told me that I was way too big for a kayak and that, anyhow, kayaks were just for women and wimpy men. He told me I should be paddling C-1, and he just happened to have one for sale! I looked at his ancient, heavily patched pig and decided to wait. That didn't stop Norm from working with me. His sister Louise was a top K-1 paddler, and he knew a lot more about kayaks than I did.

Tom, an engineering undergraduate, was one of the most powerful C-boaters around. Penn State was one of the few places in the country where a talented, athletic young man could be running Class V whitewater in less than a year

Charlie Walbridge (center) with Norm Holcombe (left) and Tom Irwin (right)





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River Voices

and Tom was one of the first to do that. He was the only person I knew who regularly broke Norse Heavywall C-boat paddles. When I bought a new C-1 from John Berry, Tom showed me how to roll it. Later I would follow him down the Lower Yough, trying to emulate his moves. Tom was one of the first C-boaters to effectively use a cross-brade; luckily I picked the right guy to emulate, because I eventually learned to do it too.

Tom loved to play big holes. Once during a practice run at the Tarrifville Races in Connecticut he “accidentally” dropped his paddle. He hand-surfed the large bottom roller to the amazement of the assembled New England racers. But he met his match one spring while surfing Greyhound Bus Stopper on the New River at four feet. He got lost in the huge foam pile, flipped, swam, and recirculated

several times. He was in bad shape when John Sweet got to him and pulled him free of the backwash. It was a scary rescue. He wanted to try again but Sweet said he’d break both of Tom’s arms first! After graduating from college, our paths crossed often as I followed the eastern racing circuit. Norm and Barb’s two boys, Richard and Benjamin, were very young and he or Barb would sometimes leave them in my care while they took a race run. Once, after a day on the Lower Yough, he introduced me to a favorite unofficial campsite next to the water tower on the hill behind Ohiopyle. The State Park campground had yet to be built so this was a real find. Me, Tom, Norm, and John Sweet would often spend nights there together. You would always hear Tom’s Blazer start up at the crack of dawn on Sunday mornings. A faithful Catholic, he never missed Sunday Mass.

In the spring of 1973 Norm and I teamed up and raced C-2 wildwater. I had a lot to learn and we weren’t quite fast enough. Since Norm lived in Fort Lee, New Jersey and was doing a post-doc at Columbia University in New York City, I would drive up from Philadelphia mid-week to practice with him on the mighty Hudson. Eventually we realized that it wasn’t enough to beat the paddlers who lived together and trained daily.

A few years later we got together for an exploratory trip down Mud Run, a beautiful, but demanding little creek that drops steeply to meet the Lehigh River about five miles below White Haven. It’s visible from a high bridge on the Northeast Extension of the Pennsylvania Turnpike. The water was low and there were some tricky carries around big ledges. Fortunately we got through a



heavily posted section just below a big double drop without meeting anyone. Tom was always a contender in slalom and wildwater races. He, Norm and John would paddle the course together, looking for the fastest route. John was the man to beat, but Tom was coming on fast! C-1 competition in the Mid-States was intense, and in 1972 he had to enter a regional race in Missouri to qualify for the Olympic Trials. But normally he was one of the guys to beat.

In 1973, after a week of heavy rain, the Savage River Dam spilled on race weekend. The level was 2500 cfs and the speed of the current was mind-boggling. Several good paddlers drove up, took one look at the "Super Savage," then turned around and drove straight home. It was the biggest water any of us had ever raced on but Tom was in his element.


He won that race and the National Championship, beating Norm, John Sweet, Angus Morrison, and Olympic Bronze Medalist Jamie McEwan.

Tom's energy was legendary. Once, on a Colorado road trip, he decided to paddle the 50 miles from Granite to Salida on the Arkansas in a single day. The rest of the group split up so that someone would

be with him on each segment. By the time we reached the Fractions, the people following him were pleading for mercy!

A few years after the Three Rivers Paddling Club was founded, the Pennsylvania Fish Commission made their big push for boat registration. They told us that it was a sure thing and that we'd better get on board. At a meeting of six Pennsylvania whitewater clubs in Harrisburg, Tom persuaded everyone to fight it. He led the charge, mobilizing boaters across the state and working closely with his state senator. The rest is history. It's rumored that a certain high level Fish Commission official, on hearing about the vote, was seen kicking a trashcan across his office, cursing whitewater boaters. If it wasn't for Tom, people would look at our boats and think we were from Ohio!

As the years passed Tom and Norm devoted themselves to their families and raised two crops of great kids. Ever so often we'd meet at the Fall Yough Slalom to race the "klunker klass" C-1 with other throwbacks like Ed Gertler and Dave Demaree. They still beat me every single time.

Thanks, guys, for everything! 

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Musings on the Smith River: Iron Bridge to Union Bridge

By Thorpe Moeckel

The air was heavier than it had been my first day on the water. Smoke from the cookfire hovered in the sycamore branches. Rain felt imminent. I sipped coffee and watched the water. It looked like many scales on a long, long snake, each scale different in its blooming and bubbling and coursing, its froth, ripple, and pile. The river had dropped another inch or so overnight, as though the snake had exhaled or digested some meal.

My canoe lay hull up in the sand. I inspected the new scrapes on the patches I'd Epoxied to it the prior week. Fiberglass, Kevlar, and Epoxy are strange, useful things, a kind of chemical Paper Mache. The boat, a tandem canoe designed for whitewater, retained its graceful lines despite the wear

and tear and the patchwork it has received in the ten years since I bought it so used it didn't even float.

I looked at the fire. I looked at the water and then at the canoe and then back at the fire. I wanted to make another fire. Maybe four or five more fires, each one a point in some pattern I'd have little to do with. It always feels good to gather wood and set it ablaze. It feels like a part of me—now glowing, now smoke—is doing this striptease, is turning to ash.

The coffee proved plenty of breakfast. My stomach swelled with the promise of new rocks, new rapids and pools and other sights. I love being on a river for the first time, especially alone. There is something necessary and deliberate and completely absurd about the whole affair. It reminds me of religion, but mostly it reminds me of travel.

I watched a ruby-throated hummingbird feed from the fire pink at the edge of the beach that was camp. Fire pink is a red flower. It resembles a paintbrush, a frayed one. The hummingbird, no larger than a large moth, hovered and dipped and licked and flew. As if priming the brushes for their next strokes, the bird visited several of the flowers before disappearing in the woods.

I was fishing now. A sandpiper rocked and twirped on a wet stone bankward as I flicked a spinner from my place on a boulder midstream. The little bird pecked its beak into the moss on the stone at water's edge. A mayfly rose like a bit of ash. Oak fronds tangled in my lure. I cleaned it, cast again. There was a great basswood growing over the river. It had such a dense and orderly canopy compared with the wobbly oaks and arthritic sycamore. Maybe it was the tree, the distraction

of it, but suddenly I hooked the bugger that'd been playing with my lure. It fought bullish and torpid, less like a trout than something with larger girth and scales. It turned out to be a red eye bass, its eyes brilliant, redder than blood, almost unnatural. I wondered what colors it saw through those eyes.

The day before I'd had another of those encounters that make you want to kiss life hard on its damp, cracked ones. After stashing my boat and gear under the bridge, I stopped at a small engine repair shop to ask for a ride from the take out at Philpott Lake back to the bridge. A nice lady, a friend of the repairman, graciously offered, and I followed her on a shortcut to the take out. On the return trip, in her small import, she pointed to an old, elegant house I'd noticed earlier. She said it had been the home of a renowned moonshiner. "He was the big man in Franklin County," she told me. "During prohibition, he supplied the politicians, ran his liquor to D.C. in hearses or ambulances, the floors rigged so the bottles rode concealed." After another turn or two on the road, as we drove by a cemetery, she took a drag off her Merit Menthol and said, "That tall one there, that's him."

I released the bass with a hunch that the water was too warm there to support a healthy trout population. It was fine. I fish for wonder more than for fish. I waded downstream from camp, working a few more pools, watching the water curl over ledges and boil from under mammoth boulders. Amber sand, green depths, and dark, moss-laced cobble marked the bottom. The surface was all furrow and curl, light-streaked and bubbly in places and smooth in others. It was late-April and on the banks the wild azalea was in bloom, also flame azalea, spiderwort, fire pink, starflower, to name the most obvious.

Leaves shone with newness, all the leaves save the evergreen of pine needles and the rhododendron's thick lances. I caught a bluegill and a few more oak fronds, and I found an inner tube and a plastic trashcan among the flotsam on a boulder. There were the remains of a suckerfish on a rock, in the form of big scales and bones and bird excrement. The osprey I'd seen several times that day perhaps had made a meal there recently, if not just a few minutes ago.

It was time to paddle now. The canoe looked like a ragged work bench or banquet table on the beach, which both saddened and thrilled me. I loaded it and headed downstream. Short pools punctuated the rips. The rapids were nothing drastic, but they were lively enough to lead me into a quiet, rhythmic state of attention and steering. Less than a mile from camp, floating down the river, submerged in its music, the gospel I trust most, I encountered a steep drop, a small sluice. Scouting the rapid by foot, I found a crushed copper kettle in the sand, its rim and handle of wrought iron and in good shape. It was clearly a relic of the bootlegging days. Spots of brightness shone amongst the general tarnish and slice and wrinkle of the crushed copper basin, as though some clinging things, lichen or egg sacs or shellfish, had cleaned those places in their time there. I wanted to put the kettle in my boat and haul it with me, but that seemed wrong.


After a smooth run over the drop, I continued downstream with the sweet little buzz you feel after running a rapid. I thought again of the woman I'd met the prior morning and of our drive and her stories about the local scene. In addition to the moonshiner story, she pointed out a famous gospel singer's house just over the next ridge, before we descended to the

bridge. I'd had a hunch earlier that there was music going on at that place, due to the traveling bus in the driveway, a real nice one, luxurious – glittery paint job, tinted windows. She began to tell a story about the family and their kindness, but well before finishing, she stopped her car in the road by the bridge. I thanked her and offered payment for her gas and time, but she shoed me off and said, "Have a good trip."

I stared up from the canoe and the river. It looked to be a 30-minute to one-hour hump by foot to the ridge at any point. The gorge was deep enough and the slope dense enough with growth as to make the river feel very remote. It was soothing to sense this. Whatever pain life deals us seems far away when you get in the woods and stay a little while, long enough or frequent enough to let the place erode you. As I continued downstream, it seemed that most of the activity on the banks was of bugs and beaver. Deer prints sometimes pocked the sand, and there were coon tracks in the silt and crayfish shells picked clean. Every now and then there were bullet casings on a rock—.357 mostly—and these were near a place where four-wheeler tracks emerged from the woods to the riverside. Garbage was commonplace, but there wasn't enough to make the place feel trashed; it wore the trash as Blue Ridge Mountain rivers do, as though people live upstream.

Perhaps a snake is an imperfect metaphor for a river, I thought a couple of miles downstream. I had beached the canoe and was scrambling up a side creek. The creek curled and pinballed from one eroded ledge to another. The bed of the creek was one rock, carved and pocked and scoured by years of flow. I hopped from foot to foot on the slippery, sloping monolith,

as if the place was teaching me a spirited dance. The banks, steeply cliffed, teemed with jack in the pulpit, mountain laurel, witch hazel, yellowroot, oak.

A river cannot be a snake because a river has legs. Each tributary is a leg, and they, too, have legs. Save a grossly deformed millipede, I could think of no insect with such limbs. No mammal either. It drizzled now, and a vague mist seemed to ooze from everything. Moss resembled melted wax from some green candle. Somewhere my truck sat in a parking lot full of larger trucks and trailers by Philpott Lake. Maybe the only metaphor for a river is time, I thought. I was in the canoe again. Or maybe it is rain. I was taking forward strokes, wrist-twisting them at the finish so the boat stayed straight. I was watching the water. I was watching the rain and paddling and seeing snakes, nests of pale and dark living snakes, and I was seeing other things, too—too much to know, too many to name. 

Searching for Solutions to Shoulder Pain

by Sean O'Malley

Shoulder pain is to kayaking as knee pain is to running. It goes with the territory. If physical therapy researcher Craig Wassinger has anything to say about it, that will change. A doctoral student at the University of Pittsburgh's Neuromuscular Research Lab, Wassinger is studying why so many kayakers suffer from shoulder pain and what can be done to prevent it.

Dislocations get a lot of press in the paddling world, but they are not the most common problem. That honor goes to impingement, a repetitive strain injury that affects boaters of all levels, from casual recreational paddlers to Olympic caliber racers. Brought on by repeated pinching of the biceps and supraspinatus muscles where they pass between the shoulder blade and upper arm, impingement can make even the simplest of tasks miserable. Symptoms include pain when moving the arm up and down or when performing overhead tasks like painting a ceiling or throwing a baseball. Often the pain will be worst when the upper arm is at 90 degrees to the torso. In paddling, that translates to strokes like duffeks, bow rudders and improper high braces.

Wassinger points to a photograph in his office of a slalom racer cleaning an upstream gate during a competition in Chilliwack, Ontario. The paddler's top hand and forearm are completely behind his head as he plants his duffek. Wassinger smiles wryly, "Is it any wonder we're always hurting?" Wassinger himself has suffered a slalom-induced impingement. "My left side turns needed work," he says. "So I went out and did hundreds of pivots in a bridge pier eddy behind the lab. I wasn't rotating my torso enough and kept reaching back to plant the blade. That's all it took."

You don't have to be a racer to give yourself impingement. All it takes is time on the water and less than ideal body mechanics.

That's where Wassinger's dissertation research comes into play. By comparing the stroke mechanics of healthy and injured kayakers, Wassinger hopes to isolate the movements and body positions that can lead to impingement.

As part of the study, Wassinger put 32 paddlers through a series of tests, including a diagnostic exam to identify any existing shoulder pain, a strength and flexibility test, and a 3D motion capture session.


During a typical 3D motion capture session, Wassinger attaches dozens of magnetic and electronic sensors to his subject, then has him or her paddle for 15 to 30 minutes on a kayak ergometer. A distant cousin of the rowing machines found in most health clubs, the kayak ergometer uses a cable and pulley system to attach the blades of a kayak paddle to a resistance unit. Paddling the ergometer feels surprisingly realistic, though the effort in each stroke is higher than normal, like towing a swimmer. As the participant paddles, electro-magnetic motion sensors create a precise three dimensional record of that person's movements. At the same time, a separate set of sensors gathers data about which muscles are firing and when. On the control unit, a ghostly computer-generated skeleton mirrors the movements of the paddler being studied.

Technology like this has been around for years, used in medical research to study body mechanics and in Hollywood to digitize actors' movements for computer generated animation sequences; however,

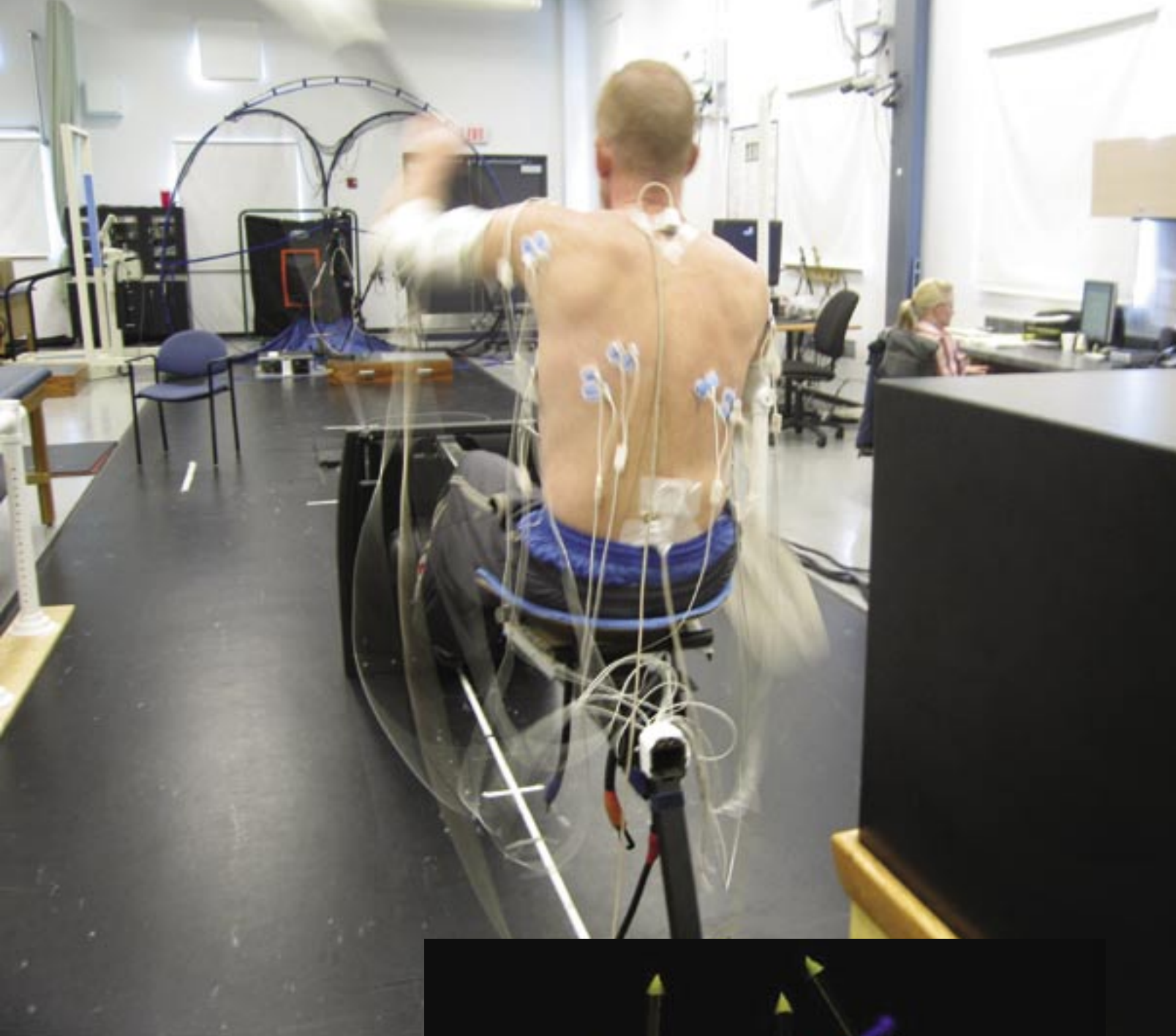
Wassinger's work is the first to focus specifically on kayaking. "If we can identify differences in the way injured and healthy kayakers paddle, especially the relationships between their upper arms and shoulder blades," says Wassinger, "we could design training or therapy to address those issues."

Results from the study have yet to be determined; however, Wassinger does have some recommendations for avoiding shoulder pain. The first you no doubt have heard before: keep your elbows in front of your body and below your shoulder blades. It's one of the first things experienced boaters tell newcomers. It's also one of the first things to go by the wayside as beginners battle to stay upright through their first challenging runs. "When I was starting out," says Wassinger, "I really leaned on my brace a lot—way back, up high. I didn't get what people were telling me back then. Now I do."

The second is torso rotation. Turn your body when you need to plant strokes behind you, and you're less likely to stress your shoulders. That said, torso rotation by itself is no guarantee of pain free shoulders. Wildwater racers, for example, use extreme rotation as part of their forward strokes, yet they still suffer from shoulder pain at about the same rate as other paddlers.

Regardless of the cause, it's important to deal with shoulder pain early. If you start feeling pain after paddling, don't just hope it will go away on its own. Get yourself to a physical therapist, preferably one with experience treating athletes, before the pain affects your lifestyle. If you can't find a therapist who knows kayaking, tell them to treat you like a baseball player. That way they'll understand the sort of punishment your shoulder needs to withstand. 

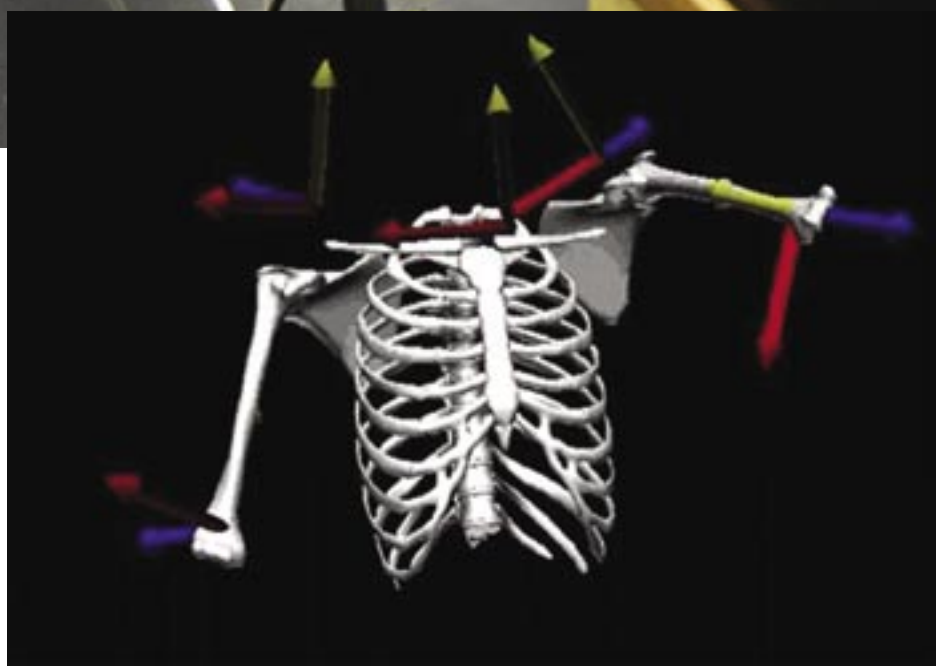
Visit www.pitt.edu/~neurolab for additional information about the Neuromuscular Research Laboratory. Craig Wassinger can be reached at caw24@pitt.edu.



Above: A paddler's movements on the kayak ergometer are captured via the sensors on his skin

The skeleton on the computer screen shows the data collected from the motion capture session

photo by Craig Wassinger



River Voices



From Remote to Roadside: The North and South St. Vrain

By The Dogg

It is always nice to find new places and new runs to do. A long time ago, when I invented the sport of kayaking, I figured that this great land, known as the United States, contains enough whitewater to keep me busy for a very long time. There have been major progressions made in the sport and people are running steeper and steeper runs. I must admit that when I invented kayaking, I never envisioned running some of the SIK creeks that I do today. Now, the Eskimos will claim that they invented kayaking but let me state for the record that it simply is not true. The Klondike Bar, yes, but kayaking, no.

Granted, I'm not looking for credit but everyone keeps giving it to me. You can't be the Greatest Kayaker in the World and expect to slip under the radar. Sometimes I have to remind myself that someone has got to be the best; someone has got to be better than everyone else but sometimes things get out of hand. The crazed fans, women all over me, heck, I can't even go into a restaurant without someone asking for my autograph.

The summer was fast approaching and I had to figure out what my paddling destination would be. Montana, California, Nebraska (?), or Colorado? My tattooing business, appropriately named Dogg Doodle, was flourishing and I could afford to take a little time off to travel. My business is truly one of the great success stories in American history. I started with nothing but a ball point

pen, a razor blade, a guitar string, and a pencil sharpener motor, and built it into the multimillion dollar business that it is today. It was nice to be able take some time and travel. However, not everyone has this luxury. There are countless young people who are slaving away at their jobs while old people sit back doing nothing and collecting money for it. It is my belief that your retirement money should be given to you when you are young, athletic, and truly able to enjoy it. Let the old people work in the fields! After all, Metamucil isn't going to harvest itself! I'm thinking of writing my local Congressman about this. But I digress.

I eventually decided that the best trip going was to join my teammates from Fluid and go to Colorado. Fluid was looking for some representation in Colorado and they offered to take me on



River Voices



the trip. Like Hallmark, they cared enough to send the best! And being the World's Greatest Kayaker, I intended to impose complete domination over all the creeks in my path! Oh yeah! Seth Chapelle and I flew out to Denver where Bryon Dorr and Graeme Anderson picked us up. We thought about going to see a Colorado Rockies game since we were in town but then thought better of it. The Fluid paddlers are athletes who don't need to use performance-enhancing drugs, unlike some athletes from these parts. It's true! It's true! Yessir, I pee in a cup and it will test steroid-free! Oh yeah!

After a few days paddling around the Golden/Boulder area, we headed to the St. Vrain for the Lyons Rodeo. I had met a group of paddlers while running Clear Creek earlier in the week and I had earjacked that they were running the North St. Vrain. They graciously allowed me to join them when I asked, so I decided to skip the rodeo. In my 35+ years of whitewater paddling, playboating has come a long way.¹ I can no longer do the

new rodeo moves that the young guys have come up with. Nowadays, moves that I am able to do, like the cartwheel, splitwheel, and the McSkizzy, are no longer on the score sheet. They've been replaced by moves like the Phonics Monkey, McNasty, and the Teacup. Sure, it makes one want to cry but, don't worry, I'm tough. I'm not gonna be marching on any Trail of Tears over it! Besides, this was a golden opportunity to run a new schweet run. I was all over the opportunity to do this run like Mad Cow on French beef! It was time to Carpe the Diem, SIEZE THE CARPE!

I had heard good things about the North St. Vrain. It is a 13-mile wilderness trip with some pretty challenging whitewater. There are several Class V+ drops on the run down a committing gorge. I knew this run was going to be schweet because my olfactory sense can sniff out a SIK run from up to 30 miles away! Yessir, this run was shaping up to be the coolest thing since Chuck Norris! As with all Colorado runs, there promised to be a fair amount of junky drops. Yessir, it is not a place to take your touring paddle with drip

rings, lest they get hung up in the mank! I figured that going with a group of people who were familiar with the run would be a great way to see it. The group that I joined included Evan Stafford, Will Rawstrom, Kyle McCutchen, Tim Smith, and Ken Oliver, among others. It was the perfect day to run the North St. Vrain, the sun was shining and there was breeze so gentle that it could tie your shoes for you!

At the strong recommendation of the Colorado guidebook, we stopped by the nearest crank house, got jacked up on something strong, and showed up at the putin dialed for chaos. After stretching, I hit the Icarian Lat Pull and did 8 reps of 450 pounds and gargled a thimble of Agent Orange to get warmed up. There was a large rapid named Cascade #1 that everyone said was really scary and too low to run at this level (about 275 cfs) so we hiked down and put in below. There was a log pinned in Cascade #2 so some of the group members headed down there early with a team of Navy Seals and a waterproof reciprocating saw to try to remove it. They were unsuccessful so we ran the 1/2-mile

section of steep, fast water between the two cascades and portaged again. We didn't get off to a very good start. We had two portages, a pinned boat, a broken boat, and a broken paddle all with a mile of the put-in. After putting back on below Cascade #2, we were confident that things would improve. The remainder of the Murkwood section was steep and fast with lots of manky drops and continuous water going downhill.

Eventually, the gradient petered out for a few miles and it gave us time to relax and enjoy the scenery. Soon, we entered the California section of the run. Here the gradient steepens and the run starts flowing through long stretches of granite boulder drops that remind one of California (or what West Virginia would be like with granite). After a few steep boulder drops, we hopped out on a trail on the left bank to scout.

The next 100 yards, know creatively as "Steep Section," was one of the finest rapids I've seen in the entire state of Colorado. It went through a steep series of boulder drops with several boofs and slots to negotiate. The rapid went on for a long time and didn't stop dropping! The approach went through a narrow notch into a pillowed boulder that led to an 8-foot drop run through a slot on the left. From here it was a maze of boulder drops and slots with more moves that I could ever accurately describe that carried you to a footbridge. I aced every part of the rapid and video replay confirmed what we already knew to be true: I got SIK! Since I ran it perfectly, it would be impossible to have run this rapid any better than I did. I mean, you can't bowl any higher than a 300!

The rapid below the footbridge, called Clam Shack was a steep double drop with some severe undercuts. Some pretty high

profile boaters have apparently had some bad trashings here so we decided to walk around it. Running this drop would be more dangerous than taking cooking lessons from Jenny Wade!² From here, the run continued down through many boulder drops, some with some areas that you definitely didn't want to go into. Luckily, Will knew all of the rapids and was able to point us away from any potential traps. Soon, we arrived at another bridge and hopped out to scout on the right. The run went down a steep boulder drop and bent to the left. There was a sloping 6-foot ledge that needed to be boofed left to avoid a bad piton rock. A stiff piton off this drop would really knock the corn off your cob! I came down the steep approach, carved a nice left turn and lined up to launch a SIK left boof! Oh Yesh! It was SCHWWEEEEETTTTT!!!!

Several more fun boulder drops carried us to the last major drop on the run, called



River Voices

The Slot. There, the creek flows through a rocky approach that feeds most of the water to the right into an ugly, walled in hole. A trip into that hole could potentially lead to the worst trashing of your life! Running this line is more dangerous than going quail hunting with Vice President Cheney! The remainder of the flow goes off an eight-foot drop through a slot in the middle of the river. It is a nice boof and everyone aced this drop. Some easy water carried us to the worst part of the day, a mile of flat water across the lake. If there is one thing in this world that can make the Dogg cry, it is flatwater! I didn't cry when my own father was hung for stealing a pig, but I cried when I saw that flatwater lake!

The dam required a steep portage that took us to the bottom, where there was tons of water shooting out. It reminded me of the old Gauley tubes back before they ruined the dam. From here, we had another mile or so of rapids that ranged from Class II-IV and another portage around a 30-foot dam. One rapid had a slide that carried you through a culvert, then dumped you into a steep boulder drop—an unexpected but enjoyable surprise!

It wasn't long before we arrived at the cars. The North St. Vrain had been a super fun run! I asked the guys what they recommended checking out next. They told me that I had to hit the South St. Vrain for some sweet roadside creeking. I met up with the Fluid guys to celebrate this momentous occasion with a Veg-O-Mite sandwich, a Mr. Goodbar (they named that candy bar right!), and 64 ounces of the finest malt liquor money can buy! After meeting up with the crew again, I talked them into checking out the South St. Vrain the next day. I was so fired up that I really wanted to fire up the run that very night with no moon and in full Kamikaze gear! However, since I didn't know the run, I eventually decided that it would be better to wait until morning.

We put on the South Saint Vrain at an ideal level the next day (somewhere around 200 cfs), looking for some high quality creek boat action. The guide book description says that most paddlers hate

this run because of the mank, but I assured my crew that the run was going to be SIK. Being all about equal opportunity Smack Down, I must drop the People's Elbow on all creeks, regardless of mank! Since I am always trustworthy when it comes to creek information, the group was assured that this run would be as sweet as a sweet potato french fry!³ Graeme and Seth were a little skeptical since we had already seen our fair share of Colorado mank and they didn't see much reason to run more. Well, I had a fistful of reasons for them to run more. I thought about giving them the old trusty roundhouse kick to the head, however, I decided that there is already too much violence in the world and it would be far better to use a much more peaceful method: bribery. I offered the two of them a game of Chutes and Ladders used only twice, a Lord of the Rings DVD, and a coupon for a free soda at Burger King when you purchase a large fry. These items were more than enough to get a couple of paddling bums on the creek!

We put in where the mank started to flatten out near the confluence of the South and West Forks. Before putting on any creek, it is important to stone grind the base of your creek boat for maximum performance. After doing so, I downed a can of this special energy drink that gave me the strength of 10 men and I was ready for action. I needed this because I was feeling a little under the weather from dinner the night before. Why did I risk life and limb and do the run while not operating at 100%? Why of course, I did it for you, the fans. I did for the thousands of fans lining the banks and the uncounted millions viewing from home. Quitting is not an option when you have so many counting on you. Unlike many entertainers, I have an obligation to you, faithful reader. Let's face it, if the sergeant goes Section 8, who will lead the troops to victory? Whenever I think about taking a day off, I think about that kid at home who is hanging on every word of this work of literary greatness. That kid who is dreaming of growing up to be just like the Dogg. Am I going to let that kid down? I think not! But I digress, again.

Instantly the run tilted down hill through continuous rocky rapids that I have found to be very common in Colorado. Soon, we were upon the first of several big drops that populate this run. None of the rapids are all that huge but they are pretty steep and contain sweet boofs and many moves to make. Luckily, we had Bryon moving downstream with us on foot and telling us the lines so we did very little boat scouting. Bryon had hurt his shoulder a couple of days earlier, so he was taking a break from paddling to hone his photography skills. If you can't be an athlete, you can always be an athletic supporter!


Down into the run, we came to a particularly sweet section of drops called the Narrows. The drops in here were a little bigger than the rest of the run and the creek bed was narrower, creating a much burlier flow. We ran the first series, which was steep and blind, on Bryon's directions. The second section had a sweet boof on the right followed by a split in the current with a sweet clapper boof on the right. Let me tell you, those were some real West Virginia Boy boofs there! These weren't any weekend warrior boofs! The left side was straightforward and manky. I informed the guys that running the left channel would be cheating. I assured them that if there was ANY cheating—especially with my wife, who is a dirty tramp—I was just going to lose it. We all came down with sweet lines off of both boofs and sweet clappers on the second one.

The last drop on the creek is called 1 in 5 because you have a 1 in 5 chance of making it successfully. We were up for testing the odds, so we stepped up, rolled the dice, and took our chances. As we were about to find out, much like the Transformers, 1 In 5 has more than meets the eye! Graeme decided that he wanted be Optimus Prime so he went first. I don't know who died and made him Chuck Norris! Either way, he ran the center slot that fell into the right channel hole. He went a deep and resurfaced against a boulder on the left before having to fight his way out. That definitely assured me that I was going to forgo that line and run the right. The right line drops a couple feet

into the right wall and goes off a 3-foot drop into a sticky hole. I launched a nice boof off the top drop but my paddle blade got stuck against the wall so I went over the second drop leaning back on the deck and finished with a slight tail stand. Not pleased with that run, I carried up to do it again while Seth dropped the far left slot. He ended up going deep off the slot and flipping at the bottom. To add insult to injury, the next little pourover flipped him as well. I suppose he was at a disadvantage, only using one blade and all. Sometimes, I really question the concept of paddling a C-1. I just don't understand the thought process of Seth and his ilk. However, in order for this to truly be a free country, you have allow everyone, even C-1ers, to practice the own beliefs, no matter how backwards they may seem. But I digress.

Back to 1 in 5, I went for the right line again, this time opting not to boof the top drop but rather to drag the left blade to set

up better. I pitoned slightly off the top drop and had no momentum going over the final drop. I went deep and backended. I rolled quickly and was facing an extended session in the grips of the hole. After some strong backpaddling, I was able to escape that boiling vat of death. I realize that my runs of this rapid were less than perfect. However, when you've aced as many tough drops as I have, to squabble over one or two blown lines is like complaining about a piece of lint on an Armani suit. Since we were 0 for 4, we had a 100% chance that a successful run would have been achieved had one of us run it again. Since it was a sure thing that the next run would have been successful, we decided that this would take all the fun out of it. And let's face it, if you take the fun out of kayaking, you take the fun out of it. On that note, we decided to call it a day and a SIK run. Besides, we had ice cream on our minds and everybody knows that I'll break every law known to man to get my hands on that confectionary treat!

These two branches of the St. Vrain provided me with whitewater kayaking thrills that I will always remember. Oh yeah! Dr. 90210 is going to have to perform plastic surgery to remove the perma-grin from my face! However, this wasn't the end of our trip. No sir, we dropped many more SIK creeks before finally heading back east. But those are stories for another day. 

Footnotes

1 The author was 27 years old when he ran this creek.

2 Jenny Wade was the only civilian killed in the battle of Gettysburg. She died when a stray bullet came into her house and struck her while she was baking.

3 The author ate sweet potato French fries for dinner the night before. He became sick with food poisoning and spent the remainder of the day after the South Saint Vrain run vomiting.



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Second Descent: Audrey Moore Rec Center Creek

By Scott Anderson

For years I'd heard rumors of a short not-so-steep creek in the lowlands of Annandale, VA. One day I finally decided I had to check it out. I gave Lucas, Brad, and Patrick a call, knowing they would drop everything at a moment's notice for some expedition creeking. After making a few wrong turns we stopped at a gas station to ask a local for directions, and he pointed us toward the big AUDREY MOORE RECENTER sign across the street. We shouldered our boats, and began the long hike in. According to our map, the put-in was at a place called the Back Entrance.

By the time we found the put-in and geared up it was well past sunset. It's normally not a good idea to creek at night—especially in the winter—but we didn't know how long the creek would hold water, so we decided to risk it. Luckily we had enough ambient light to see where we were going. Actually, I've never seen such a brilliant night sky. Once you leave the city, the stars seem so much brighter.

Because this was only the second descent we had limited beta about the nature of the creek. My topo software showed a remote gorge 50 meters long and 25 yards wide, with a staggering gradient of 0 feet per mile. Our friend Bion, who participated in the first descent, was forced to hike out after wedging his stern into a gutter in one of the rapids and being forced to swim. He's a strong paddler, and that's his only swim, so we were being very cautious.

One thing we did know, thanks to Bion, was that the creek had egress points at regular intervals on both shorelines. He described them as "ladder-like," which put our minds at ease because we were not the

most sure-footed bunch.

The first thing we noticed was that the correlation between the online gage and the painted gage at the put-in had changed drastically. Before leaving home we checked the online gage and the volume was 0 cubic feet per second, but when we arrived at the put-in there was plenty of water, and the painted gage read 13'6"—which should've been flood stage. Patrick suggested that because the water wasn't moving at all, both readings could be accurate. How absurd! Maybe a hydrologist can help us resolve this issue.

The second thing we noticed was how clear the water was. It was even clearer than Crater Lake in Oregon. We could see all the way down to the riverbed, which was composed primarily of square white rocks, rubbed smooth by eons of running water. And yet the water, clear as it was, was also highly acidic—probably due to chlorine runoff from abandoned mines.

We put-in at the deep end, which the locals use as a swimming hole in the summertime. I decided to lead, and Patrick took sweep. Before very long we reached the first horizon line and got out of our boats to scout. We were faced with two back-to-back drops: the first, which was 1 meter tall, we named Low Dive; and the second, which was 3 meters tall, we named High Dive. We all ran Low Dive clean, but Patrick and Brad didn't like the look of High Dive. Patrick portaged on river right and Brad decided to throw-and-go. Once below, they set safety for Lucas and I. Both of us stalled out at the lip and penciled in, but the landing zone was deep enough that we came away unscathed.

Continuing downstream, we came upon another intimidating rapid. Lucas liked the left line and Brad liked the right; I preferred to run the meat, right down the middle. But to tell the truth, there were so many possible lines that it was hard to know which one was the best. Even worse, there were no landmarks at water level to help us orient ourselves. Patrick didn't like the look of this one either and decided to portage. Fortunately he was able to find one of the egress points, and followed a well-worn trail beside the creek.

Patrick and Brad set safety on the shore with throw ropes while I probed the middle. Once I was safely in the pool below the rapid, I held up my paddle, signaling Lucas to go ahead. He came screaming down the left side and didn't see the lane divider until it was too late. It was all he could do to hug it and keep his head above the water, but the pressure was too great, and he kept slipping down, down, down. The ropes Patrick and Brad lofted in the air were useless, and we watched in horror as Lucas slowly disappeared from our sight.

After what seemed like an eternity, Lucas resurfaced next to me in the eddy sputtering water, and I towed him to shore. "Are you alright?" we all asked him, and he nodded his head yes. "That was a close call!" Unfortunately his boat wasn't going to come out of the lane divider anytime soon. We set up a Z-drag and anchored it to an odd-looking metal tree that reminded me—I know this sounds crazy—of a giant highchair. Lucas's boat still wouldn't budge, and in the shape he was in, we didn't want him to hike out of the creek alone. We decided to bag it, and save Audrey Moore Rec Center Creek for another day.

Yoga Made Me Soft

By Brian Snyder

On the hike out we stumbled across a natural hot spring—at a perfect 101 degrees—and rested our sore muscles in its bubbling waters. We sat in total silence, but it wouldn't have taken a psychic to tell we were all thinking ... "This is the life."

Hard men don't do Yoga. We don't get in touch with our bodies or massage our inner beings. There's too much ice in our veins for them to be coursing with love and gratitude. When something hurts, we punish it. It either heals or it breaks. The pain, the soreness only makes us harder.

It still stings to write this, but a few months ago I turned in my Hardman Club Card. I felt obligated. Denying it any longer would have only made me feel cheap and dirty. Still, I couldn't help but feel I was making a mistake. What had happened?

I was only going to try it ... just one short session—you know, to see what it was like. I thought, "How bad can it really be?" It seemed like everybody was doing it. Heck, one of my best friends had gotten himself badly tangled in the stuff, and he still seemed normal.


So I did Yoga. In a poorly lit hotel room on the outskirts of San Jose, Costa Rica, the furniture thrown up and beds piled against the wall, I rode the downward dog. Ignoring the strange sounds, I huffed and groaned and sweated through a 45-minute video. The stretches erased my amateur grip on flexibility. Good God, could the body really bend like that?

Legs shaking, arms trembling, every tendon on the verge of snapping, I thanked God and collapsed when finally Yogi Master called for "total relaxation pose." There on my back dripping little tears of sweat, I surrendered. The feeling was not so much a release of tension as a crush of relaxation.

I sat up a few minutes later and felt for the usual pain in my back, neck, and forearms. It was gone. I panicked. The Hardness was gone.

The following day I slipped into a kayak, and for the first time in three years, I didn't wince with pain. It felt like I was paddling with a new back. I cranked out attainments, made a hundred eddy turns, and hit move after move in the play hole. "Holy Buddha!" I thought. Whatever Yogi Master had done, it felt incredible.

At the end of the day, however, the old Hardness returned. It was different now, not the trusted confidant of before. It felt like a pal—one of those life-sucking, "good-time" friends that you just can't shake. Tired and stiff, I tried stretching—the bending motions I had seen Yogi Master doing on the video—to try and release the tension. My back cracked. My knees creaked. My neck went pop-pop-pop with every turn. With each bend, bands of soreness released and I realized that being Hard was stupid. You actually could paddle without pain. You could paddle longer, harder, faster, and just downright better.

It's been almost six months now since they took my card. I wish I could say I regret it. But the yogi-peace has filled me with a tranquil wisdom. With this newfound agility, flexibility, and budding yogi-strength, I'm just a better paddler now ... even if I am soft. 

2008 Board of Directors Candidates



Aaron Pruzan

I am honored to continue serving on the board of American Whitewater. I look forward to another session and doing a better job with tele-conferencing and traveling east of Denver.

As the owner of Rendezvous River Sports and Jackson Hole Kayak School I have introduced thousands of people to the sport of kayaking since I began instructing in '93. In '96 I began the non-profit Jackson Hole Kayak Club, which provides an inexpensive means for kids to get into whitewater paddlesports. The club introduces young people to the fun of competitive paddling and of running wild rivers.

As a board member of the Snake River Fund I have helped bring together a diverse group of river users, including commercial outfitters, rafters, fisherman and paddlers. Together we work in a unique alliance with the National Forest to provide stewardship for the Snake River

Watershed in Wyoming and to keep the river user fee free.

As a kayaker my interest is primarily in expeditionary kayaking which has taken me into many of the deep places on Earth. I also enjoy a diversity of competitive disciplines including slalom, wildwater and freestyle.

The world of whitewater is always exciting; but there are many river related challenges that we face beyond the rapids. Curtailing the spread of aquatic hitchhikers (invasive non-native species) is a problem that must be foremost on the minds of all river users. During the next year I will help American Whitewater take a leadership role in this battle.

Also during the next year I hope to see the passage of the Snake Headwaters Legacy Act, which is currently (with AW's help) in the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee. Passage of this

bill will give Wild & Scenic status to this amazing whitewater resource. Increasing membership and fundraising are among all our goals, and I will try to further our efforts to improve both.



Chris Bell

I've been a boater since 1969, when I paddled Oregon's Rogue River on a YMCA rafting trip. I learned to kayak after moving to North Carolina in 1985 and started squirt boating in 1987. Today I'm as likely to be found paddling a canoe or rowing a raft on a western multi-day trip with my wife and two daughters as I am to be kayaking or squirt boating. My non-American Whitewater volunteer activities include conceiving and coordinating the Western Carolina Rescue Rodeo (1992-97), serving as President, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster of the Western Carolina Paddlers (1990-1998, 2004-), and creating and maintaining the boatingbeta.com regional website (2000-). From 2000-2004 I worked extensively with AW on the Cheoah dam relicensing project, where by happy not-quite-coincidence I was fortunate to be able to combine my love of paddling with my professional skills as an economist. I joined AW's board in 2005 and have served as AW's Treasurer since 2006.

The past three years have been remarkable ones for American Whitewater. We have expanded our stewardship staff, including adding what will soon be a full time staff member in Colorado. We have reassigned staff, modified procedures and invested in a state-of-the-art membership database system that should mean we will never again be slow acknowledging new members or mailing first copies of the Journal. We have reduced costs and improved the physical quality of the Journal by changing printers. We have slashed expenses by moving our headquarters from the DC area to the mountains of North Carolina and paring non-stewardship staff. We have improved the quality of and added transparency to our financial records by hiring a full time accountant, reorganizing our chart of accounts, and improving our system of financial rules and procedures. We are in the process of reducing the size of our board, in part so that we can afford to pay travel stipends and make board membership affordable to a wider

cross-section of the paddling community. Whew! What's left? Major initiatives planned for 2008 include expansion of our California stewardship team and a serious look at our website—beginning with a “web summit” in February to assess where we are, where we need to go, and how we'll get there. As a fifth-generation Californian and as the member of the Cyber-Committee who proposed the web summit, I hope you are as excited as I am about where AW is headed and would very much appreciate your vote returning me to the AW board!

Each year American Whitewater membership elects board members to serve three year terms. The following candidates are volunteering to serve three-year terms on the American Whitewater Board of Directors. Candidate biographies can be read on page 58-60.

Please vote for five American Whitewater Board of Directors:

- ☐ Aaron Pruzan
- ☐ Chris Bell
- ☐ David Cernicek
- ☐ Kristine Jackson
- ☐ Norwood Scott

Please write your name:

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Deadline for submitting ballots is February 29, 2008.

Thank you for your participation in this important election process.



David Cernicek

David grew up on the rivers of the west and now lives in Jackson Hole, Wyoming. His passion for rivers has led him into a career of river-related work. David offers a unique perspective on rivers since he has worked with river issues from many different viewpoints. He has been rafting and kayaking rivers non-commercially since 1982, and has lived and boated in most areas of the country. He has worked as a guide and manager of commercial rafting companies in Colorado and Idaho. While completing a master's degree in natural resource management, David worked as a professional researcher, investigating river user behavior. His specialties are river carrying capacity, crowding, and conflict issues. He has volunteered countless hours for many river conservation related causes. David has worked with the National Park Service's River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in Washington D.C., where he participated in national river conservation policy formulation and the Wild & Scenic Rivers Program. David has worked as a river ranger on the Rio Grande and Rio Chama in New Mexico, the Stanislaus and Toulumne Rivers in California, and the Hoback and Snake Rivers in Wyoming. David is presently the River Manager for the Bridger-Teton National Forest in Jackson Hole, Wyoming where he administers all river corridor use. Part of his job is working with the Snake River Fund, a donation program used on the Snake River in lieu of a mandatory fee program. This one-of-a-kind program is led by the river using community and works in partnership with the US Forest Service to protect and care for the Snake River Corridor.



Kristine Jackson

Rock Island, Tennessee resident Kristine Jackson says she wants to be part of the American Whitewater Board of Directors because, "I love being involved and helping in areas where the need is great and the potential impact can be huge." Kristine, age 37, spends half the year traveling in an R.V. to events all around the U.S. and Canada with her family and two dogs. She acts as home-school teacher for her two kids: Emily—17 years old (and Junior World Champion), and Dane—14 years old (Junior World Silver Medalist). She can also be seen on the sidelines of kayaking competitions, assisting her husband of 19 years, Eric (or "E.J." as most people know him), current World Freestyle Champion. Kristine is the acting Chief Operation Officer of Jackson Kayak and she also serves as Freestyle representative for the International Canoe Federation, the governing body for the World Cup and World Freestyle Championships.



Norwood Scott

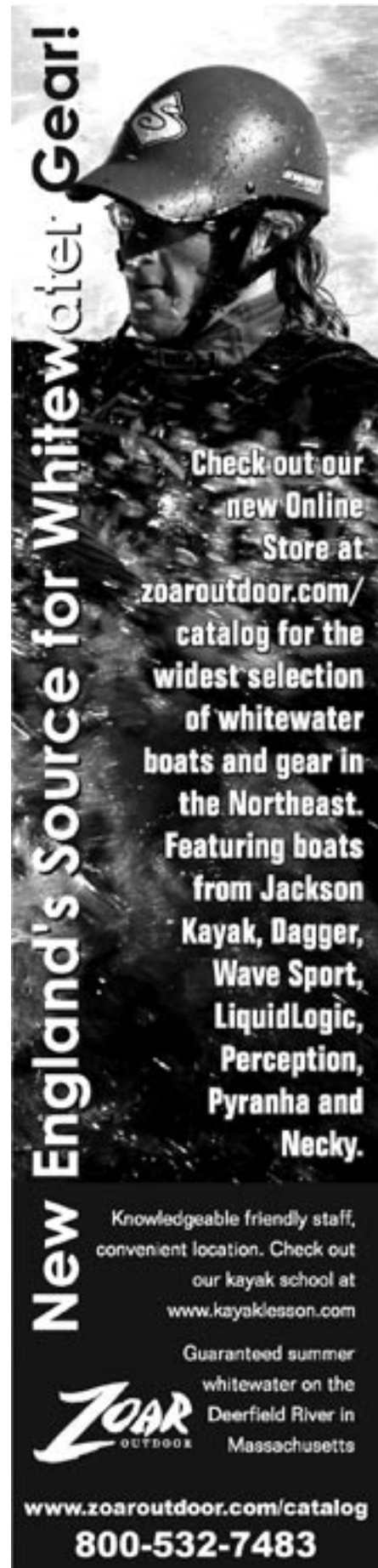
Though I live and work in San Francisco today, I started paddling 30 years ago at Camp Mondamin in Tuxedo, North Carolina. Since those first strokes on Lake Summit, paddling has been a major part of my life. After graduating from camper to counselor I went on to teach canoeing for another four years. Since then I have competed in slalom, freestyle, surf kayaking, and international wildwater events. I've organized events like the Potomac Whitewater Festival and the Great Falls Race, and served as a board member of the Tuolumne River Trust and of American Whitewater. I was on the U.S. Wildwater Team in 1998, 2000, and 2003. For the last three years I have served as AW's Board Secretary.

Besides spending a year as a ski bum in Lake Tahoe, my career has been devoted to preserving the environment. I've worked

for an environmental consulting firm, an association offering environmental services to airports, and now the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in San Francisco. As a federal employee, I continue to contribute to the EPA's comments on environmental assessments and environmental impact statements related to FERC hydropower relicensing agreements to ensure that our conservation, access, and recreational concerns are addressed at the federal level.

If given the opportunity to serve on the AW's Board for a third term, I plan to focus on growing AW's membership base and annual budget so we can devote more resources to today's pressing river issues and have an even greater impact on whitewater stewardship. In particular, I will fight for increased flows for recreation and a sustainable environment.


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The Last Word



Making a Stand Against Climate Change: A Paddler's Perspective

By Ambrose Tuscano

Several months ago I heard a report about the effects of a prolonged drought—the worst in 1,000 years—on the residents of Australia. Many of the details have already disappeared from my memory, but I do recall an Australian woman talking about the drastic changes in her family's day-to-day life that have resulted from water rationing. Her stories about the realities of a household limited to a relatively small amount of daily water made me wonder how I would cope with the same situation.

Meanwhile, the southeastern U.S. is still in the grips of a 100-year drought, though residents of the region probably haven't experienced many personal hardships from the lack of rain yet. Of course, as paddlers, we tend to become aware of and pay attention to major weather events like floods, snows storms, and most especially droughts sooner and more intently than the average citizen. We notice emptier-than-normal reservoirs and bone-dry rivers. We suffer from short runoff seasons, sporadic rainfall, canceled releases and reduced flow regimens. In our recreational lives, we are on the front lines of global climate change.

That's right, I said climate change. While it may be scientifically irresponsible to chalk up the chronically dry conditions in the southeastern U.S. to human-induced climate change, there are few scientists in the field who feel that climate change isn't playing a role in the current predicament down under. So whether critically dry conditions in the Southeast are or aren't affected by global climate change, we can

at least consider that high-profile drought so close to home (*at home* for some readers) a peek at what's likely in store for us and for future generations.

I'm pretty sure most American children are taught to form habits of water conservation in grade school. "Turn off the tap water while you brush your teeth," we're told. "Don't waste water in the shower," we hear. But somehow by adulthood, most people either can't remember these sensible admonitions from childhood, or they don't believe there's any reason to heed them.

You might wonder why it really matters if people conserve water when reservoirs are full and rains are dependable. As we may learn to our dismay, old habits die hard. When we become too used to viewing water as a limitless resource, we fail to see all the ways that we're squandering arguably the most critical ingredient for human existence. While water conservation may cramp our lifestyles, water shortages—brought on by human-induced climate change, unsustainable water use, and rapidly expanding populations—is sure to be more than inconvenient.

If, as paddlers, it's our recreational lives that first feel the effects of climate change, what might life be like when it's our daily reality that's threatened? How do we cope with water shortages that restrict more than the number of days we spent paddling? If it comes to that, it's going to take more than just water-wise personal hygiene to solve the problem. If we suspect, as many experts do, that climate change is helping to spur the increase in worldwide droughts, paddlers should also have pressing incentives to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. The American Whitewater stewardship team named "Reducing Energy Footprints" one of the Top 10 River Issues for 2008 (see page 34 of this issue), which hopefully helps paddlers look at climate change as an important factor in their recreational lives. As folks who stand to lose much of what they value in river recreation to the vagaries of a changing climate, paddlers need to recognize that this threat will

come to affect almost every facet of our lives if it continues unchecked.

For paddlers, human-induced climate change is an issue that raises some thorny questions. For me, paddling is the cause for which I drive the most non-essential miles each year. While the same may not be exactly true for all paddlers, anyone who regularly participates in whitewater paddlesports is likely to put some serious miles on their internal combustion-powered vehicles, which in turn releases copious amounts of the greenhouse gas CO₂ into the atmosphere. If we're not willing to give up weekly trips to our favorite dam-release section of river, or our spring road trip, are there some other ways to compensate? Of course there are. But unlike the water saving tips we all got in elementary school, these energy saving strategies can't be forgotten or ignored.

Most of the relatively simple steps you can take as a paddler and citizen fall into the categories of Home, Travel, and Consumption. There are so many good online sites with tips and advice for reducing your home's energy use (e.g. the U.S. Department of Energy, www.eere.energy.gov/consumer/; the National Resources Defense Council, www.nrdc.org/air/energy/genergy.asp; Popular Mechanics, www.popularmechanics.com/footprint) that it's not worth attempting to offer my own suggestions here. The guidelines for conserving energy associated with transportation are pretty simple: eliminate any travel you can—especially by plane—drive as little as possible, and buy the most efficient car you can live with. Consumption is perhaps the easiest category to address in practical terms, but psychologically, we have come to believe (or been told to believe) that we can't live without all of the stuff we desire. Buying fewer high quality items that require less energy and resources to produce and fill less landfill space at the end of their long life is better than purchasing many, cheap, potentially toxic items that are designed to have a short useful life to promote more consumption. The recent spate of toy recalls comes to mind as a good example

European glaciers, like these in the Italian Alps, will be a thing of the past if global warming is not halted and eventually reversed

The Last Word

of products that we can find superior alternatives to. A lesser-known source of fossil fuel emissions is the food we eat. Commercial farming practices consume tremendous amounts of petroleum-based products, and transportation of agricultural products from around the world obviously adds to our food's energy footprint. The easiest way you can reduce that footprint is by preferentially selecting foods that are grown the closest to home. For more in-depth attention to your food's energy footprint check out websites like www.localharvest.org, www.foodsecurity.org, www.sustainabletable.org. Individually, none of these measures call for climate-concerned citizens to make huge sacrifices in their personal lives, but to simply make energy consumption a factor in everyday decisions.

If paddlers are among the first to experience the brunt of climate change, we ought also to be leaders in fighting its causes. However, if we want to make a bigger difference, we also need to be more involved in the large-scale decisions that affect our country and our climate. Local, state, and national governments are making decisions on a daily basis that have sweeping impacts on the causes of climate change. Keeping those important decisions in our sights is one of the most important things we can do to help affect government policy—you can't possibly hope to change what you don't know is happening. Talking to other people—paddlers and non-paddlers alike—about government policy affecting climate change is another great way to make sure important issues receive the public scrutiny they deserve. As American Whitewater's stewardship team has proved many times over with their work on dam relicensing, even just a few loud voices at the table can alter important high-level decisions for the better.

By the time you read this, our country will be just beginning the preliminary stages of electing our next president. Obviously this high profile stage of American politics will play an important role in how our nation addresses (or fails to address) the causes and effects of climate change. But what

about the other races in this election cycle. Are we aware of the climatological stance of our senators? Do we know about the conservation records of our congressmen? How about the environmental credentials of our governors? The names of our county commissioners? If we want to be serious about mitigating our impacts on our world and our climate, we have to at least put the political actions of our elected officials on our radars. We can't afford to assume that our vote doesn't matter or that our voice won't be heard. Anyone who wants their grandchildren to grow up in a world whose climate closely resembles the one we're currently experiencing (let alone that of a pre-industrial earth) has to acknowledge that if we don't start taking responsibility for our own actions and for those of our government, nothing will ever improve.

Back in Australia, much of the worldwide attention on the 1,000-year drought has died down since extreme flooding—another type of calamity predicted to become more common in a world experiencing global warming—has doused much of the drought-stricken area. But for Australians faced with water rationing, little has changed. The situation illustrates an unfortunate trait of our society: we often only focus on an issue when it's at the level of immediate crisis. Thinking of climate change as an issue that only exists when extreme weather affects our lives or makes the nightly news is unreasonably short sighted. By all credible accounts it will continue to accelerate like a runaway freight train until we implement some solutions to the unsustainable habits our society has acquired, or until our society ceases to exist in any recognizable form.

Change is tough. We all know it, and in large part the fear of a change in lifestyle is what prevents a lot of otherwise rational people from living in ways that minimize their impact on the land, air, and water that sustain them and all life. Those fears, in part inherent in human nature, and in part broadcast to us by those who profit most by avoiding change, take the form of insidious questions: Will we still be able to enjoy life driving fewer

miles in smaller vehicles? Can we learn to find comfort living in homes that are focused on efficiency rather than social expectations? Is it possible to elect people to positions of political power who are aware of the threats our planet and our species face, and who have the vision lead us to a sustainable future? Can human ingenuity devise the means to save us from ourselves? It seems that all of these things are not only possible, but in fact, necessary if our species—and many, many others—stand a chance of long-term survival. Without acknowledging both our role in this problem and the degree of change we'll all need to make to address it, we will continue make the job of whoever does eventually tackle climate change that much harder.


I sometimes think of the challenges of sustainability as something like an unprepared group of paddlers tackling an unknown wilderness river. The further downstream they travel, the harder the rapids become. To make matters worse, the "easy" option (for the purposes of this analogy, let's call that "portaging") is becoming increasingly hazardous as they enter a sheer-walled canyon. What lies downstream of our intrepid adventurers is impossible to know; now inside the canyon walls, there is no hope of scouting ahead on foot and, sadly, no hope of escaping back the way they've come. Realizing their situation later than would be ideal, they stop and exit their boats on a narrow ledge just above the water line. The more they consider their predicament, the more appealing camping here for the indefinite future seems. Of course, they all know in the back of their minds that eventually their food will run out. And, as if the pressure weren't great enough, it's started to rain. Muddy rivulets streaming off the canyon walls have them questioning the long-term safety of their low-lying ledge. So what are they to do—and what kind of analogy is this, anyway?

Like our hypothetical river explorers, our society is currently enjoying the false and temporary reprieve from climate change, exacerbating its effects with wasteful practices evident at the

individual, regional, national, and global levels. Sooner or later, the floodwaters—at least partly of our own making—will rise to sweep us off our metaphorical perch. I think back to the interview I heard with the Australian woman about how persuasive a true shortage can be in arguing for conservation. But if we wait until our water, and the non-renewable energy that we rely on dries up or makes our world un-livable, will we have enough time to adjust? The sooner we begin preparing for this eventuality, the better we'll be able to cope with it. The more we prevaricate, the greater the risk that the floodwaters sweep us away unprepared. Even if some of our group manages to hastily prepare boats and gear to challenge

the canyon, wouldn't it have been wiser to tackle the unknown rapids before the river reached flood-stage?

All analogy and abstraction aside, this is an important issue that's not going away. Whether or not the news media and Hollywood maintain focus on this topic, our climate will continue to change in a way that experts agree heralds bad news for humanity. So in this New Year, I'll be trying to make the substantive changes I've always shied away from in the past to minimize my impact on the earth's resources and natural systems. It's time to question every mile I drive, phase out incandescent bulbs at home, and check the label of everything I buy at the grocery

to see how many miles it's traveled. I've seen enough evidence and consequence, and I'm ready to do something about it in a way that I haven't been before. So while I don't expect my energy footprint to disappear in 2008, with any luck, many years from now, I'll be able to look back and say, "That was the year things started to change for the better, the year the tide turned, the year I got the courage to do something about the problem." And with a lot more luck, hopefully it'll mark the year that our society starts to collectively move off that low-lying, narrow, tenuous ledge, and heads bravely into whatever lies downstream. 

Reservoirs like Lake Spaulding in California will likely show the effects of climate change



AW Corporate Partners

Class V Sponsor



In 2006, Keen's contributions will aid American Whitewater's projects in the Southeast, and the Pacific Northwest. In the Southeast Keen's support will help American Whitewater's work restoring the Catawba watershed. Additional funding from Keen will support AW's projects on the Columbia River Basin and the Cascade range in the Pacific Northwest.

Class IV Sponsors



At Dagger we love what we do because it's all about the water, and American Whitewater is the organization that helps put water in our rivers. That is why Dagger has long supported American Whitewater and is proud to continue our support of their river stewardship program today.



Wave Sport is American Whitewater's longest standing and largest philanthropic supporter. Both Wave Sport and AW are committed to one thing, whitewater.



As part of Jackson Kayak's focus on environmental responsibility, the Jackson's have long supported AW through promotional efforts. In 2006, as part of their commitment to 1% For the Planet, Jackson Kayaks will be supporting AW's river stewardship work.

Class III Sponsor



Kokatat remains one of AW's strongest allies by continuing support of AW's membership and river stewardship programs. By providing American Whitewater with valuable membership and donation incentives, Kokatat will create the support we need to continue our stewardship of North American rivers.



Teva and American Whitewater have worked together for nearly a decade to protect access and conserve whitewater resources for paddlers and rafters nationwide. Teva and AW have partnered on numerous tours and events over the years, including AW's 50th Anniversary Gala in 2004.

Class II Sponsor

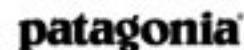
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Boof Sponsors



Wave Sponsors



Throughout the history of the natural world, water sources have been the centers of life, providing habitat and sustenance for animals and plants alike. Patagonia is proud to support groups like American Whitewater that work to reverse the destructive effects of damming, development and pollution.



Subaru always has been, and will continue to be, committed to safeguarding the natural environment that so many of its customers avidly enjoy. Subaru is proud to continue this tradition by supporting American Whitewater's largest event of the year the 2007 Gauley River Festival now presented by Subaru.

What is Immersion Research?

We are a kayaking gear company based in Confluence, PA. Our business was founded in 1997 by two career kayakers, and since that day we have had one focus: to make the best, most innovative kayaking gear on the planet. Our company is also staffed by kayakers who love the sport as much as you do, and every day we work to make sure that you get the best gear and customer service possible.

Immersion Research is proud to be an AW Corporate Partner. As the first such partner in the industry, we realized the value that AW has in all of our lives. If not for the tireless work and contributions of the fine AW employees, members and stewards, we may not even be in business. If we don't have access to the places we love to paddle, then there wouldn't be a necessity for great, innovative gear.

We, as a company, have worked closely with AW to promote the value in membership and active participation in its causes, which are ultimately our common cause. We also work with AW as individuals to promote and ensure proper access and egress to and from our favorite places. Currently, co-owner and co-founder of Immersion Research, John Weld, is volunteering a significant amount of time and effort to reach an agreement concerning the rights of paddlers in the Blackwater Canyon, a world class steep creeking destination in the Canaan Valley of West Virginia.

I have been working locally on increasing boater access to the Ohiopyle Falls, a clean and mostly friendly 18-20 footer at the put in for the Lower Youghiogheny, 10 miles downstream from IR. Currently, access is limited to three weekends per year.

Our corporate and personal contributions are a small part of a much larger whole that we are proud to be a part of. We thank you, the members of the boating community and American Whitewater, for your support of AW and IR.

Roger Loughney
Sales/Service Guru
Immersion Research



IR's line of cobranded American Whitewater products raise money to support the river stewardship efforts of American Whitewater throughout the country.



IR further supports American Whitewater by providing the Basic T to every AW member who donates over \$250 in 2008

Join



AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

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



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

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

be sure that everyone you paddle with understands the work AW does, and how you, as an AW member, value that work.

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

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

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723



PO Box 1540, Cullowhee, NC 28723
(866) BOAT-4-AW

Membership Application

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

Name _____
Address _____
City, St, Zip _____
Telephone () _____, AND e-mail _____
Club Affiliation _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- ☐ \$25.00 Junior (Under the age of 18)
☐ \$25.00 Individual for Affiliate Club Members (**SAVE \$10** if you are also a member of an AW Affiliate Club)
☐ \$35.00 Individual One Year
☐ \$50.00 Family (Immediate family members excluding children over the age of 18)
☐ \$65.00 (2) Year Membership
☐ \$75.00 Affiliate Club Membership
☐ \$100.00 Ender Club* (Receive AW's annual **Ender Club T-Shirt FREE**)
☐ \$250.00 Platinum Paddler* (Receive AW's **IR Platinum Paddler Polartec Basec T FREE**)
☐ \$500.00 Explorer Membership (Receive a Dry Bag from Watershed **FREE**)
☐ \$750.00 Lifetime Membership (Receive AW's Lifetime Membership NRS Paddlers Duffle **FREE**)
☐ \$1000.00 Legacy Membership* (Receive AW's exclusive **Kokatat Knappster Shorty Top FREE**)
☐ \$2500.00 Steward Membership (Thank you items will be arranged on an individual basis)

*Indicate Ender Club, Platinum Paddler or Legacy shirt size (S M L XL XXL). A portion of your contribution is tax deductible. If you would like information about the tax deductibility of your contribution, please speak with an AW Staff member.

ADDITIONAL DONATION and/or KAYAK SESSION SUBSCRIPTION

- ☐ \$5.00 ☐ \$10.00 ☐ \$25.00 ☐ Other \$ _____ ☐ \$ _____ monthly (via monthly c.c. or checking acct. withdrawal. Send voided check w/check option.)
☐ \$30.00 Kayak Session Subscription

AMOUNT

Membership subtotal \$ _____ ☐ I am interested in volunteering
Donation subtotal \$ _____ ☐ Do NOT share my name with like-minded groups
Kayak Session \$ _____ ☐ Do NOT mail me the AW journal, I will read it online.
TOTAL \$ _____ *Helps us conserve and, saves AW money too!*

TRANSACTION Type:

☐ Cash ☐ Charge ☐ Check # _____ payable to American Whitewater
Card type: ☐ MC ☐ Visa ☐ Discover ☐ AMEX
Card Number: _____ Exp. date _____ / _____ / _____
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Signature _____ Date _____ / _____ / _____

Affiliate Clubs

AW's Original Purpose

by Carla Miner

The Affiliate Club Program lies at the very heart of AW's existence. AW's original purpose since 1957 has been to distribute information among its Affiliate Clubs. AW's relationships with local clubs have provided the backbone for the river conservation and access work it accomplishes. Over 100 clubs are now AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf. If you don't belong to a club consider joining one.

For the past five years Clif Bar has sponsored the Flowing Rivers grant, a joint initiative between Clif Bar and American Whitewater that puts money in the hands of people who are protecting the rivers that are running through their backyards. The 2007 funding supported initiatives from the Foothills Paddling Club (SC) and the Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club (OR). The Foothills Paddling Club is using their funding to enhance an access area and purchasing water quality equipment. The Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club is using their funding to organize a safety education weekend. To read more about the two projects see <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Article/view/articleid/29549/display/full/>.

AFFILIATE CLUBS, we want to know what you are doing. Send your events to us a ben@americanwhitewater.org and we will include them in the Journal.

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks

Alabama

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

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
River Touring Section, Angeles Chapter
Sequoia Paddling Club, WindsorGold
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Ch., San Jose
Sierra Club SF Chapter, Livermore

Colorado

Avid4Adventure Inc., Boulder
Big Thompson Watershed Forum, Loveland
Colorado Whitewater Asso, Englewood
Front Range Paddle Asso, Lafayette
Grand Canyon Priv. Boat. Assn., Colorado Springs
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs
Pueblo Paddlers, Pueblo West
San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride
University of Colorado Kayak Club, Boulder

Georgia

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

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Assoc., Boise

Illinois

Chicago Whitewater Assoc., Chicago

Indiana

Ohio Valley Whitewater Club, Evansville
Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, Des Moines

Kansas

Kansas Whitewater Association, Mission

Kentucky

Bardstown Boaters, Frankfort
Bluegrass Wildwater Association, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Outward Bound, Newry

Maryland

Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Silver Spring
Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Kingsville
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Smithsburg

Massachusetts

Brian White, Boston
AMC - New Hampshire Paddlers, Honover

Minnesota

Boat Busters Anonymous, Stillwater
SCSU Outdoor Endeavors, Saint Cloud

Missouri

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

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers, Franconia
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Merrimack

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club, Albuquerque

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady
Colgate University, Hamilton
FLOW Paddlers Club, Rochester
Housatonic Canoe & Kayak Squad, Ossining
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Dunkirk
KCCNY, New York
St Lawrence University, Canton

N. Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Davidson Outdoors, Davidson
Mecklenburg Regional Paddlers, Indian Trail
Triad River Runners, Winston, Salem
Watauga Paddlers, Boone
Dixie Division ACA, Tuxedo
UNCG Outdoor Adventures, Greensboro
Western Carolina Paddlers

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus
Keel Haulers Canoe Club, Westlake
Outdoor Adventure Club, Dayton
Toledo River Gang, Waterville

Oregon

Face Level Industries LLC, Portland
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Beaverton
Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club, Corvallis
Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
North West Rafters Asso, Portland

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Mechanicsburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Easton Whitewater Parks Commission, Bethlehem
Holtwood Hooligans, Lititz
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
PA Organization for Watersheds & Rivers, Harrisburg
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh
Lehigh Valley White water Club, Lehigh Valley

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Gray
Eastman Hiking and Canoeing, Kingsport
E. Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Memphis Whitewater, Memphis
Tennessee Scenic River Assoc., Nashville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga
University of Tennessee Knoxville, Knoxville

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston

Utah

University of Utah, Salt Lake City
USU Kayak Club, Logan
Utah Whitewater Club, Salt Lake City

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Essex Junction

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynch Station
Canoe Cruisers Association, Arlington
Coastal Canoeists, Richmond
FORVA, Roanoke
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Richmond

Washington

Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
University Kayak Club, Seattle
Venturing Crew 360, Snohomish
EPIC Outdoor Adventures, Cheney
The Mountaineers, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton
Whitman College Whiteater Club, Walla Walla

West Virginia

West VA Wildwater Association, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

Hoofers Outing Club, Madison
NE Wisconsin Paddlers Inc. Appleton

Wyoming

Jackson Hole Kayak Club, Jackson

Canada, British Columbia

Vancouver Kayak Club, Vancouver

Discounted AW Membership for Affiliate Club Members

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

AW offers a discounted Affiliate Club membership of \$25, a \$10 savings. If you are renewing your AW membership or joining as a new member, select the Affiliate Club Discounted Personal Membership online at <https://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/Store/?crn=199>. Or, if you are renewing or joining by mail or telephone just mention the name of the Affiliate Club you belong to and you can take advantage of the \$25 membership.

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

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

Join American Whitewater as a Club Affiliate!

10 Reasons to Join AW as an Affiliate Club

1. Receive the *American Whitewater Journal*, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
2. Join the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly *AW Journal*.
3. List club events in the *AW Journal*.
4. Your Club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Have technical expertise for your Club conservation and access committees 'on tap.'
6. Have access to technical and onsite assistance for your Club's event planning.
7. Enjoy VIP benefits for "Joint Members" at AW events.
8. Participate in exclusive AW Affiliate Club promotions.
9. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
10. Eligible to apply for the 2008 Clif Bar Flowing Rivers grant

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

Guidelines for Contributors



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).

If possible, articles should be submitted on a 3-1/2-inch computer disk. (Microsoft Word if possible – 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 or electronic, digital photos, 300 dpi tiffs, Photoshop or high res jpegs minimum 3"x5." 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 a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. The better the photos the better the reproduction.

American Whitewater feature articles should relate to some aspect of whitewater boating. Please do not submit articles pertaining to sea kayaking or flat water.

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 II, III & IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

Profanity should be used only when it is absolutely necessary to effectively tell a story; it is not our intent to 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, please don't send it in! Because of our deadlines you will not be able to review the editorial changes made prior to publication.

American Whitewater is a 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.



PO Box 1540 Cullowhee, NC 28723

www.americanwhitewater.org

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.
- I understand that I will not be paid for my work.
- I accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information included in my submission. I have not libeled or slandered any individual, corporation, or agency in this work.
- I understand that all or some of my work may be reprinted at some future date in an American Whitewater publication
- I promise that this material has not been and will not soon be published by another magazine or publication and the rights to this material are clear and unrestricted.
- I understand that once this material is printed in American Whitewater it may be reprinted or reproduced in other publications if I wish, providing I notify them that it has already appeared in American Whitewater.
- I understand that the contents of American Whitewater Magazine, including my contribution will be archived on the American Whitewater website.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

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

Send your material to:

American Whitewater Journal PO Box 1540 Cullowhee, NC 28723 or via email to editor@amwhitewater.org

Send your material to:

Journal Editor

P.O. Box 1540

Cullowhee, NC 28723

E-mail: editor@amwhitewater.org

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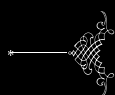


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WIDTH	2' 1/2"	2' 1 3/4"	2' 3"
HEIGHT	1' 2 1/4"	1' 3"	1' 3 3/4"
WEIGHT (LBS)	38 LBS	43 LBS	49 LBS
TOTAL RANGE (LBS)	80-165	125-200	160-300
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