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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
January/February 2010

TOP 10 STEWARDSHIP ISSUES OF 2010

CREEKING

Riverboarding Thunder Creek (WA)

Hucking off the Edge of the World

**Where the Snow and Rivers Meet:
A Mt. Washington Adventure**

Racing Daylight

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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal

January/February 2010 - Volume #50 - Issue #1

Columns

- 3 The Journey Ahead by Mark Singleton
- 4 President's Message by Don Kinser
- 5 News & Notes

Stewardship Updates

- 6 California Renewable Energy Plan: Is New BC Hydro the Answer by Mick Grochol

Top Stewardship Issues 2010

- 8 Protecting National River Management Policies on the Chattanooga (NC/SC/GA) by Kevin Colburn
- 8 Guiding Hydropower Development and Management of Government Dams on the West River (VT) by Kevin Colburn
- 9 Providing a Voice for Paddlers in National Policy by Kevin Colburn
- 10 Pushing for Wild and Scenic Designation on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie (WA) by Thomas O'Keefe
- 10 Dam Removal on the White Salmon River (WA) by Thomas O'Keefe
- 11 Bringing Natural Flows Back to the McCloud River (CA) by Dave Steindorf
- 13 Protecting the Free-Flowing Yampa River from Powerful Industries (CO) by Nathan Fey
- 14 Protecting Recreational Flows on the Upper Colorado River (CO) by Nathan Fey
- 15 Restoring Dynamic Flows to the Dolores River by Nathan Fey
- 16 River Time: Saving the Mokelumne River (CA) by Theresa L. Simsman

Creeking

- 18 Losloera by Tom Meinholz
- 24 Gangs of Nor-Cal: Showdown on a 35-footer by Raul Adamchak
- 28 Boards and Boats: A Classic New England Adventure by Darron Laughland
- 32 Searching for the Edge of the World by Jeff West
- 35 Little Paddler, Big Creek by Lauren Burress
- 36 Riverboard on Thunder Creek by Rochelle Parry
- 38 Racing Daylight by Eric Adst
- 40 First Descent of Rio Chinipas - A To Be Class IV Mexican Classic by Rocky Contos
- 49 A Southern Creekin' Road Trip by Mikel Carr



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Paddlers enjoying the Upper Colorado River, whose recreational flows are threatened by the demands of Front Range cities and farms

photo by Marin Fey



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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

Pinch me, is it really 2010?

As I write this, I'm just back from a late-fall paddle in western North Carolina where I live. The last of the leaves are coming down and it's hard to think of winter. By the time you read this, the calendar will have changed and the snow here will be on the ground knee deep. I'm not ready to pull out the skis yet; there is still more paddling to be done before the snow flies.

Last year, 2009, was a whirlwind! More new Wild and Scenic River miles than you could shake a stick at were added to the federal system for permanent protection (most of us will be very lucky if we paddle all those new miles in a life-time). Critical dam removals across the country and new settlements signed for improved flows on some outstanding whitewater rivers also took place. For the coming year, the American Whitewater stewardship team is looking deep into their crystal balls and, in this issue of the American Whitewater Journal, the outcome of that reflection is the Top Ten River Issues list on page 8. Our Top Ten River Issues of 2010 takes into consideration a broad geographic cross section of the country and identifies some of the pressures that face our nation's rivers.

Beyond the Top Ten list, it's also important to acknowledge two highly effective coalitions American Whitewater is actively engaged with for national policy work. These coalitions provide an opportunity to work smarter with other like-minded partners at addressing nagging national public policy issues.

Outdoor Alliance

The Outdoor Alliance is a coalition of conservation oriented human-powered outdoor recreation groups. The Outdoor Alliance works to balance stewardship and recreation in national policy decisions. Through this partnership our voice in DC is vastly more powerful.

Hydropower Reform Coalition

American Whitewater has been a steering committee member of the Hydropower Reform Coalition for many years. Through Hydropower Reform Coalition efforts we are able to shape the procedural and political arena where dam relicensing and management occurs.

As good as last year was and as much momentum as we are carrying into the New Year, we still face some stiff challenges. For instance, you would think that once a river is designated Wild and Scenic that paddling on it would be a given, especially if Congress specifically designated paddling recreation as a cause for the river to be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System—BUT NO, not on the Chattooga! That's not how they do things in South Carolina ("you boys aren't from 'round here, are you?"). For 30 years, paddling has been banned by the US Forest Service on the Chattooga Headwaters.

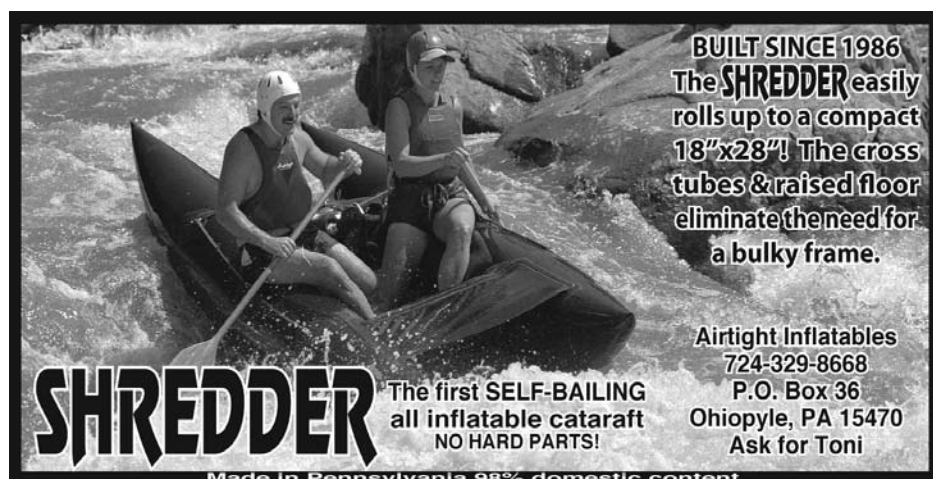
The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act requires that administering agencies "protect and enhance" the "values" unique to that river. In a classic bait and switch, the Forest Service and other agencies focus on stocking the Chattooga Headwaters with catchable-size non-native trout in direct contrast to their Chattooga Wild and Scenic River proposal.

Ultimately, the entire Chattooga Wild and Scenic River should protect and enhance the values, including paddling, that caused it to be included in the National Wild and Scenic River System. This is one of the stones we continue roll uphill as we enter the New Year, and the staff and committed volunteers of American Whitewater will work with renewed vigor to make sure that what happened under Forest Service management in South Carolina does not become a national standard.

Happy New Year,



Executive Director, American Whitewater



President's Message

Snow is flying in much of the country and thoughts of warm water and sunny weather seem distant for many of you. This is always a good time to reflect back on the year just passed.

AW enjoyed a great deal of stewardship success in 2009 and we have fared much better financially than many of our nonprofit advocacy organization peers. AW's successes result primarily from two things: passionately committed volunteers like you, who take ownership of local river issues, and an awesome, talented staff.

You are the reason AW succeeds. Your time, sweat and treasure are why AW achieves great things as we pursue our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and enhance your opportunities to enjoy them safely. Thanks

to all of you who belong to and support our organization.

Your efforts as local river stewards and advocates are greatly enhanced by AW's outstanding paid staff, led by Mark Singleton, AW's Executive Director. Mark's leadership has been a great blessing to our organization and he is joined by a talented group of hard working river advocates that includes Laura Blalock, Kevin Colburn, Nathan Fey, Carla Miner, Tom O'Keefe, Jeff Paine, and Dave Steindorf. These folks are all working hard on your behalf and I want to thank each of them personally for a job well done.

With your continued support and passion for rivers we all love, you can expect more great things from AW this year and into the future.

I hope you all had a great holiday season and that Santa brought you some great whitewater toys for Christmas. Best wishes for 2010!



See You on the River,



The Bluegrass Wildwater Association presents
National Paddling Film Festival 2010

February 26th & 27th at the Buffalo Trace Distillery, Frankfort, KY
Visit www.npff.org for details

Photo: NPFF 2009 Still Image Competition Winner, 'Diver' by Beth Koier

News & Notes

27th Annual National Paddling Film Festival

Slated for February, 26-27th, 2010, with Guest Host Tyler Bradt!

The National Paddling Film Festival was born in a barn in October, 1982 at the Kentucky Horse Park in central Kentucky. That first festival was a rowdy party with over 150 people in attendance and 23 film, slide, and video presentations. The 8 and 16 mm films were shown on two homemade screens and mattresses were used as sound barriers for the theaters. Much has changed since the inception of that Festival; however, the camaraderie remains the same, as does the excitement of viewing new films for the first time.

The 2010 festival will remain at the Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort, KY. With over 5,000 square feet available to us inside, and a full wraparound covered porch, there's more than ample room. There is also sufficient parking for Festival attendees. In addition, tours of the distillery grounds are available as well as bourbon tastings. Festivities include, but are not limited to, films, a silent auction, a chili cook-off, a still image contest, and paddling opportunities.

Last year's festival was a huge success! We had over eight hours of the latest in whitewater films and well over 300 folks in attendance both nights. Film and image entries for the 2009 NPFF were some of the best we've seen to date. Every year the competition goes up a notch! Generous sponsors donated lots of great gear for our silent auction, including a boat from Wakawai. We also gave away a Wavesport boat as part of an AW membership drive. The most important success, however, was the contribution to river conservation. We were able to donate money to AW, Friends of the Cheat, WV Rivers Coalitions, and Friends of Elkhorn Acres. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the entrants, the sponsors, and those who attended and supported the 2009 NPFF. We look forward

to your support for the 2010 NPFF.

The 2009 NPFF winners are as follows:
Amateur General - MUWC3: *Team Go Medium*, Heath Damron

Amateur Documentary - *Exploring the Boat Midget Phenomenon*, Thomas Gerencer

Accomplished General - *The Endangered Creeks Expedition*, Mikkel St. Jean-Duncan
Accomplished Documentary - *Symbiosis*, Carl Jacks

Professional General - *Eastern Horizons*, Bryan Smith

Professional Documentary - *A River's Last Breath*, Trip Jennings

Professional Instructional - *Steep Creek Skills*, Whitewater Instruction

Paddlers' Choice - MUWC3: *Team Go Medium*, Heath Damron

We are excited to announce that the winner for 2009 Best of Show is *Eastern Horizons* by Bryan Smith and the Still Image winner is Beth Koller with her image "Koller-Diver."

The National Paddling Film Festival (NPFF), along with American Whitewater, has raised thousands of dollars for river conservation efforts. The NPFF is an all-volunteer organization; all money raised goes to organizations such as AW, the Green River Access Fund, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, and many more.

Now we challenge you to get out there and take pictures and video and then be sure to enter them in the 2010 NPFF and help us raise more funds for river conservation! See you all in February!

Please visit our web-site at: www.npff.org.



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Stewardship

California Renewable Energy Plan: Is New BC Hydro the answer?

By Mick Grochol

On the 15th of September 2009, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed an executive order regarding the acceleration of California's renewable energy goals. While this sounds good, digging a bit deeper into the issue uncovers some concerns, not the least of which is the complete preempting of the legislative process. There is also the concern regarding a possible plan to import hydroelectric power from British Columbia.

The Governor's wish is to have utilities companies expand their Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) to 20% by December 31, 2010, and 33% by 2020. What this means is that a company must be generating 33% of their electricity sales from renewable sources. These sources include Wind, Solar and New Hydropower Sources that wouldn't generate over 30MW. The idea is to push utilities to develop new sources of renewable energy, since they would not be able to count existing Hydropower sources in their portfolio. This all sounds fantastic, but there is troubling language in the Executive order. The 5th part of the order is as follows:

The ARB (Air Resources Board) shall establish the highest priority for those resources that provide the greatest environmental benefits with the least environmental costs and impacts on public health that can be developed most quickly and that support reliable, efficient, cost-effective electricity system operations including resources and facilities located throughout the Western Interconnection.

What this does is effectively open the gate for importing power from BC Hydro sources. If utilities are allowed to develop

BC's rivers into new sources of Hydropower, they can do it under standards that are far lower than those in California. Currently, California's requirements for counting Hydropower as "renewable" require that there is no "net diversion" of water from the river, that there is no change in the volume or timing of stream flow, and that there would be no impact on instream beneficial uses (the water must not be changed chemically or physically). What all of this means is that it would be far easier to install new Hydropower projects in Canada, because the restrictions would not be the same. There are also size criteria, but as many paddlers know, even the smallest projects can have huge impacts on the rivers and creeks they draw from. British Columbia has some breathtaking stretches of river, and to dam them up to produce a small amount of "run-of-the-river" hydropower would be a shame. What is worse is that there is no guarantee that these small hydropower projects would provide the kind of energy that California requires during peak hours that is needed to replace carbon based sources of energy. Since these would be "run-of-the-river," the power is generated mostly by snowmelt, with no way to firm up energy and transmit it during peak hours. Power firming is the practice of taking sources of energy that are intermittent, mainly wind and solar, making sure there is stored energy available during peak demand. For example, think of a cloudy day with no wind, power would have to come from another source, or storage.

This flies in the face of some utilities' claim that BC Hydropower could be used to "firm up" Solar and Wind generated sources, and also doesn't address the problem that the ARB is commissioned to solve: finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in California.

American Whitewater supports the overall goal of replacing our current energy sources with renewable and

environmentally friendly ones. We take issue with the apparent sidestepping of current California regulations put in place to prevent further environmental impact by hydropower installations. Also, it seems that looking to BC to supply California's power needs with new Hydro plants isn't going to get us any closer to the stated goals, and doing so would have a major impact on BC's beautiful creeks and rivers.

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Stewardship Issues 2010

It is always a good idea to keep a keen eye on what awaits you downstream. When better than the New Year to look ahead and think big? Make a list of rivers you want to paddle, tricks you want to learn, or old paddling friends you want to cross paths with. Here at AW we took a look at some of the biggest and best projects headed our way in 2010. These Top 10 Stewardship Issues are projects that we expect to be an important part of our work plans in 2010 and were selected to highlight both the wide range of projects we are working on and the high stakes and potential rewards of our Stewardship work for all of us. These are only 10 out of at least 50 large-scale active projects, and many smaller ones, that we are working on. None of this work would be possible without the support of our amazing volunteers, members, and other donors. What makes AW a unique and effective organization is the enthusiasm and support of the paddling community. Thanks for your help. The AW staff looks forward to accomplishing great things with you in 2010!

Protecting National River Management Policies on the Chattooga (NC/SC/GA)

By Kevin Colburn

We all love the US Forest Service. Chances are, many of your most memorable experiences in your boat, camping out, climbing, hiking, and even running a dusty shuttle were on Forest Service land. The agency manages most of the whitewater gems in the US and generally does a fine job of it. They protect some of the best rivers with Wilderness or Wild and Scenic status, and strive to support and promote responsible recreational enjoyment of the rivers they manage. However, one small branch of this huge agency might just change all that.

Thirty-three years ago the Sumter National Forest banned boating on a 21-mile section of the Wild and Scenic Chattooga River. AW successfully challenged this decision in 2004, and in 2005 the Chief of the agency told Sumter to reconsider their illegal boating ban. In the fall of 2009 they did just that, and reached essentially the same conclusion. Specifically they decided to ban paddling again with the exception of allowing a token 6 high-water winter days of paddling to occur on one small section of the river. Counter to many laws and their own policies, they claim that allowing paddling – even when flows are too high for fishing – will impact anglers so badly that paddling must be totally eliminated. They simply value fishing for stocked trout higher than paddling, and have failed to make a rational, fair, or protective decision.

In October of 2009 we worked with the American Canoe Association and a number of our affiliate clubs to challenge the Sumter National Forest. We filed comprehensive charges against the Forest Service in federal court, and in a parallel process, appealed the decision within the agency. Our first court hearing went really well, and our next hearing is scheduled for early in 2010. Throughout 2010 we will likely have many major milestones

and plenty of work ahead. Thankfully we have an amazing team of volunteer attorneys, expert witnesses, and regional coordinators. With this crew we are optimistic that we will be able to prevent the Forest Service from setting a terrible precedent that could impact recreation and rivers across the country.

Guiding Hydropower Development and Management of Government Dams on the West River (VT)

By Kevin Colburn

The West River is currently at the intersection of two important debates in river management.

Flows on the West River are controlled by Ball Mountain Dam which is operated by the Army Corps of Engineers. In recent years the agency has cut back on the number of recreational releases in an attempt to reduce impacts that their dam may have on Atlantic Salmon. Paddlers are concerned that releases are being needlessly reduced since there is no fish passage at the dam and no evidence that the salmon smolt stocked upstream of the dam each year survive or migrate. Paddlers are seeking rational river management that is consistent with salmon recovery efforts. As if on cue, the Nature Conservancy is stepping up to provide advice to the Army Corps on the management of rivers throughout the Connecticut River basin. AW staff and partners will be working closely with the Nature Conservancy and the Army Corps in 2010 to develop flows that work for fish and paddlers. We hope that this work will serve as a model for how to manage government dams throughout New England.

At the same time a private company is pursuing the rights to install a hydropower generation facility at Ball Mountain Dam. This is just one of several recent similar attempts, including applications



on the Russell Fork and Tygart. Adding hydropower generation to existing dams that are not candidates for removal can offer relatively low impact hydropower, and AW will be participating in these licensing efforts to assure that river flows and access are protected and enhanced. The Gauley is a good example of how this kind of combination can work. There, private hydropower generation was recently installed in a government dam, with a relatively minor environmental and recreational impact. On the West River, where the current release gates do a poor job of mimicking natural flows and passing fish, some new technology could be good for the river and its enthusiasts.

Providing a Voice for Paddlers in National Policy

By Kevin Colburn

To win protections for rivers we both play the game and change the rules towards fairness. The latter half of this strategy demands that we work on national

policy issues, something the paddling community has a long history of doing. We play an invaluable and powerful role in setting national policy because as a community we know virtually every river in the nation first-hand. Our stories are first-hand and honest, revealing the real value or protecting wild rivers. In 2010 our national efforts will continue through three groups: the River Management Society, the Hydropower Reform Coalition, and Outdoor Alliance.

The River Management Society is the professional society for everyone involved in river management, which are by and large federal agency personnel. American Whitewater staff regularly attend RMS meetings, give presentations, participate in debates, and write for the RMS newsletter. In the spring of 2010 our own Thomas O'Keefe will be hosting a dam removal symposium in and around Portland, Oregon as part of the RMS biannual conference. AW Stewardship team members Dave Steindorf and Kevin Colburn plan to present on the ecological and recreational values of restoring

AW's Thomas O'Keefe testifying before Congress on the benefits of conserving the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River and surrounding lands

Photo courtesy Congressman Reichert's office

dynamic flows below dams. Our work with this group ensures that AW staff are kept up to date on river management principles and practices, while also allowing us to get to know the agency staff managing most of the rivers in the country.

AW is a steering committee member of the Hydropower Reform Coalition and our own Dave Steindorf is the Chair of the California Hydropower Reform Coalition. In close partnership with other non-profit organizations working on dammed rivers, including American Rivers and Trout Unlimited, we strive to ensure that fair and environmentally responsible regulations govern hydropower dams. This work dovetails perfectly with our on-the-ground efforts to restore flows and public access to rivers across the country.

Rounding out our national policy work is

Stewardship Issues 2010

the Outdoor Alliance. This upstart coalition of human powered outdoor recreation groups has made a big change in the way Washington DC views conservation work. Together we work to protect the remaining Forest Service roadless areas, ensure the Clean Water Act is fully implemented, stem the effects of climate change, and ensure that federal agencies have the information and resources available to do a good job managing and protecting our nation's rivers. For these reasons and more, the Outdoor Alliance has become a great asset for all paddlers. Through the coalition we create positive changes across many landscapes in the country. We expect that 2010 will hold more opportunities than any year in the history of the coalition to make real advances in environmental legislation that benefits all of us who seek adventures outdoors.

Pushing for Wild and Scenic Designation on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie (WA)

By Thomas O'Keefe

Wild and Scenic river designation is one of the most powerful tools we have to protect rivers and prevent damaging development of new dams or other water project. As we observe increased interest in hydropower development, including the incredible goal voiced by the National Hydropower Association of doubling hydropower capacity in this country, the protection of our best and most outstanding rivers becomes all the more important.

Currently American Whitewater is involved in a number of Wild and Scenic River bills and we are building off the success of 86 new Wild and Scenic Rivers that were included the Omnibus Public lands bill passed in spring 2009. Among the most outstanding of the rivers we are working on is the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River, a treasured resource for the Western Washington's paddling community since the early forays into the watershed by Wolf Bauer and members of the Washington

Kayak Club several decades ago. The river and its tributaries include 40 miles that are suitable for paddlers over a wide range of skill levels including sections appropriate for beginners and other sections that challenge the nation's top expert paddlers. In November 2009, American Whitewater's Pacific Northwest Stewardship Director, Thomas O'Keefe, was invited to testify before Congress on the legislation to protect this river, its major tributary the Pratt, and surrounding low elevation forest along the river. During 2010 we anticipate additional work on this legislation and will continue to pursue opportunities that may come available to extend the protections for this river further downstream in this or future legislation. Congressman Reichert and Senator Murray have demonstrated tremendous leadership and we are excited by the renewed interest in rivers that were originally recommended by the Forest Service to Congress for designation back in 1990.

Our efforts are not limited to the Middle Fork Snoqualmie and we are actively engaged in efforts to protect Illabot Creek, a tributary of the Skagit in Washington, and the Molalla and Rogue Rivers in Oregon. We are also excited to be a part of efforts to explore opportunities in Montana and Washington where there are a number of rivers identified by the Forest Service for Wild and Scenic designation, and in Idaho, where we have long advocated for the completion of the Salmon Wild and Scenic River. We will also continue our work to make sure rivers that are eligible for Wild and Scenic designation are identified and protected during agency planning efforts. The recent proposal to dam and divert the Madison River below Quake Lake drives home the need for advocacy efforts from the whitewater boating community.

With designation also comes responsibilities for management and American Whitewater will continue our leadership role in the River Management Society and our relationships with river managers around the country.

Dam Removal on the White Salmon River (WA)

By Thomas O'Keefe

The White Salmon River has been blocked by Condit Dam for nearly a century. The dam prevents salmon from accessing some of the highest quality habitat along this section of the Columbia River. Condit Dam produces very little power relative to the ongoing environmental impacts and it is also anticipated that a restored river will provide enhanced boating opportunities. In late 2009 we worked on pushing for the final state reviews that are required for dam removal. During 2010 there will be additional review that will take place at the federal level and we are hopeful that this process will proceed smoothly so that we can remove the dam in the fall of 2010.

Dam removals are among some of our most exciting projects, as they offer the potential to bring rivers back to life—sections of whitewater that many of us have never seen. In addition, they restore overall ecosystem health and provide significant benefits for native fish populations. Our efforts have led to the successful removal of a number of dams and we have some more lined up, including outdated dams on the Elwha River in Washington and Rogue River in Oregon. The Elwha River restoration project will include the removal of two large dams on a river that once provided habitat for thriving populations of all five species of Pacific Salmon. This project was identified as a significant opportunity through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and American Whitewater was among the organizations identifying this project as a key opportunity. The Gold Ray Dam on the Rogue River has also been identified as a key project under this legislation.

American Whitewater will continue to serve as a voice for the recreational benefits of a free flowing Snake River and continue or work on removal of Dillsboro Dam where we hope to see some success in 2010.

Bringing Natural Flows Back to the McCloud River (CA)

By Dave Steindorf

Last year, in our Top Ten River Issues, we highlighted the fact that AW was working to see more natural flow releases below dams that preserve the important dynamic nature of rivers. Since that time we have collaborated with river scientists at UC Davis to develop a paper on this topic that is now being published. The paper highlights the importance of the snowmelt hydrograph in western rivers. This hydrologic pattern of high flows that occur in the spring and then gradually recede into the summer is something that is very familiar to boaters in the West. It is also very familiar to fish, frogs, and virtually every kind of aquatic creature that evolved in these systems. Unfortunately, dams have disrupted this predictable pattern and replaced it with spring flows that are often more erratic than any other time of the year.

While helping research efforts and getting things published is nice, the goal is to actually make a difference in the flow regimes of dam-controlled western rivers. In 2009 we made great strides towards this goal with the implementation of a snowmelt schedule on the Cresta reach of the Feather River (CA). In this new flow schedule, flows are elevated in May to coincide with the spring snowmelt, 800 cfs at the peak, and then gradually tapering off to base flows in July in a normal year. This is the first flow schedule of its kind on a FERC project in California.

In 2009 we also began negotiations for a flow schedule on the McCloud River in Northern California. This amazing river lies in the shadow of Mt Shasta and is fed by springs that lay below this snow-capped volcano. However, seven miles below the spring, the Mc Cloud Dam diverts 80% of the flows down to powerhouses on the Pit River. Currently, PG&E is required to release a flat line flow of 210 cfs below the dam. Since this flow requirement says



The first five miles below the Dam contains many Class IV+ rapids

Photo by Dave Steindorf

Stewardship Issues 2010

Double Drop Rapid on the McCloud River, California

Photos by Dave Steindorf



nothing about how spill flows should be managed, flows during spills are typically very erratic, often going from the 210 cfs minimum flows up to several thousand cfs and back down in a very short time period. Equally problematic are years when no spills occur and flows can be flat lined for years on end. With sustained low flows, vegetation begins to encroach into the channel, something that we have seen in rivers across the country.

The solution, as previously stated, is to create higher flows in the spring that gradually recede. Higher spring flows will have several benefits. First, higher flows will help to buffer spill flows that occur in the spring. Rather than having spill flows laid over a 210 cfs base flow, the graph below shows how higher base flow essentially preempt spill flows so that changes are less dramatic both on the up

and the down ramp. The other significant benefit is having a smaller pulse in drier years to help maintain the river channel and provide the important ecological functions that having a spring pulse will provide in years when the dam typically does not spill.

In October of 2009, the resource agencies proposed a flow schedule for the McCloud based upon these principles. They also stated that this proposal met their regulatory requirement of balancing recreational needs because their proposal would provide whitewater recreation during these spring pulse events. Even though this only returned a small fraction of the boatable days that would have occurred without the dam, AW agreed with their rationale and supported their proposal as a reasonable balance.

Somewhat to our surprise some anglers vehemently opposed this flow proposal. What has been most astounding is that it has been the same angling groups that have been most vocal in their opposition to whitewater pulse flow that also oppose restoring more natural flow patterns to the McCloud. Their position seems to be that they wish the McCloud to be at a wadable fishing flow every day of the year. They are also in favor of bringing flows down from spill events as fast as possible, so as to get back to fishing flows. This is in spite of the fact that many anglers have expressed concern of the effects of rapid down ramping (stranding of fish, bugs, etc) from the current operation of the dams. Apparently this small but vocal group of anglers desire to have as many days to wade in the river as possible, no matter the cost to the resource, and they want this river all to themselves. AW believes that

the McCloud is a fabulous resource that should be shared by all.

Over the next year we will finalize the flow schedule for the McCloud. Our goal is to support the agencies that have worked hard to insure that the fabulous McCloud River is there for all of us to use in the future. This river is a true gem that needs AW and our members' support.

Protecting the Free-Flowing Yampa River from Powerful Industries (CO)

By Nathan Fey

We all love the wildness of free-flowing rivers, powerful and dynamic systems that remind us how iconic and rare these untouched areas are. They're threatened too, because these untouched river corridors also hide resources that are in high demand. In Colorado, the free-flowing Yampa River is in the middle of a three-way battle between interests in large reserves of oil and gas, clean water for cities, and conservation advocates.

Unlike most western rivers, which have been dammed, diverted or otherwise had their water put to "beneficial" use, the Yampa runs wild. While there is much interest in preserving the Yampa River for its globally rare wildlife habitats, endangered fish and world-class river recreation, powerful industries are looking to put Yampa River water to other uses.

First, the powerful interests in damming and delivering the Yampa River to Denver and Colorado's Front Range: Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, the agency that secures water supplies for Colorado's booming Front Range cities, north of Denver, is concerned that future demand for water along the front range promises to be greater than their current supplies. In order to meet demand, the Yampa River has been identified as a site for a 300,000-acre foot reservoir above Dinosaur National Monument. Northern



Water proposes to take water from the Yampa and pipe it 225 miles up and over the Continental Divide to the eastern side of the Rockies, where most Coloradoans live. Impacts to recreational opportunities on one of the region's most outstanding multiday trips would be substantial as peak spring flows enjoyed by boaters would be stored and diverted, permanently.

Second, the powerful Shell Oil Company, whose interests lie deep below the Yampa River. The company has filed for the rights to divert a substantial amount of water from the Yampa just a few miles upstream from Dinosaur National Monument. It

would be stored in a massive reservoir for future oil shale mining, a controversial and still unproven technology. Shell says it wants to inject the water into the ground to unlock oil from shale, where reserves are reported to be three-times greater than Saudi Arabia's.

Today, a lot of people have questions about how much water this will take, and whether there will be any left for everyone else, so agriculture, extractive energy companies and cities are all battling for a piece of the Yampa, where the first nationwide river conservation campaign started in the 1950s. Then, David Brower and the Sierra Club successfully stopped a huge reservoir that would have dammed up the Yampa River and drowned the canyons of Echo Park and Dinosaur National Monument. This year, paddlers are mobilizing for a similar fight saying, "Leave this one; let our grandchildren see what a wild river looks like."



Yampa River Canyon, Colorado

Photos Kent Vertrees

Stewardship Issues 2010

Protecting Recreational Flows on the Upper Colorado River (CO)

By Nathan Fey

The Upper Colorado River is the centerpiece of the current debate over how we will manage our western rivers in the future. Will we dam and divert our rivers and creeks as we have for 150 years, or will we work to find ways to protect what little water remains for fish, wildlife, and recreation?

The Upper Colorado River is the largest source of supplemental water supplies for Denver and Colorado's East Slope, where numerous reservoirs and pumps lift water up and over the Continental Divide. Water providers like Denver Water and Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District manage these reservoirs to provide water to Front Range cities and farms. Looking forward 30 years, water providers are looking to grab even more water out of the Upper Colorado to meet future demand. How do we balance today's environmental and recreational water needs with reliable

water supply in the future?

Flows on the Upper Colorado River are impacted by a series of projects that take water out of the river above Gore Canyon and Glenwood Springs. In recent years water managers and conservation interests have started to work to preserve critical environmental flow needs as more water is taken out of western rivers, like the Colorado. Today, while water managers are coordinating releases in an attempt to reduce impacts that their reservoirs may have on endangered fish,



Upper Colorado

Photo by Marin Fey



Upper Colorado

Photo by Marin Fey

Restoring Dynamic Flows to the Dolores River (CO/UT)

By Nathan Fey

paddlers are concerned that what little water remains in the river will not provide enough flow for commercial and private paddling opportunities. This year it will be critical to weigh in on how our rivers and paddling opportunities are impacted by Windy Gap Reservoir and Denver's Moffat Tunnel System.

At the same time, the US Bureau of Land Management is evaluating hundreds of rivers in Colorado, for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers protection. The Upper Colorado is just one of several examples, including the iconic Yampa, Green, and Dolores Rivers. While federal protection of these rivers could include flows needed for fish and paddlers, under Colorado Water Law, these flows would

happen only after water providers take all they can out of the river. As an alternative to federal flow protection for the Upper Colorado, AW is developing a cooperative river management plan with water providers, State and Federal agencies and our conservation partners that balances the needs of communities with those of fish, wildlife and paddlers. The Alternative Management Plan being proposed to the BLM will create a forum for stakeholders like AW to decide how flows in the Colorado River are managed into the future. For the first time in Colorado's era of water development, paddlers have a real say in what the future of Upper Colorado River looks like.

The Dolores River carves one of America's premier wild river canyons through southwestern Colorado. For 170 miles, from McPhee Reservoir to Utah, and the confluence with the Colorado River, the Dolores traverses some of the most remarkable landscapes in the desert southwest. One outstanding value of the Dolores River is its ability to accommodate long, wilderness-quality river trips, putting the Dolores River second only to the Grand Canyon.

The US Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service, which jointly manage the Dolores River corridor, are currently reviewing whether the Dolores River is suitable for protection under the Wilderness Act or the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Wild and Scenic designation would provide permanent protection for the Dolores River corridor and the world-class paddling opportunities it provides. However, state and federal water laws limit appropriation of waters for in-channel flows in an over-appropriated system like the Dolores, and fears of federal action that could limit the state's ability to develop its energy and water resources make this issue hotly contested.

In response, local stakeholders are recommending alternatives to federal Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers management. These alternatives could include a comprehensive set of flow targets that will inform how releases are managed to achieve equal protection of the Dolores River. It is imperative that the best science and research methodologies inform the development of these recommendations.

This year, American Whitewater continues to explore opportunities to



Dolores River Canyon, Colorado

Stewardship Issues 2010

manage McPhee Reservoir to improve downstream ecological conditions and recreational opportunities, while honoring agricultural and municipal water rights and supplies. Our staff and volunteers will advance the science-based justifications for recreational releases, and work with water users, local governments and federal agencies to manage reservoir spills to optimize ecological and recreational flow needs.

River Time: Saving the Mokelumne River (CA)

By Theresa L. Simsiman

Some twelve years back on my 30th birthday my silver & gold designer watch came to a dead stop. Looking down at the stilled second hand, my superstitious mind took it as an omen of impending doom and I vowed never to wear a watch again. Later that year, I replaced the conventional clock that had once wrapped heavily around my wrist with the beautiful rhythm of free flowing waters. I took up whitewater kayaking and like so many before me, I immersed myself into the

wonders of river time. River time does not tick away in regular intervals. It can rush by in the seconds it takes to drop over a steep rocky rapid or it can slow to introspective moments in the flat waters of a beautiful canyon. And despite this irregularity, river time flows on like the waters and the tribulations of California's Mokelumne River.

The Mokelumne River tumbles out of the High Sierra providing pristine whitewater for all to enjoy. There is a plentitude of whitewater to choose from like the multi-day Class V+ Fantasy Falls run featured in John Grace's The 7 Rivers Expedition, or the Class III-V Devil's Nose run which world rafter Jon Yost recently called "as beautiful as any he has rafted in California." Then there's one of my annual favorites the Class III-IV Tiger Creek run. There is the lesser known, Class III Ponderosa run. And one of the best training rivers for beginners in the Sierra foothills located on the borders of Amador and Calaveras County off of Highway 49, the Class II Electra & Middle Bar runs, which also serves as the site for the ever-popular annual Moke Races. These slalom and downriver races hosted by the Loma Prieta Paddlers since 1978 take place every September.

American Whitewater has been actively involved on the Mokelumne since 1992. In July of 2000, with the hard work of then Conservation Director, John Gangemi, AW became a signatory to the Mokelumne Relicensing Settlement Agreement for FERC Project 137. This 30 year settlement agreement with Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) came 18 years after their previous project license expired in 1972—an eternity in river time. But this historic agreement set conditions for PG&E's operation of the Mokelumne River hydropower project and has proven to be an ideal model of cooperation for subsequent relicensings across the nation. Through its implementation over the years, whitewater boaters have benefited from the annual scheduled releases for the Devil's Nose, Tiger Creek, Ponderosa, Electra and Middle Bar runs. And, as provided for in the agreement itself, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has obtained funds and the go ahead to build a new Electra Run take-out facility downstream of Highway 49.

Perhaps one of the more interesting access issues involved the Mokelumne's Middle Bar run. Since the 1950s East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD) had Amador & Calaveras County enforce and prosecute a strict no trespassing policy for any of the boaters who chose to ignore their signs on the waters between the Highway 49 bridge and the downstream Middle Bar bridge. In those days it was somewhat enticing to challenge this policy and several kayakers would push the envelope on a regular basis only to be met by EBMUD staff at the take-out. Several subsequent efforts to negotiate access failed. Then in 1999 Foothill Conservancy took the trespass issue to the California Attorney General's office, which in turn gave the matter to the State Lands Commission. Then in early December, the commission voted to pursue greater Mokelumne River access directing Deputy Attorney General, Lisa Trankley, to contact EBMUD on their behalf.



Take-out in Style

Photo courtesy of Foothill Conservancy

The very next day on a cold winter afternoon, paddlers Andy McKinsey, Eric Arons, Michael "Rand" Nash & Elise Goldman-Wilson climbed up a steep muddied embankment and maneuvered their boats through a barb wired fence. They were greeted and reluctantly cited by a county sheriff at the urging of a waiting EBMUD ranger. Lawyers Greg Klein and Brad Sullivan handled the ensuing legal paperwork pro bono. And Deputy AG Trankley again intervened and spoke to Amador County DA, Todd Riebe, who dropped the charges, saying that he would not prosecute trespassing citations for people moving directly between the river and Middle Bar Road. By the next year, following continued discussion with the State Lands Commission and pressure from various stakeholders, including the County of Calaveras and Amador County's five cities, the EBMUD board passed a resolution supporting access to Middle Bar Bridge. On May 16, 2003, after a significant investment of private and public funding from the California Department of Boating and Waterways the EBMUD Middle Bar Take-out was officially unveiled to the public.

Like most California rivers, the Mokelumne River has also seen its share of water grabs, including scrambles for the precious resource in the foothills of the Sierra. Most occurred in the nation's major dam-building era, from 1900 to 1960. Then in 1996 and 1998 a coalition of water agencies from nearby San Joaquin County made bids for both a high & low Middle Bar dam, behind the existing 350-foot Pardee Dam. And EBMUD, which provides water to the eastern portion of the San Francisco Bay Area, tried for a Middle Bar dam in the early 80s and then abandoned the idea. It later transformed into plans to enlarge the downstream Pardee Reservoir in the 1993 version of their Water Supply Management Program 2020. Also looking for their piece of the pie, Amador County tried to flood nine miles of the Devil's Nose reach in the 1990s. Over the years, these ill-conceived ideas that would wipe out more free flowing sections of the river have been prevented with ever-vigilant help from AW's partner organizations

like Foothill Conservancy, Friends of the River, California Sportfishing Protection Alliance, and the Sierra Club.

But no organization can stop time, and inevitably more efforts to corral Mokelumne water resources will move forward. For instance, EBMUD's board of directors recently voted 4 to 2 to approve their Water Supply Management Program 2040. At the center of this controversial program are plans, once again, to enlarge Pardee Reservoir, which would inundate the Middle Bar take-out facility, flood the entire Class II Middle Bar Run and flood out portions of the Electra run, including the new BLM take-out facilities set to break ground this spring. To assuage the numerous vocal opponents, EBMUD emphasizes that if and when they choose to enlarge Pardee Reservoir, it wouldn't happen for at least another 14 years—a regular interval of time for them and a blink of an eye for those of us on river time.

AW and many conservation groups believe the only option now, to permanently fend off all the agencies fighting for the scraps of water left in the last free flowing sections of the Mokelumne, would be designation as a National Wild and Scenic River. In the early 1990s, the U.S. Forest Service found the 17-mile Devil's Nose reach eligible for designation. Then in a Record of Decision dated February 2008, the BLM concluded that the North and Main Forks of the Mokelumne River from Tiger Creek Dam to 100 feet below the Highway 49 bridge were eligible for inclusion into the National Wild and Scenic River System. Combined with the 26-plus-mile Fantasy Falls run through the Mokelumne Wilderness, designating these miles of the Mokelumne a National Wild and Scenic River would protect more than 60 miles of beautiful whitewater. Adding the last mile of the river below Highway 49 to Pardee Reservoir's high pool would ensure full protection of the upper Mokelumne.

The conundrum here is how to get members of Congress to make this recommendation and subsequently vote for its addition. Ironically, advocates were given a small gift from EBMUD board members when Lesa

McIntosh proposed a resolution to work with foothill interests to secure National Wild and Scenic River designation—it passed 6 to 0. What does this resolution mean exactly? Only river time will tell. In the meantime, American Whitewater and our partner organizations will continue the search for the Mokelumne's political champion.

If you would like to show your support for National Wild and Scenic designation of the Mokelumne River please go to the Foothill Conservancy webpage - <http://www.foothillconservancy.org/>

Theresa L. Simsiman is a Private Boater Signatory to the Upper American River Project Relicensing Agreement and the American Whitewater Rep to the Mokelumne River Ecological Resources Committee.



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Creeking



Losloera

by Tom Meinholz

How did I end up in this situation again? I am sitting in an eddy looking downstream at an obviously difficult section of the Rio Los Loera in the Copper Canyon. It appears there will be much more portaging ahead.

The first day of our first descent was quite uneventful, save for a Class V road to the put-in and Rocky Contos, my paddling partner on this expedition, losing his camera to the river a mile into the run. We took a fairly relaxed approach to the run since it was only 42 miles and we had four days, five if necessary. The gradient had less than a dozen 150-foot per mile miles (overall average of 96 ft/mi). That did not sound too scary so when we rounded the corner only six miles into the run and saw one of the most amazing campsites I had ever seen on a river we cut the day a bit short to take advantage of the overhang

and protection from the obligatory afternoon rains. It even came complete with the highly sought after flat sandy area and dripping spring of fresh water. The first day started with mostly Class I-II and ended with III-IV in a canyon with 1000 cfs of juice, a nice flow.

The put-in was upstream only about six miles in a beautiful pastoral setting complete with cowboys or vaqueros (usually call them caballeros). In this area of the Copper canyon it seems like the rivers decided in an instant where they wanted to go and like a bolt of lightning struck their path with no regard for rock. Quite often you will find a beautiful scene of rolling green hills and flat fertile valleys dotted with small farms and the river winding through the valley. All of a sudden there is a near vertical 400-foot rock face

that the river cuts right through. It looks like it would have been much easier for the river to go around. I am no geologist (and no hallucinogens were involved) but there are some interesting canyon-forming processes occurring here. The task at hand was more serious and after a few moments of trying to figure out complex geology I was stunned back into the mission by the beginnings of the afternoon rain.

For those of you who have done multiday trips on hard rivers, especially in damp environs, you can imagine the urgency of packing the boats when the rain starts. One of my only mistakes in packing was not to first test my headlamp. It did last until about day three. My other mistake occurred a day earlier when I had to choose from three old and well used boats: a Pyranha that had been repaired under

Tom Diegel in a pillarless Freefall LT on the first descent of the upper Rio Chinipas

Photo by Tom Meinholz

the seat, a Rockit or an Embudo. I heard good things about the Embudo so decided to try it. Rocky and I quickly loaded up and pushed off the lush valley bank into the upper Rio Los Loera. I was immediately stunned at how deep in the water I sat and how sluggish the boat felt. I understood quite soon that I myself (even without the gear) was too heavy for the boat. This was the source of major frustration, especially

Aaron Stabel gives a hoot of excitement and Rocky takes it all in as the canyon finally opens up on the Rio Chinipas

Photo by Tom Meinholz

when the rapids topped the Class IV mark.

A year earlier I was on another major (120-mile) first descent with Rocky, Tom Diegel and Aaron Stable on the Rio Chinipas. Rocky said that trip was one of the two hardest runs he had done in his 8 years of exploring Mexico. I know for me it was the hardest thing I had ever done. It was physically grueling and mentally draining, as the river just kept going through deep narrow gorges and we were constantly worried about getting cliffed out. For me it was the trip of a lifetime. I have boated all over the US, New Zealand, Ecuador,

Mexico and Peru and live in the Sierras but this was my first real first descent. It was something I had dreamed of since I was a budding boater with a huge appetite for adventure. I learned a lot about myself and my ability to enjoy and thrive in a harsh environment. The biggest thing for me was realizing how much I missed my daughter and wife. I have kayaked all over the world with Cara and was anxious to tell her it was everything I hoped it to be. Rocky carried a satellite phone with him, but only after six grueling days was I able to get through to my wife. It was a very short conversation.



Creeking

“Honey, we made it through the most difficult part, it was incredible!”

“That’s great dear, but the dog just got bit by a rattlesnake, got to go. Love you, bye”

Day two, like most we had, started with the morning fog and a slight variation in the river level. After a typical boater’s breakfast I applied my damp gear and dragged my boat through the dry sand and behind a small waterfall down to the river. I was really taken by the whole scene and it really hit me how isolated we were and

that this is really no trivial task. Up until then it did not seem to be much more than a typical overnight boating trip to a new river with lots of driving. The previous year’s first descent made me realize how it really was no different than your first time down any river except that we are carrying 9 days of food. The Rio Los Loera was only 5 days, so should have been much easier, right? Shortly after we got under way the canyon took on a more serious character and things got steep quickly. We were in and out of our boats often and portaging here and there. The boulders in the river began to grow in size from car-sized to house-sized, completely blocking the river and making the portages harder and

harder. Upon reanalyzing the map, Rocky realized that this was a much steeper section that he hadn’t marked: it actually was 300 ft/mi. By the end of this second day we realized that we were definitely at the beginning of a full-blown epic. We only made it 2.5 miles that day.

Day three started again with just a slight variation in water level but the seriousness of the run was now full tilt. The day involved an endless repetition of paddling a few hundred feet (at best), getting out and scouting, then portaging or running—mostly portaging. Lots of rapids that started out fine ended in sieves, undercuts or some other ugly feature.

Rocky Contos running a clean falls on the first descent of the Rio Los Loera



There was however about a three-mile stretch of some nice runnable rapids. We only covered six miles and ended the day at mile 15. It was towards the end of this day when I finally asked the million-dollar question: "Rocky, what did I say about this run after I scouted it on Google Earth?" His reply made me want to hurtle him into the river: "You said it looked like it had a lot of hard portages." At that moment I remembered nearly every detail of that map (except for the name of the river) and

We portaged this falls down the center but found an unscoutable line down the far left

Photo by Rocky Contos

I realized what we had gotten ourselves into. It definitely felt steeper than 150 feet per mile and upon further inspection of the map it turned out that Rocky had missed a contour line in this section of the river. It also turns out that the contour interval is 100 meters or roughly 300 ft. Rocky felt bad about mislabeling the map, and said he would not have suggested this river had he been aware of the 300 fpm section. Missing a contour interval seems excusable since there is an incredible amount of stuff locked up in Rocky's brain (he is neuroscientist). But part of me thinks that while pouring over the maps, Rocky's brain went into denial just so he could justify doing this grand adventure.

It's what he thrives on.

Instead of strangling Rocky I decided to look on the bright side. We are most likely the only two people who would ever see this absolutely spectacular section of river that flows through the deepest part of the Copper Canyon area. We were around 5000 feet deep in the canyon. At that point I really started to pay more attention to the spectacular things we came across and really take it all in. One morning I saw an entire family of monkey-like cats swinging, hanging, and running from tree to tree eating fruit. Another morning I woke up and for about half an hour there were some of the most beautiful mosquitoes I



Creeking

had ever seen. Their wings had a vibrant translucency and were attached to a rich, blue chrome-colored exoskeleton. They were a bit slow but so beautiful that it was hard, at least at first, to swat them.

We had planned on four days and took an extra day of food to facilitate a leisurely pace. By the end of day three we figured there was a good chance that we would be using the five days of rations. By the end of day four we figured there was a good chance that we would need another days rations so decided to ration the rations.

On day 4 we put in a long day, made a good 11 miles (to mile 26), and got off the river just before dark. We passed through the

village of Los Loera where Rocky managed to leave word about the extra day for our shuttle driver. We set up camp and found a great slab of granite to cook dinner on. As we ate we could hear the increasing sound of the river and found it to be rising quite rapidly! By the time dinner was finished, we had to move to higher ground. Several hours later the stress was relieved as the river held steady and actually started to drop a bit. By morning it was just a bit (six inches) higher than when we first docked our vessels the previous evening.

Day five continued to be much the same: deep, narrow canyon scenery but with a lot of rain and a fair bit of runnable rapids. We made it 14 miles (to mile 40), nearly to

the confluence with the Rio Guerachi (also called the Rio Verde), which is seven miles upstream of the take-out. The weather is fairly predictable in this region. Foggy mornings give way to clear skies then clouds build before noon with afternoon showers pouring down and ending before evening. Day five, however, was the anomaly and the part where “the rain ends” never happened until the next morning. The dampness of the trip wreaked havoc with the camera equipment. Rocky’s video camera never worked until the take-out and mine was constantly shutting down

Rocky Contos boofing on the Rio Los Loera

Photo by Tom Meinholz



due to the moisture. I had always dreamed of putting together a great video and planned for this to be the trip, but alas it was not to be. We did however get a photo and some video of us running a clean 16-footer in a spectacular setting.

On day six we woke to see the testament of unpredictable weather in Mexico and the typical brown water you see in many of Rocky's photos. This, however, was not just brown, it was dark chocolate brown and raging. The river must have tripled in size and to paddle anywhere near the center of the river was a risky proposition. The previous night we got to within 1.5 miles of the confluence with the Rio Verde and from there it was only 7 miles of Class III-IV to the take-out, a bridge. We figured we would be at the take-out before noon. Due to the high water portages it was not until noon that we arrived at the confluence. The sheer volume made for some of the most impressive rapids I had ever seen. Just before the confluence nearly the entire river went into a massive whirlpool about 50 feet across and a good six feet deep. How the water exited the whirlpool was anyone's guess but it looked to us like the only water going out was somewhere deep below. We guessed the river was now flowing around 20,000 cfs.

The confluence of the Rio Verde and Los Loera starts the Rio Sinforosa and is one of the most spectacular confluences I have seen with near vertical 1000-foot walls towering straight up from the river. Big water Class II at the confluence brought a huge relief and a bit of tranquility. Rocky had been there previously when he ran the Verde a few years earlier (a trip he wrote about in *American Whitewater*). He knew the 7 miles from there to the bridge were mostly Class III with half a dozen IVs. As we rounded the corner the canyon opened up on the left and near vertical on the right. Our tranquility was very short lived when previously Class III rapids were now Class V leading into Class V+ with what seemed like 40,000 cfs and total chaos. It



Tom Standing on the takeout road. Note road running up the other side of the canyon

Photo by Rocky Contos

was a mission just to cross the river. We were eddying out on river left in bushes that lined the pastures. It took us nearly 2 hours to run the final 6 miles down to the take-out.

Being two days late, we figured the shuttle driver had most likely gone back to call in the authorities, but to our surprise he was sitting there fishing with some friends. He had received the message Rocky left three days earlier. At the take-out we did the obligatory high five and loaded up the truck. At this point I figured the adventure was over, I was so naive. The road down to the take-out was so severe that one of the racks, even without boats on them, ripped clean off Rocky's truck. Unable to repair them we had to throw all the gear, plus the shuttle driver's friend, in the back. Those guys are tough.

It took us 7 hours to drive 70 miles with a 5,000-foot elevation gain to the closest town. The view into Barranca Sinforosa going up is truly spectacular. We pulled in about 10:00pm that night, with me green from the exhaust leaking into the cab, but found a wonderful senora who opened the doors to her home/diner and cooked us a

wonderful meal.

My plane left the following afternoon from El Paso, which made for an all night drive to Chihuahua where I got on a bus. From there it was a series of bus changes, crossing the border on foot, and a frantic taxi ride that got me to the airport a scant hour before my flight. Of course, my plane was delayed for six hours so I headed straight to the nearest cantina where I was shocked back into civilization with three big screens playing the Olympics.

Rocky has a wealth of information available about the rivers of Mexico on his website, www.sierrarios.org. There you will find everything you need, including maps, of some spectacular multiday trips. Soon you can get a copy of this info in a paperback version by ordering it on the website.

Creeking



Gangs of Nor-Cal: Showdown on a 35-footer

By Raul Adamchak

Thirty rides are lined up along a pullout on Highway 70. It's got to be intimidating for people driving by. I'm part of it, and I can just taste the macho, testosterone filled air. Two gangs are meeting, one from Chico, and one from Sacto (called Sacramento by outsiders). Mostly what I see is grizzled, older men and young women, some dressed in tight black, shiny skins. It's true, they are schoolteachers, farmers, lawyers, computer programmers, and retired folks, but they're still tough and aggressive. They're gathered in clumps, laughing and shooting the bull, waiting for the Queen Bee to arrive so the action can begin. Finally, she's here. Everyone lines up to fork

over the dough—gotta pay to play here. She tucks the money in a belt-pack, down low around her waist, gives the signal, and we all thunder off to the take-out. Yo baby, it's time to boat.

The Big Bend run on the Feather River doesn't run that often. In fact, if the reservoir is full, the run doesn't exist. But by late October, after a slew of drought years, the reservoir is low (below 740') and the run is a go-go. The Feather River Canyon is the most damned, power-lined, railroad tracked, disturbed mess of river I have every seen. The more famous sections upstream, Cresta, Rock Creek, Tobin only

There's only one way down . . . The author heads over the dam

Photo by Frank Walden

run when there are recreational releases (fought for by AW). Big Bend is at the bottom of the hill. There is one last power station squeezing the last bit of power out the river before it drops into the reservoir. Just after the power station though, at low water, there is a 35-foot waterfall over a last old, funky 1930s dam. And that's where we are headed.

At the take-out everyone prepares for battle and we organize the shuttle. We put on polar fleeces, dry suits or neoprene, and river shoes, and load the rest of our gear and boats onto a trailer and a few other cars. We drive up to the put-in, our car

filled with the sweet smell of boater funk (part neoprene, part fear).

The put-in is just below the power station. The car I'm in drives down to edge of what appears to be a small lake. Water is surging slowly from beneath the power station, but it's hard to tell how much. I assume it's the low end of possible flows. Sooner than I would have guessed, all thirty boaters are geared up and in their boats. We paddle in small, disorganized groups, talking and staring up at the steep walls, following the canyon to the dam. Only about 10 minutes later I see folks ahead of me pull over on river left on the backside of the dam. There is not really room for 30 boats on shore, but we do the best we can.

The top of dam is rounded, sloping down to the water below in a sine wave. The dam is very old; the concrete job is amateurish and not uniform. But a dam is a dam, and this one holds back the water, except in the middle, where there is a depression, and water spills eagerly over the edge. More people than would be allowed by the fire department climb up on to the dam to look at the pour over. People whip out their cameras, and a few boaters who have run it before start over the drop. They make it look easy and I am eager to go. Then one of people running it flips, attempts a roll and fails, attempts another roll and fails, and swims, and swims some more. I think to myself that is time to get off the top of dam; there is only one way down.

As I get into my boat, there are a couple of other people getting ready to run the drop. Suzanne, I know, has run the drop before, so I ask her, "What's the line?" She responds, "I don't know", but doesn't seem overly concerned. Another boater noticing our indecision, yells, "Keep to the left of that little wave on top." Within seconds, he has paddled over the top and is gone. Suzanne follows him, angling from left to right, but keeping left of the small wave. Off I go, a few paddle strokes, right on line, and then—whoosh! The bottom falls out

and down I go. There is not much to see because as soon as I hit the bottom, I am shot into a wall of water and close my eyes. Once on the other side, I am upright and beaming. Running the dam is a kick.

I hang out in the current below the dam and watch person after person go over the drop. It is enjoyable to watch and I also help to rescue a few folks or their gear. One thing I notice about the people who fail to roll is that they all lift their heads up as they are coming up as if to get a quick look at the falls and say "Wow," before they fall back upside down. I totally understand.

I continue to paddle around in the squirrely water below the dam and start to wonder why we were all here running this 35-foot dam. Surely, it is the biggest drop any of us has done, and takes a certain focus to line up and drop over something that big. True, the shape of the dam makes the drop very safe. I watch over 40 descents and some are off-line, sideways, or partially flipped before they hit the bottom, but everyone comes through cleanly and unharmed. Are we brave, skillful boaters or mindless

lemmings following each other over the cliff? I vote for brave, but I'm clearly biased. I am impressed that everyone could line up and run it without fussing. Like I said above, this is one tough group of people.

After at least an hour of running the dam (some people climb up a rope and run it again), we are on our way downstream. Everyone is filled with adrenalin, and looking for challenging rapids to run. I try to ignore the sense that the hardest (or at least the most exciting) part is over and that we have six miles of easy rapids left. No one likes the climax to happen too quickly.

Again, there is some separation into groups, but 30 boaters is a lot to have running through Class III+ to IV- rapids without mishap, and indeed there is some carnage. The first big rapid is Meat Grinder on Steroids, named after Meat Grinder on the South Fork American, and generates

Fearless boaters relaxing after lunch

Photo by Frank Walden



Creeking

a couple of swimmers. It is long, fast and full of holes, which are easy to find if you run off-line. From below, it seems like not everyone knows what the line is.

The next rapid is Class IV Boxcar and we scout it. True to its name, the rapid contains the remains of a railroad car on river left. Most people run a far right slot/boof. A few hardy souls run over the pour-overs in the middle. Everyone flips in the pour-overs, but there is a big recovery pool and no swims.

We stop for lunch at a beautiful pile of rocks and ledges on river left and talk and

laugh and have a relaxing break. Whatever antagonisms I may have suggested exist between the Chico Paddleheads and the Gold Country Paddlers, the rival boating gangs, in reality, doesn't.

After lunch, there are a few unremarkable Class IIIs, and then two last Class IVs just before the end. One is read and run, and most people eddy-hop easily down the right hand side. A few people choose to go into holes and swim out. The other requires that paddlers start right and work left.

This run exists because the reservoir is low, but it still ends in the reservoir. This is where the pay to play comes in. The take-out is about six miles from put-in by water, if you don't get lost. The Queen Bee, Ilona Karow, has organized a boat shuttle for 30

at the local marina. Pretty much on time, four, 20-foot flat-bottomed skiffs show up one after the other to carry us back to put-in. During the high-speed motor powered trip we all agree that the boat shuttle is worth the \$22 each, because it would have been a long, long paddle.

Even though the 35-foot falls is "easy" and rest of the river enjoyable, but not intimidating, we are all seemingly bonded by this trip. For a second or two on the river, we all had to be focused and determined enough to run the dam and the rapids below. We respect each other for being able to do that. Everyone had fun too, but I think appreciates the mutual respect even more. I guess that's what keeps a gang together.

Infamous California Boater Gangs on Highway 70

Photo by Frank Walden



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Creeking

Tuckerman's Ravine looking up from Route 16

Photo by Darron Laughland



Boards and Boats: A Classic New England Adventure

By Darron Laughland

For a group of Mount Washington Valley paddlers and skiers, the perfect day occurs when work and family obligations align with weather, river levels, and in this case, snow conditions. On this particular day, a classic backcountry ski run literally melted into a classic creek run. An alpine hike, followed by a backcountry ski on Mount Washington, a long cruising decent to the valley floor, then a run down one of the classiest creek runs of the Whites, topped with an obligatory stop at the Moat Mountain House for a hot meal and debrief all add up to a perfect day of White Mountain living for a crew of local paddlers.

Tuckerman's Ravine sits on the shoulders

of Mount Washington in the White Mountains of New Hampshire. From the bottom of the Tuckerman's Ravine bowl flows the Cutler River. It babbles and crashes down several thousand feet of steep forested terrain descending south out of the notch, passing under Route 16 to join and swell the flow of the Ellis River.

The day begins with a half hour drive from North Conway to Pinkham Notch, one of the state's most beautiful rides. A car is dropped off to set shuttle for the paddle, and as the last of the coffee is downed, the trucks pull into the Appalachian Mountain Club's Pinkham Notch Visitor Center, joining the gathering horde of skiers in a somewhat carnival atmosphere. Shouldering a pack with avalanche beacon, shovel, snow probe, food, extra layers, and water, the team of skiers begins their several-thousand-foot ascent. The trail is packed out already by dozens, maybe hundreds of skiers. Early in the day, the snow is crusty, and crunches loudly underfoot as the line of climbers make

their way up the trail. After the first few steep pitches of the trail the excited and easygoing chatter of conversation gives way to the rustling of fabric and the hard breathing required to pump the legs up and down, hauling a few extra pounds of boots, binding, and ski with each step.

After an hour and a half of hiking, the trees begin to get shorter and more gnarled, the wide trail eventually crossing over a still winter-locked Cutler river that is stirring to life beneath the bridge. Twenty minutes later "Ho-JO's," the AMC Tuck's Caretaker cabin, comes into view and dozens of similarly clad adventurers stop for a few minutes to drink, eat, throw on a layer, and rest before the final push up the Little Headwall and into the bowl that is Tuckerman's Ravine. Clusters of people ready themselves, reviewing the avalanche report, commenting on the conditions, noting the weather. Every few minutes more climbers follow the track going up towards the ridge above.

People fade into small colored specks, bristling with skis or snowboards, a rainbow of Gore-Tex and nylon ants, marching in tight ordered rows out of sight, to the a cluster of rocks at the base of a couloir known as Right Gully. Here, the real climbing begins. Sip water, check the avalanche beacon, and trudge in the softening snow to the long line of people ascending the steep cirque to the cliff bands and white expanse above. When

the steps kicked into the snow feel like climbing a ladder, the knowledge that a slip or fall would result in a long cart-wheeling yard sale makes itself known as each boot thunks into the granular mush, searching for traction.

Nate going in to the last drop of the Ellis Gorge

Photo by Dick Pollack



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At some point, each skier or rider makes a decision about where and how to attach their gear and begin their descent. From the top of Right Gully, a long chute terminates at lunch rocks, for those going over “The Lip,” there are cliff bands amidst a wide expanse of pitched terrain. Along the shoulders of the ravine hang steeper chutes with catastrophic consequences for a fall, beckoning only to the experts. The same soul searching gut check that paddlers looking at the line over a falls or through exploding waves amidst a chaotic technical rapid takes place in the skier’s mind.

There are no eddies here as gravity pours speed on. The malleable surface underfoot leaves arcing troughs with each turn. Wind and snow spray pelt and bluster, flourishing in intensity. The bottom of the bowl crashes upward. Past the lunch rocks, down the Little Headwall on to the John Sherburne Ski Trail. The skiers weave down the mountain’s mix of moguls, hard pack, and double fall lines. Sunlight penetrates the snow surface. The rivulets of water lubricate the pellets into mush. Although the muscle groups that surround the femur are the largest in the body, by now they are fatiguing with each turn and bend of the knee. A few minutes and several hundred turns later, legs wrung out from the hike and the ski, the intrepid party arrives at the parking lot.

The pickups with creek boats perched on top are waiting at the end of the lot. Skis are thrown over the shoulder, heel throw and cable bouncing along, snow dripping off the boards as it turns to water in the afternoon heat. Sitting on the tailgate, parkas and snow pants are piled into the packs with the beacons, extra layers, and other assorted paraphernalia. They are traded for dry suits, spray decks, PFDs, elbow pads, and booties, the skis, poles, packs and boots, are pushed to the back of the truck bed, and the paddles tossed on top.

The convoy makes a ten-minute drive south to the put-in, pulling the trucks in tight to the snow bank, after letting the passengers out. A shuttle of a little over a mile had already been set early that morning, with vehicles left near the Rocky Branch Trail parking lot. The Ellis is running a little over two feet on the old USGS pipe gauge, rising with the snowmelt, to a perfect medium flow. The energy of the group is

up, pumped full after a great ski, a snack, and some loud grooves on the short drive down Route 16.

A small armada of brightly colored boats departs around a snow and lichen covered outcropping downstream of the put-in and out of sight. Immediately after put-in there is a ledge drop with an ugly pin rock on the right. The line bumps down over the middle of the ledge, dropping 15 feet into a pool. After that, it’s boogey water to a fun double drop. The flow narrows to a funky notch at the top, then a three-footer. A quick scout of the third drop refreshes the memory. An exposed rock at the bottom sits on the left. It requires a Class IV move to stick it properly. Boats gather speed and a little angle; initiate a strong boof, landing in the froth. The bow parts the water to cruise into the pool just past the huge rock on river left. This drop provides some entertainment and good crash footage. Two paddlers hit the rock, one just a dull thunk, and one pitoning off his bow into a face plant against the ledge on the right. The next drop has a slot that runs nearly perpendicular to the flow of the river. Some choose to walk. The two who run it sand fiberglass off their paddle blade dragging it down the granite to stay upright. The last ugly drop into shallow water, with an alternate even uglier piton line, is walked. A bumpy low angle bedrock slide froths and scurries its way into a pool and brings the section to an end.

This pool at the USGS gauge marks the start of over a mile of full on boogie boating Class IV and V through boulder-choked rapids. Blind drops, slots, short slides, with few boat scoutable sections make slow going for a first timer. Today, with home field advantage, the crew slows only to check for wood, and periodically to rest and tighten up the formation. A few hundred yards down there is a right hand blind boof. Bobbing flashes of color move down on river left, threading small boulders, often submerged in the cascade. Each lines up for a small waterfall landing on a rock. Right at the lip, a quick stroke to aim right and boof gently drops the boat into aerated water. Farther down, each member pauses as the paddler in front of them draws to the edge of the first of the stair case drops, a series of several small falls. A piton rock sits in the runout, demanding a well-timed draw stroke.

The river then curves through an S-turn

that marks the entrance to a short gorge. The line follows the water pouring over boulders into an exploding pillow that guards the middle of the river. The boats drive into the right side of the pillow. Each paddler leans into the foam. The pillow absorbs momentum. A fast sweep maintains a straight line down the right side of the river. The boats drive onto a shelf. One at a time, each paddler falls off the shelf. The boats melt down with a right lean onto a brace. Then, arcing over a small horseshoe shaped falls, they drop, following the tongue on the left, each finding a line through the bedrock channels below. An interesting zigzag move is required a bit further down to avoid slamming into a wall. The high potential to flip and flush upside down into the rock demands the right angle as the paddle grabs and then pulls across the green water. Once this move is nailed, things mellow considerably.

A short Class III cool down leads to the bridge and the take-out. Past this, the near constant Class III-IV rapids continue for many miles. There are access points to break the remainder of the river into additional sections as the river carves its way down Pinkham Notch into the “Classic New England” village of Jackson. Just south of the idyllic covered bridges, golf course and Nordic skiing center, and a scattering of restaurants and inns, a dam mandates a portage. Below the dam the geology changes and the river has more play and it is a short paddle under Route 302 to a takeout near the confluence with the Saco River. Had it been earlier in the day, an additional stretch may have been tackled, but at this point, the crew is ready for a meal and celebratory beverage. An hour later in the corner of “the Moat,” with hot food on board, the cameras are passed around and the stories recounted. It’s a perfect end to a perfect day of skiing and paddling two White Mountain classics and living well in the Mount Washington Valley of New Hampshire.

Darron Laughland is a river guide, kayak instructor, telemark skier, and in the “off season,” a high school English and Special Education Teacher. He lives in Conway, NH with his wife and two sons. This article is dedicated to Big Air Lar and The Whitewater Outlaw, who I paddled the Ellis with, before their unfortunate passing.



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Creeking

Searching for the Edge of the World

By Jeff West

Standing beside a popular roadside waterfall you'll hear the tourist chatting about scenic beauty, the local good 'ole boys talking about tubing, and the kayakers debating lines. Even the kayakers' perceptions of the waterfall will vary greatly. A beginner may see an unrunnable rapid, an intermediate may see a fun drop and an expert may not even get excited. All paddlers have our own evolving idea of an acceptable height from which to launch a boat. I can remember my first three-foot ledge as a beginner. Even though my Mirage was four times longer than the height of the

drop, I thought it was amazing I survived the descent. That three-foot horizon line looked like the edge of the world. Paddlers keep pushing the limits. It's hard to believe the world waterfall record was recently set at 186 feet! Personally, my vertical limit has stayed around 25 feet for a decade. Single drops higher than that have always seemed a bit much—at least until recently.

Maybe a mid-life crisis drove me to it. Attending my 20-year reunion and discovering my high school buddies are now grandparents didn't help. For whatever reason I decided it was time to try waterfalls in the 30 to 45-foot range. It was time to see what all the fuss was about. By gosh, it was time to huck some drops!

This new waterfall mission started with a bit of planning. Who would join me? Where are the closest 30 to 45 footers? Is my health insurance paid up? These were all important questions. Matt Wallace joined in the quest and with a little research we were off to our first waterfall.

The drive gave us a chance to chat waterfall technique. When do you tuck? How are you supposed to spot your landing with your eyes closed? Do these big time waterfall guys really pour several gallons of water in their boat? Is it better to throw the paddle or reference it? Joking about this stuff was more fun than considering the serious possibility of becoming maimed.

Our first big waterfall was a rolling lip 40 footer. No rocks at the bottom, just the hard hit of falling 40 feet. The approach was Class II and a perfectly placed limb made a great marker for lining it up. Standing at the lip of the drop looking down on the tree tops I suddenly remembered my fear of heights. Time to get back in my kayak where I felt safe! As I paddled into the rolling lip entrance I reminded myself to keep it straight. I was on line and the kayak accelerated in an indescribable way. I saw the landing, threw the paddle and tucked like there was no tomorrow. WOW! That barely hurt! I didn't even flip! I couldn't believe it: That was freaking fun!

The adrenalin was pumping and the drive home was full of waterfall talk. We were both surprised by the minimal hit. It stung, but it wasn't bad. It reminded me of tackling someone in football. Our first big waterfall had been a success and we were stoked to prepare for waterfall number two!

Our next waterfall opportunity came a few days later. The adrenaline had worn



Matt Wallace dropping a 40 foot slide in Georgia

Photo by

off from our first success, but a slight pain in my lower back and neck persisted. I convinced myself it was just a nice reminder of the importance of a good tuck. For waterfall number two we chose the center line at Little River Canyon Falls. This is about a 30-foot vertical drop. The center line is only runnable at high water. This day we had very high water, 30 inches on the gauge or about 6,000 cfs. Watching 6,000 cfs fall 30 feet is not reassuring. The hole at the bottom was huge. The approach was full-on. Plus, the line at the lip was 100 feet from shore. Scouting from 100 feet is not ideal. The line was to drive right, bust through a Rock Island size hole, punch a stout diagonal wave, line it up and fly off. Matt's line was good, which left me at the top by myself. I handed the camera to a tourist and went for it. 6,000 cfs is

a lot of water for a southern creeker to pound through. Surprisingly, I held the line and approached the lip exactly where I wanted. Some primal and instinctive reflex took over and I boofed the crap out of it. There I was, flying through 30 feet of air completely flat with the perfect boof. What had I done? I couldn't resist, the pad looked so inviting. Time to tuck! Boooooof, the landing was smooth! The huge boil in the landing zone made my flat kayak land as if it was landing on a giant bowl of Jell-O. It didn't hurt at all, in fact, it felt great! Waterfall number two was more fun than number one. Once again, a good tuck made the day.

With two big drops under our belts we started to feel good with our waterfall quest. We were solid with holding our

Jeff West takes the center line on Little River Canyon Falls

Photo by Matt Wallace



Creeking

line, tucking and dealing with the paddle. I needed to work on controlling the angle for landing. No more boofing! With no rain in the forecast I headed to an old faithful to learn how to better pencil. Baby Falls on the Tellico became my practice field. Plus, climbing back to the top each time for another run was a nice workout. Like many southern boaters I've logged countless runs on this easy 10-footer. The problem is that I have spent 15 years boofing it. Time to practice penciling! After a few runs I dialed the stroke in. A more subtle stroke that gently pries on the water was the ticket. Nice and easy!

The downtime awaiting more rain allowed me to get my head around this new waterfall hobby. When creek boating, I try to focus on the run as a whole, not just the big rapids. Class V paddlers often have the worst wipeouts in Class IV whitewater. It's the not-so-big ones that get you. Worrying about a big drop five rapids downstream is a recipe for trouble. But running big waterfalls can make one rapid your whole day. The size of the drop requires you to focus and channel all of your energy into one series of moves. A few crucial body movements will make or break you. It becomes obsessive. Every stroke is planned. David didn't have all day to defeat Goliath. He only had a few seconds and one shot at it. With the size of these drops you have to be smooth and precise. This waterfall hucking stuff requires a lot of multi tasking. It all comes down to a couple of seconds, a few exact moves, and a bit of luck.

Our chance for our third big drop came surprisingly soon. The Smokey Mountain National Park was drenched by a storm and the mighty Raven Fork was flowing. The Raven Fork is home to one of the south's toughest drops, Big Boy. This is a 33-foot waterfall dropping beside a large rock. I've been lucky to paddle the Raven many times in the past several years, but I have always portaged Big Boy. I've scouted the drop from every angle: left, right, downstream, upstream. Plus, I've hiked

the Raven at low flow and climbed and swam the drop. This day, I put on knowing it may be time for my Big Boy first descent. I couldn't have asked for a better day. The level, weather, everything was perfect. We knocked out the paddle down to Big Boy in only 15 minutes. My lines were solid and when I stepped out above the drop I left my boat facing towards the water ready to go. I walked to the edge for one last scout. The line was obvious: drive left, aim for the seam, take a big right stroke and land a few feet from the most menacing looking rock I have ever seen. There is even a nice diagonal wave breaking from the right to guide you. But, I just didn't see it happening. I saw the line, but I couldn't stop imagining flying through the air and splatting on the boulder to the right. Falling 33 feet and landing on a dry rock would be horrible. The risk seemed too great. Many paddlers run this drop regularly, but it wasn't my time yet. My little voice sent me portaging again at Big Boy. Maybe one day!

The amazing fall rains kept pouring and a week later Matt and I had our chance at Mill Creek Falls. This waterfall is huge! A 10-foot boof leads into an eight-foot boof, which lands on a 45-foot slide/drop. This rapid has only been run a few times. The pool is deep, but the entrance is tricky. The first time I scouted this drop I couldn't imagine paddling it. The encouragement came with a low water hike. I spent several hours climbing the waterfall and swimming the pool. After a heavy night of thunderstorms in the Cohuttas it was time. We met at 7:00 a.m. and set shuttle. The waterfall is only a short distance from the put-in. We hopped out to scout and my little voice gave a thumbs-up. Walking back to the top I actually felt calm. The nervous energy of running a waterfall was replaced with the focus of scouting a rapid. I went over the sequence in my mind: boof left, boof left, keep it straight, spot landing, throw paddle and tuck! Peeling out at the top I stayed focused on connecting the dots. Everything went according to plan!



Jeff West eliminates the paddle threat on Mill Creek Falls, Georgia

Photo by Russell Hobby

I plugged into the pool at the bottom and surfaced upright and smiling. Matt flew off a few minutes later with a great line. That drop will keep us smiling for a few weeks!

I am no expert on waterfall hucking, but I can tell you it is loads of fun! Setting and pursuing individual goals is one of the greatest parts of our sport. Dropping a waterfall is certainly an exciting way to push your limits. I recently saw a picture of the three-foot drop I ran in my Mirage years ago. I can still remember how scared I was above that seemingly enormous drop back then. It's funny how we all have an evolving idea of what the edge of the world looks like.

Creeking



Little Paddler, Big Creek

By Lauren Burruss

After camping at the put-in for almost a week we finally got the opportunity to run Upper Big Creek. Even though the three-mile hike to the put-in seemed to take forever (the creek boat on my shoulder didn't help), it was definitely worth it! After about a half mile of Class IV boogie water the run gets a little more technical with a couple of drops, and a few things you would need to scout, like trees across the river. But it's pretty mellow until you get to Midnight Hole, then it starts losing elevation, and drops into Action Alley, the steepest section on the run. It's filled with slots, boofs, and a couple of sketchy undercuts, but is still probably the funnest section on the run! After Action Alley Big Creek drops down again and goes back to Class IV, and eventually ends up at the take-out.

Once we got to the bridge (take-out), dad decided to go swimming and bring me with him. After dad dunking me under a few times and me attempting to

body slam him, we realized dad's yellow kayak wasn't on shore anymore! We of course instinctively (having experience with a missing boat before) looked down stream, and there it was maneuvering its way through the rapids along with dad's new paddle stuck in the cockpit! We start swimming towards it, and luckily it decided to eddy out at just the right time. Being really happy that we weren't going to have to chase this boat (and paddle) half way down the lower section of Big Creek, we threw it up on shore. Then dad decided to have another dunking contest, which he won, again.

The run was a great reminder of how much I missed Tennessee while I was in Colorado. And I have to say the change in climate was very nice! Much, much warmer! All in all, Big Creek was a nice reintroduction to Southeast creeking. I can't wait for more!



Lauren Burruss and Dad on Big Creek

Photo by Kathleen Burruss

Riverboard on Thunder Creek

By Rochelle Parry

You know you're out in the wilderness when the Verizon network gave up on you 20 miles back, but even though it works only sporadically in the city, AT&T manages to find a signal. I wasn't sure I would get to riverboard Thunder Creek when I left home on Friday, August 7th. Video footage (<http://vimeo.com/310265>) had provided a lust-worthy tease, and the levels were excellent.

Diablo Lake provides breathtaking mountain scenery and emerald colored water. Thunder Creek flows into it, feeding off the melting glaciers above. Friday night I camped with the Washington Recreational River Runners, boaters who take recreation seriously. The eight-mile stretch on the Skagit River for the Saturday poker run had a couple of short, easy Class III sections, lots of flat water, and even in two wetsuits, I was cold by the take-out. I had managed a good enough hand for a Hail Mary throw bag, and also got a kayaker hooked on riverboarding.

Ian, a Colorado-based paddler, joined us for the Skagit run and provided a link—via AT&T cellular—to the Bellingham boaters who had hinted at running Thunder Creek. He camped at the trailhead campground and I met up with him Sunday morning. By 10:30 am, we had ten boaters readying their gear: Dirk Fabian, Eric Mickelson, Ian Hunter, Hilary Neevel, Chris Tretwold, Rochelle Parry, Erik Zydervelt, Leif Embertson, Hale Hanaway, and Shane Robinson.

A riverboard weighs under 10 lbs. and isn't too hard to carry without additional straps. A kayak alone is 45 lbs., and requires a special backpack. Which would you rather carry for four miles? Chris showed up with almost visible post-birthday Tequila residue and offered to trade crafts with me two miles in. Fat chance.

I was one of two ladies on this outing,

but the only riverboarder, and to my knowledge the first to attempt Thunder Creek. I was excited to catch the action on my helmet camera, but alas, the batteries drained when I accidentally left the power on during the hike in. I captured a few rapids, but the best occurred after it died. The aquamarine water was refreshing after the hike and 50 yards of log-hopping down a hillside of old growth forest. If I'd known how much scouting/portaging we'd do, I would have just worn the 5 mil wetsuit without the farmer over it.

We jumped into a big eddy at the base of a cascade. The first few drops weren't too critical but I was tired from hiking in a wetsuit. On the trail I could easily have lay down and slept. The double Nooksak run on Thursday, cross-fit classes Thursday and Friday mornings, and the frozen 8 miler on the Skagit left me a bit low on energy. Which affected my decision, with nine others, to portage the first burly waterfall. Trials is at least 10 to 15 feet of narrowing madness with a bumpy lead-in and a cave behind. Leif Embertson disappeared for a good four seconds and took three tries to right himself in the aerated mess below. And he's one of the strongest in our group. I wasn't really afraid of the drop, more of what might happen afterwards. Getting sucked behind the falls isn't my idea of a good time.

The next series of drops, Dim Sum, provide the reward for the hike. Chopstix is appropriately named: whitened trees criss cross over the gorge 10-20 feet above with one log only a foot or two over the water, necessitating a limbo or roll move in a kayak. The next ledge is a 10-footer, followed by a 25-foot-long pool and then another drop.

Just after the drops there is a rooster-tail shaped rock creating a launch pad over a ledge. It looks really freaky because you can see the rock protruding vertically about four feet high, but the right side was runnable. Total launch slide, so fun to riverboard I couldn't help but hoot about it for a minute afterwards.

A tricky spot came up when what looked

like the obvious line had a retentive hole at the bottom. The froth was tilting backwards in an obvious manner. The left line was a boof off about two inches of water jutting out from a horizontal rock. Scrape city! Hole or scrape. There looked like a sneak line to the left of the boof with an eddy above, but from the other side of the river it looked really narrow. I ferried across to the eddy and looked over, it was perfect and clean! I backed up a bit and came down the four footer smooth, avoiding the perpendicular tree along the left side. Ahhhhhh....

One side benefit to all of the hiking, scouting, and portaging was the ample huckleberries and blueberries along the way. The blueberries weren't as sweet as they could be (it was only August) but I ate a bunch anyway.

The rest of the creek was read 'n run until we had to portage another log jam. I didn't bother taking off my flippers for the five-minute hike. Below that was at least 200 yards of flatwater back to the campground. I lay on my back on the board and stared at the sky, slowly drifting toward the lake. How could I have never come up here before to enjoy all this God-created glory? The area had everything; lakes, trees, glacier-speckled peaks, and that day, the sun even came out. A headwind brought me to a stand still. Time to flip over, ignore my aching everything, and get back to land to end the four-mile creek run 3 ½ hours later.

Rochelle Parry started riverboarding in 2005. If you'd like to try riverboarding in Washington please contact her at Rochelle@facelevel.com or visit her site at www.erverboarding.com



*Top: Hiking into Thunder Creek. Rochelle Parry, Chris Tretwold,
Erik Zydervelt*

Bottom: Leif on Trials Falls

Photos by Eric Michelson



Creeking

Racing Daylight

By Eric Adsit

"The ledges are running, leaving at 2."

The LCD screen on my phone seemed much clearer than the chicken scratch on the chalkboard at the front of the room. And so the current of time slows for the first time today.

Four hours and three yawn punctuated classes later I stride away from the bustle of students, grades, and faculty to another world, veiled by the mist in the mountains. Time resumes its trickle forward steadily. Only a few minutes more and I'll have my kayak loaded on the car, my gear packed, and we'll be on our way. But no, it never works like that. People arrive late, lethargically collecting personal gear, like boulders slowly settling into the riverbed. Time wells up around these boulders and rushes through the gaps, simultaneously slowing down and flitting away. And so I sit, kayak loaded, gear packed, waiting. Every second we wait is a second we could be on the river. In the late afternoon on a rainy November day in Vermont, daylight slips away quickly.

I drift away in my own thoughts, the nervous excitement filling the car pervading only occasionally. Names of not-so-far-off magical places swirl around me, evoking half memories and dreams of glistening rocks and roiling whitewater, a sense of solitude and focus enwrapped in one.

"The ledges will be too high, we should do Patterson Brook."

"But that's an extra half hour and on the west side of the mountain; we'd never make it down in time."

"What about the Lower New Haven? We can look at the ledges and then run the lower before we run out of daylight. It's on the east side too, so we'll have extra light."

It's settled. The sun's rays peek through the clouds, beautiful spotlights highlighting



the Adirondack mountains across the lake, but their angle says something more. We're running out of daylight, and we aren't even on the river yet. Getting dressed in the car is awkward but it will save time at the put-in. I wonder what exactly the Vermont seatbelt laws say about changing into polar fleece and polypropylene in the back of a moving vehicle. We squeeze out of the car, breathing in the clear mountain air, infused with the smell of unwashed gear. It's colder here, and I'm glad I wore a second layer. I've stood in this exact spot each week for the past three weeks, and each week it is foreign to me. Islands of rock and sediment are turned to explosions of white, wave trains crash against boulders, and the babbling laughing stream that once was here throws a tantrum at my feet. You can smell it, you can taste it, and you can see it; but most of all you feel the soul of the river, shaking the ground below and permeating your lungs through the air. If ever there were a connection among all people, it is the awe we feel in the face of moving water.

Calmly I look down the slope to the mass of water spread out before me, brown tinged with sediment and debris. It's bigger, stronger, just what I was looking for. I can do this, I am confident, ready. But the others. This isn't my trip, it's a trip

Sometimes the current of time slows and bubbles up. Other times it streams away faster than you can see

Photo by Eric Adsit

for the group. They cast dubious glances at the river, not wanting to say they are uncomfortable. They know just as well as I do that this is a proving ground for the advanced boaters, and their decision will determine what we run today. They don't say anything, and a light breeze on the back of our necks reminds us of the fading daylight. We make the decision for them, we'll run the lower half of the ledges and kayak the rest of the river to the lower take-out. Every trip is a delicate balance in determining the development of a paddler, and a rushed run down a borderline Class V creek won't benefit anyone here. It will run again. I turn away from the staircase of white before me and readjust my lifejacket. The first rapid starts with a few boulders to sneak by and then drops in a slight arc downward and away to the right. I'm first, and I savor the freedom. My route shall be entirely my own, obscured only by my own definition of what is possible. Accelerating down the slide I ramp up on the face of a standing wave, a large hole below me. It's happened twice as fast as last time, and suddenly I'm gasping my last breath

for who knows how long and everything goes dark.

You don't notice the roar until it's gone. Down here, in the darkness everything is quiet. My mind wanders as my arms bring the paddle to the surface, flatten the blade against the surface, wait... wait... there has to be resistance against the blade. Now. Jerking my hips to the right, I drop my head down and complete the reflex I have learned from years of practice. The roar returns, and I shake the water from my eyes. It's cold and I can feel my nerves tingling. Fifty yards ahead of me cliffs loom overhead and mist raises to eyelevel from 15 feet below. I sidesurf a hole above the drop, doing spins and digging deep when I've had enough. Everyone is here, nervously shifting around in the swirling eddy above the lip. A small group has gathered alongside the shore to watch us in our partially controlled freefall. I paddle toward the edge, looking up at the spectators. What separates us from them? Do they think we're crazy? Entertainment? I want to break the barrier, call out to them, reach them somehow, and let them understand what we know. They swirl away in the mist and in my freefall the distance grows, physically and ethereally. In the blink of an eye I have descended into a consciousness shared only by those who experience the soul of a river. I look back up at the people watching above, mothers holding children tight as they peer over the edge, a few teenagers contemplating their own descent in tubes, and an old man, remembering his lost youth. The mist blows into my eyes and they are lost. It's not too late for them, but I won't be here when they come, for my path lies downstream, beyond the next horizon line.

It's all a blur. White waves crashing down, rocks obstructing the best path, and always the current, pushing ahead. Never resting, never pausing. Someone flips, rolls up and immediately disappears below the horizon. Is he ok? Will he get surfed? How much time do we give him? Each question widens the river of time streaming away. One by one we drop over the edge, into the unknown, hoping the previous person has made it through alright. I'm last, and I paddle slowly to the edge, lifting my

bow up and landing flat to see everyone in the eddy to my left. Good, but why is there someone standing up in the water? The paddler has all of his gear and quickly empties his boat. The only thing left is to make sure the people who decided to portage make it into their boats. The last major drop is ahead of us, from here it will be comparably easy, a Class III run ... in the daylight.

Another swim. It's been two hours and twenty minutes since we began our trip. The sun will set in twenty minutes, it's overcast, and we have nearly three miles to paddle before we reach our vehicles. I drop over a slide sideways and feel myself getting sucked into a hole. No problem, I'll surf this one out just like the one above the waterfall. I feel stable, I'm not bouncing unpredictably, and as I look around I notice a flat seam along the edge of my boat. A smooth uniform ledge is creating this, and my only chance to surf out is to cross the worst part of the hole backwards and spin out. I have minutes, hours, days to contemplate my options, to execute the moves. Not enough blade angle. My paddle, and the support keeping me in the realm of oxygen, slips deep under the surface. My first instinct is to roll, but I feel a force pulling on my paddle. The green water! I'm saved by the current moving downstream beneath the surface. Fighting my will to breathe, I remain upside down as the current of time sweeps and billows around in a pool, slowing everything. Finally, I roll up and catch an eddy. Patting my head with my hand I let the others know I'm ok.

My second surf in a hole today, although this one was unintentional. A kayaker from another group comes down to the water's edge to watch us. It's getting dark fast and I'm concerned about making it to the take-out. As the others bounce down the boulders and slides I ask him if we can get a ride to the take-out. He gladly nods his head. He knows too that we will be paddling in the dark if we don't hurry. I call the trip leader over and ask if he thinks we should get out here.

"No, we have time."

We both know this is untrue. What is he thinking? I won't argue; that would only send the current of time careening forward faster, and at this point it is almost a breakneck pace. We take off, speeding around the meandering streambed, peering warily around the bends for tree branches in the river. At some point the group divides into two groups of four, and then we diverge into groups of two. The feeling of solitude creeps back in the waning light. On the road above, ethereal lights flash by, the only evidence of those other people, the ones who don't understand. It's strange seeing headlights as I float by. I'm a ghost of the past, lost in the ripple of time and the lights pass unaware of my presence. We are in different realms, these mystical lights in the fog above and I, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

White highlights roll out ahead of me. Beyond them are indistinguishable shadows melding into one another. The very thing that makes this difficult is guiding me along my way. Cold mounds of water pile up against the fluid darkness. Is it a boulder, or just a wave? Even the rushing of the water is disorienting. It echoes, magnified by the darkness, emanating from all points. This one is a rock! Something is different; it's a little more solid this time. I pull a desperate stroke on my right and raise my bow up and over the obstruction. It's another close call, and the reason my nerves tingle electrically. On my right a hill rises above me, faintly outlined by the cobalt sky. Spectral bodies of scrapped cars loom out of the darkness on the hillside, a reminder of time's constant flow. It's another world here, another time.

When we reach the take-out I realize it was never a race against daylight. As simply as water moves downstream, time continues into the future, uncontrolled and inexorable. In the end we must accept time's path for what it is, and embrace it much the same as we embrace the force of gravity on water. Embracing the night, I lean back, close my eyes, and feel the cold flow of time through my fingertips and away over the boulders.

Creeking



First Descent of Río Chínipas - A To Be Class IV Mexican Classic

By Rocky Contos

It is the eighth morning of our first descent of the Ríos Huevachic-Charuyvo-Chínipas, and we are very happy to be paddling the lower section of river that has a more moderate gradient (here, called Río Chínipas). At this point, we are in a gorge section located >more than 3000 feet below the rim where the village of Gasogachi is located. So far it is meeting my expectation, an excellent Class IV river that all other advanced paddlers coming to the Copper Canyon area will want to do. It has a pretty good flow (average 3000 cfs in August), a gorgeous canyon, tons of challenging and fun Class III-IV rapids, fine camps, clean water, no trash, comfortable summer weather, and short

or long sections to do. The only question we face now is whether the remainder of the river will be as nice as what we've already seen.

Geographic Details of Río Chínipas

Río Chínipas is a major river that flows west and south to join Río Fuerte downstream of the confluence with Río Urique, but upstream of the city of El Fuerte. The headwaters of Río Chínipas are in the region just west of Creel, the main mountain outpost town for explorers of the Copper Canyon area. Most people

familiar with the area know that the train stops at Divisadero, a point on the rim from where tourists can peer down into Río Urique in the Copper Canyon. What most people don't know is that Río Oteros-Chínipas is the bigger river on the other side of the tracks, carving a canyon nearly as deep and passing through beautiful remote terrain. Río Chínipas has up to 102 miles of Class III-IV whitewater to float, and is similar to the Tuolumne River in California in volume. There are three main upper branches, each with its own Class V run: Río Oteros (the longest), Río Huevachi-Charuyvo, and Río Maguarichi. All three of the upper branches join within 1 km of each other, at a point that can be

Tom Diegel mockingly named this rapid "Rocky's Class IV" - it may have been a Class V

Photo by Rocky Contos

accessed by dirt road. The Main Chínipas starts at the upper confluence where Ríos Maguarichi and Charuyvo join. About 60 miles downstream, the river passes by Chínipas, the town that gives the river its name. This town is another access point and divides the river into upper and lower sections.

The Confluences Section

We camped at the Río Maguarichi-Charuyvo confluence on our first descent trip, after six days of physically and mentally exhausting paddling/portaging down Río Huevachic-Charuyvo. Although tired, I still found the energy to hike for a couple of hours up to a higher point so I could see into the gorge below and view Río Oteros (only 1 km downstream of our camp), which sports a chasm of greater than 250 feet/mile several kilometers upstream. While I couldn't see Río Oteros on my hike, I could see the next rapid that we were to face downstream: apparently a Class IV that led into a pool and gorgy section. I returned to camp and relayed the observation to my partners: Tom Diegel, Tom Meinholz, and Aaron Stabel.

When we arrived at that rapid, it looked worse at river level, with the last hole having

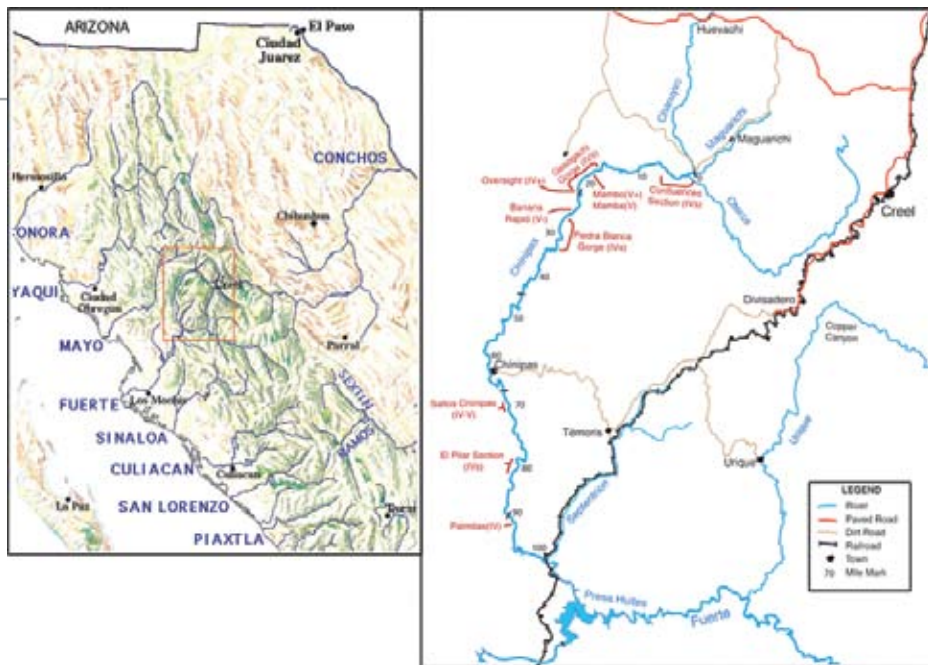
a sticky recirculation. Tom D thought this was Class V. agreed might He mockingly named the rapid "Rocky's Class IV." sympathized with its true y. At this point no one want a potential swim in the hole so we did the simple portage and moved on, running two more Class III-IV rapids to Río Oteros. Río Oteros was tumbling down to the confluence in a Class V rapid by a footbridge, and doubled the flow to about 2500 cfs. For the next four miles, we ran a number of fun Class III and IV rapids, some in a red-walled gorge where several prospectors seemed to be camped (the Sierra Madre here is known for its

silver, gold, and copper mines).

Later that afternoon, in another section of Class III-IV rapids, the rain started pouring down on us. This was more a pleasure than nuisance, since it was still warm and we were all decked-out in our paddling gear. It only lasted about 30 minutes, as do most summer thundershowers in that area. This brings up another aspect of this river and others in the region: their season. They are fed from rain that usually falls from monsoon-type thundershowers in the summer. The most reliable month for good flows is August, followed by September and July.

The Gasogachi Gorge

One of the highlight sections of this river is the "Gasogachi Gorge," below the village of the same name that sits high above the river. The walls closed in and we were confronted with two major Class V rapids, the first of which I dubbed "Mambo." I was probably thinking more of the venomous "mamba" snake than the Cuban dance at the time, but even after bestowing the label, I decided it still made sense if you think about "dancing with the water" through the rapid, but being bitten really badly if you mess up. I suppose the second one could be called "Mamba." These two Class Vs are



View into Rio Chínipas Canyon just before the confluence with Río Oteros

Photo by Rocky Contos

Creeking

easily portaged, and would live up a trip for expert boaters willing to tackle them. They could be considered equivalents to the Class V Clavey Falls on the Tuolumne, although Mambo is more difficult. Soon after these rapids, we made our seventh camp (21 miles into the run), which is where this story began.

So, what is the river like downstream of our seventh camp? Class III rapids continue as the walls of the Gasogachic Gorge gradually recede, and then we come to another Class IV, “Oversight,” that appears from a scout at the top to be nothing more than big waves all the way down. I send Tom D down armed with this information, but he hits a hidden hole, backenders and flips, and then rights himself only to get thrashed around in another hole. I say to myself, “Oops!!! Very, very sorry Tomster!!!” It does make for amusing video. He is furious, though, and I apologize profusely.

The Piedra Blanca Gorge

We come to two more big rapids with boulders in the river of IV+ and V-difficulty. The second has bananas growing by it, so I refer to it as “Banana Rapid.” The line requires starting on the right side of the river and running a drop aiming toward the center, and then riding down the center main channel in a rushing flume of water. The danger is if you don’t make it to the center channel, a sieve on the right side could be problematic. I run it first without problems, and then Tom M goes, spinning around in the upper drop but gathering himself well and making it to the center channel fine. The other guys portage. [We don’t know it at the time, but this is the last Class V of the trip, 25 miles downstream of the confluences.]

These rapids lead down to another footbridge and gorge section with whitish bedrock, so I refer to it as the “Piedra Blanca Gorge.” Here we find three miles of fun and squirrely Class III-IV water. The river then goes through a Class III section, a Class II section, and finally a long Class I section down to Chínipas. Aaron takes off his helmet and jacket and laments not having a faster boat for the “flatwater.” In my mind, the “flatwater” will really start

when we hit the reservoir in another day or two. This section of free flowing river scoots us along quickly. Since we are behind schedule by two full days due to the portages on Río Huevachic, we paddle the rest of the day, making the 40 miles to the town of Chínipas late in the afternoon.

The Town of Chínipas

It is usually a pleasure to arrive in a small Mexican town after a wilderness journey of a week or more, and Chínipas is no exception. Some friendly local people cheer us—we’re the first boaters they’ve ever seen on their river—and deliver us to the center of town. We decide to stay the night in the hotel, and amble over to the restaurant for dinner. We practically clean them out with our ravished appetites, prompting them to fetch more food. We learn that a bus goes up to the train station in Témoris in the morning, providing a convenient way to end the trip. The other guys decide to end the trip short, their main reasons: (1) being mentally and physically beaten from the Huevachic portion of the trip, (2) not digging the Class I-II section of river near Chínipas that they believe may continue on to the end, (3) not wanting a potentially lengthy paddle out on the reservoir to the train stop at Palo Dulce, and (4) being behind schedule, they want to be sure they can make it to their reserved flights back to the US. The next morning, I try to get them situated on the bus with their boats, but to no avail – there’s not enough room. Fortunately, we find a guy who will drive them up there in his pickup for about twice as much money as the bus would have cost (still only \$50). That is another great thing about traipsing around in little in rural Mexican towns: you can usually find someone to help get you around, even if it takes them out of their way. Tom M later relates to me that the vistas were spectacular on the sinuous road that climbs 3500 feet up an over the mountains. They eventually get back to Tom’s van in Creel and return to the US through El Paso.

The Lower Chínipas

I launch solo on the remaining 41 miles of the Lower Chínipas.” The townspeople warn me that there are some big “saltos” or drops/jumps/falls in the river downstream.

One guy says there is a drop of 20 feet! In about six miles the walls do close in and I come upon the two Saltos Chínipas.” They are Class V rapids in the main channels, but with easier Class III-IV sneak routes that I run. The river now has about 4000 cfs of muddy water and feels similar to the Colorado’s Westwater Canyon. The lower Chínipas gorge has several hot springs in it, another two-mile section of great Class IV rapids (El Pilar Section), and then a long section of fun Class III rapids through an amazing canyon. At Arroyo Las Palmitas, I come upon one more easy Class IV rapid, from which I can see the high water mark of the reservoir. I get to enjoy two more Class III rapids before the real “flatwater” begins, then I paddle the nine miles to the train stop at Palo Dulce, passing through a gorge section where the vertical walls rise hundreds of feet directly from the lake, only 60 feet apart. They must have drowned one amazing section of river here (and only in the late 1990s).

The Copper Canyon Train

One last interesting aspect of this trip is the Copper Canyon train that can facilitate shuttles. This train line is the only one remaining in Mexico that continues to operate passenger service. It goes from Los Mochis to Chihuahua, crossing Río Chínipas by its junction with Río Septentrion under the backwaters of Presa Huites. Up higher, the train runs between Ríos Oteros and Urique, stopping by the lookout at Divisadero. On this trip, we found out that they recently stopped trailing the cargo car, complicating the shuttle of hard kayaks. However, we still managed to get our boats to our destinations.

In conclusion, Río Chínipas does end up being an incredible Class IV journey all the way down to its terminus on Presa Huites. True, there are a few Class V rapids, but that is typical of many rivers that are considered “Classic” Class IV runs. The few Class Vs give perspective to paddlers and excitement to experts, but since they can be portaged, should not present too much of a hassle for advanced boaters looking for a fun trip that is not scary.

For additional information (more photos, video, and a soon-to-be-printed guidebook), see www.sierrarios.org

Josh Anderson below Tarnation Rapid

Photo by Daniel Anderson



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

In 1971 Graham Mackereth started building fiberglass slalom kayaks in his family's garage. From this small start, Pyranha has grown to be a leader in whitewater kayaks worldwide. Today, Pyranha remains a small company of enthusiasts dedicated to bringing you the best whitewater kayaks on the market.

Every Pyranha kayak is a team effort. We've built a global team of paddlers and dealers whose feedback helps shape our boats. We've supported numerous world class expeditions. We've researched, tested, prototyped and developed our boats year after year to make sure that you get the most out of your day on the river. Our bottom line is the same as your bottom line--having fun on the water.

To have fun on the water you need clean rivers to paddle and access to whitewater runs. This is why Pyranha is proud to partner with American Whitewater. AW's mission of river stewardship, access advocacy and safety outreach is a vital part of our continued ability to enjoy whitewater paddling. Thanks to AW for helping to preserve whitewater rivers for everyone.



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

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

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

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

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

CONTACT INFORMATION

☐ New Member ☐ Renewing Member

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone () _____ Email _____

*Note: American Whitewater will never share your information with others

MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

☐ \$35 Standard

☐ \$25 Affiliate Club Member

Club: _____

☐ \$25 Student

School: _____

☐ \$50 Family

☐ \$100 Ender Club

Shirt Size: _____

☐ \$250 Platinum Paddler

☐ \$500 Explorer

☐ \$750 Lifetime

☐ \$1,000 Legacy

☐ \$2,500 Steward

DONATE

☐ Donation of \$ _____

DISCOUNT SUBSCRIPTIONS

☐ \$30.00 Kayak Session Magazine (Save \$5)

☐ \$40.00 Lunch Video Magazine (Quarterly DVD) (Save \$8)

JOURNAL OPTIONS

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

PAYMENT INFORMATION

☐ Cash

☐ Check # _____

☐ Credit Card ☐ MC ☐ Visa ☐ Disc ☐ AMEX

Card Number: _____ Exp Date: _____

Name on card: _____

Signature: _____

July 2009

SAVING RIVERS SINCE 1954



Affiliate Clubs

American Whitewater would like to recognize the Greater Baltimore Canoe Club located in Baltimore, Maryland as an outstanding Affiliate Club and long time supporter of our mission to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely. The Greater Baltimore Canoe Club consists of members of all skill levels, from novices through advanced paddlers with a diverse range of interests including canoe camping, sea kayaking, scenic and relaxing easy moving water, fun intermediate whitewater, and advanced adrenaline rushes.

The GBCC offers beginner kayak and canoe classes to members. Both classes are an excellent introduction to flat or whitewater paddling and provide participants with the basic strokes and how to control their boat on flat water. These skills are then applied when learning the techniques for moving water. The classes are a lot of fun and a great way to try out the sport. The advanced whitewater class is for intermediate skilled people looking to try harder rivers with the guidance of experienced paddlers. An additional safety class provides knowledge that everyone can use.

Membership in the GBCC provides the opportunity to meet many paddlers and to participate in coordinated trips throughout the year. Many of the trips are in the Greater Baltimore area, as well as frequent trips in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and West Virginia. The club holds meetings every other month and the meetings feature interesting speakers relevant to paddling.

Every year the GBCC runs a river clean-up to improve our local resources and we donate money each year to several local environmental groups. The organizations are chosen for their specific interest in boating and rivers.

Yearly dues are an affordable \$20. To learn more about the Greater Baltimore Canoe Club or to join, check out their website at <http://www.baltimorecanoeclub.org/>. And remember, current members of the GBCC receive a \$10 discount off their AW membership.

Thanks GBCC for your continued support of American Whitewater!

It's Easy to Support AW!

American Whitewater is proud of the work we have accomplished in our stewardship program but we need your help to sustain our success. Your support through membership and donations enables our staff to be active and engaged in the process of river stewardship. Donations don't have to be large; each person doing a small part makes a noticeable difference. Many donors fail to take full advantage of federal tax incentives specifically intended to encourage charitable contributions. Such incentives often enable a donor to make a larger gift to AW at little or no additional cost. For more information about maximizing your gift visit the IRS website dedicated to charitable organizations.

American Whitewater is a national non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, EIN# 23-7083760. To learn more about the Giving Options below, contact us at 866-BOAT4AW or visit the "Donate" link under "Support AW" on our website at www.americanwhitewater.org.

- **Donate online today!**
- **Monthly Giving:** Contribute a minimum of \$10 via credit card or electronic transfer from your bank account.
- **Bequests:** Include AW in your will or living trust. Bequests to AW are generally exempt from federal or state inheritance taxes, and subject to an unlimited deduction.
- **Combined Federal Campaign:** Federal employees including federal civilians, military personnel and U.S. Postal Workers can donate to AW through the CFC a once a year charitable fund raising program. Look for AW (Agency #11351) in the official CFC listing of eligible donors.
- **Charitable Remainder Trusts:** Convert a highly appreciated asset (such as real estate or stocks) into a lifetime income while minimizing income and estate taxes.
- **Employer Matching:** Many employers will match your donations to non-profit organizations. This includes membership payments, as well as additional contributions. Check to see if your employer has a matching program.
- **MissionFish:** Sell your items through the MissionFish program on eBay and the proceeds come directly to AW.
- **Other Assets:** A gift of real estate to AW qualifies you for a tax deduction based on the property's fair market value. If it is not a river access point, AW will sell the property and use the proceeds to protect access and restore rivers. Acceptance of property is subject to certain conditions. You may also be eligible to receive tax benefits for gifts of real property. Art and jewelry are examples of personal property items that may be eligible. Interested donors should check with your financial and tax advisors and AW on the feasibility and tax considerations of such gifts.
- **Securities:** Donating appreciated stock to AW benefits both the donor and whitewater rivers. The donor receives two tax-related benefits. First, the gain on the stock is not subject to capital gains taxes. Second, the donor can deduct the value of the stock as a charitable contribution.
- **United Way:** All federal campaigns, and a few of the local campaigns will allow you to donate to AW. AW's UNITED WAY member # is 2302.
- **Vehicle Donations:** Turn that extra car, truck, or RV into a tax deductible donation benefiting AW.

Creeking

A Southern Creekin' Road Trip

By Mikel Carr

This story started with the intention of helping our good buddy Brandon prepare for an upcoming trip down the Colorado River through the great Grand Cannon. The plan was to make a three-day voyage on the New River with the climactic third day on the gorge. However, the rains came, and as so often happens in the lives of boaters, plans changed. As the New rose to levels in excess of 14 feet we began to question the intelligence of running this stretch of river at levels none of had ever seen before and with boats weighted down with 30 lbs or so of gear.

Instead, the crew gathered early Friday morning at Brandon's house to make plans for Friday, at least. Boats and gear loaded, Brandon Dale, Jason Bordwine, Dan Pettingill, and I hit the road south to North Carolina. The four of us decided to make our personal first descents of the Big Laurel Creek, a tributary of the French Broad River. The run began with a couple of miles of Class II boogie water and then finally peaked with about four quality Class III/III+ rapids.

After the confluence of the Big Laurel and the French Broad we got to finish our run with the last two rapids of the French Broad before setting shuttle for the second float of the day. Since we had planned for an expedition, we decided to load the boats with our gear and put on the French Broad, which, by the way, was running a very beefy 10,000 cfs. We paddled a few miles and found a nice island in the middle of the roaring river to make camp for the evening. With camp set and wet clothes replaced with dry, we broke out the wine and spirits and enjoyed a nice warm campfire on an evening where the Milky Way clearly lit the sky. We even saw a few shooting stars while we listened to the roar of the river rush by on all sides.

We woke early on Saturday, broke camp, and set out into the low-lying fog for the

short paddle to the take-out at Stackhouse. After checking the gauges, we decided to head north to Tennessee to the Doe River Gorge. Another first descent for Brandon, Dan, and I, and a second descent for Jason. Since we weren't too familiar with the run, we enlisted Damascus/Abingdon locals Brian Picket, his wife Natalie, Michael Bianchi and Eric Hoffman to join us. With the sun shining and the temperature rising to an uncommonly beautiful November morning, we put on this incredibly beautiful and deep gorge. After a mile or so we came to a mandatory portage and immediately following the portage the good stuff began. We hit some good Class III ledges and then came to one of the first named rapids, Toaster Slot. After Toaster Slot we came to the quintessential rapid of this run, Class IV Body Snatcher. Dan dropped the second drop of the rapid and got flipped headed for the namesake hole at the bottom. Dan did, however, pull out a beautiful single bladed roll just before he dropped over the edge but in the process somehow his skirt blew out and he went over with a boat full of water and swam in the pool at the bottom. Everyone else was able to clean the rapid and Dan quickly got his things together and we finished the Doe without incident. With the day wrapped up and evening approaching, Jason, Dan, Brandon, and I bid farewell to Brian, Natalie, Michael, and Eric and headed back south to North Carolina in search of a place to lay our heads for the evening. Shortly after dark we found a nice campsite down some Forest Service road and again set camp, built a campfire, and broke out the spirits.

We woke refreshed on Sunday and headed toward the Wilson Creek Gorge, where we were elated to find the level at just above -3 inches (a good minimum level). It was another first descent for Dan (Wow, what a weekend). We put on Wilson before 9 am for our first lap on this wonderful SE classic. I must say that this is probably one of my favorite runs anywhere. We pumped out three laps on the Class IV/V Wilson, enjoying numerous no-named ledge drops. And, of course, the classics: 10-foot Falls, Triple Drop, Boat Buster, Thunder Hole, and finally Razor Back.

All-in-all, the four amigos enjoyed a phenomenal weekend of whitewater and general camaraderie. What started out as being dubbed Expedition 2009 ended up being Southeast Classics Trip 2009. I'm not sure if Brandon is better prepared for his trip to the Grand than when we started this weekend, but I am pretty sure he had some fun trying to get ready, and I'm confident he already possesses all the knowledge and capability necessary for a successful trip. In reality this whole thing was really just a good excuse for four whitewater loving friends to get together and spend three days enjoying the passion we all share. In the end isn't that really what it's all about anyway?

The Crew on Stairstep Rapid on Big Laurel Creek (NC)

Photo by Mikel Carr



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 1954 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 116 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.

A few months ago American Whitewater proudly announced the Affiliate Club recipients of the 7th Annual Clif Bar Flowing Rivers Campaign. Winners were **Jackson Hole Kayak Club** of Jackson Hole, Wyoming and **Genesee Waterways Center** of Rochester, New York with each club receiving a \$1,250 grant to go towards their respective projects.

The Jackson Hole Kayak Club's proposal was to install a set of stairs to access a section of the Snake River near the Kings Wave Rapid. This section of river has some excellent play features and is also a popular Class II/III run for beginner and expert boaters alike. The necessity for these stairs is brought about by the steep banks in this area (1200 feet per mile gradient) that make river access there very difficult. They've already completed the first section of these stairs at a cost of approximately \$8,000.

Genesee Waterways Center's proposal was based around rehabilitating an existing low-head dam feature into a potentially usable whitewater feature and improving the surrounding area for multiple types of users. Their goal was to "Eliminate a hazard that exists in an area with a lot of recreational boating use, including an upstream whitewater park, a downstream rowing facility, an increasingly used canal park that attracts many hikers, bikers and other users and a very popular fishing spot."

Several other clubs submitted some great proposals; however, we could only pick two. Some other proposals included Bluegrass Wildwater Association's proposal for a cleanup this fall on the Southeast classic Russell Fork River; Tennessee Scenic River Association's proposal for a river cleanup on the Bledsoe Creek in Tennessee; and Tennessee Valley Canoe Club's proposal to improve access to Rock Creek in Georgia.

Thanks again to all of the clubs who participated in last year's grant process. Most of all, a huge thank you goes out to Clif Bar for sponsoring this wonderful opportunity for our Affiliate Clubs to try and do their part in saving our rivers!

The AW Journal Club Affiliates by state:

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks
Nova Riverrunners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Birmingham Canoe Club, Birmingham
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus
Sequoia Paddling Club, Forestville
Sierra Club Loma Prieta, San Jose
Sierra Club SF Chapter, Livermore

Colorado

Avid4 Adventure Inc., Boulder
Colorado Whitewater Assn, Englewood
Grand Canyon Priv. Boat. Assn., Colorado Springs
Pikes Peak Whitewater Club, Colorado Springs
San Miguel Whitewater Assn, Telluride
University of Colorado Kayak Club, Boulder

Connecticut

AMC - Connecticut Chapter, Colchester

Delaware

Wilmington Trail Club Paddlers, Wilmington

Georgia

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

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W Des Moines

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Assoc., Boise

Illinois

Chicago Whitewater Assoc., Chicago
Team SICK, Carbondale

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Indianapolis
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Kentucky

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

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Topsham

Massachusetts

AMC - New Hampshire Paddlers, Hanover

Maryland

Greater Baltimore Canoe Club, Cockeysville

Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Smithsburg

Michigan

Club Sport: University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Minnesota

SCSU Outdoor Endeavors, Saint Cloud
Minnesota Canoe Asso, Minneapolis

Mississippi

Mississippi Outdoor Club, Clinton

Missouri

Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield
Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers, Intervale
Merrimack Valley Paddlers, Merrimack

New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club, Albuquerque

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady
AMC NY-NJ Chapter, New York
Colgate University, Hamilton
Genesee Waterways Center Inc., Rochester
Flow Paddlers' Club, Ontario
Hamilton College, Clinton
Housatonic Canoe & Kayak Squad, Ossining
St Lawrence University, Canton
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia
USA Paddling, West Falls
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Buffalo

N. Carolina

Base Camp Cullowhee, Cullowhee
Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Mecklenburg Regional Paddlers, Charlotte
NCSU Outing Club, Raleigh
Triad River Runners, Winston, Salem
Watauga Paddlers, Boone

Ohio

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

Oregon

Eugene Kayaker, Eugene
Face Level Industries LLC, Portland
Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
Northwest Rafters Assoc, Portland
Oregon Canoe and Kayak, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Beaverton

Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf
Blue Mountain Outfitters, Marysville
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Holtwood Hooligans, Lancaster
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Lehigh Valley Whitewater Inc., Lehigh Valley
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

S. Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

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

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston

Utah

Utah Whitewater Club, Salt Lake City

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Essex Junction

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynch Station
Canoe Cruisers Assn, Arlington
Coastal Canoeists, Blacksburg
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Richmond
FORVA, Roanoke
Hollins Outdoor Program, Roanoke
James River Float Co, Madison Heights
Paddlers for Conservation, Vienna

Washington

BEWET, Bellevue
Paddle Trails Canoe Clube, Seattle
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
The Mountaineers, Seattle
University Kayak Club, Seattle
Venturing Crew 360, Snohomish
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
Sierra Club / John Muir Chapter, Madison

Discounted AW Membership for Affiliate Club Members

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

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

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

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

Join American Whitewater as a Club Affiliate!

10 Reasons to Join AW as an Affiliate Club

1. 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 2009 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@americanwhitewater.org

Send your material to:

Journal Editor
P.O. Box 1540

Cullowhee, NC 28723

E-mail: editor@americanwhitewater.org

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a river canyon with steep, rocky walls and a river flowing through it. The American Whitewater logo, consisting of the letters 'AW' in a stylized green and white font, is positioned in the top left corner. To the right of the logo, the words 'AMERICAN WHITewater' are written in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

AMERICAN WHITewater

**Contribute your text and photos
to American Whitewater**

Issue	Deadline	General Theme
Jan-Feb 2010	October 26, 2009	Creeking
Mar-Apr 2010	December 21, 2009	Intro to Whitewater
May-June 2010	February 25, 2010	Boating Beyond Your Youth
July-Aug 2010	April 26, 2010	International Paddling
Sep-Oct 2010	June 25, 2010	Wilderness Boating
Nov-Dec 2010	August 11, 2010	Story and Photo Contest

americanwhitewater.org > Library > AW Journal, for details





Px MY PADDLE PRESCRIPTION

PADDLER: John Grace

HEIGHT: 5'11"

OCCUPATION: Video Guru



I choose to support American Whitewater through the Healthy Waters Program.

Paddling forces me to focus, and the confusion of life subsides for a bit. My perfect fit ►

— John Grace

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STD. DIAMETER

WHAT'S YOUR PADDLE PRESCRIPTION?

Discover your custom fit paddle

- ◀ increase your performance
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Werner offers advanced design features with a variety of fit options to help you choose a truly custom fit paddle. Your custom fit paddle is waiting for you.

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Fit Guide: Answer a few questions and discover your custom fit Werner paddle.



WERNERTV: Hear what real people are saying about their love for Werner paddles.



HealthyWaters:

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