



AMERICAN WHITEWATER

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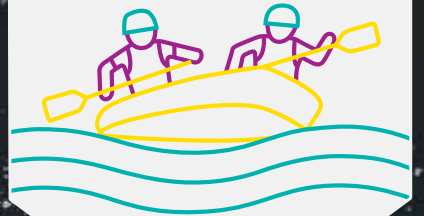
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

American Whitewater Journal Mar/Apr 2019 – Volume 59 – Issue 2

COLUMNS

- 5 The Journey Ahead **by Mark Singleton**
36 Whitewater Accident Summary July-December 2018 **by Charlie Walbridge**

STEWARDSHIP

- 7 Public Lands Package Passes in the House! **by Evan Stafford**
9 Great Potential for New Wild and Scenic Streams in the Flathead National Forest (MT) **by Kevin Colburn**
11 First Ever New River Dries Release Schedule **by Kevin Colburn**
12 Devils Postpile to be Included in Wild and Scenic Inventory **by Theresa Simsiman**
13 Farewell to Southern Rockies Stewardship Director Nathan Fey **by Kevin Colburn**
15 A River Runs Through Us **by Noah Booth and Lili Pongracz**



FEATURE ARTICLES

RIVER VOICES

- 18 Carnegie Hero Award Medals Bestowed on Pair of Ohiopyle Kayakers for Their Lifesaving Youghiogheny River Rescue **by Scott Patton**
28 From the Cuyahoga to the Cheakamus and Back: Four Decades of River- and Creek-running in North America **by Andrew C. Gross**

MENTAL GAME

- 32 The Come Back Home **by Carin Tinney**

SAFETY

- 42 Analysis of and Suggestions for Preventing Flush Drownings **by Charlie Duffy**

POETRY

- 50 Whitewater Joy **by Norma Sims Roche**



We call this "Nathan in a Winter Bathtub." After an incredibly successful 12-year run as American Whitewater's first Colorado and Southern Rockies Stewardship Director, it's time for us to wish Nathan Fey a heart filled farewell! We will greatly miss working with Nathan and the dedication he has brought to his role, but fortunately he's not going too far and we look forward to collaborating with him in his new role as the Deputy Director of the Colorado Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry. We'd like to congratulate Nathan on this exciting new step in his career and wish him the best!

Photo by Peter Holcombe

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PURPOSE

RIVER STEWARDSHIP: AN INTEGRATED APPROACH

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

EDITORIAL DISCLAIMER

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

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

AFTER OVER A decade of stability in our stewardship staff, we are now experiencing some transition. One thing that is constant is change, and with change comes new opportunity. Our Colorado Stewardship Director, Nathan Fey, will be leaving his role at American Whitewater for a new opportunity. Nathan served in this role for the past 12 years, growing our stewardship work in the region from an ambitious new idea to a thriving and effective program that has reshaped how rivers are protected and restored in Colorado and the southern Rockies. We look forward to collaborating with him in his new role as the Deputy Director of the Colorado Office of Outdoor Recreation.

A Little History and Background on the Colorado Program

Late in 2006, a group of paddlers interested in Colorado river issues met in Buena

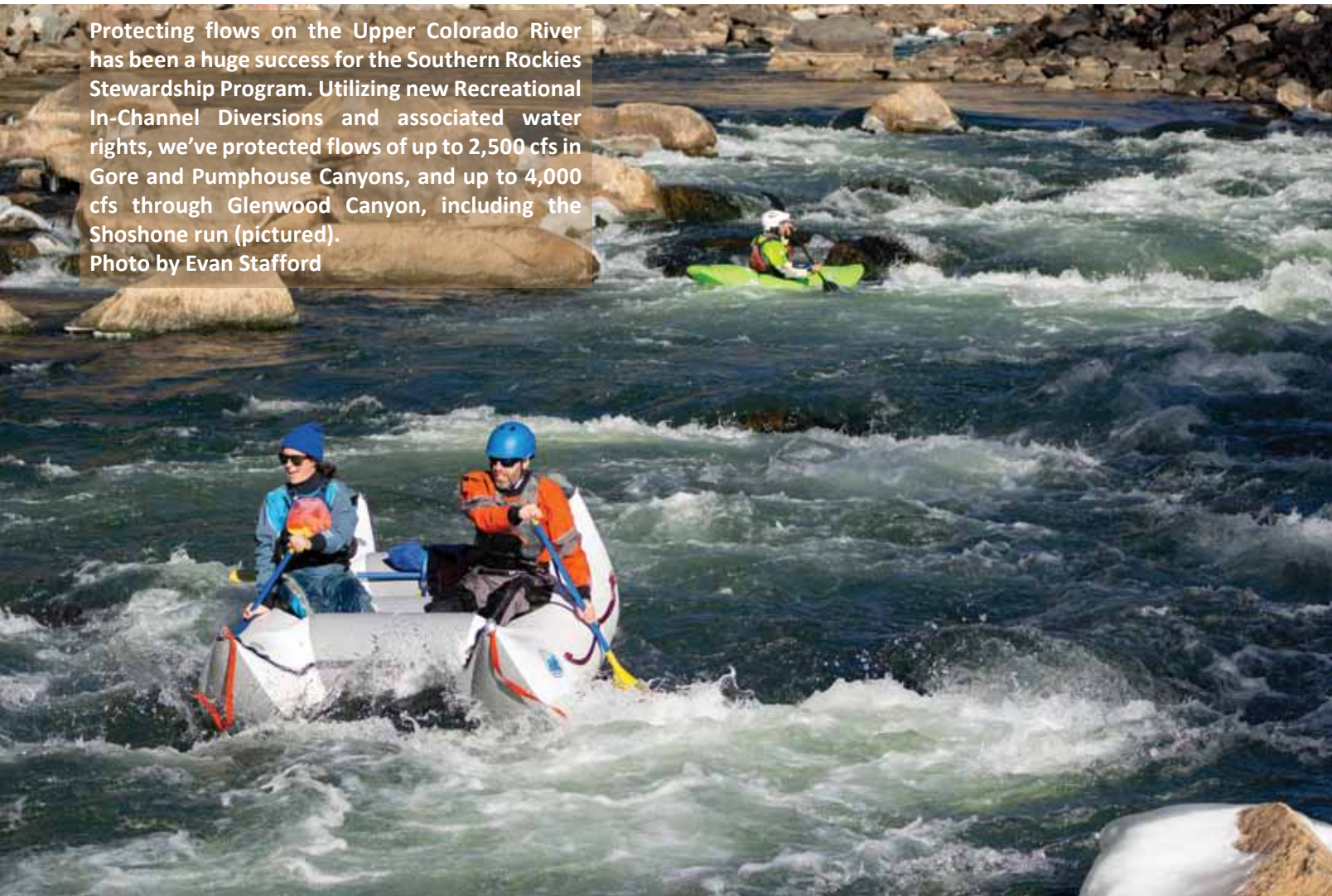
Vista, on the banks of the Arkansas River, to discuss specific needs and unique challenges rivers faced. This working group included members of the paddlesports industry, retailers, athletes, local politicians, tourism officials, water rights advocates, and attorneys. Our goal was to develop a common vision to improve the public's ability to enjoy whitewater rivers and to protect flows. At the time, Colorado was looking at ways to fill the gap in meeting water demand for communities on the Front Range. What was apparent from this meeting was that American Whitewater needed a seat at the table when water allocation discussions were taking place. Without that representation, flows that are critical for whitewater boating were going to be on the menu as a way to feed the water needs of large metro areas on the east side of the Rockies.

Out of this initial meeting came the work plan and job description for our Colorado Stewardship Director (now expanded to the southern Rockies). The first few years of the program were challenging as staff tried to find their stride. Our stewardship program at the time was largely focused on hydropower; in Colorado, water allocation was the issue. The breakthrough came when staff started using the flow study process developed for hydropower relicensing as a method for identifying flow needs in Colorado rivers. This flow study model provided good data for identifying optimal flows for recreation.

Armed with these tools, the Colorado boating community has made a huge impact in preserving and protecting flows for the future. Fast forward to the present-day, our interests are well represented and organized in a thoughtful way. Our

Protecting flows on the Upper Colorado River has been a huge success for the Southern Rockies Stewardship Program. Utilizing new Recreational In-Channel Diversions and associated water rights, we've protected flows of up to 2,500 cfs in Gore and Pumphouse Canyons, and up to 4,000 cfs through Glenwood Canyon, including the Shoshone run (pictured).

Photo by Evan Stafford



THE JOURNEY AHEAD

stewardship program is strong and making significant contributions to a focused, science-based approach to how water is allocated in the region. Other western states are likely to follow Colorado's lead in water allocation. We have one chance to get this right, and are taking the absolute best shot and bringing these discussions into the light of day.

Major Milestones of the Colorado Program

- Creating new tools that the State of Colorado now uses to define critical flow protections for recreation (Colorado's Non-consumptive Toolbox)
- Several papers co-authored with The Nature Conservancy, Colorado State University, and others on watershed and stream flow protection

- Defeating the controversial Flaming Gorge Pumpback Project in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado
- Designation of Browns Canyon National Monument on the Arkansas River
- Public access agreement to Wildcat Canyon/Cheesman Canyon with Sportsman's Paradise
- Historic flow restoration on the Dolores River through new operating guidelines for McPhee Reservoir and new release guidelines for the downstream environment
- Protection of Colorado River flows of 2500 cfs in Gore Canyon and Pumphouse, and up to 4000 cfs in Glenwood Canyon through new Recreational In-channel Diversions and associated water rights
- Preservation of high-value boating opportunities in the Upper Colorado River under a Wild and Scenic River Alternative
- A Colorado Water Plan and localized Stream Management Plans that give fair consideration to recreational use and improvements
- Replacement of a dam on the Green River (Utah) to create safe boat passage and improved habitat for native fish
- Creation of a world-class celebration of the Upper Colorado River: Gore Canyon Festival
- Completion of at least 20 flow studies that will form the scientific foundation of flow preservation for paddling and river ecology across the region
- Recognition by the Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar for his work defining river-recreation needs across the seven-state Colorado River basin,



Nathan Fey in his element. He will be missed but we wish him the best!

- The soon-to-be (we hope) Wild and Scenic River designation for Desolation and Labyrinth Canyons on the Green River

In the position of Deputy Director for Outdoor Recreation, Nathan Fey will continue to make a lasting impact on Colorado water allocation efforts. That the state of Colorado would select someone from our staff speaks volumes about the American Whitewater stewardship program. The change is bittersweet; it presents new opportunities for partnership and collaboration within the state and also presents new challenges in transition that we will overcome. We'd like to congratulate Nathan on this exciting new step in his career, and wish him the best! Plus, we look forward to working with him in his new role.

Onward,

Mark Singleton
Executive Director, American Whitewater

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PUBLIC LANDS PACKAGE PASSES IN THE HOUSE!

BY EVAN STAFFORD



The Oregon Wildlands Act, contained in this package also designates as Wild and Scenic many important tributaries of the Rogue River, and protects more than 119,000 acres of the Rogue and Molalla (pictured) Rivers as Recreation Areas.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

ON TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 26th, the House passed a multi-faceted public lands package, with 621 miles of new Wild and Scenic designations, sending it to the President's desk to become law! The Natural Resource Management Act passed in the House by a vote of 363-62. It has already passed in the Senate by a margin of 92-8. We'd like to thank our lawmakers in both the House and Senate for following through on their commitment to bring this legislation to a vote early in this Congressional session, and we commend them on a job well done. We'd also like to offer a huge thank you to our community members who reached out to their representatives in support of this historic legislation. You made a big difference!

The Natural Resources Management Act (S. 47) includes, along with the miles and miles of new Wild and Scenic Rivers designations,

a permanent reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and protects nearly 2.5 million acres of public land, many of which are landscapes containing whitewater rivers. American Whitewater played a pivotal role in a number of the pieces that came together to protect so many miles of rivers in this package and we are ecstatic that this will soon become law. This bill truly demonstrates that protecting rivers and public lands is something our entire country can get behind!" Among the provisions in the bill:

- Oregon Wildlands would designate 256 miles as Wild and Scenic Rivers, including the Molalla and Elk Rivers and tributaries of the lower Rogue River
- Mountains to Sound Greenway National Heritage Area would provide a framework for collaborative management of the headwaters of the Snoqualmie and Yakima Rivers in Washington
- Methow Headwaters would close 340,079 acres in the Methow River watershed to new mining claims
- Wild and Scenic Designation for the 62 miles of the Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook in Connecticut would protect the popular Tariffville Gorge section of the Farmington River



Labyrinth Canyon on the Green River in Utah was designated Wild and Scenic with this bill's passage
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

- Emery County Public Land Management Act would include Wild and Scenic Designation for 63 miles of the Green River (including Labyrinth Canyon) in Utah, a Recreation Area (389,731 acres), and new Wilderness (661,445 acres) for Emery County including land around the San Rafael River and Muddy Creek
- Wild and Scenic designation for 110 miles of rivers in the Wood-Pawcatuck watershed (RI/CT)
- Wild and Scenic designation for 52.8 miles of the Nashua River and its tributaries (NH/MA)
- Wild and Scenic designation for 77.2 miles of rivers as part of the California Desert Protection Act (CA)
- Reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, an important program that has supported public access to rivers since the 1960s but was recently allowed to expire

This package of public lands bills has enjoyed incredibly broad public support, allowing committee members to feel comfortable bringing this to the floor of both the Senate and the House as one of the first actions of a new Congress. The package still needed a strong showing of public outreach to push it across the finish line, and our community responded, letting Congress know how important wild rivers are in our lives.

STEWARDSHIP

GREAT POTENTIAL FOR NEW WILD AND SCENIC STREAMS IN THE FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST (MT)

BY KEVIN COLBURN



*Upper Twin Creek, Montana.
Photo by Kevin Colburn*

WILD RIVERS AND their enthusiasts got some good news with the release of the new 15-20-year Forest Plan for the Flathead National Forest in Montana. The Plan newly protects 22 streams as eligible for Wild and Scenic designation, based in large part on the advocacy of American Whitewater and our awesome partners and members in Montana. These protections will serve as a vital steppingstone to the designation of some of our Nation's most outstanding headwater streams.

In 2004 the Forest Service conducted a Wild and Scenic River eligibility inventory in which they found 10 streams qualifying for protections. Unfortunately, those protections were never implemented because of unrelated errors in the larger planning effort.

When the Forest Service reinitiated their planning process in 2014, American Whitewater and our partners in Montanans for Healthy Rivers researched, authored, and submitted an eligibility inventory of our own. AW staff and volunteers explored and documented several streams as part of that effort. That document triggered a



*Hiking into Upper Twin Creek, MT
Photo by Kevin Colburn*

STEWARDSHIP

new look at eligibility by the Forest Service. Their draft report was good but left out a stream we strongly recommended through exploration, a film, comments, and a meeting. This stream, Upper Twin Creek, was included in the final plan. The end result: a new forest plan that protects the values and free flowing status of 22 outstanding streams in the Flathead River watershed. Here are some highlights:

- Danaher Creek
- Elk Creek
- Glacier Creek
- Graves Creek
- Logan Creek
- Spotted Bear River
- Upper Swan River

- White River
- Upper Twin Creek
- Youngs Creek

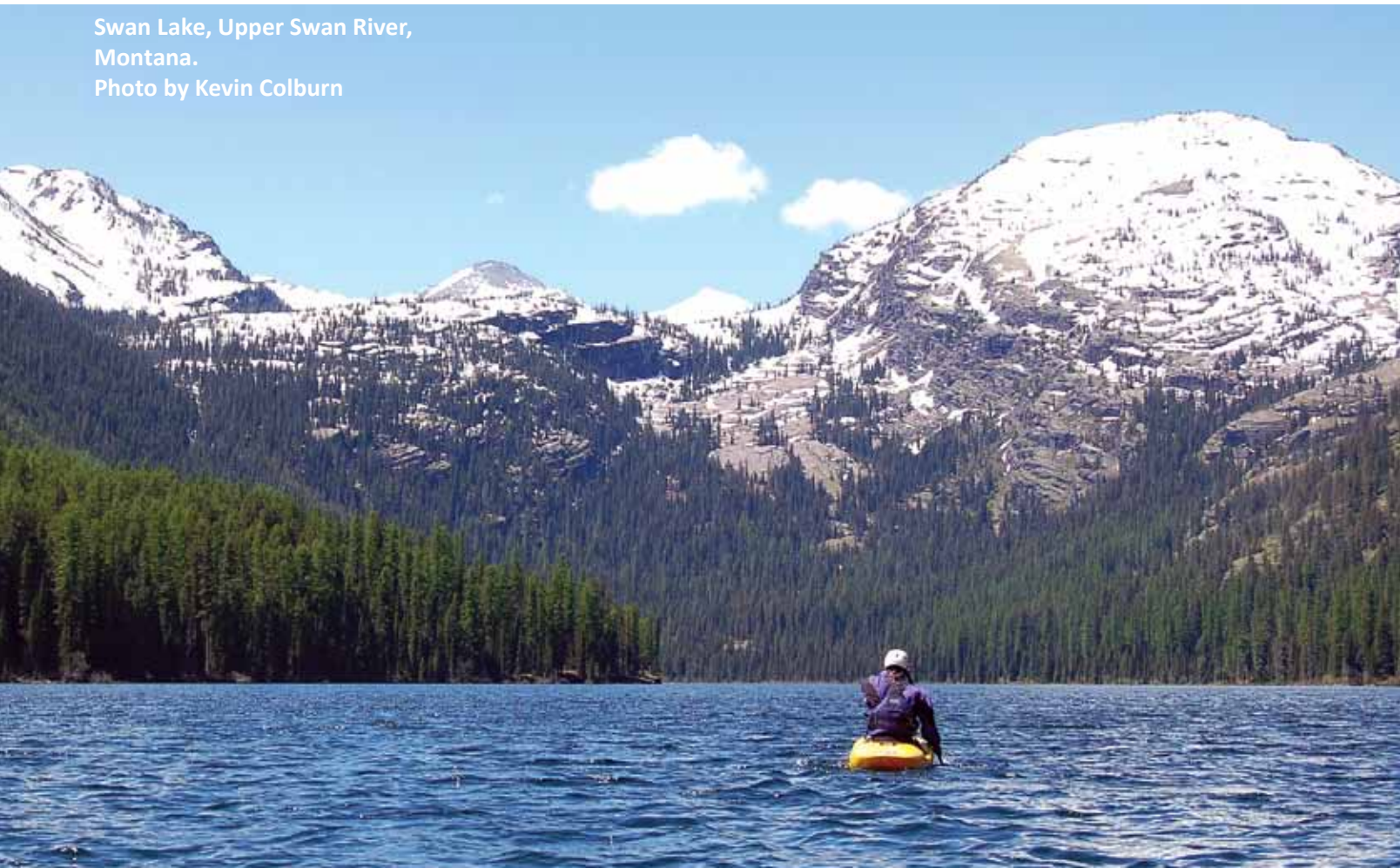
We'd like to commend the Flathead National Forest for a job well done. They certainly did not find all the streams we recommended to be eligible, but their process was good and they selected some great streams for protection. Big thanks to Patagonia, KEEN, REI, and the Cinnabar Foundation for supporting our work on these great streams, and our partners in Montanans for Healthy Rivers.

We look forward to working with everyone who loves Montana's rivers to secure Congressional designation for some or all of these streams in the coming years!



Elk Creek, MT
Photo by Kevin Colburn

**Swan Lake, Upper Swan River,
Montana.**
Photo by Kevin Colburn





FIRST EVER NEW RIVER DRIES RELEASE SCHEDULE

BY KEVIN COLBURN

The New River Dries will see scheduled whitewater releases for the first time in the spring of 2019!
Photo by Jeff Macklin

IN JANUARY, THE first ever recreational pulse flow releases were scheduled for the New River Dries, located near Gauley Bridge, WV. These releases were designed to support intermediate level whitewater paddling and to restore natural flow variability to a river reach that has been largely dewatered by the Hawks Nest Hydropower Project for generations. The releases are a requirement of the new 47-year federal dam license issued in late 2017. The releases will occur in March, June, July, and possibly August of this and future years. American Whitewater played a lead role in negotiating these releases.

Releases will be between 2,200cfs and 2,500cfs, and will be provided if inflows to the dam are between 3,800cfs and 12,500cfs. At flows under 3,800 there is insufficient flow to provide releases, and above 12,500 the dam is spilling and releases are moot. Releases cancelled due to flow conditions will be rescheduled for the next weekend on which there are no releases already scheduled. The release

dates are in two blocks, a March series and a summer series.

Two March Releases

Scheduled: March 16 & 17

Alternate Dates: March 23, 24, 30, 31. If the scheduled releases are cancelled, releases will be rescheduled for these dates until 2 releases have been provided. Releases not provided by March 31 will not be rescheduled. This is a natural season of high flows so expect some dates to be rescheduled or cancelled.

Seven Summer Releases

Scheduled:

- June 29 & 30
- July 6 & 7
- July 13 & 14
- July 20

Alternate Dates: All weekend dates between July 21 and August 31 will serve as alternates. Cancelled summer releases will be rescheduled on the first weekend days in this timeframe on which there is not a release already scheduled. Releases not provided by August 31 will not be rescheduled. This is a season of natural low flows, so expect some releases to be rescheduled or cancelled due to inadequate flows.

On March 1, 2019, the dam owner will release a new website that offers flow forecasting, realtime flow information, and release information. This will help paddlers plan ahead for releases. The dam owner has also purchased and is developing a new take-out, and is making enhancements at the Cotton Hill put-in. As the summer releases near, we'll update paddlers on where to park and how to best access the run. For now, enjoy the new New River Dries!

STEWARDSHIP

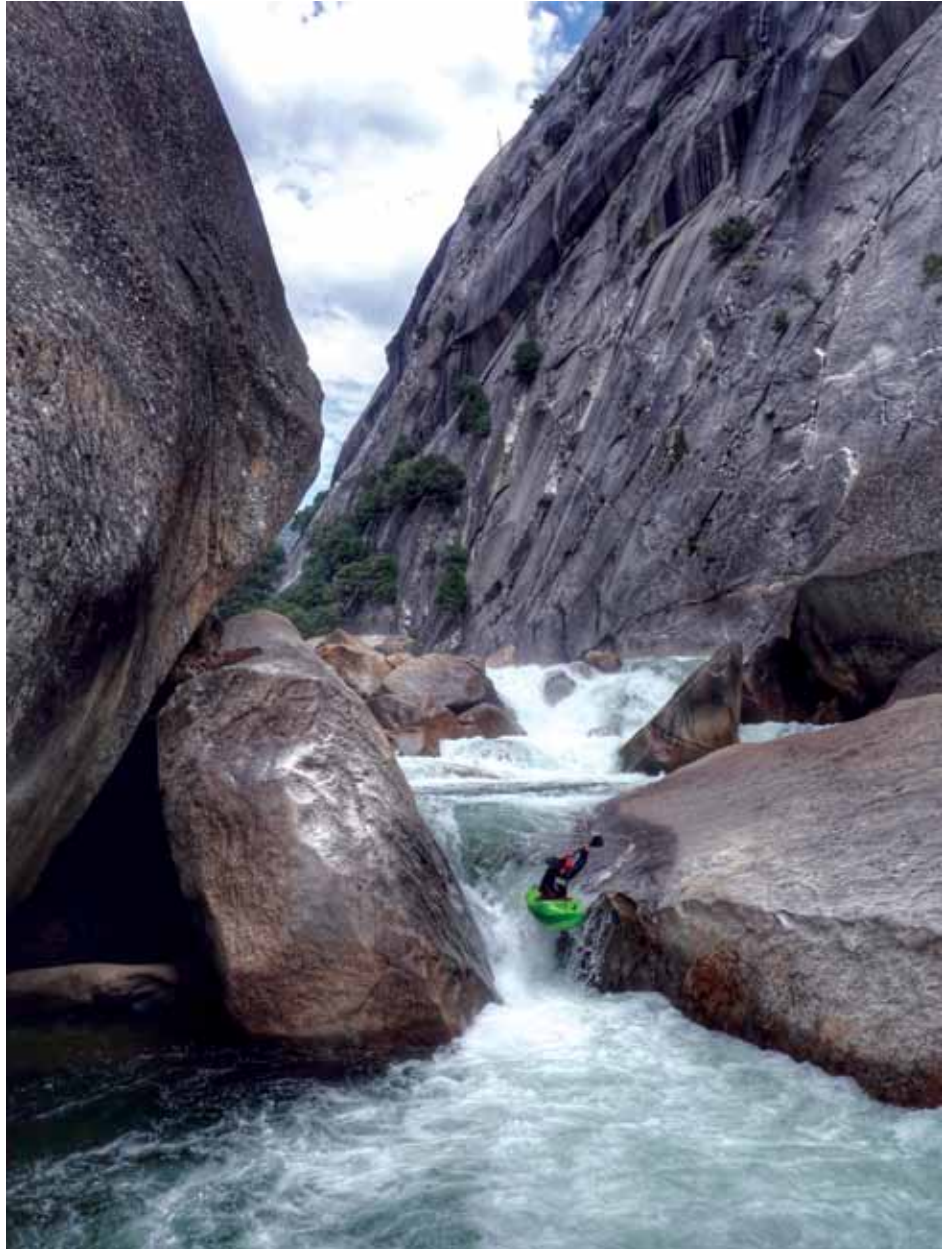
DEVILS POSTPILE TO BE INCLUDED IN WILD AND SCENIC INVENTORY

BY THERESA SIMSIMAN

GOOD NEWS FROM California! After the Inyo National Forest Plan Revision Objection Resolution meeting in Bishop California this past February, the Deputy Regional Forester and the Inyo Forest Supervisor announced that they will add the segments of the Middle Fork San Joaquin that are on Inyo Forest land to the inventory of eligible Wild and Scenic rivers for the revised Inyo Forest Plan, specifically, the 11.5 miles of the Middle Fork San Joaquin from Soda Springs footbridge to the confluence with the North Fork San Joaquin. They will also add whitewater boating as an outstandingly remarkable value.

This is a big win for whitewater boaters in terms of how this river is managed for future generations. Though not afforded the full protection of a Wild and Scenic Designation, going forward these segments will be managed as if they are Wild and Scenic, with whitewater boating as a recreational value to be protected. And of course, it puts this segment of the San Joaquin in a position for us to one day pursue Wild and Scenic designation from Congress.

A big THANKS to all of you who took the time to send us your narrative and/or pictures. Having this in hand during our presentation made a huge difference. So much so that Deputy Regional Forester Bernie Gyant sought me out after our presentation to thank me personally for providing the photos and narrative that made the squiggly lines on their forest maps come to life. They were also duly impressed by the cover photo I selected from Darin McQuoid (Thanks Darin for letting us raid your blog for pictures! And to Tom and Jim Janney, and Ben Stookesberry for their great images as well).



With 12 more forest plans to address in California alone, we're hoping we can count on your help again when it comes time to protect the rivers we love!

Deep in the Devils Postpile
Photo by Ben Stookesberry

FAREWELL TO SOUTHERN ROCKIES STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR NATHAN FEY

BY KEVIN COLBURN



Among Nathan Fey's many success stories as American Whitewater's Colorado Stewardship Director, his work on the San Miguel and Dolores may stand out as the closest to him personally. His drive led to a historic flow restoration program on the Dolores River through new operating guidelines for McPhee Reservoir and new release guidelines for the downstream environment.

Photo courtesy of Rig to Flip

IT IS WITH great appreciation that we offer a heartfelt farewell to Nathan Fey, as we announce he will be leaving his role as the Colorado and Southern Rockies Stewardship Director of American Whitewater this March. Nathan served in this role for the past 12 years, growing our work in the region from an ambitious new idea to a thriving and effective program that has reshaped how rivers are protected and restored in the Southern Rockies. We will greatly miss working so closely with Nathan, but we look forward to collaborating with him in his new role as the Deputy Director of the Colorado Office of Outdoor Recreation Industry. We'd like to congratulate Nathan on this exciting new step in his career and wish him the best!

In 2006 American Whitewater hosted a roundtable conversation in Buena Vista, Colorado on the banks of the Arkansas River, to discuss the need and potential

work plan for a new regional director for Colorado. We worked with leaders in the paddling and conservation communities to craft an ambitious plan for protecting imperiled streamflows in iconic Colorado rivers through leveraging the rivers' recreational values and local constituents. We also aimed to resolve some of the most tense river access disputes in Colorado and, indeed, the country. We selected Nathan for the job and could not be more impressed with the progress he shepherded in the 12 years since that roundtable. Among the many accomplishments, we are most proud of the following:

- Creating new tools that the State of Colorado now uses to define critical flow protections for recreation (Colorado's Non-consumptive Toolbox)
- Several papers co-authored with The Nature Conservancy, Colorado State

University, and others on watershed and stream flow protection

- Defeating the controversial Flaming Gorge Pumpback Project in Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado
- Designation of Browns Canyon National Monument on the Arkansas River
- Public access agreement to Wildcat Canyon/Cheesman Canyon with Sportsman's Paradise
- Historic flow restoration on the Dolores River through new operating guidelines for McPhee Reservoir and new release guidelines for the downstream environment

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- Protection of Colorado River flows of 2,500 cfs in Gore Canyon and Pumphouse, and up to 4,000 cfs in Glenwood Canyon through new Recreational In-channel Diversions and associated water rights
- Preservation of high-value boating opportunities in the Upper Colorado River under a Wild and Scenic River Alternative
- A Colorado Water Plan and localized Stream Management Plans that give fair consideration to recreational use and improvements
- Replacement of a dam on the Green River (Utah) to create safe boat passage and improved habitat for native fish
- Growth of the AW Colorado program in terms of budget, membership, clubs, workforce, and political standing
- Creation of a world-class celebration of the Upper Colorado River: Gore Canyon Festival
- Completion of at least 20 flow studies that will form the scientific foundation of flow preservation for paddling and river ecology across the region
- Recognition by the Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar for his work defining river-recreation needs across the seven-state Colorado River basin
- The soon-to-be (we hope) Wild and Scenic River designation for Desolation and Labyrinth

With Nathan leaving American Whitewater shortly for his new role with the State of Colorado, we are immediately initiating a search for his replacement. We look forward to maintaining and building on Nathan's outstanding work as seamlessly as possible through leveraging existing staff, contractors, and volunteers in the region, and through filling the Southern Rockies Stewardship Director role with a highly qualified individual. If you or someone you know might be interested in representing American Whitewater in the Southern Rockies, please review the job posting.

What to get for the paddler who has everything?

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



Colorado River, Grand Canyon. | Photo: Evan Stafford

A RIVER RUNS THROUGH US

BY NOAH BOOTH AND LILI PONGRACZ



*University of Montana students experience the North Fork Blackfoot River firsthand, as part of a field studies program.
Photo by Kascie Heron, American Rivers*

IT WAS A crisp October morning at the confluence of the North Fork Blackfoot and Big Blackfoot Rivers, where the sky was beginning to awake with evidence of a clear and sunny day. We, a rambunctious crew of University of Montana students, dressed in ragtag ensembles of borrowed river gear, were there as the crust of early morning sleepiness was wiped away to be replaced by a palpable atmosphere of excitement for the unknown adventure ahead.

It was the third and final day of a field studies trip through Wilderness and Civilization, an all-encompassing university program that focuses on people's relationship with the landscape. Our purpose was to learn more about the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in consideration of its 50th anniversary. Our focus was centered on the Wild and Scenic eligible North Fork of the Blackfoot River that flows out of the Scapegoat Wilderness in Western Montana. The North Fork is a

local hike-in gem that rewards boaters and other users with amazing scenery, fun whitewater, phenomenal fishing, and abundant wildlife in the midst of bear country. We had spent the last two days meeting with representatives from American Whitewater, the Blackfoot Challenge, Seeley Lake Ranger District, and American Rivers. The speakers shared a variety of perspectives about how the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act affects their work and lives. Out of approximately 169,829 miles of Montana rivers, only 388 miles have been designated Wild and Scenic. A proposal to designate and protect the North Fork along with segments of over 50 other streams in Montana is in the works, and as we began the final phase of our weekend field studies we carried the question of "Why?" with us.

By the time we finished situating our gear and running the shuttle, the golden streaks of day were evaporating the frost of the previous night's freeze. We were

all amused at how ridiculous we looked in our whitewater paddling costumes: a wetsuit complete with gloves and booties, numerous layers of jackets, a PFD, a helmet: the works. While cracking jokes and poking fun at each other we waddled down to the river to begin instruction. Jim Hepburn, a representative for American Whitewater and a guide for Tarkio Kayak Adventures, taught us the basics of paddling and river safety on the banks of the Blackfoot River. After this, with lots of gusto and very little grace, we pushed our boats into the river and pointed them downstream.

For many of us it was our very first time paddling a boat. Our troop of duckies, inflatable kayaks, and packrafts was an annoyance to the few fishermen still plying the ice-cold fall waters. Thankfully, as we floated downstream over the next several hours, our proficiency improved along with the temperature. We bunched up, spread out, and weaved in between one another

STEWARDSHIP



Students learn about the river they are about to float and its value
Photo by Lisa Ronald at UM Wilderness Institute

with the delicacy of a bull trout in an ill-fitting life jacket. By the time we dragged our boats ashore for lunch we were all happily sweating inside our neoprene.

Lunch marked a shift in the day, going from a wild and boisterous atmosphere to a more content and reflective one. With full stomachs and sore arms, we put our boats back in the water and, shortly thereafter, found ourselves in a long beautiful stretch of box canyon. Our boats wandered

downstream as our minds did the same, our pace slow in the rock wall's shadow.

As the sun sank lower into the sky, we reached our take-out destination, surprisingly exhausted but in high spirits. We were challenged to be adaptable with the schedule that day, and truly experienced being on "river time." We learned that patience, strength, and fluidity are all important characteristics in keeping a positive attitude on the river.

Several days later we discovered what each of our classmates were thinking while collectively reflecting on the experience from our memories and journals. One student shared his close encounters with bodies of water in the past: two near-drowning experiences left him with a fear of currents. Yet this paddle down the Blackfoot awakened curiosity, not fear. Chalk it up to the irresistible enjoyment of boating or to something much deeper, the effect remains a curious enigma. As he put it himself, "Extremes draw extremes, opposites attract, and with deeply rooted fear comes a primal curiosity and satisfaction."

Another classmate was inspired by the day's events, and left with questions about her relationship to rivers. She reflected on her sense of connection to her home landscape, remembering that it was the river she first canoed and whose banks she touched. Recognizing it, she wrote, "I am a woman of many rivers." That day she departed with a renewed appreciation for rivers and excitement to seek out the sense of community she felt amongst friends and strangers on the river.

The lessons the river taught us: You can't fight the nature of the thing itself. All you can do is direct your boat. You can eddy out, even get out of your watercraft, maybe stop for a lunch break or a scenic view,

Some of the NF Blackfoot's Wild and Scenic properties on display.
Photo by Lisa Ronald at UM Wilderness Institute





Preparing to run the hopefully-soon-to-be Wild and Scenic North Fork Blackfoot
Photo by Kascie Heron, American Rivers

because it's important to do so. Sometimes you need to park your paddle and simply take in the world around you. Other times you need to paddle with all your strength to go where you want, or to prevent yourself from going somewhere you shouldn't, or even to keep yourself from stagnating in the slack water. Simply put, the world is a river, time is the downstream flow, and your life is the boat that carries you.

Some of us were raised near the ocean, others around lakes or rivers. Similar to those bodies of water, with many sources feeding them, we all bring stories with new insight. We recognize how special it was to share this time on the river, all taking away something different from the experience. Again, many of us circled back to expressing appreciation for the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and the ability it has to protect many more miles of thought-provoking, pristine Montana streams.

About the Authors/Program

Noah Booth is a third-year Communication Studies major and Wilderness Studies minor who hails from Saint Paul, Minnesota. Lili Pongracz is a sophomore

Biology major (focus: Organismal Studies) and Wilderness Studies minor from Bellingham, Washington.

Here are the people who were involved with the first two days of the trip: Sara Schmidt, Communications Manager for the Blackfoot Challenge; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist Randy Garza, Vice Chair of the Challenge; Katie Knotek, Seeley Lake Ranger District; Rick Potts, retired USFWS.

And here are the people who were involved specifically with the float day: Lisa Ronald, Wilderness Communications Coordinator for the Wilderness Institute; Joanna Campbell, Nature Wisdom Guru and Director of Education Programs at the Wilderness Institute; Kascie Herron, Outreach and Communications Coordinator for American Rivers; Peter Metcalf, PhD student and Field Instructor/Coordinator for Wilderness and Civilization's 2018 field course.

All of the gear was kindly donated by Tarkio Kayak Adventures, Lewis and Clark Trail Adventures, and Professor Andrew Larson at the UM School of Forestry.

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Tallulah Race 2016. | Photo: Emrie Canen

CARNEGIE HERO AWARD MEDALS BESTOWED ON PAIR OF OHIOPYLE KAYAKERS FOR THEIR LIFESAVING YOUGHIOGHENY RIVER RESCUE

BY SCOTT PATTON

THE “CARNEGIE HEROES” for 2018 were announced in December and among the awardees were Eric Martin, 49 and Patrick McCarty, 30 both of Ohiopyle, Pennsylvania. Both men have been river guides for their entire adult lives on the rivers of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and West Virginia and both are well-known as superlative kayakers, citizens, and river-businessmen.

On June 26, 2017, two ladies decided to take a memorable “birthday outing” by going whitewater rafting. They envisioned what is typically a leisurely “fun-in-the-sun” float trip on the “easy” Class I/II “Middle Yough” section of the Youghiogheny River in Pennsylvania’s Ohiopyle State Park.

But circumstances—and Mother Nature—combined to make the day anything but typical.

The result was a life-threatening situation and an amazing rescue, carried out by Eric and Pat about 200 yards above the raging Ohiopyle Falls. The rescue was intense, dramatic, and risky for the rescuers—as well as for the victims. When I first heard the details of this rescue story I was immediately shocked, impressed, and literally in awe of the bold, brazen, and risky actions taken by Eric and Pat to pull off the rescue. I heard the story of the rescue second hand and upon hearing it I immediately said, then and there, that if the facts of this story proved to be accurate, I was going to nominate the two rescuers for the Carnegie Hero Award.

The Carnegie Hero Award

It’s likely that most of those reading this article have never heard of the Carnegie Award. I knew of it because of my “local” connection. I’m from the suburbs of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Pittsburgh was the center of the industrial steel and mining empire founded by Andrew Carnegie that ultimately placed him in the top handful of the world’s richest people. I also knew of the Award because another Ohiopyle guide who worked for the same rafting company that I did had the medal conferred upon him back in 1987. That hero

was Thomas Finn; you can read about his lifesaving rescue at the link below.

The Award had its roots back in 1904, when a disaster was caused by the underground explosion of accumulated gas in one of Carnegie’s mines—a disaster in which 181 men died. While many men were running out of the mine to escape the fire, smoke, and fumes, two men ran *into* the mine in an ill-fated attempt to rescue others. Carnegie was so moved and humbled by the heroic efforts that he himself ensured the financial needs of the families of the

fallen heroes were met. The selfless efforts of those men, in fact, so moved Carnegie that he established a foundation to honor and award any future hero who put his or her own life at risk in an effort to save another from likely death. That legacy continues to be supported by the Carnegie Foundation to this day. To be clear, one certainly doesn’t have to perish to qualify for this award! However, should a hero lose his or her life in a voluntary and selfless rescue effort, the Carnegie Commission will provide financial support to the hero’s dependent survivors. Please just take some



At high flows, Ohiopyle Falls, just downstream of the rescue site, becomes a potentially deadly hazard. Photo by Scott Patton

time when you get a chance and visit the website, www.CarnegieHero.org, where you can read further of the history of this award and of the thousands of selfless acts of heroism that have been recognized by the Commission in the past 115 years. There is a “Search Awardees” link on the upper right corner of the website where you can search by name and read about the rescue performed by Thomas Finn.

In 2018, the two heroes who are the subject of this story were nominated for the award, as were over 1,800 other rescuers from across the United

States and Canada. The incidents and rescue circumstances prompting these nominations are thoroughly researched—the facts are scrutinized and verified by Commission investigators. Of the 1,800-plus nominees, the factual basis of only 180 were confirmed and forwarded to an all-volunteer final review committee. It is the duty of the review committee to compare the nominees’ efforts with the criteria set up by Andrew Carnegie himself. Those who meet the Carnegie criteria are then honored with the bestowment of the Carnegie Medal for Heroism. Of the 180 in the 2018 “class of nominees” who were

advanced to the review committee, only 18 were deemed to fully meet the criteria for this award. Among those 18 Carnegie Heroes are Eric Martin and Pat McCarty.

The Build-up

When I was a beginning boater back in the early 70s, our go-to reference was the *AYH Canoeing Guide to the Rivers of Pennsylvania*. The book devoted two pages to the rapids of the Middle Youghiogheny, describing that section of the river accurately as an easy and straightforward, eight-mile, Class I/II run. The closing paragraph of the book’s description

RIVER VOICES



is subtitled “Difficulties.” For the Middle Yough the difficulties were summed up in two sentences:

“Take out on river right immediately under the Route 381 highway bridge. DO NOT miss this easy take-out or you will be swept around the bend, over Ohiopyle Falls, and be killed.”

That’s a pretty broad hint as to what happened on the day of the rescue in question.

On Monday, June 26, 2017, Raecyne Bechtold, 46, and Arnetta Johnson, 55, traveled to Ohiopyle State Park to go whitewater rafting. They rented a two-person shredder, paddles, and lifejackets from one of the river outfitters in Ohiopyle and received instructions on the basic procedures and safety guidelines of this activity.

On a typical day in June the gauge reading at Ohiopyle is generally between 1.5 and 2.0 feet. On this day, however, after three days of rain, the gauge read six feet. River access rules established by Ohiopyle State Park dictate that the more aggressive Class III section of the river, the Lower Yough (the put-in for the Lower Yough is just downstream of Ohiopyle Falls), is closed to rental boats if the gauge registers four feet or higher. The less challenging Middle Yough is, however, open for rentals up to a gauge reading of six feet. (The Middle Yough section is upstream of the falls, the take-out being about 500 yards upstream.)

The Mishap

So, Ms. Johnson and Ms. Bechtold paddled the eight-mile section of the Middle Yough. The day of rafting was “fun” and without incident until the very last rapid before the designated take-out. The roller coaster

Above and Below: The dangers of the Falls Area in Ohiopyle to anyone inexperienced in river running are well documented and appropriately marked.

Photos by Scott Patton

action of the waves in that rapid flipped the shredder, tossing both paddlers into the swift-moving river. The upside-down boat and the two women were quickly carried downstream by the current. Ms. Bechtold managed to climb up onto the floor of the capsized shredder and from on top of the flipped boat she was able to grasp a shoulder strap of Ms. Johnson's life jacket and was able to keep her from being swept away from the raft. The two women were carried by the river current past the Middle Yough take-out. About 100 yards further downstream they floated under the Route 381 highway bridge. They were in the clear view of many tourists as they were now floating into the dangerous "Falls Area" and toward the waterfall (The Falls Area of the river is off-limits to all boating except by special permits and safety arrangements and at a water level of less than 1.9 feet). The women were frightened by their predicament, but didn't realize how incredibly dangerous their situation had become—they had no idea that they were approaching a waterfall.

Meanwhile, the upside-down raft floating under the Rt. 381 bridge and the two women clinging to it were seen by several onlookers. Multiple 911 calls were received by the Fayette County Emergency Dispatch. The 911 dispatcher notified Ohiopyle State Park and the Ohiopyle-Stewart Volunteer Fire Department. The Park immediately dispatched an emergency response vehicle with two rangers to the scene and the Fire Department's alarm siren was sounded to beckon any available volunteers to assist in the rescue.

A bike/pedestrian bridge, retrofitted onto an old railroad trestle supported by several mid-stream piers, crosses the river just 200 feet downstream of the highway bridge. Fortunately, the inverted shredder washed up against one of those bridge piers and was held there by the current. Both Ms. Bechtold, from her position on top of the inverted raft, and Ms. Johnson, still in the water, grasped the narrow upstream edge of the pier and held on. That kept the raft

and the two women from continuing to float downstream. If the shredder had missed that pier and continued past the pedestrian bridge, the raft and the two women would have gone over the falls. At that water level, a free-float from the pedestrian bridge to the falls would have taken only about a minute.

One of the on-the-scene witnesses was Ms. Dee Reddick, herself an experienced whitewater boater (*Editor's Note: Dee also played a large role in Dan Demaree's story about Ridley Scott filming a beer commercial in Ohiopyle back in 1973. In case you missed it, check it out in our Sept./Oct. 2018 issue*). Dee rushed out onto the pedestrian bridge, positioning herself directly above the pier on which the raft had pinned. She shouted lifesaving instructions to the women in the water below her and used her words to strengthen and encourage them: "HOLD ON—DO NOT let go of that raft! DO NOT let go of the pier! You are doing great! Stay strong! Help is on the way! DO NOT LET GO—Help will be here SOON!" She repeated these and similar instructions and words of encouragement over and over and over. Other onlookers also began to shout directions to the victims; Dee knew that some of their well-intentioned suggestions were incorrect and downright contrary to the safe resolution of the situation, so she confidently took charge and shouted to the other onlookers: "Folks! We need just ONE VOICE here! Please! I will handle this!" And to the two women clinging to the bridge pier: "YOU LADIES ARE DOING GREAT! JUST HOLD ON! DO NOT LET GO OF THE PIER—HELP WILL BE HERE SOON!"

The water of the Youghiogheney River is cold—especially in June. The woman in the water would soon be exhausted and experiencing the effects of the cold water. Recognizing that, Dee knew that time was of the essence, but she didn't allow her anxiousness to show through in her words to the two women. She didn't want them to panic, so she kept up a steady stream of reassurance that help was on the way and would arrive soon and that they were

RESCUE TEAM

Eric Martin and Patrick McCarty were clearly heroic in their actions on June 26, 2017, but they did not act alone. Also to be commended in this successful rescue were:

Ms. Dee Redick whose determined directives and words of encouragement contained the situation until rescuers arrived and whose support on the shore after the rescue helped to calm the victims.

C.J. Revtai, riverguide, was the shoreline rope handler whose long-distance throw of the rope/safety line helped to safely complete the last element of the rescue.

Zack Herron, riverguide/kayaker, also entered the water just a few moments after Pat and Eric. He was fully equipped with kayaking gear—including a spray skirt. Had either Pat or Eric been capsized in their rescues, he was there "backing them up" and ready to step in as needed.

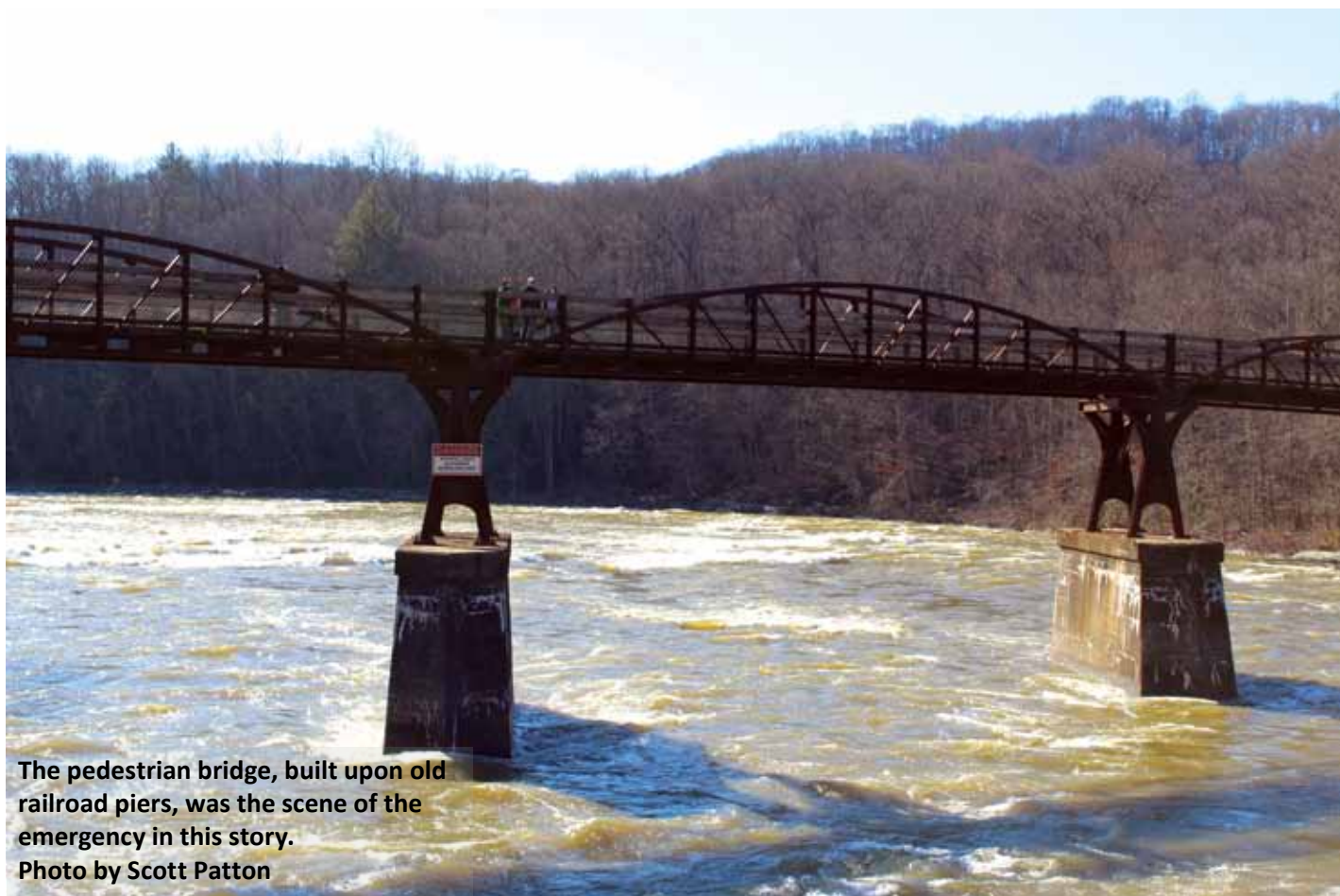
Dylan Isaacs, kayaker, who loaned his paddling gear without question to Eric Martin to facilitate the rescue.

Ohiopyle State Park staff (Officer Douglas A. Ringer and Ranger Trainee Fred Topper) and river outfitter employees who provided land-based support to bring the victims from the river up on to the shore to final safety.

Ohiopyle-Stewart Fire Department who sounded the alarm siren which initially alerted the Rescuers. VFD responders Sam Dean and Rob Joseph had brought to the point of rescue the ATV/off-road support vehicle which transported the women away from the river and to the Ferncliff Parking area where access to conventional vehicles and the ambulance was available.

Fayette EMS Service who dispatched an ambulance to the Ferncliff Parking area and provided warmth and first aid.

RIVER VOICES



The pedestrian bridge, built upon old railroad piers, was the scene of the emergency in this story.

Photo by Scott Patton

doing the right thing by just holding on to that bridge pier until help arrived. She never left her position on the bridge above the women while they were on the pier and did not let up in her flow of words of encouragement and guidance until the two were aided in the water by the kayakers.

Patrick McCarty is the river operations manager of Laurel Highlands River Tours, one of the whitewater rafting outfitters in Ohiopyle. Pat is an expert kayaker, has been a whitewater guide since he was 16, and is also an emergency response instructor/trainer. His office happens to be within 300 yards of the scene of this story. Fortunately, he was in his office at the time and he heard the fire station's siren. Pat wasn't sure of the specific nature of the situation, but he saw the Park response vehicle head *upriver* on the main street through town. He immediately grabbed his life-jacket and

helmet and headed toward the river in case the emergency might involve a water rescue. Within a minute or so he was at the river shore and saw the raft pinned on the bridge pier with Ms. Bechtold on top of it. He immediately recognized that, in consideration of the high water level and the short distance downstream to the falls, the situation was life-threatening. He knew that only moments stood between a rescue and an impending drowning. Looking upstream to the Rt. 381 highway bridge, he could see the Park's vehicle with its emergency lights flashing and two rangers. He also could see Eric Martin with the rangers on the bridge. In Eric he saw a partner in the rescue and immediately ran the 100 feet up to the bridge to team with Eric.

Eric Martin is the owner of Wilderness Voyageurs, another whitewater rafting

outfitter in Ohiopyle. Like Patrick, he is an expert kayaker and has worked this river as a guide and operations manager his entire adult life. His company's headquarters building is near the river and its management offices are on the second floor. Eric's office has a small outdoor deck which has a direct line-of-sight to the highway bridge. His attention was drawn to the river when he heard the fire station's siren. He went out onto the deck and from there he was able to see the State Park vehicle and the two responding rangers standing outside the vehicle. He could also hear and see that the rangers' attentions were focused toward the river. He shouted to the Rangers on the bridge to get their attention. "HEY! Do you need help?" One of the Rangers heard him and looked his way and shouted back, "YES!" The reply was accompanied by vigorous "come on" arm motions. The expressive manner of

the Ranger's response conveyed to Eric that a serious situation was in progress. From his experience and knowledge of the river, Eric knew that an on-river situation, downstream of the highway bridge at this high water level could very well be life-threatening.

He grabbed his helmet and life jacket and ran from his office toward the scene, shouting along the way to his employees that an emergency was in progress and that they were to grab kayaks and paddles and to follow him as quickly as they could. In about a minute he was on the highway bridge and he could see the pinned shredder with one woman on the upside-down boat. It was Ms. Bechtold on top of the inverted raft that he could see but he couldn't see the second victim, Ms. Johnson, in the water clinging to the far side of the raft and screened from view to those on the highway bridge. He knew that the situation demanded an immediate response. How long had the raft been there? How much longer could it stay there before breaking free and continuing to float toward the falls? Eric concluded, as Patrick had, that there wasn't time to investigate those answers. If there was to be a rescue it has to be initiated immediately. He knew that if the raft broke free of the pedestrian bridge pier, which could happen at any moment, there would be no possibility of a rescue by kayak and a negligible chance of a shoreline rope-throw rescue. He needed to initiate this rescue *now*. Looking to his left he saw Patrick running his way. He then knew that there would be *two* highly competent whitewater rescuers available: himself and Patrick.

The Rescue

Eric's employees were approaching the bridge on the run with a kayak and related gear and would be there in moments. But coincidentally a random car just happened to be crossing the bridge toward Eric at that very moment, *and it had a kayak on its roof*. Eric didn't hesitate; he held up his hands in a "stop" signal. The car stopped. Eric shouted, "This is an emergency—I



Above: Eric Martin, one of the Carnegie Award recipients, displaying his kayaking prowess in the Ohiopyle Upstream Race.

Photo by Joshua Lawrey

Below: Pat McCarthy, the other hero in this story, also in the annual Ohiopyle Upstream Race

Photo by Jeffrey "jeffy" Hein, Ohiopyle, PA

RIVER VOICES

need your boat!” Without waiting for confirmation he started to undo the boat’s hold-down straps. The driver was Dylan Isaacs, a competent kayaker himself. Dylan recognized Eric and didn’t question him for a moment. Instead he immediately pitched in to help get the boat and paddling gear ready for Eric to use. Just as Eric took the kayak and related gear and rushed for the water, Patrick arrived on the bridge and Eric’s employees arrived with a second kayak and paddle. Patrick was then right behind Eric rushing to the river with that second kayak. They ran to the water’s edge. They *did not* take the extra time to pull on spray skirts, since the procedure of getting into a spray skirt and affixing it to the cockpit rim can take a minute or longer. Realizing that time was paramount, both Eric and Pat launched into the river without this crucial piece of gear. They realized that if either of them capsized without a spray skirt attached they would very likely, in a flooded kayak, be swept downriver and over the falls themselves.

But an even more urgent question remained: How much longer could that woman hold onto the raft and bridge pier in the swift current? With time of the essence,

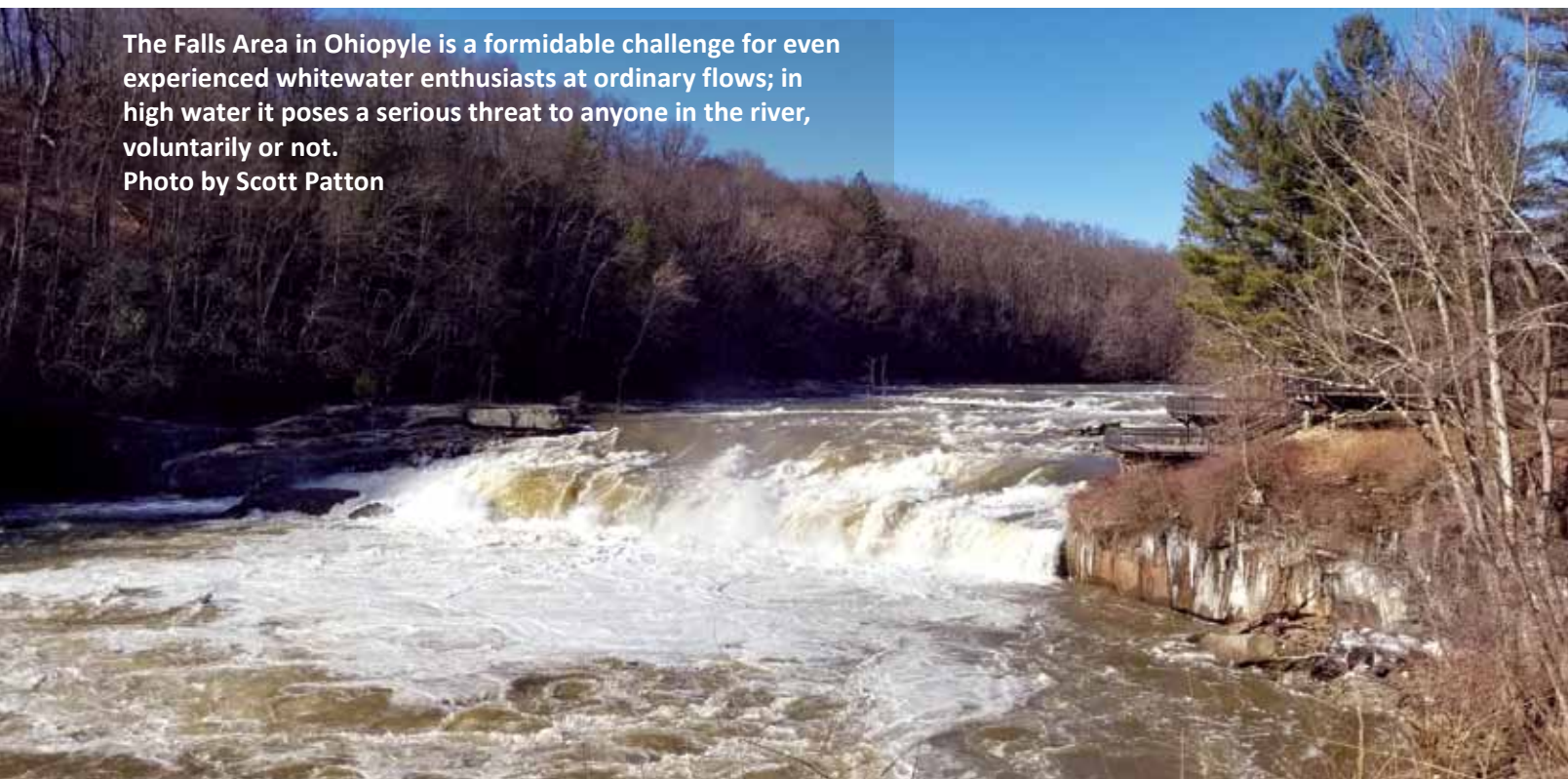
Pat and Eric paddled into the swollen river and made their way to the pinned raft—a distance of about 150 feet—without spray skirts and dressed in street clothes. The sprint across the water took only seconds. Eric arrived first and it was only then that he realized that there were two victims—the one they had seen on top of the capsized raft, and the second woman who was in the water on the back side of the raft.

Eric approached the woman who was in the water (Ms. Johnson) and told her to grab the rope loop that was on the stern of his kayak and HOLD ON with everything she had. Instead, in panic, she grabbed the cockpit rim of the kayak and almost tipped it over. Also in her panic she tried to climb up onto the deck of the kayak. Eric shouted at her to NOT try to climb, to just hold on and he would tow her to safety. She was panicky but understood and complied. With the woman clinging to the side of his kayak, Eric paddled toward the right-hand shore where the two rangers and several river guides were rushing to assist. But Eric’s kayak, with Ms. Johnson clinging to its side, was being pushed by the current downstream of the shoreline helpers. They threw a rope line out in an effort to

assist the kayaker and the clinging victim, but it fell far short. Eric and Ms. Johnson were continuing to be carried downstream toward the falls. Eric, however, spotted a flat rock ledge, about 40 feet from shore, which protruded a bit above the water. He was able to pull his kayak and Ms. Johnson into the eddy on the downstream side of that rock ledge. That protruding ledge turned out to be a life-saver. The water’s force was split around the ledge and Eric was able to hold his position in the calm water of the eddy. He prodded with his paddle and found that the water in the eddy was only about three feet deep. He told Ms. Johnson to get to her feet and to steady herself on the back side of the rock ledge while he exited the kayak. Once out of the kayak, he slid it up onto the exposed ledge; he then stood in the water next to Ms. Johnson, put his arm around her waist, and steadied her. He and Ms. Johnson were now somewhat secure, but were still about 40 feet from the shore and the current between the eddy and the shore was swift. He decided it was best to wait in that eddy for further help. While waiting in the eddy the victim was able to catch her breath and regain strength while Eric’s words and firm grasp

The Falls Area in Ohiopyle is a formidable challenge for even experienced whitewater enthusiasts at ordinary flows; in high water it poses a serious threat to anyone in the river, voluntarily or not.

Photo by Scott Patton





The rapids between the pedestrian bridge and Ohiopyle Falls are a swift and dangerous setting for a high-stakes river rescue.

Photo by Scott Patton

around her waist reassured her. Her panic largely subsided.

Patrick McCarty was right behind Eric Martin in arriving at the raft pinned to the pier. When the woman in the water let go of her grip on the bridge pier and grabbed Eric's kayak, the shredder, with Ms. Bechtold still perched atop, floated free of the pier and started moving downstream toward the falls. Patrick used the bow of his kayak like a tug boat to push against the raft. This is a tricky maneuver but common among whitewater safety boaters. He had to push up-river from the downstream side of the raft because he knew if he allowed it to get downstream of him it would pick up speed in the current and then would likely be unstoppable. Pat paddled with all his strength, calling on his kayaking expertise and his river guide experience to push the raft and its one occupant against the current but at an angle toward the right-

hand side of the river. Slowly but surely he ferried the raft closer and closer to the shore. When Pat pushed the raft in close to the river bank, one of the shore-based rescuers stepped into the water and was able to grab the raft's safety line and pull it and Ms. Bechtold to safety.

But Eric and Ms. Johnson were still out in the eddy about 40 feet from shore. For the moment they were stable in their position in the eddy behind the ledge, but with Ms. Johnson holding onto his kayak Eric would not be able to safely paddle across the current to get to the right-hand shore. Recognizing this, Pat headed back out into the river. He paddled out into the current and then to the eddy, joining Eric and Ms. Johnson. Like Eric had before him, he got out of his kayak and parked it up on the protruding rock ledge. From

CARNEGIE HERO AWARD NOMINATION

Here are the exact words by which I nominated the "heroes" for the award:

"Though others contributed significantly to the resolution of this situation, the rescue simply would not have happened—and tragedy most likely would have resulted—were it not for the kayakers Patrick McCarty and Eric Martin. Both of these rescuers were available by coincidence but became directly involved by choice when they recognized the gravity of the situation. They both reacted immediately to the pressing need of this rescue without a moment of hesitation. They took calculated risks to accomplish this rescue, but they had confidence in their knowledge of the river and in their skills as experienced whitewater kayakers and they completed without further incident this tricky and dangerous rescue in which time was so very much of the essence."

Because they knowingly put their own lives at risk to rescue Ms. Bechtold and Ms. Johnson from almost certain death, I hereby nominate Eric Martin and Patrick McCarty for Carnegie Hero Awards.

My nomination was sincerely and respectfully submitted to honor these kayakers and to honor the intent of Andrew Carnegie in his establishment of this worthy foundation for the recognition of citizenship and heroism which goes above and beyond. I couldn't be prouder of our two hometown heroes—our "CARNEGIE HEROES"!

RIVER VOICES



Trying to tow an exhausted swimmer or prod a capsized shredder to shore through these rapids above a raging, river-wide hydraulic—without a spray skirt, no less—does seem to qualify as “heroic.”

Photo by Robert Lanz

the calm water of the eddy behind that ledge to the right-hand shore the current was threateningly swift but the water was only about 30 inches deep. Together Pat and Eric could stand, though somewhat unsteadily, on the solid rock bottom of the river. With one on each side of the victim, Eric and Pat planned to assist Ms. Johnson in the unsteady walk/shuffle across that last 40 feet to the shore. One of the shore rescuers, river guide C. J. Revtai, called to them to get their attention, and then made

a clean, accurate throw of a throw-rope to Pat, who was wearing a professional life jacket (a rescue jacket with a quick-release attachment ring). Pat secured the rope to the quick-release ring and looped it behind Eric and him, who were facing upstream, with Ms. Johnson between them. Grasping Ms. Johnson around her waist they cautiously waded and shuffled out of the eddy and into the current. With C.J. and a couple of helpers anchoring the rope from upstream on the shore it provided

the critical stability that supported the final walk across the swiftwater channel. Moments later Ms. Johnson was safely on the shore.

The first victim to be pulled from the river onto the safety of the shore was Ms. Bechtold. She was met there almost immediately by Dee Reddick, who had rushed down from her position on the pedestrian bridge. Dee immediately reassured Ms. Bechtold and held and calmed her. Ms. Bechtold was understandably anxious for her friend Ms. Johnson. Dee was able to see Ms. Johnson being assisted to the shore by the kayakers and on-shore helpers and she assisted Ms. Bechtold to walk down the shoreline to regroup with her friend. Once the victims were again together and safe on shore, they were assisted by Dee and the on-shore rescuers to a waiting fire department off-road vehicle. They were then driven to a nearby parking lot where an ambulance and EMT soon arrived. In about 10 minutes both had rested, warmed, and recovered sufficiently to transport, but both declined the offered ambulance ride. They were given a ride by conventional vehicle back to the outfitter shop where they had rented the raft and where their car was parked. Both women recovered completely and were able to drive themselves home within an hour.

About the author

Scott Patton is a kayaker himself and has pursued this sport his entire adult life. For nearly 40 years he was a professional river guide and trip leader on the Youghiogheny River where this rescue occurred as well as on the Cheat (WV), Gauley (WV), and Ottawa Rivers (Ontario). He is clearly qualified to judge the merits of the life-saving efforts put forth by Pat and Eric in this rescue and the risks they took to accomplish the rescue.

Editor's Note: *None of the photos used in this article were taken during or on the day of the rescue. Setting photos show the river at similar flows to those of June 26, 2017 as a visual aid.*

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RIVER VOICES

FROM THE CUYAHOGA TO THE CHEAKAMUS AND BACK:

FOUR DECADES OF RIVER- AND CREEK-RUNNING IN NORTH AMERICA

BY ANDREW C. GROSS



*The author on the Slippery Rock (PA)
Photo by Tessa Ramsey*

Gearing Up, Staying Local— from Class I to II, from Clunkers to Creekers

IN THE MID-1970, I tried sailing in the bays around Montreal, but realized it was not for me; when we returned from Canada I looked around for an on-the-water sport, that was not wind or power-assisted. My choice was kayaking, a symmetrical exercise, as opposed to canoeing. I located the Keel-Hauler Canoe Club, a Northeastern

Ohio group, where the officers warmly welcomed new members and weekend river outings seemed well-organized. Early on, I sought advice on paddling (“hey, just get out and do it”) and volunteered to be refreshment chair. Our annual yearbook began to feature maps and guidelines for rivers, as well as roll sessions in winter.

This Club starts its season with a river race on the Vermilion, usually in late March; in 2018 this race celebrated its 50th

anniversary. The Vermilion is a Class I+ river as are three others close to Cleveland: the Chagrin, Cuyahoga, and Grand. These were the rivers I began kayaking on. All four are in scenic settings, with the Cuyahoga in its namesake National Park that has become popular with boaters as well as cyclists, joggers, and skiers, and all four rivers offer some Class I and II rapids and boaters can choose different stretches of three to 10 miles for easy day trips.

My early boats, purchased in the late 1970s, had much volume and length; I recall, not too fondly, the Perception Quest and Mirage as well as the more nimble but fragile Phoenix Slipper. By the mid-1980s I switched to the Perception Dancer, then Corsica, and finally to the Matrix. Later on, per good advice and a tip, I acquired a Savage Skreem, which is a great creek boat. My choice of a paddle was a heavy one, a Schlegel Tech III, made in Germany, but it served me faithfully over decades.

Moving Up—From Class I-II to Class III+ in PA and WV

After learning on nearby rivers and acquiring confidence, it was time to move to a higher level but still via day-trips as I am not a good camper. My choice was Slippery Rock creek near Sharon, Pennsylvania,

which has two distinct parts: an easier Class II run on its lower part and a more challenging Class III run on its upper. Over the next three decades the Slip has become my mistress. The setting is scenic, the rapids are demanding, yet fun, and the creek is too narrow to be commercialized (we hope). It is popular with both Keel-Hauler Club and Three Rivers Paddling Club members, but boaters come from as far as Michigan to enjoy it. The two famous rapids on the upper half are Airport and Triple Drop; both demand much agility.

From the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, I decided to venture beyond the Slip to more demanding rivers: the Lower Yough (PA), the New (WV), and the Cheat (WV); but not the Upper Yough (MD), Cheat Canyon (WV) or the Gauley (WV). The rapids on

these rivers are well-known. With the aid of fellow paddlers and, at times, great guides, I was able to navigate most of them without a swim or even a roll. However, I must admit to a sneak route around Dimple and an occasional portage of River's End on the Lower Yough.

These river outings in Pennsylvania and West Virginia proved to be exhilarating and the realization came to me, as it does to all devoted paddlers, that we are doing these trips for three main reasons: the love of nature and the wonder of scenery; camaraderie or comradeship, the gentle or strong encouragement of each other; and skill improvement in handling our boats in different rapids. This combination group spirit and self-realization has been told and re-told in numerous books and articles,

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RIVER VOICES



including those in the *AW Journal*. For me, the joy on the river and the memories after proved to be a great combination; the hard part was camping or staying at a hostel in Ohiopyle, PA with freight trains roaring by at night.

A Change of Venue and Boats—Rafting the West and Far Beyond

On a few occasions in the 1980s I opted for a rafting trip with a daughter's Girl Scout Club on the Lower Yough and another one with club members on the Gauley. The latter proved to me that kayaking Class IV and V rivers was well beyond my skill level, having come to the sport in middle age. But they prepared me to do other rafting trips, the first of which came in Australia where we lived in 1988. Watching all those sailboats in Sydney harbor did not tempt me to return to that sport. Instead, I chose a rafting trip on the Tully river near Brisbane; the rapids were awesome, as was the warning to watch for salt-water crocodiles at the end.

Then, in the early 1990s, I rafted out West with two daughters and friends, first in Colorado and later in California. The former involved three distinct trips. First, a “mild” warm-up on the Colorado from Shoshone Dam to Glenwood Springs with several demanding rapids; but those hot springs at the end were glorious! Next came another portion of the Colorado: Westwater Canyon from Ranger Station to Cisco. It contained impressive rapids, but we were able to float over Skull and avoid entry into that infamous eddy, the Room of Doom. Our third trip was the Browns Canyon section of the Arkansas. Our commercial guide boasted of his experience and skill level, but we still flipped at Seidel's Suckhole. Guess who came out of the raft first?

My final sets of rafting trips were in Northern California, first on the South Fork of the American from Chili Bar to Salmon Falls Bridge. This is a popular run with a series of Class III+ rapids that made me wonder, “Could I do this in my kayak?”. But Satan's Cesspool sort of delivered an answer to that line of inquiry. Then came that state's premier whitewater,

the Tuolumne River outside Yosemite. The main portion from Meral's Pool to Ward Ferry, a journey of 18 miles offers Class IV+ rapids, and Class V Clavey Falls. They were highly challenging, but this time our raft guide displayed high skills that made for an exhilarating and successful journey.

Kayaking in British Columbia and Monterey Bay

During the summer of 1996 we spent a full year in Vancouver, a city that offers much to outdoor enthusiasts; there is local skiing on Grouse and Cypress mountains and world-class terrain at Whistler-Blackcomb, just two hours away. For whitewater paddlers, local creeks include the Capilano and Seymour; further away are the more challenging Chilliwack, Lillooet, and Thompson rivers. I joined the Vancouver Kayak Club (VKC) and did many local creeks, plus the big but gentle Fraser River.

In late April 1997, VKC organized a trip to the Cheakamus creek up north. The water there is cold and plentiful, as it comes from the melting snow of Outlier Peak. The trip length is only three to four miles,

Opposite: McConnells Mill on Slippery Rock Creek.

Photo by Jeff Macklin

but rapids are frequent and rated Class III+. The regular VKC members warned me—as do all guidebooks—about mudslides that rumble into the creek with tall trees and stumps still sticking upright. The sneak route is narrow and, sure enough, this old boy managed to be swept into a whole row of standing trees. My body was leaning in at 90 degrees, not drowning, but badly pinned; my mind kept wondering, “What comes next?”. All of my VKC buddies came to the rescue, yelling “just wiggle out,” and saved me and the boat as well. Following good advice made for a lucky escape, but, whew, it sure seemed close!

Another opportunity arose in 1998 to be away for a year, this time in Monterey, California. We packed up with kayak and skis again on the roof-rack, and drove cross-country, ready to see the USA via different routes, including visits to national parks. There are few rivers near Monterey, but there is that beautiful bay. What I learned early on is to respect rogue waves rolling in from the Pacific; yes, they pop up suddenly and early on I got slammed into the sand. A good lesson learned quickly!

Back to Ohio and Pennsylvania—Resuming the Homestand

We returned to the Midwest in the summer of 1999 and I renewed the relationship with creeks and rivers in Ohio and Pennsylvania. On warm summer days I managed several trips to Slippery Rock and Lower Yough, but stayed away from bigger challenges in West Virginia. Our club meetings continued, with many river tales told by participants plus “hairy video” showings; summer picnics were at Silver Lake. Our webmaster, John Kobak, “Mr. Keelhauler,” has developed a superb website with river levels from USGS and AW, message board postings and for-sale gear listings.

During 2000-2018 I stepped up on occasion to organize or even lead local trips on the Cuyahoga and the Grand. The favorite run on the Grand is from Harpersfield Dam to Hidden Valley, with plenty of Class I and II rapids. There is an annual gathering labeled Mad-Hatters’ race, where it is not unusual to see paddlers wearing madcap clothing and weird headwear. One year, a group of nuns showed up in their habits. The Vermilion remains the site for the Club’s opening run in early spring. The Chagrin is popular, but its water levels are fickle. There are other creeks in Northeast Ohio, including the Black and many parts of the Rocky River; we are truly blessed!

The Cuyahoga offers many options for paddlers; the lower part is within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) and three portions are outside, one of which, near Akron, is labeled the Gorge, requiring a permit as it is Class III-V. My only runs here have been in the CVNP portion and this stretch is rated Class I and II. Still, I had a mishap here over a decade ago; the blame is on me and the date!

It was April 1st and I chose to do a short run by myself and then hike back. It was a sunny but cold day with high water; I flipped at the entrance and swam; the CVNP rangers and the Peninsula police fished me out; I thanked them, learned my lesson, and had to promise my wife not to boat alone. The next day, I delivered pizza to my rescuers, thanking them profusely. I looked for the lost boat with aid of two kind Club members, but no luck; however, I soon found another Matrix for only \$250.

Concluding Comments—Takeaway Points, Lessons, Acknowledgments

In my 40 years of kayaking in Ohio and beyond, I came to respect and love the sport of whitewater kayaking, while growing in competence and confidence. As so many kayakers, canoeists, and raft-riders attest, one never conquers a river, but rather tries to work with its features in harmony and rapport. Each river is different, especially

at different levels. The settings are always spectacular, whether East or West, and should be savored. The comradeship that goes with each river trip reinforces lessons and strengthens personal contacts. While I acquired many guidebooks to read, and even videos, there is no substitute for experience, listening to good advice, and going to roll sessions.

In my early 80s now, I am gravitating toward lake paddling; the Perception Matrix is quite good for that at 11+ feet, but it is getting heavier each year to hoist it to the cartop. Choice of lake? Obviously, it should be Lake Erie; but there is also Lower Shaker Lake, just five minutes from my home, in a setting where I also jog, cycle, and ski cross-country. There is psychic income at this location as we saved this nature area 50 years ago, when freeway construction was proposed by the county engineer.

In closing this article, I wish to thank the many members of the Keel-Hauler Canoe Club who advised me well and also rescued me on a few occasions. My appreciation also to VKC and TRPC members, who assisted me in BC, PA, and WV. Finally, thanks to the staff of the *AW Journal* for bringing fresh articles in each issue; and it is a pleasure to acknowledge by name Charlie Walbridge of AW and ACA for his fine safety reports over the decades as they gave me insights, not turnoffs—well done!

About the Author

Andrew Gross is a native of Hungary who grew up in Canada and the USA, worked in industry and government, became an entrepreneur, then moved to academia. He just retired from Cleveland State University after 50 years where he was a professor of marketing and international business. Andy thanks CSU for allowing paid/unpaid leaves in Australia-Pacific, Canada, and Europe, his wife for accepting his many outings on weekdays and weekends, and all the paddling buddies who enhanced the experience of running creeks and rivers.

THE COME BACK HOME

BY CARIN TINNEY

Fall Fikes Creek Fun
Photo by Jeff Macklin

FEEL LIKE I'VE been writing this chapter in my head for at least four months now. Everyone who knows me well couldn't possibly imagine me not in a kayak. They know that being on the water is equivalent to having breath. Boat is my counterbalance; it smooths the ruffled feathers, dissolves held anger and, for reasons you'll learn in a moment, the undulating waves of the river have weakened seemingly impermeable sadness, dissolving it into manageable doses. At its best, the all of kayaking—packing and loading boats, checking gauges midweek, playing in holes, nailing lines—punches me with a fistful of undeniable joy; it's involuntary and blissful. But each time I go to write down a sensational river experience that proves I am back, I feel an insecurity in being so definitive about the claim. Perhaps, it's the same reason some of us walk up to do the same line on a rapid again: to ensure it wasn't a fluke, show that

it was actually skill. Perhaps, in and of itself, the gnawing desire to share my lessons learned with the community has been one of the many motivators in coming back; but until now, I felt disingenuous claiming the victory.

Truth be told, I had a scarier swim in the river right hole of Fowlersville Falls on the Moose three weeks prior to the hit I took that cracked my helmet and broke my neck on Mosier falls of the Beaver. And if I'm honest, that's the swim I'm coming back from—mentally—on the river. Very few people I know have had the opportunity to choose to live; to know so definitely that you could give up fighting and submit to the nature of a situation that surely will kill without the will to change course. Upon reflection, these two experiences, forced me lessons I am privileged to have

had; and I have readily accepted the tools presented.

Coming back, from a potentially deadly situation on the Moose, a fractured neck on the Beaver, and the sudden death of my 45-year-old brother shortly thereafter, has been like filling a hole-ridden bucket with water. Filling the bucket, some cumbersomely long days, felt like an insurmountable and fruitless chore that I rarely had the energy to take on.

Physically, after four months in a removable but highly uncomfortable cervical collar, and an additional three months of inactivity, I was weak. My level of fitness plummeted and holding my head up with atrophied muscles and no brace required conscious effort. A soaking depression lingered from the loss of my brother, and mitigating it with my go-to coping skills (river, walls,

MENTAL GAME

and dance floor) was not permissible. There were days brushing my teeth was a major achievement.

When I was cleared to exercise, head demons paid my brain an extended visit. After a solid workout, running a 5k on the treadmill was always my litmus test of cardiovascular fitness (I hate running so doing 5k on a treadmill is all I got, kids). Upon my first weeks back at the gym, I could not run a mile; my brain morphed into a viscous critic, which was intensely demotivating.

But, I chose to live. "I choose to live." A faint but powerful whisper seeped through critic's banter. The tool I had gained from my Moose swim, reminded me that living well meant having an adequate level of fitness to endure the play my restless soul needs for me to thrive. I returned to the gym and did what I could, swearing back when the critic tried to put me down. I will say, superficially, it was a blow to my growing confidence the day my trainer noticed my return and immediately pointed out my weight gain, joking about holiday eating without knowing the hell I had been going through. These are the little battles in fighting to live.

I returned to the river in February and enjoyed fro-low flows of local Class IIIs. A fun experience until fear set in that each boof would break my healed bone. I paddled, but with trepidation, without play, taking conservative lines. While I was back on the river, I had not come back. Surprisingly challenging—reconciling that I was not feeling joyous when everyone was expressing joy to see me "back." I don't do inauthentic well, but managed to

Above: Beer Eddy Sluice, Taylorsville Section (I didn't get the beer eddy)

Photo by Chuck Brown

Middle: Agers Falls, Bottom Moose

Photo by Chuck Brown

Below: Sprite Creek Take-out (27 degrees!)

Photo by Jeff Preischel



MENTAL GAME



There were some swims this year. Grand Canyon of the Colorado.

Photo by Mike Kalanick

smile... I often left the river sad, questioning whether I'd lost the life in my living.

During my grief-ridden recovery, I had a ton of support from my river family, but I feel a need to share about one person in particular that came into my life when I was struggling to keep my head above water. I do believe this creature played an instrumental part in my comeback; he's not even a paddler. He in many ways, was my recovery's salt. A note on salt: I once asked my favorite river friend/home chef why salt is used in nearly every dish rather than, say, garlic or sage. And he shared that salt enhances and emboldens a dish's natural flavors without changing it. It helps the dish be the best it can be.

This friend helped me see and patch the holes in the bucket I was trying to fill. I am forever grateful.

I paddled nearly every weekend and began working up to running my dreaded 5k. It

wasn't until my first swim on the Bulls Bridge section of the Housatonic that I truly felt I was going to and wanted this comeback. I wanted to live; I also wanted to refrain from swimming in water that's no more than 40 degrees.

Another observation during this time: when you're cold inside, a result of being physically, mentally and nutritionally depleted, winter paddling seems counterintuitive. However, winter paddling followed by warm dinners and cuddly hugs from friends you love helps melt away the ice, filling the bucket even more.

Now despising being inside, I abandoned the gym and began walking, a lot, and then started riding bikes, a lot. Dancing was added back in, as was the love of my dance tribe.

Slowly my warm weather friends emerged from cozy confines of their homes to paddle and the rivers began to rise, as did

the level of joy I started to experience. I organized a trip to the Adirondacks with a crew of my most trusted river family. We paddled in 27-degree weather, ate good warm food, and found love for the single guy in our crew at the local bar. Home...but not quite back.

An impromptu trip to New Hampshire also started easing the holds of insecurity and filling that bucket. Low volume, tight, but manageable creeks in the most beautiful winter surroundings penetrated my soul; as did the company I kept that weekend. A trip soon after to my favorite play river, the Stonycreek in Pennsylvania, with my favorite river playmate multiplied the growth.

I was beginning to feel joy; I was warming up. Choosing to live when it was really hard to get out of bed had paid off.

On Memorial Day weekend, rather than dive deep in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania for an annual trip to the Youghiogheny, we ventured north to the Moose—yes that Moose. Successfully avoiding the hole that gave me the gift of choice, my spirits lifted and my game was on. I hit each line I planned and paddled playfully on the flats. The last on-the-books rapid, Crystal (a rapid I have been wanting to paddle for five years), awaited. I clearly saw the line, I was with friends, and I ran it.

No booty beers for this girl. I am back. Not just in skill (which is always questionable!), but I have a regained the insatiable drive to be of and with the river in the most playful ways possible; I crave using my body to the fullest extent possible.

Having had many injuries over my ten years of kayaking, the cycle of paddling highs and lows, exemplified by peaks and valleys on a flow chart is very familiar. But familiarity doesn't always provide the necessary tools needed to get through. Fortunately I to have chosen to live that day on the Moose, as that tool will always be my beacon to find my way home.

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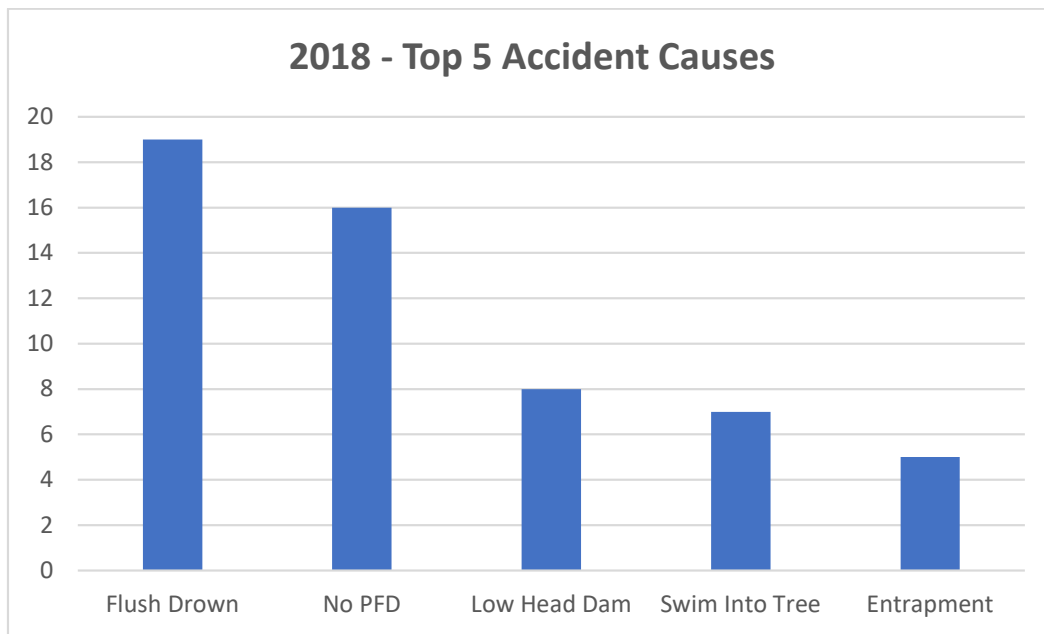
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WHITEWATER ACCIDENT SUMMARY JULY-DECEMBER 2018

BY CHARLIE WALBRIDGE



LAST YEAR SAW an unusual number of whitewater accidents, making it the second-deadliest year on record. A total of 61 deaths included 28 kayak, five canoe, and 20 rafting fatalities, 22 of which occurred in the last six months. Much of the increase was due to exceptional high water in the East, caused by unusually wet weather. Normally either Colorado or California has the most accidents, but this year North Carolina topped the list with eight. One-third of these deaths, 19, were caused by flush drowning, which is most common at high water levels. High water in the summer brings out inexperienced river users, and there were 18 fatalities in which no life vests were used. Charlie Duffy's excellent graphs summarizing these trends are included with this article.

Kayaking Accidents

There were seven kayaking fatalities in the last six months, three involving experienced paddlers in whitewater craft. On July 3rd

Kenneth Pollack, 50, was pinned under a dangerous bridge on Utah's Provo River. The bridge is a known hazard; its support structure is set at an odd angle to the current, the bridge piers themselves are undercut, and protruding boards create deadly snag hazards. It took a rescue squad several hours to extricate him.

On that same day Dugan Flanders drowned on Washington's Skykomish River. Mr. Flanders, 27, was caught in a hole, bailed out, and took a long swim. Two kayakers got him ashore some distance downstream and started CPR, but despite this, he died the next day in a hospital. On August 9th, Patrick Waldron and another man got caught in a strainer on Maryland's Monocacy River. Other members of the group rescued the pair, but Mr. Waldron, 58, collapsed soon after reaching shore. Although his death was ruled a drowning, underlying medical problems can't be ruled out.

Four other accidents involved paddlers in recreational kayaks, and in two instances of life jackets not being worn. Anna Gdanian, 32, was paddling with friends on New Hampshire's Piscataquog River on July 12th when her kayak capsized and she disappeared without a trace. There's no question a PFD could have saved her life! Divers found her body the next day. On October 8th John Conley was paddling a double kayak on Iowa's Indian Creek when they hit a log pile and capsized. Neither paddler was wearing a PFD. Mr. Conley, 32, disappeared under the logs while his partner climbed onto the log pile and shouted for help. Mr. Conley's body was found in the river four days later.

Two other fatalities occurred after paddlers were pulled into low head dam hydraulics from downstream. On July 8th Daniel Atkinson was enjoying a day of swimming and kayaking below Ketner's Mill Dam on Tennessee's Sequatchie River with

his family. Mr. Atkinson, 38, paddled up towards the dam and was pulled into the hydraulic. He recirculated for some time before washing out. Bystanders grabbed him and attempted CPR, without success. In a similar incident on October 8th, Matthew Hughes got too close to the hydraulic at the Jim Beam Distillery Dam on Kentucky's Elkhorn River. Hughes, 35, had wisely portaged the dam but didn't launch far enough downstream. Someone threw him a rope as he recirculated in the hole. He held on for several long minutes before slipping away into the foam.

Canoeing Accidents

There were two open canoe deaths in the last six months. Michael Scott disappeared while paddling the St. Joseph's River in Michigan on June 21st. Mr. Scott, 35, was with a group of friends. One of them looked upstream and saw Mr. Scott's canoe, but there was no sign of the paddler. The body was found the next day. Local paddlers familiar with the group speculated that he wasn't wearing a life vest.

On August 17th two experienced paddlers washed over Dillon Falls on Oregon's Deschutes River. This is a very serious Class V drop. Even though both paddlers were wearing life vests Ronald Stevens, 84, was killed. His badly injured daughter was rescued by nearby hikers.

The U.S. saw five guided rafting fatalities in the last six months. On July 3rd, a raft overturned on Washington's Class III Spokane River. The incident happened near the Bowl and Pitcher area of Riverside State Park. As guests clung to the boat, it slammed into a downstream rock. Some rafters swam to safety but Deise Nagle, 56, floated away. Bystanders got her to shore and began CPR, but they were too late.

Two commercial rafting deaths occurred on Pennsylvania's popular Lehigh River, which ran unusually high all summer. On August 5th Rose Spadaro, 67, was rafting the Class I Bowmanstown section. Her raft pinned near the take-out, throwing her and her

husband into the river. The trip leader, who was also a safety kayaker, reached the pair quickly and together they floated through a dissipating Class I wave train. Although Mrs. Spadaro was never underwater, she screamed at and fought with her husband, the safety boater, and a lifeguard-trained guest who was trying to help. The safety kayaker quickly got everyone into the take-out eddy. As Ms. Spadaro got close to shore she suddenly lost consciousness. Even though guides retrieved her quickly, started CPR, and called 911, she was gone. These circumstances suggest an underlying medical problem.

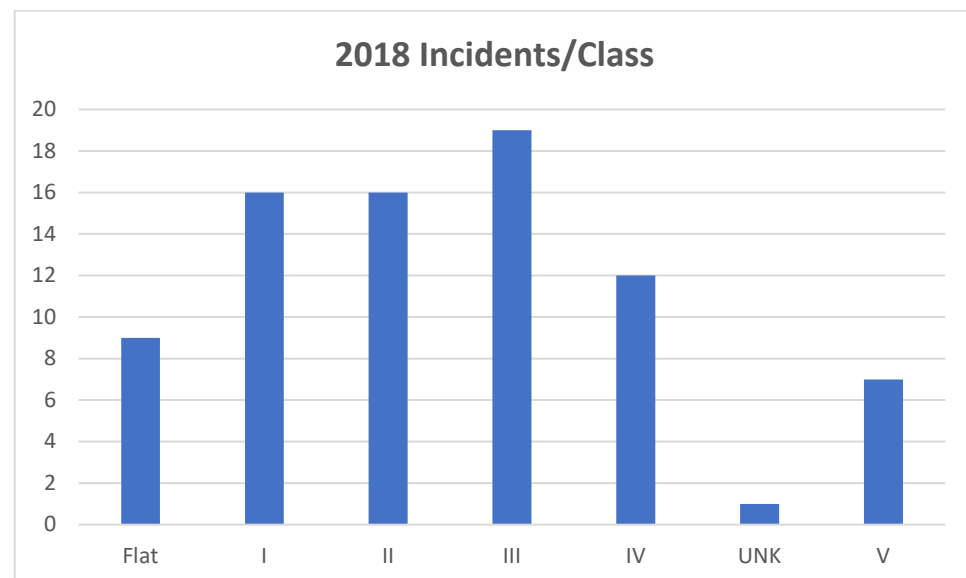
On September 1st there was another death on a Class II section of the Lehigh above Glen Onoko. Christopher J. Santana, 33, got into the water from a pinned raft, stood up in fast current, and caught his foot on the river bottom. The current pushed him over and held him underwater. Pre-trip talk ups warn against standing up in rapids for good reason! Paying close attention can avert a tragedy.

On August 11th an unidentified woman died of a heart attack during a commercial trip on Tennessee's Nolichucky River. She was paddling downriver when she was stricken, and died, despite the guides' best efforts.

Mike Howard and his wife were travelling on a commercial motor-rig tour boat in Arizona's Grand Canyon. On September 7th they were stopped for lunch at the mouth of Clear Creek when Mr. Howard's wife fell off the boat into the river. Mr. Howard, 67, was a strong swimmer. He dove in after her. Neither person was wearing a life jacket. Mr. Howard reached his wife just before they washed into Zoroaster Rapid. He was not seen alive again. His body was found 10 days later. Guides chased down Mr. Howard's wife, pulled her from the river and began CPR. She was transported by helicopter to Flagstaff Medical Center, where she was treated and released.

Lastly, there was a tragic commercial rafting accident on Costa Rica's Class III Naranjo River, which was flooding following heavy rains. All three rafts on the trip flipped; Ernesto Sierra, Jorge Caso, Sergio Lorenzo, and Andres Dennis, all U.S. citizens, along with guide Kevin Reid, died. Thirteen other guests and four guides were able to hold onto their capsized rafts until the rapids let up.

There were four more rafting accidents involving private paddlers. On July 12th a single raft carrying three passengers flipped in Yankee Jim Canyon on Montana's Yellowstone River. While only Class III



difficulty, the river is big, fast moving, and cold. After capsizing, two of the men got to shore but Mark Shirtloff, 49, floated downstream. His body was found several days later. A second boat might have been able to make a successful rescue.

Two days later, on July 14th, a raft pinned at the top of Staircase Rapid on Idaho's South Fork of the Payette. Everyone took a long, rocky swim and Pete Herbst, 67, was pinned underwater between several rocks. First responders pronounced him dead at the scene.

Rangers in Alaska's Wrangell-St. Elias National Park said that Aidan Don, a 22-year-old Austrian, died while pack rafting the Nizina River on August 2nd. A pack raft is a lightweight, one-man inflatable kayak; the Nizina is a large, remote, Class II-III river fed by snowmelt. It's no place for unprepared paddlers! Mr. Don and a friend were dropped off at a nearby lake with no life vests, helmets, or cold weather gear. The friend quickly lost sight of Mr. Don, but he thought nothing of it until he saw the overturned pack raft. Then he landed and used a satellite phone to call for help.

We have a sketchy report of a death on the Salmon River below Riggins. An oar rigged raft carrying seven people flipped on August 28th. This may have been a one-boat trip, with no on-water backup. Everyone was on shore when Helen Eimers, 73, complained of difficulty breathing and collapsed. EMS was contacted via satellite phone, but the victim did not respond to treatment. It's not clear if an unrelated health problem was involved.

Miscellaneous Watercraft

Three deaths involved paddlers in "other" types of boats. On the evening of July 27th two people were killed when a drift boat collided with the Highway 89 bridge pier on Montana's Yellowstone River. This stretch has a fast current, a few mild rapids, and icy water. James Anderson, his daughter, and a friend swam to safety; his wife and son, Angie, 47, and James, 15, did not.

Their bodies were located by search teams days later.

North Carolina's North Toe River was the scene of a fatal tubing accident on August 11th. This Class I-II river was bank-full and running fast when a couple rented tubes from an outfitter. The tube used by Jennifer Martin, 52, flipped. She was swept away until a group of kayakers found her unconscious body. They brought her ashore and tried to revive her, without success.

And finally, on November 19th two people died when their powerboat washed over Dam #4 on Maryland's Potomac River. The dam is 20 feet high. The river was higher than usual, 4.6 feet at Little Falls, so a dangerous hydraulic formed. Although no one witnessed the accident, we know that Susan and David King, both in their early 60s, launched some distance upstream. It's unlikely that they ran it deliberately; perhaps they had engine failure or got too close to the lip before recognizing the drop. After their boat was found pinned on rocks below the dam, a search was organized. Their bodies turned up a few days later.

Near Misses and Injuries

Several notable near misses were reported to American Whitewater. On July 8th, two women who pinned their kayak on a strainer on Nebraska's Elkhorn Creek called 911 to get help. The river was quite high and they were actually in the water, clinging to trees, for an hour and a half before rescuers arrived. Although they had a cell phone with them, neither paddler was wearing a PFD.

On July 16th an experienced Southeastern boater had an awful swim at Woodall Shoals on Section IV of South Carolina's Chatooga River that brought on a heart attack. It all started when he got caught in the dangerous ledge hole at the top of the rapid. Excerpts from his report exemplify the kind of thoughtful coolness he needed to survive. The full report is available in the AW Accident Database.

"..... I decided I need to wet exit. As I tried to grab my release handle, I can't reach it the hole pulled me out of my boat. I pop up and think I'm out of the hole. My boat that is eight feet long is between me and the pourover. the hole is pulling me back I take a deep breath because I don't know when I'm going to get chance to breathe again. I'm tumbling around. I don't know what's up and what's down. I have to go deep to catch the water going out of the hole if I'm going to live.

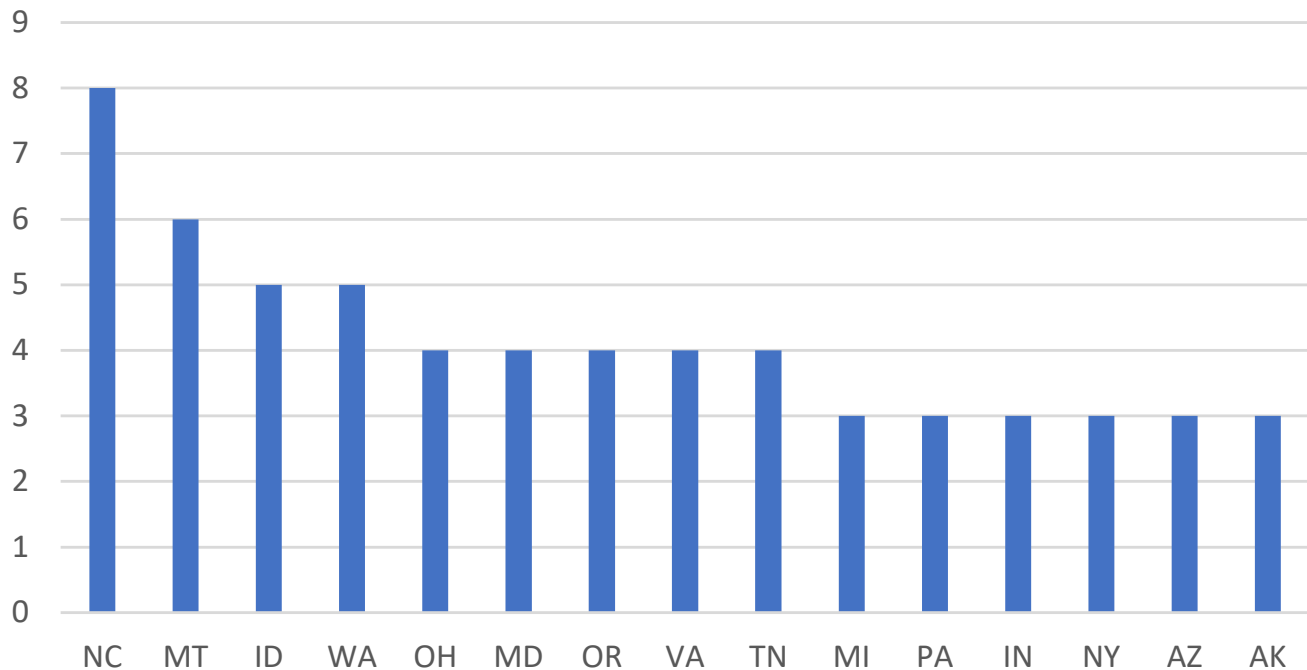
"..... I try to take off my life jacket so I can get deep. No success. I'm trying to get another breath of air but my face never clears the surface I just have to keep on fighting. The hole has pulled me back into the meat I try to ball up to go deep again. All I do is tumble. I'm talking to myself and say I guess this is it. I go limp..... I feel the hole release me. I say to myself, you have to fight to survive! I pull my head up to get a breath of air. I'm in the main current of Woodall Shoals. the hole has pulled my neoprene bathing suit off to my ankles. I'm going down stream and the river owns me.

"I come to the next deep hole and I know I'm going over so I take a deep breath I went deep and came right out of this hole and kept going down stream. I'm hitting lots of rocks. I have to be very careful about standing up or I'm going to get foot entrapment..... The water is getting shallower..... Finally, I come to a stop. I'm trying to catch my breath, but my chest is killing me. I'm trying so hard to breathe. I have a lot of pain in my chest. I'm gasping for air each breath. I'm having a heart attack!

Other paddlers got him to the hospital in Clayton, GA. From there, he was life-flighted to Gainesville, GA for treatment.

A group running the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon camped at Fern Glen on August 13th. An exceptionally violent late afternoon storm tore their camp apart and threatened their lives. The microburst

2018 - Top 10 States



dropped 5 inches of rain in 20 minutes, causing flash flooding and rockfalls. Here's an excerpt from an account published in the newsletter of the Grand Canyon Private Boaters Association. The full story, available in the accident database, is an inspiring account of how the group coped with this life-threatening weather anomaly. For a video, search Youtube for "Grand Canyon Flash Flood 2018."

"Shortly after dinner the winds picked up with sustained gusts over 30 mph requiring us to take down our tarps & sunshades. The winds were followed by heavy rain & hail. The hail stones quickly grew in size & frequency from pea sized to marble sized and finally to golf ball size with significant accumulation. Several people sought refuge under aluminum kitchen tables & the cliff overhang alone the back of the camp. After 5" of heavy rain a 1500' cliff face funneled water and debris down into our camp. At the west end of the beach a small waterfall of rock & other debris fell

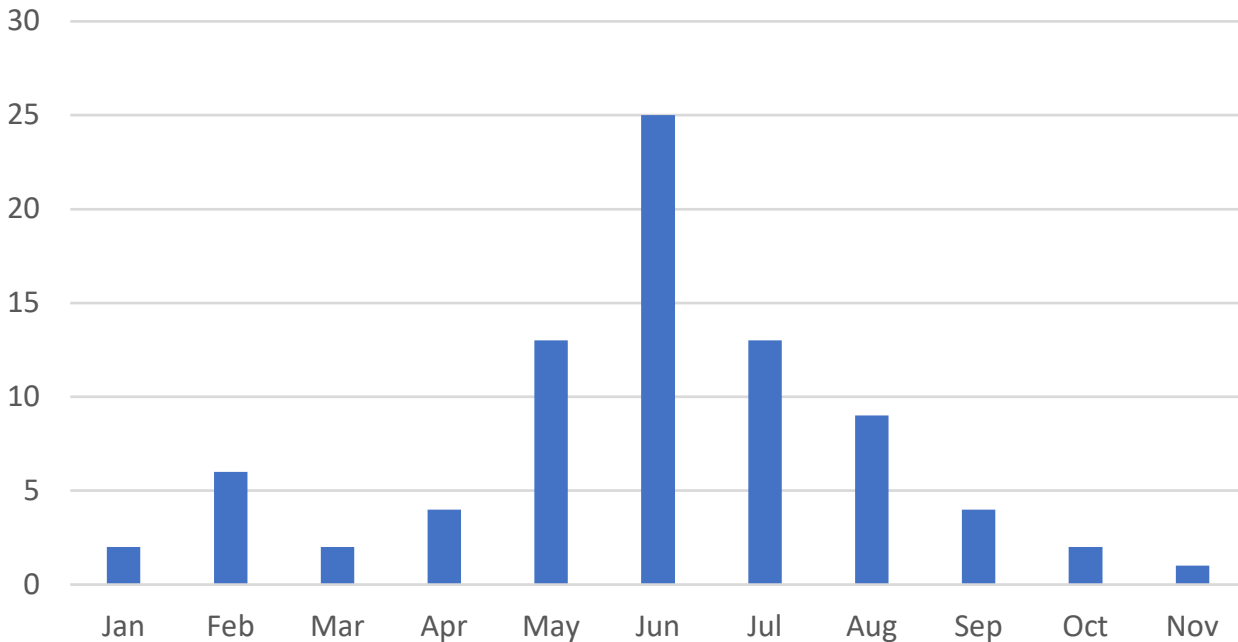
..... narrowly missing three members of our party and severely injuring another. A 30' section of the overhanging cliff collapsed, burying an area where some people had been sheltering.

Four members of the group were seriously injured. A satellite phone was used to summon help, but the group was told that no one could get to them until morning. A safe triage area was set up to administer aid to victims away from the cliff, river and historical flash flood drainages (The Colorado rose 5 feet in the next few hours) As the water began to rise it brought with it two commercial "J" boats, one boat towing the other disabled boat, carrying 15 people total. They had fled their camp at Lower National (a flash flood washed away all their gear) with only their PFD's and the clothes on their backs. We offered to help, increasing the number of souls involved in the disaster from 15 to 30. they were fed and accommodations provided in a safe area adjacent to the kitchen. Shortly

after dawn the NPS helicopter arrived on scene and evacuated several injured people. The eleven remaining members of the trip spent the remaining day cleaning and packing gear Plans were made for takeout at Pearce Ferry on our scheduled takeout day."

On the other side of the country another powerful storm caused serious trouble for a commercial rafting trip on Pennsylvania's Lehigh River. Their guests were from an Orthodox Jewish summer girls camp and guides say that cultural and language difficulties made things even more challenging. The storm hit hard as they approached the take-out of the Class I "float trip" section in Lehighton. There were high winds and driving rains. Rafts flipped, boats missed the take-out, and people were scattered over several miles of shoreline. When a capsized raft was spotted downstream, a rescue squad was called out. Their motorized boats searched the river islands and banks from Jim Thorpe to

2018 Incidents/Month



Walnutport for the next three hours, providing invaluable support to guides searching for 145 missing guests. In the end, everyone was safe.

A well-prepared group responded quickly on October 6th when a member of their group broke his femur on the Class III upper section of Virginia's Russell Fork River. Brannen Proctor, 67, broached his open canoe in a rocky ledge. He stepped out of his boat to release it, slipped, and fell hard. His face went white and he was unable to stand up and get in his boat. He eased into the water and floated down to his group.

A member of the group was an ER physician. She was pretty sure his hip was broken. She had a cell phone and miraculously was able to reach 911. Since it would take hours to get a crew in there to carry Mr. Proctor out of the gorge, the group elected to evacuate him by water. When downstream rapids are manageable this is often the best option. An excerpt from their report explains how they did it:

"Brannen was still in too much pain to move so I suggested that we give him some pain

medication that I carry Dr. Liz agreed After about 20 minutes the medication started to help and we were able to move him a bit. We decided to use the boat/saddle to transport him and immobilize his hips/legs. We helped him up and into the canoe backwards. We sat him on the bottom with his back against the air bag and his legs on either side of the saddle. This gave him some back support and each leg was braced between the saddle and the side of the boat. This effectively splinted the injured area and prevented unwanted movement.

"..... Robert and I divided up my hand paddles and rafted up with Brannen. We each held on to Brannen's canoe with one arm and had a hand paddle on the other side. We ran the next three or four rapids in this fashion. When we arrived at Garden Hole we had a welcoming committee: the ambulance crew, the Haysi, VA police chief and about 6 deputies. They were all wonderful!

American Whitewater needs *your* help to gather accident reports to share with other paddlers. First person accounts from

experienced paddlers, newspaper articles, and on-line posts are all useful. Since media articles are often inaccurate or incomplete, clarifying comments from paddlers familiar with the area are really useful. And while serious incidents among skilled whitewater paddlers are quite rare, they teach us important lessons, help us avoid future trouble, and show how to better manage emergencies. Accurate accounts of these accidents also keep malicious rumors at bay, something to consider in this age of irresponsible Internet gossip. Your story can be very helpful to everyone.

To report a whitewater accident, near miss, or serious injury, please go to the Safety page on americanwhitewater.org, click "report an accident," and enter the information. Or you can email me at ccwalbridge@cs.com or message "Charlie Walbridge" on Facebook. Feel free to share newspaper articles, chat room posts, or even rumors! I'm not an "investigator," but I often use sketchy reports as leads to find out what happened. I can also help prepare or edit an accident report if needed.

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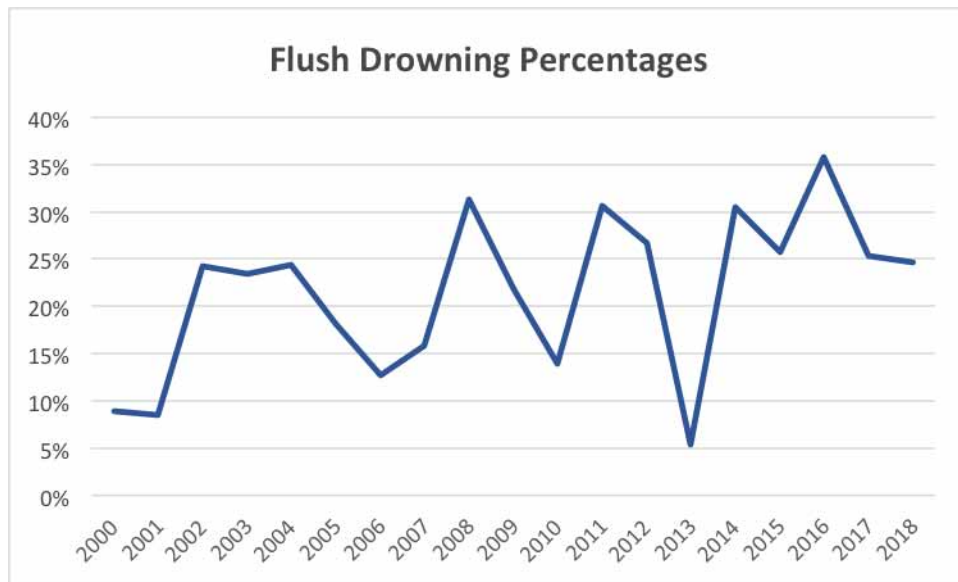
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ANALYSIS OF AND SUGGESTIONS FOR PREVENTING FLUSH DROWNINGS

BY CHARLIE DUFFY



Flush drownings are a very significant proportion of all incidents, as the following trend line shows.

FLUSH DROWNING IS when a swimmer isn't held in place, but is generally moving downstream through rough water. Repeated dunking and/or being hit by waves causes the swimmer to aspirate water compromising the airway. Eventually, getting enough oxygen in the lungs proves too difficult and they pass out and drown. Flush drowning is common on large, swollen rivers and high gradient streams, often at flood stage. Another concern is that flush drownings are almost always a fatality.

To show how common this is, I summarized the top incidents from the American Whitewater Safety Database and grouped by Novice, Intermediate, and Advance/Expert runs, listing the top five accident causes from 2000 to the present.

Novice (Class I-II) Top Accidents

No PFD	Flush Drown	Swim into Strainer	Boat Pin Strainer	Low Head Dam
98	66	42	26	15

Intermediate (Class III-IV) Top Accidents

Flush Drown	No PFD	Swim into Strainer	Boat Pin Strainer	Heart Attack
152	70	37	30	27

Advanced/Expert (Class IV-V) Top Accidents

Flush Drown	Boat Pin Rocks	Swim into Strainer	Swim into Undercut	Bad Hydraulic
106	41	26	24	23

One would expect a high number of incidents caused by not wearing a PFD for novices; many are very new to the sport. Flush drowning is still the second leading incident cause for this group. For the rest (Intermediate/Advanced), flush drowning incidents are by far the most common accident cause.

Prevention

There are many contributing factors leading to flush drownings:

- **Judgment/Planning:** All paddlers should get in the practice of creating a Float Plan. Float plans gather data on river levels, weather, water temperature, stream beta, potential hazards. All of these are common factors in flush drowning incidents. Set a cut-off level BEFORE traveling to your destination, write it down and stick to it. This is just like an auction, its far too easy to exceed your risk tolerance if you don't set a limit.
- **Cold Water Immersion:** Cold water really saps energy, making you lethargic and less capable of self-rescue. Dress for full immersion, even if you have a bombproof roll.
- **Situational Awareness:** Pay close attention to rising streams and have an exit strategy ready should the need arise. This also means keeping a close eye on your paddling buddies in case they swim.
- **Conditioning:** Many of us are desk jockeys. As we age, our cardio conditioning degrades. Aggressive swimming in rough water is exhausting. Besides cross training, I highly recommend practicing swimming drills in deep rapids.
- **Swiftwater Rescue Training:** Flush drowning is just one of the topics covered along with lots of practice swimming, wading, boat-based rescues, rescue vests, scouting, etc. All of these are valuable components in any prevention strategy.
- **Gear:** Pay close attention to your Life Jacket & Helmet. Make certain they fit well and are properly secured. Test your life vest annually to ensure adequate buoyancy (your whole head out of the water in a calm pool). Rescue vests have extra buoyancy and are worth the extra price.

Drowning

Understanding what happens when a person drowns is key to understanding why flush drowning claims many lives. Drowning is considered to be a process including the following steps:

1. **Breath Holding.** A small amount of water can enter the lungs, up to six teaspoons.
2. **Unconsciousness, Aspiration, or Laryngospasm** come next. Laryngospasm, or a sudden blockage of the airway may take place (this is quite rare, occurring in just 3-5% of drownings). This is what we used to call Dry Drowning. Rales, a spasm of the vocal cords, can in some cases allow more water to enter the lungs. Rales diagnosis requires a stethoscope, something rarely carried in the field.
3. **Unconsciousness.** The body still works to keep water out of the lungs by coughing or swallowing. A fair amount of water may end up in the stomach. This instinctive defense continues for several minutes.
4. **Loss of oxygen transfer (hypoxemia) and an increase in acidity.** At this stage foam (pulmonary edema) is produced in the lungs.
5. **Brain damage** due to lack of oxygen.

There are six grades of drowning:

Grade	Signs/Symptoms	Mortality (%)
1	Cough, no foam at mouth/nose	0
2	Small amount of foam in mouth or nose. Also labored breathing (Rales)	0.6
3	Large amount of foam, normal BP	5.2
4	Large amount of foam, low BP	19.4
5	Respiratory arrest	44
6	Cardiopulmonary arrest	93

-Wilderness EMS, Seth Hawkins

Keep it simple: if there's any lingering symptoms, especially any foam coming from the mouth or nose, get victims to the hospital ASAP!

Rescues

First, try to stay with your boat. A capsized boat has an enormous amount of buoyancy. You can rest your chest on the upside-down hull getting the head way out of the water and gaining an additional 18 inches of visibility. Stay on the upstream side of the boat to prevent entrapment and being bashed between a rock and a hardshell. You can use your legs for propulsion quite effectively in this position and clearly see where you are going. Practice this skill in a safe stream.

Look for the nearest stabilization point. These are often eddies or nice rounded boulders. You don't have to get to the bank quite yet, midstream eddies or convenient boulders will do just fine. Once stable, gather your wits and assess your situation. Take a few

SAFETY

minutes to catch your breath, swimming can be exhausting. Hopefully your paddling party can get a boat to you or a throw rope. If not, look for the next waystation on your journey to the easiest-to-reach river bank.

Defensive swimming (feet downstream on the surface, head lifted a bit to see where you are going) can save energy but eventually (and soon) you need to identify where you need to be and make certain you get there. This is where aggressive swimming techniques come into play. Once again, frequently lift your head to watch where you are going and make any necessary corrections.

Time your breathing. In large wave trains, grab breaths frequently generally on the backside of waves and scout at wave tops where visibility is best. It's generally a

good idea to keep your mouth closed while swimming and breath through the nose (less likely to gulp water).

When scouting, watch out for hydraulics, strainers, and undercuts/sieves—do what's necessary to steer clear of these features. If necessary, that water-logged boat can be used as a launch platform to get you past obstacles.

Know your run/rapids. Many large streams have very dangerous undercuts/sieves along the shoreline. With that in mind, riding tongues to a pool below the rapid may be your best option.

Be very careful with your feet, keep them on the surface to avoid foot entrapments, which are very deadly and exceptionally challenging for rescues. Swim until your

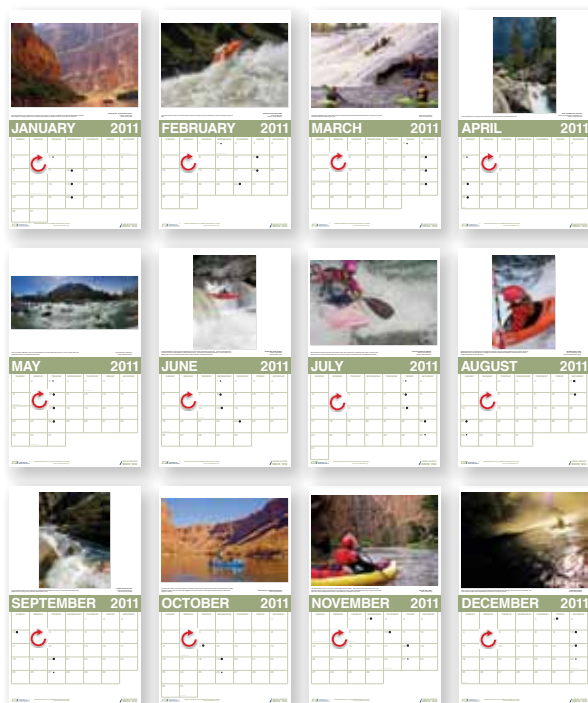
hands touch bottom and the water is slowed down by an eddy.

Pay attention to those assisting you. Especially those nearby have a huge height advantage, so they can see a great deal you can't. If they ask you to temporarily let go of their boat, they probably have a very good reason. Boats get stuck in holes much easier than swimmers, thank goodness.

Rescue parties should give priority to the swimmer(s), not their gear. Get the swimmer to the nearest stabilization point pronto—time is not on your side.

After the rescue, treat the patient. It's vital for all paddlers to maintain CPR and Wilderness First Aid training competency. Drowning victims will definitely require full CPR: Compressions and rescue breaths. It's

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vital to get oxygen to vital organs, like the brain, as quickly as possible. Compression-only CPR isn't effective with true drowning victims.

Conclusion

For most experienced paddlers, knowing the triggers for flush drowning accidents and having the knowledge/foresight to prevent these accidents is vitally important. Two very good videos well worth watching are:

1. "That Time Mike Almost Drowned" (YouTube). If you do a Google Video or YouTube search for this title, it should be the first result.
2. "The Swim" (Vimeo). If you go to the main Vimeo page and search for video number 10290133, it should take you directly to this sobering GoPro helmet-cam video.

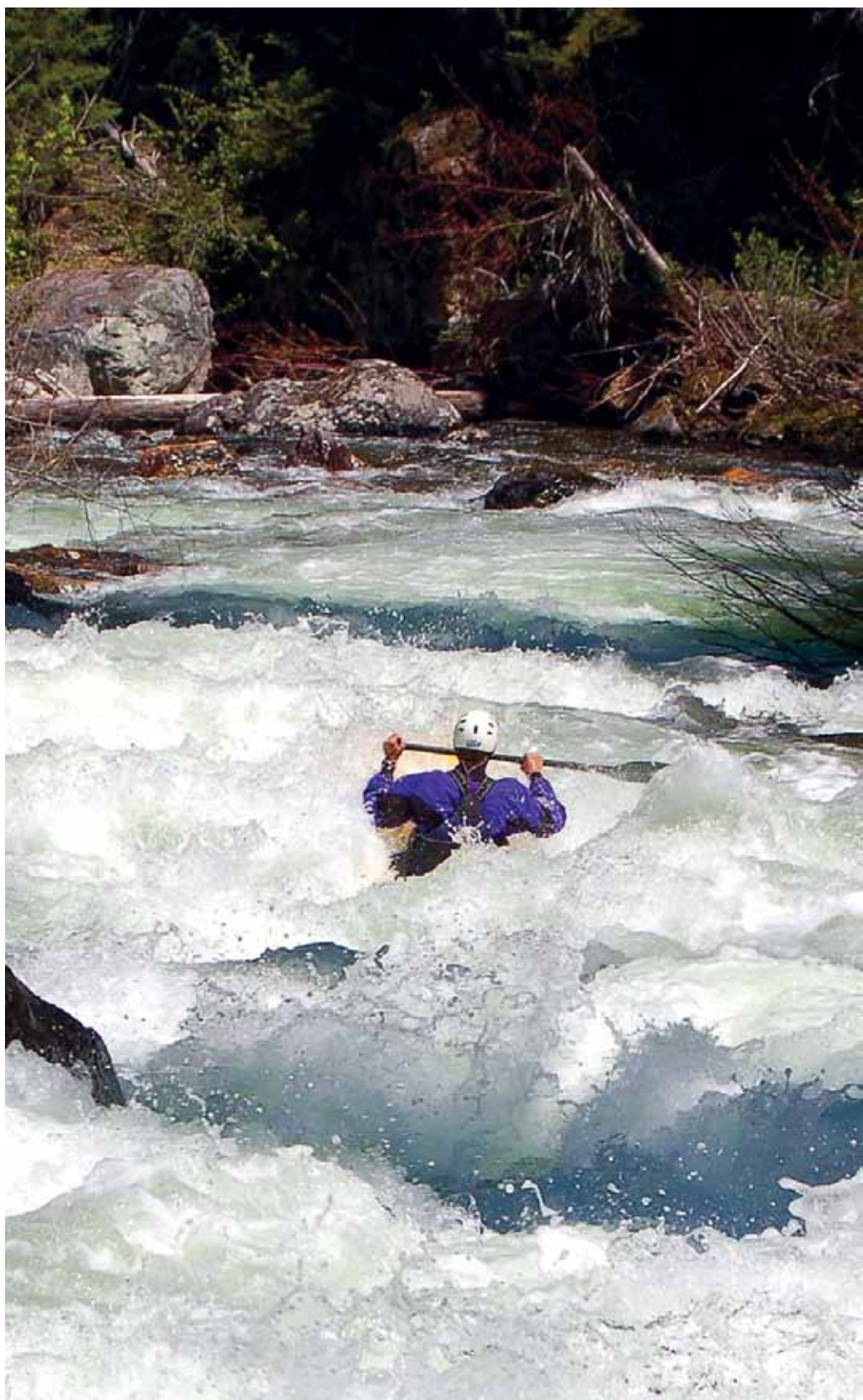
The first video is an excellent demonstration of professional teamwork in rescuing a swimmer. This also showcases all the common factors for flush drowning: high and cold water, high gradient, continuous rapids, etc.

The second video shows a very experienced and level-headed paddler, the thoughts he had, and the use of a midstream stabilization point when he couldn't overcome reactionary waves preventing him getting to shore.

Get the necessary Swiftwater Rescue Training, practice your skills, and get in the habit of preparing a float plan—one of the most valuable tools for paddlers.

Rivers like the Upper Swan River in Montana present cold, fast water, strainers, and other features common in flush drownings.

Photo by Kevin Colburn



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ability to leverage
a strong grassroots
base—members
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assist our limited
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restoration efforts.

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

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

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

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

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

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WHITEWATER POETRY

WHITEWATER JOY

BY NORMA SIMS ROCHE

It might be enough to drive northwest
red and yellow boat atop my car
iPod playing "Take Me to the River"
through farm fields, over swelling brooks, under dripping trees,
past unfortunate people stuck doing lesser things

And the greetings of friends
the cluster of bright boats
the first slap of water on my face
might be enough

But a day's long duet of warm sun and cold water
the feeling of slipping over a drop,
falling and being caught again
of riding high on a wave
with the balance of a Buddha
of a friend's shout, "Sweet move!"
of the catch of a strong stroke
steering a sure course through foamy chaos
is surely too much joy

when even gazing into a quiet eddy
at the sunlit stones of the shallows
as I ponder the next rapid
might be enough.

Photo by Evan Stafford



Editor's Note: We're reprinting Norma Roche's poem that was featured in our previous issue because we omitted the final stanza last time. Our apologies to Norma. Please enjoy the full text of the poem on the opposite page.

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.

AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY BETHANY OVERFIELD

American Whitewater's original purpose since 1954 has included distribution of information among its Affiliate Clubs. We have over 100 current AW Club Affiliates and they are all doing great work on your behalf; if you don't belong to a club, consider joining one.

American Whitewater has two levels of Affiliate Clubs - a Supporting Affiliate Club or an Affiliate Club. Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$100 annual level are recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll. In order to be recognized at this level, a Club needs to maintain an annual \$100 contribution.

Affiliate Clubs that choose AW's \$400 Supporting Affiliate Club annual level are recognized in the AW Journal, on our website club page, and in our annually published Honor Roll as well as being listed as sponsors of an AW stewardship presentation each year. In order to be recognized at this level, a Club needs to maintain an annual \$400 contribution. A Supporting Affiliate Club can revert to the \$100 Affiliate Club annual level at any time.

An Affiliate Club that is already being recognized as an AW Lifetime member is recognized in the annual Honor Roll as a Lifetime member. They do need to contribute either at the \$100 or the \$400 level annually to be recognized as an Affiliate Club in the AW Journal and under the Affiliate Club heading of the published Honor Roll. Is your club missing from this list? It might have expired. Contact me at membership@americanwhitewater.org to square your club membership away!

Supporting Affiliate Clubs

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks

California

Gold Country Paddlers, Placerville
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

Dolores River Boating Advocates, Dolores

Georgia

Georgia Canoeing Association, Atlanta

New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

Ohio

Keelhaulers, Cleveland

South Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville
Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Washington

Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
Washington Kayak Club, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

Affiliate Club by State

Alaska

Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Coosa River Paddling Club, Wetumpka
Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico
River City Whitewater Club, Sacramento
Shasta Paddlers, Redding
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

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

Connecticut

Housatonic Area Canoe & Kayak Sq, Lakeville

Delaware

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks (PA)
Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Indiana

Hoosier Canoe Club, Brownsburg
Ohio Valley Paddlers, Evansville

Iowa

Iowa Whitewater Coalition, W. Des Moines

Kentucky

Elkhorn Paddlers, Lexington
Viking Canoe Club, Louisville

Maine

Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society, Freeport

Maryland

Baltimore Canoe & Kayak Club, Baltimore
Blue Ridge Voyageurs, Rockville
Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Hagerstown

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston
Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

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

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings
Whitewater Kayak Club at Montana State University, Bozeman

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond
Ledyard Canoe Club, Hanover

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks (PA)

New Mexico

Adobe Whitewater Club of New Mexico, Albuquerque

New York

Flow Paddlers' Club, Rochester
Outdoor Education/Base Camp, Hamilton
Zoar Valley Paddling Club, Machias

North Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh
Landmark Learning, Cullowhee
Mind Body Play, Asheville
Tuckasegee Paddlers, Cullowhee

Ohio

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

Oregon

Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland
Hells Canyon Shuttle, Halfway
Northwest Rafters Association, Roseburg
Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland
Oregon Whitewater Association, Portland
Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks (PA)
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnstown
Bradford County Canoe and Kayak Club, Sayre
Canoe Club of Centre County, Lemont
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, Harrisburg
Conewago Canoe Club, York
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valley
Mach One Slalom Team, State College
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Limestone
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
Clean Water Expected in East Tennessee,
Sevierville
East Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Eastman Recreation Club, Kingsport
Tennessee Scenic River Association, Nashville

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston

Utah

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

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Virginia

Float Fishermen of Virginia, Sandy Hook

Washington

BEWET, Bellevue
Spokane Canoe & Kayak Club, Spokane
The Mountaineers, Seattle
Washington Recreational River Runners, Renton

West Virginia

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

Wisconsin

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

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson
Jackson Hole Kayak Club, Jackson

Ontario

Guelph Kayak Club, Elora
Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

Quebec

Montreal Kayak Club, Montreal

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

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

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

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

JOIN AMERICAN WHITewater AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

1. Support river access and restoration through the AW River Stewardship Team.
2. Be part of a national voice for the protection of the whitewater rivers your club values.
3. Tap into the professional expertise of AW staff for river issues that come up in your backyard.
4. Your club's members can become AW members for \$25. A \$10 savings!
5. Receive the American Whitewater Journal, the oldest continually published whitewater magazine.
6. Your club is recognized in the list of Affiliate Clubs posted to the AW website.
7. Recognize your club in the list of Affiliate Clubs noted in each bi-monthly AW Journal.
8. Post Club information on the AW Website to help paddlers find you.
9. Gain Club satisfaction from lending support to AW's stewardship efforts.
10. Improve your club members river karma.

For more information, contact Bethany Overfield at membership@americanwhitewater.org or sign-up online at www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.

AW AMERICAN WHITewater

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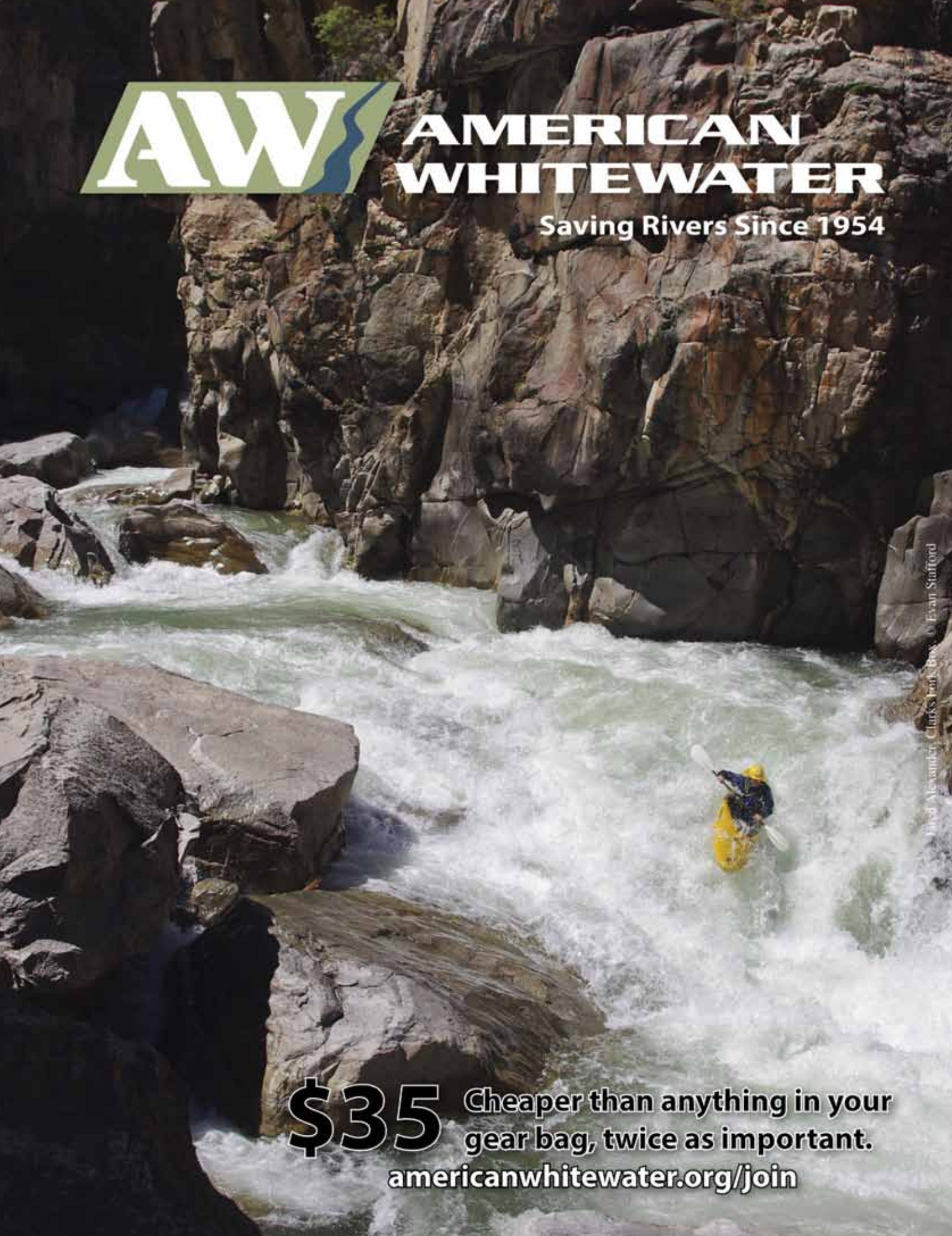
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