



**AMERICAN
WHITEWATER**

Conservation • Access • Events • Adventure • Safety

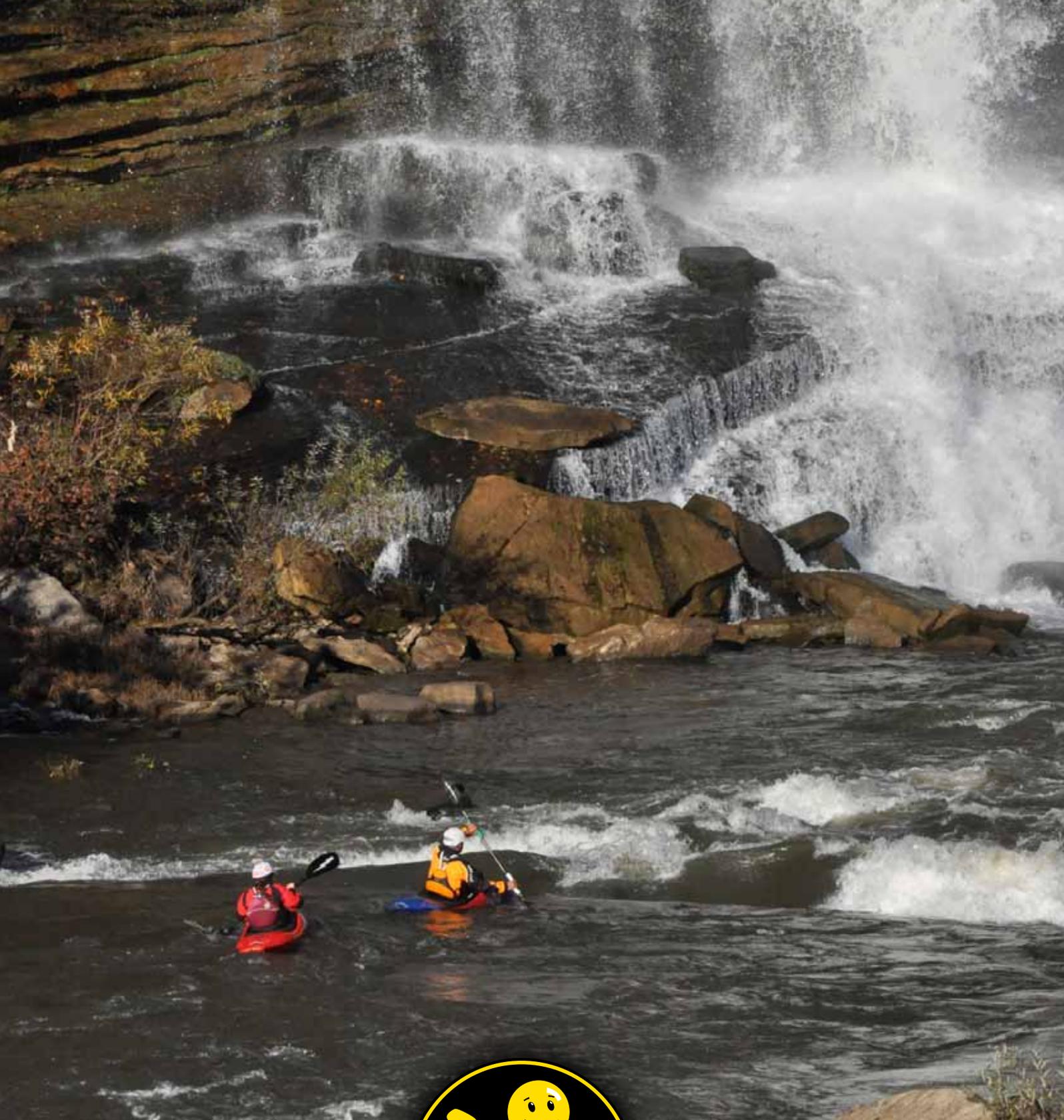
BY BOATERS FOR BOATERS
Winter 2018

THE TOP TEN RIVER STEWARDSHIP ISSUES OF 2018

SAFETY & WILDERNESS PADDLING PLUS

EXPERIENCING THE ECLIPSE ON THE CHATTOOGA





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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

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Nearing Stone Creek, Grand Canyon, Colorado River (AZ). Grand Canyon National Park was originally designated as a National Monument by Teddy Roosevelt on January 11, 1908.

Photo by Evan Stafford

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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.

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THE JOURNEY AHEAD

HAPPY NEW YEAR! Welcome to the *American Whitewater Journal* for 2018. For over 60 years, American Whitewater has worked hard to support the conservation and stewardship of rivers that are important to the paddling community. At the core of the American Whitewater river stewardship program is the connection paddlers have with wild rivers. In this issue of the *American Whitewater Journal*, our staff looks to the coming year and to the 50th Anniversary of the passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

American Whitewater's founders were among the first to advocate for a national system designed to protect pristine and free-flowing rivers in the United States. Efforts of our early organization leaders led to the passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 1968. This year, we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by leveraging this incredible opportunity to build positive awareness, support, and activism around the need to grow our one-of-a-kind system of outstanding protected rivers.

Our founders took the long view when advocating for the passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Their legacy is alive today, as illustrated by AW staff outlining their plans for this year's Top Ten River Stewardship Issues on page six. Our plans look at the need to grow Wild and Scenic designations for worthy rivers and address current threats faced by smaller streams and creeks as well as basin-wide water allocation challenges in the West.

Designating 100 New Wild and Scenic Rivers

American Whitewater aims to protect five thousand miles of river and streams by the end of 2018. We can make this vision a reality by securing new Wild and Scenic designations via Congress, as well as new protections through National Forest and BLM planning efforts. We are the co-architect of several Wild and Scenic River bills that are before Congress or in the

works that would protect some of our nation's most spectacular headwaters. American Whitewater will be encouraging river enthusiasts to apply steady pressure on Congress to introduce and pass these bills in the coming year through grassroots engagement campaigns.

What we aim to protect:

- **Wild Olympics (WA):** 19 rivers and their major tributaries, 464 river miles. The Wild Olympics bill has been introduced and is ripe for passage.
- **Montana Headwaters:** 50 rivers, 600+ miles. Introduction and possibly passage of legislation is likely within two years based on the last six years of grassroots organizing. A spinoff bill to designate East Rosebud Creek has been introduced and awaits action.
- **North Carolina Wild Rivers and Creeks:** 15 rivers, ~95 miles. Forest planning efforts have laid the groundwork for community supported legislation that awaits Congressional leadership and introduction.
- **Other active campaigns** include current efforts on the Wild Rogue and Molalla (OR), and future opportunities in the North Cascades (WA) and Vermont's Green Mountains.
- **Continue to protect and defend** the outstanding remarkable values of National Wild and Scenic Rivers such as the Eel (CA) and Chattooga (NC/GA/SC).

At the core of the American Whitewater River Stewardship Program is the understanding that conservation and healthy human-powered outdoor recreation are mutually dependent. Whitewater boaters appreciate natural landscapes, and those special places need conservation-oriented paddlers to help preserve and protect these treasured resources. As we move into the coming year, staff at American Whitewater will

be pushing for new opportunities to reconnect rivers with paddlers, habitat, and local economies. As we look to the future, we continue to appreciate the importance of rivers and their role in supporting the health and well being of the paddling community.

Join American Whitewater staff in taking the 50th Anniversary of the passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act as a way to eddy-out and appreciate the long view on this landmark legislation that provides protections to free flowing rivers. Like our founders before us, we continue exploring and conserving wilderness waterways for public enjoyment and protection.

Onward,

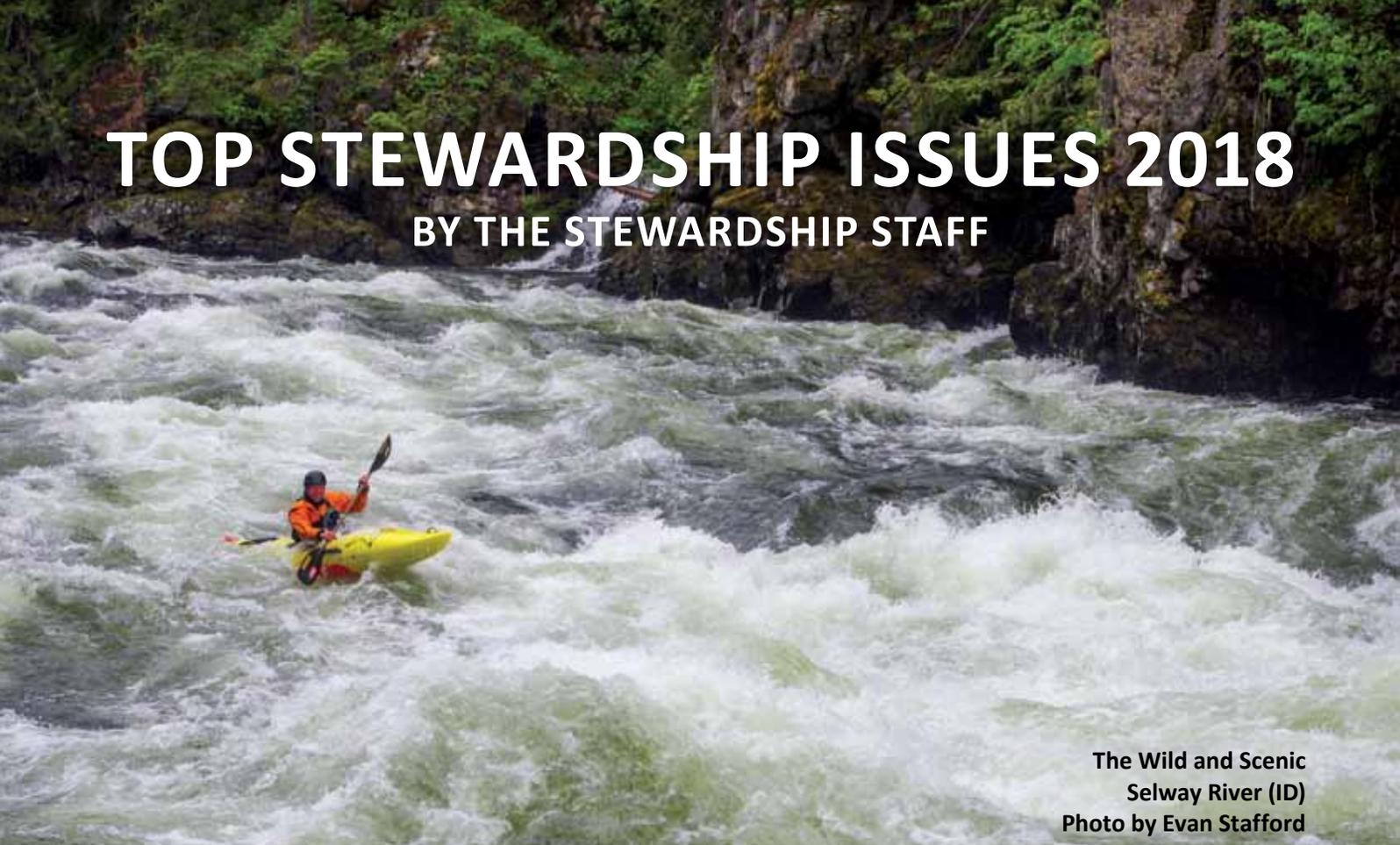


Mark
Executive Director, American Whitewater

PS - If you happen to be looking for a way to deepen that connection with wild rivers, join me on the American Whitewater Rogue River Trip from June 14-17, 2018. Thanks to support from Northwest Rafting Company, American Whitewater members have the opportunity to join staff and board members on an exclusive four-day trip down Oregon's Rogue River. We invite you to come learn more about what we're up to while having a great time enjoying one of our nation's first Wild and Scenic Rivers. The trip (June 14-17) will be fully outfitted by Northwest Rafting Company with professional guides, exceptional food, transportation to and from the put-in, and all group equipment. You will have the option of bringing your own boat, renting a boat, or joining as a passenger on one of the rafts. You can learn more about the trip and reserve your spot by visiting www.nwrafting.com/rogue and selecting the June 14-17 trip with American Whitewater under "Dates and Prices."

TOP STEWARDSHIP ISSUES 2018

BY THE STEWARDSHIP STAFF



**The Wild and Scenic
Selway River (ID)**
Photo by Evan Stafford

TWENTY-EIGHTEEN MARKS THE 50th Anniversary of the historic passage of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. River runners were among the first to advocate for a national system designed to protect pristine and free-flowing rivers in the United States. As paddlers, we know our rivers intimately and we have the first-hand experiences to speak passionately about the grandeur of a river in its most raw and wild state. Through the American Whitewater Journal, American Whitewater founders Oz Hawksley and Wolf Bauer shared the magnificence of several of the original eight rivers that were designated as Wild and Scenic when the Act was signed into law in 1968. Hawksley and Bauer both wrote passionately about the need for a national river protection system and worked with leaders in the national river conservation community to successfully develop and support what would become the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Just as we were during the inception of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, American Whitewater is right in the thick of it today, working towards bringing 5,000 new miles of river under Wild and Scenic protection in the coming year. Our Top Ten Stewardship Issues for 2018 reflect this goal, with many of our top issues being Wild and Scenic in nature. But, don't think we're going to give up on any of the other challenges our rivers face, or that we're limiting our work in 2018 to just these 10 issues. Our Top

Ten list highlights the areas that we think have the potential to be game changing and where we expect we'll focus a lot of our energy striving for positive outcomes. From national policy issues that affect water quality, landscape level river protections, and our successful flow restoration programs, to local access, and flow, and conservation issues, you can count on American Whitewater's stewardship team to lead the way.

There's not much better than Wild and Scenic beach camping, Selway River (ID)
Photo by Evan Stafford



STEWARDSHIP



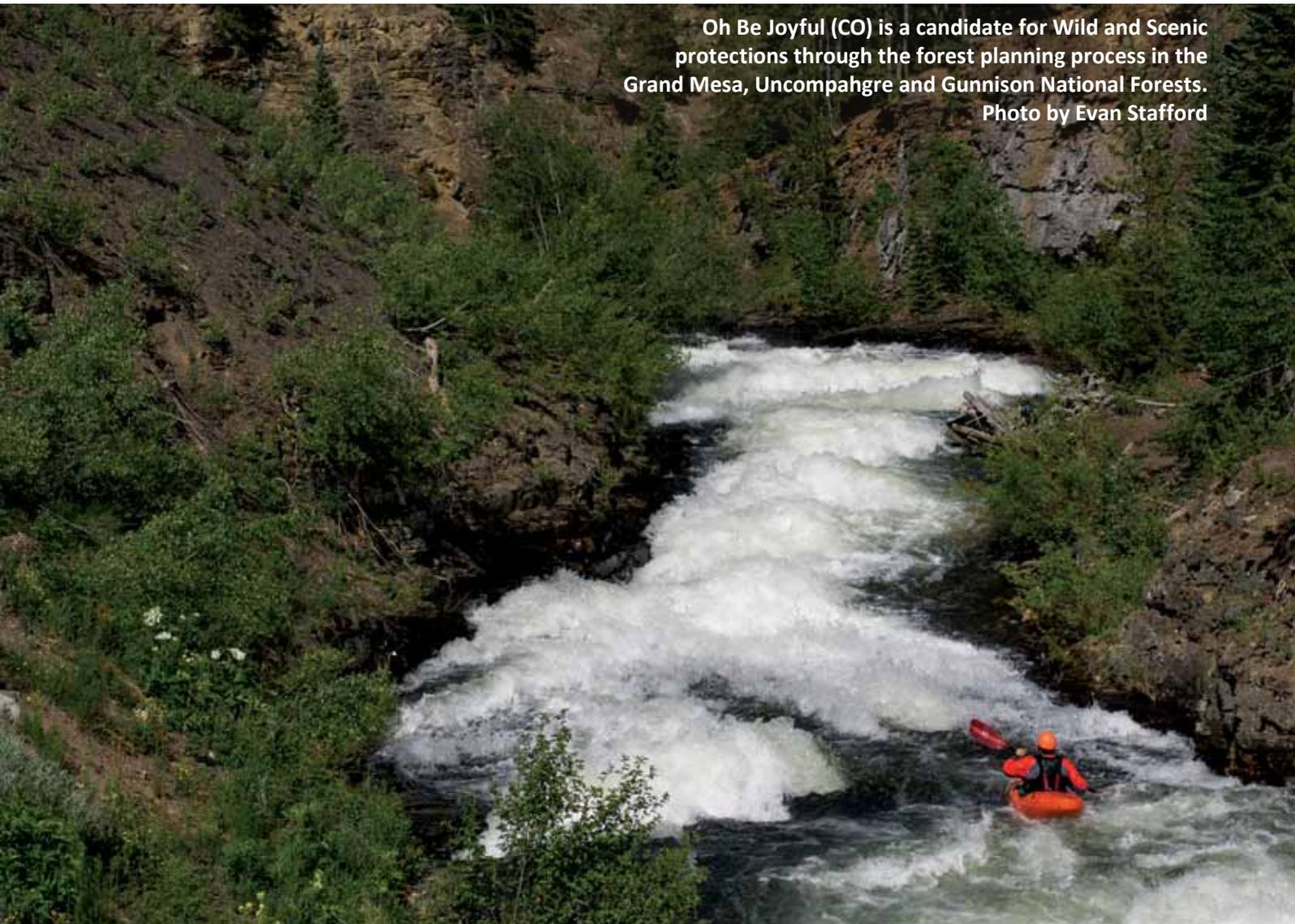
1. FOREST PLANNING

EVERY 20 YEARS or so each National Forest puts together a new management plan that includes a list of streams the agency will protect for potential future congressional designation as Wild and Scenic. American Whitewater and the paddling community take this opportunity to share the special values of these rivers and creeks that we know and love. Consequently, the Forest Service adds our favorite waterways to the list of Wild and Scenic “eligible” streams that it will protect for at least the next 15 to 20 years. Forest planning marks an incredible

once-in-a-generation opportunity for local paddlers to protect a batch of their favorite runs.

In 2018, the Forest Service will be making pivotal decisions on forest plans in California, Washington, Montana, Idaho, Colorado, New Mexico, and North Carolina. American Whitewater will be there, in meetings, filing comments, and asking you to join us each step of the way. The stakes are high, as the rivers that are up for consideration are some of the finest whitewater streams in the United States.

A couple of National Forests in Idaho have proposed to go rogue and release many eligible streams from protection by inappropriately weighing the current (lack of) political support for Congressional designation. American Whitewater and our partners have let the Forests know that their actions, if carried out, will be illegal and an insult to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act during the year of its 50th anniversary. Rest assured, we’ll be closely tracking and actively opposing this effort to thwart the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 2018.



Oh Be Joyful (CO) is a candidate for Wild and Scenic protections through the forest planning process in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forests.
Photo by Evan Stafford

STEWARDSHIP

2. WILD OLYMPICS



*The Hamma Hamm River (WA) is a part of the 19 river systems and 464 miles of river positioned to become Wild and Scenic as part of the Wild Olympics legislation.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe*

AERICAN WHITEWATER IS continuing to advocate for long-term protection of the spectacular free-flowing rivers of Washington's Olympic Peninsula. Our Wild Olympics legislation, which is the result of a broad coalition effort led by local residents, includes 19 major river systems on the Olympic Peninsula, representing 464 miles of opportunities for new Wild and Scenic Rivers. These rivers cascade through deep gorges and ancient forests where Sitka spruce and Douglas fir tower overhead and maidenhair ferns and mosses blanket the canyon walls. We have seen dam proposals for some of these rivers come and go over the years; now is the time to secure permanent protection for this unique place where opportunities for epic whitewater adventures abound and salmon and steelhead still find high quality habitat.

While we are working to permanently protect these rivers and the forests they flow through, we are also actively engaged in efforts to build new relationships

with the timber industry. The outdoor recreation economy continues to grow and local employers recognize the competitive advantage that easy access to outdoor recreation provides, but timber jobs remain important for local communities. In partnership with local community leaders, we are working to protect wild rivers and ancient forests while also recognizing opportunities to improve timber harvest in a manner that restores ecosystem function while still providing good-paying jobs. We are confident that this pragmatic approach will build community consensus for lasting conservation outcomes that provide economic benefits while leading to better forest management.

Passing federal legislation is always a long and complex

Wild Olympics
Photo by Daniel Patrinnellis

process, but we are well positioned for success on Wild Olympics and our Congressional champions, Senator Patty Murray and Representative Derek Kilmer, have consistently identified the Wild Olympics bill as a top priority. We will continue our efforts to secure legislative protection, and after we are successful, transition to developing management plans that recognize the important values of these rivers.





3. MONTANA HEADWATERS

AERICAN WHITEWATER HAS been working with our friends in Montana for several years to build support to designate about 50 outstanding rivers and streams as Wild and Scenic. Over 200 businesses have weighed in with their support, along with several major newspapers and thousands of individuals. That is a lot in a state with only one million citizens. Despite the overwhelming support, Montana's congressional delegation has lagged in delivering new designations. Frequent turnover in Montana's sole House of Representative seat has hampered the state's effectiveness in Congress, where key members take a dim view of federal designations. As an election year, 2018 offers both challenges and opportunities for the campaign.

Protecting a suite of streams as Wild and Scenic in Montana remains a top priority for American Whitewater. The streams are just so good—clean, cold, healthy, and beautiful—while also supporting a vital economy based on floating, fishing, and downstream farming. In 2018 we'll keep the pressure on and leverage the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to try to spur designation of these gems. We'll gather more support from businesses and opinion-leaders and encourage individual outreach to key politicians. We'll also celebrate Montana's awesome streams at events and through film. With steady pressure applied over the long haul, we'll reach our goal of protecting upwards of 500 miles of Montana streams.

Upper Twin Creek (MT)
Photo by Kevin Colburn

STEWARDSHIP

4. OCOEE RIVER



Protecting Ocoee River flows, which provide one of the most consistent paddling opportunities in the country, is a top priority for American Whitewater in 2018.

Photo by Kyle Koeberlein

THE OCOEE RIVER supports over 15,000 private paddler descents and 200,000 commercial rafting customer descents each year. This makes the releases on the Ocoee a big deal by any measure, especially when considering the economic value for rural communities near the river. The unusual contract between the outfitters and the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) that provides for the releases has been renegotiated and will be churning its way through federal review in 2018. The good news is that, so far, things seem to be on track to continue

the historic release schedule with perhaps a few relatively minor changes.

American Whitewater will ensure that the interests of private boaters are addressed throughout the federal review process and that private boaters are in the know. We expect at least one comment period and a round of public meetings as we roll into 2018. The current contracts expire after the 2018 paddling season, so the clock is ticking to resolve this issue prior to the first scheduled releases in the spring of 2019.

Also in the Ocoee area we are exploring options for restoring flows to the Hiwassee Dries, and are supporting the Tennessee Wilderness Act, which includes a Wilderness Area between the Ocoee and Hiwassee. We also remain interested in designating new state scenic rivers in Tennessee following our recent success in designating Soak Creek.

5. NATIONAL MONUMENTS

Teddy Roosevelt designated the Grand Canyon as a National Monument in 1908. Few today would question the wisdom of his action to protect this special place, but that is exactly what is happening to National Monuments designated over the past 20 years.
Photo by Evan Stafford



THE WILD AND Scenic Rivers Act is not the only tool we use to protect rivers. The Antiquities Act is a valuable conservation tool that authorizes the President to designate National Monuments through Presidential Proclamations. It was signed into law in 1906 by President Teddy Roosevelt and provides broad authority for the President to set aside “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest.” President Roosevelt took quick action to protect the Grand Canyon (AZ) as one of the first National Monuments in 1908 and Congress followed in designating it as a National Park in 1919. While the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, once targeted for mining and hydropower development, is arguably among the most iconic rivers protected under the Antiquities Act, many other paddling destinations have benefitted from this conservation tool.

Olympic (WA), Zion (UT), Katmai (AK), Black Canyon of the Gunnison (CO), and Denali (AK) are all examples of National Parks that embrace whitewater paddling and were first protected as National Monuments. Additionally, Bears Ears - San Juan River (UT), Browns Canyon - Arkansas River (CO), Dinosaur - Green and Yampa River (UT), Giant Sequoia - Middle Fork Tule and Kern Rivers (CA), Grand Staircase Escalante - Escalante River (UT), Katahdin - East Branch

Penobscot River (ME), and Rio Grande del Norte - Rio Grande River (NM) are all examples of National Monuments with great whitewater paddling.

The current Congress and Administration are seeking to roll back National Monument protections established over the past two decades and limit the authority of Presidents to use this conservation tool in the future. In December, the

The Browns Canyon National Monument proclamation specifically mentions recreational paddling as one of the area's values.

Photo by Evan Stafford



STEWARDSHIP

President signed proclamations reducing two National Monuments in Utah with significant whitewater resources. Multiple lawsuits have already been filed, but if this precedent stands, many more whitewater rivers in National Monuments will be in danger of losing the protections afforded under their designations.

While many rivers are modified for water storage, hydropower generation, and flood control, our remaining wild and free-flowing rivers are an important resource for outdoor recreation and serve as habitat for the aquatic species we share rivers with. American Whitewater was pleased that recent designations for Bears Ears and Brown's Canyon explicitly identified whitewater recreation as a value. However, with the new proclamations for monuments in Utah, we not only lost the identification of whitewater recreation as a valued activity in Bears Ears, we also lost protections for 28.4 miles of the 34 miles of the San Juan and Colorado Rivers that had previously been protected. The Antiquities Act has protected rivers that



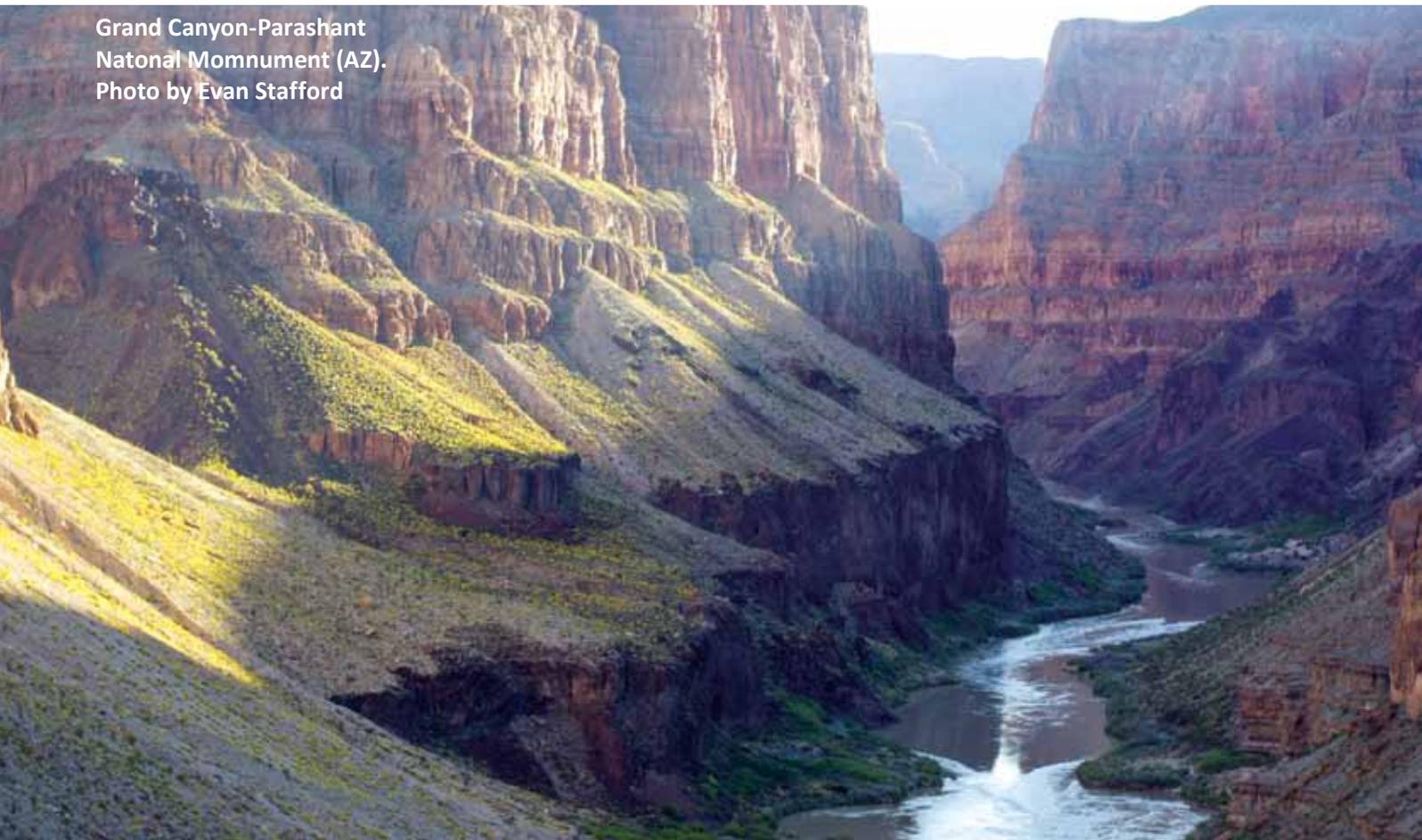
Parts of the San Juan River, including this stretch below the Honaker Trail, are no longer protected by Bears Ears National Monument.

Photo by Evan Stafford

are important to our community, and it remains an important way to preserve the wilderness quality of some of the most important rivers in the country. In 2018, ensuring protection for rivers that have

been included in National Monuments will be a top priority as we continue to preserve the integrity of this important conservation tool.

**Grand Canyon-Parashant National Monument (AZ).
Photo by Evan Stafford**



6. COLORADO WATER PLANS



*Rio Grande River in Colorado.
Photo by Don Kinser*

WHEN COLORADO EMBARKED on its first ever Statewide Water Plan, American Whitewater championed the themes of recreation and environmental health as a way to ensure the Wild and Scenic Values of the State's rivers are recognized and protected. The governor advanced these themes when he signed an executive order authorizing the Colorado Water Conservation Board to draft the plan. In the two years since the Colorado Water Plan (CWP) was released, local groups across the state have organized to develop stream management plans for 80% of Colorado's watersheds, one of the key directives of the CWP. American Whitewater is positioned to continue to advise on these planning efforts, and to bring important science-based information to discussions about how changes in future water availability will impact our environment, recreational opportunities, and our outdoor economy.

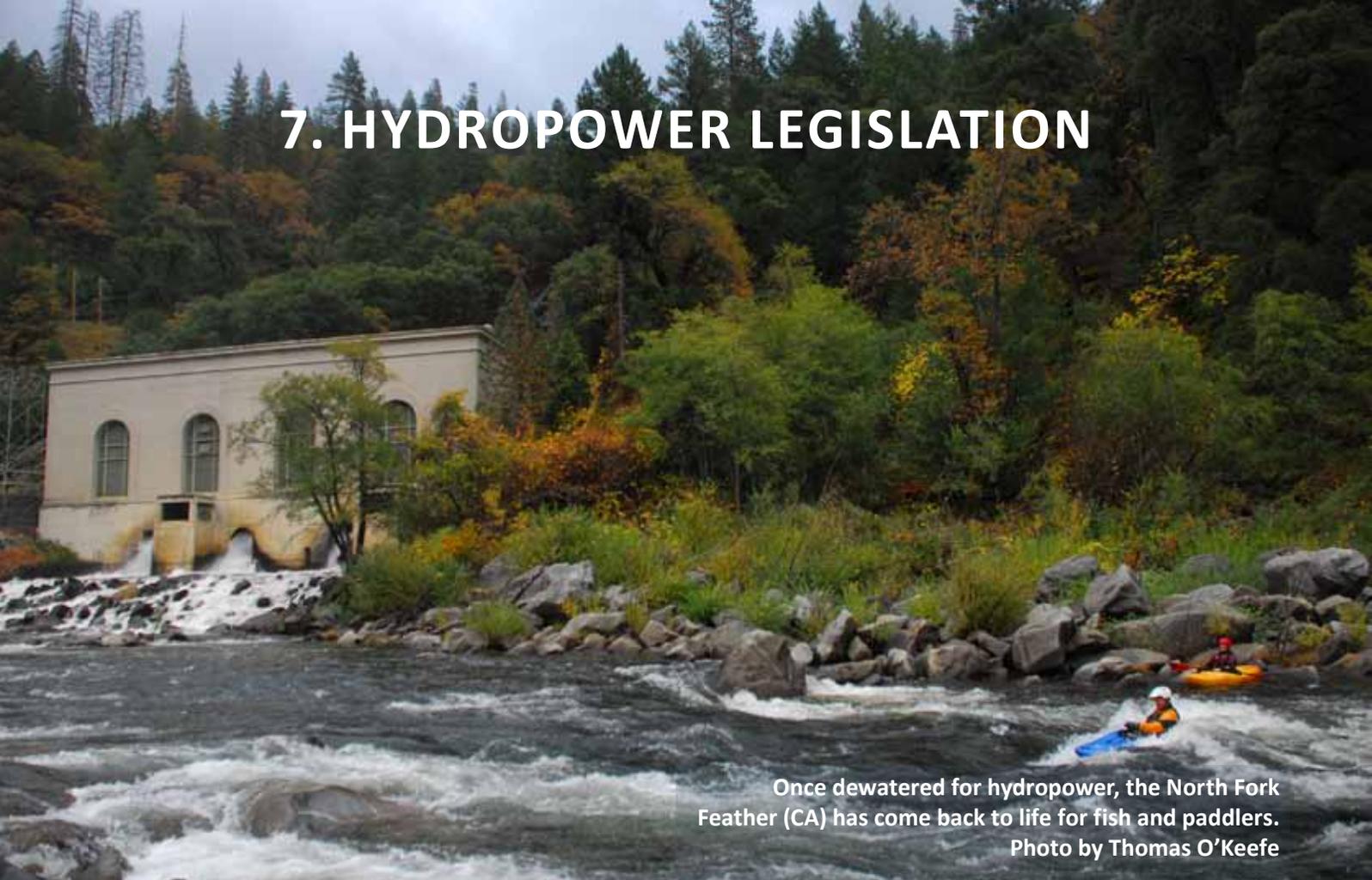
Evaluating how changes in streamflow will impact the future of river recreation requires a big crystal ball. First, we have to define current conditions. Over the past several years we've had thousands of American Whitewater members participate in surveys, providing information that helps define the range of flows that meet paddler expectations for specific river reaches across the West. Knowing what flows sustain recreational use today allows us to perform a "Boatable Days Analysis" that defines recreational opportunities and quantifies how often they are available, for any river.

To evaluate how boatable days may change in the future, and to identify where state tools like instream flow protection or recreational in-channel water rights can be applied to protect Wild and Scenic values, we are working with a suite of five planning scenarios defined by the State Water Plan. Defining current conditions and modeling how changes in flow will affect

recreational opportunities is an important step in shaping how Colorado's Water Plan is used. It requires substantive input from paddlers who know our rivers and have experienced them at different flow rates.

Also in 2018, American Whitewater will be working with managers in the Rio Grande River Basin to define and quantify recreational needs on the river's mainstem and its tributaries in Colorado. This portion of the river is upstream from the Wild and Scenic Rio Grande in New Mexico, which was designated in 1968. With support from the Colorado Water Conservation Board, American Whitewater will be asking paddlers who reside in or visit, areas like South Fork, Del Norte, and Alamosa, Colorado for input on how flow levels affect the quality of your recreation experience. We are leading this effort to provide paddlers with the opportunity to have direct input into the state water planning effort, and help us shape what the future of Colorado's rivers will look like.

7. HYDROPOWER LEGISLATION



Once dewatered for hydropower, the North Fork Feather (CA) has come back to life for fish and paddlers.
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe

WHILE WE USE the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to protect free-flowing rivers, we have used important provisions of the Federal Power Act to restore rivers impacted by hydropower by returning flows. For years, the hydropower industry has been lobbying hard to strip away these provisions that give equal consideration to non-power values, including recreation. They aren't stopping, and last year the House responded by introducing and passing legislation that threatens rivers across the country—the "Hydropower Policy Modernization Act of 2017." Fortunately, American Whitewater isn't stopping either. As the bill moves on to the Senate and through the rest of the legislative process, we'll continue to fight to protect our rivers.

The tools that the hydropower industry is targeting are the very ones that we have used to revive rivers across the country, including the Cheoah (NC), Tallulah (GA), Deerfield (MA), Feather (CA), Yuba/Bear (CA), Sultan (WA), and Bear River (ID). If the hydropower industry gets its way, our work

to restore flows to rivers with hydropower dams will be seriously compromised. If you've enjoyed boating rivers like these, or others that have been restored through dam removal, you'll be directly affected.

Here's how it works. All hydropower dam operators are required to get a license to operate their dams from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). These licenses outline how a dam will operate for the next 30 to 50 years, meaning that it is basically a prescription for whether or not a river will be healthy enough to still be considered a river. Since the late 1980s, local communities, tribes, and agencies have had a seat at the table as decisions are made about what goes into a license. The end result has been better outcomes for our rivers for fish, wildlife and, yes, paddlers. American Whitewater works in partnership with state and federal agencies to restore flows for paddlers, and if the hydropower industry gets its way, this legislation will weaken these agencies' authority to protect water quality, habitat for fish and wildlife, and flows for recreation.

The hydropower industry claims that they seek to "modernize" hydropower for the sake of "clean and green" energy. However, their bill gives strong preference to hydropower operations over all other river values, while making fish passage, river flows, and public access harder—and in some cases impossible—to achieve. Meanwhile, the industry continues to seek a way to weasel out of environmental provisions that protect water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife. There's nothing "clean" or "green" about that.

In 2018, these large and powerful energy companies will continue to seek special treatment in order to squeeze our rivers dry for their own interests. American Whitewater has played a leadership role in opposing this legislation, and will continue to do so this year. And we're going to need your help. Stay tuned to our website and social media channels for ways to take action on this and other crucial issues.

STEWARDSHIP

8. PROTECTING CLEAN WATER



*Mather Gorge, Potomac River (MD)
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe*

THE WILD AND Scenic Rivers Act protects many of our most pristine waterways, but the Clean Water Act has been essential in cleaning up many polluted waterways that were generally undesirable for outdoor recreation and avoided by paddlers. Rivers like the Pigeon (NC), Menominee (MI/WI), Cuyahoga (OH), Potomac (MD/VA), and Black (NY), to name a few, are waterways that were once polluted but are now regularly enjoyed for paddlesports.

Protecting the important conservation gains we've made in recent years for water quality will be a top priority in 2018. In 2015, the U.S. EPA and Army Corps of Engineers implemented a new rule—the Clean Water Rule—that clarified which water bodies are covered under the Clean Water Act. American Whitewater and the paddling community actively supported the rule and participated in its development. Why? Two Supreme Court cases in the early- to mid-2000s created a great deal

of confusion about which headwater streams, and wetlands the Clean Water Act protected, leaving in question the quality of the creeks, streams and rivers we paddle. The Clean Water Rule brought much needed clarity to the issue.

Last year an Executive Order directed the EPA and Army Corps to begin the process of rescinding the Clean Water Rule and replacing it with language that will likely leave our nation's headwater streams and wetlands at risk. As paddlers, we know firsthand how important it is to keep pollution out of these waters. We directly experience the way that the streams we paddle—and the pollution they carry—rise during rain and snowmelt. It's important that these waters receive protection under the Clean Water Act, not only for the sake of our health and for the health of the rivers we love, but for all those whose livelihoods and businesses depend on clean water, including the 117 million Americans who get their drinking water here.

The Clean Water Rule was based on a thorough scientific review and in consideration of extensive public comments that clearly showed that protecting headwater streams and wetlands is necessary in order to meet the Act's goal of making all of our waterways fishable, swimmable, and drinkable. It confirmed what paddlers have known for a long time... it's all connected, and you have to protect the source if you want a healthy, clean river.

American Whitewater weighed in last year when the U.S. EPA and Army Corps of Engineers proposed to repeal the Clean Water Rule. This year, we expect the agencies to continue their push to replace the rule so that the Clean Water Act no longer applies to headwater streams and hydrologically connected wetlands. Nevertheless, we're standing up for clean water in 2018.

STEWARDSHIP

9. CALIFORNIA HYDROPOWER RELICENSING



American Whitewater has had remarkable success working on relicensing hydropower projects in California and we expect that to continue in 2018.
Photo by Evan Stafford

THE WILD AND Scenic Rivers Act mandates that designated rivers be protected during hydropower relicensing. It requires a look at whether a project unreasonably diminishes the scenic, recreational, fish, or wildlife values that were present when the river was designated. In 2018, American Whitewater will be working on whitewater study plans that will help protect and restore two Wild and Scenic Rivers during the FERC hydropower relicensing process. The first is on the Eel River (CA), from 100 yards below Van Arsdale Reservoir to the confluence with the Middle Fork Eel. The Eel River was once known for its robust wild salmon and steelhead populations but today unbalanced water diversions through the Potter Valley Powerhouse to the East Fork Russian River deplete instream flows. Further south, on the Wild and Scenic Piru Creek below Pyramid Lake, we have the opportunity to restore instream flows and boating opportunities on a river that is less than an hour's drive from downtown Los Angeles.

The purpose of each whitewater study plan will be to evaluate the impacts of the hydropower project on recreational whitewater boating using a robust hydrology assessment, stakeholder focus groups, thorough site visits, and potential on-water recreational flow studies. American Whitewater will use

the information gathered to advocate for outcomes that are in line with the tenets of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. As work on each whitewater study plan progresses, we'll be calling on you to participate in the stakeholder focus groups. Stay tuned for opportunities to help protect our Wild and Scenic Rivers!



10. CONNECTICUT RIVER DAM OPERATIONS



THE ONCE-MIGHTY CONNECTICUT River, abundant with sturgeon, salmon, and shad, has been dammed, diverted, and dewatered for 410 miles from source to sea. Dams along the Connecticut have damaged or destroyed aquatic habitat, prevented effective fish passage, and eliminated boating opportunities for more than a century. For the past five years, American Whitewater, our partners, and resource agencies have been working to restore the Connecticut River through

the relicensing of five hydropower projects from central Vermont to Massachusetts. In 2018, we'll be working to reach a settlement agreement on one or more of these river reaches that will restore flows to the river when FERC issues a final license.

These efforts will restore flows and create new boating opportunities at Bellows Falls and Turners Falls where flow diversion, barrier dams, and lack of access have prevented whitewater paddling. The

boating community is eagerly looking forward to the restoration of minimum boatable and variable pulse flows, the removal of an obsolete barrier dam, improved access, and the availability of real-time flow information. Local communities burdened by abandoned mills and loss of any connection to their rivers look forward to economic renewal and improved quality of life.

*Opposite: Overnight stay on the Wild & Scenic Eel River (Hearst to Alderpoint).
Photo by Jerry Albright*

*Above: Restoring flows to the dewatered section of the Connecticut River at Bellows Falls is a priority in 2018.
Photo by Bob Nasdor*

PARTICIPATE IN OUR WILD AND SCENIC SUCCESS

HELP US MAKE 2018 a year to remember for river stewardship. Celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act by joining us in our quest for new protections for 5,000 miles of river. We need you to play an active role in our stewardship success and we'll be bringing you a host of simple ways to contribute towards our stewardship goals. Taking action for rivers has never been easier. Whether it's submitting comments on management actions, contacting your representatives about upcoming legislation, or finding the details for a public meeting or hearing, American Whitewater is here to help. The larger our membership base, the bigger our voice. Those membership dollars and donations directly fund this work. Your photos, videos, and stories about the rivers we're working on help build public awareness and enthusiasm. Let's work together in 2018 towards successful outcomes for our rivers and for all of us who receive so much from them! Stay tuned to our webpage or social media channels for updates throughout the year!

Oh Be Joyful
Photo by Evan Stafford

STEWARDSHIP

UPDATE FROM THE 2017 TOP TEN



WONDERING WHAT HAPPENED with the issues from last year's Top Ten? Look no further than the updates below! You may notice that there aren't 10 updates, though. That's because a number of our Top Ten Stewardship Issues from 2017 continue to be some of our most pressing work in 2018, and are outlined in the previous pages. This includes Wild and Scenic work in Montana, Washington, and North Carolina, as well as our work on the future of the Ocoee and our involvement in national policy issues that affect whitewater rivers.

Northwest Dam Removals

In November we celebrated the removal of the 50-foot-tall Mill Pond Dam on eastern Washington's Sullivan Creek. American Whitewater played a pivotal role in negotiating this dam removal and it is going great! It looks like the stream that's emerging from beneath the former reservoir will be a nice Class II reach. In 2018 contractors will be stabilizing stream

banks and planting trees and shrubs to restore the reservoir site.

Colorado Forest Planning

In 2017, the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests entered the assessment phase of the Forest's Plan revisions. American Whitewater reviewed the draft documents that address recreation and designated areas (including Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers) and found significant areas where paddling has been omitted from the assessments. Where the Forest Service has assigned little consideration to whitewater paddling activities in their geographic areas, American Whitewater is collecting and providing additional data for the Forest Service to evaluate relative to rafting and kayaking in places like the Grand Mesa, Slate River Valley, and San Juan Mountains. Forest Planning takes several years, from start to finish, and we will continue to engage and advise the agency in 2018.

Flood Recovery in Colorado

Efforts to recover from the catastrophic flooding in 2013 along Colorado's Front Range continued to progress through 2017, albeit slowly. Requests for proposals for some of the in-stream work needed along specific priority areas have recently been made public, and the impact that these projects may have on restoring recreational amenities like slalom course, access, and trails is unclear at this time.

However, American Whitewater is working with a group of local cities, ditch companies, and agencies to develop a comprehensive Stream Management Plan for the Saint Vrain River, using the opportunities made available by the Colorado Water Plan Implementation. Our work remains directed at identifying projects and management strategies in both the St. Vrain

and Left Hand Creeks that transition from flood recovery to stream health projects that improve environmental conditions in the river. In addition to tackling some of the flood-related issues that persist in the basin, this effort seeks to characterize barriers to recreational enhancement, like fencing, low-head dams and diversions, and conflicts with other users. We expect funding to be secured for this effort in early 2018, and for the work to get underway quickly.

Flows and Access at Northeast Dams

In 2017, we continued our efforts to restore northeast rivers that have been dammed for more than a century. Our appeal of Vermont's efforts to limit whitewater boating on the Green River survived a challenge in court, and we expect the case to go to trial this spring. On the Connecticut, we engaged in settlement negotiations on several hydropower projects, making progress towards securing minimum flows and recreation releases, and continued to navigate the dam relicensing process on the Deerfield (MA) and Mongaup (NY) rivers.

Protecting Access to the South Fork American River

On May 9, 2017 the County of El Dorado, California and a coalition comprising American Whitewater, El Dorado County residents and businesses, and other conservation and recreation organizations announced an agreement ensuring continued access to Mosquito Road Bridge a.k.a. "The Swinging Bridge" and the South Fork American River.

Construction of the Slab Creek Powerhouse and boating flow release valve commenced in September 2017 and, as we go to press, is running on schedule for Phase 1 completion in December 2017.

STEWARDSHIP

WILD RIVER LIFE COLUMN

BY SUSAN ELLIOTT



Getting the full experience on the Wild and Scenic Illinois River (OR).
Photo courtesy of Wild River Life

Editor's Note: Susan and Adam Elliott are a whitewater super couple. Susan holds a graduate degree in river engineering, and is a current member of the American Whitewater Board of Directors; she has built her life around rivers. Adam is an international guide and respected documentarian working on projects for National Geographic and RedBull Media House, while producing imagery featured in Kayak Session and Canoe & Kayak magazines. We've asked them to write a column for each of the 2018 editions of the American Whitewater Journal so that we can follow along on their Wild River Life project, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

IT IS HARD to point to one reason why we sold most of our belongings, moved into a janky RV, and set out on a two-year journey to paddle 50 Wild and Scenic Rivers. At least, the decision to do it can't be traced to any one moment. It just became our path.

We saw the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 2018 as a great reason to paddle new rivers, learn what makes a river Wild and Scenic, and live a simplified life on the road. Adam, my husband, and I officially began our Wild River Life tour in the spring of 2017. Our goal was to paddle 50 great Wild and Scenic Rivers in different regions and in a variety of boats. Along the way, we'd do our best to spread the love for our protected waterways and share our knowledge of these rivers, mostly through a guidebook we're writing. We also decided the trip would be a great time to try and get pregnant.

Today, we have completed 39 of our 50 rivers in the Western and Upper Midwestern regions of the country (Washington, Oregon, California, Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Nebraska), and we are a month away from adding a new member to our family. In 2018, after a few months spent at our

"home base" in White Salmon, WA, we'll load back into the RV and head to the east coast to check off the final eleven rivers on our list—with a three-month-old kid in tow!

Traveling while I was two to seven months pregnant meant I had to say no to a few river trips—like rafting the Tuolumne (CA) at 10,000 cfs in May. But, because we have decided to designate these rivers as Wild and Scenic, I can trust that "they will still be there." That is not always the case. The Great Bend of the Yangtze in China, where Adam and I met, has since disappeared under a reservoir. I may never experience the Zambezi in Africa before it is dammed, or the Marañón in Peru. Which awe-inspiring river will be next?

It may seem like we have it pretty good here in the United States. Not many megadams are going up in our backyard, but the threats to our rivers are just as real and potentially damaging. Strip mining and oil drilling, loss of clean water regulations,

even small hydropower facilities, are among the many threats your favorite local rivers may face.

So we must keep pointing to the value our rivers provide when they remain simply rivers. We must celebrate our successes because they propel us into action to stand up for clean water, the recreation economy, healthy ecosystems, and all the values that rivers provide.

I'll be sharing more of our journey with you throughout the next year. Share your own Wild and Scenic moments with #wildriverlife and follow along with us @wildriverlife.

The Wild River Life's "janky RV." I don't know? Looks pretty sweet to us..

Photo courtesy of Wild River Life



What to get for the paddler who has everything?

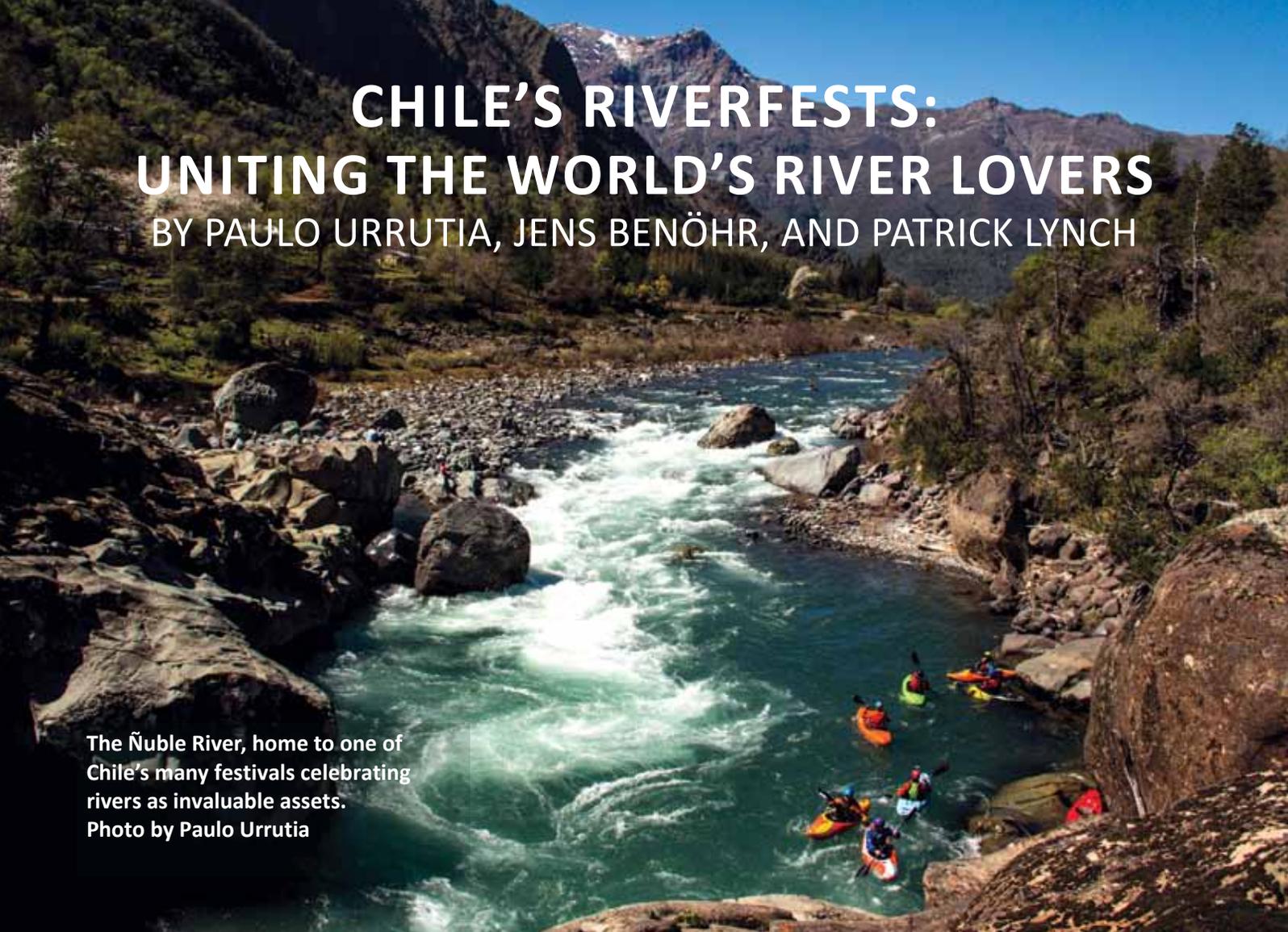
Give them the gift of rivers with an American Whitewater membership!



Colorado River, Grand Canyon. | Photo: Evan Stafford

CHILE'S RIVERFESTS: UNITING THE WORLD'S RIVER LOVERS

BY PAULO URRUTIA, JENS BENÖHR, AND PATRICK LYNCH



The Ñuble River, home to one of Chile's many festivals celebrating rivers as invaluable assets.
Photo by Paulo Urrutia

Where: Chile, South America (Maipo River down to the Futaleufu)

When: September, 2017 through February, 2018

Who: Athletes, Communities, NGOs, Artists, and Activists

What: Red Nacional por los Ríos Libres (Chilean Free-Flowing Rivers Network)

Introduction

THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY, water has been an essential element of every human settlement. Lakes, lagoons, wetlands, and rivers served as water reservoirs that were indispensable for the survival of entire populations. The very existence of these bodies of water gave people a reason to celebrate and show respect. For centuries, water sustained both human and non-human life equally throughout the world. The concept of water as a basic right gave it an anointed

status, a good that must be shared and respected by all.

But in Chile, water stopped being treated as a public good in the 20th century. To help regain a public right to water, communities up and down Chile have joined forces to establish a historic series of festivals. It is our hope that the world will join us at these festivals to celebrate our rivers and help our communities in calling upon the government to respect their basic right to water and survival.

History

Since the 1980s in Chile, both surface water and groundwater have been legally considered a market good, broken down into cubic meters per second and traded as “water rights” in the private market. Water is a fundamental axis of Chile’s economic system. This system is centered around the intensive extraction of natural resources,

whereby this invaluable liquid is treated as an endless resource without concern for preserving its use for future generations. Under Chile’s Water Code, there is no special value for water that exists in its natural state; entire rivers can be dried up to serve industrial purposes, leaving only a minimal ecological flow. In their natural state, freshwater reserves provide ecosystem services, mitigate climate change, generate economic revenue for communities through ecotourism, and provide countless other benefits. They are also important for both cultural and spiritual purposes. Such benefits and uses are ignored by Chile’s legal system, though reforms are underway.

Opposite: The Ñuble is currently threatened by the construction of a new hydroelectric dam.

Photo by Paulo Urrutia

INTERNATIONAL PADDLING



The Ñireco Canyon on Chile's Biobio River, situated between the Ralco and Pangué Dams. While the Canyon boasted Class V+ whitewater before the dams, today you can still find amazing Class IV whitewater along this stretch of the Biobio.

Photo by Paulo Urrutia

The problem with extractive industries— require increasing amounts of water which Chile is famous for—is that they as they grow in scale. Water-intensive

industries include mining, agriculture, forestry, and the generation of electricity through hydropower plants. It is becoming increasingly obvious that this model of drying up rivers to generate short-term profits is not sustainable. Water scarcity is already apparent in several regions of Chile, putting additional stresses on the extraction of water for industrial use.

A Historic Celebration

Faced with threats to the ecosystems and human communities that live alongside them, the Chilean people have responded by celebrating their rivers. In recent years several festivals have popped up in watersheds around the country to raise awareness about the importance of these water bodies. They are organized by local river lovers with support from people around the world.



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For 35 Years the National Paddling Film Festival has been hosting a competition to determine the best in paddlesport films and images. This competition provides the paddling community with a fun event to raise money in support of American Whitewater and organizations dedicated to river conservation and access. Since its inception, the NPFF has helped to raise the quality of paddlesport entertainment by providing a venue along with recognition for participating photographers and film makers.



Silent Auction



Vendor Booths

INTERNATIONAL PADDLING

These festivals celebrate the freedom with which they flow and the life they give us. Chile's river festivals are historic: they are the first place on earth where people from different watersheds are joining forces through an annual series of festivals to protect rivers and honor their intrinsic and spiritual value.

The origin of many of these festivals was spurred by athletes dedicated to whitewater kayaking. They gained an appreciation for the people and the rivers where they practiced the sport. One of these athletes who represents an inspiring example of commitment and political action was U.S. kayaker John Clark. Clark (or "Juanito" as he is known in Chile) left behind a big legacy in the village of San Fabián de Alicó and among the community of river lovers in Chile. At the beginning of

2000, motivated by the beauty of the Ñuble River, John began to show the river to local people through whitewater sports such as kayaking and rafting. He taught local young people to value and care for nature, and also proposed navigation of the river as a tourist attraction and a way to connect more people to rivers.

When John first learned of plans to build two large hydroelectric plants on the Ñuble River—the Punilla reservoir and the Hidroñuble hydroelectric power plant—he didn't hesitate to mobilize the community of San Fabián de Alicó to defend the river. This is how, in 2005, friends in the area joined and decided to create the first festival along the banks of a Chilean river. This was the Festival de Aguas Libres, now called Ñublefest.

John was the first of several U.S. kayakers who fell in love with Chilean rivers and helped launch festivals on the rivers they called home. Other festival organizers who established themselves in Chile include Todd Ericson (Teno and Claro Rivers), L.J. Groth (Puesco River), and Mitch Sasser (Futaleufu River). Each of them came together with local communities and brought the festival idea to rivers throughout Chile.

These festivals have several goals: promote the protection and defense of rivers; encourage responsible local tourism; and invite people to join the world of whitewater sports. Many of these festivals include live music, talks about environmental awareness, local food and craft stands, and kayaking and rafting competitions. In addition, visitors are offered the opportunity to descend the

**La Leona's drop on the Fuy River is a centerpiece of the Festival Fuy Extremo.
Photo by Paulo Urrutia**





A rafting race is a fun part of Ñuble Fest.
Photo by Paulo Urrutia

river in rafts to experience from within the unique connection to the flow of our rivers.

It is therefore with great joy that we share with you a calendar announcing the dates of these festivals for 2017 - 2018. None of these rivers is protected, since there are no national laws in place. In each river, development projects threaten the ecosystems and the right of local communities to use and enjoy these rivers, whether it be for fishing, adventure sports, tourism, or cultural traditions and rites associated with rivers.

It is our hope that sharing this information will help alert the world that countries like Chile

A kayaking competition on the Palguin River as part of the Pucón River Fest
Photo by Paulo Urrutia

still have a chance to save their wild and scenic rivers. Oftentimes, in order to win the policy discussion there is a need to justify the benefits of protecting nature

through economic figures and demonstrate why one river or another should not be dammed. Within this statistical vortex, we want people to remember that we can also



INTERNATIONAL PADDLING

defend things because of something even simpler: because we love them.

This year, we declare ourselves deeply in love with the freedom of rivers. And above all, we aspire to live in a society that acts with respect and ethics, in which development does not mean benefiting some to the detriment of many more.

We invite you to participate in these festivals this year, and to recognize the trajectory of the movements and people who fight for the defense of these rivers. Essential for life, rivers deserve to be celebrated. Long live the free rivers of the world!



Kayakers enjoying Pucón River Fest.
Photo by Paulo Urrutia

CHILE'S RIVERFESTS

Fest	River	Locality	Dates 2017
Guardián del Maipo	Maipo	San José de Maipo	7 to 10 September
Los Queñes Fest	Teno	Los Queñes	9 to 12 November
Ñuble Fest	Ñuble	San Fabián de Alico	27 to 29 October
Biobío Vive	Biobio	Ralco	9 to 10 December
Nahuelbuta Libre	Carampangue	Curanilahue	14 to 15 October
Cautín Fest	Cautín	Curacautín	To be defined
Pucón River Fest	Trancura	Pucón	1 to 3 December
Puesco Fest	Puesco	Curarrehue	20 to 26 November
San Pedro Libre	San Pedro	Panguipulli	To be defined
Festival Fuy Extremo	Fuy	Panguipulli	To be defined
Petrofest	Petrohue	Ensenada	To be defined
Festival Hornopirén	Blanco y Negro	Hornopirén	6 to 9 October
Puelo Libre	Puelo	Puelo	To be defined
Futaleufu XL	Futaleufú	Futaleufú	21 to 27 February 2018

SELF-SUPPORT PART III: SAFETY

BY TERESA GRYDER

A photograph of a kayaker in a red kayak on a river. The kayaker is wearing a blue helmet and a black jacket. The river is surrounded by high, rocky cliffs with some green vegetation. The sky is blue with white clouds.

Where your cell phone won't ring. Jennie Goldberg on the East Fork of the Owyhee (ID/OR). Photo by Teresa Gryder

For part one of this series I wrote about paddling, rolling, and portaging a loaded self-support kayak. Part two covered the basic gear you might use and why. In this part (three) we will consider some of the variables that contribute to safety and survival during a multi-day trip in a wilderness river environment.

Intro

THE UNEXPECTED, THE unfortunate, the unimaginable—it happens. We all know it and yet our powers of denial are impressive. We tell each other to “be safe” when we know our world is not safe, and our hobbies aren’t either. When things go wrong we tell one another, “It will be all right,” when really, we have no idea.

In the context of wilderness paddling, it’s valuable to acknowledge that Mother Nature is dynamic and often more powerful than we can comprehend. For us to

survive on wild rivers we must be realistic about our situation and resources, and make reasonable decisions. There are no guarantees, but by being conscious and conservative we can adjust the odds in our favor. One of the most important purposes of this article is to emphasize that the risk calculation for a multi-day wilderness trip is different than for a roadside day trip.

For the most part, whitewater accidents happen because of familiar hazards and mistakes. Some common denominators are cold water, fast-rising water, inadequate clothing, failing to wear pfd’s, continuous whitewater, and strainers in the river. These challenges injure and kill whitewater paddlers every year. If you are considering self-support kayaking, I hope that you are well versed in how to minimize the known risks.

Only rarely does something truly bizarre happen. If you spend enough time in the

wilderness, you may get to see some exceptional natural phenomena. There are, however, some things we can control. The better prepared we are, the more likely we are to be able to deal with any anomaly that comes along.

If you want to be ready for emergencies, you need more training than this article can provide. River rescue and first aid training are two essential slices of the skill set needed for wilderness river tripping. A reasonable baseline for whitewater paddlers is Advanced First Aid, CPR, and Whitewater Rescue training from local whitewater clubs or outfitters. When you are confronted with an urgent situation you will find out if you have mastery of the material. Repeat these trainings until you have integrated the knowledge and can use it under duress.

Passing a written test and getting a certification card is not proof of

WILDERNESS PADDLING

competence. When I first took the Wilderness First Responder class, I was working as a paddle raft guide. Soon after I completed the training I was faced with two emergency situations; a foot entrapment on the Nantahala and a car wreck. Those situations proved to me that I wasn't competent yet. When it was time for me to recertify, I took the whole class over again instead of just the recert. When life tested me the next time, I did better.

When you have mastery of basic first aid and river rescue, I recommend continuing with a Wilderness First Responder (WFR) certification, and Whitewater Rescue Technician training. The WFR training is similar to an EMT level of training except instructors assume you are in the wilderness, beyond the reach of an ambulance full of meds and oxygen. The Whitewater Rescue Technician training is designed for river guides, but anyone can take it. This training started out as Swiftwater Rescue (for police and fire fighters) but has evolved to integrate the river-specific skills that paddlers bring to the table.

These trainings are excellent, but they are still not enough. Disasters usually stem from a combination of poor planning and bad decision-making. Remote destinations and challenging whitewater demand a higher level of preparedness than popular, easy day runs. Unexpected challenges require the mental flexibility to adjust your plan. Having the right skills and knowledge, an adaptable mindset, and a good team will serve you better than all the luck in the world.

Most of us enjoy whitewater because of that alive feeling that we get from surviving by our own wits in the face of real risk. Running a big drop and coming out

in bubbles and sunshine makes us giddy. Better to die on the river than to have lived on the couch, some may rationalize. Still, life is precious. We want to live so that we can keep playing, and we want those dear to us to live too.

Here we will examine the main contributors to safety in some detail, including group selection, portaging, changing conditions, the unexpected, wildlife, first aid, communications, and a few last equipment considerations. If you have begun to compile your own self-support checklist, consider having it on hand to make notes as you read. There are no shortcuts to this competence so it is best if you work on it yourself.

Group Selection

The people you go with can make or break your trip. People bring skills and gear to the table, and they also bring their temperament. When people understand each other they can form functional teams and have more fun. It's OK if people are idiosyncratic when you know about it and can work with their eccentricities. You may think that it's an advantage to be

open-minded and invite everyone—until you find yourself in a group whose values you don't agree with, or with people who compromise your safety.

At a minimum your crew should have river skills and judgment that are more than adequate for the run being attempted—say one class higher in whitewater skill. For long trips or very remote runs, consider a bigger skill differential. For example, for a run with Class III rapids, you'll want Class IV river skills. If the Class III is continuous then the run requires Class IV+ skills. If the Class III is continuous, cold, and remote, Class V- skills are probably best.

Ideally all group members' paddling skills are known ahead of time, but if not, be wary of taking someone's word about his or her skills. People who are incompetent tend to overestimate their abilities, whereas those with amazing skills can be quite humble. Check references or assess them for yourself—but not in a wilderness setting.

The ideal group for remote kayak self-support tripping will not have any wild

An intrepid crew heads into the unknown, launching in the Duck Valley Indian Reservation on the Upper East Fork Owyhee.

Photo by Teresa Gryder



WILDERNESS PADDLING



The importance of a suitable and falling water level cannot be overstated. This sandy beach at Miami Bar on the Illinois River (OR) confirms what the gauge says.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

cards. Individuals who tend to fly off the handle, get seriously intoxicated, shut down, or run off alone without telling anyone are a hazard. Emotional stability is key. Everybody has moods, but when the doody hits the fan, will everyone in your group be present and functional?

Group size has a significant impact on a trip, no matter who is going. Most kayak self-support trips are small, on the order of three to eight people. It's far easier to come together around values and strategies with a small group. On big rivers a group can get as large as 12 before it starts to string out on the water or split into social factions. On small rivers with blind drops and corners, the maximum group size might be five or fewer. One variable that should influence group size is the minimum number of people needed to mount a rescue. A group of three offers a slender safety margin. At

Two boats and two paddlers (Larry Dunn and Jim Reed) is a full load for this air shuttle on the South Fork Salmon (ID).

Photo by Teresa Gryder

least with four people you can split into pairs if needed.

Shuttle capacities can also dictate group size. Four people and four boats in one

vehicle is a nice number, and you can double that for a group of eight. Aircraft have specific limits for people and boats, and can also choose your numbers for you. Have an idea of your shuttle strategy and the character of the run to arrive at reasonable minimums and maximums for the trip you are attempting.

Another important variable is culture. Ideally you'd like to have agreement on both decision-making and river running style. Will your group have a leader who dictates the course of events, or will you go by majority rules or require a consensus? It's a rare boater who is ok with being commanded, but the person with a launch permit often assumes control. If there's no permit requirement the structure can be less clear. Know your style and what styles you can work with, and be honest about it. If leadership roles are split among several people, be sure everyone is clear about who is in charge of what. It can be difficult to sort out leadership after something has gone wrong.

Pacing differences can split groups up. Group cohesion is easier to maintain if



PREPAREDNESS LIST

A list of what you CAN control. These safety suggestions increase your odds of an uneventful adventure. The more that you disregard, the higher your odds of a mishap.

1. Avoid boating alone.
2. Boat under control.
3. Don't put on late in the day.
4. Don't go in bad weather.
5. Dress for climate, weather, and water temperature.
6. Don't launch with high & rising water.
7. Beware of cold water, strainers, and dangerous holes.
8. Know the difficulty and character of the run to be attempted.
9. Scout blind drops or use current, local, trusted information.
10. Have a frank knowledge of your boating ability and stay within it.
11. Maintain an adequate level of fitness and health.
12. Wear proper equipment including pfd and helmet.
13. Use a boat and paddle that are in good condition.
14. Install flotation bags to fill empty spaces in your craft.
15. Carry equipment for rescues and emergencies.
16. Be practiced in self-rescue.
17. Be practiced at throwing your rope.
18. Keep your group small enough to be cohesive.
19. Have a frank understanding of the people you boat with.
20. Go with a large enough group to mount a rescue.
21. Know where you can walk off the river.
22. Be able to recognize the take-out.
23. Know where the keys to the shuttle vehicles are hidden.
24. Know how to get to the closest hospital.
25. Have ways to communicate with the world in case of emergency.
26. Be prepared to hike out.
27. Bring enough food to spend more nights than originally planned.
28. Bring purified drinking water and have ways to get more.
29. Secure your boat (and other equipment) when on shore.
30. Clip everything in to your boat.
31. Keep watch over everyone in your group, especially the last person.
32. Wear your helmet and pfd and carry a rope when scouting or portaging.
33. Don't split up the group without a shared plan.
34. Set safety for each other in high risk areas.
35. Be trained in rescue skills, first aid, and CPR.
36. Take full responsibility for your decisions to launch, scout, portage, or hike out.
37. Test new equipment before relying on it in remote or dangerous places.
38. Make your craft accessible via painters or grab loops for rescue.
39. Let faster groups play through.
40. Look upstream and all around before entering the current.
41. Yield right of way to boats coming downstream.
42. Use strong racks for transporting boats, and use bow and stern lines.
43. Avoid using drugs that dull the senses.
44. Be able to roll your boat.
45. Learn hand and paddle signals and practice and use them with your group.
46. Know whistle signals and use whistles appropriately.
47. Stay attuned to your group, the river, and environmental conditions.
48. Speak up if you see something that needs to be addressed for group safety.
49. Be extra careful and conservative anywhere or anytime a rescue would be slow or difficult.

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everyone is on the same page about the rhythms of river and camp life. The pace of downstream travel varies significantly among groups; do you like to work the river, float, or blast downstream? How long can people scout and how much can they portage before it becomes an issue? Do you really need to hike a certain canyon, or have pee stops, lunch, or stretch breaks? Discuss the intended take-out date well ahead of time, and get clear about how many days' worth of extra food folks should bring in case there are delays. Another issue to resolve early is morning rituals. Will your group need to get up at the crack of dawn and get on the water, or will you hang out and have another cup of coffee while waiting for everything to dry? Can you agree to shift into a different modes as needed, getting a quick start one day and taking it easy on another? If you have agreement on these questions, you are less likely to have unintended separations or awkward conflicts.

Sticking together both on the river and at camp is generally seen as beneficial for safety, but some folks operate differently. They may enjoy self-sufficiency and solo boating, and feel less compelled to stick with a group, especially if the group



A strategic portage can reduce your risk, but even portaging is not risk-free. Paddler Jim Reed launches below the falls on the Illinois River upstream from Miami Bar, while Walt Garms watches.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

process or decisions are problematic. It's worth thinking ahead about your approach if you have a mixture of styles on a trip. Self-support groups can split up because each person carries his or her own gear.

This ability to easily merge or separate is a strength. If someone is injured or falls ill it is not a hardship for a pod of paddlers to continue downstream while others stay behind to care for the person in need. This is a very different scenario than the mutinies seen in the Grand Canyon when a boatman takes off, leaving the group without a kitchen or a groover.

Fires can be another contentious issue. Even when they are allowed, some people are against them. Even where campfires are banned, some folks want them. Some people think nothing of creating a new fire ring, others prefer to Leave No Trace. Know the rules, know your ethic, and talk about



Left: *Canoeists Will Gehr and Chuck Wilkinson on the Lower Owyhee.*

Opposite: *Will Gehr taking a good hard look at Montgomery Rapid on the Lower Owyhee to pick a line and confirm that there are no new obstacles.*

Photos by Teresa Gryder

fire ahead of time. The most important thing about fire is that you keep it under control and put it out completely when you are done.

Drugs and alcohol can also cause conflict. Alcohol abuse tends to be more common among rafters because they have the boat capacity to bring large quantities of beer, wine, and booze. Kayakers have their own habits, however, which you may not know about until you do some extended camping with them. Be sure to talk about intoxicants before the trip to hopefully keep the use of inebriants within reasonable bounds.

When you have no influence over the invitation list, your only say in group selection may be your decision whether or not to join. Given the importance of the group to your safety and enjoyment, it's wise to be willing to exercise this option.

Portaging

We may think that if we decide not to run a rapid, we're doing the safer thing. Unfortunately there is risk involved in the process of getting your boat to the bottom of a rapid, even when you are not paddling it. On shore you can fall down, suffer cuts, twisted ankles, and broken bones, get

things dropped on you, get stung by bees or bitten by snakes, get heat exhaustion, or set the stage for a nasty case of poison ivy. Sounds like great fun, eh? Hauling a heavy boat makes it harder to pay attention to everything, so be methodical and wear solid shoes.

If anyone in the group does choose to run the rapid he or she is likely to reach the bottom well ahead of you, adding time pressure. They may be expecting that you will set safety for them. This is another reason to go with people whose skills and attitudes are similar to your own. It's also incentive to be decisive when you scout.

Rock climbing skills are an advantage when it comes to negotiating steep riverbanks. Knowing how to set an anchor and to belay something heavy is invaluable when you have to get your boat past a steep drop. Even just lining a boat downstream requires specific skills, including excellent water reading, timing, and rope handling. It's worth studying and practicing during day trips so that when your boat is loaded with survival gear you are less likely to lose it.

One way to dramatically increase your safety margin while portaging is by keeping



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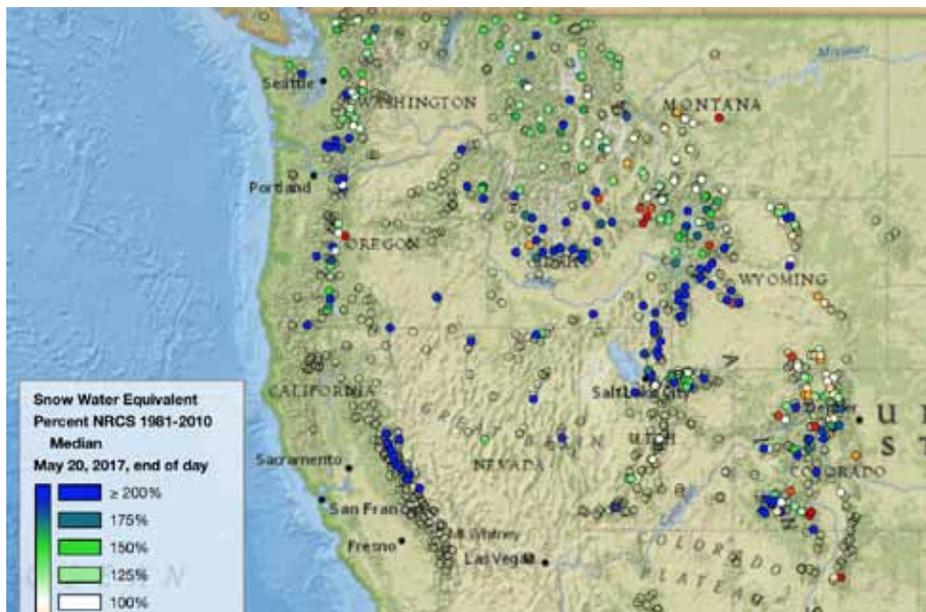
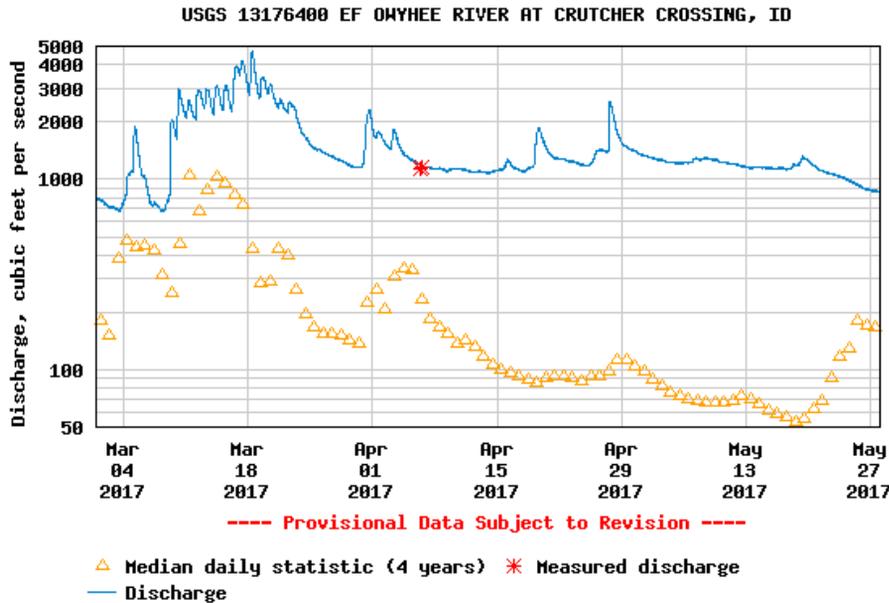


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Top: USGS gauges online allow you to select date ranges, and indicate median flows from previous years to give perspective.

Image courtesy of USGS

Bottom: NRCS Snotel data can help wilderness paddlers predict runoff in a drainage.

Image courtesy of NRCS

your life jacket and helmet on. Paddlers are tempted to take off their gear when they get hot, or just out of habit. If it is only habit, you can change your habits. If you get hot, use the river to cool off. You can jump in or pour helmets full of water over your head, then put the helmet back on. It

would be really embarrassing to get a head injury while you are carrying your helmet... but not on your head.

Wearing your river gear affords protection against collisions with rocks or equipment, and it keeps you prepared to be in the water.

You could jump in to retrieve something as part of a rescue, or you could fall in. In any event, wearing a pfd, helmet, and top notch footwear is baseline protection.

Changing Conditions

The ability to adjust your strategy to the situation you actually encounter (instead of the one you expect) will contribute to your long life. When planning a self-support trip, people often pick dates that work for their calendars, and then pray that the conditions will be right. When people have short windows in which to accomplish a trip, they will be tempted to go even when the conditions are not safe.

To avoid this trap, it's essential that someone in the group understands what conditions you need to safely launch. It's also essential that the group be flexible enough to change plans. Someone in your group should have a sense of the flow inputs, pinpoint reasonable minimum and maximum flows for your group, and then use those parameters to make the go/no-go decision. Research contingency plans, because it is easier to redirect than to cancel if the planned trip becomes a no-go. Check flows, weather, and road conditions before you leave home, and if the conditions are bad, don't leave. If the conditions are fine when you leave home, check them again before you launch. If it doesn't look good, don't launch. It's that simple.

Predicting weather for the next couple of days isn't difficult, but a week out is trickier. It's one thing to look at the weather predictions on some website, plug in the zip code of the nearest town, and decide that the weather will be good enough. It's another thing to consult radar, snotel sites, wind patterns and such, and know if there will be headwinds, smoke from wildfires, heavy precipitation, or a snowmelt flow bump on any given day. Get help from expert meteorologists in interpreting the data when it matters.

It's particularly important to consult experts when you are headed to a part of the world that you don't know. Research seasonal patterns and anomalies and talk to people who have been there. Note the elevations and latitude of your run and plan for the full range of possible conditions. Track the hydrographs. Bring clothing and shelter that will be adequate for the worst possible weather. It's easy to underestimate the cold when you are in a warm valley, or before the sun is hidden behind rain clouds.

The Unexpected

No matter how well you plan, you can be taken by surprise. Sometimes things you might not expect are well known to locals, so investigate thoroughly.



For example, the Illinois River in Oregon is a unique drainage that experiences dramatic

Rescuing a swimmer after an encounter with the picket fence in Blossom Bar on the Rogue River (OR). Swimmer: Sue Scheppele, rescuer: Alistair Hather.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

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spikes in flow. It's a 56-mile long tributary of the Rogue River that catches storms right off the ocean. It has many large tributaries and unusual geology that limits topsoil formation causing super-fast runoff. Days after a rain, the streamflow on the Illinois triples between the put-in and the take-out. The gauge is upstream of the put-in, so paddlers launching at a moderate flow of 2,000 CFS can expect 6,000 by the take-out, even without additional rain.

During a rain the flow increases can be exponential. People have died on the Illinois because they thought it would be better to paddle out than to camp an extra night on some rocky slope, waiting for the water to come down. Paddlers who know this about the Illinois choose weather that offers no threat of rising water. Even commercial raft trips bring an extra night's food, expecting to camp until water levels begin to fall.

Aside from runoff anomalies, extreme weather and sudden geological events are rare but real. Microbursts and tornadoes form quickly and can have dramatic impacts. Thunderstorms miles away can cause flash floods and lightning strikes under blue skies. Landslides like the one on the Jarbidge River in Idaho in 2009 can dam the river, leaving boaters to wonder where the water went, or surprise them with a brand new rapid. If there's one thing we know about the natural environment, it is that change is normal, and surprises are to be expected. Always study the map and know how to get off the river if you must.

Wildlife

Varmints, venomous snakes, grizzly bears, and biting or stinging insects can all cause trouble for river runners. By varmints I mean anything that will chew holes in your drybags or life jacket pocket to get at your snacks. Sometimes rodents will chew

through things that don't even contain food. Mice, squirrels, raccoons, ringtail cats, and the like can really put a dent in your food supply and your dry storage. Bring a sewing kit, patches, and Aquaseal so that you can fix stuff that gets chewed, whether by critters or by the river. A spare waterproof stuff sack weighs little and can come in very handy. You can even use it to hang your food in a tree, or to contain food odors when you stash food in your boat.

Snakebites are uncommon but they can be very unpleasant. Find out about any venomous snakes living near your destination. Rattlesnakes are most common in the west, but cottonmouths, moccasins, and copperheads can hurt people too. When in venomous snake territory, have good communications ability and an evacuation plan. Take measures to avoid getting bitten, like wearing sturdy shoes and something on your legs, and moving

carefully when on land. If someone does get bitten, he or she will need immediate evacuation.

On North America's far northern and western rivers, grizzly bears are a persistent challenge. Learn all about them if you plan to trip where they live. Avoid them when possible, minimize their interest in your stuff, and know how to properly confront them if you must. In the far north, satellite-based communications are less reliable because there are fewer satellites in that sky, and pilots only fly in the right conditions to the few reasonable landing spots, so rescues can be slow.

There is no shortage of wild things that might affect your trip. On one of our trips this year I pulled seven ticks off of a fellow group member. Ravens will steal things. Bee stings are just an inconvenience unless someone has an allergy, or gets



A hornet's nest disguised as rock; not ideal for drysuit hanger. Rogue River, 2017.

Photo by Mark Scantlebury

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Strainers are a hazard that can appear unexpectedly on any river.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

stung too many times. As long as we are in their home, it is our job to understand the wild residents and minimize negative interactions with them.

First aid

Everybody wants someone else to bring the first aid kit. I am of the opinion that each individual should bring first aid supplies. There are two reasons. One is that if you have BAND-AIDs handy, you will take better care of your own small wounds. Devoted daily care of minor injuries helps prevent infections and worse troubles. The second reason is that if someone in your group suffers a more serious injury, one first aid kit doesn't go very far. Improvising with duct tape and bandanas is not really sufficient when you are managing a wound for infection for a week on the water. Treating a serious injury might take supplies from several kits, so bring yours.

Left: *Check for ticks during and after spring trips in the wilderness.*

Photo by Teresa Gryder

Right: *Hornet-stung hand of Alex McNeily, with opposite hand for comparison.*

Photo by Mark Scantlebury

I split my first aid supplies into an owie kit and a major first aid kit. My owie kit is easily accessible in my day bag and contains things that I use all the time, plus a few emergency supplies that could be urgently needed, packed in a quart-sized

Ziploc freezer bag. Specifically, my owie kit contains flexible fabric BAND-AID, triple antibiotic ointment, Gorilla Tape wrapped on a Sharpie, butterflys, Ibuprofen, a hemostatic bandage and a menstrual pad, tweezers, electrolyte packets, Benadryl, a pair of gloves, and a CPR shield. I also keep an epi pen and my trauma shears handy. Your kit will be different depending on your needs and knowledge.

My major first aid kit gets stashed deeper in the boat and usually stays there. I know exactly where I put this kit, and I tell people where it is. It contains an ACE bandage, medical tape, more Gorilla Tape, zip ties, gauze, betadine swabs, water purification tablets, sterile dressings and bandaging supplies (menstrual pads make a cheap dressing), Aspirin, pain meds and antibiotics, eye drops, more hemostatic bandages and owie kit supplies, gloves, scissors, another epi pen, and more Benadryl. I'm a doctor, so I bring things that help with muscle soreness, constipation, infections, poison ivy/oak, sleeplessness, and sunburn. Bring what you know how to use, and share as you deem appropriate.





Drying things in the sun beside the Illinois River (OR); Ron Reynier sleeping in the background.

Photo by Teresa Gryder

No matter what you bring, events can exceed your capacity to deal with them. You can improvise a splint, but you can't stop a heart attack or fix a rattlesnake bite. When rotten things happen, having an evacuation plan and communications ability can save the day.

Communications

When your situation is impossible, your best hope is to summon help from the outside world. Flagging down a commercial raft trip works in the Grand Canyon, but in places where there are few or no other people you need another plan. Sending a runner is only as fast as the wilderness is

small. Cell phones are rarely effective in remote river canyons, but may connect in some areas if you climb to a high point. Satellite phones work in the lower 48 but they are heavy and expensive, and kayakers balk at their weight.

There are some lighter communication tools that are useful for kayak self-support. In the desert a signal mirror can get a response if you have sunlight and air traffic. These mirrors are tiny and can be carried on your person in case you are separated from the group. Unfortunately mirrors don't work at night or on a rainy day, and there is no legal obligation for pilots to act on your signal.

Your best hope for getting help in the wilds is to carry a personal locator beacon (PLB) like those used on private aircraft. These devices can send an SOS signal that brings help to you, and are well worth the \$300-700 price tag if you ever have to use one. Pairing one of these with good evacuation insurance can make your escape from a bad situation relatively easy.

If you don't have a PLB on your trip, at least make sure someone knows when you are supposed to come out. Ideally that person



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will notify authorities and invoke a rescue effort if you don't communicate within a certain time-frame.

Equipment

Every item on your packing list is part of your safety kit. You just never know what that bandana might end up being used for. Every boater should have the standard safety/rescue gear that we use on day trips, including a knife, rope, carabiners, webbing, and such. It bears repeating that excellent footwear makes you a better rescuer and gives you the option of hiking out if needed.

Your equipment should be sturdy and reliable, but it can still get broken or lost. For essential items like paddles, you should bring spares. If the river eats your paddle, you get out your spare. If the river eats your spare paddle, then what? Necessity is indeed the mother of invention.

It's much easier to invent solutions when you have tools and supplies on hand. Every individual should bring some versatile repair supplies so that your group can combine resources to repair things.

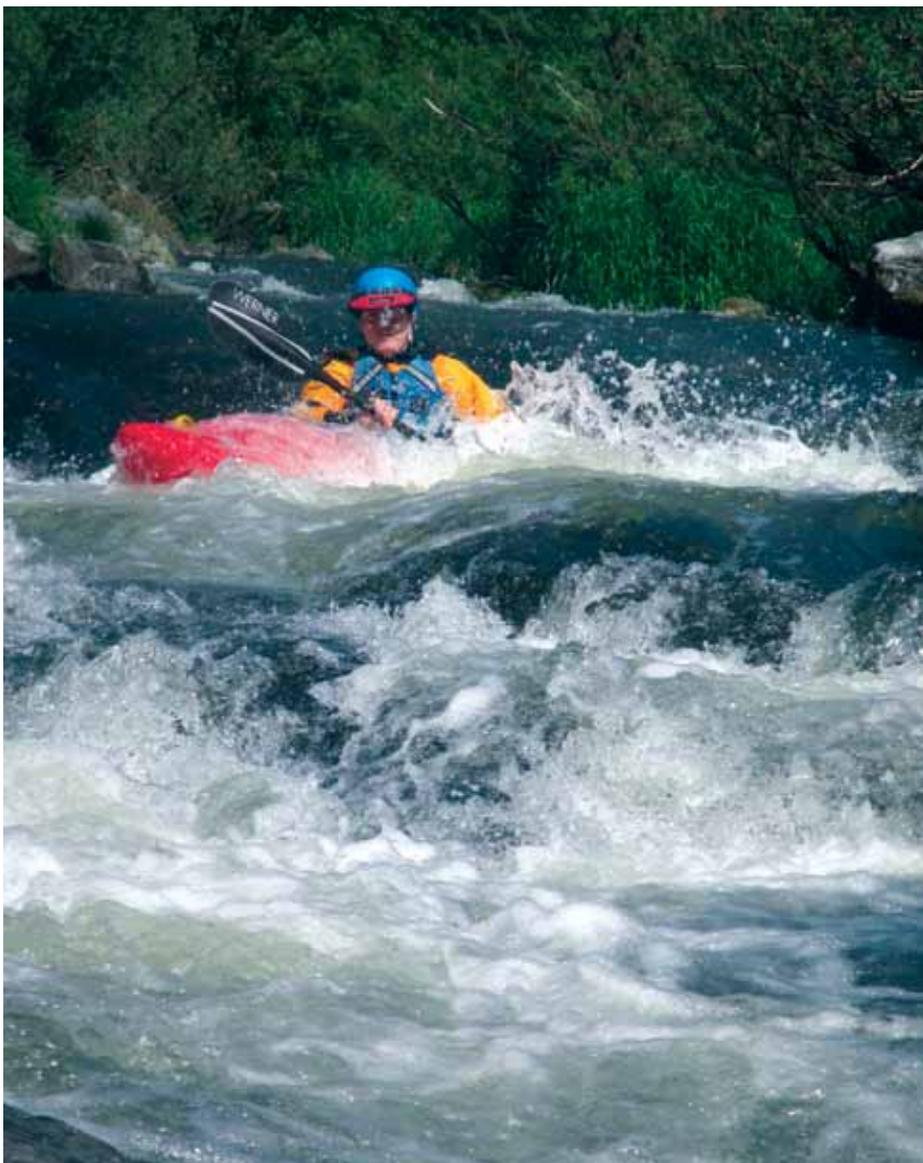
Tape has so many uses that it tops the list for repair materials. Duct tape used to be the standard but these days Gorilla Tape is popular because it's stronger and stickier. You can use it to temporarily repair broken paddles, cracked boats, tent poles, and lots more. A lighter-powered pocket torch is useful in cold/wet conditions to dry surfaces before applying tape, and warm up the tape to assure a seal. Tape can also be used for bandaging blisters, casting

Top: Drying sleeping bag after a very cold March night on the Illinois (OR).

Middle: Tarping it in the rain at the Imnaha/Snake confluence (Omar Jepperson and Laura Sol)

Bottom: Running the Imnaha down to the Snake.

Photos by Teresa Gryder



Dee Brodigan in Fish Ladder on the Rogue.
Photo by Teresa Gryder

broken digits, patching shoes, and making wind screens for stoves.

You may also choose to bring tools specific to your boat or a multi-tool with screw drivers and pliers, a sewing kit, metal tubes for fixing tent poles, Aquaseal, superglue, and self-adhesive patches for repairing punctured sleeping pads or drysuits.

The last bit of equipment that could save your life is your personal survival kit. If

you somehow lost your boat and were separated from your group, how would you fare? You can stash a few survival items on your person just in case. My survival kit includes a whistle, compass, fire-making materials, water purification tablets, a signal mirror, a bit of food, my ID, credit card, cash, and a personalized emergency contact/medical info page, all stashed in my lifejacket pocket and in the leg of my drysuit. Some people wear a small fanny pack underneath their sprayskirt to contain

emergency items. You will probably never need this stuff, but if you do, you will be glad you thought ahead.

Conclusion

The upside of self-support is the freedom to be on the river with only what you need. The downside is that you have less backup. If you are having a bad day, there is no raft to drag your kayak up onto. If you put a hole in your boat, you had best be able to repair it. If you dislocate a shoulder, hopefully you know how to reduce it, have brought good meds, and know where to hike out. If you have a heart attack, maybe somebody will even have a beacon that could bring a helicopter. Self-support demands a higher level of skill and preparedness than a garden-variety day trip, and carries a higher level of objective risk.

This article only scrapes the surface of what could go wrong and how you might deal with it. The mindset of preparedness and the ingenuity required to improvise solutions are more important than following any checklist. When each individual thoughtfully packs his or her own unique survival gear, the combined resources increase the safety margin for all participants. The glorious thing about self-support kayaking with a prepared group is the adaptability that we gain from our collective skills, knowledge, and preparation.

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

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

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RIVER VOICES

ON THE CHATTOOGA WITH FRIENDS FOR THE ECLIPSE

BY THORPE MOECKEL



The eclipse shadows.
Photo by Scott Sullivan

THERE WAS GOING to be an eclipse. The forecast was good. It was decided on the drive to the put-in: we would boogie down and set up on Alison's Rock in Sock Em Dog.

We were three pals in our late forties who'd met while guiding on the river in the early 90s. You could say we grew up together. Growing up doesn't end at 18. Some say it starts in earnest then, that we grow up or down, moment to moment. Some don't weigh in, just believe what the river has to say.

We headed down. We ran into friends. We ran into waves and eddies and over drops. The day was clear. It was late August, a summer of afternoon thunderstorms, the water a decent level. Now there were a few clouds.

We were quiet. Sometimes S made fun of my canoe. Sometimes, we reminisced.

"Remember that sunny day, when the water rose...was that '91?"

"Remember how F used to catch that nothing-eddy in his Perception Sabre?"

"Were you there that evening on Overflow?"

"What about that gorgeous safety boater for NOC who paddled with a waterproof Walkman?" And so on.

It was my third day paddling in a row, a rare thing, and I was a bit rickety. But the lines came back the way it comes back how to hug your mother.

Between the three of us, there were a couple of thousand runs down that stretch of river. We might have known the place as well as ourselves, if not better, and there was still so much to know and not know. When you paddle with friends like that, the

past and present merge. You are paddling both in the present and into the past, and the future feels very manageable, if not a little silly.

P was in a Mr. Clean, S in a David Letterman Cucumber special, AKA a green and yellow Lettmann (we were jealous). I was in one of those Tupperware canoes that was mango in color but resembled less a mango than a mix between a cut-down shipping crate and a buoy. There was a button near the thwart, and when I pushed it my saddle vibrated in a lewd manner as bilge water pumped through a tube and back into the river through a hole just below my gunwale.

We could have been three guys who'd returned to the place where we'd found our one constant home. We each had kids and we were on the river to bring some of what we felt there home to them. We could have been three guys who'd returned to a place where we'd been reborn, which suggests

RIVER VOICES

we were dead before being there. But we weren't dead, we were just different.

"It's a feeling, it's a feeling," Van sings, "and when you do it, and the more you do it, and more you do it, it becomes a beautiful obsession."

There was an eclipse coming. We didn't know what to expect. We were content. We passed raft trips. We ran into friends at Long Creek Falls. I had a good hug with H—it had been many, many years—and I met for the first time his lovely partner of a long while.

Later, I paddled up under the curtain below the pothole tunnel at Raven's Chute, filled my canoe, mini-endered out, and felt goofy as I pushed the pump's button again. Later than that, I caught a paddlesnake and had a crazy, clumsy swim in Little Woodall. My friends laughed at me. The water felt nice.

Our lines were restful, no matter what, and good, our laughter compassionate, grateful. We passed the rock, do you know that flat rock, river-left, above the fish weir into which someone years ago carved, "God is Love"?

We were coming into the Five Falls now. The eclipse was supposed to start soon, but it felt abstract, some upcoming fifth grade astronomy experiment.

Down at Sock Em Dog, P ran it, and S and I decided to wait. There were already a couple dozen folks hanging out. In the eddy, as we exited our boats, someone in those goofy glasses gazed up and said, "It's started." We stepped across the Puppy Chute and out to Alison's Rock.

Maybe the light was changing; it was hard to tell. OG showed up. He'd worked for another outfit during the early 90s and was now designing and making boats. He had good energy, was fired up. He carried props—a welding mask, a Moon Pie, a Sun Drop soda, and a tallboy Corona—and soon launched with these things into an A+ eclipse tutorial.

People were scooting past Hydro, boat after boat. It was crowded, carnivalesque. People were running the Dog over and over. The launch pad was at that level that's weird, like maybe there's enough water on the pad but probably not, like it was weight-dependent. Our friend's son J playboated up and caught three eddies on the way to the launch pad and then backed

into the right, meltdown slot and threw a wave wheel over the smeary rock. P, S, and I had worked with J's dad in the early 90s, when such moves (and with such grace) were hardly imaginable.

A fellow in a yellow canoe must have run it 12 times in the last 40 minutes. He seemed to be on a playback loop; he was a testament to something, discipleship, stoke, energy drinks, I don't know.

Now the eclipse was going on, the moon slowly covering the sun, a fingernail sliver growing to a bite. I saw it through my glasses. It was slow and it was real. We looked up and then we looked back down and around. We ate our sandwiches, and though S had a gluten-free disaster of crumbs in his Ziploc, he was valiant with his hunger.

More rafts and boats showed up. We saw old friends. We made new friends. It was kind of noisy, all the colorful gear, all the voices. Slowly, very slowly, the light grew more wintry, faded and shimmery, too. Out of my lifejacket I made a pillow that didn't feel like a pillow. That evening, a friend near Walhalla would speak of seeing lightning bugs during the totality. Even a hawkmoth came to their night-blooming moonflower.



For now, though the eclipse's totality was a ways off, things were getting intense, the canopy turning a muted gleam. The leaves started to look ancient. Or maybe antique. It was so alive, so burning. A quarter sun compared to a quarter moon is like comparing an awakened heart to a heart of resentment, fear.

I've sometimes imagined the soul as a hard little stone egg that a divine light might fertilize, or not fertilize, according to some mix of fate and our choices. And sitting on that rock I had a sense of how the light might look; it was the light of the sun with the moon passing in front of it; it was that light bathing the Chattooga River corridor at the turn below the Five Falls, the turn where the water slows and deepens at Dead Man's Pool. There was nothing dead about any man, woman, or critter present on the banks right then. Nothing dead about the canopy, the understory either.

Now, a breeze. Three crows heading back to their perches. I saw a woman who'd stretched a tapestry on a boulder at the bottom of Jawbone and was reading tarot cards for people. I saw people I'd seen on rivers over the years and recognized them the way you recognize wildflowers you haven't seen since you ID'd them a long

while back. There was a beautiful lady with a can of beer parked in her cleavage. There was my old pal with a patch on his lifejacket that was the Christian fish and inside it the word: Dudism. There was a locust tree throwing a million eclipse shadows on a wet rock. Somebody pointed to Handkerchief rock below the Dog and said, "You see that little curler off to the left, there's a creek boat stuffed in a sieve there." Just then, J from the bank launched a back flip into the maw below the pad. Dead Man's Pool gleamed like the big welcoming fern-bordered sweetheart it is. Logs and driftwood. The boulders, moss. Clouds upstream. People looked around in their eclipse glasses. Somebody said, "What the hell even is this light?"

OG wore his welding mask. People hooted. It was getting dark. I closed my eyes for a few seconds, they were tired. Someone mentioned an earthquake. Someone mentioned seeing stars, planets. I loved everything.

And now we didn't – it was sudden – need those funny glasses anymore.

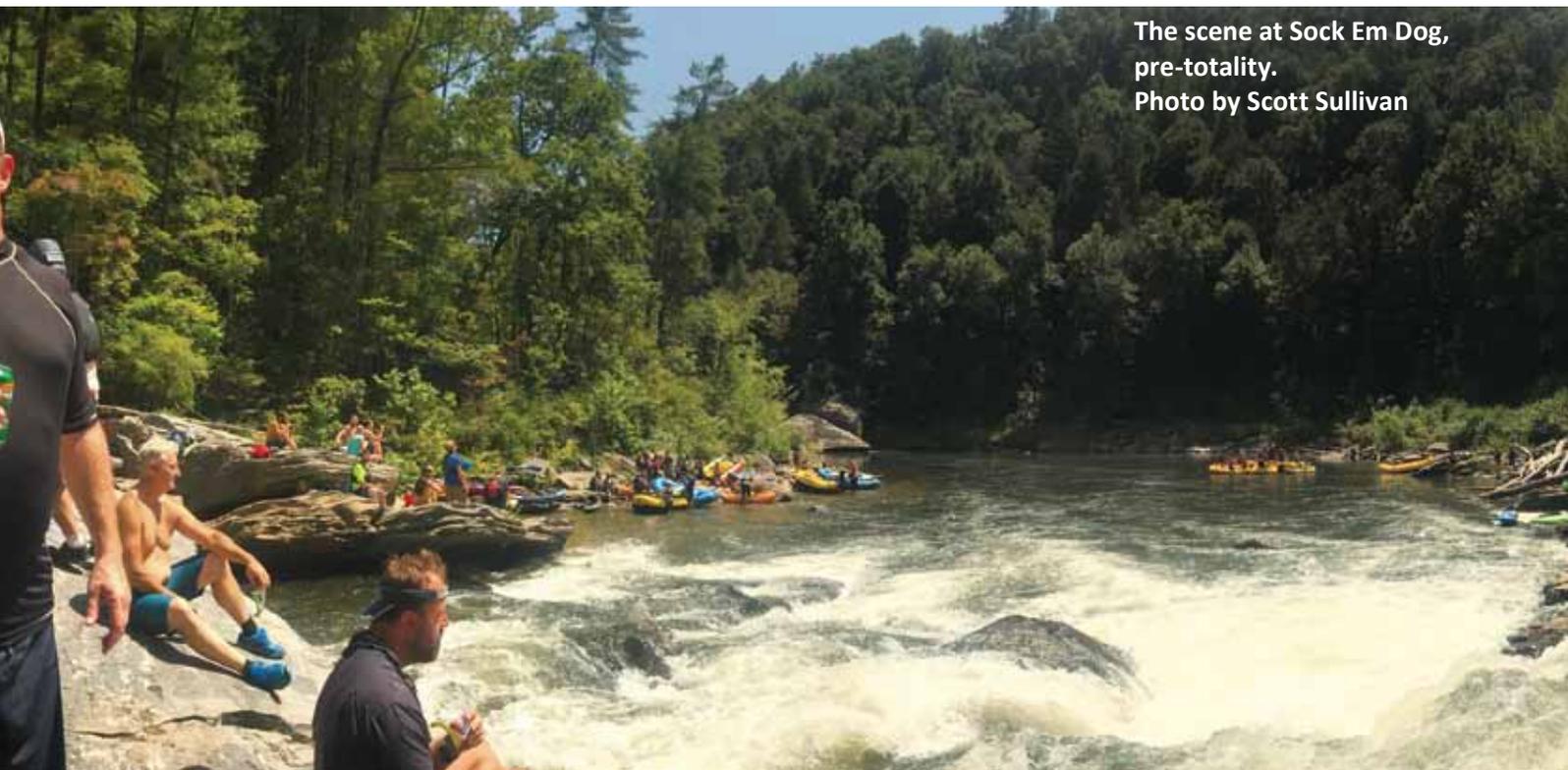
The light, the air, everything, it was like nothing else. It was not like any color. It was not like day or night or anything in

between. It was not like Gerard Manley Hopkins' "shook foil" or how Van rhymes "insight" with "granite." Not marketable, this light, not like what happens behind your eyes during orgasm, not like coming up after a long, long time underwater.

It was happening fast. I glanced at my friends, everyone there, the trees, shrubs, doghobble, yellowroot, every living thing. We had each faced eclipses in our lives, and we'd face more, and we'd find, as we had found, if only briefly, the diamond ring on the backside. The river, this river we were on, had something to do with that.

It was not like anything, this light, not like hope or childbirth or any photo or prayer or even like paddling the Five Falls on a clear night under a full moon in your riverstrong early-20s, and coming out of Jawbone to see that big ball of sensual glow tee-d up on the Dog's launchpad and all you had to do was point your bow in the exact middle of it, stick a stroke, and you were flying, just flying.

Or it was like that, all of that and much more, and it was like paddling the moon itself and the sun, too, and it was not like any of that, only all at once and all the time.



The scene at Sock Em Dog,
pre-totality.
Photo by Scott Sullivan

AW PARTNERS

\$20,000 - Class V



\$15,000 - Class IV



\$10,000 - Class III



\$7,500 - Class II



\$5,000 - Boof



\$2,500 - Wave



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Call toll free: 1-866-262-8429 - info@americanwhitewater.org or subscribe online @ www.kayaksession.com

Join



AMERICAN WHITEWATER Today!

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

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

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

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

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

Membership
P.O. Box 1540
Cullowhee, NC 28723

*Note: AW will never share your information with others

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____ Member Number: _____

↑ _____ if you have one and know it

Membership Level

\$35 Standard

\$25 Member of Affiliate Club

Club: _____

\$25 Student

School: _____

\$50 Family

\$75 Affiliate Club

\$100 Ender Club (Shirt Size: _____)

\$250 Platinum Paddler

\$500 Explorer

\$750 Lifetime

\$1,000 Legacy

\$2,500 Steward

**For current member rewards
go to:
americanwhitewater.org**

Donation

Donation of \$ _____

Additional Subscriptions

\$30 Kayak Session Magazine - 4 issues per year (KS donates \$5 to AW!)

Journal Options

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

Auto-Renew (No Renewal Notices!)

Auto-renew my membership each year on the credit card below

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NEWS & NOTES

AW ROGUE TRIP 2018

BY MARK SINGLETON



FOR THE PAST several years, the staff of American Whitewater has joined with a number of our members to participate in a four-day float trip on the Rogue River in Southern Oregon. This trip has been a great opportunity to connect with members in ways that build a lasting understanding of the role of recreation in fostering a stewardship ethic. As one of the original eight Wild and Scenic rivers in the country, the Rogue is an outstanding classroom for American Whitewater's river stewardship program. Staff members share current projects, their challenges and successes, as well as highlights of national policy work that affects Wild and Scenic rivers like the Rogue. The trip is made possible through the support of Northwest Rafting Company. They provide professional guides, exceptional food, transportation to and from Galice (the put-in), and group equipment.

In June 2018, American Whitewater members will again have an opportunity to join American Whitewater staff and board members for this exclusive trip on the Rogue. We invite you to come learn more about what we're up to while having a great time enjoying one of our nation's first Wild and Scenic rivers. You will have the option of bringing your own boat, renting a boat, or joining as a passenger on one of the rafts. The price for the trip will be \$1045, with a portion of the trip proceeds going to American Whitewater to support our work.

The trip, which will take place June 14-17, 2018, will be fully outfitted by Northwest Rafting Company with professional guides and all group equipment. The trip is suitable for all skill levels. Last year we had paddlers representing the full range of skill levels from experts who are out every weekend, to folks who had not been in a boat for

a while, and some who were just getting into an inflatable kayak or raft for the first time. Everyone is welcome on this trip—the only experience you need is a love of rivers. One of the most important concepts the Rogue trip will reinforce is what we all know firsthand—it is our common love of whitewater that makes us such passionate defenders of rivers. Oh yeah, and the food is excellent and the camping superb. Last year, we had a full trip, so make your reservation soon to ensure a spot on the Rogue trip with American Whitewater this summer.

Make your reservation directly through Northwest Rafting Company's website today at www.nwrafting.com/rogue and selecting the June 14-17 trip with American Whitewater under "Dates and Prices." We hope to see you on the Rogue River this June!

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



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

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



AFFILIATE CLUBS

AW'S ORIGINAL PURPOSE

BY CARLA MINER

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.

Supporting Affiliate Clubs

Alaska

Fairbanks Paddlers, Fairbanks

California

Gold Country Paddlers, Lotus

Colorado

Dolores River Boating Advocates, Dolores

Kentucky

Bluegrass Wildwater Asso, Lexington

New Jersey

KCCNY, Flanders

North Carolina

Girls at Play, Asheville

Ohio

Keelhaulers, Cleveland

South Carolina

Foothills Paddling Club, Greenville

Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Washington

Paddle Trails Canoe Club, Seattle

Washington Kayak Club, Seattle

Affiliate Club by State

Alaska

Nova River Runners Inc., Chickaloon

Alabama

Coosa River Paddling Club, Wetumpka

Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Outdoors Unlimited, Flagstaff

Southern Arizona Paddlers Club, Tucson

Thunderbird Outdoor Restoration

Organization, Glendale

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

Chico Paddleheads, Chico

River City Whitewater Club, Sacramento

Shasta Paddlers, Redding

Sierra Club Loma Prieta Paddlers, San Jose

Colorado

Friends of the Yampa, Steamboat Springs

High Country River Rafters, Wheatridge

Rocky Mountain Outdoor Center, Buena Vista

San Miguel Whitewater Asso, Telluride

Team Colorado Whitewater Racing Club,

Longmont

Upper Colorado Private Boaters Asso,

Glenwood Springs

Delaware

Wilmington Trail Club, Newark

Georgia

Georgia Canoeing Asso, Atlanta

Idaho

Idaho Whitewater Association, Boise

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

Mason Dixon Canoe Cruisers, Hagerstown

Monocacy Canoe Club, Frederick

Massachusetts

AMC Boston Chapter, Boston

Zoar Outdoor, Charlemont

Minnesota

Rapids Riders, Eagan

Missouri

Missouri Whitewater Assn, St. Louis

Ozark Mountain Paddlers, Springfield

Ozark Wilderness Waterways, Kansas City

Montana

Beartooth Paddlers Society, Billings

Nevada

Sierra Nevada Whitewater Club, Reno

New Hampshire

AMC New Hampshire Paddlers, Raymond

New Jersey

AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Oaks

New York

ADK Schenectady, Schenectady

KCCNY, Flanders

North Carolina

Carolina Canoe Club, Raleigh

Landmark Learning, Cullowhee

Tuckasegee Paddlers, Cullowhee

Ohio

Columbus Outdoor Pursuits, Columbus

Friends of the Crooked River, Akron

Oregon

Lower Columbia Canoe Club, Portland

Next Adventure, Portland

Northwest Rafters Association, Roseburg

Oregon Kayak and Canoe Club, Portland

Oregon Whitewater Association, Portland

Willamette Kayak & Canoe Club, Corvallis

Pennsylvania

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

Tennessee

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

Texas

Houston Canoe Club, Houston
Team River Runner, San Antonio

Utah

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

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Montpelier

Washington

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

West Virginia

WV Wildwater Assn, S. Charleston

Wisconsin

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

Wyoming

American Packrafting Association, Wilson

Ontario

Kawartha Whitewater Paddlers, The Kawarthas

DISCOUNTED AW MEMBERSHIP FOR AFFILIATE CLUB MEMBERS

By Carla Miner, Membership Manager

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

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

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

JOIN AMERICAN WHITewater AS A CLUB AFFILIATE!

10 REASONS TO JOIN AW AS AN AFFILIATE CLUB

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

AW AMERICAN WHITewater

Contribute your text and photos to *American Whitewater*

American Whitewater is a member-driven publication. If you enjoy reading it, please consider letting its pages tell your story. We are looking for articles about whitewater rivers of any variety, so let your imagination flow free!

We're always accepting submissions and we hope you'll consider contributing. For complete submission details, story topics, deadlines, and guidelines, go to:

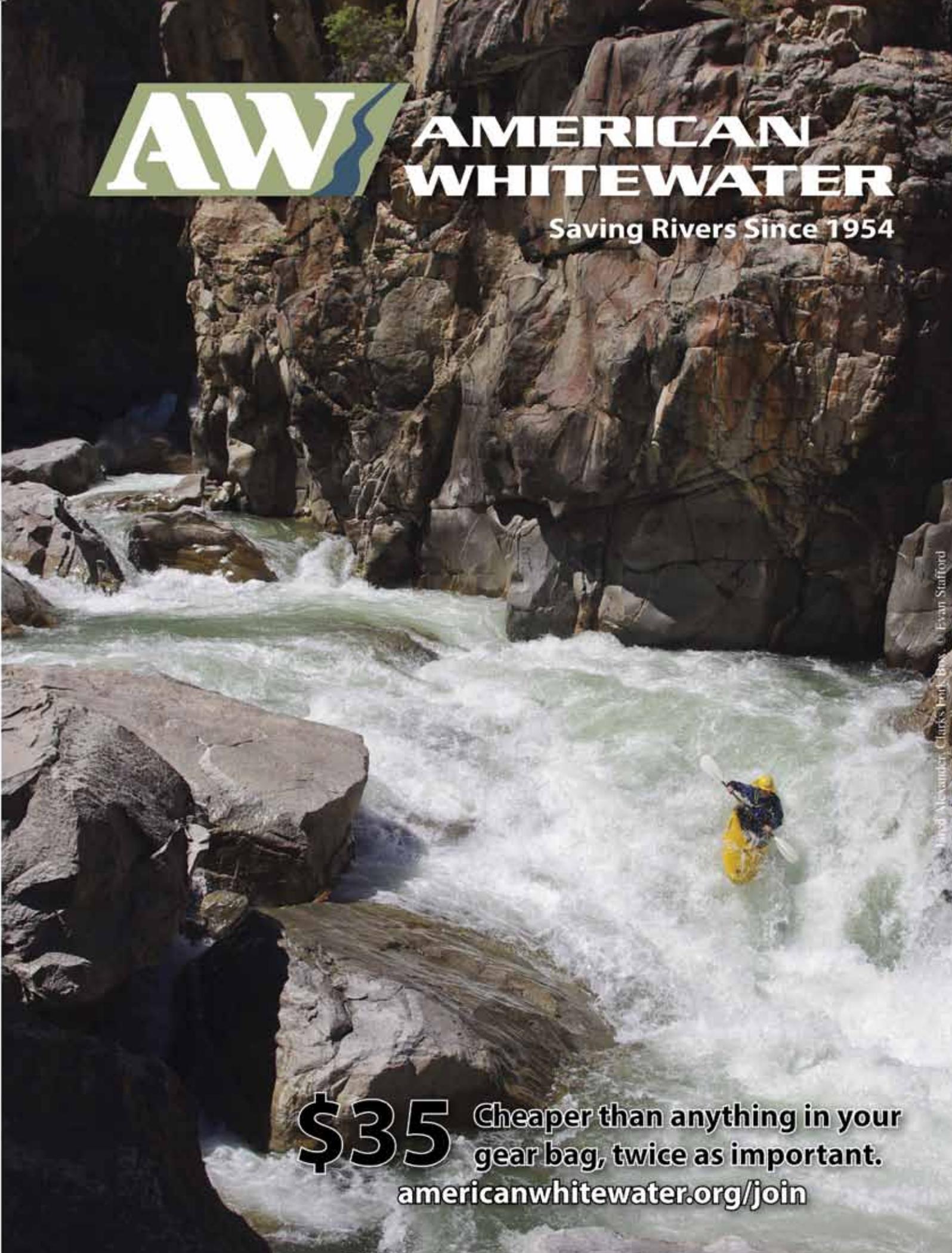
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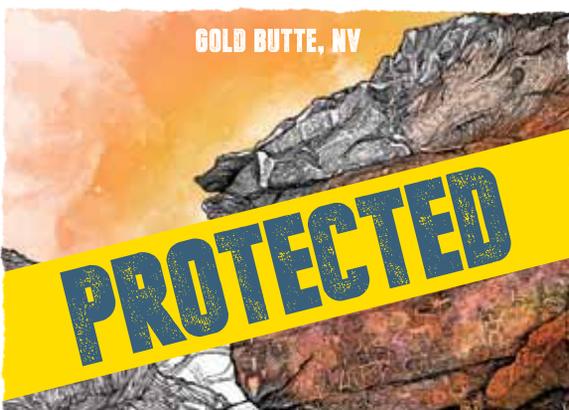


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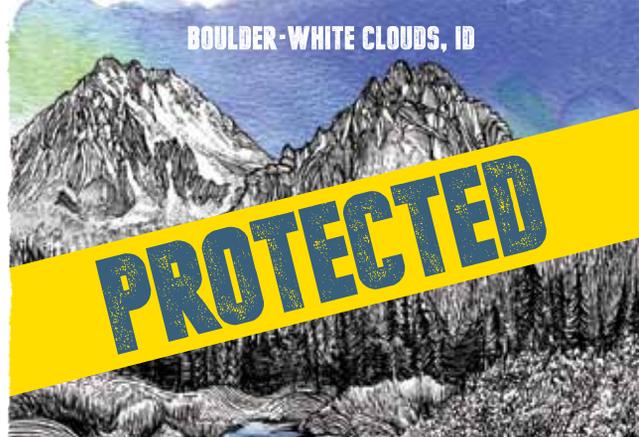
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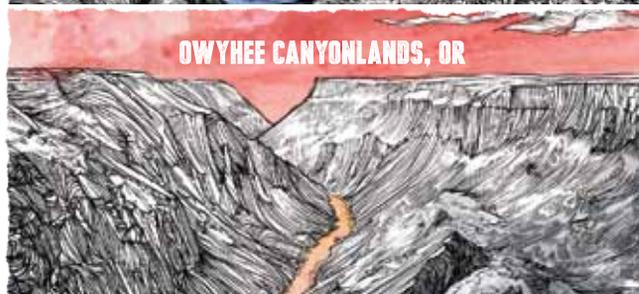
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