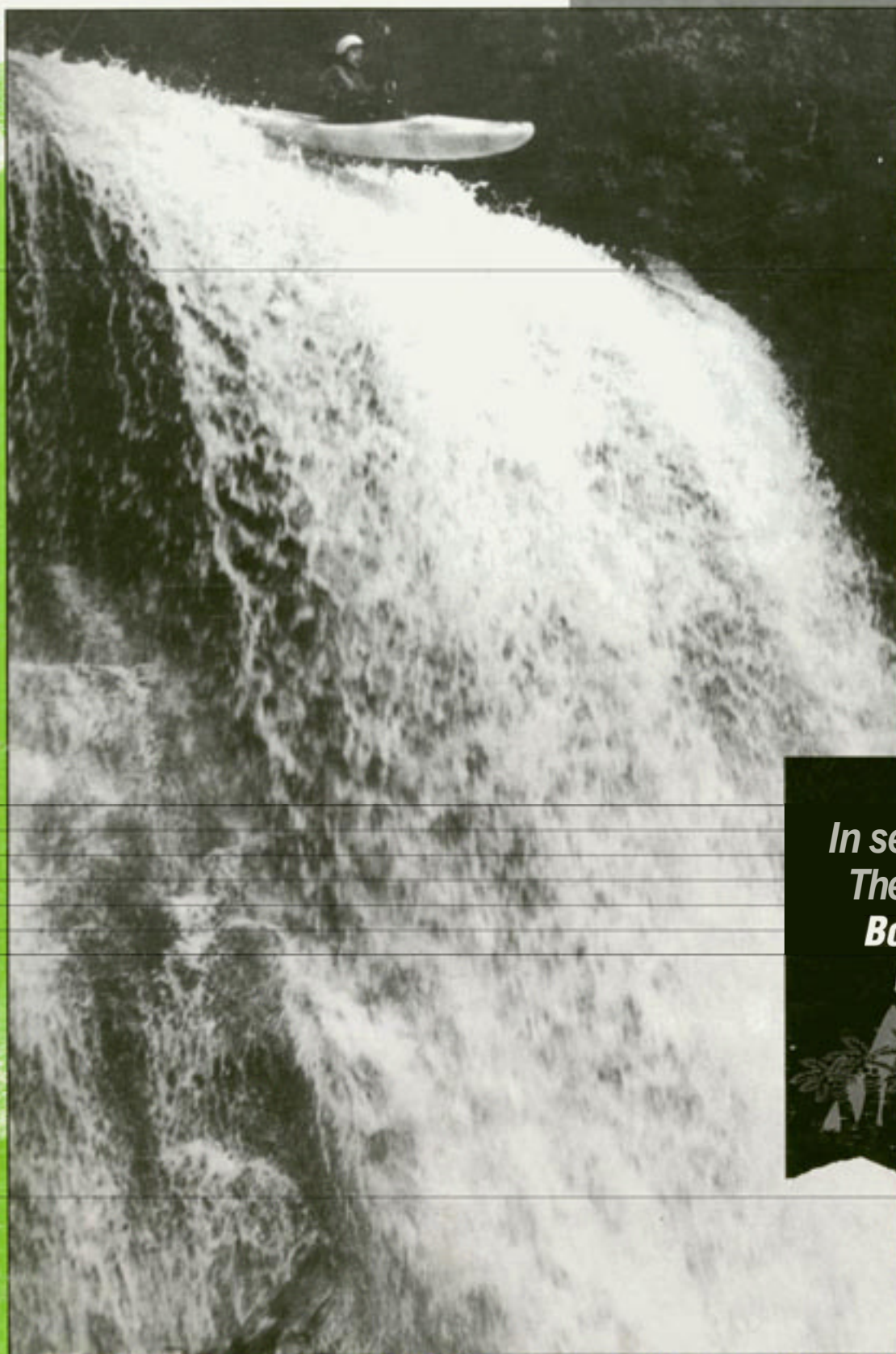


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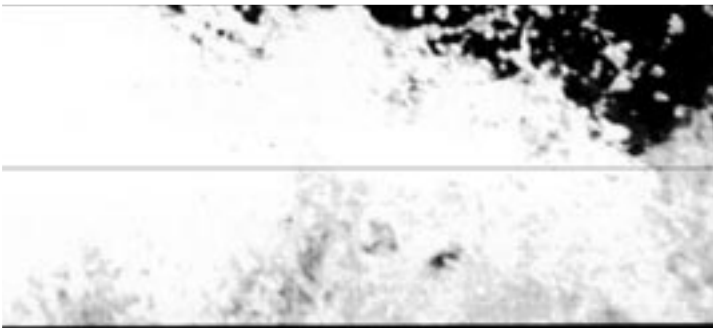
american whitewater

July/August 1993



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Bobo Fish**
page 22





american whitewater

Journal of the American Whitewater Affiliation

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THE TYGART AT ARDEN


When I think of Arden I always think of summer. I guess that's because we usually paddle there on those balmy days of June and July, when everything else is just too scrappy to bear.

Located near the bottom of the Tygart watershed, just above the lake, the river at Arden is wide and deep, with long turgid pools separating a hodge-podge of rapids that are kind of hard to describe. Some are open and affable, with plenty of places to play, but others are, depending on the level, kind of mean... with peculiar and menacing waterfalls, undercuts and siphons.

The Tygart at Arden is a lot like Alice's Restaurant; you can  anything you want. You can have a good time. Or you can get into trouble.

The same could be said about the scene along the river. The Tygart at Arden does not flow through a State or National Park, or an officially designated Recreation



Area. In fact, I don't know who owns the banks of the river. I do know that no one seems to control them. You can  just about anything you want at Arden.

On hot summer days, Arden is a busy place. There are cars parked all along the gravel road that parallels the river. But somehow there always seems to be space for one more. There is room for the motorcycles, ATVs and hot rods that roar up and down the road as well.

Old fishermen squat at the water's edge, drinking beer. They never seem to catch much, but they don't seem to mind.

Families set up tents beside the pools, roasting corn and barbecuing hamburgers, while their children wade in the tepid water. Sometimes there are ropes dangling from the trees. Young daredevils use these to swing way out over the river, and then, with savage howls and warcries, they drop. Sometimes they even manage a flip or two before they bellysmack into the water. Even the sound of it hurts.

The teenagers and young adults listen to rock and roll on the big flat boulders around Moat's Falls. This is a spectacular spot, though some would argue that all the graffiti that has been painted onto the rocks during the past century spoils the ambience.

I generally despise graffiti. But... in the case of Arden... I'm not so sure. You see, Arden is different...

I have seen fistfights at Arden lots of times. Most of these melees occur in the vicinity of the falls. Often one brawler is a local kid and the other a student at the nearby college. But not always. Sometimes women duke it out too.

If you were of a mind, you could get into a fight there. You probably wouldn't get hurt too badly; no one ever seems to. Mostly because the scrappers are too damned drunk to do much harm.

Sunbatlung is real popular at Arden as well. Sometimes, if you spin into an eddy real quietly, you can catch a gander at some naked folks, stretched out on the rocks, basking in the sun. And, if you run your shuttle late in the evening, when the sun is gone and the moon is full and high, you can see naked people doing a lot more than basking on those same rocks. I'll bet that over the years, hundreds, if not thousands, of hot blooded young'uns have seen the bear for the first time along the Tygart at Arden.

But you can do a lot more after dark than just that. Stick around. No one is going to chase you out at sunset.

You can toss cherry bombs at your unsuspecting buddy's feet and watch him dance. Shoot bottle rockets out over the river. Toast weenies and marshmallows over a driftwood fire and get so plastered that you can't stand up. Just be careful not to tumble into the Tygart and drown.

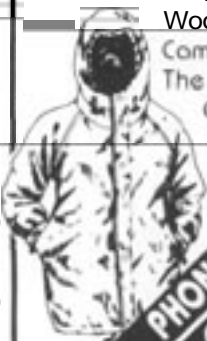
Oh, once in a great while tlungs really get out of hand. Like on the Fourth of July



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a few years ago. Folks got so rambunctious that the state cops crashed the party. That particular fandango actually merited a mention in USA Today!

But mostly the cops steer clear of Arden. I guess that's because most of the time the folks hanging out there are decent, good natured people who just want to have some fun.

Of course you won't find any squeaky clean restrooms and change houses at Arden. Fact is, there aren't any facilities at all. No parking lots, paved or otherwise. No fancy designated put-ins or take-outs. So be careful to stay out of the poison ivy on your way to and from the river.

And there aren't any lifeguards or sandy beaches. So if you take your kiddies, keep an eye on them. And, if you decide to take a dip yourself, don't tramp on any broken glass.

If you go to Arden, be careful.

Arden ain't no place for sissies. At Arden, you have to take care of yourself.

So, if you like your rivers safe and secure and sanitary and regimented and regulated, you'd best head someplace else.

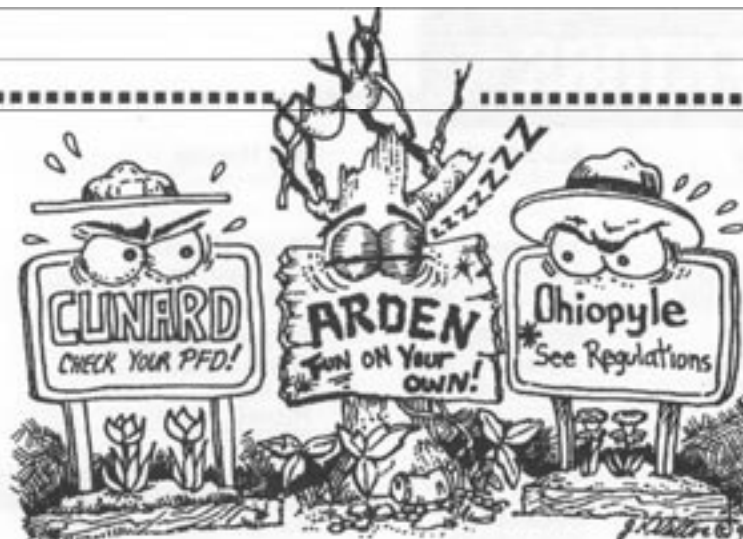
Someplace like the Yough at Ohiopyle State Park. Or the New at Cunard. Those places have all the amenities. And they've got rangers there to make sure you have the right kind of fun in the right way. To make sure you don't get into any trouble. Some folks like all of that.

But not everyone.

Lately I've been hearing a lot of complaints about what is going down at those safe and secure, regulated rivers. Some folks are reminiscing about the good old days. Remembering how things used to be. Before the Yough and the New got saved. Some folks wish it could be that way again.

The way it was when the Yough at Ohiopyle and the New at Cunard were a lot like the Tygart is at Arden now.

A place where you can *drink* beer



while you fish, or swing way out over the river before you let go, or build a driftwood fire and sleep by the water's edge, or pick a fight, or shoot bottle rockets into the midnight sky, or paddle over the falls, or see the bear for the first time in the moonlight on the rocks.

Maybe Joni Mitchell was right. Sometimes something does get lost when something's gained.

Sure, I know time only flows in one direction. And I know you can't buck progress. And I suppose there is a need for orderly, prissy, clean rivers like the Yough

at Ohiopyle and the New at Cunard.

But don't you think there ought to be room in this country for rough and tumble rivers like the Tygart at Arden too?

I know where I'd rather spend my Fourth of July.

I know which seems more like America to me.

I just pray that, at least for a little while longer, the powers that be will leave Arden alone. ■

Bob Gedekoh

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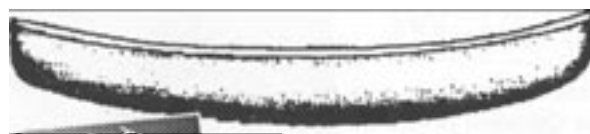
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PURPOSE.....

The American Whitewater

Affiliation

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

The American Whitewater Affiliation (AWA) is a national organization with a membership of over 3000 individual whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates.

EDUCATION: Through publication of the magazine, American Whitewater, and by other means, the AWA provides

information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique, and equipment.

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

EVENTS: AWA organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation, including the Ocoee Whitewater Rodeo in Tennessee and the annual Gauley River Festival in West Virginia, the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation.

SAFETY: AWA promotes paddling safety, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, and maintains both a uni-

form national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) as well as an internationally recognized whitewater safety code.

RIVER ACCESS: To assure public access to whitewater rivers AWA 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, and resists unjustified restrictions on government-managed whitewater rivers.

AWA was incorporated under Missouri non-profit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at PO Box 85, Phoenicia, NY 12464. The phone number is 914 688-5569. AWA is tax exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



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LETTERS

ACCESS POLICY QUESTIONED

Editor:

I would like to congratulate the authors of AWA's Public Access Policy (March/April 1993) for putting together a complicated series of issues. However, there are a couple of items that I think should be re-examined.

First, I was surprised at the extremely deferential attitude exhibited toward commercial outfitters. The article states that permit allocation systems should be adjusted to better reflect private versus commercial demand, but "only if they allow commercial rafting industries to operate successful and stable business operations". I think the AWA has it backward. The 1916 act establishing the U.S. National Park Service states that commercial operations shall be permitted in national parks, but only if they do not interfere with free access by the public. A policy that states that changes will be made only if they are acceptable to outfitters is a sure-fire recipe for doing nothing.

Second, I believe the AWA article gives an inaccurate analysis of a very important legal case that grants rights to private boaters, *Wilderness Public Rights Fund v. Kleppe* (1979). The action, on appeal, was brought by private boaters against the park service over an allegedly unfair river permit allocation system on the Grand Canyon. The AWA article states that the case upholds an allocation system that requires a 10 year wait to obtain a private permit while commercial customers can hop on the river at short notice. In fact, though the court ruled that split allocations are not inherently unfair, it stated that allocations must be "fairly made pursuant to appropriate standards." The court denied the plaintiffs appeal, but only because the park service adjusted its allocations while the case was in progress, from granting 8 percent of user

days to private boaters to granting them 30 percent of user days. The court concluded that the system had been made fair. Since then, private demand has become even higher relative to commercial demand. Under the statements set forth by Kleppe, the permit allocation system at the Grand Canyon must again be adjusted to reflect current demand.

Thank you for providing me an opportunity to share my views.

Sincerely,
Greg Moore
NORS/ *Currents* Magazine
Colorado Springs, Colorado

POPE BARROW RESPONDS

Greg has taken AWA to the woodshed regarding two statements in our new Access Policy: first, the "extremely deferential attitude" we exhibited toward commercial river outfitters and second, our misinterpretation of the Grand Canyon quota case (*Wilderness Public Rights Fund v. Kleppe*).

In disavowing plans to "undermine the viability of commercial operations", AWA did try to calm the nerves of commercial outfitters. We felt that when you share a cage with a 500 pound gorilla, you might be wise to smile and mutter a few soothing words.

River access is THE MOST critical current concern for whitewater boaters. To improve our access opportunities, private boaters need to recognize the legitimate concerns (and even the paranoid fears) of landowners, Federal and State agencies, and outfitters. Recent writings by representatives of commercial outfitters indicate that some in that community are extremely jittery about "freedom of choice" and other open access schemes. In this climate, we may make more progress toward solving our access problems by adopt-

ing a non-confrontational approach than by going in with our pea shooters blazing.

We have little to lose in adopting a more accommodating approach. So far, we have not gained much ground when our tactics are perceived by others as confrontational.

AWA's access committee is a lot less happy with the decision in the Kleppe case than Greg seems to be.

The court in that case ratified the Park Service's split allocation system on the Grand Canyon, rejecting private boater arguments on almost every point.

Fundamentally, the judge trashed private boaters on the central issue in the case, the use of split allocations. Private boaters argued that split allocation systems (dividing use between guided and unguided trips) violated Federal laws designed to prevent excessive commercialization of national parks and provide for public enjoyment and use. This was a sound and reasonable argument. Yet despite very supportive language in the Park Service Organic Act and the Concessions Policy Act, the court refused to question the concept of split allocations.

This decision has left non-commercial boaters saddled with a regulatory system on Federally managed rivers which **will** never be fair to non-commercial boaters unless the managing agency is willing (and has the political power) to make frequent quota adjustments. Given the natural inertia of bureaucracies, and given the political power - and money - of concessionaires, this **will** always be an uphill battle.

Greg notes that the Park Service dodged a bullet by changing the allocation numbers while the Kleppe case was pending, thereby making the old 8% private allocation issue moot. This was not a victory for private boaters. The court simply ducked the issue of quota fairness, saying that the quota numbers attacked by private boaters were no longer relevant. It was back to square one for private boaters on the

issue of the fairness of the quota numbers.

Greg is encouraged by a statement by the judge that user day allocations between private and commercial boaters should not be "arbitrary". However, this auspicious remark was completely undercut by the judge's warnings about the "presumption" favoring Federal river managers' decisions. He suggested that courts should not second guess a river manager's decision if it has any shred of rationality. Under this noxious theory, private boaters would have to prove a park service rule to be totally outlandish and grossly irrational before a court would invalidate it!

Adding insult to injury, judge in Kleppe gratuitously mentioned that, in the interests of safety, Federal river managers could even impose more burdensome regulations on private boaters than on outfitters if they so desired!

The bottom line, Greg, is that we don't hold any grudges against commercial outfitters, but that Kleppe decision was a real train wreck.

Editor's note: Pope Barrow is a well known river preservationist and a recipient of the *Perception River* Coservatwn Award. He is also a member of the AWA Board of Directors and a principal author of the AWA Access Policy.

A SIMPLE SOLUTION?

Dear Editor:
A Modest Proposal Concerning User Fees on the Yough

In truth, I have no basic objection to user fees on rivers. While there is no doubt that preservation of wild and natural areas (such as river corridors) is a legitimate public purpose (since even if they were **not** used for recreational purposes, the general public would

still benefit), it is not unreasonable to expect users to bear a portion of the cost through user fees. This has long been an accepted principal in game and fish management at both the national and state level.

However, in the case of the Yough, the management agency has created an administrative overhead (which has little or nothing to do with hard boater use of the river), but which is designed primarily to generate revenue for the management agency through encouraging overuse of the resource by commercial and private rafters. It is patently obvious that the quality of the recreation experience is being drastically degraded by this overuse.

On one of my infrequent trips to the Yough last summer I realized that as I paddled down the river there was a continuous stream of rafts; each group of fifteen to twenty rafts

being followed immediately by another identical group. I was strongly reminded by the similarity to the "River Raft" rides that operate in amusement parks. Frankly, this similarity is disgusting. (I have no objection to amusement park rides. These are man-made facilities operated by private for-profit corporations and generally are not degrading important natural resources. Indeed, this is the most appropriate means of providing this type of recreational experience.) At the same time hard boaters are being harassed and driven from the river by idiotic and unnecessary regulations and quotas from the Pennsylvania Parks Department.

I am told that Ohiopyle State Park is one of only two in the Pennsylvania Park system that makes a profit. I will submit that the primary purpose of a public resource management agency is to provide multi-use

management consistent with long term protection of the quality of the resource, not to make a profit. There are plenty of private companies that could degrade the resource while maximizing profits. Thus, the Pennsylvania Parks Department has created a never ending spiral of costs and revenues encouraging overuse of the natural resource.

It would be very simple to break this cycle while at the same time increasing the quality of the outdoor recreation experience of the users. The largest variable cost items in an operation such as this are personnel costs- salaries, health insurance, social security, pensions, vacations, etc. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out the solution: get rid of the rangers at the put-in, the reservation clerks, and the bus drivers at the take-out. This will also eliminate associated costs such as vehicles, building main-

tenance, video equipment, etc.

The immediate question is "How do we prevent overuse then?" Again the answer is simple: eliminate the bus shuttle at the take-out and lock the gate at the top parking area. Boaters, including rafters, who did not want to carry their boats up the trail, could use a cart to transport them. The carts could be rented from a concessionaire. (Of course, many individuals already own carts of this sort.)

This would effectively eliminate a significant percentage of the operating costs and would ration the use of the river at the same time. The rafting companies would still make money by providing a quality experience for which they could, of course, charge more per person. This approach works pretty well on the Chatoga River, where the number of rafting customers per day is strictly restricted.

With a reasonable management system such as this I would have no objections to paying a user fee to maintain parking lots, roads, etc. This approach would not require having a ranger stand full time at the put-in to collect money. A self serve reservation system could be used similar to many U.S. Forest Service Campgrounds. If necessary, random inspections at the take-out and stiff fines could be used to deter cheaters. Generally, management studies indicate that the revenue lost to cheaters is less than the incremental costs of collecting the revenues.

We as hard boaters must come to the realization that the rafting companies are not our allies. They are not interested in maintaining environmental quality or providing a quality outdoor recreation experience to their customers. Their sole goal is to maximize the number of customers they can put on the river every day in order to increase their profits. We must start to lobby to restrict their overuse and misuse of river resources before they drive hard boaters off other rivers, just like they are doing on the Yough. For example, the New



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LETTERS

River Gorge is rapidly becoming almost as crowded as the Yough.

In many cases hard boaters are partially to blame. Often, because we are too lazy to carry our boats a little ways or to paddle a little flat water, we have encouraged the building of new intermediate access points. *All* this does is encourage overuse by rafting companies, who now can get their trips on and off the river faster so they can run more trips with more customers in a day.

I feel little or no affinity with either the rafting companies or their customers. They are not there for the same reasons that I am - enjoying a day's exercise in a natural area in an unobtrusive a manner as possible. The former are there to make a profit: as for their customers, I can only assume their objectives are to get *drunk* and

make noise all night. Why don't they do that at home and save the drive? The answer is because the police would not put up with their rowdyism at home.

If we (the hard boaters) think that the rafting companies and their customers are going to help us protect natural resources from mismanagement, then we are not only crazy, but stupid as well. It seems to me that we are saving rivers from the Corps of Engineers only to let the management agencies and the rafting companies destroy the values we sought to save.

In the past I have been labelled an "elitist" or "extremist". I accept these labels readily. I will partially resist the temptation to paraphrase Barry Goldwater's comment about extremism. In this case I don't believe it is a vice. We

need to recognize that whitewater boating is not a sport for the masses. If boaters don't want to spend some energy to carry their boats or paddle a little flat water to protect the quality of the experience, then they should take up golf so they can have a motorized cart in which to ride around. If I have offended anyone by this time, too bad. Hopefully, I will make a few people think and act.

As always,
Dave Garrity
Silver Springs, Maryland

Editor's note: Dave Garrity has been paddling whitewater for over twenty years. He started out paddling a 17 foot Grumman, and currently paddles C-1, C-2 and K-1. He has also worked as a commercial raft guide. (Though, after this, I'm not sure he'll be asked to do that anymore!)

sections on the easier, but worthwhile, *runs* that lie within the watershed.

We would like to publish more articles pertaining to class 2 and 3 water, but we rarely receive any appropriate submissions. Most of our contributors are class 4 and 5 boaters; it seems unlikely that they will suddenly start to write about class 2 streams.

I'm hoping that those of you who paddle the easier stuff will take this hint, sit down in front of your keyboards, and fire away. Don't forget to include some good photos. We really aren't a bunch of hair boating elitists, and we don't want to exclude any whitewater boaters from the AWA or the magazine.

WE HELPED TOO!

Dear Editor:

I am compelled to comment on your mention of the Birmingham Canoe Club in the Jan/Feb issue, with their effort during National River Cleanup Week. Ultimately, over a dozen organizations participated, creating a significant combined collaboration. These groups included Friends of the Locust Fork, Bama Backpaddlers Association, Boy Scouts of America, Chaba River Society, Students for a Better Earth (UAB), Friends of the Little River, Birmingham Southern Conservancy, the Sierra Club, Gunwale Grabbers Canoe Club, WAPI 1-95 radio station, Brunos's, Buffalo Rock, and many concerned, active individuals, all of whom generously donated their time, labor and goods, and deserve commendation for their contributions. Merely being a "politically proper" organization (one which is an AWA affiliate who can also boast the membership of 2 of the worst environmental U.S. Senators) should not be the sole qualification for recognition. The eight BCC members you pictured in your article are a mere portion of the 100 participants statewide. It is

WHAT ABOUT US?

Dear Sir,
I have been an AWA member for about three years and have a stack of the Journal two feet high.

I am also a class 2-3 paddler and probably will never advance to more than that. Many of your readers and supporters probably fit into my league.

Once in a while something less than class 5 water should be featured in script as well as in photos.

Certainly some grand rivers that are only class 1, 2 and 3 are of interest to us from an ecologic and recreational viewpoint.

Please consider my concerns.

Sincerely,
Frank Forte, M.D.
Englewood, N.J.

Editors reply:
I agree with you 100%. Whenever I write features on large river systems... i.e. the Tygart, San Juan and Clearwater... I try to include



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encouraging to smaller, struggling groups to receive acknowledgement for their hard labor. A more comprehensive reference to the Alabama effort which we named Project AWARE (actively working along river environments) would have been appreciated by discouraged, disheartened and frustrated cleaners who learned the hard way about the pitfalls of political environmentalism.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Taylor
Birmingham, AL.

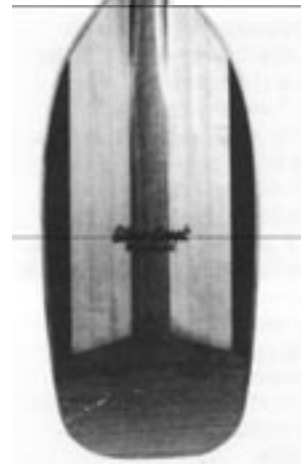
Editor's reply:
We appreciate the efforts of everyone involved in river cleanups and we try to give credit where credit is due. Believe me,

there was no secret political agenda here. The BCC group received coverage because someone in their organization took the time to send us a photo and press release. If other members of the AWARE consortium had submitted similar information, they would have received similar attention. We do not have a professional staff to travel around the country to cover these events. So, we must rely on information submitted to us by the participants.

At any rate, thanks to everyone who helped in the National River Cleanup.

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LETTERS

COURTS ON OUR SIDE!

Dear Editor:

It was with great interest that I read AWA's official policy statement on "Public Access to Rivers and Streams for Recreational Boating". I would like to bring to the attention of the AWA and boating community one other bit of legal ammunition for fighting (and winning!) river access battles. That would be State of Alaska v. Ahna, Inc., 891 F.2d 1401 (9th Cir. 1989).

This is a landmark case in the definition of navigable waterways and state ownership of riverbeds under the strict Federal requirements. Ahna is the first Federal court ruling to acknowledge that present day commercial recreational rafting and canoeing on a river provide conclusive evidence of navigability.

The court determined that the present commercial use of the Gulkana River in Alaska provided conclusive evidence of the river's susceptibility for commercial use at the time of statehood. A river's susceptibility for commercial use at the time of statehood is the critical requirement for meeting the strict Federal navigability standard. The present commercial use on the Gulkana consisted of guided fishing and sightseeing trips in small motorboats, inflatable rafts and canoes. Since the river was susceptible to use as a highway for commerce, title to the submerged lands passed to Alaska at the time of statehood, regardless of actual use of the river at that time. Such use does not have to be without difficulty, extensive or long and continuous. It was not essential that the use involve the transportation of water-borne freight by carrier whose purpose was to make money from transportation. In this case, the river's physical characteristics had also remained unchanged since statehood and hence, had no bearing on the navigability question.

The ramifications of this case are most important for the boating public interested in keeping waterways open for public use. In short, any river of stream which supports commercial floating is a navigable river under the strict Federal standards. This appellate decision is the law in those states served by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (Alaska, Washington, Oregon, California and Nevada) and serves as valuable legal precedent elsewhere. The U.S. Supreme Court has refused to consider this case, so the decision stands. This is not to say that future battles over river access will not have to be fought. The navigability question is answered on a case by case basis in courts of law.

At last we have a modern-day interpre-

tation of what constitutes commercial use and navigability of our public streams and rivers.

Ron Rogers
6827 Creekside St.
Redding, CA. 96001

TO CATCH A THIEF

Dear Editor,

There was a break-in on the night of June 14th at the River Store located in Lotus, CA on the South Fork of the American River. Please call Susan Debret at the River Store, (916) 626-3435 if you have any clues. A small reward is offered if the information leads to the arrest. Among the many missing items are:

1. new white Pirouette S with black writing and yellow trim and seat
2. three Prijon paddles, with aluminum shafts and vinyl grips
3. five orange Stems life vests
4. lot of T-shirts, sizes small and large
5. some shorts, sizes small and large
6. numerous paddle jackets
7. two Kokotat drysuits
8. a case of RayBan sunglasses

Susan Debret has been a strong supporter of the river community over the years, and has devoted many hours to negotiating the river access issues at Marshall Gold State Park, running the American River Festival, and raising money for the American River Land Trust. Please call her if you know anything!

Sincerely, Susan Scheufele
Conservation Chair,
Lorna Prieta Paddlers

Word Games

Dear Editor:

Some of us "lay" boaters have an argument going over the term "boof". Points of view vary from the activity of a nauseous boater viewing a nasty drop to the sound emitted from the base of a waterfall as a boat lands at too flat an angle. A "pro" claims it means to peel off a rock using the upstream pillow, but that's not obvious from some of the pictures and captions in American Whitewater.... It is high time to define the term and explain its origin. Actually, a short glossary with terms such as "boof" and "piton"... would be appreciated.

Thanks,
Steve Groves
Lexington, MA.

See Carla's Glossary on page 42

SAFETY

GROUP MANAGEMENT HINTS

by Charlie Walbridge

Paddling is a shared adventure, and what you do individually often affects everyone. Boating with various collections of paddlers over the years has taught me that some things people do are easy to be with, while others drive everyone crazy. Here are a few hints to make river running better for everyone.

1) **MAINTAIN GOOD SPACING.** Have you ever tried to run down the river with someone paddling right behind you? You can't get rid of them, and you know that if you make a mistake that person is going to hit you. Tailgating may not be as dangerous on the rivers as on the highways, but it's equally annoying. Give your fellow boaters plenty of room.

If you find yourself creeping up on someone, you have two choices. One is to grab an eddy. This quickly restores the right spacing, but you may get passed by the people behind you. The other is to pass the person ahead of you, but this should only be done in flat water or easy rapids with multiple passages. There's nothing more disconcerting than finding out, in the midst of a hard drop, that you have to avoid people in addition to riverine obstacles.

I still recall one particularly harrowing instance of this on the Russell Fork some time ago. A friend of mine was entering one of the harder drops when he was passed and cut off by a fellow who had been hot on his tail all day. His concentration broken, he was shoved into an unsavory chute where he flipped and swam. Part of his swim went under some large rocks. It was a very near miss which could have been avoided had the other boater been a bit more patient.

2) **KEEP THE GROUP TOGETHER.** Each person should watch the boater behind them. If no one appears, catch an eddy and wait. Usually this gives the trailing paddler enough time to catch up. If you have to wait more than a few moments, the group will notice. Each boater will stop in turn, keeping the group compact. If someone fails to appear, you can move upstream to investigate, secure in the knowledge that the group will not be split up because of your actions.



One of the most frustrating things to have happen is for one member of a party to leave without telling anyone. I still remember a day on the Gauley when one individual failed to appear at the bottom of Screaming Hell rapid. We stopped and waited. Several people remembered seeing him at the top of the drop. The next step was to search upstream; this turned up nothing. Boaters coming downstream hadn't seen him. After 45 minutes or so a friend of his in another group said that our missing paddler gone off by himself before. We later learned that he felt that we were going "too slow". Since this was the last rapid, he moved on. We would have gone a lot faster had he let us know! Even if you're just stopping to dump water from your boat or answer nature's call, advising someone can save a lot of grief.

3) DONT OVERSTUFF EDDIES.

Catching a small eddy above a big drop is one of the pleasant challenges of steep creeking. That pleasure can turn to panic if several other boats slam into the same eddy! Not only is the crowding unnerving in itself, but it can make leaving the eddy under control almost impossible. Often the last arrival, who knows the least about what lies below, is forced to lead. Or worse, someone will come down, find the eddy full, and run the drop completely blind.

When moving downstream, paddlers are advised to keep one sure eddy in sight so that they can stop if needed. As the gradient steepens, paddlers begin to run be-

tween eddies, scouting portions of a rapid from each one. Keep the capacity of these resting spots in mind. If the eddy ahead is small and already occupied, stay where you are! When the person ahead moves on, you can continue. This requires patience, but if done properly your actions will be passed upstream, slowing the entire group as you move through a difficult spot. If there's any question, you can communicate by hand signals, but don't just come crashing down.

Paddlers who plan to sit in an eddy for a while should make it easier for others to get in and out. Don't sit on the eddyline or in the heart of the eddy where you block access. Move out of these choice spots to more out-of-the-way locations. Near the shore in a side-eddy or up close to the rock which diverts the water are both good choices. Watch how people enter an eddy, and place yourself accordingly.

4) LEAD WITH SENSITIVITY: Some groups appoint an official "leader", but with many recreational parties the lead passes casually between party members. Either way, each time the version in front approaches a rapid, decisions must be made. Do you run the rapid head on? Do you gather the group in an eddy and discuss your options? Do you scout? How you'll proceed depends on the strength of the entire group, not just the lead boater. A rapid you may feel comfortable running blind may need to be scouted by weaker members of the group. So you stop and scout; to do otherwise invites trouble and sets up time-consuming rescues.

5) AVOID THE "SCOUT AND WATCH" GAME: Scouting is required on many difficult rivers. If time is short, don't play the incredibly time consuming "scout and watch" game. It's easy to fall into. Everyone gets out to look at the rapid. Then one person goes back to run while everyone else watches. Then another person runs while the rest watch, and so on. One group I was with followed this procedure to a T, and took a full hour to clear the top ledge on the Tygart Gorge! There is an alternative. Everyone scouts, decides on a course of action, then immediately goes back to their boats to run or carry. The time saved allows your group to cover more distance, or leaves more time for play.

6) KEEP WEAK PADDLERS NEAR THE FRONT: Picture this scenario: you've put a less experienced paddler near the front, where there are people upstream and downstream to help. The river steepens, and your weak paddler grabs an eddy. Stronger, more aggressive boaters continue on downstream. Before you know it,

the weak boater is bringing up the rear. This is a vulnerable position. If they have trouble, their absence is harder to notice. Help must come from downstream if they have trouble, and will be slower in coming. Keeping a new paddler towards the front requires sensitivity and patience, but it's worth doing.

7) WORK TOGETHER ON SIMPLE RESCUES: How many times have you seen a simple boat rescue turn into a free-for-all? Everyone converges on a boat or a piece of gear, pushing and pulling from all sides. Even if the victim doesn't get run over, the whole thing takes more time and energy than it should. Remember these basic rules for rescuing floating boats.

A) If the idea is to get the boat to shore, everyone needs to push on one side. If you're between the boat and the shore, you're in the way! The place for would-be rescuers is on the opposite side from the best eddy for rescue so they can ferry out and push the boat home in a single motion. NEVER push on the opposite side from everyone else!

B) Once everyone is working on the same side, first line the boat up parallel to the current. Then push the upstream end in

the direction you want to go. This creates a ferry angle, and the current helps push the boat to shore. If you're helping to maintain the ferry angle and augment the push, great. But

all too often someone comes crashing into the stem of the free-floating boat. The stern goes in, the bow goes out, blowing the ferry angle and screwing up the rescue. If you can't find a place to push, move below and stand ready to assist later if necessary.

C) Talk to each other. If a person, paddle, and boat are free-floating it makes sense to have one person to deal with each problem. If you're trying to get a boat to shore and a new

person arrives, tell them what you want them to do. Say "I've got the boat" or "go get the paddle". Even "move, you're in the way" can be helpful.

These guidelines are designed to take the hassle out of paddling. Use them and enjoy!

CHARLIE WALBRIDGE

Rahall Sponsors W.V. River Legislation in U.S. House New, Gauley and Elk Would Benefit

U.S. Rep. Nick J. Rahall, a Democratic from southern West Virginia, recently introduced legislation to protect certain nationally significant rivers within the Mountain State.

The centerpiece of the West Virginia Rivers Conservation Act of 1993 is the proposed establishment of a 14.5 mile Upper New Wild and Scenic River on the segment of the New River between the state line and Bluestone Lake in Summers County. The area that would be effected is already in federal ownership. Under Rahall's proposal, the area would continue to be administered by the State of West Virginia as a wildlife management area. At the same time the Upper New would be afforded the same protection afforded free-flowing river segments under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

"Our goal is to maintain this wilderness portion of the New River and its immediate environs like it is, for the benefit of the public as a whole," according to Rahall.

Local interest in designating this section of the river Wild and Scenic escalated last year after the Appalachian Power Company proposed erecting a 765 kv power line across it to deliver electricity to the eastern seaboard. Responding to concerns of local citizens about the line, Rahall introduced and gained enactment of legislation placing the Upper New under temporary Federal "study river" protection. Rahall's recent proposed legislation would make those protections permanent.

"Last year's bill served to put the lock in place. Now it's time to turn the key," Rahall said recently.

The power company has since filed an alternate route with the West Virginia Public Service Commission, one that would take the line across Bluestone Lake, on lands and waters owned by the U.S. Army Corps



of Engineers. However, it still prefers the route over the New. Rahall has called the proposal absurd.

Rahall's legislation would also authorize a federal study of a 55 mile segment of the Elk River, lying primarily in Webster County. This free flowing segment of river is known to many West Virginians, but there has been little official documentation of its environmental value to date.

Under the bill, the Secretary of the Interior would conduct a study to determine if the Elk is eligible and suitable for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, or as a unit of the National Park System, in the form of a national river or recreation area.

The legislation Rahall introduced would also authorize the construction of a visitors' center by the National Park Service at Gauley Bridge, where the confluence of the New and Gauley Rivers form the Kanawha. It would also require that the National Park Service construct a mid-river access point for private boaters on the Gauley River. While commercial outfitters have developed access points on lands they own within the recreation area, there are no public access points for private boaters and fishermen on this segment of the Gauley.

"Providing public access to the Gauley River is one of the most pressing issues facing the recreation area. We will never recognize all of the benefits this outstand-

ing river resource has to offer unless fishermen and private boaters are provided with a public access point in the middle segment of the river," Rahall observed.

Finally, Rahall's bill would also make boundary modifications to the New River Gorge National Area, the Gauley River National Recreation Area and the Bluestone National Scenic River.

The majority of these modifications involve placing into the park unit's boundary what are known as property remnants, which arise when the park service acquires a tract of land that is not fully within the park boundary. The Gauley NRA boundary would be modified to include Carnifax Ferry State Park, while the Bluestone boundary would be modified to include that portion of Pipestone State Park that does not already lie within the Scenic River Corridor. This legislation would not alter the State's ownership and management of these state park units.

The last major West Virginia rivers bill was five years ago, when a Rahall sponsored measure to establish the Gauley River National Recreation Area and the Bluestone National Scenic River was enacted into law.

The current proposed legislation, titled the West Virginia Rivers Conservation Act of 1993, will be referred to the House Subcommittee on National Parks, Forests and Public Lands. Rahall is a senior member of that panel. ■

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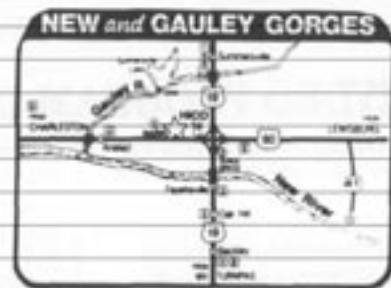
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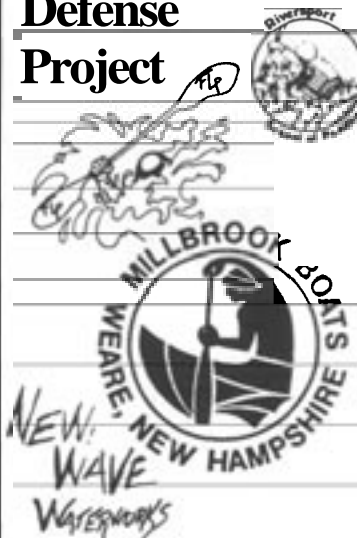
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AWA RIVER CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

AWA... Working for You!

by Rich Bowers
AWA Conservation Program Director

HYDRO PROGRAM UPDATE

Usually in the political arena or in the world of corporate negotiation, certain "procedures" are followed to reach consensus and compromise. The procedure follows a set strategy: state your position; meet other parties; learn their agendas; and attempt a reasonable settlement.

For hydropower, this formula is defined and administered by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission - FERC. The AWA, and other conservation/recreation organizations, have subscribed to this formula to restore rivers through the current slate of hydroelectric relicensings. The AWA has stated specific policies on river access, elevated flow and duration technology, economic benefits of river recreation, and other policies impacting on the overall river experience. We have met with river conservation groups, state and federal agencies, power developers, and others to discuss concerns and related improvements for river recreation.

Relicensing, under any scenario, is equated with change and new restrictions for hydroelectric generation - and this means lost income for these companies and their shareholders (for the 167 new licenses involved with the "Class of 1993", profits during the next 30 year term will approach \$10 Billion nationally). To shield this impressive profit line, some companies have begun to circle their wagons, and dig-in to protect their private holdings.

All of those interested in protecting or managing river resources, river recreation, or energy conservation are running up against the same stone wall.

Increasingly, the federal agency charged with balancing these interests, the FERC, is also running head first into this wall.

The following are examples of recent tactics, used by hydro interests to protect the "business as usual" operating routine.

• Georgia Power, who until recently refused to conduct whitewater studies in the Tallulah Gorge, has suddenly (on their own) developed testing, surveys, and safety methodology to measure recreation needs and economic benefits on this river. (A similar scheme, also with no input from recreation experts, is being conducted by Alabama Power on the Coosa River. This study has taken 10 years, is currently in its fourth revision, and has produced no boating benefits to date).

• Facing reductions in revenue due to proposed environmental/recreational mitigation, Central Maine Power (CMP) has threatened to surrender licenses for projects on Moxie Stream, the Kennebec (Fort Halifax), Dead (Flagstaff) and two projects on the Saco River. This offers FERC the interesting choice of either supporting a un-profitable dam, or addressing the question of what happens when these dams are no longer useful? AWA has requested decommissioning funds be established for all new licenses to avoid this exact situation at other sites, as these dams become increasingly obsolete or un-economical.

• CMP has also begun developing a new recreation plan for Indian Pond on the Kennebec. Unfortunately, this plan is limited to impoundment, not downstream recreation. The plan does not address the critical issue of free access for boaters. Through relicensing, river advocates have been pushing hard for comprehensive and basin-studies to quantify real-life impacts of dams on rivers.



A river ran through it! AWA Conservation Program Director Rich Bowers investigating the Nisqually River Bypass in Washington

Indian Pond is an example of a company refusing to thoroughly address even one issue (access) at one location.

• In a May, 1993 letter, the City of Tacoma (WA) stated that "the City will not allow public access to the (Nisqually River) canyon, regardless of any Commission order to the contrary." This constitutes an outright challenge to the FERC's mission (under the Federal Power Act) to balance developmental and non-developmental uses of the river, as well as original license terms and conditions requiring public access.

The AWA will be working to correct these issues, to represent boating interests throughout this process, and to protect and expand all available whitewater resources in your area. For more information on how you can help, or to get additional information on any of these issues, please call Rich Bowers at (301)236-0436.

While this issue of American Whitewater was going to press, the AWA, along with local clubs and organizations, participated in the following studies:

- May 24 Additional Studies filed, Dead River, ME
- May 26-27 Whitewater Study, Tallulah Gorge, GA.
- June 9 Rescheduled Whitewater Study, Niangua River, MD
- June 12 Whitewater Study, Moshier Bypass, Raquette River, NY
- June 26 Whitewater Study, Little Quinnesec Falls, WI
- June 26 Whitewater Study, Colton Bypass, Raquette River, NY
- Summer 1993 Boater Surveys on the Pemigewasset River, NH

(While the AWA did not participate, a study was conducted May 12-16 on the North Umpqua, OR)

REI-FUNDED NATIONAL RIVERS COALITION

Since the beginning of 1993, this coalition, which includes the AWA, has distributed \$10,000 in seed grants to various river groups, including: New York Rivers United, South Yuba River Citizens League (CA), Greenbrier River Water-

shed Assoc. (WV).

This year, the coalition is targeting new giving areas: access, urban, and big initiative river legislation. For additional information call Rich Bowers at (301) 236-0436.

AWA ATTENDS NORTHWEST RIVER RUNNER CONFERENCE

Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Program Director, was in Portland, Oregon to attend this meeting and to provide a national perspective on private boater interests. Al Ainsworth, of the Northwest Rafters Association developed this conference and presented the keynote address.

The purpose of the conference was a "call to arms" for private boaters to become more organized and a significant player in river issues. Private river issues which would benefit from this include: agency partnerships and communications, greater political and user recognition, and a stronger voice for private recreationists.

Conference topics covered agency and commercial relations, allocation systems, the issue of river ownership, and boater impacts on the resource. Attending were local boater/river conservation organizations, state and federal agency personnel, commercial interests, and National Organization for River Sports (NORS) representatives.

Rich participated in a panel discussion on private boater needs, addressed the problem of resource scarcity, and the need for all river interests to work together. He urged all private boaters to band together to address increasing access restrictions, and other major obstacles to the continued growth of paddling. ■

AWA REPRESENTS WHITEWATER INTERESTS AT RECENT DAM SAFETY CONFERENCE.

In April, Rich Bowers, AWA Conservation Program Director, participated in the 43rd Annual National Water Safety Congress Seminar in Little Rock, Arkansas. Attendees included approximately 300 local, state, and federal agencies (including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the Army Corps of Engineers), U.S. Coast Guard representatives, and numerous hydroelectric developers.

Historically, the Congress has only addressed traditional - upstream recreation such as fishing, swimming and boating opportunities. Rich presented the message that downstream recreation has become a fact of life. Specifically, Rich spoke to new concerns associated with high risk sports such as: changes in participant skill levels, evolution of safety training methods, and safety considerations (for whitewater, the traditional concerns over alcohol abuse and missing PFD's have been largely replaced by advanced medical training and wilderness evacuation techniques - a new degree of commitment for recreationists).

Rich presented to the Water Safety Congress a case history on liability and safety issues regarding recreation at hydroelectric projects. As this study shows, there is no (AWA) known record of a boater bringing suit against a hydro operator for either downstream recreational flow releases, or from site specific accidents. This study describes the growth of whitewater paddling, details the existing 44 state recreational statutes which offer protection from liability (as long as free access is guaranteed), examines the assumption of risk doctrine and proof of negligence. This study briefly touches on the access fee issue, evaluated flow liability, and warnings.

Copies of this case study can be obtained from Rich Bowers at (301) 236-0436. Next year's Water Safety Congress will take a even closer look at whitewater recreation, with major input from the AWA. ■

A Paddler's Guide to Whitewater Preservation A Grassroots Primer

by Tom Christopher, Secretary/Director

New England Flow

When I meet other paddlers the conversation often turns to river conservation and the protection of whitewater resources. Most boaters are passionate about their favorite rivers and are willing to mount some effort to insure that they will be preserved. This may not be altogether altruistic; often it stems from the selfish need for a regular adrenalin fix. But those boaters who develop a true commitment to river conservation usually discover that their education and involvement increases exponentially with time. River conservation is a time consuming process that is, at best, a bitch mistress. Not surprisingly, most boaters would rather spend their time surfing a wave or running a class four drop. But, fortunately, many boaters recognize that they should make some contribution to the cause of whitewater conservation.

Frequently boaters tell me that they want to help, but that they don't know where to start. "What can I do?... What can I contribute?" they ask.

Most established river conservation organizations already have full time professional staff members, or they are manned by a small cadre of committed volunteers who focus their energies on specific projects. This does not mean that they care more about the rivers than the average boater; perhaps they just have more expertise or more time to devote to the cause.

But the efforts of these individuals is not enough. There is still a crying need for grass-roots river activism all over the country. Local paddling clubs and individual boaters can be very effective in dealing with access issues and hydropower relicensing. Here are some tactical suggestions, born of my experiences, that should prove useful.

Follow the Legal Notices

Reading the legal notices is probably the most important step that any paddler can take in protecting their local river resources. Every community in the United States that is served by a newspaper has, near the back of their paper, a section entitled "Legal Notices". These contain a wealth of information, including foreclosures, estate settlements, construction projects out for public bid, and, most importantly, public notification of projects that might endanger the environment. These announcements might, for instance, include the construction of roads or bridges that would alter a river, the draining of the wetlands that constitute a river's headwaters, F.E.R.C. applications for hydropower projects, and the construction of residential or commercial projects that would inevitably become sources of pollution to a river system.

Public Hearings

By reading the legal notices you may discover that a public hearing has been slated by the proponent of a specific project. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the impact that project will have upon the community and the environment. If you are concerned about the project, attend these meetings and be

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prepared to ask a lot of questions.

At most of these hearings the projects **will** be presented by engineers armed with slick, fancy presentations featuring all manner of visual aids: graphics, charts and models. Evaluate these critically and ask intelligent questions about matters that are not clear to you. The promoters may try to gloss over subjects that should be of concern to you. The project's proponents may be well prepared and have appropriate answers to your questions; but if they are sketchy or vague, don't let them off the hook. Be prepared to have a lengthy discussion if necessary. If they try to divert your attention or change the subject, be suspicious; the project may be questionable.

If the proponents of a project say that they need time to prepare a response to your questions, ask for an extension to the public hearing process. Do not be bullied into accepting a "done deal". It is reasonable and customary to ask for additional materials at a public hearing. Local governing boards must honor these requests, especially if the questions raised are clearly applicable to the project under consideration. If they do not grant your request for an extension to the hearing process, you can usually invoke an appeal within ten to twenty-one days, depending on the nature of the governing board.

Never, never, never raise your voice, lose your temper, or become emotional or threatening at a public hearing! Boards do not respond favorably to this kind of behavior, and it may cause them to rule in favor of your opposition. This is especially true if you appear to be unreasonable. It is best to present your case in a calm monotone. Be clear, accurate, authoritative and non-threatening.

The Paper Trail

As you make your way through the public hearing process, make certain that you document in writing all communication with the project's proponents, the governing boards and political figures. Establish a meaningful copy list that includes all of those who might help you to meet your objectives. This copy list can be a very effective tool. Sometimes the information included in a correspondence **will** have a more significant and desirable effect on those on the copy list than it has on the individual or agency to whom the original is sent.

I know of a major project that would have endangered water and wildlife resources in New England. Although that project was initially supported by local politicians, it was stopped stone cold dead in its tracks by a single letter written to a state regulatory agency. Actually, it wasn't the original letter that went to the agency that did the trick; it was the copies of the letter that went to the planning, health and conservation officials in all the adjoining communities. These communities would have been adversely effected by the project. In less than six months the project's proponents were driven out of town by the very politicians that had initially supported the development, all because of the pressure that was being applied to them by their political counterparts in the neighboring communities.

Associations

Establish contact with other groups and individuals that share an interest in your river.

Local watershed associations can provide important information about a specific river and its resources. They usually have maps, USGS data, and other data that may come in handy. They can be an invaluable source of ammunition that you can use during your presentations at public meetings. But make sure you get your facts straight and document your sources. Inaccurate information

can do more damage than no information at all, especially if it destroys your credibility. Intelligence gleaned from local watershed associations is usually accurate and **will** be respected by local authorities when you cite it.

Regional conservation authorities are also important contacts. These may include local conservation commissions, planning boards, district water commissions, state land use boards and other state authorities that have jurisdiction over river resources.

Get to know these people and learn how their authority functions. Delineate what role they **will** ultimately play in determining the fate of your favorite river. Start by asking questions. Most of these people will be more than happy to assist you, as long as you are polite and professional. It is their job to remain impartial and to serve the public interest. As a whitewater grassroots activist it is your responsibility to gather as much information as possible and to represent the boating community with dignity and intelligence. By maintaining good relations with public officials you **will** generate additional sources of information and support. If you have a good rapport with these individuals, you can accomplish a lot while **working** behind the scenes.

Colleges and universities can often provide technical expertise, particularly those that are located within the watershed that is of concern to you. Graduate students may be looking for projects to help them secure advanced degrees. For instance, biology graduate students might be interested in water testing or ecologic monitoring, engineering students might be interested in doing hydrologic evaluations, while business and economic students might generate information regarding the financial implications of a proposed development.

Since many academic types are pro environment, they may be willing to donate their professional time and expertise pro-bono. In fact, a surprising number of boaters are scientists, scholars or lawyers. If you cultivate these acquaintances, they may be of great assistance in your efforts to protect a river.

Politics

It is important to consider the role that local, regional and state politicians **will** play in determining what happens to your river. I haven't met too many politicians that wouldn't sleep with Satan's ugly twin sisters, if it meant that they would pick up two votes come election time.

But there really are a few politicians who genuinely care about the environment in general and river conservation in particular. It is important to identify these "guys in white hats" early on and to let them know who you are and that you **will** support them, if and when they need your help.

All politicians, good or bad, are driven by public opinion. So, it is important to keep your political advocates well-informed about local river issues. By arming them with up to date information you can help them fight the developers and dam builders that would like to steal our whitewater and **ruin** our rivers.

Of course most of these commercial interests **will** have much more money and time than you to devote to their project. Your political contacts and clout can help you level this playing field; they may, in fact, be your last line of defense. No politician **will** support a **project** if it is going to cost him or her an election. It is important to monitor your political contacts at all times and to be prepared to provide gentle pressure when necessary.

Like all of us, politicians want to look good and to be heroes. If they actually do some good along the way, so much the better. You can help make your favorite sons and daughters heroes by educating them... by providing them with accurate data and hard facts. If you make them look good in a conservation battle, you stand to win big time.

You Can Make a Difference

It doesn't take a lot of time or expertise to become a grass roots river activist. A lot can be accomplished by working together with a small group, using a little common sense, and understanding the mechanics of the process. Before long your knowledge and experience will grow; you can be an effective advocate of whitewater resources, without becoming a full-time environmental professional.

Time is a precious commodity. All of us would rather spend it on our favorite river than at some boring public hearing. But un-

less we all do what we can, our whitewater resources will diminish with each passing year, as more and more of our rivers are lost to developers, dam builders and polluters.

The good news is that most public hearings are at night and most of us don't paddle in the dark. So keep an eye on those legal notices in your paper, and, when the time comes, drag your buddies out of the local pool hall and head for meeting site. Remember, the river that you save may be your own!

INSIDE THE BELTWAY

by Ed E. Lyne

Editor's Note: Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the policies or views of the AWA.

An eight-lane interstate highway (known as the "beltway") encircles Washington, D.C.* like an poisonous snake protecting the capitol from reality outside. Inside this terrifying inferno, while the rest of the nation looks on in horror, the clashing gears of government slowly grind away.

The world inside the beltway is a cacophonous Tower of Babel—inhabited by politicians, bureaucrats, T.V. news casters, lobbyists, lawyers, government contractors, drug addicts, and special interest groups.

Undeterred by this horrific scene, and ever alert to anything and everything affecting whitewater, AWA keeps a close watch on events of interest to whitewater boaters.

The following is part of a continuing series of reports beamed out from inside the beltway.

* Stands for Darkness and Confusion.

HONEYMOON IS OVER



Tallulah Gorge... Georgia Power initiates recreational study... motives questioned.
photo by Ken Wigington

As this article goes to press, the mood among river conservation advocates inside the Beltway is one of "fading euphoria". Hopes were sky high immediately after the election of one extremely green politician (Al Gore) and the appointment of another (Bruce Babbitt) to a key spot. Soon after the inauguration, the upper echelons of several agencies became infested with card-carrying environmental advocates, including some who previously worked on river conservation issues, sending hopes even higher.

Now, most of the new personnel to be making key decisions affecting rivers are firmly installed in the Department of the Interior, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). As they struggle to learn the ropes, it is becoming evident that change will not come so quickly and surely as many starry-eyed river conservationists had hoped.

First of all, the problems are much too complex and the challenges much too daunting to be overcome by the appointment of a river conservationist here and there in the Federal government. Second, in one key agency (FERC), no river advocates were appointed by the new administration. Finally, river conservation is way, way down on Bill Clinton's priority list as the White House battles to maintain its focus on the economy, the deficit, and jobs.

The best news on appointments is probably Dan Beard. An arch enemy of subsidies benefiting big league western agribusiness water users when he worked for California Congressman George Miller, Beard is now running the Bureau of Reclamation (BuReC). Beard will be a true culture shock for the Bureau which has traditionally catered to every whim of the "water buffaloes". Among the many items on the Bureau's agenda is the Animas LaPlata project. Beard's appointment, together with policy changes initiated by his boss, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, and budget constraints throughout the Federal government, should radically reduce the chances that the lower Animas River will be sacrificed to build a \$640,000,000 boondoggle.

In another key appointment, Chuck Fox, who was running the hydropower relicensing program for American Rivers, was made special assistant to EPA Administrator Carol Browner. Fox is in a position to help with numerous water quality issues affecting river ecology as well as strengthen the hand of States and EPA in the Clean Water 401 permit which occupies a critical part of every hydroelectric project licensing process.

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Canoeists, kayakers and river conservationists also occupy other potentially powerful positions in government offices inside the beltway. David Cottingham (a canoeist) is in the Environmental Policy Office of the White House, Kevin Sweeney (former public affairs director for the Patagonia Company) is with Babbitt at Interior, and Dan Reicher (kayaker and former NRDC lawyer) is at the Department of Energy.

FERC APPOINTMENTS DENOUNCED

On the downside in the appointments game, despite a fierce and relentless campaign by river preservation advocates to have a pro-environment type appointed to FERC, no one with environmental credentials made the final cut. Four new FERC Commissioners were appointed by President Clinton and confirmed by the U.S. Senate in early May, but none of the four have any environmental expertise. Few river advocates agreed with Senate Energy Committee Chairman, Bennett Johnston when he pronounced the four appointees, a "Dream Team". All four appointees, Bill Massey, Don Santa, James Hoecker, and Vicky Bailey, are natural gas experts or utility rate wonks. None have any knowledge of rivers, recreation, fisheries, or fresh water ecology, and only one even has any background in hydropower.

American Rivers denounced the appointment of FERC commissioners without environmental concerns or knowledge. It signalled that "business as usual" would continue at the agency. In the aftermath of these appointments, American Rivers, strongly backed by AWA, recommended that the hydropower functions of FERC be transferred to an agency which has expertise in water and environmental issues. So far, however, no one in the Clinton administration or the Congress has shown any interest in reorganizing FERC.

Hydropower interests continue to fight for an exemption from the President's BTU energy tax proposal, but, fortunately, the bill was reported out of the House tax writing committees with no exemption for hydro.



Washington's Nisqually River. City of Tacoma denying access. Photo by Rich Bowers

River conservationists have their fingers crossed that the existing bill will keep the tax on hydro, but the bill still has a long way to go. The hydro industry has been largely blocked by environmentalists from influencing this legislation or other Clinton administration policies. In a speech to the National Hydropower Association in April, former Senator James McClure admonished the hydro industry to become more active in politics and to form coalitions with other groups on issues of concern.

BUDGET BATTLES

The budget battles now underway inside the beltway will also affect many river recreationists, particularly in the west. Legislation is moving in both the House and Senate to impose higher fees on almost everyone using public lands, including recreational users. Free campsites will just about disappear from the national forests and incentives will be built in for the Park Service and the Forest Service to put more personnel into fee collection jobs at parks and forests where user fees are now authorized but not being collected.

New fees will also be imposed on commercial tour providers in national parks. Commercial river outfitters are the only group exempt from these new fees. Clearly, the commercial river recreation industry knows that it pays to have a good lobbyist inside the beltway.

PATAGONIA LAUDED

In a recent effort to influence decisions inside the beltway affecting rivers, the Patagonia Company of Ventura California, makers of kayak clothing

and other outdoor wear, announced that it would be buying advertisements in Oregon and Maine newspapers, the New York Times, New Yorker magazine and other magazines to urge the removal of obsolete dams in Oregon and Maine. Patagonia's owner, Yvonne Chouinard, a kayaker and the major benefactor of American Whitewater's River Defense Project, considers the support of environmental causes to be an "earth tax", giving something back to the environment. Since 1984, Patagonia has dedicated 1 percent of its sales (between \$120 and \$150 million) to environmental causes.

RIVER PRESERVATION BILLS PENDING

Congressman Larry LaRocco's bill (H.R. 233) to include Idaho's North Fork of the Payette in the national wild and scenic rivers system is still awaiting hearings as are Senator McConnell's bill (S.250) to designate 194 miles of the Red River downstream of highway 746 and Senator Bingaman's bill (S.375) to add an additional 12-mile segment of the main stem of the Rio Grande in New Mexico.

Three new pieces of legislation have been introduced since the last issue of the Journal. Congressman McInnis introduced a bill (H.R. 1356) to include a portion of the Gunnison River in the national wild and scenic rivers system. The segment would stretch from the upstream boundary of the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument down to the confluence of the North Fork of the Gunnison.

Senator Boren introduced S.592 to provide a 3-year moratorium during which no dams or other water projects could be built on rivers which States ask to have administratively designated as Federal wild and scenic rivers under an obscure provision (section 2(a)(ii)) of the Federal wild and scenic rivers Act.

The third and biggest recent rivers bill, H.R. 1584, was introduced by the most pro-river politician now in office anywhere in the nation, Nick Rahall of West Virginia. Rahall's bill would expand the boundaries of the New River Gorge National River, expand the boundaries of the Gauley River Na-

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tional Recreation Area, expand the boundaries of the Bluestone National Scenic River, designate an upper segment of the New River in West Virginia as a wild and scenic river, mandate a study of the Elk River for wild and scenic status and force the national park service to provide exclusive private boater access to the Gauley River at Woods Ferry on river right.

Rahall's bill would solve the problem of illegal private boater access at Panther Mountain and Bucklick by moving private boaters to a legal — but less desirable — location.

The more serious problems associated with commercial raft access, however, remain unsolved. Road-building by commercial raft interests within the boundaries of the Gauley National Recreation Area is continuing unabated. Two new roads were built in 1993, one by Class VI at Canyon Doors and one by ACE at Pure Screaming Hell. Each of the more than 20 outfitters now running the Gauley seems to feel the need to protect their access opportunities

by building separate roads.

One river conservationist, an original member of the Citizens for Gauley River, remarked that "when the outfitters finish with the Gauley, there will be so many roads that the map of the National Recreation Area will look like somebody threw a plate of spaghetti at it".

SALT CAVES' DEMISE

Recent river news from far outside the beltway has generated some excitement in the river conservation community. The Oregon court of Appeals has upheld the State's denial of a Clean Water section 401 permit for the Salt Caves project on the Klamath River. This decision, together with the fact that the governor of Washington has asked the Congress to designate the affected section of the Klamath a Federal wild and scenic river suggests that the Salt Caves project is finally on its deathbed.



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MADAWASKA KANU CENTRE



In Search of... THE LEAPING BOBO FISH

A Costa Rican River Adventure

by Mark H. White



"Mark! You have to get your butt down here! I've got a house, boats, a car, shuttle drivers... the works. There are first

descents EVERYWHERE—just waiting for us. Get down here!"

The distant voice on the phone was coming from Costa Rica; a West Virginia-sized country that possibly cradles more whitewater rivers per square mile than anywhere on earth. But, sadly, when I received that call, I could not respond. At the time I was a destitute student drowning in graduate school, preparing myself for a life of responsible conformity.

But the intrigue of paddling the tropics continued to haunt me for nearly a decade. Finally, I persuaded three of my kayaking comrades to join me on a trip to Central America. Unfortunately, my Costa Rican connection had long since fallen in love, married a Tico (as Costa Ricans call themselves) and returned to the States. No longer

could I rely upon someone else to deal with all the annoying details.

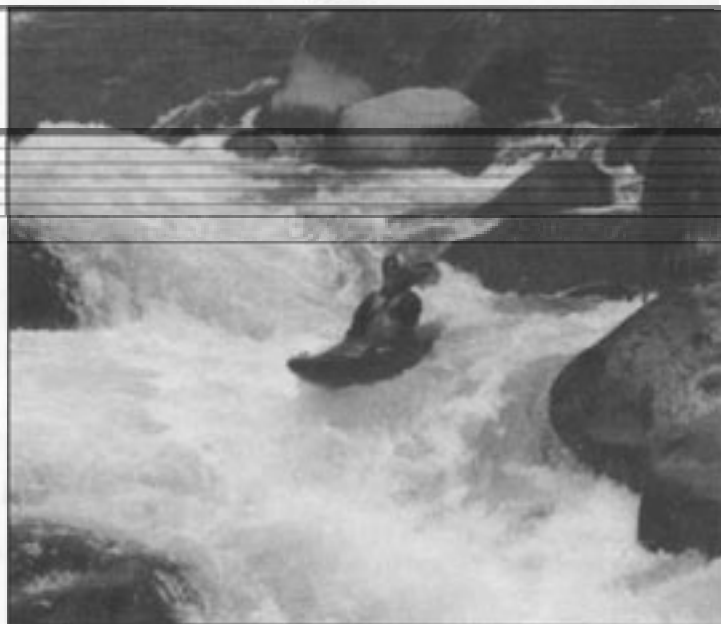
Well prior to the date of our departure, we started to research and plan our Costa Rican adventure. The idea, of course, was to maximize the time we would spend on the water. But our efforts were only marginally fruitful; in fact, we couldn't even track down a road map of Costa Rica. We found a few books in our local library that advised us to get tetanus shots and not to lick poisonous tree frogs in the jungle, but these were the most helpful snippets of information we could glean from them.

And so, with paddles and insect repellent in hand, we naively stepped off the plane and scanned the horizon for a river. For ten years I had envisioned dark, steamy jungles full of mosquitoes, centipedes, deadly snakes, fearsome crocodiles and other vile creatures waiting to feast on me. But Costa Rica turned out to be a bit more hospitable than that.

*Above: Sightseeing at the La Paz Falls in the mighty Vanette
Cruising into the town of San Isidro in the mighty Vanette*



We sauntered across the street, rented a Nissan Vanette (a smaller cousin to the U.S. mini-van) and piled in. This two wheel drive box on wheels hauled us, our perpetually wet gear and four kayaks over rugged mountain roads that would have challenged even the most macho of monster trucks. It was only when we returned the mighty Vanette that we bothered to read the disclaimer, which warned that taking the vehicle off the pavement would result in a serious penalty and/or death! As always, ignorance was bliss.



was even more heavenly. The river lies nestled in a deep gorge that is covered with lush, almost impenetrable foliage. Exotic trees dangled over the emerald pools, dangling thirsty vines more than a hundred feet into the water.

The Lower Pacuare offered another 16 miles of tropical ecstasy. The 150 foot Heucas Falls was just one of a dozen that spilled into the river from the surrounding jungle, while azure butterflies as big as blackbirds lazily fluttered amidst the orchids and other exotic blooms.

Fortunately, one of our party spoke fluent Spanish. So, on at least a thousand occasions, Jeff (a.k.a. El Hombre) had to ask a series of seemingly stupid but important questions.

"Where are we? Where does this road go? Where is the river?"

Thank God the Ticos were perpetually friendly and eager to help. The treated us like eccentric Gringos with more money than common sense. Intuitive people, those Ticos.

During our travels in Costa Rica, we eventually collected three sets of road maps. This allowed us to cross reference the ever nebulous directions. The rural roads were absolutely devoid of signage, except for those that encouraged all literate adults to drink Coca Cola and smoke cigarettes. We chose to forgo the latter, but we indulged in plenty of the former... mixed with dark rum at the end of our fine days on the rivers.

Because there are no road signs and because several villages in one area may be known by the same name, the Multiple Map Navigational System is recommended to all Central American River Seekers. But when it comes to traveling about in the crowded, chaotic capitol city of San Jose, maps will do you no good. Only a lot of luck and a Damn the Torpedoes attitude will allow one to survive the maze of confused streets and kamikaze drivers.

Mark White negotiates the Rio Chippiro

Los Rios

Practically every river we paddled merited a Two Thumbs Up/ Five Star Rating. Consider, for example, the Upper Pacuare. The guide book suggested that only the most skilled and determined paddlers should attempt this run. Numerous unemployed raft guides, who had never actually seen this segment of the river, warned us of "certain death". One kayak guide from West Virginia told tales of mega-portages and gut wrenching waterfalls.

One of our party was so disconcerted by these admonitions that he decided to forgo the run. Instead he spent the day as a "guest instructor" in a local one room schoolhouse, discussing life in the good old Estados Unidos. His pupils were quite surprised and disappointed to learn that Batman is a fictional character.

Meanwhile, we discovered a pristine, boulder filled river that featured perfect "read and run" Class IV and V rapids. The warm, green water tumbled over a few Class V+ drops, which we found to be challenging, but manageable. The Upper Pacuare was reminiscent of many of the rivers in California's Northern Sierras... but it

We spotted several local fisherman crossing a hanging footbridge that reminded us of the one in Indiana Jones. They beckoned us over to the riverbank so that they could inspect our plastic boats and graphite paddles. They seemed perplexed by our willingness to trifle with the river— one which they regard as physically and spiritually dangerous.

Near the end of the Lower Pacuare, we floated through one of the world's most spectacular canyons. In awe we reclined in our boats, trying to absorb the absolute beauty and perfect purity of the place. And then, like a cold slap in the face, we saw the cables and drilling platforms... scars from the feasibility studies for a proposed 267 meter hydroelectric dam. If this project comes to fruition the world class whitewater of the Lower Pacuare **will** be drowned, along with Indian villages, waterfalls and rare tropical wildlife habitat. Adding insult to injury is the fact that the power generated will be sold to users outside Costa Rica.

The enormous variety of wildlife in Costa Rica fascinated us. On a typical run we spotted Jesus Christ lizards, prehistoric iguanas, river otters and tropical birds of every hue and shade. I had one disappointment, however. I had hoped to see monkeys frolicking in the forest canopy, but had to settle for a single pathetic road kill near the Rio Sucio.

Speaking of Road Kill

Like many kayakers, for years I've been telling my loved ones that my sport of choice isn't really all that dangerous.

"Driving poses more of a threat. Honest!"

Well, in Costa Rica, that statement is anything but an exaggeration! The winding mountain roads are steep, narrow and garnished with bottomless potholes and overloaded produce trucks. A rapid on the Reventazon River bears the moniker "Land of a Thousand Holes", but the name more accurately describes most one mile sections of Costa Rican highway.

Once behind the wheel Costa Rican drivers developed an enchantment with death. Overcrowded busses blithely passed speeding banana trucks which were, in turn, passing four petrified American paddlers in a Vanette. All this on a blind curve!

Near head on collisions seemed to be an everyday fact of life and were casually shrugged off. The roadsides were festooned with tiny shrines and crosses that eulogized Ticos who perished while in the line of driving.

The Deluge of the Boba Fish

Near the end of our tropical whitewater adventure we camped at the headwaters of the Sarapaqui River. That night a constant barrage of raindrops pummeled our tents. It was still raining in the morning when we loaded up on rice and beans. It continued to rain as we made our way to the put-in.

Once there, we took shelter from the torrent under the hatchback of the trusty Vanette. We scanned the sky; there seemed to be no end to the deluge. All around us the saturated jungle was pumping carrot colored tributaries into the Sarapaqui. In the twenty minutes it took to unload our gear the already swollen river rose another two meters.

Needless to say, there was some

concern about the effect this extra flow might have on the 135 feet/mile river. But, after all, were not we men of the West? Had we not ridden the Big Waters before?

And so, buoyed by the Force of the Leaping Bobo Fish (a supernatural charm we had acquired earlier in the trip), we shunned the prudent option and hit the water.

Sliding our boats into this tremendous current was like jumping onto a moving freight train. Thundering holes and exploding haystacks whirled by as we rode this two hour, fifteen mile class III and IV rolliclung roller coaster.

We located the take-out entirely by chance; but once again, the Bobo Fish led us to good and wondrous things. Jeff spied a cluster of thatched roofs, so we eddied out to access our location. The simple huts were actually part of a respectable hotel. And, there was a bus stop located conveniently just across the street.

We hauled our kayaks ont the hotel grounds, shed our paddling gear in front of the bewildered guests, and retired to the veranda for chilled cervezas and a seven course meal. During our feeding frenzy we watched the local residents- iguanas, toucans, golden tails and iridescent hummingbirds- gong about their tropical business. Then, as Jeff shuttled by bus, the rest of us lounged away the afternoon, sipping sweet black coffee in the shade. Such is a paddler's life in Costa Rica.

Just Do It

Costa Rica is a paddler's paradise for boaters of all abilities and levels of experience. Accommodations and food are good and very inexpensive by gringo standards. Even nearly impoverished river burns from the States rise into a lofty socioeconomic class once within the borders of Costa Rica.

The best time for whitewater paddling in mid-October through late November. Flows are dependable during this time and there is relatively little rain. General vacationing, bird watching, volcano viewing, beach combing, surfing and, dare I say it, flatwater canoeing can be successfully accomplished year round.

Before leaving for Costa Rica call the definitive whitewater outfitter, Rio



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Left page top to bottom: Mark White playing in the Chachalaca hole - Rio General: Surfing the Chachalaca Hole on the Rio General: Mark White running 'Lava Central' Photo by Jeff Macfarlane; Lynn Meyers tackles Costa Rica's famed Upper Pacuare Above: Paddling a Ceiba tree dugout canoe on the Rio General - they track well but catch eddies poorly

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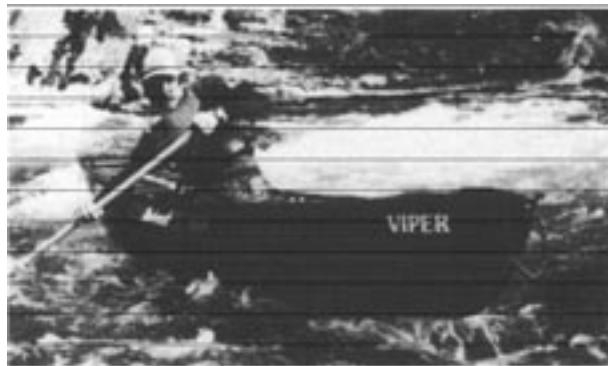
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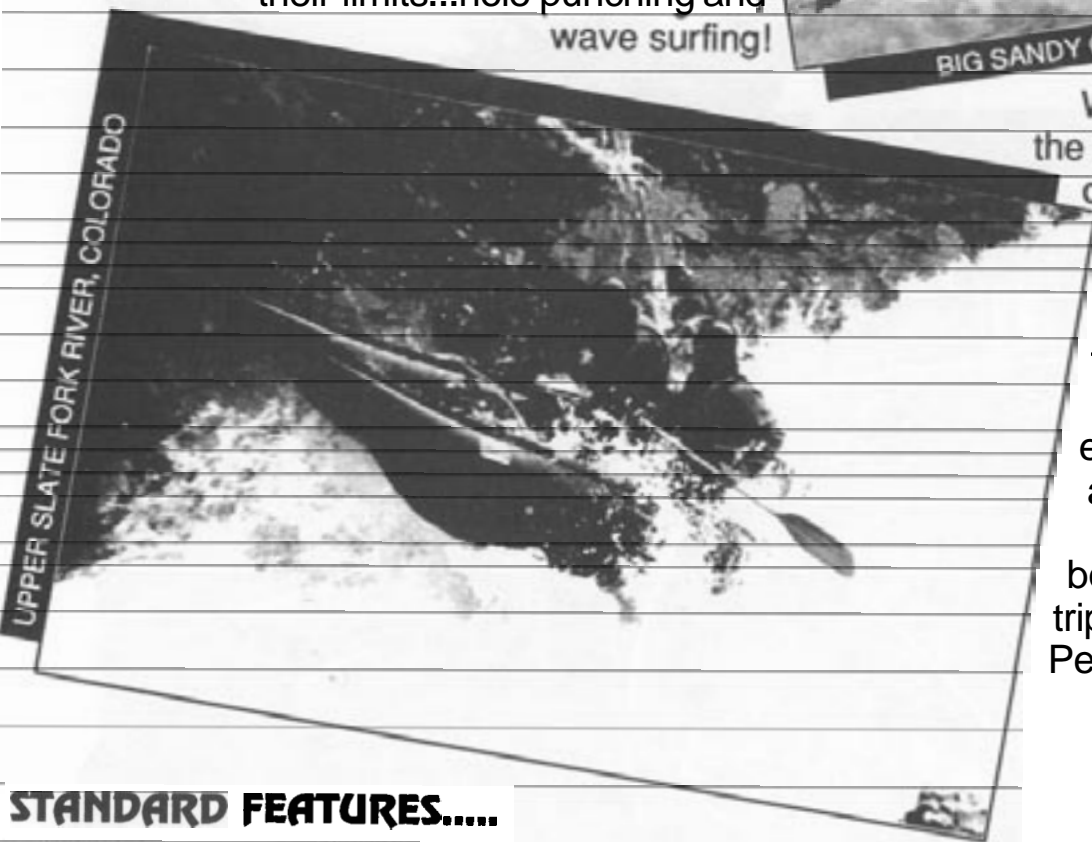
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ASK FOR TONY

SLAYING THE DRAGON

WATER FALL LOGIC

by John Lane





It would only take five seconds, but I'd be thinking about it all summer.

Late June. Cool mountain evening with the light filtering through Whiteoak Falls, the last cascade before Whiteoak Creek drops into the upper Nantahala River in western North Carolina. The creek was only two kayaks wide, yet it featured the kind of waterfall that tourists stop to photograph.

The falls dropped forty feet, almost vertically, in two broken, snarly tiers. Most of the water went left, piled against the dark cliff wall in a startling slide, then continued the final twenty feet to the shallow bottom pool. The right side was rocky, scrappy and more difficult, with little flow for paddling.

"A cliff lubed with water," a friend had called it. Until recently the paddlers in the area had looked, but never attempted it. There were demons. Death. Paralysis. Enough to keep most everyone's boats on their cars.

But waterfalls have always pulled at powerful depths in the human psyche. Early American landscape painters never tired of painting Niagara Falls, and the Japanese always had those thin ribbons of water hanging from cliffs in Sumi paintings. Lao-Tse talks of waterfalls as manifestations of the Tao, and the poet William Carlos Williams compares the falls on the Passaic River to a man's passion.

For years Whiteoak Falls seemed the powerful embodiment of the mental, physical and spiritual limits of paddling in our small corner of North Carolina. The edge of our paddling world.

Then, in the winter of '89, a local expert ran it successfully. Suddenly, like the breaking of the four minute mile, others started seriously asking themselves if they could do it too. Finally, one evening in late June, two friends, John and Jeff, headed up to Whiteoak Falls give it their best.

There were four of us who went along to watch. We clambered over the wet rocks as John and Jeff paddled slowly down the creek and pulled their boats onto the shore in the calm pool, overhung with rhododendron, just above the falls. They paused and stood, looking down. It was like an image from a film.

Quiet. Almost slow motion.

"We could see someone die today," I remember another friend whispering.

John and Jeff were both experts, two of the best paddlers in the east. They had rolled the dice many times and, at worst, come up with only a few scrapes, cuts and bruises. They were the equivalent of Ted Williams poised just out of the path of a hundred mile an hour fast ball, O.J. Simpson crashing toward a huge lineman, or, in a metaphor I prefer, St. George facing off against the dragon.

I knew that John did not consider the run overly risky. Earlier, he had explained to me how he had made the decision to run Whiteoak. He was twenty-eight and had been raft guiding on the Chatooga River since he was twelve. Sixteen years spent on difficult rivers. There were some things that these years of paddling told him he could control. First, he knew that Whiteoak had been run before by another expert boater. Second, John knew that he could make all the particular moves. For John, these were the rational elements in his decision.

But he admitted that there were irrational elements as well... food for the demons. Who you were with, how you felt and whether you were afraid to die. These three elements, along with the two rational ones, could determine the outcome of this, or any other, difficult paddling challenge.

My other friend, Jeff, was just out of college. His experience did not go as deeply as John's, but he seemed to lead the charmed life of the young. I had watched him tackle a difficult stretch of water once. He bounced smoothly past all the holes, like a puppy. He was known for paddling old, used boats that he'd pick up for practically nothing. For Whiteoak he had chosen to borrow an old Hydra Dragonfly, a design most would consider too long for waterfall jumping.

John and Jeff worked their way down the cliff face and stood with us, charting their routes. John decided to take the more rocky right side, pointing to the exact spot on the shallow, water covered ledge where he intended to land after the initial twenty foot drop. His hand fluttered past that spot and continued to describe his route to the pool at the very bottom. It looked impossible to me.

One wrong move on the approach and he faced what he acknowledged to be the greatest risk of this kind of pad-

dling, a "high impact injury", one which could lead to a compressed vertebral disk or broken ankles.

Jeff said he would choose the left route, the side where the water piled up against the cliff.

A friend of mine had taken his boat to the top of Whiteoak Fall several days before and pushed it off, curious to see which route it would follow. It had gone left and disappeared at the bottom.

John and Jeff started back up toward their boats. Steve Liebig, another friend who was along, headed down to the bottom of the waterfall to set safety. He was silent and serious as he worked his way over the rocks in his Tevas, carrying the yellow rope.

I stayed still. Looking up at Whiteoak Falls, I thought of Jesus and Buddha.

Of the great religious traditions that maintain that we learn from the journey, the hardship, the dragons and devils that we meet along the way. The supreme paradox... in order to gain your life, you must lose it.

Above me, twenty feet closer to heaven, were two friends in kayaks getting ready to drop over a big cliff padded with about a hundred fire hydrants worth of water.

John went precisely where he said he would go. It took five seconds. We watched as the Noah Jeti he paddled came down the left side, hit hard in the first shallow pool, corrected slightly, and took the second drop. From where I stood I could tell that it had ended successfully by the look on Steve's face below. He smiled and held his throw rope high in a ritual sign. For John, this dragon was dead.

Jeff watched and waited. Finally, he shook his head.

"Not this home boy," he said.

We all turned and walked away, assuming that he would shoulder his boat and head up the path to the county road. Minutes later, as we piled into the cars, Jeff paddled out the bottom of Whiteoak Creek, the nose of his Hydra crushed by the impact at the base of the falls.

He wasn't hurt. The young buck had called upon all his magic charm, confronting his dragon alone. ■

Conquering California's Canyon Creek

*Wanted: Experienced Class V
Kayakers...Must Be Able to Interpret
Aerial Photographs...*

*by Mike Fentress
photos by Walt Garms*

First descent mania swept through California during the late seventies and early eighties. During that memorable era nearly all of the whitewater runs that "rational" boaters would consider "reasonable" were explored. Only a few virgin runs remained and it seemed that most of these posed difficult logistical problems. Nonetheless, with the assistance of his trusty Piper Comanche, my paddling buddy, Walt Garms, still manages to come up with unsullied challenges.

When he discovers one, the conversation usually starts like this.

Walt: "Found a run you might be interested in."

Me: "Oh, yeah. Where is it? In the Sierras? North or South?"

Walt: "Ummm... Can't seem to remember...."

You see, Walt and I are good friends, but he's real wary of those sneaky first descent bandits that lurk on our paddling frontier. So the details are

never revealed until I commit myself, agreeing to rendezvous at some convenient airfield, and swear to absolute secrecy.

So it was in May, two springs ago. I picked up Walt, his kayak and his breakdown motorcycle at the Davis airport. Being clever, Walt has cut his little Yamaha frame in two, so he can fit it into his plane. He reassembles it by bolting the two halves together. Walt also removes the passenger seats from his plane when he prefers the company of his kayak.

From Davis we drove up into the Sierras toward our target for the day, Canyon Creek.

Canyon Creek is a tributary of the North Yuba River, entering below Highway 49. The lower section of the North Yuba is infrequently paddled, because, not far below Highway 49, it empties into the New Bullards Bar Reservoir. This necessitates paddling several miles of flat water to reach a take-out. As a consequence, few boaters even know that Canyon Creek exists.

In the first light of morning I peered out of the comfort of my van to see Walt's sleeping bag encrusted with frost. Ice crystals, dislodged by the brisk wind from the pines towering above, sparkled in the air. They were illuminated by the only rays of the sun we were to see that day. By the time I had kicked Walt awake, the sun was obscured by the lowering clouds. And so we set out to complete our first task of the day- finding the take-out.

It wasn't long before we discovered the first hitch in our plan. The road that Walt had spotted during his aerial reconnaissance was too steep and muddy for my Toyota van. And, even though Walt assured me that he would be able to locate the take-out from the level of the river... after all, he was only going 180

miles an hour when he flew by it..., I insisted that we hike in a confirm its existence. It was 6 a.m. when we started this 1500 foot descent to the river. (Yes, we had an altitude watch.)

When we had confirmed the location of our "finish line", we hiked back up to the van, stashed Walt's motorcycle and initiated phase II... finding the put-in.

After an hour of bouncing along badly eroded logging roads, we discovered the next hitch in our plan. The road to the put-in was covered with snow. So was the next alternate route. We finally located another road that traversed high above Canyon Creek, but the steep mountain wall precluded us from seeing the river itself.

Already two precious hours had passed and we still didn't know if there was adequate water to make the run. Finally, we elected to bushwack 800 feet down to the level of the water without our boats to evaluate the flow.

To our delight, we were beckoned by 500 cfs of cold, clear water pouring over a gorgeous river bed. Enthused, we scrambled back up the mountain to the van and untied our boats.

At this point I've got to tell you that Walt and I are not exactly neophytes to exploratory boating. But, before we started back down the mountain, we both admitted to some serious foreboding. We were facing ten miles and 1850 vertical feet of Canyon Creek and three additional miles of the North Yuba. We knew from the topos that several miles at the beginning and in the middle of Canyon Creek featured a relatively low gradient. But that meant that each of the other two segments of the run would challenge us with gradients of more than 200 feet per mile.

But Walt assured me that from the cockpit of his plane, the creek looked

"friendly", that it didn't "gorge up". As Walt later explained, "Experience is a valuable thing. It teaches you to recognize a mistake the next time you make it."

We paddled a couple of miles of delightful, yet powerful, class IV before we hit the first gorge. Taking the lead, I promptly back-ended in the serpentine approach and flushed upside down under a three foot thick Ponderosa Pine that was jammed across the slight granite chasm. I managed a roll just in time, upstream of what would inevitably have been a pin across a rocky channel, one that terminated with a long, nasty undercut.

I bolted into the last chance eddy and climbed out of my kayak to collect myself. Meanwhile, Walt was having problems of his own, spinning around while trying to avoid my dubious route. He managed to take out above the tree, then he crawled out onto the log to see if I was okay.

We portaged the remainder of this chasm and, after this rude awakening, we proceeded with a heightened sense of urgency and caution. We encountered one class V and VI rapid after another. One thing about Canyon Creek soon became painfully clear: it was out to get us! The rapids were steep, very technical, and there were a lot of rocks in all the wrong places.

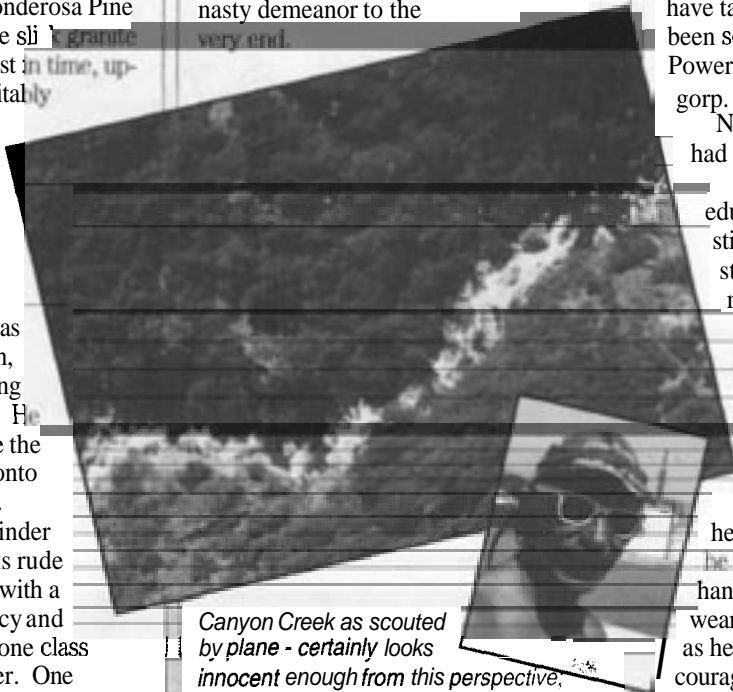
Many of the drops were blind and we had to scout constantly. It was very cold, so we moved as quickly as possible. By mid-afternoon we reached an easy section; we knew then that we were about half way. Only 900 more vertical feet to descend!

We pushed on, stopping to wolf down Powerbars and gorp only a couple of times while portaging. Most of carries were made at river level, but on three occasions we had to climb up, traverse along a gorge, then belay one another and our boats back down the river level using our throw ropes. Sometimes the effort that a portage would require and the hazards involved seemed to outweigh the risk of running a rapid, so we would just grit our teeth and paddle on. This "no gorge" run of Walt's sure seemed to have a lot of gorges to me.

We were frantically racing against the impending darkness, determined to

avoid an overnight bivouac. Finally we just dealt with each difficult rapid in the way which seemed most expeditious, either by running it or portaging it. After nine solid hours of hard-core expeditionary boating, we reached the confluence of Canyon Creek with the North Yuba. We estimated that we made about twenty portages. It was almost dark.

Canyon Creek maintained its nasty demeanor to the very end.



Canyon Creek as scouted by plane - certainly looks innocent enough from this perspective, California River - 'Pioneer Mike Fentress, Photos by Walt Garms

But we had traversed an incredibly beautiful and remote wild place. The only signs of human encroachment had been a few trails and stashes used by gold miners.

At its confluence with the North Yuba, Canyon Creek appeared to have about 700 cfs. The North Yuba more than doubled in size thanks to Canyon Creek's contribution.

We quickly paddled the remaining three miles to the side stream that marked our take-out. Now it was really dark; I mean absolutely dark. Luckily, Walt has better night vision than me, and after we crashed up the slimy creek bed for a couple of hundred yards, he spotted the road. We shouldered our boats and began the two mile, 1500 vertical foot climb out of the canyon.

We did okay for the first half mile, but then we were reduced to counting steps. Every five hundred feet or so we would drop our boats and rest. By the time we were half way up the mountains

we were both riding waves of exhaustion and experiencing mild hallucinations.

We made it to the top after 11 p.m. It had been a very long day. We had climbed down more than 3000 vertical feet. We had climbed up more than 3000 vertical feet. We had descended over 1850 feet through two segments of class V and VI whitewater. Either of these segments alone would normally have taken a day to paddle. We had been scrambling for about 18 hours on Powerbars and a couple of handfuls of gorp.

Now it was midnight. And we still had to negotiate the shuttle.

Now, Walt and I are both well educated and reputedly bright, but I still can't figure out why we had stashed Walt's clothes and the two motorcycle halves in three different places. But considering the course of the day, it came as no surprise to me that it took us an hour to find all the pieces in the sub-freezing gale. Since Walt was the only one astute enough to stash dry clothes, he had to do the shuttle. Even so, he wasn't adequately dressed; his hands were covered with wet underwear and baggies. His parting words as he pulled away were less than encouraging.

"I hope I can find the van," he muttered dubiously.

Once he was gone there was nothing for me to do but to build a roaring fire. Eventually I drifted off to sleep, but my slumber was a restless one. I was worried about Walt. I had just about given up on him, but, at 2:30 a.m., he came rolling in. When I opened the door of the van; I discovered that he was still so cold that he was shivering from head to toe.

When I finally dropped Walt off at his plane, I thanked him for what seemed to have been a week of boating. In fact it had been a single day.

But Canyon Creek wasn't finished with us yet. About three weeks later all the skin peeled off palms of our hands, a delayed reaction to our exposure.

Don't get me wrong. My purpose for writing this story is not to encourage anyone to attempt Canyon Creek. In retrospect it seems to me that the dangers and hardships greatly outweigh the benefits.

My advice is this. If you want to see Canyon Creek, take a hike. Or better yet... a plane.

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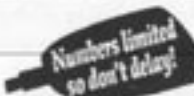
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Articles should fit our established format; that is, they should be stylistically patterned to fit into our Features, AWA Briefs, Conservation Currents, Safety Lines, Big Swims or End Notes sections. Exceptional photographs and whitewater cartoons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

If possible articles should be submitted using Wordperfect 5.0 on a 5 1/4" single sided flexible disc. Please use the standard Wordperfect default settings; do not alter the margin or spacing parameters. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

Those without access to a word processor may submit their articles neatly typed and double spaced.

Photos should be submitted in the form of color or black and white prints. Keep your originals and send us duplicates if possible; we can not guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures, include a self addressed stamped envelope with your sub-

mission. If you have slides, it is best to have prints made and to mail these instead. Because we publish in black and white, photos with a lot of contrast work best.

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

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

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled or exotic riv-

ers are given special consideration. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome.

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

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

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

Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editors to fit our format, length and style. Expect to see changes in your article.

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World Champs to Coach U.S. Paddlers

Perception, Inc. has announced that Richard Fox and Myriam Jerusalem Fox will assist in coaching U.S. whitewater slalom athletes this year. Richard Fox was a Men's Kayak Slalom World Champion four times over and Myriam Fox was a Women's Kayak Slalom World Champion.

Richard Fox began his US coaching with the Nantahala Racing Club from March 17-29, covering the junior training camp, and the Nantahala Spring Race and Ocoee Double Header. The Foxes will be in Colorado from May 28-June 7 for the Champion Whitewater Series in Vail and Durango. They will also coach juniors with the cooperation of Bal-

ance Kayak School and Four Corners Marina.

Richard will return to coaching in August for three days on the Main Payette River in Idaho, in conjunction with Tom Long of Cascade Outfitters and Idaho River Sports of Boise.

Richard will also be racing in several competitions in the U.S. "We're thrilled to continue our relationship with Richard, as he epitomizes good sportsmanship, fantastic athletic ability and professionalism", said Risa Shimoda Callaway, Marketing Director at Perception and AWA President. "He has shown a tremendous rapport with both juniors and our team members." ■



Richard Fox shows his championship form.

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Deerfield to Host U.S. Whitewater Championships

Separate Events for Open and Closed Boats

The 1993 National Whitewater Championships will be held on the Deerfield River in Charlemont, Massachusetts on September 17-19, 1993. This will be the first time a race of national scope was held on the Deerfield.

The event was awarded to the New England Division of the American Canoe Association by the U.S. Canoe and Kayak Team's National Slalom and Wildwater Committee. The races will feature both canoe and kayak racing in two divisions, slalom and wildwater. The slalom championships will take place on September 17-18, while the wildwater competition will occur on September 19.

Five classes will be held in the slalom division, men's K-1, women's K-1, men's C-1, double

C-2 and mixed C-2. Each boat will be given two runs through a series of 25 gates, with penalty points assessed for touching or missing a set of gates. Whitewater slalom was recently approved for inclusion in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

The wildwater competition will consist of a 3.5-5 kilometer run down the river with the fastest time determining the winner.

The 1993 A.C.A. Open Boat National Championships will also be held on the Deerfield on July 7-9. Paddlers can choose between racing and recreational classes in both slalom and downriver combined events.

The open boat slalom races will take place on the section of the river known as Zoar Gap

Rapid, rated class 2-3. The twenty-five gate course is being designed by John Berry and John Kazimierczyk. The downstream open boat event will begin approximately three miles upstream and will include the Zoar Gap Rapid.

The open boat event is free and open to the public. Volunteers are being recruited to help with gate-judging, timing, scoring, registration, etc. by the New England Division of the A.C.A. and Zoar Outdoors.

Information on the whitewater event (closed boats- September) is available from Karen Blom at (413) 339-4010/18566. Information on the open boat event (July) is available from Jeff Dickson at (203) 693-8793. ■

Everyone Deserves a Taste of Southern Fried Creekin'

This video is 45 minutes of extreme paddling on some of the South's most outrageous creeks and rivers. Features the Tellico, Watauga, Overflow Creek, the Whitewater, the Toxaway, and forbidden Mystery Creek. Paddlers include Dave 'Psycho' Simpson, Nolan Whitesell, Forrest Callaway, Russ Kullmar, and Kent Wigington. The video climaxes with first descents of Triple Falls and 50-foot Coon Dog Falls on Mystery Creek. Music and narration add to your enjoyment of the unbelievable action!

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WHITEWATER RODEO OLYMPIC BOUND????

by Risa Shimoda Callaway

Whitewater rodeos have traditionally been laid back, informal affairs, designed primarily to provide a weekend's worth of fun. For the past decade these rodeos have served as a meeting place for hot dog whitewater enthusiasts anxious to show off their newest tricks and to establish bragging rights. Of course, the very best boaters have often captured some great prizes and both local and national organizations have benefitted from the events. But, up until now, the whitewater rodeo scene has been less structured than the old, established whitewater racing scene.

Now, all that seems to be changing. The organizers of the rodeos are increasingly espousing professionalism. And quite a bit of money is being raised at the rodeos for a number of regional, non-profit river conservation groups, as well as for the American Whitewater Affiliation.

At the same time, the rodeos are becoming showcases for elite athletes. Whether their origins lie in the creeking, racerhead or squirt whitewater communities, the competitors at the rodeos represent whitewater

boating skill par excellence.

The National Organization of Whitewater Rodeos (NOWR) was organized in 1990 to attract attention to the rodeos spread geographically across the nation. NOWR has also helped to solicit corporate sponsorship and insurance for each event. By banding together the sponsors of the rodeos have been able to augment what each could have achieved on their own.

Now in it's third year, eleven events compromise the NOWR schedule, and over one thousand paddlers are expected to compete in NOWR sponsored rodeos this year. With coverage in the local media and increasing awareness of whitewater rodeo among volunteers and spectators, it is not surprising that new events have recently been spawned in the state of Washington, Ontario, Japan, England and Germany.

Cynics ask, "Why promote events that just crowd up the rivers?" NOWR members answer that whitewater rodeos represent a positive, fun-filled way to promote awareness of the need to protect our rivers and that the best rodeo performers truly are

great athletes who deserve the opportunity to win recognition. After all, they retort, "What does beach volleyball and synchronized swimming have on w tewater rodeo?"

This year, for the first time, a U.S. East and U.S. West Team are being established to compete in the 1993 World Whitewater Rodeo to be held October 16-17 on the Ocoee River in Tennessee. Participation in this October World Rodeo will be limited to team members representing their respective countries. Over one hundred athletes representing at least a dozen nations are expected to participate. Some of the toughest competitors will be Jan Kellner and Sandra Schmidt from Germany, Andy Middleton and Shawn Baker from the U.K. and a group of Japanese squirt boaters that Jim Snyder has nicknamed the Thrill Seekers.

The U.S. West Team Trials were held at Bob's Hole (actually Joe Bob's Hole, since Bob's Hole was washed out). The East Team Trials were held at the Ocoee Rodeo on June 5-6.

Having recently joined forces with the American Canoe Association, NOWR events will now be sanctioned by the International Canoe Federation, the governing body whose support is required to request Olympic participation.

This year whitewater playboating will be receiving increasing media coverage through venues such as MTV sports, ETV, Sports Illustrated, Self, and Men's Health. NOWR is determined to diffuse the perceived trendiness of whitewater rodeo with evidence that the sport is maturing into an energy-filled visual experience that both outdoor fanatics and couch potatoes alike could enjoy watching.

And... if all goes well... perhaps they Olympics...in '08!"

For more information on NOWR contact Risa Shimoda Callaway, p.o. box 375, Denver, North Carolina 28037. Details on the World Rodeo can be obtained from Susan Gentry, 252 Deer Creek Trail, Hoschton, Georgia 30548, or in the next issue of American Whitewater. ■

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The 4th Annual Great Falls Rapid Race is scheduled for 7:30-10:30 a.m. on August 15. This unique whitewater event pits expert boaters against the powerful currents of the Great Falls of the Potomac River. The 22 foot vertical "Spout" provides a spectacular and thrilling climax to the race. Dramatic wipeouts at the Spout have occurred during each of the preceding races.

The water tumbles a total of 55 feet in the quarter mile course. This year each competitor will be given two runs over the course and only his or her best time will be counted. About 40 competitors are expected, including members of the 1992 Olympic Team and Wildwater Team. Prizes are being donated by Patagonia, Rapidstyle and Wildwater Design.

The event is sanctioned and insured by the A.C.A. and run under guidelines established by the National Park Service. All races are registered with Maryland's Department of Natural Resources. The event can be viewed from the Virginia side of Great Falls Park. In the event of high water the race will be postponed.

For additional information contact Andy Bridge, 15191 Seneca Road, Germantown, Md. 20874, (301) 948-7000.

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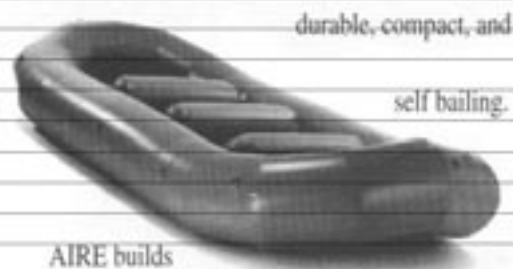
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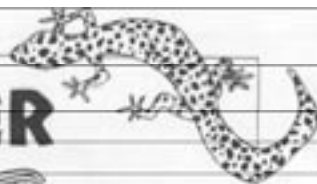
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End Notes

CARLA'S GLOSSARY

Dear Steve:

Because I did not have anything ready for this issue, our intrepid editor has decided to punish me. So I have been assigned the onerous task of preparing your glossary. I'll keep it succinct, but thorough. If you use these phrases as defined, I guarantee everyone will think that you are a world class paddler... just like me!

Good luck,
Carla Garrison

Ambush- To lurk about at the put-in of a river that you have never paddled, and on which you do not belong, with the intent of latching onto kind hearted strangers foolish enough to adopt you for the day. Requires the exaggeration of skill and experience. But when you are being ambushed, remember what the famous whitewater philosopher Neil Durst once said, "Sometimes it is better to mean than to be stupid."

Bikini factor- One of the determinants of the difficulty of a rapid. Based on the observation that scantily clad, nubile young women, sunbathing on shore, often distract dim-witted male boaters.

Boof- To launch oneself over a ledge in a horizontal, as opposed to a vertical, plane. Accomplished by accelerating on the approach and shifting one's weight backwards to bring the bow upwards. Reduces the risk of pitoning and vertical entrapment. Boofing is the opposite of goofing, which is what occurs when one fails to boof.

Duffek- A fancy, racerhead paddle stroke. Eric Jackson can, Gary Carlson can't.

Finesse- The reason that no one ever mistakes me for Cathy Hearn.

Gnarly- A banal cliché describing a river that is difficult, steep and rocky. Also used to describe the "dudes" who paddle such rivers. Unless you are thirteen years old, ride a skate board and listen to the Butthole Surfers, you should refrain from uttering this term. Its usage is no longer permitted in this publication.

Geek- Wimpy, mediocre boater who labors under the impression that it is possible to ward off evil whitewater spirits with ACA patches, first aid kits, breakdown paddles, compasses, sets of topographic maps for the entire western hemisphere, firestarters, winch and pulley systems, buck knives and God only knows what else. Actually, considering how much all this paraphernalia weighs, its a wonder these people can boat at all!

Hairboater- An adrenalin addicted crazy. Consistently paddles Class V+ water at inappropriate levels. Identifiable by his/her battered boat and face. Often a drug related phenomenon.

Hog/ Holehog- A showoff who occupies a play spot for an inordinate period of time while others wait. "Ve haf ways of dealing mit dis scum!"

Jesse- A valiant, albeit misguided attempt to paddle the impossible. Niagara Falls, for instance.

Mystery move- A squirt maneuver during which a kayak and its occupant intentionally disappear completely beneath the surface. The longer one stays under, the better the mystery move is said to be. Some say that the mystery is what the boater is doing down there. But, the real mystery is why anyone in their right mind would want to do such a thing!

Piddlesprung- A pathetic, but all too common, malady. Describes one who allows a dominant love object to dissuade him/her from boating. Based on the ridiculous misconception that sex is better than whitewater! "It's been the ruin of many poor boy/girl...."

Pig- A huge, ugly boat with a blunt snout, often plastic. The craft of choice of geeksters, but now also in favor with steep creeking hair boaters, who, as a consequence of recurrent and prolonged episodes of icewater submersion, have lost the ability to repair glass boats.

Punching rubber- To work as a raft guide. Better than starving, but not much!

Piton- A high impact test to determine which is stronger, the nose of your boat or the bones in your ankles.

Racerhead- Competitive fanatic willing to travel thousands of miles at great expense to spend three minutes trying to make his or her boat go between a bunch of sticks dangling from wires over a generic, class II-III river. A consequence of unresolved sibling rivalry? You figure it.

Radical/ rad- Extreme. "Like, Wow, Man!" Another trite, overused expression, akin to "gnarly". Its use is not tolerated in this publication.

Rock rabbit- Attractive, scantily clad non boater who hangs out on the rocks besides rapids. Potential shuttle bunny, but beware, may contribute to the bikini factor, or, worse still, leave you piddlesprung.

Shuttle bunny- A non-boater, traditionally female... though this is changing... who drives shuttles. Every boater should have two or three of these. I do.

Sneak- To circumvent the dangerous or difficult part of a rapid without popping one's skirt, even if it means dragging oneself over rocks and trees using bare hands. So much more noble than a portage, don't you agree?

Spanking- Punishment inflicted by a river in retaliation for cockiness.

Splatter- To intentionally (and temporarily) pin a fragile squirt boat vertically on the face of a large, flat rock. Don't ask!

Surface boat- A whitewater craft with enough volume to float when occupied. Sounds like a good idea, huh? A pig is the most extreme form. Not a boat of choice for those wanting to master the mystery move.

Wahoo- As in "The Big Wahoo". The New at 8'. The N. Fork of the Payette at 3000 cfs. The Chatooga at 4'. Lava Falls. "Nuff said?"

Warclub- Heavy, stout handled paddle, designed to take abuse. Favored by graceless hair boaters when paddling gnarly (Whoops!), steep creeks.

Yard sale- The carnage that ensues after a spanking leads to a swim. Specifically, the flotsam, animate and inanimate, drifting downstream.

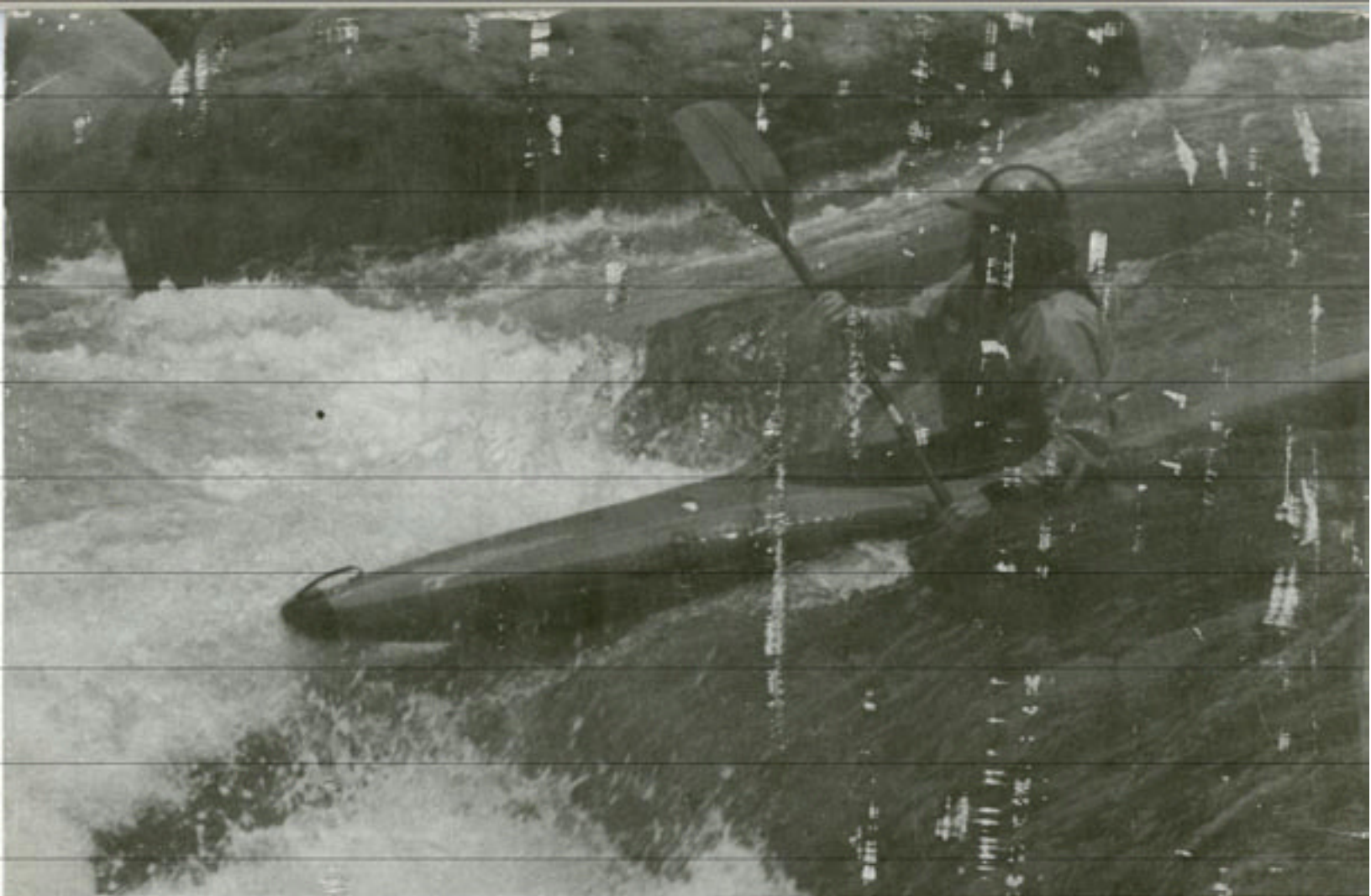


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