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November/December 2003

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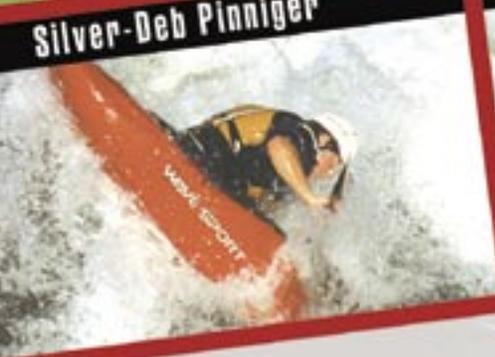
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AMERICAN WHITEWATER

A VOLUNTEER PUBLICATION PROMOTING RIVER CONSERVATION, ACCESS AND SAFETY

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Cover by TDUB
Jules Cambell looking for his landing.



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Purpose

American Whitewater

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

American Whitewater (AW) is a national organization with a membership consisting of thousands of individual whitewater boating enthusiasts and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates.

CONSERVATION: AW 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 other river users, and-- when necessary-- takes legal action to prevent river abuse.

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

EDUCATION: Through publication of the bi-monthly magazine, and by other means, American Whitewater provides information and education about whitewater rivers, boating safety, technique and equipment.

SAFETY: AW promotes paddling safely, publishes reports on whitewater accidents, maintains a

uniform national ranking system for whitewater rivers (the International Scale of Whitewater Difficulty) and publishes and disseminates the internationally recognized AW Whitewater Safety Code.

EVENTS: AW organizes sporting events, contests and festivals to raise funds for river conservation, including the Gauley River Festival in West Virginia (the largest gathering of whitewater boaters in the nation), and the Deerfield Festival in Massachusetts.

AW was incorporated under Missouri nonprofit corporation laws in 1961 and maintains its principal mailing address at 1424 Fenwick Lane, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301) 589-9453. AW is tax exempt under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



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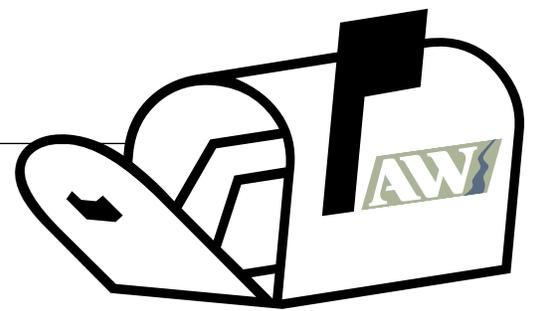
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Letters to the Editor



Dear American Whitewater,

The article "Buckle Up" by Joey Hitchins in May-June AW brought back to mind some thoughts about the possible advantages of seat belts for the oarsman on a rowed raft.

On a recent Grand Canyon Trip, our 16 foot support rafts, rowed by strong, competent amateurs, had several "incidents" wherein a raft pitched way up, the oarsman either fell or was washed overboard, and the unmanned and out-of-control raft came down rightside up and continued down the river. It is certainly true that at high angles, little raft control is possible, as all efforts go into staying aboard, and there are only the flailing oars to hang onto.

It occurred to me that an automotive type quick release seat belt would probably have allowed the oarsman to retain both his seat and control of his craft in such cases. Of course the raft could also flip, but I reason that releasing a well-designed belt should be at least as easy as releasing a kayak spray skirt. I speculate that a seatbelt also might well have prevented a nasty leg injury that occurred when, during one such violent angular ejection, the oarsman's shin banged sharply against an ammo box.

I recognize that just as there are folks who can't stand the idea of staying in a flipped kayak to roll, the raft seat belt is not for all oarsmen, but for those at home in the water and calm under fire, I think it is an option worthy of consideration. I've not seen any and certainly don't know, but I'm guessing some may already be using them.

Jim Sindelar
263 Brockway Road
Hopkinton, NH 03229

Dear American Whitewater,

You guys are screw-ups.
Two months ago you sent
AW Beta with an open cc:
list so every AW member
had a mailing list. Now you
send me a membership
request when I am already a
member. Do your
homework and do it right.

-Michael Duvall

Dear Michael,

We are working diligently to improve service, responsiveness to our members and the facility with which members can join, renew and donate time, effort or financial support to AW. As we grow and make mistakes, we do not want to make up excuses for them. I can only say that we are improving our systems, and am sorry that you've been a victim of our less-than-perfect current system. Thanks for letting us know what has happened (if we don't know we can't do anything about it!) and I hope you'll give us the opportunity to evidence improvement as time moves forward.

Risa Shimoda
Executive Director

An advertisement for Canyons, Inc. The logo features the word "Canyons" in a large, stylized, cursive font, with "INC." in a smaller, sans-serif font to its right. Below the logo, the text reads "IDAHO'S MIDDLE FORK & MAIN SALMON" and "1-888-634-2600 www.CanyonsInc.com". The entire advertisement is enclosed in a rectangular border.

An advertisement for SHREDDER inflatable cataracts. The top half features a black and white photograph of two people in a raft on a river. The bottom half contains text: "BUILT SINCE 1986", "The SHREDDER easily rolls up to a compact 18'x28'! The cross tubes & raised floor eliminate the need for a bulky frame.", "Price \$1,600.00", "Airtight Inflatables", "724-329-8668", "P.O. Box 36", "Ohiopyle, PA 15470", "Ask for Toni". At the bottom, it says "SHREDDER The first SELF-BAILING all inflatable cataract! NO HARD PARTS!" and "Made in Pennsylvania 99% domestic content!". The advertisement is enclosed in a rectangular border.

Corner Charc

by Risa Shimoda

This year American Whitewater has created, and been a partner to, success on several fronts. We have also witnessed, despite our efforts and those of our partner organizations, our capacity to restore and protect rivers threatened by 1) energy legislation that curtails our input on how our nation's rivers will be managed and 2) public river access pressured by tightened federal and state land management budgets.

It is worthless to let discouragement give the bad guys a leg up, so besides working frugally to address our financial constraints, we are working smarter to better utilize and leverage our efforts. Both our successes and disappointments are showing us how to effect change via our partnerships and coalitions thereby achieving goals toward which we would struggle on our own.

One of the most exciting stories from 2003 underscores the way in which AW is likely to focus our agenda for the foreseeable future: the signing of an agreement to guarantee water will flow in the Upper Ocoee (TN) for 54 days beginning in 2004 and continuing for the next fifteen years. AW facilitated an outcome that seemed like a pipedream just one year ago. The ingredients were as follows:



Risa Shimoda
Executive Director - American Whitewater

- AW initiated a public forum at the 2001 Ocoee Symposium, bringing the local economic interests, outfitters, and land managers together to state their priority for keeping the Upper Ocoee flowing past 2001.

- AW created a highly publicized, focused message to the Tennessee Valley Authority before, during, and after the Teva Whitewater Championships in October, 2003.

- TVA was unresponsive to specific AW requests to address river recreation plans for the river.

The Ocoee River Outfitters engaged other local businesses and represented the broader river use community to craft the recommendation that created the final plan. There would be no agreement today if it were not for the efforts of the local businesses. Having said that, the process would not have started and accelerated without AW's public relations effort, during which many members, like yourself, signed petitions and wrote letters to the TVA.

With an individual membership that represents roughly 2% of whitewater kayakers, we speak on behalf of all river enthusiasts. You can help us represent your interests and those of your fellow fans of whitewater with your continued membership, a gift when possible, and by making sure members of your paddling club, pack, posse, or tribe are members too. We can represent you best when we know that you have placed a vote of confidence in AW with your membership dues.

Safe and happy holidays to you and those you love. 

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First Annual Whitewater Symposium

Kudos to the organizers and participants in the First Annual Whitewater Symposium, held at Zoar Outdoor on the Deerfield River in (western) Massachusetts October 3-5, 2003! The Symposium was conceived by Bruce Lessels, owner of Zoar Outdoor, and Kent Ford of Performance Video (veterans of both slalom and instruction), to advance the sport of whitewater paddling. They created an opportunity for paddlers, especially active instructors, to exchange ideas about trends in equipment, instruction and technique during on-water instruction, classroom seminars, and adventure film presentations. The Symposium also created an opportunity to update instructor credentials.

Featured presenters represented a tremendous depth of experience and proven dedication to the sport. Over the course of three days, each participant had ample time to sample both a wide array of instructional approaches and other whitewater – specific subjects that are key influencers in the sport today.

Below we share highlights of exit interviews with the symposium's participants.

What was the most significant attribute of the Symposium, from your perspective?

Eugene Buchanan Publisher, Paddler Magazine

It was a great way for a lot of the big names and influential people in the whitewater industry to get together and share ideas and about where the sport is going. It was also great to participate in hands-on instructional programs and see the different techniques people are using to turn participants into enthusiasts who will be with the sport for a long time. That, combined with the classroom sessions, made it a tremendous success.

Joe Pulliam Vice President, Watermark

The coming together of strong representatives of the instruction, manufacturing, retail, publishing, and non-profit sides of the paddlesports

business....along with real, normal paddlers.

Mary DeRiemer Co-Owner, DeRiemer Adventures

The energy of gathering of so many thoughtful individuals whose passion and careers have melded into one was palpable.

Bruce Lessels Owner, Zoar Outdoor

I was really excited by the spontaneous collaborations I witnessed over the weekend. I was impressed by the degree to which people from different aspects of the sport were both curious about and respectful of other areas of the sport. The freestyle boaters had a lot to share with the shop owners and the river runners were interested in the slalom paddlers' perspectives. The energy and enthusiasm confirmed for me what a great sport we're all in and what tremendous people whitewater paddling attracts.

Anna Levesque Creator, Girls at Play video

Having a group of highly accomplished, skilled and progressive kayak instructors come together to help advance the sport. It has never been done before and it was very productive and exciting.

What was the most surprising attribute and outcome, for you?

Mary
The organization of the event was such that I was able to participate in many presentations. I wish I could have gone to all of them!

Anna
Receiving a standing ovation for Girls at Play at the premiere. I never imagined it would get such a powerful response from some of the most accomplished paddlers and instructors in the industry. It was very moving.

Does this concept have long term legs? Please elaborate.

Eugene
I believe so. Nothing is going to get accomplished in one three-day weekend, but the seeds were planted for a lot of great

ideas to get things rolling. Implementation of these ideas takes nurturing and further events to ensure their roots take hold.

Joe
It has legs, not only because it will lead to positive outcomes, but because we had a good time! And we are putting some wheels in motion to get information that will lead us to a better understanding of our market, our customer, and be better able to serve those customers.

Mary
Yes. After 2004, I think it will be well-attended as a biannual event. Perhaps two days could be geared toward 'professionals' to foster the networking and collaboration that came out of this First WW Symposium, followed by 2-3 days for the public. The range of topics would take on the focus of the group and I think the offerings would be more varied based on input from this year's public.

Anna
Absolutely! Because our sport is not static and we need the meeting of people who embrace change to keep the sport growing.

What stones were left unturned from a programmatic standpoint?

Mary
Medical: there was a doctor/father, I believe, who at one time was collecting data about injuries in the sport. This info is invaluable from a teaching viewpoint as well as for participants. I would be very interested to attend a topic presenting this research. Additionally, I think a presentation by a paddling doctor or physical therapist to present long term consequences of hucking off big waterfalls, and perhaps someone with a gymnastic background who can look at today's playboating and extrapolate the injuries one would expect to see down the line, has such great importance to paddlers. Following up with a look at the positions paddlers get themselves into and presenting prevention exercises to strengthen and condition. I think a popular clinic in a future symposium could look at the necessity for warming up, pre-activity range of motion activities versus stretching, and more info on when and how to stretch properly.

Kent

The guiding purpose of the symposium should be to guide and advance whitewater kayaking. The symposium format provides a networking opportunity to capture the collective wisdom of paddlesport manufacturers, programs (including kayak schools/ clubs/ universities), instructors, and real students.

To better define the symposium, I feel it would be good to have multiple 'tracks,' to help clarify who should attend what. For instance an Industry Track (for manufacturers, reps, and store managers), a Program Track (for kayak schools, clubs, universities, and other programs), an Instructor Track, and a Participant track for starters.

Anna

I would like to see more women presenters and more discussion on how we can get more women participating in kayaking.

Ed: Do you have one additional incredibly weighty comment to add to your reaction to or assessment of the First Annual Whitewater Symposium?

Eugene

The first step to any progress is getting together to talk about what's right and wrong about our industry. This represented the first time such an attempt has been made, and it's great to see.

Joe

Its not surprising, but certainly it's positive that so many different aspects of the sport, including groups that compete with each other, put their differences aside for a few days and focused on what we can do together to move whitewater paddling in a positive direction.

There were two notable video presentations at the Symposium, contributing to its impressive breadth. Scott Lindgren provided an insightful preface to a showing of 'Into the Tsang Po,' his historic expedition from 2002 resulting in him being honored as a member of the Adventurer's Club, joining the ranks of Sir Edmund Hillary! On a completely different note, Anna Levesque debuted her first major video 'Girls at Play' to a standing ovation. This is a landmark work that integrates easy-to-understand tips on

technique with insightful comments from today's top paddlers on being female, being a girl paddler, dealing with the challenges, and celebrating all milestones. One of my favorite comments was from Christie Dobson: "When you are on the first day of your period, don't attempt your first run of the Narrows of the Green (NC). Go shopping!" 

Looking to the future,
the Second Annual
Whitewater Symposium
will be held at the
Nantahala Outdoor
Center, October, 2004.
For more information
on this or next year's
Symposium, visit
www.symposium.com.



Volunteer Salute

by Risa Shimoda

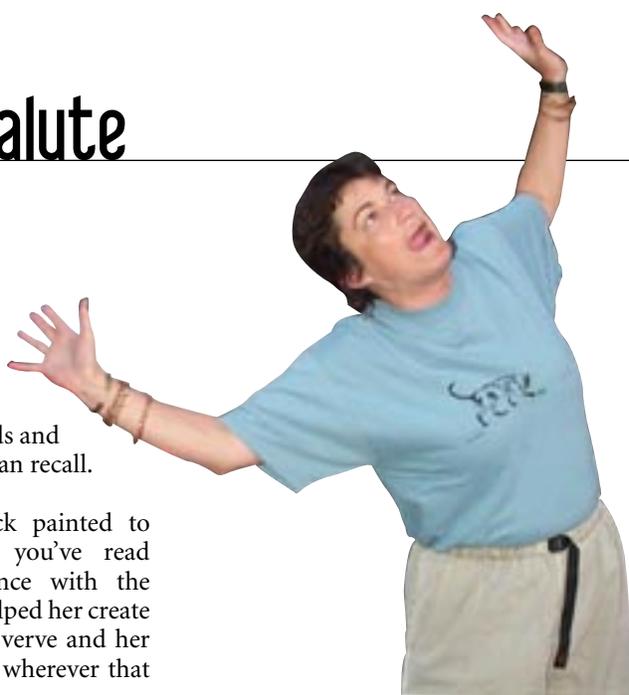
Charlene Coleman

Charlene has been driving two vehicles for longer than most of her numerous friends and hundreds of acquaintances can recall.

The first is a pickup truck painted to resemble a cheetah. Yes, you've read correctly. Making the scene with the yellow-and-black ride has helped her create a statement about both her verve and her interest in 'being' here now, wherever that is on a given day.

The other vehicle is her love for the rivers on which she's been paddling for decades. A member of the Columbia, SC paddling community, Charlene has been a consistent siren for safe and responsible recreation. She has interfaced with the mayor's office, the city's fire and rescue departments, the Regional USDA Forest Service planners, and as a representative for AW on the current relicensing of the Saluda River. (Which, if you have not visited the area, offers a stellar run through town and a fabulous year-round resource.)

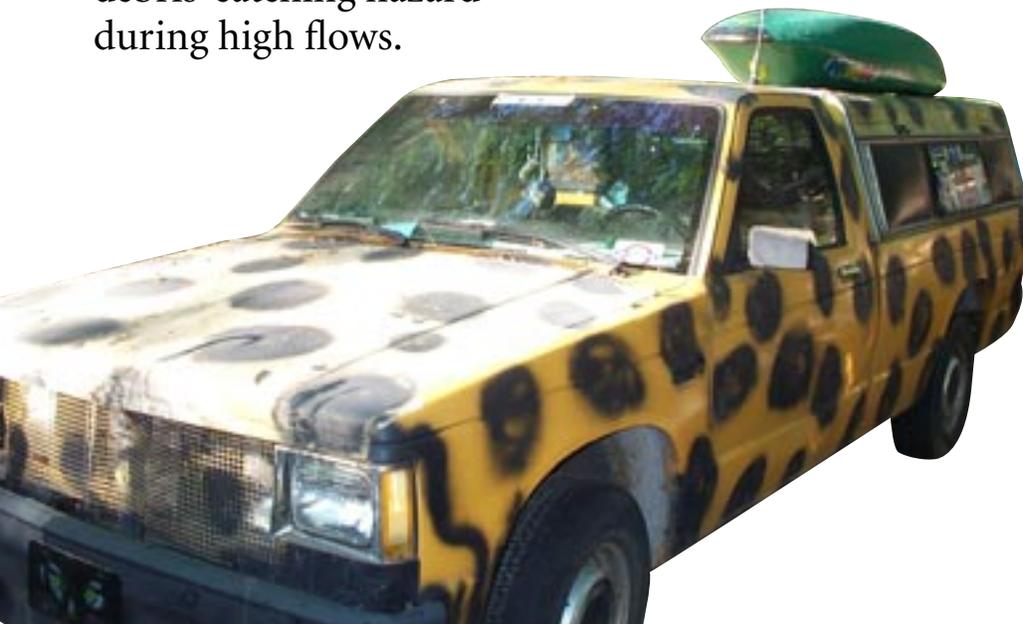
Her local efforts have helped to kill unrealistic development schemes, like proposed mid-town pedestrian bridges that would become a debris-catching hazard during high flows.



She has also improved municipal awareness of the role local paddlers can play for the entire community by initiating swift water and paddling training for fire and rescue personnel and corporate raft races which highlight current resource issues.

As an American Whitewater volunteer, Charlene initiated our public outreach to gather support for fair access to the Chattooga Headwaters, creating an issue-based website over five years ago. She facilitated an initial meeting with the Forest Service regional managers and has since been one of AW's key local representatives on this and other access and environmental issues impacting this southeastern gem. She has lent a helping hand (often with another volunteer from Columbia, Karen...) countless times at events, arriving on time and staying longer than necessary.

Then, there are the cowboy boots she wears. Always. Charlene, we hope that your outgoing nature and openness to offer your point of view never stops. 



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History: From Controversy to TV Ads

by Sue Taft

Thirty Years of Falls Running

Much has changed since the controversy of the first published image of a waterfall run by a whitewater paddler. Today we see images of waterfall runs fairly regularly—from the latest accounts of running the highest and the baddest in whitewater videos to ads on TV and in national magazines. But thirty years ago images of waterfall runs were not only unseen and unheard of, but they were also considered taboo. AW broke this long-standing taboo when it published a photo of Martin Begun running Potter's Falls (in a C-1) on the cover of the Summer 1973 issue of American Whitewater. Begun ran the fifteen-foot fall on the Crooked Fork Creek in Tennessee the previous January and wrote of his run: "Much to our surprise there was nothing to it, and now everybody is doing it. It's even a lot of fun backwards."

The result of its publication put AW at the center of controversy, a controversy that centered around two issues. The first was the preconceived notion of suspected and anticipated dangers of falls running. Until this time vertical waterfalls were largely considered too dangerous to even attempt and this clearly illustrated the opposite. The second was that AW would go so far as to include such photos in American Whitewater. After all, waterfall runs were considered reckless and deemed contrary to AW's safety standards as published in the Safety Code. It just might encourage others to do the same – which it did. In spite of all the controversy, AW included additional photos submitted by Begun in the May/June 1974 American Whitewater issue where he gave tribute to Mark Hall who was actually the first to run the falls. Begun wrote: "Potter's Falls is not a 'daredevil' stunt if one is an expert in a decked boat. The only daredevil was the guy who tried it first. The numerous safe runs since then have proven this."

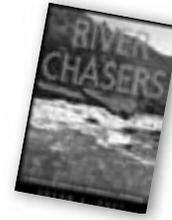
Within five years many well known waterfalls were run for the first time. Rob Lesser ran Ohiopyle Falls (18 vertical feet) on the Lower Yough in 1974 much to the chagrin of local guides who had made plans to do it themselves, with their own aborted

attempt the previous year. In 1975, Great Falls on the Potomac, with a total drop of 65 feet in 200 yards (the Spout is 22 vertical feet) was run for the first time by Tom McEwan, Dan Schnurrenberger, and Wick Walker. Its first descent was kept a secret for a number of years. In 1979, CANOE Magazine published an article written by Wick Walker about waterfalls entitled "Waterfalls: Forbidden Fruit or Calculated Risk?" The issue included as its cover photo a shot of Whit Deschner's run of Pilchuk Creek Falls (15 feet) in Washington, (Fearless) Fred Young's C-1 run of Ilgen Falls (31 feet) on the Baptism River in Minnesota, and Lesser's run of Ohiopyle Falls. With CANOE being the "Official Magazine of the American Canoe Association," an editor's note accompanied the article explaining their rationale for including a topic still viewed as controversial and/or reckless and irresponsible:

... our interest in the subject of waterfalls is one of reportage - that truly expert paddlers have and will continue to run waterfalls, pushing their skills to the limit of human endurance, until such time as 1) the water stops, or 2) they stop. Thus, the following discussion recognizes the activity only as an extreme deviation from sound boating practices. . .

Vol. 7 No. 1 (February 1979): 56-59, 68.

Now, almost twenty-five years later, waterfall runs are no longer considered "an extreme deviation from sound boating practices." While the extremes are still the domain of the truly expert such as the likes of Tao Berman with his 98.4 ft vertical record, many lesser falls are regularly run by less-than-expert paddlers



Sue Taft is the author of *The River Chasers*, the history of American whitewater paddling. If you have a topic or question you would like answered, email it to staft@theriverchasers.com and look for its answer in an upcoming issue of *American Whitewater*.



Spencer Cooke running *The Toxaway* in North Carolina. Daniel DeLavergne is filming from river right for another issue of *Lunch Video Magazine*. LVM is known for its continuous footage of big waterfalls and drops.

Photo by Chris Young

across the country. Even legal restrictions are suspended for the annual Ohiopyle Falls Race and Freestyle weekend, giving paddlers a legal opportunity to run the falls to compete for the fastest downstream run or for the best freestyle moves.

Indeed, much has changed. 

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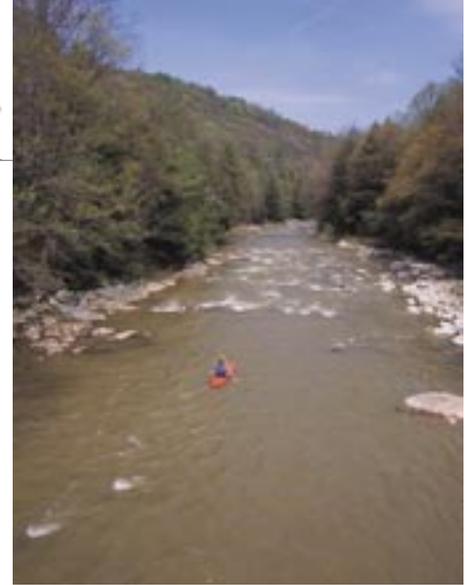
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Field Notes: 50 Classics

by Tyler Williams



West Virginia



Business schools would probably advise me to choose my book projects based on market share and profit margin, but I prefer to base my titles on a more important factor — the fun quotient. If I wanted to get rich, I wouldn't have become a kayaker, right? So it is with this juvenile judgment that I embarked on the project *Whitewater Classics-Fifty North American Rivers* picked by the continent's leading paddlers. Research for the book includes talking with North America's top boaters, and running their favorite rivers. Hellish work indeed.

My first "research tour" took me to this continent's whitewater Mecca; that well watered chunk of Appalachia where West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland converge. My friend Davey (a.k.a. "Puff" in Yough country) picked me up at the Pittsburgh airport and wasted no time getting out of the city and indoctrinating his friend to life in Appalachia.

Our first stop—Pechin's—a distinctly country store complex that Davey described as "sort of a redneck Wal-Mart." I understood the comparison, but when we were suddenly surrounded by the peeling 60s decor of the Pechin's grocery store, liquor store, feed store, and cafeteria, I felt a long way from the soulless yet familiar Wal-Mart. The people around me had accents, strong accents, and the food was cheap, real cheap. The sights, sounds, and smells were nothing like my native Southwest, and I was immediately struck with the heightened sensitivity and lack of comfort that accompany a trip to a foreign land.

By the time Davey and I ran our first classic river—the Big Sandy—I had settled into my new surroundings enough to truly appreciate the honesty of the local people that weave the fabric of the rich Appalachian culture. As we rigged our kayaks in the back of a rusty '72 Ford pickup, our shuttle driver spoke from beneath his camouflage baseball cap to Davey about hunting in the area. Turkey, deer, squirrel; 70-year old Bill hunted them all. It is doubtful he had a permit for any of it. And why should he? I thought. These people maintain a subsistence lifestyle that brings them closer to the land than any of the Sierra Club-stickered SUV-driving "environmentalists" where I come from. In an instant I understood Edward Abbey's fondness for the redneck. Although he was a

Westerner like me, this is where Abbey came from, these were his people, and he realized their breadth of knowledge and genuine intentions with the natural world.

Having run the river dozens of times before, Davey led me down the turbid rain-swollen waters of the Big Sandy. Fabled Wonder Falls was one of our first stops. Here I experienced the discovery of actually being in a place I had seen in photographs. I felt the warm sandstone on my feet and heard the roar of the falls that previously lived only in my imagination. Virtuality will never be a substitute for reality. I ran the simple, thrilling drop twice, taking Davey's boat for a run while he spared his bad back from the abuse of an 18-foot waterfall.

We arrived at Big Splat in bright sunshine. The first paddler drowning to ever occur here had just happened the week previous, and I swear I could feel the paddler's presence. We sat in the sun and looked at the rapid for a long time. Although out of instinct I scouted the line, today wasn't the day for me to run it. I just basked in the beauty of the place and reflected on how it could have been me who spent the last moments of life solidly wedged in those rocks.

We finished the day by breathing in the pleasant scenery and playful rapids of the memorable creek run. It was an auspicious start to the research project I had begun.

Paddling North America's best rivers is certainly an essential part of the book research, but equally interesting is meeting the different paddlers who have shaped the direction of the sport. One of those paddlers is John Regan.

As is often the case with charismatic figures like John, I heard his gravelly voice before I ever saw him. It was 10 in the morning, and the voice was coming from around back, where John was telling stories and enjoying the picture perfect Maryland countryside from the comfort of his Jacuzzi. I hopped in and joined the party as the group of hot tubbers laid plans for the day.

It was quickly apparent that Regan is a natural born leader. Watching him organize logistics and lead a group of independent boaters on a river trip is something akin to watching a good quarterback lead his team on a two-minute drill to win the game.

After loading the boats and arranging the shuttle, the Regan entourage re-grouped on the banks of the Cheat River and took off.

Regan's enthusiasm seemed limitless. Even though he has run the Cheat Canyon hundreds of times, his descriptions of upcoming rapids rang with the excitement of a first year raft guide. "Re-cyclotron" he bellowed through the canyon as if introducing a prize fighter—and in this corner...

His energy seems to attract extraordinary human experience. At the take out, several groups of local teenagers were engaged in weekend revelry, and apparently had been for some time. One particularly uninhibited youth walked nude among his peers, provoking them to heave his nakedness into an especially fragrant pit of mud. Undaunted, the still smiling mud man rose from the pit and proceeded to chase his clothed friends around the dirt campsite. Though our group of paddlers thought the whole scene entertaining at first, a collective realization hit us that we might not be immune to the prankster's frenzy, so we started up the hill before being implicated in a teenage boy's mud wrestling party.

The regional flavor of this Appalachian portion of my research left as much of an impression as the area's boundless whitewater. It is an essential part of going paddling there, something to be appreciated along with the steep creeks and ledge-filled riverbeds. Having experienced the warm water and smothering greenery of West Virginia, I was ready to contrast this friendly environment with an entirely different part of North America. The next leg of my journey takes me to the glacial-fed wilderness rivers of Alaska. Will this brutal work schedule never end? 

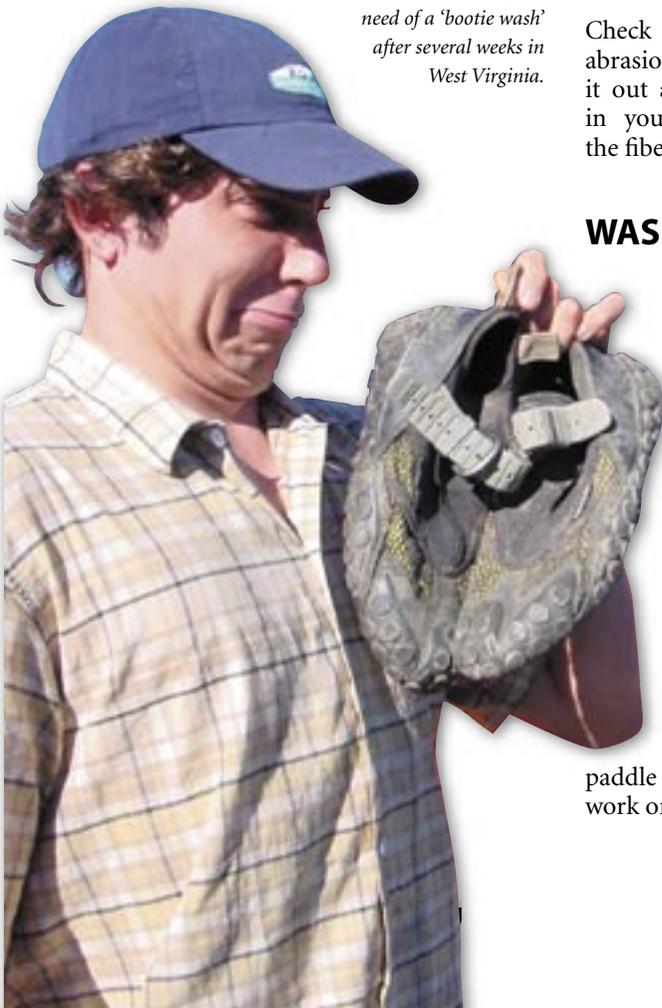
Field Notes: Off-Season Upkeep

by Clay Wright

So the weather's turned cold, the dam-release runs are about over, and the rivers are dry as a bone. Time to throw your gear in the garage and forget boating till next year? No way!

Too many paddlers forget all about the things 'they were planning to fix but didn't have time' when things were flowing. Here is a list of things to check on and to do in the offseason so you can get the most out of the first rain of the season.

Josh Bechtel is in great need of a 'bootie wash' after several weeks in West Virginia.



Skirt

Black neoprene glue is available at any dive shop and a few 'touch ups' on those thin spots will keep the cold winter water out and ensure your skirt lasts through that multi-day you're planning early next year.

Drytop Gaskets

Clean 'em with shampoo and rinse or just sponge the oils off. Adding baby powder or 303 will help keep your latex from melting during the off season and help protect them next season.

Outfitting

Chances are good your outfitting is a bit worse for wear after the season's use. This is a great time to get things in order, cause who knows what you'll be putting on next time you get in your boat?

Rope

Check your rope for tears, pulls, or abrasions. This is a good time to spread it out and clean it up as dirt embedded in your rope can abrade and weaken the fibers.

WASH YOUR PILE!

Disinfect Your Booties

Soak with a bit of bleach and rinse completely before storing. I don't need to tell you that this is important.

Replace all that gear you lost or destroyed while the off-season sales are happening.

OK – your gear is put away and ready to go at the first drop of rain. Are you done? Not yet - there is so much more you could be doing to make that first rain's paddle a big success. How about some work on the rivers themselves. . .

Gauge

Refresh that hard-to read gauge in your area to simplify those cold, rainy mornings to come. Just scour the mud and moss off with a nylon or wire brush and carefully re-trace the lines and numbers. I've found red, brush-on, enamel-based paint lasts longest. Be sure not to alter an existing gauge in any way so as not to mislead others.

Deadfalls

It's a great time to clear wood and brush from creek beds while the wood is dry and light. Often you can remove strainers by hand (then stash above the high water line) but sometimes a hand-saw will let you trim enough branches to make a passable channel without moving a thing. When in private, park, or forest service lands this sort of thing may be quite illegal so know your land-use regulations. Chainsaws make quick work of serious hazards, but often draw unwanted attention to your actions. Deadfalls have a place in the natural order of ecosystems, so anything that requires a chainsaw may be worth a second thought.

Scouting

Got a new line or creek you are interested in? Winter hiking trips are the best way to get out and see what is there. The poison ivy is all dead, the bugs are gone, and you can walk right up or down the riverbed on dry rock. Nearly all my favorite hikes become creeks after a good rain. Some of them even get kayaked.

Befriending Land-Owners

These hikes are also a good chance to talk to the local land owners and help ensure future access. Asking permission to cross someone's land is easier when you aren't in a big group dressed like gladiators. Remember to respect private property and make friends.

Renew Your American Whitewater Membership

Possibly the best thing you can do to make sure your favorite runs stay watered and river access keeps getting better. [AWW](#)

Lifestyles: Foamies

by Pat Keller

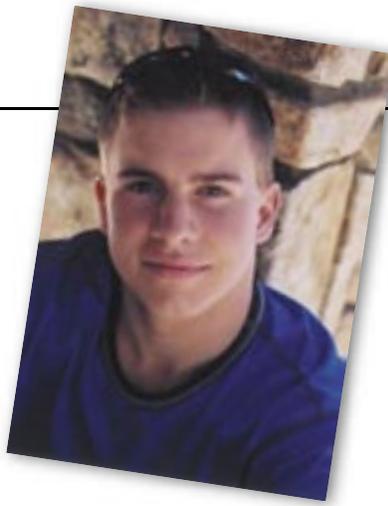


Photo by Rhea Keller

Lifestyles of the Young and Hyperactive Paddler

Teenagers are by nature somewhat hyperactive. Many of us are accused of being ADD, ADHD or just downright annoying. We can't help it if our youth inspires us to push physical, mental, and social limits. We are what we are: the next generation.

The folks at AW Journal have asked me to provide insights into the life and mind of a teenage boater. Hopefully, my rantings will provide entertainment as well as education about where the paddler youth of today is headed, or simply where we exist for the moment.

The topic I'd like to begin with is one of my favorites: foamies. When a lot of people hear the word "foamie", they think of a block of foam, shaped more or less like a boat with a foam body on the top. EURRRRHHHH! Wrong! True, the first designs were made of foam because it is easy to carve and shape. The physics of what happens to foam vs. (let's say) WOOD in a river environment is very different. For example, if Clay Wright looks at a 35-foot waterfall for a first descent, is he going to throw a block of foam off, or a big log? Duh....

I have been working with foamies for nine years. I started out with sticks and anything that would float, but one day at the Ocoee I saw this guy who had made a classy wood boat with a foam body that was perfect for foamie play. I HAD to have it. He sold it to me and I was hooked. My friend, Scott Harcke, and I figured out how to make our own. We tried all sorts of woods and techniques, and found the best formula for foamies.

The best foamies are made of cedar wood, usually from one inch to eight inches long, carved and shaped with a metal file and sandpaper. Miniature kayaks that can fit in your pocket may seem like they are more of a toy than a tool but they are both! Kids quickly get hooked and spend countless hours playing in the water, watching the lines, figuring out where the boat is most likely to go. Wait a second... that's what a

paddler does, just in a larger environment. So, why not combine the two? The foamie can't paddle, so you will really get to see what the water does to a boat. A miniature boat will follow the same rules as a big one as the water dynamics are the same. The difference is that, with foamies, you can act as a river god and move the rocks and obstacles around to set the playground you want. I think that if every kayaker played with foamies, a lot more people would know how to read whitewater and there would be less sketchy boating going on.

Playing with foamies allows you to observe the way water moving downstream is affected by obstacles or riverbed variations: creating waves, seams, eddies, etc. You are the designer and can move rocks to create whatever you imagine. You can even reproduce rapids or waterfalls you are familiar with. In most cases, you learn more by watching the miniature boat cruise downstream on its own, responding to the dynamics of the water. You can even simulate a "paddling" effect by giving the foamie a slight push as it approaches an obstacle, or just 'let it ride'. By staying in the same spot and moving rocks around to make subtle changes, you can spend hours playing, watching, learning. They say that repetitive actions help you learn better, don't they?

People used to wonder about my sanity when I played with foamies everywhere I went: during car rides, in hot tubs, eddy

lines, wherever I could use my imagination to simulate angles, drops or picture myself as the little boater. My boating improved, and pros like Shane Benedict have commented that I read water better than most boaters. Adults started joining me in foamie play on side creeks near events. I gave foamies as gifts to my friends and boating mentors. People asked me to make a foamie of their favorite boat design. Dane Jackson, EJ's son, begged me for one (and then another, and then another....) and we started getting together at events to play with our foamies. He's a kid who is bound for glory.

The most dramatic example of how foamies have helped my water reading skills is when I was scouting Koosah Falls with my friend. We measured it at 75 feet, using an 80 foot throw rope. The way the water was flowing off the edge of the drop was very similar to the type of waterfall I like to create in miniature. The water level was perfect, with water rolling off the river right side and falling straight down into the pool. There was a rock just inches underwater at the lip that made the water in the middle of the drop kick out over the right side. I knew I could enter from the right and fall under the water kicking out, and then fall all the way into the pool softly, just as I had seen so many foamies do. The only strokes I needed to take were at the top to set my angle, and be ready at the "point of no return" to do an adjustment stroke while falling if necessary. The end result was that I safely achieved the world record for waterfall ever run by a junior. 

Stay tuned: next issue of AW Journal, we'll tell YOU how to build your very own!



Ask Mom: Carrie Keller

by Tim Nickles

Carrie Keller, mother of 17-year-old Pat Keller, took some time to talk to us about raising a child who has an extremely active paddling career. Pat has been paddling since he was 7 years old and competing since age 9. Pat's most recent accomplishments include winning the Junior K-1 Men's Silver Medal at the 2003 World's Freestyle Kayak Championship in Graz, Austria and placing 1st in two major extreme events in Colorado and Oregon in the same season.

How do you balance schooling with kayaking?

It certainly isn't easy. Home schooling was our solution to allow Pat to train and compete year round. We regret that he is 'missing out' on a lot of normal teen experiences, but he is getting a different sort of education that very few young people can achieve.

Academic work is done in the mornings to allow him to paddle in the afternoon. We researched how much actual time is allotted each day for academics in schools and try to stick with that amount each day. Of course, if it rains and the rivers rise, he wants to 'go boatin'. When necessary, we make adjustments and catch up later.... one good thing about home schooling is the flexibility!

To those of you who would deem me a saint, know that I am "teaching" using an existing curriculum we found. Correspondence schools and internet class-work has saved our family's sanity. (Not to mention tutors from local colleges to help with higher level math and sciences!) The program allows Pat to earn an accredited diploma, has transcripts and even has a registered SAT/ACT code number.

What suggestions do you have for helping a son/daughter pay for their own kayaking/traveling/gear, etc?

If their passion is great, equipment needs can be a black hole. Buy the first complete outfit to ensure quality, safety (proper fitting equipment is essential) and convenience. Then work out an arrangement that requires their participation, depending on age and earning potential. Before

we had sponsor help, he paid 1/2 of his replacement costs if it was an accident. If it was his 'fault', he paid the entire tag price. He earned money the traditional way: allowance, chores, gifts and grades. Used equipment sales are a great way to reduce their expenses... especially when they are young. Kids who paddle grow out of their gear before it is 'used up', so look for boating families and clubs to access recycled equipment. Note: never, never look for a cheap alternative for a helmet.

By helping to pay the costs, they value their equipment all the more. Believe me, if a kid thinks that they will have to cough up the money to replace expensive items, they are more likely to take care of what they have and will hang on to it.

One other way to help out is to investigate any discounts you can get through paddle clubs, memberships or special arrangements with outfitters. If your kid is doing well, some companies will give you a good deal in exchange for putting their stickers on gear. Every little bit helps!

How do you find a balance between being supportive of your son/daughter's kayaking and trying to motivate them to pursue other activities (e.g., learning, music, reading, etc.)? How important do you feel this kind of diversity in activities is as a teenager?

Extreme teens are a breed apart. They obsess about their sport and spend most waking hours thinking about it, watching videos about it, talking about it.... or doing it. The biggest problem is that the real world doesn't always recognize the value of what they are doing. At times, it seems as though they don't know how to have a normal social conversation. It is critical that boating prodigies learn about other things in life.

Home schooling is not exactly conducive to social interaction, either. We have tried all sorts of 'extra-curricular' activities to simulate a normal teenager's life. Pat has taken swing dance, etiquette, theatre, and golf lessons. Whatever Pat has shown an interest in, we have tried to support his curiosity and research ways for him



to learn more. He reads a lot while he is traveling, and now that he drives we have started getting books on tape or CD for him to listen to on those long trips between competitions. Ultimately, we believe the more diversity a young person experiences, the better. Paddling can be a lifetime sport, but any individual's athletic competitive peak has a limit. If they can broaden their perspective while they are young, it increases their options for their future. 

Editor's Note: Look for "Ask Mom" in future issues of the American Whitewater Journal. Please send in your questions and we will recruit Mom's of well known and obsessive young paddlers to answer your queries. Send questions via email to editor@amwhitewater.org with "ask mom" in the subject line. And next time you see a young, successful paddler, don't forget to give some props to the Mom that helped raise them!

For The Cause: Donate Your Shuttle Vehicle

by Jeff McIntyre

As treasured as our kayaks, canoes, rafts, and shredders are - there's one other element of being on the river that boaters also become attached to - our shuttle vehicle.

Whether getting lost finding the take-out, riding in the back of Glen Miller's truck on the Cheat, or packing strange boaters into your car because it's good karma - there are as many river stories about running shuttle as there are tales of the river itself. When you take off the river, the shuttle vehicle is more than a means of getting you back to camp. It's how we haul our treasured boats. It's cold beer and warm clothes, a place for our gear, and, sometimes, a place to sleep. It's a little piece of home waiting for us at the end of a day on the water.

As a big believer in river karma, I've used my Jeep Cherokee for numerous good deeds on river trips - giving shuttle rides to strangers in Friendsville, hauling boats

out of the Cheat Canyon, going over videotape with new kayaking students. When I had finally pushed my Jeep to its limit and was eager for a new shiny truck to replace it, I hated the thought of arguing with a car dealer over its worth. It's not just a beat up Cherokee Wagon, it's a river shuttle - the deliverer of good times, good friends, and great memories!

Fortunately, my beat up Jeep Cherokee still had one powerful act of river karma left in it. I could donate it to American Whitewater and help protect the rivers we often travel to and run shuttle on.

Here's how you can do the same: On the American Whitewater website (www.americanwhitewater.org), there's a link for "Donate your Shuttle Vehicle" that will take you to the vehicle donation page.

Fill in the relevant information about your

vehicle and print out the relevant statements (e.g., odometer statement) provided on the website. (If you do not have Internet access, donations can also be arranged over the phone at 1-866-332-1778.)

Mail these forms and a representative will call you within a few weeks to arrange for pick up of your shuttle vehicle. Soon afterwards, you'll get a letter in the mail confirming your donation. You'll get a hefty tax deduction and American Whitewater will be further empowered to fight for conservation and access on our rivers.

It's that simple. With the click of a link and the press of a stamp, my Jeep has committed one last act of good karma. One day on the river - my boofs will be a little sweeter, my carves a little tighter, and my strokes a bit more elegant. I'll paddle to the take out and be glad that my shuttle and the river are there. *AWW*

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For the Cause: Donate a Boat...

by AJ McIntyre

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Below you'll find a list of all American Whitewater Boat Donation Centers near you. Take your boat to the center, drop it off, and receive a receipt for your 2003 taxes! It's that easy. 

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You can contact AJ McIntyre at 301-589-9453 or aj@amwhitewater.org.



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Sierra South	PO Box 1909	Kernville	CA	93238	760.376.3745
Back Country Ski	233 1/2 N. Court St. 233	Fayetteville	WV	25840	304.574.4005
Nantahala Outdoor Center	13077 Highway 19 West	Bryson City	NC	28713	828.488.2176 x. 145
Idaho River Sports	1521 N. 13th Street	Boise	ID	83702	208.336.4844
Lumber River Outfitters	240 Hay Street	Fayetteville	NC	28301	910.321.7383
Confluence Kayaks LLC	1537 Platte Street	Denver	CO	80202	303.433.3676
Potomac Outdoors	7687 MacArthur Blvd.	Cabin John	MD	20818	301.320.1544
NW Outdoor Center	2100 Westlake Ave. N.	Seattle	WA	98109	206.281.9694
CA Canoe & Kayak	409 Walter St. Jack London Square	Oakland	CA	94607	510.893.7833
California Canoe & Kayaks	12401 Folsom Blvd. #205	Rancho Cordova	CA	95742	916.353.1880
Zoar Outdoor	PO Box 245	Charlemont	MA	1339	413.339.4010

Conservation: The Watershed View

by Tom Christopher, AW Conservation Chair

America is comprised of thousands of watersheds that extend from the ocean shores of Cape Cod to the mountain peaks of the Columbia River Basin. Each is unique, made up of different streams and rivers flowing in every direction and eventually draining to the sea.

Rivers that defined the economic and social patterns for generations often provide a picture of what we see in a watershed. Historically, rivers have played an important role in the way communities were settled and developed, and established an identity to a region. The cultural connections brought about by the development of commerce often were the most important consideration when making decisions in these towns. As watershed protection continues as an important strategy, viewing the watershed as a whole is an important step that includes understanding more than just looking at geography or political boundaries.

Many watersheds and riverside communities have undergone transformation over the years as the economic winds have forced changes to the industries throughout the watersheds of America. Global markets, technology, and other influences changed the faces of many communities. Understanding the key assets of our watersheds is part of securing a stable future for our citizens and their communities.

The pressure of “urban sprawl” forces communities to decide what role they will play to insure progress and economic security for their watershed regions. Underlying this challenge is the ethic that any change must ensure that each new generation understands their watershed and their place in it. Conservation-based development occurring in a manner consistent with the watershed ecological capacity is critical to building a sustainable future.

The view of our watersheds needs to include many things. For example communities have long recognized the economic advantages of being surrounded by beautiful natural landscapes and open

space. Spectacular scenery, abundant wildlife, and open-space recreation provide opportunities for wildlife watching, hiking, canoeing, and other passive activities. This has the added benefit of building an economic advantage for communities that develop with a viable tourism component in their watershed economies.

Retaining old and building new cultural connections is crucial in creating an image of any watershed. If a community cares about its region it will work to restore and protect those values through stewardship and advocacy, shifting away from historical patterns of resource abuse and depletion. The celebration of people and place protect the old ways of life and can paint a picture of the watershed region with vibrancy from the past. New traditions that come from change create threads that become part of the community fabric and are carried into the future.

The strong social bonds that have developed over time provide watersheds with the assets to build connections across communities. Collaboration is beneficial in many ways. It helps communities to revitalize downtowns, protect open space, and support a lifestyle for its residents.

By offering a diversity of experiences and cultural amenities, visitors see a watershed region as a collection of opportunities to enjoy and appreciate. Educational programs on arts, crafts, and history enhance the experience of visitors already attracted to the open space, recreational opportunities, and character of the region.

Each view of a watershed has many elements—from the natural features of its landscape, to the historical and cultural diversity of its cities and towns. Local groups can help by developing partnerships to protect their watersheds by working with conservation commissions, planning boards, and elected officials. Programs that reach out and work within local communities by providing diverse resources, technical information, and funding can partner with local groups to improve the effectiveness of protecting resources within our watersheds. 

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Ocoee Release Update

by Michelle Tennant

Ocoee Olympic Site Flows Free

After 7 Years of negotiations, AW and key Ocoee VIPs have signed a new agreement.

The Ocoee Olympic Whitewater river will flow freely once again in 2004 thanks to an ad-hoc stakeholder group nick-named "The Kitchen Cabinet" made up of whitewater advocates, utility company owners, forest service representatives, politicians, and regional business leaders. Key VIPs met on Friday, September 26, 2003 at the Ocoee Olympic Whitewater Center to sign a new water agreement, open mountain biking trails, and kick-off Ocoee River Days.

The signed agreement provides 54 annual days of recreational releases in the Upper Ocoee for 15 years. The group will present the agreement to federal, state, local, and

private funding sources to encourage their financial support for this effort.

The signing was a private, invitation-only event, but area whitewater paddlers showed up to paddle below the bridge to show their support.

"This agreement represents a huge success for whitewater enthusiasts, mountain bikers, hikers and local businesses," stated Kevin Colburn, American Whitewater Eastern Conservation and Access Director. "We've been working on a commitment to insure that the Upper section of the Ocoee will flow freely since the 1996 Olympic Games were hosted at this site. It's a fantastic resource for both people who enjoy the river and for members of the business community." Colburn also credited the Tennessee Valley Authority and Outfitters Association for their willingness in crafting the historic agreement.

Colburn reported that American Whitewater's 2002 Teva National Freestyle Championships acted as a rallying cry for regional recreational and economic development interests and a catalyst for TVA to reconsider the costs and benefits associated with providing recreational releases on the Upper Ocoee.

"American Whitewater is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2004 and what a river-flowing win to report," remarked Colburn. 

Michelle Tennant kayaks and lives in Saluda, NC. A publicist who helps American Whitewater with its media relations, she can be reached at michelle@tennant.org.



TVA Director Bill Baxter stands on the bridge above the Ocoee Olympic Course with AW's Kevin Colburn.

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Rapid Progressions™

Conservation and Access Updates

by John Gangemi, Jason Robertson & Kevin Colburn

REGION: EAST

Features

- New Plans for Services on Gauley River (WV)
- Last Obstacle for West Fork Tuckasegee Releases Is Cleared (NC)
- TVA Reservoir Operation Study Nears Resolution (TN)
- USFS to Reveal Fate of Chattooga Headwaters Access (GA/SC)
- New England Dam Removals Benefit Fish, Boaters, and Community (CT).

Flashflood

Risa Shimoda, Sutton Bacon, and Kevin Colburn met with Georgia Power and GA-DNR to discuss adding releases to Tallulah Gorge (7/21). Don Kinser and Kevin Colburn met with Forest Service Officials to discuss Chattooga Headwaters access in Atlanta (7/30). Volunteer Andrew

Lazenby joined Kevin Colburn for the kick off meeting of the Catawba River relicensing in Great Falls South Carolina (7/28). Blackouts in the Northeast affected releases on several rivers including the Raquette River in NY (8/15). Bridge construction has begun at the put-in for the Watauga, NC making parking difficult for the next year (9/2). Jason Robertson and Adam Cramer met with Maryland's officials in October to discuss plans for a regional whitewater release schedule on the Savage, Upper Yough, North Branch Potomac, and Stony (10/16). Liz Garland and Lynn Aycock coordinated with the Park Service re: shuttle plans and other management issues on the Gauley (8/28). AW filed comments on TVA's Reservoir Operation Study (9/4). Charlie Walbridge and Jason Robertson met with Alleghany Wood Products to develop plans for accessing the Cheat and Big Sandy Rivers

(8/1). Don Kinser is working with Trout Unlimited to express our shared concerns about Forest Service plans to pave Burrells Ford road on the Chattooga (8/27). In August awesome AW Southeastern intern Corey McAfee returned to Law School at Washington and Lee University in Virginia. Charlie Walbridge reports that someone has been tampering with the donations box at the Upper Yough, if you see any suspicious activity, please call 866-BOAT-4-American Whitewater (9/1). Keith Strausbaugh reports that the USGS has begun replacing the Big Sandy streamgage, which was destroyed earlier this year by a shot gun; American Whitewater continues to offer a \$500 reward leading to the arrest of the vandal (8/5). On Labor Day weekend paddlers' cars were towed from the put in on Muddy Creek in Pennsylvania; long time local paddler Brad Nelson has offered to help resolve the access issue.



New Plans for Services on Gauley River

By Jason Robertson

Volunteer Projects

Regional Coordinator Todd Zarzecki is moving and we are seeking a replacement to help manage our takeout on the Watauga; if you can help please email Kevin@amwhitewater.org.

The Catawba River relicensing is beginning and we would like to have several volunteers that can work as a team in the North Carolina/South Carolina Area. If you have a background in river ecology, economics, or recreational planning, and live in the area, please email Kevin@amwhitewater.org.

American Whitewater's River Legacy

7 years ago in 1996

...American Whitewater helped to secure autumn releases on Virginia's Russell Fork River from the Flannagan Reservoir.

...American Whitewater bought our first river access site at the confluence of the Blackwater and Dry Fork of the Cheat in West Virginia.

American Whitewater worked with Representative Nick Rahall (WV) to require the Park Service to purchase and develop river access points on the Gauley.

...American Whitewater filed an amicus brief supporting access to the Virginia's Jackson River in a successful effort to protect access to this river despite the existence of a Kings Grant.

American Whitewater's web server hosts, Hensley, Elam & Associates, rafting the Upper G



On my first trip to the Gauley, I recall a long night driving down to West Virginia from Washington, DC and parking at the base of Summersville Dam around 3AM. The dam was releasing all night, and the roar was tremendous. I threw my sleeping bag on the ground behind my car and woke up 3 hours later covered in dew and buried in fog as the sun tried in vain to heat the valley. Shivering, my friends and I dressed in our warmest gear, which were only short spray jackets, and did jumping jacks for 15 minutes to get warm. The port-a-johns were locked, there was nowhere to get a hot breakfast, and we had no idea where the takeout was; but we figured we could hitchhike back to our car, so we went ahead and launched before 7AM. I think half of our group must have swum in the compression waves coming off the outflow of the dam. It was a classic start to a classic first trip down the Gauley and we didn't get off the river until sunset. It was epic, and I spent every weekend I could on the river for the rest of the season.

A lot has changed for the better in the 10 years since my first trip. I've learned the lines. I know how to find the takeouts and put-ins. There is lots of camping nearby in warmer areas. There are restaurants and gas stations. If you forget your gear, there are shops nearby.

However, some things have not changed, or they have changed for the worse. The Park Service is seeking to remedy this, and they want your help.

If you have boated the Upper or Lower Gauley, you know that this beautiful river is a very special place. American Whitewater helped to establish the GAULEY RIVER NATIONAL RECREATION AREA in 1988 to preserve 25 miles of free-flowing Gauley River, six miles of the Meadow River, and 11,000 acres of land between the towns of Summersville and Fayetteville.

This past September, the Park Service invited me to make a presentation to them about private boating on the Gauley. I gave this presentation at the first public meeting the Park held to discuss the new environmental assessment for the Gauley Development Concept Plan (DCP).

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The Plan details how the Park will manage resources and provide visitor experiences at the Gauley River National Recreation Area. The Plan also reflects the management recommendations from the Park's 1996 Gauley River National Recreation Area General Management Plan and Environmental Assessment.

Most importantly for boaters, the DCP will include designs for new facilities, including publicly-owned access points and parking, and seek funding for their construction. The Plan will also include conceptual plans for visitor interpretation and resource management activities.

Public comment is welcome throughout the planning process and the Park particularly wants to hear from the boating community. Please email your questions or comments to gari_dcp@nps.gov.

More information is available at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/945/.

West Fork Tuckasegee: It Goes!

By Kevin Colburn

Earlier this year American Whitewater signed a consensus agreement with Duke Power and dozens of other stakeholders that promised 7 recreational releases each year on the 9-mile long Class IV West Fork of the Tuckasegee. There was an "if" though, in the agreement. The releases would be provided if a large waterfall near the top of the gorge could be portaged on Duke Power property without trespassing onto adjacent landowner's property. Based on research done by AW intern Josh Egenolf we were fairly confident that Duke had the land needed to build a portage trail, however others vehemently disagreed. In August of this year Duke had the property lines surveyed and blazed. Then, on August 29th, Duke Consultant Bunny Johns and I inspected the lines. As part of this inspection 250 cfs was released into the West Fork Bypass so that it could be determined whether or not there were suitable eddies above and below the falls for paddlers to take out and put back in.

The results of our inspection left no doubt that a trail could definitely be built to portage High Falls on Duke Power property without trespassing, and suitable eddies existed above and below the falls. These findings may have marked the end to the last significant hurdle to bringing this wonderful recreational resource back to the paddling public. A big thank you goes out to Josh Egenolf for his hours of boring research in the Jackson County Courthouse, and for those bushwhacking adventures into the West Fork Gorge.

TVA Reservoir Operation Study Nears Decision Point

By Kevin Colburn

For the past two years American Whitewater has been working on improving river recreation opportunities through Tennessee Valley Authority's epic Reservoir Operation Study, which is intended to improve the management of nearly 50 dams across the Tennessee Valley. We have been attending monthly meetings of a steering committee, and hundreds of AW members filed comments on the study. In December of 2003 or early in 2004 we expect a decision to be made by the Board of TVA that outlines TVA's preferred alternative that will shape river management in the valley for years to come. American Whitewater expects this decision to improve paddling opportunities on most reaches in the system downstream of TVA dams.

One notable enhancement will likely be guaranteed flows in the popular Class II Hiawassee River in eastern Tennessee.

USFS to Reveal Fate of Chattooga Headwaters in December

By Kevin Colburn

December will mark a significant milestone in an 8-year relentless effort by American Whitewater to have the

boating ban lifted from the Wild and Scenic Chattooga Headwaters. The USFS is scheduled to release their decision on the new Forest Plan that will either open the Headwaters to paddling or maintain the ban. We are pleased that the ban was studied in detail for the first time ever in the 2003 Environmental Impact Statement and feel confident that the analysis will ultimately support the lifting of this ban. The Chattooga Headwaters are the only stretch of river in the USFS system that is banned to paddling for social reasons, and we intend to see that precedent eliminated. Regardless of the outcome in December, AW board member Don Kinser and AW regional coordinator Charlene Coleman have both worked tirelessly on this issue and deserve many sunny high water days and many thanks from the paddling community.

New England Dam Removals Benefit Fish, Boaters, and Community

By Kevin Colburn

American Whitewater has been there from the beginning and continues to support the efforts of paddlers Dan Mullins and Oliver Cote as they attempt to bring a whitewater park to the Town of Windham, CT. Following an initial conversation between Oliver and Dan during the summer of 2002, Dan took the initiative to begin a grassroots movement to promote the development of an urban whitewater park and recreation and enterprise hub along the Willimantic River.

The plan would trigger the removal of several old mill dams from the Willimantic River that would significantly increase fish passage throughout the watershed, let the river flow freely again, create several opportunities for whitewater feature construction, and would complement the ongoing riverfront revitalization projects in the town of Willimantic.

During a visit to the site last spring, Tom Christopher, Conservation Chair of American Whitewater, enthusiastically

REGION: CENTRAL and MOUNTAIN STATES

Features

- Navigability Privileges Reduced to “Keep Your Feet Wet” (WI)
- Pecos River Remains Open to Boating (NM)
- Navigability Law Upheld (MT)
- PacifiCorp Accepts New License for Bigfork Hydro Project (MT)
- Fire, Forests and Fear— D.C. Political Firestorm Singes Vital Environmental Laws

Flashflood

Paddlers in the 99 Basic kayaked 99 miles on the Class II-IV Arkansas River to raise funds for American Whitewater’s Paul Zirkelbach Fund for River Access in Colorado (6/4). Kent Ford and Chuck Wanner are proceeding with efforts to protect Colorado’s Dolores River from several water management projects (8/15). Dave Gardner continues to press BuRec for improved access to Colorado’s Blue River below Green Mountain Reservoir – at issue are the hours of access following 9/11 (7/21). Dag Grada reports that he spoke with officials concerning the rec releases on Minnesota’s Lower St Louis River and learned that there should be a higher flow day incorporated into the ‘04 schedule which should be sufficient to paddle the entire reach; the one day release will be a test balloon to see if we can encourage greater participation in this underutilized release. Anglers staged a protest against rock star Huey Lewis over whether Lewis could close access to a channel feeding Montana’s Bitterroot River; Lewis claims the slough is simply a drainage ditch (8/4). The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks accepted the recommendations from the River Recreation Advisory Group and will begin adopting those recommendations in the coming year. American Whitewater’s Conservation Director John Gangemi served on the River Recreation Advisory Council.

endorsed the concept stating that the site has “great potential as an economic redevelopment project with a whitewater park as its centerpiece.” The site is recognized nationally as the historic Windham Mills complex, former home of American Thread (check out the dams and mills at www.windhammills.com). It too is being resurrected.

The project has enormous ecological, recreational, and economical potential and many groups and organizations are joining in the effort. Under the skilled knowledge and guidance of William Breetz and Barbara McGrath, of the Connecticut Urban Legal Initiative, Barbara and Dan are incorporating a 501(3)1 non-profit organization. The goal of the non-profit is to promote urban riverfront revitalization by creating a whitewater park and recreation hub along the Willimantic River, including observation platforms and a riverwalk.

Tom Christopher’s enthusiasm is undaunted, “of the projects in which I’m involved, Willimantic is the most exciting and promising.” American Whitewater is proud to support this textbook example of how paddlers can restore the rivers we cherish.

In Bear River, ID PacifiCorp accepted the new license in August. American Whitewater will be working with PacifiCorp on the whitewater release schedule for the spring of 2004. American Whitewater volunteers attended collaborative meetings and filed comments on the scoping document for the Denver Water’s Williams Fork hydropower project.

“Keep Your Feet Wet” Laws Enacted in Wisconsin

By Corey McAfee and Jason Robertson

Editor’s Note: The change in Wisconsin’s law described below occurred 2 years ago under a different administration from the current governor, Jim Doyle. However, the modified language remains in effect and American Whitewater only recently learned of the change. If you are aware of any changes in your state’s navigability laws, please let American Whitewater know so that we can update our database at www.americanwhitewater.org/access/navigability.html

In 2001, the governor of Wisconsin, Scott McCallum, changed the text of Wisconsin Statue §30.134. However, this was not done through the normal legislative means. It was not an amendment to the state constitution or otherwise normally enacted law. Instead the law was changed through the ‘budget’ process.

According to American Whitewater StreamKeeper Rob Smage, the governor can include, as part of the annual budget, items which have little direct bearing on the budget — items which otherwise would need full discussion and vote by the State’s legislative bodies. While the legislative bodies may be called upon to approve the budget, the items thus included are not, as a result, part of the ‘normal’ body of law.

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Pecos River Remains Open to Boating

By Jason Robertson and AJ McIntyre

Smage had a discussion with a legal counsel for the state DNR who said that, as a result of the change, it was his opinion that in order to be legal, boaters have to “keep your feet wet” when scouting or portaging or else they would be trespassing and could be subject to prosecution.

The text of both the old and new statutes are available at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/898/.

The prior law allowed people using Wisconsin’s rivers and streams to have access to the exposed shoreline up to the ordinary high water mark at any time for water related recreational activities. This would have included swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, sunbathing, and, presumably, many other activities.

The statute was amended to allow access to private riparian land “only if it is necessary to exit the body of water to bypass an obstruction.” According to the Wisconsin DNR website, obstructions could consist of trees or rocks, shallow water for boaters or deep water for wading trout fishermen. The bypass can involve areas up to the ordinary high water mark and should be by the shortest possible route. Also, the DNR recommends that, when using public waters, the general rule-of-thumb is to “keep your feet wet” to avoid trespassing.

This change should have no impact on a person’s right to portage. However, the right to scout a rapid has likely been reduced to the “keep your feet wet” approach. Scouting would likely be perceived as a “water-related recreational activity”; thus, while being allowed under the old law, the “budgetary change” has likely removed this right. The law has been changed to allow access to private land “only if it is necessary to exit the body of water to bypass an obstruction.” Therefore, since scouting is not technically “bypassing an obstruction,” a person scouting a rapid in Wisconsin would likely be found guilty of trespassing if the issue arose.

In April, the Forest Service proposed a ban on all boating in the Wild and Scenic Corridor. Three months later, the Forest Service rejected this notion based directly on comments from American Whitewater. As a result of our work, and the work of our volunteers, boating will continue to be allowed on the Pecos.

The upper Pecos reaches flow through wooded high mountain canyons; the lower reaches flow through barren tablelands with bluffs and rugged rock formations. One of the best means for visitors to enjoy this scenery is by floating down the river in a raft, kayak, or canoe.

In his description of the river, American Whitewater member Tom Robey told me “I have kayaked this section several times. It is a fast moving Class III+ usually runnable in May. It is unusual for New Mexico because it is forested with clear water. Its character is more like what would be expected of a Colorado creek. They have done quite a bit of modification at the beginning of the run with wing dams to create pools for fisherman. Below Terrero there is private property and fences. I have heard of problems but my experience with landowners is that we have been very welcome and fences are directed towards fisherman.”

The Environmental Assessment for the Pecos Wild and Scenic River Forest Plan Amendment and Management Plan was released in 2003, thirteen years after its Wild and Scenic designation. The proposed plan banned all boating in the Wild and Scenic Corridor with the suggestion that it “can only be done in short sections along the river during periods of high water flow, which commonly does not occur. Prohibiting floating would therefore not be expected to displace many users and it would enhance fishing within the corridor.”

Tom Robey (River Runners for Wilderness) noticed the public comment period

for the management plan and Tim Scofield (Adobe Whitewater Club) discovered the prohibition on boating. Enlisting our help they undertook a campaign during Memorial Day weekend to send in comments.

In our response for American Whitewater we wrote, “This proposal appears inconsistent with Forest Service Policy, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Management Act (WSR), the National Environmental Policies Act (NEPA), and New Mexico’s navigability laws. Many of our members have had the pleasure of rafting or kayaking on the Pecos through the National Forest, and we strongly encourage the Forest Service not to ‘Prohibit the use of rafts, boats, or other conveyances to float down the river’ but to continue to allow the use of rafts, kayaks, and canoes on the Pecos.

“It is not Forest Service policy to ban recreational boating. At present there is only one recreational boating closure on a Wild & Scenic River. That closure is on the headwaters of the Chattooga River. American Whitewater is taking legal action to rectify this decision, which was made outside of NEPA and was based on undocumented social issues related to fishing. The decision is also being reviewed concurrently by the Agency and is expected to be resolved to allow seasonal boating access. There are a handful of other limited seasonal closures on Wild and Scenic Rivers, which are based on clearly defined and researched issues related to protection of threatened or endangered species. The decision to recommend a complete ban on boating on the Pecos does not meet the Agency policy to protect recreation and traditional historic access to America’s rivers and streams; nor is it warranted for any identified environmental reasons.”

The complete text of our comments, in which we also described the state’s navigability laws and standards, are available at: <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/850/>.

American Whitewater convinced the Forest Service that the Pecos River was in fact navigable and would remain open. District Ranger Joseph Reddan, stated “We

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agree with your position that the Pecos River is a navigable river and thus open to boating and floating." Reddan continued, "Therefore, we will be revising both the Environmental Assessment (EA), and the Wild and Scenic River Management Plan (W&SRMP) to not prohibit boating use."

As a result, the first item of the Decision Notice issued July 31st stated: "Revised the provision to allow floating use. The Standard now reads, 'The use of non-motorized rafts, boats, or other conveyances to float down the river is permitted. No additional facilities (put-ins, parking areas) will be constructed to facilitate floating'".

Thank you Tom Robey for looking out for the boating community!

Montana Navigability Law Upheld

By Jason Robertson

On May 28, 2003 the U.S. Supreme Court denied an appeal by Mountain States Legal Foundation who, representing three landowners, filed a lawsuit in June 2001 alleging the Montana Stream Access Law established in 1985 violated their rights under the U.S. Constitution to regulate who floated over their land.

The decision thus protects Montana's Stream access law and public rights of navigation throughout the State.

The case was first heard in District Court in Helena and dismissed. An appeal was filed in the U.S. District Court with the Judge ruling the law constitutional. The case was appealed to the higher court of the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco, which in December 2002 upheld the law. This ruling was then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court that decided the appeal did not hold water.

Landowners had brought action in U.S. District Court to enjoin the state permanently from enforcing MT Stream Access Law, which declared that the public had the right to recreational use of streambed and banks of all streams up to their ordinary high water mark with regard to privately owned streambeds and banks underlying historically non-navigable waters (Stillwater & Ruby rivers and O'Dell Creek). The opinion of the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit is reported at 316 F.3d 867 (9th Cir. 2002). On the State's motion to dismiss, Senior District Court Judge Lovell held the statute did not violate landowners' substantive due process rights or effect taking of private property (5th & 14th Amendment); landowners' claims were time-barred; and res judicata barred claims.

PacifiCorp Accepts New License for Bigfork Hydro Project

By John Gangemi

On August 22, 2003 PacifiCorp accepted the new license for the Bigfork Hydroelectric Project on Montana's Swan River. In their acceptance letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission PacifiCorp stated, "We look forward to serving as steward for the project and its resources during the term of the new license." Based on our experience working with PacifiCorp, American Whitewater believes the utility will play an exemplary role implementing the conditions in the new license.

The new license is the product of a Settlement Agreement reached between PacifiCorp, American Whitewater and other parties for the relicensing of the Bigfork Hydro project. The Settlement Agreement, reported in previous issues of the journal, marks a significant victory for river protection and recreation on the Swan River. American Whitewater, along with other parties was able to convince PacifiCorp of the importance of protecting 500 acres of land adjacent to the reservoir and river corridor for water quality protection, open space, wildlife security and continued recreational use. The Settlement Agreement embodied American Whitewater's mission of protecting and restoring whitewater rivers including responsible recreational use. In September, American Whitewater staff will begin working with PacifiCorp staff and local stakeholders on the implementation of the new license conditions. American Whitewater staff started working on the Bigfork hydro relicensing in 1997. Six years later the fruits of that extended labor are about to manifest themselves.



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Fire, Forests and Fear D.C. Political Firestorm Singes Vital Environmental Laws

By Rob Ament, Executive Director,
American Wildlands

Conservation Director's Note: This summer in the Northern Rockies fire has been the primary topic of conversation. With the fires comes the debate regarding management of our national forests. Many claim these fires could be prevented with better forest management. I ask these individuals and groups just what specific forest management practices they would prescribe to prevent the fires across the valley from my home? The fires show no discrimination for management prescriptions. The fires burn through all types of landscapes and forest types including roadless and roaded lands, wildlands and clearcuts, selective cuts and grasslands as well as threaten many communities. Clearly the fires are the result of prolonged drought in the Northern Rockies and not failed forest management practices. As boaters we should be concerned with attempts to use the dramatic fires of 2003 to further political agendas. The Healthy Forest Restoration Bill will do little to curb wildfires but it will greatly increase profits for the timber industry. This increased "management" could result in degraded water quality, loss of habitat for native species, and decreased roadless lands particularly in headwater drainages. American Whitewater is squarely for the protection of roadless lands.

The following article is reprinted with permission of author, Rob Ament, executive director for American Wildlands. For more information on American Wildlands work in the Northern Rockies and forest management practices, visit www.wildlands.org

With the passage of the Healthy Forest Restoration Bill, wildfires could be the least of the worries for U.S. forests.

"Proponents of thinning ponderosa pine forests have created a simple story in which chainsaws alone can save us from fire. However, thinning is not always restoration, nor will it create landscapes in which people can live safely. Thinning alone does not solve our problems with fire. Neither will President Bush's 'Healthy Forests' legislation...."

Dr. William Baker,
University of Wyoming fire ecologist

Politicians in Washington D.C. recently rekindled the wildfires that scorched millions of acres across the West the past few summers to try to torch some of our nation's key environmental protections. Any hope for a meaningful effort to reduce the nation's future wildfire risk, along with over a hundred million federal dollars, may also go up in flames.

Introduced on behalf of the Bush Administration by Representatives Scott McInnis (R-CO) and Greg Walden (R-OR), The Healthy Forest Restoration bill would essentially open the national forests that it claims to protect to larger timber cuts, while exempting those "thinning" projects from a number of statutes that have helped keep the forests healthy, full of life, and less prone to fire. The bill would allow timber companies to undertake profitable "fuel reduction" and "fire salvage" projects and subsidize them by giving them healthy trees not at risk to fire.

Among the new bill's many other unfortunate ironies, shortcomings, and excesses:

The Healthy Forest Restoration Bill would eliminate a citizen's statutory right to appeal Forest Service projects in the name of speeding approval for fire reduction projects. The rationale for this flies in the face of a recent study by Northern Arizona University researchers who reviewed the appeals process on National Forest projects and uncovered little evidence to support claims that environmental appeals increase

*First hand view of fires this past August
along the Main Salmon River, Idaho.*

Photo Dave Steindorf



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REGION: WEST

the risk of wildfires. The study found that less than five percent (154 out of 3,635) of appeals on logging projects were aimed at wildfire “fuel reduction” projects.

With the legislation, federal agencies could ignore fire prevention options that are less harmful to forests by allowing forest managers to propose only one alternative in a fuel reduction project. Alternative development has been deemed by federal courts as the “heart of the National Environmental Policy Act,” one of the most effective environmental protection statutes in our history.

The bill would kick in another \$125 million to pay timber companies to log our National Forests -- increasing the total annual subsidy to nearly a half-billion dollars, despite the blossoming federal deficit.

Though the debate and almost all the funding on wildfire has been funneled toward national forest lands, an analysis of communities-at-risk from wildfire shows that 85% of endangered lands are owned by private, state, or tribal interests.

To adequately address the problem of wildfire in the West, more attention must be paid to non-federal lands surrounding our communities; private homeowners need to take actions on their property to make their homes more defensible; and, citizens must be able to continue to participate in and question federal projects.

The Healthy Forest Restoration bill would do little more than free timber companies to increase their profits, while increasing the risk of fire by dangerously reducing the number of healthy trees in our forests and our rights as citizens. We can expect only more wildfires and fewer healthy forests as a result.

Features

- SB928, a Bad Bill on John Day River Dies (OR)
- Middle-Middle Access Moves Forward (WA)
- Wild and Scenic on White Salmon (WA)
- Saving the Clearwater (WA)
- Status of Whitewater Releases on the Chelan Gorge (WA)

Flashflood

America Outdoors is the latest organization to file a motion to intervene on the Deschutes in response to the Forest Service’s plan to implement common pool; other organizations on the opposite side of the issue include Northwest Rafters Association and American Canoe Association (8/15). Jennie Goldberg and Tom O’Keefe continue to work with the Forest Service to develop an education module on how to avoid negatively impacting salmon spawning sites on the North Fork Nooksack. O’Keefe also reports that the FS plans to restrict access (i.e. install a gate) on the river left access to the put-in for the Wynoochee Gorge Run; the logging company, Simpson, has gated the Save Creek access which was the take-out for that run and the put-in for the run that continued downstream - apparently due to timber theft. Likewise, Roger Lowe reports that there will be 6 log jams on the Upper Green by fall of next year, and the Corps plans 30 downstream of the Gorge; further there is uncertainty as to whether or not access on the Upper Green will be restored. Part of the Lower Green remains closed because of the hazard of log jams. American Whitewater filed comments in response to FERC’s request for additional studies as part of the licensing process of the Prospect hydropower project on the Upper Rogue River, OR. The relicensing of the Pit 3, 4, 5 hydropower project is nearing completion. John Gangemi is working with the collaborative stakeholder group to develop an annual schedule of releases in the Pit 4 and 5 river reaches dewatered by the project. John Gangemi, Kevin Lewis and Dave Steindorf serve on the ecological resources committee (ERC) for the Rock Creek-Cresta hydropower project. The ERC oversees adaptive

management of instream flows including whitewater flows. The Upper North Fork Feather hydropower project directly upstream of Rock Creek-Cresta is nearing relicensing completion. John Gangemi and Dave Steindorf are working with the collaborative stakeholder group to develop an annual schedule of releases in the Class III Belden reach dewatered by the project. A group of American Whitewater volunteers lead by Kris Schmidt participated in an abbreviated whitewater flow study on the Class III Borel reach of the Kern River directly below Isabella Reservoir. In September, John Gangemi filed comments on the FERC scoping document for the relicensing of this project. John Gangemi is working with the collaborative stakeholder group in the Middle and South Forks of the Stanislaus River relicensing process to develop an instream flow regime that restores ecological processes to the multiple river reaches dewatered by the project. John Gangemi and Paul Martzen have helped orchestrate three whitewater flow studies on dewatered reaches of the San Joaquin this year. Chris Shackleton and others are working with the local utility prioritizing reaches for whitewater flow studies on the Upper South Fork American in the next year. American Whitewater local volunteers will participate in whitewater flow studies on the Spokane River, WA in September and October. John Gangemi assisted with the design and implementation of those studies.

Volunteer Projects

Tom O’Keefe is seeking assistance with working on access issues on private lands owned by timber companies throughout Washington State; email okeefe@riversandcreeks.com.

American Whitewater’s River Legacy

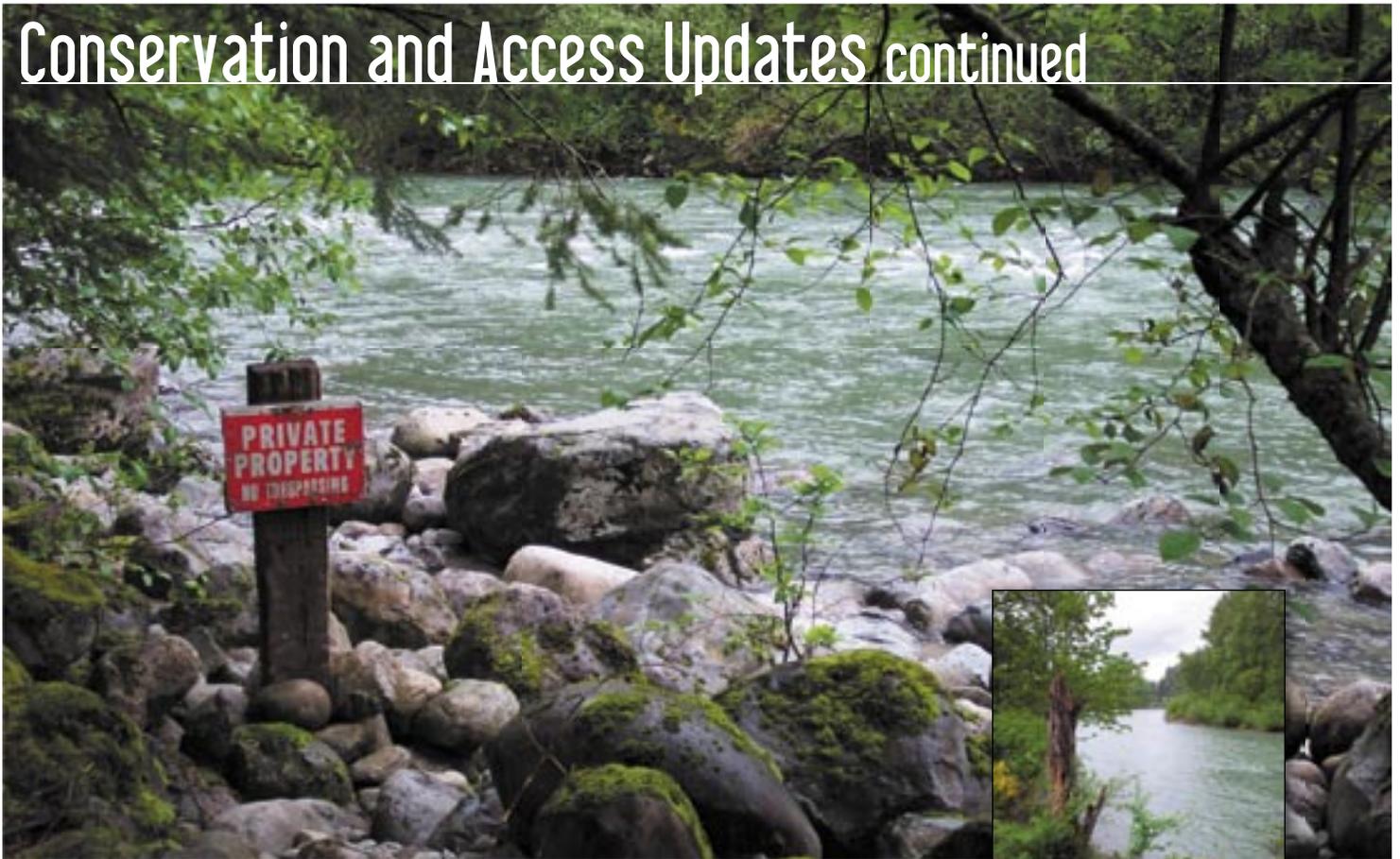
17 years ago in 1986

...American Whitewater helped ensure Wild and Scenic designation on California’s Kern River.

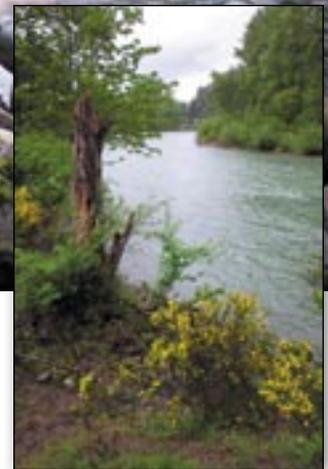
7 years ago in 1996

...American Whitewater helped to get Wild and Scenic protection for Washington’s Lower White Salmon River.

Conservation and Access Updates continued



Photos by Jason Robertson



A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

By Jason Robertson

SB928, a bill that would have provided reduced access and more restrictions on use than a designation of legal navigability on Oregon's John Day River, was defeated in early September. The bill would have provided less access and more restrictions on use than a designation of legal navigability. American Whitewater was one of dozens of organizations expressing concern the bill would harm access for our members, boaters, fishermen, and the public on this popular float river.

At press time, opponents to the bill were discussing strategies with American Whitewater to form a new non-profit to work on drafting legislation, which would provide legal protections for access and navigability based on the Montana model. One possible name for this organization was O.A.R.S. or Oregonians for Access to Rivers.

More information is available at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/942/.

Middle-Middle Snoqualmie

By Tom O'Keefe and Jason Robertson

In the Sept/Oct 2003 Journal we reported that American Whitewater volunteers were working to secure public access on the Middle Fork of the Snoqualmie River and identified this as a Top River Issue for 2004. The Middle-Middle, as it is commonly known, is one of the more significant outdoor recreation areas, "close-to-home" for residents of the greater Seattle area. Less than an hour drive from downtown, the valley is easily accessible to a population of over three million people and a destination for visitors from around the country. Despite its proximity to a large metropolitan area, the river feels remote as it winds through a forested river valley largely held in public ownership. It has been proposed for designation as a Wild and Scenic River by the U.S. Forest Service.

While a diversity of recreational opportunities can be pursued within the boundaries of the watershed, the river itself is known as one of the region's finest whitewater resources. With over 40 miles

of whitewater, the river and its tributaries serve a wide range of skill levels with some sections suitable for beginner instruction, others that challenge the nation's top experts, and everything in between.

Despite the quality of this river as a recreational resource, formal public access has never been provided. Several decades ago when the first paddlers began to regularly boat the Middle Fork Snoqualmie, access wasn't much of an issue, but as development pressure increased along the river, opportunities for public access began to vanish. Those with kayaks now scramble down the bank at a few informal access points. Paddlers, particularly those with larger and more cumbersome boats such as canoes and rafts, lost convenient access at the Concrete Bridge with the construction of a berm that blocked the popular access trail. Just downstream the State DNR's Mine Creek Campground was closed when vandalism increased to a point that public safety was compromised and with

this the convenient access to Island Drop was gated. Access at Tanner Road has also become more of a challenge as new homes blocked a convenient landing at the end of the road and pressed paddlers into a narrow strip of land in a residential neighborhood. The good news is after more than a decade of effort, a plan to address these issues was finally developed in 1997.

That year, a vision plan for the Middle Fork Snoqualmie was released through a regional partnership between the US Forest Service, State DNR, State Parks, King County, North Bend, and numerous local user groups including boating, equestrian, hiking, biking, hunting and fishing interests. In all, over 25 groups were at the table. The Middle Fork Plan highlighted several strategic improvements that could be made to dramatically improve public safety and public access within the watershed of the Middle Fork Snoqualmie. Of interest to whitewater paddlers, the plan called for formal river access at several sites including Concrete Bridge, Island Drop, and near Tanner Road. King County then began the process of acquiring the property that could make implementation of the plan a reality. The parcel downstream, river left of Concrete Bridge (a.k.a. Granite Creek Flats), where the historic river access trail was located, was purchased through the Waterways 2000 program. Purchase of a parcel near Tanner Road proved to be more of a challenge, but King County worked closely with regional paddling clubs in developing a successful IAC grant proposal to acquire funds to purchase a 50-acre site approximately half a mile downstream of the existing access of Tanner Road. This site is unique as one of the only undeveloped sections of low-bank beach access. By early 2003 King County was successful in bringing this property into public ownership.

An opportunity now exists to develop and implement an access and management plan for these sites. Earlier this spring AW's Executive Director Risa Shimoda and Access Director Jason Robertson both participated in site visits with local volunteers, and in May of this year Jason joined with representatives from Washington Kayak Club, University Kayak Club, Paddle Trails, Mountaineers, and Washington Recreational River Runners in meeting with staff from King County Parks. At that meeting parks' staff introduced a new program called the Association Development and Operation Partnerships (ADOP) Program. King County announced this program as a way to meet the public need for enhanced park facilities in a time of budget cuts. Through

this program, non-profits can enter into a formal partnership agreement with King County Parks that in turn provides a mechanism for the creation of new and enhanced facilities on land already owned by King County. King County provides the land while the partnering non-profit provides their volunteer resources, expertise, and revenue generating potential to develop and manage the site in a manner consistent with public needs. The partner organization is thus given the opportunity to develop a concept plan and long-term maintenance plan for a site of interest to its membership.

AW and local affiliate clubs are currently working with King County in developing an ADOP partnership. We have also submitted a proposal to the National Park's River and Trails program to assist us in developing site plans and have heard that the grant was approved pending resolution of the Congressional appropriations in 2004. We are currently soliciting input from the local paddling community and interested local partners. If you have an interest in participating please contact Washington Regional Coordinator Tom O'Keefe at kayak@riversandcreeks.com.

More information is available at: www.americanwhitewater.org/resources/repository/2220_rtca_proposal.pdf

Wild & Scenic on the White Salmon

By Jason Robertson

On August 7th, American Whitewater helped Senator Cantwell (D-WA) with economic, tourism, and recreation information for her press conference announcing the introduction of legislation to designate approximately 20 miles of the Upper White Salmon River in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Maria Cantwell's bill is the Senate companion piece of legislation complementing Congressman Brian Baird's (D-WA-3rd) introduction of similar language in the House earlier this year.

The White Salmon River is located in South-Central Washington in Baird's district. Strong constituent support is required if we want to see serious action on this legislation. Letters that communicate your personal interest in the White Salmon and the Wild and Scenic River program would still be very helpful in making this happen. If you have the opportunity, please be sure to thank



paddler: Clay Wright photo by Jed Weingarten

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Conservation and Access Updates continued

Senator Cantwell and Representative Baird for their hard work. If passed, this Wild and Scenic legislative protection will be an economic boon to the regional economy and raise the standard of living in the district.

American Whitewater, American Rivers, Friends of the White Salmon, and many additional groups have been working to extend Wild and Scenic status on the Upper White Salmon. Our hard work, and the work of volunteers like Tom O'Keefe, is beginning to bear fruit. The introduction of Wild and Scenic language in the House and Senate did not just happen; instead, this was the culmination of hundreds of hours of work by dozens of people who care passionately about the White Salmon and the region it is in.

If passed, designation would include a total of 20 combined river miles on the main stem and Cascade Creek, including:

The 1.6-mile segment of the main stem of the White Salmon River from the headwaters on Mount Adams downstream to the Mount Adams wilderness boundary (WILD).

The 5.1-mile segment of Cascade Creek from its headwaters on Mount Adams downstream to the Mount Adams Wilderness boundary shall be administered as a wild river (WILD).

The 1.5-mile segment of Cascade Creek from the Mount Adams Wilderness boundary downstream to its confluence with the White Salmon River (SCENIC).

The 11.8-mile segment of the main stem of the White Salmon River from the Mount Adams Wilderness boundary downstream to the Gifford Pinchot National Forest boundary (SCENIC).

If passed, the White Salmon River would be the first wild and scenic river to be designated in the state of Washington since 1986. There are currently three other wild and scenic rivers in the state: the Lower White Salmon River, the Klickitat River, and the Skagit River. Washington has relatively few miles of designated Wild and Scenic river considering the number and quality of river resources in the state.



Billy Jones running 'Big Brother' on the White Salmon

photo by Scott Collins

Status of Whitewater Releases on the Chelan Gorge, Washington

By Tom O'Keefe and John Gangemi

American Whitewater continues work to provide whitewater releases on the Class V Chelan River Gorge run in eastern Washington starting in 2005.

The Chelan County PUD operates the nation's second largest non-federal, publicly owned hydro generating system including two projects on the Columbia River and one at the outlet of Lake Chelan. Although Lake Chelan is a natural lake, the first dam was constructed in 1892 to improve steamship navigation. By 1903 a new dam for hydroelectric production had been constructed to harness the energy of the lake's natural outflow as it drops 400 feet to the Columbia River. As it travels through a pipe from the reservoir to the powerhouse, the river bypasses the Chelan Gorge, a four mile reach of river with one concentrated Class V section of cascades, bedrock chutes, and large, deep pools. The substrate is very

large, with some boulders exceeding 20 feet in diameter.

The current federal license for this project expires in 2004 and American Whitewater intervened in the proceeding to represent recreational interests on a river that has never been accessible to boaters. In July 2000, American Whitewater worked with the utility to conduct a controlled flow study which demonstrated that the Gorge was not only navigable but also provided a unique whitewater opportunity not commonly found in the Pacific Northwest. American Whitewater Conservation Director John Gangemi advocated for an annual schedule of whitewater releases in the new 30 year license.

Despite the successful flow studies, Chelan PUD continued to have liability concerns with scheduled whitewater releases. Chelan is a public utility district. Lawsuits resulting from injuries or deaths caused by hydropower project operations would affect all the ratepayers. As a private landowner Chelan PUD is protected from liability suits under the state recreational use statute, but a recent case in Washington raised concerns that hydro operators are not protected by recreation statutes if they manipulate flows creating an "unnatural" condition. American Whitewater has continued its work with Chelan PUD to close this loophole in the Washington recreational statute.

Finally in April 2003 American Whitewater was able to achieve an agreement with Chelan PUD that satisfies their liability concerns while providing scheduled whitewater releases. American Whitewater agreed to forgo September releases for the initial three year period after license issuance and use the "credit in foregone power generation" to fund liability insurance for July releases. The value of the electricity for the canceled September releases will be calculated and used toward the cost of the insurance. The Chelan PUD is not required to release water for kayaking if the cost of liability insurance is more than the value of the energy from the foregone September releases.

Most of the parties, including American Whitewater have signed the settlement



Forrest Huebler nails super-boof during Chelan flow study.

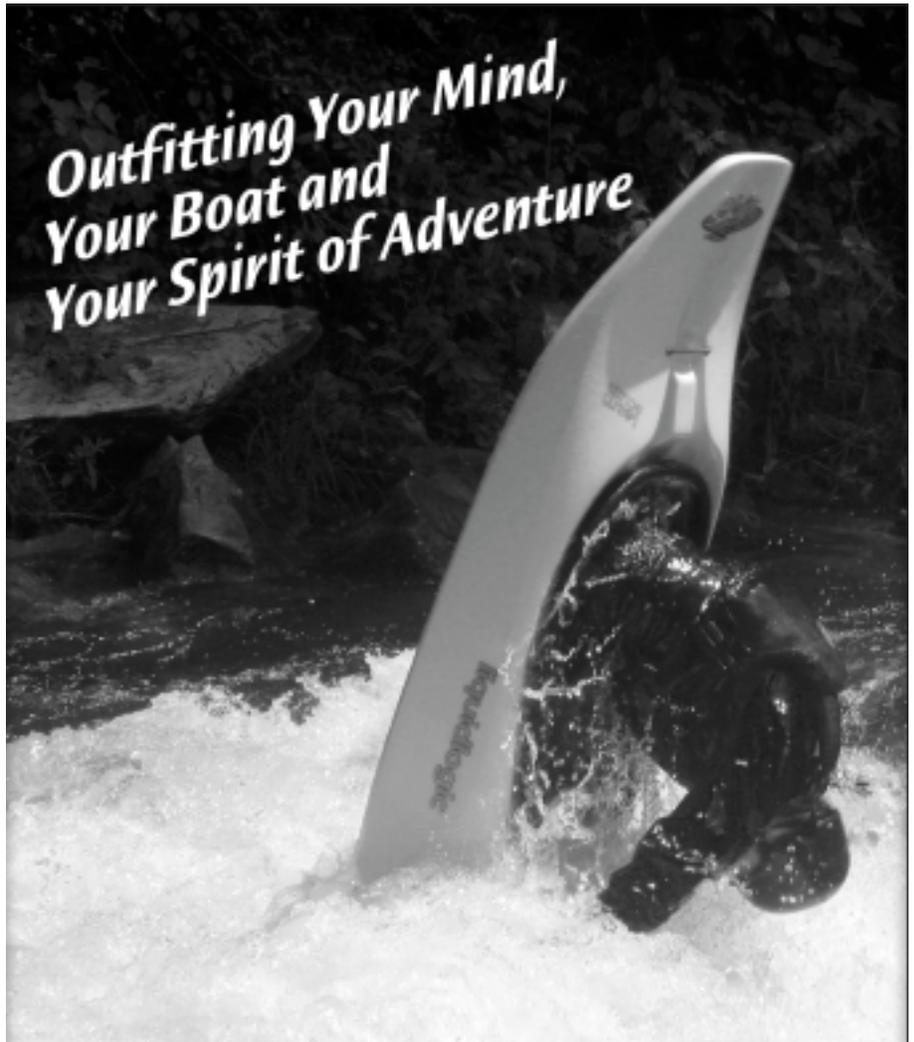
Photo John Gangemi

agreement. The state issued a 401 water quality certificate which was appealed by the tribes. At this point in time it is uncertain how the appeal will delay the licensing. We expect a new license to be issued by early 2004. Within one year, the Chelan PUD must begin scheduled releases and provide access to the public as part of a 3-year study on whitewater recreation. We are optimistic that scheduled releases will begin in 2005. Water releases for kayaking will be made on Saturday and Sunday of the second and fourth weekends of July. At least six boaters must make reservations before the release and be present by 9 AM on the day of the release for the water to be sent through the gorge. American Whitewater will announce the releases and provide necessary information to make a reservation. Keep in mind the Chelan Gorge is an expert-only run with serious consequences for mistakes.

There are two conditions under which no releases would occur – if we are in a drought year or if sufficient liability insurance can not be obtained. Results of the three-year trial period will be used to make a recommendation on future whitewater boating releases during the remainder of the license term.

For additional information on the Chelan Gorge and video clips of the rapids see <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/rivers/id/3144/>

continued on page 58



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PADDLING Clubs

...are the backbone of the whitewater community and a focal point for paddlers looking to meet others and plan trips with friends. Many clubs organize safety workshops, beginner classes, and other avenues for new paddlers to gain skills and make connections with more experienced whitewater folk. Clubs also create opportunities for members to work together on conservation projects or access issues – activities near and dear to the heart of AW's mission.

BBC

The Benscreek Canoe Club - The Little Engine That Could Getting some water in the Stonycreek River in Pennsylvania.

I was sitting in a room full of people thinking, "ho hum, another meeting for the Stony." But as I looked around, the gravity of the meeting began to sink in. A Pennsylvania state senator was sitting beside me, a congressional aide over my shoulder, a county commissioner up in front, the mayor of Johnstown behind me, and we were all meeting in the country home of one of the area's most successful industrialists. Interspersed with the regional luminaries were half a dozen members of the Benscreek Canoe Club (the BCC). We were the ones without neckties or socks; i.e., the ones wearing shorts and Tevas. We were the ones looking a little impatient to finish the talking and hit the river.

Actually there were over 70 people present, including

everyone from the Johnstown area who knows how to make big projects happen. Discussion was centered on finding \$2 million for the Stonycreek Initiative, a diverse collection of recreation projects in the Stonycreek Canyon. The cornerstone of the initiative is one that has consumed countless time and energy within the BCC for two decades: recreational releases from the Quemehoning Dam into the Stonycreek River. The initiative also includes a whitewater park, a trail system through the canyon, and cultural and historical sites in the area. The idea is to package the projects as a regional economic stimulus plan and present it to funding sources for consideration. And after years of hard work, it is finally sinking in that we are going to achieve our goal. There will be releases on the Stony next year.

This dream started in the 1980s – probably during one of the Stonycreek Rendezvous weekends. These were weekend events sponsored by BCC that were simply an open invitation to other paddling groups to come and sample the rivers in the Johnstown area. Although the rendezvous is always scheduled in the spring to allow for the best chance of good water levels, the weather is not always cooperative. I imagine the visiting boaters were sitting

around a bonfire trying to get warm, looking irritably over at an almost dry riverbed. As the night wore on, one of the locals let slip that there was a big dam just upstream with lots of water behind it. The resulting righteous indignation spawned an idea: Some of that water should be released back into the river so boaters could have some fun.

Thus began the long journey to the Stonycreek Initiative. The early activists were not very sophisticated. They soon learned that a steel company owned the Quemehoning Dam to supply industrial water to plants in Johnstown. You can imagine the scene when a couple of boaters called up the steel company and requested that they release some water into the river so that boaters could have some fun. The fact that the steel mills were all on the verge of bankruptcy didn't help either.

As the 1980s faded into the 90s, the steel and coal industry in Johnstown faded too. Mill after mill was shutting down laying off thousands of workers and leaving a legacy of brown fields and polluted rivers. It seemed the Benscreek Canoe Club was doomed to the same fate. Its members were aging and becoming less involved. Finally, after holding a rendezvous that



Feature: Paddling Clubs continued



First ever run of Border Dam on the Stonycreek River. Boaters unknown.

Photo property of Cambria Somerset Authority

only a handful of boaters showed up for, the members decided to affiliate with the much larger Three Rivers Paddling Club in Pittsburgh, essentially becoming the Johnstown division.

On the surface Johnstown was in a depression. But behind the scene, something was happening. Environmental groups were forming to try to clean up the rivers. The local congressman, Jack Murtha, bought into the idea that rivers were an untapped asset in the region and began finding federal dollars to help clean them up. And during the huge boom in the popularity of kayaking that occurred at that time, a handful of young locals took up the sport.

We all know how kayaking leads to a passion for rivers, but these guys were special. They were young, energetic, idealistic, and way too naïve to realize how big the battle was going to be. And they were joiners. Unlike so many other gen-xers, they embraced the existing political structure and set out to make a difference. They started by reviving and taking over the BCC. They got involved in the groups that were working to clean up the rivers. They went after and landed jobs in local government that could get them

inside the decision making process. And they revived the Quemehoning Dam issue.

The dam itself was going through a period of transition. The steel company was bankrupt and was trying to sell off assets. The Johnstown Water Authority was very interested in adding the property to their municipal water system. There was also a growing public demand that the reservoir be brought into public ownership. Benscreek members were at the front of the charge to create a two county authority to buy and operate the dam.

You would think that once the dam was in public ownership, it would become a little easier to ask the operators to release water for public recreation. Easier to ask maybe, but the answer remained the same. For one thing, the 100-year-old dam has no reliable mechanism to release water into the river. Second, board members of the Cambria Somerset Authority were stuck in the mentality that heavy industry was the only way to add value to the local economy. It took several years to drive home the message that scheduled releases could bring a lot of people to the region along with a substantial economic boost.

In 1998 Benscreek decided to demonstrate the potential that the Stonycreek has for bringing in river enthusiasts. They approached American Whitewater to promote the rendezvous nationwide. They secured a larger site and set it up as a small festival. The result was overwhelming. Local businesses couldn't help but notice all the boats on out of state vehicles in their parking lots, as close to a thousand paddlers showed up.

It has taken a huge effort over the past five years to illustrate this point: the Stonycreek River is a regional asset that can and should be developed for public use. Members of the BCC have been tireless in taking the issue on. Whether it's mobilizing boaters for public meetings to establish recreational uses for the dam and reservoir, or traveling to Harrisburg to meet with the state in search of funding to modify the dam, they get the job done. Finally last year, at a meeting with the Cambria Somerset Authority board, we were told that if we do the work and raise the money to modify the dam, CSA would release water. I think that they believed that there were too many conditions for a group as small as the BCC to overcome and that the issue was effectively dead.

In August the BCC and AW sent out requests for proposals to ten engineering firms for feasibility work. We met with six companies at the dam in September and received proposals ranging in price from \$19,000 to \$150,000 to determine feasibility and cost. We chose the proposal from Gannett Fleming for \$34,500 and approached the state for funding. Our grant was approved in June this year for \$16,000. We put together the matching \$17,500 with contributions from American Whitewater, the Benscreek Canoe Club, Three Rivers Paddling Club, the Community Foundation of Johnstown, Pa. Environmental Council, local watershed conservancies, Rocky Mountain Kayak, Buckstown Canoe, local rafting outfitters, and county tourism agencies.

Gannett Fleming has been working on this study since July and has provided some preliminary findings: Depending on how parameters are established, there is sufficient water in the Quemehoning Dam to provide recreational releases every weekend throughout the year. They will have suggestions for modifying the dam and approximate costs before October 15, so we can get a grant application in to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for construction money. We hope to install a release structure in the summer of 2004.

The Stonycreek Initiative has embraced the work that the Benscreek Canoe Club and American Whitewater have done to bring us to the brink of success. The movers and shakers in the room will find a way to get the money to complete these projects. It's seven o'clock and I've just had an amazing conversation with the president of the board of CSA. He's promised a release for the rendezvous in April, and is ready to authorize weekend releases through blow-off valves in their waterline as soon as possible. The Benscreek members huddle to review developments. There's only one thing that works to release this kind of excitement. Although it gets dark at 8:30 and it will be after 8 by the time we get to the put in, we head for the river.

Although Benscreek Canoe Club lists over 150 members on their roster, less than fifty are active. To achieve this kind of success with so few people requires a mix of talent and commitment that we are very lucky to have. Here's the recipe that has worked so well in this successful story (in alphabetical order):

- | | |
|---|--|
| Mark Antonik - the idea man,
and head cheerleader | Bruce Penrod - old man wisdom |
| Joel Bannister - instigator | Jeff Prycl - deep pockets |
| Rick Bloom - works well with others | Mike Quinn - not a boater but writes a
mean grant proposal |
| Steve Buncich - local
government connections | Koushic Ray - karmic relief |
| Mike Burk - organizer | Jason Rigby - youthful exuberance |
| Scott Cuppett - the politician | Mike and Kerrie Ringler - material
support |
| Ben Faas - the engineer | Eric Robertson - hydrologist |
| Clark Fisher - the computer wiz | Barry Tuscano - AW connection |
| Skip & Adelle Picking - leadership | Denny Williamson - historian |
| Steve Podratsky - executive type | Todd Wilson - heavy lifting |
| | Brad Zearfoss - inside job |



OZARK

by Bill "Fish" Herring

The Virtual Canoe Club. It was centuries ago in "internet time," or 1991 to be exact, when a one page web site about a certain nerdy-looking college student and his new twelve-foot long whitewater kayak first appeared on the University of Arkansas' fledgling World Wide Web server. At that time, it joined only a few such "personal" paddling sites around the country, digital tributes to the whitewater adventures of a handful of paddlers-slash-computer-programmers. At that time, displaying images on a web site was a brand new concept. Combined with falling prices on photo scanners, that innovation spurred the growth of personal paddling pages, where a paddler with a rudimentary knowledge of HTML and an account on a university or government server could be an instant online celebrity, at least to the other computer geeks who managed to find their way to the paddler's web shrine.

Fast-forward a dozen years to 2003, where that tiny personal paddling web site (then called "Bill's Paddling Page") has evolved into an extensive online guide for whitewater in the Arkansas Ozark region that is visited by more than 300 people per day. It also features an email list started in 1992 with five paddlers that now has

275 subscribers who post dozens of messages per day when the local rivers are running.

The history of the Ozark Whitewater Page (www.ozarkpages.com/whitewater), as it is now known, is similar to that of several popular regional online whitewater communities around the world. Today paddlers can find information, photographs, rainfall and river data, and, maybe most importantly, other boaters at these Internet gathering places. Many have evolved into virtual paddling clubs, where club "meetings" take the form of informal streams of messages delivered to paddlers' email boxes or posted on web-based forums every day.

A Regional Focus

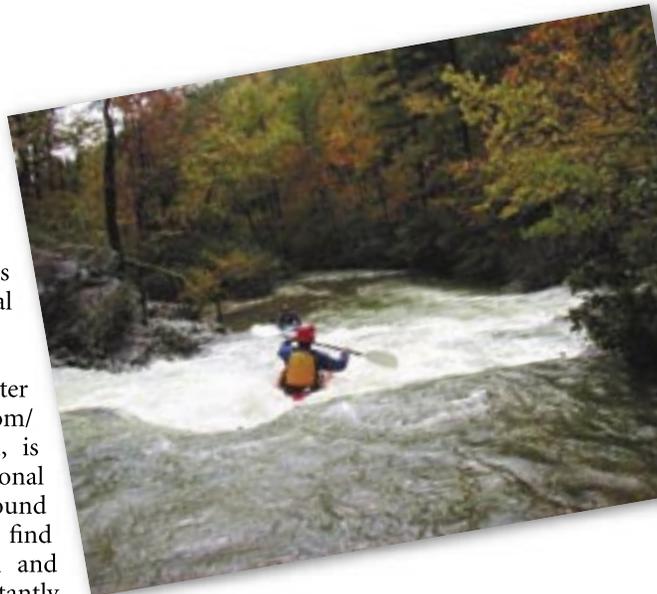
Regional online communities help bring boaters in the real world together by giving them an easy means of staying in touch with other paddlers as well as with the latest information about whitewater in their area. Wayne Mercier, the webmaster of the Northeast Paddlers' Message Board (www.npmb.com), a web forum that has over 1700 active registered users and 500 unique visitors each day, says that the NPMB serves the area's paddling

community by providing a place for paddlers to meet and exchange views and information on a daily basis. "The Northeast focus of the site makes it easy for paddlers to hook up for paddling outings, sell used gear, and share information about common experiences," says Mercier.

Participants in regional online forums form tight-knit communities that can function much like traditional paddling clubs. For example, organized, real-world events such as pool sessions, group paddling excursions, and even rodeos and races tend to grow out of the interaction between paddlers in these virtual worlds. Mercier says several pool sessions have been organized by paddlers on his web site. "The forums really help folks make the connections and get the critical mass of paddlers needed to make the sessions work."

Regional web sites also help paddlers from outside an area learn more before they visit. "Boatingbeta.com provides information intended to make boaters' visits to Asheville more pleasurable. It focuses on what I want to know when I go road tripping elsewhere," says Chris Bell, webmaster of Boatingbeta.com, a North Carolina web site where traffic has tripled in the past year to more than 300 visitors per day.

Regional online communities often have a synergistic relationship with more traditional paddling clubs. Mercier says that discussions on NPMB have helped provide input and suggestions for existing events in the paddling community. He feels that NPMB has a symbiotic relationship with paddling clubs as well as with other online paddling communities.



"In my mind, Mountainbuzz is the perfect advertising vehicle for Colorado paddle clubs - it is free and highly targeted," says Brian Gardel, webmaster of Mountainbuzz.com and proprietor of www.sidetrips.com. Gardel has built several features into Mountainbuzz that help Colorado area clubs publicize their events, such as an events calendar, a news page, a paddle clubs forum, and a page for links to club sites and other resources on the Web.

Discussions on the Ozark Whitewater Page mailing list help build awareness of events planned by that area's largest paddling club, the Arkansas Canoe Club (www.arkansascanoeclub.com). Monthly club chapter meetings, paddling clinics, and the club's annual paddler rendezvous are all announced on the mailing list, where they reach a mixed audience of club and non-club members. This free "advertising" helps hook local paddlers up with the club, supplementing the club's own online forum, which is very active as well.



Paddling Clubs Go Digital

In fact, most traditional paddling clubs have developed successful online communities of their own. Club web pages that include calendars of events and photo galleries are now ubiquitous. Mailing lists and Web-based discussion forums are common as well, and, advertised in print newsletters and at club sponsored events, participation in these forums often grows very quickly. "I think it's a great tool where folks who may be unfamiliar with an event can get information ahead of time and feel good when they get there because they've already made some friends online," says Dave Robertson, Treasurer of the Arkansas Canoe Club and an active participant in its online forums.

Andy Kravetz, a member of the Missouri Whitewater Association (www.missouriwhitewater.org) and co-webmaster of the club's message board, points out that online communities often make financial sense for clubs as well. "When things change, as they often do, the message board can immediately let people know about it. The cost of online communications is much less than mass mailings, and it allows us to better adapt to unforeseen circumstances."

Traditional clubs can leverage the Internet to expand their geographical reach. Kravetz says, "it is the modern-day water cooler. I think it has transformed the MWA from a primarily Saint Louis oriented group to one that is really accessible to paddlers from all over Missouri and even the Midwest region." This is especially helpful in areas like the Midwest, where whitewater is not exactly a widespread phenomenon and the population density of paddlers is generally very low.

In addition to these positives, Dave Robertson cautions that online forums can have unintended negative impacts on club activities as well. "More than bringing the paddling community together, I think the ACC forum has brought the online message board community together." Robertson points out that, because some members have nearly constant interaction online, they don't seem to make as much of an effort to come to ACC events. "I miss interacting with some of the folks that I used to see at the events."

continued on page 56



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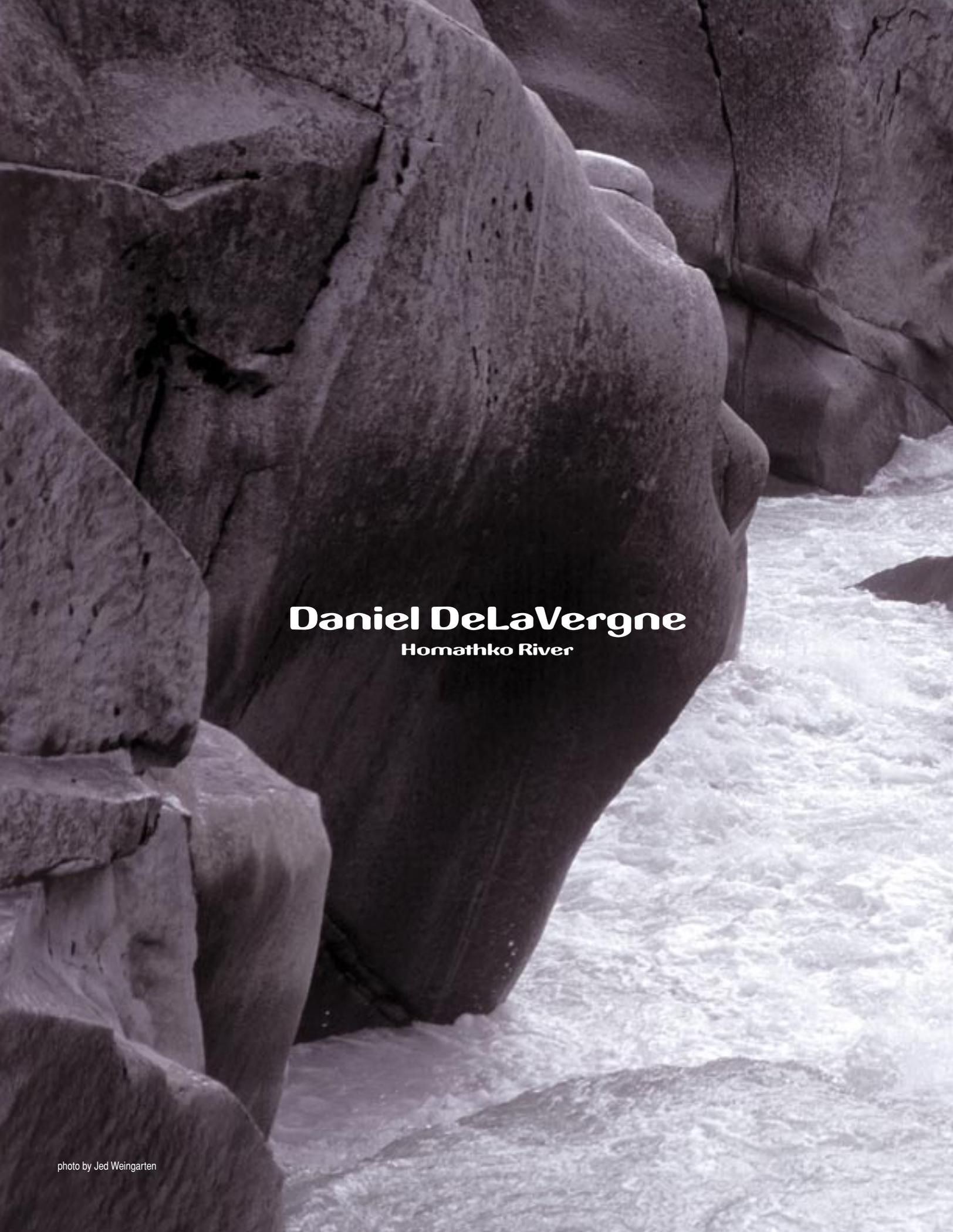


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WKCC

Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club's Fifth Annual Safety Weekend

On April 26th and 27th 2003, the Willamette Kayak and Canoe Club (WKCC) put on the fifth annual Safety weekend. As in years past, the event was a success in that each participant came away with a smile and some new skills.

Whitewater boating has inherent risks. How we manage those risks may mean the difference between a good day on the water, a scary story, and a tragedy. Sadly, a majority of boaters have literally no safety training. The WKCC has made teaching safe boating a priority.

Training and safety certification opportunities exist through a number of organizations. Some people are interested in an affordable and perhaps more approachable avenue to learn about basic whitewater safety. The WKCC Safety Weekend is affordable for most everyone, and there are scholarships for those in need. Since no certification is offered, the schedule is somewhat more flexible. The flexibility allows extra care to assure that each participant is comfortable doing hands-on exercises before moving on.

All instructors for WKCC Safety Weekend are volunteers. Some are also Rescue 3 instructors, some are EMTs, and some are even rescue professionals. In addition to instructors, each participant takes an active role in making the weekend a success. Each person is assigned one or more jobs for the weekend and pulls together to make it a success; it always works out just great.

The weekend begins with team-building warm-up games then we explore some good stretches for boating. Next we teach and learn several knots and anchors and why they are used. Once everyone is comfortable with knots, we move to mechanical advantage systems including Z-drags. Safety around ropes is stressed. The group is then split into three groups that rotate through three exercises on vertical rescue and emergency rappelling, first aid and CPR, and kayak vertical pin rescue. After these sessions, if we get done early enough, we take a short paddle trip, then cook dinner and sit around the fire playing music, enjoying a cool refreshing beverage, and telling tall tales.



On the second day, we review stretching and warm-up, then revisit Z-drags. We cover basic hydrology and river reading then coordinate our river signals. Next it's on to dry-land throw bag practice. After lunch we put on our dry gear and do some swiftwater practice. We teach kayak-assisted rescues, and everyone gets to practice swimming safely through a small (Class II) rapid. We practice shallow water crossing techniques, both solo and as a group. If people wish, they can try to "rescue" a "victim" and get them back across the river. We sometimes set up an artificial strainer and have participants swim over it correctly or try to get them out if they don't. If time is available, we set up a rescue scenario and let participants go through the process of setting

up a rescue team and effecting a rescue.

While WKCC offers no certification and our class is taught entirely by volunteers, participants leave with more training and knowledge than perhaps 95% of all boaters. It brings me peace of mind to know that after every WKCC Safety Weekend, it is more and more likely that people I boat with will have enough skill to rescue me if I should end up in a bad place and need help. Everyone who boats in our area will benefit by the new skills of WKCC Safety Weekend participants. If you see someone on the river wearing a WKCC Team Safety Weekend T-shirt, rest assured, you are paddling with someone you can trust.



RWC

by Brian Mutchler

The Richmond Whitewater Club is a loose organization of raft guides, kayakers, and whitewater enthusiasts dedicated to fun, fundraising, and promoting water safety and conservation on our home river, The James River in Richmond, VA. We provide a website where Richmond paddlers exchange information, swap gear, and find others of like mind for river trips. In conjunction with other non-profit organizations, we work to ensure the beautiful James River Park System remains boater-friendly. Current projects include river clean-up, sponsorship of a water safety campaign, and securing a public take-out on the North side of James River in downtown Richmond. Of course,

we travel to other rivers as well and will be entering a raft team for the fourth straight year in the Upper Gauley Animal Race. Below is a trip report from an eventful 2001 trip to the Lower Youghiogheny River in Ohio, PA. Of course, we don't always swim... it just makes for more interesting stories. Yeah.

Cucumber Tosses Six into Summer Salad

When the Richmond Whitewater Club heads to the mountains there's bound to be trouble. On most occasions, a little Pepto-Bismol is enough to bring things back to order, but not so on this summer outing. Bad omens filled the air on August 18th when neophyte trip leader, Brian Mutchler, arrived at the site with Elyse 'Floats Like a Brickhouse' Englehart, only to find an

unnamed 'club founder' stumbling into the path of their on-coming headlights mumbling something about a sushi condiment, "Wasaabi?"

The next morning there was talk of strange dreams and trance-like states among members the night before. Lisa "Likes the River, but Hates to be Wet" Woolfolk shook her head in disbelief when confronted with the horrid images that leapt from the mind of her tent neighbor, Ingrid Shannon. In an attempt to clear the negative energy clinging to the members, club medicine woman Brenda Stanley went into action. In a practice local river runners described as, "unfortunate and misguided," Sorceress Stanley unintentionally Yinned when she should have Yanged, turning normally stand-up river guide David Bickett into a whining Nellie before his maiden voyage with boat No-name.



With the hex firmly in place, the 4-boat expedition set out on the mighty Lower Youghiogheny. All boats passed through the entrance rapid with ease. Spanky was oar rigged by Steve and Elyse. Lucky (the shredder) had Bev and Bill Kindt to guide it downstream. Kiss My had its butt-flashing owner Ingrid, Sorceress Stanley, and Lisa at her helm. Boat No-name, soon to be rechristened The Muncher, and later rechristened Moby was guided by owner Dave Bickett and powered by Correspondent Mutchler and Dave's long time associate and now former friend Daryl.

Witnesses report that Spanky had a smooth run to the right of the offensive Cucumber, building confidence in the entire club. The Kiss My ladies also navigated past the phallus-like stone with minimal jostling. Our luck would change swiftly, however, as Bill and Bev flipped Shredder and plunged into the 64° bath.

The outwardly confident Bickett approached the rapid with consternation and caution, his neck straining as he searched the fluid terrain for safe passage. Daryl sat blissfully unaware he was entering his first Class IV rapid, quietly regretting those extra onions he had added to the morning meal. The right corner of the raft toppled over the Cucumber dropping left-front Daryl into the hole. His last image was of his guide and former friend lofting above him and plunging into the deep. I chuckled at the site of the sudden mayhem before being tossed into the watery salad of the Yough. Day one saw five club members swim.

Day two a chill was in the air. The misty morning air kept the sun from the banks of the Yough, sending most members to Brenda's stash of warm gear. The Sorceress brushed aside Bickett's accusations of a blessing turned curse, but she none-the-less passed on the morning ceremonials. Miss Englehart silently disapproved of the lack of respect paid to the river gods that Sunday morning, but she herself remained derelict in her duties to appease them. And for that she would pay dearly.

Two boats were taken down the river that morning, Kiss My and Spanky. Roll Me Over was retired and Bev and Bill ran shuttle instead. A shaken Beverly was heard to say, "Bill, the only falling water I want to see today is going to be flowing under a house." And with that, the happy couple made their way to Frank Lloyd Wright's famous 'Falling Water' for a day of architectural bliss. Dave, also shaken by a swim and not wanting to hustle to inflate his raft in the cool morning, left The Muncher snugly in Daryl's SUV.

The two fools at Spanky's helm glided past the Cucumber with skill and grace. The river, impressed with their bravery and respect, offered smooth passage. Kiss My was not so lucky. The gear-laden vessel smacked the Cucumber sending the boat reeling and Ingrid swimming. Cucumber had claimed its sixth victim.



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Feature: Paddling Clubs continued

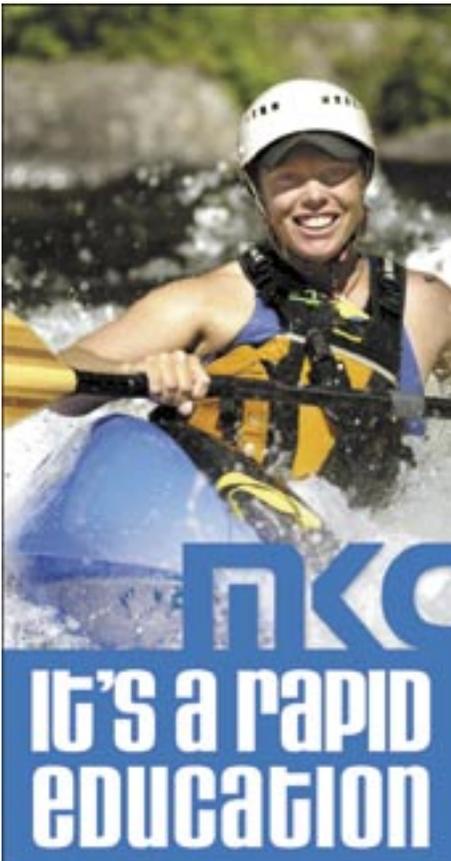
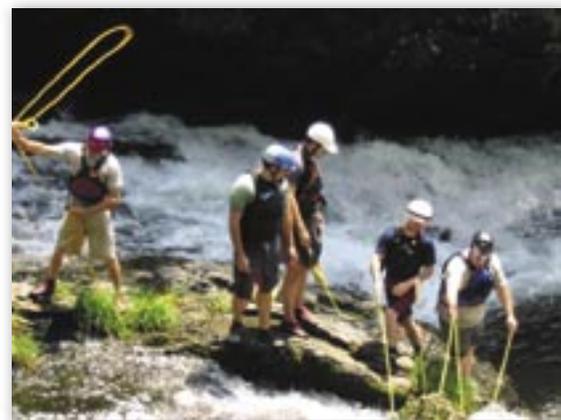
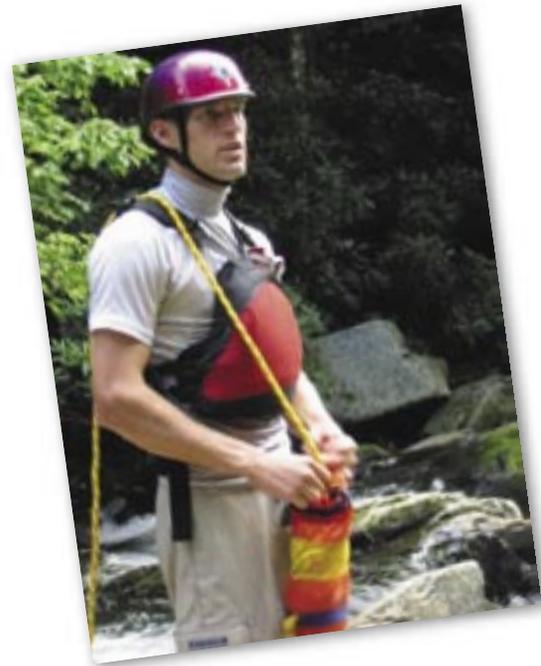
AWC

by Bill Tarleton

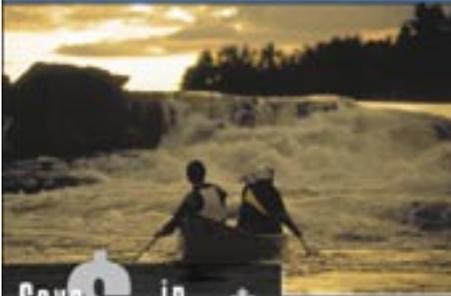
The Atlanta Whitewater Club is an active, diverse group of paddlers who live in or near the Atlanta Metro area. As we all know, some of the best whitewater in the country is just 2 short hours from Atlanta, and this wild-eyed bunch gets its gas money's worth. All year round you can usually find someone from the AWC on the Class III-IV Chattooga, Ocoee, Tellico, Nantahala, Little River Canyon, or one of many various creeks nearby, as well as the Class II Cartecay, Upper Chattahoochee, Hiawassee, and Tuckasegee. Atlanta also sits on several whitewater options in town on those many big rain days: Sweetwater Creek, Sope Creek, Rottenwood Creek, the Yellow River, Chattahoochee River, and several others are within an approximately 10 mile radius of downtown.

The AWC exhibits a laid-back feel that many find a welcome contrast to the fast-paced atmosphere of the city. This is a place where outdoor-loving, like-minded people can hang out, paddle, and tell stories. Monthly meetings take place at the Garden Hills Community Center in Buckhead that has a laid back woodsy ambiance. The meetings always involve some form of entertainment, be it a safety discussion, rope throw contest, home-brewing demonstration/wine tasting, or conservation talk from a local environmentalist. When there are conservation or river access issues such as the recent Chattooga discussion, the conservation leaders in the club urge members to write the rangers en masse. On a lighter note, good beer is always welcome at meetings - as one member puts it, 'we are a drinking club with a paddling problem'.

Paddling, however, is definitely the core activity that binds this motley crew together. Skill levels vary within the club from beginner to expert. The club is a great place to enter the sport and find others within your skill level to form a close group



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of paddling friends. As well as countless weekly unofficial trips, the club organizes many formal club trips throughout the year such as the bi-annual Three Rivers Weekend. On these weekends, Saturdays bring a group Class III/IV trip as well as a Class II trip followed by a massive group campout. Sunday, paddlers all get together on a Class II/III river. Once a year the club organizes a downriver race on the Cartecay to raise funds and attract new members.

The club is active in American Whitewater, gladly donating on behalf of the AWC to the AW general fund on a regular basis. Several members are regular contributors of pictures, video, and line description to the 'Rivers' section of the AW website. Conservation is an underlying motivator in the club with activities such as the yearly

Chattooga Clean-up Trip and a recent Cartecay Clean-up Trip.

Another thing worth mentioning is the AWC's use of the internet to stay connected. The club has an online presence utilizing an email list-serve group to organize the many unofficial weekend trips, river level info, and bragging rights, I mean trip reports.

I have been a member for about 4 years. I was welcomed to join at a local roll practice, and instantly found a good group of paddling buddies. I have met life-long friends and shared some of the best years of my life with these guys. As with most things, you get out of the club what you put into it. I don't think I would have it any other way.

continued on page 52



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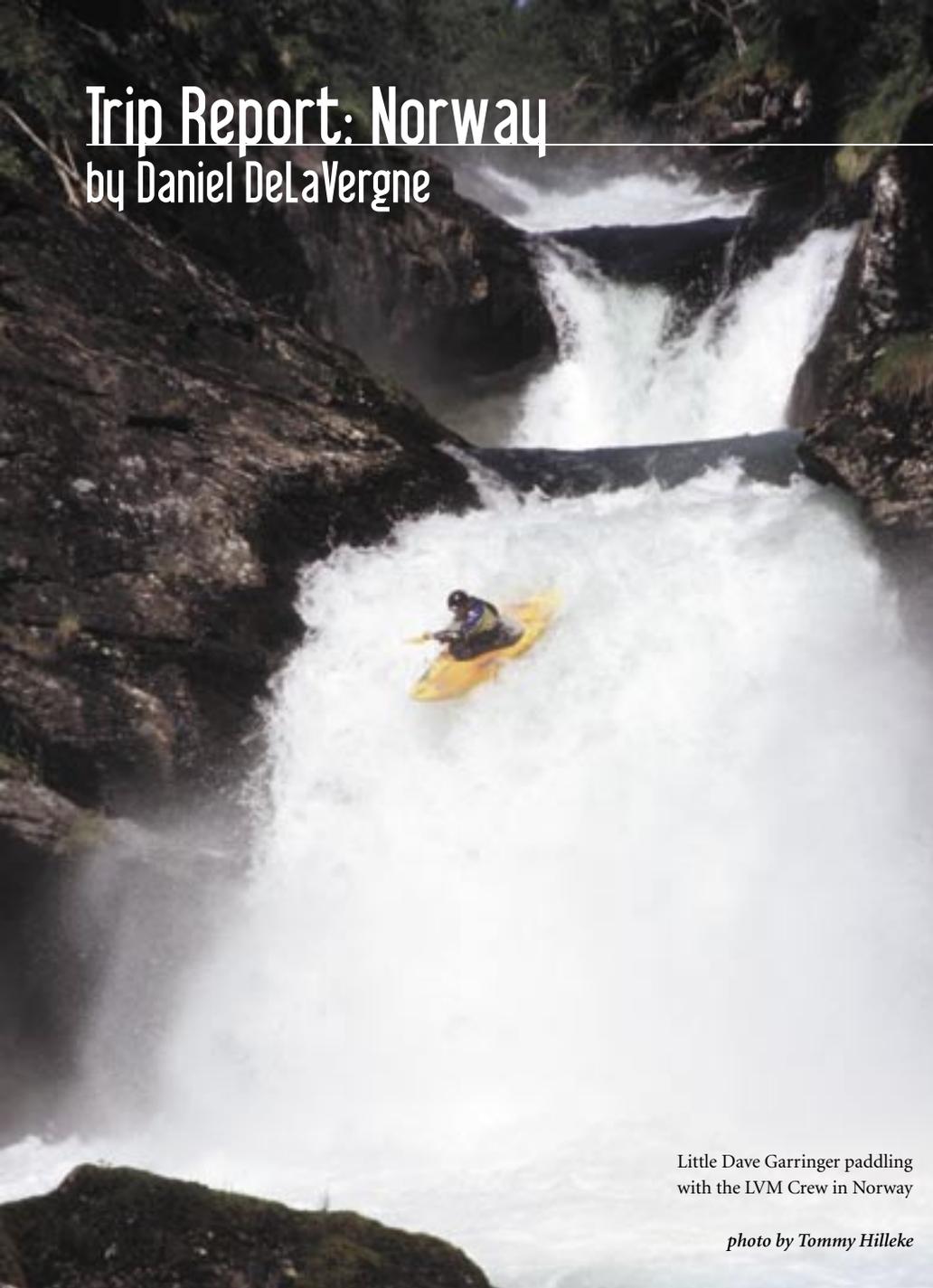
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Trip Report: Norway

by Daniel DeLaVergne



Little Dave Garringer paddling with the LVM Crew in Norway

photo by Tommy Hilleke

The LVM crew, always looking for the next great land of creeks, waterfalls, and rivers, set their sights on a grand expedition to the Scandinavian heaven of Norway. After a bit of research we decided to visit in the month of July.

We rallied a crew of 12 and planned our movement from the States to the various jump off points in Norway. The Pyrahna Crew flew to England then took a multi-day ferry/cruise ship to the bustling port town of Bergen. The Vermont crew flew from Boston and the Southeast boys departed from Atlanta. All parties met in the whitewater town of Sjoa.

After enjoying a pleasant stay at Fleming Schmidt's Kayak Camp, we set out on a large circular route to explore the various regions of the "ball" of Norway (if you look at a map you will see the southern "ball" and the Northern "arm" of Norway.) For

this trip we decided to learn the geography and riparian layout of the more accessible and larger lower region.

"The ball" contains a variety of river types; from glacial valleys full of steep rocky creeks and big water canyons to costal fjords fed by high granite snowfields. The boys paddled the burley Sjoli (Shirley) at stomping high water the first day, only suffering one swim, one contusion to the face, and one lost paddle. Satisfied, we headed out to the Rauma Valley.

The Rauma Valley, arguably the most scenic in all of Norway, features spectacular granite walls, large waterfalls, and big ol' rapids. The river was lower than usual, allowing all of the rapids to be run by our crew (usually three are portaged). At the takeout we found a tricky Class V+ entrance into a vertical 50-foot waterfall. The drop had only been run by two people prior to our trip, Fleming Schmidt and Jay Kinkaid, the former being the only one to run the entrance rapid. Well of course redneck Tommy Hilleke and Indiana John Grace decided to have a go at the whole piece. As to be expected, they claimed they never felt themselves land.

The next day we went for a repeat, John Grace learned why the third rapid is generally portaged, and another five flyers signed up for the 50-footer. They flew off the top, landed, and (as to be expected) they all distinctively felt the water at the bottom. Sore backs, cracked ribs, and near spinal compression all reared their ugly head at the bottom of Rauma falls.

After Armageddon at the Rauma, we headed to the world of costal fjords and explored such great runs as the Bygndelsalva, Langdalselva and Myrkdalselva. Our next stop, the adventure sport town of Voss, provided steep gradients and beautiful scenery.

While Norway came up short on the longer, multi-day trips, the geography made up for that with short and steep rivers everywhere. The LVM crew will return again and again to enjoy the bountiful whitewater of this Scandinavian Gem. 

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Feature: Paddling Clubs continued

MVP

by Joe Fiala

Membership Has its Rewards Merrimack Valley Paddlers

Whitewater paddling naturally lends itself to companionship. From safety to shuttling, the need for fellow paddlers is part of our sport. In fact, lack of a partner delayed my pursuit of whitewater kayaking for several years. Then I hooked up with the Merrimack Valley Paddlers and my life hasn't been the same since. I thought I was joining a group of boaters, but it turned out to be much more.

The Merrimack Valley Paddlers formed in 1976 by a group of boaters looking for camaraderie on New England rivers. While based in southern New Hampshire, the MVP has nearly 500 members from throughout New England. While the majority are kayakers, we have a large contingent of open boaters. The sport evolves with the types of craft used and we see more rafts, "shredders", and tandems each season. This is a club with diverse interests and an "I'll try anything once" attitude.

An event many members have braved more than once is the annual New Year's Day paddle on the Winnepesaukee River. It began 20 years ago as part of an effort to publicize the recreational value of the river, which was being threatened by a hydro developer. Eventually, the plan to dam the river and divert the water was scrapped and our club likes to take a certain amount of credit for saving this popular stretch of whitewater.

This frigid plunge is a favorite of the local, and even national, press who prominently feature photos of the icicle-laden beards of some of the stalwart paddlers. January 1, 2003 saw over 80 paddlers risk the brisk waters to rejoin their friends on the river. But, like everything the MVP club does, paddling is just part of the story. The

après-river scene consists of a warm hall, hot coffee, cold beer, and more pasta than in all of Boston's North End. I occasionally wonder if river-running is secondary to the social aspect of these MVP get-togethers!

Every event the Merrimack Valley Paddlers participate in, be it a weekend bash or day run, begins and ends on "MVP time". Everyone knows what I mean, but no one can define it. For example, if the plan is to meet at the Took take-out at 12, you can be sure everyone will still be there at 12:30. Chances are no one will be wet before 1:00. Somehow our need to socialize is unstoppable and must be substantially complete before we begin our day on the water. Of course, getting a late start disturbs no one because we are on MVP time, so it's understood that it will take between 1 and 7 hours to complete our run. If you paddle with the MVP just leave your watch at home.

Perhaps our demographic profile explains our inertia problem when it comes to getting busy. For the most part, we could easily call ourselves the "Over the Hill Gang". At 43, I am likely to be the youngster in a group of 8. This came as a big surprise to me when I first joined the group. I strive to maintain a young attitude and thought my excursion into Class III-IV whitewater would get me elder statesman status. Yeah, right. One of my early mentors is Allan, a 67-year-old doctor who loves creeking and is working on his front loop. Hope is a 60-ish psychotherapist from Boston who runs Class IV drops with the ease most women her age experience swimming laps at the Y. I've run a 15-foot dam on the Ashuelot with both Allan and Hope.

The MVP is largely a group of middle-aged, middle income, slightly out of shape athletes who enjoy paddling as much for the camaraderie as for the challenge and excitement. Part of the challenge for us is to convert the non-believers. We hold frequent (and free) training sessions. We offer rolling sessions all year and arrange several "newbie" runs every season. Unlike some clubs, we will paddle with anyone properly equipped and the desire to learn.

There's no such thing as "wasting" a day paddling with a beginner. And, in spite of dire warnings from another club, we will actually run with unrated paddlers. The way we see it, the more paddlers out there, the more friends we have.

Lest you think we are a bunch of floaters, let me assure you that there is plenty of competitive spirit within the club. Every outing naturally results in some playful one-upmanship. Running a tough line, boofing a big rock, or surfing the unsurfable wave are opportunities we are all in search of. Lineups at holes, waves, and eddies aren't only for socializing. That's where we teach, learn, practice, and size up the competition. Of course, there is always a time and place to put all that practice on display. For us, it is the Annual MVP Pig Roast and Rodeo.

The Pig Roast is the largest event sponsored by the Merrimack Valley Paddlers and is typical of our get-togethers—part paddling, part party. The event is held every August, at the farm of a member, along the Pemigewasset River in Bristol, NH. The weekend features camping, beer, food, beer, bands, beer, a bonfire, beer, and free scenic plane rides. Oh, and some paddling. The competition this year began several weeks early with a challenge made to the star of the day—the pig. Laurie, a Harvard radiologist and vegetarian, proclaimed that her "tofu pig" would win the taste contest over the real deal. Both sides have claimed victory, and though a vegetarian myself, I have vowed to stay out of this one.

The Rodeo competition is quite serious and features the best paddlers from throughout New England. Occasionally, contestants advance to the rarified water of the top rodeo boaters. Eric Jackson is a long-time MVP'er (once a member, always a member!). Dustin Urban, currently one of the best, won his first rodeo competition at the 1998 MVP Pig Roast. In true MVP spirit, the winner takes home the cheesiest prizes the club can afford.

If there is a serious side to our vocation it is conservation and maintenance of our

waterways. The Merrimack Valley Paddlers have an active contingent of members devoted to keeping rivers open for recreation. As whitewater paddlers, we owe a great debt of gratitude to George May, Bill and Joan Hildreth, and Tom Christopher of American Whitewater for their efforts in developing working relationships with the various users of our regional rivers.

Thanks to folks like these we are fortunate to have 511 scheduled release dates on rivers such as the Kennebec, Dead, Rapid, and Deerfield. Though hardly local rivers, the MVP is likely to be the largest group of boaters on any of these runs. In fact, this year we won a raft for the club by having the most members at the Deerfield who were also American Whitewater members.

The Merrimack Valley Paddlers is much more than a group of folks who paddle together. We are a club committed to advancing the sport of whitewater paddling through education, activism, competition, and inclusiveness. If we manage to make a bunch of new friends and have a great time doing it, well that's just the way it'll have to be.



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Feature: Paddling Clubs continued

GCP

by Cindy Winslow

Gold Country Paddlers - Lotus, California

Had you passed by the women's bathroom at Elk Creek Campground on the Klamath River in Northern California on the Saturday night of Labor Day weekend just after sunset, you'd have noticed a child-size camping chair perched on the window sill. Not an hour later, you'd have seen a white teddy bear sitting in that same chair, viewing his domain from the back of a life-sized, fake cougar mounted to the rooftop of the campground's recreation room. Meanwhile, you'd find John sitting chairless on the cooler at the edge of the circle of paddlers sharing their American/Mexican potluck, wondering where his chair had been hidden this time.

You have to admit, John deserved it. First, he announced upon arrival that whenever he goes camping, people always hide his chair; an open invitation to do it again. Second, he and his chair were an absurd couple. John was one of the tallest, longest

legged members of the 50 or so Gold Country Paddlers who chose to join us that weekend, and he brought this ridiculously small chair. On the rare moments he was able to retrieve the chair and sit in it before it was stolen again, his knees hit his chin. He claimed that the chair was designed for the astronauts because it was so light and compact; we all agreed it must have been quite the salesman who talked a 6'4" man into buying a 6" square chair on the grounds that it was astronaut-like. Either that or John was just the kind of guy who people loved to fool, because he took it so graciously.

Gracious: a good way to describe so many members of the Gold Country Paddlers. Today I watched a guy named Joe snatch a woman's paddle out of the current and paddle with two paddles upstream about 50 yards in a swift moving current to reach her. He and several other Gold Country Paddlers had been helping her and her friend all day down their first Class III run, describing the lines, providing encouragement, being patient during scouts or while she mustered her strength, leading or sweeping or bow rescuing or towing or providing a Hand-of-God as needed. Joe got within one eddy downstream of her with her paddle but the

current was too strong to paddle all the way up to her eddy, where she sat tired, cautious and maybe a little frightened in her boat. Joe climbed out, walked up the shore, and graciously handed her the lost paddle. Meanwhile, her friend swam, was towed to shore, and given a ride in an IK down to her boat, which had been rescued along with her paddle by yet another GCP'er. Gracious and humble heroes, every one of them, and well rewarded – the new boaters had an unforgettable time and so much support in spite of a few swims that they were anxious to do it all again.

Founded in November, 1992, the Gold Country Paddlers is made up of nearly 500 members, mostly whitewater kayakers, and is designed primarily to facilitate networking paddlers in Northern California for safe and responsible boating. It does so through a list server where members post trips, information, and gear exchanges; through a monthly newsletter with trip reports, photos, some advertisements, and news; and through a website: gcpaddlers.org. The membership dues are minimal and the newsletter editing and mailing, membership coordination, public relations, finances, trip coordination, and other jobs are all performed by volunteers. The founders intended for the club to focus exclusively on networking for boating purposes, free of any political action, but over the years some members have come to realize the inseparable link between boating and advocacy for boating issues such as access. As a result the club, through its membership renewal process, facilitates donations for improved access to a popular local river, and for the construction of a slalom course nearby. While some members find it sad the power of a group this large is not used for higher political goals, others are just as concerned that the primary focus of the group as a boating network could be diluted if it took a political posture. And the debate continues.

Meanwhile, we have lots of fun on the river! The Klamath trip, with or without John and his astronaut chair, has definitely become a tradition. It is a beautiful, warm river deep in the coastal range of northern California. There are three runs in three days, all within easy access of the central



hamlet of Happy Camp, and all paralleling the "Big Foot Scenic Byway ... Where the wildlife watches you." (This is the home of the legendary Sasquatch). All three runs are mostly Class II with a few Class III+ rapids thrown in for a little excitement – perfect for novice paddlers at the end of the season to get their feet wet on an unfamiliar river. And for those of us who have been there year after year, it's just a relaxing way to get out on the river, enjoy the company of lots of other paddlers, and stare in awe at a skyful of stars (my husband and I 'fell in love' on this trip several years ago so it is always special to us).

The first day we put in late in the morning close to the campground to accommodate those who arrive in the wee hours of the morning after working the day before and driving seven hours from the San Francisco Bay Area. Rattlesnake rapid is the highlight of the day; some of us ran it this year several times each to run others' boats down for them. The second day includes Dragon's Tooth rapid, which has at least three lines, all of which provide substantial entertainment opportunities for lunching spectators. But the highlight of the second day is a 20-minute hike up a stream to a twin set of waterfalls. The hike itself is exhilarating – crossing the creek on a bouncing log, swimming upstream in ice cold water, balancing on a six inch ledge above a 20 foot drop – and the falls are well worth it. The third day is a short run on the way back to the freeway – a three mile Class III run with some technical challenges and good play holes

On Saturday night after the traditional potluck, some of us head down the road a mile or so to Happy Camp to the annual Labor Day Big Foot Jamboree, where hundreds of folks trickle down from the entire Klamath watershed for some foot-stompin' to the sounds of a local band (this year our campground host was the keyboard player in the band). This quaint slice of Americana includes kids running around playing ninja, great grandmothers buying necklaces that light up when they squeeze them, Miss Big Foot giggling with her girlfriends at all the attention she is getting as she parades around with a banner across her chest, and an old Native

American man proudly strutting his stuff on the outdoor dance floor to the tune of 'Johnny Be Good.'

But the Klamath is not the only tradition. There is the Smith at Thanksgiving and/or New Years, a rainy season, free-flowing river in the heart of the redwood forest near the Oregon border, offering everything from Class III to Class V creeks, big water, and gorges. Since we go in the middle of winter, we stay warm in lodges at night and toast our feet around the hearth instead of the campfire. There is the Eel River on President's Day, another rainy season river whose flows (and difficulty) vary dramatically depending on which side of the storm you catch. For the Eel trip we stay at a cheap hotel in Ukiah that has an outdoor hot tub with liberal policies on noise and maximum occupancy! There is the upper American and McCloud trip over Memorial Day weekend. The McCloud is fed by effervescent aqua-colored spring water seeping through the lava rock of Mount Shasta; it's like paddling a river of Perrier. The continuous Class III run passes between the fairy tale castles and under the footbridges of a remote Hearst family retreat, much to their dismay and our delight. There is the Trinity on July 4th, a tributary of the Klamath and a slight level up in difficulty but still accessible by most GCP'rs – it is our first campout of the season and usually a big hit. New traditions are forming all the time: the Kern River and Brush Creek in the Spring, the "T" (the lower Tuolumne) throughout the summer, and the Oregon Rogue in the fall.

Gold Country Paddlers stays alive by the constant influx of new blood, as less experienced boaters seek out boating buddies or "angels" to accompany them down runs new to them. The local kayaking schools produce large numbers of willing and anxious new boaters just itching to get out on the water every chance they get, lying sleepless in their beds at night with their adrenalin pumping at the mere thought of running their next rapid. When they connect with Gold Country Paddlers, they've found a home.

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BCWC

The Bayou City Whitewater Club in Texas is an enigma in a state where boaters joke about “Class III whitewater and a Class V drive.” The Houston club is headquartered in the marshes of the upper Texas Gulf Coast. The club’s membership numbers about 150 dedicated paddlers across the state, including honorary members Ben Kvanli, a former Olympic slalom competitor who now runs a paddling school in San Marcos, and author Steve Daniel, who literally wrote the book on whitewater boating in the Lone Star State, Texas Whitewater.

The club was founded in 1984 as an offshoot of the Houston Canoe Club. Local outfitter Don Greene let the founding club meet at his boat shed for a number of months until the group secured permission to meet at the Red Cross Building. As a part of the deal, BCWC members taught some of the CPR classes for the Red Cross, setting a club tradition for safety and service that is respected to this day. The club quickly found its own identity as the only paddling club in Texas strictly devoted to whitewater boating.

In recent years, the club has gone largely cyber, reflecting the mix of modern technology and whitewater boating. In a state where all whitewater is totally dependant upon rainfall, BCWC members read flash flood warnings, river gauge readings, and precipitation estimates on the internet like stockbrokers read the *Wall Street Journal*. While a quarterly meeting and social is still held for the few items that must be conducted physically, almost all business is now conducted over the club’s internet mailing list.

The club’s officers include President Scott Coultas, Treasurer Cliff Peery, Instruction Officer Christy Long, and Information Officer Neil Harrison.

Club activities include a bi-monthly roll session in an indoor pool at a local YMCA. Club members lead a number of annual trips, including the annual pilgrimages to the Carolina Canoe Club’s Week of Rivers and the Ocoee Drawdown. Depending upon water conditions, the club sponsors a series of slalom races each year on the Guadalupe River under the direction of another honorary member and professional paddler, Mark Poindexter.

Another longstanding tradition is an annual auction where members donate used gear. This gear is auctioned off with all proceeds going to the Texas Rivers Protection Association, the state’s leading river conservation group. Thousands of dollars, all used to ensure continued access to the rivers of Texas, have been donated over the years. Two BCWC members, Mark Andrus and Anne Olden, also currently serve on the TRPA’s board of directors.

Together with the TRPA, the BCWC has most recently led statewide efforts to preserve access to Hildalgo Falls, an important feature on the Brazos River.

The area is only accessible from an adjacent property without a long paddle on flat water. After the owner of the property died, access was in jeopardy after heirs decided to sell the land.

Paddlers from across the state donated enough money to purchase a number of prime acres on the waterfront to preserve access to this popular park ‘n’ play spot in perpetuity. 



Feature: Paddling Clubs continued

OZARK continued from page 37

It's A Small World After All

International forums can bring paddlers together from all over the world and provide information to a global audience. The granddaddy of all of these is the venerable Usenet news group, rec.boats.paddle, which is still active today, though it is seriously waning in popularity in recent years as the Web has replaced Usenet as the medium of choice for online forums.

BoaterTalk (www.boatertalk.com), a thriving international forum, is the brainchild of Eric Princen, a Colorado paddler and software consultant. Though its servers are physically located in Colorado, BoaterTalk serves a truly global audience and currently has over 27,000 registered users and attracts as many as 4,000 visitors per day. It is almost certainly the most popular online community for boaters in existence.

Princen notes that paddler interaction on BoaterTalk is very different from that in conventional paddling clubs. "Paddling clubs tend to be cliquish, and BoaterTalk is very much not that way. People jump into conversations with people they don't know all the time. It tends to break down the social barriers that can arise in face-to-face meetings."

Princen says the strength of BoaterTalk is that it allows boaters from all different geographical areas and socio-economic backgrounds to get together to discuss their love of whitewater. "Each group brings something new to the table, and together, they create a community that is larger than the sum of its raw numbers. BoaterTalk allows paddlers to interact with those they normally would not, and that allows them to broaden their horizons."

Both Princen and Andy Kravetz see regional club forums and global forums as complementary to each other. "No one can give the Missouri Whitewater Association's members the information and services they need like the club's web site and forum, but forums like BoaterTalk serve an important function by allowing people to branch out and 'meet' other paddlers from all over the country," says Kravetz. Princen says that he doesn't feel like his web site competes with

traditional paddling clubs and regional online communities at all. "They do something entirely different than what BoaterTalk does. BoaterTalk is just out there to inform. Web sites like MountainBuzz.com are excellent examples of local communities that are very strong."

National and global paddling organizations have also gone online in recent years. A prime example is American Whitewater (www.americanwhitewater.org). AW's online presence has expanded rapidly (no pun intended) in the past few years, offering a wide array of information and services to the paddling community. Features such as an online photo gallery, where anyone can submit pictures and a database of rivers and creeks in North America, help inform and connect paddlers around the world as well as help AW serve its current members and recruit new ones.

There is, of course, overlap between regional and global sites and webmasters can sometimes feel pressure to compete for web surfers to boost ad revenues. A balance can be found, however. Chris Bell says that he is a strong believer in regional online river guides, because they generally tend to have greater consistency, fresher information, and are interesting because they reflect the personalities of their creators. However, he sees AW's database as a great resource different from his own site. "A lot of what I do duplicates what AW does online, but I share a lot with AW too," says Bell.

Rather than duplicating information found on the Ozark Whitewater Page, many of AW's database entries for Arkansas streams simply link to a description on the regionally focused Web site. The same thing happens with other strong local web communities, maximizing the strengths of both the national and regional sites. For example, AW's database is a great place to go when organizing multi-state paddling trips, but visiting a regional site linked from AW's page may be the only way to find out about the ice storm last winter that knocked dozens of trees down into some of the creeks on your itinerary.

Looking Ahead

The future looks very bright indeed for paddling web sites. Online guides that can be updated with the latest information and distributed instantaneously at very little cost are already starting to make paper guidebooks seem obsolete. Near real-time river level, rainfall, and weather data available online are being integrated with guidebook-style information to provide virtually everything the paddler needs to know about the paddling runs in a given region at a glance. As cell phones become more powerful and are able to handle email and view web pages, paper guidebooks may eventually have value primarily as coffee table novelties.

Online discussion forums also appear to be here to stay, although the landscape will likely continue shifting to keep pace with changes in technology and society. The rise of Web-based message boards has all but killed Usenet groups like rec.boat.paddle and most interactive mailing lists. Some have suffered or even perished when the anonymity and freedom that makes them so attractive has unleashed a plague of off-topic zealots and "trolls," who start pointless arguments for their own amusement.

One thing is certain: the Internet continues to transform both paddlers and their chosen sport. By the standards of only a decade ago, today's paddlers have access to a phenomenal wealth of information and fantastic communication tools that lower the barriers to pursuit of their whitewater dreams. But as wonderful a place as the Internet can be for paddlers, surfing in the virtual world won't be able to take the place of dipping a paddle blade into a cold, clear mountain river alongside good friends. I'll see you on the river!

more CLUBS on page 43

Gear Review: Smith Sunglasses

by Tim Nickles

I've been running Smith's new District and Sequel sliders through the paces the last couple weeks and I'm psyched. These glasses are the latest addition to Smith's slider line – a good option if you don't want to own two different pairs of glasses for bright or low light missions. The sets I tested had polarized lenses to reduce glare off water and snow – super helpful when paddling west at the end of the day. One caveat is that I was surprised by a cell call I didn't want because the polarization obscures the LCD if you look at it wrong. The RCP36 lens was simply killer; I use this lens 90% of the time and it yields excellent vision in almost all conditions.

My melon is on the small side and the District sits a little loose on me. The Sequel feels right, though, and held my head well. The temples of both are low profile and consequently very comfortable under a helmet or visor. The lenses change out easily and although I worried about this at first, I haven't lost a lens yet. Overall, these are good additions to the slider line.

I also tried out the Hudson and the Stance. Both fit snug and are built strong – low profile they ain't, but solid they is. The Stance is simple and perfect: the wrap is comfortable, not much peripheral distraction, and bomber. On the style side, the Hudson won out and went well with my latte, bowling shoes, and spiked hair. If Thievery Corporation or Kruder and Dorfmeister lurk in your CD-case, buy these. 

Not only do they make great sunglasses, but Smith has been an excellent supporter of American Whitewater and its mission and you can feel good about giving them your business. They're a company we love to love.



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Sequel / Tortoise



Stance / Black



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REGION: NATIONAL

Features

- Water Trails Funding Threatened
- New Bill to Regulate Outfitters (S. 1420)
- Energy Bill Passes Senate
- FERC Approves New Process for Relicensing Hydro Dams
- Hydro Relicensing Legislation in Energy Bill

Water, Biking, and Hiking Trails Funding Threatened

By Jason Robertson and Pam Gluck

On September 4th, the U.S. House of Representatives voted on the 2004 Transportation Appropriations bill. At press time, the outcome of the vote was unknown. However, the bill contained language that eliminated funding for the popular Transportation Enhancements program, the major source of federal money for projects such as trails, bikeways, blueways (river trails), and greenways. The Transportation Enhancements program has long provided essential funding to secure and develop hundreds of popular river access sites around the country, from the Haw in North Carolina to the Skykomish in Washington State.

Congressman Tom Petri (R-WI) and Congressman John Olver (D-MA), longtime supporters of trails and bikeways, were leading a bipartisan effort to support the program and planned to offer an amendment during debate on the 4th to restore the funding. Even the Bush Administration's Bill, SAFETEA, recognized the importance of Transportation Enhancements and included \$812 million per year of funding for this program.

Also, the U.S. Department of Transportation recognized TE as one of its most popular programs. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Mineta stated, "Trails are an important part of America's transportation system, providing opportunities for environmentally sustainable infrastructure, links to our heritage, and recreation for our people. Transportation Enhancements

make our communities more livable, enhancing streetscapes, preserving historic transportation facilities, and enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connections."

Opposition to the Enhancement program have crafted a bill giving the decision to allocate any funds for trails to the state highways departments.

More information is available at: www.AmericanTrails.org.

Outfitter Bill Introduced in Senate (S. 1420)

By Jason Robertson

This summer, Senator Larry Craig (R-ID) introduced a bill (S 1420) to give outfitters in the Forest Service (USFS) and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) the same privileges enjoyed by outfitters in the National Park System.

American Whitewater has followed similar bills closely over the past 7 years, and both my predecessor, former Access Director Rich Hoffman, and I provided testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

As in the past, American Whitewater's two primary interests in an Outfitter Policy bill are whether it (1) might be construed by land managers and regulators in any fashion that would unfairly limit public access to America's rivers, and (2) provides suitable flexibility to managers while simultaneously providing commercial outfitters with fair operational and permitting expectations.

We will be discussing the bill with America Outdoors and other organizations that have an interest in the outcome of this bill. Following our discussions and research, we will submit appropriate comments to the Committee on this bill.

More information is available at: www.americanwhitewater.org/archive/article/901.

Energy Bill Passes Senate

This summer, American Rivers reported that the Senate, in a surprise move, passed a comprehensive energy bill by a vote of 84-14. According to American Rivers:

"In an agreement between the Republican and Democratic leadership, this year's bill (S. 14) was replaced as a whole by unanimous consent with S. 517 from the 107th Senate.

The next step for S.14 will be the House-Senate conference committee where the two bills will be merged and then returned for an up or down vote by each chamber of Congress.

The Senate decision to switch the bills was forced due to the inability of the Senate leaders to achieve an agreement on the package in a timely manner allowing Senators to leave for the August recess. In order to reach this agreement, deals were cut with rank and file members. Sens. John McCain (R-AZ) and Joe Lieberman (D-CT) have been guaranteed the opportunity to debate global climate change. Sen. Maria Cantwell (D-WA) had concerns over the issue of market abuse by companies such as Enron, but Senate leadership has promised to address the issue in the conference committee.

The hydropower titles in both the Senate and House versions erode environmental standards and exclude the public, tribes, states, and other stakeholders. Under the House provision, only the dam owner can offer alternative environmental conditions or request a "trial-type hearing." The title would also alter environmental standards for environmental conditions related to fish passage and federal lands protection; it explicitly provides that applicants can propose alternatives to fishways for dams that do not provide fish passage. The Senate title is only slightly better: it does not contain the trial-type hearing and is not as explicit in its rollback of fish passage standards."

FERC Approves New Process for Relicensing Hydro Dams

By John Gangemi

In July the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approved the Integrated Licensing Process (ILP) for private hydropower dams. This new procedural rule is largely the product of a collaborative effort by the National Review Group to improve the existing procedures for relicensing hydropower projects. The National Review Group consists of members of the utility industry, federal agencies, states, and non-governmental organizations including the Hydropower Reform Coalition. American Whitewater, a steering committee member of the HRC, participated in the National Review Group.

One objective in the ILP is to make the relicensing process more efficient by combining the required public environmental analysis with development of the new license application. In the traditional process the license application was developed in years one through three, then the environmental analysis occurred years three through five. Combining these processes requires that groups like American Whitewater request the proper environmental and recreational studies early in the relicensing process. American Whitewater is already working to develop a suite of benchmark studies necessary for an objective environmental analysis.

For the next two years license applicants will be permitted to elect to use the traditional or the integrated licensing process, or to request authorization to use the Alternative Licensing Process (ALP). Thereafter, the integrated process will become the default, and FERC approval will be required to use the traditional process or the ALP.

Hydro Relicensing Legislation in Energy Bill

By John Gangemi

In case you have not recognized the growing attack on the environmental regulations in the Federal Power Act based on the recurring articles in the *American Whitewater* journal, let me spell it out succinctly. There is a desperate attempt by the utility industry to lead the nation's environmental policy away from protecting our rivers for present and future generations. With support from the White House and members of Congress, the utility industry has successfully inserted language into the Energy Bill that would limit the conditioning authority of federal resource agencies responsible for protecting public trust resources. Furthermore, the proposed legislation places the voice of the utility over any other interested in the licensing process. Local landowners, businesses, irrigators, navigation interests, states, tribes, and conservation groups such as American Whitewater all have an interest in instream flows. As such, these groups should have an equal voice at the table. It doesn't take much to ferret out the utility industry's motivation behind this legislation: maximize profits from hydropower generation at the expense of long-term health of our rivers along with the local folks and businesses that rely on them. As we go to press for this issue the hydro legislation is evolving. For up to date information please visit the website at www.americanwhitewater.org. 



Board Bios: It's Time To Vote!

Welcome to the 2004 AW Board of Directors' Election! Each year, the current board reaches out to members of the river enthusiasts' community to recommend a slate of directors charged with the programmatic and financial prosperity of American Whitewater. Board positions are the most important roles for volunteers and these folks have stepped up to run for a three year term. Some have been on the board and are running again, some are running for the first time, representing an array of professional expertise, geographical representation and personal paddling experiences.

The AW board can consist of up to 30 people, so please vote for all you think are qualified and capable of representing you, our members. Use the form at the end of the article to fax or mail your ballot to our office in Silver Spring. Thanks for your support of these awesome volunteers!

Adam Cramer

Washington, DC

Roger was one of my brother's friends. I always thought Roger was somewhat of a jerk and kinda forgot about him once I left home. Many years later I found myself wandering around in Fayetteville figuring out how I was going to get down the New River. I had no shuttle and only a couple summers of sporadic Potomac boating under my belt, but I made the drive from DC hoping that something might work out. As I was coming to terms with the fact that nothing was going to work out, I heard (in a Western Pennsylvania drawl) "Hey Cramer." It was Roger. Turns out that over the years Roger had become quite an experienced boater. No longer the jackass, that afternoon he took me down the New and got me to join AW. More importantly, he made the idea of a boater "community" a reality for me.

I've been boating for six years now and have been an attorney in Washington, D.C. for seven (mostly practicing environmental law, but also serving as counsel to AW on regulatory and government relations matters). I think that I'm finally in a position to try to pay back all the Rogers out there who have done so much for boating and the boating community – serving as a AW board member would help me do that.



David Ennis

Bryson City, NC

I am 56 years old, retired from a career in mortgage banking and a two-year term as interim CEO of the Nantahala Outdoor Center. During my 25-year career in mortgage banking I served on various boards of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, including the national and several state mortgage banking trade associations. My participation in the trade associations was concentrated in their legislative committees, which were responsible for lobbying activities. I currently serve on the boards of the Nantahala Outdoor Center and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Western North Carolina. I grew up in Jacksonville, Florida and worked in North Carolina, Florida and Missouri. I have lived in Bryson City, North Carolina (on and off) since 1992. My wife and I have two grown children, one of whom is a C-1 slalom racer. Degrees include a BS from Washington and Lee University and an MS from the University of Florida. I was initiated to whitewater in 1977 in a 17-foot Grumman canoe. I rafted southeastern rivers for years before I began paddling a whitewater canoe in earnest in 1989. Chronic knee and ankle pain forced me into a kayak about five years ago. I remain an avid, though only semi-skilled, paddler.



While I still work part time in real estate investment and construction, I have a lot of free time which I am trying to direct into worthwhile endeavors. I have admired the work of AW for years and strongly support its mission. I am particularly interested in access to rivers and protecting the quality of our rivers. To the extent any of my prior business or volunteer experiences might be helpful to the AW board, I would enjoy making a contribution of time and energy. Having served as CEO of the Nantahala Outdoor Center, I may be able to provide the board some insights in the outfitter industry. My prior lobbying experiences, although limited to a different set of issues, might also help me make a meaningful contribution to the board.

Eric Nies

Morgantown, WV

I still remember my first day in a kayak, almost thirty years ago: full-length boat, horse-collar life jacket, flipping and swimming ten minutes from the put-in. A decade later I was guiding and teaching kayaking full-time, making my living on the rivers that I still love today: the Chattooga, the Gauley, the Grand Canyon, the Cal-Salmon, the Bio-Bio and Futaleufu, The Pacuare & Reventazon in Costa Rica, and the Motu and Rangitata in New Zealand.

For an old dog, I still get out a lot. And I think I have an unusually broad take on whitewater sport. My two overnights this spring were on the Middle Feather (class V kayak, California) and the Smoke Hole (Class I-II, open boat, West Virginia). I've cursed the raft that trashed my surf, but I've also pushed my share of rubber. I've been pegged (correctly) as the safety geek with the big helmet, but I've also gone solo on Bald Rock and Decker's Creek.

These days I make my living as an ER doc in West Virginia, and I just paddle for fun. Raft, canoe, kayak, East coast or West coast, old-school or new-school, it's all about getting on the water, connecting with friends, and having a good time. And I believe that one of the reasons we all can do just that is because American Whitewater has worked so tirelessly and successfully on issues of safety, access, education, and conservation. I've supported AW as a member for a long time, and now I'd like to increase my commitment to AW, and to this sport we love, by becoming a board member. I hope you feel that I merit your support.

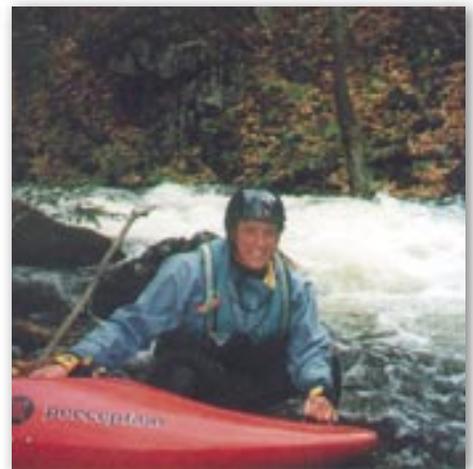
Evie Locke

Charlemont, MA

My love for water began as early as I can remember at the local lake club, spending all my summer days swimming, fishing and messing about in boats. I came to understand how murky the water in that little man-made lake was when I went to summer camp on pristine Sebago Lake in Maine. There I learned to canoe as a teenager and then returned as a college student to direct the canoeing program there for a couple of summers. I was introduced to whitewater in high school where we were lucky enough to have a slalom team and Tariffville Gorge on the Farmington River only 10 minutes away. We were involved in organizing the race there and one year the national team trials, so I was exposed to and inspired by the best slalom paddlers at the time.

After a hiatus of some years on the west coast, I moved back to New England and, not too long after, discovered Zoar Outdoor and the Deerfield River in Massachusetts. I started out as a raft guide 10 years ago and slowly worked my way into less guiding and more kayaking, finally creating the job I currently hold as Office Manager, which leaves my weekends free for paddling. I am responsible for running the reservations office, administering the website and publishing the Outfitters Shop newsletter. I also recently became an ACA whitewater certified kayak instructor. This year I have been part of a small team of organizers of the 1st Annual Whitewater Symposium to be held at Zoar Outdoor in October 2003.

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Board Bios: It's Time To Vote!

Jay Kenney

Denver, CO

For a number of years I have volunteered for National River Cleanup Week in conjunction with Zoar Outdoor and the Deerfield River Watershed Association.

I discovered American Whitewater shortly after I started kayaking because of the Deerfield Riverfest, so I understand the value of the local festivals as outreach. I have been involved in running the Deerfield Festival since 1998, organizing the amateur rodeo for a few years and then this year running the Silent Auction. As a homeowner in a town which benefits greatly from the presence of predictable water (thanks to a benchmark relicensing agreement) and several outfitters, I am interested in helping American Whitewater and the boating community to develop a stronger relationship with the town and the local watershed association. We need to educate all river users here in New England and nationwide about what American Whitewater does to provide them with predictable summertime flows, safety education, and access to other runs, and I think we need to empower local volunteers to feel more ownership of the issues pertaining to their local runs.

I have watched with interest AW's struggle over the last few years with more and less rodeo involvement and fluctuating membership numbers. I am excited at the prospect of being a part of the decision-making process about the future of AW and would be honored to sit on the Board. I think that my strong organizational skills, my love and respect for rivers, and my ties to the greater New England boating community and the outfitting industry will help to inform that process and make me an asset to the Board.

I have served two terms as an AW Director and am honored to be asked to stay on for a third. We've done much right in the last six years: growing the organization, creating a strategic plan, consolidating offices, hiring our second ever Executive Director, and letting go of the professional rodeo circuit in favor of events that celebrate the rivers we love and the public who paddles them. I am proud to have been part of AW during these years, but continue to be dismayed at the many challenges rivers face across the U.S. I'd like the chance to be part of AW for another three years as the Board continues to grow the organization into an effective, visible, and respected participant in national river access and conservation issues.



Jennie Goldberg

Seattle, WA

I paddled my first river in 1980 when access issues were miniscule compared to what faces us today. I love whitewater paddling, slalom and wildwater racing, open canoeing and recreational boating in any shape or form and thrive on self-support whitewater kayak trips. But I'm increasingly concerned with the difficulty we all face in pursuing our sport.

That's why I've chosen to become an active member in AW for the past 5 years. I always knew something needed to be done, but AW opened my eyes to the size and the importance of the task. Since I've joined the board, I've been happy to see our accomplishments in the Grand Canyon, the Ocoee, with FERC relicensing legislation, with the NF Feather, and on the MF Snoqualmie and Nooksack Rivers in Washington. I'm ready to do even more in a second term of office.

A resident of Seattle, Washington for the last 20 years, I work for Seattle City Light managing their water quality programs and the Duwamish Waterway Superfund site. To affect changes these days requires working with a wide variety of individuals and groups, such as private landowners, public utilities, government agencies, and other non-profit interest groups. I believe





Joe Greiner

Raleigh, NC

my professional organizational skills, event planning and organization experience, technical and policy skills in water quality and water resources, and experience working with and for local, state and federal government and experience serving on other non-profit boards will provide additional leadership, vision, motivation, and enthusiasm to AW to help it continue to grow.

Water is important to me. If I'm not paddling in one boat or another, I'm swimming in a lake or pool. I work in water quality. I have tropical fish as pets. And I sleep in a waterbed! I want my water clean, free-flowing in large quantities, and accessible. It's only fitting that I chose AW as the non-profit organization, where I know my time and energy will make a difference and be well-spent.

I have been paddling since 1976. I have boated 13 different countries on all six of the boatable continents. Because I've been paddling since 1976, I have a sense of the history of the sport and I know many of the people who helped bring the sport to where it is today. I have paddled extensively in the US and the world and I bring first-hand knowledge of many of the problems facing whitewater with me. I have a special interest in safety and helping people "climb the ladder" in the sport. I teach and I especially like "being there" for other people when they do their virgin runs on rivers like the Ocoee, Section IV of the Chattooga, the Watauga, and the Upper Gauley, runs that are considered "milestone" runs in the SE.

As a board member, I want:

To support those who are working on the important issues of FERC relicensing and access and conservation of the whitewater streams of the USA. I have tremendous respect and admiration for those who have the skill and the desire and who spend the time and effort that they do in working on these issues. I hope to help take care of some of the "peripheral" issues so they can concentrate their energies on access and conservation.

To be an ambassador of good will and good cheer for the sport on all the rivers and all the river trips that I do.

To help spread the AW message and increase membership through my personal contacts and efforts.

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Board Bios: It's Time To Vote!

Norwood Scott

San Francisco, California

I started paddling 25 years ago at Camp Mondamin in Tuxedo, North Carolina. Since those first strokes on Lake Summit, paddling has been a major part of my life. After graduating from camper to counselor I went on to teach canoeing for another four years. Since then I have been competing in slalom, rodeo, and wildwater; organizing events like the Potomac Whitewater Festival and the Great Falls Race; and serving as a board member of the Tuolumne River Preservation Trust and American Whitewater.

Besides spending a season skiing in Lake Tahoe, my career has been devoted to the environment. I've worked for an environmental consulting firm, an association offering environmental services to airports, and now the

Environmental Protection Agency in San Francisco. As a federal employee, I have helped to coordinate EPA's comments on the recreational aspects of environmental assessments and environmental impact statements to make sure our whitewater concerns are addressed.

If given the opportunity to serve again on the American Whitewater board, I will focus on whitewater access and conservation issues by chairing the Conservation and Access Committee. Specifically, I hope to help open more river reaches so that we can all play and enjoy these resources for years to come. I can bring a lot to the AW board including prior board and association experience, dedication to the environment, a love of the river, and a passion for river preservation. I think that AW has made a substantial contribution to the whitewater community, and I would love to be a part of its growth as AW moves beyond its 50th anniversary.



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Steven Exe

Seattle, Washington

I am a product of the Northwest, and a long time outdoor enthusiast. In the late 70's I organized a three-week trip to Glacier Bay where we used sea kayaks to access several unclimbed peaks in Alaska's Fairweather range. Those first few strokes induced a euphoria and dedication to paddling, which would take almost ten years to develop. Since the mid 80's, whitewater boating has been a way of life and a passion that nourishes my soul.

I love paddling, and am drawn to leadership roles, which further my paddling interest and enthusiasm for this awesome sport. I continue to be active at the local and the state level for both access and safety issues. Currently, as a member of the State Parks Boater Safety Counsel, I am involved in examining the issues of mandatory boater

education and boater registration for Washington State paddlers. As member of the League of Northwest Racers, I actively support slalom paddling, and have been the race director for the Nooksack Slalom for the last five years. As a certified ACA instructor I teach, guide and lead trips for the local clubs and paddle shop.

I am enthusiastic about sharing the joy of paddling with others and working to protect and improve access to our local whitewater rivers. I believe in the goals and mission of American Whitewater, and I am honored and excited about the possibility of continuing my work at a national level. Thank you for considering me as a nominee to the Executive Board of American Whitewater



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Board Bios: It's Time To Vote!

Tim Kelley

Potsdam, NY

The past three years have flown by. I've been on the Safety Committee all three years, chairing it for the past year and a half. I've learned a tremendous amount from Charlie Walbridge and Lee Belknap. My major contributions have been a comprehensive approach to risk management for flow studies and other on water events. I've also assisted Charlie in gathering facts about whitewater accidents, written several safety articles and given safety presentations to paddling clubs.

I've served 2 years on the Access Committee, running point to resolve access to Cheesman Canyon on the South Platte in CO. I had not planned on starting negotiations by getting hauled into court, but after a year of negotiating, the issue was resolved with an understanding that benefited all parties. It was a very time consuming but rewarding experience.

I also served a year on the Executive Committee. I will not pretend that reading budget spreadsheets or doing monthly conference calls was enjoyable, but it gave me a true picture of how AW really works. I like to think I had a part in helping AW re-focus on our core competencies as a part of the EXCOM.

This past year I moved to NY and served on the Conservation Committee. My main effort has been working out the details of the FERC settlement with Reliant Power on the Stone Valley section of the Racquette River. I've also become heavily involved with collegiate paddling clubs to help grow future AW members and leaders. With your vote I will continue to work and help steer AW along the course to conserve and restore America's whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.



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Tom Christopher

Lancaster, MA

We have been both fortunate and successful in achieving major settlement agreements on important whitewater resources in New England over the past ten years. As much as it would be easy to point to our hard-fought victories and say now we can breathe easy and relax, in reality, that is never the case. In spite of settlement agreements being legal documents, there is a constant need to defend them whenever they are challenged by outside interests who never sat at the bargaining table, and are now unhappy because their particular interest in a river must stand behind the enforcement of settlement provisions.

Just to review what has been accomplished in New England since 1991, AW has achieved 511 days of GUARANTEED annual whitewater releases through

settlement agreements on the Deerfield, Rapid, Magalloway, Kennebec, and Penobscot Rivers. We have contributed measurably to thousands of acres of land protection, dam removal, and water quality protection.

All of this success brings more people to the river, and this now requires resource management over the terms of each separate settlement agreement. It is the only way to protect the integrity of the resources we love for the following generations. The challenge will be to manage effectively without restricting access or charging fees for river use. If elected I pledge to continue working for balanced use and fairness for boaters, and to work with resource agencies to provide management solutions to protect our interests. 

American Whitewater Board of Directors 2004-06

Vote for those who will be responsible to you and our rivers! Here are the candidates for the AW Board of Directors. Directors serve a 3-year term beginning January, 2004. You can vote for up to eleven (all) of those on the ballot.

- Tom Christopher
- Adam Cramer
- David Ennis
- Steve Exe
- Jennie Goldberg
- Joe Greiner
- Tim Kelley
- Jay P.K. Kenney
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- Eric Niece
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HRC Update: Looking Back at 2003

by Risa Shimoda



Risa asks Rebecca Sherman, HRC Coordinator, some basic questions about what has happened on the energy front this year. She receives weighty, downright demoralizing responses.

Risa: So Sherm, what have been the most significant legislative events of 2003, relative to river restoration and the work of the HRC and CHRC?

Rebecca: Two years ago, after energy emerged as a national priority, House leaders brokered a compromise between industry representatives and environmental organizations. In August 2001 the House passed H.R. 4. The provision acted on industry-identified problems within the hydropower licensing process, but did not rollback environmental or public participation standards. The Coalition viewed the final result in the House as a significant victory, but it died in conference between the House and Senate.

It did not take long for energy to be resuscitated again this past Spring. After calling a March 2003 hearing (which included testimony from Coalition members American Rivers and Trout Unlimited), the House Energy and Commerce Committee refused to support the previous year's compromise.

Instead, the hydropower title adopted by the Committee was the most aggressively anti-environmental licensing provision to date. Under the House provision, the only entity that can offer alternative environmental conditions or request an administrative appeal, including a "trial-type hearing" in a relicensing, is the applicant. The Forest Service cannot, nor can a member or organization of citizens (like AW, Friends of the River, etc.).

Risa: Let's let the fox guard the henhouse, shall we?

Rebecca: Right. The title would also alter environmental standards for environmental conditions related to fish passage and federal lands protection; it explicitly provides that applicants can propose alternatives

to fishways for dams that do not provide fish passage. Despite efforts from several Representatives to derail the provision, the title passed into the final version of the House bill.

The Senate initially incorporated the anti-environmental House language. Coalition members picked up where they left off, lobbying members and building a broader coalition that included sportspersons' groups, outdoor industry trade organizations, Indian tribes, state attorneys general, and citizens. Senators Bingaman (D-NM) and Inouye (D-HI) agreed to offer an amendment to replace the language in the hydropower title with language from last year's House Energy Bill. On June 4th, the Senators spoke at a press conference with Coalition members, tribes and sportsmen formally announcing their intention. And as a result of Coalition members' work, heavy-hitting editorials and feature articles have appeared in major newspapers such as the *Washington Post* and in the *Idaho Statesman*, the backyard of champion hydropower advocate Sen. Larry Craig (R-ID).

Although our Coalition had gained significant momentum and support from moderate Republicans, the Senate leadership struck a last minute agreement to pass the entirety of last year's energy bill without amendment! The good news: Last year's Senate provision does not contain the trial-type hearing and is not as explicit in its rollback of fish passage standards. The bad news: it still lowers environmental standards and creates an alternative conditions process available only to the applicant.

As this goes to press, the Coalition has turned its attention to the Senate – House conferees of the bill in an attempt to moderate the language in the hydropower title. A strong proponent for hydropower regulation, Rep. John Dingell (D-MI) will have a leading role in the conference committee, though only representing the minority.

Risa: How will these impact recreational users of our nation's rivers?

Rebecca: The legislative changes will affect recreational users of rivers on or near hydropower dams. Because hydropower dams tend to be constructed where the gradient is higher (and thus, the natural force of the water is greater), boaters often find that hydropower dam operations affect their favorite rivers.

Hydropower dams have to renew their operating license once every 30 to 50 years. At these points, recreational river users get a once-in-a-generation shot at changing dam operations to enhance recreation and to protect resources that sustain recreation. Legislative changes now sought in Congress seek to imbalance the licensing process to advantage dam owners and reduce public participation. The imbalances are directly aimed at rolling back environmental conditions to make them cheaper and easier for the dam owner. They also hand power to the dam owner at the end of the licensing process - making it less likely that they will deal fairly with the public during the bulk of the process.

River recreationists know that the river belongs to the public, not to an electric utility. They can stop a utility from monopolizing their river by participating in these licensing processes. The Coalition is trying to do its part by ensuring that the laws protect our ability to have a voice in the management of our rivers.

Risa: What should members of American Whitewater, as well as other HRC coalition constituents, expect to see on the legislative front in 2004, and what can we do to have the most impact in how our interests are represented?

Rebecca: If the zombie energy bill (it will not die!) is not passed in this session, there will be another energy bill next session. Hydropower will inevitably be lumped into this comprehensive bill, where it is easier to assure passage without having individual members vote. If the bill is passed, the hydropower lobby may be emboldened to amend other laws in future sessions.

To be effective in the fight against legislative rollbacks, here are five ways you can make a difference:

1. Contact your representative when they have the chance to make a difference. Personal letters are taken seriously, especially ones signed by more than one constituent!

2. Find out enough to be able to talk up the issue. Let your friends and fishermen know that changes are afoot, and send them to an HRC website to show them how to get in touch with their representative(s).

3. Encourage your local conservation organization, community and local business leaders to participate. Organized groups can have greater sway with Congressional members: they have practice at contacting the members and they know how to be heard!

4. Spread your message to your local media. Members of Congress and electric utilities care about their public image. Sending a letter to the editor, writing an editorial, or encouraging a news reporter to write about the issue all can create positive ink and may kick up momentum.

5. Tell your electric utility that you are a concerned customer. The utility should hear that its energy customers expect environmental stewardship and the public voice preserved.

If you have questions about how to contact government officials, visit the 'Federal Tools' button in AW's Toolbox

<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/access/federal.htm>

or visit the HRC Relicensing Toolkit for some general background

<http://www.amrivers.org/hydropowertoolkit/default.htm>

Damn, we have some work to do. 



Timmy: Let me help you with those eyeballs, baby.

Betty: Shut up Timmy, those aren't eyeballs, they're olives, and like I said before, you're too young for me... you've been hanging out with Andy too much.



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HRC Update: New York Rivers United

This is the second in a series of articles about the Hydropower Reform Coalition, representing well over one hundred river conservation organizations that are working to improve both process and outcome in the relicensing of hydropower dams. NYRU, like AW, is one of sixteen members of the HRC Steering Committee.

NYRU is a non-profit, river conservation organization created to coordinate and promote an effective river management strategy statewide. NYRU's mission is to conserve, protect, and restore New York's rivers and riverine ecosystems. NYRU has been instrumental in achieving hydropower licensing settlements protecting hundreds of miles of rivers and thousands of acres of watershed lands while creating ecological and recreational enhancements at dozens of hydro projects in New York.

Founded in 1992, NYRU was formed in time to greet 'The Class of 1993': forty-three hydroelectric dams up for relicensing that year. As the fledgling organization set itself up to tackle that Herculean effort, they also acknowledged the overarching need to develop and coordinate a river management strategy and set policy regarding rivers in the Empire State.

Settlements to date equal \$1.5 million for enhancement trust funds. NYRU's advocacy has helped conserve the East Branch of Fish Creek, preserve access to the Salmon River and achieve recognition for the plight of the Hudson River.

Who are NYRU members and why do they join?

NYRU members fall into three categories:

- Those people who have direct relationships with rivers: whitewater and flatwater river paddlers and anglers
- Citizens who are invested in addressing the impacts of man-made hazards and effects on rivers, habitat protection, and the health of public resources like Adirondack and Catskill regions.
- Individuals interested in universal water (quality, availability, etc.) issues.

NYRU / AW Interface

National Level: As fellow members of the Hydropower Reform Coalition, AW and NYRU interact on national policy and issues or projects related to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission practices.

Local Level: NYRU, although not a recreation organization per se, helps the whitewater community when there are specific whitewater interests not being addressed by AW, or conflict where they can assist our position as a representative of more than one party. We have often acted jointly when there is a need for work on whitewater releases or when NYRU needs to, according to NYRU Executive Director Bruce Carpenter, "leave it up to the experts to determine recreational flow needs."

In New York, the affiliation has given boaters the ability to advocate more effectively on environmental issues.

Because it is not a recreation organization, agencies are sometimes more open to work with NYRU. For instance, in the Salmon River debate, NYRU was able to counter fisheries biologists' argument that whitewater releases would hurt the fishery and we were able to negotiate releases by making the case for simply copying natural flow patterns based on historical precipitation patterns – the same argument AW has made, day in and day out, relative to dam released flows.

What should AW members, as whitewater recreationists know above all else, about NYRU's mission and vision?

Rivers should run naturally. Since that is not always practical or possible we must constantly run a balancing act between competing needs. AW members are very educated about river issues: we spend most of our time educating a broader audience as to overall importance and the needs of our rivers. [AW](#)

New York Rivers United

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Safety: Ray of Light

by Marcus Wohlsen

Local Paddling Pioneer Overcomes Adversity to Make Whitewater Safer

It was a paddler's worst nightmare. A flipped raft. An unrelenting river. Back in 1979, Fred "Slim" Ray saw the Chattooga take his friend's life. But he did not succumb to despair.

Instead, Ray—at the time a guide for the Nantahala Outdoor Center—grabbed his grief by the horns and, along with fellow paddler Les Bechdel, wrote the book that would change the way the paddlers think about river safety.

At the time of the accident, river rescue technique and technology were virtually non-existent. Ray knew something had to be done to prevent more bloodshed.

"We sort of joked that we had to learn all this stuff the hard way, that somebody had to die for us to learn all these techniques," Ray says. "But that's not quite true."

Ray and Bechdel traveled the world collecting rescue techniques and spent hours on the Nantahala "war-gaming" their own ideas.

From their research, the two published *River Rescue* in 1983, the first-ever standard text on the subject.

Today the 55-year-old Asheville resident is an internationally recognized expert in the field of swiftwater rescue. Building on his research and experience on the river, Ray now teaches fire departments and rescue squads across the country how to handle floods.

Speaking on the phone from the National Association of Search and Rescue annual conference in Reno, NV, where he was slated to give a presentation on flood management, Ray describes his current focus as a natural outgrowth of the rescue techniques he pioneered for paddlers.

"Water acts the same way no matter where it is," he says.

In a bittersweet twist of fate, Ray witnessed his rescue techniques put to successful use firsthand when he broke his back kayaking the infamous Narrows section of the Green River near Hendersonville, NC. The 1991 accident left Ray without the use of his legs.

Six months later, he was back on the water.

"I switched over to an inflatable rather than a hard boat because it's a little bit easier for me to handle," he says. "My balance is just not as good as it was."

Ray describes his comfort level these days as "easy Class IV." The major limitation he faces, he says, is "being able to swim with only half your body," which makes it tougher to recover if something goes wrong.

Ray's busy training schedule can keep him on the road for a month at a stretch. Back in Asheville, he devotes much of his time to his publishing company, CFS Press, which puts out all five of Ray's rescue and paddling books.

Still, he loves to get out on the river when he has the chance. Since his injury, he's been back to the Grand Canyon, but there's no place like home.

"Mostly I paddle the French Broad just because it's convenient," he says. "I can drive up there and just hop on it."

Nevertheless, after eight years of guiding it, the big ride on Section IV of the Chattooga remains his favorite.

Live to paddle another day, the rescue philosophy Ray forged two decades ago, has made whitewater paddling safer – and, as a result, more popular – than ever before. His approach, he says, starts with prevention.

"The easiest rescue," he says, "is the one you never have to do." 



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River Voices: One Rafter's Story

by Juliet Jacobsen Kastorff

It is just a good memory now....the night before the trip the campfire was alive with big stories, beer cans and roughly put up tents. At least that's what I remember of my first pre-river trip campfire. We were so excited about the next day we did not care if the tents were up or not or even whether we went to bed at all. We were there to raft the Gauley River!

It was 1987 and we were all first-timers – arriving in Summersville, WV for our first whitewater rafting trip. We sat around the campfire with our guides (who conveniently stopped by the campsite when they smelled beer and women). The stories they told us... and we believed every one of them! Before the evening was out, those guides were gods in our eyes.

The river, the rapids, hearing the commands the guides shouted at us, almost falling out at Sweets Falls – it was a rush all day. And maybe it was the moment I took that first stroke and felt myself moving into the rapid in that small rubber boat. Or the first rush of adrenaline. Or just being outside and not thinking about work. Whatever it was, I was hooked. I had found myself a whole new world—whitewater! And I found it on a raft on the Gauley River

We all had commitments back in the city, but everyone was ready for our next trip back to the river. Within a year we had done the Gauley twice and the Cranberry once (yes, possibly a first descent by raft back in 1987). Did the momentum start to diminish after our first couple of trips? Quite the contrary, it built with each new friend we could convince to come with us. We were a caravan of whitewater-addicts heading to West Virginia at each opportunity.

So where do you go to top the exhilaration of your first whitewater rafting trip? I know some whitewater addicts that have hit every "classic" raft run from West Virginia to the Southeast to Colorado. And some who make it a point to return to the same river year after year because it is such a fun time. I remember my big step was the day I was convinced to go R-2ing down the Upper Yough.



River Voices: One Rafter's Story

by Juliet Jacobsen Kastorff

Whitewater is an addiction, and like any group of addicts, everyone has their drug of choice: raft, ducky, canoe, or kayak.

I made the all-too common error of sitting on the raft, looking out on the river and getting distracted by the antics being performed by the kayakers. Back in 1987, most of the kayakers on the Gauley were more under the eddy lines than on top of them. Mystery moves were what squirt boaters were all about. But as I floated through the rapids, the feeling grew stronger that I needed to be in my own boat.

And here I am (too many) years later, still enjoying the river as much as I did the first year. But now I am the one taking rafters and kayakers down the river...helping them "get addicted." I am lucky to be part of some amazing experiences.

Things have changed (probably for the better) since I first did the Gauley. Estrogen balances out testosterone a bit more these days. And families find mutual ground to share time together away from the television.

Take my sons Jim and Chandler. Both whitewater addicts, beginning first as rafters and both now committed kayakers.

Here is Dad's Version of the Story:

In the 1990s, as a father, I literally couldn't wait to take my kids down the Nantahala in a raft. By then, duckies had come along. But my youngest weighed only 52 pounds one summer, 56 the next. We kept being shunted to the Tuckesegee because of the 60 pound minimum weight required by the Forest Service to prevent hypothermia on the Nantahala.

Finally, one summer, Chandler weighed in at 59 ½ pounds soaking wet, so I shoved rocks in his pocket and he officially weighed in at 60 ½. Down the Nantahala we went for the first time, as a family of five in Duckies. The next summer, Chandler and I took a two day, ERA [kayak] lesson when Chandler was eleven.

Love of whitewater eventually evolved into a guy thing in our family, with the girls running the river usually once a year, unless a guide named Gabe was in the raft, in which case Whitney and Chelsea would run the river daily.

I created a rule in our family: if you learned to roll, you would get a kayak for your birthday or Christmas.

Chandler got a Dagger Blast. I bought a duckie so I could run the river with him. He became intrigued with surfing and spent hours upon hours mastering selected waves.

Ken then talked me into breaking the duckie habit, committing to learning to roll, which I did a year later, and buying a boat. Chandler and I began kayaking the river together and, later, I would send him with an instructor down the Ocoee. By then, he had upgraded to a Triple X and weighed about 80 pounds; so light that one instructor said when he got stuck in a hole all he had to do was hang on and the boat would do all the tricks for him. Going from duckies to kayaks together was a great learning experience for both of us.

What I have come to appreciate is how many different ways people can enjoy the river. There is no such thing as a better group of whitewater addicts: rafter, ducky, canoeer or kayaker, private boater or commercial guest; we all share a love for the river. Most of us have the same thing in common: Our addiction began when we found ourselves sitting on the thwart of a raft, listening to the tall tales of a guide and looking about in wonderment about the whole new world we had just discovered—the river. Here is to the best addiction a person can have – whitewater! 



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Corporate Sponsors Update

by AJ McIntyre

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Clay Wright
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Club Affiliates

AW would like to thank all of the groups that are helping us reenergize AW's Club Affiliate Program. In 2003, AW renewed its commitment to its historical mandate, to help whitewater enthusiasts share information with each other. Lunch Video Magazine (LVM), Dagger Kayaks, and Clif® Bar were instrumental in making our 2003 programs a success.

In 2004, AW will be announcing several exciting new programs for AW Affiliate Clubs. Watch for announcements about them:

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Club Affiliates by State:

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Huntsville Canoe Club, Huntsville

Arizona

Grand Canyon Private Boaters Assoc, Flagstaff

Arkansas

Arkansas Canoe Club, Little Rock

California

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Shasta Paddlers, Anderson
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Georgia

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Goergia Canoeing Association, Atlanta
Georgia Tech Outdoor Recreation, Atlanta

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KCCNY, S. Hackensack
Town Tinker Tube Rentals, Phoenicia
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AMC Delaware Valley Chapter, Sugarloaf
Benscreek Canoe Club, Johnson
Canoe Club of Greater Harrisburg, LeMoyné
Holtwood Hooligans, Lititz
Lehigh Valley Canoe Club, Lehigh Valle
Philadelphia Canoe Club, Philadelphia
Three Rivers Paddling Club, Pittsburgh

South Carolina

Palmetto Paddlers, Columbia

Tennessee

Appalachian Paddling Enthusiasts, Elizabethton
Chota Canoe Club, Knoxville
E. Tennessee Whitewater Club, Oak Ridge
Tennessee Valley Canoe Club, Chattanooga

Texas

Bayou Whitewater Club, Houston
Rockin 'R' River Rides, New Braunfels
Texas Tech Outdoor Pursuits, Lubbock

Utah

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

Virginia

Blue Ridge River Runners, Lynchburg
Blue Ridge Voyageurs, McLean
Canoe Cruisers Association, Arlington
Float Fishermen of Virginia, Roanoke
Richmond Whitewater Club, Mechanicsville

Vermont

Vermont Paddlers Club, Jericho

Washington

Associated Students, Bellingham
Kayak Pursuits, Redmond
The Mountaineers, Seattle
Padele Trails Canoe Club, Seattle
Spokane Canoe and Kayak Club, Spokane
Washington Kayak Club, Settle
University Kayak Club, Seattle

West Virginia

West Virginia Wildwater Association, Charleston
West Virginia Rivers Coalition, Elkins

Wisconsin

Hoofers Outing Club, Madison
Sierra Club/John Muir Chapter, La Crosse

Wyoming

Jackson Hold Kayak Club, Jackson

Join American Whitewater as a Club Affiliate!

Join the growing network of paddling clubs that have already become affiliates and support AW as the only group devoted full-time to national conservation and access issues.

Club affiliates receive many benefits, in addition to being recognized in our journal and on our website. If you are interested in becoming a club affiliate, please let us know!

For more information, contact AJ McIntyre at aj@amwhitewater.org, call our office at (866) 262-8429 or sign-up online at: www.americanwhitewater.org/membership.

Membership Notes

2003 has been and will continue to be a year of change at American Whitewater. One of our top goals is to take better care of our existing members, which means making it easier for you to renew, find out what projects we're working on, and better yet – get involved. As part of this effort, we'll be using the journal more often to communicate with you. Below is a list of frequently asked questions regarding membership. Please take a look at the list and if you have anything further, check out our website or e-mails us! Correct contact information can be found below.

Question: I am moving, how do I notify American Whitewater of my new address?

Answer: You can submit your address change three ways: 1) On our website (look under the 'membership' section), 2) By sending us an e-mail to membership@amwhitewater.org with the words 'address change' in the subject field or by 3) calling our office and letting us know of the change.

Question: I did notify American Whitewater of my address change, but haven't received my journal, why?

Answer: Address changes must be made at least two weeks before the issue is delivered. For example, for the September/August journal, we need your address change by August 20th.

Question: I've noticed a code on the label of my journal that reads '20030105' next to my name – what does it mean?

Answer: That code is actually your expiration date. The '2003' is the year you expire. The following '05' is the journal issue you expire on and the final '01' is the year you first became a member. We run 6 issues every year, so the number 05 correlates with the Sept/Oct issue (06 would be Nov/Dec and so on).

Question: I renewed my membership, but received another renewal notice in the mail!

Answer: I think this is the most frequently asked question. The main reason is your renewal wasn't processed before the next round of renewals was sent. We go to great lengths to minimize this problem as much as possible, as it's a waste of paper time and money. Unfortunately, our printer needs time to prepare the renewal forms and we have to send him the names several weeks in advance. One way to solve this problem is to sign-up for e-renewals. Call or E-mail our office, or go to our website for more details on this program.

If you have a suggestion, comment or question not covered here, please send it to:

Nick Lipkowski
Office Manager
American Whitewater
(301) 589-9453
nick@amwhitewater.org

Guidelines for Contributors



Please read this carefully before sending us your articles and photos! This is a volunteer publication, please cooperate and help us out. Do not send us your material without a release – signed by all authors and photographers (attached).

If possible, articles should be submitted on a 3-1/2-inch computer disk. (Microsoft Word if possible – others accepted.) Please do not alter the margins or spacing parameters; use the standard default settings. Send a printed copy of the article as well.

Those without access to a word processor may submit their articles typed. Please double space.

Photos may be submitted as slides, black or white prints, or color prints or electronic, digital photos, 300 dpi tiffs or high res jpegs minimum 3"x5." Keep your originals and send us duplicates if possible; we cannot guarantee the safe return of your pictures. If you want us to return your pictures, include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your submission. The better the photos the better the reproduction.

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

If you are writing about a commonly paddled river, your story should be told from a unique perspective. Articles about difficult, infrequently paddled, or exotic rivers are given special consideration. But we are also interested in well written, unusual articles pertaining to Class II, III & IV rivers as well. Feature stories do not have to be about a specific river. Articles about paddling techniques, the river environment and river personalities are also accepted. Pieces that incorporate humor are especially welcome. Open boating and rafting stories are welcome.

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

Please check all facts carefully, particularly those regarding individuals, government agencies,

and corporations involved in river access and environmental matters. You are legally responsible for the accuracy of such material. Make sure names are spelled correctly and river gradients and distances are correctly calculated.

Articles will be edited at the discretion of the editors to fit our format, length, and style. Expect to see changes in your article. If you don't want us to edit your article, please don't send it in! Because of our deadlines you will not be able to review the editorial changes made prior to publication.

American Whitewater is a nonprofit; the editors and contributors to American Whitewater are not reimbursed. On rare occasions, by prearrangement, professional writers receive a small honorarium when they submit stories at our request. Generally, our contributors do not expect payment, since most are members of AW, which is a volunteer conservation and safety organization.

Release For Publication

- I hereby release my work (literary, graphic or photographic) for publication in American Whitewater magazine.
- I understand that my work may be edited or cropped at the editors' discretion.
- I understand that I will not be paid for my work.
- I accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information included in my submission. I have not libeled or slandered any individual, corporation or agency in this work.
- I understand that all or some of my work may be reprinted at some future date in an American Whitewater publication.
- I promise that this material has not been and will not soon be published by another magazine or publication and the rights to this material are clear and unrestricted.
- I understand that once this material is printed in American Whitewater it may be reprinted or reproduced in other publications if I wish, providing I notify them that it has already appeared in American Whitewater.

- I understand that the contents of American Whitewater Magazine, including my contribution, will be archived on the American Whitewater web site.

Signed _____

Date _____

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

Send your material to:
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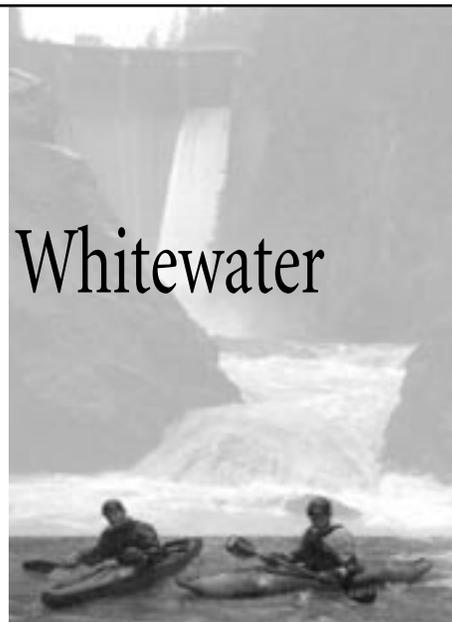
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