

# Everett Mountaineers Sea Kayak Equivalency Evaluation, Test, and Process

March 2018

The goal of this equivalency process is to ensure that the paddler has the skills and equipment necessary to be a safe follower on an SK II Mountaineers trip and be, at minimum, functionally equal in skills and knowledge to someone who has completed the Basic Sea Kayak Course.

## Steps to completion:

- 1) Candidate submits completed Mountaineers Sea Kayak Equivalency Application to Mountaineers HQ on line. (<https://www.mountaineers.org/membership/badges/course-badges/equivalency-application-forms/sea-kayaking-equivalency>)
  - a. The Program Center will send this application to the Chair of the Everett Sea Kayak Committee.
- 2) The Committee Chair or the Branch Equivalency Chair will contact the candidate to review next steps.
- 3) Candidate will:
  - a. Submit a non-refundable Equivalency Application Payment of \$25 to the Mountaineers after initial discussion with the Committee Chair, the Equivalency Chair, or the designated Evaluator(s).
  - b. Complete Written Test Below (bring completed test to on-water demonstration)
  - c. Participate in an on-water evaluation (either salt or fresh). This evaluation will be conducted by two current Everett Sea Kayak Trip Leaders. Date, time, and location will be agreed upon by candidate and evaluators. Typically, this is conducted at Flowing Lake County Park east of Snohomish. The evaluation will consist of the candidate demonstrating:
    - i. Basic paddle strokes: forward stroke and forward sweep, reverse stroke and reverse sweep, low brace
    - ii. Perform a wet exit followed by a self-rescue (either a “paddle float re-entry” or a “re-enter and roll” style is acceptable).
    - iii. Perform both sides of an assisted re-entry (as rescuer and again as rescuee)
  - d. The Mountaineers teach a specific self and assisted rescue technique as a foundation. The evaluators will, at their discretion, decide whether the candidate’s technique, if different from the Mountaineer standard, is acceptable. If so, the evaluators will also instruct the candidate on the Mountaineer basic foundational techniques, so the candidate is aware of the differences and similarities. The candidate must be willing to learn and add the Mountaineer techniques to their skill set prior to going on two SK II paddles as explained in #5 below.

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- 4) If the on-water evaluation is successful, the evaluators will discuss the balance of this test with the candidate. If the evaluation is not successful, the evaluators will advise the candidate of his/her options. They are, in shortened form:
  - a. Take the entire Everett Mountaineers Sea Kayak Committee Basic Sea Kayak Course.
    - i. The full \$25 Equivalency Application Payment will be credited toward the candidates Basic Sea Kayak Course registration fee if the candidate registers for the next available Everett Basic Sea Kayak Course. This credit is not applicable if the candidate chooses to take the course from a different Mountaineer branch.
  - b. At the sole discretion of the evaluators they may agree to allow the candidate to correct a minor weakness and to schedule another on-water evaluation to demonstrate that improved skill at some future date. The definition of “minor weakness” is up to the two evaluators on site.
  - c. Withdraw their Equivalency Application.
    - i. There is no refund given if the candidate withdraws their application at this point.
- 5) Upon successful completion of the on-water evaluation and written test the candidate will sign up for and complete two appropriate (SK II) sea kayak paddles within the next 6 months lead by a current Everett Sea Kayak Trip Leader.
- 6) Upon successful completion of the on-water evaluation, written test, and both paddles the evaluator(s) will sponsor your equivalency to Everett Sea Kayak Committee for a final vote. Once this is completed the candidate will be awarded the Basic Course Sea Kayak Badge and will be eligible to participate in Mountaineer Sea Kayak Trips appropriate to their skill level.
- 7) Options for qualified candidates:
  - a. Candidates who have ACA or BCU 2-star or above certification can bypass equivalency testing by asking for a vote of approval by the Everett Sea Kayak committee.
  - b. Candidates who have taken a multi-day kayak expedition class from Kayak Academy, Body Boat Blade, Rogue Wave Adventures or WKS can also apply for Equivalency via the same evaluation process detailed in #1-6 above.
  - c. The \$25 equivalency fee applies to all candidates applying for equivalency.

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## Evaluation Day Requirements:

- 1) The equivalency candidate must show up on time for the equivalency test with the following items: Sea kayak with flotation at both ends, kayak paddle, spray skirt, Coast Guard-approved PFD, paddle float and pump, and wearing either a wet suit or dry suit.
- 2) Bring completed written portion of test for review with evaluators

## Evaluation Test

- Date and Time for following question is based on the date and time scheduled for the equivalency evaluation.
- Evaluation Location generally is conducted at Flowing Lake. The use of Cornet Bay, Deception Pass, Hope Island, etc. below is simply a means to evaluate the candidate's knowledge of tides and currents.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Launch Time: \_\_\_\_\_

1) What are the High tide times and heights at Cornet Bay on the day of your equivalency on-water evaluation:

\_\_\_\_\_

2) What are the Low tide times and heights at Cornet Bay on the day of your equivalency on-water evaluation:

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Would either one of these be an issue for a paddle on that date? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Will the tide be ebbing or flooding in Deception Pass during the time of your equivalency on-water evaluation?

\_\_\_\_\_

5) What is the predicted wind speed and direction at Cornet Bay on the date of your equivalency on-water evaluation? \_\_\_\_\_

6) What is the longest fetch (in nm), as measured from Hope Island and which direction is it?

\_\_\_\_\_

7) What is the speed of the current in Deception Pass at the time of your equivalency on-water evaluation, and is it running into or out of the pass? \_\_\_\_\_

8) How long (in nm) is the distance from Cornet Bay Boat Ramp to Goat Island (assume most direct route) and about how long would it take you to paddle there? (assume no wind factors and that you are riding the average ebb and flood to your advantage for the paddle route). \_\_\_\_\_

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## Evaluator lead discussion

### Review the "21 essentials" -- discuss why it is needed if any questions:

1. Kayak with floatation (sealed bulkheads or float bags) in both ends
2. Coast Guard approved PFD
3. Paddle
4. Spray skirt
5. Bilge Pump
6. Paddle float or self-rescue float
7. Whistle or air horn
8. Chart in waterproof case (Navigation)
9. Waterproof compass (Navigation)
10. Sunglasses with strap (Sun Protection)
11. Sunscreen (Sun Protection)
12. Drinking water (Hydration)
13. Extra food (Nutrition)
14. Extra clothing in waterproof bag (Insulation-extra clothing)
  - Emergency Shelter
15. Visual signaling device (flares and mirror)
16. Waterproof flashlight with extra batteries (Illumination)
17. First aid kit (First Aid Supplies)
18. Knife (Repair kit)
19. Waterproof matches (Fire)
20. Candle or fire starter (Fire)
21. Dry suit or wet suit (depending on weather)

**Appropriate clothing:** Evaluator will explain to candidate about what sort of clothing we expect them to wear on Mountaineer trips during warm versus cold seasons. Avoid hypothermia.

- No cotton – all synthetic
- Layers
- Spare clothes/socks
- Winter hat/gloves

### Evaluator will explain to the candidate about how the Mountaineers trips are conducted:

- How to sign up for Mountaineer trips
- Discuss (briefly) what the different SK ratings mean
- Leader versus follower – respect for the leader who is volunteering their time and expertise

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- Show up on time (at least 60 minutes before the launch time) with all the 21 essentials
- You will be left on the beach if you are late or have inadequate equipment
- Call the leader ahead of time if you must cancel
- Help each other out with carrying equipment and with safety issues
- Stay together – don't leave the group – can't go home early – don't make dinner reservations somewhere else for right after the paddle (since we can't guarantee you will be back in time)
- Respect for the environment – leave no trace
- This is not a guide service – you are expected to be responsible for yourself