

The Mountaineers

Olympia Branch

Sea Kayaking Committee

Trip Leader's Handbook



February 2013

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1. Introduction

The Olympia Branch Sea Kayaking Committee has prepared this *Trip Leader's Handbook* to assist new and existing trip leaders in planning and conducting sea kayak trips for the branch.

The handbook attempts to gather in one place essential standards and policies as well as a collection of best practices and resources.

These standards and policies will apply to Mountaineers sea kayak trips conducted by the Olympia Branch. A Mountaineers sea kayak trip is characterized as follows:

1. A Mountaineers sea kayak Trip is led by a recognized Mountaineer sea kayak leader or by a leader in training supervised by a mentoring leader. Participants are qualified Mountaineer sea kayakers or Mountaineer guests.
2. The trip is listed and scheduled in advance on the Mountaineers' web site.
3. Trips shall be conducted according to club policies and standards.
4. Trips should be documented with completed Trip Reports filed on the Mountaineers web site.

The Olympia Branch Sea Kayak Activity operates in accordance with the Club Minimum Standards for Sea Kayaking, but establishes or recommends additional policies as approved by the Branch Sea Kayak Committee. This is a dynamic process and updates and changes are often required as new issues come to light. Your help in keeping this handbook useful and up to date is requested and appreciated.

The Sea Kayak Committee exists to serve the needs of sea kayakers within the club. We encourage you to join the committee and to help with the sea kayaking course that is taught by the committee.

2. Mountaineers Minimum Sea Kayak Standards

Application

This standard applies to club-sponsored sea kayaking trips in saltwater or freshwater. This standard applies to any branch or committee that sponsors sea kayaking activities.

Trips

Sea kayaking trips will be rated with the categories shown in the Appendix [*see page 9-10*]. The rating must be available to participants when they sign up.

Equipment

The following equipment is required for any sea kayaking trip.

Sea Kayak Related Equipment – required of all

- Sea kayak with flotation in both ends
Flotation can be compartments separated from the cockpit by bulkheads or bags specifically designed to provide the kayak flotation. A sea sock should be used in boats without bulkheads, but is not adequate flotation without float bags.
- Paddle
- Bilge pump
- Paddle float
- Spray skirt
- USCG approved PFD
- Appropriate clothing for the conditions encountered seasonally
- Whistle

Sea Kayaking Ten Essentials – required of all

1. Navigation (Chart and compass – deck or orienteering type)
2. Spare clothing in a dry bag
3. Water
4. Food
5. First aid supplies
6. Lighter or waterproof matches
7. Sun protection (sun screen, hat, sunglasses with retainer strap)
8. Illumination (flashlight or headlamp)
9. Emergency shelter appropriate for the trip (space blanket, tarp, or tent)
10. Repair kit appropriate for trip and gear

Required Equipment for Leaders

- Chart
- Tide and current data for the trip
- Waterproof watch

Required Equipment for the Party -- carried by any person

- Spare paddle
- Towing system
- Duct tape for boat repairs
- Pliers, screwdriver (Phillips and spade) and knife or “Leatherman” type tool
- Weather or VHF radio
- Toilet paper and plastic bag

The following equipment may be required of all participants at the leader’s discretion:

- Spare paddle
- VHF radio
- Sling
- Wetsuit and dry top or drysuit
- Tow rope
- Chemical light stick
- Emergency signaling device (flares, smoke)
- Additional flotation

Leaders

Leaders must be approved to lead trips by the sponsoring committee. Sponsoring committees must be satisfied that leaders of sea kayak trips have these qualifications:

Training

- Graduation from the Sea Kayak Course or Equivalency
- Completion of a leadership course or demonstration of leadership skills to the satisfaction of the sponsoring committee

Experience

- Participation in at least two club-sponsored sea kayaking trips
- Serving as a mentored leader on at least two trips (with a different mentor each time)

Leaders must demonstrate skill maintenance by satisfactorily leading at least one trip every three years.

Participants

Graduation from the Sea Kayak Course or equivalency is a prerequisite for participating on a sea kayak trip. Current-year Sea Kayak Course students may participate on trips after they have successfully completed all course field trips.

Participants are responsible for signing up only for trips that are within their capabilities, wearing suitable clothing, and carrying appropriate equipment including the ten essentials.

Courses

The content of the Sea Kayaking Course shall include:

Classroom instruction (at least nine hours) covering:

- Equipment
- Charts and navigation
- Hypothermia
- Tides and currents
- Weather for kayakers including the Beaufort Wind Scale
- Leadership and followership including group dynamics
- Trips and the trip rating system
- Ergonomics, avoiding repetitive injuries, safe handling of heavy loads, shoulder protection
- Basic conservation principles as they apply to sea kayaking

Pool Instruction (at least two hours) covering:

- A swim check without flotation (participants must be able to swim)
- Wet exits
- Self and assisted rescue

Open-water Instruction (at least two six-hour days) covering:

- Launching and landing techniques
- Basic paddling strokes
- Use of required equipment
- Wet exits
- Self and assisted rescue

A sponsoring committee can substitute a club sponsored sea kayak trip for one day of field trip instruction.

Sea Kayak Course graduates must demonstrate competence in the course content and satisfactorily complete at least one club sponsored sea kayak trip rated at least SK-II that covers at least seven miles.

Committees may grant course equivalency for applicants who:

- Submit an application that shows that they have training or experience that meets or exceeds the requirements for course graduation, and
- Demonstrate, without instruction, a level of competency in sea kayaking knowledge and boat handling skills that is equivalent to that expected of a sea kayak course graduate, and
- Based on the above criteria, receive approval by the sponsoring committee

Instructors

Instructor qualifications are:

- Graduation (or equivalency) from the Sea Kayaking Course, and
- Approval from the sponsoring committee to instruct.

First-time instructors should also participate in a train-the-trainer session coordinated by the lead instructor.

Related Club Policies and Standards

None at this time

Comparable Standards

American Canoe Association (www.americancanoe.org)

- ACA Guidelines for Safe Coastal Kayaking
- ACA Coastal (Sea) Kayak Curriculum

Appendix: Sea Kayak Trip Ratings

Rating Factors	Trip Rating					
	SK I	SK II	SK III	SK IV	SK V	SK VI
<p>Geography (Fetch is defined as the unobstructed distance that the wind can blow over the water and build up waves). nm = nautical miles</p>	In areas protected from waves by nearby landforms in case of wind.	Fetch less than 10 nm unless it is generally possible to land and walk out. Crossings less than ½ nm except for very protected trips.	Crossings up to 2 nm wide and/or fetches longer than 10 nm.	Crossings up to 5 nm.	Crossings more than 5 nm, but less than 3 hours' paddling time at the speed listed with the trip. Exposed ocean coasts are included when precautions are taken.	Trips combining a long fetch with stretches where safe landing may be difficult or impossible for most of a day.
<p>Hydraulics (Expected en route) kt = knot</p>	Insignificant currents	Max. Predicted current up to one kt.	Max. Predicted currents up to two kt.	Predicted currents may be more than 2 kt, but less than slowest paddler's top speed.	Currents may be faster than group can paddle against.	Exposure to hazards at any other levels taken to extremes.
<p>Routes</p>	Day trip near shore.	Either has protection or intermittent places to get out.	May involve crossing eddy lines and tide rips.	May cross <i>strong</i> eddy lines, tide rips and upswellings.	May include landing and launching in surf.	Exposure to hazards at any other levels taken to extremes.
<p>Acceptable Conditions (no guarantees)</p>	Calm	Generally try to avoid choppy water and/or winds above 10 kt.	Generally will not start out in whitecaps, but be prepared for paddling into waves large enough to wash over the deck, and be comfortable paddling in at least 10 kt winds.	May include steep waves and swells. Be comfortable paddling in 15 kt winds.	For groups prepared to <i>knowingly</i> set out in rough weather, whitecaps, and fast currents.	May only be negotiable with favorable conditions. Kayak rescues may not be possible.

Rating Factors	Trip Rating					
	SK I	SK II	SK III	SK IV	SK V	SK VI
<p>Skills and Conditions (The skills and experience required are cumulative with ascending levels.)</p>	<p>Ability to swim. Except with leader's permission: (a) previous experience is required on trips more than 5 nm: and (b) previous practice capsizing and wet exiting (or be willing to learn how before the trip).</p>	<p>Participants must have practiced assisted sea kayak rescue techniques.</p>	<p>Conditions may require bracing skills. Previous group and self-rescue practice (both as rescuer and rescuee).</p>	<p>Conditions may require anticipatory leaning, reflexive bracing, stern rudder with paddle, and the ability to read moving water. Familiarity with charts and navigation.</p>	<p>Trip members must have tested their skills in rough conditions, know their limits, and be self-reliant in the event of separation from the group. The ability to Eskimo roll is highly recommended as conditions can make sea kayak rescues difficult. Rescue practice with the kayak and equipment used on this trip.</p>	<p>Extensive experience and skill including kayak surfing and rolling are required.</p>

The rating system is a general guide; the highest rating of any factor is usually used to rate the trip.

Plus or minus signs can be used to further differentiate the levels. For example, a minus sign could be used for a trip which technically gets a given level, but is on the easy side of that level. An asterisk designates training trips open to paddlers new to that level. The distance to be paddled and the expected paddling speed should be listed, but do not affect the trip level.

Due to extra risk, the following factors increase the trip rating ½ level:

- Water temperatures less than 55 degree Fahrenheit, unless participants bring wetsuits or drysuits to wear.
- A slightly faster current or longer crossing when all other conditions meet the criteria of a stated trip.
- Overnight or longer trips, unless an alternative (such as hiking out or being picked up by a support boat) is available.

3. Olympia Sea Kayaking Committee Policies on Leader Selection and Recruitment

A. *Scope*

This policy covers methods of recruiting new leaders, developing their skills, and rewarding their time and effort.

B. *Leader Criteria*

1. Nominee shall be a graduate of the Mountaineers Sea Kayaking Course or have been granted equivalency by the committee.
2. Nominee shall have paddled for at least one year after graduation from class or granting of equivalency and completed at least three trips with the Mountaineers.
3. Nominee must be recommended by two trip leaders.
4. Nominee must *lead* two *supervised* trips including pre-trip planning, sign-ups, leading the trip, dealing with on-the-water group dynamics, and completing a trip report. Each trip must be done under the watchful eye of a sponsoring leader listed as a mentor. Each trip must be mentored by a different leader. The leadership coordinator has a current mentor list.
5. Nominee will be evaluated in several areas including but not limited to:
 - ◆ Leadership skills
 - ◆ People skills
 - ◆ Sea kayak paddling and handling skills
 - ◆ Judgment
 - ◆ Knowledge of potential risks, including those associated with group trips such as weather and currents
 - ◆ Trip planning
 - ◆ Safety
 - ◆ Emergency procedures
6. Nominee must be approved by 2/3 vote of the committee members present at the meeting wherein the nominee's name is presented for approval.

C. *Leader Recruitment*

1. The committee may invite individuals who show potential as leaders to become leaders. These paddlers may be identified by committee members or by leaders with whom they have paddled.
2. Paddlers may request to become leaders. These requests will be addressed to the leadership coordinator.
3. Qualified paddlers will be put into training.

D. *Skills Development and Reward of Leaders*

1. Sea kayaking involves physical skills; the committee organizes workshops in selected skills for active and potential leaders. These not only benefit the individuals involved, but result in leaders that are more able to increase the skill level of those they lead and are better prepared to cope with unexpected and potentially dangerous conditions. Workshops include paddling technique, surfing, handling currents and eddy lines and open water rescue practice as well as trip planning, navigation and prediction of tides and currents.
2. The committee may offer these workshops and reduced or no cost to branch paddlers to benefit the Olympia Sea Kayak Activity.
3. Leaders and Instructors earn *Paddle Perks* points by leading, teaching and assisting in branch sea kayak activities. *Paddle Perks* points qualify paddlers for training financial assistance from the committee.

4. Olympia Sea Kayaking Committee Policies on Problem Resolution

A. *Problem Resolution*

1. The Sea Kayaking Committee Chair will initially handle all complaints and attempt informal resolution by discussions with the involved parties as soon as possible, but in no case later than two (2) weeks after the problem is brought to Committee Chair's attention.
2. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, the Committee Chair will request the complainant to write a dated and signed letter to the committee describing the problem and stating the desired resolution and inform the complainant that the letter will be shared with the involved parties, the committee and other Mountaineer officers and staff.
3. All complaints will be discussed by the committee at its next meeting.
4. If warranted, the parties allegedly causing the problem will be notified verbally and/or in writing and given a chance to respond.
5. If the problem cannot be resolved in a manner that is agreeable to the committee, the committee may:
 - ◆ In the case of a leader, remove that person from the active leaders list
 - ◆ In the case of a participant, bar that person from participation in future trips

B. *Removal From Leaders List*

1. Persons may be removed from the leaders list based on:
 - ◆ Personal request of that individual
 - ◆ Not leading a trip for three years
 - ◆ A 2/3 vote of the committee members present at the meeting wherein the nominee's name is presented for removal
2. Persons removed from the leaders list by vote of the committee will be notified in writing of the action and the reason why.
3. The Committee Chair shall also notify the Mountaineers Program Center of the committee's action and remove the leader from the branch qualified leader list.

C. *Removal From Participation*

1. If the person in question is a member of the Olympia Branch, the eligibility of that person to participate in Olympia Branch Trips may be removed by a 2/3 vote of the committee members present at the meeting wherein the person's name is presented for removal.
2. Persons no longer eligible to participate in Olympia Branch trips will be notified in writing of the action and the reason why.
3. The Committee Chair shall also notify the Mountaineers Program Center of the Committee's action.

5. Recommended Best Practices for Trips and Trip Planning

A. *General Information on Planning and Conducting Trips*

Advance Preparation

1. Select a trip that suits your skills and comfort level: physical fitness, organizational skills, party size, paddling and rescue skills.
 - Review the SK Level ratings (*pages 9-10*) to pick the appropriate classification for the trip. You should be comfortable paddling, leading and conducting rescues in SK conditions one level above the trip you are planning.
 - Consider the overall trip length and the expected time necessary to complete the trip.
 - Investigate local and seasonal weather patterns for the area you will be paddling in.
 - Consider possible weather conditions and alternatives if the weather changes.
2. Scout the trip if possible/appropriate, especially the longer or higher skill level trips.
 - Check launch point conditions, including required fees or permits and restroom facilities.
 - Check possible break and lunch stops.
 - Identify potential safety considerations or hazards.
 - Identify possible bail out points.
3. Calculate tides and currents; allow at least one-half hour at put-in to get everyone organized, outfitted and in the water. Be conservative and cautious.
 - Identify any critical tide or current conditions and times.
 - Make sure the trip can meet the schedule required by those critical conditions. (Don't get stuck in the mud if you run late!)
 - Have a bail out plan.
4. Determine if you will require any special or extra equipment beyond that required as a minimum.
 - This might include immersion protection, helmets, towing equipment, etc.

Listing the Trip

1. List the trip on the Mountaineers web site.
 - Determine all the basic information required by the trip listing, including destination, SK level, distance, pace, charts, and permits. Establish a meeting time. List your contact information – phone number and/or e-mail address. Establish a cutoff date and time for trip sign ups. (*See Chapter 9 – Trip Creation and Reporting Screens and the Club website, www.mountaineers.org/volunteers/volunteertools.cfm.*)
 - Add any special requirements for equipment or skills that are essential to participation.
 - The Committee Trip Coordinator can help with this or list the trip for you, given the basic trip information.
2. Olympia sea kayak trips are all listed as Leader Permission Required and are limited to 12 total participants including the leader. Wednesday Night Paddles, Pool Play and social events are exceptions.

Register Participants

1. Potential participants will contact you for permission to go on the trip.
2. If you are familiar with the participant and their abilities, you can sign them up or advise them why this trip is not appropriate for them.
3. If you are not familiar with the participant, interview them to determine if the trip is appropriate. The Participant Interview Guidelines contained in the next section can serve as an outline for this interview. You as the leader have the final call on this, as you will have to deal with them if they come. The committee and the club will support your decision.
4. If you accept the individual on the trip, register them for the trip on the Mountaineers web site.

- The site will not allow you to do this if they are not a qualified Mountaineer paddler, or their dues or waiver are not current. If this happens, contact them to try to resolve the problem.
- When they are registered, the web site will send them a registration confirmation e-mail.

Changes and Cancellations

1. Sometimes changes in published trips are necessary. You must notify your participants and all other parties involved ASAP about changes.
2. If you cannot lead the trip and cannot find a substitute, please notify all parties involved as soon as possible so that they have a chance to find another trip and/or cancel their boat-rental reservations.
3. If participants cancel, cancel them on your web site roster and add folks from the wait list if appropriate. The web site will send them a cancellation confirmation.

Before the Trip

1. Leave details of your trip with a responsible person.
2. Have with you the telephone number of the Mountaineers Emergency Contact, county sheriff, nearest Coast Guard or other appropriate authority. (*See pages 31-33*) Make sure you have a full charge on your cell phone.
3. Check the weather report, preferably NOAA, as close to your departure time as possible.
4. Check your gear.

Beginning of the Trip

1. Introduce yourself and have all participants introduce themselves.
2. Make sure participants help each other unloading and carrying boats.
3. Ask those with health problems or other issues that can affect their participation to speak with you privately.
4. Check if anyone has schedule issues after the trip that might be affected by trip delay or time extension.
5. Select a lead person, sweep and a first aid person. Identify those with medical or first aid experience (MOFA, WFR). You might rotate lead and sweep responsibilities around during the trip but make sure they are always defined and understood.
6. Briefly outline the trip: use a map; cover tides, currents, distances, and stopping points. Point out and discuss any difficult areas or potential hazards. Mention possible options or plan changes in response to contingencies.
7. Share your expectations for the trip. Emphasize good followership within the group.
8. Consider and discuss the weather forecast.
9. Discuss safety procedures – signals used, capsizes and rescues, group separation, etc.
10. Answer questions and address any concerns.
11. Scan the group for lack of equipment or preparation.
12. You might review who is carrying extra safety equipment such as VHF's, tow belts, emergency signaling devices, etc.
13. If someone is unprepared, will cause problems or endanger the group, you may leave them behind. The committee and the club will support your decision. Talk to the individual privately to avoid embarrassment. If the individual refuses to comply, get witnesses.
14. Before you launch check that all vehicles are properly parked, have the appropriate permits displayed or fees paid, are locked and paddlers have their keys secured.
15. Don't leave any equipment behind on the beach.

Trip Safety Issues

1. Be prepared to abort or revise the trip if it becomes dangerous or the skill level exceeds that advertised.

2. Remember that many participants do not have your skills or stamina. Do not increase the skill level or length beyond that advertised, even if the group wants to vote on it - peer pressure is dangerous.
3. Do not permit group separation. Do not leave people behind or allow them to get way out in front. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to split the group, but have a firm plan to maintain communication and regroup.
4. The group must travel at the speed of the slowest paddler to stay together. If someone is having difficulty keeping up, consider options. Take a group break and snack. Coach technique. Check for equipment issues. Consider a change in route or course to ease paddling requirements.
5. Keep an eye on the clock. Check that you are on schedule to stay within any tide or current requirements and can finish the trip as planned.
6. Keep an eye on the weather. Review any changes in wind, waves or current that might affect the remainder of the trip.
7. Keep an eye on participants. Check in with folks to see if they are doing okay. Make sure you take enough breaks for water, snacks, lunch and relief stops. Fix little things **before** they become big problems.
8. Turn around or abort the trip **while** you and everyone in the group still have adequate reserve to finish the trip safely.
9. If conditions change so that individual paddlers are having trouble staying with the group or with directional control, consider adding a tow to assist the individual. The leader should not be doing the tow. This allows the leader to continue to be aware of the overall situation and react to other situations. Towing should not be used just to keep a group at a planned speed in the absence of safety concerns. Slow down the group instead.

In Case of Emergency

1. **Safely** get people out of the water.
2. Assess the situation. If you are going to need outside medical or rescue assistance, initiate contact as soon as possible.
3. Consider assistance response time. If you can, get to shore. EMS assistance can be waiting on an adjacent road. If you need assistance on the water, response by Sheriff Patrol or Coast Guard may not be rapid. Response by nearby vessel may be quickest.
4. As appropriate, call 911 or issue a Mayday call on VHF Channel 16. Be prepared to provide your location and plan for meeting the responders.
5. Review the Mountaineers Emergency Contact Procedures included in Appendix VII (*see page 31*) and follow required steps.
6. If outside assistance is not required, recover the group and make a plan. Getting to shore and retrieving vehicles from the launch site by hitching a ride or other means may be preferable to trying to paddle home. Hitching a ride while wearing or carrying some paddle gear works well. If you are going to be much delayed, try to get messages out to those who would be concerned or affected. Keep track of everyone.

At the Trip End

1. Nobody leaves until all participants and their equipment are out of the water.
2. Make sure all the cars start.
3. Make sure that you have all information from them to complete your trip report form.
4. Check the area for equipment left behind.
5. You should be the last to leave.

After the Trip

1. Make final revisions to the roster on the Mountaineers web site to reflect actual participants.
2. Complete a Trip Report on the web site as well. It is useful to summarize tide and current data for the trip as well as weather, wind and sea state conditions.
3. In the Trip Report you may report any participant problems or safety incidents.

4. Participant problem reports are automatically circulated to the Sea Kayak Committee Chair for consideration and action. You may follow up directly as well. Problems might include extreme or blatant non-compliance with Mountaineer standards or policies or similar disregard for leader and group requirements. They might include serious lack of preparedness or totally unexcused no-shows. The report is probably not necessary for minor issues or disagreements. If in doubt contact the Committee Chair before filing the Trip Report.
5. Safety Incident Reports also automatically go the Sea Kayak Committee Chair as well as to the Club Safety Committee. They are used for review of serious accidents as well as for accumulation of data that might be useful in revising club procedures or drawing attention to common safety concerns. Incidental capsizes are probably not a safety incident. Something that has a significant unanticipated impact of the trip, places participants at risk and causes a major response may be an incident. The club is interested in “near misses” as well as they may be instructive in improving safety in the future. Certainly incidents causing injury requiring medical attention should be reported.

Congratulations Making Another Successful Trip Happen!

6. Participant Interview Guidelines

The outline below can serve as a guide and checklist for interviewing potential trip participants who you do not know, or checking for details about which you are not certain. As a leader, you are able to check a potential participant's profile on the club website to see what trips they have done recently. Feel free to ask for references from past trip leaders, especially ones you might know. Call the references to help understand the participant's background and skills. Make yourself a worksheet to help you remember questions, answers and notes from the interview.

A. Participant History / Equipment Review – Ask These Questions

1. Are you a member of the Mountaineers?
2. Have you completed the Basic Sea Kayaking Course (when?) or have you been granted equivalency?
3. How much kayaking have you done lately? Where? Weather conditions?
4. What kind of boat / equipment will you be bringing with you? Do you have all essential gear/clothing?
5. What other skills do you have?
6. What other kayaking or related courses have you completed? (surfing classes, MOFA, etc.)
7. Can you provide a reference of someone who is familiar with your paddling skills and experience?
8. Do you have any physical or health limitations that will affect your participation or could impact the safety of the group? Do you have any special health issues that we should be aware of?
9. Is there anything special you would like to gain from the trip?
10. Do you have any pressing engagements immediately after the trip?

B. Trip Description and Requirements - Provide This Information

1. Meeting place and time (include “in-the-water” time)
2. Required equipment :
 - ◆ Ten Essentials plus additional required equipment
 - ◆ Food, drink
 - ◆ For overnights include any camping requirements
 - ◆ Any additional equipment you are requiring as trip leader
3. General trip description:
 - ◆ Breaks and lunch
 - ◆ Miles to cover
 - ◆ Return time
 - ◆ Anticipated weather, tides, current
 - ◆ SK rating and why
 - ◆ Any special skills or experience required for the trip
3. Anticipated number of paddlers
4. Permits or fees
5. Charts

If you feel this person is not qualified, refer them to a more suitable trip, or recommend an appropriate class or clinic for their skill development.

When you attempt to register a person for a trip on the Mountaineers web site, the site checks their qualifications as well as checking for current dues payment and waiver.

7. Safety and Leadership

“Safety is no accident.”

“There are old pilots and bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots.”

"A man who is not afraid of the sea will soon be drowned for he will be going out on a day he shouldn't, but we do be afraid of the sea and we do only be drowned now and again."

“The ocean – it’s always worse than it looks.”

“You can observe a lot by just looking.”

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

“Plans rarely survive contact with the enemy.”

“Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment.”

“Bring them back alive and happy, not just happy to be back alive.”

You probably have your favorites as well – admonitions that all start with a wagging finger and the prefix, “Now just remember young man/woman...” Amusing as they are, these sayings live on because they contain some essential truths about successfully negotiating hazardous environments. Safety and leadership in sea kayaking share many elements in common with other sports and activities, but also have specific issues that are worth considering. This section presents a selection of safety and leadership approaches that relate directly to sea kayaking. They all provide good ways of approaching and thinking about the challenges a leader faces on trips.

A. *Randel Washburne’s Rings of Defense*

In his book, The Coastal Kayaker’s Manual, Washburne presents what he describes as a defensive approach to sea kayaking. He identifies rings or levels of defense. As you pass beyond, or through any one of these rings, your prospects dim. As you climb back up through any ring, things look up. Think of these rings as descending levels in a whirlpool and you get an appropriate image. The rings are:

Avoiding Trouble

This is a good place to start. Good judgment in planning or aborting a trip prevents a lot of problems. Staying clear of difficult water conditions makes many fewer demands on paddler skills. However, at some level, avoiding trouble means you never get to some really interesting places. So you can look for some trouble, **BUT**, you should be able to negotiate the next level and safely return from the trouble as you need to.

Surviving Rough Water

Here’s trouble. You went around the corner after all and now are fully exposed to the wind and waves on a long fetch of coast. You could have seen this coming, by looking, but you really wanted to head on around the corner. Your prospects have dimmed. You have added a potential for problems. However, with the proper skills and equipment you can continue, confident that nothing bad will probably happen and that you can return to sheltered water when you need to. You have the resources to climb back one level. Should it get worse, you will be confronted with the next ring of defense.

Recovering from Capsize

Then it happens. Suddenly it gets cold, dark and wet. You have passed through the next ring and have to face the consequences. Hopefully, you are prepared and can restore matters, climb back at least one level and continue on. With a reliable roll, you are up in seconds. With competent paddling partners, you might get an assisted bow or paddle roll. If you swim, your prepared partners can have your boat drained and you safely back inside in mere minutes. Even if you are swimming by yourself, you may have a variety of self rescue tricks that

might work. Anything that gets you back upright and capable of continuing to survive rough water and eventually paddling out of trouble counts. But to continue to follow the levels downward, suppose that none of these approaches pan out. What's left?

Signaling for Help

Now things are really bad. Options narrow. Your return to safety depends on outside assistance. If you are really lucky, someone is nearby with a boat, **AND** the skills to get you back out of the water, **AND** you manage to signal to them that you need help. Can you get your message out? Suppose there is no one in sight. Can you get a useful message out then? Will anybody respond? How long will they take? Do you have that long? These are really troubling questions, often without good answers. That doesn't mean that signaling devices are of no use, but crossing through that last defensive ring significantly lowers the odds for a happy ending. Consequently focusing your attention on successful navigation of the higher rings should be the priority. Exercise good judgment. Paddle with competent partners. Build your paddle and rescue skills. Carry signaling equipment, but hope you never to have to use it.

B. Situational Awareness

This is a term that gets used a lot in a variety of fields from armed combat, to flying, to wildfire fighting. The concept is to maintain a continued, 360 degree view of what is going on. Specifically, you should be constantly aware when relevant factors or conditions change. In our previous scenario, this situational awareness would have recognized that heading on around the corner explicitly crossed down one level in Washburne's rings and that it should not have been done unless all the further lines of defense were in place.

A very common factor in accidents is the loss of situational awareness resulting from subtle changes in conditions that now will require a different response than what had been planned. Your return to the launch site crosses the outlet from a bay and on the incoming tide and slack, the incoming waves were no greater than elsewhere. The time slips by and the ebb starts and suddenly there is strong ebb current. Maybe it builds up in just a few minutes. Suddenly the incoming waves double in size and start to break. Capsizes occur and folks are getting swept out by the current. You and the group had been concentrating on another problem – finding a way through the sand bars, or watching whales. It doesn't matter. The difficult channel conditions should have been foreseen and the trip planned accordingly.

Being alert for changing conditions and recognizing their impact is not always easy. Distractions are the enemy. The trip leader may be immersed in details of group interaction or something. To counter this loss of awareness, a situation observer could be detailed with no other responsibilities than to keep an up to the minute, global overview of the trip. Ideally this observer will have a lot of experience and have really good “antennae” for trouble. He or she can break into the leader's activities with the message that something “doesn't look good” and might require a change in plan. The lesson for trip leaders is to avoid being too personally involved in providing active assistance to a paddler. If you are the one towing, you have limited ability to keep an eye on everyone else. If you have your head down in a difficult rescue, you can't be aware of what else is happening to your group. If you are leading the group in front, it is really difficult to keep track of all paddlers. Recruit others to take on these roles to keep you free for the overview.

On a kayak trip, situational awareness must cover changes in the weather, the current or changing condition of paddlers, oncoming boat traffic (especially from behind) and anything that might sneak up to ultimately have an impact on the trip. There is no substitute for water time in gaining appreciation of clues that might mean trouble ahead. Certainly there is value in reviewing the details of others' "experiences". Hopefully, these stories let the paddler recognize a potential problem as it starts to be match the events in someone else's story. Past accident or incident reports are a good source of cautionary tales. The skill is in recognizing when you might be headed for a starring role in a revival of the tale and seeking an alternative and better ending.

C. *Be Prepared*

The Boy Scouts had it right. Preparation is a great way of dealing with challenges that might arise on kayak trips. It of course begins with the Kayak Essentials. It really begins with the Mountaineer 10 Essentials. Over and over again, practicing this level of preparedness whenever you go out proves to be a good idea. Make sure your gear meets these requirements. Try it out to see if it really works the way you would like it to. Organize it so that it easily packs and comes along on every trip. As a leader, you should lead in having everything required and encourage your paddlers to do likewise. You might even be carrying strategic extra items that one of your paddlers might need, like a spare pair of neoprene gloves or a warm hat. At this point your gear locker or bin or closet bottom has probably accumulated cast offs and second choice items that would be easy to pack for use by someone who is still gathering gear.

Remember that major items like your kayak, paddle, PFD and spray skirt are part of the Kayak Essentials. Be sure they are working and in good condition. On the beach or on a trip you are leading is a bad time to discover that something is in need of repair. Check before you go.

Preparation is not just limited to gear. You should know beforehand and during the trip the timing and size of the relevant tides and currents. You should have and understand the weather forecast for the trip as well as what is expected next, in case it arrives sooner, or you are out longer than planned. Of course you should know who is coming. Having contact information for your participants with you at the beach and on the trip might prove useful. Printing your trip roster from the Mountaineers web site is a good way to gather this information. Providing participants with your cell phone before the trip allows them to call you on the beach with breaking news of delays.

In the trip planning section, pre-trip preparation was discussed including scouting the trip, the launch facilities and potential break sites along the way. If you can't do it personally, there may well be someone in the branch who knows the information and can brief you.

You should be prepared personally as well. You should practice, practice, practice skills that you might need on the water. Keep your physical conditioning current to match the trip requirements. The bigger bag of rescue techniques you have, the quicker you can solve problems out on the water. Take advantage of clinics to build new skills and refine old ones.

D. *CLAP*

This mnemonic comes to us courtesy of the British Canoe Union, the organizing body of paddle sports in Great Britain. Application of these techniques is more relevant to leading in dynamic conditions, but at some level they work well even for fairly ordinary paddles. The letters stand for:

Communication

You may know what you and the group are doing, but if you have not effectively shared this with all the others, you may be surprised and possibly dismayed at the result. This is especially true in rapidly changing conditions. In dynamic conditions, you must be able to communicate to the group when you need to. It might require signals, but then everyone must be watching and understand the signals. Did

you cover this on the beach before launch? You need to find out how others are doing as well. When communication breaks down, you lose control, with potentially bad outcomes.

Line of Sight

It means just what it says. You must have line of sight to the paddlers and events you are trying to manage. Folks around the corner or behind a rock are just gone and you have no idea what is happening until they emerge or you can go and look.

Avoidance is Better than Cure

A little British, what? But this is really an echo of Randel Washburne's first circle of defense – Avoiding Trouble. Keeping out of trouble beats cleaning up afterwards. Try to think through the consequences before launching on a course of action.

Position of Maximum Usefulness

This is where you as the leader should be. It means you can see everything. You can get to where you need to be quickly. You can control the movement of others to avoid or retreat from danger. And you are not tied up in something else. You are not burdened with a tow. You are not swimming out of your boat. You are not on land, unable to launch to manage the group. And you are not the one getting trashed by the wave you didn't see coming.

E. MOFA Seven Steps

MOFA, Mountain Oriented First Aid, is the name of an extremely good wilderness first aid program long taught by the Mountaineers. It is primarily focused on injuries typical on high angle climbing accidents, and oriented, as the name says, to the mountain environment. Nonetheless, it is well worth looking into for the depth of content as well as the real training it provides in accident scene management. If you decide to take the MOFA course as a sea kayaker, talk to the instructor and ask to take the course using your paddle gear rather than climbing or backpacking gear to respond to accidents. You need to train with the equipment you carry. A good instructor will agree to this quickly and might even invite you to comment on some special aspects of accident management on the water.

A central element of scene management, as taught in the course, is the seven step protocol for reacting to an accident. It is an excellent guide to follow in the event of a paddling accident as well. The steps are:

1. Take Charge of the Situation

As the leader, one would assume you would be in charge. But maybe your designated First Aid person is the right person to take on this responsibility. Be clear about this. Someone must be in charge! Since usually reaction to a sea kayaking accident involves getting the patient to shore, it makes sense for the trip leader to be in charge. As the response moves to first aid evaluation and response, you, the leader can direct the First Aid person to perform those roles, while you stay in charge, and with the overview situational awareness. Remember situational awareness? See how this all relates.

2. Approach the Patient Safely

Accident reports are full of examples of responders simply becoming more victims. This does no one any good, especially the original patient. Take the time necessary to assess the situation and find the safe way of getting to the patient.

3. Perform Emergency Rescue and Urgent First Aid

On the water, this step becomes more important than it often is on land. Typically, the patient needs to get out of the water and to land before much effective first aid can occur. Maybe getting the patient out of the water is the only emergency rescue appropriate before providing urgent first aid. Maybe getting the patient onto a rafted group of boats under tow toward land is the effective step. This part is often a lot

more complicated than just transporting the patient a short distance on land to a safer location. Here is where frequent and creative rescue practice is valuable.

4. Protect the Patient

Cold water, cold beach, cold air, rain, surf – there are a lot of things to protect a sea kayak patient from. Here is a good chance to review your paddle gear to see what you carry that would provide good protection from the elements.

5. Check for Other Injuries

This step now moves to standard MOFA injury checking protocol. Here is where your trained First Aid person becomes the active participant. Be thorough.

6. Plan What To Do

Now is the time to decide how this incident is going to be unwound. Are you calling for outside assistance? Are you sending someone for help? Can you tow the patient home safely? MOFA training provides procedures and forms for documenting the patient condition for outside responders.

7. Carry Out the Plan

Make the assignments clear. Don't split up the group too finely. Don't send someone out alone. Try to keep communication. Stay in control.

F. Avoid Party Separation

The club wide Safety Committee of the Mountaineers has determined that party separation, allowing the group to split, is a major source of incidents on club outings. Once the group splits, the leader loses control of the split party. Radio communication may cease to work. Changes in plan may be required by either party with no way to communicate the consequences. Resources are divided between the groups. It just isn't good. Mountaineer sea kayak trips are recreational and social. They are not expeditions. They are not set up to get one person on top of a peak at any cost. Party separation for anything other than a carefully planned safety response is not appropriate.

However, there may be times when breaking a group into smaller, well managed subgroups, or pods is justified. Each pod must have competent party strength. Communication protocols and plans to reestablish group contact must be complete. Make sure that the overall group strength and resources are not being compromised by the separation.

Incidents that are caused by party separation will be looked at unfavorably by the Sea Kayak Committee.

G. Leadership

The Olympia Branch of the Mountaineers offers a Leadership Course roughly based on the book, Outdoor Leadership, by John Graham. Again it is a course worth considering. The book is also a good reference to understand the challenges of being an effective leader in the outdoors. This section condenses some relevant material from the book as it relates to leading sea kayak trips.

A Leader is Prepared

No surprises here! If you have been reading this all along, preparedness and planning have been touched on before. They are still worth emphasizing. You should set the tone by being ready for the trip and what might occur.

A Leader Makes Good Decisions

The elements of good decision making have been discussed above – situational awareness, time management, continuous evaluation of people and conditions. The point is that the leader must act on

these elements and **make** the decisions as they are required to be made. It is not adequate to just watch unfavorable events unfold and then comment that you just knew that was going to happen.

A Leader Cares for His/Her Paddlers

They came on the trip to have a good time, not to be abused. Hopefully, they came on the trip because **you** were leading it. Everyone has difficult days. You may need to work to help someone through their difficulty. This is especially true if conditions begin to challenge participant's skills. You have seen the effort we make in the basic course to have students succeed. Bring that same spirit to your paddles. This spirit also encourages the participants to trust you and be more forthcoming about any issues they might be having. You might be able to intervene with a tip or gear adjustment early that improves someone's trip or prevents them from running out of gas short of the end. This spirit also acts to defuse behavior that might be disruptive or dangerous.

A Leader Takes Responsibility

It is your trip, but it is also a Mountaineers trip. It is your job to see that it is conducted safely and meets the standards of the club and the committee. You have a special relationship with the participants. They assume that you will lead. That does not mean babysitting, but you do have a duty to care for their wellbeing. You also have a responsibility to make the trip a good one for participants, which may mean quitting early or picking a Plan B. Think about going beyond the tourist guide role and sharing your knowledge of the environment or coaching technique. Remember you learned all that from someone else once.

A Leader Communicates

Communication is always two way – talking and **listening**. This starts with participant interviews. It continues with sharing the trip details and exchanging trip expectations. On the beach you continue to keep these lines of communication open. Here is where you can find out a lot of stuff that might affect how you actually conduct the trip. Here is also where you share your vision for the trip and get buy-in from the participants. It might even progress to a discussion within the group on details and maybe even a change in plan. You are making the decisions, but they are based on information exchanged through communication. Once under way, it becomes harder to keep in touch with everyone. Take advantage of shore breaks to check in with everyone. Perhaps you might circulate within the group while underway to continue the conversation. Here again is an example of why the leader is probably not the one actually leading out in front. On the other hand, the leader should have clearly communicated the plan to that lead paddler. If things get more dynamic and changes in plan are required, make sure that everyone knows the new plan. Make sure there is understanding and not just one way communication. Your participants will appreciate being part of the process.

A Leader Builds a Team

You can't do it alone. At some point you may really need help. Making your group into a team is an important element of leadership. As noted, it starts early in the trip preparation. You can communicate the attitude and team building expectations. Empower participants with responsibilities and roles. Listen to their concerns and have them involved in decision making. Honor their points of view. However, you must remain the leader and if needed must be able to make decisions quickly and effectively where safety issues are present. Effort spent building the group into an effective team will really pay off should our old friend "trouble" be unavoidable.

8. Wilderness Ethics and Conservation

A. *Conservation Principles for Kayakers*

Whether you intend to paddle on long expeditions or short day paddles, your experience will be much more rewarding if the environment in which you paddle is one of natural beauty. Many forms of recreation affect a single element of the environment, but in kayaking we have the opportunity to affect them all: water, air, shoreline, the campsite and the trails. Because our scope is so broad and the popularity of our sport is increasing, it is essential that we make every effort to leave no trace. Conservation is about sharing, partnership and stewardship for present and future generations of wildlife and people as well as the environment. It is about caring, doing the right thing, and taking responsibility to minimize your impact.

General Code of Conduct

1. Avoid damage to banks and shoreline vegetation
2. Come ashore only on approved put-in sites such as public parks, DNR beaches and ends of roads or where prior permission has been given. Do not trespass on private property or moorings.
3. Leave no trace
4. Comply with the rules and regulations of the respective land management agencies
5. Avoid overcrowding one put-in or campsite. Park away from the put-in or campsite and/or carpool if possible.
6. Always try to leave the areas you visit more pristine than you found it.

Put In

1. Park your car in designated spots
2. Respect the neighbors of put-in sites
3. Be discreet when changing into or out of paddling clothing in public places
4. Avoid spreading out so it is difficult for others to use put-in site. Minimize the time boat ramps are blocked while unloading and loading.
5. Move quietly, talk softly

Low Impact Traveling

1. Avoid using areas important for migrating waterfowl, nesting birds, nursery sites and spawning fish in the appropriate seasons.
2. Abide by the provisions of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). New rules were added for marine mammals in 2011.

Whales and Orcas

- Do not approach orcas any closer than 200 yards and stay at least 400 yards in front of the orcas' direction of travel
- Keep at least 100 yards away at all times from other whales, dolphins and porpoises
- Limit observing time to 30 minutes or less from a safe distance, use binoculars
- Never interfere with feeding, breeding or nursing activities
- Do not encircle a marine mammal or trap them between another vessel and the shore. Learn to recognize stress-related behavioral signs, such as tail-lopping and spy-hopping
- Move around animals from behind
- Do not feed or touch animals; do not discard fish or fish wastes
- If whales approach your kayak, occasionally tap the side of your boat with hands
- If you are in a group, line your boats up side by side. Whales must surface to breathe, and covering a large surface area with boats inhibits their access to air.

Seals and Sea lions

- When approaching seal and sea lion haul-outs and nesting bird refuges, stay at least 200 yards from shore. Startling the seals and sea lions could result in their stampeding toward the water, trampling each other on the way. Scaring the birds may result in them abandoning their nests.
- If you notice the seals or sea lions lifting their heads or if you hear birds giving alarm calls, slowly retreat from the area.
- Never enter a Wildlife Refuge unless you are positive that it is open

Low Impact Camping

- Obtain necessary permits
- It is always better to camp at established sites where your stay will cause no additional damage.
- Choose an area that will not be damaged by your stay
- Avoid critical wildlife habitats, obvious animal trails and fragile terrain such as stream banks
- Do not cut standing trees or live branches
- Avoid digging gutter drainage trenches around tents, choose high ground instead
- Choose unvegetated sites of rock, sand or gravel. Use grassy areas only if you can avoid trampling tree seedlings and other plants. Spend only one or two nights at each site.
- If you clear your sleeping spot of surface debris, small rocks, twigs etc, then "re-debris" it before leaving.
- Be prepared to ensure your food is stored safely and is not accessible to animals.
- Build fires below the high tide mark or use established fire sites, restrict to cooking size, disperse collected firewood, bury or scatter the ashes, return fire pit to a natural state
- Use plain saltwater for dishwashing, using sand as a cleanser. Commercial biodegradable soaps are available which can also be used to wash yourself and your clothing
- Be prepared to take out everything you brought in with you, including all waste products
- Wherever you stay, leave it in a more pristine state than the way you found it by removing rubbish and dismantling unnecessary or unsafe fireplaces.

Shoreline Ownership

- Washington Law makes identification of public and private shoreline areas difficult.
- In general ownership is divided into uplands, tidelands and submerged bottom.
- Upland ownership applies to land above the mean (average) high tide line. This will usually be further down the beach than the existing high tide wash line of debris.
- Tidelands extend from this point to the line of lowest low tide.
- Most upland is in private ownership unless specifically noted as public land.
- Most tideland is either private or publicly owned and leased for private use. Public tideland is noted on some charts.

9. Trip Creation and Reporting Screens

This section will help you navigate the Mountaineers web pages for Trip Creation and Reporting.

Below are three screens from the Mountaineers website that show both a created sea kayak trip and a filed Trip Report. They are examples of the information you should provide when setting up and closing out a trip. For more help interacting with this data base contact the Olympia Sea Kayak Trip Coordinator or check out the help information available on line. To access the help information, sign in to your Mountaineers.org account. On the **Volunteer** tab across the top, pull down the list and select **Volunteer and Leader Tools**. Click on the entries under **Activities (How do I list an activity on line? and Managing Activities)** as well as the entry under **Destinations (Activity Templates) (How do I create or edit a destination?)** You should find some answers there.

This screen shows the details of the Destination. You may be able to use a Destination already created, but the trip length may not match. Quite possibly you will need to create a new Destination for each trip. That is just the way it is with a data base set up to handle trails and climbs on land that are always the same. Details about the trip are entered later as Leader Notes as the Activity is created. Reuse of a Destination might occur if you were leading another trip from Boston Harbor around Squaxin Island. It will still be about 12 nm. But if you were planning to take a side trip up Hammersley and extend the trip to 16 nm. you would need a “new” Destination to reflect the added distance.

Destination Details



Charles Lozner photo
(The Enchantments)

Destination: Budd Inlet
Create a new activity for: Budd Inlet

Activity Report Summary⁽⁺⁾

Destination Details

<p>Activity Type: Sea Kayak</p> <p>Category: TRIP</p> <p>Capacity: 12</p> <p>Book Reference</p> <p>Map Reference Olympia, the Inlets and Harstene Island - WA205 (SeaTrails)</p> <p>Land Designation:</p> <p>Land Manager:</p> <p>Permit: No</p>	<p>Difficulty: Sea Kayak II+</p> <p>Length: 10 nm (mi. RT)</p> <p>Elevation Gain: (ft)</p> <p>Grade:</p> <p>Class:</p> <p>Start Location: West Side Rotary Park</p> <p>State/Province: WA</p>
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Description

None

This activity is approved for credit: Yes

Participant Prerequisites	Leader Prerequisites
<p>Enrolled Courses</p> <p>-None-</p> <p>Completed Courses</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Everett</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Kitsap</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Olympia</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Seattle</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Tacoma</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Everett</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Kitsap</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Olympia</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Seattle</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Tacoma</p>	<p>Enrolled Courses</p> <p>-None-</p> <p>Completed Courses</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Everett</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Kitsap</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Olympia</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Seattle</p> <p>Sea Kayaking - Tacoma</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Everett</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Kitsap</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Olympia</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Seattle</p> <p>Sea Kayaking Equivalency - Tacoma</p>

This screen shows the results for the actual activity. Here you enter details such as meeting time and place and trip details (the teaser that makes people want to sign up) under Leader Notes. The Trip Data shown on the right hand side bar is information carried forward from the Destination Details entered before (or reused)

welcome, Henry Romer.
Branch: Olympia
Your Account
Log Out
Help



The Mountaineers
EXPLORE • LEARN • CONSERVE



Explore

Learn

Conserve

Connect

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Member Info

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Activity Information

Updated by Henry Romer on 11/21/11

Edit

Budd Inlet

[View complete destination details.](#)

12/03/11
TRIP
Olympia Sea Kayaking

Leader
Henry F. Romer (360) 357-7638

When to meet: 9:30 AM

Where to meet: West Side Rotary Park

Leader Notes⁽⁺⁾
Pre-Banff Paddle. A high tide will let us explore urban and non-urban inlets of lower Budd Inlet.

Where/When to meet: 9:30 AM at West Side Rotary Park

Registration Opens:
11/21/11 @ 9:00 AM

Registration Closes:
12/01/11 @ 5:00 PM

Leader Permission Required

Trip Data

- Participant Capacity: 11
- Leader Capacity: 1
- Total Capacity: 12
- Difficulty: Sea Kayak II+
- Elevation Gain: N/A
- Distance: 10 nm
- Pace: Slow
- Map(s)
Olympia, the Inlets and Harstene Island - WA205 (SeaTrails)
- Book(s)
N/A
- Land Designation
- Land Manager
- Permit Required?
No

feedback



Charles Lozner photo
(The Enchantments)

This screen shows the data from the completed trip report from the activity. Use the General Activity Note field to describe the route, stops and details. Use the Route Conditions field to record Tide and Current data. Weather notes are where wind and wave conditions should be recorded. Equipment notes and Required Skills can be used to note special circumstances like immersion protection, helmets or good bracing or rolling skills.

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Connect
Outdoor Centers
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Activity Report for Budd Inlet

Activity ID: 29108

Activity Limit: 12

Activity Date: 12/03/11

Activity Leader: Henry F. Romer

Submitted by: Henry F. Romer

Activity Results: Successful

Start location: West Bay Park

End location: West Bay Park

Roundtrip distance (in miles): 8 n

Elevation gain (in feet):

Roundtrip time (in hours): 4.5 hrs

General Activity Notes (trail, approach, bike route, water route conditions, etc.):
Counterclockwise navigation of lower Budd Inlet. Visited West Bay Cove, 4th Ave. dam, Yacht Club, Percival Plaza and boardwalks and Port. Lunch at spit at Ellis Cove. Return to Butler Cove and West Bay shore. With 1 mile crossing, trip length was sufficient to count towards the Inlet Paddle Pin Award.

Problem(s) found:

Overall route condition:

Route conditions: (for climbs, scrambles, snowshoe trips, etc.)
Olympia low tide 5:24 AM - 4.3', high tide 12:05 PM - 14.6', low 7:36 PM - 3.4'

Permits required? No

Driving / parking notes:

Camping notes:(for backpacks, overnight scrambles, climbs, etc.):

Equipment notes:

Required skills notes:

Flora / fauna notes:

Weather notes: Low clouds, with sun breaks. Calm

[Edit this Activity Report](#)

Charles Lerner photo
(The Enchantment)



Appendix I: Mountaineers Emergency Contacts

Mountaineers Emergency Contact Procedures and Call Tree

Members of all branches/committees with a trip emergency should:

- 1) First call **911** and ask to be transferred to the Sheriff of the county they are in (or National Park Service for Rainier, Olympics, & North Cascades) for a Search and Rescue (SAR).
- 2) Second notify the club by calling the Mountaineers Emergency Line:

206-521-6030

This will bring the services of the Mountaineers organization to bear. The club representative can provide advice on managing through the incident, notify emergency contacts and relevant committee/club leadership, and serve as spokesperson for external organizations such as the media.

They will hear a message that says: *“You have reached the Mountaineers Emergency line. If you are involved in a trip emergency, call 911. If you have already done this, please press ‘1’. You will be connected to the club representative on-call who can provide further assistance. If you have tried that person and they are not available, press ‘2’, if they are not available press ‘3’.*

Pressing “1” will connect with Mike Maude, Safety Volunteer

Pressing “2” will connect with Martinique Grigg, Executive Director

Pressing “3” will connect with Leann Arend, Director of Finance & Operations

Pressing “4” will connect with Mary Hsue, Director of Development & Communications

Pressing “5” will connect with Becca Polglase, Education Manager

Pressing “6” will connect with Gavin Woody, Mountaineers President

Cut out the following and carry it in your 10 Essentials package

Mountaineers Emergency Line

First call **911**, and ask to be transferred to the Sheriff of the county you are in (or National Park Service for Rainier, Olympics & North Cascades) for a Search and Rescue (SAR)

Then call the club: **206-521-6030**

Appendix II: Telephone Numbers and Internet Addresses (Checked 2012)

A. *Emergency Telephone Numbers*

In all cases	911
Mountaineers Emergency Contact	206/521-6030

Coast Guard (Officer in Charge)

Bellingham	360/734-1692
Ilwaco	360/642-2382
La Push	360/374-6469
Port Angeles	360/457-5990
Neah Bay	360/645-2237
Seattle	206/217-6750
Westport	360/268-0121
Astoria	503/325-3301
Portland	503/240-9365

<u>Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service</u>	206/217-6151
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County Sheriffs

Clallam County	
East (Port Angeles)	360/452-7836
Grays Harbor County (Montesano)	360/249-3711
Island County (Coupeville)	360/678-4422
Jefferson County	
East (Port Hadlock)	360/385-3831
King County (Seattle)	206/296-3311
Kitsap County (Port Orchard)	360/337-7101
Mason County (Shelton)	360/427-9670
Pacific County (South Bend)	360/875-9397
Pierce County (Tacoma)	253/798-7530
San Juan County (Friday Harbor)	360/378-4151
Skagit County	
East (Mt. Vernon)	360/428-3211
Snohomish County (Everett)	425/388-3411
Thurston County (Olympia)	360/786-5500
(24 hr)	360/704-2740
Wakiakum County (Cathlamet)	360/795-3242
Whatcom County (Bellingham)	360/676-6650

Red Tide and Biotoxin Hotline (Recorded message on closures)	800/562-5632
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Washington Poison Center	800/222-1222
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B. *VHF Radio Channels*

Marine VHF

Coast Guard Liaison	Channel 16, Channel 22
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Distress or Hailing	Channel 16
Commercial/Non-Commercial Hailing	Channel 9
Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service Pt.	Channel 14, South of Bush Pt. & Possession Channel 5A, North and West
NOAA Weather	
Astoria	Channel 2
Neah Bay	Channel 1
Olympia	Channel 3
Puget Sound/Forks	Channel 4 (Marine Weather)
Seattle	Channel 7
Environment Canada Weather	
Vancouver-Victoria	Channel 2
Port Alberni/Port Hardy/Ucluelet	Channel 7
Available Channels for Non-commercial Traffic	Channels 68, 69, 71, 72

C. Information Telephone Numbers

Ferries	
Washington State Ferries	206/464-6400 or 800/843-3779
B.C. Ferries	888/223-3779
Washington Water Trails Association	206/545-9161
Washington State Parks	350/902-8844 (Information) 888/226-7688 (Reservations) 360/902-8500 (Hdqtrs in Olympia)
Nature Conservancy (Yellow Island, Long Island)	206/343-4344
Olympic National Park	
Visitors Center (Port Angeles)	360/565-3130
Wilderness Information Center	360/565-3100
Ranger Station Forks	360/374-7566
Ranger Station Quinalt	360/288-0232
Whale (and marine mammal) Hotline to report sightings, strandings or harassment	800/853-1964
BC Whale Hotline	866/472-9663
Washington Marine Weather	206/526-6087 and follow prompts

D. Internet Addresses

Washington Marine Forecast (NOAA)	http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/marine_report.html
British Columbia Marine Forecast (Synopsis and links to regional marine forecasts)	http://www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/marine/synopsis_e.html?mapID=02&siteID=14305&stationID=
Western Washington Zone Forecast	http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/zone_report.KSEW.html

SW Washington/NW Oregon Zones	http://www.atmos.washington.edu/data/zone_report.KPQR.html
Washington State Ferry Schedule	http://www.wsdot.com/ferries/schedule/Default.aspx
Port Angeles/Victoria Ferry	http://www.cohoferry.com/main/?Fares
British Columbia Ferries	http://www.bcferrries.com/schedules/
Washington Tide Predictions	http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/tide_predictions.shtml?gid=259
Washington and Oregon Current Predictions	http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/currents12/cpred2.html#OR
Washington Kayak Club	http://www.washingtonkayakclub.org/
The Mountaineers	http://www.mountaineers.org/
Olympia Branch Mountaineers	http://www.olympiamountaineers.org/
Washington Water Trails	http://www.wwta.org/index2.asp
Washington Boat Launch Sites	http://maptest.iac.wa.gov/presentation/map.asp?ScreenWidth=1440&MapType=1&Cmd=INIT&AreaType=County&Area=ALL
Washington Shoreline Photos	http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/shorephotos/

NOAA has started to produce downloadable booklet charts which can be downloaded, printed page by page with Adobe Reader to scale and then assembled into charts as large as you want. The catalog page for our region is at:

<http://www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/mcd/catalogs/viewer.php?cat=Pacific&side=Chart>

A list of charts to download can be found at:

<http://ocsdata.ncd.noaa.gov/BookletChart/PacificCoastBookletCharts.htm>

A good scale for charts for sea kayaking is 1:80,000. The booklet chart for the North Sound – Seattle to Whidbey is **18441**. The San Juan Islands are covered by **18421**. Unfortunately Chart **18448** which covers our South Sound isn't produced yet as a booklet chart. This site is a good source if you need up to date charts for a lot of other areas, like the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the Coast or the Columbia River.

Appendix III: Beaufort Wind Scale

Force	WMO Classification	Wind Speed In knots	Wave Height (Puget Sound-ft.)	Wave Height (Open ocean-ft.)	Description of sea	Description of land
0	Calm	Less than 1	0	0	Sea like a mirror. Old wave-patterns only.	Calm; smoke rises vertically.
1	Light air	1-3	0.25	0.25	Ripples, no foam crests.	Smoke drifts indicate wind direction.
2	Light breeze	4-6	0.5 - 1	0.5 - 1	Small wavelets, crests have a glassy appearance and do not break. Comfortable kayaking.	Wind felt on face; leaves rustle, vanes do not move.
3	Gentle breeze	7-10	1-2	1-3	Large wavelets, crests begin to break. Perhaps scattered white caps. Good kayaking.	Leaves, small twigs in constant motion; light flags extended.
4	Moderate breeze	11-16	1-3	2-6	Small waves becoming longer. Fairly frequent whitecaps. Comfortable limit for intermediate paddlers.	Dust, leaves and loose paper raises up; small branches move.
5	Fresh breeze	17-21	2-4	4-10	Moderate waves, taking a more pronounced long form. Numerous whitecaps, some spray. Weather for experienced kayakers.	Small trees in leaf begin to sway.
6	Strong breeze	22-27	3-5	7-18	Large waves begin to form. Extensive whitecaps everywhere, some spray. You <i>must</i> be strong and experienced. Difficult to turn, difficult to make headway, difficult to communicate.	Larger branches of trees in motion; whistling heard in wires.
7	Near gale	28-33	3-6	10-26	Sea heaps up and white foam from breaking waves begin to be blown in well-marked streaks along the direction of the wind. Definitely outside of the realm of normal paddling.	Whole trees in motion; resistance felt in walking against wind.
8	Gale	34-40		14-36	Moderately high waves of greater length. Edges of crests break into spindrift. The foam is blown in well-marked streaks along the direction of wind. This is the practical limit for kayaking (no progress into it). Each paddler must look out for himself. Rescues impractical.	Twigs and small branches broken off trees; progress general impeded.
9	Strong gale	41-47		20-52	High waves. Dense streaks of foam along the direction of the wind. Spray may affect visibility. Sea begins to roll. The paddler is blown backwards.	Slight structural damage occurs; slate blown from roofs.
10	Storm	48-55		26-68	Very high waves with long overhanging crests. The surface of the sea takes on a white appearance. The rolling of the sea becomes heavy and shock-like. Visibility is affected. Fight for survival. Kayak running or lying to a drogue.	Seldom experienced on land; considerable damage occurs.
11	Violent Storm	55-63		32-82	Exceptionally high waves. This sea is completely covered with long white patches of foam. Visibility is affected. Small- and medium-sized ships are lost to view for long periods. The kayak is running before the wind or lying to a drogue.	
12	Hurricane	64+			The air is filled with foam and spray. Sea completely white with drifting spray. Visibility from a kayak is near zero. Running with warps astern is probably your only practical option.	

Wave height ranges represent the most common wave height and the height of the highest 10% (1 in 10 waves) for fully developed waves for a fetch of 10 miles in Puget Sound or up to several hundred miles in open ocean. Occasional waves will be higher.

Appendix IV: Paddle Pins

Mountaineers Sea Kayakers

Accomplishment Awards

Paddle Pins

The Olympia Sea Kayak Committee invites interested, qualified paddlers from all Mountaineer branches to pursue, achieve and be recognized for their kayaking accomplishments. Through the process of challenging one's own abilities and building skills through experience and practice, we hope to encourage the advancement of kayaking skills within our community.

This series of award incentives is to provide encouragement for leaders to schedule and lead trips throughout the many regions and waters of Washington, and to encourage participation by all club paddlers.

REQUIREMENTS COMMON TO EACH OF THE "PADDLE PINS"

- Shall be advertised in the Mountaineer Go Guide and open to any qualified Mountaineer paddler
- Rescheduling due to weather or other parameters is acceptable. Paddlers registered for the original trip should be encouraged to participate on the rescheduled day.
- Shall have at least three participants including leader
- Must be a current Mountaineer member
- Must have passed the basic course or been granted an equivalency rating
- It is recommended that participants paddle within one SK rating of their previous experience. Details of the Sea Kayak (SK) rating system can be found in the *Mountaineers Kayak Leadership Handbook*, or check with the trip leader.
- Those pursuing an award must keep their own records, including date, leader, and branch listing the trip, a list of all other participants, and a brief report of the trip.
- To receive your award and be recognized at your branch's annual banquet, you must submit documentation using the official paddle pin form to the Olympia Kayak Awards Coordinator by September 30. Check the Olympia Sea Kayaking section of the "Go Guide" or the Olympia Mountaineers website for the name and address of the coordinator.
- No trip paddled prior to January of 2003 will count towards achievement of these awards.

Criteria are defined for the following categories:

Seven Islands
 Seven Inlets
 Riptides and Rapids

South Sound Inlets



To earn the South Sound Inlets Award each of the seven trips must include paddling at least seven miles of unrepeatd shoreline within the inlet. Miles paddled while crossing from shore to shore does not count toward the minimum seven miles of shoreline. This award could be achieved without exceeding an SKII+ rating (“+”=crossings up to 1 nm & currents >1 knot/<2 knots), or a 10 NM total paddle distance. Though not required, we encourage you to include exploration of the innermost tidal areas as part of your trip. The practice of car shuttling is allowed. +

Budd Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Carr Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Case Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Eld Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Hamersley Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Henderson Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Totten Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____
 Participants _____
 Comments _____
Must include 7 NM of uninterrupted, non-repeated shoreline.

Once completed - Return this original document to the Olympia awards coordinator and keep a copy for your records.

South Sound Islands



To earn the South Sound Islands paddle pin one must circumnavigate the listed islands south of the Tacoma Narrows. A circumnavigation is defined as the act of paddling around the intended island while continuously keeping only the intended island to your starboard or port, whichever may apply. You may maintain any distance from the shore as long as no other landmass comes between your boat and the island being circumnavigated. The island pair of Stretch and Reach Islands must be circumnavigated in a figure eight, "8" fashion. This pin could be achieved without exceeding an SKII+ rating ("+"=crossings up to 1 nm & currents >1 knot/<2knots). If Hartstene Island, the largest of the South Sound Islands were paddled in a two day camping trip, no circumnavigation would require more than 13 nm of paddling in one day.

Squaxin Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
Anderson Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
Stretch and Reach Islands	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
McNeil Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
Fox Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
Ketron Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		
Hartstene Island	Date _____	Leader _____	Branch _____
Participants	_____		
Comments	_____		

Once completed - Return this original document to the Olympia awards coordinator and keep a copy for your records.



Riptides and Rapids

Trips included in this award are all rated at SK IV or above. Only very skilled and experienced paddlers should attempt to achieve this award. Participants should have a reliable roll, excellent bracing skills, recent practice in self and assisted rescues, and well rehearsed towing skills. The ability and strength required to punch out through a surf zone is required on several of the trips. Paddlers should be prepared to spend several hours in their boat, as landing may be impossible or not allowed. On open coast trips, participants should be prepared for overnight camping, even if planned as a day trip.

Tacoma Narrows Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Must include Toliva Shoal and Point Defiance

Deception Pass Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Must include circumnavigation of Deception and Pass Islands

Admiralty Inlet Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

To include Admiralty Head, Point Wilson, and Point Partridge

Crescent Beach to Lyre River Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Makah Bay to Shi Shi Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

An overnight trip is acceptable

Westhaven to Point Brown Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Must launch and return through surf. Round trip or shuttle OK. May start at either end.

Ilwaco to North Head Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Round trip or shuttle to Long Beach OK. May start at either end.

Anacortes to Friday Harbor Date _____ Leader _____ Branch _____

Participants _____

Comments _____

Route must be via Cattle Pass. Return by ferry OK.

Once completed - Return this original document to the Olympia awards coordinator and keep a copy for your records.

Appendix V: Paddle Perks

Olympia Mountaineers Sea Kayaking Paddler Perks

Adopted 5-17-2010, Revised 2-15-2012

Purpose:

The purpose of this program is to strengthen the club's instructional and leadership base by offering training and financial assistance to club members who provide service to the sea kayak program.

Operation:

Paddlers who qualify under this program would receive financial assistance to be applied towards training intended to develop the paddler's leadership, paddling or coaching skills. The assistance would be a fixed dollar amount, determined by the Sea Kayak Committee. Qualification for the assistance is based the paddler providing a defined level of service to the Sea Kayak Program. Paddlers can only qualify once per year. Applicable training programs can be either any preapproved program or one submitted for Committee approval.

Qualification:

Qualification is proposed to be on the basis of an earned point system. Points may be earned over a 2 year period, but only one training award may be earned in any year. Point accumulation period matches the Mountaineers Fiscal year – October-September. Within any year, points earned will be capped at the total needed to qualify for training. Qualifying participation information is to be forwarded to a committee appointed record keeper and current totals will be published periodically.

The proposed qualification point system is as follows:

Basic Class Leader	18 points per year
Lead Instructor for Basic Class Pool, Basic Class Open Water, Basic Class Wet Paddle	3 points per session
Trip or Event Leader	3 points per trip or event
Lead Instructor for Other Full Day Clinics	3 points per clinic
Pool Coordinator	3 points per year
Wednesday Night Paddle Leader	2 points per evening
Lead Instructor for Roll/Pool Clinics	1 point per session
Equivalency Evaluation	1 point per evaluation
Assistant Instructor for Class Pool, Open Water, Wet Paddle or other Clinics, or Basic Class	1 point per session
Committee Position and attendance at 5 Committee Meetings	3 points per year
Total points required to earn training grant	18 points

Training Financial Assistance:

The amount of training financial assistance proposed to be earned by accumulating 18 points within a period of up to two years is \$50 to be applied to an approved training course or clinic. The approved course or clinic can occur any time within the fiscal year in which the point total is earned or within the next fiscal year.

Effective Date of Point Accumulation:

The proposed effective date for the start of point accumulation is the start of the 2010 Basic Sea Kayak Class.

Appendix VI: Sea Kayaking Reading List

This is not intended as an all inclusive list. There are a growing number of books covering both basic and advanced skills as well as guide books to a growing number of areas. This list is a selected set of books that might form a basic library. Older books have been omitted as they become dated.

Sea Kayaking - Books

- ◆ The Complete Sea Kayaker's Handbook, 2nd Edition – Shelley Johnson; Ragged Mountain Press
- ◆ Sea Kayaking Illustrated – John Robinson; Ragged Mountain Press
- ◆ Paddle Your Own Kayak – Gary McGuffin; Boston Mills Press
- ◆ Sea Kayaking Safety & Rescue, 2nd Edition – John Lull; Wilderness Press
- ◆ Sea Kayak – Gordon Brown; Pesda Press
- ◆ Canoe and Kayak Handbook; British Canoe Union; Pesda Press
- ◆ Coaching Handbook; British Canoe Union; Pesda Press

Sea Kayaking - Magazines, Articles, Pamphlets, Etc.

- ◆ *Sea Kayaker Magazine*

Accident Reports and Safety

Most issues of *Sea Kayaker Magazine* contain accident reports and lessons learned. Back issues are available through the magazine.

Navigation, Weather, and the Marine Environment

- ◆ Sea Kayak Navigation Simplified – Lee Moyer; AlpenBooks Press
- ◆ Northwest Marine Weather - Jeff Renner; The Mountaineers

Leadership

- ◆ Outdoor Leadership – John Graham, The Mountaineers

First Aid

- ◆ Mountaineering First Aid, 5th Edition – Carline, Lentz, McDonald; The Mountaineers

Currents and Tides - Puget Sound

- ◆ Puget Sound Tidal Current Charts – NOAA; reprinted by Starpath School of Navigation
- ◆ Current Atlas, Juan de Fuca Strait to Strait of Georgia; Canadian Hydrographic Service
- ◆ Washburne's Tables – Randel Washburne – Weatherly Press Division, Robert Hale & Co, (Annual to use with Canadian Current Atlas)

Trips and Destinations - Puget Sound

- ◆ Afoot and Afloat Series - Marge Mueller; The Mountaineers
 - San Juan Islands
 - North Puget Sound
 - Middle Puget Sound
 - South Puget Sound and Hood Canal
 - British Columbia's Gulf Islands
- ◆ Kayaking Puget Sound, the San Juans, and Gulf Islands- Randel Washburne; The Mountaineer