

Trails Club Kayak Put-In Checklist

Introductions and Waivers

- Paddlers introduce themselves and sign waivers
- No one will be allowed to participate on a Trails Club kayak event unless they first sign the Trails Club liability release and acknowledgment of risk (release)
- No person under 18 years of age will be allowed to participate unless a parent or legal guardian has signed the Trails Club release on their behalf, where legal for them to do so
- Announce: Trip leaders are not guides; each participant is ultimately responsible for him/herself.**

Review Itinerary / Special Needs Assessment

Physical / Mental / Logistical

Check Participant Equipment

- Make sure nothing is loose to lose, glasses, drybags, etc.
- Make sure all participants have all required gear
- Check foot bracing, flotation
- PFD must be worn at all times

Announce Group Communication Signals

Whistle

- 1 Blasts: Attention
- 3 Blasts or more: Attention - Help!!!

Paddle – demonstrate these

- Vertical Static: Straight ahead; come ahead
- 45° Right or Left: Preferred route; never point at something to be avoided!
- Vertical Waving: Help!!!
- Horizontal: Stop, gather around leader

Group Paddling Instructions

- Maintain group communications: Stay within hearing or seeing distance of leader or sweep
- Do not leave group without permission (ahead, behind, on shore)
- If a group decides to break away, it must be fully functional & equipped, with leader, proper gear, sweep, etc.

It is each participant's responsibility to communicate any problems, difficulties, or apprehensions about a paddling situation

In case of a swim or emergency

- Key people move rapidly into position to execute rescue and provide assistance to victim and rescuers
- Group immediately rafts up and waits for instructions
- Swimmer is to hold onto boat and paddle if possible
- Use T-rescue to dump water from boat
- Get swimmer into boat ASAP and secure spray skirt
- Pump out extra water if necessary
- Check Status of paddler to continue unassisted
- Set up tow if necessary

Ecology Talk

- Garbage and human waste removal
- Smoking and fires
- Marine Mammal Public Areas and National Wildlife Refuges require 100-yard distance from wildlife habitats, especially when animals are nesting. Squirring pinnepeds signal anxiety; approach at angles, not straight on.

Analyze Group

Appoint lead and sweep boats.

Lead boat will set the pace, but keep in mind the WEAKEST LINK PHILOSOPHY.

Sweep should paddle behind most paddlers but slightly ahead of slowest paddler to encourage him/her to move along.

Pair up strong paddlers with weak paddlers.

Group Stretch and warm up

Questions?????

Enjoy the trip! Have fun! Be careful!

Instructions for paddlers who capsize and swim

Swimming in rapids: Swim on back, feet up in front of your. Fend off rocks with feet. Never try to stand until in safe eddy. Look for eddies to catch. Aggressively swim on stomach to make progress in big water. Catch an eddy or climb over a sweeper. Look for help, a thrown rope and a desirable route. Try and keep hold of paddle and boat. Stay upstream of gear. Don't get squished. IF HELP ARRIVES: Hold paddle and boat in one hand. Grab rescuer's stern and grab loop in other. Help kick. Release gear if necessary. Drain and re-enter boat if possible.

Swimming in surf: Swim with boat preceding you to beach. Never get in front of boat. Try to hold onto boat and paddle, but if necessary let go of equipment. It will wash up on shore. In a rip, swim across the current and get to shore swimming with the waves. It is futile to try to swim directly to shore in the rip.

Towing: Philosophy and practice

Philosophy

It may be necessary to tow for various reasons. It can be used in a wind or current when group is being slowed down "too much" by slower paddler. It might be used to assist injured or tired paddlers.

Present the reasons for the use of towing before a trip so group will realize ahead of time that this is a possible leadership decision on the water. This is a group activity. Sometimes faster paddlers are slowed down, sometimes slower paddlers are sped up.

The individual being towed is being responsible to the group, not admitting humiliating failure. The towee still needs to paddle.

A tow is, hopefully, a "temporary boost" through a current, wind or whatever, not a permanent situation.

Practice

Practice with group ahead of need.

Single, in-line, "V", and leap frog methods of towing

Tow system should be able to be deployed quickly

Tow from cockpit, not stern

Assign faster paddlers, not always group leader, as towers. This slows the faster paddler and can be presented as an "advance training exercise"