

Trails Club Kayaking Guidelines for Leaders

Definitions

Sweep: A qualified trip leader who serves as the rear guard on a kayak trip; specific duties defined by leader at put-in

Trip: Any on-water activity, including classes, rescue practice, etc. For overnight camping trips, the term includes associated land-based activities.

Trip Leader: A club member who has skills and experience which qualify him / her for independent leadership of on-water group activities, and whose authority to make decisions necessary for safe and successful conduct of the trip is acknowledged by Trails Club and the paddlers who agree to participate in the trip.

Trip leaders are not guides; each participant is ultimately responsible for him/herself.

Requirements for Kayak Trip Leaders

1-A leader of a Trails Club kayak trip must meet the following criteria:

- Trails Club member
- Current 1st Aid and CPR certification
- Basic kayak skills (strokes, directional control, bracing, rescue)
- Completed the kayak leadership course
- Experienced at towing and have appropriate towing equipment (leadership course)

2-Leaders are subject to all of the requirements and guidelines specified for participants (see **Trails Club Kayaking Guidelines for Participants**).

Review of Proposed Kayak Trips

3-Kayak trips must be approved by the Trails Club kayak committee. A trip or activity may not be promoted or presented as a Trails Club trip unless so OK'd. Send information regarding prospective trips to Rich.Fuhs@Verizon.Net and tckayak@MSN.com.

4-Prospective trip leaders should download the appropriate documents from the kayak page on the Trails Club web site. These documents include all of the following:

- Trails Club Kayak Trip Rating System**
- Trails Club Kayaking Guidelines for Participants**
- Trails Club Kayak Trip Planning Worksheet**
- Trails Club Kayaking Guidelines for Leaders**
- Trails Club Kayak Put-In Checklist (laminated copy for use on trip)**

5-All prospective first-time leaders and assistant leaders include with their proposal a brief resume which outlines paddling and leadership skills and experience appropriate to the proposed activity. On-water activities proposed by first-time leaders or instructors must be approved by the Committee.

Guidelines for Leaders

6-Select, research, and plan a kayak trip: select a trip to lead / research & scout the trip / make sure you are qualified to lead it / complete the **Trails Club Kayak Trip Planning Worksheet**, rating the trip and noting any special gear or skills required / submit trip description portion of the **Trip Planning Worksheet** to the bulletin & web / arrange for a qualified sweep

7-Determine the specific type or types of clothing to be required for the trip based on anticipated conditions. The decision on whether the clothing must be worn or kept readily accessible will be made based on actual conditions at the time of the trip. In making these decisions, consider: water temperature; air temperature; speed and direction of currents; exposure to wind, waves, and swells; wind speed and direction; wind chill; precipitation; distance from land; group size/rescue conditions; and the skills and experience of paddlers in the group.

Cotton is **NOT** acceptable cold water clothing.

8-Screen applicants for the skills and physical endurance to handle the trip; fully brief non-members on pertinent club policies **at the time of sign-up**. A recommended question for potential participants: “When was your last wet exit and re-entry?”.

9-The leader may refuse or withdraw permission for any person to participate in a Trails Club kayak event based on any of the following grounds:

- a. The person does not have the requisite skill and /or physical vigor for the anticipated conditions or possible risks of the trip
- b. The person's equipment or clothing is not safe, seaworthy, or otherwise appropriate for the trip, or required equipment/clothing items are missing
- c. Participation of an individual may jeopardize his or her own safety or the safety of other participants

10-At the put-in site, follow the guidelines in the **Trails Club Kayak Put-In Checklist**, which includes having all participants sign the **Trails Club Kayak Trip Log**.

11-During the trip: coordinate with sweep to keep group reasonably close together to facilitate assistance if needed

12-Following the trip: submit roster of people who actually participated on trip (electronic version of **Trails Club Trip Log** would work) & a brief write-up of the trip to the kayak committee (Rich.Fuhs@Verizon.Net). Any comments regarding participants or conditions that may provide useful information for future events are also welcome.

13-In the event of an accident or other incident which might reasonably be expected to result in a claim against the Trails Club, follow normal Trails Club activity procedures.

14-The leader may designate a kayak trip as a members-only activity.

15-For activities which have a designated maximum group size limit, once the trip is filled, additional interested participants can be placed on a waiting list and added to the trip if space becomes available.

Equipment

16-On all trips, trip leaders/instructors and sweeps are required to carry a spare paddle, tow system, paddle float, emergency signal devices, a flashlight, and bailing pump.

17-Each group should have at least one compass, appropriate chart or charts, tide information, current weather forecast information, and basic repair materials (at a minimum, a roll of duct tape).

18-Participants and trip leaders are expected to be prepared separately for common or minor first aid needs.

19-A minimum of one leader and one sweep should be present on the water for every twelve (12) participants on fresh water trips and for every six (6) kayakers (maximum of 9 participants) on salt water trips. Prior to put-in, the leader and sweep should discuss and agree on their respective roles and "chain of command", including delegation of leadership authority in the event of an emergency or the leader's absence or incapacitation. Roles of the various leaders and assistants as well as participants should be discussed with the entire group before launching boats.

20-A minimum of one person with current first aid and CPR training will be present on the water for every twelve (12) participants on fresh water trips and for every nine (9) participants on salt water trips. Each leader is required to have current first aid and CPR training

21-Other items to pack: suggested?

- Long range VHF radio for trip leader
- Paddle float