

# Trails Club Kayaking Guidelines for Participants

## Definitions

**Participant:** Anyone, member or non-member, who participates on a Trails Club kayak trip; includes leaders and sweeps

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

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

## Trip Signup

1-Check Trails Club bulletin or website for planned kayak trips and note the rating of a trip that interests you.

2-Refer to the **Trails Club Kayak Trip Rating System** to determine the conditions that are likely to be encountered, the skills that will be required, and the endurance needed as designated by the trip rating.

3-If you are qualified for the trip, contact the leader to sign up.

4-All participants on ANY Trails Club kayak trip must have passed a kayak safety course OR have certification of similar course taken elsewhere OR taken beginning courses offered by PKC.

5-Participants on any trip with a Conditions / Skills rating of 2 or higher (see the **Trails Club Kayak Trip Rating System**) should be proficient in wet exits.

6-For all activities not designated as members-only, non-members are welcome to participate. Non-members are subject to the same policies and rules as Trails Club members. Leaders should fully brief non-members on pertinent club policies **at the time of sign-up**.

## Equipment

7-Participants should arrive at the put-in prepared with equipment and clothing necessary for safe paddling.

8-For **all trips** (on fresh and salt water), all participants are required to.

- a. wear a **Coast Guard-approved PFD** at all times while on the water
- b. use a **boat equipped with buoyancy enhancement** in the form of flotation, secured bulkheads and hatches, and/or a properly fitted sea sock
- c. carry **food and water supplies** appropriate to the length of the trip
- d. carry a **personal first aid kit** (self-selected contents)
- e. have a **whistle** readily accessible
- f. **knife???**
- g. have a **flashlight**, waterproof or packed in a waterproof container, *on evening or overnight trips*
- h. wear or have readily accessible **cold water protective clothing** as appropriate, per the Cold Water Protective Clothing policy below
- i. have and use **other equipment and clothing appropriate to expected conditions**, as required at the discretion of the trip leader

**9-**In addition to having or wearing the items specified for **all** trips (above), all participants on **salt water trips** are required to:

- a. have a **spray skirt** properly fitted to both the boat and paddler, unless paddling a:
  - i. self-bailing sit-on-top kayak
  - ii. canoe outfitted appropriately to expected conditions as approved by the trip leader
- b. have a **pump or bailer** readily accessible

**10-**Whenever water temperatures are expected to be below 50° F (most club trips), all paddlers are required to wear or have readily accessible cold water protective clothing. Depending on conditions, cold water protective clothing may consist of any combination of the following:

- a. Water repellent outer shell (jacket and pants) with wrist and ankle seals in combination with synthetic or wool insulation
- b. Half wet suit (Farmer John or shortie) with or without synthetic or wool insulation and a water repellent shell
- c. Full wet suit
- d. Dry suit with synthetic insulation worn underneath.

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

### **General Information**

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

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

**13-**At all times on the water, participants should stay with the group unless given specific permission otherwise by the leader or sweep. This means keeping close enough to a leader or sweep to communicate with visible or audible signals.

**14-**No person 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.