

CANOE SAFETY 101

TO GET INTO YOUR CANOE:

- * **HAVE SOMEONE HOLD THE CANOE STEADY** – you don't want to tip the canoe before you even get out on the water!
- * **CROUCH LOW** – keep your knees bent and
- * **GRAB THE SIDES OF THE CANOE FOR BALANCE** as you walk to your seat.
- * **ALWAYS WALK ALONG THE CENTER** – keep your feet on the “centerline” to help keep the canoe from rocking.

STAY LOW – Do not stand up or walk in your canoe when you are away from shore.

ALWAYS WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET – you never know when you might fall out or tip over unexpectedly.

BE AWARE OF THE CURRENTS IN THE WATER – you don't want to end up floating farther downstream than you planned. If the current starts to pull you along faster than you see lots of rock in the water ahead, you paddle away from them or paddle towards the shore.

ALWAYS SIT ON THE SEATS OR IN THE CENTER OF THE CANOE – sitting on the side of a canoe will cause it to tip over.

STAY AWAY FROM LOW HANGING TREES AND BRANCHES NEAR THE SHORE

AVOID LETTING BIG WAVES HIT THE SIDE OF YOUR CANOE – always try to keep your canoe at a right angle to the waves otherwise the wave might push your canoe over.

IF YOUR CANOE TIPS OVER:

- * **DON'T PANIC**
- * **STAY WITH YOUR CANOE**
- * **PADDLE OR PUSH YOUR CANOE TO SHORE** – with the help of your canoe partner, you can get out in shallow water and flip the canoe to dump out the water. Your canoe should float even if it's full of water until you can get to shore to empty it.
- * **ALWAYS BRING ALONG EXTRA CLOTHING IN A WATERPROOF CONTAINER** – you want to be prepared in case your canoe tips or the weather changes.

BE SURE TO BRING THE PROPER EQUIPMENT:

- * **SUN PROTECTION** – **SUNSCREEN**, sunglasses, hat (with a wide brim), long sleeve shirt and pants
- * **FIRST AID KIT**
- * **PLENTY OF FOOD AND WATER**
- * **LIFE VESTS**

TIE ALL YOUR EQUIPMENT TO THE CANOE – put your equipment into a waterproof bag or 5G buckets to keep it dry and tie it to one of the center beams in the canoe so that you don't lose everything if your canoe tips over.

DO NOT LITTER – **EACH CANOE IS RESPONSIBLE TO CARRY OUT WHAT THEY BRING IN!!!**

Be certain to wear a properly fitted Personal Flotation Device (PFD) at all times when on and around the water. One PFD per person.

Take a litter bag with you and use it. Everything you take with you should leave with you.

Dress for the water temperature and be prepared to get wet. Wear layers of clothing which can be added or taken off during the day. Cold weather and/or cold water can result in hypothermia. Bring additional dry clothes to change into if paddling during cooler weather. Clothes should be packed in a waterproof container or a double trash bag.

Use an eyeglass strap for your eyeglasses or sunglasses.

WEAR RUBBER BOOTS OR SHOES!!! Old gym shoes or shoes with tops and sides offer the most protection. Avoid sandals.

Bring drinking water in non-breakable containers. BEER SHOULD BE IN CANS AND DRINKS IN PLASTIC.

Use SUNSCREEN, even on cloudy days and also use a sun hat (with a wide brim) on bright warm days. Wear wool stocking to help slow heat loss from you body on cool, wet days. Take along a windbreaker or rain gear. Use Palmolive rubber (dish) gloved under your gloves or mittens when in wet weather.

Eat a good meal before leaving on your trip. Drink plenty of fresh water while on the river to prevent dehydration.

Keep your craft under control. Control must be good enough at all times to stop or reach shore. Know your boating ability. Do not enter an area of fast current unless you feel sure you can safely paddle through.

Have a signaling device or whistle attached to your PFD or with you in case you get in trouble and need to signal for help.

Respect anglers. Paddle to the shore opposite of their lines and pass by quietly.

When paddling in a group, assign a boat to lead and a sweep boat to paddle in the rear. Both the lead and sweep positions should be held by experienced paddlers with knowledge of the river being traveled.

If you are pulling off the river early, please notify someone either at CAMP 1, the covered bridge, the Mall or CAMP 2 that you are pulling out and won't be continuing down river.

Keep a lookout for river hazards and avoid them. Walk around any hazard in which you have doubts.

Respect private property. Please do not trespass.

NO DRIVING OR PARKING ON FARMERS FIELDS AT ANY TIME. When/if dropping off gear or you have people visiting you at campsites, have them park on the road and walk down.

☺ MOST IMPORTANT! RELAX AND HAVE FUN ☺