

HAW RIVER CANOE & KAYAK COMPANY

“TIPS FOR A GOOD TRIP”

We hope you are going to have a wonderful trip. Through the years, we have learned that trip participants can often gauge the enjoyment of a trip based on how well prepared they were for both the unexpected and expected. Please use the information outlined below to help you be prepared. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. We will be more than happy to answer them.

Being Prepared and Responsible:

- ◇ Be a competent swimmer with the ability to handle yourself underwater and in moving water.
- ◇ Dress for the water temperature and be prepared to get wet. Wear layers of clothing that 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.
- ◇ Use an eyeglass strap for your eyeglasses or sunglasses.
- ◇ Wear shoes! Old gym shoes or shoes with tops and sides offer the most protection. Avoid sandals.
- ◇ Bring drinking water in non-breakable containers. **Alcohol should not be taken on the river.**
- ◇ Use sunscreen even on cloudy days.
- ◇ Take food and snacks along in a waterproof container that can be fastened to the boat. All items not fastened in the boat are at risk of getting lost and/or wet. **No Styrofoam coolers or glass containers please.**
- ◇ Wear only waterproof watches.
- ◇ Use a sun hat on bright warm days. Wearing a wool stocking hat helps slow heat loss from your body on cool, wet days. Take along a windbreaker or rain gear.
- ◇ **Take necessary allergy or other medications with you on the river.** In case of a mishap, it could be several hours before help arrives in inaccessible locations.
- ◇ Paddling is a physical exercise. Consult your physician prior to undertaking any program of physical exercise.
- ◇ Get plenty of rest prior to your outing. Wear comfortable clothing that will keep you warm if you get wet. Eat a good meal before leaving on your trip. Drink plenty of fresh water while on the river to prevent dehydration.
- ◇ Optional items to bring include: fishing gear, a bailer or sponge to remove excess water from the boat, insect repellent, knee pads (for kneeling in the boat), first aid kit and whistle or other signaling device for use in emergencies.

Upon Arrival:

- ◇ Attend the instruction, conservation and safety briefings. Ask the rental staff any questions you may have regarding the trip.
- ◇ If you have not already done so, carefully read and sign the Liability Waiver form.
- ◇ Leave all items not needed on the river locked in the trunk of your car or in a secure area. Leave your car keys with the rental staff or in another safe place. Everything you take with you on the river is at risk of getting lost and/or wet. Take cameras and binoculars in sturdy waterproof containers.

Trip Preparation:

- ◇ Be certain to wear a properly fitted Personal Floatation Device (PFD) at all times when on and around the water. The rental staff will distribute PFDs. Check your PFD for proper, snug fit prior to getting near or on the water. Do not accept a PFD if it is torn or if buckles or fasteners are not functioning properly.
- ◇ Know where your trip will take you, where to get out and emergency routes in case of a mishap. Make sure you understand how to identify and avoid any hazards that might exist.
- ◇ Choose a paddle of the proper size.
- ◇ Take a litterbag with you and use it.
- ◇ Be sure your boat is in good condition before starting the trip. Do not overload or improperly load the boat. This can lead to unexpected capsizes. Steady the boat for your partner while loading and unloading.

While on the River:

- ◇ It is recommended that you leave your PFD on at all times.
- ◇ Never dive headfirst into the water.
- ◇ Respect private property – Do not trespass!
- ◇ Respect anglers. Paddle to the shore opposite of their lines and pass quietly.
- ◇ Keep your boat 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.
- ◇ When paddling in a group, assign a boat to lead and a sweep boat to paddle in the rear. Experienced paddlers with knowledge of the river being traveled should hold both the lead and sweep positions. Never get ahead of the assigned lead or behind the assigned sweep boat.
- ◇ Be sure to keep an appropriate distance between boats. Distance will vary depending on water conditions. A good rule of thumb is to keep the boat behind you within view. If it lags behind, pull over and wait.
- ◇ Keep a lookout for river hazards and avoid them. Walk around any hazard about which you have doubts.
- ◇ We recommend that you not paddle alone. Bring your friends.
- ◇ **Do not paddle in flood conditions.** During periods of heavy rain, the river levels can rise quickly. Recognize when the water level and current speed exceed your abilities. If you must abandon your boat, leave it pulled high onto the shore and attempt to mark the spot along the river bank. Walk out along any designated evacuation route. Contact the rental office as soon as possible.

PLEASE REMEMBER:

You are in control of your rental boat while on the water. There are no river guides. The river is a natural environment with downed trees, rocks and fluctuating water levels, depth and current speeds. Man-made obstructions such as bridge piers and dams should be avoided. Be ready for possible temperature and weather changes.