
PSC Guidelines for Safe and Enjoyable Paddling

Trip Leader Responsibilities

1. Scout the river, landings and conditions for the trip and take the measures necessary to ensure a safe trip.
2. Make the necessary arrangements for the trip (such as parking, contacts, car shift route, etc).
3. Complete the trip announcement, sign-in and trip report according to club procedures.
4. Coordinate the car shift and driver returns.
5. Announce group organization while on the trip. This may include designating a lead boat and a sweep boat. (These paddlers have the same status as the trip leader.)
6. Announce decisions as to safety issues.

Participants' Preparedness and Responsibilities

1. Contact the leader before the trip to let him/her know that you are planning to attend.
2. Remember that safety is always a priority and act accordingly.
3. Know your skill level and your limits and match the difficulty of the trip with your skill level.
4. Stay behind the Lead Boat and ahead of the Sweep Boat.
5. Observe River Etiquette. The rules governing socially acceptable behavior while on the river including the following:
 - Keep your boat under control
 - Be able to stop your boat or reach shore before reaching any danger
 - Do not crowd other boats; maintain a safe distance behind other boats in restricted passages and rapids
 - Allow other boats to clear a passage

before you enter it.

- Warn the boats behind you of difficult obstacles and watch for them to clear the spot.
 - Allow downstream paddlers access to an eddy if you are in it.
6. Know and obey the Federal regulations for PFD's. Federal law requires that you have a U.S. Coast Guard approved class I, II, III (wearable) Personal Flotation Device for each person in the boat. PSC recommends that every participant wear a PFD at all times while on the water.
 7. Ensure that all children 13 years old and younger wear a PFD at all times while on the water.
 8. Follow the prescribed Order of Rescue if a capsizes occurs.
 9. Bring the proper equipment and be prepared for river and weather conditions. Refer to the General Terms page for Equipment—Required, Recommended and Optional.
 10. Carry out all garbage/trash to deposit in trash cans.
 11. Supervise your children, pets and guests; be responsible for their welfare and behavior.
 12. Leave your outboard motors and radios at home.
 13. Take your turn to help with car shift and driver return.
 14. Consume no alcoholic beverages for the duration of the trip, that is, from arrival at the put-in until after the take-out.
 15. Sign the PSC waiver for each trip:

I agree that I am taking part in the prairie state canoeists activities at my own risk. I will not hold prairie state canoeists, its officers, trip leaders, and or members responsible for any injuries (including death) or property loss I may incur while taking part in club activities. I understand

that paddling is an assumed risk sport, that prairie state canoeists is a voluntary organization without professional leadership and that I am responsible for myself/family. By signing my name here, I indicate that I have read this waiver and that neither I nor any members of my family will sue the club or anyone associated with it.

Club Practices

- During rest stops, women go upstream; men go downstream for rest room breaks, unless otherwise designated. A garden trowel should always be kept handy to deal with human waste properly.
- PSC paddlers traditionally will assist each other in off-loading boats from vehicles, launching and landing, over obstacles and portages, and on-loading boats at the take-out.
- PSC trips are intended to be quiet family excursions to enjoy the beauty of the out-of-doors.
- Non-compliance with any of the responsibilities detailed here may result in the individual being asked to leave the trip with a notation of non-participation on the trip roster. Additionally, a member may be placed on probation by the PSC Board and/or subject to cancellation of his or her membership.