



Nice clean cold water in the Skykomish River below Boulder Drop July 2018.

President's Currents

by Kanako Iwata

The 2nd Annual Methow Kanufest was a great success. Though I couldn't paddle with the group, it was great to meet a big crowd particularly from BC at the camp!

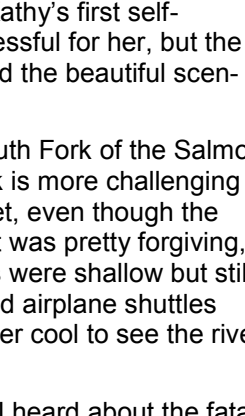
Last 2 months, I was busy with some great multi-day river trips. In the early June, I went to the Middle Fork and Main Salmon for the first time. The popular Middle Fork was right below 5 feet, starting to be mellow but still exciting, with a fun crew having a daily Happy Hour with sweet cocktails and tasty appetizers. We made lots of hot spring stops. Four of us hiked up the Pistol and the Loon Creeks with our kayaks and enjoyed the short but exciting creeking. The Main Salmon was still in the pre-permit-season and big. Grand Canyon-sized waves and violent eddies flipped me three times in one day!

At the end of June, six friends and I had a kayak self-support trip on the Grande Ronde. This was Kathy's first self-support experience and somewhat stressful for her, but the rest of us enjoyed the relaxing river and the beautiful scenery. I was surprised to see pelicans!

In July, I had a chance to go to the South Fork of the Salmon with 7 good kayakers. The South Fork is more challenging than the Middle Fork, but at the 2.5 feet, even though the whitewater was continuous for miles, it was pretty forgiving, and the sneak routes of Class 5 rapids were shallow but still runnable. At the end of the run, we had airplane shuttles flying us back to the put-in. It was super cool to see the river we just ran from the sky.

When I returned from the SF Salmon, I heard about the fatal accident in the Skykomish. I had boated with this super nice young man, Dugan, and am very sad. Even in a familiar run, we should never underestimate the power of water. We cannot paddle whitewater if we worry about the worst case all the time, but we should always be prepared. The club will have a River Safety Skills Practice on August 12, and I hope many members will participate in this training led by Dave Mainer. Thanks, Dave!

Happy paddling!



Renewed Membership?

If you haven't renewed your PTCC membership for 2018 do it now. Without renewal, you lose access to the website and CANEWS.

[Renew your membership](#)

Upcoming Trips

[August 12: River Safety Skills Practice](#)

[August 18—19 Meteor Shower Paddle & Camp](#)

[August 19: Yakima River I+](#)

[August 25: North Fork Nooksack River III](#)

[August 26: Snoqualmie River Powerhouse II+](#)

[September 1: White Salmon River III-IV](#)

[September 8: Skykomish River Boulder Stretch II+ III](#)

[September 8—9: Yakima River Weekend II](#)

[September 13-17: Canoe Tripping Class 1+](#)

[September 16: Skagit River Eagle Stretch I+ - 2-](#)

[September 16: Skagit River S-Bends III](#)

Sign up for trips by clicking on the above hyperlinks or the [Events Calendar](#)

Website Resources

[Past CANEWS issues](#)

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LFBM (Looking for Board Members)

Just a reminder that our Fall Bash is coming up in October and that is when we elect the new board. If you have on average an hour a month to spare and you'd like to serve on the board or volunteer to help with membership, trip scheduling, class coordination, outreach, social (or anything else) next year in any capacity please contact Kanako Iwata canoe@paddletrails.org. We always welcome new members too.

Paddling Tips

To Follow or Not to Follow

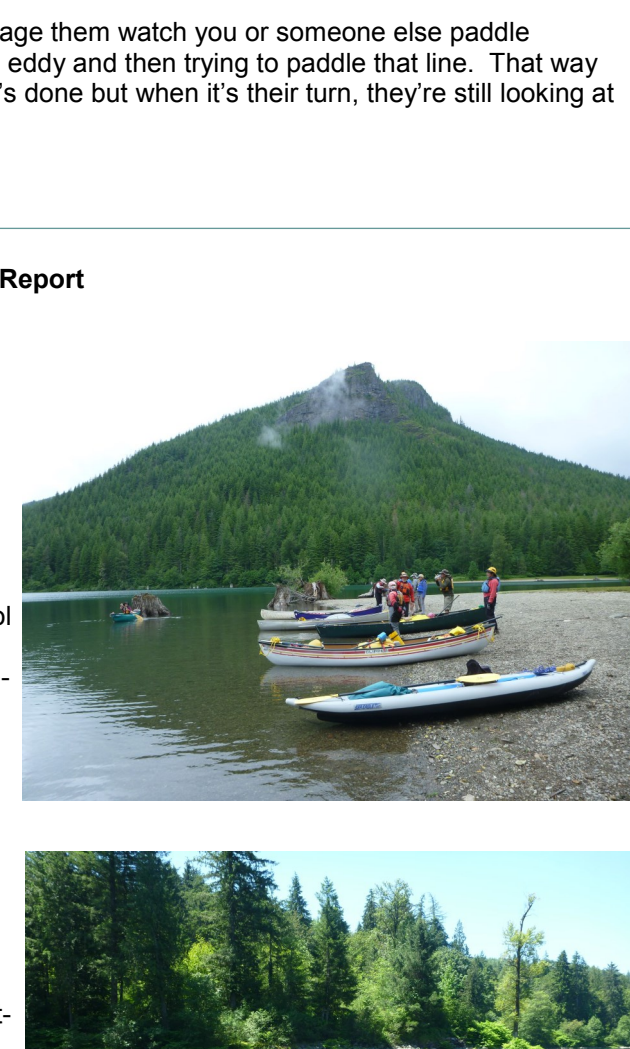
Many who are just beginning to learn how to paddle rivers find that it builds their confidence if they can follow someone down through a rapid. This isn't a bad strategy in certain circumstances but try not to make a habit of it yourself or, if you notice your paddling partners making a habit of it, try to discourage them from doing that.

So much of becoming a good river paddler is about building good judgement; recognizing the good lines and the bad lines through a rapid or riffle but mostly being able to predict what effect the river will have on your boat before it happens and being ready to react or counter it. This is generally what we call "reading the river" or "reading water" and only comes from experience.

When someone says they want to follow you, they're basically saying "I can't read this on my own" and if they do follow, instead of looking at the river and judging what it's features are telling them, they will be busy watching you which is ok in certain circumstances and for the short term. In the long run, they aren't learning the judgement skills required to become good on their own and it will deter them from getting proficient at reading water.

A good intermediate step is to encourage them watch you or someone else paddle through a rapid from shore or from an eddy and then trying to paddle that line. That way they have the benefit of seeing how it's done but when it's their turn, they're still looking at and reading the water on their own.

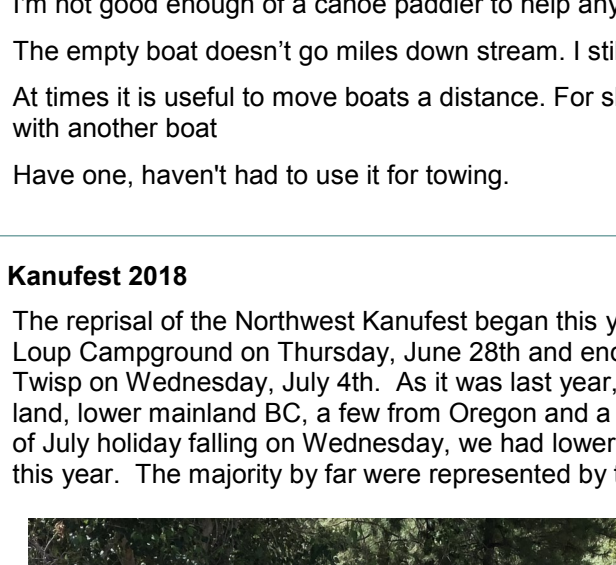
Dave Mainer



2018 Intro to River Canoeing Class Report

On June 23 & 24 we held our annual Intro to River Canoeing Class. The weather was great, not too hot, not too cold, and the water levels were near perfect on the Snoqualmie river. This year we had 3 tandem canoes, 1 solo canoe, and 1 inflatable kayak taking the class. On morning Saturday, we met at Rattlesnake Lake, a few miles south of North Bend. At the lake Carol Beers and Helen Buttemer provided tandem canoeing instructions and Steve Reutebuch instructed the solo boats. Jerry Eller and Don Bottles also assisted with the tandem canoes and provided great safety boat coverage. Saturday afternoon, we headed down to Fall City where Susan Batchelor joined us as a safety boater. We practiced eddy turns, peel outs, and ferries across the river right below the bridge over the Snoqualmie in Fall City. After an hour of successfully getting all the participants back and forth across the river several times, we headed down river for about 3 miles to the Neal Road take-out. Along the way, we scouted a bend that had several trees in various positions and talked about how to paddle safely through the area.

On Sunday, Dave Mainer and Lori Lodzinski took over as the tandem instructors and Peggy Mainer, and Don Samdahl joined us as safety boaters and addition instructors. We met at Tokul Creek about 4 miles upstream of Fall City. We practiced boat handling skills and discussed boat outfitting for about 90 minutes. Then, we headed downstream, practicing eddy turns and strokes. About half way down, we stopped to scout the wave train. After looking at the area, each boat proceeded one-at-a-time down through the way train. Two of the 3 tandems experienced their first swim of the weekend, but the tandem paddlers in the other canoe were all smiles as they bounced through the waves. Both solo boats also had great runs.



After the class, we went to the Fall City Roadhouse for refreshments and food.

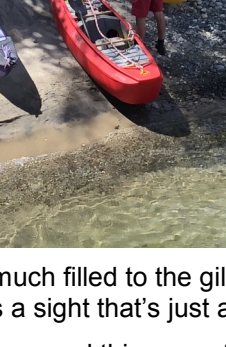
[Photo Album on PTCC website: 2018 Intro to River Canoeing Class](#)

Steve Reutebuch

Just for Fun Survey

This new segment is to see what other members are saying about paddling, rivers and whatever. This is just for fun! If you have any questions you want to ask other members, send them to the editor. This month, we only had 5 responses. The average time spent was 1 minute.

Do you like to use a rescue leash for towing a boat? Why, why not?



Responses:

I'm not good enough of a canoe paddler to help anyone! But I do use one with my kayak.

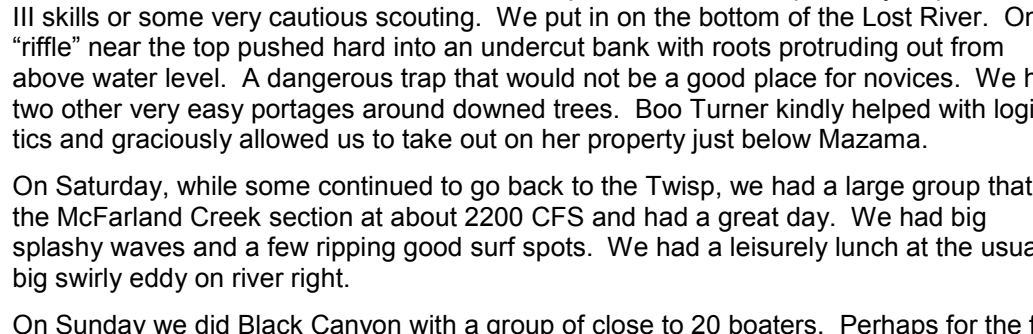
The empty boat doesn't go miles down stream. I still have two hands to paddle

At times it is useful to move boats a distance. For shorter distances it is easier to push with another boat

Have one, haven't had to use it for towing.

Kanufest 2018

The reprisal of the Northwest Kanufest began this year with people gathering at Loup Loup Campground on Thursday, June 28th and ended with a few diehards paddling the Twisp on Wednesday, July 4th. As it was last year, we had boaters from Vancouver Island, lower mainland BC, a few from Oregon and a few from Washington. With the US 4th of July holiday falling on Wednesday, we had lower turn out from Paddle Trails and LCCC this year. The majority by far were represented by the 2 groups from Canada and we had



Loup Loup Campground pretty much filled to the gills with canoeists. Most sites were double and triple occupied. It is a sight that's just awesome to behold.

We returned to Loup Loup Campground this year after last year's stay at Black Pine Lake due to the Hwy 20 closure over Loup Loup Pass. We all agreed Loup Loup was a better location. The weather this year was uncharacteristically cool. Day time temperatures in the valley were in the 70s and low 80s while temperatures at Loup Loup were in the high 40s at night. We even had a small bit of rain but not enough to impact the fun.

Blackfly Canoes was there with demo boats for people to try and provided a taco dinner for everyone one night. Holding to tradition, some of us tried their hand at Dutch oven deserts and managed to provide enough sweet goodies (with varying degrees of success) to satisfy everyone. New this year, Chris Loomis from Blackfly, held two paddling clinics, an introduction to creek paddling and paddling techniques for short canoes.

Every day, paddlers went off in different directions and because more people had knowledge of the different available runs, organizing was much easier. There were fewer options this year due to water levels but everyday people were off running the Twisp and different sections of the Methow and so my version of Kanufest may be different than others.

Water levels this year were lower than last with the Twisp running in the low 500's on the first day and dropping down to around 270 by the last day. My personal notes from previous years indicated that 520 was the lowest I would run it and so I opted for other runs however people ran it every day of the festival and claimed that it was still runnable – even enjoyable down below 300.

On Friday, some of us heard there was enough water to run the upper Methow, which according to some, hadn't been run by PTCC members over July 4th in many years. It's a beautiful class II section, which because of the presence of wood, probably requires class III skills or some very cautious scouting. We put in on the bottom of the Lost River. One "riffle" near the top pushed hard into an undercut bank with roots protruding out from above water level. A dangerous trap that would not be a good place for novices. We had two other very easy portages around downed trees. Boo Turner kindly helped with logistics and graciously allowed us to take out on her property just below Mazama.

On Saturday, while some continued to go back to the Twisp, we had a large group that ran the McFarland Creek section at about 2200 CFS and had a great day. We had big splashy waves and a few ripping good surf spots. We had a leisurely lunch at the usual big swirly eddy on river right.

On Sunday we did Black Canyon with a group of close to 20 boaters. Perhaps for the first time in my many years of Black Canyon runs we had no swims. Not one. We couldn't decide whether to feel proud or just slightly and ashamedly disappointed.

Monday was back to McFarland Creek for those that wanted an easy day on the river. Those hunting for surf waves had to look hard as water levels had dropped. Nevertheless, we were able to bag a few good waves.

Tuesday was back to Black Canyon for one last day of paddling. Water level had dropped to @1800 CFS but it was still fun. On Wednesday after packing up our campsite we met down at the Cinnamon Twisp bakery to decide if and where to paddle. Forgetting it was July 4th we encountered downtown Twisp packed with folks participating in and getting to watch the parade. The bakery was packed. Many of us decided to head home, satisfied with 5 days of paddling but others wanted one more day on the Twisp River.

Everyone who came had a great time and said they wanted to come back to the Methow again next year. We met old friends and made new ones. The sense of community and camaraderie was wonderful. There was talk about whether to continue to host Northwest Kanufest at the Methow. Ideas were surfaced for alternate dates and locations. Regardless, there are a lot of new paddlers who are now big fans of our 4th of July Methow tradition.

Dave Mainer

Other PaddleTrails Trip Reports are found on the website at:

[Trip Reports](#)

Featured Story

How We Found Paddle Trails

In the early years of our marriage Sue & I were day hikers & backpackers. We moved to Seattle for work, daughter Renee was born in December 1969, and by June 1970 we were back to backpacking. Sue carried Renee and a bit of gear, & I carried the rest. When Michelle was born in 1973 Renee could still not walk all day, we would have had to carry both kids to backpack. We needed a new plan for that year's vacation.

At a fishing boat supply store in White Center I purchased a canoe (something we knew nothing about), a 17 foot Grumman, with a 3/4" lake keel. For our summer vacation we drove into British Columbia to the north end of Ross Lake. We loaded the canoe with four of us, a friend from church, our Irish Setter, and gear for a week of camping. We had a wonderful time enjoying the lake and the fabulous scenery of the North Cascades. By the next summer (1974) Renee could hike a full day, so we were back to backpacking for our vacations. The canoe sat unused in the backyard. Fast forward to 1977.

We decided to go for a picnic one Spring Saturday at Flaming Geyser Park. There were a lot of people near the river with canoes. We had encountered the PTCC Spring Bash! They had racing gates set up on the stretch of river near the picnic pavilions, and were racing their canoes through the gates. We spent a couple of hours watching, during which time an older couple (Ray & Martha Parker) gravitated to us. In our conversation they learned that we had a canoe (it didn't really matter what type). By the end of our conversation they had invited us to come on the club trip over July 4th on the Methow River.

So we farmed out Renee & Michelle to friends and spent the 4th weekend with PTCC. It was a 95 degree weekend, getting wet felt good. We ran the stretches from Carlton to Stinky Outhouse, and Stinky Outhouse to Burma Road. With an inner tube for flotation and cheap horse-collar PFDs, we hit every wave train right down the middle, filled up to the gunnels, & did what the club members were yelling at us: "Keep Paddling to Shore!"

We were hooked! We joined the club and replaced backpacking with paddling. Our kids grew up in the club, with lots of new grand-parents. They became excellent paddlers. Renee guided for Osprey on the Wenatchee for several years. In her early days Michelle even won the only club Cookie Award for sleeping through a Class III drop!

Tom Waggener