

## WHILE ON THE RIVER

1. Don't overload or improperly load your boat. This can lead to unexpected capsizes. Steady the boat for your partner while loading and unloading.
2. Always wear your PFD, even when swimming.
3. Never dive headfirst into the water.
4. Respect private property. Do not trespass!
5. Respect anglers. Paddle to the shore opposite of their lines and pass by quietly.
6. 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 paddle safely through.
7. 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. Never get ahead of the assigned lead or behind the assigned sweep boat.
8. 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 they lag behind, pull over and wait.
9. Keep a lookout for river hazards and avoid them. Walk around any hazard about which you have doubts.
10. In the event of an emergency, do not try to walk to find help. This is a wilderness river. Send your strongest paddlers to the campground for help, and stay on the right side of the river to make river rescue easier.

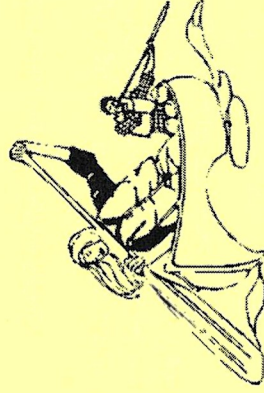
11. In the event of a thunderstorm, get off of the water and wait out the storm, but do not get under the tallest tree. If needed, you may turn your boat over and get under it to seek shelter.

12. Do not try to walk in a rapid if the water is above your knee. The current may be too swift to get a good foot grip, and there is also the danger of trapping your foot underneath a rock.

**Please remember:** You are in control of your rented boat while on the water. There are no river guides. The river is a natural environment with downed trees, rocks, and fluctuating levels, depth and current speeds. Be ready for possible temperature and weather changes.

## UPON ARRIVAL BACK AT THE CAMPGROUND

1. If a campground staff member is not at the boat launch to assist, pull your boat to the top of the ramp and turn it over to allow the water to drain.
2. Bring your paddle and PFD to the camp store. This is the only way we know you have returned safely. If in a group, designate one person to let the campground staff know when everyone has returned.



# Canoe & Kayak Trip Preparation Guide



Rappahannock River Campground, LC  
33017 River Mill Road  
Richardsville, VA 22736



We hope you are eagerly anticipating your upcoming float trip. Through the years, we have learned that trip participants can often gauge the enjoyment of a trip based on how well prepared you are should the unexpected or the expected occur.

Use this information to help prepare yourself for an enjoyable day of activity on the water.

*Rappahannock River Campground, LC*

### BEING PREPARED AND RESPONSIBLE

11. 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.
12. Optional items to bring include: fishing gear, a bailer or sponge to remove excess water from the boat, insect repellent, sun block, knee pads (for kneeling in boat), first aid kit, whistle or other signaling device for use in emergencies.

### UPON ARRIVAL AT THE LIVERY

1. Use an eyeglass strap for your eyeglasses or sunglasses.
2. Dress for 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.
3. Be on time for orientation, which begins 45 minutes before your departure time. Ask the livery operator any questions you may have regarding the trip.
4. Wear shoes! Old gym shoes or shoes with tops and sides offer the most protection. Avoid sandals.
5. Bring drinking water in non-breakable containers. Alcohol should not be taken on the river.
6. If you have not already done so, carefully read and sign the Release of Liability Form.
7. Use sun screen even on cloudy days.
8. Take food and snacks along in a waterproof container which can be fastened to the boat. Remember, all items not fastened in the boat are at risk of getting lost and/or wet. No styrofoam coolers or glass containers please.
9. Review the river map. Know where your float trip will take you and where to get out. Make sure you understand how to identify and avoid any hazards marked on the map.
10. Wear only waterproof watches.
11. 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.
12. Take necessary allergy or other medications with you on the river. In case of mishap, it could be several hours before help arrives.
1. Campground employees will assign personal flotation devices (PFD's) and participants will choose their paddles after all safety briefings.
2. Please do not dig in the gravel with the paddles -- they will break!
3. 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 owners in the camp store or in another safe place. Remember, everything you take with you on the river is at risk of getting lost and/or wet. Take cameras in a sturdy waterproof container.
4. Please feel free to take one of our reusable mesh trash bags with you. We will empty your trash and wash the bag for reuse.