



KCK Paddling Safety

I. Personal equipment

A. Underwear

1. polypro
2. thermax or other synthetics
3. pile for cold weather



B. Wetsuit or drysuit

C. Booties

1. neoprene socks
2. no waders or heavy boots in fast water

D. Additional clothing

1. pile or synthetic fleece
2. wool

E. Paddle jacket or dry top

F. Gloves

1. neoprene
2. poagies
3. kitchen gloves with polypro liner

G. Helmet

H. Life Vest

1. choosing type and amount of flotation
2. addition of crotch strap
3. whistle and knife



I. Rescue equipment

1. first aid kit
 - a. should include prescription medicines reqd. of any member
2. throw-bag
3. 200' poly rope
4. 3 carabiners and prussiks
5. 2 rescue pulleys
6. lightweight camp saw

J. Additional safety equipment

1. paddle float for sea-kayakers
2. hand bilge pump
3. signaling devices
 - a. hand flares
 - b. parachute or meteor flares
 - c. smoke
 - d. mirror
 - e. rescue flag
 - f. strobe
4. marine VHF radio



5. EPI RB
 - a. special precautions to prevent accidental activation
6. survival kit
 - a. worn inside fanny pack
 - b. compass
 - c. waterproof matches
 - d. fire starter
 - e. link saw
 - f. space blanket
 - g. tube tent
 - h. candy bars

II . Trip planning

- A. International scale of difficulty (class I -VI)
- B. True assessment of skill levels of group members
- C. Use of guide books
 1. Alaska Paddling Guide, by Jack Mosby
 2. The Alaska River Guide, by Karen Jettmar
 3. Fast & Cold A Guide To Alaska Whitewater, by Andy Embick
 4. books available for most other areas of U.S.
- D. Topo or navigational maps
 1. significance of gradient
 2. landmarks
- E. Stream flow and river gages
- F. Accessibility of area
 1. difficulties in transporting equipment
 2. emergency rescue possibilities
- G. Making allowances for bad weather
- H. Wilderness travel etiquette
 1. respecting private property
 2. leaving a clean campsite
- I. Leave detailed trip itinerary prior to departure
 1. with person who will miss you and notify authorities
 2. with appropriate land manager



III . Reading the water and boating hazards

- A. River right and river left
 1. water is faster on outside of bends
- B. Dynamics of moving water
 1. drag created by riverbed and rolling motion produced
 - a. fastest water on surface/ & slowest on bottom
 2. "V" shapes created on surface by shallow rocks
 3. standing waves created by rocks
 4. hydraulics or keepers
 - a. escape weaker hydraulics by working your way to the side and out
 - b. escape by diving to bottom and swimming out
- C. Horizon line
- D. Scouting rapids
 1. universal hand signals
 2. choosing a route
 3. eddies and using them



4. setting throwbag personnel and or rescue boat
5. the decision to portage

E. Rivers in flood

1. increased danger beyond its normal difficulty rating
2. floating debris

F. Strainers and sweepers

G. Undercut banks

H. Ocean kayaking hazards

1. wind
2. waves
3. tides
4. currents
5. vessel traffic
6. visibility

I V. Defensive Swimming and Hypothermia

A. Swimming defensively in moving water

1. be sure to get behind boat
2. sitting position
3. face down stream
4. use legs and arms to fend off rocks etc.
5. lunge up onto strainers
6. be prepared for throw ropes
7. self rescue i.e. swim aggressively to shore

B. Surviving Cold Water Immersion (non moving water)

1. do not try to swim unless safety (shore) is extremely near
2. if unable to re-enter craft then pull as much of your body as possible up out of water
3. use available signaling device(s) to get attention of your group or others nearby
4. use whatever additional floatation is available
5. if alone then get into sitting position with legs crossed and arms held against chest
6. if in group then huddle
7. keep as much of head out of water as possible
8. keep all movement to a minimum to conserve heat while awaiting rescue

C. Hypothermia

1. what is hypothermia
2. recognizing signs
 - a. uncontrollable shivering
 - b. slurred speech
 - c. incoherent thought
 - d. loss of muscle coordination
 - e. drowsiness
 - f. unconsciousness
3. treatment
 - a. quickly but very gently move victim to safe dry area
 - b. if unconscious, check for pulse and breathing
 - c. begin CPR only if no pulse
 - ◊ heartbeat of a deeply hypothermic victim may be weak and spasmodic therefore unnecessary CPR could cause cardiac arrest
 - d. begin artificial respiration if necessary
 - e. remove wet clothing



- f. get inside sleeping bag with victim
- g. give warm fluids to drink
- h. give high sugar food or drink
- i. never give alcohol

4. prevention

- a. dress appropriately
- b. the importance of warm headgear
- c. keep yourself well hydrated
- d. keep your energy level up
- e. being prepared
 - ◇ carry spare dry clothing in drybag
 - ◇ small stove & vessel to heat water
 - ◇ candy bars or sugar cubes for quick energy

