



The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network Recommendations for Trip Organizers and Participants

Trip Organizer:

1. Set the trip date, pre-paddle meeting time, put-in location, difficulty level, route for paddle, and likely paddle duration (Float Plan). Notify members by posting on the Website.
2. Receive calls from interested members and keep participant list with contact phone numbers.
3. Confirm that late forecasts for weather, wind, and wave conditions are consistent with planned difficulty level, and if not, revise difficulty level, revise Float Plan, or cancel paddle.
4. Meet participants for pre-paddle meeting and seek consensus on the float plan. Leave a copy of float plan in car. Encourage identification of any special concerns by any participant.
5. Remind everyone that trip safety is everyone's responsibility and encourage all to look after one another and to paddle together. Ask participants to notify others of any changes in their own intentions and of any difficulties.
6. Have everyone sign the SMSKN Statement of Understanding form and leave them in your car. After the trip the signed forms should be sent to the SMSKN Secretary to be filed.

Trip Participant:

1. Acknowledge that SMSKN has no pre-qualification criteria of any kind for participants, and that even the individual(s) who have volunteered to organize a trip may be less experienced than you. SMSKN events are every member's opportunity to learn!
2. Let the trip organizer know you intend to participate and provide your phone number to the organizer so you will be notified of trip changes. If weather conditions are questionable, confirm trip status with trip organizer prior to leaving home.
3. Practice wet exits and rescues prior to paddling. Know that you can get back into your boat on your own.
4. Know your limits! Be responsible for yourself. It is each paddler's decision to go or not go on any trip based upon his or her evaluation of the conditions of the day and his or her paddling abilities. Do not assume that someone else will be able to save you if you get in trouble. Do not follow where you are not comfortable going.
5. Let other paddlers know of any limiting health conditions or other concerns that you may have.
6. File a Float Plan. Let someone at home know where you are going, and when you are to be back so that if you are not back when expected, help may be sought.
7. Arrive at paddle meeting place with time to prepare your gear and evaluate the weather conditions prior to the meeting.
8. Make sure you have the appropriate equipment – ocean-ready kayak, spray skirt, PFD, paddles, suitable clothing, sunscreen, food, water, chart, compass, flares, paddle float, pump, etc.
9. Know where you are at all times on the water. Know where you plan to go. Know how to get back.
10. Stay with the group. Everyone is safer when paddling with others. Help each other stay safe.
11. Keep track of other paddlers; let the rest of the group know if someone is falling behind.
12. Keep watch for hazards including changes in weather, waves, other boats, etc.
13. Help others in need of assistance to the extent possible when needed. Anyone's life may depend upon the help of a friend if conditions change unexpectedly.