

April 2004

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North Texas River Runners



Commodore's Column

By Diana McCown

Taking a Test Drive

Been watching too much TV? Getting a little stir crazy with all the rain (or threats of rain)? I have a solution: Buy a new boat (or a new, used boat)! Even if you already have a boat, you could always use more. I'm sure some of you are thinking, "Diana, get real. Just how many boats can you paddle at once?" Well, obviously, just ONE. But in my mind, boats are like shoes: you need a different style and/or color for different occasions.

Let me demonstrate. Paddling the Elm Fork of the Trinity? You need a flatwater boat. Going down the Lower Guadalupe? You need a whitewater boat. Want to take your best friend down the river? You need a tandem boat. Want to paddle with your boyfriend/girlfriend? You need TWO SOLO boats! Want to impress a potential mate? You need a boat with a pretty color.

I think I've made my point. Of course, once you get the new (used boat), you'll be obliged to test drive it. You have to see how it loads on the car, paddles on the water, and what kind of crowds it attracts. This period could take days- maybe even weeks or months. SO- if you've been trying to convince your significant other of the need for a new boat, let them read this article. Help them visualize how much more active (and attractive) you'll be test driving this new boat. Or- if all else fails- just bring the new boat home without permission. I'm sure they'll fall in love with it once it's been in the garage awhile.

See you on the test river (hopefully not the bottom of it),
Diana

Monthly Program

Our April meeting will feature Charles Smith, one of our most accomplished trip leaders and certainly the best organized. Charles will speak on trip planning. Also, Bill Anton from Mountain Sports will give a short miniclinic on a new product of interest to paddlers.

fyi, I have contacted the other retailers for product clinics; however, Bill has been the only available and reliable one.

Thanks
Dave

Buffalo River Trip

Buffalo National River April 8 - 11 2004.
Canoe trip

open to all NTRR members comfortable paddling class I and II water while carrying sufficient personal and group food and gear for a three-day float. Trip Leaders Ted Drake & John Simmons went on this trip for about 15 years with the TCC South Campus canoe class and know all the spots to stop and enjoy trails to high bluffs for spectacular views, the tallest waterfall in the Ozarks, beautiful hidden valleys, abandoned settlers cabins, etc. Please contact Ted or

> John at the March meeting or by email
(tdrake@twu.edu

> ; moordr@comcast.net) no later than
April 4.

Canoeing on the Brazos

To those who couldn't join us on the Brazos April 3rd for a 5 hour paddle and river clean up....

The weather was glorious! The water level was decent most of the way.

We had to get out and pull our boats over some shoals in a couple sections but for the most part the canoeing was quite nice. We had 16 people for our stretch of the river. Some folks had never been in a canoe before and discovered they really liked paddling.



Though the river looked pretty good, we were still able to pick up about 8 big bags assorted trash, 21 old tires, a cable spool, an oil barrel, pieces of old barbecues, carpet, lawn chairs, and car parts. We really got into it. Nice barbecue dinner was waiting for us at Tres Rios Campground when we were through. We'll do it again next year. Plan to come along.

Beth Barber, Chris Gross, Mitch Gross, Tom and Barbara Norton, Barb and Mike Cutter

of



Travel and Camp without a Trace An Environmental Report from Barbara Cutter

The Leave No Trace National Education Program promotes **seven** principles of outdoor ethics or minimum impact practices for human-powered recreationists. Last month we looked at *Plan Ahead and Prepare*. This month we'll highlight *Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces*.

Initially one would think that this principle applies more to hikers and backpackers than river runners and sea kayakers. Hikers are encouraged to travel on established trails to preserve wildlife habitat, delicate soils and fragile vegetation. We are definitely doing our traveling on a durable surface, the water. It carries us through natural areas with next to no impact. Yea, Paddlers! Now, what about our travel at put-ins take-outs, portages and campsites?

Keep in mind that durable surfaces include rock, gravel, dry grasses, snow. So try to execute that portage over rock or gravel whenever possible. At the put-in walk and carry your boats in single file, sticking to the established trail if there is one. Yes, even it is trenched and muddy. If there is not a trail and the surfaces are fragile, disperse use to *avoid* making tracks or ruts that can contribute to erosion and destroy plant life.

When you are selecting a campsite along a river or along the shore of a barrier island remember that a good campsite should be found, not made. Altering a site is usually not necessary. Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams. Keep your campsite small. If you are part of a larger group divide into smaller units of three or four people to find good sleeping and cooking areas. Then focus larger group activities in areas where vegetation is absent.

The Coast Guard can't **STRESS** this enough:

WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET!!!!

Each year, needless lives are lost to boaters of all types of vessels, simply because they chose not to wear their life jacket!

— There appears to be a "highest risk boating group," with approximately 74% of all fatalities attributed to not wearing Personal Flotation Devices (PFD's - more commonly referred to as a life jacket). This high-risk group are the participants in Paddlesports, which include kayakers, canoeists, and rafters. —

Wayne Spivak, BC-AIG, N-IC

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Wild and Scenic Rivers

The ACA has a great history of working to secure Wild & Scenic protection for rivers and to ensure that the protections afforded under the act are properly enforced. The federal Wild and Scenic Rivers Act is a great tool for protecting the nation's rivers. River segments designated as Wild & Scenic are afforded protection from water projects such as dams and other development that would alter the river.

ACA Wild & Scenic success stories stretch from coast to coast. The ACA was instrumental in securing Wild & Scenic designation for Wilson Creek in western North Carolina. After years of work, legislation to designate Wilson Creek became law in 2000. A year earlier a lawsuit by ACA and the National Parks and Conservation Association (NPCA) prevented the National Park Service (NPS) from turning management of the river over to a council composed largely of pro-development representatives. ACA also took action when the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) was planning to allow Alaska's Wild & Scenic Fortymile River to be threatened by expanded gold mining operations. Vigorous protests and warnings by ACA and American Rivers prompted BLM to scrap its decision to allow suction-dredge mining camps along the river.

Despite the ACA record of success, the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act is not being utilized to its originally envisioned potential. Opponents of the Act in Congress have blocked attempts to protect many rivers deserving of protection. Federal and state agencies have often ignored their management responsibilities under the Act. The state of Maine even allowed an illegal dam to be built on the Wild & Scenic Allagash Wilderness Waterway.

Securing and safeguarding Wild & Scenic protection for the nation's outstanding rivers is a challenge that requires the efforts of all paddlers. To find out more information about the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, and how you can help secure protection for rivers near you.

Article courtesy of www.acanet.org



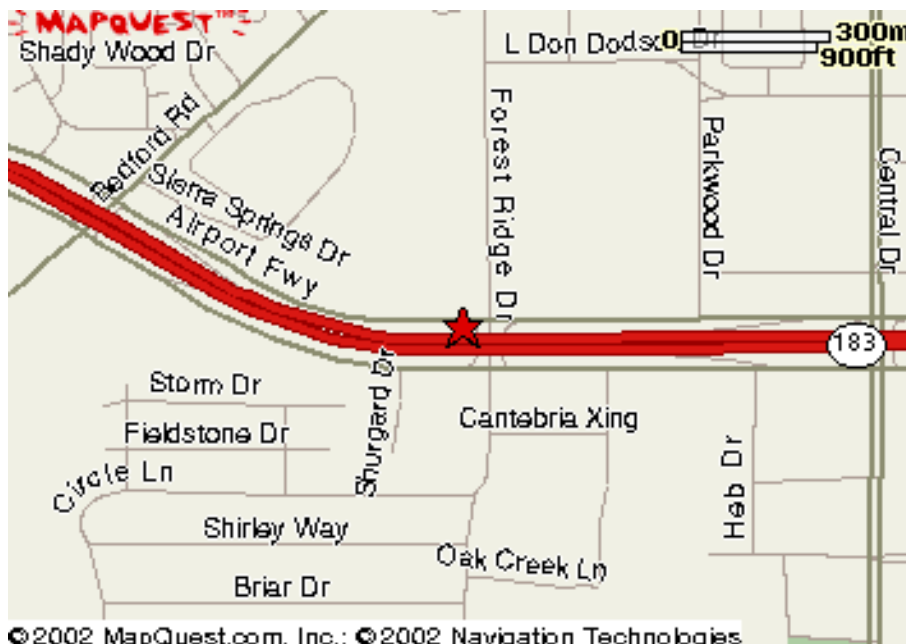
The North Texas River Runners
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Home of the Prairie Dog Surfing Society
"If we're not in the hole, we're sitting right beside it."



**If you would like to receive the Newsletter by email, please
contact: Tyler Bennett @ GMChighrider01@aol.com**



Club meetings
are held on the
last Tuesday of
the month at
Spring Creek
Barbeque from
7:00—9:00 PM

Spring Creek Barbecue
1509 Airport Freeway
North-West Corner of Forest & 183
817-545-0184