



SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

August 2004

Mission Statement

The Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network is an association of paddlers interested in connecting with others who enjoy the sport of sea kayaking. Our purpose is to promote safe and responsible practices, and, at the same time, to have fun.

Southern Maine Sea Kayaking Network
P.O. Box 4794
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www.smskn.org

Officers

Michael Charek	President
Chick Carroll	Treasurer
Jayne Engel	Secretary
Sandra Hodge	Board Member at Large
Reed Markley	Board Member at Large
Susan Payne	Board Member at Large
John Ropes	Board Member at Large

Newsletter Editor

David Lay

Membership Committee

Reed Markley	Chairman, Database Mgr.
Susan Payne	
David Lay	

President's Notes

Mike Charek

The season has been in full swing for some time now, and it's been gratifying to see so many trips being planned and conducted. Only wish I had time to go on some of them...

The Board has been working hard over the past few months, and several changes are in the works. First and foremost,

dues will be going up for the first time in many years (at least three years that I've been a member). Individual dues will increase from \$15 to \$20 per year; family dues will increase from \$20 to \$25. There are a variety of reasons for the increase, but the primary reason is to keep SMSKN financially healthy and able to do the things we do so well. The increase will take effect immediately with this issue of SMSKN News, and will be charged when individuals and families join as new members or renew their memberships.

The next change you will see will be to the website. Bob Arledge did a terrific job of building our website, and Reed Markley has carried on with maintaining it in the past few months, adding things here and there as needed. Our intention is to open up the content more to the casual visitor, to draw in potential new members and help grow the organization, and to make more explicit who we are and what we do. We have also been working on our trip organizing materials and waiver forms; new forms will be posted on the website soon. Keep checking back; the changes are coming.

One area the Board could use some help in is program planning. With all the other business we need to accomplish it's difficult to plan and carry out new and interesting meeting and educational programs. We have discussed the idea of a Program Planning Committee or a Program Planning Coordinator. If anyone is interested in becoming involved in helping us plan our programs please contact one of the members of the Board.

November is the month in which we elect new officers for next year. It's not too soon to be thinking of throwing your hat in the ring. There will be at least one, and possibly two at-large seats opening up for next year, so please contact me or another Board member if you are interested in serving. Also we are going to be creating a new officer position: that of Vice President. This would be someone who would serve for a year in preparation for becoming President the following year, and would help ease the transition into the President seat. We know there are qualified candidates out there...please contact a Board member to declare your intention to run.

Finally, a word of thanks to our outgoing Treasurer, Dorry Shaw. Dorry has served us faithfully for many years, and reluctantly stepped down this summer because professional obligations no longer allowed her the time to do the job as well as she thought it should be done. Thank you, Dorry!

Chick Carroll has stepped up and taken over as Treasurer. We wish Chick a long and successful term as our new Treasurer.

That's it for now. I definitely intend to get out on the water and enjoy the rest of the season. Hope to see you out there!

Member List

Please help us make sure that you are receiving club notices by email by checking the member list in this newsletter to assure that your email address is correctly listed. We have had quite a few messages coming back as not being valid and would like to keep you informed. Email any corrections to Reed Markley at rmarkley@ctel.net

Adopt an Island

Lee Bumsted

Do you ever wish you had an island to call your own? Well, SMSKN members do. For the past few years, we have "adopted" Little Snow Island. It's one of about 100 islands on the Maine Island Trail, and one of 14 in our home waters of Casco Bay.

The Maine Island Trail Association provides stewardship and recreational access to a chain of islands that starts in Portland and continues downeast to Machias. Members receive a guidebook that describes islands that are appropriate for recreational use, and we learn how to travel on the water and visit islands in a low-impact manner.

Island adoption gives us a special stake in a favorite island. As adopters, we clean the shoreline of washed-up debris and the interior of anything left behind. These "random acts of kindness" help return the island to a wilderness state, for future visitors to enjoy. Island adopters also record levels of use and report any concerns about what we observe to the MITA office in Portland.

Little Snow Island is the J-shaped island just to the east of Snow Island, in Quahog Bay near Cundy's Harbor. It's a pleasant two-mile paddle from the ramp at the end of Bethel Point Road. (There is parking for a small fee at the Bethel Point Boatyard and Marina, 100 yards from the ramp.) Next time you are looking for a new place to paddle, why not go check up on our island? Be sure to pack a couple of trash bags, just in case!

For more information about island adoption or membership in the Maine Island Trail Association, visit www.mita.org or call 761-8225.

Paddle Events

Remember that the Network is your opportunity to connect with other paddlers like you to get out on the water. Those who list trips below are just like you. If you want a certain type of trip, make a plan, list your trip on the website, and get others interested in sharing the experience with you, and go. If you would feel better sharing the effort, link up with someone else, and plan a trip together. This is our season!



Upcoming Events

8/14/2004 Saturday

Halfway Rock, Jewell Island and Eagle Island from Bailey Island

Meet at Land's End on Bailey Island (43°43.05'N, 70°00.15'W)(at the southern end of Rt 24). We will paddle 4 nm to Halfway Rock, then 3 nm to Jewell Island, then 2.3 nm to Eagle Island and 2.3 nm back to Bailey Island. Please email me if you plan on participating.. Difficulty: 2 - Moderate; Category: Day Paddle; Location: Bailey Island, Maine; Meet: 10:00 AM, Land's End, Bailey Island; Limit: None; Leader: Bob Arledge, (207) 415-1567, bob@arledge.cc.

8/15/2004 Sunday

Androscoggin Hand Powered Regatta

Youth 2.0 mile kayak race on the Androscoggin River at 11:00am Adult serious racers 8.0 mile kayak race on the Androscoggin River at 2:00 pm Adult & multigenerational fun 4.0 mile kayak race on the Androscoggin River at 2:05 pm Awards for all with many great door prizes. This event is a charity fundraiser for the Rotary Club of Brunswick as well as a way to introduce all kayakers to the fun of going fast on a flatwater course. Start at the Water Street Boat Ramp. Registration is required and those that preregister by August 1st will receive a t-shirt and other incentives.. Difficulty: 1 - Easy; Category: Other; Location: Brunswick, Maine; Meet: 10:45 am, Water St. Boat Ramp; Limit: unlimited; Leader: Michael Todd, 721-2155, regatta@brunswickrotary.org.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSIGNING THE LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY FOR SMSKN TRIPS

RATING	NOVICE 0	BEGINNER 1	INTERMEDIATE 2	ADVANCED 3	EXTREME 4
DISTANCE, NAUTICAL MILES PER DAY	< 2	< 6	< 15	< 25	> 25
DISTANCE FROM SHELTER/LANDING NAUTICAL MILES	< 1/4	< 1/2	< 1	< 3	> 3
WAVE HEIGHT, FEET (WAVES, NOT SWELLS)	< 1/2	< 1	< 3	< 6	> 6
PACE, KNOTS	< 2	2 - 2.5	2.5 - 3	3 - 4	> 4
TIME BETWEEN BREAKS, HOURS	< 1/2	< 1	< 2	< 5	> 6

These guidelines are intended to make the rating of SMSKN trips more uniform among trip coordinators. They are intended to avoid having paddlers finding themselves on trips that have demands beyond their capabilities; this creates a threat to safety. Safety is of paramount importance, but the guidelines are also useful to establish some minimums for trips. For example, a trip intended for advanced paddlers should not be planned for a pace of two knots. This can create boring conditions.

Obviously the condition with the highest rating should generally determine the rating of the trip; however, the boundaries between ratings are not rigid. For example, if you are planning a trip on a calm, sheltered lake in late August, at a gentle pace, but you want to go 16 nautical miles, there is no reason the trip should not be classified as an intermediate trip. It would be a good idea to let people know that the trip is a little long for the classification,

but there is no need to dissuade intermediate paddlers from participating. The most important safety tool in kayaking is good judgment.

The most critical criterion for safety is wave height, and it is the one that is the least predictable. It is never possible to be certain that conditions will not be worse than the guidelines for a rating level. You have to deal with probability. If there is a significant chance that the conditions will be worse than the guidelines or if there is a slight possibility that the conditions will be a lot worse than the guidelines, you should upgrade the rating.

In most cases it is the waves that pose the threat, not the wind. This is the reason that wave height is used in these guidelines rather than wind speed. Exposure to the wind, fetch for waves to build, time of year and time of day are all things that can affect the potential for large wind-generated waves and are things to be considered in rating a trip. As the day of the trip approaches, weather forecasts begin to have pertinence to the probability that conditions will be within the limits for the classification of the trip. The day before and the day of the trip, weather buoy data becomes also becomes pertinent. At this point if the probability that wave conditions will exceed the rating of the trip, the rating should be upgraded or the trip relocated. A trip can be relocated to a place where sheltering conditions compensate for stronger winds.

Another thing about waves to consider is their steepness. A breaking one-foot wave is a greater threat than an eight foot swell. Swells with long periods gently lift you up and down without any tendency to tip you over. Of course the energy in these swells can become dangerous if you paddle into shallow water where the waves slow down and build up. For the wave height criterion in these guidelines, it is assumed that the waves are steep.