



# SOUTHERN MAINE SEA KAYAKING NETWORK

June 2005

## 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**  
**Portland, ME 04112**  
**[www.smskn.org](http://www.smskn.org)**

### Officers

Michael Charek	President
Chick Carroll	Treasurer
Jayne Engel	Secretary
Sandra Hodge	Board Member at Large
Sarah Knock	Board Member at Large
Reed Markley	Board Member at Large
Anne Weigel	Board Member at Large

### Newsletter Editor

David Lay

### Membership Committee

Reed Markley	Chairman, Database Mgr.
Susan Payne	
David Lay	

### Librarian

Lee Bumsted

## President's Notes

Mike Charek

We had a great Trip Planning meeting April 21. About 30 people came to the meeting, and we ended up with about 30 trips up on the calendar. Not bad for an hour's work! You can check the list in this issue of the Newsletter for interesting trips, and the Event List is always available and up to date at [www.smskn.org](http://www.smskn.org).

Of special note on this year's calendar is the number of beginners' trips that have been scheduled, primarily on Wednesday evenings. This is in response to requests last year for more trips geared for the beginning paddler.

On July 21 we will revisit the calendar to refresh our trip listings for the balance of the season, and will have a discussion session where we will have a chance to learn from each other about boats, gear, trip planning, or whatever else is on your mind.

August 18 will bring Keith Attenborough to our meeting to show us how to carve a Greenland paddle out of a 2 x 4.

On September 15 we will hear from USM Professor Mark Swanson about using sea kayaks in his research on mapping geological features off the coast of Maine.

There are several paddling-related charity events this summer. Keep an eye out for requests for volunteers. SMSKN has helped out with several of these in the past, and the event organizers are always grateful for our assistance.

It's not too early to start thinking about serving on the SMSKN Board of Directors next year. Elections will be held in November for seats that may open up for 2006. If you want to pitch in and get involved with running the organization, this is the way to do it.

As always, if you have ideas or suggestions for the Board, let me know at [president@smskn.org](mailto:president@smskn.org) or call me at 761-0556. See you on the water!



## Kayaker Courtesy

Kayaks are relatively new to the seacoast compared with other working and pleasure craft. It should not be any wonder that those who have historically not had to consider kayakers while they work or play might now find kayakers a nuisance. Kayakers do not pay mooring fees, nor do they spend money at marinas for their boat purchase or its maintenance. Kayakers do not bring in fish or pay dock use fees to do so. Kayakers sometimes get in the way of launching trailers at ramps and of other craft out on the water. They are particularly difficult to see on the water, possibly creating a hazard and potential liability to other boat operators. Kayakers sometimes seem to ignore the common and familiar practices of other larger boat operators. We should not wonder why some might feel that we have invaded their domain, and that we should be pushed back from whence we came. The harbormaster in Freeport has been pushing for our removal from his worries, and many other boaters may agree with him.

Go to ConnYak's website for a helpful guide to Paddler Etiquette. Lets help make a good impression for all kayakers. (<http://connyak.org/Public%20Affairs/PaddlersEtiquette.html>)

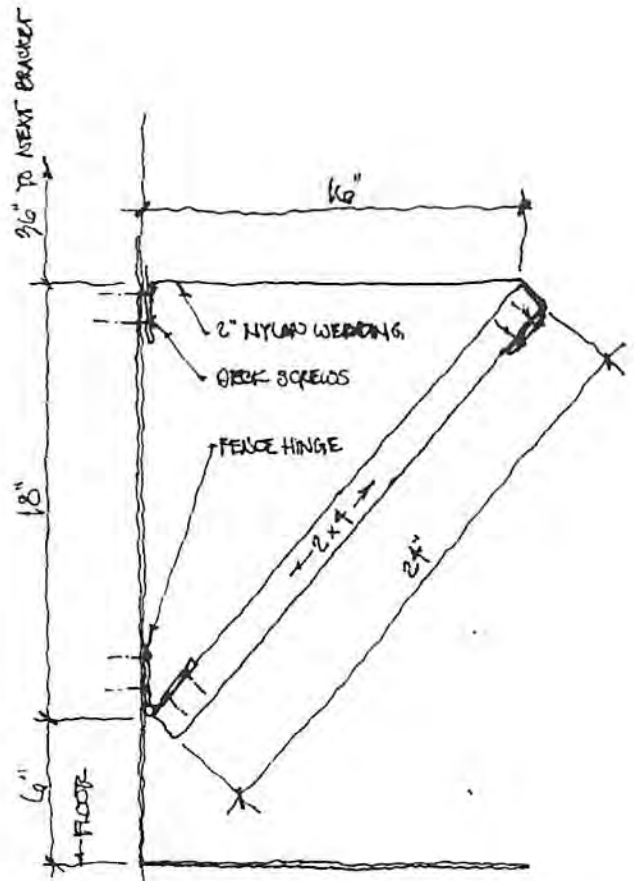


## An Inexpensive Kayak Rack

David Lay

There are kayak hangers on the market, but you can make your own quite economically for a wall in your garage. This rack stores flat, treats your boat kindly, and is not difficult to make.

For materials, you will need 4 feet of 2x4 lumber, 8 each 1-1/2" deck screws with washers, 4 feet of 2" nylon webbing, and a pair of fence gate hinges. Assemble the parts as shown in the sketch. To help assure that the webbing does not fray, you can melt the holes for screws through the webbing with a hot spike. If you attach one rack at 6" above the floor, you will find that you can mount another rack above it and load it without the need to use a ladder. Boats are stored off of the floor and are easily loaded or unloaded. The weight of the 2x4 opens the rack ready for loading, and the weight of the boat pulls the 2x4 in tight to the boat. A Velcro cord wrap (available at marine stores) can be used to hold the boards to the wall when not in use. Simply screw the Velcro wrap to the wall near the top of the assembly and wrap it around the 2 x 4 to hold it.





your graphics editor of choice, and perform and Edit – Paste. Now save this graphic in the format of choice. I used .jpg for this article. But .png or .gif will also work. I saved these as a 50% compressed jpg to reduce file size. Experiment with this to get a compression ratio to your liking that combines small file size while retaining most of the image detail. If you are emailing the file to a friend, small file size is a virtue.

Open the saved view in IrfanView and select the area you want to keep, then go to Edit and select Cut-Leave Selection. Save the result. This is the file you will send to people. The file can have text annotation applied. It is a little difficult in IrfanView, but, with patience, it can be done. If you look at Figure 1, you will see the text annotation of OUT > and < BACK. Follow the directions in IrfanView to add text. If you don't like the result, undo before you save. If you save, you are stuck with the text, since it is added directly to the graphic, not just in an editable text box. The higher end programs allow you to put the text on a different layer, so you can delete the layer to remove unwanted text. Some may also have editable text boxes, which makes life much easier.

#### Web Site Posting

If one is planning on posting the graphic on a website, there are several things that will speed-up image display. One can increase jpg or png compression. Experimentally determine the compression at which the picture really starts to look bad and back up a little. Reduce color depth. You may not need a large number of colors to represent a chart. Try 256 or 16 colors or some level between. To give the viewer an early idea of what the graphic will look like, jpg files can be saved as progressive, and gif files can be saved as interlaced. The image will quickly show up as low quality, and then fill in to full quality.

#### Questions or Problems

If anyone reading this article has questions, feel free to email me at [rmarkley@ctel.net](mailto:rmarkley@ctel.net), and I will try to answer.

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## Upcoming Events

### **6/25/2005 Saturday**

#### **Intermediate-level Strokes and Braces Clinic**

Chick and Ann Carroll will lead a half-day seminar on intermediate-level strokes and braces. This is a good opportunity for the more experienced paddler to refine technique and learn some new strokes. We'll meet from 10:30 AM to 3:30 PM with a one-hour lunch break. Bring your own kayak, paddling and safety gear, beverages, and lunch. The fee for the session is \$30.00 for SMSKN members and \$30.00 for non-members plus the \$20.00

SMSKN membership dues. Please note that you must register and pay in advance for this clinic - no walk-ins. Meet in time to be in your boat on the water at 10:30 am. Please note that all participants must be in a boat with spray skirt and bulkheads. Difficulty: 2 - Moderate; Category: Instruction; Location: Freeport, ME; Meet: 10:30 AM; Limit: 16; Organizer: Anne Weigel, 207-828-3789, [aweigel1@maine.rr.com](mailto:aweigel1@maine.rr.com).

### **6/25/2005 Saturday**

#### **Thrumcap from Ocean Point**

This will be a point-to-point paddle from Ocean Point to East Boothbay. We will leave some vehicles at East Boothbay beforehand to permit a short return shuttle to Ocean Point at the end of the trip. Paddle from Ocean Point across to Thrumcap Island, where we will plan to land on the small protected beach. We will proceed back along the east side of South Bristol, exploring the Thread of Life Ledges en route. The Gut at South Bristol will take us under the scenic swinging bridge before crossing the Damariscotta River to return to East Boothbay. Total distance is 8 miles. Alternate route and starting point may be necessary if conditions are unfavorable at Ocean Point, but digressions for a longer trip are also possible if conditions are favorable and the group desires. The trip is rated 2-Intermediate. Driving directions: Take Route 1 north approximately 2 miles beyond Wiscasset and turn right on Route 27. Proceed south to Boothbay Harbor and turn left on Route 96. Drive approximately 2 miles to East Boothbay and continue approximately 4 more miles to the boat launch ramp where the road reaches the ocean. Meet at 10 AM. Possible dinner stop afterwards in Boothbay Harbor or at Sarah's in Wiscasset. Please email me at [dboyle@clinic.net](mailto:dboyle@clinic.net) to let me know if you are planning on participating. If I need to cancel or make any changes, I will post it here on the Event List. Please check the Event List before the paddle. . Difficulty: 2 - Moderate; Category: Day Paddle; Location: Ocean Point, East Boothbay area, ME; Meet: 10:00 AM, Ocean Point boat ramp; Limit: None; Organizer: Dave Boyle, 207-442-7921, [dboyle@clinic.net](mailto:dboyle@clinic.net).

### **6/29/2005 Wednesday**

#### **Wednesday Night Beginners' Paddle**

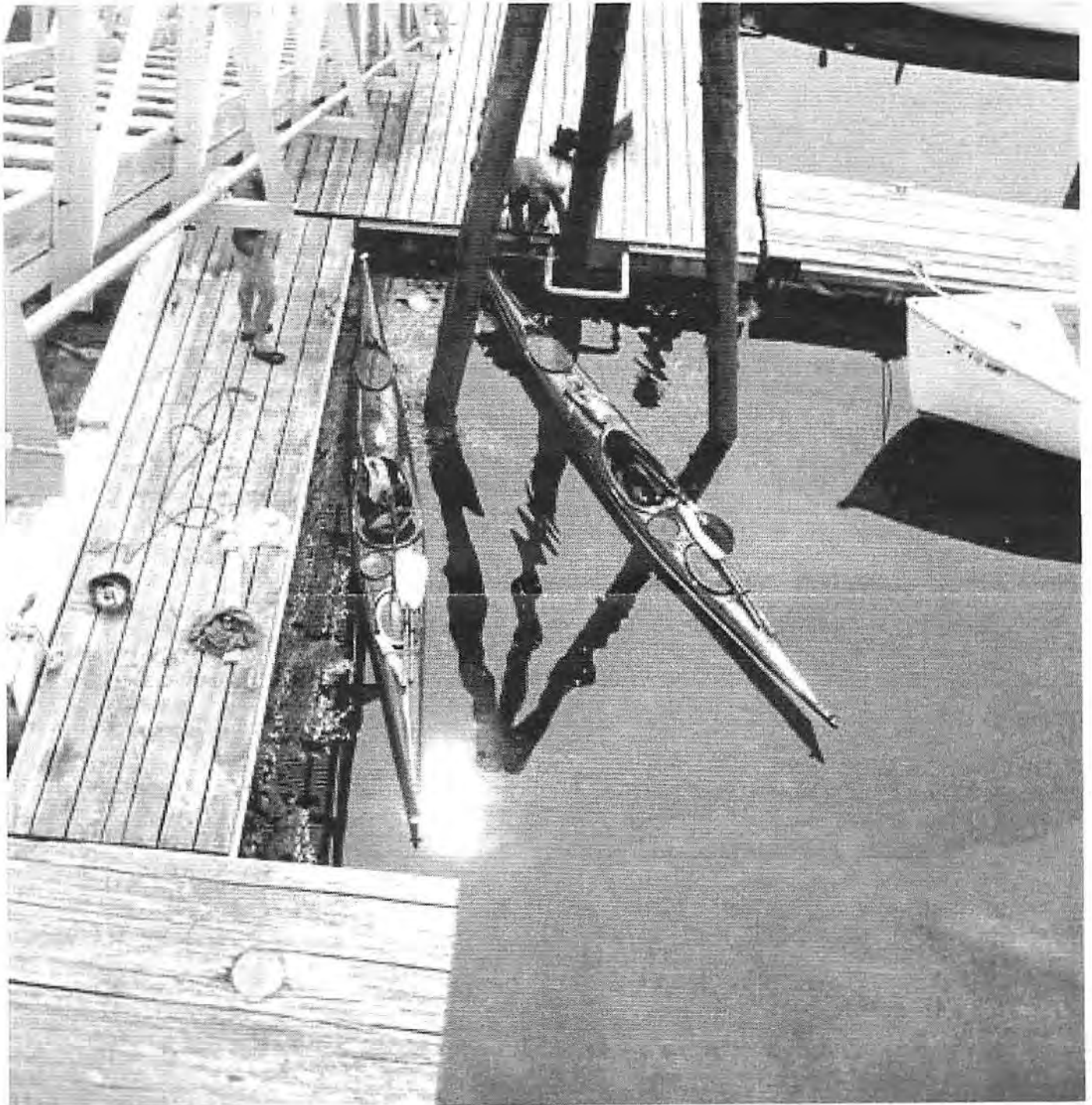
Join us on an easy beginners' paddle off East End Beach in Portland. We need to be in our boats on the water by 6:00 pm. Destination, route, and return time to be determined by weather and the inclinations of the group. Directions to East End Beach: Get onto Eastern Prom from Fore Street or Washington Avenue. Follow Eastern Prom around to the road down to East End Beach, opposite the block between Wilson and Morning Streets. Drive down to drop your boat off next to the bath house, then park in the lot up the hill and walk back down.. Difficulty: 1 - Easy; Category: Other; Location: Portland, ME; Meet: 6:00 PM, East End Beach; Limit: None; Organizer: Chick Carroll, 207-721-9245, [chickcarroll76@hotmail.com](mailto:chickcarroll76@hotmail.com).

### **7/1/2005 Friday**

#### **St. Lawrence Whale Watching**

We stay at a campground 13 miles northeast of the mouth of

Buttermilk Cove boat launch; Limit: None; Organizer: Bob Arledge, (207) 415-1567, bob@arledge.cc.



## 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.

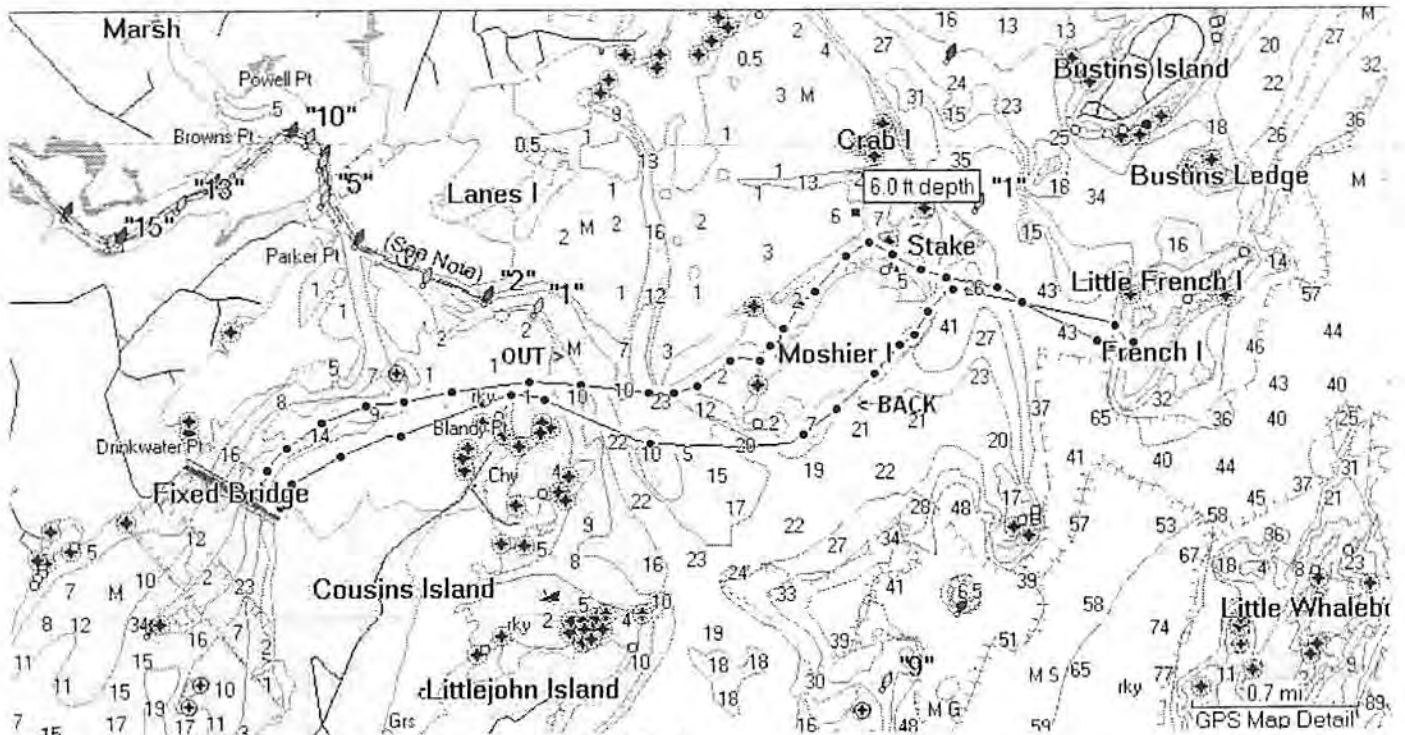


Figure 1 - Route from Cousins Island to French Island and Back.

Figure 2 Charting View of Track.

