

OCSJ Canoe/Kayak Trip Leader Rules

Trip leaders represent the OCSJ. As such, prospective trip leaders must be interviewed and approved by the Canoe Chair. Factors to be considered are number of trips and length of time paddling with the OCSJ, level of paddling skills and experience, and safety awareness. Input should be solicited from other OCSJ trip leaders that have paddled with the prospective trip leader. On his or her first trip, the new trip leader must be accompanied by the OCSJ Canoe activity chair or an alternate assigned by the activity chair to make sure OCSJ rules are being followed.

Participants' Safety is the #1 responsibility for all trip leaders. Leaders are expected to use good judgment and are NOT to take members on dangerous trips. CPR/First Aid training is recommended but not mandatory. Leaders must carry a First Aid kit on each trip. A brief safety meeting must be held prior to each trip which contains the following information:

PFD's: All trip participants must wear them.

Whistle Codes: Everyone should have one:

- 1 blast of the whistle means: attention,
- 2 blasts on the whistle means: stop your boat,
- 3 blasts on the whistle means: a paddler is in the water.

Paddle Signals:

- Paddle held overhead straight up in the air = Paddle forward
- Paddle held overhead with blade to the left = Paddle to the river left
- Paddle held overhead with blade to the right = Paddle to the river right
- Paddle held overhead horizontally = STOP

Lead Boat: The trip leader will be the lead boat or designate someone else to be lead. Participants must not pass the lead boat.

Sweep Boat: A "sweep" boat should be in place. The trip leader has the option of asking for a volunteer to sweep or designating someone to do so. A sweep boat is the very last boat in the flotilla. It is their responsibility to always be at the tail end of the group. They may, with leader's permission, switch off the sweep designation with another qualified boat throughout the trip.

Trip Leader Responsibilities

- The trip leader will designate the meeting place and time for the trip and plan the easiest way to shuttle.
- The trip leader will advise people about the nature of the trip, what class it is, what equipment to bring.

- The trip leader will screen all the people wanting to go on the trip to make sure they are members or guests of a member, and have adequate skill level and proper equipment for that particular trip.
- The trip leader must use an official OCSJ trip signup sheet which must be signed by all trip participants. The trip leader will validate that each OCSJ member is a current member. The trip leader will direct Guests that have been on several trips join the OCSJ.
- The trip leader should know the river or stream by recent trip or by scouting.
- If on the day of the trip, water levels have risen and are unsafe, or if weather conditions are bad, it is expected that the trip coordinator will cancel the trip for safety reasons.
- If the trip leader is not able to lead the trip for any reason, he or she should find an alternate leader or call off the trip. If the trip is called off, the leader must notify everyone who has signed up for the trip. (If a member is not reachable, the leader must go to the meeting place to notify the member of cancellation.)
- The trip leader will make all final decisions on the trip.
- Trip speed is determined by the slowest paddler. For safety reasons, the group must be kept together. DO NOT leave slow paddlers to catch up with the group later.
- The trip leader must see that ALL members are off the water and reunited with their vehicle at the trip's end.