

ROCKY MOUNTAIN SEA KAYAK CLUB

TRIP PLANNING

Hopefully you are thinking about leading a trip. If it is to a location the club has already been you might find the list of Past Trips and Leaders to be helpful (). Give one of these people a call and pick their brains about all those nit-picky details a trip leader has to worry about – paddle route, transportation, driving time, put-in, parking, permits, camping, routes, shuttle and take-out for one-way trips, ACA and club requirements, etc. These people would love to help you in planning your trip so that it is successful, safe and enjoyable for all.

Or maybe you have a great idea for a new paddling location but you just don't know enough about it to plan a trip. Where can you find the trip planning information you need? While not the only source of information, the Internet is a great source that you can easily explore.

If you are lucky, someone you know has done a trip there already and you can just ask him or her. If not, there is bound to be someone out there who has gone and has put a trip report on the web. I've found a good way to search for these trip reports is to do a Google search: enter the paddling location and if you get too many matching sites you can add the string "kayak OR canoe" so that all the web pages that don't mention paddling are weeded out.

For example, entering the phrase ("green river" kayak OR canoe) into a Google search ([Google \("green river" kayak OR canoe\)](#)) results in several very useful websites. This one is mostly pictures: <http://members.cox.net/genenet/GreenHome.htm>; this one has all kinds of trip logistic info: ; this one is in a journal format, lots of detailed descriptions: <http://www.hollowtop.com/journals/jgreenriver.htm>; and here is an outfitter who provides lots of details on their website: <http://www.redrivercanoe.com/greenriver.html>.

Government websites are another great source of information. For example, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation in Wyoming has a web site that provides links to pages for each of the recreational areas that they manage: . When searching for information on Bighorn River and Reservoir in Montana, I found the National Park Service site <http://www.nps.gov/bica/> as well as a state-run tourism website http://visitmt.com/falcon/Paddling3_BigHorn_River_final.htm that includes a link to a detailed river map http://visitmt.com/falcon/Paddling3_Bighorn_River.gif.

If your Google searches didn't turn up what you need in the way of maps there are several mapping sites that can get you the info you need. The two standbys, Map Quest <http://www.mapquest.com/> and MSN Maps <http://www.mapblast.com> are great for planning the drive to your paddling destination, but they are of limited use for planning the paddle itself. There are several other sites that provide topographic maps, air photos, and (sometimes) nautical charts: TerraServer <http://teraserverusa.com/>, MapTech <http://mapserver.maptech.com/>.

Depending on where you want to go, the American Canoe Association Water Trails web site <http://www.americancanoe.org/recreation/watertrails.lasso> may have some information. There are currently no Colorado water trails listed but there are a number Nebraska water trails listed. The Sea Kayak Site Map lists 330 pages of trip reports. Your trip just might be in here

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, be sure to review the Trip Leader Guidelines and be prepared to fulfill all the requirements before committing to being a trip leader. Once you have

decided upon the trip you want to lead, the next step is to notify the Event Coordinator to get the trip approved by the Steering Committee. Now you are off and running – Have fun and safe paddling!

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