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NSSKA Trip Classification and Rules

TRIP CLASSIFICATION:

A. EXPECTED CONDITIONS AND REQUIRED SKILLS

- I - Protected waters, possibly a light breeze, little or no current, easy landings. You must be able to wet exit safely from a capsized kayak.
- II – Possible chop with wind waves of up to 2 feet, current to 1-2 knots, easy to moderate landings. You must have experience with wet exits, assisted rescues, and bracing.
- III – Possible swells and eddy lines, moderate to strong winds, moderate to difficult landings, current up to 4 knots. You must have dependable skills in assisted rescues, self-rescues, and bracing.
- IV - Some exposed water, possible open-water crossings, moderate to strong currents, swells, moderate to strong sustained winds, moderate to difficult landings, possible surf. You must be able to brace automatically, to self-rescue confidently, and (preferably) to roll. You must be able to navigate using a chart and compass.
- V - Possible long crossings, rugged and/or exposed coast, large swells, surf, strong currents, turbulent water, difficult landings and/or strong wind effects. You must have advanced paddling, seamanship, and rescue skills, and be able to roll dependably.

B. EFFORT

- A – Up to three hours and/or 6 nautical miles, with plenty of sheltered landing spots for resting.
 - B - Up to 5 hours and/or 10 nautical miles, with some sheltered landing spots for resting.
 - C – Up to 6 hours and/or 15 nautical miles with infrequent shelter or landing spots.
 - D – More than 6 hours and/or more than 15 nautical miles, with little or no shelter and very few landing spots.
- C. The trip leader may turn away individuals who lack the skills or endurance to complete the trip safely or keep up with the group.

TRIP RULES

A. MINIMUM REQUIRED EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

1. No alcohol before or during the trip.
2. Wear a properly fitting PFD (“life jacket”) and have a whistle or horn readily available. These are Coast Guard requirements.
3. Wear a properly fitting spray skirt
4. Dress for total immersion. In almost all cases, this will require at least a wet suit and polypro or fleece underwear (no cotton). On cold water, including all salt water and most fresh water, a dry suit is preferable and may be required on some trips.
5. Carry a bilge pump and paddle float on your deck or in your cockpit.
6. Carry a sharp knife readily available on your person.
7. Your kayak must be equipped with fore and aft flotation (bulkheads, float bags, or a sea sock).
8. The trip leader may require additional equipment and supplies for the trip. The trip leader may turn away individuals who lack the equipment or supplies to complete the trip safely.

B. RECOMMENDED SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT (as needed)

1. Adequate snacks, lunch, and water. Consider chocolate.
2. Compass, chart and watch for navigation.
3. A personal first aid kit.
4. Sun and rain protection (hat, sun glasses, sun screen)
5. Insect repellent
6. A dry bag with warm, dry clothing.
7. For night paddles, a flashlight or head lamp.
8. For overnight paddles, camping gear and provisions (consult trip leader for details).

C. YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Trips are restricted to members except by invitation. The normal size limit is 12, but may vary on individual trips. Where the trip size is limited, members have priority.
2. Please contact the trip leader if you plan to go on a trip. If you find later that you must cancel, please let the trip leader know as soon as possible.
3. If you have a medical condition which could require special assistance, please inform the trip leader before launching.

D. DISCLAIMER:

1. NSSKA is an affinity club of people who enjoy kayaking. It is not a guide service. The trip leader organizes and leads the trip and sets minimum requirements, but you must assume full responsibility for your personal safety and comfort during the trip. Therefore, you must sign a release of liability form before each trip.
2. If you do not have the necessary skills or equipment to participate safely in a specific trip, don't go.