



# WATERLINES



Newsletter of Poudre Paddlers

September, 2008



## The Wendover Crew Enjoys a High-Water Run

by Mike Koliha

Wow - 7500 cfs - nobody on this trip would admit to having been on the river at that flow rate. I did some checking and found that it isn't unusual to have four or five days of more than 7000 cfs somewhere around late July or early August. Evidently, none of us have been around when it happened. We started with 22 boats, 40 people and two dogs. We ended with the same count. That's just how it's supposed to be.

Did the flow make that much of a difference? Not for most of the trip. The first small sets of rapids, about a mile below the Glendo Power Plant, were a bit larger than normal. The more adventuresome plowed right down the middle; the others

*(Continued on page 3)*

### In This Issue:

Prez Letter.....p. 2

Locater Beacons..p. 7

Dolores River.....p. 8

Dog Paddling....p. 12

Safety Class.....p. 14

Maps.....p. 15

Hello Friends,

**From the Prez.....**

I am amazed that it is September already. I hope you each have had, and continue to have, a great paddling season. The river flow has been very good to us this year! I write this on September 1<sup>st</sup> and am thrilled to say we could still run Bridges at 1.4'. There were even some commercial rafters making the run!

There are two items I would like to discuss in this newsletter. The first is our successful 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Poudre Paddlers Rodeo. The second item is what I will affectionately call an "Officers Roundup." That seems to fit with the Rodeo theme.

The Poudre Paddlers Rodeo was held at Union Reservoir in Longmont, Colorado August 23. This venue worked perfectly for paddling, swimming and grilling all in close proximity to each other. There were about 25 members, several guests, and fortuitous weather.

Some of us started the Rodeo by playing dead-fish polo. We had two "dead-fish" (sponges sewn inside of terry cloth "fish") that had to be lobbed into each other's boats using only our paddles. If the fish lands in your boat, you're out! There is a special technique to pick up the fish with your paddle, and many learned it quite fast in order to stay in the game. Next it was time to try each other's boats. This was a popular activity. We had a great mix of kayaks, a couple of white-water canoes, and many different tandem canoes. Randy Knaupf and Annie Wolff even brought a special Alaskan raft that weighed in at less than 5 lbs (and they just got off the plane from Alaska that morning)!

Then it was time to let the games continue. We started out with bow races. This is where only one paddler sits in a tandem boat and paddles forward from the bow. The idea was to get around a buoy and back first. This turns out to be quite entertaining with canoes but much too easy for tandem kayaks that still stay in trim with only a bow paddler. The next game we played was tug-of-war. Three sets of 2 boats each, were tied together at their sterns. The winner was whoever pulled the other boat across the center line. We had three heats until the last two winning boats had to go against each other. I will say that Mike and Debbie Koliha put up a good fight but they eventually lost to Steve Cassels and his son-in-law Rob. Steve, of course, finished with a flair of twirling his paddle over his head, a la Kent Ford. Honorable mention go to Debbi Artzer and Zach Schwalbe who almost beat Debbie and Mike. They just didn't realize how close it was!

Next came the game I have dubbed "Blindfolds n' Buoys." We took tandem boats and had each stern paddler wear a blindfold. The object of the game was to race out and around the buoy and get back first. The bow paddler had to tell the stern paddler what to do. Somehow rights and lefts get all mixed up when you're blindfolded! The next heat was with the bow paddlers blindfolded. I got to try this position and was amazed at how funny it feels. My stern paddler Zach was telling me to straighten out after going around the buoy but I was sure we hadn't made a full turn yet!

*(Continued on page 6)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

skirted the left edge. Lunch Island was still where we left it with plenty of dry land to sit on while eating, but not as much of it was in the shade as usual. The shady parts were a bit wet.

When we got down to the bridge on the Cassa road, you felt like you had to duck way down when you went under it. You didn't really need to, you just felt like you should. The water level on the bridge was certainly high enough to that you really wanted to give the pylons a wide berth. Don't mess with those things.

Do you remember that funky hair-pin corner that comes about half way through the trip? At lower flow rates it tries to spin the unwary paddler around a couple of times before they can get things going downriver again. In such high water we had one big eddy line to cross, much easier than punching through the swirling eddy that I remembered.

Now we get to talk about the haystacks. The debate the night before ranged from "they are going to be huge" to "they are going to be totally washed out." The reality was, of course, somewhere in between. The haystacks were certainly smaller than I have seen them at lower flows, but they did exist. Two changes: There was a significant rapid just above the haystacks which did its best to push boats smack dab into the heart of the wave train. And there was no return eddy. Those accustomed to sneaking down the left edge of the stacks and bailing out into the big return eddy found themselves in the thick of the waves, nowhere near the return eddy, which didn't exist anyway. Most peo-



**Wendover is dangerous....Go Armed!**

ple managed to get through the wave train. Some didn't (little Ming, one of the canine companions on the trip, actually had the opportunity to swim for real).

Three boats turned into submarines that I know of, and not a one of them was mine. The good thing is that there was nothing more than minor scrapes and bumps on anyone. Also, let me tell you it is so nice to be on the other end of the rescue, the dry side that is. We helped pull a boat/person duo to shore as well as shuttled some other people back to their respective boat. If someone was looking for minimal waves while going through that stretch of water, it ended up being river right in the new rapid above the haystacks with a quick diagonal to the left side of the stacks just above the first standing wave.

I don't think anyone made it back up to the top of the haystacks to try a second run down. That missing return eddy had a big

*(Continued on page 4)*

*(Continued from page 3)*

## **Wendover, from p. 1**

impact on the play time in the hay stacks. The last of the river was as mellow as always, just a simple cruise on down to the take-out to play tag with the trains.

The high flow didn't really impact the trip too much. There is usually somebody that capsizes in the haystacks even with lower flow rates, and, while I'm sure the average speed was higher than last year's, it didn't seem to cut hours off the time on the river.

# Wendover, from a First-Time View

By Kristy Perkins

In our younger years, my husband Rick and I had both been naturally athletic, so when Debbie Hinde invited us to come canoeing down the North Platte from Glendo to Guernsey with the Poudre Paddlers our first thought was “that sounds like a blast” and our second thought was “how hard can this be?”

On our way up to Glendo we saw the most amazing rainbow we had ever seen. It was so clear and close that we could see both ends of the rainbow in the nearby open field. We knew this was a sign of the wonderful weekend ahead of us.

Friday night we were welcomed by the group of strangers known as the “Poudre Paddlers.” We made our plans for the morning to meet and take all the boats to the drop-off point. Debbie offered us some “beginners lessons” while we waited for the shuttle caravan to return. Rick and I both thought this would be easy. Somewhere between learning the J-stroke and trying to get out of the current hearing Debbie yell from the bank “Kristy, what are you trying to do,” we realized this wasn't just as easy as paddle to go faster, don't paddle to go slower. We have always been up for a challenge so we spent the next 2 hours learning all we could from the master.

The first set of “mini rapids” came up on us in a hurry. Debbie was next to us in her canoe with her daughter Rachel and our daughter Shelby, both 12, giving us pointers along the way. When Debbie nicely suggested we kneel to go through this first portion, we didn't hesitate in getting down and ready for what lay ahead. Our adrenaline pumped and Rick and I yelled to each other what we needed to do to keep the boat upright. Lo and behold we made it! We were feeling very proud, and maybe a little bit cocky about our “ability.”

Less than an hour into our trip we made it to “Lunch Island.” We all took a break, broke

*(Continued on page 5)*



*(Continued from page 4)*

out the lunch and sat down to chat with our new friends. After eating, the kids (and adults) took the opportunity to enjoy the water and cool off with some “current swimming.” You hop in at the top of the island (PFD’s in place, of course) and let the current take you to the bottom of the island. Swim to the shore, hop out and do it all over again.

After a 30 minute break, it was back in the boats for the rest of the trip. Everyone (except for the newbies—let this be a lesson) had water cannons and the water fight began. It was every canoe for themselves. We found, being cannon-less, that it was best to paddle until we couldn’t paddle anymore!

Arriving at the second set of rapids we were much more tired, and not feeling as prepared for these “bigger rapids.” We forgot the cardinal rule of rapids....KNEEL. We started out ok, hitting the waves head on, and thought we were clear until the last wave was too much for us and in we went.

The group was amazing. The minute we dumped the canoe whistles started blowing all around us and boats came out of nowhere to pick up the three of us. Luckily we had been trained by Debbie on what to do if this happened. Our 9-year-old son Corbin immediately faced his feet downstream and started swimming toward shore. The teamwork of the group was incredible to me. With 20 minutes the three of us had been picked up, someone grabbed

*(Continued on page 6)*

### **Or, As Corbin Puts It...**

Hi, my name is Corbin Perkins and I am 9 years old. On July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2008, my parents took my sister Shelby and me on a weekend camping and canoe trip with my Mom’s friend Debbie. We go camping a lot but had never been canoeing so I was really excited. We spent a lot of time before our canoe trip playing in the river and getting ready for everyone to leave at the same time so we could stay as a group and be safe.

I learned how to help paddle the boat with my own paddle and when to hold it up and let my

*(Continued on page 6)*



our steadily sinking canoe and all of our gear and we met up at a small inlet to get put back together.

Some very nice people emptied our canoe of all the water and the other canoeists formed a “bridge” to allow the three of us to walk from boat to boat to get back into our own. It all worked like clockwork.

The rest of the trip was fairly uneventful, just a nice steady ride down a beautiful river with incredible scenery all around. It was by far the best weekend we had all summer.

Thank you Debbie and fellow Paddlers for your invitation, instruction, help and hospitality. We hope to be able to join you again sometime and become a part of your wonderful group. I would recommend this experience to EVERYONE!

### **Corbin’s view, cont.**

parents do all the work. We got to have water gun fights while my parents paddled the boat, stop to swim in the river and even got to see some wildlife. We saw bald eagles in a tree and little baby ducks fighting the current of the river. The most fun part of the trip was when we fell out of our boat! We got rescued by some other people in boats (Mike rescued me even though I had been trying to shoot him with a water gun all day!). Luckily Debbie had taught me what to do if I fell in, so I wasn’t scared because I had my life vest on to keep me floating and I just swam as hard as I could. I think every kid should try canoeing just once, I bet if they did, they would love it as I did.

### **From the Prez, from p.2...**

We noticed at this point that while several lightning storms came toward us and veered away, the wind was picking up. Not enough to stop the last game though, which was truly in the spirit of Rodeo. It was “barrel racing”—racing around three buoys in a triangular fashion. The wind made it a challenge but the whitewater canoes seemed to breeze through the turns. Steve was again honored with the opportunity for another of his famous overhead paddle spins.

At this point the wind became rather strong and the time was exactly 4:15, only 15 minutes after the scheduled end of the festivities. We loaded up our boats, said our goodbyes, and of course noticed that the wind had now stopped. Right on cue!

Now on to item #2, the “Officers Roundup”: What do I mean by this? Well, we really need to round up some new officers! My term is up and we need a new President. May I be bold enough to hint that this can be an individual or even a team/couple? We also would love to have some new insights and energies added to the officers group via people that have not been in this group yet. It’s not hard! All you need to do is like to paddle, like to share ideas and want to help our club. We can use people for any of several positions. Please contact me or any of the other officers if you are interested in helping (see the list of names and contact information posted later in this newsletter). This is not a huge time commitment and what better way to share your paddling passion! We look forward to hearing from you. Paddle, paddle, paddle!  
Debbie Hinde

# Personal Locator Beacons – Report on the SPOT

By Jeanne Willson

Just because I'd like my (adult) children to come running if I get myself into a scrape on a wilderness trip, because I often hike alone, and because I lead many trips (hiking, canoeing) where anything can happen, I decided to purchase a SPOT, one of 3 or 4 commercially available satellite emergency communication devices. Mine works like this: (1) set up your friends-and-family list on the web at home, along with any changes to your brief message (example: Jeanne is OK on the Dolores); (2) turn it on and send one of 3 messages by pressing a button:

- \* **I'm ok**; just checking in (SPOT sends an email to your list with a link to your location mapped on Google Earth! How cool is that? It can also send a text message to a phone without the map link.)
- \* **It's NOT** life threatening but I really need you to get help to me (again, only your friends and family are notified, and your location information is sent, too); or
- \* **Critical**, life-threatening emergency; please sent help immediately (a wide-coverage rescue system is notified of your emergency, as is your selected friend list, and all efforts are made to locate and rescue you immediately.)

There is also an optional (extra charge) tracking system that sends normal trip progress updates to the findmespot.com web site, and your friends can go to the web site to follow your travels. The basic charge is about \$150 for the unit and a \$99 annual subscription. Optional rescue insurance is available.

On a trip this spring, my grown son got news

that he'd gotten his first teaching job, and he left me four phone message trying to reach me at home. At the end of the day, he got my "I'm OK" SPOT message from Mee Canyon on the Colorado River, and remembered that I was on a trip. When I got home and got the messages, I felt bad that I wasn't there for him, but at least once he got the SPOT message, he knew I wasn't ignoring him ... and that I was OK.

I have found that it's important to turn the SPOT on and wait a good 10-15 minutes before sending a message especially if you are in a remote or northern area, or somewhere where cliffs or mountains block low-angle satellites.

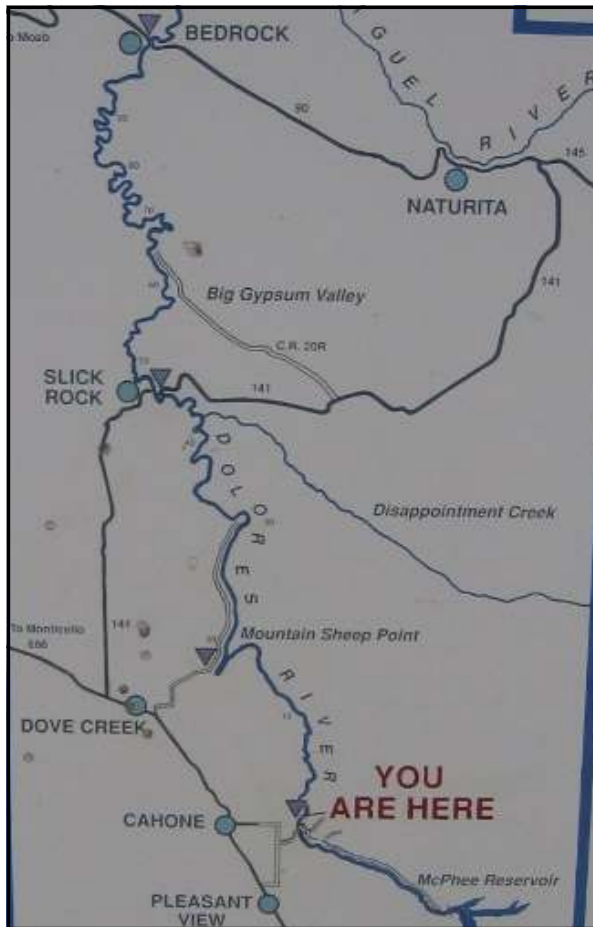
Big plusses of the SPOT relative to other available units in my opinion are (1) overall low cost, (2) ability to send a positive, "I'm OK" message, (3) ability to avoid calling the helicopters but still get help.

Negatives are (1) no local signal homing beacon, just GPS coordinates are sent to your rescuers, (2) It's not as easy as you'd think to figure out the buttons, which would be a BIG problem in an emergency when thinking straight can be tough; (3) no feedback on the unit to tell whether a message was sent successfully; (4) No way to send communication such as the type of emergency, and no way to receive communication such as "Hang in there, we are on the way." I hope that some of these negatives are fixed through inexpensive design upgrades; the communication limitations are probably far too expensive to fix.

# El Rio de los Dolores de Nuestra Senora

by Eric Hermann

The full and lovely name of the Dolores River is El Rio de los Dolores de Nuestra Senora, The River of the Sorrows of Our Lady, and its canyon is as full and lovely as its name. This year a rare element was added: Water entered the river.



Five of us did 82 miles of the Dolores in its lower stage, 800 cfs, from June 2 – 8. David Karan, Will Golson and I put in at Bradfield Bridge to run 47 miles of whitewater in solo boats for three days; then Will headed home to pack for another trip. Dave's wife Roberta

and my wife Connie arrived then at Slickrock, bringing tandem boats for the 35-mile run from Gypsum Valley to Bedrock over four days. It was a study in logistics!

The nine-hour drive to Slickrock and then Dove Creek is long, of course, but includes a beautiful, rarely traveled 140 miles from Grand Junction to Slickrock. Here's how Jeanne Wilson described it in the Rocky Mountain Canoe Club newsletter:

....wild isolated canyons of unimaginable grandeur. First you cross the Uncompahgre Plateau through the strange and stunning Unaweep Canyon; you are flanked by tall walls of billion-plus-year-old gneisses and shists and pegmatite dikes....Unaweep crosses a divide—all the more strange for a canyon!—draining to the Gunnison on the east, and the Dolores on the west. Then reaching Gateway, you are again in Red Rock Country. It's national park-quality scenery, but too remote and rugged to host a national park.

Our car camp at Dove Creek Campground, or Mountain Sheep Point, its other name, was in a shady box elder grove under 200-foot walls of deep red sandstone, surrounded by a choir of warblers and towhees—oh, so sweet! Next day came a 14-mile drive to Bradfield Bridge, where we left Will's car to be shuttled to Slickrock, and put in for 19 miles of class 2 water into a painting of deep greens and reds: dark green ponderosas and lettuce-green new oak leaves along towering Wingate sandstone. This stretch would be a great 3-day trip of short days, leisurely camps in grassy pine groves, and clear water with plenty of trout. A mile from our camp we climbed a steep trail to an Anasazi ruin with a sweeping view of the river below. It was

*(Continued on page 9)*





*(Continued from page 9)*

Valley Campground. A 65-mile drive then to Bedrock to pick up our shuttle driver, who returned with us to Gyp Valley. My poor 4Runner, with four trips over the mess! Our poor wives, who huddled in the cold wind and intermittent rain for three hours. Next time, I'll put in at Slickrock if there is any



Camp Nirvana Sunset! Connie , David, Roberta,

chance of rain, and I'll arrange a full shuttle. Slickrock means another 15 miles of easy water through ranchland, maybe four hours, but eliminates more than an hour of possibly horrid road. Shuttle companies prefer the pavement as well.

We put on at about three p.m. as the weather lifted, steam rose from the deepening walls, and our spirits rose as well. Four miles down came a 100-yard wall of petroglyphs. Another party was camped there, but didn't mind us walking among their tents to view the rock art. Hey, BLM, make it illegal to camp here! Ten more minutes brought camp one, we thought at Bull Canyon, but really it was False Bull—looks just like the real Bull

Canyon, and features is even a nicer camp. Chefs Dave and Roberta added more fixins' to ready-made pizza. So simple and delicious! Clearing sky, and stars and stars!

Three more days in Slickrock Canyon, ever so lovely. Here, the Dolores has carved a sinuous route through 400-foot Wingate walls, walls that seem sculpted at every turn. The water is busy Class II for the most part, with four or five III- rapids for excitement. The advantage to the lower flows is that the year's heavy raft traffic is done; the canyon is quiet; the campsites untenanted. Most of these offer shade amid sandstone art galleries.

Weather was beautiful, with clear nights and 80-degree days. What a contrast to the RMCC trip over Memorial Day—days of rain, hail, and temps in the 50's.



David, Roberta navigate La Sal Rapid

We hiked up Spring Canyon, lovely and well-named with several springs—its trail opening is 150 yards up from the canyon opening—and toured two more petroglyph panels, the last near the tracks of a turkey-sized dinosaur.

*(Continued on page 11)*

(Continued from page 10)

Sadly, we finished the trip at Bedrock, where our mud-stuccoed cars awaited, as did an eight-hour drive home. El Rio de los

Dolores de Nuestra Senora will await another year, await another heavy snowfall in the San Juans, and another flow of water!

## Dolores Logistics

The big question, “Will there be water?” has you watching the snowpack in the San Juans all winter, especially from March to May. Check out these websites for official flow predictions, usually available by mid-April: [www.doloreswater.com/releases](http://www.doloreswater.com/releases) and <http://www.co.blm.gov/ubra/ufo-dolores.htm>. Get a copy of the Dolores River Guide by Devries and Maurer, and start planning. (ISBN #1-879343-11-8, published by the Southwest Natural and Cultural Heritage Association in Albuquerque, available through Rocky Mountain Adventures.)

Raft traffic is thick in May, especially over Memorial Day. Although rafts can scratch through at 700 cfs, most traffic subsides under 1,000—at season’s end. There are campsites every three miles or so—easier to get when crowds thin.

You can do your own shuttle, but it could take over three hours AND you will need to repeat it at trip’s end to get your upstream car. Here are some numbers for commercial shuttles: Jamie Husky, 970-677-2301. Torrie Davis 970-677-2818 cell 970 560 1475.

We hired Ramona Jones, who lives in Bedrock. Her number is 970-859-7445. Her May, 08 prices were \$210 for a full shuttle or \$65 just to return our drivers to the put-in—a shuttle plan that still took over three hours.

## Lodging

Motel in Naturita, c. 30 miles before Slickrock: 123 E Main St (970) 865-2700

Noisy in the morning, said Tom/Mary Peck.

Motel 9 in Dove Creek, about 15 miles past Slickrock. Phone, I think: 970 667 2234

Okay, but with many rules and warnings.

Beautiful new hotel/resort complex in Gateway, about one hour before Slickrock. It runs about \$120 per night for two, including a full, meaty breakfast. 970-931-2458.

Or just stay in Grand Junction, giving two-hour drive to Slickrock.

Directions to Gypsum Valley: I-70 to Clifton exit 5 miles before Grand Junction. Then head toward Montrose, but very few miles; at Whitewater, take 141 through Gateway and Naturita, then approximately 28 miles to mile 34.5. Turn right 13 miles to Gypsum Valley Put-in. To Slickrock, stay on paved road seven more miles.

Camping: Gyp Valley Campground has no water, but covered tables. No outhouses in 08! No camping at Slickrock, but turn-offs onto BLM land starting 3 miles south.

Dove Creek, or Mountain Sheep Point – Turn north on dirt roads east side of Dove Creek. Check maps for the 3-4 miles from there. Very nice campsites. Outhouses, tables, but no drinking water.

# Canoeing with Your Canine on Board

by Kari Monson

If you're anything like me, you don't like leaving your dog(s) behind when you go away. This is especially true for outdoor activities. After all, if I enjoy the outdoors, I am guessing that my dogs would also. So, why not consider taking your dog on your next paddling trip?

Now, before you start with all the reasons why you should not take your dog, I'll concede that some dogs should stay home—older dogs and others who swim poorly, or those who are unpredictable around people or other animals—the last thing you want is for someone to get hurt. Start with only one dog, a singleton that you can reliably and safely handle and control. Other than that, most any dog can enjoy a canoe/kayak trip as much as you. Do you really want to justify to those big, sad eyes asking why he can't come along?

“But,” you say, “what about the dogs who don't like water?” Who says they HAVE to get wet...unless YOU get them into a water fight. A dog can enjoy canoeing and the outdoors with you and never get a toe wet. Trust me, I have “defective” cocker spaniels who don't like the water. They have each [quickly] learned how to get in and out of my boat without getting wet. Of course you can help a bit by putting in and taking out in ways and places where they can keep their feet dry. Try pulling up to that large stone they can hop on to—or an elevated portion of the shore. If they know voice commands,



teach them to “wait” until you are ready for them to disembark. This will help keep you both safe and dry.

So you've decided to give it a try. Now what?

Dog Fancy Magazine had some good tips in their June 2008 issue. I've incorporated their ideas along with a few of my own below.

- Have a high-energy dog? No problem—let him help him burn off energy before you put in. A walk, run or swim while others are running the shuttle is a great way to burn energy and time.
- If your dog is a rookie to boating, start easy. Maybe that four-day river trip is not the best first trip. Start with just a few hours—like

*(Continued on page 13)*

(Continued from page 12)

one of Poudre Paddlers great Paddle-N-Pot Luck days.

- Borrow or buy a doggie PFD... even if you dog is a natural swimmer. We encourage all humans to wear them. Why not our canine? Not only does it keep the hot sun off of his back, it gives you an easy handle to grab. Just like human PFDs, the bright color will help you keep track of him when he's in the water. Strong swimmers, human or canine, need pfd's for safety.
- Never tie your dog into the boat. Unless my dog is great with voice commands, I do keep him on a leash (not a heavy retractable). It gives me something to grab if he decides to ignore me. But if he is tied in, he will likely drown if we do accidentally go over.
- Especially for novice canine "paddlers," try breaking up the day a bit. Plan some stretch/potty breaks just as you would for a road trip. But also be prepared to clean up after your dog.
- Remember that the bottom of your boat is smooth and slippery. Your dog is probably not wearing rubber-sole shoes like you. Try putting a shower mat or other non-skid surface where you want your dog to spend his time. Not only will this give him some traction, but it is a good indicator of "his seat" in the boat.
- Be prepared for slightly more challenging paddling. A friend of mine once said that he likes taking his dog for the extra challenge. "It automatically makes class I water

into class I+ or even II." You just never know which way he might lean next.

- Make sure your dog is current on all his vaccinations. You might also consider adding the giardia vaccine to the regimen—since you never know for sure how clean the water really is. I recommend carrying clean water for your dog.
- Make sure your dog is wearing a well-fitting collar with identification. It might help others on your trip keep track of which dog goes with which human. And, if he does get lost, whoever finds him has a way to contact you.

Still not sure if your dog can do it? Give it a try locally. Then you don't have a lot of time and frustration invested. Sometimes it might be the second or third outing before your dog realizes how fun it really is. Remember, if you are nervous, he will more likely be nervous.

Be calm, relax! Have a great time, but don't leave your best friend behind!



# Wet Paddlers Learn Safety and Rescue

by Annie Wolf

On Saturday, July 19th, I had the honor, along with six other Poudre Paddlers of learning beginning Safety and Rescue from the capable and always effervescent, Debbie Hinde. We met at Picnic Rock parking lot and proceeded down to the Poudre for some instruction.

Our agenda included topics like these: learning how to get to the water safely, choosing the right water (whitewater classification system) and appropriate gear. We were all surprised to learn how much care and planning is needed before even putting a toe in the water. Good planning can make or break a day in on the river. We also reviewed river signals, how to find paddle partners and lots of good advice on staying warm and safe.

Next was the 'laboratory' portion of the morning that included learning the mantra of all water lovers, "Swimming Happens!" We got plenty of practice with what to do and how to respond when it happens. This included jumping in the current, one at a time, and learning self-rescue swimming (always remember: keep your feet up and your point your head in the direction you want to go!). We also learned how to throw ropes (and yell "rope!"), use our paddles to rescue, and wade in groups of three.

By afternoon, we were tired, hungry and much more knowledgeable about how to keep safe in the water. Thanks to Deb

and her very informative handouts and instruction, we are all much more aware of the hidden dangers inherent in boating as well as more confident and competent on the water.



# Confessions of a Mapaholic Paddler

by Eric Hermann

Silly excuses bind us to our homes and work-places—like making a living, having food, raising family—you know what I mean. Perhaps, then, you share an arm-chair addiction of mine: maps.

I can open a map, enter its terrain and hike or boat for an hour along its many routes. A frequent frustration I face, however, is that stores don't carry the topo map I want.

So it's only natural that I'd make the pilgrimage to Map Nirvana, the USGS map storehouse and sales room in Littleton. Every topo map of the West is there, either in giant sliding racks or in the warehouse, where only the government's own mapaholics may enter. Other shelves offer endless commercial maps for hiking and camping—about every map made. An example is a favorite of mine, the Fruita Map put out by Latitude 40 maps (Check out [www.latitude40maps.com](http://www.latitude40maps.com)). It includes Ruby and Horsethief Canyons, Westwater, and the wilderness canyons south of there, like Mee and Knowles.

The personnel are, again, mapaholics, and they enjoy talking about routes and niches within maps, and are very helpful.

Finding directions to the Map Center is far easier than allowing yourself time to browse once you're there. I'd suggest at least an hour or two.

To get to the Map Center, drive the interstate to Denver, take I-76 west to I-70, then exit east on 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, then turn south on

Kipling. You're there! Enter the Denver Federal Center Campus and drive toward the southwest corner to Building 810.

Naturally, there are fine map sources nearby, in the usual outdoor outlets. The best maps for river-runners are the actual river guides, and they are available for about any river that people run. This includes Brian Maddox's *River Guide to the Cache la Poudre River*, which details our Poudre from top to bottom, section by section. (I can get these for any of us, I believe, for \$10.50 each.) River guides, and some hikers' maps are usually water-resistant, and can be even more so if kept in zip-locks (Duct-tape a string to the bag, and tie/clip it to your boat.) Or, buy a map case for more security and better looks. For the Colorado River's Loma Run, I took a county topo map, color-copied only the piece I needed, laminated it, and duct-taped it to a string. I make notes in permanent marker.

For good navigation I often tie a \$10 compass to my canoe thwart. Since rivers are so sinuous, especially in the West, a check of the compass and map can tell me quite accurately where I am: A stretch of the Dolores heads northwest then curves to the north, for example, before aiming west again. That's where the compass says I am.

At any rate, this winter seek out your favorite maps, maybe at the USGS sales office. Some blizzardy day, curl up with one and paddle through it with your imagination; make some plans—maybe real ones. Find out if permits required. If they are, plan a permit party and start packing!

## Flotilla-Club Officers

<b>President</b>	Debbie Hinde	970-669-6247
<b>Vice President</b>	Your name here	
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mary Peck	970-484-6309
<b>Membership</b>	Debbie Artzer	970-231-0302
<b>Trip Coordinator</b>	Roger Faaborg	970-669-4182
<b>Marketing</b>	Debbie Artzer	970-231-0302
<b>Newsletter</b>	Eric Hermann	970-482-8339
<b>Conservation</b>	Steve Luttmann	970-498-9181
<b>Instruction</b>	Eric Hermann	970-482-8339
<b>Webmaster</b>	Will Golson	970-207-0101

**Website:** [www.poudrepaddlers.org](http://www.poudrepaddlers.org). Check out the Photo Gallery.

**Wanted:** Officer volunteers, especially for president and vice president.

Poudre Paddlers Club  
P.O. Box 1565  
Ft. Collins, CO 80522

Thanks to those who contributed material for this newsletter. I appreciate your time and thoughts! How 'bout some stuff for the next one, and maybe yet some more writers? It's a great way to participate and contribute to the club! Someone wanna edit the next one? Free help!

For Sale

FOR SALE: tandem (2 cockpits)kayak w/rudder - Carolina II - 17.5 ft. long , 29" wide - 85 lbs. - max. load=450 lbs. - blue - 2 holds - \$900 (new: \$1800)  
Nan Reed: [nreed@softhome.net](mailto:nreed@softhome.net) phone: 221-5068

From Karla Porter: Wilderness Systems Pungo 120 for sale. 3 years old in good condition. \$500 OBO. Check specs at [www.wildernesssystems.com](http://www.wildernesssystems.com). 970-226-3923 or 970-980-3087. [eightponies@msn.com](mailto:eightponies@msn.com)