**PRE-TRIP CHECKLIST**

**INTRODUCTIONS**

* Organizer, Co-organizer, CPR/First Aid persons
* Participants

**LIABILITY**

* **You have all signed the Liability Waiver releasing OOPS and its agents in exchange for the “opportunity to participate”.**

**ITINERARY**

* Put in / take out
* Intended route
* Bail out options

**RISK ASSESSMENT**

* **What worst-case scenario most concerns each of you personally?**
* Assess local hazards:
	+ Boat traffic, strainers, surf, or rapids
* Assess observed conditions:
	+ Compare observed to expected using OOPS Trip Rating System
* Assess paddlers:
	+ Relevant medical issues; allergies; athleticism
	+ Wet exit experience? Roll? **Adequacy of immersion wear and equipment**?

**SAFETY DISCUSSION**

* **Are each of you comfortable that we can manage these risks as a group?**
* In case of a capsize…
	+ Nearest paddler is responsible
	+ Next nearest assists
	+ Remainder of the group immediately rafts up
* Be willing to accept being towed if it is beneficial to group progress or safety

**GROUP COMMUNICATION**

* Whistle
	+ 1 blast: ATTENTION
	+ More than 1 blast: HELP!!!
* Paddle signals
	+ Vertical static: COME TO ME, RAFT UP
	+ 45° angle: PREFERRED ROUTE - GO THAT WAY
	+ Horizontal: STOP, HOLD YOUR POSITION
	+ Waving arms/paddle: HELP!!!
* Hand signals
	+ Pat on top of head (question): ARE YOU OKAY?
	+ Pat on top of head (response): I’M OKAY
	+ Point with finger: LOOK AT THAT

**EQUIPMENT CHECK**

* Who has first aid or repair kits?
* Is everyone wearing proper immersion wear?
* Check relief zippers/hatch covers/life jackets/invasive species permits/skirt grab loops
* VHF “radio check” (if applicable)

**GROUP EXPECTATIONS**

* **Stay together – What does that mean for today? (distance, earshot?)**
* **Speak up if you have any safety or comfort concerns.**

***Have fun!!***

### OOPS Trip Rating System - Any two conditions exceeding a level’s listing bumps the rating up to the next level. Night or limited visibility (fog) bumps the rating up one level.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Condition** | **Level 1** | **Level 2** | **Level 3** | **Level 4** | **Level 5** |
| **Wind** | Less than 7 knots. (8mph) | Up to 12 knots (14 mph) | Up to 16 knots (19 mph) | Up to 21 knots(25 mph) | Any two of the level 4 conditions exceeded. Any three or more level 4 conditions present |
| **Waves, Swell, Breaking Waves, Surf** | Under 1' waves, no breaking waves | Waves up to 2', no surf | Waves to 3', breaking waves to 2' | Waves up 6', surf up to 4' |
| **Sea State as seen from boat** | Waves up to the deck seam; water glassy to rippled, no whitecaps | Waves up to armpit; light to moderate chop, scattered whitecaps | Waves to paddle tops; numerous whitecaps, waves becoming longer | Many whitecaps, some spray |
| **Total Distance**  | Up to 6 miles | 6 to 11 miles | 11 to 15 miles |  15 to 22 miles |
| **Landing Type** | Frequent easy landing opportunities including gently sloping, sand, gravel or grass | Frequent landing opportunities including docks or moderate sloping banks, brush or overhanging trees | Bad footing, rocky shores, or surf up to 1.5' | Steep rocky shores if sheltered from the waves, or surf up to 4' |
| **Current** | None or mild (less than 1 knot) | Mild currents (up to 2 knots): current increases / decreases group speed by half | Up to 4 knots: paddlers must sprint to move forward | Up to 6 knots |
| **Open Crossings** | No open Crossings | Short: Less than 1 mile | 1 to 2 miles | Over 2 miles |
|  **Recommended Skills** |
| **Paddling** | Forward, reverse, sweep turns, stern rudder | High and low bracing ability. Comfort with some edging. Efficient forward stroke. | Eddy line crossings. Confident edge control in all maneuvering strokes. Confident bracing ability. | Confident boat control in wind and moving water. Reliable roll. | Reliable rough water roll. |
| **Rescue** | Wet exit ability | Confident wet exits. Assisted rescue ability both as swimmer and rescuer. Paddle float or other self-rescue. | Confident assisted rescues. Self-rescue ability. | Recently rehearsed assisted rescues in Level 3 or Level 4 conditions. | Confident rough water assisted rescue ability. |
| **Group Dynamics** | Group positioning awareness | Group positioning and dynamics awareness. | Group management ability. | Confident group management experience. | Confident group management experience |
| **Navigation** |  |  | Basic navigation skills. | Accurate course plotting and chart positioning skills. | Night and limited visibility navigation |

**Note:**  Please refer to the OOPS website for definitions and additional details on the rating system.

**Risk Management Triangle (green, yellow, red) –** [**www.nols.edu**](http://www.nols.edu) **– what is the worst that could happen?**

**People**: Gear, skills, health, attitude, communication, pressures and goals

**Water**: Swell, period & size, river levels, water temp, current, tide

**Atmosphere**: Wind, temperature, precipitation

**Context**: Shore, sand, rock, boat-traffic, bailout options, accessibility to emergency services

**CLAP**: Communication, Line-of-Sight, Avoid Problems/Awareness, Position of Maximum Usefulness

**OOPS Policy reminders:**

* Assign additional Co-Organizer(s) or Assistant Organizer(s) per the Activity Policy if needed. 1&2: 6; 3:5; 4&5: 3
* Pods of 14 paddlers (2 organizers plus 12 other paddlers levels 1 & 2) max
* One 1st aid kit per pod
* No alcohol before or during OOPS activities
* No cotton clothing except for a hat
* Clean up your trash and pack it out