

Northeast Georgia Council Weekend Whitewater Kayak Program

Information for Scouts and Parents

The purpose of the program is to give scouts the training needed for safe kayaking on a beginner-level whitewater river (Class II on the International Scale of River Difficulty). It is open to participants of all ages, subject to the approval of the program instructors. To follow the guidelines of the Boy Scouts of America and the American Canoe Association, we provide at least two instructors, one or more for every four learners. At least one instructor will be certified as a whitewater kayak instructor by the American Canoe Association. Participants will need to bring some personal items (see enclosed list). Also, all participants need to have passed the scout swim test before the weekend.

Schedule:

The program will take one evening on land, a day on the lake, and another day on the river. All sessions are mandatory. During the land session, we will cover essentials, such as safety, how to "read" a river to find good routes, how to rescue yourself if you capsize, and how to let others rescue you. During the lake session, you will learn how to make a kayak behave. This includes basic paddle strokes, how to maintain balance, how to get out if the boat capsizes, and some additional skills. On the river, you will put those skills into practice in a more exciting setting. The river location will depend on skill levels, water levels and other conditions.

Risks:

This program is different from the typical scouting program. Whitewater kayaking puts people in close contact with a powerful natural force, namely a river. For that reason, we want to make sure everyone realizes that it carries a risk of serious injury or even death. Please read the waiver carefully before you sign it. We wrote it in plain English so you would make an informed decision whether to participate.

Our expectations:

- (1) We expect that you will come. We don't want an instructor to give up a weekend unnecessarily.
- (2) We expect that one or more adult leaders will learn along with the scouts, or at least be around to help.
- (3) We expect that you will attend all sessions on time and bring the required materials (see list).
- (4) We expect that you will exercise personal responsibility by accepting responsibility for the Council's equipment, and by exercising good judgment on the water.
- (5) We expect that you will obey the Scout Oath and Law, and we will run this program accordingly. We will not let anyone go on the river trip, nor kayak any rapid, unless we believe that he or she has the right attitude as well as the right skills. You will be free to choose not to go on the river or on any rapid, and we insist that you respect that choice if anyone else should make it.
- (6) We expect that you will have fun—and we will work hard to make that happen.