



***Raft Guide
Reference Book***

Table of Contents

I.) Trip Procedure

II.) Helpful Information

III.) Knots, Hitches, & Ropework

IV.) River Maps

V.) River Signals

VI.) Incidents & Liability

Trip Procedure

Rigging Your Trip

Check-In

Guides are to check in after 8 p.m. the night prior to trip. Please don't call earlier than 8 p.m. as office will be coordinating booked trips with Sarah & Tessa until this time. Check in # is 970-923-8906. Listen for your Name, Trip, & Lot Time. Leave your name and lot time.

Punctuality

Most morning trips have a Lot time of 7:00 a.m. Most afternoon trips have a Lot time of 12:00 noon. These times are always subject to change. Please show up at least 10 minutes early. Trip Leaders at least 15 minutes early. Be mindful of our neighbors in the mornings. No noise until after 7:00 am and absolutely no moving vehicles until after 7:00 am.

Proper Attire/Gear

Necessary – Clean & wrinkle-free guide shirt, clean & wrinkle free shorts or pants, clean swimsuit, PFD, helmet, whistle, river knife, flip line, dry bag, and river-appropriate footwear. If you wear a hat, it must be a Blazing Adventures hat.

Optional - Fleece for cold mornings, carabiners, pulleys, and prusiks for rope rescue, water bottle, sunscreen, sunglasses, and personal splash gear/dry gear.

Passenger List & Notes

Be sure to read over Passenger List and Notes to be sure that nothing is missed. It is good practice to ask your Trip Leader (TL) where you can be of assistance. In the Passenger List, you'll find pick-up location, pick-up time, waiver status, and # of guests (adults & children). In the notes, you'll see any special needs such as disabilities, young or old guests, and dietary restrictions to name a few. Address anything out of the ordinary with your TL.

Trip Leader Meeting

Check the Trip Leader Sheet first thing in the morning to double-check which trip you are guiding, and which guide is the Trip Leader. The TL will have a brief meeting with all guides scheduled for their trip. TLs will delegate rigging responsibilities and expectations to all guides involved with trip. Keep in mind that on large trips (over 5 boats) there will be multiple TLs. Your TL is your direct manager for the day. Please be respectful.

Pre-Trip Checklist

Once you have completed your rigging responsibilities, check in with your TL and go through the posted Pre-Trip Checklist. When you are finished, inform your TL.

Guide Ride

Guide Rides will be utilized to expedite our larger trips. A guide ride will usually be a van or small bus with multiple guides heading down to the put-in to rig the boats prior to guests arriving. A guide ride may also be sent to the put-in to organize guest gear. Check with TL to confirm which guides are assigned to the guide ride. Guide Rides are designed to make life

easier for your fellow guides and to ensure a smooth trip for our guests. Be ready to work hard at the put-in.

Guest Pick-Up

Punctuality

Be at least 10 minutes early for guest pick-up. Most pick-ups are at the Aspen office, Snowmass office, Intercept Lot, or at the guest's hotel. However, we will cater to guest requests and do pick-ups almost anywhere. Be sure that you are presentable in your guide attire and that you have finished eating your breakfast. Please be early.

Greet Concierge

If you are doing a pick-up at a hotel, try to go out of your way to introduce yourself to the hotel concierge. Let them know that we appreciate their business. Feel free to visit and get some feedback as to guest experience thus far in the season. Never speak negatively of anyone or anything with concierge staff. Hotel concierge staff sends us a lot of business and we strive to be their favorite outfitter. Always be professional.

Greet Guests

As guests check in to either office or as they make their way to the lobby of their hotel, be sure to greet the guests in a professional manner. Be proactive. Sometimes guests may be sitting around the lobby, and you'll have to ask them if they are going on a rafting trip with Blazing Adventures.

Guest Verification

There are multiple companies and multiple trips that go out each day. Verify that you have the correct guests, correct # of guests, and correct trip for guests. If anything has changed or is not correct, call Operations Manager or Office Manager and inform them of what is going on.

Organize Guests

Often there are multiple parties that are going out on your trip. It's important to keep guests organized to prevent them from mixing in with another trip or another company. This often takes the coordination of multiple guides. Be prepared to work as a team.

Escort Guests to Bus/Van

Once our guests have checked in, paid, and have been verified, you can escort your guests to their bus/van. You will find that organization is of the utmost importance throughout your entire trip, and it starts here. Don't be afraid to be vocal, but please do so in a professional manner. Whenever you leave Aspen, Snowmass, or any other pick-up location with guests, be sure to call Ops Manager on her cell and let her know the final head count and destination. e.g. "We are leaving the intercept lot with a total of 28 guests heading for Shoshone".

Transporting Guests to River

Welcome Entire Group

This is the time to start earning your tips and making it a wonderful guest experience. Once guests have been seated on the bus and you begin driving to the put-in, have one guide welcome the guests to their Blazing Adventures rafting trip. It's important to include our name (Blazing Adventures), as well as the name of the river and section that you will be rafting, along with any other pertinent information.

Introductions

The same guide that welcomed the group will continue to make introductions and explain our waiver policy. First introduce yourself as one of the guides. Follow that up with an introduction of the other guides that are on the trip, along with the name of the shuttle driver.

Waivers

After introducing the guides and driver, let the guests know that you will be passing around a liability waiver that everyone needs to sign. We send out e-waivers prior to trip, so many guests may have already filled out the form. Your passenger list will indicate which guests still need to fill out waiver. Be certain to get waivers for all guests on trip. It's always better to double-down on waivers. If a guest thinks they signed, but passenger list indicates that they did not, just have them fill out hard copy. Inform guests that anyone under 18 years old must have a parent or guardian signature accompanying the minor's name. All guests 18 and over must sign for themselves. Adults are not allowed to sign for other adults. Let guests know that you need ALL the information including printed name, signed name, address, phone number, birthday, and today's date. Take the waiver/liability form process seriously and let the guests know that they should take the time to read it in its entirety. Give guests as much time as they need to read waivers. If asked, inform guests that information will not be shared with any third parties. Be sure that you count and review signed waivers on the drive to the put-in. Often, you'll need to do some investigating to obtain all signatures and pertinent information. Be patient. Be thorough. These must be complete.

Assign Guests to Guides (Trip Leader)

Usually, the trip leader will do this. If not, the trip leader will appoint a senior guide to make assignments. Remain flexible as your trip leader will be trying to assign guests to an appropriate guide. The TL may not always appease all parties involved, but will do his or her best. If there are any concerns with assignments, address them with your TL. Do not be shy.

Guest Interaction

Guest interaction on the bus may be just as important to the entire experience, and just as much of a "tip maker" as guest interaction on the boat. This is also a chance for you to start up a conversation with a particular party that you may want in your boat. Often if the TL

sees chemistry among guides and guests on the drive to the put-in, he or she will assign boats accordingly. Try to adapt your rapport to the party involved. Remember that you'll be guiding boats that may be a child's birthday party one day and a bachelor party the next day. Know your audience.

What to Expect/What to Wear

Ideally, a guide other than the one that did the welcome talk will do the "What to Expect/What to Wear" talk. When you find yourself about 10 minutes from where you will get your guests river ready, stand up and gain the attention of all guests. Be vocal. Let the guests know that you are 10 minutes away from where you will get them river ready. River Ready means that they have the appropriate PFD, sized helmet, and appropriate footwear. All guests will be fitted to one of our Type V Personal Floatation Devices. Guests cannot wear their own life jacket (rarely requested). Guests are required to have footwear that has a strap or laces. No flip-flops or crocs. We provide neoprene booties if needed. Neoprene wetsuits are also available, along with splash jackets, for colder water or cooler weather. It is a good idea to apply sunscreen, especially to your face and other exposed areas. Let them know that they should leave their personal items on the bus. Upon arrival to location in which you will gear up guests, point out restrooms and inform them that this will be their last chance for quite some time to use the facilities. Give them a rendezvous point for their gear. Sometimes there are multiple companies gearing up guests and you don't want to lose a guest to another company. Again, good communication is of the utmost importance.

Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC):

Rafting is available to all individuals who acknowledge the ability to perform the following essential eligibility criteria. Consider this when doing safety talk with guests and speaking to guests pre-trip.

1. Breathe independently (i.e., not require medical devices to sustain breathing)
2. Independently maintain sealed airway passages while under water
3. Independently hold head upright without neck/head support
4. Manage personal care independently or with assistance of a companion
5. Manage personal mobility independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance
6. Follow instructions and effectively communicate independently or with assistance of a companion
7. Independently turn from face-down to face-up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted life jacket *
8. Get in/out or on/off a paddle craft independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*
9. Independently get out and from under a capsized paddle craft*
10. Re-enter or remount the paddle craft following deep water capsize independently or with a reasonable amount of assistance*

11. Maintain a safe body position while attempting skills, activities, and rescues and have ability to recognize and identify to others when such efforts would be unsafe given your personal situation*

*To participate in adaptive programs, participants must acknowledge only the first six EEC listed above. Entry-level adaptive programs will involve variations to EEC #s 7-11.

Gearing Up Guests

Organize Guests

Be sure that you help wandering guests to find the gear and/or restrooms. Most guests are nervous and/or organizing families at this point and not focused on the task at hand. Be patient and be polite.

Proper Order for Gear

Gear should look like a buffet line. At least one guide should be handing out gear at each gear station. Guests should first have the option of receiving a sized wet suit. Explain that wet suits are inside out and that the guest will want the knee pads and colored chest to face forward (if it's a smaller trip do this for them). Next, guests will move to booties, followed by splash tops, then helmets, and ending with PFDs. All guests must have their PFD fitted by a guide. PFDs must be snug enough to pull the guest back into a boat from the river. Assure them that a tight fit will expand when wet and will feel much more comfortable when on the river.

Sizing Gear

Take the time to give our guests the right size for the gear that they desire. Kids won't have fun in an XL splash jacket, just as a large man may be embarrassed while trying on a size M wetsuit. Explain that booties are better a little roomy than too tight.

Appropriate Gear

Be sure that the guests are dressed accordingly in cold water on a cold day. Sometimes you'll have to do some convincing to get someone to wear a wetsuit. Convince them. It's always easier to cool off than it is to warm up. They will thank you later.

Safety Speech

Safety Speech Checklist

Prior to starting the safety speech, find an adult guest that is willing to go through your Safety Speech checklist and sign off on it. This guest will check off all safety points, sign their name, and date. The TL must check that this has been filled out completely.

Gain Guest's Attention

It is important to have the attention of all guests for the safety speech. You are about to cover vital information that can help both you and the guest should there be an incident on the river. Be vocal as many of our buses carry 25 guests on any particular trip. Maintain attention throughout speech. If you need to politely ask for someone's attention, that is acceptable. Be polite.

Reason for Safety Speech

The safety speech is not meant to scare our guests. However, it is meant to make our guests aware of the inherent risks and dangers of rafting and what to do should an incident occur.

Two types of Swimming

In the safety talk, you will cover voluntary swimming and involuntary swimming. Voluntary swimming can be very dangerous so please let your guests know that they should not go swimming at any time without permission from their guide.

Whitewater Swimming Position

The whitewater swimming position is on your back, feet downstream and arms out to the side. Feet downstream so that you can see what is coming your way and so that you can take on rocks with the bottom of your feet as opposed to any other part of your body.

Aggressive Swimming

Aggressive swimming is how you save yourself. The whitewater swimming position is used to get your bearings. Once you know your surroundings and your direction of travel, it's time to aggressively swim back to your boat, to another boat, or to shore.

How to Rescue a Swimmer

The guide will be concentrating on maneuvering the boat, so each guest should know the proper rescue technique. Explain that it is important to stay in the boat. Parents are much more valuable to their children as paddlers than they are as another swimmer in the river. It should take only one adult to rescue a swimmer. The rest of the guests need to continue paddling and listening to their guide to avoid more swimmers.

Throw Bag

If paddling to the swimmer isn't effective, you may need to use your throw bag. Throw bags are mostly used from shore, but can be used from a raft as well. You need to use your whistle so that the swimmer can hear you. Once you have the attention of the swimmer, you will throw the bag to them and they will swim to the rope. The swimmer must hold on to the rope and not the bag. The swimmer will then lay on their back and allow you to pull them in. Again, throw bags are rarely used from a boat. Throw bags are most effective when used from shore.

High Side

A high side usually happens when you hit a rock with the side of your boat. The current will continue to push on the upstream side of your boat as the downstream side of your boat starts to climb up the rock. You must move people now! If nobody moves it is likely that you wrap or flip. Yell "High Side!" and get everyone to the high side of the boat. You may need to do some maneuvering, but often this is enough to move you off the rock.

Wrap

A wrap occurs when you hit a rock or an obstacle that is big enough to stop your boat. The current then pins your boat to the obstacle and you are stuck. Wraps can be a quick fix or can take days. Be ready to move your guests around in the boat to distribute weight. Advanced methods for getting a boat un-wrapped include setting up a z-drag or mechanical advantage system with ropes.

Boat Flip

In the case of a flip, the guide will stick with the boat unless there are life threatening circumstances that are in plain view. Guests, along with guide are in self-rescue mode. Guests are to swim to shore or to another boat and stay put. The guide is to stay with boat and flip boat upright. The guide will then get to shore and manage the incident. Remain calm and effective. All guests must be accounted for and medically assessed. Other guides will help you out. Be ready to fill out incident report.

Strainers

If you or a guest is swimming towards a strainer, you must ditch the whitewater swim position and aggressively swim away from it. A strainer is anything in the river that is allowing water to pass, but will not allow a body to pass. Examples are down trees and logs.

Foot Entrapment

Never stand up in the river and you will avoid foot entrapment. Foot entrapment happens when you try to stand up and your foot gets trapped between rocks or some other object on the river bottom and you are unable to remove it. The current pushes against you and eventually submerges you.

Medical Concerns

Have guests discretely inform their guides of any medical conditions that they may have prior to getting into their boats. Common conditions include allergies, asthma, muscle and

joint injuries, and diabetes. Always ask if they have medications to bring along as you can store medications in your dry bag. Ask what kind of symptoms they experience and what they have done in the past when symptoms arise. Know that we have medical supplies in our sweep kit, know what supplies we have, and know how to use them. Guides have the authority to discretely disqualify a guest from a rafting trip due to physical/medical concerns. Blazing Adventures will always support safety-oriented decision making.

Example Safety Speech

“May I have your attention, please. It’s important that I have everyone’s attention for the next 5 minutes because we’re about to go over the risks and dangers of rafting. What if something happens on the river today? What will I do? This isn’t meant to scare anybody. This is meant to make you all aware of what can happen on the river and how to respond should something happen.

First of all, when it comes to whitewater rafting there are two types of swimming. The first type is Voluntary swimming. This is when you ask your guide if there are any swimming holes that you can jump into and cool off. There are plenty of areas to go swimming in the river. However, some are safer than others, so please ask your guide before you jump in. Always enter feet first if you are going for a voluntary swim as there are plenty of rocks in the river and they are always moving to new locations. The second type of swimming, the type that you are probably a little more concerned with, is Involuntary swimming. This is when you find yourself in the river and you hadn’t necessarily planned on it. When it comes to an involuntary swim, do not panic. It’s important that you remain calm whether you are in the river or in the boat. Moms and dads, if your child goes for a swim, do not jump in after them. You are much more effective paddling to your child than you are in the river with them. Keep in mind that if you go for an involuntary swim, the water is going to be plenty cold. Be prepared. Just know that you could float for a very long stretch of this river with the gear provided to you before hypothermia would set in. Again, do not panic.

If you do happen to fall out of the boat, assume the whitewater swim position. The whitewater swim position is a lot like sitting in a lazy boy recliner. Feet out in front and arms out to the side while facing downstream. Feet are out in front to take on any obstacles that may be in your way. We want the bottom of your feet to hit rocks and not your butt, back, neck, or head. Once you’ve taken in your surroundings and see where you are moving, it’s time to aggressively swim to your boat, to another boat, or to shore.

Now let’s go over how to rescue a swimmer. Know that the guide won’t necessarily be the person that is rescuing a swimmer. Your guide will be working hard to avoid other obstacles and/or positioning the boat to retrieve the swimmer. Each person here should know how to rescue a swimmer. One person, and one person only, will rescue the swimmer. Everyone else will be listening to paddle commands from their guide to position their boat as needed. Usually when someone falls out of the boat they are within arm’s reach. Make sure that the swimmer is facing you, stand against the side of the boat with your knees on the rubber. Lean over and grab the shoulders of the swimmer’s lifejacket with both hands. Give them a dunk and lean them back into the boat. Don’t muscle them in, rather lever them in with your

body weight. If the swimmer is a little further out, extend them the t-grip of your paddle and bring them in to arm's reach.

If a swimmer is completely out of reach, we will bring them back with a throw bag. Your guide will blow a whistle to get the swimmer's attention. Once eye contact is made, your guide will throw the bag your way. The swimmer needs to swim towards the rope and grab onto the rope, not the bag. The bag has 75 feet of rope and it will continue to unravel. Hold onto the rope, lay on your back, and we'll reel you in.

Usually, an involuntary swimmer is the result of someone not paying attention or not listening to the paddle commands of their guide. Sometimes our raft can end up sideways on a rock. This may result in a high side situation. If you hear your guide yell "high side" this means get up to the high side, or the dry side, of the boat. If we fail to do this right away, the upstream side of the boat will fill with water and we will either flip or wrap on the rock.

If we do happen to flip the boat, consider yourself in a self-rescue situation. Please swim into shore or to another boat and then stay put. If you flip the boat and you find yourself underneath the boat, pick one direction and get out from under the boat. If your guide looks at you and taps the top of his or her head, this is a non-verbal "are you ok?". If you are ok, simply tap your head back at them. If you are not ok, and you are in need of immediate assistance, cross your arms in an X in front of your face to let your guide know that you are seriously injured. This will be considered an emergency situation. If there's no emergency, our guide will stick with your boat and flip it upright. He or she will then get to shore and regroup the crew.

There are a couple of things that we will want to avoid whether we are in the river for a voluntary swim or an involuntary swim. The first is a strainer. A strainer is something that is allowing water to pass, but would not allow a swimmer to pass, such as a downed tree. You may hear your guide blowing their whistle and pointing you a certain direction. This is when you get out of the whitewater position and swim aggressively in the direction that your guide is pointing. Your guide will always point positive. We will always point you in the direction that we want you to go. The other thing that we want you to avoid in the river is standing up. Never stand up in the river. What we want to avoid is called foot entrapment. Foot entrapment happens when a swimmer tries to stand up in the river and their foot gets wedged on the river bottom. Even in waist deep water the current is strong enough to push a swimmer's body downstream with their foot stuck behind them. Never stand up and we can avoid foot entrapment altogether. Once you're near shore and can feel the bottom of the river with your hand, it is ok to stand up in the river. Only then.

Last but not least, we need to know if anyone has any medical conditions. Please take your guide aside before we start to trip so that he or she is informed. We want to know conditions such as severe allergies, asthma, diabetes, or heart disease to name a few. Your guide will have a dry bag and they can store your medications for the duration of the trip.

Again, this is not meant to scare anyone, just meant to make you all aware of what can happen on the river and what to do should something happen. Now I'm going to go over the names of the guests and who your guides will be..."

Put-In

Assign Guests to Guides

The guide that does the safety speech will take the passenger list and announce which guests are going with which guides. Be sure to have the attention of everyone. As you announce guest parties, have them raise their hand. Once you see them with hands raised, give them their guide's name and point their guide out. If their guide is a member of the guide-ride crew, describe who to look for at the put-in.

Organize Guests

Once guests know who their guides are, prepare them for exiting the bus. Let them know that they need to have all buckles on their life jackets buckled. Inform them that we will need everybody to chip in getting our gear to the put-in. Use guests to assist with boats, paddles, oars, and other miscellaneous gear. Remember that most guests have never done this before, so keep them clear of the stack and explain every step. Use your best judgement for who should and should not help to carry heavy boats. Safety first.

Paddle Talk

Paddle talks may be done as individual boats or done as a group. If it's the latter, your TL will assign a guide to do the paddle talk (preferably a guide that has not done the welcome chat, what to wear talk, or safety speech). This is an important job. You need to gather all the guests around one boat as the other guides work hard at rigging all of the other boats. You need to be very vocal. There is usually a lot of river noise and other companies at the put-in. Get everyone's attention and keep it. First let them know how to hold the paddle. Let them know the dangers of hitting their neighbor in the face with the t-grip of the paddle. After they know how to hold a paddle, show them how to sit in the raft. Next, teach them paddle commands. Basics are Forward, Back, and Stop. You will also want to explain how a Left Back, Right Forward, will turn the boat to the left and vice versa. Inform the guests that the two people that will be sitting in the front of the boat are going to be the team leaders. They are the two that everyone else will be following as we paddle down the river. These two people need to use their peripheral vision to paddle at the same pace. The rest of the paddlers need to be in sync with the two front paddlers. You may want to make the analogy of having the team paddling together like a little blue Viking ship. Explain the importance of a Lean In command when hitting rocks or other obstacles. You may also want

to demonstrate how to move for a High Side. Answer any questions and then point out the other guides. The other guides should hear you and raise their hand so that guests can make their way to assigned guides. Take your time with the paddle talk as your fellow guides will be hustling to gear up boats.

Rig Boats

While one of the guides is giving the paddle talk, the rest of the guides are busy rigging boats.

- 1.) Each boat should have tubes, floors, and thwarts pumped very tight.
- 2.) Each boat should have a paddle for each seat, along with an extra strapped in next to the guide. Don't forget the guide stick.
- 3.) Each boat must have a throw bag.
- 4.) Each boat must have a secure bow line.
- 5.) Some boats may have an oar frame. Be sure that the frame is secured to the boat along with a breakdown oar. All oar frames must have two oars.
- 6.) The last boat in a pod (5 boats max) will be the sweep boat. This boat must have a sweep kit secured to it somewhere near the guide. This is usually in a senior guide's boat or with a guide that has advanced medical training.

Guide Introductions

First, double check that your boat has been properly rigged as it may not have been you rigging your boat. Once boats are rigged and you have your guests, introduce yourself. Take the time to go around to each person and get their names. Try to remember each person's name the first time you hear it as this enhances the guest experience and has been known to help with tips. While you are getting guest names, double check their PFDs for proper fit, along with the rest of their gear. These guests are your responsibility. Never assume everything has been done perfectly by fellow guides. Things can be missed on busy days. Don't ever blame someone else. Be diligent.

Guest Seating

Once you have introduced yourself to everyone, take a look around and make a smart decision about where people sit. Remember that the two paddlers up front must work together and be your pace setters. These are usually strong paddlers. Anyone with any hesitations should be near the guide. It is a chance for you to show them that you are there to take care of them. How you seat people and rotate them throughout the trip may play a big role in how your boat performs, as well as how you do with tips.

Boat on River

Once you have your guests and boat ready, carry the boat to the river stern first. You want to allow the guests to enter the bow of the boat so that you can see how they are sitting. Be sure to position your guests properly. If there is current at the put-in, have a shuttle driver or another guide hold the bow of your boat as you board. Be ready to move as soon as you start boarding. Have your paddle ready or have your oars in a position in which they are easily accessible. Sometimes guests sit on your oars and you don't want to start moving without the use of your oars. Be ready to hit that first eddy. All trips have an immediate mandatory eddy to hang out in to ensure trip continuity.

Whitewater Rafting

Trip Continuity

Trip continuity is of the utmost importance. Remember you are only as fast as the slowest boat in your pod. So be patient. You always want to be able to see both the boat in front of you and the boat behind you. If you ever lose sight of the boat behind you, it's time to eddy out. Use non-verbal river signals to talk to other guides while on the river. For example, if you see the boat behind you get stuck on a rock, signal to the boat in front of you to eddy out. This signal should then continue to every boat in your pod.

Mandatory Eddies

Think of these as regrouping eddies. Every section has mandatory eddies that all boats are expected to make to ensure trip continuity. Know the mandatory eddies.

Spacing for Rapids

Give the person in front of you enough room for error. You want to be able to see the boat in front of you while giving yourself enough room to either eddy out or take another line should they get stuck or wrap. You don't want to make a situation worse by adding another boat to the mix.

Swimming Guests

Be smart about where you let guests go for a voluntary swim. There are few spots on the Roaring Fork that are deep enough to swim. The Roaring Fork is also a very cold river compared to the Colorado or the Arkansas. Consider who wants to swim and when. A child with little body fat should probably wait until the end of the trip to go swimming to avoid them being miserable.

Swimmer Rescue

If you have an involuntary swimmer, remain calm. Usually, they are right next to your boat and you can coach another paddler to rescue the swimmer. If they are away from your boat, blow your whistle to alarm other boats of your swimmer. Be vocal with your directions as you may need your other paddlers to avoid obstacles that could result in additional swimmers, wraps, or flips.

Boat Wrap

If you wrap your boat, again remain calm. You may have to move your paddlers to different locations in your boat to avoid them swimming or flipping the boat. This is when you may have to get creative. Keep guests informed and happy. An anxious guide results in an anxious guest. Guides may have to set up a 3 to 1 mechanical advantage (Z Drag) from shore. Ask a senior guide to practice this as it is much less complicated if you've set it up many times before being in the actual situation.

Boat Flip

Boats flip. It happens every year. Luckily, we all work together as a team and most of the time your fellow guides will be there to help you manage the situation. Again, remain calm and coach your guests as best you can. Unless there is an emergency situation, stay with the boat and flip it upright. You will want to have a flip line as part of your every-day gear.

River Signals

Rarely are you close enough to another boat to be able to verbalize with fellow guides. Non-verbal river signals are an important communication tool. The most common river signals that we use are the signals for “Are you ok?”, “Eddy out”, and “Keep going”. Often you need to blow your whistle to get the attention of another boat. If you hear 1 whistle blow this means “Attention”, if you hear 2 whistle blows this means “Stop” and if you hear 3 whistle blows followed by a pause and then another 3 whistle blows, this means “Emergency”. “Are you ok?” is signaled by tapping the top of your head. If you get the same signal back this means that the responding party is ok. If you get any other response, this means that there is a possible emergency. “Eddy out” is signaled by raising your paddle vertically over your head and moving it in a circular motion. If you see another boat giving you this sign, that means find an eddy close to them and hang out. “Keep going” is signaled by raising your paddle vertically over your head and not moving the paddle. If you see another boat giving this sign, it means that you don’t need to eddy out and that you can continue downstream.

Take-Out

Spacing

Proper spacing at the take-out is very important as most take-outs don’t have room for more than one or two boats. This is the time of the trip that it’s ok to give the boat in front of you some additional space. Allow enough time for the boat in front of you to get into the take-out, escort guests out of boat, remove paddles, and remove boat. Not all guests move at the same pace and not all guides move at the same pace. It’s better to give too much space than not enough at the take-out.

Informing Guests of Photos

Before you make the take-out, inform the guests that the photos that were taken on the river will be available for purchase, either on our website or at the Oasis. This is important on the Shoshone section because often guests want to buy photos on site. Let your guests know that there is no obligation, but if they intend on buying photos to do so before eating lunch. This way we can avoid having the majority of our guests waiting for the few that went uninformed. Please inform guests that photos are available to view in our Snowmass and Aspen offices, as well as on our website. This information can keep people moving at the take-outs and can bring business into our stores.

Utilizing Guests

Inform your guests of what to expect at the take-out. Guests are to exit front of boat only, to prevent them from entering the river in water that is deeper than expected. All guests are expected to help carry the boat, paddles, oars, and other miscellaneous gear. Use your best judgement to assign responsibilities to guests (limit or eliminate workload for disabled, young, and elderly). Warn guests of loss of sensation in their feet due to cold temperatures and to walk with extra care.

Helping other Boats

Once your boat and gear are on the trailer, lend a hand to the other boats. Always offer relief to any guest that you see carrying a boat when you are available to do so. You should be sweating at every take-out. Make it a fun workout.

Organizing Gear

If there are plenty of guides helping with boats, assist the shuttle driver with the organization of guest gear. Be sure that wet suits are returned inside out (for cleaning), booties are banded together in pairs, splash tops are returned inside out (for cleaning), and lifejackets are neatly piled together. River dunking is great for booties and wetsuits to remove debris before the drive home, however this does not qualify as adequate washing of this gear. You'll still deep clean this gear once you're back at the lot. Try to move quickly while organizing gear as there may be other trips and/or other companies coming into the take-out momentarily. Once gear is organized, load into either guide ride or onto the bus.

Stack Boats

Stack boats with the bigger boats on the bottom. Bundle paddles in the same fashion that you did in the morning with bundles of 9 or 7 depending on boat size. Be sure that the stack has all paddle bundles, all oars, all boats, all bow lines, all throw bags, and sweep kit. Secure stack with two, three, or four ropes (depending on stack size) and secure tailgate. Once stack is complete move trailer to a location that is out of the way of other trips.

Organizing Guests

Often, we see the guests roaming without direction once they have removed their river gear. Point them in the direction of restrooms, photographer, snacks and drinks, or lunch. Keep people moving so that we can stay organized throughout the entire trip. Know that just because you are off the water doesn't mean that you are done working. There is still plenty to do!

Final Sweep

The final sweep is when a guide walks down to the take-out to make sure that nothing has been left behind. Also, be prepared to pick up trash, even if it's not yours. Next, double check the stack (ropes, tailgate, boats, paddles, oars, sweep kit, throw bags). Let your TL know that you are going to do this so that he or she can delegate remaining duties to the other guides.

Lunch

Proper Etiquette

Please mind your manners at lunch. Never get in line for lunch or grab a bagged lunch until every guest from your trip (not just your boat) has had a chance to do so. Let guests know where the lunch, drinks, garbage, and recycle bins are located. Ask if there is anything that you can get for them.

Guest Interaction

This is another golden opportunity to enhance guest experience and earn your tip. Eat with your guests. Perhaps there were a few people in your boat that you didn't get the chance to chat up while you were on the river. This is your chance to do just that.

Clean Up

Pick up trash on the ground and on tables. Ask the guests if you can take empty plates, bottles, and cans. Let the guests know that we recycle. Keep recyclables in their own bag or be prepared to separate in the lot when de-rigging trip.

Organize Guests

As guests start to finish up with lunch, the shuttle driver will position the bus or van in an area that is easily accessible to our guests. Be sure to give your guests a five-minute warning. Let them know that we are going to load the bus soon and that this will be their last chance to use a restroom until we get them back.

Transporting Guests Home

Head Count

Get a head count and ensure that all guests are accounted for before leaving take-out. You don't want to get down the road and realize that you have left guests behind.

Guide Count

Guides can go missing just as easily as guests can. This is the TL's responsibility, but you can help by doing this yourself and reporting to the TL.

Guest Interaction

The drive home is a good time to visit with guests. They're less anxious, their bellies are full, and by now you have established some sort of rapport. This is a good time to find something in common, tell some clean, appropriate jokes, present some riddles, and give them some local's insight on restaurants, bars, and activities. Don't forget to inform them of additional activities offered by Blazing Adventures. You can earn some extra money by doing this. If you book an additional trip, you will receive a 10% commission and could get extra work if requested.

Offer Snacks and Drinks

Offer your guests snacks and drinks on the ride home. Be sure that the guest remains seated and bring the snacks and/or drinks to them. Remember that it may be these little things that earn you a gratuity.

Clean Up

Take the time to walk around with a trash bag and collect trash and recyclables from guests. You may have to do this a few times on the way home depending on the length of the drive.

Post Trip Wrap-Up

If there is a guide that hasn't had the chance to address the group, this is their last chance. Otherwise, your TL will assign someone to do a post trip wrap-up. This should be done when we are about 5 minutes from the first drop-off. Thank your guests for choosing Blazing Adventures. Let them know that we would appreciate their business in the future. Hand out Google Review cards, beer cards, photo info, and discount cards (don't forget to write your name on the back). Let them know that there are plenty of other activities that we offer and to "Like" us on social media. Your ability to talk your guests into writing a review for Blazing Adventures Aspen results in more business and more work for you and your co-workers in the long run. Please encourage Google and Trip Advisor reviews. Blazing Adventures Aspen on Google is preferred review. This is often how our future guests find us.

Return Guests to Destination

When we arrive at our guest's destination, exit the bus. Stand outside of the bus to clear the aisle for guests that are exiting. Be sure to thank them for their business, even if they weren't in your boat. Handshakes, hugs, and high-fives are all encouraged. This is usually where a guest will give you a tip. Thank them for the tip and be professional. Don't look at the tips in front of guests and don't talk about tips with other guides in front of guests. Everyone gets skunked (no tip) from time to time. Although rare, it happens, and is usually due to lack of guest knowledge, so don't get discouraged. Remain professional. Your next tip could be your best yet.

De-Rigging Trip

Clean Outside of Vehicle

Wash every vehicle from every trip with soap and water at the washing station in lot 2. Don't forget the wheels and the windshield. Take the time to do it right.

Clean Inside of Vehicle

Clean the inside of every vehicle from every trip. This involves sweeping, hosing down bus aisles if needed, vacuuming seats and carpet in vans, and using a rag to clean up any spills. Please be thorough.

Post-Trip Checklist

Once you have completed your vehicle cleaning responsibilities, check in with your TL and go through the posted Post-Trip Checklist. When you're finished, inform your TL and double check the time sheet to make sure that you are being paid for the day.

Organize Lot

Take the extra time to look around the lot and pick something up or do some organization. Always leave the lot looking better than you found it in the morning. Do at least one extra thing after every trip. Go the extra mile. Thanks for a great day!

*Helpful
Information*

Phone #s

(Take time to enter these numbers into your cell phone)

Vince Nichols – 970.319.1228

Jen Nichols – 970.319.4374

Evan Cree – 970.618.1280

Sarah Fangman - 970.379.1717

Tessa Dawson – 970.379.1717

Check In - 970.923.8906

Aspen/Snowmass Offices - 970.923.4544 (non-emergency)

Emergency - 911

Aspen Valley Hospital - 970.544.1551

Pitkin County Sheriff - 970.920.5310

Garfield County Sheriff - 970.945.0453

Chaffee County Sheriff - 719.539.2596

Pre-Trip Checklist

Guests

- PFDs & Kid's PFDs
- Booties
- Adult Splash Gear
- Kid's Splash Gear
- Wetsuits
- Helmets

Boats

- Oars, Frames, & Breakdowns
- Paddles & Guide Paddles
- Pump
- Bow Lines
- Throw Bags
- Sweep Kit
- Z-Drag Kit
- Cam Straps

Vehicles

- Vehicle Check & Checklist
- Snacks
- Cooler & Drinks
- Ice

- Trash Bags
- Waivers & Pens
- Safety Speech Checklist
- Fuel Card
- Radio
- Trailer (Lights, Hitch, Connections, Tires, Spare, & Tailgate)
- Your Own Gear

Post-Trip Checklist

Customer Gear

- Hang PFDs on gear bus
- Prepare Wash Station
- Wash Splash Gear & Hang on Gear Bus
- Wash Wetsuits & Hang on Gear Bus
- Wash Booties & Hang on Bootie Rack

Trailer

- Park Trailer
- Return Paddles
- Return Oars, Frames, & Breakdowns
- Return Throw Bags to Gear Bus
- Return Sweep Kits to Gear Bus
- Return Pumps to Gear Bus
- Return extra Bow Lines not used to tie down boats to Gear Bus
- Return Cam Straps to Gear Bus

Vehicle

- Wash (At Wash Station with Soap and Water)
- Clean/Wash Inside & Vacuum or Sweep
- Check for Lost Articles
- Report any Vehicle Maintenance Needs
- Return Snacks & Drinks to Snack Shed and Coolers behind Situation Room
- Return Fuel card to drawer
- Trash & Recycling Bins (Separate Recyclables)
- Return Keys on Key Holders
- Park Vehicle

Trip Leader

- Fill Out Trip Form & staple to Waivers
- File Waivers in appropriate dated folder
- File Safety Trip Checklist
- File Trip Sheet
- Fill Out Timesheet
- Fill Out Trip Sheet (Groups trips)
- File Post-Trip Checklist
- Incident Report (If Applicable)

Training Checklist

- Rigging Trip
- Welcoming Guests
- Guest Interaction
- What to Wear
- Gearing Up Guests
- Safety Speech
- Rigging Boats
- Paddle Talk
- Check Out
 - Shoshone
 - Lower Roaring Fork
 - Roaring Fork Express
 - Upper Roaring Fork
 - Slaughterhouse
 - Brown's Canyon
 - Numbers
 - Pine Creek
 - Duckies
 - Stand Up Paddleboard
- Knots & Hitches
 - Bowline
 - Trucker's Hitch
 - Figure 8
 - Water Knot
- Rescue Swimming
- Throw Bag
- Boat Flipping
- River Signals
- Take-Out Process
- De-Rigging Trip
- Medical/First Aid

Shuttle Driver

Working as a Shuttle Driver ensures you get more hours. To drive a bus, you have to obtain your CDL. See Sarah or Tessa for details. Shuttle driver responsibilities go well beyond driving to and from the river. The shuttle driver keeps things organized at the put-in and at the take-out. The shuttle driver is expected to help with rigging and de-rigging. Do not forget to tip your shuttle driver. 20% is standard, but sometimes shuttle drivers go above and beyond. Please tip out accordingly.

Know how to properly assist a shuttle driver in backing up a trailer. Stand on the driver's side. If you can't see the driver through the driver's side mirror, he or she cannot see you. Be sure that the shuttle driver can see your hand signals. The more you pitch in to help, the less damage we have to our vehicles, trailers, and equipment. Always help out drivers, and be safe while doing so.

Common Courtesies

- Update your schedules for Sarah & Tessa as early as you can.
- Always ask your trip leader what you can do to help.
- Pool tips with other guides if there is a chance that one or more guides may be go without a tip (all children in their boat for instance).
- Pick up trash and recyclables at put-ins, take-outs, lunch areas, and around the lot.
- Pick up Bootie Rubber Bands at put-ins, take-outs, and around the lot.
- Pair mismatched Booties at end of day.
- Organize all gear on the gear bus according to size at end of day.
- Organize shed at end of day.
- Take the extra time to leave the lot looking better at the end of the day than it did when you arrived at the beginning of your trip. This will not go unnoticed! Be a good example to others.
- Pay for your snacks and drinks in the lock box in the snack shed. You don't have to pay full price, but know that snacks and drinks aren't free. Use your best judgement.
- Stay positive, take pride in how you do your job, and have fun!

***Knots,
Hitches
&
Rope Work***

Common Knots & Hitches

WATER KNOT

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BOWLINE

www.netknots.com

© Copyright 2012 John E. Sherry www.netknots.com

FIGURE EIGHT

www.netknots.com

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This knot can also be tied by tying a Figure Eight Knot with doubled line at the end of a rope (Fig. 1. with doubled line and don't come back through bottom loop.) It is faster but cannot be used if tying onto a fixed object. A single Figure Eight also makes a good "Stopper Knot" at the end of a rope.

TRUCKER'S HITCH

TIED OFF AT END

www.netknots.com

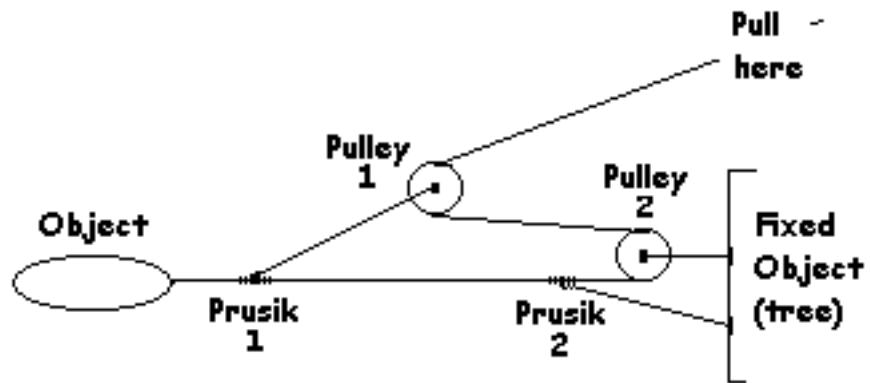
Tie a slippery half-hitch in middle of rope.

Pull very tight

Make a turn around a bar, cleat, etc.

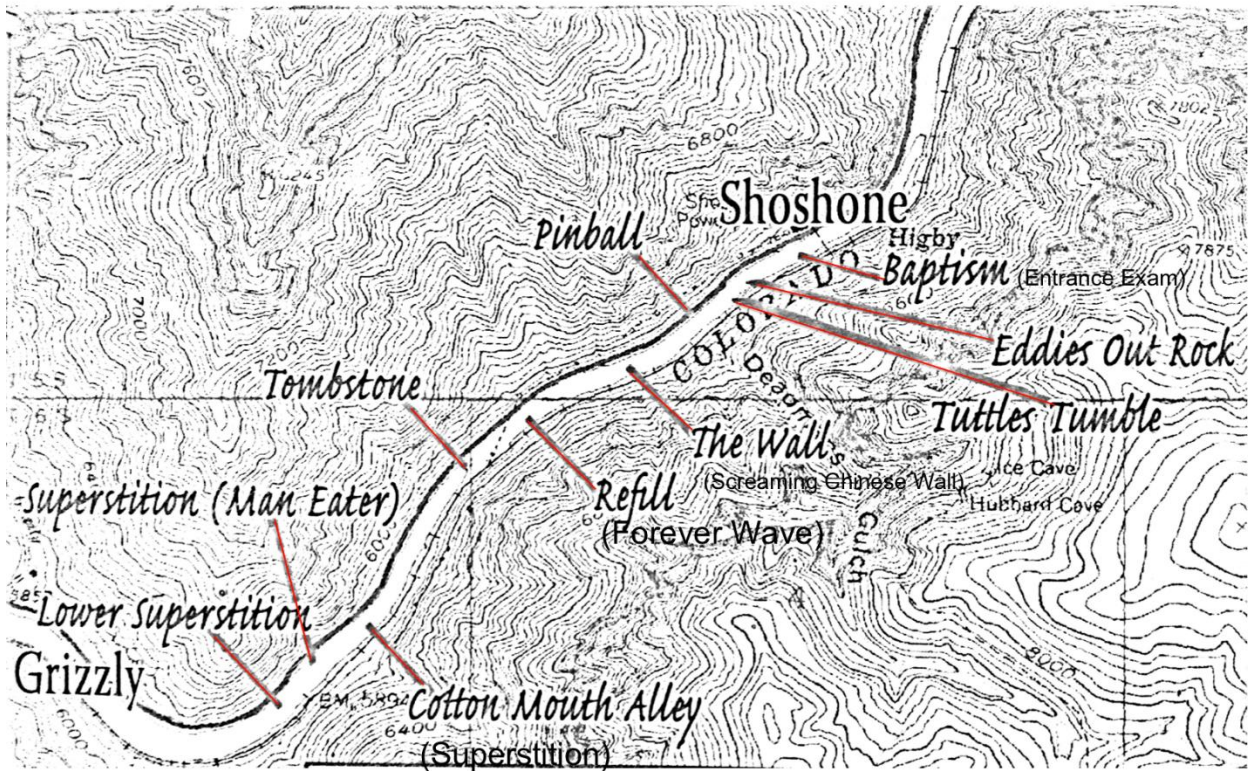
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Z-Drag or Pig Rig (3 to 1 Mechanical Advantage)



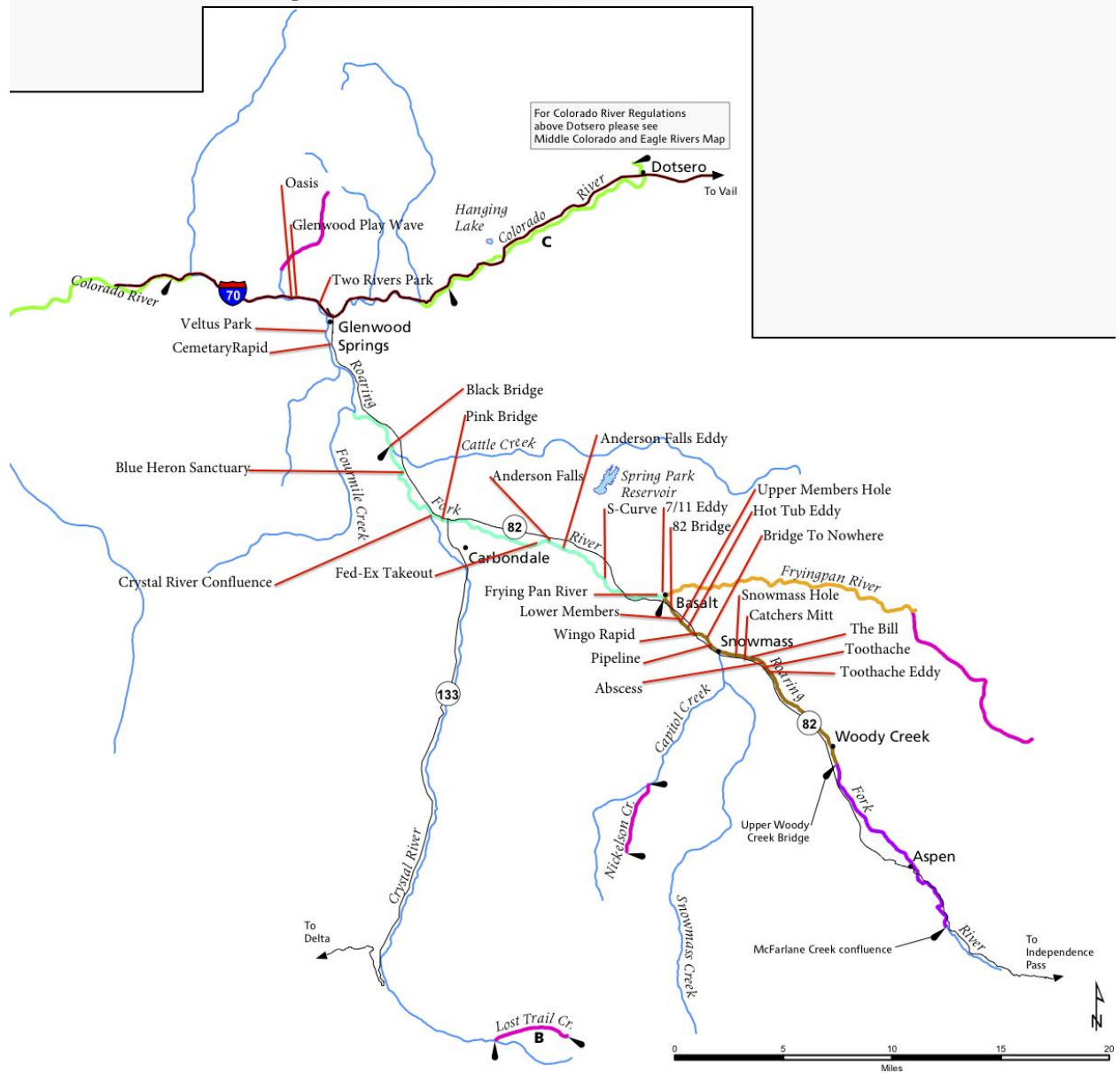
River
Maps

SHOSHONE

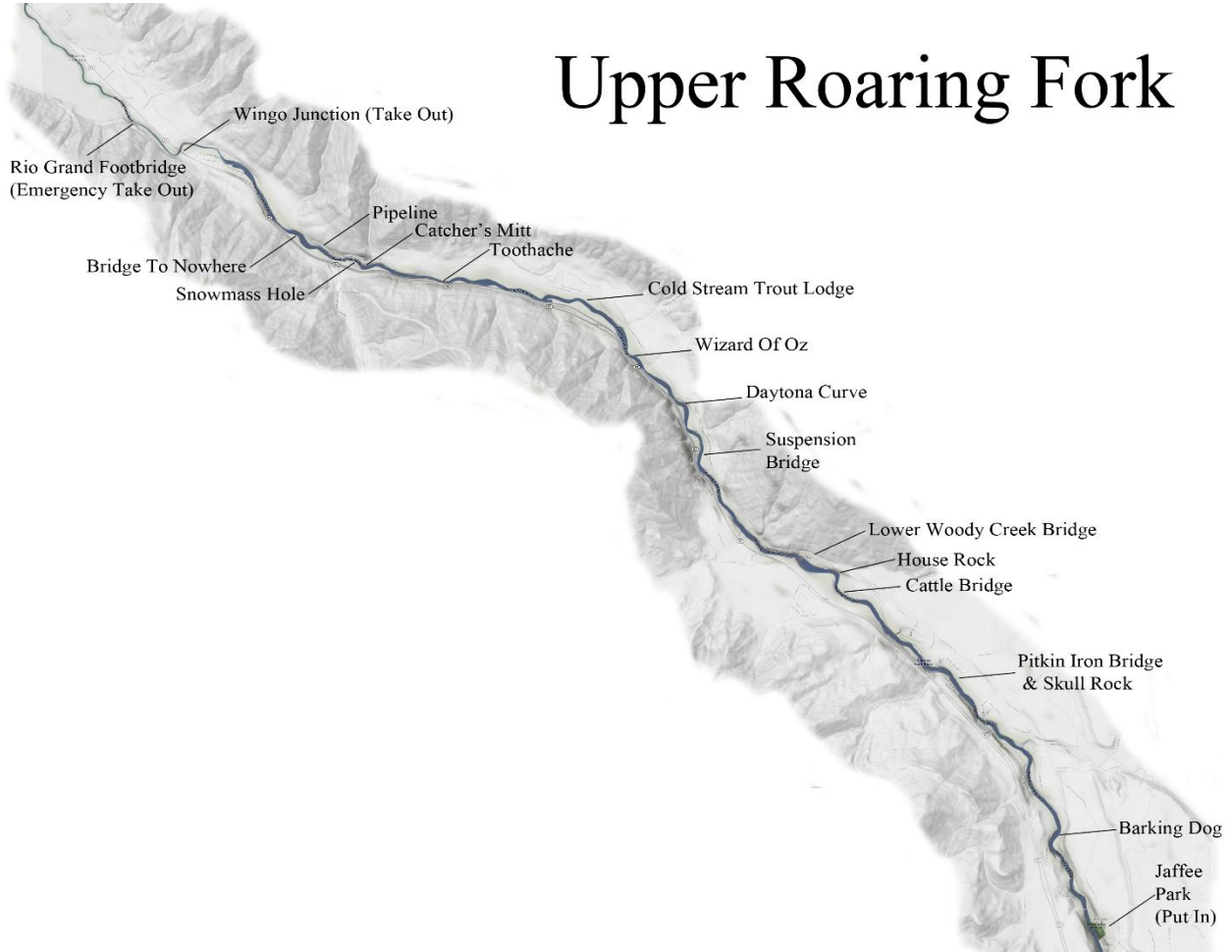


EXPRESS & LOWER ROARING FORK

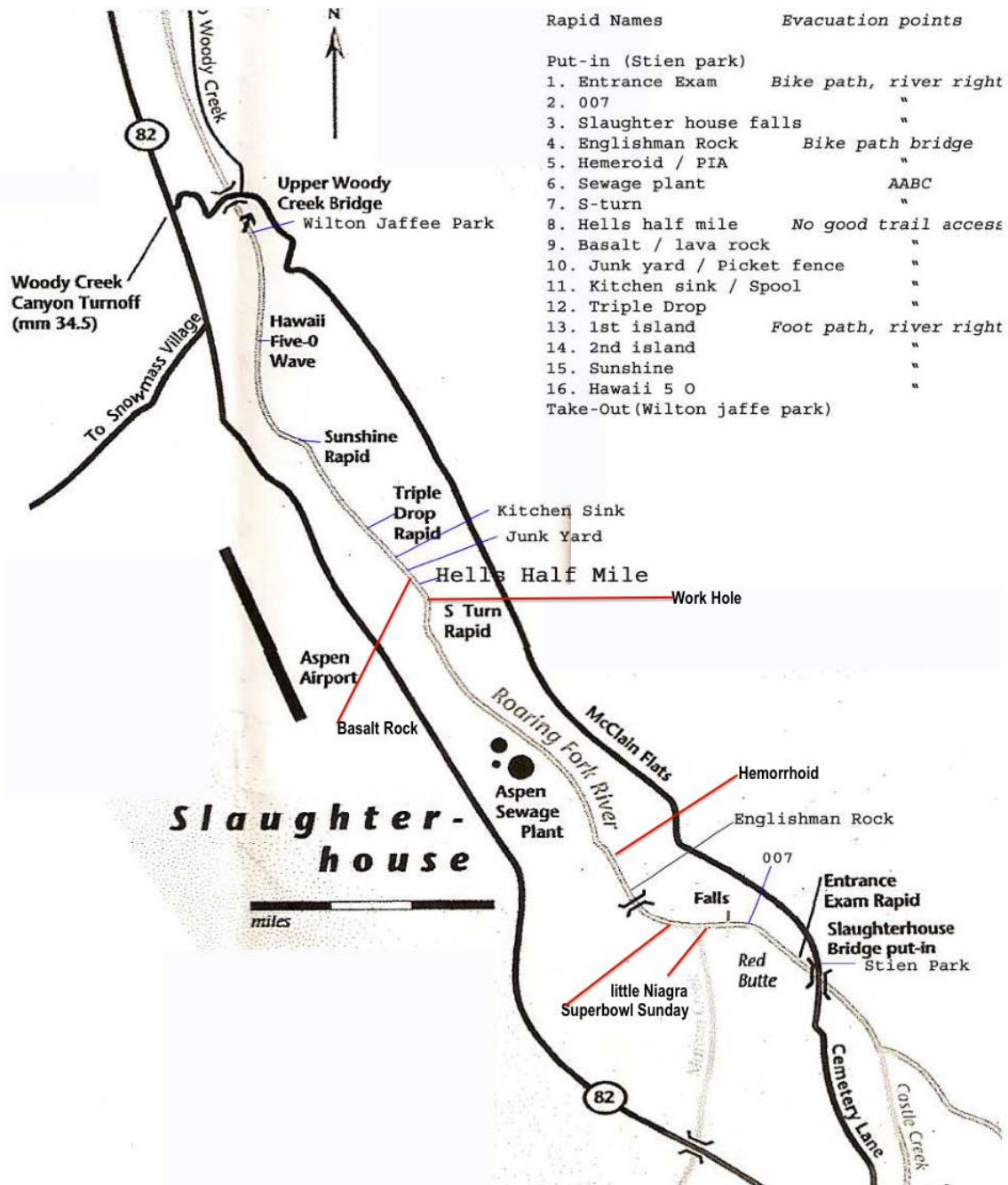
Express and Lower Fork Sections



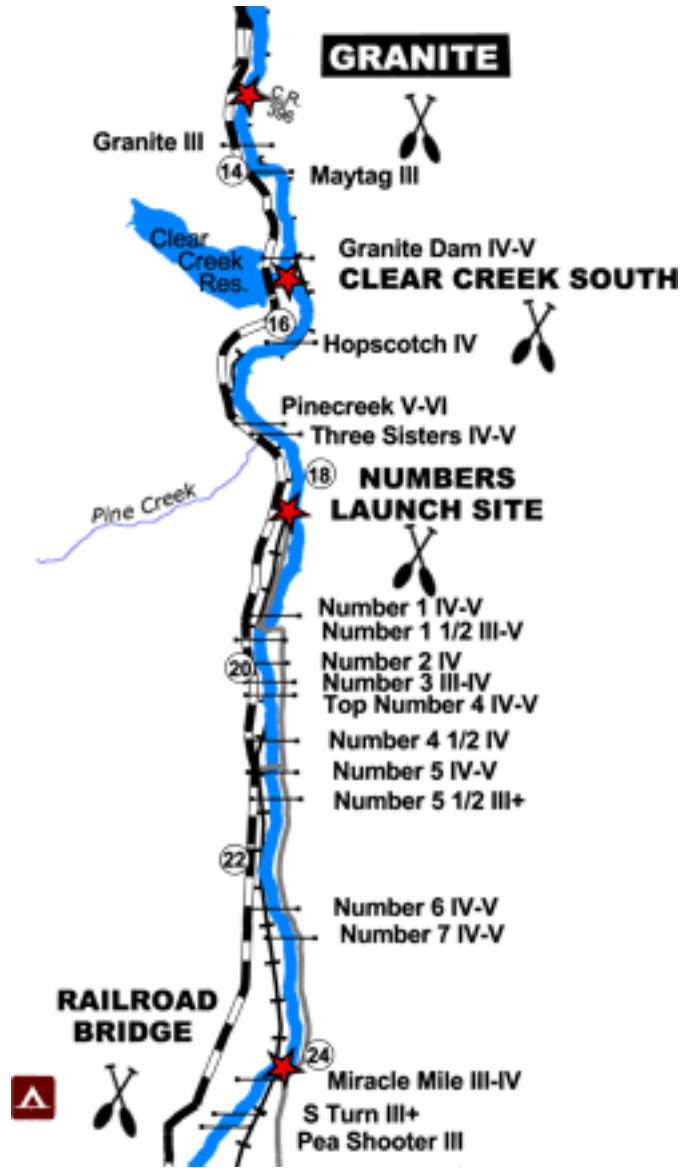
UPPER ROARING FORK



SLAUGHTERHOUSE



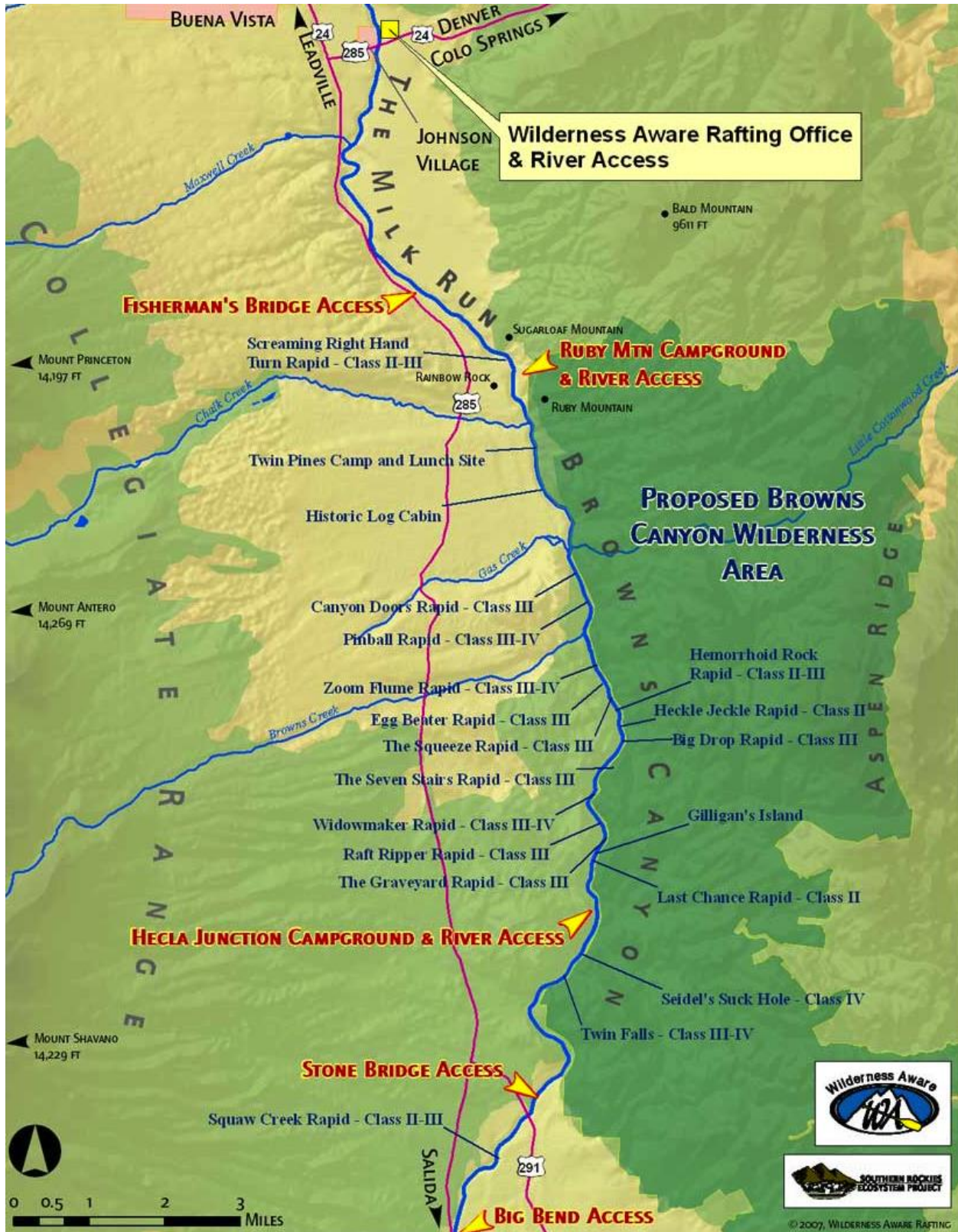
PINE CREEK & NUMBERS



NUMBERS



BROWNS CANYON



River
Signals

Universal River Signals

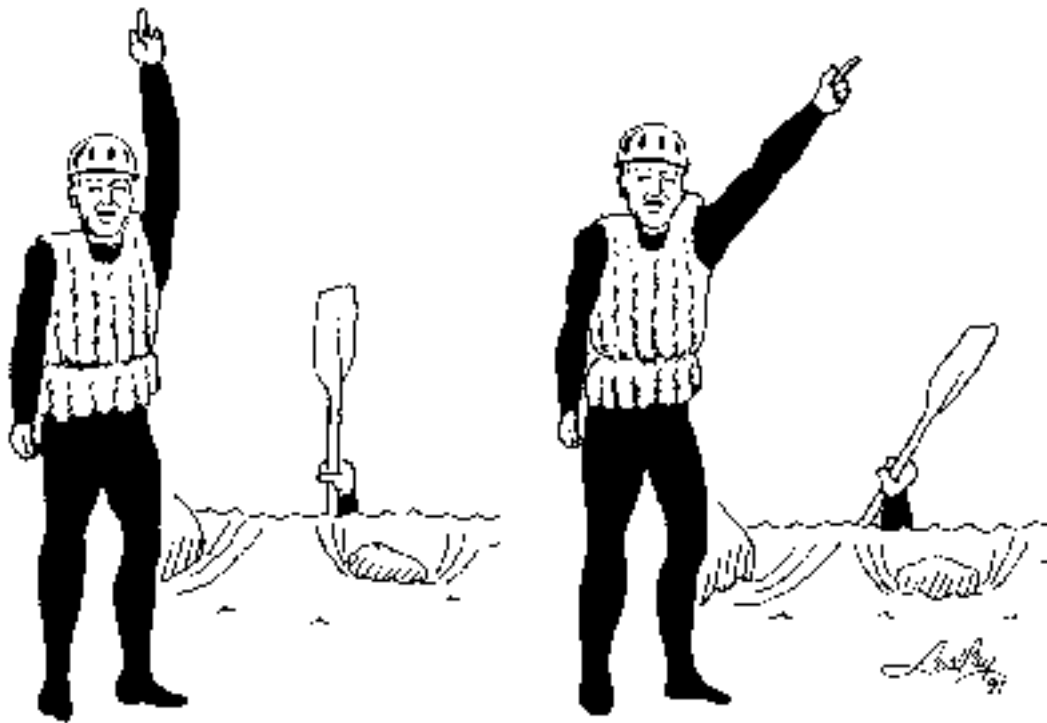
These signals may be substituted with an alternate set of signals agreed upon by the group.



Stop: Potential Hazard Ahead. Wait for “all clear” signal before proceeding, or scout ahead. form a horizontal bar with your outstretched arms. Those seeing the signal should pass it back to others in the party.



Help/Emergency: Assist the signaler as quickly as possible. Give three long blasts on a whistle while waving a paddle, helmet or life vest over your head, repeat. If a whistle is not available, use the visual signal alone. A whistle is best carried on a lanyard attached to your life vest.



All Clear - Come ahead: (in the absence of other directions proceed down the center). Form a vertical bar with your paddle or one arm held high above your head. Paddle blade should be turned flat for maximum visibility. To signal direction or a preferred course through a rapid around obstruction, lower the previously vertical "all clear" by 45 degrees toward the side of the river with the preferred route. Never point toward the obstacle you wish to avoid.



I'm okay: I'm okay and not hurt. While holding the elbow outward toward the side, repeatedly pat the top of your head.

Incidents

&

Liability

Accident/Incident Reporting & Safety at Work

Injured Guests - Injuries can and will happen. Be prepared to take action if you are involved in an accident. Call for assistance or send someone to call for assistance immediately. In all instances, calling 911 is the fastest way to alert and activate advanced medical systems. If you have manpower, you can have another guide call the Blazing Adventures office to alert the office staff, Vince, and BFD. Do not delay assistance to injured guests. While it is your job to render assistance with your own first aid skills, do not hesitate to allow a guest on your trip with more advanced medical skills to take over primary care of an injured guest. Many doctors and other highly trained medical professionals take part in our trips. Be aware of this and obtain the best level of care as soon as is possible. Also, know who our EMT and Paramedic guides are and look to them for assistance if they are on your trip.

Stay focused. Panicking can render you less effective as a rescuer and first aid administer. No matter the severity of the accident/injury, it is important to remain calm and professional. It is also important to call the office as soon as you can, after 911 has been called if appropriate. Department managers have years of experience in helping with accidents. Their presence on site or at the hospital can help to calm guides, injured guests, and their families. Get them involved as early on as possible.

Accident Report - The Outfitters Accident report needs to be completed and returned to the proper authorities. All accidents must be reported immediately. This means an accident that results in an obvious injury or suspected injury as seen by the guide, or any accidents reported to the guide by a passenger. Any accident reported to, or seen by a guide, that appears to have caused any trauma or injury to a passenger, whether physical or psychological, shall be reported. For any injury that requires a guest to seek medical attention during or after the trip, it is important that all parties involved be required to complete statements of the accident and that an Accident Report form be filled out. Guides and TL must be diligent in obtaining the best and most thorough information that they can in a timely fashion. Recollections and perceptions quickly fade. Written statements and descriptions are valuable tools. Statements from both the guest involved in the accident, as well as those who witnessed it, are extremely valuable. Please get specific names of witnesses and the appropriate contact information should we need to get additional information. This information is required by law and can lead to a significant fine if it is not recorded thoroughly and properly. Too much information is always better than not enough.

Incident Report - Short of “accidents” are “incidents”. Incidents must also be evaluated and reported on. Incidents include such things as:

1. Swimmers that get away from boat.
2. Any boat that flips.
3. Any boat that wraps and results in swimmer(s).
4. Any time a raft is pinned and cannot be unpinned without help from shore or other boats on the trip.

5. Other instances where passengers may have felt that their safety was compromised. This is a highly subjective determination.

Reporting incidents does not reflect poorly on your skills – every guide is eventually involved in “incidents”. To the contrary, a guide who is diligent in his reporting is a valuable guide.

Accident Prevention - Safety instructions to customers are to be given orally prior to launch time. Blazing Adventures will continue to require all passengers and crew to always wear life jackets for rafting, helmets for biking, and seat belts in any company vehicles where available. Blazing Adventures philosophy is “safety first”. When in doubt, take the safe route.

Injuries on the Job - Any injury occurring on the job must be reported to your supervisor immediately and to the Accounting office on the day that the injury occurred. The appropriate forms must be filled out immediately. If emergent, proceed directly to the Emergency Room. Employee safety is the priority. If non-emergent, all medical attention relating to an on-the-job injury must be handled through a designated provider. Again, in the case of an emergency, treatment should take place at the closest emergency room. In non-emergencies, you must see the designated provider or the Insurance Company may reduce, deny, or delay claim payment.

Safety - We are committed to providing a safe place for you to work. Everyone needs to understand the importance of safety. This requires all of us to exercise good judgment and common sense in our day-to-day work.

Disclaimer

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