

MINNESOTA PADDLER

SEPT/OCT/NOV/DEC VOLUME 50 No. 7

The Official Publication of the Minnesota Canoe Association



this issue

Annual meeting
Water Trails Tourism Summit
Far North Symposium
Fall Color Cruise
Winners "Girls Portage Too!"
Regional Updates
Paddling Opportunities

**Minnesota Canoe Association
2014 Board of Directors**

PRESIDENT

Kevin Groeneveld

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTOR

Emily Johnson

TREASURER

Mike Coriale

SECRETARY

Karl Huemiller

EDUCATION & SAFETY DIRECTOR

David Shanteau

RACING DIRECTOR

Marcus Imes

BUILDING COORDINATORS

Bob Anderson

Doug Nordang

COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

Mary Hoffman

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

open positions

PUBLIC RELATIONS DIRECTOR

open

GREETINGS FROM THE MCA BOARD

Hello.

It was exciting to see Amy and Dave Freeman portaging a canoe up to the White House. If you don't know the story, here's the link. <https://www.savetheboundarywaters.org>.

We held our first essay contest- read about memorable portaging.

Are you a member of the Minnesota Canoe Association? Your membership helps us carry out our goal of promoting paddling. Our funds provide the necessary insurance to provide public cruises, rent auditoriums to provide shows like the Far North Symposium, and website expense. Members get discounts at MCA shows. If you are interested in racing, a member gets free use of one of our Kevlar canoes at Monday night Rookies. As a small token of our appreciation, you get an MCA sticker for your boats:) -Editor

Apply online at mncanoe.org

MCA Membership Categories

<u>Category</u>	<u>1 Year</u>	<u>3 Year</u>	<u>Description</u>
Individual	\$20	\$55	23 years and older
Youth	15	40	22 years or younger
Family	25	70	Spouse/partner+ children

*Cover: Take-out on Mississippi,
River Bluff Regional Park 09-29-2014*

From the by-laws of the MCA:

The purposes for which the corporation is organized are:

- to unite in common organization those persons who are interested in all phases of recreational canoeing, professional and amateur canoe racing, canoe camping, and related activities
- to formulate and maintain standards for the guidance of members and others interested in canoeing
- to exchange information about canoes, canoe equipment, river, lakes and other waterways, campsites and other matters of common interest to members
- to promote and encourage conservation of wilderness, waterways and campsite and such other matters as will maintain and improve conditions for canoeing
- to do any and all lawful acts and things and to engage in any and all lawful activities which may be necessary, useful, suitable, desirable, or proper for the furtherance, accomplishment, fostering, or attainment of any or all of the purposes for which the corporation is organized
- to aid and assist other organizations whose activities are such as to further, accomplish, foster, or attain any of such purposes.

Public Relations Director Needed

The MCA needs a Public Relations Director. Utilize any/all of today's media to promote paddling sports. In the upcoming year we want to sponsor one national canoe race, promote racing, we have 6 canoes to use for club activities, and we want to offer a couple one-of-a-kind cruises.

president
@mncanoe.org

Newsletter Help!

Have you noticed the erratic publishing of the newsletter? Sometimes it's a lack of news, sometimes it's a lack of time. I would like help, advice on how to make the job easier, yet continue to publish original content to let our readers know what's happening in our region. Can you help with layout?

communications@
mncanoe.org



Open to Public and Members

MCA monthly board meeting

December 17, 2014

7:00 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Midwest Mountaineering, upstairs conference room, Free Validated Parking

Minnesota Canoe Association 2015 Annual Meeting

- **February 7, 2015**
- **REI Bloomington Community Room**
- **Business meeting**
- **Guest presentation : to be announced**

The next newsletter will give you all the specific information. The web site at mncanoe.org will also have this information as soon as the arrangements are finalized.



Flotilla on Mississippi River, 09-29-2014

Water Trail Tourist Summit

By Mary Hoffman, Communications

Emily and I recently met with about 140 people at the Water Trails Tourism Summit. As a first-time gathering of groups interested in water trails and their community, it was a success. Although members of the MN Canoe Association have been paddling the routes for decades, I met many people just beginning to think about the details of how to introduce others to the sport. Emily focused on finding community sponsors who are open to holding canoe races. It was time well spent for both of us.

A water trail is a designated recreational route managed by the MN Department of Natural Resources for canoeing, kayaking, boating and camping.

Monday afternoon was the “experiential” session. I was very impressed with the organization of the cruise. It seemed like it took only 20 minutes or so to get everybody into the water. How do you get 75 strangers into tandem canoes for a short cruise on the Mississippi? Start with an easy put in– no steps! Beaver Landing access is just at the edge of St. Cloud State University. For gear, have Clearwaters Outfitter and the National Park Service donate. Two-by-two, the canoes are carried into the water. One poor guy in a dry suit was standing in the water, holding the bow steady on two canoes. Then we were off. Easy. I was surprised to learn that some had little experience, and the outfitter I partnered with said he rarely gets time on the water. The take-out was at River Bluffs Regional Park.



Beaver Landing put-in, 09-29-2014



Emily Johnson talking with Stan Linell, MN DNR

I thought Paco Ollervides, [River Network's](#) Great Lakes Program Manager was one of the most experienced presenters. His main interest lies in strengthening leaders to ensure organizations' continuity and success in campaigns and programs. The talk was aimed at professional non-profits needing volunteers. The MCA will never be an organization of paid professionals, but we have the same organizational development issues as any other nonprofit. The take-away is to have small, achievable tasks. The tasks need to be specific. Develop concrete actions. I know I've heard it before in other contexts, but it was good to hear it again.

One of the major sponsors was [Northstar Canoes](#). A brand new 17-foot Northwind tandem canoe was given away! The odds were good, considering that of the 142 participants, only about 65 were eligible to enter. I was on the planning team with the Water Trails Citizen Advisory committee, so could not enter. Because of strict rules about gifts, government agencies could not enter. A young startup outfitter won-Robert and Nikki Stai, Gear Resource Outfitters in Northfield, MN. It was pretty sweet.



Attendees at a breakout session,
Rivers Edge Convention Center, St. Cloud, MN



History of the river, 09-29-2014

Far North Symposium

Saturday, March 21, 2015

Metro U 700 East 7th Street
St Paul MN 55106

Bob O'Hara will be your host, introducing an entire day of awesome paddling adventures in the far north of Canada.

A full announcement with the date, time, and presenters will be sent out to you in early December.

**Pre-registration and web links
are not set up yet.**



2014 MCA Fall Color Cruise

By Dave Shanteau, Safety and Education



On October 24, the day was partly cloudy in the 40F's with moderate gusty winds. The fall colors were not quite at peak. The cruise was attended by 20 in total: 5 MCA members, 3 guests, 7 U of M concrete canoe club members, and 5 Urban Boat Builders. Everyone did fine paddling. The boats used were five of the MCA Jensen 18's, a Jensen 17, a Wildfire, and a J180. The Urban Boat Builders paddled two skin-on-frame canoes and 1 Electric Row Boat.

We met at Osceola Landing, unloaded the boats, figured out who would paddle in what boats. We then ran the shuttle to William O'Brien State Park. We arrived back at Osceola Landing and started paddling down river about 11:00 AM. I led the trip down river, stopping a few times to keep the group together. The colors were OK but not at peak. The river was at an average level. It was high enough to have no problems with sand bars. The Urban Boat Builders skin-on-frame canoes were beautiful in their translucence. The Lapstrake Electric Row boat was a thing of beauty. We arrived at the Swing Bridge just as the tourist train was crossing. We waved to the people on the train and they waved back. We paddled down to the Big Island for lunch. During lunch, the sun came out a bit more, brightening the day and our spirits. As we were leaving the lunch spot, the tourist train returned to cross the bridge. On the way down to the take out we did an impromptu lesson on upstream ferrying. We arrived at the William O'Brien take out at about 3:00 PM and loaded up ran the shuttle drivers up to Osceola to pick up their cars.



Some of the rules and regulations for the Concrete Canoe Competition:

- Single-blade paddle
- Length = 22 feet maximum
- Width = 36 inches
- The canoe shall pass a flotation test where the canoe floats near the water's surface, when completely filled with water and loaded with two (2) 25-lb. sand-bags
- Flotation must be encased in concrete
- Bondo®, epoxy or similar materials are not permitted at any time during the casting of the canoe
- Reinforcement thickness cannot exceeds 50% of canoe thickness
- Concrete sealers or surface coating) may be applied to any portion of the canoe
- Seaworthiness is defined by a canoe that has (1) little to no structural damage or (2) structural damage that has been sufficiently repaired

Entries in the competition have weighted from 105-405lbs!

Photos: Bob Anderson

Updated Boat Decals!

Members— An updated version of the MCA decal is available. Email us with your name and current address. The first one is free. For more than one, the cost is \$1.00 .

The sticker is a 4in x 6in oval.

Send request to : Communications@mncanoe.org







2014 MCA Fall Color Cruise

By Dave Shanteau, Safety and Education



	<h2>"GIRLS PORTAGE TOO" Essay Contest</h2>
	<div data-bbox="446 346 673 472">1st</div> <div data-bbox="695 336 1068 472"> Birch Bark PSA by Stephanie Hoepner Poster & sticker </div>
<div data-bbox="240 682 332 745">tie!</div>	<div data-bbox="332 609 560 724">2nd</div> <div data-bbox="657 588 1096 724"> Girls Portage Too by Allison Croat Poster </div>
	<div data-bbox="349 745 576 850">2nd</div> <div data-bbox="568 724 1185 861"> It Was the Best of Times by Cheryl Batson Poster </div>
	<div data-bbox="397 976 625 1081">3rd</div> <div data-bbox="617 976 1136 1102"> Vermilion River Trip by Sara Waldorf sticker </div>
	<p>Thanks to all who entered our little contest. It was fun to read the entries!</p>
	<p>MCA retains right to publish all essays. The MCA does not prevent author from publishing elsewhere. The Essay must be free of all legal restrictions. Donations for prizes accepted. Must be approved by the MCA Board of Directors Prior to acceptance. Donator must provide all shipping and handling to final destination. All decisions by the Minnesota Canoe Association are final. MCA Board members not eligible. List of winners published in the Minnesota Paddler November 2014.</p>

The following pages are the winning entries that tell the story of memorable canoe portages.

David Shanteau showed us the poster, and we knew you'd like it too. Check out badgerpaddles.com if you'd like one for yourself.

Birch Bark PSA

By Stephanie Hoepner

We expect portaging to test our physical limits, we expect to be pummeled by the weather and assaulted by mosquitos, to engage our orienteering prowess, but only once have I been utterly confounded by a portage, and then enlightened by a piece of birch bark.

It was September 2004 when we put in at Moose Lake to begin our fall staff travel. Four Grumman canoes and eight instructors from the Voyageur Outward Bound School in Ely set out on a variation of the Hunter's Island Loop. From Moose Lake we traveled the border route east and turned north at Cache Bay to enter Quetico. We followed the historic fur traders' route up the Falls Chain to the grand waters of Kaw-ni-pi Lake, Sturgeon Lake and the Maligne River before turning south to head home. It was when we left the Maligne and turned south to Poobah Lake that things got interesting.

Most of our group had spent the entire summer going in and out of the Boundary Waters for anywhere from one to three weeks at a time. We were seasoned. Being so comfortable in the backcountry and enjoying our fellow staffer's company, we tended to lollygag. As a gorgeous morning broke on the crystal clear waters of Poobah Lake, no one was in a rush to get going.

Our late start didn't worry us as we set off on the obvious portage trail from Poobah to Conmee Lake. After

following what seemed like a typical portage for 100 rods or so the trail became less clear. Herd paths shot off this way and that. We found ourselves trapped in a thick swampy undergrowth. I have a clear memory of watching as a pair of canoe partners wove their boat through the brush like someone threading a needle. Something was wrong. We sent scouts ahead to investigate the paths that looked the most promising but to no avail. Every path petered out into nothingness.

By this time it had started to rain, the type of rain that drives you to wear rain pants even while portaging. The lack of sun invited an onslaught of mosquitos. Lunchtime came and went.

Stymied, we sent a pair to the start of the portage to see if we had made a wrong turn from the beginning. There, a previously unseen message was discovered. "This is not the portage" was scrawled onto a small piece of birch bark. Intrigued, we laid out our Fisher and our McKenzie maps, both showed the portage exactly where we were on the southern shore.

I'm not sure why our trip leader had packed a Quetico Park Map. A small scale map it showed the entire park, including portages. Only this map showed the portage in another location on the southeastern corner of the lake. The mystery solved, we made it to a campsite on Conmee just as the light was fading.

Thank you to whoever wrote that birch bark PSA!

Sarah Lake portage





Girls Portage, Too

By Allison Croat

The grasses come up to my thighs, scratching bare skin as I lumber on.
I dare to look up, though my view is stunted by the canoe on top of me, I look left and right.
Weedy grasses spread out all around me in the field, and at both edges is a forest.
One I've just come through, the other lies ahead.

No water though.

I shimmy and adjust the canoe as it presses into my shoulders, weighing down on me.
Sometimes they go numb, but they're not there yet.
They will be though, it's only a matter of time.
Suddenly, I'm on the ground, the canoe beside me.
I tripped on something, but when I look around, there's nothing there.
Not a branch, not a log, just some grasses.
Awesome, I tripped on grass, and now I have to put the canoe back on top of me.
My crewmate hikes up from behind me and helps me get the canoe back onto my shoulders.
This time, I put my head down and just keep walking.
I've made it through the field finally, and begin navigating my way through the forest,
following the neon tagging others before me have left.
The canoe bumps up against trees I can't see until we've hit them,
and I struggle to keep it from tipping backwards off my shoulders.
My crewmate hikes ahead this time, guiding me through the maze of pines, birch,
and whatever else the Manitoba wilderness has to offer.
The trees start to thin, and the landscape turns into a bluff.

Water! Below!

But nothing is that easy out here.
There's no way to get down from this bluff, so I'm forced to walk alongside the water,
its coolness mocking me as sweat glides down my face and back.
Even my hands are sweaty, and they slip off the canoe.
So close, yet so far.
Then, when I think I need to stop, that I'll never make it,
the ground to the left slopes downward.
At the bottom are more of my crewmates, and I take off running,
the canoe no longer weighing anything at all.
It's the water that matters.
I make it to the edge of the water, flip the canoe off, and dive in with no regard.
There's nothing so sweet or meaningful as the end of a long portage.

The Best of Times

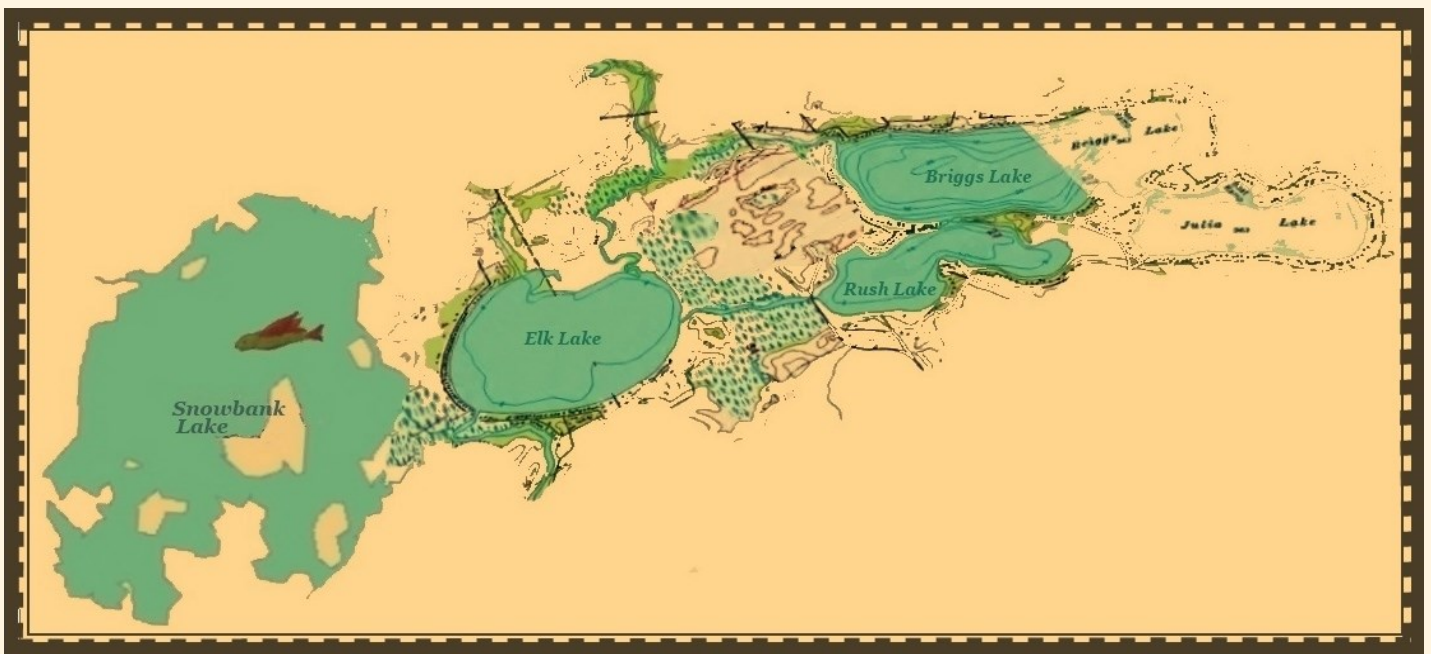
By Cheryl Batson

It was the best of times. It was the worst of times. Oops, wrong story. It was the best of times. It was the best of the best of times. My family had a cabin up near Monticello, MN situated on the channel coming out of Briggs Lake. We got a canoe in 1975 when I was 10 years old and from there on I went out exploring for hours or on all day adventures with my girlfriends or solo. I was a completely self taught canoeist. J-stroke, C-stroke, draw stroke. It all naturally made sense.

As my family and I grew more confident in my ability, I ventured out onto Briggs Lake and explored the whole lake. I learned what I could do in all sorts of weather and wave conditions. Soon, the lake was not enough. When I was 11 years old it was time to get permission to go into Rush lake. It was easy to navigate or so I told my parents. "Just go from the channel to Briggs Lake and I can see the channel into Rush. Come on. Piece of cake, Mom." "Well, okay then. But only there. No further." Well, we got lost that day coming back. I figured it out by looking at the smoke stack of the Monticello nuclear power plant. From then on, I'd always note where the

smoke stack was before I headed out on my various adventures. It was my compass.

Soon, it was time to explore even further out. This time I needed to figure out what was beyond the bayou in front of the family cabin. We headed out under the power line, under the bridge, and into the marsh. Dead end. Or was it? I got out and checked it out. Cool! There's a river behind here! Awesome. This was the grand portage of my childhood. I couldn't wait to get a girlfriend willing to portage the swamp, get our feet wet for a block and into the river! The first person I hit up for this adventure was my friend Robin. She was the most unlikely of all my girlfriends to do this, but I was persuasive. "It's only just a little bit of a canoe pull to the river." "What river? I don't see any river." "No, really, just come on out and look. It's right here!" "Have you ever done this before? Will we get lost?" "Of Course not!" "Well, okay. As long as we don't get lost!" Well, we dragged that sturdy Grumman canoe into Elk River, which is more creek then river at this point. We headed right into lots of brush and downed trees. We hauled that canoe over and under and through. Okay. Time to go left. Ready? Come on, isn't this fun? Well, left was much better. It wasn't until much later that I discovered and corrected her belief that this was her first trip to the Boundary Waters. In a way it was.



Vermilion River Trip

By Sara Waldorf

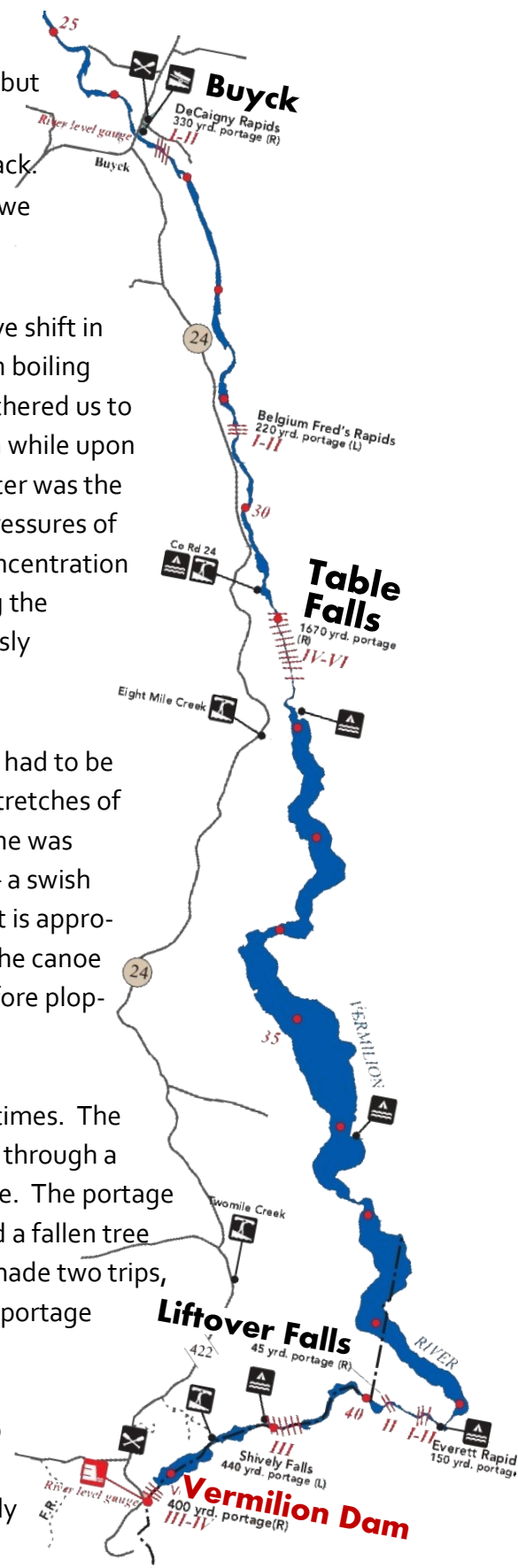
In 2009, I went on a canoeing trip with a mixed group (girls and guys). The route we chose was the Vermilion River, near the boundary waters but not quite inside. We started at the County Road 23 bridge at Buyck, canoeing 15 miles upstream to the Vermillion Dam and then 15 miles back. We had some experience, but planned the trip to be challenging -- and we succeeded a little better than expected.

On the first day of the trip, our water purifier gave out, causing a massive shift in our plan. We had back-up purification tablets, but had to rely mainly on boiling water. We learned, quickly, that boiling enough water for the group tethered us to camp for longer periods than we had planned, and we learned it takes a while upon reaching the campsite to produce any water ready to drink. Boiling water was the last thing done at night, and the first thing done in the morning. The pressures of life "out in the world" melted away, and were replaced by absorbing concentration on gathering wood, balancing kettles over the hottest coals, and timing the 10-minute boil cycles. Starting each day with full canteens, we judiciously supplemented with the tablets until the end of the day's travel.

The route includes 6 stretches of rapids, from 8 to 303 rods, all of which had to be portaged going upstream. On the downstream journey, we ran three stretches of Class I-II rapids but had to portage the other three. One was Class III, one was Class VI, and the other was Class II but just didn't look like a good idea – a swish and a drop over a four-foot fall. Besides, the portage was easy; the spot is appropriately named Lifterover Falls, and portaging involved simply grabbing the canoe by the decks and lifting it, gear and all, up and over a little headland before plopping it back in the water 8 rods later.

The 303 rod portage, Table Rock Falls, was the longest by about three times. The river narrows abruptly, pitches down a 20-foot waterfall, and continues through a gorge full of rapids for almost a mile. The river drops 80 feet in that mile. The portage trail climbs and dips ruggedly beside it, with rocky, slippery footing, and a fallen tree or two. It took fully half a day to make that portage, and several of us made two trips, because the terrain and distance together made it nearly impossible to portage canoes and packs in the same trip.

When we came back to "civilization", it seemed wonderful to turn a tap and have nice, clear (cold!) water run out. We didn't want to drink the river-tasting, brownish water we had left in our canteens, but it was only after several days back home that we could bear to dump it out: it had cost so much effort to obtain. The habits of scarcity, so quickly learned, were slow to be unlearned.





REGIONAL UPDATES

Polymet Copper Mining in Northern MN

[October 8, 2014](#) PolyMet Final EIS “Early Spring” 2015

2015-2016 session– Final Environmental Impact statements, public comments, decisions

July 15, 2014 No pending legislation, reviews, actions

[May 20, 2014](#) PolyMet Mining Issue Gives Carlson School Freshmen a Case Study for Ethical Decision-Making

April 18, 2014 Nothing reported.

[March 13, 2014](#) EPA issues EC-2 rating.(Environmental Concerns– Insufficient Information)

Cannon River/Hidden Valley Campground

January 21, 2015 MN Appellate Court to decide on appeal

[August 12, 2014](#) Campground Owner Appeals county’s permit revocation

[June 16, 2014](#) Owner applies for a variance for holding tanks instead of on-site sewage treatment.

[May 16, 2014](#) Campground permit revoked by county– Thanks for your support and care for clean water!

[April 3, 2014](#) Troubled Campground Gets Reprieve

[March 14, 2014](#) The Cannon Falls Beacon, “Campground permit revoked by county”,

[~2011 through 2013](#) Woodhalls Campground Management, The Independent Voice of the North American Campground Business, gives many dates and details

[October 2011](#) Goodhue County Land Use Management, documents, photos, letter, inspections

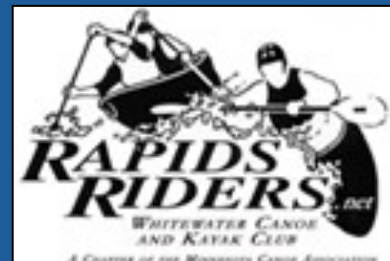
PADDLING OPPORTUNITIES AND UPCOMING EVENTS

PADDLING CLUBS IN THE REGION

Rookie Racers



Your club here



Minnesota Canoe Association

P.O. Box 14989
Minneapolis, MN 55414-0989

www.mncanoe.org