

# CALIFORNIA PADDLER

Magazine

Always Free

Summer 2013

INSIDE:

Your First SUP

Blending Strokes

Paddling With Kids

Big Bear

Chumash Tomol

+ more



Photo: John Hyde

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Paddling can be a dangerous sport. Dress appropriately, always wear your PFD, and paddle within your skill level.



## Features

- 6 Getting Started: Your First SUP
- 10 Skills: Blending Strokes for Kayaks
- 13 Paddling With Kids
- 18 Destination: Big Bear
- 21 Crossing to Limuw
- 24 Review: This Is The Sea 5
- 26 Review: Rock the Boat
- 28 Review: BC Coast Explorer

## In Every Issue

- 4 Editor's Note
- 5 News
- 5 Calendar of Events
- 16 Center Hatch Photo Spread
- 30 Intellectual Section: Wet Exit
- 30 List of Advertisers



*Cover Photo - a woman prepares herself to try out a SUP at a shop's demo day*

*Photo by Neil Schulman  
Camera: Nikon D300*

# Editor's Note



What difference can one word make? Depending on the word, it can either be a lot or nothing. If you are into stand up paddle boarding (SUPing), the changing of the name from *California Kayaker Magazine* to *California Paddler Magazine* means that we now cover your sport. To kayakers, it means very little, as the magazine will still have lots of kayaking content.

The change was made specifically to allow the magazine to cover SUPing. We found that kayaking was a bit too limiting a subject, and the magazine was not able to grow to where we wanted it to. SUP is the big growth area in paddle sports, so including them will hopefully allow the magazine to grow.

And what better way to start than to have an article to help people navigate the types of paddleboards on the market?

This change has actually been in the works for a couple of years. The big thing holding it back was that I needed to spend some time myself on a SUP to see what the big deal was. I don't claim to be a SUP expert, but I am now comfortable around a board. And I agree there is an attraction to them.

There are some changes that you need to do to keep up with the magazine, though. We were able to forward the old URL to the new for our web site, so that is fine. But we couldn't do that for Facebook. So if you want to follow us on Facebook, please go to [www.facebook.com/CalPaddlerMag](http://www.facebook.com/CalPaddlerMag) and "Like" the new page.

See you on the water!

Peter Donohue  
Editor  
[editor@calpaddlermag.com](mailto:editor@calpaddlermag.com)

## ▷ Events

### **Jay Moriarty Memorial Paddleboard Race**

Capitola, CA  
June 22, 2013  
[jayrace.surftech.com](http://jayrace.surfttech.com)

### **AquanFest**

San Mateo, CA  
June 22-23, 2013  
[www.aquansports.com](http://www.aquansports.com)

### **Big Bear Paddlefest**

Big Bear Lake, CA  
June 29, 2013  
[www.bigbearpaddlefest.com](http://www.bigbearpaddlefest.com)

### **Eppies Great Race**

Sacramento, CA  
July 20, 2013  
[www.eppiesgreatrace.org](http://www.eppiesgreatrace.org)

### **US Surf Ski Championships**

South San Francisco, CA  
Aug 3-4, 2013  
[www.ussurfski.com](http://www.ussurfski.com)

### **Battle of the Bay**

San Rafael, CA  
Aug 17-18, 2013  
[www.battleofthebay.com](http://www.battleofthebay.com)

### **American River Festival**

Coloma, CA  
September 7-8, 2013  
[www.americanriverfestival.org](http://www.americanriverfestival.org)

### **California Coastal Cleanup Day**

throughout CA  
September 21, 2013  
[www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/ccd.html](http://www.coastal.ca.gov/publiced/ccd/ccd.html)

### **Moke Races**

Jackson, CA  
September 21, 2013  
[lp.sierraclub.org/lpp/mokeraces/](http://lp.sierraclub.org/lpp/mokeraces/)

### **Ventura Paddle Surfing Championships & US Waveski Championship**

Ventura, CA  
October 11-12, 2013  
[www.uswaveski.com](http://www.uswaveski.com)

### **Cal Burn Fest**

Burnt Ranch, CA  
October 12, 2013  
[caliproduct.blogspot.com](http://caliproduct.blogspot.com)

### **Lumpy Waters**

Pacific City, OR  
October 18-20, 2013  
[www.lumpywaters.com](http://www.lumpywaters.com)

### **Sea Trek Regatta and E.T.C. Paddleathon**

Sausalito, CA  
October 26  
[www.etctrips.org](http://www.etctrips.org)

### **Davenport Paddle Surf Classic**

Davenport, CA  
November 9-10, 2013  
[www.davenportpaddlesurf.com](http://www.davenportpaddlesurf.com)

### **Golden Gate Sea Kayak Symposium**

Sausalito, CA  
Jan 31-Feb 2, 2014  
[www.ggsk.com](http://www.ggsk.com)

### **Wavechaser Paddle Series**

Various NorCal locations  
Various dates  
[www.wavechaser.com](http://www.wavechaser.com)

### **SoCalOceanRacing Series**

Various SoCal locations  
Various dates  
[www.eteamz.com/socaloceanracing/](http://www.eteamz.com/socaloceanracing/)

## ▷ News

### **L.A. River Opens to the Public**

For the first time since the Los Angeles (LA) River was channelized in the 1930s, the public will be welcomed to walk, fish, and kayak along a 2.5 mile portion of the LA River in Elysian Valley. The Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) will administer the LA River Recreation pilot program to increase safe public access to the LA River and to promote the goal of river revitalization.

The program runs from Memorial Day to Labor Day and from sunrise to sunset daily, during safe conditions. During this time, any member of the public can access the Recreation Zone free of charge. Organized groups and fee-based groups must obtain special use permits from the MRCA for which there is a fee. More information can be found at [www.lariverrecreation.com](http://www.lariverrecreation.com).

There is also a 1.5 mile stretch open in the Sepulveda Basin. That program has been going for a few years and is much more restrictive. For example, you must go with a guide, you can't use your own boat and gear, and so on. Because that program was successful (that is, no safety incidents), this new program gained support and fortunately carries fewer restrictions. Hopefully the rules for the Sepulveda Basin program will be relaxed more in the future, as all slots on these guided paddles have been claimed for 2013 already. Information about this program is available at [www.paddlethelriver.org](http://www.paddlethelriver.org).

If this summer's Elysian Valley pilot program is successful, there are plans to open more of the river to kayaking and eventually to return much of the river bottom to its natural state.

For more background info on the process of gaining access to the LA  
Continued on Page 30

To submit news or an event for consideration to *California Paddler Magazine*, please send basic information to [editor@calpaddlermag.com](mailto:editor@calpaddlermag.com).

## Your First Stand Up Paddleboard: What to Get? What to Get? What to Get? By Scotto Galbreath



**P**re-article factoids to keep in mind: length of the board on the water equates to speed; speed becomes glide & inertia; glide & inertia mean you paddle less and go farther. Beam (or width) becomes drag, slowing you down and making you work harder. On the water, every inch in length is an advantage. Off the water, those same inches are a hindrance. Keep these basic facts in mind and read on.

I'm not gonna start this little "How To" article by saying stand up paddleboarding (SUPing) is so easy anyone can do it. That would be a lie. But I can in good conscience say SUPing is so easy almost everyone can do it. And using the basic law of averages, chances are pretty good this means you. Also, I'd like to start this with a little disclosure: The first photo I ever saw of someone SUPing happened to be of Laird Hamilton on the Colorado River, heading through the Grand Canyon. I instantly thought to myself, what a nut. And then, within a year, I started to see more people in more photos on more stand up paddleboards and I thought, this is the dumbest thing I've ever seen. And then I went to the Outdoor Retailer show in Salt Lake City where there were one or two companies hawking these overgrown surfboards and I thought, this fad'll be dead in five years.

And then I finally tried it. Now I'm singing a different song.

Today I'm of the opinion that SUPing is similar to sex in a couple of ways. There are those who are doing it and those who wish they were doing it. And for those who don't wish they were doing it, it's only because they've never done it.

Now, I've been a kayaker for more than twenty years. A lot of my best memories involve a kayak. I make my living selling kayaks. Heck, I even met my wife when I sold her a kayak. But when I get on the water today, nine times out of ten, I'm on a SUP. Why? Well, for one reason, the Stand Up Paddleboard eliminates inconvenience as my excuse for not getting on the water. Board, paddle, lifejacket, go. And the fact that a SUP weighs at least half of what a kayak weighs is a big portion of convenience. That means my wife, who weighs half of what I do, can easily put the board on the car as well. Next, the dogs like it, and anything we can do with the dogs is a bonus (feel free to substitute children for dogs if that's your cup of tea). I'm also a big fan of seeing what's going on in the water around me. When you're standing five to six feet above the water you get a much better view of all those cool things happening below you – bat rays, leopard sharks, otters, sea lions, etcetera. But enough about why, let's get to what.

### Types of Stand Up Paddleboards (in a nutshell)

*\*Caveat – All rules have exceptions. But in an effort to keep this article short, I'll be focusing on rules, not exceptions.*

Basically, there are two general types of SUPs. You've got your Displacement Hull and you've got your Planing Hull. In the simplest of terms, a displacement hull slices through the water (like a kayak). A planing hull travels over the water (like a surfboard). Typically, the displacement hull is faster and more efficient while the planing hull is more stable.

The displacement hull offers two subspecies: The Race Board and the Touring Board. The race board is usually 12'6" or 14' in length (because of race class) and is as narrow as they can go without tossing all but the pro into the drink. The touring board is anywhere between 12' and 14' and has greater width for general stability – think of it like going on a tour with your bicycle. It wouldn't be too much fun if you kept falling off. The Sub-sub-species of all this is the Trainer Board which is typically 10'6" to 11'6" and not something I would recommend to most people for their first board, so that'll be something to discuss another time.

The planing hull also offers two subspecies with a love-child resting gently between them. I give you the Recreational SUP, the Surf SUP and the crossbreed of the two, aptly called the Crossover SUP. The recreational (or rec) SUP, is wide, stable and not too terribly fast. The surf SUP has more rocker, less volume and is designed for, oddly enough, surfing. And the crossover can easily be used for both but may not be absolutely great for either. Sizes are all over the place. Length can range anywhere from under 9' for the smaller surfer who knows how to rip it up, to a hair past 12' for the, shall we say, larger paddler. Width and thickness help considerably with volume and volume is what makes the board float. So, if you're 98 lbs with your sunglasses on, there's not many boards that won't float you just fine. But if you're 298 lbs, you're gonna want the widest, thickest SUP you can lay your hands on.

### New or Used?

Let's move past that for now. Let's talk about the basics of the purchase itself. It's your first board and maybe you're not even sure if you're really gonna like it all that much. Should your first board be used?

Well, when you purchase a used board from someone off of a Craigslist ad, you've really got three ways to go. First, you might get super lucky and fall into a sweet deal with the perfect board. It's brand new, there was a divorce, and bingo, they practically give you the board and they throw in a top of the line paddle that just happens to be your size, for free. Not a terribly realistic scenario, but it could happen. Second scenario involves you getting a SUP that maybe doesn't look so great but it's cheap and it gets you out on the water. It's not the perfect board for you, but now at least you'll know more about what you're looking for on the second go around. Lastly, you get a used board that looks new for less than half of what you'd have to pay in the store. Maybe it looks a little small but you can't believe there are suckers paying retail prices out there in the world. You take it out to the bay and spend more time in the water than you do on the board (the board made for someone 75lbs lighter than you). You got a great deal on a total pain in the butt and now the only thing you can actually do with it is to sell it to somebody else.



*Front view showing the difference between a displacement board (top) and planing board.*

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Or you could buy used from your local SUP shop. They're probably not going to tell you what you want to hear (you know, the line about how they were just gonna throw it away, so you can have it if you want it). In fact, what they think the used board should cost and what you think the used board should cost are probably two very different numbers. However, they probably want you to be a satisfied customer who comes back to the shop to buy something else. So your big advantage of buying from these

guys is they're most likely not going to sell you something that's not going to work for you. At our shop, we're going to guarantee your satisfaction and chances are your local SUP shop will too.

Well if that's the case, why would you want to buy new? That's a good question. I knew you'd be paying attention. To begin, I don't know a single retail paddle shop that carries a remarkable selection of used boards. We're all focused on new boards. We've got dozens of new

boards in stock and only a handful of used. That is, of course, the long way to say, that while we've probably got your perfect new stand up paddleboard in stock, we are less than likely to have a used one that's comparable. And again, when you buy a SUP from us we're gonna guarantee it's the right board for you. Wouldn't you rather pay a little more to get exactly what you want? That was a rhetorical question. Of course you would.

Now, of course, you can buy online or from some massive chain as well. I'm not going to tell you not to. But you'd better be sure of what you want. No box store or online discount warehouse is gonna make sure you get the perfect board. And they're not gonna let you demo a board so you know it's the right board for you. Nor are they gonna have stand up paddle classes so you can get a little knowledge and a little experience under your belt either before or after your big purchase. And I doubt they're gonna have a dozen ways to transport your SUP on top of your vehicle

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*Man's best friend may not get as excited about this as you, but you can see a lot more when standing on a SUP as compared to sitting in a kayak*

or store it properly back at your house. Also, when you support your local paddle shop, your local paddle shop supports you. Resources like local knowledge, spare parts, board repairs, classes, tours—even just the basics like showing you how to properly tie down your SUP to your car—are the things we, your local paddle shop, can offer you that the online warehouse or the national chain can't.

So you're looking at buying your first stand up paddle-board and maybe you don't even know if you're gonna like it. Hey, it's the fastest growing new sport in the world for a reason, and that reason is: it's a bucket of fun. So don't sabotage what should be a lifetime of great times over a couple bucks. That's all I'm saying. 🍷

*Scotto Galbreath is co-owner of Clavey Paddlesports in Petaluma.*

*Photos by Scotto Galbreath and Tom Meckfessel*



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# Blending Strokes for Sea Kayaking

by Sean Morley

*The author using a low-brace turn in challenging conditions  
Photo by Dominick Lemarie*

**D**o you want to learn to control your sea kayak with power, precision and grace whatever the conditions?

In this article, we will first consider the fundamental concepts of paddling, the building blocks of effective technique. We will also consider how to modify some strokes for rough water conditions.

A subsequent article will attempt to develop blade awareness and a feel for the water by practicing some fun drills that you can use on flat water and then take into more advanced conditions. We will also look at some stroke combinations that can greatly enhance your ability to control your craft in wind and waves.

## Paddling Concepts

There are some fundamental concepts to consider for many of the strokes in our skill set. By keeping these concepts in mind as we perform our strokes we can greatly enhance the effectiveness of the strokes and improve our performance on the water, allowing us to paddle with less effort and enjoy the day more.

- **Paddler's Box:** By keeping both arms almost straight during the power phase of a propulsion stroke you will utilize the large muscles of the torso. Look to keep the paddle shaft away from the body – imagine a beach ball between your body and the paddle shaft.
- **Edge by weighting the Sit Bone (NOT lifting the knee):** We edge the kayak to help us turn by reducing the waterline length of the kayak, releasing the keel and utilizing the increased rocker when the boat is tilted to one side. If we edge the kayak by lifting the knee it ties up the tummy muscles and reduces our ability to rotate. Focusing on weighting the sit bone on the side we want to edge towards and relaxing the tummy muscles allows us more rotation and thus a more effective stroke. All the opposite

knee should be doing is keeping enough pressure on the thigh brace to keep us from falling out of the boat!

- **Edge versus Lean:** When we edge our kayak we are trying to keep our head and torso over the centerline of the kayak and our weight on the sit bone on the side we are edging towards. It is sometimes referred to as the J-Lean. We are creating a letter J with our head, torso and pelvis. Think of edging as something you can do whilst remaining in balance without using your paddle. Once we move our head and torso away from the centerline we are most definitely leaning and if we don't do something with the paddle we will capsize. When moving slowly we should only edge and thus stay in balance. The faster we are moving the more we can lean, using the paddle blade on the surface of the water for support. As we lose speed we need to bring our head and torso back over the center of the kayak and equalize the weight on our sit bones to get back into a balanced position.



*Edging involves keeping your head close to above the centerline of the boat, so you can maintain balance.*



*Leaning will cause you to fall over unless you brace or are using a climbing angle on your paddle blade.*

• **Control Blade Face with Elbow:** The wrists are the 'Achilles Heel' of the kayaker. Imagine all the force we are applying to the paddle blade going through the tiny muscles, tendons and ligaments of the wrist. Keep the wrists straight to avoid over-use and repetitive strain injuries such as tendonitis. Control the blade face by keeping the wrist locked and guiding the blade angle with your elbow.

• **Force Arrow perpendicular to Back of Blade:** Newton's Third Law (every action has an equal and opposite reaction) applies to the paddle stroke. Whenever we pull on the paddle blade the force generated by the resistance of the water is in the opposite direction, roughly perpendicular to the back of the blade. For example, if we are paddling forward we should try to keep our imaginary force arrow pointing in the direction we want to go by orientating the blade so that it remains perpendicular to our direction of travel for as long as possible. Try holding onto the paddle normally but pointing with your index finger in the direction you want to go. See how that affects how you orientate the blade, the position of your top hand, the amount of torso rotation you might need and the effective length of the stroke.

• **Climbing Angle for Support:** A vertical blade, perpendicular to our direction of travel might be the most powerful position for the paddle blade but often we need to use the blade for support as well as propulsion. During a propulsion stroke, by angling the top of the blade slightly (about twenty degrees) in the direction we are pulling or pushing, we can put weight onto the paddle blade and get a tremendous amount of support from the blade, so long as the blade is moving through the water. Try skimming the back of the blade across the surface of the water. Then try lifting the leading edge of the blade, just as if you were spreading butter on toast. Start putting some weight onto the paddle blade and feel the support you get in return. Try doing the same thing with the power face. Keep in mind, this only works as long as the blade is moving!

• **Move the Boat not the Water:** When performing any strokes, try to minimize the amount of splash and bubbles that you generate from the paddle. The boat will only move as quickly as its design allows. By creating lots of splash and bubbles you will not be making the kayak move any more quickly. Instead, focus on anchoring the paddle blade in the water and moving the boat around the paddle using your whole body to do so. Imagine you are moving the boat through thick treacle, so thick that the paddle blade will not budge. The only way you can move the boat is by pushing with your foot during a forward stroke or pulling with your knee during a reverse stroke.

By the way, most of these fundamental paddling concepts apply to any paddle craft whether it is a sea kayak, white water kayak, canoe or SUP (except substitute foot bones for sit bones!)

### Stroke Modifications

Maintaining the sea kayak on edge is the key to an effective turn. Try doing a sweep stroke, edging towards the working blade then immediately bringing the kayak upright. See how quickly the kayak stops turning. Then do the same sweep stroke but keep the kayak on edge. The kayak will keep turning. It is easy enough to remain in balance utilizing the secondary stability of the kayak on flat water. It is necessary to modify some strokes in bouncy water so that you can maintain the kayak on edge without losing your balance and potentially capsizing. Try these techniques to help you stay on edge:

#### Forward Sweep Stroke with Low Brace Recovery

Shorten the stroke to just do the first two thirds of the forward sweep with a climbing angle on the blade. At the finish of the sweep, skim the blade forwards for the next catch in the LOW brace position (backside of the blade on surface of the water; elbows high), controlling the angle of the blade face with the elbow.



*A vertical blade provides a lot of propulsion power. But sometimes you need your blade to do other things for you...*

*By angling the blade slightly in the direction you are pulling the paddle, the paddle will both provide propulsion and support - so long as the paddle is moving!*



*This paddler is demonstrating the low brace recovery. After finishing his modified sweep stroke, he skims his blade back to the front of his boat in a low brace position.*

## Reverse Sweep with High Brace Recovery

Again, shorten the stroke to just do the first two thirds of the reverse sweep with a climbing angle to blade. At the finish of the sweep, skim the blade backwards for the next catch in the HIGH brace position (power face of the blade on the surface of the water, elbows tucked in), controlling the angle of the blade face with the elbow.

With both the low brace and high brace recovery techniques, the key is to keep the blade moving with a climbing angle, where the leading edge of the blade is angled up to keep the blade on the surface of the water, thus giving you support.

## Bow Rudder Initiated with Forward Sweep

The Bow Rudder is a stylish stroke but in a sea kayak, particularly in bouncy water, it needs to be combined with speed, a modified Forward Sweep stroke and lots of edge to be

effective. Having generated enough momentum to carry you through the turn, you initiate the turn with an effective modified Forward Sweep stroke; edging towards the working blade by weighting the sit bone on the side away from the direction you wish to turn.

In relatively calm water remain on that outside edge and place the blade in the water between the knee and foot on side you want to turn towards in a neutral (slicing) position. Ensure the paddle shaft is near vertical with your top hand in front of your forehead and your control hand elbow bent tucked into your life jacket. Progressively open up the power face of blade towards your direction of travel. Feel the pressure of water on the power face of the blade. If you fix the paddle in that position, the kayak will turn around it. Close down the blade angle as you lose speed and bring the kayak upright by equalizing the weight on both sit bones. Go immediately into a forward stroke to maintain your momentum.

## Low Brace Turn Initiated with Forward Sweep

The Low Brace Turn is a very effective and stable stroke in a sea kayak, but again needs to be combined with speed, a forward sweep stroke and lots of edge to be effective. Having generated enough momentum to carry you through the turn, you need to initiate the turn with an effective forward sweep stroke; edging towards the working blade by weighting the sit bone on the side away from the direction you wish to turn.

In relatively calm water remain on that outside edge and place the back of the blade on the surface of the water on the side you want to turn towards in a neutral (slicing) position. Ensure the paddle shaft is near horizontal with your elbows high. Increase the climbing angle of the blade and feel the pressure of water on the back of the blade. If you fix the paddle in that position, the kayak will turn around it. Close down the blade angle as you lose speed and

## Notes on Edging

During the Bow Rudder or Low Brace phase of the turn you can edge away from or into the turn (inside or outside). Edging away from the turn is very effective but can feel a little awkward in bouncy water. Try doing a modified forward sweep stroke and then transferring to your inside edge for the Bow Rudder/Low Brace. See how this affects the radius of the turn and how stable you feel. If you are moving really fast you can lean onto the paddle blade if you use a slight climbing angle on the blade. Be sure to get back into balance as you lose speed through the turn.

Outside edge: maintains momentum for slow speed turn and is good for full length sea kayak and/or relatively calm water.

Inside edge: faster turn but kills your speed and is good for shorter sea kayak or whitewater kayak and/or rough water conditions. Edging into the turn is more stable but does mean you need to switch edge from the sweep stroke side.

bring the kayak upright by equalizing the weight on both sit bones. Go immediately into a forward stroke to maintain your momentum.

Remember, you need speed to make these strokes effective. Depending on the kayak design, each technique should turn you approximately 90 degrees. Practice them in calm conditions and then put them to use in more realistic conditions and see how they work for you. Like any new skill it takes time and practice to achieve muscle memory and feel confident. ♪

*Sean is an ACA Level 5 Advanced Open Water Instructor and is supported by P&H Sea Kayaks, Werner Paddles and Kokatat Watersports Wear. Sean teaches for California Canoe & Kayak and is co-organizer of the Golden Gate Sea Kayak Symposium.*

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## Care, Comfort, and Confidence: First Strokes for a Lifetime of Paddling

by Joseph Carr Ritchie



*The author paddling  
with his son in  
Half Moon Bay*

I didn't paddle regularly until I took a job teaching science lessons in canoes. I was hired for my educational abilities, not my paddling skills. Fortunately, my stepfather had taken me on a handful of canoe fishing trips in my youth. Those positive paddling experiences and fond memories of stepfather-and-son time on the water gave me the confidence to get back in a canoe after more than a decade off the water.

By that time, I had a son of my own: Jack. Hoping to enjoy decades on the water with my growing family, I introduced Jack to paddling as soon as I could trust him to stay in a boat. With proper caution and attention to his comfort, I have helped my son develop the confidence he needs to launch a lifetime of canoeing and kayaking. I hope our story can help you begin your own journey.

It always helps to start something new with a spark, and we first kindled our collective paddling passion at a family reunion on the Guadalupe River in Texas just before Jack's fourth birthday. Between meeting new people and exploring a new place, trying a new activity seemed perfectly natural. Jack had splashed in the river enough to feel comfortable in the warm water, and he had already grown accustomed to using pool floats, so it didn't take much convincing to have him put on a personal flotation device (PFD) and hop in the middle of a canoe for a quick paddle.

Such a lazy, shallow river on a calm day didn't seem threatening, but I still felt safer heading out with proper training in paddling and rescue techniques along with a second boat full of cousins. We did end up getting wet, but only because we chose to step out of the boat and splash when we reached water too shallow for paddling. We kept our trip short and playful, and must have included enough in the way of fish, birds, trees, clouds, and splashing to keep it interesting, because Jack wanted to take the canoe up the river again and again during our time in Texas. We returned to California with hopes of making paddling a regular part of our family life.

We retained our fond memories of paddling in Texas; we just needed a new spark to get us kayaking our home waters.

The spark for getting us back paddling would come two years later like a flaming arrow from the time of our Scandinavian ancestors, when I suggested to Jack that we start taking our imaginary Viking adventures on the water. It worked. With his toy axe and sword in hand, he eagerly donned his "paddling armor"—warm clothes and a PFD—and eased into the front seat of the sit-on-top tandem I'd chosen for its solid primary stability and comfortable seating. I paddled from the center position with him at my feet. This helped him feel secure, gave me best control the craft, and helped us both hear each other without having to shout. A bit like Leif Eiriksson more than a millennium before, we set out to see whatever we could find.



*Spotting wildlife with three generations of the family*

By this time he had started first grade and I had started kayaking regularly. In addition to learning new paddling and rescue techniques, I began learning as much as I could about different types of kayaks, paddles, and PFDs.

Jack may have left shore heavily armed, but the peace of paddling quickly calmed him. Even as car alarms brayed and jets roared over the lagoon by San Francisco International Airport, he remarked that paddling “feels quiet.” After about half an hour of inspecting docks and boats

and looping around flocks of floating water birds, we returned to shore with both our battle and paddle blades raised in triumph. We’d found a way to make our father-son bond even deeper.

We didn’t take long to lure Jack’s stepmother, aunt, uncles, and grandfather onto the water with us. Comfortable Type III PFDs and stable, sit-on-top double and triple kayaks helped three generations at once feel secure on the water, while the kind of close encounters with the gulls, pelicans, and harbor seals of Pillar Point Harbor that we could never get on land have kept us coming back to kayaking week after week. On our last paddle, Jack felt so comfortable and confident that after an hour on the water, he wanted to go back out on the water to save a red rock crab—he named it “Red Buddy”—we’d seen trapped on an abandoned fishing line. One borrowed knife and thirty extra minutes of paddling later, and we were no longer just paddlers; we were “heroes!”



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*Releasing our inner Viking*



*All sorts of paddle craft can appeal to kids.  
Photo provided by Advanced Elements*

With care, our family has become comfortable in canoes and kayaks. We are developing the confidence we'll need for longer, more adventurous paddles. Jack has even started talking about which kayaks have "lots of rocker" and what rudders and skegs do. So while he does not yet feel confident enough to paddle his own boat, it seems like it's only a matter of time. And his baby brother, Rune, can just about sit up on his own...

The journey begins with care, comfort, and confidence. Take care, get comfortable, and start with small, short trips to develop your child's confidence. You'll have the whole brood on the water before you know it. ♡

*Joseph Carr Ritchie paddled his first canoe on a lake in Wisconsin and his first kayak off Maui, but he does most of his paddling, selling, renting, tour guiding, educating, living, and breathing of canoes and kayaks closer to his home in Half Moon Bay, where he lives with his wife and his two young sons.*

*Photos not otherwise attributed are by Joseph or his wife, Elinor Anderson*

## A Checklist for Paddling with Kids

### Must-haves:

- Personal flotation device (PFD) rated for the weight of your child. Many Type III child- and youth-specific PFDs feature pockets for binoculars, cameras, snacks, or cold hands!
- Sun protection appropriate for conditions. Sunscreen (applied correctly and reapplied as necessary), hat, sunglasses (with eyewear retainers), rash guard shirt.
- Change of clothes and towel. Even if everything goes great, your child will still probably get at least a little wet. You don't want them to stay that way.
- Tow line (if your child will paddle his or her own boat)

### Nice-to-haves:

- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Dry bag with snacks
- Paddling jacket and/or wetsuit. Nothing will turn your child off from the sport faster than associating paddling with feeling cold.

### Do:

- Do get lessons (for you, the parent) if you don't already know basic paddling and rescues.
- Do have your child try on his or her PFD (and wetsuit, if applicable) ahead of time. You don't want your trip cancelled right before you launch because your child "hates" the feeling of a PFD.
- Do plan on keeping trips short, especially at first, and make sure you can land quickly if your child's energy or interest drops.
- Do start with flat water destinations such as protected harbors, lagoons, lakes, or calm stretches of rivers.
- Do scout destinations ahead of time for possible hazards as well as points of interest. Sites that reliably provide encounters with swimming seals, swooping pelicans, or sunning turtles will pique your child's interest.
- Do keep cramps away and extremities awake by stretching before you launch and after you land.

### Don't:

- Don't set yourself up for disappointment with firm plans and grand ambitions. Getting on the water and coming off counts as a success!
- Don't lean out of, or stand in, a boat. If your child doesn't understand that they shouldn't do this now, it will be worth it to wait until they can.

# Center



Have a photo that shows the beauty of paddling or otherwise makes people think?  
We'd love to see it. Send submissions to [editor@calpaddlermag.com](mailto:editor@calpaddlermag.com).  
Include the background story and what camera was used.

# Hatch

Now that we are adding stand up paddleboards and other paddle craft to a magazine that started out as kayaks-only, we wanted to show that kayakers know how to paddle standing up.

Left: Fletcher Burton has a specially modified wave ski (a sit-on-top surf kayak) that allows him to also stand and surf, as this picture shows from the 2013 Santa Cruz Paddlefest. Photo by Chris Bensch. Camera: Canon EOS 5D

Below: Photographer Bill Vonnegut captured this picture of Gregg Berman standing up and paddling in his white water kayak on the South Fork of the American River. Camera: Pentax Optio W30



# Big Bear: a World Apart

by Meade Fischer



At 6,700 feet, Big Bear is an island in the sky: cool, green and wet, surrounded by a sea of hot, brown, dusty desert. While only 99 miles east of LA, it's a world apart, one of the few true mountain lake resorts in Southern California.

For the paddler, particularly from the northern part of the state, it's easy to overlook Big Bear, a man-made, seven mile long lake (and 2.5 miles wide at its widest), often just thought of as a place to fish or ski. This erroneous image arises because you don't really get this lake when driving along the shore, catching views between the buildings and trees. Once you're on the water, the scenery opens up and takes you in. The lake is surrounded by high ridges, and on the south, by the snow-capped San Gorgonio Wilderness. The shoreline is a series of points and bays,



along with intricate, often cathedral-like patterns of granite boulders on the west end. The blue sky often has big, puffy clouds sailing by, and paddling can seem remarkably warm, even when the day's high is 55°F, as it was in May.

I got lucky on May 8, a sunny morning sandwiched between rainy days. Early in the morning I met up with Jim and Janet Dooley at their North Shore Trading Company, the only full service paddling store on the lake. Joining us was Dan McKernan of the Big Bear Lake Resort Association. Serena Saunders, manager of Captain John's Fawn Harbor & Marina and the daughter of Captain John, joined us, along with her friend, Tammy Ardigo, a stand up paddle and yoga instructor. Another local couple, Ernst Mueller and Susan Maya rounded out the group. Ernst has the distinction of paddling the lake in each of the last twelve months, even when the lake was almost frozen over in January. It rained near the end of the month, opening up a channel in the ice, enough for a short paddle. Maya is a ski instructor in winter. Apparently a sign of the times, five of the eight of us were on stand up paddleboards (SUPs).

While we explored the western end of the lake, the most scenic end, Jim and Janet filled me in on the Big Bear PaddleFest, which has been steadily growing over the years. The 2012 event had 180 participants, and this year they hope for 300. Some big corporate sponsors provide prizes for this event. The longer race, the 20K, around the perimeter of the lake has a \$500 prize, and for the other events, the prizes would be schwag from the sponsors. These events include a 10K, 5K along with relays, sprints and events for kids. And after the daytime races

and events wind down, the after party will start up, running into the evening. This will be a beach party Big Bear style.

While there are many places to launch, including the marinas, Swim Beach Park and the parks at Boulder Bay and Grout Bay, we launched at Mursick Beach, a locals-only spot on the north shore. Since the night's low was in the 30s, I was dressed in layers. However, by the time we got on the water, at about 8:45 am, the air felt warmer than indicated on the thermometer. Even after peeling down to two layers, by the time we returned it still felt like I wore too much. The two young ladies on SUPs were wearing shorty wet suits and seemed comfortable.

May is a transition month in Big Bear. It can rain or be sunny, and it can occasionally snow. The days can be in the fifties or the seventies. By June, the summer weather kicks in, with days in the seventies or even the low eighties. It was hard to believe that only three months earlier the lake was almost covered by a layer of ice. The normal paddle season, except for hard core paddlers like Ernst, is mid-April through Oct. A few other paddlers were out on the lake, but the real season was still a month away.

We paddled west almost to the dam, and I learned that when the first dam was built in the 1880s, Big Bear Lake

became the largest man-made lake in the world, touted by many as the eighth wonder of the world. It was built to water the expanding citrus industry in Riverside County. Then we turned and headed up the south-western shore, to my mind the most scenic part of the lake.

We passed a rocky island the locals call China Island because of the oriental style pagodas. This is a housing complex owned by Captain John's family. The entire island, like most of the south-western shoreline, looked like a huge stack of outsized boulders, many the size of a cabin. Another house, high on the shore, seemed to be growing right out of the rocks. Dan explained that much of the housing is on National Forest leased land, and when the builder wanted to remove the rocks to make way for the house, he was told "no way".

Then we paddled into Boulder Bay, which looks like something you'd find on a picture postcard, with two large boulder islands and many small rocks jutting out of the calm water. We wound between the rocks and islands for a while, looking down into the clear water or up at the fancy homes high on the rocky shore, before heading back toward the middle of the lake, where we hit the beginning of what would be the afternoon breeze. My 14-foot sit-on-top kayak normally tracks well, but today it started to yawl with the side wind, reminding me to buy a rudder. It seems that, like so many places, the wind almost always comes up in the afternoon. The only surprise is how windy it will get.

As we pushed through the light chop, Jim was excited about the PaddleFest, telling me that last year's best time was achieved on a SUP, a 20 foot by 24 inch speed monster. The year before, a 19' Kevlar sea kayak turned in the best time. It seems that in Big Bear, like most places, SUP is the wave of the future.

When we arrived back at Mursick Beach, I was wishing we had time to explore the entire lake, but that would



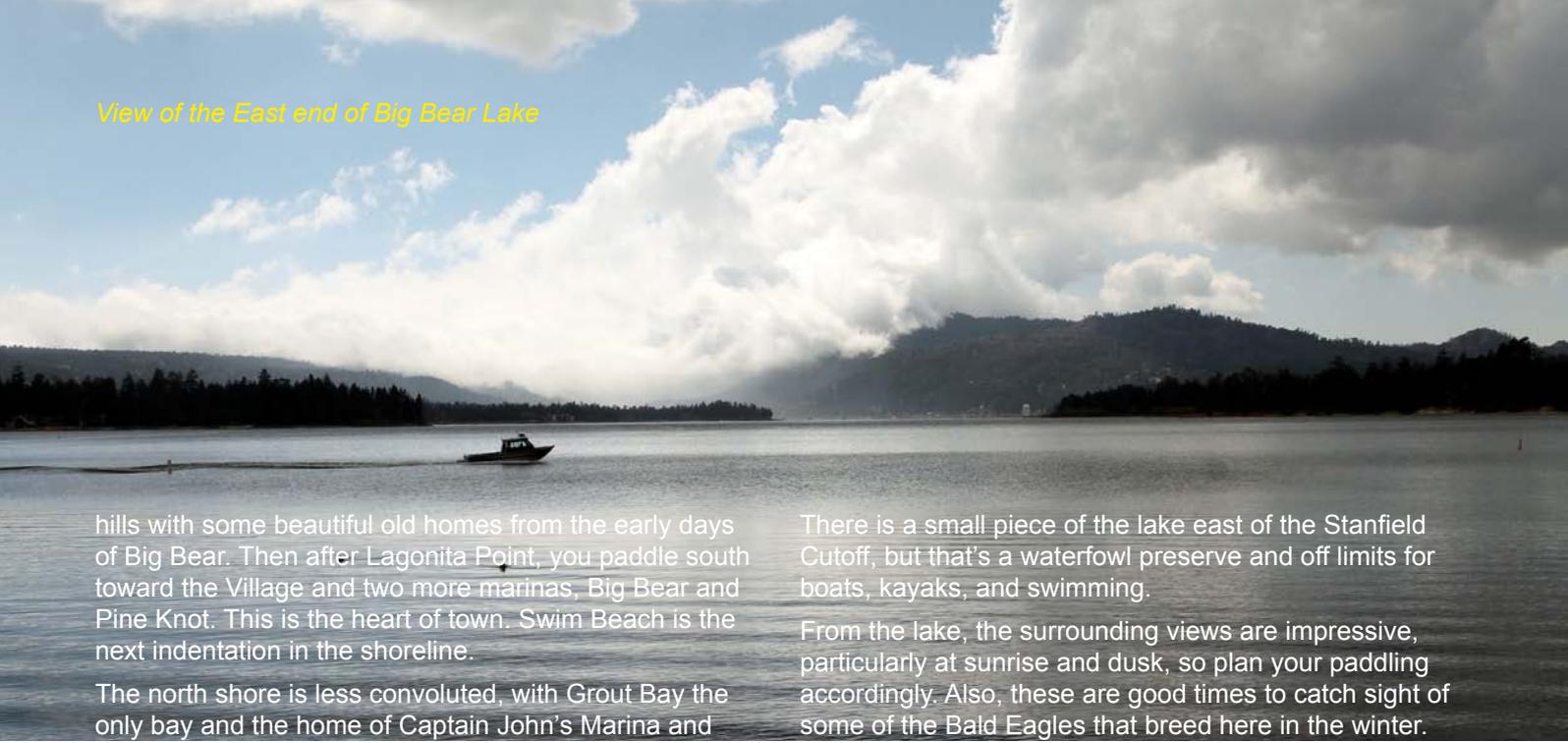
have to wait for another day, as the others had to work.

For the person who prefers kayak angling to racing, Big Bear is a great fishing destination, and many of the local businesses have pictures of people proudly holding up some sizable fish. There is also a money prize fishing event in June.

Swim Beach, the launch and party site for Big Bear PaddleFest, is in a cove near the eastern end of the south shore at Meadow Park with restrooms and plenty of parking. The wide sandy beach has lots of room for kayaks.

From Boulder Bay, headed toward Swim Beach, you paddle past the one big town, Big Bear Lake. The deep Metcalf Bay is next, home to Hallways and Pleasure Point marinas. Then you round Gilner Point, extending half way across the lake. Here the shore is comprised of gentle





hills with some beautiful old homes from the early days of Big Bear. Then after Lagonita Point, you paddle south toward the Village and two more marinas, Big Bear and Pine Knot. This is the heart of town. Swim Beach is the next indentation in the shoreline.

The north shore is less convoluted, with Grout Bay the only bay and the home of Captain John's Marina and another day use picnic area. This bay also has an island that's home to waterfowl, such as Mallards, Mud Hens, Wood Ducks, Great Blue Herons, and White Pelicans. You can see these birds in the marshy areas along the shore. And yes, Grout Bay is named for the grout material once mined there. There is also a solar observatory at the end of a jetty on the north shore that you can paddle up to.

There is a small piece of the lake east of the Stanfield Cutoff, but that's a waterfowl preserve and off limits for boats, kayaks, and swimming.

From the lake, the surrounding views are impressive, particularly at sunrise and dusk, so plan your paddling accordingly. Also, these are good times to catch sight of some of the Bald Eagles that breed here in the winter.

If you go, you'll need to stay at least one night, and I can recommend two excellent and reasonably priced places. Cabins 4 Less has units in several south shore locations, all on or near the lake. Plus they have kayaks for your family to enjoy while you compete. On the north shore in Fawnskin, the Quail Cove Lakeside Lodge has charming, recently remodelled cabins with a kitchen and separate bedroom, along with an outside patio with a barbecue. It's walking distance to the North Shore Cafe, a great breakfast place.

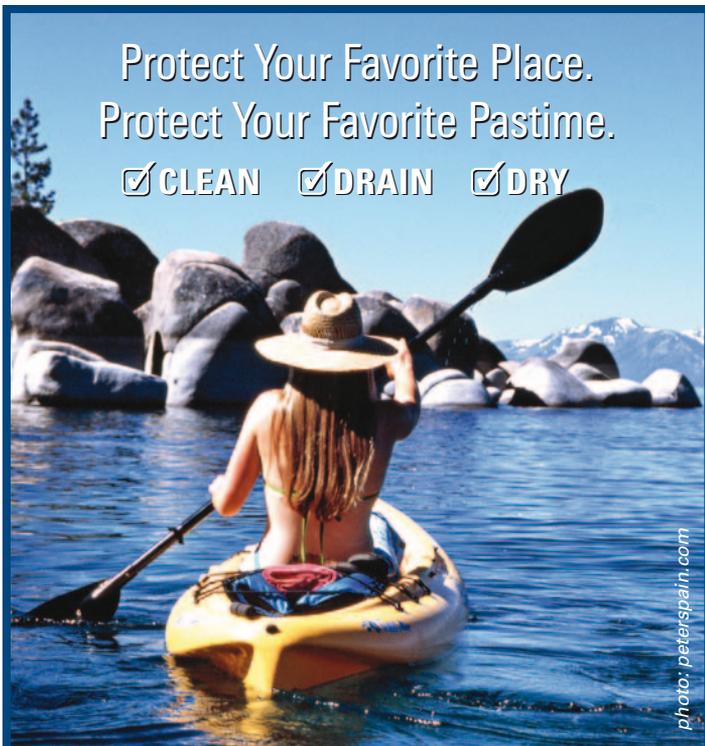
For lunch, try BLT on Big Bear Blvd. They have a five buck burger special every day. For dinner try either the Himalayan Restaurant in the village, the best northern Indian food I've ever tasted, or the Captain's Anchorage on Big Bear Boulevard near Moonridge for outstanding steak and seafood meals, along with real old fashion service.

I discovered, bringing my own kayak, that Big Bear has a \$20 inspection for Quagga and Zebra mussel. The inspections are at the East Public Boat Ramp on North Shore Drive near the Stanfield Cutoff. You can always just rent from Captain John's or any of the other four marinas, which rent kayaks, canoes, boats, and SUPs.

After you get your paddle fix on the lake, it would be worth sticking around for a couple of extra days. Big Bear offers off-road adventures, zipline tours, charter fishing, miles of mountain biking, parasailing and hiking—the Pacific Crest Trail runs just outside of town. Also the San Gorgonio Wilderness has many miles of great hiking and contains San Gorgonio Mountain, the tallest peak in Southern California. ♡

*Meade Fischer is a freelance writer, radio commentator, part-time educator, artist and environmental activist.*

*Photos by Meade Fischer.*



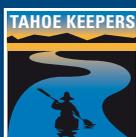
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# Crossing To Limuw

By Chuck Graham



**E**lye'wun sliced through the ink-black water with relative ease. Phosphorescence glowed beneath the surface as four Chumash Indian paddlers navigated their 24-foot long plank canoe under the cover of darkness, 22 miles to their ancestral homeland, Limuw, now known as Santa Cruz Island.

'Elye'wun (pronounced "El-E-ah-woon") means swordfish in Chumash. It's the only functional Chumash plank canoe, or tomol, in North America.

I followed the Chumash on their historic path, paddling my sit-on-top kayak across the Santa Barbara Channel while photographing their incredible journey. At 3 a.m. Chumash paddlers gathered on a quiet dock in the Channel Islands Harbor in Oxnard. A plume of smoke billowed from an abalone shell, the strong scent of sage signifying another day to be spent at sea.

By 5 a.m. the tomol was at the harbor mouth, the four paddlers gradually stroking into open ocean, somewhere out there Limuw beckoned. Another 90 minutes passed and the first rays of light brightened overcast skies. Oil platform Gail loomed on the immediate horizon, but it was the soft pink hues on Anacapa and Santa Cruz that greeted the four silhouetted paddlers.

With the first light of a new dawn, other Chumash paddlers situated on a support boat called out to their brothers, sounds of encouragement bellowing across the sea.

## In The Sea

Limuw—part of the Channel Islands National Park—was home to the largest Chumash village, Swaxil, with a population varying between 500 to 2,000 villagers. The Chumash have now made several successful crossings to the site in their traditional canoe since 2001, revitalizing a historic journey frequented by their distant ances-

tors. Before that first crossing in 2001, the last Chumash tomols were reportedly used for fishing around 1850. The Chumash once thrived throughout their traditional region from San Luis Obispo to Malibu, and were one of the largest Native American populations on the west coast of North America. They also inhabited the four northern Channel Islands with 11 villages on Santa Cruz, eight on Santa Rosa and two on San Miguel. Due to the lack of a reliable water source on Anacapa, the narrow islet was inhabited seasonally.

The Chumash were a true maritime culture, hunting, fishing and reaping the natural resources provided by the ocean and the coastal mountains. Historically, the tomol was made from redwood trees found floating in the ocean, anywhere from eight to 30-feet long. It was constructed of a single piece of wood for the floor, with three or four rows of planks. Milkweed, yucca, dogbane, or sinew from mule deer was used as cordage to bind the tomol together. Yop, a glue consisting of a mixture of pine pitch and asphaltum (a natural tar-like substance that washes ashore from oil seepages) was used to seal the space between planks. "It's our super glue," said Chumash elder, Marcus Lopez. Sharkskin was used for sanding, red ochre for staining, and abalone for inlay and embellishment. A swordfish of inlaid shells was on one of the ears of the 'Elye'wun.

The tomol linked the islanders with the mainland villages that numbered well over 100. Michumash is the word from which Chumash is derived. Translated, it means "makers of shell bead money," and is the term mainland Chumash used to refer to those inhabiting the islands. 'Achum, or shell bead money was "minted" by the islanders using small discs shaped from Olivella shell and drills manufactured from Santa Cruz Island chert. Shell bead money was exchanged with mainland villages for resources and manufactured goods that were unavailable on the island.

*'Elye'wun (swordfish) on the bow of the Chumash tomol*



### Songs For The Journey

Reggie Pagaling, a member of the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, sang a melodious tune as they reached the center of the channel. As he steered the tomol his words inspired a steady rhythm, the four paddlers worked in unison toward their historic quest.

“They’re just happy songs,” explained Pagaling, a Chumash tribal elder. “It makes the crossing more enjoyable and takes the paddlers’ mind off the task at hand, while unifying them.”

It worked with me as well, the mo-

notony of the crossing washed away as I observed their heavy paddles pulling through capping seas as they paddled on their knees leaning forward into swell and wind.

With six more miles left in their wake, the Chumash made another transition of paddlers from the support boat. Four new paddlers forged ahead into the shipping lanes. As large as these cargo ships are, it’s a classic case of “now you see them, now you don’t.” It seemed like they weren’t moving fast until we got fairly close to one, a steep wave cresting off its bow.

### Building Bridges

“The crossing is meant to create bridges for different communities,” said Lopez, a Chumash Maritime Association member, and along with Pagaling, captain of ‘Elye’wun, “both internally and externally.”

However, the Chumash have been crossing the channel for millennia, and according to Chumash lore the first Chumash people came from Limuw. Hutash, the Earth Mother was married to Alchupo’osh, Sky Snake, the Milky Way. The Chumash were created from a magic plant, and Alchupo’osh used his tongue to make lightning bolts, building fire to keep the Chumash warm and to cook food. Now introduced to fire, the Chumash lived more comfortably and proliferated as their island villages grew. Limuw became crowded and the noise increased, annoying Hutash. She decided to move some of the Chumash off Limuw to the mainland where no people lived.

Hutash created a rainbow, long and high stretching from the tallest mountain on Limuw (Diablo Mountain) to the Tzchimoos, the peak

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near Mishopshno (Carpinteria). She told the Chumash to cross the rainbow bridge and proliferate the world. As they made the journey, some made the mistake of looking down to the fog swirling below. Some of the Chumash got dizzy and fell into the ocean. Hutash didn't want anyone to drown, so she transformed them into dolphins. The Chumash consider dolphins as their brothers and sisters.

For a brief moment a small pod of common dolphins greeted us with the sun directly overhead, breaching out of windblown waves toward our bows. Hoots and hollers followed coming from the support boat before their pelagic siblings dove deep beneath our boats.

### Coming Home

The ridge line from Cavern Point was clearly distinct, running evenly toward the southeast end of Santa Cruz before descending into Scorpion Anchorage. Two of the next generation of Chumash were now paddling the tomol to Limuw, paddling in rhythm with Lopez at the helm.

Several weeks prior, Lopez told me the crossing was one way to involve the next generation into a rich culture of boat building, artisans and fishermen. The boat builders were in the upper echelon of Chumash society.

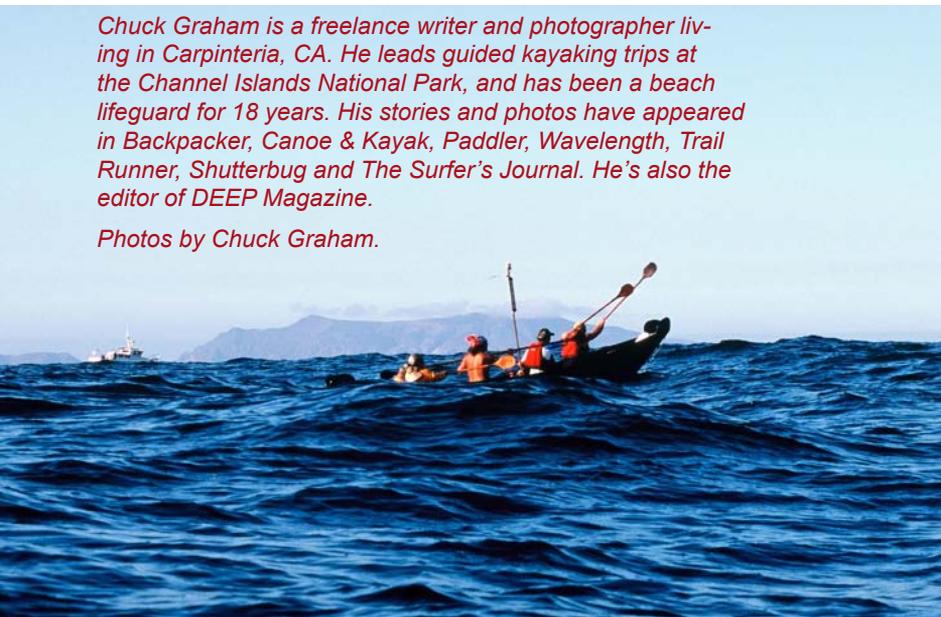
"We're trying to train the younger generation," said Lopez, who has helped build five tomols, "so they can gain that balance and harmony."

I've never seen Scorpion Anchorage so alive. At least 200 Chumash and well wishers greeted the 19 Chumash paddlers as the tomol reached the cobbled shore. The women sang ancient songs as the tomol approached, and a throng of Chumash helped carry the tomol up the beach.

"We're part of that revitalization," said Ray Ward, who with his two sons and brother Matt were part of the paddling contingent across the channel. "We really don't want to disappear." ♪

*Chuck Graham is a freelance writer and photographer living in Carpinteria, CA. He leads guided kayaking trips at the Channel Islands National Park, and has been a beach lifeguard for 18 years. His stories and photos have appeared in Backpacker, Canoe & Kayak, Paddler, Wavelength, Trail Runner, Shutterbug and The Surfer's Journal. He's also the editor of DEEP Magazine.*

*Photos by Chuck Graham.*



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*Chumash paddies*

# This Is The Sea 5

I have the first 4 DVDs from the This Is The Sea series, so I was excited to hear that Justine Curgenvén was coming out with a 5th edition. They call these kayak documentaries, but I call them kayak porn. I find them inspirational to watch during times when I can't be out paddling. Did this 5th release meet up to my expectations?

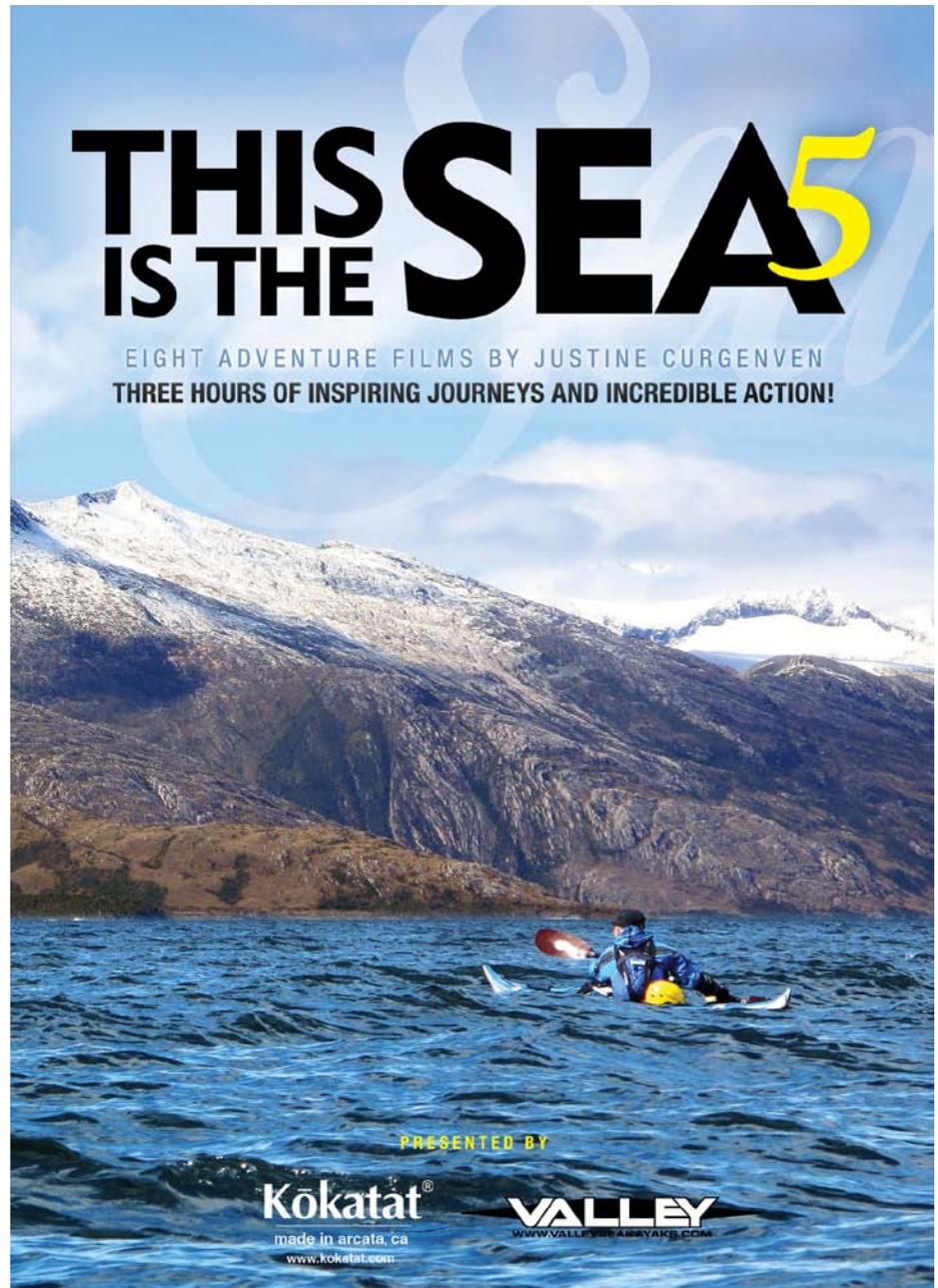
This DVD contains 8 adventure sea kayaking films from Russia, Japan, Spain, Hawaii, England, Wales, Sardinia, Argentina, Chile, and Sicily. It features Paul Kuthe surfing, Turner Wilson rough water rolling, Harry Whelan surfing ferry wakes on the River Thames and World Champions Oscar Chalupsky and Greg Barton surf skiing.

The disk has some 3 hours of content to watch, and all was filmed in high definition.

The video's trailer can be seen at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGfmUD8FHF1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sGfmUD8FHF1).

In general, Curgenvén's filming and editing have improved with each release, with this one the most professional. This is likely both from her improved experience as a filmmaker, and also from advancements in waterproof camera technology.

Both of our reviewers found that all the segments were interesting to watch. We both liked the long voyage segments best, specifically Sarah Outen's round-the-world trek and Curgenvén's circumnavigation around Tierra del Fuego in South America. This provided a kayaker's view of a place we do not expect to ever paddle. Though Outen is now out of her kayak and in a rowboat for the crossing from Japan to the U.S., her story is captivating enough that we check her website ([www.sarahouten.com](http://www.sarahouten.com)) occasionally.



The one that most makes us want to travel was the Islands of Fire in Italy's Aeolian Islands. Though there were two segments on paddling in Italy, the Sardinian downpours were not as pleasant to watch as island hopping, pumice rafts, lava geysers, and sunny days shown in Islands of Fire.

This is not meant as an instructional

### The Good

- Great filming.
- Captivating content.

### The Not So Good

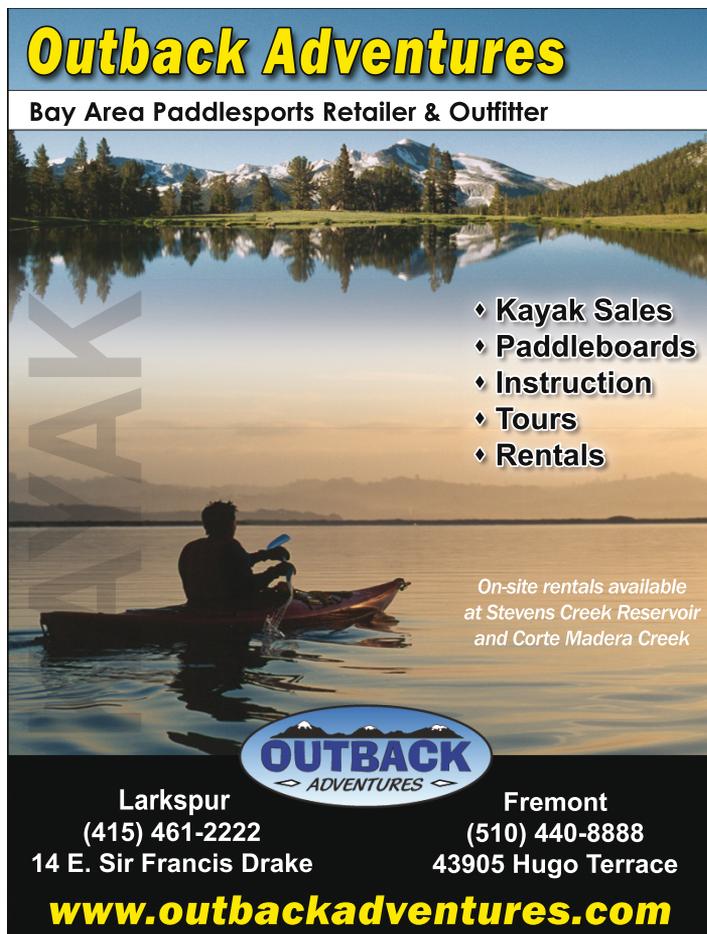
- Where is the West Coast U.S. content?
- Defaults to Italian subtitles on some DVD players.

DVD, but it is hard not to try to glean something useful from watching these paddlers riding boat wakes, rolling, and surfing. Whelan's segment may have been easiest to connect his description with the video, though I doubt I will ever want to get that close to a ferry. Kuthe's segment showed him describing situations and maneuvers between surf clips. Kuthe did give some pointers on surfing, but the advice was unfortunately not well coordinated with the action clips. Too bad it wasn't arranged so that each tip was followed by a video clip example. It was easier to follow Turner Wilson's descriptions of using the wave energy where his description was followed by a clip showing him doing just that. There's a lot to get out of what is not meant as an instructional video, but only as kayak porn.

We did have a couple of minor complaints. First, one of our reviewers had some sort of bug where the video would start with Italian subtitles by default. Not a major problem to either shut them off or to watch it with the subtitles on. And of course, after watching the Islands of Fire segment, a little Italian language practice might be good as you prepare for your trip...

Also we wondered why there isn't more west coast US content? Paul Kuthe is based out of Portland, so he did provide a little bit of a local connection (but the filming of him was from the other side of the pond). Justine, please keep in mind that we have lots to offer that is well worth inclusion in future versions of this DVD series.

Overall, this video is well worth adding to your library. One of the better kayak porn products out there. It has a suggested retail price of \$29.95 and is available at your local paddle sports shop or online from [www.cackletv.com](http://www.cackletv.com).



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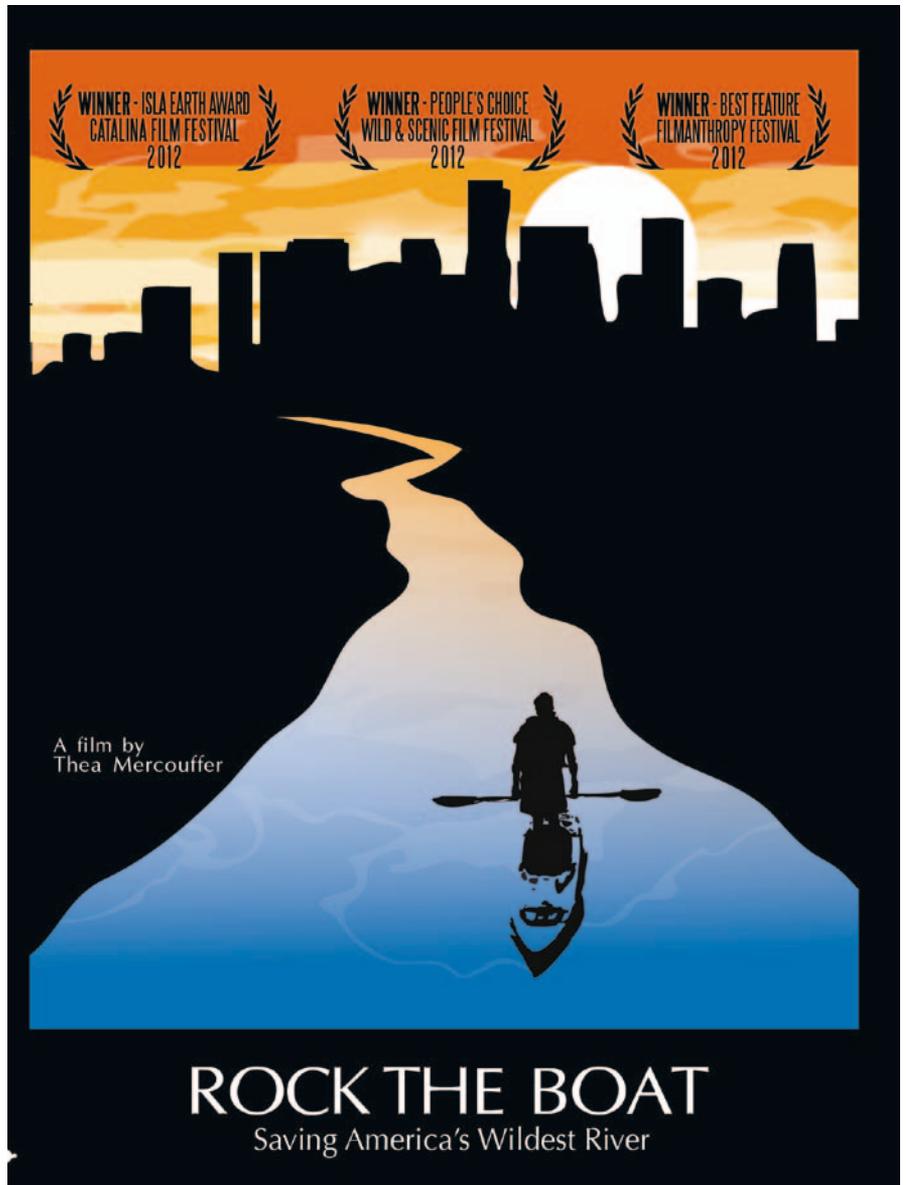


# Rock The Boat

Let me start by saying that this DVD is a bit different from the ones we normally review in this magazine. First it is on paddling a river in Los Angeles, not a place you would normally think of as a paddling destination (and a river that many Angelinos likely don't even know exists). Second, it is a documentary, where we normally do reviews on kayak porn or instructional DVDs. And lastly, the level of paddling skills displayed is nowhere near what we normally review. But this one caught our eye as one with a good message, presented humorously, and with positive results for paddling, so we decided to review it.

The story is based around some paddlers who wanted to paddle the Los Angeles River to challenge the Corps of Engineers' classification of the river as non-navigable. This classification exempts the river from environmental protections and permits the Corps to control access to the river and continue to restrain its flow in concrete culverts. The navigability of the waterway was driven home by the mix of boats that paddled the river. A trailer of the movie can be seen at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqJKQnMhT28](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MqJKQnMhT28).

The film was enjoyable to watch. The



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filmmakers kept a story line going, from organizing the paddle, to recording the trip down the river and ending with what they accomplished. Interspersed through the main story are informative interviews with a number of different individuals with different connections to the river and narrated background segments. There is also a bit of scandal in a side story about a government whistleblower. The interviews and history segments help to put the paddle into context and explain why the paddle was important to the

### The Good

- Great use of humor.
- Good cause and results.

### The Not So Good

- Well worth watching, but not necessarily something that you'd want to buy the DVD. Find a local showing on a big screen.



organizers and their supporters and its significance not only to the Los Angeles area but to the entire Southwest.

The film looked into the federal management policy for waterways. The rules distinguish waterways that usually contain water from those that are frequently dry, with fewer environmental protections for the latter. The film makes the point that in the Southwest, many tributaries to important waterways are dry much of the year and that the policy would exempt many of these tributaries from the Clean Water Act, with possible harmful downstream consequences.

The film tells the story of how the river came to be channelled. Without judging past decisions, the filmmakers take the position that the decisions of a past century are not appropriate for present-day Los Angeles. They go on to share their vision of what a restored river could offer the region in water management and recreation.

The activists succeeded in changing policy that governs the management of the Los Angeles River. For an update on the status of paddler access on the Los Angeles River, see the News section starting on page 5 of this magazine.

This is not the type of DVD one would normally want to own, so it may be more cost effective to find a local showing of this movie on a big screen. The sound and video quality were quite good, so it would look good on that larger screen. The audio seemed especially good considering most of it was filmed outside. There were one or two wildlife shots that were of lower quality.

Then again, buying the DVD would support the cause of river access, so that could be a reason in itself to pick up a copy.

The DVD has a 54-minute run time and can be purchased from [www.rocktheboatfilm.com](http://www.rocktheboatfilm.com) for \$24.95. ♪

*Is this a river? Picture shows the paddlers proving a point that the LA River is navigable. Hopefully this will work toward the concrete being removed and the river being restored to a form that is more what we think of as a river.*  
Photo by Tom Andrews

An advertisement for 101 Surf Sports. At the top, the text "101 SURF SPORTS" is written in a large, bold, black font. Below it, the slogan "We are located on the water!" is written in a yellow, italicized font. The central image shows a woman in a black wetsuit and sunglasses standing on a yellow stand-up paddleboard (SUP) on a body of water. To the right of the woman is a shield-shaped logo with "SAN RAFAEL" at the top, "101" in the center, and "SURF SPORTS" at the bottom. Below the image, a list of services is provided: "RENTALS", "LESSONS", "REPAIRS", "PARTIES", "TOURS", and "SALES". A Facebook logo is positioned to the left of the woman. At the bottom, the text "stand up paddling kayaking windsurfing kiteboarding surfing" is written in a white font, followed by the address "115 Third Street, San Rafael Ca" in a yellow font, and the phone number "415-524-8492" and website "www.101surfsports.com" in a black font.

# The BC Coast Explorer and Marine Trail Guide Vol. 1

If you are looking for excellent coastal paddling outside of California or Oregon, Vancouver Island would be high on most anyone's list. But where would you find the information you need for a trip north?

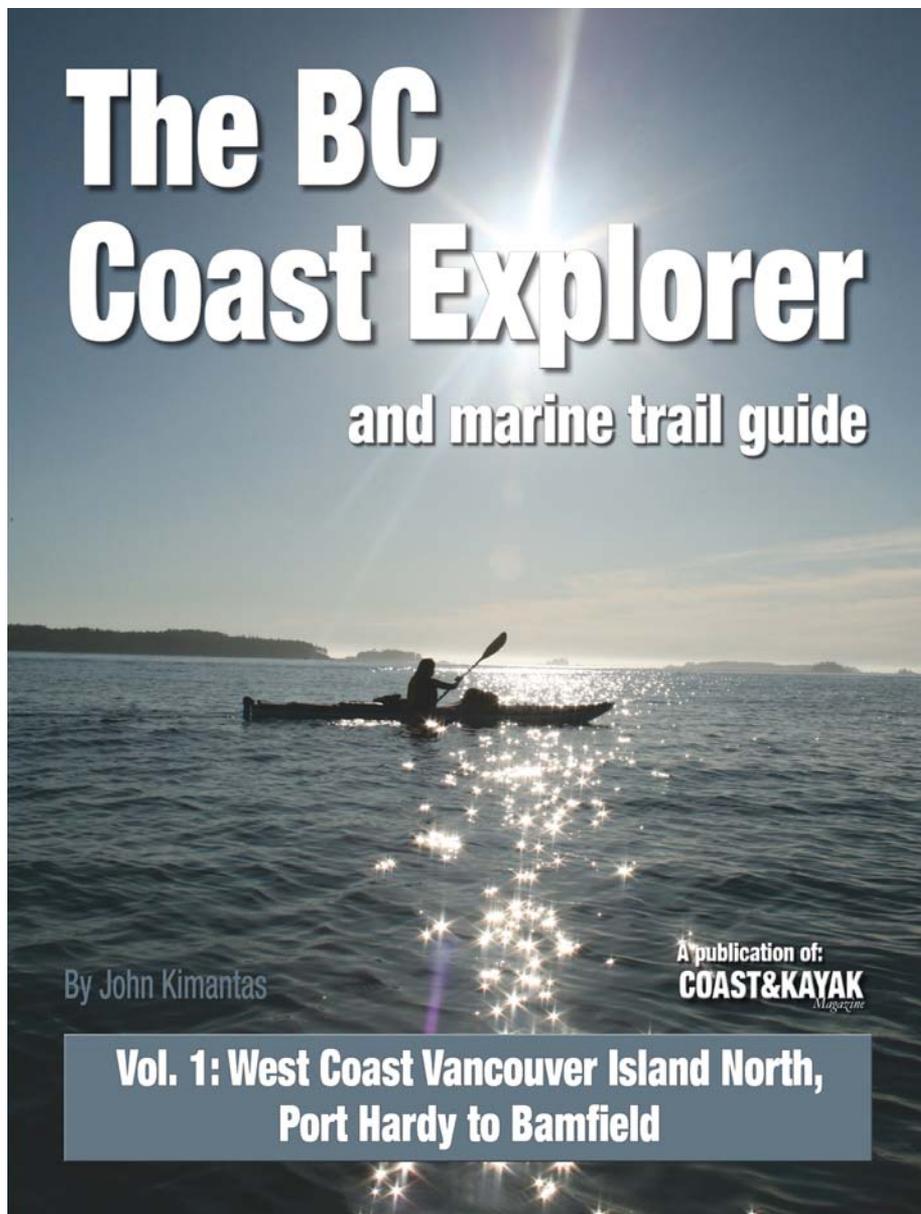
One option is the new BC Coast Explorer Volume 1. This guidebook covers West and North Vancouver Island destinations, and is a rewrite of the previous Volume 1 in the series "The Wild Coast," published in 2005. The same region is covered, but with updated information and a new and improved format.

The book names can be a little confusing. The volume numbers refer to regions, not revisions. Volume 2 of the Wild Coast books covering North and Central British Columbia coast destinations (from north of Vancouver Island to Alaskan border) and Volume 3 covering south British Columbia coast/eastern Vancouver Island destinations.

The BC Coast Explorer Volume 1 contains high quality maps with satellite imagery overlay. It has route details for many coastal explorations between Port Hardy and Barkley Sound. Areas include God's Pocket, North Coast Trail, Cape Scott, Quatsino Sound, Brooks Peninsula, Kyuquot Sound, Nootka Sound and Clayoquot Sound.

This guidebook is published by John Kimantas, who is also the publisher of The Wild Coast Guidebook series and *Coast & Kayak Magazine* (formerly *Wavelength Magazine*), a magazine focusing on kayaking in the Pacific Northwest. You probably couldn't find a more knowledgeable source of information for this area.

So how well does this guidebook work? Since I have limited experi-



ence paddling the areas covered, I enlisted the help of both a paddler who is currently using the book as she prepares for a trip this summer (but has not ever paddled there) and also a paddler who used the prior Wild Coast books for Vancouver Island trips she took.

Our trip planner found that the book provided an incredible amount of detail and seemed far more useful for

### The Good

- Best guidebook for western Vancouver Island.
- New larger format is easier to photocopy the sections you would need for your trip.

### The Not So Good

- If you don't know the Island, get a road map or atlas for reference.

trip planning than the two other guidebooks she borrowed. It informed her about what conditions she might expect to encounter in various areas, and contained great information about beach orientation and potential difficulty of landing/launching. This is often very important information when planning an expedition.

The one issue she had was figuring out where things are, as she is not yet familiar with the layout of the island. To someone who lives there or has visited before, it would probably make a lot of sense, but if you are new to the area it can be initially confusing. Looking back at the overall map at the start of the guide helped.

In comparing the previous Wild Coast guidebook to this new version, our experienced Vancouver Island expeditioner immediately noted that the new version is a much larger format: 8.5"x11"x3/4" versus the 6"x9"x1" of the original. Neither is a volume you'd be tempted to bring with you on a trip, as they are too big. She photocopied the pages she needed and left the book behind. The new larger size would be easier to photocopy.

Our reviewer said "the maps in the new version are improved over the old ones. The old ones were purely graphical, and easy enough to read, but the new ones overlay topographical information which helps with orientation. The maps are a bit busy for my taste, and I find myself having to really look hard to find a location while reading the trip write-ups. They aren't charts and they lack the detail for proper trip navigation planning. These are overview maps."

The BC Coast Explorer Volume 1 chapters are arranged similarly as the prior The Wild Coast book, with only one exception—the new version omits the chapter on the Juan de Fuca Strait. Perhaps this will be tucked into an updated Volume 3?

The BC Coast Explorer Volume 1 breaks the north/west third of the island into chapters, with suggested trips and suggested routes. A well seasoned kayaker would be able to knit together a few sections and make a larger trip, while newer expeditioners would likely be better off following the suggestions.

The BC Coast Explorer Volume 1 would be an excellent resource for anyone planning to paddle on western Vancouver Island. It balances tour advice with historical and archeological perspectives, with enough well-organized information to plan a trip and chart your course. But it is not a one-stop book for all your planning needs... you'll also have to take a tide log, maybe detailed nautical charts and a street map or atlas of the island.

The BC Coast Explorer Volume 1 contains 192 pages in full color, and costs \$34.95 (plus tax & \$8 shipping). It can be ordered online from [www.wavelengthmagazine.com/orderonline/index.html](http://www.wavelengthmagazine.com/orderonline/index.html)

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They all called me  
a "Deadbeat"  
because all I  
wanted to do was  
SUP and  
eat pizza.



*News - continued from page 5*

River, check out the review in this issue on page 26 of Don't Rock The Boat DVD.

**Removing Klamath River Dams?**

In April, the Department of Interior recommended removing four dams on the Klamath River, listing the action as the Preferred Alternative for a long-term solution to address native fishery and water resource issues in Oregon and California's Klamath River Basin. The recommendation was set forth in the Department's Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which provides a comprehensive review of whether partially or fully removing four dams owned and operated by PacifiCorp will help to restore salmon runs to the Klamath River. The document also examines the impacts and benefits of multiple scenarios to ecological, aesthetic, historical, cultural, social and other resource values, and how removal will impact local communities and tribes. The EIS was completed as part of the Klamath Hydroelectric Settlement Agreement.

Three of the four dams are in California north of Yreka (Siskiyou County) and the fourth is in Oregon. The study predicts dam removal would employ 4,600 people during 15 years of work, and result in an 81 percent increase in chinook and similar increases in steelhead trout and coho salmon.

The project includes habitat restoration and sediment removal, but even at \$1 billion it would cost less over time than maintaining the reservoirs and building federally mandated fish ladders.

The next step requires the Secretary of the Interior to make a determination about whether removing all four dams is within public interest. Before he can do this, Congressional action is required. Bills to this effect have been introduced in the House and the Senate in 2011, but were never brought to a vote.

More information can be found at [www.klamathrestoration.gov](http://www.klamathrestoration.gov).

**ADVERTISERS INDEX**

101 Surf Sports .....	27
Advanced Elements .....	9
Aquan Sports .....	32
Advertise with CPM.....	31
Clavey Paddlesports .....	7
CPM on Facebook .....	19
Delta Kayaks .....	2
Epic Kayaks .....	31
Eskape Sea Kayaking .....	25
Kayak Zak .....	8
Liquid Fusion Kayaking.....	12
Outback Adventures.....	25
SEA-LECT Designs.....	29
Shady Acres Park .....	26
Sunrise Mountain Sports.....	14
Tahoe Keepers.....	20
WaterTorks EcoTours.....	22
Wheeleez .....	23



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