

# PADDLE

ACA | CANOE - KAYAK - SUP - RAFT - RESCUE



## Moving Beyond Words To Action

Letter from the ACA Executive Director

## Great American Outdoors Act

Landmark Legislation Approved by U.S. Senate on June 17th

## Instructors of the Month

Robert Levin & Mike Sharp

Cover Photo: Sarah Ruhlen



# INSIDE

GUIDE TO VOL. 6, ISSUE NO. 4

---

06

---

## Membership

Lake Sebago & Sugar Island  
COVID-19 Guidelines for Paddling Instructors  
& Event Organizers

15

---

## Education

CMS Userguide & New Features  
Paddlesports Report Video  
Instructors of the Month

- Robert Levin & Mike Sharp

19

---

## Stewardship

Great American Outdoors Act Update  
Mallows Bay Nat'l Marine Sanctuary  
Gila River Conservation





**22**

## **Competition**

**Update on 2020 International Racing  
"Faces of Slalom Races"**

**26**

## **Recreation**

**Summer Paddling Photo Journal  
"A Pitch for Heeling" by Marc Ornstein**

**32**

**Moving Beyond Words to Action  
Letter from ACA  
Exec. Director**

# Who We Are

Founded in 1880, the American Canoe Association (ACA) is a national nonprofit organization serving the broader paddling public by providing education related to all aspects of paddling, stewardship support to help protect paddling environments, and sanctioning of programs and events to promote paddlesport competition and recreation.

## ACA National Office Staff

---

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Interim Executive Director                  | Beth Spilman     |
| SEI Department Manager                      | Kelsey Bracewell |
| Membership/State Director Coordinator       | Amy Ellis        |
| Membership Coordinator                      | Michelle Flynn   |
| Sprint National Coach (Development)         | Dan Henderson    |
| Compliance & Administrative Manager         | Cathlyn Huitt    |
| Sprint National Team Canoe Coach            | Aaron Huston     |
| Communications Coordinator                  | Aaron Mann       |
| Public Policy Chief                         | Brett Mayer      |
| Insurance Coordinator                       | LeighAnn Moore   |
| Education & Grant Coordinator               | Carrie Schlemmer |
| Slalom National Team Coach                  | Rafal Smolen     |
| General Manager - High Performance Programs | Rok Sribar       |
| Sprint National Team Kayak Coach            | Zsolt Szadovszki |
| Finance Manager                             | Emma Walther     |

## ACA Board of Directors

---

|  |                           |
|--|---------------------------|
| Board President                        | Robin Pope (NC)           |
| Board Vice President                   | Trey Knight (FL)          |
| Board Treasurer                        | John Traendly (GA)        |
| Board Secretary                        | Stanton Collins (GA)      |
| At-Large Director                      | William Irving (NC)       |
| At-Large Director                      | Samuel Fowlkes (NC)       |
| Independent Director                   | Heather Davis Miller (VT) |
| Independent Director                   | Adam Joseph (MD)          |
| Property Management Director           | Bill Micks (VA)           |
| Safety Education & Instruction Council | Trey Knight (FL)          |
| Competition Council                    | Marsh Jones (MN)          |
| Elite Athlete Director - Sprint        | Stanton Collins (GA)      |
| Elite Athlete Director - Slalom        | Scott Mann (VA)           |
| Elite Athlete Director - Paracanoe     | Nikiha Miller (GA)        |

## ACA NATIONAL OFFICE

503 Sophia Street, Suite 100

Fredericksburg, VA 22401 USA

+1-540-907-4460 | [aca@americancanoe.org](mailto:aca@americancanoe.org)

[www.americancanoe.org](http://www.americancanoe.org)

---

## 2020-2021 SEIC Discipline Committees

---

### Safety Education & Instruction Council Executive Committee

Chair - Trey Knight (FL)

Vice Chair - Josh Hall (SC)

Secretary - John Traendly (GA)

Past Chair - Steve Hutton (SC)

### Discipline Committee Chairs

### Other Elected Positions

Universal - Crystal Skahan (NH)

River Canoe - Mike Aronoff (VA)

Touring Canoe - Lynn Dominguez (MI)

River Kayak - Lydia Wing (NC)

Coastal Kayak - John Browning (WI)

Surf Kayak - Sean Morley (CA)

Surfski - Matthew Murphy (TX)

Prone Paddling - Robin Pope (NC)

Safety & Rescue - Sam Fowlkes (NC)

Rafting - Elisha McArthur (CO)

SUP - Anna Levesque (NC)

Intro to Paddling - Beth Wiegandt (VA)

International Rep: Ge Wu (China)

International Rep: Sandra De Ugarte (Peru)

At-Large Rep: Dale Williams (GA)

At-Large Rep: Jefferson Atkins (SC)

Engaged Athlete Rep: Pia Lord (FL)

Engaged Athlete Rep: Heidi Henkel (VT)

## 2020-2021 State Directors

---

AL-Jimmie Cummings (alstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

AK-Levi Hogan (akstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

AZ-Andrew Huff (azstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

AR-Rob Moody (arstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

CA-Jamie Eubanks (castatedirector@americancanoe.net)

CO-Lynne Carpenter (costatedirector@americancanoe.net)

DE-Chris Beckman (destatedirector@americancanoe.net)

DC-Meredith Waters (dcstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

FL-Wayne Douchkoff (flstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

GA-Laura Clower (gastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

ID-Zach Mason (idstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

IL-Jennifer Hahn (ilstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

IN-Joyce Hayes (instatedirector@americancanoe.net)

IA-Jennifer Kammeyer (iastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

KS-Jay Jeffrey (ksstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

KY-Gerry James (kystatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MD-Paula Hubbard (mdstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MA-Mike Morrison (mastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MI-Michael Gray (mistatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MS-Kelly McGinnis (msstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MO-Perry Whitaker (mostatedirector@americancanoe.net)

MT-Lee Beers (mtstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NE-Jordan Messerer (nestatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NV-Jonathan Riezman (nvstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NH-Paul Berry (nhstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NJ-Paul Serdiuk (njstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NM-Robert Levin (nmstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NY-Mike Cavanaugh (nystatedirector@americancanoe.net)

NC-Doug Stager (ncstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

ND-Matthew Sherrard (ndstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

OH-Christine Cancian (ohstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

OK-Clark Miller (okstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

OR-Sam Norgaard-Stroich (orstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

PA-Joel Johnston (pastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

PR-Omar Ramos (prstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

RI-Mark Allio (ristatedirector@americancanoe.net)

SC-Jefferson Atkins (scstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

SD-Patrick Wellner (sdstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

TN-Andrea White (tnstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

TX-Bruce Bodson (txstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

VT-Jake Taylor (vtstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

VA-Sarah Beth Dinwiddie (vastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WA-Brent Roth (wastatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WV-Meghan Roberts (wvstatedirector@americancanoe.net)

WI-Luke Martz (wistatedirector@americancanoe.net)

---

# MEMBERSHIP

## SUGAR Island

We wish we could enjoy the St. Lawrence River and make new paddling memories at ACA's Sugar Island this year. However, reopening the Canada-U.S. border will be a long, gradual process.

The risks associated with COVID-19 are constantly changing, and access to Sugar Island isn't fully within our control. Due to these circumstances, the annual ACA Sugar Island Encampment event is cancelled.

If the situation changes in the fall, Sugar Island volunteers will make efforts to complete camp work days to prepare for future use of the island. For more information about Sugar Island, or to contact the registrar, please [click here](#).

The ACA Camp at Lake Sebago is now open! Clubs and cabin renters may come this weekend to start setting up their facilities, and tent platform renters may put up their tarps. Overnight stays are permitted, and members with boats can bring them to be stored.

## LAKE Sebago

Season passes and boat storage space will be sold – so keep an eye out for the camp director. Contact [acacampcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:acacampcommittee@gmail.com) if you need an invoice emailed to you for your season pass and boat storage fees, or to ask any additional questions. All camp visitors must follow the [Covid-19 Guidelines](#) that camp has negotiated with Harriman State Park. For additional details, please visit the camp website, [here](#) and follow them on Facebook: ACASebago.



*Connect with us!*  
*@acapaddlesports*



# UPDATE

## COVID-19



This information was originally posted on May 22, 2020 and can be found on our website, [here](#).

*The information in this document is not intended or implied to be a substitute for professional legal advice or professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. All content, including text, graphics, images, and information, are provided for general informational purposes only. The knowledge and circumstances around Covid-19 are changing constantly and, as such, ACA makes no representations and assumes no responsibility for the accuracy or completeness of this information. Further, you should seek advice from legal professionals, medical professionals and/or public health officials if you have specific questions about when, and under what circumstances, you may resume operations, teach a class, hold an event, or simply go paddling. The American Canoe Association introduces people to the world of paddling and provides an instructional framework to reduce the inherent risks associated with paddling. The Covid-19 pandemic has introduced a new dimension of risk to our community, one that must be clearly understood and carefully evaluated by instructors, event and outing organizers, and individual paddlers. The guidelines which follow are intended to help decision-makers adapt their usual practices to the changing circumstances and elevated level of risk caused by Covid-19. ACA members live in all 50 states and in over 20 countries around the world. Given this diversity, it is challenging and unrealistic to provide detailed guidelines relevant to all of our members. Therefore, our overarching directive is that all paddlers adhere to federal, state, and local public health guidelines, rules, and regulations. These are subject to change, and it is imperative to closely monitor them on a regular basis.*

Covid-19 is a viral disease transmitted by respiratory droplets. It can cause a wide range of serious effects, including death. The disease can be transmitted by individuals who are not experiencing any symptoms, making it particularly difficult to control. Any contact among people introduces the risk of transmission: closer contact and/or more people increase that risk. The ACA is not a medical organization and cannot provide medical advice. Below, we have suggested practices, recommended by public health organizations such as the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), that might reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission during classes, events and outings.

These recommendations provide a general, conservative approach to responding to the Covid-19 crisis. As States and Counties begin to open, each organization and each instructor will need to take new guidance into consideration. As time progresses and we learn more, conditions will change and these recommendations may not be appropriate for all localities. For local guidance, consult your organization's medical advisor or your local health or Covid response department. Further, if you have specific medical questions, you should consult your organization's medical advisor, your personal healthcare provider, or your local health department.



## Key considerations when planning your event, class, or outing:

- **Develop a clear plan to address the typical risks associated with paddling and the heightened risk created by the Covid-19 pandemic.**
- **Be familiar with and follow all local, state, and federal guidelines and rules.**
  - These guidelines change frequently, so be sure to stay current.
  - If the guidelines do not seem consistent, it may be prudent to follow the most conservative guidance.
- **Plan and manage gatherings according to CDC guidelines.**

The CDC is likely to have the most up-to-date guidance regarding Covid-19.

- CDC guidance for managing events can be found at: [Get Your Mass Gatherings or Large Community Events Ready](#).
- If an event takes place in a local or state park, the CDC offers additional guidance at: [Parks and Recreational Facilities | COVID-19](#).
- If there is a conflict between the recommendations in this document and those advocated by the CDC, the CDC recommendations should be followed.

## Carefully consider any potential impact on the community living in the vicinity of your class or event.

- We have a responsibility to our own communities and to those communities through which we travel to access waterways and paddle.
- These communities may not have the public health infrastructure or emergency response resources to manage high rates of infection, so we should carefully consider the potential impact of using local facilities and interacting with other communities.
- Recognize that longer travel times present a higher risk for you and your participants.

## Recognize that larger groups present greater risk.

Consider changes to your normal practices, to reduce group size and duration of exposure:

- For instructors, reduce class sizes and/or offer private lessons.
- Stagger arrival and departure times for classes and events, and switch locations to prevent crowded parking lots or waterway access points.
- Use electronic [waivers](#) and other online paperwork.
- Use tools such as pre-course readings, video chats, and online discussions to present course content.

## Be willing and prepared to postpone or cancel events.

Have a plan for postponing or canceling your event or class if conditions, such as local infection rates, adverse weather, crowding, or local guidelines change:

- Consider the financial implications to you and your participants if your state or local government suddenly or unexpectedly implements more restrictive measures prior to the event or class.

- Provide participants with clear information regarding deposits and refunds which explains what will happen if a participant is unable to begin or to complete a course or event due to illness or a change in local guidelines.
- Determine how you will communicate schedule changes to your participants and ensure that you have accurate contact information for each participant.

### **Before your event, class or outing begins:**

#### **Warn and inform all participants that protection against exposure to Covid-19 cannot be guaranteed.**

- Provide a written statement to every participant clearly noting that no organization can absolutely eliminate the risks associated with Covid-19 and other infectious diseases. Consider including a statement that Covid-19 is a special concern due to the potential for disease transmission by people infected by the virus who are not exhibiting any symptoms of the disease. Document the completion of this step.
- Consider asking participants to sign a waiver that specifically addresses infectious diseases. You might also consider requesting guidance in this regard from your insurance carrier and/or legal counsel.
- ACA's insurance broker has recommended an addendum to ACA's regular waiver. This document is available at: [Sample Waiver/Release For Communicable Diseases Including COVID-19.](#)
- ACA has been advised that some insurance carriers for the outdoor industry may not cover liability claims related to allegations of Covid-19 exposure at a specific event. ACA is not aware of any insurance carrier for the outdoor industry, including our own, that has definitively stated they will cover this type of liability claim.
- ACA's insurance broker has provided an in-depth discussion of risk management and potential liability from Covid-19 claims, which is available at: [Amateur Sports and Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): How To Return to Play.](#)

#### **Perform a health screen of all participants.**

- The screen should be performed using CDC guidelines which provide a specific series of questions participants should be asked. This information is available at: [Symptoms of Coronavirus.](#)
- Some people are at higher risk for severe illness. Consider counseling people of higher risk about this concern. This information is available at: [People Who Are at Higher Risk for Severe Illness.](#)
- For more local and individualized guidance, speak with your organization's medical advisor, your personal healthcare provider, or your local health department.
  - They may recommend temperature checks of participants at an event. If so, follow their guidance regarding required personal protective equipment for the screener, methodology and timing for checking temperature, and cut off values for participation.
  - As new tools, such as vaccines and rapid Covid-19 tests, become available, health experts may recommend incorporating them into the screening process. If so, follow their recommendations regarding the application of these tools.

- If, based on the screening questions, a participant seems at an increased risk for Covid-19 infection, they should not participate in the class, event or outing. They should be directed to contact their local health department or healthcare provider for further care and direction. If there are questions regarding the significance of any finding during a health screen, speak with a healthcare provider for guidance.
- Recognize there is no screening tool that is 100% accurate. Participants who show no signs of a disease may still be infected and able to transmit Covid-19 to others. Therefore, CDC recommendations regarding hygiene, face coverings, and distancing should be followed at all times during an event or class.

### **During classes, events and outings:**

### **Provide clear direction and monitor the implementation of CDC recommended practices regarding hand hygiene, face coverings, social distancing and surface cleaning:**

#### **Hand Hygiene**

Ensure the availability of alcohol based hand sanitizer (60% alcohol or greater) or other approved anti-viral sanitizer, and soap and water for hand cleaning.

#### **Face Coverings**

CDC advises the use of face coverings to slow the spread of the virus. Therefore, we suggest all participants consider wearing face coverings while on land (unless medical conditions do not allow this). For more information, refer to the CDC guidelines available at: [Use Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow Spread](#).

Weigh the risks and benefits of face coverings for participants while they are on the water. Surgical masks must be discarded once wet and generally are inappropriate for on-water training. Cloth masks and improvised masks help prevent disease transmission when dry, but have an unknown efficacy once wet and have the potential to interfere with breathing during exertion or unexpected capsizes. Helmet wear may further complicate use of face coverings on the water. The ACA is not aware of any research that examines using, or not using, face coverings during on-water activity.

Some healthcare providers have suggested additional face protection could be gained from protective eyewear, such as face shields, goggles or safety glasses. However, eye protection also may increase the likelihood of someone touching their face to adjust the eyewear or to clear it of fogging. On the water, eye protection may be difficult to use when wearing a helmet and may create an added concern during a capsizes. Paddlers, therefore, should weigh the risks and benefits of using eye protection in their paddling venue.

## **Social Distancing**

- Maintain social distancing of at least 6 feet whenever possible.
- Recognize that some activities, such as hands on rescues, cannot be performed while maintaining social distancing.
- Consider the impact of wind when outside and, when practical, avoid being downwind of other participants.
- Consider the impact of social distancing at waterway access points and in planning shuttling logistics.

## **Surface Cleaning and Equipment Sharing**

- Surfaces touched by more than one person should be cleaned frequently.
- Participants should bring their own equipment whenever possible, including life jackets, paddles, boats, flotation bags, and helmets. If not possible, event organizers should ensure that equipment is assigned to a single person for the duration of the event and cleaned properly before use by anyone else. Equipment should not be shared unless thorough cleaning can be performed between uses, to include the appropriate contact time to ensure elimination of the virus. CDC recommendations for cleaning are found at:
  - [Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes](#)
  - [Cleaning and Disinfecting Your Facility](#)

## **Repeat health screenings during multi-day events.**

- At the beginning of each day of a class or event, repeat the health screening protocol described above.
- If, based on the screening questions, a participant seems at risk for infection with Covid-19, they should discontinue participating in the class, event or outing. They should be directed to contact their local health department or healthcare provider for further care and direction.

## **Recognize that some activities, such as rescues, wet exits, and roll instruction, require close contact and could possibly place participants at higher risk of exposure.**

Activities that require prolonged close contact, such as roll instruction, should be avoided unless allowed after consultation with local public health officials or your organization's medical advisor.

Simple activities such as sharing a small eddy or launching at a small access ramp may place participants at higher risk. Take steps to reduce the risk of these activities. Steps might include, but are not limited to:

- Assessing self-rescue skills at the beginning of, or prior to, the course or event.
- Ensuring all participants use the appropriate gear including, but not limited to, life jackets, leashes (if applicable), and proper thermal protection.
- Working in venues that allow adequate distancing.
- Working in conditions that are less challenging to all of the participants in order to reduce the need for rescue.

## **Be a good steward of the environment and communities we visit.**

In addition to implementing the practices described above, paddlers should consider the potential consequences of their paddling-related decisions in regards to short- and long- term access to resources such as public lands and water, state and national parks, trails, waterway access points, and community facilities. We must also take care to protect the communities near these resources, to reduce the risk of transmission to areas that might not have the infrastructure to manage high rates of infection.

Because there is currently a heightened level of sensitivity surrounding access to resources and corresponding infrastructure, our failure to manage this risk could lead to closures of trailheads that enable access to paddling resources, closure of the waterways, and/or closure of road access or facilities such as drinking fountains and bathrooms at those access areas.

The situation created by Covid-19 continues to be fluid and uncertain. ACA is committed to helping paddlers respond to the Covid-19 crisis, with our highest priority always being the health and safety of our members and the larger paddling community. Although these recommendations represent what the ACA believes is proper guidance at this time, some will almost certainly have to be changed as we learn more about Covid-19. All paddlers must take full responsibility for their actions and choices, understanding that during this time, paddlesport activities come with heightened complexity and risk. The water will be there when the Covid-19 pandemic ends; we want to be sure that everyone stays healthy so they can have fun on the water when the crisis ends.

## **Quick References**

- [White House Opening Up America Again](#)
- [CDC How to Protect Yourself & Others](#)
- [CDC Cleaning and Disinfection for Community Facilities](#)
- [CDC Use of Cloth Face Coverings to Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19](#)
- [CDC Social Distancing](#)
- [CDC Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Sadler Insurance Sample Waiver/Release for Communicable Diseases Including Covid-19](#)

## **Additional References**

### **Approaches Taken by Other Organizations and Instructors**

*Many organizations face the question “How should we, and our members, respond to the Covid-19 pandemic?” ACA believes it may be helpful for our members to see these approaches and, perhaps more importantly, the decision making process associated with them. Below are guidelines from US Sailing, US Rowing, the International Technical Rescue Association, and a private group of paddling instructors. Each has some differences, but many similarities. The greatest similarity may be the obvious thought, work and effort put into each guide. ACA encourages our members to put similar thought, work and effort into planning for their individual situation.*

- [Guidance for Junior Sailing Programs During the COVID-19 Pandemic Version 1.0](#)
- [Return to Competition Planning \(7 May 2020\)](#)
- [USRowing Coronavirus Information and Updates](#)
- [International Technical Rescue Association](#)
- [Paddlesports During the Age of COVID-19: Risk Assessment & Risk Management](#)

## **CPR, First Aid, & Wilderness Medicine Certifications**

*ACA certified instructors, trainers, and educators should check with their CPR, First Aid, or wilderness medicine certification agency/organization on steps to extend or be granted provisional certifications. The ACA will consider any certification that included at its origin or most recent recertification hands on skills demonstration and assessment and has been extended or granted provisional status as currently certified. This policy goes into effect July 1, 2020.*

- [Red Cross - Coronavirus Information](#)
- American Heart Association - [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Resources for CPR Training](#)
- Wilderness Medicine Education Collaborative - [WMEC](#)
- American Safety and Health Institute - COVID-19 Update: [Reauthorization and Certification Cards April 9, 2020](#) • [Health & Safety Institute](#)

## **Outfitters & Liveries**

- [Seven Steps for Outfitter Operations in a COVID-19 World](#)
- [Businesses and Workplaces | COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Resources for the Outdoor Industry](#)
- [2020 Coronavirus Resources from AORE](#)
- [Cleaning and Storing Your PFD \(Personal Flotation Device\)](#)

## **Camps**

- [School Settings | COVID-19](#)
- [COVID-19 Contingency Planning Framework for Camps](#)
- [National Statement on COVID-19 \(Boy Scouts of America\)](#)
- [Covid-19 Updates \(Girl Scouts of the USA\)](#)
- [Camp Operations Guide Summer 2020](#)

## **High-Performance Athletes, Fitness, & Exercise**

- [United States Olympic & Paralympic Committee Coronavirus Updates](#)
- [COVID-19 Reopening and Return to Play Resources](#)

## **Parks and Land Management**

- [Parks and Recreational Facilities | COVID-19](#)
- [Coronavirus Disease 2019, COVID-19, Parks | Health & Wellness](#)
- [NPS Public Health Update \(US National Park Service\)](#)
- [Forest Service Coronavirus \(Covid-19\) Updates](#)
- [WO 2019 Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Response](#)

---

---

# EDUCATION

ACA INSTRUCTORS & TRAINERS

## COURSE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We are excited to share an updated and expanded ACA Course Management System (CMS) User Guide for course registrations and reporting. The guide includes the following changes from the earlier version of the CMS Userguide, which was published several months ago:

- Additional content to cover the system enhancements implemented since Feb 2020
- Expanded scope to cover course and candidate evaluations
- Six Frequently Asked Questions sections
- A table of contents to make it easier to use the guide as a reference

New CMS features such as digital credentials and certification maintenance and renewal progress tracking will be available this month. Stand by for these improvements!

To read the user guide and access the CMS, please visit: [www.americancanoe.org/CMS](http://www.americancanoe.org/CMS)

Near the end 2019, we were pleased to present the 2019 Special Report on Paddlesports & Safety. The heart of the project focused upon the collection and distribution of the comprehensive, qualitative, and statistical data summarized by the Paddlesports Report.

# special report



The final report includes paddlesport participation data, demographic data, and participant behavioral insights and trends. In addition, a section in the report analyzes paddlesport fatality and accident statistics. The report includes data on the following paddlesport activities: kayaking, canoeing, rafting, and stand up paddleboarding. To read the report, [please click here](#).

We are also proud to share a video presentation accompaniment, which follows the progression of the report document while showing some engaging video footage. To watch the video, [please click here](#). For more educational videos and resources, check out the [ACA Video Library](#).

*This project was produced under a grant from the Sports Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, administered by the U.S. Coast Guard.*



# Instructor of the Month



The June 2020 Instructor of the Month is Robert Levin, the New Mexico ACA State Director! Robert and other New Mexico ACA members and Instructors have been hard at work to help facilitate paddlesports instruction and stewardship. Recently, Robert, Norm Guame, and the other ACA representatives have been working to protect their local resources. Norm has tirelessly worked on issues such as the Gila River and has taken a leading role on the fight over 'Stream Access,' both of which are state policy initiatives.

In the early fall of 2018, NM representatives identified three policy initiatives - two of which have since taken on lives of their own.

- Rio Grande del Norte in cooperation with Rio Grande Restoration
- The Gila River in cooperation with the Gila Coalition
- Privatization of streams and rivers or what is now known as 'The Stream Access Issue'

To their surprise, 'Stream Access' was picked up by the media: The Guardian and Fox news. This issue has united a vast number of people and organizations and is a great example of how coalition and teamwork can help garner a larger following and bring attention to paddlers' rights.

To show the progress that has been made to help protect stream access, there now is a Writ of Mandamus before the State Supreme Court, Amicus Brief's filed by two US Senators in support of the Mandamus action, and a vast coalition made up of American Whitewater, New Mexico Wildlife Federation, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, New Mexico Wild, New Mexico River Outfitters and Guides Association, and many individuals who have offered their help, expertise, donations, and support.

Robert says, "I learn new things every time I'm on or near the water. In the instructional setting my favorite role is the demonstrator. Whereas I love coastal boating especially when I can disappear on an expedition to Central America or the Gulf Coast, I participate in almost all forms of paddle sports, sharing that passion with others so hopefully, we are all a little safer on our journeys."

Robert, thank you for your contribution to New Mexico as a State Director, paddlesports instructor, and stewardship initiatives!



# Instructor of the Month

July

The July 2020 ACA Instructor of the Month is Mike Sharp from Oak Hill, WV!

Mike's passion for the outdoors drew him to take his first commercial rafting trip down the New River in 1980. That experience led him to more adventurous trips on the Gauley River just a few months later. Along with the growth of the rafting industry in West Virginia came the need for safety and rescue training. Mike took his first ACA class in the early 1980's. He became an ACA instructor in the 1990's then an Instructor Trainer in 2011.

With 40 years of river experience as a whitewater rafting guide and swiftwater safety instructor, Mike Sharp has trained with the ACA and Rescue 3 International in technical rope rescue, boat operator, and Safety & Rescue. Mike is the Safety Coordinator at a large rafting and adventure resort in West Virginia and the Water Rescue Officer for his local Volunteer Fire Department. He was the Safety Director for the 2018 U.S. National Whitewater Championship races and Water and Safety Director for the 2019 Spartan Race held in West Virginia. Using the knowledge and techniques learned over the years has allowed him, and some of his students, to save people in dangerous situations on the water.

Mike is the owner of Rapid Rescue, LLC and teaches very "hands on" rescue classes in order to share his knowledge with students. He feels blessed to also be able to volunteer and share this information, whether it's with elementary school-age children, fire department members, or the National Park Service. The more properly trained individuals there are on the water, the safer the waterways will be. Congratulations to Mike for his amazing and inspirational years of work and dedication to making the world a safer place to paddle!

---

---

# STEWARDSHIP & PUBLIC POLICY

## Great American Outdoors Act

The Senate voted to approve the Great American Outdoors Act on June 17th! The Act is a landmark piece of legislation that will significantly address the twenty billion dollars of maintenance needed in our National Parks. It will do so by creating a fund that reserves no less than 50% of revenues from energy production on public lands for deferred maintenance projects.

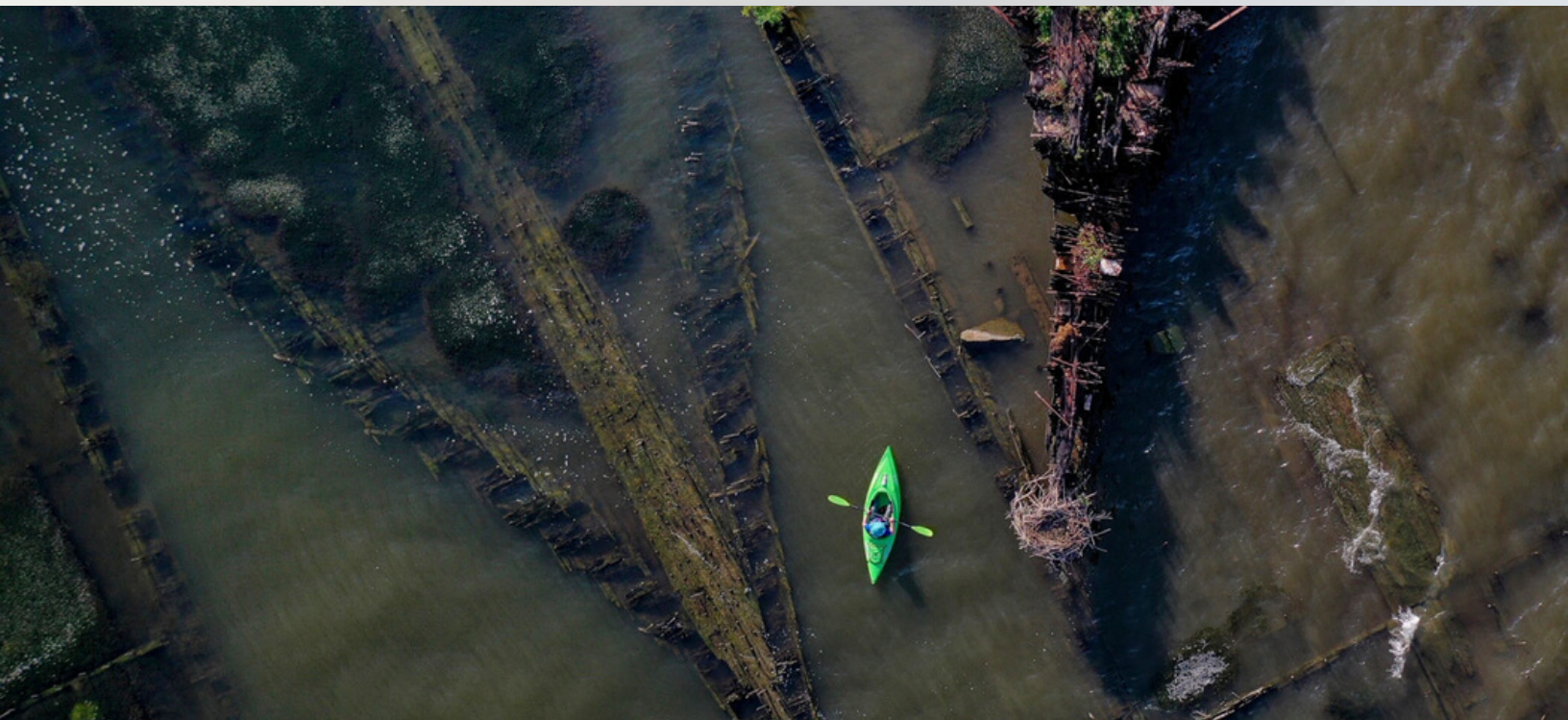
In addition, the Act permanently reauthorizes and fully funds the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for \$900 million a year. These funds are used for the purpose of conserving public lands and waters. In the past, the LWCF had to be re-approved every single year and the amount of funding consistently changed.

This victory is huge for paddlesports; over 40% of paddling access and opportunities happen on public lands. The full passage of the Act will create thousands of jobs and protect shared resources for generations to come. The bill will pass to the House and a vote is anticipated sometime in the last two weeks of July.

# Mallows Bay



If you have not had a chance to follow the story of the recently designated Mallows Bay National Marine Sanctuary, check out this great story from [CBS This Morning](#). Mallows Bay National Marine Sanctuary protects the remnants of over 100 World War One era wooden steamships about an hour south of the nation's capitol. The National Marine Sanctuary designation resulted from the collaborative efforts of a wide array of organizations, and the ACA is proud to be a supportive partner throughout the process.



# GILA RIVER



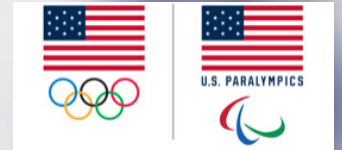
## CONSERVATION

In 2004 Congress passed the Arizona Water Settlements Act (AWSA) that authorized diversion of the Gila River. This opened the door to a process that could eventually divert water from the Gila River, negatively impacting the riparian ecosystem, as well as the paddling opportunities on one of the most beautiful wild rivers in the West. In addition, project proponents are actively opposing designating the Gila River as a Wild and Scenic River, the greatest level of protection, although the designation was carefully designed to not include areas with existing water uses.

Paddlers and ACA members, Norm Gaume and Peter Coha, have worked tirelessly since 2014 to push back against government water development agencies to show the true amount of water the project can develop along with the associated costs.

Sign-on to the Gila River Conservation's petition to protect the Gila River and tell the Bureau of Reclamation to take the no-action alternative! **[Sign here!](#)**

# COMPETITION



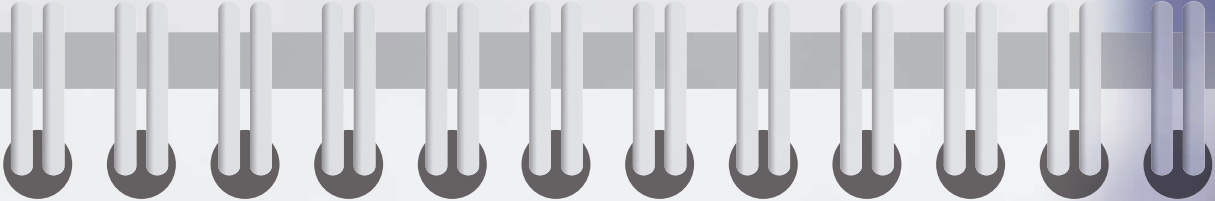
July 2, 2020

To: Sprint Athletes, Families, and Coaches

Dear Sprint Community,

In these challenging and uncertain COVID-19 times, every sports Federation seeks to determine the best possible ways to prepare athletes for the Tokyo Olympic Games and 2021 season in general. Because of limited Canoe & Kayak Sprint racing opportunities in the U.S. in 2020, our coaches have ascertained that racing in Europe during the Summer/Fall of 2020 would offer our athletes a chance to assess their current readiness and create incentives to prepare for the next season.

The Hungarian National Canoe Federation has confirmed the plan to host the annual Olympic Hopes Regatta (OHR) in Szeged, Hungary, from September 17-20, 2020. The OHR competition has been expanded to include the 18 year old athletes in 2020. Also, the International Canoe Federation (ICF) announced on June 29 that it intends to organize the ICF Canoe Sprint World Cup in Szeged, Hungary, from September 23-27, 2020.

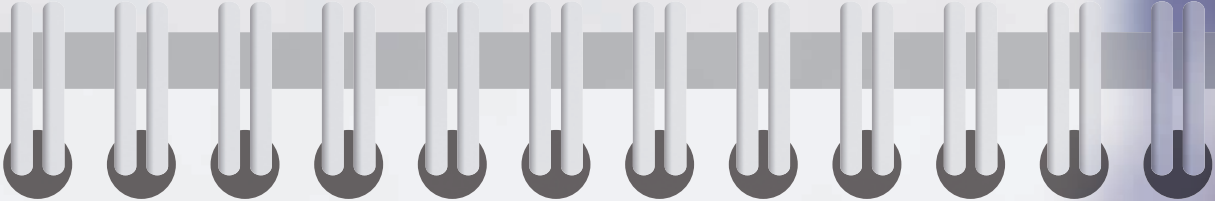


The ACA has secured an exception from the Slovenian Government that allows the U.S. Canoe & Kayak athletes, coaches, and support staff (family members) to enter Slovenia. The first group of the U.S. Canoe & Kayak Slalom athletes arrived in Ljubljana, Slovenia, on June 24. This group is in 14-day quarantine during which they can train twice daily, including on the water.

As you can imagine, traveling in times of COVID-19 is not the same as before. Besides additional controls that airlines and governments have implemented before boarding flights to Europe to ensure that everyone has all the required paperwork, the ACA staff cannot assume supervisory responsibility for the Junior and Young adult athletes during the global pandemic. Therefore, we expect that athletes from each club will be accompanied by a "Club guardian" on training trips to Europe. The guardian is responsible for the club athletes from departure until returning home and needs to carry a medical release form for each of the club's athletes. He/she is responsible for the athletes in case of a medical emergency.

In addition to standard pre-trip documentation (e.g., Code of Conduct, Safesport, STEP, NCIS Background Check, etc.), each member of the U.S. Canoe & Kayak delegation also signs the new ACA Waiver and Release of Liability before departure. Please be advised that the delegation members may be subject to quarantine upon their return to the U.S. per the federal, state, and local laws and regulations in effect at the time of reentry.

Only athletes and coaches can expect to receive the official race accreditation. Parents and the official club guardians cannot anticipate getting the race accreditation, except permit to ride on a bus to/from the venue.



If a sufficient number of athletes/families and staff indicate their readiness to travel to Europe this summer, the ACA will organize the necessary supporting documents, accommodations, appropriate training facilities, and boats in alignment with the USOPC's COVID-19 training considerations. Also, we plan to arrange with the responsible local authorities for on the water training during the quarantine. If we cannot secure favorable training conditions during the quarantine, including on the water training, the U.S. Canoe & Kayak Sprint Team will not travel to Europe in 2020.

For the OHR, athletes would fly to Europe no later than August 31, and return on September 21st or 22nd. Those athletes that intend to compete only during the World Cup would fly to Europe on September 5th or 6th and return to the U.S. on September 28th or 29th. The extra days in Europe are required to ensure the time necessary for the 14-day quarantine before competition.

Please consider personal risks vs. rewards before committing to traveling to Europe for the OHR and the World Cup.

For additional information, please visit the National Sprint Team website, [here](#).

In sport and health,

Rok Sribar, Ph.D.

ACA General Manager High-Performance Programs





# FACES *of slalom* RACES



Tyler Westfall is a four-time Team USA Senior National Team Member and 8-time Jr/U23 National Team Member for slalom kayaking. As a competitor, Tyler knows that to win - sometimes you have to look weird. As you can see from his facial expressions, he wears his success right on his face!

*Photos by Nathaniel Francis*

---

---

RECREATION

*summer  
photo  
journal*



*MtI Life Jackets*



*Sarah Ruhlen*

Liquid Fusion Kayaking



Thomas Mogensen @kayakthomas



Maurice Van de Maele  
@kayak\_maurice





Corey Robinson



Bryan Mangum



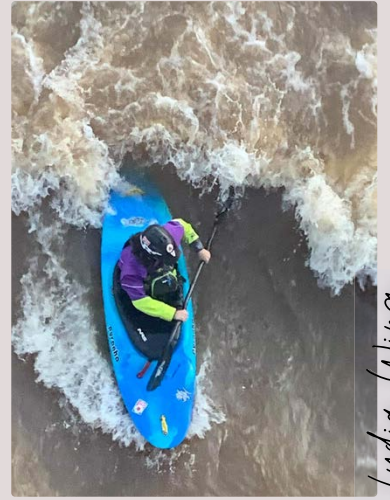
Robert Levin



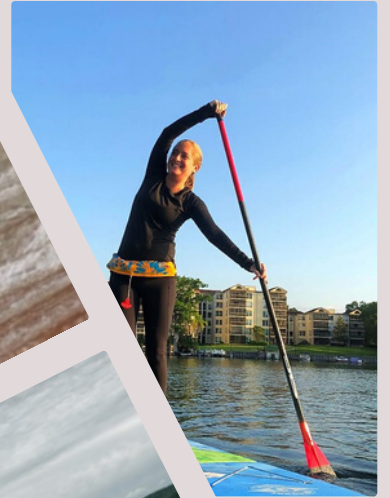
Mike Sharp



*Meghan Guess*



*Lupia Winy*



*Casey Eichfeld*



*David Marsh*

# A Pitch for Heeling

By Marc Ornstein

If you're reading this article it's a good bet that you've seen a video or two where a paddler has significantly heeled (tipped) the canoe, sometimes all the way down to the rail, while executing a turn. You may have thought "OK that looks cool, but why do that? Is it just some way of making something simple look fancy- just another way of showing off?" Well a bit of that maybe, but heeling has an effect on the hull that can be very useful.



Most canoes are designed to track (travel straight) quite well when level in the water (side to side and front to back) and paddled correctly. The keel line (length of the hull that is below the waterline) is relatively long compared to the width of the hull and it parts the water nicely as it travels forward or backwards. In general, the longer the keel line and the narrower the boat, the more efficiently tracking happens. Thus, racing and fast tripping canoes tend to be long and narrow, while canoes designed for maneuverability tend to be shorter and wider. Regardless of the design when a paddler attempts to turn the canoe, the ends of the hull must push a lot of water to one side or the other - and this requires additional effort.

Before beginning a turn, spend some energy getting the canoe moving; creating momentum. Any effort spent while turning the canoe expends energy and reduces momentum. One way of increasing the efficiency of that effort is to add rocker. Rocker is a curvature of the keel line from front to back. This raises the bow and stern a bit, causing the bottom shape of the hull to look in profile a bit like the rung of a rocking chair. With the ends now sitting a little higher in the water, the amount of water that needs to be pushed aside as the boat turns is reduced - and the turning is going to be a little easier. Looking at two extremes, a typical racing canoe will have little or no rocker while a whitewater play boat will often have so much rocker that it begins to resemble a banana. The more rocker, the easier the boat turns. When I began canoeing, I was told that I could buy a canoe that tracked (went straight) well or one that turned well, or one that did a little of each (but wouldn't be all that great at either).

The common advice was that to cover all the bases, from lake tripping to running rivers, I'd need a selection of canoes. Well, not necessarily - I'm here to tell you that you can have your cake, and eat it too. You can have a single canoe that will both track nicely and also turn efficiently when you want it to. A dream canoe. It's one that has a fairly straight keel line when you want it to go straight but can be converted to a highly "rockered" canoe when you want it to turn. In fact, it may well be the canoe that you already have in your shed. Picture almost any canoe, be it a tripping, touring, racing, or general purpose boat. Sit it flat on the ground or better yet, float it on a pond (if on the ground, you'll have to use a bit of imagination). You'll notice the keel line runs the full, length of the boat or nearly so. Now, tip the boat a bit to one side or the other. The tipped down side has now effectively become the bottom of the boat and the ends of the boat have risen higher in the water (or the imagined water). The keel line has become much shorter and the canoe suddenly has more rocker. The further you heel the boat, the greater the rocker, to the point where the ends may leave the water entirely.

A valuable trick is in learning how to control that rocker. How to heel the canoe onto its side, smoothly and consistently. Learning when, where, and how far you need to heel - and then how to flatten it back out with the same level of control. Generally, a modest heel is sufficient to get the job done but the further you heel the boat, the greater the rocker, and the less the boat resists turning. It even matters which way you heel it, toward or away from the turn, but that's a lesson for another time. In sum, the boat that you have can be the dream canoe! How you adjust your canoe to meet your needs at any moment determines its usefulness in that very moment.

So, do you still think it's just something that looks cool, that it's a way of showing off? It can be that for sure, but it's much more about precision boat control. It's about the ability to have a nice tracking touring boat, which at your whim, becomes "rockered" and turns on a dime before continuing on its journey. It's about transforming/fine tuning your canoe, on the go, constantly. Stay tuned for part 2, where we'll talk about pitch!



# Dear ACA Members,

As recently noted by our board chair, Robin Pope, Statements are easy to make and easy to forget. Actions are more important but can take more time and effort.”

I am pleased to share that ACA has taken the first steps in our journey to increase diversity and access. We know we cannot single handedly change the world overnight, but we sincerely believe that we can and should work toward a world where all people have full access to enjoyment of all water sports.

At our June Board of Directors meeting, discussions regarding diversity were a significant part of the agenda. There was a strong consensus among the board members that diversity and inclusion are important issues not only within paddling, but within all water sports. We are fortunate that one of our Board members, Heather Davis Miller, who works for the National Wildlife Federation, is deeply involved in developing diversity training and programming as part of her job, and has offered to lead ACA's efforts. She brings a wealth of experience and knowledge, and we are grateful for her willingness to share her skills with ACA.

On Friday, June 26, Heather and I convened a group of ACA board members, ACA staff, and several instructors who had proactively expressed interest in assisting with ACA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts.



The instructors included Dan Sandberg in Montana, Erin Jones-Avni in Mexico, and Gerry James in Kentucky. During this meeting we discussed many ideas and reached a consensus on a few points:

- ACA's leadership should be more diverse
- DEI should be an integral part of ACA's strategic plan (currently a work in progress)
- Unequal access to paddling venues is a big obstacle to increasing diversity

So, our journey has begun. It will not be perfect. We will make mistakes and use the wrong words and move too slowly for some. However, our intentions are earnest and our resolve is strong. We promise to update you throughout this journey.


In the meantime, I would love to hear from you if you have any thoughts, ideas, or suggestions.

Sincerely,

*Beth Spilman*

Executive Director



A photograph of a man and a woman in a canoe on a lake at sunset. The man is wearing a green cap and glasses, and the woman is wearing sunglasses and a blue life vest. They are both smiling and holding paddles. The water is calm, and the background shows trees and a bright sky.

*Thank you for reading  
ACA Paddle eMagazine!*

Photo: Michael Neumann

**Have some news to share?**

**Please [click here](#) to submit content for consideration.**