



@@first\_name@@,

To accompany your morning cup of coffee, the ACA National Office is serving up the latest paddlesports news! We know this month's newsletter is a little denser than normal but we promise it is worth the read! To navigate the monthly membership newsletter and to help you find the content that matters to you most, use the guide below.

- Check out **"Forward Strokes"** for local and national policy updates that affect paddlers and ways that you can get involved in protecting the waterways that you love to paddle.
- There are a lot of opportunities for ACA members! **"Making Waves"** highlights community events, information about the Summer Solstice Celebration, and details about the Essay & Photo Contest.
- Head to **"Bringing Home the Gold"** for news from the Slalom, Kayak Cross, Sprint and Paracanoe National Teams as they kick off the international competition season!
- **"Safety Talk"** brings you updates on Education & Instruction initiatives, programs, and conferences!



May 2023 poses as a reminder that when it comes to policy, nothing is set in stone. This can be a positive thing, providing opportunities to reverse harmful rulings, but it also means that as a community we must be vigilant and active in speaking up for the places that we love to paddle.

**Rep. Stauber proposes two bills attacking the Boundary Waters 20-year mining ban.** Just months after the Biden-Harris administration took action to protect the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, the nation's most visited Wilderness area from sulfide-ore copper mining, bills are already being proposed to undo these new protections.

Becky Rom, National Chair of Save the Boundary Waters, testified at a hearing on May 11 against Representative Stauber's fast tracked legislation to reverse the Biden-Harris administration's decision to protect the headwaters of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness for 20 years from sulfide-ore copper mining.

According to Save the Boundary Waters Communications Director, Libby London:

Rep. Stauber's bill, The Superior National Forest Restoration Act, would force the government to reissue canceled federal mining leases, review mining prospecting permits, additional leases, and mine plans on an expedited timeline. It would also prohibit judicial review of those actions.

Despite having support from 70% of Minnesotans for the ban on sulfide-ore copper mining in the Boundary Waters headwaters, Becky Rom was the only witness testifying on behalf of the protection of the Boundary Waters. Add your voice to Becky's and [urge your elected officials to protect the America's most visited Wilderness, the Boundary Waters, from sulfide-ore copper mining forever.](#)



*Send a message to your elected officials asking for permanent protection from sulfide-ore copper mining for the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness!*

**Supreme court erodes clean water protections.** The May 25 Supreme Court ruling to narrow the scope of protections placed under the longstanding Clean Water Act (CWA) is a serious let down for everyone who cares about access to clean water in the United States.

This setback for clean water in the United States comes from a 15-year legal battle between the federal government and an Idaho couple, Michael and Chantell Sackett, who received a notice from the EPA to stop construction of their house on an empty lot near Priest Lake.

The court ruled unanimously in favor of the Idaho couple, Michael and Chantell Sackett, but split 5-4 in its reasoning. From SCOTUSblog article, "Supreme Court curtails Clean Water Act", by Amy Howe:

Four justices – Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Brett Kavanaugh, and Ketanji Brown Jackson – agreed that the CWA does not apply to the wetlands on the Sacketts' lot, but they disagreed with the majority's reasoning. In an opinion joined by the three liberal justices, Kavanaugh contended that **"[b]y narrowing the Act's coverage of wetlands to only adjoining wetlands, the Court's new test will leave some long-regulated adjacent wetlands no longer covered by the Clean Water Act, with significant repercussions for water quality and flood control throughout the United States."** For example, Kavanaugh noted, under the court's new test, the wetlands on the other side of levees on the Mississippi River will not be covered by the CWA, even though they "are often an important part of the flood-control project" for the river.

Kagan also wrote a brief opinion of her own, joined by Sotomayor and Jackson, in which she criticized what she characterized as "the Court's appointment of itself as the national decision-maker on environmental policy."

Following the ruling, Sam Sanker, Senior Vice President of Earthjustice tweeted, "The [#Sackett](#) decision undoes a half-century of progress generated by the Clean Water Act. Almost 90 million acres (about the area of California) of formerly protected wetlands are now deeply threatened, as well as smaller streams and water bodies. I am very sad today."

Sources and Further Reading:

- [Supreme Court curtails Clean Water Act](#) - SCOTUSblog
- [Supreme Court Narrows Clean Water Act](#) - American Whitewater
- [Supreme Court rules against EPA in dispute over regulating wetlands](#) - CBS News

**@@first\_name@@**, we challenge you to do a little research on your favorite place to paddle. Is it currently being threatened or protected? If it is being protected, what organizations or pieces of legislation are providing these protections? If you find something that surprises you, get in touch with a member of the Regional Activity Council, together we can help amplify issues impacting paddlers both locally and nationally.

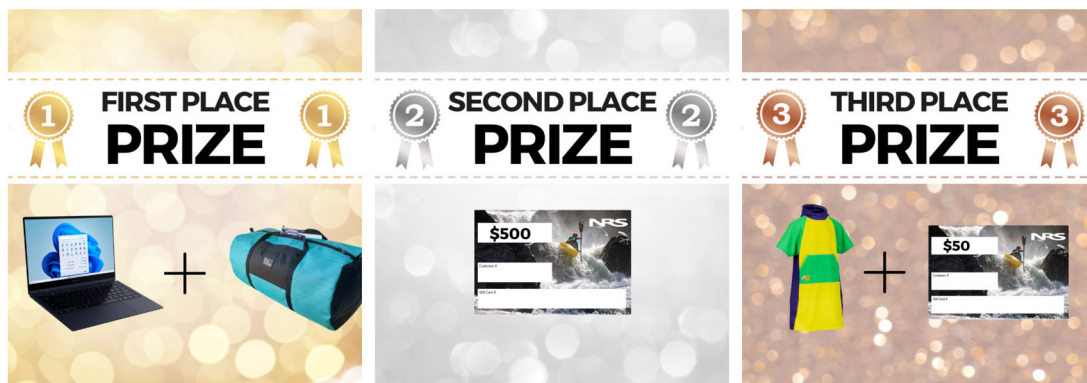


**Summer Solstice Celebration** paddling events have been organized from Alaska to Argentina! Don't miss out on the fun and [find an event near you](#) or call up your friends and family for a group paddle this June 21!

[Submit your event to the ACA Calendar before June 7](#), and we will mail you exclusive ACA Summer Solstice Celebration Stickers that you can hand out to all the participants of your event! This sticker shows the world that you love to paddle, you care about protecting your local waterways, and you celebrated the longest day of the year in the best way possible!

**Don't forget to submit your short essay and favorite paddling photo to the ACA Essay & Photo Contest** organized as a part of the Summer Solstice Celebration! There are some truly spectacular prizes up for grabs so take some time to reflect on what paddling means to you, scroll through your photo album, and submit your content for consideration! More information on the prizes and contest Terms & Conditions can be found on the [Summer Solstice Celebration landing page](#) on the ACA website.

A big thank you to our contest sponsors, [River Station Gear](#) and [Immersion Research](#)!



*Don't miss out on your chance to win these incredible prizes, submit your content for the [ACA Summer Solstice Essay & Photo Contest](#) today!*

**Congratulations to Sun Zhencheng for successfully kayaking across the Qiongzhou Strait** and setting a record for the minimum age of crossing the Qiongzhou Strait! We are so proud of 10-year-old ACA Member, Sun Zhencheng. Read about this impressive accomplishment in the [Trip Report](#) shared with us by Sun's mother and published on the ACA Website!





*Sun Zhencheng, with a motivational dragonfly resting on his cap, paddles his way across the Quiongzhou Strait, becoming the youngest person to do so!*



**Catch-up with the U.S. Canoe Slalom and Kayak Cross National Teams!** At the end of April, members of the newly selected national team made their 2023 international debut in Três Coroas, Brazil for the 2023 Pan American Championships! Marcella Altman, Evy Leibfarth, Bug Lokken, Kyler Long, and Joshua Joseph made their country proud! Check out their impressive [results for the 2023 COPAC Pan American Championships](#) and follow [@officialusacanoekayak](#) on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) for regular slalom, kayak cross, sprint, and para updates!

Tyler Westfall, K-1 athlete and Slalom National Team Member brings you the inside scoop on the team's recent training camp in London, England and upcoming 2023 ICF Canoe Slalom World Cup in Augsburg, Germany which will be taking place on June 1-4! A live recording of this race will be available, linked on the [ICF Website](#), be sure to watch and cheer the team on!



*Athlete: Tyler Westfall, K-1 athlete and U.S. Slalom National Team Member / Headshot by: Eric Friedenson*

More from Tyler (5/27/2023):

This course is my personal favorite. It is one of the bigger, if not the biggest, courses on the global circuit, featuring high volume challenging yet consistent rapids! Consistency is something many courses struggle with, and London seems to have mastered it, which makes it a pleasure to paddle on.

Now we are all onboard a flight along with a few fellow national teams on our way to begin our international racing season where we ended it last year... Augsburg! We all spent plenty of time there last year so we're hoping that comfort with the course will pay off for this first of 5 World Cup races. Augsburg is a beautiful town and course with a great importance both for the history of the sport of canoe slalom and personally as it was the venue for the debut year of Slalom in the Olympics (1972), where my great uncle Jamie McEwan took a bronze medal in C-1 for Team USA! I think it's a favorite amongst many paddlers because of its beautiful town filled with swimmable canals and lakes, and because it's one of those venues where many teams stay quite close together making it easy to hang out with your friends from different countries which is one of the best parts of this sport. I'm also lucky enough to stay with friends when I'm in Augsburg which is a nice break from the hotel/Airbnb life (shout out to the Bahner's).

A few things to note about the upcoming race for fans wanting to follow along. Take note that the schedule of the races has changed this year with qualifiers for K-1 categories starting midday on Thursday, C-1 qualifiers on Friday morning, K-1 semis and finals Friday afternoon, C-1 semis and finals on Saturday morning, and lastly all Kayak Cross events taking place Sunday morning. We hope you follow along this week and the following two weeks for the World Cup 1-3 action!

**The U.S. Canoe Sprint and Paracanoe National Teams have begun their international competition season starting with the ICF Canoe Sprint World Cup in Szeged, Hungary.** A special shout out to Jillian Elwart for taking 5th place in Women's Va'a Single 200m and to Ian Ross for taking 6th place in Men's Canoe Single 5000m! We couldn't be prouder of all the athletes who represented the United States in Hungary this May! For more and to see the full list of results, please head to the [ICF Website](#).

**Sprint Canoe and Kayak Clubs from around the country will be competing at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota, Florida for the 2023 ACA Sprint Canoe National Championships!** Racing will begin Tuesday, August 1 and go through Friday, August 4. We anticipate hundreds of paddlers racing in Bantam, Junior, Senior, and Masters age groups, in sprint and para events.

"The National Championships is the culmination of all the hard work and dedication of athletes and clubs to race for national titles. The incredible venue at Nathan Benderson Park in Sarasota Florida will be the perfect place to show case athletes in all different age groups, both in para and Olympic events. Future Olympians will be chosen at these championships to represent the United States at the Olympic Hopes Regatta in Poznan Poland in September. The whole country is watching and cheering you on to race at your best! Amazing awaits!"

Joseph Harper, Sprint National Team Canoe Coach



*Nathan Benderson Park Regatta Venue, the host of the 2023 ACA Sprint Canoe National Championships!*



**Congratulations to Nicole Smedegaard, May's ACA Instructor of the Month!** "I'm one of the newer ACA Instructors and I love teaching! I've worked with youth in outdoor settings my entire career, doing environmental education and outdoor education. I strive for others to have the privilege of connecting to the natural world in the same way that I do."

At the ACA, we love Nicole's authenticity, and the thoughtful, collaborative way she delivers instruction. In Nicole's complete [Instructor of the Month Feature](#) you can read more about:

- Nicole's motivation and teaching philosophy
- A glimpse behind the scenes of Nicole's teaching process
- 3 stewardship initiatives Nicole wants the paddling community to know about

If you know a truly awesome ACA instructor, let us know and [nominate a future Instructor of the Month!](#)





*May Instructor of the Month, Nicole Smedegaard rowing a big rapid!*

**The ACA Swiftwater Rescue Conference is returning!** This year's event will be held at [The Summit Bechtel Reserve](#) in Glen Jean, WV, from September 29th to October 1st. Presenters will include Charlie Walbridge, Sam Fowlkes, Mike Mather, Julie Munger, Tom Burroughs, Robin Pope, and a host of other amazing safety and rescue professionals. Attendees will have a chance to learn and practice the latest advances in swiftwater rescue, while refreshing core knowledge. ACA Instructor updates will also be available.

This year's conference will also include the **Wilderness Life Support for Medical Providers Track!** WLS:MP (previously AWLS) is designed for medical professionals of all levels (MD, EMT, PA, NP, RN, etc.) that have an interest in expanding their knowledge of wilderness medicine pathology and enhancing their practical skills in a wilderness environment. The course offers continuing education credits and will focus on the river environment with realistic river-based scenarios.

[Learn More & Register!](#)

**National Safe Boating Week** went off with a bang! Please join us in saying, "Well done!" to everyone who helped make the Kayaking 101 Courses organized in Tennessee and North Carolina in support of National Safe Boating Week a huge success!

For their second year ACA Tennessee partnered with Tennessee State Parks and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to bring paddlesports education to novice and prospective paddlers in their state. This year they sold out all 195 training seats across 13 locations in 5 days! Almost 100 ACA instructors, safety boaters and volunteers from more than 20 organizations stepped up to make these events happen. Give [ACA Tennessee](#) a follow on Facebook and read the full ["Tennessee State Parks, TWRA Partner With American Canoe Association for Kayak Instruction"](#) press release for more!

ACA North Carolina joined forces with ACA Tennessee to host 11 Kayaking 101 Courses in their state for National Safe Boating Week. Over 90 volunteers worked together to provide low-cost instruction to 130 students throughout the state. To read more about this event, scroll through photos taken at the events, and check out who was involved, follow [ACA North Carolina](#) on Facebook!



*Group photo shared on ACA North Carolina's Facebook page from one of the Kayaking 101 Courses taught over National Safe Boaters Week!*

**¡Estamos muy orgullosos y emocionados de poder ofrecer un curso de seguridad de remo por el ACA, de gratis y en español!**

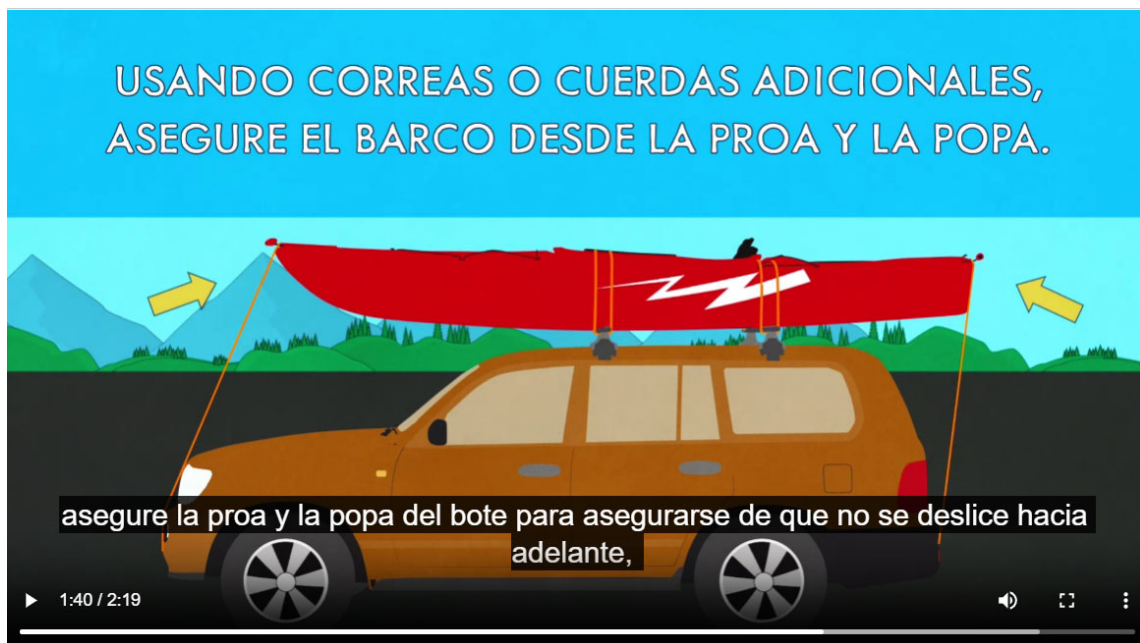
We are proud and excited to offer a free ACA online paddling safety course in Spanish!

Make sure to tell your Spanish speaking friends about this course! They can learn or refresh their knowledge of topics including:

- Shopping for paddling equipment
- Securing a boat to your vehicle
- Trip Planning
- Filing a Float Plan
- On-water Group Management
- Waterway Hazard Identification
- Challenging Weather
- Temperature Regulation & Self Care
- Rescue Priorities & Protocol
- And more!

This online training course is brought to you through a partnership between the ACA and the U.S. Coast Guard, and was developed to meet the ACA standards for paddlesports safety education. This course is mobile-friendly from start to finish and is designed to work on your smartphone, tablet, laptop, or desktop computer!





*Free online paddling safety course now offered in Spanish includes how to properly secure a boat to your vehicle amongst many other helpful topics!*

[Iniciar el Curso / Take the Course](#)

Thank you for reading our monthly membership newsletter! You can find the latest stories and updates by following us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#)!

We encourage you to [submit content for consideration](#)!

Sincerely, Kaycee Maas, Communications Coordinator

ACA | Canoe - Kayak - SUP - Raft - Rescue

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