

# Hoofer Outing Club Water Safety Code

*Revisions to Previous Code Edition of August 2013*

*Approved by Hoofer Outing Club Water Safety Board on Sept 27, 2016 and March 14, 2017*

*Dan York, Water Safety Board Chair*

## **Preface**

The Hoofer Outing Club Water Safety Code is intended to be a comprehensive manual for leaders of Hoofer Outing Club water trips to help ensure that all boating activities of the Hoofer Outing Club are accomplished safely.

The rules and regulations presented in this Code are minimum requirements that must be adhered to at all times. The Water Safety Chairperson or a boating leader may, in the interest of safety, be more conservative than this Code requires.

All violations of this Water Safety Code should be reported to the Water Safety Chairperson as soon as possible. Irresponsible conduct or other violations may result in a hearing before the Water Safety Board. Demotion in leader rating or other penalty deemed appropriate by the Water Safety Board may be imposed by a two-thirds majority vote at a Water Safety Board meeting.



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# 1 Lake Lessons & Swim Tests

## 1.1 Lake Lessons

In order to paddle any Hooper Outing Club boat on quietwater, an individual must participate in the Lake Lesson and be granted a Lake Rating in the appropriate craft (kayak, decked canoe, open tandem canoe, open solo canoe), and pass either the provisional or standard swim test<sup>1</sup>. The lake lesson can be split into separate land and water components at the discretion of the instructor. The land-based lake lesson will cover information pertinent to both canoeing and kayaking on Lake Mendota as described below.

### 1.1.1 Land-based Lake Lesson

The requirements of the Land-based Lake Lesson include:

- 1) Review of the Hooper Outing Club Lake Rules (see Appendix B ).
- 2) Location and meaning of the light and flag system (see Appendix B ).
- 3) Location and proper care of the boats, paddles and associated gear.
- 4) Sign-out and sign-in procedure for boats.
- 5) Basic boat selection and outfitting of boats to achieve proper fit.
- 6) Review of the basic gear needed for canoeing, whitewater boating, and sea kayaking.

### 1.1.2 Open Canoe Lake Lesson

The requirements of the Open Canoe Lake Lesson include:

- 1) Definition of bow, stern, gunwale, etc.
- 2) How to get into and out of the boat properly.
- 3) Strokes: the ability to paddle in a relatively straight line forward and backward and demonstrate knowledge of fundamental canoeing strokes, including forward stroke, J-stroke (or stern pry) forward and reverse sweeps, draw stroke and the low brace.

### 1.1.3 Kayak Lake Lesson

The requirements of the Kayak Lake Lesson include:

- 1) Basic boat selection and outfitting of boats to achieve proper fit.
- 2) Review the six pieces of gear needed for whitewater paddling: kayak, paddle, personal floatation device (PFD), sprayskirt, helmet, and floatation bags.
- 3) How to get into and out of the boat properly.
- 4) Proper adjustment of a sprayskirt and placement of flotation bags.
- 5) Basic strokes including forward, backward, sweep and draw strokes.
- 6) Wet exit: How to bail out of a capsized boat.
- 7) The proper methods to empty water out of a boat.
- 8) Demonstrate and practice elements of an Eskimo rescue including hip-snap.
- 9) Replace boat and gear to proper location.

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<sup>1</sup> Note: The “provisional swim test” was introduced in 2013. Prior to the addition of this test, the Water Safety Code had only a single swim test, which is now termed, “standard swim test” to distinguish it from the “provisional swim test.” Members whose records show having passed the “swim test” will have passed what is now termed the “standard swim test.”

#### 1.1.4 Decked Canoe Lake Lesson

The requirements for the Decked Canoe Lake Lesson include all of the items listed above for the Land-based, Open Canoe and Kayak Lake Lessons.

### 1.2 Lake Lesson Administration

Anyone who is a current Hooper Outing Club member and has a paddler rating of at least R2 in a decked boat, R1-OC, SK2p or who is approved by the Water Safety Chairperson may administer the Lake Lesson for the same type craft for which he/she is rated. It is recommended that anyone teaching a Lake Lesson have an assistant. The rating nomenclature and grading system is discussed in more detail in Section 2.

### 1.3 Swim Test

#### 1.3.1 Swim Test Requirements

One must pass a swim test in order to paddle any Hooper Outing Club boats. There are two swim tests: (1) provisional and (2) standard.

Passing the **provisional swim test** is required for the following types of paddling trips:

- 1) Quietwater canoeing (canoe lake rating)
- 2) Moving water canoeing (R1-OC)
- 3) Beginner level sea kayaking (SK0 and SK1)

The **standard swim test** (or equivalent qualifications) is required the following types of paddling trips:

- 1) Whitewater paddling in all types of boats (R1 and above)
- 2) Intermediate and advanced sea kayaking (SK2 and SK3)
- 3) All expeditionary canoeing trips (remote, extended trips that include large lake crossings).
- 4) Whitewater rafting in Grade II and higher rapids.

The requirements of the provisional swim test are to swim 50 yards in 4 minutes or less wearing a properly fitted personal floatation device (PFD).

The requirements of the standard swim test may be satisfied in one of 2 ways:

- 1) By presenting proof of passage of a Red Cross Lifesaving or Water Safety Instructor Course. Equivalent certifications from the YMCA or other recognized water safety and instructional organizations may also satisfy this requirement. Certifications need not be current.
- 2) In a swimming pool or lake, swim 100 yards and continue to remain afloat for a total of five (5) minutes by treading water. This test is the same as administered by the UW Lifesaving Station at the Memorial Union swimming area and can be satisfied by completing the test under the supervision of a UW Lifesaving Station lifeguard. The test can be administered by a qualified HOC member or a UW lifeguard as described below in Section 1.3.2.

A trip leader or the water safety chair may require the standard swim test for certain trips that normally would be satisfied by the provisional swim test. This may be due to cold weather, cold water, remote locations or other more demanding conditions.

#### 1.3.2 Swim Test Administration

This test may be given by anyone who is a current Hooper Outing Club member and holds a paddler rating of at least R3p (or equivalent). Alternatively, the Water Safety Chairperson can authorize individuals who do not yet have an R3p to give the swim test based on lifeguarding, water safety, or related water rescue experience. During the test, the person giving the test should be alert and ready to perform a rescue if needed. Administering the test is to be done to one person at a time. The only exception to this 1:1 requirement is when the testing is performed by club leaders under the presence of professional lifeguards on duty, such as during club pool sessions or similar, safe controlled swimming environments.

The person administering the test must have a rescue aid readily available that can be used for a reaching rescue, such as a canoe or kayak paddle, rescue pole, etc. and must be positioned on a dock or pool deck so as to be within reach (using the aid) of the swimmer at all times. The administrator of the test also must have an appropriate rescue aid (rescue ring, personal floatation device, rescue tube, etc.) that can be thrown to a swimmer for floatation support.

The standard swim test is the same swimming test administered during summer months by UW Lifesaving in the swimming area at Memorial Union. UW lifeguards may administer this test, which can be recorded with Outdoor UW as meeting the requirements of the HOC swim test. It is the responsibility of the member to ensure that the rating is granted and registered into the HOC records.

The swim test may also be administered in open water. There are three acceptable ways to administer the test in open water (outside of a pool or swimming area with a pier).

- *Rescuer in a canoe or rowboat.* A rescuer may be positioned in a canoe with 2 paddlers. The canoe must follow the swimmer closely such that the rescuer (not paddling) can reach the swimmer with a paddle or pole. The rescuer also must have a rescue aid that can be thrown, such as a ring buoy, PFD or rescue tube. From a rowboat the rescuer would be positioned in the stern of the boat similarly equipped and ready to perform a reaching and throwing rescue. The rescuer in these circumstances is exempt from the HOC rule requiring PFDs to be worn at all times because of the possible need to surface dive as part of a rescue. The rescuer in these cases must still have a qualified PFD in the boat or canoe.
- *In an area where the water depth is never over the swimmer's head (roughly 4-5 feet).* In most cases this would mean that the swimmer would swim parallel to shore while the rescuer and administrator of the test walked along closer to shore but still within reach of the swimmer. The rescuer must be equipped with a reaching aid (paddle, pole) and a rescue device that can be thrown (PFD, rescue ring, rescue tube).
- *Rescuer on a stand-up paddleboard (SUP).* In this case the rescuer must be equipped with a rescue device that can be thrown (PFD, rescue ring, rescue tube) in addition to being able to use a paddle as a reaching aid. The rescuer in these circumstances is exempt from the HOC rule requiring PFDs to be worn at all times because of the possible need to surface dive as part of a rescue. The rescuer in these cases must still have a qualified PFD on the SUP.

In all cases when the test is administered in open water, conditions must be safe for swimming: suitable air and water temperatures, no strong winds and no large waves.

## 2 Paddler Classification/Rating System

The following are descriptions of the paddler classifications that are granted as a result of proficiency demonstrated while on a trip.

### 2.1 Quietwater and Whitewater Open Canoe Classifications

Each paddler may be granted up to two classifications indicating his/her competency in each of two types of boats: tandem canoe (OC-2) and solo canoe (OC-1). Craft distinctions are made because each type of boat requires certain skills which are unique to that craft.

The Lake Canoe Rating and R1-OC are assigned by the leader of each lesson respectively. The remaining ratings are assigned by a Water Safety Board Member who has observed the paddler in question on the river. An individual may be promoted one grade of rating while on a trip at the discretion of the boating leader. However, the promotion is subject to subsequent approval by the Water Safety Chairperson. No paddler may advance more than one rating while on a trip without specific prior approval by the Water Safety Chairperson.

#### 2.1.1 Canoe Lake Rating

This rating is achieved by passing the Open Canoe Lake Lesson previously discussed. This rating entitles the individual to paddle quietwater. The individual may paddle certain Grade I rapids if an R1 is in the boat and if he/she has passed the provisional or standard swim test.

### 2.1.2 R1-OC

This rating is achieved by one who

- 1) has passed the Open Canoe Lake Lesson and provisional or standard swim test,
- 2) has been involved in a river safety talk and learned basic moving water hazards and how to avoid them, as well as how to safely swim in moving water; and
- 3) is practiced in peel outs from and eddy turns into eddies, ferrying, and paddling strokes in Grade I current.

This rating allows the person to paddle Grade I rapids. In tandem open canoes, Grade II rapids may be paddled if an R2-OC is in the boat.

### 2.1.3 R2p-OC (tandem canoe rating only)

This rating signifies the paddler can handle Grade II water competently with a similar R2p-OC paddling partner, but would have difficulty paddling Grade II with an R1-OC rated partner. The R2p-OC paddling team should be able to paddle Grade II water fairly confidently. This also requires meeting the standard swim test requirement.

### 2.1.4 R2-OC

This rating is given to an individual who has consistently demonstrated proficiency in all open canoe paddle strokes. The individual also possesses good river-reading ability. Additionally, the individual should:

- 1) Have a general knowledge of river safety and the Water Safety Code.
- 2) Handle Grade II water with relative ease, or, in the case of a tandem open canoe, handle Grade II water with relative ease with an R1-OC paddling partner.
- 3) Be able to ferry and eddy-out at will on Grade II water.
- 4) Demonstrate use of a low brace.
- 5) Has passed the standard swim test (or met equivalent qualifications)

### 2.1.5 R3p-OC

This rating is a provisional rating given to an R2-OC who has demonstrated proficiency in handling Grade II water and is ready to attempt Grade III. In a tandem open canoe, this rating entitles the individual to paddle certain Grade III water when accompanied with an R3p-OC partner or better.

### 2.1.6 R3-OC

This rating is granted to an R3p-OC who has consistently demonstrated proficiency in paddling Grade III water. The individual must also know how to use a low brace to guide a swamped canoe through rapids and maneuver it to shore. An R3-OC should have a very good river reading ability and be able to handle all Grade III water with an R2-OC paddling partner.

### 2.1.7 R4p-OC

This is a provisional rating given to an R3-OC who has demonstrated proficiency on Grade III water and is judged ready to attempt paddling Grade IV with an R4p-OC partner or better.

### 2.1.8 R4-OC

This rating is the highest open canoe rating used by the Hooper Outing Club. For tandem canoes, it means the paddler is qualified to paddle on any water boated by the Hooper Outing Club when paired with an R3-OC partner or better.

## 2.2 Quietwater and Whitewater Decked Canoe and Kayak Classifications

Each paddler may be granted up to three classifications indicating his/her competency in each of three types of boats: canoe (C-2), solo canoe (C-1) and kayak (K-1). Craft distinctions are made because each type of boat requires certain skills that are unique to that craft.

The Lake Rating and R1 are assigned by the leader of each lesson respectively. The remaining ratings are assigned by a Water Safety Board Member who has observed the paddler in question on the river. An individual may be promoted one grade of rating while on a river trip at the discretion of the boating leader. The promotion is subject to subsequent approval by the Water Safety Chairperson. No paddler may advance more than one rating on a trip without specific prior approval by the Water Safety Chairperson.

### 2.2.1 Lake Rating

This rating is achieved by one who has passed the Lake Lesson in the given craft (C-2, C-1 or K-1). This rating enables the paddler to paddle on Lake Mendota within defined boundaries according to conditions. This rating also enables the paddler to participate on certain quietwater and moving water (R1) trips, such as Prairie du Sac, Badfish Creek and Koshkonong Creek if he/she has also passed the provisional or standard swim test.

### 2.2.2 R1

This rating is achieved by one who:

- 1) Has passed the Lake Lesson and standard swim test.
- 2) Has been involved in a river safety talk and learned basic moving water hazards and how to avoid them, as well as how to safely swim in moving water.
- 3) Is practiced in wet exit, Eskimo rescue, and paddling strokes in Grade I current.
- 4) Has demonstrated peel outs, eddy turns and ferrying.

This rating enables the paddler to boat on Grade I or II rapids trips.

### 2.2.3 R2

This rating is given to one who has demonstrated knowledge of basic river safety to a Water Safety Board Member and has demonstrated the following skills:

- 1) Possesses some directional control on Grade II water.
- 2) Is able to ferry and eddy out.
- 3) Attempts to avoid rocks and hit chutes though not always successful.
- 4) Capable of calmly handling a capsize of his/her craft.
- 5) Has passed the standard swim test (or met equivalent qualifications)

### 2.2.4 R3p

This is a provisional rating granted to an R2 paddler who has demonstrated the following:

- 1) Ability to handle Grade II water with relative ease.
- 2) Possesses good directional control in Grade II water.
- 3) Actively avoids rocks and hits chutes successfully.
- 4) Ability to ferry and to turn into and out of eddies successfully.
- 5) Calm in water and effectively self-rescues after a bail out.
- 6) Possesses knowledge of using a throw rope and how to assist in rescue.
- 7) Has at least a working knowledge of an Eskimo roll and actively attempts to use it on the river.

### 2.2.5 R3

This rating is granted to an R3p who has demonstrated proficiency in reading and paddling Grade III water. In addition to those skills outlined for an R3p, the paddler must have a consistent Eskimo roll and is capable of effectively self-rescuing.

## 2.2.6 R4p

This is a provisional rating granted to an R3 paddler who has demonstrated proficiency in reading and paddling Grade III water, including the following:

- 1) Possesses very good directional control on Grade III water.
- 2) Avoids rocks, hits chutes and negotiates Grade III rapids successfully.
- 3) Competent in self rescue on Grade III water.
- 4) A general ability to handle Grade III water with relative ease.

## 2.2.7 R4

This rating is the highest rating given by the Hooper Outing Club for decked canoes and kayaks and suggests that the paddler is competent to paddle any whitewater attempted by the Hooper Outing Club. In addition to the skills outlined for an R4p, this rating requires that a paddler possess the following:

- 1) Good directional control in Grade IV water.
- 2) Ability to ferry and turn into and out of eddies on Grade IV water and brace as necessary to maintain an upright position.

## 2.3 Sea Kayak Classifications

The following are the paddling classifications for Hooper Outing Club sea kayak trips. SK0 and SK1 ratings can be given by any person who has an SK1 rating, has at least a day trip experience, assists with a Sea Kayak Skills/SK1 Lesson, and teaches the same lesson under supervision. SK2p, SK2 and SK3 ratings can be given by an SKL1, SKL2 and SKL3, respectively.

These ratings are assigned by a Water Safety Board Member who has observed the paddler in question on the water. Promotion in ratings may only be assigned after completion of a trip, i.e., no mid-trip promotions (note this difference from the whitewater rules). The promotion is subject to subsequent approval by the Water Safety Chairperson. No paddler may advance more than one rating after a trip without specific prior approval by the Water Safety Chairperson.

Guidelines for recommended skills associated with each sea kayaking classification are given in Appendix D.

### 2.3.1 Lake Rating

This rating is achieved in a whitewater kayak (See Section 2.2.1).

### 2.3.2 SK0

This rating is achieved by one who successfully completes the Kayak Lake Lesson, the provisional or standard swim test and the SK0 lesson successfully. The SK0 lesson includes instruction in wind/water/weather considerations, boat and paddle differences between whitewater and sea kayaks, basic paddle strokes and assisted rescues. Individuals who take this lesson must demonstrate they can perform an assisted T-rescue. This rating enables the paddler to paddle on Lake Mendota and on most quietwater trips based on the trip leader's discretion.

### 2.3.3 SK1

This rating is achieved by a paddler who has an SK0 rating, has passed the provisional or standard swim test, and who demonstrates the ability to brace in unexpected waves and re-enter a swamped kayak without assistance. These skills can be demonstrated either during the SK1 lesson or during an R1 lesson. This rating enables the paddler to paddle on all quietwater trips and instructional trips such as at Prairie Du Sac or Lake Michigan, based on the trip leader's discretion.

### 2.3.4 SK2p

This intermediate rating is achieved by a paddler who has accomplished the following requirements:

- 1) Either paddled at least 10 miles in a single day on flatwater (or equivalent of it in a river with the help of current) OR be exposed to 2-foot waves for at least an hour on a trip.
- 2) Demonstrated the ability to re-enter a swamped kayak without assistance in rough conditions (at least 1 foot waves) or, with assistance in waves of 2 feet or more.
- 3) Has passed the standard swim test (or met equivalent qualifications)

This rating enables paddlers of this rating, in limited numbers, to paddle on more advanced trips, such as Lake Michigan and Apostles Islands, based on the trip leader's discretion.

### 2.3.5 SK2

This rating is achieved by a paddler who has met all requirements for the SK2p rating and has met the following additional requirements in a sea kayak:

- 1) Demonstrated proficiency in surf landings and launches in breaking waves.
- 2) Demonstrated endurance sufficient to paddle 10 miles in single day in a cross or head wind without the assistance of river current.
- 3) Demonstrated capacity to maintain one's composure while paddling in waves of 2 to 4 feet.

### 2.3.6 SK3

This rating is the highest rating given by the Hooper Outing Club for sea kayaking. It is achieved by a paddler who has met all requirements for the SK2 rating and has also met the following additional requirements in a sea kayak:

- 1) Demonstrated proficiency in rolling a fully loaded single sea kayak in calm conditions.
- 2) Demonstrated ability to navigate using map and compass.
- 3) Demonstrated proficiency at surf landings in breaking waves of at least 3 feet.
- 4) Demonstrated ability to assist in rescue of capsized boaters in waves of 2-3 feet.

## 2.4 Tandem Sea Kayak Classifications

Assuming the lower rated paddler has at least an SK1 rating, the combined rating equals the higher rated paddler's rating. In the case of someone with an SK0 rating, the combined rating is one rating lower than the higher rated paddler's rating.

## 2.5 Transfer of Whitewater Ratings for Sea Kayaking

Advanced whitewater paddler ratings may be used as evidence in granting sea kayak paddler ratings. However, the paddler must still meet the navigation, endurance and rescue (solo and assisted) requirements required of the sea kayak paddler ratings. Additionally, paddlers with whitewater skill ratings must earn the SK0 and SK1 ratings in a sea kayak. Specifically,

- To earn an SK0 rating, the paddler must take/pass the SK0 lesson in a sea kayak
- To earn an SK1 rating, the paddler must take/pass the SK1 lesson in a sea kayak.

These requirements assure that whitewater paddlers are familiar with skills, rescues and equipment specific to sea kayaking.

A paddler with an R3/R4p/R4 rating may be granted an SK2p/SK2/SK3 paddler rating, respectively, after completion of endurance, navigation and rescue (solo and assisted) requirements specific for those sea kayak ratings and gaining an SK1 rating as described above. Note that transfers are not automatic and they are at the sea kayak leader's discretion.

## 2.6 Fast-tracking Paddler Ratings

Individuals who have previous boating experience in the crafts listed above may be eligible to get ratings faster. This is called fast-tracking. Even though fast-tracking helps an individual move faster through the Hooper Outing Club paddler ratings, it still requires that he or she initially complete the usual lessons to achieve an R1, R1-OC and/or SK0 rating. This allows the individual to become familiar with the Hooper Outing Club practices. It also gives Hooper Outing Club instructors a chance to observe the individual and provide useful feedback to him or her. The promotion is subject to approval by the Water Safety Chairperson.

## 2.7 Raft Classifications

The Hooper Outing Club rafting program safety rules are relatively new and, as such, are expected to be modified as experience suggests. The Water Safety Chairperson, in consultation with other members of the Water Safety Board, shall approve each rafting trip on a case by case basis, applying the following rules as well as those previously presented in the Water Safety Code which are applicable:

- 1) Every Hooper Outing Club rafting trip must have an approved leader (see Section 3.4).
- 2) Rafting Requirements: All participants in rafting trips on Grade II rivers and higher shall have passed the standard swim test and the Canoe or Kayak Lake Lesson, and have received water safety instruction. It is also recommended that participants have experience with or be given a demonstration of the appropriate whitewater maneuvering strokes.
- 3) Personal flotation devices (PFDs; also known as "life jackets" or "life vests") must be worn at all times and helmets must be worn on Grade II water and above. Clothing requirements are the same as for boating trips.
- 4) A first-aid kit and a coiled rescue rope must be carried on the trip.
- 5) All participants on trips attempting Grade IV and above water shall be individually approved by the Water Safety Chairperson.
- 6) If the rafting trip is professionally guided, the trip is not to be considered a Hooper Outing Club boating trip.

## 3 **Boating Leader Classifications/Rating System**

Any boating trip to occur on any water body other than Lake Mendota must be organized and accomplished under the direct supervision of an approved boating leader. The boating leader is ideally not only a very competent paddler, but also a person with good judgment and knowledge of river (or other relevant water body type) hazards and safety precautions. Practical knowledge of relevant rescue and basic first aid will be considered for promotion of leaders. A number of boating leader classifications are employed by the Hooper Outing Club for various levels of river and sea kayaking difficulty, and for both open boat and decked boat trips. Though normally demonstrated on Hooper Outing Club trips, if no current Hooper Outing Club leader is available, the leadership requirements for higher leader ratings may be demonstrated under supervision on private trips which are conducted in accordance with Hooper Outing Club water safety policies, with the exception of paddler skill requirements.

Another option for leadership of a HOC trip when no current member and qualified leader is available is a "paddling leader at large," which is a special category to enable lapsed HOC leaders (no longer active HOC members) to lead trips. This is a category defined by the Hooper Outing Club Executive Board in recognition of past HOC paddling leaders who remain active paddlers with the skills necessary to lead safe trips at or below the highest leadership rating obtained while an active HOC member. The "leader at large" classification is granted on a single trip basis to a lapsed HOC leader who fulfills these requirements:

- Provides evidence of completing recent paddling trips at the difficulty level of any proposed trip to be led and had obtained a HOC paddling leader rating at this level.
- Provides her/his own boat and equipment, both paddling and camping as necessary.
- Pays the HOC Executive Council fee (a minimal charge required of all members, even those with lifetime memberships).
- Agrees to adhere to the HOC Water Safety Code in the conduct of the proposed trip.

Granting of the leader-at-large rating requires an approval by a majority of the HOC Executive Council upon a recommendation submitted by the Water Safety Chair. This approval may be done via either in-person voting or by email.

### 3.1 Open Canoe

#### 3.1.1 Quietwater Leader

A quietwater leader must have:

- 1) gone on one prior Hooper Outing Club boating trip,
- 2) received a water safety briefing and taken a short test from the Water Safety Chairperson, and
- 3) at least an R1-OC paddler rating.

#### 3.1.2 WW1-OC

This leader classification requires at least an R1-OC paddler rating. Additionally, the person must pass a safety test administered by the Water Safety Chairperson concerning the contents of this Code as well as river safety in general. To attain the rank of WW1-OC also requires that the individual must have been on at least one Hooper Outing Club trip. This leader rating may be assigned by the Water Safety Chairperson upon satisfactory completion of these prerequisites. Anyone with a WW2 or above leader rating and has obtained the paddler rank of R1 in an open canoe (R1-OC) may be assigned the rank of WW1-OC by the Water Safety Chairperson.

#### 3.1.3 WW2-OC

This leader rating requires at least an R2-OC paddler rating and a current WW1-OC leader rating. Additionally, the individual must know how to rescue pinned boats, and must have participated on an open canoe trip as assistant boating leader at least once on Grade II water. Upon satisfactory completion of these requirements, this leader rating is assigned by a majority vote at a Water Safety Board meeting.

#### 3.1.4 WW3-OC

This leader rating requires at least an R3-OC paddler rating and a current WW2-OC leader rating. Additionally, the individual must have participated as assistant boating leader on an open canoe trip on Grade III water at least once. Upon satisfactory completion of these requirements, this leader rating is assigned by a majority vote at a Water Safety Board meeting.

#### 3.1.5 WW4-OC

This leader rating requires at least an R4-OC paddler rating and a current WW3-OC leader rating. Additionally, the individual must have participated as assistant boating leader on an open canoe trip on Grade IV water at least once. Upon satisfactory completion of these requirements, this leader rating is assigned by a 2/3 majority vote of the Water Safety Board Members present at a meeting.

### 3.2 Decked Canoe and Kayak

#### 3.2.1 WW1

This leader classification requires at least an R3p paddler rating (in a decked boat). Additionally, the person must pass an oral safety test administered by the Water Safety Chairperson concerning the contents of this Water Safety Code as well as river safety in general. To attain a WW1 rating also requires that the individual must have been recommended by a Water Safety Board Member. This leader rating may be assigned by the Water Safety Chairperson upon satisfactory completion of these prerequisites.

#### 3.2.2 WW2

This leader rating requires at least an R3 paddler rating and a current WW1 rating. Additionally, the individual must have served as boating leader under the direct supervision and evaluation of another leader with WW2 or

higher rating. A WW2 can lead on up to Grade II water. This leader rating must be assigned by a majority vote of the Water Safety Board Members present at a meeting after satisfactorily fulfilling the given prerequisites.

### 3.2.3 WW3p

This provisional leader rating requires at least an R4p paddler rating and a current WW2 rating. This rating is assigned by the Water Safety Chairperson at his or her discretion based on the leader's experience and knowledge of the river to be paddled. A WW3p can lead on up to Grade III water, but only on rivers with which he or she is very familiar. As this rating is provisional, it must be assigned for each trip, and is not a standing rating.

### 3.2.4 WW3

This leader rating requires an R4 paddler rating. The individual must have demonstrated good judgment while satisfactorily river leading on Grade III water under the direct supervision of another WW3 or higher rated leader. This leader rating must be approved by a majority vote of the Water Safety Board Members present at a meeting.

### 3.2.5 WW4p

This provisional leader rating requires a current WW3 rating. This rating is assigned by the Water Safety Chairperson at his or her discretion based on the leader's experience and knowledge of the river to be paddled. A WW4p can lead on up to Grade IV water, but only on rivers with which he or she is very familiar. As this rating is provisional, it must be assigned for each trip, and is not a standing rating.

### 3.2.6 WW4

This leader rating requires the individual to have consistently demonstrated good judgment, exceptional river leading on Grade IV water, and strong leadership. This leader rating must be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the Water Safety Board Members present at a meeting.

## 3.3 Sea Kayak

### 3.3.1 Quietwater Leader

A quietwater leader must:

- 1) Have gone on at least one prior Hooper Outing Club boating trip.
- 2) Have received a water safety briefing and taken a short test from the Water Safety Chairperson.
- 3) Have at least an SK1, R1, or R1-OC paddler rating.

### 3.3.2 SKL1

A Sea Kayak Leader 1 must:

- 1) Possess an SK2 paddler rating.
- 2) Pass an oral safety test administered by the Water Safety Chairperson or the Water Safety Board Chairperson's designee.
- 3) Lead under the direct supervision and evaluation of a current SKL1 or higher leader on a trip encountering Sea Level 1 conditions and have demonstrated leadership abilities at the SK1 level.
- 4) Be recommended by a Water Safety Board Member.
- 5) Be approved by the Water Safety Chairperson.

### 3.3.3 SKL2

A Sea Kayak Leader 2 must:

- 1) Possess an SK2 paddler rating.
- 2) Pass a written exam on safety, navigation, and seamanship administered by the Water Safety Chairperson or the Water Safety Chairperson's designee.

- 3) Possess a current SKL1 rating.
- 4) Lead under the direct supervision and evaluation of a current SKL2 or higher leader on a trip encountering Sea Level 2 conditions and have demonstrated leadership abilities at the SKL2 level.
- 5) Be approved by a majority vote of the Water Safety Board.

### 3.3.4 SKL3

A Sea Kayak Leader 3 must:

- 1) Possess an SK3 paddler rating.
- 2) Have significant experience in rough water conditions, long crossings, and inaccessible coastlines.
- 3) Possess a current SKL2 rating.
- 4) Lead under the direct supervision and evaluation of a current SKL3 leader on a trip encountering Sea Level 3 conditions and have demonstrated leadership abilities at the SKL3 level.
- 5) Be approved by a 2/3 majority vote of the Water Safety Board.

## 3.4 Raft

WW2-OC's and WW2's and above with rafting experience may lead whitewater rafting trips. Persons may also be approved as rafting boating leaders by a majority vote at a Water Safety Board meeting if they have participated in at least two whitewater rafting trips, led one trip under supervision, and passed the Water Safety Code test. Rafting leaders must have the appropriate level rating for the river being paddled and must lead on the raft.

## 3.5 ACA Certified Leaders and Translation to Hooper Outing Club Leader Ratings

Any Hooper Outing Club member who can show evidence of current American Canoe Association (ACA) certification shall be eligible for a comparable Hooper Outing Club leader rating. This person must demonstrate good leadership skills while leading under supervision, and familiarity with the Water Safety Code and the Hooper Outing Club checkout procedure for boating trips. For all of the leader ratings above Quietwater Leader, the leader rating also must be approved by a majority vote at a meeting of the Water Safety Board.

ACA Ratings and their equivalents to HOC leader ratings:

- ACA Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader (CKTL) Level 3 qualifies for an SKL2 HOC leader rating.
- ACA Coastal Kayaking Trip Leader Level 4 qualifies for an SKL3 HOC leader rating
- ACA River Kayaking Instructor Level 4 qualifies for WW3 HOC leader rating

Other certifications and credentials obtained for paddling leadership skills may also be considered (such as the British Canoe Union) and follow this same approval process: leading under supervision and being approved by a majority vote of the Water Safety Board. In such cases, the candidate must present the credentials to the Water Safety Chair and Board for review to demonstrate clearly how the credentials translate to the required skills at the leadership rating being sought.

## 3.6 Appointment of Paddling Leader Ratings by HOC Advisor and Water Safety Chair

The standard process for promoting HOC paddling leaders is based on leading under supervision of qualified HOC leaders at the same or greater leadership rating as the one being sought by a candidate for promotion. After leading under supervision, candidates are recommended to the Water Safety Board, which votes to approve promotions (with the exception of Quietwater and WW1 ratings, which are assigned by the Water Safety Chair without a vote by the Water Safety Board).

In the event that there are no active HOC paddling leaders with the ratings sought by a member, the HOC Advisor may grant a provisional leadership rating based on an assessment of the candidate's paddling, leadership, and safety skills. Evidence of such skills includes, but is not limited to:

- Paddling certifications and/or training programs, such as those from ACA, the British Canoe Union, the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS), and well recognized and established paddling and outdoor skills schools, such as the Nantahala Outdoor Center.
- Professional experience as a paddling guide, camp counselor, outfitter or similar---any position that involved leadership roles for groups of paddlers.
- Demonstration of relevant personal paddling experience and leadership on personal or other paddling (non-Hooper) club trips.
- References on paddling and leadership experience of candidates are encouraged to be provided to the HOC Advisor and Water Safety Chair.

In any such case following this process, the HOC Advisor is to confer with the Water Safety Chair, who must confirm all such recommendations. The resulting leadership rating is provisional. To confirm and remove the provisional status requires the following steps:

- The candidate must complete the HOC water safety test, administered by the Water Safety Chair.
- The candidate must first lead a trip under supervision of a Water Safety Board member for a trip rated one rating lower than that of the leadership rating being sought:
  - For leadership rating of WW2, a provisional leader would need to lead a trip rated for R1 paddlers.
  - For a leadership rating of WW3, a trip rated for R2 paddlers.
  - For a leadership rating of WW4, a trip rated for R3 paddlers.
  - This same pattern holds for SKL ratings (SKL1 rating requires leading an SK0 trip, SKL2 a SK1 trip, SKL3 an SK2 trip).
  - The above are minimum requirements; it is highly recommended that candidates to be granted leadership ratings via this process lead additional trips at lower skill ratings to become familiar with club policies and procedures. It also provides opportunities for more WS Board members to become familiar with the skills of such candidates.
- The candidate must receive a positive assessment of paddling leadership and safety skills by the supervising Water Safety Board member on a trip as described above. Upon completion of such a lower rated trip, the Water Safety Chair and HOC Advisor are to confer with the supervising Water Safety Board member in determining a positive or negative assessment. A positive assessment is required for the final confirmation step (below).
- The candidate leads a trip at the leadership rating being sought. Upon completion of such a trip, the Water Safety Chair and HOC Advisor will confer with trip participants as to the qualifications and demonstrated leadership, paddling and safety skills of the candidate. Based on this input, the HOC Advisor and Water Safety Chair must both agree to removal of the provisional status to the rating sought and be approved by a majority vote of the water safety board.

### 3.7 Maintaining Leader Ratings

To maintain an achieved leader rating normally requires that a person must have led a river or sea kayaking trip or at least participated in a river or sea kayak trip for which he/she was qualified to lead during the last 3 years. For example, to maintain a leader rating of WW3 from May of one year until May of the following year typically requires that the individual must have led or at least boated on a Grade III river trip during that 12 month period. The individual must maintain competence in the craft from which they are leading, including aptitude to self-rescue and effectively assist in rescues on the grade water on which they are leading. Boating leaders are strongly urged to maintain their paddling and judgment skills by boating and/or leading regularly. A leader not satisfying this requirement may be demoted to the next lower rating. To regain the previous rating, the individual must comply with Hooper Outing Club procedures as outlined in the previous section. Exceptions may only be granted when deemed appropriate by the Water Safety Chairperson.

## 4 Boating Leader Duties and Responsibilities

The duties and responsibilities of a boating leader extend throughout all phases of a trip. A few general boating leader responsibilities are of particular importance:

- 1) The boating leader is the final authority on the boating trip. He/she may exceed the requirements of this Water Safety Code at any time in the interest of safety, but at no time may he/she lower them.
- 2) The boating leader shall comply with specific instructions given by the Water Safety Chairperson, but is always free to act in the direction of greater safety.
- 3) On whitewater trips, the boating leader determines the river classification on the spot and determines who may run any given rapids.
- 4) The boating leader may delegate his/her responsibility to another individual. However, he/she shall be responsible for all decisions made by the person to whom authority has been delegated.

An outline of other major duties and responsibilities of boating leaders during each trip is included below. Leaders are encouraged to delegate some of these duties and responsibilities to other qualified leaders, but ultimately the trip leader is responsible.

### 4.1 During Organization of the Trip

- 1) Obtain information on the rivers or lakes to be paddled including current water levels (refer to river guides, fellow paddlers, etc.)
- 2) **OBTAIN APPROVAL FOR THE TRIP FROM WATER SAFETY CHAIRPERSON!!!**
- 3) Announce trip plans at a Hooper Outing Club meeting, electronic distribution list and/or website with appropriate requirements regarding paddler abilities, equipment required, etc.
- 4) Confirm that all trip participants are current Hooper Outing Club members and possess necessary paddling skills (check paddler ratings).
- 5) Inform trip participants of expected weather and water conditions.
- 6) Make certain that all necessary boating equipment is available and in serviceable condition for the trip.

### 4.2 Prior to Departure from Madison

- 1) Ensure that trip participants sign out all Hooper Outing Club boats.
- 2) Complete and deposit trip information sheet with the Outdoor Programs Office.
- 3) Check to ensure that all equipment being taken on the trip is in serviceable condition and has been checked out properly!
- 4) Check to ensure that at least one (1) first-aid kit and throw rope are taken for each river group as well as a block and tackle (i.e., "pin kit") when appropriate.
- 5) Take at least one (1) extra paddle for each type of craft on the trip, including a breakdown kayak paddle if needed, for use as spare paddles while on the river.
- 6) Take extra paddles, helmets, lifejackets and sprayskirts as deemed necessary and available as space permits.
- 7) Make certain that each paddler has the necessary personal and paddling gear.
- 8) Take along a river guide for the area.

### 4.3 At the Put-in

- 1) Make certain that all paddlers have all gear needed on the river out of the cars to be used for the shuttle.
- 2) Run the shuttle.

- 3) Give a "river talk" concerning paddling techniques, river character and river safety. This is especially important on beginner trips!
- 4) Assign a river order.
- 5) Assign the first-aid kit and throw rope to competent paddlers.

#### 4.4 On the Water

- 1) Maintain order and group spacing.
- 2) Make an effort to instruct in paddling and safety techniques throughout the trip.
- 3) Observe paddlers and consider each for promotion in paddler rating.
- 4) If applicable, decide which section of river requires scouting.
- 5) On whitewater trips, exercise discretion and authority in deciding which trip participants may paddle a given rapid. This applies to those with private equipment too.

#### 4.5 After the Trip

- 1) Dry and clean boats at the take out to help minimize spread of aquatic invasive species. (Avoid draining the boats into Lake Mendota from another water body.)
- 2) Ensure that all Hooper Outing Club equipment is returned to its proper place and that boats are signed in.
- 3) Inspect all Hooper Outing Club boats to determine if any boat damage has been incurred.
- 4) Inform paddlers of any damage they are responsible for repairing.
- 5) Inform Water Safety Chairperson of any items needed for the first aid kits.
- 6) Collect boat user fees from all participants who used Hooper Outing Club boats. Deposit any collected fees with the appropriate interest group chairperson.
- 7) Inform paddlers of any promotion in rating after confirmation with the Water Safety Chairperson.
- 8) Complete any accident incident reports as necessary.

## 5 **Water Safety Board**

The purpose of the Water Safety Board is to ensure that appropriate water safety procedures are employed in all aspects of the Hooper Outing Club boating program. To this end, the Water Safety Board is responsible for conceiving and administering the necessary rules and regulations such as those outlined in this Water Safety Code.

### 5.1 Water Safety Board Membership and General Functioning

The Water Safety Board is established on a year-by-year basis (calendar year) and will consist of all current Hooper Outing Club members who hold boating leader ratings of at least WW2-OC, WW2, or SKL1.

At the first meeting of each calendar year, the Board for the coming year will be established. Members of the Board during the preceding year who have maintained their leader ratings as outlined previously will be included at their previous rating. Members who have dropped to a lower rating as a result of insufficient boating activities will be included at their new, lower rating. The Board is responsible for drafting the safety regulations in this Code and revising them when necessary. A meeting at which rule changes may be made must be announced at a Water Safety Board meeting or a general Hooper Outing Club meeting and the proposed rule changes posted at least one week in advance. A 2/3 majority of the Water Safety Board Members present plus designated proxies at a Water Safety board meeting is required for revisions. Rule changes do not become effective until they have been posted on the Hooper Outing Club website or published in the Hooper Outing Club Water Safety Code.

On matters concerning general boating policy, the Water Safety Board makes recommendations to the Executive Board of the Hooper Outing Club, which then determines policy.

A meeting may be called by any Water Safety Board Member at any suitable time as long as a reasonable effort has been made to contact all other Water Safety Board Members. Those Water Safety Board Members present at a meeting constitute a quorum. Absent Water Safety Board Members may submit proxy votes on specific agenda items. A majority shall consist of majority of Water Safety Board Members present at a Water Safety Board meeting, plus proxies.

## 5.2 Water Safety Chairperson

### 5.2.1 Election

A Water Safety Chairperson is elected by the Water Safety Board to direct its activities and generally oversee the safety aspects of the Hooper Outing Club Boating Program.

The Water Safety Chairperson must hold a leader rating of at least WW3, WW3-OC, or SKL3 and must be elected by at least a 2/3 majority of a Water Safety Board meeting that has been announced at least one week in advance.

The Chairperson shall be regularly elected at the first meeting of the calendar year, but the Board may elect a new Chairperson at any time.

The elected Chairperson shall appoint another Water Safety Board Member to serve as temporary Chairperson during his/her absence, for a period not to exceed four (4) weeks. For longer periods of absence, the Board must elect the replacement.

In the event the chairperson position becomes vacant, a simple majority may select an acting Chairperson, whose term shall not exceed one month, until such time as a permanent Chairperson is elected.

The Water Safety Chairperson may be removed for cause or demoted by a 2/3 majority vote at a meeting posted one week in advance.

### 5.2.2 Responsibilities and Duties

The Water Safety Chairperson shall make certain that all the requirements set forth in the Water Safety Code are fulfilled. He/she may raise the standards in the interest of greater safety at any time. He/she shall approve the boating leader for each boating trip and make certain the personnel are appropriate for the river to be run. He/she, or a designated individual, shall maintain Hooper Outing Club water safety equipment in serviceable condition and make it readily available to boating leaders. The Water Safety Chairperson shall see that a roster of all active Hooper Outing Club paddlers including their current paddler ratings is maintained. The Chairperson shall examine candidates for the Water Safety Board on their knowledge of the Water Safety Code and river safety in general. The Chairperson presides at Water Safety Board meetings. The Water Safety Chairperson, or his/her designated substitute, is the representative of the Water Safety Board to the Executive Board of the Hooper Outing Club. The Water Safety Board Chairperson may appoint an alternative Water Safety Board Member to administer WW1-OC, WW1, or quietwater tests. This person shall be approved by a majority of the Water Safety Board. The Water Safety Chairperson may update Appendices to this Water Safety Code containing reference materials and rivers listings as needed. The Water Safety Board shall approve any changes made at the next Water Safety Board meeting.

## 6 Boating Trips

Hooper Outing Club boating activities may be divided into four categories depending on where they occur: (1) Lake Mendota, (2) a swimming pool, (3) rivers, or (4) other inland lakes, Great Lakes or oceans. This section describes policies related to river and sea kayaking trips. A discussion of regulations and policies concerning Lake Mendota and Hooper Outing Club swimming pool sessions have been included in Appendix B and Appendix C, respectively.

### 6.1 Definition

A Hooper Outing Club boating trip is defined as any trip not on Lake Mendota on which Hooper Outing Club equipment is used and on which all participants are Hooper Outing Club members or approved guests thereof.

Every person who uses equipment, food or transportation provided for such a trip is considered a participant on that trip and shall observe the regulations outlined in this Water Safety Code. This applies to Hooper Outing Club members and/or guests who are using private equipment.

All Hooper Outing Club boating trips must be approved by the Water Safety Chairperson. The Hooper Outing Club paddles on rivers up to Grade IV as indicated by American Whitewater ratings or in Appendix D of this Water Safety Code.

## 6.2 General Trip Rules and Policies

### 6.2.1 All Hooper Outing Club Boating Trips

The following rules and policies apply to all Hooper Outing Club boating trips. Following this list, rules and policies to specific types of boating trips are described.

- 1) All boating trips must be approved by the Water Safety Chairperson.
- 2) The boater and trip leader requirements outlined in the previous section must be satisfied.
- 3) A minimum of three (3) boats are required on whitewater river and sea kayaking trips at all times. A minimum of two (2) boats and three (3) paddlers are required on river trips.
- 4) Personal flotation devices (PFDs; or "life jackets") must be worn at all times by all trip members on all types of Hooper trips and all lessons and practice sessions. This includes all quietwater trips. The only exception is for indoor pool sessions with lifeguards on duty; PFDs are not required for such sessions.
- 5) At least one first-aid kit must be carried while on the river.
- 6) All paddlers should wear foot protection while boating. Specialty paddling shoes or wetsuit boots are recommended.
- 7) If the water temperature is less than 55°F, appropriate clothing, possibly including wetsuits, must be worn by all boaters on all rapids trips.
- 8) Ropes, spare paddles and other Hooper Outing Club equipment are the responsibility of those carrying them.
- 9) The group plans, expected hazards, number of rapids which are likely to require scouting, location of special equipment, and expected rescue procedures are part of the knowledge every trip participant should have. It is the boating leader's responsibility to convey this information to the group.
- 10) On whitewater trips, the boating leader determines the order and spacing of boats and has the authority to decide who may run a given rapids.
- 11) The lead boat sets the pace, should not be passed, is on the lookout for possible hazards and has the delegated authority of the boating leader to make decisions in the interest of safety.
- 12) The sweep boat is always in the rear. It is recommended that the sweep boat carry a rescue rope and first-aid kit.
- 13) Each boat is responsible for keeping the one behind in sight, stopping to wait if necessary.
- 14) After trips, each person is responsible for identifying and if possible repairing any damage incurred to the boat he/she was paddling before the next weekend.

### 6.2.2 Required Safety Gear for Quietwater Trips

Personal flotation devices (PFDs or "life vests" or "life jackets") must be worn at all times on club trips, including quietwater.

At least one rescue rope and one first-aid kit must be carried with the group.

### 6.2.3 Private Boats and Non-Members on Hooper Outing Club Trips

Non-members (guests) are not allowed to use HOC boats and boating equipment at any time under any conditions. This includes paddling in a tandem canoe with a qualified HOC member.

Private boats may be taken on a Hooper Outing Club trip by members provided they fulfill the requirements outlined in this Code. All participants using private equipment must comply with the rules and regulations outlined in this Code.

Guests may be taken on boating trips in accordance with current Hooper Outing Club guest policy, provided they meet the necessary boater skill requirements and provide their own boats and equipment. The Water Safety Chairperson may assign provisional skill ratings to experienced boaters participating as guests, based upon a knowledgeable evaluation of their boating ability. A Hooper liability/waiver form is to be signed by all guests.

When a private group is met at a river and wishes to boat with the Hooper Outing Club, the boating leader shall determine their experience and proficiency as best he/she can. If he/she feels they are inadequately prepared, he/she should so inform them and he/she should discourage them from running the river. If they insist on going, the boating leader may permit them to accompany the Hooper Outing Club boats for their own protection. Nevertheless, the boating leader should make it clear that the Hooper Outing Club will not assume responsibility for any misfortune which might occur. The boating leader is urged, however, to provide whatever aid he feels is necessary if an individual's safety is in jeopardy (Hooper Outing Club witnesses should be present).

### 6.2.4 Use of HOC Boats and Equipment for Skills and Leadership Training in Non-HOC Events

Hooper Outing Club encourages paddling and leadership skills development in non-Hooper, well-structured, safe, and suitably staffed training events, such as ACA instructor training classes, sea kayaking symposiums, National Outdoor Leadership courses, and skills classes at reputable paddling schools. The skills and experience gained at these types of events by Hooper paddling leaders can be very valuable to the club if the member applies these skills in organizing and leading trips and lessons for Hoopers.

Members may be allowed to use HOC boats and equipment for such events. This is to be determined on a case-by-case basis. This option is only available to active club members who also have obtained a paddling leadership rating (at least quietwater leader). Interested members must request permission from the Water Safety Chair and demonstrate to the chair an interest and plan for using skills gained to create and lead future trips and lessons for the club. If granted such permission, the member assumes all liability for damage to the club boats and equipment. If damaged, the person must pay for repairs or replacement as necessary.

## 6.3 Sea Kayak Trips

### 6.3.1 Conditions and Ratings Requirements

Trips shall be evaluated based on the highest level conditions that can reasonably be anticipated at any time during the duration of the trip. As a point of clarification, trips are evaluated in their entirety in advance, whereas conditions are evaluated a day at a time and/or during the trip. Conditions change—often rapidly. The result is that trip classification can change the day of a trip. It is the responsibility of the trip leader to check water conditions and weather prior to departure. If such conditions change the difficulty and associated rating requirements for paddlers and leaders of a planned trip, it is the responsibility of the leader to change the trip plan or even cancel the trip. This should be done in consultation with the water safety chair or a sea kayaking leader rated SKL2 or higher. Trips are to be classified according to the most difficult conditions expected.

In addition to factors mentioned under condition ratings, additional items such as season of the year, prevailing weather patterns, and trip duration should be considered when evaluating the trip as a whole.

Even once a trip has begun, conditions must be constantly evaluated. What was reasonably anticipated prior to a trip's departure may not be what is actually encountered at a point during the trip. In recognition of this, all trip participants should recognize in advance that the entire group will be limited to conditions able to be paddled by the lowest rated paddler on the trip.

Sea kayaking leaders are responsible for risk management of trips in process. The over-arching priority of all HOC paddling trips is safety. Leaders are to exercise sound judgment and effective risk management to ensure safety of all trip participants at all times while on HOC trips. This may mean changing plans while trips are in

progress, such as waiting out hazardous weather and conditions, modifying routes, ending a trip earlier than planned, and making emergency calls for rescue. Trips rated at Level 2 or higher require detailed trip plans with full daily itineraries on file with the Water Safety Chair and HOC office.

The following descriptions of trip classifications and skill ratings are guidelines for HOC sea kayaking instructors and leaders. These guidelines define parameters to be used to rate a given trip. They are not to be viewed or used as strict requirements. The final decision for rating a sea kayaking trip is to be made by the Water Safety Chair with input from the trip leader. For level two and level three trips, input also is recommended from the Sea Kayaking Chair.

In recognition that many factors together determine the difficulty of paddling under a given set of circumstances, the conditions below are listed as "typical" and are not meant to be all inclusive. Each situation needs to be evaluated on its own merits. Factors including wind speed and direction, wave height, distances between landings, air temperature, water temperature, difficulty of landing, proximity to help, etc. should be considered. A rough rule of thumb is that Sea Level One conditions require skills comparable to Grade I whitewater, Sea Level Two conditions require skills comparable to Grade II whitewater, etc.

#### 1) Lake Level (Quietwater)Trips

1. Quietwater leader required for on-water trip leadership.
2. SKO paddler rating required for all participants..
3. Lake level condition: wave heights less than 1 foot, wind fetch less than 10 miles. Surfing is allowable with proper landing conditions.
4. Distance of travel: target is generally modest distances (10 miles per day or less); Longer distances are possible depending on conditions and experience of the group (for reference, paddling around Lake Mendota is 21 miles and such trips at this level are allowed on calm days).
5. Pace: No desired pace
6. Inland lake crossings: less than or equal to 3 miles
7. Great Lakes paddling: not allowed at this level
8. Emergency shore line access: shoreline along route is accessible by water for landing about every 1 mile in the event of an emergency.

Examples of quietwater (lake level) trips include Lake Waupaca (chain of lakes), Lake Mendota Trips, and the Wisconsin River.

#### 2) Level One Trips

1. SKL1 leader required for on-water trip leadership for high exposure lakes
2. SK1 paddler rating generally is required for trip participants. The only exception is that paddlers with an SK0 rating may be allowed at the discretion of the trip leader and accounting for prevailing conditions and extra time that may be needed.
3. Water conditions: wave heights less than 2 feet, easy landing and takeoff zones (e.g. shallow or sandy beach without obstructions, or very protected harbors, on-shore breakers less than 2 feet), wind fetch generally less than 20 miles, wind less than 12 knots, Surfing is allowed. currents up to 1 knot; little chop; water temperatures above 55°F.
4. Distance of travel: 0 to 10 miles per day.
5. Pace: 3 mph with no wind or current
6. Inland lake crossings: less than or equal to 3 miles
7. Great Lake Crossings: limited—distances generally less than 4.0 miles. Must be approved in advance of the trip by the Water Safety Chair with a clear plan for changes in conditions that could result in being stranded in an off-shore location.

8. Emergency shore line access: shoreline along route is accessible at least every 3 miles by water in the event of an emergency
9. Small Craft Advisory conditions: generally not allowed unless in a lee side area that is well protected.

Examples of SK1 Trips include HOC Boat House to Governor’s Island on Lake Mendota, Klode Park to Bradford Beach on Lake Michigan, land-based Apostle Islands drip (camping on the mainland and taking day trips), Door County Labor Day Trip, Surfing at Whitefish dunes, Voyageurs National Park, and Boundary Waters.

### 3) Level Two Provisional Trips

1. SKL2 leader rating required for on-water leadership.
2. SK2p participant rating required or SK1 rating with trip leader approval. SK2p rating required for crossings on Great Lakes.
3. Water conditions: wave heights less than 2 feet, easy landing and takeoff zones (e.g. shallow or sandy beach without obstructions, or very protected harbors, on-shore breakers less than 2 feet), wind fetch less than 20 miles, wind less than 12 knots
4. Distance of travel: 10 to 20 miles per day
5. Maintain typical kayak speed under given conditions as outlined below for several hours.

Typical Kayak Speeds		
	Wind Speed	Kayak Speed
Head Wind	20	1.5
	10	2.5
No Wind	0	3.0
Tail Wind	10	3.5
	20	4.0

6. Inland lake crossings: Not advised over 3 miles.
7. Great lake crossings: No farther than 4.0 miles and no farther from the mainland than just one crossing. For example, it takes one crossing to get from Sand Island or York Island to get to the mainland. However, Bear Island or Otter Island require two crossings to get to the mainland so those islands are not accessible on a Sk2p level trip.
8. Fog: Crossings in fog are allowed on inland trips. In event of fog, no Great Lakes crossings generally are to be made from mainland locations to islands. Any paddling in fog conditions should only be done if leaders are comfortable and experienced with fog navigation. In fog conditions, crossing from islands to the mainland poses much less risk. In all cases of paddling in foggy conditions, the leader must have map and a deck mounted compass as minimum navigation equipment.

9. Emergency shore line access: shoreline along route is accessible at least every 3 miles by water in the event of an emergency
10. Small craft advisory conditions: Generally not allowed unless in a lee side area that is well protected.

Examples of SK2p Trips include circumnavigation of Lake Mendota, Head Waters of the Yaraa, Klode Park to South Shore Marina Lake Michigan, Door County, and similar trips

#### 4) Level Two Trips

1. SKL2 leader rating required for on-water leader.
2. SK2 participant rating required or SK2p rating with trip leader and water safety Chair approval.
3. Water conditions: wave heights less than 3 feet, moderate landing and takeoff zones (shallow rocky beach or steep sandy beach, protected harbors, on-shore breakers less than 3 feet), current up to 2 knots, wind less than 18 knots; wind fetch less than 40 miles; currents up to 2 knots; water temperatures less than 60°F.
4. Maximum distance of travel: 20 miles per day
5. Pace: 3 to 4 mph with no wind or current
6. Inland lake crossings: less than or equal to 4.5 miles.
7. Great Lake Crossings: less than or equal to 4 miles. Any number of crossings away from mainland.
8. Fog: Crossings in fog are allowed on inland trips. In event of fog, any crossings on Great Lakes trips should be carefully considered and only attempted when leaders and paddlers in the group are skilled and experienced with navigation in fog. Island to island crossings pose the highest risk and groups generally should avoid them. All paddlers should have deck compasses for SK2 level trips and be familiar with their use.
9. Emergency shore line access: shoreline along route is accessible at least every 5 miles by water in the event of an emergency.

Examples of SK2 Trips include island hopping in the Apostle Islands, Door County and similar trips.

#### 5) Level Three Trips

1. SKL3 leader rating required for on-water trip leader.
2. SK3 participant rating required or SK2 rating with trip leader and sea kayak chair approval
3. Sea level three conditions: wave heights less than 5 feet, moderate to poor landings and take-off zone (steep rock beach or unprotected harbor), wind fetch less than 200 miles, wind less than 20 knots. currents up to 3 knots; water temperature less than 50°F.
4. Max distance of travel: generally 20 miles per day, but longer distances possible.
5. Pace: 3 to 4 mph with no wind or current
6. Inland lake crossings: less than or equal to 7 miles. In the event of poor visibility such as fog. In foggy conditions crossings should not be made if over 3 miles; any crossings in fog require use of deck compasses.
7. Great Lake Crossings: 7 miles or less.
8. Fog: In the event of poor visibility such as fog, crossings greater than 3 miles are not advised; all crossings in foggy or limited visibility conditions require use of deck compasses and maps.
9. Emergency shore line access: shoreline along route is accessible at least every 5 miles by water in the event of an emergency.

Examples of SK3 Trips include advanced island hopping in the Apostle Islands, Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, Door County, Isle Royale, the Slates and similar trips.

SK3 level trips are the most advanced trips that HOC allows. Members wishing to do more difficult trips must do them as private trips. As private trips they are not subject to any HOC WS Code requirements. Hooper boats and equipment may not be used for private trips.

## 6.3.2 Sea Kayaking Required Safety Equipment

### 6.3.2.1 Required Of All Trips

#### Group

- 1) All kayaks must be in good working condition, with plenty of secure buoyancy in the bow and stern.
- 2) At least one accessible spare paddle for every 3 paddlers.
- 3) First aid kit.
- 4) A pump or bailer per every two boats.
- 5) Anticipated trip itinerary left at Hooper Outing Club Outdoor Programs Office.

#### Each Paddler

- 1) Paddle
- 2) Sprayskirt that adequately seals on the boat.
- 3) Personal floatation devices (PFD or "lifejackets"). PFDs must be worn in all conditions.
- 4) Clothing suitable to conditions (wetsuit or drysuit must be taken on all trips with water temperatures below 55°F). Wetsuits or drysuits must be worn at the discretion of the trip leader.

### 6.3.2.2 Required For Level One or Above Trips

#### Group

- 1) VHS weather radio
- 2) Self rescue aid (paddle float and/or stirrup per every two people)

#### Each Paddler

- 3) Helmet (for surfing trips or other shallow water trips)

### 6.3.2.2.1 Required For Level Two or Above Trips

#### Group

- 1) At least two VHF marine radio transceivers
- 2) Tow line
- 3) Current tide tables where applicable
- 4) Repair kit appropriate to boats on trip
- 5) Accessible flares or smoke bombs

#### Each Paddler

- 1) Map of area
- 2) Compass (either deck mounted or in map bag on deck)
- 3) Knife, waterproof matches or lighter, accessible food and water
- 4) Flashlight
- 5) Whistle
- 6) Wet or dry suit

6.3.2.2.2 *Required For Level Three or Above Trips*

Group

- 1) Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) (recommended, not required)

Each Boat

- 1) Spare paddle
- 2) Sufficient gear and food to survive independently if separated from the group

6.4 River Trips (Quietwater and Whitewater)

6.4.1 Rating Requirements

A summary of the paddler and leader requirements for various levels of river difficulty is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1** Minimum Paddler and Boating Leader Requirements for Various Levels of River Difficulties

<b>Class</b>	<b>Leader Rating</b>	<b>Paddler Rating</b>
Quietwater	Quietwater	Lake
I	WW1 or WW1-OC	Lake
II	WW2 or WW2-OC	R1, R1-OC
III	WW3p, WW3 or WW3-OC	R3p, R3p-OC
IV	WW4p, WW4, or WW4-OC	R4p, R4p-OC
Expeditionary	WW1 or WW1-OC	Lake or as appropriate by river description
Expeditionary-Exploratory	WW3 or WW3-OC	R2, R2-OC or as appropriate by river description

Exceptions:

- 1) For tandem canoes, if the two paddlers possess different skill ratings, the team may paddle river sections one grade higher than the lower rated paddler (e.g., an R2-OC and an R4-OC may paddle Grade III). When two people paddle as a team and both have a rating of R2p-OC, they may paddle Grade II water together providing they show good directional control and have the ability to self-rescue.
- 2) At the discretion of the Water Safety Chairperson, at an organization sponsored clinic or race, where adequate safety precautions will be provided, boaters with paddler ratings one grade lower than the river rating applied to the rapids will be permitted to paddle the rapids.
- 3) Generally, higher paddler and leader ratings will be required when winter paddling conditions exist (e.g., ice shelves, frigid air and water temperatures).

6.4.2 Expeditionary- Exploratory Trips

- 1) There are two classes of extended trips, expeditionary and expeditionary-exploratory: Expeditionary - Any boating trip of extended duration (i.e., 5-7 days or more on any waterway). These trips will usually be differentiated from more ordinary Hooper Outing Club excursions by more detailed logistics, whereby time of excursion and planned inaccessibility to supplies becomes an important consideration. A description of the route is usually available, or if not, it is expected to consist of no significant rapids. Examples of

expeditionary trips would include: runs on the Mississippi, Wisconsin, Missinaibi, Quetico-Boundary Waters, Everglades, Bloodvein, Thelon, Coppermine, Nahanni, Great Lakes, etc.

- 2) Expeditionary-Exploratory- Any boating trip of extended duration where an accurate description is not available and where significant rapids are expected. Examples include: rivers seldom run draining into the north side of Lake Superior, Hudson Bay, Arctic Ocean, etc.

While the safety measures outlined by the Water Safety Code are relevant for the customary trips taken by the Hooper Outing Club, expeditionary-type ventures are carried out in a separate environment. In general, practicality dictates an acceptance of a higher risk of mishap by participants, balanced by a unique set of rewards.

Water Safety Board Members will review past and current expedition-type trips to gain an appreciation for common practices. The following are safety guidelines for each class:

- 1) Note that the degree of difficulty of these trips can vary enormously. Higher qualifications should be assigned by the Water Safety Chairperson as conditions dictate.
- 2) A high degree of proficiency of all participants is essential. Additional safety measures, which there very likely will be, should be dictated by the Water Safety Chairperson after full consideration of the itinerary, trip members, and consultation with relevant personnel.

Water Safety Board Members understand that expeditionary-type trips require abilities in addition to those acquired in obtaining Hooper Outing Club paddler and leader designations. The possession of these abilities is the primary safety precaution, and these abilities are gained gradually as paddlers build upon their experiences and knowledge through practice.

#### 6.4.3 Required Safety Equipment for River Trips

The following safety and rescue gear must be used or carried on all whitewater trips (Grade 1 and higher):

Paddler gear:

- Helmets.
- PFDs (attached whistles recommended)
- Skirts (decked boats)
- Footwear
- Paddle wear appropriate for weather and water conditions

Group gear:

- First aid kit in waterproof case or bag
- Rescue throw bags (rescue ropes in stuff-sacks)(except for Prairie du Sac or other locations where shore rescues are not feasible or practical).
- Pin kit (prussiks, pulleys, locking carabiners, climbing webbing)
- Break-down paddle
- Print-out of emergency contacts and roster of all participants

Recommended:

- Cell phone or other communication device (e.g., satellite phone or signal device)
- Spare warm clothing layers in drybag
- High energy snacks
- Emergency kit (when paddling in remote locations)
- Warm beverages in a thermos or a stove with a small pot for cold weather trips
- Spares of essential gear (PFD, helmet, skirts, paddle---at least to the put-in)

For organized events with safety equipment and safety provided, such as the Wausau whitewater course, some items may not be required (such as throw bags and pin kits). Trip leader should consult with the water safety chair as to requirements.

#### 6.4.3.1 Whitewater Trips in Open Boats

Only keel-less or ABS Royalex type boats will be allowed on rapids above Grade I.

When anticipating rapids of Grade II or greater difficulty, safety helmets must be worn. At least one rescue rope must be carried on each trip. Also, one set of block and tackle (i.e., "pin kit") must be carried. Boaters should kneel in the boats while paddling in rapids. All boats must be outfitted with additional flotation equivalent to approximately 30% of the boat volume.

When paddling rapids of Grade III or greater difficulty, the boat should be fitted with flotation equivalent to approximately 70% of the boat volume. Further, boats must be equipped with thigh braces.

## 7 River Safety

The topic of river safety is a very complex one and a truly adequate discussion is beyond the scope of this Water Safety Code. Familiarization with the hazards associated with boating and the procedures to avoid and to overcome these hazards is the responsibility of all paddlers, and particularly boating leaders. This knowledge of river safety comes from a variety of sources, including reading in references such as those outlined in Appendix A , discussions with fellow paddlers (particularly those with extensive experience) and the time and experience gained by oneself. A brief discussion of several key aspects of river safety follows.

### 7.1 River Classifications

The Hooper Outing Club and this Code use the International Scale of River Difficulty in classifying rivers. On this scale, river difficulty varies from Grade I which is easiest to Grade VI which is the upper limit of navigability. The grade of difficulty is influenced by a variety of factors such as water flow and temperature.

The primary reference to be used for classifications of river difficulty is the American Whitewater Association. It maintains a database of whitewater rivers in all states where they exist (from Class I to Class VI). (<http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/view/>), which includes river descriptions, directions to put-ins, take-outs and shuttle routes, and links to US Geological Survey water levels for many rivers. Hazard warnings are also often posted by other boaters to this site.

American Whitewater and other whitewater guides may publish alternative river ratings, indicating the difficulty varies significantly according to flow volume. If a particular length of river cannot be characterized properly by one grade number, or if it alternates between a lower and a higher grade, two numbers are used, e.g. II-III. If a few short sections of a river that can be portaged easily are considerably more difficult than the rest of the river, their severe grade of difficulty is indicated by a subscript, e.g. II(IV). A rise or fall in the water level always alters the appearance and often the rating of a river or individual rapids. In the Wisconsin area most rivers are about one grade higher in the spring over that of the average summer level.

For many rivers in the United States and elsewhere, guide books are available that provide detailed river descriptions including their difficulties. Leaders should consult and use applicable, up-to-date guidebooks for planning and leading whitewater trips. This is especially important for trips on rivers for which the leader and other members lack direct experience and knowledge.

It is extremely important to recognize that river classifications are meant only as a general tool to convey the approximate difficulty of a section of river from one individual to another. Despite the guidelines set forth for classifying a section of river, differences in individual river assessments and interpretations often yield different classifications for the very same section of a river under the very same conditions.

Further, conditions change with time, in many cases drastically, resulting in changes in the river difficulty. Additionally, certain rivers may have been paddled a limited number of times by Hoopers, some not at all, and detailed descriptions and difficulty classifications may not be available. The paddler and especially a boating leader must be aware of the limitations of river classifications and be capable of assessing the difficulty and hazards of a given stretch of water on the spot.

In general, for Hooper Outing Club purposes, a river will be classified according to the most difficult section of water that has to be negotiated (i.e., cannot be portaged). River classifications and guidelines for boating leaders for many rivers commonly paddled by the Hooper Outing Club have been included in Appendix D of this Code.

## 7.2 River Hazards

The following river hazards are frequently encountered on boating trips and have proven to be the most frequently involved when accidents have occurred.

### 7.2.1 Cold Water

Cold water can render even a strong, competent swimmer helpless in a matter of minutes after submergence, if the person is not dressed properly. Even without submergence, cold water lapping up on oneself while boating can, over the course of a day, begin to sap one's strength. It is extremely important that all paddlers dress appropriately for the conditions expected and be alert for the signs of hypothermia in themselves, and in other paddlers.

In deciding on appropriate dress, one should take into account not only the absolute water temperature, but also the air temperature, the length and difficulty of the run, the likelihood of a swim occurring, the individual's tolerance to cold and general physical stature, and the capabilities of the group as a whole to perform prompt, efficient rescues. As a result of these various influences, certain individuals find polypro underwear and a fleece sweater under spray top and pants adequate for all but the most severe weather, while others select a full drysuit for all but the mildest weather. The point to make regarding dress for cold weather and water is that it is an individual thing and varies from trip to trip, not just from water temperature to water temperature. It is the boating leader's responsibility to assure that all trip participants are dressed adequately. If in doubt about wearing an extra piece of clothing, ask someone for their opinion. If still in doubt, wear it.

### 7.2.2 High Water

The river's power and danger often increase as the water flow in a given river increases in volume. The obvious extreme, is where a river is in flood. Be extremely cautious in judging the river level and relating it to river difficulty, especially as determined from a guide book. This is especially true when making the judgment at a put-in or take-out where the width or depth of the river bed can often mask variations in the river level (e.g., on certain rivers, a rise of several inches at the put-in or take-out can mean a rise of several feet in a central, narrowing section of the river).

Also, it is important to be aware of any potential for the river to rise significantly once your boating trip has begun. This may result from an increase in the release from a dam upstream, or may be due to a sudden cloudburst.

### 7.2.3 Strainers and Sieve-Like Obstacles

Brush, fallen trees, bridge pilings or anything else which allows the river to sweep through it (like water through a sieve) offers a severe hazard in that a boat and/or paddler can be swept into the "sieve" with the river flow and be pinned. The water pressure on anything trapped this way is overwhelming and efforts to extricate oneself will likely be futile. Avoid these hazards at all costs. One must be extremely alert, since there may be little or no whitewater to warn of this danger. If a boater ends up in a strainer, they should attempt to climb up on it *immediately*.

### 7.2.4 Weirs, Reversals, and Souse Holes

These river hazards are characterized by water dropping over an obstacle such as a rock or ledge and then curling back on itself in a stationary wave. The surface water is actually going upstream and this action can trap any floating object. These "holes" as they are collectively called, vary substantially in their size and power. It is a real art to assess whether a hole offers a fun place to play, surf and do enders, or is a potential death trap. It must be emphasized that it is not only sheer size that dictates the power of a hole. Certain innocuous reversals following two or three foot high dams have trapped many persons and led to their eventual drowning. Exercise extreme caution in running a rapid with dangerously powerful holes in it and station an individual with a suitable throw rope if deemed necessary. If trapped in a hole, a swimmer's only real hope of escaping prior to tiring and drowning, is to dive toward the river bottom (or at least relax and let the water pull you under and out of the hole) where the current is flowing downstream or swim to one end of the hole. A throw rope from shore may provide the extra pull to extricate one from the side of the hole.

### 7.2.5 Entrapment

The entrapment referred to here means primarily catching a foot in rocks on the river bottom. Following a foot entrapment, the river current may knock one from his/her feet and eventually lead to drowning unless someone is nearby to provide a quick rescue. This type of entrapment is typically caused by one trying to stand up in fairly shallow but swift flowing sections of a river when trying to get to shore after a capsized.

Avoid standing up and risking entrapment. Keep your feet near the surface and use the backstroke or sidestroke to make your way to shore. This applies also when swimming through rapids.

### 7.3 River Conditions

Each paddler and the boating leader in particular should have a reasonably good knowledge of the river conditions to be expected, especially the number, location and difficulty of rapids to be encountered.

One should be aware of any possible river level changes and how these might affect the difficulty of the rapids. The approximate water temperature should be ascertained; if this is not possible, one should take appropriate boating clothing for the worst possible conditions.

One should consult available river guide books, talk to fellow paddlers who have run the river before, talk to knowledgeable individuals in the area of the river and make other efforts as needed to obtain information regarding the river conditions.

Related to this, one should have a knowledge of how to exit from the river in the event of an emergency and who to contact (e.g. Local sheriff, State Patrol, local hospitals, etc.).

### 7.4 Party Members

While on the water, keep a close watch on all party members including the very experienced, "they can take care of themselves" boaters. It is the boating leader's responsibility to ensure that all members of the party are among the group and in good shape.

### 7.5 Scouting

At individual rapids which present significant difficulties for the group or a few members of it, safety precautions should be taken. The obvious first precaution is to scout the rapid from eddies above the rapid or from the shore. An experienced paddler who is unlikely to have any difficulties should run first, not only to get a boat to the bottom of the rapids for rescue purposes, but to demonstrate the correct course to take. Depending on the nature on the rapid, it may be advisable to station an individual with a rescue rope at a key spot (e.g. next to a hole or at a particular significant drop). Further, to provide a rescue boat at the bottom of the rapid for the first boat to run, it may be necessary to portage one of the boats around the rapid. These rescue precautions should be maintained until all boats have negotiated the rapids successfully.

### 7.6 Rescues

In the event of an upset by one of the boats during negotiation of the rapids (or anywhere on the river for that matter), the safety of the boater(s) is of the utmost importance with any boating equipment of secondary concern. The persons involved in the upset should attempt to hold onto their craft and equipment and use a side stroke to make their way to shore as quickly as possible. Don't panic in trying to get out, but work quickly. The swimmers should be aware of any rescue boats and/or ropes being tossed. If a rescue boat comes to your aid while swimming, be cautious in holding onto the rescue boat and obey the instructions of the paddler. If the paddler instructs the swimmer to let go of the boat or equipment he/she may be dragging in the water, do it immediately! If he/she instructs you, the swimmer, to let go, do it. The swimmer should not try to stand up and should always remain upstream of his/her capsized boat; a boat full of water can crush one against a rock or other hard place.

Rescuing a swimming paddler and/or a floating boat and equipment is a real art which requires a lot of common sense and a lot of practice at which to become efficient. The rescuing paddler should be aware of the river characteristics downstream and know where to try and drag the swimmer to safety. A safe spot (e.g., on shore or a large eddy in the river) should be selected (one which can realistically be hit). The paddler should then work like hell to move the swimmer (and possibly his/her boat) into that safe spot. Indecision and/or changing one's mind in midstream has often resulted in needlessly long and uncomfortable swims on the part of the swimmer. If

necessary, have the swimmer let go of the boat he/she may be dragging. Other rescuers can then pick up the floating equipment.

A most effective rescue involves having the swimmer climb onto the rear deck of longer ("old school") K-1's or sea kayaks and C-1's or mid-deck of C-2's. The more of their bodies they get out of the water, the easier it is to move them. Once on the deck of a rescue boat the swimmer should remain extremely still so that they do not capsize the rescue boat. If the rescue paddler is in a shorter K-1, the swimmer will likely not be able to climb onto its rear deck. In this case, the rescuer will likely have the swimmer hold onto the stern grab loop and assist the rescue by kicking. Rescuers should remain calm and avoid spearing the swimmer in their frantic attempt to perform a dramatic rescue.

People throwing ropes should keep several things in mind. 1. A well thrown rope is useless if the swimmer is not looking for it. Make sure they know you are about to throw the rope. 2. In fast current, a swimmer hanging on to a rope is a heavy load. Be sure you select a position where you can brace yourself securely in a belay position. Other rescuers can assist by helping hold the rope thrower in place by holding onto his/her life jacket at the shoulders from behind. 3. Try to envision the likely swing of the swimmer on the rope as they are swept downstream. If they will be swept over another hazard, choose another location for rescue.

Rescue procedures using an open boat are significantly different from those employed in a decked boat. Rescue from an open boat offers the possibility of pulling the swimmer into the boat with you. Swimming a rapids holding onto an open boat is usually not recommended.

It is known that the Hooper Outing Club Water Safety Code has been revised and reapproved by the Hooper Outing Club Water Safety Board *at least* in 1978, 1986, 1996, 2010, 2011, 2013, 2016 and 2017.

## Appendix A List of Suggested References

*American Whitewater*. Comprehensive database of whitewater rivers in the US. Whitewater advocate and industry leader. <http://www.americnawhitewater.org>

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## **Appendix B Regulations and Policies Regarding Lake Mendota Paddling (Hooper Outing Club Lake Rules)**

- A. General Rules for paddling activities that are not part of an official Hooper Outing Club trip.
- 1) Obey the Boathouse lights and flags. Determination of conditions as indicated by flags and lights is ultimately set by the UW Lifesaving Station, which is operated by the State of Wisconsin. The flag pole is located in front of the Boathouse. Lights are located at the top of the Lake Safety Tower which is on the northeast corner of the Helen C. White College Library. Call 608-262-4567 for Lake Mendota weather conditions (including the current flag and light in effect) or check the online Hooper Sailing Club webcam (<http://www.hoopersailing.org/>).

The UW Lifesaving Station may sound the steam whistle located on the top of the Lake Safety Tower, upon closing the lake due to a storm and one hour before sunset. In the event of a storm, red lights shall flash from the end of Picnic Point, the Tenney Park Locks, the Lake Safety Tower, and the UW Lifesaving Station. The mechanical warning devices are subject to failure so the flags take precedence if in conflict with the light signal. Flags may change in the middle of the day. Hooper boaters are required to obey the following flags which tell current weather conditions:

- a. Green (winds up to 18 mph): No special restrictions.
  - b. Yellow (possibly of storm, water less than 60°F, poor visibility, or one hour before sunset): Boating allowed only within an imaginary line from the tip of Picnic Point to the Tenney Park locks.
  - c. Blue (winds 18 to 30 mph or winds over 15 mph with too many rescues for the Lifesaving Station to handle): Same restrictions as yellow. Lake Mendota is usually quite rough under these conditions; therefore, it is recommended that inexperienced boaters do not go out. There can be no more than two people per boat. All canoeists must kneel, not sit on the seats. Life jackets must be worn by all boaters.
  - d. Red and Blue (very heavy winds greater than 30 mph, but no storm expected): Decked boating in pier area. No open boating.
  - e. Red: No boating. If you are on the lake, go to NEAREST shore.
- 2) State law requires that each boat carry one life jacket per person. Hoopers Outing Club requires all members to wear PFDs at all times on any kind of kayak or canoe while on Lake Mendota and any body of water. There are no exceptions to this requirement.
  - 3) State law requires all boats to be lighted after dark. A flashlight will suffice. It should be flashed in the direction of approaching boats to warn them of your presence. Boating after dark is allowed only during authorized Hooper Outing Club moonlight canoeing.
  - 4) Do not leave a boat at the mooring buoys, but you may beach your boat on the shore temporarily.
  - 5) Stay with your boat if it turns over: It will float even though full of water. Wave your paddle in the air to get attention and wait for the University Rescue Service to pick you up.
  - 6) If unable to return your boat, call the Boathouse (608-262-7351). You are responsible for returning all Hooper Outing Club equipment to its proper place.
  - 7) All boating must be done on Lake Mendota unless you will be going on an authorized Hooper Outing Club trip: Boats must be signed out. (For Hooper Outing Club Trip Rules, see the Hooper Outing Club Water Safety Code.)
  - 8) Failure to comply with the Hooper Outing Club lake rules will result in the securement of the violator's membership for up to two weeks.
    - a. The Hooper Outing Club Water Safety Chairperson may increase this penalty if he/she deems it appropriate.
    - b. If a person feels he/she has been penalized unjustly, he/she may appeal safety violations to the Water Safety Board and non-safety violations to the Hooper Outing Club Executive Board.

### **B. Open Canoe Rules**

- 1) At least one person in the canoe must have passed the lake canoe test.
- 2) If the water temperature is less than 60 degrees F, canoeing is only allowed under the direct supervision of an instructor or trip leader.
- 3) No more than three adults may be in a canoe (2 adults and 2 small children is okay).

#### C. Kayak Rules

- 1) All spray skirts must be tested for ease of removal: put the spray skirt on the boat, gather the middle of the skirt and lift gently. The skirt should come off the boat before the boat leaves the ground.
- 2) All kayakers must have passed the Kayak Lake Lesson and swim test or be under the direct supervision of an instructor.
- 3) Only persons who possess an R1 or SK1 or higher rating may kayak outside the pier area except on an official Hooper trip.
- 4) All kayaking must be done in accordance with the Hooper Outing Club Lake Mendota Rules Chart.
- 5) All kayaking practice which is likely to result in swimming must be done within the Pier Area, as defined in the Hooper Outing Club Lake Mendota Rules Chart.
- 6) If the water temperature is less than 60 degrees F, kayaking is only allowed under the direct supervision of an instructor or trip leader.
- 7) Helmets and face guards are mandatory when playing kayak water polo with paddles.

#### D. Decker Canoe Rules

- 1) All spray skirts must be tested for ease of removal (see Kayak Rules, "C1)" above).
- 2) At least one person in each two-person canoe must have passed the advanced canoe test or be under direct supervision of an instructor.
- 3) Any person in a one-person canoe must have had C-1 instruction or be under the direct supervision of an instructor.
- 4) If the water temperature is less than 60 degrees F, canoeing is only allowed under the direct supervision of an instructor..

#### E. Sign-Out Procedure

- 1) Select a boat, paddle, and life jacket (Note: locations as given below may change; check with the HOC equipment chair or whitewater chair for questions and updates).
  - a. Boats: Open canoes are stored on the two sets of racks just outside the HOC storage cage in the south end of the boathouse. They are marked with prominent lettering and logos. DO NOT use the Outdoor UW rental canoes, which are stored on a rack closer to the lake. Be careful when removing canoes from racks: keep it upside down while sliding it off the rack, then turn it right side up, making certain not to drop it, before carrying it to the lakefront. Do not attempt to take a canoe off the rack without assistance. Kayaks and decked canoes are stored in racks in the center of the boathouse (boats stored vertically).
  - b. Paddles: Canoe paddles for lake use are located on a wall rack near the canoes.  
  
DO NOT use the rental paddles. Rapids paddles are stored in the HOC paddling gear cage in the Boathouse, which is kept locked. Leaders can get a key card for access. Kayak paddles for lake use are on a rack on the west wall of the Boathouse near the rack of club bikes. PFDs (life jackets) for lake use are stored on a wall rack near the canoes. DO NOT use the Hooper Sailing Club or Outdoor UW rental PFDs.

Sprayskirts for kayaks and canoes are on a wall rack near the canoes---close to the HOC paddling gear cage. These sprayskirts are designated for lake use. Kayak sprayskirts inside the

HOC paddling gear cage are designated for use on trips. Canoe sprayskirts are all located inside HOC paddling gear cage.

- 2) Fill in your name, Hooper Outing Club member number, boat you are using, date and time in the log located outside the inner cage.
- 3) Upon return, dry and clean boats and remove float bags, then replace all equipment to its proper storage area immediately.
- 4) Finally, sign the equipment in by marking the time returned in the log.

#### F. Special Rules when Lifesaving Service is Not Available.

When instructing is going on, instructors and students must remain within the pier area. The pier area is defined as that area between the two piers and extending outward from shore to an imaginary line that connects the ends of the two piers. During this period, all instructors and students must wear life jackets at all times on the lake.

#### Recommendations and Tips

- 1) Carry an extra paddle as a safety precaution.
- 2) When you need help on the lake, your paddle should be waved in the air, or blink a light at the Boathouse. If you capsize, stay with the canoe, it will not sink.
- 3) Solo canoeing is more effective if you position yourself amid ships, and even further forward if there is strong wind.
- 4) Start your trip heading into the wind so that it will be behind you on your return.
- 5) When the wind is off-shore, the wind is stronger and the waves larger as you go further from shore.
- 6) So stay close to shore. In addition, unless your destination is across the lake, stay reasonably close to shore. Paddling is generally safer and easier and the scenery is more pleasing.
- 7) Wear a life jacket when there are large waves.
- 8) When there are large waves it is particularly important to lower the center of gravity for increased stability. It is best accomplished by kneeling in the boat with the knees spread apart: don't sit on the seats.
- 9) If possible, have someone watch while you are rolling a kayak so that she can render help if necessary.
- 10) Sprayskirts are labeled as to type of boat. Neither skirt fits well on the other types of boat. It is best not to endanger your safety or the sprayskirt's wellbeing by using the improper spray skirt.

## HOOFER OUTING CLUB LAKE MENDOTA RULES

To use this chart:

1. Check the water temperature at the Outdoor Rentals Office.  
If Water Temperature ≥ 60°F (approximately mid-May to late September) Use **Warm Water Paddling Chart**  
If Water Temperature < 60°F: **Use Cold Water Paddling Chart**
2. Check the flag color(s) outside – find the appropriate row in the column to the left  
IF NO FLAG IS FLYING – there is no rescue service – USE EXTREME CAUTION – see chart for restrictions
3. Find your paddler rating in the boat you want to paddle from the choices in the top two rows
4. Follow corresponding column and row to see where you can paddle today

The steam whistle is a warning sound to listen for while paddling. You may hear it

- When storms are approaching. If you hear it, get to shore immediately.
- One hour before sunset. After sunset, Lake Mendota is closed to boating (unless an official Hooper Outing Club trip).

### WARM WATER PADDLING CHART WATER TEMPERATURE ≥ 60°F

**Life vests MUST BE WORN at all times in any Hooper boat in all lessons and lake outings.**  
**All boating must be during daylight hours, between sunrise and sunset, unless an official Hooper Outing Club trip.**

Flag	Sea Kayak			Open Canoe – Two paddlers per boat			WW Kayak, Decked Canoe or Open Canoe with One Paddler		
	SK0	SK1 or SK2p	SK2 or Higher	Lake Rating	ROC-1 or ROC-2p	ROC-2 or Higher	Lake Rating + Swim Test	R1 or R2p	R2 or Higher
<b>IF NO FLAG IS FLYING – there is no rescue service</b>	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	Follow the blue flag rules, weather permitting.	Follow the green + yellow flag rules, weather permitting	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion.	Follow the blue flag rules, weather permitting.	Follow the green + yellow flag rules, weather permitting	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion.	Follow the blue flag rules, weather permitting.	Follow the green + yellow flag rules, weather permitting.
<b>USE EXTREME CAUTION</b>	ALL LESSONS MUST STAY WITHIN PIER AREA. ALL PADDLERS MUST WEAR THEIR LIFE JACKETS AT ALL TIMES.								
<b>Green</b>	Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Solo: Yellow line*  <u>2 or more boaters</u> ; whole lake	Whole lake	Yellow line*	Whole lake	Whole lake	Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Yellow line*	Yellow line*
<b>Green + Yellow</b>	Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Yellow line*	Solo: Yellow line*  <u>2 or more boaters</u> ; Whole lake	Yellow line*	Yellow line*	<u>1 boat</u> ; Yellow line*  <u>2 or more boaters</u> ; Whole lake	Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Solo; Pier area <sup>†</sup>  <u>2 or more boaters</u> ; Yellow line*
<b>Blue</b>	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	Solo: Pier area <sup>†</sup>  <u>2 or more boaters</u> ; Yellow line*	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>  Only 2 people per canoe Must kneel – no sitting	<u>1 boat</u> ; Pier area <sup>†</sup>  <u>2+ boaters</u> ; Yellow line*  Only 2 people per canoe Must kneel – no sitting	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons Are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>  <u>2+ boaters &amp; all ≥ R3p</u> ; Yellow line*
<b>Blue + Yellow</b>	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<u>NO BOATING</u> Lessons are at the instructor's discretion	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>
<b>Blue + Red</b>	<u>NO BOATING</u>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†</sup>	<u>NO BOATING</u>	<u>NO BOATING</u>	<u>NO BOATING</u>	<u>NO BOATING</u>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†#</sup>	<b>Boating alone not recommended</b> Pier area <sup>†#</sup>
<b>Red</b>	NO BOATING								

\*Yellow line is defined as an imaginary line between the end of Picnic Point and Tenney Park.

†Pier area is defined as that area between the Hooper Sailing Club pier and the swimming pier and extending outward from shore to an imaginary line that connects the ends of the two piers.

#No open boating.

## HOOFER OUTING CLUB LAKE MENDOTA RULES

To use this chart:

1. Check the water temperature at the Outdoor Rentals Office.  
If Water Temperature ≥ 60°F (approximately mid-May to late September) Use **Warm Water Paddling Chart**  
If Water Temperature < 60°F: Use **Cold Water Paddling Chart**
2. Check the flag color(s) outside – find the appropriate row in the column to the left.  
IF NO FLAG IS FLYING – there is no rescue service – USE EXTREME CAUTION – see chart for restrictions.
3. Find your paddler rating in the boat you want to paddle from the choices in the top two rows
4. Follow corresponding column and row to see where you can paddle today.

The steam whistle is a warning sound to listen for while paddling. You may hear it:

- When storms are approaching. If you hear it, get to shore immediately.
- One hour before sunset. After sunset, Lake Mendota is closed to boating (unless an official Hooper Outing Club trip).

### COLD WATER PADDLING CHART WATER TEMPERATURE < 55°F

**Life vests MUST BE WORN by all paddlers at all times.**

**All boating must be during daylight hours, between sunrise and sunset, unless an official Hooper Outing Club trip.**

Flag	Sea Kayak			Open Canoe – Two paddlers per boat			WW Kayak, Decked Canoe or Open Canoe with One Paddler		
	SK0	SK1 or SK2p	SK2 or Higher	Lake Rating	R1-OC or R2p-OC	R2-OC or Higher	Lake Rating + Swim Test	R1 or R2p	R2 or Higher
IF NO FLAG IS FLYING – there is no rescue service  USE EXTREME CAUTION	<b>NO BOATING WITHOUT PRIOR PERMISSION FROM THE WATER SAFETY CHAIRPERSON!!!</b>								
Green + Yellow	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Solo; Pier area<sup>†</sup></a> <small><a href="#">2 or more boaters</a>; Yellow line*</small>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>  <small>Only 2 people per canoe Must kneel – no sitting</small>	<a href="#">1 boat; Pier area<sup>†</sup></a>  <small><a href="#">2 or more boats</a>; Yellow line*</small>  <small>Only 2 people per canoe Must kneel – no sitting</small>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons Are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>  <small><a href="#">2 or more boats + all ≥ R3p</a>; Yellow line*</small>
Blue + Yellow	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a> <small>Lessons are at the instructor's discretion</small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>
Blue + Red	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†</sup></small>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†#</sup></small>	<a href="#">Boating alone not recommended</a> <small>Pier area<sup>†#</sup></small>
Red	<a href="#">NO BOATING</a>								

\*Yellow line is defined as an imaginary line between the end of Picnic Point and Tenney Park.

<sup>†</sup>Pier area is defined as that area between the Hooper Sailing Club pier and the swimming pier and extending outward from shore to an imaginary line that connects the ends of the two piers.

<sup>#</sup>No open boating.

## **Appendix C      Regulations and Policies Regarding Hooper Outing Club Pool Sessions**

The following rules and policies apply to all pool sessions sponsored by the Hooper Outing Club.

- 1) The pool sessions must be supervised by a Water Safety Board Member or an individual approved by the Water Safety Chairperson.
- 2) The leader of the session is responsible for all Hooper Outing Club equipment and the actions of the Hooper Outing Club participants while in the pool and its immediate surroundings.
- 3) The pool session must be open to all current Hooper Outing Club members and efforts should be made to provide instruction to those requesting it.
- 4) Air bags and other paraphernalia should be removed from each boat and the boats should be hosed down with a clean water prior to their use in the pool. Also, all paddling gear should be similarly cleansed.
- 5) Sprayskirts or other equipment susceptible to degradation from chlorine should be rinsed with fresh water following use in the pool.

## Appendix D Guidelines for Sea Kayaking Skills and Ratings

Paddler skill ratings are defined in Section 2.3, *Sea Kayak Classifications*, of the Water Safety Code. The ratings are largely based on overall ability to paddle safely and in control under given conditions. HOC paddling leaders and instructors assign ratings based on their overall assessment of a member's performance under conditions that define different skill levels.

This appendix is a supplement to the paddler ratings; it lists skills that paddlers at different skill ratings should possess. The intent is to inform members of the skills they need to develop and accomplish to progress from beginning to advanced paddlers. This also is helpful for leaders and instructors to know which skills to be taught in lessons and during trips.

These listing of skills are not to be interpreted as check-lists to obtain different paddler ratings. Ratings are assigned by leaders and instructors according to the requirements given in Section 2.3, *Sea Kayak Classifications*.

### SK0

SK0 skills include the following:

- Hold Paddle Properly
- Developing in the use of forward, back, draw stroke and sweep stroke
- Perform a T-Rescue both as a swimmer or rescuer within 3 minutes on flat water
- Proficient knowledge of HOC Boat House Rules relating to Sea Kayaks
- Has theoretical knowledge of risks and hazards related to Sea Kayaking
- Developing knowledge of purpose, proper care and use of a skeg
- Developing knowledge of paddle signals
- Developing understanding for the meaning of "hold your position"
- Developing theoretical knowledge for on-water group spacing to maintain communication.

### SK1

SK1 skills include the following:

- Developing High Brace and Low Brace
- Developing forward stroke with cruising speed of at least 3 mph on flat water
- Proficient in the use of forward, back, draw, and sweep strokes.
- Perform a T-Rescue both as a swimmer or rescuer within 2 minutes on flat water
- Can perform a paddle float rescue
- Proficient use and proper care of skeg
- Developing an understanding for the use of edging to turn
- Proficient Knowledge of paddle signals
- Developing knowledge for beach launches without the use of a dock.
- Proficient knowledge for on-water group spacing to maintain communication.

### SK2p

SK2p skills include the following

- Successfully participate in SK2p level trip at discretion of Trip Leader
- Proficient forward stroke
- Maintain typical kayak speed under given conditions as outlined below for several hours.

Typical Kayak Speeds		
	Wind Speed	Kayak Speed
Head Wind	20	1.5
	10	2.5
No Wind	0	3.0
Tail Wind	10	3.5
	20	4.0

- Proficient in the use of edging to turn
- Developing knowledge of Sea Kayak crossing procedures and risk mitigation
- Comfortable in wave chop up to 2 feet
- Can perform a T-Rescue in 2 foot waves in 2 minutes as rescuer and swimmer.
- Demonstrated practice of proper group spacing to maintain communication.
- Developing knowledge for VHS Marine Radio use and when they're needed.
- Developing knowledge for navigation using maps, compass and terrain association
- Developing knowledge for towing techniques
- Developing knowledge of concepts related to winds and waves
- Developing knowledge for the use of Transit and Range lines to hold position
- Developing knowledge of Cold Water Consideration
- Know how to access the marine coastal forecast online.
  - <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/zone/usamz.htm>

## SK2

SK2 skills include the following

- Successfully participate in SK2 level trip at discretion of Trip Leader
- Proficient knowledge of Sea Kayaking crossing procedures and risk mitigation
- Comfortable in waves up to 4 feet
- Perform a T-rescue in 2 to 4 foot waves

- Developing knowledge for surf landings and launches in breaking waves.
- Proficient knowledge for navigation using maps, compass and terrain association
- Proficient knowledge for VHS Marine Radio use and when they're needed.
- Developing knowledge for how to pack a boat for multi night expeditions
- Proficient knowledge for Towing Systems and Towing Techniques
- Proficient knowledge of concepts related to winds and waves
- Proficient knowledge for the use of Transit and Range lines to hold position
- Proficient knowledge of Cold Water Considerations

### **SK3**

SK3 skills include the following

- Successfully participate in SK3 level trip at discretion of Trip Leader
- Proficiency in rolling a Sea Kayak in flat water
- Comfortable in waves up to 5 feet
- Proficiency at navigating using map, compass and terrain association
- Proficient knowledge for VHS Marine Radio use and when they're needed.
- Proficiency in how to pack a boat for multi night expeditions
- Able to roll a fully loaded boat in calm conditions
- Fluent in Towing Systems and Towing Techniques
- Fluent knowledge and application of wind and wave concepts
- Fluent knowledge and use of Transit and Range Lines for holding position
- Fluent knowledge of Cold Water Considerations
- Possess an SKL1 Rating

## Appendix E Selected River Classifications and Leader Instructions

River classifications defined in this Appendix represent both leader and paddler ratings recommended to run the rivers listed. These are guidelines for river leaders and the water safety chair to determine appropriate skill ratings for HOC trips. For rivers not listed, the Hooper Outing Club defers to American Whitewater for river classifications. Boating leader discretion is of utmost importance on every trip. Boating leaders have the ultimate authority for on-river decisions on individual paddlers running a particular rapid, accounting for paddler abilities and river conditions. High water or other conditions may make the river more challenging than its usual classification and changes in conditions can happen rapidly, without warning. Thus, boating leaders are responsible for making decisions to increase required paddler rating if conditions warrant such measures.

Rivers draining the north shore of Lake Superior are denoted with an asterisk. At least R4 skills are required to run these rivers. Extreme caution must be used at all times, because even the easiest rivers are often interrupted by large un-runnable falls which may be difficult to recognize from upstream. Only reliable and consistent boaters in good physical condition should be taken on these rivers. A reliable roll is a must.

The following is a brief summary to some of the better-known rivers run by the Hooper Outing Club. The difficult drops are far too numerous to list individually.

### **BAD RIVER (Ashland County, WI):**

- A. Forest Road 184 to Mellen:
  - a. Culvert Caldron: High Grade II, discretion of boating leader.
  - b. Rocket Railroad:
    - i. Low water, R4p at the discretion of the boating leader.
    - ii. High water, R4.
  - c. Poke 'n Hope I and Poke 'n Hope II: R3p.

### **BAPTISM RIVER (MN)\*:**

- A. Section I: R2.
- B. Section II:
  - a. R3p.
  - b. The most difficult falls: R4 with discretion.
- C. Section III:
  - a. Low water, R3.
  - b. High water, R4.
- D. Section IV: R4.

### **BARABOO RIVER (WI):**

- A. Hwy 12 to Hwy 113: R1.

### **BLACK RIVER (Gogebic County, MI)**

- A. Section I: To Ramsey: R2.
- B. Section II: Highway 2 - Blackjack: R2.
- C. Section III: Narrows to Copper Peak: R3.
- D. Section IV: Copper Peak to Lake Superior: R4.

### **BRUNSWEILER RIVER (Ashland County, WI):**

- A. Section I: Beaver Dam Lake to first bridge at Springbrook Road:
  - a. Low water, R3.
  - b. High water, R4.
- B. Section II: Springbrook Road to Highway 13:
  - a. Push and Squeeze:
    - i. Low water, R3.
    - ii. High water, R4p.
  - b. Large boulder bed rapids:
    - i. Low water, R3.
    - ii. High water, R4p.
  - c. Double Indemnity (Canyon):
    - i. Low water, R3.
    - ii. High water, R4.

**BRULE RIVER (MN)\*:**

- A. Low, R3.
- B. High, R4. There is danger of being swept over large waterfalls near the beginning and end of this run.

**CHIPPEWA RIVER (WI):**

- A. Jim Falls
  - a. Most drops, R2.
  - b. Big drop, R3p.

**CROSS RIVER (MN)\*:**

- R4.

**EMBARASS RIVER (WI):**

- A. The Dalles: R3p to run the first major drop and large hydraulic below it at the approach to The Dalles.

**EAU CLAIRE RIVER (Marathon County, WI):**

- A. Initial drop: R4p.
- B. The Dells following the first drop: R3p.

**FALLS RIVER (Baraga County, MI)**

- R4. [R4p]

**FLAMBEAU RIVER, SOUTH FORK (WI):**

- A. Slough Gundy: At higher water levels, R2 and use caution because of the proximity to Little Falls.
- B. Little Falls: R3p, R4 at very high levels.

**GAULEY RIVER (WV):**

- A. Upper, R4.
- B. Middle and Lower, R4p.

**KETTLE RIVER (MN):**

- A. Above 2 feet on gauge: R2.
- B. Above 3 feet: R3p.
- C. Above 4 feet: R3.

**LITTLE WOLF RIVER (WI):**

- A. Prior to Big Falls: R1 to R2.
- B. Big Falls: R3.

**MENOMINEE RIVER (MI/WI):**

- A. Niagara to Highway 8:
  - a. Above Missicot Falls, R3p.
  - b. Missicot Falls:
    - i. Low water, R3. (R3p with a solid roll)
    - ii. High water, R4p.
  - c. Below Missicot Falls, R3p.
- B. Kremlin Islands (Quiver Falls):  
R1's may paddle at the discretion of the boating leader. (Note: The left channel is more difficult than the right channel, discretion is advised.)

**MONTREAL RIVER, WEST BRANCH (WI):**

- A. Section 1: Highway 77 to Highway 2:
  - a. Low water, R3.
  - b. High water, R4p.
- B. Section 2: Saxon Falls to Highway 122:
  - a. Low water, R2.
  - b. High water, R3p.

**OCOEE RIVER (TN):**

- A. Upper: R4p.
- B. Middle: R3.

**PAINT RIVER (MI):**

- A. Michigan DNR campground to Horserace Rapids: R3. Use extreme caution at Horserace Rapids due to a pin spot.

**PESHTIGO RIVER (WI):**

- A. Section II: Michigan Rapids and Ralton's Rips must be scouted by Grade II trips and may be run by R1's at the discretion of the boating leader.
- B. Section III: Roaring Rapids
  - a. up to 12": R2 (R1 with permission from the Water Safety Chairperson), R3p for Horserace.
  - b. 12-24": R3p.
  - c. >24": R4p.

**PIGEON RIVER (MN)\*:**

- A. Low water, R3.
- B. High water, R4

**PIKE RIVER (WI):**

- A. County K to Yellow Bridge:
  - a. County K to take out upstream of Yellow Bridge: R1.
  - b. Yellow Bridge: R3p.
- B. Falls Section: R3.

**POPLAR RIVER (MN)\*:**

- A. Low water, R3.
- B. High water, R4.

**POPPLE RIVER (WI):**

- A. Little Bull Falls: High water, R3p.
- B. Big Bull Falls: High Water, R3p.
- C. Washburn Falls: High Water, R3p.
- D. Jennings Falls: High Water, R2.

**PRESQUE ISLE (Gogebic County, MI):**

R4.

**RED RIVER (WI):**

- A. Below Gresham to town of Red River.
  - a. From below Gresham to Red River: R1.
  - b. Monastery Falls:
    - i. Should always be scouted.
    - ii. Low water, R2.
    - iii. High water, R3p.
  - c. From below the main hole in Monastery Falls to the bottom:
    - i. Low water, R1.
    - ii. High water, R2.

**ROCK RIVER (Baraga County, MI):**

R4p. Watch for trees blocking river.

**ST. LOUIS RIVER (MN)\*:**

R4. Possibly lower for some sections.

**STURGEON RIVER (MI):**

Canyon: R4p. Use *extreme* caution in high water. This can be a very dangerous river.

**TEMPERANCE RIVER (MN)\*:**

- A. Lower section (from lake upstream): R4. There is danger at the end of the run where the river drops into a narrow chasm and over large un-runnable falls. Take out above Fred's Falls (IV) and Fred's Folly (IV) to avoid the cascades.
- B. Upper section:
  - a. Low water, R3.
  - b. High water, R4p.

**TURTLE CREEK (WI):**

- A. CTH G to Rocky Ridge Rd:
  - a. Low water, R1.
  - b. High water, R3p.
- B. Delavan to Hwy 140: R1.
- C. Hwy 140 to Shopiere: R1.

**VERMILLION RIVER (IL):**

- A. As of 2009, it is illegal to run this section. If it reopens, follow these guidelines: During very high water use extreme caution in approaching Wildcat Rapids and the cement plant dam. Scout and portage if hazardous. R3p.

**WISCONSIN RIVER, WAUSAU COURSE (WI):**

The whitewater course formed by a diversion channel on the Wisconsin River for the Wausau Dam is open for recreational paddlers each paddling season on scheduled release days. Participants must sign liability waivers and pay associated fees for these releases. The organizers manage and provide some degree of safety on the river; rescue aids (throwbags) are located at selected points on the course and there are certified swiftwater rescuers on-site and available in emergencies. It is a relatively safe setting and provides a highly valuable training site for whitewater paddlers.

The general recommended skill rating for the course is R3p and the ability to roll as swims can be long on certain parts of the course. It is permissible—even recommended—for large groups to break into smaller groups on the course. Ordinary river order won't really work on this run because people constantly carry back up. The trip leader should assign a partner system or something similar to make sure people don't boat alone, which is not allowed as part of Hooper trips.

The Wausau course is a great learning environment. Trips may include R2 paddlers if these paddlers can be directly supervised and led by a qualified river leader. R2 paddlers should stay on the lower half of the course (below Big and Little Drop Rapids).

A WW3 rating or a WW2 leader with permission to lead at Wausau from the water safety chair is required to lead a Wausau release.

Use caution regarding the numerous rocks, and the small, steep nature of the run.

**WOLF RIVER (WI):**

- A. Section III: Highway 64 bridge to Menominee County WW:
  - a. Highway 64 to Boy Scout Rapids: R2 up to a reading of 1000 cfs. Not recommended/use caution below 300 cfs.
  - b. Boy Scout Rapids to Highway WW: R2 at levels of 750 cfs or below through Gilmore's Mistake Rapids, and levels of 500 cfs or below from Gilmore's Mistake to Highway WW. However, boating leaders are urged to use discretion in deciding which boaters of higher ranks they permit to run Boy Scout Rapids. Use caution at levels below 300 cfs.
- B. Below Section III to Otter Slide
  - a. This section is not often paddled and an access fee applies. Boating leaders are urged to use discretion in deciding which boaters of higher ranks they permit to run Shotgun Rapids and Pissmire Falls. A river-wide ledge creates a dangerous hole at Pissmire Falls and should be scouted and carried if necessary.
- C. Section IV: Sullivan Falls to Big Smokey Falls:
  - a. Only [R3p] boaters should run at levels above 400 cfs. Below 400 cfs, the following minimum boater skill ratings apply:

- i. Sullivan Falls: R3p.
- ii. Evergreen Rapids (Sullivan Falls bypass): R2.
- iii. Duck's Nest Rapids: R3p (recommended that weaker boaters use the more circuitous left side route on the upper drop).
- iv. Upper Dalles (Teakettle): R3p.
- v. Lower Dalles: R3.
- vi. Big Smokey Falls R3p.

## **OTHER AREAS**

For those trips to other more remote and less well-known rivers, such as those draining into Lake Superior, rivers of the Cumberland-Smoky Mountain region of the southern states, the Appalachians of the eastern states, Canadian rivers, and western rivers, boating leaders must discuss their trip plans in detail with the Water Safety Chairperson, and have each boater individually approved. Leaders should consult with boaters familiar with these rivers whenever possible.