

Great Champlain-Hudson Paddle

Summer Camp for Adults!

Trip Details for Thru-Paddlers and Getaway Paddlers

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

Note the Dates Change: August 3 to 17, 2009

General Information

The Great Champlain-Hudson Paddle is a fifteen day, 195 mile kayaking and camping trip from Fort Edward to Manhattan along the Champlain Canal, an engineering marvel of the 19th century, and the historic Hudson River. A group of Thru-Paddlers will be camping out in state and local parks along the way and visiting heritage and cultural sites in the communities in which they will be staying. The event is scheduled for August 3 to August 17, 2009.

There are several ways for Paddlers to join the Paddle; you may apply for a slot as a Thru-Paddler or Getaway Paddler, sign up with a local outfitter for a Day Paddle, or join us at a Festival and experience kayaking for the first time. Day Paddlers should visit the Day Paddles page and beginning kayakers should visit the Festivals page.

This page is intended for prospective Thru-Paddlers and Getaway-Paddlers. Thru-Paddlers are with us for the entire trip, paddling and camping from Fort Edward to New York City. Getaway Paddlers will sign up for three-day segments of the Paddle.

The Schedule

- Thru-Paddle: Albany to Pier 96 NYC, Monday, 8/3 to Monday, 8/17/09
- Getaway 1: 3 days, Fort Edward to Peebles Island, Monday 8/3 to Wednesday 8/5/09
- Getaway 2: 3 days, New Baltimore to Kingston, Saturday, 8/8 to Monday, 8/10/09
- Getaway 3: 3 days, Kingston to Cold Spring, Tuesday, 8/11 to Thursday, 8/13/09
- Getaway 4: 3 days, Cold Spring to Yonkers, Friday, 8/14 to Sunday 8/16/09

Registration and Selection

We reserve the right to change the number of slots reserved for each type of paddle depending upon registration. In the event of over-registration for a particular trip, Paddlers will be selected by qualifications and by the postmark date on their application for registration. If you wish to register for a Paddle, send in your application for registration packet and payment. We will provide a full refund if you are not selected or there is not a spot available for the trip you register for.

A Typical Day

A Paddle day begins early—wake-up call at 5:30, break camp, pack boats, eat breakfast, attend daily briefing and launch by 8:00 AM. This launch schedule will take advantage of forecasted ebb tides on the lower 150 miles of the Hudson River and attempt to avoid

prevailing southerly winds and thunderstorms, which generally are strongest later in the day.

Once on the water, we will paddle an average of 12-14 miles per day. The longest day will be about 20 miles; the shortest day will be around 5 miles. We will be joined many days by other Paddlers guided by our local outfitter partners. These Paddlers will travel with us during the day, but will not be camping with us at night.

A lunch break will be held around midday. This may be earlier or delayed if a particularly attractive site beckons, if especially good time is being made, or if weather conditions require a change. Paddlers should have snacks accessible when in their boats to keep their energy level up. Unfortunately, due to the nature and length of the trip and the size of the group, it will not be possible to do side trips into marshes or tributary creeks.

After lunch we will finish the day's paddle and arrive in early to mid-afternoon at our pre-arranged sites (assuming no storms, broken gear, or other delays). Upon landing, all participants will work together to clear the boats from the launch area so we do not interfere with local boat traffic.

Each person sets up their camp on his or her time schedule, generally prior to dinner. Showers will be available at many sites. In the evening there will be time to enjoy the river, lake, canal, or the host community, call home, or just relax. Some dinners will be hosted by the local community and be away from the campsite, while others will be delivered to us.

The communities, whose parks we are staying in, are our hosts and will be looking to entertain us and learn about us. Paddlers should be prepared for attention and questions from the public.

Experience and Other Important Information

Paddle participants must be experienced Paddlers and campers. This type of trip is very wearing both physically and mentally. Thru-Paddlers should have completed a trip that, at a minimum, lasted ten days and more than one hundred miles. All paddlers must be able to maintain a speed of 4 miles per hour for the day, handle sizeable waves and wakes (4 feet or more), paddle into a strong headwind (25 knots) for the day and perform self and assisted rescues as the victim or the rescuer.

In order to keep the group together and moving, we recommend Paddlers use 16 foot long or longer single kayak or a 17 foot long or longer decked canoe. The Safety Committee and guides reserve the right to require a paddler to use a different boat for their own safety, the safety of the group or in order to allow the group as a whole to maintain a reasonable pace. All Paddlers are expected to carry their own safety gear (see gear list attached to application for registration) and, in the event of unforeseen delays, be prepared to paddle at night by carrying federal and New York State legal navigation lighting.

No one under the age of 16 may participate, except for special programs set up in advance. Participants aged 16-17 must be accompanied in the same boat by a parent or guardian.

Paddlers will be provided with a duffle bag (~6,400 cubic inches) that may be used to transport gear on our gear truck. Do not pack anything fragile in the duffle bag as it may be at the bottom of a large pile of bags. All the gear you plan to bring must fit in your boat and the duffle bag. It is each paddler's responsibility to bring a boat that, in combination with the provided duffle bag, will carry all the gear you need and want. The bag must be light enough to be handled by a single member of our land crew.

Orientation

All Paddlers will be required to attend an all day orientation and get-acquainted paddle on Sunday, July 12, 2009 in the mid-Hudson Valley. Waivers for the orientation may be granted, at the discretion of the Safety Committee, for those traveling from beyond neighboring states or out of the country. In order to receive a waiver you must demonstrate or provide proof of the requisite skills needed for the Paddle, including the ability to rescue and be rescued.

At orientation you will meet your guides and land staff, have the details of the trip explained to you, get on the water as part of the Paddle group (where you will travel at the pace we will be keeping during the trip) and practice boat handling in tight quarters, wet exits, rescues, towing and channel crossings. You will have an opportunity to ask as many questions as you want. Later during dinner, you will get a review of some of the activities you will be enjoying in the evenings. Finally, we will hand out duffle bags and reading information. This is a terrific time to begin to get to know the people you will be spending your vacation with and it's a chance to set up a pre-Paddle paddle or two with folks who live close to you. There will be people at orientation who have done the Great Hudson River Paddle before, and they are another invaluable source for setting expectations and for pre-trip planning.

The organizers reserve the right to accept or reject any paddler's application for registration for any reason.

Fee Schedule

The Paddles	Fee
Thru-Paddle: Albany to Pier 96 NYC, Thursday, 8/3 to Sunday, 8/17/09	\$875
Getaway 1: Fort Edward to Peebles Island, Monday 8/3 to Wednesday 8/5/09	\$210
Getaway 2: New Baltimore to Kingston, Saturday, 8/8 to Monday, 8/10/09	\$210
Getaway 3: Kingston to Cold Spring, Tuesday, 8/11 to Thursday, 8/13/09	\$210
Getaway 4: Cold Spring to Yonkers, Friday, 8/14 to Sunday 8/16/09	\$210
Any two Getaways	\$400
Any three Getaways	\$600

Included is a guided kayaking and camping trip, breakfast, dinner, showers at most sites and transportation as needed to showers and meals. Also provided are 1 gallon of

drinking water each day and snacks when off the water. You provide your own lunch each day and snacks while paddling.

Cautions

The Paddle is not without risk. The Champlain Canal has numerous dams and impoundments and must be navigated by going through locks; it is also very narrow in some spots which can make passing a large group by and around other boat traffic difficult. The Hudson River is tidal and commercially navigable for the entire length of our trip. The difference between high and low tide is as much as five feet, currents can be strong, and, when in opposition to prevailing winds, can result in steep waves well in excess of three feet. On all of these water bodies large commercial and pleasure boats can produce wakes in excess of four feet. Strong southerly winds may be expected during the trip and thunderstorms are always a possibility.

Commercial ships, tug and barge combinations up to 10,700 tons and numerous large pleasure craft will be sharing the water with us, ; and high-speed passenger ferries will be crossing the in front of and behind us. These vessels all have the right of way. We will avoid the shipping channels at all times, except for necessary channel crossings. Paddlers should be prepared to handle the large wakes created by these vessels.

Weather on the Paddle at this time of year is unpredictable. It can range from the expected hot and humid to wet and chilly, it can even be dry and sunny. There will be biting insects and ticks. Thunderstorms can blow up at any time of day, but especially in the afternoon. They can be dangerous with lightning, high winds and rough water. We have chosen a time of year when we can leave early and, with luck, be off the river before afternoon thunderstorms arrive.

Straight line mileage from our launch in Fort Edward to our takeout in New York City is 195 statute miles. Our actual mileage traveled may be significantly higher due to channel crossings, meanderings, and the need to avoid strong headwinds by paddling in the protection of bays.

Occasionally a paddler will not be able to finish the day—gear breaks, a muscle gets pulled, or the heat is more than can be borne. For your safety and the safety of the group as a whole we are prepared to assist Paddlers to shore in the event someone needs to leave the water for reasons of health or safety. The final decision as to whether someone is able to safely continue on a particular day is made by the guides.

Liability

Two liability release forms must be signed by each participant. While we are very safety conscious, we can not control the weather or other conditions and events. You must understand that risks simply cannot be eliminated in an event of this type. Sea kayaking is a high risk activity and you must be willing to assume responsibility for your participation in the event.

Contact Information

If you have questions or require more information please call Scott Keller at (518) 473-3835 or send an email to: scott.keller@hudsongreenway.state.ny.us

Registration

All applications for registration must be filled out completely, with all waiver forms signed, and mailed with full payment to the address indicated on the form. A Safety Committee will review each application for completeness, boat suitability, and skill level. You will be notified when the committee makes a decision regarding your application.

[Click to Download the Paddle Registration Packet](#)

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