

Outdoor News



Kayaking off the Edge of the Tibetan Plateau

OP staffer, Travis Winn, teaches kayaking and a love of wild water while exploring rivers on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau

Takeout. Day number one. A whole village stands on the bridge eagerly waiting our arrival at the little blue water tributary where we agreed to meet our land support crew. We shoulder our boats and work our way up through the terraced corn fields to meet the throngs on the bridge.

I set down my boat and point up the tributary's small valley to a weathered old man. Mustering up all that I know, I smile a few words. "Piaoliang." "Tai hao le." "Xie Xie." Beautiful! How excellent! Thank you." It's the extent of my vocabulary now, but fortunately, for this little exchange, it does what I want. His weathered face lights up with laughter. Brzzzzm. We connect. Kayaks, rivers, Americans. Hopefully they will forever hold a positive place in his heart.

Considering the wild day of white water we threw ourselves into today, we're all pretty happy to be safe on dry land. The first rapid was tenfold larger than it looked from the road, and being able to hear the boulders roll didn't help anything. Scouting this glacial torrent the realization came to me: Not only are we first descending a Class 5 river in a remote corner of China; we're presenting kayaking to a nation of 1.3 billion for possibly the very first time.

We reevaluated our priorities: Number one, kayaking is fun. Let's not push ourselves to the point of making it look scary. Number two, teach as many people as possible, and teach them in way that emphasizes the beauty of rivers and the importance of appreciating them. Our Chinese comrade embraced our goals, and the truth of the matter was that he helped found them. In the course of our journey he introduced us to the head of the tourism bureau in every town and even organized a kayaking debut in one of the towns along the way. As the trip progressed, we became increasingly aware of China's love of excitement and growing appreciation for outdoor activities. After many handshakes, autographs, and excited smiles we realize that China has been looking forward to watching and learning how to enjoy rivers for a long time. We are just lucky enough to be the catalysts. Our responsibility now is to give this gift in a way in which everyone and everything can benefit, in a way in which rivers in their free flowing natural form become an integral part of Chinese society and economy.

Travis Winn will present a multi-media show on his trip to China on February 18th (see event calendar for details).

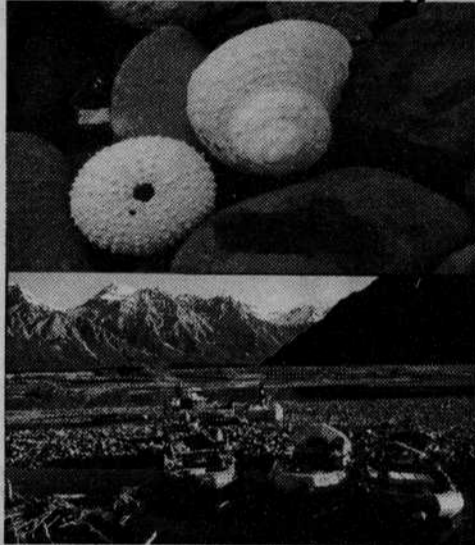
City of Eugene Offers WFR

Wilderness First Responder Course & Re-Cert Offered

The 80 hour WFR is a scenario-based course and is the industry standard for outdoor first aid. It trains participants to respond to emergencies in locations one hour or more from help. The WFR course meets daily for ten days as well as two evening sessions; March 19-28, 8am-5pm, cost is \$525. The WFR Re-certification course meets for three days; April 2-4, 8am-5pm, and costs \$200.

These courses fill with waiting lists, so get your registrations in now! To register: <http://www.nols.edu/wmi/> or (307) 332-7800. If you have questions about the Eugene courses, you may contact Kellie Nemke at <mailto:kellie.l.nemke@ci.eugene.or.us> or at 682.6324.

OP Outdoor Photography Contest



This spring, the Outdoor Program will host the University of Oregon Outdoor Photography Competition. Entries will be accepted from February 1st until April 15th. If you have some original outdoor photography, drop by the OP office, EMU room 37, and pick up an official entry form. The contest is open to all non-professional photographers and prizes will be awarded in five categories. The categories are: Flora and Fauna, Landscapes, People in the Outdoors, Outdoor Action and Adventure, and Digitally Altered Photos. One outstanding photograph will also be selected for the Grand Prize, and several Special Mentions will be chosen from among the entries. All entries must be submitted in digital form, although the original photograph

may have been shot on film, slide or with a digital camera. If you need help getting your slides or prints scanned, stop by the OP office for assistance.

Oregon Roadless Areas Threatened

By OP Environmental Coordinator Yoko Silk

For years, initiators at the Outdoor Program have led trips on Oregon's beautiful rivers and in the old growth forests of the cascades. These places offer unparalleled outdoor recreation, are habitat for a wide diversity of sensitive and endangered species. Such wilderness reserves are essential for maintaining the integrity of Northwest ecosystems. The students and community members that have experienced the magnificence of Oregon's wilderness know how precious it is and appreciate the areas untouched by roads and logging operations.

Unfortunately, many of these public roadless areas are threatened by logging proposals that would affect sensitive old growth forest reserves. The Biscuit salvage proposal is one of the largest proposed timber sales in the history of U.S. logging and would affect an area of over 12,000 acres in the Kalmiopsis wilderness. The proposed Kelsey-Whisky sale in the Zane Grey wilderness would clear-cut hundreds of acres above the Wild and Scenic section of the Rogue River, in addition to commercial logging throughout the area. The Three Pyramids sale threatens some of the last remaining old growth stands in the old Cascades of Oregon. Although each of these areas is distinct, all are threatened by logging practices that would destroy old growth forests in some of the last untouched wilderness areas in Oregon.

We know that the University of Oregon student population and community members value these rich wilderness areas. Please keep yourselves informed of current logging issues and for ways to help preserve Oregon's last public wild lands.

We encourage you to write your senators, representatives, and US Forest Service officials (see contact info below). The Forest Service is required to provide time for public comments to be considered. This is a very effective way for us to let our government officials know what is important to the Oregon people, so take advantage of it!

The Outdoor program will do our best to keep ourselves updated about the times frames and details of any upcoming roadless area issues.



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