



WATER SAFETY

RESOURCES AND GUIDELINES FOR KAYAKING LIR



CROSSING THE COLUMBIA

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Participants in water sports on the Columbia River should be aware that, while these activities can be enjoyable and exhilarating, they also come with inherent risks due to the river's strong currents, variable weather conditions, and busy waterway traffic. The Columbia River is known for its unpredictable conditions, including swift currents, changing winds, and occasional large waves, which can pose challenges even for experienced paddlers and boaters.

SAFETY REQUIREMENTS

Mandatory Requirement: All participants must wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved or internationally recognized certified PFD at all times during the race. The PFD must be properly fitted, securely fastened, and in good condition.

Know the Course Layout: Understand the course markers, start/finish areas, and safety zones, including any designated rescue areas.

ON THE WATER

Overtake Safely: When passing other racers, do so with caution. Communicate your intentions clearly (using verbal cues or hand signals) and leave enough space to avoid collisions.

Avoid Reckless Maneuvers: Sudden, sharp turns or aggressive maneuvers can lead to capsizing or accidents. Maintain control of your kayak at all times.

EMERGENCIES

Capsize Training: All participants should be familiar with self-rescue techniques, including



the “wet exit” and methods for re-entering the kayak. In the event of a capsize, stay calm, float with your PFD, and signal for help if needed.

Follow all instructions given from race guides and safeties, including designated lanes, markers, and time limits. Make sure your race number is clearly visible on your kayak or yourself.

RACE DAY

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Safety is our top priority. In the event that conditions are deemed unsafe for participants—due to factors such as severe weather, strong currents, or other circumstances—the race may be canceled or postponed, without prior notice. All participants will be informed immediately of any changes, and we appreciate your understanding and cooperation.





RESOURCES

Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership water safety info

<https://www.estuarypartnership.org/explore/water-trail/water-trail-safety-guide/be-aware-river-hazards>

Oregon State Marine Board safety info

<https://www.boatoregon.com/>

Rules of Navigation

<https://www.boatsafe.com/navigation-rules/>

Washington State Parks

<https://parks.wa.gov/about/rules-and-safety/boater-education-safety/wear-life-jacket#:~:text=Washington%20state%20life%20jacket%20laws,person%20on%20board%20a%20vessel.>
