

ACA Stewardship

Quarterly Newsletter



Since 1880 The American Canoe Association (ACA) has been serving the broader paddling public by providing education related to all aspects of paddling; stewardship support to help protect paddling environments; and sanctioning of programs and events to promote paddlesport competition and recreation. The ACA is national 501(c)3 non-profit organization.

If there is magic on this planet, it is contained to water.

Loren Eiseley

These beautiful days must enrich all my life. They do not exist as mere pictures—maps hung upon the walls of memory—but they saturate themselves into every part of my body and live always.

John Muir

In our concern for the whooping crane we are at once symbolizing and concealing a far deeper anxiety—namely, the prospective total extermination of all species.

Lewis Mumford “The Future Environments of America”

We never understand a thing so well, and make it our own, as when we have discovered it for ourselves.

Rene Descartes

To stick your hands into the river is to feel the cords that bind the earth together in one piece.

Barry Lopez

ACA Partners and Supporters

Subaru

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Rapid Media

Hobie Polarized Sunglasses

MTI Adventurewear

Association of Outdoor Recreation and Education

Werner Paddles

Kokatat

International Whitewater Hall of Fame

Whitewater Symposium

Stand Up Paddle Industry Association

USA Canoe/Kayak

Leave No Trace

Outdoor Alliance

Outdoors Alliance for Kids

BSA Aquatics Taskforce

U.S. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary

National Safe Boating Council

NOAA Marine Debris Program

US Geological Survey

National Geographic

National Association of State Boating Law Administrators

Western States Boating Administrators Association

American Sailing Association

Polynesian Voyaging Society

Virginia Outdoor Center

Cascade Designs

Clean Waste

City of Fredericksburg

Fredericksburg Parent & Family

Klean Kanteen

New Belgium Brewery

R-Board

Join Refresh Renew



Recreation

The ACA supports more than [375 Paddle America Clubs](#) and affiliate organizations across the U.S. Find resources to connect with a local club, or to start your own online.

Providing service to all segments of the paddling public, the ACA promotes the health benefits of paddling and plays an active role in local and national recreational events and competition.

The popularity of canoeing, kayaking, SUP, and rafting grows rapidly each year, with new paddlers constantly entering the sport at varied skill levels.

Water Trails

The ACA [Water Trails Explorer](#) strives to be the nation's most comprehensive online directory

of water trails. Whether you are looking for a leisurely paddle or a challenging coastal exploration, you will always find authoritative resources from the ACA. Add to our [Water Trails](#) or report an [Access Issue](#).

Stewardship

Easy access to safe, enjoyable paddling opportunities is one of the ACA's top tenets. This program focuses on clean and healthy waterways, paddler access, and full funding for water protection.

The ACA also advocates for [paddler-friendly policies](#) on state and federal regulatory issues, such as boat registration and boater education.

Our advocacy and stewardship activities take place from local

clubs and communities to Capitol Hill—from supporting grassroots campaigns, to building and maintaining water trails, to influencing federal policy on access and enjoyment of recreational waterways.

Interested in leading a stewardship initiative of your own? Lean about [grant opportunities](#) today.

Education

The ACA is the nation's leader in paddlesport education and instruction with over [7,300 certified instructors](#) around the world. The ACA's introductory through mastery level instruction programs are second to none, and our publications reach hundreds of thousands of paddlers annually.

In addition to working with industry partners to reach the millions of people who paddle each year, the ACA publishes the [Journal of Paddlesports Education](#). This tool is for instructors, trainers, and educators to exchange ideas, knowledge, and experience that influence teaching in paddlesports.

Competition

Through an extensive network of local volunteers, and partnerships with other organizations, the ACA sanctions more than 200 races, a collegiate race series, and 6 national championships each year. These events range from extreme whitewater, to SUP, to family friendly.

Learn more about the ACA online at [americancanoe.org](#)

Stewardship

Quarterly Newsletter

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Track Trash

“Data Collection of Marine Debris”



The Stream to Sea Initiative collects data through the ACA's online form, [Track Trash Data Collection \(TTDC\)](#).

TTDC helps individuals, groups, clean-up crews, waterway organizations, and paddlers document the marine debris they remove. To be viable for TTDC, marine debris must be removed within 100 meters of a waterway or within waterway environments. Once the information is submitted via the online TTDC form, the Stewardship Department compiles this data to create an annual report of marine debris. Organizations that submit data are recognized in annual reports. Reports are published through social media, the Stewardship eNewsletter, and in Rapid Media magazines.

Annual clean-ups help establish baselines of data across the U.S. Through this data the ACA will discover key answers to specific questions.:

- What specific types of marine debris are in specific areas?
- How many people volunteer at paddling clean-up events?
- What states have a marine debris problem?
- How many states or organizations remove marine debris from their waterways?
- Where does most marine debris originate?
- Which organizations are initiating these clean-ups and how much debris is being mitigated?

- What type of waterway environments (streams, lakes, coasts, ocean) are being cleaned-up?
- What specific types of marine debris are collected (metal, glass, rubber, fabric, styrofoam, plastic)?
- What large and unique items are collected out of waterways?
- How much weight and volume is collected at each clean-up?
- What type of reusable bags or single-use bags are used?
- The ACA also collects photographic documentation of marine debris and volunteers.



Stream to Sea Initiative



It just makes sense

The National Marine Science Institute said 78% of marine debris originates in fresh water streams and rivers. In the United States, paddlers thrive in those waterways as well as large tributaries and coastlines. The ACA is helping mitigate the marine debris issue by correcting the problem at the source before it ever reaches the oceans.

However, becoming a good on-water steward begins by developing habits learned through education. The ACA and its educational partners bring the marine debris issue to classrooms and communities across the country. The ACA has a unique connection to the 50 million people who paddle America's waterways at least once a year. Part of the Stream to Sea Initiative is to travel to communities with geographically unique watersheds to conduct Paddle Green Events (PGE). Each PGE will consist of a one-day event, clean-up, and education for the entire community. At each PGE, the ACA teaches about the marine debris issue, how to maximize community efforts, and how to develop sustainable ways to continue fostering good on-water stewards. The ACA is equipping these communities with Paddle Green Bags and the knowledge to coordinate clean-up efforts, recycling, debris identification, and reporting. These communities and local organizations learn to actively track efforts by geo locating clean-up sites and uploading results (type of debris, location, date, photographs, and disposal) via [Track Trash Data Collection \(TTDC\)](#). The data is collected and sorted for use by NOAA, classrooms, and the general public. As part of the community based PGEs, the ACA uses its own network of paddling clubs, outfitters, volunteers and schools to track, assist, and report the clean-up efforts.

TTDC is in its first year and has already collected data from numerous events and past clean-up events, ranging from local freshwater streams to coastlines. This is a unique opportunity for the paddling community to show the effort it is putting towards the marine debris issue on a global scale. This also creates an excellent opportunity to educate youth in marine debris and paddling.

Creating classroom opportunities for children is vital to ridding our waterways of marine debris. The ACA has started working with RiverXchange and other educating organizations to boost this opportunity to reach youth across the country and soon to other countries around the world. Marine debris education does not stop at the U.S. border; it is a global issue affecting the entire world's waterways. The ACA wants to give you an opportunity to use the Stream to Sea Initiative as a platform for education, awareness, tracking, and reporting.

The last known study, from 1975, estimates that 14 billion pounds of trash enters oceans every year. Thirteen years before the publication of this study, the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships prohibited the dumping of materials in the ocean. In addition, the study only took into account debris that is put into oceans by maritime vessels.

The ACA, along with other organizations, are working together to gather data from individual and organizational clean-ups to gain a better understanding of how much debris enters ocean environments.

The ACA is in a unique position to not only mitigate the marine debris problem, but help collect data. Paddlers are the ones who see the effects marine debris plays in their waterway environments. It is time to take action.

[Click Here](#) to learn more about the ACA's Stream to Sea Initiative.



Rapidan Stream Sweepers

An Eco-entrepreneurial and Clean-Up Undertaking in Central Virginia



Participants clean-up the Rapidan River

Beth Seale is an ACA Level 2 Kayak Instructor and owner of Rapidan River Kayak Company, LLC. located in Orange, Virginia. The Rapidan River is a small river in central Virginia that flows into the Rappahannock River above Fredericksburg, and is part of the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

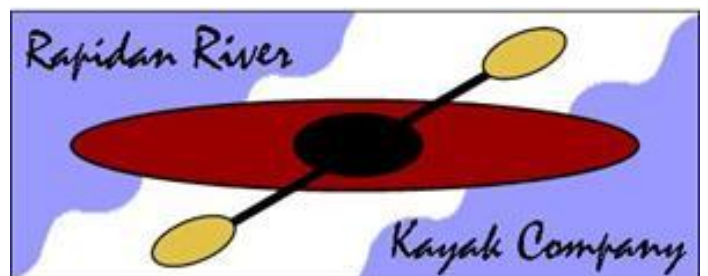
Earlier this year, Beth got together with a small group of Orange residents to discuss a river clean-up and a concept was hatched to somehow create a business providing river cleaning services. This business would be similar to a landscape care and maintenance business and be paid for by landowners with water frontage and others who understand and have an appreciation for their connection with rivers and waterways. This concept soon expanded to encompass the need for meaningful young adult career training and summer jobs. A vision began to hire and train a small group of young people to determine the ecological health of the Rapidan River approximately 17 miles long. Using canoes and johnboats, they would then remove most of the debris in this waterway. With that vision, Rapidan Stream Sweepers was born.

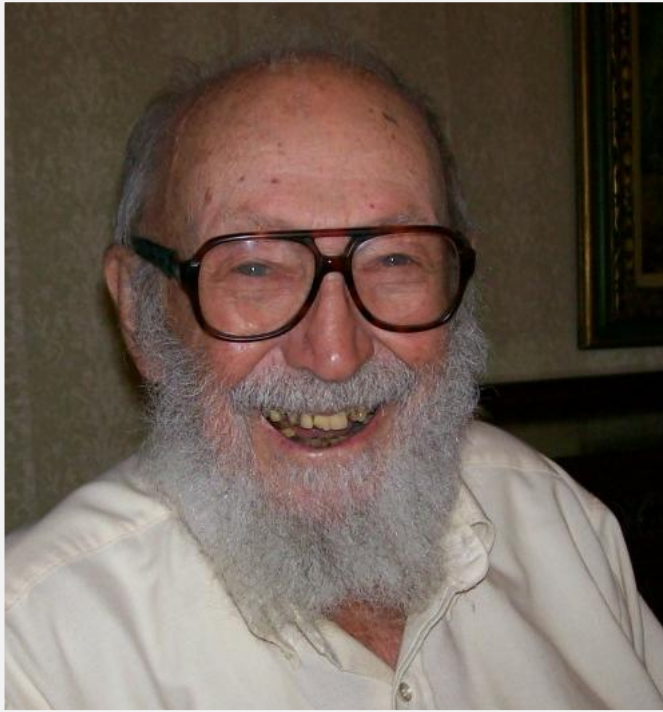
The Center for Natural Capital, a charitable corporation which is focused on the use of economic development to solve modern environmental conservation challenges, agreed to be the administrative agent for this pilot project. Beth's business, [Rapidan River Kayak Company](#), was hired to provide paddling instruction, risk management, and supervision of all on-water assessment and clean-up activities. She provided those services and acted as a contact person with area emergency medical personnel and the event organizer for the American Canoe Association. During the clean-up, Beth kept a detailed list of all debris removed from the river. At the conclusion of this event it was submitted for inclusion in the ACA's Stream to Sea Initiative's national database. Three area high school students and one college student were hired. Bill Micks, owner of Virginia Outdoor Center, donated canoes, paddles, life vests, and a trailer. They were ready to begin their three week schedule of training, river assessments, and river clean-up. During the training week, the "Sweepers" were taught to assess the ecological health of a river using means such as

macro invertebrate counts, and visual assessments of forest quality, river canopy, bank geometry, vegetation, and the structure of the river bed. They were trained in computer mapping software and the use of hand-held Garmin GPS units. The second week was spent floating the river and performing the ecological river health screenings. Using the GPS units, these assessments were recorded as well as the location and the identification of debris for removal during the following week's clean-up, or "Sweeping".

The "Sweeping" yielded more garbage than anyone thought possible. The list of debris removed from the river included several dozen automobile, truck, and tractor tires, along with an oil drum, plastic urinal, plastic pots, landscape cloth, old rafts, a Virginia Department of Transportation barrier barrel, beer cans, and bottles. Several cars and large culverts were included in the items found. The trash was extracted with shovels and a digging bar, transported using canoes and a johnboat to the take-out spots for pick up and later removal.

The Rapidan Stream Sweepers ended its pilot summer with a successful river clean-up event. This clean-up not only improved the health and aesthetic value of the Rapidan River, but also generated a report available to supporting landowners detailing the results of the assessments of the health of their section of river frontage. Interested landowners can also be provided with a list of suggestions for the improvement of their frontage. Beth hopes that the Rapidan Stream Sweepers will continue their training, river "screening", and river "sweeping" work next summer further down the Rapidan River, from the end of the 17 mile section worked this year to the village of Rapidan.





Elmer Eddy, ACA member

After 94 years of active service to America's Waterways, Elmer has passed away. He held onto his hopes and dreams that he could clear the waterways of trash and obstructions until the very end. Elmer never gave up, he still had ideas and drive. Even the day before he died, July 23, 2013, he was still hoping he could get better, so that he could collect more trash, prevent litter, and clear our waterways of obstructions. Unfortunately, his heart was unable to continue the fight. Elmer passed away peacefully at home, surrounded by his family. He will surely be missed because there is no other like him. His final hope was that his efforts had made a difference. He hoped that he had inspired others to be aware of the problems and to continue the effort. Elmer knew that no matter how much he did, there would always be more, but if he inspired others to the cause, it would make a lasting difference. He wanted to thank all of those who paddled and boated with him for their company, friendships, and shared purpose.

Go boating, paddle a stream, drive a rural road in Onslow, Jones, Craven, and Carteret Counties. Think of him when you don't see trash as you paddle or drive. When you can get through that blow down, and especially when you see other Stewards, maybe inspired by him, cleaning and clearing those waterways! From his family, a heartfelt thanks to all who have meant so much to him and pitched in to further the causes over the years.

His family plans to use all donations to keep the www.waterwaystewards.us website going. Elmer has more than a decade of write-ups and photographs that are archived by date and are searchable by keyword. They would like to keep that available as a resource. Based on site statistics, many people are still visiting the website on a daily basis. If you have not visited in a while and tried the

Elmer Eddy

1919-2013

search feature, please do so and give it a try!

They would also like to invite everyone to contribute write-ups and photos of future trips as well. As you may know, Elmer had expanded his interests beyond just litter pick-up. He was also interested in keeping streams and rivers navigable and promoting use of our waterways. As such, any write-ups, condition reports, or other items of general interest are welcome. Please reply if you are interested in authoring. www.waterwaystewards.us

The Waterway Stewards are dedicated to bringing waterways to a trash-free condition and keeping them there. This includes tremendous efforts by volunteers to pick up tons of trash. However, picking up trash alone is not enough. We must go to the source of the trash. People, of course, are the source. We try to increase awareness of littering, involve citizens in clean-up, and educate our young people. Our message is simple: if nobody litters, there won't be trash to pick up. Please do your part!

[Green Paddle Award for Waterway Conservation](#)

In 2009 - Elmer Eddy & the Stewards of the White Oak



River Basin received the ACA Green Paddle Award for Waterway Conservation for their dedication and protection of waterways.

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Stephen Wylie is the former director of the Oklahoma City Zoological Park, an ornithologist, and an authority on cranes, waterfowl, and game birds. He earned a bachelor of arts degree with a major in zoology from Nebraska Wesleyan University and did graduate work in vertebrate zoology at the University of Kansas.

Steve was active in numerous professional organizations. He received many outstanding service awards from the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums. His profession-related travel has taken him throughout the United States, to Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, Canada, England, Scotland, Argentina, the Falkland Islands, Panama, Peru, Colombia, Kenya, Mexico, Denmark, Norway, Thailand, India, and the People's Republic of China.

Steve has seen his fair share of marine debris through his travels throughout the world. Marine Debris effects on wildlife can be seen, but the most notable is unseen. Below is an interview with Steve on the topic of marine debris.

Q: What type of impact have you seen on your travels across the globe?

A: The impact of free roaming gill nets (those which have broken away from their boats) on marine mammals is well documented. The debris found on beaches in my experience can be attributed to local cultures and their attitudes on recycling and general trash disposal. I have seen beaches and streams around the Yucatan Peninsula that are covered with trash. Styrofoam, cans, plastic containers, you name it. Its primarily because the locals have no primary education. All they would need to do is regularly recycle or stop throwing it in the water in the first place.

Q: When were you most surprised about the effects of marine debris?

In 2000 and 2001, I was a guest lecturer on the Queen Elizabeth II on a cruise that originated in England and ended in Cape Town. As I would stand along the rail watching for whales and birds, I was amazed at how frequently I saw debris in the water, hundreds of miles from

shore. Mainly Styrofoam, floats, old boards and items I could not identify. They were no doubt dumped at sea by fishing vessels or others. Around St. Helena Island, I observed the same types of debris, but was not sure whether it was from the locals or if it drifted in from the sea.

Along the southern coast of Australia, however, the beaches and water are pristine. The same could be said for the Galapagos Archipelago 20 years ago, although I cannot say what it is like today, since tourism is more prevalent. The beaches and streams I have observed in Costa Rica and others in Central and South America countries vary. Some are pristine while others are terrible. The stream that flows through the zoo in San Jose is a sewer. China is the worst example I have seen. The cities are polluted by numerous sources and their streams are totally unmonitored. Of course, all these streams, no matter where they are, end up in the world's oceans.

Q: What other problems have you seen, and what problems do you see for the foreseeable future?

A: Marine mammals being caught in loose nets or ingesting foreign objects (marine debris) is visually disturbing. The same can be said for plastic six-pack holders around the necks of geese. However, the increasing appearance of debris is only symptomatic of a bigger and deeper problem. If debris is becoming more noticeable, what about items (mainly chemicals and toxic run-off) which are dumped into streams and oceans that you cannot see? Trash is one thing, but chemically changing the integrity of aquatic life systems is something entirely different. Fish kills are usually immediate responses to imbalances. Certainly, there are unwanted scenarios occurring right now that will take longer to realize. This will have the most devastating impact on aquatic insects, birds, and aquatic wildlife.

Q: What can be done about the issue of marine debris?

A: Changing the practices of a culture is a major task, but I feel it is the only way to reverse the trend. Educating people about the pitfalls of trash and pollution is one thing, but they have to physically take action. Unfortunately it sometimes takes a major disaster before they understand.



Albatross eating plastic and caught in fabric found on beach

When albatross or other seabirds ingest debris.

We have all seen and been moved by photos of a seabird carcass (typically a Laysan albatross) laden with plastic debris. The detrimental effects of marine debris ingestion on Laysan albatross have been an object of research interest for many years, but like most ecological issues the answers are not straightforward. Regardless, the problem of marine debris ingestion is real; not just in seabirds, but species of fish, marine mammals, and sea turtles.

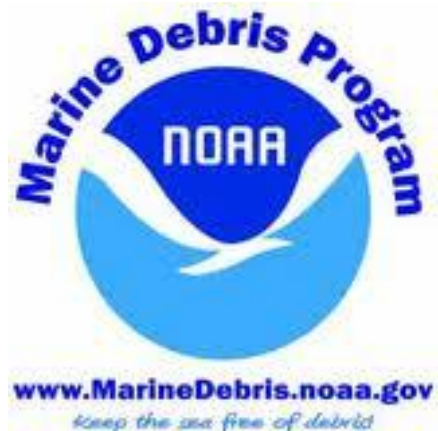
Albatross:

Ingestion of debris may cause a blockage in the digestive tract, perforate the gut, result in a loss of nutrition (due to displacement of food), or cause a false feeling of being "full". Studies have found that ingested plastic debris is a problem for seabirds; however, it may not be a significant direct cause of mortality (e.g., on a population level) (Sievert and Sileo, 1993; Auman et al., 1997). More research is needed to see if these results (mid-1990's) have changed.

Other Seabird Species:

There are numerous studies on ingestion of debris in seabird species other than the Laysan albatross. The results of a recent study conducted by Ryan (2008) show the number of ingested plastic particles in five species of seabirds, sampled in the 1980s and again in 1999–2006, have not changed significantly in the southern Atlantic and

southwestern Indian Oceans. He found that the proportion of pre-production plastic pellets decreased 44-79% in all five species. "More data are needed on the relationship between plastic loads in seabirds and the density of plastic at sea in their foraging areas, but the consistent decrease in pellets in birds suggests there has been a global change in the composition of small plastic debris at sea over the last two decades."



Article from NOAA
Media from ocean conservancy

Benefits of ACA Membership



As a member of the ACA, you join thousands of paddlers who support safe, enjoyable paddling and the protection of America's recreational waterways. ACA member have many benefits:

Subaru VIP Program

As part of Subaru's support for the association, ACA members are eligible to participate in the Subaru VIP Partners Program. VIP Partners participants can save up to \$3,300 off the manufacturer's suggested retail price (depending on model and equipment selected) on the purchase or lease of any new Subaru from participating dealers. This discount is available to all eligible ACA members. No haggling is required.

Stewardship Support

The ACA has sanctioned thousands of clean-up events around the country since 1880. Learn more about the [Stream to Sea Initiative](#), a three-pronged effort to educate, motivate, and model proactive, on-water stewardship practices to curb marine debris. The ACA works hard to fight for [public policy](#) at local, state and federal levels for paddlers and the environment.

Education

The ACA National Paddlesports Instruction Program is the "Gold Standard" of [paddlesports education](#) throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries.

Rapid Media

Members receive their choice of one of the magazine titles from Rapid Media in either print or digital format. Subscriptions include *Canoeroots*, *Adventure Kayak*, *Kayak Angler*, *Rapid*

On newsstands now...



Exclusive Access

[Sugar Island](#) on the St. Lawrence River offers all ACA members the opportunity for a unique paddlesport camping experience. [Camp Sebago](#) in New York welcomes individual ACA members and ACA Clubs. Spend an afternoon or an entire week!

Events

With the help of an extensive network of local volunteers and partnerships, the ACA sanctions over 200 races and produces 6 national championships each year. Receive reduced admission to hundreds of [ACA sanctioned events](#) and [races each year](#).

Merchandise

The ACA [eStore](#) offers adaptive equipment, instructional books and DVDs, awards, guide books, insurance, paddle green bags, and ACA clothing. Members sign in to receive a discount on many

items.

eNewsletters

The [Stewardship eNewsletter](#) is a quarterly eNewsletter providing valuable information to members and paddlers about the ACA's initiatives to create more sustainable paddling environments. The [Journal of Paddlesport Education](#) is a monthly eNewsletter from the Safety Education & Instruction Department providing valuable information to paddlesport Instructors, Clubs, and Affiliates.

Discounts

Current certified instructors with the ACA are eligible for discounts and [Pro Deals](#) from numerous companies. [Members only discounts](#) refer to the ever increasing list of organizations that have extended a discount to ACA members.

Backcountry Paddling Excursions

If you are an ACA member you can join high quality outfitters on an [incredible paddling journey](#).

Levels of Support

The following individual membership levels also receive added membership benefits including Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Green Paddle. For a complete list of these benefits. [Click Here](#)

Outdoor Alliance for Kids



The ACA is proud to announce it is a new member of Outdoor Alliance for Kids (OAK). This is a national strategic partnership of organizations from diverse sectors with the common interest in expanding the number and quality of opportunities for children, youth, and families to connect with the outdoors and has over 50 members advocating for youth.

The members of OAK are brought together by the belief that the well-being of current and future generations, the health of our planet and communities, and the economy of the future depend on humans having a personal, direct, and life-long relationship with nature and the outdoors. While childhood is the best time for instilling and fully benefiting from a connection to nature, in today's world children are increasingly moving away from an understanding of the natural world. Although families have the leading role in connecting children with the outdoors, local, state and national decision-makers have a critical role to play to ensure that children, youth, and families have the access, opportunities, skills, and encouragement to connect with the great outdoors.

To reconnect with nature, OAK believes that every child should have the opportunity and encouragement to play outside, touch soil, feel rain, watch leaves fall, sleep under the stars, count waves, eat food fresh from the garden, roll down a hill, catch a fish, and enjoy the satisfaction of climbing to the top of a hill or a tree. Such simple acts create a pathway to longer hikes, an appreciation for wildlife, a desire to care for special places, healthier bodies, deeper family relationships and wiser people, which in turn OAK believes offers hope for a better world.



OAK's PUBLIC POLICY FRAMEWORK – 3 PILLARS

Environmental Education: OAK supports initiatives that provide children and youth with opportunities to learn about — and in — the great outdoors. These initiatives provide experiences that are both in-school and out-of school experiential learning, are hands-on, and ultimately improve both academic skills and the practical skills, and create a well-rounded education that all kids need to thrive.

Community Health and Wellness: OAK supports initiatives and infrastructure that increase access and opportunity to engage in healthy, safe, and affordable outdoor places, networks and programs. By helping children and their families play and learn through outdoor recreation, we can ultimately improve the health of individuals and the broader community.

Environmental Stewardship: OAK supports initiatives and funding that provide young people with jobs, training, service, and volunteer opportunities that connect them to the outdoors and recreational opportunities. These initiatives will help youth assume responsibility for the stewardship and preservation of America's great outdoors and the healthy development of the next generation.

To learn more [Click Here](#).



The undergraduate crew at ACA's Sugar Island.

On every journey the best of things and the worst of things are experienced, and I believe yesterday morning was the worst of it. It was a nauseating start to the day, as our wonderful captain, Eric and first mate, Shanley, dealt with septic tank blockages through breakfast and beyond. There was a slight tension on the ship, when I was reminded of some wise words that were told to me by someone special. I was told that as we enter new environments with people in life, there is an order to the way things go. That order is: Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing. Yesterday morning we experienced a short-lived, yet unmistakable storming segment of our journey. Being the strong, good intentioned crew that we are, we quickly moved onto the norming stage of our adventure with an incredibly special day on Sugar Island.

We were warmly welcomed to the island by Bill and Marcia Banholzer, who greeted us with friendly faces, cold beverages and snacks. My shipmates and I could not have been happier to spend the day on this magnificent island with its lovely hosts. Sugar Island is not any ordinary island.

The people who visit Sugar Island step onto its grounds with a mission in mind. Bill and Marcia are board members of the American Canoe Association (ACA), which was founded in 1880. Each summer, about 250 people stay on Sugar Island for a few weeks, where they have the opportunity to canoe and kayak around the surrounding islands, and even become certified paddlesport instructors.

The ACA realizes the value of a healthy freshwater ecosystem, and this realization inspired their environmental initiative, known as the [Stream to Sea Initiative](#). The initiative provides the means and the inspiration to paddlers to help reduce marine and freshwater debris, by using their Paddle Green Bags to collect waste they encounter while they paddle. The initiative aims to "educate, motivate and model proactive on water stewardship practices" in an effort to curb the flow of debris through our lakes and into our oceans.

From Lake Superior, all the way down through the Great Lakes to Lake Ontario, water flows and makes its way into

One Water Story

Pangaea Explorations

the Thousand Islands chain, into the narrow St. Lawrence Seaway, and empties its fresh water into the North Atlantic Ocean. Along this journey, the largest freshwater reservoir on earth becomes contaminated by shameful amounts of human pollution. The Stream to Sea program provides the temporary residents of Sugar Island with large mesh bags on each canoe and kayak to be filled up with debris encountered on each excursion, preventing it from making its way out to the ocean. Such a simple mission saves the precious lives of many aquatic wildlife, changing the unfortunate fate of many animals that suffer and die in large numbers from consuming our pollution, which they interpret to be food.

Bill happily gave us a tour of the island, showing us cabins built from wood logs, and his and Marcia's home grounds consisting of a wood-built canopy, covering a comfortably sized tent and a gas powered refrigerator from 1937! The island is free of electricity, and a 400ft well is in its final stages of construction to be the source of fresh drinking water. Spending time on Sugar Island reinforced the realization that a satisfying life can be easily achieved by living simply and minimally in the presence of other species inhabiting this earth, besides humans.

Of course, sharing this way of life with other human beings can further life's satisfaction. With the blessing of health, humans really do not need much material to live a good life. This is something many of us can forget when living in crowded cities amongst an overwhelming amount of consumer products we encounter, leading us to think we need more materials in our lives than we actually do. Albert Einstein said, 'the more baggage we have is just extra weight around our necks'. We feel the truth of those words when we get the opportunity to live minimally, receiving energy and inspiration from the nature surrounding us.

Touring the island, the girls became intensely distracted by filling up the mesh bags with tons of garbage contaminating Sugar Island's serene coastline. The vast majority of this debris was unsurprisingly plastic- balloon strings, bottle caps, bottles, shot gun caps, tampon applicators, a speaker, bags, wrappers, degraded fragments, and much more.

Collecting as much garbage as possible, I was feeling the heavy weight of a tragedy in my heart for all the innocent lives affected and taken due to human recklessness. At that point, all you can really do is be happy that the plastic we collected will no longer harm the aquatic life it may have otherwise encountered. Picking up the garbage by hand is inspiring to continue forwarding the mission of achieving human respect for the rest of life on earth- something that makes a lot of sense to myself and the rest of the Sea Dragon crew.



One Water Story

Pangaea Explorations

actually prove a chemical substance to be harmful in scientific terms, especially since nowadays we all contain so many contaminants in our own bodies that there is no pure control human to compare to.

What we do know is that we encounter thousands of contaminants everyday, and each time we flush our soaps and detergents down the drain, they enter our environment and circulate throughout the earth. We can detect and measure the presence of these contaminants in our blood, and even in the placental blood of pregnant women. We know many synthetic chemicals are endocrine-disruptors that can feminize animals in nature. We know that since regularly using these chemicals, allowing them to circulate throughout our environment, especially through water and air, human males have significantly less testosterone than they used to, and females are maturing and going through puberty at earlier ages.

By the time I raised my head from the polluted beach, I realized all the female crewmembers were surrounding me, also picking up trash, while the guys had moved on to collect water samples to assess the health of the waters. Separated from the guys, we started exploring more of the island's coastline, stopping for many swims in beautifully clear, refreshing water- it was truly delightful. After reuniting with our male counterparts, we thanked Bill and Marsha for their generosity, and back to the boat we went.

We ended the day with conversations lead by Dr. Sherril Mason and Dr. Paul Helm, discussing the presence of contaminants in everyday consumer products. How many of us do not even consider the ingredients that are in the products we use daily? Chemicals many of us are unfamiliar with are found in our shampoos, dishwashing detergents, make-up, deodorants, hand soaps, and toothpastes.

When reading the ingredients on these products, we discover that the majority of them are synthetic chemicals that we know nothing about. There are approximately 80,000 synthetic chemicals on the market today. Of those chemicals, only 4% have been tested for human health impacts. Knowing this reality, we should be questioning the effects that these various compounds may have on our health and in marine environments.

These 80,000 chemicals were approved under the Toxic Substances Control Act in 1976, created 27 years ago. Since then, only 5 chemicals have been removed from the market. As a group, we discussed how it is very hard to

It is very difficult to attribute specific chemicals to specific health effects, however we can acknowledge these trends appearing in nature, and question the addition of these chemicals into our environment. They are ubiquitous, and can potentially influence the direction of our evolution. This is a scary thought, since we do not understand the implications that many of these chemicals may have.

One way we can work towards solutions to this issue is to be conscious of what is in the products we buy. We need to go back to simpler products, such as baking soda and vinegar as cleaning products, and natural based soaps to wash our hands. Simple feels good! My advice- question things. It is healthy to do so.

I have to say, I could not have asked for a better crew to spend this time with on the Sea Dragon. We function as one tight unit, efficiently extracting daily samples and sailing smoothly through the lake. Everyone is so interesting and different, I feel refreshed by their personalities! We are all having a spectacular time, and the adventure continues!

We have now set sail into beautiful Lake Ontario, riding the Dragon on our way to Toronto. And that is why this experience has changed my life forever.



Conservation Newsroom

Outdoor Alliance for Kids



Go Week

GO Week is the preeminent event celebrating our collective connection to the great outdoors while advocating for its future. As one of the largest annual conservation and outdoor focused events in Washington DC, GO Week raised awareness around outdoors issues, and brings together hundreds of diverse organizations and activists to meet with lawmakers and administrators to advocate for our outdoor way-of-life. During GO Week, OAK advocated for opportunities for children, youth and families to enjoy the outdoors. OAK's public policy framework rests on three pillars: environmental education, community health and wellness and environmental stewardship.

Healthy Kids Outdoors Act

The Healthy Kids Outdoors Act would improve our children's health, support economic growth and strengthen the future of conservation by reconnecting our children, youth and families with the natural world through innovative state strategies that connect communities with green spaces, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation, and engage the health community in educating caregivers about the benefits of active time outdoors. The legislation provides state-level incentives for agencies and partners across sectors to develop comprehensive 5-year state strategies.

No Child Left Inside Act

The No Child Left Inside Act would create incentives for states to implement environmental literacy plans for K-12 public school students. This bill would create new funding for: 1) training teachers in environmental education; 2) for expanding environmental education programs; and 3) for states to implement

environmental literacy plans, which will ensure that U.S. graduates are environmentally literate. Through this bill, field trips and other outdoor learning opportunities would become more frequent in participating schools.

Letter to Congress on the Public Lands Service Corps Act of 2013

OAK wrote to the Senate and House of Representatives to support the Public Lands Service Corps Act of 2013, S.360 and H.R.1351. The legislation will allow the public land and water management agencies to engage youth and young adults to meet our nation's backloged maintenance needs, address record youth unemployment, and prepare a diverse group of youth to be the next generation of natural resource employees. The Public Lands Corps program will allow for expanded public / private partnerships that leverage existing federal investment and provide federal land and water management agencies critical services at reduced costs. An expanded Public Lands Corps program will provide more opportunities for thousands of young Americans while helping the agencies address critical maintenance, restoration, repair and rehabilitation needs during tight budgetary times.

Additionally, environmental stewardship initiatives, such as those supported by the Public Lands Service Corps Act, are a key way to encourage an active lifestyle among a generation of youth that has become increasingly sedentary. Nearly one in three children between the ages of two and 19 are overweight or obese. These youth are more at risk for chronic diseases and higher health care costs. One important aspect of keeping youth and young adults healthy is to ensure that they receive the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity. Yet today's youth spend 7.5 hours a day on electronic media while studies show that youth who spend time outdoors tend to be more physically active. Participating in the Public Lands Service Corps encourages youth to get outside in a fun, educational, and engaging manner.

To learn more [click here](#).

Other News

Groups Protects Contoocook River

American Whitewater and Merrimack Valley Paddlers have reached an agreement to purchase a 10-acre parcel fronting on Contoocook River in Henniker, NH. The land serves as an important launch point for whitewater paddlers enjoying the popular section of the river that runs from Hillsborough to Henniker. This section of the Contoocook River contains rapids ranging in difficulty from Class II to Class IV.

The two groups are working with the Five Rivers Conservation Trust to establish a conservation easement that will permanently protect public river access and the ecological value of the land. Continued access to this section of the river will draw paddlers to the region, benefitting the local economy. "We are very pleased to have been able to protect access to one of the most significant whitewater paddling opportunities in the region," according to Bob Nasdor, American Whitewater Northeast Stewardship Director.

The project will serve as a memorial to Cliff Eisner, a kayaker, and local teacher at John Stark Regional High School, who died in a kayaking accident on the Saco River in 2006. American Whitewater and Merrimack Valley Paddlers have secured in excess of \$40,000 dollars in donations that will enable the groups to purchase and protect the property. The groups have received strong support from local paddlers, conservationists, public officials, and businesses from the Henniker area.

Sally Jewell Helps Connect Kids with the Great Outdoors

On June 26 Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell spent Wednesday afternoon walking, talking and having fun with 100 local youth at the "Kids, Youth and the Great Outdoors Festival" on the National Mall. Part of [Great Outdoors America Week](#), Secretary Jewell was joined by White House Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality Nancy Sutley, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works Jo-Ellen Darcy, Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune, The Wilderness Society President Jaime Williams, and [members of the Outdoors Alliance for Kids](#).

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"When children get outside, they build a healthy lifestyle at a young age and create connections with nature that last a lifetime," said Interior Secretary [Sally Jewell](#). "We have a responsibility to connect kids to nature so that they grow up to be our next generation of business leaders, scientists, and conservationists."

"The Corps of Engineers is an enthusiastic partner in President Obama's America's Great Outdoors initiative and is eager to strengthen partnerships and increase both awareness and participation in outdoor activities while taking care of the outdoors," said Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works [Jo-Ellen Darcy](#). "We are committed to getting kids and teens involved in conservation and restoration."

Kids participated in several fun-filled nature-based recreation activities at the festival, including mountain bike riding with IMBA, a kayaking games with ACA, camping 101 with the Hiking Society, and live birds of prey. Secretary Jewell also held a press conference to discuss the importance of connecting children, youth and families to the outdoors. The event ended with an urban walk from the National Mall to Capitol Hill.

"As the father of three young children, I know just how important it is for them to get outdoors and connect with nature," said Michael Brune, Executive Director of the Sierra Club. "I also know that nature is not in everyone's backyard, which is why Sierra Club is dedicated to making the outdoors more accessible to kids and families everywhere."

"Seeing kids and teenagers having fun in the great outdoors is my favorite part of my job," said Jamie Williams, President of The Wilderness Society. "America's kids are the future stewards of our wild lands, and GO America Week is all about reconnecting our communities to the great outdoors."

Great Outdoors America Week (GO America Week) is the preeminent event celebrating the nation's collective connection to the great outdoors while advocating for its future. As one of the largest annual conservation and outdoor focused events in Washington DC, GO America Week raises awareness around outdoors issues, brings together hundreds

of diverse organizations and activists to meet with lawmakers and administrators to advocate for America's outdoor way-of-life.

"Many of us – youth and adults alike – don't spend a whole lot of time outdoors these days," says Jackie Ostfeld, Chair of the [Outdoors Alliance for Kids](#). "One in five of us can't even safely walk to a park from our home. OAK is working to ensure youth and families have access, opportunities, skills and encouragement to connect with the great outdoors."

"The best way to protect the places we care about in the long term is to pass on our passion for conservation to the next generation," said Larry Schweiger, President and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "This means getting America's kids outside on a regular basis to experience all that nature has to offer."

President Obama's Plan to Fight Climate Change

While no single step can reverse the effects of climate change, we have a moral obligation to future generations to leave them a planet that is not polluted and damaged. Through steady, responsible action to cut carbon pollution, we can protect our children's health and begin to slow the effects of climate change so that we leave behind a cleaner, more stable environment.

[Click here](#) to learn more.

How Big is the Ocean?

(ted.edu) We all know that the ocean is large. By large I mean huge. The reality is that the ocean is so big that it's almost



impossible to wrap your head around it.

To blow your mind this afternoon here is a short animation to help put everything into perspective.

Overfished and under-protected Oceans

As the human footprint has spread, the remaining wildernesses on our planet have retreated. However, dive just a few meters below the ocean surface and you will enter a world where humans very rarely venture.

In many ways, it is the forgotten world on Earth. A ridiculous thought when you consider that oceans make up 90% of the living volume of the planet and are home to more than one million species, ranging from the largest animal on the planet -- the [blue whale](#) -- to one of the weirdest -- the [blobfish](#).

Remoteness, however, has not left the oceans and their inhabitants unaffected by humans, with overfishing, climate change and pollution destabilizing marine environments across the world.

Many marine scientists consider overfishing to be the greatest of these threats. The [Census of Marine Life](#), a decade-long international survey of ocean life completed in 2010, estimated that 90% of the big fish had disappeared from the world's oceans, victims primarily of overfishing.

Tens of thousands of [bluefin tuna](#) were caught every year in the North Sea in the 1930s and 1940s. Today, they have disappeared across the seas of Northern Europe. [Halibut](#) has suffered a similar fate, largely vanishing from the North Atlantic in the 19th century.

In some cases, the collapse has spread to entire fisheries. The remaining fishing trawlers in the Irish Sea, for example, bring back nothing more than prawns and scallops, says marine biologist [Callum Roberts](#), from the UK's York University.

Bringing law and order to ocean protection

The problem is that most of the world's ocean is located outside of international law and legal control. Any attempts to implement rules and regulation come with the problem of enforcement, says Rogers, who is also scientific director of the [International Program on State of the Ocean](#) (IPSO).

Conservation Newsroom

Marine conservationists estimate that at least 30% of the oceans need to be covered by marine protected areas, where fishing and the newly emerging deep-sea mining of valuable minerals on the seabed, is banned or restricted.

Callum Roberts, who helped form the first network of [marine protected areas](#) in the high seas in 2010, says on their own they are not enough.

"I could sum it up as: we need to fish less and in less destructive measures, waste less, pollute less and protect more," says Roberts.

[Click here](#) to get the full article.

House Subcommittee Axes Fund for Hunting, Fishing, Parks, And Battlefields

(LWCF) Washington, DC— Despite strong bipartisan support in Congress and among Americans across the country, an Appropriations Subcommittee in the House of Representatives today approved a bill that would eliminate America's premier conservation program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). In a move that is being met with immediate and strong opposition from sportsmen, business leaders, and a wide range of partners, the bill for the first time in history proposes to divert the entire \$900 million in oil and gas revenues credited annually to LWCF for unrelated spending, leaving nothing for the fund's authorized purposes.

The proposal to wipe out LWCF is part of a House Interior Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2014 that includes a host of other program eliminations and massive budget cuts that, if enacted, would represent an unprecedented rollback of America's bipartisan tradition of conservation investment. These stark cuts in natural resource programs are a direct result of the larger budget process in the House, which slashed the funding available to the Subcommittee by over \$5 billion, or nearly 20 percent, from current-year levels.

"Americans expect offshore oil and gas revenues to go where they were told they would go: protecting working lands, expanding outdoor recreation

opportunities, and conserving public land access for future generations," said Miles Moretti, President of the Mule Deer Foundation. "Axing America's premier conservation program is bad for the economy, bad for sportsmen, and bad for Americans."

For nearly 50 years, LWCF has been the nation's primary tool to conserve parks, wildlife refuges, forests, rivers, trails, battlefields, historic and cultural sites, urban parks and playgrounds and other important federal, state and local public lands. In past years, LWCF revenues – which by law come from the sale of offshore oil and gas resources, not from tax dollars – have often been raided to some extent to offset other spending, but never to the degree proposed in the bill. Meanwhile, the Senate's 2014 budget proposes fully funding LWCF and ending the chronic diversions of these receipts, and the President's budget also recommends significant increases, not cuts, to LWCF.

If it became law, the bill would deal a blow to America's \$646 billion outdoor recreation economy, and to communities across the nation that rely on public lands and outdoor amenities to meet local needs and to attract workers and businesses. For example, the proposal would halt the efforts of ranchers to conserve working lands and duck habitat in the Dakota Grasslands in North and South Dakota; the work of sportsmen to expand access to hunting and fishing opportunities on public lands in Montana; the investment in working forests in Maine and Idaho; the protection of hallowed ground at Civil War battlefields at the moment we are celebrating its Sesquicentennial; the creation and improvement of parks in the towns and cities where 80% of Americans live and work; and locally-driven efforts to improve the national trail system, including the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Vermont, and along the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail in California, Oregon, and Washington.

"Millions of American families enjoy the outdoors because the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has helped

create parks and save land," said Will Rogers, President of The Trust for Public Land. "It has been one of the most important and effective conservation tools in the past 50 years, and cutting all spending for it would be a real disservice to an American public which has time and time again voiced its support for federal, state, and local land conservation."

The House's action today stands in sharp contrast to mainstream, bipartisan efforts in Congress to support LWCF. Recent letters urging the Appropriations Committees to dedicate robust funding for LWCF in Fiscal Year 2014 were signed by 157 House members and 48 Senators, including Republicans and Democrats – indicating a level of support that is rarely seen on any issue in Washington.

President Obama's budget proposed \$600 million for LWCF in 2014 and full funding beginning in 2015. In addition, on March 23, with the leadership of Senate Budget Committee Chair Patty Murray (D-WA), the U.S. Senate passed a Budget Resolution that would enable full funding of LWCF. Bipartisan legislation to fully fund LWCF, S.338, was also recently introduced by Sens. Max Baucus (D-MT), Richard Burr (R-NC), and Ron Wyden (D-OR). S.338 has now gained 27 sponsors, a number which continues to grow.

For more information, [click here](#).



Stewardship Spotlight

Illinois Water TrailKeepers is a program of the Illinois Paddling Council and Openlands. Volunteers adopt a reach of a river, cleanup their section, and work with the local authorities and paddling community to promote their Water Trail.

Every year there are two cleanups on the Fox River, one lead by Brad DeArk in St. Charles IL, and the other lead by Jodie Auliff in Algonquin. Stan Popelar runs an annual cleanup on the Kishwaukee in partnership with the Boon County Conservation District. Both Kathi Landow and Ray Ziemer run cleanups in partnership with the DuPage River Sweep every spring. These smaller cleanups are still very effective at picking up a lot of trash, engaging local paddlers in the process, and highlighting the value of stewardship in their communities.

For the last couple of years, Mike Taylor has done an excellent job organizing the entire community around his cleanup efforts. Last year, over 60 participants participated from canoes, kayaks, or by walking the shores picking up trash. This year, on a bad weather day, Mike still attracted 38 participants. Mike is organizing a second event this year on September 28th.

Tom Eckels, Program Manager for the Illinois Water TrailKeepers, was awarded the [2013 Green Paddle for Waterway Conservation](#) from the ACA at the National Paddlesports Conference in Bend, Oregon. For the last three years, Tom Eckels has partnered with Upper Des Plaines River Ecosystem Partnership, Forest Preserve District of Lake County, Cook County Forest Preserves, Open Land, and other partners to run a large scale cleanup on the Des Plaines River. The first two years, the event attracted between 50 and 60 participants. This year, 119 participants generated 6 huge trash piles and rescued a sickly Red Tailed Hawk.

For more information on the Water TrailKeepers, or if you want to volunteer, participate in a cleanup, or contribute financially, please contact Water TrailKeepers Program Manager, Tom Eckels at thomasreckels@gmail.com

Do you know of individuals or organizations that are good stewards to our waterways and deserves recognition? Contact Greg Rolf, [ACA Stewardship Coordinator](#), and submit them for next quarters

Stewardship Spotlight.



Be sure to follow us online.



Stewardship needs on your waters?

You can contact Greg at the national office:

540.907.4460 x 106

greg@americancanoe.org

Words from Edward Abbey

Do not burn yourselves out. Be as I am—a reluctant enthusiast...a part-time crusader, a half-hearted fanatic. Save the other half of yourselves and your loves for pleasure and adventure. It is not enough to fight for the land; it is even more important to enjoy it. While you can. While it's still there. So get out there and hunt and fish and mess around with your friends, ramble out yonder and explore the forest, encounter the grizz, climb the mountains, bag the peaks, run the river, breathe deep of that yet sweet and lucid air, sit quietly for a while and contemplate the precious stillness, that lovely, mysterious and awesome space. Enjoy yourselves, keep your brain in your head and your head firmly attached to the body, the body active and alive and I promise you this much: I promise you this one sweet victory over our enemies over those deskbound people with their hearts in a safe deposit box and their eyes hypnotized by desk calculators.

Edward Abbey, at Earth First

Paddle safe, paddle often, paddle sustainably.



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