

# Extended Beach Briefing & Topics for Safe Ocean Paddling

## INTRODUCTIONS

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- Leaders – where from, time on committee, paddling background
- Participants – where from, paddling experience, goals for weekend

## MEDICAL

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- Issues you would like us to know in private regarding something on your Med form (see trip leaders)
- Always ask people you paddle with about the big medical concerns:  
    allergy issues / epipens / asthma inhalers / heart conditions & meds / seizures /  
    diabetic issues & meds / shoulder or back problems
- Will you need or may need med while we are out? ... good for a leader or friend to know where it is located
- Does anyone in the group have medical training? (WFA, WFR, CPR, EMT, RN, MD, etc)

## HOW WE TRAVEL

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- Lead and sweep with group in-between (like a group hike)
- Rubber Band Model – group spreads out lengthwise, minimize widthwise spread
- If the lead stops, then group naturally collects at the leader
- Need to stay within voice communication range of each other
- Help/Emergency Signal – paddle vertical and wave it, whistle blasts

## CAPSIZE (IN THE EVENT OF)

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- Always ask who in your group has rescue skills (self and/or assisted)
- Wet exit review – tuck / pull / push
- Flip over (right) your boat if possible and hang onto boat (top priority) and paddle
- One of the leaders or participants will get you back in your boat
- Rest of group – one of the leaders will advise what to do based on conditions (e.g. hold up, group up, keep moving)

## WILDLIFE / LEAVE NO TRACE

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- Enjoy and observe from a distance
- Avoid flushing seals from ledges – pups separated from parents; taps into energy budget
- Energy Budget – defense / finding food / breeding & raising young
- Island soils are fragile so avoid compaction – see MITA guide
- Bio Break Etiquette – “urinate on rocks or sandy areas or below high tide line” (MITA guide)

## HAZARDS & RISKS

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- Waves and current
- Boat traffic
- Obstructions – docks, piers, floats, submerged objects
- Cold water / hypothermia
- Overheating / dehydration
- Fog
- Lightening
- On Shore
  - Boat Carrying (be in communication with and cognizant of your partner)
  - Footing (slippery and rocky shore)
  - Rusty wire and broken glass
  - Poison Ivy

## TIPS FOR SWELLS / ROUGH WATER

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- Keep paddling (boat more stable when underway)
- Stay loose at the hips
- Sculling and bracing for stability

## COMMUNICATE

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- Poor boat fit / discomfort
- Not feeling well
- Trouble keeping up
- Nervous about conditions
- Easier for leaders to be proactive rather than reactive

## BOAT CHANNELS

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- Delineated primarily by Red Nuns and Green Cans
- We try to stay out of them (so not scrambling when a boat appears)
- If need to travel in channel for any length of time, stay to one side
- Crossing
  - Clear channel as quickly as possible
  - Keep small group footprint
  - Travel more abreast than lengthwise
  - Cross shortest route (e.g. right angles versus long traverse when possible)

## PLAN FOR THE DAY

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- Gear: water / food / sun screen / meds / wind & warmth layers / change of clothes (no cotton)
- Weather and conditions: sunny/cloudy/fog/thunderstorms, expected temps, predicted wind speed and direction, wave height and period
- Tides and Current
- Show & Discuss the route (distance, breaks, expected paddling time)
- File Float Plan – written or verbal plan so someone knows where you are going and when you are expected back
- Opt – out (e.g. not feeling up to the mileage or conditions, not feeling well, etc)

## WIND SPEED GUIDELINES (SPEED IN KNOTS)

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- 5-10 = Condition Green – typical ocean day, 10 knots may affect some in the group
- 15 = Condition Yellow – some will struggle and most will tire sooner, whitecaps likely to develop
- 20 = Condition Flashing Red – doable for strong paddlers but typically not a lot of fun
- 25 = Condition Solid Red – Small Craft Advisory – don't go out!