



FRIENDS OF THE RIVER

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Introduction

Friends of the River (FOR) is a state-wide river advocacy nonprofit in the California working to protect and preserve rivers through policy and grassroots organizing. FOR works not just to preserve California rivers, but to change the way that people think about them – not as a resource to be exploited, but as a treasure to be enjoyed.

Friends of the River hosts activities to engage people, increase access and enjoyment of the river and provide advocacy opportunities. Classes and outings charge minimal fees to cover insurance, boat fees and gear maintenance.

Below is a description of the activities that Friends of the River plans to host on the Lower American River in an effort to further its goals to teach people about rivers by engaging them in the beauty and enjoyment that is available to us all by the incredible access we have to this incredible and beautiful river.

Programs

Friends of the River inherited the canoe class program previously sponsored by the American Red Cross. FOR is excited to continue a valuable education opportunity of teaching canoe skills and expanding the program to include Advocacy Outings. Advocacy Outings increase the chance for advocacy education and community building while paddling on the Lower American River and Cosumnes Preserve.

Canoe Classes

Canoe Classes held on the Lower American and Lake Natoma (Folsom SRA) during the summer. Classes are designed to improve paddling skills on flat and moving water while teaching about conservation, river advocacy and water safety. FOR provides the equipment for classes including safety gear.

Basic River

The class begins with a review of the skills learned in Fundamentals of Canoeing (taught on Lake Natoma), then introduces a variety of techniques needed to maneuver a canoe safely in moving water.

When—May 1-September 30

Schedule—2.25 day class.

- *Friday*—6 - 9 pm
- *Saturday*—9 am - 4 pm
- *Sunday*—9 am - 4 pm

Where—Put-in will be at the Upper Riverbend parking area on river left. Take out will be at the Gristmill access point.

Boat Access— River Bend and Gristmill

Fees—This class is offered on an as needed basis to FOR members to build skills within the canoe community. It is anticipated that there will be between 5 and 10 participants per class.

Prerequisites—*Fundamentals of Canoeing required before Basic River. Must be at least 14 years old and accompanied by a parent or guardian if under age 18.*

Advocacy Outings

To further FOR's mission of engaging people advocacy related to water and waterways, we will host several Advocacy Outings each summer. Each Outing invites speakers to teach about the area where the paddle takes place. A 30-min canoe basics lesson will be taught by an experienced FOR paddler. Locations are selected for their teaching opportunities and their access to beginner paddlers.

Lower American

What—Advocacy Outings on the Lower American River to allow participants the opportunity to enjoy the experience of being on the water in a canoe – a unique and enjoyable way to experience the river. Also provides the opportunity to educate people about conservation issues important to maintaining and protecting California rivers.

When—May 1 - November 30

- 2-4 Outings in the spring summer
- 2-4 Outings in the fall (for salmon viewing trips),

Where—Outings will start based on the speaker invited. For example, if the speaker is addressing flood management, we will boat the lower section of the Lower American. If

the speaker is addressing the history of hydraulic mining and gravel then the Outing will cover the upper Lower American.

Boat Access—Gristmill, Watt Avenue Access, Camp Pollock and Tiscornia Beach

Fees—

- *FOR members*—\$10 for each outing to cover the costs of launch fees, insurance and gear maintenance.
- *Non-Members*—\$35

Attendance—FOR anticipates that there will be between 5 and 20 participants per outing plus a Head Guide/Trip Organizer plus other FOR volunteers.

Safety Issues

As always, water safety is an important part of any outing and our canoe programs have a solid history of awareness and focus on safety issues going back to the programs roots with the Red Cross. The following are safety considerations that are followed in each of our programs and outings on the Lower American River:

- **Proper equipment** – all canoes are in good condition, and all participants are equipped with safety equipment as appropriate for the outing, including Personal Flootation Devices (PFDs), helmets (if Class II or greater), paddles, throw ropes and first-aid kits.
- **Experienced leaders**—All group and class leaders are experienced canoe instructors and are certified in First Aid and CPR.
- **Insurance**—Nonprofits Insurance Alliance of California (NIAC)

Contacts

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FOR Canoe Volunteers (Leadership Team)

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