

PADDLE TRIP RATING SYSTEM

Difficulty

- **Easy:** Usually trips of 1 to 4 miles in length, typically on protected waters and seldom requiring a shuttle. In most cases, trips are conducted from developed facilities with ease of launching and take-out considered.
- **Moderate:** Usually trips of 4 to 10 miles, occasionally exposed to open water, wind and/or strong currents. These trips are usually point to point and require shuttle of vehicles. Some launch sites may require special skills to negotiate. Some trips may last up to 4 hours and may necessitate the impromptu visit to the woods for the dreaded “nature call.”
- **Demanding:** Usually trips over 10 miles, some with extended exposure to open water, waves, wind and strong currents. These trips are usually point to point and require vehicle shuttles. Most of the trips will exceed 4 hours duration and probably necessitate the “visit to the woods.” Trips of this kind occasionally happen upon nature’s roadblocks and require special skills to launch, navigate over, under or around.

Skill Levels

- **Beginner:** Just learning to paddle, protected water, very short trips.
 - **Novice:** Basic paddle skills with some experience on open water, current or with wind.
 - **Intermediate:** Good physical condition, experienced with open water, strong wind, currents and greater distance trips up to 10 miles.
 - **Experienced:** Excellent paddling skills and physical condition, comfortable in strong winds, waves, currents and in open water, greater distances up to 20 miles. Some skills in map reading, navigation, exploration, camping and survival may be required.
- **Note:** Above difficulty and skill ratings are based on Eastern Carolina warm water conditions. These same trips in our winter months with colder temperatures increase the difficult rating and require additional skills to paddle safely.