



Dear whitewater paddler,

We need your help to start a youth paddling program in Monroe, Washington! Your donations of whitewater paddling gear and boats would be much appreciated.

The Monroe/Sky Valley Family YMCA and the Sky Valley Education Center (SVEC) are starting a youth whitewater kayaking program. Our goal is to teach middle and high school students the fundamentals of whitewater boating through a semester long course. We hope that our students will develop a lifelong love of kayaking and an appreciation of the incredible environment around us .

Students will begin by learning about kayaking equipment, the basic paddling strokes and the Eskimo roll in the safe environment of the YMCA pool during 2 sessions per week. As the weather and students' skill improves, classes will move outside onto nearby Lake Tye to further develop technique and boat handling skills. Near the end of the semester, students will be on the river experiencing easy whitewater, and will progress to more difficult sections of the river as the program and their skills progress.

The program will have two coaches. Jim Coppernoll is an avid kayaker, whose love of the sport began in the late seventies after learning to paddle from a book. He has taught kayaking courses in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho. Currently Jim is a professional geologist working for his own small environmental and geological consulting firm in Monroe, Washington. For the last two years Jim has taught high school geology at the SVEC. Tom Wier is a 6-time National Champion in wildwater C-1, and has been paddling for 14 years. He has paddled and raced in over ten countries, represented the U.S. in international competition since 1997, and has ranked as high as 8th in the international wildwater rankings. Currently, he works at the Monroe/Sky Valley YMCA as a personal trainer and community event coordinator, and is studying to become a high school science teacher.

Our goal is to have 10-12 students in class in spring semester this year. Currently, we only have three kayaks and paddles to use for the program. You could help us get our program off the ground by donating new or used paddling gear to the Monroe/Sky Valley YMCA. We need kayaks, paddles, spray skirts, helmets, and life jackets for 10-12 high school students. Any kayak in decent condition would be a great asset for us; we have no need of the latest designs at this point. If you have any paddling gear or boats that you would like to pass along, please contact Tom Wier at the number or email below, and we can arrange to pick up the gear and provide you with a receipt for your tax-deductible contribution.

Thank you for your help,
Tom Wier
Jim Coppernoll

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Sky Valley Education Center
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