

**Program Title:**            **Whitewater Safety &  
Awareness Training Workshop**



**Objectives**

To provide boaters with the basics of rescue /incident response with an emphasis on proactive prevention.

**Specific Goals:**

- – To comprehend that prevention is the key to safe river trips.
- – To understand how to avoid potentially dangerous situations.
- – To develop the skills to effectively manage minor river incidents.
- – To develop the in-water skills necessary for effective defensive and aggressive swimming.
- – To learn to concentrate on the safest, simplest, and quickest methods to effect rescue.
- – To be able to properly assist swimmers from shore with a throw bag and coiled rope.

**Prerequisites:**

General good health, comfort in water, ability to swim with PPE on, and a desire to learn.

**Location:**

Class II/III whitewater.

**Equipment**

Full equipment is provided for all activity sessions. This will include PPE for water activities and harness for live baiting activities.

Participants will be required to provide their own footwear suitable for the exercises.

No participant requires any previous experience other than the confidence to enter whitewater in PPE,

Full instruction will be given before any workshop activity commences.

Individuals wishing to use their own equipment must agree to it being inspected and its use is subject to its compliance to our equipment guidelines.

Wild Planet guides are trained in first aid and a full medical kit is present during all activities.

**NOTE: This workshop is not intended to train activity instructors, rather to highlight areas for future training and to teach participatory staff basic skills for use in moving and whitewater environments. We recommend that prior to this workshop all attendee's should have knowledge of basic First Aid and CPR procedures as covered in The Emergency First Responder Course and similar programs.**

## WORKSHOP CONTENT

**NOTE: The itinerary below will take place over two days and scheduling will be adjusted according to river levels and features. The workshop will be conducted on the river using both whitewater rafts and kayaks.**

### **Section 1. Personal Equipment**

- A minimum of personal safety gear should be a constant and should be appropriate to potential task
- Group gear

### **Section 2. Reading a Whitewater River**

- Features and principles
- River features and hazards

### **Communications and moving down a river.**

- Effective communications are essential for any group activity, such as proceeding down a river, setting safety, or affecting a rescue
- Predetermined, universally understood visual signals (i.e., hand or paddle signals) should be used

### **Section 3. Swimming Whitewater**

- Understand and practice defensive and aggressive swimming techniques
- Never try to stand up in deep or swift current while swimming
- Swimming types
  - i. Self-rescue
  - ii. Defensive position with ferry
  - iii. Aggressive position with transition and eddy catching
  - iv. Special situations: ledges, holes, hydraulics, and strainers

### **Section 4. Principles of Safety**

- CLAP
- Successful rescues require a foundation of four building blocks:
  - i. Training
  - ii. Practice
  - iii. Experience
  - iv. Judgment
- Keep an open mind
- Emphasize training over equipment
- Value simplicity and speed
- Minimize risk where possible
- Prioritize rescue techniques using mnemonic RETHROG
- Get victim away from power of river and out of current as fast as possible
- Trip planning, competent leader, medical concerns, river level, skills assessment (individual and group)
- Incident command system and its application to real “river world” incidents
- Reality of injury and death

### **Section 5. Rescue Skills**

- **Throw Lines**  
Techniques and practical use
- **Live Baiting**  
Practical applications and risks involved
- **Tag Lines and Their Uses**  
Dealing with Foot entrapment.