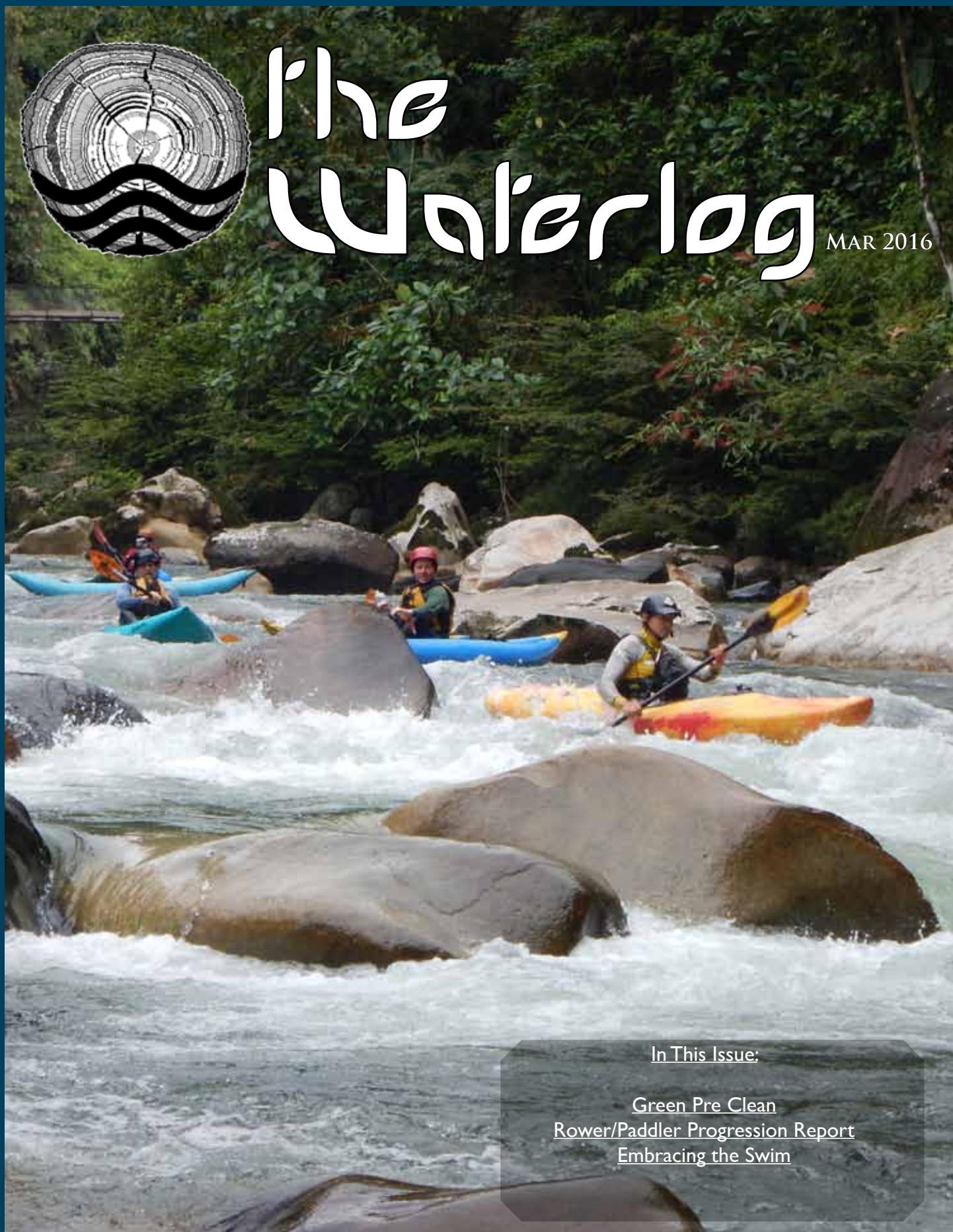


THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF WASHINGTON RECREATIONAL RIVER RUNNERS



The Waterlog

MAR 2016



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JOIN THE FUN! BECOME A MEMBER OF THE "GREATEST WHITEWATER CLUB IN THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD". Washington Recreational River Runners is a private, non profit corporation organized to promote river running as a safe and fun sport and to provide for an exchange of ideas among its members and public issues concerning rivers. Membership is open to anyone having an interest in the recreational use of rivers upon payment of annual dues as shown below. To join or renew your membership, cut out this form, fill out and mail to the address listed below. The Release and Indemnity Agreement **must** be signed before your application is processed.

Select Membership level. Prices effective \$1/1/13. All membership levels include the newsletter and access to club events

☐ **\$30 HOUSEHOLD** - everyone residing at the registered address

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☐ **\$55 BENEFACTOR** - same as family plus 10 free raffle tickets at Wenatchee Rendezvous and 2 free hands at the Poker Run

☐ **\$100 SPONSOR** - for those wishing to advertise a product or service (must be river/outdoor-related)

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Returning Member (prior membership ran out)

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I hereby state that I wish to participate in courses and/or activities offered by Washington Recreational River Runners Association (WRRR) a non-profit corporation. I recognize that any outdoor or aquatic activity may involve certain dangers including, but not limited to, the hazards of traveling by boat on rivers or other bodies of water, accidents, or illnesses in remote places or occurring during portages, forces of nature, and the actions of participants and other persons. I further understand and agree that without some program providing protection of its assets and its leaders, officers, and members, WRRR would not be able to offer its courses and activities.

In consideration of and as part of my payment for the right to participate in the activities offered by WRRR, I hereby release WRRR and its leaders, officers, and members from any and all liability, claims and courses of action arising out of or in any way connected with my participation in any activities offered by WRRR. I personally assume all risks in connection with these activities, and further agree to indemnify WRRR and its leaders, officers, and members from all liability, claims, and courses of action which I may have arising from my participation in activities including, but not limited to those involving death, drowning, personal injury, and property damage. The terms of this agreement shall serve as a release and indemnity agreement for my heirs, assigns, personal representatives, and for all members of my family including any minors. [Parent or legal guardian must sign for all persons under eighteen (18) years of age.] This agreement is effective as of the date signed, and has no termination date. I have fully informed myself of the contents of this release and indemnity agreement by reading it before I have signed it.

Signed _____ Date _____

Signed _____ Date _____

Mail your check and signed Agreement to:
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PMB 501
330 SW 43rd ST. Ste K
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*Journal of Self-Serving Statistics, June 2009

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Board meetings are held the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM (except December).

Please visit <http://www.wrrr.org/> for meeting locations.

THE WATERLOG

EARN BIG-TIME RIVER KARMA! Flip less often! Get shuttles from bikini models! Stop losing your hair! Your boat will look better; your beer will be colder; the sun will shine every day you're on the river and it will rain every day you're off the river! All you have to do is...**SUBMIT ARTICLES TO THE WATERLOG!** (Photos & cartoons too! It's just that easy) The Waterlog is published 11 times a year. (Monthly except December) Material for publication should reach the editor by the 25th of the month. An attempt will be made to place submissions received after the 25th. However, no guarantees are given. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity and length. Articles and editorial comment do not necessarily reflect the view or opinions of WRRR, its Board of Directors, or its membership...They seem to think it's important that I print that last bit for some reason, go figure. Authors are solely responsible for the content of their articles.

Submit material for publication in The Waterlog to the editor:

Brian Vogt
bvogt@wwik.org

Atlas Fabrication

Raft Frames • Boat Repair
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Jim Sheflo
425-343-4105



Shangri-La Pre-Clean

Please join us for a volunteer work effort from 9:30am-1:30pm Saturday April 2nd, 2016. For the past several Green River Cleanups, Palmer Coking Cole (<http://www.palmercc.com>) has donated free camping for WRRR members on their property at the Shangri-La. This is over a \$2,000 value for a weekend booking.

Shangri-La is providing WRRR with camping on Green River Cleanup weekend in exchange for helping to clean up the grounds. Participants will help clean and clear the wooded areas of winter debris. In the past we have done all sorts of activities. Volunteers will be helping move picnic tables, raking, pressure washing, cleaning bathrooms and grounds, firewood, trail cleaning, BBQ setup and other preseason activities. Please bring gloves, rain gear and any tools you may have that may be useful (Think coffee, rakes, wheelbarrow, pruners, hoes, etc). If you aren't able to do physical labor, The Green River Cleanup committee needs help mapping trash and doing our final preparations for the Cleanup Event.

Some people will be boating the Green River Gorge and other sections of the Green in the rower's progression that day as well. Details will be posted on the WRRR Forums and Facebook group page a few days before, since we will need to plan based on flows.

Please RSVP as lunch will be provided. Trip leaders Mark Burns, Brenan Filippini. Please see forums at WRRR.org for current information and updates.

Progression Report

It was a gorgeous day on the Sauk River, where I paddled my IK around nervously at the put-in as I awaited the challenging rapids downstream. "What are you going to work on today?" Lyles asked from his IK. To my own surprise, I hadn't given that question much thought even though today's run was intended to be a practice run, the first IK/Rower's Progression of 2016. In my mind, I had only one simple goal: Make it downstream without flipping, and self-rescue quickly if all else fails. "I don't know", I replied to Lyles. "Catching eddies would be good practice. I'm not that big into surfing, I just like to run the river", I said hesitantly. As soon as those words came from my mouth, I suddenly realized that I was relying on a shaky foundation: Even though I hadn't taken much interest to intentionally surfing my IK, an unintentional surf is the primary reason why I flip to begin with. And if surfing is what flips me, and if my goal is not to flip, then surfing and bracing is what I need to practice on! "When you brace you want to reach with your paddle downstream," Lyles said. "You're trying to grab the water downstream so that it will pull you out of the hole." A lightbulb suddenly went on. Up until this point, I thought that a brace had much more technique to it, like a skillful and mysterious balancing act. But the notion of just grabbing downstream water seemed exceedingly simple. This coming-to-surf moment ended as quickly as it had begun, and we were off with the first rapids just within eyesight.

It had been at least six months since I had been on this challenging of a run, and it was only my third time down the Sauk. At this medium-low water level



there were relatively big pools in between the drops, but those provided only brief respite to the long, steep, burly rapids that seemed to never end. My river reading skills felt up to par, but the level of stamina needed to hit the big holes and avoid the bigger ones was keeping me huffing and puffing. As seems to happen commonly, Stacy got a few good laughs out of catching me with my “OH SH#!” face on, as I punched through the big waves and breathed relief at the end of each drop. In the end, the whole group made it down successfully without any carnage. Though there was no place on this upper stretch that I felt comfortable practicing my surf (that is, no place I felt comfortable swimming), I still felt that the numerous diagonal waves and narrow windows between holes put me up to quite enough of a challenge.

At noon, we joined with a second group at the North Fork confluence. We had already had an excellent turnout, and now even more boats were joining our group for the lower section of the run. The confluence provided a good place to practice ferry angles as we paddled back-and-forth across the current. We had both IKers and rowers, including one brave soul who would fare the IK for the very first time. The eddy at the lower put-in was small, and was soon followed by a small but steep little pour-over. I watched him enter the IK, and then within seconds he went sideways over the pour-over and fell out into the river. “Welcome to running the IK!” I shouted. This was going to be fun.

The rapids that followed provided plenty of challenge for those less experienced, and were long

enough and had enough features to keep the more experienced testing their skills. The last class 3 rapid of the run, which I believe is named Bachman Drop, was relatively short but it also had a giant hole at the bottom. I scouted from shore and watched some other IKs go through it. As they hit the hole, two things happened: The hole seemed to shift them sideways, pulling the IKs right-to-left into the meat of the hole. Second, their speed slowed significantly. Even after watching others narrowly make it through, I underestimated the size of this hole and ended up hitting it too slowly. Within no time my IK slowed, then came to a stop, then starting getting pulled back in upstream. Just like that, I found myself sideways as water poured into my boat – the classic pre-flip position. Grab the water downstream, I remembered. I quickly stretched my paddle far out beyond the downstream side of my boat, laying the blade flat against the bubbling surface. I suddenly felt as if frozen in time, just maintaining my brace with my outstretched paddle and feeling the force of the boiling water beneath me. One second went by, then two, and then.....I was out of the hole, upright, and shouting in excitement! Any other day I would have undoubtedly flipped in this situation. It would have been my “go-to” move (not that you can call flipping a move). What happened instead was like magic. Even onlookers from shore noticed the save. And, well.....it was sexy if I can say so myself. It most definitely has left me wanting for more, and I am looking forward to trying it again and again.

Thanks WRRR for a great day on the Sauk!

– **Adam Schierenbeck**



Embracing the Swim

I was invited to go kayaking in Ecuador. At first I thought, "Naah." I had spent time in Belize and Venezuela and felt as though the tropics and I did not get along very well (one reason I live in the Northwest is I love the weather). Then I found out who else was going on the trip and well, I just love these folks so I agreed to go. Then I started researching more about the rivers and Wowzer, these rivers were solid class III and some class IV. Lump in throat, butterflies in stomach. I love to IK, and I have some skills but class IV is always intimidating. So I decided to get out and improve my boating skills in a low water year. I ran my NRS Maverick quite a bit before our trip in February. I bombed the Methow and had a terrific swim in the Sauk. I should have ran the IK on the Tieton but ran my cat instead. I got on the lower Green that required good bracing so I was getting comfortable but really no better.

As February grew ever closer and my skills were plateaued at about the same level, I started to experience a little anxiety. I thought how ridiculous. There will be guides on the trip, I am with great friends, and am doing ok. Yeah, ok. That was certainly confidence building. So I finally decided to just change my mindset and stop fearing the swim. Not that I was going to go out and just bash around (although I sort of did), I just wasn't going to let my anxiety spoil the trip. My new mantra was "Embrace the Swim."

I managed to stay in my boat on our first day on the Inchillaqui River. And we were running tight little slots

that I would most definitely not be doing here in my home turf. Our guide company, River People, gave this a class II to II+ rating. There was a point we had to pull over to evaluate a wood hazard. I was near the back of the pack and most had gone through. One guide was eddied out and pointing to a sharp tight slot on the left. One glance and I could see the water went through OK, so down I went. I was stunned at how fun it was and that I was still upright at the bottom.

I was not feeling well on our second boating day. It was this day that I had three swims and none of them really bad at all. Except I had a very grumbly stomach and I ached all over. The Misahualli River was beautiful, with rounded, pink andesite boulders scattered throughout. The section we were on was given a II+ to II++. There was one flat flake of a rock that poked out in the middle of a drop. I barely made it to the left and flipped and swam. I believe there were a couple of other swimmers here and a great wrapped Ik on that rock. Because I wasn't feeling well, I could hardly wait for the day to end. And that is too bad, because this river is just beautiful. There was a point where we came by some very happy local kids swimming there. There was a stark contrast between us in our PFDs and helmets and these kids barely in bathing suits. And as we went by they jumped in behind us and swam across a fast moving pool to the other side. So fun to see that.

Our next day was an overnighter trip that would start on the Jondachi River and end on the Hollin River. Both



of these are fairly out there jungle rivers. River People had two clients that were supposed to paddle the support raft, but they cancelled that morning. Upon hearing this I immediately volunteered to be in the raft. I love to bow paddle and knew that would help my IK skill anxiety. Local people were hired to carry our boats down to the river (about a mile). The hike down was through very thick sticky red mud. As I approach date river I saw one of the porters washing off using his rubber boot as a bucket to pour water over his head. Again the riverbed was chocked full of rounded pinkish rocks. Dark green jungle foliage covered the steep canyon walls. Vines, bamboo, broadleaved trees, and purple orchids surrounded us. If I was going to swim, at least it would be a pretty place. The raft went in front of the kayaks. I was able to take a few photos but mostly was riding the raft in complete awe of the guiding skills as we high sided and lowsided that 14 foot raft through narrow slots. Our guide, Gabriel, pingponged us so we ricocheted backward into slots that we would not have reached it we tried to turn. It was fairly low water so we did our fair share of jumping up and down to get off rocks. The water was crystal clear with a teal hue. We were chatting away and jumping up and down to get down one shallow drop and the boat finally hit the pool sideways, caught the current and hit the headwall on the right. You could feel the boat hit and the left tube (the side I was paddling on) getting sucked down. "Highside!" I tried scrambling up to the high side as it was scrambling up the headwall.

Splash, flip. The pool was deep and fairly slow. I could tell I was coming up on the downstream side of the boat but we were off the wall now. We got back to the boat, all laughing, and we started pulling it to shore. Gabriel then informed us this was the lunch spot. As the kayaks arrived everyone was amazed at the flip and laughing. The water was so warm and clear under that boat that there was no panic or need to hurry a breath.

We had lunch on the Jondachi and then it started to rain. Big, warm drops pelting us from above. Gabriel talked about how the rivers can come up so quickly there in the jungle. The Hollin had a reputation for it. We all had heard about the trip the week before we got to Ecuador, on the lower Misahualli, where they had to cancel the trip and hike out through the jungle due to severely high water. So folks put on paddle jackets and we headed out towards the Hollin hoping the levels wouldn't get too high. We passed under jungle suspension bridges that you would swear were only growing vines across the river. These were out of an Indiana Jones story for sure. We continued to push herons downstream in front of us and saw flocks of birds overhead that may have been parrots. The rain continued for about thirty minutes. Side channels coming in were now brown and frothy. We reached the Hollin and her level was just fine but the water turbid and brown. At the confluence on river left there was a huge boulder, maybe the size of Split Rock on the Skykomish. High water flows over this rock. And just downstream of



the confluence is another jungle suspension bridge. It was in rough shape due to being under the last high water event. That was mind boggling.

At this point in the trip we had an IKer who was tired and wanted to ride in the raft. I was doing OK so I took the IK for my own boat. There were definite adjustments that had to be made in the foot brace and seat positions. I had always wanted to paddle a Wing. Here was a good opportunity. I think I had a brief swim at a headwall right off the bat but no big deal. Then I was told that Waffle Maker was coming up. "Waffle Maker?" Dum de dum dum.

When it arrived our guide explained the routes and that if you swim just continue to hold your breath because the ledge at the bottom would push you down, but that it would flush. Silly me, I decided that the best place for me would be right behind the guide in the hardshell. "My but that is a big lateral wave coming off that rock!" Whoosh! Trying to brace to the left when the lateral is coming from the right, over I went. I came up long enough to hear the guide, Tim, yell "Grab my boat." Which I tried to do. But suddenly (everything was sudden in this experience) I went under. I had the paddle in the left hand and was being drug by it down, down down. It was dark. I could hear the rushing of the water. I could feel the







paddle and my hand bouncing off rocks on the bottom. I was holding my breath no problem but starting to wonder about what was really going on here. I decided to let go of the paddle. It was around this time that it got lighter and my head popped up. I grabbed a breath at the same time I felt myself spilling headfirst over a pour over rock. I just got that one breath and back down I went. Again I could hear the rush of the water and it was pretty dark. I don't recall if I hit any rocks this time. I finally put my hands up in case I was going to come up in backwash and someone was going to throw me a rope. When I did surface, I was in the pool below the ledge and in quiet water. Tim was right there for me to grab his boat. "Where were you?" he said. "Petting the anacondas at the bottom of this river." I'm sure that was my reply. Somewhere I had the where-withal to look back upstream to see an IK get caught in the backwash of the ledge drop, turn sideways and flip. At least I wasn't alone in my swim of Waffle Maker. Even if that boat and paddler had successfully run the rapid, a swim is a swim.

I wasn't too out of breath. I got back into the IK and paddled on to our jungle cabins for the night. We were treated to a very elegant dinner of creamed chicken in crepes. I have to say that overall the food on the entire trip was just amazing thanks to our outfitter. But that night I got to relive my swim over and over and over again. As I listened to the sounds of the jungle, crickets, frogs, cicadas, whatever, I just kept going over

what could have happened on the swim, headfirst with a paddle in my hand. I found myself unable to sleep, jaw clenched tight, a rapid heart beat, and quickened breathing. So, I thought about the new puppy that I knew I would be getting upon my return home. I would hold that little pup and stroke its little head and finally drifted off to sleep. The puppy is not the gist of the story, but I did get her a week after my return and her name is Hollin.

The next day we had a quick paddle out and took the rest of the day to do laundry. Well, we went to the zoo and did some amateur spelunking. And out to a great dinner in Tena. Now back to paddling.

Our next river was the Anzu. Tim took us to a section that he and his brother have just opened for commercial use. All of this depends on the access through local villages etc. We scouted the first rapid from the bank above the put in. This was more of an open river but again full of rounded boulders with narrow chutes and pour overs. On this rapid there was a gnarly pour over into a fast moving pool with the desired exit line to the right of the big rock in that pool. The put-in was rather shallow so I ended up the second IK behind the lead guide. When I came over the pour over into that pool, I have no idea what happened, but once again I was out of my boat and holding onto Tim's bow. Then I get whacked in the back of my head by an IK and I see the big rock to my right and realize that everyone behind



me is going to hit me as well. So I looked over and grabbed the trailing tether line of the passing IK and pull myself into the current and to the right of the rock. Tim caught up with me and moved me out of the current until my boat could catch up with us. He grabbed my paddle and clasped his and my paddle together to move us around. One thing that I found difficult was knowing what to do with my paddle when getting onto the back of the rescue kayak. I suppose the best thing would be not to swim in the first place. But even my swims on the Missahuali, I had a hard time figuring out how to hang onto my paddle, keep it out of their way and still hold on to the kayak.

I was frustrated at this point because I really had no idea why I had just swum. What was the skill I missed. Was this going to be the omen for my day? Ugh. Well, we ended up running bigger stuff and I even headed into sort of the same type of lateral wave off of a big rock like Waffle Maker. I went into it, leaned into the rock and actually put my right hand out. My left leg was swung out over the left tube. I wasn't sure if I needed to high side, brace, or just bail. I sat there momentarily, and then got swept down and around the rock, but stayed in my boat. Holy Toledo! (or words to that effect) I made it. There were a couple of other drops that the only way through was through the swirling mess of a pour over and I made it. The rest of the day was a success for me staying in the boat. This made

for a total of seven swims on the entire trip, a couple of bruises on my knees and forearm, and a name for a new puppy.

Our final river was the Jatunyacu. A big, mostly wide river with powerful hydraulics. Most of the hydraulics you can read and stay out of. Which of course I did. Others in the groups took the challenge and surfed and boofed these big monsters. I enjoyed the scenery and watching the group really whoop it up. The Jatunacu joins the Anzu and become the Napo River. The Napo is one of the major tributaries to the Amazon River. To think the water we were paddling would end up in the Amazon, the largest river in the world. I love rivers. These rivers of Ecuador are friendly and warm. I took a major swim and only suffered mentally from it. The guide company, River People, made us their priority and their family while we were there. I have become even closer friends with the other six people that went with me. If I had not made the decision to just "Embrace the Swim", I would have either cancelled my participation or become so anxious that I would have been no fun. I mean, swimming is a big deal, you want to stay in your boat. But it is a risk that we consciously take and need to face up to. Of course now I had to weigh those risks with my new puppy responsibilities. See you all on the river hopefully sometime soon.

--Rebecca Post



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on their drysuits and accessories. If you are in the Portland area and are a WRRR member, Andy & Bax will honor this discount as well. You will need a WRRR membership number to order. Contact the Membership Chair to get your membership number.

DAY/DATE	RIVER/DESCRIPTION	CLASS	CONTACT
Mar	ROWER'S PROGRESSION	IV	WRRR Board
Apr 2nd	Shang-ri-la Cleanup	II	WRRR Board
Apr 17th	FLIP PRACTICE Vasa Park	III	WRRR Board
Apr 30th	GREEN RIVER CLEANUP	IV	WRRR Board
Jun 2nd - 5th	BOB JOHNSON MEMORIAL WENATCHEE RENDEZVOUS	III	WRRR Board
Jun 25th	SAUK SUMMER OVERNIGHTER	III+	WRRR Board
July 16th - 17th	WHITE SALMON RETREAT	III+	WRRR Board
Aug 11th - 14th	CAREY BERGER MEMORIAL SKAGIT POKER RUN	II+	WRRR Board
Sep 17th - 18th	TIETON RALLY	III	WRRR Board

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