COMMON HAZARDS

Floods and Swift Rivers

Cold Water Immersion and Hypothermia

Strainers

Lowhead Dams

SAFETY TIPS

- Boat with a buddy - someone who has experience to mitigate risks.
- Wear a lifejacket at all times, particularly in swift water and when you are paddling alone. Remember to contact the local authorities.
- If you are swimming to shore or calm water before standing, make sure you know the “rules of the road” regarding boat traffic.
- If paddling at night, a white light must be used. Must be bright enough to see one’s body under water.
- Do not attempt to stand or walk in swift-moving water. Feet can become entangled in swift water.
- Keep the weight in the boat low and centered to maintain stability.
- Wear a lifejacket at all times, particularly in swift water and when you are paddling alone.
- Wear a life jacket of an appropriate size.
- Be aware of motorized boats - when you see a boat with a motor, do not boat on it!
- Be aware of strainers. Close to shore unless crossing, wear bright colors for visibility, stop/paddle your boat in the water to avoid collision.
- Keep at least five feet of buffer space between your boat and any other boats.
- Avoid able-bodied boaters, they are usually boating faster than you.
- Keep your life jacket securely fastened to help keep your head above water and prolong survival time if you fall overboard.
- Know where you are along the trail at all times.
- Wear a life jacket of an appropriate size.
- Do not reenter your boat until you have time to prepare for the worst-case scenario.
- Sit upwind of the capsized boat, hold onto your boat unless it presents a life-threatening situation. Position yourself on the upstream side of the capsized boat, floating or on your back, hold your oars up as high as possible in line with your body. Always keep feet up and padded downwreath so you can see to care for or be cared for.
- Carry plenty of drinking water.
- In case of emergency call 911. Know where you are on the trail in case you need to request emergency assistance.

OUTDOOR ETHIC

Respect the privacy and rights of landowners. Access sites shown in this guide are public property, all other lands should be considered private property.

Floods and Swift Rivers

- Avoid areas of swift flowing water. Water levels and flood risk are not always visible.
- Never boat on flooded rivers. High water increases risk and severity of all hazards.

Water temperature never exceeds 80 degrees Fahrenheit. Water levels and flood risk are not always visible.

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COOL WATER IMMERSION AND HYPOThERMIA

- The Portage River Water Trail provides opportunities to explore the Portage River between Oak Harbor and Port Clinton. Enjoy paddling through the peaceful wetlands and wonderful wildlife that make northern Ohio unique. The Portage River provides a place to live, work, and play. The pictures are just a glimpse of the beauty that can be found here. The Portage River provides many opportunities to experience nature, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. The Portage River provides many opportunities to experience nature, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. The Portage River provides many opportunities to experience nature, relax, and enjoy the outdoors.

- The Portage River flows over 160 miles of rugged terrain through the Portage and Sandusky Rivers into Lake Erie. The Portage River is a premier place to live, work, and play. The Portage River provides many opportunities to experience nature, relax, and enjoy the outdoors. The Portage River provides many opportunities to experience nature, relax, and enjoy the outdoors.