



PADDLE TREK

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: How far is the trip?

A: The whole trip is about 15 miles, but there are options to do one or more sections. (See below)

Q: Do I have to paddle the whole thing?

A: No. The trip is split into four parts. You may do as many or as few as you like. You may start the trip at the Minnehonk boat launch (Mt. Vernon), the Echo Lake boat launch (West Mt. Vernon, near the Chimney), Lovejoy Pond (behind Fayette Country Store), and the North Wayne dam. You may end the trip at the Echo Lake boat launch (West Mt. Vernon, near the Chimney), Lovejoy Pond (behind Fayette Country Store), the North Wayne dam, or Wayne Village.

Q: How long will it take?

A: The whole trip takes about seven hours, including breaks. Please see the schedule in the "Trip Details" for more information.

Q: What are typical paddling conditions?

A: We will be paddling a variety of lakes and streams. Conditions vary depending on water levels and wind. The calmest paddling tends to be on Minnehonk Lake, Hopkins Stream, Lovejoy Pond and Pickerel Pond. The stronger winds and larger waves are usually on Echo Lake and Pocasset Lake. If water levels are high enough, we are able to avoid two of the portages and paddle the streams at the outlets of Minnehonk Lake and Echo Lake, which both have swifter current and a few riffles and rocks.

Q: What is a portage? How many are there?

A: Portage means that you must pick up your canoe or kayak and carry it from one body of water to another because of a dam or other impasse. Portages are up to 300 yards long and are difficult for some people. If you need help, there will be volunteers available to assist you. A kayak/canoe dolly cart may be helpful if you have one; most portages are on even ground. Depending on water levels in the streams, there are 4-6 portages in the trip.

Q: Do I need to provide my own boat?

A: Yes, although there are a few places locally that rent them. Belgrade Canoe and Kayak (495-2005), Webb and Sons (441-4537) and Belgrade Boat Rental (495-3421).

Q: What kind of boat do I need?

A: Past participants have used kayaks or canoes, although standup paddle boards are certainly welcome. We've had boats in a variety of shapes and sizes on past trips. The ideal boat is one that tracks well on open water but is also maneuverable in streams. Because of the portages, very heavy or very long boats can be more challenging. Shorter, sit-on-top kayaks do not work as well on the larger lakes.

Q: What pace do people go?

A: There is always a wide variety of abilities, from first-timers to experts. This event is not a race, and most people take a relaxed pace. The group will get spread out, but we are careful that no one gets left behind.

Q: How do I get back to my car at the end of the day?

A: We have return shuttles and trailers to take you and your boat back to your starting point.

Q: Will there be bathrooms along the way?

There are porta-potties or outhouses at Minnehonk boat launch, Echo Lake boat launch, North Wayne dam and Wayne village.

Q: Will you cancel the trip if it rains?

A: We will only cancel the trip in the event of heavy rain or thunderstorms. If we do need to cancel, we will email all participants, post on Facebook, and leave a message on our voicemail, 860-4043.

Q: Do I need to register ahead of time?

A: We strongly prefer for you to register in advance. That helps us plan for shuttles. We do allow same-day registrations, but you may need to wait for a later shuttle.

Q: How many people go on the trip?

In past years, 50-65 people have paddled, though not everyone does the whole route. The group gets fairly spread out, so it doesn't feel crowded.