



# FLOWlines



Finger Lakes-Ontario Watershed Paddlers' Club Newsletter  
Rochester NY

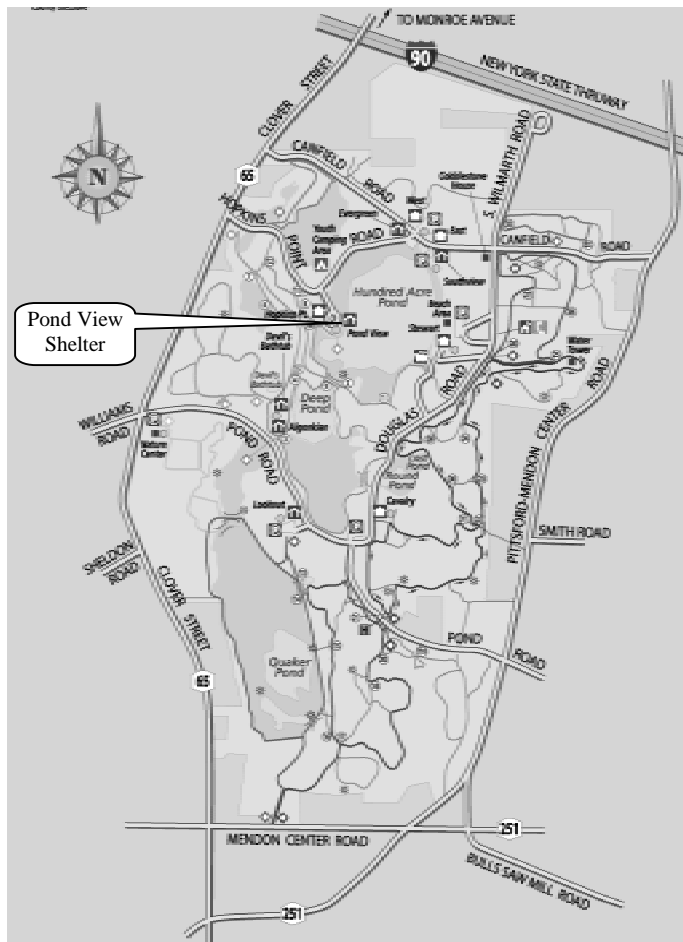
Volume 8, Issue 6

June 2003

## June General Meeting

Date: Thursday, June 12  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Pond View Shelter, Mendon Ponds

The June General Meeting will be held at Pondview Shelter in Mendon Ponds on Thursday June 12th at 7 PM. This will be an "on the water" meeting featuring a Greenland Paddle Demo by Harry Weidman and a Roll Clinic hosted by Joel Chastek. Both open water and whitewater members are encouraged to attend. Rumor has it that hot dogs and Italian sausages will be grilled and served by part time chef and club president Don Shaw. Bring your own Roloids!



## June Steering Committee Meeting

Date: Tuesday, June 3  
Time: 7:00 pm  
Place: Pittsford Barnes & Noble Cafe  
3349 Monroe Avenue

Steering committee meetings are open to all members. Feel free to just show up - your input is welcome. If you are not available but have an idea, send email to [info@flowpaddlers.org](mailto:info@flowpaddlers.org).

### Agenda

- June 12th General Meeting:
  - Joel - roll clinic
  - Harry - Greenland Paddle demo
  - Don - grill hot dogs and sausages
  - Logistics - food, beverages, grill, charcoal or gas, utensils, plates, condiments, etc
- Impact of Slamon release schedule shift:
  - Whitewater trip schedule
  - FLOW picnic & Salmon Fest
- Close books on Wheatland - Chili pool practice
- Membership (renewal and new) status
- Treasurer status
- Plan for budget review / update
- FLOWlines Assistant Editor
- Cattaraugus Access

## Trip to the Kipawa Festival

June 19-22

The Kipawa is a big pushy river (6,000 - 9,000 cfs) with big waves and holes and some opportunities for truly epic swims. It is not a place for beginners or intermediates, but a terrific river for all who are comfortable with class IV. A full river description is available at <http://kipawariver.ca/>

The Kipawa is a 7 hour ride from Rochester and the plan is to leave Rochester on Thursday June 19th, stay at a motel somewhere short of the put-in on Thursday night, and then camp at the put-in thereafter. The festival releases are set for 4 days, Friday through Monday. We plan to paddle on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, the 20th through 22nd, returning on Sunday the 22nd.

A caution to those who haven't been here before. This is both prime black fly terrain and prime season for them. Be prepared with long sleeved and legged clothing, bug spray, cigars, etc.

If you want to go, please contact Vaughn Skinner at [vaughnsally@yahoo.com](mailto:vaughnsally@yahoo.com).





## 2003 Salmon Release Dates Change

And other Salmon River Related News

Submitted by Jerry Hargrave

On Tuesday, May 13, 2003, the annual meeting of the SRFMAT (Salmon River Flow Management Advisory Team) was held at the DEC hatchery in Pulaski, NY.

The Team has the power to change any flow regimes or release dates by petitioning FERC. However votes must be 100% unanimous. Unfortunately, the releases proposed last year by DEC, and assumed by all to be set in stone, were not verified or approved. Bill Kuipers representing AW (substituting for Peter Skinner) and Jerry Hargrave representing ADK (Adirondak Mountain Club) both voted to keep the earlier proposed dates for the benefit of all paddlers, but to no avail. Only two of the twelve member team voted **not** to use the pre-announced dates. These two individuals dictated and demanded that the dates must be exactly as specified in the Hydropower license issued by FERC (Federal Energy Regulatory Commission). No matter how painful this is, we must respect those votes.

Here are some of the effects of the change:

- Oswego County 2003 tourism brochures are already printed with the old proposed dates. They have already been distributed and are already on tourist stop shelves.
- There will be no release during the Pulaski (Ringold) fireman's carnival. So much for getting a GREAT chicken dinner after paddling.
- The rafting industry will suffer as those weekend trips are already booked and must be rebooked.
- Paddling clubs, paddling classes, and many independent paddlers who have scheduled whitewater weekends must now change dates and juggle their schedules and plans.

**All of these will result in a loss of revenue and local tourism dollars.**

The confirmed dates for the 2003 Salmon River releases are: 6/21-22; 7/5-6; 7/19-20; 8/2-3; 8/30-31. We also approved the 2004 release dates, so we don't have to go through this again. They are 6/26-27; 7/10-11; 7/24-25; 8/7-8; 9/4-5.

Whatever flow regimes are adopted in future years, I promise they will not effect the recently approved 2004 dates. (Unanimous vote required.)

For three of the last four years the Labor Day releases have been curtailed or canceled – the predicted water coming into the watershed (based on a 25 year average) just isn't occurring. A subcommittee, which includes ADK/AW, DEC, Fish and wildlife, and Reliant/Orion power, will look at all options to make up for this shortfall:

- Changing min fall flows from 335 to 185 CFS
- Reducing water lost by generous ramping regimes
- Moving the low water reservoir action trigger
- Moving release dates before the water is all used up. (Beaver and Moose release on that day too.)

The Salmon River is the only major stream feeding Lake Ontario without a real time gauge. Even South Sandy and the Genesee River have real time gauges. Last Year Reliant Energy agreed to investigate installing a gauge. They presently meet their license obligations by funding Waterline. The cost to Reliant Energy formerly Orion Power is about \$8,000 per year.

There is a new activity presently in progress to add a real-time gauge at Pineville. This is expected to be completed in approximately 2 months. The advantage of the gage is that it gives accurate current information. The advantage of Waterline is that it predicts the FLOW for a specific duration. Reliant is considering whether to continue one or both services. Kudos to Reliant who took the task to get this done.

To give comments, assign blame, and yes even offer encouragement, you may reach me at K1C1C2@aol.com.

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### Pittsford Regatta

June 14-15 on the Erie Canal

The 2003 Pittsford Regatta will be held on June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> on the Erie Canal in Pittsford, New York. This will be Pittsford's 6<sup>th</sup> annual June regatta. The regatta is open to all high school age crews. Events will include boys and girls; 1V (varsity) , 2V (varsity), Novice; 4's and 8's. Format will be 2 crew elimination races, Royal Henley style, over 2 days leading to championships in each event.

For a more information, please visit [www.pittsfordcrew.org](http://www.pittsfordcrew.org).

## Access to the South Branch of the Cattaraugus River

by Don Cochran

Finally!!! A step in the right direction. Many years ago when I was first introduced to this magical canyon (by New York State standards), we used an access point on Skinner Hollow Rd., which brings you right to the first of many good surfing waves. My first trip to the South Branch was a very impressive one that is hard to wipe from my memory.

We had a somewhat typical February thaw where the temps reached the 70's and we had two-three feet of snow. Buffalo's Sunday newspaper showed headlines and photos of FLOODING !!! Oh my... When we pulled into Gowanda to scout the last major rapid on the main branch (called Tannery), the gage for the main branch was 7.5 ft. Tannery's main wave was like a Black Hole sucking the whole river from bank to bank into its massive hydraulic. It was time to scout for a take out upstream of this.

Some of the other paddlers had run this branch before and knew that there would be two drops of 4-6 ft., and a 20 ft. falls. But no one was exactly sure where the falls would be, or had enough experience with water levels for this branch and THE

20 ft. FALLS.

What an awesome canyon. In some sections the canyon walls soar 400 ft. almost straight up, and in some places the river is only 15 yards wide. A New York version of paradise, there are trickle waterfalls spilling over the canyon walls, with many making 100 ft. freefalls. Plenty of surfing spots like you would expect if you have been to Fish Creek or South Sandy, but the pools aren't as deep because of the shale rock.

So there I was.... in my boat, pulling out at every bend in the river to send someone around the corner to scout for the FALLS. Ralph was scouting another bend in the canyon by foot and came back with a confirmed report. Jerry H., who was sitting next to me, said, "I would have bet anything this was not the spot."

From 100 yards up stream we could see water spitting up from the horizon of THE FALLS. The stair-like portage on river right was swallowed up to the canyon wall. There was a micro eddy across the way on the river left, big enough for one boat and



Don Cochran running the falls on South Branch of the Cattaraugus

just six feet above the deadly upstream notch of the falls. "Let's send one boater at a time to that eddy and..." And if anyone misses the eddy?????????

I immediately started looking at the wooded slope of the right side canyon wall to climb out. We found a trickle falls to climb up along, UP about 200 ft. We used our throw ropes and biners to connect our six boats in a chain, to haul up after ascending the canyon wall. We portaged around the FALLS deathtrap... and back down to the river. In some snowy slopes we let our boats go to ping pong down off the trees. As we continued downriver, the canyon opened a little wider and surfing opportunities were everywhere.

I have to say I walked out that day after getting rattled by a whirlpool eddy with a big strainer at the exit. I had had enough. Everyone else continued down to the main branch of the Cattaraugus without event and caught some huge surfing after the confluence. But everyone pulled out before the Black Hole at the Tannery rapid.

I have been back many times since my first trip. It can be hard to find enough water to make this trip. The min. level is 3.5 ft. and the falls are runnable at many levels below 6.5 ft. with scouting. The first drop I mentioned is about 4 ft. and very close to the beginning of the whitewater. The second drop is just around the corner below the falls. It has a narrow slot on river right with a flat shelf that extends on river left. Be cautious about the slot as there are pot-holes that you can get stuck in at some levels. In the summer, local teens hike upriver to the slot drop and falls to party. The local emergency response crews have gone in there several times to rescue people with broken bones and at least one death of someone who got stuffed in one of the pot holes on the slot drop.

For the past 10 years or so, the owner of the land adjacent to the access road/trail on Skinner Hollow Rd. has stopped paddlers from using this put-in for liability reasons. Instead we put in 5 miles upstream at the next road crossing in Otto, NY., and float down class I flat water to reach the whitewater.

Several years ago the Zoar club in Buffalo worked out an insurance arrangement with the landowner. The FLOW club now has an insurance rider through our ACA insurance that covers our club on a year-by-year basis. You should show the land owner (Chuck Evans) your ACA membership cards when arriving to access the river through the old road/trail. For now we have supplied him with a FLOW member list. Without an ACA card you can just tell him you are on the FLOW club list. Just so you are not totally surprised, the road is longer than the hike in at Letchworth. Maybe someday we will have a more permanent arrangement.

Here are the stats on the South Branch - 5 miles to the confluence with the main branch in Zoar Valley, then 4 miles to Gowanda. With an average gradient of 40 ft per mile the South Branch is Class III at normal levels with a class IV falls and 3 class 3+ ledges. The 3rd ledge is about 3.5 miles from the put in, the falls are 2 miles from the put in, or 6 left turns of the canyon after the first ledges. The first and last ledges are normally boat scutable, but be cautious with the drop after the falls with the slot. At low levels the whole river twists through a 6 ft. wide crack of riverbed with undercuts and pot-holes. Fine for a canoe but not low volume kayaks.

Mike S. and Bill K. and I recently took a Friday trip in May with 3 ft on the gage. It was way too much scraping. The ledges and falls were all runnable but the level was too low for surfing until we reached the main branch. For all our bumping and scraping we were rewarded with seeing three Bald Eagles at the confluence.

## Steering Committee Minutes

April 29, 2003

- Discussion on access to Catt tabled until Don Cochran can attend meeting
- The May General Meeting will be held at Brighton Town Hall, Thursday May 8th at 7PM. Steve Kittelberger will facilitate a discussion on the status of the following whitewater venues: Route 3 Wave, Cruncher and Hudson / Indian Access. Light refreshments will be served.
- The June General Meeting will be held at Mendon Ponds on Thursday June 12th at 7 PM. This will be an "in water" meeting.
- AW check controversy tabled until old FLOW checking account is closed
- Pittsford pool practice revenue package discussion facilitated by Ivan Rezanka. Books closed on Pittsford pool practice. Revenue package discussion on Wheatland - Chili tabled until Mike Shafer can attend. Agreed to review budget impacts of pool practice following Mike's submission of Wheatland - Chili revenue package.
- Agreed to publish trip roles and responsibilities document with changes that help the document apply to both whitewater and open water trips.
- Simon will repost request that members accept electronic distribution of FLOWlines.
- Agreed to entertain changing the date of the Steering Committee meetings so that there is more lead time notice for the general meetings. Don took an action to put together a proposal for a new date.



## Unique Paddle in Letchworth

by Don Cochran (who can usually be found surfing the white stuff)

Don't bother reading any further. Don't bother because you can't handle it and you're probably not up for it anyway...too boring. Unique trip...what's so unique about paddling in Letchworth? Has the water turned purple? No...but how many times do you get to paddle the gorge when it's mostly flat water and wander through the tree tops instead of below them?

On April 12<sup>th</sup>, I managed to coerce Richard Joki to do a flat water paddle with me from Lee's Landing to the Mt. Morris dam, approximately 14 - 15 miles. Because of the Ice Storm and late snows the dam was holding back enough water to flood the gorge as far back as the Archery Field overlook at Great Bend. That only leaves about 1.5 miles of class II whitewater to paddle before the lake.

The river was running around 11.5 ft. that day but was over 16 ft. a week before. We were set to cruise with our Chinook sea kayaks and ready for a unexpected flip just in case. Just to be extra cautious we put in at Red Ball, which is after the first rapid. After running a gauntlet of jeers and cajoles about our ocean liners from the micro boat Surf Clinic jockeys, we slithered in from the beach around 11 AM. I would start earlier next time.

What an awesome day - without a cloud and about ten degrees warmer than what was forecasted. After Rich and I reached Great Bend and the flat water, we stripped down from dry tops to much more comfortable poly pro shirts. We were able to paddle up to the base of the falls at Wolf Creek, then through the trees from an island next to the Diagonal ledge. At the St. Helena take out road we pulled over to talk to a couple of the raft operators, mind you a quarter way up the hill, get out and stretch our legs and store away a basketball I found stuck in a tree. We were not at the mercy of the winding river any more. Waterfalls and trickles were everywhere waiting to be explored.

Since we were not in any big hurry we zig-zagged all over the canyon every time we saw another waterfall we wanted to explore. Near one falls a short distance from St. Helena, we heard a beaver slap and go under within 20 ft. of Rich's boat. Sometimes we would explore a side canyon that would go back more than 100 yards from the normal valley walls. These were side canyons that could only be explored by foot during most of the year - if you knew where they were.

I have had the opportunity to paddle all the way to the dam a couple times before; this trip was a first for Rich. Previous trips, years ago, were at a time when the river was at its normal level behind the dam. The summer conservation pool level is 600 ft. above sea level and the take-out poses an interesting challenge - to get out on terra firma, or terra

squishy, depending on how long it has been dry there. But, you have a nice class I current on the way to the take out.

It can be a nice river trip for boaters not interested in whitewater or wishing for a change of venue. And what a nice change it is. I remember the first time paddling it with my wife and two other friends in Chinooks, we had the feeling like we were in a much wilder place than New York. Maybe even the Yukon or Alaska, because there were no signs of humans for hours.

This trip was different because the level behind the dam was 705 feet. I was most excited about having 100 feet less to climb at the take-out. However, the current wasn't exactly in our favor. From St. Helena to the dam we had a head wind - ten miles of headwind and sometimes white caps! This kept us searching for shelter in the tree-tops everywhere we could find them, or hugging a canyon wall to escape the winds.

Two more times we came upon large beavers. One we watched for several minutes from a ridge where we got out for a stretch. After dawdling around exploring all the waterfalls we decided we still had to make some distance and be out before sunset, so we put our heads down into the wind and put our backs into the paddles for long stretches. The canyon is such a maze for so many miles that it is hard to tell exactly where you are until the last few miles near some overlooks near the North pool.

Just before taking out, two more beavers decided to check us out. First they swam along shore and then cruised out to get between us. One was making a heading for my boat until he was about 15 ft. away, when he apparently said "woah," and popped under.

Now comes the killer part... the road... or as some call it the Burma Road. I just call it 45 degrees, 300 feet of hell. It helps if you bring a pair of wheels for each boat. In our case we took turns with one set of wheels and made a separate trip for each boat.

As it says on the Canoe Permit from the State Park office, you must call the Visitors Center at the Mt. Morris Dam in advance of your trip. Actually, we were told that in the future they would like to be called several days in advance of a trip, and call Mon. - Fri. only. They used to have the water level behind the dam posted on a web site for info, but since 2001 it has been omitted for security reasons.

Now, I don't know why you bothered to read this far because you'll never go there. Good... that means that I'll have fewer people to destroy my peace and quiet sanctuary just an hour from my home. Especially those cartwheeling, wave carving, toeless, waterlogged - brain damaged maniac weenie boaters out there.

## 2002 Open Water Trip Schedule

Trip Leaders Wanted. Contact Jim Hopkins and fill in the blanks!  
607-281-2337 work 607-330-5649 evenings hoppyski@yahoo.com

Day	2003 Date	Time	Where	Trip Coordinator	Contact
Th	6/5	6:15 PM	Canadice	Rich Joki	jokird@ficc.edu
Th	6/12	6:15 PM	Mendon Ponds	Harry Weidman	seayaker@seayaker.com
Sat	6/14		Full Moon Paddle, Hemlock	Sheila Wagoner	Sheila.wagoner@kodak.com
Th	6/19	6:15 PM	Erie Canal west from Lock 32	Jim Hopkins	607-281-2337
Th	6/26	6:15 PM	Genesee Valley Park	Scott Hardies	scottth@bikerider.com
Th	7/3				
Th	7/10	6:15 PM	Roll Clinic Mendon Ponds Boat Launch	Jim Hopkins	607-281-2337
W-Sun	7/16-7/20		St. Regis Canoe Wilderness	Steve Kittelberger	Stevekit@frontiernet.net
Th	7/17	6:15 PM	Genesee River	Mike Marini	Marini@fronteirnet.net
Th	7/24	6:15 PM	Webster Park	Harry Weidman	seayaker@seayaker.com
Th	7/31	6:15 PM	Erie Canal, Ayrault Rd	Scott Hardies	scottth@bikerider.com
Sat/ Sun	8/2-8/3		August Picnic	Norm Roof	Nroof1@rochester.rr.com
Th	8/7	6:15 PM			
Th	8/14	6:15 PM	Erie Canal, Wildwaters Lock 32	Jim Hopkins	607-281-2337
Th	8/21				
TBA			Chimney Bluffs	Tricia Schank	triciaschank@hotmail.com

## 2003 FLOW Whitewater Trip Schedule

Whitewater paddling, like all adventure sports, entails an element of risk. FLOW members assume this risk, and share the risk and responsibility for assisting others in need, as a condition of joining any of the listed trips below. Each participant must sign a release to this effect before putting onto the water. **We can not take non ACA/FLOW members on the trips.** To add trips, or change existing trip listings, call Ivan Rezanka, 381-7475.

Date	Level	Trip Description	Coordinator	Phone
June 7	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Jerry Koehler	315-986-4526
June 7-8	Beginner	Lehigh River, PA; with camping in nearby state park.	Steve Kittelberger	585-442-6138
June 14	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Richard Mauser	585-473-2162
<b>June 21</b>	Intermediate	Salmon River, Pulaski, NY. A scheduled 400 cfs release. Class III	Jerry Koehler	315-986-4526
June 20-22	Advanced	Kipawa River Festival in Quebec. Class III-IV	Vaughn Skinner	315-683-5379
<b>June 29</b>	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Don Shaw	585-223-5077
July 4 - 6	Intermediate/ Advanced	Ottawa River, Beachburg, Ontario. The annual gathering of FLOW paddlers to celebrate July 4 and Canada day. Class III - IV	Paul Houndt	585-342-3055
<b>July 5 or 6</b>	Intermediate	Salmon River, Pulaski, NY. A scheduled 750 cfs release. Class III	TBD - Check Message Board	
July 10	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
July 17	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
<b>July 19</b>	Intermediate	Salmon River, Pulaski, NY. A scheduled 750 cfs release. Class III	Don Shaw	585-223-5077
July 20	Advanced	Black River, Watertown and gorge. Class IV	Paul Houndt	585-342-3055
July 24	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
July 26-27	Int / Adv	Deerfield River, MA Dryway section Class III - IV	Steve Kittelberger	585-442-6138
<b>July 26</b>	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Cathy Rague	315-926-7890
July 31	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
<b>August 2</b>	Intermediate	Salmon River, Pulaski, NY. A scheduled 750 cfs release. FLOW picnic Saturday Evening. Class III	Richard Mauser	585-473-2162
August 2-3	Advanced	Gatineau River, Maniwaki, Quebec on Friday and Saturday. Class IV	Vaughn Skinner	315-683-5379
August 7	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
August 14	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
August 16-17	Advanced	Ottawa River, Beachburg, Ontario. Class III - IV	Steve Benedict	315-331-5198
August 21	Intermediate	3-Wave or other feature on Black River. Class III	Mike Shafer	585-227-9291
August 23	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Cathy Rague	315-926-7890
August 30	Intermediate	Salmon River, Pulaski, NY. A scheduled 750 cfs release. Class III	Bill Kuipers	585-322-7742
August 30	Advanced	Beaver River, Taylorville section. Class IV	Ben Bramlage	518-792-3277
Sept. 20	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Don Shaw	585-223-5077
Sept. 20	Intermediate	West River, Vermont, Class III+	Ben Bramlage	518-792-3277
Sept. 27	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Don Shaw	585-223-5077
Oct. 25	Beginner	Genesee River in Letchworth. Class II	Don Shaw	585-223-5077
Nov. 1-2	Intermediate	Tohickon Creek, PA Class III to III+. Camp nearby.	Steve Kittelberger	585-442-6138

**Bold date indicates a trip date change due to the changes in the Salmon River Release schedule change.**

## Classified Ads

*To have your boat or equipment listed, send email to [newsletter@flowpaddlers.org](mailto:newsletter@flowpaddlers.org).  
Items will be removed after 6 months. Feel free to re-list items that have not sold.*

Liquidlogic Session+ used but not abused...ie great condition. Blue. \$500or swap. (wavesport Ace 5.1)?? The right Creek Boat?? Call Steve 315-331-5198 or email [whimsy@rochester.rr.com](mailto:whimsy@rochester.rr.com).

For Sale: Pat Moore Reverie II canoe. Pedestal seat, beautiful wood trim, light gray color. 13 ft., 30 lbs, fiberglass. Here's a chance to own a classic. For the freestyle enthusiast. This canoe is in mint condition. Asking \$1200. Contact Donn at (585)242-0846 or [dwells8014@AOL.com](mailto:dwells8014@AOL.com).

Prozone 225 - like new - floated fewer than 10 times, with foot bumps, full outfitting, yellow, \$450 OBO. Contact Ben Bramlage, [barkeater1@adelphia.net](mailto:barkeater1@adelphia.net), (518) 792-3277. Located in Lake George.

For sale: Wavesport Siren, the kayak designed specifically for women. Yellow, 1 year old, like new condition. Paddled primarily in pool classes and a few times at the Lock 32 whitewater course in instructional classes. Asking \$550. Dagger Animas, blue/purple swirl, very good condition. Great river-running boat for novice paddlers. Bulkhead foot rests, asking \$350. Contact Ardie or Gary Shaffer 334-4487 or email [ardie@rochester.rr.com](mailto:ardie@rochester.rr.com)

Used Canoes for Sale. Discovery 158's. Red with roto-molded seats. Good condition. \$225.00 each. Call Adventure Calls Outfitters (585)-343-4710.

Sea Kayaks- 2 Wilderness System Sealutions- 16.5 ft., 22" beam, Expedition equipped, \$550 & \$600. Harry at (315) 524-9295 or [seayaker@seayaker.com](mailto:seayaker@seayaker.com).



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