



The LowCountry Paddler's Club Trip Planning Committee Trip Rating Guidelines



Each official LCP Club-sponsored paddling trip will be evaluated by the Trip Planning Committee as to its difficulty and will be given a ranking that is published along with the trip information on the LCP Club's website. **These are guidelines only**, they are simply ways in which the LCP Club can equip its members with the knowledge about the conditions that they may experience during an LCP Club trip. They are in no way to be construed as hard and fast rules and are subject to interpretation by the Trip Leader in charge of any given trip. Additional LCP Club documentation about Trip Leader Guidelines, Participant Responsibilities, Recommended Equipment and Skills Self-Assessment may be found on the LCP Club website or obtained from any LCP Club Officer.

Each trip will be evaluated according to, but not limited to, the following:

- ☒ Minimum Required Skill Level
 - L1, L2, L3, L4
- ☒ Body(ies) of Water
 - Sheltered, Semi-Sheltered, Semi-Open, Open
- ☒ Total Trip Distance in Miles
 - <8, 9 – 15, >15
- ☒ Expected Pace
 - Leisurely, Moderate, Fast

Based upon the criteria above, each trip will be designated with a Skill Level that may be broken down into the following categories:

- ☒ Level 1
 - Someone who may be new to paddle-sports, paddles infrequently and/or wants to simply participate in the trip for leisurely pleasure in sheltered waters. A Level 1 paddler would be comfortable on trips in sheltered, calm waters at a leisurely pace of distances typically under 8 - 10 total miles.
- ☒ Level 2
 - Someone who has paddled before and has either had, or is working on, formal or informal instruction. The Level 2 paddler can comfortably and confidently handle total trip distances up to 10 – 12 miles at a leisurely to moderate pace in Sheltered, Semi-Sheltered or Semi-Open waters and has a reliable rescue in the event of capsizing.
- ☒ Level 3
 - Someone who paddles as a habit and has had training in paddling techniques and rescues. The Level 3 paddler is comfortable with trip distances in excess of 12 – 15 miles at a consistent moderate pace and has a reliable self-recovery technique as well as training in assisting others in rescue situations in Sheltered to Semi-Open water with winds up to 15 knots and waves or swell less than 2 feet.
- ☒ Level 4
 - Someone who has had a significant amount of training and can paddle comfortably at a moderate to fast pace and exhibits reliable and consistent control of their paddle-craft in most conditions. The Level 4 paddler is proficient in self-rescue, preferably using a reliable roll, (craft-dependent), and is comfortable in Open water conditions with waves, surf, strong currents, winds in excess of 15 knots and trip distances well over 15 miles.