



1. This is being provided to each unit so it can give a safety briefing to their Scouts and guests prior to the River Trails District/Ozark Trails Canoe Trip.
2. Units will start the trip together under the unit leadership. Each unit is responsible for the safety of their scouts and guests. Unit leadership is responsible for enforcing BSA Safety Afloat guidelines.
3. Qualified Supervision
All activity afloat must be supervised by a mature and conscientious adult age 21 or older who understands and knowingly accepts responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of those in his or her care and who is trained in and committed to compliance BSA Safety Afloat. That supervisor must be skilled in the safe operation of canoeing, knowledgeable in accident prevention, and prepared for emergency situations. There is no advance medical assistance on the river, therefore units must provide first aid. Cell service is spotty at best so the first time and place we can get medical service is at the end of the float at Ackers Ferry.
4. Any swimming done must be in accordance with scouting's safety afloat and be supervised in accordance with BSA Safe Swim Defense standards.
5. Personal Health Review
A health history is required of all participants. Participants should be asked to relate any recent incidents of illness or injury just prior to the activity. Supervision and protection should be adjusted to anticipate any potential risks associated with individual health conditions.
6. Swimming Ability
Operation of the canoe trip is limited to youth and adults who have completed the BSA swimmer classification test. ANYONE not classified as a swimmer is to be considered a non-swimmer. A non-swimmer may paddle or ride in a canoe with an adult swimmer skilled in that craft as a buddy.
7. Life Jackets
Properly fitted U.S. Coast Guard–approved life jackets must be worn by all persons engaged on the canoe trip, Type III life jackets are provided. Every person on the canoe trip must properly wear the life jacket when they are in a canoe or in the water.
8. Buddy System
All participants are paired as buddies who are always aware of each other's situation and prepared to sound an alarm and lend assistance immediately when needed. Each canoe must have a "buddy boat." All buddy pairs must be accounted for at regular intervals during the activity and checked off the water by unit leader.

9. Skill Proficiency

Everyone on the canoe trip must have sufficient knowledge and skill to participate safely. All participants should know how their movement affects boat stability and have a basic understanding of self-rescue. River Trails District will provide training and/or demonstrate all aspects of safe swimming, canoeing, or rescue skills prior to the canoe trip if requested.

10. Planning

All planning considerations necessary to ensure a safe, enjoyable exercise afloat were completed by River Trails District leadership. This includes a safety check of the river the morning of the canoe trip.

11. Discipline

Rules are effective only when followed. All participants should know, understand, and respect the rules and procedures for safe boating activities provided by Safety Afloat guidelines. Applicable rules should be discussed prior to the outing and reviewed for all participants near the boarding area just before the activity afloat begins. People are more likely to follow directions when they know the reasons for rules and procedures. Consistent, impartially applied rules supported by skill and good judgment provide steppingstones to a safe, enjoyable outing.

Additional notes

- Transportation to the river and back to the camping area is provided.
- Units should be ready to depart at 0900 and 1000
- Units departing on Saturday after the trip may want to pack up prior to the trip.
- Units are responsible for giving the safety briefing to all participants prior to getting into the canoes. If a unit needs assistance on giving a safety briefing, conducting training, or demonstration, please let Mr. Josh Hare (573-578-1503) early on Saturday morning.
- Unit Leaders are fully responsible for discipline on and off the river. Units can have swimming and relaxation stops anywhere on the river. If units elect to have open swimming, all BSA safety guidelines must be enforced to include, inspecting the area for hazards, buddy system, lookouts that are skilled at rescues and BSA swimming requirements, should have a reach rescue device, and enforce the life jack requirement.
- At the end of the float, unit leader must report in to the check in station. Please provide the following information: Unit Number, if unit has 100% accountability and any injuries or safety consideration
- A BBQ is provided at the end of the trip.
- Unit leader will be able to pick up the patches at the check-in point.