

Safety Tips for Having Fun on the Red & Sheyenne Rivers

Boating/Canoeing/Kayaking/Fishing



Water Safety is Your Responsibility!!!

Swimming/Wading

- Swimming in the Red River is not recommended.
- If wading, wear a properly fitted and fastened life jacket.



Fishing

- Stay sober. Never recreate near the river while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Children and adults should always wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD)/life jacket that fits properly and is fastened. Don't assume you have the swimming skills to keep you afloat, even the strongest swimmers can drown.
- Be careful of slippery riverbanks.
- Know where your fishing hooks are flying.

Canoeing, Kayaking and Boating

- Stay sober. Never recreate on the river while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Children and adults should always wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD)/life jacket that fits properly and is fastened. Don't assume you have the swimming skills to keep you afloat, even the strongest swimmers can drown.



- Do not paddle/boat alone.
- Learn about your route in advance, including potential hazards and current water conditions.
- Portage around dams.
- Take a paddling/boating class. Learn the essential canoeing/kayaking strokes to effectively steer the vessel.
- Learn to swim.

(over)

- Avoid situations that are beyond your paddling and swimming ability.
- Have a safety plan.
 - * Carry a spare paddle.
 - * Bring a whistle or sound-signaling device.
 - * If you fall in, point your feet downstream and towards the surface and swim to shore.
 - * Don't go into the water to rescue somebody else, call 9-1-1, then be sure have a life jacket on, throw something to them to help them float or reach out with a pole or branch but keep a firm grip.
 - * Bring a First Aid kit.
 - * Bring a pump and sponge.
 - * Before going on the water, tell someone where you are going and when you will return.
- Be sure your vessel is in good repair.
- Monitor the weather.
- Do not stand up in a canoe or kayak.
- Avoid weight shifts that may cause capsizing.
- Never paddle/boat over a low-head dam, fallen tree or other in-stream obstruction.
- Keep vessels a safe distance apart.
- Dress appropriately.
 - * Wear sunscreen, a hat and sunglasses.
 - * Clothing layers are a great answer to changing temperatures.
- Bring plenty of drinking water.
- Watch for anglers lines in the river.

Riverfront Users

- Stay sober. Never recreate near the river while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Always watch children in and around water. They can quickly enter the water and get in trouble when your attention is diverted for only a moment.
- Be cautious near all water bodies.
- Be cautious around muddy riverbanks slippery rocks.
- Enroll children in swimming lessons.
- Monitor the river and weather conditions.
- Do not fall asleep on the edge of a riverbank.

Dams

Seven of the eight dams on the U.S. portion of the Red River have been retrofitted with a five percent slope rock rapid that has eliminated the undertow and allowed upstream fish migration. Still be cautious and use portages when available.



The Dam at Drayton, ND has not yet been retrofitted with rock rapids and is very dangerous.

All dams are dangerous. Lowhead dams are especially hazardous because they do not appear dangerous. Water falling over the lowhead dam creates a hydraulic roller, or recirculating current. The falling water continuously takes any object to the bottom, brings it to the surface and returns the object to the bottom.

Watercraft should stay at least 300 feet away from the dams. Individuals along the banks of the river should stay at least 10 feet away.



For more information:

River Keepers

1120 28th Ave. N., Ste. B

Fargo, ND 58102

christine@riverkeepers.org

(701) 235-2895

www.riverkeepers.org

<http://www.facebook.com/RiverKeepersFM>