



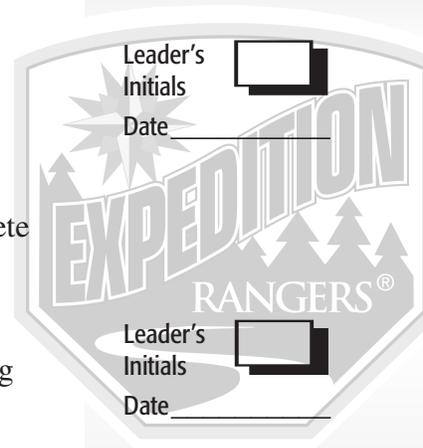
# Whitewater Rafting Merit

**Note:** Prior to beginning this merit, you must complete the Swimming Merit.

Swimming Merit completed

**Note:** If you have earned the Kayaking Merit, you may proceed to and complete Requirements 5 through 8. If you have not earned the Kayaking Merit, complete all of the following requirements.

1. List and explain the points of the American Whitewater Affiliation Boating Safety Code or its equivalent.
2. Explain the levels of the International Scale of River Difficulty and the conditions that define each level.
  - a. Class I Easy
  - b. Class II Novice
  - c. Class III Intermediate
  - d. Class IV Advanced
  - e. Class V Expert
  - f. Class VI Extreme
3. Define the following terms:  
Skills
  - a. Self-rescue
  - b. Portaging
  - c. Pinned  
Reading the river
  - d. Laminar flow
  - e. Helical flow
  - f. Spiral current
  - g. Haystack
  - h. Hydraulics
  - i. Standing wave
  - j. Staircase
  - k. Pillow



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- l. Whirlpool
- m. Boils
- n. Hole
- o. Eddy
- p. Upstream “V”
- q. Downstream “V”
- r. Wave trains
- s. Undercut rock

Equipment

- t. Spray cover or spray skirt
- u. Rescue rope
- v. Rescue or throw bag
- w. Carabiner

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- 4. Describe the following conditions and the reasons to avoid them.
  - a. Strainers
  - b. Hole
  - c. Broaching, pinning
  - d. Rock and headwall rolls
  - e. Whirlpool

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- 5. Demonstrate the following basic strokes and maneuvers in calm water. Then explain how a raft and canoe are similar and how they differ. Describe what you learned about controlling the raft with someone at or not at the stern.

- a. Show control of steering by negotiating a raft through various conditions: moderate rapids, around obstacles, positioning it on different parts of the river as you come out of a turn, going into a preferred part of the rapids, etc. You should be at the stern and have at least two other people in the raft with you.
- b. Switch to another part of the raft and help paddle (without an oar rig). In this instance, have no one at the stern. Demonstrate assistance and teamwork in negotiating the raft through the various conditions listed in “a.”

- 6. Explain each of the following:
  - a. Reasons not to stand in the rapids after falling out of your raft
  - b. Upstream right-of-way
  - c. Universal signals canoeists, kayakers, or inflatable river rafters use to communicate with each other
  - d. Hole etiquette



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7. Do ONE of the following:
- Go to a sporting shop and talk with someone with white-water experience or research selecting a white-water raft and proper paddle. Write a report about what you learned. Describe at least three types of white-water rafts.
  - Try at least three different rafts in a river in calm water and mild rapids. Do not attempt any greater difficulty than you have experience. Write a report including your opinions of the advantages and disadvantages of each type of raft.
8. Complete a white-water raft trip for beginners of at least a one-day travel on the river. Complete the following:
- Plan the trip with the leaders.
  - Review the list of equipment to take. Assist in the inspection of the equipment prior to departing.
  - Obtain a detailed river map of the river you will raft. Determine where the put-in and take-out places are, the length of the trip, and the location of waterfalls, narrows, rapids, etc. List the terrain features or landmarks on the map that indicate the presence of rapids, smooth water, etc.
  - Explain the steps the leaders have taken for safety. Describe the plans for emergency procedures and their understanding of the river's difficulty.
  - Determine the rule for selecting the difficulty level of the river to be rafted.
  - Obtain the current water levels for the river you will raft.
  - Obtain the weather forecast for the day and the area you will raft.
  - Explain any local rules and needed permits for taking a trip on this river.
  - List the steps taken by the leaders on the trip to comply with the American Whitewater Affiliation Safety Code.
  - Discuss this trip with your Expedition Rangers group after your return. Describe what you learned from the trip and what you would do differently on a future trip.

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