

Chapter 2

Roles of Assistant Guides, Guides and Trip Leaders

Skills Expected of an Assistant Guide

Gear Handling

- Know location and proper storage of gear
- Assist with the carrying/transporting a raft
- Knowledge of how to clean equipment
- Ability to check equipment to ensure it is safe to use
- Properly fit PFDs and helmets to participants

Teaching and Group Management

- Greet and welcome groups
- Lead group games and activities
- Communicate clearly and respectfully with all participants, both on and off the water.

Disability Awareness

- General knowledge of and sensitivity to people with disabilities
- Perform transfers
- Ability to help support (emotionally and physically) a participant with a disability while rafting

Rafting Skills

- Ability to follow and execute paddle commands in a paddle raft
- Ability to pull swimmers back into a raft
- Knowledge of how to guide a paddle or oar raft in the event of an emergency
- Knowledge of river signals & river etiquette

Campground & Kitchen Maintenance

- Ability and willingness to help maintain the campground including but not limited to: taking out trash/recycling and cleaning the bathrooms, river house and kitchen
- Ability and willingness to help participants prepare and cook meals
- Ability and willingness to ensure food safety practices are followed and that all kitchen equipment is cleaned and returned to the proper storage area
- Safely build and extinguish campfires

Skills Expected of a Guide

Gear Handling

- Know location and proper storage of gear
- Assist with the carrying/transporting a raft
- Knowledge of how to clean equipment
- Ability to check equipment to ensure it is safe to use
- Properly fit PFDs and helmets to participants
- Knowledge of how to pack and rig a sweep kit (First Aid, Wrap Kit, Repair Kit)
- Know how to properly rig gear into a paddle raft and/or oar raft

Teaching and Group Management

- Greet and welcome groups
- Lead group games and activities
- Conduct a boat orientation talk and paddling instruction (Boat & Paddle Talk)
- Conduct a safety orientation talk (Safety Talk)
- Communicate clearly and respectfully with all participants, both on and off the water.

Disability Awareness

- General knowledge of and sensitivity to people with disabilities
- Perform transfers
- Ability to make adaptations to a raft for a person with a disability

Raft Guide Skills

A detailed list of these skills can be found on the “Guide Evaluation Checklist” included in the Appendix. This is a brief overview of the skills & responsibilities involved in guiding a raft.

- Current certifications for Basic First Aid and CPR on file at the ETC Office
- Sufficient training in Swiftwater Rescue.
- Successful completion of the Guide Check-Out System as outlined in this manual for a paddle raft, oar raft, or both
- Ability to read water and identify obstacles
- Ability to navigate a paddle and/or oar raft downstream while avoiding obstacles
- Ability to get raft off of an obstacle if stuck
- Ability to give clear, understandable paddle commands to participants
- Ability to catch eddies, hold a ferry angle, and slow a raft in current
- Ability to rescue swimmers, use a throw bag, and chase down a swimmer or boat
- Ability to self-rescue
- Ability to right a flipped raft, and to release a wrapped raft
- Knowledge of River Signals and proper river etiquette
- Ability to properly rig a paddle raft and/or oar raft
- Knowledge of the location of the quiet zone, lunch stops/rest stops and emergency egress routes
- Possess a professional/responsible attitude, arrives on time and works until the work is done

Additional Skills Expected of a Trip Leader

Trip Facilitation

- Extensive knowledge of and experience with all aspects of trip logistics
- Extensive knowledge of participant population
- Collaborate with group/agency leaders to facilitate a successful trip
- Maintain trip timeline

Risk Management

- Mitigate and manage hazards appropriately
- Maintains adequate energy and focus levels throughout the trip
- Manage environmental hazards including weather
- Respond appropriately to incidents

Team/Guide Leadership

- Delegate roles appropriately
- Provide basic instruction to Guides
- Ability and openness to solicit input from all Guides in making decisions; but with the willingness to take responsibility for the final decision
- Ability to give constructive feedback when appropriate and praise accomplishments
- Comfort leading a team of Guides to execute a class III raft trip

On-Water Skills

- Intimate knowledge of river hydrology, rapids and emergency access points
- In-depth knowledge of water levels and weather conditions and their implications for executing a successful raft trip
- Extensive whitewater raft guiding experience and comfort guiding a boat while also overseeing the overall trip
- Understand and manage proper pod formation

Off-Water Guide Roles

Meet and Greet: This person should be prepared to welcome the group upon their arrival to camp. The first Guide to meet the group significantly sets the tone for the trip. It is important that this person be friendly, outgoing, responsible and organized. This person should:

- Introduce themselves to the group and welcome the group to ETC
- Help unload vehicles
- Instruct the group on where to meet
- Show participants the bathroom
- Collect forms from individuals/group leaders

Trip Introduction: This is typically the responsibility of the Trip Leader during the Opening Circle and is an important component of setting the tone of the trip. Therefore, it is critical that whoever leads this talk is engaging and fun. During this time it is important to cover the following:

- Welcome to ETC
- Overview of ETC as an organization (cater this to the group you are speaking with)
- Plan for the day

Camp Orientation: This person will orient the group to the River Camp. Depending on whether the group is camping or not will dictate the depth of this talk. Reference the “Camp Orientation List” included on Page 19.

River Ready: At this opening circle this person will explain how to prepare for their day on the river, especially what they should wear. For this to be effective, it is wise for this person to be river ready. The best flow for this talk is to begin either with the head or the feet and talk through all that a person will need to wear/have with them. This will depend specifically on the weather and time of year, though generally will include:

- Hat with a brim (remind people they will be wearing helmets)
- Sunglasses with retention strap
- Shirt
- Shorts
- Shoes that will stay on their feet
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen (both a reminder to bring it on the river and where to put it on your body)
- Remind not to bring jewelry, technology, or other valuables on the river (they can be secured in the River Camp Office)

Name Game: Lead an age appropriate and fun name game so participants and Guides can begin to get to know one another.

Shuttle Organizer: This person will be responsible for coordinating vehicles for the trip, ensuring that participants, guides, and equipment will have transportation from the take out or to the put in. This may include coordinating with land support, confirming bus times, driving equipment vehicles, and/or shuttling participant vehicles. This is an important task to coordinate

with other trips on the water and the in-camp manager. For trips with people in wheelchairs it is important to ensure there is a plan for how the participants will get from the boats to the vehicles or vehicles to the boats (which may involved putting a wheelchair in the take out vehicle).

Lunch: This person will coordinate lunch for the trip, either working with the Group Leader to use the food they brought or working with an ETC menu to use food purchased for the trip.

There are two options for lunch:

- Lunch in camp: The group will be eating in camp so a lunch spread is set out in the Main Kitchen.
- Lunch on the River: The group will be stopping at some point during the trip to have lunch. If this is the case, lunch will be packed in the appropriate cooler with sufficient supplies to properly serve lunch. (See Page 51 for complete list)

Snack Bags & Water Bottles: This person will fill two water bottles for each raft. Additionally, this person will make snack bags (either with food provided by the group or by ETC) for each raft.

Safety Talk: Conduct a safety talk that gives participants all instruction necessary for them to be safe on the water. (See Page 17)

Boat & Paddle Talk: Each guide will conduct a Boat & Paddle Talk for their respective crews. This talk will orient groups to the raft, explains how to properly sit in the boat, and teaches the basics of paddling. (See Page 18)

Activity/Education Lead: This person is responsible for leading or delegating the leadership of games and activities. Games may be purely fun or focus specifically on team building or environmental education. Times where activities typically fit into the trip flow includes: the time in camp before rafting The Gorge (often during shuttle), on-river lunch stops, the evening after dinner, and in the afternoon after Rafting Chili Bar. (See Chapter 6 for suggestions for various activities/games).

First Aid Lead: This person is responsible for all First Aid on the trip and is typically the Guide with the highest level of First Aid training. Responsibilities include:

- Inventory First Aid Kit to ensure it is complete prior to the trip. (See Page 56)
- Pull all Guide health forms and put them in the First Aid Kit
- Review all participant liability forms to ensure they are signed and complete
- Review all Guide and Participant health forms to ensure they are complete and note any important medical issues/concerns
- Address medical concerns with the individual or Group Staff Member. If the person has a medical condition where rafting may not be safe, the First Aid Lead should consult with the Trip Leader or in-camp manager and make a decision.
- Carry the First Aid Kit in your raft or ensure it has been properly rigged into the Sweep Boat.
- Administer any necessary First Aid and seek outside resources when needs are beyond their scope of practice
- Restock the First Aid Kit at the end of a trip

- Note any First Aid administered on the Guide Trip Evaluation
- Fill out an Incident Report Form, with the support of the Trip Leader, if a significant incident occurred on the trip
- Re-file all Guide health forms
- Give all participant health and liability forms to the Trip Leader to be include with trip paperwork

Closing Circle: Typically the Trip Leader will facilitate a closing circle at the end of the trip, where participants will often share their “Kodak Moment” for their day on the water or trip.

Equipment Clean Up: All guides on the trip are responsible for the proper cleaning and storing of the river equipment used that day. *Every guide should be present and ready to clean/store gear upon arrival back at camp.*

On-Water Guide Roles

Lead: This person will guide the first boat in the pod. This person must be a competent guide with deep knowledge of the river. Responsibilities include:

- Setting a pace that ensures the pod stays tight and other groups are not backing up behind the pod
- Entering rapids only when the pod is situated and ready
- Communicating with other groups and passing when appropriate
- Pulling over to allow other groups to pass when appropriate

Sweep: This person will travel as the last boat in the pod and must be a very competent guide and highly experienced with Swiftwater Rescue. Responsibilities include:

- Carry Sweep Kit (See inventory on Page 55)
- Matching the pace of the lead boat and ensuring all rafts in the pod are staying together
- Assisting with the repair of any broken or malfunctioning equipment
- Eddying out in the event of a perch, wrap, flip, or other incident and providing assistance as needed
- Depending on the trip plan, proceeding in front of the group at major rapids to set safety in an eddy below the rapid

**Please note that it is possible to have any boat act as the emergency boat for the day and carry the emergency equipment. It does not have to be the first or last boat in the order. The plan for the day will be confirmed at the morning guide meeting.*

Volunteer Use of Camp

The ETC River Camp is a place for participants, volunteers, and staff to gather as one community. The hope is that you will treat the camp as your home, always feeling welcome and caring for it as your home. Below is information that is valuable when spending time in camp as a volunteer:

Food Storage: The white refrigerator in the pantry in the Main Kitchen is exclusively for volunteers to store food while they are in camp. Please label all food with your name and departure date. Please note that this refrigerator will be emptied and cleaned every Wednesday. Place dry food in a paper bag and label the bag with your name and departure date. Dry food can be stored on one of the top two metal shelves on the far side of the pantry adjacent to the freezer.

Kitchen Use: Volunteers may use the Main Kitchen to prepare their own food. If there is a group in camp, please ensure they have the space they need to prepare, serve, and clean up after their meal. The kitchen in the River House is reserved for live-in staff members who have unique needs spending the whole season at the camp. Volunteers are asked not to use this kitchen.

Camping: The area adjacent to the fire ring on the other side from the river is reserved specifically for volunteers. Please respect one another by only taking as much space as you can truly use and positioning your tent/sleeping area to allow as many people possible to camp in this space. Volunteers may also camp in other spaces in camp so long as they are not occupied by participants.

Volunteer Area: The porch on the end of the River House is a place for volunteers and staff to gather in a space away from participants. Please treat this space as your own. When using it, remember that this is still a public space and participants can still hear and see you.

Technology Use: Groups come to the ETC River Camp for an experience in nature. For this reason we ask volunteers and staff not use technology in the public spaces in camp. Volunteers may access the wireless network though please only use it to conduct necessary tasks as its primary purpose is for camp business. The wireless network is password protected. Please ask the Program Associate for the current password and please do not share the password with participants.

Camp Office: The primary purpose of the Camp Office is to conduct the administrative business of the program. Volunteers may store valuables in the office, charge electronic devices, and use the Staff/Volunteer computer for personal use, though please do not socialize in the office.

Equipment Storage: The cubbies on the end of the River House are intended for volunteers to store their belongings. Volunteers are entitled to one cubby while they are in camp. Please label the cubby while you are using it and remove all your belongings when departing camp.

Showers: To conserve water, we ask volunteers only shower after spending three days in camp. Please discreetly use the showers during a time when participants aren't present and keep them short to use a minimal amount of water.

Alcohol: Volunteers are subject to the ETC Drug, Alcohol, and Substance Use or Abuse Policy (see Page 46).

Staff Area: The live-in staff spends the entire season at the ETC River Camp. To decompress and recharge it is valuable to have a private living space. We ask volunteers respect this space by not going into the ETC staff living area behind the River House.

Safety Talk Outline

General Introduction

- Names
- Description of the trip: What section of river and what to expect,
- Explain the type of boats that will be on the river that day (oar and paddle boats)

On Land Considerations

- Sun/Heat: Hat, Sunscreen, Sunglasses, Dehydration
- Cold: Hypothermia
- Footwear: must be worn at all times
- Poison Oak, Rattlesnakes
- No feeding animals
- Do not drink the water
- No littering (leave every place cleaner than you found it!)
- Bathroom (tell next location of bathroom/out houses)
- Inform guides of any special medical condition
- Use caution around slippery rocks
- Rinse feet before getting into boat

On Water Considerations

- PFDs
 - How to tighten and check for proper fit
 - PFDs must be worn any time a person is in water deeper than the knees
 - Must be checked by a Guide
- Helmets
 - Must always be worn when in the raft
 - Demonstrate proper adjustment and fit
- Keep both legs in boat
- Keep weight on feet to stay in boat
- Scheduled Swim:
 - Always ask Guide
 - Always jump in feet first
- Unscheduled Swim:
 - Swimmers Position
 - Oriented downstream
 - Feet up and knees bent to push off rocks
 - Foot Entrapment: Never stand up in moving water
 - Hold on to your paddle (if possible)
 - Get out from under raft: pick one direction and swim out
 - Stay away from downstream side of raft
 - Breathe in troughs; crests will break over your head
 - Strainers: Describe and instruct to avoid
- Getting swimmer back into boat:
 - Point positive
 - Paddle pass
 - Throw bag
 - Grab rope, not bag
 - Do not wrap rope around any part of body
 - Hold over shoulder
 - Pulling in a swimmer
- No water fighting just above rapid.

Emergency Situations

- Wraps: Describe. High side command (demonstrate/describe effect).
- Flips: Get out from underneath boat and look to nearest Guide

Boat & Paddle Talk Outline

Before Getting in the Boat

- Distribute paddles
- Describe parts of the boat
- Demonstrate sitting position and foot wedging
- Seating Arrangements:
 - Lead Paddler: Front right or front left
 - Sit opposite someone of equal strength
- Remind to rinse feet before getting in the raft

In the Boat

- Introductions
- Check paddlers' sitting positions
- Demonstrate holding the paddle
 - Inside hand on T Grip
 - Outside hand above blade with knuckles forward
- Identify lead paddler
- Explain importance of synchronization and paddling as a team
- Commands
 - Forward:
 - Use whole body
 - Short and quick for maximum power
 - Back:
 - Hip or PFD as pivot point
 - Lean into stroke
 - Right Turn:
 - *Right* side back
 - *Left* side forward
 - Left Turn:
 - *Left* side back
 - *Right* side forward
 - Stop: Rest paddle in lap
 - Bump: Lean in
- Demonstrate High Sides
- Demonstrate pulling in a swimmer
- Importance of listening to the Guide
- Quiet Zone
- Water Fighting (if appropriate)
 - Strategies
 - No boarding other boats

Camp Orientation

General

- Leave No Trace in camp
- Potable water is available from all sinks in camp
- Quiet times at 10:00PM to 7:00AM

Bathrooms

- Tell an ETC volunteer/staff member if the bathrooms need attention or supply levels get low
- To conserve water, we do not allow participants to use the showers unless they have a special need.
- Showers can be used as changing rooms.

River House

- The River House is a group area and we encourage participants make use of it while in camp
- Read the books and play the games, though please return them to their place on the shelf when you are finished

Staff/Volunteer Areas

- The area behind the River House is specifically for staff and volunteers. Please respect their space.
- The kitchen adjoining the River House is specifically for staff. Please respect their space.

Main Kitchen

- We'll be preparing and eating all meals in the main kitchen.
- Recycling and trash
- Washing hands

Camping (only applicable to groups spending the night)

- Orient the group to where they will be spending the night
- No food kept in the campsites

Swimming:

- ETC Guide must be present anytime someone is in the water
- Anytime someone is in the water deeper than their knees they must wear a PFD

Concerns:

- Always wear shoes when in camp
- To avoid poison oak please stay on the paths
- Rattlesnakes are uncommon though it is possible to see one. If you do, please back away and notify and ETC Guide.