

**Thank you for signing up for the 2025 Point Roberts Park and Recreation District Kayak and Paddleboard Program!**

**In order to take out a kayak or board each individual will need to read and sign the following documents and provide proof of residence in Whatcom County - such as a copy of your driver's license or utility bill.**

## **RULES:**

### **1) Buddy System**

Anyone using a Program Kayak or Paddleboard must go out with another adult in another kayak or board. The kayak/board can be a Program Kayak/Board but that individual must also sign up for the program.

### **2) Washington Waters Only**

Kayakers and Paddleboarders shall stay in Washington waters and not enter Canadian waters. You may not take kayaks or paddle boards to other mainland or islands of Washington State.

### **3) Replace All Equipment As You Found Them**

Before you take out your kayak or paddle board, and upon return inspect it for damage. Let our staff know if any damage is discovered before you leave or is caused upon your return. When taking a kayak/paddle board out and upon return the lock for all equipment must be secured.

### **4) Accidents and Rescue**

If you are involved in an accident or a rescue, no matter how minor, you must report the incident to our staff and other authorities as required.

### **5) PFD and Sound Device**

Properly fitted Coast Guard approved life jackets must be worn at all times while in the kayak or on the paddleboard for each person onboard. A sound producing device must be worn as well, such as a whistle or air horn.

### **6) Guests**

If you take a guest or a minor out on a 2-person kayak or paddle board, this person must also sign this program package/waiver. If your guest is a minor, their parent or guardian must sign the waiver on the minor's behalf.

### **7) Age**

You must be at least 18 years old to take out a kayak or paddle board. Anyone under 18 may accompany an adult in a 2 person kayak or board.

By signing, I confirm that I have read and agree to follow the rules and safety measures:

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## **SAFETY:**

Kayaking and Paddleboarding can be hazardous activities which can result in severe injury or death. Safety preparations and precautions are the sole responsibility of the kayaker/paddleboarder. We highly recommend doing extensive research before you take the kayak or paddleboard out and consider taking online or in person safety courses.

The following are safety tips to follow:

- Check with NOAA or other websites for local tides, current and weather prior to your departure. Visit [tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov](http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov) and [nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/home.ht](http://nws.noaa.gov/om/marine/home.ht)
- Stay within 200 feet of shore. Doing so can significantly reduce your chances of getting blown off shore by strong winds or getting stuck in a strong current.
- Boats create a wave behind them when they move, called a wake. The larger the boat the larger the wake. Always keep an eye out for wakes as the boat that created the wake can be long gone by the time it hits you. Wakes from ferries are especially hazardous; do not attempt to enter or exit the water while a wake is breaking on shore at the boat launch.
- Keep your cell phone or handheld VHF radio in a waterproof bag such as a Ziplock. Call 911 in an emergency or use channel 16 on VHF.
- Look at a nautical chart of the local area before you depart to familiarize yourself with your surroundings.
- Prepare for changes in weather and the possibility of a capsize. If paddling in cold water, a wetsuit or dry suit can keep you warm and comfortable. In warm weather, a long sleeve shirt can provide sun protection. Invest in appropriate clothing for the climate and conditions. Dress for the day.
- Beware of off-shore winds that make it difficult to return to shore. Consider starting your journey upwind so that your return will be easier with the wind at your back.
- Know and follow the boating rules for Washington state.
- Never mix alcohol or drugs (prescription or non-prescription) with boating.
- Never exceed the weight capacity of the boat or board and always check equipment for wear and tear before you paddle.
- Seek qualified instruction to learn proper paddling techniques, water safety and basic first aid.
- Brush up on self-rescue such as a safety roll, first in calm, warm, shallow water, and again in more extreme conditions.
- Wearing your lifejacket will help keep your head above water and add insulation to your body, keeping you warmer in cold water. There are great PFDs designed specifically for paddlers.
- Tell someone your paddle plan, which includes: where you are going, what you will be doing, how long you expect to be gone and how many people are in your party. Then stick to your plan.
- Stay hydrated. Always bring plenty of water and food.
- When paddling in a new area, check with the locals regarding currents, shoreline conditions and weather patterns. Plan an "escape" route - an alternative place to get off the water should environmental conditions dictate it.
- Equipment recommended for your kayaking comfort can include a backrest, scupper stoppers to keep your cockpit drier, and dry bags are important for storing gear. You can also buy accessories for navigating such as a handheld GPS.

- Other useful equipment could include a compass, maps and tidal charts, extra food and water, dry bags, spare paddle or paddle leash, paddle float, bilge pump, boat sponge, flares/signaling device, tow line, first aid kit and sunscreen.
- Suggested clothing includes a sunhat, sunglasses, paddle jacket and a base layer. For colder weather consider quick dry clothing, a wet or dry suit, gloves and pogies.

By signing, I confirm that I have read and agree to follow the rules and safety measures:

PRINTED NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_