

2021 5th Annual PaddleCross Challenge

Participant Information & Course Overview

The 2021 Willamette River Festival is holding the fifth annual Paddle Cross Challenge August 21-28. This year, participants will have three options to participate, all of them involving self-recorded times that participants submit electronically (see descriptions below).

The challenge course starts in Alton Baker Park in Eugene, and travels up the Canoe Canal into Springfield, where participants will portage over to the Willamette River and paddle downstream through several rapids back to the start at Alton Baker Park. Much of this area is within the Whilamut Natural Area, designated to honor the Kalapuya peoples past, present and future.

Please read the full land acknowledgement here: [Kalapuya Illihi](#)



Race it, or paddle it just for fun...

Register at www.willametteriverfest.org to compete against other participants, or just join in the challenge and paddle to finish it! Everyone who officially registers and completes the route will receive a special finisher's digital certificate and limited edition patch. You can run the course as many times as you like, and keep submitting your times to see where you fare on our official online PaddleCross Leaderboard. Each time you do the course and enter your time, you will receive another chance to win something from our festival prize drawing. Final 1st-3rd place race finishers will be listed August 28, 2021 online. Registration is \$5, however; **paddlers under the age of 18 can participate for free with a parent.**

There are three options to participate throughout the week of August 21-28:

1. Option 1: As an independent, virtually recorded race anytime during the week - race when you want.
2. Option 2: With a small group on a guided experience providing support and safety; this option will happen on Wednesday, August 25th, 5pm (space limited!).
3. On the last Saturday, August 28th, with safety boater support on more challenging sections of the route. Racers can choose to start whenever they want, but safety support will be out on the water from 12-3pm.

Regardless which option you choose to participate in, you will need to record your time and GPS track, and submit it [here](#).

Please find below:

- **Safety information**
 - **Safety Requirements**
 - **Safety Recommendations**
- **How to Register**
- **How to Submit Your Course and Time**
- **Specifics about the route**
 - **Course description**
 - **Images of course route, hazards, portages and other features**

Safety Information

Due to COVID-19, we have adapted the race process and Safety Briefing to the following steps:

1. Please read the Safety Requirements below and review all course information
2. Please register for the PaddleCross Challenge here: www.willametteriverfest.org
3. You will be asked to watch our PaddleCross Safety Video before answering a short quiz and moving on through the rest of the registration process, including a digital waiver, payment, and registration confirmation. **Please take your time and enjoy the process!**

Safety Requirements

Please note! This is a self-guided activity. PARTICIPANTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY AND ANY DAMAGE TO THEIR WATERCRAFT. Paddling is inherently risky - weather changes, current, and obstacles in the waterway may play a significant role in unexpected circumstances along the PaddleCross Challenge route. This course is not appropriate for paddlers without adequate **class 2 whitewater experience**.

1. **Follow all laws** pertaining to watercraft (e.g. PFD's, whistle, Waterway Access Permit).
2. **Wear an approved PFD** (Personal Flotation Device) that is properly fitting, and suitable for whitewater (class III or V) - please no inflatable PFD's.
3. **Helmets** are strongly recommended (best practices), particularly for downriver sections
4. Have an appropriate **auditory signaling device** on board each boat (such as a whistle).
5. Have proper **training and experience** to travel the entire route (class 2 whitewater).
6. Participants should be in a **craft that is suitable for class 2 rocky whitewater** (including flotation and sea worthiness) such as a packraft, whitewater kayak or whitewater canoe or SUP or durable sea/touring kayak. Inflatables are great, but **fiberglass or composite boats are not recommended**, although several people use them each year in this section.
 - a. **NOTE: Rudders that do not flip up and large fins on SUP's** also create hazards (catching on rocks) and can slow progress while dragging.

7. Have **adequate flotation** for your craft (such as airbags, or sealed compartments)
8. **SUP's** (Stand Up Paddleboard) have two options for **leashes**
 - a. Use a **coiled leash** that has a quick release belt system
 - b. Use **no leash** at all (straight leashed are not acceptable in the river, and any leash can cause an entanglement hazard in the moving current)
7. **Show respect** for the natural environment at all times
8. Follow all **Leave No Trace principles**, including finishing with everything that the racer starts with (no trash/equipment left behind!)
9. Racers must pass through any designated "Gates", markers or directions from Race Officials or Race Guidelines along the course; failure to do so automatically disqualifies the racer (this is a safety issue as well); examples include:
 - a. Go River Right at 'Horseshoe Bend' just above the Weir
 - b. Go River Left at Autzen Footbridge (between bridge posts 1 and 2, looking downstream and counting left to right (DO NOT GO LEFT OF BRIDGE POST #1 ALONG THE SHORE - there is much woody debris here)
11. A [Waterway Access Permit \(Old Aquatic Invasive Sp. Permit\)](#) is required by law if your craft is over 10' long.
13. **Have a good attitude** – this is about building community and enjoying our natural areas! Please don't put yourself, or others, at risk.
14. **Please respect private property** along the route.

Safety Recommendations:

1. **Remember: YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR OWN SAFETY AND ANY DAMAGE TO YOUR WATERCRAFT!** Please follow all safety requirements and recommendations included in this document and the online PaddleCross registration.
2. Fiberglass/composite boats are **not** recommended; although these boats are generally faster, there are many rocks to avoid on this route. However, many racers do use them.
2. Please be sure to review the [PaddleCross Challenge Route video](#) before you paddle the course! Even if you paddled it last year, water levels, and many hazards have changed in both the canoe canal and the Willamette River. It is best to be prepared.
3. Consider carrying a spare paddle in case you lose/break your main paddle.
4. Contact organizers if you want more in-depth course descriptions, or boat suggestions:
 - Sam Norgaard-Stroich, UO Outdoor Program (541) 603-8362
ssstroich@uoregon.edu
 - Marcel Bieg, City of Eugene River House Outdoor Center (541) 682-5329
mbieg@eugene-or.gov

How to Submit Your Course and Time

There are two categories for the PaddleCross Challenge: **Racer** or **Participant**.

Racers are those competing for the best time, whereas **Participants** are those doing the course as a challenge, and not focused on the time it takes.

Racers are required to submit an **image** of their route and time from some electronic tracking platform, such as Strava, Gaia GPS, Ride GPS, or any other means that records your route and time.

Participants are only required to submit the day/time they completed the course.

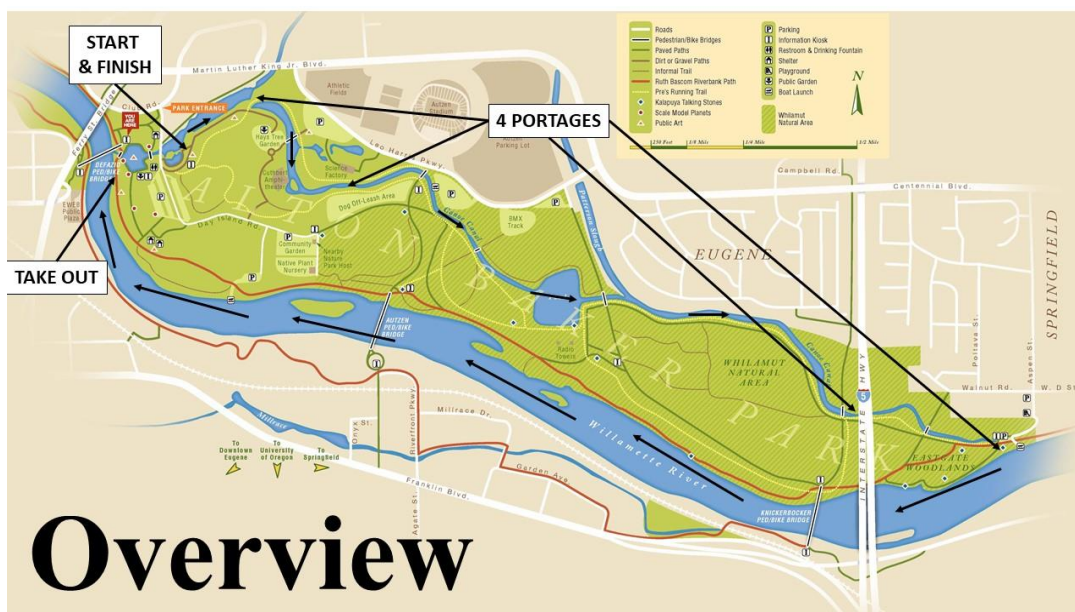
BOTH CATEGORIES are able to submit as many attempts as possible within the open race window August 21 - 28, 2021. Each attempt increases the chances of winning a prize! An extra chance to win a prize will be given to anyone who also submits a photo of themselves doing the race course!

Submit your course route and time by clicking on this link and entering the information into the form: [PaddleCross Challenge Route/Time Submission Form](#)

Specifics About the Route

Course Description:

The Race starts and ends at the Put-In Area (see image below) at the pond connected to the canoe canal. Racers will travel approximately 2.5 miles up the canoe canal, and approximately 2.5 miles downstream. There are 4 portages throughout the course, each of varying difficulty (see images below). How racers deal with portaging will play a large role in efficient times. As



Overview

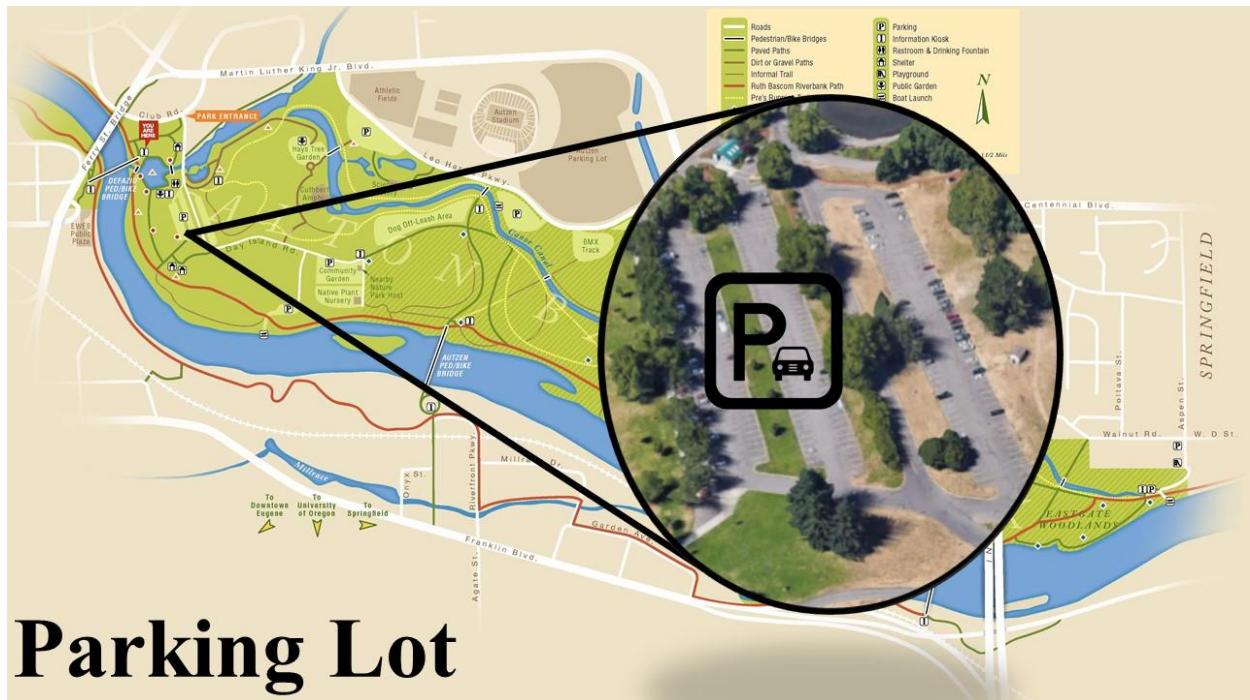
racers reach the “Take Out” beach, they leave their boat on the beach, and sprint back to the put-in to end their time and complete the round trip.

PLEASE NOTE: the down river section is rated as Class 2 involving whitewater rapids, rocks, hazards, and required maneuvers.

Please review the PaddleCross Challenge [Route Video here](#).

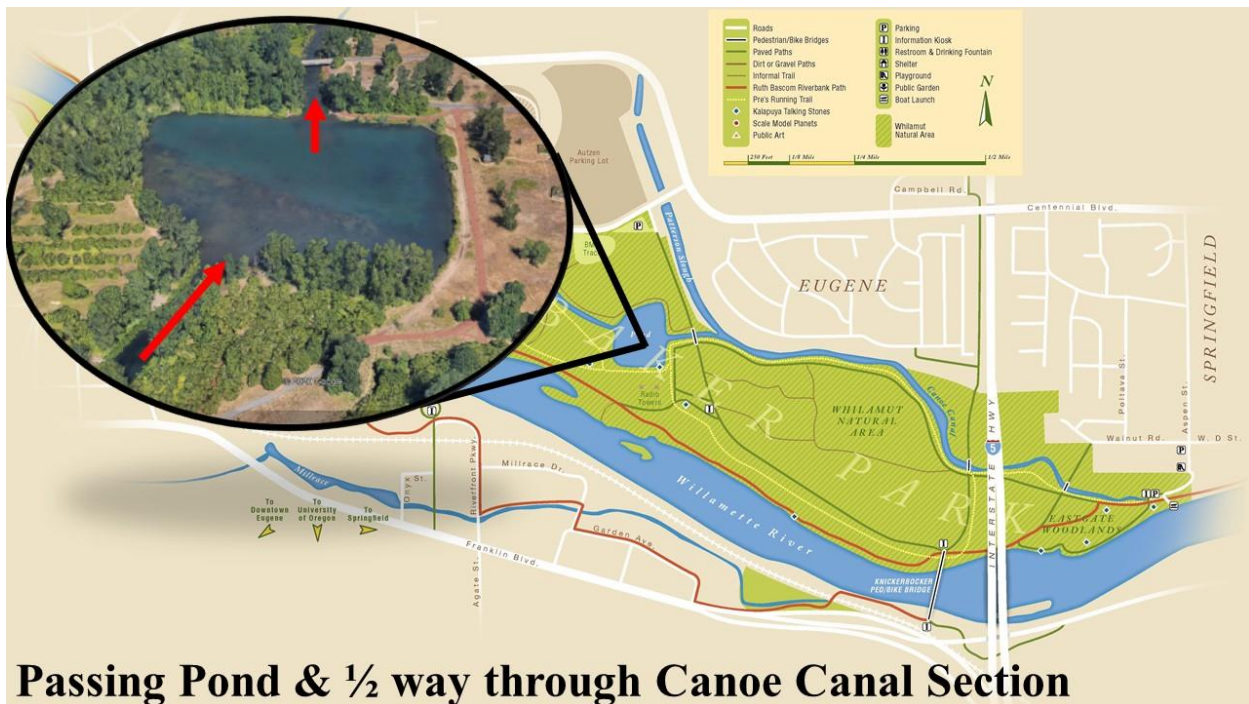
Images of Course hazards, portages, and other features

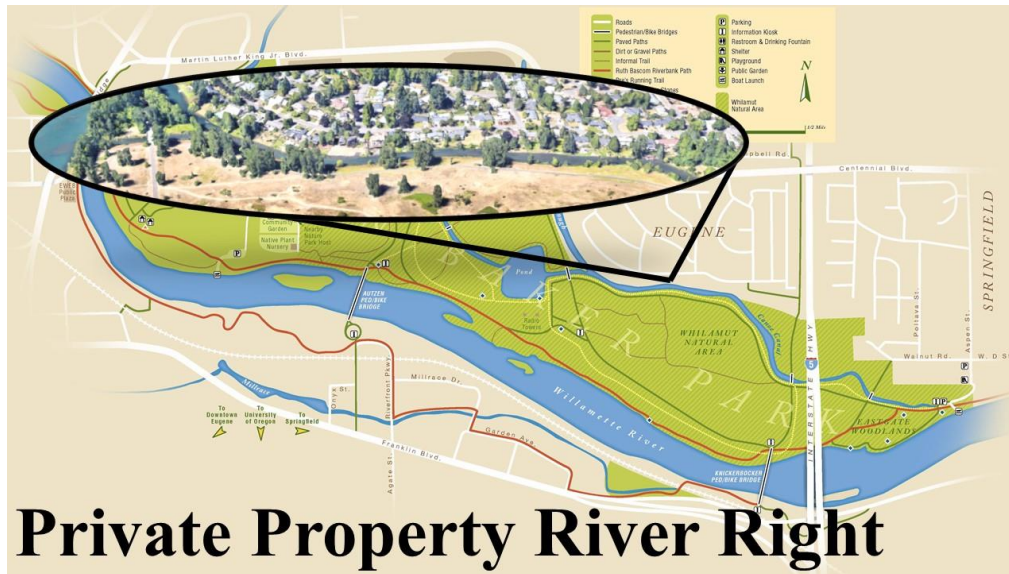
The following pages offer images and maps of major hazards and other components of the race course.





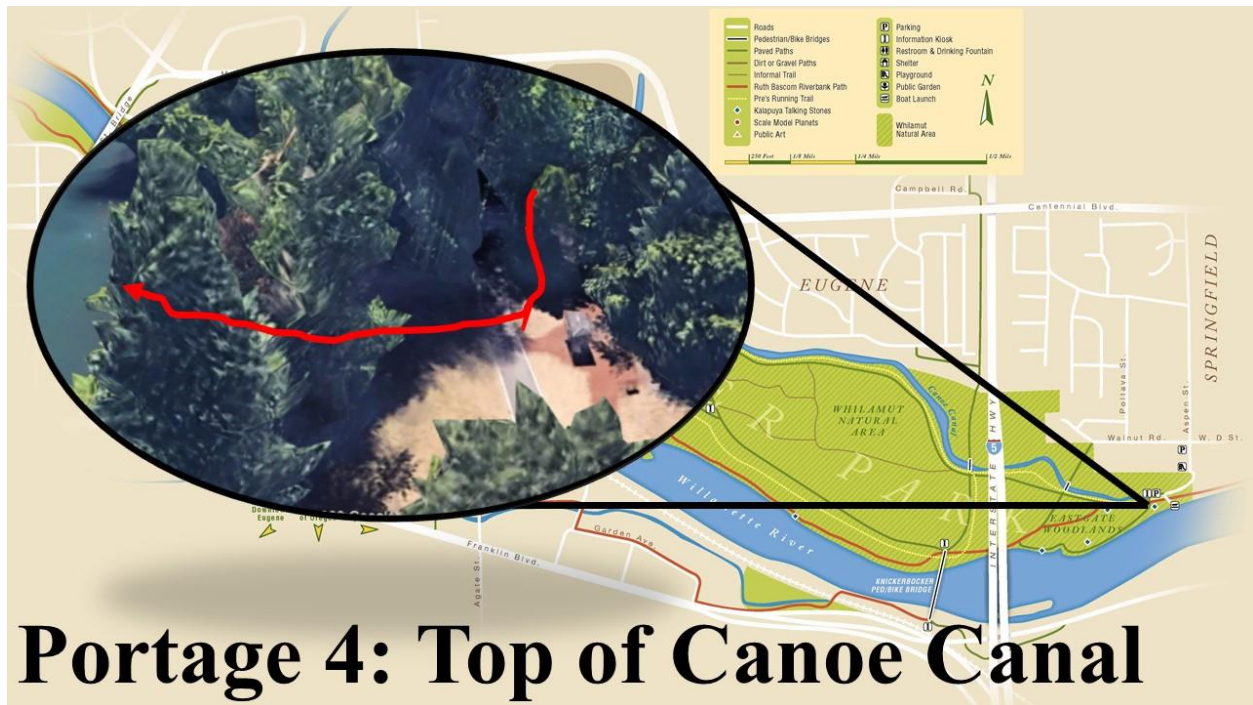
Portage #2 Take out and put-in





Portage #3 take out and put-in





Portage #4 Take out and put-in





