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Introduction of Almanor Basin Water Trails map

Last updated 07/1/2016 at 12:07pm



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Participants in the June 17 "paddle event" start at the Canyon Dam Picnic Area. The event celebrated the near completion of the Almanor Basin Water Trails map that had just been unveiled minutes earlier.

Friday, June 17, was a milestone occasion for the Caribou Alliance for Trails' almost two-year project to develop a comprehensive map of water trails for northern Plumas County.

Representatives from the Caribou Alliance, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Feather River Land Trust, Mountain Meadows Conservancy, Almanor Recreation and Parks District, Lake Almanor Watershed Group and the State of California Division of Boating and Waterways gathered at the Canyon Dam Picnic Area about 11 a.m.

There appeared to be a few concerns about the gathering clouds and two dozen or so rain drops at first, but they were quickly forgotten with the first sight of the placid surface of the lake.

The "paddle event" was hosted by the Caribou Alliance with two purposes in mind.

First on the agenda was to celebrate the unveiling of the almost complete "Almanor Basin Water Trails" map.

The development of the water trails map, as described by Caribou Alliance volunteer Courtney Gomola, is to promote the Almanor Basin as a destination point, support local businesses and of course encourage more people to enjoy the wonders of this area in human powered craft.

This map is the first of its kind for this area and has a wealth of information about locations to launch human powered (non-motorized) watercraft, points of interest for kayakers/canoers, supporting business locations, lodging and much more for the navigable waters from Bucks lake to Mountain Meadows Reservoir.

Gomola described the amenities included on the map and explained the massive collaborative efforts of the many people who helped bring the project to the point of being ready to go to print.

She noted that Charlie Plopper, another Caribou Alliance member, was a visionary and driving force in the development of the map.

The project was facilitated with funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, along with ideas and personal support from members of the Mountain Meadows Conservancy and Lake Almanor Watershed Group.



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The human-powered craft used for the June 17 paddle event are actually quite swift as it takes less than two minutes for the group to put several hundred yards between them and the picnic area. All kayaks are not created equal though, as demonstrated by the hand-built craft of Bob Kingman (right).

Attending the event was the deputy director of California State Parks Division of Boating and Waterways, Lynn Sadler, who commented, "Since becoming aware of this project we have been watching it closely. I believe it will provide an excellent model that can be used to promote human powered watercraft sports in other areas of the state."

Bob Kingman, assistant executive officer of the SNC, noted that it has been a pleasure to work with Gomola and Plopper as the project has progressed and the prototype presented is well worth the effort.

Gomola said the final creation is only weeks from completion and they are anticipating the final map will be available to the public in mid to late July. The second purpose of the event was to enjoy the very reason the map was conceived by having a relaxing paddle along the shoreline of Lake Almanor.

About half of those attending brought their kayaks so they could participate in the afternoon cruise along the southeast shoreline.