

# WHITEWATER PADDLING IN THE NORTH CASCADES



**THE NORTH CASCADES** region represents one of the world's most spectacular destinations for whitewater paddlers with over 150 recognized runs on rivers and creeks that span an impressive diversity of landscapes. From the snowmelt rivers that flow east through arid areas to the rivers that flow west through temperate rainforests, paddlers of all skill levels from beginners to the world's top experts can all find something to enjoy. Paddlers are attracted to the region for the year-around paddling season and opportunities for backcountry paddling which provide unique and highly valued opportunities for exploration and self discovery.

*Leland Davis on the Little Wenatchee, Photo by Kevin Colburn*

# SURVEY OF PADDLERS

More than 50 years ago American Whitewater was founded on guiding principles that include conservation and stewardship of the wilderness paddling experience, an experience defined by the rivers of the North Cascades. From October 2007 to March 2008 American Whitewater conducted an internet-based survey to provide a quantitative assessment of the quality and popularity of the rivers in the region. The survey was promoted through web articles on paddling websites, in paddling club newsletters, postcards distributed at river access points, and through internet discussion boards and blogs.

Of the 165 individuals who responded to the survey, the majority were whitewater enthusiasts with over 60% paddling more than 40 days a year and 30% paddling greater than 70 days a year. Most were either advanced or expert whitewater paddlers with 79% having class IV or V whitewater skills.

"I've paddled in many other places outside of the Pacific Northwest and there is no place like what we have here. The evergreen forests, clean water, commanding views, and year-round season are just a couple of the things that make this place amazing. I chose my job, my house, my life based on the whitewater resources in this area. Having the North Cascades so close is like a dream come true."  
- Eric B.

*Chris Arnold tackles a rapid on the Cascade Wild and Scenic River.  
Photo by Ryan Cole.*



# SURVEY RESULTS

On average how many days a year do you paddle?

Less than 5:	0.6%
6-10:	2.5%
11-20:	12.4%
21-40:	23.0%
41-70:	31.1%
More than 70:	30.4%

Approximately what percentage of your time spent paddling do you paddle in the North Cascades?

Less than 5%:	4.8%
5-15%:	9.7%
15-35%:	8.1%
35-65%:	25.8%
More than 65%:	51.6%

Please provide an assessment of your level of whitewater boating skill in the craft you most commonly use.

Class II Paddler:	1.2%
Class III Paddler:	19.8%
Class IV Paddler:	48.1%
Class V Paddler:	30.9%



*Matt Gamache (above) and Ethan Smith (below) on Canyon Creek in the Nooksack drainage.  
Photos by Hale Hanaway.*



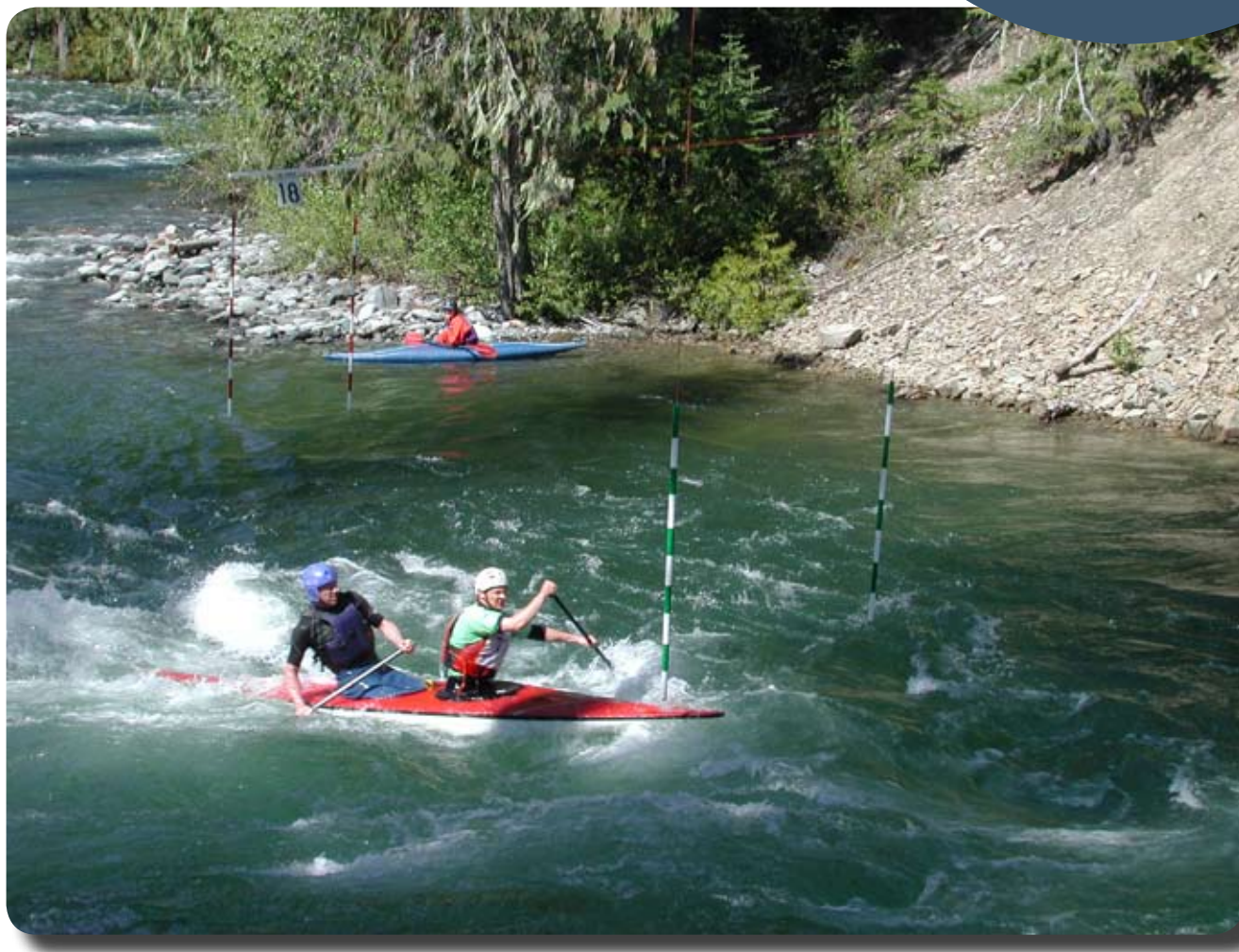
“From desert like landscapes to rainforest, this place has it all! There are so many opportunities for exploration! “  
- Franz H.

# OUTSTANDING WHITEWATER OF REGIONAL OR NATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

The run most often listed as a favorite in the North Cascades was the Skykomish River which was also the most popular run (62% of respondents had done the run). The Wenatchee, Cooper, North Fork Skykomish, and Middle Fork Snoqualmie rounded out the top 5 favorites. The Cascade, Clearwater (Nooksack drainage), Cooper, Entiat, Icicle Creek, Little Wenatchee, Middle Fork Nooksack, North Fork Nooksack (The Bend), North Fork Sauk, Skykomish, North Fork Skykomish, North Fork Snoqualmie (Ernie's Canyon), South Fork Snoqualmie, South Fork Stillaguamish (Robe Canyon), Thunder Creek, Tye, Whitechuck, Silverhope Creek, Similkameen, and Slesse Creek (Chilliwack drainage) were scored as outstanding whitewater resources in the North Cascades of regional and national significance.

*Dick and Paul Shipley race a decked canoe at the Salmon La Sac slalom race on the Cle Elum River, the longest running slalom competition in the nation.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*

"The North Cascades epitomizes the Northwest paddling experience: Rugged glaciated peaks, dark canyons and beautiful forests compliment a long paddling season. I have paddled throughout the states and the N. Cascades region tops any other area in the country as the total package."  
- Paul H.





*Jessica Sneedon on the North Fork Nooksack Canyon.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*

**“The North Cascades is rad because of how undeveloped it is. It is a treat to be able to achieve a semi-wilderness experience amidst big mountains, awesome wildlife, clean water, and minimal human impact... all within an hour or two from the cities of western Washington. While the infrastructure is there to get us \*close\* to rivers, and to get drivers to some pretty amazing spots, I appreciate that there aren't roads and attractions everywhere we might want to go.”**  
**- Ethan S.**

*Andy Bridge on the Lost River in the Pasayten Wilderness.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*



I like paddling for the same reason I like backpacking, to get out and enjoy the wilderness and to learn more about it every day.”  
- Courtney N.

# POPULARITY OF RIVERS

Top 25 runs by popularity. Popularity is measured as the percentage of paddlers who completed the survey who have done the run.

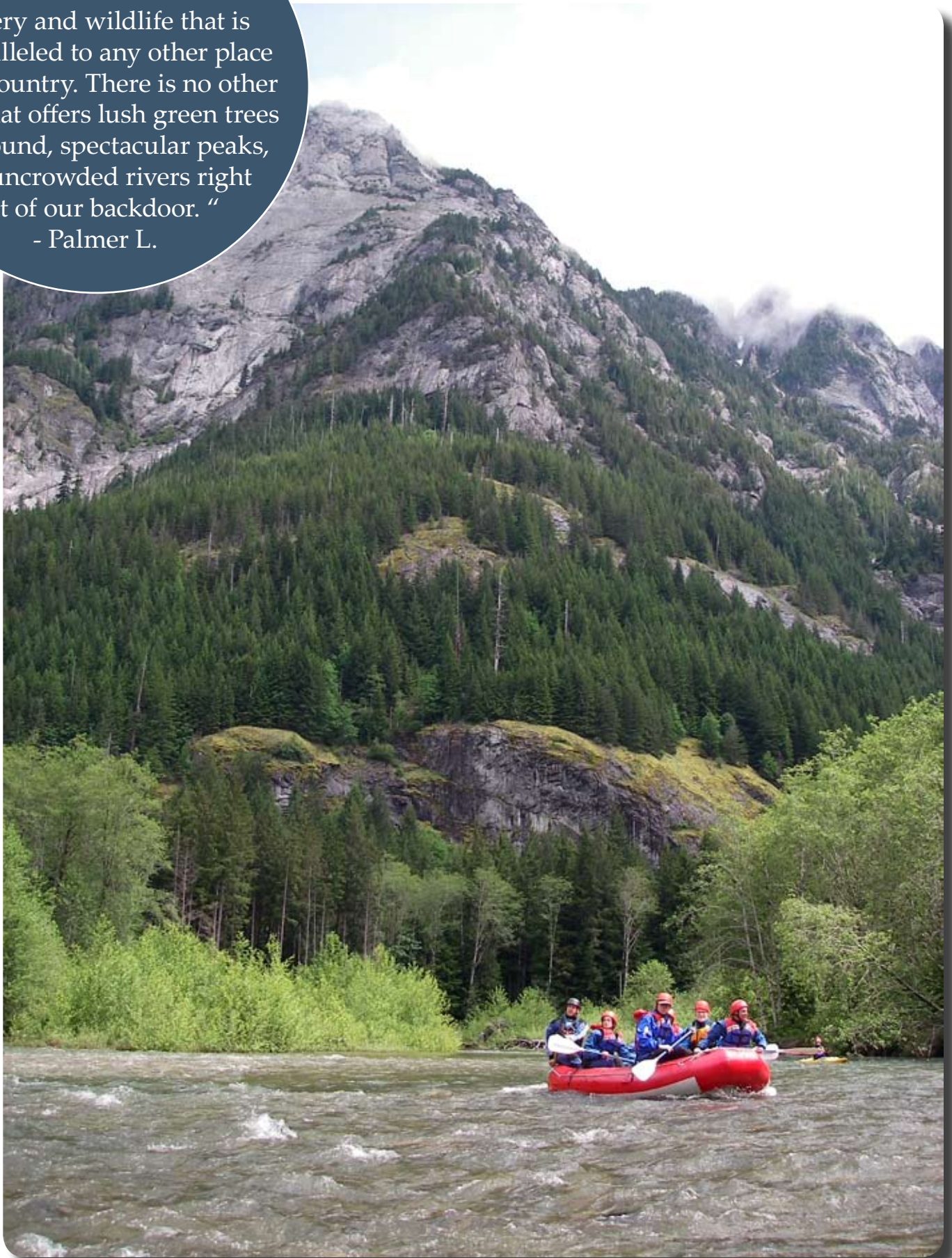
River Reach	Percentage
Wenatchee, Leavenworth to Monitor	64%
Skykomish, Index (Sunset Falls) to Railroad Bridge	62%
Skykomish, Railroad Bridge to Big Eddy	55%
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork , Concrete bridge to Tanner (Middle-Middle)	53%
Sauk, Whitechuck River to Clear Creek	43%
Skykomish, N. Fork, Bear Creek (Drumbeater) to South Fork confluence	41%
Wenatchee, Tumwater Campground to Leavenworth (Tumwater Canyon)	40%
Nooksack, N. Fork, Douglas Fir Campground to Mt. Baker Highway milepost 27	39%
Thompson (BC), Nicoamen Confluence (Frog) to Fraser	38%
Sultan, Powerhouse to Fishing Access	34%
Methow, McFarland Creek access to Pateros (Black Canyon)	33%
Skagit, Goodell Creek to Copper Creek	31%
Peshastin Creek, Highway 97 culvert to Wenatchee River	30%
Cooper River, Waterfall to Cle Elum River	28%
Icicle Creek, Ida Creek to Snow Creek trailhead	28%
Skagit, Copper Creek to Rockport (Eagle Float)	28%
Skykomish, Big Eddy to Monroe	28%
Snoqualmie, Snoqualmie Falls to Plum's Landing	27%
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork, Tanner to North Bend (The Club Stretch)	27%
Chilliwack (BC), Slease Creek to Tamihi	27%
Canyon Creek (S.F. Still. trib), Fishing Access site to S.Fork Stillaguamish	26%
Nooksack, N. Fork, Nooksack Falls to Douglas Fir (The Bend)	26%
Cle Elum, Scatter Creek to Salmon La Sac Creek (China Gorge)	25%
Icicle Creek, Rock Island Campground to Ida Creek (Upper)	25%
Snoqualmie, S. Fork, I-90 Exit 52 to Denny Creek Campground (Fall in the Wall)	25%

*Bacon Creek in the Skagit watershed.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*



“The North Cascades provides abundant scenery and wildlife that is unparalleled to any other place in the country. There is no other place that offers lush green trees year round, spectacular peaks, and uncrowded rivers right out of our backdoor.”  
- Palmer L.

*Will Robens guides his raft under the shadow of Mt. Garfield on the Middle Fork Snoqualmie River.  
Photo by Thomas O’Keefe.*



# OUTSTANDING RESOURCES

Runs rated as having outstanding recreational and aesthetic qualities of regional or national significance (all these runs scored 5 on a 1 to 5 scale).

- Snoqualmie, N. Fork, Spur 10 Bridge to 428th St. Bridge (Ernie's Canyon)
- Tye, Surprise Creek to Alpine Falls (Upper)
- Stillaguamish, S. Fork, Verlot to Granite Falls (Robe Canyon Run)
- Chilliwack (BC), The Canyon (Camp Foley to Slesse)
- Cascade, Marble Creek Campground to Bridge nr. Skagit (class V)
- Silverhope Creek (BC)
- Cooper River, Waterfall to Cle Elum River
- Icicle Creek, Ida Creek to Snow Creek trailhead
- Clearwater (MF Nooksack trib.), to MF Nooksack
- Nooksack, N. Fork, Nooksack Falls to Douglas Fir (The Bend)
- Thunder Creek, to Diablo Reservoir
- Whitechuck, Bridge above Crystal Creek to Sauk River confluence
- Little Wenatchee, Fall Creek to Lake Creek Campground
- Entiat, Lake Creek Campground to National Forest boundary (Canyon Section)
- Snoqualmie, S. Fork, I-90 Exit 52 to Denny Creek Campground (Fall in the Wall)
- Lost, Drake Creek to Methow River confluence
- Sauk, N. Fork, Above North Fork Falls
- Nooksack, Middle Fork, Clearwater Creek to Heisters Creek
- Skykomish, Index (Sunset Falls) to Railroad Bridge
- Skykomish, N. Fork, Jackson Wilderness to Bear Creek
- Similkameen (BC), Canyon III(IV)
- Slesse Creek (BC), to Chilliwack III (IV)
- Stillaguamish, S. Fork, Deer Creek to Mallardy Creek (Upper)
- Similkameen (BC), below Similkameen Falls

I have 3 words: Year round paddling. There is no where else in the country where you can paddle Class II-V 365 days a year if you so chose. And it's not just any old year round paddling, these rivers by far are some of the most beautiful in the country.  
- Dirk F.

The diversity of rivers in both difficulty and character make paddling in the NC most enjoyable. I paddle rivers to enjoy nature and no other area offers such a great wilderness feel than the NC rivers.  
- Hunter H.



Laurel Hansen enjoys a surf on the Teanaway River.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.



# THE FAVORITES

Paddlers were asked to list their top 3 favorite runs in the North Cascades. The rivers below are the top 10 favorite runs in the North Cascades.

1. Skykomish, Index (Sunset Falls) to Railroad Bridge
2. Wenatchee, Leavenworth to Monitor
3. Cooper River, Waterfall to Cle Elum River
4. Skykomish, N. Fork, Bear Creek (Drumbeater) to South Fork confluence
5. Snoqualmie, Middle Fork, Concrete bridge to Tanner (Middle-Middle)
6. Stillaguamish, S. Fork, Verlot to Granite Falls (Robe Canyon Run)
7. Chilliwack (BC), The Canyon (Camp Foley to Slesse)
8. Icicle Creek, Ida Creek to Snow Creek trailhead
9. Wenatchee, Tumwater Campground to Leavenworth (Tumwater Canyon)
10. Clearwater (MF Nooksack trib.), to MF Nooksack

*Eric Myren floating down the Skagit Wild and Scenic River with the peaks of the North Cascades as a backdrop.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*





*Forest Service staff out on the Suiattle Wild and Scenic River.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*

**I feel that we are lucky to have so many free-flowing rivers that provide high quality whitewater as well as incredible natural beauty, two qualities that in my opinion are of equal importance to the overall kayaking experience.”  
- Hilary N.**

**What I find so unique is the ability to paddle in a hot and dry climate or in a lush green canyon all within an hour from my house. The opportunity for wilderness boating is also amazing. - Jeff M.**



**When I go kayaking, it's usually on a run I've never done before, or it's a 'new' run altogether meaning that the spirit of 'adventure' is usually a big part of any paddling mission up here.” - Todd G**

*Omar Jepperson playing in a whirlpool on the Sauk Wild and Scenic River.  
Photo by Thomas O'Keefe.*

## Complete Survey Results

The following pages include a summary of all data and results from the survey. In interpreting these results it should be remembered that population surveyed generally represents whitewater enthusiasts. A total of 158 runs were surveyed. This is not necessarily a complete list of all whitewater in the North Cascades. During the course of the survey some respondents noted that we had not included some backcountry runs.

Rivers are identified by name, state/province, and section. The put-in and take-out coordinates are approximate and have not been field verified in all cases but are referenced to WGS84.

Data categories are as follows:

**Favorite:** All respondents were asked to indicate their 3 favorite runs out of the 158 choices. Values represent the number of votes for each run as a top-3 favorite (e.g. 40 individuals considered the Skykomish River a top 3 favorite).

**Popularity:** All respondents were asked to indicate which of the 158 runs they had done. The count is the number of individuals responding to the survey who had done the run and the percentage is expressed relative to the number of respondents to the survey. (e.g. 103 individuals responding to the survey have run the Skykomish River representing 62% of respondents).

**Quality:** Respondents were asked to score the quality of each run based on the recreational and aesthetic qualities of the river based on a 1-5 scale with 5 representing an outstanding run. Standard deviation was also calculated to quantify level of agreement regarding the quality of the run. Those runs scoring 4.50 or higher were considered outstanding whitewater runs of regional or national significance.

**Commercial Use:** A Y indicates that the run has been used by commercial outfitters. These list may not be comprehensive but it represents the runs most often run and for which land managers issue commercial use permits. Values represent ten year averages (1995-2005) for visitor days provided by US Forest Service. It should be noted that accurate use numbers are not available for the most popular rivers that include the Skykomish and Wenatchee because the sections most often commercially run are downstream of the Forest Service boundary and no management agency tracks use numbers.

**Open Ended Comments:** All respondents were asked to describe the special or unique opportunities paddling in the North Cascades provides. All responses to this question are included.

River	state	section	put-in lat	put-in long	take-out lat	take-out long	FAVORITE	Popularity (Count)	Popularity (%)	Quality, mean	Quality, SD	Commerical Use	Commerical Use
Bacon Creek	WA	Falls Creek to Skagit River confluence	48.650383	-121.4269104	48.5879059	-121.3951492	0	14	8%	3.14	0.86		
Baker River	WA	North Cascades National Park to Baker Lake	48.7616577	-121.5447998	48.7392082	-121.5673599	0	8	5%	3.38	0.74		
Beckler	WA	Rapid River to S.Fork Skykomish	47.8033028	-121.2926407	47.7140656	-121.3406601	0	35	21%	3.69	0.80		
Boulder	WA	Boulder Falls to mouth	48.2465286	-121.8274078	48.2778397	-121.7810211	0	7	4%	3.00	0.82		
Box Canyon Creek	WA	to Kachess Reservoir	47.3791275	-121.2603226	47.3593216	-121.2453995	0	6	4%	3.67	1.03		
Canyon Creek (NF Nooksack)	WA	Canyon Creek Bridge to Glacier Springs.	48.9330292	-121.9495392	48.9146996	-121.9908676	0	14	8%	3.71	0.99		
Canyon Creek (S.F. Still. trib)	WA	1 - Confluence to Hampton Tree Farm Bridge	48.1579208	-121.8169785	48.1215134	-121.9047699	0	9	5%	3.89	0.33		
Canyon Creek (S.F. Still. trib)	WA	2 - Hampton Tree Farm Bridge to Fishing Access	48.1215134	-121.9047699	48.1151237	-121.9639282	0	14	8%	4.00	0.55		
Canyon Creek (S.F. Still. trib)	WA	3 - Fishing Access site to S.Fork Stillaguamish	48.114933	-121.9636459	48.0960388	-121.9733582	2	43	26%	4.30	0.60		
Canyon Creek (Skagit trib.)	WA	Slate Creek to Granite Creek	48.7570992	-120.7942963	48.7071991	-120.9160995	0	5	3%	3.40	0.89		
Cascade	WA	1 - bl. Mineral Park to Marble Creek Campground (Upper)	48.5013275	-121.2506027	48.5306473	-121.2806015	1	8	5%	3.88	0.99		
Cascade	WA	2 - Marble Creek Campground to Bridge nr. Skagit confluence	48.5306473	-121.2806015	48.5265694	-121.4139252	5	35	21%	4.77	0.55	Y	
Chelan	WA	Lake Chelan to Columbia River	47.8336906	-120.0109024	47.8052025	-119.9866562	0	7	4%	3.57	1.13		
Chewuch	WA	1. Andrews Camp to Camp Four (The Upper)	48.7824516	-120.1079636	48.7153625	-120.125473	1	10	6%	3.60	0.70		
Chewuch	WA	2. Camp Four to Five Mile Bridge (The Middle)	48.7153625	-120.1254044	48.5645523	-120.1781006	1	11	7%	3.45	0.69		
Chewuch	WA	3. Five Mile Bridge to Winthrop (The Lower)	48.5645256	-120.1781006	48.4735489	-120.1776733	0	9	5%	3.00	0.50		
Chiwawa	WA	1 - Schaefer Creek to Huckleberry Campground (near Brush Creek)	47.9736052	-120.802617	47.897456	-120.7135033	1	13	8%	3.77	0.73		
Chiwawa	WA	2 - Huckleberry Campground (near Brush Creek) to Wenatchee R.	47.897456	-120.7135033	47.7665752	-120.6627237	1	19	12%	3.74	0.65		
Cle Elum	WA	1 - Scatter Creek to Salmon La Sac Creek (China Gorge)	47.4663544	-121.0475388	47.4031754	-121.0973816	4	41	25%	4.34	0.91		
Cle Elum	WA	2 - Salmon La Sac Creek to Cle Elum Reservoir	47.4031754	-121.0973816	47.3558235	-121.1070251	0	30	18%	3.90	0.80		
Cle Elum	WA	3 - Cle Elum Dam to confluence with Yakima River	47.2407036	-121.0644379	47.1901016	-121.0155563	0	18	11%	3.61	0.78		
Clear Creek	WA	Eightmile Creek to ab. Abestos Creek Falls	48.1603203	-121.6018829	48.1859665	-121.5769424	0	8	5%	3.75	0.71		
Clearwater (MF Nooksack trib.)	WA	to MF Nooksack	48.7892418	-122.0225143	48.7745667	-122.0451889	11	29	18%	4.72	0.53		
Cooper River	WA	Waterfall to Cle Elum River	47.4192543	-121.1382675	47.4090233	-121.1071091	22	47	28%	4.74	0.71		
Day Creek	WA	Blair Rd. to Skagit River	48.441864	-122.0067902	48.5014801	-122.0461807	0	7	4%	3.43	0.98		
Deception Creek	WA	Fisher Creek to Tye River	47.6499367	-121.1908569	47.7138977	-121.1935883	0	6	4%	3.33	1.37		
Deer Creek	WA	Bridge at Rick Creek to mouth (town of Oso)	48.3616638	-121.908905	48.2700157	-121.9333725	0	6	4%	3.50	0.55		
Dingford Creek	WA	bl. Goat Creek to M.F. Snoqualmie	47.5227776	-121.4311142	47.5152779	-121.4538879	0	9	5%	3.89	1.27		
Downey Creek	WA	Downey Creek trail to Suiattle River	48.271183	-121.2167053	48.2593346	-121.2249298	0	5	3%	2.80	0.84		
Duwamish	WA	King County Park behind Boeing	47.503273	-122.296669	47.503273	-122.296669	0	12	7%	2.67	0.98		
Entiat	WA	1. Cottonwood Campground to FR 5605 (Cottonwood Section)	48.0222588	-120.6443176	47.9649391	-120.5510254	0	16	10%	4.13	0.62		
Entiat	WA	2. FR 5605 to Tommy Creek trailhead (Box Canyon)	47.9649391	-120.5510254	47.9261627	-120.5135956	0	8	5%	4.13	0.64		
Entiat	WA	3. Lake Creek Campground to National Forest boundary (Canyon Sect)	47.9261627	-120.5135956	47.9041405	-120.473587	0	13	8%	4.62	0.65		
Entiat	WA	4. Ardenvoor to Columbia River (Lower)	47.7654305	-120.3657455	47.6634102	-120.2351303	0	8	5%	3.50	0.76		
Finney Creek	WA	Finney Creek Rd. Bridge to bridge at mouth	48.405899	-121.7917938	48.4324226	-121.7486267	0	5	3%	3.60	0.89		
Foss	WA	FR 68 Bridge to Highway 2 bridge	47.6559525	-121.2921295	47.7118988	-121.3115463	3	40	24%	4.33	0.80		
Glacier Creek	WA	FR 39 Bridge to NF Nooksack	48.8548431	-121.9030991	48.88908	-121.940918	0	13	8%	3.69	0.85		
Granite Creek	WA	1. Hwy. 20 to Beebe Creek (Upper)	48.6261177	-120.8411179	48.6892662	-120.8896637	2	15	9%	4.47	0.92		
Granite Creek	WA	2. Beebe Creek to Panther Creek (includes Ruby Creek)	48.6892776	-120.8896637	48.7083092	-120.976059	2	20	12%	4.20	0.89		
Icicle Creek	WA	1 - Rock Island Campground to Ida Creek (Upper)	47.6074867	-120.9175262	47.6067924	-120.8429947	3	41	25%	4.46	0.81		
Icicle Creek	WA	2 - Ida Creek to Snow Creek trailhead	47.6067924	-120.8429947	47.5437126	-120.7080231	12	47	28%	4.74	0.44		
Icicle Creek	WA	3 - Snow Creek trailhead to Leavenworth Hatchery	47.5437126	-120.7080231	47.5580559	-120.6712418	2	40	24%	4.35	0.77		
Illabot Creek	WA	to Rockport-Cascade Rd.	48.42342	-121.4021301	48.4816551	-121.5004425	0	8	5%	2.50	1.20		
Ingalls Creek	WA	Ingalls Creek Rd. to Peshastin Creek	47.4622307	-120.6735229	47.4627876	-120.6614685	1	23	14%	3.78	0.95		
Jackman	WA	mile 6 to mile 1	48.5593872	-121.6052933	48.5289764	-121.6976929	0	4	2%	3.75	0.96		
Jim Creek	WA	Naval Station to S. Fork Stillaguamish	48.2128754	-122.0121155	48.1841011	-122.0762288	0	6	4%	2.83	0.98		
Lake Creek	WA	along FR 400	47.8762932	-121.0530319	47.8764801	-121.0355911	0	5	3%	2.80	1.10		
Lake Washington	WA	Arboretum Slalom Course	47.6462517	-122.2994232	47.6462517	-122.2994232	0	20	12%	2.95	1.00		
Lightning Creek	WA	Boundary Trail to Ross Reservoir	48.9001999	-120.9805984	48.8745003	-121.0182037	0	7	4%	3.86	0.90		
Little Beaver	WA	River Mile 3 to Ross Reservoir	48.9192505	-121.1314087	48.9152374	-121.0750885	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND		
Little Wenatchee	WA	Fall Creek to Lake Creek Campground	47.8958397	-121.0751648	47.8731537	-121.0135803	6	33	20%	4.64	0.78		
Lost	WA	Drake Creek to Methow River confluence	48.7812042	-120.394928	48.6551743	-120.5064087	1	9	5%	4.56	0.73		
Mad	WA	3.3 miles up Mad River to Entiat River	47.7576808	-120.4239194	47.7367779	-120.3688465	0	4	2%	3.25	0.50		
Martin Creek	WA	along FR 6710	47.7468987	-121.1887436	47.7264557	-121.206459	0	4	2%	3.50	0.58		
Methow	WA	1. River Bend Campground to Carlton	48.651577	-120.5532303	48.2454262	-120.1175842	0	18	11%	3.56	0.70		
Methow	WA	2. Carlton to McFarland Creek access	48.2463417	-120.1176147	48.1507912	-120.0566635	0	25	15%	3.72	0.68	Y	
Methow	WA	3. McFarland Creek access to Pateros (Black Canyon)	48.1507607	-120.0566177	48.0461845	-119.9154053	7	54	33%	4.04	0.64	Y	
Miller	WA	East Fork to NE Old Cascade Highway	47.6585197	-121.3788605	47.7166252	-121.3925552	0	16	10%	4.13	0.72		
Miller, East Fork	WA	along FR 6412	47.6344337	-121.3776703	47.6423988	-121.3748474	0	12	7%	4.00	0.85		
Miller, West Fork	WA	Upstream of Miller Rd. Bridge	47.659584	-121.4112015	47.6713295	-121.3913727	0	12	7%	4.33	0.78		
Money Creek	WA	Upstream of Money Creek Rd. Bridge	47.7004356	-121.4660873	47.716301	-121.4092712	1	30	18%	3.97	0.93		
Nason	WA	1. Bernie to Merritt (Upper)	47.7714615	-120.9998093	47.7835732	-120.8759232	1	20	12%	4.20	0.77		
Nason	WA	2. Merritt to Coles Corner (Lower)	47.7691422	-120.8027344	47.7609138	-120.7347794	0	14	8%	3.71	0.91		
Nooksack, Middle Fork	WA	Clearwater Creek to Heisters Creek	48.7666512	-122.0395737	48.7847328	-122.1128845	1	31	19%	4.52	0.63		
Nooksack, N. Fork	WA	1 - Mt. Baker Wilderness to Nooksack Falls	48.9026985	-121.7332001	48.9073982	-121.8019028	1	20	12%	4.35	0.67		
Nooksack, N. Fork	WA	2 - Nooksack Falls to Douglas Fir Campground	48.9032211	-121.8851776	48.9019012	-121.9116669	11	43	26%	4.67	0.52		
Nooksack, N. Fork	WA	3 - Douglas Fir Campground to Mt. Baker Highway milepost 27	48.9019012	-121.9116669	48.9209671	-122.0546494	7	64	39%	4.20	0.78	Y	
Nooksack, S. Fork	WA	River Mile 25 to Saxon Road	48.5988426	-122.0118637	48.6701164	-122.1435547	0	20	12%	3.90	0.91		

Peshastin Creek	WA	Highway 97 culvert to Wenatchee River	47.4542961	-120.6560669	47.557373	-120.5749054	3	49	30%	3.61	0.86	
Pilchuck Creek	WA	1 - Lake Cavanaugh Road to Pilchuck Creek Campsite	48.3411827	-122.0557327	48.320343	-122.1422729	0	25	15%	4.28	0.74	
Pilchuck Creek	WA	2 - Pilchuck Creek Campsite to Highway 9 Bridge	48.320343	-122.1422729	48.2654228	-122.1647949	2	32	19%	4.13	0.83	
Pilchuck Creek	WA	3 - Highway 9 Bridge to I-5 Bridge	48.265255	-122.1661377	48.2100296	-122.2261505	0	6	4%	3.83	1.17	
Pilchuck River	WA	Road P-500 above Boulder Creek to Menzel Lake Road Bridge	48.0232391	-121.8162155	48.0186577	-121.9136581	0	6	4%	3.83	1.17	
Pratt	WA	Kaleetan Creek to M.F. Snoqualmie	47.4597206	-121.5316696	47.5258331	-121.5858307	0	6	4%	3.67	0.82	
Racehorse Creek	WA	to NF Nooksack	48.8716202	-122.0475845	48.8883438	-122.1453323	1	12	7%	4.17	0.83	
Raging	WA	Hwy 18 to Preston	47.4863014	-121.8884964	47.5230064	-121.9239349	0	9	5%	3.22	1.30	
Raging	WA	Preston to Fall City	47.5230064	-121.9239349	47.5681839	-121.8870621	0	19	12%	3.47	0.84	
Rapid	WA	Road end to Beckler River	47.8186111	-121.2405548	47.8030548	-121.2944412	0	28	17%	4.04	0.84	
Ruth Creek	WA	Mt. Baker Wilderness Area to confluence with Nooksack River	48.9091988	-121.5875015	48.8941994	-121.6631012	0	4	2%	3.75	0.96	
Sauk	WA	1 - Bedal Campground to Whitechuck River (Upper)	48.0970345	-121.3891296	48.1730309	-121.4723282	1	34	21%	4.18	0.83 Y	
Sauk	WA	2 - Whitechuck River to Clear Creek	48.1730309	-121.4723282	48.2187271	-121.568718	9	71	43%	4.28	0.74 Y	1172
Sauk	WA	3 - Clear Creek to Darrington	48.2187271	-121.568718	48.2619095	-121.5941544	1	34	21%	4.09	0.79 Y	
Sauk	WA	4 - Darrington to Sauk River Park	48.2619095	-121.5941544	48.4130707	-121.5591583	0	18	11%	3.89	1.02 Y	
Sauk, N. Fork	WA	Above North Fork Falls	48.0929909	-121.3382416	48.0979729	-121.3678818	1	20	12%	4.55	0.60	
Silver Creek	WA	Quartz Creek to North Fork Skykomish	47.9259758	-121.4388885	47.8675995	-121.4816971	2	31	19%	4.32	0.75	
Skagit	WA	1. Goodell Creek to Copper Creek	48.6718483	-121.2694168	48.5910988	-121.3728027	2	51	31%	3.96	0.92 Y	
Skagit	WA	2. Copper Creek to Rockport	48.5910988	-121.3728027	48.4846001	-121.5945969	3	47	28%	3.87	0.97 Y	962
Skookum Creek	WA	Above lower gorge to SF of the Nooksack	48.6798668	-122.1255951	48.6700668	-122.1430817	0	7	4%	4.14	0.69	
Skykomish	WA	1 - Index (Sunset Falls) to Railroad Bridge	47.8038597	-121.5514603	47.8291435	-121.6172943	40	103	62%	4.50	0.71 Y	844
Skykomish	WA	2 - Railroad Bridge to Big Eddy	47.8291016	-121.6156998	47.8366051	-121.6597672	2	91	55%	4.00	0.83 Y	
Skykomish	WA	3 - Big Eddy to Monroe	47.8366051	-121.6597672	47.8461609	-121.9705734	0	47	28%	3.74	0.94 Y	
Skykomish, N. Fork	WA	1. Jackson Wilderness to Bear Creek	47.9253998	-121.2778854	47.8939018	-121.3860016	0	16	10%	4.50	0.73	
Skykomish, N. Fork	WA	2. Bear Creek (Drumbeater) to South Fork confluence	47.8946877	-121.3931351	47.8125954	-121.5788345	21	68	41%	4.44	0.85 Y	159
Skykomish, S. Fork	WA	1. Beckler River to bridge above Baring	47.7137985	-121.3399811	47.7856102	-121.5012512	0	22	13%	3.82	0.85	
Skykomish, S. Fork	WA	2. Baring to Sunset Falls	47.7856102	-121.5012512	47.8074989	-121.5386963	1	15	9%	4.47	0.64	
Sloan Creek	WA	to NF Sauk	48.0484314	-121.290741	48.0580597	-121.2909851	0	4	2%	3.75	0.96	
Snoqualmie	WA	Snoqualmie Falls to Plum's Landing	47.5421715	-121.8388062	47.5547981	-121.8544312	1	45	27%	3.96	0.93	
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork	WA	1 - Hardscrabble Creek to Burnboot Creek	47.5082359	-121.3543396	47.4879265	-121.3895416	0	14	8%	4.21	0.70	
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork	WA	2 - Burnboot Creek to Taylor River	47.4879265	-121.3895416	47.5470009	-121.5389328	1	16	10%	4.13	0.72	
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork	WA	3 - Taylor River to Concrete bridge (Upper)	47.5471039	-121.5417938	47.4950333	-121.6408005	2	33	20%	3.97	0.77	
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork	WA	4 - Concrete bridge to Tanner (Middle-Middle)	47.4950485	-121.6406784	47.4796906	-121.7384451	19	87	53%	4.30	0.68	
Snoqualmie, Middle Fork	WA	5 - Tanner to North Bend (The Club Stretch)	47.4781723	-121.7391129	47.5160675	-121.7679977	1	45	27%	3.67	0.98	
Snoqualmie, N. Fork	WA	1. Big Creek to Spur 10 Bridge (Upper)	47.6398506	-121.6864243	47.5794487	-121.7153015	1	17	10%	4.00	0.87	
Snoqualmie, N. Fork	WA	2. Spur 10 Bridge to 428th St. Bridge (Ernie's Canyon)	47.5794487	-121.7152786	47.5220337	-121.769722	5	19	12%	4.95	0.23	
Snoqualmie, S. Fork	WA	1. I-90 Exit 52 to Denny Creek Campground (Fall in the Wall)	47.4269371	-121.4290543	47.4116402	-121.4440308	6	41	25%	4.59	0.63	
Snoqualmie, S. Fork	WA	2. Twin Falls State Park to 436th St. Bridge	47.4537849	-121.7078781	47.4664116	-121.7583847	0	35	21%	3.94	0.87	
Squire Creek	WA	Squire Creek Road to downstream	48.1902504	-121.6424789	48.2254906	-121.6304160	0	4	2%	4.25	0.50	
Stehekin	WA	Agnes Creek to Lake Chelan	48.3793983	-120.8339996	48.3209648	-120.6805267	0	9	5%	3.89	1.05	
Stetattle Creek	WA	bl Jay Creek to Gorge Lake	48.7479286	-121.1905975	48.7168121	-121.1502609	0	6	4%	3.67	0.82	
Stillaguamish, N. Fork	WA	1. Confluence with S. Branch to bridge below Moose Creek	48.3278313	-121.6405945	48.2801552	-121.7027649	0	6	4%	3.33	0.52	
Stillaguamish, N. Fork	WA	2. Moose Creek to Oso	48.2801552	-121.7026749	48.2738419	-121.9100189	1	11	7%	4.09	0.83	
Stillaguamish, S. Fork	WA	1 - Deer Creek to Mallardy Creek (Upper)	48.0629501	-121.5155029	48.071804	-121.6554489	0	6	4%	4.50	0.55	
Stillaguamish, S. Fork	WA	2 - Mallardy Creek to Verlot (Middle)	48.0742493	-121.7080002	48.0923233	-121.783577	1	30	18%	4.20	0.66	
Stillaguamish, S. Fork	WA	3 - Verlot to Granite Falls (Robe Canyon Run)	48.0923233	-121.783577	48.1027985	-121.9526367	18	35	21%	4.80	0.53	
Stillaguamish, S. Fork	WA	4 - Granite Falls to Jordan (Lower)	48.1027069	-121.9551849	48.1478996	-122.0382309	0	8	5%	4.25	0.71	
Suiattle	WA	1. Sulphur Creek to Rat Trap (FR 25) Bridge	48.2350731	-121.1798019	48.3017502	-121.4181213	1	16	10%	3.69	0.79 Y	
Suiattle	WA	2. Rat Trap (FR 25) Bridge to Sauk River	48.3017502	-121.4181213	48.3445358	-121.5482483	1	28	17%	3.79	0.99 Y	
Sultan	WA	1. Spada Reservoir to Powerhouse (The Upper)	47.9712982	-121.7005005	47.9086999	-121.8145981	1	29	18%	4.45	0.69 Y	434
Sultan	WA	2. Powerhouse to Fishing Access	47.9086999	-121.8145981	47.8886986	-121.8349991	1	56	34%	4.11	0.80	
Taylor	WA	bl. Marten Creek to MF Snoqualmie	47.5772209	-121.5047226	47.560833	-121.5322189	0	9	5%	3.67	0.87	
Teanaway	WA	N. Fork Teanaway to E. Masterson Road (near Musser Creek)	47.2549095	-120.8789597	47.2010612	-120.7821198	1	13	8%	3.54	1.05	
Teanaway, N. Fork	WA	Johnson Creek to Stafford Creek	47.3807106	-120.8862915	47.3465233	-120.8496399	1	11	7%	3.91	1.04	
Thunder Creek	WA	Trail mile 4.1 to Colonial creek campground	48.6226158	-121.0564957	48.6890984	-121.0942993	1	15	9%	4.67	0.62	
Tolt	WA	Tolt River Road nr. Carnation to Snoqualmie River	47.6972237	-121.8233337	47.6408348	-121.9255524	0	8	5%	3.50	0.53	
Tolt, N. Fork	WA	ab. Yellow Creek to SF Tolt	47.7195778	-121.7431793	47.6957664	-121.8212357	0	7	4%	3.86	0.38	
Tolt, S. Fork	WA	Bridge to confluence with N. Fork Tolt	47.689167	-121.7130585	47.6972237	-121.8233337	0	5	3%	3.80	0.45	
Trout Creek (Sky drainage)	WA	to NF Sky	47.8583603	-121.4745712	47.8632736	-121.4872665	0	9	5%	4.00	0.71	
Twisp	WA	Buttermilk Creek to town of Twisp	48.3638077	-120.336998	48.3698273	-120.1486893	0	12	7%	3.33	0.65	
Tye	WA	1. Surprise Creek to Alpine Falls (Upper)	47.7118416	-121.1649475	47.7176399	-121.2247391	7	38	23%	4.22	0.39	
Tye	WA	2. Alpine Falls to Beckler River (Lower)	47.7168884	-121.2262726	47.7137985	-121.3399811	0	30	18%	4.30	0.65	
Wallace	WA	Bridge below Wallace Falls to Sultan	47.8627014	-121.6921997	47.8594017	-121.796402	0	8	5%	3.13	0.64	
Wapatus	WA	Wapatus Lake trail to Salmon La Sac	47.4357262	-121.1123962	47.4029388	-121.0975494	0	4	2%	3.75	0.50	
Wenatchee	WA	1. Lake Wenatchee State Park to Tumwater Campground	47.8098984	-120.7151489	47.6762009	-120.7340622	0	29	18%	4.00	1.00 Y	
Wenatchee	WA	2. Tumwater Campground to Leavenworth (Tumwater Canyon)	47.6405945	-120.720993	47.5873642	-120.6839294	12	66	40%	4.45	0.79	
Wenatchee	WA	3. Leavenworth to Monitor	47.5690651	-120.5954056	47.5244713	-120.4655228	28	106	64%	4.34	0.78 Y	
Whatcom Creek	WA	Lake Whatcom to Yew St. Bridge	48.7532959	-122.4263992	48.7548256	-122.4449692	1	22	13%	3.45	1.30	
Whitechuck	WA	Bridge above Crystal Creek to Sauk River confluence	48.1777992	-121.3587036	48.1724014	-121.4709015	0	6	4%	4.67	0.52	

Yakima	WA	Confluence with Teanaway River to Thorp	47.1658554	-120.8282242	47.0713425	-120.6584167	0	19	12%	3.21	0.85	Y
Ashnola River	BC						1	7	4%	3.86	0.90	
Chilliwack	BC	Post Creek to Camp Foley III+					1	17	10%	4.29	0.92	
Chilliwack	BC	Sleese Creek to Tamih					7	45	27%	4.24	0.80	
Chilliwack	BC	Tamih to Vedder Crossing					1	22	13%	4.05	0.84	
Chilliwack	BC	The Canyon (Camp Foley to Slesse)					15	39	24%	4.79	0.47	
Coquihalla	BC	Jessica Bridge to Othello III(IV)					1	11	7%	4.18	0.60	
Fraser	BC	Boston Bar to Yale					2	12	7%	4.08	0.67	
Fraser	BC	Yale to Hope					0	7	4%	4.43	0.79	
Nicola River	BC	Shackan Campground to Thompson River II-III					4	17	10%	4.12	0.70	
Nicolum Creek	BC						0	6	4%	3.83	1.17	
Silverhope Creek	BC						0	13	8%	4.77	0.44	
Similkameen	BC	below Similkameen Falls					0	6	4%	4.50	0.55	
Similkameen	BC	Bromley Rock to Stenwinder Park II(III)					5	17	10%	4.29	0.85	
Similkameen	BC	Canyon III(IV)					5	12	7%	4.50	0.67	
Slesse Creek	BC	to Chilliwack III (IV)					0	10	6%	4.50	0.71	
Spus Creek	BC						0	12	7%	4.00	0.85	
Sumallo River	BC						0	9	5%	3.56	1.01	
Thompson	BC	Nicoamen Confluence (Frog) to Fraser IV+					4	62	38%	4.32	0.67	
Thompson	BC	Spences Bridge to Nicoamen Confluence II+					0	22	13%	3.77	1.02	
Tulameen	BC	Coalmont to Princeton					2	13	8%	4.23	0.60	

## Individual Paddler Responses

Paddlers were asked an open-ended question regarding the special qualities rivers in the North Cascades offer for whitewater paddling. All responses are included below and highlight the reasons that paddlers value the opportunities available: a year-around paddling season, a high diversity of river types, opportunities for remote backcountry experiences that are accessible to population centers, opportunities for solitude, spectacular scenery, and clean free-flowing rivers.

Question: Describe the special or unique opportunities paddling in the North Cascades provides. If you have experience paddling in other parts of the country how is the experience in the North Cascades special or unique?

1. spectacular scenery, great whitewater, relative privacy, consistent water, great communities to spend time in and a great paddling community  
Thu, 3/6/08 2:48 PM

2. relatively easy access to beautiful rivers. an incredible variety of paddling opportunities, both skill level and setting. I've paddled more remote rivers (grand canyon) which is a longer more committing trip, and other day/play runs (lochsa). North Cascades compares with favorably with the my Idaho experiences, but is closer to home. Sun, 3/2/08 11:24 PM

3. I love how many great rivers are in such a close proximity to each other and to where I live (seattle). Great scenic beauty, clear water and wide variety of different runs. Also, most rivers are not too crowded. Reliable paddling opportunities all year long, if desired. Sun, 2/24/08 3:58 PM

4. I have spent most of my time paddling in MD/WV/PA. The North Cascades are spectacular with beautiful gorges and impressive water clarity. Every paddler should spend significant time here. Tue, 2/19/08 4:13 PM

5. within a short driving distance, there is just not the variety of runs that we have here. Also it is rarely ever crowded Tue, 2/12/08 5:18 PM

6. I've paddled in the Northeast, Southeast, Rockies, Cali... No region experiences the dynamic yearly changes that affect the Cascades... The rivers are continually evolving, and demand a different level of focus and care to run safely. Wed, 2/6/08 2:30 PM

7. Lack of people on the water makes the North Cascades special, with the exception of the busy Wenatchee River. The Cascades provided a large amount of recreation to those who are passionate about the wilderness. Most rafting stretches are considerably safe and very enjoyable. Tue, 1/15/08 9:59 AM

8. The memories provided make life great. Our Ross Lake trips on par with Isle Royale and the BWCA. The whitewater runs here more thrilling. Wed, 1/9/08 11:14 PM

9. The waters are a beautiful color and usually clean. Most of the rivers make me feel like I'm in the middle of the wilderness and that's one of the reasons I kayak (as well as backpack). Even when there is a road near it seems like there's not because it's usually not visible until you get to a bridge. Many

of the rivers feel remote and untouched. I like paddling for the same reason I like backpacking; to get out and enjoy the wilderness and to learn more about it every day. I used to paddle back east and many of the rivers are packed with rafters and paddlers there. Wed, 1/9/08 5:42 PM

10. Accessible wilderness Tue, 1/8/08 7:43 PM

11. I LIVE BETWEEN MARBLEMOUNT & ROCKPORT ON THE SKAGIT. IT IS A GREAT RIVER WINTER & SUMMER. I HAVE PADDLED IN ARKANSAS, TEXAS, CALIFORNIA, MONTANA, MINNESOTA. HARD IT BEAT THE NORTH CASCADES Tue, 1/8/08 5:18 PM

12. More scenic, better variety, more choices Tue, 1/8/08 2:22 PM

13. The flora of the North Cascades area makes every trip a nature adventure. This is more true for this area than for desert rivers in other states. Tue, 1/8/08 1:51 PM

14. several rivers in the north cascades can be boated all year with very little downtime (sept). I love Idaho in the spring but, it's way cold in winter & most rivers are dry by july. Sat, 1/5/08 8:00 PM

15. This best thing about the North Cascades is that it is in some of the most beautiful country and there is always something runnable 365 days a year. Sun, 12/30/07 4:25 PM

16. absolutely gorgeous Thu, 12/27/07 7:51 AM

17. Long paddling season due to rainy winters on the west side and heavy snowpacks on both east and west sides. Many high quality runs packed in, so there is alot of variety...from small steep creeks to large, high-volume rivers. Wed, 12/26/07 11:43 AM

18. North Cascades paddling allows access to the lushness of the Douglas Fir forests Fri, 11/30/07 12:00 AM

19. Large variety of rivers and terrain. Sat, 11/3/07 10:43 AM

20. Howdy~I started boating in the wild and wonderful West Virginia. I paddled throughout the SE for a few years and moved to Glacier, WA in the heart of the North Cascades. The Southeast kicks ass but this place is nirvana. I've been boating here for seven years and haven't missed a single month in that span! That's what I love most of paddling here...the never ending season. Whether it's playboating the runoff or creeking in the rain, the North Cascades can't be beat. Secluded, fern covered canyons, crystal clear water and waterfalls...what more could you ask for. Oh yeah, the olympics, coastal surf and BC aren't that far away. Thanks for listening and keep up the good work. May all rivers flow freely. Mark Mon, 10/29/07 9:43 PM

21. I've paddled in many other places outside of the Pacific Northwest and there is no place like what we have here. The evergreen forests, clean water, commanding views, and year-round season are just a couple of the things that make this place amazing. I chose my job, my house, my life based on the whitewater resources in this area. Having the North Cascades so close is like a dream come true. Thanks, Eric Tue, 10/16/07 6:47 PM



22. not as much pressure of people using rivers. I came from Calif.  
Yikes!!! Mon, 10/15/07 7:43 PM
23. The North Cascades offers an incredible selection of diverse runs that are easily accessed and surrounded by stunning natural beauty and wildlife. It's hard to top the experience of working with a wild river in a visually breathtaking canyon / gorge surrounded by snow capped peaks. I've done some paddling in Idaho and California where the access and beauty were close, but for sheer variety and quantity of high quality wild river runs, the North Cascades can't be topped! Sun, 10/14/07 10:52 AM
24. Year Round Paddling Fri, 10/12/07 9:26 PM
25. Cold clear water. Rivers that change radically with rainfall. Natural free flowing rivers. Fri, 10/12/07 6:58 PM
26. Wide variety of river character and difficulty. Beautiful scenery, majestic mountains, paddling available most of the year. Fri, 10/12/07 5:49 PM
27. One thing that stands out for me paddling in the N. Cascades is the pristine quality of so many of the rivers. While I haven't done a lot of paddling in other parts of the country I hear about a lot of rivers in other areas that have been very heavily impacted by humans ( for example, rapids that have been formed by blast rock from road construction in Colorado and the many rivers on the east coast which rely on dam-releases to be runnable). While there is of course some of this in the N. Cascades as well, I feel that we are lucky to have so many free-flowing rivers that provide high quality whitewater as well as incredible natural beauty, two qualities that in my opinion are of equal importance to the overall kayaking experience. Fri, 10/12/07 3:09 PM
28. The N. Cascades rivers have beautiful views, challenging whitewater and not too many people. They are as varied as eco-systems in the state. They are close by and very accessible, as a rule. Spending more time on the river than driving is an attainable goal with lots of choices. The season is longer than anywhere else in the country and they can be enjoyed in many different crafts at many different levels. The almost infinite variety is unique to the N. Cascades rivers. And the fact that most are freeflowing adds a dash of feeling privileged and lucky when you catch one at just the right level with a beautiful day. Running these rivers is one of the things that makes life worth living. Fri, 10/12/07 1:20 AM
29. Clean water – compared to paddling many Eastern Rivers, the water quality in the North Cascades is outstanding. Wilderness feel without being too far from civilization Wildlife – I've seen eagles, osprey, elk, deer, black bears, salmon, otters, and other cool creatures while paddling in the North Cascades. Challenging whitewater – the North Cascades has a high concentration of class 4–5 runs. Spectacular scenery – regardless of the difficulty of the whitewater, the scenery on runs in the North Cascades is usually spectacular: snow-capped mountain peaks, vertical-walled gorges with rainforest ferns hanging down from the tops of the walls, rocks covered with moss so thick it looks like something from the Lord of the Rings, old-growth trees that make you feel very small, and translucent water colors that range

from turquoise blue to emerald green. Changing rivers – several of the rivers in the North Cascades have their rapids rearranged yearly by the fall floods, and downed trees in the river are a concern after any rain. While some paddlers don't like this (and it can certainly be an inconvenience at times), I like the fact that it forces us paddlers to constantly be on the lookout and be prepared for the unexpected. And I also like how it is a dramatic yearly reminder of the power of the rivers and the environments that we love. Thu, 10/11/07 5:53 PM

30. so many different rivers within a few hrs drive Wed, 10/10/07 10:22 AM

31. This area is special due to it's lovely scenic surroundings, excellent wet-season boating opportunities, and close proximity to a large metropolitan area. Wed, 10/10/07 8:39 AM

32. Incredible scenary and great whitewater! Tue, 10/9/07 10:03 AM

33. The North Cascades offer a rugged alpine setting that is hard to match elsewhere in the country. Paddling many of these rivers, such as the Lost, offer a chance to really feel like you are stepping away from society and entering a true wilderness. There are many rivers which are still rarely run, without a lot of information about them, that can still leave the paddler with an exploratory feel when you run them. Mon, 10/8/07 10:53 PM

34. the isolation and unique aesthetics of the N Cascades. Even on "roadside" runs like the Foss, you feel like it is a wilderness experience due to the vegetation, scenery, and lack of boaters. This is unique compared to other parts of the country I have paddled such as the Rockies. The paddling experience in the N Cascades is awesome. Mon, 10/8/07 5:58 PM

35. Many rivers run all year (except aug. & sept) Mon, 10/8/07 5:45 PM

36. The lack of people and crowds is outstanding and the scenery is second to none Mon, 10/8/07 5:09 PM

37. It is so special I will never move away!!! Great whitewater, year round paddling, and a wide range of runs. Everything from big water to teep creeks. It is not as crowded as back east, nor as commercialized as California or Colorado... very special. Mon, 10/8/07 4:21 PM

38. close to home. good for day trips/ challenge of river Mon, 10/8/07 2:23 PM

39. There are so many fun runs in a small area. Also, the weather makes it possible to run whitewater year round. Washington is a great place to live if you are a whitewater enthusiast. Mon, 10/8/07 2:09 PM

40. Variety of environment and wide selection of runs across the north cascades are the best qualities of this part of the world. Mon, 10/8/07 2:08 PM

41. Access in other parts of the country is better than the North Cascades. Idaho has incredible river access where as we have to fight for access even if the access is on public land. The North Cascades have incredible scenery

and wildlife. Where else can you watch Bald Eagles and elk/deer at the water as you float by. Mon, 10/8/07 1:26 PM

42. Proximity and familiarity for me. Mon, 10/8/07 10:48 AM

43. Great opportunities for boating year round due to snowmelt and rain. Spectacular scenery; option for runs either close to civilization or in true wilderness. Many different class ratings to choose from. Few rivers are overcrowded. Mon, 10/8/07 10:45 AM

44. I spent a few years living in Olympia, but primarily boat in the mid-atlantic. The scenery and quality of the runs in the North Cascades is amazing. What makes those runs so different is also how few people are on the rivers. Coming from the potomac, NRG, and Gauley, running a river without seeing any other group is amazing. Mon, 10/8/07 10:42 AM

45. There are many rivers and creeks in the North Cascades which give the sensation of isolation and remoteness while being relatively close to home. Mon, 10/8/07 10:24 AM

46. Most rivers I've paddled in Cali, Colorado, Arkansas, TX are along major roadways. The North Cascades affords paddlers the opportunity to really get 'out'doors more so than most other regions. The Stein/Nahatlatch in BC are actually my two favorite rivers. Sun, 10/7/07 2:38 PM

47. Weather conditions provide both rain and snowmelt. Fantastic water quality (no industrial, domestic sewer, or agricultural run-off) Sun, 10/7/07 12:46 PM

48. Mountain canyons. Beautiful scenery. Clean water. Close to home. Sun, 10/7/07 1:37 AM

49. To me there is no more beautiful place than the Whitechuck/Sauk and Skykomish drainages. Sat, 10/6/07 2:36 PM

50. I moved to the NW for the paddling in the North Cascades & BC. Sheer-walled gorges, polished bedrock, the big trees/moss/vegetation/greenness in temperate rainforests, remote rivers that never see crowds, cold clean water, salmon. One of the things that struck me recently as uniquely "Northwest" is that throughout most of the year, when I go kayaking, it's usually on a run I've never done before, or it's a "new" run altogether .. meaning that the spirit of "adventure" is usually a big part of any paddling mission up here. Having lived & paddled on the east coast & the rockies, I can no longer imagine being content living anywhere else in the US as a fully engaged kayaker. Sat, 10/6/07 12:49 PM

51. great access. overall outdoor experience. i.e. uncrowded camping, hiking, and amazing scenery. Sat, 10/6/07 11:56 AM

52. I have paddled most of the significant regions of the country and several other countries in the world, and the North Cascades ranks as one of the best regions for paddling that I have experienced. The North Cascades has an abundance of boating that is both accessible and remote at the same time. It possesses an incredibly long season with unique diversity of runs. Sat, 10/6/07 11:13 AM

53. The mountain scenery in the North Cascades is amazing. Also, many of the rivers still have undeveloped shorelines. The rivers that are more inaccessible, e.g. 'canyon' are usually the most spectacular. Fri, 10/5/07 11:09 PM

54. Greater than 9 months/year paddling. A range of rivers with varying difficulty Unique for quality of some of the runs and the long season through the winter Not as much play as some runs in WVa or costa Rica, or as much granite slides as in CA. Overall variety of runs is less than in CA, but much more dependable in WA. Costa Rica has much, much warmer water and is loads of fun and also has a long season but Seattle, WA is probably the best place to live, kayak and snowsport and juggle a professional career. Portland OR is another alternative, but I haven't paddled much down there. Fri, 10/5/07 8:08 PM

55. Spectacular scenery, challenging whitewater, reasonable proximity to Seattle, occasionally interesting wildlife, possibility of boating 52 weeks a year. Fri, 10/5/07 5:54 PM

56. The North Cascades provides me with the best in whitewater opportunities. As a kayaker and a catarfter I am able to explore an abundance of rivers and drainages requiring many different skill levels. There are so many different kinds of rivers to run in the Noth Cascades! From desert like landscapes to rainforrest feels this place has it all! There are so many opportunities for exploration! Access can be a challenge but this is always part of the fun! the North Cascades normally provide a solitary experience that is near impossible in places like WV. I have paddled in North Carolina, West Virginia and Pennsylvania and found it fun but not near the wilderness experience I get on PNW rivers. The North Cascades is also adjacent to so many more places that offer even more whitewater. The Olympic Penninsula, Idaho, Central and Southern Cascades all provide more killer whitewater and are only a few hours drive from the North Caascades. I would rate the whitewater here as not only as challenging as is gets anywhere but also extremely diverse. A paddler can spend a long time getting to know the rivers and building skills and knowledge that will take them to the next level. I have been boating here for 7 years and have found a place in the North Cascades and surrounding areas that keeps me excited about new adventures and gained knowledge and skill. I love it here!!! Fri, 10/5/07 5:54 PM

57. Close to where I live Fri, 10/5/07 4:08 PM

58. The North Cascades is rad because of how undeveloped it is. It is a treat to be able to achieve a semi-wilderness experience amidst big mountains, awesome wildlife, clean water, and minimal human impact.. all within an hour or two from the cities of western Washington. While the infrastructure is there to get us \*close\* to rivers, and to get drivers to some pretty amazing spots, I appreciate that there aren't roads and attractions everywhere we might want to go. The coolest places in the NW wouldn't be so cool if they had roads and a lot of people. Fri, 10/5/07 1:21 PM

59. Great access to some very remote and scenic rivers. Lots of additional non paddling opportunities in all of the areas, ie these are destination runs. Fri, 10/5/07 11:45 AM

60. The North Cascades is a Mecca for recreational paddling of all ability levels. It's our gateway! Fri, 10/5/07 11:09 AM
61. It can give you a remoteness even though you are near various cities in the NW. Fri, 10/5/07 10:50 AM
62. The North Cascades is unique because there is rarely a time of year when flows are too low to paddle. There always seems to be something running. I really appreciate that we do not need to rely on dam releases to paddle most of our rivers. This makes for a dynamic paddling experience, even on runs that I know well. This also helps spread out paddling pressure, so the rivers rarely feel crowded the way they do in many other parts of the country. Kayaking in the North Cascades also allows access to some little-seen areas of spectacular beauty. I feel lucky to have opportunities like this right in my backyard. Fri, 10/5/07 10:19 AM
63. Aside from Washington, most of my paddling experience is in Idaho. The access in Idaho is by far the best I have seen, access points are marked by road signs on major commercial rivers. I can only compare it to Cashmere's waterfront park, as that is our only acceptable river access facility. Camping is far easier in Idaho also, numerous state parks that are not RV infested, and free dirt camping on thousands of miles of FS roads. It is strange for me to think that Washington is behind Idaho, but in this category, we are, our progression is more towards commercialism, and less toward the public land use Idaho has set a standard for. Fri, 10/5/07 9:56 AM
64. The North Cascades presents the opportunity for year round boating on scenic uncrowded rivers. The east and southeast where I started boating has some great rivers, but the crowds are out of hand. Fri, 10/5/07 9:56 AM
65. Thompson Frog Nicomen to Lytton is not IV+ It is III+ to IV- with some IV at high or very low levels. My e-mail is tomhoskinkayak@yahoo.com but please don't post it on a public domain. Tom Fri, 10/5/07 9:40 AM
66. The N. Cascades have a uniquely remote feeling to them. Along with some amazing whitewater, the Geology is breathtaking. Fri, 10/5/07 9:07 AM
67. Deep, steep-walled granite canyons. Dark, mossy, ominous, thick forest. Amazing scenery. And the rapids are good too. Fri, 10/5/07 8:55 AM
68. Coming from Portland Oregon the North Cascades offers great road trip opportunities. 1. It's a fairly short drive to get to there. 2. There's plenty of camping near the rivers. 3. Multiple runs can be done from one campground for any given road trip. Fri, 10/5/07 8:52 AM
69. I love the north cascades because the rivers feel remote, the landscapes are breathtaking, and the water is clean (I began my paddling on the east coast). There is almost always something running for all skill levels and often times you can find your group is only one on a river at that particular time. Fri, 10/5/07 8:34 AM

70. Right now I spend most of my time paddling around Hood River and the Columbia River Gorge; however when spring hits and the Wenatchee and some of the creeks around there come in it's a great place to be. This past season I met a lot of paddlers from Seattle I plan to get out that was a lot as I hear nothing but great things. Since I've started paddling, I think one of my favorite rivers is the Tumwater. It's pristine water, formidable rapids, and roadside accessibility really makes it a unique run. My paddling buddies, who have paddled all over for the past 25 years, look forward to paddling this stretch of river every year. The draw to it for them is uncanny. Fri, 10/5/07 8:05 AM

71. The diversity of rivers in both difficulty and character make paddling in the NC most enjoyable. I paddle rivers to enjoy nature and no other area offers such a great wilderness feel than the NC rivers. I also enjoy animal tracking and wildlife viewing and so th NC have given me the opportunity to sight cougar, river otter, bear and more. Another important aspect to I have learned to enjoy and expect is the opportunity for riverside camping on many of these rivers. I have paddled a little outside the country and area and feel that the NC have the best paddling resources I have encountered. Not only is the scenery epic and the wildlife plentiful but the diversity of the rivers and the mutliple seasons have made it a lifelong addiction for me. When I look at this list it motivates me to search out runs I have not yet experienced which is the ultimate paddling experience - exploring the unknown! I also run a small non-profit org called Wild and Scenic Institute who's mission is to provide free outdoor recreation and environmental edu programs to disadvantaged youth of Seattle. We have developed our curriculum based on the plentiful natural resources of the NC rivers. We enjoy the bald eagles on the Skagit in the winter, whitewater of Sauk and Sky during Spring runoff, multiday trips and wilderness camping on the Suiattle and year long floats on the Upper Skagit. Thanks NC rivers! I would be happy to write or speak more aout my experiences if it would be helpful Fri, 10/5/07 7:55 AM

72. Close proximity of many, many whitewater resources to urban areas, and a 9-month season for white water boating, most other places have a 3-month spring snow melt season such as Colorado, & Corsica or the other rocky mountian states. Fri, 10/5/07 7:11 AM

73. The North Cascades is such a unique and challenging place to paddle and offers MULTIPLE opportunites for any paddler in a variety of whitewater settings ranging from rivers to trickles. I learned to kayak in Colorado, which is also an amazing place to paddle, but the season is short and everything is largely accessible, and for the most part, polluted in some form. Much of the North Cascades remain for the most part pristine. I have taught kayaking for much of my time here and the variety of runs is key to keeping paddlers coming back for more, now if only the water were a tad warmer! Runs range from smooth bedrock to manky boulders and within a couple hours drive of each other. And the best part is, you can run most of it year round! Aesthetically speaking, I have lived in some of the most beautiful places in the country, Sedona, Durango, Ouray, and the North Cascades rates right up there. We just got off the Clendenning River in BC and I saw more hanging glaciers on that trip that I have seen in my entire life! There are eagles and salmon lurking

around every corner, bears, cougars, slugs, berries and mushrooms; each contributing its part to making the NW one of the best places to paddle. There are some days in the winter when it is raining so hard, you can't see your car outside, and you can't help but get excited because all your favorite runs will start to come in. It takes more motivation, dedication, and preparedness to get out year round in the NW, but if you make and survive the venture, you will be duefully rewarded. Even without the amazing whitewater and outstanding scenery, the NW has one of the most kind and welcoming boating communities of anywhere I have been. There is drama all over the place, but for the most part, NW boaters are all about everyone getting down while having as much fun as possible while leaving no evidence behind that you were ever there. Boaters up here are bred with LNT instincts. It is a part of our blood and is what keeps our rivers looking as pristine as they do. Hope you aren't using this as marketing for the NW, I am still trying to keep this place a secret ;-)

Fri, 10/5/07 6:51 AM

74. The North Cascades region offers so many different levels of paddling, and our climate allows for a year-round boating season, unlike most other places in the world. We have tons of creeking opportunities, as well as backyard classics like the Skykomish, and even world class playboating on the Wenatchee and Thompson rivers. It's a fantastic place to call home. Thu, 10/4/07 11:00 PM

75. Beautiful scenery, with high quality runs. Thu, 10/4/07 10:48 PM

76. I have 3 words: Year round paddling. There is no where else in the country where you can paddle CI II-V 365 days a year if you so chose. And it's not just any old year round paddling, these rivers by far are some of the most beautiful in the country. When I lived in Wisconsin, we used to drive 3-4 hours to get to a single river, now I can leave my house after work and get a run in. When I lived in Wisconsin, I thought I had to fly to New Zealand (and I did) to see beautiful, untouched, nearly magical river gorges. I wish someone had told me that all I had to do was drive to Washington state. Having paddled internationally, I can say with fair certainty that we have a uniquely beautiful resource in our backyard. Protecting it (and providing access) is a major concern of mine. Thu, 10/4/07 10:26 PM

77. What I find so unique is the ability to paddle in a hot and dry climate or in a lush green canyon all within an hour from my house. The opportunity for wilderness boating is also amazing. Thu, 10/4/07 10:05 PM

78. I paddled a lot in the Southeast, have slowed down since we had kids. There are more runs in a shorter distance here when there is water. Thu, 10/4/07 9:38 PM

79. Year-round opportunities (good water levels most of the time), excellent variety for grades, great scenery and nature. Thu, 10/4/07 9:25 PM

80. Unique in that there often is year round paddling. More runs in a good year than there are days to get on 'em. Thu, 10/4/07 9:19 PM

81. Year round paddling is real nice. hitting the slopes for powder turns, then a quick afternoon run on the river is a perfect day. Thu, 10/4/07 9:15 PM

82. Numerous drainages/runs, good snow-pack, remoteness, beautiful scenery, clean water, potential for new or little known runs. Thu, 10/4/07 9:14 PM

83. I love local paddling the closer the better. I think that north cascades is so rugged and remote with no crowds which is great. Thu, 10/4/07 9:11 PM

84. Paddling year round. creeking on thunder creek goes into september! Thu, 10/4/07 9:06 PM

85. The north cascades has some of the most diverse paddling: Roadside rivers, afterwork runs, wilderness/overnite trips, and you can kayak year around. I have found that paddling in other parts of the country is limited by the flows or lack there of during the summer months. Also the old growth forests in our area create some of the most spectacular river corridors I have seen. We have a diverse mix of geology: Clearwater creek is made up of a small strip of sandstone that extends from Bellingham Bay area east to Kendall WA, and the middle fork Nooksack and Racehorse creeks all benefit from the excellent whitewater formed by this interesting geological occurrence. Also, you can drive 35 min north and kayak down the Chilliwack afterwork and the streambed is made up of granite boulders..hows that for diversity! Thu, 10/4/07 8:20 PM

86. If you can handle the road trips, it is the alps of America. Nothing better than cold hands and big smiles. Thu, 10/4/07 2:43 PM

87. Alps of North America! Huge mountains, deep wilderness, CLEAN water, good blend of easy road access and "pay to play" runs. Need to update your river list to make it more inclusive. You include some seldom-run gems, but don't include others like Bridge Creek, Stehekin, Agnes, Railroad, Goodell... Thu, 10/4/07 9:16 AM

88. The North Cascades offer phenomenally clean rivers with easy access and reliable flows much of the year. The wilderness feel and beauty of the gorges and water combined with the HIGH quality whitewater and easy access make for one of the greatest destinations for the traveling paddler, and also one of the best home bases for paddlers wanting a year round season on wilderness rivers. Thu, 10/4/07 9:01 AM

89. Wide variety of river types, biogeoclimatic zones & geography, Paddling opportunities exist year round. Wed, 10/3/07 10:14 PM

90. The North Cascades provides abundant scenery and wildlife that is unparalleled to any other place in the country. There is no other place that offers lush green trees year round, spectacular peaks, and uncrowded rivers right out of our backdoor. In the dreary winters it provides a recreational outlet and opens your doors to some new friends and beer drinking buddies. Wed, 10/3/07 7:10 PM



91. Thunder Creek is a very special run. It runs all summer, has great rapids and is in a spectacular setting. The N Cascades provide many untapped opportunities for spectacular wilderness kayaking. Wed, 10/3/07 2:49 PM

92. What is most special about the North Cascades is the breadth of whitewater in terms of levels of difficulty, landscapes, geology, easily accessible and very remote. Wed, 10/3/07 12:46 PM

93. The North Cascades is a unique paddling region because it provides whitewater recreation almost 365 days per year. Because the weather is so mild and because it includes ecosystems from alpine to lowland drainages, there is always a run to enjoy. Many other paddling regions (the Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Nevada, Montana) only provide whitewater opportunities during the runoff season. During other times there is either not enough water or everything is frozen over. Wed, 10/3/07 12:09 PM

94. The N. Cascades epitomizes the Northwest paddling experience: Rugged glaciated peaks, dark canyons and beautiful forests compliment a long paddling season. I have paddled throughout the states and the N. Cascades region tops any other area in the country as the total package. Wed, 10/3/07 10:44 AM

95. I have spent most of my time paddling in the East coast of the United States as well as paddling in New Zealand, Chile, and Canada. Despite all of this, I still love how the Cascades provide a long season with beautiful, natural flowing rivers. The Cascades are only a few hours from a major metropolitan area yet still provide a nice feeling of remoteness. Wed, 10/3/07 10:11 AM

96. Clean water, remote wilderness rivers, year round paddling. Variety for paddlers of every ability level. Big water for class II-IV paddlers and technical runs for the same. Incredible scenery and wildlife. I have lived and boated in CO, WV, PA, NY and now WA. The North Cascades offers more variety and opportunity than any other area I have experienced. Wed, 10/3/07 8:19 AM

# ABOUT AMERICAN WHITEWATER

Founded in 1954, American Whitewater is a national non-profit organization with a mission “to conserve and restore America’s whitewater resources and to enhance opportunities to enjoy them safely.” Founding principles of the organization include:

- Encourage the exploration, enjoyment, and preservation of America’s recreational waterways for human-powered craft;
- Protect the wilderness character of waterways through conservation of water, forests, parks, wildlife, and related resources;
- Promote and celebrate safety, proficiency and responsibility in all aspects of whitewater activities such as the navigation of moving water, teaching, teamwork, leadership, and equipment design, by publishing and demonstrating our support for instructional development in these and related fields;
- Promote appreciation and respect for the value of wilderness activity and whitewater sports.

American Whitewater is a membership organization representing a broad diversity of individual whitewater enthusiasts, river conservationists, and more than 100 local paddling club affiliates across America. The organization is the primary advocate for the preservation and protection of whitewater resources throughout the United States, and connects the interests of human-powered recreational river users with ecological and science-based data to achieve the goals within its mission.



**Rivers Need to be Protected, Restored, and Enjoyed.**  
[www.americanwhitewater.org](http://www.americanwhitewater.org)

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