



TEAM RIVER RUNNER
HELPING OUR WOUNDED VETERANS

PATHWAY TO
"PADDLER" & "INSTRUCTOR"
ENDORSEMENT HANDBOOK

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Statement of Purpose

Message from Dave Robey:

As individual paddlers, we continually seek ways to improve our skills in order to achieve our paddling goals. The same can be said about our personal life as well. Setting goals and identifying what we have to do to achieve those goals is what makes us successful in our personal life. TRR believes in these values and wants to progress towards recognizing individual paddler achievements across all chapters.

Creating Skill Level Endorsements for “Paddlers” and “Instructors” provides many benefits, including;

- A nationwide TRR standard of recognition of individuals skill level and knowledge base
- Provides a developmental plan towards higher achievement levels in paddling and instruction
- Continues to allow individual chapters the opportunity to teach and share information in their own unique individual way, but remains consistent between specific teaching objectives nationwide
- Provides continuity towards individuals developmental learning path when participating in local, regional or national trips. Allows trip leaders of such events the opportunity to teach specific skill objectives that are needed and or communicate skill accomplishments with other chapters within TRR.
- Empowers the veterans we serve to strive for success; set goals, be able to visualize that path and achieve set goals
- Provides grantors and VA clinicians with the knowledge and understanding that TRR values education, goal setting, training, standards of practice and personal achievement. As a result, potential grants for continued training and education may become available, as well as increase in support from VA Hospitals and or VA Clinicians.
- TRR recognizes that ACA is the foundation towards paddling education. As a result, TRR created a systematic approach that closely mirrors the ACA foundation. This pathway will ensure TRR paddlers who are seeking ACA skill courses/assessments and or certification will have the necessary knowledge, paddling and or instructor ability to achieve their ACA goals. It is TRR goal that ACA membership and education is highly encouraged and promoted to all Chapters, Paddlers and Instructors.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide a clear and concise explanation of the TRR Skill Endorsement Process. Furthermore, it gives the Chapter Coordinator and or Instructor Trainer the necessary tools to implement the Skill Endorsement Process. This handbook is intended to be used as a reference tool. You will find that throughout the process of implementation that many question will arise, use this handbook to help answer those questions. Within this handbook are links to specific pages, sections and or resources that are available for you to use.

Any questions or concerns regarding this handbook and or the overall objectives of the program can contact:

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Pathway to Paddler "Skill Level" Endorsement



Instructor who is signing off the endorsement must be an instructor endorsed at or above the specified skill level

Level 1 – Introduction to Kayaking – Paddler Requirements

Level 1 – Paddling Equipment/Education	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Proper Fit of Helmet and PFD; able to adjust helmet/PFD to correct size / fit, help others to ensure proper fit			
Enter a boat in a safe manner; transfer or independent			
Boat fitted correctly and correct posture; Being comfortable in the boat, bulk head, hip pads, back brace, sit up straight, hips rolled forward			
Hand position on paddle; control hand, not gripping too tight, hands good distance apart ("paddlers box")			
Paddle Position; Blade position when holding, blade position when in water, education on degree of "offset" of paddle			
Safe wet exit from kayak without spray skirt; flip upside down, count to 10, tuck, push, push. 3x to be independent in pool and lake			
Safe wet exit from kayak with spray skirt; tuck, pull, push, push. 3x to be independent in pool			
Self-rescue; swimming to pool deck or shore while carrying boat and or paddle, emptying water out of kayak			
Lifting and carrying of boats/gear; education on safety and teamwork, proper lifting procedures (lift with legs, NOT BACK)			
Hip Snaps; grasp side of pool deck, rest head on hands, relax hip and let boat "fold" over, snap hip (focusing on keeping head down, upper body/lower body separation)			
T-Rescue; flip over, stay in boat, clap hands on boat, run hands back and forth along boat, use someone else's boat to get back to an upright position, practice using instructors hands			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 1 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 1 - Paddling Strokes	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Forward stroke; Toes to hip, pull hip to the paddle blade, not pulling the blade to the hips, paddle is more vertical-top hand crosses in front of eyes			
Forward sweep; follow the blade with eyes and torso, toes to the back of the boat, paddle is more horizontal, think about pivoting boat around a planted blade			
Backward stroke; stopping, this can be a state, non-moving blade, that is dipping into the water			
Reverse sweep; follow the blade with eyes and torso, back of the boat to toes, paddle is more horizontal, think about pivoting boat around a planted blade			
Pin wheels / Spins; forward sweep on one side then reverse sweep on the other to spin in a circle, practice on both sides.			
Stern Draw; this is also rudder, forward sweep just from the hip to the back of the boat			
Stern Pry; this is also rudder, reverse sweep just from the back of the boat to the hip			
Level 1 - Paddling Maneuvers	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Paddle in a straight line forward; can use the objects on the horizon of the pool or lake to paddle towards			
Paddle in a straight line backward; can use the objects on the horizon of the pool or lake to paddle away from			
Tilt control; 0= no tilt, 1= butt cheek weight shift, 2= engaging hips 3= engaging the knee opposite to the side your tilting, 4= engage opposite hip and knees more			
Paddling around an object in the pool or lake; works on maneuvering, boat tilt and having to use different paddle strokes			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 2 – Lake / Open Water Kayaking – Paddler Requirements			
Level 2 - Paddling Equipment/Education	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Essential Paddling Equipment for kayaking; Helmet, PFD, Paddle, Spray Skirt and Float Bags			
Appropriate Clothing for kayaking; river booties, thermal wear (wet suit; full body, farmer john, top and bottoms), thin skin/under armor clothing, dry top, semi-dry top, splash jacket, gloves, pogies, nose plugs, ear plugs			
Anatomy and Functionality of Kayaks; overall design, intended use, type of water (Hard shell, SOT, Inflatable, Cross Overs, Sea Kayaks)			
Level 2 - Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Kayaking Signals and Communication; Emergency Paddle Signal, Stop, Circle Up, Directional cues (point away from danger), 1 whistle blow (pay attention), 3 whistle blows (emergency), "are you ok" by tapping top of helmet, response "I'm OK" by tapping top of helmet, "all clear" signal			
Environmental Risk and Risk Management; understanding/ managing environmental risks (wind, rain, thunder/lightning, white caps/waves)			
T-Rescue within a lake setting "Open Water"; rescuing others as well as self			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, Towing a boat, bull dozing another boat to shore and open water rescue techniques			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 2 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 2 – Paddling Maneuvers	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Paddle forward in a straight line while boat is on tilt; practice tilt between 1-3, both sides			
Paddle backward in a straight line while boat is on tilt; practice tilt between 1-3, both sides			
Paddle in a figure 8; focusing on 1-3 tilt within each turn (butt showing to outside of turn), stern draw between the transition of each turn; practice paddling <u>only</u> on the outside of turn as well as inside of turn			
Level 2 – Paddling Strokes			
Draw Stroke; Direction change without moving forward; power face placed in line with your hip, pulling the blade towards the boat, turn the blade and slice the water, repeat			
Bow draw; power face placed in line with your feet, pulling the blade towards the boat, turn the blade and slice the water, repeat			
Level 2 - Bracing			
Sculling; pulls you to the side you are sculling on, wrist motion; blade angle changes in a smooth and consistent motion			
Low brace stroke to avoid capsizing; tilt the boat to a 3 or 4, use the back of the paddle (flat blade, no climbing angle), arm position and body is low, hip snap, keep head tilted down towards tilted side			
High brace stroke to avoid capsizing; tilt the boat to a 3 or 4, use the power face of the paddle (flat blade, no climbing angle), arm position and body is high, danger for shoulder damage, hip snap, keep head tilted down towards tilted side, sculling of blade			

Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart

Level 3 – River Running (Class I-II River) – Paddler Requirements			
Level 3 - Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Reading the water & identifying hazards; eddy, eddy line, current, waves, identifying the "V" or Tongue, hole, rocks, strainers			
Portaging and or Scouting a Rapid; understanding the natural flow of the river, it's hazards and identify the safest path.			
Trip Leading and Risk Management; understanding lead and sweep boaters position/role within group, proper spacing of paddlers, placement of boaters relative to skill level, emergency protocol			
Self-Rescue Swimming; proper "swimmers" position (feet down stream, knees bent, arms out, head up), swimming into an eddy, avoiding hazards (rocks, holes, strainers)			
Self-Rescue to shore w/ gear; swimming to shore with boat and or paddle			
T-Rescue within a river setting; rescuing others as well as self			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, bull dozing another boat to shore, Towing a boat			
Rescue techniques using a throw bag; proper handling and use of a throw bag/rope, proper handling of throw bag/rope when being rescued			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 3 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 3 – Paddling Maneuvers	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
<p>Understanding of boat tilt relative to current of water; show your "butt" to the current, maintaining a tilt (1-2) while sides of boat are facing the current</p>			
<p>Side Slip; Directional change while moving forward; power face of blade placed near or behind your hip. Useful when "peeling out" or "catching eddies"</p>			
<p>Ferrying (forward and reverse); moving across the river, maintaining / adjusting angle of boat with appropriate boat tilt</p>			
<p>Peel outs; high in the eddy, 45 degree bow angle away from top of eddy, paddle forward with a 1-2 tilt, paddle through eddy line, continue tilt, show "butt" to current, active downstream paddle blade</p>			
<p>Catching an eddy; catching the eddy high, ferry angle 45 degree toward top of eddy, proper boat tilt prior to eddy entry, speed/power through eddy line, transition boat tilt to other edge as middle of boat crosses the eddy line, active up steam paddle blade</p>			
<p>"C" turn; peel out and turn into the same eddy, maintaining proper tilt throughout maneuver, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (forward strokes, sweep stroke)</p>			
<p>"S" turn; peel out and turn into an adjacent downriver eddy, maintain proper tilt and ferry angle, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (stern draw, forward stroke)</p>			
<p>Spawn Drill; paddle up stream, weaving to find easiest line</p>			
<p>Kayak Roll within controlled environment or Class I-II rapid; either "C to C" and or Sweep Roll Click Here to View "The Kayak Roll" Paddler Objectives</p>			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 4 – Whitewater Kayaking (Class III River) – Paddler Requirements			
Level 4 – Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Reading the water & identifying hazards; eddy, eddy line, current, waves, identifying the "V" or Tongue, hole, rocks, strainers in Class III river setting			
Portaging and or Scouting a Rapid; understanding the natural flow of the river, it's hazards and identify the safest path in Class III river setting			
Navigating the river from "Eddy to Eddy"; breaking down a rapid into small manageable sections (Peel outs, Ferrying, Catching an eddy)			
Self-Rescue Swimming; proper "swimmers" position (feet down stream, knees bent, arms out, head up), swimming into an eddy, avoiding hazards (rocks, holes, strainers) in Class III river setting			
Self-Rescue to shore w/ gear; swimming to shore with boat and or paddle in Class III river setting			
T-Rescue within a river setting; rescuing others as well as self in Class III river setting in Class III river setting			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, bull dozing another boat to shore, Towing a boat in Class III river setting			
Rescue techniques using a throw bag; proper handling and use of a throw bag/rope, proper handling of throw bag/rope when being rescued in Class III river setting			

[Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 4 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 4 – Paddling Maneuvers	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
<p>Ferrying (forward and reverse); moving across the river, maintaining / adjusting angle of boat with appropriate boat tilt in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>Peel outs; high in the eddy, 45 degree bow angle away from top of eddy, paddle forward with a 1-2 tilt, paddle through eddy line, continue tilt, show "butt" to current, active downstream paddle blade in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>Catching an eddy; catching the eddy high, ferry angle 45 degree toward top of eddy, proper boat tilt prior to eddy entry, speed/power through eddy line, transition boat tilt to other edge as middle of boat crosses the eddy line, active up stream paddle blade in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>"C" turn; peel out and turn into the same eddy, maintaining proper tilt throughout maneuver, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (forward strokes, sweep stroke) in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>"S" turn; peel out and turn into an adjacent downriver eddy, maintain proper tilt and ferry angle, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (stern draw, forward stroke) in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>Spawn Drill; paddle up stream, weaving to find easiest line in Class III river setting</p>			
<p>Surfing a hole/wave; front surf (edge control/tilt, balance point), side surfing (edge control/tilt, downstream paddle position)</p>			
<p>Kayak Roll in Class III rapid; either "C to C", Sweep Roll <i>Continue to next page to view objectives of "The Kayak Roll"</i></p>			

Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart

Level 3 and 4 – The Kayak Roll – Paddler Requirements			
Introduce once bracing & hip snaps are proficient Choose the type of roll that best fits the paddler	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>"C to C" Roll</u></p> <p>Three Components: -Set-Up (tuck to the side, paddle blades out of the water, forward paddle blades "power face" is parallel with the water, no "climbing angle" on front paddle blade. -Sweep (tuck to first "C"; roll torso to side, swing forward paddle blade out to the side of the boat, other paddle blade and hand is placed directly over the paddlers "Butt" -Hip Snap (transition for first "C" to second "C"; engage rolling knee with hip snap, the paddle blades power face is flat against the water (almost like a high brace), Keep "head down", recover by centering paddle</p>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sweep Roll</u></p> <p>Three Components: -Set up/Start Position (set up thigh and tuck to the side, blade floats, loose grip), -The Sweep (the movement between synchronized rotation of the body, rotation of the boat and the path of the paddle blade as it sweeps to the "Finish Position" -Finish Position (watching the blade, twisted torso, knuckled back/elbows jettted forward, exaggerated blade angle)</p>			

Go back to Pathway to "Paddler" Endorsement Flow Chart

Click here to view You-Tube Instructional Videos regarding "The Kayak Roll" (C to C and Sweep Rolls)

Pathway to Instructor "Skill Level" Endorsement

Level 1 – Paddler
Introduction to
Kayaking



Observe and Assit
Instructor in each
objective within the
skill level
(Click here to view objectives)



Independently teach a group and or
individual each objective; under the
supervision of an Instructor Trainer*
**2-3 independent teaching sessions
are required to become an instructor*



Level 1 - Instructor
Introduction to
Kayaking

Level 2 – Paddler
Lake / Open Water
Kayaking



Observe and Assit
Instructor in each
objective within the
skill level
(Click here to view objectives)



Independently teach a group and or
individual each objective; under the
supervision of an Instructor Trainer*
**2-3 independent teaching sessions
are required to become an instructor*



Level 2 - Instructor
Lake / Open Water
Kayaking

Level 3 – Paddler
River Kayaking
Class I-II



Observe and Assit
Instructor in each
objective within the
skill level
(Click here to view objectives)



Independently teach a group and or
individual each objective; under the
supervision of an Instructor Trainer*
**2-3 independent teaching sessions
are required to become an instructor*



Level 3 - Instructor
River Kayaking
Class I-II

Level 4 – Paddler
Whitewater Kayaking
Class III



Observe and Assit
Instructor in each
objective within the
skill level
(Click here to view objectives)



Independently teach a group and or
individual each objective; under the
supervision of an Instructor Trainer*
**2-3 independent teaching sessions
are required to become an instructor*



Level 4 - Instructor
Whitewater Kayaking
Class III

Instructor Trainer who is signing off the endorsement must be an instructor endorsed above the specified skill level

Level 1 – Introduction to Kayaking – Instructor Requirements			
Level 1 – Paddling Equipment/Education	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Proper Fit of Helmet and PFD; able to adjust helmet/PFD to correct size / fit, help others to ensure proper fit			
Enter a boat in a safe manner; transfer or independent			
Boat fitted correctly and correct posture; Being comfortable in the boat, bulk head, hip pads, back brace, sit up straight, hips rolled forward			
Hand position on paddle; control hand, not gripping too tight, hands good distance apart ("paddlers box")			
Paddle Position; Blade position when holding, blade position when in water, education on degree of "offset" of paddle			
Safe wet exit from kayak without spray skirt; flip upside down, count to 10, tuck, push, push. 3x to be independent in pool and lake			
Safe wet exit from kayak with spray skirt; tuck, pull, push, push. 3x to be independent in pool			
Self-rescue; swimming to pool deck or shore while carrying boat and or paddle, emptying water out of kayak			
Lifting and carrying of boats/gear; education on safety and teamwork, proper lifting procedures (lift with legs, NOT BACK)			
Hip Snaps; grasp side of pool deck, rest head on hands, relax hip and let boat "fold" over, snap hip (focusing on keeping head down, upper body/lower body separation)			
T-Rescue; flip over, stay in boat, clap hands on boat, run hands back and forth along boat, use someone else's boat to get back to an upright position, practice using instructors hands			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 1 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 1 - Paddling Strokes	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Forward stroke; Toes to hip, pull hip to the paddle blade, not pulling the blade to the hips, paddle is more vertical-top hand crosses in front of eyes			
Forward sweep; follow the blade with eyes and torso, toes to the back of the boat, paddle is more horizontal, think about pivoting boat around a planted blade			
Backward stroke; stopping, this can be a state, non-moving blade, that is dipping into the water			
Reverse sweep; follow the blade with eyes and torso, back of the boat to toes, paddle is more horizontal, think about pivoting boat around a planted blade			
Pin wheels / Spins; forward sweep on one side then reverse sweep on the other to spin in a circle, practice on both sides.			
Stern Draw; this is also rudder, forward sweep just from the hip to the back of the boat			
Stern Pry; this is also rudder, reverse sweep just from the back of the boat to the hip			
Level 1 - Paddling Maneuvers	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Paddle in a straight line forward; can use the objects on the horizon of the pool or lake to paddle towards			
Paddle in a straight line backward; can use the objects on the horizon of the pool or lake to paddle away from			
Tilt control; 0= no tilt, 1= butt cheek weight shift, 2= engaging hips 3= engaging the knee opposite to the side your tilting, 4= engage opposite hip and knees more			
Paddling around an object in the pool or lake; works on maneuvering, boat tilt and having to use different paddle strokes			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 2 – Lake / Open Water Kayaking – Instructor Requirements			
Level 2 - Paddling Equipment/Education	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Essential Paddling Equipment for kayaking; Helmet, PFD, Paddle, Spray Skirt and Float Bags			
Appropriate Clothing for kayaking; river booties, thermal wear (wet suit; full body, farmer john, top and bottoms), thin skin/under armor clothing, dry top, semi-dry top, splash jacket, gloves, pogies, nose plugs, ear plugs			
Anatomy and Functionality of Kayaks; overall design, intended use, type of water (Hard shell, SOT, Inflatable, Cross Overs, Sea Kayaks)			
Level 2 - Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Kayaking Signals and Communication; Emergency Paddle Signal, Stop, Circle Up, Directional cues (point away from danger), 1 whistle blow (pay attention), 3 whistle blows (emergency), "are you ok" by tapping top of helmet, response "I'm OK" by tapping top of helmet, "all clear" signal			
Environmental Risk and Risk Management; understanding/ managing environmental risks (wind, rain, thunder/lightning, white caps/waves)			
T-Rescue within a lake setting "Open Water"; rescuing others as well as self			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, Towing a boat, bull dozing another boat to shore and open water rescue techniques			
Level 2 – Paddling Maneuvers			
Paddle forward in a straight line while boat is on tilt; practice tilt between 1-3, both sides			
Paddle forward in a straight line while boat is on tilt; practice tilt between 1-3, both sides			
Paddle in a figure 8; focusing on 1-3 tilt within each turn (butt showing to outside of turn), stern draw between the transition of each turn; practice paddling <u>only</u> on the outside of turn as well as inside of turn			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 2 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 2 – Paddling Strokes	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Draw Stroke; Direction change without moving forward; power face placed in line with your hip, pulling the blade towards the boat, turn the blade and slice the water, repeat			
Bow draw; power face placed in line with your feet, pulling the blade towards the boat, turn the blade and slice the water, repeat			
Level 2 - Bracing			
Sculling; pulls you to the side you are sculling on, wrist motion; blade angle changes in a smooth and consistent motion			
Low brace stroke to avoid capsizing; tilt the boat to a 3 or 4, use the back of the paddle (flat blade, no climbing angle), arm position and body is low, hip snap, keep head tilted down towards tilted side			
High brace stroke to avoid capsizing; tilt the boat to a 3 or 4, use the power face of the paddle (flat blade, no climbing angle), arm position and body is high, danger for shoulder damage, hip snap, keep head tilted down towards tilted side, sculling of blade			
Level 2 – Adaptive Paddling			
Disability Info: General knowledge and understanding of TRR paddling instruction for veterans with Spinal Cord Injuries, Amputees, TBI, PTSD and Visual Impairments (Reference the TRR Instructional Guidelines document to learn more about disabilities relative to kayak instruction)			
Adaptive Equipment/Fitting: Able to identify equipment adaptation needs relative to disability and provide such adaptations either by hand or by using pre-existing adaptation equipment			
Transfers: Able to assist and lead with transfers; awareness of a variety of techniques			
Guiding/Instruction Techniques: Able to provide guiding and or teaching techniques for Spinal Cord Injuries, Amputees, TBI, PTSD and or Visual Impairments			

Go back to Pathway to “Instructor” Endorsement Flow Chart

Level 3 – River Running (Class I-II River) – Instructor Requirements			
Level 3 - Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Reading the water & identifying hazards; eddy, eddy line, current, waves, identifying the "V" or Tongue, hole, rocks, strainers			
Portaging and or Scouting a Rapid; understanding the natural flow of the river, it's hazards and identify the safest path.			
Trip Leading and Risk Management; understanding lead and sweep boaters position/role within group, proper spacing of paddlers, placement of boaters relative to skill level, emergency protocol			
Self-Rescue Swimming; proper "swimmers" position (feet down stream, knees bent, arms out, head up), swimming into an eddy, avoiding hazards (rocks, holes, strainers)			
Self-Rescue to shore w/ gear; swimming to shore with boat and or paddle			
T-Rescue within a river setting; rescuing others as well as self			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, bull dozing another boat to shore, Towing a boat			
Rescue techniques using a throw bag; proper handling and use of a throw bag/rope, proper handling of throw bag/rope when being rescued			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 3 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 3 – Paddling Maneuvers	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
<p>Understanding of boat tilt relative to current of water; show your "butt" to the current, maintaining a tilt (1-2) while sides of boat are facing the current</p>			
<p>Side Slip; Directional change while moving forward; power face of blade placed near or behind your hip. Useful when "peeling out" or "catching eddies"</p>			
<p>Ferrying (forward and reverse); moving across the river, maintaining / adjusting angle of boat with appropriate boat tilt</p>			
<p>Peel outs; high in the eddy, 45 degree bow angle away from top of eddy, paddle forward with a 1-2 tilt, paddle through eddy line, continue tilt, show "butt" to current, active downstream paddle blade</p>			
<p>Catching an eddy; catching the eddy high, ferry angle 45 degree toward top of eddy, proper boat tilt prior to eddy entry, speed/power through eddy line, transition boat tilt to other edge as middle of boat crosses the eddy line, active up steam paddle blade</p>			
<p>"C" turn; peel out and turn into the same eddy, maintaining proper tilt throughout maneuver, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (forward strokes, sweep stroke)</p>			
<p>"S" turn; peel out and turn into an adjacent downriver eddy, maintain proper tilt and ferry angle, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (stern draw, forward stroke)</p>			
<p>Spawn Drill; paddle up stream, weaving to find easiest line</p>			
<p>Kayak Roll within controlled environment or Class I-II rapid; either "C to C" and or Sweep Roll Click Here to View "The Kayak Roll" Paddler Objectives</p>			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 4 – Whitewater Kayaking (Class III River) – Instructor Requirements

Level 4 – Kayaking Safety and Rescue Techniques	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Reading the water & identifying hazards; eddy, eddy line, current, waves, identifying the "V" or Tongue, hole, rocks, strainers in Class III river setting			
Portaging and or Scouting a Rapid; understanding the natural flow of the river, it's hazards and identify the safest path in Class III river setting			
Navigating the river from "Eddy to Eddy"; breaking down a rapid into small manageable sections (Peel outs, Ferrying, Catching an eddy)			
Self-Rescue Swimming; proper "swimmers" position (feet down stream, knees bent, arms out, head up), swimming into an eddy, avoiding hazards (rocks, holes, strainers) in Class III river setting			
Self-Rescue to shore w/ gear; swimming to shore with boat and or paddle in Class III river setting			
T-Rescue within a river setting; rescuing others as well as self in Class III river setting in Class III river setting			
Rescuing others boaters / gear; Towing a swimmer, bull dozing another boat to shore, Towing a boat in Class III river setting			
Rescue techniques using a throw bag; proper handling and use of a throw bag/rope, proper handling of throw bag/rope when being rescued in Class III river setting			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 4 Objectives Continued.....Go to Next Page

Level 4 – Paddling Maneuvers	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Ferrying (forward and reverse); moving across the river, maintaining / adjusting angle of boat with appropriate boat tilt in Class III river setting			
Peel outs; high in the eddy, 45 degree bow angle away from top of eddy, paddle forward with a 1-2 tilt, paddle through eddy line, continue tilt, show "butt" to current, active downstream paddle blade in Class III river setting			
Catching an eddy; catching the eddy high, ferry angle 45 degree toward top of eddy, proper boat tilt prior to eddy entry, speed/power through eddy line, transition boat tilt to other edge as middle of boat crosses the eddy line, active up steam paddle blade in Class III river setting			
"C" turn; peel out and turn into the same eddy, maintaining proper tilt throughout maneuver, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (forward strokes, sweep stroke) in Class III river setting			
"S" turn; peel out and turn into an adjacent downriver eddy, maintain proper tilt and ferry angle, active paddle blade, effective paddle strokes (stern draw, forward stroke) in Class III river setting			
Spawn Drill; paddle up stream, weaving to find easiest line in Class III river setting			
Surfing a hole/wave; front surf (edge control/tilt, balance point), side surfing (edge control/tilt, downstream paddle position)			
Kayak Roll in Class III rapid; either "C to C", Sweep Roll <i>Continue to next page to view objectives of "The Kayak Roll"</i>			

[Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart](#)

Level 3 and 4 – The Kayak Roll – Instructor Requirements			
Learn and teach both types of the kayak roll Focus on teaching methods towards breaking down the roll within its "Three Components"	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>"C to C" Roll</u></p> <p>Three Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set-Up (tuck to the side, paddle blades out of the water, forward paddle blades "power face" is parallel with the water, no "climbing angle" on front paddle blade. -Sweep (tuck to first "C"; roll torso to side, swing forward paddle blade out to the side of the boat, other paddle blade and hand is placed directly over the paddlers "Butt" -Hip Snap (transition for first "C" to second "C"; engage rolling knee with hip snap, the paddle blades power face is flat against the water (almost like a high brace), Keep "head down", recover by centering paddle 			
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sweep Roll</u></p> <p>Three Components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Set up/Start Position (set up thigh and tuck to the side, blade floats, loose grip), -The Sweep (the movement between synchronized rotation of the body, rotation of the boat and the path of the paddle blade as it sweeps to the "Finish Position" -Finish Position (watching the blade, twisted torso, knuckled back/elbows jettted forward, exaggerated blade angle) 			

Go back to Pathway to "Instructor" Endorsement Flow Chart

Click here to view You-Tube Instructional Videos regarding "The Kayak Roll" (C to C and Sweep Rolls)

ACA Skills Assessment Completion - TRR "Paddler" Endorsement Equivalency



***The following page provides the ACA requirements for an Endorsed TRR Paddler to receive a "Skills Course" participation card or "Skills Assessment" completion certificate through the ACA**

ACA Requirements for “Skills Course” or “Skills Assessment” Completion

Each TRR Paddler who has achieved a skill level endorsement is eligible to receive either an ACA “Skills Course” participation card or “Skills Assessment” completion document (*see requirements below*). It is highly encouraged that ACA is a focal point in all of our training and education we provide to the veterans and volunteers we serve.

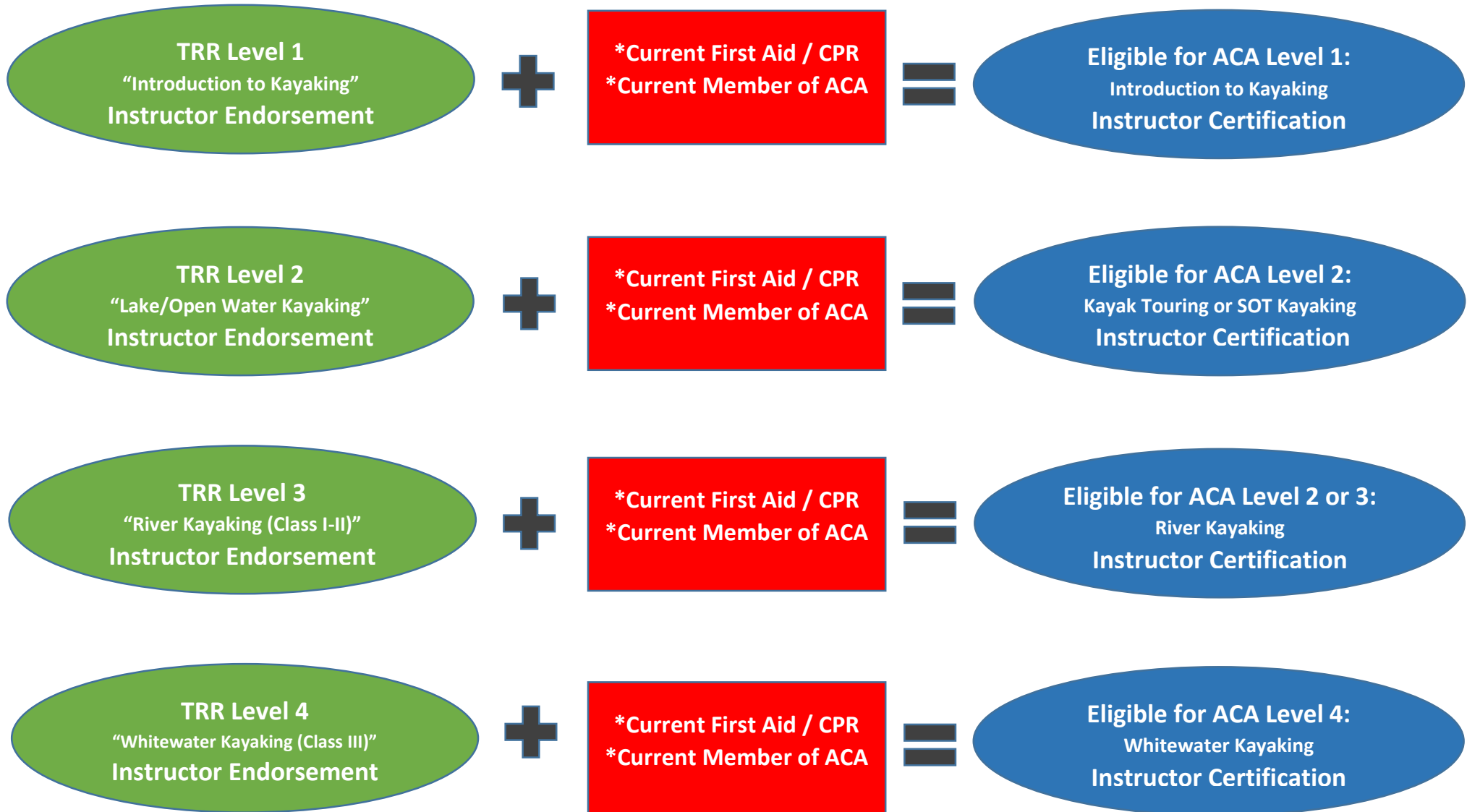
Requirements for TRR “Skill Level” Endorsed Paddler to receive a “Skills Course” participation card

- Course must be taught by an ACA Certified Instructor with a certification level within the respective skill level or higher
- Additional ACA information/education may need to be provided to the “Paddler”. [Click here to reference the ACA requirements for “Skills Course” completion](#)

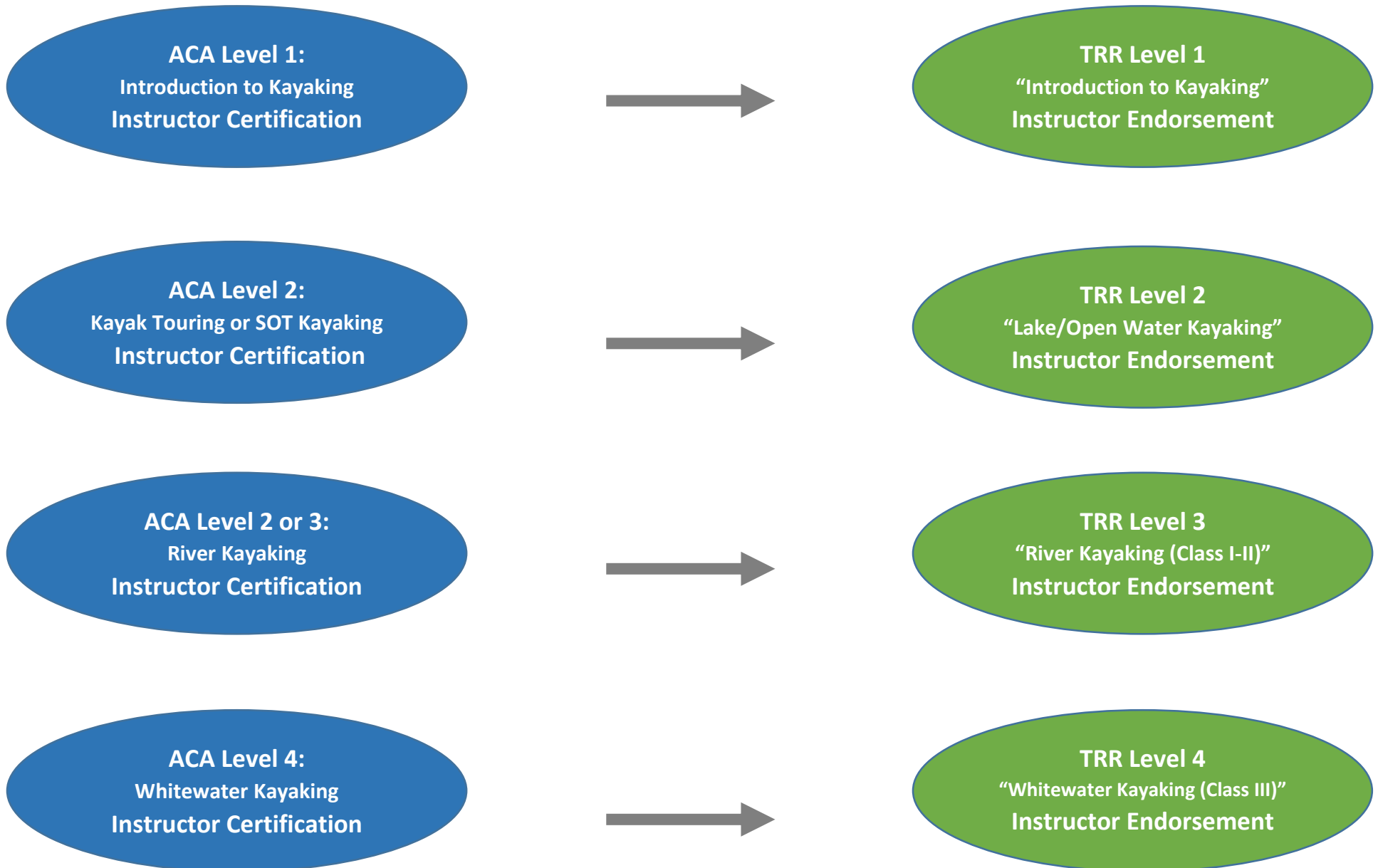
Requirements for TRR “Skill Level” Endorsed Paddler to receive a “Skills Assessment” completion document

- Course must be taught by an ACA Certified Instructor with a certification level within the respective skill level or higher
- TRR Endorsed Paddler must be an “ACA Member” to receive completion documentation (*highly encouraged*)
- Additional ACA information/education may need to be provided to the “Paddler”. [Click here to reference the ACA requirements for “Skills Assessment” completion](#)

Requirements Towards Participation in TRR National ACA Certification Clinics



ACA Instructor Skill Level - TRR "Instructor" Endorsement Equivalency



Management and Implementation of the Skill Progression Checklist

Showing progress of the “Paddlers” and “Instructors” achievements towards their respected skill level endorsement is important in many ways. It is important for the paddler and instructor to visually see their individual path towards achievement. Subsequently, VA clinicians involved in your program will see that specific skills are being taught with a purpose and objectives are being met. Furthermore, involving the paddler, instructor and the VA clinician within the Skills Progression process allows for a greater sense of personal ownership, goal setting skills and personal growth.

Below are some Tips/Ideas on managing individual Skill Progression Checklist for Paddlers and Instructors

1. Download the following documents (*click on the documents name below to download the form*)
 - [“Level 1-4 Paddler Skill Progression Checklist](#)
 - [“Level 1-4 Instructor Skill Progression Checklist](#)
2. You will want to create multiple copies of the document so you can “save” one for each of your paddlers/instructors. You can name each document using the paddler/instructors name or some other way if you choose
3. Print the “Skill Progression Checklist” and create an individual folder with each paddler and instructors “Skill Progression Checklist” inside of it and bring the folders with you to all paddling events
3. Prior to the paddling event, update the individual paddler or instructors “TRR Individual Lesson Plan” with paddling objectives for the day. This will allow the veteran paddlers and or instructors to view individualized paddling objectives and give them a greater sense of ownership towards their own paddling/teaching progression (*Form is located on the first page of the Skills Progression Checklist*)
4. Update the individuals Skill Progression Checklist during or after each paddling event (*paper copy in folder or computer file*) (*proceed to the next two pages to view examples of the updating procedure*). A “Progress Note Sheet” is also encouraged to be updated by the instructor at the completion of each event. This will serve as a “source of communication” between multiple instructors who are teaching the same veteran (*the “progress note sheet” is located on the 2nd page of the Skills Progression Checklist*)
5. Encourage VA clinicians involved in your program to utilize the individualized Skill Progression Checklist towards their documentation needs

“Example: TRR Individual Lesson Plan”

TRR Individual Lesson Plan:

Paddlers Name	Current Skill Level	Type of Paddling Craft	Paddle Length	Equipment Adaptations
John Smith	Level 1 (Practicing towards Completion)	Hard Shell Kayak – Liquid Logic Remix 69	197 cm	Creating Ability “Back of Hand” (Right) Adaptation

Introduce Paddle Strokes

- Backward Stroke
- Reverse Sweep

Introduce Paddling Maneuvers

- Tilt Control

Introduce Paddling Equipment / Education

- Self Rescue to pool deck or shore with gear

Objectives to “Practice towards Completion”

- Boat fitted correctly and correct posture
- Hand position on paddle
- Safe wet exit from kayak without spray skirt

Example: "Level 1-4 Paddler Skill Progression Checklist"

Paddlers Name: John Smith

Current Skill Level: Level 1 – Practicing towards completion

Click on the "Skill Level" to view the "Paddler Requirements"

[Level 1](#)

[Level 2](#)

[Level 3](#)

[Level 4](#)

Level 1 – Introduction to Kayaking – Paddler Requirements			
Level 1 – Paddling Equipment/Education	Introduced	Practicing towards Completion	Completed w/ minimal cues from Instructor
Proper Fit of Helmet and PFD; able to adjust helmet/PFD to correct size / fit, help others to ensure proper fit	JM 6/12/15	JM 6/28/15	JM 7/30/15
Enter a boat in a safe manner; transfer or independent	JM 6/12/15	JM 6/28/15	
Boat fitted correctly and correct posture; Being comfortable in the boat, bulk head, hip pads, back brace, sit up straight, hips rolled forward	JM 6/12/15		

1. Enter the "**Name**" and "**Current Skill Level**" of the Paddler
2. As teaching objectives are "**Introduced**"...type or write in the Instructors initials and date
3. As paddlers "**Practice towards Completion**".... type or write in the Instructors initials and date
4. As paddlers are able to "**Complete**" the objective with minimal cues from the instructor.... type or write in the Instructors initials and date

Please Note: Some paddlers may not be able to complete specific objectives independently due to physical and or cognitive disabilities as well as a variety of water crafts the may use. It is important to note that TRR promotes the achievement of endorsements and encourages each paddler to participate in each objective as independently as possible. If the paddler has reached their highest level of achievement within a specific objective then mark the check boxes with N/A (Not Applicable).

Example: "Level 1-4 Instructor Skill Progression Checklist"

Instructors Name: Frank Paul

Current Skill Level: Level 1 – Instructor Candidate

Click on the "Skill Level" to view the "Instructor Requirements"

[Level 1](#)

[Level 2](#)

[Level 3](#)

[Level 4](#)

Level 1 – Introduction to Kayaking – Instructor Requirements			
Level 1 – Paddling Equipment/Education	Observed Instructor Teaching	Practicing towards Completion	Cleared to Instruct Independently
Proper Fit of Helmet and PFD; able to adjust helmet/PFD to correct size / fit, help others to ensure proper fit	JM 6/12/15	JM 6/28/15	JM 7/30/15
Enter a boat in a safe manner; transfer or independent	JM 6/12/15	JM 6/28/15	JM 7/30/15
Boat fitted correctly and correct posture; Being comfortable in the boat, bulk head, hip pads, back brace, sit up straight, hips rolled forward	JM 6/12/15	JM 6/28/15	
Hand position on paddle; control hand, not gripping too tight, hands good distance apart ("paddlers box")	JM 6/12/15		

1. Enter the "**Name**" and "**Current Skill Level**" of the Instructor and or Instructor Candidate
2. As the Instructor Candidate "**Observes the Lead Instructor Teaching**" an objective.... type or write in the Instructor Trainers initials and date
3. As the Instructor Candidate teaches other veterans specific objectives (with oversight and feedback from the lead instructor).... type or write in the Instructor Trainers initials and date under "**Practice towards Completion**"
4. When the Instructor Candidate is able to teach the specific objective independently.... type or write in the Instructor Trainers initials and date under "**Cleared to Instruct Independently**"

Please Note: Some instructors may not be able to complete specific objectives independently due to physical and or cognitive disabilities as well as the water crafts they may use. It is important to note TRR promotes the achievement of endorsements and encourages each instructor to participate in each objective as independently as possible. If the instructor has reached their highest level of achievement within a specific objective then mark the check boxes with N/A (Not Applicable).

Criteria for Completion of “Skill Level” Endorsement Documents

Criteria needed for “Paddler” to complete/receive a Skill Level Endorsement [\(click here to view requirements via “flow chart”\)](#)

1. All objectives within specified “Skill Level” need to be “Completed with Minimal Cues from Instructor”
2. At least 2-4 paddling sessions within the designated “venue”
3. The “Progression Checklist” completed and signed off by Instructor

Criteria needed for “Instructor” to complete/receive a Skill Level Endorsement [\(click her to view requirements via “flow chart”\)](#)

1. Instructor Candidate must have their current “Paddler Skill Level Endorsement” within the respective skill level they are wanting to instruct.
2. All objectives within specified “Skill Level” need to be “Cleared to Instruct Independently” by Instructor Trainer
3. At least 2-3 teaching sessions within the designated “Skill Level/Paddling Venue” as observed by Lead Instructor
4. The “Progression Checklist” completed and signed off by Instructor Trainer

Criteria for current TRR Paddlers and Instructors who are not Skill Level Endorsed

1. Evaluate Paddlers and Instructors current paddling ability relative to the specified skill level objectives
2. To receive a Skill Level Endorsement all of the objectives need to be checked off “Completed with Minimal Cues from Instructor” or “Cleared to Instruct independently” *(see page 3 and 13 for specific number of paddling/instruction session needed)*
3. Paddlers and Instructors who are currently ACA Certified and or have completed an ACA Skill Assessment Course are automatically endorsed as a TRR Endorsed “Paddler” or “Instructor” *(reference pg. 23 & 25 for the equivalency flow chart. This will allow you to identify the appropriate TRR Skill Level Endorsement that the “Paddler” or “Instructor” has achieved)*

Submission Process of “Skill Level” Endorsement Documents

Process of submitting completed “Paddler” or “Instructors” Skill Level Endorsement

In order for the “Paddler” or “Instructor” to receive their Skill Level Endorsement, the completed “Skill Progression Checklist” and the “Skill Endorsement Submission Form” will need to be completed and emailed to Ryan Keyes

Ryan@TeamRiverRunner.org by the Chapter Coordinator. [Click here to download the “Skill Endorsement Submission Form”](#)

(See example of the “Skill Level Endorsement Submission Form” on the next page).

Skill Level Endorsement will be submitted and processed three times per year. All required documents are to be submitted no later than the dates below:

-May 1st

-September 1st

-December 1st

Example: "Skill Level Endorsement Submission Form"

Date of Submission: May 1, 2015

TRR Chapter Coordinators Name: Randall Chapman

TRR Chapter Affiliation: Grand Junction, Colorado

Mailing Address: 2564 W First Street, Grand Junction, CO, 81501

Name of "Paddler" or "Instructor"	Level of Endorsement Achieved	Type of Endorsement "Paddler" or "Instructor"	Process for Skill Level Endorsement* <i>see below</i>	Name of "Instructor" or "Instructor Trainer"
John Smith	Level 3	Paddler	ACA Skills Assessment Course	Jim Worthington
Peter Townsend	Level 1	Instructor	ACA Certification	Jim Worthington
Frank Clark	Level 2	Paddler	TRR Skills Progression	Jim Worthington

**TRR Skills Progression or *ACA Skills Assessment Course or *ACA Certification*

***Please submit this form as well as all completed "Skill Progression Checklists" to:**

Ryan Keyes

TRR – Central Rockies Regional Coordinator

Ryan@TeamRiverRunner.org

Rewards for Skill Level Endorsement

Once the submission forms are received and processed, TRR-N will send a skill level reward to the Chapter Coordinator, which then will be given to the paddler or instructor. A “Certificate of Completion” is also available for each endorsement and is suggested that each chapter print one for each endorsed “Paddler” or “Instructor”. [Click here to download the “Paddler” or “Instructor” skill level endorsement “certificate of completion”](#). Present the certificate and award to the endorsed Paddler or Instructor in a public or ceremonial way. Give them their chance to shine, they deserve it!

Paddler Skill Level Endorsement Reward

- Level 1 = TRR Paddler Sticker
- Level 2 = Blue TRR Paddler Pin
- Level 3 = Green TRR Paddler Pin
- Level 4 = Black TRR Paddler Pin

Instructor Skill Level Endorsement Reward

- Level 1 = TRR Instructor Sticker
- Level 2 = Blue TRR Instructor Pin
- Level 3 = Green TRR Instructor Pin
- Level 4 = Black TRR Instructor Pin

Instructional Resources

Books

American Canoe Association (*complete list of endorsed books*)

River Rescue 4th Edition

Complete Whitewater Rafting - Jeff Bennett

VHS and DVD Videos

Whitewater Kayaking w/Ken Whiting

Jackson Kayak Kayaking Strokes & Concepts DVD

Jackson Kayak EJ's Advanced River Running

Jackson Kayak EJ's River Running: Basics DVD

Kayaker's Toolbox DVD

"The Combat Roll" DVD

Rolling a Sea Kayak w/ Ken Whiting

Whitewater Paddling – A Woman's Guide to Paddling

Rolling a Kayak w/ Ken Whiting

The Kayak Roll w/ Kent Ford

All About Kayaking w / Kent Ford

Performance Sea Kayaking w/ Kent Ford

Whitewater Self Defense w/ Kent Ford

American Canoe Association (*complete list of endorsed DVD's*)

You Tube Channels

Paddle Education- Instructional Resources

Paddling TV – Instructional Resources

Whitewater Paddling TV – Instructional Resources

Creating Ability – Adaptive Paddling Adaptations

Websites/Forums/PDF's

TBI and PTSD Instructional Guidelines

Certified ACA Instructors, Instructor Trainers and Educators (*all disciplines*) in your area

ACA curriculum for all disciplines

Resource information on becoming an ACA Instructor

Introduction to River Features Presentation

Paddle Education (*website; compellation of educational resources*)

Paddle Clicks (*Internet forum; compellation of educational resources*)