

# California's Salmon River

## History of Whitewater Paddling Short Film



**Mission:** Share the rich undocumented history and stories of whitewater paddling on the Salmon River.

The Salmon River is Karuk ancestral territory. Land surrounding its confluence with the Klamath has been returned to the Karuk Tribe.

### Goals

1. Increase awareness of the rich history of whitewater culture on the California Salmon River
2. Document and preserve information and stories of how whitewater culture evolved over time on the Salmon River
3. Share my love for this place by demonstrating the beauty and high quality recreation opportunities available on the Salmon River

### Objectives

- 1a. Interview Scott Harding and document a summary of who pioneered California Salmon whitewater experiences
- 1b. Interview five other people that have commercial or private whitewater experiences with the area spanning over 10 years
- 1c. Implement a sum of at least one minute of historical footage of whitewater on the Salmon River
- 2a. Share at least five of people's favorite stories of the Salmon River
- 2b. Five minute absolute minimum for the documentary length
- 2c. At least four full minutes of modern, high quality, whitewater footage (camera or drone footage)
- 3a. Ask at least two people in their interviews why there aren't as many boaters on the Salmon anymore
- 3b. Situate the Salmon within the West Coast whitewater scene

### Challenges

1. Learning film making techniques in a short timeframe
2. Key players in the development of whitewater history are spread out around the world and many are hard to contact
3. People are generally excited to share information and stories about the Salmon River, but not necessarily excited about promotion of it as a place to visit
4. The Karuk Tribe Public Affairs requested that I include Karuk people who are active in the whitewater community, but the contacts I know and have received were not available for an interview
5. Ethical issues associated with bringing attention to the Salmon River as an outsider

### Lessons

1. Ethics are the top priority when creating storytelling film, as it depends on and most greatly affects those with the stories
2. Storytelling and creating projects of interest foster relationships and connections
3. Film making is fun!
4. Investigative and storytelling film making takes a long time
5. The Salmon River has an intricate history in all aspects

### Next Steps

1. Continue kayaking on the Salmon and getting involved in its community
2. Continue to make larger scale, narrative-based film projects
3. Integrate newly developed skills and utilize new contacts as I move into professional recreation administration positions

