

## Parks & Recreation Management

Students in the Parks & Recreation Management program have produced this guide. For more information about the PRM program contact us at 828.227.7310 or visit our website at [prm.wcu.edu](http://prm.wcu.edu)

## Base Camp Cullowhee

Not ready to explore on your own? Or would like to try a new outdoor adventure? Need to rent outdoor gear for your next adventure? WCU's Base Camp Cullowhee (BCC) provides an array of outdoor program services, which include recreation trips, outdoor gear rental, and experiential education services. Contact BCC at 828.227.3633 or visit their website at [basecamp.wcu.edu](http://basecamp.wcu.edu)

## Want to Learn How to Paddle?

- Base Camp Cullowhee (BCC) offers weekly rolling clinics and trips. Check them out at [basecamp.wcu.edu](http://basecamp.wcu.edu)
- PRM offers classes each year, look for PRM 254: Introduction to Outdoor Pursuits, PRM 352: Beginner-Intermediate Kayak and PRM 426: Water Based Outdoor Pursuits Education.
- Want to try whitewater with a group? BCC offers whitewater rafting trips for students.

## Attention!!!

Paddle sports can be very dangerous and physically demanding. All paddlers should understand that participating in paddle sports may involve serious injury or death. Participants should have proper training and equipment prior to engaging in paddle sports.

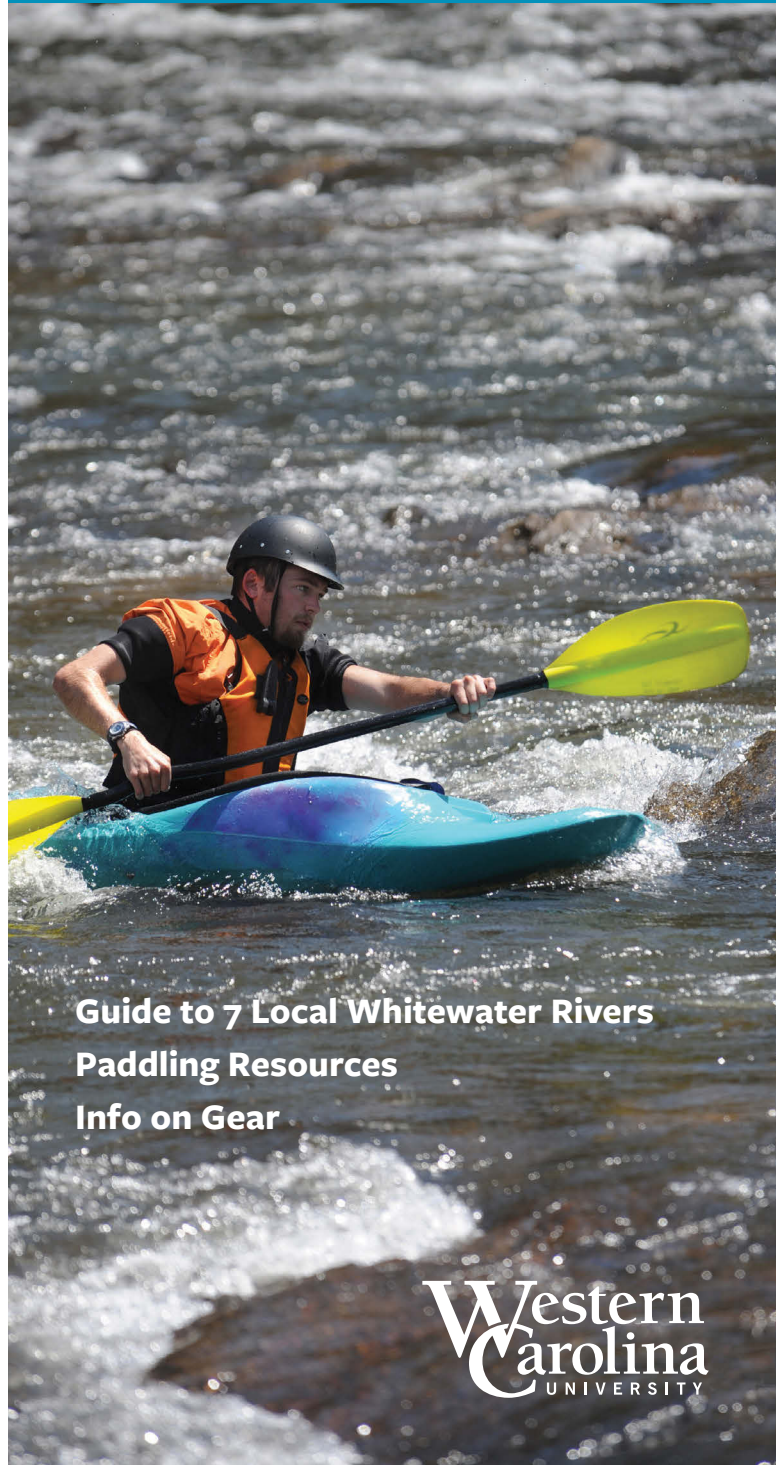


Cullowhee Adventure Guide Originally Produced by:  
PRM 434: High Adventure Travel Spring 2011  
(Justin Kleberg, Ben David Jacob, Paul Killian, Kim Miller, Katie Mosier)  
Updated in 2015 by Thomas Graham, Peter Langenwalter  
and Daniel Csizmadia

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# Whitewater Paddling

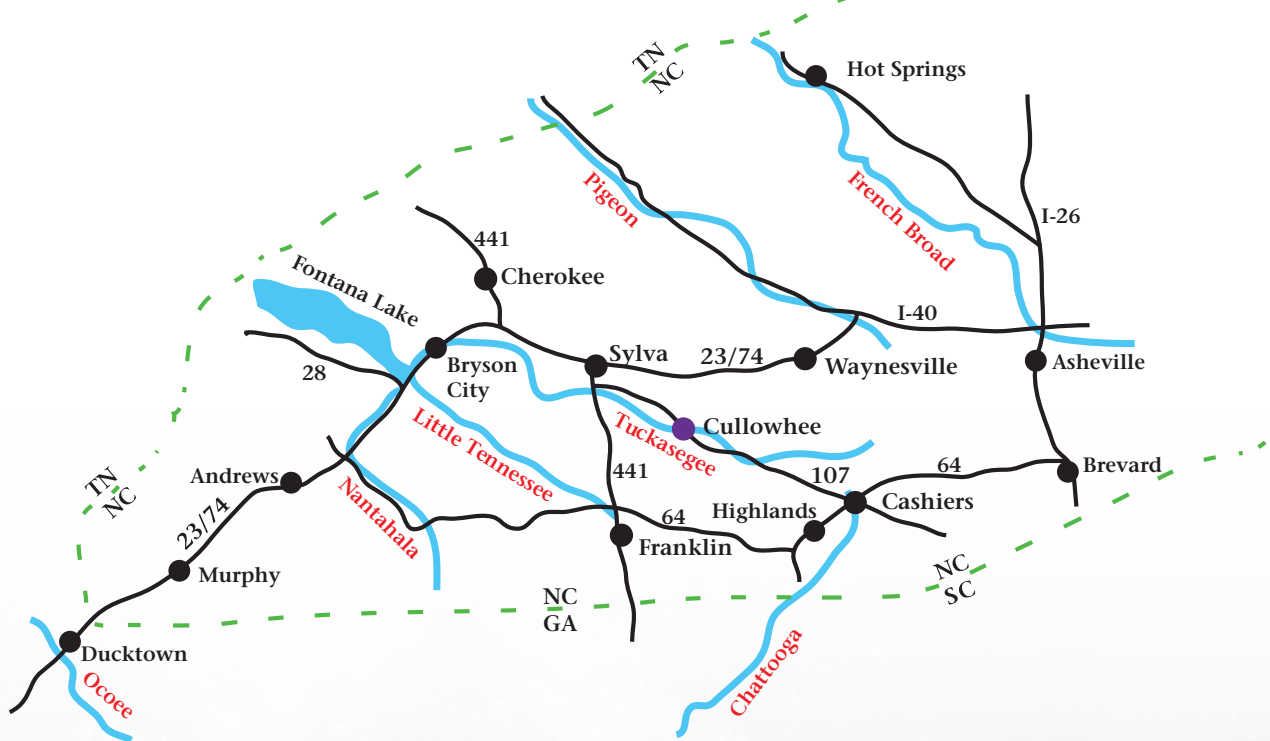
## Where Whee Play



Guide to 7 Local Whitewater Rivers  
Paddling Resources  
Info on Gear

Western  
Carolina  
UNIVERSITY

# Where Whee Paddle



Western Carolina University is a whitewater epicenter. Within an hour and a half of the WCU Campus in Cullowhee, whitewater paddlers can find the entire gambit of runs. With local resources ranging from Class I – Class VI, from park and play to park and huck and everything in between, WCU has easy access to it all. The focus of this brochure is to provide vital information to beginning and intermediate paddlers.

## Release Information for Other Rivers

Check the following websites for “flow events”:

Cheoah River: [boatingbeta.com/releases/cheoah\\_next](http://boatingbeta.com/releases/cheoah_next)

Nantahala Cascades and East and West Fork Tuckasegee: [duke-energy.com/lakes/non-scheduled-flow-releases](http://duke-energy.com/lakes/non-scheduled-flow-releases)

## Required Gear

All paddlers will need a boat, skirt, helmet, paddle, personal flotation device, appropriate layers, and safety equipment prior to a trip.

## A Little Note on Leave No Trace (L.N.T.)

When visiting a river it is important to practice Leave No Trace ethics. Please don't litter or damage any of the beautiful surroundings. Remember to plan ahead and prepare, travel and camp on durable surfaces, leave what you find, properly dispose of waste, minimize campfire impact, and respect wildlife and other visitors. Respect landowners and other river locals. Research regulations are for each area you visit as they may be different.

## Additional Resources:

American Whitewater: | [americanwhitewater.org](http://americanwhitewater.org)

Boating Beta | [boatingbeta.com](http://boatingbeta.com)

Boatertalk | [boatertalk.com](http://boatertalk.com)

Carolina Canoe Club | [carolinacanooclub.org](http://carolinacanooclub.org)

*North Carolina Rivers and Creeks*, by Leland Davis

# Tuckasegee

Class II | Beginner to Intermediate | Park & Play

The Tuckasegee is our local river here in Cullowhee. With headwaters beginning in the Panthertown Valley, the Tuck flows through several different sections. With the Tuck Gorge and the Eternity Hole being the two closest whitewater resources to WCU, this is a premier location to begin paddling. Commercial rafting is also available.

## Gorge

**Class:** Class II  
**Length:** 4.4 Mile stretch  
**Level:** 800 cfs min  
**Put-in:** Dillsboro  
**Take-out:** Barkers Creek Rd., Tuckasegee Outfitters  
**Distance from WCU:** 8 miles, 15 minutes

## Eternity Hole

**Class:** Class II  
**Length:** Park and play  
**Level:** Duke Energy schedules releases [duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp](http://duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp) 866.332.5253  
**Parking:** 1 mile up Shook Cove Rd.  
**Distance from WCU:** 11 Miles, 15 minutes

## Cullowhee Canoe Slalom

Test your paddling skills at the annual canoe slalom held on the Tuckasegee River in Cullowhee each September. The course is beginner friendly and you can paddle a canoe, kayak, or paddle board. Contact the PRM program for more information.



# Little Tennessee

Class I-II | Beginner

This run, flowing into Fontana Lake, is best done during the winter months while the lake is low. The float trip is mostly class I-II and is perfect for anyone worried about getting in over their heads. This stretch is great to learn surfing and getting familiar with a kayak. No commercial rafting is available.

**Class:** Class I-II  
**Length:** 6.5 Miles  
**Level:** 500-2000 cfs  
**Put-in:** Needmore Road  
**Take-out:** Fontana Lake  
**Distance from WCU:** 30 miles, 40 minutes



# Nantahala

Class II-III + | Beginner to Advanced

The Nantahala River is a step above the Tuck. With several different sections, the Nanty is another local resource on which aspiring paddlers can hone their skills. With park and play, river running, and meat hucking all available within the gorge, the Nanty is a must boat river. Scheduled releases throughout the warmer months make this run a southeastern classic. Commercial rafting is also available.

## Gorge

**Class:** Class II-III  
**Length:** 7.8 Miles  
**Level:** Duke Energy schedules releases [duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp](http://duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp) 866.332.5253  
**Put-In:** Beechertown  
**Take-out:** Wesser  
**Distance from WCU:** 44 miles, 53 minutes

## Upper

**Class:** Class III-III+  
**Length:** 3.3 Miles  
**Level:** 250-500 cfs  
**Put-in:** sr 1310 bridge below Cascades  
**Take-out:** Beechertown  
**Distance from WCU:** 48 miles, 60 minutes

## NOC Store Wave

**Class:** Class III  
**Length:** Park and Play  
**Level:** Duke Energy schedules releases [duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp](http://duke-energy.com/lakes/nantahala/nan-scheduled-flow-releases.asp) 866.332.5253  
**Parking:** NOC  
**Distance from WCU:** 36 miles, 43 minutes

# Pigeon

Class III | Intermediate to Advanced

This roadside run, skirting I-40, is a staple summer run in the southeast. The class III nature and quick shuttle makes for an easy afternoon run.

**Class:** Class III  
**Length:** 4.4 Miles  
**Level:** 400 + cfs  
**Put-in:** Waterville Power Plant  
**Take-out:** Hartford  
**Distance from WCU:** 62 miles, 70 minutes

# Chattooga

Class II-V | Beginner to Advanced

Perhaps the most iconic river in the southeast, the Chattooga is a staple run for southeast paddlers. Located on the Georgia/South Carolina border, this natural flow river ranges from mild to wild, all dependent upon rain and water levels. Difficulty increases as paddlers work their way toward Lake Tugaloo, with the Five Falls of Section 4 before the 2 mile lake paddle to the take-out. Commercial rafting is also available.

## Section 2

Class: II (III-)

Length: 5.7 miles

Level: 1'+ on US 76 Bridge Gauge

Put-in: Long Bottom Ford

Take-out: Earl's Ford

Distance from WCU: 86 miles, 120 minutes

## Section 3

Class: III (IV)

Length: 12 Miles

Level: 1.5' - 3' on US 76 Bridge Gauge

Put-in: Earl's Ford

Take-out: US 76 Bridge

Distance from WCU: 56 Miles, 80 minutes

## Section 4

Class: IV (.5'-1.6'), IV (V) (1.7'-2.5'), V (2.5'+)

Length: 6.3 Miles

Level: 1'-3' on US 76 Bridge Gauge

Put-in: US 76

Take-out: Tugaloo Lake Boat Ramp

Distance from WCU: 50 miles, 70 minute



# Ocoee

Class III-IV | Intermediate to Advanced

The Ocoee River is a continuous class III located just across the border into Tennessee. With roadside access, scheduled summer releases, and an open community of core paddlers, the Ocoee is a rip-roaring good time. Commercial rafting is also available, and all hard boaters should be warned about the floating undercuts.

## Upper

Class: Class III-IV

Length: 5 miles

Level: 900 cfs - 6000 cfs

Put-in: Ocoee #3 Dam

Take-out: Ocoee #2 Dam

Distance from WCU: 102 Miles, 115 minutes

# French Broad

Class II-IV | Beginner to Advanced

Located outside of Asheville, this class III run is always runnable. With higher water translating to bigger waves and a rowdier ride it is a run best tackled with flow. This unusually wide river provides for a variety of lines. Commercial rafting is also available.

## Section 9

Class: III-IV

Length: 8.2 miles

Level: Any

Put-in: Barnard

Take-out: Hot Springs

Distance from WCU: 64 miles, 90 minutes

## The Ledges

Class: II

Length: Park and Play

Level: 1700+ cfs

Parking: Riverside Drive, Asheville

Distance from WCU: 69 miles, 80 minutes

## Alexander Wave

Class: II

Length: Park and play

Level: 2000 cfs - 4000 cfs

Parking: Alexander Bridge

Distance from WCU: 140 miles, 150 minutes

