

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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Annual Update
**2022 Whitewater Boating
Program**

**2022 Annual Report to the 131st Joint Standing
Committee on Inland Fisheries & Wildlife**

Provided by Inland Fisheries & Wildlife

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February 1, 2023



2022 ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMERCIAL RAFTING INDUSTRY

- In Maine, there are approximately 19 licensed commercial whitewater outfitters providing whitewater boating trips among our 6 rapidly flowing rivers. The rivers include stretches of the upper Kennebec River, West Branch of the Penobscot River, South Branch of the Penobscot River, Dead River, Rapid River and the Magalloway River.
- In Maine, the commercial whitewater industry provided professional services to approximately **42,390** commercial rafting passengers during the 2022 rafting season (January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022).
- The commercial whitewater rafting industry continues to be a tremendous economic asset to the State of Maine. The industry is complex and requires a significant investment of time by the Department to fulfill the responsibilities required by law. In 1999, the Department hired a full-time game warden to work as a whitewater boating specialist to enforce whitewater rafting rules and regulations and manage the administrative duties associated with the whitewater rafting industry. This position is currently funded 50% from the “Whitewater Rafting Fund”.
- During the whitewater rafting season, the Department’s Whitewater Boating Specialist spends most of their time at the Dead, Kennebec, and West Branch of the Penobscot Rivers enforcing whitewater rafting rules and regulations, working with whitewater outfitters, guides, private boaters, and Brookfield Renewable partners. Recently, the Rapid, Magalloway and South Branch of the Penobscot Rivers have seen an increase in rafting traffic, which requires additional enforcement efforts and administrative duties. In addition to river enforcement, the specialist spends time dealing with administrative responsibilities out of the Whitewater Boating Office, located in Augusta. These duties include communicating with whitewater outfitters, working directly with Advisory Board for the Licensing of Whitewater Guides, completing financial and safety reports, and other tasks associated with the Whitewater Boating Program.

WHITEWATER FUND AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Fund Established: 12 M.R.S. Section 10259

The Whitewater Rafting Fund, referred to in this section as the “fund” is established to be used by the Department, the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, Bureau of Parks and Lands and the affected counties and municipalities to fund activities related to river recreation with primary emphasis on those activities which relate to whitewater trips.

The Whitewater Rafting Fund shall be expended solely for purposes related to river recreation such as promoting safety, education, and enforcement on the rivers and additionally mitigate environmental problems and any adverse effect on competing uses of rivers. This fund dedicates sixty-five percent of the revenue to remain with the Department for administration and enforcement of the whitewater rafting laws and rules, twenty-five percent is dedicated to the Department of Conservation and ten percent to the affected counties.

Income Report Calendar Year

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Counties 10%</u>	<u>Dept. of Conservation 25%</u>	<u>Dept. of IF&W 65%</u>
2016	\$138,646.00	\$13,864.60	\$34,661.50	\$90,119.90
2017	\$147,842.00	\$14,784.22	\$36,960.50	\$96,097.31
2018	\$124,699.90	\$12,469.99	\$31,174.98	\$81,054.94
2019	\$120,202.27	\$9,054.20	\$30,050.57	\$78,131.48
2020	\$34,212.50	\$3,421.25	\$8,553.13	\$22,238.13
2021	\$113,518.06	\$11,351.81	\$28,379.52	\$73,786.73
2022	\$104,007.00	\$10,400.70	\$25,001.00	\$67,600.00

INCIDENT REPORTS

2022 TOTAL NUMBER OF COMMERCIAL RAFT PASSENGERS AND REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS

- **Dead River**
Total Passengers: **1,998**
Total Reported Accidents: **1**
- **Kennebec River**
Total Passengers: **32,471**
Total Reported Accidents: **0**
- **Magalloway River**
Total Passengers: **0**
Total Reported Accidents: **0**
- **Rapid River**
Total Passengers: **0**
Total Reported Accidents: **0**
- **South Branch of the Penobscot River**
Total Passengers: **48**
Total Reported Accidents: **0**
- **West Branch of the Penobscot River**
Total Passengers: **7,873**
Total Reportable Accidents: **4**

2022 REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS BY OUTFITTER AND FLOW RATES IN CUBIC FEET PER SECOND

A Safety Incident (reportable accident) is defined in MDIFW Rule Chapter 14.06 (F) as any accident occurring in connection with a commercial whitewater trip or whitewater guide training that results in the death of a person, a person losing consciousness or receiving professional medical treatment, a person becoming disabled for more than 24 hours, a person disappearance from a watercraft under circumstances indicating death or injury or damage to the watercraft or other property of more than \$1,000.00.

- **Penobscot Adventures II: 1**

Date: 6-17-2022

Location: Big Amberjackawockamus, West Branch Penobscot

Primary Cause of Incident: Fall Overboard

Secondary Cause of Incident: Collision with Passenger

Reported injury: Concussion Head

CFS Water Flow: 3,000

- **North Country Rivers: 1**

Date: 7-23-2022

Location: Nesowadnehunk Falls, West Branch of the Penobscot River

Primary Cause of Incident: Capsize

Secondary Cause of Incident: Unknown

Reported Injury: Dislocated Shoulder

CFS Water Flow: 3,000

- **Northern Outdoors: 2**

Date: 8-5-2022

Location: Exterminator Hole, West Branch of the Penobscot River

Primary Cause of Incident: Capsize

Secondary Cause of Incident: Hazardous Waters

Reported Injury: Dislocated Shoulder

CFS Water Flow: 3,000

Date: 8-6-2022

Location: Nesowadnehunk Falls, West Branch of the Penobscot River

Primary Cause of Incident: Fall in Boat

Secondary Cause of Incident: Hazardous Waters

Reported Injury: Fracture of Ankle

CFS Water Flow: 2, 800

**2022 REPORTABLE ACCIDENTS BY OUTFITTER AND FLOW RATES IN CUBIC FEET PER SECOND
CONTINUED**

- **Magic Falls Rafting Company: 1**
Date: 10-1-2022
Location: Below Big Poplar at Fryolator Wave on Dead River
Primary Cause of Incident: Capsize
Secondary Cause of Incident: Unknown
Reported Injury: Fatal
CFS Water Flow: 5,980

2022 COMMERCIAL PASSENGERS CARRIED BY LICENSED OUTFITTERS

- **Adventure River Expeditions-Total Passengers: 181**
Dead River: 79
Kennebec River: 102
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0
- **Crab Apple Whitewater-Total Passengers: 3,549**
Dead River: 197
Kennebec River: 3,352
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0
- **Downeast Rafting, DBA Adventure Bound-Total Passengers: 4,000**
Dead River: 116
Kennebec River: 3,884
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot: 0
West Branch Penobscot: 0
- **Jump and Raft Adventures: 598**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 0
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 598

2022 COMMERCIAL PASSENGERS CARRIED BY EACH LICENSED OUTFITTER CONTINUED

- **Lifelines Outdoors-Total Passengers: 7**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 7
Magalloway: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

- **Magic Falls Rafting-Total Passengers: 5,085**
Dead River: 296
Kennebec River: 4,789
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

- **Magic Rivers Rafting-Total Passengers: 145**
Dead River: 24
Kennebec River: 121
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River:
South Branch Penobscot: 0
West Branch Penobscot: 0

- **Maine Rafting Expeditions-Total Passengers: 450**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 0
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 450

- **Maine Whitewater-Total Passengers: 373**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 373
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

2022 COMMERCIAL PASSENGERS CARRIED BY EACH LICENSED OUTFITTER CONTINUED

- **Moxie Outdoor Adventures-Total Passengers: 2,613**

Dead River: 103
Kennebec River: 2,510
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

- **New England Whitewater Center-Total Passengers: 753**

Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 0
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 753

- **North American Whitewater-Total Passengers: 0**

Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 10
Magalloway Rivers: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

- **North Country Rivers-Total Passengers: 8,249**

Dead River: 337
Kennebec River: 6,073
Magalloway Rivers: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 1,839

- **Northeast Whitewater-Total Passengers: 2,274**

Dead River: 60
Kennebec River: 1,840
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 48
West Branch Penobscot River: 326

2022 COMMERCIAL PASSENGERS CARRIED BY EACH LICENSED OUTFITTER CONTINUED

- **Northern Outdoors-Total Passengers: 7,798**
Dead River: 498
Kennebec River: 5,838
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 1,462
- **Penobscot Adventures II-Total Passengers: 1,791**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 0
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 1,791
- **Three Rivers Whitewater-Total Passengers: 4,328**
Dead River: 207
Kennebec River: 3,467
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 654
- **US Rafting-Total Passengers: 108**
Dead River: 0
Kennebec River: 108
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0
- **Unicorn Wilderness Expeditions-Total Passengers: 88**
Dead River: 81
Kennebec River: 7
Magalloway River: 0
Rapid River: 0
South Branch Penobscot River: 0
West Branch Penobscot River: 0

2022 WHITEWATER BOATING CHECKS AND NUMBER PRIVATE BOATERS ON UPPER KENNEBEC RIVER

- Number of safety checks by wardens on commercial whitewater outfitters: 2,000 +
- Number of safety checks by wardens on private whitewater boaters: 2,000 +
- 2022 noncommercial passengers that registered at Harris Station 4, 231+
- 2022 the Department tested over 80 whitewater guide applicants.