



Paddlesports Angler Endorsement Criteria

Course Outline

Fundamentally, participants are expected to have the paddling skills, technical knowledge, rescue ability, teaching ability, group management, and interpersonal skills commensurate with this course content prior to presenting themselves for evaluation as an Endorsement Candidate.

The Paddlesports Angler Endorsement is available to ACA Level 1 (or higher) Instructors, Trainers, and Educators within the disciplines of river kayaking, coastal kayaking, and stand up paddleboarding (SUP). Upon successful completion of this course, instructors will have the ability to deliver the appropriate angling skills courses and the flatwater safety and rescue for anglers course within their respective craft.

Course Prerequisites

- Acknowledgement of personal compliance with the [ACA Essential Eligibility Criteria \(EEC\)](#).
- Be a currently certified ACA Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking or Level 1: Introduction to SUP instructor (or higher) in good standing

Course Duration

Minimum of one day (8 hours) or more.

Course Location / Accessible Venues

Within the course venue corresponding to the instructor's current level of certification.

Course Size

5 Endorsement Candidates : 1 Instructor Trainer; with an additional endorsed instructor, the ratio can be 10 : 2. The maximum number of participants permitted is 10.

Instructor Trainer

This endorsement course may be offered by Level 1 or higher ACA Instructor Trainers or Instructor Trainer Educators holding the Paddlesports Angler Endorsement OR by an ACA Level 1 (or higher) Instructor Trainer (IT) or Instructor Trainer Educator (ITE) who co-teaches alongside a current ACA Instructor actively holding the Paddlesports Angler Endorsement.

The following is a list of the criteria used to evaluate Endorsement Candidates. The content and sequence of evaluation is to be adjusted to best fit the participant's needs, class location, time allowance, and be craft appropriate.

General Requirements for all ACA Endorsement Candidates

- Be at least 18 years old
- Demonstrate general knowledge of ACA Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives
- Successfully complete an Endorsement Workshop
- Have and maintain first aid and age appropriate CPR
- Demonstrate a general knowledge of paddlesports and the ACA
- Demonstrate the ability to appropriately perform and teach all of the following material, unassisted, in the appropriate venue

Maintain ACA Level 1: ACA Level 1: Introduction to Kayaking or Level 1: Introduction to SUP instructor status through the following:

Certification Maintenance Requirements

- Teach at least two courses that meet ACA standards within the four-year certification period and properly report the courses using the ACA Course Management System (CMS).
- Complete an Instructor Update, at the highest level of certification, during the four-year certification period
- Maintain ACA membership and SEIC registration annually
- Maintain appropriate CPR and first aid certification for the duration of certification

ACA Paddlesports Angler Endorsement Requirements

Demonstrate a knowledge of ACA administrative processes:

- How to register and report a course (with and without insurance)
- An understanding of the ACA Waiver and Release of Liability
- A familiarity with the ACA website and the resources/policies available within

Demonstrate a knowledge of teaching and learning theory:

- Understand multiple modalities of teaching and how they impact different learners
- Differentiate instruction targeting different learners
- Use effective teaching methods
- Present information effectively, both prepared and impromptu

Demonstrate the following:

- Positive interpersonal skills
- Appropriate group management skills including leadership and judgment
- Ability to choose an appropriate venue / class site

Demonstrate a clear understanding and the ability to teach the various unique fishing specific considerations, including but not limited to:

1. **Paddling Gear**

- Choosing a paddlecraft
- Choosing and sizing a fishing life jacket
- Choosing a paddle paddlesports fishing
- Propulsion: what is different if you have a motor/pedals?
- Outfitting an angler's paddlecraft for safety

2. Fishing Gear

- Fishing styles and their advantages/disadvantages (bait casting, spinning, fly)
 - Identify reel types: conventional and spinning
 - Identify rod types: conventional or spinning to match reel
- Rod types/lengths and advantages/disadvantages
- 5 main types of bait
 - Live or fresh dead
 - Hard lures
 - Bladed lures
 - Soft plastic lures
 - Artificial flies
- Types of fishing line and their advantages and disadvantages
 - Monofilament
 - Braided line
 - Fluorocarbon
 - Fly lines (floating/intermediate/sinking)
- Miscellaneous tools

3. Fishing techniques from a paddlecraft

- Anchoring

- Structure vs. cover
- Shallow vs. deep water
- Moving water vs. still water
- Windy vs. calm
- Clear water vs. stained water
- Act of fishing
 - Casting
 - Setting the hook
 - Fighting the fish
 - Landing the fish

4. Paddlecraft rigging

- Tackle management
- Rod holders
- Paddle holders
- Electronics/power management

5. Paddling with fishing gear

- Securing and storing of gear (balance load top/bottom, bow/stern, port and starboard)
- Getting in and out of the paddlecraft with gear
- Launching with gear
- Accessing gear while maintaining angler balance
- Standing vs. sitting (advantages and disadvantages)
- Wading with gear, including wearing waders

6. Fishing ethics and etiquette

- License requirements and why they are important
- Fish regulations
- Aquatic Nuisance Species and Clean, Drain, Dry
- Handling fish (catch and release, keeping fish)
- Launching and landing paddlecraft (boat ramps, shore line, docks, etc)
- On the water fishing etiquette
 - Proper spacing while fishing in proximity to other waterway users
 - Interactions with bank/shore/wading fisherman
 - Interactions with boat fisherman
 - Interactions with other paddlers
 - Respecting private property and land owner's rights

7. **Safety and Rescue**

- Rescue philosophy for anglers: address the need to prioritize rescue of people and boats over rescuing fishing gear
- Lake/open water hazards: boat traffic, cold water, wind, managing a paddle and fishing rod in waves, tackle management in waves, etc.
- River/moving water hazards: managing a paddle and fishing rod in current, tackle management in current, etc.
- Approaching strainers/lay downs as an angler
- Describe recommended guidelines for the use of tethers and leashes
- Discuss entanglement hazards
- Anchor and anchor line safety
- Cast a fishing rod safely (fly line management)
- Retrieve a fishing line
- Managing snags

- Knowing when to cut the line to save your life
- Land a fish and use of a boat net
- Managing toxicity concerns with handling lead weights
- First Aid response to cuts from line
- Awareness of higher-risk fishing disciplines such as trolling and targeting large species

Successfully complete the craft-specific module that corresponds to current discipline of instructor certification (river kayak, coastal kayak, or SUP)

Demonstrate leadership, group management skills, experience and judgment necessary to be a safe, effective paddlesport angling instructor

ACA Paddlesports Angler - River Kayak Fishing Module

This module is appropriate for currently ACA certified instructors within the discipline of river kayak. Instructors earning this endorsement must demonstrate their ability to explain, model, and teach the following:

River trip planning

- Understanding weather, wind, and wave considerations for anglers/fish
- Understanding river flow (average vs. low vs. high) for anglers/fish
- How to find and read/interpret river gauges related to fishing (e.g. river is rising vs. river is falling) for anglers/fish

Locating fish in the river

- Eddy lines
- Current seams
- Manmade structures vs. natural structures
- Cover/strainers/lay downs

- Current
- Rule of Thirds: drop offs vs. pools vs. main channels

Maneuvers

- Launch/landing kayak while loaded with gear
- Move the kayak forward, turn it, move sideways, stop it, and reverse it, when kayak is loaded with fishing gear
- Access fishing tackle and other fishing gear and equipment
- Set anchor properly

Safety and rescue considerations for river fishing

- On-water hazards: boat traffic, wind, cold water, handling paddle and fishing rod in waves, tackle management in waves, etc
- River/moving water hazards: handling paddle and fishing rod in current, tackle management in current, strainers, anchoring risks
- Approaching strainers/lay downs as an angler
- Rescue philosophy for anglers
- Demonstrate self-rescue with gear and tackle
- Discuss the risks associated with the particular propensity of anglers to paddle in cold seasons, in the dark, and alone
- Demonstrate and explain appropriate use of tethers and leashes and discuss entanglement hazards
- Demonstrate setting anchor and anchor line safety
- Use/wearing of waders: safety and rescue concerns when wearing waders, emphasizing the neutral buoyancy factors
- Demonstrate neutral buoyancy in waders in still water

ACA Paddlesports Angler - Coastal Kayak Fishing Module

This module is appropriate for currently ACA certified instructors within the discipline of coastal kayak. Instructors earning this endorsement must demonstrate their ability to explain, model, and teach the following:

Coastal trip planning for fishing

- Nautical charts, tide charts, and topography for fishing
- Weather, wind, waves, and surf reports for fishing
- Fishing in familiar waters
- Fishing in unfamiliar waters

Locating fish

- Surf
- Marshes/bays
- Estuaries
- Tidal creeks and pools

Maneuvers

- Launch/landing kayak while loaded with gear
- Move the kayak forward, turn it, move sideways, stop it, and reverse it, when kayak is loaded with fishing gear
- Access fishing tackle and other fishing gear and equipment
- Set anchor properly

Safety and rescue considerations for coastal fishing

- On-water hazards: boat traffic, wind, cold water, handling paddle and fishing rod in waves, tackle management in waves, etc.
- River/moving water hazards: handling paddle and fishing rod in current, tackle management in current, strainers, anchoring risks
- Approaching strainers/lay downs/jetties/docks as an angler
- Rescue philosophy for anglers
- Demonstrate self-rescue with gear and tackle

- Discuss the risks associated with the particular propensity of anglers to paddle in cold seasons, in the dark, and alone
- Demonstrate and explain appropriate use of tethers and leashes and discuss entanglement hazards
- Demonstrate setting anchor and anchor line safety
- Use/wearing of waders: safety and rescue concerns when wearing waders, emphasizing the neutral buoyancy factors
- Demonstrate neutral buoyancy in waders in still water

ACA Paddlesports Angler - SUP Fishing Module

This module is appropriate for currently ACA certified instructors within the discipline of SUP. Instructors earning this endorsement must demonstrate their ability to explain, model, and teach the following:

Trip planning for SUP fishing

- Nautical charts, tide charts, river gauges, and topography for fishing
- Weather, wind, waves, and surf reports for fishing
- Fishing in familiar waters
- Fishing in unfamiliar waters

Identify methods of rigging equipment on a SUP

- Identify tackle management methods
- Identify rod holder types and placement
- Identify paddle holder types and placement
- Identify electronics and power management placement and concerns

Maneuvers

- Loading and launching/landing the SUP while loaded with gear
- Move the SUP forward, turn it, move sideways, stop it, and reverse it, when SUP is loaded with fishing gear

- Access fishing tackle and other fishing gear and equipment
- Set anchor properly

Safety and rescue considerations for SUP fishing

- On-water hazards: boat traffic, wind, cold water, handling paddle and fishing rod in waves, tackle management in waves, etc.
- River/moving water hazards: handling paddle and fishing rod in current, tackle management in current, strainers, anchoring risks
- Approaching strainers/lay downs/jetties/docks as an angler
- Rescue philosophy for anglers
- Demonstrate self-rescue with gear and tackle
- Discuss the risks associated with the particular propensity of anglers to paddle in cold seasons, in the dark, and alone
- Demonstrate and explain appropriate use of tethers and leashes and discuss entanglement hazards
- Demonstrate setting anchor and anchor line safety
- Use/wearing of waders: safety and rescue concerns when wearing waders, emphasizing the neutral buoyancy factors
- Demonstrate neutral buoyancy in waders in still water

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Date of last revision: 1/1/2023

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This curriculum is managed by the ACA Paddlesports Angler Advisory Board. To connect with the leadership of this group, please view the SEIC Committee rosters on [the ACA website.](#)