
TUMALO CREEK KAYAK & CANOE

Safety Talk: River Tubes

Welcome:

Welcome to Tumalo Creek Kayak and Canoe Rentals. To provide you with the most enjoyable experience possible we would first like to share some tips for a successful float. For a general overview of your trip please listen carefully.

You will be entering the Deschutes River at River Bend Park, approximately one and a quarter miles upstream from Downtown Bend and Drake Park. During your float you will travel through the Old Mill District, the Passageway Channel at the Bend Whitewater Park, and your final destination Drake Park. The float takes approximately one and a half to two hours.

How do you get back:

The city of Bend Oregon offers a Ride the River shuttle service from June 16th- September 3rd for a small fee, \$3 per person. The shuttle service does not issue change, please be prepared with exact cash. The shuttle picks up passengers and their river tubes at the most southern point of Drake Park. This can be recognized easily during your float. After navigating the Passageway at the Bend Whitewater Park you will pass under one foot bridge and a second traffic bridge, the Galveston Bridge. As you pass under the Galveston Bridge please exit the river to your right. There you will see signs for the shuttle stop which will bring you back to the Simpson Ave. site or River Bend Park. Times and details can be found at <http://cascadeseasttransit.com/ride/ride-the-river/>.

Be prepared:

To best enjoy your time on the water be prepared for variable conditions. We recommended that you bring plenty of sun and heat protection including sunscreen and drinking water. We also suggest you bring a sun hat and sun glasses. Although it may be sunny and warm outside, understand that the water temperature of the river is likely in the low to mid 50s. If you fall in it may be chilly. You can reduce the chance of getting cold by wearing appropriate clothing layers. This includes quick-drying synthetic fabrics, not cotton. We also recommend that you wear protective footwear as there are hazards that could harm your feet both in and out of the water. Appropriate footwear and apparel are also advantageous if choosing to float through the passageway in the Bend Whitewater Park (see notes in next section) as the passage is constructed out of local basalt lava rock which can be sharp to the touch.

The Passageway Channel at the Bend Whitewater Park:

Approximately half-way down your float, you will encounter the passageway channel at the Bend Whitewater Park. This is easy to recognize as there are many signs directing you to the river-left side. You will also observe the Colorado Bridge at this location. As you approach this location, please exit the river to the left. You may float through the passageway channel however, it is best to “know before you go”. Please look at the channel before committing to float through it. The channel contains some rapids that may not be suitable for all floaters.

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The passageway can easily be walked around or portaged by following the signs and gravel path to McKay Park. At this location you can get back into the river below the passageway successfully avoiding any of the swift water or rapids.

If you decide to float through the passageway, please note the areas available to exit, shallow rocks, the gradient, and resulting hydraulics. Pick a path for success; this would be in the center of the passageway in the deepest channels. You can navigate your river tube by facing down stream and paddling backwards, with your hands, away from the obstacles you want to avoid. Keeping your feet pointed down stream will also allow you to push off of rocks or other hazards. If you fall out of your river tube you may swim in a similar fashion. Keep your body close to the surface of the water, point your feet down stream, and swim away from hazards you want to avoid. Avoid standing up in the current, as this can be dangerous. You may stand up in shallow water without any swift current. If at any point you become uncomfortable in the passageway you may direct yourself to the river left side to exit and walk the remainder of the swift water and rapids.

The state requires that youth under twelve years of age wear a personal floatation device (PFD). Youth and adults twelve years of age or more are not required to wear a PFD however it is highly recommended. Please check that the fit of your PFD is correct. To do this make sure all buckles are buckled, zippers zipped, and all straps have been snugged down. Your PFD should be snug but comfortable. If the shoulder straps of your PFD can be pulled above your ears the PFD may be too loose and should be adjusted. Check the fit of your PFD periodically as it can become loose after getting wet.

Drugs and alcohol are not allowed to accompany any of our rentals and may lead to injuries or death. Please also take care of our river and practice leave no trace. The Deschutes River sees a tremendous amount of use each year, 250,000+ users in the 2017 season according to Bend Parks and Recreation. Every one of us can make a difference, please do your part and keep the river clean.

Review:

To review please be prepared for the hot sun, cold water and sharp rocks in the passageway of the Bend Whitewater Park. Know before you go, and look at the passageway before committing to run it. Note any hazards and potential exits. It is highly recommended to wear a PFD (and mandatory for youth below 12 years of age). Keep the PFD snug, but still comfortable. Check your PFD regularly for proper fit. The Bend City Shuttle cost is \$3 and it will bring you back to River Bend Park. Please check in at the kiosk when returning your tubes. Enjoy your float down the Deschutes River!