

Safety Plan

For the

Chief Pinesi Canoe Brigade

June 23 to July 1, 2025

Deep River - Ottawa

Draft

Jan. 20, 2025

Introduction

Purpose

- The purpose of this plan is to ensure that the Chief Pinesi Canoe Brigade on the Ottawa River is prepared for as many eventualities as possible. We must do everything in our power to ensure that there are no incidents, and if these do occur, we must be prepared to deal with them.
- In the event of an incident where legal action is taken, our best defence is to demonstrate that we have exercised “due diligence”.

Due diligence is “...the level of judgement, care, prudence, determination, and activity that a person would reasonably be expected to do under particular circumstances.” A judge or jury would consider whether the incident was foreseeable (could a reasonable person have foreseen that something could go wrong?); preventable (was there an opportunity to prevent the incident?); and controllable (who was the responsible person and what could they have done to prevent the incident).

Event Overview

- The Chief Pinesi Canoe Brigade will take place over the course of 9 days, June 23 – July 1, 2024. The brigade will consist of 3 replica fur trade big canoes (7.5 – 12 m), each paddled by 6-16 paddlers, that will travel from Deep River to Ottawa (approximately 160 km) on the Ottawa. This event is expected to take 9 days to complete. In addition there will be opportunities for smaller craft to informally participate in the event for limited distances and times.

Responsibilities:

Official Title	Individual Assigned - Source	Overall Responsibility
Brigade organizer	Kichi Sibi Trails (on water responsible person Max Finkelstein)	all communication with press and family in the event of an incident, accident or emergency; ensure that canoes meet Paddle Canada and Canadian Coast Guard safety requirements
Canoe captains and on-water leaders	A Canoe Captain will be designated for each canoe. There are two on-water leaders, Max Finkelstein and Eva Moons, who may or may not also be canoe captains.	The brigade travels in a single group with a lead and sweep canoe. Each evening or early morning the Brigade Organizer or his/her delegate leads a daily Brigade Meeting with canoe captains and the two on-water leaders. The schedule for the day, special considerations, stopping points are discussed. As well, weather and other dangers need to be discussed and decisions need to be made collectively on when a planned paddle should be cancelled or delayed due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. Canoe captains are responsible for communication with each other and the Brigade organizer during the day to ensure that the schedule is adhered to and in case of unforeseen circumstances which could require abandoning the paddle for the day
Route Planner	Kitchi Sibi Trails (Peter Stockdale, Max Finkelstein and Jim Stone)	Planning of the basic route, and assist in pre-event safety plan implementation.
Safety Chair	TBA	Implementation of the Safety Plan
Sweep Marshall(s)	will be assigned for each day at the preceding Brigade Leaders meeting	All canoes complete each day's paddle, or appropriate arrangements are made for the pick-up of canoes departing the route part way along on any day.
Canoe captains	1/canoe	Ensure that each canoe is properly equipped to Coast Guard regulations, and Safety and First Aid equipment for his/her canoe. Responsible for navigation! Each canoe captain is a Paddle Canada certified Big Canoe leader.
Canoe Crew First Aid persons (at least 1 per canoe crew) who ensures that the canoe he/she is assigned to has required First Aid equipment for its crew.	provided by each canoe crew. Each canoe will have a complete First Aid kit.	On site First Aid, & victim supervision until EMT arrival

Location of the Safety Plan during the Event

- Each of the following are to retain a copy of the Safety Plan, and must have their copy accessible in camp each day.
 - Safety Chair
 - Brigade Organizer
 - Canoe Captains
 - On-water leaders, Max and Eva

Contact Information

General Information on Contacts

- It is important that all people involved in the safety plan, know their roles ahead of time.

Emergency Response Contacts: 9-1-1 is the emergency phone number for the region!

Official Title	Name	Location on Site	Cell Phone #
Safety Chair	TBA		
Brigade Organiser	Kichi Sibi trails Max Finkelstein Peter Stockdale	With canoes or on land transportation	343 462-6944 ____ _
Brigade Captains and on-water leaders,	Various On-water leaders Max Finkelstein and Eva Moons	With canoes	
Event/ Site Managers	various		
Ottawa Police			Emergency: 911 non Emergency: 613 -236-1222
Ontario Provincial Police			1 888 310-1122 or 911
La Surete de Quebec			310-4141 or 911
Ontario Provincial Police water rescue			613 283-6911
Pembroke Regional Hospital			Tel: (613) 732-2811
Canadian Armed Forces Health Services Centre (Petawawa)			(613) 687-5511

Arnprior and District Memorial Hospital		350 John St N, Arnprior ON K7S 2P6	(613) 623-3166
Deep River & District Hospital		117 Banting Dr, Deep River ON K0J 1P0	(613) 584-3333
Pontiac community Hospital		350 Main Street • Shawville • Québec • J0X 2Y0	Phone: (819) 647-2979
CLSC Mansfield		134 Rue Principale • Fort-Coulonge • Québec • J0X 1V0	: (819) 683-2259

On Route: Prior to, During, and Following the Event

Potential Hazards and Control Measures:

Potential Hazard	Control Measure	Person Responsible
Weather conditions: rain, hail, wind, severe winds (tornadoes), lightening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper clothing, food, water. Daily access to appropriate weather forecasts Lightening protocol: get off the water (preferably under shelter) after first lightening seen; wait 30 minutes after last lightening seen. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> responsibility of brigade leader and crew captains. Check weather forecasts each morning before departure
Injury: sprained ankle, blisters, overuse injuries, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prevention is the first line of defense. Proper clothing, treatment at early onset of overuse injury, There must also be a communications device (e.g., radio or cell phone) or system (e.g., call-in system before and after going to site). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> , responsibility of brigade leaders and crew captains
Risks from other boaters: collisions, swamping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> following the “rules of the road”, always assume a power boat does NOT see you 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brigade organizer, Canoe Crew captains
Water Hazards: wind, big waves,. The Ottawa is a big river with open stretches that can generate dangerous waves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Postponement, or leg cancellation Appropriate route selection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brigade organizer Canoe Crew Leaders
River Hazards: dams, rocks, shoals, possible powerful currents (depends on water levels)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning and route selection Knowledge of navigation markers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brigade organizer Canoe Crew Captains

Potential Hazard	Control Measure	Person Responsible
Hypothermia, hyperthermia At this time of year, hot weather could be a danger	▪ Appropriate clothing, rain gear, drink lots of fluids (electrolyte replacement drinks),	▪ Canoe Crew Leaders ▪ Individual Paddlers
Drowning:	▪ <i>During this Brigade all paddlers will wear an approved PFD</i>	▪ Individual Paddlers, ▪ Crew Leaders
Wild Animals: raccoons, etc.	▪ Proper food management: no food in tents or left outside!	▪ Individual paddlers, Crew Leaders

Canoe and Rescue

The Big Canoes

- Big Canoes for this event are 26' North Canoes, and larger, up to 36' Montreal Canoes. These canoes will include five, six or more seating benches. Canoes deviating from this standard must be approved by the Brigade organizer.
- These canoes should be rendered unsinkable in calm water. AND, it must be the practice of all paddlers to load day, and/or overnight trip gear into the boats in waterproof packs (garbage bags and other innovative waterproofing techniques are acceptable) and these packs should be secured to the canoe in such a way as to add to the overall floatation of the canoe and gear in the case of upset. Such gear must be secured such that it cannot come loose and hinder rescue (i.e. tied in tightly or stuffed under seats). It is recommended that a swamped big canoe have enough floatation so that its gunwales are 5" above the water surface. All canoes used in this event must have positive buoyancy when swamped.
- Canoes are to have on board at all times:
 - Spare paddles – minimum 2
 - ***Approved PFD for each paddler. Paddlers are required to wear their PFDs at all times when on the water.***
 - A sound making device, commercial air horn preferred
 - A minimum of two manual bailing devices – buckets or hand pumps. Two 10-20 litre buckets and a hand pump are recommended.
 - A first aid kit
 - GMRS radio with a minimum capability of 16 km, or a working cell phone. Cell phones for each canoe captain and the brigade organisers. There may not be cell phone reception for parts of this route, which is why radios are required as back-up.
 - A minimum of two 15 m Throw Bags of floating 10 mm line. Normally one bag shall be secured at one end to a grab loop, and the second shall be immediately available mid-canoe for rescue work.
 - 4 (four) locking carabineers, two with each throw-bag
 - A repair kit of materials appropriate to the construction of the canoe. Duct Tape, wire, spare nuts & bolts of sizes similar to those in the canoe, silicone repair caulk/adhesive, appropriate resin and materials for significant hull repairs.
 - Flashlight and spare batteries

General Paddling Practices

Each morning crew captains submit completed Crew Sign-out forms (see Appendix A), so we know who is paddling with whom, when, and in which canoe.

Each morning crew captains and the two on-water leaders review the route. Crew captains are responsible for having a map of the route for each day.

At all times during the brigade canoes are to paddle in a single group of three. At NO time should a canoe be traveling alone. If one canoe stops, all canoes in the group stop! The needs of the individual canoe or an individual (needing to stop to for any reason) supersede the needs of the brigade. At no time should canoes be ahead of the designated 'lead' canoe, or behind the designated 'sweep' canoe.

At times of greater risk or difficulty paddlers MUST follow the instructions of the on-water leaders, Max Finkelstein and Eva Moons. If the need arises, Max and Eva, or their designates, will balance canoes for physical ability and experience, direct the order of canoes for approaching landings and portages, direct rescues, make decisions for running rapids, and when to get off the water due to risky weather or water conditions.

Canoe – Flat water Rescue

Flat water rescue is problematic, the conditions (wind and waves usually) that necessitate rescue also make it difficult to carry out a successful rescue. The victims from a swamped canoe must attempt to remain with their boat. The canoe is the most visible item for rescuers to locate.

Under most mild condition the quickest rescue is for the rescue canoe or boat to help stabilize the upset canoe, and one or two paddlers clamber in and begin to bail the canoe dry. As the gunwales lift additional paddlers can climb in to help with the bailing. Canoe captains must be familiar with this rescue technique and should be able to rescue a swamped canoe within 5 minutes.

First priority is to identify the most vulnerable paddlers and get them out of the water. This is the responsibility of the crew captains. In a rescue, the captain should be the first to board the swamped canoe and then direct the rescue from inside the canoe. The second person in should be strong enough to help less capable persons into the canoe. Each canoe captain is trained in rescuing a capsized big canoe.

Leg/Day Cancellation

Conditions Leading to Cancellation

- It is difficult to state specifically what circumstances could lead to delay or the cancellation of a day's paddle. The most likely is weather:
- Extremely bad weather: high winds, thunderstorms, tornados are high risk to paddlers on the Ottawa River. The other hazard at this time of year is extremely high water, which could make certain sections of the route dangerous.

Who Makes Decision to Cancel

- Making the decision to cancel should be done by the on-water leaders, Max Finkelstein and Eva Moons, or their designates. Max and Eva, in consultation with Canoe Crew Captains will be responsible for cancelling a day's paddle on route.

Procedures to Follow in the Event of Cancellation

- Each evening, or morning, at least 60 minutes prior to scheduled departure, the Brigade organizer and canoe crew captains shall meet and determine if weather conditions are conducive to safe paddling. This group shall have the best available weather reports and route maps. If an evening meeting is held a morning meeting will be necessary when conditions are marginal or worse. Canoe Crew captains will be responsible for notifying their crews of any cancellation.

Communication

General

- For reliable contact the following shall carry a cell phone:
 - On-water leaders (2)
 - Each participating canoe
 - Brigade organiser (land)

Before embarking, ensure that cell numbers of the Brigade organizers, Canoe Captains, and appropriate land crew are loaded onto your phone! Remember that **a cellular phone is not a good substitute for a marine radio** and it is not an approved means of issuing a distress call. Making a call does not alert other boaters close to you - those other boats could be the ones to help you first if they could hear you. Unlike VHF transmissions, cellular phone signals cannot be followed back to your location by rescuers.

For reliable on the water contact, it is recommended that the following shall carry GMRS Radios:

- Brigade Organizer
- Canoe crew captains
- On-water leaders (2)

Marine VHF Radio

The Brigade Organizer will provide marine VHF radios to each canoe crew captain.

Marine VHF radio is the recommended means of issuing a distress alert. If you have a marine VHF radio, keep it tuned to channel 16.

Know where you are at all times and be prepared to describe your location accurately. In case of grave and imminent danger (for example, your boat is taking on water and you are in danger of sinking or capsizing) use channel 16 and repeat "MAYDAY" three times. Then give the name of your vessel and its position, the nature of your problem and the type of assistance needed.

Remember:

Channel 16 is used for EMERGENCY and CALLING purposes only. If possible, take your conversation to a working frequency once you have called another vessel on channel 16.

Overdue Canoes/Crews

Prevention & Preparation

- Ideally, the need for a search should not arise. We must do everything we can to prevent people staying out past leg closing times, and to prevent crews from getting lost. In reality, it is more likely to lose a crew member in a campsite than on the river. However, a situation may arise where our best efforts to prevent an overdue crew may fail (e.g. due to injury, medical emergency, or weather conditions).

Identifying Overdue Crew

- The Brigade Organizer or designate will be responsible for maintaining a record of all departing and arriving crews each day.

Prior to Conducting Search – Determining if a Search is Necessary

- The Safety Chair or Brigade organiser will attempt contact by radio or phone any/all missing crew(s).
- The Safety Chair or Brigade Organiser will contact by radio or phone all other canoe crews still on the water, and attempt to determine location and status of missing crew.
- The Brigade Organizer will deal with friends and relatives, informing them of the situation and the procedures being undertaken. The purpose is to reassure them and prevent them from rushing out to search for the overdue participant.

The Brigade organizer will check Brigade Records to see if the overdue crew or participants with the crew are on the list of people who have provided information on pre-existing medical conditions.

Decision to Initiate Search

- The decision to initiate a search, after the above attempts to find the person, should be made by the Brigade organizer, and a local authority, in this case the Ontario Provincial Police Marine unit (911; or for non-emergency 613-283-6911) or the Quebec Surete. Such decision should be first considered 2 hours after the estimated arrival (eta) time of the missing person or crew.
- The actual decision as to how and when to start a search will depend upon circumstances. It is difficult to give precise directions, since there are many factors, such as the age, health and experience of the participant(s); weather conditions; length of time the participants are overdue; etc.
- Examples of factors to be considered include:
 - age, health, experience of the participants/crew
 - weather conditions
 - length of time the participant is overdue
 - amount of daylight left
 - nature of the terrain and water conditions

Participants with Identified Medical Conditions - this information will be treated as confidential and will only appear in the copy of the plan that resides with the Brigade Organizer.

- This refers to the participants who provide information to the organizers that they have a medical condition that the organisers should be aware of.
- This information is provided voluntarily by some participants. It is important that this information is kept confidential. It must be recorded on a separate form, the only copy of which will be kept in the first aid files. This information will be available to the Brigade Organizer first aid or medical personnel only.
- The information sheet should clearly indicate the person's name, brigade crew/Crew, names and phone numbers of next-of-kin, and the particulars of the condition using the exact wording provided by the participant.

Sample medical information form:

Name:

Canoe Crew:

Medical Condition: (medications)

Insurance number:

Family Doctor:

Emergency contacts: 1. name: phone # email:

2. Name: phone #:email:

Participants Who Identify Themselves as Medical Professionals

- Contact any participants prior to the event and ask if they wish to be identified as medical professionals and will help out in the event of an emergency (e.g., EMT, nurse, physician, physiotherapist, etc.)
- Ontario and Quebec have a “Good Samaritan Act” that protects medical personnel who respond to an emergency as a volunteer.

Appendix A:

2025 Chief Pinesi Canoe Brigade Daily Crew Sign-out

For each day the evening prior ideally, but certainly prior to departure, crews are to resubmit or update **IN WRITING** their paddling crew shift assignments. Both each paddling crew and the Brigade organizers must be aware of who is in each canoe at all times.

Crew _____ Date(s) _____

Morning Reach _____

Afternoon Reach _____

Other _____

Crew Leader 1 _____ Cell Phone # _____

Crew Members Paddling: *(please print legibly!)*

	Morning Shift	Afternoon Shift	Other
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			

If more add below!