

American Canoe Association and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Promote Paddlesports Safety

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ST. LOUIS – The American Canoe Association (ACA) and the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary announced



signing of a Memorandum of Agreement to promote safety among those who use kayaks, canoes and other paddlecraft. The new



agreement establishes cooperative efforts broadening outreach and education to the paddle sports community.

Paddlesports boating is one of the fastest growing recreation activities in the United States. In 2008 the Outdoor Industry Association reported that approximately 17.8 million people participated in paddlesports getting out on the water nearly 50,000 times daily. The explosive growth has triggered a disturbing increase in paddlesports injuries and fatalities. Often, with little investment inexperienced individuals are on the water without adequate paddle sport safety equipment or training.

The American Canoe Association and the Coast Guard Auxiliary are committed to reversing this trend. With input from the ACA a new Auxiliary Paddlesports America Course is now available nationwide complementing traditional safety courses that have been offered by ACA for decades. This classroom based training provides paddlers basic knowledge needed to safely operate their vessels including: knowing the paddlecraft, trip planning, safe operation, legal requirements, and paddling emergencies. The American Canoe Association and the Coast Guard Auxiliary will also reach out to paddlers through the paddlecraft vessel safety check program. Experts will talk with paddlers as they examine safety gear and provide personalized paddlesports safety guidance.

“With this cooperative effort we will reach out to the growing population of paddlers providing needed training to keep them safe on the water”, said Jim Vass, Auxiliary National Commodore.

“The ACA is proud to continue our partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary as we continually strive to improve the boating experience for the recreational paddler.”- Chris Stec, ACA Chief Operating Officer

Founded in 1880, the American Canoe Association (ACA) is a national nonprofit organization serving the broader paddling public by providing education related to the aspects of paddling, stewardship support to help protect paddling environments; and sanctioning of programs and events to promote paddlesport competition and recreation. For more information about the American Canoe Association visit <http://www.americancanoe.org>

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed volunteer component of the United States Coast Guard created by an Act of Congress in 1939. The Auxiliary, America's Volunteer Guardians, supports the Coast Guard in nearly all of the service's missions. For more information about the Coast Guard Auxiliary visit <http://www.cgaux.org>