

**Orange County Council, B.S.A.
Orange Frontier District
Troop 295**



Canoe Camping

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Preparations for a Successful Canoe Trek

The Troop 295 offers a unique opportunity for Scouts, leaders and parents to experience a wilderness canoe trek into the Southern Regions of the mighty Colorado River Country – Blythe to Imperial Dam.

Did you know, in 1901, developers cut an opening in the west bank of the Colorado River, across from Yuma, Arizona, and installed gates to irrigate the much lower Imperial Valley? In December, 1904 floods washed out those gates, diverting the entire Colorado River from its course and forming the Salton Sea. It required more than two years of heroic efforts to close the gap. Had those efforts failed -- as they very nearly did -- most of Imperial County parts of Riverside County would be under water today.

Canoe treks can be one of the most positive and memorable experience for a Scout or adult during their Scouting career. However, an unprepared trekker is faced with disappointments and a miserable experience. Therefore, by following the guide lines set forth in this presentation, trek participants will be prepared for a wonderful experience and come away with a lasting remembrance of the event.

Requirements and Preparation

- 1) All participants must:
 - a. pass the first class swimming requirements and test just prior to the trek without exception! (Required by the Guide to Safe Scouting)
 - b. Scouts must have earned their Swimming & Canoeing Merit Badges. (required by the Troop Committee)
 - c. be capable of handling their personal gear, food, tent, and canoe.
 - d. have a current (within the last 12 months) BSA Medical form with all vital information. The trek leader must be made aware of all medication, recent illnesses and other medical problems.
 - e. be required to wear a Type III PFD while on the water. The camp will supply the PFDs.
- 2) There are no portages to worry about between Blythe and Imperial Dam. The average trek day begins at the crack of day light and finishes up in the late afternoon. Fifteen miles is an average day of travel. But not to worry, the mighty Colorado River has a current of 3 to 5 miles per hour. If you do the math you will suddenly realize that to cover the trek distance will require very little paddling, which leaves a great deal of time for more fun – on and off the river.
- 3) All participants should select a paddle that is sized to their individual height. A paddle should be no longer than the distance from your chin to the ground or shorter than the distance from your chest to the ground.
- 4) The trek leader and the participants should start planning the trek 6 months in advance and identify several routes that meet the skill levels of the group. Information on trek routes and points of interest can be obtained from the Troop's Communication's Portal – <http://counciltraining.net/295>. or someone familiar with canoeing and trekking between Blythe and Imperial Dam.

What to bring on a trek?

Insect repellent

Sun screen

Hat

Gloves for paddling

First Aid kits

Light weight cushion for sitting and kneeling

Maps and compass

Flash light with extra batteries and bulb. Head mounted lamps are preferred.

Pocket knife

Trail stove with supply of liquid fuel

Mess kit

Several collapsible water jugs

Each person should have their own one quart water canteen or water bottle.

Each person should have a 100' of 1/4"

Zip lock bags for stowing waste, dirty and clean cloths

Select an Outfitter that uses:

17' Osage Aluminum Canoe



Double End Standard
Length: 17'
Beam: 36"
Depth: 13.5"
Weight: 79 lbs
Max Capacity: 780 lbs
Material: Aluminum
Gauge: 0.050"