



Program Information Package

Cape Scott Challenge

Program Description

This is an expedition that is designed for the intermediate to advanced paddler that wishes to explore remote locations while receiving quality instruction and feedback along the way. Whether you have received training through a professional organization, or you are a motivated boater with practical experience, this program will allow you to apply and polish your existing skills while deepening your understanding of their tactical applications. Traveling through the remote Orca and Humpback whale habitats of Northern Vancouver Island you will push yours skills while exploring surf beaches and the rocky points of this beautiful ocean playground.

Facilitated by our committed instructors you will take full advantage of this wild place. You will hone your skills in everything from expedition management to technical paddling and build yourself from confident paddler to competent mariner.

To help you prepare for our time together, we have created this course package to be used as an equipment checklist. There is a lot of information included, so be sure to review all the pages.



Paperwork Checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure you have received and reviewed all the required documentation prior to the program start date:

- ✓ Cape Scott Challenge Program Document – please review
- SKILS Waiver
- SKILS Medical Form

Program Logistics

Prerequisites

This expedition is designed for individuals who have had previous kayak touring experience and training.

- Interested candidates should have extensive (over 50 days) previous sea kayak experience and have experience in dynamic waters and surf. Vigorous sea conditions along exposed shores with infrequent landing opportunities present significant challenges for individual safety and group management
 - Participants must be 18 years of age or older.
 - Considerable personal paddling experience in light and moderate sea conditions or higher including overnights.
 - Please note that this course is intense as well as mentally and physically demanding. If you are unsure of your ability to take this course, please call us to discuss your concerns prior to registering.
 - You must be able to paddle at a speed of 3 knots for up to 6 hours per day.



Group Size

A minimum of 3 participants is required to run this program while the maximum group size we adhere to is 8.

Locations and Traveling

Our program will begin on the Northern end of Vancouver Island in Port Hardy, BC, Canada. Port Hardy is reached via BC S 19N highway from Nanaimo on Vancouver Island BC. We will meet in downtown Port Hardy on Market Street at the intersection of Main Street, near the Port Hardy Visitor Information Centre (7520 Market Street). There is short-term street parking available at this location, and a large grass lawn on which you can prep your kayak and sort your gear. Across the grass lawn is a broad, flat, tidal beach, which will serve as our jumping off point for our push around the north end of the Island. Long-term parking is available close-by at the base of Hastings Street, right by the water. We will meet in downtown Port Hardy on Market Street at the intersection of Main Street, near the Port Hardy Visitor Information Centre (7520 Market Street) at 8am on Day 1. From here we will take care of the final particulars and paperwork, load boats, park vehicles and head out into the Pacific Ocean! Upon arrival at Coal Harbour at the end of our trip, we have arranged for a shuttle from Coal Harbour to Port Hardy. You should expect to stay a night in Port Hardy at the end of the trip as we anticipate our return to be late in the day.

Meals

You are required to provide your own breakfast for the morning of the first day. From this point on, SKILS will provide all meals and a full expedition style kitchen complete with stove and pots and all the essentials. Food will be delicious and nutritious.

Our Classroom

The Northern Coast of Vancouver Island and Cape Scott will be our classroom. These stretches of coastline are remote and offer the diversity of beautiful pocket surf beaches, rugged rocky coastline and exposed waters.

The weather is variable at all times on the West coast; during the expedition we can expect sun, rain and wind in varying amounts. Please come prepared. You will also spend time in the water during rescue practice and play time. The water temperature varies from 6 degrees Celsius to 15 degrees Celsius. Bring warm clothing and immersion gear. Drysuits are strongly recommended.



Your Instructors

SKILS staff members are industry leaders and professionals with extensive guiding and instructional

experience and certification. For profiles on each of our staff members, please visit our website at www.skils.ca

Accommodation

You are responsible for all accommodation before and after the program. We will start early on the first day in Port Hardy. There is camping south of Port Hardy at Quatse River Regional Park and Campground (<http://www.quatsecampground.com>), as well as a number of marina resorts and motels in Port Hardy. It is recommended that you make a reservation for your accommodation at this time of year. There is also camping in Telegraph Cove south of Port McNeill, however please plan 1h 30min driving time to Port Hardy from here. At the end of the trip, SKILS will take care of the shuttle back to Port Hardy. We recommend that you plan to camp or secure a motel for the last day of the program as we will be returning later in the day.

What to Bring

The following is a list of gear that you will need on the course. Most items are required, however, an * indicates items are optional. If you need to rent equipment, visit <https://skils.ca/rentals/>. Your instructors can carry your rental kayak and equipment to Port Hardy for you at no cost.

Kayaking Equipment

Seaworthy kayak – The kayak must have positive buoyancy (no leaks) and 17 feet long
Paddle
Spare paddle
Foam PFD ULC approved (inflatable PFD not allowed)
Whistle
Hand pump
15 m Buoyant heaving line or Tow line

Helmet – Helmet must be designed for surf kayaking or whitewater kayaking; bicycle helmets don't offer sufficient protection.
Paddle float

Navigation Equipment

*Charts – Canadian Hydrographic Service
*Chart 3549 S Queen Charlotte Strait (Western Portion)
*Chart 3624 S Cape Cook to Cape Scott

*Chart case – large zip lock will work, but not very well
*Orienteering Compass
* Marine Compass (highly recommended)

Camping Gear

Tent
Sleeping bag – 3 season bag with synthetic insulation
Sleeping mat
*Tarp with thin cord
*Pillow case

Bathroom

Toothbrush and toothpaste
Sunscreen and lip balm with high SPF protection (30 +)
Toilet paper
*Tarp with thin cord
*Pillow case
*Small first aid kit 'ouch kit'
* Camp towel
* Pads and/or Tampon

Immersion Clothing

Wet suit and paddling jacket or dry suit suitable for extended cold water immersion on the west coast. You will be paddling in this gear for extended periods of time, so make sure it fits well. Drysuits are strongly recommended and available for rent through SKILS. Please contact SKILS to arrange your rental.
Neoprene booties or other immersion footwear
Paddling gloves or poggies

Personal Clothing - following is a guidelines to assist with your packing; feel free to bring more or less as you feel necessary.

Torso

Rain Jacket
1-2 fleece or wool sweaters/jackets
2 pair long jane/john tops
1-2 t-shirts
1 wind breaker

Legs

Rain Pants
1-2 pair pants – At least one should be made of nylon
1 pair fleece or wool pants
1 pair long john/jane bottoms
1 pair shorts
*Bathing suit

Feet

2-3 pair warm sock made with synthetics and/or wool
*2 pair liner socks – Polypropylene or wool are common materials
1 pair camp shoes – Sneakers work well
*1 pair rubber boots
1 pair sport sandals or shoes that can get wet.

Head

2 wool or fleece caps
1 Brimmed hat or baseball cap

Hands

1 pair of fleece or wool gloves

Miscellaneous Gear

- Notebook with pencils and/or pens
- Water bottle
- Pocket Knife
- Sunglasses with good UV protection with retriever strap
- Spare garbage bags and zip locks
- Headlamp or Flashlight with extra batteries

Additional Items

- * Binoculars
- * Flares
- * VHF Marine Radio or Weather Radio
- * GPS
- * Reading material
- * Buff to protect your face from the sun



Packing your gear

You will need to waterproof at least your clothing and sleeping bag. Depending on how watertight your kayak is, you can pack the rest of your gear loose or in zip locks inside nylon stuff sacks. Here are two packing methods that work well. In fact, we usually use a combination of the two when we pack. Remember to leave room for group gear.

Dry Bag Method

Dry Bags are especially designed for paddle sports and are available at most sporting goods stores. Depending on the closure system they do not always keep all the water out. Test them in the shower before the trip. You will need two 20 litre bags for your sleeping bag and bulky clothing and 2 or 3 10 to 15 litre bags for your other clothing and gear.

Stuff Sack with Garbage Bag Liner Method

This is the tried and true method of years gone by. Line a stuff sack with a garbage bag. Pack as normal. Squeeze the air out before twisting the garbage bag top. Don't tie the garbage bag or use twist ties. Simply tuck the twisted end down into the stuff sack before drawing the top closed. This technique is reliable but not durable, so make sure you bring extra bags with you. You can improve the durability of this system by adding a 2nd stuff sack into the garbage bag creating a plastic sandwich. This method takes up less room than dry bags and makes the kayak easier to pack.

A couple of final pointers....

Lots of smaller bags are better than a few larger ones

A large duffel bag or IKEA bag is useful for transporting all your small bags.

Thank you for enrolling in our Cape Scott Challenge. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact us at info@skils.ca. We look forward to playing on the water with you!

