



Paddle Antrim Volunteer Handbook

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Welcome!

Thank you for your commitment to serve as a Paddle Antrim volunteer. Paddle Antrim's past, present and continued future successes are due in large part to the skills, talents, and dedication of its volunteers.

As a Paddle Antrim volunteer, you are contributing to our mission protecting our waterway by using paddle sports to connect individuals to our lakes and rivers.

We want your volunteer experience to be rewarding and fun. We can provide opportunities to develop leadership skills, network with others and great things for our area. We want this handbook to be a resource for you and covers the information you need to know about volunteering for Paddle Antrim.

You are important to us and your impact on the organization can be as significant as you would like. We look forward to working with you.

Warmly,

Deana Jerdee, Executive Director

About Paddle Antrim

Founded in 2014, Paddle Antrim is a non-profit 501c3 organization. Our mission is to protect our water resources by using paddle sports to connect people to our waterways. Through stewardship, education, improved water trail access, and promotion of our waterways we will increase water resource protection and enhance the economic vitality of the region.

- **Stewardship** of our waterways and protect them through on the ground projects and education.
- **Access** to the waterways and work to promote and improve access points for universal access to all.
- Celebrating our waterways and enjoying our water resources through all types of **paddling sports**.
- Strong **local economy** in Northern Michigan and support our local businesses and communities.
- **Partnerships** and act as a conduit to help provide important information about our resources to our communities and visitors.
- Our board members, staff, volunteers and friends in our communities and work to build stronger **relationships** to do great things.

We engage with the community to achieve our mission in a variety of ways. Throughout the year, we work to share educational messages (both stewardship and safety). During the paddling season, we engage with paddlers on the water through small community paddles, safety classes, and larger events like the Paddle Antrim Festival. We are proud to host the Chain of Lakes Water Trail to provide quality access to our lakes and rivers and are grateful for the partnerships that help make that happen.

Chain of Lakes Water Trail Overview

Planning for the Chain of Lakes Water Trail began in 2014 and the water trail officially opened on May 26, 2021. Nineteen access site owners, including units of government and non-profit organizations, have approved resolutions of support authorizing 84 access sites with over 100 miles of water trail to explore. As Paddle Antrim does not own any of the access sites, we depend on, and are grateful for, our partnerships with local government jurisdictions and non-profit organizations to provide the necessary access to this trail.

A water trail is a designated route along a river, lake, canal or bay specifically designed for people using small, non-motorized boats like kayaks, canoes, single sailboats or rowboats. These trails are the aquatic equivalent to a hiking trail. Water trails typically feature well-developed access and launch points, are near significant historical, environmental or cultural points of interest, and often include nearby amenities such as restaurants, hotels and campgrounds.

Access Sites and Signs Overview

Water trail signs have been placed near the water's edge at each of the 84 access sites to help paddlers identify where to exit from the water. The signs all include maps of the water trail to help paddlers navigate throughout their journey. Additional information on stewardship, safety, paddling experiences, and more can be found on kiosks at main and secondary access sites. We developed 4 different types of access sites throughout the trail and specific signs for each of these sites types.

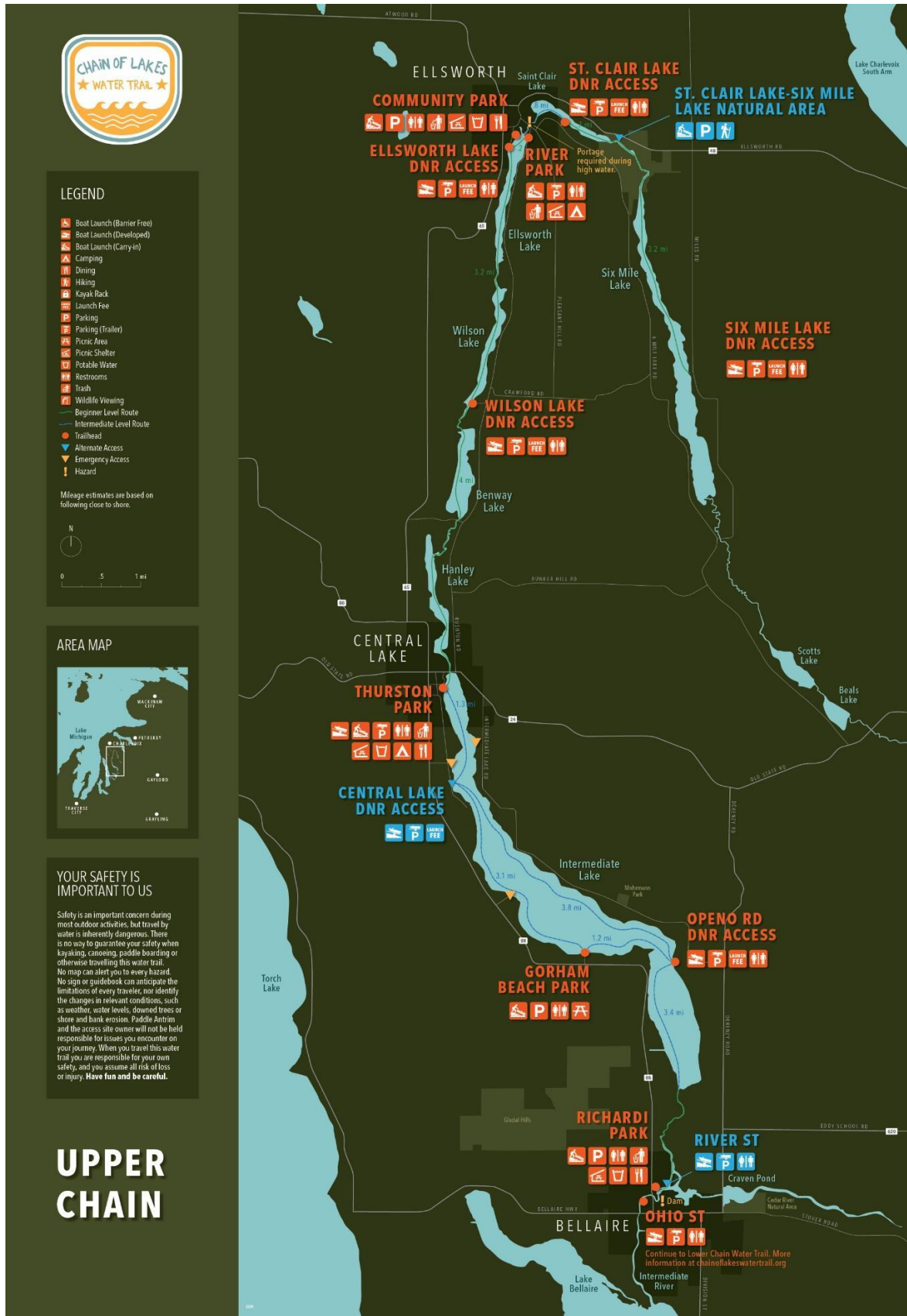
Access Sites Defined:

Trailheads – Trailheads are primary access sites that have a suitable launch, parking and restrooms. Many have other amenities such as trash, potable water, and picnic areas.

Alternate Access Sites – Alternate access sites have a suitable launch and at least some legal parking along a public roadway.

Emergency Sites – Emergency access sites are public access sites that are not maintained for entry/exit from the water and do not provide parking.

Rest Stops – Rest stops are places where it is permissible to land a paddle craft, but not a place where a road is readily accessible.





LEGEND

- Boat Launch (Barrier Free)
- Boat Launch (Developed)
- Boat Launch (Carry-in)
- Camping
- Dining
- Hiking
- Kayak Rack
- Launch Fee
- Parking
- Parking (Trailer)
- Picnic Area
- Picnic Shelter
- Potable Water
- Restrooms
- Trash
- Wildlife Viewing
- Advanced Level Route
- Intermediate Level Route
- Trailhead
- Alternate Access
- Emergency Access
- Rest Stop
- Hazard

Mileage estimates are based on following close to shore.



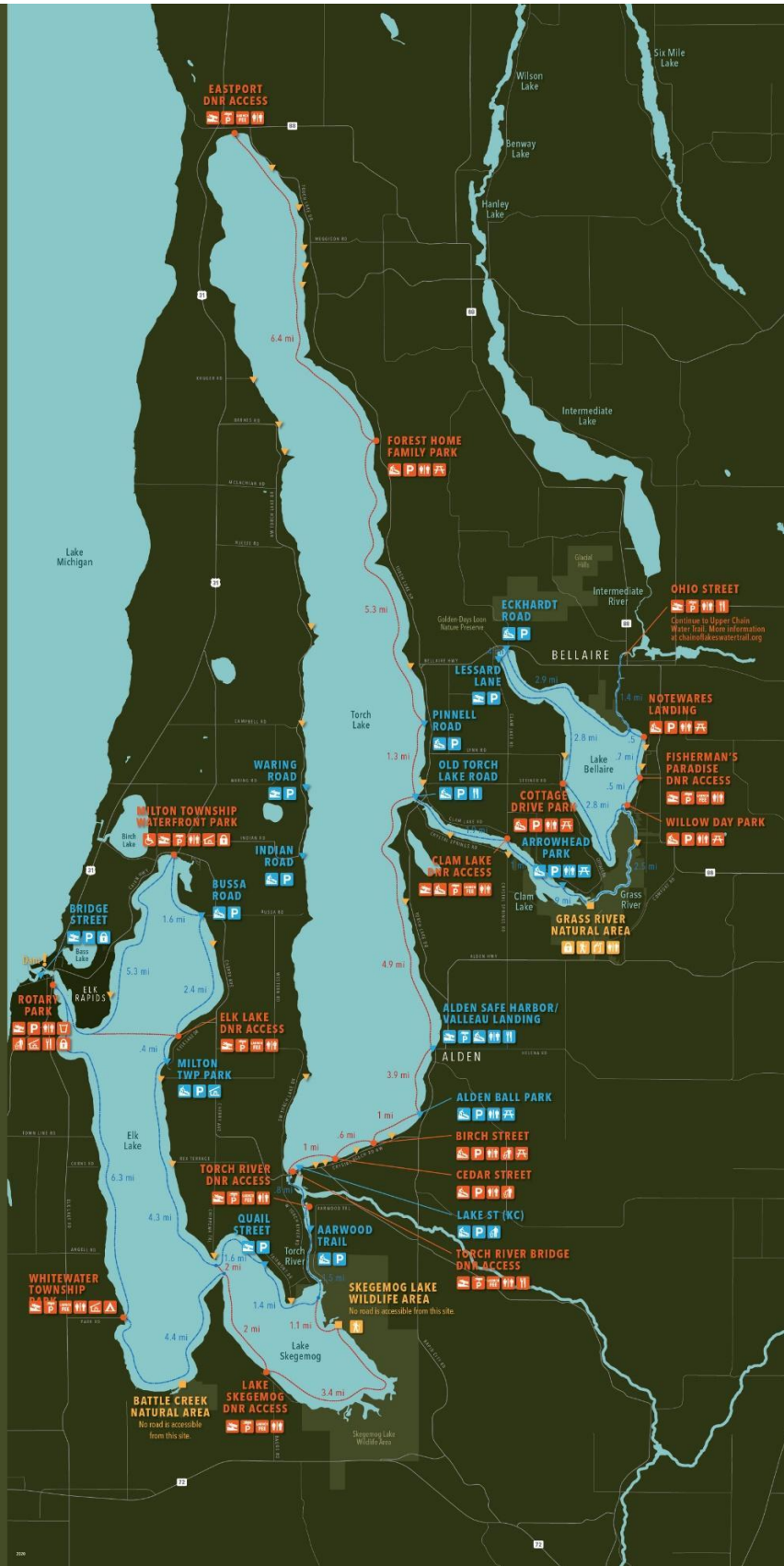
AREA MAP



YOUR SAFETY IS IMPORTANT TO US

Safety is an important concern during most outdoor activities, but travel by water is inherently dangerous. There is no way to guarantee your safety when kayaking, canoeing, paddle boarding or otherwise travelling this water trail. No map can alert you to every hazard. No sign or guidebook can anticipate the limitations of every traveler, nor identify the changes in relevant conditions, such as weather, water levels, downed trees or shore and bank erosion. Paddle Antrim and the access site owner will not be held responsible for issues you encounter on your journey. When you travel this water trail you are responsible for your own safety, and you assume all risk of loss or injury. **Have fun and be careful.**

LOWER CHAIN



Volunteer Benefits

Volunteers are vital to the success of Paddle Antrim's mission. They not only provide extra hands but also contribute new ideas and connect others to our waterways.

Paddle Antrim volunteers receive the following benefits:

- Paddle Antrim apparel discounts (5% off)
- Volunteer newsletters
- Recognition in our Annual Report
- Invitation to our annual volunteer appreciation gathering

Volunteer Rights and Responsibilities

It is your right...

- To be assigned to a job that is worthwhile and challenging with freedom to use existing skills or develop new ones.
- To be kept informed of upcoming projects, events and what is going on at Paddle Antrim.
- To receive a written job description, orientation, training and supervision for the job you accept and to know why you are being asked to do a particular job.
- To know whether your work is effective and how it can be improved.
- To have your questions answered and your comments and suggestions welcomed.
- To be respected for the skills and experiences you bring to your work and appreciated for the contributions you make toward accomplishing our mission.
- To be given recognition of your day-to-date contributions by staff and your fellow volunteers.

It is your responsibility...

- To commit to at least one project or area of service and to only accept assignments you are capable of or willing to perform.
- To attend the virtual or in-person orientation session and stay informed via meetings or email.
- To become familiar with the mission, policies, and procedures of Paddle Antrim.
- To represent Paddle Antrim in a manner that promotes our mission, our interests in the community and the trust we place in you.
- To protect confidential information and data of Paddle Antrim and its donors, employees and other volunteers. Volunteers may learn information that has not been released to the public or is not intended for the public and are expected to maintain the confidentiality of that information.
- To avoid public statements, interviews with the press, or press releases. They are the responsibility of the Presidents of the Board, Executive Director or staff appointed by the Executive Director.
- To care for, help maintain and return tools & equipment you use.

Getting Started

The first step to becoming a Paddle Antrim volunteer is to register by completing the [Volunteer Information Form](#) on the Paddle Antrim website. By providing us with this information we can place you on the appropriate contact list based on your availability, interests and skills. Each volunteer will also be invited to an orientation with the volunteer coordinator to discuss the interests and skills volunteers can offer to the organization that will also enable them to grow as professionals and as members of the community.

Orientation

All volunteer applicants will attend a virtual or in-person orientation with the volunteer coordinator to receive an overview of Paddle Antrim, review the volunteer program and policies and determine where each individual best fits into the volunteer program. Each volunteer will be provided with a position and

description that defines specific responsibilities, clarifies expectations and defines support that staff will provide to the volunteer. Each volunteer is selected based on ability to perform the job requirements and the willingness to participate in the training for the position. During this time the process for logging volunteer hours will also be reviewed.

Reporting Hours

All volunteers are required to log their volunteer activity and hours. Understanding how many hours our volunteers are committing helps us track the success of our initiatives. [This form](#) can be accessed from the [Volunteer Resources](#) page on the paddleantrim.com.

Asking Questions/Giving Feedback

We love to hear from you and welcome your questions and feedback anytime. You may always contact Ellie Kirkpatrick our volunteer coordinator or Deana Jerdee our Executive Director.

Ellie Kirkpatrick, Marketing and Outreach Specialist

p:231-498-2080 or cell 616-350-4806

e:ellie@paddleantrim.com

Deana Jerdee, Executive Director

p:231-498-2080 or cell: 231-492-0171

e:deana@paddleantrim.com

Volunteer Position Descriptions

Water Trail Site Steward

These core volunteers perform basic maintenance on water trail signs or at access sites including trimming with loppers, removing debris/garbage, using a drill for sign replacement. We ask that these volunteers be proficient in the use of any tools required and that they can work independently with instruction and support from Paddle Antrim staff.

Qualifications

- Ability to walk various distances over uneven surfaces
- Ability to perform manual labor
- Ability to work unsupervised

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator but works closely with the Executive Director

Water Trail Site Monitors

These volunteers are our eyes on the 84 water trail access site. Volunteers adopt one (or more) site(s) to regularly visit (at least every three weeks from May 15 - September 30) and report out on your visit after each visit via our online form. Volunteers will be asked to provide photos and report on any issues.

Qualifications

- Ability to walk various distances over uneven surfaces
- Ability to work unsupervised
- Ability to report on each site after each visit

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator

Outreach/Event Ambassador

These core volunteers help us engage and share information about Paddle Antrim and the Chain of Lakes Water Trail at various events and meetings. These core volunteers enjoy representing Paddle Antrim and talking about our mission and work.

Qualifications

- In-depth Knowledge on Paddle Antrim and the Chain of Lakes Water Trail that will be provided by Paddle Antrim staff.
- Ability to relate and communicate with a variety of people and an outgoing attitude.
- Some positions may require the ability to stand on and off for long periods of time and ability to lift up to 20 lbs.

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator

General Event Volunteer

These volunteers help at paddling and appreciation/outreach events with duties such as registration and set-up/tear-down. Responsibilities will vary based on event but we ask that these volunteers have a can-do friendly attitude and willingness to work with a variety of individuals. Attention to detail and organization skills are also helpful.

Qualifications

- Knowledge of Paddle Antrim and the Chain of Lakes Water Trail, provided by Paddle Antrim staff.
- Ability to relate and communicate with a variety of people and an outgoing attitude.
- Some positions may require the ability to stand on and off for long periods of time and ability to lift up to 20 lbs.

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator

Motorized Boat Volunteer

Safety is extremely important to Paddle Antrim. For larger events such as the Paddle Antrim Festival, motorized safety boats provide extra eyes on the water. These volunteers monitor paddlers on the water, are available if asked for assistance, or can call for emergency responders when necessary.

Motorized boats should meet the following criteria

- Meet State of Michigan and Coast Guard safety requirements for vessels of their length (PFDs, fire extinguishers, noise makers, etc.).
- Must be crewed by at least two people – one to drive and one to spot.
- Must have a cell phone and provide a number to the safety coordinator. Be prepared to tow or take on board any participating paddle crafts. On board should be 50 ft. long, 3/8" diameter towline.
- Have a boat specific plan to assist a person who may be fatigued or hypothermic out of the water. This could be a swim platform on a large boat to a rope or webbed climbing ladder.
- Have warming devices on board. This can be a space blanket or wool blanket.
- Be aware of the local hazards which can include dead heads/ underwater obstructions, dangerous currents and likely areas of reflected waves. These areas are where participants are most likely to get into a difficult situation.

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator but works closely with the Executive Director

MI Paddle Steward

MI Paddle Stewards are volunteers who assist local water trails, like the Chain of Lakes Water Trail, with identifying and reporting Aquatic Invasive Species. Volunteers are required to take a training through the MI Sea Grant and Michigan State University Extension, currently offered free online (website). Participants will learn about important invasive species, how to properly clean a watercraft, and how to report invasive species. Paddlers will learn to use the MISIN (Midwest Invasive Species Information

Network) app, a reporting tool used by Michigan's Department of Natural Resources and others to locate invasive species of concern. Paddlers who have completed the MI Paddle Steward training are asked to help report invasive species on the Chain of Lakes Water Trail through the MISIN app. Paddle Antrim and our partner CAKE-CISMA are here to help support local MI Paddle Steward volunteers.

Qualifications

- Complete the MI Paddle Stewards course
- Ability to use a paddle craft
- Ability to work unsupervised

Administrative Volunteer

Assist with office work such as small or large mailings, data entry, organization, product inventory, and other administrative tasks.

Qualifications

- Excellent organizational skills
- Ability to take direction
- Some jobs require the ability to work in excel and complete simple computing functions

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator

Photographer/Videographer

We are always looking for photographers and videographers to help capture events and photo shoots. This may include being in a paddle craft or on a motorized boat to capture event images or images during a photo shoot. Timely delivery via dropbox, google drive, or thumb drive is required.

Reports to: Volunteer Coordinator

Paddling Safety Lead/Assistant

Paddle Antrim prides itself in promoting safety out on the water. For community paddles, safety classes, and the Paddle Antrim Festival, having safety paddlers and qualified assistants help us provide safe events on the water.

Qualifications:

- Paddle safety leads require first aid/CPR and experience guiding/lead.
- Both leads and assistants must be proficient in paddling skills at an American Canoe Association L2 level for stand up paddle boarding, canoe touring, kayak touring or sit on top kayaking (depending on your choice of paddle craft). Paddle Antrim will request demonstration of skills or proof of certification/assessment.

Reports to: Executive Director

Volunteer Policies

Volunteer Safety

The safety of our volunteers is our primary concern at Paddle Antrim. Please use the following guidelines when participating in volunteer activities and events.

- You know your health and physical limitations better than anyone. If at any point during a volunteer activity it is becoming too strenuous or tiring please inform a Paddle Antrim staff member immediately. Your safety and health are our priority.

- If you have a medical condition or allergy that may inhibit or cause harm to you during a volunteer event please come prepared with medication or other personal requirements, and inform a Paddle Antrim staff member prior to volunteering of your medical condition.
- Dress appropriately for all volunteer events. Depending on the volunteer activity you may also need insect repellent and sunscreen.
- If an injury occurs while volunteering at a Paddle Antrim event, no matter how small, inform a Paddle Antrim staff member.
- While out on volunteer assignment, if you encounter or witness any urgent problems or threatening situations, immediately remove yourself to a safe distance and contact a member of Paddle Antrim staff and the police if warranted. Your safety is the most important consideration.

Use of Tools and Equipment

Water Trail Site Stewards may be asked to bring their own equipment. Paddle Antrim assumes no financial responsibility for the loss or damage of personal equipment or items brought to the site by volunteers.

Vehicle Use

Insurance of vehicles is the responsibility of the owner; Paddle Antrim assumes no responsibility for the loss or damage of such vehicles.

Equality

In keeping with its goals of individual recognition and treatment characterized by dignity and respect, Paddle Antrim does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or familial status or marital status. As part of this policy, Paddle Antrim also prohibits abusing the dignity of anyone through jokes, slurs, or other derogatory comments or statements that refer to the above list through conduct of any objectionable nature.

Unlawful Harassment

Paddle Antrim strives to foster a pleasant working environment for all employees and volunteers, free from intimidation, humiliation, and insult. Under no circumstances will Paddle Antrim condone or tolerate harassment or discrimination based on race, creed, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, height, weight, sexual orientation, or marital status.

Harassment can include slurs, jokes, obscene gestures or degrading comments concerning protected characteristics. It is not possible to list all of the circumstances that may constitute unlawful harassment. The following are examples of conduct that, depending upon the severity and pervasiveness, if unwelcome, may constitute unlawful harassment:

- Comments, jokes, teasing, or verbal abuse directed at a person or persons because of his/her/their protected class status
- Distributing or displaying through any means, including electronic communications (e.g., email, instant or text messages, the Internet, voice mail, or facsimile), messages, objects, pictures, cartoons, or other materials that are degrading or offensive to a protected class
- Implicit or explicit threats directed at a person or persons because of his/her/their protected class status
- Adverse actions including a disciplinary warning to a volunteer or termination from a volunteer position based upon a person's protected class status

Examples of prohibited sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors and other verbal abuse of sexual nature; graphic verbal commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess or sexual deficiency; sexually degrading, lewd, or vulgar words to describe an individual; leering; pinching or touching a private area of the body; displaying sexual suggestive objects, pictures, posters, or cartoons.

Retaliation

No volunteer shall be subjected to retaliation, discharge, threats, intimidation, harassment, discrimination or other adverse action because the protected individual, or an individual acting on behalf of the protected individual, reports or is about to report, verbally or in writing, a report of a violation or a suspected violation, or because the protected individual is requested to participate in an investigation, hearing, or inquiry held by that public body, or a court action. Prohibited adverse actions include but are not limited to actions regarding the individual's compensation, terms, conditions, location, or privileges within Paddle Antrim and its activities.

Complaint Process

Volunteers who believe they have been subjected to harassment by a supervisor, staff person or any other person with whom they come in contact in connection with their Paddle Antrim work should immediately report the incident to his or her supervisor or a member of the Paddle Antrim Board.

Drug/Tobacco Use

Volunteers shall not possess, use, consume, sell, transfer, exchange, or distribute any illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, or alcoholic beverages while engaged in Paddle Antrim business. Volunteers shall not perform work under the influence of drugs or alcohol in any manner that may impair their ability to safely perform their position duties, or that may jeopardize the safety of staff, other volunteers, the public, or property. The policy of Paddle Antrim has zero tolerance to the misuse and abuse of alcohol, illegal, and prescription drugs.

Volunteer Waiver

All volunteers are required to read and sign the [Paddle Antrim liability waiver](#) prior to volunteering. Volunteers are also required to review and sign the Paddle Antrim liability waiver once a year after their start date. Volunteers under the age of 18 must have a form signed by their parent or legal guardian permitting them to volunteer. Volunteers under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult during volunteer activities.