



**Economic Impact of the Proposed  
Run of River Whitewater Park  
in Skowhegan, Maine**

**For: The Town of Skowhegan**

**September 22, 2016**

**Frank O'Hara, Planning Decisions, Inc., Hallowell  
Kenneth Young, Hallowell**

**With the help of Kristina Cannon, executive director of Main Street Skowhegan**

# **Table of Contents**

---

---

<b>I. Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>II. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>III. National Paddling and Whitewater Experiences</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>IV. Survey Responses from Area Paddlers</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>V. Paddling Community and Associated Events</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>VI. Projected Economic Impacts</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>VI. Operations Issues</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>VII. Marketing Communications</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Appendix A: List of Parks Reviewed Online</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Appendix B: List of Parks Interviewed</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Appendix C: Base Growth Projections, with High/Low Ranges</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Appendix D: Paddling Events in New England</b>	<b>44</b>

## I. Executive Summary

---

The Town of Skowhegan is considering the development of Run of River, a whitewater park in its downtown, just below the dam in the Kennebec River Gorge. This project involves placing various permanent structures in the gorge to establish a play park for canoeing, kayaking, tubing, and other water-related recreational activities and events—taking advantage of the constant flow of the Kennebec, a unique strength of the Skowhegan location. In addition, trails for walking, biking, and cross-country skiing would be further developed as would viewing areas along the banks for spectators, ultimately creating the Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area. The park would be the host site for paddling competitions and events of local, regional, and national significance.

Paddling—including kayaking, canoeing, and rafting—is a popular and growing activity in the United States. In 2014, 22 million Americans were involved in paddling. The number grew by 4 percent each year from 2010 to 2014. In response to this interest, dozens of whitewater parks have sprung up around the country, with many located in Colorado. Colorado has a unique combination of mountains and rivers, outdoor recreation enthusiasts, and state funding dedicated to the development of recreational facilities such as whitewater parks. Such parks are usually in close proximity to a downtown so that there are facilities to accommodate users and spectators and economic benefits to the community. Festivals or competitive events are the major source of return on investment, and individual whitewater events have been found to generate up to \$1 million in economic impact.

A survey of about 200 Maine paddlers for this study found that two out of three said that they would use Run of River at least monthly, two-thirds might enter competitive events at the new facility, and about a third would volunteer to help make the event a success. One in six paddlers would stay in Skowhegan area lodging, and 70 percent would patronize an outdoor recreation store if there were one in town.

The economic model estimates that Run of River would generate almost \$6 million in revenue in its first year, and up to \$19 million in its 10th year. It would create about 43 jobs in Skowhegan (and 54 in Maine as a whole) in the inaugural year and up to 136 jobs by year 10 (171 statewide).

Run of River would generate an estimated \$155,000 in new tax revenues from increased property values in the base year, and more than \$200,000 in added state income and sales tax revenues. By year 10, property tax revenues could increase by a range of \$270,000 to \$480,000; and state tax revenues could grow to a range of \$364,000 to \$656,000 per year.

Annual costs to maintain the physical infrastructure of Run of River would be incurred. Interviews with other parks around the country indicate that these costs would be modest, however. Because Skowhegan's river structures would be anchored in bedrock, it's less likely that they would be dislodged, which is sometimes the case in rivers where structures are mounted on sandy soils. Beyond maintenance, the park would require

increased public safety during festivals. Currently, the town is reimbursed for added expenses from special events by the event sponsor, and a similar arrangement would be anticipated for Run of River events.

Attracting an event from the New England Slalom series of races is an achievable objective in the early years; attracting the USA Freestyle Kayaking's National Whitewater Freestyle Championship is also in the realm of possibility, based on requirements for host sites.

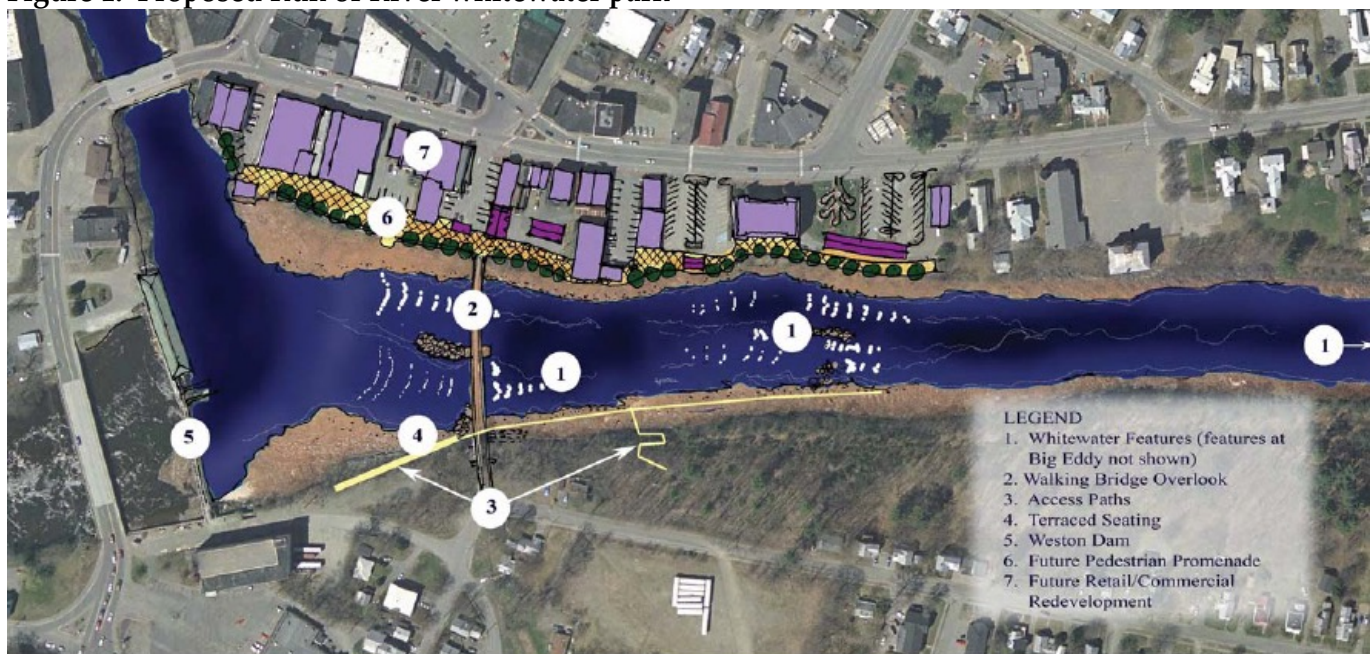
In addition to the promotion of special events, promotion of Run of River will be key to increasing economic impact. The marketing communications strategy included in this study recommends four audience segments—paddlers, recreation vacation enthusiasts who may have an interest in paddling, local and regional youth populations, and tourists and residents who enjoy watching outdoor events—and suggests an integrated and cohesive communications approach.

With a commitment to promotion of the whitewater park, as well as the organization of special events and competitions and engagement of local youth, Run of River could have the potential for major economic impacts in Skowhegan and Somerset County.

## II. Introduction

The Town of Skowhegan is considering the development of Run of River, a whitewater park in its downtown, just below the dam in the Kennebec River Gorge. This project involves placing various permanent structures in the gorge to establish a play park for canoeing, kayaking, tubing, and other water-related recreational activities and events. In addition, trails and viewing areas would be developed along the banks for spectators (see Figure 1 below). It is anticipated that this whitewater facility would be an integral element of a larger outdoor recreation infrastructure in Skowhegan—the Run of River Whitewater Recreation Area—following the lines of successful whitewater parks around the country described further along in this report.

**Figure 1: Proposed Run of River whitewater park**



**SKOWHEGAN RUN OF RIVER WHITEWATER PROJECT**

The vision for the park on the Town of Skowhegan’s website<sup>1</sup> includes:

*Run of River will position Skowhegan as a tourist destination and attract visitors from near and far. A recreation area situated within the downtown Kennebec River Gorge and its environs, Run of River will feature an array of water and land-based facilities, including a whitewater play park with enhanced rapids and waves for kayakers, canoeists, tubers, and stand-up paddle boarders; a comprehensive four-season trail system for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, and more; pristine fishing waters with improved fish habitat, and an array of parks for nature-based tourism.*

<sup>1</sup> See <http://skowhegan.org/index.aspx?NID=408>

*A strategic project designed to benefit the community, diversify the economy, and spur business development and tourism, Run of River will benefit locals and visitors alike. The project will also create opportunities for regional partnerships and packages, and bring paddlers, recreation enthusiasts, and spectators to Skowhegan and the Kennebec Valley.*

One of the special assets of this site is the strength of the current. The proposed facility in Skowhegan will have sustained May to October average river flows of 4,000 to 6,000 cubic feet per second. Most of the 12 whitewater parks examined for this report have considerably lower average river flows and much shorter seasons, typically from May to early July. The amount of water in Skowhegan and the duration of the season will be distinctive features of the Run of River. Another strength is that the site is grounded in bedrock, rather than in unstable soils, making it less expensive to maintain river structures.

Run of River's higher water flows and longer season will make it an especially attractive paddling venue in Maine and New England and, over time, will attract significant regional and possibly national competitive paddling events. Paddling events and festivals attract significant numbers of spectators; such events contribute the major portion of the economic impact of whitewater parks. A longer season provides more opportunities for local, regional, and national events.

One analogy for the economic impact of Run of River is the Maine Winter Sports Center. The Maine Winter Sports Center is a much larger project—\$25 million in capital costs for cross-country and downhill skiing venues in Presque Isle, Fort Kent, Mars Hill, and Rumford—but it is based on the same premise. Create world-class outdoor recreation facilities, engage schools and local residents, form clubs and teams to make use of the facilities, and coordinate and attract events and competitions to bring people from outside the area. The Maine Winter Sports Center is estimated to have had over \$100 million in economic impact, mostly in Aroostook County.<sup>2</sup> The center would not have been able to have been started without roughly \$25 million in capital funds and a half million a year for 15 years in operating funds from the Libra Foundation in Portland.

Although Run of River would be available to users free of charge, it is still expected to have significant economic impact on the area through increased visitors, tourism, and shopping. This study is designed to estimate the economic benefits of the proposed park and to share some of the lessons learned in other whitewater parks across the country. This information can be helpful to state agencies considering financial support for the project (and needing to understand how much money will come back in income and sales tax revenues) and to philanthropic organizations and individuals wanting to know the ultimate effects of their investment on the economy and quality of life in Somerset County.

---

<sup>2</sup> See <http://www.mainewsc.org/about/mwsc-story/economic-development.html>

### III. National Paddling and Whitewater Experiences

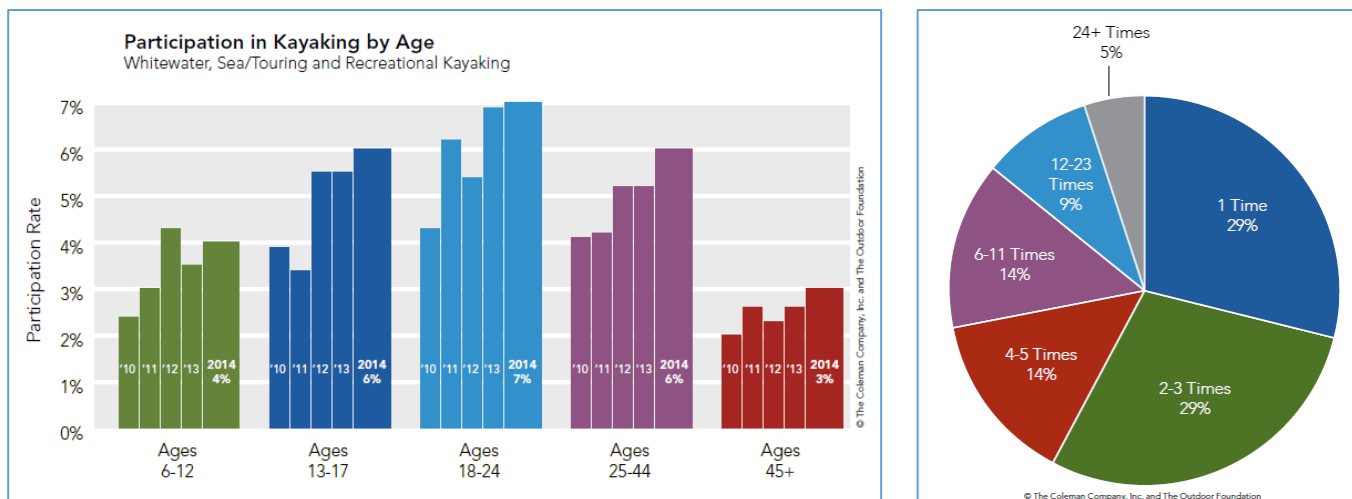
The consulting team learned about the experiences of other whitewater parks by reviewing key documents and interviewing key participants. Our findings are described below.

#### A. National Research

In 2005 Maine was one of 21 states selected for a detailed economic analysis of the effects of outdoor recreation, including paddle sports (kayaking, rafting, canoeing).<sup>3</sup> Because the study is old, had a small sample size, and incorporates data on people involved in outdoor swimming, the majority of the results are not of interest. However, this is the only study that estimated the amount of money spent on sports equipment in Maine by paddlers (swimmers would not inflate these numbers because swimmers do not need much in the way of equipment). The study estimated that paddlers purchased \$16.7 million in sports equipment in Maine in 2005, about 10 percent of total paddler spending.

There is no more recent data on Maine, but the Outdoor Foundation sponsors an annual survey on national paddling activity<sup>4</sup>. The 2015 report found comparable rates of participation in kayaking and canoeing, though more growth in participation across all age groups in kayaking (see Figures 2 and 3). Stand-up paddling had the lowest rate of participation but the highest rate of growth (Figure 4). In all, participation in paddling activities has grown at a rate of about 4 percent each year, or 16 percent overall from 2010 to 2014. Kayaking is growing faster than other paddling sport (7.6 percent per year), and whitewater kayaking is the fastest growing subset of kayaking (8.3 percent per year).

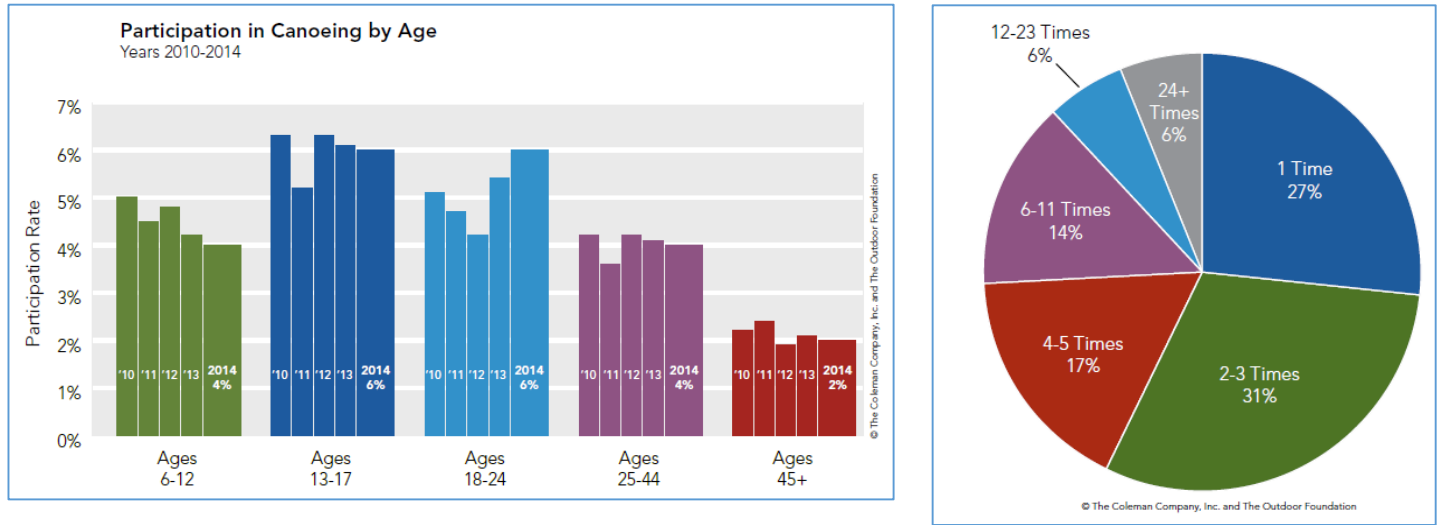
**Figure 2: Kayaking Participation – Age and Frequency, US, 2014**



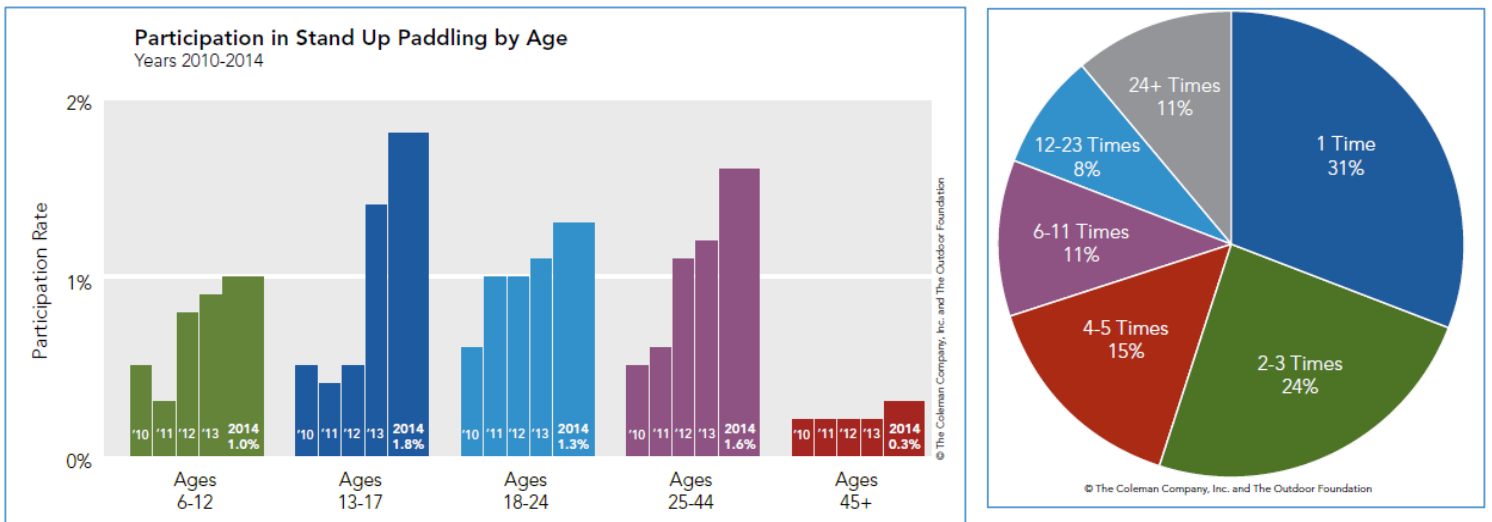
<sup>3</sup> *State-Level Economic Contributions of Active Outdoor Recreation – Technical Report on Methods and Findings*, Southwick Associates (for the Outdoor Industry Foundation, April 13, 2007).

<sup>4</sup> 2015 Special Report on Paddlesports: Kayaking, Canoeing, Rafting, Stand Up Paddling.

**Figure 3: Canoeing Participation – Age and Frequency, US, 2014**



**Figure 4: Stand-Up Paddling Participation – Age and Frequency, US, 2014**



As with all activities, a rough “80/20” rule applies to paddling; in other words, about 20 percent of paddlers may account for 80 percent of the trips. The intensity of engagement is particularly strong in females and the young-adult age group—59 percent of paddlers who describe themselves as “fanatics” are women and 46 percent are ages 25-44.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., page 21.



The Maine Office of Tourism (MOT) provides current demographic, psychographic, and spending data on tourists who visit Central Maine.<sup>6</sup> Of the more than 2 million visitors to the region in 2014, MOT estimates that about 10 percent had an interest in canoeing or kayaking (Table 1). For one in five overnight visitors, water-related activities were the most important reason for visiting the area. On average, visitors spent about \$125/person/trip in the area, which translates into about \$60/person/day.

**Table 1: 2014 Visitor Profile, Kennebec and Moose River Valley**

2014 visitors to Kennebec and Moose River Valley	Overnight	Day
Total all ages	1,036,504	1,237,190
under 35	32%	25%
35-44	23%	20%
45-54	20%	27%
55+	25%	28%
Interest areas		
Water activities generally	33%	24%
Most important - water activities	20%	11%
Of water interested - canoeing or kayaking	33%	34%
<b>Of All Visitors - canoeing or kayaking</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
Active outdoors (not water)	31%	28%
Most important - active outdoors	9%	11%

## **B. Interviews**

There are dozens of whitewater parks in the United States. The consulting team identified 19 successful parks across the country in rural areas similar to Skowhegan (see inventory in Appendix A). From this list, 12 parks were selected by the team as having important characteristics in common with Run of River, such as location relative to larger cities, characteristics of the river, and characteristics of the river structures (see Appendix B). The team then conducted telephone interviews with municipal and county officials responsible for operations of those parks. Ten parks were in Colorado, one in Idaho, and one in rural New York. Additionally, an interview with the person advocating for the development of a Westbrook (Maine) River Park confirmed the essential points made by the interviews conducted with the 12 park operators.

The heavy weight on Colorado parks in the sample deserves comment. Municipalities and counties in Colorado have a long and successful history of whitewater park operation, with many parks originally built in the early 2000s. Part of the explanation for the number and success of Colorado parks is the fact that the state

<sup>6</sup> *Visitor Tracking Research 2014 Calendar Year Annual Report* and *Kennebec and Moose River Valley 2014 Regional Tourism Impact Estimate*, Maine Office of Tourism.

has a significant commitment to outdoor recreation; it uses lottery revenues to underwrite the construction and repairs of parks similar to Run of River through the Great Outdoors Colorado program.

The takeaways from these interviews are described below.

### ***(1) Recreation Areas – Quality of Place Assets***

Local public officials and private persons involved with both the development and operations of these facilities consider the whitewater facility to be an integral element of a larger surrounding outdoor recreation infrastructure that typically includes a mix of public parks, ball fields, performance venues, trails, picnic areas, and river access points for boating, fishing, and swimming.

In each place the whitewater park was located in close proximity to the downtown. There was a deliberate effort to establish and maintain a strong connection that supported the easy movement of spectators and water users between the parks and the downtowns. These connections are important contributors to business vitality.

These places market their locations as full-featured recreation areas offering an array of individual, high-quality recreational facilities that, presented together, offer locals and visitors multiple and distinct opportunities to experience a variety of outdoor fun—in short, something for everybody.

Whitewater parks have become an integral part of these downtowns and are the primary drivers of revitalization and enhanced economic activity. The effects are dynamic, diversifying over time as use of the park grows.

**This is a key lesson to keep in mind in planning Skowhegan’s park.**

### ***(2) Cost of Construction***

Developers of each of the 12 parks placed or plan to place artificial structures in the river to develop "features" that produced special whitewater effects suited to a variety of users. The cost of such features range widely—from \$200,000 to \$4,000,000. Cost is mainly a function of local conditions involving access, depth, flow, and soil type. It is also a function of the number and complexity of structures that are built into the river.

Much of the capital invested in the 12 parks was raised from grants and donations. Local, public money tended to be invested in riverside improvements such as access points, trails, and viewing areas.

One Colorado community, the Town of Eagle, is planning a whitewater park with an estimated cost of \$4,000,000<sup>7</sup>. Town officials intend to ask voters for a \$4 million bond issue for the park. It should be

---

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.townofeagle.org/407/Town-of-Eagle---River-Corridor-Plan>

added that Colorado allows a local sales tax, so the town has the option of using its 4 percent local sales tax (or increasing the rate) to help pay the amortization.

### ***(3) Water Flows and Seasonality***

Water flow among these 12 sites varies considerably from a low of approximately 250 cubic feet per second (CFS) to a seasonal maximum of approximately 4,000 CFS. The Kleinschmidt 2004 report indicates that Run of River would experience seasonal average flows (May to October) of 4,000 to 6,000 CFS. Skowhegan's seasonal average flows make it distinctive among this group.

The paddling season in most Colorado locations is over by mid-July as river flows are reduced by that time. The season in Skowhegan is not limited by river flow and is likely to extend from May to October and possibly longer. Avid paddlers are in the rivers in Maine during the winter. This longer season offers Skowhegan comparatively more opportunities to attract users and spectators and to host events.

### ***(4) Operation and Maintenance***

Operation and maintenance of whitewater parks is typically built into the public works/parks and recreation budgets and not listed as a separate line item. Annual operating expenditures range from approximately \$5,000 to \$65,000. To this point, most in-river structures have not required maintenance, though one whitewater park in Colorado recently invested \$465,000 in grant funds to repair to several structures undermined by water flows.

An analysis in St. Lawrence County, N.Y.,<sup>8</sup> estimated annual operations costs would amount to roughly 1 percent of the total construction cost.

### ***(5) Usage Data***

The whitewater parks operators interviewed had little to no usage and demographic data. Due to the nature of outdoor recreation, specific demographic information for hiking, biking, birding, etc. is always difficult to come by for the fact that the goal of much of this recreation is in isolation; finding outdoor recreationalists to stop what they are doing and take a survey is difficult. Therefore, anecdotal evidence from local industry experts is, more often than not, the best available data.

A study of Kelly's White Water Park in Cascade, Idaho,<sup>9</sup> found that most private users (as distinct from people using commercial rafting companies) were kayakers aged between 15 and 55, from the local area, with some day-trippers within one-hour +/- travel time (75 miles). Peak usage during the annual paddling festival drove overnight visits. In terms of paddling, kayak use predominates—but there is expanded use of other equipment such as surfboards, stand-up paddle boards (SUPS), and tubes. Most kayakers own their boats. Kayakers will use the park but typically do not spend a lot of money locally.

---

<sup>8</sup> St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park, *Feasibility Analysis, Market Assessment and Economic Impact Analysis*, April 2015, page 9, item 4

<sup>9</sup> See <http://www.kellyswhitewaterpark.com/docs/study.pdf>

### **(6) Admission Fees**

None of the parks charge a fee to users. Park operators and/or organizations that plan events do charge fees to vendors and exhibitors during events and festivals.

### **(7) Events**

Events are the principal drivers of economic impact for whitewater parks. They bring in the most outside visitors—both users and spectators—who spend money locally. Events include local, state, regional, and national paddling competitions; festivals with beer, music, and fun events; and even “float to work” days. Often they are annual events that build up visitors each year. Events are typically organized by a coalition of public, private, and nonprofit sponsors who share the expenses and proceeds.

The St. Lawrence County, N.Y., study summarized some of the impacts of such events around the country:

*In 2012, the Vail Mountain Games brought 44,000 people to Vail (Vail Valley Foundation, 2013). Participants stayed an average of three nights and spent an average of \$125 per day. Economic impact from this event totals \$3.8 million. A similar event, the Dominion Riverrock on the James River in Virginia, attracted a total of 28,000 visitors and had a total economic impact of over half a million (Dominion Riverrock, 2010). A series of whitewater specific events in Durango, CO attracted over 4,200 participants and visitors and had a total impact of \$977,000 (RPI Consulting, 2006).<sup>10</sup>*

### **(8) Spectator Participation – Central Element in Park Success**

A key element of successful whitewater park operations is the involvement of riverside spectators. The ratio of spectators to paddlers is in the range of three to one—three spectators for every one paddler. Events attract additional spectators, often times in the thousands.

The spectators and other non-river users are the principal groups that spend locally. Weekday and weekend spectators purchase meals and go to the river to watch the paddlers and other river users—tubers, canoers, boogie boarders, and SUPs. Non-kayaking activities are on the rise in Colorado. Effectively, whitewater paddlers provide the entertainment for the spectators, who range in numbers from a few people on a cool spring weekday to thousands on a sunny festival weekend.

People are willing to travel to get to a destination that offers lots of activities and great paddling. Many Colorado parks attract day-trippers traveling from up to three hours away. Proximity to a population center, like Portland, Bangor, and Lewiston-Auburn contributes to usage and spectator turnout.

---

<sup>10</sup> St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park, Feasibility Analysis, Market Assessment and Economic Impact Analysis, April 2015, page 31.  
*Economic Impact of Proposed Run of River Park in Skowhegan Sept. 2016 Planning Decisions, Inc.* 10

Spectators at events want to participate in other recreational activities. Spectators stay in hotels and eat at restaurants and may spend several days in town taking advantage of available recreational and cultural offerings and may not use the whitewater park. Most successful parks in Colorado have an abundance of additional activities for visitors.

Non-paddling locals and visitors want the ability to interact with the river— watching users paddle the waves, enjoying a meal while on the shore, walking along the river’s edge, and using an access point to dip their feet or swim.

Fishing is becoming more popular. In Colorado commercial fly-fishing guides utilize the rivers alongside paddlers, tubers, and SUPs.

Support services such as tube and paddle board rental companies have opened in or near various whitewater parks.

### **C. Specific Whitewater Park Studies**

The consultant team reviewed a variety of studies of the usage and economic impact of paddlers and of whitewater parks. Three in particular had information of use to this study.

(1) *The University of Idaho Extension Service* did a rigorous study of the economic impact of Kelly’s Whitewater Park in Cascade, Idaho.<sup>11</sup> Researchers interviewed 243 park users and found that about 10 percent were from the local county, 25 percent were from out of state, and another 60 percent were from about two hours away (within Idaho but outside the county). This is a useful model for thinking about what might happen in Skowhegan, with the large potential markets in Portland, Lewiston, and Bangor. The Kelly study also found that only about a quarter of visitors came to exclusively use the whitewater park; for more than 50 percent of visitors the park was one of several identified destinations, and for 20 percent the park wasn’t a planned destination at all— people just came upon it.

(2) *Durango Park in Colorado*<sup>12</sup> documented the importance of spectators and special events to the economic impact of whitewater parks. They found that for every participant in a special event (such as a competition), there were three to four spectators—and about a quarter of those spectators were visitors to the area. In all, special events contributed about 20 percent of the economic impact of the Durango facility.

---

<sup>11</sup> See <http://www.kellyswhitewaterpark.com/docs/study.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> See [http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/spp-documents/durango\\_economic\\_impacts\\_whi.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22durango%22](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.americancanoe.org/resource/resmgr/spp-documents/durango_economic_impacts_whi.pdf?hhSearchTerms=%22durango%22)

(3) A student at the University of California at Berkeley, Kristin Podolak, surveyed 278 users in five California whitewater parks for her Ph.D. thesis<sup>13</sup> and documented thousands of users during 36 observation days in the parks. Of the 24,000 people she and her team observed, only about 1,800 (7 percent) were rafting, kayaking, or tubing. The majority of activity was on the riverbank: walking (38 percent), sitting or lying down (22 percent), standing (11 percent), biking or running (4 percent). In the river, more people were wading and swimming (14 percent) than kayaking. This confirms the idea (already present in the Skowhegan planning) that a variety of activities are essential for making the site a destination.

(4) The State of New York commissioned a comprehensive study of the *whitewater park potential in three towns in the Adirondacks: Colton, Canton, and Potsdam*. Titled *St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park, Feasibility Analysis, Market Assessment, and Economic Impact Analysis*, April 2015,<sup>14</sup> this 191-page study is comprehensive, addressing virtually every aspect of the considerations necessary to site, permit, operate, and maintain a whitewater park. The report includes information relating to the design process, including factors relating to stability, costs, permitting, construction, access, maintenance, and safety. Other sections contain an assessment of the market in the local area and an analysis of the potential economic impact of construction and operation.

---

<sup>13</sup> See <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7k8243b4>

<sup>14</sup> See <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8LxFOcFUg2Ab3lCY3UyVDc4Mnc/view?pref=2&pli=1>

## IV. Survey Responses from Area Paddlers

In March of 2016, Kristina Cannon of Main Street Skowhegan conducted an online survey of 995 members of the closed Facebook group MAINE FLOWS. The survey received 193 responses, for a very respectable 19.4-percent return rate.

### A. Location and Demographics of Respondents

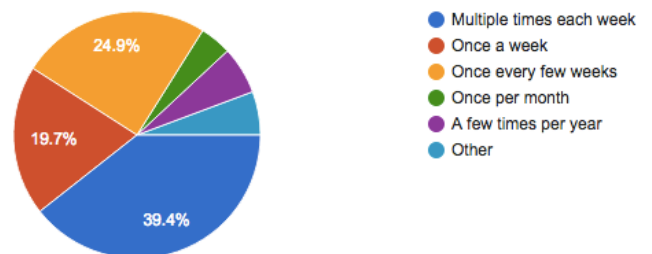
Two-thirds of the respondents were men and a third women. Most (90 percent) were over age 25—roughly equally split between those 25-44 (45 percent) and those over age 45 (43 percent). They came from households of all income levels: 36 percent earning less than \$50,000, 40 percent earning \$50,000 to \$100,000, and the remainder (24 percent) earning over \$100,000.

Two-thirds were year-round residents of Maine. Another quarter were either seasonal residents or frequent visitors. Of the Maine residents, over a quarter were from Somerset County, and the remainder represented Maine’s other 15 counties. Penobscot, Franklin, Kennebec, Androscoggin, and Cumberland counties each accounted individually for about 10 percent of respondents.

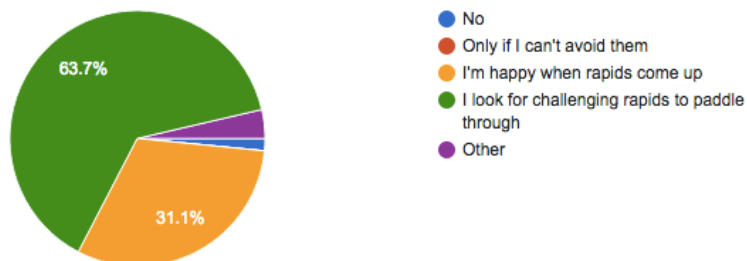
### B. Patterns of Paddling and Outdoor Recreation

The respondents are avid paddlers. Forty percent go out several times a week. Twenty percent paddle once a week, and 25 percent paddle at least several times each month.

6. How often do you paddle? (193 responses)



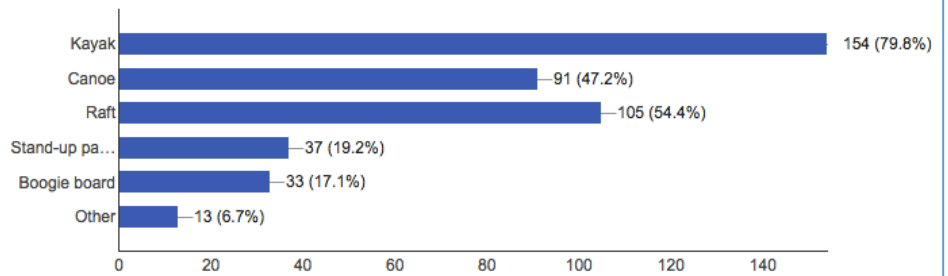
3. When you go paddling, do you run rapids? (193 responses)



Consistent with their paddling frequency, respondents are not afraid of whitewater rapids. In fact, two-thirds actively seek out challenging rapids, and almost all are happy when rapids arise on a trip.

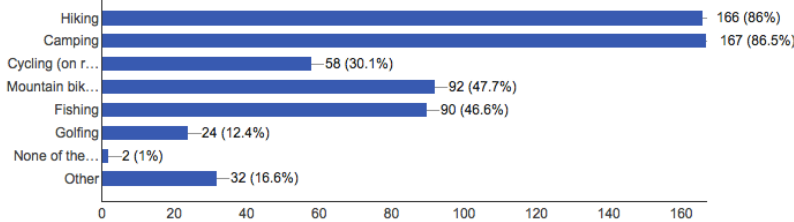
As is the trend nationally, respondents use multiple types of watercraft: kayaks (80 percent), canoes (50 percent), SUPs (20 percent), and boogie boards (15 percent). This is consistent with what the team found in its interviews.

**4. What types of water craft do you use? (check all that apply)** (193 responses)



**12. What other recreational activities do you participate in? (check all that apply)**

(193 responses)

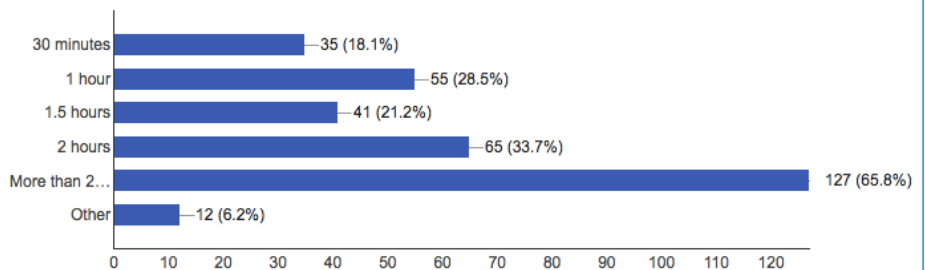


Paddlers are also active in other types of outdoor recreation. Most (87 percent) hike and camp. Around half fish or mountain bike. A third cycle on roadways. Paddling is only one of many ways that respondents enjoy the outdoors.

Most paddlers go in groups. Only a third go alone. The most common way to travel is in small groups (90 percent do this at one time or another). About a quarter sometimes go in large groups of 10 or more.

**5. How far are you willing to travel to paddle? (check all that apply)**

(193 responses)



Respondents are willing to travel for a good experience—two-thirds will drive more than two hours to paddle.

**C. Response to Run of River Proposal**

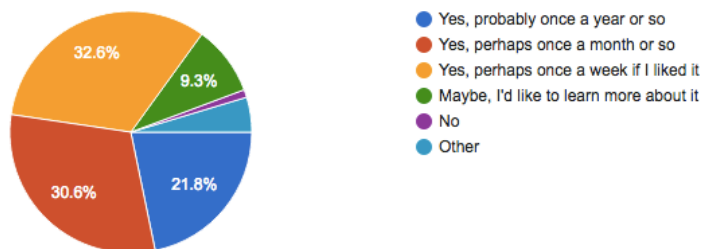
The survey described the project as follows, then asked respondents if they would visit such a park.

*The Skowhegan Run of River Committee is drafting a business plan for a whitewater recreation area in downtown Skowhegan called Run of River. The central focus of this recreation area will be a 3,000-foot*



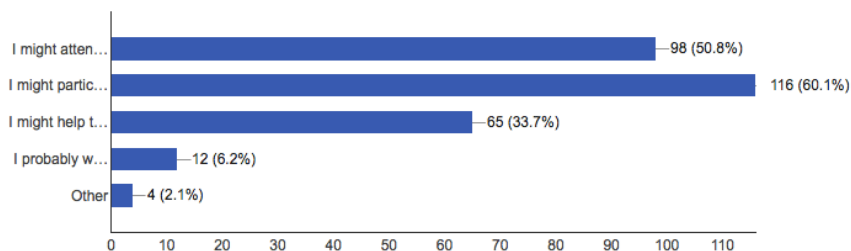
whitewater course with three rapids consisting of 1+ to 2-foot drops. The first wave feature will be in the gorge under the pedestrian footbridge, the second at a middle rapid halfway down the gorge, and the third at the Big Eddy. Anticipated shoreline improvements include an access road, additional foot and portage trails, and terraced seating for spectators.

**1. Would use Run of River (see description above)?** (193 responses)



**7. If Run of River held whitewater events or competitions, what level of involvement might you potentially have? (check all that apply)**

(193 responses)

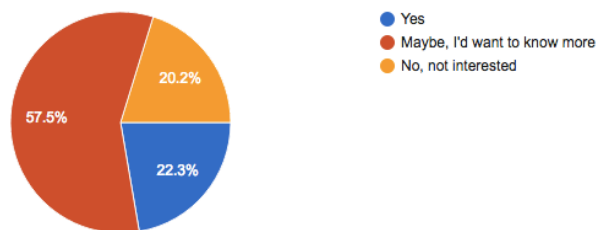


The response was enthusiastic. A third said that they would visit it “perhaps once a week if I liked it.” An almost equally large group expected to visit once per month. If there were a competition in Skowhegan, 60 percent might enter and participate. Half might watch, and a third would help to “organize, promote, and manage” the event.

Paddling clubs are important supporting organizations for a whitewater park. They help to train new generations of paddlers, to sponsor events, to raise interest in the sport. Eighty percent of respondents had a potential interest in joining a club associated with Run of River.

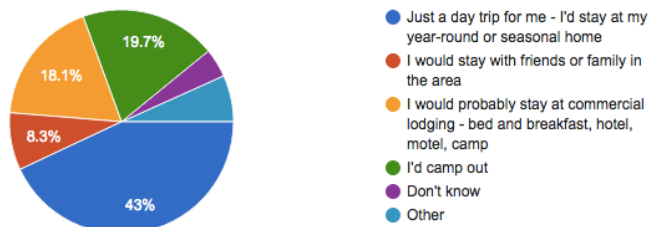
**8. If there was a Skowhegan area paddling club that met regularly to use Run of River, would you join the club?**

(193 responses)



**9. If you would come to Skowhegan to use Run of River, where do you think you might stay?**

(193 responses)



About one in six potential users of the whitewater park (18 percent) would stay in commercial lodging. Their impact would be multiplied by any spectators they brought along.

About 70 percent of respondents would patronize an outdoor recreation store if one were located in Skowhegan. This would be a help to such a store but not enough to attract one by itself. Equipment rental companies would be the most likely recreation stores to open immediately in the area if a whitewater park were built.

Respondents also said that Facebook was the best way to keep in touch with them.

#### **D. Comments, Ideas, and Suggestions**

One indication of the enthusiasm respondents had for the proposed park is the number of suggestions and comments that they initiated. These are listed below:

##### *Ideas for the design of the water features*

- Slalom course
- Portage points along river
- Deep hole for play-boating
- Various levels of difficulty in regards to features
- Consult paddlers on whitewater features to be built
- Find out what people want—as in the ability level of who would use the features
- Include challenging rapids that can help paddlers progress
- Don't make it just for pros or racer heads; consider all paddlers, and of course guarantee deck seating and discounted beers for boaters at the Old Mill Pub
- At least one play feature that is beginner friendly
- Use larger groups such as ACA, AW, Neckra, etc. to get word out
- Make it safe and clean and set the standards high, check out the Kelly Play Park in Idaho; it is by far the most well-thought-out play park I have visited they put on amazing events for all ages and abilities of water enthusiasts
- Clinics/classes
- Play-boating
- Slalom
- Quality of play features on the river is #1
- Plan for varying flows / varying features to keep things interesting and cater to a greater variety of users
- Surfing holes are a must to draw attention
- A series of rapids with varied difficulty for all levels to play and learn

##### *Ideas for the infrastructure surrounding the water*

- Single-track mountain bike trails would complement the whitewater park well
- A comprehensive trail development plan on town land, Somerset Woods Trustee land, private land, and connecting road bike pathways
- Power outlets for raft inflating

- Restroom access
- Primitive restroom facilities
- Bathroom changing area with shower
- Shuttles
- Shuttling services for vehicles and/or boats
- Parking, shuttling paddlers from bottom back to top (town bus or private for-profit potential, i.e., local taxi expansion potential)
- Easy access and support from local merchants and residents
- Parking, access, convenience of food, supplies, shuttles to Sugarloaf and Skowhegan and to remote parking
- Signs to educate visitors about the natural aspects of the river
- A really enjoyable pedestrian experience on the shore is just as important for friends, family, and the general public
- Coffee shop with terrace seating
- Food and drinks overlooking the river

#### *Ideas for potential customers*

- Get the summer camps involved
- Connect with outdoor groups – UMaine
- I would bring students to the river from Colby College, it would be great!
- Bowdoin, College of the Atlantic, Unity, there must be others with paddling programs too
- Tap into boating community in the Forks (we would stop and spend money)
- L.L. Bean and other outdoor recreational partners may be able to help with vision and execution
- I live in Mass. and visit once a year to run the Dead River with a paddling club. We pass through Skowhegan to get there, and I suspect that Run of River would attract some of us to stop and maybe stay the night.
- This would probably be a stop on the way through town on the way to the Dead River or Kennebec for whitewater kayaking
- While kayakers might be the main users, I hope you'll consider the WW canoe community. The concept sounds fun! I paddle with a small group of friends 35-65 years old. No races. We like our "wine and cheese" paddling—do Class I-III rivers as day trips and then stop for dinner at a local restaurant. Old Mill Pub is a favorite stop on the way home. It would be nice to paddle right in Skowhegan!

#### *Ideas for safety*

- Transports, price points, safety and training, guided runs for novices
- Safety and use management (managed locally vs. state/federal), emergency and injury management (river access for safety or injury extraction, backboards, first-aid availability)
- Whitewater rescue

#### *General comments*

- A whitewater park is a great addition to any town
- If successful, I think this will be a great draw bringing paddlers from all over to the Skowhegan area. Old Town recently did work on the T-Wave by the dam at Stillwater Avenue, and that's become pretty popular.
- When I attended meetings in the past there was a strong focus on how recreation (not just "kayaking," but fishing, rafting, biking, hiking, picnicking, etc.) benefits the entire community, and I hope that theme continues through the process. Good luck, please feel free to contact me for help ☺.
- River festivals and competitions
- Festival with music and performances along the river (see Providence, RI)
- Please, please, please make this a reality!!!
- Good Luck - would be awesome
- I have been supporting this since the beginning, I hope it comes to life soon
- You should talk to Rob Mitchell who is behind the Westbrook river park and kayak shop opening there. You should also get some real whitewater enthusiasts involved in this process, ask people real questions about the type of features they would want to see, the type of park, etc. Review other success stories for inspiration (Reno WW park, Glenwood Springs, so many more).

## **V. Paddling Community and Associated Events**

---

### **A. Size of New England Paddling Community**

Though there are a few other whitewater park projects under discussion in Maine, Run of River is projected to be the first of its kind and scale in New England. For this reason, Skowhegan can expect to draw both local paddlers and enthusiasts from further afield. More than a dozen paddling groups (listed below) exist in New England. These groups combine for a total of 7,600 members.

- The Penobscot Paddle and Chowder Society
- New England Canoe and Kayak Racing Association
- Merrimack Valley Paddlers
- Mt. Washington Valley Paddlers
- Maine Canoe & Kayak Racing Organization
- White Mountain Creeking
- Maine Women Kayakers
- Paddling Appalachian Mountain Club Maine Chapter
- The Maine Outdoor Adventure Club
- Maine Paddling Connection
- Appalachian Mountain Club Boston Chapter Paddlers
- Vermont Paddlers
- New Hampshire Appalachian Mountain Club Paddlers Meet Up Group
- Rhode Island Canoe & Kayak Association (RICKA)
- Appalachian Mountain Club Connecticut Whitewater Committee
- American Canoe Association Maine Chapter

Paddlers are also active on Facebook. In New England, the following Facebook pages combine for 7,700 fans/members:

- Berkshire Highlands Pentathlon
- Central Maine Paddling Group
- CT AMC Chapter
- Katahdin Paddlers
- MACKRO
- MAINE FLOWS
- Maine Whitewater Championship
- New England Slalom Series
- NH AMC Paddlers

- Northeast Paddlers Message Board
- Paddlesports North America
- Penobscot Paddle & Chowder Society
- Rhode Island Canoe/Kayak Association

### **B. Size of National Paddling Community**

According to the Outdoor Foundation, 21.7 million Americans participated in paddlesports in 2014. This number equates to 7.4 percent of the U.S. population and represents an increase of more than 3 million people since the study began in 2010.<sup>15</sup>

Many national paddling organizations and membership-based groups exist, including the American Canoe Association, the United States Canoe Association, the American Kayaking Association, American Whitewater, the Professional Paddlesports Association, and the U.S. National Whitewater Center.

### **C. Paddling Competitions and Events**

Paddling competitions—including national competitions—already take place in New England, providing a network of potential participants for an event in Skowhegan. Within the region, more than 90 paddling competitions and events are planned annually, with 34 taking place in Maine, 10 in New Hampshire, and 26 in Massachusetts. Events take place March through December (see Appendix D).

Run of River could easily build on these activities. For example, the annual New England Slalom Series consists of 11 slalom races from Maine to New York. According to Slalom Course Coordinator Amy Hunt, NESS is always looking for new race locations—especially venues that have consistent water flow. That could be Skowhegan.

The USA Freestyle Kayaking put out a request for bids for a host site for the 2016 U.S. National Whitewater Freestyle Championships. According to their website, they require host communities to meet the following conditions:<sup>16</sup>

- Have reliable, predictable water levels during pre-event and competition days
- Offer reasonable lodging for competitors, including camping
- Offer riverside accommodations for competitors (40-75), judges, and spectators with respect to viewing, on water staging and safety, and parking

In 2015 the freestyle championship was cancelled due to lack of water. With abundant and regular flow, three play holes, and ample viewing access, Run of River would provide an excellent location for this event.

In addition to competitions, several successful paddling events take place in New England each year. In southern Vermont, the Jamaica State Park releases water from its Ball Mountain Dam on the fourth Saturday of

<sup>15</sup> 2015 *Special Report on Paddlesports: Kayaking, Canoeing, Rafting, Stand Up Paddling*, page 2.

<sup>16</sup> See <http://www.usafreestylekayak.com/featured/2016-us-nationals-host-sought/>

September, providing rafting, kayaking, and canoeing opportunities on the West River. The Park's website says this:

*These events draw whitewater enthusiasts from around the northeast as kayakers, canoeists and river rafters all join in the fun of paddling the class II to class IV rapids. Thousands of people come to the park to watch the action on the West River and hike along the 3 mile long former rail bed hiking trail that gently winds up the steep valley.<sup>17</sup>*

Here in Maine, the Kenduskeag Canoe Race, held annually in April and broadcast live on television, is the best-attended paddling race in New England. People come from all over the country and from Canada to attend. This past year nearly 1,000 people participated, bringing along thousands of spectators that added to the economic impact of the event, according to Debbie Gendreau at Bangor Parks and Recreation.

---

<sup>17</sup> See [http://www.vtstateparks.com/html/jamaica\\_wv.htm](http://www.vtstateparks.com/html/jamaica_wv.htm)

## VI. Projected Economic Impacts

---

### A. Overview

Economic impacts of Run of River would occur in several ways:

- Direct spending from kayakers and whitewater sports participants on food, lodging, and equipment
- Direct spending from spectators on food, lodging, and souvenirs
- Indirect spending from businesses who are buying supplies to meet the needs of participants and onlookers
- Induced spending from workers at those businesses, who use their paychecks to buy other goods and services in the region

The results of such spending, in the first two instances, would be an increase in employment, wages, and profits at existing restaurants, convenience stores, gas stations, motels, bed and breakfast establishments, arts and craft stores, and sporting good suppliers in Skowhegan. Over time, as expenditures continued to grow, there would be new businesses opening up in Skowhegan in all of these sectors in order to serve participants and spectators.

The purpose of this analysis is to try and quantify these various effects.

### B. Key Assumptions of the Analysis

The analysis that follows relies on the IMPLAN model.<sup>18</sup> The model looks at economic effects on two levels. The first is local, within Somerset County itself, as most of the spending will take place here. The second perspective is state-wide. Some travel revenues (gas, lodging, food) will be shared throughout the state, and most recreation equipment purchases (at this point) would be within Maine but not in Somerset County. For these reasons, the Maine effect is larger than the Somerset County effect.

The model requires a number of inputs. These have been estimated by Planning Decisions, Inc., using the data described in previous sections. For example, estimates of whitewater paddling participation by age are generated by the research of the Outdoor Foundation described in Figures 2, 3, and 4. Estimates of participation by geographic distance from the project—local, in-state but several hours away, and out-of-state—are estimated using the experience of the Kelly Whitewater Park described in Section II of this report. An interpolation of the data from that report found that the Kelly park attracted 26 percent of local paddling trips and 1.2 percent of paddling trips from those further away (but still in-state). A capture rate of 5 percent of

---

<sup>18</sup> IMPLAN (IMPact Analysis for PLANing) is a computer based input-output modeling program originally developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service for resource management planning. It contains a mathematical representation of the purchasing patterns that take place between sectors of an economy. Built into the IMPLAN data files are all of the industry sales, employment and income data for each sector of the Somerset County and Maine economies.



out-of-state, overnight visitors with a paddling interest was the estimate of Planning Decisions. These capture rates are the foundation of the base-year analysis economic impact model.

Spending per person per day was based on findings of the Maine Tourism Office with regard to visitors to the Kennebec and Moose River Valley in 2014. Spending on recreation supplies was based on the 2005 economic impact study which found that recreation supply spending came to about 10 percent of total paddler spending in Maine.

The analysis projects future growth in economic activity around the project. Growth comes from two sources: first, the general increase in kayaking going on in the country (about 4 percent each year) and second, growth due to the capture of a higher proportion of market share of paddling activity, due to increased awareness and marketing over the years (estimated to be a 5-percent increase per year—i.e., the 1.2 percent of the in-state share would increase 5 percent to 1.26 percent in year two). A range for growth is provided by varying the market share penetration growth of the project—a low projection at half the rate, a high projection at double.

### **B. Base-Year Impacts**

Using the assumptions above, the *direct economic impact* of Run of River in the base year would generate about \$6 million in spending, 50 jobs, and \$1.5 million in income (see Table 2).

**Table 2: Direct Economic Impact of Operation of Run of River**

<b>Metric</b>	<b>On Maine</b>
Annual Sales/Spending	\$5.9 million
Permanent Employment (full-time equivalent jobs)	54 jobs
Annual Labor Income	\$1.5 million

In addition, Run of River will have indirect and induced impacts as the flow of spending from the visitors to the park moves out into the surrounding community. The *indirect effects* flow from the purchases made by businesses down the supply chains serving the customers of the project. The indirect impacts of operation of the facility will continue—and increase—as Run of River remains in operation and, hopefully, expands over time.

A second effect of the project results when the retail businesses, their employees, and the employees of all their suppliers use their wages to buy items for their households—for rent, food, clothing, health care and for all other miscellaneous items they may purchase. These are called the *induced effects* of both the direct and indirect spending. They constitute the economic impact of Run of River on local grocery stores, hardware stores, hospitals, schools, local governments and myriad other local consumer businesses.

Table 3 summarizes the overall base-year economic impact of Run of River.

**Table 3: Economic Impact of Run of River – Base Year**

<b>Economic Impact on Maine as a Whole</b>			
	<b>Sales</b>	<b>FTE Jobs</b>	<b>Earnings</b>
<b>Direct Impact</b>	<b>\$4,102,348</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>\$892,586</b>
<i>Lodging</i>	\$1,068,502	11.6	\$276,647
<i>General Merchandise</i>	\$810,588	4.2	\$116,811
<i>Food and Drink Establishments</i>	\$617,152	10.3	\$210,520
<i>Other Recreational Services</i>	\$442,139	6.6	\$137,502
<i>Gas Stations</i>	\$442,139	1	\$29,330
<i>Sporting Goods Stores</i>	\$417,858	3.8	\$75,053
<i>Food Stores</i>	\$303,970	1.6	\$46,723
<b>Indirect Impact</b>	<b>\$817,505</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>\$277,979</b>
<b>Induced Impact</b>	<b>\$965,597</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>\$337,231</b>
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>\$5,885,450</b>	<b>54.1</b>	<b>\$1,507,796</b>
<b>Economic Impact on Somerset County</b>			
	<b>Sales</b>	<b>FTE Jobs</b>	<b>Earnings</b>
<b>Direct Impact</b>	<b>\$4,102,348</b>	<b>39.1</b>	<b>\$892,586</b>
<b>Indirect Impact</b>	<b>\$330,078</b>	<b>2.7</b>	<b>\$99,281</b>
<b>Induced Impact</b>	<b>\$195,781</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>\$50,261</b>
<b>Total Impact</b>	<b>\$4,628,207</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>\$1,042,128</b>

Source: IMPLAN

The indirect (supply chain) impact of these activities supports an additional \$800,000 in sales statewide, supporting the full-time equivalent of jobs providing approximately \$280,000 in income to workers and proprietors. The induced (consumer spending) impact of direct and indirect spending supports an additional \$1 million in sales, supporting the full-time equivalent of jobs earning approximately \$340,000 in income.

Within Somerset County, the effects are slightly smaller—yet still, with all effects taken into account, the project would create about \$4.6 million in sales, 43 jobs, and \$1 million in income on an annual basis in Somerset County.

Finally, all of this activity generates tax and fee revenue for state and local governments of about \$360,000 per year. Table 4 summarizes these revenues by category.

**Table 4: Annual State and Local Tax and Fee Revenue Generated  
by Run of River Operations**

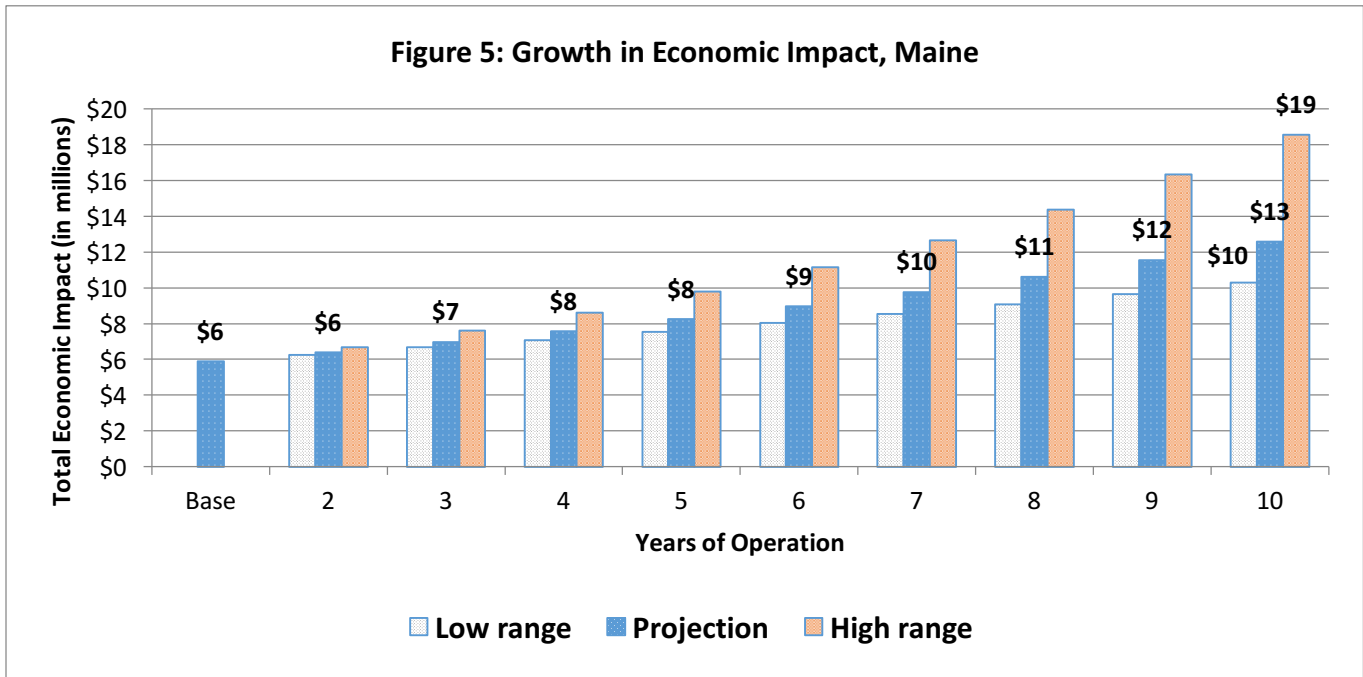
<b>Category</b>	<b>Operations</b>
Individual and Corporate Income Taxes	\$46,700
Sales Taxes	\$122,500
Property Taxes	\$154,900

Other Taxes & Fees	\$39,100
<b>Total State &amp; Local Tax Revenue</b>	<b>\$363,200</b>

Source: IMPLAN Pro 2.0 and calculations made by PDI.

### C. Growth in Economic Impacts

Growth is predicated on two factors: the increase in paddling and kayaking that is taking place nationally, and the increase in market share that Run of River should achieve over time as it becomes better known and its events become more well attended. The growth in economic impact is projected to more than double over 10 years, from \$6 million to \$13 million (see Figure 5). At half the market share penetration growth rate, the increase is about 66 percent, to \$10 million. At double the market share penetration increase, the impact triples in 10 years to around \$19 million. Market share penetration can be increased by marketing efforts, including promotion of Run of River and well-publicized paddling events and competitions.



Detailed projection figures for jobs, taxes, etc., are available in Appendix C.

## VI. Operations Issues

---

The previous section outlined the potential economic benefits of Run of River. This section discusses costs.

### A. Initial Observations

All of the structures located in the rivers of the whitewater parks that we examined (except Kelly's White Water Park in Idaho) are owned and operated by the local government authority—either a municipality or a county. The ownership and use of the various rivers are governed by state and federal laws and regulations. As the owner, the local government authority is responsible for compliance with federal and state laws and rules on the site.

Most of the municipalities and counties do not have a specific line item budget for operation and maintenance for the park by itself. These costs are part of the local government's overall parks and recreation and/or public works budget. For the three parks that did have a line item for the whitewater park, the budgets ranged from \$5,000 to \$50,000 annually. No details were available for how these costs are allocated.

Major repairs either were not budgeted or were funded by external grant sources, as in the case with Colorado park that recently invested \$465,000 in grant funds to repair several structures undermined by water flows.

The Town of Eagle, Colo., is planning a whitewater park that in both dollars (\$4 million construction) and visitors (20,000 to 30,000 a year) is similar to Run of River.<sup>19</sup> Town officials estimate that annual maintenance will be \$60,000 to \$70,000 per year. The costs include maintenance of the park area, the parking lot, the nearby trails, and the in-stream features, plus added police costs.

In the cases we studied, marketing expenses were covered by other organizations. The Town of Eagle does not include projected marketing expenses.

A map of the proposed Town of Eagle park and estimated maintenance costs are on the next page.

---

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.townofeagle.org/407/Town-of-Eagle---River-Corridor-Plan>



**Table 1: Estimated Total Annual Costs to Operate and Maintain the Eagle River Park**

Task	Cost per Unit	Amount	Estimated Annual Cost
Park Maintenance <sup>1</sup>	\$12,500 per acre	2.5 acres	\$31,250
Gravel Parking Lot Maintenance <sup>1</sup>	See Table 2	See Table 2	\$10,500
Eagle Valley Trail Maintenance <sup>2</sup>	\$5 per linear foot	1,600 feet	\$8,000
In-Stream Recreation Feature Maintenance <sup>3</sup>	See Table 3	See Table 3	\$4,500 - \$7,000
Law Enforcement <sup>4</sup>	See Table 4	200 Calls	\$8,750
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$63,000 - \$65,500</b>

<sup>1</sup> The estimated costs associated with the park area and the gravel parking lot were provided by the Town of Eagle Public Works Department.

<sup>2</sup> The estimated costs associated with the Eagle Valley Trail were provided by Eagle County (ECO Trails).

<sup>3</sup> The estimated costs associated with the maintenance of the in-stream recreation features was determined by taking the range of annual allocation for in-stream recreation feature maintenance from the Town of Lyons, Town of Buena Vista and City of Glenwood Springs.

<sup>4</sup> The estimated costs associated with law enforcement were provided by the Town of Eagle Police Department.

## **B. General Operations Issues**

This section describes the general operational considerations related to whitewater parks.

### ***(1) Parks and Recreation***

The Town of Skowhegan has 808 acres of land characterized on the town's tax records as "park." The town owns or has an easement on 43 of these acres. The remaining acreage is owned by third parties and, based on the property listing sheet, appears to be open to the public.

The Debe Park Riverwalk is located along the river in downtown Skowhegan and would be the location of some of the pedestrian way and seating improvements in the Run of River plan. The town has a maintenance reserve account for the Debe Park Riverwalk with a current balance of \$70,350. The Parks and Recreation Department has a reserve for external facilities and tennis courts of \$3,500 and an annual operating budget of \$8,000 for all recreational facilities. In total, the town has approximately \$82,000 available for current park maintenance.

These funds provide a basis for day-to-day maintenance of the riverside area. To the extent that new areas are added to Run of River and new facilities are added that require additional attention, more funds may be needed.

### ***(2) Public Safety***

Public safety is largely a function of the town's police and fire/rescue departments. Police service requirements would be consistent with existing demands, with demand being related to the size and number of additional Run of River-related festivals and events requiring an expanded police presence. Currently the town charges \$40 an hour per police officer for special events; there are typically two assigned to each event.

Fire and rescue service requirements are likely to be similar to existing demands. Possible additional requirements may include an increase in water-related rescue services and rescue service personnel during events.

In short, additional police and rescue personnel presence may be needed during events, but the costs would likely be covered by event organizers as the cost for additional police officers is now. Additional training may be needed for the fire/rescue operation, which would involve only modest costs; if new equipment is needed, the cost would be greater.

### ***(3) Personal Liability and Property Damage Insurance***

All whitewater parks examined relied on provisions in state law that limited liability — each state's equivalent of the Maine Tort Claims Act.

All of the whitewater parks posted signs warning that use of the facility is at the users' own risk and that the owner assumes no liability of any kind by virtue of its ownership and operation of the facility. The signs also remind users to comply with state statutes regarding the use of life jackets while boating.

While no park surveyed purchased additional private liability insurance to manage exposure to claims, we recommend that the town discuss this issue with its local counsel and the town's insurance carriers before deciding whether additional coverage should be purchased at a higher premium.

#### ***(4) Insurance Against Damage to the Whitewater Park Facilities***

The structures placed in the river that produce various whitewater conditions used by paddlers will be owned by the town. These structures are subject to the usual wear and tear over time, as well as potential damage in the event of a flood or natural or man-made disaster. Such costs may be covered or offset by insurance. This is another subject to discuss with the town's insurance carrier.

#### ***(5) Repairs***

The St. Lawrence County study found that river features grounded in bedrock—as is the case in Skowhegan—are less likely to require maintenance than those grounded in less stable floorbeds.

*The structures which are built in the riverbed need to be stable and robust and need to be anchored in such a way that they are not moved by flows up to the 100-year flood event. Typical design guidelines for these types of drop structures are found in the Denver Urban Drainage Handbook.*

*Experience shows that the structures tend to fail from scour/erosion and piping. These failure modes are a function of the soils upon which the structure is built with bedrock, for example, being the most stable foundation for a structure, and sandy soils being the most problematic. In order to determine stability a geotechnical analysis is typically conducted and a scour and piping analysis are undertaken as a part of the design process.<sup>20</sup>*

None of the whitewater parks we examined maintained reserve funds to cover the cost of repairs beyond general maintenance. The practice appears to be based on the assumptions that repairs are not frequent and that when they are necessary, they can be paid for out of annual maintenance budgets.

Since all of the parks we surveyed are relatively new, there is not a long-term track record to test the accuracy of these assumptions. In the one instance we came across where repairs were needed—in Gunnison County, Colo.—the county applied for and received a Great Outdoors Colorado grant for \$325,000 to cover a part of the anticipated \$485,000 cost for making safety repairs to two structures.

---

<sup>20</sup> St. Lawrence County Whitewater Park, Feasibility Analysis, Market Assessment and Economic Impact Analysis, April 2015, page 15.

Maine does not have an equivalent grant program to Great Outdoors Colorado. One approach to financing future repair costs is to establish a reserve account and use it to accumulate funds over time for repairs.



## VII. Marketing Communications

---

Marketing is essential to the economic success of Run of River. A well-branded and promoted whitewater recreation area could achieve a \$19-million economic impact in 10 years; a not-so-well-marketed project might only achieve half that number in 10 years (see Figure 5).

In other words, Run of River requires more than a one-time capital expenditure to achieve success. It requires an annual integrated marketing communications campaign, as well as an ongoing commitment to coordinating and publicizing events, to increasing participation among local high school and college students, and to the creation and nurturing of local clubs. The Maine Winter Sports Center in Aroostook and Franklin Counties demonstrates how it works. The project involved \$25 million in capital costs for cross-country and downhill skiing venues in Presque Isle, Fort Kent, Mars Hill, and Rumford. But its success came from staging major events, like the World Cup Biathlon competition in 2016. It also came from introducing skiing to local youth via school curriculums, ultimately engaging thousands of young people. The project is estimated to have had over \$100 million in economic impact in Maine.

The following is an outline of a possible annual integrated marketing communications plan that would promote Run of River. Festival and competition promotion would be the responsibility of the event organizer(s), as is currently the case in Skowhegan.

### *(1) Marketing Objectives*

- Increase awareness, generate interest, and drive usage of Run of River and visitation to Skowhegan.
- Promote Skowhegan as a thriving recreation destination.
- Promote river events, festivals, and activities.

### *(2) Target Audiences*

Segment 1: Current active paddlers and river users

Segment 2: Recreation vacation enthusiasts who might develop an interest in paddling

Segment 3: Students and young people who could learn to paddle

Segment 4: Tourists, vacationers, and residents who enjoy watching outdoor events

### *(3) Marketing Strategy*

- Promote features and benefits of recreation area and Skowhegan
- Work within Skowhegan and Run of River brand identity
- Use strong visuals—photos, video—to tell story
- Employ cohesive and consistent messaging
- Maintain database of users and visitors
- Utilize multi-pronged approach to increase reach

- Website, SEO, social media, digital advertising
- Content marketing, user-generated content
- Public relations
- Email marketing
- Events and festivals
- Tradeshows, regional paddling events
- Maine Office of Tourism and Kennebec Valley Tourism Council promotional tools
- Other media based on target audience (direct mail, radio, print, TV)
- Active outreach to bring national paddling events to Skowhegan
- Local organizations (Main Street Skowhegan, Chamber) to plan festivals, activities
- Targeted annual advertising campaign
- Main Street Skowhegan to implement marketing tactics
- Work with area schools to promote paddling recreation

***(4) Media (Advertising) Strategy***

- Reach specific audience segments via media vehicles that allow targeting
- Target feeder markets (Portland, Boston, Mid-Atlantic, and others as determined)
- Consider seasonality of usage when purchasing advertising
- Negotiate premium rates
- Maintain adequate reach and frequency levels
- Engage audience via free social channels (Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter)
- Consider different tactics for annual campaign versus seasonal events

***(5) Recommended Annual Marketing Budget***

\$20,000 minimum

***(6) Potential Marketing Funding Sources***

- Maine Tourism Marketing Partnership Program
  - Regional Grants
  - Enterprise Grants
  - Event Marketing Grants
- Maine Community Foundation
- Libra Foundation
- Alford Foundation
- Elmina Sewall Foundation

## Appendix A: List of Parks Reviewed Online

Name of Park	Location	Pop'n	Rural or Urban	Distance to Closest City	Natural or Pumped	Park Description	Managed By
East Race Waterway	South Bend, Indiana	100,886	Urban		Pumped	This thrilling course is great for beginners and advanced rafters alike. This three-mile waterway runs at a water scale rating of 2 during recreational rafting and kayaking hours—with a flow speed of 450 to 500 cubic feet per second. All required rafting equipment is provided and instruction is available for beginners and advanced rafters.	South Bend Parks and Recreation Department
Clear Creek Whitewater Park	Golden, Colorado	19,393	Rural	13 miles to Denver	Natural	Clear Creek Whitewater Park streamflows vary based on snowpack (best mid-May to August) in Golden, Colo., a 25-minute drive from downtown Denver. Ideal river boarding conditions at flows greater than 250 cfs. RipBoard provides river boarding lessons at the park from mid-May until mid-August (as long as flows allow).	Golden Parks and Recreation Department
Truckee River Whitewater Park	Reno, Nevada	233,294	Urban		Natural	Kayakers of all skill levels (including beginners) can enjoy the one-half-mile park that includes easy access points from all directions, class 2 – 3 rapids, 11 drop-pools, 7,000 tons of smooth flat-top rocks and boulders along the river banks, and in-stream and convenient pedestrian walkways between both the east and west ends of Wingfield Park.	Owed by the City of Reno and managed cooperatively with the State of Nevada
Arkansas River Whitewater Park	Salida, Colorado	5,409	Rural	67 miles to Colorado Springs	Natural	A half-mile stretch of the Arkansas River in Salida offers several great surfing features and is home to the longest-running whitewater festival in the country, FIBArk. Right next to the park is Headwaters Outdoor Equipment, where you can rent boards.	
Dickerson Whitewater Park	Dickerson, Maryland	1,848	Rural	31 miles to Washington, D.C.			Mirant

Buena Vista Whitewater Park	Buena Vista, Colorado	2,736	Rural	71 miles to Colorado Springs	Natural	Located on the Arkansas river in beautiful Buena Vista, Colo., (2 1/2 hours west of Denver) this park recently expanded downstream into the new South Main Neighborhood development with four main in-water structures and numerous eddy and trail improvements. It's on its way to becoming one of the premier whitewater parks in Colorado.	The town of Buena Vista
Glenwood Springs Whitewater Park	Glenwood Springs, Colorado	9,837		125 miles to Denver	Natural		The city of Glenwood Springs
Gunnison Whitewater Park	Gunnison, Colorado	5,873	Rural	115 miles to Colorado Springs	Natural	The Gunnison Whitewater Park is a series of rock structures along a several-hundred-foot section of the Gunnison River, just west of Gunnison, Colo., and downstream of the Twin Bridges. These formations create various water dynamics that make rafting more exciting and turn the area into a paddle playground for kayakers, SUPs, and rafters, enabling them to perform all types of tricks while staying within the same stretch of the river.	Todd Crane Center for Outdoor Leadership and the Recreation Department at Western State Colorado University.
Montrose Water Sport Park	Montrose, Colorado	19,015	Urban		Natural	Located on the Uncompahgre River at Baldrige Park, the water sports park will have six drop structures, making it the largest in Colorado. The park will also have a spectator and beach area for those who want to swim, watch the fun, and catch some sun.	
Steamboat Springs Chamber Resort	Steamboat Springs, Colorado	12,100		110 miles to Denver	Natural	Steamboat Springs is a Class II section of the Yampa River, over two miles long through Steamboat Springs, Colo. The park begins with a slalom course followed by several excellent rapids that provide great surfing opportunities. Later in the summer this stretch has a lot of tubers and fishermen. The Yampa River should have ideal river boarding levels from late May through June and into early July. The Yampa whitewater festival is normally the third weekend of June. The Yampa River runs right through downtown Steamboat Springs, providing a Class II river experience for all thrill seekers.	

Vail Whitewater Park	Vail, Colorado	5,311	Rural	74 miles to Denver	Natural	Vail, Colo., has had whitewater events for many years and is renowned for its excellent conditions; however, large events such as the Teva Mountain Games took place just outside of town on the Eagle River. Since 2002 the Vail Valley Chamber and Bureau has become amenable to freestyle paddling so whitewater rafting can take place in Vail Village. This has transformed the area into a popular whitewater haven and the host of the annual Teva Mountain Games.	
Lock 32 Whitewater Park	Pittsford, New York	29,405	Urban		Pumped	This 25-foot-high spillway has concrete blocks along its path to stir up the water. The water pours from the canal above, under a bridge at the top of the falls, and into the spillway below. Several rapids spot the whitewater course along the park.	Genesee Waterways Center
Red Cedar River	Williamston, Michigan	3,832	Rural	68 miles to Detroit	Natural	There are two sets of rapids on the Red Cedar, which is otherwise slow flatwater. One is behind the Administration Building on the Michigan State University campus and is known as the MSU wave. Ordinarily a shallow section of ripples below an artificial underwater barrier, the wave appears at high water and becomes a play spot. The wave becomes surfable at about 800 cfs on the USGS Gauge. Built by the city of Williamston in 1998 to replace a breached dam, the Williamston rapids are a 100-yard stretch of Class I that runs along one of the main streets of downtown. Parking is across the street from the rapids and the put-in is above the bridge where Putman Street crosses the river. At the bottom of the rapids you can either take out on river left or carry your boat back to the top by walking along the island in the center of the river. A good level for adequate water without washing out the features is about 250 c.f.s./4 ft. on the East Lansing gauge. It is an okay rapids for beginners but suffers from three problems. First, the original project was never entirely completed and getting from the river back up to the boardwalk at street level is difficult. Second, no one seems to maintain the rapids and many of the "boulders" have been displaced. Third, and most important, the river is polluted with e-coli bacteria from sources above the Putman Street bridge. Levels can be extraordinarily high at times. Paddle at your own risk.	Parks and Land Mgmt Coordinator Jane Greenway

Berg Park	Farmington, New Mexico	45,426	Urban			This section of the Animas includes two water features popular with rafters and kayakers. The Animas is a perpetual flow stream that can be paddled in canoes, kayaks, and rafts (depending on water levels). During spring runoff rafters enjoy Class I and II rapids from Animas to Boyd Park. Once flow decreases kayaking and tubing are popular along the Animas River in Farmington. There are eight points of river access in the Farmington for kayaking and rafting.	Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs Department, City of Farmington, New Mexico
Expedition Island	Green River, Wyoming	12,752	Urban		Natural	The park has two small man-made rapids and a bit of an obstacle course on the back channel ending on low dam. The rapids are nothing to get excited about, but you can get wet and get in a little practice for technique between dinner and sunset in the summer. The park is actually open year-round, as long as the river doesn't freeze, and is free to the public. There is a small change room/bathroom there as well.	Parks & Recreation Department
Lyons Playpark	Lyons, Colorado	2,102	Rural	37 miles to Denver		Lyons whitewater park is located on the St. Vrain river in Lyons, Colo., and is an ideal place for beginners. The park has several easy surfing features complete with auto-load eddy currents so you can surf the wave as many times as you like. Peak runoff during the month of June is the best time to go riverboarding. The 2011 Lions whitewater festival was a hit. The whitewater park in Lyons is new as of 2003. There are bathrooms, a ballfield, horseshoes, and boating. The Saint Vrain River is a small front range river. The drop structures are spread out more than other local playparks leaving nice big pools and eddies. This playpark is easier than Boulder Creek and the Golden Playpark, making it a better choice for the novice boater. The drops are at different angles/slopes, lending to a variety of water features and waves. Currently there are not any gates set up. With all the trees around this course, temporary gates will not be a problem. The best rodeo hole is half a mile below the actual playpark.	

Avon Whitewater Park	Avon, CO	6,447	Rural	106 miles to Denver	Natural	Avon's Whitewater Park offers an exhilarating and fun freestyle kayaking experience. Located just blocks south of the town center, directly under "Bob the Bridge" on Avon Road, Avon's new Whitewater Park is 350 feet in length. The Whitewater Park was built in the fall of 2006 with natural boulders and natural looking pre-cast structures to maintain the native look and feel of the Eagle River. The three river features were built to perform optimally at different water levels so that recreational opportunities exist throughout the spring and summer. Commercial raft trips, ranging from Class IV to III, run on sections of the Eagle River both above and below Avon's Whitewater Park. In late September, once the kayaking season is over, exceptional fishing can be found in the Eagle River.	Avon Parks and Rec
Whitewater Park	Pueblo, CO	106,595	Urban	114 miles to Denver	Natural	The Whitewater Park is located in downtown Pueblo. It is within walking distance of shops and restaurants in the Historic Downtown District between Union Ave. and the West 4th Street Bridge. The park has eight drops and is approximately half a mile long. The south bank has the world's largest mural. The names of the drops and pools reflect the paintings: Harpo, Marley, and the Grim Reaper to name a few. The main access is from Chapa Place. Take out is at Union Ave. There is also a parking lot located on the south side of the Main Street Bridge on the left. You could also park on Corona Street and walk down to the river. This is a real river and not an amusement play park. It is a series of man-made structures (wing-dams) in a cement-walled section of river.	

Durango Whitewater Park	Durango, CO	16,887	urban	336 miles to Denver, lower west corner of CO	Natural	<p>The Animas River is more than just a whitewater rafter’s dream: It’s an important part of Durango’s landscape. The early Spanish explorers who originally traveled the Four Corners region named the winding river Animas—which means “ghosts” or “lost souls” in Spanish—for the spirits natives claimed haunted the lower stretches. However, today you’ll likely find that the Animas River and her “Gold Medal Waters” are a spirited part of Durango’s culture and heritage—especially if you’re into whitewater rafting. Anyone visiting Durango should run the Animas River with an experienced guide. The portion of the river running alongside downtown Durango is easily accessible for enthusiasts with basic paddling skills. The section from 33rd to 29th is easy, but then the rapids start to speed up after that and should be taken very seriously. After the 9th Street Bridge, people should get out if they do not have proper training or a personal floatation device. This is the drop in to the whitewater park.</p>	
-------------------------------	----------------	--------	-------	--	---------	---	--



## Appendix B: List of Parks Interviewed

Park	Pop	Nearest Big City	Structures	Date	O & M	Events	Org. by?	Promotion	Economic Impact	Usage	Demographics	Liability
Avon, CO	6,500	2 hours from Denver	3	2006	Town, no line item budget, structures & amenities	No			Positive, typical amenity, no measured direct effect	100 -200 local 80% and day trip 10% kayak, own boats, no local biz.	Age 17-40	Immunity, state law, Own Risk
Buena Vista, Buena Vista, CO	2,736	25 Min. from Denver	5		Town, no line item budget, structures & amenities	Yes, Big Annual	Civic Groups, Sponsor-ships, Fee to Vendors/Competitors	Regional Tourism, sponsors	Indirect, events drive use up substantially, trend up,	Locals & day trippers primarily, with big influx driven by events, + O/N asso. with events.	Usually 25 to 30 users a day, mostly locals, more daytrippers on weekends. Most have own boats.	Ditto
Canon City, CO	16,318	120 min to Denver, 60 min to Colorado Springs	2	2010	City, no line item budget, structures & amenities	Yes, Big Annual- 10k people 2015	Civic Groups, Sponsor-ships, Fee to Vendors/Competitors	Regional Tourism, sponsors	Prime econ. Driver for D/T; effects not quantified	Locals & day trippers primarily, with big influx driven by events, + O/N assc. with events, 75% kayak	5 to 15 users daily but for event, kayakers have own boats, no outfitters. Age 18 to 55	Ditto
Gunnison, CO	6,000	3.5 hours from Denver	3 w/ 5 more planned	2000	County and town, no line item budget, structures & amenities	Yes, Big Annual	Ditto	Ditto	Prime econ. driver; effects not quantified	No Data. Grant app. may have, coming.	No Data. Gant app. may have, coming.	Ditto

Pueblo, CO	107,000	2 hours to Denver, 1 to Colorado Springs	8	2005	City, no line item budget, structures & amenities	A few events. No big annual event	Ditto	Ditto	Prime econ. Driver for D/T; effects not quantified	"Lots". Busy day 100 to 150. Mostly locals. Fewer day trippers.	60% surfers, age 20-30; 40% kayak 30 to 50	Ditto
Kelly's in Cascade, ID	1,000	2 hours from Boise	3.5	2009	Private. May spend \$15K/yr.	Yes, Big Annual	Ditto	Ditto	See U/Idaho EIA 2011	100k/yr. Event driven. 50% kayak, 40% surfers, 10% SUP	50% kayak, 40% surfers, 10% SUP. See U/Idaho EIA 2011	Immunity, state law, Own Risk
Sacandaga, NY	15,000	1 hour from Albany, 2 hours from Syracuse	Proposed, not built	?	N/A	N/A	Ditto	Ditto	EIA, 2008, Crane & Assc. Asked for; not likely avail.	20k/yr. Private users. 75% kayak, 20% tubers, 5% other. Users within 70 miles +/-.	Majority of private users 30 to 50. Larger, 30K/Yr commercial rafters have essentially same demos.	Immunity, state law, Own Risk
Clear Creek, Golden, CO	19393	13 miles to Denver	Kayak course with instream features	~1996	\$50K out of a conservation trust fund, CO state lottery (budget every other year)	Wed night rodeo, junior nationals	Organized by people running events, not city	Not city, regional tourism sponsors	No data available	No commercial rafters, mostly open boat	80% kayakers, some SUP, canoe, fishing, inner tubes	Immunity, state law, Own Risk

Salida Playpark, Salida, CO	5409	67 Miles to CO Springs	4 primary features including a freestyle hole, kayak hole, and two surfer waves	Unsure, 10+ years, but 2012 added some downriver holes	No annual budget, occasional maintenance required. City finds a way to pay for it when needed.	Draw 10-15K people, Royal Gorge Whitewater Festival, FiBARK Festival (very popular), SUP championships, canoeing championships, kayaking championships - attract an international crowd	Various nonprofits org events, not city	City promotes events when organizers alert them; otherwise promoted by chamber	This park connects downtown with the river and benefits business. If water is good, the rafting companies have trips all day long.	Variety of users including kayakers, SUP, tubers, etc.	Immunity, state law, Own Risk	
Glenwood Springs Whitewater Park, Glenwood, CO	9837	125 miles to Denver	A few large cement cast structures	2008	\$5K budgeted by city per year for maintenance, occasionally have to put things back into place = \$20K	Cruise-a-thon, "don't triathlon"	Various groups who run events org and promote. Says events will find us if we have a good venue.	None by city, only by regional tourism sponsors	No specific data, but anecdotally: ton of opportunity, but kayakers aren't the spenders, they are in the water, spectators and special events are moneymakers	kayakers - 30%, SUP - 50%, other - 20%; but Memorial Day for two weeks, it's probably 80% kayakers	Majority of users are from within an hour, but very common to see people travel from 3 hours away. Had Olympic-caliber athletes here. this is part of circuit.	Immunity, state law, Own Risk

Steamboat Whitewater Park, Steamboat Springs, CO	12100	110 miles to Denver	Structure s and holes for kayakers and fishing, join use. wing walls made of rock. Oxygenat e and force flow to center	Late 1990s, but put c- hole in 2004 and other downtow n holes a few years later	D-hole is getting rebuilt this year because it never flowed like it should, city will pay with grants, but no O&M budget	Yampa River Festival - memorial weekend festival - Slalom race and freestyle in C-hole near library. All tricks and flips and standing on nose, river dunk competition.	Friends of the Yampa - a local nonprofit made of boaters and fisherman. Local tubing outfitter, boat enthusiast.	Parks/Re c has a marketin g budget, but not currently allocated to river. Just hired a marketin g coord, may do more in future.	No specific tracking, but is measured by sales tax. Tourism has been on an upward trajectory and whitewater and rec facilities in area are primary drivers.	kayakers 10- 20%, tubing is so big - 1000 people a day on the river in July, SUP has exploded, whitewater paddle boarders, paddle board yoga in pond next to river. whitewater usage is prob 20- 30%, 70-80% kayaks in whitewater.	Summer time is crazy with spectators, 50 kids swimming, 20 people eating, lots of fishermen, 2 kayakers.	Immunit y, state law, Own Risk
Durango Whitewat er Recreatio n Area, Durango, CO	16887	314 miles to CO Springs	Grouted structure s	One of first parks in country, but no structure s until recently - 2014	No set budget. Doesn't separate out costs for maintainin g park. Budget for whole park system. Cover it in general operating budget (funded by sales tax).	Animas River Days (festival with parade and competitions) , trials, national competitions.	Durango Whitewater hosts events and promotes.	None by city	Paddlers drive around state and go to the best water. Tight network. Travel and bring families, gear and stay in hotels, Lots stores that sell. Events are great economic generators.	Kayakers, rafters, fishermen/wome n, SUP	People come from 50+ miles, locals and vacationers	Immunit y, state law, Own Risk

## Appendix C: Base Growth Projections, with High/Low Ranges

	Year	Base	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>Projected growth rate</b>	Skowhegan Direct	\$4.1	\$4.5	\$4.9	\$5.3	\$5.7	\$6.3	\$6.8	\$7.4	\$8.1	\$8.8
	Skowhegan Other	\$0.5	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.7	\$0.8	\$0.9	\$0.9	\$1.0	\$1.1
	Rest of Maine	\$1.3	\$1.4	\$1.5	\$1.6	\$1.8	\$1.9	\$2.1	\$2.3	\$2.5	\$2.7
	Total Maine impact	\$5.9	\$6.4	\$7.0	\$7.6	\$8.2	\$9.0	\$9.8	\$10.6	\$11.6	\$12.6
	Somerset jobs	43	47	51	56	61	66	72	78	85	93
	Total Maine jobs	54	59	64	70	76	82	90	98	106	116
	Property tax	\$0.155	\$0.169	\$0.183	\$0.200	\$0.217	\$0.236	\$0.257	\$0.280	\$0.304	\$0.331
State tax revenues	\$0.208	\$0.227	\$0.247	\$0.268	\$0.292	\$0.318	\$0.346	\$0.376	\$0.409	\$0.445	
<b>Low rate (half of projected market share growth)</b>	Skowhegan Direct	\$4.1	\$4.4	\$4.6	\$4.9	\$5.3	\$5.6	\$6.0	\$6.3	\$6.7	\$7.2
	Skowhegan Other	\$0.5	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.7	\$0.8	\$0.8	\$0.9	\$0.9
	Rest of Maine	\$1.3	\$1.3	\$1.4	\$1.5	\$1.6	\$1.7	\$1.8	\$1.9	\$2.1	\$2.2
	Total Maine impact	\$5.9	\$6.3	\$6.7	\$7.1	\$7.5	\$8.0	\$8.5	\$9.1	\$9.7	\$10.3
	Somerset jobs	43	46	49	52	55	59	63	67	71	76
	Total Maine jobs	54	58	61	65	69	74	79	84	89	95
	Property tax	\$0.155	\$0.165	\$0.175	\$0.187	\$0.199	\$0.211	\$0.225	\$0.239	\$0.254	\$0.271
State tax revenues	\$0.208	\$0.222	\$0.236	\$0.251	\$0.267	\$0.284	\$0.302	\$0.322	\$0.342	\$0.364	
<b>High Rate (double projected market share growth)</b>	Skowhegan Direct	\$4.1	\$4.7	\$5.3	\$6.0	\$6.8	\$7.8	\$8.8	\$10.0	\$11.4	\$12.9
	Skowhegan Other	\$0.5	\$0.6	\$0.7	\$0.8	\$0.9	\$1.0	\$1.1	\$1.3	\$1.5	\$1.7
	Rest of Maine	\$1.3	\$1.4	\$1.6	\$1.8	\$2.1	\$2.4	\$2.7	\$3.1	\$3.5	\$4.0
	Total Maine impact	\$5.9	\$6.7	\$7.6	\$8.6	\$9.8	\$11.1	\$12.7	\$14.4	\$16.3	\$18.6
	Somerset jobs	43	49	56	63	72	82	93	106	120	136
	Total Maine jobs	54	61	70	79	90	102	116	132	150	171
	Property tax	\$0.155	\$0.176	\$0.200	\$0.227	\$0.258	\$0.293	\$0.333	\$0.378	\$0.430	\$0.488
State tax revenues	\$0.208	\$0.237	\$0.269	\$0.305	\$0.347	\$0.394	\$0.448	\$0.509	\$0.578	\$0.657	

## Appendix D: Paddling Events in New England

Name	City	State	Month
Hockanum River Race	Manchester	CT	April
Punch Brook Slalom	Burlington	CT	April
Willimantic River Downriver Canoe & Kayak Race	Tolland	CT	April
Candlewood Lake Dragon Boat Race	New Milford	CT	August
Riverfront Dragon Boat & Asian Festival	Hartford	CT	August
Connecticut C1/K1 Championships	Windsor	CT	July
NE Whitewater Triple Crown Championships	Tariffville & East Granby	CT	July
Tariffville	Tariffville	CT	June
Salmon Slalom	Colchester	CT	March
Boateater Challenge	Burlington	CT	May
Covered Bridge Slalom	West Cornwall	CT	May
Quinnipiac Downriver Classic	Southington	CT	May
Scantic Spring Splash Canoe & Kayak Race	Enfield	CT	May
Pumpkin Classic Race	Simsbury	CT	October
Rainbow Run Downriver Race	Windsor	CT	September
Silver Lake Race	Berlin	CT	September
Ware River Icebreaker Race	Barre	MA	April
Westfield Whitewater Races	Huntington	MA	April
Annual Run of the Charles	Weston	MA	April
Sturbridge All American River Race	Sturbridge	MA	April
Squannacook River Canoe and Kayak Race	Townsend	MA	April
Athol-Orange River Rat Race	Athol	MA	April
USCA Marathon National Championships	Northfield	MA	August
USCA Flatwater Nationals	Northfield	MA	August
Chocolate Bowl	Stockbridge	MA	August
Cookie Bowl	Stockbridge	MA	August
Paddle for Plummer	Salem	MA	July
The Great River Race	Norwell	MA	July
Holyoke Rows Boathouse Challenge	Holyoke	MA	July
Annual Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival	Boston	MA	June
Wild Goose Chase	Lenox	MA	June
The Meltdown	Northfield	MA	June
Charlemont Downriver Race	Charlemont	MA	June
Nashua River Race	Groton	MA	June
Deerfield Festival	Charlemont	MA	June
Middleborough Park Dept Canoe Race	Lakeville	MA	May
Mystic River Herring Run	Somerville	MA	May
Dryway Kickoff Event	Charlemont	MA	May
Upper Farmington River	New Boston	MA	October
Miller's River Challenge	Orange	MA	October

<b>Name</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Month</b>
Farmington Slalom	Otis	MA	October
Great Stone Dam Classic	Lawrence	MA	September
Kenduskeag Stream Canoe Race	Bangor	ME	April
Passagassawakeag River Race	Waldo	ME	April
Souadabscook Spring and Downriver Race	Hampden	ME	April
Marsh Stream Sprint and Downriver Race	Frankfort	ME	April
12th Annual West Grand Lake Race	Grand Lake Stream	ME	August
Tour de Verona	Verona Island	ME	August
Bashabez Run Canoe/Kayak Race	Brewer	ME	August
Bethel Maine Flatwater Paddle Race Weekend	Bethel	ME	August
International War Canoe / Southside Tavern Sundowner	Skowhegan	ME	August
West Grand Lake Races	Grand Lake Stream	ME	August
The Penobscot River Whitewater Nationals Regatta	Eddington	ME	July
Whitewater Nationals Regatta	Old Town	ME	July
Paddle Haley Pond	Rangeley	ME	July
2016 Penobscot River Whitewater Nationals Regatta	Old Town	ME	July
Sheepscot River	Wiscasset	ME	July
Sebec Lake Canoe Race	Sebec	ME	July
Pushaw Lake Flatwater Race	Glenburn	ME	July
Penobscot Kayak Race	West Branch Penobscot	ME	July
Stillwater River Race	Orono	ME	July/August
Stillwater River Community Paddling Series (1-7)	Orono	ME	July/August
Paddle the Kennebec River	Solon	ME	June
Moose River Canoe & Kayak Race	Rockwood	ME	June
Greater Grand Isle Annual Canoe Kayak Race	Grand Isle	ME	June
Messalonskee Stream	Waterville	ME	June
Cathance River	Bowdoinham	ME	June
Great Falls Boats 'n' Brews River Race	Auburn	ME	June
Kennebec Race & Huckfest	The Forks	ME	June
St. George River Race	Searsmont	ME	March
Canoe Poling National Championships	TBD	ME	May
Kenduskeag Slalom	Bangor	ME	May
Aroostook River Fun Run	Washburn	ME	May
War Canoe Race	Mt. Desert Island	ME	October
Muskrat Scramble	Orrington	ME	October
Ebb Tide Marathon	Brewer	ME	September
Lower Ashuelot River Race	Winchester	NH	April
Blackwater Slalom	Webster	NH	April
New England Championships	Westmoreland	NH	August
Great Bay Paddle Challenge	Durham	NH	August
Laurel Lake Association Canoe & Kayak Race	Fitzwilliam	NH	July
Contoocook River Race	Contoocook	NH	July
Winni Slalom	Tilton-Northfield	NH	June
Otter Brook Canoe & Kayak Race	Roxbury	NH	May
NH AMC Quickwater, Upstream Pole and Return	Amherst	NH	November

Saco River Kayak and Canoe Benefit Race	Conway	NH	September
NPMB Winter Solstice Paddle	TBD	TBD	December
NPMB Summer Solstice Paddle	TBD	TBD	June
NPMB Spring Equinox Paddle	TBD	TBD	March
NPMB Autumnal Equinox Paddle	TBD	TBD	September
Fiddlehead Slalom	Montpelier	VT	May