



## Smith River Checklist

- Smith River Float Permit**
- Cash &/or Checks for Float Fees** for each person in the party  
*Residents - \$30 per person, Non-Residents - \$60 per person. Also to buy firewood at Camp Baker.*
- Cash or Checks for Vehicle Shuttle(s)** - \$130 per vehicle and worth every penny!
- Spare Vehicle Keys - For the Shuttle!** *Keep your key w/ you on the river in a very secure place!*
- Smith River Map** *Get one before hand to plan your trip – and they're great souvenirs.*
- Raft, Cataract, Kickboat, Drift Boat** -CrossCurrents sells & rents all types of boats.  
**Minimum Flows for boats:** 385 cfs for Drift Boats, 225 cfs for Rafts/Cataracts, 200 cfs for Kick Boats, 150 for Canoes. *Check out the live Streamflow link on [www.crosscurrents.com](http://www.crosscurrents.com).*
- PVC Rod Holder for Raft** - *We make ours out of 3" schedule 40 or 80 PVC that we cut ~25% of the tube off, making a trough. At 10' long they accommodate up to four 9' rods fully rigged. They strap to the side of your raft and keep all your rods perfectly protected and at the ready.*
- Tent** - Get the best one you can buy if you don't have one already. *Make sure it is seam sealed and waterproof even in wind driven rain. If you already have one treat the entire tent and rain fly with a DWR product like Tectron before you leave. (CrossCurrents sells Tectron.) This will greatly increase the waterproofness of the fabric! Vestibules are really handy. You may bring a tent of any size since you will be carrying it in the boat - I would get one that I could stand up in. Remember however, that it must go in a dry bag!*
- Tent "Footprint" or Ground Cloth**
- Spare Tent Stakes and Guy Lines**
- Sleeping Bag rated at 0° to 30°** - Synthetic is better because it will still keep you warm even if it gets wet (you will be on a river ya know!). It's not uncommon for nighttime temps to dip below freezing even in July!
- Compression Stuff Sack for Sleeping Bag** -makes packing much easier.
- Sleeping Pad &/or Roll-A-Cot** -*Full length sleeping pad is better than shorter. The Roll-A-Cots are great and they pack up nicely! CrossCurrents sells and rents cots.*
- Pack Pillow** -optional, but nice!
- Canopy Rainfly 15'-20' x 15'-20'** -*To put over the cooking and eating area if its raining. This item can really save a trip. Ask Chris how to set one of these systems up. CrossCurrents rents and sells NRS Riverwing Canopy.*
- Roll-A-Chair or Roll-A-Stools** -*Trust me when I say you want to bring these. A wet stump is no fun to sit on when you are trying to put your waders on or when you are trying to eat dinner. CrossCurrents sells and rents chairs and stools.*
- Roll-A-Table** -*Super handy! CrossCurrents sells and rents tables.*
- 5.0 cubic feet (16"x 42") Dry Bag (at least one)** -**THESE ARE A MUST!** *These will hold your sleeping bag & pad or tent. CrossCurrents sells and rents dry bags.*
- 3.8 cubic feet (16"x 33") Dry Bag (at least one)** -**THESE ARE A MUST!** *These will hold your sleeping bag & pad or tent. CrossCurrents sells and rents dry bags.*
- 2.2 cubic feet (14"x 24") Dry Bag (at least one)** -**THESE ARE A MUST!** *These will hold your clothes, toiletries and other stuff. CrossCurrents sells and rents bags.*
- Dry Bag 11"x24"** - *These are great for smaller items and things you want to keep handy while on the river. CrossCurrents sells and rents dry bags.*
- Splashproof Duffel Bag** -*I use one to carry my loose gear, fishing stuff, camera & film, dry snack foods and other stuff that I may go to several times a day. Although not as dry as a true "dry bag" they are much easier to get in and out of and will keep its contents very dry unless it is submerged in the water. CrossCurrents sells great dry duffels from Orvis, Outcast and NRS.*
- Stuff Sacks** -*These may be made out of waterproofed fabric but are definitely not waterproof! They are handy for putting your clothes and other gear in to keep things organized. (i.e. -all your socks are in one small stuff sack, your spare shirts are in another stuff sack, etc.)*
- Freezer Zip-Lock Bags** (2 Gallon, Gallon & Quart size) -*I put my clothes in these even though I'm going to put them in a stuff sack and then put the stuff sacks in the dry pack. It will make life much easier when you are trying to get to your dry socks on the bottom of your bag and you have to take out all your other clothes to get to them! You'll also put your batteries, cameras, snacks and other stuff in them so bring a bunch and some extra for garbage.*
- Cam Straps** (4' to 20' lengths and about two to four of each size) -*These are extremely handy for lashing your gear to the boat - very important! CrossCurrents sells and rents cam straps.*
- Carabiners** -*I like the wire-gate style like the Omega Highwires. Carabiners are invaluable because everything must be clipped together and to the boat.) -CrossCurrents sells Carabiners*
- Headlamps & Flashlights** -*It's nice to have both. I absolutely love my Princeton Tec headlamps and flashlights. I've owned over a half dozen headlamps in my camping/ climbing/hunting/ fishing/night-time auto repair career and have found that that to-date, Princeton Tec makes the best! CrossCurrents sells Princeton Tec lights.*
- Batteries** -*Bring a back-up set for your headlamps, flashlights, cameras and two-way radios.*
- Lantern** -*Needs to be in dry bag or dry carrying case/box.*
- Extra Mantles for Lantern**
- Camp Saw &/or Hatchet** -*For cutting & splitting firewood. When camping on Forest Service Lands YOU MUST HAVE an axe, bucket & shovel!*

- Leather Gloves** -Work/Garden gloves for hauling firewood, setting up camp, etc. These can really come in handy!
- Camp Cook Stove** -(1) 2-burner stove and the fuel to go with it.
- Fuel for Stove and Lanterns**
- Good Matches &/or Windproof Lighter**
- Fire Starter** -Can use lantern fuel, charcoal lighter fluid or those little blocks work well.
- Cook Ware & Cooking Utensils** -Based on your meal plan.
- Coffee Pot/French Press** -Unless you can go without for 5 days!
- Fine-Mesh, Metal Strainer** -Perfect pasta or for straining out dirty dish water.
- Sturdy Paper Plates, Plastic Utensils & Paper Towels** -Paper plates & towels reduce the amount of dishes you have to wash every meal and make good fire starters. FYI- a roll of paper towels fits nicely into those 2 gallon freezer zip-locks.
- Large, Heavy Duty Plastic Bags** (Get 40-55 gal. "contractor grade" bags) -One for trash and one for aluminum cans – they have a recycling bins at Eden Bridge for cans.
- Coolers/Ice Chests** (50-120 quart) -Should have at least two, for food and drinks.
- Ice Blocks** -Blocks last much longer than cubes. If it's going to be hot, bring a cooler packed with spare ice blocks. Duct tape it shut and only get into it when your other ice runs out. However, you'll want to drain the water out every day.
- Water Bottles & Large Water Containers** -Bottles to drink out of during the day and some large containers for using in camp – freezing gallon or 1/2 gallon jugs gives ice for coolers and then water to drink or cook with when it melts!
- Water Filter/Purifier** -It's a lot easier to get it from the river than it is to bring all your water. Although if the water is muddy filters don't work and you'll have to rely on bottled water you bring or the few springs along the river. CrossCurrents sells water purifier bottles.
- Binoculars** -Because it's a HUGE canyon and there's lots to see!
- Camera** -A waterproof camera like the one-time use ones are great.
- Extra Digital Media Cards and Camera Batteries**
- Waterproof Case/Pouch** for Camera or other electronics. CrossCurrents sells waterproof cases and pouches.
- Small Notebook & Pen** -The "Write In Rain" notebooks are perfect. It's always nice to look back in a journal or some short notes written while you were on your trip. It also helps in planning next years trip –like making notes on camp sites you liked or didn't like.
- Snack Food** -Because the lunch food is in the other raft and we haven't seen them for 4 hours!
- Polarized Sunglasses** (and a back-up pair!) -CrossCurrents sells Smith Sunglasses-the best polarized glasses.
- Sunglass Retainer** -These are cheap insurance and extremely handy. CrossCurrents sells Crookies/Chums.
- Hard Case for Sunglasses/Rx Glasses** -soft case will not do!
- Back-Up Pair of Rx Glasses** (Bring these in a hard case.)
- Eye Glass Cleaning Cloth** -This little item can really make a difference. CrossCurrents sells these handy cloths.
- Toilet Paper!!** -Double bagged in freezer ziplock bags. Everyone bring some! Need I say more?
- Anti-Bacterial Handy Wipes & Anti-Bacterial Hand Wash** -Make sure you put some in the bags with the toilet paper! And make everyone use them before they cook &/or eat.
- Biodegradable Soap** -For your hands/face & for the dishes.
- Pack Towel** -It's great for drying off after a dip or drying dishes.
- Toiletries** -The usual stuff: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, deodorant, contact lens solutions, mirror, etc.
- Medications** -If you need to take Rx meds, then make sure you bring them! You may want to let someone in the group or the entire group know that you need Rx meds to help remind you to take them or if there is a problem. [i.e. diabetic shock, etc.]
- Hand Lotion/Butter Bar!** -I guarantee you that you will get "river hands" by the end of the first day. Lotion will ease this problem.
- Sunscreen** -And a couple spares - because you can't remember which bag you put it in!
- Lip Balm** -And a spare or two - "Oh no, I left it in my pants that I packed away!"
- Insect Repellent** -Can you say, "West Nile?"
- Teva or Korkers Sandals** -These are what our guides wear in June and July when it's warm/hot. CrossCurrents sells Teva & Korkers!
- Lightweight Waterproof Boots/Shoes** -You will definitely want a pair of lightweight boots/shoes to wear around camp unless you want to go right from your waders to your sleeping bag. Also great for when you want to go on a little hike in this scenic canyon. Be mindful of private property, though.
- Spare Boot/Shoe Laces**
- Synthetic &/or Wool Socks** -CrossCurrents sells excellent socks.
- Waterproof/Breathable Jacket** -A good one. You may be in this jacket 10 to 12 hours a day for rain and wind protection! CrossCurrents sells great rain gear by ExOfficio and Columbia.
- Back-Up Rain Jacket** -It doesn't need to be waterproof/breathable but that would be nice.
- Rain Pants/Splash Pants** -Waterproof/Breathable are the best. CrossCurrents sells great rain gear by ExOfficio and Columbia.
- Bandanas** -These always come in handy. CrossCurrents sells Buzz-Off Bandanas to repel mosquitos/ticks.
- BUFF®s** -Super comfortable and versatile –keeps you warm, cool and protected from the sun, bugs & wind. Great to keep your hat on your head when it's windy. CrossCurrents sells Buff®s.
- Warm Fleece or Wool Hat** -A nice hat can make a huge difference between being warm or not. Bring a spare! CrossCurrents sells hats.
- Fingerless or Flip-Finger Gloves or Flip-Mitts** -The windproof kind is best. These are what you will be wearing while fishing. CrossCurrents sells Glacier Gloves, NRS and Orvis.
- Full-Fingered Gloves for Rowing** -Neoprene gloves are great but any glove will work as long as they are warm, waterproof and durable. You will appreciate warm, dry paws when it's your turn on the sticks! CrossCurrents sells Buff, Glacier Gloves, NRS and Orvis.
- Sungloves** -These are nice for fair skinned folks. They are also great for anyone to row in! CrossCurrents sells Buff, Dr. Shade and NRS.
- Medium-Weight Synthetic or Wool Long Underwear Top and Bottom** -CrossCurrents sells ExOfficio, Columbia and Orvis.
- Fleece Top and Bottom** (100 or 200 weight) -Over a base layer of light to medium-weight synthetic underwear this should keep

you warm. Add a third layer if it's really cold. This is the system I use when it's cold: 1-base layer of Light to Medium-Weight Underwear, 2-middle layer of 100-weight fleece, 3-Third layer of 200-weight fleece. CrossCurrents sells Columbia, Redington and Orvis.

- Upper Body Layering Pieces** - A Primaloft Jacket/Vest, Wool Sweaters, etc. Make sure you bring enough to stay warm and have some for a back up. CrossCurrents sells Columiba, ExOfficio, Orvis.
- Technical Shirts** -These are perfect for life on the river. They convert from long to short sleeve (it gets cool/cold in the evenings & mornings), dry very quickly, allow for ventilation on hot days, have perfect pocket configurations so you don't need a vest, and hold up very well after 4 or 5 days on the river! CrossCurrents sells ExOfficio and Columiba.
- CrossCurrents Smith River T-Shirt** with the river map silk screened on the back you can't get lost! Great for lounging in camp, they are incredibly comfortable and come in stylish colors. These also make great souvenirs! Available at CrossCurrents in Helena and Craig or call us.
- Convertible Quick-dry Pants** -They are moisture-management long pants to wear under your breathable waders, they are perfect to wet wade in (they dry extremely fast) and convert to shorts for hot weather. CrossCurrents sells ExOfficio and Columiba.
- Quick-dry Shorts** -Comfortable and functional in warm/hot weather. When it's warm, all I wear are my shorts or convertible pants and my sandals. I always have my breathable waders with me in case it starts raining or the temps drop. CrossCurrents sells ExOfficio and Columiba.

**During Cool/Cold Weather, avoid Cotton Clothing as it will get wet and stay wet for the whole trip.** There is a saying in the outdoor business - "Cotton Kills" because wet equals cold! Note: Cotton does NOT allow breathable waders/jackets/pants to breathe.

Remember, you will not be going back to your car or going inside a warm house at the end of each day. When you are cold during the day, unless you quickly make changes to warm you back up [drink warm beverages, add more layers, put on a warm hat, etc.] you will remain cold and it will be very difficult to warm up when you get to camp in the evening as the air temps are dropping! The danger about being outdoors the entire time is that when you get cold, you tend to stay cold. The trick is not to get cold in the first place. Mild hypothermia can quickly lead to severe hypothermia which is the third leading cause of river deaths each year! (Read Stan Bradshaw's River Safety book.)

On the other end of the scale - be mindful of Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke! It can be just as deadly as Hypothermia! It's easy to become over-heated on the river. Drink plenty of non-alcoholic, non-caffeinated fluids all throughout the day! [This can be especially troublesome for some women. They don't want to drink that much because then they will have to go to the bathroom. They either find it embarrassing or inconvenient to answer nature's call while out in nature. The men in the group must understand this and respect the women's privacy! There is plenty of thick vegetation and big boulders along this river to allow for excellent privacy and some of the established latrines have some of the most spectacular views of the canyon! Don't be embarrassed to say, "pull-over now!"] Taking a dip in the river on a hot day is a great way to cool off and is most pleasant after a couple days without a shower! (Read Stan Bradshaw's River Safety book!)

- PFD (aka - "Life Jacket")** EVERYONE MUST HAVE ONE BY LAW. Here's an FYI on PFD's - Most adults wearing a bathing suit weigh between 10 and 12 pounds in the water. The more muscle you have or the more clothes you have on, the more floatation you need. Higher floatation in a PFD brings you to the surface faster and floats you higher in the water. Get a PFD that has at least 15.5 lbs of floatation. Get one with ~20+lbs if you want a high floating PFD. Get the best

one you can afford. Don't be too macho/proud to wear your PFD if you feel the slightest bit uncomfortable on a section of river -like at Givens & Rattlesnake! This is classic self-rescue water and you can't rescue yourself and gear if you're drifting along the bottom of the river! Kids 12 and under need to wear their PDF while in the boat. CrossCurrents sells & rents PFD's!

- Safety Whistles** -A whistle attached to your PFD is just a great idea. CrossCurrents sells Safety Whistles.
- A Comprehensive First Aid Kit** -You need one in each boat. Don't skimp on this safety item as there's really no way out of this canyon except at the take out! A good one will run between \$50 and \$150. PUT IN A DRY BAG! CrossCurrents sells excellent First Aid Kits!
- Super Glue** -Nothing seals up the cracks in your "river hands" faster than super glue! Trust me on this one! It's also perfect for making small repairs on gear and buying some time on your fly that's falling apart. CrossCurrents sells Zap-A-Gap Super Glue.
- Rescue Rope/Throw Bag** -In each boat!! These can mean the difference between life or death on a river! Aside from your brain and PFD, this is the most important safety item to have! I won't go on the river without one in my boat. CrossCurrents sells rescue throw ropes.
- 50'-75' of 3/8" "Bow Line" or Anchor Rope** -In each boat to tie off the boats at night. Each boat MUST be tied off to something very solid on shore (boat camp posts, big tree or boulder) at night! It's not much fun to get out of the tent on a beautiful morning and have it ruined by looking down at the river and see an empty shore line!
- Multi-Tool** (Like a "Leatherwoman".)
- Raft Repair Kit & Pump** -Good and complete kit. One in each raft! It should include things like spare Oar Locks, Pins, Nuts, Bolts, Bag Needle & 100# Test Thread, and Tools to do all the repairs. You should also know how to use all the repair materials & tools in the kit!
- Loon's UV Life Saver Boat Patch** -Quick & easy and gets you back floating in minutes!
- Spare Oar & Oar Lock & Oar Stop/Oar Right** (for each boat, in each boat!)
- Loon's Reel Lube** (Great for your reels but also takes care of that annoying oar lock squeak!)
- Duct Tape** -"Montana Chrome" If it's moving and it shouldn't!
- Accessory Cord** (2mm - 3mm, for your tent, tarp, shoe laces, etc.)
- Rope** (550# cord is great and it's cheap ) for hanging stuff up to dry.

**TRY BEFORE YOU BUY!** CrossCurrents Rental Program includes subtracting the rental price off the purchase price should you want to buy a new one for yourself when you get back. That's how our "Demo Program" works!

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## FISHING ON THE SMITH RIVER:

- Montana Fishing License** -A MUST even if you just want to hold a rod. CrossCurrents sells Fishing & Hunting Licenses.
- 8' to 9' Four, Five and Six-Weight Rods** (Bring at least 2 rods!) I mainly fish my Orvis Helios 9' 5-wt for dries/nymphs and my Helios 9' 6-wt for streamers. I always bring 3 to 4 rods with me. Yes, I've had to use the 3rd & 4th rod on a couple trips! No I'm not that clumsy, but a couple of my clients were! CrossCurrents rents Orvis Fly Rod Outfits.
- Reels** You should have a reel for every rod you bring.
- Floating Fly Line** -You will most likely be chucking big, heavy stuff or larger, air resistant dry flies. Weight Forward tends to be better for that. Since this river is fairly small, floating line is best.
- Sink-Tip Fly Line** Or WF, Intermediate (2.5 ips) to Fast (5.5 ips) Sink-Tip or Sinking Fly Line is handy if you wish to chuck buggers and streamers (which are very productive!). It's not a bad idea to have one rod rigged up with dries or nymphs and another rod rigged up with buggers on a sink-tip line. You will often come across a "perfect" bugger spot and if you have the rods rigged and ready to go it's just a matter of a quick switch to the other set up.)
- Leaders:** 7.5': 0X, 1X & 2X (for streamers on sink-tips lines), 9': 1X, 2X, 3X (for nymphs & larger dry flies), 9' 4X (for small dry flies). I would plan on one new leader per day. You'll probably be using the 1X, 2X & 3X most of the time, so plan accordingly.
- Tippet:** 0X to 5X. However, I would bring extra spools of 2X, and 3X. Fluorocarbon is not necessary on the Smith for stealth unless you simply want it for the abrasion resistance - not a bad idea on this rocky river!
- Breathable Waders** -You will be spending 8 to 12 hours a day in these babies. You've got to check out the new Silver Sonic waders from Orvis! CrossCurrents rents and sells Orvis waders.
- Waterproof/Breathable Wading Jacket** -A good one. You may be in this jacket 10 to 12 hours a day for rain and wind protection! CrossCurrents sells Orvis wading jackets.
- Loon's UV Wader Patch or AqualSeal UV** -Can save you from a soggy day and a miserable trip.
- Felt or Rubber Sole Boots** (DO NOT wear studded boots in inflatable boats!)
- CrossCurrents Jet Fuel Floatant** -The best floatant ever. Works great on CDC. Made exclusively by CrossCurrents! Stop by our Helena or Craig shop or call us.
- Gel-Type Floatant** -Fly Sauce, Loon's Aquel, Gink, etc.
- Strike Indicators** (Medium and Large Thingamabobbers)
- Split Shot or Sink Putty** -You will mainly use AB, BB and 1.
- Hook Sharpener** -The Smith beats up your points, this tool is a must!
- Forceps, Nippers and Zingers** (and a back-up pair)
- Net** -preferably a long handle net for the boat.
- Kit Bag or Chest Pack & Lanyard** -Vests are uncomfortable when you're in a boat and they get wet & stay wet when it rains. I have switched over to a waterproof kit bag and a lanyard for my essentials. These items along with wearing a technical shirt with good pockets are a lot more practical in the boat or even when you hop out to wade fish.
- Polarized Sunglasses** (and a back-up pair) -CrossCurrents sells Smith, Orvis, Suncloud, Cocoons, PolarEyes & Fitovers!

**Smith River Flies:** Plan on losing 10 to 20 flies every day to the Smith River's rocky bottom, and brushy shoreline! I would fish all barbless hooks not only to make it easier on the fish but also to make it easier on your jacket, ear, finger, net, etc., - you get my point - hopefully you don't get the fly's! Stop by our Helena or Craig shop for help selecting your flies or give us a call.

**Dries:** In early to mid May you usually only get a couple of hours of dry fly fishing in the warmer afternoon. In June & July you can expect to fish dry flies most of the day starting around 10:00am on cool days and very early on hot days.

- #12-#18 Parachute Adams
- #10-#16 Elk Hair Caddis (Tan, Brown, Olive)
- #2-#6 Salmonfly Patterns (usually mid-May through early June!) [-Jacklin's Giant Salmonfly!, Rogue Foam, Stim Chew-Toy, etc.]
- #6-#10 Golden Stonefly Patterns (usually mid-June through July!) Jacklin's Giant Golden (doubles as a hopper too!), Rogue Foam, etc.
- #4-#12 Parachute Madam-X's [aka. PMX or Bugmeister] (Peacock, Yellow, Royal)!!!
- #8-#14 Royal Wulff!
- #6-#12 Stimulators (Orange, Royal, Yellow!)
- #10-#14 Humpies (Yellow, Red)
- #6-#10 Hopper patterns (Stalcup's, Club Sandwich, DeBruin's)
- #12-#18 Ants & Beetles (Great to drop behind a PMX or Stim!)

**Nymphs:** Nymphs can be very productive on this river.

- #2-#10 Stonefly Nymphs (Brown &/or Black, Golden) - (There are a lot of stoneflies on this river and the nymphs are very abundant and active in May through July!)
- #6-#10 Rubber Leg Nymph (aka - "Pat's Rubber Legs")
- #4-#10 Bitch Creek Nymphs (Smith fish love the rubber legs!)
- #10-#14 Prince Nymphs
- #12-#16 Fly Formerly Known As Prince (Don't laugh, this is a great new version of an old classic!)
- #10-#14 Bead-Head Hare's Ear (regular and flashback)
- #14-#16 Mirage Nymphs
- #14-#16 Lightning Bugs (Silver &/or Gold)
- #12-#14 Copper Johns
- #6-#12 San Juan Worms! (this fly can be a life saver on rainy muddy days.)

**Streamers:** If you want to catch the bigger fish on the Smith or if the water is off color use big streamers!

- #4-#8 Bead-Head Buggers (Black, Olive Wine-Tail, Brown, Olive)
- #4-#8 Bead-Head Girdle Buggers (Black, Olive Wine-Tail, Brown, JJ Specials)!!
- #6 Flash-Fry Zonkers (a sweet epoxy-head zonker that is a guide & staff favorite. In Black, White & Yellow/Brown.)!!!
- #4 Sheila's Sculpin (A sweet squirrel zonker streamer)
- #4-#6 Conehead Bow River Bugger (White or Black)
- #4-#8 Zonkers (Black, White, Olive, Brown)
- #4-#6 Muddler Minnow (Kiwi, marabou and/or traditional)
- #4 DG's Bugz Bunny (Black, Tan or Purple)
- #4-#8 Yuk Bugs (Again, it's a rubber leg thing!)