

Pre-Powell Pueblo Reservoir Sea Kayak Training Weekend Report

August 7-9, 2020 we had 9 people and 2 instructors descend on the Juniper Flats Campground at Pueblo Reservoir to learn some sea kayaking skills in preparation for our October 9th Powell Escalante Arm Houseboat/Kayak trip. Jim and Karen Dlouhy from the Rocky Mountain Sea Kayak Club picked out a beach across a bay from the South Marina for our Saturday training and broke the group into a morning class for Karen Amundson, Lin Hark, Sally Edsall, and Carol and Werner Duecker while Anne Fiore, Gary Cage, and Kit and Henry Williams paddled around in nearby bays.

The first exercise was a wet exit, and Jim stepped us through it to allay any fears. He and Karen managed the trainees' kayaks so that people could be quickly flipped back up if they had trouble with releasing spray skirts. Then we moved into many variations of re-entry into the kayaks. First was the Cowboy Scramble which Karen D. demo'd with ease. Most people found that harder than the Heel Hook rescue. Paddle floats and/or slings were used to make the re-entries easier or enable self rescues, but often a 2nd kayak was positioned so that person could stabilize the empty kayak.

After lunch the 2nd class started and Carol, Werner, Lin and I took a nice bay tour and studied the bird life. We saw a dozen Turkey Vultures scanning the area for food, a couple of American Dippers, swallows, a pack of 15 small water birds (smaller than Short-billed Dowitchers), and more. Back in camp we had some good storytelling and a nice sunset:



Kit and Henry will need to skip the 2020 trip, but wanted to train for a future Powell trip. On Sunday 8 of us started at the Sailboard Beach and launched in some surf. Winds were 15mph but improved as we dipped into coves on both sides of our campground. Lin was happy:



Anne showed well in red, and Gary guarded 1 branch of the cove:



We played around for a while in the cove, and finally got into formation for photos:





So in summary, we had a great time learning how to be safer in and out of our kayaks, then enjoyed exploring the north shore of the reservoir and gathered a few more tips from Jim and Karen. Currently we are sitting at 8 people for the Powell trip, but Sally needs to back out and find a replacement. So it would be great if 1 or 2 people could contact Karen A. (trip leader) and join us to explore the Escalante Arm at Powell via houseboat and sea kayak or decked canoe.

