

# New River Committee takes to the water to raise awareness

*[By Scott Nicholson](#)*

The National Committee for the New River is sponsoring a kayak trip, but you might want to carry your sleeping bag along with your paddle and life jacket.

The NCNR is organizing the 2009 New River Expedition to raise awareness of the organization's stewardship efforts and meet partner agencies and conservation groups along the entire length of the historic river.

"Last year, the New River Community Partnership did a good part of the river and we participated, but this is our maiden voyage, as it were, for doing the whole river," said Chris Arvidson, NCNR assistant director.

The trip along the 320-mile route will have a number of stakeholder groups participating along various stretches of the route.

The first leg of the journey will stop at the Osborne Farm in Cox's Chapel, Va.

The farm was the proposed site of a state prison that was abandoned because of mounting pressure from advocacy groups and will be site of the NCNR's annual meeting.

"Anybody is welcome to grab a boat and jump in or contact a local outfitter," Arvidson said.

NCNR executive director George Santucci and NCNR board member Henry Doss are rafting the entire route, with other groups kayaking and canoeing during various stretches.

Santucci said, "Mostly it's to get folks back out on the river and get people connected on the river. Everybody celebrates the river and loves it, and sometimes we do things we shouldn't do. We're inviting people out for a day or three to come enjoy the river.

"This is not just a ditch along the side of the road, it's a National Heritage and Wild and Scenic and state-significant river," he said.

Arvidson described the trip as a celebration to draw attention to the river as well as meet partners along the way and get a closer look at the entire river.

The expedition events and progress will be updated on Twitter and Facebook social networking Web sites.

"If we catch a fish, we'll let you know," Arvidson said.

The 2009 New River Expedition launches July 20 at Brookshire Park in Boone, with the first leg ending at Todd Island Park, a 22-mile run.

The next 23-mile run ends at NC 163, then continues to New River State Park, the Virginia border, and into West Virginia.

It is expected to end in mid-August. Stops are posted at [www.ncnr.org/expedition.php](http://www.ncnr.org/expedition.php).