

Rod Weeding:



“I grew up on a ranch in eastern Montana, which I have been involved with until recently. I learned to fly in high school/college and made a career of crop dusting, predator control, and wildlife surveys. Getting ready to retire and just recently moved to Billings Montana. Looking forward to more paddling and getting into downhill skiing again.

My hobbies include bowhunting, making my own primitive archery equipment, flying, paddling and ????

Married 38 years to Gail. Two daughters, Briana who has 7 girls and one boy (blended family/adoption) and Callie who has 2 girls and one boy. So I have 11 wonderful and healthy grandchildren.

Got into paddling because I wanted to see if I was capable of building a kayak. When it was close to completion I decided to paddle the Missouri. Because of work/family commitments and some health issues that cropped up, it took me 3 expeditions of paddling over 4 years to complete the journey. I paddled every mile and portaged under my own power.

Here is what Rod had to say:

#1: What was the most difficult part about your paddle trip and how did you overcome (if you did) the situation?

“ Convincing a non-adventurous spouse that I needed to do this. Got her involved, primarily following my progress on the SPOT personal tracker page.”

#2 What do you feel was the most important thing that you planned for on your trip that you actually benefited.

“Having a decent camping/cooking setup.”

#3 What was the 5-most important pieces of gear you carried on the trip? Explain.

“ Good 2 man tent. Jetboil. Lightweight paddle. SPOT tracker. Weather radio/or phone.

#4 Prior to your trip, what was your weakest asset or least skilled or qualified trait for the trip and how do you overcome this?

Having virtually no paddling experience other than flat water. Watched a few Youtube videos on paddling a sea kayak, put my kayak in the river and started paddling.”



#5 What was the least important item(s) that you brought and discovered there was never a need for?

“Collapsible water bucket. “

#6: What was the biggest surprise of the journey? Something you did not anticipate.

“The number of young paddlers I met up with and became instant lifetime friends with! Also have to say equally surprising was the fantastic hospitality of every single ‘river angel’ who helped me along the way.”

#7 What kind of boat did you paddle and what were its good qualities and also the things you did not like about it?

“Strip cedar ‘expedition’ from plans purchased from One Ocean Kayak company. 18.5 ft. Hauls a lot, tracks well. I built it, so no negatives. She’s just what I anticipated

when I ordered the plans.”



#8: How did you plan your meals/food? Did this system work good for you and what would you change regarding this?

“ Dehydrated veggies and fruit. Mostly ended up eating Ramen and Knorr noodles and rice and instant potatoes and gravy and granola type snacks. It worked but I did my trip over 3 separate seasons so was able to burn fat reserves each time. If I’d have done it single season I’d have needed to plan more calories and variety.”

#9 What was your system for obtaining drinking water and what were the benefits as well as the disadvantages you had dealing with water?

“ For the most part was able to fill a 3 gallon water bag along the way from available sources. Also had a Sawyer water filter along but never really used it. You’ll need to have a water plan from Ft. Benton to Fort. Peck dam. Lake water would be filterable but probably not the river from Benton to upper end of lake. “



#10: If you were going to give advice for someone planning the same journey what do you feel would be best advice and things to consider that you now know about this journey?

“Read David Miller’s book, take what applies to

you from it, put your boat in the river and start paddling. Don't over analyze; just enjoy each day as an adventure unto itself. String enough days together and you'll have made a journey. " ~ Rod Weeding



Kris Laurie and Rod Weeding. Kris is the first solo person to descend from the utmost source of the Missouri and descend to the Gulf of Mexico.

