

RIVER LOCHY CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CANOEISTS AND ANGLERS

The River Lochy is known amongst salmon Anglers worldwide as a truly majestic salmon fishery offering wonderful fishing on its pristine water from the months of April to October. It is however, also a great river for journeying by canoe. Over the last few years we have seen increased numbers of canoeists using this river for their adventure activities. We also have outdoor activity organisations operating within the Lochaber region and indeed across Scotland who also use the river for adventure trips and excursions.

“Confirmed by the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003, on Scottish rivers there is a statutory right of non-motorised navigation and a right of reasonable and responsible access for walkers, cyclists and horse riders over land and to non-motorised craft on inland water”. www.outdooraccess-scotland.com

Thus, it is quite likely that, canoes may be present on the river, approaching from upstream. An existing code of practice is already in place - ‘Paddlers’ Code of Conduct’ of which the majority of canoeists & rafters will be aware. [‘Paddlers’ Access Code](#)

As river users we should be aware and indeed adhere to the following :

- *Respect the interests of other people*
- *Care for the environment*
- *Take responsibility for your own actions*

Based on the above, anglers can reasonably expect:

- ❑ The leader of the paddling group will endeavour to ensure the angler is aware of their presence by either shouting or ideally blowing a whistle ~ most likely to be heard over water noise.
- ❑ Once contact established the leader will seek information on the angler’s preferred line of passage for the group.
- ❑ Paddlers will wish to cause minimum disturbance to the angler’s direction of casting and, water depth/obstructions allowing, paddlers will move in the direction indicated. Where the angler is standing on the bank, direction indicated may include towards the angler, even under the rod or toward the opposite bank. If the angler is wading, canoeists will be very happy, where possible, to pass behind i.e. between the angler and the bank.
- ❑ Leaders will endeavour to have their group pass in fairly close formation, with a reasonable, safe distance between each boat, thus minimising the time taken to pass.
- ❑ If an angler is playing a fish, paddlers normally wait upstream until the fish is landed or until there is indication from the angler or ghillie that it is safe to pass towards the direction indicated.
- ❑ In the event of inadvertent capsizes, paddlers will do utmost to effect efficient rescue and refloat upturned canoe as soon as possible. Currents can catch out even the most experienced paddlers!
- ❑ Once past the party will continue on their way quietly downstream. Paddlers will not loiter unnecessarily or ‘play’ in a pool .

Anglers are requested to:

- ❑ Acknowledge they are aware of the presence of paddlers.
- ❑ Carefully consider which line is most practical for both angler and paddler.
- ❑ Give clear direction as to the preferred side for the craft to pass.
- ❑ Not always necessary to take in fishing line. However, refrain from casting whilst canoes pass by.

- ❑ As soon as the boats have safely passed the angler may very soon resume fishing

The River Lochy is a short, shallow and clear river. It has many great spots where salmon will hold up and rest for short periods of time if undisturbed. It would therefore be appreciated that paddling disturbance be kept to a minimum while making passage along the river course, even through sections where there are no anglers present.

During the months between April and October it can be expected that as many as 20+ plus anglers may be fishing on the river. Again, it would be appreciated if journey times were calculated with this in mind, as small delays may be encountered.

During the months between November and April, salmon will be spawning on the main river bed and tributaries. Extra care should be taken when entering and exiting the river and again disturbance should be kept to a minimum.

The key to harmony on the river is mutual respect and overt courtesy between all river users.

We share the same commitment to our clients which is to provide a pleasurable and memorable experience on this wonderful river.

Guidance available to paddlers, specific to the River Lochy can be found at : [WEBSITE](#)

(Issued initially by River Lochy Association which we hope to be endorsed by Scottish Canoe Association and all LOCAL Outdoor activity Organisations.)