

biggest in the country during the flood season. Most river trips average five days; there are no one-day trips because of the lack of take-outs. This allows for peaceful reflection between rapids, a chance to scout for wildlife, and tanning the parts of your body that never see the sun. Most of the rapids are Class II or III, with a few Class IV rapids that make it a great trip for intermediate paddlers who want to try bigger water. The flood season runs through May and June, and into July in a good year.

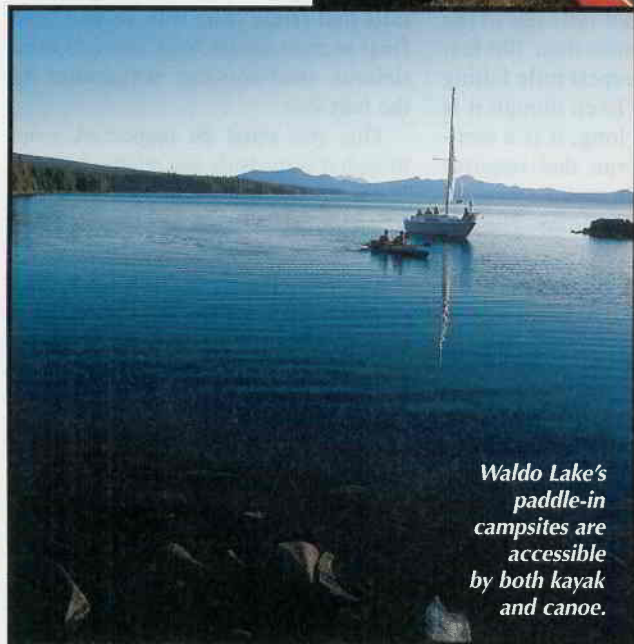
The canyon has roomy camps, many of which offer short hikes to stretch your legs after a long day. Bighorn sheep, peregrine falcons, and eagles make the canyon their home, so pack your binoculars. The Yampa is one of the most spectacular rivers to paddle in the country, and worth the wait for a permit or the cost of a commercial trip. Check out [www.nps.gov/dino/river/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/dino/river/index.htm) for outfitters and permit information.

—Emily Crawford

### WALDO LAKE, OREGON

They call it one of the purest bodies of water in the world. From a paddler's point of view, peering in, it's easy to be convinced of Waldo Lake's cobalt-blue depths, which dive to some 400 feet, because you can see almost 100 feet down.

Covering 10 square miles, glacier-carved Waldo ranks as Oregon's second-deepest lake, outdone only by Crater Lake. And like Crater, Waldo is remarkably pristine and clear. The reason? It lacks a permanent inlet, so the water is short on nutrients and remains largely devoid of plants, floating particles, and microscopic critters.



*Waldo Lake's paddle-in campsites are accessible by both kayak and canoe.*

PHOTOS BY BOB WOODWARD

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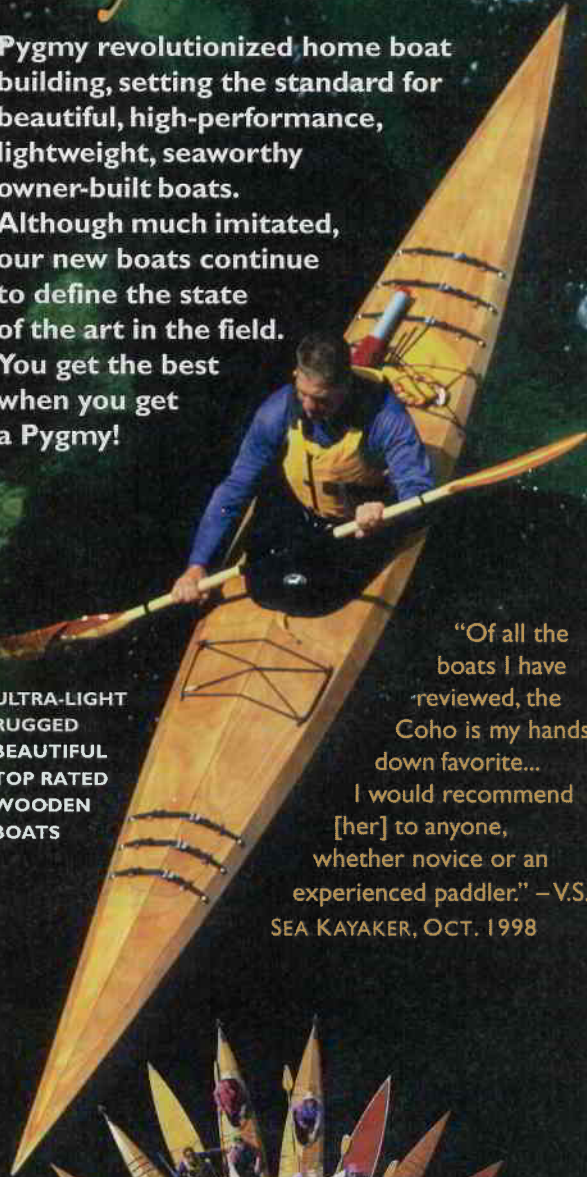
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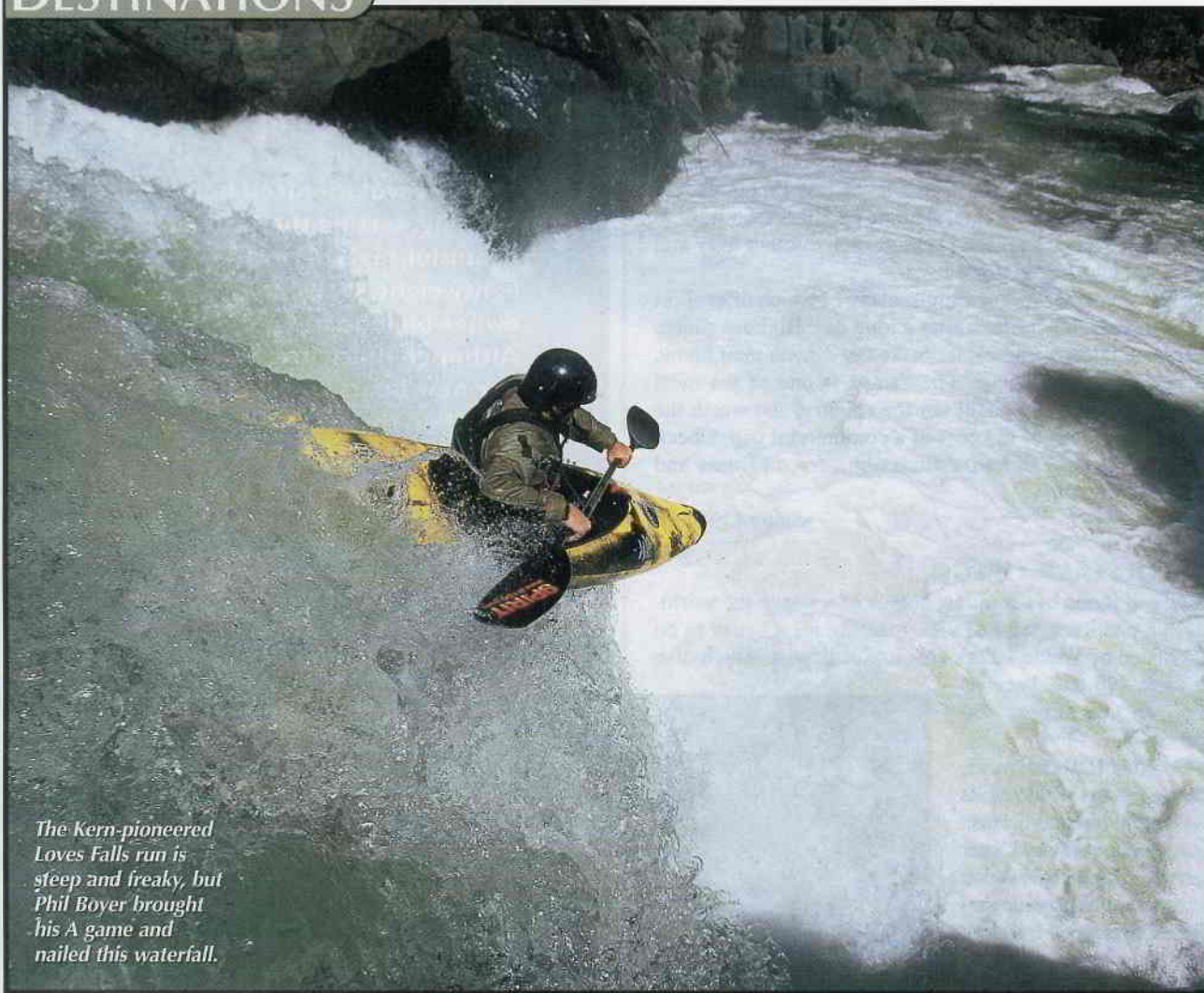


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*The Kern-pioneered Loves Falls run is steep and freaky, but Phil Boyer brought his A game and nailed this waterfall.*

Located near Willamette Pass in Oregon's central Cascades, the lake covers part of the Willamette National Forest, with much of its shoreline abutting wilderness. As you paddle out, you'll find mountains linking up around you: the Three Sisters, Broken Top, Mount Bachelor, the Twins, Maiden Peak, and Mount Ray.

Head up the western shoreline, which is thick with hemlocks, and you'll pass the defunct Klondike Dam, a short-lived hydroelectric project built at the beginning of the 20th century. Farther along is a small island filled with rhododendrons, a good place to stop and stretch. There are several paddle-in campsites and plentiful car-camping options, as well as numerous trails to explore.

Where's Waldo? For information, contact the Middle Fork Ranger District at (541) 782-2283 or visit [www.fs.fed.us/r6/willamette/manage/waldolake](http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/willamette/manage/waldolake).

—Mark R. Johnson

### LOVES FALLS, UPPER NORTH YUBA RIVER, CALIFORNIA

The Loves Falls section is a serious, action-packed run that falls out of the Sierras, averaging more than 300 feet per mile, with the steepest mile falling more than 350 feet. Even though it is roughly three miles long, it is a committing and taxing run that requires continually getting in and out of your boat to scout some big drops. The run tends to have cold water and is usually the home of cold weather, so bundle up and buckle up for some serious Class V-V+ action.

Pioneered by the Kern brothers, the run changes character throughout its descent. The first section is roadside and starts off with continuous technical borderline read-and-run. A few man-made obstacles are thrown in, as there has been roadside-stabilization work (be careful up here). The steep gets steeper in the middle section, as the river cuts into a more solid granite

gorge, offering distinct, high-quality drops and waterfalls. The crux rapid here is Big Bird, followed by waterfalls that range from 8 to 18 feet. The final section tapers back down to continuous read-and-run whitewater to the take-out.

This run must be respected, even though it is roadside and relatively short. It has all the ingredients of a serious Class V-V+ challenge, or a serious Class V-V+ humbling—undercuts and caves, wood and strainers, and big drops with stickiness. This is not a recommended place to swim. If you are up for it and on your game, then Loves Falls might be worth checking out. Head above the town of Downieville, California, on Highway 49 near the footbridge of the Pacific Crest Trail, and scout from the road. Some very good paddlers have been spanked here and some have hiked out; this is not a place to take lightly. Log on to [www.boof.com](http://www.boof.com) for more beta.

—Dunbar Hardy □

PHOTO BY CAMERON LAWSON