

## Warning – Must Read – Ignore at Your Peril

**WARNING! WARNING! WARNING! THESE ARE DANGEROUS EVENTS.**

Although this warning has some notices specific to Florida and the Everglades, it applies to all locations for any WaterTribe event.

### ***No Liability Or Responsibility***

All people, companies, and agents associated in any way with any WaterTribe Challenge or event do not accept any liability or responsibility what so ever for your safety and well being. Your safety and well-being is your responsibility.

### ***Consider the Following – You Must Sign a Waiver***

The WaterTribe Challenges are long, grueling races that are extremely demanding, both physically and mentally. Entrants are encouraged to consult a physician to ensure that they are in good health and can withstand the rigors that participation entails. The physical demands of the race, combined with sleep deprivation, heat, cold, water, dehydration, and exhaustion, often cause participants to become disoriented. Amnesia, hallucinations, hypothermia, and other debilitating conditions are not uncommon. Such effects can impair judgment, a condition especially dangerous for the solo paddler or sailor.

All participants are required to comply with Coast Guard and local regulations regarding safety equipment and operation of their boat. Required Coast Guard equipment includes, but is not limited to, a LIFE JACKET, signaling equipment, and lighting. Although the event rules require this compliance, the event organizers and associates will not take responsibility for your compliance. Your compliance is your responsibility.

A LIFE JACKET is required by the Coast Guard and it is strongly urged that all participants wear them at all times. Weak swimmers or non-swimmers should not be in this race.

Water, even under normal conditions, involves certain inherent dangers. A person in a boat may be struck by overhead branches or a boom or other man-made objects. A person may be struck by lightning. A boat may strike stationary or floating objects causing injury. A boat may collide with another boat. A person in the water may be pulled under. He/she might be pinned against the boat or another object or under the sail. Boats and swimmers can be swept out to sea or into shoreline hazards. Even slow-moving water or small waves have tremendous force. All participants are expected to be experts in their sport, their watercraft, and their equipment. Participants are expected to use watercraft that is seaworthy and suitable for the course. Participants are expected to be able to control their watercraft in any and all conditions. Participants are expected to become familiar with the course. All potential hazards of these races cannot be listed in this warning. **If you are not an expert paddler and/or sailor, do not enter this race. Even if you are a well-prepared expert you may DIE – yes, you may DIE.**

Many participants will be tempted to travel at night. You should be aware that night travel adds to the potential hazards. Night travel also involves certain Coast Guard regulations on required lighting. Regard these regulations as minimums. As an expert you should be better prepared.

The effects of heat can be extremely debilitating and lead to injury or death. As an expert you are expected to know how to prevent and treat heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

The effects of cold water and weather can lead to hypothermia which can result in injury or death. As an expert you are expected to know how to prevent and treat hypothermia.

As an expert it is expected that you know how to protect yourself from the sun.

Lack of proper hydration (drinking fluids) and nutrition (eating) can exacerbate all dangerous aspects of the course and can result in injury or death. As an expert you are expected to know how to eat and drink properly before, during, and after the race.

Fresh water may not be available anywhere along the course except at the checkpoints. Animals will break into your boats and rip open plastic jugs to get at your water. After they take all your water, they will take your food. An expert would not let this happen.

Animal hazards are common. Within the last few years there have been several attacks on humans resulting in serious injury and/or death. These attacks have come from bears, cats, dogs, sharks, alligators, rattlesnakes, cottonmouths, coral snakes, pythons, sting rays, barracuda, spiders, bees, hornets, wasps, fire ants, ticks, mosquitoes, Manatees, and whales. Other dangerous or annoying critters, too numerous to mention, are also in abundance. Some of these hazards walk on two legs. As an expert you are expected to know how to counter these attacks and it is expected that you have an adequate first aid kit and that you know how to use it.

Mosquitoes are ever present year-round in Florida and especially in the Everglades. They are also abundant in North Carolina, Minnesota and other event locations. November through March are the best times for less of a mosquito problem, but they can still be dangerous. Mosquitoes can carry disease including, but not limited to West Nile Virus and Zika. And there have been documented cases of large animals dying from mosquito bites alone due to loss of blood. As an expert you are expected to be able to deal with mosquitoes.

There are poisonous plants in some parts of Everglades National Park that can harm or kill you. Poison from the Manchineel tree was used by the Calusa Indians against Ponce de Leon and his men. Eventually, Ponce de Leon was killed by an arrow covered with Manchineel sap. If you rest in the shade of these trees, you will receive droplets of burning sap. Rain running off the leaves is poisonous. If you burn the wood, the smoke is poison. If you eat the berries, they may be the last thing you eat. Rubbing the wood on your skin will poison you. As an expert you should be able to recognize the Manchineel tree and all other poisonous plants in all WaterTribe event areas.

As an expert it is expected that you would not be in these events without any special medications required for allergic reactions or for any other reason.

As an expert it is expected that you will carry a GPS, a VHF, and a cell phone. Even experts are required to carry a Personal Locating Beacon (PLB) and SPOT or inReach as described in the **Required and Suggested Equipment** list for WaterTribe Challenges. No expert would allow these items to fail due to water intrusion or lack of batteries.

As an expert it is expected that you will listen to current weather reports and that you know how to predict and deal with the weather around you. Remember that the race will not be put on hold for weather delays, but as an expert you should be able to determine if weather conditions are not safe for you and your craft. It is not necessary for anyone to travel during a small craft warning.

Weather of less severity than required for a small craft warning can still present dangerous conditions. As an expert it is expected that you can recognize dangerous weather conditions and take appropriate action. Do you know what a “micro burst” is? Can you handle it?

Even though you consider yourself to be an expert you may be injured or die in this event. Rescue services are not provided by WaterTribe or anyone associated with this event. There are no chase boats. There are no lifeguards. There are no paramedics or doctors. You are on your own. If you get in trouble, you should call the Coast Guard or 911 or passing boats and activate your PLB and/or SPOT/inReach. Only after you have been rescued by them should you call Event Officials to inform them of your situation.

If you drop out of a WaterTribe Challenge or Ultra Marathon anywhere, you are on your own and no effort will be made to transport you. Repeat, you will be on your own. You could be liable for search, rescue and/or boat towing costs.

This warning cannot list all hazards, dangers, or other safety considerations. Assume this is a very dangerous event that can cause your injury, death, mental anguish or even Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. By entering this event, you are asserting that you are an expert, and you take full responsibility for your own actions.

Let me try to explain this one more time. By entering any WaterTribe Challenge or event, you are agreeing that all the people, companies, and agents associated with the event owe you nothing nor do we owe you duty of care or service or any other duty. We promise you nothing. We do not and will not even try to make this event safe for anyone. This event is not safe for anyone. This is no joke. We won't even try to warn you about every known danger or hazardous condition, whether we know about it or not. If we do decide to warn you about something, that doesn't mean we will try to warn you about everything. If we do make an effort to make some aspects of the event safer, we may not correct other aspects, and we may even make matters worse! We and our agents may do things that are unwise and dangerous. Sorry, we're not responsible. We may give you bad advice. Don't listen to us. In short, ENTER AND PARTICIPATE IN THESE EVENTS AT YOUR OWN RISK. And have fun!

**Do you agree with the following statement?** --- I have read, understand, and agree to all contained herein. I RELEASE ANY AND ALL PARTIES associated in any way with WaterTribe events from liability or responsibility. I am an expert paddler and/or sailor, and I can take care of myself. My physical condition, mental acuity, and health is good and more than sufficient to meet any and all challenges before, during, and after this event. --- **If you do not agree, you should not register for any WaterTribe event.**