



Kingdoms of the Tides

This summer I paddled a couple of places on the Maine coast that are out of the way and have interesting tidal water.

My favorite is the lower Kennebec River. The beaches, Popham and Hunniwell, which stretch from Fort Popham at the mouth three or four miles westward to Small Point are world-class. They are extraordinarily beautiful, uncrowded, and have a good range of surf—from easy one footers to a substantial off-shore break. There is free public parking/access at the Fort, though arriving early on a summer week-end is a good idea.

The waters of the islands and bays at the river's mouth will test your skills at reading current and wind and will teach you some new ones. You can camp on Perkins Island, a MITA/BPL island about a mile up the river, or at one of several local campgrounds. The Stripper and Blue fishing is very good. Seals are present. Side trips include the Back River, which connects the

Kennebec to Hockmock Bay and the Beal Island area, and the Morse River, a bird-saturated tidal river at the west end of Popham Beech. At the right tides, the Morse River is accessible from the very shallow Spirit Lake along Rte. 209. Bates College owns a reservation at Small Point that is open for public hiking. Not far away is the AMC Knubble Bay camp and paddling area.

The mouth of the Kennebec has a bad reputation—several years ago it killed a neophyte kayaker who knew nothing of tidal currents, cold water, and the effects of wind and waves. In this territory, THE TIDE RULES. Paddlers must obey it. They must do what it is doing. If they show respect, these waters can be paddled by those with cold water protection, good self-rescues, and skill at reading and negotiating currents. ConnYak member Dan Poulin frequents these waters. Talk to him.

The mouth of the Kennebec is

south of Bath. From Rte 1, take Rte 209 south and follow it to Fort Popham.

Next month, the other kingdom, Cobscook Bay.

Submitted by Clark Bowlen, Ed.

Coming Events

• Wednesday, October 25, 7:30pm. ConnYak Meeting. Manchester Community-Technical College, Classroom A-4. Call Clark Bowlen, 623-6587 for directions.

For Sale

Necky Narpa, 1 year old, slate grey with rudder and thigh braces. Excellent condition, never rolled. \$900. Tim King, 247-4915 days.



CONNECTICUT SEA KAYAKERS
241 South Water Street, unit 3
East Windsor CT 06088