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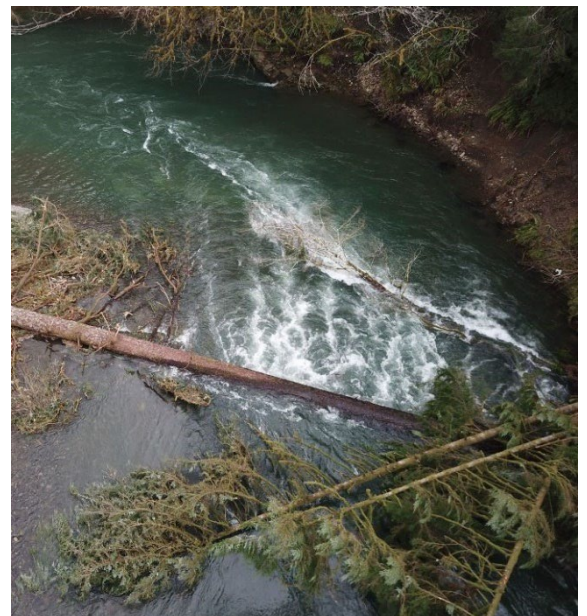
Scout Ahead and Keep a Sharp Lookout for Obstructions

Heavy wind and rain from winter storms cause trees to plunge into Oregon rivers. Trees become obstructions, a risk for all boaters, including paddlers, rafters, and drift boats. Some of these obstructions will become more dangerous as river levels drop, requiring boats to portage around the obstructions for safe navigation.

“We urge every boater to plan ahead. River conditions can change daily which is why checking river levels is critical. Always look downstream as you navigate allowing time to react and maneuver to the safest course,” says Brian Paulsen, Boating Safety Program Manager for the Marine Board.

The Marine Board urges the following precautions:

- Visit the Marine Board’s [Boating Obstructions Dashboard](#) to view reported obstructions.
- Learn about and [how to report obstructions](#) you encounter while boating.
- Scout ahead and look for the safest route for each section of the river before committing. When in doubt, portage out.
- Stay clear of partially submerged trees and limbs. Strong currents can quickly carry you in, potentially leading to capsizing and entrapment.
- Wear a life jacket. Oregon’s waterways are cold year-round. Boaters are encouraged to wear a properly fitting life jacket and to dress for the water temperature, not the air temperature.
- If you’re using a Stand Up Paddleboard, be sure to wear a quick-release leash on moving water, especially in rivers where obstructions are present so you can disconnect from the board if you are drawn into one.
- Boat with others and stay within sight of one another. Do not separate far from one another so you can respond quickly to help.
- Know your limits and how to self-rescue. Be sure your skills and experience are equal to the [river difficulty](#) and the conditions.
- Fill out a [float plan](#) and let others know where you are boating and when to expect your return.



Visit Boat.Oregon.gov for everything you need to know about recreational boating in Oregon.

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