

In August nine of us enjoyed a spectacularly beautiful overnight paddle down the Cariboo River from the bridge on the 8400 Road to Ladies Creek Rec Site on Cariboo Lake. The days were warm with a spattering of rain. The shuttle was a long winding road, about 80 km, but the paddle was much straighter and shorter, maybe ten hours over two days. Camping together on a gravel bar near a clear stream was a great learning experience for those of us new to river camping, and the veterans were always willing to share their knowledge and skills. Heather and I were very thankful to join Jeff and Margaret, John and Dorie (sp?), Murray and Paige, and seven year old Kyle on this wonderful trip.

In September the Haven's and the Olson's got together again for a five hour paddle down the Blackwater River from the Westroad River Recreation Site bridge north of Nazko to the Euchinika bridge just 18 km north by road, but MUCH farther by the winding river. The day was again beautiful, but the huge difference between the two trips was the additional wildlife we saw on the Blackwater. We started the day pointing out the odd eagle we saw in the sky, but when the count rose to 20 or so we started to wonder why there were so many. Then we started noticing schools of Blackwater Trout swimming through the crystal clear water, heading upstream. Next we noticed a red backed salmon or two, then salmon by the half-dozen, then finally schools of salmon swimming up to their spawning grounds. Ahh, that's why the eagles were here in such large numbers. Well, if the salmon were here and the eagles were here, we wondered if perhaps we would see a bear or two today, and sure enough we did, a big black bear along a gravel bar checking out the view of the salmon, and a little rolly-polly bear racing down the road near the river as we headed back towards our put-in spot.

Both these river trips were enjoyable experiences with great people, and we plan on repeating them next year.

Don & Heather Olson