

September 15, 2011

Hello Flatwater paddlers,

A crew of us paddled the course this morning, and we wanted to send an update on the river. First off, the course is beautiful, as always! We saw herons, turtles, deer, and even some early fall foliage.

We want you to be fully prepared for an adventurous, wild, and scenic course on Sunday!

1. Water levels on the North Branch are a bit low right now, so this course is going to be more about skill than speed - we like to call it "adventure paddling"! If you have an option, we recommend NOT bringing your fanciest equipment. Friends has canoes you can rent for the day - and if you respond to this email we'll give you 25% off the rental fee of \$50. Other options are listed on our website at http://www.chicagoriver.org/events/flatwater_classic/paddlers/.

2. Wear shoes you can get wet. You'll need to portage two dams (at Winnetka Rd. and Beckwith Rd). The Forest Preserve District of Cook County and Ralph Frese have installed new planks to make the portages much easier - so thank them if you see them! Friends will have our canoe guides at the dams to help people over.

3. Listen to all safety instructions from our safety team on site.

We're very much looking forward to seeing you all on Sunday! If you haven't seen them yet, start times are downloadable here: <http://www.chicagoriver.org/upload/Website%209.13.11.pdf>

Best,

Meshawn