

Hello...my name is Lollie Mercer, the owner of Rivers Edge Kayak & Canoe Trips. I wanted to thank you for the opportunity to respond to the FMA regarding your concerns with our commercial operation on the river above Healdsburg.

First...a little about one of my business philosophy...which is to create immense value...and let the return follow: Value to our clients, value to our staff and value to the community. We are very passionate about what we do for this community...and conscious of the impact that we leave as well.

Recently...the FMA came to us with various concerns and requests. Many of these requests we currently address on a regular basis, **but we believe we can do better!**

We share your anger and frustration...for we experience a litany of abuse from trespassers and day users on our properties: Theft, vandalism, trespassing, toxic litter, public urination, arson, illegal parking, and constant tagging. We hire a security guard every weekend on our beach, (next to Memorial), to keep the public from tearing our fences down. River's Edge also paints over the bridge tagging weekly, not the city...though they do provide the paint when they can.

First I would like to address the litter issues. We operate of 32 miles of the upper Russian, and the only areas we have litter problems is on the four miles that can be accessed by the general public, which is four miles above Healdsburg. **We are not professing that our client's don't litter on occasion, but the other 28 miles we operated on stay pristine and virtually free of litter.**

Though we have various programs to pick up the bulk of all litter on your section of river, it is our experience that 70% – 90% of it is generated by unsupervised day users and gate crashers. **I will stake my reputation on that fact!** Fourth of July weekend generated more day use garbage than we were prepared for....8 canoes loaded high.

Existing Litter Removal Practices:

- Free net bag and free ice cream for picking up trash...for every client.
- Litter sweep 4 days a week with two employees.
- We ask our clients to not bring bottles and to leave no trace.
- We are one of the largest contributors to the Annual Russian River Clean-Up.
- We provide tie-downs and teach our clients to keep gear secured to their boat.

Newly Implemented Litter Removal Practices:

- Inviting our clients to volunteer once a month for river clean-up...great response.
- Litter sweep seven days a week instead of four in the "Litter Gitter"
- The "Litter Gitter" sweep boat passes out garbage bags to day users, and asks them to please respect the environment and to leave no trace.
- We will check coolers better for glass, though our clients do not usually lie to us.

Other Request from FMA:

- We ask clients not to touch personal property such as chairs or sitting on docks.
- Dogs must have poop bags now.
- We are asking clients not to paddle through the Ludwigia.
- We are pursuing approval for a composing toilet on river for the public.
- We are promoting quiet zones near homes, to not use profanity and not to use private property to go to the bathroom.
- We are asking all smokers to carry a container for cigarette butts.
- We are unaware of any clients bringing barbecue equipment or lighting fires, but we will address this as well.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to explain our position and for approaching us with dignity and respect. We welcome feedback from the community and our neighbors.

Speaking of such, there is a gentleman claiming to be one of your members, who verbally attacked our female staff, and physically impeded their progress while on litter sweep Sunday, July 11th. We have identified such individual, and we are prepared to report him to the authorities if he harasses my staff again. This individual has never approached me or my male staff...whom are on river almost daily. My staff has been with me for years, they are just doing their job and don't deserve cheap shots taken at them. Thank You.

You have my personal promise that we will go to every length to address your issues and concerns. Thank you all for your kind words and "thumbs up" to my staff sweeping the river for garbage in the "Litter Gitter". We invite you to come by anytime.

Lollie Mercer
Owner, River' Edge