



STURGEON RIVER TRIP INFORMATION

Summer
2024

With an average descent of 14 feet per mile, the Sturgeon River is the **fastest** river in Michigan's Lower Peninsula! Not whitewater, but exciting and challenging with its quick and often tricky current, along with leaning trees, stumps, and logs (especially when navigating through numerous narrow passages and sharp turns!) The current does most of the work, but it is up to you and/or your partner(s) to maneuver your watercraft down the crystal-clear, spring-fed stream, as it winds its way mostly through beautiful state forest. The average depth is 3-4 feet, however, there are deeper pools that can reach 5-8 feet, usually around the outside of bends. Plan on getting wet as many of our guests take an unplanned "refreshing" dunk! (approx. 80% tip-over rate for Kayaks on longer trips, 1% for Rafts). Various types of paddlers can enjoy this exhilarating adventure as long as close attention is paid to the **type** of equipment used, as well as the **section** and/or **length** of the river trip. The shorter trips are less technical/easier and strongly recommended for Sturgeon River "first-timers".

PLEASE SEE REVERSE SIDE FOR MORE IMPORTANT TRIP INFO, DEPARTURES & FLOAT TIMES!

ALL RIVER TRIP RATES INCLUDE:

- U.S. Coast Guard approved and safety-inspected quality equipment
- Paddles and PFD's (comfortable Type III Lifejacket)
- Shuttle service to the put-in point (most trips end at Burt Lake State Park, which has a great swimming beach!) See "Ending Point/Parking"

River Hours & Reservations:
9:30 am - 7:00 pm
(231) 238-8181
www.bigbearadventures.com

For Families / Beginners / Less Experienced:



RAFTS

For the ultimate in stability and family/group adventure, try our RAFTS! Made of extremely durable Hypalon, these are the same rafts used on major whitewater rivers (but of course, there is NO whitewater). The river does most of the work as far as taking you downstream, but it's up to you and your crew to work together and steer/navigate your Raft down the narrow passages & around obstacles. Rafts are spacious and promote TEAMWORK. They also decrease your chance of accidentally getting wet - a real relief for those with young ones! Trips end in beautiful Burt Lake State Park — swim, picnic, play! Sorry, NO Pets or large, heavy coolers in rafts.

Approx. Float time	1 hr +/-	2 hr +/-	3½-4 hr +/-
Rate Per Person	\$21	\$28	\$44
Departures	9:30-5:30 Every ½ hr	9:30-5:00 Every ½ hr	9:30-2:30 Every ½ hr

Raft sizes: Small Raft holds 5 ppl max (w/min. of 4 paid), Large Raft holds 7 ppl max (w/min. of 6 paid).
Recommended for: all ages (young to the young at heart!) and all skill levels (beginner to advanced). Wonderful **group** or **family** activity! We recommend the shortest trip for **extremely** young children and the longest trip only for older and/or more adventurous, experienced paddlers.
Raft Rates: are per person. During the summer season there is a minimum of 4 **paid** people in the smaller rafts and 6 **paid** people in the large rafts.

TUBES

What's the best way to spend a hot, sunny afternoon in beautiful Northern Michigan? Floating on a tube down a clear, refreshing river! River Tubing is a wet and extremely fun group adventure! Again, this is NOT a lazy river, so you do have to watch where you are going and regularly paddle a little and push away from logs and sticks. Quite often, this adds to the fun as long as you have an adventurous attitude! Tubing is best on a sunny day that is at least 70 degrees. *Please Note: Tubes go slower than everything else, so a 2 hr. Raft or Tracker trip will take about 2.5 hours by Tube.*

Recommended for: ages 6 & older only (no lap riders allowed). Tubers must be comfortable and confident in, on, and around water! We strongly recommend the short trip for families and Sturgeon River "first-timers". Lifejackets required for minors ages 6-16), and non-swimmers.

Tube Rates: are per person (or per tube as only 1 person per tube allowed).



Approx. Float time	1½ hr +/-	2½ hr +/-
Tube Rate Per Person	\$20	\$24
"DELUXE" Tube Rate	\$26	\$30
"COOLER Carrier" Tube	\$18	\$22
Departures	9:30-6 pm Every ½ hr	9:30-4:30 pm Every ½ hr



Upgrade to our "DELUXE" Tubes

These tubes are **whitewater-grade** with a bottom! There is a small drain hole (so you have a little water) but have more space and more back support.

Add a "COOLER Carrier" Tube

Place your **own** cooler in our commercial-grade rectangular "Cooler Carrier" tube. Fits coolers up to 17" by 27". Comes with a strap to attach to your tube.

TUBE TRACKERS

Try our revolutionary, inflatable, steerable Kayak-Tubes! The comfort of a tube, with the control of a kayak! Featuring 3 heavy-duty fins on the abrasion-resistant bottom, and a sewn cover design, which allows some water to enter and circulate helping to prevent an overturn. Backrest, cup holder and kayak paddle included.

Please Note: Tube Trackers are best on warm days as you will get wet!

Recommended for: Ages 10 & older only (no lap riders allowed). Must be comfortable and confident in, on, and around water!

Tube Tracker Rates: are per person (or per Tracker as only 1 person maximum allowed per Tracker).

Approx. Float time	1 hr +/-	2 hr +/-
Rate Per Person	\$29	\$33
Departures	9:30 -5:00 Every ½ hr	9:30 -3:30 Every ½ hr



For More Experienced:

"Sit-On-Top" KAYAKS / TANDEM KAYAKS

Easy to paddle and fun to use, we offer both solo and tandem "Sit-On-Top" Kayaks. With the challenges of the Sturgeon River, a "Sit-On-Top" is by far the best choice over "Sit-In" kayaks because it does not fill with water like traditional kayaks or canoes in case of a tip-over (which can be extremely difficult/heavy to stop, catch, and empty the water out)! Our kayaks come with comfortable, high-back, molded-in seats and footwells, cupholders, and a flat spot for cargo. We offer 2 sizes for solo kayaks: Old Town "Twisters" (11'3" for up to 250 lbs) and Jackson Kayak "Rivieras" (11'4" for larger adults over 250 and up to 300 lbs). Our tandem "Riviera" kayaks are 13'8", have a capacity of up to 450 lbs., and have 2 high-back seats.

Recommended for: confident thrill-seekers with basic paddling experience (not young children), or groups with odd numbers. Sturgeon River "first-timers" should not go on any trip longer than the 1.5 hour trip!

Solo Kayak Rates: are per person, one person per kayak. Must be at least 14 yrs old.

Tandem Kayak Rates: are per person, based on double occupancy. At least one 18 yr. old preferred.



Approx. Float time	1½ hr +/-	3 hr +/-	4 hr +/-	5 hr +/-
Solo Kayak	\$31	\$43	\$48	\$51
Tandem Kayak per person	\$29	\$36	\$38	\$41
Departures	9:30 -5 pm Every ½ hr	9:30 -3:30 Every ½ hr	9:30-2:30 Hourly	9:30-11:30 Hourly



ENDING POINT in BURT LAKE STATE PARK

All River Trips end at our designated ending point just inside Burt Lake State Park (except for the “Mid-Section” trips). This landing has a large set of wooden stairs with Big Bear signage and is where you exit the river. If you are Tubers, you carry your tube (not drag!) for a short 4-minute walk back to Big Bear (using the crosswalk). If you rented anything besides Tubes, you must turn in your equipment at the top of the wooden stairs and then walk approximately 4 minutes to your car parked in the “day use” area of the park (near the beach). Burt Lake State Park offers over 2,000 feet of sandy, shallow beach and crystal-clear water (great for swimming and playing) and a large, day-use picnic area under towering oak and pine trees. There is a picnic pavilion, tables, grills, restrooms, playground equipment, a beach volleyball court, and a 1-mile wooded hiking trail! During the summer months, the Sturgeon River is great for quick dips as it is extremely refreshing, but Burt Lake is better for swimming as it is warmer!



PARKING

After signing up for your river trip, we will direct you to park your vehicle in the following locations: If **TUBING**, you will park your vehicle in our back parking lot here at Big Bear. If you are **RAFTING/KAYAKING**, then you will be instructed to park in the State Park right near the beach/picnic area where you have access to the park and its’ amenities all day! Be sure to carpool in order to bring the least amount of vehicles as possible. All **NON-TUBERS** are required to park **all vehicles** in the state park where there is no waiting at the end of your trip; your vehicle is ready w/ towels, beach toys, and picnic supplies, and most importantly, it is a wonderful way to finish your river adventure—swimming, relaxing, and playing at one of Northern Michigan’s most beautiful state parks! Any vehicle that goes into a state park needs a “Recreation Passport”. If you didn’t already buy a passport for \$14 when you renewed your license tabs, you can purchase one from the state park for \$19, motorcycles are \$12 (good at ALL MI STATE PARKS until your license plate expires!) Vehicles with out-of-state license plates must purchase a daily permit for \$11 (or an annual pass for \$40). For more detailed information, please visit www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport.

CHALLENGING “MID-SECTION” TRIP!

We offer a “Mid-Section” trip for those who want the faster, most challenging part of the river, but don’t necessarily want or have the time to do the Wolverine (5 hr.) trip, and/or wouldn’t mind skipping the last 1 ½ hrs. of the river (which is the easier section, has more homes/cottages, and at peak times more congested with rafts and tubes). This trip ends at N. White Rd, which is the most commonly used put-in point (and which we own). This trip is definitely for more advanced paddlers!

Put-In/ Take-Out	Rondo Access to N. White Rd	Wolverine to N. White Rd
Approx. Float Time	2-2 ½ hr +/-	3 ½ hr +/-
Tandem Kayak Rate/ person	\$40	\$43
Kayak Rate/person	\$50	\$53
Departure Times	9:30-2:30 Every Hr.	9:30-11:30 Every Hr.

ESTIMATED FLOAT TIMES

For most trips, we shuttle you and your equipment to your desired starting point and then you paddle downstream to the State Park. That is one of the best features of the trip: you can enjoy yourself and take as much time as you want—stop and swim, have a picnic lunch (no glass containers, Styrofoam coolers, or jumbo coolers), sun yourself, etc., just as long as you respect private property and are back by 7:00 pm. **Extremely important!** Please understand that there are many factors that can dramatically effect the approximate float time of our trips: the type of equipment used, the section of the river, the current river level/conditions, and the individual paddler. Our estimated float times are based on average conditions by average paddlers. We cannot, under any circumstances, guarantee exactly how long a particular trip will take. Everyone and every trip is different.

TRIP DEPARTURE TIMES

Trips depart every ½ hour from Memorial Day-Labor Day (Every hour otherwise). In order to maintain prompt departure times for our guests, it is required that everyone in your group **arrive 30 minutes prior to your desired departure time**. This allows us time to load equipment, and you time to change into proper attire and park your vehicle. Be sure to remove and store all valuable jewelry and personal property. You can spend as much time on the river as you like. However, all equipment must be returned by 7:00 pm or late charges will apply. Please allow yourself ample time. Please note the latest departure time available for each trip!



GROUP RATES

We love groups!! Special discounted rates are available for youth groups (church, schools, & scouts) and adult groups (church, corporate, & reunions). We offer packages that can include: Raft, Tube, Tube Tracker, and Kayak trips, packed “SUBWAY” lunches, Guided SIDE-by-SIDE Tours, 18-Hole Adventure Golf, Ropes Course, and Bumper Boats! In order to receive discounted rates, reservations are **required** in advance. Lodging is available at motels, cabins, and campgrounds—many with group facilities. Please ask for Group Rates and info or check out our website @bigbearadventures.com.

HAUL-IT-YOURSELF RENTALS

This program provides an excellent opportunity for you to rent an aluminum Canoe, Solo or Tandem “Sit-In” Kayak, or Regular tube (sorry, no Old Town Canoes, “Sit-on-Top” Kayaks, Rafts, DELUXE Tubes, or COOLER Tubes) and transport it yourself to and from a nearby lake, beach, or stream. Canoe and Kayak rentals come with paddles & lifejackets. Equipment must be rented and/or returned between the hours of 8:30 am and 7:00 pm. Requires signed, open-ended **credit** card slip for security equipment deposit. Prices are per watercraft. 24 hours \$42; 2 days \$72; 3 days \$84; Monday-Friday \$105; Full week (7 days) \$135. “Haul-it-Yourself” tube rentals are available for \$20 per tube, due back by 10 am the next day. If you just need to rent a lifejacket or paddle, the rates are: paddle=\$10, kayak paddle=\$13, lifejacket=\$10. Area delivery to cottage or house available for an additional fee.



SPOTTING/SHUTTLE SERVICE

We provide transportation for guests and some privately-owned equipment to various locations on the river. Please ask for specifics on “Spotting/Shuttle Services”.

WALK-INS/RESERVATIONS

Trips are available 7 days a week, May through mid-October (please call ahead May and October weekdays). To avoid disappointment and save time, we **recommend making a reservation at bigbearadventures.com**. Walk-ins are welcome, most of our guests are simply walk-ins and we are usually able to accommodate them on a “first come, first served” basis. However, please keep in mind that our busiest time is between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm. Earlier trips tend to see the most wildlife and fewest people. Although we have ample amounts of watercraft and transportation vehicles, there may be some unavoidable delays due to heavy volume at key times and/or on weekends (again, guaranteed reservations are recommended). It’s always best to come in the morning if possible.

Cancellation Policy: Our policy on guaranteed reservations is a 48 hour cancellation notice. You will receive a full refund with at least a 48 hour notice. You will also receive a full refund or credit in case of operator cancellation (due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances).

LIABILITY AND SAFETY

For over 44 years, Big Bear Adventures has provided quality river trips for thousands of people, with an excellent safety record. Still, any river adventure will involve inherent risks and dangers, and can be physically demanding. We will ask you to assume the responsibility for many decisions affecting your safety. Our trips require varying degrees of fitness, and you must evaluate your fitness for any given trip. Big Bear Adventures assumes **NO** responsibility for injury to you or your personal property. All guests take the trip at their own risk and are required to read, understand, and sign an agreement to participate/liability release.

WEATHER/WATER CONDITIONS: Big Bear Adventures reserves the right to change trip format, move trips to a different section of the river, or to another river if necessary due to weather conditions, water fluctuations, or other factors beyond our control. It is unlikely, but should we cancel a trip completely, we will refund or credit any deposit. Such a refund will be limited to the actual deposit paid, and will not cover any other costs incurred by the guest. We reserve the right to turn away, at Big Bear or the put-in-point, any guest who we feel is not well-suited to the rigors of a particular Big Bear river trip.

ALCOHOL POLICY

We strongly discourage the use of alcohol in any of our rental equipment. The Sturgeon River is a technical, narrow, winding river and demands attention while paddling. We **LOVE** sober paddlers! It is **unlawful** to operate a watercraft while intoxicated. Big Bear reserves the right to turn away any guest at any time, who appears to be intoxicated, with no refund issued. Although we don’t regularly check coolers, we do reserve the right to inspect coolers, bags, etc (large, heavy coolers, glass and styrofoam are all prohibited). Please help us keep the atmosphere clean and enjoyable for everyone, including property owners!

EQUIPMENT SECURITY DEPOSIT

A security deposit will be collected prior to any river trip. This can be done with a signed, **credit card** imprint. It will be refunded when all equipment (from the ENTIRE group) is returned in good condition, and prior to 7:00 pm, our river equipment closing time.



POSSIBLE EXTRA CHARGES

Lost or damaged Kayaks, Rafts, Tubes, Cats, Paddles, Lifejackets, and any other equipment issued by Big Bear Adventures will be charged to the guest at repair cost or replacement cost (whichever is lower), and the equipment security deposit from the group will be held until the claim is satisfied. In addition, pick up of guests and/or watercraft failing to complete designated trip will be charged a retrieval fee of \$50/hour. It is highly recommended that participants in this situation accompany staff in locating the equipment (unless manager requires). A \$15 late charge per watercraft will be charged starting at 7:01 pm sharp as well as an additional \$15 per watercraft for every ½ hour thereafter.

OUTFITTER SHOP/GENERAL STORE SUBWAY SANDWICH SHOP

Our log cabin general store offers river, beach, and camping supplies. Also hats, t-shirts, sweatshirts, and river shoes, as well as sunglasses, eyeglass straps, waterproof bags (for gear, cell phones, etc), coolers, beach towels, paddling & outdoor books, sunscreen, and insect repellent. We also have a full SUBWAY sandwich shop on premises, snacks, and drinks available. You can enjoy your food indoors, outside at our picnic tables, or take something with you on your trip. Our Gift Shop is full of souvenirs and unique treasures!

WINTER ACTIVITIES

Experience the breathtaking beauty and solitude of Winter on our Guided Winter Raft trips!

Our knowledgeable staff will guide you on a fun and narrative 1 ½ hour trip, offering you an excellent opportunity to see wildlife in their natural habitat. Snowshoe and X-C Ski Rentals are also available with wonderful trails right nearby! Visit our website for more detailed information!

~ As featured in Midwest Living and Michigan Out Of Doors ~



Voted “Outside”
Magazine’s “40 Frozen
Experiences of a Lifetime”!