

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Next Steps:

- **Fill Out Registration On Our Website:** <https://uwdp.org/news-events/paddle-fest.html>
- **Sign In & Set Up Your Give Smart Page**
- **Fundraise / Pay Entry Fee**
- **Read Through General Information & Race Day Requirements=**

GENERAL INFORMATION

Big Ole PaddleFest is a two-day competitive paddle event through the iconic waterways of Alexandria, MN. BOP is a charitable adventure paddle on Alexandria's Chain of Lakes and the Long Prairie River. **All proceeds benefit local United Way initiatives, fueling real impact in our region.**

- **Friday, July 18th | 4.5 Mile BIG OLE | \$100**
 - Stand-up paddleboarders, kayakers, and canoeists will race across the Alexandria Chain of Lakes, testing speed, endurance, and strategy.
- **Saturday, July 19th | 8 Mile LENA | \$100**
 - The action continues with the Long Prairie River Cruise — a timed paddle down a designated MN State Water Trail, known for its winding turns and natural beauty.

RAISE FUNDS FOR THE UWDP #PADDLE4APURPOSE

The Big Ole PaddleFest supports the Alexandria Lakes Area by raising funds for the United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties. We raised over \$18,000 in 2023 and most of it came from individual fundraising! The fundraising deadline is 3:30PM on Thursday, July 17th.

Individuals who raise:

1. \$100 Event Registration & Race T-Shirt
2. \$250+ Long Sleeve Race Shirt
3. \$500+ Long Sleeve Race Shirt & Race Sweatshirt & Entrance into Grand Prize Drawing

PADDLER SAFETY

Safety must be everyone's highest priority to sustain the Big Ole PaddleFest. Paddlers should read the rules & regulations, advice and safety tips, and register for the course that best suits their abilities. The Big Ole PaddleFest is insured and regulated through the [US Canoe Association](#) and permitted by the Douglas County Sheriff's Office.

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN MY REGISTRATION?

Paddlers receive a safety whistle and event t-shirt. Water & snacks are provided at the end of the race.

2024 BIG OLE PADDLEFEST RULES

1. PARTICIPANTS must be 12 or older and complete the waiver form. Minors 12-17 must have their parent sign their waiver.
2. PARTICIPANTS must possess a [U.S. Coast Guard approved Personal Flotation Device](#) (PFD) in serviceable condition and suited for their height and weight.
3. PARTICIPANTS must possess the provided clip-on safety whistle.
4. PARTICIPANTS MUST EMPLOY A SAFETY LEASH and wear their PFD.
5. PARTICIPANTS exiting their course prior to finishing must notify a PaddleFest organizer or volunteer.
6. PARTICIPANTS must pass through low culverts while lying face down on their SUP, or crouched low in their craft.
7. PARTICIPANTS must carry a water bottle or hydration pack.
9. Minors age 12-13 must be in same craft as parent or guardian. All minors MUST accompanied by an adult during races.
10. No consumption of alcohol is allowed by participants during races.

MN DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES REGULATIONS

1. Nonmotorized watercraft over 10 ft in length must be registered if kept in MN for more than 90 consecutive days and display a valid registration decal. [You can register your SUP in Alexandria.](#)

2. [Zebra Mussels](#) infest all waterbodies. Out-of-town paddlers should take necessary steps to prevent their spread.
3. Participants are on [public waters](#) and must obey [Minnesota's boating laws and rules](#).
4. Consumption of alcohol at public accesses and county parks is prohibited.

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

The Big Ole PaddleFest takes months of planning and over a dozen volunteers. BOP organizers plans a far off Friday and hopes for a calm, sunny day. If unsafe weather conditions such as high winds, thunderstorms or lightning require organizers to deviate from the schedule, postponing start times is the first option. If conditions force the cancellation of Chain of Lake events, alternative events of similar distances will be held on the Long Prairie River.

SPONSORSHIP & VOLUNTEERS

The Big Ole PaddleFest donates all profits to the United Way of Douglas & Pope Counties (UWDP). Businesses or individuals can become an event sponsor by making a tax-deductible donation to the UWDP by July 1st! BOP organizers gratuitously thank all of our sponsors on social media and recognize them at the post-paddle party!

BOP Coordinators are always looking for volunteers. If you would like to get involved, just send us an email!

EVENT ROUTE MAPS

[BIG OLE](#) <-- Link to Google Map of Course, works great w/ your Google Maps phone app!

- Participants are paddling on *public waters* and must remain aware of their surroundings, especially around boaters.
- Participants should wear their PFD if paddling in adverse weather.
- Friday paddlers should bring cash or credit card for a post-paddle meal at Arrowwood's Deck Bar ([menu](#)).