

Procedure for Lockage for Canoes and Kayaks (no Paddleboards currently allowed)

by Mary Wimmer, Dee Fulton, Chris Linton, and Bruce Summers of **Morgantown Area Paddlers (MAP)**

Read about our locks, operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, at the following website:

www.lrp.usace.army.mil/Missions/Navigation/Locks-and-Dams/

On-line maps of the recently updated (April 2019) Upper Monongahela River Water Trail, including access points, locks and lock phone numbers, can be found in the MAP Guide to Flatwater Paddling (<http://arcg.is/2pCMnJA>) and at <http://www.uppermonriver.org>. Hard copies (free!) are given out on MAP trips, and have been distributed widely in outdoor venues and equipment stores, CVBs, restaurants, and other locations.

Lock operation schedule:

- The Morgantown Lock currently operates 7 days a week, *from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. (used to be 3)*
- The Point Marion Lock operates 24/7.
- Hildebrand and Opekiska L&Ds: check with [www.uppermonriver.org/](http://www.uppermonriver.org) for current schedules.

What you need to bring with you:

Someone in your party needs to have a **cell phone**. (And yup, it needs to be charged!) You also need to have **one rope or strap (more if many boats), 6-8 feet long, and life jackets**.

The “Lockage” (passage through the lock):

1. First and foremost, **all boaters are required to wear their life jackets - imperative!**
2. As you approach the “Arrival Point” before the lock, you will need to call the lockmaster to tell him/her that you are wanting to do a lockage, and if you are a novice at this. (Some pull ropes work, some may not.) You may want to call ahead to let them know you are coming, as they are not always in the office when you arrive. The phone numbers are:
 - Morgantown Lock: 304-292-1885
 - Point Marion Lock 724-725-5289

Other lock numbers can be found on the links above.

3. **The lockmaster will give you instructions, esp. if you are new to lockages, so listen carefully!** You will be told when to enter the lock, and where to go to tie onto a cylinder that rises and falls with the water. Tie-on is just a safety feature – the boater just holds the rope, and the process is slow, so you don’t feel much of anything. The other boaters will form a “raft” with the anchored boater by holding on each other’s boats.



Dee, Chris and Bruce await the go-ahead



Rope attached to
Cylinder #1



Mary, Chris and Bruce form
a kayak raft

4. You are now set. The water will rise (or fall) slowly, and **when doors are fully open**, you untie and exit the lock. The trip back through is similar, with water falling (or rising) this time.