



# Association of Canadian Sea Kayak Guides

## *Freshwater Kayak Instructor Training & North Pacific Outer Coast Sea Kayak Guide Training*

The Association of Canadian Sea Kayak Guides (ACSKG) will only consider endorsing certified guide courses that are run in northern Pacific Ocean outer coastal regions.

ACSKG certified guides are trained, evaluated and certified on the north Pacific coast.

This guide-training standard has existed since the early days of the ACSKG; it has long been upheld though the process of reviewing the curriculum and agenda of each new leadership course.

Even courses applying to run in British Columbia's Gulf Islands have been denied ACSKG endorsement; there are simply no substitutes for the learning opportunities provided by the north Pacific outer coast. This guide-training standard is published on the ACSKG website:

[www.acskg.ca/Certification.aspx](http://www.acskg.ca/Certification.aspx)

Guides require many instructor skills, yet instructors are not necessarily trained in the specific skill sets required by professional, certified multi-day wilderness guides.

Some of the fundamental reasons why the ACSKG adopted and continues to uphold this guide-training standard include:

- Full guides are not invincible. Assistant guides may be instantly promoted and tasked with leading a group, without an assistant of their own, while conducting treatment and/or evacuation of the fallen full guide. This would be much more successfully completed if the assistant had previous experience and training in the environment it was occurring.
- Tides are one of the most significant daily factors taken into consideration by sea kayak guides. North Pacific tides can range over six vertical metres within seven hours. Associated tidal currents and the resulting, variable sea conditions are major factors affecting each moment a kayak group is at sea. These conditions simply do not occur on freshwater.
- From a kayak guide's perspective, sea conditions on the outer coast have much to do with wavelength. No lake on Earth is capable of generating the diversity and magnitude of wavelengths encountered on the Pacific Ocean. No theoretical lesson could ever adequately substitute the value of experiencing Pacific outer coast swell.
- ACSKG assistant guide courses include extensive practical lessons on northwest coastal weather observation and interpretation, as well as learning to decipher and apply west coast VHF marine weather reports. These essential and highly valued practical components could only be covered in theory elsewhere; no real-time experience is possible in freshwater.

The ACSKG has no day-guide certifications. Day-trip guiding is a separate topic; one which is generally managed by other organizations.

The Association is exclusively devoted to upholding the highest level of guide training, certification and operating standards for multi-day, guided wilderness sea kayak expeditions.

The ACSKG does not provide freshwater-trained kayak instructors with certification enabling them to work as assistant sea kayak guides on multi-day wilderness expeditions, unless they have satisfactorily completed an ACSKG endorsed leadership course.