Roanoke River Blueway Safety & Stewardship

The Roanoke River Blueway is a beloved natural resource and a major attraction for paddlers. To ensure the safety of all users and the preservation of this resource, the Roanoke River Blueway Coalition has established safety guidelines and stewardship principles. By following these guidelines, paddlers can help protect the river and its surroundings for future generations.

Safety Guidelines:
1. Obey all “Private Property” and “No Trespassing” signs.
2. Inform others (family, friends, or colleagues) of your plan.
3. Ensure that gear and equipment are suitable for river conditions.
4. Make certain that all participants are fully capable of paddling and safely navigating the river.
5. State law requires a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) for all paddlers under age 16.

Stewardship Principles:
1. Leave No Trace: The river's beauty and recreational opportunities are available for all to enjoy. To help ensure the preservation of this resource, Leave No Trace principles should be practiced. Blueway users should observe the following:
   a. Minimize campfire impacts
   b. Disimpact campsites
   c. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
   d. Leave no trace: Take your trash with you
   e. By following these guidelines, paddlers can help protect the river and its surroundings for future generations.

Water Levels:
The river's water levels can affect the safety and accessibility of certain access points. High water levels may make certain sections of the river impassable, while low water levels can present dangerous boating conditions. Water levels are monitored regularly, and the Roanoke River Blueway Coalition provides updates on the website. Paddlers are encouraged to check the latest water level information before heading out on the water.
Ways to experience the Roanoke River Blueway

**Float**
Canoes, kayaks, rafts and stand-up paddleboards are all great ways to enjoy the river. Some stretches are ideal for beginners and families with children, while other portions include challenging white water rapids. Always check river levels before going on the river.

**Fish**
There are great fishing opportunities on the Roanoke River Blueway. Smallmouth and largemouth bass, bluegill, catfish and trout are among the species found in the river. Portions of the river are part of Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries’ trout stocking program.

**By Land**
Enjoy the beauty and serenity of the Roanoke River Blueway as it flows alongside nearly 45 miles of the Roanoke River Greenway, a paved multi-use trail for walking, jogging or biking. More trail access to the river exists at Explore Park just off the Blue Ridge Parkway in Roanoke County.

A full list of outfitters and shops can be found at RoanokeRiverBlueway.org.