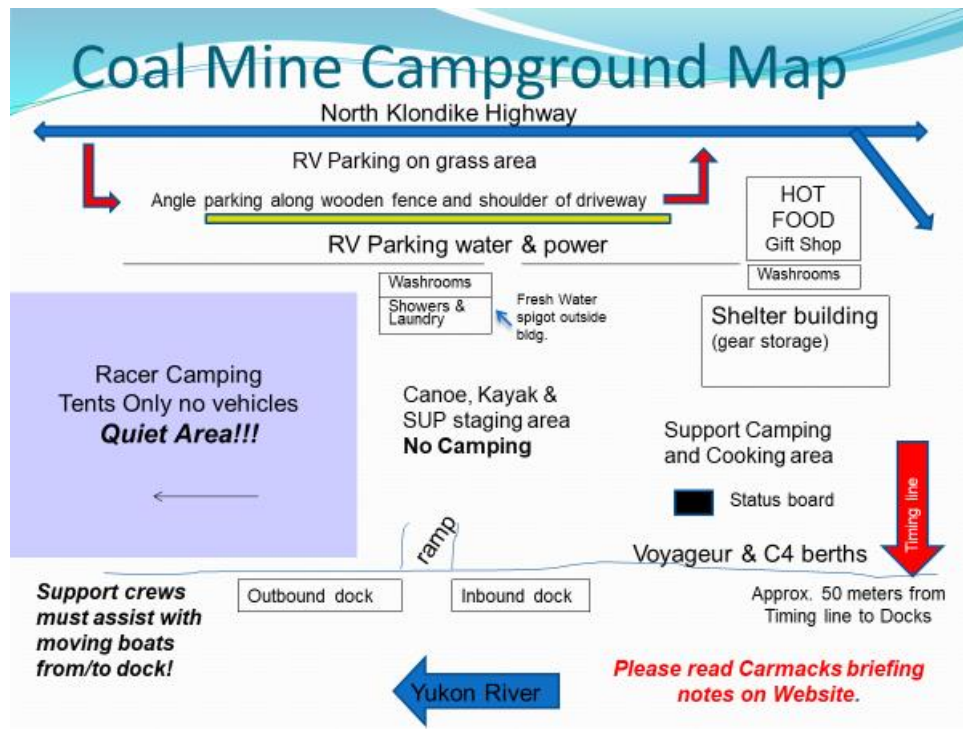


# Yukon River Quest Briefing Notes for Carmacks Checkpoint

The following document is to give racers and their support crew a better idea of what to expect at the Carmacks checkpoint. The document is broken into 3 sections with information pertinent to Support Crews, Voyageur/C4 Racers and Canoe/Kayak/SUP racers.

## General Layout and Notes on the Carmacks Checkpoint



- **LOCATION:** 2-2.5 hours up N. Klondike Hwy. from Whitehorse. Carmacks is reached by highway first but is actually downriver from Little Salmon. Several river views along walkway in town. Cross Yukon River bridge to Coal Mine Campground CP 3, about a mile further on right just before junction with Robert Campbell Highway.
- Carmacks CP 3 at the Coal Mine Campground opens at 0600 Thursday morning.
- Required 7-hour Stop. Teams may stay longer if needed but must notify a checker.
- Teams must reach CP 3 within 35 hours of the start (2200 Thurs evening) and leave within 42 hours of the start (0500 Fri morning - close of checkpoint). Written notification is required if scratching! (\$100 penalty if race officials are

not notified before checkpoint closes). If you remove your boat from the staging area, please inform one of the Carmacks coordinators.

- Support Crews need to be here ahead of time ready to support your paddlers. Watch Little Salmon times on race tracker/leaderboard to approximate your team's arrival time. If you have a voyageur trailer, please take it to a storage area a short distance from the Coal Mine Campground on the Robert Campbell hwy.
- You can sign up for paid support for Carmacks at Tuesday's registration with the Coal Mine Campground Staff. <https://www.yukonriverquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Carmacks-Support.pdf>
- If you are not staying in the campground, let us know at registration.
- Take money to buy food - the showers take \$1 "loonies".
- There is internet access but of limited capacity.

### Support crew briefing

1. There is limited RV and vehicle parking space at the checkpoint. Please park efficiently or as directed by the staff. Boat trailers are stored at separate location please ask campground staff where that is.



Figure 1: Do not setup camp in staging area.

2. It is important that when support crew arrive in Carmacks that they do not set up their camp site in the staging area for the canoes, kayaks and SUPs. If you are not sure where that area is located please contact the campground staff.
3. Support crew should contact Coal Mine Campground Staff regarding specific questions on campground facilities. Facilities are limited. <https://www.yukonriverquest.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Coal-Mine-Campground.pdf>
4. Racers have a quiet area set aside for sleeping, support crew **cannot** setup their camp/cooking facilities in this area. Support crew can use this area for sleeping as well, but not as a common area for cooking, or other activities that might create noise while other racers are trying to sleep. No vehicle parking in this area.
5. Inbound dock usually has 3 to 4 volunteers on it, always with lifejackets on.
6. Outbound dock usually has 2 volunteers on it
7. We ask that spectators and specifically small children to stay off the docks during the race so we don't have to worry about someone falling into the river.
8. Teams have approximately 50m/150 ft of distance from the timeline to the dock to slow their boat down and line it up parallel to the outside edge of the dock.

9. Bowline must be accessible to the volunteers on the dock, not duck taped down or hidden under the spray skirt.
10. Volunteers on the dock will secure the boat to the dock and help racers out of the boat. Support crew need to get them from the dock to shore. **All gear stays in the boats until they are moved to staging area. This is very important as quite often the racers are very unstable on their feet when they get out of their boat and if there is gear laying on the dock quite often they trip over it or step on it causing damage.**
11. Canoes, kayaks and SUPs are then passed from the dock to the shoreline (using the bowline or SUP tether line) and then carried up to the staging area.
12. Support crew must help in the lifting of the boats out of the water up to the staging area. **Ideally 4 people are required to lift the boats up to the staging area.**
13. Voyageurs and C4s need both bow and stern line available when coming to the dock. It is important to realize that with the size of the voyageur crew plus the 4 volunteers on the dock that we can't have everyone getting out of the boat at once and standing around on the dock or the dock will start to sink.
14. Support people need to get their crew to the shore as quickly as possible and then be ready to assist in lining the voyageurs and C4s back up the shoreline to their staging area. Depending on the number of C4s and the available shoreline there might be the requirement to store some C4s in the canoe and kayak staging area. **All gear stays in the boats until they are moved to staging area.**
15. If there are multiple canoes, kayaks and SUPs coming in we can take 2 at the inbound dock, 1 at the outbound dock. The shoreline is too steep to take them out there.
16. Multiple voyageurs or C4s coming in, we can take only one at the inbound dock others will be waved to the shore.
17. Remember to turn your Spot off while in Carmacks.
18. Support crew checks out and cleans up their teams' boats at the staging area and provides all the necessary information/care that their racers might need. There is usually a nurse available at the checkpoint in case of any health issues that need to be dealt with.
19. Leaving Carmacks remember you must have another gear check done prior to your departure time. Also remember to reactivate your SPOT for tracking.
20. Canoe, kayaks and SUPs need to be carried from staging area to outbound dock. **Ideally 4 people are required to lift the canoes and kayaks down from the staging area to the outbound dock.**
21. Voyageurs and C4 usually choose to leave from the shoreline at their staging area.
22. Timer will tell you when you can leave.
23. Some checkpoint staff will be in Carmacks early Wednesday evening if you have any further questions
24. To remain in the race your team must reach CP 3 within 35 hours of the start (2200 Thurs evening) and leave within 42 hours of the start (0500 Fri morning - close of checkpoint). Written notification is required if scratching! (\$100 penalty if race officials are not notified before checkpoint closes).!!!

- Power line crosses river 2km out. Then a short straight section followed by a bend left with large island mid-river.
- **Bear Right!** Safest & easier approach is to go **RIGHT** of the island. If you go **Left** of the island, you will need to stay right and paddle very hard after island to get River Right for the proper approach to CP3.
- **Fast Water!** The Timeline is marked by **orange cones/flags, 50 metres** upstream of the dock. After crossing the time line, you should be no more than **5 metres** from the shore. Teams should come **straight in alongside dock** (kayak rudders up). **Toss your bow line to the crew on the dock**, and they will assist you. Voyageurs also toss your stern line. **Don't overshoot the dock!** If you miss this checkpoint you will have to paddle into **Carmacks** and take out river left after the big bridge.





## Voyageur & C4 briefing

1. It is strongly recommended that all teams have support crew available to help them in Carmacks. Many racers have tried doing this race without support crew and have found it extremely difficult to deal with the logistics in Carmacks due to their level of exhaustion when they arrive.
2. River current is very strong in mid channel so we ask you to **Bear Right!** Safest and easier approach is to go RIGHT of the island. If you go Left of the island, you will need to stay right and paddle very hard after the island to get River Right for the proper approach to Carmacks. This is the racers choice to make.
3. Docking in Carmacks: Coming into the Carmacks checkpoint dock can be very easy or it can be a bit of a stressful situation. The key to an easy docking is to stay close to shore approximately 5 meters (16 -17ft), slow down after passing the timing line and concentrate on lining your boat up parallel to the dock. Teams have approximately 50m/150ft of distance from the timeline to the dock to slow their boat down and line it up parallel to the outside edge of the dock. Have your bow and stern lines ready to pass to the people on the dock. It is best to have your lines stored on the right hand/starboard side of the boat ready to toss to the volunteers, this prevents the line from possibly get tangled around one of your crew members. The river current here is strong and if you don't come in parallel to the dock, but have your bow pointed towards the dock and your stern out towards the river, you will get swept around by the river. If you are out in midstream (river current is very strong) after passing the timeline you will have a hard paddle to try and get to the dock and this is where many people have over-strained themselves in the past. Inbound dock usually has 3 to 4 volunteers on it, always with lifejackets on. If you see the volunteers shouting (likelihood of hearing them is very poor) and waving at you. They are trying to get your attention because you are too far away from the dock to line up parallel or you are coming in too fast; the weight of a fully loaded voyageur coming in fast will pull the volunteer off the dock if they manage to catch your lines.
4. Volunteers on the dock will secure the boat to the dock and help racers out of the boat. Support crew need to get them from the dock to shore. **All gear stays in the boats until they are moved to staging area. This is very important as quite often the racers are very unstable on their feet when they get out of their boat and if there is gear laying on the dock quite often they trip over it or step on it causing damage.**
5. It is important to realize that with the size of the voyageur crew plus the 4 volunteers on the dock that we can't have everyone getting out of the boat at once and standing around on the dock, or the dock will start to sink.
6. Support people need to get their crew to the shore as quickly as possible and then be ready to assist in lining the voyageurs back up the shoreline to their staging area. Depending on the number of C4s and the available shoreline there might be the requirement to store some C4s in the canoe and kayak staging area

The following 2 pictures show good examples of voyageurs coming into the dock (close to shore and moving nice and slow).



**Figure 3. A good Voyageur docking approach.**



**Figure 4. Nice and slow and lined up parallel to dock**

The following picture shows the not recommended way to come into the dock (not parallel or close to the shore and too fast)



**Figure 5. Coming into the dock at an angle and too fast**

7. Multiple voyageurs or C4s coming in; we can take only one at the inbound dock others will be waved to the shore. So, look for someone on shore near the timeline trying to get your attention to come to shore there.
8. Remember to turn your Spot off while in Carmacks.
9. Support crew checks out and cleans up their team's boat at the staging area and provides all the necessary information/care that their racers might need. There is usually a nurse available at the checkpoint in case of any health issues that need to be dealt with.
10. Leaving Carmacks remember you must have another gear check done prior to your departure time. Also remember to re activate your SPOT for tracking.
11. Voyageurs and C4s usually choose to leave from the shoreline at their staging area.
12. A timer will tell you when you can leave





Figure 6. Voyageur leaving from shoreline

## Canoe, kayak & SUP briefing

1. It is strongly recommended that all teams have support crew available to help them in Carmacks. Many racers have tried doing this race without support crew and have found it extremely difficult to deal with the logistics in Carmacks due to their level of exhaustion when they arrive.
2. River current is very strong in mid channel so we ask you to **Bear Right!** Safest & easier approach is to go RIGHT of the island. If you go Left of the island, you will need to stay right and paddle very hard after island to get River Right for the proper approach to Carmacks. This is the racers choice to make.
3. Docking in Carmacks: Coming into the Carmacks checkpoint dock can be very easy or it can be a bit of a stressful situation. The key to an easy docking is to stay close to the, shore approximately 5 meters (16 -17ft), slow down after passing the timing line and concentrate on lining your boat up parallel to the dock. Teams have approximately 50m/150ft of distance from the timeline to the dock to slow their boat down and line it up parallel to the outside edge of the dock. Have your bowline ready to pass to the people on the dock. The river current here is strong and if you don't come in parallel to the dock but have your bow pointed towards the dock and your stern out towards the river, you will get swept around by the river. If you are out in midstream (river current is very strong) after passing the timeline you will have a hard paddle to try and get to the dock. This is where many people have over-strained themselves in the past. We ask the SUP paddlers to kneel on their board as they come into the dock. This procedure has worked well since the introduction of SUPs to the race.
4. Inbound dock usually has 3 to 4 volunteers on it, always with lifejackets on. If you see the volunteers shouting (likelihood of hearing them is very poor) and



waving at you. They are trying to get your attention because you are too far away from the dock to line up parallel to it or you're coming in too fast.



**Figure 7. A good approach to the dock and bow person has a bowline ready to pass to the volunteer on the dock**



**Figure 8. A bad approach to the dock.**



Figure 9. The unexpected capsize can still happen, so be prepared.

5. Volunteers on the dock will secure the boat to the dock and help racers out of the boat. Kayakers need to raise their rudders. Support crew need to get them from the dock to shore. **All gear stays in the boats until they are moved to staging area. This is very important as quite often the racers are very unstable on their feet when they get out of their boat and if there is gear laying on the dock quite often they trip over it or step on it causing damage.**
6. Canoes, kayaks and SUPs are then passed from the dock to the shoreline (using the bowline or SUP tether line) and then carried up to the staging area.
7. Support crew must help in the lifting of the boats out of the water up to the staging area. **Ideally 4 people are required to lift the boats up to the staging area.**
8. Remember to turn your Spot off while in Carmacks.
9. Support crew checks out and cleans up their team's boat at the staging area and provides all the necessary information/care that their racers might need. There is a nurse available at the checkpoint in case of any health issues that need to be dealt with.
10. Leaving Carmacks remember you must have another gear check done prior to your departure time. Also remember to re activate your SPOT for tracking.
11. Canoe, kayaks and SUPs need to be carried from staging area to outbound dock. **Ideally 4 people are required to lift the canoes and kayaks down from the staging area to the outbound dock.**
12. Timer will tell you when you can leave.





Figure 10: SUPs leaving Carmacks

### **How important is a Support Crew?**

- When you see racers arriving in Carmacks, you very quickly get an idea of how hard the race has been to get there and whether the racer is going to continue. Ones that don't have a good support crew waiting for them will always find it harder to get back in the boat. So, what can the support crew do to make that difference?
- When the boats start arriving help your racer off the dock and then come back to help haul your canoe or kayak up to the staging area. The more hands helping to get the boats out of the water as well as back into water, is one area where all support crews help is greatly appreciated. Also have a bow line on your racers boat long enough to reach the shore from the dock (min. 25ft.). That way you reduce the chances of losing the boat in the current when it gets past over to the shore and some poor soul won't have to stand in the freezing water to catch your boat as it is passed to shore because your rope is too short.
- The first boats can be into Carmacks shortly after 6:00 am Thursday morning and the last boats will be leaving Friday morning somewhere between 4:00 - 5:00 am. So that means between those hours there are racers trying to get some sleep. So, a quiet area for them is important. The campground has a quiet section set aside for tents, so the racers can catch some sleep. Tents are not very soundproof, so the support crew should be setting up their cooking areas and their tents outside this area and let the racers sleep. But every year that has not been the case. So, give your racer and all the other racers a chance to a good couple of hours of sleep. Keep the sleeping area as quiet as possible. If you have a RV park it in the parking area not in the sleeping area, don't run



your generator or play your favourite music so loud that the rest of the campground hears it (I'm not kidding about this as it does happen).

- When the racer is sleeping, clean the boat (boy can they be smelly), recheck the gear list, have dry clothes ready, food, hot water, bandages, first aid etc. Remember there is a gear check required in Carmacks before the boat can leave so getting it done well in advance of departure time can reduce stress. Find people to help you carry your boat back down to the launching dock, not at the last minute but before that (it gets harder to find people later in the evening). Racers like to know their standing in the race and any other interesting race gossip so having some information you can pass on to them it is usually appreciated.
- The campground is a family run business and over the years I'm just not sure if they sleep the whole time the YRQ is there, but they're always out there lending a helping hand. So, any help you can give them cleaning up the campground I'm sure would be greatly appreciated.
- If anyone ever tells you being a support crew is an easy job. Then they're just not supporting their crew adequately. Oh, yah take a picture of your racer getting out of their boat in Carmacks, so they have something to look back on and see how good or bad they look at that point of the race. Be ready to help in Dawson, not just your crew but all the teams that make it there. They all deserve your support for completing this race.

As you leave Carmacks and head north to Dawson be prepared for sudden changes in river conditions.



I hope all the racers and their support crew have a great time at the Carmacks checkpoint. To make this work everyone must work together and support not just their team but everyone participating in the race.

Thanks everyone: Al Foster