

Fourteen intrepid kayakers spent Memorial Day weekend on Port Gamble Bay up at the north end of the Kitsap Peninsula. This was our last shakedown in preparation for our trek into Desolation Sound Provincial Park in British Columbia at the end of June.



For this weekend, it was the opportunity to practice packing our boats with all the respective gear we will need for the longer voyage. Learning to paddle a group takes a little practice, and everyone gets to work on their 'cadence' as they paddle. It didn't take very long after we first set out before we were scattered over a 1/4 mile from front to back, so we stopped, rafted up, and then worked on staying in pairs or trios with some of the newer paddlers in front and the more experienced folks in the back or sweep positions. Progress was notable after that change.

We also took the opportunity to practice some more self and assisted rescue drills when the afternoon winds started gusting and we actually experienced some good waves with crests.



The water was still pretty cold, too. By the end of the first day, everyone was finally qualified and we came ashore to set up camp and had a great meal and a chance to dry out and soak up some rare Puget Sound sun.

Morning tides left us with a short haul from the beach to some estuaries where we portaged our loaded boats out to deeper water for the paddle along the Bay. Since Desolation Sound

experiences up to a 19-foot tidal change between Highest High water and Lowest Low, we visually learned the effects of tidal currents and their relationship to tidal heights. We're ready for the trek north at the end of the month!