

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **First Ever Maryland Canoe and Kayak State Championships at ASCI**

McHenry, MD – From 4-6pm on Saturday, August 13, competitors from around the region will compete in the first ever Maryland Canoe and Kayak State Championships at the Adventure Sports Center International (ASCI), home of the world's only mountaintop whitewater course. The Championship is part of the 2011 Maryland Canoe and Kayak Series produced by the Bethesda Center of Excellence (BCE). BCE is the nation's premiere slalom canoe/kayak training center and is led by two-time Olympic Silver medalist Dana Chladek. Dana is also BCE's head coach and will be fielding a team of young up and coming athletes at the event.

The State Championships will be a first glimpse of whitewater competition at ASCI since it was awarded the ICF 2014 Canoe Slalom World Championships. ASCI won out over bids from Austria and Poland at the April meeting of the International Canoe Federation (ICF) in Paris, France. "Deep Creek 2014," the official title of the ICF 2014 Canoe Slalom World Championships, is scheduled for September 17-21<sup>st</sup>. Deep Creek 2014 will also mark the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the highly successful 1989 Canoe Slalom World Championships held on the Savage River in Garrett County.

Canoe slalom refers to 'decked' or 'covered' whitewater boats which race a series of gates strategically placed over rapids. The four official Olympic disciplines include single men and women's kayak (where athletes sit in the boat and use a double bladed paddle) and single and double canoes (where athletes kneel in the boat and use a single bladed paddle).

Maryland has historically fielded the nation's most successful slalom athletes, including World Champions Jon Lugbill, Davey Hearn, Fritz and Lecky Haller, Cathy Hearn, Dana Chladek and Olympic Gold Medalist Joe Jacobi. Bill Endicott, the most successful canoe coach in U.S. history, is also based in Maryland. The Maryland State Championships will be the first and only state-level whitewater competition in the county.

The State Championships will take place on the upper section of the ASCI whitewater course. Each run lasts around 100 seconds, and athletes must navigate 20 gates covering 300 meters of rapids. Gates are two poles hung over the river from a wooden crossbar, creating a meter wide 'gate' through which athletes must paddle. At least 6 of the gates require athletes to paddle upstream. Hitting the poles or missing a gate entirely adds 'penalties' to a score. The score is a racer's time plus penalties, and the lowest score wins.

Watching the race is easy. ASCI is open to the public and spectators can watch from rocks alongside the river or from the grass-sloped amphitheatre. Refreshments will be on sale at Wisp Resort's Pumphouse Café. Regular guided rafting and kayaking will take place during normal whitewater hours, with trips at 11am and 1:30pm. Please call ahead for reservations. The race will last from 4-6pm, with awards immediately following the last run.

The Adventure Sports Center International (ASCI) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3), charitable organization formed to promote adventure tourism and healthy outdoor lifestyles. ASCI operates the world's only

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mountaintop river park and has taken over 45,000 people rafting since it opened in 2007. Activities include whitewater rafting, kayaking and canoeing, rock climbing, rappelling, mountain biking, trail running, orienteering and more. Programs are designed for groups and individuals of all skill levels and backgrounds.

For more information about ASCI programs and reservations, please contact 301-387-3250, email [asci@adventuresportscenter.com](mailto:asci@adventuresportscenter.com) or visit [www.adventuresportscenter.com](http://www.adventuresportscenter.com).