

## **Planes, Falls and Flat Water Joys; Paddling the Kanairktok River in Labrador: TA Loeffler**

TA Loeffler's presentation placed the audience in the middle of the Labrador wilderness on the remote Kanairktok River. The logistics are significant, however detailed planning and preparation, including the improvements of river paddling skills resulted in a successful, safe trip.

There is always a great flurry of activity that occurs whenever a float plane is loaded or unloaded. They are tightly scheduled and there is often the question, "Will we be able to land and be dropped off or will this be an expensive flight seeing effort?" The pilot will often circle the landing area a few times to check for hazards and then with the plane banking and throttle cut, the plane drops suddenly from the sky and skims along the surface of the lake like the water bugs we all captured as kids.

Gear is grabbed and tossed, the plane become cavernous once again, and we all hop to shore to watch the plane take off. Emotions swell like the buzz of the straining engine and then the plane is off, gone. We are alone with ourselves, along with bears, black flies... and the profound silence. A deafening silence that is only sliced by us and the occasional jumping trout. Remote Labrador...with the lakes and river providing the multi-textured ribbon of experiences that will enter our bodies, minds, and souls with each paddle stroke and each step along the portages.

TA Loeffler's presentation discussed the preference to lining the canoes instead of running rapids in several situations. Should the boats take on water or capsize while running these, there was the possibility of personal injury, loss of gear or damaging the canoes which would make it difficult to complete the trip. Furthermore, the risk of injuries in such a remote location had to be minimized as the ramifications are much more significant, even deadly.

