



AMAS' RAPID TRANSIT

Whitewater rivers provide a sense of freedom to all who challenge themselves in the rapids. But for members of the Alternate Mobility Adventure Seekers group, that sense of freedom is especially profound.

Says AMAS president Larry Thrasher, "It gives me mobility without the use of my chair. When I'm in a raft, I'm like anybody else." Thrasher, who has been rafting and kayaking with AMAS since 1985, jokes, "I think I've swam every rapid in Hells Canyon."

On the first rafting trip, quadriplegic members sat on inflatable mattresses in the bottom of the rafts.

Today, AMAS has developed its own specially adapted raft frames to provide solid and reasonably safe seating for the physically challenged. And Ertter jokes that trips on the Payette have gotten much smaller because, "everyone's pretty bored with it. They want something more exciting." This year the BSU-based outdoor program for the physically challenged has run rafting trips down the Payette, Hells Canyon and the Salmon River gorge, and will run a late summer excursion down the North Fork Payette. □



Top: Running the Payette River's Mike's Hole, clockwise from lower left: Lyle Stilwill, Larry Thrasher, Dave Lindsay, K.C. Thrasher, Nancy Ertter and Dave O'Day.

Middle: Carrying Virginia Collier to the put-in on the Payette River are Lindsay, front, Dave Kester, back. Thrasher is in wheelchair with Ertter behind him.

Bottom: Lindsay and Collier in an inflatable kayak.