

## **Q & A: Smith River - Human Waste Packout and SCAT Machine**

**Q: Why are floaters now required to pack-out human waste?**

**A:** The 2021 legislature granted FWP spending authority to implement a human waste pack-out system to reduce impacts to natural and cultural resource in the river corridor. This decision supports a long-term stewardship approach to management that limits disturbance to soil, vegetation, and cultural resources. It also reduces risks to public health and contamination of water resources.

**Q: How will FWP ensure that groups are using a portable toilet?**

**A:** River Rangers will perform an equipment compliance check at the Camp Baker put-in to ensure that groups possess one, or more, of the approved portable toilet(s). River Rangers will also be monitoring compliance during river patrols to determine if people are simply digging cat holes or defecating directly on the ground.

**Q: Why do some people call portable toilets a “groover”?**

**A:** After much experimentation with different toilet options on the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon, the “groover” came into existence by 1974. Users would sit on an army surplus ammo can which left grooves on their behind and back of thighs, when not using a toilet seat.

**Q: Where do we place the toilet at camp?**

**A:** Preferably in a private location near the core camp location to minimize carrying. FWP will continue to maintain the original privacy screening used for the decommissioned pit toilets in those camps that don't have natural vegetative screening.

**Q: How do you keep the portable toilet isolated from your food and kitchen gear in the boat?**

**A:** The simplest method is to follow a camp and boat sanitation plan that isolates dirty gear from food and clean gear. See document titled, “*River Trip Sanitation Plan*”.

**Q: How will we keep an appropriate level of sanitation while in camp?**

**A:** Similar to the boat sanitation plan, it's important to set up camp in a fashion that isolates dirty items associated with the toilet. When you are on the river, use hand sanitizer if you happen to touch your toilet or need to use it during the day. When you arrive at camp, have two people set up the hand wash station first, then the toilet before

anything else is set up. If these two individuals wash and sanitize after setting up the toilet system, the rest of camp can be unpacked without cross-contamination.

**Q: What do I do if I need to use the toilet during the day?**

**A:** If you need to use the toilet during the day, you can pull your toilet out of the boat and use it, if that's convenient for you. Another option is to carry a "DAY PORTO" which is a backup toilet set aside just for day use.

**Q: What is the SCAT Machine?**

**A:** SCAT stands for Sanitized Containers with Alternative Technology and is a stainless steel washing machine designed to clean human waste out of portable, hard-sided toilets.

**Q: Where and how do I dispose of the human waste in my portable toilet at the end of the trip?**

**A:** A SCAT machine is located at the Eden Bridge take-out. SCAT stands for Sanitized Containers with Alternative Technology and this stainless steel washing machine is designed to clean human waste out of portable, hard-sided toilets.

**Q: Can I put trash, wet wipes or personal hygiene products in the toilet?**

**A: NO!** Human waste and standard toilet paper are the only things that belong in the toilet. All other materials, including personal hygiene products and wet wipes, will cause damage to the SCAT machine and need to be packed out separately.

**Q: What if the SCAT Machine is broken? How will I clean my toilet?**

**A:** If you arrive to the take-out and discover that the SCAT Machine is out of order, a "back-up" RV dump station, containing a water hose and drain, is located directly adjacent to the SCAT Machine building.

**Q: What are my options if I don't have the funds to purchase a portable toilet?**

**A:** There are a couple of cost-friendly approved toilets you can purchase including a plastic five-gallon bucket with a threaded and sealed lid or an army surplus 20mm Ammo Can. There are several other agency approved portable toilets, varying in price, displayed on our website [here](#).

**Q: Will the portable toilet have the volume and capacity to last the whole trip?**

**A:** There are varying sizes of agency approved portable toilets. Most of these toilets have been used regularly for several years by river runners and have a capacity to contain 50 or more uses. The size of your group and length of your trip are the factors to consider when calculating whether you'll require more than one portable toilet on your trip.

**Q: What if my toilet breaks?**

**A:** Be prepared. Just like the raft repair kit and 1<sup>st</sup> aid kit that are commonplace in the gear pile, you should bring some sort of heavy-duty tape or other material to facilitate fixing your gear. If you are using a 5-gallon bucket, be aware that not all are manufactured to the same quality.

**Q: How do I care for my toilet?**

**A:** Be thoughtful with how you treat your toilet. Don't throw it from the boat onto the rocky shore where it might break. Begin your trip by adding some spray-on cooking oil, or some other organic lubricant, to the bottom and sidewalls of your toilet before the first use. Adding lubricant will help to prevent adherence.

**Q: Will one wash cycle in the SCAT Machine be enough to clean and sanitize my toilet?**

**A:** Usually, one wash cycle will clean your toilet however, it doesn't hurt to check the inside of your toilet and run a second cycle. To ensure an easy clean, add about one quart of water to your toilet the morning before you pack up on the last day. This helps to loosen the solid waste, so that the first wash cycle leaves your toilet spick and span!