

CRAB: Boston Duck Tours Operating Procedures on the Charles River.

Our ramp into the river is located on the Cambridge side, between North Point Park and the MBTA railroad bridge. The opening in the seawall is at an angle to the ramp creating something of a blind spot. Canoeists, kayakers and operators of small power boats are encouraged not to come close to the opening in the wall. Ducks coming down the ramp sound a prolonged horn blast (4 to 6 seconds).

Ducks entering the river from the ramp go through the opening in the wall and then head upriver on the North Point Park side to the old lock. We sound a prolonged blast again when exiting the upriver end of the lock. The high wall at the end of the lock creates another blind spot. Canoeists and kayakers are encouraged to approach the lock from a point upriver where they can be seen by the operators of the Ducks, and other boaters, who are coming out of the lock.

Once through the old lock, Ducks head for the Cambridge side and go upriver on that side. Once under the Longfellow Bridge, Ducks proceed another 50-100 yards upriver and then cross over to the Boston side to go downriver. We try to avoid using the center span of the Longfellow Bridge.

After going through the lock, Ducks continue downriver on the Nashua Street side and then cross the river to our ramp. At all times, our vessel operators are expected to maintain a straight course.

It is our policy to give larger boats the right of way in the old lock, especially those boats that need a bridge opening. When there is current in the lock, our policy is to allow only one Duck in the lock at a time.

If we know that a disabled vessel is under tow in the lock, we do not enter until the towing vessel and disabled boat are clear.

We recognize that vessels under oars, or under sail, have the right of way (except when overtaking). We do ask that sailors not suddenly and deliberately change course in order to sail close to a Duck. We do our best not to interfere with races at Community Boating.

On the river, we allow passengers, including children, to drive the DUCKS when it is safe to do so. Our operators understand that they are still responsible for assuring that the Duck maintains a straight course.

We monitor VHF Marine channels 13 and 16. The names of our Ducks are painted on the port and starboard side of the bow.

Persons with a question or concern may call:

Matt Knowlton, Director of Operations, at 617-653-4535 or

Jim Healy, Safety Officer, at 617-438-4915