



Media Contact:
 Verde PR
 Brook Sutton
brook@verdepr.com
 970.259.3555

Mad River Canoe Thinks “Green” With ECO Concept Boat

Easley, S.C. (July 20, 2009) – “Going Green.” For some, it’s a fad. For others it’s a mission. For Mad River Canoe, it’s not as much a matter of fashion as it is principle. For our newest concept boat, we decided to take a journey of discovery: to figure out what we’re doing right and what we can do better. The journey was fruitful. The findings were many. And the cumulative result is the Malecite ECO.

This journey began with the renowned Malecite, the design that launched the Mad River brand 1971. It is versatile, well performing and it’s brought some good luck throughout the years. With the Malecite, the shallow-vee bottom was introduced when everyone else was building flat-bottom canoes. It was revolutionary at the time, so what better place to start a new revolution?



We began with materials - to figure out the most sustainable and the least impactful materials available that would still meet the Mad River stringent standards of performance. To understand the Malecite ECO, it’s best to break it down and examine each layer. From exterior to interior:

- *Partially corn-based clear gel coat:* The outside surface of the ECO is a low VOC (volatile organic chemical), clear gel coat made from polyester resin that has been engineered to produce 50-percent fewer volatile solvents while curing. All resins in the Malecite ECO are partially corn-based and have the same qualities as above. We use a closed lamination system for the ECO and all our production boats. In this system, styrene, a VOC, emissions are trapped and filtered before entering the atmosphere. It’s safer for our production staff and it’s safer for the environment.
- *Fiberglass:* Fiberglass is not “green,” but it is still necessary to maintain seaworthiness and to protect the hemp layers (below) from abrasion, impact and resulting potential water absorption.

- *Hemp burlap*: Use of hemp may be the biggest ecological leap in the Malecite ECO. An open weave, coarse fibered fabric provides stiffness to the laminate. Using hemp, the lay-up of the canoe is made from 66-percent natural fibers (twice that of conventional fiberglass fabric). Hemp is a renewable resource and requires 40-percent less energy to produce than fiberglass fabrics.
- *Hemp linen*: With the same benefits of hemp listed above, this tight weave, 9.3-ounce per yard fabric conforms to hull shape and provides rigidity and strength.
- *Fiberglass*: This “shell” layer on the interior of the hull provides another level of consistent water-barrier, impact and abrasion protection.
- *Hand-painted Mad River bunny*: Okay, it’s not green. But who’s going to argue that it’s not cool?

In researching the wood elements for the Malecite ECO, we discovered some surprisingly good news. We were already making solid choices, and opted to use the same wood for the ECO, as with the production Malecite.

- *Gunwales, seat frames and seat trusses in Northern or White ash*: Ash is one of the most sustainable species of hardwood, both commercially and in the wild. The Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) has certified nearly 1 million acres for cultivation and harvest.
- *Decks are American beech*: Beech is another native and readily replenished North American species, available via SFI-certified forests.
- *Cane seat panels*: Cane is a reed endemic to North America and it replenishes itself very rapidly. As luck would have it, it is also one of the most functional choices for this application in terms of comfort and durability.
- *Wood components are finished with Sutherland Welles® Botanical Tung Oil*: For the ECO, we used a citrus-based solvent, totally free of petroleum-based components.
- *Fasteners are stainless steel*: Unlike brass, stainless steel is 100-percent recyclable. Since it less prone to corrosion and rust than other metals, it has a low replacement rate and equals a significant reduction in waste.

At the close to this leg of our journey, we’re left with more questions than answers. Though, we do know a few things.

Have we created an environmentally benign boat? No. But are we on the right path? Absolutely. Have we been inspired to see how far we can take the idea of a “greening” the paddling world, without sacrificing performance and longevity? Yes. Do we have the answers? No, but we do have ideas; and ideas are what started the Mad River revolution, after all.

Mad River Malecite ECO:

Available: In limited run of one canoe

MSRP: \$0. It’s not for sale; it’s for inspiration.

About Confluence Watersports:

Located in Easley, S.C., Confluence Watersports is the result of blending the unique watersports brands: Wilderness Systems®, Perception®, Dagger®, and Wave Sport® kayaks, Mad River Canoe®, Adventure Technology® paddles, and Harmony® accessories. With a full representation of canoes, and kayaks ranging from touring and recreational to high-performance whitewater boats, the Confluence brands are well suited to outfit all paddling enthusiasts. People passionate about the outdoors run the company today: advocates who are dedicated to bringing more people to the water. For more information, please visit: <http://www.confluencewatersports.com>.