

With a sandwich in one hand and drink in the other, former Connellsville native Don Nixon, who now lives in Pittsburgh, recalled the times he swam in the Yough as a young boy. "I saw this in the newspaper and said whoopee. I've never done any of this," Nixon said.

Nixon said he used to reside at 1119 Race St. in Connellsville and graduated from Connellsville High School. He, too, will take in the entire excursion.

For 8-year-old Logan Goddard of Mifflinburg, the trip was fun, but cold. Goddard was accompanied on his first sojourn by his mother, Susan, who said she started taking her older son, Cody, on river sojourns from the time he was 8.

Goddard said she and Cody paddled the Susquehanna River in New York. At first, Goddard said she was apprehensive about Logan being in a duckie by himself, but after they were on the water she changed her mind. "This river is more fun and less dangerous," said Goddard.

The Goddards plan to participate in the entire trip.

As a volunteer for the Westmoreland Regional Trail Council, Harry Morrison of Latrobe said, although it rained, the first five miles of the trip were still pleasant.

Morrison, however, is no stranger to whitewater. He canoes the Yough frequently in Ohiopyle and West Newton. Morrison will continue with the trip on Wednesday and Thursday.

The River Sojourn is a cooperative venture between the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), various individuals, organizations and entities.

It is also a celebration of American Rivers Month with the Youghiogheny being named the 1998 River of the Year by the DCNR.

Today, the river sojourn includes whitewater rafting from Ohiopyle to Bruner Run. The group will return to Ohiopyle for dinner and camping.

The entire trip consists of 15 miles from Connellsville to McKeesport. Along the sojourn, residents and dignitaries from various communities will meet with the participants to nourish, encourage and celebrate.

The remainder of the trip's itinerary includes: Wednesday, biking