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MISSOULA---Boat-going Bob McKinnon and two companions from Great Falls, Glenn Waldenberg and Bill Rutan, will embark from Flathead Lake Friday on a 3500-mile river tour that will wind up in Los Angeles, Calif., about Sept. 1.

McKinnon--a veteran of nearly 5000 miles of river traveling--will be accompanied by his pet bloodhound, Gabriel. It's the first venture at river running for Rutan and Waldenberg.

After leaving Flathead Lake, the adventurers will travel upstream up the Clark Fork River to Missoula, planning to arrive in the Garden City June 14 to help celebrate Missoula's Centennial. Then the foursome will travel down the Clark Fork to the Columbia River as far as Pasco, Wash. They'll take a 400-mile side trip up the Snake and Salmon Rivers, then will retrace their steps to the mouth of the Columbia River at Astoria, Ore. From there the men will travel down the Pacific Ocean coastline to Los Angeles.

Traveling through roughly 1500 miles of alternate "white water" and wide streams should be an interesting proposition in a 15-foot boat with a 40-horsepower engine, according to the three men. The Snake and Salmon are noted for turbulent waters, and even the Clark Fork has sections of wild rapids. "If we get through all right, I think we'll be the first ones to travel the entire distance up the Salmon as far as Salmon City," McKinnon commented.

In 1959 McKinnon traveled down the Missouri, Mississippi, Ohio, Tennessee and Savannah Rivers from Fort Benton to Savannah, Georgia, a distance of 3200 miles. In 1958 the wandering MSU student floated down the Salmon, Snake, Columbia and Sacramento Rivers from North Fork, Idaho to Oakland, Calif.

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