

Grand River Expedition 2010
Steering Committee Notes-Monday, January 18, 2010

Attendees: Mike Smith, Mike Gray, Paul Rentschler, Gloria Miller, Gary Haynes, David Ringlein, Larry Arbanas, Robert Miller, Payal Ravani, Chip Kosloski, M.C. Rothhorn, Reuben Green, Chuck Amboy, Rich Bailey, Mike McGhan, Christina Jordan, Gene Townsend, Eric Larson, Charlie Parmelee, Pat Conley, Doug Carter

Welcome, Introductions, Approval of November 16th Meeting Notes and Agenda

Announcements

Upper Grand – next meeting at 6:30 PM, Wed., January 20th, Blackburn Hall.

Lower Grand – next meeting is January 27th, Grand Valley Metro Offices.

Middle Grand – next meeting at 6:30 PM, February 8th, Woldumar Nature Center.

The Quiet Water Symposium is March 6th - GRE 2010 will have a booth there.

Friends of the Looking Glass will host Mike Smith on Jan. 27th, 7:00 PM, at the firebarn, 911 Main St. in Dewitt. Mike will have a slide show and talk about his trip tracing the Lewis & Clark expedition.

The Eaton Rapids Paddle Club meets at 6:30 PM the last Thursday of every month at the City Hall in Eaton Rapids.

Leadership Team Meeting

Doug Carter reported on the 5 hour discussion among the heads of the regional committees. The objectives of the Expedition were expanded to include those with special physical needs. The website will include a section on paddling with dialysis on the Grand, along with information on pledges for the Michigan Kidney Foundation of Michigan. GRE 2010 has obtained proclamations from the Governor's Committee on Health & Physical Fitness and the Old Town Commercial Association (OTCA).

Regional Coordination

Upper Grand - Paul Rentschler reported that the City of Jackson Chamber of Commerce will be providing lunch. It is the 180th anniversary of the founding of Jackson and there will be historical reenactments as we arrive. The planning for opening ceremonies is underway. GREAT has obtained access for the start, a headwaters tour is planned and we'll have water from the tributaries to pour over the rock. Charlie Parmelee suggested having Verlen Kruger's boat leading the way across Liberty Pond. Mike Smith will be looking into this as well as raising funds by auctioning off the use of the canoe for portions of the trip.

Middle Grand – The first and last days are coming together. Will start in Eaton Rapids by hauling boats and people from the campground around the dam. Mike McGhan volunteered that Eaton Rapids Paddle Club might be able to help out with the transfer. We'll be stopping at Woldumar for the night and Jug & Mug Ski Club will provide a light breakfast before a stop at Old Town for brunch and festivities. Since the Kruger memorial will be dedicated on June 26th, we will not be trying to coordinate with that as was initially thought, but we will have a ceremony there. Gloria Miller reported that Friends of the Maple River will probably have a historical program.

Lower Grand – There are 3 leaders each taking two days. Places to stay and half of the meals are lined up as well as historical presentations. A group in Grand Haven wants to do an ending celebration.

Liability Insurance – Rich Bailey and Pat Harrington have been comparing costs. They are still looking at the American Canoe Association for paddler insurance. They are also looking at insurance to cover volunteer drivers and property.

Budget, Funding & Financial Procedures – April 1, 2010 is the target date for having all direct costs identified. Registration will then be online.

Timberland Resource, Conservation and Development has lost their staff and may have difficulties acting as the fiduciary for the project. Two other 501(c)(3)'s offered to take the issue to their boards.

Mid Michigan Environmental Action Council offered a grant writer to work on a Dart grant proposal. It was mentioned that small groups and retail establishments have been very responsive when approached and this may be an important funding source this time around.

Database & Survey – Rita Jack and Andy Bowman are starting to get responses to the Zoomerang Survey and will incorporate the answers into the main database. The web address <http://tiny.cc/grandriverexpedition2010> now works with or without capitals.

Press Relations – Chuck Amboy has volunteered to coordinate local newspapers. He stressed that we need to reach out to the press in all of the watershed counties and outlined a plan to obtain stories from individuals and submitting them to their local papers. We already have 2 people going on the expedition that will be blogging back to the Grand Haven Tribune. Getoffthecouchpress, Wikipedia and a number of newspapers already have web entries.

Mike Smith suggested we have live interviews from the river and use a GPS to tracker system to provide updates. He will look into getting sponsorship from Spot-Track or Grand Point Marina.

Doug Carter estimated the cost of a videographer at \$5,000. Gene Townsend recommended that we contact Great Lakes Canoe Adventures for a videographer who is already planning on coming on the trip.

Assignment Status

Quiet Water Symposium – Rich Bailey will need a list of the volunteers so that he can print badges. Dave Ringlein will need handouts of trip schedule. Doug will provide Dave with the banner, books on previous expeditions and recent photos.

Draft proclamations – Doug and Robin Barfoot have developed a sample proclamation that organizers can download and take to townships, etc. for passage. A proclamation has been drafted for the Governor and a joint legislative resolution has been prepared. Richard Barclay agreed to walk these through the process. We will put a list of all partners and sponsors on our website.

Celebrity spokesperson – It was decided that we would not seek a single celebrity.

Historic Re-enactors – Project Lakewell has committed to the last four days if we provide mileage. They will do a project each night for those four days. They may have more involvement, but are worried about river depth and possible damage to the boats. They could be involved even if not on the river. Bob Miller may also dress as a voyager. Local hosts can also contact their local historical society, their chamber of commerce and the Grand River Heritage Water Trail for help interpreting local history.

Other contacts – An information sheet with ideas for schools and youth groups was distributed. Contacts need to be made with the 4-H clubs and intermediate school districts.

The next steering committee meeting will be at 6:30 PM, February 15th at Impression Five Science Museum, Lansing. To locate the meeting room, walk up the stairs, go all the way to the back and turn left.