

2010 Grand River Expedition

Notes from Tuesday, March 24, 2009 meeting

Doug Carter and Charlie Parmelee called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm. The 32 participants introduced themselves and briefly described their interest in the Grand River Watershed.

Mike Smith and Dan Smith recapped the two previous Expeditions, in 1990 and 2000. Dan also updated the group on the status of the Verlen Kruger Memorial. Mike was Chair and Dan Treasurer of the 2000 Expedition. They described that the GRE Committee organized and conducted the entire 13-day event, including providing camping and most meals for the participants. Each boat was required to have a purpose for being on the trip, and a responsibility, e.g.: identify and count turtles. Planning and coordination of these events was a tremendous task, taking over two years for each Expedition. A major reason for their success was significant funding from General Motors and a great deal of help from UAW. They feel it's doubtful that support will be available for the 2010 Expedition. As such we need to look at other optional formats.

Doug and Charlie led a discussion of a sampling of optional formats, including the following:

- Consecutive 10-13 day paddle, complete with camping and meals provided – a la 2000
- Consecutive 7-10 day paddle, complete with camping and meals provided
- Consecutive series of day trips, with no camping or meals provided
- Series of day trips over 4-6 weekends, with camping available, no meals provided
- Series of day trips, no camping or meals provided
- Some combination of the above approaches

There seemed to be strong support for paddling on consecutive days, but perhaps coupled with other focused weekend events. Also, since it appears that most of the previously used campsites may still be available, camping should be provided as part of the Expedition. It was noted that people would be willing to pay for or provide their own meals. A dozen or so folks volunteered to with Charlie Parmelee to examine alternative formats and present their recommendations at the next meeting.

The group briefly discussed the stated goals of GRE 2000. Robin Barfoot and Patrick Harrington agreed to review, update and revise the goals for 2010 and present them at the next meeting.

Doug led a discussion on organizational options, including the following:

1. All planning, programming and implementation done by central committee - a la 2000
2. Overall Steering Committee, with local coordination handled by 3 regional "entities"
3. Overall Steering Committee, with local groups handling all details on daily segments
4. Some combination of the above

Doug described a successful program on the Kalamazoo River, which relied on local groups to plan, organize and conduct daily trips. No camping was provided, and the trips were done on consecutive weekends. The group felt that a combination of 2 and 3 above would work best

for GRE 2010. Doug agreed to prepare a check list of responsibilities of local coordinators for discussion at the next meeting. He will also contact organizations which could serve as regional coordinators.

The group briefly discussed financial needs, including those we know we need very soon:

- Website hosting and maintenance
 - Rita Jack with the Sierra Club agreed to do this
- Printing, mapping, graphics materials, etc.
 - Doug is working on requests for donations from Staples and other merchants
- Meeting locations
 - Erik Larson offered Impression 5 for Lansing area meetings, providing there are no conflicts
- Periodic use of meeting materials – display boards, easels, projector, laptop, etc.
 - Charlie was able to “recruit” 3 easels from the Quiet Water Society
 - We still need the other items

Other items:

- Pat Conley agreed to serve as Expedition Secretary – THANKS!
- Rita will check on the Sierra Club policy on insurance/liability for sanctioned events
- Doug and Charlie will check with other organizations to generate a list of paddling groups, watercraft dealers and manufacturers, liveries and other recreational providers
- Suggestion to sell t-shirts as a fund-raiser
- Someone should send out a survey asking committee members for suggestions on GRW 2010 goals, their areas of interest, how they would like to get involved and “who do you know?” that can help make this a successful endeavor.
- Project Lakewell should be invited to participate.

Upcoming events:

- April 14 – next GRE 2010 meeting, 6:30 pm, Impression 5 Science Center
- April 18 - river clean-ups in Lansing and Eaton Rapids
- April 25 - Hugh Heward Challenge, Dimondale to Portland
- May 16 - Eaton Rapids Boat Demonstration and Paddle, GAR Island Park, 10:00 am

The next meeting was set for Tuesday, April 14 – 6:30 pm, Impression 5 Science Center

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by Doug Carter

Doug Carter
517-627-7690
riverologist@comcast.net

Charlie Parmelee
517-589-5237
beaverwood13@aol.com