

**Great Rivers Confluence Project  
Agenda Feb 1, 2011 Afton City Hall**

- 1. Introductions**
- 2. Set meeting calendar for 2011**
- 3. "River Flags" the Bridge Between the Yangtze and Mississippi Rivers, Randy Thoreson**
- 4. The 100 Year St Croix River Celebration Flotilla, Randy Thoreson**
- 5. Confluence map status report, Ian Meuhlenhaus and Charlotte Vick**
- 6. Marketing, contact with Jim Malman, Watchable Wildlife, Randy Thoreson**
- 7. Marketing, inquiry letter re area stories and branding ideas, Charlotte Vick and Mark Huber**
- 8. Marketing, creation of a Confluence Project media presentation, Margaret Smith**
- 9. Update on trail and resource development, Barry Bernstein and Peter Mott**
- 10. Next Meeting**

# Great Rivers Confluence Project Meeting

February 1, 2011

Afton City Hall

**Next Meeting Weds. April 6, 9:00 at GRRVLC in Prescott**

(Color code: orange – upcoming dates; red – to do)

## Attendees:

**Randy Thoreson**, NPS RTCA

**Emily Shively**, NPS RTCA Apprentice

**Mark Huber**, Prescott City Council (Pride in Prescott project; former Duluth healthcare consortium lobbyist)

**Julie Galonska**, NPS SACN Education and Public Programming

**Gene Groebner**, Park Manager, Afton State Park

**Jim Malman**, Watchable Wildlife

**Chris Stein**, NPS SCNSR Superintendent

**Ian Muehlenhaus**, UWRF Geography Dept. GIS Professor

**Jim Shiely**, Great River Road Visitors Center/ Friends of Freedom Park (Board Chair)

**Charlotte Vick**, Great River Road Visitors Center/ Friends of Freedom Park (Board member; retired attorney)

**Margaret Smith**, Executive Director, Great River Road Visitors Center/ Friends of Freedom Park

**Linda Bjorklund**, Great River Road Visitors Center/ Friends of Freedom Park (Board member)

**Pat Snyder**, Mayor, City of Afton

**Peter Mott**, Washington County Parks

**David Nelson**, Nelson Sustainability, Afton resident

**Barry Bernstein**, Hastings Parks and Rec.

## Notes:

### River Flags Project – Randy Thoreson

- Randy met Wang Ping at St. Anthony Falls Laboratory dam removal conference
- Wang Ping is faculty at Macalester College (<http://www.macalester.edu/english/wang.html>; <http://www.wangping.com/>)
- Mississippi River and Yangtze River will have a “sister river” type relationship
- Ping and supporters intend to start at the headwaters of the Mississippi in 2011, canoe to Prescott and kick off this project. They’ll continue their trek down the Mississippi to New Orleans. Next year a group will go to China/possibly Tibet and travel up the Yangtze sharing art, poems and river flags from the U.S.
- “River Flags” will be created locally through workshops in communities using cloth and natural materials (block prints, etc.); may convey river stories; highlight unique flora and fauna, etc.
- River Flags will be placed in communities along the Mississippi River from the headwaters to the delta and similarly along the Yangtze River in China; flags remain in place and are allowed to disintegrate over time
- There could be additional “cultural exchanges” such as musical performances incorporated into community events along the river
- June 25 – Flag making workshop tentatively scheduled at the GRR Visitor Center
- Display flags in Prescott around the time of the St. Croix 100yr Anniversary Paddle (**July 24**)
- **Randy has Ping’s proposal and will email it to interested people (Chris, Julie, Jim Malman, Ian)**
- Julie will talk to the Paddle organizing committee about the project
- Dave mentioned that there may be some concerns by China due to current issues with China and Tibet – form of installation is derived from Tibetan prayer flags—that is why the flag project is named “River Flags”.

- Jim Malman suggested Jim Harris, International Crane Foundation as a resource person knowledgeable about China (<http://www.savingcranes.org/>)

### 100 Year Anniversary – Saint Croix River Celebration Paddle – Julie Galonska

- Julie explained that the St Croix River Association intends to celebrate its 100 year existence by sponsoring “the Paddle” of the whole St Croix River starting July 6<sup>th</sup> in Solon Springs and ending on July 24<sup>th</sup> in Prescott coinciding with the end of River Awareness Week. A kickoff event is being planned for July 5. Planners also hope to connect local celebrations along the way. Perhaps the “Paddle” and the “River Flags” celebrations can be coordinated in some way.
- Julie will email more information about registration activities (registration may open March 1) – see also: [www.stcroixriverassociation.org](http://www.stcroixriverassociation.org)

### Confluence Area Map – Ian Muehlenhaus

- Ian has recruited an undergraduate research assistant (Zach - sophomore) who will be working on the project
- Ian would like examples from the group of interactive maps (similar to the St. Louis Confluence map: [www.confluencegreenway.org](http://www.confluencegreenway.org) that they can email him.
- He has already begun creating the base map using the existing inventory he has and will add sites as the group identifies them (currently group has asset types identified, but not necessarily specific locations)
- Ian and Zach may also develop smart phone applications and links to google maps for directions to sites on the map
- There is a question as to where the map will be “housed” – the GRRVC website? A stand-alone Great Rivers Confluence website? Likely will take numerous forms – online, print, kiosk, etc.
- Base map would be very useful for “charette” phase of the upcoming workshop in April for participants to identify key sites
- Next meeting to discuss map elements will be **February 21st** at 1pm at the GRRVC
- Map will need to be updated and maintained (who will do this?)
- Sites can/should be organized – some sort of hierarchy of sites established to differentiate for visitors
- There is a good example at the St Louis area Mississippi and Missouri Confluence Project. It’s worth looking at this site to see how we could produce an interactive map.
- **At the next meeting, Char will bring an initial list of places to evaluate and discuss platforms for “delivery” of the information**
- **By that time, Ian should have a base map developed for review**

### Branding/Site Identification Letter – Charlotte Vick and Mark Huber

- Mark and Charlotte had created a letter to be sent to the Confluence contact list to help identify area assets and stories.
- **Jim Malman will send Char his site assessment forms to review for the identification process.**
- **Gene Groebner will include the letter in his newsletter to park supporters**

### Marketing the Great River Confluence Area – Jim Malman

- Understand the user trends (largely “non-consumptive” users; hunting and fishing still major driver/funder of conservation and recreation)
- Concerns about diversity of users and future demographic changes (Two books: Everyone’s Nature and Black and Brown Faces in America’s Wild Places)

- Recommended adding a representative from the Army Corps of Engineers to the workgroup (Jim will start with his DC contact and let Randy know who the local person should be)
- Focus on how “investors” will receive a return – motivation and a reason to be involved in the project
- Business and government can partner to leverage resources and enhance each entity’s goals (collaboration vs. competition)
- Recommendation for next steps: do an in depth site assessment of the area
- Consider site attractions from the visitor’s perspective

### Workshop on Marketing and Economics – Charlotte Vick and Jim Malmon

- Jim can do the workshop for 75 in three parts:
  - Intro to Wildlife Tourism (the numbers)
  - Developing Local Community Support
  - How to do a Site Assessment (breakout “charette”)
- Market the workshop to stakeholders, canoers, photographers, church groups, teachers, birders, fisherman, tourism experts, etc.
- Personally invite these people
- Give attendees a toolkit (site assessment) and have them report back in a couple of months
- Cost: there will be a fee; 6 hour workshop; tentative date: **April 7**; Location: Hastings or Carpenter Nature Center
- Need list of people to invite – key players/users/funders/stakeholders

### Trail and Resource Development – Peter Mott

- Pursuing money for trail construction from three areas: Trail extension into Hastings from the new bridge; Railroad crossing bridges (King’s Cove safety issue); TEA money for trail construction from Hwy 61 down Point Douglas Rd – possibly by 2016
- Would like letters of support to submit with proposals (Char and Margaret)

### Media Presentation – Margaret Smith

- 10min DVD with overview of the Confluence Project – use to succinctly engage interested parties/ outreach
- Should contact Venture North, Outdoor Wisconsin, Ron Schara’s group, Prescott Cable to do production work or produce a story that will get the message out (Digital Bridge to Nature)

### Other notes:

- David and Randy will work on a “45 second” public message about the Confluence Project
- Upcoming event: Taste of Freedom, **March 12** 5-7pm at GRRVC
- Legislative reception for arts support Feb 16<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 at the Le Duc Mansion– will mention Confluence Project
- MRT workshops completed – see web for updates
- Next meeting: **April 6, 9am, GRRVC; subsequent meetings – first Tuesdays, 9am (6/7, 8/2, 9/6, 10/4, 11/1, 12/6)**
- Jim Malman will have Army Corps contact within the next two weeks

Respectfully submitted by Emily Shively