



Great Rivers Confluence Project Workshop
Developing a Sustainable Community
Wildlife/Nature Tourism Program

**Presented by James Mallman, President,
Watchable Wildlife Inc.**

Thursday, April 7, 2011, 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
At: Hastings City Hall in the Historic Court House
101 4th St. E. Hastings MN 55033
(715) 262 0104 snelson@freedomparkwi.org

AGENDA

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 8:30—9:00 | Registration, Coffee |
| 9:00—9:15 | Introductions |
| 9:15—10:45 | The Economics Behind Wildlife Tourism:
This session provides an overview of what is happening in nature tourism nationwide. It also explores the impact on state and local economies in areas that promote nature tourism and addresses how shifting demographics have impacted tourism trends. |
| 10:45—11:00 | Break |
| 11:00—12:30 | Providing a Positive Viewing Experience:
This session will help attendees better understand what wildlife visitors want and need. We will also help them determine the best way to budget limited funds to make improvements on existing sites. |
| 12:30—1:15 | Lunch |
| 1:15—3:00 | Building Community Support: Why Promote Wildlife Tourism and Conducting Site Assessments
This session explains the reasons for promoting nature tourism. Wildlife watching is big business, generating billions of dollars and creating hundreds of thousands of jobs. It also deals with identifying your community's assets and those within the surrounding 60 miles, from a visitor's point of view. It covers how to prioritize where best to spend your time and money. |
| 3:00—3:30 | Mapping the Confluence: The U of WI at River Falls has been creating a multi-layered, multi-state map of the confluence area designed for tourists, anglers, nature lovers and more. Learn about this new resource. |
| 3:30 | Questions and Adjournment |

Developing a Sustainable Community Wildlife/Nature Tourism Program

Presented by James Mallman, President, Watchable Wildlife Inc.

Thursday, April 7, 2011, 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Hastings City Hall in the Historic Court House

Notes provided by Emily Shively, Community Planning Technician, National Park Service Rivers and Trails Program

Building Nature/Wildlife Tourism Programs

“So you love nature – big deal – how are you going to pay for it?”

Understand/ accept that public budgets won't fund conservation

Find a different way – Can wildlife fund itself?

- Jobs are fundamental for sustainability
- “Eco” is often associated with activism (Ecotourism may not be the best term to promote)
 - Wildlife/ Nature Viewing is a more widely accepted way to frame activities
- Be strategic (analogy of the bad boxer who blocks punches with his face...)

Recreation trends have changed:

- For detailed statistics see USFWS reports:
<http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/NationalSurvey/reports2006.html>
- Shift away from hunting and fishing
- Increases in bird watching, hiking, etc.

When developing a Wildlife Tourism program, remember: **Every place has something that somebody wants** (you need to be able to MARKET to those people)

- IDENTIFY the places you have
- FIND the people who want to be there
 - Who do you want to come to your place
 - Define their characteristics
 - Specifically target an audience
 - Promote and understand diversity (Dudley Edmondson's *Black and Brown Faces in America's Wild Places*; also *Everyone's Nature- Universal Design for Wildlife Viewing*)
- You don't care about *everybody*, you just want the people who want to visit you

More info on trends:

- Tourism is the world's largest industry at \$9.3 trillion/year.
- A 2006 survey by US Fish & Wildlife Service found \$45.7 billion was spent in the US on wildlife-related expenditures, surpassing expenditures in fishing (\$42.2 billion/year) and hunting (\$22.9 billion/year).
- Accessibility to the outdoors is lower for urban populations
 - Recent population shifts have been movement from rural areas to urban areas (global phenomenon)

- Hunting participation is declining – why? WOMEN
 - Only 4% of women hunt
 - Women have increasing economic clout (particularly in the last 30-40 years)
 - The number of women-headed single parent households have increased
 - Women plan vacations and make 80% of travel decisions
 - Women tend to favor shorter distance trips, flexible itineraries, experiential activities, and may make more impulsive decisions
- New tourism destinations are small communities – unique, diverse

Planning a Wildlife Tourism Program:

- Timeline should be both long and short term, but focus on 18 month timeframe because conditions change rapidly
- Activities need to pay for themselves and show demonstrable results
- Plan needs to work the first time (example of two projects asking for funding – one ready to go and ultimately successful; other stalled due to opposition and unlikely to be funded again)

THINK LIKE A CRUISE SHIP

- Example of cruise “sticker price” versus actual price
- Draw a “cruise” around your community – focus on short day trips
- You need to know what you have to sell – details
- Focus on promoting the shoulder season – 15 days before and after the high season can greatly benefit small businesses
- Fill out phenology charts
 - Identify what you have and when you have it (don’t want people coming to view particular birds outside of their migratory seasons and be disappointed)
 - List the species you have
 - List the places where they can be viewed
- Need a core group of people willing to start a process to develop a program

The Wildlife Viewing Experience – it’s not all about what you see:

- People want a PLEASANT, SAFE, and REWARDING experience
- Provide the experience without disturbing the natural behavior of wildlife
 - Provide access and protect the resource
- Create a travel destination and provide a lifetime experience – have a reason to return
 - Know your audience
 - Match the experience to the audience
 - Nature and Wildlife Photographers
 - Teachers and Students
 - Families
 - (Butterflies and insects are a growing attraction for visitors)

FOUR TIPS FOR HIGHER RESULTS

1. Information – accessible, relevant
2. Support materials – can take out in any weather, attractive
3. Special events
4. Site enhancements

HAVE A DISTRIBUTION PLAN FOR INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

(Demonstration of Watchable Wildlife website; consider placing your information on a partner's website that gets more exposure before developing your own website)

INFORMATION:

- Signage
 - Interpretive
 - Wayfinding
 - Interactive
 - Branded
- How to view wildlife – how to use/adjust binoculars, etc.

SUPPORT MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

- Reusable – durable (laminated, sturdy, waterproof)
- Consider who will use it and how they will use it
- Differentiate between regions
- Visually appealing (use images)
- Keep it updated
- Utilize both electronic and print media
- BE CAREFUL when making materials to distribute
- Prioritize sites (is the Grand Canyon of equal importance as a city park?)
- Rather than advertise, bring outdoor magazine writers to your area – host a “Familiarization Tour” (target outdoor writers from different parts of the country – Chicago is a good market for MN sites; try to get 2-3 stories to come out of a trip so people are exposed multiple times)
- Provide binocular rental and other relevant equipment
 - plan on visitors not having enough equipment (or not having specialized gear)
 - other supplies may be useful too: \$2 rain coats
 - boots – avoid wet feet! Difference between an ordeal and an adventure
- Kids love gadgets – give them a digital camera and a computer to make photo slideshows

SPECIAL EVENTS

- Highlight wildlife research projects
- When flowers are blooming (when you can see rare plants, etc.)
- Bird banding

- Predator calling demonstrations
- Nature photography seminars
- Live animal demonstrations
- Provide guides and naturalists; boats or viewing vehicles
- Have special services such as coffee at 5am for birders
- Nighttime wake-up calls: viewing owls, insects (use a black light to attract)
- If there is a likelihood of misery or discomfort – let people know!

SITE ENHANCEMENTS

- Landscaping for wildlife – attract bees, butterflies, birds for up-close viewing
- Water
- Viewing platforms
- Treetop observation/ canopy walks
- Photo blinds
- Bird feeders

PERFORMING SITE ASSESSMENTS:

- What do you have?
- What is it worth?
- How do you experience it?
- Look critically at conditions and features – underpromote and overproduce

FIVE STEPS:

1. Define your region and identify your sites

- Keep in mind that a 60 mile radius is roughly one hour travel time
- Think like a CRUISE SHIP – plan short day trips
- Identify and prioritize sites
 - National facilities (NPS, USFWS, USACE, USFS)
 - State facilities (State parks and trails, wildlife management areas, aquatic management areas, scientific and natural areas, state forests)
 - County or regional parks
 - City parks
- People want to WALK to and SEE things (not *do* things)
- Provide expected amenities
 - Interpreters
 - Restrooms
 - Parking
 - Food

2. Establish a team of experts

- Photographers and photo clubs
- Land managers

- c. Land owners
- d. Geologists
- e. Anthropologists
- f. Interpretive sign writers and designers
- g. Agency managers
- h. Politicians
- i. Birders
- j. Wildlife professionals
- k. Site designers (planners, architects, landscape architects)

3. Identify habitats, communities, species

- a. Top ten list from Carrol Henderson:
 - i. Bald Eagle
 - ii. Large, conspicuous mammals
 - iii. Breeding grounds and display areas
 - iv. Migratory concentrations and wintering areas
 - v. Good examples of native biomes (plant community types such as tall grass prairie, short grass prairie, deciduous forest, boreal forest)
 - vi. Water – lakes, rivers, wetlands, streams
 - vii. Wildflower and butterfly concentrations
 - viii. Rare, unusual and endemic species
 - ix. Common wildlife
 - x. Nocturnal wildlife viewing areas

4. Send out planning teams to do site assessments

5. Create a phenology chart

- Remember: WHAT DO YOU HAVE? WHO IS INTERESTED IN IT?
- Perform assessments in the shoulder season
- Bring in people who know the region/sites/features

SITE RANKING SHEET EXERCISE

1. List sites (choose 5)
2. List activities available/ attractions (choose top three)
3. Rate the site on a scale of 1-5 (five is best); add up rankings (high score is premier site)
4. List groups who would be interested in the site features and activities

Developing a Sustainable Community Wildlife/Nature Tourism Program Attendees
April 7, 2011

Rick Allen
Owner
Great Rivers Printing
121 Orange Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-4848
greatrivers@greatriversprinting.com

Ray Anderson
xtremesenior momentum.com
8400 Isle Ave. S.
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
651-338-8235
xtremesenior momentum@gmail.com

Don Arnosti
Policy Director
Audubon Minnesota
2357 Ventura Drive, #106
St. Paul, MN 55125
651-739-9332/612-718-3626
darnosti@audubon.org

Barry Bernstein
Parks and Recreation
City of Hastings
920 W. 10th Street
Hastings, MN 55033
651-480-6176
bbenstein@ci.hastings.mn.us

Tom Blanck
Prescott Resident
228 Gibbs St. N.
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-2016

Karen Blodgett
WI DNR
1300 West Clairemont
Eau Claire, WI 54701
715-836-6574
karen.blodgett@wisconsin.gov

Zachary Bodenner
UWRF
339 Kleinpell Fine Arts
4120 S. Third Street
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-3264
zachary.bodenner@uwrf.edu

Rosanne Bump
River Falls Chamber of Commerce
214 N. Main Street
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-2533
rosanne@rfchamber.com

John Burbank
Senior Planner
City of Cottage Grove
7516 80th St. South
Cottage Grove, MN 55016
651-458-2825
jburbank@cottage-grove.org

Dennis Donath
Commissioner
Mississippi River Parkway
Commission
N5035 1208 Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-5484
Dennis07@centurytel.net

Jim Fitzpatrick
Executive Director
Carpenter Nature Center
12805 St. Croix Trail S.
Hastings, MN 55033
651-437-4359
jim@carpenternaturecenter.org

Mark Frazer
Hub's Landing and Marina
P.O. Box 21
Hastings, MN 55033
mark.frazer@us.lawson.com

Julie Galonska
Chief, Interpretation & Education
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
401 N. Hamilton
St. Croix Falls, WI 54020
715-483-2270
Julie_galonska@nps.gov

Gene Groebner
Manager
Afton State Park
6959 Peller Avenue S.
Hastings, MN 55033
651-436-5391
gene.groebner@state.mn.us

Michele Hanson
MNDNR
1200 Warner Road
St. Paul, MN 55106
651-259-5785
Michele.hanson@state.mn.us

Marissa Holst
Council Member - Ward 1
Prescott City Council
450 Gibbs Street S.
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-4116

Mark Huber
Council Member - Ward 2
Prescott City Council
551 Locust Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-5514

Trish Huber
President
Prescott Chamber of Commerce
237 Broad Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-3284

Bob Hughes
Council Member - District 4
River Falls City Council
709 Bartosh Lane
River Falls, WI 54022
715-441-2110
bhughes@rfcity.org

Mike Hunter
Mayor
City of Prescott
800 Borner Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-5200

Peter Kelly
Council Member At Large
Prescott City Council
184 Dexter Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-3859

Brad Labadie
Park Ranger, Eau Galle Recreation
Area
US Army Corps of Engineers
W501 Eau Galle Dam Road
PO Box 190
Spring Valley, WI 54767
651-290-5578
Bradley.R.Labadie@usace.army.mil

Paul Labovitz
Superintendent
MNRRA NPS
111 Kellogg Blvd. E.
Suite 105
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-290-3030 ext. 222

Jim Mallman
President, Watchable Wildlife
www.watchablewildlife.org
jim@watchablewildlife.org

Elaine Miller
Mississippi Valley Partners
1110 Hiawatha Dr E
Wabasha, MN 55981
507-951-5286 cell
wabmotel@wabasha.net

Peter Mott
Parks Manager
Washington County
11660 Myeron Road N.
Stillwater, MN 55082
651-430-4328
Peter.mott@co.washington.mn.us

Ian Muehlenhaus
GIS Lab Manager
UWRF
339 Kleinpell Fine Arts
4120 S. Third Street
River Falls, WI 54022
715-425-3264
ian.muehlenhaus@uwrf.edu

Evy Nerbonne
St. Paul Pioneer Press
345 Cedar Street
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-228-5195
enerbonne@pioneerpress.com

Don Richards
Mayor
City of River Falls
106 N. Wasson
River Falls, WI 54022
715-441-2397
drichards@rfcity.org

Loretta Richman
WI Great River Road National Scenic Byway
Promotion Committee
821 Kinnickinnic St.
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-5032
richmans@comcast.net

James Ross
Board Supervisor - District 10
Pierce County
N4962 Co Rd CC
Elmwood, WI 54740
715-639-6114
jim@flatpennies.com

Jill Shannon
Director of Community Partnerships
St. Croix Valley Foundation
516 Second Street, Suite 214
Hudson, WI 54016
715-386-9490
jshannon@scvfoundation.org

Jim Shiely
Board President
Friends of Freedom Park
920 N. Lake Street
Prescott, WI 54021
651-208-2077
jfshiely@yahoo.com

Emily Shively
National Park Service
111 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-290-3004
Emily_shively@contractor.nps.gov

Chip Simones
Board Supervisor - District 1
Pierce County
20 Orange Street
Prescott, WI 54021
651-492-2353
simchip@comcast.net

Margaret Smith
Executive Director
Friends of Freedom Park
200 Monroe Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-0104
mhsmith@freedomparkwi.org

Patricia Snyder, Mayor
City of Afton
3033 St. Croix Trail South
PO Box 219
Afton, MN 55001
651-436-5090
mayor@ci.afton.mn.us

Chris Stein
Superintendent
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
401 N. Hamilton Street
St. Croix Falls, WI 54024
715-483-2290
Chris_stein@nps.gov

Sara Taylor
City Planner / Asst. Administrator
City of Bayport
Bayport, MN 55003
staylor@ci.bayport.mn.us

Randy Thoreson
Outdoor Recreational Planner
National Park Service
111 E. Kellogg Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-290-3004
Randy_thoreson@nps.gov

Pam Thorsen
Classic Rosewood Inn
620 Ramsey Street
Hastings, MN 55033
651-437-3297
info@thorwoodinn.com

Charlotte Vick
Board Member
Friends of Freedom Park
867 Monroe Street
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-4124
cvick@centurytel.net

Dave Vogel
Regional Manager - Southern
Regional Office
Explore Minnesota Tourism
115 East Hickory
Suite 230
Mankato, MN 56001
507-389-2683
dave.vogel@state.mn.us

Mary Weller
Hudson Chamber of Commerce
502 2nd St.
Hudson, WI 54016
715-386-8411
mary@hudsonwi.org

Sally West
319 Lake St N
Prescott, WI 54021
715-262-4411
swest50@hotmail.com

Lisa Roberts
Travel Pierce Co.
W2494 Hwy 10
Maiden Rock, WI 54750
715-577-2094
grangehallauto@centurytel.net

Phil Roberts
Travel Pierce Co.
W2494 Hwy 10
Maiden Rock, WI 54750
715-577-2094
grangehallauto@centurytel.net

Karen Spicer
Hastings Chamber of Commerce
111 E. 3rd Street
Hastings, MN 55033
651-437-6775
INFO@HastingsMN.org

Diane Webster, Prescott Resident
Genny Taevs, Prescott Resident

Kimberly Adams, Prescott Journal
news@prescottjournal.net