

**Heart of the Continent Partnership
General Meeting
Quetico Provincial Park, Mink Lake Camp
Atikokan, Ontario
June 24, 2011**

Welcome and Introductions:

Doug Franchot, HOCP Steering Committee Chair, led introductions and gave an overview of the Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP) organization.

Robin Reilly – Quetico Provincial Park; Doug Franchot – Voyageurs National Park Association; Kathleen Przybylski – Voyageurs National Park; Brian McLaren – Lakehead University (Thunder Bay); Chris Stromberg – Quetico Provincial Park; Lynda Horman – Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park; Amy Holzwarth – Path of the Voyageur project; Nancy & Doug McReady – Conservationists with Common Sense; Zach Williams – Municipal Planner, Atikokan; Shaun Hamilton – Trust for Public Land; Tracy Jo Hamilton – interested citizen; and Darryl McLeod – Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Fort Frances District

Mink Lake Ranger Camp

Robin gave an overview of the purpose of the camp. Mink Lake Ranger Camp hosts 20-24, 17-year olds to work 10 weeks in the park and in town. The campers get to participate in educational activities related to park research and visitor services. The program is similar to the US' Civilian Conservation Corps program.

Sister Sites Arrangement

Robin gave a brief overview about the Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP) and then talked about the Sister Sites Arrangement. LaVerendrye and Quetico Provincial Parks, Superior National Forest, Grand Portage National Monument, and Voyageurs National Park have drafted a written arrangement to collaborate based on the National Park Service's Sister Parks program template.

America's Great Outdoors (AGO)

Kathleen gave a brief presentation about the AGO initiative. The group had a good discussion about connecting youth to the outdoors. For more information and to view the official report go to <http://americasgreatoutdoors.gov/>.

Dorothy Molter Museum

Nancy McReady works at the Dorothy Molter Museum in Ely. Nancy told the group about Dorothy's history and how the cabin came to be located in Ely. Approximately 4,000 people visit each year. For more information about Dorothy and the Museum go to <http://rootbeerlady.com/>.

Wolf Island on Lake Vermilion: A History of Land and People

Shaun Hamilton presented a report about the history of the island and its now known significance. Shaun suggested an event for 2012 sponsored by HOCP related to the conveyance of the rest of Wolf Island to the Forest Service because there are so many connections to agencies and the history the public lands protect.

Excerpt from The Trust for Public Lands website: “A 60-acre gem, Wolf Island is a place of legend and lore, holding footprints of both Native Americans and Voyageurs. Located in Lake Vermilion's Wolf Bay, the island's rich history is well-documented by John Jaeger, a prominent Minneapolis architect who homesteaded the island after first visiting in 1906 and created maps showing sites of Native American burial mounds and points of historical interest.

Quetico's Stewardship Program

Quetico has ~55 outfitters between Canada and the US. Outfitters fees fund the website and other materials. The park puts information on the website for the outfitters to access and share with clients (e.g. portage trail maintenance). Visit the website at www.quetico100.com to view the outfitters making an effort to work with the park.

Boundary Waters-Voyageurs Canadian Heritage River Program Nomination

Border lakes and rivers have been nominated for special designation in Canada.

Voyageurs National Park Headquarters Grand Opening

Kathleen reiterated the invitation to all present to attend the VNP events on July 2, 2011 at their new headquarters building in International Falls.

Funding

Doug explained the current financial needs for operating the HOCP and this fall's International Community Congress. He encouraged everyone to think about how HOCP might get funding.

International Community Congress Update

Robin handed out the progress report and gave an update. The progress report may be found at <http://www.heartofthecontinent.org/communitycongress/>.

Science Committee

- The committee has worked on archiving materials related to research conducted in the Heart of the Continent region. A Heart of the Continent region science website went live on June 23, 2011 and highlights research that occurs on both sides of the border (e.g. moose and sturgeon research). Go to <http://www.heartofthecontinent.org/science-committee/> to see the accomplishments of the Science Committee.
- SFI – Sustainable Forestry Initiative – Abitibi-Bowater is a proud member of this initiative and may be interested in funding a project sponsored by HOCP.
- Science and Math Education – promote the profile of Rainy River Community College (RRCC) as a two-year liberal arts school; RRCC received a grant for science programming.
 - RRCC is trying to set up a program for RRCC graduates to transfer to Lakehead University; RRCC has a program set up with Bemidji State University at present
 - Bi-national Science and Learning Center is a project idea that is in the thought process; ideas – could be a lakes, transition zone, freshwater, or headwaters science and learning center
- Natural Resources Management MBA – cooperative education program with the University of Minnesota Duluth and Lakehead University is underway

Next Meeting - August 18-19, 2011 – Voyageurs National Park, International Falls, MN

Tentative Plans (*specific logistics still need to be worked out*)

Thursday, August 18 – visit to Oberholtzer Island on Rainy Lake in afternoon, dinner together, 1.5 hour evening boat tour in Voyageurs National Park on Rainy Lake

Friday, August 19 – ½ day HOCP general meeting