

**Heart of the Continent Partnership
Great Lakes Aquarium, Duluth, Minnesota
October 24, 2008**

(8:30 am) Welcome and Introductions

Tavis Westbrook – DNR Parks, Kimberly Byrd - Voyageurs National Park Association, Meredith Cornett – The Nature Conservancy, Carmen Converse – Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Rich Kelley – Quetico Foundation, Lawson Gerdes – Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Bret Hesla – Heart of the Continent Partnership Coordinator, Robin Reilly – Quetico Provincial Park, Doug Franchot – Voyageurs National Park Association, Lynda Horman– Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park (Superintendent), Jason Blier – Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park, Lisa Pattni – Superior National Forest, Kris Reichenbach – Superior National Forest, Kathleen Przybylski – Voyageurs National Park, Doug Thompson – The Nature Conservancy, Mark Weber – St. Louis County, Resource Manager, Brad Sagen – Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, Doug Shinneman – The Nature Conservancy, Deborah Kleese – Northern Minnesotans for Wilderness, Pat & Bob Tammen – interested citizens, Emily Miller – Trust for Public Land, Mary Kay Kelley – volunteer (Rich’s sister), Cory MacNulty– Voyageurs National Park Association, Ann Schwaller – Superior NF

(9:00 am) Discussion: HOCP Science Lecture Series Follow-Up

Discussion continued on lecture topic, including responding to Peter Reich’s question to the group: considering that climate change is happening and the climate will be markedly different 50 years hence, what do you manage forests for? 1) maintaining the historical mix of species? 2) let nature take its course? 3) try to predict species that will do well in the new climate and encourage those? Answers varied: some groups still planting traditional species; some managing for diversity. But do we plant what’s not here now given uncertainty? Some are thinking about trees that are poor dispersers, starting to ask questions about if/how they might be supported.

What can HOCP do collaboratively related to this topic of climate change? Ideas included:

1. education through map and lecture series
2. Or an agency carbon footprint contest?
3. collaborate to gather data about ecosystems. Perhaps do a north to south transect of birch genetics and monitor it. We would need to collect survey data in the same way for it to mean anything; need to look at the HOC region as if there are no borders. At what point does it go from data collection to issues of policy? (HOCP is a nonpolicy org). It’s less important to choose what to monitor, but rather it’s more important that the group needs to do something collaboratively to monitor. A symbolic gesture would be to collectively do something; we can’t solve the question by looking in our own boxes—HOCP positioned to do something cross-border. Meredith and Robin will coordinate a conference call to discuss a potential HOCP monitoring project.
4. summarize active researchers and projects—“what’s happening on the landscape?” (put on HOCP Web site)
 - o SLICE program – seining lakes in a changing environment (DNR & MPCA)

- Lisa Solomon and Bruce Anderson collaborated on related to research done in the area (Lisa will gather this info)
- Minnesota 2050 – statewide project and series of meetings – try to get people to visualize alternative scenarios

Robin R. proposed as a challenge question for HOCP meetings:

“At the end of the hour are we somewhere different than at the beginning of the hour?”

(10:30 am) Report: HOCP Update

1. **Key Focus—Communication.** In the last few months, a key effort has been to focus our message in a way that will attract broader participation. At the July meeting in Thunder Bay, we talked a lot about the need to reach a wider audience, our message and how we can better reach out. As one example, in August the Northern Counties Land Use Coordinating Board wrote to ask for info about HOCP, and invited HOCP to a meeting to present and have a conversation. The presentation and connection went well, and resulted in some new folks attending the Duluth mtg. This development has also helped HOCP steering committee and communications committee to examine and improve how we reach out and get our message out (talking points, etc).

Since July, the steering committee and message committee

- drafted a talking points document.
- launched the HOCP website
- distributed press releases about this Duluth meeting and lecture.

2. **HOCP Coordinator Position ending.** Since HOCP does not have additional funding for the coordinator position, the Steering Committee made the decision that the position will not continue past December 08. In his remaining time, Bret will help put in place ways to keep HOCP moving along and staying organized.

HOCP will need people to step up and take on responsibilities that the coordinator has been doing – website updates, etc. There was some discussion about how to get funding for the coordinator position.

3. **Refocusing meetings for 2009.** In keeping with the need to attract and keep wider participation, the SC has proposed that 2009 meetings be focused on conversation and action, rather than internal HOCP organizing needs. The SC recommends the following general meeting structure.

General Meeting Structure for 2009

Day 1: Lecture and Discussion (evening)

Among their remarks, we'd like lecturers to help us reflect on past 100 years and next 100 years, so as to tie into centennial theme. Also, helpful to have them pose a key question to the group, as Dr. Reich did.

Day 2: Formal Meeting

- Lecture follow-up discussion (w/speaker, if possible)

- Activity/Event updates: Orgs give update on one of their Projects with Potential for Partnering. Perhaps one or two prearranged 15 minute presentations and lots of 5 minute shorties.
- Break outs (then reports) on HOCP Active committees and projects *as needed* (Canoe, Science, etc).

(11:00 am) Breakout: Meeting Planing for 2009

Participants split into two groups to plan the January 2009 meeting (Int Falls) and the April 2009 meeting (Atikokan).

January 15 & 16, 2009 – International Falls, MN

Discussion topic (*locally relevant, common ground potential*)

- water level management issues
- or research related to water levels (e.g. sturgeon)

Speaker ideas - International Joint Commission member or sturgeon researcher

Who else needs to be invited to attend (who will call them?) Boise, Forest Capital Partners, Koochiching County Land Department, Koochiching County Commissioners, Koochiching County Environmental Services, City of International Falls, Rainy Lake Sportfishing Club, Convention and Visitors Bureaus in each gateway community, Fort Frances (need info from Robin), First Nations, DNR Fisheries, DNR Wildlife, DNR Forestry, Bois Forte - Cory and Kathleen will contact/send letters

Who among us will help (and with what?)

- Kathleen (lead) (contact – 218-283-6612)
- Cory/Kathleen - extending invitations
- Mary Kay Kelley - will help with lecture flyer
- Meredith/Lawson/Kathleen - lecture
- (KP plans to talk to Phyllis and Dale Callaghan too. In Thunder Bay they sounded interested in helping with the meeting.)

April 1-2, 2009 – Atikokan, Ontario (Quetico PP)

Planning committee --Robin Reilly. Ideas discussed. Details to be determined.

(1:00 pm) Report: Centennial Updates (*Kris R & Robin R*)

Superior National Forest – February 13, 2009

SNF is planning at both the forest-wide level and at each district, as well as potential joint activities with Quetico. A few highlights to-date:

- established a forest heritage & history section on website
- working on an interpretive poster, kids activities, interpretive "historic characters" program, travelling display, heritage tour brochure, etc.
- identified 4-5 potential activities/events in the Twin Cities
- plan to tie into national events (e.g., Earth Day, National Trails Day & National Public

Lands Day)

- plan a kick-off shortly after New Year and have developed a draft calendar of events that keeps growing
- have established a SNF centennial logo and talked QPP about developing similar "look" logo representing Quetico that we can work into a banner to use for joint activities
- are discussing possibility with various partners for joint cross-border events (ski, dog sled and/or snowmobile)
- KEY EVENT- participating in planning for and realization of the Canoe the Heart of the Continent Expedition in July 09 - major centennial partnership event
- more to come.....stay tuned!

Quetico Provincial Park – April 1, 2009

- Distributed a copy outlining about 20 Centennial Events linked to Quetico
- Discussed the value of graphically linking Quetico and Superior in a logo or at least two logos with similar style
- Circulated a list of potential Centennial Projects to announce or formalize during 2009
- Described a project called Quetico 100 that would draw private sector businesses into the Centennial

(1:30 pm) Breakout: Canoe the Heart of the Continent

Breakout group met to confirm the desire to do the event, get specifics on who will help with what pieces. Participants agreed to move forward and to support this event. Decided to expand the name to “Canoe the Heart of the Continent” [not “Canoe the Heart”] so as to give more clarity to the event’s purpose.

Goals of Canoe the Heart of the continent: Celebrate the region’s history; Build awareness of the HOCP partnership; Build awareness of the HOC region, itself—broadening public perception to be cross border, interconnected land areas, one ecosystem, etc; draw attention to the future of the region; Celebrate centennials; Have fun

Route: start in Atikokan on July 1st, then to IFalls/Ft Frances, along border through VNPA, border lakes through BWCA to perhaps Gunflint, then trailer to Grand marais, then paddle lake Superior to Grand Portage and end up in Ft. William (Thunder Bay).

Canoe sub-committees (leads will convene meetings)

Overall lead: Rich Kelley

Core Planning: Rich (lead), Ann, Robin, Rob, (Lisa, Kris)

Crew selection: Lisa (lead), Mary Kay, Rich, Quetico person, and Emily

Route team: Rich(lead), Rob, Ann, VNPA person

Other needs:

Event planning

Mission clarity

Science collecting component—interest from Nolan Baratano

Fundraising opportunities

(1:30 pm) Breakout: Science Group

Breakout group met to discuss the various items on the plate of the HOCP Science Focus group.

1. Lecture series. The group decided to continue pursuing the lecture series as open-to-the-public, high profile speaker events associated with quarterly HOCP meetings. (Science is a strength of HOCP. Also recognizing that lecture topics may expand beyond science focus.) Science Committee members will attend the symposia at the University of Minnesota (December, 2008) and Lakehead University (June, 2009) and make an assessment about whether we will consider pursuing a symposium in 2010 or 2011 that builds on partnerships and concepts from the former.
2. Science Symposium sponsored by HOCP. Dr. Peter Reich provided details to the group about how to organize a symposium. The group decided to put this idea “neatly” on the shelf for now and instead use energy to tie into existing symposiums and other events.
3. Institute on the Environment Discovery Grants. After a briefing on this new "venture capital" grants program by Dr. Peter Reich, the group decided to explore the possibility of collaborating with a team of university scientists on submitting a concept proposal (Due December 5) that would focus on grand, big-picture problems and solutions for the Border Lakes Region in a global context. Must be interdisciplinary and have a societal focus. Doug Shinneman will attend the web presentation on 10/28 to further assess the potential. Meredith Cornett will follow up directly with Dr. Reich, the rest of the exploration team, and the Steering Committee. (Lawson Gerdes attended the web presentation on the Institute on the Environment Discovery Grant.)
4. Doug Shinneman reported on the results of his modeling research. He distributed a draft of the report, and will also solicit technical feedback from several members of the group. He will present his key findings at the December 2 University of Minnesota symposium.

(3:15 pm) Report: HOCP Structure Committee (Doug F)

Structure Committee met several times in Sept/Oct to consider a formal structure and whether or not HOCP should become a 501(c)(3). Decided that now is not time for that; HOCP should wait until after it has drawn in the wider, more diverse participation that it seeks.

HOCP needs now to reaffirm the steering committee structure and membership. HOCP organized the Steering Committee ~15 months ago. Recommend staggered, two year terms, but that for the start, have Steering Committee members rotate after two and three years--to make sure HOCP has consistency through the Centennial. Eventually, staggered two-year terms. Three (of 7) will rotate off in May of 09. the other four will rotate off in May 10. Doug F will get an e-mail out to ask for individuals interested in serving on the Steering Committee. The group affirmed that the SC's current role is what it desires/needs.

(3:30 pm) Report: Message Committee (Kathleen P)

Per assignment from Thunder Bay meeting, Message Committee has met to develop drafts of communications plans for HOCP. The group has worked on a short-term plan and a comprehensive plan. Kathleen P circulated the short-term plan (draft), outlining needs for press

releases, etc., to be sure basic communication needs don't fall through the cracks. John Sohigian is working on a more comprehensive, wide ranging plan.

Also, the committee has submitted a small proposal for funding to develop a logo and information brochure (to National Park Foundation). (still pending.)

(3:45pm) Meeting Evaluation

Pluses:

- evening lecture and follow-up discussion were very good
- Location: great view, loved the tour of the aquarium, we met in a place with something to learn

Could be improved:

- Idea: how about an alternate two-day format: afternoon mtg, evening lecture, morning meeting next day, done at noon (as opposed to evening lecture, am mtg, pm mtg)
- Would be nice to all stay overnight together in the same spot (ala Jy 08 mtg at Ft. William)
- Would Saturday meeting allow for wider participation? (or perhaps just better for some, worse for others)
- Need to receive agenda earlier

Next meetings

- Jan 15/16, 2009. International Falls, Minnesota
- Apr 1/2, 2009. Atikokan, Ontario
- Details will be posted on the Web site. www.heartofthecontinent.org.