

**Heart of the Continent Partnership
Lakehead University
Thunder Bay, Ontario
October 7, 2010**

Welcome and Introductions:

Doug Franchot, HOCP Steering Committee Chair, gave an overview of the Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP) and reviewed the HOCP values statements.

Ann Schwaller – Superior National Forest, Frank Vecchio – Grand Portage Lodge and Casino & Cook County Visitors Bureau, Claudia Mielke – U.S. Forest Service Eastern Region (Regional Office), Kathleen Przybylski – Voyageurs National Park, Paul Danicic – Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness, Brian McLaren – Lakehead University (Thunder Bay), Jim Johnson – Cook County Commissioner, Lynda Horman – Pigeon River, La Verendrye, and Kekebeka Falls Provincial Park, Sarah Crow – University of Minnesota, Holly Larson – Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (U.S. National Park Service), Andy Hubley – Arrowhead Regional Development Commission, Cam Clark – Quetico Foundation, Michael McKinnon – Atikokan Chamber of Commerce and Atikokan newspaper, Brad Sagen – Northeastern Minnesotans for Wilderness, Chris Stromberg – Quetico Provincial Park, Lakehead University Students – John Harvey, Shane Gray, Matt Lebron, Michelle, Autumn Taciuk, Andrew, Dick Parker – Arrowhead Coalition for Multiple Use, Jan Hall – Cook County Commissioner, Peter Reich – University of Minnesota, Debbie Duplassie – Community Development Officer White River, Susan Bourne – Quetico Provincial Park, Bret Hesla – Heart of the Continent Partnership Coordinator, Robin Reilly – Quetico Provincial Park, Doug Franchot – Voyageurs National Park Association, Lisa Rasodevich-Craig – Superior National Forest

Science committee Summary (Brian McLaren)

Science Committee developed themes by which to evaluate project proposals that HOCP may support (**get list from Brian**)

1. community outreach/education/citizen science
2. ecological function
3. how people connect... spiritually, culturally, economically, ecologically, recreationally...to the region?
 - project idea not yet claimed: reasonable forecast of use and use patterns in the region
4. long-term aspect of a project – could be a good fit for HOCP area (correct interpretation?)
5. incorporation of citizen science
6. social change, economic restructuring
7. comparisons of processes or ecosystems in areas where natural disturbances are managed to areas where....

Does wilderness mean no management or less management? HOCP provides a forum to bring people together to discuss this question, but not to form an opinion.

How does HOCP support the priorities of the science committee? Ideas included:

- Post science results and info, including the spreadsheet of ongoing research, on its website
- Convene a funders meeting with science committee and prospective funders of research

Science topics:

Quetico Field School for students - Robin Reilly, Shane Gray, John Harvey, Autumn Taciuk & Michelle

- John & Shane - paddled through Quetico – they experienced how challenging it is to manage invasive species; learned that invasive species are a big issue
- Autumn – visited Atikokan plants and forests, and participated in lectures about park management and invasive species; learned that different management practices can be implemented on different sides of the border; paddled Namakan River and visited High Falls
- Michelle – worked with Lisa Solomon, Quetico Provincial Park on sturgeon research, invasive species, and fire management
- Robin – HOCP created an opportunity linking Lakehead University and Quetico through the field school
- Lake Sturgeon research - Matthew Lebron
 - Matt's research - Invertebrate productivity in the littoral zone and its importance to lake sturgeon feeding habitat
 - will develop a model that can predict invertebrate communities throughout the lake
 - research will highlight what impacts drawdown of lake levels could have on lake sturgeon feeding habitat
 - changes in invertebrate communities related to how feeding habitats may change
 - substrate mapping – substrate influences invertebrate productivity
 - Cam Trembath's research (Cam works at Voyageurs NP and is a Lakehead University student)
 - juvenile sturgeon research – inserted acoustic transmitters in juvenile sturgeon; receivers detect acoustic transmissions
 - 132 juvenile sturgeon were netted – 18 acoustic transmitters were implanted
 - deep flowing water (deepest locations of the lakes sampled – up to 30m or 100') is the most important for juvenile sturgeon

Discussion on resilience - Peter Reich

How to connect communities to their natural resources on public lands

- patchy land ownership makes land management difficult across boundaries of public and private land
- leaders from all stakeholder groups are needed – these stakeholders need to decide what the agenda is, what is important – Jim Johnson – communities need to have credible science so they can act locally versus from the top down

- need to get groups to think about the future
- have found that those who can't necessarily agree on what they want today, they could agree on possible futures/visions
- if we walk backwards from the vision could see what we need to do to ensure resilience

Management of invasive species on the Superior National Forest - Anne Schwaller

- the quantity of invasive species in the SNF is significantly lower than comparable forests/wilderness areas in the west – there is potential to control them
- areas for collaboration between public land managers – survey, treatment, volunteers
- we need to act now
- share obstacles
- some weeds can't be pulled
- SNF hopes to use an integrated approach – hand pulling and herbicide
- in December SNF is starting a scoping process for an environmental impact statement about treating exotic species
- don't forget about county involvement when developing plans for treating exotic species

Proposals and new ideas

- Moose research - Robin Reilly, Kathleen Przybylski, Brian McLaren
Voyageurs is leading moose research relative to climate change. Quetico is joining in with tracking collars as well. Lakehead University and University of Minnesota are cooperating. Visit the Natural Resources Research Institute website for more information.

International Lake of the Woods & Rainy Lake Watershed Task Force - Stephen Challis (Brian read a statement for Stephen Challis)

- IJC established a citizen task force –
- examine and make recommendations about the bi-national waters
- will serve as a sounding board
- Rainy Lake Conservancy and VNPA applied to be on the task force
- Rainy Lake Provincial Policy Statement - Dale & Phyllis Callaghan (Brian read a statement for the Callaghans)

Dark Sky Preserve - Robin Reilly

- Quetico Provincial Park as Dark Sky Preserve - Quetico is submitting an application to be designated as a Dark Sky Preserve
- International Dark Sky Association –source for Quetico/Voyageurs/Superior to consider designation as a greater area

Ann Schwaller – Ann presented a summary document of research occurring in BWCA/Superior NF

Update from Design Team

The 2011 International Community Congress is in the planning stages. The design team met yesterday, and settled on venues and dates for the event: October 23-27, 2011. Venues: Thunder Bay (2 days) and Grand Portage (2 days).

Design team is currently preparing an application process and a plan to recruit up to ten community teams of 5-7 members each to participate. Emerging details will be posted on HOCP website.

HOCP Organizational Housekeeping

Steering Committee structure: Those present discussed the Steering Committee structure and roles. A document was presented by Kathleen Przybylski. Some suggested changes. The edited document was approved by consensus and will be distributed at a later date.

2011 meeting plans: Tentative meeting locations proposed for 2011:

Winter 2011: Aurora-Hoyt Lakes

Spring 2011: Atikokan

Late summer 2011: Voyageurs National Park

The steering committee will consider these and other options and post the 2011 schedule on the website.

Evaluation of these meetings (6 & 7 Oct 2010 at Lakehead U)

- Lakehead University was a great venue
- Loved the student involvement (at lecture and also at meeting and presenting)
- Found that both the space and leadership created a welcoming environment
- Wed meetings were a bit too long (8:30a – 8:00p) but good content and results
- Nice to have a communities focus one day and science focus the next
- The diversity of interests represented in today and yesterdays' meetings is a key success in itself
- Lots of new ideas emerged
- Lots of new relationships built, good networking
- "it's great what HOCP is doing here"
- nice to have some funders present in the conversations yesterday
- would have been nice to include a field trip, to get us out into the region somehow
- important to note and celebrate that every effort here is voluntary, that voluntary spirit is a key to the success of HOCP