



## Heart of the Continent Partnership

*Working together to sustain and celebrate the lakes, forests and communities on the Ontario/Minnesota border*

**Heart of the Continent Partnership  
Meeting Minutes  
General Quarterly Meeting  
Duluth, Minnesota  
February 9-10, 2012**

**Participants** (*Thursday, February 9, 2012 and/or Friday, February 10, 2012*)

Robin Reilly, Quetico Provincial Park; Frank Jewell, St. Louis County; Kris Reichenbach, Superior National Forest; Paul Danicic, Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness; Teri Heyer, US Forest Service; Brian McLaren, Lakehead University; Bev Dale, Municipality of Neebing; Duane Lula, National Scenic Byways; Clara Butikofer, Neebing Municipality; Sandy Skrein, Superior National Forest; Bonnie Hundrieser, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission; Cheryl Erickson, North Shore Scenic Drive Council; Chris Stromberg, Quetico Provincial Park; Andy Hubley, Arrowhead Regional Development Commission; Kurt Lysne, Voyageurs National Park Association; Shaun Hamilton, Trust for Public Land; Judy Ness, Superior National Forest; Holly Larson, Rivers and Trails; Lynda Horman, Kakabeka Falls Provincial Park; Rolf Thompson, Friends of the Boundary Waters; Jen Lukacic, Quetico Provincial Park; Bret Hesla, Heart of the Continent Partnership; Kathleen Przybylski, Voyageurs National Park; Sue Spencer; Jennifer Niemi, Split Rock Light House Historic Site; John Cameron, Thunder Bay Tourism; Frank Vecchio, Grand Portage Lodge and Casino; Rob Ecklund, Destination Voyageurs National Park; Ann Schwaller, Superior National Forest; Mary Somnis, Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board; Lisa Radosevich-Craig, Superior National Forest; Doug Franchot, Voyageurs National Park Association; Kirsten Spence, Trans Canada Trail Ontario; Sue Duffy, Superior National Forest; Chris Goepfert, National Parks Conservation Association; Tom O'Rourke, Hartley Nature Center; Liz Taylor, Duluth Sister Cities International; Norman Deschampe, Grand Portage Band; Jim DeVries, Laurentian Environmental Center; Dave Wilsey, Duluth/Cloquet UMN Extension; Tim Cochrane, Grand Portage National Monument; Anna Deschampe, Grand Portage State Park; Jackie Monahan-Jurek, City of Eveleth; Andrew Slade, Minnesota Environmental Partnership.

**Thursday, February 9, 2012 (12:30 pm – 5:00 pm)**

**Welcome and Introductions:**

Doug Franchot, Voyageurs National Park Association, welcomed everyone to the meeting. Kathleen Przybylski, Voyageurs National Park gave an overview of the Heart of the Continent Partnership (HOCP).

**Place Matters workshop** – prepared by Dr. David Greenwood (Lakehead University) and presented by Lisa Radosevich-Craig and Jim DeVries. Guided conversations on the

importance of local places, giving participants a chance to consider their valued places, listen to what's most important to others, and look at what motivates us in our work to sustain and celebrate the lakes, forests and communities along the Ontario/Minnesota border.

### ***International Community Congress Team Reports***

Iron Range Team – Laurentian Connection: Plans are moving ahead for their Earth Day event on April 21, 2012.

Grand Portage, Grand Marais, Gunflint Trail team: Connecting History in Cook County – team has met and have identified stakeholders and scope of the project

### **Other:**

- Shaun Hamilton shared a publication that talked about forest resources.....Forest Resources Committee;
- shared other reports

### **Thursday, February 9, 2012 (6:45 pm – 8:00 pm) pm**

We watched the Duluth debut of the film "*Gaa-izhinagishkodaaking Gichi-Onigamiing Dibaajimowin*," [*Rendezvous with History: A Grand Portage Story*]. The film was followed by a discussion led by Norman Deschampe, Chairman, Grand Portage Band of Chippewa and Tim Cochrane, Superintendent of Grand Portage National Monument. The Grand Portage National Monument along with the Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa worked together to create this 24-minute film, which features Grand Portage history as told by an Ojibwe narrator. There were two back-to-back showings: one in English followed by one in Ojibwemowin.

### **Friday, February 10, 2012 (8:00 am – 1:00 pm)**

#### **Science Committee Report** by Brian McLaren

*Information Database* – soon to be posted on HOCP website will be a comprehensive database of research present and past in the area. This will be a means to share research information; metadata approach that will provide links to publicly available documents; database is a work in progress.

*Superior National Forest researcher meeting, February 22, 2012* – will be a gathering of and for scientists – forestwide research – fire science, social science, silvaculture projects, - way to work together and share information because some duplication was occurring; another element doing research inside and outside of wilderness areas

Volunteer Network action plan – could help coordinate specific science programs for secondary and postsecondary education

HOCP website ([HOCP Science webpage](#)) is a good resource for the Science Committee

## **Financial Report** by Lynda Horman and Doug Franchot

Lynda reported on the Revenue/Expenses for the International Community Congress effort: 10 funders, balanced budget, \$127,388 cash, \$218,000 inkind. This funding allows for followup support to teams, through August 2012, in form of limited coordinator hours for support of teams.

Doug reported that the fundraising committee will be meeting soon and asked participants to send ideas to him. He also shared information about our voluntary membership dues. He stressed that membership is not mandatory and that membership does not give any person or organization an advantage. The [dues form is on the website](#).

## **Steering Committee Update** – by Doug Franchot

One goal is to have staggered terms so that transition in the committee by having people join and complete terms. Another goal is to have the committee represent the diversity of participation seen in the HOCP meetings: diverse geographically, as well by representation of diverse organizations and diverse sectors.

Five new Steering Committee Members were approved by consensus: Frank Jewell – St. Louis County Commissioner, Mary Somnis – Iron Range Resources and Rehabilitation Board, Anna Deschampe – Grand Portage State Park, Chris Stromberg – Quetico Provincial Park, David Greenwood – Lakehead University. Incumbent Steering Committee Members are: Doug Franchot, Chair – Voyageurs National Park Association; Paul Danicic – Friends of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness; Lynda Horman – Kakabeka Falls and La Verendrye Provincial Parks; Brian McLaren – Lakehead University; Kathleen Przybylski – Voyageurs National Park, and Lisa Radosevich-Craig – Superior National Forest, Tim Cochrane, Grand Portage National Monument. Leaving the steering committee is Robin Reilly, Quetico Provincial Park.

**Canadian Heritage River Initiative** – update given by Robin Reilly – currently Pigeon River to Lac La Croix is designated as a Heritage River and the committee has nominated the section from Lac La Croix to Lake of the Woods for designation as Heritage River. Robin pointed out that it would be great if the US side of the river could be identified as a heritage river as well. A section of the Detroit River between the US and Canada is designated as a heritage river on both sides, which is a great example for the Heart of the Continent area. Shaun Hamilton pointed out that there is an international wildlife refuge near Detroit as well. Holly will look into the American Rivers program and American Heritage Rivers non-governmental group. Shaun asked if the Minnesota Historical Society (MHS) has been contacted. Jennifer from Split Rock offered up assistance for checking in with MHS.

**Visit Duluth Tourism Presentation** – Gene Shaw, Visit Duluth Director of Public Relations  
2011 was a record year for tourism  
3.5 million visitors  
\$780 million in economic impact

## **International Community Congress Reports**

*New City of Ranier* – Andy Hubley reported that Ranier annexed 600 acres and wants to develop a map for this new bigger city. The team has met once a month and a draft map can be seen at [www.arrowheadplanning.org/ranier](http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/ranier). The goal is to have the map printed by the summer tourist season. Funding for map printing has been found. The team has offered free advertising to businesses to get them on board for this first printing.

*Municipality of Neebing* – Clara Butikofer. The team's project was to re-open the Pigeon River Falls park by July 1, 2012. Lynda Horman, Park Superintendent, has prepared an agreement between Neebing and Parks Ontario that is up for approval by the two organizations. Trans-Canada Trails has asked Neebing to be involved in the development of a water trail. Ontario trillium grant. If Neebing gets the money it will finish the trail and Neebing will need to develop three campsites for paddlers. The community has great support from its residents.

### *Trans-Canada Trails – Kirsten Spence*

Working on their project – Path of the Paddle – base of Kakabeka Falls to Schoal Lake. 900 km water trail. broken into 5 segments – developing concept plans for each segment  
Building partnerships so a group can take on a trail project is how it's going to work.

*DVNP*- Kathleen Przybylski and Rob Ecklund. The DVNP team's project is to develop a Marketing Plan by December 31, 2012. The group has met three times and plans to meet again in March. The group completed a working session led by Mary Somnis to begin developing a marketing plan. The team needs a new action plan because they have completed almost everything outlined in the plan developed at the International Community Congress.

*Atikokan Familiarization Tour* – Robin Reilly reported on the bus tour concept that would take people from the communities who work in tourism related businesses around the Heart of the Continent area. The bus would go around twice to get people back to their starting point. The project is nudging forward, but support is still needed from communities other than just Atikokan.

*North Shore Scenic Drive*– Bonnie Hundrieser reported – The team worked on how to reach out to other partners. Bonnie turned the team's action plan into an external action piece to inform partners. Bonnie and Cheryl met with people from the Sister Cities Commission and they agreed to put information about the north shore as a connecting road on their website. Paul Pepe from Thunder Bay Tourism is working on a *Ride Lake Superior* as a motorcycle riding tour. Bonnie was asked to help with motorcycle friendly places and services. A *Ride Lake Superior* website exists.

*Connecting Volunteers to the Heart of the Continent* – Paul Danicic reported that focus of the action plan is to create a volunteer clearing house for HOCP; the team noticed that some organizations have too many volunteers and others don't have enough to no volunteers. The team has researched volunteer models across the country. They are working on developing a Design Team member list and revising their draft action plan. Ann shared a

volunteer program model that has a director for a foundation that serves as the clearing house. Agencies feed the foundation with project ideas and volunteers apply to the foundation to be volunteers.

### **Group Brainstorm #1:**

*What could this volunteer program look like?* Meeting participants spent time brainstorming on what features a region-wide volunteer program might have.

- identify commonalities and then offer centralized training
- get information out about annual training opportunities
- organizations could contact the HOCP volunteer organization to share training information
- have teams assembled with specialties and ready to go so the clearing house doesn't have to keep organizing
- make sure there are a lot of opportunities and not just hard labor – educational too
- border crossing issues – have information on website about how to prepare for crossing the border
- make sure it's clear that the website/clearing house is not just for agencies, but also for organizations or municipalities or cities
- focus is on public lands, but not necessarily just big ones

### *Project Ideas for Volunteers?*

- pool of volunteers with specific skills; send in a resume
- meet and greeter at Gooseberry, etc.
- projects for Moms and Daughters or Dads and Sons
- transportation to the site for a rural volunteer experience
- get a bus donated for a HOCP volunteer transportation bus
- volunteers like to hear about others' experiences – volunteer testimonials or videos
- incentives – volunteer brand – all have a specific hat or coat
- volunteer passport – get a stamp when you volunteer in several places; after getting so many stamps get entered in a drawing
- consider incentives like two free nights in Quetico for volunteering

### **Other Reports**

*Corridor update by Andy*

*Lake Vermilion area* – ARDC is working with the Bois Forte band on a paved, non-motorized trail.

*Orr City* – developing a plan for re-designing the downtown area

*Video Game with potential* – Sue Spencer demonstrated a game that could be adapted to specific areas and resources around the HOCP using different skins for the game.

**Group Brainstorm #2:** Meeting participants spent time brainstorming on Niche visitor ideas for marketing – what information should communities provide to attract niche markets?

- *Birders* – what places open early; where are guided trips?; remember to share management information about bird habitats
- *Snowarama* – fundraising event for Easter Seals (there is one held in Fort Frances, could be international)
- *Virginia Motor Club* – draws people to see the cars, could tour around the area
- *Law Enforcement Torch Run* – fundraiser and awareness raising; happened across New Foundland; this occurs in Thunder Bay too
- *Kayaking – water tour group* – Sleeping Giant loppet; need inexpensive accommodations like hostels; need to make sure you have a range of accommodations for different expectations relative to cost
- *Outdoor Clubs* – in the Twin Cities there are 15 ski clubs, canoe club, etc – all of these groups do weekend or longer trips; volunteer clubs organized by volunteers – they could be enticed by someone who has planned a tour for them with details about lodging, dining, etc.; Holly has contact information
- *Cross-country skiers* – if people have real time information about where there is snow they may likely go there; [www.skinnyski.com](http://www.skinnyski.com) is where skiers go to get information
- *Bicyclists* – need a place to lock up bikes; a circle tour idea sounds good
- *Group Tours* – if facilities are available to accommodate groups, it's a potential audience to attract
- *How to Be Friendly to \_\_\_\_\_* - John from Thunder Bay Tourism will share the information sheets they have created for businesses to increase awareness about how to be friendly to a specific user group

**Thank you to Robin Reilly** – Robin is leaving the area and leaving HOCP, a job transfer to Sandbanks Provincial Park in Southern Ontario. On behalf of the HOCP, Doug Franchot recognized Robin's contributions to the HOCP and presented him with a painting of a canoe scene. Thanks Robin!