

The Heart of the Continent

International Partnership

HOCP – Roundtable Meeting Grand Portage Minnesota



It was a great opportunity for HOCP meetings to return to the wonderful area of Grand Portage, meet up with new people, see old friends and talk new business and projects in the Heart of the Continent.

Land Managers Meeting

May 3, 2018

Grand Portage National Monument Visitor Center

Attendees: Bob Degross, Voyageurs National Park - Patty Thielen, MN Department of Natural Resources – Anna Deschampe MNDNR – Trevor Gibb, James Bennitt, Chris Stromberg - Ontario Parks - Craig Hanson, Grand Portage National Monument – Pamela Neil, NPS – Connie Cummings, USFS – Lisa Radosevich Craig, USFS (via phone)

There were introductions from each of the land manager, some meeting for the first time and a bit of history from each of their work with Heart of the Continent and partnerships. Craig, being a new participant said he really liked the concept of the partnership. Anna who has been with us in the past and has now returned to the DNR said she has always liked the energy behind HOCP. Trevor enjoys the collaboration and James looks forward to the continued work. Bob has worked with other partnerships in the past and looking forward to work with this one. Connie is rather new to HOCP but wants the SNF to continue support it

Topics

Crane Lake Multi – Agency Visitor Center Concept

Bob points out that Voyageurs is a natural gateway to the Superior National Forest and Quetico. Since its concept in 1975 its plan has been to have a visitor center at each gateway community bordering the national park. It has 3 of the 4 visitor centers and not only is the community of Crane Lake hoping to develop a facility, VNP has is seeking to look at the idea of a shared facility, a multi-agency facility that may be facilitated by both community, the Park Service and other agencies involved. The community envisions a visitor center, boat launch, and campground. The Park Service is working with the RTCA at possible development and is inviting other agencies to brainstorm. The question is whether it might be a community owned building, possibly renting to the agencies.

Bob has worked with other communities on these joint projects with success. He feels it would do well with alleviating congestion in parts of the park and possible to bring visitors into the less traveled areas of both the Superior National Forest and Quetico Provincial Park. He also believes that the facility could be run in part by volunteers. Connie suggests the idea of a volunteer program ran out of the Crane Lake Facility.

Patty said that the road to funding may be a long one but that the MNDNR is looking to move forward and that the DNR may have some funding in the future. Although the people of the Iron Range are energetic, there number of hurdles such as environmental assessments to be done.

Connie said that the Crane Lake project is really huge potential of converging interests for each of the public lands agencies. Lisa would appreciate that we all share and stay informed. Trevor feels the idea is amazing and could see possibilities of contributing through interpretive programs.

Other topics were of:

- Dispersing of visitors to improve lesser congestion and utilize lesser used areas.
- Cross Border collaborations in the field
- The sharing of primary education themes and interpretive programs.
- Coding on-going research of each agency
- Public Conservation events
- 40th anniversary of the BWCAW act
- 125th anniversary of Ontario Parks

1:00pm

Welcome from Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Tribal Chairman - Norman Deschampe and Superintendent, Grand Portage National Monument - Craig Hansen

Chief Norman presented us with fun and interesting history of the Grand Portage Band of Chippewa's collaboration with the National Park Service as well as their involvement with the Heart of the Continent Partnership.

Craig Hansen talked about being appreciative of everyone visiting, his great job and being part of the Grand Portage community and his beautiful view out the windows of his office. Craig said he was happy to have all of us there and hosting our partnership's roundtable in Grand Portage

Afternoon conversations were led by Clara Butikofer and Doug Franchot, the topic being the story of HOCP, how it has unfolded, how it has affected, enhanced, reached out, and brought organizations together through the power of collaboration.

An article written by Paul Danicic, formerly of Friends of Boundary Waters, inspired the presentation. Paul had used the theme of a moose being able to cross the border and "why shouldn't our good ideas"? Clara's slide presentation talked of our 5 million acres of public lands and the responsibilities for managing them. This was the premise of the Heart of the Continent Partnership, to share in our challenges and victories and to bring public land manager supervisors, community leaders, elected officials, conservation leaders and business people together to share ideas and celebrate the really good ones.



Clara talked of a long history of cross border collaboration.

"Outlaw Bridge," built in 1917 by average citizens without government oversight or assistance. The story can be found in Northern Wilds Magazine -

<http://northernwilds.com/border-history-story-outlaw-bridge/>

Clara shared the historic example of the building of the Outlaw Bridge 101 years ago, funded by Rotary Clubs from Thunder Bay (Fort William and Port Arthur) and Duluth and the Pigeon River Timber Company. Attending this meeting were staff from the Northern Wilds publication and Clara shared an article they had published in 2017. <http://northernwilds.com/border-history-story-outlaw-bridge/>. This meeting was held a short distance from the border, the value of this early partnership through necessity was a strong reminder of the mission and purpose of HOCP.

Clara also brought up the example of the need for partnership through the connection of the Trans Canada Trail route through the Heart of the Continent. Grand Portage, Boundary Waters and Gunflint Trail businesses are instrumental in the success of the Path of the Paddle Association, a 1200 km water and land route that is part of the 24, 000 km Trans Canada Trail. www.pathofthepaddleassociation.com.

Networking followed the presentation with new partnerships being created.

Evening walk at High Falls and Susie Island Lookout



Trevor Gibb – Jim Winnemen
Gary Davies – Clara Butikofer



Afternoon Partnership shower



Rainbow at High Falls



Devon Multimaki and Frank Jewell

6pm – Dinner – Grand Portage Lodge in the Presentation room

Presentation: *"Private Land Conservation on the North Shore of Lake Superior - A Cross-border Success Story"*



Big Trout Bay Nature Reserve

Slides and presentation by Gary Davies – Nature Conservancy of Canada gave us an interesting recent story of the good work being done on both sides of the border. The Nature Conservancy of Canada, working with collaborators on both sides of the border were able to obtain a beautiful 2,500 acres property on the shores of Lake Superior near Little Trout Bay in Neebing to ensure public access (e.g. hiking trail under development) and prevent development. The property is now known as the Big Trout Bay Nature Reserve.

Morning meetings at Grand Portage State Park



Great hosts and wonderful facility at Grand Portage State Park



Breakout meeting – Science Symposium

It was talked about that if there was a theme to the symposium it should be a non- aquatics theme due us piggy-backing the IJC Rainy Lake of the Woods symposium prior to ours that would be entirely based on the state of the water in the Heart of the Continent.

Topics discussed were:

- Nonnative invasive species (NNIS)
- Social sciences
- Cat tails

We talked about the idea of another evening abstracts again, that it went well and it gave a chance for presenters and attendees to network.

Patty Thielen (MNDNR) mentioned that Molly McGregor is on board to help with the symposium. Doug Franchot (Co chair HOCP) mentioned he would be contacting Ingrid Schneider who helped with the abstracts last symposium. Trevor Gibb said he would be contacting Ontario MNRF partnership specialist to see if they would be on board to help as well.

Doug Franchot played a big role in working out details for food, accommodations, facilities (Rainy River Community College) and funding said he would take on those roles again. Patty Thielen said she would be contacting Molly McGregor and Pooja Kanwar. Pooja was a huge help in our last symposium and we are hoping that although she has a new position with MNDNR that she would still be willing and able to come onboard again. Trevor mentioned possible funding and help from Fort Frances MNRF Planning Specialist. Lawson Gerdes was also mentioned as a possible help

The question of a keynote speaker was brought up. Theme again was addressed with the possibility of Dark Skies, or Moose as our theme.

Possibly alternatively, it was also agreed that the quick presentations were liked by all. It was fast paced and interesting.



Breakout Meeting – Bike the Heart

Talks of using the app called Strava - <https://www.strava.com/> to map the popular routes for biking in the HOC. Also the idea of biking events showcased with our organization throughout the Heart in all communities on both sides of the border. Bike tour logistics were talked about that may cross borders and time spent on mapping out the favourite routes of the locals. Maps were brought out and areas of biking activity were filled in. A list of clubs and events are being made.



**Next Roundtable – September 11-13 –
Atikokan/Quetico**

**[Voyageur Wilderness Programme -
Voyageur Island Eco-Lodge](#)**

**Information for our next meeting will be
posted soon online –**

heartofthecontinent.org