



Mollie Chaudet

Congratulations – 2021 RMS Award Winners

The 2021 River Management Society Awards were presented virtually in April, and following tradition, the recipients had no idea they had been selected. This year, four of five recipients were “present” and surprised as their awards were presented in the virtual Zoom space.

RMS President Judy Culver presented awards to three RMS members during the symposium opening on April 12: Rod Bonacker and Mollie Chaudet, *Outstanding Contribution to the River Management Society*, and Colter Pence, *River Manager of the Year*. Coworkers and others assured these award winners would be present. George Lindemann received the *Outstanding Contribution to River Management* award on April 13, just before he spoke at the symposium — because he was a speaker, it was easy to assure that he would be present to receive his award! (Jennifer Reed, the *Frank Church Wild and Scenic Rivers* award recipient, was recognized during a Teams meeting of

the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council. Several of Jennifer’s coworkers helped determine when she would be available as she was not attending the symposium.)

Outstanding Contribution to the River Management Society

This award, open only to RMS members, recognizes contributions to the success of the River Management Society itself. This award recognizes contributions at the national or regional level that result in greater organizational effectiveness, efficiency, growth, positive change, or enthusiasm. The award focuses on impact on the organization as a whole, rather than a particular length of service.

Mollie and Rod are recognized for their many accomplishments supporting river management training, especially the work they did for the Eleven Point Ranger

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River Management Society

Main Office

Risa Shimoda, Executive Director
PO Box 5750, Takoma Park, MD 20913-5750
(301) 585-4677 / cell (301) 502-6548
executivedirector@river-management.org

River Training Center

River Studies and Leadership Certificate
Angie Fuhrmann, Coordinator
(480) 818-3649 / angie@river-management.org

National Rivers Project

James Major, Coordinator
(540) 717-3595 / james@river-management.org

Communications

Bekah Price, Coordinator
(423) 943-2000 / bekah@river-management.org

Professional Purchase

Rick Waldrup, Lead
(406) 925-1554 / riverguy@bresnan.net

Anja Wadman, Assistant
(801) 388-2214 / awadman@blm.gov

Darin Martens, Swamper
(307) 413-9913 / darin.martens@usda.gov

RMS Store / Merchandise

Judy Culver
(928) 443-8070 / jculver@blm.gov

RMS Journal

Caroline Kurz, Editor / Design
(406) 549-0514 / caroline@river-management.org

National Officers

Judy Culver, President, Taos, NM
(928) 443-8070 / jculver@blm.gov

Shannon Bassista, Vice President, Boise, ID
(208) 373-3845 / sbassista@blm.gov

Helen Clough, Secretary, Juneau, AK
(907) 790-4189 / hcloughak@gmail.com

Rob White, Treasurer, Salida, CO
(719) 221-8494 / rob.whiteco@gmail.com

Emma Lord, Chapter Liaison, Loudon, NH
(518) 728-4029 / emma_lord@nps.gov

Ex-Officio Advisors

Linda Jalbert, Past President
(928) 638-7909 / l_jalbs@yahoo.com

Bob Randall, Kaplan, Kirsch & Rockwell LLP
(303) 825-7000 / brandall@kaplankirsch.com

Nate Hunt, Kaplan Kirsch & Rockwell LLP
(303) 825-7000 / nhunt@kaplankirsch.com

Steve Chesterton, US Forest Service
(202) 205-1398 / smchesterton@fs.fed.us

Editorial Policy

Articles are not edited for content and may not reflect the position, endorsement, or mission of RMS. The purpose of this policy is to encourage the free exchange of ideas concerning river management issues in an open forum of communication among the RMS membership. Unless indicated, points of view are solely those of the author.

Executive Director's Eddy

Light looms large as we arrive at the end of the pandemic tunnel! We hope visitors who return to newly discovered joy and freedom of river recreation also develop skills to enjoy them safely. We also hope that as they learn to love their experiences, they will see the importance of stewarding the resources that need and deserve sufficient human resources and wise protocols critical for their endurance.

What lies ahead as public health officials field creative incentives to meet COVID-19 vaccination goals, and pandemic response restrictions lift?

Outdoor Participant (COVID and Beyond), a special report completed by the Outdoor Industry Association (March 31, 2021) shared the following that you may have already factored into your plans or are experiencing in the field:

- Those who participated in an outdoor activity for the first time alone did so close to home and chose an activity with a low barrier to entry (e.g., walking, running, biking, hiking, etc.). Vacations were also an entry point (e.g., trying kayaking while on a fishing trip).
- Although new participants report more screen time (TV and online) since the onset of the pandemic — presumably to replace things they did before COVID like going out to restaurants, bars, or events — they also hope to reduce their screen time as restrictions lift.
- Outdoor activities are a cost-effective antidote that can serve as the social fabric that brings kids, families, and communities together safely.
- More than 60% of those who started or resumed walking, bicycling, fishing, or running/jogging intend to continue once restrictions lift.
- About one-quarter of new participants said they don't want to continue the outdoor activities: the top barriers



Risa Shimoda

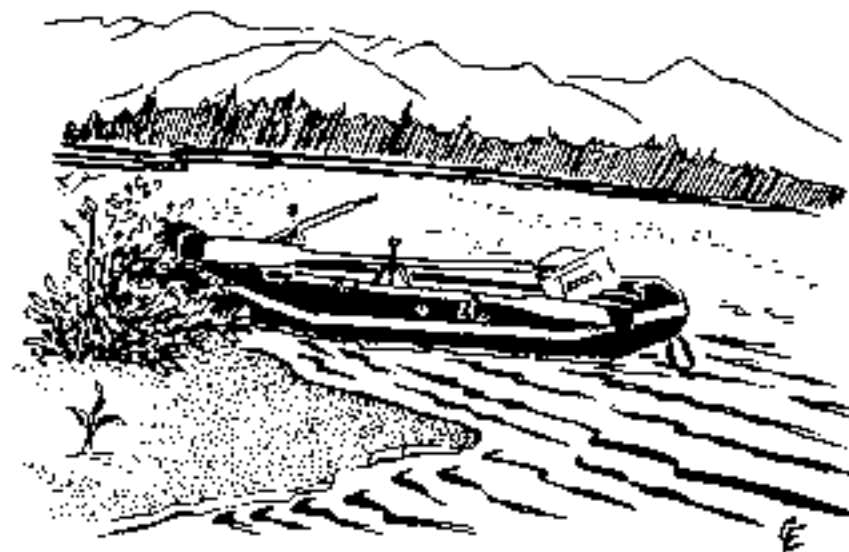
include travel, resuming other activities, and family demands.

Rivers are “open for business” and we both celebrate the visitation, permit demand, full outfitter trips, and [backorders](#) (unless you have been shopping for hard goods and hoping for immediate delivery). While Tahe Outdoors, one of our Symposium sponsors, generously offered a SUP / Kayak Kit, they could only promise delivery in the fall. Another, when asked whether they would be attending this year's major international paddlesports trade show (The Paddle Show in Lyon, France) to take orders for 2022 mused, “We don't really need to, given the demand we are seeing!”

Please share what you are experiencing vs. last and previous years. Are crowds as large as they were last summer? Has your 2020 experience prepared your team for this year's visitation? Have you heard stories about others' ability to rent or purchase a raft or kayak in 2021? Email us at rms@river-management.org.

We've just finished our six-part Wild and Scenic Rivers webinar series! We received high marks for the material

RMS President's Corner



Judy Culver

covered and the expertise of our instructors, and they were each expertly coordinated and hosted by RMS' River Training Center Coordinator, Angie Fuhrmann. Thank you Angie for the job well done, and to our expert webinar presenters: Fred Akers, Kai Allen, Mollie Chaudet, Steve Chesterton, Shana Stewart Deeds, Liz Lacy, Emma Lord, Jim MacCartney, Colter Pence, Jennifer Reed, Sharon Seim, Nancy Taylor, Cassie Thomas, and Monica Zimmerman. We appreciate and applaud you!

As we venture into what looks like a season of unprecedented heat, consider taking a break to attend an upcoming [River Management Roundtable](#) session. We continue to offer both *On the River* discussions such as the discussion of trade-offs related to establishing user capacity (on July 13th) and *Gearing Up, Personally* topics that offer exercises you can use in your workgroup or household to help grow awareness and effectiveness as but threads in a diverse tapestry of cultures and aspirations, on the river and off. ♦

Risa Shimoda
Executive Director

As river managers going through our professional and personal river gear trying to figure out how we can make the good, the bad, and the ugly work for one more season due to the shortages in the supply chain something keeps nibbling at my subconscious.

Our challenges to educating new river users include not only social media's misinformation but how to reach new users that do not know that someone, in fact, manages the river system and where to find valid information? Is this a new challenge, no, but the magnitude of first time users effects every responsible river user out there.

River managers are now faced with a diverse group of users who are actively seeking new or repeat experiences on our rivers, lakes and trails who have never heard of Leave No Trace, Tread Lightly or situational awareness? Many have never been outside of the comfort of their community parks and are using unfamiliar equipment or that which is not adequate for the desired use. How do we welcome and educate users of different backgrounds, education and socio-economic levels to become stewards of the land while addressing the challenges of language or lingo barriers? How do we educate those who don't even know we exist?

I challenge my fellow RMS members to develop or express innovative ways to

educate the users of our nations waterways and to provide examples to the RMS board and members on what has worked or may work to create inclusive messaging and recruitment of river stewards and managers.

Do you have examples of how to bridge the gap in river safety and recreating messaging for multiple languages or those from the low income, inner city or suburban areas? Do you have ideas on how to improve accessible messages in areas for which there are isn't cell coverage or power?

RMS is seeking those who wish to be on a committee to help us spearhead these efforts whether you wish to provide feedback, just listen or have ideas you would love to share or to provide ideas that this committee can work through and build from. Committee meetings will work around participants schedules and workload.

All voices and membership levels are welcome to be part of the committee or to express your innovative ideas. May our 2021 boating season provide many opportunities to get out and recreate! ♦

Judy Culver
RMS President

District recently. Training had been planned for a long time between Ed Sherman (Forest Service Recreation) on the Eleven Point Ranger District and the River Management Society — everyone adjusted their schedules and stepped out on a limb during a global pandemic to have a virtual five-day workshop to share diverse perspectives prior to beginning outreach to update the Wild and Scenic River Comprehensive River Management Plan (CRMP). This was the first time anyone had held a five-day CRMP workshop virtually. This put all the instructors out of their element, and many hours were donated by instructors learning a virtual platform and learning specifics of the Eleven Point River. This workshop enabled the Forest to begin this update process as a much less trying endeavor.



Rod Bonacker.

Considering that travel was very limited during the fall of 2020, putting this workshop on virtually was the only option. Mollie and Rod went above and beyond to ensure this virtual meeting was effective and engaging for attendees, and that it covered a wide range of perspectives to prepare for the upcoming CRMP update process. Having the workshop recorded allowed individuals that couldn't attend to catch up and be prepared for the CRMP update process.

This workshop was a collaboration among the District, the Forest, the Region, outside consultants with expertise, a citizen historian, and multiple disciplines. Archaeology, Biology, Recreation, Fisheries, Hydrology, Geology, Planning, Lands, and many more Forest Service areas were represented. Mollie and Rod, assisted by Maret Pajutee, brought very powerful collaboration and consulting skills based on their past experience working within the Forest Service. This workshop set the stage for the Forest Service to identify a long list of partners and communities to collaborate with as it updates this half-century old plan. It also set the stage for experts on the Forest to conduct the necessary work over the winter to begin outreaching to the public in Spring 2021. The workshop has given everyone that attended the tools to build bridges with partners and effectively engage the community as the CRMP is updated.

The bottom line is that these instructors put themselves out of their element to meet the needs of a Forest during a global pandemic. They learned a virtual platform, dealt with the hiccups, and pulled it off! Mollie and Rod have provided many river management training sessions over the years and are key instructors for the River Training Center.

Outstanding Contribution to River Management Award

This award is open to all and recognizes a longer history of contributions to the greater field of river management (as

opposed to more recent or project/location-specific accomplishments). George Lindemann is an enthusiastic paddler with an appreciation for the environment and the nation's waterways. Whether he is paddling with friends and family on rapids in Tennessee or through quiet coastal areas in south Florida, he is committed to preserving and protecting these special places. He knows that protecting the water includes protecting the lands around it.

George doesn't just appreciate these places, he takes steps to understand what each landscape and habitat contributes to the whole. In 2017, he organized, funded, and led a coalition of landowners, conservation groups, and state conservation leaders to secure unanimous, bipartisan approval designating Soak Creek on the Cumberland Plateau as a

Tennessee State Scenic River — the first new designation in 15 years. His work also made it possible for the state to leverage federal funds to add five miles of trail, connecting two state natural areas. George's donation of 1,000 acres of land to the State of Tennessee came with one request: that public access to Soak Creek be provided.

In 2018, as part of the celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, George was part of the ceremony to officially open the Soak Creek segment of the Cumberland Trail. More recently, George was part of the movement to name Piney Creek a Tennessee State Scenic River. In June 2020, the Tennessee legislature made this special designation.

These years-long efforts have resulted in more access, better protections, and collaborations for future plans and programs. Because of his conservation work, George was named 2017 Conservationist of the Year in Tennessee. Protecting the waterways is critical, but they are not protected in isolation. George continues his work in the watershed. He recently donated 2000 acres to TennGreen for preservation and research. He used the Southeastern Grasslands Initiative to inventory the landscapes and wildlife on his Cumberland Plateau farm and advise on restoring native grasses. In the process, he found that his previously clear-cut lands can be managed to encourage native grasses to grow, which can be used to feed his cattle. George has written articles to show other farmers how they can be useful, efficient, profitable, and mindful of the landscapes and wildlife, improving habitat and encouraging repopulation of native flora and fauna.

He has sponsored seminars and conferences to support and encourage research regarding medicinal plants, including Wild American Ginseng. George has written for a variety of

publications, helping to educate and engage other farmers and developers. In an editorial in *The Tennessean*, he stated that "this is the perfect moment to build on the successes of the past and encourage the State and Federal legislatures to designate more waterways; protect more of nature and bring more commerce to these natural areas. Those who have done well have a special responsibility to give back. Do well. Do good." These are words by which George Lindemann lives.

George Lindemann



Frank Church Wild and Scenic Rivers Award

This award recognizes contributions focused on the management, enhancement, or protection of designated Wild and Scenic Rivers. As with the Outstanding Contribution to River Management, this award recognizes a history of contributions with a broad geographic scope (as opposed to more recent or project/location-specific accomplishments).

As one of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's representatives to the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council, Jen Reed provides national Wild and Scenic River policy guidance to an agency whose Wild and Scenic River management responsibilities have not always been widely recognized. While her official job title is Visitor Use Manager at the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, for the past several years Jen has worked tirelessly at a regional and national level to ensure that her agency's Wild and Scenic Rivers program has been able to maximize the benefits of the strong resource protections embodied in the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Unlike its sister agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has few Wild and Scenic River management responsibilities outside Alaska. Within the state, however, the agency manages seven Wild and Scenic Rivers, some of them seeing relatively high visitation pressure due to their superlative recreational and subsistence values. Fish and Wildlife Service's relatively low number of Wild and Scenic Rivers had, until recently, resulted

in a very low profile for its program. It is almost entirely to Jen's credit that this is now changing.

Jen cut her teeth serving on an interdisciplinary team that conducted a Wild and Scenic River review on Arctic Refuge, completed in 2011 with an Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision signed in 2015. This endeavor resulted in eligibility and suitability findings for four pristine rivers located in one of the nation's most remote and untouched conservation areas, giving these rivers increased protection. These four rivers have been recommended for congressional designation.

From the time of her in-depth exposure to the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, Jen has been a staunch advocate for increasing the awareness of the protections afforded by the Act. Jen has presented at various RMS symposiums, and she has served as Alaska's subject matter expert on Wild and Scenic River management. Jen ensured that protections afforded by the Act were incorporated into the Environmental Impact Statement for evaluating oil and gas leases on Arctic Refuge. Her extensive knowledge of this Act proved indispensable for detailing the effects that a leasing program would have on rivers recommended for designation.

More recently, recognizing the strong protections afforded designated Wild and Scenic Rivers, Jen has focused on ensuring that all five refuges with designated rivers in Alaska, along with her regional leadership, are using this statutory resource management tool to its full potential. She led a multi-year effort to educate staff about the Act through a series of training opportunities that she organized in cooperation with other agencies and the RMS River Training Center. Jen facilitated a region-wide effort to identify Wild and Scenic River values on the seven rivers within Alaska refuges. The resulting product – a

Jennifer Reed



regional report detailing each river's ORVs, free flowing character, water quality, and the interdependency between water resources and other values – has been recognized as a major achievement by FWS regional leadership.

Jen continues to work tirelessly to ensure that Fish and Wildlife Service policy is consistent with Wild and Scenic River Act mandates, and that refuge staff and key regional managers are able to benefit from training offered by the River Training Center. Within the interagency council, she has contributed significantly to the development of user capacity planning guidance. She is currently the council's sole representative from Alaska, a state with 25 designated WSRs that are subject to the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act's (ANILCA's) often confusing requirements. Jen is a constant advocate for rivers.

River Manager of the Year

Colter Pence is a regional and national asset to river management. Her commitment is exemplified by her actions. These actions span from a local commitment to work across agencies to manage the Flathead Wild and Scenic River to volunteering to take on regional and national responsibilities. Since 2018 she has volunteered to present and train others regarding Wild and Scenic River management. In 2018, when the 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was celebrated, Colter set the “gold standard” for promoting the occasion through social media and a variety of presentations. She built a strong social media plan for the Flathead National Forest and then implemented the actions in that plan. She led several presentations about the history of the Flathead River system and its impact on the national Wild and Scenic River system. This included a presentation at the 2018 River Management Symposium, University of Montana Wilderness Issues Lecture Series, and the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation guest lecture series.

Colter has been a core team member for the Northern Rockies Wilderness Skills Institute planning group. In this role she has advocated for more Wild and Scenic River related training and has taught about Wild and Scenic River management during that training session. In 2021 she taught a Wild and Scenic River Management session for the RMS River Training Center. Colter strives to improve on the ground management of the Flathead River. For example, through her efforts and commitment, the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park have furthered their efforts in coordinating and sharing in a river ranger volunteer patrol program.

She also improved training and coordinating agency ranger patrols and monitoring. She has assured that we are working together for consistency on management issues and regulations. This push for interagency cooperation has led to increased public awareness of Forest Service and Park Service management and



Colter Pence

regulations across the Flathead Wild and Scenic River system.

Colter is a leader for the Forest in working with BNSF Railroad on their Oil Spill Response Plan and emergency response training. As concerns for the impacts to the Middle Fork Wild and Scenic River continue to grow, Colter's leadership, knowledge and feedback working alongside BNSF Railroad and other agency partners, has contributed immensely to working on this increasingly important management issue.

Colter stands out as a River Manager. She is dedicated and locally focused but the actions that she takes on the Flathead help other river managers across the country. ♦



The RMS Board and the awards committee thank all who submitted nominations, and we encourage you to *resubmit* nominations this fall for those who were not winners this time around – the committee acknowledges that making selections is a very difficult process, and all who were nominated are well deserving of recognition.

Paddle The Kish In Marengo

by Pat Lawlor

Paddle the Kish in Marengo is a volunteer group started in 2018 by a group of frustrated paddlers. From Union, IL, through Marengo and to the county line with Boone County, there are 14 beautiful miles of Kishwaukee River flowing through the western side of McHenry County with no access and too many logjams to count.

Although the Kishwaukee headwaters are in Woodstock, it is not until Union that the Kish is usually navigable, at least in spring. From Marengo and west, the Kish is generally about 20-40 feet wide and 4-10 feet deep and navigable all season. The group has a Facebook page Paddle the Kish in Marengo that has garnered 861 volunteers to date, a web page paddlethekishinmarengo.com, and our own YouTube channel Paddle the Kish in Marengo.

Two new launches have been established. Siems Memorial Park at 16351 Highbridge Rd in Union has a launch within the park with easy access and parking. Woodbine Launch is at 860 Woodbine Lane in Marengo. It sits in the northeast corner of Deerpass subdivision on land owned by the City of Marengo. There is a driveway, parking lot, a driveable dirt road to a boat drop off area, then a 300' path to the Kish. This area was all neglected brush and overgrowth that was cleared and constructed by volunteers. Other access points are N Union Rd, Deerpass, Hwy 23 and Thorne Rd, although those generally have no parking other than roadside. The group is working on developing more parking access.

Most of the land on either side of the Kish in McHenry County is low wetland with no visible buildings or development for most of the passage. Because of this the land is full of birds and animals, and a great place to fish. The Kishwaukee is a Class A river in the State of Illinois, the last one to be developed. Paddling on the Kish seems remote and peaceful, with only bird and animal noises to be heard. One would never guess that a city and civilization are so near.

Another thrust of the group is to clear the Kish of all the treefalls from the past decades. It is amazing how many jams a dedicated group of 4 people with a chainsaw can clear in a Saturday morning! There are still many chokepoints, but the clear sections are Siems to just past 176, Deerpass to Ritz Rd and east of County Line Rd. The volunteers are working hard this year of low water levels to connect these sections for easier paddling.

Some of the land is owned by the City of Marengo and McHenry County Conservation District, but a lot of the land is privately owned. The group is working with these private landowners in securing permission to “paddle through.” So far, all the landowners have been



Before and after, volunteers clear treefalls.



And, volunteers create important trail access. Photos: Pat Lawlor

agreeable, but paddlers are warned not to step on private land. ♦

Pat Lawlor is an organizational leader for Paddle the Kish in Marengo.

Origin's Origin and Vision

by Scott Martin

This urban river story, like many, begins in a flood. Through January and February 2018, repeated rain and snow events in the Ohio's headwaters pushed the Ohio well outside of its banks. By curious happenstance, a planning team had simultaneously just begun work exploring the potential future land use for about 600 acres and 1.5 miles of an ecologically rich, culturally significant, and sadly abused, dumped upon, and forgotten section of the urban Ohio River waterfront in Southern Indiana just across from downtown Louisville.

As the flooding continued, the planners ran into a park ranger working hard to set up barriers to prevent people from accessing a parking lot that was soon to go under water. He was flummoxed in his task. Just as a cone went up, people would push it out of the way to get as close as they could to the river. They wanted to see, smell, and feel the power of the flood. This five-minute observation produced what we hope becomes a pivotal "AH HA!" moment for our community.

We learned right then the big question we didn't know we had been gathered to answer – *what if we built a park, a public landscape, aimed at being the place people come to experience during floods?* What if we approached the river's most challenging days as its best? What if we created an urban waterfront park that didn't freak out when the Weather Channel's Jim Cantore showed up?

And for the next act, what if we acknowledged the near certain impact of climate change in the Ohio River basin? What if we took the climate change projections seriously and designed a park that creates new wildlife habitat, new ways for people to experience nature and deployed climate change's local impact to "rewild" our urban waterfront, establishing a dynamic public



space with positive outcomes for people and wildlife alike? These are the big questions that drove the shaping of this land, a 600-acre collection of brownfields, wet woods, and river camps located in the center of the Louisville metro region within a short thirty-minute drive of 1.2 million people.

The design firm OLIN Studio and Joseph+Joseph Architects, under the direction of the nonprofit park leaders with River Heritage Conservancy are creating a landscape that will lean into climate change, and bring people into contact with the rarest experience in the relative flatlands of the Upper South — the raw, muscular, unrestrained power of nature. To guide this ambitious effort, the key was agreeing upon guiding design principles at the beginning.

First, we acknowledge the Ohio River's supremacy. All the land in the park — be it shoreline, floodway, or floodplain — is river. Whether it is wet ten days a decade or 365 days a year, it is river.

Second, there is tremendous value in putting people in close, and safe, relationship with big water rivers during all of their seasons. Only by connecting people to this wildness do we even begin to think about redefining our relationship with the wildness that surrounds us. Our community doesn't have the Tetons or the Pacific Coast. We do have a lumbering, brown, sober, and strong river of massive scale. We sit along a globally significant waterway. This is our Yellowstone. It should be celebrated.

This leads to the third. Picking up lessons from our colleagues in Europe and Australia about the value of urban green spaces, we aim to "rewild" our community. These unfinished, rugged, green, blue and ecologically (and thus recreationally)

Birds Eye Aerial Rendering



rich environmental systems in the middle of a top 50 US metro area are where fascinating juxtapositionally-informed experiences can be unlocked. When the park is complete, if we are successful, people will wonder how in the world we spent so much money on a landscape that seems so natural, so wild, and so just "there." And these experiences must be accessible to all.

And all building to the fourth. This land continues to be seen as "throw-away" land by many. We know that our plan and vision must result in a tangibly emotional experience for visitors delivered in large part by assets either already present, or so massive that they are out of our control. As a nonprofit conservancy driven project, that value must be understood and latched onto by the public if we are to be successful in raising the private funds, and public support, required to make action happen.

Finally, the name of the project was to be grounded in all of the stories of the land. Beginning with over 10,000 years of human habitation by First Nations, the initial land grant for what became the State of Indiana, to the beginning of the Lewis & Clark Corps of Discovery that launched from this site, to its place on the Underground Railroad, and next to the coming changes facing our entire planet, we see this site as an "Origin" — a beginning of many ways for many people. Thus, the name "Origin Park" was selected.

Since work has begun, over 300 acres have been secured for the park. Ecological, recreational, and environmental assessments were all completed. The Corps assisted with an in-depth historical analysis of river flow regimens at this site. Historical and cultural resource reviews were wrapped up. Then, the Master Plan was completed and rolled out to the public in mid-2020. A pilot project (a blueway element with low-head dam removal included) was funded and will open later in 2021. EPA and State funds have been secured to begin remediation of brownfields within the site. Most significantly, serious fundraising is set to kick off in late 2021 for the landscape's first big moves.

This project is a big move for our community and as anticipated with big projects, it's not without resistance. One local mayor opposes the project and his community's participation. Land acquisition will take time as the Conservancy only works with willing sellers. And most recently, a local historical landmark within the site was lost to arson.

That said, as one of four metro areas in the US with fully realized Frederick Law Olmsted park systems, this community uniquely appreciates the value of master planned landscape level work for parks and parkways. We hope this park finds its place in this tradition.

With profound changes on the horizon due to climate change, and changing local economic realities, we see this park site as playing the role of community healer

and restorer. A massive lift, no doubt, and one we are certain is 100% the right move to make for the challenges, and opportunities, we face here along one of America's great rivers.

The creation of Origin Park as the first amphibious and climate-change resilient park in the region marks a change in our history as we move forward in park design. Bringing people closer to nature and embracing the unknown changes in our environment allow for a better understanding and desire to learn about our impact on the world around us. Origin Park is the future of park design — and climate-change resilience is the foundation upon which lasting landscapes will be built. ♦

Scott Martin is the Executive Director of the River Heritage Conservancy in Jefferson, Indiana.

(Above) The current Origin Park site and (below) the hopeful future of Origin Park. Courtesy: River Heritage Conservancy





The Des Plaines Canoe and Kayak Marathon

66 Years and Still Going Strong – May 22, 2022

Edited and expanded by Sigrid Pilgrim from an article by the late Ralph Frese – Founder of the Des Plaines Marathon

The Des Plaines Marathon, founded in 1957 by Ralph Frese, is much more than a race. It is the longest running competitive and citizens' canoe paddling event in the U.S., always held the Sunday before Memorial Day. The event had its origin when Ralph Frese was involved in the scouting program on the northwest side of Chicago. An avid paddler addicted to

exploring the area's waterways, he wanted to share his passion with the young men in the program. Starting out by teaching them to build canoes and kayaks with canvas over a frame construction, he discovered fiberglass and polyester resin with which he could build an almost scout-proof craft much less prone to damage than the canvas ones.

This led to the development of a fiberglass mold copied after a 16-foot Old Town Guide model that became the key to a

kit program, allowing many scouts to build a small fleet of canoes for their unit and others. In the meantime, Ralph was guiding scout leaders on exploratory canoe trips in the area, showing them how they could add an affordable note of adventure to their programs.

Attendance on these trips reached the 100 mark at times. Before he knew it, there were about 400-500 of these little canoes made which prompted him to introduce a little bit of fun with a competition. As

for the location, the Des Plaines River was close and thus, the Des Plaines Canoe Marathon came into being with the original length of about 25 miles giving impetus to the name, now shortened to 18.5 miles, with a Minithon of 5.25 miles.

The first race was held in the fall with low water and 25 craft made the challenging run. It was decided then to move the race to the Sunday before Memorial Day when the river was more apt to be bankfull and the trees and flowers in the bloom of spring. (Now it is the traditional race date). The second year saw 106 craft, followed by 156 the third year and 206 the fourth year. The Marathon's popularity was established, eventually reaching a cut-off limit of 1000 boats. Registration in 2019 was over 700 paddlers.

In scouting, the awards of colorful embroidered patches are important recognitions to both scouts and leaders, and these continue to be awarded each year to everyone finishing the event. Because the Des Plaines River had been a route of the voyageurs in the years past, a cast figure of a voyageur as the trophy was created and is still the award for certain category first place winners.

Over the decades the event has been organized by volunteers, who eventually founded the Des Plaines River Association, whose mission is to conduct the annual race and further protection and restoration of the river. It is gratifying that this effort is still alive and well after 60 years.

From the early days of homemade canvas over frame constructed canoes, the event witnessed the evolution of design and materials in canoes, kayaks and standup paddle boards that hopefully will continue to float down the river for many more decades to come. Come join us in 2022 and beyond – pandemic permitting. ♦

63rd Annual Des Plaines Canoe and Kayak Marathon
May 22, 2022
 Registration starts March 1
www.canoemarathon.com
 hotline 847-604-2445



Ralph Frese

What Dam Removal Does To Paddling On The Des Plaines River In Northern Illinois

by Don Mueggenborg

Don epitomizes the passion held by lifelong paddlers, having first raced in the Des Plaines Marathon in 1969. He serves as the Registrar for the Des Plaines River Canoe Marathon, Treasurer for the IPC and St. Charles Canoe Club, and currently "as close to president as we have" for the Southwest Brigade Voyageur Canoe Club.

In 2012, former Illinois Governor Pat Quinn announced an initiative to remove or modify 16 low-head run-of-river dams throughout the state. The goal of the initiative was to improve water quality, aquatic habitat, and recreational safety. Run-of-river dams degrade the quality of water by creating a stagnate pool of water that has diurnal fluctuations in dissolved oxygen that is conducive to large algal blooms. The run-of-river dams are harmful to aquatic habitat by both

creating a barrier to the free movement of fish and mussels in an upstream direction and the poor water quality in the pool upstream of the dam. The run-of-river dams are also dangerous to recreational users of the rivers due to the hydraulics created downstream of the dam. For more information, see: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/WaterResources/Pages/safetyAtDams.aspx>.

Many dams were built for purposes no longer needed: to generate power, turn mill wheels, and to flush away sewage with the appropriate "Odor Meter" on a local river during low water in the summer. Dam removal lowers the water upstream, and increases it downstream, and generally makes paddling safer but can also make paddling harder, as noted below.



Run-of-river dam, Des Plaines in North Aurora.
Photo: Don Mueggenborg

In northern Illinois's Cook County, a favorite paddle is on the Des Plaines River, site of the annual Des Plaines River Canoe and Kayak Marathon (held continuously for 62 years until cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic) which in 2019 attracted over 700 paddlers, including myself. www.canoemarathon.com

The Des Plaines River Dams – A Pro And Con For Removal

Hollister Dam – When I first started racing the Des Plaines River Marathon, there was a messy portage; then a notch miraculously appeared in the dam. It was a little tricky to maneuver through, but I thought it was fun. Now it is safer, and one can paddle right over where the dam used to be.

Dam # 1 – Paddlers often would shoot over the dam – some made it, some did not and spectators on shore loved it. During low water, paddling over the dam became dangerous. With the dam removed, the water is very shallow, and it is hard to even paddle downstream.



Ryerson Dam – I was told that this dam was built by Mr. Ryerson so his horses could have shallow water below the dam to cross the river. It was a messy portage and dangerous to shoot except in high water. Now there is no problem.

Hoffman Dam – This is a high dam that had to be portaged even though accessing the shore and portaging was illegal in Riverside. Now the current and dam remnants in the water make it quite difficult to paddle and the portage is even harder.

Material Service Dam in Lockport - Dam removal eliminated a portage and a large standing wave below the dam referred to as Fishnet Rapids. It is better to paddle but still has usually very low water.

There are alternatives to dam removal – as shown on the neighboring Fox River, where the State of Illinois created a bypass channel creating rapids for the [Marge Cline Whitewater Course](#). ♦

Marge Cline Whitewater Course in Illinois. Photo: Karen Ann Miller

by Michael Schramm and Audrey Naughton

It may seem incongruous that there should be a National Wildlife Refuge in the Mid-Ohio River Valley. After all, despite great progress, the river remains the most polluted in North America. Within the Ohio River Valley, industries have long reigned supreme in the imagination of local residents who for generations have relied upon industry for employment and other community benefits. The river has traditionally been used for recreation, but local interest in the river has rarely penetrated the surface of the water. Speaking with locals, it is clear the river is seen as a superhighway for coal barges more than as a unique ecological resource, though the river is actually home to an incredible diversity of fish and other wildlife, including the greatest mussel diversity in the world. Fortunately, things have begun to shift. Less of the land, including land on the islands, is being used for farming, and the once-booming oil drilling industry has receded.

Some islands are quite large, up to two miles in length and a quarter mile wide, while others are small and easy to overlook. Before the present system of dams and locks were established, the summertime flows in the Ohio River were so low that many islands could be accessed by wading across the river. Horse drawn carts could utilize an established ford to traverse the river without an axle ever touching the water's surface. Therefore, no bridges were required and it was economical to farm the rich soils of the islands. Record watermelons and potatoes were grown on some of the refuge's islands. But as new dams were constructed, the depth of the river

Struggling To Shift Perspectives Through A Kayak Challenge



Buckley Island farmhouse. Photo: M. Schramm



Manchester. Photo: M. Schramm

increased in most places to around 18 feet, making island access impractical for farming or other uses.

Following the passage of the Clean Water Act, water quality improved and wildlife began to return to the islands, which had recently been abandoned by farmers. The discovery of a Heron rookery on Fish Creek Island in the 1970's sparked a grassroots movement by local citizens to advocate for federal protection. The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge was formally created in 1990. The refuge currently owns 22 islands, a little more than half of the islands between Pittsburg and Cincinnati. Each of the islands has unique characteristics. While birds and other wildlife dazzle the eyes, the history of each island is palpable; today it is easy to find vestiges of a bygone era.

Clamoring up the bank to the forest atop the islands, visitors will discover abandoned farm houses and barns, rusting oil derricks, and clearings left behind where farm fields once fed the nation. It feels adventurous and inspires the imagination to visit the islands, but for many local citizens, the islands remain abstract and inaccessible. Why should the public care about a resource they have not had an opportunity to visit? A lot of people don't even realize the islands are open to the public. In order to increase public awareness of the refuge as well as of the local ecosystem, the refuge has sought to encourage visitation to the islands. "The Kayak Challenge" fulfills this purpose.

"The Kayak Challenge" presents a challenge to outdoor enthusiasts to visit 20 of the islands included within the refuge via kayak or canoe. Each of the 20 islands has a special sign



located at an accessible point on the island’s interior. The kayaker must take a picture with every sign to document their visit and completion of the challenge. There is also a yellow sign on the shore that suggests a good spot for landing and helps direct the kayaker to the interior island sign. Once the kayaker has visited all of the islands and taken a picture with each sign, they can share the photos at the visitor center and receive a prize and certificate for their efforts. The first individuals to complete the challenge were River Management Society members David and Fife Wicks in May 2021.

The islands of the refuge are scattered over 360 miles of river, so for many it will be more practical to break down the adventure into a series of short trips. This allows participants to truly experience the Ohio River islands, visit local towns, and relish in the biodiversity found here. Additional information about public access points, landing sites and signs, and an overall Kayak Challenge Map can be found on the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge website: www.fws.gov/refuge/ohio_river_islands/visit/kayak_challenge.html

The overall goal of “The Kayak Challenge” is to encourage visitation and awareness of a unique and valuable ecosystem. The challenge is meant to inspire visitors to get out on the river and interact directly with the environments that help sustain local species. Bald eagles and Great Blue Herons have become common along the river. By revealing the beauty of the Ohio River islands to new audiences, there is hope that we can shift away from a tired and outdated industry-centric view of the river to a view more closely aligned with what’s actually happening here: nature is recovering in all its splendor. To inspire a new generation of environmental stewards, all that’s left to do is get out and enjoy what’s already here. ♦

Michael Schramm is the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Services Manager, Williamstown, West Virginia. Audrey Naughton is a Biology Intern working with the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge through the Student Conservation Association (SCA).

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge Kayak Challenge

– Trip Report –

The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1990 to protect, conserve, and restore habitat for wildlife native to the river’s floodplain. The refuge consists of twenty-two islands and four mainland tracts scattered along 362 miles of the upper Ohio River.

The Friends of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge created the Kayak Challenge to promote their conservation work by engaging the recreational community and furthering the understanding of the scope and importance of Ohio River islands. The challenge is simple — visit 20 refuge islands (of the 22 islands owned by U.S. Fish and Wildlife) by kayak or canoe. Each of these islands has a special island sign located at a high and accessible point on the island (there is also an accompanying yellow sign on the shore which indicates the suggested landing point; usually the island sign is just inland from the yellow landing sign).

We, Fife and David Wicks, took on the challenge and canoed to each of the islands from May 23 to May 28, taking selfies at each island. We created a [YouTube video](#) of our selfie photos on each island which is a requirement of the challenge.

The adventure was not only about visiting each island, but we also had a beautiful adventure on the Ohio River! ♦



Fife and David Wicks, from Prospect, KY (dwicks1@gmail.com).



Wisconsin BLM's Lower Wisconsin River Cleanup – 8 Tons in 8 Hours

by Danielle Donkersloot

On March 17, 2020, the Northeastern States District partnered with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WI-DNR) to participate in the cleanup of Shack Island in Arena, Wisconsin. This effort resulted in the removal of eight tons of debris and a pre-1960's Volkswagen (VW) micro-bus. The BLM hired a contractor specializing in waterway debris removal to help accomplish the work.

BLM often needs to clean up illegal dumping sites on our lands, but it's not every day we need to do a major cleanup on an island. The Northeastern States District is responsible for the management of islands on lakes and rivers, specifically in the states of Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Michigan. These islands are enjoyed by boaters, tubers, and campers alike and may range in size from a quarter acre to over 60 acres.

Several years ago, the BLM discovered a trespass issue on one of the BLM islands on the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway (LWSR), in the beautiful Wisconsin Dells region. There were two dilapidated shacks, a VW microbus, and various household debris scattered along the northern edge of the island. That stretch of river is part of the protected Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. The LWSR is an ecological landscape of continental significance, conserving a broad assemblage of important and rare natural communities and plant and animal species. Therefore, it was important to get this island cleaned up. There are hundreds of

people floating past the island every weekend throughout the summer and the debris was a hazard to recreation.

I realized this was not going to be a typical cleanup. This island is in the middle of the river where the currents are always changing, and the river bottom is constantly shifting. The goal was to clean up the island with the least amount of ground disturbance, while keeping the riverbanks in tack.

The BLM had a small window of opportunity for the cleanup. The river stage needed to be high enough to allow workers to get in there with barges and a crew, but could not be too high as to inundate the island. The BLM worked with our sister organization NOAA and their Senior Service Hydrologist/Meteorologist who provided us with river stage predictions based on snow melt, precipitation, and the lock/dam water releases from above and below the island. This partnership was key in allowing the BLM to determine the best time to do this work.

Cleanup items included hundreds of cinderblocks, fencing, fence posts, the pieces of the shacks, roofs, carpet, water tanks, sheet metal, lumber, household appliances, lawnmowers and even a sand point well. ♦

Danielle Donkersloot is a Natural Resource Specialist and Project Manager for the Bureau of Land Management in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

(Courtesy: BLM staff)



(Courtesy: Schafer's Marine Services)



Lower Wisconsin Riverway Floodplain Wetlands Named Wetland of International Importance

by Danielle Donkersloot

The BLM Northeastern States District was part of a collaborative effort that worked to secure the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Floodplain Wetlands as a [Wetland of International Importance](#) under the International Ramsar Convention on Wetlands. The BLM is responsible for the management of several public islands within the Lower Wisconsin Riverway.

The BLM islands on the Lower Wisconsin Riverway include many large floodplain forests with small pockets of remnant prairie. These islands have extensive sandbars that attract day-use paddlers and campers. Northeastern States District staff partner with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Youth Conservation Corps, and others to manage invasive species and wildlife habitat on the islands.

“This designation further strengthens our network of partners by providing a vision for all of us. We look forward to continuing our efforts of caring for these beautiful public places,” said Francis Piccoli, Acting District Manager, BLM Northeastern States District Office.

Lower Wisconsin Riverway — The 48,000-acre Lower Wisconsin Riverway is Wisconsin’s sixth “Ramsar site” and its second largest. The site covers the longest free-flowing stretch of river in the Midwest and includes approximately 17,700 hectares from the Prairie du Sac dam to the confluence with the Mississippi River.

Other partners who worked to secure the Lower Wisconsin Riverway Ramsar designation include the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Ho Chunk Nation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway, Lower Wisconsin State Riverway Board, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, and private landowners. Many other local organizations and public officials also supported the nomination.

Wisconsin’s five other Ramsar sites are: Horicon Marsh, Kakagon/Bad River Sloughs, Door Peninsula Coastal Wetlands, Chiwaukee Illinois Beach Lake Plain, and Upper Mississippi River Floodplain Wetlands. ♦

Danielle Donkersloot is a Natural Resource Specialist and Project Manager for the Bureau of Land Management in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Reflections

by Tangy Wiseman



Julie Galonska

RMS has partnered with the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council (IWSRCC) to highlight the stories of river managers and their involvement in the development of Comprehensive River Management Plans (CRMPs) in an article series called [Reflections](#). These river professionals have provided insight on both their successes and challenges in forming and implementing the plans. A variety of challenges are covered from three very different river systems.

On the Snake River Headwaters, Linda Merigliano reflects on the impacts of climate change: “We’ve had some really big water years the past few years. As a result, people are losing property, banks are eroding, and structures are being undermined or lost. Bank stabilization projects on private lands are also becoming common occurrences.”

Julie Galonska provides insight on the complexity and importance of partnerships along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. “The more partners we can bring together, the better. Our local watershed councils and local universities are also very active along the Riverway.”

And, Kristen Thrall discusses the nuances of balancing the desires of stakeholder groups. “At the Huron-Manistee National Forest, these relationships were built by discovering potential stakeholder groups early on — everybody was at the table during its development.” As CRMPs age, it’s important to stop and reflect on how they have played out over the years in order to improve the development of plans for future Wild and Scenic rivers. ♦

Visit: www.river-management.org/crmp-reflections

The Effort Continues to Designate the Fox River a National Water Trail



Lower Fox River in Illinois. Photo: Karen Ann Miller

by Karen Ann Miller

As we begin another paddling season, (I know some of you diehards like to paddle all year round), the Team that formed a few years ago to develop a water trail for the Fox River that flows from southeast Wisconsin to north central Illinois continues to assemble an application for inclusion in the National Park Service (NPS) National Water Trail System. I have been a planner for Kane County, Illinois, for over 20 years and find our national parks awe inspiring, so when the opportunity presented itself to work with a team of professionals around the Fox River Watershed under the technical assistance of Angie Tornes from the NPS, I jumped at the chance.

Over the past few years our team has used data collected from volunteers to develop downloadable and printable maps and information on access sites, dams, portaging, and itineraries valuable to Fox River paddlers on the FabulousFoxWaterTrail.org website. Check it out!

Application to the National Water Trail System also requires inclusion of the following best management practices:

- Recreational Opportunities
- Education
- Conservation
- Community Support
- Public Information
- Trail Maintenance
- Planning

There are over 80 access sites on the Fox River offering recreational opportunities, cultural activities, and places to grab a bite to eat. The team has educated the public about the Fabulous Fox! Water Trail through dozens of presentations, published articles, FabulousFoxWaterTrail.org, and the distribution of over 40,000 brochures. The community has shown its support and input by attending several open houses, volunteering to collect data, submitting letters of support, and passing resolutions at the local government level. Currently, the team is completing

our first major update with the assistance of Map Hero, who designed our logo, website, and brochure. We are also working on developing a management plan which will include our planning process, cultural and historical information about the Fox River, ongoing stewardship and conservation efforts, coordination with land use plans, trail maintenance, and recommendations.

Based on data from the National Park Service, as a designated water trail, the Fabulous Fox! Water Trail is expected to benefit from national promotion and visibility, mutual support and knowledge sharing, training, opportunities to obtain technical assistance and sources of funding, positive economic impact from increased tourism, increased protection for outdoor recreation and water resources, and improved public health and quality of life. ♦

Karen Ann Miller, AICP is the Executive Planner for the Development Department in Kane County, Illinois.

Advancing Silent Sports in Your Community

How an Illinois Paddle Club Fought the Law and Won

by Joseph Ginger

This article appeared in March 2021 silentsportsmagazine.com and is published with permission from the author.

Friends of the Pecatonica River Foundation (FPRF) began in the early 1980s when the Freeport Park District, Illinois, sponsored a one-evening class on paddling a kayak. The Freeport Park District bought three Aquaterra Chinook kayaks as rentals. The kayak class started it, but people are necessary for the adventure to continue. Enter Rod Simenson, a long-time Boy Scout leader, retired from Scouting but still paddling. Together we paddled Yellow Creek, Pecatonica River, and Sugar River. For some time, one of our groups was using a Friday morning paddle as a team building exercise. At times, some of us got together and paddled Yellow Creek.

One day, as I was preparing to launch my kayak in Krape Park, considered the star of the Freeport Park District, a police officer told me it was against Park District rules to launch in Krape Park. After several years of launching in the park, I was shocked. I checked with a Park District office worker, who said, "If you paddle into the park, you can take out. But no launching." Codified rules related to owners of land along waterways and ownership rights, Riparian Law, in Illinois was the reason. A park district that rented canoes, kayaks, and paddle boats, but barred the public from launching did not seem right.

Illinois Riparian Law distinguishes navigable streams as waterways having been used for commercial purposes, such as transporting material. Fishing does not count. "A body of water to be navigable in fact, had to be 'generally only useful to any purpose of trade or agriculture.'" Illinois started this issue in 1842 and has an interesting and involved history.

When my family moved to Freeport in 1952, the Freeport Park District maintained a structure with rentable sections for the public to store rowboats



Joe Ginger, FPRF President

and canoes. People rented rowboats during the summer. The State of Illinois allows for petitioning to declare a stream or part of a stream navigable. Primarily, the stream must have been continuously used by the public for twenty-five years, and the Pecatonica River has a long history of boating and is classified as a navigable stream. The Park District had canoes and paddle boats for rent for many years. We were totally ignorant about Illinois Riparian Law, but fortunately the Pecatonica River was used to transport lumber and cattle. There was even a steamboat that had carried passengers from Winslow to Freeport.

But what do you do when you are told you cannot launch in your local stream? I contacted the American Canoe Association, which told me to contact Sigrid Pilgrim of the Illinois Paddling Council. After visits to Park District meetings, the Park District said they were going to review and improve their rules and let me know about launching in Krape Park. Their improvement?

No launching or even paddling in the park allowed.

Then a compromise was proposed. A paddler could use Yellow Creek by requesting a permission slip from a

designated Park District person. The Illinois Paddling Council came to the rescue. They asked each member to mail a permission request to the Freeport Park District expressing their opinion that this isn't a paddler friendly policy. This worked as, over the next few years, the Freeport Park District became paddler friendly.

The attention to Yellow Creek happened to coincide with some severe flooding along that stream, which developed two significant logjams. A search for someone to blame had the positive effect of having the logjams removed, but did little to relieve a systemic problem: Too much rain and no place to put it meant flooding. The Yellow Creek Partnership was formed and has worked on issues ever since. It has been successful in getting stakeholders involved.

On the plus side, the Yellow Creek Watershed Partnership gave us Lee Butler, a snowmobiler interested in winter trails. I persuaded him to paddle in a Pecatonica River canoe trip sponsored by the Honeywell group, which quickly converted him to paddling and, later, becoming a founding member of the FPRF.

Amenities are important to every community, for the people living there as well as for attracting visitors and new businesses. Freeport and Stephenson Counties in Illinois have the Jane Addams

Trail and part of the Pecatonica Prairie Trail. While these assets benefit the community, they need support groups to help fund them. I was asked if I would be interested in joining the board of the Northwest Illinois Trails Foundation. After I said yes, my involvement in the Illinois Paddling Council has given me lots of information on water access and how to create a water trail. The Trails Foundation provided access to Roger Schamberger, who might be classified as a force of nature because of his knowledge and dedication.

After high school, while many were going off to college, Roger was going to Texas for life-saving surgery and rehab due to a spinal cord injury. The result left Roger in a wheelchair and a focus on improving his community, Lena, Illinois, in every way possible. I met Roger in October 2003, at the Northwest Illinois Trails meeting. They asked me to become the Recording Secretary, and I said, "Yes." Roger also said "Yes" to the concept of a water trail. As a member of the Lena Community Park Board (LCPD), he was able to gain their support. Roger works for a company that designs and develops community swimming pools and water parks. He knows governmental regulations, Federal and State, Parks and Recreation, Army Corps of Engineers, and EPA rules. What he doesn't know he'll find out. The LCPD Board also included Joe Green, an engineer and businessman with many related design and business skills that help us keep our equipment running.

One point became apparent: The Water Trail needed to become a not-for-profit in Illinois. Several years later, we became a 501(c)(3). In Illinois, the process is straight forward. You must have officers, a statement of purpose, and a constitution with by-laws. Illinois charges a fee and yearly renewal. Board members receive no compensation. Using Illinois Paddling Council information on launch site development, a list of existing and possible launch sites was developed. Bridges require an easement that defines how much land is controlled by the governing body. They may control more land than you'd expect, and that could provide room for a parking area at the launch site. It's best to talk with area paddlers to determine their favorite lengths of the river and how long it takes to paddle them. Also, to note any negative



Lee Butler paddles past a lone dolomite sentinel along the Pecatonica River — a testament to the river being older than the last Ice Age.



Roger Schamberger tests the metal of his skid loader as he places erosion protection at a Pecatonica River fishing pier. All photos: Joe Ginger

aspects mentioned because they will likely need to be addressed at a later date. Keep in mind the unfortunate yet inevitable need for trash collection and removal. Scheduling an annual clean-up paddle will encourage stewardship for your stream.

Water trail development begins with identifying and listing any site being used and any other access sites providing a length of time reasonable for a paddle trip. Remember, it's possible to put two trips together to create a longer trip. Also keep in mind, especially for children, that map-making should show locations of launch sites and other amenities such as bathrooms and outhouses. These will then be useful as brochures to hand out,

promoting your water trail.

Becoming stewards of a waterway means you offer your community as a recreational destination. People who engage in Silent Sports other than paddling are also likely open to start engaging in paddling when in sight of inviting self-propelled water trips. We have the Jane Addams Trail nearby, which comes close to the Pecatonica River in several places. You can pedal, paddle, and hike in Stephenson County, Illinois.

When you look around your community, consider what you can do to make your area more attractive for recreational use. I hope what I have presented here will provide inspiration and

the means to begin.

Joseph Ginger, current president of Friends of the Peconica River Foundation, is a retired mechanical designer, having worked at Honeywell (Micro Switch) for 39 years. With retirement providing more time to paddle, he quickly found out about area Illinois river access issues and quirks, and then worked with others to make changes for the better.

Update

Construction began on the floating dock for Wes Block on the last weekend of April. Over a dozen volunteers have contributed their time and resources to expand the availability of launch sites on the Peconica River Water Trail! We are very thankful to all. ♦



Iowa River Revival

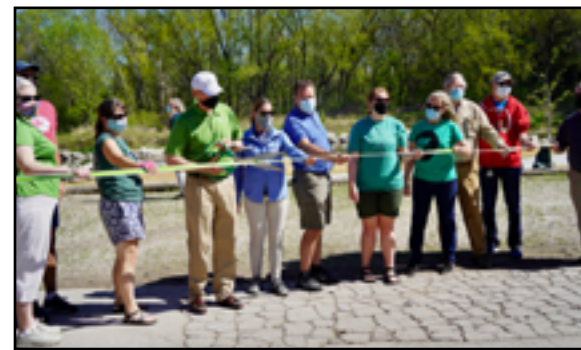
by Sara Carmichael

We at Iowa Rivers Revival understand not only the water quality issues rivers face in Iowa, as explained in the American Rivers list, but the issues that are more visible including deadly low-head dams, streambank erosion, and flooding. We have come a long way from a volunteer based organization 15 years ago. Legislators, media, and the public understand IRR is the voice focused solely on protecting, restoring, and enjoying our rivers.

Every year we [educate the public](#) about these dams through the trainings and other outreach events. Some of our most recent successes include leading the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) Toolbox Training workshops. These weeklong trainings are dedicated to educating engineers, architects, and the conservation community on specific ways to restore a stream or river, including ways to remove or mitigate low-head dams. We have 177 low-head dams left in Iowa, having started with over 200. Since 2008, the IDNR has worked to remove these dams since they offer no use and negatively impact rivers and water flow.

We also advocate for more funding for the IDNR Rivers Program. We have been successful in the past, receiving as much as \$2M allocated from state in 2015, and have also been zeroed out as we were in 2018. Our best path for success is for the state to realize the important this work by supporting IDNR with funds to remove more of the remaining unnecessary dams. We also work to get more Iowans out on to our water trails by leading paddling events with the public and with legislators. The best way for someone to realize how awesome and important their river in their backyard is to actually get out on the water!

We are excited to have celebrated the naming of [Ames, Iowa](#) as the 2021 [River Town of the Year](#) in May 2021. This is the fifteenth year of the award program, and the award is recognized as a great honor for any city or town to receive. ♦



Ames event and ribbon cutting. Photos: Robin Fortney



Sara Carmichael is Executive Director of Iowa River Revival, Des Moines, Iowa.

33 Dams Down, River Awareness Up: A Conversation About Iowa's Rivers

by John Wenck and Risa Shimoda

River professionals in Iowa continue to lead dramatically landscape-altering initiatives for over twenty-five years. Water trails, whitewater parks and as you'll read, dam removals are redefining rivers as fun, safe recreation destinations for residents and visitors. Here, RMS member John Wenck, Iowa DNR Water Trails Coordinator, provides a bit of history and his perspective of the dam removal program.

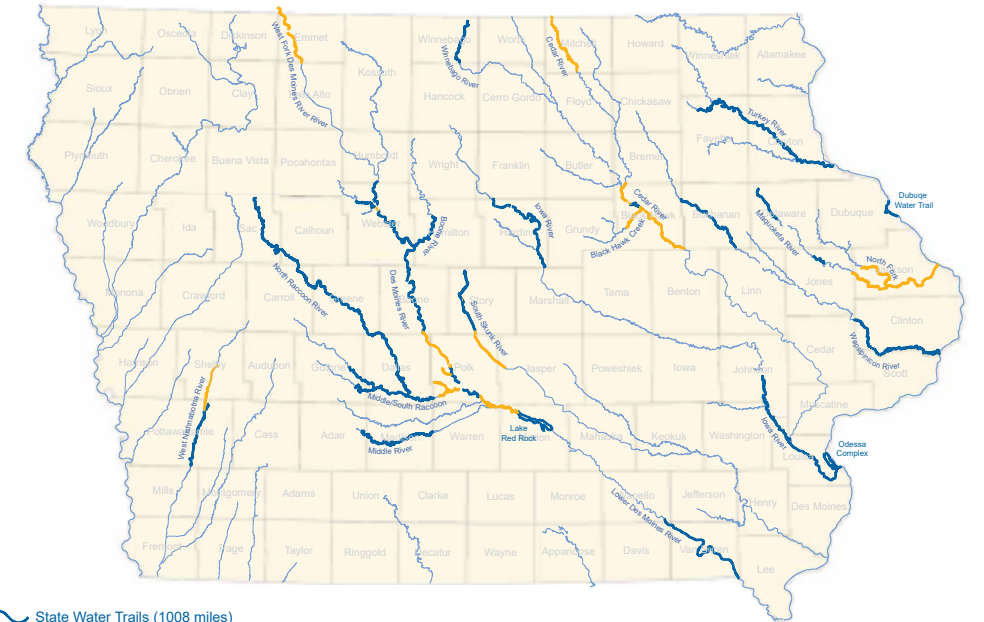
On May 1, 2021, a dam conversion project on the South Skunk River Water Trail was dedicated, funded in part by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR), along with pledges from the Outdoor Alliance of Story County, Iowa Whitewater Coalition, the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association, Skunk River Paddlers, and the family of Spencer Veysey. This is the 33rd completed dam mitigation project since the advent of DNR's River Programs in 2005. Two of the DNR grant programs, the Low Head Dam Mitigation Grant Program and the Water Trails Grant Program, provided a significant amount of funding for this project, as well as technical assistance. We have 1008 miles of state designated water trails.

This is a description of this specific project:

Since 1984, the low head dam constructed in North River Valley Park has pooled water in the South Skunk River to recharge the aquifer that supplies Ames with drinking water; however, the dam made the waterway inaccessible for paddlers due to the dangerous recirculation hydraulics it created. Now, the dam has been reimaged into a recreational asset that still allows water to pool, but also creates riverbank access for visitors and an exciting water feature for paddlers.

By placing a sequence of boulder weirs in the waterway, a small section of river rapids provides a thrill for kayakers, tubers, and canoers. A nearby fish passage allows for the migration of aquatic species upstream. The improved riverbank access allows anglers, water trail users, and

2021 Water Trails & Water Trails Under Development



State Water Trails (1008 miles)
Water Trails Under Development (271 miles)
Paddling Routes

visitors to get closer to the water. Nearly 2,000 cubic yards of material from the riverbank was excavated to open the area to the public and to provide protection against flooding. A path along with the upstream and downstream portage was included in the project. (Source: City of Ames [announcement](#) of the celebration posted April 7, 2021.)

The State program is supported by the *Rebuild Iowa's Infrastructure Fund*, sourced by gambling dollars: other program recipients include their lake restoration program. Iowa Rivers Revival has to work hard to advocate for dam mitigation funding, and it is not easy when the overall budget changes from one year to the next. There are projects worth \$17M that are ready for funding, and the list grows each year.

Dams Removed, Others in Process

John and Nate Hoogeveen, Director of River Programs, have developed an [interactive map](#) to identify dam projects. Completed dam projects are shown, as well as current projects in various phases of completion. Dam mitigation

projects include both total and partial removal. *Note: John is working on a similar interactive map that shows IDNR water access projects which he hopes to complete in 2021.*

John describes the steps they take as part of the state's low head dam mitigation program. "Each dam is unique, and we are careful to listen and learn as much as we can about the area and the concerns and comments from local residents. Between 2008 and 2010, we went through a statewide planning process for dams and water trails. Out of that process came three publications:

[Developing Water Trails in Iowa](#)

[Iowa Water Trails: Connecting People with Water and Resources](#)

[Solving Dam Problems: Iowa's 2010 plan for Dam Mitigation](#)

Solving Dam Problems: Iowa's 2010 plan for Dam Mitigation prioritizes all the dams in Iowa based on a number of considerations such as the danger it

poses, whether it is a barrier to invasives, the degree to which it promotes flooding, and related cultural issues.

A Bit About Nate

John reminds those unfamiliar with the many great accomplishments of the IDNR, that Nate Hoogeveen is probably the single most influential person and the brains behind their dam mitigation program, as well as their new program of river restoration, dating back to the early 2000s.

“The push really began after a kayaker drowned while intentionally paddling over one of the low head dams in downtown Des Moines in the summer of 2002. We realized that public education was incredibly important, especially in Iowa where our rivers are pretty tame and the consequences of poor river reading is generally minimal. In 2002, Nate founded the Iowa Whitewater Coalition whose primary focus, despite the name, was dam mitigation. A couple years later he spearheaded a conference for Iowa river enthusiasts that led to the formation of another non-profit called Iowa Rivers Revival in 2007. Both organizations are active: they focus on connecting people with their river resources and improving physical conditions along our rivers for ecological reasons, as well as safety and recreation.”

Looking forward, John offers good news as more and more people are discovering their state’s rivers: “The choir of voices is growing louder and louder to the point I think legislators are really listening. We are optimistic for the future of our rivers in Iowa.” ♦

John Wenck is the Land & Waters Bureau/River Programs Water Trails Coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and a member of the River Management Society.

Water Trails & Dam Mitigation Funding

Fiscal Year	Level of Funding
2015	\$2,000,000
2016	\$1,750,000
2017	\$1,000,000
2018	\$0
2019	\$500,000
2021	\$250,000
Total	\$6 Million

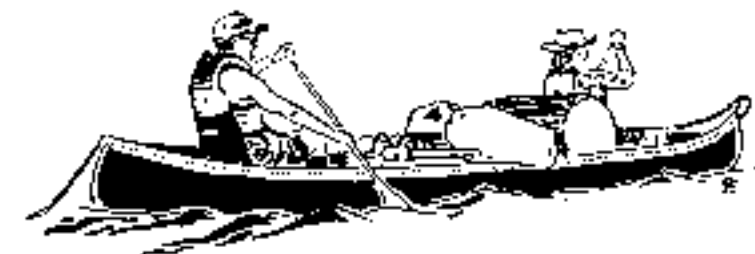
Prairie State Canoeists Founded in 1971

50th Anniversary

by Helen Gretz

Prairie State Canoeists (PSC) is a canoe and kayak not-for-profit social club founded for the enjoyment of paddling waterways on organized trips in Illinois, Wisconsin, Michigan, and other states. We rely on our members to be involved as trip leaders and as responsible participants for our organized paddles. In addition, PSC offers instruction for different levels of canoe and kayak by ACA certified instructors at reasonable prices.

The founding members were part of The Prairie Club, which was founded as a volunteer organization in 1908 and organized hikes in this tri-state area as a way for people to get out of crowded Chicago. It evolved over the years to include other outdoor activities and acquired several properties for camps.



The Prairie Club had a key role in establishing the Cook County Forest Preserves system, Indiana Dunes State Park, and Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

In 1970, a group from The Prairie Club who had a strong preference for paddling formed their own breakaway group. They were incorporated in 1971 as Prairie State Canoeists. The original members numbered no more than fifty but grew over the years. 2021 is our 50th anniversary year and we intend to celebrate!

So join in the celebration by taking this challenge:

1. Paddle five (5) official PSC trips this year
2. Each trips counts for 10 miles (5x10, get it?)
3. Prizes, awards, and recognition will be yours!

You can do it! Classes, clean-ups or other activities will not count toward the 50 miles. We will keep track of your miles and post the list of 50-Mile Paddlers on the website. Stay tuned for your reward. We are on [Facebook](#) and [MeetUp](#), along with our [website](#). ♦

(Adapted and reprinted with permission.)

Join Us!

Allagash Wilderness Waterway

RMS Northeast Chapter

by John Little

To go or not to go? That’s *not* the real question. It is *when* to go! The Allagash is the premier wilderness paddling trip in the eastern US. Nowhere else can you find a 90-mile-long lake/river watershed that has been preserved in perpetuity. The upper lakes drain into the Allagash River, creating a more reliable water source than the nearby St. John River. The St. John is only really canoeable in the spring, while the Allagash will maintain flows throughout the paddling season. Yes, it can get boney, but then you need to add an extra day or so to accommodate the slower flow and greater quantity of rocks.

So, what can the RMS Northeast Chapter participants expect to find on their trip? Firstly, they’ll find wildlife in abundance. There are moose, deer, bear, otters, beaver, mink, and coyotes. We might hear the coyote, but by early September, we will perhaps see a bull moose guarding a cow while she is still hanging out on the lake shores with her calf of the year. Or, maybe in the early morning we’ll get to watch a family of otters; the young ones goofing off while Mom keeps guard. Or perhaps if the weather is hot, spot a bear sitting in the river cooling off.

If bird life is your joy, then there’s plenty to see. The Canada Goose is likely to be flocking and socializing. The older members of the flock will be training the youngsters to strengthen their flight muscles. Forty years ago, the Bald Eagle was a rare sighting. Today they are numerous and have made it harder to spot the Great Blue Heron or Osprey whom they hassle for fish. And then there’s the little birds who are tucked away in the stream shrubbery or lake shore marshes. Who knows what may be lurking?

Aside from the living denizens of this watershed, there’s a ton of history. The Allagash was home to a thriving logging industry in the early 1900’s. Logs originally went out with the spring flood to get sawn up in Canada, eventually sparking a “logging war.” Later, logs were worked up the lake chain by boats and booms to be flooded down into the East Branch of the Penobscot watershed by way of the manmade Webster Cut. After, the “Tramway” was invented, and still later, they hauled in two steam engines across the ice to make a railway to get over the height of land into the West Branch of the Penobscot. And then? The Lombard Log Hauler was invented, the predecessor of the bulldozer. And eventually the logging industry turned to trucks and roads. Currently, the remnants of earthen dams, Lombards, the Tramway, and the steam engines still can be found up there in the woods, and we’ll visit these sites of Yankee Ingenuity.

This is a very special place, accessible only by the network of logging roads in the northernmost parts of Maine. Did we say you could also get valuable information about river management? This region is guarded and serviced by a small cadre of very dedicated rangers who are lucky enough to live and work in this region. We will get to talk to a few of them about their lives and work. I look forward to seeing those of you who make it on the trip this September. And, if there’s enough interest, maybe this trip will be offered again next year! ♦

Please contact John Little, Northeast Chapter Trip Coordinator for more information: jalittle58@gmail.com



Even in September, abundant water can be found at Allagash Falls.



Historic relics of the booming logging industry.



Paddlers enjoy prime paddling on the 90-mile chain of river and lakes. All photos: John Little

Canoecopia

RMS note: Canoecopia is the world's largest paddlesport exposition hosted by retailer Rutabaga in Madison, Wisconsin. The annual event is usually mobbed by paddlers from Wisconsin and surrounding states seeking a peek at what's new for the season. This is a reflection by Rutabaga's owner about the experience of COVID-19 in 2020 and pivoting to greet 2021.

by Darren Bush

Almost a year ago, I stood up on a chair in the Alliant Energy Center Expo Hall, and croaked out the words "Folks, we need to call it." Cancelling Canoecopia the day before it was supposed to open was one of the most difficult decisions of my life. Many of our exhibitors were already setting up their booths. It was ready to go. But it was also, in reality, an easy decision. I knew I would be responsible for spreading a virus that was going to kill 578,000 people in the United States. It was only a few days later when everyone was shut down and March and April hit us hard.

Like most entrepreneurs, I took a few days to absorb the massive implications of cancelling our biggest event of the year. Then, I got the team together and said "Okay, let's get a plan." We worked the plan and it worked us, but we made it through the season. Watching the infection rates and vaccine news and trying to make sense of the trends was a constant for me, with my phone notifications going off whenever the AP or Reuters said COVID-19.

As we approached the end of summer, we looked at Canoecopia timelines, and realized that even if everything went perfectly (and it rarely does), there was no way to do an in-person Canoecopia. The Alliant Energy Center offered us some wonderful incentives to make it financially feasible if we limited attendance, but there was no way I was going to do that. A Canoecopia that excludes is not a Canoecopia.

We had already made many changes in our business using technology to reduce some of the impact of not meeting in person. Zoom calls replaced the conference table, including our tech folks working at home. We used virtual shopping and a new work order system to space out customers. So why not do a virtual Canoecopia?

It was a tough one. It just wouldn't be the same, I told myself. No smiling faces, high-fives or hugs, no family reunion. I was resistant to my own brain. Then I had the moment where I remembered the phrase I had used so often this year. It'll never be like it was. It will be different, and maybe even better. Trying to recreate an in-person experience would be silly. So why not make it, in some ways, better?

Speakers

Everyone wants to see every speaker, but because of scheduling and maximum capacity of rooms, people miss out on seeing their favorites. What if the size of the speaker room was, I dunno, unlimited? You can't do that in Euclidean space, but online, there are no limits to space. Furthermore, there are no limits to time. With our online speaker platform, an attendee can watch any speaker anytime for months after the show is over. Want to go back and revisit the tips and tricks from Cliff

Jacobson? Easy peasy. Enter your password, and click on Cliffy. What about a presentation from someone who lives on the other side of an ocean? No massive carbon footprint, expense of an 8-hour airline flight, or jetlagged speaker! Yes, we love in-person, but if you can get a presenter on their home turf, isn't that great? What about Q&A? We chose a web platform that allows live type chat, live vocal Q&A, and the ability to send direct messages if the speaker wants to do so. Yeah, different and better.

The Canoecopia Show Guide

The biggest problem with print is the timeline. We had to finish the entire show guide in late December. It's beautiful and feels good in the hand, but it also means we can't add anything once the ink is on the (recycled) paper.

It never failed: the show guide would be at the printer and we'd get a phone call from a potential speaker who did some amazing thing and wanted to present, and we'd have to say no. We don't like saying no, so we'd put them off to the following year. No more. We used to be limited to 78 pages. No longer true. Trying to sort out what can go into the What's New section is no longer a problem: we can accommodate everyone. Virtually unlimited content. We still curate it, of course, but no more saying 'no' to an awesome article or beautiful photography essay.

Buying Product

We completely rebuilt our website from the ground up. Attendees were able to go from an exhibitor booth directly to the Rutabaga site and just add stuff to the cart, enter their unique code and get their gear at the show price. We could ship most items, of course, but we also had curbside pickup for those who wanted it sooner. For more complex purchases we set up a phone bank in the store, and had all our staff to help folks select a boat or roof rack, schedule an appointment for pickup, and in the case of racks, you can also set an appointment for installation. The question we ask ourselves constantly is this: what's the optimal customer experience? This didn't replace laughs, hugs, and the energy that comes from person-to-person interactions, but it was the next best thing.

Moving Forward

We received many emails from folks thanking us for allowing them to attend virtually from all over the world. Older customers who used to attend in person but now live in Florida or Arizona, and just can't make it to Madison anymore, are delighted to still be included in the community. Because of that, we're going to do both a live and a virtual Canoecopia in tandem for 2022. Brian Woods said that "Even upon the waters of trial and tribulation, by building the ships of kinship, fellowship, leadership and mentorship, we become unsinkable."

We didn't sink, thanks to our loyal customers and friends. ♦

Darren Bush is the owner of Rutabaga Paddlesports — a store which sells paddling gear, provides lessons, and hosts the annual Canoecopia event.

The screenshot shows a virtual event interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with "Show Agenda" and "Culinary, Food". The main title is "Pack Cured, Not Raw". Below the title, there's a section for "Flexibility" with a bulleted list: "Faster preparation time", "Smaller serving portions", "Keep for more days in the field, so you don't have to serve it the first or second day", and "Combine with fresh catch". Below that is a section for "Dry Cured Meats" with a bulleted list: "Cured Sausages", "Country Ham", and "Canadian Bacon". On the right side, there's a list of "Small Town Butchers in the Midwest" with names and locations: "The Daily Grind, Lake Forest, IL", "Miesfelds Triangle Market, Sheboygan, WI", "Lake Geneva Country Meats, Lake Geneva, WI", "Schwai's Meat & Sausage, Fredonia, WI", "Lodi Sausage Co & Meat Market, Lodi, WI", "Foss Fine Meats, Sparta, WI", "TJ's Butcher Block, Minocqua, WI", "Lake Tomahawk Meat Market, Lake Tomahawk, WI", and "Old World Meats, Duluth, MN". At the bottom, there's a video player with a play button and a timer showing "00:00". Below the video player, there's a section for "Cooking/Meal Planning" and "Live Q&A". The event title is "People, Paddling and Food - LIVE Q&A". At the bottom right, there's a "55 Likes" button. The event date and time are "Fri. Mar 12, 2021" and "5:00 PM - 6:15 PM". There are also icons for "833 Attending" and "13 Questions".

A pre-pandemic Canoecopia. Photo: Darren Bush



River Ranging During a Pandemic...

by Bobbie Roshone

2020 will always stand out in my mind. It was a year of upheavals. It was the year of the pandemic. It was the year my child was born. It goes without saying that there were a lot of struggles and triumphs last year.

When I found out I was pregnant in February, I wasn't sure what to think. We had just decided for employee and visitor safety to close the visitor center at Niobrara National Scenic River.

I went from a frontline ranger to a telework ranger. A river ranger to a couch ranger. I even got the shirt.

I was not mentally prepared for the shift to digital. Instead of demonstrating paddling techniques and pointing out geological wonders, I created webpages and social media posts to highlight my river office. I became a digital ranger.

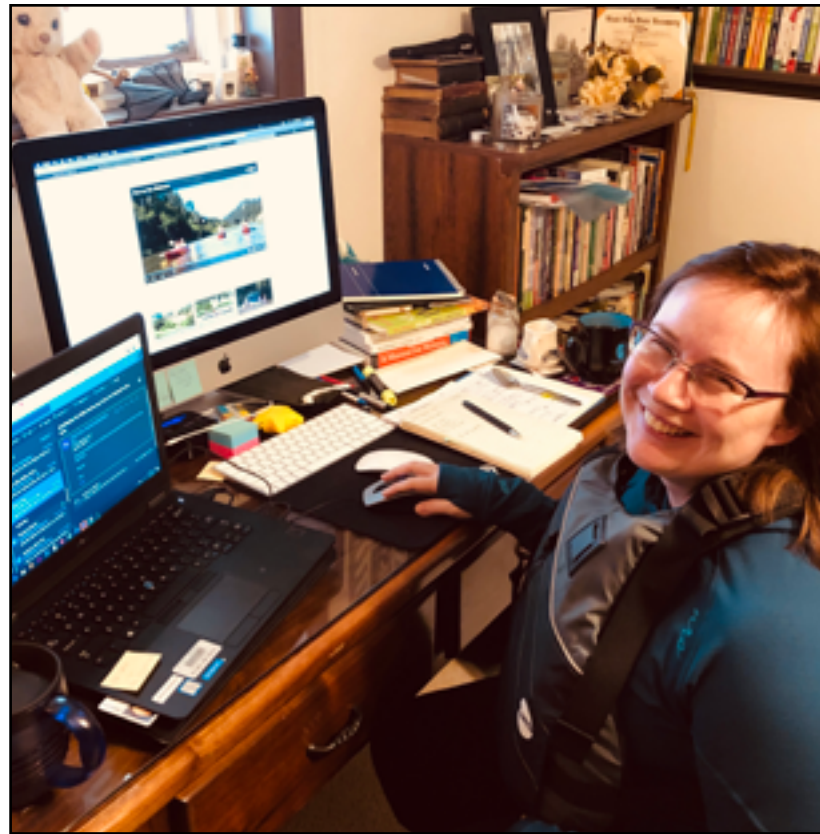
I started my career as a park ranger to combine my love of education with my love of rivers and the outdoors — and get away from the computer screen as much as possible. I'm the odd duck millennial that doesn't care for computers, social media, or the internet. Give me a paddle, life jacket, or hiking boots any day! Or a good book — the one outlier to my luddite tendencies, the Kindle. I can carry hundreds of books and now they make them waterproof. Perfect for winding down in camp after a river trip.

Suddenly, I became a virtual ranger — I was doing everything from behind a screen... creating virtual experiences for visitors stranded at home due to Covid-19. Luckily, even though I'm not fond of it I can still use technology, but it still wasn't the same. For me, my colleagues, and our visitors. It's hard to express love, evoke emotions, and engage visitors from a 6.5" screen.

While most of the nation was dealing with shutdowns and limited social engagement, Nebraska was lucky. As a rural state we didn't have the same level of high transmission in the rural areas of the state. By April, we were looking at ways to safely open the visitor center and provide programming.

I was ecstatic. We opened with limited operations for the summer. We wouldn't be doing much in the way of in-person interpretive programming, but we were going to be out on the water! Well, some of us would be...

At the beginning of the season, for us mid-May, we did our annual canoe training. I'm the lead instructor for the park. I was excited to show newbies the skills they would need to navigate the river.



Wear your life jacket to work day, May 15, 2020. Credit: Wade Roshone

I was also just starting to show. Between the morning sickness, which apparently hits at two in the afternoon, and the new center of gravity, I felt like a hot mess teaching canoe skills. However, I got to show off modified lifting skills and how to provide accommodations for our team. Plus, they all told me I did a great job and they learned a lot.

There still was a looming specter that was Covid-19 though, and our safety team determined that many of us were at risk and should be teleworking as much as possible. The visitor center was assessed, and plexiglass shields were installed around the information desk. Staff were sanitizing areas of the office and visitor center hourly it seemed.

By mid-summer I was showing my baby belly off in our stylish maternity uniform. I also got stuck in my canoe during a river rove and had to imitate a turtle to get out. It made for a wonderful interpretive dance program for the visitors at the landing.

After relating the story during our staff meeting, for my safety, I decided not to do any solo canoe roves for the rest of the year. Since we were working in safety circles to limit staff exposures, this effectively meant I would not be out on the water for the rest of the summer. The ranger I was teamed with also worked the visitor center when I was out in the field and would not be able to help shuttle me.

I spent a lot of time wandering the banks, looking longingly at the cool water. I was hot all the time and not just because of summer — luckily, we have waterfalls I could stand under. When I wasn't

in the field or in the visitor center, I was teleworking from home. During the summer, teleworking wasn't so bad, mainly because I was only teleworking one or two days per work week.

It was around this time that information was beginning to come in about the risks of Covid-19 on pregnancy. I got worried about the science. I religiously wore my mask when dealing with visitors. People also had an opinion on that; one visitor kindly pointed out: *"Wearing a mask isn't good for the baby."*

Some people outright scoffed at our protocols for Covid-19. I had one visitor that asked for assistance reading our river map and while I was helping this person, they sneezed on me. I still don't know if it was intentional or not, but this person smirked and didn't apologize after the fact. Plus, when I used the hand sanitizer on the counter, they implied I was overreacting to their "allergies." After that I developed strategies for using the map under the plexiglass shield. I had a few visitors that tried to only talk through the gaps on the plexiglass shield, with their masks down. Overall, visitors were respectful of our safety precautions and many thanked us for caring.

I also had a few visitors that wanted to touch my belly. One was a little overenthusiastic and thought since I was a public servant, I couldn't say no. I kindly explained that was not how that worked. It was a weird summer.

Fall began to creep in, and our visitors began to taper off. Niobrara National Scenic River had a banner year — the best year in a while for our outfitters. We had a total of 102,766 visitors in 2020 (prior to this our best was 80,806 in 2017).

I wrapped up my projects, finished out what was needed for structured data on the website (they needed it done for the NPS app that launched this spring), and gave a rundown of my duties to the seasonal ranger that would be covering for me during maternity leave.

September 29th was my due date, but I went over by a week. I was off for three months; maternity leave was a mixed blessing. I loved being home with my new little man, but I missed my work routine, the office, and my preferred desk — the river. It went by in a blur though. But when I came back on in January it was determined I should stay home and telework. Once more I was a virtual ranger.

It was so much harder this time around. Burnout from the previous spring of being a digital ranger had lingered. Teams meetings, Zoom calls, and emails that never seemed to end further exacerbated the burnout. Building out more digital interpretive and educational experiences for our virtual visitors helped ground me and positive feedback from people stuck at home was a light at the end of the tunnel for me.

However, I was getting frustrated. I was suffering from seasonal affective disorder. I was becoming depressed. My husband pointed out I stopped reading for fun, that I wasn't writing either. In my spare time I write poetry and posts for an outdoor centered blog. I hadn't written anything for my blog in several months due to the screen time I was logging for work. Between the winter

weather and being "stuck" at home, I had to make some changes.

I created a separate workplace on our dining room table so I could see into our backyard. It wasn't the Niobrara, but it was nature, kind of. It also helped to differentiate between my "office" work area and my personal library/work area for writing. I established a work routine for a semblance of normalcy. I actually took a lunch instead of a snack at my desk (or canoe) like I normally do. I also took two fifteen-minute breaks a day, mid-morning and mid-afternoon, and took the dogs out to play.

By March, I knew I was burning out working from home. I stayed stressed, I could hear the dings of my email even when I was off duty and had the sound muted on the computer. Luckily, the end was near. The seasonal ranger hired to assist while I was on maternity leave was coming up on the end of her tour of duty, and I would be heading back to being a frontline ranger once more.

Now, I'm back in the office — and with summer approaching, impatiently waiting to get back to my other office, the Niobrara. I'm still creating digital content but I'm interacting with actual visitors and things look brighter again! We will still be observing Covid-19 protocols and limiting our programming somewhat, but I will be leading field trips, giving pop-up programs outdoors, and be out on the river with the rest of the crew instead of languishing on the bank, or being a virtual ranger all the time. ♦

Ranger Bobbie modeling the NPS maternity shirt and quick-dry shorts. On vertically challenged folks, it resembles a dress. Credit: Wade Roshone, 6.20.20



Evaluation of the Mehlich-3 soil test for phosphorus with implications for calculating pollution reduction credits in the mid-Atlantic region

by R.H. Simmons

Perhaps an appropriate subtitle for this discussion would be: What is of greater importance in measuring for potential phosphorus loading impacts on water quality, total phosphorus or bioavailable phosphorus?

Those with knowledge of regional geology, soils, and hydrogeology have long known that stream bank soils of small order, upper headwater streams of the inner Coastal Plain and Fall Zone of the mid-Atlantic region, including all of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, streams, contain low levels of phosphorus (P) and are considered phosphorus-poor. Nonetheless, to check this assertion, 10 soil samples were taken in 2020 according to standardized methods by R.H. Simmons from mineral soil of exposed stream banks along the three currently proposed City of Alexandria projects (Simmons 2020, 2021).

Soil samples were analyzed for P using the Mehlich-3 method by Brookside Laboratories, Inc. As expected, P levels were low in all of the samples (Mallarino et al. 2013). Taylor Run P amounts = 0.21, 0.24, 0.09, and 0.33 pounds per ton of soil/sediment. The average of the four samples is 0.2175. Strawberry Run P amounts = 0.27, 0.27, and 0.37 pounds per ton of soil/sediment. The average of the three samples is 0.30. Lucky Run P amounts = 0.25, 0.15, and 0.18 pounds per ton of soil/sediment. The average of the three samples is 0.19.

The average of all samples above = 0.24 pounds P per ton of soil/sediment. This data shows that the City's assumed average for P (1.05 lb. per ton) is nearly 5 times higher than the actual samples. While most P in soil is tightly adsorbed to soil particles, total phosphorus (TP) is a measure of all the forms of phosphorus, dissolved or particulate, that are found in a sample (Mallarino 2003, Murphy 2007, Lammers and Bledsoe 2017). Phosphorus is highly concentrated in human and animal waste and fertilizers, as opposed to phosphorus-poor stream bank soils, and is probably the main nutrient of concern affecting water quality downstream. Bioavailable P is considered to be the fraction of TP with the potential to cause excessive algal growth and eutrophication in downstream waterways and the Chesapeake Bay, therefore it is a regulated nutrient/pollutant.

Data from relatively few stream bank studies for TP suggest that bioavailable P is usually less than 25% of TP, and because of the difficulty of quantifying P bioavailability in TP testing, alternative testing methods to estimate bioavailable phosphorus, such as the Mehlich-3 method, are recommended (Lammers and Bledsoe 2017). Moreover, most soil tests do not directly measure the total amount of available nutrients in the soil "because there is usually not a clear-cut distinction between available and unavailable nutrients" (Danovi 2011).

This is important to note when quantifying P loading for



(Above) Soil sample location and (Below) stream bank soil sample from exposed Potomac Formation soils along the south branch of Lucky Run, City of Alexandria, Virginia. Photos: Rod Simmons

nutrient reduction crediting because favoring TP stream bank soil testing, as opposed to bioavailable P testing, will significantly overestimate the nutrient reduction values and credits for P, resulting in cost-inflation of projects and limited pollution-reduction benefits. In fact, using TP values for nutrient reduction crediting would seem to give us the same problem all over again that was discovered in using the inaccurate, inflated default P metric (1.05 lb. P per ton of soil/sediment) from legacy sediments in an agricultural district in the Piedmont and Ridge and Valley of Pennsylvania (Walter et al. 2007). For this reason, the use of the default metric is no longer allowed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

The Mehlich-3 P test is an approved and recommended soil P test by the USDA's North Central Regional Soil Testing Research Committee number 13 (NCR-13) for the acid/neutral soils of the North Central Region of the United States (Watson and Mullen 2007). It is adopted as a reference method by state extension laboratories in several southern U.S. states, especially for its "broad range of applicability and significant advantage in...

enhancing the validity of the Florida Phosphorus Index (PI), a crucial tool for assessing the vulnerability of various soils for P losses to the environment" (Mylavarapu et al. 2014).

"The Mehlich-3 P test would be a fine measurement looking at the relative value of nutrient reduction. If you look at data out of Lake Erie, TP is not so important when it comes to availability of P in the water column. What is of concern is the dissolved reactive phosphorus or bioavailable P, which Mehlich-3 does predict" (pers. comm. Luke Baker, PhD, president and CEO of Brookside Laboratories).

The Mehlich-3 P test is also the most commonly used soil P test in the mid-Atlantic region (Mid-Atlantic Regional Water Program 2006), as well as recommended by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and DEQ (DCR 2014, 2015) and used by many other researchers (Elrashidi 2001, Sims 2002, Mallarino 2003, Danovi 2011, Lammers and Bledsoe 2017, Cade-Menun et al. 2018, Inamdar et al. 2020).

Because Al- and Fe-phosphates are the primary source of P in acidic and neutral soils, such as predominantly occur in the inner Coastal Plain and Fall Zone, the Mehlich-3 P test which removes these minerals along with dissolved and adsorbed forms is an excellent choice for sampling soils for P (Elrashidi 2001).

It would be misleading to say that the Mehlich-3 P test significantly understates the amount of total phosphorus to be reduced by a stream "restoration" project because it is the amount of bioavailable P that is of primary concern for pollution reduction and water quality. As the above examples show, the Mehlich-3 P test is a widely accepted method of measuring estimated P loading rates from stream bank erosion.

Even if, for the sake of argument, we used the enhanced version of the Mehlich-3 P test to further measure P, such as the Mehlich-3 ICP test that uses an inductively coupled plasma (ICP) instrument for measuring a greater content of P forms in a sample, doing so would still not produce statistically significant different results than the Mehlich-3 P test.

For example, the Mehlich-3 ICP test might potentially measure up to nearly 30% more P than colorimetric measurements like the Mehlich-3 P test, as some studies suggest (Mallarino 2003, 2013, Nathan et al. 2006), yet all of the City of Alexandria stream samples, including those for Taylor Run, would still show P values many times less than the default value of 1.05 lb. P per ton (Walter et al. 2007). The Mehlich-3 ICP test of the average of the four Taylor Run samples would be at most 0.28 lb. P per ton of soil/sediment. That is nearly 4 times lower than the inflated, misapplied figure of 1.05 lb. P per ton used by the City for nutrient reduction crediting. Therefore, if we used the Mehlich-3 ICP test for P, a pound of P would cost \$60,000, not \$16,000 per pound as incorrectly reported by the City (Simmons 2021).

While the Urban Stormwater Workgroup (USWG), which provides guidance to DEQ and other regulatory agencies for determining pollution reduction credits, recently recommended that the EPA Method 3051 plus 6010 test for TP (total-sorbed P) be used for all stream bank soil samples collected (USWG 2019), DEQ has not officially adopted this policy recommendation.

Not requiring or utilizing stream bank soil tests for TP instead of tests for bioavailable P is probably a wise course of action until more is learned of P dynamics in waterways and quantifying the potential impacts of TP loading from stream bank soils on water quality. ♦

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From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals, From Dining Room Desktops to Living Room Laptops

Reflections on the 2021 Symposium

by Bekah Price



As we reflect on the long-awaited and eventually virtual 2021 River Management Symposium, we are amazed by the flexibility, creativity, and patience of organizers, presenters, sponsors, and attendees. Without your professionalism and grace, we would not have been able to offer such incredible programming. So we must first say, "Thank you so much!" to everyone involved.

In the various sessions, we learned how colleagues are balancing demand and capacity with recreational safety, as well as best practices for visual resource management, ecological protections, and infrastructure design. Presenters also shared about the importance of partnerships and collaboration for river-based regional renewal.



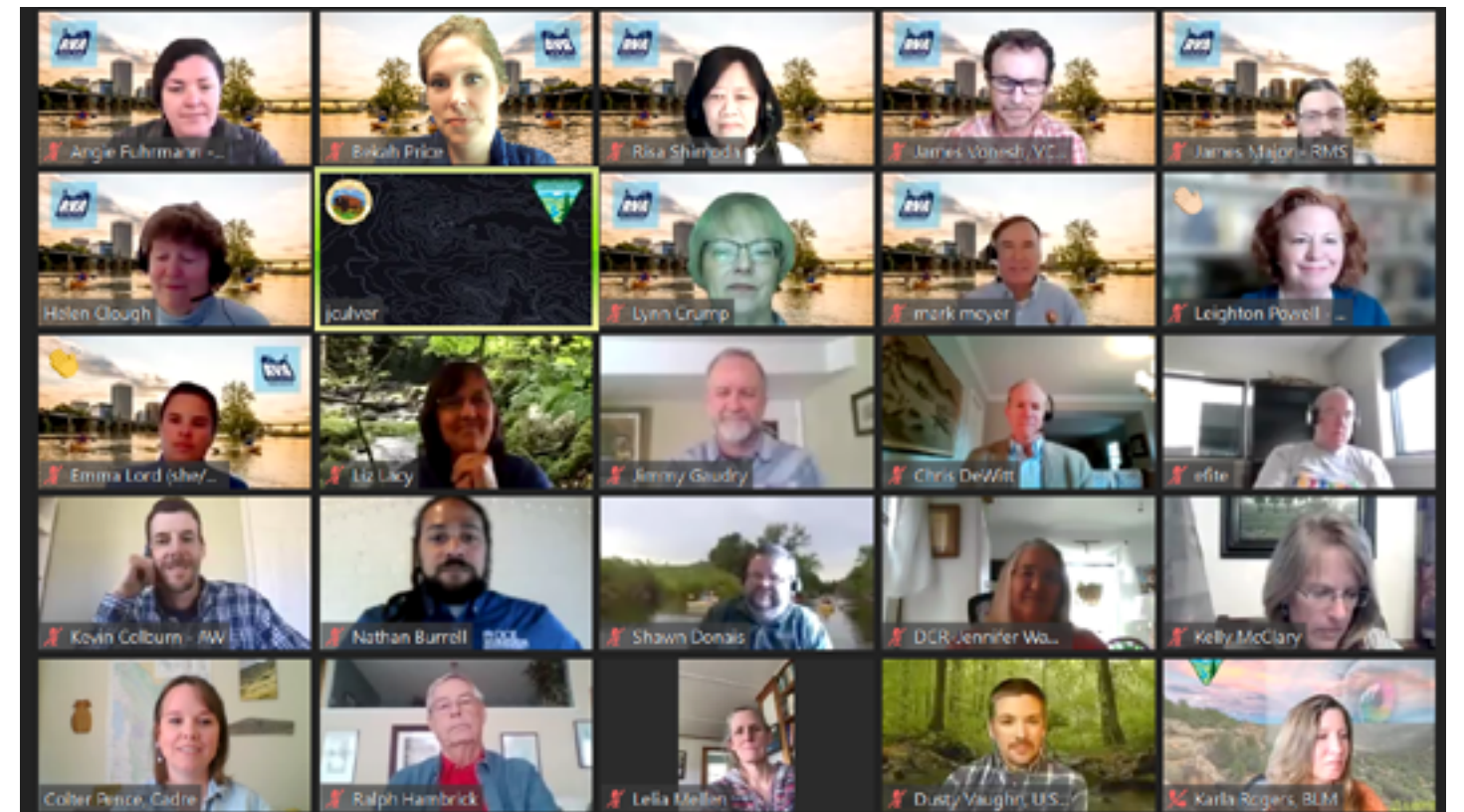
The "From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals" Symposium celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Virginia State Scenic Rivers Program and was presented by RMS in partnership with Virginia Commonwealth University and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The field trips provided an awesome history of the [James River](http://bit.ly/james-history) and Richmond's critical role in the Confederacy and the nation (<http://bit.ly/james-history>), as well as an up-close and personal insight into the ubiquity of the James River [Batteau](http://bit.ly/james-batteau) in the 1770s (<http://bit.ly/james-batteau>), a Google Street View style tour of the James River with Terrain 360 (<http://bit.ly/james-river-tour>) and a visit with breaching [sturgeon](http://bit.ly/james-sturgeon) and their return to the James River.

Even in the virtual format, we were able to offer three concurrent sessions daily on seven tracks, plenary sessions, student presentations, virtual field trips, river trivia and prizes, and our most successful silent auction yet. Once again, it brought together more than 200 river professionals from state and federal agencies, conservancies, advocacy groups, universities, municipalities, and outfitters.

Students showcased their amazing and promising studies taking place across the country, from classrooms in Hawaii and Arizona to Minnesota and Virginia, including opportunities they are developing with field scientists and river managers.

(continued page 35)



2020 Annual Report

by RMS staff and Shannon Bassista

2020 was a challenging year for many people, and the pandemic drove RMS to pivot its programs to provide maximum benefits to its members. New RMS staff were hired, and new officers were elected. This annual report outlines the variety of accomplishments that RMS members and staff were still able to accomplish.

River Training Center

Due to the pandemic, a handful of workshops were postponed, but then reconfigured and executed professionally. Trainings included the River Access Planning Guide Webinar (June) and 2-day Workshop (October), the Eleven Point CRMP Workshop (October), Better Bank Restoration Workshop (November), and the Green River CRMP Workshop (December). In total, the RTC facilitated 9 workshops, provided individualized training regarding 5 rivers and hosted more than 250 attendees. The RTC Video Channel also went live with past webinars and trainings.

Pandemic Response Webinars

These webinars focused on the challenges river professionals were facing during the pandemic, and allowed participants to share stories and ideas to address these challenges. The first of two webinars held in April, led by Confluence Research and Consulting, enjoyed the highest ever attendance for this type of meeting with over 100 people participating, and we exceeded attendance levels again in early summer.

State River Programs Working Group

RMS hosted 'best practices for today, anyway' meetings through the spring and early summer for members to learn what others were doing. Meeting settings were an open platform, where sessions were not recorded, and participants were able to share and explore ideas about the need for change within organizations, specifically related to equity in workplace, attitude, and workforce planning. RMS members were surveyed concerning topics of diversity and equity in the workforce. Some of the results showed that members who work in large organizations felt they had no voice in the matter or if they pursued these topics, they would not be recognized. Due to a September Executive Order, the diversity discussion shifted, and the focus again was on COVID-19 response protocols for managers, guides, and other river professionals. Discussions included how to fund river access areas and how to manage increased use, as recreation visitation has skyrocketed around the country.

National Rivers Project

In 2020, RMS added US FWS refuges that promote river recreation, rivers designated through the Dingell Act in the Northeast, initiated the addition of Wild and Scenic Rivers managed by the Bureau of Land Management, and also added a notice for rivers that have reliable flow thanks to hydropower releases. The National Rivers Project additions included 326 new

segments (of 1,972 total), 2,107 new access points (of 14,578 total), and 21 new WSR segments of 354 total. Twenty-seven NRP segment descriptions were updated to include references to recreational flow release backstories and schedules.

Hydropower License Summaries

RMS, with the assistance and funding from the Hydropower Reform Coalition, completed two new hydropower license/settlement summaries. We also updated sixteen license notices.

River Studies and Leadership

RMS sent certificates to over 20 graduates and a certificate of completion to their respective schools. Additionally, toolkits were provided for advisors to help recruit students, an alumni database was developed to keep graduates from the program in touch, and a Facebook page was developed for current students and graduates of the program to continue to network with each other.

Outreach

Digital outreach has ramped up in a very new way for RMS during 2020. The website was revised, and social media outreach increased. A great contribution to the website was a presentation from veteran WSR expert Jackie Diedrich. She provides a guide to the revision of the WSR framework and delivers resources for the most necessary information. She also helps differentiate RMS from the other WSR-related organizations and online authorities (e.g., American Rivers, American Whitewater and rivers.gov).

Staff

RMS was able to hire 3 new staff positions in 2020. Angie Fuhrmann, the River Training Center Coordinator and Bekah Price, the Communications Coordinator joined RMS in June. James Major, the National Rivers Project Coordinator, started in August. We feel very fortunate to have these talented and dedicated staff on our team!

Chapters, Membership

We have begun to move the membership needle toward the goal of 2000 by the end of 2022! Chapters have begun a discussion about changing the chapter borders, and this discussion will continue through 2021. In 2020, RMS gained a net total of 125 new members, and the Membership Committee is currently discussing new strategies for outreach and retention.

2020 Statement of Activities

Revenue	2020	2019
	(\$)	(\$)
Events	12,791	28,273
Sponsorship	6,750	7,500
Advertising Income	246	274
Charitable contributions	5,728	4,230
Agreements	324,713	232,042
Grant Income	20,950	7,340
Interest Earned	821	609
Membership	15,815	12,291
Products	302	2,231
Total Support	\$388,115	\$294,790
Expenses	2020	2019
Training & Education	183,619	211,455
Public Awareness	47,293	53,507
General & Administrative	118,916	36,696
Fundraising	5,000	5,000
Total Support Services	\$354,828	\$306,658
Net Income	\$33,287	-\$11,868

A-DASH (Anti-Discrimination and Sexual Harassment) Collaborative

This is a new collaborative whose mission is to support and train professionals in service to workspaces safe from the effect of sexual harassment. The program was founded with support from NPS and an impressive level of commitment and expertise by a core team of professionals: academicians, raft company owners, nonprofit leaders, and training professionals who share a love of rivers. The A-dashcollaborative.org website and social media launched in the fourth quarter and the group presented its approach to nourishing healthy workspaces to the America Outdoors Association annual conference attendees. Pilot trainings were held with two outfitters and two more planned.

Wild and Scenic Rivers Coalition

RMS participated in the first annual Hill Week for rivers, and continues to participate in virtual calls, contributing to the development of the website and planning for the 2021 Hill Week.

Ohio River Basin Alliance Recreation Working Group

This group supports a multiple-year plan to brand the Ohio River Basin as a recreational entity, using the National River Recreation Database for the region's online guide. This partnership also seeks to encourage the inclusion of river recreation in the State Outdoor Recreation Plans (SORPs) to be developed in 2021. ♦

(Symposium, continued)

Of perhaps the greatest significance to river management today were the presentations exploring historical inequities and what we can do to make rivers and river management more welcoming for all. One of the newest and most exciting solutions is the One Virginia Plan, the nation's very first statewide diversity, equity, and inclusion strategy, which we learned about firsthand with some of the leaders that engineered it.

It is true that virtual events inevitably equate to lost face time with peers, Zoom fatigue, and distractions from the home or office. Despite these hurdles and some technical hiccups, we are grateful for such attentive participation and for our nimble presenters' time and expertise.

Perhaps the greatest irony of the event is how well-equipped we now feel to host a virtual event of this capacity in the future! However, while we feel that some virtual elements at the next Symposium might improve access to programming for those unable to travel, we greatly missed gathering in person and can't wait to see you all at the next one!

We want to close with special thanks to the following:

Symposium Chairs:

Risa Shimoda, River Management Society
Lynn Crump, Virginia Dept of Conservation and Recreation
Dr. James Vonesh, Virginia Commonwealth University

Program Chair: Helen Clough

Marketing Chair: Emma Lord, National Park Service

RMS Staff: Angie Fuhrmann, James Major and Bekah Price

Last, but not least: Our gracious volunteers! ♦





'Guess my River' Contest

by Risa Shimoda

RMS added a change of pace during the 2021 River Management Symposium, after keynotes or before other plenary presentations. James Major emceed, sharing river photos contributed earlier this year by members and asking participants to identify the river based on a question or clue provided in a phrase or brief statement. The first to answer correctly in the Zoom chat won. Many of

the questions were challenging for those outside the river's region, so a few went unanswered.

James commented afterward, "It was awesome to see how many people wanted to share photos of their rivers with others! Some of the questions and photos submitted were really tough and I was pleased, though not shocked, that so many were identified by our participants."

Here are some of the questions, answers, and winners (names noted next to a star!) — along with the river photos reminding us why we do what we do!

The 2021 River Management Symposium Steering Committee thanks all river content contributors, contest winners, and our great emcee, James Major. It was such a fun way to celebrate rivers, with a little competition — we will do this again!



1) If early California explorers had known their fish species better, they would have named this the Lamprey River.

★ Dave Cernicek



2) What is the Capital city canal that bypasses Class IV rapids?

★ Chris DeWitt



3) Native Americans used a sinuous moving hand signal indicating they "lived near the river with many fish" when communicating with the European explorers who misinterpreted them when naming this river.

★ Kip Mumaw



4) What is the southern terminus of the Ohio and Erie Canal?

This stumped the audience!



5) What is the name of this river, also known as the Grand Canyon of the East?

★ Jennifer Wampler



6) This river has a wildlife refuge named after it.

★ Helen Clough



7) Name the South Carolina State Scenic River near Kingstree, famous for early settlement Township in 1700's.

★ Leighton Powell

ANSWERS (river photo credit or courtesy) — 1) Eel River, CA, Zane Ruddy 2) Richmond's Kanawha Canal, VisitRichmondVA.com 3) Snake River, WY/ID/OR/WA, Dave Cernicek 4) The mouth of the Scioto River at Portsmouth, OH, Jerry Schulte 5) Russell Fork River, VA/KY, Ronnie Hylton 6) Kanuti River, AK, Barry Whitehill 7) Black River, SC, Mary Crockett

Welcome! New RMS Members

Associates

Richard Thomas Moore, Chairman, Board of Directors, Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor, Inc. Whitinsville, MA

Duncan Hay, Hydropower Licensing Specialist, NPS-RTCA, Boston, MA

Erik Hazelton, New Milford, CT

Sarah L Waterworth, Chief of Administration, DOI-NPS-SACN Saint Croix Falls, WI

Professionals

Bridget Moran, Conservation Associate, American Rivers, Bellingham, WA

Aaron Selig, River Manager, Ashley National Forest, Dutch John, UT

Sarah Bursky, WSR Manager, National Park Service, Philadelphia, PA

Ryan Lee Abrahamsen, Owner, Terrain360 LLC, Richmond, VA

Christopher Colvin, Outdoor Recreation Planner, US Forest Service, Research Triangle Park, NC

Loren Flynn, Regional Park Manager, MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Missoula, MT

Corporate / Government Organizations

Kris Schachel, Emriver, Carbondale, IL

Triston Oswald, Fireside Outdoors, Surprise, AZ

Ohio River Basin Alliance
Heather Mayfield, Cincinnati, OH
Chuck Somerville, Huntington, WV
Jordan Lubetkin, Ann Arbor, MI
Craig Butler, New Philadelphia, OH
Richard Harrison, Cincinnati, OH
Harry Stone, Chair, Cincinnati, OH
Sarah Stone, Dayton, OH

BLM AK
Teri Balser, Fairbanks
Tim DuPont, Fairbanks
Eric Yeager, Fairbanks
Scott Justham, Anchorage
Denton Hamby, Glennallen

BLM AZ
Geoff Walsh, Phoenix

BLM CA
Leigh Karp, Moreno Valley
Andrew Archuleta, Moreno Valley
James Gannon, Moreno Valley
Chris Otahal, Barstow
Marty Dickes, Ridgecrest
Carrie Woods, Ridgecrest
Alden Neel, Redding

Kristen Lalumiere, Palm Springs
Mark Massar, Palm Springs
Dan Kasang, Palm Springs
Dani Ortiz, Palm Springs
Tobias Felbeck, Redding
Laura Brodhead, Redding

BLM CO
John Monkouski, Kremmling
Paula Belcher, Kremmling
Justin Jones, Silt
Jeff Christenson, Dolores
Britta Nelson, Program Analyst / WSR Program, Grand Junction
Zachary Ormsby, Grand Junction
Paula Cutillo, Grand Junction

BLM ID
Casey Steenhoven, Marsing
Ryan Homan, Marsing
Nathan Jayo, Twin Falls
Scott Maclean, Twin Falls
David Draheim, Boise
Jared Fluckiger, Boise
Angela Beley, Challis
Cecilia Lopez, Idaho Falls

BLM MT
Courtney Frost, Butte
Jason Oles, Dillon
Jaime Tompkins, Dillon
Chris McGrath, Dillon
Maria Craig, Missoula
Paul Sever, Fort Benton

BLM NM
McKinney Briske, Santa Fe

BLM NV
Barb Keleher, Reno
Tammy Owens, Elko
Paul Fuselier, Carson City
Nicole Cutler, Carson City

BLM OR
Heidi Anderson, Klamath Falls
Nicholas Weber, Prineville
Michael Anderson, Prineville
Diane Priebe (Wenatchee, WA)
Evan Smith, North Bend
Cara Hand, Salem
Jeanne Klein, Medford
David Sanders, Springfield
Cheyne Rossbach, Roseburg

BLM UT
Cory Jensen, Price
Raven Chavez, Kanab

BLM WY
Joel Klosterman, Assistant Field Manager, Pinedale

Nonprofits

Maryann Carroll, Executive Director, Delaware River Greenway Partnership, Stockton, NJ

Tom Martin, Council Member, River Runners For Wilderness, Flagstaff, AZ
Valerie Liggins, The Cameron Foundation, Petersburg, VA

Students

Nichole Jordan Sanchez, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Danielle Hare, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

University of Richmond, VA
Sydney Thomas
Brianna Lebeck

Virginia Commonwealth University
Brian Tyler Dagliano, Sandston
Charles Ryland Stunkle, Richmond
Catherine M. Steele, Charlottesville
Chris E Hobson, Richmond
Joshua T Armstrong, Richmond
Grace C. Lumsden-Cook, Richmond

Chapter Officers

ALASKA

David W. Schade, MPA, President
Alaska Department of Natural Resources
550 West 7th Avenue, Suite 1020
Anchorage, AK 99501-3577
(907) 269-8645 / cell (907) 230-6061
david.w.schade@alaska.gov

Cassie Thomas, Vice President
National Park Service, Retired
11081 Glazanof Dr
Anchorage, AK 99507
(907) 677-9191 / cassieinak@gmail.com

Sharon Seim, Secretary
US Forest Service
PO Box 21628, Juneau, AK 99801
(907) 586-8804 / sharonseim@fs.fed.us

NORTHWEST

Lisa Byers, President
Salmon River Ranger District
304 Slate Creek Road, White Bird, ID 83554
(208) 839-2146 / lmbyers4@gmail.com

Colin Maas, Vice President
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
4600 Giant Springs Rd, Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5857 / cmaas@mt.gov

Martin Hudson, Secretary
Bureau of Land Management, Retired
P.O. Box 92, Pinedale, WY 82941
(307) 367-5315 / 53silvercreek@gmail.com

Joni Gore, Events Coordinator
Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming
(408) 386-0856 / gorejoni@gmail.com

SOUTHWEST

Matt Blocker, President
Bureau of Land Management
440 West 200 South, Suite 500
Salt Lake City, UT 84106
(801) 539-4021 / mblocker@blm.gov

Stew Pappenfort, Vice President
Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Retired
308 Palmer St, Salida, CO 81201
(719) 221-4905 / sgpappy@gmail.com

Stuart Schneider, Secretary
NPS / BLM, Retired
906 Sunny Slope Drive, Gunnison, CO 81230
(970) 631-2541 / stuartwschneider@gmail.com

Ericka Pilcher, Events Coordinator
National Park Service
4972 Easley Road, Golden, CO 80403
(970) 219-8213 / ericka_pilcher@nps.gov

NORTHEAST

Emma Lord, President
National Park Service
54 Portsmouth St, Concord, NH 03301
(603) 224-0091 / emma_lord@nps.gov

John Field, Vice President
Field Geology Services
P.O. Box 985, Farmington, ME 04938
(207) 645-9773 / fieldgeology@gmail.com

John Little, Trip Coordinator
Missisquoi River Basin Association
737 Rushford Valley Rd
Montgomery Ctr, VT 05471
(802) 326-4164 / jalittle58@gmail.com

SOUTHEAST

Jane Polansky, President
Tennessee State Parks
Wm. R. Snodgrass TN Tower, 2nd Floor
213 Rosa Parks Ave, Nashville TN 37243
(615) 456-3843 / jane.polansky@tn.gov

PACIFIC

(vacant)

MIDWEST

(vacant)

Canadian River Management Society
Contact: Max Finkelstein
tel (613) 729-4004 / dowfink@gmail.com

RMS is fueled by the amazing energy of its members – and, chapters are always looking for leaders who care about the management of rivers. Potential chapter officers are team players who love working with others and believe a regional dialogue would help local members and the organization as a whole – are you ready to serve?

Membership in RMS makes a great gift for a colleague or friend!

RMS is a non-profit professional organization. All contributions and membership dues are tax-deductible.



RMS Membership

Name _____

Home Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Organization _____

Office _____

Work Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Work Phone _____

Email _____

Job Title _____

Duties/interests _____

Rivers you manage _____

Membership Category (please check one)

- Professional \$50/yr (\$200 for 5 years - save \$50!)
- Associate \$30/yr
- Student \$25/yr
- Lifetime \$500 (for individuals only)
- Governmental / Corporate Organization \$150/yr
- Governmental / Corporate Plus \$200/yr
- NGO/Non-profit Organization \$75/yr

Membership benefits are described online:
www.river-management.org/membership

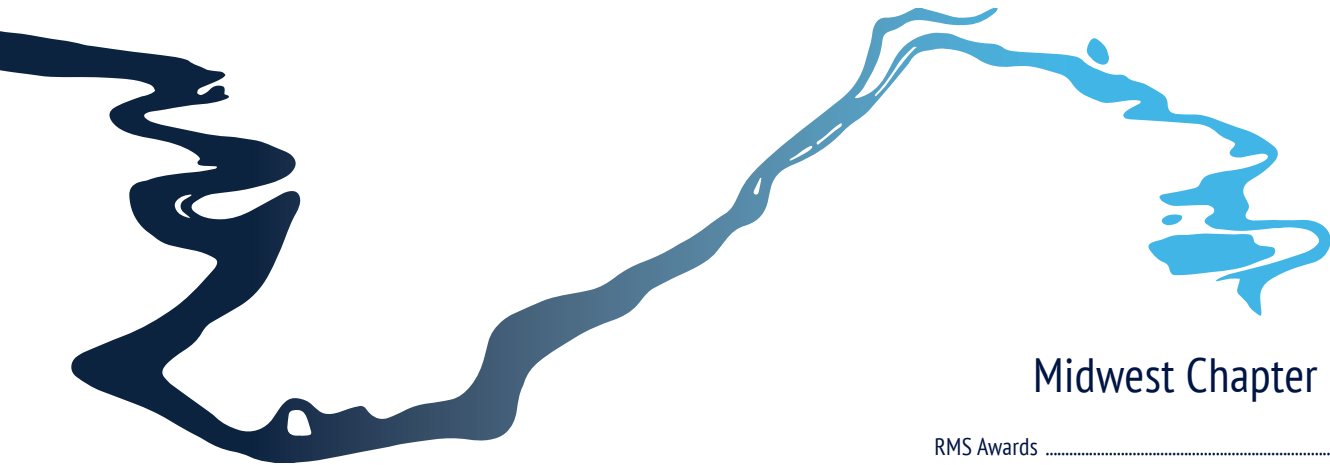
Who referred you to RMS? _____

*Make checks payable to "RMS"
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Send this form, with payment, to:
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RMS Journal Submission deadlines:

Fall 2021	Vol. 34, No. 3	Southwest	Aug 1
Winter 2021	Vol. 34, No. 4	Northwest	Nov 1
Spring 2022	Vol. 35, No. 1	Northeast	Feb 1
Summer 2022	Vol. 35, No. 2	Pacific	May 1
Fall 2022	Vol. 35, No. 3	Alaska	Aug 1
Winter 2022	Vol. 35, No. 4	Southeast	Nov 1