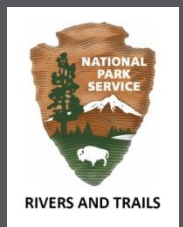


THE GREAT RIVERS CONFLUENCE PROJECT

A Partnerships Success Story !!



Margaret Smith – Exec . Director / Friends of Freedom Park
Randy Thoreson – National Park Service /RTCA



Where is the Confluence ?



Where the St.Croix National Scenic Riverway joins the Mighty Mississippi - approx. 40 miles southeast of the Twin Cities.

The Project

▣ Background

The National Park Service (NPS) hosted a St Paul conference to promote the creation of support groups. At that meeting, several participants realized that we could look across the river at each other and despite jurisdictional boundaries we shared common interests, opportunities, and concerns. The idea of a “Great Rivers Confluence “ project was born! Interested Confluence Project members then met for the first time in June 2009 at the Great River Road Visitor and Learning Center in Prescott WI (GRRVLC). The ideas and interests took hold and for the last three years this small group has grown to many engaged partners very active on a wide variety of topical Symposiums and activities. Check out our web page at www.greatriversconfluence.org

In a nutshell

RTCA led Strategic Planning Workshop

- ▣ **Confluence Vision:** *“Recognize and appreciate the confluence of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and its people, places, and stories through connections, partnerships and recreational opportunities”*
- ▣ **Confluence Mission:** *“To foster partnerships and connections across national, state and local levels, and to create and articulate a common vision of education, conservation and recreation at the confluence area of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers. This collaborative effort will work to: increase recognition and appreciation of this area; enhance existing resources; acquire funding for education, conservation and recreation; and ensure that all people can enjoy these assets in the future”.*

Great Rivers Confluence Advisory Group

A little more descriptive

The numbers game :

- Bordering two states : Minnesota and Wisconsin
- Three Counties: Washington, Pierce and Dakota
- Four Cities: Hastings, MN; Prescott, WI, Afton, MN ; River Falls, WI
- Confluence area: approx. 100 square miles !

We Developed a Logo



Our Website



 **Outdoor Recreation**

Experience the sights, sounds and seasons of the Confluence by boat, bike, or hike.

 **Mother Nature**

Explore the wildlife, walk a trail, visit a park, and taste our farm fresh treats.

 **Culture & History**

Discover historical landmarks, railways, and footprints left by glaciers, and local art.

 **Stay A While**

After a fun day, enjoy local cuisine, entertainment, and unique lodging.

 **Confluence Concierge**

Get away and make a trip to the Confluence.

It's All About Partners the story



It started as a small group



And then we started adding partners...

Partnerships Are Growing

▣ Get this:

Over 30 partners including local, state and federal agencies and communities, non- profit organizations, interest groups, and a whole bunch of excited citizens and volunteers! And the list is growing !



Some Pics



Watchable Wildlife
Symposium



Just one of our groups



Neo-Tropical Migrants Initiative
Friends Group
Birding Trail – Friends of Osa /Cost Rica



Natural Preservation Route /
Great River Road Route
2012 Nation's Prettiest Drive !!



Eco Tourism / Recreation Brainstorming
at Symposium

Historic Agreement



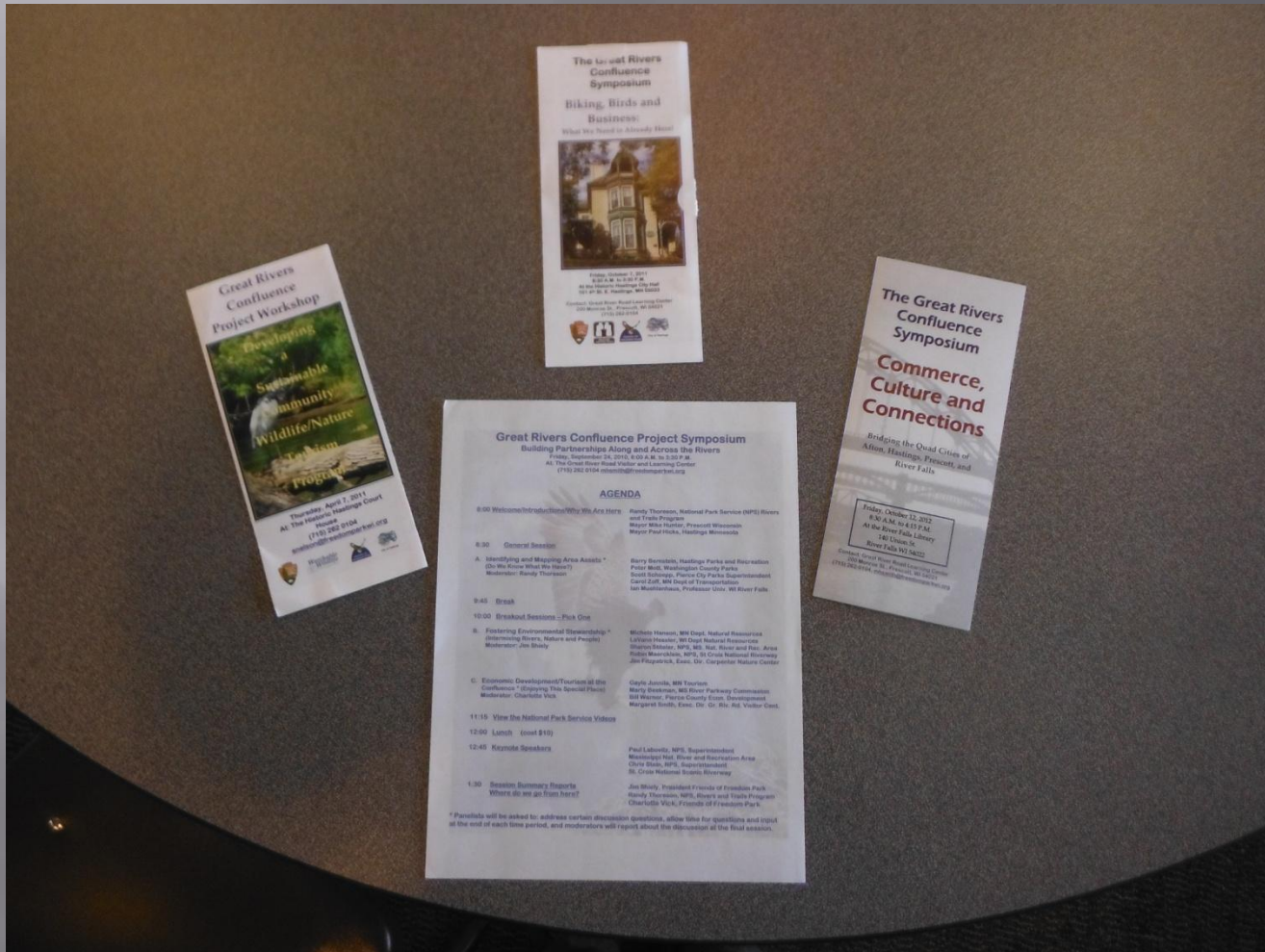
National Park Service

Supt. Paul Labovitz / MNRRRA and Supt. Chris Stein / SACN



St. Croix River and Mississippi River coming together for a “Sister Park Agreement”.

Successful Symposia



Great Rivers Confluence Project Workshop

Developing a Sustainable Community Wildlife/Nature Program

Thursday, April 7, 2011
At the Historic Hastings Court
Hours: 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM
(716) 262-1104
email: info@greatriversnet.org

The Great Rivers Confluence Symposium

Biking, Birds and Business: What We Need is Already Here!

Friday, October 7, 2011
9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.
At the Historic Hastings in 2011
901 W. S. Hastings, West Seneca

Contact: Great River Road Learning Center
200 Monroe St., Prescott, WI 53426
(716) 262-1104

Great Rivers Confluence Project Symposium
Building Participation Along and Across the Rivers

Friday, September 24, 2010, 9:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
At The Great River Road Visitor and Learning Center
(716) 262-0104 ext:2011@greatriversnet.org

AGENDA

8:00 Welcome/Introduction/Why We Are Here
Randy Thomson, National Park Service (NPS) Rivers and Trails Program
Mayor Paul Hicks, Hastings, Minnesota

9:30 General Session

A. Identifying and Mapping Area Assets - (Do We Know What We Have?)
Moderator: Randy Thomson
Randy Thomson, Hastings Parks and Recreation
Peter Maki, Washington County Parks
Scott Schreyer, Forest Co. Parks Department
Carol Zoff, MN Dept of Transportation
Ian Muehlenbachs, Professor UNW, WI River Falls

9:45 Break

10:00 Breakout Sessions - Pick One

B. Fostering Environmental Stewardship - (Inspiring Rivers, Nature and People)
Moderator: Jim Shady
Michele Heaver, MN Dept. Natural Resources
LizVain Heaver, WI Dept Natural Resources
Sharon Stalder, NPS, WI, Riv. River and Fall Area
Ridley Marchbanks, NPS, St Croix National Scenic Riverway
Jim Fitzgerald, Exec. Dir. Crescent Nature Center

C. Economic Development/Tourism at the Confluence - (Engaging This Special Place)
Moderator: Charlotte Voth
Cathy Jacobs, MN Tourism
Marty Stekman, WI River Parkway Commission
Bill Warner, Pierce County Econ. Development
Margaret Smith, Exec. Dir. Dr. Riv. and Visitor Cent.

11:15 View the National Park Service Videos

12:00 Lunch (cost \$10)

12:45 Keynote Speakers
Paul Libbey, NPS, Superintendent
Meredith Hill, River and Recreation Area
Chris Beck, NPS, Superintendent
B. Great National Scenic Riverway

1:30 Session Summary Reports
Where do we go from here?
Jim Shady, President Friends of Franklin Park
Randy Thomson, NPS, Rivers and Trails Program
Charlotte Voth, Friends of Frenchs Park

* Panels will be asked to address certain discussion questions, allow time for questions and input at the end of each time period, and moderators will report about the discussion at the final session.

The Great Rivers Confluence Symposium

Commerce, Culture and Connections

Ending the Quad Cities of Adm., Hastings, Prescott and River Falls

Friday, October 12, 2012
9:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.
At the River Falls Library
140 Union St.
River Falls WI 54622

Contact: Great River Road Learning Center
200 Monroe St., Prescott, WI 53426
(716) 262-0104 ext:2011@greatriversnet.org

What's next – FY13 ?

- ▣ Our 4th topical Symposium to be held October 12, 2012 entitled: Commerce Culture and Connections – Bridging the Quad Cities of Afton, Hastings, Prescott, and River Falls
- ▣ Refinement and Official launch of our website (although the soft launch has been out for the last couple of months) www.greatriversconfluence.org
- ▣ Further design and completion of the Great Rivers Confluence “Interactive Map”
- ▣ Input and participation of the Sisters Parks “Neo-Tropical” migrants initiative, St. Croix National Heritage Area , and Mississippi River Trail
- ▣ The construction of Pt. Douglas Trail (key 5 mile trail segment linking countless miles of trail systems in Minnesota and Wisconsin. Other land and water trails planning in Confluence area.
- ▣ Eco-Tourism promotion and Natural Resources protection projects
- ▣ More to come

Conclusion

- ▣ **Lessons Learned:** *Don't wait – make it happen! Engage partners early and often! Don't be afraid to ask for help! Just add water ! Have fun and celebrate!*
- ▣ **Best Practices:** *Strategic Planning ; Building and Leveraging Partnerships; Networking; Using Social Media; Collaborative Leadership !!*
- ▣ **The future:** *The Great Rivers Confluence will grow in both partnerships and national attention as a unique and special place !*
- ▣ **Wait for the movie !**

Quotable Quote:

"There are three kinds of people – the kind that makes things happen, the kind that watches things happen and the kind that wonders what happens" – Tommy Lasorda

Tidbits


- It's not just the Project! – neat associated stuff as a result of our work

July 22nd Friday
3:00 to 9:30
 Flotilla begins at 8:30
Save the Date!
Prescott at Mercord Mill Park
 Where the St. Croix & Mississippi Meet

Celebrate the Rivers!
 Come celebrate with us as:

- ♦ Paddlers conclude a 17 day, full length river journey in celebration of 100 years of the St Croix River Association
- ♦ Mississippi and St Croix National Park Superintendents ride Voyageur canoes down 2 rivers to meet at the confluence
- ♦ The International Kinship of Rivers Project kicks off
- ♦ The River Flags are hung – later to be flown over the Yangtze River in China and Tibet
- ♦ We enjoy a Chinese tea ceremony and Chinese music
- ♦ A We-no-nah canoe is raffled
- ♦ The St. Croix River Association celebrates the Grand Finale of the "Be Moved by the River Paddle" and dignitaries speak of the rivers' value
- ♦ St. Croix Suite, a beautiful river tribute in poetry and song is performed
- ♦ We enjoy Barbershop Quartet/ A Bass and Banjo Duo/Americana music and food booths
- ♦ Motor boats form an evening flotilla at 8:30

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 MissCroix Yacht Harbor Association
 Prescott Insurance
 Placek's IGA
 Mike Toninato, DDS
 City of Prescott
 Friends of Freedom Park
 Kinship of Rivers Project
 National Park Service
 Prescott Chamber of Commerce
 St Croix River Association



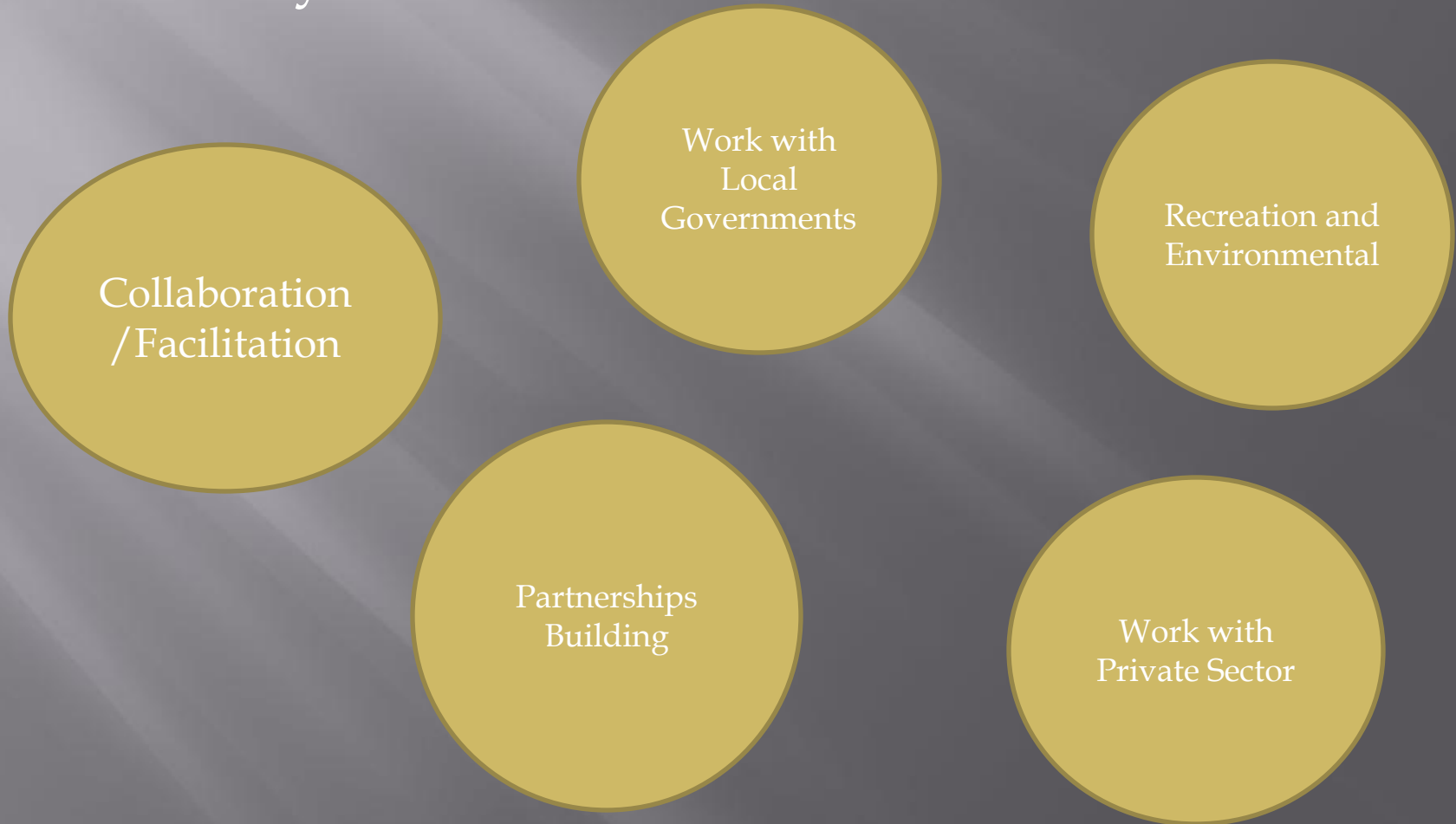


Play Time



OK – A few Skills Used

▣ Randy T. skill set



Contact info.

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- ▣ Outdoor Recreation Planner / Project Manager
- ▣ National Park Service, RTCA Program
- ▣ Phone: 651-293-8450
- ▣ email: randy_thoreson@nps.gov

- ▣ Key Partner: Margaret Smith

- ▣ Executive Director
- ▣ Great River Road Visitor & Learning Center /
- ▣ Great Rivers Confluence Project Committee Member
- ▣ Phone: 715-262-0104
- ▣ Email: mhsmith@freedomparkwi.org

Parting Shot – one of our friends



Hey, I am on live "Eagle Cam"