

MRPC Marketing Committee Conference Call Notes February 16, 2016

Attendees: MO, WI, IL, IA, MN, AR, KY National Office (NO)

Meeting began at 10:02am.

- **National Geographic Geotourism update:** NO reported that community outreach meetings will take place in some southern states beginning in March and April, according to Bob Miller who participated on a January MRCC call. Jim Dion will offer a webinar series for those unable to participate in the outreach meetings. Miller will represent the MRPC on the website roll out committee. The roll out will begin in the summer to coincide with the NPS anniversary, July and August with the Harahan Bridge and in September with the MRPC meeting in Natchez. There will be a meeting in Alton, IL on March 24-25 to review nominations. Craig Mitckes will attend on behalf of the MRPC. Dion is working on the financial sustainability plan.
- **Map Review Process:** NO has heard from the following states regarding their review committee: IA, MN, MS and AR. Other states are requested to submit their four-person committee as soon as possible. NO reported that the new map is in production and will be available for pick up at the Semi Annual meeting. The map will have few changes aside from bringing the interpretive centers up to date, cleaning up roads and bridges. The map will continue to be a promotional not navigational map.
- **2016 marketing/advertising plan options:** NO referred to the document included in the meeting email. The cost for national publications exceeds the committee's marketing budget. NO reviewed how online advertising works and suggested it may be the best option based on timing, budget and reach. During the call KY forwarded an email from Southern Travel & Lifestyle. NO will review, along with suggestions for co-op advertising.
- **Sponsorship ideas:** There was discussion about approaching American Queen as a future sponsor. IA noted they are partnering with Casey's General Store. Dollar General was noted as a retailer located in all 10 states. IA suggested ADM, grain processor as another business. NO will collect ideas for future discussion.
- **Committee collaboration ideas/ bike race:** NO reviewed the preliminary research and discussion. The big question is deciding on a primary goal of the race and letting that goal determine what type of event to create. A long-distance event through all 10 states will garner less participants than a series of shorter events. The group decided to have the NO collect an inventory of all bike races along the GRR in the 10 states for review.

- **MRC Updates:** NO indicated that MRC is completing the final steps in their U.S. Commerce grant and will apply for a new grant in March. IPW will also take place in New Orleans this June.

Meeting adjourned at 11:37am.