

Midwest Region

Apostle Islands NL hosted its 11th annual research conference in Bayfield, WI in November. The conference features ongoing studies at the Lakeshore, with 14 presentations. Topics ranged from early agriculture in the Apostles to water-quality of Lake Superior. Abstracts of the proceedings will be published by the NPS.

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On Sept. 14, 1989, the USFWS issued a final rule that determined both the eastern and western prairie fringed orchids threatened. The western species has been photographed at Pipestone National Monument in Minnesota, but the location of the plant or plants is unknown. We believe funds will be available in 1990 to conduct a field survey to verify the presence of this threatened orchid at Pipestone.

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The Science Museum of Minnesota's Saint Croix Field Research Station funded a gathering of scientists/scholars at Wilder Forest, Marine On Saint Croix, MN in October to discuss and share their research findings. Saint Croix National Riverway co-hosted the Rendezvous. Dick Weisbrod chaired the program.

Over 80 researchers and resource managers from federal, state, county, and private agencies and institutions responsible for natural resources management in the 22,000 km² Saint Croix Basin participated. Several congressional district offices were represented. The meeting was kept in order and the 20 papers kept on time with a makeshift gavel, a rusty machete.

(It was rumored the usual meeting gavel was misplaced during the Rendezvous' semi-organized Frolic and Palaver, on the preceding evening, while thwarting the native wildlife's attempted snatching of hors d'oeuvres.)

Academic session topics ranged from archaeology to zoology with a dominant focus on aquatic biology. Introductory papers discussed the unusually diverse biota in the Saint Croix Valley (e.g. unionid mussels, odonate insects, basalt prairies, etc); later papers dealt with specific management issues such as native prairie maintenance, aquatic snag management, and rare species-recreation use conflicts.

Troll Surveys, Ltd. (developers of the famous TS Index) polled participants' response to the Rendezvous and obtained a Technical Meeting Index of a strongly positive 4.85. The Science Museum and the riverway are already planning next year's Saint Croix River Research Rendezvous.