

PA ORGANIZATION FOR WATERSHEDS AND RIVERS

The Pennsylvania River Sojourn Organizer's Guide

An introductory manual to organizing a sojourn
event on your waterway

PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers

2014

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PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers
175 Main Street
Luzerne, PA 18709
Phone: (570) 718-6507



We know the river best when we see it firsthand. Draining the waters of our lands, the rivers give us, and all the places we know, a timeless continuity.”

TIM PALMER, NATIVE PENNSYLVANIAN AND RIVER AUTHOR (RIVERS OF PENNSYLVANIA, 1980)



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POWR would like to thank all partners who so graciously contributed their time and expertise to creating this organizer's guide several years ago. Countless interviews were conducted and a tremendous amount of information sharing was needed. We heard about the methods developed over the years that converted the idea of a yearly river awareness celebration into the well-designed "outdoor classroom" process that it is today in Pennsylvania. The extraordinary people who work to protect our rivers and streams each day are truly passionate about their mission. Fortunately, they have been able to share that passion with countless others throughout the Commonwealth and beyond through the DCNR supported River Sojourn Program. This guide celebrates the effort among "river rats" and the general population who have been forever touched by these annual events designed to raise awareness of the importance of our waterway resources.

We have made some edits and updates for this edition and we hope it will serve you well.



PREFACE

People who care deeply about water resources sometimes struggle with the question of how to engage others. The typical tools available to a river advocate somehow seem to fall short of influencing the change in public attitude that is needed. Public meetings, brochures, and even media coverage may not touch the essential element of change. People need to see and feel the value of a river to gain a deeper appreciation than typically results from the traditional educational and outreach experiences. Furthermore, today's busy and demanding lifestyles seem to disconnect many people's consciousness from their local water resources. This is where a sojourn excels as a means of reaching people. Change of any kind always begins with the heart. Spending multiple days on a waterway, learning about its history, environment and threats, and struggling with the physical demands of canoeing away from the context of their normal lives institutes a major change in the way a person views a river. The relationship with the river becomes an intimate one. This approach is effective with all types of people, not just those who consider themselves environmental advocates.



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INTRODUCTION

CELEBRATING OUR WATERWAYS

Citizens increasingly view natural resources as an environmental endowment to future generations. Any occasion to have fun outdoors and at the same time educate the local communities about the issues facing a watershed is viewed as a unique opportunity. This manual will lead the reader through the process of organizing a River Sojourn to raise awareness about local watershed issues. Much of the guidance contained in this manual derives from the experiences of successful sojourn organizers.

Each sojourn event can be as unique an experience as the individuals organizing it and the waterway on which they travel. A sojourn:

- Can take place for any length of time, but usually ranges up to eight days;
- Can include a few dozen to over 100 participants;
- Can travel a stream of moderate size or a river a mile wide;
- Always includes a series of educational events and activities for sojourn participants and interested guests.

The sojourn can be an effective tool in:

- Raising awareness about the river and the issues affecting it;
- Educating communities about natural and cultural resources;
- Promoting public access to the resource;
- Encouraging political commitment to watershed stewardship; and
- Enhancing community involvement in river corridor restoration.

Through participation in this activity, people may come to realize the need for stewardship, restoration, and conservation of river resources. Thousands of people participate and attend sojourn events conducted in Pennsylvania each year. The reach of the Pennsylvania Sojourns is both broad and deep, creating lasting, caring and educated watershed stewards.

THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Every year since 1991 the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) has designated a waterway in Pennsylvania as a River of the Year. This recognition has initiated many of the Pennsylvania Sojourns that continue annually. The Pennsylvania Feature River of the Year is selected by the general public on an annual basis to provide emphasis for a specific Commonwealth river. Selection of the feature river is based on local initiatives and stewardship efforts to restore, maintain, protect or enhance the river, its long-term viability and values, and its community connection. The feature river is celebrated through a gubernatorial proclamation, poster distribution, and sojourn activities. In celebrating June Rivers Month, the agency promotes the positive steps that regional and local communities have made in repairing or maintaining watershed health. DCNR promotes local efforts within the featured region through a commemorative river scene poster distributed statewide, and it provides funding and planning assistance for up to a week-long sojourn on the featured waterway. It also funds numerous other sojourns throughout the Commonwealth.

IS A SOJOURN RIGHT FOR US?

If you think you might like to plan a river sojourn, it is important to address some key questions at the outset. Some of these questions are:

- Will the subject waterway support a sojourn (i.e., is it long, deep and wide enough? Are land-based activities possible along non-navigable sections)? The organizing body needs to consider the overwhelming interest this type of event may attract, and consider whether there is physically enough room on the water and adjacent land.
- What is the purpose of the sojourn?
- What are the goals for the event?
- Who will help you organize and execute a sojourn?
- What section(s) of the waterway is appropriate?
- What kind of funding will be needed and where will it come from?

If the stream section has been the subject of a sojourn before, the previous sojourn(s) will obviously serve as a foundation on which to base the plan for future events. It is advisable to research and learn from past experience in planning for subsequent years. Planners of the previous sojourns may serve as valuable members of the planning team.

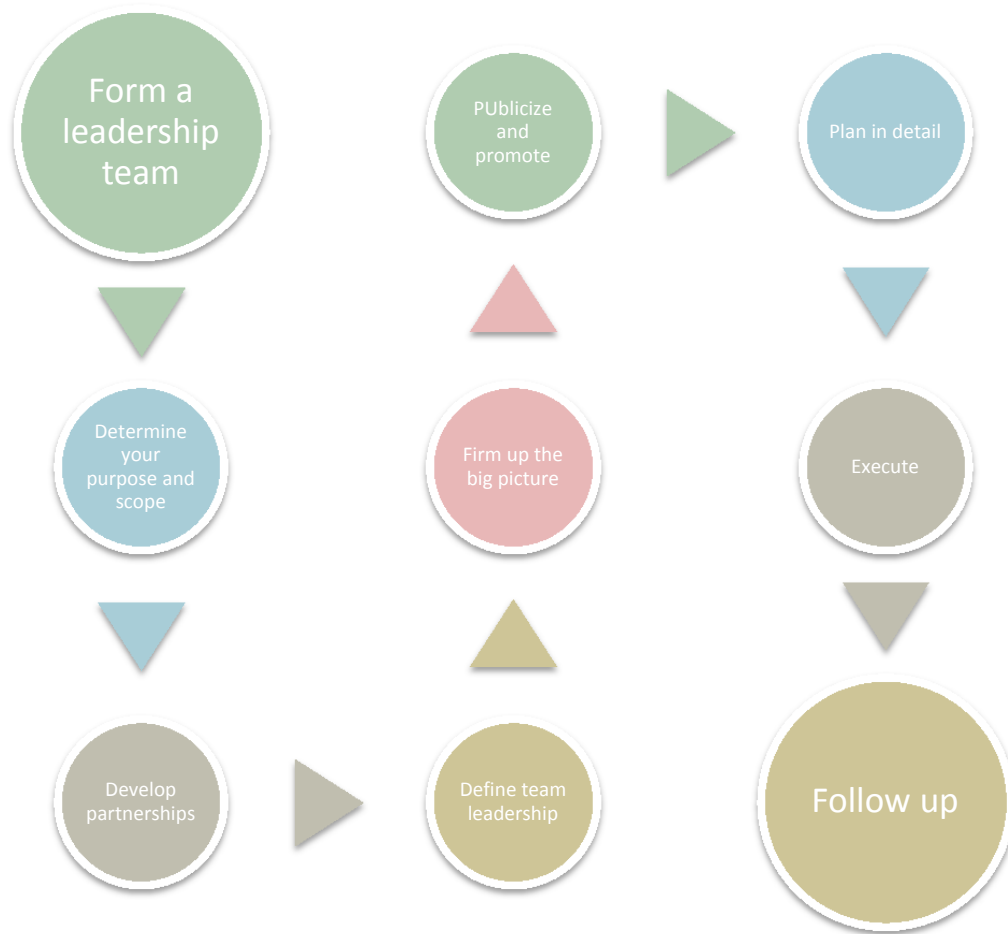
If the stream section has not been the subject of a sojourn before, it is advisable to select the following year's sojourn segment as early as one year ahead of time in order to scout for stops, camping and educational opportunities during the same season as the planned event. Form a planning or core team that includes members of local canoe clubs or outfitters who are experienced at paddling the stream.

Other important background research includes:

- **Maps** - United States Geological Survey maps are crucial (<http://store.usgs.gov/>). River Basin Commissions and County Conservation District offices may be able to provide maps as well. Canoeing guides or water trail maps are also good resources. Check local outfitters and book stores for these items.
- **Distance** – The distance a sojourn covers will be determined by a number of factors. One of the most important is the rate of flow for the subject reach of stream. Most sojourns cover 8-12 miles per day.
- **Access** – Access points should be identified on maps and verified on the water. It is important to keep notes and records for future reference, so consider plotting access and other important features on a laminated map and taking pictures.
- **Characteristics** – Stream characteristics such as flow rate, depth, width, gradient and obstructions should be carefully researched. Will the stream still be of adequate depth if there is a drought? U.S. Geological Survey gauge data may be useful in assessing such factors.
- **Adjacent or Nearby Sojourns** - Instead of starting from scratch the first year, it may be best to partner with an already existing sojourn. This may be a particularly attractive idea in headwater locations. Land-based activities could present a valuable addition in programming and location to an established sojourn's previous itinerary.

PLANNING PROCESS

As you set about developing your sojourn, keep in mind the following key steps in the planning process. Each is important all will take effort, coordination, and time to ensure that the end result – a fantastic sojourn event – is achieved.



THE CORE PLANNING TEAM

Once it is determined that a stream reach can support a sojourn, it is important to form a core planning team that will lead the planning of the event. The core planning team is the muscle and motivation of a successful program. Many sojourn planners find it useful to approach members of the communities that are located along the stream corridor (within 5-10 miles along the entire waterway) to involve them in the planning process as well. Involvement gives people a sense of “ownership” for the event, providing potential sponsorship opportunities, and it may help ease access issues.

The core planning team should be made up of dedicated people who will volunteer their time and expertise to help plan daily program activities, meals, campsites, shuttles and other logistics. There should be enough people on the team to share the workload, yet few enough to allow for fluid communication and decision-making. In general, a team of 5-10 people with the following types of affiliations is suggested.

- Local outfitters
- Canoe and trail clubs



- Environmental groups
- and agencies
- Tourism bureaus
- Municipal offices
- Business groups
- Sporting clubs
- Recreation
- organizations
- Civic clubs

In addition to the core team, it may be useful to appoint sub-teams to handle more detailed planning of, for example, safety, programs and entertainment, food, and event promotion.

PLANNING MEETINGS

Since many sojourn planners will be volunteering on a part-time basis, opportunities to communicate can be difficult to find. Scheduling and holding regular meetings may be helpful. Suggested issues for discussion and decision are: (See Appendix B)

First meeting:

- Introductions
- Team contact information
- Team leadership and functional structure (including designating a secretary)
- Sojourn theme
- Sub-teams
- Meeting schedule
- Timeline

Subsequent meetings:

- Identification of stream segments
- Put-in and take-out access
- Lunch, bathroom, program stops
- Camping areas
- Funding and promotion
- Safety and liability issues
- Progress of planning

PLANNING TASK LIST

During the course of the planning year, the core planning team and sub-teams will need to address the following tasks at a minimum. (See Appendices A and C)

- Permissions – access permission and licenses may be required. In Pennsylvania, contact the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) to inquire whether it governs recreational access to the river and begin the process of acquiring any permits or licenses early on. In Pennsylvania, this would include: 1) boat registration or launch permit; 2) fishing licenses; and 3) group activity event registration. Similarly, if public access to the stream is unavailable, private landowners should be contacted as early in the process as possible. It may be helpful to invite them to participate in the sojourn planning process and as paddlers. Above all, respect the privacy and rights of property owners because one bad experience can tarnish the image of the entire sojourn program and precipitate serious conflicts.
- Theme – Many sojourn organizers like to designate a focus for the event (e.g., historical, geological, cultural, environmental). You may choose to relate the theme to the accomplishments or highlights of the local area and present time. Some Pennsylvania examples: West Branch Susquehanna: Trail of the Tall Timbers; Lehigh Legacy; Delaware River Odyssey; Juniata Journey: From Yesterday to Tomorrow; and Kiski-Conemaugh River Revival. Planning should keep the needs of all paddling levels in mind.
- Logistics - Consider designating Day Planners who will handle logistics for each individual day’s activities, programs, meals, time on the river, and campsites. Consider also assigning a Landing Captain for each stream segment. The Landing Captain would be responsible for the landing site each day, making sure the access site is clear, securing the campsite, helping with the food and activities, and greeting sojourners at the take-out. (See Appendices E, F & G for a sample Campsite Planning Table and Sojourn Day Planning Forms)
- Funding - Develop a preliminary budget by making a list of activities and expenses, and potential revenues (e.g., registration fees, grants, sponsorships, donations).
- Transportation – Travel logistics to and from the origin and final landing, as well as intermediate stops, need to be planned. Because people are generally allowed to sign up for part or all of a sojourn, the organizers need to make arrangements for some participants to get back to their vehicle or pick-up location each day.
- Publicity - Prepare a listing of municipalities, legislators, mayors, county officials, reporters and others for jurisdictions along the sojourn route. You may wish to send letters announcing the sojourn and asking for their endorsement or involvement.

REGULATORY/LOGISITICAL NOTES

Numerous logistical and regulatory concerns need to be addressed during the planning process. Many of these issues will be specific to place, people, and events. A number of issues will be applicable to all sojourn groups.

PORTABLE TOILETS

Many of the arranged camping, put-in and take-out locations will have sanitary facilities available if they are maintained parks or campgrounds. Organizers should confirm whether these facilities will be available to the sojourn participants. If they are not, or if the location is without permanent facilities, a portable toilet rental is the other option. The number of users and the amount of



time at the location will determine the number of portable toilets required. The vendor can help determine this number, but a general guideline is two units per 50 people.

PERMITS AND LICENSES

River access and many associated activities may be subject to regulation, depending on the location and nature of the sojourn. For example, use of a Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) access area requires a valid launch permit. Individuals who want to fish along the sojourn route need to obtain and display valid state fishing license, which is also available from the PFBC (<http://www.fishandboat.com/>). Local jurisdictions also may have rules governing group activities. Contacting state and local officials as early as possible in the planning process helps to ensure a smooth sojourn. Permission from private landowners, if needed, should also be requested as early in the planning process as possible, even if only needed on a contingency basis.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

Since paddling can be considered an inherently dangerous activity, sojourn organizers must give due consideration to liability issues. Insurance coverage is essential. POWR facilitates an insurance program in conjunction with the American Canoe Association (ACA) to make insurance available to sojourn organizers. County Extension Offices may be able to supply a listing of insurance companies that afford group coverage on an annual event basis. Also check if additional coverage is needed for landowners and special activities and that all organizing committee partners are insured. If using an outfitter with existing coverage, make sure to purchase any additional coverage that is not available under the outfitter's policy.

TRANSPORTATION

Since the sojourn will contain starting, ending and intermediate points over the course of several days, ground transportation must be thoroughly planned. A contracted school or charter bus may be needed to provide shuttle service. It is important to make sure that pick-up and drop-off points will be accessible for a bus. If contracting with a bus service, be sure to ask for and receive proof of carrier liability insurance.

FOOD AND CATERING

Most sojourns arrange for meal catering with contractors and find it important to offer options for alternative diets such as vegetarian, diabetic, and low-fat. Some other concerns are:

- Amount of food to provide. Having too little food available can (and has) become a point of contention (an oversight may have been providing for volunteers, guests, drivers and performers/speakers, in addition to seconds and dessert after a long day on the water). On the other hand, conservation values should be emphasized in a sojourn and waste should be minimized. The caterer's experience with activity-based events may affect their ability to predict demand.
- Minimizing packaging waste. If possible, recycle or provide dishwashing stations. (See Appendix D for further sustainable sojourn tips)
- Provide plenty of water for adequate hydration. Each person should drink at least one to two liters of water per day.

PROGRAM PLANNING

A very important aspect of sojourns (and requirement for DCNR funding in Pennsylvania) is education. A true sojourn is not just a floating vacation; it is a watershed awareness journey. Sojourns have had a significant effect on participants as well as residents of neighboring communities.

PROGRAM PLANNING GUIDELINES

- Planning team members may have excellent ideas for environmental and educational activities on the sojourn. It may be useful to brainstorm and make a master list of these ideas.
- Try to involve communities along the river as much as possible. They may be more eager to help with meals and programs if they can recognize an opportunity to gain positive attention.
- Ask for donations of goods and services especially from local businesses. You may be surprised! If you are receiving grant funds for the event, donations of this kind are perfect for matching funds and show community involvement. Be sure to get a receipt or invoice for all goods and services, whether they are donated or not.
- View the sojourn as an opportunity to raise awareness about the watershed, surrounding communities, and specific issues of the region (e.g., abandoned mine drainage, river access, newly designed water trails, land use).
- Beware of potential effects on the community. Dozens of sojourners invading a town can be a double-edged sword; they can stress resources, yet can be good for the local economy. In order to enhance the acceptance of the sojourn, consider incorporating public service, such as a litter clean-up, into the event.
- Programming and entertainment are important elements of some sojourns. They may also demand logistical support, such as shelter, electricity, projector screens, amplification, etc. It is helpful to keep programming in mind when scouting the stream.
- It is important to keep the educational programs simple and entertaining; some participants may have limited knowledge of ecological issues.
- Consider alternative programming for younger children.
- A common, yet avoidable mistake is to overschedule the daily programs. Since paddlers are exerting themselves on the water, more sedentary programming in the evenings, or some free time may be appreciated.
- Providing sojourners with a simple evaluation form (see Appendix H) is important not only for the continuous improvement of the event, but also for repeat business. Sojourners who show enough interest to give feedback are likely to return the next year.

SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The goals of a sojourn may be educating and raising the awareness of participants while having a good time, however, safety should be the organizers' first priority. Not all risk can be completely avoided in an outdoor environment; however, risk should be minimized through anticipation and prevention.

LEADERSHIP AND SAFETY PERSONNEL

The first aspect of prevention is the presence of able leadership and safety personnel. A safety sub-team should be formed to determine and implement safety guidelines and policies. The sub-team may wish to appoint a chief safety officer from among their ranks who will be responsible for implementation of the safety guidelines leading up to and during the day of the event.

Recruit professional paddlers, such as local guides or recreational outfitters, and medical professionals, if possible. You may need to contract with these individuals if they are unable or unwilling to donate their services. Volunteer groups such as local canoe and paddling organizations may be good resources as well. At a minimum, safety personnel should be trained in CPR and First Aid. Boat safety and water rescue training is also a good idea, and available through the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission.

A major part of the risk management planning process is the consideration of liability issues. Insurance coverage is essential. Contact the American Canoe Association (ACA) and ask about event sanctioning guidelines. Your County Extension Offices may be able to supply a listing of insurance companies that afford group coverage on an annual event basis.

IDENTIFYING/ELIMINATING RISK

River Sojourns share many risks with outdoor travel and recreation in general, but also have many risks related specifically to water and the local environment. Sojourn organizers should be aware of risks associated with their specific waterway and daily activities as well.

- Dehydration, or excessive loss of body water, is a major concern for participants of physical activity in outdoor environments. Opportunities and reminders to fill water bottles and continually hydrate should be components of every trip.
- Hypothermia, or abnormally low body temperature, can surprise inexperienced paddlers. Many participants only associate it with winter and snowy conditions, but it can strike even during the spring, fall and summer months especially if windy and wet conditions present themselves. Warn participants to dress appropriately, and be aware if rain and cooler temperatures prevail.
- Environmental Hazards are many and varied. Safety personnel should be aware of potential hazards such as poisonous plants, snakes, and insects, quickly changing weather patterns and lightning.
- Site Specific Hazards should be identified through scouting trips for the river stretches being traveled. Examples include narrow stretches that can cause grounding of craft, undercut banks that may lead to fresh strainers (trees or other debris which may trap people underwater), low head dams, and seasonal water levels that may present unsafe conditions. Visit <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/rt> for United States Geologic Service Real Time streamflow data.
- Participant Wellness can easily be overlooked, but should be a constant concern of leaders and safety personnel. Unhappy paddlers, wet and muddy campsite conditions, or problematic social interactions with non-sojourners on and offshore, are examples of concerns that may lead to safety compromises. In addition, adequate opportunity should be given to make safety personnel aware of individual health conditions that warrant special consideration (e.g., diabetes, pregnancy, attention disorders, etc.)

RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

It is strongly suggested that the safety sub-team and safety personnel develop a written risk management plan that is easily available to everyone on the sojourn in case of emergency. All sojourn staff, volunteers, and safety personnel should have a copy of the risk management plan. In addition, copies of the plan should be located within each sojourn first-aid kit and each sojourn support vehicle. All sojourn participants should be informed about the key components of the plan, in addition to its location during each morning's safety talk. Sojourn organizers may also contact nearby safety personnel such as volunteer fire and ambulance companies indicated on the risk management plan and provide them with copies of the risk management plan and itineraries of the sojourn.

A sample sojourn risk management plan form is provided in Appendix I. The plan should cover identification of potential hazards, safety personnel, emergency procedures, communications tools, route with map to nearest hospitals, at a minimum. Safety personnel should determine “911” availability and test both phone numbers and cell phone service areas as well as emergency equipment. They should also drive the routes to each medical facility to familiarize themselves with the locations prior to the event.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

Sojourners are more than just tourists. They should be regularly informed as to the sojourn logistics, especially changes in itinerary that may affect their decision to participate and conform to the group agenda. Participants can be viewed as resources in risk management situations as well.

Participants should be reminded of their responsibility to disclose their medical and personal needs to ensure proper care during an emergency, and to follow proper safety procedures during the sojourn. Cooperation and teamwork should be stressed as a working ideal during all aspects of the sojourn.

ADDITIONAL GENERAL SAFETY GUIDELINES

Although not comprehensive, the following guidelines have been successfully implemented by Pennsylvania sojourn organizers and are recommended. Sojourn organizers and safety personnel should consider implementing the guidelines for their own sojourns.

- 1) The on-water safety crew should be comprised of a Scout boat, a Lead boat, a Safety boat for at least every 10 canoes/kayaks, and a Sweep boat.
 - The Scout has the responsibility to select passages and watch for obstacles. He or she can move freely without the entire group following.
 - The Lead is the second boat. The Lead paddler is responsible for observing and taking direction from the Scout and maintaining the pace of the trip. The participants are to follow and not pass the Lead boat.
 - The Safety boats should space themselves evenly throughout the participants.
 - The Sweep boat is the last boat. Its operator ensures that no one falls behind.
- 2) All sojourn participants should be required to wear Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices (PDFs) when they are on the water.
- 3) Sojourn policies and suggested equipment lists (See Appendix J) should be sent to sojourners in their initial information packet. Sojourn safety rules should be included in confirmation packets. Reserve the right to expel any participant who fails to obey rules.
- 4) Two sets of daily plan sheets should be provided to sojourners. One set should be mailed in advance in order to allow family and friends to track the sojourn’s daily progress. The second set should be given to sojourners when they check in on-site. Sojourners should be encouraged to read the daily plan at the beginning of each day on the water and should be given an opportunity to communicate with family and friends in the event that a change in plans calls for a change in their coordination.
- 5) Consider requiring that every sojourner sign a waiver of claims and release of liability, including a medical release and photo waiver. Appendix K contains an example, but organizers should obtain legal advice to make sure they have undertaken precautions that offer them protection.
- 6) At least two water stops/bathroom breaks should be scheduled every day, in addition to lunch, dependent upon the weather and activities scheduled. Offer water and sports drinks containing electrolytes to all paddlers.

- 7) The safety boats should be readily visible to the participants and to each other. Orange safety vests, hats, or other markers can be used for this purpose. Bicycle flags are sometimes used on wide rivers where over hanging branches do not present obstacles.
- 8) It is important to make morning safety briefings mandatory for all sojourn participants. (See Appendix L)
- 9) Landing Captains or other safety personnel should inspect landing sites daily to make sure they are safe and free from hazards.
- 10) Landing Captains or other safety personnel should also make sure that each participant who started the day, successfully and safely exits the waterway at the end of the day.

THE SOJOURN BUDGET

How much does a sojourn cost? The answer depends upon many factors; sojourns can cost as much as several thousand dollars a day. But organizers recognize that higher registration fees generally mean fewer participants; sojourn fees typically range from \$25 - \$50 per day.

Local businesses and corporations may provide sponsorships or “in-kind” donations of items and services. Local businesses and civic organizations may be willing to provide useful services, such as meals, sanitation or transportation for free or at cost in exchange for positive publicity.

Currently, DCNR provides funding for a limited number of sojourns in Pennsylvania through The PA River Sojourns Grant Program. POWR administers the grant program and should be contacted directly about funding availability. Groups interested in first-time funding through the program should initiate the contact at least 1 year ahead of their prospective sojourn dates to be considered in yearly budget availability. A chart may help to identify needs and potential funders.

Please see the Appendix for an example budget table.

In some cases, sojourns may be eligible for philanthropic funding. The planning team should develop a budget and track expenses accurately (most grant-makers require it). Suggested budget/expense categories include (See Appendix M):

- Supplies & Equipment - canoe/kayak rentals, food, water, paper products for fliers and brochures, T-shirts and any other project supply costs that are anticipated.
- Sojourn Brochure and Website - planning text and graphics, writing, editing, layout, and printing.
- Postage & Printing - for “save-the-date” cards, brochures, registration packets, flyers.
- Telephone - phone costs related to the project.
- Contractual - safety officers, liability insurance, shuttle drivers, catered meals, pavilion and campground rentals, toilet facility rental, gear trailer rental, paid programs/entertainment, credit card processing fees.
- Salaries - for paid staff working on the sojourn. It is helpful to have one full-time person work on sojourn planning beginning in the fall for a summer event, in addition to all volunteer planning committee members.
- Travel - for planning team reimbursable expenses, mileage traveled to sites, as well as the van or bus shuttling of gear and participants each day. A good “rule- of-thumb” is to multiply the total number of miles for the sojourn by four (90 mile sojourn will take approximately 360 miles of land travel).

SOJOURN PROMOTION

Promotion and outreach is an important element of most sojourns. In addition to attracting participants, effective promotion can help draw donors and political support. Some useful tips for promoting a sojourn follow.

TARGET YOUR AUDIENCE

- Decide on a target audience. Sojourns sometimes depend on core constituents such as school children, scouts, and community organizations; and others simply aim for broad participation by the general public.
- One effective targeting technique is to ask each team member to submit a mailing list of people or groups they think would be interested in participating and merge the lists for a single mailing or divide them for more targeted mailings.

MEDIA PLANNING

- Assign one or two planning committee members to develop press releases and to contact local news media and publications. If there is someone on the committee who has experience in this area, ask him/her to volunteer to handle the media planning. (See Appendix N)
- Make initial contact with the local and regional press approximately two months before the event.
- Develop press releases early so they can be thoroughly proofread. Send them out three weeks before the event.
- Ask a volunteer to take pictures during the sojourn and use them in future promotional materials. Also provide them to reporters in conjunction with press releases.
- Make sure to contact any local environmental reporters directly, and consider providing complimentary registration for the event. Point out potential human-interest stories in order to attract coverage. Always provide a good paddling partner for the media who can answer questions and provide them a safe trip.
- Provide web or other access to photographs of the sojourn for reporters' use. Have all sojourn participants sign a photo release, and consider assigning one of the organizers the task of capturing the event on film.

SOME EXAMPLES OF SOJOURN MARKETING:

- Launch sojourn specific website and social media campaign
- Mail "save-the-date" postcards and brochures to past sojourners and others requesting information;
- Take brochures to local venues such as gyms, sporting goods stores, outdoor/sportsman's clubs, libraries, schools and bookstores;
- Give a presentation at the local canoe club;
- Ask local canoe clubs/outdoor/environmental clubs to list the sojourn in their newsletters;
- Send Public Service Announcements (PSA's) and news releases to news/radio stations and newspapers;
- Advertise in local newspapers and magazines;
- Invite local media representatives and government officials along for a complimentary sojourn day, and to present official proclamations (See Appendix O);
- Sponsor a contest at a local festival or trade show and award the winner a free day on the sojourn.

THE SOJOURN BROCHURE

A brochure or fact sheet about the event is a useful communication tool. It should cover the following information (See Appendix P for an example).

- Name and description of event (dates, length, stops, programs, etc.);
- Fees (what is included and not included);
- Instructions needed (policies, what to bring, deadlines, contact information for organizers, directions to daily launch and camping sites);

- Local retail boat rental information;
- Registration form and link to sojourn website.
- Photos of the Sojourn!

REGISTRATION

Having an easy registration system is essential for attracting participation and ensuring a smooth event for sojourn planners. Many sojourns have moved most or all of their registration onto the internet. This approach has allowed them to reduce staff or volunteer time necessary to process paper registrations and to ensure that data is captured and maintained. Most importantly, online registration seems to be associated with higher participant counts.

SPONSORSHIP REQUESTS

Costs relating to programming, educational events, meals, campsites, and other logistical support are prime targets for sponsorships and donations. Appendix Q contains a sample sponsorship letter that can be used to make initial contact. This should be done at least three months prior to the start of the sojourn, and preferably as much as nine months ahead of time. Always follow up with phone calls and consider approaching competitors.

Indicate the benefits of the sojourn to the waterway and the surrounding communities. Benchmarking can serve as a useful marketing tool for gaining sponsorships – therefore, it is important to track and report measurable statistics.

Some Examples of Sponsor Benefits:

- The sponsor's name and/or logo on all printed materials such as brochures (# of copies);
- The sponsor's name and/or logo on sojourn T-shirts (# of shirts) or other promotional items;
- The sponsor's name mentioned in paid advertisements, public service announcements and media releases;
- Complimentary registrations for officials, board members and designated guests;
- The sponsor's name mentioned as a sponsor each day during the morning orientation and welcoming address;
- The sponsor's placement of informational materials and promotional gift items in a "goodie bag" to be distributed to each participant.

CONCLUSION

Connecting people to watersheds through on-the-water experiences can be an effective way of generating interest in river issues. Sojourns are also prime opportunities to conduct educational efforts aimed at the water resources in use.

Some sojourns reach across political boundaries and encompass regions and multiple states in partnerships. With the River Sojourn Program, Pennsylvania DCNR has recognized the accomplishments of individuals and organizations along the Susquehanna River and its tributaries, which is the largest contributor to the health of the Chesapeake Bay. There are also sojourns on the Potomac, James and Patuxent Rivers in Maryland and Virginia sponsored by the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay. Organizers along the Delaware River, which makes up the entire eastern border of Pennsylvania, have been conducting their sojourns with cooperation from neighboring states New York, New Jersey, and Delaware for over seven years.

There are many different approaches to sojourns, and each sojourn presents a unique opportunity to educate people about watersheds. New sojourn organizers can take advantage of lessons learned by other groups. With the help of this guide and resources listed herein, organizers will continue to inspire new generations of sojourners.

SELECTED RESOURCES

<http://www.pawatersheds.org>

Pennsylvania Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR)
175 Main Street
Luzerne, PA 18709
(570) 718-6507

<http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us>

Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
7th Floor, Rachel Carson State Office Building, P.O. Box 8767
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8767
(717) 787-2869

<http://www.alliancechesbay.org>

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay
3310 Market Street Suite A
Camp Hill, Pennsylvania 17011
(717) 737-8622

<http://www.railtrails.org/field/pennsylvania/default.asp>

Rails to Trails Conservancy Pennsylvania Field Office
105 Locust Street
Harrisburg, PA 17101
(717) 238-1717

<http://www.americancanoe.org/>

American Canoe Association
108 Hanover St
Fredericksburg, VA 22401
(540) 907-4460

<http://www.fish.state.pa.us>

Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission
1601 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9299
P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000
(717) 705-7800

A. SOJOURN PLANNING CHECKLIST

June

- Form planning team/committee
- Identify and scout stream segment for sojourn
- Research past experiences with trips or sojourns
- Talk with local paddlers, past sojourners
- Order and review maps
- Identify possible sojourn theme
- Photograph features, access points, potential camping areas, etc.

July

- Finalize and map route
- Designate subcommittees
- Locate access points and identify property owners
- Identify permitting requirements
- Establish team meeting schedule
- Establish planning timeline/deadlines
- Identify political boundaries and jurisdictions

August

- Finalize sojourn theme
- Draft preliminary budget
- Contact public and private access site owners
- Research liability insurance

September

- Finalize access agreements
- Apply for access permits
- Contact officials and VIPs
- Draft sponsor request letter
- Contact potential vendors
- Contact potential presenters
- Review preliminary budget
- Contact insurance carriers
- Begin drafting day plans

October

- Approve sponsor request letter and send

- Draft safety plan

November

- Begin developing vendor agreements
- Finalize insurance agreement

December

- Begin collecting donations

January

- Finalize budget
- Compile list of organizational newsletters for publishing sojourn articles
- Compile mailing list
- Send initial press release (soliciting volunteers, sponsors, etc.)
- Begin newspaper insert
- Draft save-the-date postcards
- Do site walk through and confirm day-to-day schedule
- Obtain sojourn logo from DCNR
- Review planning progress/make reassignments?
- Finalize day plans

February

- Mail save-the-date postcard
- Finalize fee schedule for attendees
- Draft municipal proclamations
- Follow up to sponsor request letters
- Create draft brochure with sponsor recognition
- Confirm presenters
- Confirm vendors
- Review safety plan

March

- Finalize registration deadline
- Finalize safety plan
- Review draft brochure
- Newspaper insert to publishers for layout
- Discuss T-shirt design
- Rent vans / equipment trailers
- Draft sponsor request letter
- Contact potential vendors
- Contact potential presenters
- Review preliminary budget
- Contact insurance carriers
- Begin drafting day plans

April

- Obtain sponsor logos for t-shirts
- Finalize/print brochure and t-shirts
- Mail brochures
- Issue press release and invite media
- Open registration

May

- Complete newspaper insert and provide to newspapers
- Confirm registration people for each day confirmed
- Notify medical/emergency facilities

June

- Execute Sojourn!

B. SAMPLE PLANNING MEETING AGENDA

SOME RIVER SOJOURN 2014 PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

I. Call to Order

- Introduction of Attendees

II. Report from Secretary

- Overview/Adoption of December Minutes
- Update of Task Completion/Scheduling Status

III. Reports from Standing Sub-Committees, Chairs or Alternates

- *Adhoc Brochure Committee*
 - Second Draft Brochure
- *Budget & Items Related*
 - Final Balance in Account
 - 2014 Fiduciary / Registration + Ground Support Proposals,
- *PEEC / Delaware & Raritan Greenway (D&R Greenway)*
 - Adoption of Final 2013 Budget (With Fiduciary/Registrar Line Items)
- *Planning/Day Plans, Day Planners*
 - Proposed Day Plans On Planning Sheets, Day Planners
 - Specific issues: camping location for day 4 and 5; livery service for day 7 and 8; possible sailing for day 8
 - Update on programs (Ideas from Appointed Day Planners)
 - Update, Sponsorship Efforts for Day Planning Activities
- *Fundraising/Sponsorship*
 - Status of first mailing of sponsorship letter
 - Historic Sponsor Packages-Draft
 - Plans for follow-up, volunteers needed
- *Public Relations*
 - Update on Sojourn Website, Scrapbook, tee-shirts, freebies
 - Sojourn Media List
- *Education*
 - Progress on involving Educators
 - Status of mailing to Teachers & Students
- *Safety*
 - Safety Report

IV. Other Business (Unfinished & New), All Members & Visitors

- Next Meeting

V. Adjourn

D. SUSTAINABLE SOJOURN TIPS

Some sojourns may choose to make an effort to model earth-friendly habits, such as offering wholesome, natural meals and limiting the use of disposable and individually packaged items. Here are some suggestions for a “Sustainable Sojourn”:

1. Dishes, utensils, and beverage ware should be reusable/washable. Ask sojourners to bring their own and provide set-ups for do-it-yourself washing, rinsing and disinfecting after each meal.
2. Ask participants to bring and use their own bandanas as napkins, rather than paper napkins.
3. Encourage food providers to use foods and ingredients that are as whole and natural as possible, and locally and/or organically produced, if such are available at reasonable cost. Foods produced with minimal refining and processing, low in fat, whole grains and whole grain baked goods, plenty of fruits and vegetables would be great!
4. Discourage the use of individually packaged items.
5. Consider that some people might be vegetarian, or even vegan (no eggs or dairy), and have on the registration form a space to indicate this preference, as well as any other special dietary needs, food allergies, etc. Folks who have such needs are often very cautious about eating provided foods, will ask about ingredients, and even bring their own alternative foods; but to ask and be willing to accommodate shows consideration and stimulates thinking.
6. Make containers for recyclable items, and maybe even compost, available for use at meal sites and eating areas. The “pack it in, pack it out” ethic should be emphasized for any foods or drinks along the river.

F. DAY PLAN FORM

Day #: _____ Date: _____

Starting Point/Location: _____

Ending Point/Location: _____

Number of river miles in daily segment: _____

Number of possible paddlers (river carrying capacity): _____

Number registered paddlers: _____

Number of actual paddlers: _____

Total Daily Participants (include general public): _____

		Morning	Noon	Afternoon	Evening
General comments					
Meal	Sponsor				
	Location				
	Cost (if any)				
Program	Title				
	Speaker				
	Organization				
	Location				
	Attendance				
Camping	Location				
	Sponsor				
	Cost (if any)				

G. EVALUATION FORM

Thanks for taking a few moments to fill out this evaluation. Your comments will help us improve future Sojourns.

Which days did you attend the Sojourn? Circle all that apply:

ALL Kickoff Saturday Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

Was the cost of the Sojourn reasonable for the services provided? Yes / No

Comments:

Meals:

What did you like or dislike about the meals we had?
What would you have liked to see done differently regarding meals?

Programs:

What did you like or dislike about the programs we had?
What kind of programs would you like to see in the future?

Camping/Shuttles:

Were you satisfied with the camping facilities provided? Yes / No
Comments:
Was the shuttling of gear and transportation of people adequate? Yes / No
Comments:

Schedule:

What did you think of the amount of paddling we did per day: too much, too little, just right?
Were days planned too full or not full enough (with programs, etc.)?
Was there anything you wanted to do that wasn't included in the schedule?

General Comments

What did you like the most?
What did you like the least?
What changes would have improved your experience at the Sojourn?
What can organizers do to increase the appeal of Sojourns?
What can organizers do to expand the Sojourn participation to others who have not participated in the past?
Will you recommend participating in river Sojourns to someone else? Yes / No
Do you plan to participate in a sojourn next year? Yes / No / Maybe If no, why not?
How did you hear about the Sojourn? Circle all that apply:
Newsletter Newspaper insert Website Newspaper DEP newsletter Friend/Co-worker
Other _____
How many Sojourns have you participated in? _____
Other comments:
Name (optional) _____

H. RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

The following is an example of a very simple Risk Management Plan. Yours may include much greater detail and information, especially related to procedures for medical and safety emergencies.

GENERAL INFORMATION					
Waterway name:		Sojourn name:			
Starting point:		Ending point:			
Total miles:					
TRIP INFORMATION					
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Number of paddlers					
Safety officer name					
Camp location					
Miles traveled					
Expected hazards					
First Aid Kit locations					
Public Telephone locations					
EMERGENCY PROCEDURES					
Communications procedures in case of medical emergency					
Describe boat safety procedures during a medical emergency					
CONTACT INFORMATION					
	Name	Title/Organization	Mobile Phone	Email	Location (Trip mile point)
Primary Sojourn Contact					
Secondary Sojourn Contact					
Safety personnel					
Hospitals					
Ambulance					
Fire, Search and Rescue					

I. SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT LIST

This list is intended as a guide only – use your judgment and experience to pack what you need

Camping Gear – Be prepared to sleep outdoors

- Tent
- Sleeping bag/pillow
- Foam pad/air mattress
- Personal toilet articles, shower shoes, bath towel
- Sunscreen
- Dry shoes
- Bug repellent
- Rain gear
- Camp clothes, including sleeping gear, cold weather clothing, and rain gear
- Hat/visor/sunglasses
- Flashlight with extra batteries/bulb
- Pocket knife

Canoe Gear – Be prepared to get wet

- Canoe with 3 paddles and PFD/life jacket for each canoeist
- Whistle on lanyard
- Dry bag
- Bailer
- Toilet paper
- Paddling gloves/knee pads/seat pads - optional
- Paddling clothes with sturdy water shoes (old tie sneakers are good)
- 50 feet nylon cord – optional
- Dry clothes

Medications

- Poison ivy treatments
- Band-Aids
- Antiseptic
- Medic Alert bracelet/ID
- Prescriptions

Food

- Snacks of your choice
- Water bottles

J. MORNING ANNOUNCEMENT

A. Introductions

- Coordinator(s) and daily support staff
- Steering committee members present (optional)
- Corporate sponsors
- Program staff
- Safety staff
- Special daily programs
- Readings/poetry
- Press & other VIPs
- Other special announcements

B. Daily Logistics

- Review the day's schedule
- Discuss possible difficult areas on the waterway
- Show a map representation of the day's route
- Announce the number of miles to be traveled for the day and estimated time of arrival at the evening's campsite
- Announce the scheduled programming for the day
- Inspirational river readings or poetry

C. Safety Briefing

- Possible obstructions- strainers, dams
- Lead/sweep boats for the day
- Signals –stop, start, right, left, center, raft up
- Four strokes to control canoe
- Kneel in rapids, keep the boat straight, avoid obstacles in advance
- If you fall out: floating position, stay upstream of boat
- If someone else falls out: rescue people, boats, then gear
- Drink water, wear sunscreen
- The day's conditions and landmarks

K. BUDGET AND EXPENSE REPORT

Expenses	Category	Item	Budget	Actual
Direct Costs	Salaries and Benefits	<i>Ex: Jane Doe</i>	\$10,000.00	\$8,500.00
		<i>Ex: Robert Smith</i>	\$2,000.00	\$1,700.00
	Food	<i>Ex: Supermarket</i>	\$11,000.00	\$12,000.00
		<i>Ex: Josie's restaurant</i>		
	Transportation	<i>Ex: A-1 Buses</i>	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
	Facility Rentals	<i>Ex: Fire Hall</i>	\$250.00	\$250.00
	Promotional	<i>Ex: T's Printing Co.</i>	\$400.00	\$450.00
	Entertainment	<i>Ex: Bluegrass Band</i>	\$2,000.00	\$1,750.00
Subtotal Direct costs			\$26,650.00	\$25,650.00
Indirect Costs	Advertising	<i>Ex: Mag Print Ads</i>	\$450.00	\$500.00
	Postage	<i>Ex: USPS Stamps</i>	\$150.00	\$150.00
	Printing	<i>Ex: Brochure Printing</i>	\$2,700.00	\$2,500.00
	Other	<i>Example: safety gear</i>	\$125.00	\$125.00
Subtotal indirect costs			\$3,425.00	\$3,275.00
Total			\$30,075.00	\$28,925.00

Revenue Category	Item	Budget	Actual
Grants	<i>Example: POWR</i>	\$6,000.00	\$540.00
Registration Fees	<i>Example: \$60 per person per day</i>	\$6,000.00	\$4,500.00
Sponsorship Revenue	<i>Example: Mom's Diner</i>	\$500.00	\$750.00
Canoe Rentals	<i>Example: \$15 per person</i>	\$300.00	\$360.00
Other	<i>Example: T-shirt Sales</i>	\$250.00	\$275.00
Total			\$6,425.00

L. PRESS RELEASE EXAMPLE

(Insert Letterhead)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, April 7, 2014

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Gearing Up Pennsylvania's 2014 River Sojourns

River Sojourns across the state of Pennsylvania are gearing up for the 2014 paddling season. Canoers and kayakers will be out in numbers taking advantage of warmer weather and plentiful water during May Watershed Awareness Month and June Rivers Month. With a full slate of 12 Sojourns scheduled throughout all corners of the state, there's no excuse not to float your boat this year.

Each Sojourn highlights the outstanding features of their river and watershed including geology, cultural and archaeological heritage, riparian corridor biodiversity, and environmental conservation efforts. So why not get out and see what it is like to paddle through Pennsylvania's Susquehanna Valley on the Juniata River, through the Pocono Mountains on the Lehigh, or through the Lake Erie region on French Creek. Throw in a smattering of fun, food, and education and you have a trip to remember for the whole family.

An indication of the Sojourn sensation is sampled here from one of many positive organizers remarks. John Smith, Alliance for the River, of the Susquehanna Sojourn commented, "The event (2013 Sojourn) was a success in public outreach, programs offered, agencies involved and number of registrants. Even through downpours the spirit of the group was upbeat and much praise was given to the Sojourn workers".

Looking back on 2013 gives a clear idea of the significance and success of River Sojourns in Pennsylvania. DCNR and PA Organization for Watersheds and Rivers (POWR) supported sojourns benefited from \$68,000 in grant funding, networking opportunities and statewide promotion efforts, including dedicated pages on the POWR website with links to individual Sojourn organizations. Check www.pawatersheds.org once again this year for the latest info on 2013 Sojourns. The results were that a spectacular total of over 3,100 participant days were accounted for in the different Sojourn events. In addition, numerous spectators and participants joined at shore side events (including over 5,000 spectators at the Ohio Pyle All Terrain Weekend Falls Race).

The Pennsylvania Sojourn experience will only get better and better as organizers discover new wonders of our waterways, and introduce many more people to the joys of paddling and stewardship. So says Jane Doe, Scenic Valley Conservancy, of the Scenic River Sojourn, "I believe that most of our success was due to having great paddlers and planners on our committee who were involved last year and knew what worked and what didn't". 2014 brings back loads of experienced organizers and paddlers, who are gearing up right now, so don't miss out.

M. SAMPLE PROCLAMATION

COUNTY, CITY, or BOROUGH LETTERHEAD

PROCLAMATION

RIVERS MONTH JUNE 2014

ANY CREEK

WHEREAS, June 2014 has been designated as Rivers Month in Pennsylvania and throughout the nation; and

WHEREAS, we in _____ (County, City, Borough or Township) are uniquely blessed by having a portion of the Any Creek run directly through our jurisdiction; and

WHEREAS, the Any Creek has great significance in human history including Native American Culture, early American Culture, and the regional economy; and

WHEREAS, the Any Creek contributes immensely to the scenic beauty and ecological well-being of our area, providing watersports and recreation, and contributing to wetland and river corridor wildlife; and

WHEREAS, the Any Creek has a great impact on the Other River, into which it empties, and

WHEREAS, from June 5th June 8th, 2014 a four day river "float" will take place from the Southern Erie County near Routes 6N and 19 to the confluence of Any Creek and Allegheny River at Franklin, PA, its purpose being to accentuate and celebrate the Any Creek; and

WE, the undersigned (Commissioners, Councilmen, or Supervisors) _____ of _____ (County, City, Borough, or Township) do solemnly declare June 2013 to be Any Creek Month in _____ (County, City, Borough, or Township) and the week of June 5-8th to be Any Creek Sojourn Week in _____ (County, City, Borough or Township). We urge all citizens to join together to conserve and protect the Any Creek as a resource, and to discover the beauty and opportunities the Creek offers for recreational and educational adventure by becoming involved with "riverwork" activities through citizens groups, school groups, environmental organizations, and sporting associations.

SEAL

(County, City, Borough, Township Officials)

N. FACT SHEET

What is the Some River Sojourn?

The Some River Sojourn is an eight-day, 95 mile canoe and kayak journey on the beautiful, blue Some River. Paddlers will begin their adventure on the West Branch of the Some River, near Big Dam, and continue on to Anyville, at the confluence of the Some and Susquehanna Rivers.

Why hold a sojourn?

Each year the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) selects a feature River of the Year. The Some River was named PA River of the Year for 2001. In honor of this prestigious designation, the Some Clean Water Partnership, in conjunction with DCNR, will host the Some River Sojourn.

Is the Sojourn just a canoe trip?

No! The sojourn also provides participants with the chance to meet fellow paddlers, camp, and enjoy a variety of daily and nightly programs ranging from presentations on history, geology, and culture, to campfire sing-alongs and folk music.

Tentative Schedule and Daily Contacts

INSERT SCHEDULE HERE

O. SAMPLE SPONSORSHIP LETTER

Date

Name

Title

Address

Address

Town, State, Zip

Dear _____:

On behalf of the _____ River Sojourn steering committee, we would like to request your financial assistance and participation in the _____ Sojourn.

This event was created to introduce people to the _____ River, to celebrate and increase awareness of the river's unique natural, cultural, ecological, historical, and recreational characteristics, as well as to educate individuals and organizations on the importance of conserving our natural resources. The sojourn combines canoeing, camping, educational programs, historical interpretation and more.

The fees paid by the daily Sojourn participants help to defray some of the costs associated with this educational and awareness project, such as transportation/canoes, insurance, partial meals, and administrative expenses.

You also might be interested to know that we are trying to obtain separate grant funding to allow select federal, state, and municipal government officials to participate for a day during the sojourn, in the hope of educating them about why our magnificent river resource deserves their attention and protection.

We are asking you for financial support in the range of \$1,000-\$2,000. The _____ River Sojourn will also seek media coverage and would, of course, recognize your contribution in press releases and in related promotional materials. In addition, we would be happy to display your logo on any of above products that we are able to successfully fund. Most importantly, your financial support will help to demonstrate the importance of the _____ River to the quality of life in the basin.

Please join us in this important educational, fun experience. A steering committee member will contact you shortly to answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,