Presentation Title:

Minnesota State Water Trails – Making History for 50 Years

Presentation Description:

Minnesota has the first and largest Water Trails system in the nation. Water Trails are recreational routes on waterways that are managed for canoeing, kayaking, boating and camping. The Minnesota River was designated as a "canoe and boating route" by the state legislature in 1963, making it one of the very first Water Trails in the nation. Come learn about the early years of the system, and the trip planning resources and paddling opportunities that are now available. Plus, special guest **Paul Ryberg** will tell stories about growing up on the Minnesota River with his family that will be honored for their efforts to "unleash the recreational giant of canoeing."

Presenter Biographies:

Erik Wrede serves as the Minnesota DNR Water Trails Coordinator. His primary role is to provide resources to the public that help them to get out paddling. His job is a mixed bag of policy, training, mapping, outreach and working with external partners on recreation and conservation projects. He has led paddling adventures in the Boundary Waters, the Everglades, the Canyonlands of Utah, Yellowstone, Puerto Rico, and a number of State Water Trails. **Paul Ryberg** grew up on the water. His earliest memories connected to rivers are of "accidentally" falling in the water on hot days as a young boy when his family lived on a houseboat on the St. Croix River. Paul says he didn't feel like Huck Finn - he was just a normal kid with a wet backyard! His parents, Clyde and Shirley Ryberg, championed efforts to manage and promote the Minnesota River and other rivers for canoeing. They were driving force behind the beginning of the Minnesota State Water Trails system.