



Annual Sandhill Crane Paddle set for Sunday on the Kankakee River

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Once known as the hekiki, Huakiki, Aukiki, as well as the Sauwauseebe by Native Americans and early explorers, the Kankakee River has historically served as a trading route, food source and water trail. On Sunday, it will serve as a source of recreation and inspiration for paddlers and nature lovers of all ages.

Organized by the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association, in partnership with the LaPorte County Parks Dept., the Porter County Parks Dept., the Kankakee River Basin Commission, the Porter County Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Friends of the Kankakee, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Coulter Produce, and the LaPorte Co. Drainage Board, the third annual Kankakee River Sandhill Crane Paddle offers an opportunity to learn more about the Grand Kankakee River.

Last year, about 120 paddlers enjoyed a picture perfect day on the water before gathering at the Jasper-Pulaski Fish and Wildlife Area, 5822 N. Fish and Wildlife Lane, Medaryville, to witness one of nature's greatest spectacles, the gathering of 10,000 or more Sandhill Cranes at dusk.

Register online at <http://www.nwipa.org/krsc2012.html#rsvp> or (219) 793-6967.

Registration begins at 10:30 a.m. Sunday at the Yellow River Public Access Site at English Lake. Paddlers will leave their boats at the start, and proceed to park their vehicles at the Porter County Park's Dunn's Bridge historic site. A shuttle bus will be available to take paddlers back to English Lake for the start. The last bus is scheduled to leave at 12:30 p.m.

A \$5 suggested donation is requested to support the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association's education and blueways stewardship efforts in the region.

For those who don't have a boat, canoes and kayaks can be rented in advance through Chicago River Canoe and Kayak at (312) 823-3384 or ryanwc@sbcglobal.net.

The first 125 participants will receive a free commemorative T-shirt courtesy of the producers of new documentary, Everglades of the North – the Story of the Grand Kankakee Marsh, and Christopher B. Burke Engineering Ltd.

For more information, contact Dan Plath: dplath@NWIPA.org or (219) 871-9559, or visit www.NWIPA.org.