



HRCC NEWS

AKA "THE LETTER" ISSUE 05.1 - April 15, 2005

THIS YEAR'S TRIP DATES

Thursday 8/25 -
Sunday 8/28
2005

BAILER! BAILER! WHERE THE HELL IS THE BAILER?!

What happens when you tie a bunch of canoes together, load all of them to a hundred pounds past capacity, throw a few people in each, and then set off down a river? You end up needing more bailers! Ahhh, the sound of a drunken floater realizing he's almost underwater... "Bailer!!!"

For the second largest Hog Trip ever everything went off pretty damned well! We filled the campsite (and the boats) with twenty-one Hogs, including three Rookies. The weather was mostly good, except those pesky downpours that seemed to chase us downriver at times. Have you hugged your rain gear today?

Not knowing how a lack of family camping was going to affect us, we decided to get a jump on it and set up the site on Wednesday. This worked out very well and we are going to continue the approach this year. The "administrative day" served us well and a good number of Hogs showed up early. We're not a hundred percent sure where we'll be setting up this time, but more on that later...

The float route changed yet again. Instead of at Hartland it began Friday at the covered bridge. We floated from there back down to Wilgus and on both Saturday and Sunday we left Wilgus and pulled back out at the New Hampshire landing. "What, no Hartland?" you say! This is true, but the Hartland leg is too shallow for the Avon and with 21 people we simply didn't have enough boats. Something to remember for this year... more canoes is more gooder. We can't do Hartland with three people in a canoe.

No complaints about the eats this time. Our lunch subs came from Straub's and the new Ascutney Market and they were really good. We did the Bricker's Buffet on Friday night and they actually gave us our own room. Aren't we special?!?! The meal teams did great and kudos again to Casey and Mike for putting on a great Saturday dinner. They topped last year's feast, which was no small feat.

As for tournaments, we had a new one this time, golf. Taking the award was Eric Anderson. Expertly gripping his shaft and deftly whacking his balls, he only almost got us killed by the locals a couple of times. Stupid lumberjacks don't belong on the links anyways. We decided that we'd keep up the golf idea by playing a game each year on Thursday. So, if anybody is interested for this year just bring your clubs (if you've got 'em) and be around before we leave for the course. Don't ask, I dunno what time that is!

It is a sad phenomenon that there was no Running Dummy. Although in hindsight there was some bovine romance that probably deserved those honors. <shiver> I simply don't know how we overlooked that at the meeting. I think we were still actively blocking it out when we were discussing the awards. Can we grant it post-trip? Truly, truly disturbing...

Rookie Master Mark was lucky again to have a bunch of great Rookies to oversee. They kept up the pattern of quality Rookies that we've been enjoying. There were three newbies this time, and Rookie of the Year went to a deserving Tim Tyszka. Congratulations Tim, good job.

Blown Bladder went to Steve Anderson for having piss-holding abilities roughly equivalent to an eight month pregnant woman. Oh wait, he only beat me by about seven seconds... nevermind. A little reminder to Steve... you still owe your penalty, don't forget to pay up.

There was a goodly amount of fishing going on, but the competition wasn't quite as rabid as I've seen it. Nonetheless, a great showing was made by Eric Anderson to win the Outstanding Fisherman Award with about 14 pounds of Nemo. Good job again, Eric... Don has had a lock on that award for a while now. We'll see if he can take the title back this year.

So, how long can you keep it up? Well, congratulations to Don Dubuc for keeping it up for fifteen years! He achieved his Fifteen Year Survival Award last trip. Other staying power nods go to Casey Occhialini and Chris Oliphant for reaching the Five Year Survival mark. Many more to us all!



Hey, Scott! Look familiar? Pork and beef... as good together as a big 'ole bacon cheeseburger!

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Somehow we managed to break all of our toys last time. What fun is it if you can't use it to death, right? It took about two days to lovingly paint the guitar Hog orange, and about a second to sit on it and mash it. Oooops. And the potato cannon worked better than it ever has, only to have the fuel injection system busted beyond repair. Both problems are being remedied...

One important business note that I should re-mention is that the dues this year will be going up to \$75. Even with a \$10 surcharge for Bricker's on Friday night the till showed a loss by coming out somewhat lighter than when we started. There's one thing we can count on... shit don't get any cheaper. Wait, we can count on Spodies too... definitely Spodies...

STATE GOVERNMENT: WHY HOGS CARE

As you may have noted, we've had a new set of Rangers at Wilgus for the last couple of years. While they haven't been quite the personable Rangers that we've been used to in the past, they also haven't taken it upon themselves to bother us any more than we probably deserve. I guess you could say that they tolerate us. That said, enter the State of Vermont...

In making the 2005 reservations for our beloved Fur, Locus, and Elm hooches I was met with an entirely new set of hoops to leap through. I was informed on the phone that we could no longer simply book the Group Area and be done with it. No, we must now apply for a Group Use Permit before we will be allowed our stay. I had to fill out a Group Event Application, which consisted of questions like "Will there be alcohol served, and if so who holds the liquor license?", "List all activities the group will be active in", "Name, address, phone, bank account, and first child of the person responsible for this, that, and everything else." Needless to say, I wasn't pleased about having to lie about all that shit.

The kicker is, we had to pay everything up front, but that doesn't mean we're in. They now have the option of denying our application. Nice. Oh yeah, if they feel like it they can also charge us an additional hundred bucks security and twenty-five bucks per day non-refundable reservation charge. You'd think we're signing a lease or something.

So that leads me to the classic and worthwhile subject of venue. For a number of years we've been discussing the option of utilizing another campsite for part or all of the trip (potentially saving us hundreds of dollars a year, too). The new bullshit from Vermont just adds another incentive for us to seriously consider this opportunity. We visited the high end of Jarvis Island again last year, and we were all impressed (yet again) with it's potential. It's an isolated and protected locale with all we need.

The idea is, we're supposed to be able to do pretty much whatever we want when we're on this trip. As a matter of fact, it's the rule (see Article 3). But in a practical sense, what we can do while we're in Wilgus is getting more and more limited. A few years ago we would have thought nothing of blowing off a few fireworks, or having a paintball game down the Nature Trail. And believe it or not there were a couple acceptable Hog Fires as well (when we were allowed to use the chainsaws). Unfortunately for us we can't get away with any of that anymore. Ok..ok.. I'll say it.... We've been strapped down by the system! <collective gasp>

Let me put it this way... If we were set up on the island, who would say anything to us if we had a huge Hog Fire on the beachhead, or a fireworks show, or a rowdy paintball game? Who would complain about the noise level or the thumping of accelerated potatoes? The answer: Nobody. Sound like fun? Hey, what else do you wanna do? Hmmm? Hmmm?

Yes, I know it's a bunch more work to do the island. But there's a New Hampshire landing right there for us to use, and we're lucky enough to have boats to do the haulin' with. This club does have a history of staying on islands in the river... why not revive the adventurous spirit of yester-Hog? (psssst... isn't that what Rookies are for, anyway?)

Now that we're all thinking about it, and in light of the fresh problems at the park... the time is upon us to decide. This issue will be seriously considered and decided by anyone who chooses to contact me and lodge their opinions and comments by June 1st. It will be a group decision. If you care, then call or email me. Everyone is getting this letter and will have ample opportunity to be heard one way the other.

Don't get nervous, we'll still have Wilgus this year (I think, if not I'll let everybody know with another letter), but let's put a little energy into weining ourselves off of the things that have been constraining us lately. I really do think it'll pay off in spades. Honorable Hogs... what say you?

See you on the river... *Andy*

CHECKS, CONFIRMATIONS AND COMMENTS TO:

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT A JARVIS ISLAND TRIP

In the short time between when this Hog Letter was originally written and when it was actually mailed out to everyone, it was suggested that I give everyone some more information about what a Jarvis Island trip might entail. So I figured that I'd include the most likely scenario for that type of trip, along with some additional information that I've gathered since.

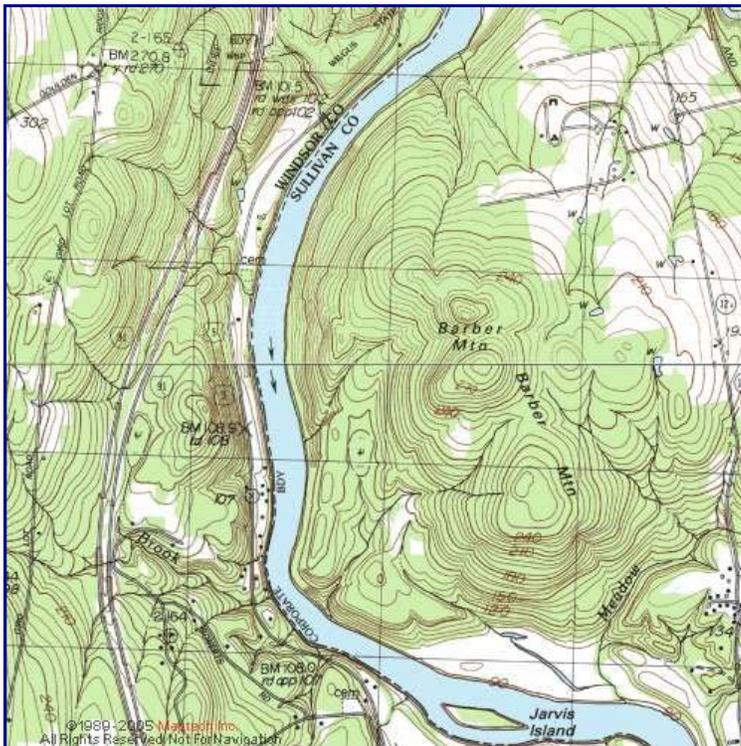
In addition to the New Hampshire landing on the other side of the river, it turns out that there is also a Vermont side access just below the island. Satellite imagery shows a nice dirt road that leads right to the river. Makes sense, since there used to be an active ferry running across the river. The eye in the sky also shows that all the land between Route 5 and the river (on the bend itself) has been routinely farmed so we can probably count on additional access roads. This makes the potential move from Wilgus much easier, as the drive distance would be significantly reduced to just a few miles down one road.

In the past we've tried all sorts of ways to move from Wilgus to some other location down river. Most recently it has been a move to a meadow that is a bit further South of Jarvis Island. Historically, the most effective method has been to make the move on Friday. This allows us to set up the campsite and have from Friday night through to Sunday without having to move or setup anything. The smoothest way to accomplish this move has been by using a couple of volunteers to begin the setup on Friday instead of going on the float. Volunteers have not always been available, and that's by no means a problem.

So, for this trip it would mean that we would stay in Wilgus (lightly setup) for Wednesday and Thursday nights. We would then break camp at Wilgus and move the equipment the few miles down Route 5 to Weathersfield Bow. Vehicles we won't need can safely stay at Wilgus if we want. If we have the volunteers, they would remain (post-Spodie, of course!) at the island and begin shuttling equipment and preparing the site. We'd then do the float from Wilgus to Jarvis Island, pull out, and complete the camp and personal setup. From there on we're livin' it up on the island!

Things to keep in mind if we're on the island...

- It's tough to get lost. If you find yourself wet, go the other way. You'll eventually find somebody.
- It's difficult to just run out to the store for more beer or cigs. Bring enough to last.
- It's difficult to just run out for hookers (or cattle). Be sure they can make the swim when we inevitably catch them and throw them headlong into the river.
- You must bring your own sleeping accommodations or risk being cold and/or wet and grumpy.
- Rookies will actually have to work to fulfill the firewood requirements.
- There will be no toilets... plan appropriately to avoid the chance of wiping with poison ivy.
- There will be no showers, only river baths. The fish don't bite very hard.
- Island = More Gooder without limiting our typical outings (Bricker's, Saturday night at the bar, etc.).



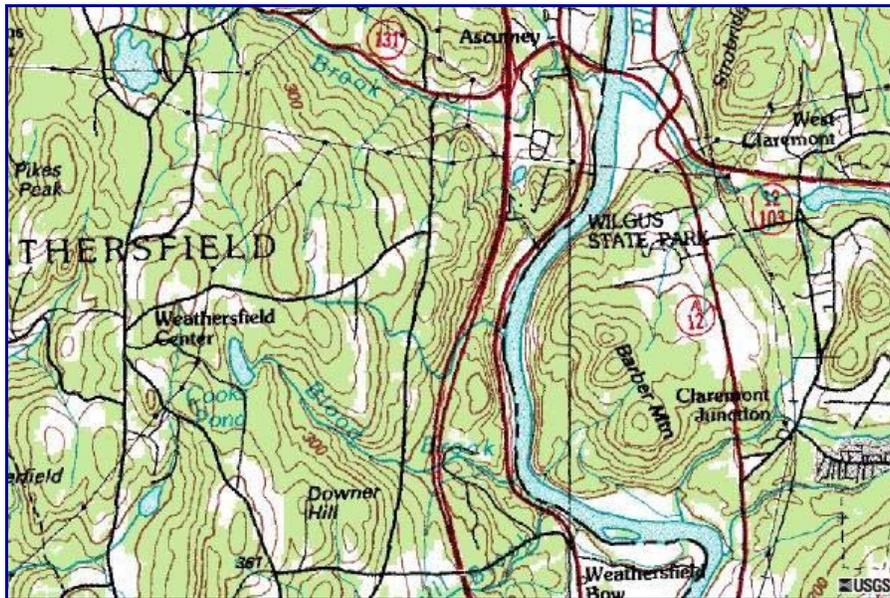
One thing that making a move to a more isolated venue means is that we would have to put a bit more thought into the logistics of things like meals. All of the meals would be pre-planned on our "administrative day" and detailed provisions lists will be in place. Our water requirements would need to be met. All the Spodie materials would need to be pre-arranged.

Because of this, it would be more crucial than usual for us to know who is coming on the trip. Dues would be needed in advance to deal with the food and equipment issues. We had 21 attendees last year, which is ominously close to the max of 25. Remember guys, it's first-come-first-served and it would not be a good thing if people were turned away once they were already there.

Get those dues in to guarantee your slot!

The map at the left shows the route between Wilgus and Jarvis Island. Wilgus is on the left bank at the top of the map, and Jarvis Island is the green thingy in the river at the bottom.

The distance is approximately three miles.



Here are a couple of additional views of the areas that we are discussing. Notice the access road that can be seen in the satellite image. The light colored area on the right bank at the bow is the boat landing where we often pull out. The color map shows the area roads between and around Wilgus and Weathersfield Bow.