GRAND RIVER HERITAGE WATER TRAIL 2.23 MILES

REACH 6

1. HUGH HEWARD
   Each decade since 1990 a team of historians, educators, students, civic leaders, and scientists embark on a journey of discovery to document the conditions and opportunities offered along the Grand River watershed. Hugh Heward made that grueling journey for many of the same reasons 200 years earlier. Heward was a well-educated British fur trader based in Detroit. He and seven French-Canadian boatmen outfitted two birch bark canoes in preparation for a first-of-its-kind exploration of the Grand River. On March 24, 1790 Heward and his men headed down the Detroit River on an adventure that would take them across lower Michigan from Lake Erie to Lake Michigan by way of the Huron and Grand Rivers and then on to Chicago. Heward detailed the odyssey in a day-to-day journal that has been preserved over the centuries. On Tuesday, April 27, 1790 Heward’s party arrived in present day Grand Haven. Heward successfully completed his voyage to Chicago and returned to Michigan by an unknown route. In 2000 Heward chronicler, Jim Woodruff, became involved in the modern day Grand River Expedition and issued the “Hugh Heward Challenge”

2. PERIGRINE FALCON
   Approaching this point along the south bank of the river, you will be coming to the end of Harbor Island passing by the power plant. The smoke stack of the power plant is a known as a nesting area for Peregrine Falcons. The Peregrine Falcon also known simply as the Peregrine, and historically as the “Duck Hawk” in North America, is a cosmopolitan bird of prey in the family Falconidae. It is a large, crow-sized falcon, with a blue-gray back, barred white under parts, and a black head and "moustache". It can reach speeds over 320 km/h (200 mph) in a stoop. This makes it the fastest creature on the planet! While its diet consists almost exclusively of medium-sized birds, the Peregrine will occasionally hunt small mammals, small reptiles or even insects. Reaching sexual maturity at one year, it mates for life and nests in a scrape, normally on cliff edges or, in recent times, on tall human-made structures. The Peregrine Falcon became an endangered species in many areas due to the use of pesticides, especially DDT. Since the ban on DDT from the beginning of the 1970s onwards, the populations recovered, supported by large scale protection of nesting places and releases to the wild.

3. DEWEY HILL DEPOT
   The Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad first pulled into town in 1858. The impressive depot was originally located across the Grand River at the foot of Dewey Hill just beyond Grand Haven’s city limits. It spawned a small village that included two hotels, a tavern, bakery, an ice house, coal depot, and housing for railroad employee and fisherman families, along with their shanties and boat houses. As that fledgling community expanded, it begged naming. “Cedarville” and “Sanford” were seriously suggested and unceremoniously discarded. In 1866 the editor of the Grand Haven News proposed the tiny town be named “Muir” in honor of the superintendent of the Detroit & Milwaukee Railroad. That, too, was vetoed. By 1870 the once thriving village, by whatever name, would become a “Muir” ghost town. Encroaching sand and the inconvenience of ferrying passengers and freight across the river to Grand haven sealed the railroad’s decision to move its terminus across the channel to a newly built depot at the foot of Washington Avenue. One would have thought any confusion in naming the abandoned dune land would have ended there. Not so. The great sand dune remains a landmark of note, but without designation until the turn of the century. Commodore George Dewey's victory in Manila Bay at the beginning of the Spanish-American War in 1898 inspired national pride and a wave “Dewey dubbing”. To honor and memorialize Dewey’s opening blow, a parade of torch-toting citizens marched down Washington Avenue to the riverfront where orators officially named the creeping dune Dewey Hill. That name has stuck since July 5, 1900.

4. RIX ROBINSON FUR TRADING POST
   Rix Robinson was born in Richmond, Massachusetts on August 28, 1879. At the opening of the War of 1812, Rix abandoned his law studies and ventured to Michigan to avoid being drafted into a conflict his father vehemently opposed. After proving himself a capable sutler to U.S. troops in Detroit, Robinson was invited to be a limited partner in the American Fur Company based at Mackinac. He was assigned a territory that encompassed the Muskegon, Kalamazoo, and Grand River watersheds. In 1821 he established a trading post, warehouse, and primitive home on this site. The Reverend William Ferry, his family, and boatmen found shelter in the loft of the 16’ X 22’ dwelling when they arrived in Grand Haven on November 2, 1834. They survived that bone-chilling winter. While Robinson established his permanent headquarters upstream in Ada, his facilities here served as a storage area and staging ground for transporting thousands of furs to the annual spring rendezvous in Mackinac. Robinson named his beautiful point of departure Grand Haven.

5. KITCHEL LINDQUIST DUNES
   Approaching this point you will be going past “Dewey Hill” on the north bank of the Grand River where if you look up you should see an American Flag. Right past this dune is a river access to Kitchel Lindquist Dunes. Located about 3 miles northwest of Grand Haven, this 52-acre preserve is owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy. It encloses typical natural communities from open dunes to shrub land to oak-maple forest. Unusual or rare plants here include sand cherries and Pitcher’s thistle. Many different kinds of birds use this area. There is an excellent probability of viewing large numbers of hawks during their fall migration in September and October. Bald eagles may be seen during winter months. Watch for hawks on days when there is an east wind blowing. Also there is an excellent chance of seeing ring-billed gulls, herring gulls, great blue herons, and other water birds. Warblers, woodpeckers, sparrows, swallows, and many other songbirds can be seen at various times from spring through fall. Dawn and dusk provide the best viewing opportunities. Several kinds of reptiles including hognose and blue racer snakes may be seen during summer.