

2010 Locks Trip

By Dana Dickson

The 2010 Locks Trip was a great success. This near wilderness daytrip is a club favorite. There are places on this route where it is easy to forget that we are passing the heart of the city. Over the years, otters, mink, deer, eagles and osprey have been seen on this trip. For the first time we chartered a bus to do the shuttle from Hidden Falls to Boom Island. We met at Boom Island at 8 AM. A couple of the paddlers volunteered to stay with the boats while the rest of us drove down to Hidden Falls and dropped off our vehicles. Dana walked to the top of the hill to meet the bus driver. The walk was a good choice, to make the turn and get down the hill, the driver needed to turn around and approach the park entrance from the north. The ride back to Boom Island went quick. There was some logistical excitement at Boom Island. The Plymouth Avenue Bridge was closed, car and bus drivers alike had to maneuver around road closed signs and barriers to get to the park.

Our entrance into the Upper St. Anthony Lock was delayed about an hour while the lockmaster rescued a deer that swam into the lock from the bottom. We were told that part of the lock crew from Lower St. Anthony motored into the lock and lassoed the deer. The deer was released between the locks. We were disappointed that we did not get to see the deer; the delay allowed some of us time to get out of our boats and walk the promenade. Despite the high water the clapotis below the Lower St. Anthony Lock was manageable.

Other than the wait for the deer the locking down the river went smooth with little delay. We stopped midway down the Lock and Dam No. 1 pool for a snack and some tea. Then on to the final lock. The high water made for fast current by the island below Lock and Dam No. 1. The landing beach at Hidden Falls was noticeably smaller than in past years. All in all the 23 attendees were great companions on this trip through the urban near wilderness of the Upper Mississippi River Gorge.

After the trip some of us enjoyed a traditional sandwich at Cecil's Deli in Highland Park.