

River revival scheduled for today in Bangor

When the organizing committee was beginning to formulate a plan for what would become the Penobscot River Revival, they really had no idea what to expect.

So they began by making modest plans.

It didn't take long to figure out their blueprint for a celebration of the river needed some tweaking.

"The idea was to have a few tables about other work that's happening [along the river], said Gayle Zydlewski, the chairwoman of the Lower Penobscot Watershed Coalition. "We thought we'd have four or five exhibitors showing information about fish and other wildlife along the river."

That estimate, she said, was a bit off.

"We ended up having 33," Zydlewski said.

On Friday morning, Zydlewski stood next to the grassy area that will be used during today's festival in Bangor, waiting for tables and tents to arrive.

At one point, a bald eagle soared over the festival grounds, slowly heading south, toward Hampden.

"That's a good sign," Zydlewski said with a grin.

Today's festivities will run from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., and events will be held on the river side of the railroad tracks near the city docks.

The Penobscot River Revival was organized to run in conjunction with the culmination of the Penobscot River Striped Bass Tournament, which wraps up today.

The Coastal Conservation Association organized the tourney, which began June 21, and awards will be handed out during the Penobscot River Revival.

Zydlewski said that as organizers moved forward with their plans, various groups liked the sound of a Penobscot River Revival and began asking how

"People were getting excited about it and saying, 'Well, we'd like to sponsor,'" Zydlewski said. "We didn't ask people to pay to have a table, because we thought we were just keeping it small. Then people said, 'Should we pay? How much do you need?' and we started accumulating sponsors."

Sponsors include the Bangor Area Storm Water Group, Coastal Conservation Association, Conservation Association, Cove Brook Watershed Council, Hamlin Marine, Lane Construction Corporation, Lower Penobscot Watershed Coalition, Maine Department of Marine Resources, Maine Sea Grant, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Penobscot River Restoration Trust, Sunrise Materials and The Nature Conservancy.

Zydlewski is a biologist by trade, and said making the transition to organizer and promoter was interesting.

"It's exciting. It's pretty daunting, because I've never organized something like this before," Zydlewski said.

Zydlewski said she hopes the Penobscot River Revival will help people realize what a great resource they have in their backyards.

"Doing the fish biology stuff up at the University [of Maine], I get to be out on the river a lot. But a lot of people don't get to be out on the river," she said. "[This event] is sort of bringing that information and getting people down to the river to see what a great place it is."

Visitors to the Penobscot River Revival will find all kinds of interesting and informative displays, and plenty of watershed stewards to chat with.

Entertainment will be provided by the Eric Green Band and Blue Northern. The bands will split time on stage and, between musical sets, awards for the striper tournament will be handed out and raffles will be held.

According to the Penobscot

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River Revival Web site, children's activities are also planned, as is an art show and sale. Food vendors will be on hand, and boating information will be available.

Exhibitors include the Atlantic Salmon Federation, the Penobscot Nation Water Resources Program, Maine Audubon, Castine Kayak Adventures, the Bangor Symphony Orchestra, Equipment Rental/Party Plus, Beginning with Habitat, Friends of Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Friends of Sears Island, the Maine Association of Charter Captains, Capt. Pete Douvarjo's Eggmoggin Guide Service, Capt. Pete's Custom Rods, Arthur Taylor, Howling Threads, the Penobscot Riverkeepers, the U.S. Geological Survey, Leonards Mills Maine Forest and Logging Museum and the American Fisheries Society.

Zydlewski said a common goal is shared by organizers, sponsors and exhibitors.

"[We want to illustrate] how we can keep the river a good place and a place we want to keep coming to visit," she said.

Haugen reaches goal

A month ago, colleague Kevin Miller told you about the ambitious plans of outdoors enthusiast Mike Haugen.

The Denver teacher was in Maine on June 25, where he

climbed Mount Katahdin. The mountain was one of 50 — the highest peaks in each state — that Haugen hoped to reach in 50 days.

On Friday, I received word that Haugen had succeeded ... and set a record in the process.

Haugen completed his 50-state journey Friday morning when he reached the 13,796-foot summit of Mauna Kea in Hawaii.

Better news: He and his climbing partner, Zach Price, did so in just 45 days. The previous record was 50 days, seven hours, five minutes.

Haugen's trip, which was supported by the Coleman Company, was designed to generate interest in the outdoors among students.

In order to reach as many peaks as quickly as possible Haugen drove to the peaks that were serviced by auto roads.

According to a press release announcing Haugen's feat, the climbing partners began on Mount McKinley in Alaska on June 9, and logged a total of 23,684 miles in their quest. Nearly 15,000 of those miles were driven in a hybrid SUV that was provided by Toyota.

If you're interested in learning more about Haugen's trel you'll be happy to learn that the second phase of the project, a education-based Web site, will be up and running Aug. 21.

You can find that site : www.coleman.com/50states.

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