May 4-10, 2018 Spring Michigan Trip lead by Gary Konecny and Regina Watts for PSC.

Friday May 4 – Travelled to Sturgeon Valley Campground and set up tent. A 2” rain Thursday caused the Sturgeon River to be out of its banks (USGS 04127997 STURGEON RIVER AT WOLVERINE, MI 840 CFS and 5.0 FT) and too high to paddle with insufficient clearance under the bridges. Regina and I travelled Webb Road to see the Pigeon River as an option but the dirt roads were washing away under my tires and I was lucky to get to Red Bridge without getting stuck using my 4 wheel drive. The Pigeon River looked all right to paddle but getting people and vehicles to the river was not possible (USGS 04128990 PIGEON RIVER NEAR VANDERBILT, MI 350 CFS and 4.4 FT). We found a difficult road out to the east and got to M-68 and came back west. I called Steve Hourtienne and Jim Philips and told them not to come up.

Saturday May 5 – Rick and Donna Allen left this morning. Dina Ferree joined Regina and I to travel to the **Bear River**. We checked the take out at Sheridan Road NW corner of bridge where the flow looked fast but certainly able to be padddled. We then drove to Bear River Road and confirmed the access and parking on NW corner of bridge. Easy slide in here. We drove to Evergreen Trail Bridge where we saw a portage path on the west side. This bridge has culverts which had little head room at this water elevation. We travelled to McDougal Road Bridge which had culverts that were impassable at this water level and we saw no good portage path. We then abandoned the paddle. We then toured the whitewater park in Petoskey which was raging with fast water and was closed. We had lunch in town and shopped in the tourist section on a beautiful day before returning to camp.

Sunday May 6 – We paddled the **Jordan River** from Graves Crossing PAS to Rogers Road PAS which is 10 miles. The water level was normal. A beautiful day.USGS 04127800 JORDAN RIVER NEAR EAST JORDAN, MI 240 CFS and 3.45 FT

Monday May 7 – We paddled the **Ocqueoc River** from Millersburg Park access on the NW corner of CR638 Bridge (Main St.) south of Millersburg to the Ocqueoc River State Forest Campground (take out at flat area below camp site #10) which is a 7 mile paddle. We found an alternate take out about 200 yards upstream at a roadside park south of the campground. The road side park is on M-68 just east of the gravel road turn off to the falls (which is signed as the turn to Ocqueoc Falls).Park has a drive thru loop on the north side of M-68. You must drag boats up a 20 foot hill on the west end but still very good take out because you can park at the top of the hill. The State Forest Campground access requires dragging your boat up a long bank into a camp site and then walking a ¼ mile north across the highway to the parking lot to get your vehicle where a MI Passport sticker is required. The river level was about 2 feet higher than normal and very fast current in the middle section with hair pin turns, a 4 foot drop at Chipmunk Falls, and only one log jam below the falls which took us 45 minutes to portage around through tightly clustered trees. It was a fast, exhilarating roller coaster ride and one of my best paddles ever. The river is narrow at 30-50 feet wide, rock bottomed with rock gardens at lower levels.

Tuesday May 8 – We paddled the **Sturgeon River** because the water level was down into the banks and we verified adequate bridge clearances. Put in at Towbridge Road PAS and take out ended up being Rondo PAS (7 mile paddle) instead of White Bridge because Dina Ferres lost her kayak and paddle on the river. The river had two portages upstream of Wolverine and lots of tight downfall below because the Sturgeon River Sweepers had not yet done their cleanup (scheduled for May 19). The river was fast and rippled with wave trains. We went to the Thirsty Sturgeon for dinner and Dina got a call that her kayak was found and she could pick it up at Mark’s house (Rondo Road east over the bridge to Meyer Road on left, house number 002). Mark is president of Sturgeon River Sweepers and was paddling the river not far behind us. He pulled the kayak out of the trees. USGS 04127997 STURGEON RIVER AT WOLVERINE, MI 310 CFS and 3.3 FT

Wednesday May 9 – Regina and I paddled the **upper Manistee River** from Cameron Bridge Road access on NW corner to M-72 PAS on SE corner; a 10.5 mile trip. There was some current and the area is lowland swamp with two sets of ridges crossing the river. The river has wooden structures in the upper section requiring one to avoid old posts. It looks like mosquitoes would be a problem in the summer with all the low ground. Rain was threatening and we hurried to the take out and beat the rain.

Thursday May 10 – Rained all night and the forecast looked cold and rainy so we ended the trip and returned home. I scouted the **Little Muskegon River** on the way home.