

Pass the Paddle: Rivers 2000
Thursday, May 4, 2000
Mississippi Museum of Natural Science
11:00 a.m.

They have asked that you speak for 15 minutes and answer questions for 5 minutes.
Stand up straight. Use low tones.

Good morning.

It is a pleasure to be with you here at the newly opened Mississippi Museum of Natural Science.

1. I commend the goals that Rivers 2000 has set
 - a. to increase public understanding and appreciation for the values of North America's flowing waters
 - Rivers and streams are vital to our lives.
 - They accommodate our recreational activities and at the same time they support a rich variety of fish, aquatic animals and plants.
 - They provide essential wildlife habitat for a variety of animals.
 - People have long felt a strong connection to streams and rivers.

- Who here cannot remember relaxing days floating down a river, or a picnic with your family, fishing for trout or tubing with friends?

(Insert personal story)

b. to enhance personal and collective stewardship of our rivers and watershed

- Our opportunities to enjoy nature in Mississippi are really endless, and it is our responsibility to maintain the natural state of those areas.
- Mississippi is unique in the natural areas that we have available for both our citizens and for visitors to our state to enjoy.
- Our rivers are a calling card for our state, and we must make sure that we are protecting them.
- Dredging of the Sunflower River.

- Flood Planes in the Mississippi River
- Historic River Destinations – Bob Innis working with Natchez to be the first designated city in MS.
- Lower Mississippi River Conservation Commission (Fordice pulled out & you have commented that we need to be involved in helping to shape policy for protecting Mississippi's interest)
- If we don't take care of our resources, we will be unable to enjoy the beauty and bounty they provide.
- Conservation is a must, and conservation must be observed and practiced by all people.
- Landowners, campers, fishermen, boaters, recreational enthusiasts and every person who has touched the water is responsible for the conservation of our waters.
- I commend you for your efforts to maintain the vitality and beauty of rivers in the state of Mississippi and across our nation.

Signing the Paddle

- I am honored to place my signature to the ceremonial paddle that began its journey to Jackson, MS on April 1st down the Potomoc River.