

James Dake

Paddling the Grass River in Antrim County



The Grass River in Antrim County is within the Grass River Natural Area and connects Lake Bellaire to Clam Lake, before flowing into Torch Lake, and eventually into the Grand Traverse Bay of Lake Michigan. This is all part of the larger Chain of Lakes system, composed of 14 interconnected lakes that flow out into the bay. James Dake, Education Director at Grass River Natural Area, has paddled the Grass River in every month, and leads kayak tours on the river from June through September. Join James as he takes you on a virtual tour of the river to show its history, ecology, and the Natural Area's conservation efforts to

keep the river healthy.

James Dake has been Education Director at Grass River Natural Area since 2014. He has studied science education at Central Michigan University and Western Michigan University. He holds a teacher certification in the state of Michigan and has a Master of Arts in Science Education. He is a Certified Interpretive Guide through the National Association for Interpretation. James has taught environmental studies & science in the classroom, as well as with nature centers and museums in Michigan and New York. He spent over two years in New York State and authored a field guide of the flora and fauna of the Finger Lakes Region using his own photography, and he is the author of Grass River's Field Guide to Northwest Michigan. He has paddled throughout the state of Michigan, including meeting his goal of paddling every month of the year in 2021. In the summer of 2012, James and his wife, Lauren, rode their bicycles from Michigan to California, with their trip beginning in northwest Michigan. He is proud and happy to call the Northwest Michigan region his home.



