

Basin Council of North Karelian Coast 2015

Step by step



Chupa. Whitesea. Russia. 2015

Dear Jens, dear friends, the field season 2015 has come to its end and we can sum up results and estimate the achieved results during the year.

KROO “Basin Council of North Karelian Coast” is an independent public organization and acts not only within the project “Basin Council”, which is sponsored by the Lighthouse Foundation, but has its own projects and initiatives financed by third-party funds and organizations. These projects not only continue the project “BC + LH” but supplement and develop it significantly. New initiatives outside the project “BC + LH” allowed KROO “Basin Council of North Karelian Coast” to be completely audited for the last three years by the Ministry of Justice of Russia.

Currently, a package of laws for public organizations and associations is in force in Russia. Within the framework of this law, organizations with foreign financing attract great attention of controlling authorities. These laws are imperfect and their purpose is the direct control of public initiatives, prevention of ideological dissension and support of the loyalty of public organizations to existing course of the Government of Russia. Unfortunately, this course is always clear and correct from the point of view of public institutions and sometimes if dangerous. The law in effect “On Public Organizations” interprets practically any activity of public organizations as the political one. If activity of public association considered by the Russian State: as having signs of a political one and having foreign financing – it is acknowledged as a “foreign agent” with applying definite suctions to it, which make the activity of a public association impossible. So, several thousands of public organizations and associations have been already closed. Preparation for such audit took 4 months and the audit itself has been performed by justice authorities for a month. As a result of the audit it is established: activity of KROO “Basin Council” is not of the political character, and the signs of activity of a “foreign agent” are not revealed. Its activity is acknowledged as publicly useful and socially oriented. It is a big victory, as practically all ecological organizations really working in Karelia have been acknowledged as such an agent and were charged with large penalties or ceased their activity.

Our organization KROO “Basin Council” in spring period took part in the work of several conferences “Meeting of ecological organizations of the North-West of Russia” in Petrozavodsk, in the forum “Days of the Baltic Sea” in Saint Petersburg. These meetings allowed us to establish new relations and business contacts with ecologists and social activists solving the similar issues. New participants and speakers for the conference held under the support of LH in Chupa.

Recruitment of a group of students from young members and volunteers of the organization for the participation in the workshop in the City of Kalevala has become a great step. Four of our participants became certified instructors in the sphere of natural tourism, established partner connections and in summer 2015 could demonstrate received skills to the guests of the region, to tourists and participants of the conference in Chupa. This additionally added attractiveness to the North-Karelian region and attracted additional qualified staff in the sphere of natural tourism in Chupa. Chupa traditionally experiences staff deficit in tourism. It should be separately mentioned that this project was financed through the Ministry of Economy of Republic of Karelia. This did not require finance expenditures from LH. Specialists of the Kostomuksha reserve were involved in participation in the conference in Chupa. This sustainable connection was affirmed not only by participation in the conference but also by visit of groups from inner Karelia (Kostomuksha) in September aimed at getting acquainted with the White Sea and activity of our organization for dissemination of successful experience.

One of the positive and small projects was holding in Chupa of winter fishing competitions that already have become traditional. Small activity collecting local traditional nature resource users allows to involve and introduce wide range of citizens with activity of the organization, to exchange (“open collar”) new ideas, wishes, initiatives and problems, and find way to solve small issues exactly during the event through direct communication. As an example, vivid and ingenuous communication of amateur fishermen with Fishery Inspectorate, Inspectorate for Small Vessels, employees of municipal council, and prosecutor’s office, etc. This removes barrier in communication of a citizen-fisherman and a civil servant, and as a consequence, this eliminates many potential conflicts conditioned by legal nihilism of an amateur fisherman and legal framework set by the government in the sphere of amateur fishery.

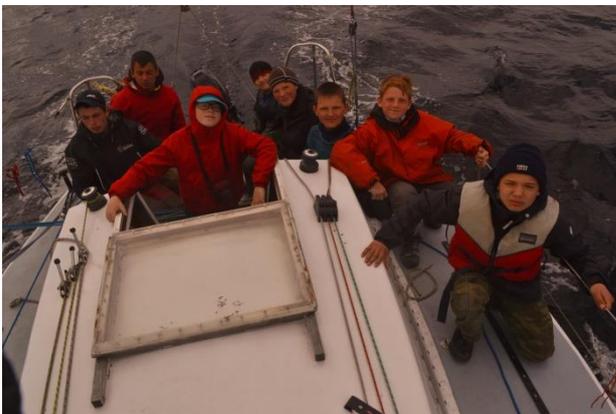
Support of children’s ecological and educational programs received a new impetus to the development. In June the complex interdisciplinary camp was organized in the Ivankovo fishery. There were schoolchildren of Chupa, cadets of the “Moskovskaya navigatskaya shkola”, hobby group of young naturalists “Zelenaya druzhina” – 42 people in total.



The camp lasted for two weeks with the minimum expenditures under support of LH, WWF and Chupa yacht club.



During the work of the camp workshops were held in natural tourism (ornithology, sports orientation), water tourism (kayaks), navigation and maritime training (centerboarder and yachts).



There were implemented several historical reconstructions: process of salt-making, process of tar-distilling (extraction of tar from trees), process of repairs of ancient karbass.



This camp was the largest and diverse during the last years, and according to the achieved agreement with the “Navigatskaya school” it will become a double-shift and self-supporting camp in 2016. This project is to be mentioned as the most successful of local long-term initiatives.



Due to successful activity in support of children’s ecological and educational programs we managed to hold in 2015 the additional children’s camp for 25 schoolchildren of the orphan cadet corps at the Hermitage of St.Aleksey, Yaroslavl.





It was financed by the Russian Charity Foundation "Support of Humanitarian Initiative". In it not only small educational programs were held, but also a complete maritime practice was held with visiting of Solovetskiye Islands.

Apart from LH financing the project of reconstruction of Pomor karbass of the 19th century was developed.



This project was declared as the necessary for implementation in the resulting part of the Chupa conference of 2014. Implementation of this initiative takes place in Chupa and Umba on the White Sea; its completion is planned for November 2015. The project is being implemented at the expense of the Museum of the World Ocean, Kaliningrad.

Undoubtedly, the largest realized project of the KROO "Basin Council" was the Conference "Natural and Cultural Heritage of the White Sea".





There were a lot of the most interesting reports and project ideas from North-West of Russia and Europe. Currently a book of reports of the conference is being prepared for the publication. The conference project was financed by LH and IFAW.



It should be noted that the estimated in Euro by the moment of its holding has lost more than 30% because of the growth of ruble's exchange rate to Euro. This problem did not stop the project but on contrary optimized some expense items. Though it has added some inconvenience and resources deficiency. The following growth of euro rate to the week ruble in September was unable to compensate losses in February-July. From the point of view of Tax Inspectorate of Russia, losses on currency exchange are non-recovered losses of organization, and growth of the exchange rate over the estimated one is the income of organization and it is subject to additional taxing.



One more project appeared on the conference of 2014 and continued during the conference of 2015 is the project of the home-study museum and geological exposition in Chupa.



The project is implemented by the Prof. Frishman “Amethyst Museum”, Umba, KROO “Basin Council” and “Chupa Yacht club”. One of the first steps to its implementation has become the maritime expedition supported by the Kandalaksha reserve to the Porya Inlet to the Medvezhiy Island.



Medvezhiy Island is a territory of special protection of the Kandalaksha reserve. Here during the period of 1731-1734 functioned the first in Russia silver mine.



Shafts, adits and slag-heaps of these mines are of great interest for tourism and are objects of cultural heritage. Expedition has collected samples of unique minerals for museums of Umba, Kandalaksha and Chupa. It is supposed to open a museum in Chupa by the Conference of 2016.



Participation of KROO "Basin Council" in the Conference "Petroglyphs of Kanozero" in Umba was a distinctive continuation of Chupa conference.





It resulted in visits of accessible monuments of rock paintings, participation in research expedition on the Umba River, development of the common tourist route.



Participation in signing agreement on establishment and development of the tourist cluster Umba-Kandalaksha and the Government of Murmansk Oblast.

Three years ago LH supported the project of the Chupa yacht-club for conducting regatta “Cup of Kandalaksha Bay”. At present the regatta project has extended and covered all large populated areas of the Kandalaksha Bay of the White Sea. In regatta 2015 14 yachts from 5 regions and federal districts of Russia took part. The number of yachtsmen reached 70 people; the number of sideliners of events held during regatta in Kandalaksha amounted to more than 3500 people.



Due to these results regatta in 2015 received partial municipal financing, and the guarantees of the state financing in 2016 was received.



Yachtsmen are the most active participants of the projects of the Basin council, and because of activity of the Chupa Maritime yachts-club and Basin Council in the city of Kandalaksha the public organization “Kandalaksha yachts-club” was established, which united many interesting and attracted to the White Sea people.

Together with the salt-makers of Pongoma village, presented their activity on the conference in Chupa, the visit of Pongoma village by participants of Solovetskaya regatta was organized.



One more recreational possibility of revival of the ancient Pomor village was shown to the administration of Kem region, which can be not only the salt-making industry but as a potentially yacht and motorboat moorage.



Water area neighboring to Pongoma village is closed from winds, has good depth, beautiful shores and has the possibility of installing the floating moorings. Closeness of Solovetskiye Islands and tourist infrastructure with transport nodal center in Kem allow to develop in Pongoma several recreational trends that are economically prospective.



One of the projects previously designed and implemented through KROO "Basin Council" the festival "White noise" has become independent and is implemented by non-profit partnership "Karelia – fest". The lack of direct links "Karelia – fest" with activities Kroo "Basin Council" does not allow to fully assess the effectiveness of the festival. I can only say positive trends associated with intensification during the festival, local food businesses, develop tourism and excursion destinations, tourism services and transport, to draw attention to the region.

In General, the activities of Kroo "Basin Council" for the 2015 season can be characterized as positive. Activity implemented by outside funding LH are positive, develop and complete the project as a whole. The experience of the "Basin Council" has spread to other regions of the white sea coast.

Best regards, Yuriy Rybakov, «Basin Council» - chairman

P.S.

Project ideas which have asked for support from members Kroo "Basin Council" , the conference participants and partners in 2016 :

1. Co-financing of the salt works in the village of Pongola. Proposed: NP "Revival of old crafts Kem Parish" – 5000 Euro
2. Co-financing of the project viewing platform in Kandalaksha. Proposed: Kandalaksha yacht club.- 600 Euro
3. Field expedition – the conference "the Labyrinth of the Kandalaksha Bay". Proposed: Shakhnovich , the Karelian national Museum – 3000 Euro
4. Activities in support of children's ecological and educational programs. Proposed: Diordiyev, Chupa marine yacht club - 1000 Euro
5. The 100th anniversary of the unitary enterprises. Album of historical materials. Proposed: the Administration Chupa urban settlement. 500 Euros.
6. Trail in Summer. Work on surveying the forest area. Offered: Information center – 1200 Euros.
7. **Excavations of the Neolithic settlement.** Proposed: Lobanova. Karelian research centre. 10000 Euros. This is not a complete list, the package of ideas still forming.

About this idea details:

“Multidisciplinary study of the Early Metal Age settlements on the White Sea Karelian Shore”

Prior to the beginning of the 21st century the White Sea Karelian Shore was a "white spot" on the archaeological map of Karelia, which was primarily due to its remoteness and poor transport accessibility. Over the past 12 years, the situation has slightly improved. In 2003-2007 and 2014, in the frames of 2 international projects ("Historical and cultural heritage of the Karelian coast of the White Sea," "Multidisciplinary humanitarian study in the basin of the White Sea"), supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers, and by the Russian Geographical Society (project "Gold Shore of Pomors") the area of Karelian Shore was firstly surveyed by archaeologists. The main result of this work was the discovery of five unique to the northwest of the Russian settlements of the Early Metal (Sonostrov I, III-IV, Ship Bay I-II) with a large number of relatively well-preserved house and other type (total 112) . The constructions are situated in similar topographic and geographic conditions, close to the sea, on the Quaternary sandy deposits overlying the bedrock, elongated in the direction of north - south. An interesting feature of some of them is the location of one another in the form of a chain (number of three to 11 in a row). Perhaps these buildings were connected by some passages and thus represent a kind of multi-room houses. Their character and time of functioning may be possible to clarify only with the complex and big excavations (with the

participation of representatives of natural researchers) on a sufficient area, including area directly adjacent to the housepits.

Three pits (but not a part of the connected multi-room complex) were excavated in 2004-2005 and 2014. The works helped to get some preliminary information. The houses were small in size (13-22 sq. m), of rectangular shape, slightly deepened into the ground, with one or two exits, and with unusual stone hearths. According to some data, they were mostly of the winter and short duration character. Collected finds (stone artifacts and pottery fragments with a mixture of asbestos) are very small in number. On the base of typological analyses the houses are dated back to the Subboreal era - the end of III - beginning of II millennium BC. Mainly local raw material (high quality quartz) was used for the stone tools, occasionally people used imported slate, flint artifacts are missing. The dwellings population may be engaged in the hunting of marine animals, what is evidenced by some observations.

The above-cited settlements, newly discovered and little-studied by excavations, on the west (Karelian) shore of the White Sea in the circumpolar area at a distance of 0.6 to 15 km from each other, are of exceptional scientific interest and require further in-depth studies. The presence of chains of connected house pits is a unique phenomenon, not only for the North-West of Russia, but for the whole territory of Northern Fennoscandia as well, where studied such house complexes (Ostrobothnia), but they are not of such magnitude (the number of "rooms" no more than 4-5). Besides, they are located well south of the White Sea objects.

The actuality of the field work is determined by a serious gap in our knowledge of the settlements in the coastal area of the White Sea, reflecting the specific way of life of the seaside population living here about 5000 years ago. Identified settlement with multi-room dwellings are the only of its kind in NW Russia, it is no longer unique. There are some parallels with the monuments, studied by Finnish archaeologists in Kierikki (Ostrobothnia). Works in the Western White Sea allow to carry out a comparative analysis of the neighboring archaeological cultures, especially multi-house sites on both of the areas, as well as attracting Finnish colleagues to participate in joint projects on the topic.

The main aims of the project are: research culture of marine hunters of northern part of the Karelian coast of the White Sea, specification of the age and nature of dwellings, located in a row and form, apparently a single residential structure elucidation of the details of their structure, the study of the natural context, a comparative analysis of inventory, physical and chemical analyzes of sediments, fossil remains and other organic materials, preparation and publication of a scientific essay on the stated theme. Common study of archaeologists, geologists, paleogeographers and paleozoologists from Karelian Research Centre will give an opportunity to clarify the age and character of the sites. An important additional task is also to complete a survey of the Karelian coast, first of all, the area adjacent to the estuary of the river Keret, where the topo-geographical conditions might be similar to those that exist in the described area.