

**CAMP ECHO TRIPPER CONFERENCE  
LA CROSSE, WI, MARCH 28-29, 2009**

**Pre-Work Brainstorming and Reflecting**

Welcome to the beginning of the first-ever Echo Tripper Conference! We are looking forward to hearing from as many people as possible. Below are instructions for how you can participate, whether or not you can make it to La Crosse. Please read on to see how.

First, a little poem to bend your brain the Echo trip way and  
get things started

**Pine Tree-tops**

in the blue night  
frost haze, the sky glows  
with the moon  
pine tree tops  
bend snow-blue, fade  
into sky, frost, starlight.  
the creak of boots.  
rabbit tracks, deer tracks,  
what do we know.

*(Gary Snyder)*

What do we know? This is a good place to start. And it's our feeling that the best sort of knowledge, the knowledge that will link the past, present and future of the Echo tripping program will be found in our individual stories. That's where you come in. We need your stories from the Echo trips. We will use these stories as guideposts, inspiration, and who knows what else, to piece together some core Guiding Principles for the Echo tripping program.

Your stories can be about almost anything (your most difficult trip day, a funny or scary moment, a small or large achievement, etc.). The best stories are the ones you find yourself going back to over and over again. Don't worry too much about selecting the "right" story. Any story that is meaningful to you will add value to the conversation. We would like to be able to share these stories throughout the weekend so it might be helpful to write them down.

**ECHO TRIP STORIES:**

**Please come up with 2 stories that you are willing to share.**

Give yourself a little time to conjure up the old Echo spirit and let the pen or pencil fly. It may be helpful to consider a traditional structure to help shape your story:

- *The Beginning*: Where were you? Who was there? What were you feeling? Thinking? What was the weather like?
- *The Middle*: What happened? What were you doing? What were other people doing?
- *The End*: What was the outcome? Did you feel different after? How so?

Or, another way to get at the heart of the story is to use simple writing prompts like these:

- The world seemed different after...
- It was then that I knew...
- The night smelled like...
- I'd never seen the sky like that...
- Under the stars...
- In the summer sun...
- On the side of the road...
- In my pack/boat/pannier, etc...

### **For those who are unable to attend the Conference:**

We'd love your input even if you can't come to La Crosse. How can you contribute? Send your stories by Wednesday, March 25th, to Ish at [ish@greencirclepartners.com](mailto:ish@greencirclepartners.com).

### **For those making the trip to La Crosse...**

If you are coming to La Crosse for the conference please bring a few copies of each of your stories with you. Don't worry about the format. Whatever you bring will be great.

**Also**, please bring a tripping "artifact" with you to the conference. What do we mean by artifact? We mean any tangible object that signifies something important to you and in some way relates back to an Echo trip (the artifact doesn't have to come from a trip). We will be sharing these artifacts at the conference.

**Thank you very much. We appreciate your contributions!**