

Abe "FreightTrain" Quinby Q & A: Bio: Abe better known by his trail name "FreightTrain", paddled the Missouri River from Three Forks, Montana to New Orleans during the Lewis & Clark Bicentennial in 2004. In 200001 he backpacked the Appalachian Trail. Prior to paddling the Missouri, he paddled the Mississippi from Lake Itasca to Helena Arkansas. In 2003 he moved to Alaska to live and work for a stint. You can read Abe's journals at: <http://www.trailjournals.com/entry.cfm?id=58494>

Here is what FreightTrain had to say:

#1: What was the most difficult part about your paddle trip and how did you overcome (if you did) the situation? *"The most difficult part for me was, the portages... I portaged twice by hand then figured out that I needed to pull out at the last boat ramp or Marina on any given pond. I would ask a fisherman w a pickup for a portage around the dam... never had a problem.. and i was prepared to camp out if need be... never had to."*

#2 What do you feel was the most important thing that you planned for on your trip that you actually benefited from? *"time"... let me explain.... on the Mississippi in 2002 I started in Sept...way too late and winter was catching me the whole way.. where I left in Helena Arkansas because I was no longer "enjoying it".... I always heard on the AT if you are no longer enjoying it, go home and come back another time.... so I did. on the Missouri I started May 16th so I would have more than enough time to make my journey without rushing.. a major issue for me."*

#3 Was there anything that you planned for then you felt was unnecessary or overdone? Explain. *"No not really...."*

#4 What was the 5-most important pieces of gear you carried on the trip? Explain. *"NOTE: (this was before cell phones w cameras) #1. a LED headlamp that used common easy to find AA or AAA batteries 2. Kelty Tahoe 2.. a quality double walled 1 man tent that kept me n Midnight protected from insects and weather. 3. sunglasses 4.Sun screen, white nose paint, and a wide brimmed straw hat to dunk in the water and wear. 5. 5 gallon soft collapsable water jug.. it fit into the bow and molded itself to the shape of the hull and allowed peace of mind about water.."*

#5 Prior to your trip, what was your weakest asset or least skilled or qualified trait for the trip and how do you overcome this? *“Physical conditioning..i was MORBIDLY obese and weak, just took it one day at a time and built up my endurance on the river DAY BY DAY.”*

#6 What was the least important item(s) that you brought and discovered there was never a need for? *“FLARE GUN.. although i did have it pointed at a few boats that looked like they were headed to run me down! LOL”*

#7: What was the biggest surprise of the journey? Something you did not anticipate. *“I KNEW OF HOW AMAZING AND BEAUTIFUL total strangers are or can be from previous journeys.. but I would say how Lakota George(medicine man, spiritual leader, flute maker, Native American Musician of year, Buffalo breeder) welcomed us paddlers to stay on his peoples land n camp,,, blessed our journeys, us, and our canoes and was just an amazing human being!”*

#8 What kind of boat did you paddle and what were its good qualities and also the things you did not like about it? *“I paddled a Weh-no-nah solo Prism in KEVLAR. 16.5 feet and weighed 35#... it has GREAT lines!! will glide for EVER!! great tumblehome... only down side was portaging... was warned of stress fracturing the hull portaging with gear inside.. but never had a problem... it has held up GREAT with over 5000 miles on it!!!”*

#9: How did you plan your meals/food? Did this system work good for you and what would you change regarding this? *“I packed food that I would take backpacking.. such as stove top stuffing w a can of chicken, deluxe mac n cheese, pop tarts, crackers, lipton noodles n sauce, rice n sauce, bottle of EVOO to add to everything, instant rice to add to everything, iced tea or lemon aide drink mix’s... plus i had to pack dog food and cookies. i carried a separate bag for the dog food that i swapped out for a hard plastic jug with a screw on lid ... EVENTUALLY I WENT TO a NO-COOK DIET... meals were a no cook chicken casserole made from ramen..soaked for 15 min, drained.. added 2 mayo packets, a mustard packet.. and can chicken... and mixxed up... breakfasts were made in advance... in a freezer*

ziploc... added a carnation instant vanilla, cup of powdered milk, and a serving of cereal... so that it gave me a double breakfast of vitamins n minerals."

#10 What was your system for obtaining drinking water and what were the benefits as well as the disadvantages you had dealing with water? *"I carried a collapsible (soft) 5 gal plastic jug, two half gal jugs, and a few 1 liter Mtn Dew bottles... filled them all whenever I could.. only place I started running low was on Peck Lake. I carried extra for the dog in case the river water looked or smelled questionable to me."*

#11: If you were going to give advice for someone planning the same journey what do you feel would be best advice and things to consider that you now know about this journey? *"Go with quality "ultra lite" gear same as used for backpacking.. carry more water and food than you could possibly need. go with a boat that isn't too heavy."*

