

Columbia kayaker on long journey stops at Cooper's Landing

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<http://www.columbiamissourian.com/m/47674/janet-moreland-stops-at-coopers-landing/>



Kayaker Janet Moreland glides into her stop to meet dozens of her friends and supporters Monday at Cooper's Landing on the Missouri River south of Columbia. Moreland has been kayaking down the Missouri River for the past six months in her quest to become the first woman to kayak from the source of the Missouri River in Montana to the Gulf of Mexico. | [Jack Suntrup](#)

BY [Jack Suntrup](#)

COLUMBIA — The relaxed flow of the Missouri River matched the mood at Cooper's Landing on Monday afternoon after a day of cool rain at the campground.

But a sense of anticipation developed in the afternoon, when a few dozen friends, family and well-wishers trickled in to greet [Janet Moreland](#), the Columbia resident who is kayaking the entire Missouri River, hanging a right in St. Louis, then going down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico.

As word spread that Moreland was getting nearer, her friends Roger and Barbara Giles played "[Old Man River](#)" from speakers on their dock and a celebratory fish fry was begun. Onlookers took out their video cameras and binoculars.

"We had a false sighting earlier today," said Deb Miller, one of Moreland's friends. "It was just a stump."

Scott Mestrezat, who met Moreland during [his own quest](#) to paddle the river, scanned the river while sitting on the Cooper Landing's porch. He tried to find her location using her GPS tracker but was unsuccessful.

"She's just loving it," he said. "She's not wrapped up in how many miles she gets every day. She's just enjoying it."

When Moreland glided in, onlookers gathered at the access ramp to greet her and a flotilla of friends who joined her on the stretch of the trip before Columbia. When the group approached the landing, Roger Giles shot a faux cannon ball from a cannon on the side of his paddleboat and blew a foghorn.

Dave Bandy, whom Moreland calls her partner, strummed "[Blue Moon](#)" — which is also the name of her kayak — on his guitar when Moreland arrived. The crowd applauded her.

Moreland plans to spend a week at her Columbia home before resuming her voyage. She began the trip five months ago at the source of the Missouri River in Montana.

Mike Cooper, the owner of Cooper's Landing, said he wasn't sure Moreland was serious when he heard about the trip. But he quickly changed his mind.

"She's a strong-willed woman," Cooper said. "I knew pretty fast she was serious about it."

Moreland said she knew it was "the perfect trip" for her, and that she's a little overwhelmed with the support she's received.

"I'm just out there having a really great time paddling the river, and people are just telling me how proud they are of me," Moreland said. "Sometimes I don't think I deserve such praise."

Moreland said that one of the purposes of the trip is to inspire others to pursue their goals. Although she still has hundreds of miles to kayak, she is already thinking about another goal: to write a book about the journey.

The book, Moreland said, will include stories about other paddlers — she calls them her "river brothers" — she's met along the way. Her "river angels," the people who have helped and who will help her along the way, will also play a part.

"Having people help you is critical, if nothing else, for the emotional support," she said

Supervising editor is [Richard Webner](#).

For more on Moreland's travels

Janet Moreland shared photos from her trip in the *Missourian's* From Readers section. You can see those [here](#).

She has also blogged about her travels at loveyourbigmuddy.com.

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Sources: NATIONAL ATLAS, LOVEYOURBIGMUDDY EXPEDITION FACEBOOK PAGE

Columbia resident Janet Moreland embarked on a trip down the 2,300-mile Missouri River in May. Now, four months later, she will make a brief stop in Columbia before continuing her trip to St. Louis and eventually down the Mississippi River to the Gulf of Mexico.

- http://media.columbiamissourian.com/multimedia/2013/09/16/media/091613_Moreland_JS_002_t_w600_h3000.jpg



Barbara Giles, Deb Miller, Tricia Straub and dog Max peer out from Giles' dock on the Missouri River to try and catch a glimpse as friend and kayaker Janet Moreland arrives at Cooper's Landing on the Missouri River south of Columbia.
