



## TRAIL OF TEARS WATER ROUTE EXPEDITION 2012: REVISIT AND REVELATION OF THE UNTOLD HISTORY

### INTRODUCTION

In June 2012 I will depart Ross's Landing by kayak, located on the Tennessee River at the site of present-day Chattanooga, Tenn. It was named for John Ross, the Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation from 1828 - 1866.

I will paddle the entire water route taken by at least four detachments of Cherokees, 1,226 miles along the Tennessee, Ohio, Mississippi, and Arkansas rivers. Understanding the history of the Trail of Tears provides insight into the early growth of the U.S. and can provide perspective about other events and even issues society faces today. It is American history.

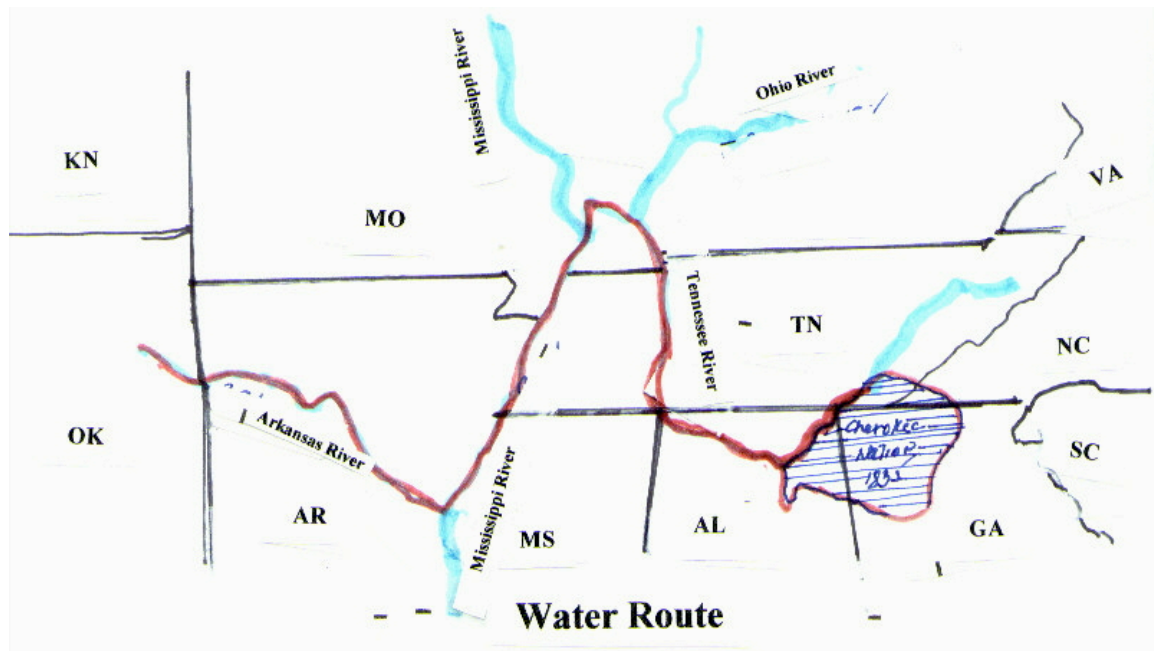
The purpose of the challenge is to inspire, educate and engage the citizens about this little known route of the Trail of Tears. I will also raise money to assist with the construction of the new Cherokee Children's Home in Cherokee, North Carolina.

### BRIEF HISTORY

"Trail of Tears" describes the journey of Native Americans forced to leave their ancestral homes in the Southeast and move to the new Indian Territory defined as "west of Arkansas," in present-day Oklahoma. Through coerced or fraudulent treaties, Indians had been given the choice of submitting to state jurisdiction as individuals or moving west to preserve their sovereign tribal governments. The metaphoric trail is not one distinct road, but a web of

routes and rivers traveled in the 1830s by organized tribal groups from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

Four detachments from the Cherokee Nation came west by the Water Route. They were taken from the gathering camps and placed on boats in the Chattanooga area. They continued down the Tennessee River until they came to Muscle Shoals. Here they were placed on the railroad and carried around the shoals where they boarded boats for the trip down river. They continued down the Tennessee River to the Ohio, then down to the Mississippi to the Mouth of the Arkansas River. It was tricky here, because of shallow water. So they usually entered the White River Chute at Montgomery Point, worked their way around Big Island and re-entered the Arkansas River for their journey upstream to Ft. Gibson.



## THE CHALLENGE

As you can imagine, this sort of challenge will require an enormous amount of work before I even get to the start line. Fundraising, sponsorship, boat selection, raising finances, food, equipment, transport, timings, and raising the profile of the challenge will need to be organized. All this even before I have put in the training hours paddling and building up my stamina!

## WAYS TO HELP

There are many ways that you can help get this challenge to the start line:

1. Contribute a financial donation to the Challenge to help with the purchase of equipment.
2. Contribute equipment, food and water.
3. Offer your expertise or time.
4. Help with logistical support.

***All financial assistance will go directly to the project to help purchase equipment and pay for logistical organization.***

## ABOUT ME



Dale is an explorer, adventurer, conservationist, and educator. His exploration philosophy is to immerse himself in extreme and often hostile environments, going alone and learning from indigenous people and what the wild has to offer.

He likes extremes and feels at home where he finds himself; jungle, desert, mountain or Arctic conditions." Dale's expeditions have taken him from the highest peak in the Sahara, Emi Koussi, in the Tibesti Mountains of northern Chad, from kayaking the fjords near Svalbard, Greenland, and from the rain forest of Central and South America and from living and learning from remote indigenous people on four continents.

"Exploration, to me, is not about carrying a flag, or going where no man has gone before, but rather opening my mind to what is there and letting that experience mark me for life." - Dale Stewart

Dale is a practitioner of the art and science of survival and changing the deception of powerlessness people often feel when crisis strikes. He uses his knowledge and experience to help others around the globe achieve their own personal targets and succeed in their own harsh environments.

This broad experience and knowledge led to the development of his much sought-out speaking and training programs. He knows what it takes for individuals, families, organizations, and corporations to survive during turbulent times. He lays out action plan intent on accepting the responsibility to understand, limit and manage risk to the greatest extent possible.

Dale's presentations are full of energy, high content and high impact. Clients and audiences appreciate his unique philosophy and common sense approach on difficult topics. Dale has been interviewed on National TV and Radio Programs and has been featured in newspaper and magazine articles. He is a published author, speaker, and educator who still seeks that next great challenge.

"Your best survival tool is your mind."

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