

Historical Marker - S617C - The Grand River / Grand River History (Marker ID#:S617C)



Front - Title/Description

The Grand River

The Grand River and its valley were formed by the melting of the continental glacier that retreated from this area some twelve thousand years ago. Known by Chippewa Indians as "Washtanong" (further country) and by the French as "le Riviere Grand," the Grand is Michigan's longest river. From its headwaters in northern Hillsdale and southern Jackson Counties, it flows 270 river miles and drops 460 feet in elevation before entering Lake Michigan at Grand Haven. Together with its tributaries, it drains a 5,570-square-mile watershed, including all or part of eighteen counties. Lansing is located in the upper portion of the river basin where the Grand changes direction from northward to westward. The Red Cedar River, one of seven major tributaries, enters one mile upstream from here.

Significant Date:

Native People and the French (< 1760)

Registry Year: 1990 **Erected Date:** 1990

Marker Location

Address: East bank of Grand River North of Shiawassee

City: Lansing

State: MI **ZipCode:**

County: Ingham

Township: Lansing

Lat: 42.73922000 / **Long:** -84.54835200

Web URL:

Back - Title/Description

Grand River History

The Grand River has been an important resource and travel route throughout Michigan's past. To the Indians, the Grand River provided a route for travel and trade and a valley for hunting and agriculture. Seventeenth-century French explorers were the first Europeans to see the river. In the eighteenth century French, British, and American fur traders canoed the Grand and its tributaries. The journal of Detroit fur trader Hugh Heward, who passed by this site in 1790, is thought to be the first written record of travel near present-day Lansing. In the mid-nineteenth century the Grand became an important means of transportation for logs and lumber. In the twentieth century the waters of the Grand have been used for industrial and agricultural production, as well as recreation.