

# RIVERTIME

EXPERIENCE IT. PROTECT IT. FOREVER.

WINTER 2018



# HOPE FOR THE NEXT 50 YEARS AND BEYOND

What a year. In this, the golden anniversary of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, we made significant progress in raising awareness about this national park through many celebrations and activities, with the further goal of enhancing people's continuing connections to the Riverway. It will take people with connections to the Riverway to ensure that the park remains an ecological, cultural and community treasure today and for generations to come. The incredible story about the establishment of this national park has potentially reached over 33 million people so far.

We were not alone in the celebrations. Other non-profits, chambers of commerce, arts organizations, communities, and many other groups held their own tributes. Spenser Black, a retired Wisconsin Legislator, spent several days paddling his canoe on the Namekagon River. In an editorial published this summer he said, "The Namekagon is protected as part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. The Riverway preserves an area that still retains much of the wild feel and biological diversity of our northwoods before development – where the sounds are of water rushing, birds singing, and big pines rustling in the wind. It is home to a wide variety of animals, fish and birds. During our paddle, we often sighted bald eagles, mergansers, egrets, herons, osprey, and numerous other species".

There is no doubt that there are challenges facing this beautiful yet fragile Riverway. We all need to remain vigilant, committed to conserving this place we enjoy. But there are definite signs that 50 years of federal protections have paid off. This spring the National Park Service announced that they discovered a pair of nesting peregrine falcons within the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway boundaries. There hasn't been a naturally nesting pair in the Riverway since the 1950s. Efforts to protect and enhance our intact, healthy river system mean your grandchildren may get to see these once-imperiled birds diving at nearly 200 mph to catch their prey in the air. I cannot think of a better 50th anniversary present.

The St. Croix River Association did so much more than host events in 2018. We have a long-term commitment to protecting the vibrant ecological, cultural and recreational value of the Riverway. This newsletter speaks to a few of the initiatives we are engaged in to meet our mission—to protect, restore and celebrate the St. Croix River watershed.

*"The incredible story about the establishment of this national park has potentially reached over 33 million people so far."*



Deb Ryun, Executive Director



## VISION:

A thriving watershed forever accessible, scenic, and wild.

## MISSION:

To protect, restore, and celebrate the St. Croix River and its watershed.



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# VOLUNTEERS FOR THE RIVER

JAIME SOUZA, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

The St. Croix River Association (SCRA) reaches more people because of volunteers. We are so grateful to all the volunteers who give their time and talents in so many different ways. In 2018 we have grown the volunteer base to enhance the public's use of our special outdoor resources and to build the community dedicated to conserving the St. Croix watershed now and for the future.

The Rivers Are Alive K-12 environmental education program, a partnership between the National Park Service and SCRA, is meeting the increased demand for programs thanks to dedicated volunteer educators. Our current volunteer educators include: Mary Dylkowski, Bob and Kathy Focht, Julie Kilpatrick, Suzanne McGann, Tony Minnischoffer, Patricia Mueller, Dianne Polasik, and Sue Schultz. Their enthusiasm and dedication to teaching the next generation about the St. Croix River and its watershed is inspiring.

New in 2018 was our volunteer trip leader initiative. Experienced cyclists, hikers, paddlers, snowshoers, and cross-country skiers guide trips throughout the watershed. After the inaugural team of volunteer trip leaders participated in classroom and kayak training sessions, they helped to guide a number of successful outings. Thank you Ron Anderson, Diane Beyl, CJ Carlson, Geoffrey Gates, Heidi Fust, William Keilty, Julie Kilpatrick, Suzanne McGann, Beth Meyers, Patricia Mueller, Timothy Tougas, and Janet Wallace for your leadership and meaningful contributions to this new volunteer program.

This is a small example of how everyone can help SCRA fulfill the mission. If you are interested in volunteering for SCRA as a volunteer educator, trip leader, or to find out more about other volunteer opportunities please contact Jaime Souza at [jaimes@scramail.com](mailto:jaimes@scramail.com).



Volunteer trip leaders from L-R: Suzanne McGann, Heidi Fust, Beth Myers, and Kelly Peterson; C: Intern - Wyatt Benton

“The [St. Croix] river speaks to me, and has been a special place for me and my family for nearly twenty years. Volunteering gives me an excuse to visit this place more often, and sharing it with others – whether volunteer guiding or assisting with an education program – gives me great satisfaction.”

SUZANNE MCGANN, SCRA RIVERS ARE ALIVE  
VOLUNTEER EDUCATOR AND VOLUNTEER  
TRIP LEADER

# ZEBRA MUSSELS TRACKING

SEAN GRIFFIN, INVASIVE SPECIES PROGRAM ASSISTANT

Throughout November, the St. Croix River Association (SCRA) will work alongside National Park Service (NPS) staff to conduct boat inspections in the lower Riverway. These are not the typical boat inspections that many Minnesota and Wisconsin residents are accustomed to. These inspections take place at marinas and yacht clubs from just north of Stillwater to Prescott.

What is the reason for these inspections? Zebra mussels. An invasive species, the zebra mussel found its way into the St. Croix in 1995, was reproducing by 2000, and has been causing damage ever since. They attach to boats, clog pipes, destroy native mussels and create an imbalance in the food chain. Their razor sharp shells affect people that recreate in locations that are plagued by these invaders. Zebra mussels can out-compete the native species for food and space, and they affix to the native mussels in huge numbers, smothering them.

Monitoring zebra mussels helps us to track changes overtime and better understand the population dynamics in the St. Croix River. These boat inspections are one way that I work with the NPS and the Marinas along the St. Croix to monitor for zebra mussels.

"The NPS would be unable to consistently monitor zebra mussel numbers on the Lower St. Croix, without the help of the St. Croix River Association" Byron Karns, Acting Chief of Resource Management explained. Karns has been working on this issue since the mid-nineties. "We work with many partners in our efforts to stop or slow the spread (or introduction into new areas) of zebra mussels into the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers. SCRA provides us the boots on the ground to get the work done. We simply could not do this vital assessment without them."

There are about 40 different types of native mussels in the St. Croix, including several that are threatened or endangered. Zebra mussels are currently found from Stillwater downstream and imperil the natives living in this stretch of river. There have been many projects to move native mussels upriver to escape the threat, and of course, there is the boat travel restriction upstream of Stillwater to ensure zebra mussels aren't carried into new areas. Hopefully, these efforts will allow the native mussels have a chance to thrive and keep the St. Croix River one of the most diverse mussel watersheds in North America.



**"The St. Croix River Association provides us the boots on the ground to get the work done. We [NPS] simply could not do this vital assessment without them."**

Byron Karns, Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway,  
Acting Chief of Resource Management

# KARNER BLUE GAINS MORE GROUND

MONICA ZACHAY, LAND AND WATER PROGRAM DIRECTOR

The endangered Karner blue butterfly will have more room to roam because of a partnership between the St. Croix River Association and the St. Croix Wetland Management District, of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We have just completed the first year of this multi-year project to increase the habitat needed for Karner blue survival.

Listed as endangered in 1992, the Karner blue butterfly needs pine and oak savanna or barrens with wild lupine and nectar plants to reproduce. Loss of habitat due to development, disease, fragmentation, and a changing climate has led to its decline. The Karner blue butterfly's rarity and beauty make it a desirable addition to butterfly collections. Because butterfly numbers are so low, the collection of even a few individuals could harm the butterfly population.

A healthy population of the Karner blue is found in the Crex Meadows and Fish Lake Wildlife areas. This project will provide over 120 additional acres of habitat. Additionally, the crew will move lupine plants containing Karner blue butterfly eggs to new locations in the hopes of expanding their range.



## SAVE THE DATE - 2019 NAMEKAGON PADDLE

Registration for the June 8-14 annual river paddle will open soon. The six day river-camping adventure will cover 92 miles of the Namekagon River, part of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway in NW Wisconsin.

People of all ages, from 14-84, have participated in this week of discovery. One paddler said it well, "It's a week to live in the moment. Enjoy all that the Riverway has to offer and enjoy each day on the river. I enjoy getting to know the other paddlers and myself."

The registration fee will be \$400 for SCRA members and \$450 for non-members. The registration covers shuttles, transportation of gear along the route, six nights of camping, evening educational programs, 5 meals and more. Watch for more information soon at [scrapaddle.org](http://scrapaddle.org).



# HIGHLIGHTS OF 2018

## CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE RIVERWAY

2018 marked the 50th Anniversary of the founding of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, comprised of over 200 miles of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers.

The St. Croix River Association, National Park Service, and other partners planned events to commemorate fifty years of this national treasure. Enjoy these highlights from the 2018 golden anniversary celebrations.





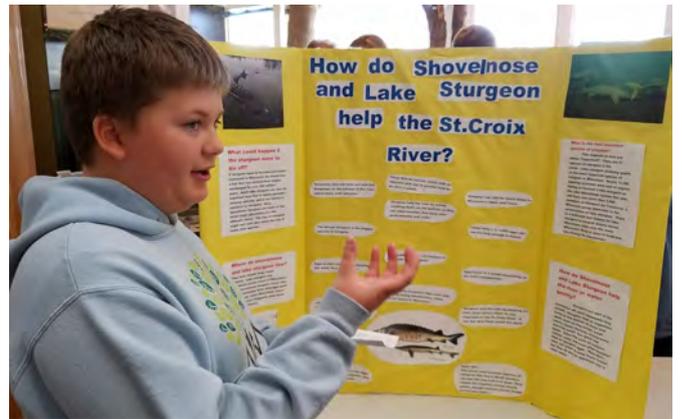


Wisconsin State Senator Patty Schachtner (right) presented Julie Galonska (left) Superintendent of the Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway with a proclamation from the Wisconsin Senate recognizing the occasion.

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT CELEBRATION KICK-OFF

The 50th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act got started with a press conference spotlighting the historic effort. It also launched a full schedule of activities to mark 50 years of celebration.

The event featured Representative Betty McCollum who talked about preserving the wild and scenic Riverway for generations to come.



Amery Inquiry Minds students showcased their science projects about the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway as part of the celebration kick-off event.

## EXHIBIT OPENING RECEPTION - "ST. CROIX & NAMEKAGON RIVERS - THE ENDURING GIFT"

Craig Blacklock's photography book was one of the signature initiatives to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act.

As a U.S. senator, Walter Mondale helped secure passage of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, which was signed by President Lyndon Johnson on Oct. 2, 1968.



Peter Gove (left) and Vice President Walter Mondale (right) admires Craig Blacklock's book at the Mill City Museum.



Mondale with Gove, Ryun, and Blacklock was presented with the Signature Edition.

The photography book includes an introductory essay by Mondale, who labels it “a glorious book.”

Also in the book are musings from people who regularly use the river. One is from Greg Seitz, editor of St. Croix 360, Marine on St. Croix, MN, who summed up his love of the St. Croix, saying, “To know the river’s little secrets is also to know its true grandeur.”

To purchase:  
[www.stcroixphotography.com](http://www.stcroixphotography.com)



**WILD & SCENIC 50TH:  
 OCTOBER 2 DECLARED  
 “SAINT CROIX RIVER  
 DAY” IN MINNESOTA**

Gov. Mark Dayton signed a proclamation recognizing the occasion and declaring October 2 “Saint Croix River Day”. The proclamation reads “Minnesotans appreciate the Saint Croix River for its beauty, scenic view sheds, clean water, abundant fishery, and close proximity to over three million citizens.”

**FEATURED ON TWIN CITIES AND  
 WISCONSIN PUBLIC TELEVISION “THE  
 WILD AND SCENIC ST. CROIX” FILM  
 PREMIERED AT THE FITZGERALD  
 THEATER**

The St. Croix River Association worked with filmmakers John Kaul and Tom Reiter to create this 27 minute film, along with Twin Cities PBS.

This beautiful documentary is a tribute to the St. Croix and Namekagon rivers. It is part of the celebration of the 1968 landmark legislation which preserved rivers with outstanding natural, cultural, and recreational values in a free-flowing condition for the enjoyment of present and future generations.



Sold-out film premiere at the Fitzgerald Theater of the "The Wild and Scenic St. Croix".

# MEET OUR PARTNERS: THE ST. CROIX – RED CEDAR CWMA

NICOLE BUTLER, FORESTRY PROGRAM COORDINATOR

Terrestrial invasive species pose major threats to the water quality and habitat across the St. Croix watershed. One way that the River Association combats these threats is through the St. Croix – Red Cedar Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA). Coordinated by the St. Croix River Association, the CWMA is a partnership of public agencies, NGOs and private landowners working together to raise multigenerational awareness of invasive species and increase collective terrestrial management across Burnett, Washburn, Polk, Barron and St. Croix counties in Wisconsin. Together St. Croix – Red Cedar CWMA partners host educational workshops, provide free technical assistance and equipment like a free tool trailer, coordinate community work days, hold regular meetings and develop regional plans and strategies. This summer and fall, CWMA partners focused in on spotted knapweed and buckthorn.

**Spotted knapweed:** Through support by the National Fish and Wildlife Federation's Pulling Together Initiative, CWMA partner Wade Oehmichen released over 16,000 *Cyphlocleonus achates* biocontrol agents at 161 locations across Wisconsin to help combat invasive spotted knapweed populations. This was the largest single season biocontrol release in Wisconsin history. This release extends the progress made with Wade's 10,000 agent release in 2017, which focused on establishing biocontrol populations in the critically important northwest barrens habitat found in the northern watershed. A two year monitoring program for these releases commenced in October.

**Buckthorn:** CWMA partners across the watershed pulled together this fall to offer four hands-on buckthorn management and herbicide trainings. Through these workshops, partners from St. Croix, Burnett, Barron, Washburn and Polk counties, UW Extension, the Cedar Lake Buckthorn Project, the WI DNR and SCRA were able to train over 80 private landowners to make an impact on the 3,750 acres they collectively own, provide herbicide for buckthorn management on over 1620 acres of woodlands, and contribute to an eight acre woodland restoration effort in Barron, WI.

To learn more or get involved with the St. Croix – Red Cedar CWMA, please visit [scrcinvasives.org](http://scrcinvasives.org).



# SUPPORT THE RIVER YOUR WAY

The St. Croix River Association has a long-term commitment to protecting the vibrant ecological, cultural, and recreational value of the St. Croix River and its watershed. The St. Croix National Scenic Riverway, which flows through the heart of this watershed, is a magnificent national treasure. It is also a fragile one. Continued protection of this place and its world class experiences requires commitment from all of us. There are lots of ways you can give; some can reduce your taxable income.

**Gift of Stock** - The St. Croix River Association accepts gifts of appreciated stock to support our mission. If you choose to give stock you can avoid capital gains tax and are entitled to a full fair market value charitable tax deduction.

**Employer Matching Gifts** - You can double – or even triple – the impact of your donation to the St. Croix River Association with a matching gift from your employer. Matching gifts are a simple way to maximize your donation to SCRA.

**IRA Charitable Rollover** - The Charitable IRA Rollover allows anyone 70½ and older to make tax-free direct transfers from individual retirement accounts to the St. Croix River Association of up to \$100,000 per year. Money you transfer via one of these distributions reduces the amount you must take in required distributions.

**Legacy Gifts** – A legacy gift is a planned future donation given through a will or other form of designation. It is a way to ensure that the St. Croix River Association is able to continue its important work to protect and conserve our treasured Wild and Scenic River and reach your own financial goals.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact us at  
715-483-3300 or debryun@scramail.com



SUPPORT THE RIVER YOU LOVE!

EVERY. GIFT. MATTERS.

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to St. Croix River Association and mail to: PO Box 655, St. Croix Falls, WI 54024

\$5,000     \$2,500     \$1,000     \$500     \$250     \$50     Other \_\_\_\_\_

You can also make a secure donation online at [stcroixriverassociation.org/donate-now/](http://stcroixriverassociation.org/donate-now/)

Donations to SCRA are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.



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“THE ULTIMATE TEST OF MAN’S  
CONSCIENCE MAY BE HIS  
WILLINGNESS TO SACRIFICE  
SOMETHING TODAY FOR FUTURE  
GENERATIONS WHOSE WORDS OF  
THANKS WILL NOT BE HEARD.”

*Gaylord Nelson (1916-2005), Former Governor of  
Wisconsin, Founder of Earth Day*