



# RIVERTIME

EXPERIENCE IT. PROTECT IT. FOREVER.

SPRING/SUMMER 2020

# NOW WHAT?

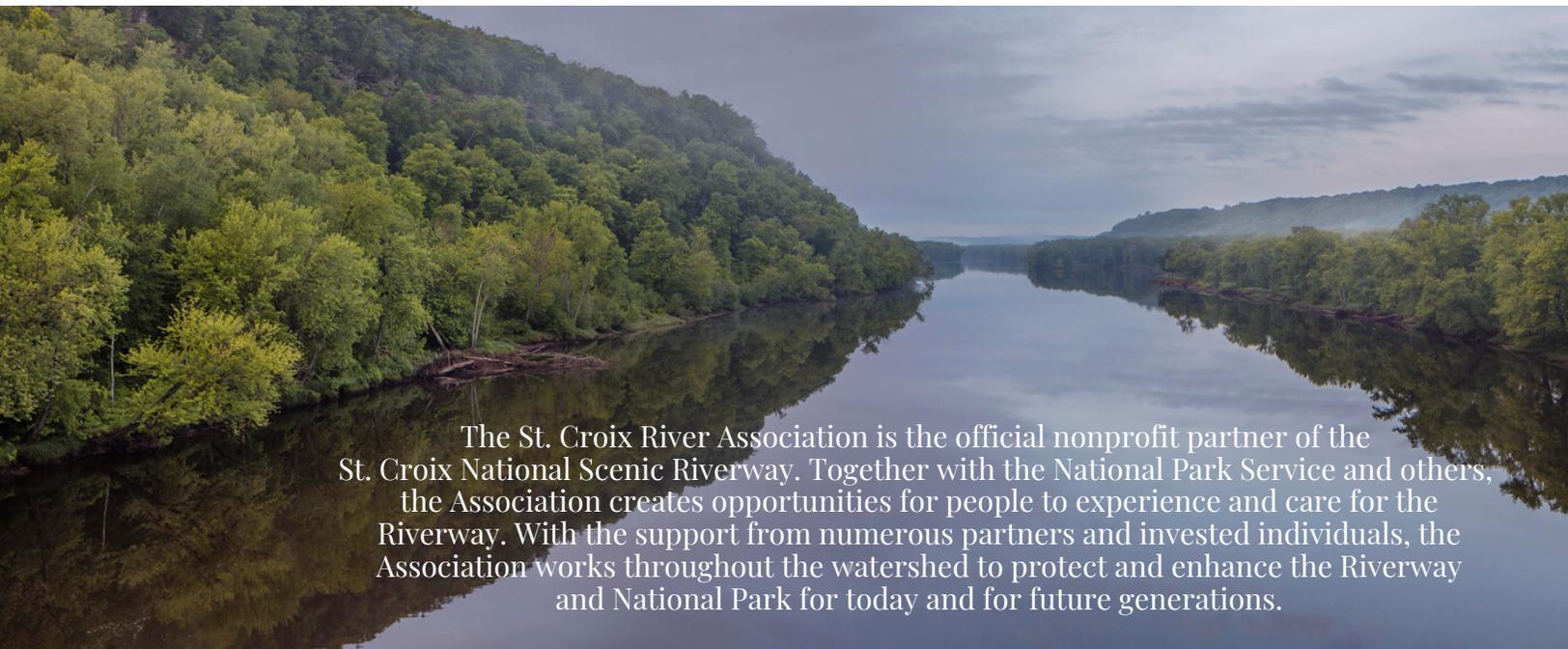
*DEB RYUN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

This last year has been a year of reflection. In 2019, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of expanding the work of the St. Croix River Association (SCRA), and my 10th anniversary as SCRA's first professional staff. It has also been a year for organizational reflection, with SCRA's Board taking on the task of refreshing its strategic plan.

Strategic planning can be an arduous process but it can be fun too. It was a joy to reflect on how far we've come in the past 10 years. In 2009, SCRA had a staff of one and a 21-member board committed to building the framework needed for a strong, effective organization. We worked together to lay the foundation for what we have become, the non-profit partner and the voice for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Now, as the Friends Group for the Riverway, our 10 full-time staff partner everyday with the National Park Service (NPS) on education initiatives, water protection, invasive species detection and prevention, and public access programs.

Looking at where we've been was important in helping us envision the plan for the next 3 to 5 years. We've explored some key questions for continued growth, stability, and relevancy. SCRA has already experienced significant growth, so what infrastructure is needed to sustain us as a viable, well-respected organization? What new challenges are we facing now or are likely to face in the future? What does it mean for us to be the Friends Group for the Riverway, and how do we expand our work to be more inclusive of the Namekagon? These questions and more have led us to examine even the name and the stated mission of our organization. Our existing core functions are solid and we will continue our good work in those areas but we are also now looking beyond them.

There is so much more we can and should do. I am looking forward working with you all to implement our new strategies from the updated plan. It took all of us together to grow SCRA to what it is today. Now more than ever, we will need your help to continue to protect and enhance the Riverway and National Park for today and for future generations.



The St. Croix River Association is the official nonprofit partner of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Together with the National Park Service and others, the Association creates opportunities for people to experience and care for the Riverway. With the support from numerous partners and invested individuals, the Association works throughout the watershed to protect and enhance the Riverway and National Park for today and for future generations.

# WELCOME NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD AND THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO'VE SERVED



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian Alton - Chair  
 Ron Anderson  
 Sally Arneson  
 Bob Bickford  
 George Boody  
 Bill Buell  
 Katie Clapp  
 Lorelee DiLorenzo  
 Jim Dorsey  
 Lisa Erickson  
 Don Hansen  
 Doug Hemer  
 John Herman  
 Dianne Hickok  
 Dana Jackson  
 Andrea Jorgensen  
 Betsy Kremser  
 Bridget Levin  
 Stu Neville  
 Pam Rasmussen  
 Amy Short  
 Kristina Smitten  
 Tom Swain - Vice Chair  
 Bonnie Swanson - Treasurer  
 Kristin Tuenge  
 Mary Uppgren - Secretary

Please join us in welcoming these five new members of the SCRA Board of Directors, who began their term on January 1, 2020. All candidates clearly have a passion for the Riverway. Each brings a unique set of skills and strengths to the board and all are well positioned to be terrific ambassadors for SCRA.

Bill Buell is a retired business owner, attorney, and MN DNR Parks & Trails River Specialist. He has extensive volunteer, board, and government relations experience, and is an avid paddler, cyclist, and skier.

Lorelee DiLorenzo considers herself a "serial volunteer". She brings fundraising and writing proficiency, and has served on many other volunteer boards. She retired from marketing and strategic planning at American Express.

Andrea Jorgensen recently accepted a position at Xcel Energy as the Community Service Manager. Prior to that she worked for the Hudson Chamber of Commerce and has outreach, volunteerism, fundraising, eco-tourism, and marketing expertise.

Betsy Kremser is a retired attorney and has worked in public affairs at Honeywell. She has worked on planning, public policy, and information technology, and has board and volunteer experience, and enjoys many outdoor activities.

Kristina Smitten is the Director of Sustainability, Development at Hillcrest Development and currently serves on the Planning Commission for Marine on St. Croix. She brings a substantial natural resource protection background and deep experience as a volunteer and board member.

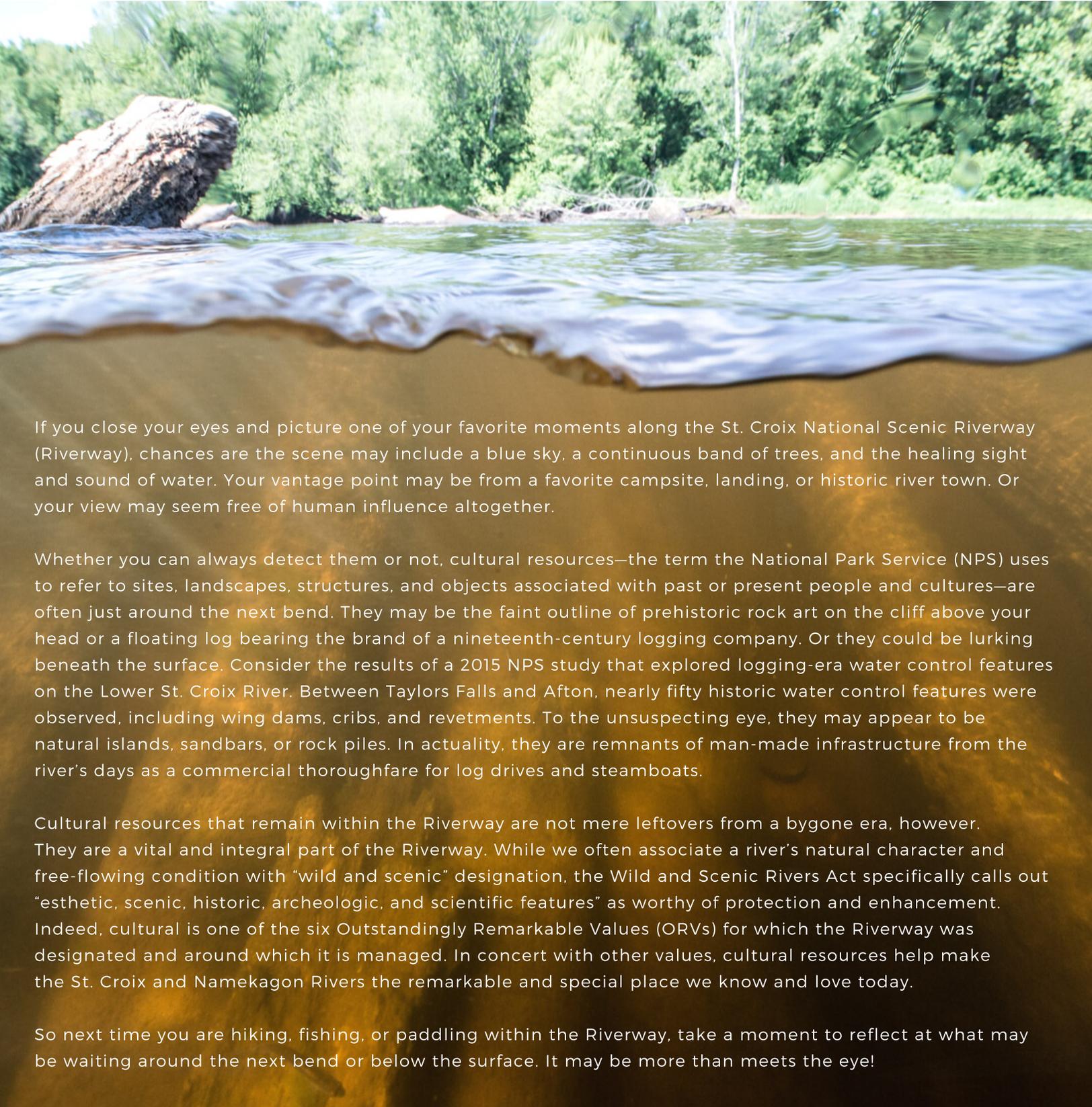
To learn more about the SCRA Board members, visit: [stcroixriverassociation.org/about/board-of-directors](https://stcroixriverassociation.org/about/board-of-directors)

## THANK YOU FOR SERVING

We'd also like to express our deepest appreciation to the outgoing board members who have contributed significantly to our success as an organization. Thank you **Dana Jackson, Katie Clapp, Don Hansen, Bob Bickford, and Pam Rasmussen**, for everything you do in service of the River. Your contributions over the past 6 plus years have been incredible!

# MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE: CULTURAL RESOURCES AT A WILD AND SCENIC RIVER

*JONATHAN MOORE, CULTURAL RESOURCES PROGRAM MANAGER,  
ST. CROIX NATIONAL SCENIC RIVERWAY*



If you close your eyes and picture one of your favorite moments along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (Riverway), chances are the scene may include a blue sky, a continuous band of trees, and the healing sight and sound of water. Your vantage point may be from a favorite campsite, landing, or historic river town. Or your view may seem free of human influence altogether.

Whether you can always detect them or not, cultural resources—the term the National Park Service (NPS) uses to refer to sites, landscapes, structures, and objects associated with past or present people and cultures—are often just around the next bend. They may be the faint outline of prehistoric rock art on the cliff above your head or a floating log bearing the brand of a nineteenth-century logging company. Or they could be lurking beneath the surface. Consider the results of a 2015 NPS study that explored logging-era water control features on the Lower St. Croix River. Between Taylors Falls and Afton, nearly fifty historic water control features were observed, including wing dams, cribs, and revetments. To the unsuspecting eye, they may appear to be natural islands, sandbars, or rock piles. In actuality, they are remnants of man-made infrastructure from the river's days as a commercial thoroughfare for log drives and steamboats.

Cultural resources that remain within the Riverway are not mere leftovers from a bygone era, however. They are a vital and integral part of the Riverway. While we often associate a river's natural character and free-flowing condition with "wild and scenic" designation, the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act specifically calls out "esthetic, scenic, historic, archeologic, and scientific features" as worthy of protection and enhancement. Indeed, cultural is one of the six Outstandingly Remarkable Values (ORVs) for which the Riverway was designated and around which it is managed. In concert with other values, cultural resources help make the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers the remarkable and special place we know and love today.

So next time you are hiking, fishing, or paddling within the Riverway, take a moment to reflect at what may be waiting around the next bend or below the surface. It may be more than meets the eye!

# NEW STRETCH OF THE ST. CROIX NOW LISTED AS IMPAIRED

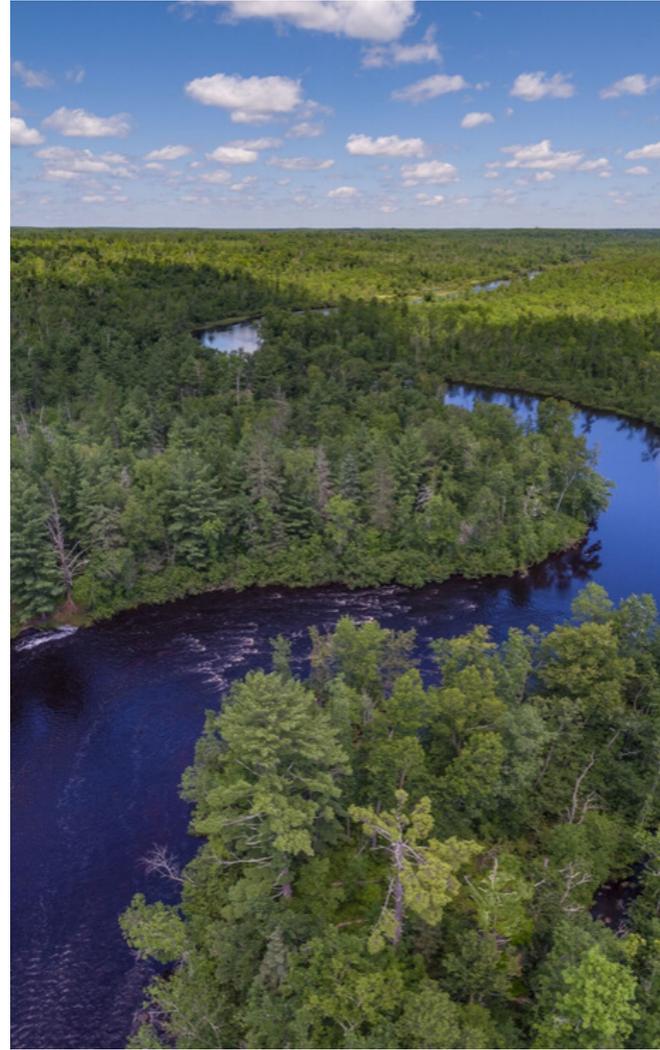
The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) has proposed adding a segment of the St. Croix River from Taylors Falls to Lake St. Croix to their impaired waterbody list. The new segment is proposed to be listed for excess nutrients, specifically phosphorus, with increased levels of chlorophyll a (algae) in response to this excess phosphorus.

What does this mean? Impaired Waters are those waters that do not meet water quality standards for one or more water quality parameters, thus, they are “impaired” or not supporting their designated uses. This impairment listing is for “aquatic life,” meaning that the level of nutrients detected in the water may be detrimental to aquatic life.

The new listing doesn’t mean that the water quality is poor. People can continue to use the river for recreation; swim, paddle, fish, and enjoy. In fact, monitoring has shown that water quality has been improving over time. Advances in sewage treatment facilities and implementing other phosphorus reduction practices have had a positive impact.

## **The river is vulnerable and will always be vulnerable.**

This impairment designation is a reminder that continual work and public action will be necessary to maintain the St. Croix River as the national treasure that it is. Phosphorus reduction requires a watershed approach with multiple partners and public action in both states to be successful and sustainable.



## FIVE WAYS EVERYONE CAN HELP

[pca.state.mn.us/water/15-ways-reduce-nutrients-lakes-and-streams](https://pca.state.mn.us/water/15-ways-reduce-nutrients-lakes-and-streams)

- Use no-phosphorus fertilizer on lawns and gardens - If you fertilize your lawn look for “0” in the middle number on the package, such as 22-0-15.
- Keep grass clippings and leaves in the lawn and other organic matter out of the street - Organic matter in the streets wash into storm sewers that drain to the river.
- Create native plant buffers along the shoreline or plant a rain garden - Wildflowers, native grasses, shrubs or trees absorb and filter nutrient runoff and provide wildlife habitat.
- Inspect your septic system - A functioning septic system keeps human waste, which has high levels of phosphorus and other nutrients out of our rivers and lakes.
- Clean up after your pets - Animal waste left on the ground runs off which adds nutrients and may contain harmful organisms such as Giardia, Salmonella and E. coli to the water.

# VOLUNTEER FOR THE RIVER

KATIE SICKMANN, INVASIVE SPECIES COORDINATOR

How many people does it take to protect a watershed? As many as possible! The St. Croix River Association works with over **500 volunteers each year**. Volunteering for SCRA is a great way to learn more about your local National Park, meet new people, and gain valuable experience while enriching your life by giving back. There are many opportunities in which you can do your part and let your talents shine by being a steward to this wild and scenic riverway.

Algae Alert Network is an example of a hands-on volunteer opportunity with SCRA, in partnership with the U.S. Geological Survey, to assess the blue-green algae in the St. Croix River. Volunteers are needed to collect water samples twice a month from July through September at several locations along the Riverway. Samples are then analyzed for levels of toxicity in efforts to learn more about the occurrence and potential for toxic algae blooms throughout the St. Croix River. Volunteer to collect samples at a location near you!



Did you know that blue-green algae are not algae at all?

Blue-green algae are types of bacteria called cyanobacteria that are normally present in many lakes. This type of bacteria thrives in warm, nutrient-rich water. When conditions are right, the bacteria can grow quickly forming toxic "blooms."



To learn more or become a volunteer visit: [stcroixriverassociation.org/get-involved/volunteer](http://stcroixriverassociation.org/get-involved/volunteer) or contact Katie Sickmann at [katies@scramail.com](mailto:katies@scramail.com) to learn more about the Algae Alert Network or other ways you can get involved with the invasive species program.

## WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

The St. Croix is a globally significant river with a rich variety of native species, including over 40 types of native mussels, some endangered. Preventing the spread of invasive species helps preserve our way of life and culture of water recreation, now and for future generations. Your actions matter.

### PROTECT OUR WATERS

Invasive species can promote toxic algal blooms, degrade spawning habitat, outcompete and displace native species, and negatively impact our aquatic ecosystems.

### PROTECT OUR SHORES

Invasive species can inhibit access to our shorelines, block our views, erode our shore, and keep us from the water's edge.

### PROTECT OUR RIVER TIME

Invasive plants can clog our boat motors, increase flooding, lower water levels, and threaten our time on the water.



# ST. CROIX AND NAMEKAGON RIVER PADDLE ADVENTURES

## Registration is Now Open!

**Namekagon Three-Day Paddles (No camping!)  
June 14-26, 2020 and August 2-4, 2020**

Explore 40 miles of the Namekagon River on a fully supported kayak trip designed for those who may not have paddling equipment or want to camp outdoors. Paddlers will experience nature at its best - the peacefulness and occasional excitement that time on a river produces - without having to camp or cook.

**Camping on the Croix  
July 19-21, 2020**

Experience the wild and scenic St. Croix River in a whole new way when you're sleeping under a blanket of stars on its banks after spending a day paddling its clear blue waters. This trip features long paddling days and "primitive" camping, some experience is recommended but not required.

**[stcroixriverassociation.org/events](http://stcroixriverassociation.org/events)**





JOIN US FOR THE ST. CROIX RIVER ASSOCIATION'S  
2020 ANNUAL SPRING GATHERING, "OPEN WATER",  
ONBOARD THE GRAND DUCHESS RIVER BOAT.

# Open Water

**2020 Spring Gathering**  
**April 17, 2020**

The evening will kick off with the presentation of the St. Croix Stewardship Awards with a fiesta style dinner and camaraderie of fellow river enthusiasts. Registration is required. We hope to see you on the River!

## Agenda:

5:30 PM – Boarding  
6:00 PM – Program  
6:30 PM – Dinner  
7:00 PM – Social

**When:** April 17, 2020 | Boarding 5:30 PM | Cruise 6:00-9:00 PM

**Where:** St. Croix River Cruises | Grand Duchess  
98 Walnut St., Hudson, WI 54016



## REGISTRATION FORM

Reservations and payments can also be made online at: [stcroixriverassociation.org](http://stcroixriverassociation.org). Call 715-483-3300 with questions.

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

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

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

Dinner and Program: Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$55 ea \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Table of 8: Qty \_\_\_\_\_ x \$400 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Additional donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

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

If more space is needed for additional guests, please use an additional sheet.

**Register by April 13**

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION:  
[STCROIXRIVERASSOCIATION.ORG/EVENTS](http://STCROIXRIVERASSOCIATION.ORG/EVENTS)

March 8

Spring Forward XC Ski

March 27

2020 St. Croix Forestry Conference

March 28

Morning Prairie Snowshoe

April 17

Spring Gathering –  
*Open Water*

April 30

Invasive Species Citizen  
Science Workshop #1

May 1

Invasive Species Citizen  
Science Workshop #2

June 14-16

Namekagon 3 - Day Paddle #1

July 10

Project RED  
(Riverene Early Detectors)

July 19-21

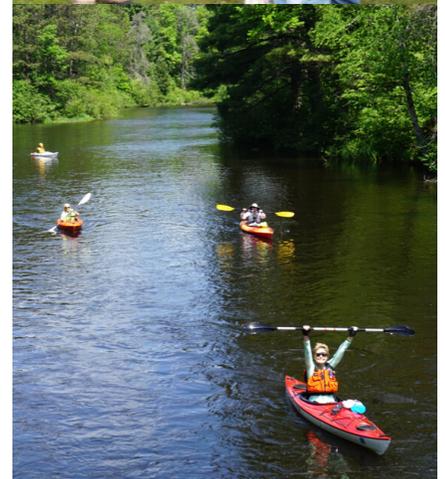
Camping on the Croix

July 26

Annual Fundraiser –  
*Keeping the Croix*

August 2-4

Namekagon 3 - Day Paddle #2



# FOSTERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF RIVER STEWARDS

JAIME SOUZA, EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COORDINATOR

"I loved learning about the river, I wished the lesson never ended." - Sophia

Our goal is to reach every student in the St. Croix River watershed with meaningful, student-centered environmental education.

The SCRA hosted St. Croix Youth Summit brought over 350 students from 6th grade to undergraduates to the University of Wisconsin - River Falls, where they had fun learning about *Wildlife and Watershed, Farm to Faucet*, and more. It was a day for networking, collaboration, and inspiration; we are fostering the next generation of St. Croix champions.

The key note speaker was Dennis Liu, renowned Biodiversity Scientist from the Half Earth Project at the E.O. Wilson Foundation. They are working to conserve half the land and sea to safeguard the bulk of biodiversity, including ourselves.



## INTRODUCING NEW CHIEF RANGER



**What I'm excited about?** I am excited to continue the proactive law enforcement work we are currently doing here at St. Croix. I am also excited to take on new challenges that come way as the new Chief Ranger.

**What I'm looking forward to?** I am really looking forward to my role as part of the St. Croix management team and continuing to work with other divisions at the park, outside agencies, and partnerships to make St. Croix a better place for all to visit.

Nick Shope, Chief Ranger  
St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

# NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEGACY GIVING

BETHANY COX, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT

What does it mean to leave a legacy? It means putting a stamp on the future, making a contribution to future generations. Many of the St. Croix River Association's (SCRA) supporters want to leave a Riverway legacy because they want to ensure the powerful voice for both the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers. And they can do that best through SCRA.

SCRA has recently opened two funds at the St. Croix Valley Foundation; St. Croix River Association Endowed Fund and St. Croix River Association Opportunity Fund. We are excited to offer this opportunity to give back to the Rivers we all love.



Our love for the St. Croix includes a strong desire to protect the river for the benefit of our grandchildren and their grandchildren. But we have grave concerns about the future.

We understand that protecting the St. Croix will be an ongoing and forever struggle.

And we know that future conservation leaders will be challenged to find the resources needed to continue the fight. That is why we are supporting the River Association's new Endowed Fund, the purpose of which is to provide those resources.

Dan and Ruth Ann Willius, Scandia, MN

For more information or questions on either of these funds please email Bethany Cox at [bethanyc@scramail.com](mailto:bethanyc@scramail.com) or Deb Ryun at [debryun@scramail.com](mailto:debryun@scramail.com) or by phone at 715-483-3300.



**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/support/donate](http://stcroixriverassociation.org/support/donate)

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



PO BOX 655  
 ST. CROIX FALLS, WI 54024  
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@stcroixriverassociation

*Save the Date!*

# ANNUAL FUNDRAISER "KEEPING THE CROIX"

**Sunday, July 26, 2020**

3:00 - 6:00 PM

JX Event Venue

123 2nd Street North, Stillwater, MN 55082

**Featured Speaker: Jenny Anderson**

↑ Creator of *Girl of 10,000 Lakes*

↑ Outdoorer

↑ Evoking inspiration & wonder through the beauty of the great outdoors

**Catering by:** Lake Elmo Inn

