



ANNUAL REPORT

2020

Dear River Friends,


What a different summer this is from the summer of 2020. From the onset of the pandemic, the Wild Rivers Conservancy (Conservancy) and the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (Riverway) made it a priority to act rather than react whenever possible. We changed the way we traditionally delivered programs and activities, adjusting to physical distancing requirements. While we lost the ability to deliver hands-on learning, online programming gave us the unexpected benefit of reaching a broader audience.

The Conservancy's Board adopted a new strategic plan in 2020. It identified the need to reach a new level of support to address the diverse and changing needs of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers. To that end, we decided to update the St. Croix River Association's name and mission statement to better reflect our work and goals. In May of 2021 we announced our new name, "Wild Rivers Conservancy of the St. Croix and Namekagon." The Conservancy is uniquely positioned to inspire stewardship to help the Riverway continue to be a place of refuge for all, forever. Our new name and mission reflect our watershed-wide approach to conserve habitat and protect water quality, as well as our commitment to the national park at the heart of the watershed.

In spite of the pandemic, field work continued for both the Conservancy and the Riverway. A few Riverway projects that had been in the works for as long as 10 years were completed: 194 acres along the St. Croix and Namekagon were acquired and permanently protected as part of the national park; design development for the rehabilitation of Osceola Landing was completed; the Conservancy supported project planning to restore continuity for a trail in Cable, WI. And we renewed our official Friends Agreement for another 10 years, affirming our partnership to advance our shared priorities for the Riverway.

During a time of immense uncertainty, we were inspired by and grateful for the extraordinary support from all of you in 2020. Together, we will protect park resources and cultivate future park champions. Together we will ensure that future generations can enjoy the same experiences you have come to know and love on our wild and scenic rivers.

Ever Forward,



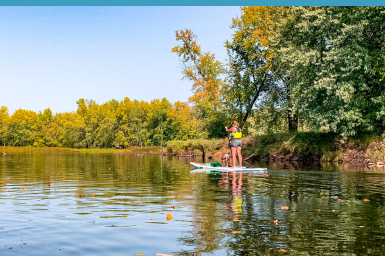
Deb Ryun
Executive Director



Julie Galonska
Superintendent



Brian Alton
Former Board Chair



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Thank you to our outgoing Board Members.
We are grateful for your work.

NEW MISSION

Inspiring stewardship
to forever ensure the
rare ecological
integrity of the St.
Croix and Namekagon
Riverway.



VISION

A thriving
watershed, forever
accessible, scenic
and wild.

STAFF (2021)

Deb Ryun, Executive Director
Nicole Biagi, Outdoor Educator
Bethany Cox, Director of Development
Nikki Henger, Forestry Program Coordinator
Jennifer Lutz, Business Manager
Sophia Patane, Communications Coordinator
Katie Sickmann, Invasive Species Coordinator
Wendy Tremblay, Community Engagement Coordinator
Jeremiah Walters, Naturalist
Kate Wright, Donor Engagement and Events
Monica Zachay, Director of Programs

BRANCHING OUT

Engaged **2,600** woodland owners through campaigns to conserve and protect critical forest habitat

Provided Riverway education for

173,000

people online

Monitored **130** miles of river for invasive species

Tested over **27,200** acres of water across the watershed for zebra mussels, including **37** lake and Riverway sites

20 of these sites were also tested for spiny waterflea

Connected over **1,150** students to the Riverway through hands-on experiences



Made our park more accessible to over 5,700 people from all walks of life



MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Bringing the endangered Karner Blue Butterfly back—working with USFWS to **restore 120 acres of habitat** for this rare and beautiful butterfly

Empowering over **100 citizen scientists** to take action to protect our rare ecological resources



Adapting outdoor programming through Explore Wild Rivers so people of **all ages, abilities, and skill levels could enjoy the Riverway** during a year when the outdoors offered a place of refuge



BE WILD IN 2021!

7



EXPLORE

We lead programs so people of all backgrounds and abilities can explore and discover the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers.



VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are the lifeblood of keeping the Riverway healthy for present and future generations. There are many ways to help out!



DONATE

Whether it's an annual membership or a bequest, your donation in any amount is maximized for the greatest benefit.

2020 AUDITED FINANCIAL REPORT

Balance Sheet

FY 2020

Assets

Current Assets	\$403,020
Investments	\$54,621
Property & Equipment	\$28,779

Total Assets **\$486,420**

Liabilities & Equity

Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	\$73,743
Other Current Liabilities	\$42,979

Total Current Liabilities **\$116,722**

Net Assets **\$369,698**

Total Liabilities & Equity **\$486,420**

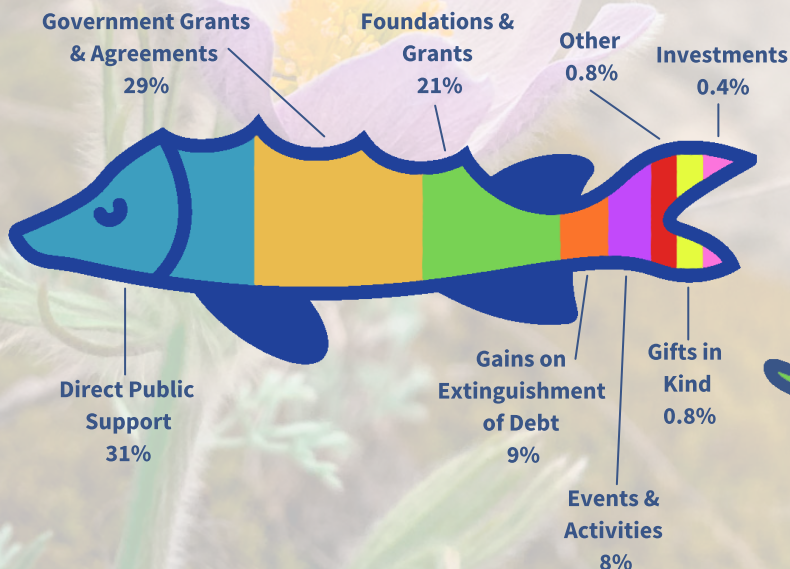


"My time with SCRA [Wild Rivers Conservancy] has shown me just how impactful an organization run by passionate individuals can be. Wherever I end up in a future career, I hope to emulate and build upon their success in environmental efforts."

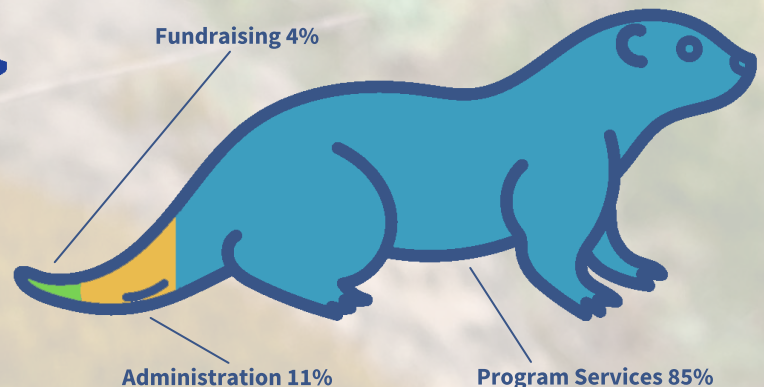
—Ryan Rogers, 2020 Forestry Intern & 2021 AIS Intern

Financial statements audited by CarlsonSV. A copy is available upon request.

FY 2020 Income \$1,238,168



FY 2020 Expenses \$1,056,045



Income shown greater than expenses due to timing of grants.



A LIVING LEGACY

Vice President Walter Mondale's favorite place on earth was the St. Croix River. "The river is magnificent," he said in a 2015 interview. "It's a spiritual experience. I've always loved that river."

Many of us use those same words today whether we are on the water, looking at the river, or remembering past experiences splashing in the water. The St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers change you, and many of us—myself included—know that our lives are better because of them.

Vice President Mondale's passion for the river will forever be remembered in his sponsorship of the 1968 Wild and Scenic Rivers Act alongside Senator Gaylord Nelson. This important work ensured that the clean water, natural beauty, recreational, and cultural riches of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers would be protected for generations to come.

But he knew that vigilance was essential in safeguarding these values.

"I worry about the cumulative impact of nicks and cuts from unwise development impacting what our children and grandchildren will experience. I am pleased that the St. Croix River Association today is the official "friends" group of the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway."

While our name has changed, Wild Rivers Conservancy continues to work diligently to safeguard the rare ecological integrity that Mondale valued.

From bringing new groups to the rivers for adventures and learning, to restoring habitat and mitigating invasive species throughout the watershed, our team loves this work and is proud to be the voice for the rivers each and every day.

Even after his passing in April 2021, the rivers received another gift from Walter Mondale and his family. Memorial gifts were requested to several organizations he supported, including the former St. Croix River Association, now Wild Rivers Conservancy.

We were honored and humbled by the Mondale family's inclusion of our organization and the rivers that the former vice president held dear. Perhaps it's time for you to start thinking of your legacy or the legacy of a loved one? As these plans form, we ask you to support Wild Rivers Conservancy to protect our treasured wild and scenic rivers for generations to come.

If you have any questions or need more information about legacy giving, please contact Bethany Cox, Director of Development at bcox@wildriversconservancy.org or 715-483-3300



“We should make our commitment, protect the river and, for once, take heart in the saying: how we care for our natural treasures will someday determine our worth as a nation.”
-Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

This list represents gifts given from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020 and includes in-kind and memorial gifts. Every attempt was made to ensure the accuracy of this list. We sincerely regret any errors or omissions. You may call our Development office at 715-483-3300 with questions or corrections.

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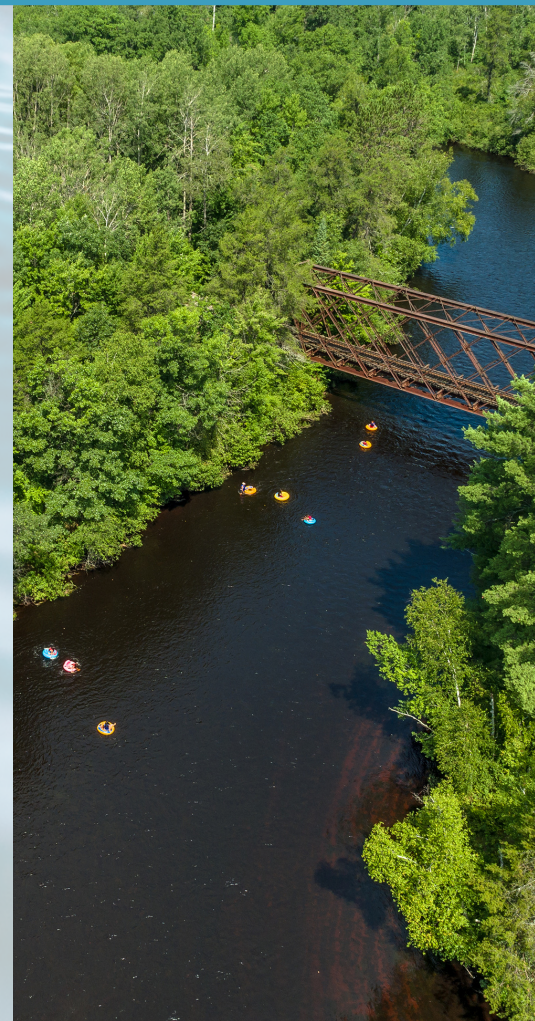
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Pine County
U.S. Endowment for Forestry &
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ST. CROIX FALLS, WI 54024

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FOREVER WILD

GET **WILD** FOR YOUR RIVERS!

Wild Rivers Conservancy

SEPT 9, 2021

Annual FUNdraiser

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