Dear Friends,

In 2008, the St. Croix River Association (SCRA) positioned itself to leverage resources on a greater scale to bring allies, both traditional and non-traditional, together with the same mission -- to save the river.

It was people power: people that gave their time, talent and energy to begin the transformation to a more robust organization.

People understood that if future generations are going to safely enjoy our lakes and rivers for boating, fishing and swimming as we have, and benefit from open space for hiking, birding, hunting, and quiet reflection, we must act. People have to care enough to preserve open space and the "wild" nature of our watershed.

We finished the 2016 fiscal year with a budget of about $997,000. This transformation happened because people rallied even more people to move from just enjoying the river to taking a share of the responsibility to care for the River.

Some of you made a significant up-front investment, giving to the SCRA Founders Circle. Let's remember those who in 2009 took a huge leap of faith - people who believed that our organization could grow and make real progress in meeting river protection goals.

Sharon & Bill Clapp, Peter & Mary Gove, Dan & Ruth Ann Willius, Karen & Craig Hansen, and Martin & Esther Kellogg all made it possible for SCRA to hire a full-time executive director. Deb has served in that role since 2009 and now oversees a staff of 10 with 11 seasonal interns.

George Reid, Marcia Berkley, Ron & Terry Barczak, Lee Lynch & Terry Saario, and Richard & Sally Leider all enabled SCRA to deliver educational programming to 1,628 students in 17 school districts in 2016. We expanded our outreach program, touching more than 37,000 people through enriching and engaging experiences that raise awareness and foster watershed stewardship.

Founding support from the West Family, John Velin & Jane Harper, Taylors Falls Recreation, Jennifer Gross & Jerry LeFevre, and Mike & Lyne Prichard allowed us to hire water quality staff to coordinate targeted efforts and to leverage over $2 million dollars of federal, state, and local funding for phosphorus reduction in the St. Croix watershed, reducing the harmful algal blooms.

Without the investment from Bob & Vivian Dunbar, the Cowles Family, the Jane & John
Borchert Family, and Susan Ferron & David Stephens we would not have realized our Land Stewardship program. Staff leads efforts to protect and restore important natural and scenic areas, and along with Walter Mondale, SCRA participated in a high-profile, successful 2016 U.S. Supreme Court case that upheld scenic protections on the St. Croix.

The Silha Family, gifts given in the names of Walter Mondale & Gaylord Nelson, and Gary Noren & Marty Harding helped to advance the SCRA network of highly trained volunteers who follow emerging issues such as pipeline safety and monitoring for invasive species and water quality.

Thank you, Founders, for your initial support and faith in a growing organization.

We have laid the foundation for successfully protecting this Riverway. We have had success building solid programs. So where are we going from here?

The immediate future will bring celebrations. 1968 was the year of the creation of St. Croix National Scenic Riverway through the passing of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. We will celebrate the 50th anniversary big with a multi-year celebration to honor the past, to celebrate the Namekagon and St. Croix, and to secure the future of our globally important river system.

As the population grows, our planet has begun to feel smaller. The river, with its timeless beauty and endless recreational opportunities, is more imperiled than ever. Zebra mussels, Asian carp, zoning changes, development pressures, legislative action, and other new threats have the river engaged in the fight of its life.

Because of you, SCRA works throughout the watershed to protect the national park that flows through its heart. Thank you all for your unwavering support of the River, your friendship, and, of course, your financial commitment.

With sincere appreciation,

Melanie Kleiss  
Board Chair

Deb Ryun  
Executive Director
A Big Year for the National Park Service

In 2016, we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service at the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway and expanded our joint efforts connecting with and creating the next generation of park visitors, supporters, and advocates. We are the Friends Group for the Riverway. Working together we engage more people with our public programs and can accomplish greater resource protection.

Building Capacity

St. Croix BioBlitz
- Engaged citizens, scientists, and future stewards in discovering 500 species that call the St. Croix Valley home in partnership with the Interstate Parks.

Restoring Park Lands
- Improved 165 acres at Arcola Bluffs along the lower St. Croix River through a 3-year project to control invasive species and restore habitat.

National Park Service Centennial
- Connected with new audiences through "Find Your Park" outreach, including the Centennial Paddle Challenge and the premiere of "National Parks Adventure" IMAX film at Science Museum of Minnesota.

Paddling to Health and Wellness
- Promoted the benefits of outdoor recreation with paddling programs for youth, families, and veterans.
"The work that NPS and SCRA accomplish together continues to inspire powerful connections between people and their wild and scenic national park." Julie Galonska, Superintendent, St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
1,628 students in 17 schools shared hands-on learning at the Riverway.

32,000 people youth, families and veterans outreach and stewardship activities.

5,406 hours of resource protection, education, and outreach by 11 interns.
Our education and outreach programs encourage advocacy and stewardship of the St. Croix watershed through educational events, publications, and activities. We give the river a voice, engage people to act, and influence solutions to problems that threaten our diverse terrestrial and aquatic systems. We promote responsible recreation.

**Accomplishments**

**Engaging Youth**
- Expanded the ‘Rivers Are Alive’ education program in partnership with the National Park Service and 10 teacher volunteers in 17 schools, reaching 270 teachers and 1,628 students.

**Expanded Park Use**
- Kayak and canoe outings helped people develop a deep understanding of Riverway cultural and natural resources and the relevance of parks in their lives.

**Fostering Future Leaders**
- We provided 11 interns practical work experience as they served over 5,400 hours in resource protection and river connections programs.
Our Water Resource Protection program works to maintain and improve water quality watershed-wide. Our work protects water quality, reduces pollution to the St. Croix and its tributaries, and increases efficacy through strong partnerships by leveraging financial and technical resources throughout the watershed.

**Accomplishments**

**Critical Lands**
- Launched the restoration of 165 acres of native savannah, prairie, and forest along the Riverway eliminating invasive species, improving habitat and water quality, and enriching recreation.

**Forest Stewardship**
- Established partnerships to obtain $500,000 in new funding to protect private forest lands, which are vital to maintain high water quality.

**Pollution Reduction**
- Advanced pollution remedies that reduced 500,000 pounds of sediment and eliminated twice as much algae-producing phosphorus from reaching the river as in 2015.
$500,000 forest protection for water quality through woodland owner outreach and forest stewardship

500,000 pounds of sediment reduced in the St. Croix and its tributaries

165 acres of unique savannah, prairie, and woodland habitat restored along the Riverway
351 boats inspected to prevent the spread of invasive species

261 students in 5 schools learned how they can help stop invaders

13,000 acres of water sampled for zebra mussel veligers
Our Invasive Species program identifies and combats aquatic and terrestrial invasive species. Through this program, SCRA collaborates with many organizations to strategically address invasive species that can devastate native species including Eurasian water milfoil, zebra mussels, and Asian carp.

**Accomplishments**

**Increased Regional Capacity**
- Adopted the watershed-wide Aquatic Invasive Species strategic plan and coordinated the multi-county Cooperative Weed Management Area including new funding for biocontrol of spotted knapweed.

**Inspired Future Leaders**
- Taught 261 elementary school students about invasive species in five new schools and hosted forums on invasive species and trained 135 volunteers to identify and prevent the spread of invasive species.

**Strengthened Regional Partnerships**
- Monitored and sampled for zebra mussel veligers in more than 13,000 acres of water alongside federal agencies and inspected 351 boats on the St. Croix River to stop hitchhikers.
The Lands program works to protect and restore important natural and scenic areas and encourage citizens to be the first line of defense for the River. The Shoreland Protection project works closely with local governments, realtors, and landowners to support Riverway rules that protect the Lower St. Croix River.

**Accomplishments**

**Pipeline Safety**
- Created a workgroup to protect the ecologically sensitive and wild lands of the upper St. Croix, Totogatic, Namekagon, and Eau Claire rivers at risk from existing or proposed pipelines.

**Lower Riverway**
- Educated over 300 realtors, 2,000 landowners and 10 city councils on Riverway regulations, protecting the view shed, and enhancing natural bluff lands.

**Supreme Court Case**
- Submitted a co-authored Brief to the U.S Supreme Court in support of St. Croix County in the Murr Case, with the final ruling protecting the St. Croix River.
2,000 landowners learned the reasons for and about Riverway regulations and scenic easements.

300 realtors educated on the importance of Riverway protections and disclosure to home buyers.

10 local governments provided resources for city staff and officials to improve zoning process.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The St. Croix River Association gratefully acknowledges the generosity of the donors who support our mission to protect, restore, and celebrate the St. Croix River and its watershed.

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MN Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (LCCMR)
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FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS FOR 2016

Balance Sheet  
**FY 2016**

**Assets**

Current Assets
- Checking / Savings: $183,161
- Other Current Assets: 31,561

**Total Current Assets**: 214,722

**Total Assets**: $214,722

**Liabilities & Equity**

Current Liabilities
- Accounts Payable: $10,559
- Other Current Liabilities: 24,670

**Total Current Liabilities**: 35,229

**Equity**: 179,493

**Total Liabilities & Equity**: $214,722

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**Expenses**  
**FY 2016**

**Programs**
- Land & Water: $382,451
- Education & Outreach: 429,638
- Lobby: 2,805
- Other Programs: 6,974

**Total Program Expenses**: $821,868

**Administration**: 137,408

**Fundraising**: 40,397

**Total Expenses**: $999,673

*Expenses shown as greater than income is due to timing of grants.*

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Financial statements audited by Carlson Highland. A copy is available upon request.
The River is better because of you. Thank you for your many contributions.
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OUR VISION

A thriving watershed forever accessible, scenic, and wild.
Our Mission: to protect, restore, and celebrate the St. Croix River and its watershed