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

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.

Loratee 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

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

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.
**Why should you care?**

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

**Protect our waters**

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

**Protect our shores**

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

**Protect our river time**

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

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!

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

RESERVATION FORM

Reservations and payments can also be made online at: 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: $ ________

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

Register by April 13
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 8</td>
<td>Spring Forward XC Ski</td>
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<td>March 27</td>
<td>2020 St. Croix Forestry Conference</td>
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<td>March 28</td>
<td>Morning Prairie Snowshoe</td>
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<td>April 17</td>
<td>Spring Gathering - Open Water</td>
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<td>April 30</td>
<td>Invasive Species Citizen Science Workshop #1</td>
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<td>May 1</td>
<td>Invasive Species Citizen Science Workshop #2</td>
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<td>June 14-16</td>
<td>Namekagon 3 - Day Paddle #1</td>
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<td>July 10</td>
<td>Project RED (Riverene Early Detectors)</td>
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<td>July 19-21</td>
<td>Camping on the Croix</td>
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<td>July 26</td>
<td>Annual Fundraiser - Keeping the Croix</td>
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<td>August 2-4</td>
<td>Namekagon 3 - Day Paddle #2</td>
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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 or Deb Ryun at 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

Donations to SCRA are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.
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
† Outdoorser
† Evoking inspiration & wonder through the beauty of the great outdoors

Catering by: Lake Elmo Inn