



- St. Croix River Association 100 year anniversary in 1911.
- Our mission is to protect, restore and celebrate the St. Croix River and its watershed.
- We are the friends group for the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway.
- In 2008 “rebirth” in 2008 to become a watershed wide organization, to protect the resources beyond the ¼ mile wide, 255 mile long national park boundary.
- Not Strayed from our mission and focus created by the design team in 2008. The tactics we use to accomplish the mission may not be what was envisioned, but we constantly check to ensure that we stay mission focused.

PROTECTING THE LEGACY

Through common-sense programs and partnerships we are working to ensure that:

- Waters run free and clean in the St. Croix and its tributaries
- Habitat remains plentiful to sustain our unique and diverse flora and fauna
- People have access to our National Park and the park flourishes
- Towns throughout the basin thrive and people celebrate the River

Strategic plan updated last year.

- ◆ Partnerships have led to success, leveraging is a way of life
- ◆ We work to protect and restore natural and scenic areas along the river and throughout the watershed
- ◆ We work to improve and maintain water resources
- ◆ We engage people in educational, recreational and volunteer stewardship activities. People that understand and value the river are motivated to advocate on behalf of the river and watershed
- ◆ We celebrate the St. Croix River watershed , a national treasure, at every opportunity.

2013 ACTIVITIES

- Completed the four monitoring and phosphorous reduction projects funded by the MN Clean Water Legacy
- Co-sponsored the Protecting the St. Croix Conference at U of WI River Falls
- SCRA Annual Meeting at Camp St. Croix, with author William Souder
- 2013 Namekagon Paddle 6-day, and 16 fully supported Ranger led paddles
- River Awareness Week including Hudson's new RiverFest, on-river elected officials training, and MN Water Trails 50th Anniversary events
- Co-hosted Project RED (Riverine Early Detectors) invasive species volunteer training
- Advocates for protecting the St. Croix watershed from Asian Carp including summit
- Photo contest and the Winning Photos traveling display
- Partnered with NPS on the Riverway Speaker Series, Springbrook Wayside acquisition, Leonards gage operations, & funded the equipment & seasonal staff for the pilot river connections program
- Worked with U of MN Law students review bait laws relating to Asian Carp, and whether the NPS lack of monitoring easements along the St. Croix impede future enforcement efforts

- Key monitoring sites have been established, and 100s of pounds of P no longer run off to the St. Croix
- High quality speakers share important information and have grown our audience
- Our paddles allow people to experience the rivers in a new way, many of those people would not have had the opportunity be on the river
- Volunteers learn to identify and report invasive species and sample water for toxicity
- River Awareness week has grown to include thousands of people in celebration, education and cleanup events
- The photo contest pictures travel to different venues throughout the watershed
- We partner with NPS on many programs, including the highly successful vets on the water program
- Law students have done terrific work for protecting the St. Croix

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENT



- Through our outreach efforts thousands of people are exposed to the concept of watershed protection, the unique flora and fauna we're blessed with, and the fact that we have a national park right here in our back yard
- Several SWCD districts in MN no longer practice "random acts of conservation". With the newly developed prioritization protocol they target the lands that will have the biggest impacts on water quality
- Solid working relationships are being forged with other groups such as universities/colleges, local land and water protection organizations, and government agencies. We all benefit by sharing expertise and resources
- The St. Croix watershed has a voice; it's a long way from Madison, and as a border river, MN can easily overlook our river
- Cities that once turned their backs to the river, or focused more on lakes, understand the value of having a wild and scenic river

IT'S COMPLEX



What do you see in this photo? To me it tells our story

- You can see the buffer along the river that does a pretty good job of protection
- But just beyond the border we clearly have an agricultural landscape
- Urbanization is a growing concern (yes that's the new bridge)
- The water isn't brown with sediment
- But there is clearly an algae bloom
- Maintaining the wild and scenic characteristics is not going to get easier over time. It will be critical to reach out to new audiences, and the next generation to be sure they understand what a treasure we have in the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

WATER STEWARDSHIP



Water resources in 2014

Ongoing Work includes:

- Complete the first phase of forestry & water quality project in the northern part of the watershed, and work with partners to develop the next phase
- Complete the last year of the LCCMR prioritization project
- Continue the work in the Apple River watershed to build local capacity

In 2014 we will seek additional funding to:

- lay the foundation for improved coordination among government and citizens, increase the capacity for civic engagement
- design a tool to better define roles, responsibilities and methods to address water management, to further the strategies of the Lake St. Croix TMDL Implementation Plan.
- Create an online, accessible, atlas, a clearinghouse for new and existing data.

CONTROLLING INVASIVE SPECIES



2014 Invasive Species

SCRA will continue to partner with partners that have established AIS programs. In WI they typically have been lakes groups. There is high interest within WI DNR to work on what they consider “super spreaders”, river systems that unwelcome species can move into relatively quickly

We are seeing funds to hire an AIS coordinator that will:

- Coordinate the St. Croix River basin stakeholders to achieve prevention, containment, and control of AIS
- Inventory existing AIS programs and identify gaps where work is needed;
- identify threats within St. Croix River basin & develop a plan with strategies specific to river systems
- Engage river people; coordinate information and outreach to

targeted audiences and high value areas regarding invasive species.

RIVER CONNECTIONS



Slide 8-In 2014 the River Connections Program.

1. A coordinator would oversee our current and expanding education and outreach efforts
2. To have a great presence on the St. Croix and Namekagon, and reach a broader audience. Hire up to six summer interns to provide education programming and act as “ambassadors” on the river.
3. An internship program will give students rich work experience, get more young people intimately involved in the river, and they will provide meaningful service back to the community.

River Connections three fundamental goals:

- ⇒ Develop an ethic of responsible recreation; people can enjoy the park in a responsible way, and treat the river, land and animals respectfully
- ⇒ Ensure the health and safety of people on the river
- ⇒ Enhance the experiences of park visitors and overcome the barriers for those that have limited access to the river

A. New grants and individual donations will pay for the program

LAND STEWARDSHIP



That ¼ mile protection along the riverway has done a LOT of good; so how to we ensure it remains in place, and GROWS over time

Ongoing work

- In collaboration with NPS develop a land protection strategy for St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- Continue to facilitate the SCCC meetings
- Develop connections with pro bono attorneys and law schools for land protection efforts

New initiatives:

- In collaboration with NPS, create a volunteer easement monitoring program
- Develop a volunteer program to monitor local zoning variances, training begins in January
- Hire an intern to compile current watershed law

One idea floated in reaction to the five variance granted to ONE property owner in Lakeland

1. Work at the legislative level to strengthen the authority of DNR to act when needed.
2. Seek funds from the state to develop and initiate a landowner stewardship program to reduce the demand/desire for variances (small house)

WE HAVE SOMETHING SPECIAL
PROTECT RESTORE AND CELEBRATE



We have something special.

Questions to ponder:

- a) How do we bring more people to the river, to gain more “enthusiasts”, without taxing the fragile resource?
- b) The current political climate favors personal property rights over laws & ordinances=variances are handed out like parade candy. What ideas do you have to ensure our wild and scenic remains special?
- c) Do you have ideas on how to grow our earned income revenue stream?

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Optional add slides after this point