

Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway 2021 Annual Summary



Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW) is a non-profit member organization that works to protect and preserve the wilderness-type experience of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

Annual Meeting – Saturday, February 5

This year, FLOW's annual meeting is being held virtually on Sat., February 5, at 1:00pm. Join us! For log on info, go to <https://www.wisconsinriverfriends.org/>

Leadership Update

The FLOW Board has experienced changes in 2021. Don Golembiewski is currently president of the organization and looking forward to the year. In addition, new Board members have joined the leadership team. We encourage member involvement in committees. Email interest at wisconsinriverfriends@gmail.com.

Riverway Champion 2021



FLOW's "Riverway Champion" is celebrated and chosen for outstanding service in support of FLOW's mission to preserve the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway.

The Riverway Champion for 2021 is a fisheries research scientist,

John Lyons. John has long been a tireless river advocate and protector. He states "I have been fortunate to work all over Wisconsin in all sorts of habitats and with all sort of fish species, but my favorite place has always been the Lower Wisconsin River." *Congrats John!*

Information and Education

Field trips

FLOW's group outings were curtailed in 2021 due to the pandemic. However in 2022, we plan to offer field trips. Tentative topics will include: fish identification and gear, canoe craft, birding, river safety, sandbar camping, effigy mounds, and other river habitat and river environment topics.

All outings will be in the riverway and outdoors respecting COVID safety protocols. They will be free. Donations will be accepted.

Riverway Safety

In 2021 FLOW continued its mission to engage and inform the public on many aspects of the Lower

Wisconsin Riverway.

A valuable tool is available to you on the FLOW website – the "Paddle Planner." You'll find time estimates for numerous river trips, from trips less than one hour, to planning an overnight trip down the river. Trip times and estimates can vary. Many factors including headwind or tailwind can alter paddle times. Remember to carry out everything you bring in and glass bottles are prohibited.

FLOW helps facilitate group outings to learn about and enjoy the river. More information on 2022 FLOW hosted educational events will be on our website.

Also, look for information on the new Lower Wisconsin Riverway Safety Coalition, (LWRSC).

Kids Don't Float



FLOW works with the Wisconsin DNR (WDNR) and municipalities to create and maintain personal flotation device (PFD) or life

vest loaner kiosks at 15 river access points. The goal is to promote safety on the Lower Wisconsin River during the paddling season.

Two new kiosk locations are in Avoca and Wauzeka. In Wauzeka, the kiosk is part of the community's recently completed boat landing improvement project. It is hoped that members of that community will help maintain the kiosk. Initially, they will be stocked with PFD's supplied by WDNR and donations.

FLOW plans to make available about 200 PFDs at the 15 stations. After each paddling season, FLOW members inspect and retire some worn out PFDs and store the usable ones. Some PFDs go missing each year and need to be replaced.

Through donations of PFDs in good condition and purchases of replacements, stations are replenished. Adult Universal PFDs are the most used and needed. Are you able to help? After busy weekends, we often need to shuttle some PFDs to upstream kiosks and balance the available ones for kids of all ages and sizes.

Continued –

Promoting Stewardship



FLOW volunteers at BLM cleanup on an island near Arena, March 2021

FLOW promotes stewardship of the lower Wisconsin riverway by working with local groups such as the Three Eagles Foundation and Cultural Landscapes Legacies, Inc.

In 2022, we hope to coordinate tours of internationally significant Native American effigy mounds and other heritage sites. FLOW also helps coordinate workdays and supports other organizations' efforts to preserve and maintain important areas in the Riverway.

Informed Membership

FLOW continued its mission to keep people informed of river levels and safety issues such as dangerous sand bars and other hazards. FLOW also keeps the public aware of news that impacts the riverway such as progress on the proposed Wisconsin River Recreation Bridge. In 2022, FLOW hopes to again host popular events like the Fire on the River campout and Rhythm on the River. Stay tuned to our website for more updates.

Membership

A Benefit for FLOW Members

FLOW's Riverbiz program enables discounts at area businesses when presenting a FLOW membership card. Watch for information on discounts. If you have a business in the river valley and want to support FLOW while increasing goodwill in the community, contact Membership Committee member Chuck Rathmann at charlesrathmann@gmail.com or call 414-403-1066.

FLOW Free Annual Membership for 2022

We recognize the impact the COVID pandemic has had on all of us and want to extend another one-year free membership to FLOW. Please visit our website for details at www.wisconsinriverfriends.org

Advocacy

In 2022, FLOW intends to again advocate for the Riverway and water quality issues by partnering with like-minded conservation organizations such as the Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Green Fire, the Midwest Environmental Advocates and others.

Science Committee Updates

The Science Committee reported the successful reintroduction of State Endangered starhead topminnows in river area sloughs initially stocked in September 2018. The goal was to establish a population above the Prairie du Sac dam. The Science Committee will continue other projects.

2021 Photography Contest



We celebrated spring by hosting FLOW's Earth Day River Photo Competition in March and April 2021! Submitted were the best river-oriented image in two categories--Adult and

Juveniles under 16. There were over 50 entries. Photos were captured in the Lower Wisconsin Riverway or in other rivers and streams in the greater Lower Wisconsin River watershed. See the winners at <https://www.facebook.com/media/set?vanity=107199472716198&set=a.3306353342800779>

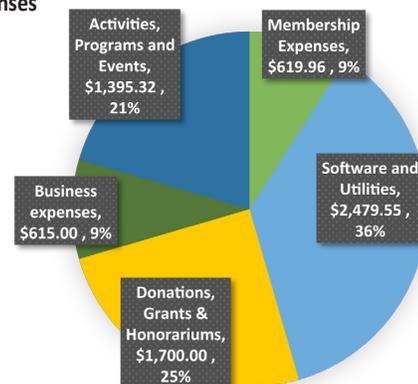
FLOW Financials

The FLOW board will develop and approve a fiscal policy that addresses accepting/holding/maintaining donated items and reimbursing volunteers for travel and miscellaneous expenses. We ensure the most cost-effective uses of your dues and donations. **Special thanks** to The Wisconsin Smallmouth Bass Alliance and **most of all, you.**

2021 Financial Snapshot

	Amount (\$)
2021 Starting FLOW Balance*	\$ 7,944.45
Donations	\$ 6,600.00
Expenses	\$ (6,809.83)
2021 Ending FLOW Balance*	\$ 7,734.62

FLOW Expenses



*FLOW is the financial agent for Sauk County Conservation Network. SCCN funds are not included in FLOW balances shown here