

Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway

2020 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, January 30

This year, FLOW's annual meeting was held virtually Saturday, January 30. We hope you were able to join us! Current updates can be found on our Website.

Riverway Champion 2020

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

The Riverway Champion for 2020 is **DNR Conservation Warden, David Youngquist**. David has long been a tireless river advocate and protector based at Tower Hill State Park along the river. **Congratulations David!**

Lower Wisconsin Riverway Designated a RAMSAR Wetland of International Importance

The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, also known as the Ramsar Convention, is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of wetlands and their resources. The Lower Wisconsin Riverway 92 mile section is now 1 of 6 sites in Wisconsin and 41 in the U.S. with this special status.

Membership

A Benefit for FLOW Members

In 2020, FLOW launched the Riverbiz program enabling discounts at area businesses for those presenting a FLOW membership card. Our initial issuance of membership cards offers a meaningful reason to support FLOW and our mission.

Watch for information on these 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 chuck.rathmann@ifs.com or call 414-403-1066.

FLOW Free Annual Membership for 2021

We recognize the impact the COVID pandemic has had on all of us and are extending a one-year



FREE membership to FLOW.
Limited-Time Only.
For details and to join, visit
www.wisconsinriverfriends.org

Information and Education

River Teaching and Safety

Do you want to paddle the river but have limited time? Are you wondering how long it will take to go from one put-in to your preferred take-out landing? Do you need help designating a location to spot your vehicle or planning your float? Thinking of multiday?

In 2020 FLOW continued its mission to engage and inform the public on aspects of the Lower Wisconsin River. A new tool available is the "Paddle Planner."

PADDLE PLANNER

0 - 1 HOUR PADDLE				
Put In	Take Out	Distance	Estimated Time	Map
Tower Hill State Park	Pecks Landing			View Map
South R1 12 p.m.				
2 - 3 HOUR PADDLE				
Put In	Take Out	Distance	Estimated Time	Map
Works Landing	Otter Creek Landing	7.1 mi	2 hrs 2 minutes	View Map
	Eagles Corner Landing	7.1 mi	2 hrs 2 minutes	View Map
		7.4 mi	2 hrs 7 minutes	View Map
3 - 4 HOUR PADDLE				
Put In	Take Out	Distance	Estimated Time	Map
Arena Landing	Pecks Landing	10.6 mi	3 hrs 2 minutes	View Map
5 HOUR PADDLE				
	Lemanski Landing	10.6 mi	3 hrs 2 minutes	View Map
		10.6 mi	3 hrs 5 minutes	View Map

Winter is a great time to dream about that warm, sunny day on the Wisconsin River so check out the Paddle Planner on the FLOW website and start your dreaming. You'll find time estimates for numerous river trips from less than one hour to info on planning an overnight trip down the river.

Note: the time estimates are based on many factors including running into a strong headwind or tailwind that can greatly alter your paddle times. Please remember to carry out everything you bring in and glass bottles are prohibited.

Every "normal" year, FLOW helps facilitate group outings to learn about and enjoy the river. More information on 2021 FLOW hosted paddling events will be on our website.

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

Continued –



Caitlyn de Araujo, FLOW member

Kids Don't Float

We hope to launch our highly acclaimed and successful Kids Don't Float 2021 season when COVID health and river

conditions warrant. We plan to distribute about 200 Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs) at 11 stations along the Lower Wisconsin River. After each paddling season, we inspect and retire some worn out PFDs and store the usable ones inside for the winter. Some PFDs go missing each year and need replacing. We hope they will be used to keep kids of all ages afloat.

Through donations of PFDs in good condition and annual purchases of replacements, we keep a supply ready to replenish our stations. Adult Universal PFDs get the most use and are most in need. Are you able to help? Are you available for a PFD relocation run? After busy weekends, we often need to shuttle some PFDs to upstream kiosks and balance the available ones.

When public safety concerns allow, FLOW will continue to maintain a string of loaner PFD stations along the length of the Lower Wisconsin River. Based on our understanding, no drownings took place during 2020 by anyone wearing a Coast Guard approved, PFD in good condition along the 92-mile stretch of the Lower Wisconsin. We venture to claim some credit for that.

Promoting Stewardship

FLOW works with local groups such as the Three Eagles Foundation and Cultural Landscapes Legacies, Inc. In 2021, we hope to coordinate tours of internationally significant Native American effigy mounds and other heritage sites. FLOW also helps coordinate workdays to preserve and maintain important areas.

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 2021, 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.

Advocacy

In 2021 FLOW intends to again advocate for the Riverway and water quality issues by partnering with like-minded conservation organizations



FLOW members protecting Eagle Island trees from further beaver damage and working with Ferry Bluff Eagle Council

such as the Wisconsin Conservation Voters, Green Fire, the Midwest Environmental Advocates and others.

Science Committee Updates

The Science Committee reported successful overwinter survival and reproduction of State Endangered starhead topminnows in river area sloughs initially stocked in September 2018. The goal is to establish a population above the Prairie du Sac dam. The project continues.

FLOW Financials

The FLOW board is establishing a fiscal policy that addresses accepting/holding/maintaining donated items. Kind thanks to Kim Wright, retired attorney, who shared her thoughts about non-profit organizations. Kim formerly worked at Midwest Environmental Advocates in Madison.

Financial Report

	Amount (\$)
Ending Balance from 2019	\$ 4,950
INCOME	
Kids Don't Float Donations	575
Memberships and Donations	11,332
Total Contributions	11,907
EXPENSES	
Telephone and Utilities	3,774
Office supplies	851
Organizational Expenses	623
General Expenses	1,194
Total expenses	6,442
FUND BALANCES	
Restricted Funds	2,581
Kids Don't Float	951
Jumping Spiders	2,986
General Fund	3,898
Balance as of Dec 31, 2020	\$ 10,416

FLOW could not operate and be successful if not for your kind and generous support. **Special thanks** to The Wisconsin Smallmouth Bass Alliance, the Badger Fly Fishers and **most of all, you.**