



Friends of Wild River State Park

Newsletter

SEEGWAN
MAY 22

May, 2010

www.friendsofwildriver.org • info@friendsofwildriver.org • 651-583-2926 (Visitor Center)

State Park Update

By Paul Kurvers,
Wild River State Park Manager

Spring is always a busy time at the park. Seasonal office and maintenance staff return, new employees are interviewed and hired, buildings, grounds and facilities are cleaned and opened for season, required staff training is conducted, and budgets are analyzed and projected and we approach our fiscal year-end in June. And of course, in a steady progression similar to the seasonal changes of spring, visitors journey to the park in increasing numbers to explore, camp, recreate.

In mid April park staff conducted a very successful prescribed burn on about 40 acres of land just north of the main campground. The land may look charred now, but if you visit the area again in few months you will undoubtedly see new lush green vegetation and a reinvigorated prairie and oak savannah landscape. Depending on weather, we also have plans to burn areas north and west of the horse campground that is currently mostly dominated by non-native forbs and grasses. The burn in this area will be the first step towards

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From the President

By Dave Kozlovsky - Friends of Wild River State Park

The Friends of Wild River State Park have two family friendly events planned for this spring and summer. First is our 27th annual Seegwan (Ojibway for spring) celebration on May 22, 2010. The day will begin with a bird hike at starting from the boat landing led by a member of the Audubon Society. I did go on the bird hike two years ago and I must admit I was impressed with the knowledge and passion of those from the Audubon Society. Even though I was only able to identify the call of turkey across the river in Wisconsin, it was a great start to the day. Binoculars are recommended.

If you are interested in starting prairie plants, the Park is the place to shop on May 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Trail Center. You can purchase prairie plants started by master gardener Tom Dickhudt and he will give instruction as to the best place to plant them for maximum success.

Please join us at 2 p.m. to restore the Prairie with our seed sowing which is fun for all ages. To culminate the evening, we are inviting back our friend, Charlie Macquire, who at 7 p.m. will weave songs and stories at the amphitheater. Wow, what a lineup!!

On July 17th, the Friends of WRSP will be sponsoring a St.

Croix River clean-up/interpretive event. The Friends support the Moonlight Ski and Prairie Restoration, and now are helping to clean up the focal point of our Park, the St. Croix River. Gary Noren will fill in the details in this newsletter. Please join us in this family fun event. This will also be a good opportunity to meet our new naturalist, Kacie Carlson, who will give interpretive comments on the river and park from its inception to the present.

And last, it is with a heavy heart I present sad news, as colleague, fly-fishing bud, and fellow Board member, Bob Ziegler, 49, passed away on April 23, 2010. He was a teacher for 26 years, and his heart was in the right place promoting exercise and the environment with his students. He will be missed.

Upcoming Events



- May 22nd - Seegwan
See poster on next page!
- May 29th–Aug 21st - Summer
Speaker Series sponsored by
Friends of Wild River State Park
- July 17th - Friends River Trip

FREE

ADMISSION to the Park!

on May 22nd, 2010

* SEE GWAN 2010

* OJIBWE WORD FOR SPRING



Wild River State Park is located on the St. Croix River near Almelund, MN, north of Hwy 95. For more call 651-583-2925 or visit www.mnstateparks.info

SATURDAY, MAY 22ND

The 27th Annual Celebration of Spring at Wild River State Park

All programs are FREE and open to the public. A MN State Park Vehicle Permit is NOT Required May 22, 2010.

7:30 am **SPRING BIRD HIKE** Meet at the Boat Landing. Bring binoculars! Sponsored by Wild River Audubon Chapter

10 to 3 **NATIVE PLANT SALE** At the Trail Center. Locally grown native plants ready for your garden spot! Sponsored by Chisago County Master Gardeners

2 pm **SEED SOWING** Help bring back a prairie! Sow some of last fall's volunteer-collected seed in new locations. Easy and fun for any age!

7 pm



CHARLIE MAGUIRE

PERFORMANCE at the Amphitheater (rain site is the Visitor Center) Come and hear this legendary folk singer weave stories to song. Charlie is a long-time supporter of State Parks and our Friends Group and we're excited to bring him back to Wild River - sure to be a crowd pleaser for folks of all ages.

Summer Programs at Wild River State Park

Sponsored by the Friends of Wild River State Park

- **Live Frogs! and other Amphibian Encounters** May 29, 7:30 p.m., Randy Korb
- **Nature & Campfire Stories Told by Dwight Wilcox** June 19, 7:30 p.m.
- **Blacksmithing - A Craft from the Past** June 26, 10 a.m. - 3 p.m., Paul Webster
- **Big, Bad & Beautiful Bugs** July 3, 2 p.m., Bruce Giebink
- **Tools from Stone - Flint Knapping** July 10, 1 - 4 p.m., Joel Osmond
- **Wild River Canoe Trip & Cleanup** July 17, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunrise to main boat landing
- **Prairie Skies & Perseid Meteors** August 13 & 14, 9 to 11 p.m., Steve Tonsfeldt
- **Fiddler Pierre Jacques Pleau & Friends** August 21, 6:30 p.m.,



< **PARK UPDATE**.....Continued from Page 1

planting and restoring this area of the park to prairie. Earlier this spring, a crew of workers from the Conservation Corp of Minnesota spent about a week in the park cutting and removing buckthorn, tartarian honeysuckle and other non-native shrubs. Removal of these non-native plants will greatly improve the habitat for native plant and animal species. Both of these resource management projects were made possible from funds derived from the new Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment which dedicates a portion of state sales tax to support parks and enhance and restore natural resources.

Planning has also begun this spring for the addition of electrical hook-ups in the park's equestrian campground. Over the years this has been one of the most common mentioned improvements that equestrian campers have requested. Work on this project will begin later this summer and should be completed by fall.

All of us at the park are very excited to announce the appointment of Kacie Carlson as the new naturalist at the park.



New Naturalist at Wild River - Kacie Carlson

Kacie began her new duties on April 15 and has been very busy since then learning about the park, planning programs and other activities, and meeting staff, visitors, and volunteers. Kacie is a very outgoing person with lots of energy, ideas and enthusiasm and I am sure she will prove to be a great

asset to the park's interpretive program. Next time you are at the park, I encourage you to stop by the Visitor Center and say hello to Kacie.

Finally, I'd like to mention that there will be two days this spring when entrance to the park will be free. Purchase of a vehicle permit will not be required on May 22 (Seegwan) and well as on our annual Open House day on June 12. If you know someone who has not been to the park before, encourage them to visit the park on one of these days.

Hope to see you at the park this spring and coming summer.

Friends Group Canoe Trip planned for July 17

By Gary Noren - Board Member

The Friends of Wild River State Park (WRSP) announce the first annual St. Croix River canoe trip and river cleanup. It is scheduled for Saturday, July 17th from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm; mark your calendars! The section to be cleaned is that part of the St. Croix River between the Sunrise Landing and the main boat landing in the park. Depending on the number of participants, the Wisconsin side of the river may be cleaned too.

Logistics: Shuttling is always an issue with river canoe trips. In an attempt to solve the shuttle issue, Friends Board member Mo Whalen has agreed to be at the Sunrise Landing at 9:00 am. He will guard your boats and gear until you come back about an hour later (after you have left your cars at our exit point - the main park boat landing) and have received a ride back to Sunrise Landing by a carpool or park vendor shuttle. We will try to begin by 10:00 am and finish by 4:00 pm. This is a rain or shine event, so come prepared. We will not be on the water if an electrical storm is imminent.

Bring your own lunch, water, gloves, insect repellent, and sunscreen. WRSP will provide bags for collecting your junk, river interpretation during the canoe trip, and disposal of our trash. Another Board member, Kia Donais, will be rewarding all participants with watermelon at one of our stops! Canoes will be available for rent at WRSP from Eric's Canoe Rental. To reserve a canoe for the event, call Eric's Canoe Rental at 651-270-1561. Rental rates are \$40/canoe which includes a shuttle to the Sunrise Landing area. Life jackets must be worn by all people in canoes. If you prefer not to canoe, walking and cleaning the river at entry and exit points would be very helpful too.

Check the Friends web site for the latest information www.friendsofwildriver.org This event is open to all Friends and anyone else interested in canoeing and cleaning the river. It is part of the St. Croix River Association's River Awareness and Cleanup Week, July 17 - 25th. Watch your local newspapers and www.stcroixriverassociation.org for other River Awareness events.



Friends of Wild River State Park Guest Program Series 2010

The following line-up of fascinating programs by special guest presenters is sponsored by Friends of Wild River State Park with funds raised by the Seegwan native plant sale:



Saturday, May 29, 7:30 p.m. Live Frogs! and other Amphibian Encounters

You can't get much more hands-on with frogs than you will with Randy Korb. Learn about Minnesota amphibians (frogs, toads, and salamanders) in face-to-face encounters. Meet at the amphitheater



Saturday, June 19, 7:30 p.m. Nature and Campfire Stories Told by Dwight Wilcox

Dwight Wilcox will be telling stories about the St. Croix Valley and sharing campfire tales. Some true, some not so true, but all fun and entertaining. Hear tall tales and true tales of the north woods and the St. Croix Valley, and fun stories and fables with a few surprises. Meet at campground amphitheater.



Saturday, June 26, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Blacksmithing - A Craft From the Past

Pioneer farmers couldn't just run to the hardware store for tools and nails - they went to the blacksmith, who made them what they needed. Stop by and learn about the art of smithing from expert smith Paul Webster during this working demonstration of an ancient art in modern times. Watch the sparks fly as raw metal is turned into tools before your very eyes! Bring lots of questions - Paul is good at explaining things and hammering hot metal at the same time. Meet at visitor center.

Saturday, July 3, 2 p.m. Big, Bad, and Beautiful Bugs



Bruce Giebink from The Bug Zone will provide entertainment and education about some of the world's smallest critters. See (and touch, if you dare) a giant millipede, hissing cockroach, or a "friendly" tarantula; view an incredible assortment of specimens of metallic-blue butterflies, walking sticks a half-foot long, beetles with giant pincers, and much more, while hearing fascinating stories about insects and how they live. Meet at visitor center.

Saturday, July 10, 1 to 4 p.m. Tools From Stone -- Flint Knapping

Joel Osmond provides a detailed working demonstration of the methods used to create arrowheads and knives from stone, using techniques which have barely changed in the last 4,000 years. Drop in for a short look, or stay for the whole afternoon. Meet at visitor center.



Friday - Saturday, August 13-14, 9 p.m. Prairie Skies and Perseid Meteors

What better place to view the night sky than the open prairie! Join guest astronomer Steve Tonsfeldt for images of some of the most impressive and beautiful sights from space (August 14) or a slide show of meteorite impact craters, and a chance to handle actual meteorites (August 15). About 10:00 p.m. take a short walk into the prairie for a live view of the night sky's features through telescopes, and watch the Perseid meteor shower. Bring bug spray, flashlights, and binoculars if you have them. Meet at the visitor center for the first part of the program, then drive to the astronomy site near the campground amphitheater for the meteor watch. There are benches at the site, but meteor watching is best from a reclining lawn chair or lying on a blanket.

Saturday, August 21, 6:30 p.m. Pierre Jacques Pleau - Fiddler, Storyteller, Singer and Songwriter

Travel back in time with Pierre Jacques Pleau to the days of candlelight and campfires for an evening of storytelling, music and folk dancing. Meet at the campground amphitheater (Visitor Center if raining).



Wild River State Park is located 3 miles north of Almelund, MN,
on Highway 95 between North Branch and Taylors Falls.

Facility, camping and lodging information (651) 583-2125. Naturalist program information (651) 583-2925

Naturalist Notes

By Kacie Carlson, Park Naturalist

“Dave Crawford is retiring? I don’t know who they’re going to find to follow in his footsteps!” This is a quote I was recently reminded of saying when we got word of Dave’s retirement. And, needless to say, a year later here I am! While Dave undoubtedly left footsteps to fill, he also paved the way to a thriving park full of exciting opportunities- all of which I’m anxiously awaiting.

It all began back in 1989. I was four years old, camping at Itasca State Park with my family and was just awarded my first Junior Park Naturalist award. It was the moment

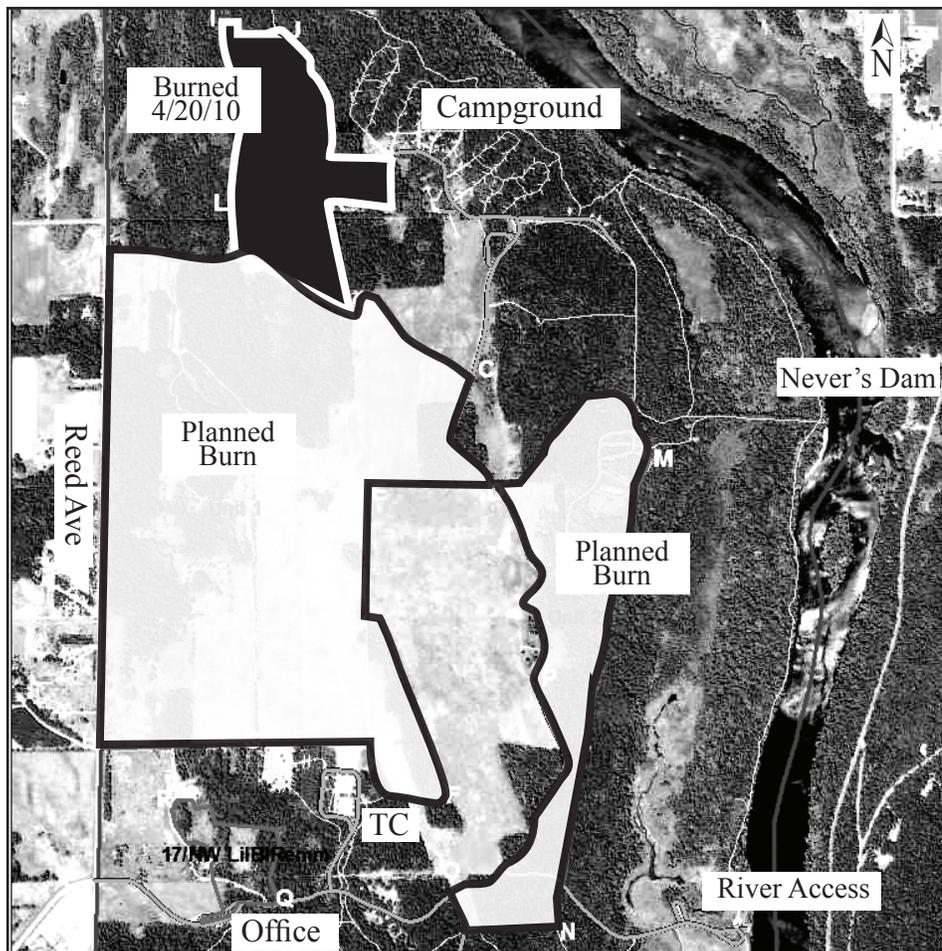
it dawned on me that being a real Park Naturalist had to be the greatest job in the world. I grew up in the small town of Osakis where I enjoyed building forts, catching frogs, raising squirrels, and playing basketball. After graduating from the University of Minnesota with degrees in Biology and Physiology I landed that greatest job in the world as a Naturalist intern at, of all places, Itasca State Park.

In the summer of 2008 I was offered the seasonal temporary Naturalist position at Lake Carlos State Park. From the towering pines I retreated back to my home territory of the hardwoods. Looking for a new

adventure in 2009 I accepted the seasonal permanent Naturalist position at Interstate State Park- three hours from home in the uncharted territory of the St. Croix Valley. It didn’t take long to realize that this uncharted territory was just the fit. Twenty-two days ago when I was offered the chance to follow in Dave’s footsteps and the opportunity to be mentored by one of the greatest Naturalists in Minnesota, that dawning thought of 1989 came full circle. I look forward to sharing my enthusiasm and appreciation for the outdoors with all of Wild River State Park’s visitors and especially spending time, learning from, and working with the dedicated friends and volunteers of the park.

While this summer will bring back many of the activities you’ve enjoyed in the past, you can expect a variety of new opportunities to unfold as the summer progresses. Returning for the interpretive team will be both Theresa Jo Rohland and Samantha Olson whom you may have come to know. They, along with a vacant position, will act as members of our first-year legacy-funded Naturalist Corps. With an extended thank you to the Friends of Wild River State Park, we will also be hiring a fourth position that will help inspire more visitors throughout the summer, reach out to more school and community groups in the fall, and provide extended resource management to the park. Thank you. For the always-updating list of activities taking place around the park, visit our next 90 days of events at www.mnstateparks.info.

As I get back to organizing event schedules, updating bulletin boards, dusting off program props, developing interpretive plans, and preparing for the summer ahead, what I most look forward to is spending time getting to know the park and everyone it’s made up of. I look forward to meeting you!



A large remnant oak savanna west of the campground was burned on April 20th, 2010. Two other large burns and a few smaller burns in other areas of the park are planned but may not happen until fall depending on the weather and staffing at Wild River State Park.

Please add your name to our email list!

To save paper, mailing costs, and time we encourage you to have your name added to our email list. We will never sell or trade your address and only send about 6 emails per year.

To be added to our emailing list please visit our website
www.friendsofwildriver.org
or contact us at info@friendsofwildriver.org

If you prefer to receive "snail mail" that's fine!

Please let us know when you renew your membership and we'll be happy to mail your newsletters!

Have you paid your dues? Dues are the Friends' main source of funding for programs we support at the park. Send in the form below and help support the great programs Friends members bring to Wild River!



MEMBERSHIP DUES

- Individual Friend** – \$20/year
- Family Friend** – \$35/year
- Silver Friend** – \$50/year
- Gold Friend** – \$100/year
- Platinum Friend** – \$250+/year
- Add an additional \$10 and be a member of MN Parks and Trails Council*

Name/Address _____

City _____ State _____

I prefer snail mail.

Sign Up Online!

Zip _____

Email _____

We will never sell or trade your email address

Favorite activities at the park include: _____

Mail with check to:



Friends of Wild River State Park
c/o Treasurer Maurice Whalen
3663 164th Ave NE
Ham Lake, MN 55304

www.friendsofwildriver.org
to donate using your credit card

Thank you for your support!