

## Friends of Wild River State Park

# Newsletter

Fall 2018



www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ info@FriendsOfWildRiver.org ■ 651-253-3498

### From the President:

#### Come together

By Brad Bjorklund, Friends of Wild River State Park president



With the Board of Directors as large as it has ever been, surprisingly things get easier for all of us. We are more diverse and volunteers seem to float out of the woods for each and every task. It is really neat and social bonds develop. Long term

members get relief from having to do overall tasks. They can focus more on what they really enjoy and are good at. You'd think that herding such a bunch would be more work. Not. As autumn rolls in, the Apple Festival, tree cage installations, programs and the 5k Race are happening. Our nonprofit 501 (c)(3) status is strong and we contribute more and more to the park. Come join us for the fun and beauty.

### *On your mark, get set, go!*

Annual Otter Trotter 5k coming up Oct. 13

The seventh annual Wild River State Park Otter Trotter 5K Run/Walk is coming up on Oct. 13. The 5K is the perfect time to check out the fall colors at Wild River State Park. Registration is available the day of the race, but racers can register at a discounted price until Oct. 1. See page 4 for a mail-in registration form and more information. Registration for the race will take place from 8:45 to 9:30 a.m. and the race begins at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 13. Awards will be given to top finishers. All participants and visitors will need to have or purchase a state park vehicle permit sticker upon entering the park.



### Winter isn't here yet but...

...it's never too early to get the annual Candlelight Night event into your calendar. The upcoming special winter event will take place during the evening on Feb. 9, 2019 at Wild River State Park. Join us for a candle-lit evening of cross-country skiing, snowshoeing or hiking. The event will include live music, treats, and other activities. The event is free, but a park vehicle sticker is required to enter the park.

Did you see us at the Almelund Apple Festival on Sept. 16? Check out pages 4 and 6 for upcoming events with both the Friends and Wild River State Park. Come out and say hi!

## Keeping our river clean – Annual River Clean-up

By Marjorie Otto, Friends of Wild River State Park board member

The Friends of Wild River State Park has an annual summer tradition of gathering to canoe down part of the river—from Sunrise Landing to Wild River State Park Landing—to clean up any trash found along the way. While the event serves as a fun excuse to go for a paddle, it also plays an important role of keeping our shared resource clean for others to enjoy. What makes it even better is that we often don't find much trash at all, showing us that others value the river just as much. This year, the group—which included Friends volunteers and interns from the St. Croix River Association—met on Saturday morning, July 14th. It's roughly 8 or 9 miles between the two landings, and what usually takes the better part of a day only took about 3 hours to paddle due to the fast-moving water. As many had been seeing in the news earlier in the summer, heavy rainfalls up north had raised the river's level significantly and created fast currents.



This year's Annual River Clean-up event paddlers standing in a very high St. Croix River.

Very little trash was found (a pink plastic flamingo was this year's amusing find), but it was a great time anyways, with picture-perfect weather. A recent tradition also involves sharing a watermelon for lunch, which is the perfect summer treat on the river.

The Friends of Wild River State Park would like to extend some special thank yous to Wild River Canoe Rental for providing the group with free shuttle service; to Jaime Souza, Robert Boss, and all the interns from the St. Croix River Association; to Wild River State Park Naturalist Mike Dunker; and to all the volunteers who came out to help. Thank you all for your help and making it a wonderful day.

For those interested in volunteering with the Friends' river cleanup event, the event is held the second weekend of July each year. For more information and for next year's date, go to [www.friendsofwildriver.org](http://www.friendsofwildriver.org). (first published online on the Minnesota Parks and Trails Council website)

### Speaking of the river....

Have you seen the new documentary "Wild and Scenic St. Croix" that was created to celebrate the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway's 50 years as a protected water way? The public television documentary can be viewed online for free at [www.tpt.org/the-wild-and-scenic-st-croix](http://www.tpt.org/the-wild-and-scenic-st-croix). The 30-minute documentary shares the history of the St. Croix and Namekagon Rivers and the national park system they are included in.



## A Changing Forest

By Paul Kurvers, Wild River/Interstate State Park manager



Frequent visitors to the park may have noticed a not-so-subtle change to the appearance of the forested landscapes within the park. Lots of dead or dying trees. More specifically, dead or dying oak trees. Unfortunately, over the last couple decades,

hundreds of mostly red oak trees have died. This massive die-off of oak trees has been caused by a non-native, invasive fungus called *Bretziella fagacearum*; commonly referred to as oak wilt. Oak wilt fungus spreads from diseased to healthy trees either below ground via connected roots or above ground by sap beetles. Oak wilt was first detected in Minnesota around 1950. Park staff first began noticing pockets of oak wilt in the park in the mid 1990's. Aggressive, labor-intensive, and time-consuming efforts were initiated to contain the spread of the disease. Unfortunately, these efforts proved ineffective as the disease was already too widespread throughout the park and surrounding lands. For the past ten years, the park has been focused on removing dead oak trees that pose potential hazards to people if a dead tree were to fall in a campsite, on a building, or in a parking lot. The removal of these hazard trees is an annual process that is very time and labor intensive.

Unfortunately, oak wilt is not the first disease to affect the forests in the park. If you are my age or older, many of you may recall the similar devastating impacts of the spread of Dutch elm disease back in the 1970's. This disease killed millions of elm trees across Minnesota and left once shaded street boulevards bare. The introduction and spread of new non-native diseases and pests continues to impact our state's forests.



An example of an oak tree that died from oak wilt at Wild River State Park.

In 2009, an Asian beetle called emerald ash borer was first detected in Minnesota in St. Paul. Since 2009, emerald ash borer has spread and is now found in 17 Minnesota counties, including Chisago. The beetle kills 99 percent of the ash it infests within 5 to 7 years. With an estimated 1 billion ash trees in the state, this insect could cause

massive changes to the forests in the park and across the state. Scientists continue to research methods to control the spread of oak wilt, Dutch elm disease, emerald ash borer, and other forest diseases and pests. However, many preventative measures, which may be effective for individual trees in an urban setting, are costly, ineffective and not practical when applied to large forested areas.

The most effective means to control the spread of these diseases and pests is to limit the transport of firewood. About 10 years ago, new rules were implemented in Minnesota to restrict the transport of firewood onto Department of Natural Resources (DNR) lands including state parks. The rule requires that firewood brought on to DNR lands be purchased from a vendor who harvested the wood in same county as it is being used. If the wood was not harvested from the county it's used in, the wood must be certified as

heat treated to kill diseases and pests by the Minnesota Department of Agriculture or the United States Department of Agriculture. If firewood has been certified as heat treated, the firewood bundle will note this by displaying the appropriate seal on the label.

For the foreseeable future, the spread of oak wilt and other forest and pests will continue to impact the character and composition of the forests in the park and throughout the state. However, we can all help reduce the rate of spread by limiting the transport of firewood. The hope is by slowing the rate of spread, this will afford scientists and researchers time to develop more effective methods to combat these invasive diseases and pests.

Friends of Wild River State Park  
 Seventh Annual  
**Wild River Run**  
 Otter Trotter 2018!



Take a walk or run under the fall colors and along the St. Croix River at Wild River State Park, and on one of the most beautiful 5K courses in the state! This 7<sup>th</sup> annual event will take you on both paved and unpaved surfaces.

- Awards will be given to the top finishers, plus all those under 12 will receive a nice prize.
- Registration is available on the day of the race, but at a discounted price before Oct. 1.
- T-shirts are available for sale when you pre-register before Oct. 1; some will be available after Oct. 1 and on Race Day while supply lasts.
- All proceeds go to the Friends of Wild River to help support park events and improvements.

Early registration discount – register by **October 1!**

Race Day:

**Saturday, October 13, 2018**

Registration: **8:30-9:45** at Picnic Shelter.

Race begins at **10 a.m.**

**Wild River State Park**

39797 Park Trail

Center City, MN 55012

(15 miles east of North Branch, 12 miles north of Taylors Falls)

Call Mike Dunker (Park Naturalist)

at 651-583-2125 x227 with questions.

Sponsored by the Friends of Wild River State Park and the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota



**Wild River 5K Run/Walk**

Saturday, October 13, 2018

Registration: 8:30-9:45 am -- Race begins at 10 a.m.

Wild River State Park

**Note: you can also register online at FriendsOfWildRiver.org and payment there is through PayPal.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Division:  Female  Male

Age:  under 12  12-30  31-45  46-60  61

T-Shirt Size: \_\_\_\_\_ (Requires an \$11 additional fee)

\* Email will only be used to relay information regarding the Wild River Run

Check here to be added to the Park and Friends email lists.

Cost: Before October 1, 2018: \$20 (\$31 with T-shirt)

After October 1/Race Day: \$25 (\$36 with T-shirt)

**Friends Member Discount Free T-Shirt (\$11 saving)**

Amount Paid: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

A \$7 daily or \$35 annual Minnesota State Park permit is required on all vehicles entering the park – not included in the Wild River 5K Run registration fee.

Please write a check made out to "Friends of Wild River State Park" with "5K Run" in the memo field, then mail this form to:

Friends of Wild River State Park, c/o Jan Kozlovsky

re: Wild River 5K Run

17190 410th St

North Branch, MN 55056



The Wild River 5K Run will route participants on both paved and non-paved surfaces. By participating in this event, you understand the risks involved with trail running. I hereby release Friends of Wild River State Park, Wild River State Park/DNR, and Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota—including their officers, event partners, organizers, associated entities, and any or all persons including volunteers connected with the event—from liability for injuries or damages to my person or property arising out of my participation.

Signature of understanding the terms of liability: \_\_\_\_\_

## Where am I?

### GeoPDFs and Wild River State Park

By Mike Dunker, Interpretive Naturalist at Wild River State Park

I get asked a lot of questions at the park's Visitor Center. From questions about plant and animal identification, wildlife sightings in the park, best spots for fall colors/photography to ski trails and recent grooming efforts. But more than any other question is that of where are they and how they can get to a particular trail. Granted, technology has changed a bit in the last decade. Where once almost everyone knew how to use a trusty map to find their way, GPS and Google Maps has removed the need to plot your course along the dotted or colored lines to reach your destination. Now, someone whispers in your ear whether to turn right or left and you can ignore your location and hope the machine you are trusting doesn't have its microchip switched to evil.

Of course, the new colored maps for the park have helped the situation and made locating oneself and certain trails much easier. Again, a big thank you to the Friends of Wild River State Park for contributing to the map production costs to make this possible. We continue to get lots of remarks of how visitors would like to see more state park maps like ours. Regardless, there are always those who feel comforted by their cell phone directions and others who are directionally challenged.

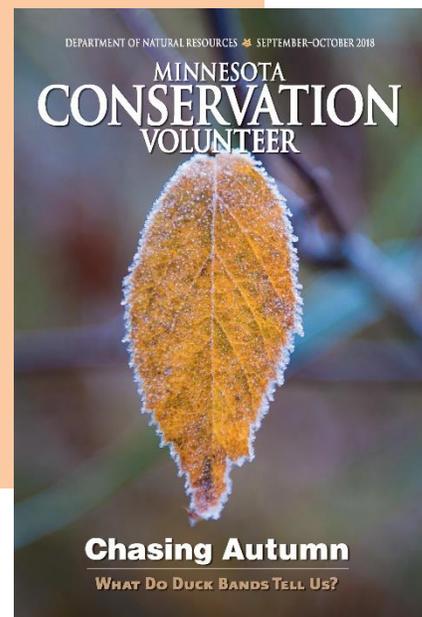
This summer, the DNR released some new maps for smart phones and tablets that show your location in the parks using a new map format. They are called GeoPDF maps and cell service is not required to use them. It uses a program called Avenza Maps which is free to download, and is used in combination with DNR recreation facility maps throughout the state. Of course, most of Minnesota's State Parks and Trails are included and can be downloaded. You will want to download at home before you come out to the park, but try out Wild River's map next time you visit. Directions and downloads can be found on the MNDNR website at:

[www.dnr.state.mn.us/mobile/geopdf/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mobile/geopdf/index.html).

I was able to see this in the development stage and send in GPS coordinates to update some of our trails that we have had to adjust because of water or grooming. I found a few benefits to this new mapping. You can plot locations with photos, record routes and more. It is also available for some of our water trails too, so as you are on the river you can see where you are according to campsites and boat landings. I'll always be partial to paper maps, books and magazines and even a paper copy newsletter. Even so, new technology like this can make the job a little easier. Now if I can only figure out a way to answer the fall color questions on the map...

## Wild River in the press

Have you seen the most recent edition of the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer? Wild River State Park had a couple mentions for both its horse trails and its beautiful fall colors. Check out [www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/index.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/mcvmagazine/index.html) to subscribe to the magazine and to check out the articles. Also, check out our website, [www.friendsofwildriver.org](http://www.friendsofwildriver.org) and scroll down to the "DNR Fall Color Finder" link to check out fall color updates for Wild River State Park and across the state.



Thank you for your  
Membership

### FWRSP Membership Options

- Junior **Friend, 12 and under** – \$5 / year  
*Includes an "Action Guide" and other benefits*
- Individual **Friend** – \$20 / year
- Family **Friend** – \$35 / year
- Silver **Friend** – \$50 / year
- Gold **Friend** – \$100 / year
- Platinum **Friend** – \$250+ / year



Name:			
Address:			
City:			
State:		Zip:	
Email:			

*(We will never sell or trade your email address.)*

**Option 1:** Mail above with check to:  
 Jan Kozlovsky, FWRSP Treasurer  
 (make check out to "Friends of Wild River State Park")  
 17190 410<sup>th</sup> St.  
 North Branch, MN 55056

**Option 2:** Sign-up Online and use your credit card:

[www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org](http://www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org)

*We will never sell or trade your email address*

### Upcoming events

- October 6 – Fall Color Walk, 2 to 3:30 p.m.
- October 7 – Fall Color Photography, 10 to 11 a.m.
- October 13 – Wild River 5k Run/Walk, 8:30 a.m. registration, 10 a.m. race start time
- October 19 – The Great Cauldron Cache, 1 to 2 p.m.
- October 20 – Snakes of Wild River State Park, 1 to 2 p.m.
- February 9, 2019 – Candlelight Night
- March 9, 2019 – Pancake breakfast and Annual Meeting

Like us on Facebook!



Search for "Friends of Wild River State Park."

Friends of Wild River State Park  
 Bob Kessen  
 31145 Genesis Ave  
 Stacy, MN 55079-9417