



A Publication of the River Alliance of Wisconsin • Spring 2008 • Volume 14 • Issue 2

Friends at Every Bend

River Alliance members are our heart and soul

There is no organization without members. During its 15 years in business, the River Alliance has been generously and wisely served by scores of people who have gone well beyond dues-paying, and contributed time, energy and soul to the organization. Here we feature two members from different corners and eras of the organization: one is a founding member, the other discovered us recently. One is an academic, the other a business man and outdoorsman. They are different in many other ways. Read on to learn how river conservation, and the River Alliance, is "common water" between them.

Passion for Wild

Brad Werntz does good business through good conservation



by
Chris Clayton

There is no one way of going about protecting rivers. This organization has worked to protect rivers now for 15 years, yet the way we have approached our mission has depended on the changing influence of various folks who have contributed their various gifts.

River Alliance member Brad Werntz's approach to river conservation provides us with a different story than most. Brad cannot claim to be an academic, planner, educator, biologist, or trout fisherman. He runs a business called Pemba Serves, which acts as a sales representative for a smattering of outdoor apparel and equipment companies. He is certainly not the only businessman in our membership, but he has woven together job and spirit to help the River Alliance in his own unique way.

Yet in talking to Brad, I realized that the passion Brad so transparently expresses for rivers and wilderness is similar to what I have heard in River Alliance circles. For him, passion is the spark for both work and play.

Defining wilderness beyond the "wild"

Brad grew up in Arizona and Wyoming. As a youth, Brad made the most of the many wilderness opportunities those states offer. He has guided backcountry hiking trips through the Wind

River Range in Wyoming and has built and run trapper rafts with kids through rapids down the Green River.

A spirit for wilderness and adventure led him on trips all over the world. From canoeing the Boundary Waters and the Amazon to summiting Mount Everest, Aconcagua, and peaks in the Alaska Range, Brad has always found a way to pursue his passions, and got the chance to articulate them for publications like *Outside* and *Climbing* magazines, and to speak to audiences about the need to protect wilderness.

Brad is conscious about defining the meaning of the term "wilderness." For him, there is just as much wilderness around Madison as there is at any exotic locale stamped in his passport. He has seen large muskies and bass while swimming in Lake Monona and paddled underneath bald eagles on the lower Wisconsin River. A favorite bike ride on the Capital City Trail takes him past large wetlands, over creeks, and through green space. It is difficult to argue with him when he asserts his view that these places are wilderness – accessible and waiting to be experienced.

Continues on page 3...



The Chenoweth Chapter

Urban planning prof is a River Alliance founding father



by
Lori Grant

The River Alliance has recently efforts on the Wisconsin River or, as we refer to it, the state's Mother River. But the Wisconsin also played a major role in birthing the organization.

Rick Chenoweth, emeritus professor of urban and regional planning at UW-Madison, is an environmental psychologist with an interest in understanding how the physical environment affects human behavior and well-being. Our story begins in 1980, with a summer course on landscape planning along the lower Wisconsin River taught by Rick and his colleague, Ben Niemann.

The National Park Service had just qualified the lower Wisconsin for designation as a National Wild and Scenic River. However, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources determined that pursuing the designation would be politically difficult, and set about developing a conceptual plan for state protection of the river. Rick and Ben suspected DNR's plan would ignore protection of the spectacular bluffs and verdant shoreline along the river.

Their suspicions were confirmed when DNR issued a draft plan that addressed the river from bank to bank, with no consideration of the corridor as a whole. Rick had students in a summer

course he offered survey property owners and river enthusiasts. They found that the scenic beauty of the bluffs and shoreline was in fact its most valued asset.

From FLOW to RAW

The study got media attention, and DNR went back to the drawing board, forming a citizen advisory committee and planning task force. Rick instigated the formation of the Friends of the Lower Wisconsin, FLOW, the first local river group in the state, to establish a local constituency for protection of the river. In 1989, after years of meetings and contentious public debate, the legislature created the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway to protect and preserve the scenic beauty and natural character of the river valley. Performance standards for new development and forestry were established to protect the aesthetic integrity of the Riverway, with many of the standards closely mirroring the points made by participants in the 1980 survey.

Continues on page 3...



Denny Caneff
Executive Director
Stream of Thought



An Eye-blink of Time

As we recognize our 15th year in business as a river conservation organization, I also recognize that 15 years isn't very long. Maybe we shouldn't toot our horn too loudly.

I was reminded of the eye-blink of time that 15 years represents while traveling in France with my sons in March. We visited one of the scores of medieval-era churches found in every small village in Normandy. The plaque inside, attached to a foundation stone, said the church's foundation alone took 15 years to install; the rest of the edifice required another 112 years to complete.

On the other hand, in this fast-as-the-speed-of-electrons era, in which everything from government regimes to climate changes weekly, there's something to be said for a small nonprofit organization hanging in there for 15 years. For all the huff and bluster and ability to draw attention to ourselves, we nonprofits are fragile beings. We rarely own hard assets, like most businesses. We scrape up every nickel we spend from hither and yon; we don't sit on the kind of endowments that colleges enjoy, nor do we offer immortality, like buildings to name, or salvation, like churches can. Competition for attention (and therefore money) for "our issue" is intense, as every other nonprofit worth its tax-exempt status is telling the world why their cause is essential to human life and health.

Nonprofit, heal thyself

Sometimes we are done in not by outside forces of shifting public opinion or economic downturn, but by our own incompetence – bad management, founder's syndrome, feckless fund raising, failing to keep out on the edge of the issue that required your existence in the first place. There are at least two nonprofits in my career that are now extinct.

With the talent of my predecessors and the wisdom of the founders of this organization as the wind in my sails here (see our cover story about Rick Chenoweth), and with a great crew of staff members and a wise and astute board of directors, there's little chance this organization will join my list of erstwhile nonprofits. There is no guarantee, however: no one owes us our existence. The staff and board have to earn it from you, our members. The onus is on us to remain relevant, fresh, fiscally viable, and worth your money and attention.

Priorities change, core values don't

Our history can be summed up in four basic priorities: hydropower reform, small dam removal, water policy advocacy, and volunteer watershed group support. While we give less attention and fewer resources to dams work these days, we have expanded our definition of "river restoration" to include urban rivers and a sharper focus on the Wisconsin River. Policy issues will naturally change, but our commitment to support policies that protect rivers and aggressively challenge those that don't will remain a core value of the River Alliance. And though how we work with local watershed and river friends groups has changed, and will change again, that we work with them will not. Supporting volunteers in their local efforts to protect their home rivers is essential for the health of Wisconsin's flowing waters.

I won't attempt to speculate where the River Alliance will be 15 years hence. But it's safe to predict that a warmer climate, many more people, weaker government and scarcer and pricier hydrocarbon energy will shape the world we work in, and those forces will affect how we all use water.

Other more "micro forces" will affect us, but like the eddies below a dam working a canoe, it's hard to know how they will spin us. What resources will baby boomers retiring in 10 years have to give to nonprofits? Many Wisconsin nonprofits would be lost without the current crop of retirees and their generous gifts of time, wisdom and cash. Will the absence of better health care and a sensible retirement system keep people grinding it out on the job longer, cutting into their volunteerism and charity?

Will issues seem so "global" to people that supporting a local or statewide group will feel fruitless? In such a context, can organizations like the River Alliance offer to people something to do with a tangible impact (like, perhaps, doing restoration work or water monitoring that government once did) and thus keep us relevant and valuable?

One thing is sure: these watery channels that we call rivers will outlast us all. I plan to enjoy my eye-blink of time with them as much as I can.

Denny Caneff
Executive Director

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Wisconsin Rivers is a quarterly publication of the River Alliance of Wisconsin. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of our funders. Articles are invited for consideration.

Editor
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Designer
SilverLine Studio
Madison, Wisconsin

Printer
Wingra Printing Group
Madison, Wisconsin

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Pemba Serves River Alliance

Two events coincided on the way to Brad's forming a relationship with River Alliance. Pemba Serves, which Brad founded in 1991, became involved with an initiative called "1% For the Planet." This movement was founded by two successful businessmen who made a conscious choice to donate income from their businesses to activities supporting environmental protection, and it became a challenge to the business community to act as environmental stewards. Pemba Serves had become successful enough to take up that challenge, and Brad was looking to make a serious commitment to donating business income to an environmental organization. Coincidentally, he participated in a canoe trip down the lower Wisconsin River with a group of folks that included River Alliance board chair Lindsay Wood Davis.

River Alliance was just the type of organization Pemba Serves was looking to associate with. Brad has called Madison home for 17 years now, and it was important to him that his business establish a relationship with an organization focused on the protection of local resources. Valuing the practice of caring for one's surroundings, and in this case one's local economy, he also wanted to ensure that any financial donation would go to an organization patronizing local businesses. Also, River Alliance is an advocacy organization, and activities relating to the advocacy of local rivers are what Pemba Serves was looking to help fund.

A little over a year ago, a relationship involving funds, purpose, and, most importantly, people was set in motion. Pemba Serves now donates one percent of its gross income to the River Alliance, through an arrangement with Badger Barter (<http://www.badgerbarter.com>).

Lake Havasu and Lake Michigan Share a Fate

Brad's concern for water issues came from his intimate knowledge of Lake Havasu, an impoundment of the Colorado River at the Arizona-California border. The series of pumps and aqueducts which lifts water out of the Colorado basin and carries it to large urban centers in the southwestern U.S. comprises a massive infrastructure little known to Midwesterners. The fact that the Colorado River delta is greatly diminished by water use upstream, and that water needs in the southwestern U.S. continue to grow, underscore, in Brad's thinking, the importance of the Great Lakes Compact.

The Compact is one major issue about which he and the River Alliance share common ground. A second shared concern is ensuring Wild River



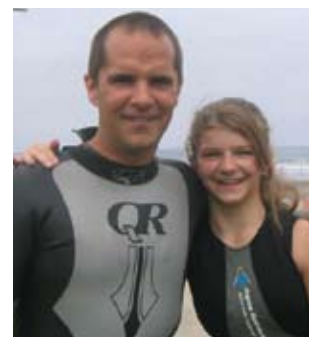
Brad camping with the "OWLS" on the Lower Wisconsin River. Photos courtesy Brad Wertz

designations for some of Wisconsin's northern rivers. As Brad sees it, the protection of green space adjacent to "wild" rivers is a way to help ensure access for those wanting to enjoy the "wildness" of those rivers.

Brad appreciates an approach to these issues that is broad-based and pragmatic. He cites River Alliance's focus on non-point pollution as a good example of this approach. Working with agriculture and farmers to support the use of best practices should coincide with a focus on protecting river corridors against unfettered urban and agricultural development. All the while, several communities in Wisconsin are searching for ways to revitalize their urban centers, and the River Alliance is working to make river restoration a key ingredient of urban revitalization.

Fun, charity are good business

One question Brad constantly poses to his staff at Pemba Serves (and to anyone visiting their web site and blog, www.pembaserves.com) is: How will we interact and recreate with our local environment? In addition to donating one percent of his business' income to River Alliance, Pemba Serves has created an ad hoc board of directors that includes a Minister of Fun and a Minister of Charity. The idea is to get employees out of the office to have fun in the local environment and to help provide some muscle-power for local charities. He considers this all a part of doing good business.

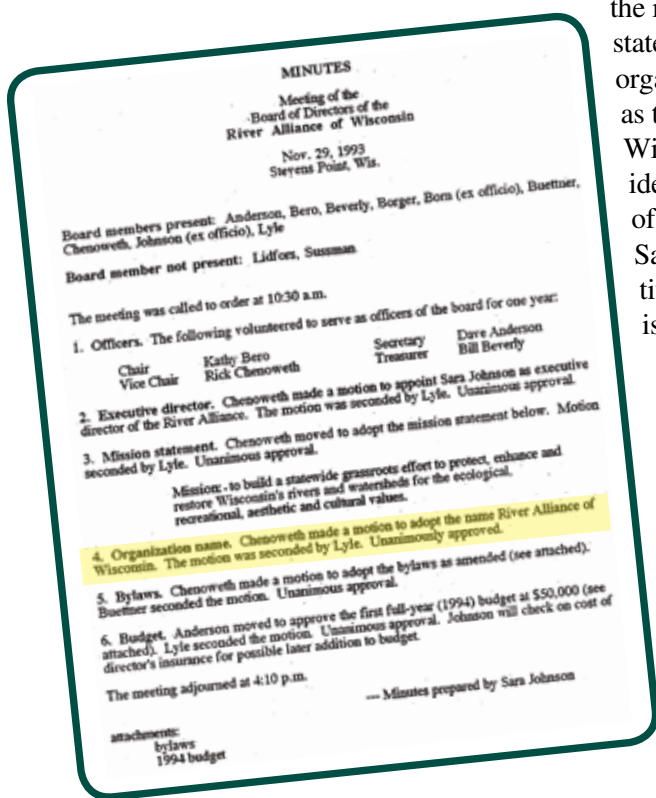


Brad Wertz with daughter Emma, at La Jolla Cove, California.

The Chenoweth Chapter continues from page 1...

A few years after this grand success, a paper Rick had published about Wisconsin's legal authority to protect scenic beauty caught the eye of River Network, a national organization promoting statewide river programs. River Network had also heard about FLOW and the formation of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway, and called Rick to plant the seed of scaling up his efforts statewide. With a little prompting and the offer of a bit of start-up funding, Rick and his graduate assistant Sara Johnson hatched

the idea of establishing a statewide river advocacy organization, to be known as the River Alliance of Wisconsin (RAW). The idea got traction, a board of directors was formed, Sara became the executive director, and the rest is history.



Minutes of the second meeting of the fledgling river organization's board of directors (November 1993), at which Rick Chenoweth proposes that the organization be named "River Alliance of Wisconsin."

Start-up was tough, but done right

A self-described Midwest boy with a deep appreciation for the scenic value of our waterways, Rick admits that the start-up of the River Alliance was not all that much fun.

"It wasn't started to put out a brush fire," he notes, "but to address long-term river protection in the state." Instead of leaping into the fray with a burning cause to fight, he remembers his first few years as a board member consumed with learning how to form an organization, figuring

out a mission, understanding how to function as a board, creating bylaws and deciding the relationship between the board and executive director.

"It was all aimed at creating the foundation for a healthy organization," he recalls.

Many of the issues that first board grappled with sound very familiar: How do we grow, how do we raise funds to support our mission, do we revise our mission to better chase the funding? As any non-profit organization can attest, these are ongoing challenges for all of us, but thanks to the diligence and creativity of Rick and other founding board members, the River Alliance had a well-built foundation that got us through the first fifteen years, and will serve us well beyond.

Rick is especially proud of an early decision made by the board to define what the River Alliance would stand for.

"We had to decide: Do we want to be radical naysayers, or do we play a less adversarial role?" The board had observed other groups lose credibility and effectiveness by digging in their heels, and decided on the latter. "It's a significant achievement that the River Alliance is perceived as reasonable, even by legislators and others who may not agree with us philosophically." That tradition continues, and has allowed us to work collaboratively with DNR, the legislature and industry.

The original board also emphasized helping local groups to start up around the state as a means of building a statewide coalition of river protectors. In our first 15 years, we've helped build and support local groups all over the state. Rick sees an important role for us in the future, showing these groups how to use community-based social marketing to affect change in their communities, encouraging protection of all the values of our rivers.

"Looking back at the start-up of the River Alliance, and looking at the state of the organization today from my long-term perspective, wow! It's very impressive the way the River Alliance has grown and matured, become effective. We are *the* river organization for this state, and our presence is known and respected."

Now on the board of Scenic Wisconsin, Rick continues to support the River Alliance, bring new ideas for our future in protecting our state's beautiful rivers, and promote community-based social marketing as the means to change behavior in favor of protection our natural resources – interrupted, as often has he can, with fly fishing adventures.



RIVER ALLIANCE of Wisconsin

2007 Annual Report

Like a River

River Alliance came from somewhere, always going someplace



Lindsay Wood Davis

Part of the magic of rivers is that they're always going someplace. Our imagination can take us away as surely as the river can, just as it did for the first people who followed in the receding glaciers' melt, the Voyageurs and their Jesuit compatriots, the waves of settlers who followed them.

But rivers don't just flow, they flow somewhere. As we reflect on the work of the River Alliance in 2007, it becomes clear that we protect not just a river's flow, but protect where it flows from, and where it flows to.

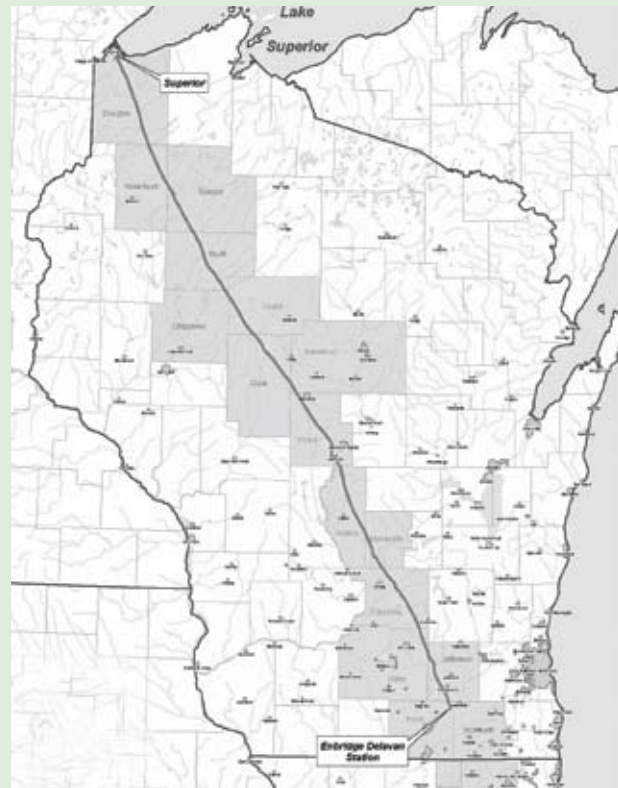
Little Rivers, Big Issues

2007 was a year that ranges this spectrum. We worked with "where they flow from" issues like the continuing problem of **groundwater depletion** in the central sands region. The now annual disappearance of the Little Plover River in Portage County has become a poster river for this increasingly obvious problem. We have been called on more and more to provide technical expertise in groundwater issues throughout Wisconsin.

One huge issue of "where they flow to" was the fight over the **Enbridge pipeline**, the largest single construction project going on in the state right now. It cuts across the state, where over 250 streams flow. You know it when you see it. Under pressure mandated by the so-called "Jobs Creation Act," DNR approved the pipeline as having "no environmental impact." Your River Alliance, in conjunction with the



River Alliance photos



Wisconsin Wetlands Association and Midwest Environmental Advocates, challenged the DNR assertion in court. Our challenge was unsuccessful and construction of this monster project continues unabated.

More successfully, the River Alliance continued its efforts to restore urban rivers, especially a plan to restore the **Root River** where it flows through downtown Racine into Lake Michigan. The Alliance has become a fulcrum organization in building a strong coalition of river advocates there to bring a **riverfront redevelopment** plan to fruit.

For years, the promise of the laws to control **polluted runoff from agriculture** was hollow – the funding was never sufficient. We led a coalition of groups and convinced the Governor and legislators that the state has to invest in "non-point pollution." We got their attention – \$7 million was added for this biennium to the non-point fund.

Maybe the ultimate effort in protecting "where the rivers flow to" is the **Great Lakes Compact**. 2007 was a year where all of us who support this critical piece of legislation struggled to get the Legislature to pay attention. By the time you read this, perhaps the special session of the Legislature called by the Governor will have succeeded in bringing a completed Compact to his desk. The River Alliance has worked with a broad coalition in making a strong Compact a reality. Here's a special tip of the hat to state Rep. Cory Mason, sponsor of the Compact in the Assembly and a member of the Board of Directors of your River Alliance. Cory's work on this has been both masterful and tireless.

Continues next page...

Foundations and Businesses

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River Valley State Bank
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Third Wave Research
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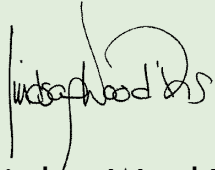
Donations from individuals, businesses and organizations keep your rivers healthy for all. Thanks!

Your Support Keeps Us Flowing

Any nonprofit organization devotes a great deal of time and energy to fundraising. Organizations such as ours depend on you, our members, for the financial means and moral support to accomplish our work. 2007 saw a big increase in our important “**Voyageurs**” level of membership. These are River Alliance members who make a minimum \$1000 annual gift. Their support is critical to the efforts of this organization. I offer the thanks of the organization and its Board of Directors to you, Voyageurs.

All of this serious work needed to be balanced with fun. In 2007 we greatly expanded the number of paddling and social events, including a wonderful celebration of the **Wisconsin River** in the fall and a spectacular May fundraiser at the opening of Robert Redford’s **Sundance Cinema** in Madison; they’ll be talking about that one for years!

Thanks to you, the members of the River Alliance of Wisconsin, our vital work is able to continue. You can be proud that day in and day out, “We Save Rivers.”



Lindsay Wood Davis
Chair, Board of Directors

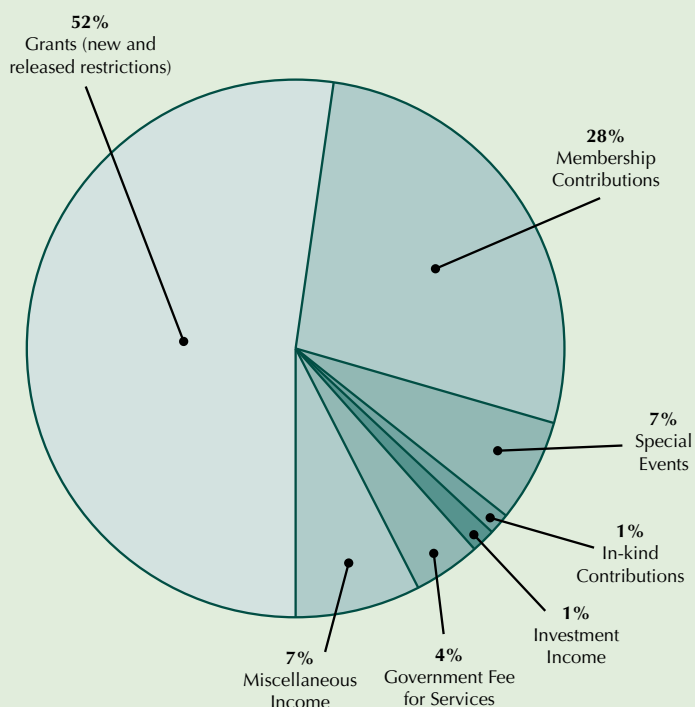


Revenue and Support

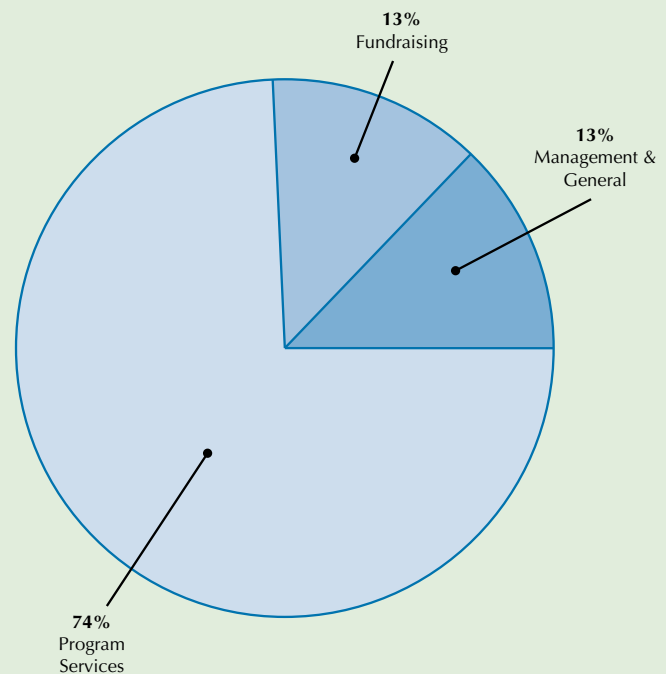
Grants (new and released restrictions)	\$269,360
Government Fee for Services	\$21,470
Membership Contributions	\$143,435
In-kind Contributions	\$6,194
Special Events	\$34,711
Investment Income	\$7,549
Miscellaneous Income	\$36,189
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$518,908

Functional Expenses

Personnel	\$392,763
Professional Fees	\$29,030
Printing and Postage	\$45,122
Special Events	\$300
Rent	\$34,337
Phone and Internet	\$7,688
Travel	\$10,832
Office Equipment	\$1,357
Supplies	\$4,981
Depreciation	\$10,832
Dues and Subscriptions	\$1,872
Insurance	\$1,252
Other	\$49,685
TOTAL	\$590,051



Expenses - Program vs Administrative



This Fund is for pioneers willing to push on their paddles to protect the flowing waters of our state.

Join our growing list of dedicated supporters in this important and rewarding adventure. You’ll receive special recognition for your contribution, invitations to exclusive events for Voyageurs (e.g. engaging speakers and guided river outings), personal contact with Board and staff members, and the satisfaction of sustaining the River Alliance for the long voyage ahead. Contact Denny Caneff for information. 608.257.2424, or email dcaneff@wisconsinrivers.org.



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|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Grant Abert | Patricia A. Juday |
| Todd Ambs | Richard Kark |
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| E. T. Juday | Emily Stanley |
| | David Worth |

Make a Date with a River!

We've got another great slate of outdoor events for 2008. Visit www.wisconsinrivers.org or call 608.257.2424 x121 to learn more and sign up today!

Please note: advance registration is required for all events.

2nd Annual Running the Root

Saturday, May 3, 10 a.m. to noon

\$10/person (includes refreshments), **\$10 for boat rental** (limited supplies)



During the last year, the River Alliance has been engaging citizens in a meaningful dialogue about improving the Root River in downtown Racine. Learn more about this effort and offer feedback on recommended next steps while enjoying a spring paddle on an urban river. The event is part of Root River Revival, a day-long celebration of the grand opening of UW-Parkside's new riverside Root River Environmental Education Community Center (REC).

The paddle will start and end at the REC Center. As we paddle through downtown, we'll stop to learn about the recommendations that will be presented in a Root River Revitalization Plan later this spring. After touring the downtown section of the river we will spend some time in the park section upstream of the REC Center.

Spring on the Kickapoo

Saturday, May 10, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

\$25/person (includes lunch)

Join us for an early spring run on the upper reach of the fabled Kickapoo River with veteran paddler Ron Rosner. You'll learn about how the Kickapoo almost became a huge lake and the protracted battle to save the river from a proposed dam. Ron Rosner was active with the Sierra Club in the 1970s and joined the battle.



Photo courtesy Ron Rosner.

He will be joined on this excursion by members of the Valley Stewardship Network, a local grassroots watershed organization; they will describe what they are doing currently to protect the Kickapoo.

We'll begin at Landing 4 and stop along the way to hike to the top of Mt. Pisgah to get an eagle's view of the Kickapoo Valley. We'll continue paddling downstream to Landing 7. Beginning paddlers are welcome on this trip, but be prepared for quick turns and occasional hanging trees. Our limit is 16 boats, so register now!



River Alliance photos

Baraboo Float and Riverfront Tour

Friday, May 30, 1 to 4 p.m., \$25/person

As part of recognizing the River Alliance's 15 years of river conservation work, we'll revisit the Baraboo River, where four dam removals several years ago, and the resulting dramatic benefits to the river, put dam removal on the map in Wisconsin and helped establish the organization's reputation as a player in river restoration.

We'll begin at Haskins Park in West Baraboo and end at Glenville Landing, the former site of the Glenville (Linen Mill) Dam. We'll stop along the way to learn about the city of Baraboo's ambitious plans to increase the activity along the river and connect people with historic downtown and waterfront.

After the paddle, we will quench our thirst at a local watering hole and partake in the requisite Friday night fish fry. While these additional events are optional, we hope you will share in the fun!

Wilderness Shores Paddle on the Menominee

Saturday, June 21, \$25/person

Celebrate the beginning of summer with a paddle on the Menominee River and learn about the 1997 Wilderness Shores Settlement, a breakthrough agreement on hydropower dam regulation.

Bikes and Brews on the Sugar River

Thursday, July 17, \$15/person

Get a view of the Sugar River from the state bike trail that runs beside it, then join us for refreshments and conversation on a summer evening.

3rd Annual Milky Moonlight in Milwaukee

Thursday, August 14, \$25/person

Learn about urban river revitalization efforts and experience the beauty of the moon rising over Lake Michigan on a paddle through the heart of Milwaukee's downtown.



Paddle the Wisconsin to Louis' Bluff

Saturday, October 4, \$25/person

Paddle the Upper Dells of the Wisconsin River, then hike to the top of Louis' Bluff, a historic promontory permanently protected by its owners.

Mississippi Bluff Hike

Saturday, October 11, \$15/person

Enjoy a majestic overlook of the Mississippi River from Maiden Rock Bluff State Natural Area and tour nearby sites preserved by the West Wisconsin Land Trust.

Thanks to our generous 2008 event sponsors!

Alliant Energy • DeWitt, Ross and Stevens • MG&E • Organic Valley • Tom's of Maine





Program Update

Invaded!

The River Alliance of Wisconsin is taking on aquatic invasive species. Aquatic invasives have gained the attention of lake organizations statewide as a serious threat to their ecology and the recreational potential. But what about our riverine ecosystems?

Starting now, we will work with the Wisconsin DNR and other partners to assess the potential threats that four species (rusty crayfish, Japanese knotweed, zebra mussels, and Asian carp) pose to our rivers. By this summer we will identify which rivers and watersheds are most threatened. By the fall we plan to reach out to local groups in these watersheds to help them protect their home waters from invasion. This project will be led by River Alliance river restoration assistant Laura Lueders.

This project is supported the Aquatic Invasive Species Control Grant Program of the Wisconsin DNR, and we thank them for their support.

Staff Flows

Last month we bade farewell to our membership and outreach manager of 7 years, **Michael “Otis” Lavitschke**, whose considerable talents showed up in just about every phase of the River Alliance’s business, from managing the data base to being the principal architect of events big and small. We miss him, and wish him well in his new life at UW Health as an IT systems analyst.

And it’s back to the future for **Laura Lueders**, whose return, and return again, to the River Alliance is always a good deal for us. Laura was here five years ago as an intern, returned part time last year to assist on several river restoration projects, and now joins us full time as the coordinator of invasive species project described above. She will continue to assist us in other river restoration projects as well.

Making Sure Ag Polluted Runoff Money is Well Spent

Five years after the Wisconsin Legislature adopted strong rules to control polluted runoff from farm fields – with the caveat that farmers need not comply unless the state offered to reimburse them at least 70% of the cost of their efforts – the Legislature finally provided significant funding to the cost-share pot. The River Alliance and a consortium of conservation organizations worked for well over a year to make sure every legislator understood the importance of providing funding to help reduce the greatest threat to our waterways.

Once the air cleared after last year’s contentious budget debate, we were thrilled to discover that \$25 million had been allocated for the next two years – most for barnyard improvements and manure storage, but a full \$7 million to help farmers prepare nutrient management plans. These plans are required for all farms, and are key to keeping nutrients, such as fertilizers and manure, in the soil instead of running off into streams.

Now that funding is available, we want to make sure it’s spent in a way that it actually improves water quality. To find out how effective nutrient management plans have been to date, we interviewed a number of natural resource managers who work with farms around the state. The resulting report, *Can We Plan Our Way to Cleaner Water?* (go to www.wisconsinrivers.org and look for this title) finds that while there are more plans being prepared, there is little oversight to make sure the plans are being followed.

The report recommends that funds be targeted to the farms most in need of pollution management; that planning be simplified and more training be provided to farmers so that they can prepare and have ownership in their plans; and support be provided to farmers to help them implement their plans. We hope our findings will open a dialogue among conservation organizations and state and local agencies and lead to a comprehensive strategy to make sure plans aren’t just stuck on a shelf in the barn, or lost in state bureaucratic machinations, but are used effectively to protect our waterways.

Monitors Spring into Action

Spring is the heavy season for volunteer citizen monitors, and River Alliance begins its third year in partnership with the Wisconsin Dept. of Natural Resources on the Citizen Based Stream Monitoring Program.

In 2006 and 2007, 15 local watershed groups completed training sessions to monitor four stream quality parameters (transparency, dissolved oxygen, pH, and temperature). The groups successfully completed training, followed proper use of equipment and monitoring protocols, and recorded and submitted data. By the end of 2007, 130 individual participants collected data from 140 monitoring sites statewide, and quality assurance checks indicated a very high level of confidence in data collected by citizens.

This season, the program is growing. The DNR hired Deb Deppeler to take on data management tasks. Deb has been monitoring Token Creek, just outside of Madison, for the past two years. (Welcome, Deb!) This is good news: it will allow for a smoother running program. Also, we will soon train new groups of citizen monitors this season, as well as continue to work with all 2007 participants.

The data collected over the past two years are valued by the DNR. For example, in the west central part of the state, a stream biologist used data collected by students from Galesville Ettrick Trempealeau High School to develop a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) report for sediment-choked Hardies Creek.

The work citizens do to monitor streams around the state matters a great deal, and the River Alliance enjoys getting our feet with them again this season.





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2008 Spring Confluence

Over 100 people joined our River Champions Peter McAvoy, Chris Murphy, and Neal Brandt and Ruth Bauer (representing the late Paul Brandt) at our 15th Anniversary Spring Confluence April 5. Thank you to all who came, to all who didn't come but contributed, and to our business sponsors.



River Champions Valley Stewardship Network (group of four on the left); Peter McAvoy, 16th St. Community Health Center; Chris Murphy, Adams County Land & Water Conservation Dept.; and Neal Brandt and Ruth Bauer.



Lori Grant and Jamie Saul with founding board members (and high school classmates) Bill Beverly and Cy Lyle.



Amanda Davis and
Hannah Hudson



Ruth Bauer



Emma Wood and George Kraitt



Wisconsin Rivers

Everyone deserves healthy rivers

Volume 14 • Issue 2 • Spring 2008

Looking Back, Flowing Ahead

River Rats, Young and Old(er)

For You: The Root, the 'Poo, the 'Boo
Invaded!

2007 Annual Report

