



# Annual Report

## 2017-2018

Friends of Five Rivers • 56 Game Farm Rd • Delmar, NY 12054

[www.FriendsofFiveRivers.org](http://www.FriendsofFiveRivers.org) • (518) 475-0295 • [FriendsFiveRivers@outlook.com](mailto:FriendsFiveRivers@outlook.com)

### Friends Staff

Joanne Macklin  
*Executive Director*

Nancy Conway  
*Program Director*

Nancy Payne  
*Environmental Educator*

### Board of Directors 2017-2018

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*Vice President*

Dan Berry  
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From our President: Building on Success

For the Friends of Five Rivers, fiscal year 2017-2018 was the first full year for the Guided School (GSP) and other programs since the official opening of the new Visitor Center at Five Rivers. Increased awareness of the Center came with increased demand. More and more schools now know of GSP's unique outdoor science classroom on the grounds of your beloved Five Rivers; they recognize that an experience there begins a lifelong interest in the natural world, provides enrichment for language and visual arts, and beyond. Adults and families seeking in-the-field education sought us out for Talk and Trek and Family Fun Programs as well.

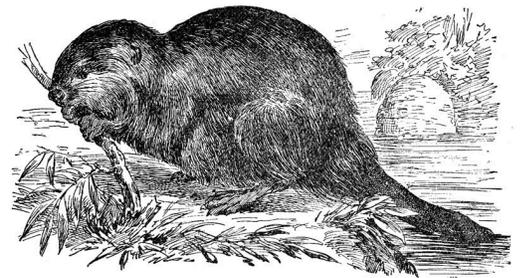
As you will read in the reports inside, our exceptional professionals met the demand. Through creative staffing and scheduling, by calling on the committed volunteer instructors, and with generous support from the Center's DEC staff, we were able to welcome almost every school that wished to send students to us. Prudent use of financial resources played no small part in taking on the challenge of running the programs and special events like the Amazing Race.

Yes, it is a pleasure to look back on the last year.

The work of the Board of Directors, however, is to look forward! We take seriously our responsibility to guarantee the health and strength of the Friends into the future. To that end, the Board is working even harder on projects such as securing corporate sponsorships and raising our profile throughout the neighboring communities. It is with confidence that we can more boldly move to increase fundraising for administration and salaries (for which grants are not generally available), because you, our members and donors, have demonstrated ongoing support. We will be inviting you to attend events, to volunteer and to donate to special projects. Your investment has sustained us from the beginning; your pride in our organization buoys us. Not for a moment can we forget that you are behind us.

In June, we were delighted to support collaboration by NYSDEC and the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy that resulted in the acquisition and protection of a parcel that added 38 acres to the existing footprint of Five Rivers. We were able commit funds raised during the earliest years of our existence; those monies were raised specifically for the mission of assisting with land acquisition and restricted for that purpose. Just as bold steps were taken years ago by founding Friends with foresight, your generosity similarly advances our current educational mission into the future.

We know how much you care about your organization. The Friends looks forward to working with you to meet the needs ahead - needs that arise from the success you have already made possible! Thank you!



## From Joanne Macklin, Executive Director

The Friends of Five Rivers have had another successful 2017-2018 year:

- Our membership numbers are strong.
- Attendance at our Guided School Program lessons reached capacity for the spring and fall. Attendance was high also for the seasonal Family Fun Program - around 235 children ages 2-12 and their guardians.

Our programming for adults is growing. The Talk n' Trek program continues to grow. We have contracted with MVP Medicare to provide seasonal guided walks for their members.

- We received grants from the Hudson River Estuary Program, the Albany Convention & Visitors' Bureau Fund and the Sidford Family Fund to support our efforts to design an environmental education garden at Five Rivers.

We thank the Michaelson Family Fund and the Stewart's Holiday Match for their support of our honey bee programs. We thank the Dean Graham Foundation, the Repass-Rodgers Family Foundation and the Rhodes Memorial Fund for your general support of the Friends of Five Rivers.

We are grateful to the Mohawk Hudson Land Conservancy for all their work in obtaining the additional 35 acres along Fisher Blvd and supporting the conservation easement to bring a trail into Five Rivers in the near future.

The tremendous support from our members and the community has provided over 5,000 students of all ages the opportunity to participate in our environmental education adventures. These experiences leave lasting impressions. Our goal has been, and will continue to be, to provide those lasting memories, and to improve and increase them as resources grow.

We are very thankful for the hard work of our volunteers who so generously make most of what we do possible. At the same time, as we grow, we are in need of additional volunteers - greeters for the Visitors Center, Guided School Program Instructors, and board and committee members. If you have a talent in public relations, fund raising, teaching and/or science – please consider donating it to Five Rivers.

### **Members & Volunteers**

**Current Members: 532**

**New Members: 62**

**Volunteer Hours: 9,500**

We invite you to share your stories and photos of your visits to Five Rivers with us via email or Facebook. Please "like" Friends of Five Rivers on Facebook, and visit our website [www.FriendsOfFiveRivers.org](http://www.FriendsOfFiveRivers.org). Contact us for more information on any of our programs and events, or to share your ideas and input. Thank you for your support. Hope to see you out on the trails or at one of our events!



## From Nancy Conway: Our Educational Programs

Environmental Education Program Director

### **Guided School Program**

Often visitors are greeted by a chorus of song birds, crickets and bull frogs as they arrive at Five Rivers. Groups visiting to take part in a Guided School Program lesson have the additional gift of always being greeted by friendly, enthusiastic, knowledgeable guides to whom I am eternally grateful. There is rarely a dull moment in the Guided School Program. You see, the end of construction brought an increase in school visitation. This year a total of 3,548 students and 989 adult chaperones ventured out on guided lessons to explore nature. May the environment, and the program, be fortunate enough to continue this volume of patronage for years to come!

**2017-2018 Highlights**

Middle School and High School teachers have discovered the Guided School Program. The study of a pond's health through the collection of macroinvertebrates naturally engages students' curiosity, bringing to life the scientist within them. Teachers have found they can build on this experience through classroom activities including ethics, art and language arts.

The Birds, Birds, Birds lesson developed for pre-school to second grade students has taken flight. This year nearly 200 students visited to learn about birds and their unique adaptations and migratory needs. The incorporation of numerous hands-on activities has resonated with teachers and students alike.

Friends now maintains three honeybee hives at Five Rivers. This work has inspired the development of adult and parent/child programs. This year Friends offered two such programs: Introduction to Honeybees (June) and the Honey Program: Creation and Extraction Processes (July).

The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Amazing Earth Day RACE at Five Rivers was held on April 20th. Fifteen teams registered for this cooperative night of activities. Teams were made up of toddlers and their parents, high school students, senior citizens and everything in between. Everyone seemed to enjoy this friendly competition created to benefit the Scholarship Fund.



**2018-2019 Looking Ahead**

As visitation increases, so does the need for volunteer instructors. If you or someone you know enjoys the outdoors and would like to share your enthusiasm with children, please contact us. Friends will be working on comprehensive public relations plan to recruit instructors and further increase participation in GSP lessons.



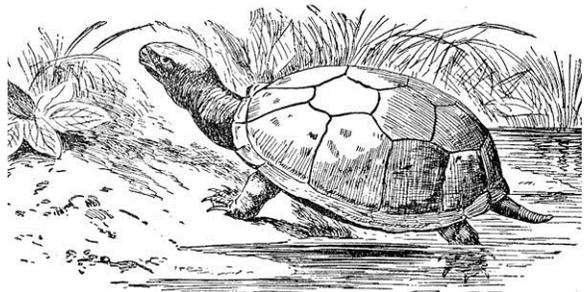
The 5th Annual Amazing Earth Day RACE is planned for April 19. Save the date and watch for details in Friends' newsletters on how to volunteer or participate on team.

Talk and Trek is back with a Fall Series entitled Bee Curious! We will discuss an aspect of a honeybee colony before heading out for a walk on the property. Friends of Five Rivers has begun to extract honey from the hives for use in GSP programs as well as for sale at the Book Store. A byproduct of honey extraction is beeswax. Over the last year, we have been working to develop a safe, hands-on program in which participants can learn about wax and create a wax mold or candle. Keep an eye out for this program come winter.

If you have an idea for a program or for a lesson you'd like to see offered, please stop in for a chat. While things are literally hopping in our neck of the woods, you are always welcome!

**Family Fun Programs**

With the vision and skill of our master environmental educator, Nancy Payne, families with young children now enjoy year-round adventures at Five Rivers in growing numbers. This seasonal program runs from November—March and July through August. We hosted over 235 participants during these months. While the summer programs are for adults with children 2-8, the Family Fun Program offers the riches of Five Rivers to preschoolers and their caregivers. Both programs start with a story, then a guided walk, and a take-home craft activity.



Friends of Five Rivers  
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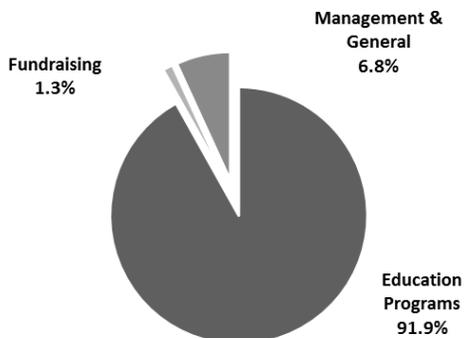
## Financial Position for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2018

The Friends of Five Rivers is a charitable not-for-profit corporation formed in 1972 by a group of concerned citizens. Our mission is to support environmental education at the Five Rivers Environmental Education Center in Delmar, NY, which is a facility of the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation. The corporation's independent accountant review report for FY 2017-2018 is available upon request. The Friends conducts the following activities:

**Guided School Program • Family Programs • Adult Education • Internships • Scholarships**  
**Accessible Trails • Wildlife Garden • Center Greeters • Fall Festival • Birdseed Sale • Land Protection**

**Net Assets for FY 2017-2018: \$278,267 (2016-2017: \$275,609)**

### Expenditures: \$192,772



### Revenue: \$194,365

