



ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

Friends of Five Rivers – Supporting Environmental Education
56 Game Farm Road, Delmar, NY 12054 • Phone: 518-475-0295

www.FriendsofFiveRivers.org

Friends is a not-for-profit charitable organization 501c3 • EIN: 23-7309978

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The mission of Friends of Five Rivers is to support environmental education at Five Rivers Environmental Education Center as well as to enhance the experience of visitors to Five Rivers and to promote the interests of the Center.

BOARD PRESIDENT – RANDY COBURN

Board President – Randy Coburn

The 2019-20 fiscal year began like any other. Summer Family Fun, Honey Bees and Beekeeping, Fall Festival, Guided School Programs, Family Fun and Talk and Trek all churning along nicely.

As we celebrated the New Year, winter events were held and planning for the Guided School Program and other spring programs were on schedule. The Center was open and volunteer greeters were welcoming and engaging visitors to enhance their experience at the Center. We had every reason to think it would be another great year of quality environmental education at Five Rivers.

And then the world changed.

COVID-19 was that jolting change. The Center closed and all programming was cancelled in the Spring. Revenues from the Guided School Program all but disappeared.

Joanne Macklin retired as Executive Director after many years of great accomplishments. Her leadership and commitment to Five Rivers have been missed. The Executive Committee stepped up to fill the void and keep things as normal as possible.

Board meetings are being hosted via technology provided by DEC. Committee meetings are done over Zoom or conference calls. We continue to transition to a virtual environment to enable administrative tasks to be completed online.

Our environmental educators, Nancy Conway, Nancy Payne and Alex Garrigan-Piela, devised new ways to provide hands-on education safely and cost-effectively. Training for volunteer instructors continued. Programs continued to be developed and programming restarted in July.

Parks and Trails NY provided us a one-year grant to help build capacity for outreach and development. Carolyn Dunn was retained to devise a plan of action and has since been hired as our Development and Outreach Coordinator to sustain focus on our development goals. Many thanks to her for stepping up and working hard to fully engage our friends, organize events, communicate the impact of our programs, and hopefully increase our financial support.

Friends of Five Rivers was successful in securing a small business loan under the Payment Protection Program to enable us to retain our staff during the crisis. We have already applied to the Small Business Administration for conversion of the loan to a grant and are confident we meet all the criteria for this to happen.

BOARD PRESIDENT – RANDY COBURN

A special and heartfelt thanks to the family of Peggy and Herb Repass for their many years of continuous and generous support to our mission of environmental education at Five Rivers.

The crisis created challenges for all of us, yet many of you maintained your membership or responded to appeals with generous donations. New members have joined. Volunteers remain committed. Many thanks to all our supporters who have helped us through this challenge. For those of you who prefer to remain anonymous, we respect your wishes and for everyone else, we are glad to be able to list you as a supporter in this report.

We need you, as well as new friends, now more than ever.

Randy Coburn



TREASURER'S REPORT – DAN BERRY

Treasurer's Report – Dan Berry

The Friends' Financial Reports, including the IRS 2019 Return (Form 990) and the NYS Annual Financial Report for Charitable Organizations (CHAR500), prepared by an independent accountant, are available to the public. Following is a summary of the Friends' financial performance fiscal year ending June 30, 2020.

OVERALL PICTURE

Operational revenue and spending increased in the current year with revenue fortunately outpacing expenses by \$2,822. Overall, total revenue as reported in the IRS 990 increased over the prior year by \$37,976 to \$202,987, while total spending increased by \$20,837 to \$200,165.

BREAKDOWN OF OPERATING REVENUE

The largest sources of operating revenue at 38% each were from government grants (\$77,081) followed closely by non-government grants and donations at 36% (\$72,782). Paid membership dues of \$29,026 accounted for 14% of total operating revenue, consistent with the \$29,676 in membership dues received the prior year. Program fee revenue at 9% increased from \$15,119 the prior year to \$18,114 despite the necessary cancellation of nearly all spring Guided School Program lessons but fell short of budget projections by \$7,655. The remaining 3% of revenue totaling \$5,984 came from bookstore sales and other ancillary sources.

BREAKDOWN OF SPENDING

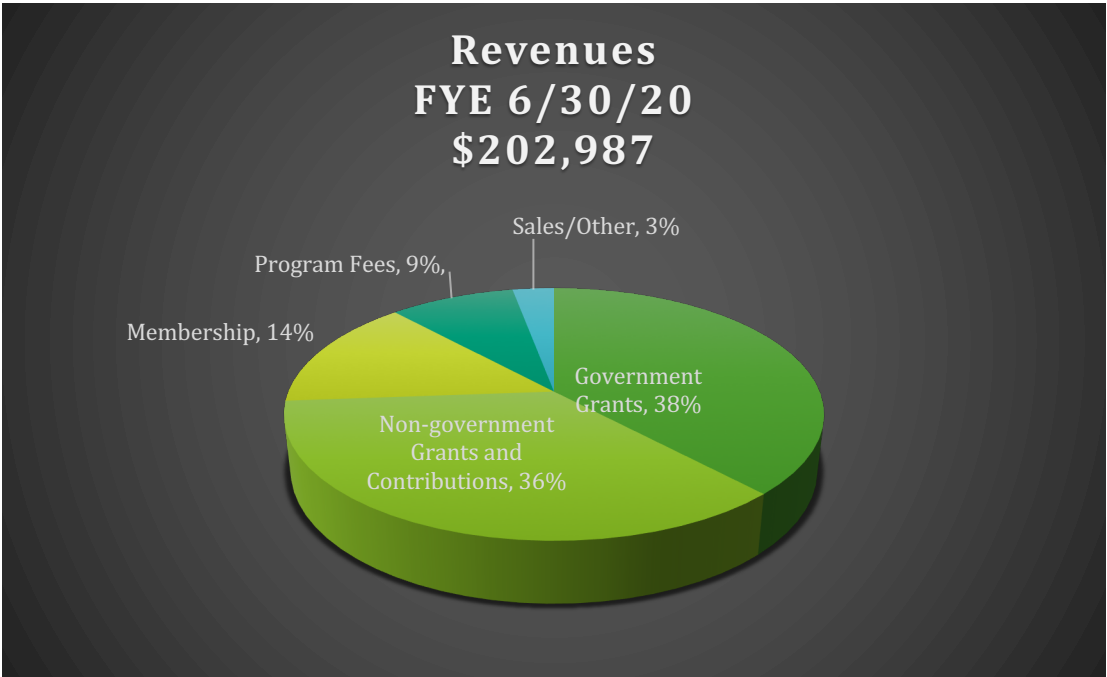
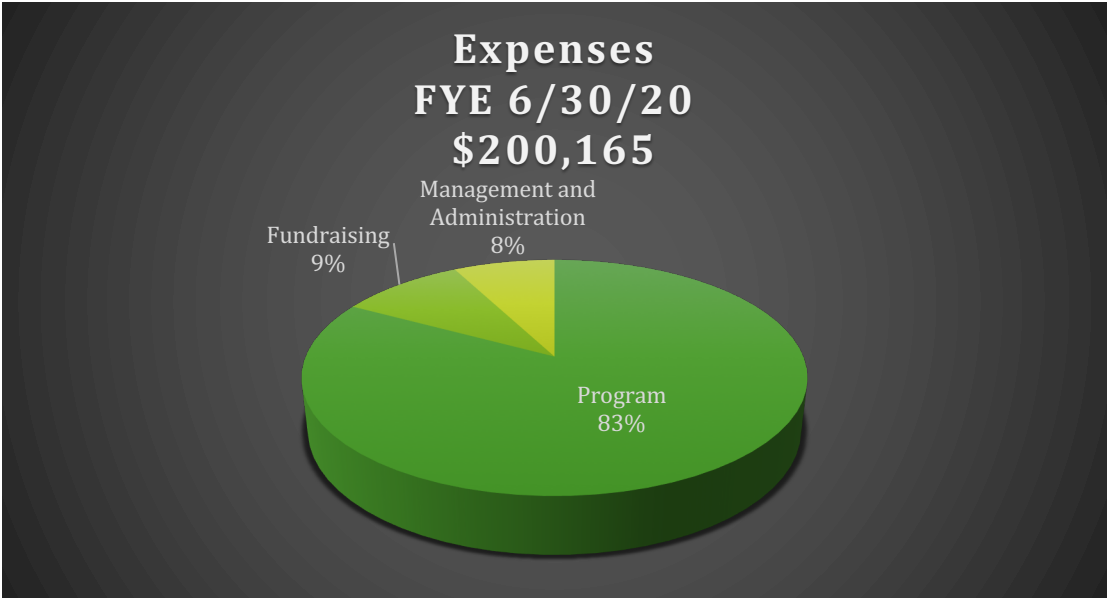
Program expenses of \$166,031 accounting for 83% of total spending, was appropriately the largest area of spending and a \$1,806 increase over the prior year. Fundraising expenses at 9% accounted for the second largest area of spending at \$18,695, a dramatic increase over the 1% spent on fundraising in prior years. Management and administration accounted for the remaining \$15,439 or 8%, consistent with the prior year.

The large increase in the proportion of spending on fundraising was driven by the Board's decision to add a full-time Development and Outreach Coordinator to the staff to increase focus in those areas, particularly fundraising. With funding obtained from a \$31,500 Parks and Trails NY grant, Carolyn Dunn was hired in June 2019 to fill this role.

TREASURER'S REPORT – DAN BERRY

END OF YEAR ACCOUNT BALANCES

Cash account balances on June 30, 2020 totaled \$250,245 compared to \$245,023 at the beginning of the year. Of this amount, \$107,623 was restricted to a specific purpose either by the donor or by Board action and \$142,622 was unrestricted. Total net assets for the year increased to \$259,531.



EDUCATION PROGRAMMING REPORT – NANCY CONWAY

Education Programming Report – Nancy Conway

The Guided School Program’s instructor motto is **Flexibility**. Defined as the ability to change without breaking, flexibility is a key trait for successful guiding. Unforeseen events will occur, and how an instructor chooses to proceed makes all the difference. By choosing to be flexible, instructors help children create positive memories of their time outdoors at Five Rivers.

In March an unprecedented event shut down all programming at Five Rivers and flexibility was again embraced. Friends’ volunteers, staff, and interns as well as our teammates in DEC, Operations and New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc, flexed with each new guideline.

Friends staff modified training and program content, and created safety protocols in alignment with DEC, state and federal guidelines. In April, four weeks after the shutdown, Friends and DEC staff provided online trainings for volunteer instructors and interns. Six weeks later Friends held small group trainings on site with the support of DEC, Operations and New York State Industries for the Disabled, Inc. By July, Friends began offering in person public programming and has continued to do so without incident.

Connecting with nature is invaluable, especially in times like these. When your schedule has some flexibility, I hope you’ll stop by for a restorative moment at Five Rivers.

Be well Friends.

Nancy A. Conway



Volunteer Instructors 2019

EDUCATION PROGRAMMING REPORT – NANCY CONWAY

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS: JULY 2019 TO JUNE 2020

- The Guided School Program led 1,228 students accompanied by 223 adult chaperones between September 17, 2019 and March 12, 2020. The shutdown canceled scheduled visits for 2,262 students and 346 adult chaperones in the spring. Dedicated volunteer instructors spent the spring mastering the use of WebEx and attended trainings online. Bravo instructors!



- The Summer Family Program ran three sessions in July and August with 43 families taking part. Instructors led small groups on adventures in the field, wild garden, forest and stream habitats.
- Talk and Trek themes piqued patrons' interests, doubling registrants. Themes included homestead crafts (fall), a study of Stokes' *A Guide to Nature in Winter* (winter) and Geocaching (early spring).



- Family Fun or “Nature School” was in high demand (28 families) with repeat families filling nearly all slots session after session. Why so popular? Because indoor and outdoor activities were developmentally appropriate, promoting a sense of success for each child and adult partner.

- Parks & Trails NY (PTNY) recognized Friends as a leader in successfully providing in person public programming during COVID 19. Friends of Five Rivers will present the processes and protocols used to safely provide this programming in a November webinar hosted by PTNY for Friends groups throughout New York.

EDUCATION PROGRAMMING REPORT – NANCY CONWAY

PROGRAM NEEDS

YOU! No resume needed. If you or someone you know enjoys the outdoors and would like to share your enthusiasm with children, please contact Friends Education Director, Nancy Conway, at gsp5rivers@outlook.com. Not interested in being a guide? We still would like to see **YOU**. Register for a program today!

PROGRAM FEEDBACK

"Thank You. We love 5 Rivers. We love you."

- Grandmother and two grandchildren's feedback for Fall 2019 Family Fun Series

"I want to give a HUGE shout-out to (instructor) who gave my son and I an amazing day together learning about bees. My son told me on the way out that he didn't like it... HE LOVED IT! I was excited to see him fully engaged with this program. We thank you so much for this opportunity and the time you shared with us."

- Mother's feedback for Summer 2019 Introduction to Bees and Beekeeping



"They (the students) were so interested and truly enjoyed (the guide's) enthusiasm...My students were engaged at all times. The (instructor) was wonderful with the kids. The students enjoyed catching species and figuring out what they caught. We will use the sheets as we create our own ecocolumns, but nothing will match what they did today."

- Fifth Grade Teacher feedback for Fall 2019 GSP Pond Lesson

"Thank you so much for another absolutely fabulous fall & late fall Family Fun series. As always, we had such a blast with you; reading books, exploring outdoors, doing crafts and activities and learning about all things nature of course. We love laughing, joking, and being silly, too. Thank you for all the time, effort and energy and love you put into the program and to our boys."

- Mother and two sons' feedback for Fall 2019 Family Fun Series

DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH – CAROLYN DUNN

Development and Outreach – Carolyn Dunn

HELLO FRIENDS OF FIVE RIVERS,

Yes, that's you, our generous members!

Your commitment to environmental education is the financial building block in providing unmatched educational lessons to students of all ages.

Volunteers and Members

1,163 Hours Volunteers Gave

481 Friends Members

41 New Friends Members

BECAUSE OF YOU

Here is a snapshot of the impact you made this past fiscal year.

Because of you... Over 1,420 children participated in our environmental education lessons.

Because of you... A teacher shared “My students really enjoyed collecting the aquatic creatures. Only one out of my 24 students had ever been near a stream.”

Because of you... A successful Five Rivers Fall Festival was held with over 1,400 visitors in 2019.



Because of you... Birds were singing your praises for the over 6,200 pounds of birdseed you purchased to support the Friends fundraiser.

Because of you... Honey Bees and Beekeeping participant shared “Being able to interact with the bees was really a unique experience and definitely took away the fear of bees.”

Because of you... We have been able to connect with you through our new Instagram presence.

Because of you... The Naturalist Intern created a podcast to celebrate your love of Five Rivers and the world around us.

DEVELOPMENT AND OUTREACH – CAROLYN DUNN

WHY YOU SUPPORT FRIENDS

Many of you shared your testimonials as to why you make a donation to support Friends.

- Five Rivers is my favorite place.
- To make a difference in students' lives.
- Five Rivers is our lifeline!
- Staff is so generous with their time to visitors.
- To guarantee that Five Rivers is around for my grandkids, grandchildren.
- We have a family history of attending programs and growing up at Five Rivers. Now I share it with my children.
- To encourage our next generation of educators.
- I love nature and Five Rivers allows me to explore and to sit and take it all in.

Thank you, Friends for also giving your time, volunteering, attending a program, and registering for an event. Because of you, your donations make a difference in the lives of those we serve at Five Rivers!

Want to learn about upcoming events, happenings, programs and even more ways to help? Please connect with us on our [website](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) or sign up for our [monthly newsletter](#).



Carolyn Dunn

LEGACY SOCIETY INFORMATION

Legacy Society Information

MEMBERSHIP IN THE LEGACY SOCIETY

Membership within the legacy society provides the opportunity to support environmental education for generations to come.

Your legacy gift to Friends of Five Rivers is part of your long-term plan of your personal assets. Some gifts that may be received are retirement accounts, stocks and bonds, a bequest within your will, beneficiary designation of a life insurance policy, charitable trust and more.

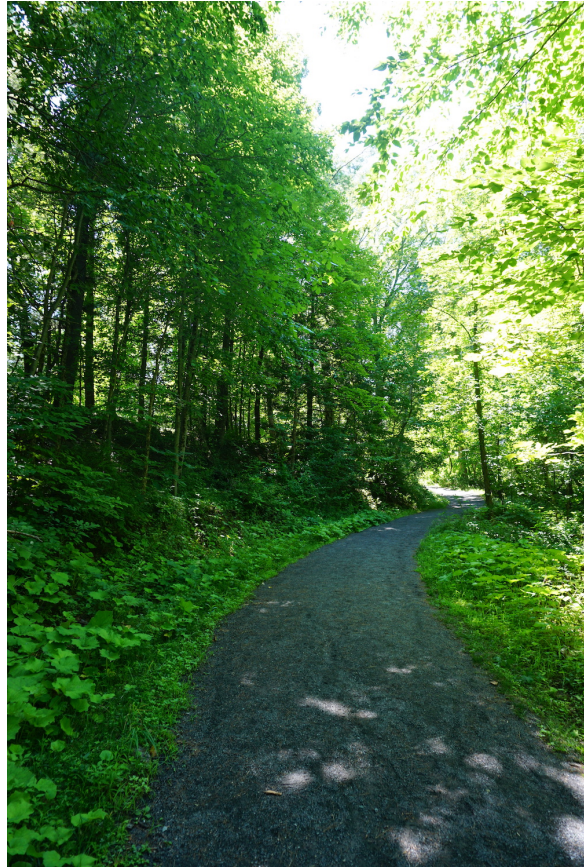
Your gift provides long-term sustainability for Friends of Five Rivers and its programs. You may elect to support the “Friends Endowment Fund” or choose to designate your gift for a particular program or for general operating support.

To make your legacy gift we suggest you contact your financial advisor or attorney on options that best fit your estate planning. Then reach out to Friends of Five Rivers to hear how your gift will make a significant impact. We would then like to recognize you as a Legacy Society member where you will receive special recognition, updates and invitations to private events. However, we will respect all requests for anonymity.

Please reach out if you have any questions about your legacy society membership.

To discuss how your donation will benefit the Friends of Five Rivers, please contact the Friends at (518) 475-0295 or by email at FriendsFiveRivers@outlook.com.

Friends of Five Rivers is a 501(c) 3 tax-exempt public charity. Tax ID: 23-7309978



FRIENDS' STAFF

Friends' Staff



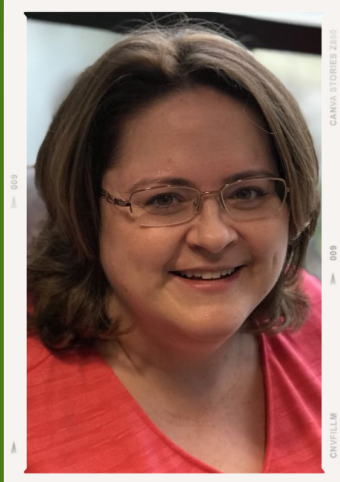
NANCY CONWAY
Educational Program Director



NANCY PAYNE
Environmental Educator



ALEX GARRIGAN-PIELA
Environmental Educator



CAROLYN DUNN
Development & Outreach Coordinator

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors

2019-2020

- Randy Coburn - President
- Andrea Ricard - Vice President
- Dan Berry - Treasurer
- Paula Read - Secretary
- Chip Reynolds - Executive Committee
- Barbara Coon - Director
- Miles Garfinkel - Director
- Robert Greenman - Director
- Stephanie Maes - Director
- Larry Naviasky - Director
- Reid Prinzo - Director
- Mary Louise Stanford – Director



Thank you! Our mission is supported by the generosity of our funders, donors, volunteers and partners. We are appreciative of your ongoing support of environmental education.

Friends of Five Rivers Tax ID: 23-7309978



Thank you, Friends, for your generous contributions' fiscal year July 2019-June 2020.

\$1,000 +

Dan and Mary Berry
Herb and Peggy Repass Fund

\$500 +

Catherine Adlerman
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Claudia Verga

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Thank you, Friends, for your generous contributions' fiscal year July 2019-June 2020.

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Thank you, Friends, for your generous contributions' fiscal year July 2019-June 2020.

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Thank you, Friends, for your generous contributions' fiscal year July 2019-June 2020.

\$99 +/- Continued

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Elizabeth Zwink



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