



# Chemung River Friends 2017 Annual Report

by River Friends Executive Director Jim Pfiffer



# Thomas Beecher

Guided, supported and loved the river and River Friends  
His spirit flows in the water that guides paddlers

12/29/43 to 9/18/17



# 2017: full parking , empty boat racks and plenty of paddlers

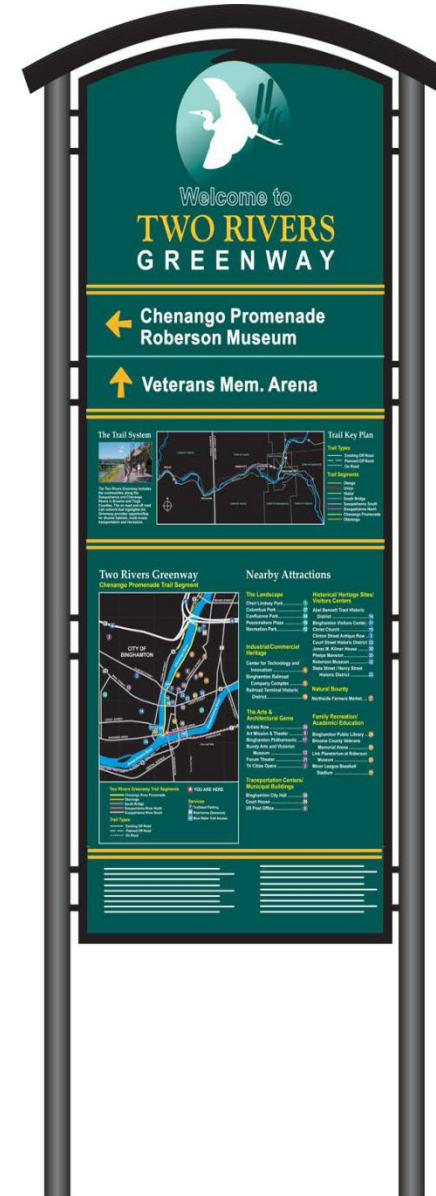


- More people than ever using river.
- No reports of river emergencies or injuries.
- Improved outdoor recreation & tourism.
- Wonderful 7-mile-long palisades river valley.
- More water safety and paddling classes for youth using our portable pool.
- More police/civilian patrols and security cameras.



# Protecting and improving river land

- Finger Lakes Land Trust.
- Kehoe Nature Preserve, 50 acres on Southside of the river near Stanley Woods in Big Flats.
- Bench swings Bottcher's Landing, Big Flats & Town of Corning Community Garden.
- White Wagon signs.
- Boat launch cleanups.
- Tire removal.
- Catching dumpers.



# Education

- 9 Ospreys Need Clean water presentations to 283 children, 64 adults.
- Co-taught a class for educators on reading topographical river maps and civilian scientists water testing.
- Intern, Carrick Palmer, taught civilian scientists water testing to 36 students and 9 adults as part of the NYS DEC WAVE program to monitor NYS streams and rivers.
- Helped Chemung County Soil & Water Conservation District teach rain barrel use classes to public and the Elmira Garden Club.
- Organized a Nature Strollers wagon ride through Big Flats federal plants materials center to learn how plants reduce erosion.
- 90-minute presentation on owls and the environment for 82 scholars at Finn Academy charter school in Elmira.
- Summer school presentation on “why water is important” to 16 students at Hendy Elementary School in Elmira.



# Environmental stewardship

- Cleaned litter from Lackawanna Rail Trail in Elmira with more than 100 students and parents from Finn Academy.
- Dozen trash cleanups involving more 30 volunteers from May until now.
- EC freshman and Mountain Day, Sept. 19.
- Elmira-Corning Association of Realtors, April 21.
- Removed 12 tires from Seeley Creek.
- River Riverside Patriots boat launch (5) cleanups.
- Maintained and cleared vegetation from two wooden bench swings we installed along West Elmira trails.
- Employees from our partner, Copy Express, in Elmira and River Friends volunteers and staff removed more 800 pounds of trees, brush, vegetation and debris from Katy Leary Community Park in Elmira.
- Most unusual object found: plastic case for a compound hunting bow.



# Teaching the public to safely enjoy and respect our rivers

- June safe paddling class with AHWAGA.
- Life vest giveaways.
- Anderson Foundation grant for pool.
- Paddling instructions to more than 450 children and 40 adults.



# Eco-recreation



- Hikes 10.
- Paddles 5 on the river and dam reservoirs in Chemung County.
- Presidents Day weekend hike
- French paddle.
- More than 400 people enjoyed our guided events.





# Fishing

- Great for walleye, bass, catfish, pan fish, Muskie and the occasional trout.
- DEC fishing survey.
- Kids fishing derby by Swarthout's Bait & Tackle Shop.
- Guided fishing tours.



# Increased community river use

## 5k races & outdoor classrooms

- Historic Civil war reenactments
- Civil War Prison Camp exhibit.
- Bird watching.
- Drone river photography.
- 5k Race with Grace church run.
- Reconnect with nature. Enjoy the beauty.
- Horseheads Sch. Dist. survivors race.
- Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts paddling, camping, merit badges.
- Magnet fishing.



# Grants

- LL Bean and ACA \$352 for cleanup supplies. May 1, 2017
- Arts of the Southern Finger Lakes, \$1,026 bandanna project
- Comm. Foundation \$700 emergency grant for game cameras.
- \$750 Rose's Education grant for osprey education program.
- Vanguard \$2,000 binocular donation.



# Friendly outreach, feedback and knowledge



Ignorance Is  
A Form Of  
Environmental  
Pollution

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- Rain barrel program.
- Big Flats Elem. Sch. pollinator garden.
- Civilian scientists H2O testing.
- WAVE training.
- Removed more than 3 tons trash, tires and litter.
- Youth nature hikes.

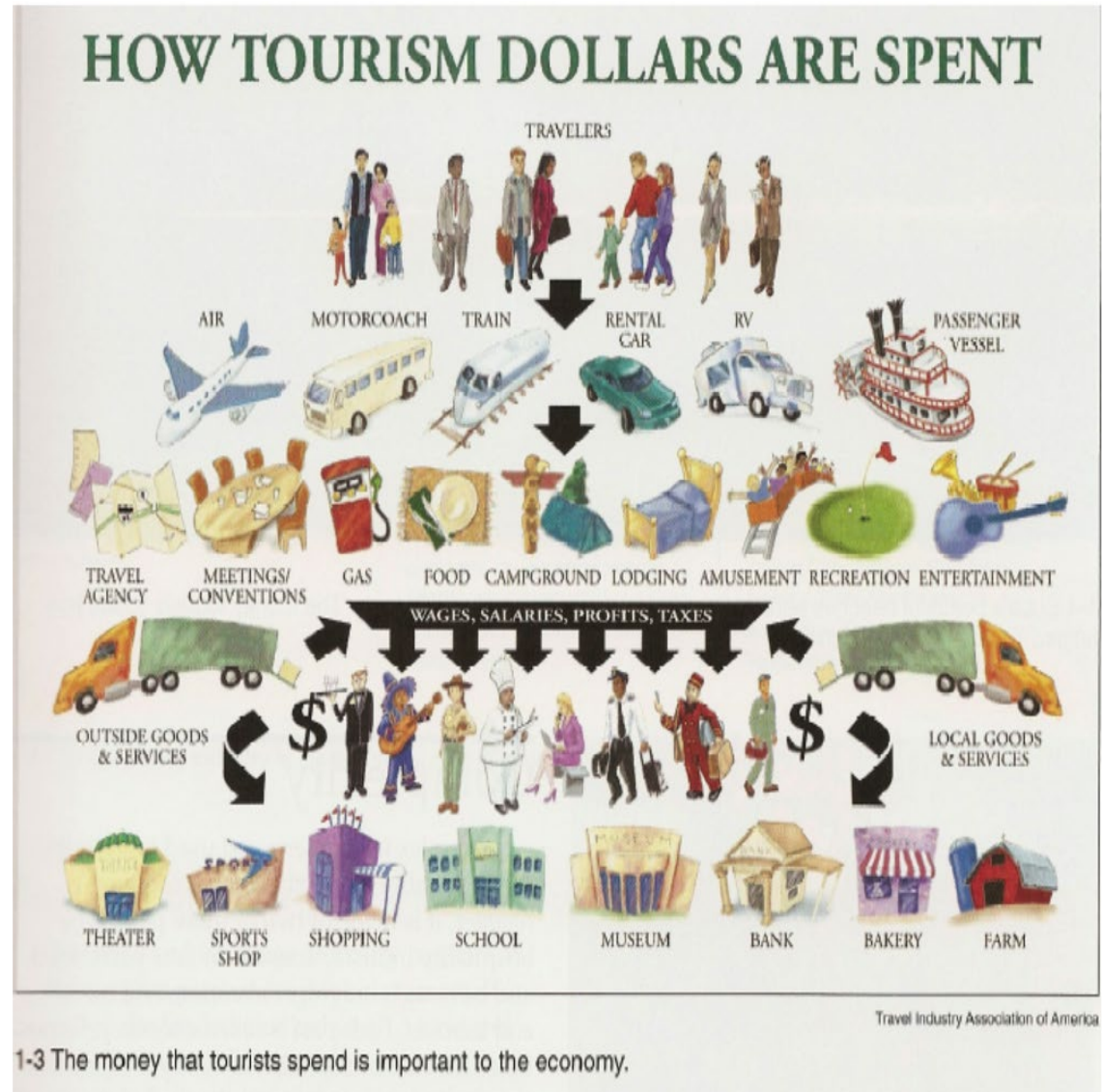
# Improving our environment



# Economic impact



- Added a new outfitter West Water Sports.
- Locals stay put.
- Increased river use.
- Improved health and wellness
- Better local quality of life.
- Increased tourism.
- French tourists.



1-3 The money that tourists spend is important to the economy.

# What's downstream in 2018

- Southern Tier River Trail.
- Concrete boat ramp Fitch's Bridge Boat Launch in Big Flats.
- Info kiosks on White Wagon Trail in Town of Chemung.
- Cleanup of tons of trash from illegal dump sites on FLLT newly donated river property in Big Flats.
- Night time and cold water rescue training for river rescue personnel.
- Purchase river rescue boat and propless motor for Elmira Fire Department.
- More security cameras.
- Kool Treats Ice cream truck.
- STEAM Ahead youth environmental education program.
- Finn Academy and Big Flats Elementary School programs.





Seneca-Cayuga-Onondoga-Oneida-Mohawk



- ★ BOAT LAUNCHES**
- 1 = KINSELLA PARK ERWIN
  - 2 = COHOCTON STREET
  - 3 = RIVER ROAD TOWN CORNING
  - 4 = BOTTCHEER'S LANDING
  - 5 = MINIER'S / SPENCER SMITH
  - 6 = FITCH'S BRIDGE BOAT LAUNCH
  - 7 = GROVE STREET
  - 8 = DUNN FIELD BOAT LAUNCH
  - 9 = TOLL BRIDGE PARK BOAT LAUNCH
  - 10 = ROUTE 427 BOAT LAUNCH
  - 11 = WHITE WAGON
  - 12 = TOZIER'S LANDING

