

A Message to our Friends

March 25, 2020

Dear Friends,

It is certainly a strange time when we are all bound together by a common threat and yet physically separated by the need to defeat that same threat. Some of us are confined to our homes with no fixed agenda. Some are also confined but working diligently at jobs that can be done via computer and phone. Some are out in the wider world taking care of the rest of us in hospitals, in grocery stores, on garbage trucks and in power plants.



Since this situation has gone on for some time - and looks like it will last a good bit longer - we thought it would be useful to let you know the current state of the Genesee RiverWatch events calendar, what we are working on during this "New York State on Pause", and what we are doing to take advantage of our enforced solitude.

Take care and stay safe,

Mike Haugh, President of the Board of Directors
George Thomas, Executive Director

2020 Genesee RiverWatch Events

2020 Genesee RiverWatch Events Update:

- 7th Annual Genesee River Basin Summit – Early this month our Board of Directors looked at the budding crisis and decided to postpone the Summit, originally planned for April 29th. We hope that the virus will be under control by fall and that we can re-schedule the Summit then. Along with this postponement, we are deferring the Elizabeth Thorndike Environmental Leadership Awards. If you would like to recognize a person or organization, we will be extending the nomination period. Keep an eye on our website/Facebook page for details.
- While the Letchworth Earth Day event has been cancelled, ADK's Outdoor Expo on June 13th is still on the books. If the Expo does take place, come and join us at the Genesee RiverWatch table.
- In partnership with the City of Rochester, we have planned to open the new Petten Street canoe/kayak dock before Memorial Day. At this point we don't know how the shutdown will affect the City's construction schedule. When we know more, we will publicize an update on our website and Facebook page.
- Our two cruises on the Lower River in 2019 were so successful that we have scheduled three for 2020. They are planned for July 26th, August 23rd, and October 3rd. We hope this schedule can be met and will let you know when to make your reservations.
- In association with the Waterways Center, we have outlined an extensive list of public

paddle trips on the river and Canal as well as a “learn to paddle” day and a family outing day. As the extent of the shutdown becomes clearer, we will make modifications and announce these events on the Waterways calendar and the Genesee RiverWatch website/Facebook page.

Ongoing Activities

- We have two big streambank stabilization projects planned for this year: 2,720 feet of bank near the confluence of the Genesee River and Angelica Creek and an 1,800-foot project near Houghton. Permit applications for these have been filed with the NYSDEC and Army Corps of Engineers and required archaeological work has been completed. More information on these projects will be covered in our upcoming newsletter.
- Our recreational map of the river, in partnership with Genesee River Wilds and the Genesee Valley Land Trust, is in development. We are investigating ways to get the public input that had been planned as part of the Summit.
- Other activities such as a sediment reduction strategy for the entire basin and numerous administrative improvements are getting the attention they deserve now that other activities have been pushed down the calendar.

Enjoy the Genesee!

Regardless of what we were doing before “New York State on Pause”, all our lives have been thrown off their normal tracks. Many of us have more discretionary time and many fewer outside resources such as libraries, gyms, museums, movies, etc. Walking is one of the few things we can do that is virus-safe and provides needed exercise.



We at Genesee RiverWatch are a bit prejudiced and happen to believe that our river, with its beauty and history, is a great place to do those walks. Accordingly, we will post occasional suggestions for stretches of the river that you might want to explore. Here is an initial idea:

Scottsville Area: Lehigh Valley Trail to Scottsville Canawaugus Park or Route 253 – 3.1 or 4.1 miles

Park at the access lot on the east side of River Road, 2.6 miles south of Scottsville near the Casella Transfer Station. Walk about .6 miles east on the Lehigh Valley Trail to the intersection with the Genesee Valley Greenway at the Wadsworth Junction railroad bridge. Read the sign describing the Genesee Valley Canal and its successor railroads that ran on the same line as today’s Greenway Trail. Walk north up the trail about 2.5 miles to Canawaugus Park on Owatka Creek. Still have energy? Add an additional mile to route 253. The trails are mostly flat and well-groomed, though there may be muddy spots after a rain. There is parking for about 6 cars at the Lehigh Trail access point, a large parking lot at Canawaugus and room for 2-3 cars at the route 253 intersection.



