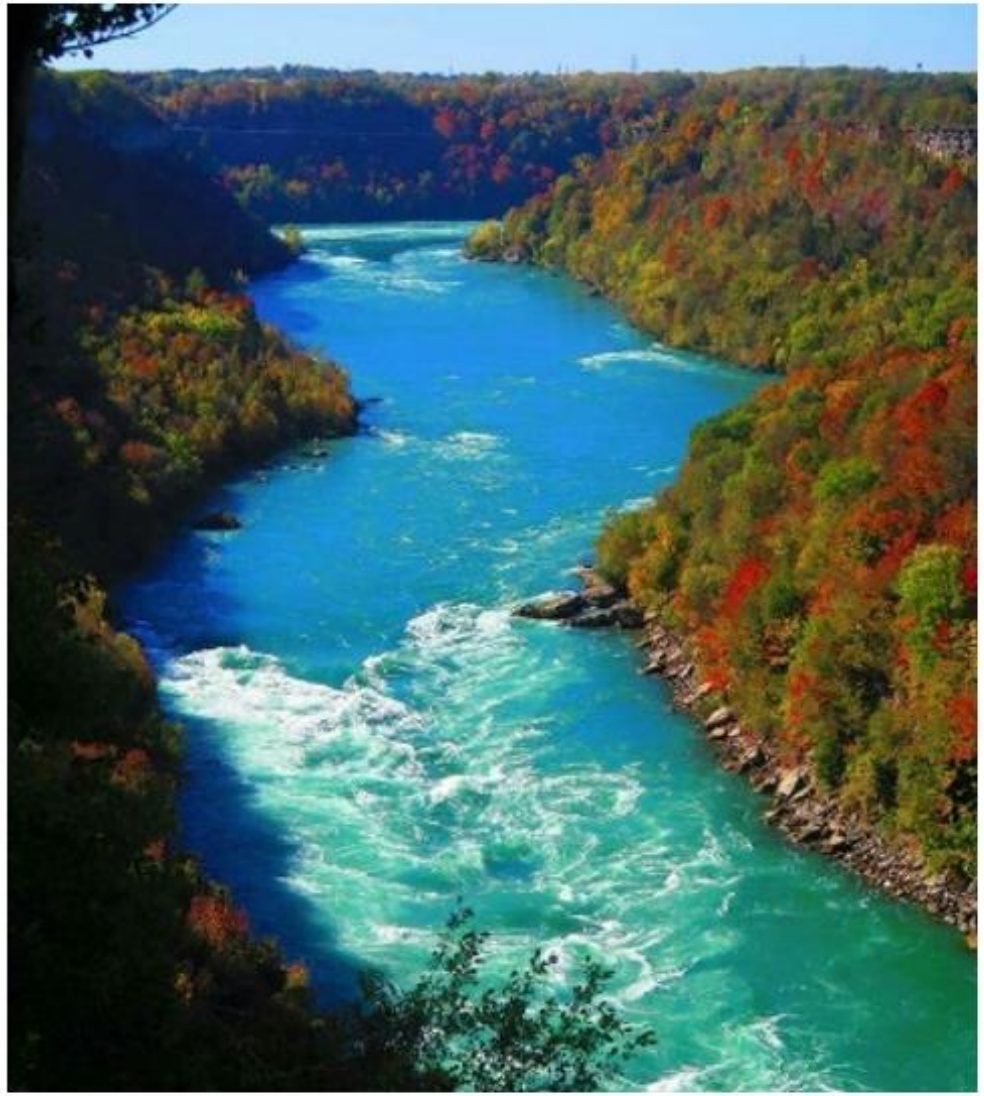
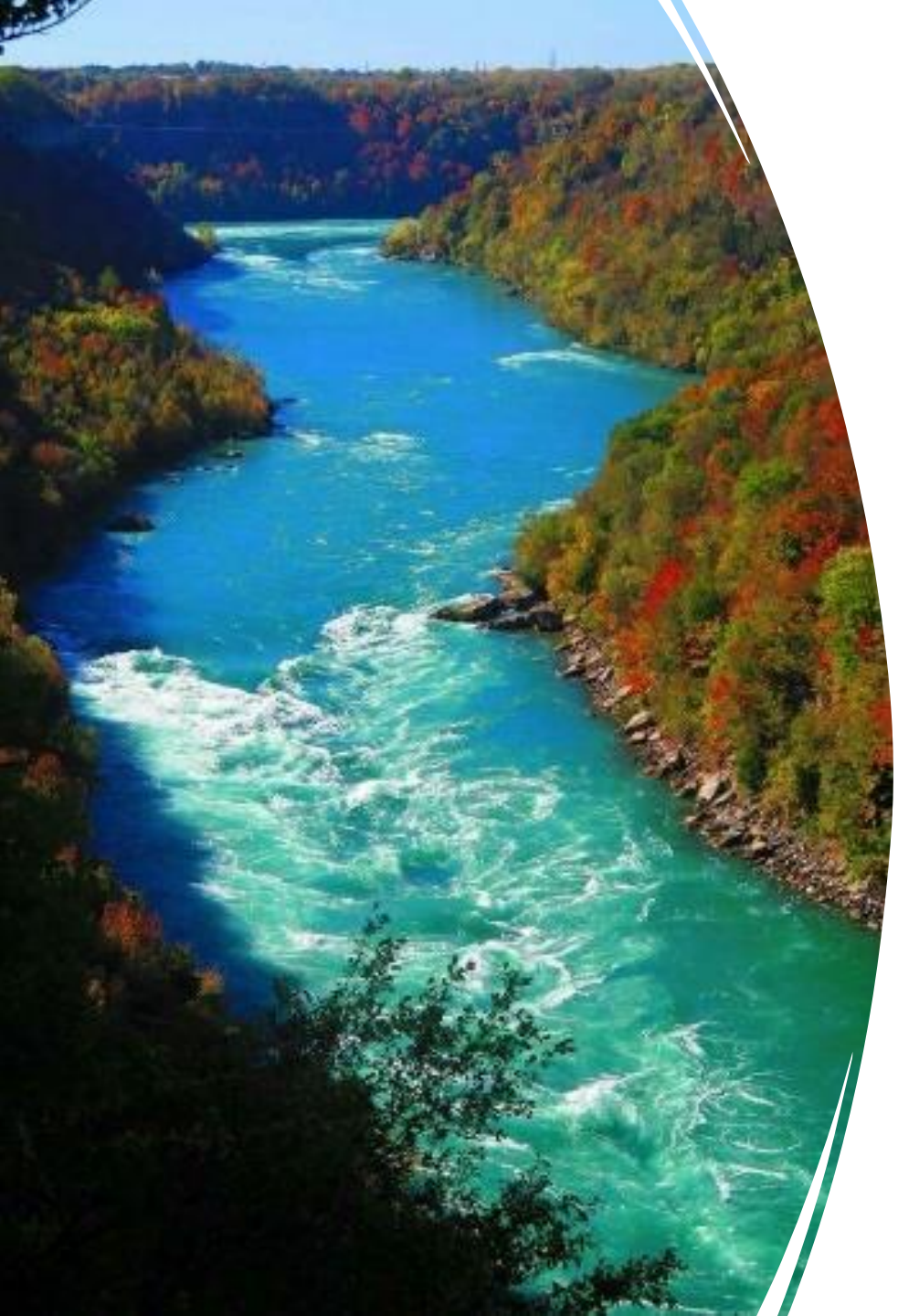


Niagara River Greenway Commission Annual Report 2021



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- Chapter Two: Commission History
- Chapter Three: Performance 2021
- Chapter Four: Feature Project
- Chapter Five: Highlights

Chapter One

Commission and Staff

Niagara River Greenway Commission Members 2021

- Lisa Chimera, Senate appointment 2020
- Treasurer Sean Edwards, Governor appointment, 2010
- Joseph Emminger, Assembly appointment, 2017
- Sam Magavern, Assembly appointment-*Community Liaison, 2014*
- Steve Broderick, Senate appointment- *Municipal Government Liaison, 2017*
- Lou Paonessa, *New York Power Authority, 2013*
- Kenneth Baginski, *Department of Environmental Conservation, 2022*
- Jim Cuozzo, *Department of Transportation, 2020*
- Mark Mistretta*, New York State Parks, 2018*
- Chris Bauer, *Department of State, 2016*
- Lynn Marinelli, *Empire State Development, 2019*

Niagara River Greenway Staff Members

- Greg Stevens, Executive Director

- Lisa Vitello, Administrative Manager

- Michelle Lockett, Community Engagement Manager

A Message from the Director

In 2021 our primary focus under our #1 priority, trail development, was coordinating implementation of our Lower Niagara Trail plan to develop a complete trail network from Devils Hole through Fort Niagara to Porter on the Lake to complete the northern end of our Niagara Shoreline Trail system. Our Community Engagement and Youth Stewardship Program got a major boost by winning at $230,000 grant from the Tonawanda Environmental Benefit fund, through CFGB, to expand our Environmental awareness and volunteer projects with 13 local area high schools

In 2022 we will continue driving to complete and enhance the Niagara Shoreline Trail by completing critical temporary on-road sections with cycle sharrows stenciled on the pavement, pushing for more off- road greenway construction, and constant improvement of signage, wayfinding, and amenities. A unique public art based placemaking project is underway for Devil's hole thru the Village of Lewiston in partnership with Art Park, Castellani Art Museum, and the Lewiston Arts Council. As New York is advancing Greenway development all across the state, your Niagara River Greenway Commission is leading the charge to fully connect our Western NY communities to safe and attractive off- road trail networks, with special attention to including disadvantaged neighborhoods.

With completion of the Niagara Shoreline Trail now clearly visible on our horizon; we are setting new long term strategic priorities to connect disadvantaged communities to our Greenway network by following Niagara tributaries up stream. Primary examples are the Gill Creek Corridor through Hyde Park in Niagara Falls and the Scajaquada Creek corridor through Buffalo's East side. In addition to connect our Shoreline Trail to Canadian trails to our West, and the New York State trail networks to our East building a regional trail network for Western New York.

We are grateful for the leadership of our Governor, the New York Power Authority, our Commissioners, sister State agencies and many community partners such as the Western New York Land Conservancy, Buffalo-Niagara Waterkeeper, GObike, and many others who champion the programming that engages the community in helping to create and enjoy our ever- improving Niagara Greenway.

- Best regards,
- Gregory Stevens

Chapter Two

Commission History

Commission History

- **On September 21, 2004 Governor George E. Pataki announced his approval of Chapter 460 of the Laws of 2004 establishing the Niagara River Greenway and creating a public benefit corporation for the purpose of creating a Niagara River Greenway Plan and its subsequent implementation.**
- **The Niagara River Greenway Commission was charged with creating the plan that would develop a linear system of parks and trails.**
- **The Niagara River Greenway plan was adopted by thirteen municipalities located along the Niagara River.**
- **The Niagara River Greenway plan would highlight the Niagara River in terms of its history, economic vitality and ecological significance. Key elements of this plan include increased public access to the Niagara River, development of a trail system with complimentary connections to land access points, balanced economic growth that compliments the natural scenic environment, preservation and enhancement of environmental resources and the celebration of the region's cultural, environmental and historical heritage.**
- **The mission and vision of the Niagara River Greenway Plan is to serve the communities located along the Niagara River in advancing the ecological and economic restoration of the Niagara Corridor to become a regional and global destination that tells the story of where we've been and where we would like to go in the future. The Niagara River Greenway Commission is tasked with stewardship of the Shoreline Trail, connecting parks, conservation areas and communities along the length of the Niagara River. This world class corridor of places, parks and landscapes celebrate and interprets our unique natural, cultural, recreational, scenic and historical heritage by providing access to and connections between these important resources giving rise to economic opportunities for the region.**

Standing Committee Structure and Fund Allocation

Buffalo and Erie County Greenway Fund Standing Committee
$2,000,000.00

Ecological Standing Committee
$1,000,000.00

New York State Parks Standing Committee
$3,000,000.00

Niagara County Host Community Standing Committee

- **School Districts receive 40%**
- Niagara Falls School District 14.0% ($420,000)
- Lewiston Porter School District 14.0% ($420,000)
- Niagara Wheatfield School District 12.0% ($360,000)

- **Municipalities receive 60%**
- City of Niagara Falls 17.0% ($510,000)
- Town of Lewiston 17.0% ($510,000)
- Niagara County 13.0% ($390,000)
- Town of Niagara 13.0% ($390,000)

Chapter Three

Performance 2021

Finances and

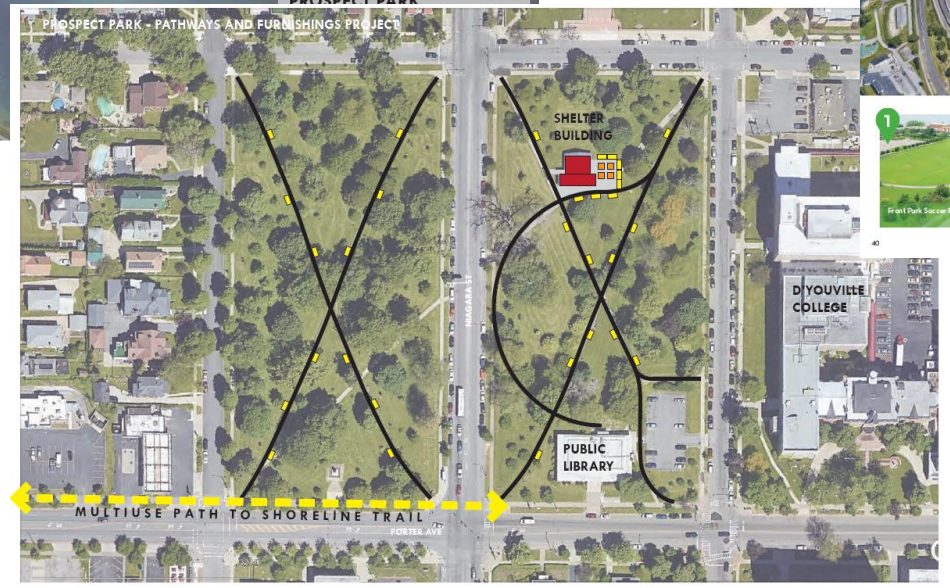
2021 projects voted Consistent

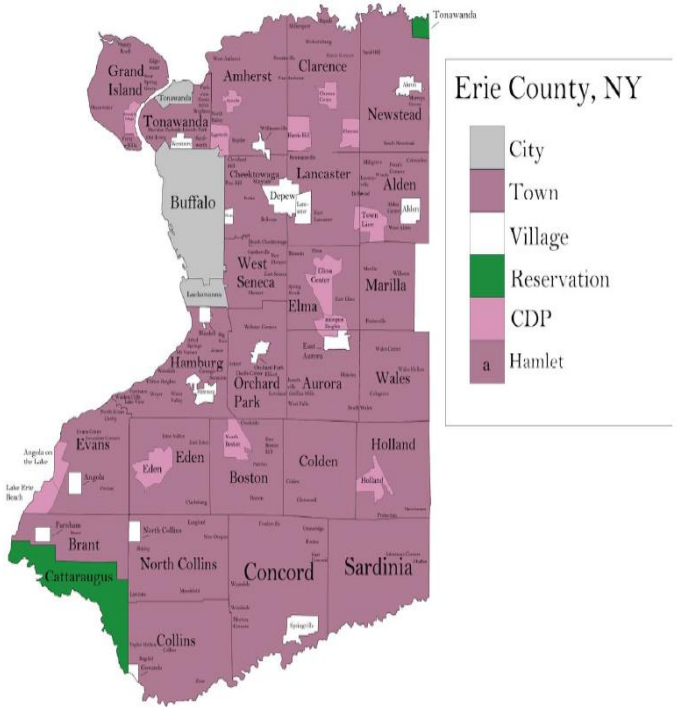
Items	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Budget	2022 w CFGB	2023 w CFGB
Number of Staff	**1 + 2 PT**	**1 + 2 FT**	**3**	**3**	**4**	**4**
Salary and Fringe	$128,000	$260,000	$ 291,000	$ 310,000	$ 325,000	$ 335,000
Consultants			$ 9,438	$ 10,000	$ 25,000	$ 25,000
NHT/Parks Overhead			$ 9,286	$ 10,000	$ 10,000	$ 10,000
Computers/AV			$ 1,294	$ 2,000	$ 2,000	$ 2,000
Printing, Supplies Misc	$13,000	$15,000	$ 4,144	$ 5,000	$ 5,000	$ 5,000
Meetings and Events			$ 1,265	$ 5,000	$ 25,000	$ 25,000
Total	**$141,000**	**$275,000**	**$317,133**	**$ 342,000**	**$ 392,000**	**$ 402,000**
Beginning balance	$ 91,000	$273,000	$ 8,290	$ 260,625	$ 260,625	$ 138,625
New income EPF	$200,000	$200,000	$200,000	$ 200,000	$ 200,000	$200,000
Grants/donations	$ 4,000	$ 25,000	0	0	$ 70,000	$100,000
Transfer from Parks			$118,814			
Ending balance	$154,000	$223,000	$ 9,971	$ 118,625	$ 138,625	$ 36,625
Remainder in Parks		$223,000	$104,186	$ 118,625	$ 138,625	$ 36,625
Total Available		**$223,000**	**$114,157**			

Niagara River greenway

Projects Reviewed and found Consistent by the Commission January 2021 to November 2021

Buffalo Olmsted Parks Conservancy Prospect Park Pathways and Furnishings Pro



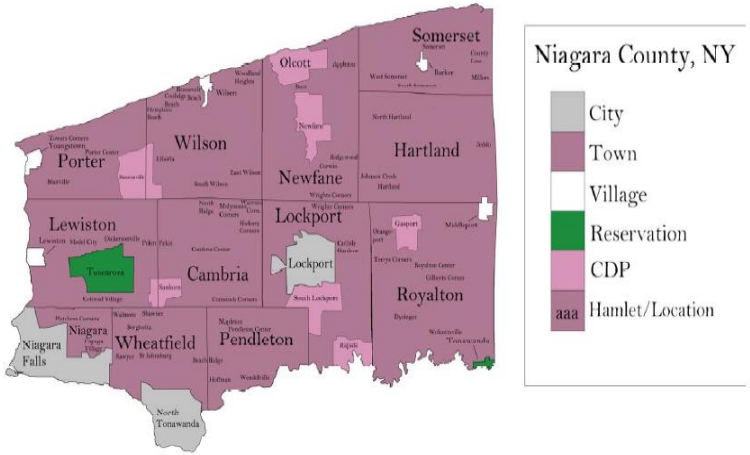


Currently Certified NWF Community Wildlife Habitats
With populations above 200,000

Community Name	State	Population Size
Houston	Texas	2200000
Broward County	Florida	1723000
Oakland County	Michigan	1232000
Erie County	NY	918702
Charlotte	North Carolina	867050
Pierce County	Washington	843954
Austin	Texas	735000
Seattle	Washington	724725
Baltimore	Maryland	621000
Lancaster County	Pennsylvania	536624
Sonoma County	California	466000
Washentaw County	Michigan	344791
Collier County	Florida	322000
City of Orlando	Florida	277000
Greater Mason District	Virginia	267776
Buffalo	NY	256902
Chula Vista	California	223000
Niagara County	NY	209281

This shows where Buffalo, Erie County and Niagara County will rank nationally when certified.

Data provided by the National Wildlife Federation

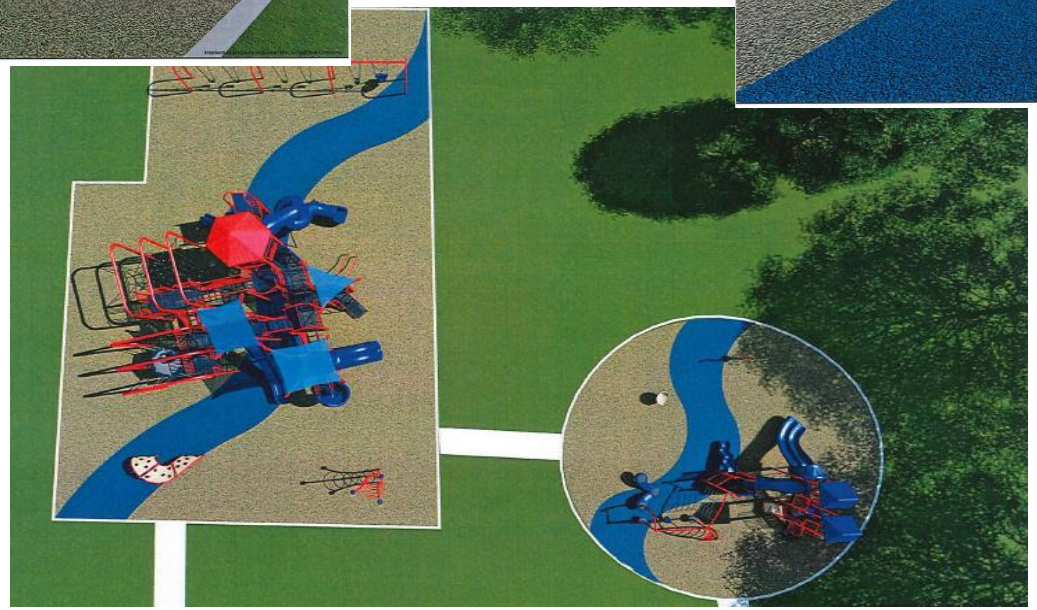


Black Rock Riverside Alliance Habitat Project Phases 1 & 2

Pollinator Conservation Association Niagara Greenway Pollinator Action Plan

Town of Niagara Veterans Memorial Community Park

Town of Lewiston
Pletcher Road Playground



BUFFALO NIAGARA WATERKEEPER

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper Cayuga Creek Land Protection

Town of Lewiston Sanborn Playground Replacement Project

Old Fort Niagara Historic Structures Preservation Project

Chapter Four
Feature Project

Feature Project- Grant Award

Tonawanda Community Environmental Benefits Program

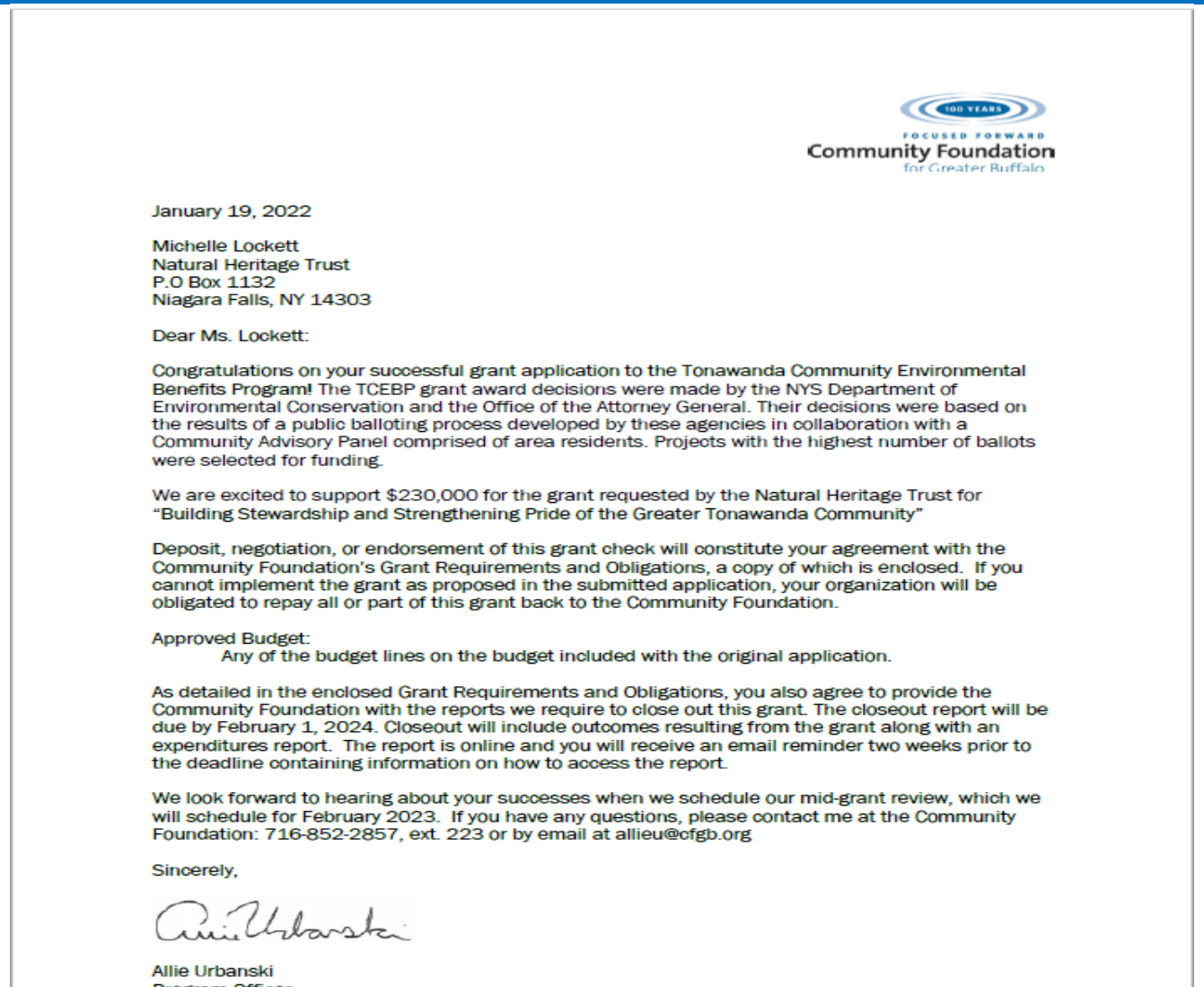
100 YEARS

FOCUSED FORWARD

Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo

Niagara River greenway

“Building Stewardship and Strengthening Pride of the Greater Tonawanda Community”
$230,000.00 Award



FOCUSED FORWARD
Community Foundation
for Greater Buffalo

January 19, 2022

Michelle Lockett
Natural Heritage Trust
P.O Box 1132
Niagara Falls, NY 14303

Dear Ms. Lockett:

Congratulations on your successful grant application to the Tonawanda Community Environmental Benefits Program! The TCEBP grant award decisions were made by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of the Attorney General. Their decisions were based on the results of a public balloting process developed by these agencies in collaboration with a Community Advisory Panel comprised of area residents. Projects with the highest number of ballots were selected for funding.

We are excited to support $230,000 for the grant requested by the Natural Heritage Trust for “Building Stewardship and Strengthening Pride of the Greater Tonawanda Community”

Deposit, negotiation, or endorsement of this grant check will constitute your agreement with the Community Foundation’s Grant Requirements and Obligations, a copy of which is enclosed. If you cannot implement the grant as proposed in the submitted application, your organization will be obligated to repay all or part of this grant back to the Community Foundation.

Approved Budget:
Any of the budget lines on the budget included with the original application.

As detailed in the enclosed Grant Requirements and Obligations, you also agree to provide the Community Foundation with the reports we require to close out this grant. The closeout report will be due by February 1, 2024. Closeout will include outcomes resulting from the grant along with an expenditures report. The report is online and you will receive an email reminder two weeks prior to the deadline containing information on how to access the report.

We look forward to hearing about your successes when we schedule our mid-grant review, which we will schedule for February 2023. If you have any questions, please contact me at the Community Foundation: 716-852-2857, ext. 223 or by email at allieu@cfgb.org

Sincerely,

Allie Urbanski

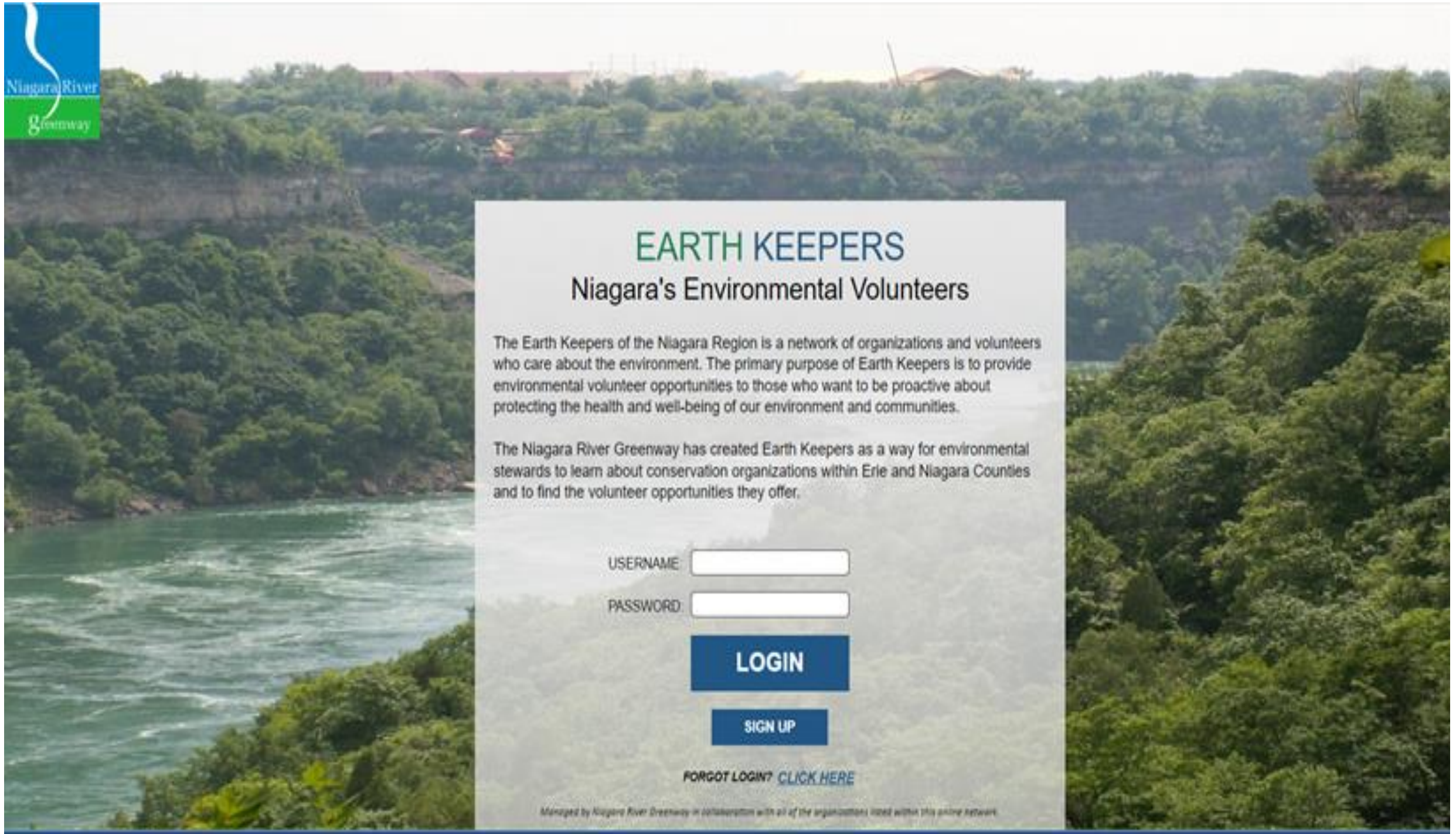
Grant Initiatives
Youth Stewardship Program
and
Region Wide Volunteer Youth Management System

Spring Cleanup along the Shoreline Trail

7 Adopt a Trail Organizations Participated

66 Adults
103 Students

65 Bags of Trash Collected


Niagara River
greenway
EARTH KEEPERS
Niagara's Environmental Volunteers
The Earth Keepers of the Niagara Region is a network of organizations and volunteers who care about the environment. The primary purpose of Earth Keepers is to provide environmental volunteer opportunities to those who want to be proactive about protecting the health and well-being of our environment and communities.
The Niagara River Greenway has created Earth Keepers as a way for environmental stewards to learn about conservation organizations within Erie and Niagara Counties and to find the volunteer opportunities they offer.
USERNAME
PASSWORD
LOGIN
SIGN UP
FORGOT LOGIN? CLICK HERE
Managed by Niagara River Greenway in collaboration with all of the organizations listed within this online network

Welcome, Michelle

MY PROFILE | EVENT CALENDAR | EVENT LIST | ORGANIZATIONS | PERMISSIONS | REPORTS

Upload/Replace Photo

Michelle Lockett

Organization Niagara River Greenway Commission

Member Since March 2022

Address Address

City State Zip

Mobile Phone 716-299-0608

Email Michelle.Lockett@parks.ny.gov

Emergency Contact Emergency Contact Name

Emergency Contact Phone #

Bee Allergy ○ Yes ◉ No

Other Allergies

Other Allergies

Total Credited Volunteer Hours:

View My Volunteer history

Interests

- ☐ Gardening / Horticulture
- ☐ Invasive Species Management
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ Outdoor Recreation
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Activism
- ☐ Conservation
- ☐ Bird Watching
- ☐ Hiking / Walking
- ☐ Paddling
- ☐ Litter Control
- ☐ Other

Upcoming Events

View Event Calendar

My Upcoming Volunteering Events

My Affiliations

© 2022 Niagara River Greenway Commission

Organizations

LOGOUT

MY PROFILE | EVENT CALENDAR | EVENT LIST | ORGANIZATIONS | PERMISSIONS | REPORTS

1 UPCOMING EVENTS

15 VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

EDIT MY ORGANIZATION

ADD NEW ORGANIZATION

ADD NEW EVENT

Welcome, Michelle

FIND AN ORGANIZATION BY INTEREST Clear

- ☐ Gardening / Horticulture
- ☐ Invasive Species Management
- ☐ Construction
- ☐ Engineering
- ☐ Cycling
- ☐ Outdoor Recreation
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Activism
- ☐ Conservation
- ☐ Bird Watching
- ☐ Hiking / Walking
- ☐ Paddling
- ☐ Litter Control
- ☐ Other

All Organizations List

Logo

Leader

Logo

Buffalo Audubon Society

1610 Welch Road
N Java
NY, 14113
585-457-3228

Leader
Kate Watson

Logo

Buffalo Niagara Waterkeeper

Leader
Claudia Rosen

Logo

Buffalo Sunrise Rotary

Leader
Kevin Crosby

Logo

GoBike Buffalo

Leader

Logo

Niagara River Greenway Commission

P.O. Box 1132
Niagara Falls
NY, 14305
716-299-0808

Leader
Michelle Lockett

Volunteering Event

MY PROFILE | EVENT CALENDAR | EVENT LIST | ORGANIZATIONS | PERMISSIONS | REPORTS

SEND EVENT UPDATE | + NEW EVENT | — DELETE EVENT

Sponsored By: Niagara River Greenway Commission

Status: Not Started

Event Name:

Volunteers Needed:

Event Leader:

Address:

Date:

Event Length:

Time:

Hour(s)

Location:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Description:

Event Website:

UPLOAD ADULT WAIVER

Work Conditions:

Tools Required:

UPLOAD MINOR WAIVER

VOLUNTEER LIST

For Admin Only

Volunteer Name	Waiver Complete? (Y/N)	Hours	Completed (check all) >	Remove Volunteer
< Choose Volunteer				

Chapter Five

Highlights

Adventures along the Niagara River Greenway

FULL DAY ADVENTURE #1

Start your day on two wheels and ride from Devil's Hole State Park to the historic waterside Village of Lewiston. Enjoy the many shops and restaurants that adorn this charming village

After a bite to eat, continue your ride along the Shoreline Trail to Old Fort Niagara where you can visit the oldest buildings on the Great Lakes and experience the Fort through the eyes of reenactors

After your step back in time, load your bike on the free Discover Niagara Shuttle and jump off at the Niagara University Castellani Art Museum. After that, visit the Underground Railroad Heritage Center and learn about stories of the Underground Railroad in Niagara Falls.

Unwind with a great meal from any of the delicious eateries in downtown Niagara Falls before heading back into the park to witness the beauty of thousands of LED lights at the nightly illumination of Niagara Falls!

FULL DAY ADVENTURE #2

Start your day in a powerful way at the Niagara Power Vista and discover how power is generated with the water from the Niagara River. Visit Artpark overlooking the Niagara River.

After your electrifying experience, head south to Grand Island and take a stroll or ride through Buckhorn State Park, home to hundreds of bird species.

From there walk or ride breathtaking West River Trail and take in the views of the mighty Niagara River and the Canadian Shoreline.

At Beaver Island State Park, you can hit the beach – or a golf ball at the 18 hole public course. It's also a great place to get out on the water in a kayak or canoe.

There are several outstanding dining options on Grand Island for lunch or dinner!

HALF DAY ADVENTURE

Check off this bucket list location and begin your adventure at Niagara Falls State Park. Don't miss the chance to stand under the Falls at the Cave of the Winds for an exhilarating experience you won't soon forget!

Catch your breath with a stroll through the park toward to the Aquarium of Niagara where you can make new friends with the sea life that reside there.

Follow the Gorgeview trails north toward the Whirlpool Bridge for breathtaking views of the Niagara Gorge.

And to wrap up your journey grab the Discover Niagara Shuttle at the Underground Railroad Heritage Center for a free ride back to the falls.

MORE DON'T MISS ADVENTURES

- Stroll the **Erie Canal** in The Tonawandas and learn the history of the Erie Canal and the lumber industry.
- Visit the historic **Darwin Martin House**, Frank Lloyd Wright's famous landmark
- Witness the reconstruction of Thaddeus Joy Webster's 1429 Packet Boat at the **Maritime Center for Boat Building**
- Celebrate parks in the **Olmsted Parks System**, the first connected parks and Greenway Trail system in America
- Revisit Buffalo's **Industrial Heritage Corridor** and its hulking grain elevators along the outer harbor
- And you can't leave Buffalo Niagara without trying some **wings** and a local beer at any number of neighborhood pubs and breweries! *(Pro tip – we just call them wings and ALWAYS blue cheese, NEVER ranch!)*

RIDE WITH GPS

To view an interactive map, with turn by turn directions of the Shoreline Trail, please visit our website at *NiagaraRiverGreenway.com*

Niagara River Greenway is a New York State Public Benefit Corporation, working alongside municipalities and government agencies, to create a Niagara waterfront that benefits the

EXPERIENCE THE

Niagara

RIVER GREENWAY

50+ miles of world-class cycling, hiking & paddling!

Niagara River

https://www.dropbox.com/s/wby9p5lzq5lluel/Niagara%20River%20Greenway%20brochure%20v5.pdf?dl=0

Bike There Niagara Book Launch
LAKE ONTARIO
Share your experience, visit:
facebook.com/NiagaraRiverGreenway
BIKE THERE, NIAGARA
Brought to you by:
5
SELF GUIDED BIKE TOURS
www.niagararivergreenway.com
SIGN UP FOR THE FREE RIDE WITH GPS ACCOUNT & UNLOCK A BONUS GRAND ISLAND RIDE
ridewithgps.com

Bike There Niagara Book Launch

Public Art Group

- Niagara River Greenway
- Castellani Art Museum
- Art Park
- Lewiston Council of the Arts
- Niagara Falls National Heritage Area

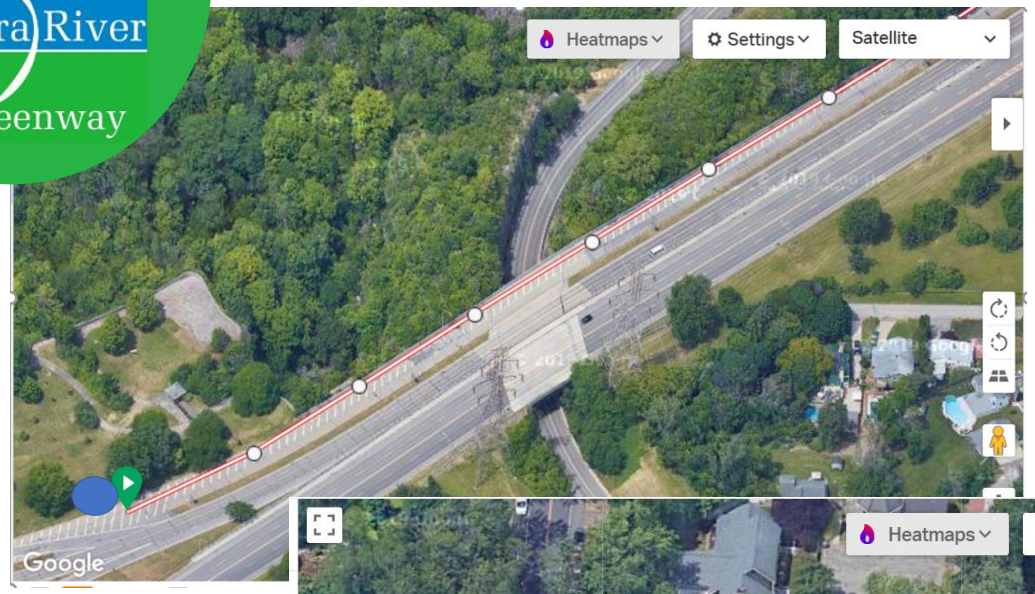
Public Art Project Announcement- June

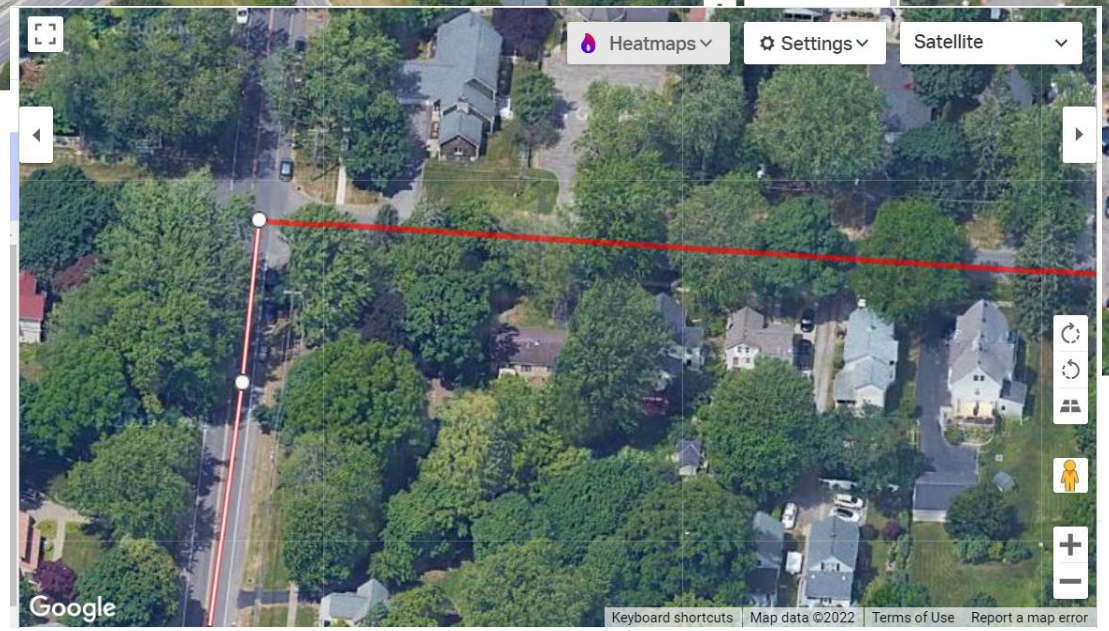
- <u>Partners</u>
- Niagara Falls National Heritage Area
- Artpark
- Castellani Art Museum
- Lewiston Council of the Art
- Niagara Arts and Cultural Center

Incorporate Ornamental Benches and Boulder Clusters at the Backside of Curb

Temporary Trail Barrier / Edge | Concept View 1

Possible sites for Public Art





GORGEFEST

SATURDAY, JUNE 18TH
11:00 AM TO 2:00 PM

WHIRLPOOL STATE PARK
NIAGARA SCENIC PARKWAY
NIAGARA FALLS, NY 14303

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

REGISTRATION REQUIRED AT
WNYLC.ORG/GORGEFEST

FAMILY FUN ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

- GEOLOGY & HISTORY HIKES
- ANIMAL MEET & GREETS
- NATIVE PLANT EDUCATION
- FOSSIL DISPLAYS
- HANDS ON ACTIVITIES & MORE

THE INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED NIAGARA GORGE IS ONE OF THE MOST ICONIC PLACES IN WESTERN NEW YORK. JOIN THE WESTERN NEW YORK LAND CONSERVANCY, NEW YORK STATE PARKS, AND MORE THAN A DOZEN OF YOUR FAVORITE LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS FOR A ONE-DAY CELEBRATION OF THE NIAGARA GORGE AND ITS AMAZING RIVER

Niagara River greenway

The Niagara Falls City School District Elementary Bike Ride

On Wednesday, June 15, we are pleased to announce that the NFCSD will be partnering with the Niagara Greenway Commission for a bike ride on the Niagara River trail. We will assemble at the Underground Railroad Museum, Depot & Whirlpool St. parking lot at 4:00pm and ride the trail south to the Falls and back. Once we arrive at the Falls we will take pictures of the group ride. All students participating MUST be accompanied by a parent/chaperone. Please dress appropriately for the weather and do not forget your bike helmet!

Maple Avenue School Historic Hike on the Niagara River Greenway

PADDLES UP NIAGARA

NEW this year: guided eco tour hike and learn to kayak lessons!

Join us for the 16th Annual Paddles Up Niagara!

Saturday July 30th, 2022

Niagara River greenway

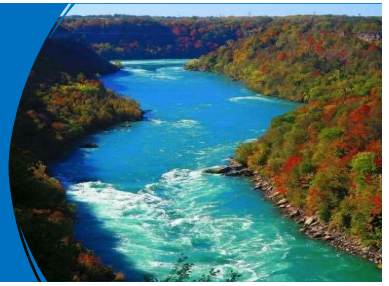
BIRDS ON THE NIAGARA

February 2022

ded Experiences Travel Art and Home Goods Books/Maga

Our Partners

Get in Touch



Home | niagaragreenway (niagararivergreenway.com)
Visit our Niagara River Greenway Website

Niagara River Greenway Commission - Home | Facebook
Join our Facebook page

Contact our Staff
Stevens, Gregory (PARKS) Gregory.Stevens@parks.ny.gov
(Executive Director)
Vitello, Lisa (PARKS) Lisa.Vitello@parks.ny.gov
(Administrative Manager)
Michelle (PARKS) Michelle.Lockett@parks.ny.gov
(Community Engagement Manager)