

Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition

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*Adirondack
Mountain Club,
Niagara Chapter*

*Audubon New
York*

*Buffalo Niagara
RIVERKEEPER*

*Citizens Campaign
for the
Environment*

*League of Women
Voters of Buffalo
Niagara*

*Niagara Musky
Association*

Presbytery of WNY

*Sierra Club,
Niagara Group*

*Western New York
Land Conservancy*

DATE: May 9, 2016
TO: Niagara River Greenway Commissioners
FROM: Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition
RE: Comments on Proposed Greenway Projects

The Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition has reviewed the proposals before you today and submits the following comments.

Riverside Heritage Project by Friends of the Buffalo Story:

We recommend this project be found consistent. We feel the project will provide additional historical recognition with a modest budget.

Recovering ecosystem function in the upper by Niagara River SUNY Buffalo State

Research Foundation:

We recommend this project be found consistent. This type of research is needed for good quality ecological restoration and adaptive management. However, we recommend the applicant strongly consider the size and scope of their research project and how it directly relates to project implementation. We want to ensure that they have thoroughly reviewed and considered past research projects, ongoing data collection efforts, and identified data gaps that need to be addressed for ongoing and future restoration projects. There also needs to be a well-considered communication plan to allow for information sharing and the evolving needs of project implementers. This level of coordination and information sharing is a lot of work and often goes well beyond the level of scholarly work.

Niagara Gorge Rim Restoration and Enhancement Project by Western New York Land Conservancy:

We recommend this project be found consistent. Provides much needed invasive species management and ecological restoration in a critically important ecological area along the rim of the Niagara Gorge.

Veterans Memorial at Veterans' Memorial Park by Town of Niagara:

We recommend this project be found consistent. However, we feel that this project would better fit the Niagara River Greenway, a unique corridor of parks, historical and ecological locales and connective trails, by thinking outside-the-box and creating something other than a hardscaped memorial with well-manicured landscaping. We encourage the applicant to consider a memorial (tree) grove or potentially incorporate a pollinator garden into the design. Forest Lawn Cemetery is a shining example of a place that allows people to remember their loved ones while also enjoying the beauty of the natural setting. Buffalo Spree recently published an article titled, "Bird watching at Forest Lawn" that discuss how the founder, Charles E. Clark, in 1849, designed the space as a burial ground and a public park. This type of vision, shown by Clark, would be much more representative of the Niagara River Greenway the Commission is trying to create. A park space that would allow residents and visitors to remember the lives of the veterans while enjoying the unique ecological diversity the Niagara River Corridor has to offer.