

# BUFFALO NIAGARA RIVERKEEPER®

Working to protect and restore our region's  
most important natural resource – *water*.

Over the last five years, community leaders and foundations, concerned citizens, and federal, state and local agencies have invested over \$7 million in Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper to help restore and protect our local waterways. In return, we have used this investment to leverage over \$250 million for our partners to help make progress in revitalizing our waterfront communities, increasing public access and restoration of our local waterways. Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper is a national leader in community-driven efforts such as industrial pollution remediation, green infrastructure solutions, improving connections to the water and celebrating cultural and ecological heritage.

Our success will continue with increased involvement and support from the community. There are various ways for individuals and organizations to engage with Riverkeeper. As we embark on the third decade of our organization's history, we welcome your participation and support.

Please visit our website at [www.bnriverkeeper.org](http://www.bnriverkeeper.org), or call 716-852-RIVER to learn how you can become involved and informed.



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# Watershed Science, Restoration and Advocacy

## Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan Dredging Project

As the federally-designated “Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan Coordinator” Riverkeeper has helped establish the “Buffalo River Restoration Partnership” in order to restore the Buffalo River. Restoration efforts include the dredging of nearly 1 million cubic yards of contaminated sediments with the goal of ultimately “delisting” the Buffalo River as a U.S. Area of Concern (AOC).



## Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan Coordination

Riverkeeper is coordinating restoration activities which will aid in the delisting of the Buffalo River as an Area of Concern. Activities include: ongoing participation in the Buffalo River Great Lakes Legacy Act project to remediate contaminated sediments, habitat restoration planning and implementation, the development of monitoring protocols, a baseline species inventory, the promotion of green infrastructure for sewer overflow abatement, shoreline buffers, and education and outreach activities.

## Buffalo River AOC Habitat Restoration at “Riverbend”

This project includes designing, implementing and monitoring habitat restoration activities along the Buffalo River. Work includes the design of over 4300 linear feet of combined riparian grassland and forest habitat, the implementation of 2,800 linear feet of design, invasive plant removal, placement of native vegetation, and a two year monitoring program.

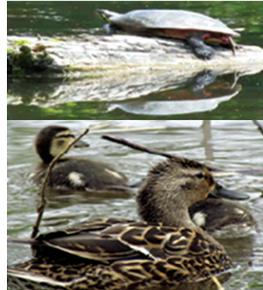
## Niagara River Watershed Management Plan - “Healthy Niagara”

Riverkeeper is developing a Niagara River Watershed Management Plan (“Healthy Niagara”) that focuses on action steps to protect and restore ecosystem water resources in a four county region. Process will include a review of existing data, a summary of existing conditions in the watershed, and identification of problems and opportunities. A final report will provide citizens with information about the health of the watershed and educate them about actions that can be taken regarding its restoration. Project partners include the Town of Tonawanda and Erie County Department of Environment and Planning.



## Buffalo River Ecological Restoration Master Plan Implementation

Riverkeeper was just one of many stakeholders involved in the Ecological Restoration Master Plan (ERMP) for the Buffalo River. The ERMP represents a vision for habitat rehabilitation of the river, improves ecological diversity, and is balanced by community priorities including economic revitalization, increased recreational opportunities, waterfront development, and open space preservation.



## Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition Management

Riverkeeper is the designated coordinator for the Niagara Relicensing Environmental Coalition (NREC) who collectively represent one seat on the Greenway Ecological Steering Committee. The Committee is responsible for guiding the NREC on Greenway project proposals and funding decisions.

## West Seneca Oxbow Wetland Restoration

West Seneca’s oxbow is one of only three major wetlands in the lower Buffalo River watershed. Riverkeeper is working collaboratively with the Town of West Seneca to implement an oxbow wetland restoration plan developed under a previous National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant. The work involves training a group of dedicated volunteers for ongoing future management of the site including invasive species control, native plantings, wildlife monitoring and community outreach.

## Niagara River Habitat Conservation Strategy

Development of a fish and wildlife habitat conservation strategy for the Niagara River watershed is being completed by Riverkeeper with support of a Technical Advisory Committee. The strategy will lead to the identification of vital areas to implement habitat restoration and conservation. A complementary effort is also being conducted within the boundaries of the “Niagara River Greenway.”



# Watershed Science, Restoration and Advocacy Projects\*



Symbol	Project Name	Funding Source	Total Project Cost
●	1. Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan Dredging Project	USEPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), Great Lakes Legacy Act	\$50 million
—	2. Buffalo River Ecological Restoration Master Plan	USEPA Great Lakes National Program Office	\$250,000
—	3. Buffalo River Remedial Action Plan Coordination	USEPA GLRI	\$600,000
○	4. West Seneca Oxbow Wetland Restoration	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	\$65,000
●	5. Buffalo River AOC Habitat Restoration & Riverbend	USEPA GLRI	\$657,000
—	6. Niagara River Habitat Conservation Strategy	USEPA, New York Power Authority (NYPA)	\$400,000
—	7. Niagara River Watershed Plan- Healthy Niagara	NYS Department of State (DOS)	\$469,000

# Citizen Participation and Awareness

## Niagara River Riparian Restoration Program

This project offers tools to landowners on how to increase the ecological integrity of their property. As a part of the program, Riverkeeper recruits and coordinates a group of more than 500 volunteers, called “RestoreCorps”, dedicated to the restoration of natural riparian habitats. RestoreCorps volunteers leap into action at different waterfront sites around the Niagara region to install native plants, remove invasive species, and stabilize shorelines.



## Habitat Restoration at Seneca Bluffs

Seneca Bluffs, a 15 acre area of riparian floodplain located along the Buffalo River, was identified in 1994 as one of five unique and critical habitat areas in need of protection. The site will benefit from removal of invasive species, use of bioengineering techniques along areas of eroding shoreline, installation of a pollinator conservation area, and an ongoing monitoring plan.

## Re-forestation in Two Western New York AOCs

Riverkeeper is implementing two high priority forested riparian habitat restoration projects totaling 18 acres on brownfield sites. The Riverbend project on the Buffalo River will attempt to reduce soil toxics through phytoremediation. The Griffon Park site on the Niagara River will reduce stormwater runoff and improve a public access point.

## River Academy

River Academy is a comprehensive training course for professionals, students, and teachers that offers an introduction to our Niagara River watershed. The River Academy program features local experts sharing their passion for hydrology, ecology, contamination issues, land use impacts, restoration design, mapping, stream assessment and more.

## New York Teachers Get WET

Through this program, teachers gain knowledge about how to provide meaningful watershed education experiences related to four local AOC's. The project will empower students and teachers to protect fresh water resources through direct stewardship activities in their region.

## Spring and Fall Cleanups

Riverkeeper's most visible and engaging community-based efforts are the Spring and Fall “Shoreline Cleanups”. Over 1,500 volunteers participate to help improve aesthetics and stream health throughout Western New York. An average of 20 tons of trash is removed from these sites each year.

## River Tours

Led by knowledgeable experts, Riverkeeper provides a variety of hiking, biking, paddling, and boat tours throughout Erie and Niagara counties. These tours allow the public to experience the beauty of the Buffalo and Niagara River ecosystems, watch for birds and wildlife in the heart of the City of Buffalo, and learn about what's happening along the water's edge.

## Enhanced Fish Consumption Advisory in the Buffalo Niagara Region

Through this project, the issues associated with fish consumption in the Buffalo and Niagara River areas are tackled using outreach efforts to reach high-risk communities who consume fish caught in our waters.

## Downspout Disconnection

Along with the Buffalo Sewer Authority, Riverkeeper will provide outreach management services, as well as technical and implementation assistance, to disconnect downspouts in Hamlin Park and the Old First Ward in an effort to alleviate Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) issues in the Buffalo River and Scajaquada Creek.

## River Care Green Infrastructure

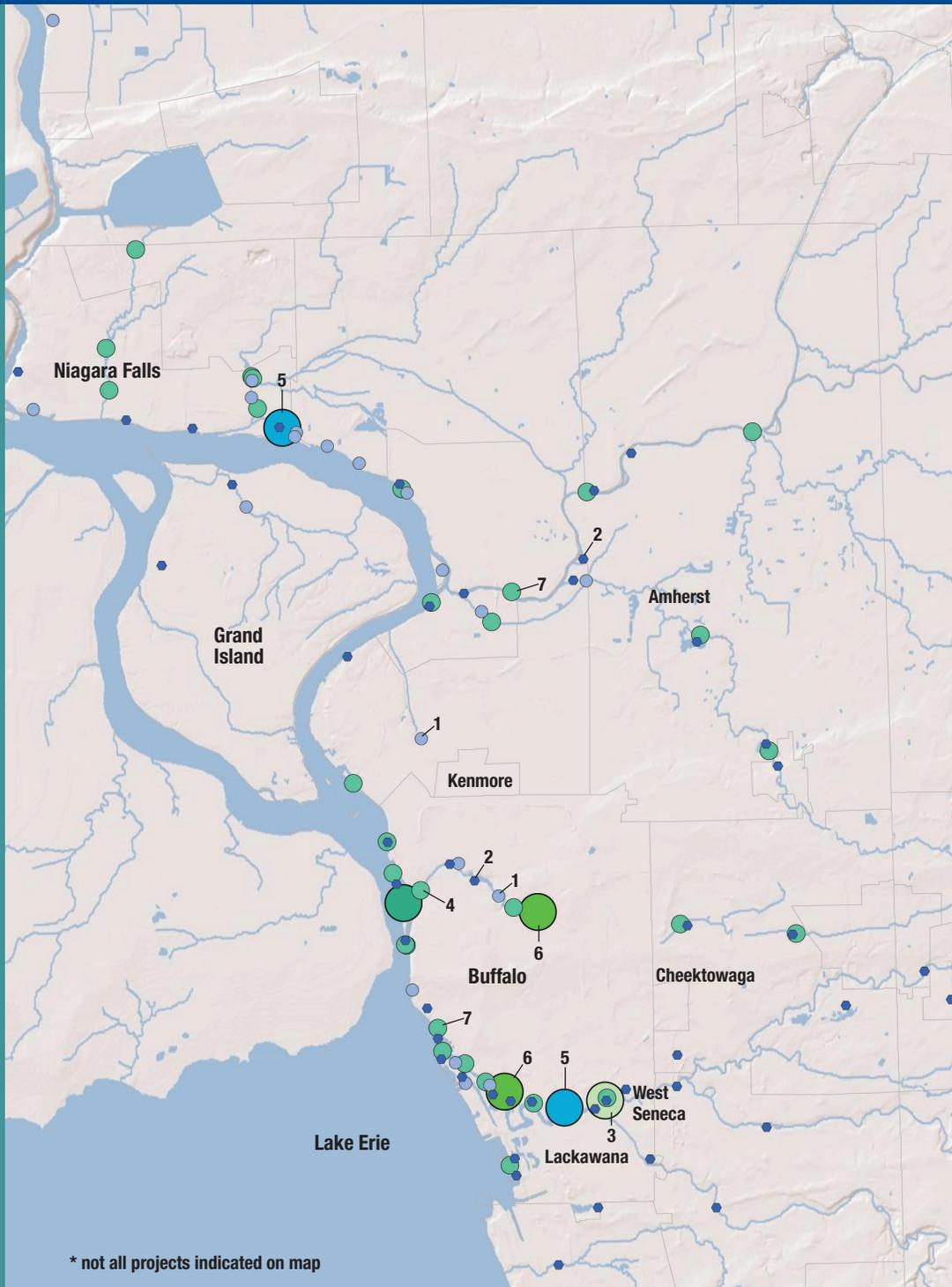
The focus of this project is on-the-ground green infrastructure strategies and urban forestry best practices in the Niagara Falls region. Implementation will take place through downspout disconnection, rain barrel and rain garden installation, and educational outreach.

## Riverwatch Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring

The Riverwatch Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring program has been a key component of community outreach since 2006. Over 20 volunteers participate in the effort and sample at 28 sites once a month throughout each field season. Parameters sampled at each site include temperature, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, conductivity, and pH. Sampling for E. coli is also performed at select locations.



# Citizen Participation and Awareness Projects\*



Symbol	Project Name	Funding Source	Total Project Cost
	1. Niagara River Riparian Restoration Program	Niagara River Greenway Ecological Funds	\$300,000
	2. Spring and Fall Cleanups	M&T Bank, Royal Bank of Canada	\$15,000
	3. Habitat Restoration at Seneca Bluffs	USEPA GLRI	\$200,000
	4. Enhanced Fish Consumption Advisory	USEPA GLRI	\$225,000
	5. Re-forestation in Two Western New York AOCs	United States Forest Service (GLRI)	\$397,000
	6. Downspout Disconnection	Buffalo Sewer Authority	\$19,500
	7. Riverwatch Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring	USEPA GLRI, NYSDEC Environmental Justice Program	\$15,000/year

# Community Vision and Revitalization

## Scajaquada Creek Initiative

Riverkeeper is engaging a diverse team of stakeholders to develop an implementable Restoration Strategy for Scajaquada Creek. The Strategy will identify action steps, suggest protective policy improvements, propose projects, and prioritize recommendations for subsequent implementation throughout the watershed. The goal of the project is to engage the community, and better leverage various efforts to address the multitude of impairments to the Creek.



## CSO 60 Green Streets Demonstration Project

In partnership with Riverkeeper, the Buffalo Sewer Authority will be implementing a Green Infrastructure demonstration project for a combined sewer overflow (CSO) that outfalls in Scajaquada Creek, near Hoyt Lake at Delaware Park (known as CSO 60). CSOs are overburdened by excessive stormwater entering the existing sewer system. This project seeks to eliminate overflow events by evaluating innovative ‘green’ infrastructure applications (i.e. porous asphalt, rain gardens and downspout disconnections), also known as ‘green streets’.

## Land Acquisition Feasibility Study

This study evaluated selected parcels throughout the City of Buffalo and provided conceptual designs that explore the parcels’ potential use for creating and increasing public access to the waterfront, providing environmental restoration and heritage interpretation, and contributing to community revitalization.

## Broderick Park Master Plan

In partnership with the City of Buffalo, Riverkeeper is facilitating the Broderick Park Master Plan which will both improve Niagara River shoreline as well as celebrate the international significance of the Underground Railroad. Once constructed, the park will enhance Buffalo’s waterfront as part of the City’s Draft Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan, and enhance Frederick Law Olmsted’s vision for a continuous system of parks along the waterfront.

## Green Infrastructure Solutions Report

This report, *written by Riverkeeper*, addresses the issue of using green infrastructure instead of traditional underground engineering to solve some of our combined sewer overflow problems. The plan outlines how green infrastructure would effectively prevent sewage from flowing directly into local waterways. Green infrastructure not only improves community aesthetics and environmental health, it costs less to implement than sewer separation systems or traditional engineering approach.

## City of Buffalo River “BOA” Step 2 Study

In partnership with the City of Buffalo, this project will evaluate existing conditions, and opportunities for potential properties located in the Buffalo River, Tonawanda Corridor, and Outer Harbor Brownfield Opportunity Areas with an emphasis on the identification and reuse potential of strategic sites that are catalysts for revitalization.

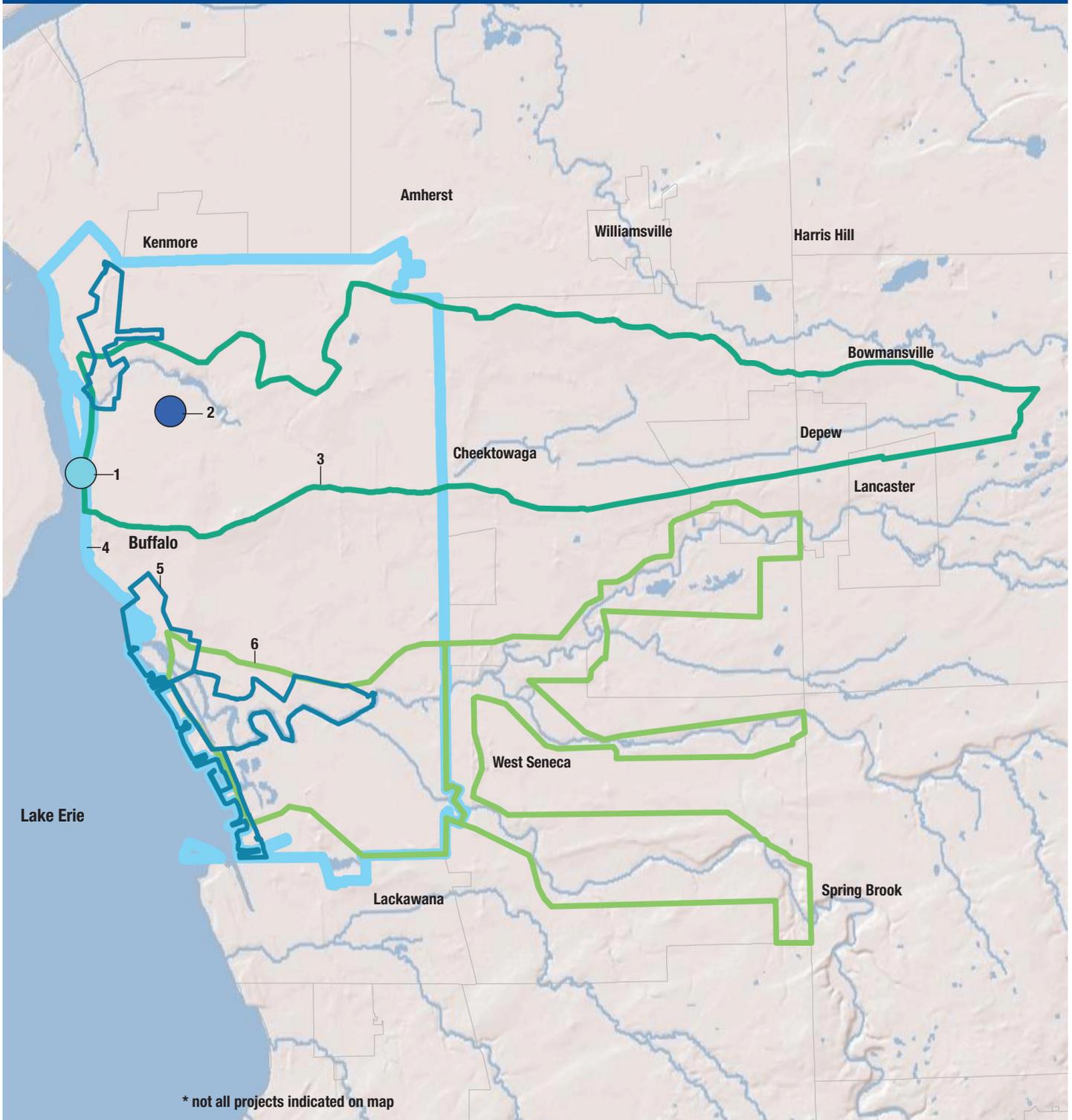


## Buffalo River Greenway

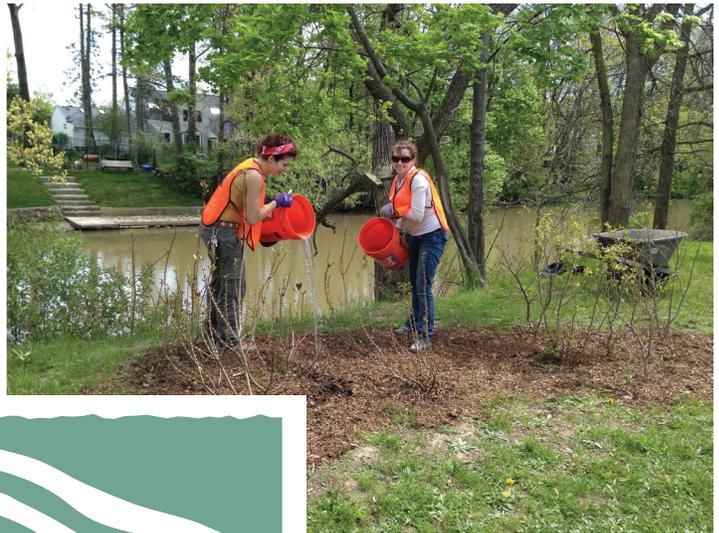
In partnership with the City of Buffalo, Riverkeeper is developing an implementable action plan to make the Buffalo River Greenway a reality. The Greenway will be designed to serve as a “*multi-purpose open space corridor and trail system designed to improve access and management of the river’s recreational, cultural and ecological assets.*” Recommendations will include: site and facility improvements to enhance recreation and the Buffalo River; opportunities for fishing, boating docks and scenic viewing of the river; signage, wayfinding and branding of the Buffalo River; cultural, industrial and heritage interpretation potentials.



# Community Vision and Revitalization Projects\*



Symbol	Project Name	Funding Source	Total Project Cost
	1. Broderick Park Master Plan	NYS DOS, City of Buffalo	\$1.6 million
	2. CSO 60 Green Streets Demonstration Project	BSA, NYS Environmental Facilities Corporation's Green Innovation Grant Program	\$2.9 million
	3. Scajaquada Creek Initiative	No dedicated funding	N/A
	4. Green Infrastructure Solutions Report	Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, Oishei Foundation	\$60,000
	5. City of Buffalo River "BOA"	NYS DOS	\$39,500
	6. Buffalo River Greenway	NYS DOS, Environmental Protection Fund	\$89,100



## BUFFALO NIAGARA RIVERKEEPER®

Prepared by Emily Sadowski • Design by Robert Hochberg  
Jill Jedlicka, Executive Director



### RIVERKEEPER Achievements to date

- \$250,000,000 Funds leveraged for WNY Water and Habitat Restoration
- \$50,000,000 Funds Secured for Buffalo River Dredging
- \$2,000,000 Ongoing Riverkeeper projects in the region
- 600,000 Cubic Yards of Contaminated Sediment Removed
- 100,000 Tons of Trash Removed from WNY Shorelines (estimated)
- 8,000 Volunteers & Students Participated in Citizen Action Programs
- 5,000 Trees Planted
- 4,500 Linear feet (Estimated) Planted Along Shoreline
- 4,400 Supporters of Riverkeeper
- 275 Surveys of Refugees & Recreational Anglers
- 150 Partnerships with Community Members, Agencies, Funders
- 1 Transformative Partnership with Buffalo Sewer Authority

