

Lower Schuette Park Kayak and Canoe Launch

The Friends of the Manitowoc River Watershed (FMRW) adopted Lower Schuette Park, in cooperation with Bethany Lutheran School, in January 2014. The group envisions adding a boat launch for kayaks and canoes, adding a grill to the shelter area, identifying and removing invasive species, and overall park upkeep including picking up trash and planting additional native species. The mission of FMRW is to connect people to the Manitowoc River in order to increase awareness, appreciation and use of the river. In order to help accomplish that mission, the group developed a plan to increase river access through the creation of a Kayak/Canoe launch at Lower Schuette Park. There are several benefits to a launch specifically for kayaks/canoes including removing the kayaks/canoes from the busy Manitou Park boat launch, which in turn would reduce the risk of potential conflict between the paddlers and anglers. Also, the kayak launch would provide another access point to the river for both recreation and wellness.

To help fund the kayak/canoe launch, a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource's Stewardship Local Assistance Program, is being pursued. The Grant is due on May 1, 2014 and would provide funds for the purchase and installation of the launch.

Partner groups who would support the kayak/canoe launch and enhanced river access, include the Manitowoc/Two Rivers YMCA, the Manitowoc Marina, Wisconsin Maritime Museum, Friends of the Ice Age Trail, and the Two Rivers Paddling Club.

In order to make the launch accessible to a wide range of people, we are researching the EZ Launch – Kayak and Canoe Station (see images below), which can be made handicap accessible. This type of launch also makes entering and exiting the kayak/canoe easier for seniors and children with a stable platform to hold the kayak, guide rails to stabilize the vessel, and launch rollers that move the kayak easily into and out of the water. The EZ Launch is also a floating platform that allows it to adjust with changing water levels and can be easily removed in the fall to avoid ice damage.

