

WOODBURY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AGENDA ITEM(S) REQUEST FORMDate: 10-12-17 Weekly Agenda Date: 10-17-17**ELECTED OFFICIAL / DEPARTMENT HEAD / CITIZEN:** Rick Schneider, Conservation Dir.**WORDING FOR AGENDA ITEM:**

Presentation and approval of Conservation Annual Report

ACTION REQUIRED:Approve Ordinance ☐Approve Resolution ☐Approve Motion ☒Public Hearing ☐Other: Informational ☐Attachments ☒**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Iowa Code requires the Conservation Board to submit an annual report to the Board of Supervisors.

BACKGROUND:

The FY 17 Annual Report of the Woodbury County Conservation Board was reviewed and approved by the Conservation Board at their October 5, 2017 meeting. The report is now presented to the Board of Supervisors.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

None

IF THERE IS A CONTRACT INVOLVED IN THE AGENDA ITEM, HAS THE CONTRACT BEEN SUBMITTED AT LEAST ONE WEEK PRIOR AND ANSWERED WITH A REVIEW BY THE COUNTY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE?

Yes ☐ No ☒**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the FY 17 Conservation Board Annual Report

ACTION REQUIRED / PROPOSED MOTION:

Move to accept and approve the FY 17 Annual Report of the Woodbury County Conservation Board.

ANNUAL REPORT

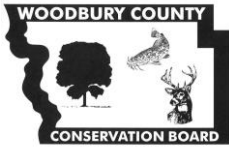
Woodbury County Conservation Board

July 1, 2016 — June 30, 2017



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Woodbury County Conservation Board

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Board Members:
Cindy Bennett
Suzan Boden
Don Dixon
Neil Stockfleth
Christine Zellmer-Zant

Rick D. Schneider, Director
Brian Stehr, Deputy Director
Dawn Snyder, Education Director

Executive Summary

MISSION: *Woodbury County Conservation Board is a regional agency tasked with providing high quality and valuable education, recreation, enhancement and preservation of our natural resources through professional and courteous service for the betterment of current and future generations.*

WOODBURY COUNTY VISION: *Woodbury County dedicates itself to providing high quality services to meet the ever-changing demands and needs of its citizens.*

FY 17 HIGHLIGHTS:

- Curtin Timber – Expanded by 120 acres
- Meyer Access – New access added to Little Sioux River
- Little Sioux Park – Water control structure installed for lake
- Southwood Conservation Area – Two new camping cabins opened for rental
- Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center – Parking lot lighting converted to LED
- Administration – Moved cabin and shelter rental reservations to online system

CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT BY THE NUMBERS:

- Manage 16 areas totaling 5,623 acres
- Hold and monitor 15 conservation easements on 1,695 acres
- Park revenues totaled \$379,025
- Visitation to all areas was over 750,000 persons
- Over 46,700 visitors to Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center
- More than 188 volunteers logged nearly 2,610 hours
- Provided 104 public programs for more than 7,100 participants
- Staffed by 14 full time, 3 regular part time, and 24 seasonal employees

Woodbury County Conservation Board is a five-member volunteer board appointed by the county Board of Supervisors. Members are appointed for five-year terms. Meetings are scheduled the first Thursday of each month.

It has been our pleasure to carry out our mission and serve the public in this manner during the past fiscal year while dove-tailing with the County's Vision. We deeply appreciate the outstanding assistance and willing cooperation of so many local, state and federal agencies including the county Board of Supervisors, the Iowa Natural Resources Department, and numerous local organizations described in Section IV of this report. We also appreciate the many comments and suggestions from our visitors which help us be more responsive to our customers.

Woodbury County is blessed with outstanding natural resource and outdoor recreation opportunities supported by its taxpayers. Please explore and enjoy your county park areas. You'll be glad you did!

Yours for Conservation,

Rick D. Schneider, Director

WOODBURY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017

I. BOARD ROSTER/MEETINGS

The conservation board members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors for five year terms. Members serving in 2016-2017 were as follows:

<u>Meetings Attended</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Expiration Date</u>
9	Suzan Boden	President	December 31, 2016
9	Neil Stockfleth	Vice President	December 31, 2019
9	Chris Zellmer-Zant	Secretary	December 31, 2020
10	Cindy Bennett	Member	December 31, 2018
9	Don Dixon	Member	December 31, 2017

Suzan Boden was reappointed to a five-year term beginning January 1, 2017. Marty Pottebaum, Woodbury County Supervisor, attends meetings as liaison to the Conservation Department from the Board of Supervisors for 2017.

The Board held twelve regular monthly meetings during the fiscal year. Minutes of these meetings are on file in the conservation office at Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center and are available for viewing on our website www.woodburyparks.org.

OTHER MEETINGS ATTENDED

One Board member and three staff attended the 57th Annual Conference of Iowa County Conservation Boards at Ft. Dodge, IA on September 15-17, 2016. The department's law enforcement officers attended the County Conservation Peace Officers Association's annual law enforcement workshop on October 3-5, 2016 at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in Johnston, Iowa. Two employees attended the IACCB E-Commerce Summit in Ames on November 10, 2016. The Director and Deputy Director attended the ISAC Fall School of Instruction in Des Moines on November 30-December 2, 2016. Four staff attended the annual Winterfest Employee Workshop in Waterloo on January 24-26, 2017. Staff members hosted a county conservation booth at the Woodbury County Fair in August 2016 and assisted with a district conservation booth at the Clay County Fair in September 2016. Five officers attended the CCPOA Western Region Workshop in Pocahontas February 22, 2017. Three employees attended the IAN Spring Workshop in Plymouth County March 8-10, 2017. The Director attended the ISAC Spring School and County Day at the Capitol in Des Moines March 8-10, REAP Day March 29, and IWill Day April 11, 2017.

Additional meetings attended by employees and/or board members during the fiscal year included:

IACCB New Employee School and Friends and Foundations meeting in Des Moines
Loess Hills Prairie Seminar – June 2-4, 2017 in Monona County
Conservation Directors Retreat
Woodbury County Safety meeting
Pesticide and Water Operator CEU training meetings
Woodbury County Conservation Foundation meetings
Woodbury County Department Head meetings
Woodbury County Health and Wellness Committee meetings
Woodbury County Strategic Planning meetings
Woodbury County Board of Supervisor joint meetings with rural towns
Plywood Trail Committee meetings
Grow Siouxland Committee meetings
Loess Hills Alliance committee meetings

Western Iowa Tourism meetings
IACCB District meetings
National Wild Turkey Federation Chapter
Pheasants Forever Chapter
Department Staff meetings

The Conservation Board hosted a volunteer recognition and awards presentation soup supper on March 30, 2017 at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. Numerous volunteers were recognized for their many hours of service to the Board and the Nature Center. Anthony Gaul of Sgt. Bluff was presented the Conservation Educator Award for his many years of teaching and involvement with environmental education and Boy Scouts. Ginger Martin of Sioux City was presented the Friend of Conservation Award for her many years of volunteer service working in the Nature Center gardens and at the Nature Calls fundraiser event.

II. ADMINISTRATION/MAINTENANCE

Staffing

Department staff during the fiscal year included fourteen full time, three regular part time and numerous seasonal employees. Part-time Senior Aide positions through the Woodbury County Community Action Agency continued to provide valuable receptionist assistance while providing employment for previously retired individuals. Employment through this program is limited which can result in a new employee each year. Numerous temporary seasonal employees were hired from April through October for maintenance tasks in the county park and wildlife areas.

FY 17 was a significant year for staff changes within the department. Deputy Director Mark Peterson retired on June 30, 2016. Resource Manager Brian Stehr was promoted to Deputy Director July 4, 2016. Assistant Manager Josh VanVoorst was promoted to fill Brian's position, and Resource Technician Dylan Bales was promoted to the Assistant Manager position. Resource Manager Bernie Ketelsen retired August 31, 2016 after nearly 44 years of service. Assistant Manager Robert Fundermann was promoted to fill this position, and Resource Technician Nathan Silfies, who was hired on July 1, 2016, was promoted to fill the Assistant Manager position. Resource Technician Erik Lindsay was promoted to Assistant Manager in September 2016 to provide an additional law enforcement officer for the Southwood Conservation Area district. The Resource Technician position at this location has been eliminated for the time being. The open Resource Technician positions at Little Sioux Park and Snyder Bend-Brown's Lake were filled in early 2017 by Derek Bean and Mike Massey respectively. Director Rick Schneider announced his retirement at the end of 2017, and the Board worked on the replacement process the first half of 2017 with the position advertised in June 2017.

Conservation staff have a history of longevity, and several employment milestones were celebrated during the year as follows: Don Haahr, Resource Manager (40 years); Pam Pfautsch, Receptionist (21 years); Theresa Kruid, Naturalist (20 years); and Marilyn Milbrodt, Receptionist (20 years).

The department's six Resource Managers and Deputy Director are certified law enforcement officers who maintain their certification through the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA).



New officers Bales (L) and Lindsay (R)
Also pictured: Officers VanVoorst, Stehr and Haahr



Don Haahr
40 years of service

These officers are also covered under the IPERS Protective Class of employees whereby the employer and employee both pay a higher rate into IPERS retirement system. The promotions during the fiscal year

resulted in three new Assistant Managers being appointed as peace officers and they are required to become certified through ILEA. Officers Bales and Lindsay attended and graduated from ILEA April 14, 2017. Officer Silfies began his attendance at the Academy May 8 and will graduate August 18, 2017.

Various employment programs provided through a variety of other agencies in the community help supplement board staffing needs when available. Conservation Corps Iowa (CCI), the AmeriCorps program through the Minnesota Conservation Corps, was contracted to work a total of 16 days during the fiscal year. CCI crews comprising up to five persons came four separate weeks during July, August and October 2016 and June 2017 to work on special projects. Four naturalist interns were employed in 2016 and 2017 to assist with summer camps and programs at the nature center and parks. An “Outdoor Skills” intern was hired in 2017 to teach and promote various outdoor skills to area youth. Funding for the position came from area businesses and conservation organizations. The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation provided funding for a Habitat Stewardship intern to work on projects near the Nature Center, Riverside Bluffs, and other park areas. Interns from Briar Cliff University and Morningside College were used during the school year. Board staff uses community service workers when available. Campground host volunteers provided a valuable service and were used in most of the parks at least part of the camping season. General volunteers are an important resource and have been a great assistance at the Nature Center and in the parks. The Nature Calls fundraiser event uses over 70 volunteers each year. The Receptionist/Volunteer Coordinator position works to contact and organize volunteers. Staff continued to recruit and train volunteers to provide a wide variety of assistance with many tasks. Numerous groups including area businesses, Middle School Peer Helpers, high school students, college students, church groups, and Boy Scout and Girl Scout troops, provided numerous volunteers that completed a variety of projects and tasks for the board during the year.

Positions employed/hired throughout the fiscal year were as follows:

- (1) Director
- (1) Deputy Director – Field Operations
- (4) Resource Manager
- (5) Assistant Resource Manager
- (5) Resource Technician
- (1) Administrative Secretary
- (9) Seasonal Park Ranger
- (1) Education Programs Director
- (1) Naturalist
- (1) Resource Naturalist
- (2) Nature Center Receptionist
- (1) Receptionist/Volunteer Coordinator
- (6) Summer Intern Naturalist
- (7) Security Guard
- (8) Seasonal Park Maintenance Employee
- (2) Outdoor Skills Intern
- (2) Habitat Stewardship Intern

The number of employees listed represents the various persons hired to fill these positions over a two-season period. The numbers do not necessarily represent the number of authorized positions.

Grants

The Conservation Department is very active in pursuing grant opportunities each year. Numerous grant applications were written and submitted by board staff during the fiscal year including the following:

<u>Grants Submitted</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>\$ Requested</u>	<u>\$ Awarded</u>	<u>Award Date</u>
Gilchrist Foundation	Land Acquisition	\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000	July 2016
Iowa Chapter NWTF	Land Acquisition	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	July 2016
Whitetails Unlimited	Land Acquisition	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	July 2016
Gilchrist Foundation	Nature Center Projects	\$ 74,825	\$ 0	July 2017
MRHD	Cabin Development	\$ 125,000	\$ 75,000	October 2015

Conservation staff continues to seek grant dollars and leverage available funds to assist with major development projects, land acquisition, publicity, and environmental education. **During FY17, a total of \$430,501 in grants was administered and another \$74,825 in grant applications was written and submitted for funding.**

Long Range Planning

Long range strategic planning is a very important responsibility of the Board. On January 28, 2017, the Board held a strategic planning session with staff at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. Discussion was held on various topics including future capital improvement needs, staffing needs, and succession planning. Long range planning needs to be addressed every year to maintain focus and purpose by the Board and an efficient, effective and responsive department.

Board Policies

Board policies are reviewed annually and addressed when needs arise. The Conservation Board coordinates department policies closely with other county policies and procedures. Staff worked on proposed changes to Park Rules and Regulations which had not been updated since 2000. Working with the County Attorney's Office, a final draft of new Rules and Regulations was approved by the Board, published and new signs ordered for placement at the entrance of every conservation area. The Deputy Director who serves as the Chief Law Enforcement Officer for the department worked with the Sheriff's Department to incorporate many of the Sheriff's Department policies into a new Law Enforcement Policy for the Conservation Department which was adopted by the Board. Policies governing cabin and enclosed shelter rental were updated to comply with the new online reservation system.

Training

Training requirements for new and existing employees involves a large time commitment. A variety of training must be administered and received to ensure that employees are prepared to do their jobs. New full time and seasonal employees receive orientation training regarding board policies, especially safety related concerns. Training is important to ensure that employees are able to safely and efficiently do their jobs.

Staff attended numerous specialized training sessions during the fiscal year, many of which were required to maintain certifications. The Board's seven Law Enforcement Officers attended various training and certification schools including the County Conservation Peace Officers Association's annual training school at the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy in October 2016 to obtain required continuing education units and firearms qualification. Four employees attended the Winterfest Employees Training Workshop in Waterloo in January 2017. Training sessions on safety issues typically result in a review of Personal Protective Equipment and acquisition of items needed to keep employees safe. The annual County Safety Meeting for Secondary Roads and Conservation employees was held at the Nature Center on November 3, 2016.

Staff and board members attended the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards annual conference at Ft. Dodge, IA September 15-17, 2016. Nine staff members are required to maintain Pesticide Applicator Certification in several categories and attended several sessions during the year to obtain continuing education units for certification. The Director attended classes to receive continuing education units for maintaining certification as Water System Distribution Operators for the Nature Center's public water supply system. This certified position will be in jeopardy following retirement of the Director in December 2017. All full-time staff maintains CPR, AED and Basic First Aid certification, and recertification classes were attended during the year.

Committees/Appointments

The Education Programs Director served on the REAP Conservation Education Programs statewide grant review and scoring committee and as a delegate from Woodbury County to the Loess Hills Alliance Board of Directors. The Director served as an alternate from Woodbury County to the Loess Hills Alliance Board of Directors and as a member of the Stewardship Committee, Protection Committee and the Protection Committee's grant review group. The Director and Deputy Director served on the Habitat and Executive Committees for the Woodbury County Chapter of Pheasants Forever. The Director served as Publicity Chair for the local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, and served on the Woodbury County Health and Wellness Committee. Bob Fundermann, Assistant Resource Manager, served as Chief Firearms Instructor for the County Conservation Peace Officers Association. Dawn Snyder and Board member Christine Zellmer-Zant served on the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation. All five Board members served on the Woodbury County Conservation Endowment Board. Two staff and Board member Don Dixon served on the Woodbury County REAP Committee.

Agreements/Partnerships

The Board and staff continue to develop and nurture partnerships with numerous agencies and organizations for the benefit of conservation. Board staff worked with area school districts regarding incorporation of annual class field trips to the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. The Board's Receptionist/Volunteer Coordinator and Resource Naturalist also worked with various agencies to provide after school programs for youth and public programs in the parks. Ducks Unlimited has been a major partner through agreements with the Board to develop and enhance Owego Wetland Complex and other areas in the county. The Loess Hills Alliance has provided partnership opportunities by making available through the Board firefighting equipment to be used on private lands. The Alliance also provides continuing training for Advanced Wildland Burns whereby board staff receives refresher training. Trained individuals can be available to assist the National Park Service in fighting forest fires. An Agreement is maintained with Golden Hills Resource Conservation Development to provide for the installation and long-term maintenance of special interpretive panel signs along the Loess Hills Scenic Byway. A major partnership effort has been formed between the Board and the Natural Resources Conservation Service in developing various agreements to manage the Owego Wetland Complex.

Siouxland District Health Department provides testing services for the nature center's public water supply as required by IDNR, and conducts annual water testing on all park wells. Staff maintains nesting towers for Ospreys on the north shore of Brown's Lake and along Snyder Bend in cooperation with Iowa DNR and CF Industries. The Board participates with the DNR's water quality monitoring program on its two swimming beaches.

The Board continued to nurture partnerships and agreements with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation regarding conservation easements and Woodbury County Pheasants Forever in acquiring and providing food plot and native grass seed and seeding equipment. An extremely valuable partnership is maintained with the County Secondary Roads Department. Secondary Roads has provided many hours of work with specialized heavy equipment, surveys, engineering and construction oversight on numerous conservation projects. A special Interdepartmental Agreement for maintaining specified park roads continued between the Conservation Board and Secondary Roads. In the past fiscal year, the Secondary Roads Department staff has worked on plans to improve the Dixon Bridge Access on the Little Sioux River, developed plans and obtained permits for a shoreline armoring project at Little Sioux Park, and assisted with the installation of the water control structure for the lake at Little Sioux Park. Conservation Department staff returned the favor by assisting with removal of several large Cottonwood trees at the Lawton Shed, and planting and mulching about 30 spruce trees for a new screen planting. The Conservation Department must also maintain a close working relationship with the Sheriff's Office. Conservation law enforcement officers depend heavily on Sheriff's Deputies to assist with problems that arise in the parks and any subsequent arrests. The Sheriff's Office assisted with updating the Board's Law Enforcement Policy and with researching specific equipment for department officers. Cooperative efforts have begun with the Rural Economic Development office to promote county conservation areas and facilities.

The Board sponsored its annual Camping Kick-Off Weekend at all county campgrounds the first weekend in May which was well received. Campers received a voucher for one night free camping later in 2017 along with other small gifts. Board staff also works closely with Stone State Park staff on prairie and trail management around the nature center.

A more detailed description of various cooperative ventures is discussed in **Section IV** of this report.

Technology

Mobile and portable law enforcement radio equipment was replaced with assistance from the Board of Supervisors to enable department officers to have the most current communications equipment due to the change to statewide encrypted radio communication. Department laptop computers were replaced with new units. The search for reliable, consistent, and fast internet service continued with a serious look at fiber.

Board staff continued to make considerable use of GIS technology for better management of county parks and wildlife areas, and use in various grant and permit applications. This technology is heavily used for prescribed burn management of wildlife areas and preparing detailed maps for grants or permit applications. Erik Lindsay, Resource Technician at Southwood Conservation Area, serves as the department's GIS Specialist.

The Board's website, www.woodburyparks.org, provides a multitude of information for visitors and is updated regularly by staff. Information on cabin and enclosed shelter rental dates can be accessed through the website. Video clips are available showing the inside of the cabins and enclosed shelters as well as the nature center. Donations and certain sales can also be made through the website. All cabin and enclosed shelter reservations entered the electronic age when they went "online" through MyCountyParks.com website December 23, 2016. All four park offices are connected to the internet and the County's GroupWise email and main "U" Drive which provides an efficient method of information exchange with the main office. Most full-time staff have opted to receive and access their work email on their personal cell phones. High speed internet access has been installed at all park offices, and wireless internet access for campers and park users at Snyder Bend Park and Bigelow Park. Public access at the Nature Center is also available. It will be a goal of the Department to provide high speed wireless internet for park users in all four of the main developed park areas in the future. Fiber optic service is expected to be installed to Southwood Conservation Area by the end of 2017, and plans are being made to provide public wireless access at this park and Little Sioux Park.

The Board continued to provide two outlets for the public to obtain DNR licenses at Little Sioux Park and Southwood Conservation Area. These outlets are part of the DNR's electronic licensing system that has been operating since 2000, and these systems were upgraded in 2010. All IDNR licenses are also available online.

The Board is part of a statewide publicity and promotion effort for all county conservation boards through a website, www.MyCountyParks.com. This advanced website provides excellent access for all county conservation boards in Iowa to promote their areas and facilities to potential visitors across the country and received comprehensive updates in 2017.

Environmental Education/Publicity

The Board's environmental education program continued to experience strong demand for programs and information during its twenty-ninth year. Emphasis for school class programs is centered on encouraging classes to visit the nature center and experience the outdoors in the loess hills. Students have the opportunity to view and learn from the exhibits, watch educational videos, listen to a naturalist program or participate in an educational hike. Volunteers are an immense help with the many classes that come to the center. The nature center is an excellent facility to host various types of public programs regardless of weather conditions. Staff conducted numerous radio and television interviews concerning various programs and events during the fiscal year. Numerous programs were presented to various groups and organizations in the community and at the county parks. The Board cooperated with the Woodbury County Soil Conservation District in providing trees to fifth graders in rural school districts throughout the county. The Board's newsletter, "Woodbury Wanderings", continued to be a popular publication and is published three times a year and is available on the website in digital format. The Board continued to sell advertising to help support printing costs of the newsletter which is a free publication. Subscribers are encouraged to sign up to receive the newsletter electronically. Several Resource Managers, Naturalists and the Deputy Director serve or assist as Hunter Safety and Fur Harvester Instructors teaching and assisting with these classes throughout the county during the year. Several classes are held at the nature center and various park offices. Hunter Safety classes are now part of the curriculum of the three local public high schools and are assisted by Board staff with over 200 students receiving the training in the past year. The nature center Gift Shop features many items which help promote the nature center with its name and logo. Summer day camps held at the nature center were again very successful, are self-sustaining, and continue to be expanded where possible. A complete annual report of the Board's environmental education program is located at the end of this report in **Section VII**.

The Board provided an information booth at the Woodbury County Fair. Staff also assisted with a District III County Conservation booth at the Clay County Fair.

A dedicated, hard-working group of volunteers worked with the Education Programs Director and Naturalist to raise money for nature center programs and needs through the thirteenth annual "Nature Calls" fundraiser. Over \$45,000 was raised at the September 10, 2016 event which was held at the Sioux City Convention Center. Proceeds help fund one summer naturalist intern and upgrades/improvements to the Nature Center.

Communication

Communication contacts between various conservation organizations and the Board were coordinated by the Director during the fiscal year. Maintaining close working relationships with various state, county, and federal organizations along with local organizations is a high priority. Staff continually seeks new methods to communicate through the Board's website and other electronic means.

Regular staff meetings were conducted during the fiscal year. Communication efforts among staff locations have been enhanced with the use of e-mail, high-speed internet, fax machines, and cell phones. Conservation staff conducted regular maintenance checks on major equipment, playground equipment, park facilities and vehicles during the year. Emphasis is placed on safety issues in all park areas according to the Board's safety policy. Routine safety inspections of park shops help ensure a safe working environment for employees and compliance with OSHA regulations.

Equipment Purchases

Major equipment/furniture items purchased by the Board during the fiscal year were as follows:

	<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
1	2005 Used Ford F350 Flatbed Pickup Truck	\$ 16,570
1	2017 Chevrolet 1500 Pickup Truck	\$ 26,990
1	2016 Toyota Sienna Minivan	\$ 23,500
1	2016 Case TV380 Compact Track Loader	\$ 64,550
1	2017 John Deere 1550 Terrain Cut 4WD Mower	\$ 15,852
1	Toro Industrial Push Mower	\$ 1,041
1	Mi-T-M Pressure Washer	\$ 700
1	Fireproof 4 Drawer Lateral File	\$ 1,200
2	Desks	\$ 629
1	Acetylene Cutting/Welding Kit	\$ 350

A complete equipment inventory is on file in the conservation office.

III. FUTURE

CIP/Revenue Requirements

The Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for the Conservation Department is reviewed regularly by the Conservation Board. A minimum five-year improvement program is prioritized, approved annually and submitted to the Board of Supervisors as part of the annual budgeting process. The CIP is based on needs and available grants and revenues, and can fluctuate throughout the year. In **Section VI**, this report describes various capital improvement projects scheduled for completion during the next fiscal year. These include improvement upgrades to the Little Sioux Park swim beach, nature center improvements, playground renovation at Brown's Lake, providing a dust-free surface for the road at Southwood Conservation Area and numerous other projects. Of more immediate concern is the condition of asphalt roads at Little Sioux Park and Bigelow Park that have reached the end of their life span and require resurfacing within the next year or two. Longer range projects include construction of cold storage buildings at three parks, renovating and possibly enclosing shelters at Fowler Forest Preserve and Snyder Bend Park, renovating the Bellamy Campground at Little Sioux Park, and shoreline improvements at Brown's Lake. All projects are dependent on park user fees and other revenues generated from conservation areas that are deposited into the Conservation Reserve Fund which finances these improvements. These revenues are also used as leverage to cost-share with available grant programs which provide additional funding for capital improvement projects.

Large scale projects could not be completed without the availability of various grant monies. Applications to grant programs such as LAWCON and REAP, as well as project specific grants, will be made when appropriate, provided grant monies and match dollars continue to be available. Many state and federal grant sources are shrinking or disappearing completely. Construction costs continue to rise at a steady pace making it imperative that grant funds be obtained to complete necessary capital improvements. The Board and staff need to continue to look for new sources of revenue, and the county Board of Supervisors needs to be involved in this effort. User fees and other charges are to be monitored and adjusted periodically to

ensure a competitive product and price, but these revenues will need to be supplemented with additional sources. Long range planning must be an ongoing effort by the Conservation Board and staff and should include the Board of Supervisors in dealing with particularly costly projects. The Board has collaborated in the past with the Board of Supervisors to issue bonds to finance specific projects with park revenues used to pay back the bonds. This is an innovative way to complete high-cost improvements when interest rates are attractive for borrowing. Some major projects, such as road resurfacing, are simply out of the Conservation Board's ability to repay and will need to be funded by bonds issued through the Board of Supervisor's Debt Service Fund. The Iowa Outdoor Natural Resources Trust Fund can be a significant source of revenue when it is funded.

Land Acquisition

Land acquisition efforts continued with the Curtin Timber Expansion project. The Board began working with the landowner of a 120-acre parcel adjacent to Curtin Timber early in 2015. Final acquisition and closing on this property occurred in October 2016. Acquisition was made possible through the assistance of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. This property contains some of the finest forest in western Iowa and will remain undeveloped open to public hunting.



Meyer Access on Little Sioux River

Staff approached the Iowa DOT regarding a small right-of-way along Highway 31 south of the County Road D-50 bridge over the Little Sioux River for potential use as a public river access. An agreement was approved by both entities and the 2.5 acre access will now be managed by the Conservation Board. It will be known as Meyer Access. Easement opportunities in the County will be monitored for any attractive possibilities.

Rare opportunities for fee title acquisition occasionally arise from willing sellers, and the Board should take advantage of these offers coupled with the availability of grant dollars to fund acquisitions. The Board will continue to work only with willing sellers, and potential acquisitions will be reviewed to determine their viability within the Board's system and Long Range Land Acquisition Plan. Acquisitions are usually dependent upon grants which typically fund 50% -100% of acquisition costs.

Cooperation

As described in **Section IV**, the Board will continue to cooperate wherever possible with other agencies, departments, and private organizations to further the awareness of conservation and promote the Board's goals and objectives throughout the next fiscal year. Cooperative efforts and partnerships are critical to the success of the Conservation Board. Locally, the Board looks forward to continuing cooperation with local colleges and universities, Pheasants Forever, National Wild Turkey Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Whitetails Unlimited, Sioux Valley Sports Club, River City Anglers Club, and Siouxland Fly Fishing Club. The Board will also continue to work with the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation, Loess Hills Audubon, the Northwest Iowa Sierra Club, Stone State Park and IDNR, The Nature Conservancy and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to promote conservation issues and projects. Collaborative efforts will continue with the Loess Hills Alliance to promote conservation and protection measures for Iowa's loess hills. The Board also looks forward to continued use of various grant programs including employment programs such as Conservation Corps Iowa and Woodbury County Community Action Agency Senior Aides program, and community service worker programs, along with interns and volunteers to complete various maintenance and educational projects throughout the Board's conservation system.

A critically important cooperative relationship exists between the Conservation Department and other county departments, particularly Secondary Roads. Many projects could not get accomplished or could cost much more without the willing cooperation of the County Engineer and his staff who assist often with a variety of maintenance and construction projects in the parks due to their specialized equipment and expertise. The Sheriff's Department provides critical assistance to park officers in law enforcement situations. More cooperative ventures with the Rural Economic Development Department to promote county parks and facilities will have a positive economic impact for the County. It is imperative that these types of relationships continue among departments.

Priorities/Strategic Planning

The Board's top priorities for the next fiscal year will be renovation of the beach at Little Sioux Park, renovating the playground at Brown's Lake, and finding a dust-free surfacing solution for the Southwood Conservation Area road. Renovation of asphalt roads at Little Sioux Park and Bigelow Park are major concerns that need to be addressed in the next year. The Board's policies and long range plans will continue to be reviewed and updated as necessary. Future planning efforts assist in developing the Board's budget requests, and a strategic planning meeting of the Board needs to be held annually. Board priorities continually change, but timely review of these priorities will allow needs to be efficiently matched with limited resources. Strategic planning has already proven its value within the department and has helped tremendously in dealing with retirements from key positions.

Staff

Full-time conservation staff numbers have been insufficient for many years. The Board is extremely grateful for the new Resource Technician position funded by the Board of Supervisors last fiscal year. Optimally, the department should have a minimum of three additional full-time positions to operate most efficiently and responsively to the public. Discussion of additional staff continues to be addressed through strategic planning and communication with the Board of Supervisors with overall county budget concerns the limiting factor. Priorities for full-time staff positions include a Natural Resources Coordinator, an additional Resource Technician position, and a third naturalist for the department. A part-time Clerk position and more receptionist hours are also needed in the Conservation Board office. The "park season" runs nearly eight months which causes difficulties with federal wage and hour regulation compliance when using temporary or seasonal employees. Increasing visitation numbers at county parks and the Nature Center has put tremendous pressure on existing employees to keep up with public needs. Increasing training requirements take more hours away from department production thereby placing even more pressure on limited manpower resources. New staff positions should be considered which can better accommodate and benefit the Board's programs and service to the public. Additional employee retirements within the next two years will also impact staff needs. Position requests have been favorably received by the Board of Supervisors, but budget constraints have not allowed many positions to be added. It is hoped that proposed strategic planning for the entire county will place more emphasis on staffing needs to provide necessary services.

Board staff will continue to recruit, train and organize volunteers that can assist with operating and maintaining the nature center and park facilities. Campground hosts have proven to be particularly effective as they handle various park duties, and staff will continue to seek individuals willing to serve in that capacity. The Board will continue to annually recognize special individuals who have made outstanding contributions of their time and efforts to apply conservation practices and promote conservation education by conferring the "Friend of Conservation" and "Conservation Educator" awards. The volunteer recognition program will continue to reward and acknowledge those dedicated volunteers that assist the Board in various ways. The Board's outstanding environmental education program will continue to be the top promotional tool for the Board's park and conservation areas and programs.

IV. COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS

1. Management Agreements

The Woodbury County Conservation Board presently operates two areas totaling 46 acres under management agreement with the Iowa Department of Natural resources. These areas include Bigelow Park and the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center/Board Office area at Stone Park. The Board also operates two areas under management agreement with the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Copeland Park Access on the Little Sioux River west of Correctionville at the State Highway #31 bridge and Meyer Access, a river access site on the Little Sioux River near the D-50 bridge south of Anthon. The Bigelow Park management agreement was renewed as a 50-year management lease agreement in 2010.

2. Wildlife Habitat Restoration Program

The Board maintains an active wildlife habitat restoration program by planting tree and shrub seedlings and various types of grass cover and food plots on its park lands each year. Wildlife food plots totaling nearly 80 acres were planted on public wildlife areas. Controlled burns for

prairie for grassland improvement as well as seed production were conducted on 94 acres. Staff cooperated with the Woodbury County Pheasants Forever Chapter in providing free seed for establishing food plots on public and private lands.

The Board's undeveloped wildlife areas are managed specifically for wildlife populations. Food plots and farmlands are managed to benefit wildlife. Some lands are enrolled in USDA programs, including seven CRP contracts and six WRP contracts which the Board must maintain.

The restoration and establishment of native prairie and forbs is a popular component of the board's habitat program. The board maintains four Truax native grass drills of various sizes required to plant native grass seed, and the board's equipment and technical assistance is constantly in demand. Ranging from the small 6' drill, which is ideal for small plantings, to the large 12' no-till drill which is suitable for large acre planting, the drills are made available to landowners on a rental basis and were used to plant 240.6 acres in the fall of 2016 and the spring of 2017. Depending on time and weather, staff typically harvests native grass seed each fall for use in replanting both public and private areas, as well as providing a seed source for roadside vegetation management programs. No seed was harvested during fall 2016. The Board assists the Secondary Roads Department with seeding various road shouldering, re-grading and box culvert construction projects throughout the county. Native grass species are used when practical.

Non-game habitat improvement programs include maintenance of bluebird house trails at Southwood Conservation Area and Little Sioux Park. Volunteers also maintain bluebird house trails along one mile of fence line at the Interstate rest area south of Sergeant Bluff, and the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center. Osprey nesting towers are maintained on the north shore of Brown's Lake and east shore of Snyder Bend Lake. Other non-game efforts include a variety of programs offered to the public. Board staff assists the local Ducks Unlimited chapter at the annual Green Wing Day for youth and assists with construction of wood duck houses for use throughout the county. These houses are installed at various sites by department staff and monitored occasionally to determine usage and condition. Representatives from the Waterfowl Association of Iowa have assisted with installing nesting structures at Owego Wetland Complex.

Staff has investigated the possibility of obtaining a pair of Trumpeter Swans to be located at Little Sioux Park, and the possibility of erecting nesting sites in downtown Sioux City for Peregrine Falcons.

Special planting equipment for planting seedling trees and shrubs is made available to landowners on a donation basis. Employees work closely with landowners and Iowa DNR personnel surveying and establishing populations of wildlife species, as well as enforcing fish and game regulations.

3. Water Recreation Access Cost-Share

This state cost-share program typically provides up to seventy-five percent of the cost for boat ramps, docks, and related facilities used by boaters and fishermen. The Conservation Board has obtained several boat ramp and dock facilities through this program, as well as assistance for parking lot improvements and restroom facilities. A limited amount of funds are made available to conservation boards each year for various cost-share projects. Monies in this fund are derived from a special tax on fuel sold within the state. In September 2015, Board staff submitted a grant application for cost-share funding for new boat docks at Brown's Lake boat ramp and campground and was successful in receiving up to \$26,692 toward that project. The old docks were moved to Southwood Conservation Area and repurposed for use as boat and fishing docks in that pond.

4. Supplemental Environment Projects (SEP)

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division has established a process whereby monies paid as penalties in environmental enforcement cases can be directed to supplemental environmental projects, or SEPs. Instead of fines and penalties being paid into the state's general fund, the process allows for the penalties to be directed to the county conservation board in the county where the violation occurred for the board to expend on environmentally beneficial projects. An annual report is sent to IDNR to verify the amount of monies collected during the fiscal year and explain how they were expended by the county. Monies are placed in a

special SEP fund and budgeted for expenditure through that fund. During the fiscal year, no environmental penalties or fund interest were received by the Conservation Board, and the fund contains a zero balance. The Conservation Board has designated Owego Wetland Complex as their main priority for expenditure of any SEP funds.

5. Naturalist Programs

The Board's environmental education program completed its twenty-ninth full year in June 2017. Please refer to **Section VII - Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center Annual Report**. Although most programs and presentations are organized by the naturalists, the Director and other staff assist in presenting programs to various groups and organizations throughout the year. Staff members occasionally participate in various publicity efforts with the media. Resource Managers are frequently requested to present programs to school classes, as well as information on specific topics about their areas and careers.

6. Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts

Scouting programs in the area continue to use county conservation parks for camping and other activities. The naturalists and Resource Naturalist occasionally work with Eagle Scout candidates and Girl Scout Gold Award candidates on their community service projects. Several Eagle Scout projects were planned and completed for the nature center and some county parks during the last fiscal year. Staff will continue to work with scout groups to foster an interest in conservation ethics and careers, and to provide opportunities for smaller service projects.

7. Woodbury County Pheasants Forever

This local private organization was formed in January 1986. The group is dedicated to improving habitat to increase the number of pheasants within the county, and works with landowners and other conservation agencies to meet their goals. Since 1987, the local chapter has assisted financially in the purchase of 852 acres of additional wildlife habitat areas in the county. In two acquisitions, the local chapter was responsible for nearly 25% of the total acquisition costs.

The Chapter hosted a Youth Day at Little Sioux Park October 2, 2016, with over 70 youth in attendance, and a Youth Fishing Derby June 17, 2017. In the spring of 2017, the Pheasants Forever (PF) Chapter and conservation staff cooperated in providing 300 pounds of seed for establishment of food plots on public and private lands. Board staff assisted the Chapter by providing equipment and planting advice when possible to private landowners along with equipment for prescribed burns. The Board plans to continue cooperative efforts with the Pheasants Forever Chapter for the establishment of additional permanent habitat and food plots on private lands.

8. River City Anglers Club

The River City Anglers Club is a local organization comprised of persons interested in the betterment of fishing resources in the local and Midwest area. The group holds an annual event featuring fishing experts and a swap meet to raise monies that can be used for special projects benefiting fish resources and fishermen. The club has donated several thousand dollars to the Board for the improvement of fishing facilities and opportunities at Brown's Lake and Snyder Bend, and sponsored the 400-gallon aquarium display at the nature center.

9. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation

The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is an IRS 501(c) (3) organization dedicated to the conservation and preservation of natural resources in Iowa. This group can provide specialized assistance to landowners in the acquisition and protection of various types of land. The Conservation Board utilized the assistance of the Heritage Foundation in acquiring an addition to Shagbark Hills in 1987, the Hammond addition to Southwood Conservation Area in 1989, three additions to Oak Ridge in 1999, 2000 and 2006, two additions to Owego Wetland Complex in 2001 and 2002, an addition to Curtin Timber in 2016, and negotiation of fourteen permanent conservation easements. The advantages of the foundation include quicker response to seller's

requests and demands, and the ability to provide specialized tax-deductible options to willing sellers that cannot be provided by governmental entities. The Foundation provides their services at cost, and the Conservation Board maintains a sustaining membership with this organization.

The Board holds fifteen easements on over 1,695 acres and is responsible for annual monitoring of these easements.

10. Woodbury County Conservation Foundation

The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation was formed in January 1990. It is an incorporated non-profit organization that received tax exempt status in 1991 and is dedicated to the conservation and preservation of natural resources in Woodbury County. Similar in goals to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation concentrates on specific projects to assist the Conservation Board in completing major acquisition and construction projects. The foundation's main goals have been the acquisition and protection of native loess hill prairie areas and the establishment of a regional nature center for the conservation board. The foundation's most ambitious project, establishment of a nature center, was realized in 1995. The foundation's tax-exempt status is an invaluable help in raising funds for various projects, such as the nature center, and will continue to be a vehicle for future fundraising efforts. The foundation has positions for nine directors, two seats which are reserved for a county conservation board member and staff member. Dawn Snyder, Education Programs Director and conservation board member Christine Zellmer-Zant served as representatives on the foundation board of directors. Dawn also serves as Secretary/Treasurer for the Foundation. Regular meetings are held by the foundation, and its mailing address continues to be the Conservation Board office mailing address. As a 501(c) (3) organization, the foundation provides a tax-deductible avenue for donations, contributions and grants to be used toward conservation projects including the nature center, land acquisition, and parks.

During the fiscal year, a special group of more than 70 volunteers worked on the Board's annual fundraising "Nature Calls" event, a craft brew/wine tasting and auction event held each fall. The thirteenth annual event was held September 10, 2016 and netted over \$25,000 for improvements at the Nature Center. The Foundation provided funding for a Habitat Stewardship Intern in 2017 to work on prairies and other habitats. They also provided funding for two Conservation Corps Iowa crews of six workers to conduct four days of tree and brush clearing on 8 acres as part of prairie restoration efforts at Riverside Bluffs and to install 800 feet of new fence at Riverside Bluffs. The Foundation continued to offer special incentives to boost memberships, including camping discounts, free nights of camping and nature center gift shop discounts. On February 26, 2017, the Foundation held its annual meeting at the nature center and featured a program from the Great Plains Zoomobile. The Foundation has continued to fund scholarships for needy Summer Camp children.

11. REAP

The Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection Act (REAP) was passed by the 1989 session of the Iowa General Assembly and went into effect July 1, 1989. This legislation was to be a long-term, multi-million-dollar commitment to the protection, maintenance, and enhancement of natural and scenic areas; county and state parks; upgrading environmental education programs; protection of endangered animal and plant species and wildlife habitat; halting soil erosion; and improving air and water quality.

For the 2017 fiscal year, \$16 million was appropriated by the Iowa legislature which was allocated among eight different areas, including conservation boards, which will share 20% of the appropriation. Of this 20%, sixty percent goes directly to county boards on per county and per capita basis. The remaining 40% is administered through the Natural Resources Commission for competitive grants to conservation boards. To be eligible for the per capita share and competitive grants, counties must spend at least 22 cents per thousand dollars of taxable valuation on conservation programs. During the 2017 fiscal year, Woodbury County spent approximately 44.8 cents per thousand dollars of taxable valuation on conservation programs. During the fiscal year, Woodbury County received \$9,711 for its per county share and \$32,876 for its per capita share. \$749.61 in interest was credited to the REAP account during the fiscal year.

During the fiscal year, the following expenditures were made from the REAP account:
\$64,317.40 – Funding for 120-acre Curtin Timber acquisition
\$ 5,000.00 – Purchase of 12 canoes, 1 kayak, 2 trailers and related equipment

Carryovers in the REAP Fund are typically obligated for future facility developments or specialized equipment. A portion of the funds may be used for cost-sharing land acquisition and capital improvement grant projects if necessary. For FY 18, the Legislature reduced the REAP appropriation to \$12 million due to budget issues. The Board is hopeful that REAP funding may eventually reach the originally legislated \$20 million per year level. Since REAP funds are used for special projects and expenditures, the board is not dependent on this special appropriation for operational expenditures. It is anticipated that Woodbury County's REAP funds in the next fiscal year will be used to assist with Nature Center or park improvements.

12. National Wild Turkey Federation

A local chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, known as Loess Hills Longbeards, was formed in January 2000. The chapter conducts an annual membership and fundraising banquet. Chapter meetings are held at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, and the Director served as publicity chairman during the fiscal year. This group is dedicated to the preservation and establishment of the wild turkey throughout the United States. Most funds raised by chapters are forwarded to a state and national organization and used for a variety of programs to acquire and enhance habitat and promote the wild turkey. The Conservation Board received a \$7,500 grant in 1999 to assist with an addition to Oak Ridge Conservation Area. Two grants totaling \$17,000 were received in July 2005 and January 2006 to assist with a 228-acre acquisition project in Oak Ridge Conservation Area. A grant for \$10,000 to assist with a 320-acre acquisition project in Oak Ridge was received in January 2008. And a grant for \$15,000 was received in July 2016 for the Curtin Timber Addition. Staff will continue to work with this organization to promote their efforts in enhancing wildlife habitat and populations in the county.

V. LAND ACQUISITION

A 120-acre addition to Curtin Timber south of Anthon was acquired during the fiscal year. This project has required the assistance of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation to step in and acquire the property on behalf of the County and hold it until the Board secured sufficient grants for funding.

A 2.5-acre area was acquired through management agreement with Iowa DOT in 2017. This area is located along Highway 31 south of Anthon on the south side of the County Road D-50 bridge and provides an excellent public access to the Little Sioux River.

Easements, river accesses, and expansion of Snyder Bend Park will be priorities in the future. Future acquisitions will continue to be dependent upon available grants and the Board's ability to maintain areas. Acquisitions must fit into the Board's plans with priority being placed on Oak Ridge Conservation Area, Owego Wetland Complex, and existing parks. Land is acquired only from willing sellers.

At the end of the fiscal year, the conservation board managed 17 different areas comprising approximately 5,667 acres, and held fifteen easements on over 1,695 acres.

VI. AREA DEVELOPMENT

1. Snyder Bend County Park

Snyder Bend County Park is located two miles southwest of the Salix interchange on Interstate 29. This 35-acre area was acquired in 1961 and is currently managed as a full-service outdoor recreation park area. Existing facilities at this site include modern and tent camping areas, a camper's shower and restroom facility, playground equipment and open play areas, picnicking grounds, two open shelters, restroom building, boat ramp and parking lot, paved access and interior roads, concrete trail, four modern family cabins, a residence, and maintenance shop/office and storage area.

Additional trees were planted in spring 2017 as staff continued to replace trees lost in the 2011 flood. Many more trees continue to die and will be removed and replaced. Trees were planted with assistance from employees of CF Industries and their families. Renovation of the wireless equipment in the park was completed to ensure good, consistent service. Seasonal low lake levels continued to be a concern as the power plants providing the supplemental water only operate during peak periods. Water level remained at a recreational level during the park season. Recycling dumpster containers were added to the park to encourage recycling by park visitors. All night security lights were converted to LED.

Plans for the next year include removal of dead trees and planting new trees. The original open shelter needs some refurbishing with consideration of enclosing and the playground surfacing material needs to be replaced with shredded rubber. Other future plans include development of an accessible fishing pier jetty near the lake and application of epoxy finish to the camper shower/restroom building floors.

Visitation to the park was very strong in 2016-2017 with an estimated 165,000 visitors during the fiscal year.

2. Bigelow Park - Brown's Lake

Bigelow Park is located on the south shore of Brown's Lake one mile west of the Salix interchange on Interstate 29. This 36-acre state-owned area, which also contains the Dale G. Bell Memorial Arboretum, was acquired from the Department of Natural Resources through management agreement in October 1970. It was renewed in 2002, and again in 2010 for a 50-year lease period. The area is highly developed and is managed as a high-use outdoor recreation park. Facilities at this park include a 41-unit modern camping area, a tent camping area, a camper's shower and restroom building, enclosed shelter house with restrooms, playground equipment and open play areas, swimming beach area, concession/restroom building, boat ramp and dock facilities, parking lots, maintenance shed/office and storage area, paved roads, and a residence.

Renovation of the wireless equipment in the park was completed to ensure good, consistent service. Additional trees were planted throughout the park with assistance of volunteers from CF Industries and their families. Beach hours were reduced to help alleviate disturbance issues late in the day. Discussion with an engineering firm began regarding future shoreline improvements to create additional fishing and access opportunities. All night security lights were converted to LED and two additional lights installed for safety. Recycling dumpster containers were added to the park to encourage recycling by park visitors. Weekly water quality monitoring was conducted at the swimming beach during the summer months in cooperation with IDNR. Park staff instituted weekend outdoor movie nights for campers which were well received.

Plans for next year include installation of an additional septic drain field, continued tree planting and playground renovation including new surfacing material. Interim needs include repair/resurfacing the asphalt park roads and construction of a cold storage building for equipment. Long range improvements include a major renovation or replacement of the beach and concession building, constructing an accessible fishing jetty near the picnic area, and clearing more shoreline areas for fishing access.

This popular area experienced strong visitation numbers and an increase in camping and visitation during the fiscal year with an estimated 185,000 visitors.

3. Little Sioux Park

This 609-acre developed park area is located two miles southwest of Correctionville off State Highway #31. The bulk of this park area was acquired in 1965, with 118 acres of abandoned county-owned gravel pits on the north and 40 acres adjacent to the south added to the park jurisdiction in 1999. Fourteen acres were added in 2004 to provide a trail connector to the town of Correctionville. Thirty-two acres encompassing an old gravel pit adjacent to the shooting range were added in 2008. Eighteen acres of river bottom greenbelt were added in 2015. The park also includes an area formerly known as the Little Sioux Greenbelt, 25 acres of river bottom timber located on the east side of the river and acquired in 1974. Little Sioux Park is currently managed as a high-use outdoor recreation and conservation park. Facilities existing at the park include two modern campground areas with shower and restroom facilities, camping cabins, picnicking grounds, playground equipment and open play areas, enclosed shelter house, several small open shelters, three modern restrooms, swimming beach area, shooting range, hiking trails, hard surfaced trail, non-modern campground, a ten-acre lake, historic one-room schoolhouse, maintenance shop/office and storage area, paved roads, and a residence.



Little Sioux Park Water Control Structure Installation

An engineering firm was contracted to survey and develop plans for renovating the swim beach area and installing a water control structure for the lake. Bids were taken twice during the fiscal year and rejected by the Board both times due to the high cost. It was decided to purchase all materials and hire a contractor to do the installation. High water conditions into 2016 did not allow the swim area to open until July 4, 2016. The water control structure was installed in April 2017 and will allow for better management of the lake level. A 180-foot stretch of river bank erosion along the picnic area by the Little Sioux River was armored with rip rap by a contractor in March 2017. Additional protection for the bullet catch areas at the Shooting Range was installed using sand filled tires. Concrete sidewalks and living areas were installed by all four cabins creating a much more attractive and cleaner area. The park residence was completely remodeled for the first time in forty years. Recycling dumpster containers were added to the park to encourage recycling by park visitors. All night security lighting was converted to LED and three additional lights installed for safety.



Little Sioux Park Riverbank Armoring Project (Before and After)

Many dead and dying Scotch pine trees were removed during the year and numerous trees planted. Woodbury County Pheasants Forever Chapter hosted a fall Youth Day in October 2016 and a Youth Fishing Derby in June 2017. The annual Halloween camping event was held in October 2016 with over 1,000 persons in attendance.

Plans for next year include renovation of the swim beach area, continued tree removal and replacement, and addition of a live swan display. Of immediate concern is the condition of the park asphalt roads. The 2.2 miles of asphalt have reached the end of life expectancy after 20 years and need to be resurfaced or renovated soon before the road base is lost and the project becomes more costly. Longer range plans include renovation of Bellamy Campground, addition of playground equipment near the beach, replacement of playground surfacing material, application of epoxy floors to various restroom/shower facilities, asphalt road repairs, and development of the Peters Pit area.

Little Sioux Park generated the largest amount of revenue during 2016-2017 and continued to be busy. New and renovated facilities continue to attract more users, and the Union Bridge trail continues to be extremely popular with park users and Correctionville citizens. Camping numbers rebounded well in 2017 with visitation estimated at approximately 290,000 persons during the fiscal year.

4. Fowler Forest Preserve

This attractive day-use area is located one-half mile west of Smithland on State Highway #141. The original 50-acre site was acquired in May 1965, with an additional 58 acres added to the area in 1981. In 1998, 52 acres located between the preserve and the city limits of Smithland was added to the area which now totals 160 acres. This park is managed primarily as a day-use preserve and includes an open picnic shelter, restroom facilities, hiking trails, parking lot, and playground equipment.

A memorial bench was installed at a scenic overlook site on a new section of trail. Staff worked with a local architectural firm to look at plans for enclosing the open shelter, but cost estimates were prohibitive. A severe windstorm in August 2016 created a tangled mess of trees along the trail system and in the park. It took staff several weeks of hard work to clear all trails to safe condition.

This area continued to be a popular picnicking and rest area stop for persons traveling along Highway 141. Future plans include continued replacement of steep trail sections with railroad tie box steps, enclosing the large open shelter, and replacement of playground surfacing material. Attendance for the fiscal year is estimated at 15,000 people.

5. Southwood Conservation Area

This mostly undeveloped conservation area is located one mile south and three-fourths mile west of Smithland. A majority of the area, 463 acres, was acquired from 1978-80 with fifty percent cost sharing funds received through the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund. Another 160 acres was acquired in 1989 with cost sharing from the state Wildlife Habitat Stamp Fund and donations from local Pheasants Forever Chapters. The entire park now totals 623 acres. The area provides a limited amount of development along the east boundary of the property and is managed primarily as a wildlife conservation park. Facilities on this site include primitive and tent camping areas, a nineteen-site modern electrical campground, hiking and bridle trails, two 7-acre lakes, boat launching area and dock, modern restroom and shower building, maintenance shop/office and storage area, and a residence.



Southwood Conservation Area
New Cabins



The highlight of the fiscal year was the grand opening of two new cabins on July 15, following an open house for the public on July 9, 2016. These one-bedroom housekeeping units provide another alternative offered for cabin camping in the county. The cabins are located near the campground and feature locally crafted furniture made from local red cedar trees. A \$75,000 grant from Missouri River Historical Development group assisted with the project.



All night security lights were converted to LED fixtures with one new light added by the cabins. New decks were rebuilt for the park residence. The campers' shower and restroom had new plumbing lines installed along with a new lifetime water heater. Dust control agent was applied to the gravel road along the camping areas. This park provides equestrian trails and campsites, and a group of volunteers with the Back Country Horsemen frequent to park and conduct many trail improvements. Native grass seed harvest operations were headquartered at Southwood Conservation Area where seed is cleaned, dried and

stored. No controlled burns were conducted in this area last fiscal year due to unfavorable conditions and lack of staff.

Plans for next year include addition of a dust-free road material to eliminate the need for annual dust control and provide sufficient road rock. Future plans include extending electrical service to a number of tent campsites, continued renovation of trails, and application of epoxy finish to the restroom/shower floor. Southwood Conservation Area is a popular destination for people who enjoy large, undeveloped open spaces, but still have access to basic amenities. It is also a popular spot for equestrian users, hunters and campers. Cabin reservations are expected to have a big impact on visitation in the future, and the demand may require additional cabins. It is estimated that at least 45,000 people visited this conservation area during the fiscal year.

6. Shagbark Hills

This undeveloped 379-acre natural area is located one and one-quarter miles south of Correctionville on County Road L-27. The area is managed as a public hunting area and is regularly used by hunters, hikers and birdwatchers.

New parking signs along the public roads were installed to direct users to specific parking lots. This area is open for public hunting and provides good opportunities for a large variety of upland game species and contains a nice farm pond for pan fish species.

7. Midway Park

This 20-acre abandoned gravel pit site is located three and one-half miles north of Moville on State Highway #140. It contains old gravel pit ponds, a vault latrine restroom, rock ramp accesses to the ponds, and picnic facilities. The area was acquired in May 1978 from the Midway Park Association of Kingsley, Pierson, Moville and Lawton. The park has been developed into a picnic area and is managed for this purpose. The gravel pit ponds also provide good fishing for many park users.

A historic rain event in June 2016 flooded most of the park and surrounding fields and put water over Highway 140 for a short period of time. High water continued to exist throughout 2016 and into 2017, but park facilities were not affected. Beavers found the area and proceeded to destroy or damage many large shade trees. The beavers were removed and hazardous trees cut and removed. Additional trees were planted and more will be added in the future.

8. Copeland Park Access

In January 1986, the Board obtained a right-of-way lease for a .36-acre access from the Iowa Department of Transportation located one-half mile west of Correctionville. This site will be maintained as an undeveloped river access.

9. Inkpaduta River Access

In February 1989, the Board obtained a two-acre river access by easement through a trade-off agreement involving the closing of an abandoned secondary road right-of-way and establishment of a new right-of-way to the river. The area provides a parking lot and limited access to the Little Sioux River for fishermen and canoeists. Long range plans include installing a graded and rockered canoe ramp access.

10. Inkpaduta Historical Monument

In April 1989, the Board acquired .04 acres adjacent to the county road right-of-way and State Highway #31 for a historical marker site. This area marks the location of the Sioux Indian Inkpaduta's campsite during the winter of 1856-57 where they stayed before being driven away by the white settlers. A large boulder with an 18" X 24" bronze informational plaque was erected on this site in the fall of 1989. This site preserves a small part of county history and attracts many interested travelers as they pass on the adjacent highway.

11. Walling Access

This 13.04-acre river access on the Little Sioux River near Correctionville was purchased in 1989. The area is managed for wildlife and as an access for canoeists and fishermen to the Little Sioux River. The area features a concrete boat ramp access to the river.

12. Oak Ridge Conservation Area

This large, undeveloped conservation area identified by the board in 1990 will be the Board's largest acquisition project when completed in the future totaling approximately 3,200 acres. The largest parcel containing 530 acres was added in 2000 and connected three separate existing parcels. Another 19 acres were added in 2002, 231 acres in 2005, and 315 acres in 2007. The area is located between Oto and Smithland and presently consists of four separate Units totaling 2,082 acres.

Timber stand improvement work covering 10.3 acres was completed in Unit 2 with the assistance of a Conservation Corps Iowa crew who worked four days on the project. The project is partially funded over nine years with a Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program grant through the NRCS and was completed in 2016. Prescribed burns were not conducted during the year. This area contains several CRP contracts expiring in the near future.

Future plans include developing plans for repair of a breached watershed dam and construction of a new watershed structure near County Road D-54 and removal of remaining interior fences. Existing native prairie areas, as well as wooded areas, will be rejuvenated through controlled burns. The Board will consider grazing in certain areas as a potential management tool. Additional parcels within the identified boundaries of the Oak Ridge Area will be acquired from willing sellers as they become available and as grant monies are available to fund such purchases.

13. Owego Wetland Complex

This 1,330-acre area is located in the Missouri River bottoms adjacent to an abandoned town known as Owego. The original 320-acre parcel was purchased in 1999. Following the purchase of a permanent wetland easement by the federal government, the Conservation Board acquired residual rights and subsequent title to other parcels comprising the complex. Basic wetland restoration work was funded with federal Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) monies.

No prescribed burns were conducted in 2016 due to unfavorable conditions. Wet weather in 2015 created sufficient water levels so no supplemental pumping was required. A youth duck hunt was held in October 2015 sponsored by the local conservation officer. The Board was approached by a farmer about the possibility of “flash” grazing parts of the area for up to 30 days. This would be a fall management practice, and staff will be researching the use of such grazing techniques.

The Owego Wetland Complex provided good hunting opportunities in the fall of 2016 and spring 2017. Continued wet conditions and rains resulted in record water levels in spring 2016 which dried out during the summer requiring artificial pumping by fall. An irrigation well needed repairs. Staff began grinding volunteer trees for mechanical removal. Encroachments onto WRP easement property required the installation of a quarter mile of new fence and re-establishment of another boundary. Staff was contacted by NRCS to begin writing a new Management Plan for the area, and this will be completed in the next year. The Board has received requests to allow flash grazing of areas within Owego but need the Management Plan guidelines before authorizing any such practice. Clean out of shallow areas and control of cattails also need to occur. Some rodent damaged dikes and two water control structures need repair. The future continues to look bright for the impact this complex will have on wildlife populations, as well as outdoor recreation opportunities for hunters and bird watchers.

14. Administrative Offices/Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center

The Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center is located on approximately 10 acres of land in the southwest corner of Stone State Park. The area is under management agreement with the Iowa Department of

Natural Resources. The nature center, completed in 1995, features a large exhibit hall, classrooms, library/resource room, gift shop, and conservation board offices. Additional features include a paved access road and parking lot, maintenance shop and a 2.5-mile hiking trail system with outdoor amphitheater.

Remaining outdoor parking lot lighting was converted to LED fixtures. A large eagle sculpture was donated for the Outdoor Playscape, and large viewing binoculars were donated and installed at Kestrel Point. Staff researched possibilities for extending fiber optic service to the Nature Center. Costs were estimated at \$105,000, but with the loss of staff time experienced from existing poor service, this cost is minor. It is hoped a joint effort can be developed with an internet provider. The Nature Center was featured as one of Sioux City's "jewels" in a community perception review presentation by consultant Roger Brooks in 2016. Particularly noted was the welcoming signage and staff.

Future projects at this facility include hard surfacing trails around the Nature Center and adding a new hard surfaced trail from the water feature to the Outdoor Playscape. Some of this work will require additional work on drainage issues. Additional concerns include roof replacement and HVAC upgrades which are both reaching the end of expected life. A very detailed report on the nature center follows in **Section VII**. Continued strong visitation numbers were experienced during the twenty-first year of operation.

15. Curtin Timber

This 90-acre timbered area located three miles northeast of Oto was purchased in February 1992. The area has been left in its natural state for the last 20 years and provides excellent habitat for deer and wild turkey. A forty-foot easement for foot access to the property was also acquired from the landowner pending future acquisition of adjoining property that would provide access to the county gravel road. This area is managed as a public hunting area and is used by many hunters, hikers and mushroom hunters.

A 120-acre addition adjacent to the south side of this property was acquired in October 2016 and dedicated on November 12 at the site. Staff continues to work with DNR, tribal representatives and National Park Service staff to finalize cultural resources compliance to clear the way for the Board to obtain a \$175,000 Land and Water Conservation Fund grant. The Upper Sioux Community Tribal Historic Preservation Officer was contracted to conduct a cultural resources survey which was completed in April 2017. Final agreements are pending approval.

16. Riverside Bluffs Area

This 135-acre loess hill native prairie area was acquired in 1992-93 from three different landowners through a state REAP grant that was awarded in 1991. The property is separated by West 19th Street and is located in the Riverside area of Sioux City. The area features virgin loess hills prairie along with outstanding scenic views overlooking the Missouri and Big Sioux River valleys. The area provides a unique, high quality prairie within the city limits.

The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation, which played a significant role in the grant application and acquisition process, continues to raise money for improvements on the area. For the fifth and sixth consecutive years in 2016 and again in June 2017, the Foundation provided funding to contract with a Conservation Corps Iowa crew of five persons for four days to conduct prairie restoration work. Working in conjunction with Conservation Department staff and equipment, and with funding from a two-year grant from the American Great Outdoors program, over 24.5 acres of native prairie was reclaimed and the grant completed. The Foundation also provided funding for a second CCI crew to install 800 feet of new fencing on the north parcel. The Foundation again provided funding for a seasonal Habitat Stewardship intern who spent considerable time on this area and around the nature center.

Due to a long-standing encroachment issue with a neighbor, an agreement was reached to sell the neighbor a small parcel of property (.347 acre) which will give them title to land under several structures they own. The sale of the parcel was approved by the DNR and the Board of Supervisors for \$4,000. The proceeds will be used to install an access off of Military Road.

Additional sections of fence will be replaced or constructed to control unauthorized traffic and delineate property boundaries. Hiking access for the property is maintained and allowed. Controlled management burns of the prairie areas and elimination of woody vegetation is being planned for the north segment in the next few years. The area is managed as a prairie preserve and includes management practices such as removal of woody vegetation and prescribed prairie burns.

VII. **DOROTHY PECAUT NATURE CENTER**



**Annual Report
July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017**

**Woodbury County
Conservation Board
4500 Sioux River Road
Sioux City, IA 51109-1657
712-258-0838
<<http://www.woodburyparks.org>>**

Highlights



- A Bald Eagle found near Anthon, Iowa was diagnosed with lead poisoning, rescued by WCCB staff and taken to Saving Our Avian Resources (SOAR) for treatment. This was only surviving eagle of the 15 eagles admitted with lead poisoning during 2016. A public event in Anthon was held in August 2016, and this rehabilitated Bald Eagle was released back into the wild by Resource Naturalist Tyler Flammang. More than 700 people attended this public event.

- DPNC participated in ArtSplash over Labor Day weekend with an educational booth on Monarch butterflies and the importance of planting milkweed as host plants. Participants made milkweed seed bombs to take home and plant. DPNC also hosted Nature's Fall Fest in October in conjunction with City of Sioux City, and more than 400 people attended to decorate pumpkins, take a fall scavenger hunt, and participate in fall programs.

- A Bald Eagle sculpture and a giant Bald Eagle nest were added to the Discovery Forest Nature Playscape with funds provided by gifts in memory of Michael Corrie.
- For the fifth year, Woodbury County Conservation Foundation (WCCF) donated funds to hire a Habitat Stewardship Intern for the summer months.

They also funded an Iowa Conservation Corps Crew to work on prairie management at Riverside Bluffs prairie for one week.



- A memorial binocular viewing scope and a bench were installed at Kestrel Point overlook deck with additional funds from the Michael Corrie memorial.

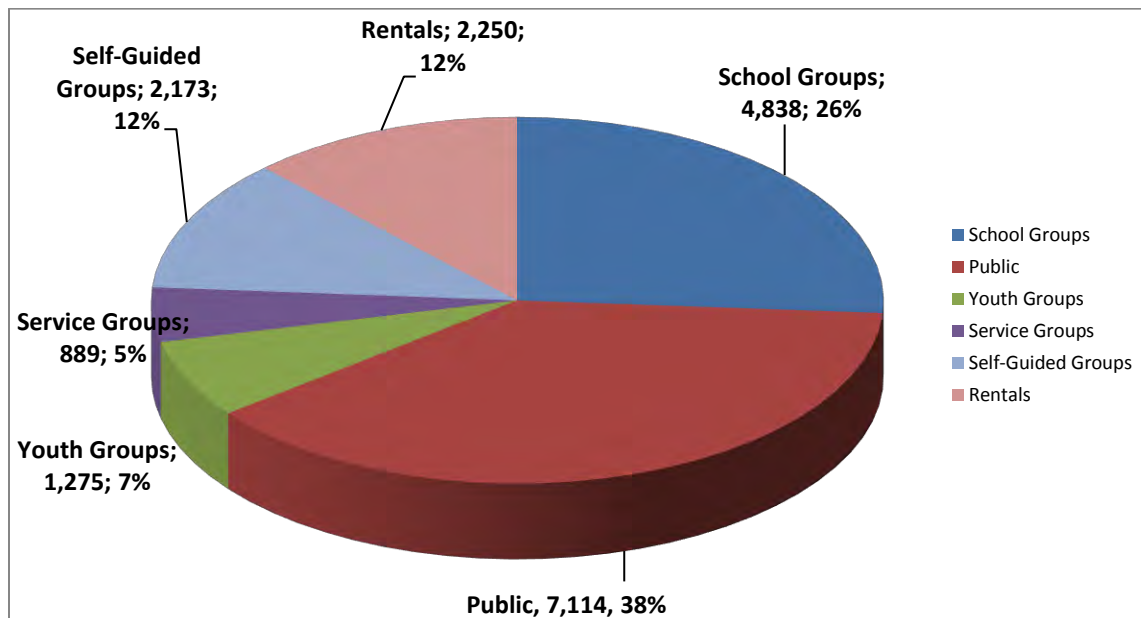
- The 13th Annual Nature Calls Fundraiser in September 2016 continued to be popular with 520 people attending and raising \$45,000 for Nature Center projects. It was held at the Sioux City Convention Center.

- WCCB purchased 10 canoes and one kayak from former canoe outfitter Greg Leonard. The canoes are based at Little Sioux Park and will be used for education programs.



Programs

DPNC's mission of providing quality environmental education and outdoor recreation is carried out through our educational philosophy of environmental awareness, sensitivity, knowledge, understanding, appreciation and responsible actions. Each philosophical step is considered when designing programs for different age levels. To ensure participants receive a positive learning experience, our staff is committed to engaging all levels with experiential and interactive activities.



Program Facets:

Public and Family Programs: A wide variety of programming is offered throughout the year for all aspects of families in our surrounding area. This past year, we offered 104 public programs and had more than 7,100 participants. In the winter of 2017, the Nature Center also cooperated with the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation (WCCF) in hosting the *Great Plains ZooMobile* program, and more than 300 people attended. The interns provided free programs on archery, fishing, animals, etc. to hundreds of visitors. Nature Tales is a popular preschool story time with preschool children and an adult. Winter Fun Day and Summer Programs in the Parks continue to be big hits with the community. The Lunch Time for Animals is held once per month in the summer and allows the public to view the resident animals eating. This has been a popular addition to our program offerings. Resource Naturalist Flammang offered several survival type programs including map and compass, knot tying, and fire building. Kruid & Flammang provided programs with our educational raptors and hosted a "Photograph the Raptors" event in which the public could take photos of our birds of prey while they maintained a natural pose outside of their normal cages. Our staff believes involving the entire family instills the values of our mission, as well as providing quality activities for the residents of our area.



School Groups: DPNC is a field trip site for preschool through college students. The Center's staff provides resources, materials, and curriculum supplements for teachers to enhance the learning process of their students. Approximately 26% of the audience we reach is school children. Within the tristate area, DPNC reaches an average of 150 schools, including urban, rural, public, and private audiences. School audiences and outreach remained constant during the past year. Naturalists are working with the Sioux City School District and other schools to continue to promote our programs and facilities. DPNC continues to find new ways to reach students and teachers—an increasing challenge due to the lack of public funds for field trips.

Our Educational Programs Guide lists our offerings for school and youth ages preschool to 12th grade. It is distributed to more than 1,200 teachers in the tristate area. Last year our direct school programs reached more than 4,838 youth. Additionally, more than 2,173 students visited the Nature Center for a self-guided experience. For Non-Woodbury County Schools, we charge a user fee of \$1.00 per student. These fees are used to provide funding for additional programs, materials, staffing and supplies. When programming demand is high in spring and fall, naturalist staff is not always able to accommodate the school groups. Additional part-time or full-time staff would help address this continued demand for programming.



College Groups: Professors from at least four local colleges use the DPNC as an onsite educational tool for their students. DPNC staff also provides programming and internships for students entering the natural resources field. College and University classes from around the tristate area use our facility for meetings, classes, and field studies.

Youth Camps & Programs: The DPNC offers Summer Day Camps that reach nearly 300 children annually. Many campers return each year due to the current program's seven levels. This program is developed with our education program goals in mind and is extremely popular. Typically, most camps fill within a few weeks after the initial registration date, and many camps have a waiting list.



The Summer Camps beginning in June 2017 were very successful with 276 children attending the 17 camp sessions. We were 96% full this year with only 12 spaces remaining open. This season included two sessions for 3-5 year olds with an adult; two sessions for 4-year old campers, four sessions for 5-6 year olds; four sessions for 7-8 year olds; two sessions for 9-10 year olds; two sessions for 11-12 year olds; and one session for 13-15 year olds. The revenue received from the camps helps to pay for the five Summer Naturalists positions. Camps are designed to offer engaging outdoor activities for ages 3 through 15. The Discovery Forest Nature Playscape continues to be a favorite component of attending camp and is a great way to help reinforce our outdoor awareness goals.

Camps ranged from 2-day sessions to 4-day sessions. This allows scheduling and financial flexibility for families as well as trying to offer more programming opportunities for the Education staff. We offered day trips for ages 13-15 and this was very well received. These

campers were taken on a scavenger hunt around our Woodbury County parks and participated in outdoor skills activities such as canoeing, archery, pellet gun shooting, and fishing. We hope to continue this option for these age groups.

Scholarships were again provided during the 2016 Summer Camp season. The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation co-sponsored the Camps to allow this opportunity and 7 scholarships were awarded totaling \$245. The WCCF sponsorship also assisted with transportation for children ages 11-12 to visit Little Sioux Park during their camp session.



Summer Interns: In Summer of 2016 and Summer 2017, we had five paid naturalist interns. All five interns provided programs for camps, youth groups and public on a variety of topics, including outdoor skills. A sixth intern was funded by WCCF and focused on habitat stewardship, trails and general maintenance

On-site programming is available for schools, youth, civic and community groups throughout the year. Staff utilizes materials within our teaching collection and live reptiles and amphibians. Native American Youth, ESL youth, scouts, 4-H groups and others often request special programs from our staff. We reached more than 1,249 youth during our programs this year, mostly attributed to the summer programming by our interns.

Service Learning Groups/Volunteers: Resource Naturalist Tyler Flammang had the opportunity to work with multiple service groups over the last year including church, school and scout groups. Service groups worked on trail maintenance, put together bluebird box kits, landscaping, staining benches, roadside cleanup, playground construction and prairie rescue. This offers a good opportunity for people to help their community and learn about their natural areas at the same time.



Service Group Programs: Programming is also offered for groups, such as Garden Clubs, Sertoma Clubs, Rotary, etc. throughout the year. A total of 889 people were reached through these meetings.



Teacher Training: In cooperation with Iowa's Area Education Agency (AEA 4/12) and Morningside College, the DPNC staff is able to offer a variety of workshops including Project WILD, Project WET and Project Learning Tree (PLT) for teachers' continuing education and graduate credits. Pre-service workshops are offered to college students pursuing an educational degree. The past year, one workshop was offered, providing service to 25 pre-service teachers. Other groups use our facility for their teacher workshops as well.

Community Development: Staff networks with a variety of community agencies to maximize resources. Some partnerships include cooperative teaching with Area Education Agencies, schools, WIT and City of Sioux City. Snyder serves on the REAP-CEP Board and scores statewide grants for educational projects twice per year on behalf of the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards. WCCB collaborates with the Woodbury County Library in Moville for the Summer Reading Program and provided a program. Flammang also provided geocaching programs in cooperation with Iowa State University Extension of Woodbury and Monona County. DPNC also cooperated with Sioux City Blue Zones Project on programs and public education. Flammang provided an owl program at the Clay County Fair and naturalists participated with the Ponca School Expo by providing educational programs.

Casual Visitors: DPNC is open to the public 9am-4:30pm Tuesday through Saturday and 1-4:30pm on Sundays. Evening programs are available by appointment. Areas of interest include hiking trails through native prairie and woodlands, wildlife viewing area, interpretive displays including an interactive badger in a tunnel under the prairie diorama, working beehive, a 400-gallon native fish aquarium, resident education animals, and butterfly and herb gardens. The Raptor House and Nature Playscape brought in several new visitors. An estimated 46,700 people visited the Nature Center last year. The Nature Center was open extended hours on Thursday evenings until 7pm in June & July.



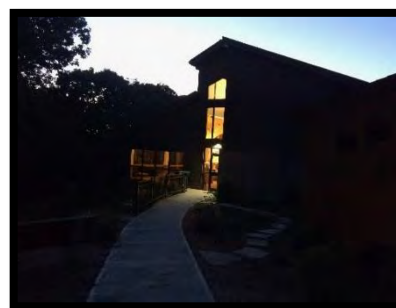
Grants:

The WCCB and WCCF applied for four grants during this period, receiving a total of \$2,000.00. Total amount requested was \$12,750.00.

<u>Grants July 1, 2016 - June 30, 2017</u>	<u>Amount requested</u>	<u>Amount received</u>	<u>Project Targeted</u>
Kohl's Go Green Grant	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	Playscape
Sioux City Garden Club	\$500.00	\$500.00	Gardens
Iowa Dept. Economic Development	\$750.00	\$0.00	Advertising
Union Pacific Foundation	\$10,000.00	\$0.00	General operating support
Total received:	\$12,750.00	\$2,000.00	

Nature Center

Nature Center: The woodland surrounding the parking lot, maintenance shop, and east side of the nature center building, has begun to be thinned of Hackberry, Ironwood, Elm, and Buckthorn saplings and trees. This project will continue to be an ongoing effort in an attempt to allow more sunlight to reach the woodland floor, which in turn will allow for a greater diversity of woodland flowers to grow, as well as allow Bur Oaks, Walnuts, Basswoods,



and Kentucky Coffee trees the opportunity to thrive, without competing for sunlight. The fallen lumber is then bucked up into firewood size pieces and shipped out to our many county parks where it is then split, bundled, and sold to guests. Smaller saplings and branches are chipped into fine mulch and sent out to the parks to be placed around trees. The thinning of areas like this also help to enhance the aesthetic look of the woodland. Rather than looking at a wall of crowded, short tree canopies, visitors are able to see deeper into the forest, allowing them to view wildlife such as turkey, deer, and numerous birds. A final benefit of this thinning, and



perhaps the most important, protects the many retaining walls that support the slopes surrounding the parking lot, maintenance shop, and Nature Center building. Many of the Hackberry that were cleared had taken root dangerously close to the retaining walls. Aside from their branches and canopy hanging out over the retaining walls, putting visitors' vehicles at risk and stress on the walls themselves, the roots anchoring these trees would have, in time, began to push the walls over, creating unnecessary expenditures.

Trails: The trails provide a great interpretive asset for programs and a wonderful recreational option for park visitors. Woodchips are added to the trails when needed and possible. The decks, benches, and bridges along the trails are stained annually. As part of a Girl Scout Gold Award Project, 10 nest boxes and two nest cups were installed along parts of the Nature Center's lower yard, Whitetail Ridge Trail, Walnut Valley Trail, and Loess Loop Trail. As a compliment to the boxes, an informational binder was placed in the center's Exhibit Hall, containing information about the nesting habits of native bird species, construction plans for building a variety of nest boxes, and a scavenger hunt map for visitors to take with them to locate all the boxes during a hike. The 2017 nesting season saw the use of many of the newly installed boxes by local birds such as wrens, chickadees, and nuthatches.



An informational kiosk is located at each trailhead and provides information on the trails, plant identification and natural history information. Student interns provide temporary display information for each of the kiosks. Prairie management, including woody vegetation removal and prescribed fire, is coordinated by Nature Center staff. Thanks to a memorial gift, an observation viewing scope was added to our Kestrel Point Overlook Deck. A bench was also donated and installed on the deck. Both were in memory of Michael Corrie.



Resource Management and Maintenance: Projects over the last year included development and implementation of management plans for the playscape and water feature; the nature center trails are an ongoing project. Nature center staff and volunteers moved wood chips onto trails and spent many hours maintaining the stairways along our trails. Other maintenance projects over the year included mowing, snow removal and exhibit troubleshooting. The existing six bluebird nest boxes, situated along the driveway coming up to the nature center, were removed and replaced with newly constructed models of similar design. These boxes also saw an

amazing amount of use during the 2017 nesting season, with five of the six boxes containing bluebird eggs at one time. Many of the boxes were also used once again for a second bluebird nesting attempt and, once completed, were then occupied by House Wrens.

Amphitheater: The Amphitheater provides a cozy area of seating for DPNC programming, as well as rental space for the public to reserve for weddings and reunions.



Exhibits

The new exhibit gallery opened in April 2011. The changes have been well-received, and we have had very little problems with the design and functionality. We are currently waiting to replace a broken monitor for the badger camera, and the monitor is on back order. DPNC continued to focus on outdoor exhibits—branching to outdoor exhibits with the Raptor Enclosure and Natural Playscape projects.

Raptor Enclosure

The Raptor House grand opening and dedication of the Raptor House was held May 4, 2013. The facility houses two large birds of prey. This exhibit continues to be a highlight for many visitors and allows them an up close and personal experience with animals that are otherwise distant and elusive. Our live educational raptors include Skye, the American Kestrel; Scarlet, a Red-tailed Hawk and Harlan, a Barred Owl. Harlan replaced our original Barred Owl, Olaf, after he passed away from natural causes in March of 2017. All birds were acquired from Kay Neumann of the non-profit SOAR.

The raptors are used for educational programs for schools, camps and the public. These animal ambassadors continue to be a vital component to our programs assisting in over 100 programs and reach over 6,000 people every year. We received \$795.00 in cash donations for animal adoption and care.

Discovery Forest Nature Playscape

The Playscape continues to be a visitor favorite. This year a Bald Eagle sculpture and giant Bald Eagle play nest were added. These were



funded by a gift in memory of Michael Corrie. The slides installed last year have been very popular. Plans will include landscaping terraces that will hold the soil on the slide hillsides and allow for additional play and seating. Through generous volunteers, this expansion has become a wonderful and welcome addition.

We also received a \$500 grant from the Sioux City Garden Club and additional native plants, enhancements and new mulch were added to the Water Feature garden and our butterfly gardens.

The Nature Playscape is a nature-based play area that allows children to climb a tree fort, clamber over logs, create natural art, wade in the water and experience safe, outdoor play. Research



shows that regular time in nature reduces stress, supports creativity and imaginative play, facilitates better social and physical development and improves fitness, motor-skills and well-being. The Nature Playscape was designed to enable this process.

Maintenance Shop: The maintenance shop provides storage for tools, county vehicles, and supplies. The ongoing organization and cleaning of the shop is never ending, as it is a constantly used building. Whether staging incoming WCCB supplies and food plot seed, being used to prepare for a volunteer group, or sheltering county vehicles from the elements, this space is used to the maximum.

Marketing

The WCCB, WCCF and Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center participated with the local non-profit theatre, Lamb Regional Arts. The theatre selected WCCF as a benefactor for their Projects of HOPE night for the show *On Golden Pond*. WCCF and DPNC promoted the opening night production and sold tickets to this one show. All proceeds from those tickets sales were given to WCCF as a fundraiser for DPNC. The opening show had the largest turnout ever from a Lamb Theatre Projects of HOPE night with 180 people attending, and WCCF made more than \$1,600. This is just one example of a community partnership.



The Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center is participating with Siouxland Public Media (KWTI Sioux City FM 90.3 and KOJI Okoboji FM 90.7 radio) as part of their membership benefit for sustaining members. Sustaining members of Siouxland Public Media (SPM) receive a membership card and special benefits at local and regional businesses and organizations. Members that show their SPM sustaining membership card at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center receive 15% off gift shop purchases, excluding consignment shop items. We are pleased to collaborate with SPM and appreciate all they offer to the community.

A positive relationship is maintained with local media. The naturalists participated in more than 50 interviews for radio, television and newspaper during the past year. In addition to media releases, PSA's, articles and interviews, WCCB parks are included in two I-29 rest area kiosks. Networking with Western Iowa Tourism Region, Siouxland Chamber, Iowa Department of Economic Development, MyCountyParks, Iowa Welcome Centers and Siouxland Tourism Bureaus has allowed expanded visibility of our areas. The Tourist in Your Own Town promotion includes DPNC, as well as other local attractions, and encourages people to visit local attractions during the summer months. DPNC was one of 10 attractions featured in this passport booklet.

An advertisement was placed in the Siouxland Visitor's Guide to attract additional tours and visitors to our area. An ad was also placed in an advertising supplement for Iowa tourism. This piece reached more than 1 million households via the Des Moines Register, Omaha World Herald & Minneapolis newspapers. WCCB also participated in advertising for a map of Sioux

City. The Conservation Board provided an informational booth at the Woodbury County Fair and helped staff a shift at the Clay County Fair, in addition to providing an educational fair booth and programs for the duration of the Woodbury County Fair.

Woodbury Wanderings Newsletter

Our newsletter is published 3 times a year and features updates on our parks, natural history articles and our calendar of events. The newsletter is also online with the addition of our web page. The newsletter is mailed to approximately 2,200 households three times per year. Since June 2003, issues have also included a downloadable PDF version of the newsletter. Interested subscribers are encouraged to request their newsletter online or in this format to reduce mailing costs of the publication.



Web Page

<<http://www.woodburyparks.org>>

The site features beautiful new photos, updated information, video clips of the cabins, shelters and nature center and the ability to donate online to the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation. Maps of all WCCB areas are available as .PDF files to download for free. We maintain a Facebook page and it continues to increase in followers.



Rentals

The Nature Center is an attractive spot for business retreats and private rentals. The classrooms have been rented to numerous groups for anniversary parties, wedding receptions, family reunions and business retreats. More than 2,250 people (85 groups) used our rooms for a rental space. The revenue generated from these rentals goes to the General Fund for re-disbursement. Last year the Nature Center collected \$3,810.00 in revenue. The Nature Center recognizes groups such as Friends of Stone Park, Audubon Society, and Sierra Club that have a primary mission of conservation and education as “First Priority Users.” These groups are allowed free use of our meeting rooms. The number of groups using our facility at no charge was 50 groups. Rental rates for the nature center stayed the same as last year, with a price break for non-profit groups.

Nature Nook Gift Shop

The Nature Center gift shop sells items such as shirts, postcards, books, note cards, and nature-related toys and gifts. We also feature handmade items from local artists such as handmade cards and jewelry. All proceeds from the shop go to the Nature Center.



GIFT SHOP FINANCIAL REPORT

July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017

INCOME

Gift Shop	\$ 5,083.50
Total Income	\$ 5,083.50

EXPENSES

667-6102-461	
4050 Promotions	(\$ 2,826.65)
Total Expenses	(\$ 2,826.65)

Total Income over Expenses	\$ 2,256.85
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Staff

DPNC has six staff dedicated to the operation and programs of the facility. Dawn Snyder serves as Nature Center Education Programs Director and Head Naturalist and holds a BS degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Biology from Iowa State University. She has more than 29 years of experience in the interpretation field, with 20 years as DPNC Director and 9 years as Head Naturalist for WCCB. She serves as the Secretary/Treasurer of the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation. Snyder also serves on the state REAP-CEP grant review committee as a representative for IACCB and Loess Hills Alliance Board and Economic Development committee.

Theresa Kruid, Naturalist, has been at the DPNC for 20 years. She has 25 years of experience in the interpretation field and holds a BS degree in Recreation and Park Management (Environmental Interpretation and Outdoor Education emphasis) from Pennsylvania State University. Kruid developed DPNC's successful summer day camp program that continues to grow each year.

Tyler Flammang, Resource Naturalist, has two years of experience at WCCB. He has an Associate's Degree from Western Iowa Tech Community College and extensive volunteer experience with birds of prey. His duties include programming, resource management, building, and grounds maintenance.

DPNC Support staff includes 2 part-time receptionists, Pam Pfautsch and Marilyn Milbrodt, and a Part-time Volunteer Coordinator/Receptionist, Betty West. Summer staff for 2016 included Katelyn Brinkerhoff, Dawn Henderson, Brianna Martens, Rae Hattan and Michelle Knaack. These five interns provided Summer Camp and public event programming. Derik Bailey was hired as the Habitat Stewardship Intern funded by WCCF. Interns for Summer 2017 were Katelyn Brinkerhoff, Michelle McClanahan, Andrea Norton, Megan Maaske and Sara Larson. These five interns provided Summer Camp and public event programming. Joshua Dirks was hired as the Habitat Stewardship Intern funded by WCCF. DPNC general hours are 9am to 4:30pm Tuesday through Saturday and Sunday from 1-4:30pm.



Due to increased program requests the Summer Naturalist Interns in 2016 were primarily education interns and did not focus on habitat maintenance projects, with the exception of the Habitat Stewardship Intern.

Special Projects

Fundraising—Nature Calls 2016

A group of volunteers was recruited to assist with fundraising ideas. *Nature Calls*—a beer sampling, nature art sale and auction—was the targeted special event fundraiser. The 13th Annual Nature Calls raised an additional \$25,000 for Nature Center exhibits and educational programs. An additional \$2,210 was raised in a raffle for Summer Youth Programs. A portion of the proceeds also funds one summer naturalist intern. Committees worked throughout the year to plan this large event, which although it requires a tremendous amount of staff time, was considered a worthwhile endeavor. The event was held at the Sioux City Convention Center with more than 520 people in attendance.



Woodbury County Conservation Foundation

The WCCB maintains a close relationship with the Conservation Foundation (WCCF). Dawn Snyder serves as the Foundation's Secretary and Treasurer.

October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

WCCF Memberships

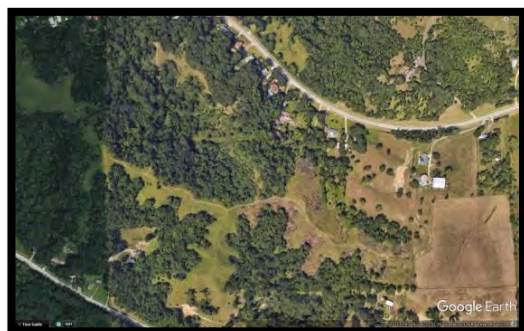
34 Individual Memberships	\$ 680.00
48 Family Memberships	\$ 1,700.00
36 Wildlife Conservationist Memberships	\$ 1,840.00
42 Woodland Conservationist Memberships	\$ 4,822.00
9 Prairie Conservationist Memberships	\$ 2,300.00
8 Wetland Conservationist Memberships	\$ 4,300.00
2 Distinguished Conservationist Membership	\$ 2,000.00
179 Memberships	\$ 17,642.00

Donation Preference Breakout:

To Help Further WCCF's Mission	\$ 10,982.00
For Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center Support & Camps	\$ 4,030.00
For Loess Hills Area Habitat Support	\$ 1,840.00
For Birds of Prey Food	\$ 500.00
For Woodbury County Park Enhancements	\$ 290.00
Total Memberships	\$ 17,642.00

WCCF hosted its annual meeting at the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center in February 2017. The event hosted the ZooMobile from the Great Plains Zoo. More than 300 people attended this educational event.

The WCCF initiated an annual membership campaign in 2003 to increase visibility and assist with special needs.



The Foundation co-sponsored the Conservation Board Summer Day Camps to provide \$655 in scholarships for underprivileged youth. They also contributed approximately \$600 in educational materials and supported the Loess Hills Prairie Seminar. They funded a 6-person Iowa Conservation Corps crew to work at Riverside Bluffs for one week and purchased fencing materials for Riverside Bluffs. They continue conservation education and natural area protection in our area. The minutes of WCCF meetings are on file at the WCCB Office.

Current members of the WCCF Board of Directors are Brian Hazlett, President; Chris Zellmer-Zant, Vice President; Dawn Snyder, Secretary/Treasurer; Dianne Blankenship; Herman Schultz; Bruce Hopkins; Norbert Ruhland; Randy Kramer; Anne Shaner and Rod Tondreau. Online donations can be received via a PayPal account, allowing more avenues to donate. WCCF is the channeling agency for the Nature Calls fundraiser and continues to be a vehicle for transfer of large donations to the Woodbury County Conservation Board.

Endowment

In May 2012, the WCCF established an endowment fund within the Siouxland Community Foundation. This will give donors a simple and efficient way to continue supporting the Woodbury County Conservation Foundation (WCCF) while providing us with a source of lasting support. The Woodbury County Conservation Foundation Endowment Fund is designed to give donors access to the most favorable tax advantages available as well as help WCCF develop planned giving programs. The WCCF received two endowment gifts this past year totaling \$5,500.00. The end of fiscal year balance of the WCCF Endowment within the Siouxland Community Foundation was \$23,822.61. A separate Special Projects Fund within the Siouxland Community Foundation was established in Fall of 2013 to assist with occasional project funds. That current balance is zero.



Volunteers

During the past 12 months, volunteers logged more than 2,610 hours of volunteer service. Support staff at the Nature Center and WCCB is comprised of approximately 188 non-paid active volunteers, 29 of these being Junior Volunteers under the age of 18. Volunteer duties include animal care, gardening, reception & clerical, summer camp naturalist assistants, prairie rescue, educational, curatorial, research, trail maintenance, program assistance, fund raising, gun range safety officers and general maintenance. Five service groups also assisted with prairie rescue/habitat management, mulching trails, staining, playscape, water feature and several other maintenance projects. Contributed service translates to a conservative estimate of \$33,286.88. Volunteers were recognized at the 28th Annual Volunteer Recognition and Awards Dinner in March 2017.



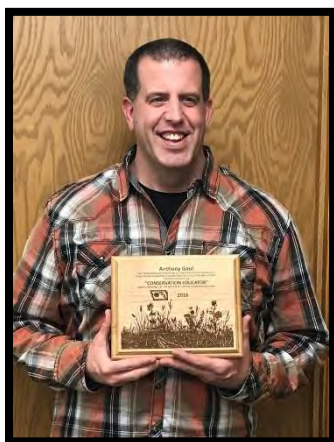
Volunteers are as follows: Alcester Hudson Girl Scout Troop 50296, Jack Anderson, Derik Bailey, Bob Baldwin, Audie Baughman, Briana Baughman, Julie Baughman, Cindy Bennett, Joseph Benoit, Chris Birdsell, Rita Birke, Josh Black, Carol Blair, Shailynne Blakeslee, Kira Bliss, Jeanne Bockholt, Suzan Boden, Rick Borg, Missy Brandon, Reid Brandon, Sean Brandon, Shay Brandon, Briar Cliff University Women's Softball & Environmental Stewardship Students, Katelyn Brinkerhoff, Brock Auction Company, Emma Bruns,

Barb Camarillo, Jessica Camarillo, Sam Camarillo, David Chapman, Blake Christensen, Zac Chwirka, Karla Claussen, Steve Claussen, Bre Cline, Alexis Comer, Sydney Corcoran, Summer Cord, Kandi Custer, Mark Custer, Judi Deaton, Tracie Derochie, Don Dixon, Abby Duin, Joe Finney, Bob Flanigan, Nate Frankman, Cathy Frost, Tracy Gates, Greg Giles, Carolyn Goodwin, John Gray,

Tyler Griffin, Elizabeth Hanemann, Rae Hattan, Jim Henning, Kai Herron, Jane Hey, Sue Hinrichs, Phyllis Holzrichter, Sandy Horton, Greg Hoversten, Cindy Hyndman, Loyanne Jensen, Chuck Johnson, Dominic Johnson, Alisha Junge, Grace Junge, Kendra Kersting, Dianna Kincaid, Laura Kinnaman, Kathy Koskovich, Martha Krone, Phil Krone, Tiana Kruid, Herb Kuehne, Rosie Kuehne, Braden Kumm, Stephanie Kumm, Leonard Kurtz, Sara Larson, Jenna Lee, Keri Leopold, Marlin Lessmann, Kenny Leuenberger, Lyle Listamann, Tina Listamann, Bianca Llamas, Tucker Lutter, Morgan Mahon, Stephanie Maness, Brianna Martens, Ginger Martin, Courtney Massey, Chloe McClure, Alex McRae, Jane Merritt, Tony Michaels, Bruce Miller, Jill Miller, Judy Miller, Kalyope Miller, Morningside College Into the Streets, Bob Morrissey, Jill Moser, Candice Nash, Brenda Nelson, Erica Newbrough, Lori Newbrough, Mark Nielsen, Susan Nielsen, Amy Niewohner, Bruce Noble, Caroline Oberg, Jeff Olson, Judy Peers-Tagstrom, Annie Petersen, Lynne Petersen, Mark Peterson, Walt Peterson, Eric Pfautsch, Kathy Pfautsch, Zach Pike, Tracy Pomerson, Donna Popp, Carrie Radloff, Brad Reiva, Elizabeth Reiva, Gill Ridenour, Kelly Ridgway, Pam Ridgway, Jaelyn Riemenschneider, Becky Roberson, Becky Roemmich, Ruth Rose, Heidi Rouse, Sacred Heart School, Catherine Saulsbury, Pat Saulsbury, Shannon Saulsbury, Angie Schneider, Barb Schultz, Chris Schwerin, Michele Schwerin, Anne Shaner, Gary Shaner, Ellen Shaner, Nancy Shulenberger, Bill Sibley, Ed Sibley, Mary Siepker, Mary Sievers, Barb Small, Sam Sneed, Bennett Snyder, Stacey Snyder, Kellie Solberg, Grace Stevens, Neil Stockfleth, Bobbi Swanson, Doris Swanson, John Swanson, Kate Swanson, Mike Swanson, Patrick Swanson, Tracy Swanson, Bob Sweeney, Olivia Tidwell, Reggie Torno, Sharlene Torres, Lynette Tullis, Jaye Tumpkin, Dean VanRoekel, Hunter Vedral, Emma VonHagel, Howard Wanned, Christine Warmuth, Olivia Warren, Emma Wenger, Ethan Wenger, Tracey Wenger, Carly West, Gina West, Becky Williams, Liam Wilson, Reed Wilson, Jessica Wisniewski, Eric Wodtke, Bill Zales, Dottie Zales & Chris Zellmer-Zant.

Conservation Awards

This was the 28th year for the WCCB to confer awards to outstanding individuals for their dedicated service. Ginger Martin received the *Friend of Conservation* award for her support of the Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center and her efforts to beautify the Nature Center gardens as a Master Gardener and her volunteer work with orphaned song birds. Anthony Gaul was recognized for the *Conservation Educator* award for his years of teaching 6th Grade at West Middle School and mentoring thousands of youngsters by exposing them to the wonders of nature with overnight field trips and experiences.



**Conservation Educator
Anthony Gaul**



**Friend of Conservation
Ginger Martin**

Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center

Volunteer Contributed Services July 1, 2016 –June 30, 2017

Hours \$/Hour \$Value

Education/Interpretive (information services, docents, teachers, etc.)

Camp Assistant (20)	346.50	\$9.25	\$3,205.12
Naturalist Assistant (15)	185.50	\$9.25	\$1,715.88
Special Event (96)	723.50	\$9.25	\$6,746.12

Administrative/Clerical/Maintenance (office, routine maintenance, etc.)

Clerical (7)	38	\$9.25	\$351.50
Maintenance (94)	363.25	\$9.25	\$3,360.06

Curatorial/Collections (research, gardens, care of objects, etc.)

Gardening (9)	61.75	\$9.25	\$571.19
Trail Maintenance (21)	172.50	\$9.25	\$1,595.63
Playscape Project (7)	20	\$9.25	\$185.00
Prairie Rescue/Habitat Management (4)	31.5	\$9.25	\$291.38

Professional (legal, fundraising, guest speakers, consultants, etc.)

Gun Range Officers (3)	125	\$20.00	\$2,500.00
Fundraising Special Events (22)	424.50	\$20.00	\$9,087.50
Photographer (1)	5	\$20.00	\$100.00
Consultants (3)	90.5	\$25.00	\$2,262.50
MC's (2)	8	\$20.00	\$160.00
Accountant (1)	8	\$90.00	\$720.00
Auctioneer (1)	3	\$25.00	\$75.00
Veterinarian (1)	4	\$90.00	\$360.00

Total Volunteer Hours: 2,610.5 Estimated Value of Service: \$33,286.88

Training

The DPNC is committed to professional development, and interpretive staff participates in the IAN Annual Professional Development program. Snyder attended a few Western Iowa Tourism meetings and some local fundraising sessions hosted by Association of Fundraising Professionals. All education staff attended the Iowa Association of Naturalists Spring workshop and Flammang & Kruid assisted with presentations during the sessions. Flammang & Kruid attended Growing Up Wild training in April. Support staff is trained in computer software, First Aid, CPR and other services vital to their jobs.



List of Donors

Numerous individuals and organizations assisted us in the past year. We would like to acknowledge them for their generous support.

Cash Donations

Greg & Susan Askeland
Carol Blair
Paul Chelstad
Steve & Lynn Corrie
Mark Davenport
Judi Deaton
Beverly Feiges
Floyd Place
Stacey Gerhart
Greenberg Foundation
Scott Kayl
Kingsley Garden Club
Kingsley State Bank
Tiana Kruid
Loess Hills Audubon Society
Ginger Martin
Catherine McKnight
Marilyn Milbrodt
Lonna Miller

Mark & Judy Monson
Robert Nickolson
Marty Palmer
Sue Miller PEO Chapter GZ
Scott & Laura Phelps
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Bob Scott
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Mike Verschoor
Ed Walding
Wray Wright

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Catherine McKnight
Marilyn Milbrodt
Lonna Miller
Robert Nickolson
Donna Popp
Carol Probst
Jim Schroeder
Helen Schuck
Anne Shaner
Thompson Electric Co.
Mike Verschoor
Wray Wright



Memorial Gifts

We received \$7,910.00 in memorial gifts this past year.

In Memory of Walter G. Freeman	from Jeanine Freeman
In Memory of Darwin Johnson	from Marilyn Milbrodt
In Memory of Michael Corrie	from Marty Palmer, Steve & Lynn Corrie, Duncan Palmer, Curtis White, Honeck Farms & Susan Askeland

2016 Nature Calls Sponsors

White-tailed Deer Sponsors

Hy-Vee
Dan & Kay Pecaut
Powell Broadcasting
Sioux City Journal

Bald Eagle Sponsors

Dr. Luis Lebrede & Ruth M. Rose
Wheelock and Bursick Dentistry

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US Bank
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Sooland Bobcat
Thompson Electric
United Real Estate—Chris Zellmer-Zant
Wells Enterprises, Inc.



Bluebird Contributors

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Marvin & Karen Heidman
Chuck & Lynnette Hoffman
ICON Ag & Turf
Iowa - Nebraska State Bank
John D. Kiernan, O.D.
Raymond Kuwahara, M.D.

Special Thanks

Arctic Ice
Brock Auction Co., Inc.
Center Plate
Glazer's Distributors of Iowa
KES Productions
L & L Distributing Co.
Panda Pix
Record Printing
Sioux City Convention Center
Texas Roadhouse
Tony & Candice at KSUX 105.7 FM
Woodbury County Information & Communications Commission

Cash Donations

Karen Blatchford
Carol Boellstorff
Patricia Brenden
Jack & Janice Bristow
Jim & Beverly Cosgrove
Bernice Moritz
Gary & Anne Shaner
Garnetta Snyder
Brian & Heather Stehr
Ed & Cindy Storm
Doris Swanson

Nature Calls 2016 Auction Donors

Artery, Julia Licht
 Autumn Prairie Designs, Jana Peterson
 B & B Cleaning, Corey Brand
 Bernie's Lawn & Garden, Duane Corey
 Big Brothers Big Sisters
 Bloom Wild, LLC, Vanessa Wodtke
 Bob Rowe's North End Zone
 Body Enhancement Med Spa, Deb Rogers
 Brownbox.com
 Candlewood Suites, Mark Baltushis
 Casey's General Stores
 Cathy Frost Life Coach
 Chick-Fil-A, Kristine Schrad
 Clay CCB, Dan Heissel
 Country Inn & Suites, Terri Schelm
 Covington Golf Course
 Culver's, Katrina Jackson
 Dar Pro Ingredients, Brad Frost
 Deer Run Golf Course, Scott Mathiason
 Dona W. Prince DDS, PC
 Dressed to a T, Threasa Gunderson
 El Fredo's Pizza, John Lennon
 Fareway Stores, Inc.
 Gabberts Home Furnishings, Jeff Lyle
 Get Funky Gifts, Wendy Wright
 Greenberg's Jewelers, Elise Greenberg
 Gunderson's Jewelers, Brian & Cathy Gunderson
 Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sioux City, Ashlee French
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 Jackson Street Brewing, Dave Winslow
 Jimmy Johns
 Johnson's Mill, Doug Johnson
 JT Fitness, Jay Todd
 Karl's TV & Appliance
 Kincaid, Fett & Tharp
 Koffie Knechtion, Maureen & Lyle Knecht
 Lessman Electric, Harlan Lessman
 Magic Carpet & Drapery, Greg & Deb Engle
 Majolie Skin & Body Therapy, Julia Culver
 Marto Brewing Co, Erik Martin
 Marx Leasing Marx, Dave & Robin Marx
 Massage & Body, Kevin Trowbridge
 Merry Maids
 Midbell Music, Mike Guntren
 M's Uncorked on 4th
 Palmer Candy Co., Marty Palmer
 Promenade Cinema 14
 Rascals Beer Brewing Club
 Rev-Tac Firearms Training, Jon Murad
 Rocket Auto Wash, John & Mark Hanson
 Rudolphs Shoes, Rae Pendergast

Rush Werks
 Scheels All Sports, Penni Hunn
 Second Chance Woods, J. Mark Lary
 Shady Grove Pottery, Chaeli Kohn
 Sioux Air Inc., Gene & Ginger Martin
 Sioux City Ford Lincoln, Sam Burrish
 Sioux City Musketeers Hockey Assoc., Heather Campbell
 Siouxland Fly Fishing Club
 Snowflake Woods, Lynn Jarvis
 South Ridge Golf Course
 Starbucks
 Stoney Creek Inn
 Sue Bee Honey
 Sugar Shack
 Sun Tan City, Katie McWilliams
 Texas Roadhouse, Brian Warren
 The Shooting Shop, Bob Farmer
 Thorpe & Co. Jewellers
 Tri-State Dental, Drs. Jeff & Amber Reinking
 Valiant Vineyards, Eldon Nygaard
 Wellness Works Massage, Jeanne Thune
 Wheelock Family Dentistry
 Wild Hill Honey, Tori & Justin Engelhardt
 WineStyles, Jerry & Christine Janssen
 Xpedition, Archery Devin Bakley
 Carol Blair
 Laurie Byrne
 Karen & Rusty Clark
 Sean Conrad
 Don & Jane Dixon
 Amy Foltz
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 Jane & Steve Merritt
 Marilyn Milbrodt
 Dr. Robert & Phyll Powell
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 Rick & Angie Schneider
 Mary Siepker
 Kris Snavely
 Mark & Barb Taylor
 Wray Wright
 Bill & Dotty Zales



Animal Adoptions Donors

Mrs. Ehrig's Battle Creek Ida Grove First Graders
Dick's Bait & Tackle
Scott Kayl
Kingsley State Bank
Gene & Ginger Martin
Scott & Laura Phelps
Dean & Paula VanRoekel

Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center

Staff

Rick Schneider, *Conservation Board Director*
Brian Stehr, *Deputy Director*
Dawn Snyder, *Education Programs Director*
Theresa Kruid, *Naturalist*
Tyler Flammang, *Resource Naturalist*
Dawn Bostwick, *Administrative Secretary*
Pam Pfautsch, *Part-time Receptionist*
Marilyn Milbrodt, *Part-time Receptionist*
Betty West, *Part-time Volunteer Coordinator/Receptionist*

Hours:

Tuesday – Saturday 9am – 4:30pm

Sunday 1 – 4:30pm

Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

*A Program of
Woodbury County*

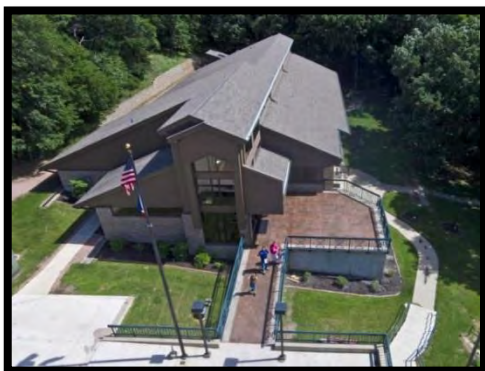


DPNC Mission Statement:

To provide quality environmental education programs and outdoor recreation experiences; to manage our natural resources in an ecologically sound manner; and to conserve and interpret our natural, historic, and cultural resources.

Goal of the Environmental Education Program:

- To help citizens of all ages and backgrounds develop an awareness and sensitivity toward the environment.
- To acquire knowledge and understanding for effective environmental action.
- To foster positive attitudes and patterns of conduct toward the environment.



VIII. FY '17 FINANCIAL STATEMENT
GENERAL CONSERVATION BUDGET

RECEIPTS

Sale of Commodities	\$ 4,939.20
Nature Center Rental	4,030.00
Fuel Tax Refunds	4,712.27
Newsletter Advertising	1,200.00
Taxation	1,765,048.43
TOTAL RECEIPTS	\$ 1,779,929.90

DISBURSEMENTS

Administration

Department Heads	\$ 107,702.92
Supervisory	81,178.85
Wage Plan Employees	43,996.75
Matching FICA	17,233.90
Matching IPERS	20,438.88
Employee Hospitalization	44,516.16
Life Insurance	158.40
Dental Insurance	1,057.32
LTD Insurance	1,215.49
Gas/Oil	2,032.99
Office Supplies	2,061.60
Magazines & Books	164.01
Wearing/Safety Apparel.	555.56
Publishing Notices	332.52
Printing	2,045.91
Postage	1,239.34
Travel/Expense	8,855.82
Professional Services	1,251.00
School of Instruction	4,215.96
Medical Fees	400.00
Motor Vehicle Expense	2,841.62
Radio Expense	-0-
Dues/Memberships	3,015.00
Drainage Taxes	4,544.92
Motor Vehicle Purchases	130,892.00
Office Equipment & Furniture	2,010.00
Lease Purchase Agreement	3,985.87
Sub-Total:	\$ 487,942.79

County Parks

Supervisory	\$ 97,931.27
Wage Plan Employees	244,592.52
Temporary Employees	136,372.13
Overtime	-0-
Matching FICA	35,651.05
Matching IPERS	36,951.39
Employee Hospitalization	85,606.86
Life Insurance	338.80
Dental Insurance	2,261.49
LTD Insurance	2,504.18
Chemical Supplies	5,871.37
Agricultural & Horticultural	7,315.45
Custodial Supplies	8,660.77
Gas/Oil	26,220.24

Arms/Ammunition	23,762.36
Wearing/Safety Apparel	13,020.34
Telephone Expense	4,538.67
Cell Phones	4,260.47
School of Instruction	20,020.00
Natural & LP Gas	1,717.40
Water/Garbage	20,625.06
Electricity	70,314.02
Building Maintenance	47,174.56
Equipment Maintenance	12,019.56
Motor Vehicle Expense	11,681.80
Radio Expense	1,069.60
Office Equipment & Furniture	20,243.84
Sub-Total:	<u>\$ 940,725.20</u>

Naturalist

Wage Plan Employees - PT	\$ 59,524.02
Supervisory	65,999.96
Wage Plan Employees	90,587.47
Temporary Employees	-0-
Matching FICA	15,842.17
Matching IPERS	19,298.43
Emp. Hospitalization	39,777.84
Life Insurance	158.40
Dental Insurance	1,057.32
LTD Insurance	1,147.86
Gas/Oil	979.60
Office Supplies	224.63
Magazines & Books	63.09
Wearing/Safety Apparel	680.93
Printing	3,454.33
Postage	1,035.24
Mileage	14.99
Travel Expense	-0-
School of Instruction	462.64
Motor Vehicle Expense	652.41
Dues/Membership	227.00
Office Equipment & Furniture	14.74
Sub-Total:	<u>\$ 301,203.07</u>

Nature Center

Janitorial Supplies	\$ 685.75
Gas/Oil	361.91
Wearing/Safety Apparel	259.45
Telephone	5,362.94
Cell Phone	2,333.62
Garbage	415.00
Electricity	11,068.83
Building Maintenance	9,343.18
Equipment Maintenance	672.34
Contractual Services	19,555.82
Sub-Total:	<u>\$ 50,058.84</u>

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS (ACCRUAL BASIS):	\$ 1,779,929.90
APPROVED BUDGET:	<u>\$ 1,804,245.00</u>
BALANCE JUNE 30, 2017 (ACCRUAL BASIS):	\$ 24,315.10

257-022

NATURE CENTER

ASSETS

Interest	\$	-0-
Contributions		19400.28
Accrued Assets Adjustment		<u>-0-</u>

TOTAL ASSETS (ACCURAL BASIS): \$ 19,400.28

LIABILITIES

Transfers Out (To Reserve fund)	\$	5,670.00
Accrual Liabilities Adjustment		<u>-0-</u>

TOTAL LIABILITIES (ACCURAL BASIS): \$ 5,670.00

NET ASSETS OVER/UNDER LIABILITIES: \$ 13,730.28

BALANCE JULY 1, 2016: \$ 61,849.60

ACCRUAL ADJUSTMENT: \$ -0-

BALANCE JUNE 30, 2017 (ACCRUAL BASIS): \$ 75,579.88

667-610

CONSERVATION RESERVE FUND

ASSETS

User Fees	\$	330,791.57
Nature Center Program Fees		27,000.32
Ag Rentals		37,989.80
Concession Rentals		934.25
Equipment Rentals		9,309.53
Donations		58,854.80
Reimbursements		16,121.94
Interest		3.98
Grants		235,501.00
Gift Shop Revenue		5,083.50
Miscellaneous		13,869.33
Transfers In (Fund 257)		5,670.00
Accrued Assets Adjustment		<u>(46,589.96)</u>

TOTAL ASSETS (ACCRUAL BASIS): \$ 694,540.06

LIABILITIES

610-1 Administration

Land Acquisitions	\$	200,182.15
Capital Improvements		44,540.40
Accrued Liabilities Adjustment		<u>(7,244.10)</u>
Sub-Total:	\$	237,478.45

	<u>610-2 Nature Center Gift Shop</u>	
Promotional Activities		2,826.65
Sub-Total:	\$	<u>2,826.65</u>

	<u>610-3 Nature Center Programs</u>	
Temporary Employees	\$	26,200.44
Matching FICA		2,004.34
Food		551.86
Office Supplies		344.61
Program Supplies		8,263.90
Animal Care		2,820.94
Promotional Activities		9,612.16
Accrued Liabilities Adjustment		-0-
Sub-Total:	\$	<u>49,798.25</u>

	<u>611-8 Conservation LAWCON Grant</u>	
Land Acquisition	\$	175,000.00
Sub-Total:	\$	<u>175,000.00</u>

Transfers Out (To Debt Service fund)	\$	107,968.00
Transfers Out (To CIP fund)	\$	179,983.56

TOTAL LIABILITIES (ACCRUAL BASIS):	\$	753,054.91
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NET ASSETS OVER/UNDER LIABILITIES:	\$	(58,514.85)
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BALANCE JULY 1, 2016 (ACCRUAL BASIS):	\$	309,667.82
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ACCRUAL ADJUSTMENT:	\$	39,052.44
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BALANCE JUNE 30, 2017 (ACCRUAL BASIS):	\$	290,205.41
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266-610

REAP FUND

ASSETS

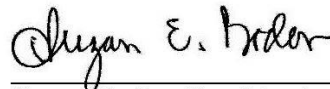
Per County Allocation received FY 17	\$ 9,711.00
Per Capita Allocations received FY 17	32,876.00
Interest	749.61
Accrued Assets Adjustment	<u>(749.61)</u>
 TOTAL ASSETS (ACCRUAL BASIS):	 \$ 42,587.00

LIABILITIES

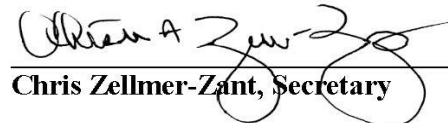
610-1 Administration

Capital Improvements	\$ 69,317.40
Accrued Liabilities Adjustment	<u>-0-</u>
Sub-Total:	\$ 69,317.40
 TOTAL LIABILITIES (ACCRUAL BASIS):	 \$ 69,317.40
 NET ASSETS OVER/UNDER LIABILITIES:	 \$ (26,730.40)
 BALANCE JULY 1, 2016 (ACCRUAL BASIS):	 \$ 131,340.88
 ACCRUAL ADJUSTMENT:	 <u>\$ -0-</u>
 BALANCE JUNE 30, 2017 (ACCRUAL BASIS):	 \$ 104,610.48

Respectfully Submitted,



Suzan Boden, President



Chris Zellmer-Zant, Secretary



Rick D. Schneider, Director