



CLAYTON COUNTY CONSERVATION

Promote the health and general welfare of the people; to model and encourage preservation, conservation, education and recreation through responsible use and appreciation of our natural resources and cultural heritage.

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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BOARD MEMBERS

Daryl Landsgard, Chair- St. Olaf (since 2016)
 Pamela Vaske- Vice-Chair -Strawberry Point (since 2017)
 Larry Stone, Secretary- Elkader (since 1999)
 Gary Kregel, Chair- Guttenberg (since 2015)
 Natasha Hegmann (since 08/2022)

DIRECTOR

Jenna K. Pollock, Volga- (since 2015)

SUMMARY

In 2023, the Osborne Conservation Center welcomed 5,441 visitors from 7 countries, 31 states, and 54 Iowa counties according to the voluntary guest register. The Motor Mill Historic Site welcomed 1,663 from 22 different states and 6 foreign countries.

Clayton County Conservation Staff offered 381 events, consisting of 640 presentations delivered to 9,080 participants (75% of participants were youth) for total program hours of 556.25. The success of our environmental education program offerings would not be possible without dedicated volunteers and several long-standing cross-agency partnerships. This year we welcomed 77 consistent volunteers, and they contributed over 1,391 hours of service to our organization.

Clayton County Conservation welcomed over 2,732 camping users in 2023, spending a total of 2185 nights in Clayton County. This provided \$35,347.54 back into the budget for maintenance and development needs. The Conservation Board manages 1401 acres which includes seven campgrounds and eighteen areas that are managed for wildlife habitat and recreation opportunities. These areas consist of highly erodible river-bottom ground, reclaimed native prairies, and upland mixed-age forests. Clayton County Conservation Areas have an average corn suitability rating (CSR) of 31.8 with the higher CSR rating being located in floodplains.

Grant money of \$1,764,545 was realized in 2023 to assist with Conservation projects and program improvements. Several of these grant awards were carry-over from previous years for ongoing projects like the Motor Mill Inn Restoration, Motor Mill Interpretation Project: Living History at Motor Mill, the Osborne Campground, and the Pony Hollow Trail Extension.

In 2022, the Conservation Board began restoration of the Motor Mill Inn which was opened to the public in July of 2023. The first guests stayed at the Inn in November of 2023. The Osborne Campground Project also got underway with the project awarded in August of 2023 and earthwork beginning late August 2023.

With several large infrastructure projects underway, the Conservation Board and Staff are turning their attention to the future and considering modifications to operations to continue forward. Staff began visioning and goal setting work sessions in November of 2023. The Conservation Board intends to survey the public once the campground and trail extension projects are complete to reevaluate the public interests.

STAFFING

STAFF MEMBERS-Permanent Full-Time

JENNA POLLOCK – Director

MOLLY SCHERF - Office Manager

EAN POPENHAGEN- Office Assistant/Director of Sales

ZACH DINGBAUM - Park Ranger

HUNTER JENSEN - Operations & Maintenance

KENNY SLOCUM - Naturalist/Natural Resource Manager

ABBEY HARKRADER - Naturalist

NICK MOSER – Operations & Maintenance

NON-STAFF MEMBERS - Voluntary Routine Service

PAUL & CATHY MARCOTTE – Exhibit Security/ Opening & Closing

PAM & MARK REINIG– Exhibit Security

SEASONAL EMPLOYEES

SUMMER MAINTENANCE – Will Koether, Connor Tricket, Reilly Franzen

SUMMER NATURALISTS – Becca Patten, Christian Cutsforth

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers help the Clayton County Conservation Board and Staff accomplish many achievements. (Statistics shared on page 17 of this report.)

VISITOR NUMBERS

Welcome Center Totals

1,256 Groups of People

5,441 Individuals

Average size of each group: 4 people

Iowa Visitor Registration

2019: 6,101

2020: 7,012

2021: 8,448

2022: 5,693

2023: 4,616 (85% of total visitors were from Iowa)

(See Pages for Maps)

Motor Mill Visitor Registration

2019: 1399

2020: 805

2021: 1415

2022: 1067

2023: 1663

Traffic Counter Statistics

14,294 (April 17-Oct.22)

19,827 (May-October)

19,592 (April 25 –Nov. 2)

18,544 (April 12 – Nov. 8)

20,028 (April 17 – Nov. 7)

Website Unique Visitor Numbers

2019

CCCB

102,317

MMF

9,379

2020

(new website launched August) 7,178

10,061

2021

19,036

11,555

2022

11,725

10,421

2023

14,853

9,049 (website mod.)

VISITORS BY COUNTRY



CAMPING NUMBERS

<u>Bloody Run Park</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	572	723	\$ 5,722.00	
	2020	1341	1095	\$ 10,974.36	
	2021	1546	1305	\$20,660.00	
	2022	1405	1359	\$ 21,432.05	
	2023	1358	1261	\$ 19,988.54	
<u>Motor Mill Park</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	119	163	\$ 1,190.00	
	2020	462	331	\$ 3,325.00	
	2021	315	211	\$ 3,340.00	
	2022	377	206	\$ 3,394.00	
	2023	444	229	\$ 3,860.00	
<u>Joy Springs Park</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	51	59	\$ 510.00	
	2020	178	99	\$ 1,109.00	
	2021	222	123	\$ 1,885.00	
	2022	238	121	\$ 1,895.00	
	2023	132	92	\$ 1,672.00	
<u>Buck Creek Park</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	51	38	\$ 255.00	
	2020	98	83	\$ 525.00	
	2021	48	34	\$ 516.00	
	2022	61	45	\$ 699.00	
	2023	72	47	\$ 763.00	
<u>Friedens Park</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	55	32	\$ 275.00	
	2020	126	105	\$ 415.00	
	2021	83	65	\$ 1,021.00	
	2022	109	81	\$ 1,315.00	
	2023	178	120	\$ 1920.00	
<u>Big Spring</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	
	2019	183	191	\$ 915.00	
	2020	403	269	\$ 1,340.00	
	2021	399	325	\$ 5,187.00	
	2022	460	360	\$ 5,859.00	
	2023	548	436	\$ 7,144.00	
<u>Total</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u># of Users</u>	<u># of Nights</u>	<u>Fees</u>	<u>Firewood</u>
	2019	1031	1206	\$ 8,867.00	
	2020	2608	1982	\$ 17,688.36	
	2021	2613	2063	\$ 32,609.00	
	2022	2638	2160	\$ 34,414.05	
	2023	2732	2185	\$ 35,347.54	\$2,646.81

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Environmental Education Programs presented by the Clayton County Naturalists and Osborne Staff are tracked by the format shown below (Table). For the purpose of the Annual Report, totals have been calculated for each category pertinent to this report. There are several specialty programs held at Clayton County Conservation Parks/Areas that may or may not be led by our Naturalists and Staff but are listed below the table to show their impact on the Clayton County Community.

Program Year	Program			Demographics		Participants		
	Events	Type Title	Presentations	School/Town	Grade	Youth	Adults	Group Hours
2017	421		754			10,910	2,608	632.75
2018	396		705			10,544	7,743	623.85
2019	424		792			11,921	2,911	681
2020	174		327			5,175	1,463	242.5
2021	292		479			6,040	1484	464.75
2022	413		656			7,921	2,118	596.95
2023	381		640			6,812	2,268	556.25

Heritage Days

Estimated people: 2,500

Hunter Education Classes

June Internet Field Day (12) & August Full Course (22)
Students 34 Instructors 16

Deer Hunter Registration

23 Deer Hunters Registered

Turkey Hunter Registration

4 Turkey Hunters Registered

Blog Post Views 2023		
Blog Title & Date Published	Number of Views	Blog Visitors
The Great Honeysuckle Hunt of 2023 Feb. 2023	85	68
The Other CWD April	110	93
Fires & Floods May 2023	81	69
The Naturalist in your Pocket June 2023	91	75
KAGPAI July 2023	287	215
The Worth of Weeds Sept. 2023	79	60
The Greatness of Grasses Nov. 2023	58	51
Winter Sowers Bring May Flowers Dec. 2023	37	36
Totals	828	667

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Volunteers assist the Clayton County Conservation Board and Staff by volunteering their time to help present Environmental Education programs, guide at Motor Mill, clean-up projects, Hunter Education Classes, Fishing Clinics, Heritage Days, Iowa Room Staffing, Bluebird House building, Fishing Pole maintenance, and many more projects. Without our dedicated volunteers, we wouldn't be able to achieve success.

Total Volunteer Hours

Program Year	Volunteers	
	# of Volunteers	Volunteer Hours
2019	233	2,420
2020	105	1,282.75
2021	205	2,193.5
2022	253	2,331.5
2023	77	1,391

Public Program Volunteers

Program Year	Volunteers	
	# of Volunteers	Volunteer Hours
2019	195	920
2020	72	186.5
2021	172	994
2022	211	1,201.5
2023	48	199

Motor Mill Volunteers

Program Year	Volunteers	
	# of Volunteers	Volunteer Hours
2019	38	1,500
2020	33	1,096.25
2021	33	1,199.5
2022	42	1,130
2023	29	1,192

GRANTS

Grant	Item	Amount	Received	Expended
Foundation for Future	Living History MM Phase 1	\$1,000	May-23	Dec-23
Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp.	Living History at Motor Mill	\$50,000	Oct-22	Dec-23
Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp.	Living History at Motor Mill	\$35,000	Oct-23	Dec-23
McElroy Trust	Motor Mill Field Trip Interpretation	\$5,000	Oct-22	Dec-23
Silos & Smokestacks	Living History MM Phase 1	\$8,945	Nov-22	Dec-23
Iowa Great Places	Motor Inn	\$328,000	Dec-22	Dec-23
Rural Heritage Revitalization	Motor Inn	\$125,000	Jun-21	Dec-23
Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp.	Motor Inn	\$125,000	Oct-21	Dec-23
Destination Iowa	Osborne Campground	\$345,000	Mar-23	partial
Upper Mississippi Gaming Corp.	Osborne Campground	\$149,600	Oct-21	partial
LAWCON	Osborne Campground	\$125,000	Jul-21	partial
Foundation for the Future	Canine Enhancement & Programming	\$1,000	May-23	Dec-23
IA TAP	Pony Hollow Trail Extension	\$192,000	May-21	
Wellmark	Pony Hollow Trail Extension	\$100,000	Aug-21	partial
Black Hills Energy	Pony Hollow Trail Extension	\$3,000	Oct-23	
IA TAP	TRRC Trail Extension	\$171,000	May-22	
Total		\$1,764,545		

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT REPORT

Seedings & Plantings

- 1 acre of enhancement seeding at Motor Mill Historic Site
- 2 acres of enhancement seeding at Osborne Park
- 3 acres seeded at Becker West Wildlife Area
- 0.5 acres interseeding at Bloody Run County Park
- 35 species hand-collected from remnant prairie sites

Prescribed Burns

- 4 acres (timber, spring), Bloody Run County Park
- 14 acres (prairie, fall), Becker East Wildlife Area
- 9 acres (prairie, spring/fall, timber, fall), Motor Mill Historic Site
- 27 acres (timber, spring/fall, prairie, fall), Becker West wildlife area
- 12 acres (prairie, spring), Osborne Park



Forest Stewardship

- 5 acres at Osborne Park
- 3 acres at Becker West Wildlife Area
- 3 acres at Motor Mill Historic Site

Invasive Species Control

- 11.5 acres honeysuckle treatment at Osborne Park
- 3 acres crown vetch treatment at Osborne Park
- 2 acres Sericea lespedeza treatment at Osborne Park
- 2 acres wild parsnip treatment at Osborne Park
- 1 acre Reed Canary Grass treatment at Motor Mill Historic Site
- 2 acres buckthorn/honeysuckle treatment at Bloody Run County Park
- 10 acres Multiflora Rose treatment at Becker West Wildlife Area

Rare, Threatened, and Endangered Species Documentation

- Cerulean Warblers (Bloody Run County Park)
- Ruffed Grouse (Bloody Run County Park)
- Rusty Patch Bumblebee (Becker West Wildlife Area)
- Jeweled Shooting Star (Location undisclosed)
- Round-Stemmed False Foxglove (Location undisclosed)

Bluebird Boxes

62 boxes monitored across county
56 Bluebird nests recorded
58 bluebirds fledged

Bald Eagle Nests

Nest 257 (Roberts Creek State Preserve): Unsuccessful

Nest 903 (Osborne Park): 1 fledgling

ENFORCEMENT REPORT

Patrol of County Parks

- Register campers
- Public Relations
- Environmental and Laws Education
- Investigate incidents/complaints in the parks
- Check for hunting, fishing and navigation violations
- Assist State Conservation Officers during hunting seasons
- Checked **34** Fishing Licenses
- Checked **58** Hunting Licenses

Call types and numbers:

<u>Traffic</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>Suspicious Activity/Person</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Assist Motorists</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Vandalism</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Animal Call</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>Trapping Violations</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Medical</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Fight/Assault</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Building Alarm</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>Dog Complaint</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>Underage Drinking</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Missing Person</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Fireworks Complaint</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Welfare Check</u>	<u>3</u>
<u>Fishing Violations</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Hunting Violations</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>ATV Violations</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Building Struck with Bullet</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Trespass</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Law Calls/Questions</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>Navigation Checks</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>Wanted Person</u>	<u>0</u>

*4 Handled from home or while not “on duty”

Total Number of Calls—36

Assists From Other Agencies

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Number of Assists</u>
<u>Mar-Mac</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Clayton County</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Iowa DNR</u>	<u>1</u>
<u>Strawberry Point</u>	<u>0</u>
<u>Elkader</u>	<u>1</u>

TOTAL 11

CLAYTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

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www.claytoncountyconservation.org

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