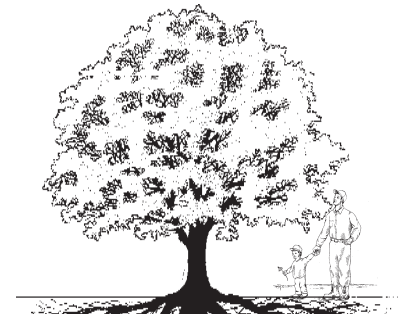


Buchanan County Conservation Board

Annual Report (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”



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Your Conservation Board, FY23: Conservation Board members are county residents who have an expressed interest in conservation. They are appointed by the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors to staggered five-year terms. For more information about the roles of a Conservation Board member, contact the Executive Director (see below).



*Loren Hamilton, Chair
Independence, IA
Ending 12/31/22*



*Ronnie Wolfe, Vice-Chair
Quasqueton, IA*



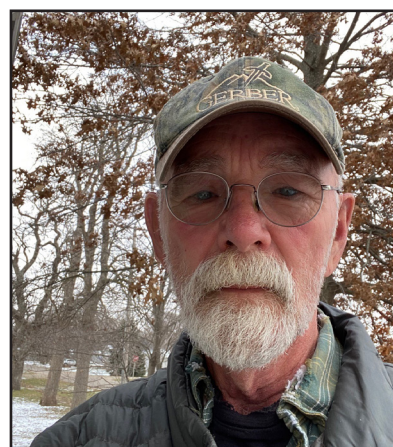
*Andy Crump
Independence, IA*



*Mary Jean Blaisdell
Independence, IA*



*Maud Bentley
Independence, IA*



*Orlan Love
Quasqueton, IA
Beginning 1/1/23*



*Dan Cohen, Executive Director
Fontana Park, Hazleton, IA*

For more information about programs and activities of the Conservation Board, contact:

*Fontana Park
1883 125th St.
Hazleton, IA 50641
319-636-2617
dcohen@co.buchanan.ia.us*

*Visit Buchanan County Conservation Board at
www.buchanancountyparks.com!*

Like "Fontana Park" on Facebook!

Buchanan County Conservation Board

FY23 Annual Report

“Increasing quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”



Executive Summary

The Conservation Board and Staff had a busy year planning and implementing expansion and enhancement of amenities in its most popular park. Implementation of projects prioritized in the Fontana Park Master Plan moved at a fast pace. The Bison and Prairie Learning Area was completed, with educational kiosks placed along the first phase of a Learning and Discovery Trail (LDT). The bison were moved into their new prairie and pasture enclosures. Fundraising continued as work began to construct the Lakeside Campground. Planning and grant-writing also was in the works to pave and expand the new Learning and Discovery Trail. To help power new and existing amenities while reducing financial and environmental costs of operation, the Conservation Board began pursuing installation of a solar array.

As with all large undertakings, the above priorities are moving forward with help from our friends. Special thanks are owed to Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, Engineers, and Secondary Roads Department for their support and assistance. Project funding was garnered from many sources outside of county tax asking, and grant programs and donors are listed within this report. It is striking that these sources are from diverse partners, recognizing how natural resources and outdoor recreation have economic, tourism, public health, rural revitalization, and environmental benefits.

Popularity of parks and natural areas was again evident this year, with park facilities being used at near-record levels. Education programs remain popular, with hundreds of programs provided to youth and adults. Naturalists worked with teachers to conduct week-long School of the Wild programs that provide intense immersion in nature experiences. Opportunities for education are many, with programs for people of all ages, indoor and outdoor displays, publications and social media outreach, and more.

The benefits of conservation, education, and outdoor recreation for people in the Buchanan County are many. Projects and programs make Buchanan County a community where people want to live, work, play, and stay. Conservation Staff work hard every day and look forward to seeing the wide variety of people engaged in learning about conservation and nature, experiencing the outdoors, and enjoying park amenities and protected natural areas.

Buchanan County Conservation Board

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1883 125th St.
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319-636-2617 (ph)
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www.buchanancountyparks.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Cohen".

Dan Cohen, Executive Director
Buchanan County Conservation Board

The Annual Report and Long Term Planning

This Annual Report serves two roles. The report is an explanation of the projects and services provided during the Fiscal Year running from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Such a report is called for in the 1955 legislation which established the County Conservation Board system (Chapter 350 of the Code of Iowa). This report goes a step further and indicates future objectives of the Conservation Board and its staff. It serves as an annual update of the Outdoor Recreation, Conservation, and Open Spaces Plan. These plans can be viewed online by visiting www.buchanancountyparks.com.

Conservation and Natural Resources

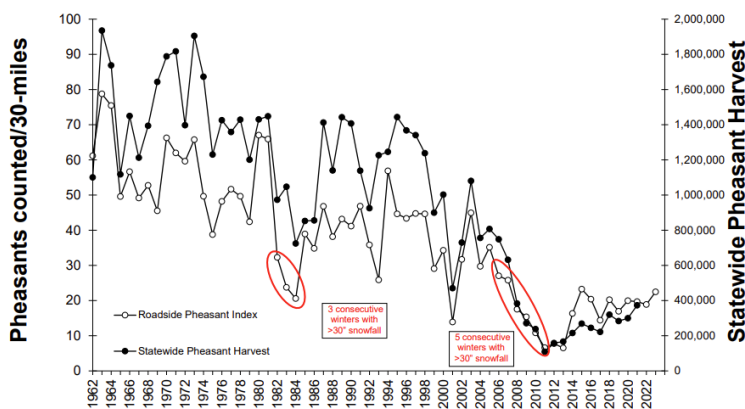
From 1990 to 2013, retired CRP and other factors resulted in nearly 3,000 square miles of habitat loss for pheasants and other upland

wildlife. That equates to more than an eight mile wide strip of land stretching from Council Bluffs to Davenport!

Upland birds suffered during this period as their habitat on private lands disappeared. Since 2013, landowners enrolled many more acres into pollinator plantings and other CRP programs. The chart to the left indicates an upward trend as pheasant populations rebounded with this increased area of habitat.

These trends also impact Iowa's rivers and lakes, and susceptibility to flooding. Lack of perennial ground cover, loss of historic wetlands and other landscape features that hold water, along with a

Statewide Pheasant Trends



Above: Loss of habitat, changes in agriculture, climate, and other factors impact populations of pheasants and other upland birds.

changing climate, have resulted in an increased number and severity of floods and other issues.

Iowa routinely ranks among the lowest in per capita state spending on conservation, environmental protection, and public lands available to its citizens. In 2010, Iowans voted overwhelmingly to change this situation by amending the Iowa Constitution to create a Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, and to designate 3/8-cent of the next sales tax increase to fund the Trust. Although there is great public support to fund this program (routinely, about 70% of Iowans polled want this to happen), the Trust Fund sits empty due to legislative inaction. The Conservation Board, along with many groups, work to educate the public and legislators about the need for this investment.

To address the needs of Buchanan County residents and others, the Conservation Board has developed programs geared toward conservation practices on private and public lands, outdoor recreation, and education and outreach.



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

Private Lands Conservation - Landowner Assistance

Although the Conservation Board manages 41 properties, these public lands account for **less than one percent of the landscape**. To a large degree, the fate of waters, wildlife, land, air, and wise use of natural resources is in the hands of private landowners, land managers, and other citizens. In Iowa, nearly all landowner/farm programs are voluntary. Therefore, conservation success relies heavily on educated and engaged citizens. The Conservation Board promotes a knowledgeable and conservation-minded citizenry through its education programs (see pages 10-13), and provides planting equipment and services for implementing conservation practices on private land.

During the year, Conservation Board staff and equipment were used to **plant more than 680 acres of prairie grasses and flowers for 30 private landowners**. The Conservation Board’s tree planter was used to plant 3,800 trees. Conservation Staff continues to implement the Prairies to Schools/Prairies to Businesses Program, and advising schools, cities, and volunteer groups on ways to incorporate conservation plantings and energy considerations. This year, the Hazleton Township Trustees designated an area for prairie planting at the cemetery adjacent to Fontana Park.

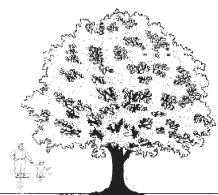
The Conservation Board understands the need to work at the **watershed level**, and the Director attended meetings to provide input to Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed Management Authority (WMA). WMAs are cooperative ventures among counties, cities, soil and water conservation districts, and other groups created to address flood risk and water quality. For more information on work in the Upper Wapsipinicon River WMA visit www.upperwapsi.org. The Conservation Board Director worked on past projects for the North and South Forks of the Maquoketa River, Cedar River, and Buffalo Creek. Buffalo Creek was removed from the State’s Impaired Waters List. Efforts in Lime Creek similarly have been successful, and Bear Creek is being monitored as an outstanding waterway.



Thanks largely to conservation plantings implemented on private lands, Lime Creek in Buchanan County was removed from the State’s Impaired Waters List. The Giant Floater is one of many native mussels found in Lime Creek. The presence of these species is an overall indicator of reduced sedimentation and overall stream health.



Conservation Technician Chris Hansen uses a prairie seed drill on private land.



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

Public Lands Conservation - Natural Areas

Natural areas constitute most of the public land managed by the Conservation Board. On these areas, management practices are implemented to enhance wildlife habitat, maintain unique natural features, including healthy forests, prairies, wetlands, and waterways, and improve water quality. Many of these areas contain mowed trails and burn breaks to facilitate hikers, hunters, anglers, and others pursuing enjoyment of natural landscapes. For more information about management of individual Conservation Board areas, see pages 16-25.

Staff visits all natural areas during the year for general maintenance needs and patrolling. Areas popular for deer hunting were posted with tree stand rules, and stands found remaining after the deadline for removal were confiscated. Boundary lines are checked and signed as needed. The Conservation Board strives to work well with its neighbors, while at the same time keeping its commitment to managing natural areas for the purposes they were acquired, and for the benefit of all citizens.

A flock of dunlins used the new Albert Wetland adjacent to Koutny Pond as a spring migratory stop on their way to arctic breeding grounds (photo by Dan Cohen)



The Wapsipinicon River Corridor is recognized statewide as one of Iowa's most important areas for wildlife habitat and public recreation, and is a Conservation Board priority for protection and enhancement.

Previous years' work to create a wetland adjacent to the Conservation Board's Koutny Pond/Hoffman Woods really took off. The Albert Wetland is owned and managed by Benton County Conservation Board and is an example of how two counties together are managing public lands for the betterment of wildlife and water quality. Drought conditions worsened into summer, making wetland areas smaller and more important.

It was a good year for prescribed burns in the many prairie areas managed by the Conservation Board. Prescribed fires were conducted on 23 burn units totalling 134.5 acres. Staff used mechanical means and limited herbicide application to remove invading woody vegetation from some prairie areas, and accomplished a lot of shrub removal in several grassland habitat areas with the loan of a forestry mower.

Invasive species are of special concern throughout Iowa, as they supplant native species and greatly reduce habitat diversity. Some of the more prevalent species in Buchanan County public lands include Reed's canary grass, garlic mustard, crown vetch, multiflora rose, Canada thistle, buckthorn, and woody plants in prairies. Conservation Staff work to eradicate or reduce these species, and to nurture establishment of native plants and wildlife. Spraying, burning, and mowing were regularly used in problem areas. Invasive species are prevalent in almost all places, requiring prioritizing areas where limited staff can accomplish objectives. Some of the bigger invasive species problems are identified for individual areas on pages 16-25.



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

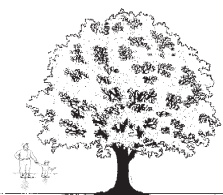
Natural areas continue to be living laboratories. During the year, professional biologists and botanists, and citizen scientists, visited Buchanan County's natural gems to study sandhill cranes, various plants and insects, and to tag monarch butterflies. To address needs of nesting bluebirds, wood ducks, and bats, more than 100 nest boxes are maintained and monitored throughout conservation areas. Volunteers conduct most of the bluebird nest monitoring and maintenance.

Future Objectives – Private and Public Lands

- Continue timber stand improvement, with priorities at Jakway and Fontana Parks. Foster regrowth in the 2019 clearcut at Jakway Forest and establishment of the Roberts Wildlife Area 2020 savannah planting.
- Remove dead ash trees and replace as needed with new young trees.
- Plant diverse tree species in the Lakeside Campground.
- Acquire properties as per Conservation Board's acquisition policy.
- Monitor fish populations at Koutny Pond, Fontana Park, and Grover Pond.
- Use the new water control structures at Koutny Pond to better manage marsh vegetation.
- Conduct prairie and timber burns as per a strategic burn schedule. Acquire a tree-puller implement to assist with mechanical removal of woody plants in prairie areas.
- Continue to offer the Prairies to Schools/Prairies to Businesses Program. Plant the Hazleton Cemetery prairie.
- Facilitate nest box, monarch, frog and toad, bald eagle nesting, osprey, and other wildlife monitoring as part of education and volunteer programs.
- Continue to address invasive species problems, especially the following:
 - Thistles and woody plants at the Crumbacher Area;
 - Multiflora rose at Ham Marsh, Jakway, and Crumbacher;
 - Garlic mustard at Jakway Forest, Putty Root, and Fontana Park;
 - Honeysuckle at Fontana Park and Wehner Woods;
 - Buckthorn at Jakway Forest and Newton Township Area.
- Maintain a wildlife food plot at Crumbacher Wildlife Area.
- Maintain and monitor wood duck and bluebird nest boxes.
- Promote and conduct conservation plantings on private lands through equipment and staff planting services.
- Provide technical assistance to Watershed Management Authorities for the Wapsipinicon, Maquoketa, and Cedar Rivers.
- Offer periodic public programs on topics of private lands conservation.
- Work with Benton County Conservation Staff to manage additional wetlands and public access adjacent to Koutny Pond.
- Clean silt from the river connection at Cortright Wildlife Area.
- Maintain/replace way-finding water trail and park signs as needed.
- Develop individual management plans for priority natural areas.



Park Ranger Mike Van Raden on a prescribed fire at Crumbacher Wildlife Area.



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Parks and Recreation

Of the Conservation Board’s 41 managed areas, some are considered parks where a significant portion of the area contains picnic areas and shelters, campgrounds and cabins, nature center, displays, and other amenities.

Buchanan County parks and natural areas continue to show their importance with visitor counts in campgrounds, cabins, picnic areas, trails, and the nature center near or at all-time highs.

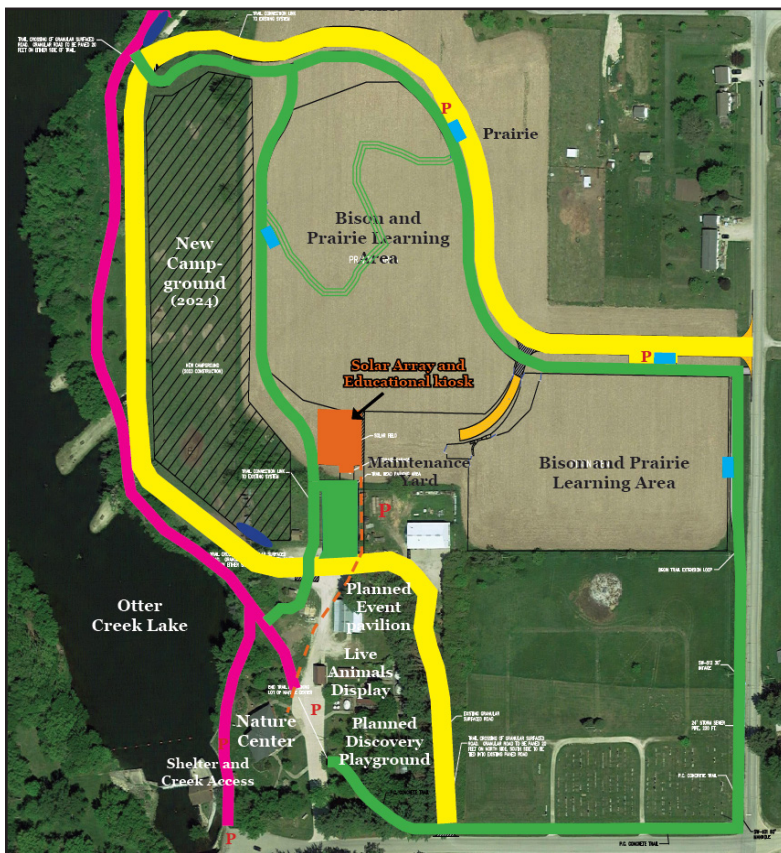
Fontana Park is the most visited county area. About 70 percent of county residents, and many non-county residents visit the park each year. The Fontana Park Master Plan that was approved in 2020 as a mechanism to guide priority park enhancements, and was a topic during every Conservation Board meeting. Master Plan project accomplishments during the year, included: Completion of the Bison and Prairie Learning Area; removal of old bison pasture fence; selecting a contractor for campground construction; grading and rocking campground roads; installing water lines, hydrants, a new meter pit, sewer lines, lift station, and septic system; and pouring the foundation for a shower house. The Fontana Park Master Plan also called for a paved Learning and Discovery Trail, and a solar array to help power portions of the park with reduced long-term financial and environmental costs. Grant-writing and other fundraising were underway for these projects.

Substantial work was completed this year on the Lakeside Campground (dashed lines - see layout on report cover). Planning for a new Learning and Discovery Trail (green) as an extension of the existing Fontana Trail (pink) and a solar array (orange) began. A new entrance road (yellow) was constructed in 2022.

A Fontana Park Master Plan Committee reviewed plans and

budget projections and provide input on projects (see list of Master Plan Committee volunteers on page 36). The Committee included representations from the County Board of Supervisors, and County Engineers and Secondary Roads Department, which also provided project engineering. The Board of Supervisors dedicated a portion of its federal American Rescue Plan Act funds to the Lakeside Campground project. Funding assistance also was provided by a Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) grant, a Black Hawk County Gaming Association grant; funding from the Orlan Snyder Trust; donation commitments from Friends of Fontana Park, and other donors.

Also at Fontana Park, discussions were held about potential future lake restoration plans, with the possibility of a new funding source for lake impoundments. The old Fontana



footbridge was replaced with a rock crossing.

Buchanan County Secondary Roads continued its plan to rehabilitate the historic Taylor's Ford Bridge adjacent to the Conservation Board's Iron Bridge Access.

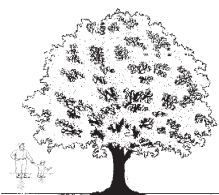
Jakway Forest Campground had its electrical pedestals and service upgraded to meet current camper demands. Playgrounds at Jakway, Lime Creek, and Fontana Park received an outside safety review, and some upgrades were made, with additional work planned for the next fiscal year.



The old wooden footbridge in the Fontana Woodland was replaced with a rock crossing.

Future Park Development Objectives

- Transform the unfinished building at the Fontana Park East Entrance into a rental cabin.
- Construct the Learning and Discovery Trail and trailhead, and install additional interpretive signs near the campground and at the trailhead.
- Install a solar array to offset financial and environmental costs of powering the nature center, Lakeside Campground, maintenance shop, wildlife display, and shelter houses on the northeast section of Fontana Park.
- Implement a plan for new and updated way-finding signs at Fontana Park.
- Continue to work with partners for input and preliminary plans elements prioritized in the Fontana Park Master Plan, including nature discovery playground, observation deck, wetland trail, expanded shop, cabins, and more.
- Complete the Lakeside Campground, to include full hookups, shower house, firewood crib, and playground.
- Consider possibility of a lake restoration project for the Fontana impoundment.
- Continue grooming ski trails at Fontana and Jakway Forest using volunteers.
- Continue to partner with Black Hawk County Conservation Board to provide improvements to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail segment in Buchanan County.
- Consider a trail to link the west side of Fontana Park to Hazleton.
- Evaluate use and potential for more cabins (Fontana Master Plan).
- Work to expand Fontana Park's boundaries to allow for additional facilities.
- Work to expand and secure maintenance storage in the recently enlarged maintenance shop yard. Move the fueling station to shop yard.
- Consider water supply at Lime Creek should rural water service be offered.
- Upgrade Lime Creek to 50-amp service.
- Add reservable campsites and shelter at Jakway Forest Campground.
- Bring better internet service to Fontana Park, and perhaps public wifi to campgrounds.
- Make updates to existing playgrounds at Fontana, Jakway, and Lime Creek parks.
- Obtain a smaller mower to better address needs in the Lakeside Campground, Animal Display, and other parks with narrow soft trails.
- Consider a season-long campground host in the Lakeside Campground, and the possibility of a small campground host cabin.
- Develop a plan for managing the bison pasture and prairie.
- Consider designating sites in Lakeside campground as season-long.



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Environmental Education

Environmental education (EE) provides information and experiences that allow people to make more informed personal choices regarding conservation practices, natural resources protection, and environmental health, and to gain appreciation for the natural world. Programs are offered and tracked to meet the following topic objectives:

- sensitivity and awareness;
- local flora, fauna, and physical features;
- ecological concepts;
- problem solving skills; and
- ethics/human effects.

The program goal is that no objective falls below 25 percent in total programs offered. During the year, this goal was met. There also is an objective to assure most programs are conducted largely outdoors. During the year, nearly 53% of programming was conducted outdoors.

Educational Programming

During the year, 873 educational and recreational programs sponsored by the Conservation Board drew more than 17,000 participants. See page 35 for statistics breakdown.

In addition to in-person presentations, displays and other media were used to teach about nature and the environment.

School Programs

Conservation Board staff provided or facilitated more school programs compared to the previous year. This included 703 presentations to students from area schools throughout the year (pre-school through college), with 14,367 students in attendance. Both outdoor field trips and in-class programs were offered. Emphasis was placed on getting youth outdoors, and the majority of programs featured an outside component. Most field trips were to Fontana Park, although students also visited other county parks (indicated in park listings on pages 16-25). Naturalists communicated with teachers to make sure presentations met curriculum and Conservation Board objectives. Naturalists continued to implement the School of the Wild Program, providing an intense week-long series of field days, with students immersed in a different topic each day.

Youth and Camp Programs

Seventy-six presentations were made to youth groups, including scout, 4-H, library, and church groups, as well as youth enrolled in Conservation Board camps, with an attendance of 1,567



Students on a school field trip to Rowley Fen learn about the wetland's unique organic soil with a little mud face painting.



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participants. Youth progressed from preschool participants in the Wee Nature Tales (ages 3-5), to the Nature Explorers (ages 6-8), and on to Young Naturalists (ages 9-12). Wapsi Wanders overnight canoe trip was held. The annual River Raiders overnight canoe trip was held (although cut short by severe thunderstorms). Plans were made to provide a Buchanan/Benton County youth trip to the Boundary Waters wilderness as a capstone adventure, but was cancelled due to lack of participants.

Public Programs and Adult Education

Environmental education does not stop with youth. There were 82 programs offered during the year for families and adults. Of these, 24 programs were requested by civic groups, senior centers, and nursing homes. Topics for the 64 programs advertised to the general public are listed in the appendices. A series of “Animal Encounters” continued to be popular in the Fontana Wildlife Display, Yaks and Brews (kayaking followed by a social at a local brewery), and Wapsi through the Seasons (seasonal trips down the Wapsipinicon River). Public programs were advertised through newspapers, radios stations, postings, and through the Conservation Board’s Facebook, website, listserves, and links from other websites. Naturalists also worked to target market programs based on peoples’ known interests. The Conservation Board promoted and provided space for the Fontana Herb Society.

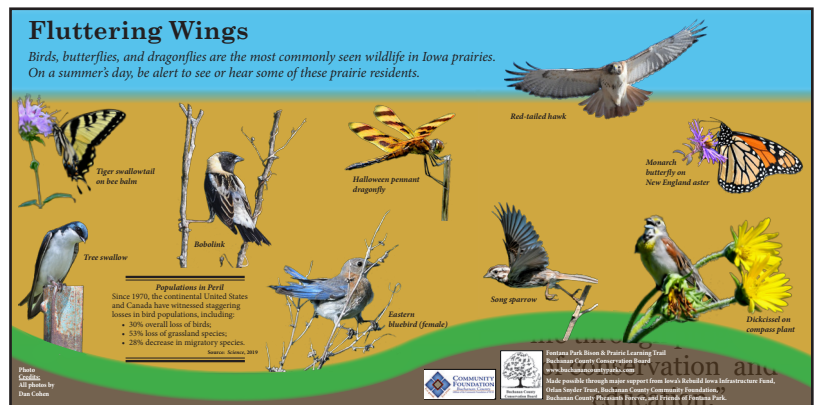
Interpretive Resources

In addition to in-person programs, educational efforts include publications, self-guided trails, displays, web sites, and other media. Since its inception, the Nature Center has drawn visitors from all 50 states and more than 80 foreign countries and, along with the wildlife display, continue to be very popular. These displays require a lot of upkeep and enhancement, and receive financial support from the nonprofit group Friends of Fontana Park. There was a record high nature center visitor count of 12,760 for the year.

The Conservation Board maintained a strong presence through www.buchanancountyparks.com, www.MyCountyParks.com, and tourism websites. A “Fontana Park” Facebook page, and an email listserve also were maintained. Staff are engaged with local and state tourism groups to help spread the word within and outside of county borders. New nature center displays were brought in showcasing snakes and wolves. Storybook trails were maintained near a Nature Play Area. Four interpretie kiosks on topics related to bison and prairie were placed along the new Bison and Prairie Learning Area.

An Iowa DNR Creek Sign grant submitted by the Conservation

The panel below is one of four 2'x4' featured on kiosks along the new Bison and Prairie Learning Area.





One of many creek and watershed signs placed throughout Buchanan County by Buchanan County Secondary Roads sign crew.

Director on behalf of Buchanan County Secondary Roads allowed for the purchase of watershed and creek signs to provide an understanding of Buchanan County waterways and the watersheds they impact. Special thanks to the Buchanan County Secondary Roads crew for placing these educational signs at key locations along some of Buchanan County’s paved roads.

Interpretive signs exist on self-guided trails in Jakway Forest and Fontana Park woodlands, and a few outlying areas. Display panel topics include a pioneer homestead messages (Jakway), sustainable cabins (Fontana), fens (Rowley Fen and Fairbank Fen), Wapsipinicon River Corridor (Grover Timber), and Wapsipinicon River Water

Trail (Quasqueton and Independence). An outdoor kiosk display was changed with the seasons at Fontana Park. Other interpretive resources included four issues of the Otter Creek Quarterly, web sites (buchanancountyparks.com, mycountyparks.com, Iowa tourism, and www.tripadvisor.com), and a Facebook page and conservation listserve.

Future Objectives for Environmental Education (EE)

- Disseminate program information and provide annual teacher in-service.
- Increase participation in outdoor recreation and service learning for older youth.
- Continue meeting program objectives for content and outdoor exposure.
- Increase engagement with youth and adult groups in special projects such as cleanups, water testing, invasive species removal, etc.
- Increase environmental issues instruction, with an objective of one grade 6-12 level participating at each county school annually and adult programming on water quality, watersheds, and other issues.
- Coordinate and promote field trips to the Richardson-Jakway Historic Site, with the objective of participation of at least one 4-8 grade level from each school district.
- Promote “nature play” areas, and model their use during field trips.
- Host at least one educator training annually.
- Make reference materials and activity guides available to teachers, and advertise this availability.
- Conduct at least one conservation practices program annually targeting an audience of private landowners and land managers.
- Offer at least 40 programs per year for general public participants.
- Offer summer educational/recreational programs for pre-school and school age children.
- Market and present programs to local civic groups.
- Conduct Outdoor Adventures-type programming for 7-12 graders.
- Offer a minimum of six public programs annually that bring people of all ages to outlying county natural areas - with an objective of more than ten participants.
- Participate in the Extern Program or other volunteer programs to enhance EE programming capacity.



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- Better promote/market Conservation Board sponsored programs through media, postings, and contact with various groups.
- Offer series of adult-oriented programs on conservation topics, such as Master Conservationist at least biannually.
- Publish the Otter Creek Quarterly
- Make substantial changes in nature center displays at least annually, as per the Exhibit Plan (new displays, traveling displays, on-loan exhibits).
- Develop displays/information/programming at Fontana Park to interpret the Otter Creek Watershed.
- Install plant identification signs along the interior prairie trail of the Bison and Prairie Learning Area that change with plant bloom times.
- Complete kiosk on the topic of “serving community” in the campground.
- Coordinate signs placement/replacement for the Buchanan County Wapsipinicon River Water Trail.
- Develop two kiosks to be placed on the Taylor’s Ford bridge on the topics of the bridge’s history and the nature of the river.
- Use the intern program to, at a minimum, produce a quality, written, original educational activity for inclusion as a BCCB resource, and a substantial, new educational exhibit.
- Make quarterly updates to the outdoor kiosk near the playground at Fontana Park. Consider placement of a second kiosk.
- Educate people about Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program and Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.
- Maintain Conservation Board web site and social media outreach
- Continue developing databases to target-market programs and events.
- Maintain self-guided trail signs at Fontana and Jakway.
- Submit an application to have Buchanan County designated as a Bird Friendly Community.



Information about upcoming public education program and other activities sponsored by the Conservation Board is included in the Conservation Board newsletter – the Otter Creek Quarterly.

Conservation Volunteers

(Volunteers are listed in Appendix D)

Volunteers are an important part of Conservation Board programs and activities, providing both physical assistance and visible public support. Since its opening in 1994, volunteers have been instrumental to nature center operations, providing 15,063 hours of service. At the current minimum hourly wage of \$7.25, the total dollar value of this service is \$109,206.75. This year, 17 nature center receptionists contributed 782 hours. Unfortunately, the trend in people wishing to volunteer is generally downward.

There are 18 areas in which people may volunteer. Volunteers monitored nest boxes, developed and maintained plantings, conducted cleanups, served as campground hosts, helped with educational programs, fundraised with Friends of Fontana Park, helped with park maintenance, and more.

Future Volunteer Program Objectives

- Better distribute the Volunteers brochure.
- Host a Volunteer Recognition event.
- Recruit more nature center receptionists and campground hosts.
- Better communicate the volunteer program in media.
- Continue using volunteers as much as possible in the 18 areas of need.



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Board and Staff Development

Conservation Board Background



Conservation Board members are strongly encouraged to further their education by attending the annual Iowa County Conservation System Conference.

From left: Board members Loren Hamilton, Mary Jean Blaisdell, and Andy Crump, with Director Dan Cohen view Story County Conservation areas in September.

Conservation Board Term Expirations

- Andy Crump, 12/31/23
- Ronnie Wolfe, 12/31/24
- Mary Jean Blaisdell, 12/31/25
- Maud Bentley, 12/31/26
- Orlan Love, 12/31/27



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

County conservation boards are agencies of county government created by statute (Chapter 350.1 of the Code of Iowa). They have broad policy-making responsibilities in the area of local conservation, education, and recreation programs. Conservation boards are relatively autonomous, and control all properties and set the direction for conservation programs. Conservation boards address diverse matters for parks, preserves, museums, recreation, wildlife management, and education. The Conservation Board

consists of five county residents, appointed to staggered five-year terms by the Board of Supervisors. Conservation Board members are appointed on the basis of their demonstrated interest in conservation matters and serve without pay.

The Conservation Board functions as a corporate body, making group policy decisions that then are implemented by the Executive Director, who is responsible to the Board. Other staff are hired by the Executive Director with Board budget approval, and are directly responsible to the Executive Director. Conservation Board members, with the expiration dates of their terms, are listed to the left.

All Conservation Board meetings are open to the public. Board agendas are posted at the nature center and on www.buchanancountyparks.com. Minutes also are posted on this website.

Staff Development

Conservation Department staff are encouraged to further their professional development. Park rangers and technicians kept current on pesticide applicator licenses, and park rangers attended law enforcement trainings. Field staff also attended annual training with Mine Safety Health Administration and other topics. Most staff attended the Iowa Association of County Conservation Board Employees annual training. Naturalists attended workshops and training provided by the Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN), and naturalist Michael Maas served on the IAN Executive Committee. The Director and Deputy Director attended meetings and training provided by the Iowa County Conservation System, Iowa State Association of Counties, and County Conservation Directors Association (CCDA). They also serve on the Buchanan County Safety, Department Heads, and Tourism committees. The Director represented the CCDA on the ISAC Legislative and Awards Committees, and Bird Friendly Iowa. Other County-mandated and topic-specific trainings were held throughout the year.

The Conservation Department grew with the addition of a Deputy Director. Turnover resulted in a new Office Manager and Conservation Technician.



Dan Cohen, Executive Director



Ben Bonar, Deputy Director



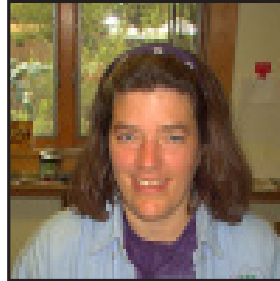
Mike Van Raden, Park Ranger



Jeremy Whittle, Park Ranger



Michael Maas, Interpretive Naturalist



Sondra Cabell, Interpretive Naturalist



Chris Hansen, Conservation Tech.



Jacob Schwarting, Conservation Tech.

Staff Roster

Full-time Staff

Dan Cohen, Director.....	1/13/86
Ben Bonar, Deputy Director.....	9/9/23
Mike Van Raden, Park Ranger.....	7/1/90
Jeremy Whittle, Park Ranger.....	8/14/06
Chris Hansen, Conservation Technician.....	5/15/00
James Mount, Conservation Technician.....	9/16/19
Jacob Schwarting, Conservation Technician.....	9/20/23
Michael Maas, Conservation Technician (11/9/15); Naturalist.....	8/7/17
Sondra Cabell, Naturalist.....	5/30/01



James Mount, Conservation Tech.

Part-time and Seasonal Staff

Dawn Vogel, Office Manager (now Board of Supervisor/photo on page 33)...	2/28/22 - 7/30/22
Diane Johnson, Secretary/Volunteer Coordinator.....	10/10/12
Jacob Schwarting, Seasonal Conservation Technician.....	hired full-time (see above)
Gus Joyce, Seasonal Conservation Technician.....	5/16/22 - 8/20/22
HannaRose Iliff, Seasonal Naturalist Intern.....	6/13/22 - 8/8/22
Mara Moore, Seasonal Conservation Technician.....	5/15/23
Jaime Guizar, Seasonal Conservation Technician.....	5/11/23
Sam Reed, Seasonal Naturalist Intern.....	5/1/23



Diane Johnson, Secretary

Future objectives

- Conduct an annual Board Field Day with all Board Members.
- A majority of Board Members attend the annual ICCS Conference
- Write the update of the Conservation Board Long-term Plan.
- Assist in planning statewide and regional training workshops.
- Maintain a minimum of 24 hours of professional development for full-time staff, and 20 hours for board members.
- Work to retain quality and dedicated board and staff. Add an additional Conservation Technician, and consider a season-long campground host.
- Work with Board of Supervisors to allow revenues from facilities use to be retained for facilities' capitol improvements.



Dana Kreklau, Office Manager

Areas and Facilities

The following are descriptions of Conservation Board areas and facilities, and highlighted activities during the past year. Not described are routine maintenance activities such as mowing, maintaining roads and fences, janitorial, patrolling, administration, and public relations.

Conservation Board Areas (key)

A – Location; C – Current management
B – Acquisition D – Activities during the year

1. Fontana Park - 144 acres

- A. Fontana Park is located one mile south of Hazleton, off Highway 150.
- B. The original 128 acres were acquired in 1959, and since that time Fontana has been the base of operations and location of administrative offices for the Conservation Board. Six acres were added in 1998 with the donation of the Jarrett-Slater addition. Four acres were added at the East Entrance in 2016, purchased from Rick See using reserve and donor dollars. In 2020, 16 acres were added to the northeast corner of the park, purchased from the Lohman Estate using donor dollars.
- C. Fontana Park offers modern and primitive camping, two cabins, a shower house, a live animal display including a Bison and Prairie Learning Area (2022), 40-acre lake (reservoir) and Otter Creek, woodland, prairie plots, three picnic shelters, chapel area, interpretive and ski trails, hard surface and soft trails, stream and lake fishing, educational plantings, and a nature center. Management practices relate to visitor use, park and recreation area development, live wildlife and other outdoor exhibits, educational and recreational programming, and natural areas management. Conservation Board offices and most maintenance and equipment storage are at Fontana Park. Fontana Park is the most visited of Conservation Board-managed properties, and the place that introduces citizens to Conservation Board facilities and programs. It is the main destination for educational field trips and public programs.
- D. Completed work on the Bison and Prairie Learning Area by finishing the corral system, placing interpretive kiosks, and installing fences and gates. Bison were moved from their old pen into the new pasture. Work began on a mural near the main shelter as a tool for interpreting the Otter Creek Watershed. Plans were approved and work began on constructing a Lakeside Campground. Major campground work included: site grading, rocking roads and camper pads, pouring concrete camper patios and shower house foundation, and installation of water, sewer and electrical infrastructure. Lots of ash trees were removed due to emerald ash borer infestation. Replacement trees were planted in spring. The nature center roof was replaced with new steel shingles, and repairs were made to some of the wildlife enclosures. Additional solar panels, new charge controllers, and new batteries were added to the Sustainable Living Cabins. Playground equipment was updated per recommendations of the playground inspector, with plans in place to replace some sand protection with rubber mulch. Fishing line receptacles were added to the main shelter and jetties. A prescribed fire was conducted in the Bison and Prairie Learning Area and near the East Shop. Many education programs were held. A Multi-Species Inventory and Monitoring project was conducted, surveying a variety of wildlife.

A new Bison and Prairie Learning area was completed in late summer, and bison were moved to their new pasture and prairie grounds in fall.



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2. Jakway Forest - 315 acres

- A. Located 1 1/2 miles south of Aurora off W45.
- B. Acquired in 1968, 1970, 1971, and 1973 with Land and Water Conservation Act Grant Funds.
- C. Managed for modern and primitive camping, picnicking, public hunting, interpretive trails, equestrian riding, hiking, ski trails, disc golf, and a historic site. Ongoing Timber Stand Improvement (TSI): 100-year rotation on approximately 200 acres of timber. Contains a shower house with modern restrooms, a storm shelter, dump station, disc golf course, two pit toilets, wildlife observation blind, picnic shelter, staff residence, heritage plantings, and the Richardson-Jakway Historic Site.
- D. Interpretive panels were replaced in the historic site. Repaired and remedied playground equipment per the recommendations of the playground inspector, and budgeted for replacing some rubber mulch under the swing-set. Ash trees infected by emerald ash borers were removed and new trees were planted. Buckthorn, garlic mustard, and multiflora rose remain the main invasive species concern in the timber, and efforts were made to control these species. Environmental education programs were held.



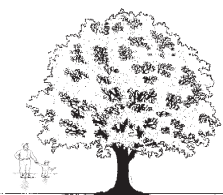
A nine-basket disc golf course is maintained at Jakway Forest.

3. Buffalo Creek Area - 85 acres

- A. Located one mile East of Winthrop off HWY D22.
- B. Acquired in 1961. In 1998, 1.5 acres on the east side were donated by Dr. A.J. Murphy.
- C. Managed for picnicking, hiking, and public hunting. Natural areas include a bottomland woodland, ponds, and constructed prairie. Contains a pit toilet and shelter house. A walking trail is maintained around the park area and to a pond.
- D. Emerald ash borer struck the area hard, and some dying and dead trees were removed. Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS) is conducting research in ash borer control with release of live parasitoids in the park. A prescribed fire was conducted. Environmental education programs were held. A fee for camping was initiated. Nest boxes were monitored.

4. Lime Creek Area - 45 acres

- A. Located 1.5 miles northeast of Brandon.
- B. 39 acres were acquired in 1964. A six-acre addition was donated by Lime Creek Fish & Game Club in 1985.
- C. Managed for modern and primitive camping, and for public hunting during fall and winter. Natural area is managed as a riverine woodland. Contains two pit toilets, a playground, swing-set, and two shelter houses.
- D. Plugged an old hand pump well. Repaired and remedied playground equipment per the recommendations of the playground inspector. Mussel sampling continues in the creek, conducted by students from Iowa State University. Normal maintenance and patrolling. Nest boxes were maintained. Environmental education programs were held.



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5. Boies Bend Area - 26 acres

- A. Located 1.5 miles west of Quasqueton.
- B. Acquired in 1967.
- C. Managed for primitive camping, picnicking, river fishing with stairway access, restored prairie, woodland, and public hunting. Contains a pit toilet.
- D. A fee for camping was initiated. Environmental education programs were held. Normal maintenance and patrolling.

6. Otter Creek Roadside Park – 13 acres

- A. One mile south of Oelwein at the intersection of Highways 150 and 281.
- B. Acquired as former FEMA buyout property in 2002 from the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors.
- C. Managed as a roadside park with walking and ski trails, picnicking, fishing, canoe access, and a savanna planting.
- D. Plugging of the overflow tube for the pond by beaver or general debris is a continuing maintenance issue. Otherwise, the area received normal maintenance and patrolling.

7. Cutshall Area - 67 acres

- A. Located 4.5 miles north of Jesup off V62.
- B. Acquired in 1959.
- C. Managed for picnicking, public hunting and fishing, and Water Trail access. Natural area is managed as riverine wetland and timber. Trail is maintained for a state water trail put-in, and along the river.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. Nest boxes were monitored.

8. Patton Prairie - 45 acres

- A. Located southwest of Aurora off Quonset Ave.
- B. Acquired in 1998 with REAP Grant Funds
- C. Managed as a native prairie and wetland with public hunting.
- D. Prescribed burns were conducted on two management areas. Willow and aspen were removed with a forestry mower. Multiflora rose was sprayed.

9. Otter Creek Wildlife Area - 99 acres

- A. Located on west edge of Hazleton, adjacent to Fontana Park.
- B. Acquired 1965, 1969, 1973, and 1983 with some parcels receiving Land and Water Conservation Fund Funding (LWCF) and one parcel donated. In 2014, 0.137 acres were impacted during construction of a new bridge. In return, 0.161 acres was purchased by Secondary Roads to become part of the Otter Creek Wildlife Area.
- C. Managed as a nature preserve and wetland habitat with public fishing at the pier.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. A Multi-Species Inventory and Monitoring project was conducted, surveying a variety of wildlife. Nest boxes were maintained.

10. Nibeck Nature Preserve - 33 acres

- A. Located adjacent to the north city limits of Hazleton.
- B. Twenty acres were acquired in 1981, bequeathed by Leora Nibeck. An additional 7.5 acres were purchased from Chad Dettbarn in 2013.
- C. Managed as a nature preserve.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. An education program was held.



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11. Van Laningham Wildlife Area - 3 acres

- A. Located 4.5 miles east and 4.5 miles north of Independence.
- B. Acquired by gift from Thurman and Veva Van Laningham in 1967.
- C. Managed for wildlife habitat.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling.

Wildlife Management Area
(also known as Game Management Area)

Buchanan County Conservation Board Rules and Regulations

Below are some key rules and regulations pertaining to use of this Conservation Board-managed property
[A more complete listing of Conservation Board rules is available for download at www.buchanancountyparks.com](http://www.buchanancountyparks.com)

A summary of rules and regulations are posted at each Conservation Board area.

12. Sand Creek Area - 80 acres

- A. Located three miles east and three miles south of Quasqueton.
- B. Acquired in 1971.
- C. Managed for public hunting and fishing on the Wapsipinicon River. A trail is maintained from the parking area to the river.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. Nest boxes were maintained.

13. Pine Creek Area - 40 acres

- A. Located five miles southeast of Independence.
- B. Acquired in 1971.
- C. Managed for public hunting, fishing, and native hard maple woodland.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. Nest boxes were maintained.

14. Rowley Fen - 43 acres

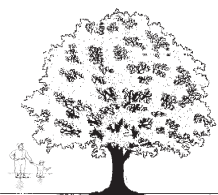
- A. Located 0.5 mile northwest of Rowley.
- B. Acquired in 1984.
- C. Managed for unique fen habitat, restored prairie, and public hunting. The area was designated an Iowa Registered Natural Area in 1986.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Environmental education programs were held. A prescribed fire was conducted.

15. Koutny Pond-Hoffman Woods - 106 acres

- A. Located one mile east of Brandon.
- B. Acquired in 1985.
- C. Managed for wildlife habitat, public hunting, and fishing. Includes a 12-acre lake with two fishing jetties, 23-acre wetland, toilet, boat access, and prairie plantings. In 2017, US Fish & Wildlife Service helped fund replacement of water control structures for the lake and wetland to the east. An adjoining wetland owned by Benton County was constructed in 2020.
- D. Environmental education programs were held. Worked with Benton County Conservation Department on signs and access between Koutny Pond and Albert Wetland. Prescribed burns were conducted on three management areas.



People prepare to launch kayaks for a fishing excursion on Koutny Pond.



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16. Mickey Fox Area - 118 acres

- A. Located five miles north of Jesup off V62.
- B. Sixty acres acquired in 1960. In 2003, an additional 37.10 acres were acquired from the Melvin and Lila Anderson Estate with funding from REAP. In January, 2013, an additional 21 acres was purchased from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation which had previously purchased the land from the Johnson Estate to hold while grants were being written. Funding came largely from REAP, Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, and Buchanan County Wildlife Association.
- C. Managed for public hunting, fishing, and wildlife habitat.
- D. Nest boxes were maintained. Issues occurred with target shooting and ATV use especially on the east entrance. Signs were placed and law enforcement increased. Sign stealing also has been an issue.

17. Putty Root Preserve - 17 acres

- A. Located three miles northwest of Quasqueton.
- B. Original five acres acquired in 1962. Ten acres acquired 1992 from Delbert Crow and two acres acquired from Betty Payne in 1996.
- C. Managed as an old growth oak-hickory woodland preserve. The putty root orchid, for which the parcel is named, grows here.
- D. Efforts were made to control garlic mustard. Normal maintenance and patrolling.

18. Crumbacher Wildlife Area - 368 acres

- A. Located 3.5 miles southwest of Independence.
- B. Acquired in 1989. The first 320 acres were acquired with Habitat Stamp Grant funds. Fifty-one acres were acquired with funds from Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, German Shorthair Club, and Buchanan County Wildlife Association.
- C. Managed for forest, prairie, and wetland habitat, and public hunting.
- D. Brush and invasive species control are ongoing, labor-intensive tasks in native and reconstructed prairies. Mechanical shrub removal was assisted with use of a forestry mower provided by Hawkeye Community College. Beaver dams along Lime Creek were outfitted with beaver bafflers, and a trapper attempted to remove the beavers in efforts to reduce water backed up on neighboring land. Environmental education programs were held. Nest boxes were monitored. Prescribed burns were conducted on three management areas.



A northern flicker perches on twigs on an early spring day at Crumbacher Wildlife Area.



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19. Bearbower Sand Prairie - 40 acres

- A. Located two miles west of Highway 150, off Buchanan-Benton Road.
- B. Acquired in 1988 with public/private cost share grant funds by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (many donors were involved) and then transferred to the Iowa DNR. The Conservation Board assumed a management agreement with Iowa DNR in 1995.
- C. Managed for preservation and enhancement of the unique sand prairie, public hunting, and nature appreciation. Fragile prickly pear and ornate box turtles are among the species drawing attention from researchers.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. A prescribed fire was conducted.

20. Blazing Star Prairie - 7.5 acres

- A. Located two miles east and 1 1/4 miles south of Rowley.
- B. Acquired in 1987 by cooperative efforts of the Conservation Board, Buchanan County Chapter of Pheasants Forever, Buchanan County Wildlife Association, and the Cedar-Wapsi Chapter of the Lutheran Brotherhood.
- C. Managed as native prairie habitat with public hunting.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. A prescribed fire was conducted. Researchers visited the area to survey for insect species.



A federally endangered rusty-patched bumblebee was photographed at Blazing-star Prairie (MJ Hatfield).

21. Swartz Preserve - 4 acres

- A. Located 5.5 miles east of Hazleton at the junction of C57 and W33.
- B. Acquired in 1991 by conservation easement from Mr. & Mrs. Ormel Swartz.
- C. Managed for wetland habitat and as a wildlife preserve.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling.

22. Bryantsburg Prairie Preserve - 1.5 acres

- A. Located two miles south of Hazleton on Highway 150.
- B. Acquired in 1988 by conservation easement from Mr. & Mrs. Henry Brandt.
- C. Managed as a native prairie preserve.
- D. Woody plant encroachment is an ongoing threat to the wetland prairie plants. A prescribed fire was conducted. The area was used for monarch tagging and releases, and for several school field trips and public programs.



Yellow Star Grass blooms in the native prairie-wetland at Bryantsburg Prairie.

23. Schneider-Heinick-Rowe Wildlife Area - 20 acres

- A. Located three miles east and 3.5 miles south of Quasqueton.
- B. Acquired in 1996 by Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, Tri-Rivers Chapter of Whitetails Unlimited, Lime Creek Fish & Game Club, Littleton Hookanliners Club, and the Buchanan County Wildlife Association.
- C. Managed for woodland and wetland wildlife habitat. Some rare plants are found on the site.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling. Nest boxes were monitored.

24. Three Elms Area - 75 acres

- A. Located one mile southeast of Independence.
- B. Acquired in 1964.
- C. Managed for wildlife habitat, river access, fishing, hiking, and mountain biking. Contains a boat ramp built with Marine Boat Fuel Tax Grant funds, handicap fishing, picnic shelter, prairie plot, and pit toilet.
- D. Lots of dying or dead ash and elm trees were removed, and several hundred replacement trees were planted. The area receives high use, and regular litter pick up is necessary. Environmental education programs were held. Nest boxes were monitored.

25. Frogville Access - 135 acres

- A. Located three miles northwest of Troy Mills.
- B. Original 96 acres acquired in 1978 with LWCF Funds. An additional 20 acres were acquired with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant funds in 1997.
- C. Managed for public hunting and fishing.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrolling.



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26. Troy Mills Access - 63 acres

- A. Located three miles east and 4.5 miles south of Quasqueton.
- B. 23 acres acquired in 1969. 40 acres acquired in 1981 with Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant funds.
- C. Managed for forest, fishing, hunting, and Wapsipinicon River access. The Iowa DNR owns 11.5 acres under a long term management agreement with the Conservation Board. Contains a boat ramp.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Camping was discontinued due to the Iowa DNR not allowing pit-toilet installation. The boat ramp no longer provides access to water most the year, as the river has changed course and drought conditions have prevailed. Illegal ATV use is a problem on land off the boat ramp. Met with Iowa DNR biologist and Rivers Program staff to make fixes to allow for at least a secondary paddler access/takeout.

27. Wapsi River Access - 51 acres

- A. Located 0.5 miles northwest of Independence.
- B. Acquired in 1963 and 1964.
- C. Managed for picnicking, fishing, river access, and hunting. Contains a pit toilet and picnic shelter. Snowmobilers used the area in winter to access the Wapsi.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Educational paddling programs were held. A prescribed fire was conducted. Litter is an ongoing issue.

28. Iron Bridge Woodland and River Access - 34 acres

- A. Located 4.5 miles northwest of Quasqueton.
- B. Access acquired in 1996 from Buchanan County Secondary Roads, which manages the bridge. An additional 33 acres were acquired in 2012 from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation which had previously purchased the land from the Laverne Kress Estate. Major funding came from grants from the Wildlife Habitat Stamp Program, Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, Buchanan County Wildlife Association, Buchanan County Tri-Rivers Waterfowlers, National Wild Turkey Federation, and Iowa Whitetails Unlimited.
- C. Managed for nature appreciation with public hunting, fishing, and river access, and as a historic site. Contains a boat launch originally constructed with a Waters Access Grant and a circa 1872 Bowstring Arch Bridge. Major improvements were made last year (FY20), including paved trails and parking, new ramps, street lighting, and restroom.
- D. The area receives a lot of use. The area was a put-in and take-out access for river paddling trips held as part of the Conservation Board Education Program. Weeds were removed among riprap rocks.

29. Newton Township Natural Area - 158 acres

- A. Located nine miles southeast of Quasqueton.
- B. Acquired with REAP Grant Funds in 1998.
- C. Managed as a riverine woodland with public hunting, fishing, and canoe access to Buffalo Creek.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrol.

30. Hodges and North Wildlife Area - 67 acres

- A. Located one mile south of the Jesup Highway Interchange, off V65.
- B. Acquired in 2001 by a donation of Basic Materials Co. Inc., Waterloo.
- C. Managed as restored prairie and wetland, with public hunting and fishing.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Shrubs were removed in grassland areas using a forestry mower on loan from Hawkeye Community College.



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31. Buffalo Creek Wildlife Area - 54 acres

- A. Located six miles south of Winthrop off W45.
- B. Acquired in 1969.
- C. Managed for riverine woodland habitat, public hunting, and stream fishing. The road to the Wildlife Area is managed by Secondary Roads with limited maintenance.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrol.

32. Hoover Area - 20 acres

- A. Located three miles east and 3.5 miles south of Quasqueton.
- B. Acquired in 1962.
- C. Managed for wildlife habitat and public hunting.
- D. Normal maintenance and patrol.

33. Fairbank Fen – 40 acres

- A. Located two miles east of Fairbank, a half-mile off Highway 281.
- B. Acquired by the Conservation Board in August, 2002, with funding from Buchanan County and State Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, Fairbank Gun Club, Buchanan County Wildlife Association, INHF and Kirkwood Wetland Students, and Hookanliners Club.
- C. Managed as a prairie and wetland fen, with picnicking and public hunting.
- D. Litter is an ongoing problem, especially spent shells from target shooting. The area has been signed for no target shooting. A prescribed fire was conducted.

34. Anderson Addition to Cutshall Park – 24 acres

- A. Located four miles north of Jesup, off Highway V62.
- B. Purchased along with the Addition to the Mickey Fox Area on November 21, 2003 from the Lila Anderson Estate, with a REAP Grant. A donation from Buchanan County Pheasants Forever paid for a 6.5-acre prairie reconstruction.
- C. Managed as river bottom timber, riverine wetlands, and restored prairie upland, with public hunting.
- D. Nest boxes were maintained and monitored. A prescribed fire was conducted.

35. Ham Marsh – 54 acres

- A. Located four miles northwest of Independence, off Indiana Avenue.
- B. Purchased in 2006 from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation which had served as an intermediary in a bargain sale from the John and Maxine Ham Family. Ten acres had been protected in 1985 with a life estate agreement. These ten acres were donated to the Conservation Board, and 45 acres purchased, to secure the property.
- C. Managed as a glacial wetland marsh, sedge meadow, and restored prairie, with public hunting. A small area of hay ground is maintained for wildlife habitat and hay production for Conservation Board use.
- D. Hay ground was mowed and baled for feeding bison at Fontana Park. Multiflora roses were sprayed. Nest boxes were maintained and monitored. Environmental education programs were held. A prescribed fire was conducted. The Director monitored a sandhill crane nest from nest construction to rearing of a colt. Biologists placed a transmitter on a previous year's colts and data continues to come in on its movements.

A sandhill crane lands at Ham Marsh. (photo by Dan Cohen)



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36. Cortright Wildlife Area - 190 Acres

- A. Located one mile southeast of Littleton, off River Road.
- B. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) purchased 152 acres from Kevan Cortright, which the Conservation Board repurchased from INHF in 2008, with grants from the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA), REAP, Wildlife Habitat Stamp Fund, Iowa Pheasants Forever Build A Wildlife Area (BAWA) program, Iowa Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Buchanan County Wildlife Association, Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, and the Kirkwood Wetland Students. The 34-acre Hookanliner Addition was acquired from the Hookanliner Sportsmen in 2010. A REAP grant, Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, and Buchanan County Wildlife Association, funded the acquisition. Four acres adjacent to the southeast corner were purchase from James and Kathy Brown in 2010. Fish Habitat Grant funds paid for a river reconnection project, completed at the southeast ponds in 2010.
- C. Managed as forest and forested wetlands, with a mile of Wapsipinicon Riverfront; restored timber and prairie areas; ponds; and for public hunting, fishing, picnicking, hiking, and nature appreciation.
- D. Environmental education programs were held. Nest boxes were monitored. A small, late summer burn was conducted. One section of mowed trail was extended to the river.

37. Robert “Chic” McGlaughlin Easement Area – 6 acres

- A. Located at the Littleton Dam, off Highway D16.
- B. The Iowa DNR purchased a public use easement from the Robert and Betty McGlaughlin Family. The land was sold to the Coventry family, with the easement attached. The easement covers a stretch of land along the Wapsipinicon River and the east half of the Littleton Dam. The Conservation Board signed a Management Agreement with the DNR in February, 2009 to manage and maintain the land, not including the dam. The DNR controls management of the former dam site, and in 2019 transformed the old dam into a series of arch rapids.
- C. Managed for public river access, fishing, and portage around the dam.
- D. The area receives a lot of use. Used as a put in spot for environmental education paddling programs. Normal maintenance and patrolling.

Participants in a past New Years Day hike tromp through the snow at Cortright Wildlife Area. Conservation Board education programs take people to many different county parks, river accesses, and natural areas.



38. Wehner Woods – 30 acres

- A. Located at the northeast corner of Lamont.
- B. The Conservation Board entered into a 15-year contract to purchase the property from Nels and JoAnne Wehner on August 18, 2009.
- C. Managed as river bottom and upland timber, riverine wetlands, and nature appreciation, with public hunting and a nature trail.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Environmental education programs were held. Staff took over mowing that previously was contracted with a local Lamont resident.

39. Guy Grover Timber and Tree Plantings – 204 acres

- A. Located three miles east of Quasqueton. The area is divided into east and west parcels, connected by a path that goes through private land.
- B. Guy and Shirley Grover donated 186 acres to the Conservation Board in December, 2011. The property includes a conservation easement granted to Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in 2007. The easement is perpetual and tied to the land. In 2015, 15 acres were purchased from Justin Kuhn, connecting the east side to the river.
- C. Managed for river bottom and upland timber, riverine wetlands, prairie savanna, a fishing pond, nature trails, and public hunting and fishing. The pond contains two fishing jetties.
- D. The conservation easement area was checked by INHF staff. Nest boxes were monitored. Environmental education programs were held. A prescribed fire was conducted.



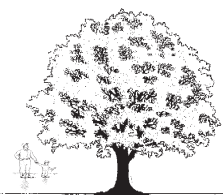
Above: Painted turtles bask on a fallen log over a forested wetland in May at Guy Grover Timber and Tree plantings.

40. Quigley-Slattery Heritage Prairie – 33 acres

- A. Located four miles northeast of Winthrop. The area is a high quality, native mesic prairie and wetland.
- B. The area was long owned by the Quigley family, and had been protected in grassland reserve. In 2011, the property and surrounding farm land was sold to Jerry Slattery, who attempted to convert parts of the prairie-wetland to row crop agriculture, but ended up selling 33 acres to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in 2012. The Conservation Board and INHF submitted successful grant requests and donor requests to recoup the cost. Major funding was secured from: REAP, the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant program; Iowa Pheasants Forever State Council; Buchanan, Linn, Clayton, and Black Hawk County Chapters of Pheasants Forever; Iowa’s Living Roadway Trust Fund; Buchanan County Wildlife Association; and Iowa Prairie Network. In March, 2015, the Conservation Board took possession of the property.
- C. Managed to enhance the prairie and wetland for public education, hunting, and nature appreciation.
- D. Woody plant encroachment of the prairie was reduced with a prescribed burn and mechanical removal. Wild parsnips near the parking lot were mowed and multiflora roses were sprayed.



Below: New England aster blooms bright in the native prairie on a September day at Quigley-Slattery Heritage Prairie. (photos by Dan Cohen)



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41. Roberts Wildlife Area – 109 acres

- A. Located six miles northeast of Jesup. The area connects two other properties in the Wapsipinicon River Corridor, including the County’s Cutshall Area and Black Hawk County’s Wilson Woods, resulting in 512 contiguous acres of public wildlife area. It contains a variety of wetlands, river bottom forest, upland pasture and tree plantings, and Wapsipinicon River shoreline.
- B. The area was part of the Harris Estate, and a right of first refusal was provided to the Conservation Board by Marynette Harris as per wishes of surviving children of Lee Ivy and Willie Roberts. Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation acquired the property, and held it while the Conservation Board sought grants and donations. Major funding was secured from: REAP, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Iowa Pheasants Forever State Council; Buchanan, Linn, Clayton, Delaware, and Black Hawk County Chapters of Pheasants Forever; Wild Turkey Federation, Whitetails Unlimited, Tri-Rivers Waterfowlers, and Buchanan County Wildlife Association. The Conservation Board purchased the property from INHF on March 22, 2018.
- C. Managed to protect and enhance forest, savannah, river, and wetland habitats, and for public hunting, fishing, and nature appreciation.
- D. Nest boxes were monitored. Education programs were held.



www.buchanancountyparks.com is the Conservation Board’s web site. Visitors to the site can access park information; reserve campsites, cabins, and shelters; register for programs and activities; download job application materials and volunteer application; view Conservation Board agendas and minutes; downloadable publications; and more. People can also be involved by “liking” Fontana Park on Facebook!

www.mycountyparks.com contains information about Buchanan County’s parks and programs, and also contains information about other county conservation programs.

Buchanan County Conservation at a Glance	
Facilities	
Total number of areas managed.....	41
Total acres managed.....	3,066
River accesses (with designated ramps).....	5
Lakes/ponds/reservoirs with fish.....	5
River/stream fishing.....	23
Areas open to hunting.....	31
Modern campgrounds.....	3
Primitive campgrounds.....	3
Number of picnic shelters.....	9
Shower houses.....	2
Group campgrounds.....	1
Hard surface trail.....	1
Interpretive trails (signed).....	3
Hiking/walking trails.....	15
Ski trails.....	2
Nature center.....	1
Live wildlife displays.....	1
Historical interpretive sites.....	3
Nature center visitor count.....	12,760



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Board Meeting Highlights

Conservation Board meetings were hosted in the Board Meeting Room of the Fontana Interpretive Nature Center. Board meetings were tentatively scheduled for 6 p.m. on the third Tuesday of each month, unless a conflict occurred that required a change in meeting date. All meetings were posted and open to the public.

The following are brief meeting highlights/motions from the Conservation Board's 12 regular meetings and three special meetings. Each meeting included updates on progress of Fontana Park Master Plan work, including the Lakeside Campground and trails.

July 19, 2022

The Board reviewed progress on the Bison and Prairie Learning Area and fundraising for the Lakeside-Prairie Campground. The Board accepted the resignation of its Office Manager. The Board discussed filling the new Deputy Director position.

August 16, 2022

The Board authorized the Director to allow private individuals to take fill material from previous construction projects that needs disposal. Sale of confiscated tree stands and other items no longer used by the department were approved to be sold at a local auction. The Director presented an Interview Committee's recommendation to hire Ben Bonar as Deputy Director, which was approved by the Board.

September 6, 2022 - Special Meeting

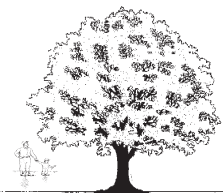
A special meeting was called to discuss terms for replacing a Conservation Technician who resigned unexpectedly and to discuss a revised quote for a truck bed replacement. The Board approved paying the costs for a new conservation technician to obtain a CDL. The Board affirmed its plans to continue with replacing the truck bed and hoist.

September 20, 2022

The Assistant County Engineer presented plans for the Lakeside Campground project. Completion of the Bison and Prairie Learning Area was discussed. The Board approved the purchase of corral panels. The Board authorized the Director to begin work on selling/trading a bison. The Board discussed an opportunity to purchase land in southeast Buchanan County with no action taken.

October 18, 2022

The Board received an update from the Director on planning for the Lakeside Campground project. The mission and purpose of the Board were discussed. The Board discussed its strategic planning process and was presented with a board evaluation tool. Due to member conflicts, the Board moved its November meeting date to 11/17/2022.



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

November 17, 2022

The Board authorized advertising for bids for the Lakeside Campground project. The Board approved its FY24 Salary Policy and adopted a Paid Leave Policy of the Board of Supervisors. The Board approved its FY22 Annual Report. The Board scheduled its upcoming regular meetings and time for a strategic planning session.

December 14, 2022 - Annual Organization/Budget Meeting

The Board approved its FY24 budget and calendar year 2023 meeting schedule. The Board appointed and approved the election of officers and committee assignments for the 2023 calendar year.

December 14, 2022 - Regular Meeting

The Board approved raising the rate for cabin rentals to \$95.00 per night, effective January 1, 2023. Minimum contribution levels for donor recognition on the nature center donor wall were set to start at the \$500 level. The Board approved a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between Buchanan, Black Hawk and Fayette counties to house animals from their live animal displays for each other in the event of one county having a dire need due to emergency.

December 20, 2022 - Special Meeting

The Board held a special meeting to open sealed bids and for construction of the Lakeside Campground. The Board accepted Denver Underground and Grading Inc's bid for the project. The Board approved a change to the bid to allow for a smaller septic tank for the project. The Board approved a resolution to dedicate funds for a Community Attractions and Tourism (CAT) grant application for the Lakeside Campground, Learning and Discovery Trail, and solar array.

January 17, 2023

The Board approved a contract for construction of the Lakeside Campground with Denver Underground. The Board approved the Deputy Director to sign documents and represent the Board in the absence of the Director. New language for Fuel Wood Permits were approved. The Board conducted a Strengths-Weaknesses-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) analysis of the department. The Board adopted a new Buchanan County Land Evaluation tool.

February 15, 2023

Conservation Board naturalists and teachers from Independence Middle School presented on a new School of the Wild program. The Board approved change orders to the Lakeside Campground contract. The Board approved a letter of support for an application for a Prairie Meadows grant to fund trail and trailhead development. The Board approved the purchase of playground equipment for the Lakeside Campground. The Board accepted a bid from Superior Cleaning for cleaning services.



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March 21, 2023

Kent Kraus from Eagle Point Solar presented information on a potential solar array installation project at Fontana Park. The Board officially named the new Fontana Park campground the “Lakeside Campground” and named the existing campground the “Creekside Campground”. The Board approved camping rates for the Lakeside Campground and Creekside Campground.

April 18, 2023

The Board received a presentation from Tyler Billmeyer from Blue Sky Solar regarding a proposal for a solar installation at Fontana Park. FY23 budget amendments were approved for consideration by the Board of Supervisors. The Board continued strategic planning by reviewing future objectives and prioritizing Fontana Park Master Plan phases. The Board approved a letter of support for the Independence Public Library Kiosk Project.

May 16, 2023

The Board was notified that it was chosen to receive a Community Attraction and Tourism (CAT) Grant and approved a resolution committing funds and entering into a grant funding agreement. A claim from Denver Underground, including change orders to meet requirements of the CAT grant (above), were approved. A request for proposals for installation of a solar array and electrical lines at Fontana Park was advertised and the Board set a date to open proposals. The Board continued strategic planning by prioritizing Master Plan projects. The Board discussed its Housing Policy and Use of Force Policy.

June 13, 2023

The Board awarded the asphalt paving contract for the Lakeside Campground to River City Paving. A resolution was approved by the Board endorsing an application to the State Recreational Trails grant program for the Learning and Discovery Trail, trailhead, and restroom. The contract for the Fontana Park solar array was awarded to Eagle Point Solar and related electrical rework was awarded to Biechler Electric.



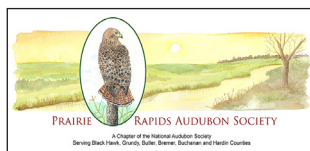
Bison graze in their new pasture in spring.



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

Cooperative Programs and Agreements

The following represents some important partnerships during the year.



- Worked with Pheasants Forever (PF) to encourage the planting of native grasses, trees, and shrubs on private land.
- Participated in local committees related to conservation and recreation, including Friends of Fontana Park, REAP, Bird Friendly Iowa, and Buchanan County and Iowa Tourism.
- Communicated closely with the County Board of Supervisors.
- Worked with the Friends of Fontana Park as a partner group for funding Conservation Board projects.
- Shared expert advice with Iowa DNR Water Trails Program, Watershed Management Authorities, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Iowa State University, and others in development of wildlife habitat, environmental protection, conservation practices, research, and specific projects.
- Partnered with Buchanan County ISU Extension for administering environmental education programs.
- Worked with the Four Seasons Trail Association and Iowa Northland Regional Council of Governments (INRCOG) to plan future trails.
- Supported efforts of Black Hawk County Conservation Board to work on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, which traverses southwest Buchanan County.
- Supported efforts of the City of Independence to provide more recreational trails.
- Worked with groups and associations to improve support for REAP and the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.
- Received substantial grant awards/funding from the following groups and programs: Enhance Iowa Community Attractions and Tourism (IEDA), Prairie Rapids Audubon Society, Black Hawk County Gaming Association, Friends of Fontana Park (and its many donors), Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, and Orlan Snyder Trust.
- Provided meeting space and advertised programs for the Fontana Herb Society.
- Partnered with groups to promote monarch tagging and larvae monitoring, bluebird nest box monitoring, sandhill crane research, and other wildlife surveys.
- The Director served on statewide ISAC Legislative and Awards Committees, Bird Friendly Iowa Steering Committees; Buchanan County Four Seasons Trails Association, Buchanan County Pheasants Forever, and Buchanan County Safety Committee.
- Partnered with Iowa County Conservation System (ICCS) on website items.
- The Director partnered with Iowa's Water and Land Legacy, Fund the Trust, ICCS, and ISAC to provide education to lawmakers, county officials, and the public regarding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.
- The Conservation Board worked with, shared resources with, assisted, or received assistance from many of the other County departments, including Secondary Roads, County Attorney, Board of Supervisors, Sheriff, Public Health, IT, and GIS.
- Kept in contact with local legislators - Senator Craig Johnson, Representative Chad Ingels and Senator Dan Zumbach.
- Received input from various partners sitting on a Fontana Park Master Plan Committee, including: County Supervisors, Engineers, and Sanitarian; Tourism and Economic Development; Orlan Snyder Trust; Friends of Fontana Park; Hazleton mayor, Jaspers RV, and others.

Appendix A: Status of Funds

A.1 FY23 Revenue, Reserves, and Grants

0001-1-22-6110-520000	Camping: Fontana \$27,163.95 Jakway \$12,949.31 ; Lime Creek \$1,905; Boies Bend \$400	\$42,418.26
0001-1-22-6110-523000	Shelter Reservations	\$2,200.54
0001-1-22-6110-622000	Concessions-Firewood and Pop	\$3,472.00
0001-1-22-6110-843000	Insurance Reimbursement	\$515.82
0001-4-22-6110-612000	Rent of Equipment & Machinery	\$12,228.75
0001-4-22-6110-846000	Fuel Tax Refund	\$1,134.60
0001-4-22-6100-847000	Misc Reimb.	\$191.04
0001-2-22-6110-271500	Conservation State Grant	\$500
0001-2-22-6110-600000	Local Grants	\$2,000.00
0023-3-10-6110-242100	REAP	\$11,744.00
0023-4-10-6110-600000	Interest on REAP	\$841.47
0027-3-22-6110-242200	State Grants	\$161,618.01
0027-4-22-0210-810000	Donations	\$3,575.00
0027-4-22-6110-810000	Donations-Maint. & Operations	\$400.00
0027-4-22-6110-523100	Cabin Rentals	\$19,379.37
0027-4-22-6110-600000	Interest on Conservation Reserve	\$2,758.90
0027-4-22-6110-811000	Reimbursement From Private Source	\$16,025.00
0027-4-22-6110-848000	Conservation Reserve-Donations & Refunds	\$1,268.60
0027-4-22-6110-920000	Conservation Reserve-Sale of assets	\$2,018.25
	Total	\$284,289.61

Reserve Accounts	<u>Beginning Balance</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Balance</u>
REAP	\$114,523.50	\$12,585.47	\$4,000	\$0	\$123,108.97
Cons. Reserve	\$380,519.00	\$207,043.13	\$34,633.80	\$15,000.00	\$567,928.33

A.2 Camping Revenue FY23 **Total Camping Revenue: \$42,418.26** (42,009.69 FY22)*

Fontana Camping Revenue

FY19 Camping Revenue	\$20,696.00
FY20 Camping Revenue	\$22,087.00
FY21 Camping Revenue	\$34,246.00
FY22 Camping Revenue	\$29,056.69
FY23 Camping Revenue	\$27,163.95

Lime Creek and Outlying Area Camping Revenue

FY19 Camping Revenue	\$2,201.00
FY20 Camping Revenue	\$2,350.00
FY21 Camping Revenue	\$3,600.00
FY22 Camping Revenue	\$2,625.00
FY23 Camping Revenue	\$2,305.00

Jakway Camping Revenue

FY19 Camping Revenue	\$6,474.00
FY20 Camping Revenue	\$5,611.00
FY21 Camping Revenue	\$12,329.00
FY22 Camping Revenue	\$10,328.00
FY23 Camping Revenue	\$12,949.31

***Note:** FY23 reflects the second highest camping revenues in the Board’s history. Unfortunately, mistakes were found in recorded breakdown data for units, people, and electric vs primitive. However, the trends from last year likely follow into this year.

A.3 Expenditures and Balances - FY23

Financial Report FY23-Expenditures and Balances

Land Acquisition and Development

0001-22-0210-000-60000	Land	(\$5,000.00)
	Total budgeted	\$5,000.00
	Remaining Balance	\$0.00

Administrative

0001-22-6100-000-10004	Salary-Official & Dept Heads	\$120,406.51
0002-22-6100-000-11000	FICA-Director	8611.09
0002-22-6100-000-11100	IPERS-Director	11366.51
0002-22-6100-000-11300	Health Insurance-Director	\$34,287.00
0002-22-6100-000-11301	Life Insurance-Director	\$113.30
0002-22-6100-000-11302	Dental Insurance-Director	\$295.02
0002-22-6100-000-11303	Flex Fee-Director	\$84.00
0001-22-6100-000-26000	Office Supplies	\$899.82
0001-22-6100-000-26700	Educational Supplies	\$952.38
0001-22-6100-000-26702	Supplies- Foundation Grant	\$11,542.14
0001-22-6100-000-29400	Uniforms	\$1,741.88
0001-22-6100-000-40200	Printing & Advertising Services	\$503.87
0001-22-6100-000-41200	Postage & Mailing	\$293.60
0001-22-6100-000-41320	Mileage & Sub-Director	\$713.20
0001-22-6100-000-41321	Mileage & Sub-Board	\$1,877.63
0001-22-6100-000-41400	Telephone	\$4,437.44
0001-22-6100-000-41800	Internet Service	\$1,686.03
0001-22-6100-000-42220	School of Instruction-Director	\$1,671.35
0001-22-6100-000-42221	School of Instruction-Board	\$646.00
0001-22-6100-000-42500	Legal & Court Related	\$1,665.84
0001-22-6100-000-44400	Service Contract	\$94.59
0001-22-6100-000-45300	Leased Office Equipment	\$1,095.90
0002-22-6100-000-46200	Real Property Insurance	\$10,356.00
0001-22-6100-000-46300	Vehicles & Equipment Insurance	\$3,301.69
0001-22-6100-000-46400	Workmen's Compensation Ins	\$7,623.00
0001-22-6100-000-48000	Dues & Membership	\$2,270.00
0001-22-6100-000-63600	Office Equipment & Furniture	\$2,387.21

Total County Conservation - Administrative	\$230,923.00
Total Budgeted	\$262,607.00
Remaining Balance	\$31,684.00

Maintenance and Operations

0001-22-6110-000-10000	Salaries-Full Time	\$294,839.53
0001-22-6110-101-10101	Salaries-Part time	\$43,726.47
0002-22-6110-000-11000	FICA	\$24,582.51
0002-22-6110-000-11100	IPERS	\$28,715.47
0002-22-6110-000-11300	Health Insurance	\$109,703.00
0002-22-6110-000-11301	Life Insurance	\$365.65

0002-22-6110-000-11302	Dental Insurance	\$1,665.02
0002-22-6110-000-11303	Flex Fee	\$192.00
0001-22-6110-000-12400	Volunteer Program	\$29.97
0001-22-6110-000-20101	Animal Display	\$2,185.42
0001-22-6110-000-20200	Chemicals - Herbicides	\$1,083.50
0001-22-6110-000-20700	Plantings	\$755.61
0001-22-6110-000-21201	Road Rock-Fontana	\$1,787.03
0001-22-6110-000-21202	Road Rock-Jakway	\$416.64
0001-22-6110-000-21203	Road Rock-other parks	\$4,692.28
0001-22-6110-000-21400	Signs	\$1,209.40
0001-22-6110-000-21901	Constr Maint-Fontana	\$3,542.03
0001-22-6110-000-21902	Constr Maint-Jakway	\$1,014.97
0001-22-6110-000-21903	Const Maint-other parks	\$2,511.70
0001-22-6110-000-23000	Food & Provisions	\$520.91
0001-22-6110-000-23200	Janitorial Supplies	\$2,638.99
0001-22-6110-000-21904	Special Project	\$54,602.27
0001-22-6110-000-23300	Propane & Fuel Oil / Fontana	\$4,581.71
0001-22-6110-000-25000	Fuel	\$18,463.69
0001-22-6110-000-25200	Safety Items	\$2,053.77
0001-22-6110-000-29000	Minor Equipment & Hand Tools	\$1,017.10
0001-22-6110-000-40000	Official Publications/Legal	\$806.96
0001-22-6110-000-41101	Bldg Repair & Maint-RH Fontana	\$567.07
0001-22-6110-000-41102	Bldg Repair & Maint-RH Jakway	\$51.96
0001-22-6110-000-41300	Mileage & Sub-Employees	\$632.10
0001-22-6110-000-42200	School of Instruction-Employees	\$3,863.47
0001-22-6110-000-42801	Employee Hearing Tests	\$116.00
0001-22-6110-000-43101	Electricity-Fontana	\$15,512.34
0001-22-6110-000-43102	Electricity-Jakway	\$3,684.26
0001-22-6110-000-43103	Electricity-other parks	\$1,333.98
0001-22-6110-000-43201	Rural Water-Fontana	\$2,671.82
0001-22-6110-000-43202	Rural Water-Jakway	\$1,205.93
0001-22-6110-000-43300	Garbage	\$1,441.10
0001-22-6110-000-44000	Motor Vehicle Equip Maint	\$5,212.38
0001-22-6110-000-44101	Janitorial & Bldg Maint-Fontana	\$3,665.88
0001-22-6110-000-44102	Janitorial & Bldg Maint-Jakway	\$974.08
0001-22-6110-000-44103	Janitorial & Bldg Maint-All Parks	\$364.97
0001-22-6110-000-44300	Equipment Repair & Maint	\$4,747.48
0001-22-6110-000-44501	Plumbing Repair-Fontana	\$1,187.72
0001-22-6110-000-44502	Plumbing Repair-Jakway	\$0.00
0001-22-6110-000-44600	Repair & Maiant Radio Equip	\$0.00
0001-22-6110-000-48400	Refund	\$0.00
0001-22-6110-000-61200	Heating Equipment-Asset	\$0.00
0001-22-6110-000-63500	Motor Vehicles	\$12,815.00
0001-22-6110-000-63900	Equipment - Asset	\$15,700.00
	Total Maintenance and Operations	\$683,451.14
	Total Budgeted	\$686,003.00
	Remaining Balance	\$2,551.86
	Total Budget Remaining	
	Land & Acquisition & Development & FEMA	\$0.00
	County Conservation-Administrative	\$31,684.00
	Maintenance and Operations	\$2,551.86
	Year End Balance	\$34,235.86

Appendix B: FY23 Donations (Conservation Board and/or Friends of Fontana Park)

General Donations

Marybeth Peterson
Network for Good
William Porter
Frankie King
Dorothy Gray
Chuck, Jane, John & Azeala Watson
Yvonne Brown
Elaine Hughes
Les Grundemeyer
Hookanliner
Max & Charlotte Grover
Donna Tiller
Marybeth & Harlan Peterson
Duane & Barbara Blount
Linda Ridihalgh
David & Anabeth Voigts
Lynda Fiester
Marcella West
Gary Humes
Diane Alexander
Orlan Snyder Trust
Maynard Savings Bank
Millie Jessen
Charles & Rosemary Krebs
Dave & Sue Hansen
Maxine Losen
Rick & Julie Whittle
Bank Iowa
Verna Kerns
Tisbest Philanthropy
Harvy & Mary Davis

Memorials

Burton Cashner
Wanda-Williams Tiedt
Carol Ladeburg
Al McGraw

Animal Sponsorships

Danyce Zegarac-Jasper
Don & Lorelei Williams
Hazleton Commercial Club
Kimberly Dakovich
Hayden, JD & Jacob Schmitz
Jesup Lions' Club
Lance & Cindy Hemel
Moser Preschool & Daycare
Dean & Lynn Heins
Don & Lorelei Williams

Prairie Rapids Audubon
Keegan Slick
Mary Klotzbach
Nancy Arend
Penny Noah
Leah Brady
Parker Kress in memory of Luke Kress
Dave Minton & Diane Alexander
Independence Federated Garden Club
Cat Wise
Henry Robinson
Ben Korn
Brenya Brady
Luke & Anna Stephens
Moser Preschool & Daycare
John & Azalea
Ava Brady
Sue Johnson
Lauren Schlessner
Hazleton Commercial Club
Dunlap Motors
Margie Torgerson
Dean & Lola Baragary
Dr Anthony Leo
Alexander Korn
Bryce & Mariselle Jones Ava & Allie Shannon
Jim & Ann McMillan
In memory of Kevin Oldridge
Susan & Norman West
Wanda Bunting
In memory of Dorothy Ladeburg
J.K. Shannon-Jones
Nick Heine Family
Keith Hynek Family
In memory of Bob Cashner

Donated Items & Services

Ron Wolfe- Free
Room rental at Wolfey's
City Laundry- towels
Dana Kreklau- office supplies
Mary Jean Blaisdall- canoe



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

Thanks to anonymous donors who gave feed for display animals and reusable items for environmental education classes!

Appendix C: Environmental Education

Appendix C.1: Environmental Education Attendance Figures FY23

The following is a summary of the groups served through the EE program. The EE program is designed to meet a set of specific goals and objectives, described in the Buchanan County Conservation Board’s Long-term Plan. Figures for FY22 and FY21 are shown in parenthesis.

<u>School Student Programs (K-college)</u>			<u>Youth Programs (other than school groups)</u>				
Number of presentations:	703	(666)	(444)	Number of presentations:	76	(106)	(63)
Total attendance:	14,367	(13,352)	(7,796)	Total attendance:	1,567	(1,602)	(732)
Average group size:	20.4	(20.0)	(17.5)	Average group size:	20.6	(15.1)	(11.6)
<u>Teacher and Youth Leader Programs</u>			<u>Public Programs (advertised to public)</u>				
Number offered:	12	(10)	(5)	Number of presentations:	58	(64)	(91)
Total attendance:	135	(97)	(33)	Total attendance:	839	(1,032)	(1,166)
Average group size:	11.3	(9.7)	(6.6)	Average group size:	14.5	(16.1)	(12.8)
<u>Civic and Senior Programs</u>			<u>Total Attendance</u>				
Number of presentations:	24	(45)	(30)	Presentations:	873	(891)	(641)
Total attendance:	331	(1,272)	(699)	Total:	17,239	(17,355)	(10,497)
Average group size:	13.7	(28.3)	(23.3)	Avg. Group Size:	19.7	(19.5)	(16.4)

Outdoor programming: 53.4% of programs were primarily conducted outdoors.

Appendix C.2: Programming Support - FY23

Kara Vance, ISU Extension	<u>Teacher Externship Program</u>
David Voigts, Astronomer	Jessica Duprey
Darrin Siefken, Crawdaddy Outdoors	
Fontana Herb Society	<u>Upper Iowa Noyce Scholar Intern</u>
Katie Hund, Iowa DNR	Marlene Franzen
Faith Henricks, Benton CCB*	
Aaron Askelson, Benton CCB*	
Heather Gamm, Bremer CCB*	
Angie Auel, Bremer CCB*	
Wanda Havercamp	
Bill Wolfgram	
Chelsea Byram	



* County conservation board

Appendix C.3: Public Programs Offered - FY23 (multiple programs on different dates)

Animal Encounters (13) - A different Wildlife Display animal featured	Nature Kids (3) - featured wildlife	Whitewater Kayaking
Boundary Waters Trip	New Years hike (cancelled due to weather)	Yaks and brews - kayaking and then social time at brewery
Earth Day Hike (cancelled)	OWLS (6) - field trip topic for each program	
Fishing the Wapsi	Park Passport walks in county parks (6)	
Fossil Fun Day	Photo Contest Judging	<i>In addition to the 64 program topics listed above, 61 presentations were also advertised to the public, and are included in youth numbers shown above.</i>
Geocaching Egg Hunt	Pumpkin Plunge & Paddle	
Independence Public Library	Rhubarb Leaf Birdbath	
Light up the night	River Raiders	
Monarch Tagging (2)	Spring Foraging	
Moonlight Paddle	Tour by Trails: trail walks in county parks (9)	
Moonlight snowshoe	Trick or treat with the animals	
	Wapsi Through the Seasons (4)	

Appendix D: FY23 Volunteers

Volunteers were greatly impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Campground hosts, nature center receptionists, and other jobs entail close contact or indoor settings, which led many volunteers to stay home.

Campground Hosts

Tyler Thorton
Robert Armstrong
Jim Koper

Friends of Fontana Park

Lisa Ross-Thedens
Linda Ridihalgh
Wendy Van DeWalle
David Voigts
Mary Davis
Diane Johnson
Sondra Cabell
Michael Maas
Dan Cohen
Loren Hamilton
Mary Jean Blaisdell
Orlan Love
Ben Bonar
Bryce Bentley
Jacob Kurt

Gardens and Tree Planting

Mary and Harvey Davis
Edith Biddinger
Claudia Schweer
Bev Sage
Margaret Damge
Marybeth Jaggard
Jo Porter
Linda Ridihalgh
Jane Walters
Mary Kalb
Tish Frye
Kathy Kitner
Barb Roberson
Sue Kuennen
Laura Schlitter
Paula Bush
Barb Mulford
Amber Johnson
Elaine Johnson
Robin Van Raden

Park Maintenance

John Thedens

Fontana Park

Master Plan Committee

Clayton Ohrt
Brian Keierleber
Alex Davis
Danyce Jasper
Lance - Jasper
Wendy VandeWalle
Jim Klever
Jerry Franz
Darrin Hayzlett
Ronnie Wolfe
Chad Beatty

Wildlife Monitoring

David Voigts
Lon Janecek
John Thedens
Elaine Hughes
Faith Rulapaugh
Janette Beyer

Nature Center Receptionists (hours)

Jim Bond 25
Sally Bond 25
Joye Bowers 29
Margaret Damage 4
Ellen Gaffney 39
Elaine Hughes 86
Cheryl Hansen 4
Karla Kula 4
Duane Olsen 64
Patti Olmstead 18
Todd Rosonke 20
Shirley Rozendaal 4
Faith Rulapaugh 40
Frank Sauer 10
Pam Shurtz 185
David Voigts 50
Jane Watson 175



“Improving quality of life through programs of conservation and education.”

Appendix E: Conservation Board and Board of Supervisors

E.1 Board Members and terms from founding to present (*Denotes charter board member)

Ralph L. Kimball*, Independence	1956-58	Bob Booher, Independence	1983-91
C. L. (Mickey) Fox*, Jesup	1956-67	Nyle McMartin, Jesup	1992-01
L.O. Weston*, Lamont	1956-58	Phil Thyer, Independence	1993-00
“ “ “	1962-65	Diane Slaughter, Independence	1994-03
A.J. Murphy, Winthrop	1957-62	Loren Hamilton, Independence	1995-04
R.C. Stewart*, Lamont	1956-62	“ “	2013-23
H.G. Lincoln*, Rowley	1956-57	Robert Bainbridge, Independence	1996-99
Jack Gates, Independence	1958-62	Dr. Kenneth McDonough, Oelwein	2000-06
Robert Buckman, Aurora	1959-62	Roger Johnson, Independence	2001-12
“ “ “	1965-92	Richard Vogel, Jesup	2002-05
Lacey Gee, Brandon	1962-63	Gary Buresh, Independence	2004-12
Warren Pratt, Rowley	1962-63	Jim Klever, Independence	2005-14
Don Anderson, Independence	1962-81	Ranor Hoffman	2006-10
Kessler Clark, Brandon	1963-65	Patricia Fencl	2006-15
Miller McMillen, Quasqueton	1964-66	Karen Stephenson	2011-19
Raymond Finley, Brandon	1966-80	Don Shonka	2012-15
Max Grover, Rowley	1967-93	Ronnie Wolfe	2015-
J.M. Tounshendeaux, Jesup	1968-79	Andy Crump	2015-
John Miller, Jesup	1980-94	Anita Miller	2016-21
Carroll Conklin, Independence	1981-95	Mary Jean Blaisdell	2020-
Harry Brooks, Independence	1982-83	Maud Bentley	2021-
		Orlan Love	2023-

E.2 Board of Supervisors

The Conservation Board thrives on the support of the Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, and their understanding of the importance of local conservation programs. Members of the FY23 Board of Supervisors are shown below.

Buchanan County Board of Supervisors, FY23



*Gary Gissel
through 12/31/22*



*Don Shonka
through 12/31/22*



Clayton Ohrt



*Dawn Vogel
beginning 1/1/23*



*John Kurtz
beginning 1/1/23*

Appendix F: Map of Buchanan County Areas

1. Anderson Addition to Cutshall
2. Bearbower Sand Prairie
3. Blazingstar Prairie
4. Boies Bend
5. Bryantsburg Prairie
6. Buffalo Creek Area
7. Buffalo Creek Wildlife Area
8. Cortright Wildlife Area
9. Crumbacher Wildlife Area
10. Cutshall Area
11. Fairbank Fen
12. Fontana Park
13. Frogville Area
14. Guy Grover Timber and Tree Pl.
15. Ham Marsh
16. Hodges and North Wildlife Area
17. Hoover Area
18. Iron Bridge Woodland and Access
19. Jakway Forest
20. Koutny Pond/Hoffman Woods
21. Lime Creek Area
22. Mickey Fox Area
23. Newton Township Wildlife Area
24. Nibeck Preserve
25. Otter Creek Wildlife Area
26. Otter Creek Roadside Park
27. Patton Prairie
28. Pine Creek Area
29. Putty Root Preserve
30. Quigley-Slattery Heritage Prairie
31. Robert "Chic" McLaughlin Easement
32. Roberts Wildlife Area
33. Rowley Fen
34. Sand Creek Area
35. Schneider-Heinick-Rowe Area
36. Swartz Preserve
37. Three Elms Area
38. Troy Mills Access
39. Van Lanningham Area
40. Wapsi River Access
41. Wehner Woods

