

The mission of Story County Conservation is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Story County by wisely managing our natural resources, by providing recreational and leisure opportunities, and by educating citizens to be wise caretakers of our natural environment.



FY14 Annual Report

July 1, 2013-June 30, 2014

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Executive Summary

By Michael Cox, Director

The accomplishments described in this report would not have been possible without the partnership of many individuals and organizations--all dedicated to improving the lives of Story County residents and visitors and conserving our natural resources. Our natural resources are inextricably linked to our health and to the economic viability of our communities. Our programs focus on three primary needs of the county: 1) health of our natural resources, 2) recreational opportunities, and 3) encouraging knowledge of and involvement in nature.

Some of Story County Conservation's accomplishments in FY14 included:

- ***Began Prairie and Wetland Restoration of Roland Wildlife Area*** – This 80-acre parcel was acquired through support of Story County Pheasants Forever and the Iowa DNR.
- ***Completed Phase #1 of Dakins Lake Expansion*** – This much-needed project will provide many economic, recreational, conservation, and social benefits for the county and greater central Iowa region. Bids for the entire project exceeded available funds. The project was, therefore, divided into phases. Groundbreaking was held September 9, 2013. Phase #1, including construction of the new lake and all rough earthwork, was completed.
- ***Equipped Rangers with Mobile Reporting and Communications Terminals*** – These terminals allow rangers to access state databases, file reports, and be located by Story County Sheriff's dispatch staff at all times.
- ***Acquired FEMA Funding for 2013 Flood Damages*** – Heavy rains in May 2013 damaged several parks and trails including the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, Praeri Rail Trail, and sections of the Skunk River Greenbelt.
- ***Awarded a Watershed Improvement Review Board Grant and an Iowa Department of Natural Resources Grant for Phase #1 of the Hickory Grove Watershed Improvement Project*** – These grants will fund stream stabilization, cattle exclusion, grass buffers, a saturated buffer, and a grade stabilization.
- ***Expanded Volunteer Numbers and Opportunities*** – Volunteerism is at the heart of Story County Conservation. Volunteers "adopted" a majority of Story County Conservation areas, and volunteer projects included concrete pouring on the Touch-A-Life Trail, TEAM days, goat management, Halloween Hike and other environmental education programs, Operation ReLeaf, and Trek the Trails.
- ***Assisted in Creating a Vision for Story County Which Includes Protection of Our Natural Resources and Recreational Opportunities.***
- ***Seeded 42 Acres of Roadsides to Native Grasses and Forbs.***
- ***Conducted a Dynamic Series of Environmental Education Programs*** – 26,854 contacts were made through classroom presentations, public events, nature camps, and service learning opportunities.

Story County Conservation Board

2013 - Jim Pease (chair); Joyce Hornstein (vice-chair); Allen Weber (secretary);
Ted Tedesco; Craig Meyers (appointed May 2013); Wayne Clinton (ex-officio)

2014 – Joyce Hornstein (chair); Ted Tedesco (vice-chair); Craig Meyers (secretary);
Allen Weber, Jim Pease; Wayne Clinton (ex-officio)



**September 5, 2013 – Board members at Dakins Lake Groundbreaking.
Left to right: Craig Meyers, Jim Pease, Ted Tedesco, Al Weber, Joyce Hornstein, Wayne Clinton**

Story County Board of Supervisors

2013 – Rick Sanders (chair); Paul Toot, Wayne Clinton

2014 – Paul Toot (chair); Wayne Clinton, Rick Sanders

Staff

Administration

Director – Michael Cox
Financial Data Manager – Jolene Van Waus
Outreach Coordinator –Tiffany Cornelius (through October 2013), Sydney Algreen
Administrative Assistant –Melissa Johannes

Environmental Education

Environmental Education Coordinator – Jerry Keys
Naturalists –Heather Hucka, Emily Herring, Jessica Lancial
Summer Naturalists, 2013 – Annie Cope, Danielle Koester
Summer Naturalists, 2014 – Kelly Mitchell, Jacob Wiese

Special Projects

Special Projects Ranger – Carol Williams

Natural Resources

Natural Resource Specialist – Amy Yoakum
Natural Resource Specialist Aide, 2013 – Karen Wilke
Natural Resource Specialist Aide, 2014 – Tyler Renze

Skunk River Unit

Park Ranger – Ryan Wiemold
Conservation Technician II – Danny Simcox
Conservation Technicians – Joe Hill, Michael Eilderts (through August 2013), Jarett Cook
Park Aides, 2013 – Benjamin Marcus, Steven Strecker
Park Aides, 2014 – Matthew Monahan, Mark Runkel
Park Ranger Aide, 2013 – Kirk Mensen
Park Ranger Aide, 2014 – Joseph Allen

Indian Creek Unit

Park Ranger – Dustin Eighmy (through December 2013), Luke Feilmeier
Conservation Technicians – Russ DeWall, Beau Hoppe
Park Aides, 2013 –Lucas Dreckman, Joseph Ogden, Christian Pitt, Samantha Trail
Park Aides, 2014 – John Kirchner, Benjamin Marcus, Joel Schwarzkopf, Samantha Trail
Waterfront Aides, 2014 – Saryn Case, Dustin Curran, Zachary Jamison, Charles Robertson

Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management

Roadside Biologist – Joe Kooiker
Vegetation Management Specialist – Tyler Kelley
Vegetation Management Aides, 2013 – Travis Guy, Heather Stratton, James Evans
Vegetation Management Aides, 2014 – Tyler Bruck, James Evans, Heather Stratton

Environmental Education and Outreach

Programs and Events Overview

Story County Conservation conducted or sponsored 1,066 programs resulting in 26,854 contacts in FY14. These included 644 presentations (indoor programs), 414 outdoor experiences, and 8 service learning opportunities.

Staff also partnered with several organizations (Ames Area Amateur Astronomers, Central Iowa Prairie Network, and Story County Conservation *Partners*), to conduct 14 public programs or events, resulting in an additional 289 contacts. In addition, schools, hunter education classes, church groups, and other county conservation agencies borrowed environmental education supplies for their own programs.



Above: Pond Study at McFarland Park.
At right: Archery at Wild Women of the Woods.



Dial and Discover

Eight Dial and Discover stops, where park visitors use their own cell phones to learn about natural features or management practices specific to that park, were located at Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve, Hickory Grove Park, Robison Wildlife Acres, Petersen Park West, McFarland Park, Dakins Lake, and Jennett Heritage Area. Calls totaling 384 were received from 141 users in FY14.

Outreach

The quarterly *Prairie Horizons* newsletter, which provides articles about Story County Conservation as well as programs, events, and meetings, was distributed to area libraries, city halls, businesses and 1,924 households). Electronic versions were emailed to 472 households. Special event fliers were created and distributed to schools and local businesses to publicize specific programs.

More than 100 press releases were sent electronically to numerous media outlets. SCC news and photos were shared via Facebook, on the county's website, and on Twitter. At the end of FY14, SCC had 1,233 Facebook "fans," a 31 percent increase over the previous fiscal year.

Volunteers

Volunteers are very important to the mission of SCC. Hours logged in FY14 included the following tasks: serving on boards and committees (Story County Conservation Board, Story County Trails Advisory Committee, and Story County Conservation *Partners*), hosting the conservation center on Sunday afternoons, providing office/clerical assistance, cleaning up our parks in the Adopt-A-Park program, providing natural resource and land stewardship work, monitoring blue bird boxes, collecting prairie seed, and helping with environmental education programs. SCC also provided volunteer opportunities at scheduled events, including TEAM (Trail Enhancement and Management) workdays, seed harvests, Ames Area Amateur Astronomers programs, prairie walks, fishing tournaments, and *Partners* festivals.

Volunteer opportunities were advertised via SCC's website and Facebook page, *Prairie Horizons* newsletter, and the Volunteer Center of Story County website. Various student and adult organizations and clubs were matched to SCC volunteer tasks to complete service projects.

There were 991 volunteer occurrences in FY14 resulting in 3,245.5 donated hours.



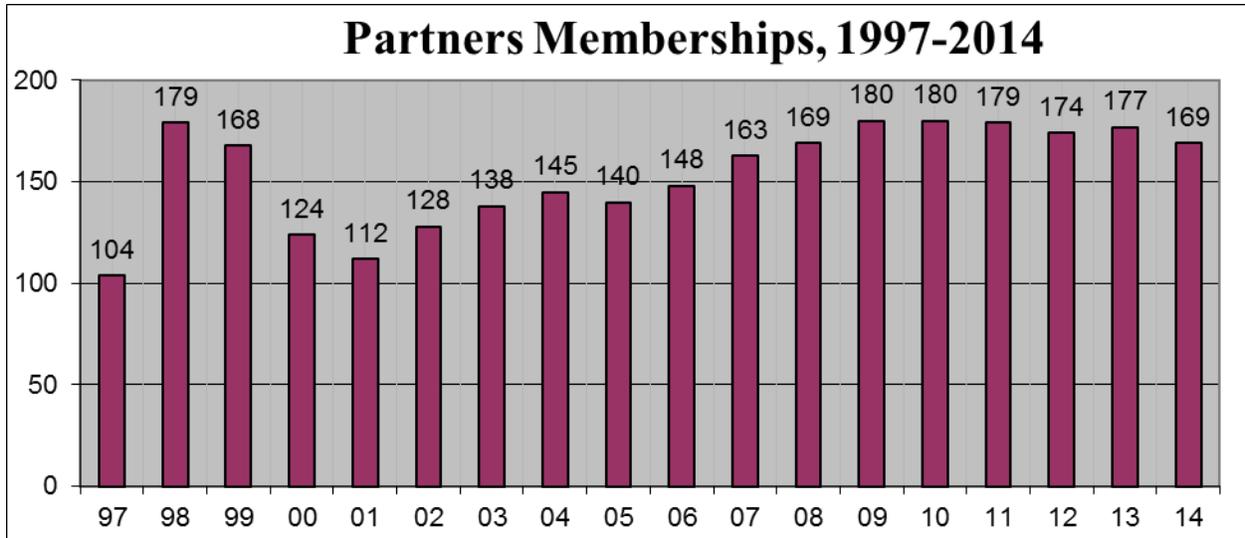
September 2013 - ISU Student Housing staff removed oriental bittersweet at Christiansen Forest Preserve.

VOLUNTEER HOURS		
FY14 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)		
Volunteer Category	Volunteer Occurrences	Volunteer Hours
Administration	155	384.75
Environmental Education	163	784.25
Special Projects	296	910.75
Integrated Roadside Veg. Mgmt.	29	55.50
Field	350	1,110.25
TOTALS	991	3,245.50

Partners

The Story County Conservation Partners group provides funding and volunteer support in many ways: spring and fall festivals at McFarland Park, a photo contest, and financial support for the *Prairie Horizons* newsletter and various conservation projects.

Partners averaged 169 memberships during FY14 (a total of \$17,705).



The 2013 Partners Fall Festival was held on October 6 with the theme “Down to Earth” and featured two bands—the River Monks and Dustin Smith and the Sunday Silos. The Central Iowa Mineral Society assisted with many displays. Unfortunately, it was cold and rainy, which kept our attendance down. In spite of the weather, approximately 125 people enjoyed the festival.

The 2014 spring festival, “Sounds of Spring,” welcomed the Flying Pig Fiddle and Banjo band. Participants were invited to make their own musical instruments and join in the fun.

Partners provided funding for several Story County Conservation projects during FY14: signs on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (\$518), a GPS unit for the environmental education program (\$1,940), start-up costs for OnCell (\$1,748), and funding for work at Robison Wildlife Acres by Conservation Corps Iowa (\$750).



May 2014 – An audience member at the spring festival plays a banjo with the Flying Pig Fiddle and Banjo Band.

Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management

Goals for the IRVM program in FY14 included increasing brush control, working with Secondary Roads staff to coordinate seeding in right-of-ways, and receiving \$30,000 in drainage district revenue.

Planting on SCC areas and private lands was well above average with over 36 acres seeded. These sites included Dakins Lake, Jennett Heritage Area, ISU seed herbivory research plot, Maxwell trailhead planting, Cambridge wetland mitigation site, and Nevada Kiwanis Park.

Roadsides (138.5 miles) were sprayed for brush. Two townships were covered using handgun sprayers to reduce overspray and provide better coverage on plants. Miscellaneous spraying operations included several acres of gravel parking lots and areas managed by Story County. Japanese Knotweed was sprayed along the Skunk River next to Carr Park, and crown vetch, Canada thistle, and common burdock were sprayed at several sites. Dozens of sites along roadways were cut back with chainsaws or mowed to reduce site distance hazards.

Fewer prescribed burns were conducted in FY14, with five sites (15.25 acres) in the right-of-way and one burn (3 acres) at the IRVM shop area. Equipment rentals continued to be slow due to lack of CRP enrollment. IRVM assisted 10 landowners seed 49 acres of cool season species, 25.6 acres of warm season species, and 5 acres of food plots.

Staff harvested prairie seed throughout September and October, which included 20 acres of new planting projects. An estimated 240 pounds of usable seed were collected.

IRVM FIELD OPERATIONS FY14 (July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2014)	
Acres of roadsides burned	15.25
Acres of roadsides seeded (native)	22
Acres of roadsides seeded (non-native)	2
Miles of roadsides sprayed (brush)	138.5
Acres of SCC and private lands seeded	36
Miles of roadsides sprayed (weeds)	290.5
Miles of drainage districts burned	.75
Miles of drainage districts seeded	2.58
Miles of drainage districts cleared	2
Equipment rentals	10
Weed complaints	5

In its second full year of drainage district maintenance, IRVM staff utilized clear cutting in Story County's open ditches. Two linear miles of trees along three open ditches (Boone-Story #1, Boone-Story #8, and Grant #5) were cleared, piled, and burned. Staff also burned select areas to control small, woody vegetation. A total of \$25,387.37 was received in drainage district services revenue. Finco Tree Service was awarded a contract to remove trees in Hamilton-Story #1.

Four Living Roadway Trust Fund grants were awarded to IRVM in FY14. Two pickups received updated LED lighting for operating in work zones, diverse seed mix for 40 acres was obtained, and a pesticide storage cabinet and tractor loader were purchased with these funds.

Two new pieces of equipment were added to IRVM's fleet: a 10-ft. Diamond batwing mower and a John Deere 5115M tractor.

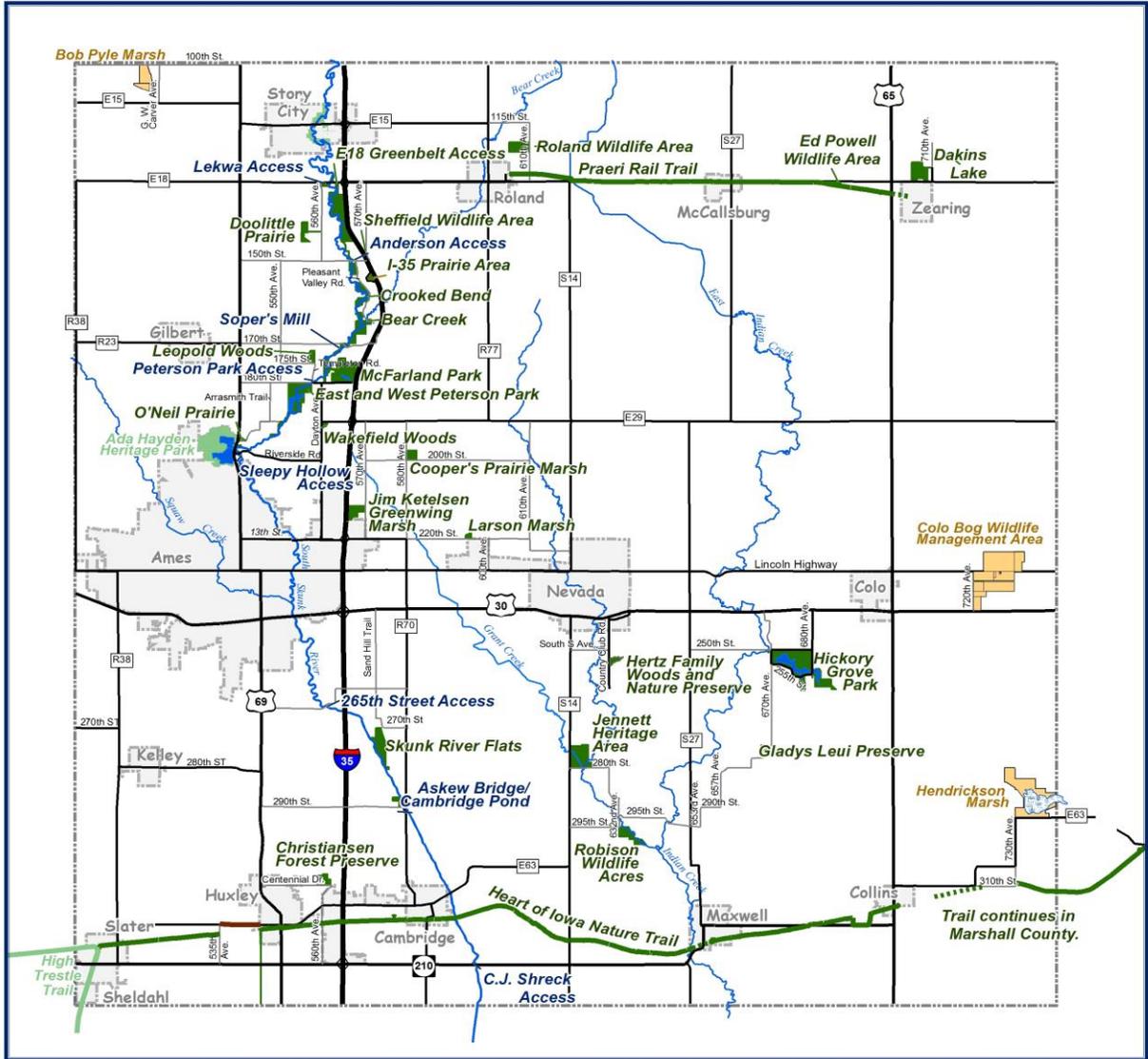
The roof on the pole barn at the shop area in rural Nevada was replaced following wind damage. Funds were budgeted for repairs prior to the June 2013 storms, but insurance proceeds and FEMA provided funds to replace the entire roof.

Summer Staff - 2014



May 2014 – Summer staff (left to right): Zach Jamison, Dustin Curran, Mark Runkel, Kelly Mitchell, Tyler Renze, Samantha Trail, Joel Schwarzkopf, Heather Stratton, Matthew Monahan, Joseph Allen, Jacob Wiese, Tyler Bruck, John Kirchner.

Story County Conservation Map



Legend

- County Managed
- State Managed
- City Owned
- Developed Trail
- Undeveloped Trail
- On Road

Parks in blue are Skunk River Water Trail Access Points

Parks, Natural Areas, and Trails

265th Street Access • 56091 265th Street, Ames • 1 acre

This small water trail access on the Skunk River south of Ames also offers stream fishing.

Major Project During the Year

Permits were acquired to install a park entrance sign, roads were graded, and rock was added.

Anderson Access • 56743 150th Street, Story City • 2 acres

This Skunk River water trail access offers stream fishing and woodland habitat.

Askew Bridge/Cambridge Pond – 57887 290th Street, Cambridge • 26.5 acres

This site provides a water trail access on the Skunk River and a four-acre pond (old borrow pit) surrounded by reconstructed prairie and vegetation.

Major Project During the Year

Park roads were graded, rock was added, and the wetland was interseeded with native vegetation.

Bear Creek Access • 16415 Pleasant Valley Road, Story City • 93 acres

This area provides access to the Skunk River Greenbelt trail. Hunting is allowed at this 87-acre woodland area.

Major Project During the Year

An ISU VEISHEA Service Day group (38 students) assisted the trails advisory committee in rerouting parts of the trail through the flood plain south to Soper's Mill and reworking a drainage area that had been blocked by downed trees.

C. J. Shreck Access • 59627 Highway 210, Cambridge • 3 acres

This water trail access is on the Skunk River off Hwy. 210 south of Ames.

Christiansen Forest Preserve • 55973 310th Street, Huxley • 45 acres

This wooded tract near Huxley was donated to the conservation board in 1985 by Charles Christiansen. The area is designated as a wildlife refuge.

Major Project During the Year

Trees were removed and the boundary fence repaired along the northwest portion of the property. Conservation Corps Iowa crews helped battle oriental bittersweet and remove and burn invasive species towards the restoration of prairie and savanna.

Colo Bog Wildlife Mgmt. Area • 22687 730th Avenue, Colo • 168 acres

The Colo Bog Wetland complex contains over 630 acres of native or restored prairie. This public hunting area is currently managed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, but Story County Conservation owns 168 acres, including the 25-acre original bog site that began the project.

Cooper's Prairie Marsh • 58249 200th Street, Nevada • 40 acres

The original 10 acres of Cooper's Prairie Marsh were acquired from Robert Cooper in 1976. The area supports a large population of upland and wetland wildlife and is a designated public hunting area. The agricultural land was restored to prairie.

Major Project During the Year

Signs were installed to mark new boundaries, and trees were removed. The 30-acre addition was mowed in order to help establish the native vegetation.

Crooked Bend • 15997 Pleasant Valley Road, Story City • 66 acres

This wooded tract is in the Skunk River Greenbelt. It is open to public hunting.

Dakins Lake • 12635 710th Avenue, Zearing • 103 acres

Dakins Lake is located just north of Zearing in northeast Story County. The area includes remnant and restored prairie, successional timber, and trails. During an expansion project that began in 2013, the park grew to 103 acres with 20 acres of open water in two lakes. The new park will offer camping, fishing, picnicking, a natural playscape, and hiking trails.

Major Project During the Year

The Dakins Lake Expansion project got underway with a groundbreaking ceremony on September 9, 2013. Participating in the ceremony was 100-year-old Zearing resident Bernadine Schaefer, whose family was instrumental in building the original lake and selling land to Story County for the expansion project. Shive-Hattery was chosen as the project engineer, and McAninch Corporation (Phase I) and Smith Seeding (Phase II) were the general contractors. The park was closed prior to construction with plans to re-open in spring 2015.

In addition to planning for and supervising construction, staff helped the Iowa DNR shock and remove fish in the old lake, placed fish structures in the larger lake (trees, concrete culverts, broken-up concrete, cement block, and pallets), and worked with Shive-Hattery to plan content for seven interpretive panels in Phase II. Staff planted winter wheat, prairie, and turf seed and seeded/hydroseeded steep slopes.

Volunteers from the Zearing area hosted a fish fry/silent auction event to raise money to purchase fish from a private hatchery. The lake was then stocked with 2,000 6-inch largemouth bass and 2,000 6-inch channel catfish in addition to 10,000 bluegill from the Iowa DNR.

June 6, 2014 - Channel catfish ready to be stocked at Dakins Lake.





September 9, 2013 - Construction begins at Dakins Lake!



Doolittle Prairie • 14249 560th Ave, Story City • 40 acres

The prairie is divided into two tracts. The northern Plover Tract is owned by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and is managed by Story County Conservation. The 24-acre Plover Tract has six natural potholes, and native prairie areas. It has been managed by the conservation board since 1980. The Matheason Tract is owned by Story County Conservation and was purchased with the help of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. This 16-acre tract has native prairie areas and three potholes, which provide valuable habitat for wetland wildlife. Doolittle Prairie is open to public hunting.

Major Project during the Year

Management burns were conducted, reed canary grass was mowed, and wild parsnip was removed.

E-18 Greenbelt Access • 56342 130th Street, Story City • 210 acres

Twenty-nine acres of prairie, seven acres of wetland, and hiking, equestrian, cross-country skiing, and mountain biking trails can be found at this area. Public hunting (forest and upland species) is allowed.

Major Project during the Year

A trail workday was held to clean debris and fallen trees and open up a foot trail.

Ed Powell Wildlife Area • 68328 130th Street, Zearing • 17 acres

The Ed Powell Wildlife Area offers public hunting adjoining the Praeri Rail Trail. The entire area is reconstructed prairie and is bisected by a small stream.

Gladys Leui Preserve • 27371 670th Avenue, Maxwell • 25 acres

The Gladys Leui Preserve is a wildlife refuge. The tract is mostly mature hardwood forest bisected by a small stream. Upland oak-hickory, maple-basswood, and some floodplain forest species are present. The area also offers a 6-acre reconstructed prairie. A small parking area is provided, but no trails are maintained.

Heart of Iowa Nature Trail • Slater to Collins • 32 miles

The Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (HOINT) is a cooperative effort of the Story and Marshall County Conservation Boards and an important part of the Central Iowa Trails System. A segment of the former Milwaukee Railroad from Slater to Melbourne forms this recreational trail corridor. This multi-purpose trail accommodates many users including bicyclists, pedestrians, equestrians, and snowmobilers—when conditions allow.

The Heart of Iowa Nature Trail meets the High Trestle Trail in Slater. Future plans include connecting the east end of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail to Melbourne, the Iowa 330 Trail, Marshall County Conservation's Grimes Farm Nature Farm, the Marshalltown Greenbelt Trail, the city of Marshalltown, and to the Chichaqua Valley Trail.

Major Project During the Year

Over one mile of brush was cleared along fence lines, and shoulders were mowed. Staff worked with contractors to plan and complete FEMA-funded repairs from 2013 flood events. Ditches were cleaned out, and culverts were cleaned out, repaired, and reset. Localized downpours in

2014 impacted some of that repair work. A highly-erodible ditch was armored with revetment, and washouts and fences were repaired.

Hertz Family Woods and Nature Preserve • 25401 Country Club Road, Nevada • 21.5 acres

This park was donated by the Hertz family in memory of Carl and Marjory Hertz and their son, C. Douglas Hertz. This diverse woodland includes 22 tree species and many wildflowers. It was preserved by the family with the intention of providing a site for public enjoyment. The park includes a one-mile trail. The land was donated to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, who in turn donated the park to Story County.

Major Projects During the Year

A Conservation Corps Iowa crew helped staff cut honeysuckle and remove a truck load of metal from several ravines. Staff also worked with an ISU class on a management plan for the park.

Hickory Grove Park • 67382 250th Street, Colo • 445 acres

Hickory Grove Park is the largest of the conservation board's parks. This multiple-use recreational area southwest of Colo contains a 98-acre lake stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, crappie, channel catfish, and grass carp.

Major Projects During the Year

Repairs were made to the open shelters, and Newsome Plumbing completed the waterline repair project at the park by replacing fittings, installing new hydrants and shutoffs, and making repairs to the campground shower house.

Over 250 tons of rock were hauled on the frozen lake and placed along 250 feet of the south shoreline. This was a shoreline stabilization project funded by the Iowa DNR. Ice conditions in the winter of 2013-14 made it possible to complete the work.

Old parking lot posts at the beach were removed and replaced with 6x6 treated posts. The entrance to the hiking trail at the East Game Area also received new 6x6 treated posts and a cable gate. Two new sets of speed bumps were placed on the main park road. The remaining pit toilet vault (near Oriole Lodge) was removed and filled.



February 2014 – Staff placing rock on the south shoreline of frozen Hickory Grove Lake.

The steps (deteriorating creosote timbers) leading down to the beach were removed. Over 270 tons of sand were delivered to the beach (2013 flood repairs). Two memorial benches honoring retired employee Paul Peterson and past board member Don Toms were placed near Plover Bay Shelter.

Hiking trails behind the ranger residence, in the old energy plantation area, and on the south side of the park were widened and cleared of unwanted vegetation with the forestry mower. Brush was cleared to connect the overflow parking area to the trails behind the ranger residence. Prairie areas were mowed to remove small brush. Conservation Corps Iowa spent 3.5 days helping staff remove honeysuckle from areas surrounding gullies.

Staff cleared brush and small trees from the island in an effort to reduce goose nest suitability. Regular hazing was performed throughout the spring and summer.

I-35 Prairie View Area • 15233 Interstate Hwy 35, Story City • 4 acres

This area is owned by the Iowa Department of Transportation. SCC manages the site's natural resources, including woodland, prairie, and a .25-mile hiking trail.

Major Projects During the Year

Staff and a Conservation Corps Iowa crew spent five days removing brush and trees as part of a Living Roadway Trust Fund grant project. Staff also cut cedar trees and transported them to Dakins Lake for fish structure.



May 2014 - CCI crew clearing brush at I-35 Prairie View Area.

Jennett Heritage Area • 62321 280th Street, Nevada • 171 acres

This area was purchased in March 2011. The family of Raymond and Edythe Jennett, Hertz Farm Management, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation were instrumental in its acquisition.

Story County's largest wildlife area, Jennett Heritage Area contains native prairie remnant, two ponds, two creeks, wetlands, and woodlands. The botanical survey revealed 277 prairie species such as silver-leafed scurf pea, smooth blue aster and marble seed. The remnant prairie rests on steep slopes, allowing for a greater variety of prairie plants to thrive, and the area's combination of landscapes allows for a wide range of bird species, including wild turkey and the increasingly-rare bobwhite quail.

Major Project During the Year

Conservation Corps Iowa and staff removed honeysuckle and burned brush piles. Staff mowed prairie for weed control, mapped locations of Japanese Hops, and planted an additional 11 acres of prairie. Staff met with Fox Engineering, IDNR fisheries staff, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife staff

regarding an oxbow restoration project. Story County Pheasants Forever removed old fences from the park.

Jim Ketelsen Greenwing Marsh • 21163 570th Avenue, Ames • 68 acres

Ketelsen Marsh was acquired by the conservation board in 1987. It contains a native prairie pothole and a restored wetland, restored and native prairie, pasture grasses, and a shelterbelt. The six-acre sedge meadow located in the southwest corner of the area is an easement with Jerry Johnson. The marsh is a memorial to honor the late Jim Ketelsen, an avid outdoorsperson and supporter of the Ducks Unlimited Greenwing program. The acquisition was made possible through the partnership of several agencies: Ames Chapter of the Izaak Walton League, Anderson Lake Sportsmen, Inc., Big Bluestem Audubon Society, friends and family of Jim Ketelsen, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Habitat Stamp Grant program, Dr. Gerald Johnson, Story County Pheasants Forever, the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, and Wetlands for Iowa Program.

Major Project During the Year

Story County Pheasants Forever hosted a hunt for disabled veterans in September. Staff mowed boundary lines and a parking area and provided amenities and support for the event.

Larson Marsh • 59537 220th Street, Nevada • 12 acres

Larson Marsh was acquired from Maurice and Ruth Larson in 1981. Prior to acquisition, the area was farmed. However, half of the site would regularly flood in the spring due to the presence of a large pothole. Assistance from the state's wildlife habitat stamp fund grant program allowed the conservation board to make wildlife habitat improvements on the area. The large pothole was deepened, and two islands were created within the pothole. Native prairie grasses and forbs were planted on the islands and other areas around the pothole. The marsh is a public hunting area.

Lekwa Access • 56156 130th Street, Story City • 10 acres

This water trail access on the Skunk River south of Story City has a small wetland area and 9 acres of woodland. The Lekwa family granted a lease for public river access in 1995.

Leopold Woods • 55821 175th Street, Ames • 20 acres

Leopold Woods is a wildlife refuge. It was held in a conservation easement until owner Don Norton's death. The county acquired it outright in February 2010. The tract includes small areas of cool season and prairie grassland but is mostly planted trees approximately 20 years old. A small parking area is provided, but no other improvements are allowed on the area due to deed restrictions.

McFarland Park • 56461 180th Street, Ames • 200 acres

McFarland Park is located northeast of Ames and offers a variety of ecotypes including tallgrass prairie, woodland, and stream habitats. The administrative and environmental education staff are housed at this building, and the multipurpose room is available for rent.

Major Project During the Year

Brush was removed from the north prairie in preparation of haying, trails were cleared of brush, and stumps were ground at various locations. Parking lot lines were painted by staff and an

Eagle Scout volunteer, and staff assisted IDNR staff in shocking fish and relocating more than 50 bass from Dakins Lake to McFarland Lake.

Staff and volunteers prepped and poured approximately 1,200 feet of concrete on the Touch-A-Life Trail. This section connected the existing trail and foot bridge poured in 1976. The Ames Town and Country Kiwanis Club has been involved in the project since its inception and contributed immensely to its success with funding and volunteer support.



June 2014 – Completed extension to McFarland Park’s Touch-A-Life Trail.

O’Neil Prairie · .1 mile east of Hwy. 69 on Arrasmith Trail · 5 acres

This area contains 4.7 acres of prairie and .3 acres of wetland. It was acquired through flood buy-outs in 1998.

Major Project During the Year

Volunteers removed unwanted vegetation from the prairie.

Peterson Park · 203 acres

East: 55756 180th Street, Ames; West: 55310 180th Street, Ames

Peterson Park (approximately 31 acres of water) is situated along the Skunk River Greenbelt. Park entrances are located on both the east and west sides of the Skunk River. Activities and scenic areas include: swimming beach (West Peterson), fishing, picnicking, bird watching, boating, trails, canoe access, and hunting.

Major Project During the Year

Staff cleared brush and removed buckthorn at East Peterson and installed hitching posts, boundary signs, and a grill by the new picnic area at West Peterson.

Staff worked with two ISU student groups to complete construction of a picnic shelter and docks at West Peterson Park.



July 2013 – Students from an ISU Design class planned and built this picnic shelter at Peterson Park.

Praeri Rail Trail • Roland to Zearing • 10.5 miles

This section of abandoned railway was acquired by the county in 1978, and development began in the spring of 1979. The spelling of the word "Praeri" is in recognition of the area's strong Norwegian heritage. Many native prairie remnants can be seen adjacent to the trail. Sections of the trail at Roland and McCallsburg have a limestone surface; the remainder of the trail is mowed grass and may be difficult for all but off-road (mountain) bikes.

Major Project During the Year

Shoulders were mowed along the trail. Work to cut back trails was started but was unfinished due to flooding.

Robison Wildlife Acres • 29490 632nd Avenue, Nevada • 78 acres

Robison Wildlife Acres (RWA) is a unique area in south-central Story County. The initial 58 acres were donated to the conservation board by former board member Clay Robison. The remaining 20 acres were purchased from the Whitaker estate. West Indian Creek forms most of

the eastern boundary of the park, and nature trails wind through grassland and woodland. The area is a favorite spot for spring wildflower walks. The park is a wildlife refuge.

Major Project During the Year

A CCI crew helped staff remove honeysuckle. Prairie crabapple and hawthorn bushes were cleared in preparation of erecting an enclosure for the goat herd returning to control invasive species. Goats were checked and watered by staff on a regular basis. An ISU student group wrote and presented a prospective management plan for the park.

Roland Wildlife Area • 12007 610th Avenue, Roland • 80 acres

This parcel was purchased in December 2012 with financial support from Story County Pheasants Forever and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. The 80-acre area offers prairie and wetland habitats and upland and wetland hunting.

Major Project During the Year

Boundary signs and public hunting signs were placed at the new area. Staff worked with representatives from the NRCS, Ducks Unlimited, and adjoining landowners to plan tiling, seeding, and wetland installation.

Sheffield Wildlife Area • .25 N of 150th Street on 570th Avenue, Story City • 3 acres

This is a small public hunting area located along I-35 which offers upland hunting.

Skunk River Flats • 26995 Sand Hill Trail, Ames • 117 acres

Skunk River Flats, a public hunting area, is owned by the Iowa DNR but managed by Story County Conservation. It was purchased through the Natural Resource Conservation Services wetlands program. A small area of floodplain forest is present near the Skunk River, but the area is mostly reconstructed prairie with a small restored wetland. A parking area is provided, and a mowed perimeter path is present.

Major Projects During the Year

Staff removed brush prior to haying. Park roads were graded, and rock was added.

Sleepy Hollow • 646 West Riverside Road, Ames • 13 acres

This park serves as a water trail access on the Skunk River.

Soper's Mill • 56364 170th Street, Ames • 16 acres

Soper's Mill is a historic site on the Skunk River. Recreational opportunities include canoeing, kayaking, stream fishing, hiking, and forest/upland hunting.

Major Project During the Year

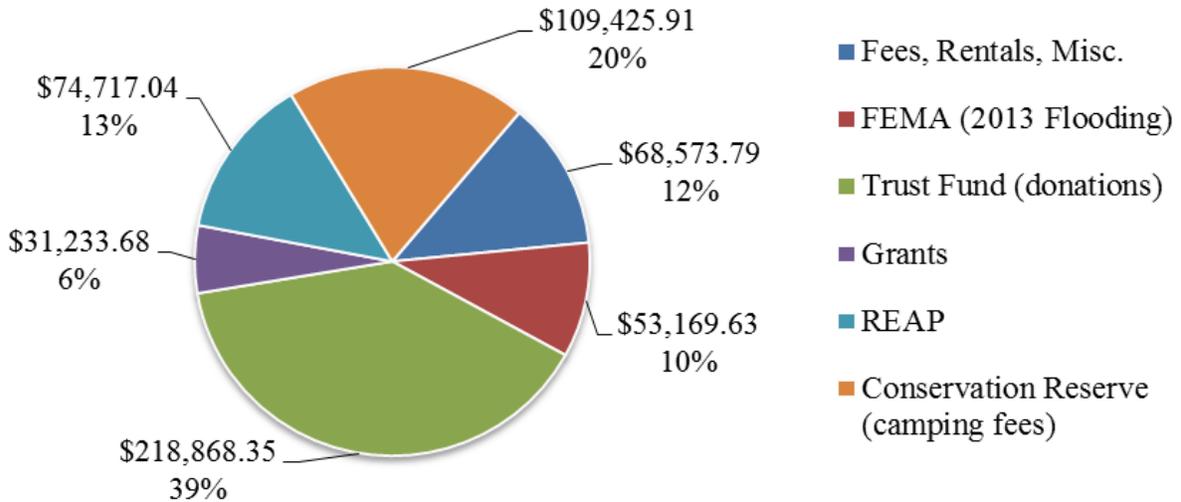
Parts of the trail through the flood plain south to Soper's Mill were re-routed.

Wakefield Woods • 2480 East 190th Street, Ames • 10 acres

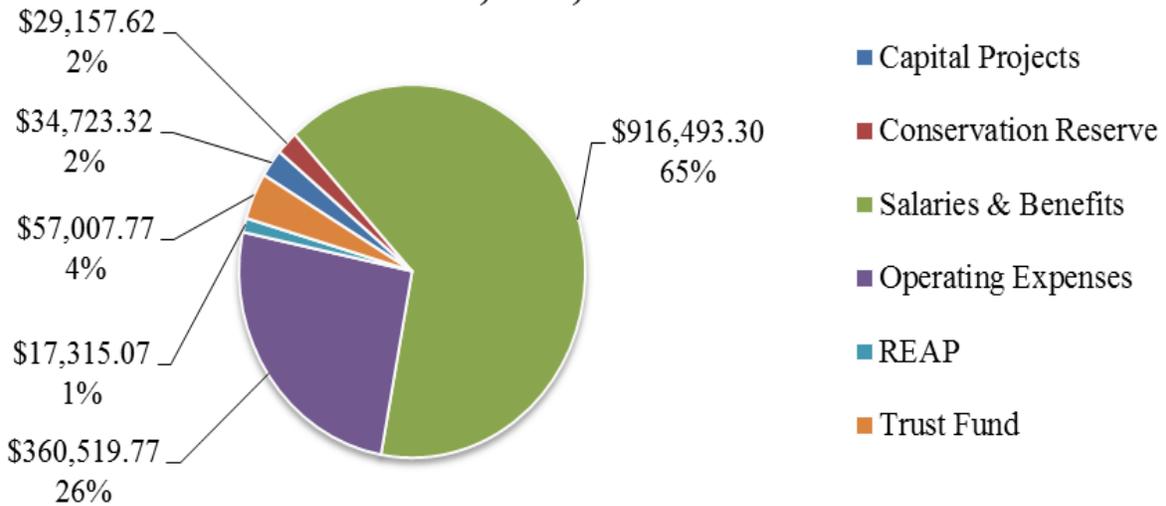
This oak-hickory woodland was donated to the conservation board in 1988 by John and Anne Wakefield. A prairie savanna planting was completed on the area in 1994.

Financial Reports

Conservation Revenue by Category \$555,988.40



Conservation Expenses by Category \$1,415,216.85



FRIENDS OF CONSERVATION TRUST FUND SUMMARY
FISCAL YEAR 2014 (JULY 1, 2013 - JUNE 30, 2014)

	Revenue	Expenditures	Balance
Balance carried forward from FY13			\$345,939.89
Donations:			
- designated for Wild Women of the Woods program	\$848.00		
- designated for parks, natural areas, and trails	\$40.00		
- designated for invasive species control at Dakins Lake	\$1,170.00		
- designated for equipment repairs	\$100.00		
- designated for bird seed	\$238.29		
- designated for Dakins Lake Expansion project	\$420.00		
- Charles Presley memorials	\$20.00		
- Gary Swartz memorials	\$100.00		
Gladys Leui Estate distributions	\$127,009.00		
Fishing Tournament fees	\$1,810.00		
Heart of Iowa Nature Trail grant reimbursements	\$67,464.40		
Partners membership fees & donations	\$17,741.00		
Partners festivals donations	\$198.39		
United Way Day of Caring grant	\$50.00		
Miscellaneous donations	\$192.00		
Interest earned on account	\$1,467.27		
Canoe class for summer naturalists		\$50.00	
Coyote rug for display at conservation center		\$750.00	
13 8-foot tables for conservation center		\$3,238.12	
Digital projector replacement		\$659.38	
Park bench at Hickory Grove in memory of Don Toms		\$1,195.00	
Tools for trail workdays		\$216.32	
Building materials for Skunk River bridge project		\$203.06	
Building materials for Skunk River Water Trail kiosks		\$1,122.61	
Retainage paid - Heart of Iowa Nature Trail construction		\$30,000.00	
Supplies, food, and prizes for fishing tournaments		\$1,786.85	
Gloves for volunteers (United Way Day of Caring grant)		\$47.84	
Repairs to combines		\$60.00	
Bird seed for McFarland Park feeders		\$173.08	
Partners expenses and projects:			
- Prairie Horizons newsletter, supplies, misc. expenses		\$8,535.98	
- Spring and fall festivals (food and supplies)		\$4,199.51	
- Wild Women of the Woods program supplies		\$951.48	
- Trailer and spray rig for natural resources specialist		\$1,966.00	
- Public program & nature camp food and supplies		\$1,852.54	
YEAR-END TOTALS	\$218,868.35	\$57,007.77	\$507,800.47

STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD REAP ACCOUNT SUMMARY
ENDING BALANCE - 6/30/14 = \$110,437.56

REVENUE

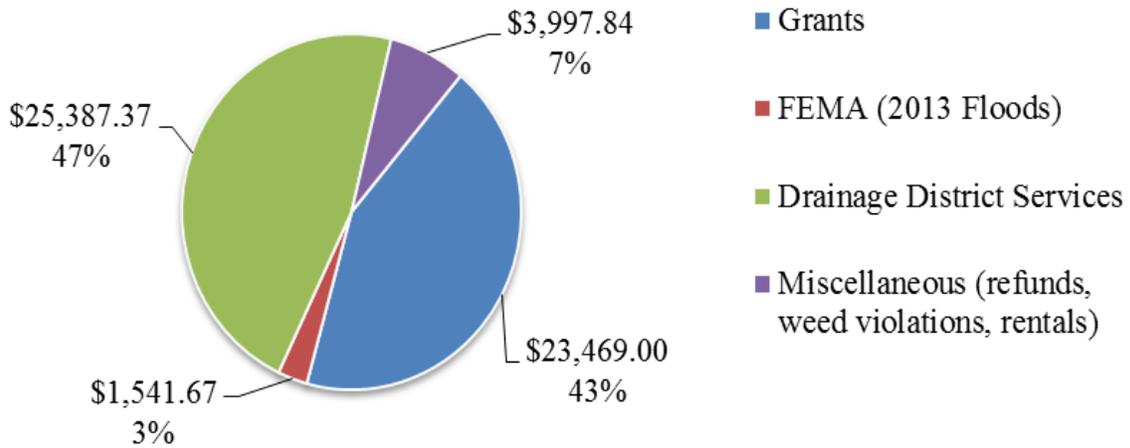
Fiscal Year	Per County & Per Capita Distributions	Interest Earned on REAP account	Grants and Reimbursements	Total FY Revenue
FY90-FY04*	\$336,902.00	\$24,129.52	\$33,437.10	\$394,715.46
FY05	\$25,702.00	\$583.57	\$35,942.40	\$62,227.97
FY06	\$12,685.00	\$1,242.92	\$3,993.60	\$17,921.52
FY07	\$32,180.00	\$2,952.07	\$0.00	\$35,132.07
FY08	\$43,395.00	\$3,133.80	\$0.00	\$46,528.80
FY09	\$41,754.00	\$1,678.46	\$0.00	\$43,432.46
FY10	\$40,604.00	\$1,084.15	\$500.00	\$42,188.15
FY11	\$35,054.00	\$397.72	\$0.00	\$35,451.72
FY12	\$27,714.00	\$240.27	\$0.00	\$27,954.27
FY13	\$25,848.00	\$249.30	\$0.00	\$26,097.30
FY14	\$38,236.00	\$390.79	\$36,090.25	\$74,717.04
Totals	\$660,074.00	\$36,082.57	\$109,963.35	\$806,366.76

*REAP was not funded by the Iowa Legislature in 2003

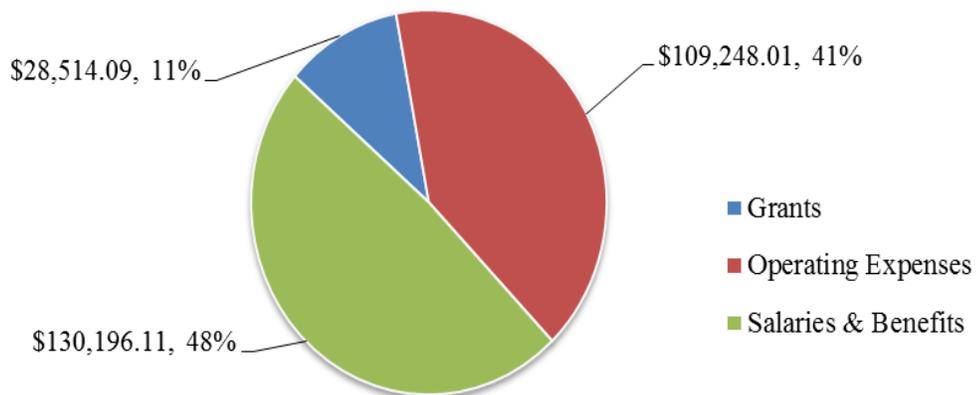
EXPENDITURES

Fiscal Year	Land Acquisition & Acq. Expenditures	Facility Development & Renovation	Equipment, Supplies, Staff	Total FY Expenditures
FY90-FY04	\$53,954.78	\$291,526.28	\$23,889.26	\$369,370.32
FY05	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$29,930.06	\$31,130.06
FY06	\$2,640.00	\$0.00	\$9,796.35	\$12,436.35
FY07	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
FY08	\$0.00	\$20,862.75	\$0.00	\$20,862.75
FY09	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
FY10	\$0.00	\$111,660.75	\$500.00	\$112,160.75
FY11	\$0.00	\$87,684.78	\$0.00	\$87,684.78
FY12	\$0.00	\$3,469.12	\$0.00	\$3,469.12
FY13	\$39,500.00	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$40,500.00
FY14	\$0.00	\$17,315.07	\$0.00	\$17,315.07
Totals	\$98,294.78	\$533,518.75	\$64,115.67	\$695,929.20

IRVM Revenue - \$54,395.88



IRVM Expenditures - \$267,958.21



Grants Awarded*

Grant	Project	Amount
Iowa Dept. of Transportation		
- Living Roadway Trust Fund Grant	I-35 Scenic Prairie View Overlook	\$ 5,850
- Living Roadway Trust Fund Grant	Work Zone Lighting	\$ 2,500
- Living Roadway Trust Fund Grant	Standard Loader for 100 hp Tractor	\$ 7,306
- Living Roadway Trust Fund Grant	Pesticide Storage Safety Cabinet	\$ 2,252
- Living Roadway Trust Fund Grant	Educational Sign for IRVM Program	\$ 3,000
Iowa Dept. of Natural Resources	Stabilization of Eroding Shoreline at Hickory Grove Park	\$ 18,500
Iowa DNR--Land and Water Conservation Fund Program	Dakins Lake Expansion	\$ 175,000
Iowa Native Plant Society	Dakins Lake Restoration	\$ 1,170
Leopold Ctr. for Sustainable Agriculture	Local Food Cycle	\$ 500
Trees Forever—Iowa's Living Roadways	Dakins Lake	\$ 15,847
Iowa Department of Agriculture	Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Improvement Project	\$ 223,095
TOTAL		\$455,020

*Grants awarded in FY14. Expenditures and reimbursements may occur in other fiscal years.

Board and Staff Development

Board members and staff attended the following educational programs during FY14:

A.L.I.C.E. Training
 American Heart Association CPR and First Aid Certification
 Bike Trail Tourism Conference
 County Conservation Peace Officers Association - Fall Workshop
 Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards - Fall Conference
 Iowa Association of County Conservation Board Employees Workshop (Winterfest)
 Iowa Association of Naturalists - Spring Workshop
 Iowa Prairie Conference
 Iowa Roadside Conference
 Iowa Trails Summit
 Iowa State Association of Counties - Fall School/County Conservation Directors Association
 Iowa Weed Commissioners Association – Invasive Species Conference
 Midwest Environmental Education Conference
 National Association of Interpreters – Region V Workshop
 Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage – ABC's of Lesson Planning Workshop
 Social Media Workshop

Board Meeting Attendance

(P = present; A = absent)

DATE	Tedesco Term Exp. 12/31/13	Hornstein Term Exp. 12/31/14	Pease Term Exp. 12/31/15	Weber Term Exp. 12/31/16	Meyers Term Exp. 12/31/17	Clinton (EO) Term Exp. 12/31/16
7/15/13	P	P	P	P	P	P
7/29/13	P	A	P	A	P	A
8/19/13	P	P	P	A	P	P
9/9/13	P	P	P	P	P	P
10/14/13	P	P	P	P	P	P
11/18/13	A	P	P	P	P	P
12/2/13	A	P	P	P	P	A
12/10/13	P	P	P	P	P	A
	Tedesco Term Exp. 12/31/18	Hornstein Term Exp. 12/31/14	Pease Term Exp. 12/31/15	Weber Term Exp. 12/31/16	Meyers Term Exp. 12/31/17	Clinton (EO) Term Exp. 12/31/16
1/20/14	A	P	P	A	P	A
2/10/14	A	P	P	P	P	P
3/11/14	P	P	A	P	P	P
4/14/14	P	P	P	P	P	P
5/12/14	A	P	P	P	P	A
6/10/14	A	P	P	A	P	P
6/27/14	A	P via phone	P	P	P	P

Board Meeting Highlights

July 15, 2013

The board approved a request from Story County Pheasants Forever to hold a disabled veterans pheasant hunt at Ketelsen Greenwing Marsh on September 14, 2013, an amended conservation easement with Steven and Linda Stoll, a first reading of proposed changes to Story County Conservation Law Enforcement Handbook, and a Living Roadway Trust Fund grant agreement for the purchase of a batwing mower for IRVM. Bids for the Dakins Lake Expansion project were reviewed. Bids exceeded the engineer's opinion, and the board moved to recommend to the Story County Board of Supervisors that all bids be rejected.

Director Cox reported that Story County has been awarded public assistance for early summer flooding. He added that conservation areas received more damage than flood events in 2010.

July 29, 2013

Plans for Phase 1 of the re-designed Dakins Lake Expansion project were reviewed. Phase I will include construction of the lake, rough grading for the whole project, and construction of wetlands. The board voted to recommend to the Story County Board of Supervisors to authorize solicitation of bids for Phase 1 of the Dakins Lake Expansion project.

The board also approved submission of a REAP grant application for Dakins Lake and the budgeted purchase of a tractor for IRVM.

In updates, Director Cox reported that a letter of intent for a large grant was submitted to the Story County Community Foundation for playground equipment at Dakins Lake. Cox also briefed the board on engineering contract costs for the Dakins Lake Expansion project.

August 19, 2013

The board approved a second reading of proposed changes to the Story County Conservation Law Enforcement Handbook. Bids were reviewed for the Dakins Lake Expansion project, and the board voted to recommend to the board of supervisors that the project be awarded to the McAninch Corporation. The board also voted to recommend that the board of supervisors approve an agreement with Shive-Hattery for construction supervision of the project.

Possible dates for a groundbreaking ceremony for the Dakins Lake Expansion project were discussed. A gold shovel will be presented to Bernadine Shaefer at her 100th birthday party on August 25. Director Cox reported that plans for a disabled veterans fishing event at Hickory Grove (co-sponsored with the Ames Anglers and ISU Bass Fishing Club) on October 19 are progressing. Board meeting dates for the remainder of 2013 were confirmed. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is working with the Brotherson family and Pleasant Valley Church regarding the sale of property north of McFarland Park on which SCCB holds an easement.

Tedesco reported on his efforts in working with Congressman King's office regarding property held by the Army Corps of Engineers between Ames and Story City.

September 9, 2013

Cox shared photos from today's groundbreaking at Dakins Lake and conveyed his thanks to the entire conservation board and board of supervisors for their presence. About 75 people braved the hot weather to attend, and the Dakins family was pleased with the event.

The board approved five Living Roadway Trust Fund agreements and recommended to the Story County Board of Supervisors that they approve these agreements and adopt resolution #14-18. The grants included four projects for IRVM: work zone lighting (\$2,500), standard loader for 100 hp tractor (\$7,306), pesticide storage cabinet (\$2,252), and educational signs for Story County's IRVM program (\$3,000) and one Conservation project: Scenic Prairie View Overlook restoration (\$5,850).

The board voted to sign a letter supporting several federal grant programs, including State and Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, North American Wetlands Conservation Fund, Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Fund, Forest Legacy Program, and Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Park Ranger Dustin Eighmy gave an update on the Indian Creek Unit's activities over the past year.

Director Cox has met with FEMA coordinators for site reviews of flood repair projects. The IRVM pole barn roof has been repaired.

Work on the Strum parcel (wetland building, tiling, and seeding) will be done this fall.

Cox reported that he is part of a task force assigned to implement Story County's Capital Improvement Plan. Departments will submit potential projects for review by the task force and the board of supervisors for inclusion and prioritization in the budget. Cox added that the Hickory Grove sewer system is a priority as well as an extension of the Praeri Rail Trail through Zearing to Dakins Lake.

October 14, 2013

The board approved a capital improvement and major maintenance plan. The board also approved spending up to \$30,000 in REAP funds on owner-provided items for the Dakins Lake Expansion project and recommended approval of two change orders for the Dakins Lake project for approval by the Story County Board of Supervisors.

Environmental Education Coordinator Jerry Keys gave an update on the environmental program, highlighting programs and activities over the past year.

Director Cox reported on the following: the Indian Creek Greenbelt Trail Extension south of Nevada has been completed; 69 applications were received for the conservation technician at McFarland Park, waterlines at Hickory Grove are being replaced; the City of Ames will be discussing removal of the low head dam north of 13th Street; and a reception for legislators is planned for November 1.

November 18, 2013

The board approved the following: expenditure of unbudgeted funds to purchase and install a furnace and heat pump at the conservation center; change in status of the administrative assistant position; submission of a Living Roadway Trust Fund grant for prairie and tree plantings at Dakins Lake; Resolution 2013-05 endorsing a grant application to the CIRTPA Transportation Alternatives Program for hard surfacing on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail; and a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in support of wetland funding,. The board also voted to recommend to the board of supervisors that they approve Change Order #3 for Phase 1 of the Dakins Lake Expansion project and to solicit bids for Phase 2 of the project.

FY15 budget proposals were reviewed, and explanations were provided by the director.

Cox gave updates on the Dakins Lake Expansion project, the legislators reception, the Brotherson easement, and REAP meeting

December 2, 2013

The board reviewed and approved FY15 Conservation and IRVM budget proposals and approved dates for conservation board meetings in 2014.

Director Cox gave updates on funding for the Hickory Grove Watershed project, bids for Phase 2 of the Dakins Lake Expansion project, and a request for the termination of a lease between Mark Hall and Story County.

December 10, 2013

The board met to reconsider the FY15 Conservation budget proposal. The board voted to approve the revised budget proposal.

Park Ranger Dustin Eighmy announced his resignation. The board thanked Eighmy for his service to Story County Conservation commenting on his great attitude, enthusiasm, and commitment.

January 20, 2014

The board elected officers for 2014: Joyce Hornstein, chair; Ted Tedesco, vice-chair; and Craig Meyers, secretary. Sydney Algreen, new outreach coordinator, was introduced and welcomed.

The board reviewed a policy for Iowa/NCIC Systems Operations, which will allow SCC rangers to use mobile data terminals and access the state's crime information system. The board voted to approve this addition to Story County Conservation's Law Enforcement Policy and to waive a second reading of the policy.

The board considered bids for the Dakins Lake Expansion project, Phase 2, and voted to recommend to the Story County Board of Supervisors that they approve the bid award and all the alternates to Smith Seeding, Inc. The board also voted to recommend that the board of supervisors approve Amendment #3 of the Professional Services Agreement with Shive-Hattery for the project.

An agreement to provide preliminary engineering needed to submit a Water Improvement Review Board grant was reviewed. The board approved a professional services agreement for Hickory Grove Watershed Engineering Services to Fox Engineering.

Roadside Biologist Joe Kooiker gave a presentation on the IRVM program's achievements and activities over the past year.

Director Cox announced that a CIRTPA grant proposal to assist in paving a portion of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail in Huxley was recommended for funding. Cox has invited Steve Carter, director of the ISU Research Park, to give a presentation at the March board meeting regarding a potential partnership with SCC.

Hornstein and Pease will follow up on the completion of the director's annual evaluation.

February 10, 2014

Steve Carter gave an overview of the ISU Research Park, including its 25-year history and the tenants that are providing business success and contributing to the growth of the research park. Justin Platts, landscape architect, shared the research park's approach to design an environment to provide wellness, collaboration, and healthy, green spaces for employees and shared highlights of the master plan. Story County Supervisor Rick Sanders added that he sees Story County's involvement as an opportunity for Story County Conservation to reach out to new audiences.

The board approved two resolutions: #2014-01 prohibiting importation of firewood from all locations outside out Story County to prevent the spread of the emerald ash borer, and #2014-02 committing support to the Hickory Grove Lake Watershed Management Action Plan and the administration of grant funds.

Park Ranger Ryan Wiemold presented a yearly update on the Skunk River Unit.

Director Cox stated that the Indian Creek Unit park ranger position selection is still in process. Cox also reported that he is working with the county attorney regarding the resolution of endowment funds currently held with the Story County Community Foundation. Guest Mike Meetz reported that the Story County Outdoor Alliance has received 501C status.

March 11, 2014

The board met at the Story County Administration Building prior to a public hearing to approve the county's FY15 budget. Chair Hornstein administered the oath of office to board member Ted Tedesco, who will serve another term ending December 2018.

The board approved a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant agreement for \$175,000 with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for buildings at Dakins Lake Park. Updates to SCC Rules and Regulations were discussed, and the board approved a first reading of the proposed changes. Recreational activities at Dakins Lake will be suspended while the expansion project is in progress.

After the ISU Research Park presentation at the February meeting, board members are interested in receiving more information about a possible collaboration. Director Cox will make contacts and report back to the board.

Cox reported on discussions regarding the development of a comprehensive recreation and natural resource management plan for Story County. SCC would steer this project, and Cox acknowledged it would be a big time commitment. Board members were in support of SCC's involvement in this effort.

Updates from the director included the following:

- Story County has entered into a contract for construction on Phase II of the Dakins Lake Expansion project. The contractor anticipates finishing work in September.
- The shoreline stabilization project at Hickory Grove has been completed. An outside firm has been contracted to assist IRVM staff to remove trees in drainage ditches. Approximately 30 brush piles left on private property will be burned this spring.
- Park Ranger Luke Feilmeier began work on March 10. He has moved into the residence at Hickory Grove and is getting oriented to Story County Conservation.

April 14, 2014

The board approved the termination of an easement agreement between Stephen Mark Hall & Narda Hall and SCC upon the owners' request; a second reading of changes to SCC Rules and Regulations, first readings of changes to SCC Safety and Health Management Policy, Personnel Policy, and Operations Manual; 2014 campground attendant contract with Patricia Jensen; and goat grazing agreement with Finch Livestock Exchange.

Special Projects Ranger Carol Williams presented an update to the board. Highlights of the past year included work on the Dakins Lake Expansion Project, Partners and Trails Advisory committees, planning and implementing Partners spring and fall festivals, and TEAM days. Several grant proposals were written and submitted. The opening of the bike lanes on Country Club Road south of Nevada and closeout of construction phases 7 and 8 of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail project were celebrated. New projects included planning a local foods bike ride with SCC and Prairie Rivers of Iowa staff, working with ISU students on class projects, and attending law enforcement training.

Cox commented on a court case in Montana contesting conversion of railroad rights of way. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation believes no trails in Iowa will be affected by this case. Cox reported that SCC hosted a successful workshop to share information on the emerald ash borer. Cox also reported on a meeting with the ISU Research Park director, a possible land acquisition, and 2013 flood repairs in progress.

May 12, 2014

The board approved a contract with Jensen Excavating for repairs on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, a memorandum of understanding for a public service agreement re: the High Trestle Trail, a first reading of proposed revisions to SCC By-laws, and second readings of revisions to the SCC Safety and Health Management Policy and SCC Personnel Policy.

Iowa State University student Brooke Ferrell gave a presentation to the board re: a survey she conducted on SCC trails, results, and her conclusions. Natural Resource Specialist Amy Yoakum also gave a report to the board, reviewing projects she has been involved in over the last year.

The director gave updates on the Hickory Grove Watershed and Dakins Lake projects.

June 10, 2014

The FY13 annual report was accepted. The board approved FY15 salaries with 2 percent cost-of-living increases for Conservation staff, second readings of revisions to Story County Conservation By-laws, an agreement with the Iowa DNR Lakes Program for the Hickory Grove Watershed, a Watershed Improvement Fund Grant contract, and an agreement with Fox Engineering for the Hickory Grove Improvement Grant. The board also approved a resolution endorsing a grant application to the State Recreational Trails Program for hard surfacing the Heart of Iowa of Iowa Nature Trail between the cities of Huxley and Cambridge.

Cox announced that Story County has contracted with the University of Iowa to work towards a comprehensive plan for the entire county. Cox would like to work a comprehensive plan for SCC that would address recreational opportunities and natural resource planning for the next 30 years to be part of the county's comprehensive plan.

Cox reported on construction progress on the Dakins Lake Expansion project. The board of supervisors approved a change order for costs associated with correcting soil erosion in Phase I.

Cox and board chair Hornstein met with the board of supervisors and county attorneys to discuss transfer of land north of Ames held by the Army Corps of Engineers. Cox said he is encouraged with the increased dialog on this project.

June 27, 2014

The board met to consider a donation of land north of Ames from the Army Corps of Engineers. The Corps communicated that they would like to receive assurance that Story County will accept the property and fund the disposal costs.

The board voted to recommend to the Story County Board of Supervisors that they accept Resolution #15-03 to accept a donation of land from the Army Corps of Engineers and fund the Corps' associated disposal costs.

The board also approved an agreement with the Iowa DNR Lakes Program to accept funding for \$200,000 for the Hickory Grove Watershed.