

**STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION
QUARTERLY REPORT
May 24, 2022
Michael D. Cox, Conservation Director**

Hickory Grove Park

- The lake is now full. The beach house will be open as soon as we are able to hire seasonal staff for it. The boat launches are open to canoes and kayaks. We are adjusting the boat docks and will open the boat ramps as soon as docks are adjusted.
- We are awaiting execution of the 28E by Iowa Regional Utility Association. Design of the in-park wastewater facility will commence immediately following execution.

McFarland Park

- Lake renovation plans are being developed. The lake has not been dredged since construction in the 70's. Sedimentation is a phosphorus source and is limiting aquatic life. Renovation will include a sediment catchment forebay, a canoe and kayak launch, shoreline armoring, a fishing jetty and several shoreline access areas. Public opinion has been sought. Plans are currently at the 75% design review level.

Heart of Iowa Nature Trail

- A grant application has been submitted for the Destination Iowa program to pave the trail from 610th Avenue to Collins.
- We have been awarded a grant for paving the trail between 610th Avenue and S14.
- Paving between Cambridge and 610th Avenue is in design.

West Peterson/ Skunk River Stabilization Project

- We have contracted for improvements to the parking and beach area. This work should be completed early this summer.

Dakins Lake Primitive Campground

- Construction is underway. Larger angled sites with water/ electric are being installed. Defined primitive camping is being installed.

Sopers Mill Water Trail Access Improvements

- We have been awarded a grant from the Iowa DNR to improve the water trail access at Sopers Mill. The project will include parking area improvements and addition of a second launch point. This project is in design and awaiting a cultural review by the State Historic Preservation Office.

Water Quality

- We are surveying potential sites for edge-of-field BMP installations for the summer of 2023.
- Edge-of-field sites for 2022 are in the permit review stage.
- We are working with the City of Ames and IDALS to design a proposed wetland at Dotson. The wetland would treat water in Boone-Story #8 by pumping it from the open ditch to the wetland. When preliminary design is complete, a proposal will be made to the Drainage District Trustees. The design plan is currently being reviewed by the parties.
- Shoreline stabilization on the South Skunk River at Anderson Access is under contract and will commence soon.

Events/Environmental Education

- School field trips are in full force.

- Summer camp registrations have been filling fast. Thirty-two camp opportunities are being offered. These camps will be daytime only.
- We partnered with the IDNR and Alliant Energy on a tree distribution program called One Million Trees. More than 250 trees were distributed to area landowners.
- We are offering several water sports classes this summer designed to engage people with water recreation.
- We are offering several presentations at community libraries as part of their summer reading programs.

Natural Resources

- Work has begun on a floristic inventory at remnant prairies on pioneer cemeteries. This has been funded through a grant.
- We are working with the IDNR and other county conservation departments to establish a small seed nursery for native prairie plants.
- The environmentally sensitive area inventory is complete. We are developing a program of follow-up opportunities for landowners who wish to manage or protect their natural resources.
- We were able to conduct many prescribed prairie burns this spring including burns at Tedesco Environmental learning corridor.