

Earthtones

Summer 2011

Anderson Celebrates 30 Years Serving Iowa's Counties

Milestones in one's career seem to come along on a regular basis when one is blessed with professional and dedicated co-workers, unlimited and unquestioning support of family and friends, and professional boards maintaining balance with support and guidance. I am being reminded that I have now had the pleasure of attempting to direct the organization created to provide the local conservation needs of an individual county for 30 years. The song "Don't Blink" keeps running through my mind as I am nudged to take a look back.

Slow and steady progress, dictated by attempting to find the balance between the needs and wants of the counties being served versus their willingness and ability to pay for them has always prevailed. Here in Washington County since my arrival in October of 1984, our program has evolved at a steady pace, very much keeping in line with both my professional development and the inevitable aging process. The net change here might be best summarized by a young man with wild ideals showing up to direct and assist a staff of one maintenance person (Burdette Davis) and one part time Naturalist (Kathy Cuddeback) while operating a little over 1,000 acres of land. Well over half my time was spent in the field, making our program operate and grow with excellent guidance from great boards and an overall supportive public. Time passed (apparently 30 years) and my hair turned gray and is now falling out. Our program also matured until

we now have an excellent professional and dedicated staff of 5, and are managing nearly 2,200 acres. Through this evolution, my role has steadily shifted towards the office (the change I continue to resist the most), but the goal of our entire program has never faltered. It is, was, and looks to remain the goal of the Washington County Conservation Board to provide your local conservation needs!



Steve wrangling a goose to be banded

For me personally, my life has been amazingly blessed. I have very few regrets. After 30 years, I am more certain than ever that this was and is the right career path for me. I am looking forward to continuing down this path, for I still see a very bright future!

By Steve Anderson

The Washington County Conservation Board congratulates Steve Anderson on 30 years of dedicated service in the field of conservation.

Anderson is only the third Executive Director in the 47-year history of the WCCB. Anderson works with the 5-member conservation board and current 4-member staff to manage over 2,000 acres of public recreation areas in Washington County. Known for his conservative nature, Anderson relies on his vast knowledge and experience of the past 30 years for practical solutions to a variety of situations. The Conservation Board feels very fortunate to have a director of the status of Steve Anderson along with the staff of the WCCB.

By Lyle Moen

Washington County Conservation Board

Project News

Ah, the good ole summer time is here at last! The staff of the Washington County Conservation Board are all on the run in a multitude of directions, from directly serving you and your children, to keeping things safe and neat, and to getting our multitude of planned improvements (all funded through generous donations, grants, and user fees instead of your property taxes) accomplished. It is the projects that the balance of this column will attempt to focus on.

With a generous grant from the Washington County Riverboat Foundation in the amount of \$74,800 – estimated to be half of its actual cost – the Washington County Conservation Board is charging ahead with the expansion of the Marr Park Campground. Over the past several years, we have been forced to turn away campers on a good many spring, summer, and fall weekends due to our 27 site limitation. We are adding 16 sites complete with water and 50 amp electrical service. Additionally, we are taking this opportunity to modify the Park's primary road as well as other related camper services (registration, dumping station, entrance, etc.). After years of planning and input from our patrons and citizens, we are both excited and confident that nearly every visitor to Marr Park will appreciate the improvements.

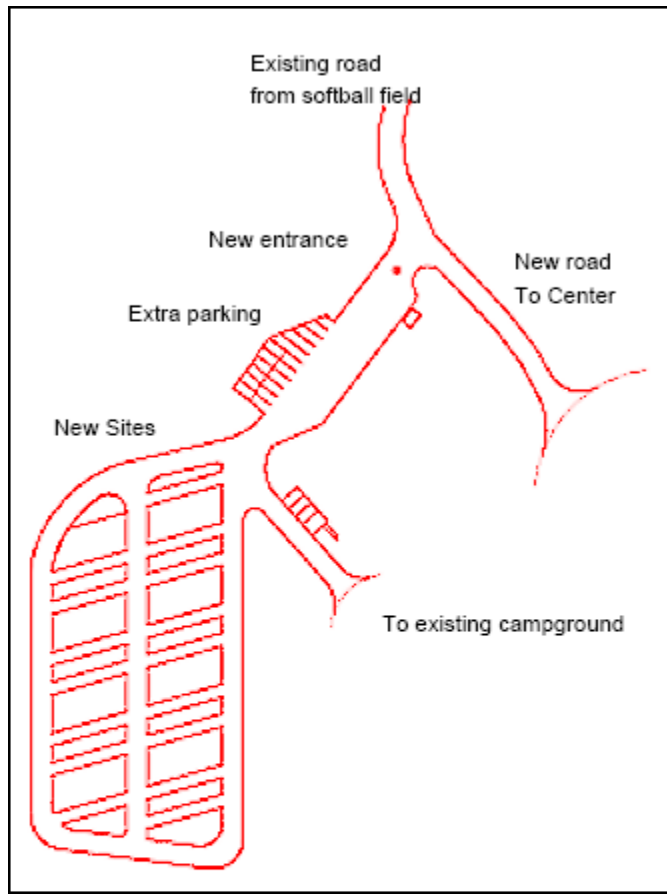
The Washington County Riverboat Foundation has also been instrumental in funding the planning and design funding for an exciting paved trail from Ainsworth to Marr Park. With full funding now in place, we will soon move this project off the paper and onto the land!

Fishing remains one of the most popular recreational activities in Iowa, and the WCCB remains committed to maximizing the opportunities on the properties you have entrusted us to manage. Fish Habitat Stamp Fund grants are currently the primary funding source for two larger projects. The first is the reconstruction and renovation of Willow Pond (located adjacent to the Kewash Nature Trail south of the Washington County Jail). The other is the Fisheries Renovation and Protection of Foster Pond.

Another relatively large project we remain hopeful of accomplishing is actually jointly owned and operated between the Iowa, Keokuk & Washington County Conservation Board. This summer, pending the ceasing of the flow of water from the sky at least to the level that it stops running across the land

so rapidly, these three CCB's are excited to team up with the United States Fish & Wildlife Service to repair and enhance the dike that impounds the 60 acre wetland at the English River Wildlife Refuge.

By Steve Anderson



New Campground Layout

Another New Board Member

Regretfully, Jeff Wolcott recently resigned from his position as a Washington County Board Member due to other obligations. The Supervisors appointed Mike Davis of Rubio in his place.



Mike works as a carpenter for Caver-Hoy Construction. Although he grew up in Ollie, he has been living here for thirteen years with his wife and two children. In his free time, he loves camping, boating, and coaching his daughter's ASA softball team. He also serves as a reserve officer for Washington County.

He is excited to serve on the Board and put his love for the outdoors to use and help others enjoy it. He particularly loves to fish and hunt.

Thanks to the Following

Youth Fishing Clinic

Donations

Ace N More Walmart County Line Mart
HyVee Dan Pulz

Volunteers

Session leaders: Bob Bellmer, Chad Dolan, and Don Kline
Jeff Koepp Dale Venske
Annalisa and Samantha Holz

Other Volunteers and Donations

Don Kline and Dale Venske: re-stringing fishing poles
Don Pfeiffer: removing garlic mustard
Faye Vittetoe and Mary Anson: nyger seed for finch feeders
Andrew Altmaier and Boy Scouts: landscaping for the bird blind
Linda Finke: Sponsoring the barn feeder at the bird blind
Washington Junior High students during Orange and Black Give Back Day

Washington County Conservation Board

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Website:

co.washington.ia.us/departments/conservation

Members: Lyle Moen
Liz Kaufman
Craig Capps
Bill Nickell
Mike Davis

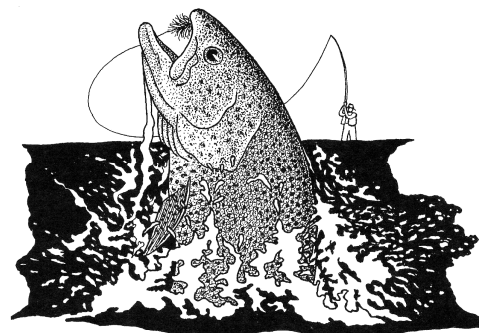
Staff: Steve Anderson, Exec. Director
Bob Bellmer, Park Ranger
Pamela Holz, Naturalist
Fritz Engel, Maint. Technician
Kathy Dolan, Center Coordinator

Washington County Conservation Board meetings are held the second Wednesday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at the Conservation Education Center. Visitors are welcome.

The WCCB is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

If you would like a copy of this newsletter in larger print, please contact our office.

This newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



Bird Blind Open

The Marr Park Bird Blind opened this past spring and is operational. We are continuing to add a few touches, but it is otherwise fully functional. For an Eagle Scout project, Andrew Altmaier brought several volunteers out to the park to work on the landscaping. Shrubs and vines were planted to attract birds (such as trumpet vine for hummingbirds) as well as screen the feeders from the road.

Eventually we will be adding an information display inside the blind to help you identify the birds that visit as well as other relevant information.

Also, we are still looking for people willing to adopt a feeder for a year. Your name will be posted in the informational display as well as here in the newsletter (see Linda Finke’s name on page 3). All contributions are tax deductible.

Adopt A Feeder Program

<u>Feeder type</u>	<u>Estimated Annual Cost</u>
Thistle feeder	\$300
Platform feeder	\$300
Suet feeder	\$100
Misc. tube feeder	\$150
Nut feeder	\$250



Work progresses during Orange and Black Give Back Day

VERB:

It’s where the action is

The Washington County Conservation Board is supporting the University of Iowa’s VERB program this summer. What is VERB? It is a fun way for children ages 8–13 to keep physically active over the summer break.

The program works similar to a summer library reading program, but instead of reading books, the student must partake in physical activities. Each scorecard has fifteen spots. Four of those spots must be filled by attending one of VERB’s special events (such as our Creepy Crawly event on July 23 – see page 4 for more information). The remaining squares can be signed by parents, coaches, or other adults for each hour of physical activity partaken by the child. The scorecard is then turned in for prizes, including gift certificates, free movie rentals, and even a drawing for a Nintendo Wii.

For more information on this exciting way to help keep kids physical fit, go to www.iowaverb.org or contact Josh Riffel at the Washington Y.



A Way to Help And Earn Money

We are currently looking for individuals who would be willing to host the Conservation Center as a substitute for our Center Coordinator. This paid position includes welcoming visitors, helping with any rentals, basic cleaning, and other minor tasks. This is a as-needed position and can include anytime the Center is open as well as additional hours in case of a rental. For more information, contact Kathy at 319/657-2400 or wccb@iowatelecom.net.

WASHINGTON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
2943 HIGHWAY 92
AINSWORTH, IA 52201

Return Service Requested

Center Summer Hours
Monday and Thursday,
10:00 a.m.—6:30 p.m.

Friday and Saturday
12:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Sunday
1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

New Display for Halloween Hike

Mark your calendars now for our annual Halloween Hike on Saturday, October 15! This year's hike will feature something a little different. In addition to all the fun activities we do each year, it will also be the Grand Opening of the Prairies travelling exhibit.

The Prairies Exhibit was created as a travelling display by the Iowa Association of Naturalists. It will feature information on the importance of the prairie to Iowa and several interactive components (because naturalists know the best way to learn is hands-on!).



The theme for this year's Hike is Animals of the Prairie. We'll have several challenges out in the prairie behind the Conservation Center as well as several activities inside. Those that are not interested in the hike itself are still welcome to come and see the new displays as well as partake in refreshments. All ages will enjoy this year's event as there will be something for everybody.

We will have the traveling display until the first week in December. Anyone wanting to see it then will have to travel to Pocahontas County.