

**A NEWSLETTER OF THE  
BREMER COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD**

**Winter 2018 Edition**

***Director's Notes***  
***By Andrew Hockenson***



I would like to introduce myself as the new Executive Director for the Bremer County Conservation Board. My name is Andrew Hockenson and I began working as your Director March 29, 2017. It didn't take long for me to realize Bremer County Conservation is a busy place with several nice wildlife and recreational areas, as well as a great educational program. I also found out quickly, there is a great staff taking care of it all.

I grew up in Charles City, IA where I graduated high school in 1999. I attended North Iowa Area Community College for two years and then transferred to Iowa State University in Ames. ISU has a great natural resources program with many different options within to choose from. I choose the Forestry option and graduated in May 2004. Prior to graduating, I worked two summers as a seasonal Park Ranger for the US Army Corps of Engineers at Saylorville Lake near Des Moines. As graduation grew near, I began the search for full-time work and was fortunate enough to find it in the County Conservation system. I was hired as a Park Ranger for the Webster County Conservation Board, while there I attended the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy and become a Certified Peace Officer in April of 2005. I spent the next 2 ½ years in Webster County before moving to the Boone County Conservation Board to serve as a Park Ranger there. In January of 2009 I became Executive Director for Boone County Conservation. My wife Morgan and I then moved into a park house located within Don Williams Park near Ogden, Iowa where we lived for the past 8 years.

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***Bremer County Conservation Board Staff***

*Executive Director - Andrew Hockenson*

*EE Coordinator / Naturalist - Heather Gamm*

*Recycling Educator / Naturalist - Sarah Beckman*

*Natural Resources Technicians - Pat Hyde, Dave Steere,*

*Mike Weidemann & Nick Franzen*

***Board Members***

*Chairperson - Jim Peters*

*Vice Chair - Mandie Sanderman*

*Richard Harms, Stacey Snyder, Kevin Korman*

## *Director Notes, continued*

*By Andrew Hockenson*

Morgan is also an ISU grad and originally from the Iowa City area. We married in August of 2008 and have 3 great kids. Madelyn is 8 years old and is in 2<sup>st</sup> grade, Blaise is 6 years old and is in 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and Alina is 4 years old and is enjoying preschool this year. They are attending school in Denver. It's hard to believe how quickly this first summer has gone by and how I have already been with Bremer County for 9 months. I'd like to thank all those I've met and interacted with during this time for welcoming me and my family into Bremer County. I look forward to getting to know more of the people using our parks and wildlife areas, and am excited for all that lies ahead.

This past July, the Bremer County Conservation Board was able to hire a fourth full-time Natural Resource Technician position to aid in the management of our 4,330 acres of wildlife and recreational areas, parks, and trails. Nicholas Franzen is a Natural Resources Management program graduate from Hawkeye Community College in Waterloo. You may have seen Nick in the past working as a seasonal employee. He has a great knowledge of our areas and was able to jump right in to his new position. Please, when you are out in our areas, welcome Nick to the county conservation system.



Staff members Pat Hyde, Nicholas Franzen, and Michael Weidemann have been busy constructing parking areas at Wilson Grove Wildlife Area and Horton Roads Ponds.

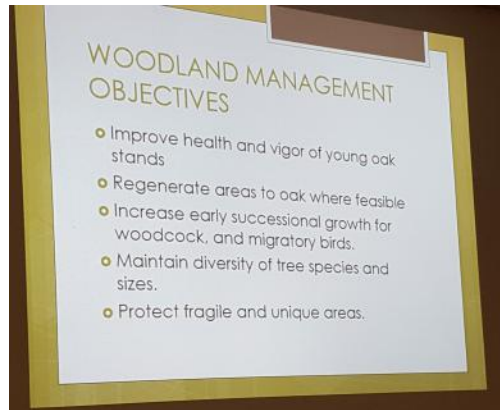
**Wilson Grove parking lot**



**Horton Road Ponds parking area**



Iowa DNR District Forester Greg Heidebrink presented the Wapsi Greenbelt Island Access Forest Management Plan to a crowd of around 20 at the ISU Extension Office in Tripoli. A forest management plan has been created to guide in the management of the area. Having a good plan in place and using good forestry practices will improve wildlife habitat and the overall forest health of the area. The complete plan is available on our website <http://www.co.bremer.ia.us/conservation-board/wapsie-river-greenbelt.aspx>.



## *Tripoli students build birdhouse boxes with Audubon grant*



Bremer County Conservation and Tripoli Schools received a \$500 grant to establish 46 Bluebird boxes along the new Sweet Water Trail near Tripoli. The grant was given by Prairie Rapids Audubon Society. Sumner Building Center was the local lumber company used.

This project began in April 2017. The art, science and industrial technology teachers began an architect unit at the Tripoli Middle/High School. The students built 46 birdhouse boxes. The boxes were hung up by the end of May. Ongoing maintenance will occur through science classes with Paula Carlson's students.

These students not only got to build and put up their very own birdhouse, but they also gained ownership in the trail in their town. This trail was completed in the fall of 2016. The Sweet Water Trail leads from downtown Tripoli east to the Wapsipinicon River and Sweet Marsh Wildlife Area. This trail is being used by all kinds of people. As people use the trail, they will notice the birdhouses that are placed along the trail.



## *Monarch Tagging Report* *By Sarah Beckman*

Monarch Watch is an organization through the University of Kansas that provides resources to the citizen scientist, naturalists and teachers. Through educational programming and an extensive online learning site the interested public can become educated on the biology of the Monarch Butterfly, their alarming drop in population due to habitat loss and milkweed supply and participate in a volunteer based Monarch tagging program. Monarch Watch utilizes the data recovered from the tagging program to better understand the annual mass migration of Monarchs to Mexico. Bremer County Conservation has participated in the tagging program for nearly 20 years. The migration typically starts mid to late August through mid to end September. We have hosted tagging programs in our areas, schools, nursing homes, churches and libraries and with people of ages 2 to 92. This 2017 tagging year participants tagged 29 Monarchs, 14 males and 15 females. We cross our fingers as we set each one free to continue its 3 month journey to Mexico.

We are happy to announce a male Monarch tagged on September 6, 2016 at Bremwood Campus in Waverly was recovered on February 27, 2017 in Piedra Herrada Mexico, that's approximately 1,900 miles from Waverly. WOW!



## 20th Annual Bremer County Sandhill Crane Count

April 14 is the 20th annual crane count in Bremer County. Area volunteers will explore natural areas around the county to listen for the distinct unison or guard calls of the Sandhill Crane. Each person can walk, kayak, or listen from a car/chair. The goal is to get a "picture" of how many cranes are in our county. Check out the details and let us know if you want to participate by calling 319-882-4742.

<http://www.savingcranes.org/education/annual-midwest-crane-count/>



**Congratulations to BCCB employees who received longevity awards.**

Sarah Beckman - 5 years



Dave Steere - 10 years



Mike Weidemann - 10 years



## Winter Picnic at Ingawanis Woodland

On a COLD winter morning, 25 outdoor runners took part in the Iowa Games Snowshoe Race at Ingawanis Woodland on January 13. However, it wasn't a snowshoe race. It ended up being a trail run due to a lack of snow. Some participants ran a 5K and others completed 2 laps for a 10K. Participants returned to Eagle Lodge with ice in their beards or on the front of their warm weather gear. Bremer County Nature Alliance members greeted them with egg casseroles, Dutch Oven monkey bread, muffins and warm coffee/hot cocoa. In addition to the race, a few families braved the cold temperatures to take a short winter hike and learn more about the outdoor world. A neighbor dog entertained the group by chasing off a herd of deer. The children were able to see deer tracks in the skiff of snow prior to the deer waving their tails at us. For more information about the Bremer County Nature Alliance, follow their Facebook page. Their next event will be on March 24 for their 2nd annual spring banquet.



## Beauty in the Beasts Halloween Hike 2017

**Thanks to the following for donations to BCCB.**

**Jim Peters**

Memorials for  
Bob Meyer  
Terri Knothe  
Bill Tjaden  
Terry Roberts  
Ron Prock

**Jonathan Taiber**

Ingawanis Woodland  
Donation

**Lori Tank-Davis**

**Brian Davis**

Ingawanis Woodland  
Donation

**Diane Newman**

**Dunkerton PTO**

Donation for owl  
program at EWALU

**Joel Meyer**

Donation for Cedar Bend  
playground set

**Bremer County**

**Nature Alliance**

**Members**

Winter Picnic food  
donations & time spent  
on January 13.

**St. Paul's Lutheran  
Church & School**

**in Waverly**

Donation for  
Env. Educ. Program

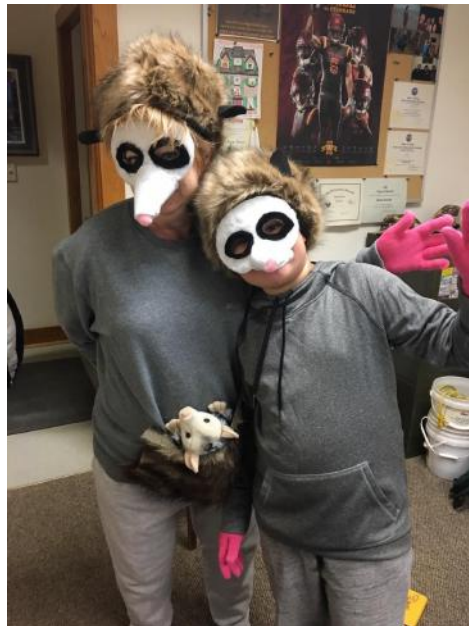
This year's hike involved a few "misunderstood" beasts that set the record straight about their beast status.

Coyote, skunk, mole, opossum, and snake shared common misconceptions of their kind and brought light to the "beauty" that each of them behold.

Most of the cast is seen here on the right. The snake is absent.



Below is the mama opossum and her young son as well as her pouch baby. Mandy Mole is seen below.



Thanks to Bremer County Nature Alliance members who made cookies as well as Bev Weidemann, Lisa Weidemann & Morgan Hockenson. Thanks to Angi Reid, Tammy Turner, Wartburg EARTH volunteers, Owen Pecenka, and Frank Frederick for leading hikes. Thanks to Brian and Jen Mohlis and family for cleanup of luminaries. Maggie Beninga, Lincoln Beckman, Laura Chapin, and Steve Martin acted this year and we are grateful for their assistance.

## *Eagle Lodge at Ingawanis Woodland is available for rent.*

Eagle Lodge is a rental facility located at Ingawanis Woodland in the southwest corner of the county between Janesville and Denver (2588 Hawthorne Avenue - Janesville). The lodge is heated, air conditioned, available year round, and has restrooms and a kitchenette. Eagle Lodge is a great place for family reunions, graduations, birthdays, weddings, holidays, and many other events. The cost for rental is \$75 per day. If you are interested in finding out more or making a reservation for next year, please call the office at 319-882-4742.



In November, the lodge was updated with new flooring as seen in the photo to the left.

A big THANK YOU to the  
**Bremer County Nature Alliance**  
for contributing funds toward this update.

New signs have been placed to aid in finding the area from  
C 50 and Hawthorne Avenue.

The bottom, far right photo shows the lodge and parking lot  
as a group leaves to go on a hike.



# Bremer County Conservation Fees for 2018

## Camping

Cedar Bend Park      \$12.00 per night per camping unit without electricity  
\$17.00 per night per camping unit with electricity with the following exceptions:  
Sites A, B, C, D, E, F & G will be for ONE CAMPING UNIT ONLY with a  
\$20.00 per night charge (50 amp outlets available)

Alcock Park, North Cedar Park and North Woods Park  
\$10.00 per night per camping unit  
\$15.00 per night per camping unit with electric (30 amp outlets available)

Wednesday night will continue to be a free camping night unless the Wednesday falls on a holiday (whereby there will be regular fees).

Camping fees will be collected on a self-registration basis, whereby campers fill out an envelope upon arriving at the campgrounds, and deposits the envelope and fees in a vandal-proof collection box at the campground entrance. No RESERVATIONS.

## Showers

Shower facilities are located in all parks. These facilities are free to those camping in one of these parks. For anyone wanting to use the showers and not camping in the park, there is a **\$2.00** charge each time this facility is used. The fee can be placed in a camper self-registration envelope and marked "shower" and placed in the camper collection receptacle.

## Dumpstations

There is a dumpstation in three of the four parks. This facility is meant for those camping in the park and is included in the camping fee. For anyone wanting to use the dumpstation and not camping in the park, there is a **\$5.00** charge for each time the facility is used. The fee can be placed in a self-registration envelope and marked "dumpstation" and placed in the collection receptacle in the campgrounds.

## Firewood

There will be a **\$5.00 donation** requested each time a defined amount of firewood is obtained in the parks from the firewood pile. There is a collection receptacle in each park near the firewood pile.

## Shelters

Shelters are located in each of the four county parks and an amphitheater is located at Cedar Bend Park. They can be used free on a first-come, first-serve basis, but can be held for you by reservation. The charges are **\$20.00 per day** for shelters or the amphitheater. Contact the BCCB office at 319-882-4742 for more information or to reserve.

## Ingawanis Woodland Lodge

This facility is located at 2588 Hawthorne Avenue, Janesville. It is an enclosed facility with restrooms, heat, air conditioning and a kitchenette. It can be rented for \$75.00 per day and reservations can be made by calling the BCCB office at 319-882-4742.

Bremer County Conservation Board park gates are scheduled to be open May 1 - October 31. For additional information, call Andy Hockenson at the BCCB office at 319-882-4742.

# Bremer Bulletin

Bremer County Conservation Board  
P.O. Box 412  
1104 South Main Street  
Tripoli, IA 50676

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## BREMER BULLETIN

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The Bremer County Conservation Board in the provision of services and facilities to the public does not discriminate against anyone on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, national origin, age or handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to such discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Bremer County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

### *Bremer County Conservation Board*

*(319) 882-4742*

*conservation@butler-  
bremer.com*

*www.mycountyparks  
.com/county/  
bremer.aspx*

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the Bremer County  
Conservation Board at  
319-882-4742.**