

THE HAWK EYE



Keyword Search GO

Thursday, August 7th, 2014

THESE SECTIONS ARE FREE! NO SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED! • VIEW NOW! • THESE SECTIONS ARE FREE! NO SUBSCRIPTION REQUIRED!

Roads Multimedia Obituaries Area Info/Events Classifieds Auto Real Estate Happs Jobs Garage Sales Place an Ad Find It Contests LiveLocalsea.com

SUBSCRIBER CONTENT!

HOME | NEWS | PROGRESS | BUSINESS | SPORTS | OBITUARIES | LIFE | OPINION | ENTERTAINMENT | PHOTO | PDF Version | ARCHIVES

▶ 10 Stocks to Hold Forever ▶
 wyattresearch.com
 Protect Your Investments with Our Top 10 Stocks to Buy and Hold.

< > AP Updates: Landon Donovan says he'll retire after season - updated 17 minutes ago

Progress | 3/2/2014

Story | Photos/Video | Comments

SHARE Font Size: 100%

Des Moines County Conservation brings nature closer

Several preserves offer an opportunity to renew relationship with nature.

By KATHLEEN SLOAN
ksloan@thehawkeye.com

Advertisement

Free Genealogy Search

genealogy.com/Records

1) Simply enter their name. 2) View genealogy record online!



Those who feel at one with nature hardly ever feel bereft because they feel enveloped and part of creation - a larger container but similar to the womb.

Photo



Cultivating this relationship with Mother Nature is getting harder and more important, but like the saying, "only the virtuous understand the need for virtue," only Mother Nature's initiates understand why huge green swaths of land and blue waters need to be preserved.

Our ties are growing tenuous and to our detriment. The steep rise in allergies and other immune-related diseases are evidence our bodies increasingly identify Mother Nature as "other."

Mechanical transport prevents us from looking at even urban trees closely. Prepared food spares us from butchering, picking, grinding, shelling, nature's fruits and we know not what we eat. Air conditioning and heating keep us cocooned and comfortable and seasonless instead of chopping wood, shoveling coal or sleeping outside on hot nights.

If the umbilicus is cut, people seek earth mothering in all the wrong places, not knowing another way.

Gerard Manley Hopkins captures this unknowing in "Binsey Poplars (Felled 1879)," partially quoted:

...

My aspens dear, whose airy cages quelled,
 Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun,
 All felled, felled, are all felled;
 Of a fresh and following folded rank
 Not spared, not one

...

O if we but know what we do
 When we delve or hew-

Today's Ads

Viewed | Emailed | Editor Picks

- Police: man killed in shooting
- MP teachers speaking out against Wells
- High-speed chases land man in jail
- Man sought in shooting arrested at GRMC
- DCI releases officer's name in Fort Madison shooting
- Man accused of shooting at Pollmiller Park
- Citizens decry store's location
- Five injured in rollover accident
- FM man gets 25 years for molesting boys

Register for Your Chance to Win ...

TWO 5 DAY PASSES

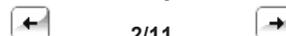
for the Midwest Old Threshers Reunion

August 28 - September 1, 2014

Random User Photo



Hover over image for details



2/11

Hack and rack the growing green!

. . .

After-comers cannot guess the beauty been.

Ten or twelve, only ten or twelve

Strokes of havoc unselfe

The sweet especial scene,

Rural scene, a rural scene,

Sweet especial rural scene.

. . .

We are that "fresh and following folded rank" if we take the time to commune with nature.

In Des Moines County there are a number of preserves for renewing initiation with Mother Nature.

Des Moines County Conservation Department oversees 1,601 acres that include 18 recreational properties ranging in size from one to 800 acres.

Big Hollow Recreation Area is the largest at 800 acres. It is 10 miles north of Burlington and can be reached by driving on U.S. 61 to Pleasant Grove Road, driving 3 miles west then a half-mile south on 152nd Avenue.

Big Hollow has been a primary focus for the department and local conservationists over the past 15 years.

The Partners for Conservation Foundation started a capital campaign about that time. Vice President Dave Riley said the campaign already was underway when he joined the board in 2001.

"Building a dam to form the lake was first - we already had a hollow," he said.

The 50-foot dirt-fill dam cost about \$1 million. About \$600,000 in private donations was raised and Vision Iowa contributed \$1 million.

The 178-acre lake took six months, not the estimated two or three years to fill, Des Moines County Conservation Department Director Chris Lee said.

Trees were not felled but allowed to remain standing to provide fish habitat, he said.

"It's a canoers' paradise, paddling under a canopy of forest," and the fishing is good, too," he said.

Hunting also is allowed in the park and there is a system of trails.

Last summer, after collecting another \$130,000 in private donations and with the conservation staff doing the earthwork with county vehicles, Lee said, 30 RV sites and 100 campsites were constructed.

The RV sites have been electrified and this will be the first summer campers can plug in, Lee said.

"We are at a quarter-million-dollar hurdle," Lee said. That's the amount needed for the next phase, which is sewer and water.

"It's not very glamorous for a capital campaign," Riley said, "but Big Hollow needs revenue. Chris has operations costs."

And revenue doesn't come from rough camping, the big draw is RV camping.

"There are a lot of people who do it - with self-contained RVs," Riley said.

Lee said a pull-up dump station will need to be accompanied by a mechanical pump system that pipes the sewage "down the road a ways." The septic system will be big, because each of the 30 RV sites may have a family of campers.

After the sewer is completed, more money will be needed to build a shower house for the campers. One cabin has been built, but more are planned and they will share this shower house. A second will be built for the beach area, Lee said.

Other plans for building revenue streams are canoe rentals, bait shops and concession stands.

Des Moines County expends about \$530,000 a year on the conservation department which oversees 1,600 acres. The department made about \$25,000 fiscal year ending June 30, 2013.

About six months ago, county supervisors passed a resolution that allows the department to keep revenue generated by Big Hollow to be spent on maintenance and development. Lee expects Big Hollow to make about \$30,000 fiscal year ending June 30, 2015.

By comparison, Clinton County expends about \$1.2 million and has 1,871 acres. Its conservation department made about \$120,000 fiscal year ending June 30, 2013.

The second project the Des Moines County Conservation Department has focused on is the Flint River Trail. It eventually will be 20 miles long and will connect Big Hollow with the Mississippi River in downtown Burlington.

The county is responsible for building 16 miles of trail and Burlington is responsible for building 4.

The county's 7 and the city's 1 1/2 miles were funded mostly by a Vision Iowa grant spearheaded by Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission and overseen by its grant writer, Zack James.

The 7 miles go from Big Hollow Recreation Area's Dodgeville Road entrance to Flint Bottom Road.

James landed a second grant to fund the next 2.5 miles, which "has tricky terrain in the forest and a very long bridge going over Flint Creek, which is half the cost."

The total cost for the 2.5 miles is \$1.292 million. The Federal Recreational Trails Program is funding \$423,000 and the Department of Transportation Alternative Program is funding \$611,000 of the project. The county will pay \$258,000.

This part of the trail will cross Irish Ridge Road, Starr's Cave and Flint Creek, James said.

The architectural and environmental work will be done in the spring and design work will follow, with bids let in the fall, James said.

Planning, building and fund raising for sewer and water hook-up and trails may be mundane, but initiates and acolytes to Mother Nature will be "Quelled or quenched in leaves the leaping sun," and "after-comers" will know the beauty of the forest.

If you would like to volunteer with the conservation department, call Starr's Cave at (319) 752-5808 or e-mail them at starcave@dmcounty.com.

If you would like to donate to Flint River Trail or Big Hollow, call Partners for Conservation Foundation at (319) 753-8260.

Email this to a friend!

Subject:

To: (recipient's email address)

From: (your email address)

Validation Key: 

Enter validation key:



The Hawk Eye
 PO Box 10, 800 S. Main St.
 Burlington, Iowa 52601
 319-754-8461 • 1-800-397-1708 • FAX: 319-754-6824
 Circulation: 319-754-8462 • Classified: 319-754-8463
[Privacy Policy](#)
 Problems? Contact the [webmaster](#).
 ©2014 The Burlington Hawk Eye Co.