

FY25 Annual Report

To: Louisa County Board of Supervisors

LOUISA COUNTY
CONSERVATION



Prepared by: Jacob Ewart on behalf of Louisa County Conservation Board

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

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The following is the annual report of the Louisa County Conservation Board as prescribed in Chapter 350.3 of the Code of Iowa (1993).

At a Glance...

- **Wilson Prairie Interpretive Trail** – Thanks to a generous donation from Orion Renewable Energy Group, Wilson Prairie received nine interpretive panels for visitors to read as they hike around the 40-acre remnant prairie. Signage includes all sorts of information ranging from insects and birds to prescribed fire and seasonal changes. The panels were designed by LCCB staff and manufactured by Pannier Graphics.
- **Reduced Personnel** – Last year's budget shortage resulted in less staff for many departments in the county, including conservation. Due to this, the maintenance team was reduced to one full-time employee, Tanner Hollingsworth, with Jacob helping as time allowed.
- **Virginia Grove Fish Habitat Stamp Grant** – Naturalist Sarah Martinez submitted a Fish Habitat Stamp Grant through the Iowa DNR and was awarded over \$16,000 for pond improvements at Virginia Grove Recreation Area. Planned improvements will come next year and include an aeration system, dam reinforcement, and the creation of fish habitat.
- **Eden Park Disc Golf** – With the demand as high as ever, LCCB voted to pursue the installation of a disc golf course at Eden Park. This 9-hole course was designed by 3one7 Discs and includes wooded and grass components. Funding for this course was provided by the Eden Park Trust.
- **Pawpaws at Chinkapin Improvements Underway** – While off to a slow start, staff, alongside Tom Wahl, have been making steady improvements to the recently returned pawpaw plantation at Chinkapin Bluffs. Grafting and pruning efforts will be a continued effort for the foreseeable future to ensure great fruit stocking every year. With so many rows, plans include grafting two or three rows every year on a rotational basis to more easily manage the population. Members of the public are encouraged to pick and eat the fruit of the pawpaw tree, while being mindful of others and ensuring everyone can enjoy this unique resource.
- **Improvements at Langwood** – Thanks to funding from Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation, Community Foundation of Louisa County, The Schlutz Foundation, and Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust, Langwood has received many improvements in the name of accessibility. Improvements include an outdoor prairie classroom/shelter, an accessible drinking fountain, a concrete parking spot near the lodge, and pond side docks for pond viewing and scooping.



Board Roster

The five members of the Louisa County Conservation Board are a decision-making and policy-making body appointed by the Louisa County Board of Supervisors. The board's authority includes the acquisition and development of land, adoption of rules and regulations, comprehensive planning of an overall county conservation board program and specific site plans for individual areas. Other functions of the Board include hiring an executive director, developing a budget, and working with other governmental subdivisions to provide programs for the public.

The primary consideration of the board should be to provide a balanced conservation, recreation, and education program to the citizens of the county, through proper planning and identification of needs and demands. The County Conservation Board can be the primary county agency dealing with natural resource issues in its county. (Source: Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards)

The Louisa County Conservation Board members who served during this reporting period were:

Name	Title	Expiration Date	Meetings Attended
Josh Hardin	Member	December 31, 2025	14
Shawn Maine	Chair	December 31, 2026	13
Elizabeth Kling	Secretary	December 31, 2027	10
Joellen Shantz	Vice-Chair	December 31, 2028	14
Sam Willson	Member	July 2027*	5

* Sam Willson was removed from the Conservation Board after the June 2022 meeting. He made an appeal and was reinstated in January 2025 for the remainder of his term when he was removed, essentially two and a half years. Therefore, his term will expire in July of 2027.

The board held 12 regular meetings and 2 special meetings during the fiscal year. Agendas and minutes from the meetings are on file at the Louisa County Conservation Office, 12635 County Road G56, Suite 101, Wapello, Iowa, 52653. The previous 12 months of meeting minutes can also be found online at: mycountyparks.com/County/Louisa. To find meeting information on the website, hover on "More Info" at the top, then click "Conservation Board". This page will provide minutes for the past year, the current Annual Report, and information about the next meeting.

Online Tools and Resources

- **Mapping and Directions:** Find all our areas and addresses on Google Maps.
- **Reservations and Area Information:** To find more information on individual areas, to reserve Langwood, a campsite, or shelter, or to sign up for a program, visit our website at MyCountyParks.com/County/Louisa. You can also google “my county parks” and search for Louisa. This website is where we will post all information about upcoming events, board meetings, and information about nature camps and public programs. This website is managed by ICCS (Iowa County Conservation System).
- **Naturally Louisa County Newsletter:** LCCB, cooperatively with Tri Rivers Conservation Foundation, also publishes Naturally Louisa County - a quarterly newsletter featuring articles from The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Louisa Regional Solid Waste Agency, Port Louisa National Wildlife Refuge, Friends of Port Louisa Refuge, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Louisa County Izaak Walton League, Pheasants Forever (PF), Quail Forever (QF), and other local conservation organizations. To sign up for the newsletter, email conservation@louisacountyia.gov or go to mycountyparks.com and find the Naturally Louisa County Newsletter tab under “more info”.
- **Job Posting:** Louisa County Conservation uses mycountyparks.com for posting employment. This applies to both seasonal and permanent positions. To find employment opportunities, click “careers” on the top ribbon of the landing page of mycountyparks.com
- **Facebook:** We will continue to post reminders about upcoming events, important news updates, bid requests, sales, and environmental educational opportunities. This is where you will find the most up to date information about what is happening at LCCB. Follow us @Louisa County Conservation.

Recognition

- The Hunter Education team received their award for “Teaching Team of the Year” at the conservation picnic held in October.
- Tom Wahl was the recipient of the “Friend of Conservation” award for his help with the re-establishment of the pawpaw plantation at Chinkapin Bluffs.



LCC Staff

The Louisa County Conservation Board maintained five permanent staff positions and ten seasonal positions.

Permanent Staff:

Name	Title	Date Started
Jacob Ewart	Executive Director	7/2022 (PFT)
Dani Boysen	Office Manager	7/2016 (PPT)
Lana Artz-McComb	Naturalist	3/2016 (PFT)
Sarah Martinez	Naturalist	5/2023 (PFT)
Tanner Hollingsworth	Natural Resources Technician	7/2024 (PFT)



Seasonal Staff:

Name	Title	Dates
Luke Perkins	Seasonal Maintenance 6. Mo position	2023 – 2025 (SFT)
Bryar Runnells	Seasonal Maintenance	2024 – 2024 (SFT)
Keegan Akers	Seasonal Maintenance	2024 – 2024 (SFT)
Mason Cooley	Seasonal Maintenance	2025 – 2025 (SFT)
Lynette Moore	Toolesboro Assistant	2019 – 2025 (SPT)
Nonie Crumly	Toolesboro Assistant	2020 – 2025 (SPT)
Ann Kauffman	Toolesboro Assistant	2025 – 2025 (SPT)
Griffin Schoonover	Naturalist Intern	2024 – 2024 (SFT)
Brelynn Randall	Naturalist Intern	2024 – 2025 (SFT)
Emily Hemphill	Naturalist Intern	2025 – 2025 (SFT)

PFT: Permanent Full Time (at least 32 hours/week, receives full benefits)

PPT: Permanent Part Time (20-31 hours/week, salaried, receives vacation, sick leave & holidays)

SFT: Seasonal Full Time (works full time seasonally, no benefits)

SPT: Seasonal Part Time (works part time, seasonally, no benefits)

In addition to paid staff, the conservation board used the services of volunteers and community service workers including school groups, Boy Scouts, and many individuals. Of considerable note, Eagle Scout, William Parsons along with his Troop, designed and built a 32' footbridge across a stream at Langwood.



Board Area List

The Louisa County Conservation Board currently owns 16 areas comprising of approximately 2,600 acres for the uses of conservation, recreation, open spaces, trails, and wildlife benefits. LCCB also manages 4 other areas for either the State of Iowa or US Army Corps of Engineers. Additionally, LCCB is part of a cooperative agreement to assist in the management of two water trails along the Iowa River and Lake Odessa. There were no acquisitions this year.

Own:

- Baird Grove
- Baird Timber
- Cairo Woods Wildlife Area
- Cappy Russell Access
- Chinkapin Bluffs Recreation Area
- Eden Park
- Flaming Prairie Park
- Hickory Hollow
- Hwy 61 Access
- Hoover Nature Trail (all sections)
- Indian Slough Wildlife Area

- Langwood Education Center
- River Forks Access
- Virginia Grove Recreation Area
- Wetland Interpretive Trail
- Wilson Prairie

Manage:

- Snively Access & Campground
- Toolesboro Mounds and Museum/Littleton Brothers Memorial
- Wykert's Landing

Area Use Categories

The following is a list of areas broken down into categories of use. Some may appear in more than one category. Names have been shortened to their common names for ease of use.

Parks and Recreation	Campground	Wildlife Area	Boat Access
Chinkapin Bluffs	Flaming Prairie	Baird Grove	Flaming Prairie
Eden Park	Virginia Grove	Baird Timber	River Forks
Langwood	Snively Campground	Cairo Woods	Hwy 61 Access
Virginia Grove		Chinkapin Bluffs	Cappy Russell
Toolesboro/Littleton		Hickory Hollow	Snively Campground
		Hoover Nature Trail	Wykert's Landing
		Indian Slough	
		Virginia Grove	
		Wetland Interpretive Trail	
		Wilson Prairie	

Area Amenities

Area Number	Area 911 Address	Acreage	Electricity	Water	Toilets	Picnicking	Hiking Trails	Equestrian Trails	Fishing	Boating - motor	Canoe/Kayaking	Boat Ramp	Hunting - Forest	Hunting - Upland	Hunting - Wetland
1	Baird Grove 6011 Q Avenue, Morning Sun	20					●						●		
2	Baird Timber 2851 "K" Ave, Wapello	19											●		
3	Cairo Woods Wildlife Area 9032 S Ave, Columbus Jct. (Main Access)	526					●	*	●		●		●	●	
4	Cappy Russell Access 6444 West Co. Rd. X-71, Oakville	<1				●			●	●	●	●			
5	Chinkapin Bluffs Recreation Area 14198 R Ave, Columbus Jct.	394	●	●	●	●	●		●				●	●	●
6	Eden Park 17426 Co. Rd. X17, Columbus Jct.	154		●		●	●								
7	Flaming Prairie Park 14624 Co. Rd. X-61, Wapello	75	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●			
8	Hickory Hollow 12786 148th Street, Wapello	34					●						●		
9	Highway 61 Access 10726 Highway 61, Wapello	<1							●	●					
10	Hoover Nature Trail (all sections) N/A	83					●								
11	Indian Slough Wildlife Area 1225 L Avenue, Wapello (Main Access)	1052					●	*	●		●		●	●	●
12	Langwood Education Center 14019 H Ave, Wapello	92	Reservable use only												
13	River Forks Access 1001 Main St, Columbus Jct.	<1				●			●	●	●	●			
14	Snively Access & Campground 9246 Co Rd X-61, Wapello	6	●	●	●	●			●	●					
15	Toolesboro Mounds & Littleton Memorial 6568 Toolesboro Avenue, Wapello	5	●	●	●	●									
16	Virginia Grove Recreation Area 20406 55th Street, Morning Sun	138	●	●	●	●	●		●		●		●	●	
18	Wetland Interpretive Trail 14207 H Ave, Wapello	40				●	●		●						
17	Wilson Prairie 10400 Co Rd G44X, Muscatine	37					●								
19	Wykert's Landing 1714 20th Street, Oakville	<1							●	●	●	●			
20	LCC Office 12635 County Rd G56, Wapello	Open M-F, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - (319) 523-8381													
21	LCC Maintenance Shop 8299 K Avenue, Wapello	Call for appt. - (563) 272-8066													
* Open May 21 to September 15															

Baird Grove – 20 Acres

Location: Directly NE of Virginia Grove along Q Avenue

911 Address: 6011 Q Avenue, Morning Sun

Year Acquired: 1997

Acquisition Method: Donated by Baird Family

Land Management Type(s): Forest

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: This wildlife area is all woodland, used mostly for wildlife habitat and hunting. Baird Grove is a beautiful place for spring and fall walks, viewing woodland wildflowers and hunting mushrooms. This property is adjacent to Virginia Grove and can be fully accessed by traveling off-trail and crossing ravines.

Existing facilities: There is a small parking lot and about a quarter-mile trail loop.

Updates this FY: Trail maintenance

Planned Improvements: Continue to remove invasive species as needed and monitor tree and woodland health. Use the mulcher to clear trails and connect to Virginia Grove management area

Documented Use: Vehicles were seen in the parking lot, especially during hunting season



Baird Timber – 19 Acres

Location: Five miles south of Wapello

911 Address: 2851 K Ave, Wapello

Year Acquired: 1983

Acquisition Method: Cash

Land Management Type(s): Forest

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: This wildlife area is all woodland, used mostly for wildlife habitat and hunting. Baird Timber is a beautiful place for spring and fall walks, viewing woodland wildflowers and hunting mushrooms.

Existing facilities: There is a small parking lot and about a quarter-mile trail loop.

Updates this FY: Trail maintenance

Planned Improvements: Continue to remove invasive species as needed and monitor tree and woodland health.

Documented Use: Vehicles were seen in the parking lot, especially during hunting season



Cairo Woods Wildlife Area – 526 acres

Location: Five miles southeast of Columbus Junction, Iowa

911 Address: 9032 S Ave, Columbus Jct. (Main Access)

Year Acquired: 1984 - 1987

Acquisition Method: Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Upland Prairie

Management Restrictions: Any type of development or use which does not provide, protect, or enhance wildlife habitat. Allowed uses are only compatible activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking, etc.

Current management: This is a popular area for hunting rabbits, deer, turkey, pheasant, and quail. Cairo Woods also continues to be one of the best places in the county for picking black raspberries and blackberries. There are 6 miles of mowed hiking trails, 5 miles of which are open to equestrian use from May 21 to September 15 each year.

Existing facilities: Three rocked parking lots and an accessible hunting blind, located near the East Access.

Updates this FY: Trail maintenance and limb clearing

Planned Improvements: Conduct more prescribed burns and enhance upland game populations. Food plots are also planned.

Documented use for this area: Many hunters and equestrian riders have been spotted on the trails by staff. Berry picking and dog training exercises have also been recorded by staff.

99 County Parks: Cairo Woods has a selfie station, placed in FY19 as part of the Iowa Tourism's 99 Counties, 99 Parks promotion. It was placed near the main access for people to snap selfies.



Cappy Russell Access – <1 acre

Location: Along the Iowa River approximately one-half mile west of Oakville

911 Address: 6444 West Co Rd X-71, Oakville

Year Acquired: 2004

Acquisition Method: Cash

Land Management Type(s): River Access

Management Restrictions: This area is restricted from time to time due to flooding

Current Management: Maintained as a boat access on the Iowa River. Highly utilized access for the Iowa but can also be used to reach the Mississippi River which is just a few miles downstream to the confluence.

Existing Facilities: Concrete boat ramp and gravel parking lot. Portable latrine sometimes available

Updates this FY: LCC made continued effort to keep the trash can emptied and the parking lot mowed. High water levels and sand bar location made accessing the river from Cappy Russell difficult this spring and summer.

Planned Improvements: Continued addition of rock to the parking lot

Documented Use: Consistent use by boaters, anglers, and paddlers

Flooding Info: When the Iowa River is at 20.2 feet, the parking lot is underwater.



Chinkapin Bluffs Recreation Area – 394 acres

Location: One mile southeast of Columbus Junction

911 Address: 14198 R Ave, Columbus Jct.

Year Acquired: 1992 (on the bluff) and 2002 (below the bluff)

Acquisition Method: 1992 – REAP ; 2002 – Wildlife Habitat Stamp Fund

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Bottomland, Prairie

Management Restrictions: The Fuller (on the bluff) property was purchased using REAP funds. This restricts the Board from putting in organized sporting equipment or swimming pools, etc. The wetland addition (below the bluff) was purchased using a mix of Wildlife Habitat Grant funds (75%), and local donations. Management of this lower section does not allow any type of development or use which does not provide, protect, or enhance wildlife habitat. Allowed uses are only compatible activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking, etc.

Current Management: Multi-use recreation area – hunting, gathering, nature or bird hikes, picnicking, hiking, cross country running, field trips, and nature camps. There are two agriculture fields that are rented and food plots for wildlife.

Existing Facilities: Shelter with a fireplace, several picnic tables, grills, drinking fountain, composting toilet, overlook deck, playground equipment, sundial, swinging bench, pawpaw plantation, and five miles of hiking trails. The Hoover Nature Trail bisects the property along the bottom side of the bluff.

Updates this FY: Farm agreements continued with Bo McLaughlin. A white oak tree and stationary bench were placed near the playground in honor of John Fuller. A swinging bench was installed near the shelter in honor of Dick and Cleo Fuller. Continued updates and management to the pawpaw plantation with the help of Tom Wahl. Trail maintenance and limb clearing to widen trails were also completed. LCCB voted to raise the price of reserving the newly renovated shelter from \$30 to \$50.

Planned Improvements: An accessible concrete path to replace the limestone trail to the overlook and playground area. Grant funding will be needed to complete this project.

Documented Use: There were 5 programs held here along with non-reserved use of the shelter. For reserved use, see Reservation/Camping Data on page 27



Eden Park – 154 acres

Location: 4 miles northeast of Columbus Junction

911 Address: 17426 Co. Rd. X-17, Columbus Junction, IA

Year Acquired: 2010

Acquisition Method: Donation by Donna Eden

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Bottomland, Prairie

Management Restrictions: MidAmerican has an easement on the property which could restrict the scale of major projects. Hunting and trapping are NOT allowed.

Current management: The rolling topography includes grasslands, wetlands, two creeks and forests. A 9-hole disc golf course extends through the prairie and forest on the west portion of the property.

Existing Facilities: Gravel parking lot, 3 miles of hiking trails, playground, drinking fountain, and picnic table on a cement pad.

Updates this FY: Installation of a disc golf course designed by 3one7 Discs. This also urged a prairie burn to clear debris for fairways in the prairie.

Planned Improvements: Improved trail signage for increased usability with the disc golfers, tee-pads, a picnic shelter, and more picnic tables are all projects which staff and board wish to accomplish.

Documented Use: 8 rounds of disc golf were played with the course being constructed on June 18th. 3 programs including picnics and school groups were held at Eden Park.



Flaming Prairie Park – 75 acres

Location: Approximately 15 miles south of Muscatine

911 Address: 14624 Co. Rd. X-61, Wapello

Year Acquired: 1978

Acquisition Method: Donated by Grain Processing Company (GPC)

Management Agreement: (Boat Access) 25-year lease with US Army Corps of Engineers. Expires 2030

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Bottomland

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: For wildlife habitat, camping, picnicking, fishing, Mississippi River boat access and other recreational uses. Hunting and trapping are NOT allowed. Campground was constructed using Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant.

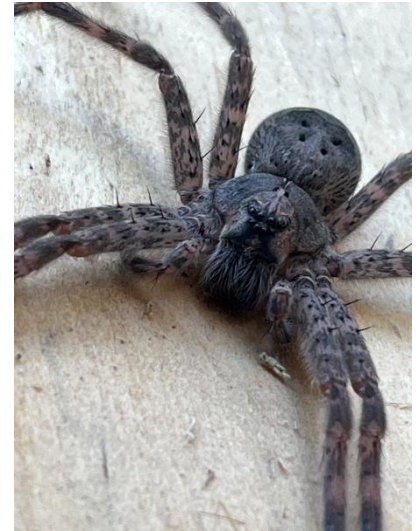
Existing Facilities: Two shelters, camping & picnicking facilities, 20-30-50-amp service for 17 campsites, two latrines, and a Mississippi River boat access.

Updates this FY: Continued maintenance of trash cans, restrooms, shelters, and grass

Planned Improvements: Continued work on road maintenance and getting them cleaned on both sides to make management easier and safer.

Documented Use: See Camping/Reservation Data on page 27. There were also two programs with school groups held.

Flooding Info: Being in the floodplain, flooding has been and always will be an issue. Seep water begins to affect campsites when river levels exceed 12 feet. Water begins to drain when the river reaches 10 feet.



Hickory Hollow – 34 acres

Location: One mile east of Grandview (behind the cemetery)

911 Address: 12786 148th Street, Wapello

Year Acquired: 2014

Acquisition Method: Donated by River Products Company

Land Management Type(s): Forest

Management Restrictions: This area was donated with a 404 Permit for Indiana Bat mitigation on 28 acres of the property. The area cannot be developed or cleared except for soft trails for maintenance and foot bridges for access. Habitat work (girdling cedars, invasive species removal) must be done prior to April 14 each year to avoid the Indiana Bat maternity season. The remaining 5.32 acres can be developed and is not subject to the 404 permits.

Current management: The area can be used for hunting (not within 200 yards of occupied building), gathering, hiking and bird watching.

Existing Facilities: Gravel base parking lot and pole building

Updates this FY: Cedar girdling/removal

Planned Improvements: Cedar girdling and invasive species removal

Documented Use: Users have been spotted exploring this area and hunters have also been seen in the parking lot



Highway 61 Access – <1 acre

Location: Approximately two miles north of Wapello on the east side of the road.

911 Address: 10726 Highway 61, Wapello

Year Acquired: 1989

Acquisition Method: Quit Claim by Iowa DOT

Land Management Type(s): Boat Ramp

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: Maintained access to the Iowa River for fishing. No boat ramp is provided, but canoes/kayaks can be carried from the parking lot during most water levels/conditions.

Existing Facilities: Parking lot and access road

Updates this FY: Trimmed back woody trees from bank for better fishing access

Planned Improvements: Continued maintenance of bank growth and entrance road. The new highway will likely disturb this site and will need to be re-evaluated after construction

Documented Use: This access has many cars/trucks in the lot at many times of day. Especially during higher water events, this is used nearly all year.



Hoover Nature Trail – <1 acre

Location: Three major chunks – Morning Sun, Columbus Jct., and a disconnected section between Wapello and Columbus Jct.

911 Address: None

Year Acquired: 2006

Acquisition Method: Quit Claim by Hoover Nature Trail Inc.

Land Management Type(s): Trail

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: Morning Sun and Columbus Jct. portions are mowed and cleared, but the middle chunk is underdeveloped. A major management challenge is the crossing for Long Creek. These intersect and there is currently no way to cross Long Creek. Another challenge is disconnectedness. Two extremely small parcels need to be acquired in the middle to reconnect 3 miles of trail with gravel road access on either end.

Existing Facilities: Parking lot in Morning Sun and trail head at Louisa County Fairgrounds. The Morning Sun portion is roughly 3 miles one way, and the Columbus Junction portion is roughly 2 miles one way. The underdeveloped portion in the middle is 3 miles one way

Updates this FY: Staff cleaned many trees off the trail and mulched the sides as time and equipment allowed

Planned Improvements: Continued efforts to clear trails in a timely manner after storms and keep erosion to a minimum. Many portions are in dire need of renovations before the trail is completely lost. Plans include renovating major washouts and continued efforts to connect the underdeveloped portions to roadways – and each other – for public use.

Documented Use: Many cars are seen in the parking lots at Morning Sun and on the various lots in Columbus Jct. Hunters use this trail to access portions of Chinkapin Bluffs during squirrel season, especially.



Indian Slough Wildlife Area – 1,052 acres

Location: Three miles northwest of Wapello, Iowa

911 Address: 1225 L Avenue, Wapello (Main Access)

Year Acquired: 1985 - 1988

Acquisition Method: Wildlife Habitat Stamp Funds

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Bottomland, Prairie

Management Restrictions: Any type of development or use which does not provide, protect, or enhance wildlife habitat. Allowed uses are only compatible activities such as fishing, hunting, hiking, berry picking, etc.

Current management: For wildlife habitat purposes and compatible recreational uses such as hunting, fishing, hiking, cross-country skiing and trapping.

Existing Facilities Water control structures, access roads, four parking lots/access points (Rudisill, Main, Turkey Run, & Kuder Lake) and mowed trails. Equestrian use from May 21 to September 15 each year. Brandon Bark covered telephone poles are also located on the property for Indiana Bat research by the Iowa DOT.

Updates this FY: Trails were maintained, and a food plot (corn) was planted inside the bermed area. Introductory planning was also started to revamp the area and create a water control structure to increase water retention.

Planned Improvements: Improved trail signage for increased usability. We also want to plant more food plots here as drought conditions allow

Documented Use:



Langwood Education Center – 92 acres

Location: Three miles southeast of Grandview, Iowa

911 Address: 14019 H Ave, Wapello

Year Acquired: 2000

Acquisition Method: Cash

Land Management Type(s): Forest

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: For environmental education, outdoor recreation, and rental facilities. Youth groups are encouraged, particularly in conjunction with outdoor education programming, to use the area. Many private groups also rent the facility for reunions, weddings, campouts and more.



Existing Facilities Enclosed lodge with wood-burning stove, central heating and air, furnished with tables, chairs, fridge, stove, microwave, pots & pans and table service; unheated two-story A-frame dormitory with 21 cots, unheated bathhouse with four showers and 4 flushing toilets; five electrical hookups for campers; eight aluminum canoes; 6 kayaks; 2 bridges and a bird viewing blind.

Updates this FY: A new well pump was installed for clean drinking water in the lodge. A new driveway spot and drainage were installed near the lodge to reduce flooding and increase accessibility when parking. Small improvements were made to the pond drainage system to increase flow and control water levels. Also installed in the pond were stationary docks for accessibility to the pond edge for those with physical limitations. In the bathrooms, new toilets and self-closing stall doors were installed as well as a fresh coat of paint. New plumbing was also purchased due to the growing number of leaks.

Planned Improvements: A water softener will be installed this year, new sink and shower faucets, as well as a wheelchair accessible drinking fountain mounted on the lodge. Plans to fix the leaking roof on the bathroom are also underway. As usual, plans for replacing/repairing the lodge and bathrooms are taking place with the biggest concern being budget and long-term plans for future building(s).

Documented Use: There were 44 programs held at Langwood this year, many of which were multi-day events. See Reservation/Camping Data on page 27.



River Forks – <1 acre

Location: One mile east of Columbus Jct.

911 Address: 1001 Main St, Columbus Jct.

Year Acquired: 1973

Acquisition Method: Cash

Land Management Type(s): Boat ramp

Management Restrictions: None

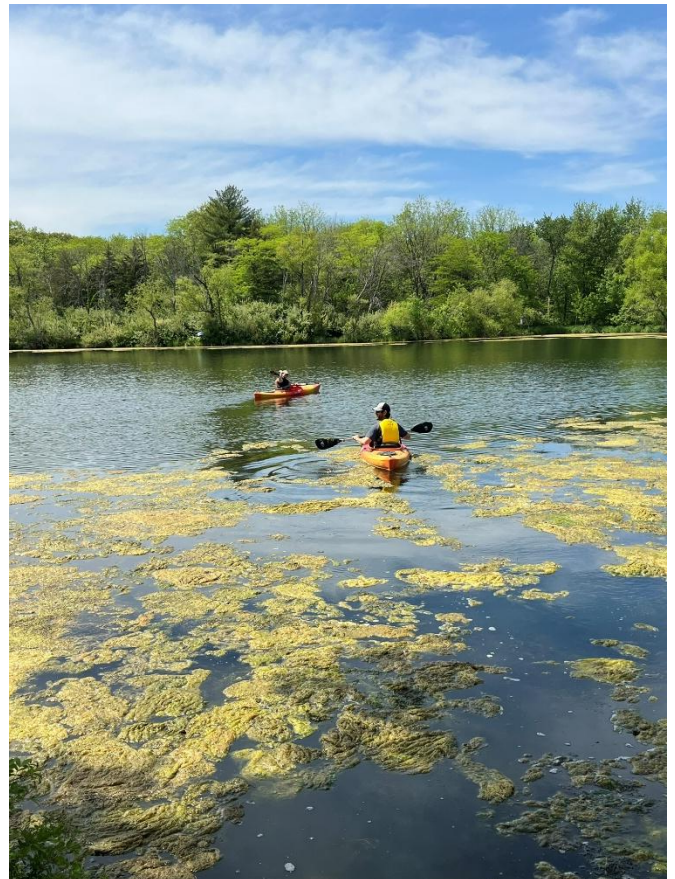
Current management: Managed as a boat ramp with area for picnicking. Boaters are allowed to primitively camp with permission

Existing Facilities Concrete boat ramp, parking lot, and bench along riverfront

Updates this FY: Continued mowing of the boat access parking lot

Planned Improvements: Improvements include adding rock to the parking lot, continued area leveling, and removing stumps from the center of the parking area

Documented Use: Many anglers, boaters, and visitors are often spotted near or on the boat ramp throughout the season



Snively Access & Campground – 6 acres

Location: On the west bank of the Odessa Wildlife Management Complex, four miles east of Wapello

911 Address: 9246 Co Rd X-61, Wapello

Management Agreement: Sub-lease agreement with the Iowa DNR through the US Corps of Engineers. 25-year lease expires 2032

Land Management Type(s): Camping and canoe/kayak access

Management Restrictions: Unable to keep earned profits. Any money LCCB earns from the site must be spent at the site, which includes rock, improvements, patrol, maintenance, admin, etc.

Current Management: Camping, day use picnic and fishing, and canoe/kayak launch site

Existing Facilities: Thirty-two gravel campsites with electric 20-30-50-amp, picnic tables & grills, latrine and three frost free water hydrants. Removable dock with benches and handicap accessible ramp.

Updates this FY: Staff removed many logs off the area after flooding occurred in July. After being closed for roughly 6 weeks, camping and use resumed as normal. The removable dock and kayak launch were installed and the hill to the campground was bladed a few times.

Planned Improvements: Staff plans to give the bathrooms a facelift and make them more sanitary and appealing for use.

Documented Use: Snively campground and boat access were used for 4 programs, including using it as a launch, docking area, picnic site, and more. See Reservation/Camping Data on page 27

Flooding Info: When the campground needs to be closed due to safety, refunds can be issued instead of the required “rain checks”. However, when users want to cancel for any other reason, refunds will not be issued. Instead, they will instead have the option to move dates or sites to accommodate their needs.



Toolesboro Mounds & Littleton Memorial – 5 acres

Location: Approximately 10 miles southeast of Wapello off County Road 99

911 Address: 6568 Toolesboro Avenue, Wapello

Management Agreement: Agreement in place with State Historical Society of Iowa since 1990 and is renegotiated annually. All expenses at the site are reimbursed, including staff and mowing.

Land Management Type(s): Burial mounds and granite monuments

Management Restrictions: No work may be done on the mounds which can cause damage or erosion/rutting. Mowing on the mounds is done very sparingly to accommodate these needs.

Current Management: Toolesboro is a National Historic Landmark to be used for the preservation and education of the unique cultural history found in Louisa County. The facilities are open to the public and often visited by travelers of the Great River Road/All American Road, historians, school field trips, the public and more. The Littleton Memorial is managed between the Louisa County Historical Society through LCCB, and the descendants of the Littleton family. LCCB does the mowing and trimming at these sites, as well as staffs the museum Wednesday – Sunday 12:30 – 4:30.

Existing Facilities: Two well-preserved burial mounds, a visitor center, and a small, restored prairie site. Also on the site is a nine-foot-tall black granite memorial. There are benches, flags, a trash can, and flowerbeds. In addition, there are six oak trees with engraved stones: one for each brother.

Updates this FY: Maintenance staff continued to mow and trim the area and worked on removing large portions of the stump in front of the museum. Museum staff continue to keep the museum clean and functioning as well as giving valuable information and tours to visitors.

Planned Improvements: We would like to burn the prairie this year to invigorate plant growth. Other site improvements include removing roots from around the lodge for easier maintenance and keeping the mounds cleaner and more attractive to visitors.

Documented Use: Toolesboro was open for 88 days and was visited by 447 individuals while open. There is no number for how many off-hour visitors were present. There are outdoor interpretive panels to learn about the mounds when not open. When visitors sign in, they are asked what state and/or country they are from. This year, 22 states were accounted for and 3 countries including France, Germany, and Switzerland. Two school programs were held this year.



Virginia Grove Recreation Area – 138 acres

Location: 10 miles southwest of Wapello

911 Address: 20406 55th Street, Morning Sun

Year Acquired: 1975 – 1978, 2023

Acquisition Method: Cash & LAWCON grant

Land Management Type(s): Forest, Prairie, Campground

Management Restrictions: None

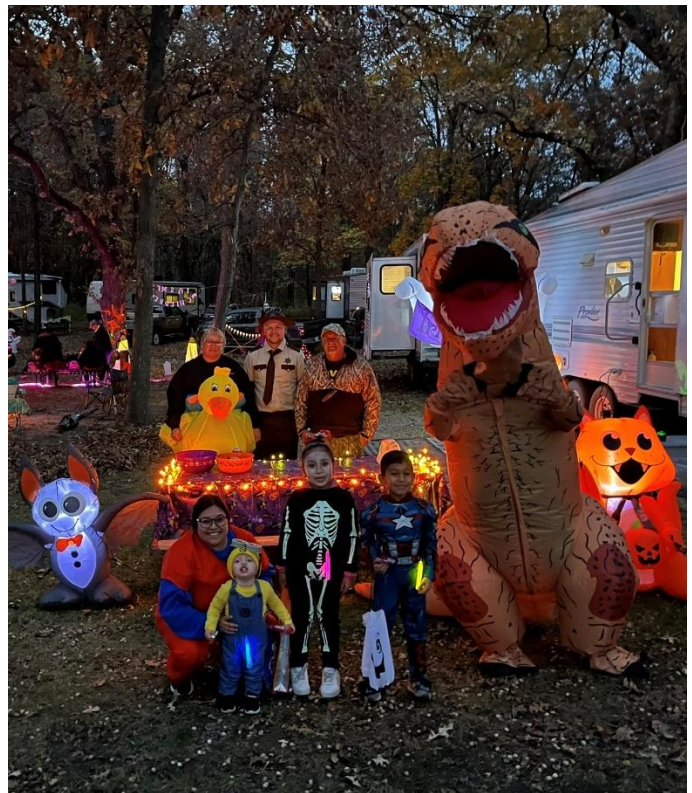
Current management: For multi-use recreation, including hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, hiking and education programs.

Existing Facilities: Two shelters; 11 camp sites with 20-30-50-amp service plus two non-electric campsites near the windmill; latrine (no running water in restroom); playground equipment; three frost-free hydrants; handicapped accessible fishing dock; one room schoolhouse; four footbridges, and a 3-acre pond.

Updates this FY: The skid steer and mulcher were used to widen trails and clear brush in many portions of the park. Invasive species (honeysuckle) were removed, and trails were reestablished after the timber harvest in past years. Camping stickers were updated, and the playground received a new tire swing.

Planned Improvements: Planned improvements include renovations to the restrooms for better experiences overall. Leaking roof and dingy facilities are making the need for porta-pots very high. To decrease costs, we will make the restrooms nicer and avoid the fee for porta-potties.

Documented Use: 9 programs were held at Virginia Grove including the Halloween Hike which brought over 150 people to the park. See Reservation/Camping Data on page 27.



Wetland Interpretive Trail – 40 acres

Location: Three miles southeast of Grandview, Iowa

911 Address: 14207 H Ave, Wapello

Year Acquired: 2008

Acquisition Method: Donated by Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation

Land Management Type(s): Prairie, Wetlands

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: Prairie and pond habitat for recreation and wildlife habitat

Existing Facilities: Visitors are allowed to fish the pond, hike the Wetland Interpretive Trail and the perimeter trail. There is a parking lot on the horseshoe driveway with a concrete pad and gazebo coming soon.

Updates this FY: With a donation from Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation and Carver Foundation, funding for an outdoor classroom was acquired and will be installed in the coming fiscal year.

Planned Improvements: We will do a better job this year of keeping the limestone trail clear of weeds and grass. This will help the overall esthetics and make a better experience for all. Also planned is a burn to keep willow, cottonwood, and cattails out of the prairie

Documented Use: Many users were seen parked in the parking lot at the WIT, and students also used the Interpretive Trail as part of their experience at Langwood.



LCCB Maintenance Shop – 1 acre

Location: Directly west of Wapello city limits behind the Farmers Elevator

911 Address: 8299 K Avenue, Wapello

Year Acquired: 1977

Acquisition Method: Unknown at this time

Land Management Type(s): Shop

Management Restrictions: None

Current management: Used for storage of equipment and vehicles and is a home base for the maintenance crew

Existing Facilities: Various buildings for storage

Updates this FY: The shop is undergoing small changes as management changes. General cleaning of the property will take time as parks take up most of priorities of the staff. This year some surplus equipment was sold to clean the property as well as to help balance the budget.

Planned Improvements: General overhaul of the exterior curb appeal is badly needed. New siding and roof are scheduled for next FY and removal of rip rap pile and moving some supplies off site are planned as time allows.



Environmental Education

The environmental education team yet again upheld the goals set forth by LCCB: to create environmentally knowledgeable and aware citizens who enjoy and wisely use our natural resources and contribute to a sustainable environment. We work toward this goal by promoting stewardship through various programs and events on conservation, recreation, and education. Naturalists provide a diversity of programs to a variety of audiences, ranging from school field trips and public programs to summer nature camps and civic groups.

Environmental Education in Louisa County can be broken into 7 major categories...

- School groups – includes field trips to Board areas, partner areas, as well as programs in the classroom
- Youth civic/private – Girl scouts, homeschool groups, etc.
- Adult civic/private – Motts, Care Initiatives, Colonial Manor, etc.
- Nature camps – registered, multi-day summer events
- Hunter education – in cooperation with DNR, to gain hunter education certificate
- National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) – facilitated by PE teachers, with LCCB equipment
- Public programs – Summer Reading, Trunk-or-Treat, Langwood Adventure Day, Halloween Hike, etc.

Overview: A total of 228 programs were administered this year to a total of 7,167 non-unique attendees.

School Groups: 113 programs and at least 1,306 **unique Louisa County** school group students attended a program or field trip at least one time. Naturalists see every student in Louisa County at least twice a year. With the addition of out-of-country students and classes getting multiple visits in a year, there were 5,333 non-unique school group attendees this year.

Youth and Adult Civic: 14 programs with 212 non-unique attendees.

Nature Camps: 10 programs with 109 unique attendees

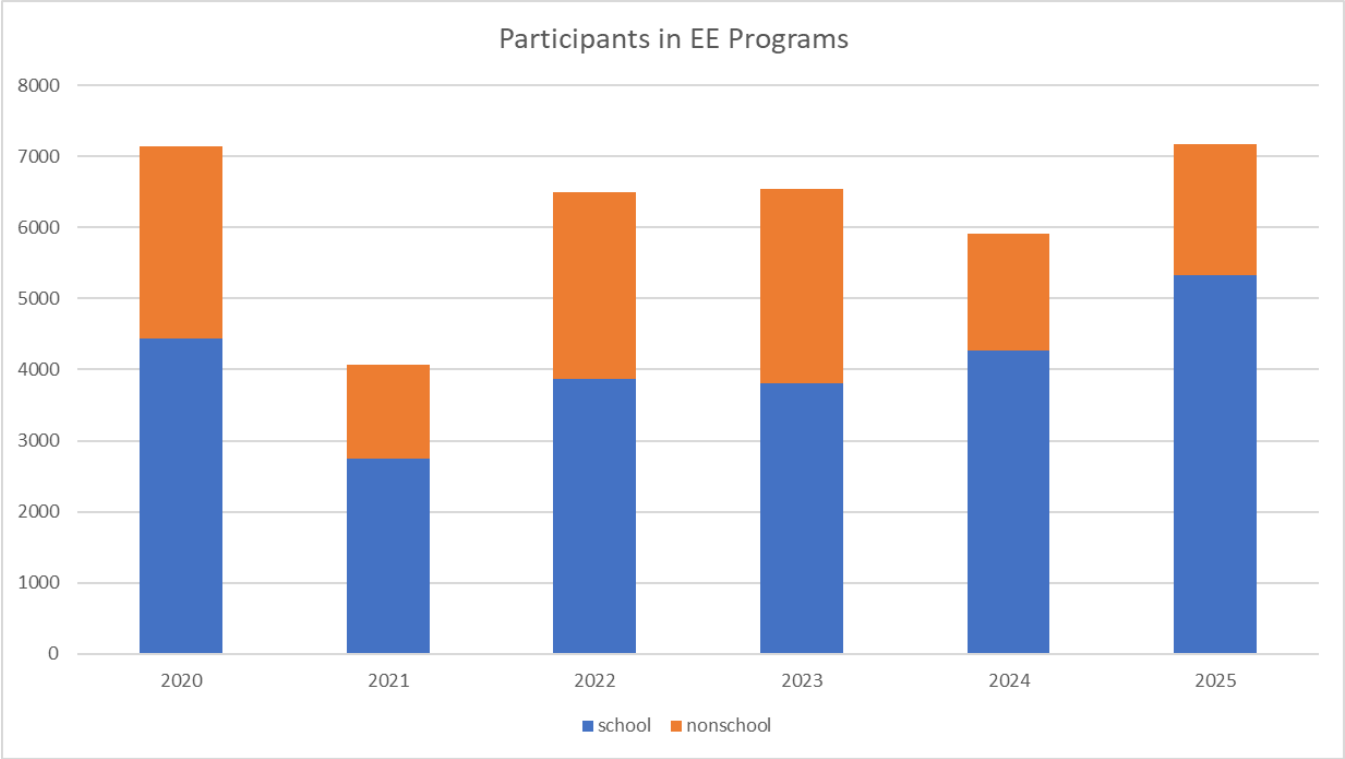
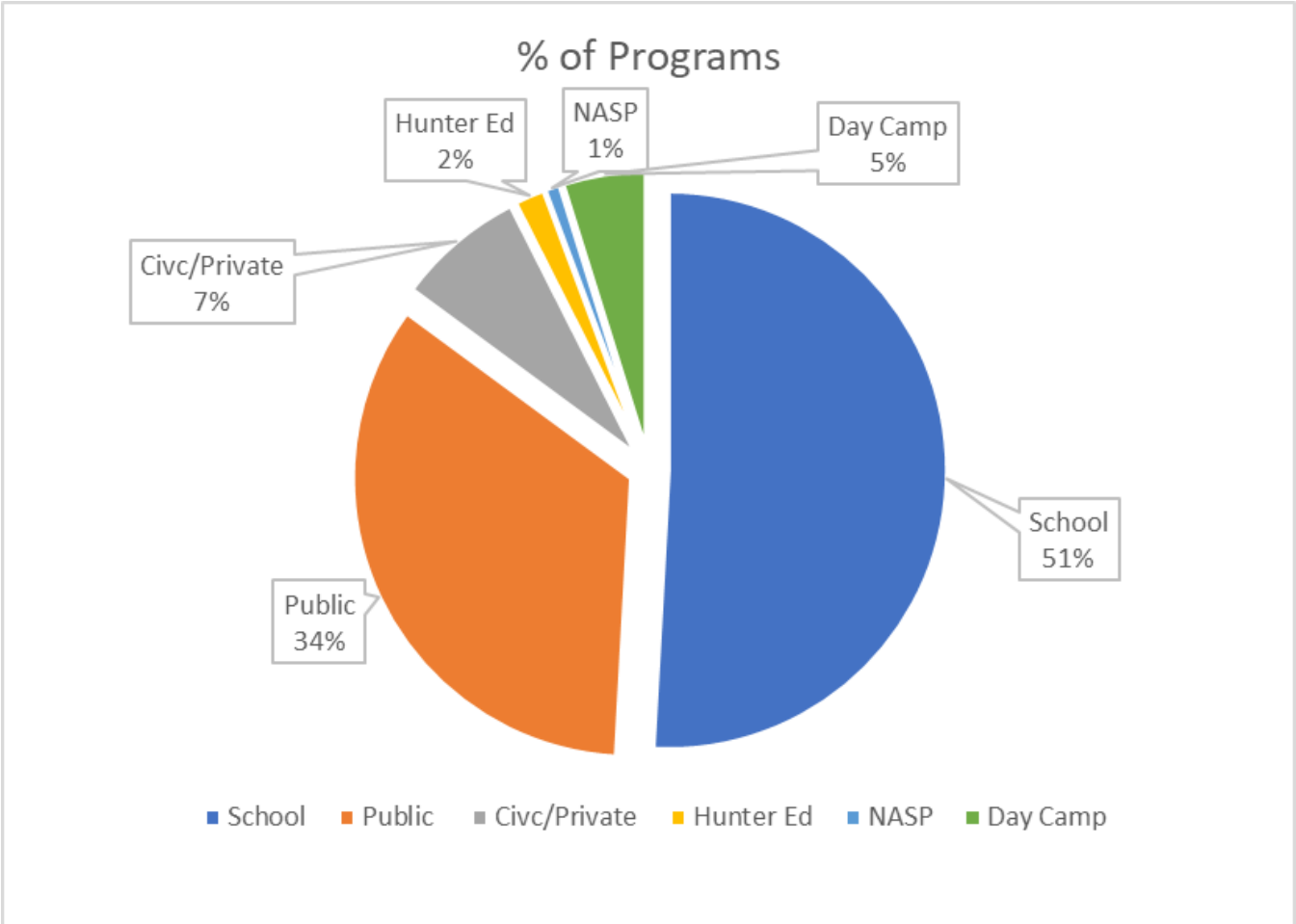
Hunter Education: 3 programs with 71 unique attendees

NASP: 2 programs with 95 unique attendees

Public Program: 78 programs with 1,319 non-unique attendees



Location	Programs	% of Programs	Participants
Classroom	62	27.8%	3006
Other Public	58	26.0%	1132
Langwood	44	19.7%	1138
Other Private	11	4.9%	150
Outdoor Classroom	9	4.0%	360
Virginia Grove	9	4.0%	214
Starrs Cave	5	2.2%	189
Chinkapin Bluffs	5	2.2%	142
Big Sand Mound	3	1.3%	113
Eden Park	3	1.3%	31
Odessa Water Trail	3	1.3%	12
Toolesboro	2	0.9%	105
Flaming Prairie	2	0.9%	46
Iowa River Water Trail	2	0.9%	7
Complex	2	0.9%	0
Snively/Odessa	1	0.4%	50
Wilson Prairie	1	0.4%	27
Snively	1	0.4%	0



Reservation/Camping Data

Camping Information

Snively: 1,960 camper use days and had \$11,698 in revenue. 205 reservations, 141 of which are unique

Virginia Grove: 1,236 camper use days and \$5,275 in revenue. 119 reservations, 67 of which are unique

Flaming Prairie: 227 camper use days and \$1,079 in revenue. 42 reservations, unknown unique guests

Shelter Information

Chinkapin Bluffs: 17 reservations and \$643 in revenue

Langwood Rentals

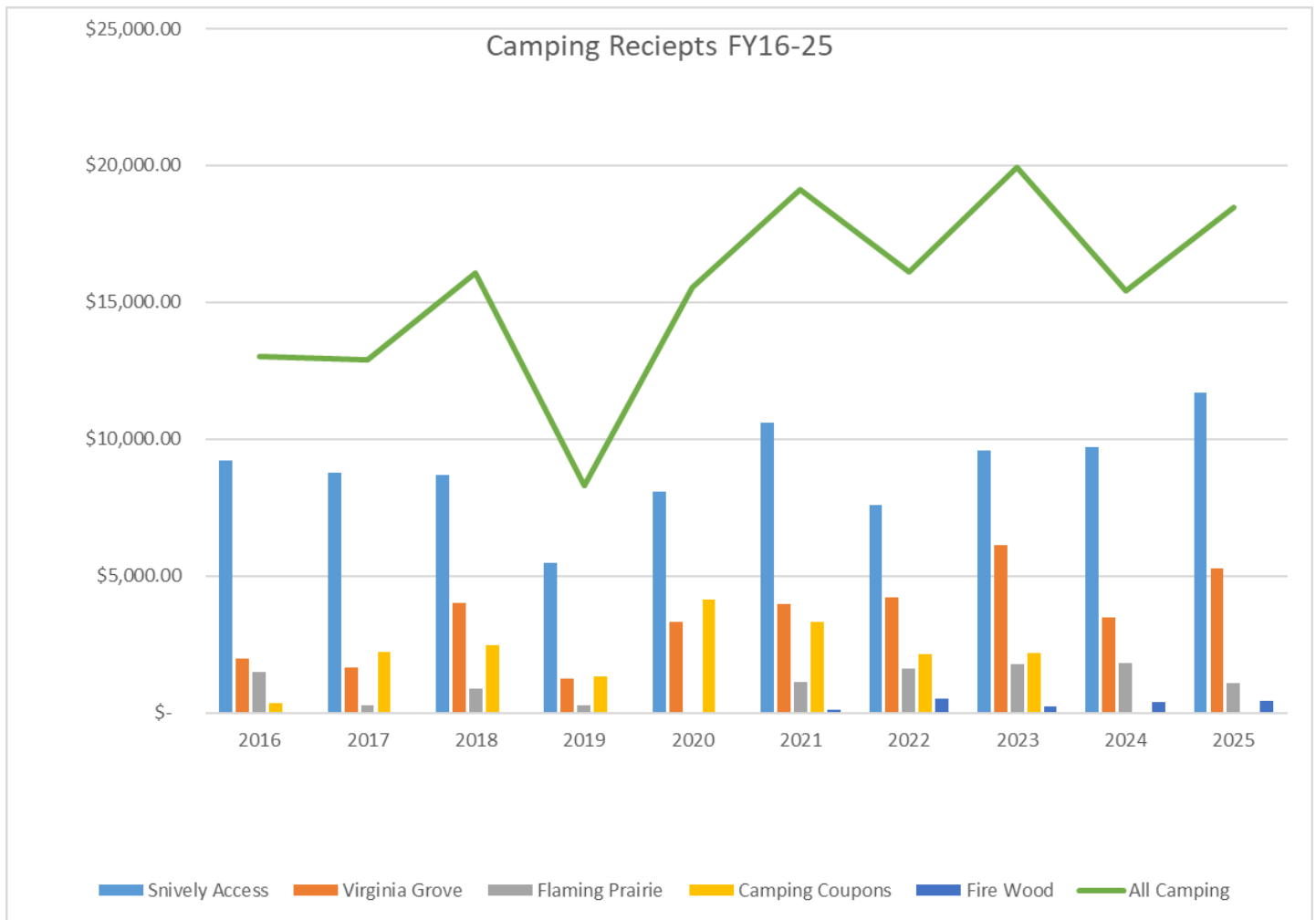
26 rentals and \$7,224.29 in revenue

Demographics

Snively Reservation Demographics		
County name	#	%
Louisa	68	33.2%
Muscatine	65	31.7%
Other State	22	10.7%
Scott	10	4.9%
Henry	9	4.4%
Johnson	7	3.4%
Washington	6	2.9%
Des Moines	3	1.5%
Linn	3	1.5%
Polk	3	1.5%
Lee	2	1.0%
Poweshiek	2	1.0%
Boone	1	0.5%
Cass	1	0.5%
Jones	1	0.5%
Pottawattamie	1	0.5%
Van Buren	1	0.5%
16 Iowa Counties, 12 states	205	100.0%

Virginia Grove Reservation Demographics		
County name	#	%
Louisa	61	51.3%
Henry	26	21.8%
Jackson	7	5.9%
Other State	7	5.9%
Muscatine	5	4.2%
Des Moines	3	2.5%
Washington	3	2.5%
Jasper	1	0.8%
Johnson	1	0.8%
Jones	1	0.8%
Keokuk	1	0.8%
Marion	1	0.8%
Poweshiek	1	0.8%
Scott	1	0.8%
13 Iowa Counties, 6 states	119	100.0%

Other states include: Oklahoma, Michigan, Wisconsin, Alabama, Washington, Illinois, Missouri, New Mexico, Nevada, Kansas, Florida, Louisiana, New York, Minnesota, and Massachusetts.



Langwood Reservation Use and Demographics			
Use Type	# Reservations	User County	# Reservations
General	8	Muscatine	12
Youth Campout	8	Louisa	8
Family Reunion	5	Johnson	2
Wedding	3	Des Moines	1
Youth Day Camp	2	Jefferson	1
Total	26	Linn	1
		Scott	1
Total Guests		915	
Average Guests per Reservation		36	

Financial Report

Financial Report - - General Basic Fund - Revenue		
Donations from Private Sources		
Wilson Prairie Interpretive Panels	\$	9,000.00
TriRivers MOU	\$	3,000.00
Columbus Junction United Fund	\$	835.00
ICAP Safety Grant	\$	995.06
Memorial Items	\$	2,668.50
CFLC - habitat	\$	3,306.41
CFLC - langwood	\$	6,876.92
Schlutz - langwood	\$	3,000.00
Walking Bridge Lumber	\$	100.00
Prescribed Fire Donation - TRCF	\$	266.00
Miscellaneous	\$	150.00
	\$	30,197.89
Camping Fees		
Snively Campground	\$	11,698.52
Flaming Prairie Campground	\$	1,079.35
Virginia Grove Campground	\$	5,275.67
Fire Wood	\$	426.00
Additional Deposit from account	\$	600.00
	\$	19,079.54
Shelter Fees		
Chinkapin Bluffs	\$	643.84
Flaming Prairie	\$	-
Virginia Grove	\$	-
	\$	643.84
Sale of Land/Buildings/Equipment/Etc	\$	8,925.57
Toolesboro Contract	\$	17,456.21
Land Rent		
Indian Slough - Hayes	\$	11,374.00
Cairo & Chinkapin - McLaughlin	\$	16,190.00
Kinder Morgan	\$	89.10
	\$	27,653.10
Equipment Rental		
Grass Drill	\$	60.00
Tree Planter	\$	95.00
	\$	155.00
Langwood Education Center		
Langwood Rentals - Overnight	\$	6,454.29
Langwood Rentals - Day Use	\$	450.00
RV Hook-ups	\$	320.00
	\$	7,224.29
Environmental Education		
Day Camp	\$	4,519.11
Toolesboro Donations	\$	173.00
Public Programs	\$	3,053.85
School Archery Rental Fee	\$	50.00
Newsletter Ads	\$	400.00
	\$	8,195.96
Miscellaneous	\$	134.97
Gas Tax	\$	580.20
Hotel Motel Excise Tax	\$	307.00
Total Conservation Revenue	\$	120,553.57

Financial Report - - General Basic Fund - Expense		
Administration		
Office Supplies / Publications	\$	2,708.39
Environmental Education	\$	11,313.57
Internet, Security, Phone Service	\$	3,709.66
Employee Continuing Education	\$	591.98
Dues, Permits, Physicals, etc.	\$	3,452.71
Drainage Fees	\$	4,258.00
	\$	26,034.31
Salaries		
Director	\$	59,999.93
Environmental Education Coordinator	\$	53,925.55
Naturalist	\$	46,277.12
Natural Resources Technician	\$	46,294.73
Naturalist Intern	\$	786.00
Seasonal 3-month Maintenance	\$	4,410.00
Seasonal 6-month Maintenance	\$	14,568.00
Office Manager (0.75)	\$	35,105.45
Toolesboro Staff	\$	4,838.62
	\$	266,205.40
Operations		
Fuel	\$	10,156.17
Minor Equipment	\$	631.94
Uniform	\$	210.54
Park and Shop Utilities	\$	10,858.80
Motor Vehicle Maint/Repair	\$	2,709.59
Operating Equipment Maint/Repair	\$	6,735.77
Park Maintenance/Grant Expense	\$	45,483.96
Toolesboro Maintenance	\$	46.93
Langwood Maintenance	\$	10,278.16
Eden Park Maintenance	\$	7,967.50
Snively Maintenance	\$	2,886.42
	\$	97,965.78
General Basic Expense	\$	390,205.49

Financial Report - - General Supplemental Fund - Expense		
General		
FICA (Director)	\$	4,249.47
IPERS (Director)	\$	5,664.09
Insurance (Director)	\$	19,730.54
FICA (Staff)	\$	15,403.68
IPERS (Staff)	\$	17,143.21
Insurance (Staff)	\$	21,337.02
Equipment/Liability Insurance	\$	23,875.20
Workers Comp	\$	5,559.05
General Sup Expense	\$	112,962.26

Financial Report - - Conservation - Expense		
General		
Gen Basic Expense	\$	390,205.49
Gen Sup Expense	\$	112,962.26
Total Conservation Expense	\$	503,167.75

Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP)	
Starting Balance	\$ 184,422.01
Revenue	
REAP CCB Allocation	\$ 7,588.00
REAP Per Capita Allocation	\$ 2,473.00
Interest on Investments	\$ 7,672.59
Total Revenue	\$ 17,733.59
Expense	
Naturalist Intern Salary	\$ 9,762.00
FICA	\$ 746.77
Improvements	\$ 2,160.00
Total Expense	\$ 12,668.77
Ending Balance	\$ 189,486.83
Conservation Reserve / Land Acquisition Fund	
Starting Balance	\$ 173,291.20
Revenue	
Transfer from GB to Reserve	\$ 60,876.72
Total Revenue	\$ 60,876.72
Expense	
Mabeus Addition Repayment to GB	\$ 40,000.00
Mower Lease	\$ 8,355.96
Total Expense	\$ 48,355.96
Ending Balance	\$ 185,811.96

Grants received by LCCB:

Orion Renewable Energy - \$9,000 – Wilson Prairie Interpretive Panel Trail

Iowa Communities Assurance Pool – \$995.06 – Safety Equipment

Community Foundations of Louisa County – \$3,306.41 – Habitat Grant

Community Foundations of Louisa County – \$6,876.92 – Langwood Accessibility

Schlutz Foundation – \$3,000 – Langwood Accessibility

Columbus United Fund – \$835 – Chinkapin Overlook Interpretive Panels

**Iowa Code 350.6 states that "Upon request of the county conservation board, the board of supervisors shall establish a reserve for county conservation land acquisition and capital improvement projects. Money credited to the reserve shall remain in the reserve until expended for the projects upon warrants requisitioned by the county conservation board." This Conservation Reserve Account, also called "Land Acquisition" allows a portion of revenue from gifts, contributions, and bequests of money, rent, licenses, fees, charges, and other revenues received by the county conservation board to be placed in this account to be carried over and used for land acquisition and capital improvements.*

Partners

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- United States Army Corps of Engineers
- State Historical Society of Iowa
- Louisa County Historical Society
- Louisa Regional Solid Waste Agency
- Tri-Rivers Conservation Foundation
- Iowa State University Extension
- U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- Louisa County Soil and Water Conservation District
- Louisa Development Group
- Pheasants Forever and Quail Forever
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Iowa's County Conservation Systems (ICCS)
- Many Iowa County Conservation Boards
- Louisa County Governmental Offices

Next FY...

With a recovering budget and different staff organization, listed below are some of the goals for the next fiscal year:

- More emphasis on natural resources conservation (TSI, pond maintenance, food plots, etc.)
- More rock on entrance roads
- Eden Park improvements including shelter and picnic area
- Revamp trail signage and road signs
- Snively and Virginia Grove bathroom renovations
- More burning as prairie management tool
- Increase weed control at playgrounds, parking lots, and campgrounds
- Explore options for Virginia Grove Schoolhouse restoration

Long-term goals include Langwood Lodge restoration with bathrooms, Hoover Nature Trail connections and overall better facilities across all the parks. The Board will continue to monitor grant opportunities to make these goals a reality.

Approved by the Louisa County Conservation Board at the meeting on Sept 8, 2025

Shawn Maine, Chair

Jacob Ewart, Director