

# IOWA'S COUNTY CONSERVATION SYSTEM

## JANUARY

NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 64. ISSUE 7.

### JOHNSON COUNTY HOSTS DISTRICT VI

## DATES

**January 24th-26th**  
Winterfest  
2023 – Coralville Hyatt

**January 31st**  
District 2 Meeting  
Wright County

**February 8th**  
MCP 101  
Zoom

**March 8th-10th**  
Spring IAN Meeting  
Sioux CCB

**March 9th-10th**  
Spring ISAC Des  
Moines

**September 19th-21st**  
2023 ICCS Fall  
Conference Hosted by  
Pottawattamie &  
Harrison CCBS  
Council Bluffs, IA

Thanks to Johnson County for hosting a full house at their district six winter meeting! Outstanding festive doughnuts and hot beverages helped hold off a looming winter storm!

Brad Friedhof, Johnson County Operations Supervisor, gave an expert rundown on how Johnson County was able to pass a \$20 million dollar bond issue and what they did with all the money. The Johnson County approach was to use these dollars to put the land first. From projects to acquisition prospects, they prioritized the highest ecological benefits and that has opened the door for all types of recreation, positive community relations, and brightened prospects for future Bonds.



After a district wide Fish Habitat Scoring session, Hazelton got up and gave another awesome ICCS update followed by a final sendoff with yet another a well-deserved ovation at the end! Shirley then stumbled his way through a few talking points, in awe of the moment. Ohh and lunch was also excellent...

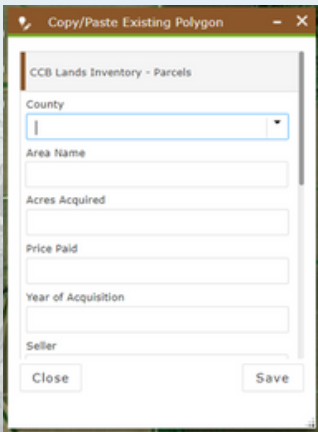
**Thanks Johnson County!**





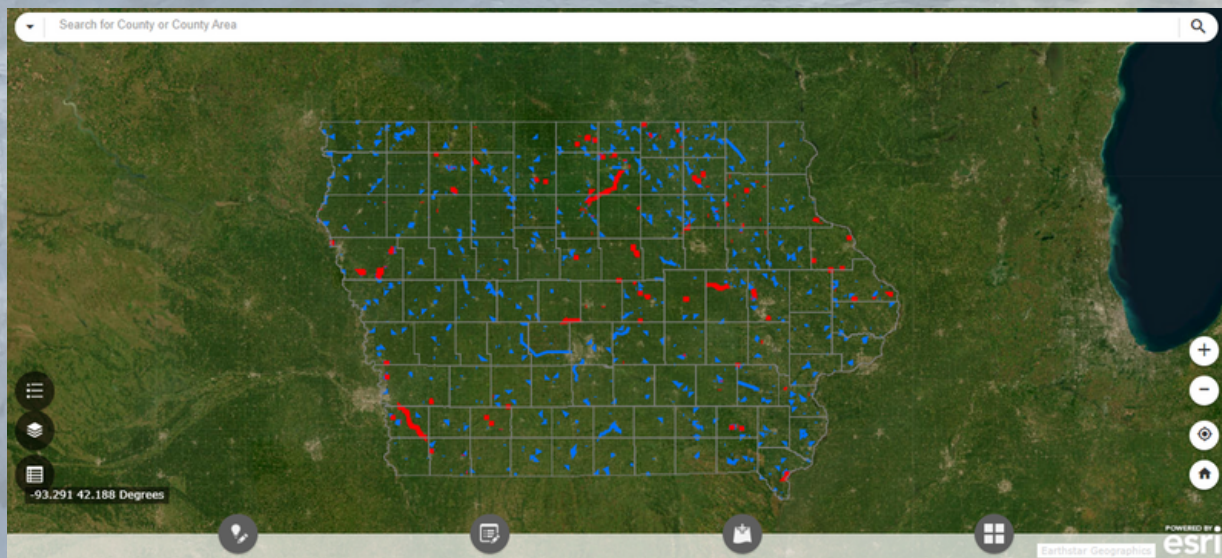
# IOWA DNR FACILITATES SF2323 REQUIREMENTS

*In 2022 Senate File 2323 "An act Relating to the inventory of lands managed or owned by the Department of Natural Resources or a County Conservation Board, and including applicability provisions" was signed by Governor Reynolds.*

A screenshot of a web application window titled "Copy/Paste Existing Polygon". Inside, there's a sub-header "CCB Lands Inventory - Parcels". Below this is a form with several input fields: "County" (a dropdown menu), "Area Name", "Acres Acquired", "Price Paid", "Year of Acquisition", and "Seller". At the bottom of the form are two buttons: "Close" and "Save".

To assist the CCBs with addressing the requirements in SF2323 the Iowa DNR has developed an online interactive web map called "CCB Land Inventory Mapper" that can be used to digitize CCB-owned land tracts and add attributes about the acquisition including: Acres Acquired, Price Paid, Year of Acquisition, Seller Name, and Funding Used. In addition to assisting with the required land inventory records, this online web application will also be the preferred method for CCBs to report land acquisitions, trades and divestitures to the Iowa DNR under Chapter 350.4(3) Iowa Code, replacing the old format of submitting the Word Document form.

This is not as much of a chore as it may seem. DNR has already digitized all acquisitions that were submitted historically and have included as much information as was provided by CCB's. ICCS and a few guinea pig Counties are testing the tool, thankfully so far it seems straight forward and easy to use! When the project is done, DNR will create a new tab on their website and this will be available as the **CCB Land Inventory**; another nice way for the public to find us! We are hopeful that the tool will go live soon after Winterfest...Stay tuned!





# WINTERFEST 2023



We are extremely fortunate to have a record number of Vendors, as well as Sponsors for Winterfest 2023! Twenty-eight Vendors will have their exhibits set up around the conference site next week for you to visit with and learn from. If you would like a sneak peak of who they are and where they will be – scan this adjacent QR Code and select “Vendor Listing & Booth Locations” from the options available. (Note: This QR Code will be accessible at numerous places around the conference venue for your convenient scanning opportunities)

County Conservation’s largest employee training and networking event continues to grow!



475 Participants registered  
28 Vendors (Most Ever)  
365 County Conservation employees  
76 Counties  
85+ career-path college students from nine college campuses.

Attendees are encouraged to stop by and visit with all these vendors - several will have raffles and hand-outs for those of you that do. ☺ We need to take time to express our thanks to them for attending, as well as supporting our industry through the Preferred Vendor Membership program and their sponsorships of our conferences. Preferred Vendors – part of ICCS since 1960!



## “MYCOUNTPARKS.COM 101” OUTSIDE OF WINTERFEST IN 2023!

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH / 9:00 – 11:00 AM / ICCS ZOOM ROOM



To offer more flexibility, and to accommodate work schedules MCP.com/ICCS will be offering a couple of orientation training programs online for 2023 in lieu of the one annual session at Winterfest. Join Internet Systems Administrator Tom Hazelton for this enlightening opportunity for employees that may be new to our CCB system and need to learn the basics about our award-winning website. Registration is Required for this **FREE** training and is available with additional information via the following link. Registrants will receive a direct email with the access link to the training a couple days in advance of February 8th. Thanks!

**REGISTRATION:** <https://www.mycountyparks.com/Org-Event/64/-MCP-com-101-Basic-Training.aspx>





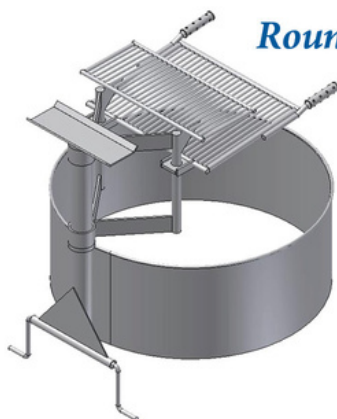
# KOSSUTH CCB LAUNCHES MCP.COM ONLINE RESERVATIONS

**CONGRATS** to the Kossuth CCB for all of their logistical and timely work over the past couple of months that culminated with their rollout of online facility reservations on January 12th! ☺ They added 83 facility pages to their portion of MyCountyParks.com, and launched 37 campsites for online reservations on schedule. They are also generating new QR Code signage for their campsite posts for both the reservable and non-reservable sites to allow patrons to access more information about the sites or to reserve them. They will be poised to take advantage of all the new marketing and promotion opportunities that will come with our new edition of MyCountyParks arriving later in 2023!



We are also working with **O'Brien CCB** – who has done a masterful job of digitally prepping their **EIGHT** cabin facilities for online reservability through MyCountyParks this spring! Both of these CCBs were able to take advantage of what other CCBs have brought to the online reservation system by “cherry-picking” best practices and ideas to come up with their own preferences and methods of getting these popular services available to a broader customer base.

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**Purchases from Iowa Prison Industries support our valuable work training programs, allowing Iowa's incarcerated men and women the opportunity for Building Brighter Futures.**



# ROOT DISPLAYS AVAILABLE



The Tallgrass Prairie Center is once again accepting applications from Iowa organizations including CCB's interested in obtaining a preserved prairie root for display and programming. Thanks to the support of the Iowa Living Roadway Trust Fund, a limited number of roots will be distributed **free-of-charge** to select applicants. Root recipients must complete creative displays and conduct impactful programming to help the public understand the important role of native root systems in today's rural and urban landscapes. Applications must be submitted by **February 15, 2023**. To learn more about the Prairie Roots Project, visit [www.tallgrassprairiecenter.org/prairie-roots-project](http://www.tallgrassprairiecenter.org/prairie-roots-project).



## RECOGNIZING LANDOWNERS IN YOUR COUNTY?

So many times, the lands Counties acquire that provide space for our Precious Parks, Trails, Wildlife and Recreation Opportunities come from generous landowners who have conservation at heart. They are the wise few who realize that the land belongs only to the future!

**The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** is now accepting names of individuals to be recognized at the **15th Annual Gift to Iowa Recognition Event**. The event will be held at the Capitol Building in Des Moines on March 22nd to honor landowners who have generously donated land, land value or a conservation easement in 2022 in order to place permanent conservation protections on their natural land.

Landowners will have the opportunity to meet the Governor, Lt. Governor and Director of the Iowa DNR and will receive a certificate of appreciation from the Governor. Legislators are also invited to attend the event to meet their constituents and often take the time to thank landowners for their generosity and commitment to the land.



[Whitney.Schuhardt@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Whitney.Schuhardt@dnr.iowa.gov)



# Old Faces New Places



**Mike Miner** takes over in **Mitchell CCB** as Executive Director after serving 10 plus years in the same capacity for **Butler CCB**. The move brought Mike and his family closer to his original home in neighboring **Howard County** where they still farm. Mike looks forward to bringing his knowledge and experience to serve **Mitchell County** and becoming part of the community.



**Matt Morris** is a lifelong resident of **Butler County** and started working for the CCB 11 years ago as a Park Tech. In 2018 he became the first Natural Resource Manager. Matt is married with two kids, ages 14 and 11. He loves everything to do with the outdoors and spends most of his free time hunting, fishing, golfing and boating. Matt recently accepted the job as Executive Director for the **Butler CCB**. He looks forward to leading the department and helping improve the quality of outdoor recreation opportunities within the county.



**Emily Herring** will become the Director of **Marshall CCB** on January 23rd. She has been in the conservation field for over 20 years. She is looking forward to improving **Marshall County Conservation** infrastructure, increasing natural resource management in county areas, and continuing the growth of natural public lands in **Marshall County**.

There are many things we would like to achieve together as **Co-Directors**. Our first priority will be reestablishing the trail system throughout **Sharon Bluffs State Park** which will include replacing steps and bridges. We will continue to improve our other parks as well, continuing to provide space for the residents of the county in their outdoor pursuits.

## **Hannah Wiltamuth**

Has worked in conservation more than 20 years. Her first conservation work after college was as an Environmental Educator at the Phoenix Zoo. "I loved seeing the excitement on kids' faces when they hear coyotes call or lions roar for the first time, and using these moments to connect people with the world around them". She started her career in Iowa in 2010 first, as the Interpretive Programs Director at Honey Creek Resort, and then as the Naturalist at **Appanoose County Conservation**. "I enjoy teaching various forms of outdoor skills, recreation, and the natural history of Iowa."



## **Austin Hoffman**

started in 2008 as a seasonal for the **Appanoose CCB** and continued through college years at **Northwest Missouri State**. Since then he has served as Technician, Interim Co-Director to now Co-director. "The outdoors and conservation have always been a big part of who I am. It is a topic and one of the main focal points that is constantly on my mind. I enjoy introducing new people to the outdoors in multiple ways to help preserve and protect our great state for many generations to come."





**Chris Clingan** is really excited about taking on the challenges of being the new Director for **Mahaska County Conservation!** "Dave has done a great job in making the transition a smooth one. I have many goals in the next year, but my main one is to build relationships with staff and other partners to enhance our potential to serve the Mahaska County residents. I would like to wish Dave the best in his retirement! It is well deserved!"

"I grew up about 20 miles away from the Mahaska county conservation Headquarters, So when this opportunity became available I couldn't pass it up! Its nice to be part of the county conservation system once again. I'm looking forward to seeing some familiar faces and also meeting some new ones."

## RETIREMENTS



**Mike Stegmann**, Director of the **Marshall County Conservation Board** will be retiring on January 20 after 18 years as director and 30 years in the natural resource field. Focus over the years for Mike has been natural lands acquisitions and reclamation. Marshall County has nearly no state and federal lands so the MCCB is the sole provider of outdoor recreation opportunities in the county. Mikes proudest accomplishments are the addition to Marietta Sand Prairie, Iowa River Wildlife Area and the collaborative efforts with incoming director Emily Herring on the newly acquired Mann Wetlands. He is also proud of the staffs accomplishments through the years with education and maintenance of MCCB facilities. Mike will be turning to full time work as a taxidermist specializing in birds



**Dave Sedivec** was a temporary worker for the Iowa Conservation Commission for 27 months before being hired to work at the Missouri River Wildlife Unit. He spent 5 years as the Park Ranger at Lake Hendricks for Howard County CCB, then spent 15 years as a Park Ranger for Chickasaw CCB. I was hired as Director for Mahaska county in 2010.

"I have been fortunate to work in every corner of the state, and get to appreciate all that this state has to offer. I would like to thank all of the dedicated professionals in the field that have helped me through the years. There's not enough space here to list all of you, and many of you probably don't realize the positive influence that you have had. I am looking forward to my next chapter, and with any luck, I may be able to influence someone myself".



**Dawn Snyder** " I never expected to stay in Woodbury County for 34+ years but the opportunities, resources, people, and partnerships allowed me to establish and grow the WCCB Environmental Education program to what it is today. The Dorothy Pecaut Nature Center, Discovery Forest Nature Playscape, Outdoor Raptor House, and Nature Calls fundraiser were among my most memorable highlights, in addition to seeing my own children grow and appreciate our natural world. It has been a distinct honor and amazing journey to be a part of this process from day one. I especially am proud and grateful to have worked in Iowa's County Conservation System...the best in the nation!"



## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

### 11. Full Time Positions

1. Poweshiek County- Conservation Technician
- 2.Scott County- Park Ranger- \$5,000 Bonus for Certified Officers
- 3.Calhoun County- Maintenance Technician II/ Ranger
- 4.Marshall County- Interpretive Naturalist
- 5.Woodbury County- Naturalist I

6. Des Moines County- Watershed Coordinator
7. Clinton County-Naturalist
8. Louisa County-Naturalist
- 9 .O'Brien County- Educator/ Naturalist
10. Polk County- Conservation Laborer
11. Polk County-Facility Attendant
- 60 plus Seasonal positions on Website!!**

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/Jobs/Default.aspx>