

## Our Mission

The McHenry County Conservation District exists to preserve, restore and manage natural areas and open spaces for their intrinsic value and for the benefits to present and future generations.

## Our Vision

By the year 2020, McHenry County Conservation District will be a premiere public agency in the country for preserving, protecting and managing open space. Residents will have developed a personal responsibility for their local environment, gained a greater appreciation for their natural world and invested into ensuring its future protection. Achieving this vision will:

- Inspire respect for the land;
- Promote sound environmental practices;
- Promote the long-term viability of the county's biodiversity;
- Provide opportunities for responsible use of the land in concert with natural resources;
- Promote environmental stewardship;
- Provide quality experiences that promote green, healthy and balanced lifestyles;
- Connect children to nature and;
- Foster public and private partnerships.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Elizabeth S. Kessler  
Executive Director

## Upcoming Board Meetings

September 15 | October 20 | November 17

Brookdale Administrative Offices  
18410 US Hwy. 14, Woodstock  
815.338.6223

Executive Session begins at 6 p.m.  
Public Session start varies by agenda, posted  
on our website and at the District office.



McHenry County  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

## Message From the President

Memories of a cherished experience can often serve as a valuable perspective to a current place or time.

As the District celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, recall a moment when you were impacted by a facet of the Conservation District's mission: What aspect of preservation, education or recreation has had a strong meaning for you?

The wide variety of potential responses to such a question is a tribute to the wide open spaces interwoven throughout our communities. Perhaps our recollections are a reflection of nature's resilience or delicacy. Perhaps our recollections are a reflection of our curiosity or inspirations. Perhaps our recollections are a reflection of adventure or turmoil. Hopefully, our thoughts can provide us with some perspective on how nature plays a formative, and at times, unexpected role within our lives!

At some point within the weeks ahead, amidst the promise of the impending fall season, make it a point to connect with a new experience in the wide open spaces that surround us. The moments available to our self or our families can often be fleeting. Take advantage now of opportunities that are scheduled, or recognize a call for some spontaneity.

Learn and discover more about a site that has been a mainstay in your outdoor pursuits. Explore the unknowns at a destination yet to be experienced. Take advantage of a recreational amenity that intrigues you. Participate in a site restoration workday. Register and volunteer as a part of a natural and interpretive history program or event. Introduce someone else to what has helped create some of your favorite experiences in nature.

Chances are there is some aspect of these wide open places, that we at times take for granted. Now is the perfect time to find it. Continue to get out, experience, cherish and connect!

Sincerely,

Kevin Ivers  
Board President



**Landscapes** is a FREE publication. To subscribe or update your contact info: email [MCCD@MCCDistrict.org](mailto:MCCD@MCCDistrict.org) or call (815) 338-6223. The publication can also be read online at [MCCDistrict.org](http://MCCDistrict.org).

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*Printed with soy ink on partially recycled paper, minimum 10% pcw.*

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Sign up for our E-newsletter at  
[www.MCCDistrict.org](http://www.MCCDistrict.org)



## Join Us!

McHenry County Conservation Foundation was established in 2000 to help promote the goals and objectives of the McHenry County Conservation District in the area of land protection, management, conservation education, and research. The foundation plays a key role in protecting and preserving our natural heritage through such programs as grant support, fund raising and membership development.

The Foundation welcomes charitable gifts and memberships to assist in their goal to protect the quality of life, property values, air and water quality, and open space throughout the county. Support of McHenry County Conservation Foundation ensures the future protection of our natural heritage.

Visit [www.mchenryconservation.org](http://www.mchenryconservation.org) to find out how you can help.

*McHenry County Conservation Foundation is a recognized not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization.*

McHenry County Conservation Foundation P.O. Box 1108,  
Woodstock, IL 60098 | (815) 759-9390



## Gaining Ground:

The Conservation District currently manages 25,019 acres.

### Private donations aid recent purchases.

In April, 13 acres of oak and hickory woodland zoned for residential development and directly north of the Wildlife Resource Center was acquired. A \$400,000 donation in memory of Harvey J. Rosen was instrumental in the preservation of this site. There is now a Preservation Covenant on the property that ensures that the site will be maintained and preserved in its natural condition in perpetuity. The site is in Hebron Township and will be part of Grundstrom Woods Conservation Area within the Nippersink watershed.

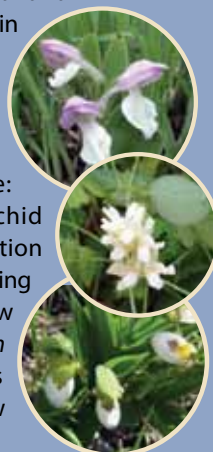
In June the Conservation District acquired 43.7 acres located at 13703 Rt. 173, in Hebron Township. It includes nearly 1/2 mile stretch of Nippersink Creek and is part of the newly opened Winding Creek Conservation Area. A bequest from the estate of Earl G. Smith was used to fund roughly 70% of the purchase.

A second parcel, 21.8 acres in size, was also acquired in June, located at the northwest corner of Harts Road and Rt. 31 at the main entrance to Glacial Park, in Ringwood. A bequest from the Louis E. Marchi Declaration of Trust totaling \$266,666, designated for land acquisition, was applied to assist with part of the acquisition. The site is in Richmond Township in the Nippersink watershed and will be considered part of Glacial Park.

2010-2011 annual report available online in September at [MCCDistrict.org](http://MCCDistrict.org) under About Us/Publications.

## News and Noteworthy:

This past spring more new rare plant discoveries were made than over the past five years. The plants were discovered on sites where land management activities such as prescribed burning, brush removal, and exotic species control have occurred—evidence that continued land management activities are necessary for rare plant survival and that our methods are successful in providing the necessary growing conditions for these plants to show up in places that we have never seen them before! The recently discovered include: *Orchis spectabilis*, showy orchid (state rare)—1 new subpopulation *Lathyrus ochroleucus*, pale vetchling (state threatened)—1 new subpopulation *Cypripedium candidum*, white lady slippers (state threatened)—5 new subpopulations.



### Go for the GOLD —

It's official, the "green" improvements made to the Lost Valley Visitor Center in Glacial Park received the Gold Level of LEED Certification as outlined by the United States Green Building Council's program that recognizes Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, a distinction carried by a select group of sustainable and innovative buildings.

## People Making A Difference



### Employee of the Season— Executive Assistant Anne Basten

was recently recognized by staff for her outgoing attitude, willingness to assist other departments, and offers to volunteer for multiple committees, programs and special events. Anne also exemplifies a green lifestyle at work and at home. In addition to setting up the compost collection system at District facilities, she is a volunteer site steward, assists with controlled burns, and is a member of several conservation-minded organizations.

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On the Cover — Yellow coneflowers (*Ratibida pinnata*) and hikers at Pleasant Valley, photo by Kevin Horner



### What happened to the Marsh?

The marsh, located along Valley Road and visible from the Lost Valley Visitor Center, will be undergoing restoration work this summer. Initial restoration work in 1995 removed some subsurface drainage tiles to re-create marsh hydrology; however in-holdings within Glacial Park at the time did not allow complete removal of those tiles. The purchase of the 33-acre Lost Valley Visitor Center parcel in 2006 now allows the restoration of the marsh to be completed.

The artificial pond directly below the deck was created in the 1950's to channel spring water away from plowed fields in order to make them easier to farm. A surface headwater stream that once flowed through the marsh was also placed underground in a large tile to feed the pond.

This summer the pond was re-contoured, which allows it to be reconnected to the larger marsh so it will return to its former status as a natural wetland habitat. The headwater stream will also be brought back to the surface to flow into its former channel.

Each time you visit Lost Valley Visitor Center follow the changes to these two wetlands.

### Fel-Pro RRR Conservation Area, Cary — Reopening Summer 2012

Located at 1520 Crystal Lake Rd., Cary, updates to the Fel-Pro RRR early morning parking began this summer. The new and improved entrance will reopen Summer 2012. A new parking lot with automatic gates, a .32 mile ADA-looped trail with two seating areas, three rain gardens, restroom, picnic shelter with grill and solar lighting, bike rack at trailhead, and drinking fountain are planned.

### Dufield Pond Conservation Area—McConnell Rd. Entrance, Woodstock —Construction beginning Spring/Summer 2012

Located between Country Club Rd. and McConnell Rd. in Woodstock, this intimate site features a 7 acre pond that attracts local fishermen. The Country Club Road entrance will receive a complete redevelopment, improvements include a new 9 car parking lot, restroom, and boardwalk that stretches along the entire north shoreline of the pond allowing fishermen better access to the water. A new entrance drive and 11-car parking lot is also being added off McConnell Rd., providing an opportunity to experience the site from a completely different perspective. A .75 mile wooded nature trail, courtyard with seating and restroom are included. Due to the wetlands, trails from either side will not connect. There is no access to the pond from the McConnell Rd. entrance.

### Boone Creek Conservation Area, Bull Valley —Construction beginning Summer 2012; Opening 2014

Located between Rt. 120, Bull Valley Rd., and Cold Springs Rd. in Bull Valley. The site helps to protect the valuable natural resources of Boone Creek and its headwater stream system. The new site plan offers an array of recreational opportunities including hiking, fishing, picnicking, birding, and horseback riding. This past spring and summer in preparation of adding site improvements brush clearing was completed as well as debris removal. Construction is anticipated to begin summer 2012 with the site opening in 2014. Parking lot, restroom, picnic shelter, observation area with viewing scope, and a fishing pier all fully ADA accessible, as well as 1.75 miles of hiking trails are planned.

### Ridgefield Trace Phase II, Crystal Lake —Opening 2012

Currently the regional bike trail known as Ridgefield Trace runs 2 miles along the north side of Route 14 from McHenry County College to just before Oak St. in Crystal Lake. Construction of Phase II of Ridgefield Trace will begin this fall which will extend the trail from Oak St. eastbound to Veteran Acres in Crystal Lake, and opened for use in 2012.

