



POLK  
COUNTY  
CONSERVATION

*Leading You Outdoors*



*Annual Report*  
*July 2009 - June 2010*



## *A Year at a Glance...*

Jester Park Master Plan efforts wrapped up in December of 2009. The Board and staff will use this plan to help guide future park improvements. Master plan efforts also began for both Thomas Mitchell and Yellow Banks Parks. Staff conducted the public input portion of the plan and hired RDG Planning & Design to complete the narrative and graphic design elements. We are well on our way to completing master plans for all of our major parks and prioritizing park improvements county-wide.

Comprehensive efforts also continue on our regional trail system in Polk County and Central Iowa. It was a busy year continuing construction on the Ankeny to Woodward Trail (now known as the High Trestle Trail) between Highway 17 and Woodward. Bridge and bridge art construction continued at a rapid rate. Progress also continued on the Gay Lea Wilson Trail (Des Moines to Ankeny and Neal Smith to Ankeny sections). Grant efforts also centered around constructing a trail around Easter Lake. Trail use continues to be very important to the health and well-being of Central Iowans. Polk County Conservation is just one of the many partners that support these efforts.

Polk County Conservation relies heavily on our partners. Public, private, and other governmental agencies assist with special projects, help us leverage funds, provide park and trail maintenance, partner on land purchases and restoration efforts, and manage some of our most popular facilities. Private management contracts for the Jester Park Lodge and Jester Park Golf Course have resulted in enhanced services to the public and supplemental resources for conservation and recreation projects. This is the perfect time to extend a sincere thank you to the many partners, volunteers, and supporters who work diligently with us in support of what we do. Our accomplishments and successes increase two-fold when we work together...all for the greater good of Polk County citizens and future generations.



## *Annual Highlights*

### Organization Development

- ◆ RDG Planning and Design was hired to provide the narrative and graphic support services for the Jester Park Master Plan. The Master Plan was Board approved in December of 2009.
- ◆ Polk County hired a federal lobbyist group by the name of Federal Advocates. Conservation worked with the county to put a trail enhancements package together that totaled \$5-6 million dollars. The trail around Easter Lake Park and the Gay Lea Wilson Trail were the two trails included in the package and the goal was to have the projects funded as part of the Transportation Bill (SafeTea-LU) reauthorization.
- ◆ The Accounting Technician position was reclassified to Accountant in December of 2009. Carol Ann Carlson was hired as the Accountant in February of 2010.
- ◆ RDG Planning and Design was hired to provide narrative and graphic support services for the Yellow Banks Park and Thomas Mitchell Park Master Plans.

### Recreation Enhancement

- ◆ High Trestle Trail and bridge construction continued at a rapid pace between the cities of Madrid and Woodward. A revised bridge artwork contract with RDG Dahlquist Studios was approved in March of 2010. Contract approval also occurred for engineering services and interpretive design services for the HTT Scenic Overlook. Snyder and Associates was hired to engineer the overlook area on the bridge and Shive Hattery was hired to design the interpretive panels that will be welded to the bridge near the overlook.
- ◆ Polk County Conservation received Transportation Enhancement Funds for construction of the Neal Smith to Ankeny portion of the Gay Lea Wilson Trail. Reilly Construction was awarded the construction contract for this trail and Snyder and Associates was selected as construction managers.
- ◆ PCCB was notified in May of 2010 that we were awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant for the Jester Park Bison and Elk Exhibit for approximately \$60,000. Improvements to this exhibit will include an accessible observation deck, informational kiosk, educational panels, interactive displays, high quality art components and an inviting viewing and picnicking area.



## *Annual Highlights*

### Conservation Education

- ◆ Cross-country skis and snowshoes were purchased by the Environmental Education Unit in December of 2009 and made available for public rental. The equipment rental program was designed to make it easier for the public to get outdoors and learn a new skill. Public response was very positive.
- ◆ The EE Unit was awarded a Healthy Polk 20/20 grant called Steppin' Out in the amount of \$12,111. The goals of the grant were to encourage teenage youth to spend more time outdoors exercising and provide them with ways to be physically active, along with giving youngsters the opportunity to have fun outdoors. Program evaluations did indicate that goals were met. The importance of outdoor health was at the forefront of this grant and a good model for future initiatives.

### Resource Enhancement

- ◆ HG Golf Properties continued capital improvements at the Jester Park Golf Course as part of their contract with Polk County Conservation Board. Sand bunker renovations and additions, drainage and irrigation improvements, and landscaping work was performed at holes #6, 7, 10, and 17. PCCB also authorized the renting of the golf course residence to an HG Properties' employee.
- ◆ Christiani's Catering, LTD. was awarded an extended management agreement to manage the Jester Park Lodge through 2016. Various facility improvements were outlined in the management agreement where Christiani's would pay for material costs and PCC would provide labor. Slated improvements include construction of a 24' x 38' storage building west of the Lodge and an exterior deck expansion.
- ◆ Board members approved the Director to sign and finalize a memorandum of understanding with the Central Iowa Trails Association (CITA) on the design and maintenance of single track trails at the Sycamore Mountain Bike Trail.



## *Annual Highlights*

### Land Protection and Restoration

- ◆ Conservation signed a memo of understanding with Global Spectrum to assist with landscaping at the Iowa Events Center. The funds derived from the MOU are used to supplement seasonal staffing and supplies for the Natural Resources Unit.
- ◆ PCC accepted a land donation of 10 acres from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation that was located approximately 1/2 mile southwest of Engeldinger Marsh. This donation satisfied some of the mitigation efforts associated with the Hwy 65 bypass road project. PCC also purchased a 30-acre piece of land immediately adjacent to the shooting range at Chichaqua that joins two sections of land that now allows full access to the formerly isolated section.
- ◆ A Fish Habitat Stamp Fund grant was awarded by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in early 2010 for the Thomas Mitchell Park Pond. These improvements will coincide with the Watershed Improvement Review Board grant. Funds will build a rock sill at the NW portion of the pond to help control the inflow of water and help hold back sediment and also give anglers access to the south side of the pond. Other items to be installed include rock piles, cedar trees, spawning area, and bank armoring.
- ◆ Drake University contracted with PCC to conduct a research project at Chichaqua's Sand Hill Unit to monitor the reintroduction of the ornate box turtle, a state special concern species. The turtles were relocated to Chichaqua from Iowa City in 2003 when their habitat was threatened. Research did not indicate that nests were found; however, indirect evidence was found in the form of several young turtles that were under four years old. This does suggest that re-population has been successful. Continued research efforts will take place in coming years.
- ◆ PCC partnered with Ducks Unlimited and other North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant partners to enhance 288 acres of critical migratory bird breeding and migration habitat at Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt. The sites were strategically targeted and will restore 88 acres of wetland and 200 acres of upland habitat. Approximately \$150,000 worth of work will be completed and includes ground preparation, seeding, installation of a water control cover, wetland enhancement and well modification/repair.



## *Annual Highlights*

### Infrastructure

- ◆ Numerous FEMA repair projects continued during this fiscal year. Some noteworthy projects included the Trestle to Trestle Trail and Yellow Banks Park Boat Ramp.
- ◆ Site improvements were made to Yellow Banks Park Campground #1. Electric upgrades were made to accommodate larger RV's and sites were enlarged and improved. In previous years, site improvements have also been completed at Jester, Chichaqua, and Thomas Mitchell Parks.
- ◆ Major interior and exterior renovations were completed to the Chichaqua Longhouse. Renovations included a new steel roof coating, floor epoxy, exterior siding & stonework, and window/door replacement.
- ◆ The Equestrian Center stables and arena entrance received accessibility upgrades to better accommodate visitors and clients requiring special assistance. Covered roofs were constructed for both the stables and indoor arena entrances, along with associated concrete work. Also at this time, a 28' x 24' steel shelter was relocated from the Jester Park Lodge to the Equestrian Center (north of the indoor arena).
- ◆ PCC's first pre-cast CXT vault latrines were placed at Yellow Banks Park Shelter #3 and at the Scout Camp/Water Trail Area. More of these durable and "sweet-smelling" latrines will be installed in the park system as funds become available.



# Jester Park Golf Course Financials

**Polk County Comprehensive Annual Financial Report  
Combining Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets  
For the Year Ended June 30, 2010**

**OPERATING REVENUES:**

Charges for goods and services:	
Charges for services	0
Commissions Income	235,021
Miscellaneous	1,451
Total operating revenues:	236,472

**OPERATING EXPENSES:**

Cost of good and services:	
Personal Services	4,020
Supplies	10,177
Professional Services	19
Other Services/charges	5,801
Cost of goods sold-concessions	0
Miscellaneous	0
Depreciation	45,879
Total operating expenses	65,896

**OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)** 170,576

**NONOPERATING REVENUE (EXPENSES)**

Intergovernmental	
Interest Revenue	4,559
Interest Expense	
Gain on Sale of capital assets	
Total nonoperating revenues (expenses)	4,559

**INCOME (LOSS) BEFORE TRANSFERS** 175,135

**TRANSFERS:**

Capital contribution from other funds	0
Capital contribution to other funds	-467,000
Total transfers	-467,000

**CHANGE IN NET ASSETS** -291,865

**TOTAL NET ASSETS - BEGINNING** 1,580,170

**TOTAL NET ASSETS - ENDING** 1,288,305



# Financial Statement- Revenue

REVENUES:	General Basic	General Supp.	Insurance	Reserve	REAP	TOTALS
<b>Property Taxes</b>	\$ 2,916,424	\$ 787,810	\$ 171,863	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 3,876,097
Recreational Fees	571,266	0	0	0	0	571,266
Concessions	39,605	0	0	0	0	39,605
Environmental Protection Agency Grants	17,642	0	0	0	0	17,642
Miscellaneous Federal Grants	13,450	0	0	670,586	0	684,036
Miscellaneous State Grants & Reimbursements	47,548	0	0	2,020,303	0	2,067,851
Land Rent	24,115	0	0	0	0	24,115
Building & Shelter Rentals	107,219	0	0	0	0	107,219
Equipment & Machinery Rentals	1,891	0	0	0	0	1,891
Firewood Sales	3,645	0	0	0	0	3,645
Miscellaneous Sale of Commodities	37,049	0	0	0	0	37,049
FEMA	90,267	0	0	0	0	90,267
Service Fees	11,336	0	0	0	0	11,336
Miscellaneous Contributions & Reimb. Other Govts	55,135	0	0	75,000	0	130,135
General Administration Fees	13,000	0	0	0	0	13,000
Fee Based Program Revenues	30,211	0	0	0	0	30,211
Commissions	2,931	0	0	0	0	2,931
Motor Vehicle Fuel Refunds	6,973	0	0	0	0	6,973
Miscellaneous Contributions & Donations	24,939	0	0	2,625	0	27,564
Miscellaneous Receipts	9,806	0	0	0	0	9,806
REAP Annual Per Capita Payment	0	0	0	0	150,179	150,179
REAP Videocast Grant	0	0	0	0	18,054	18,054
REAP Guide by Cell Grant	0	0	0	0	9,793	9,793
REAP Land Purchase Grant	0	0	0	0	67,789	67,789
Fund Interest	0	0	0	251	617	868
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 4,024,451</b>	<b>\$ 787,810</b>	<b>\$ 171,863</b>	<b>\$ 2,768,765</b>	<b>\$ 246,432</b>	<b>\$ 7,999,321</b>

## GRANTS:

The following are grants and reimbursements awarded during the FY 09-10. The annual amounts listed are the award totals. Depending upon the grant specifics the award may be received in one year or over multi-years.

Healthy Polk 2020	\$12,111
NRCS Mally's Stream Barbs	\$12,000
ISSACC Walton Nature Friends	\$2,000
High Trestle Trail Scenic Overlook	\$140,000
Prairie Meadows-Equestrain Center	\$7,680
REAP Guide by Cell	\$19,586
Thomas Mitchell Fish Hapitat Grant	\$13,940
NAWCA-Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt	\$56,750
Watershe University	\$15,000
LAWCON Bison/Elk Exhibit	\$67,500
Community Betterment Grants Bison/Elk Exhibit	\$5,000
Wal-Mart Bison/Elk Exhibit	\$2,500
Great Outdoors Fund Bison/Elk Exhibit	\$5,190
REAP Video Cast-PSA	\$20,060

# Financial Statement- Expenditures

EXPENDITURES:	General Basic	General Supp.	Insurance	Reserve	REAP	TOTALS
Conservation Infrastructure	\$ 13,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 13,000
Environmental Education	328,824	89,290	0	0	0	418,114
Natural Resources	783,738	173,269	0	0	0	957,007
Administration	584,498	97,466	0	0	0	681,963
Community Outreach	182,485	41,393	0	0	0	223,878
Parks Advocacy	469,666	130,258	0	0	0	599,924
Construction, Maintenance, Operations	992,651	188,312	0	0	0	1,180,963
Equestrian Center	398,021	67,823	0	0	0	465,844
Road Clearing	271,569	0	0	0	0	271,569
Insurance, Unemployment, & Workers Comp. Medical	0	0	171,863	0	0	171,863
Conservation Land Acquisition & Development	0	0	0	2,794,864	0	2,794,864
Resource Enhancement & Protection	0	0	0	0	162,680	162,680
	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 4,024,451</b>	<b>\$ 787,810</b>	<b>\$ 171,863</b>	<b>\$ 2,794,864</b>	<b>\$ 162,680</b>	<b>\$ 7,941,668</b>

## BUDGET SUMMARY:

The General Basic funds expended for the various departments covered salaries, supplies, and services. The General Supplemental funds covered employee benefits. The Insurance expenditures were for Unemployment Insurance, Workers' Comp Disability, Workers' Comp Medical Expense, and Liability Insurance premiums.

Projects completed or continued with the Reserve funds were asphalt overlay for roads, Yellow Banks Park electric upgrades and site improvements, addition to the equipment maintenance building at Jester Park, Thomas Mitchell Park shop improvements, Equestrian Center ADA entrance and overhang and paddock resurfacing, Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt land purchase and improvements to the Longhouse, the purchase of a new skid loader for use at all parks, and continued construction of trails throughout Polk County.

Projects completed or continued with REAP (Resource Enhancement and Protection) funds were on demand water heaters at Yellow Banks Park, Thomas Mitchell Park, and Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt, improvements to the Jester Park ranger's residence, Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt new septic at the Longhouse, support of a naturalist's salary for wildlife research, Environmental Education grants for Podcasts and Guide by Cell, plus various smaller projects throughout all areas.

Polk County Conservation continually monitors revenues and expenses to assure budget compliance. In addition, a user fee committee annually reviews the various direct user charges for camping, shelter rentals, educational programs, special events, and other fee based activities to assure that a fair mix of user fee charges and general Polk County taxpayer support is maintained in the annual budget.



## *Facts and Figures*

### FY '10 Park Visitation (where recorded)

Jester Park	326,832 visitors
(includes Golf Course and Equestrian Center visitors)	
Easter Lake Park	399,428 visitors
Yellow Banks Park	226,774 visitors
Fort Des Moines Park	167,510 visitors
Thomas Mitchell Park	119,761 visitors
Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt	47,059 visitors
Brown's Woods	55,569 visitors
Chichaqua Valley Trail	16,768 visitors
Mally's Weh-Weh-Neh-Kee Park	10,310 visitors
Four Mile Greenbelt	2,290 visitors

\*Total Park Visitation 1,372,301 + visitors

\*PCC is unable to accurately calculate total park visitation from traffic counters. The estimated visitation total of 1,372,301 people reflects only those parks equipped with counters or alternative ways for tracking visitation.

### Rental Facility Reservations

Chichaqua Longhouse		68
Easter Lake Park:	Shelters #1-#5	247
Fort Des Moines Park:	Shelters #1-#2	119
Jester Park:	Shelters #2-#6	201
Jester Park Lodge		122
Thomas Mitchell Park:	Shelters #1-#2	107
Yellow Banks Park:	Shelters #1-#3	69

Total Facility Reservations 933

### Environmental Education/ Outreach

923 school programs	-21,256 students
215 youth programs	-4,933 participants
60 adult programs	-2,757 participants
74 family programs	-4,965 participants

63% Programs Held Outdoors  
98% Participant Satisfaction Rate

### Volunteer Contributions

9,691 hours



## *Unit Directory*

(as of May 2011)

### **Polk County Conservation Administration Office**

11407 NW Jester Park Dr.  
 Granger, IA 50109  
 (515) 323-5300 (515) 323-5354 fax  
 pccb\_info@polkcountyiowa.gov  
 www.leadingyououtdoors.org

### **Administration /Front Office Unit**

Dennis Parker, Director  
 Carol Ann Carlson, Accountant  
 Cindy Lentz, Administrative Supervisor  
 Melissa Ritter, Account Clerk  
 Nancy Simmons, P/T Account Clerk

### **Community Outreach**

Kami Rankin, Community Outreach Supervisor  
 Pat Spain, Planning and Outreach Coordinator

### **Environmental Education**

Patrice Petersen-Keys, Environmental Education Coord.  
 Heidi Anderson, Naturalist  
 Lewis Major, Naturalist  
 Joe Boyles, Naturalist  
 Lori Foresman-Kirpes, Naturalist

### **Natural Resources Unit**

Loren Lown, Natural Resources Specialist  
 Mark Dungan, Natural Resources Manager  
 Doug Sheeley, Natural Resources Supervisor  
 Ron Ugolini, Natural Resources Technician  
 Chris Lunan, Natural Resources Technician  
 Scott Gehl, Natural Resources Technician  
 Al Pasker, Natural Resources Technician  
 Dan Hrubes, Natural Resources Technician  
 Lael Neal, P/T Natural Resources Technician Worker

### **Board Members**

Tina Hadden  
 Tom Levis  
 Michelle McEnany  
 Mike Smith  
 Jim Cataldo

### **Parks Advocacy**

Mark Hurm, Lead Ranger  
 Dean Bruscher, Ranger  
 Brian Herrstrom, Ranger  
 Charlie Finch, Ranger  
 Chris Clingan, Assistant Ranger  
 James Dotzler, Assistant Ranger

### **Construction, Maintenance, & Operations Unit**

Wayne Johnson, Construction/Maintenance Manager  
 Stan Manning, Special Services Technician  
 George Lentz, Equipment Maintenance Supervisor  
 Ken Young, Mechanic  
 Brad Talbert, P/T Assistant Mechanic  
 Steve Haefner, Construction Technician  
 Bernard Feezell, Construction Technician  
 Tim Wears, Maintenance Technician  
 Tyler Naeve, Maintenance Technician  
 Chance Patrick, Maintenance Technician

### **Leisure Services**

Carrie Spain, Equestrian Center Manager  
 Dennis Crowley, Barn Manager  
 Deb Crowley, P/T Stable Laborer II  
 Deanne Mundt, P/T Stable Laborer II  
 Dean Simmons, P/T Stable Laborer I