

Polk County Conservation Summer 2015 Volunteer Events

River Run Garbage Grab (R2G2)

Friday, August 21 @ 8 a.m. -12:00 and 4:00 p.m.
Sycamore Access

This event allows volunteers the opportunity to remove trash from the river or along its adjacent trails. Choose from many locations to either clean up land based trails by foot or bike, or clean up the Des Moines and Raccoon River Water Trails by power boat, canoe or kayak. Polk County Conservation will be hosting the Sycamore Access.

For more information about this event, please contact Pat Spain at (515) 323-5280, or pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov.

Volunteer Appreciation Paddle & Picnic

Sunday, September 20th @ 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt

What would we do without our amazing team of volunteers?! The thousands upon thousands of hours put into our parks and trails deserves to be celebrated! Please join us at the Longhouse for a potluck style picnic at noon. Polk County Conservation will be grilling up brats and burgers - bring a side to share with your fellow volunteers! Refrigeration is available in the longhouse if needed. Afterwards, explore the Skunk River Oxbows by canoe or kayak.

PCC will offer 28 boats available on a first come, first serve basis or you are welcome to bring your own. Not a paddler? Chichaqua also offers great hiking and birding opportunities. Potluck starts at 12:00 p.m. followed by float. To RSVP/ reserve a boat, contact Pat Spain pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov or 515-323-5280.



Volunteers cleanup the Des Moines River by boat



Efforts are on-going to remove invasive species and collect seeds from Puccoon Prairie, a unique sand prairie plot within Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt.

A very special thank you to these volunteers...

- Eagle Scouts: George Hoemann - Jester Park overlook picnic area and Aaron Brault - Jester Park bat house replacement boxes.
- Birdbox builders Habitat for Humanity, Rogers Shell, Walter Willhoft, Dean Ahnen and Kids with a Cause for their help in providing homes for bluebirds, kestrels and wrens in our county parks and along the trails.
- Trash Bash participants who removed thousands upon thousands of pounds of litter, brush, tires and recyclables from public lands and waterways and cleared away invasive species from our urban woodlands.
- St. Theresa's Youth Home Missions, along with Open Opportunities 4H, for finishing the excavation of a 24 foot area for pavers at the Jester Park Playscape which involved moving 20 tons of rock base in preparation for paver installation.
- Taco Ride Trash Challenge participants for trash cleanup and prairie restoration efforts along the Great Western Trail.
- Those volunteers beating the heat of an Iowa summer and continuing to reclaim Puccoon Prairie to its former glory.
- Our dedicated corporate teams of volunteers from John Deere, Wells Fargo, Principal Financial, Terracon and Wellmark.
- Our many stewards and trail ambassadors who are working each year restoring woodlands, wetlands and natural areas and monitoring natural and hard surface trails throughout the Polk County Conservation trail system.

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Looking ahead...

Fourmile Creek Sweep

Sunday, October 4th @ 11:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Mally's Park, Berwick

Strap on your boots and waders and get muddy with the Conservation team! In an effort to improve water quality, we will be sweeping Fourmile Creek for tires and other debris as well as clean up litter in and around Mally's Park. Participants should dress for the weather, bring work gloves and wear appropriate shoes for water or shore-based efforts (old shoes, rubber boots or waders). Be sure to bring along a refillable water bottle. Meet at Mally's Park at 11:30 for lunch from Jason's Deli provided by the National Environmental Education Foundation. Creek Sweep to follow beginning at 1:00 p.m.

For more information about this event and to RSVP for lunch as well as submit any dietary restrictions, please contact Pat Spain at (515) 323-5280, or pat.spain@polkcountyiowa.gov.

Moonlight Seed Harvest

Saturday, October 24th @ 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt, Youth Camp Area

Join us if you dare for a spooktacular moonlight seed harvest followed by a bonfire s'more cookout! Check the website calendar tab at www.leadingyououtdoors.org for further information as October approaches!

Pat Spain

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Butterfly Garden Caretaker

Help protect and provide habitat for our pollinators! Seeking knowledgeable volunteers to weed the native pollinator garden at Easter Lake below Shelter #2. Contact Beth at beth.waage@polkcountyiowa.gov for further information.

Advisory Committee Members

PCC is seeking out 5 individuals to serve on its Advisory Committee. These volunteer positions serve to provide feedback to staff and board members on various park planning and programming needs related to outdoor recreation, safety, education, marketing, volunteerism, maintenance, natural resources and conservation practices.

Contact Community Outreach Supervisor Kami Rankin at kami.rankin@polkcountyiowa.gov for further information.

Seed Harvesters and Stewards

The prairie is ripening as summer winds down. Join Polk County Conservation now through October in our efforts to restore local areas to their former glory by collecting seed for future planting - no experience necessary. Scheduled public collection will occur every Friday beginning at 12:30 p.m. If this doesn't fit your schedule, PCC staff will help organize a weekday or weekend that works well for you. Rally friends, family and coworkers in a group effort this harvesting season! For those interested in long-term and volunteer leadership roles, become a Harvest Steward!

Contact Lael at lael.neal@polkcountyiowa.gov for further information.

Trail Ambassador Mobile Patrol Team Members

We are now actively seeking to fill positions within our Trail Ambassador Program throughout our parks. Those placed in these positions will fill a leadership role by communicating and coordinating a network of volunteers. Needs for this program include a fundraising team, trail coordinators, and mobile patrol team members.

