



*Boone County Conservation*  
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## **Boone County Conservation Board Strategic Plan Years 2017 through 2020**

Approved and adopted by the Boone County Conservation Board this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016

Boone County Conservation Board Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Boone County Conservation Board Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_

Boone County Conservation Board Director: \_\_\_\_\_

**Boone County Conservation Mission: To protect, conserve and maintain our natural resources and provide education and recreation for the benefit of current and future generations.**

**Goal 1: *To continuously improve, preserve and manage our natural resources.***

- Strategy 1: Create management units and plans for each area by May 2018.
  - Action 1: Utilize college students to assist with the creation of management plans for county areas.
    - Meet with College Professors (ISU, Drake, Community College)
    - Site inventory of different aspects and features within the site.
    - Create burn plans.
    - Create Integrated Pest Management plans.
  
- Strategy 2: Improvement of fisheries (utilize DNR Fisheries survey data)
  - Action 1: Design and construct fish barrier at Don Williams Lake spillway utilizing fish habitat dollars
    - Control invasive species (carp & gizzard) shad from coming up spillway into the lake
    - Prevents game fish from going over spillway (Fish Habitat Grant)
  - Action 2: Add fish habitat structures utilizing fish habitat grant dollars
  - Action 3: Improve stocking programs with assistance of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources
    - Reintroduce other non-invasive species (white bass hybrid, perch, etc. per fisheries staff recommendation)
    - Design and construct rearing pond for walleye
  - Action 4: Create better access points including trails, additional fishing piers and jetties (Fish Habitat Grant)
  - Action 5: Develop interpretive signs on fisheries management
    - Length limits, invasive species information, possession limits, etc.
  
- Strategy 3: Remove invasive species and brush in a minimum of 3 acres a year for the purpose of
  - ecological restoration.
  - Action 1: Utilize mechanical control methods (chainsaws, brush hogs, tree shears, etc.).
  - Action 2: Utilize volunteers for help with removing invasive plant species
  - Action 3: Utilize chemical control methods (herbicide application)
    - Certify at least 2 full-time employees in Categories 3T & 6 by 2017

- Action 4: Improve invasive species control management on state listed and invasive weeds focusing on multiflora rose, locust, wild parsnip and honeysuckle
- Action 5: Utilize cultural control methods (using local ecotype plant stock, etc.).
- Action 6: Utilize biological control methods (beneficial insects/ organisms).
- Action 7: Monitor untreated and treated areas for invasive species.
  - Map areas of concern by September 2017
- Strategy 4: Water Quality Improvements
  - Action 1: Install sedimentation pond(s) for Don Williams Lake by 2020
  - Action 2: Install erosion control structures on stream and lake banks and highly erodible areas (rip rap, cedar bank revetments)
  - Action 3: Work with private landowners to improve buffer zones and erosion control within all watersheds
  - Action 4: Improve monitoring of water quality
    - Certify at least 2 full-time employees in the IOWATER Monitoring program
- Strategy 5: Develop a chemical budget for pesticide application.
- Strategy 6: Birding
  - Action 1: Build elevated viewing platform at Jay Carlson Wildlife Area
  - Action 2: Create and improve bird nesting programs
    - Build and install boxes for various bird species (wood ducks, kestral, barn owl, song birds, etc.)
    - Create banding program for various nesting species
  - Action 3: Utilize volunteers to help with all aspects of birding activities
  - Action 4: Utilize Iowa State Audubon Society and Iowa Wildlife Center
- Strategy 7: Wildlife Food Plots
  - Action 1: Work with partner organizations to acquire seed and equipment
    - Seed drill, harrow, cultipacker, disc, batwing mower
  - Action 2: Seed and maintain 2+ acres of food plots/year

- Action 3: Seed and/or maintain 10 acres of pollinator plantings/year
- Strategy 8: To acquire land for preservation, conservation and recreation
  - Action 1: Work with landowners, public and private organizations so when land comes up for sale that has value to Boone County Conservation Board (BCCB) and the public for wildlife habitat, public enjoyment and recreation, and education, BCCB will pursue purchasing said land in order to keep it out of development and for previous listed purposes.
    - Build interest in donating by presenting, outline interest on website
    - Meet with attorney's in county to express interest as they work with clients
  - Action 2: Work with landowners, public and private organizations to acquire land within the watershed of Don Williams Lake
  - Action 3: Working with Boone County Board of Supervisors to manage existing un-managed county property by 2020.
  - Action 4: BCCB will graciously accept land donated to them.
- Strategy 9: Create and maintain a tree nursery to replace ash, maple, and other declining tree species

***Goal 2: To continue to reach the public through outdoor and environmental education, to provide and expand our expand our environmental education programming to the public.***

- Strategy 1: Provide various forms of programming each year
  - Action 1: School programs (in classroom or on school grounds)
  - Action 2: After school programs (scouts, 4H, special interest clubs)
  - Action 3: Public programs (all age groups during nights and weekends)
  
- Strategy 2: Continue to track and report public program participation numbers quarterly
  - Action 1: Maintain public program participant contact list
  - Action 2: Present quarterly report at conservation board meetings
  
- Strategy 3: Cross train staff members yearly
  - Action 1: Each staff identifies expertise area to help naturalist (archery, fishing, canoeing, etc.)
  - Action 2: Appropriate trainings and certifications for certain areas
    - Audit staff needs by December of each year
  
- Strategy 4: Develop campgrounds education programs yearly
  - Action 1: Designate meeting point with bathrooms and within walking distance of campgrounds
  - Action 2: Develop amphitheater site (Eagle Scout Project)
  - Action 3: Develop evaluation process for each program
  - Action 4: Develop promotional efforts within park areas including flyers, QR codes, website, etc.
  
- Strategy 5: Develop a Summer Education Intern
  - Action 1: Write job description by November 30, 2016
  - Action 2: Post it in college and universities in January 2017
    - Action 3: Hire by mid-March and start in mid-May 2017

- Strategy 6: Interpretive signs
  - Action 1: Install signs in restoration areas to educate the public on what we're doing
  - Action 2: Install signs along hiking trails and access points
  - Action 3: Acquire funding from various sources (casinos, scout projects, endowments, etc.)
  
- Strategy 7: Education equipment and materials needs
  - Action 1: Utilize partner organizations to help with needs
    - Enclosed trailer by 2017
    - Ice fishing shacks by 2018
    - Kayaks by 2019
  
- Strategy 8: Construct a Nature Center by 2025
  - Action 1: Create a master plan by 2020
  - Action 2: Identify funding sources by 2022
  - Action 3: Develop construction plan by 2023
  - Action 4: Celebration and open house

***Goal 3: To reach the public through the promotion and marketing of our services, recreational, and natural areas.***

- Strategy 1: Promote the Boone County Conservation Foundation (BCCF) each year
  - Action 1: Create a donation envelope / brochure
  - Action 2: Display at all BCCB events
  - Action 3: Create a way to donate online from our website
  - Action 4: Pursue more members and implement one new fund raising activity per year
  
- Strategy 2: Utilize various media outlets for promotion and marketing throughout regional area on a yearly basis
  - Action 1: Regular posts on various media outlets (newspaper, facebook, instagram, emails, etc.)
    - Get an intern or hire additional staff to help coordinate to post (college or talented high school student)
  
- Strategy 3: Evaluate our parks annually from a user's point of view and look for areas of improvement.
  - Action 1: Develop surveys consisting of a min. of 10 critical questions for park users to fill out to better serve the public
  - Action 2: Utilize college students for data collection and analysis
  - Action 3: Track economic value each year for Boone County to present to BOS
  
- Strategy 4: Dedicate money in our budget for marketing purposes by 2017
  - Action 1: Work with an intern or marketing professional to improve our marketing and promotion
  - Action 2: Evaluate brochures and redo as needed
    - High Trestle Trail/Swede Point- 2016
    - Cabins- 2017
    - Don Williams Park-2017
    - County Areas Brochure-2018
  
- Strategy 5: Attend events where we can promote our areas.
  - Action 1: Create a float we can use in local parades yearly
  - Action 2: Have a booth with promotional materials developed by 2017

**Goal 4: *To develop long lasting partnerships with other organizations and volunteers***

- Strategy 1: Increase and utilize at least 25 volunteers to maintain and improve our areas over the next four years
  - Action 1: Keep a list of work items for volunteers developed by spring of 2017
  - Action 2: Enlist help from school groups of all levels of education for their services (K-12, college, 4H, etc.)
  - Action 3: Keep records of volunteer hours
  - Action 4: Recognize volunteers for their service at a special event and in a media release
  - Action 5: Develop an online technology file (Open Source) for staff to register volunteers and work items
  - Action 6: Coordinate work days
  - Action 7: Hire additional staff to help coordinate 2020
  
- Strategy 2: Build relationships with private and public organizations, as well as individuals
  - Action 1: Reach out to private organizations to fund projects or volunteer (boy and girl scouts, 4H, youth groups, PF, DU, NWTF, INHF, Prairie Rivers of Iowa RC & D, other non-profits, local businesses)
  - Action 2: Reach out to public organizations to work together on various projects (IDNR, NRCS, other CCBs, USFWS)
  - Action 3: Develop relationships with private citizens interested in special projects (landowners, contractors, etc.)
  
- Strategy 3: Build rapport and support with the Board of Supervisors (BOS)
  - Action 1: Develop a strategy with Foundation / Friends group for their help by March 2017
  - Action 2: Invite BOS for yearly tour of assets
  - Action 3: Conservation board chair or other member submit quarterly updates to BOS
  - Action 4: Develop an annual report printed for BOS and citizens to demonstrate impact and build support
  
- Strategy 4: Create memorial donation program by 2018
  - Action 1: Develop list of items that can be donated
    - Golf Course, HTT, parks
  - Action 2: Hire additional staff to help coordinate
  - Action 3: Develop printed material to hand out and put information on website



***Goal 5: To get people outside by providing a variety of recreational opportunities.***

- Strategy 1: Increase family recreational opportunities
  - Action 1: Develop Frisbee golf course by 2020
    - Bait shop redone
    - Identify volunteers to help design course
    - Develop budget for creating
    - Create fundraising plan
    - Raise the money
  - Action 2: Survey public for recreational opportunities by January 2017
  - Action 3: Research possibilities of concessionaire for canoes, kayaks (Seven Oaks partnerships?)
  - Action 4: Add natural play-scape for children by 2019 (potential Eagle Scout project)
  - Action 5: Improve the fishing resources
  - Action 6: Cabin –Friendly improvements
    - Provide dock access below cabins
    - Posting trail maps
    - Educational programs happening
    - My County Parks Conservation Website Reservation in place by 2018
    - Golf course incentives/packages outlined by March 2017
  - Action 7: Family friendly fishing derby on free fishing weekend launched by 2018
  - Action 8: Continue working with the Boone County Trails Initiative
  - Action 9: Improve and create new hiking and mountain biking trails in our areas
    - Identify 2 new trail opportunities by 2018
  - Action 10: Build sand volleyball court at Don Williams Recreational Area by 2018
  - Action 11: Use old tennis courts at Don Williams for an archery range
    - Pursue DNR shooting sports grant by 2018

***Goal 6: To develop diverse sources funds at a level that allows all our goals to be met.***

- Strategy 1: Get to state average on salaries for staffing (currently \$5,000 - 15,000 below average for each employee) by 2020
- Strategy 2: Get to state average per capita value (currently \$11.16/ person. State average is \$23.32/ person) by 2020
- Strategy 3: Get to state average levee per \$1000 (currently \$0.24 / \$1000. State average is \$0.43 / \$1000) by 2020
- Strategy 4: New strategies for funding
  - Action 1: Apply for local and state grants
  - Action 2: Find ways to keep portions of revenue for capital projects
  - Action 3: Keeping any revenues above projections
  - Action 4: Hold over any unused line item dollars for future years (ex. Equipment line item)
  - Action 5: Utilize more fund raising avenues
  - Action 6: Staff for conservation easement monitoring for raising money

***Goal 7: To ensure our properties and programs are managed the best in the state by providing appropriate levels of staffing and equipment.***

- Strategy 1: Additional full-time and seasonal Staff
  - Action 1: Hire certified Park Ranger / Natural Resources Technician by 2020
  - Action 2: Hire volunteer and public outreach coordinator by 2025
  - Action 3: Hire paid and unpaid seasonal help for all areas each year
    - Naturalist intern
    - Natural resources intern
    - Part time mowers
  
- Strategy 2: Continue to improve and expand technology
  - Action 1: Meet with county IT and corporations to see how they could help with improving technology by December 2017
    - Develop a technology plan by December 2017
  - Action 2: Acquire appropriate software / hardware (Microsoft Office, Arc GIS, radios)
  - Action 3: Access to shared network
  - Action 4: Smartphones for staff
  - Action 5: Shared online calendars
  - Action 6: Online calendar for reservable facilities
  
- Strategy 3: Staff and board communication regularly to build team inspired work
  - Action 1: Prepare quarterly reports for board and presentation by staff quarterly.
  - Action 2: Weekly staff meetings
  - Action 3: Annual get together with board and staff
  
- Strategy 4: Develop seasonal goals
  
- Strategy 5: Equipment needs each year for next 4 years

***Goal 8: To update and maintain our grounds and infrastructure (Don Williams Park, Dickcissel Park, Jay Carlson Area)***

- Strategy 1: To update and maintain our grounds maintenance, and keep up-to-date facilities with current standards and practices
  - Action 1: Golf Course Improvements
    - Club house expansion
    - Make ADA accessible
    - Bring bathrooms upstairs
    - Kitchen and dining area need more space
    - Secure rental cart storage area
    - Improve or replace infrastructure
    - Replace bridges
    - Create cart path plan
    - Irrigation and pumping station updates
  - Action 4: Campground renovations and upgrades
    - Upgrade electrical in campgrounds by November 2018
    - Upgrade camper pads to rock by November 2018
    - Upgrade all fire rings by November 2019
  - Action 5: Continue cabin updates and renovations yearly
    - Flooring, insulating crawlspace, countertops and cabinets, exterior, etc.
  - Action 6: Continue shower building updates and renovations yearly
    - Exterior, plumbing, fixtures, flooring, etc.
    - Inspect and make sure septic systems are working properly and up to code
  - Action 7: Ronald Good Shelter updates and renovations
    - Finish off interior with insulation to add air conditioning
    - Improve lighting, windows, doors, electrical panel
    - Fireplace maintenance
    - Seek additional funding sources for this project (Leonard Good Trust)

- Pave road and parking lot for this facility
  - Fascia and soffit
  - Action 8: Lodge by the Lake updates and renovations
    - Exterior siding and roofing by 2018
    - Removal of old kitchen vent hood system by 2018
    - Move bait shop to its own small building near the ramp to avoid any issues with the bait shop operation and those renting the Lodge by the Lake, this would also increase storage for tables and chairs by 2018
  - Action 9: Maintenance of equipment storage buildings
    - Add rock inside by 2018
    - Exterior and interior structure maintenance
  - Action 10: Maintain and update dock system (remove wooded docks and add to dock below bait shop) by 2018
  - Action 11: Replace walk bridge between campgrounds A and B by 2018
  - Action 12: Landscaping and grounds keeping
- Strategy 2: Equipment needs and replacement schedule reviewed and updated yearly (**for all properties**)
    - Action 1: Purchase equipment for staff time efficiency
      - Mowers, tree, brush, and stump removal attachments for skid loaders
      - 4 wheel drive loader tractor to replace John Deere 210C
      - Dump trailer (4-5 ton capacity)
      - Smaller trailer for hauling mowers and smaller pieces of equipment
      - Implement an equipment replacement schedule and work with Board of Supervisors to create a depreciation fund
      - Habitat planting equipment (seed drill)

- Strategy 3: Additional Construction Projects
  - Action 1: Build new maintenance shop at Don William Park with temp controlled pesticide and seed storage by 2025
  - Action 2: Build open picnic shelter at Whitetail Picnic Area by 2018
  - Action 3: Build small open shelter near the beach at Don Williams Park by 2019
  - Action 4: Build observation platform at Jay Carlson Wildlife Area by 2018
    - Mow and maintain trail around the pond for fishing access and exercise
  - Action 5: Build open picnic shelter at Dickcissel Park by 2020
    - Mow and maintain trail around the pond for fishing access and exercise
    - Replace fence around parking area
  - Action 6: Create 18 hole Frisbee Golf course by 2020
    - Begin fundraising
    - Utilize volunteers to help design and build course
    - Find businesses to sponsor holes
  
- Strategy 4: Upgrade facilities to ADA standards
  - Action 1: Utilize ISU Engineering Department to evaluate and lay out a plan for implementing

***Goal 8: To update and maintain our grounds and infrastructure (Swede Point Park, Buffalo Grove)***

- Strategy 1: To update and maintain our grounds maintenance, and keep up-to-date facilities with current standards and practices
  - Action 1: Build insulated, heated shop or make conversions to the existing maintenance shop at Swede Point Park. Include small office space by 2020
  - Action 2: Campground renovations and upgrades
    - Build a row of 10 electrical campsites consisting of 50 amp service in campgrounds by November 2018
    - Upgrade camper pads to rock by November 2017
    - Upgrade all fire rings by November 2017
  - Action 3: Continue shower building updates and renovations yearly
    - Exterior, plumbing, fixtures, flooring, etc.
    - Inspect and make sure septic systems are working properly and up to code
  - Action 4: Maintenance of equipment storage buildings
    - Exterior and interior structure maintenance
    - Concrete flooring
  - Action 5: Landscaping and grounds keeping
- Strategy 2: Additional Construction Projects
  - Action 1: Construct observation deck at Swede Point Park by 2020
  - Action 2: Construct parking lot at Buffalo Grove by 2018
- Strategy 3: Upgrade facilities to ADA standards
  - Action 1: Utilize ISU Engineering Department to evaluate and lay out a plan for implementing

***Goal 8: To update and maintain our grounds and infrastructure (High Trestle Trail/Grant's Woods)***

- Strategy 1: To update and maintain our grounds maintenance, and keep up-to-date facilities with current standards and practices
  - Action 1: Add crushed limestone to High Trestle Trail Shoulders by 2018
  - Action 2: Landscaping and grounds keeping around trail and open shelters
  - Action 3: Replace exterior of garage at Grant's Woods
    - Metal roofing
    - Metal siding
    - Garage door
    - Walk door
  - Action 4: Cap and fill old well on Grant's Woods
  - Action 5: Remove old well house near garage at Grant's Woods
  
- Strategy 3: Additional Construction Projects
  - Action 1: Build Grant's Woods Park by carrying out the master plan for that area
    - Shower/Shelter facility
    - Cabins
    - Trails
    - Play area
  
- Strategy 4: Upgrade facilities to ADA standards
  - Action 1: Utilize ISU Engineering Department to evaluate and lay out a plan for implementing