



# STRATEGIC PLAN

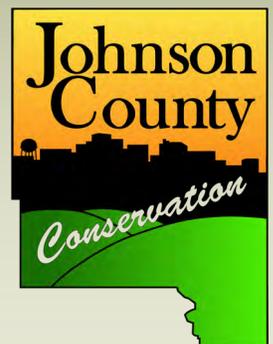
## JOHNSON COUNTY CONSERVATION

The Johnson County Conservation Board engaged thought leaders, environmental and conservation groups, and the public to identify the most important environmental and conservation needs in Johnson County. This process identified six focus areas:

- ◆ **Protect**
- ◆ **Restore**
- ◆ **Connect**
- ◆ **Water Quality**
- ◆ **Partnerships**
- ◆ **Sustainability**

The strategic plan focuses on these needs in a sustainable manner and provides quality stewardship of Johnson County's natural and financial resources.

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**“When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect.” - Aldo Leopold**

# VISION STATEMENT

The Vision of the Johnson County Conservation Board is a county where all citizens have access to a healthy landscape, environmental education and recreation opportunities; where the natural resources of the county are enhanced and protected; where conservation areas are restored and maintained at the highest standard and are safe; and where this vision is accomplished through partnerships with the public and private sector.





## Protect

- ◆ Grow JCCB's land holdings in a managed and sustainable manner, with a priority on bio-sensitive areas and lands along rivers and streams.
- ◆ Add lands to the public trust that connect to current holdings and reduce fragmentation or isolation of natural areas due to development.
- ◆ Acquire more land for trails.





# Restore



- ◆ Use sustainable land restoration and management practices to protect water quality and biodiversity.
- ◆ Restore ecosystems to their natural state.
- ◆ Apply restoration strategies that enhance wildlife habitat and reduce the spread of invasive species.



# Connect

- ◆ Expand education and outreach opportunities, especially for people who are not currently connected to nature.
- ◆ Provide a variety of outdoor recreation opportunities, with a priority on trails, to meet the diverse interests of Johnson County citizens.
- ◆ Engage people where they live through expanded outreach programs, including the social media, technology and regional opportunities.





## Water Quality

- ◆ Be a leader in water quality by using sound water management practices on our current and future holdings.
- ◆ Protect land along rivers and streams and implement management plans to restore native plant communities and promote nutrient recycling on the land.
- ◆ Provide educational opportunities that expand the understanding of water quality issues.
- ◆ Provide access to healthy aquatic communities for water-based outdoor recreation opportunities.





## Partnerships

- ◆ Partner with other governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, businesses, and residents when planning and managing natural and cultural resource projects.
- ◆ Work with the Friends of Johnson County Conservation to actively engage interested citizens in participating in and supporting the conservation program.
- ◆ Provide opportunities for volunteers to get involved in management and restoration of conservation areas and programs.





# Sustainability

- ◆ Use public funds in a wise and fiscally prudent manner.
- ◆ Leverage conservation bonding funds and other public funds with support from grant programs and donations.
- ◆ Develop and manage public lands in a manner sustainable for the long term.





**Cedar River Crossing**

is a 407-acre floodplain with native relict prairie, forest and wetlands.

**Cihra Fen**

is an 81-acre preserve with a very rare “nutrient poor” fen and native prairie and savanna remnants.

**Clear Creek Area and Trail**

is an 80-acre floodplain forest with a 1.3 mile length, hard-surfaced trail.

**F.W. Kent Park**

is a 1,052 acre, recreation area with native and re-established prairies, forests, wetlands, a campground, lake, shelters, miles of trails, playgrounds, beach and education center.

**Frytown Conservation Area**

includes a 94 acre timber with a 30-acre tree and shrub planting.

**Hills Access**

is a 40-acre park located along the Iowa River. Facilities include a boat ramp, campground, vault toilets, picnic tables and a playground.

**Hoover Trail**

is a 6.0 mile segment of hard-surfaced trail – expected to be complete in 2017. A 3-mile segment of trail connects the village of Oasis to West Branch.

**Iowa River Trail - Iowa City to North Liberty**

is 4.6 mile segment of hard-surfaced trail that connects Iowa City to North Liberty.

**Iowa River Water Trail - Sturgis Access to the Tri-county Bridge**

is a 23 mile segment of water trail that connects Iowa City to the Mississippi River near Lake Odessa.

**River Junction Access**

is a 12-acre area with a boat ramp, picnic tables and camping area along the Iowa River.

**Scott Church Park**

is a five-acre roadside park with picnic tables, a vault toilet, drinking water and a reconstructed prairie.

**Solon Prairie**

is a three-acre prairie relict with more than 157 native plant species.

**Sutliff Bridge and Access**

is a historic bridge and boat ramp along the Cedar River. The bridge is visited by fans from around the world.

**Walker Park**

is a three acre park with a picnic shelter, vault toilets, tables and grills. The Old Settlers Association assists with preservation of a historic log cabin and the Henry Walker Memorial Building, constructed in 1912.

**Williams Prairie**

includes more than 320 species of prairie plants and was dedicated as a State Preserve in 1976. In 1973, the land was purchased by The Nature Conservancy. In 2014, the property was transferred to the Johnson County Conservation Board.

## The 2008 Voter Approved Conservation Bond Referendum

In 2008, the voters of Johnson County approved a bond referendum to expand the conservation program in Johnson County. The ballot language was as follows.

*Shall the County of Johnson, State of Iowa, be authorized to acquire and develop lands with public access provided, to be managed by the Johnson County Conservation Board, in order to protect the water quality in rivers, lakes and streams; protect forests to improve air quality; protect natural areas and wildlife habitat from development, and provide for parks and trails, at a cost not exceeding \$20,000,000 and issue its general obligation bonds in an amount not exceeding \$20,000,000 for that purpose, to be repaid in not more than 20 years? All expenditures will be subject to an annual independent audit.*

### Conservation Bonding Projects Planning and Implementation Schedule and Relationship to the Strategic Plan

PROJECT	YEAR																				STRATEGIC PLAN ELEMENTS								
	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	Water Quality	Acquisition	Restoration	Connection	Partnerships	Sustainability		
	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	0							
Lake Restoration																							X			X	X	X	X
Ciha Fen			P	P	I																		X	X	X	X			X
Clear Creek Trail - I			P	P	I	I																		X					X
Show House KP						P	P																						X
Beach KP						P	P																	X					X
Entry KP						P	P																						X
ADA Restrooms KP						P	P																	X					X
Poor Farm Trail																													X
Hoover Trail - I																													X
Cedar River Crossing						P	I	I																					X
Wetland Bank CRC																													X
Sutliff Bridge Access						P	P	I																					X
Clear Creek Trail II																													X
Iowa River Acquisition																													X
Hoover Trail - II																													X

P = planning I = implementation Italics indicates project complete. This timeline is fluid and will change based on availability of grant funding and private support of projects.

### Conservation Bonding Projects Implementation Schedule and Budget

YEAR	PROJECT															Admin.	TOTAL												
	Lake Restoration	Ciha Fen	Clear Creek Trail I	KP Shower House, Beach, Entry, ADA Restrooms				Poor Farm Trail	Hoover Trail I	Cedar River Crossing	Wetland Bank CRC	Sutliff Bridge Access	Clear Creek Trail II	Iowa River Acquisition	Hoover Trail II														
2010			289,280.68																										289,280.68
2011																												11,323.74	11,323.74
2012		283,966.39	11,363.75																										295,330.14
2013			77,654.00																										77,654.00
2014				130,117.73					16,142.39	1,250		2,775.58																150,285.70	
2015	6,300			227,829.92					272,099.23	414,647.98		20,221.06																941,098.19	
2016	700,000								152,000		350,000	150,000		1,500,000															
2017	700,000								1,500,000		500,000		300,000	500,000															
2018	700,000								1,500,000																				
2019	400,000			415,000				500,000				300,000																	
2020				350,000				500,000					1,800,000																
2021				1,400,000																									
2022				1,000,000								600,000																	
2023				1,000,000																									
2024																										550,000			
2025																										1,500,000			
2026																										1,500,000			
2027																													
2028																													
<b>BONDING</b>		283,966.39	378,298.43	357,947.65					288,241.62	415,897.98		22,996.64																1,764,972.45	
<b>GRANTS</b>		172,145	512,642						454,000	382,000																		1,520,787	
<b>TOTAL</b>		467,475	890,940.43							797,897.98																			

Total figures are shown for expended funds through May 1, 2015. Italics represent total project cost estimates, grant and bond funds combined, and are used for budgeting purposes only.

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or find us on Facebook

## Friends of Johnson County Conservation

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INSTITUTE  
FOR CONSERVATION  
LEADERSHIP

Special thanks to Elaine Chaney, Consultant, for guiding the planning process.

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