Iowa’s County Conservation System

Why County Conservation Matters

Since 1955

Building on the historic successes of acquiring, developing, and making available county parks, preserves, playgrounds, forests, wildlife, and other conservation areas; promoting and preserving the health and general welfare of the people; encouraging the orderly development and conservation of natural resources; and cultivating quality of life by providing programs of public recreation and outdoor conservation education.

QUALITY OF LIFE & HEALTHY LIFE STYLES
COUNTY CONSERVATION OUTDOOR RECREATION EXPERIENCES

24 Million Annual Visitors

661,194 Campers utilize 10,507 campsites annually
2,354,688 Trail Users visit 1,536 miles of trails annually
Hundreds of thousands of hunters utilize 146,500 acres of hunting lands
755,000 people attend 26,000 public programs annually

County Conservation creates & supports healthy life style opportunities to keep people healthy from their wonder years to their golden years.

$531 Million of Annual Economic Impact

Camping generates $39.4 million in local spending around Iowa
Trail Users spend $20.7 million collectively in 99 counties
Hunters generate $58.4 million via local spending
5,800 jobs are supported by associated spending while using county parks
$167.5 million of personal income is generated by this spending impact

Both rural and urban counties enjoy increased local spending by residents and visitors due to the presence of local county parks and facilities.

Generating Jobs – Putting People to Work

600 Professional Permanent Staff - 99 Directors, 116 Park Rangers,
115 Naturalists, 51 Field Specialists, 62 Administrative & Office Staff, 41 Operation Supervisors, and 116 Natural Resource and Field Technicians

350 Seasonal and Part-time Employees

Annual Statewide County Conservation Permanent Employee Payroll - $27,544,570

No two counties are the same – the organization and structure of individual county conservation boards are tailored to fit local characteristics, public need for services & opportunities, and available fiscal organization.

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Weaving the Fabric of a Statewide Network

IACCB, along with many of our professional CCB staff are key assets to an integrated network of public & private partnerships and stakeholder organizations. County Conservation leadership is provided by listening to our members, patrons and supporters – and responding in a timely, responsible and skillful manner. Our joint successes have cemented our resolve to continue. We know that we don’t have to do this by ourselves.

One Incredible Infrastructure

Along the way, these first 61 years – our county conservation program has grown exponentially. Public use and service facilities now account for $1.25 Billion in collective statewide assets. (excluding land) Including: 75 visitor/nature centers, 464 shop/service buildings, 675 pedestrian bridges, 415 dams, 349 playgrounds, 154 shower houses, 100 office buildings, 764 shelters, 496 fishing piers/docks, 175 camping cabins, 725 restrooms, etc.

Counties are the driving force in naturally connecting communities via land & water trail systems. Maintaining this infrastructure will be a challenge in the years ahead.

The Winning Formula for 61 Years of Success

Local Control, Local Ownership, Local Funding & Support, Local Partnerships

A majority vote of the people at a general election in each county was required to establish their local county conservation board. In many cases, these majorities were well in excess of 75%. From those beginnings – the success of each CCB has been locally generated and driven. And collectively, since 1959 - the Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards (IACCB) has flourished with the support of these 99 partnerships. Our statewide footprint is important to the future of Iowa!

It’s hard to imagine where Iowa would be without county conservation – thousands of acres would still be unprotected, once-in-a-lifetime opportunities would have been missed, and those bridges we have collectively built for others to follow would be far shorter and fewer.

The Mission of IACCB – To promote the objectives and supplement the activities of conservation boards, provide information networking, to assist boards and members in program development, to promote and market Iowa’s County Conservation System, to foster board member & staff education, and to provide a unified voice in the Iowa legislature.