



The Conservation Foundation: Kendall County Activities

The Conservation Foundation (TCF) has been working in Kendall County since 1997, when it expanded its service region to also include Kane and Will Counties, after previously serving DuPage County exclusively for 25 years. TCF plays a key role in preserving open space through direct land acquisition, conservation easements, holding land for other entities, education, and coordination of numerous efforts to restore and protect rivers and watersheds.

To assist in the delivery of programs in Kendall County, TCF has appointed John Church as Kendall County Program Director. John works closely with local volunteers, agencies and organizations to help address local conservation issues and is located at the Dickson-Murst Farm office near Montgomery. A volunteer county Advisory Council provides support and input to the Foundation on local issues.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS IN KENDALL COUNTY (2012- 2017): Special Priorities

- ◆ The Lower Fox River Land Conservation Plan is being implemented and used as a planning tool for landowners and local entities interested in preserving land along the Fox River.
 - ◆ The Aux Sable Creek Watershed Plan is being implemented.
 - ◆ TCF has completed or facilitated several land preservation projects.
 - ◆ Municipal rain barrel programs are active in at least two towns.
- ◆ Conservation@Home/Conservation@Work certified properties have significantly increased.
- ◆ TCF continues to provide support to the Dickson-Murst Farm Partners volunteer group and a long-term site development and maintenance plan for the property has been developed.

Ongoing Activities

KENDALL COUNTY LAND CONSERVATION

Kendall County Forest Preserve District

TCF works with the forest preserve district to identify open space lands and to contact landowners of potential future forest preserve sites. TCF coordinated the successful campaigns to pass a \$5 million open space referendum for the forest preserve district in 2002 and the \$45 million referendum in 2007. TCF accepted a donation of 45 acres in Little Rock Township that was transferred to the forest preserve district as part of a package that resulted in a new 120-acre preserve, Called Jay Woods Forest Preserve. TCF also helped purchase a 68-acre parcel near the Fox River west of Yorkville, now called Subat Forest Preserve and in 2015 assisted in the acquisition of a 160+ acre parcel near Silver Springs now called Fox River Bluffs Forest Preserve.

Reservation Woods

One of the highest-quality woods in Kendall County, the 100-acre Reservation Woods has been isolated for most of its long history. Recent development activities, however, have threatened its existence. TCF put together private monies, grant funds and public dollars to purchase the first portion of Reservation Woods in 2008. TCF staff members are working with the Forest Preserve District and other owners of properties in hopes of preserving the entire stand of woods. A fund-raising project was also initiated in cooperation with the Oswegoland Parks & Recreation Foundation.

Conservation Easements/Private Land Conservation

The Foundation currently holds several conservation easements in Yorkville, Oswego, Millbrook, Newark and Millington. Discussions are occurring on additional conservation easements throughout Kendall County.

Protect Kendall Now!

PKN! was a TCF led effort to develop a countywide plan for protection of open space and high quality natural areas in cooperation with local governments and others throughout the county. PKN! is still used as a basis for such planning in current open space protection efforts in the county.

WATERSHED PROTECTION

Fox River

TCF provided leadership to the *Lower Fox River Voluntary Land Conservation Planning Project* in cooperation with numerous local individuals, groups and local governments and is currently working with landowners and others to implement the plan. TCF helped coordinate the publishing of *A Citizen's Guide to Protecting the Fox River* and an accompanying website to highlight the impact of the Fox River and activities related to its protection, available at www.preservethefox.org. A grant from the Hamill family is providing funds for the Fox River Initiative which focuses on educational activities within Kane, Kendall & LaSalle Counties.

Big Rock Creek Watershed

The Conservation Foundation utilized Illinois Clean Energy Foundation grant funds to identify high quality natural areas in the BRC watershed for potential protection, in cooperation with local governmental entities, landowners, and other local stakeholders. The project was completed in October 2015.

Aux Sable Creek Watershed

The Foundation facilitated the completion of a watershed plan to protect Aux Sable Creek in 2010. Staff continue to routinely meet with homeowners and public entities regarding tools to implement portions of the plan. ASC is the focus of four special grant programs in 2014,15,16 and 17 from LyondellBasell Corporation to install demonstration plantings in the watershed and provide public programs.

KENDALL COUNTY EDUCATION + OUTREACH

Dickson-Murst Farm

The Dickson-Murst Farm Partners volunteers host free public special events each year. Two Days at Farm, and the Bluegrass Jam draw thousands of visitors each year. New native plantings and a new solar panel system have recently been installed.

Workshops and Seminars

TCF frequently coordinates educational seminars on C@H, sustainability BMP's and land use, as well as open space and watershed protection. Staff also work cooperatively with local agencies, libraries, homeowners' groups and other groups to offer presentations on numerous watershed related topics.

CONSERVATION@HOME (and @Work) IN KENDALL COUNTY

Residential and Commercial Certifications

Numerous locations in Kendall County have been certified with the Conservation@Home and Conservation@Work designations. These properties are being recognized for employing conservation practices such as using native plants and water-conserving measures. There are currently approximately 60 certified sites in Kendall County.

Conservation in Our Community

To provide a more in-depth focus on conservation planning within local municipalities, TCF developed the Conservation in Our Community to work with local leaders to review and implement strategic conservation based activities within the community. Oswego is the first community in Kendall County to participate.

Public Programs

TCF has made numerous public presentations throughout the county regarding Conservation@Home best management practices such as using rain as a resource and the use of native vegetation to replenish groundwater supplies, etc. Staff also work with local Chamber of Commerce and municipal environmental committees.

Rain Barrels

In addition to selling thousands of rain barrels to individuals, TCF also works with local agencies, corporations and municipalities to sell rain barrels on a larger scale. TCF, SWCD, Kendall County and local municipalities have co-sponsored May as Rain Barrel Month.

Rain Gardens/Native Planting Demonstrations

TCF has recently worked with the City of Yorkville, Oswegoland Park District, City of Plano, Minooka Elementary School District, Kendall Co. Soil and Water Conservation District, U of I Extension, the Oswegoland Parks & Recreation Foundation; Plainfield Park Dist & Kendall County Forest Preserve to establish rain garden and native planting demonstration sites in the local communities.