



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. In the past fifteen years, TCF has been very active in Kendall County:

To assist in the delivery of programs towards its mission, TCF reorganized to provide a more identifiable local presence in each county it serves. To accomplish this, a County Program Director has been appointed to serve local county residents in each county. In Kendall County, John Church 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 Committee also provides support and input to the Foundation on local issues.

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.

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.

Conservation Easements/Private Land Conservation

The Foundation currently holds several conservation easements in Yorkville, Oswego, Millbrook 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 is also an active member of the Fox River Ecosystem Partnership (FREP). TCF and FREP recently 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.

Blackberry Creek Watershed

The Foundation recently coordinated the update of the Blackberry Creek Watershed Plan.

Aux Sable Creek

The Foundation facilitated the completion of a watershed plan to protect Aux Sable Creek in 2010. Staff continue to routinely meet with corporations, landowners, and public entities regarding tools to implement portions of the plan.

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 are also being installed.

Workshops and Seminars

TCF frequently coordinates educational seminars on sustainability 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 designation. These properties are being recognized for employing conservation practices such as using native plants and water-conserving measures.

Homeowners Associations (HOAs)

TCF, along with ecological management consultants, have made presentations to groups of HOAs in Kendall County about how to manage their natural areas and convert conventional common area/detention pond landscaping to native vegetation.

Municipal Programs

TCF has made numerous presentations on using rain as a resource and the use of native vegetation to replenish groundwater supplies. In addition, municipalities have had Conservation@Home "days," where presentations are given and a number of residential and municipal sites are certified. 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. Presentations and a discount program are offered.

Rain Gardens

TCF has recently worked with the City of Yorkville, Oswegoland Park District, City of Plano and Minooka Elementary School District, as well as other groups and volunteers, such as the Kendall Co. Soil and Water Conservation District, U of I Extension and the Oswegoland Park Foundation to establish rain garden demonstration sites and native plantings in the local areas.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS in KENDALL COUNTY (2012- 2017)

- 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.

(Revised: April, 2014)