



O'Brien County
Conservation Board

4931 Yellow Ave
Peterson, IA 51047

712-295-7200 
occb@obriencounty.iowa.gov 
prairieheritagecenter.org 

O'Brien County Conservation Board Quarterly Report

July 1, 2022 – October 1, 2022



Conservation Board Quarterly Report July 1, 2022 - October 1, 2022

Environmental Education

- From July-September the O'Brien County Conservation Board education program reached 1,136 people.
- On August 6th Little Sioux Valley Conservation Association held the annual Bison Burger Picnic. It is estimated that 480 people were in attendance, staff led 2 educational nature hikes through the event.
- New Aquariums were installed at the Prairie Heritage Center. The Large fish tank is 310 gallons and 8' long. The Turtle tank is 150 gallons and 6' long.
- The Interactive Ecosystem display project is nearly complete. There are just some details in the tunnel left to complete.
- On September 2nd South O'Brien High School took a field trip out to Paullina Lake to enjoy fishing and paddling.
- September 6th a Raptor Identification talk was held at the Prairie Heritage Center by the Naturalist. The audience explored the different groups of raptors and tips for identifying them.
- On September 9th the Heritage center held the Outdoor Classroom with 170 students in attendance.
- September 9th Monarch tagging was held at the Sanborn Community Garden. The audience learned how to properly tag a butterfly and how to tell if it was a male or female.
- September 8th, 9th, 12th and 13th the Sheldon 7th and 8th graders got to experience a day of paddling with OCCB staff.
- September 15th staff educated Clay County fair goers about the American Bison.
- On September 16th 1st graders from South O'Brien took a field trip to the Nature Center, in the morning they had the opportunity to learn about the exhibits and explore the prairie. In the afternoon they headed over to Paullina to tag butterflies.

- September 22nd Treasure Hunt program was held at Mill Creek. The audience used a GPS to find geocaches at the park, once all the geocaches were collected they were able to put together a craft.
- Homeschool nature programs covered various topics such as paddling, the water cycle and geocaching.
- The Story book walk trail has seen 3 different stories which include Stellaluna, Come Out Muskrats and Senorita Mariposa.
- Staff made 3 visits to senior living centers to talk about native mammals, monarch tagging, reptiles and amphibians.
- Staff visited the O'Brien County public libraries to talk about monarchs, turtles, owls and frogs.
- Day Camps finished up with Birding camp and Nature Art camp. For birding camp, day campers used different utensils that represented bird beaks and had to pick up food with them. During Nature Art camp the campers found colors in the outdoors and used those same colors for leaf rubbings, the camp finished up with sidewalk chalk.
- Open Range nights at Crosbie Youth Nature Education Center Started in June and are held twice a month. From July to September the largest open range night had 23 shooters with an average around 10 youth shooters. In 4 months we had 75 youth target shooters participate.
- Programs with a ranger were a success this summer. July was paddling, August was nature hiking, September was Atl Atl and archery. Several of these programs had 15-20 participants.



Parks & Recreation

- The New O'Brien County Conservation Board logo has been installed on all of our commonly used vehicles and most of our conservation areas.
- On August 27 a wind storm came through Mill Creek Park damaging more than 100 trees. Staff worked for several days to clean up the damage.
- All of the tree stumps at Mill Creek Park have been ground out and refilled with dirt.
- Staff has been cleaning up scrap metal and trash from behind the shop at Mill Creek. Nearly 8 tons of scrap metal has been hauled away and recycled.
- New mattresses were installed in 3 of the cabins.
- The Little Free Library was installed at Mill Creek Park.
- The Mill Creek Park trail signage project is complete. 88 signs with educational QR codes were installed on 4 different trails around the lake along with a kiosk with a trail map and information about the park and trails. This Project was primarily funded by O'Brien County Community Foundation along with funding by Little Sioux Valley Conservation Association.
- The Concrete project at Douma Park is completed. All 14 camp sites now have expanded "living space" on concrete. The grass is filling in nicely around several of the sites.
- Staff is working to develop management plans for each area.
- Camping season is nearly done for the year, the campgrounds and cabins were very busy again this quarter. \$104,420.48 in revenue was deposited in this quarter alone.
- Staff has been busy with maintenance in the parks, cleaning up storm damage, painting, staining, new motion sensors in restrooms, new grill at shelters and switching restroom door locks out to deadbolts, among several other items are on the list.
- All of the coin operated showers have been replaced with turn dial timers. This has drastically reduced the amount of maintenance required in the shower building.
- Several new memorial benches have been installed at the Prairie Heritage Center, Mill Creek and Douma Park.

- New interpretive signage and musical flowers were installed on the experience trail. These improvements were paid for by Little Sioux Valley Conservation Association.
- OCCB staff partnered with O'Brien County Suicide Prevention for the Labor Day parade in Sutherland.
- The old pits from previously used pit toilets at Douma and Dog creek park have been filled and capped with concrete.
- Rangers have responded to several medical calls in the parks, assisted deputies on accident scenes and enforced park rules including: vehicles driving off the roadway, alcohol on the beach, park speed violations, noise complaints, criminal mischief complaints and fishing regulation violations.
- New boundary signage has been installed on several parks and wildlife areas. The remaining areas are planned to be completed this fall.
- New 200 yard marker signs reading "No Shooting Within 200 yards of Occupied Buildings" were installed around the Prairie Heritage Center.
- O'Brien County Conservation Board received a grant from the National Wild Turkey Federation for \$6,723 towards the purchase of skid steer attachments for habitat management. This grant will go towards the purchase of a grapple rake and a brush mower.
- Two new gates were installed in the bison pen. One is a walk through gate in the corral the other is a double gate.