Prescribed Fire Season

Conservation District land management staff will be conducting prescribed burns at several of our conservation areas in the early spring of 2016. Prescribed fire is an essential and efficient management practice for the health of our native ecosystems, including prairies, savannas, and woodlands. Fire helps return nutrients to the soil, helps control undesirable exotic weeds and shrubs, increases blooming and seed production among our native plants, and stimulates the growth of our native prairie and woodland plant species. District staff manage the burns to minimize smoke on highways and neighboring properties.

Needed:
The BCCD is looking for donations of yarn already rolled into balls and ear corn. Donations can be dropped off at the Administration Center, 603 N Appleton Rd., Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.

Forests and Climate Change

Secondary Educator PLT Workshop
Saturday, February 13th 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Hickory Knolls Discovery Center, St. Charles, IL

This workshop will introduce a new Project Learning Tree (PLT) secondary module on climate change impacts on forest ecosystems, the role of forests in sequestering carbon, and strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to changing climatic conditions.

The module includes 14 engaging activities designed for use in life science, environmental science, and agriculture classes in grades 9-12, with adaptations for use in middle school classrooms. To learn more about the material, please visit http://sfrc.ufl.edu/extension/ee/climate/.

- Participants will leave with a FREE copy of the curriculum guide
- Participants will receive Professional Development Hours
- Lunch Provided
- Fee - $40

Registration: Please contact Laura McCoy - lmccoy@st-charlesparks.org
Registration is open until spots are filled.

Thank you to our sponsors:
Environmental Education Association of Illinois - Project Learning Tree - University of Illinois Extension Service - Boone County Conservation District - St. Charles Park District, Hickory Knolls Discovery Center.

Parks & Conservation Foundation’s Stewardship Challenge Grant Update

This newsletter update on the Parks & Conservation Foundation’s Stewardship Challenge Grant indicates a lag in financial donations. If everyone who receives this newsletter would contribute just $5 we could easily reach our goal of $7,000. Remember the Challenge Grant will match these funds – providing an additional $3 for each $1 raised locally. We still need to raise $4,700 to meet this goal! Please help by making a donation payable to the: Parks & Conservation Foundation. Thank you! Please mail your donation to Boone County Conservation District, 603 N. Appleton Rd., Belvidere, IL 61008
Book Discussion Group

“A Sand County Almanac” by Aldo Leopold

Led by Tina Dawson, BCCD educator and Peggy Doty, U of IL Extension Energy and Environmental Stewardship educator

In 1935, pioneering wildlife manager Aldo Leopold purchased a worn-out farm on the Wisconsin River outside of Baraboo, Wis. The farm and its renovated chicken coop served him and his family as a refuge from “too much modernity” as well as a laboratory for some of the earliest efforts at land restoration.

*A Sand County Almanac* was his signature work. Leopold weaved together many observations and insights gathered during a life lived close to the land, including those family weekends at “the Shack.”

Since its publication in 1949, *A Sand County Almanac* has sold over two million copies and has been translated into nine different languages.

Join us for a relaxed reflection of Leopold’s writings. Short weekly readings will be given out to help guide our discussions.

**Mondays, January 11 – February 15**
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Boone County Conservation District
603 N Appleton Rd.
Belvidere, IL 61008

There is no fee, but pre-registration is required. Class size is limited to 20 participants. Register by call BCCD at 815-547-7935.

The books have been donated by Pheasants Forever.

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**Coyotes**

Presented by Peggy Doty, U of IL Extension Energy & Environmental Stewardship educator.

**Monday, March 7**
6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Boone County Conservation District
603 N Appleton Rd.
Belvidere, IL 61008

Coyotes have to be one of the most misunderstood species in Illinois and the U.S. They conjure up mixed feels of fear anger, and for some wild beauty. There are many stores about coyotes and some circles believe them to be the jokester of the wild. Many of these feelings depend on who you are, where you live, and even what you do for a living. Coyotes get blamed for many things they do and don’t do in our spaces. They none the less should get the award for best survivalist despite the human population. We have all but paved the road for the coyote’s historical expansion. Come and hear more about this incredible animal and what you can expect from them in your neighborhood.

**Cost of this program is $5 per person**

To register, visit web.extension.illinois.edu/bdo or call Boone County Extension at 815-544-3710

If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in this program, call the Boone County Extension office at 815-544-3710

University of Illinois College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences
United States Department of Agriculture, Local Extension Councils Cooperating

*University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.*
Monthly Meetings
(All Meetings held at the Roger D. Gustafson Nature Center are open to the public)

BCCD Board of Trustees
Tuesdays at 4:00 p.m. January 19th, February 16th and March 15th

Gardeners of America
Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m., February 23rd and March 22nd. No meeting at the District in December and January.

The Truth About Black Bears
February 23rd at 6pm
BCCD Nature Center

BCCD Educator, Tina Dawson Scott will present a FREE program on black bears.

She will address the myths and misconceptions about black bears and introduce the audience to the natural history of this misunderstood animal. There will be a bear hide, skull, claw, and track on display. There is no charge for this program but please pre-register by calling (815) 547-7935.

If You Can Walk, You Can Snowshoe
Saturday, January 16th
10:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.
Nature Center

The Boone County Conservation District will be offering a snowshoe class. Cost is $10/person. Pre-registration and prepayment is required. Call (815) 547-7935 to register.

Also...If you are interested in joining our staff on a snowshoe trek, please call to have your name placed on the list. If the weather cooperates you will be notified as to where and when the hike will take place. BCCD has a number of snowshoes that will be available to rent at a cost of $5/person for these hikes.

Beyond S’mores and Hotdogs
Tuesday, March 1st
6:00 – 7:30 p.m.
BCCD Nature Center

Have you ever wanted to cook something more than just hotdogs and s’mores when you go camping?

Come and learn how to cook like an outdoor gourmet from Diane Kane. It’s easier than you think! There will be lots of ideas and tasty samples to try. Cost for this class is $10/person. Must register and pre-pay by February 23rd by calling (815) 547-7935.

Eagle Watch
Saturday, January 30th
7:30 a.m.—5:30 p.m.

Join us for a day of eagle watching along the Illinois River at Starved Rock. There are programs featuring live birds of prey, nature seminars and exhibits. You can bring your own lunch or eat at the lodge. Bring binoculars if you have them. The cost to ride in our mini bus is $40 a person. There is also a minimal charge to use the trolley at Starved Rock. We will leave the Nature Center at 7:30 a.m. Space is limited. Preregister and prepayment is required, call (815) 547-7935.

Teachers/Scouts/Homeschoolers

We are now scheduling for winter programs. You can visit our website for more information. Please call or email to reserve a date. (815) 547-7935 or email tdawson@bccdil.org

Summer Camp Information

Camp staff applications are available on our website and will be accepted starting February 1st.

Camp registration begins April 1st. Registration information will be available on our website in March.

Flora Prairie Clean Up
Tues., March 8th
9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon

Join us for the annual clean up. Volunteers will help clear brush and unsightly trash from the prairie. Wear comfortable clothing and bring work gloves. Call (815) 547-7935 and let us know if you are coming to help.

District will be Closed
Dec. 24th thru Jan. 3
Christmas and New Years
Feb. 15th President’s Day
Feb. 25th & 26th Staff retreat

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Kid’s Ice Fishing Workshop

A FREE workshop for kids 5—15. Lunch provided.

Sat., February 6, 2016
9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon

Workshop will start at the
Roger D. Gustafson Nature Center
603 N. Appleton Road, Belvidere, IL

Bring any ice fishing equipment you have, limited rigs available.