

NEWS

Champaign County Forest Preserve District
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Middle Fork River Forest Preserve ▪ Homer Lake Forest Preserve ▪ Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve
River Bend Forest Preserve ▪ Sangamon River Forest Preserve

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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TO DO A JOB RIGHT, YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE THE RIGHT TOOLS!

Forest Preserve District uses grant money for its growing Trail Steward Program.

The Trail Steward Program at the Champaign County Forest Preserve District (CCFPD) is growing and thriving thanks to grant support from several entities. With \$1,246 from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Wildlife Preservation Fund, along with \$1,938 from the Illinois chapter of The Nature Conservancy and the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, the District was able to purchase necessary tools including bypass loppers, pruning saws, work gloves, safety vests, herbicide applicators and safety glasses, all vital tools for doing the work safely and correctly.

Through this adopt-a-trail program, volunteers maintain safe passageway for visitors enjoying the CCFPD trail system. Throughout the five forest preserves in Champaign County, there are 35 trails covering more than 36 miles that are maintained by 67 volunteer stewards.

Stewards commit to one year of service. In addition to clean-up and reporting of unusual observations on the trail, they focus on invasive species removal and the preservation of wildlife and native plants. These volunteers provide a much needed service for the Forest Preserve District.

The program, now in its third year, has exceeded all expectations, nearly tripling participants from year one. Stewards meet quarterly for training and idea sharing. The next workshop is scheduled for Saturday, April 17 at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve in Mahomet. People who want to learn more about this worthwhile project are welcome. For more information, contact Volunteer Coordinator Kim Horbas at (217) 493-7199 or khorbas@ccfpd.org.

The CCFPD provides conservation, education and recreation for the citizens of Champaign County and manages more than 3,800 acres of open space located at Lake of the Woods Forest Preserve, Mahomet; River Bend Forest Preserve, Mahomet; Homer Lake Forest Preserve, Homer; Middle Fork River Forest Preserve, Penfield; and Sangamon River Forest Preserve, Fisher.

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