

Conservation Corner

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Over the past two weeks we've looked at some of our national parks, monuments, and trails as America celebrates the 100th Birthday of the National Park Service in 2016. This week I thought it would be timely to take a look at several of our own county parks as Conservation plans and places four new interpretive signs in 2016. We recently received a Pocahontas County Foundation Grant which will help fund them and bring our total to ten interpretive signs, each of which illustrate a chapter in the story of Pocahontas County.

The goal of the National Park Service is to preserve nature in all its diversity and tell America's story. Our goal here at Conservation is much the same. And while we don't have mountains, waterfalls, or caverns, we do have prairies, wetlands, and woodlands. Over the years we have learned that interpretive signs are a great way to tell others some stories of our natural and cultural heritage.

The first sign will greet visitors traveling to Pocahontas County along Highway 3 from the west. It will tell the story of Little Clear Lake, a shallow glacial lake which is partially spring fed and drained by the West Branch of Cedar Creek. Did you know that in 1872 the Town of Lombard was plotted on the NE shore by Fred Hess in anticipation of the railroad coming through? Today PCCB has three areas along its shores, Little Clear Lake Recreation Area, West Roadside Park, and Little Clear Lake Wildlife Area.

The second sign will greet travelers from the east on Highway 3. It will mark "The Edge of the Crater" at Moore Recreation Area northwest of Gilmore City. This abandoned limestone quarry covers 48 acres and several story lines, including the Day of Devastation written by an asteroid over 74 million years ago. Many of you are familiar with the Manson Impact Structure whose terrace terrane region contains the cretaceous limestone rocks that were pushed up some 200 feet, making quarrying less costly.

The third sign will be placed at Meredith Park, a/k/a Plover Pit, in north-central Pocahontas County. In 1976, Ernest and Florence Meredith donated 10 acres of land along Beaver Creek. This summer the park will turn 40, and the old sand and gravel pit is still a popular camping, picnicking, and fishing spot.

The fourth sign will be at Conservation Headquarters in the center of the county and feature the history of PCCB in the park named for its first director, Elmer Rosenberger. As Rosenberger Park is located along the flood plain of Lizard Creek, we will need to find a high spot that isn't flooded every time we receive a heavy downpour.

We also need your help! If you have an old picture, postcard, or special story from any of these four spots, give us a call at 712-335-4395. Who knows, maybe your piece of the story will end up on one of our new interpretive signs.

Follow the sign!

