

SEASONS

VOLUME 41, ISSUE 2

SUMMER 2026



It's All in the Name

by Emily Herring, Director of Marshall County Conservation

Many people may not realize that Marshall County Conservation manages 37 areas totaling more than 3,400 acres. Each area offers visitors unique experiences, making it hard to decide which park to visit or what each location has to offer. However, the name of each area usually gives a good idea of what to expect.

Marshall County Conservation areas are categorized in several ways. The most frequented group is the "Recreation Area." This category includes destinations such as Green Castle Recreation Area, Sand Lake Recreation Area, and Grammer Grove Recreation Area. A recreation area features amenities for leisure, including campgrounds, shelters, maintained trails, and playgrounds.

"City Parks" are another type of area with amenities. Marshall County Conservation manages three city parks in the unincorporated communities of Bangor, Dillon, and Van Cleve. Depending on the park, you may encounter shelters, basketball courts, or swing sets.

A majority of Marshall County Conservation areas are designated "Wildlife Management Areas." As the name implies, these sites support wildlife habitat and frequently permit hunting and wildlife viewing. Mowed burn breaks facilitate walking, but you will not find shelters, picnic tables, or manicured hiking trails, as these areas are intended primarily for wildlife. Habitats include wetlands, prairies, and forests. The newest site, Winter Bottoms Wildlife Management Area, fits this category.

"Prairie Preserves" are areas designated by Marshall County Conservation primarily for prairie preservation. Marietta Sand Prairie Preserve is a prime example, recognized nationwide for its distinctive sand prairie habitat.

"Accesses" are locations primarily designated as river entry points or boat ramps, with Jesse R. Furrow Sr. River Access serving as a prime example.

In some cases, the name indicates that an area is a trail. These locations are primarily designed for trail use. Marshall County Conservation maintains three such trails: the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, the Highway 330 Trail, and a section of the Linn Creek Trail. Trail areas may be paved or natural, but are mainly linear, offering limited space beyond the path itself.

We have multiple sources to help you get out and explore our different areas. The *creme de la crème* is our County Atlas. We are currently updating to the second edition, which costs \$10 and is available at the Nature Center. There are individual maps for all areas in the atlas and a list of recreational opportunities. There are newly printed brochures that fit easily in a glove compartment, including a large map of the county showing the locations of all the areas. It also lists the opportunities that are available in each park. Finally, a new and exciting addition coming this fall will be an interactive county conservation website.

Together, these areas form a diverse system of places to explore, relax, and connect with the outdoors across Marshall County. Whether you're looking for a family-friendly campground, a quiet stretch of prairie, a place to watch wildlife, or simply a scenic trail to walk, there's a destination that fits your interests. So next time you're planning an outing, take a closer look, you might just find a new favorite spot waiting for you.



Meet Our Summer Staff

Brooklyn Shepard

Hi! My name is Brooklyn, and I will be one of the summer naturalists. I am going into my senior year at Iowa State University majoring in Forestry. I'm originally from Fort Collins, Colorado, and I love spending time outdoors especially in the woods. Some of my favorite activities include fishing, paddleboarding, and swimming, and I also have a special interest in frogs and birds. I'm passionate about environmental education and helping others connect with nature.



Paige Hollenberg

Paige is our seasonal Vegetation Management Aide. They will help with managing invasive species in Marshall County. They love hiking in many of Iowa's local and state parks. They are often found looking for wildflowers, catching bumble bees, or birding.



Greg Morris

My name is Greg Morris, and I was born and raised in Liscomb and Conrad. I worked at Lennox Industries in Marshalltown for 38 years and am semi-retired. I currently own and manage several rental properties. I am married to Mary, and we've been married for 40 years. We have three grown children and five grandkids. My hobbies are anything outdoors, especially fishing. We like to ride bikes on the local bike trails. I am a big Hawkeye, Pittsburgh Steelers, and Chicago Cubs baseball fan. This is Greg's third summer with MCC.



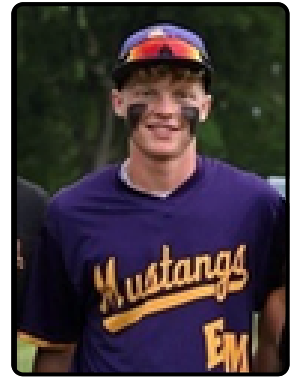
Brayden Fetch

Hello, my name is Brayden. I was born in Spokane, Washington. I was 7 years old when my family moved to Wyoming. As I got older, I got into hunting, fishing, and camping, and I absolutely love the great outdoors! Seven years later, I moved here to Marshalltown. It was a challenge in high school, but I passed with good grades. Then I found this job that I absolutely love! I look forward to more adventures! This is Brayden's second summer with MCC.



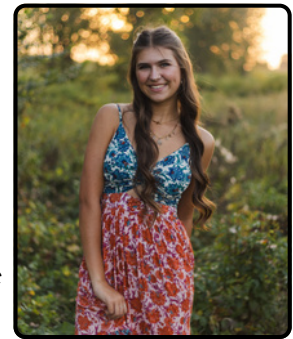
Kaleb Grant

My name is Kaleb Grant, and I grew up in the countryside of Gilman, graduating from East Marshall High School. I am currently pursuing my studies at Wartburg College, majoring in Environmental Science and minoring in Economics. In addition to my academic studies, I am part of the Wartburg Track and Field team. In my free time, I enjoy hunting and fishing. Kaleb is returning for his second summer with MCC.



Abby Kemp

Hi! My name is Abby and I will be one of the Naturalist Interns this summer! I just finished my first year at Iowa State University studying Agricultural Communications, with a main emphasis in environmental science. I love the outdoors, and some of my favorite activities include picking flowers, going on hikes and exploring new places! This will be Abby's second summer with MCC.



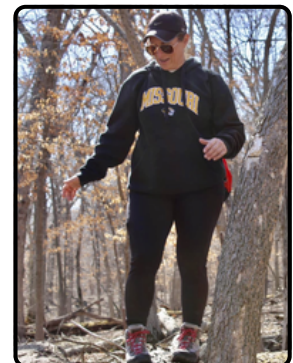
Angie Dudley

Angie Dudley is excited to join the MCC for the summer. She teaches 1st grade at GMG Elementary School and just finished her 29th year in education. Angie will be working as a Teacher Extern funded by the Governor's Iowa STEM Teacher Externship program. This will be her second summer working with Marshall County! When not teaching, Angie loves reading and hanging out with her family and pets.



Marty King

I am a high school science teacher at East Marshall. This will be my 25th year of teaching. I earned my BA from Grand View College and my MA from Montana State University. I have one child that I have successfully raised to be a Chiefs fan. I enjoy hiking and kayaking. I love bringing my dog to Grimes Farm. He thinks they have the best smells.



Live & Local

FREE Live Music and Local Food Trucks
6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater

June 11
Standing Hampton

Food Trucks
Clare's Tenderloins
The Gyro Spot
The Pie Lady
Apple Wagon



July 30
Orquesta Alto Maiz

Food Trucks
Clare's Tenderloins
La Capital Del Taco
Ma Brown's



August 27
Weary Ramblers

Food Trucks
Clare's Tenderloins
MaGoo Pizza
Tropical Snow
Outside Scoop



September 10
Jordan Beem

Food Trucks
Clare's Tenderloins
Holy Grounds
Bkry 146



Star Gazing with the Central Iowa Astronomers

Solar Picnic

June 13 at 12:00 p.m.
Gander Lookout, Green Castle Recreation Area
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman

Perseids and Other Meteor Showers

July 10 at 10:00 p.m.
Green Castle Observatory
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman

Parade of Planets and Other Planetary Alignments

August 14 at 9:30 p.m.
Green Castle Observatory
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman

For more information, please
call Jim Bonser at (641)751-8744.



Quilt Sealed Bid Auction

Friends of Marshall County Conservation is pleased to offer a beautiful handmade nature-themed quilt through a sealed bid auction!

Bidding Opens: March 7, 2026
Bidding Closes: August 28, 2026
All sealed bids will be opened in early September.
Winner Announced: September 10, 2026, at the Live and Local Concert



**PEOPLE IN
THE PARK**

Will return July 2026, watch our Facebook page for more details.



SUMMER CAMP

Cricket

June 23 - 25 from 9:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Grimes Farm Conservation Center
2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown
Ages: 4 to out of Kindergarten & accompanying adult
Registration Fee: \$20
Registration Deadline: June 5 by 4:00 p.m.

Let's play! Cricket Camp is all about nature play and will have kiddos and adults having hands-on outdoor fun!

Acorns and Asters

July 7 - 9 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Grimes Farm Conservation Center
2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown
Age: Out of 1st & 2nd Grades
Registration Fee: \$25
Registration Deadline: June 19 by 4:00 p.m.

All about aquatic fun! Kids will spend their time getting muddy and wet while learning about the watery world around them.

Muskrats

July 15 - 17 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Izaak Walton League
2606 Smith Avenue, Marshalltown
Age: Out of 3rd & 4th Grades
Registration Fee: \$35
Registration Deadline: June 26 by 4:00 p.m.

A little dirt never hurt anyone! What better way to spend your summer day than getting dirty, learning about geology, and having fun while doing it!

Praying Mantis (Uncle Ike's)

July 23 - 24 from 3:00 p.m. - 9:00 a.m. (overnight)
Izaak Walton League
2606 Smith Avenue, Marshalltown
Age: Out of 5th & 6th Grades
Registration Fee: \$45
Registration Deadline: July 3 by 4:00 p.m.

Ready for a campout? Come learn how to cook over the fire and pitch a tent, all while learning the basics of survival.



Register for Summer Camp online by following this link: <https://forms.gle/7aNpVXUY7PPG3x518> or by taking a picture of this QR Code with your smartphone.

SUMMER SKILLS

Do you have a youth aged 10 to 15 who is interested in building their outdoor skills? Join us for Summer Skills courses to learn geocaching, fishing, and outdoor survival skills! Sign up for one or all sessions!

Fishing

Tuesday, July 28 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Green Castle Recreation Area
2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman
Ages: 10 - 15
Registration Fee: \$10
Registration Deadline: July 14 by 4:00 p.m.

Summer is about having fun and spending time outdoors. Join MCCB naturalists as they introduce your youth to fishing. They will learn about fish species in Iowa, fish anatomy, and fishing techniques.

Survival

Tuesday, August 11 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Grammer Grove Recreation Area
2030 127th Street, Liscomb
Ages: 10 - 15
Registration Fee: \$10
Registration Deadline: July 28 by 4:00 p.m.

Learning survival skills is great fun and essential to keeping you safe when exploring the outdoors. Join MCCB naturalists as they introduce your youth to basic survival skills that will last them a lifetime. They will learn how to build a survival shelter, what to pack for a hike, and how to start a fire safely.



Register for Summer Skills online by following this link: <https://forms.gle/DKgXdwTvygWRHDGt7> or by taking a picture of this QR Code with your smartphone.



PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

Nature Story Hour

Nature Story Hour is held during the summer months at Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater at the Grimes Farm. In the event of inclement weather, the program will be held indoors at the center.



The program will start with a storybook read-aloud, an educational program by the naturalist on the topic, and an activity or craft. Each session will last about 30 - 40 minutes. Upcoming topics and guests include:

Thursday, June 4 at 10:00 a.m.
Animal Signs - Naturalist

Thursday, June 18 at 10:00 a.m.
Hidden Rainbow - Hallie Crouse, East Marshall Art Teacher

Thursday, July 2 at 10:00 a.m.
Storms - Kim Elder, Marshall County EMS

Thursday, July 16 at 10:00 a.m.
Bats - Angie Dudley, GMG Teacher

Thursday, August 6 at 10:00 a.m.
Wildlife Rehab - Iowa Wildlife Center

Sunrise Hike

Join Marshall County Conservation for a program that encourages you to start your morning with a hike in a county park. Research has shown that people who exercise in the morning are more active throughout the day. Come for a brisk hike, bring your binoculars to spot birds, or take a leisurely stroll for some fresh air. MCCB staff will be there to answer any questions you might have. Participants should dress appropriately and wear sturdy footwear. There is no charge for this event. Registration needed.

Wednesday, June 10 at 6:00 a.m.
Heart of Iowa Trail Nature Trail
3009 Canfield Avenue, Rhodes

Tuesday, July 28 at 6:00 a.m.
Grammer Grove Recreation Area
2030 127th Street, Liscomb

Tuesday, August 11 at 6:00 a.m.
Iowa River Wildlife Area
2503 Sand Road, Marshalltown

Wednesday, September 9 at 6:30 a.m.
Marietta Sand Prairie Preserve
1744 Knapp Avenue, Marshalltown



Brown Bag Bunch - Helping Iowa's Native Species Thrive

Thursday, June 11 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm Conservation Center
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: June 9 by 4:00 p.m.

Join Stephanie Shepherd, a wildlife diversity biologist from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, for an engaging look at how Iowans are helping protect the state's native species. Learn about the wide variety of volunteer opportunities available through Iowa's Wildlife Diversity Program—from native bee monitoring and bald eagle nest surveys to frog and toad call surveys, just a few of the many ways you can get involved.

You'll also hear inspiring success stories and see real results from past monitoring efforts, including how volunteer data has helped track population trends, support conservation decisions, and contribute to the recovery and protection of species across Iowa.

Live and Local - Standing Hampton

June 11 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater at the Grimes Farm Conservation Center

Standing Hampton have been playing together for more than 25 years. They've played over 1300 gigs at casinos, festivals, fairs and affairs, weddings, corporate events and smoky bars. The band has headlined RAGBRAI overnights and opened for national acts including Cheap Trick, Night Ranger and Eddie Money. Standing Hampton is well known for their high energy performances of classic rock covers from the 70s and 80s! This will be an experience you will not want to miss!

Food Trucks

Clare's Tenderloins
The Gyro Spot
The Pie Lady
Apple Wagon



THEY'RE BAAA-AACK!!!
SAVE THE DATE
PARK APOCALYPSE
OCTOBER 10, 2026

Ready for a scary good time?!?! The zombies will return to the Grimes Farm Conservation Center on October 10. Join fellow runners and walkers during the Park Apocalypse 5k run/walk as you avoid getting your brains eaten by the zombies! Mark your calendars and watch future newsletters for registration information. If you are interested in volunteering, please email ebruck@marshallcountytia.gov.

TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS: CALL 641-752-5490, EMAIL MCCB@MARSHALLCOUNTYIA.GOV, OR TEXT ONLY 641-758-9777 BY EVENT DEADLINE

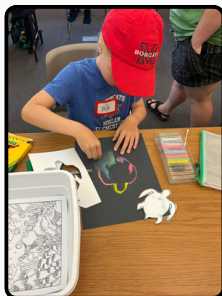
Art in the Park

Celebrate summer creativity at Art in the Park! This relaxed, come-and-go program invites families to stop by, enjoy the outdoors, and create a fun art project inspired by nature and the season. All supplies are provided—just bring your imagination and enjoy making art in the fresh summer air. Stay as long as you like, create at your own pace, and soak up a little sunshine while you're here!

June 19 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Grimes Farm Shelter House

July 13 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Grimes Farm Shelter House

August 7 from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
Grimes Farm Shelter House



Brown Bag Bunch - Rooted in Nature: A Guide to Native Landscaping

Monday, July 20 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm Conservation Center
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 16 by 4:00 p.m.

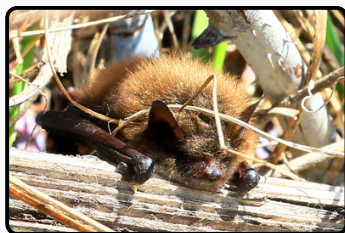
Curious about adding native plants to your landscape? Join us to learn why planting native species benefits pollinators, wildlife, and your yard, along with tips on what to plant and when. After a brief presentation, we'll take a short walk to observe and identify native plants in the landscape, helping you feel more confident bringing them into your own space.



Bat Program

Friday, July 31 at 8:30 p.m.
Timmons Grove Shelter House
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 23 by 4:00 p.m.

Join us for a family-friendly evening exploring the fascinating world of bats in Iowa. Learn about local species, their behaviors, and why they're vital to healthy ecosystems. We'll take a guided hike and use acoustic monitors to detect and identify bats by their echolocation calls, a unique way to experience these nocturnal animals in action. All ages are welcome as we discover how bats help control insects, support agriculture, and how we can protect them.



Kayaking

Join us as we explore Marshall County waters with kayaks. This family-friendly event is designed to help participants learn the basics of kayaking and stay safe on Iowa's waters. There is no fee for this program; however, you must pre-register to reserve one of a limited number of spots.



Wednesday, June 17 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Sand Lake - 2901 Main Street Road, Marshalltown
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: June 11 by 4:00 p.m.

Tuesday, July 14 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Green Castle Recreation Area - 2891 Green Castle Road, Gilman
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 9 by 4:00 p.m.

Wednesday, August 5 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.
Sand Lake - 2901 Main Street Road, Marshalltown
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 31 by 4:00 p.m.

All About Bees for Kids!

Wednesday, July 29 from 10:00 - 10:45 a.m.
Grimes Farm Classroom
Ages: 5-10 & accompanying adult
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 24 by 4:00 p.m.

Learn why bees are some of our most important pollinators and how they help plants, flowers, and even the food we eat grow! In this fun, hands-on program, kids will discover different types of bees, why they need our help, and simple ways we can protect them. We'll finish by building our very own bee houses to take home, giving these helpful insects a safe place to live and thrive



Ragbrai - Marshalltown July 22

The Conservation Center will remain open late until 6:00 p.m. for visitors.
Ride safe!



TO REGISTER FOR EVENTS: CALL 641-752-5490, EMAIL MCCB@MARSHALLCOUNTYIA.GOV, OR TEXT ONLY 641-758-9777 BY THE DEADLINE OF THE EVENT

Live and Local Orquesta Alto Maiz

July 30 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater at the
Grimes Farm Conservation Center

Orquesta Alto Maiz is something of a musical enigma. It is a popular Latin-jazz-dance band made up of musicians now living in the "heartland" of America. Orquesta Alto Maiz plays a wide range of Latin musical styles, including merengue, samba, cha-cha-cha, salsa, calypso, and boleros. In addition to Latin-jazz standards by Tito Puente, Ray Barretto, Eddie Palmieri, Ismael Miranda, Mario Bauzá, Poncho Sanchez and others, the band has produced many successful original compositions as well. Alto Maiz has been performing regionally and internationally since 1986 and has steadily built a strong base of Latin music fans and supporters wherever they've played.

Food Trucks

Clare's Tenderloins
La Capital Del Taco
Ma Brown's



Forest Detectives: Exploring the Secrets of the Woods

Wednesday, August 5 from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.
Grimes Farm Shelter House
Ages: 6-12 & accompanying adult
Registration Fee: Free
Deadline: July 30 by 4:00 p.m.

Step into the role of a nature detective and uncover the hidden stories of the forest! In this hands-on, interactive program, participants will explore the woods through games, and guided discovery. Along the way, we'll learn how to identify trees, search for signs of wildlife, and investigate how plants and animals are connected in a forest ecosystem.

Brown Bag Bunch - Rescue, Rehab, Release

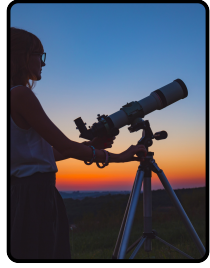
Thursday, August 6 from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm Conservation Center
2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown
Registration Fee: Free
Registration Deadline: July 30 by 4:00 p.m.

Join us for this month's Brown Bag Program with the Iowa Wildlife Center and discover what happens when wild animals need help. Learn how injured and orphaned wildlife in central Iowa are rescued, treated, and given a second chance to return to the wild. We'll explore the challenges wildlife face from habitat loss to human-made dangers—and how science, ethics, and humane care guide every step of rehabilitation. Come find out how you can play a role in protecting Iowa's wild neighbors!

Discover the Night Sky the Woods

Friday, August 7 at 9:15 p.m.
Green Castle Observatory
2891 Green Castle Rd, Gilman
No Registration Required

Explore the night sky at our new observatory! This beginner-friendly "Intro to Astronomy" program offers a relaxed and engaging opportunity to learn the basics of stargazing. Participants will get acquainted with the observatory, discover how telescopes work, and learn how to find and identify constellations and other celestial objects. Whether you're brand new to astronomy or just curious about what you can see after dark, this program is a great way to experience the wonders of the night sky. Perfect for all ages—no experience necessary!



Nocturnal Scavenger Hunt

Thursday, August 13 at 8:30 p.m.
Grimes Farm
Registration Fee: FREE
Registration Deadline: August 11th by 4:00 p.m.

Grab your flashlight and family and head to the Grimes Farm for a nocturnal scavenger hunt. Families will begin the search using flashlights and observation skills while hiking the trails. Reflectors will lead participants on a hunt for prizes. This is a great way to celebrate the final days of summer break and explore nature at night. Participants must pre-register before August 11 at 4:00 p.m. to reserve limited spots. There is no charge for this event. Please bring your flashlight(s) and wear sturdy shoes

Live and Local Weary Ramblers

August 27 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Leonard Grimes Memorial Amphitheater at the
Grimes Farm Conservation Center

Newly formed Iowa Americana duo, Weary Ramblers bring years of experience to the stage with award-winning songwriting and chemistry. Chad Elliott and Kathryn Fox showcase multi-instrumental performances with tight harmonies and great storytelling. Iowa Public Radio called them "nothing short of an Iowa-based super-duo". Weary Ramblers are winners of the 2026 International Blues Challenge.

Food Trucks

Clare's Tenderloins
MaGoo Pizza
Tropical Snow
Outside Scoop



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OR TEXT ONLY 641-758-9777 BY THE DEADLINE OF THE EVENT**

SEASONS

MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD
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MARSHALLTOWN, IA 50158
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Marshalltown, IA
Permit No. 159

THANK YOU!

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Tom Mack Memorial, Bobbi and Garry Brandenburg,
Dennis Eige Memorial, Jim Lee Memorial, Delbert Kellogg,
Sharon Stevens

Newsletter Collating

Irene & Gary Williams, Dianne Freiboth, Charlotte
McGinty, Dianna Mick, Joan Studts, Micki Stanley, Sharon
Depew

Park Maintenance

East Marshall, Emerson, Marshalltown FFA

Flower Beds

Master Gardeners

Programs

Andy Kellrur(IDNR), Tyler Harms

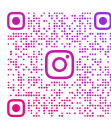
Bird Feeders

Evans McWilliams

Newsletter Editing

Bren Lee

Apologies to anyone we may have missed.



MCCB1958

MARSHALL COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

2349 233rd Street, Marshalltown, IA 50158
(641) 752-5490

mccb@marshallcountytia.gov

www.marshallcountyconservation.com

Nature Center Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

BOARD MEMBERS

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Pam Paone
Steve Armstrong
Tom Deimerly
Tina Nelson

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Emma Bruck - Naturalist
Jeremiah Manken - Operation Supervisor/Park Ranger
Tyler Renze - Natural Resource Manager
Alan Naughton - Maintenance Technician
Ben Steinberg - Maintenance Technician
Tami Krough - Administrative Assistant
Greg Morris - Summer Field Intern
Brayden Fetch - Summer Field Intern
Kaleb Grant - Summer Field Intern
Brooklyn Shepard - Summer Naturalist Intern
Abigail Kemp - Summer Naturalist Intern
Paige Hollenberg - Seasonal Vegetation
Management Aide
Angie Dudley - Summer Naturalist Extern
Marty King - Summer Naturalist Extern