



SANDERLING TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF KOHLER-ANDRAE STATE PARK

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Winter 2016-17



Superintendent's Notes,

By Carolyn Morgen;

It's starting to feel like winter in Wisconsin. After such a beautiful, mild fall, it's time for volunteers and Friends Group members that have been so active this past year. As I write this, there have been 6,542 volunteer hours recorded. I know that there are still some folks that haven't been submitting their volunteer hours. If you are one of those people, please stop in at the park office and make sure that your volunteer contact information and hours have been recorded. We are so thankful for our volunteers!

This past year, we have accomplished a LOT! And, without the volunteers & the Friends of Kohler-Andrae, most of it wouldn't happen. The work at Parking Lot #6 is coming along very nicely. We managed to get the plantings all in, and I can't wait to see how they grow this next summer.

The picnic parking posts have all been removed, and native grasses are planted along the roadsides. That will be another fun project to watch the plantings to come in.

We're now into full winter swing, with our volunteer ski trail groomer, Dan Dittrich, doing a fantastic job! I hope you take the time to come out and test the ski trails, or hike/snowshoe another trail.

This time of year, it's amazing to walk the beach. In winter, the beaches look wide open again. And, the ice volcanoes are starting to form out on Lake

Michigan. I hope that you take the time to come out and enjoy your park.

Attached to this newsletter, you will find a letter, to the statewide Friends of Wisconsin State Parks group. The letter is in reference to the DNR's recent alignment process. If, after reading that letter, you have questions and concerns, please contact me. I would be glad to answer your questions and share what I know about the process. In the following paragraphs, I will attempt to give a brief explanation for how the changes affect us, on the ground level.

In recent times, WI State Parks have experienced quite a few changes. In the 2015/2017 budget, the Legislature voted to remove all General Purpose Revenue (GPR) spending authority from WI State Parks. Prior to that time, parks received roughly 30% of their funding from GPR.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/about/documents/FactSheets/FactSheetParks.pdf>

There have been many discussions to address the shortfall in WI State Parks funding. In 2015, this change in WI State Park funding sources prompted park sticker and camping fee increases. Without the GPR, parks must rely 100% on Segregated (SEG) Funding. This funding change, along with others experienced within the DNR agency as a whole has prompted the DNR to undergo an “alignment process”.

KASP remains one of the premier properties in the state, averaging nearly ½ million visitors, and generating over \$500,000 annually. In recent years, KASP has had two Full Time Employee (FTE) position vacancies. Both the Visitor Services (Mary Kultgen) and Ranger (Ryan O'Keefe) positions

have been vacant. KASP is not alone. There are quite a few staff vacancies across the state. Over time, our staff has been “stretched so thin” that their responsibilities have grown to an almost impossible combination. It has become increasingly difficult to be proficient in each area.

In this process, park staff has been recognized as the experts in recreation management; the management of building, grounds, and excellent customer service. In order for staff to be able to focus on recreation management, there will be a transition over the next year and a half. The decision has been made to remove law enforcement responsibilities from WI State Park Rangers. After June 2018, the Bureau of Law Enforcement (Conservation Wardens) will handle law enforcement duties within state parks. To handle the extra workload, several of WI State Park vacancies have been transferred over to the Warden force.

I do ask for your continued patience and understanding with me and our park staff as we work through and implement the alignment changes. Our staff is still committed to providing excellent facilities and customer service. What does this mean to Kohler-Andrae? This summer, will be “business as usual.” You may see a few more Conservation Wardens around, due to continued Ranger vacancies. By the summer of 2018, you will see a change in the state park uniforms, and Conservation Wardens will be handling the law enforcement duties.

What does this mean to the Friends of Kohler-Andrae? If you are already a Friends member, thank you. If you aren't please join the Friends group. The funding from the memberships goes directly to the Friends group. All proceeds raised by the Friends group are specifically directed to Kohler-Andrae State Park. If you have yet to become involved at Kohler-Andrae, please get involved. At least once or twice a week, park visitors tell me how much they “Love Kohler-Andrae!” I repeatedly ask them if they are a Friends member, or a volunteer. If they aren't I encourage them to get involved.

For the first time since they began, we haven't scheduled any winter Candlelight Hikes. For the past few years, due to weather conditions (cold, ice, lack of snow) and lack of help (staff vacancies,

volunteer shortages), we have cancelled the past 4 hikes. With continued staff vacancies, and lack of volunteer help, I made the very difficult decision not to schedule any winter hikes for 2017. In time, hopefully the winter hikes will return. If you have a desire to help to make that happen, let me know.

We are already making plans for the 2017 season. Interpretive Programming plans have begun. Doris has several programs on the calendar. We are hopeful to schedule more Candlelight Hikes next spring, summer and fall, possibly coupled with “Music in the Park” events.

I am convinced that we have the most dedicated group of volunteers in the state!

I want to wish you all a very Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and hope to see you in the New Year!

President's Notes,

By Jim Mohr;

Thank you to all the people who volunteered in the past year. All volunteer work, no matter how insignificant it may seem at the time, is important and is appreciated. Volunteers are what has made Kohler-Andrae a great place to visit.

As Carolyn mentioned, the DNR is going through an alignment process at this time due to the State legislature deciding that the State Park system should operate without any tax payer funding. The alignment will attempt to address this issue. It is a work in progress and will take time. Additional changes will be made as the need arises. A letter from Ben Bergey, The new Director of the Bureau of Parks and Recreation, explaining some of the re-alignment, will follow this article.

I am looking forward to another successful season for the Friends of Kohler-Andrae. With your help, we can continue to make our park a place that visitors will remember as a great place to visit.

The volunteers on the conservation team have been busy at the shop all winter, painting and repairing picnic tables etc. and whatever else Carolyn can come up with. They work mainly on Fridays. If you are interested in volunteering with this group,

contact Carolyn. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity, please stop at the park office and fill out a volunteer form. Your information will be entered in our database. We can sort this database so we know who to call for any specific volunteer needs.

Come out and visit our beautiful park and as always, the best time to visit our park is whenever you get the chance.

Letter to Friends Groups,

From Ben Bergey;

Good Evening,

Every year, friends groups provide thousands of volunteer hours and dollars to help support the mission and activities of the Wisconsin state parks, forests, trails, and recreation areas. Our strategic direction depends upon building and strengthening partnerships such as we have with each of your organizations. Our combined efforts have shown to be effective to help promote and expand recreation opportunities that leverage and enhance each of your communities. Because of this, we value our partnership and wanted to communicate with you about the DNR Alignment initiatives that were rolled out to all DNR staff today.

Below you will find some over the over-arching elements of alignment. In the coming weeks your property managers will be reaching out to all of you to discuss the details of the agency alignment and the property operational changes that may affect our Friends groups. The general theme of alignment is of prioritization and specialization. Additionally, please follow this link for the DNR press release regarding alignment.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/news/releases/article/?id=3D4135>

1. The Bureau of Parks and Recreation will now be called the Bureau of Park and Recreation Management to align with our new responsibilities.

2. The Park and Recreation Management program is now recognized as the experts for all recreation management within the Department; as such, the Program will perform recreation management functions on all department lands

including lands managed by the Fish, Wildlife, Natural Heritage Conservation, and Forestry programs.

3. Habitat management will now be performed by Habitat Management experts in the Wildlife, Fisheries and Natural Heritage Conservation Programs on all department lands including Park and Recreation Management lands.

4. The Park and Recreation Management Program will be moving to a specialization and prioritization model by creating a recreation property classification system that will align properties based upon visitation, recreation opportunities, operation complexity, and customer needs and trends. This classification system will be used to most appropriately align available recreation resources to best meet customer needs and expectations. This approach will maximize the services and opportunities we provide to the greatest amount of people possible

5. Public health and safety has and will continue to be a top priority of the DNR and Parks and Recreation Management Program. Through an alignment transition process, over the next several months, all DNR law enforcement services will be provided by the Bureau of Law Enforcement. Some of the above listed small-scale initiatives will be completed in the coming months while other large-scale initiatives may take several months to complete.

Moving forward, we will continue to work to gain operating efficiencies, standards, priorities and consistencies; provide for public health and safety; manage our natural and cultural resources; be financially responsible and sustainable, and provide outstanding service to our partners and visitors. Friends Groups are our some of our most valued partners as we could not provide the service and recreational opportunities that we do without your continued support and dedication of resources to our program. We look forward to moving through this transition with you and continuing to provide excellent customer service and recreational opportunities to all of our visitors.

Thank you,

Ben Bergey
Director – Bureau of Parks and Recreation

Officers and Board Members

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	458-3934
Mary Butts (Secretary)	458-4518
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Sue Meyer	457-4329
Bryan Casper	917-9526
Ted Bergstrom	208-2847
Mary Lutzke	458-2075
Joe Brunnbauer	668-8560
Al Lawrence	452-5662

Board meetings are held on the fourth Monday of the month at 6:30 PM at the Park office. Guests are welcome. *Only board members can make a motion or vote at board meetings.*

E Newsletter

You can receive the newsletter via e mail instead of by snail mail. It would save the Friends group the money spent on printing and postage. The e newsletter arrives 3-4 days sooner than snail mail. If you are interested, send me an e mail at:

jimohr@aol.com. Be sure to put **e newsletter** in the subject line so it gets past my spam filter

Change of Address

If you have a change of address, be sure to let us know so we can update our records and get the newsletter you at your new address.

Wetlands - Bog, Marsh, or Swamp?

By Jim Buchholz;

Visitors often ask park staff and nature center volunteers about wetlands in our area. We have the Black River marsh right here at Kohler-Andrae of course but what about some of the nearby wetlands such as the Cedarburg Bog, Cleveland Swamp, Sheboygan Marsh, Spruce Lake Bog, Collins Marsh or the Horicon marsh. Why are they called a bog, marsh or swamp and what's the difference between them?

The easiest way I know to tell the difference is to just remember that a "marsh" has mostly grass, a "swamp" has mostly trees and a "bog" has sphagnum moss. This description might be a bit over simplified but in general it works.

Almost all marshes in the world are associated with some body of water such as a river, creek, pond, lake or even an ocean. The Black River Marsh exists thanks to the local Black River drainage area and the Sheboygan Marsh features the main channel of the Sheboygan River. Even the massive 21,000-acre Horicon Marsh owes its existence due to several branches of the Rock River that flow through it. Typical plants found in marshes include many types of grasses, rushes, reeds, sedges,

Thank You to General Fund Donors;

David G. Martyn
Fred and Linda Kudert
Andy and Janet Raddatz
Thomas E. Riemann

Welcome New Members;

April and Christine Heider
David G. Martyn
Thomas E. Riemann

Welcome New Life Members

Thomas and Susan Hebel

cattails, low growing woody shrubs and other vegetation that can survive wet, mucky soil and regular flooding.

Many larger marshes also have “swamps” associated with them as well. Swamps also have grasses and cattails but they are dominated by trees such as white cedar, tamarack, silver maple, green ash, swamp oak and other species that can survive in water-logged and often standing surface water. The large cedar/tamarack forested area surrounding the Sheboygan Marsh and the wet forested area called the Cleveland Swamp just north of Sheboygan are both good examples of a swamp.

Bogs can be a bit more difficult to classify especially when found in the southern part of Wisconsin. Northern bogs are more typical in that they almost always surround an open body of acidic water and feature deep deposits peat which is formed by layer after layer of dead plant material. Plants typical of bogs are black spruce, sphagnum moss, cotton grass, pitcher plants, sun dews, orchids, poison sumac, leather leaf, and other plants that can survive in acidic water and can grow on floating, unstable mats of peat. Southern Wisconsin bogs, such as the Cedarburg Bog near Saukville and the Spruce Lake Bog in the NU-Kettle Moraine State Forest, are a bit different. They do have many of the same vegetation types as the northern bogs such as sphagnum moss and black spruce but are not acidic. The Cedarburg bog, for example, was actually part of a larger glacial lake at one time so most of the area’s cedar/tamarack forest there would be considered a swamp rather than a bog. The property does have some unique “string bogs” which do have all the typical bog plant species but the water there is neutral base (not acidic). It also has a fresh water stream outlet and a couple shallow lakes that can support fish and other aquatic life. Most northern bogs receive their water from rainfall runoff and underground seepage and are too acidic for most fish to survive in.

Now that you know the difference between the three basic wetlands, take some time to get out and explore them on foot. Many publicly-owned wetland areas have boardwalks available for visitors to use and some even have interpretive signs along the way. Winter is a great time to explore them on foot as well if you’re careful and wait for good ice before venturing too far out.

Friends of Kohler-Andrae State Park
Kohler-Andrae State Park
1020 Beach Park Lane
Sheboygan, WI 53081

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____ Renewal ____ New Membership Your cashed check will serve as your receipt

Membership Year is from May 1 thru April 30

Mail to: Friends of Kohler-Andrae, Treasurer, 913 St. Clair Ave., Sheboygan, WI 53081