

FRIENDS OF CAPITAL SPRINGS RECREATION AREA NEWSLETTER

2016 / ISSUE I



NATIONAL TRAILS DAY AT CAPITAL SPRINGS, JUNE 4, 11AM – 2PM

Bike the Capital City State Trail near the Lussier Family Heritage Center and stop by the Friends water station! We will lead bird walks throughout the day and a trip to a natural spring. Bring the whole family!

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LOWER YAHARA RIVER TRAIL WORK UNDERWAY

Development of phase I of the Lower Yahara River Trail began in March of this year. Phase I of the Trail is approximately two and a half miles long, beginning at the Capital City State Trail in the CSRA near the Lussier Family Heritage Center and ends at McDaniel Park in the Village of McFarland. Construction of this portion of the trail is anticipated to be completed by June of 2017.

The Trail includes nearly a mile of bicycle pedestrian bridge and boardwalk – the longest in Wisconsin! For a video of the work in progress, see our web site.



The Trail will be parallel to and outside of the existing railroad corridor along the north shore of Lake Waubesa.

"We are excited to begin construction on this long anticipated project and thankful to have the Wisconsin Department of Transportation as a partner to assist us with completing this very complex first phase of trail construction. Dane County has some of the best biking trails and access in the world, it is an important component to our quality of life."

— Dane County Executive Joe Parisi

MADISON METROPOLITAN SEWAGE DISTRICT – KEY PARTNER IN OUR COMMUNITY

*By Ralph Erickson
Friends of Capital Springs Board Director
Treatment and Waste Acceptance Coordinator
Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District*

Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD) has facilities throughout the metro area. Some lands and facilities are units of the Capital Springs Recreation Area – the wildlife viewing lagoons as an example. Other facilities are miles away from CSRA and yet undeniably part of the “parks culture” in the Madison area.

In total, eighteen wastewater pumping stations are owned by the District, and a surprisingly large number of them are situated next to trails or urban bike routes. Keen observers will notice that MMSD provides rest stop facilities and kiosk information at our stations for bikers and park visitors. In line with this practice, we are adding facilities near station number 11 by Clayton and Larson Roads – the area is a gateway to the Baxter Park spur trail that will soon contain a bike rack, picnic table and kiosk when completed later this summer! The rehabilitated station will also have porous pavements and prairie seed plantings.

In addition, this autumn look for a Capital City State Trail relocation project in the area of the District wildlife viewing lagoons and the Metro biosolids trucking facility. The plan is to realign the trail along the westernmost dike of the wildlife lagoons.

In other news, the District will soon occupy its new combined maintenance facility on Moorland Road (you can see the new building looking north from Clayton/Larson Road). We are excited about this state of the art facility, and expect to obtain LEED gold or platinum certification as we will be cooling and heating the facility with treatment plant effluent – a cutting-edge technology. Did you know? Thirty-six million gallons of effluent per day pass under the Capital Springs State Trail in a 60-inch underground pipeline near the CSRA disk golf course. Interested in seeing it firsthand? Watch for details coming out for a public tour of the new shop.



Station 11, nearing the end of construction. The site will be improved for a rest stop, porous pavement, and prairie seeding.



Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District Boardwalks lead to wetland ponds at CSRA.

Have you noticed that there is an increased energy from folks in the region related to water quality improvements? The Yahara Watershed Improvement Network (WINs) is now employing the Watershed Adaptive Management plan this year. On April 15th, the Inter-Governmental Agreement went into effect, which means that trial processes for improving nutrient problems in local waterways via adaptive management are going full-scale throughout the entire Yahara River basin. Many entities play vital stakes in this program - please refer to the web site for details: <http://www.madsewer.org/Programs-Initiatives/Yahara-WINs>.

What does Watershed Adaptive Management mean to CSRA? Water quality in the Yahara River, Nine Springs Creek, and Lake Waubesa is expected to improve. We may see more citizen water monitors working on sampling (see article on page 4), and the public will become even more engaged in water quality issues.

FRIENDS EVENTS

Looking for outdoor recreation nearby? Join us for one of our upcoming events.

- **National Trails Day at Capital Springs**

June 4, 11am – 2pm

Bike the Capital City State Trail near the Lussier Family Heritage Center and stop by the Friends water station! We will lead bird walks throughout the day and a trip to a natural spring. Bring the whole family!

- **CSRA Volunteer Work Days**

Throughout the year

Join team leader Dan Kerkman for a work session to improve areas at Capital Springs. For details, contact work group leader Dan at Kerkmande@att.net to get on his mailing list (see [page 5](#) for an article about current projects).

- **Dane County Healthy Parks Tours - Capital Springs Walks**

August 20, 10 am & noon

The Friends of Dane County Parks will be conducting a "Healthy Parks Tour" in area Dane County parks this summer. The Tour highlights the important role of nature-based parks in advancing physical and mental health. Join tours throughout the area to visit some of the most beautiful venues in Dane County! We are very pleased to announce that two of the walks will take place at CSRA. For more information on other tours throughout the county, please visit www.countyofdane.com/lwrp/parks/endowment.aspx.

- **Jenni and Kyle Preserve Tour**

Meet at Jenni and Kyle Preserve Shelter, 925 Post Road, at 10 am. The Jenni & Kyle unit of the Capital Springs Recreation Area has a unique history and beautiful features, including a wetland, prairie and fishing pier designed for people with disabilities. The trail is generally level, and walk will be approximately 1.5 hrs long.

- **Capital Springs State Park Unit Tour**

Enjoy a lakeshore walk starting at noon, Shelter #1, 4330 Libby Rd, Madison. The trail located at the Capital Springs State Park unit within the Capital Springs Recreation Area is somewhat hilly terrain and meanders along Lake Waubesa. The walk is about 1.5 hrs long.

- **Healthy Parks Tour - Friends of Dane County Parks Endowment Event**
Keynote Speaker: Dr. Zorba Paster at Lussier Family Heritage Center

Speakers will share inspiring information on the health benefits of parks and trails. Proceeds will support the Friends of Dane County Parks Endowment, a permanent, charitable fund designed to provide educational opportunities and sustaining support for 4000+ volunteers and Park Friends groups, and protect our most precious natural resources. More details to come – visit our web site.

- **Capital Springs Magic Bus Tour: September 10, 8:30 – 11:30 am**

- **Harvest Moon Festival : October 7, 2016**

- **Winter Fun Day: February 5, 2017, 11 am – 2 pm**



Capital City State Trail (left) is featured on National Trails Day, June 4th. Stop by our water station and take a guided bird walk or springs tour!

SPOTLIGHT ON WATER QUALITY IN THE CAPITAL SPRINGS RECREATION AREA

By Rick Eilertson
Water Boy and Friends of Capital Springs Board Secretary

Ever wonder what's in the water where you live, work, and play? Well, you're not the only one!

The Rock River Coalition (RRC) has been leading volunteer stream monitoring efforts throughout the Rock River basin for decades, from Horicon Marsh south to Beloit and from Middleton east into Waukesha County. Fortunately for us, the Rock River basin also includes the Yahara River watershed on its western border.

Now, in a new robust water-improvement effort called “Yahara WINS” (Yahara Watershed Improvement Network) organized by Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District and in partnership with over 30 municipal and other interested partners, RRC Volunteer Stream Monitoring Coordinator Nancy Sheehan is readily training and cultivating new volunteer stream monitors in our watershed.

Just this year, the Yahara WINS partnership has just grown from a small pilot to a full scale project, implementing an “Watershed Adaptive Management” plan to address phosphorus runoff at non-point sources which include runoff from agricultural fields, construction sites, and urban areas. One key premise of Adaptive Management is that permittees are enabled to pool their money and resources to come up with innovative, cost effective practices to help improve water quality throughout the watershed.

In addition, rather than relying solely on modeling and theory, Adaptive Management utilizes actual stream data gathered by volunteers throughout the watershed, emphasizing the importance of consistent water monitoring throughout the area.

We now have over 50 sampling sites throughout the Yahara River Watershed and three sites are in the Capital Springs Recreation Area: Penitto Creek by the Dutch Mill Park and Ride, just before it discharges into Upper Mud Lake; Nine Springs Creek by the Jenni & Kyle Preserve; and Nine



The Rock River Basin includes a large portion of south-central Wisconsin, including the Madison chain of lakes.

Springs Creek by Anderberg Drive boat launch. If you're interested in learning more about the Yahara WINS adaptive management program, please visit: www.madsewer.org/Programs-Initiatives/Yahara-WINS.

Rick Eilertson has volunteered to conduct stream monitoring on all 3 sites and will be training other interested volunteers throughout the year. He installed continuous temperature data recorders (called “TidBits”), uses a clarity tube to measure how clear the water is, gathers spot air and water temperatures and dissolved oxygen using a portable meter, and grabs water samples to take to MMSD’s lab for analyzing nutrients (nitrogen and phosphorus). This data gets entered into DNR’s database so that biologists can determine how well the streams are doing in meeting water quality standards. If you’re interested in joining Rick on a stream sampling date, please contact him at rick.eilertson@fitchburgwi.gov or 608-235-0412.

Please consider volunteering!



VOLUNTEER WORK DAYS – PARK IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR HABITAT AND TRAILS

By Dan Kerkman

CSRA Volunteer and Friends of Capital Springs Board Director

The main project that we hope to move forward with is to finish the landing out on Hogg Island - stumps need to be recut and we will also install a bench. There are puddling areas on the trail itself, so we will work to improve portions of the trail.

Other duties on our list for this year include extending a walking trail into an area of the woods slated for rustic camping – the area has beautiful trees, it would be great to be able to see them up-close. Also, in areas of CSRA that we have removed invasive plants, we will now need to conduct maintenance work by mowing or other means. This includes the new prairie at CSRA which will need to be mowed in order to keep unwanted plants at bay.

Due to my schedule, I am unable to set up work days all summer far in advance. We do have a work day scheduled for Thursday, June 9, 10 am. If you are interested in helping us out with this or another work day, please send me an email at Kerkmande@att.net and I will put you on my mailing list. I usually send out an email one week prior to a work day. Thanks, and hope to see you out at CSRA!



The CSRA has work days to maintain habitat and recreational trails with volunteer Dan Kerkman (see article) as well as student groups (see photo left, college group in March) and work days organized by Dane County Parks (see right, controlled burn at Nine Springs E-Way in April).

CARSON MAIN, FRIENDS NATURALIST COORDINATOR, BIDS FAREWELL

By Carson Main

Friends of Capital Springs Naturalist Coordinator

As my time with the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area comes to an end, I would like to thank the Dane County Parks staff, FOCSRA Board of Directors, volunteers, and community members who all contributed to a very rewarding experience. I would also like to thank the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District for the on-going generous support of the Friends group with which our programming is made possible.

I have most enjoyed the opportunity to connect individuals and families to the incredible natural and cultural features that the park offers. I believe that environmental education and recreation within Dane County parks is critical for the continued health and resiliency of our community. I am fortunate to have had the opportunity to contribute to this legacy. I am moving on to Duluth, MN, where I plan to continue professional pursuits in the environmental education and conservation fields. I will fondly remember my time coordinating with members and volunteers and exploring Capital Springs. I am already looking forward to future visits!



FRIENDS OF CAPITAL SPRINGS ENDOWMENT – LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

By Matt Carlson

Friends of Capital Springs Board President

As you know, there are many ways to support the Friends and CSRA. We are pleased to provide an option that looks at support sustainability into the future – the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area’s permanent endowment fund.



The endowment is managed by the Madison Community Foundation (MCF), which currently manages numerous funds throughout the Madison Area and Wisconsin that are committed to building perpetual and sustainable private funding.

We feel that the creation of the permanent endowment represents an important step towards sustainability for the Friends group and will provide a permanent source of financial support for the Park’s educational, recreational and conservation needs. The purpose of the fund is to enhance and strengthen the Capital Springs Recreation Area especially in the area of environmental education.

Individuals who want to help the Friends support the Park now and for future generations can make tax-deductible gifts to the endowment through donations to the Friends group or directly to the Capital Springs endowment fund. Please visit our web site for online links to electronic donation options: www.friendsofcapitalsprings.org/donate/. Or, you can send the endowment gift directly to Madison Community Foundation, 2 Science Ct, P.O. Box 5010, Madison, WI 53705-0010 for Capital Springs Endowment fund (# 1031905). Donations can be made at: www.madisoncommunityfoundation.org

If you prefer, you may contact me directly with your donation or estate planning legacy gift at mccarlson@michaelbest.com or 257-3501. Thank you for your support of the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area.

“The Wisconsin Conservation Endowment will enable us, in our state, to create the intellectual and practical foundations for a better world. Never has there been a greater need for private funds to energize a genuine commitment to harmony between men and the land. Were my father alive today, I think he would be pleased with this important initiative.”

– Nina Leopold Bradley

FRIENDS OF CAPITAL SPRINGS RECREATION AREA



MISSION

To assist Dane County, DNR, and other partners in the mutually beneficial planning and implementation of the Capital Springs Park and Recreation Master Plan.

VISION

To see public and private partners working together to develop, manage, and enjoy the educational, ecological, esthetic, exercise, and environmental aspects of the Capital Springs Park and Recreation Area as the ‘crown jewel’ of the Lewis Nine Springs E-Way.

PURPOSE

To support, assist, and promote the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the Dane County Parks Department and Commission with interpretive, scientific, historical, educational and related visitor services at Capital Springs Park and Recreation Area.

NEW NATURALIST PROGRAM COORDINATOR

By Clare L. Carlson
Friends of Capital Springs Naturalist Coordinator

I'm pleased to introduce myself to the Friends membership as the new Naturalist Program Coordinator for Capital Springs Recreation Area.

A wide-variety of experiences have led me to this position, but most important are those related to hands-on naturalist training and substantial time managing and assisting with environmental nonprofit organizations.

With regards to naturalist work, I've been a volunteer environmental educator at Cambridge Elementary School for the past five years, teaching and learning in an apprentice-type relationship with the award-winning educator Georgia Gomez-Ibanez. We've introduced students to many opportunities, including citizen-science projects such as woodland food availability studies, stewardship work by removing woodland and prairie invasive plant species, and interpretive materials like our woodland trail guide and tree benefits project.

My naturalist experiences also include leadership roles for a number of organizations speaking to visitors about such topics as Wisconsin bats, wetlands and bird behavior. I've also led monthly bird walks in Jefferson and Dane counties with other great birders in our area. Last fall, I completed Master Naturalist Training through the University of Wisconsin-Extension's Environmental Resources Center and Natural Resources Foundation. After completing that course, I was asked to conduct a prairie interpretive project for our training host, MacKenzie Learning Center in Poynette.

I also bring a keen knowledge of environmental-based nonprofit organizations as a founding member of the Friends of Glacial Heritage Area located in greater Jefferson and eastern Dane counties. As Board President, I coordinate implementation of the Glacial Heritage Area Master Plan with state, county and local leaders (a similar organizational feature to Capital Springs Recreation Area).

I also assist in the administrative affairs, budgetary, and member database duties for the Friends of Glacial Heritage Area organization (over 100 members and 400 email contacts), as well as help plan events, including paddles, restoration work days, hikes, educational events, winter activities, bird walks, picnics, and cycling events. Just last year, we organized the Glacial Heritage Area Paddle Volunteer Corps in support of Jefferson County Parks Department's work in water trail maintenance. Within these duties, I speak to a many groups and media outlets about the Glacial Heritage Area.

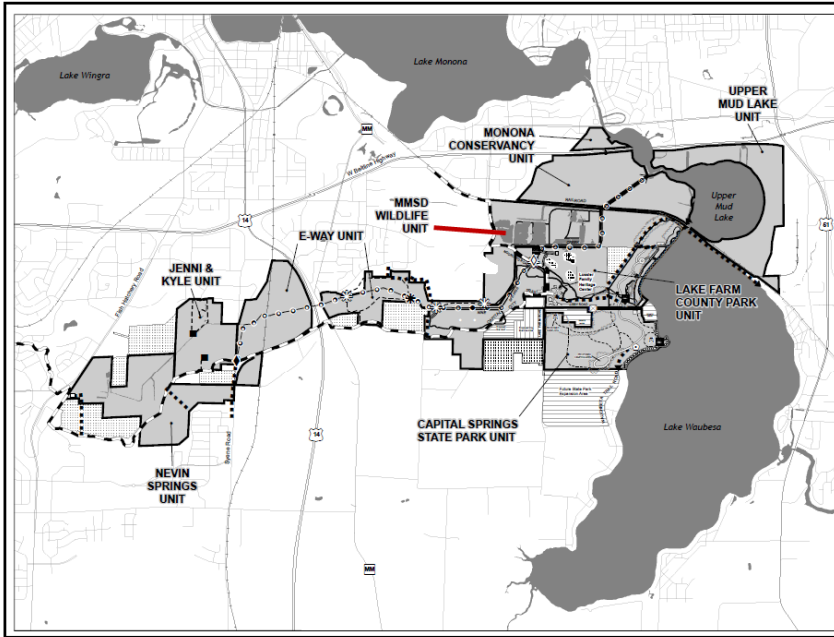
I also worked with the Rock River Coalition as a media specialist, and spent over ten years as a law librarian and online legal publishing specialist.

In addition, I have the benefit of knowing CSRA and the Friends of Capital Springs organization as a volunteer over the past ten years, which has included coordinating the Friend's web site and newsletters as well as attending volunteer events.

Based on these experiences, I understand that coordinating outreach through interpretive projects, educational programming, and use of a variety of online and print resources is essential to the Friends' mission of connecting people to the natural resources and recreation at Capital Springs. I hope to bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to this very important park in Dane County.

I look forward to hearing from you! My email address is carlson.clare@countyofdane.com. I welcome your ideas to improving programming, conservation, and recreational opportunities at Capital Springs.





CAPITAL SPRINGS RECREATION AREA

3101 LAKE FARM ROAD, MADISON, WI 53711

The Capital Springs Recreation Area is both a state and county park, which lies south of Madison, stretching from Fish Hatchery Road to Lake Waubesa.

Enjoy a variety of recreational amenities including miles of hiking and biking trails, winter sports, a dog exercise area, disc golf, picturesque shelters near water, lake boat launch, paddling trails, campground, excellent birding and more. Visit our web site for details.

Your support is vital to the growth and success of Capital Springs Recreation Area. Consider volunteering your time, joining the Friends, or sending a tax-deductible donation to the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area, Inc. The Capital Springs Newsletter is published by the Friends of the Capital Springs Recreation Area, Inc., as a benefit to its members.



Friends Board of Directors: Matt Carlson, President; Bill Lunney, Vice-President; Judie Pfeifer, Treasurer; Rick Eilertson, Secretary; Dan Kerkman; Ralph Erickson. Advisors: Michael Mucha and Don Schmidt. Dane County Liaison: Linda Mittnacht. Capital Springs Park Ranger: Adam Lipscomb. Dane County Volunteer Coordinator: Rhea Stangel-Maier. Dane County Parks Director: Darren Marsh. Capital Springs Naturalist Program Coordinator: Carson Main. DNR Liaison: Sarah Bolser

FRIENDS OF CAPITAL SPRINGS RECREATION AREA

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