

Kickapoo Valley Reserve update

A quarterly publication highlighting education, property management & events on the KVR.

Spring 2023



What's happening at KVR

March 26 - Creative Communities Canvas
Online Auction Closes 5pm

March 27 - Canvases available for pick up at
KVR Visitor Center 8am

April 6 - Education & Tourism Committee
Meeting 5:30pm

April 15 - Annual Upper Midwest Crane Count
5:30-7:30am

April 15-16 - Youth Turkey Hunt

April 15 - 22 Earth Week Roadside Clean-up
and Garlic Mustard Gathering

April 15 - Driftless Dialogue: Tracking Invasive
Species in Vernon County with Matt Wallrath
12:30-2pm

April 20 - KRMB Meeting 7pm

April 22- Earth Day Celebration

April 24 - Finance Committee Meeting 9am



View from the Director's Desk

Lynn Kronschnabel, *KVR Executive Director*

As I near the end of my fourth month as Executive Director, I am reflecting on transitions, from late Fall to Winter, and now into the emergence of Spring. I have taken in the beauty of new snowfalls, the ice formations, and the excitement of Winter Festival. I heard the return of the Sandhill Cranes and watched them gracefully walk up the hill toward the Visitor Center. The intensity of beginning a new position, with the adjustments and learning curve, has evolved into feeling at home here, with a deep sense of gratitude for this opportunity.

I am learning more each day, about the wonders of this unique and beautiful landscape. I feel lucky to have landed here in this place, with dedicated and passionate staff, volunteers, and Board members and to be able to serve alongside them to carry out our mission. I have spent time with each employee, regularly feeling impressed with their vast collective knowledge of the property and operations; they all have unique skills they bring, and most importantly, their dedication to preserving and protecting natural resources, providing unique educational opportunities, and maintaining space for low impact recreation!

With many hats to wear, I am pulled in multiple directions each day. Planning, recruiting and hiring, learning operations and procedures, and managing events and projects. I am thrilled to have brought Maggie Manke on board as our new Education Coordinator, and in the near future will be hiring a Natural Resource Specialist to round out our team. I am also excited about the seasonal spring events, purchasing a new groomer for our ski trails and taking steps with the Ho-Chunk Nation and our collective staff, to pursue initiatives together that further promote the biodiversity of life on the KVR thru projects that enhance our pollinator habitats.

If we haven't yet met, please stop in and say hello. I look forward to celebrating Spring and beyond here at the KVR!

KVR is Hiring!

Employment Opportunities at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve

The Kickapoo Reserve Management Board (KRMB) is accepting applications for the following:



What's happening at the KVR *continued*

April 29 - Driftless Dialogue: Climate Reality with Jeffrey Steuer 10:30am-Noon

May 1 - Equestrian & Bike Trails OPEN (weather permitting)

May 6 - Trout - General open season begins

May 20 - KRMB Meeting 7pm

May 22 - Finance Committee Meeting 9am

June 3 - National Trails Day Sunrise to Starry Skies

June 15 - KRMB Meeting 7pm

KVR Plant ID Hikes: participants will meet on the second Saturday of the month at 9am starting in May ending in Sep. We will meet at the KVR Maintenance building and walk the West Ridge Trail. The intended section of trail is atop the hill, between the powerlines and where the trail enters the woods to the west/north. That section of trail has plenty of grassland/prairie associates, including Pussytoes, Nodding Tress, Rough Blazing Stars, and Cream Gentian. Grasses?? You bet. Sedges, ferns, mosses. Trees?? Not so much. Hikes led by Ben Johnston.

Frog Walk Tuesday: a weekly survey of the Frogs (and one toad!) at the Bacon Ponds, (along Old 131, just north of Bridge 18). The effort is in participation of the Wisconsin Frog and Toad Phenology Survey. Frog Walk Tuesday 2023 Edition will begin on March 21, and will continue until July 18th, 15 minutes after sunset. Note: The frogs likely won't be calling on March 28th... zero is a number.



- **Natural Resource Specialist**

Responsibilities include invasive species management, native plant community management and property maintenance.

Application due March 27th, 2023

- **Field & Trail Crew Members**

Responsibilities may include mowing, maintenance of the grounds, trails and campsites, invasive species control & various other property management tasks. *Open until*

position(s) filled.

- **Enforcement Officers**

Must be Wisconsin certified police officers, knowledge of the KVR and natural resources is helpful. Requires weekend and evening availability. *Ongoing recruitment.*

- **Education Instructors**

Training, curriculum, and supplies provided. Hours occur within a Monday-Friday timeframe and are generally four-hour increments. *Ongoing recruitment.*

Complete position descriptions and application forms are available on the KVR website: <http://kickapoovalley.wi.gov>, by emailing kickapoo.reserve@krm.state.wi.us, or calling 608-625-2960.



Education Corner

Summer Camp

Summer Camp 2023 registration is now open! We have some wonderful camp offerings this year - there is something for everyone. From returning camps like forest friends and kickapedal to new offerings including insects and fly fishing. Check out our website kickapoovalley.wi.gov for more information and to register. We look forward to summer camp with new and returning campers on the KVR!

Instructors Wanted!

KVR is seeking a pool of applicants to join our instructor team. These instructors work on an as needed basis. We are looking for individuals interested in leading programs in a variety of areas including geology, animal tracking, orienteering, team building, and human history. Working at KVR is a great way to get out in nature and give back to the community! If interested please [email](mailto:maggie.manke@wisconsin.gov) maggie.manke@wisconsin.gov

Forest Fridays

Kickapoo Valley Reserve nature program based on free play and wonder-filled exploration for children ages 3-5. [More details and to register.](#)
Spring Semester: April 21 -- May 26, 2023 - 6 sessions - 8:15am-11am each Friday
Each session will include: a hike, story, healthy snack, singing and nature awareness games.

Driftless Dialogue

April 15 - Tracking Invasive Species in Vernon County 12:30-2pm. Matt Wallrath is a conservationist with the Upper Sugar River Watershed Association. Matt received his M.S. in Environmental Conservation from the UW Madison Nelson Institute.

April 29 - Climate Reality 10:30am-Noon. Jeffrey J. Steuer is a retired water engineer with the U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources Discipline. With an M.S. in Hydraulic Engineering from UW Madison & a B. S. Ocean Engineering, U.S. Coast Guard Academy, he has worked as a Professional Hydrologist for the State of Wisconsin.



New Education Coordinator!



It is an exciting time at the KVR! We are so happy to have Maggie Manke join our team as the new Education Coordinator. Maggie has been the science teacher at Hillsboro High School for the last 6.5 years, and her other work experience includes: Education Specialist at the Kansas City Aquarium, Education Associate at Timbavati Wildlife Park, and

Conservation Education Intern at the Topeka Zoo. She has a BA in Biology as well as a Teaching Certificate in Secondary Science Education. She has a strong passion for conservation and is excited to bring her skills and experience to the Reserve. Maggie has jumped right in, getting into summer camp organization, school group visits, instructor recruitment, and touring the property in order to become familiar with this vast landscape. Please stop in and welcome her next time you are at the Visitor Center!

Trail Talk

Jackie Yocum, *KVR Parks and Recreation Specialist*

Spring is a time of newness. New growth, new life, new beginnings and new....mud. During the annual freeze and thaw, mud is inevitable. So how do we preserve and protect the trails during this time? Here are some tips to get the most out of your outdoor experience while doing your part to protect valuable resources:

- **Stick to solid surfaces.** It won't be long until the rains come to help move out the frost and settle the ground. Natural surface trails will be alright to use again.
- **Wait it out.** Take a pause on venturing out on the natural surface trails. Take this time to give back and get some exercise by participating in the roadside cleanup.
- **North facing trails thaw out later.** They may be usable longer while still frozen. South facing trails dry out faster and may be usable sooner, especially in open areas.
- **Check trail status and policies prior to heading out.** Trail and river updates can be found on the [KVR website](#) and [Facebook page](#). Call the Visitor Center if you have questions.
- **Renew your annual permit** or pay for a day pass. Fees collected are used to maintain the property. Permits are required for anyone over 16 years old.

Trails open for equestrian and bike use on May 1st, weather permitting, including Old Highway 131 Trail.



A big THANK YOU to Toro Company. Through their Community Giving Program, this awesome Toro Grandstand Multi Force zero turn mower joins the property maintenance team at the KVR!

Recreation News

Camping - Beginning in October 2022, all campsites on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve are available through online booking. Campsites can be booked up to 45 days in advance including at the site upon arrival. No refunds will be given on camping for any reason. [Learn more about camping on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve on our website.](#)

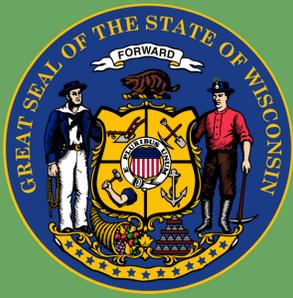


E-Bikes - Kickapoo Reserve Management Board has had three separate meetings affirming electric bikes and all electric powered wheeled devices are not allowed on the KVR with the exception of mobility impaired permit holders. For more information, contact the Visitor Center. 608-625-2960

Annual and Day Permits - Permits are required for the various visitor uses at the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Activities such as hiking, biking and horseback riding require a day use or annual permit. Camping on the Reserve requires a separate permit. All vehicles parked at river access sites must display a day use, annual, camping, or vehicle parking permit.

All fee revenue is used to maintain, enhance and protect the Reserve!





KRMB Land Acknowledgment Statement

The Kickapoo Reserve Management Board acknowledges that the state and federal lands that comprise the Reserve fall within the ancestral homelands of First Nations people including the Hooçak Nation. We recognize the sovereignty of the Hooçak and other First Nations and will work towards a shared future by continuing to create collaborative opportunities to protect and preserve these lands.

Welcome Shelby!



Hello! My name is Shelby Wolfe and I'm a part-time office assistant at KVR. You'll find me working most mornings at the front desk. I moved to the area almost a year ago from Minneapolis and have been an

employee here for about 5 months. My partner, Nate and I have a homestead in Viola where we cultivate a variety of seasonal vegetables & herbs to sell to local restaurants, and take care of our 5 goats, 3 cats, 2 dogs and many rabbits. I have a love for gardening, visual storytelling and working with medicinal plants. I've been a practicing community herbalist for the last several years and am looking forward to building relationships here with plants & people alike.



Starry Skies await you at KVR!



Logo design: Jordyn York

by KVR Instructor John Heasley

Spring is a wonderful season to discover the dark skies over KVR. Our updated webpage has lots of recommendations for places to stargaze and hike at night. We encourage you to "Discover the Night" during International Dark Sky Week April 15-22. We will be including stargazing and night hiking as part of our celebrations of Earth Day on April 22 and Trails Day on June 3. The weekend of April 22/23 is an especially good time for stargazing. The Crescent Moon, Venus, and Pleiades star cluster will be gathered in the west after sunset, and you may be able to see a few Lyrid meteors streaking across the sky after twilight.

Work continues on designating the 13,300 acres of public land along the Kickapoo River protected by KVR, Wildcat Mountain State Park, and Mississippi Valley Conservancy at Tunnelville Cliffs as Wisconsin's next International Dark Sky Park so that its starry skies can be enjoyed by future generations. KVR uses very little artificial light at night. This past year, Scott Lind has made lots of smart lighting around the Visitor Center so that people can move about safely at night while still enjoying the stars. Be sure to notice how the lights are pointed down rather than up and how they are shielded to help protect your night vision. The project also has a new logo designed by Jordyn York. It perfectly evokes our theme of "River Flowing Below, Stars Streaming Above" and reminds us that there are still places to be awed by the sight of the Milky Way.

John Heasley is an astronomy educator and stargazer who enjoys connecting people with the cosmos. He volunteers with NASA/JPL as a Solar System Ambassador. For more information about stargazing in southwest WI, like Driftless Stargazing LLC on Facebook and find out whenever there's something awesome happening in the skies.





Earth Day Celebration

April 15 - 22, 2023

Join in on celebrating Earth Day (all week) on the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. A weeklong stewardship event benefiting the landscape of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to attend. Stewardship activities include:

- **Garlic Mustard Gathering (all week)** - Groups, clubs, businesses, school groups, individuals, families and friends are provided a known location of garlic mustard (invasive plant), plant ID education, garbage bags & safety vests & asked to hand pull as much garlic mustard as possible. There will be a friendly competition garlic mustard weigh-in on Sat. April 22 at the Visitor Center.
- **Annual Roadside Cleanup (all week)** - Groups, clubs, businesses, school groups, individuals, friends and families are provided garbage bags and safety vests to remove trash from roadsides in and around the KVR.
- **Youth Poetry Contest/Reading (April 22)** - Area youth Grades 3-8 are encouraged to submit nature focused poetry to the KVR Friends. Poems of merit will be chosen and read by the author at the Earth Day Celebration.
- **Zero Waste Potluck Meal (April 22)** - To participate, bring a dish to pass including utensils, your own reusable place settings and flatware, cloth napkins and a cup for beverages. Everyone is welcome! Zero Waste - Zero Cost!
- **Froggy Starry Walk (April 22)** - take in the sights and sounds of twilight on the KVR, on a guided hike lead by KVR Astro Educators and Instructors.

Everyone is welcome to attend. Earth Day Celebration is free and open to the public. [Learn more on the KVR website.](#)



Creative Communities Canvas Online Auction

Creative Communities Online Canvas Auction is in full swing! Artists of all ages were asked to interpret the word *Reflections* as it pertains to nature. Check out their amazing work! Bid High-Bid Often!

ONLINE AUCTION CLOSING MARCH 26th!



National Trails Day Sunrise to Starry Skies

June 3, 2023 – National Trails Day® is celebrated across the country annually, on the first Saturday in June. The event is open to the public. Information is available at the Visitor Center and on the KVR website.



Saturday, June 3, 2023