



LAND CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

BIG NEWS at LCF!

LCF has a new Executive Director! We would like to welcome Eric Mollahan to lead our organization. Eric started this position on October 20th and was previously a Lead Ecologist and Consulting Department Manager in the private sector in Lake County, Illinois. Eric is a graduate of the University of Illinois, class of 2013, and grew up in Rochester, Illinois. Come and say hello to Eric at our upcoming LCF events!



2025 Winter Newsletter



Winter Newsletter



The Wes Seitz Trail Fund Update



LCF was recently the benefactor of a generous donation by Wes Seitz. The donation has allowed LCF to procure equipment for trail clearing, signage and marking of the 4.5 miles of trails which comprise the Sangamon River Trail Bluff. This primitive trail experience includes trails from Allerton, IDNR and LCF's Bruce Hannon Levee Trail.



LCF, and Mr. Seitz himself, have been actively clearing brush and marking paths. When the trail enhancements have been completed, LCF and other groups will hike the entire length. Stay tuned for updates on the trail's progress and the planned hiking excursion! Thanks to Wes for his donation and his volunteer hours on the trail. We cannot express our gratitude enough.



Winter Newsletter

Halloween at the Levee Trail

LCF hosted its 5th annual Halloween at the Levee Trail Event on Sunday November 2nd.

We had beautiful Fall weather and were thrilled to see so many people enjoying the festivities.



Whether you were painting pumpkins, doing the trail scavenger hunt, making pinecone owls with the Master Naturalists, snacking or all the above, it was a great time. There were even some reports of a Bigfoot sighting! Thanks to all the volunteers that made this happen; and to everyone who joined us, we hope to see you next year.

Mussel Rescue at Jasmine Hollow

Winter Newsletter

On Saturday, November 8th LCF led its FIRST EVER mussel rescue. Due to the prolonged drought in Central Illinois, some sections of the Sangamon River are drying up, leaving freshwater mussels stranded on the riverbed.

Organized by LCF, 30 local volunteers gathered up more than 300 mussels, representing 19 species, which were returned to deeper waters, where they will burrow into sediment to overwinter, emerging next spring.

Previous mussel surveys had documented around 12 species, so this was a great opportunity to gather more information!

While this effort is not necessary each year, drought conditions we have experienced in 2025 have prevented many mussels from accessing deep pools, and some pools have dried up altogether.

This event took place at the 144-acre Jasmine Hollow Land and Water Reserve, which was donated to LCF earlier this year. THANK YOU to the mussel volunteers!



Winter Newsletter

Black Friday Hike at the Levee Trail



Led by Illinois Extension's Ryan Pankau, the 4th annual Black Friday Hike at the Levee Trail was full of fun and learning!

The beauty of winter can be breathtaking, and while the weather was chilly, it was a wonderful experience. Many of us were there to better understand tree identification, floodplains and general ecology, while some of us were trying to burn calories and feel better about eating too much on Thanksgiving! Thank you to everyone who joined us, and a special thanks to Ryan, who always leads this event with such enthusiasm and shares his vast knowledge.

Winter Newsletter

Thank You, Deanna.

Deanna Glosser, the previous Executive Director of LCF has been essential to the success of LCF over the past 9 years. Under her leadership, LCF has increased its sites from 2 to 6, including the recent donation of Jasmine Hollow in Piatt County. We are so thankful to Deanna for all her hard work and time she dedicated to the organization.

Winter Newsletter

Please join us for upcoming events this winter! Save the date for our Winter Botany at Allerton Park in January and Mudpuppy festival in February. We hope to see you there! In case of inclement weather, updates will be posted on the LCF Facebook Page. Please contact Eric at ericmollahan@landconservationfoundation.org to sign up for either event.

Where: At Allerton Park and Retreat Center

What: Winter Botany

When: Saturdays, January 10th & 17th 10 A.M. to 12 P.M. in The Studio and outdoors

How: Register by January 3rd, \$40/person

URL:<https://allerton.illinois.edu/events/winter-botany/>

Event: Mudpuppy Festival

When: Sunday, February 1st, 1:00 P.M. – 4:00 P.M.

Where: Monarch Center in Monticello

What: Family Fun!

Leader: Land Conservation Foundation Team

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Upcoming Volunteer Events

Ecowarriors assemble! In January, we will begin our monthly volunteer stewardship events on the 2nd Saturday of each month. We will be helping remove invasive species from LCF sites. We will meet at the LCF parking lot for the Bruce Hannon Levee Trail at 10:00 A.M. and wrap up around 12:00 P.M. All ages and abilities are encouraged to join us. Learn about local ecology while making an impact in your local communities. There will be coffee, treats, and a small fire to keep warm. Please reach out to Eric Mollahan to register. The upcoming stewardship event days are January 10th, February 14th and March 14th.

Winter Newsletter

End of Year Appeal

LCF has sent out its End of Year appeal for 2025. Please help us continue to protect natural areas in our region and create welcoming and engaging community events. You can donate any time on our website, which can also be found by scanning the QR code below. It is important to note that LCF's generous board of directors has agreed to match funds dollar for dollar up to \$20,000!!! That means when you donate 25 dollars, it becomes 50!

