

2016



# TURKEY RIVER RECREATIONAL CORRIDOR

Annual Report

## SUMMARY FROM THE DIRECTOR

The Turkey River Recreational Corridor Board has been busy making continued progress to “connect Clermont, Elgin and Elkader to develop and enhance the existing natural resource base through the creation of land and water trails to serve as the catalyst for economic growth and development.” Your continued support and partnership with us is incredibly important and valuable.

### Notable 2016 Accomplishments:

- Assisted the Fayette County Conservation Board in their receipt of a \$100,000.00 Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant for a total of \$1,196,000.00 raised for the TRRC trail extension from Elgin to the Gilbertson Conservation & Education Area
- The City of Elkader in partnership with Clayton Co. Conservation were allocated \$52,000.00 for pre-engineering of the trail route between Elkader and Elgin from the Transportation Alternatives Program (2020)
- Began working to assist TRRC businesses with leadership training and expansion
- Aired a TRRC commercial featuring Fayette and Clayton County Conservation over a 6-month period
- Coordinated the Turkey River Safari program (500+ youth and multi-generational participants)
- Placed a TRRC advertisement in the 2016 Jan./Feb. issue of Iowa Outdoors Magazine
- Gained 73 followers on the TRRC Facebook Page for a total of 447 followers and gained 35 followers on the new TRRC Twitter Page
- Conducted trail counts in Summer 2016 (1,241 users in Fayette & Clayton Counties over a 2-day period)

### **Grants/funds received by TRRC or TRRC partners in 2016:**

- TRRC: Rural Business Development Grant (TRRC Business Expansion) - \$9,650.00
- TRRC: Alliant Energy Grant (Turkey River Safari) - \$1,000.00
- TRRC: R.J. McElroy Trust Grant (Turkey River Safari) - \$525.00
- Clermont Historical Society: Fayette Co. Community Foundation (Clermont Blacksmith Shop) - \$6,065.83
- Fayette County Conservation: Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant (TRRC Trail expansion from Elgin to Gilbertson Park) - \$100,000.00
- Fayette County Conservation: Fayette County Community Foundation (TRRC Trail expansion from Elgin to Gilbertson Park) - \$10,000.00
- Fayette County Tourism & Economic Development: Iowa Tourism Grant (Fayette County Trout Fishing Guides) - \$2,500.00
- City of Elkader/Clayton County Conservation: Regional Enhancement Funds (Elkader to Elgin Trail Pre-Engineering) - \$52,000.00
- Clayton County Conservation: Keep America Beautiful-Coca Cola Foundation Recycling Program (Recycling Program Equipment) - \$8,000.00
- Clayton County Conservation: Paint IA Beautiful - \$246.80
- Clayton County Conservation: Wellmark (Wells Hollow Trail) - \$10,000.00
- \$4,010.00 was raised from corridor businesses and private donors for Calendar Year 2016 TRRC projects and events.

**A total of approximately \$203,997.63 was raised for TRRC-related projects in 2016.**

As you read through the following report, take note that the Calendar Year 2016 runs within two fiscal years (FY '16 & FY '17). Again, thank you for your continued support. The TRRC Board and myself look forward to the exciting projects and events to come in the next year!

Regards,

**Mallory Marlatt, TRRC Director**



Students participating in the Turkey River Safari - May 2016

# TASK 1

## GRANT FACILITATION

Complete tasks

necessary to  
fulfill current  
and/or  
pending grant  
tasks and/or  
requirements.

- Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments**
- 1.1 Worked on grants secured within the contract period
  - 1.2 Completed Iowa Tourism Grant reporting requirements
  - 1.3 Completed Fayette County Community Foundation reporting requirements
  - 1.4 Completed the 2016 Clermont StoryWalk Project
- Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments**
- 1.1 Worked on grants secured within the contract period
  - 1.2 Completed related grant reporting requirements (as needed)

### 2016 grants/projects:

- \$1,000 Alliant Energy Grant & \$525 R.J. McElroy Trust Grant**  
These grants were written by the TRRC Director to help off-set the cost of printing for the 2016 Turkey River Safari guidebooks and maps. Grant activities and final reports have been completed.
- \$6,065.83 Fayette County Community Foundation Grant**  
This grant was written by Northeast Iowa RC&D staff to help secure funding to develop interpretive panels for the Clermont Blacksmith Shop. Northeast Iowa RC&D will be designing the panels and will assist with installation in 2017.
- \$100,000 Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant**  
This grant was written by the TRRC Director in partnership with Fayette County Conservation for a portion of the trail expansion project between Elgin and Gilbertson Park. Grant activities are in progress.
- \$2,500 Iowa Tourism Grant**  
This grant was written by the TRRC Director in partnership with Fayette County Tourism to develop and print Fayette County Trout Fishing Guides. An additional \$2,500 has been applied for to the Fayette County Community Foundation. Northeast Iowa RC&D will develop the guides in 2017.
- \$9,650 Rural Business Development Grant**  
This grant was written by the TRRC Director to assist businesses within the TRRC with leadership training and expansion. Grant activities are in progress.



Pony Hollow Trail (Elkader, Iowa)

**TASK 2**

**MARKETING  
AND  
ADVERTISING**

**Market and  
advertise the**

**Turkey River  
Recreational  
Corridor  
(TRRC).**

**Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments**

- 2.1 Developed TRRC action plan with input from the TRRC Board and other partners
- 2.2 Wrote press releases covering current events, activities, and news
- 2.3 Sold Mediacom Advertisement
- 2.4 Coordinated radio interviews to promote the TRRC

**Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments**

- 2.1 Wrote press releases covering current events, activities, and news
- 2.2 Began working with Mediacom to update TRRC commercial
- 2.3 Coordinated radio interviews to promote the TRRC
- 2.4 Maintained a presence at area events within the TRRC

Materials for TRRC events and programs were produced. Radio interviews were conducted to promote upcoming TRRC events and programs.

Press releases were submitted throughout the year advertising various TRRC events, including the Turkey River Safari. These articles were featured in Fayette, Clayton, and Allamakee County Newspapers. The TRRC was also showcased in the Cedar Rapids Gazette on Labor Day, 2016.

Mediacom aired a commercial featuring the TRRC and Fayette County & Clayton County Conservation over a 6-month period.

A TRRC advertisement was submitted to be featured in the Jan/Feb issue of Iowa Outdoors magazine (see right).

The TRRC Director and TRRC Board members represented the TRRC at the Iowa State Fair on August 16th, 2016 and at the Fayette County Fair on July 28th , 2016.



Visit the Turkey River Recreational Corridor and discover it's unique geography and recreational opportunities, including a variety of walking trails, historic sites, and public art installations.

Enjoy the 98-mile Turkey River Water Trail. Whether you are an experienced kayaker, want to enjoy a relaxing day of tubing, or are just starting out with a canoe, you can experience this scenic waterway.

Discover unique dining, shopping, and entertainment in Clermont, Elgin, and Elkader, including authentic Algerian cuisine, antique shops, an art gallery, Opera House, museums, and more!

Turkey River Recreational Corridor Mission:  
Connect Clermont, Elgin and Elkader to develop and enhance the existing natural resource base through the creation of land and water trails to serve as the catalyst for economic growth and development.



Camping/Recreational Photoshoot - October 2016



- Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments
- 3.1 Acquired existing photographs
  - 3.2 RC&D staff member photographed TRRC events and activities during various seasons
- Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments
- 3.1 Acquired existing photographs that were used in digital billboard advertising
  - 3.2 RC&D staff member attended and photographed TRRC events

**TASK 3**  
**PHOTOGRAPHY**

Northeast Iowa RC&D staff hosted a photoshoot to feature camping and outdoor recreation activities. Photos acquired through this shoot will be available with no restrictions to the TRRC Board for use in print and online promotional materials.



Acquire  
photography  
for the Turkey  
River  
Recreational  
Corridor  
(TRRC)



Disc Golf Workshop (Elkader, Iowa) - May 24th, 2016

## TASK 4

### EVENT COORDINATION

Facilitate and  
coordinate  
events for the

Turkey River  
Recreational  
Corridor  
(TRRC).

#### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

- 4.1 Coordinated/Cancelled the 2016 Triathlon
- 4.2 Coordinated the 2016 Turkey River Safari
- 4.3 Worked with the TRRC board to evaluate the effectiveness of existing events and planned for future events

#### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

- 4.1 Began planning for the 2017 Turkey River Safari
- 4.2 Began working with Clayton County Conservation to partner on 2017 events
- 4.3 Assisted Clermont Public Library with coordination of their 2016 StoryWalk
- 4.4 Conducted a cost benefit analysis of all events
- 4.5 Worked with the TRRC board to evaluate the effectiveness of existing events

The Turkey River Safari was a success with 500+ participants in 2016. The TRRC Board would like to continue hosting the safari annually with new and re-visited sites every year.

The following events were held in calendar year 2016:

#### Turkey Trot 5k on May 14th, 2016

Event Evaluation: Due to low participation, the TRRC Board has decided to partner with existing events such as Clayton County Conservation's Motor Motor 5k in future years.

#### Disc Golf Workshop on May 24th, 2016

Event Evaluation: The event was a huge success and has encouraged interest to continue with disc golf events in 2017.

In addition to the events above, the TRRC coordinator was present at the Oelwein Elementary School Annual Safety/Wellness Fair on May 5th, 2016 and the Clermont Bike Safety Event on June 5th, 2016.

\$4,010.00 was raised from corridor businesses and private donors in January and February for 2016 TRRC projects and events.



StoryWalk (Clermont, Iowa)



#### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

- 5.1 Began design of promotional materials and looked into funds for these materials
- 5.2 Included TRRC logo on publications developed by TRRC and other partners

#### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

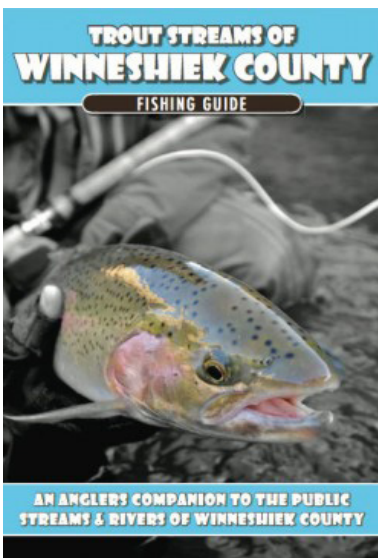
- 5.1 Worked with the TRRC board to identify promotional materials for development
- 5.2 Included TRRC logo on publications developed by TRRC and other partners

## TASK 5

### PROMOTIONAL MATERIAL

The TRRC Board is currently working with the TRRC Director to design Elgin, Clermont, and Elkader Community brochures that will feature trails, natural areas, and anchor businesses in each. These guides will function as a set of 3 or as their own individual publications.

Develop and design promotional material for the Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC).



The TRRC Director is also working with Fayette County Tourism to secure funding for development and printing of a Fayette County Trout Fishing Guide. This guide will complement the design of existing guides already developed for Winneshiek and Allamakee County (see left).



Whitewater Course (Elkader, Iowa)

## TASK 6

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Advertise and promote the

Turkey River  
Recreational  
Corridor  
(TRRC).

#### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

- 6.1 Updated the TRRC Facebook Page
- 6.2 Updated the TRRC Twitter account
- 6.3 Posted TRRC-related pins to Pinterest
- 6.4 Utilized Google+ to increase TRRC's Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

#### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

- 6.1 Updated the TRRC Facebook Page
- 6.2 Updated the TRRC Twitter account
- 6.3 Began working to develop video content for YouTube
- 6.4 Began updates of trail maps in Fayette and Clayton Counties

The TRRC Facebook Page and Twitter account have been particularly successful over the past year. The number of likes for the TRRC Facebook page has increased from 374 in January 2016 to 447 in December 2016. The TRRC's Twitter account has 35 unique followers currently. Social Media followers are expected to increase over the next year as TRRC's online presence is improved.





Eagle's Nest (Elgin, Iowa)

- Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

  - 7.1 Began updating and maintaining the TRRC Website
  - 7.2 Ensured website was linked with other partner websites
- Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

  - 7.1 Updated and maintained the TRRC Website
  - 7.2 Ensured website was linked with other partner websites

TASK 7

WEBSITE

The TRRC website (turkeyrivercorridor.com) was updated regularly with current event information, meeting agendas and minutes, and other content. A complete overhaul of the website will take place in 2017 due to TRRC’s receipt of a \$9,650.00 Rural Business Development Grant.

Update and maintain the Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) website: [www.turkey-rivercorridor.com](http://www.turkey-rivercorridor.com).





Clermont City Park (Clermont, Iowa)

## TASK 8

### BOARD MANAGEMENT/ PARTNERSHIPS

Foster and  
maintain  
Turkey River  
Recreational  
Corridor  
(TRRC) board  
and build upon  
partnerships with  
organizations  
and groups that  
will promote the  
TRRC.

#### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

- 8.1 Hosted monthly TRRC meetings (1st Tuesday of the month)
- 8.2 Ensured meeting agendas were posted at all 5 locations 24 hours ahead
- 8.3 Wrote and sent out meeting minutes
- 8.4 Coordinator was in regular communication with TRRC board members
- 8.5 Worked with TRRC board chair and committees
- 8.6 Attended regular Northeast Iowa Tourism Association (NEITA) Meetings
- 8.7 Attended Regular River Bluffs Scenic Byway (RBSB) Meetings
- 8.8 Attended Fayette and Clayton County Trail Group Meetings
- 8.9 Attended related local, regional, and statewide conferences/meetings
- 8.10 Reviewed TRRC Board Appointments and Policy & Procedures

#### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

- 8.1 Hosted monthly TRRC meetings (1st Tuesday of the month)
- 8.2 Wrote and sent out meeting minutes
- 8.3 Coordinator was in regular communication with TRRC board members
- 8.4 Worked with TRRC board chair and committees
- 8.5 Attended regular partner meetings
- 8.6 Attended local, regional, & statewide conferences/meetings
- 8.7 Kept record of current and past funding and organizational history
- 8.8 Reviewed TRRC Board Appointments and Policy & Procedures

**TRRC Board Meetings were held once-per month in rotating locations.**

**Various partner meetings were also attended, including:**

- Northeast Iowa Tourism Association
- River Bluffs Scenic Byway
- Clayton County Trails Coalition
- Upper Explorerland Regional Planning Commission

**The Iowa State Fair (August 2016) and the Fayette County Fair (August 2016) were also attended. The TRRC was promoted at these events.**

**Additionally, the TRRC Director worked with University of Iowa Students to gather information about Winneshiek County Trail economic impact for determine potential for recreation of the study in the TRRC.**



Clermont Blacksmith Shop (Clermont, Iowa)



## TASK 9

### SMALL PROJECT GRANT WRITING

Write grants

that will assist

the Turkey River

Recreational

Corridor (TRRC)

with its activities

and goals.

### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

9.1 Researched and gathered information about potential small grant opportunities

9.2 Worked with the TRRC board to develop projects

### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

9.1 Researched and gathered information about potential small grant opportunities

9.2 Worked with the TRRC Board to develop projects to help implement visioning and business development

### 2016 grants/projects:

#### **\$1,000 Alliant Energy Grant & \$525 R.J. McElroy Trust Grant**

These grants were written by the TRRC Director to help off-set the cost of printing for the 2016 Turkey River Safari guidebooks and maps. Grant activities and final reports have been completed.

#### **\$6,065.83 Fayette County Community Foundation Grant**

This grant was written by Northeast Iowa RC&D staff to help secure funding to develop interpretive panels for the Clermont Blacksmith Shop. Northeast Iowa RC&D will be designing the panels and will assist with installation in 2017.

#### **\$100,000 Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant**

This grant was written by the TRRC Director in partnership with Fayette County Conservation for a portion of the trail expansion project between Elgin and Gilbertson Park. Grant activities are in progress.

#### **\$2,500 Iowa Tourism Grant**

This grant was written by the TRRC Director in partnership with Fayette County Tourism to develop and print Fayette County Trout Fishing Guides. An additional \$2,500 has been applied for to the Fayette County Community Foundation. Northeast Iowa RC&D will develop the guides in 2017.

#### **\$9,650 Rural Business Development Grant**

This grant was written by the TRRC Director to assist businesses within the TRRC with leadership training and expansion. Grant activities are in progress.



TRRC Trail Bridge (Elgin/Clermont, Iowa)

## TASK 10

### TRAIL COUNTING

#### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

10.1 Coordinated volunteers to conduct trail counts in the Summer (June/ July 2015) and Fall (September/October 2015)

#### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

10.1 Coordinated volunteers to conduct a trail count in the Summer (July 2016)

Coordinate  
with Upper  
Explorerland  
Regional  
Planning  
Commission  
(UERPC) to  
conduct trail  
counts along  
the TRRC  
trails annually.

Trail counting was conducted on the following dates at Founders Park in Elkader at the Valley Bridge Access between Elgin and Clermont:

- July 15th, 2016
- July 16th, 2016

Volunteers were coordinated to conduct these trail counts.

A total of 1,241 trail users were counted over the 2-day period in Fayette and Clayton Counties:

- 208 Bicyclists
- 550 Pedestrians
- 483 River Users





Art in the Park (Elkader, Iowa) - August 2015

### Fiscal Year 2016 Accomplishments

- 11.1 Wrote 2015 annual report detailing all work done in the 2015 calendar year
- 11.2 Worked with the TRRC Board to approve the FY 2017 action plan & budget
- 11.3 Submitted a formal request for funding to be included in each of the TRRC contributor budgets
- 11.4 Presented the 2015 annual report and annual request to TRRC partners

### Fiscal Year 2017 Accomplishments

- 11.1 Wrote 2016 annual report detailing all work done in the 2016 calendar year
- 11.2 Began gathering input from the TRRC Board for the FY 2018 action plan & budget

The 2015 annual report was presented to partner entities in December 2015 and January 2016.

An audit of the Northeast Iowa RC&D was completed in 2015 and 2016, which includes TRRC financials.

The Fiscal Year 2017 contract and budget was approved in June 2016.

## TASK 11 REPORTING

Write and  
present an  
annual report  
to each  
participating  
TRRC entity.





River Safety Demonstration (Turkey River)

## TASK 12

### LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE GRANT WRITING

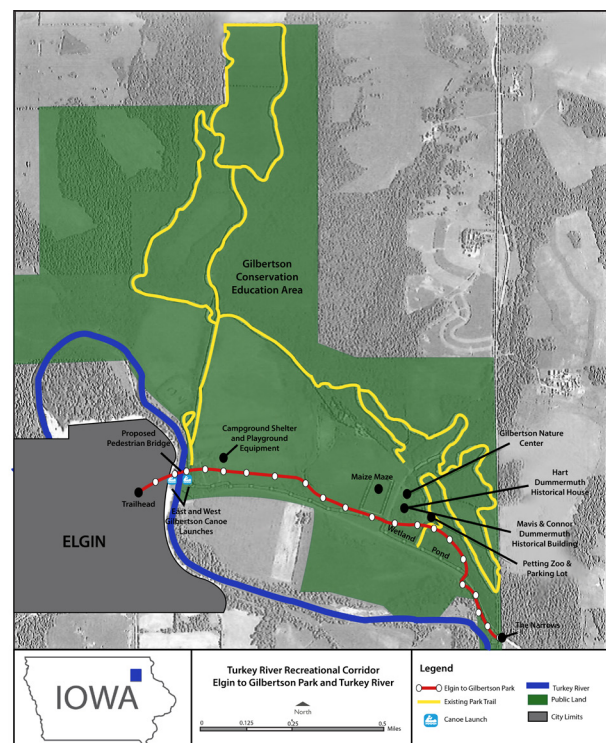
This task shall require the NE IA RC&D to write up to one large infrastructure grant per year that will further the development of the Turkey River Recreational Corridor (TRRC) trail. \$1,000 will be budgeted annually for the NE IA RC&D to write one of the following grants per year (as needed): State Recreational Trails Grant, Federal Recreational Trails Grant, REAP grant, other.

Note: If grant is awarded, the TRRC will not be responsible for the balance of the RC&D fee. The applicant entity will be responsible for entering into a contract with NE IA RC&D and fulfilling obligations related to NE IA RC&D charges and fees associated with the grant writing contract.

The Fayette County Conservation Board's Project to expand the Turkey River Recreational Corridor trail from the City of Elgin, across the Turkey River, and through Gilbertson Conservation Education Area received a \$100,000.00 Resource Enhancement and Protection Grant in 2016.

This grant was written by the TRRC Director and Northeast Iowa RC&D staff, with assistance from the Fayette County Conservation Board.

\$1,196,000.00 total is currently secured for the project.



## TRRC BOARD MEMBERS

- Roger Buchholz (Elkader City Council) \*Vice-Chair
- Jennifer Cowsert (City of Elkader)
- Carrie Davis (Fayette County Tourism)
- Jon DeNeui (Motor Mill Foundation)
- Sharon Harris (Clermont City Council)
- Rod Marlatt (Fayette County Conservation)
- Vicki Rowland (Fayette County Supervisor) \*Chair
- Jenna Pollock (Clayton County Conservation)
- Alex Popenhagen (Elgin City Council)

## FISCAL YEAR '17 FINANCIAL REPORT

July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017

**Total Projected Income**  
(Partner Contributions, Grants\* and Fundraising)  
\$34,718.00

**Total Projected Expenses**  
(Supplies, Events, Fees, Projects, Payroll, Mileage and Grants\*)  
\$32,715.85

Note: These funds include completed and projected work for Fiscal Year 2017 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017)..  
\*Income and expenses listed above do not reflect large grants secured for specific projects in FY '17 (as listed in the Small Grant Writing section of this report).

These funds were audited as part of the Northeast Iowa RC&D Annual Audit. (Proof of audit available upon request)

## FISCAL YEAR 2018 REQUEST

July 1, 2017-June 30, 2018

The Turkey River Recreational Corridor would like to request a total contribution of \$30,000 from partner entities for activities to be carried out in Fiscal Year 2018. A detailed contract for services and task list for Fiscal Year 2018 will be determined by the TRRC Board of Directors, as listed above, prior to the start of Fiscal Year 2018.

