

# Grundy County Conservation Connection

October 2015 – December 2015

Volume 8 Issue 2

<http://www.swcd.mo.gov/grundy>

## Women In Ag – Roaring Into Our Twenties

What an exciting conference we experienced at The Elms Hotel & Spa in Excelsior Springs. Monday kicked off with vendors and guest speaker, Carolyn Miller – Nostalgia, Vintage Apparel: Wedding Garments for the opening session. During the afternoon ladies had the choice to attend Financial Planning-Personal Finance, Rain Simulator, Gardening with Cover Crops, Internet Safety, 5 Questions Landowners should ask their Operators, Financial Planning-Recordkeeping, Backyard Chickens, Smart Technology and Dry Canning. The banquet meal was served then the ladies were able to enjoy a nice show of dancing and singing. The hospitality room and silent auction was open after the banquet and everyone had a roaring good time with friends and food.

Exciting tours on Tuesday took the ladies back in time to Watkin's Mill State Park where they were able to see the Woolen Mill, House and Museum and visit Platte-Clay Electric for solar energy, Mule Barn Berries for a different approach to high tunnels and square foot gardening and visit Buffalo. An amazing lunch was catered by Sugar & Spice. For evening entertainment some ladies painted with local artist Molly Roberts, while other enjoyed line dancing and salsa on the lawn, many ladies had an amazing ghost tour of The Elms with Jay. As always the hospitality room and silent auction were open where many laughs were shared and memories made...and some of the ladies enjoyed the outdoor hot tub!!

On Wednesday ladies got to experience the Feisty Farm Wife, GMO's and Crop Insurance as well experience the 2<sup>nd</sup> power outage, this just added to the ambiance of the ghosts of The Elms. Dr. Julie Connor was guest speaker during brunch.

The torch was passed to the SW area for the 2016 Women In Agriculture State Conference. Dee Glenn, Dade County, accepted the torch and briefly spoke to the ladies and announced the location may be around the Springfield area.

Thank you to the NW Planning Committee for a great conference and we look forward to 2016 in the SW Area.

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# State WIA Pictures





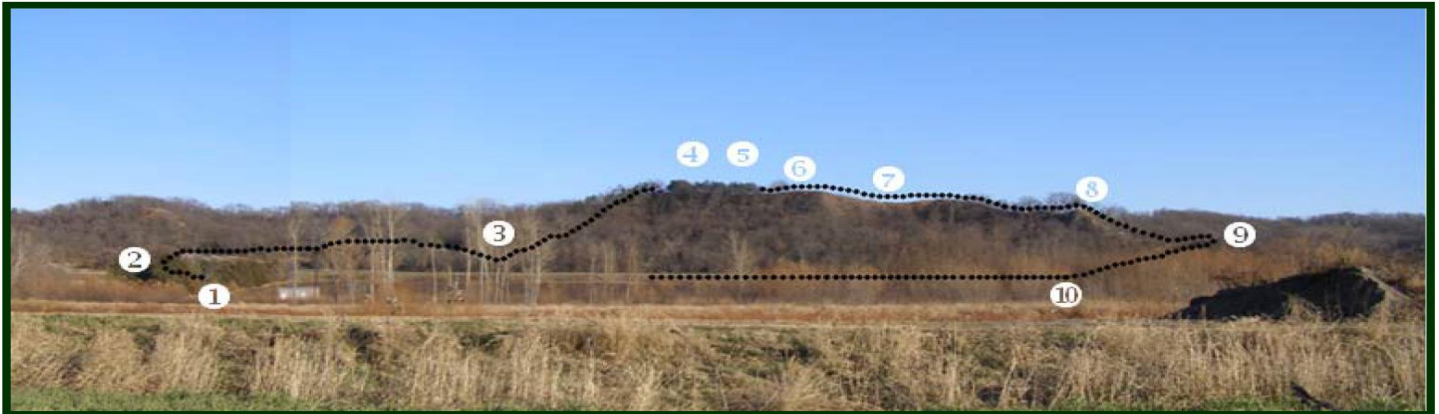
### State WIA Pics





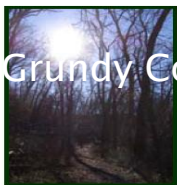
## NW Regional Envirothon to be held at Squaw Creek

The NW Regional Envirothon will be held at Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge near Mound City on Thursday, November 5, 2016. The map below was found at [http://www.fws.gov/refuge/squaw\\_creek/](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/squaw_creek/)

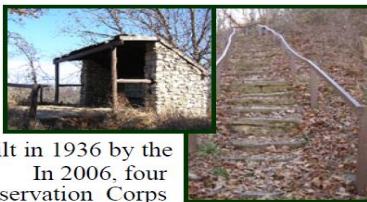


### 1 The trail head

starts at the visitor center. Once you reach the top, you will have traveled to a 200 foot rise in elevation.



**2 An over-story of trees** is all around you. They are Burr Oak, Prairie Willow, Hackberry, Wild Plum, and Eastern Red Cedar.



### 3 The stone steps

and the shelter house were built in 1936 by the Civilian Conservation Corps. In 2006, four members of the Youth Conservation Corps replaced the wooden rails and posts with recycled plastic. The trail was also extended across the rest of the bluff making the trail 9/10 of a mile long. Are you getting tired climbing all those steps? There are over 200 of them! Have you noticed that the stairs are jagged rather than sloped like normal stairs? The soil of the Loess Hills is very unique. How you interact with the soil takes a special awareness. The soil of the Loess Hills is silt mixed with sand rather than clay; it's tightly packed, but still very loose. If you were to simply cut into the side creating a slope for stairs, the soil would just wash out so a square cut into the steep earth is required. The jagged silt edges act as concrete keeping it in place.



**4 Elevation:**  
1,150 Feet  
Above Sea  
Level

### 5 A panoramic view of Squaw

Creek National Wildlife Refuge allows one to see that amidst 7,419 acres of man-made marshes here at Squaw Creek, waterfowl and other wildlife can find critically needed food, water and shelter in the spring and in the fall when hundreds of thousands of migratory birds provide a stirring spectacle against the backdrop of the bluffs. The Missouri River Valley has historically been a major migration corridor for birds even though it's believed that due to the channelization of the river and destruction of wetlands, migration has declined.

### 6 Wildflowers

can be seen along the Loess Hills Trail.



**7 The savannah** is a mix of native grasses and wildflowers (Loess Bluff Prairie) that reveals an over story of trees (oak hickory forest) as you transition from a south facing slope to a north facing slope; both of which are extremely steep. The southern slope reveals savannah prairie while the north facing slope reveals the over story of trees. As you continue along the narrow trail at the top, look south and you will see the Loess Hills as they extend towards St. Joseph, Missouri.

### 8 The steep descent

now starts as you make your way downward off the summit of the Loess Hills trail.



### 9 Preserving the Loess Hills

Earlier Native Americans once explored these hills regarding the hilltops as sacred. But, no archeological sites have ever been located. Do you suppose the Indians just journeyed through and hunted even though they left no evidence of their journey's passage? The Oneota, Missouri, Ioway, and Oto Tribes are some of the tribes believed to have traveled through. Some common threads shared by these tribes were they all planted corn, beans, and squash and they were all hunters of bison (buffalo) and elk. Their artifacts (found in other areas) also had some common threads – those found right here in the Loess Hills, such as stone.



### 10 The Callow Trail

is a paved memorial trail that marks the end of the Loess Hill Trail. As you follow the Callow Trail, it will merge with Squaw Creek's parking lot. This part of the trail is flat and easy to walk. This trail was dedicated to James Michael Callow who served as Squaw Creek's Assistant Refuge Manager from 1991 to 1998. He was killed after his aircraft went down in Oregon while conducting waterfowl surveys.



## Kids Corner – 5 Ways you can help wildlife this winter

### 1. LET YOUR GARDEN GO WILD

- Leave undisturbed wild areas in your garden – piles of leaves or brushwood can make the perfect nest in which animals can hide, rest and hibernate.
- By leaving the task of tidying your garden borders and shrubs until early spring, shelter can be provided for insects throughout winter.
- If you have a compost heap, this will become a welcome habitat for toads, and even grass snakes and slow-worms.

### 2. BREAK THE ICE

- If your garden pond freezes over, ensure you make a hole in the ice. Toxic gases can build up in the water of a frozen pond, which may kill any fish or frogs that are hibernating at the bottom.
- When you make a hole in the ice, it is very important to do so by carefully placing a pan of hot water on the surface.
- Never break the ice with force or tip boiling water onto the pond, as this can harm or even kill any fish that live in it.

### 3. FEED THE BIRDS

- Birds may find it difficult to find natural foods such as berries, insects, seeds, worms and fruit during this cold season. Therefore, any extra food you can put out will help.
- Provide a range of seeds, fresh unsalted peanuts and table scraps (cheese and fruits such as apples and pears.) Garden birds also love dried mealworms or waxworms, which can be bought from bird food suppliers.

### 4. PROVIDE FRESH WATER

- Clean water and food will encourage visiting hedgehogs to return regularly to your garden. Minced meat, fresh liver, tinned dog food (not fish based), or even scrambled eggs appeal to these prickly creatures.
- Be aware - hedgehogs like milk but it may cause severe diarrhea in youngsters. It is best to provide fresh water each night in a shallow bowl.

### 5. ATTRACT GARDEN VISITORS

- When food is scarce, putting out a small amount of an appropriate treat will help to see the mammals visiting your garden through the winter.
- **For foxes:** Put out cheese, boiled potatoes, chicken carcasses, bread and fat scraps at dusk.
- **For squirrels:** Squirrels do not hibernate, instead they cache food during autumn to eat when food is scarce. Offer them nuts such as hazelnuts, walnuts and almonds, plus some chopped apple, beans, carrots or spinach.
- **For badgers:** Badgers have a tough time finding their favorite food - earthworms - when the ground is frozen. Provide them with lightly cooked meats, cheese, peanuts and fruit.
- Do not leave out large quantities of food each evening to avoid your guests becoming dependent on handouts.
- It is also not advisable to provide food if it encourages wildlife to cross a busy road.



**Mission Statement**

The purpose of the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is to construct and carry out a complete soil and water conservation program on all lands within Grundy County, Missouri. The district supervisors will work with all individuals, organizations and agencies interested in saving, maintaining and improving soil and water resources within the district.

**Non-Discrimination Statement**

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**2015 Upcoming Events**

**Holiday Closings**

**October**

12<sup>th</sup> – Columbus Day

**November**

11<sup>th</sup> – Veteran's Day

26<sup>th</sup> – Thanksgiving Day

**December**

25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day

**EVENTS**

**November 5th**

NW Regional Envirothon  
Competition  
Squaw Creek National  
Wildlife Refuge  
Mound City, Mo

**December 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>**

Eagle Days  
Squaw Creek National  
Wildlife Refuge  
Mound City, Mo

**SWCD Board Meetings**

October 19<sup>th</sup> – 9:00am

November 16<sup>th</sup> – 9:00am

December 21<sup>st</sup> – TBA

Board Meetings are held at the  
USDA Service Center  
3415 Oklahoma Avenue

All meetings are open to the  
public with the exception of  
executive sessions. If you  
wish to be on the agenda  
please notify the District

**Happy Holidays to you  
from the Staff!**



**Grundy County SWCD**  
3415 Oklahoma Avenue  
Trenton, Mo 64683