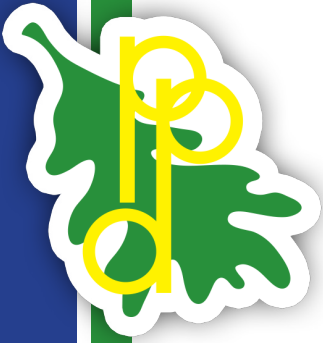




**Peoria Park District  
Commitment to  
Environmental Sustainability**



## **THE PEORIA PARK DISTRICT'S COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP**

The Peoria Park District has been, and will remain, a leading force in the preservation of historical, cultural, and natural environments of the community.

As guardians of a quality environment, the Peoria Park District promotes and practices the conservation, preservation, and restoration of our unique natural heritage. The District will stand as a role model in demonstrating and practicing sound environmental policies and practices:

1. To promote facility management and maintenance which reduces pollution and waste; incorporates energy efficiency, has a positive impact to reduce the District's carbon footprint; and preserves historic and aesthetic features.
2. To promote and practice open space planning and preservation which reflects environmentally sensitive stewardship and enhances ecosystem resiliency in the face of climate change on all Park District lands.
3. To provide knowledge, opportunities and encouragement for Park District employees and visitors to practice low impact resource use within our Parks and community.

For questions about the District's Commitment to  
Environmental Stewardship, please call  
(309) 682-1200 or e-mail [contactus@peoriaparks.org](mailto:contactus@peoriaparks.org)



We have not inherited the Earth from our parents.  
We are borrowing it from our children.

As park and recreation professionals, it is imperative that we take a leadership role in conservation, preservation, and restoration of the natural environment through interpretation, planning, and management, while providing quality recreation opportunities. Our planet is faced with increasing threats of ecological catastrophe from many angles; climate change, habitat destruction, species extinction, and loss of biodiversity. It is our intent to be a role model in demonstrating and practicing sound environmental policies and practices. We strive to be an example of sustainability and resilience to mitigate negative ecological impacts.

This Commitment to Environmental Stewardship outlines environmental goals which can be divided into 5 major categories:

- 1. Protection of the Biosphere;**
- 2. Environmental Education and Interpretation;**
- 3. Conservation of Energy;**
- 4. Use of Environmentally Sensitive Products; and**
- 5. Reduction of and proper Disposal of Waste.**

Staff will develop action steps for meeting these goals as part of our strategic planning process. As part of this strategic process, baseline data will be a part of gauging success in achieving goals. The process will also become an important tool in our annual capital and operational budgeting process. This commitment and the goals that follow will be a part of our overall PPD Strategic Planning Process.

# OUR DISTRICT FOCUS

## *Category #1: Protection of the Biosphere*

**To safeguard the biodiversity of our region by maintaining quality and diverse habitats in land managed by the Peoria Park District through conservation, preservation, and restoration.**

### *Goals* (not in order of priority)

- a.** Conduct ecological monitoring and citizen-science to keep abreast of environmental and ecological conditions of our parks. *i.e. Keep our fingers on the pulse.*
- b.** Focus local universities and conservation agencies on our stewardship needs.
- c.** Monitor and plan for ongoing effects of climate change on our local ecosystems and infrastructure.
- d.** Promote reclamation, acquisition, protection, and environmentally sensitive management of open space, wetlands, river corridors, natural habitats, greenways, and trails.
- e.** Work cooperatively with volunteer organizations, and other agencies in open space preservation and restoration.
- f.** Take appropriate steps to identify and protect rare and endangered species and plant communities.
- g.** Practice an ongoing Integrated Pest Management program which includes: use of preventive maintenance; selection of species which require little care; use of natural control methods; early detection of problems; and proper use of pesticides only in amounts deemed necessary based on park function and ecological necessity.
- h.** Consider environmental impacts that projected climate change will pose during the planning phase of all projects and developments.
- i.** When developing new or renovating existing facilities, sustain or mimic a site's pre-development hydrologic regime by using techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain stormwater runoff close to its source.
- j.** Encourage landscape management that will provide habitat for native species of plants and animals.
- k.** Protect and restore erodible watershed lands, while providing access for recreation if appropriate.
- l.** In heavily urbanized areas of our community, seek ways to restore suitable native habitat where natural areas are lacking.



## *Category #2: Environmental Education and Interpretation*

**To provide citizens with knowledge, awareness and appreciation of our natural heritage, its relationship to the District's mission, and its enjoyment through low impact recreation.**

### *Goals* (not in order of priority)

- a.** Create and provide programs, facilities, and exhibits which help people gain understanding and appreciation of nature, and in turn, develop an environmental ethic, throughout our operation scope.
- b.** Partner with the community to provide equitable access to environmental education.
- c.** Promote leisure activities which are environmentally friendly and have the least impact on rare or threatened habitats.
- d.** Provide access to and interpretation of cultural, historical, scenic and aesthetic resources within the local environment.
- e.** Serve as a role model through wise use and reuse of resources by employees both at work and at home.
- f.** Work cooperatively with groups that have a parallel environmental mission in protecting the environment.
- g.** Provide opportunities for staff development to keep up on the latest training concerning environmental and ecological issues and practices to better the District's knowledge base on such topics as; green infrastructure, climate change, atmospheric carbon reduction, and interpretive techniques.
- h.** Provide in-house training and discussions in environmental practices and policies for all District staff.





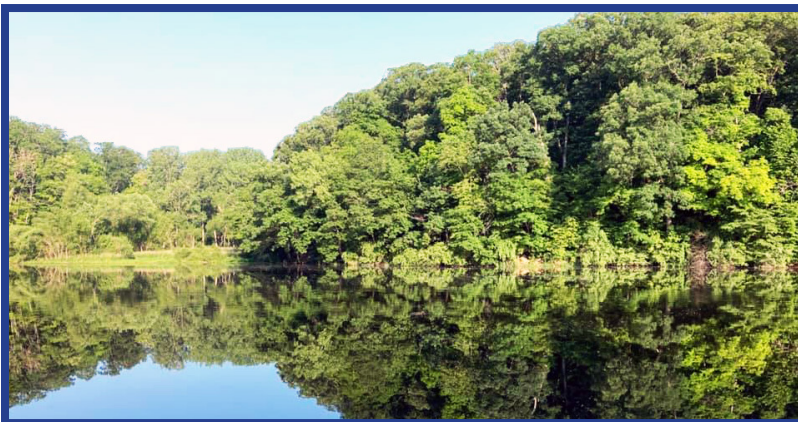
# OUR DISTRICT FOCUS

## *Category #3: Conservation of Energy*

**To invest in improved energy efficiency, renewable energy sources, and conservation in operations.**

### *Goals* (not in order of priority)

- a.** Conduct energy audits and improve efficiency by retrofitting and/or replacing appliances, mechanical equipment, and materials to improve building energy efficiency.
- b.** Improve efficiency of heating, cooling, and mechanical systems by weatherizing, and installing energy efficient systems whenever possible.
- c.** Improve building efficiencies by designing landscape that works in conjunction with building design to enhance energy efficiencies (e.g. solar gain, wind infiltration, stormwater management)
- d.** Develop incentive programs to encourage employees to use more environmentally sustainable methods of transportation.
- e.** Working cooperatively with other municipalities in planning trail projects to make the community more bicycle and pedestrian friendly.
- f.** Implement steps to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the district through carbon fuel reduction strategies by focusing efforts on reduction of fossil fuel usage for transportation, ground maintenance, and building controls.
- g.** Refine technology deployment strategies to improve the efficiency. (*i.e., staff to meet remotely and collaborate effectively without the need to travel to meetings or the use of building automation systems to monitor and reduce mechanical and energy usage*)

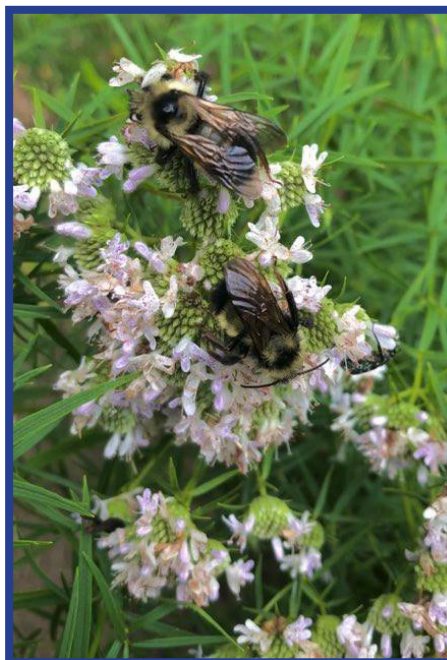
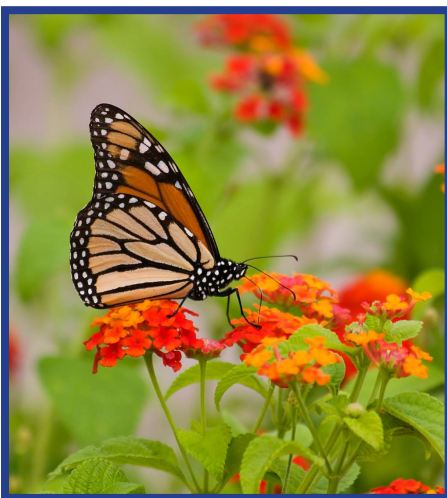


### *Category #4: Use of Environmentally Sensitive and Safe Products*

**To use products which are safe and effective, and which minimize adverse environmental impacts.**

#### *Goals* (not in order of priority)

- a.** Use cleaning agents which are safe and biodegradable.
- b.** Procurement of materials for District-wide use should emphasize the use of recycled, recyclable, and lowest impact products available.
- c.** Develop methods of streamlining procurement and budgeting (capital and operational budgets) processes to better quantify our reduction strategies. *(i.e. what is the net effect of some of the strategies we deploy on fossil fuel use)*
- d.** Pesticide use will be based on best management practices established by research and science. It will focus on the lowest impact treatments as identified in industry research and experience. *(i.e. not solely dependent on manufacture-based research)* All pesticide use will be in compliance with state and federal regulations.
- e.** The District will keep up with industry best management practices for reducing environmental impacts of chemicals, products, and materials throughout the District's operations.





# OUR DISTRICT FOCUS

## *Category #5: Reduction of Waste*

**To minimize the creation of waste, especially hazardous waste, and whenever possible to recycle materials and use recycled materials.  
To dispose of wastes through safe and responsible methods.**

### *Goals* (not in order of priority)

- a.** Help to promote community-wide recycling efforts and provide on-site recycling for users of our parks, where possible.
- b.** Manage landscape waste produced in parks to prevent accelerating the release of atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub>
- c.** Manage facilities, programs, and events in ways that reduce the production of non-recyclable waste, or waste that can contribute to community litter. *(i.e. plastic bags, balloons, etc)*
- d.** Use a District-wide approach for recycling efforts, reuse options, and ways of reducing waste.
- e.** Use a District-wide approach to coordinate Hazardous Material use, monitoring, reduction, and disposal that is compliant with State and Federal regulations; in conjunction with PPD Environmental Health and Safety program.
- f.** Work with other local agencies to promote hazardous waste recycling and disposal on a community-wide level.

