



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Update on Conservation District Sites and Programs – COVID-19

McHenry County Conservation District remains committed to supporting the health and safety of our employees, visitors and residents and to assist in slowing down the spread of the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19).

The best way to do this is to take additional steps to follow the recommendations of the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and to maintain social distancing of at least six feet from any other person and to prohibit any gathering of more than ten people.

In order to assist our residents in maintaining their physical and mental health during these very trying times, the Conservation District's outdoor conservation areas and trails will remain open for hiking, dog walking and other recreational activities during the Illinois 'Stay at Home' Executive Order issued by Governor J.B. Pritzker on Friday, March 20, 2020.

The public may use open Conservation District sites and trails as long as the rules contained in the Governor's Executive Order are followed including all social distancing and gathering requirements. All buildings and restroom facilities will remain closed. The District strongly encourages visitors to bring their own hand sanitizer for personal use when visiting all conservation areas.

The District encourages residents to visit less frequented conservation areas and consider delaying visits when parking areas are over 50% filled. Supporting these efforts will ensure that conservation areas remain open to the public. The District will monitor attendance and close conservation areas if it appears that public health goals for increased social distancing are being impacted, or if the Governor's Office orders that further distancing measures be taken.

The Conservation District had already cancelled all programs through the end of April 5 and has extended this time through May 1st. This includes all programs, events, volunteer activities and workdays, as well the opening day of Trout Season at The Hollows, Piskasaw North and Beck's Woods and the Earth Day Celebration.

District staff encourages our residents and many visitors to keep physically and mentally healthy by spending time outdoors in your own backyards, while keeping your distance from other people.

New digital E-learning for programs and outdoor education can be found on our website under MCCD.me/E-Learning. We will also continue adding inspiring content to our Facebook Page [@DiscoverMCCD](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverMCCD) as well as our Wonders of the Wild Series and Behind the Scenic Views videos found on our YouTube channel [@DiscoverMCCD](https://www.youtube.com/DiscoverMCCD) to bring the healing power of nature to you.

As of March 16, administrative and education staff were transitioned to work remotely; this now includes reduced field staff. Rest assured, District staff is still working diligently to care for our open spaces from virtual community outreach, professional development, and independent tasks, such as research, monitoring and mapping, as well as developing project plans to implement in the future.

Additional changes and new announcements may come in response to the circumstances in the days to come. We will continue communicate as quickly as we can. The District's website MCCDistrict.org is the best location for the most up to date information on site openings/closing – as well as our Facebook page [@DiscoverMCCD](https://www.facebook.com/DiscoverMCCD).

We express our enormous gratitude to everyone for their exceptional efforts in these extraordinary days. We thank you for your support and appreciate your patience as we navigate these challenging times together. We will continue to closely monitor the situation with our focus on keeping our employees and communities healthy and safe.

We're grateful to our wide open spaces that so many of you support our county's efforts to protect, preserve, maintain, and restore our natural and working lands for the benefit and enjoyment of our broader community. Be well. Take care of yourself and others, and we will see you on the trails soon.

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