



Vermilion County
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
Recreation · Education · Conservation

Volunteer Handbook

VCCD Park Properties

Location and mailing address:

Kennekuk County Park, 22296 Henning Road, Danville, IL 61834*
Forest Glen Preserve, 20301 E 900 North Road, Westville, IL 61883

Location address only:

Lake Vermilion County Park, 2607 Denmark Road, Danville, IL 61834
Heron County Park, 15494 West Newell Road, Danville, IL 61834
Kickapoo Rail Trail, 201 E South Main St Oakwood, IL 61858

**VCCD Headquarters*

Executive Director:

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Volunteer Coordinator:

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Follow us on social media for the latest information
about programs, events, and more:

Facebook: <https://facebook.com/VermilionCoConservationDist>

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YouTube: <https://youtube.com/@VermilionCountyConservatio8576>

Website: <https://vccd.org>

What is a Conservation District?

A Conservation District is an organization that may be formed by one county or a group of adjacent counties to provide for open space preservation and outdoor recreation needs. The people of the county must vote on the formation of a Conservation District, thereby agreeing to support it from local taxes. According to law, Conservation Districts may acquire and hold land for education, pleasure, and recreation of the public. Some lands may be held for their natural values alone, with little or no public access, while others may be managed for multi-recreational purposes. All land is to be kept in 'such a matter as to leave it unimpaired for the benefit of future generations.'

Forest Glen Preserve

Dedicated in October 1968, Forest Glen Preserve is located six miles northeast of Georgetown. At 1,800 acres, the wooded ravines, grassy meadows, a restored tall-grass prairie, several ponds, and three miles of frontage along the Vermilion River give it a variety of habitats, which harbor countless species of plants and animals. Forest Glen Seep Nature Preserve protects the rare bog twayblade orchid. The Howard's Hollow Seep Nature Preserve is significant because of its many marsh marigolds and skunk cabbage. Forest Glen is a popular camping destination with tent and electrical sites available. The 11.2 River Ridge Backpack Trail is popular with hikers.

Kennekuk County Park

Kennekuk, eight miles northwest of Danville, opened in 1975. It is 3,000 acres in size and offers a wide variety of recreational activities to visitors. The park is composed of wooded ravines, successional fields and meadows, and some prairie remnants. The park lies along the eastern border of the Middle Fork River, the only river in Illinois to be registered as a National Wild and Scenic River. Four ponds, marshes, and 170-acre Lake Mingo add to the variety of habitats, which are home to many kinds of wildlife. Kennekuk is also home to the Bunker Hill Historic Area, which includes eight historic buildings that were relocated from various county locations to showcase the history of the early 1900's to 1950's.

Lake Vermilion County Park

In 1983, Lake Vermilion was opened for public use when the District took over operation of the former Jaycee's Park. Boating, water-skiing, and fishing are all popular activities at the lake, which has a surface area of approximately 1,000 acres.

Heron County Park

Heron County Park is located north of Danville off West Newell Road. Visitors can explore the second-longest floating boardwalk in Illinois where the North Fork Vermilion River enters Lake Vermilion. A trail meandering through a tall-grass prairie and oxbow lakes provide excellent wildlife viewing.

Kickapoo Rail Trail

The multi-purpose recreational trail will extend 24.5 miles from Urbana to Kickapoo State Park in Vermilion County. The trail is designed for pedestrians and bicyclists, and passes through some of the most diverse ecosystems in this part of the state, including woodlands, prairies, and wetlands. Currently, only 3 miles is open to the public from Oakwood to the Vermilion County Fairgrounds. The VCCD owns and manages the KRT from the county line to Gray's Siding; the Illinois Department of Natural Resources manages from Gray's Siding to the Fairgrounds. The IDNR section includes the ¼-mile trestle bridge that towers 90-feet above the Middle Fork River.

Volunteer Policies

1. Introduction

To the employer, good volunteer practices are an integral part of an orderly plan of personal relations that help attract, hold, and develop capable and productive volunteers. Volunteers play an important role within the Conservation District. Therefore, the following volunteer policies are set forth to bring about a high degree of cooperation and understanding between the employees and volunteers of the Vermilion County Conservation District.

2. Risk Management

The Vermilion County Conservation District is committed to practicing effective risk management to protect the safety, dignity, and legal rights of others as well as our human, financial, and intangible assets.

3. Method of Application

All volunteers are required to fill out an application form provided by the Vermilion County Conservation District. The Volunteer Coordinator, for reference, will keep a copy of this application on file until the volunteer is no longer a member of the Vermilion County Conservation District Volunteer Corps.

4. Public Relations

All volunteers of the Vermilion County Conservation District are from time to time in a position to come in contact with residents of Vermilion County. Therefore, it is important that each volunteer is aware of, and engages in good public relations. Remember that residents of Vermilion County are the most important persons to enter the district's office in person, by mail, or by phone. The same is true on District lands. It is important that all volunteers remember to be friendly and helpful to the public.

5. Volunteer Responsibilities

a. Absence

If a person is unable to volunteer on their assigned day, the volunteer is to notify the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as the volunteer realizes that he or she cannot work. It is then up to the Volunteer Coordinator to find a replacement volunteer.

b. Hours

The volunteer is responsible to work the pre-assigned hours of each shift they request. Volunteers can sign up for multiple shifts. Volunteers are also responsible to report the number of hours worked to the Volunteer Coordinator to be kept on file for records. If a volunteer wishes to not report his or her hours, they will not be eligible for certain benefits that are awarded to volunteers who have worked the minimum hour requirements.

c. Personal Appearance

All volunteers will be given a Conservation District Volunteer name tag that should be worn while volunteering at the park. The volunteer should be in a presentable fashion for events where the public is concerned. Dress comfortably, but appropriately for the work assignment.

d. Smoking Policy

Smoking is not permitted in any buildings of the Vermilion County Conservation District as required by state law.

e. Cell Phone/Internet Usage

Volunteers should limit personal cell and internet usage while volunteering unless emergency situations arise.

6. Volunteer Training

Training will be offered to any interested volunteers throughout the year. Volunteers working certain job positions will be required to attend training sessions; the Volunteer Coordinator will notify all volunteers when a training session occurs.

7. Accidents

In case of an accident while a volunteer is on duty, the volunteer should immediately notify a Park Security personnel or any other District official. All volunteers should report to the Volunteer Coordinator with written documentation of the accident. The volunteer should obtain the names and addresses of all persons involved in the accident, and any witnesses.

8. Volunteer Communication

Primary communication from the volunteer coordinator will be through electronic newsletters. To ensure receipt of electronic newsletters, please periodically check spam/junk email folders if they do not arrive in primary email inbox.

9. Complaints and Due Process

Should questions or concerns arise that a volunteer believes that he or she was treated unfairly, or causes him or her any degree of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the job; the volunteer should report the matter to the Volunteer Coordinator. The Volunteer Coordinator will make every effort to solve the differences between the volunteer and the Vermilion County Conservation District.

10. Suspension

Volunteers can be suspended from the Vermilion County Conservation District Volunteer Corps if necessary. Grounds for dismissal include, but are not limited to: unable to work efficiently with other volunteers or staff, not following guidelines for various volunteer positions, or reporting to work under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

11. Volunteer Benefits

Each volunteer receives numerous benefits for their contribution to the district. Some of the benefits are based on the number of hours the volunteer accumulates over a year (January 1-December 31). The volunteer benefits and the requirements for each are:

- a. A free subscription to *The Vermilion Conservationist*, a printed newsletter (no minimum hour requirement)
- b. Subscription to all electronic newsletters from the VCCD, including volunteer update emails (no minimum hour requirement)
- c. Invitations to various seasonal dinners or special get-togethers (minimum hour requirement varies, must have volunteered within the previous year).
- d. A Certificate of Appreciation for volunteering (with 10 minimum hours per year).
- e. An invitation to an annual recognition dinner for dedicated service (with 10 minimum hours per year).
- f. A 10% discount on selected park buildings and shelters (with 15 minimum hours per year).
- g. Two nights per year of free camping at Forest Glen Preserve (with 15 minimum hours per year).

12. Volunteer Bill of Rights

All volunteers of the Vermilion County Conservation District have personal rights, which are as follows:

- a. To be treated as a District employee with respect and importance.
- b. The right to request certain duties outside their normal volunteer duties.
- c. To be given a job description.
- d. To be given suitable assignments.
- e. To have the option to make suggestions in decisions affecting assignments.
- f. To receive appropriate training.
- g. To be evaluated, and to evaluate their experience.