

**The History of the Conservation Education Center** began in the early 1990's. Steve Garst, Joe Halbur, and Dave Olson and others were involved in some of the early brainstorming about the possibility of a regional environmental education facility located in Swan Lake State Park. The 1999 five-year plan for Carroll County Conservation included the first concrete proposal, and a fundraising drive was initiated shortly thereafter.

Construction began in 2003. Doors opened in late October of 2004 with programs and room rentals beginning January 2005. A grand opening was held in April 2005. The price tag of the Center was \$1.8 million, with the local community putting in several thousand additional hours of volunteer help and hundreds of thousands of dollars of local in-kind donations. The funding sources of the Ed Center demonstrate the regional support of the project, with 47% of the funding coming from outside Carroll County and 17% from outside Iowa. Only 15% of the project was financed through Carroll County taxpayers. The remainder was from local support.

**The Carroll County Conservation Foundation** is a nonprofit group of interested citizens that meets regularly throughout the year to provide input regarding fundraising and educational programming at the Center. The financial support of the Foundation plays a critical part in meeting our mission by providing needed funds to improve our programs. If you are interested in becoming a member, please give us a call or send in the form below.

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**Conservation Foundation Membership Application**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Pledged: \_\_\_\_\_

Please use my donation for (check one):

Checks payable and mailed to:  
 Carroll County Conservation Foundation  
 22676 Swan Lake Dr  
 Carroll IA 51401

- where most needed
- environmental education programs
- for land acquisition

# Education Center

Carroll County Conservation



**Carroll County Conservation Board**

22676 Swan Lake Drive

Carroll, IA 51401

(712) 792-4614

[valerie@carrollcountyiowa.org](mailto:valerie@carrollcountyiowa.org)

[mycountyparks.com/County/Carroll.aspx](http://mycountyparks.com/County/Carroll.aspx)



**The Conservation Education Center** is located in Swan Lake State Park, approximately 2 miles south of Carroll. From Highway 30 turn south on Grant Road, drive to 220<sup>th</sup> Street and turn east (following the signs). 220<sup>th</sup> can also be reached from Highway 71 and will lead you to the front door of the Center.

## Hours of Operation

Conservation Education Center & Concession Stand/Gift Shop

Memorial Day through Labor Day

Mon-Thurs: 8am – 4:30pm      Fri-Sun: 8am – 8pm

Off-season: Weekdays: 8am – 4:30pm

\*\*\* Also by appointment \*\*\*

The Conservation Education Center is a regional facility serving Western Iowa, contributing towards the local economy and quality of life while providing educational, recreational, and cultural activities. The facility includes two large classrooms, an educational display area, kitchen, gift shop, elevator, restrooms, offices, boardroom, wildlife viewing deck, storm shelter, prairie restorations, and a backyard wetland connected via the 33-mile multi-use Sauk Rail Trail.

## Programs

The Education Center provides programming for all ages and is fully ADA accessible. A state of the art audio/visual system assists in the facilitation of environmental education in an enhanced educational setting. The Center also features a natural resource library, with books and videos available for checkout to schools and individuals.

Outdoor education opportunities lie just outside the back door, with a restored prairie (in progress) and a constructed wetland that lies below an agricultural field. Nature and water studies are possible during every season of the year.

The Center is open to school visits, youth groups, special interest groups, bus tours, and the public. Public programs are regularly hosted on a wide range of environmental topics.

## Display Area

Environmental Education Displays include a full-mount bison, a fur rack, children's activity area, Native American display, historical maps, and more. The display area is designed as a self-interpretive experience, or can be used as part of your group's educational program.

We also have a rotating guest artist gallery, with local, environmentally themed art that rotates every few months.

## Education Center Rooms

The Education Center classrooms are our largest rental area, accommodating up to 200 people. The rooms can also be divided for smaller events up to 100 guests. These rooms are located inside the Swan Lake Conservation Education Center, and offer a unique location for your gathering, with a beautiful view and access to the outdoor deck and trails.



The Wapiti Room Classroom offers a state-of-the-art audiovisual system with a projector, drop-down 6'X8' screen, and multiple hanging speakers - perfect for a PowerPoint presentation or slideshow. A high-speed internet connection is available along with a DVD player, VHS player, and CD

player. A kitchenette with a sink, microwave, and refrigerator is attached to the classroom and is included with the room rental. The Bison room is set up as banquet style for your convenience. A wall separates the rooms and can be taken down so you can have one large room for wedding receptions, parties, etc. The rooms rent for \$110 per side (\$220 for the entire room) and are available year-round. The rental price is \$160 per side if alcohol is served (\$320 for the entire room). Non-profit organizations receive a discount. A refundable clean-up deposit is required. The rooms are rented from 8am to 10pm.



Please call the conservation office at (712) 792-4614 for additional information or if you would like to tour the classrooms.