

PRAIRIE CREEK CAMPGROUND/CABIN PROJECT

- 273 acre property called Prairie Creek Recreation Area was donated to Jackson County Conservation in 2014 from Robert Martin. Mr. Martin's last will and testament states "the erection of improvements to make the property suitable for young people in scouting programs, the development of a public campground, and similar improvements and developments".
- A master plan was developed for the property by students at Iowa State University and Shive Hattery Architects as part of a class project in 2016. The master plan included a campground and cabin site with 50 modern, 20 primitive, and 12 cabin locations.
- A reduced project scope/design is being developed by WHKS Engineering to include 50 modern campsites, 20 primitive campsites and 4 cabins. This includes site survey, soil borings, and an engineer's estimate for the project. Early estimates have the project between \$2.5 and \$3 million dollars.
- The Jackson County Conservation Board has requested a general fund loan from the Jackson County Board of Supervisors of an amount "Not to exceed \$2.5 Million dollars to build the campground and cabins at Prairie Creek Recreation Area".
- The General Fund Loan is a bond loan from a financial institution that will simply pass through the counties general fund. It does not use tax payer dollars for this project.
- Any additional expenses above \$2.5 Million dollars will be covered by grant dollars and private donations.
- To apply for a Community Attractions and Tourism Grant (CAT) for this project the applicant must have 70% of the funding secured at the time of the application. The application is due April 15, 2019 with a maximum request of \$500,000. i.e.: the general fund loan must be approved by the Jackson County Board of Supervisors prior to submitting the CAT grant application.
- The estimated annual revenue from the campground and cabins is approximately \$208,000.
- The estimated annual payment for the general fund loan is \$130,000 for 20 years.
- The estimated annual expenses for the campground and cabins at Prairie Creek is \$70,000. I.e.: utilities, staffing, maintenance.
- The estimated revenue will cover the annual bond payment and park expenses.
- The Jackson County Conservation Department currently generates over \$200,000 annually in other campground facilities, boat dock rentals, and timber sales. These dollars could be used to supplement the general fund loan if needed.
- There is a need for additional camping and cabin rental facilities in Eastern Iowa, especially the Grant Wood Loop region which includes Jackson, Jones, and Dubuque counties.
- The campground and cabin development at Prairie Creek will generate additional tourism dollars in Jackson County which will help the local economy.

For questions about the Prairie Creek Campground/Cabin Project, contact:

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