



# 2026 - 2027 ANNUAL PLAN OF WORK

## BOONE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT



1973 Burlington Pike,  
Burlington, KY 41005



[bccdky.org](http://bccdky.org)



859-544-5287



[info@bccdky.org](mailto:info@bccdky.org)



# INTRODUCTION

.....

The Mission of the Boone County Conservation District (BCCDKY) is to promote the protection and wise use of natural resources through education and service to the citizens of Boone County, Kentucky. The BCCDKY identifies and addresses the county's natural resource issues and provides technical assistance, conservation planning, and access to cost share programs to the community.

Fiscal year 2026 - 2027 promises to be a very active year for conservation in Boone County. BCCDKY staff are planning to build on our ongoing efforts to address local natural resource issues and continue our initiatives to keep them at the forefront as our community continues to grow. Forest health, stream health, soil health, and biodiversity are among the most important issues we face.

Our Forest health and stream health initiatives are underway, and we will continue to collect data and monitor diseases and invasive species threats. We will assist private and public landowners and inform and involve local citizens about protection and stewardship for these resources. Staff will also continue to encourage and support soil health by aiding agricultural producers to prepare Ag water quality plans and assisting with technical and financial assistance.

One of our most valuable but often ignored natural resources is the Ohio River. BCCDKY has been working with community partners such as the Boone Conservancy and the National Park Service for many years to highlight the ecological importance and historical significance of the Ohio River to our community. We will continue to work with our riverside communities to highlight and protect the natural and cultural heritage along the Ohio River. Identifying easy access points will open opportunities to explore and learn more about this diverse aquatic ecosystem and historic waterway. There is much interest in the restoration of the Ohio River and BCCDKY hopes to help lead this long overdue effort along the 42 miles of Boone County's shoreline and its multiple tributaries.

The district's Earl and Hazel Jones Center for Conservation will continue to be a hub for conservation activity in Boone County. We have made great progress in planning and developing a safe and inviting natural environment for educational activities for all ages as well as initiating new projects to inform and demonstrate management and stewardship efforts.

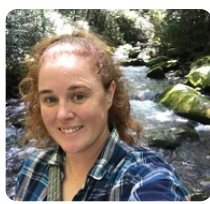
The following information in this plan of work will give more detail on the projects and initiatives BCCDKY plans for 2026 - 2027. We hope you will actively participate in our programs and support our local natural resources.



# KRS 262.020



Purpose of soil and water conservation district -- Methods of achieving purpose. The purpose of a soil and water conservation district is to conserve and develop all renewable natural resources within the district. In so doing, the district is authorized to undertake, sponsor, or participate in projects and activities which promote the conservation, development, maintenance and use of the land, water, trees and other renewable natural resources of the district. Such projects and activities shall include but not be limited to conservation practices on agricultural lands, the control of soil erosion, retardation of water runoff, the construction of flood prevention and control reservoirs, the maintenance of flood plains, the promotion of projects to assure an adequate municipal, industrial and agricultural supply of water, watershed stabilization, the avoidance and abatement of sedimentation and pollution in streams and other bodies of water, forestation and reforestation, the establishment of parks and outdoor recreation areas, the protection of open space, greenbelt areas and scenery, the preservation of wilderness areas, the protection of fish and wildlife, working for the location of highways, industries, housing developments, airports and other structures as are consistent with the district's objectives and will offer the least possible interference with the conservation and best multiple use of the renewable natural resources, and all other activities consistent with the total natural resources development of the district. History: Amended 1968 Ky. Acts Ch. 64, sec. 1. -- Recodified 1942 Ky. Acts Ch. 208, sec. 1, effective November 1, 1942, from Ky. Stat. sec. 42i-2.



## Our Team

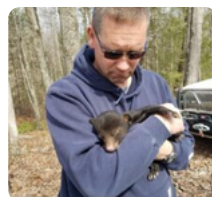
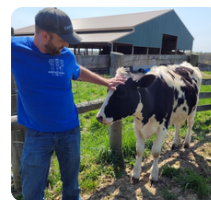
### Staff

- Mark Jacobs, Director of Conservation Programs
- Pavla Link, District Operations Manager
- Susan Brown, Conservation Education Specialist
- James Acey, Forest Health Specialist
- Tyler Rankin, Forest Health Specialist
- Evie Moellering, Conservation Technician



## Board of Supervisors

- Mike Wilson (Chair)
- Debra Waller (Vice-Chair)
- John Stork (Treasurer)
- Dr. Shannon Galbraith-Kent, Ph.D.
- Kevin Bond
- Kathleen C. King
- Casey Moll





# OPERATIONS

BCCDKY is committed to working with the people of Boone County to understand and protect our local natural resources. Considering our small staff and limited budget, it is imperative that we run smoothly and efficiently. The operation of the district helps supervisors and staff coordinate projects and initiatives and use available resources to achieve our goals.

**Maintain a Budget Committee to pursue equitable and sustainable funding for BCCDKY.**

- Ensure that the budget supports the Annual Plan of Work and Long Range Plan activities.
- The Budget Committee will meet at least quarterly for updates and with their accountants when necessary.
- The Budget Committee will establish and maintain five-year budget plan, in addition to the required one-year budget.
- The Budget Committee will meet with the Boone County Judge Executive and other members of the Fiscal Court at least once a year.
- The Budget Committee will meet with the Boone County Commissioners at least once a year.

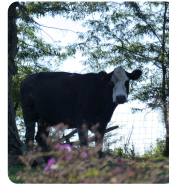
**Meet and exceed the statutory requirements that are listed in the BCCDKY Long Range Plan, revised January 2022.**

**Provide conservation services to the citizens of Boone County.**

- Provide technical, financial, and educational assistance to landowners and land managers.
- Develop partnerships with local and regional conservation groups.
- Maintain close relationship with The Boone Conservancy in efforts to collaborate on land preservation and other conservation programs.

**Secure adequate space for office operations, conservation education programs and equipment storage.**

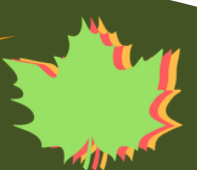
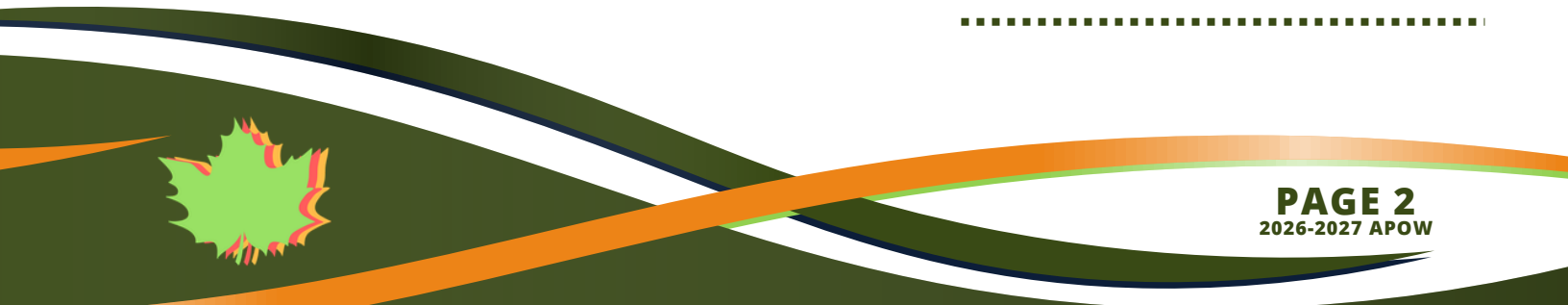
**Manage the Earl and Hazel Jones Center for Conservation.**



# AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The protection and improvement of our soil and water resources to support Boone County's agricultural producers is one of our most important issues. This is particularly important to the rural agrarian community in western Boone County. BCCDKY is committed to:

- Provide technical assistance and planning services to Boone County landowners and producers.
- Facilitate assistance from other resource agencies when necessary.
- Facilitate landowner compliance with the Kentucky Agriculture Water Quality Act (KAWQA).
- Continue to promote and facilitate landowner participation in Kentucky Soil Erosion and Water Quality Cost Share Program and Federal Cost Share Programs, when available, to decrease soil loss and improve water quality.
- Continue recertifying Agriculture District program participants.





# EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Education is a vital component to BCCDKY's mission. Our education programs directly reach thousands of people each year and are designed for people of all ages in order to frame an environmentally-responsible generation, for the benefit of all Boone County residents. We specialize in outdoor, experiential programs that engage students in hands-on conservation practices. In 2026-2027, we will continue to focus on developing our youth and teen programs, which provide students with opportunities to develop conservation leadership skills that can support their future academic and professional careers. We will also work to reach new audiences with a formal volunteer program and by utilizing the natural resources of Boone County, including the Ohio River shoreline, the Center for Conservation, and our various public parks.

## **Provide conservation education programs to citizens of Boone County and surrounding areas.**

- Integrate current research and citizen science into programming.
- Maintain safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for learners.
- Support partner organizations through collaborative programs, and promote conservation practices and Best Management Practices (BMPs) among local agencies.
- Develop a formal volunteer program.
- Offer habitat management workshops for landowners.
- Promote conservation practices and Best Management Practices (BMPs) among local agencies.

## **Provide support for K-12 and homeschool students and teachers by providing lesson plans, curriculum resources, and technical support.**

## **Provide opportunities for the public to access and benefit from the Earl and Hazel Jones Center for Conservation.**

- Host public education programs and volunteer events throughout the year for children and adults.
- Use natural resources on the property to demonstrate best management practices.
- Develop curriculum based on cultural and historic resources of the property.
- Increase awareness of the Ohio River's natural and cultural resources.
- Collaborate with the Ohio River Way and other stakeholders on the Boone County Ohio River Initiative.
- Develop educational resources and programs for the general public.

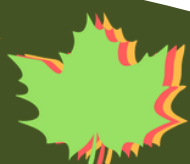
## **Engage and effectively communicate with local legislators and government leaders, including Boone County Fiscal Court.**

### **Expand Conservation Leadership Programs**

- Create pathways for careers in conservation for local youth.
- Further develop college internship program.
- Provide resources for college students studying conservation.
- Provide opportunities for students of all ages to engage in outdoor recreation, citizen science, and conservation practices.
- Improve summer youth programs.
- Create opportunities for students to grow leadership skills.

### **Promote the mission of BCCDKY through community outreach**

- Maintain up to date information and public resources on [bccdky.org](http://bccdky.org).
- Engage with the general public through print, online, video and social media.
- Participate in local fairs and festivals and other community events.
- Provide presentations to civic groups, clubs, meetings, etc.





# FOREST AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

The forests in Boone County are perhaps the most neglected, and under-utilized resource in the County. Approximately 47% of the original forested canopy cover, located mostly in the western and northern slopes along the Ohio River and its tributaries, remains. In order to preserve and promote the development of the remaining forests, BCCDKY will:

- Utilize our Forest Health Specialists to create studies and plans for Boone County which focus on ecological health of forest lands in Boone County including biodiversity, habitat fragmentation, invasive species management, plant and animal diseases, threatened/endangered wildlife and species of special concern, and public and private land management.
- Work with local universities to encourage student research on local forest and wildlife issues.
- Pursue stream, wetland, forest mitigation funds and other sources of funding to protect forest and wildlife resources.
- Collaborate with local, state, and federal agencies where appropriate to support conservation efforts on public and private forest land.
- Continue to develop and offer educational opportunities for the management of forest and wildlife resources (i.e. field days, lectures, etc.).
- Utilize volunteers to assist with forest and wildlife surveys.
- Collaborate with the Boone County Planning Commission to identify and inventory the county's most environmentally sensitive areas and create conservation initiatives for those areas.



## WATER RESOURCES

Hydromodification and poorly mitigated storm water runoff from past development and rapid present growth have become a major threat to the health of streams and adjacent built infrastructure in Boone County. Our focus will include:

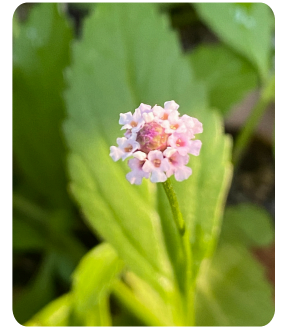
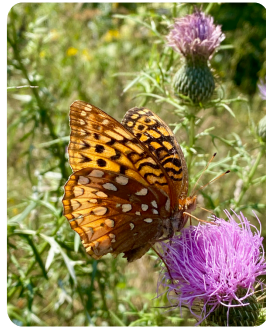
- Working closely with mitigation programs, organizations, and agencies to identify and implement stream and wetland mitigation projects in Boone County.
- Continue efforts to improve stream health through implementation of Gunpowder and Woolper Creek Watershed Plans.
- Continue to maintain and seek new partnerships to implement watershed plans.
- Work closely with Sanitation District No. 1 to monitor stream health.
- Develop a student and citizen science training program to monitor stream health.
- Expand watershed planning efforts in Boone County.
- Maintain and strengthen partnerships developed through watershed planning initiatives.
- Work closely with the Boone County Planning Commission to identify and map conservation priorities along the Ohio River and major tributaries in Boone County.



# EARL AND HAZEL JONES CENTER FOR CONSERVATION

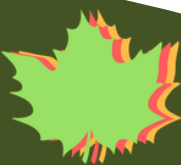
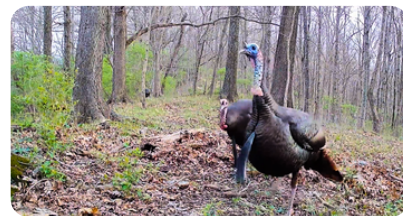
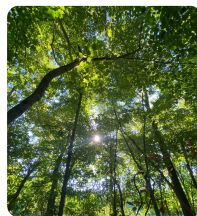
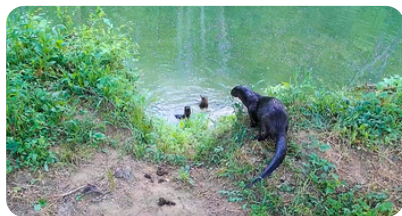


BCCDKY has had the opportunity to provide conservation education programs and activities to hundreds of people at the Earl and Hazel Jones Center for Conservation. We have and will continue to offer summer camps, school programs, workshops and an open house for anyone interested in our conservation work. We have also made progress in developing our intern program to provide unique work experiences and implementing projects on site to improve forest and meadow habitat. We will continue to develop the network of trails that allow safe access to different habitats and features on the property.



In 2026-2027 we will focus on:

- Develop a conservation education building at the Jones Center that will provide office space, lab and maintenance facilities.
- Continue innovative conservation education programs for all ages.
- Improve and maintain a safe trail network.
- Continue and expand intern research projects.
- Develop volunteer and citizen science and data collection programs.
- Continue collaboration with local historians and archaeologists to investigate the Crisler-Gulley Mill and other historic and prehistoric sites.
- Develop effective education and outreach materials for the Jones Center.
- Continue plans for a stream and wetland mitigation project along Gunpowder Creek.
- Complete a long-term management plan for the Jones Center.
- Explore opportunities for a conservation easement on the property.





# BCORI

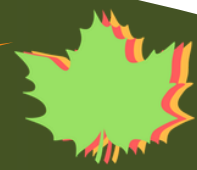


## BOONE COUNTY OHIO RIVER INITIATIVE

The Boone County Ohio River Initiative (BCORI) is perhaps one of the most important conservation initiatives BCCDKY has undertaken. There is great potential to attract attention to Boone County's Ohio River shoreline for its beauty and historical significance. We hope to encourage people to enjoy this beautiful river while emphasizing protection of its waters, surrounding forests and small river communities. We have developed a plan with assistance from the National Park Service and the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program and in 2026 – 2027 BCCDKY and our partners will begin to implement that plan. The development of an Ohio River Restoration Plan is gaining momentum, and we hope to highlight the Boone County shoreline as an opportunity to encourage conservation, local history, recreation, and commerce in our river towns.

In the 2026 – 2027 fiscal year we will pursue the following objectives:

- Work with Rabbit Hash community to stabilize the riverbank and create better access to the river for visitors as well as canoe and kayak access.
- Work with the residents of Petersburg and Boone County Fiscal Court to plan improvements to the Petersburg Riverside Park including bank stabilization and improved access to the river.
- Work towards “shovel ready” conservation projects and pursue funding for projects along the Ohio River.
- Host and participate in education and outreach events, clean up days, other conservation events on the river.
- Lead educational canoe and kayak trips to unique locations on the river to educate the public and promote conservation.
- Continue to work with other regional partners to promote river conservation.



# 2026-2027 BCCDKY COMMITTEES

## **Executive Committee**

Chair: Mike Wilson  
Vice Chair: Debra Waller  
Treasurer: John Stork  
Mark Jacobs

## **HR Committee**

Chair: John Stork  
Kathy King  
Susan Brown  
Mark Jacobs

## **Land and Natural Resources Planning Committee**

Chair: Kevin Bond  
Shannon Galbraith-Kent, Ph.D.  
John Stork  
Mark Jacobs  
Pavla Link  
James Acey  
Tyler Rankin

## **Budget Committee**

Chair: John Stork  
Mike Wilson  
Kevin Bond  
Mark Jacobs  
Pavla Link

## **Education Committee**

Chair: Shannon Galbraith-Kent  
Susan Brown  
Kathy King  
Debra Waller  
Casey Moll

## **Government Affairs Committee**

Chair: Kathy King  
Kevin Bond  
Mark Jacobs  
Pavla Link



