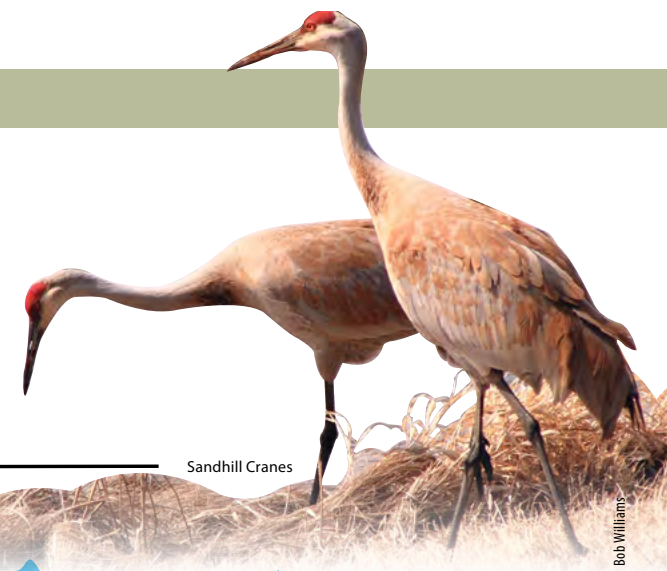




# Glacial Park Conservation Area



Sandhill Cranes

Bob Williams



**Kames** are large hills made primarily of gravel deposited by the glaciers over 10,000 years ago. Visitors can view four different kames at Glacial Park including the "Camelback Kames", which have two humps shaped like a camel's back.

**Sedge Meadows** are areas where the soil remains saturated, though standing water is uncommon most of the time. Popular plants are Michigan Lily and Spotted Joe-pye Weed.

**Bogs** are wetland areas whose predominant vegetation is sphagnum moss. Known for their highly acidic soils, low oxygen levels and poor drainage, bogs are spongy, floating mats of vegetation where not much else can survive.

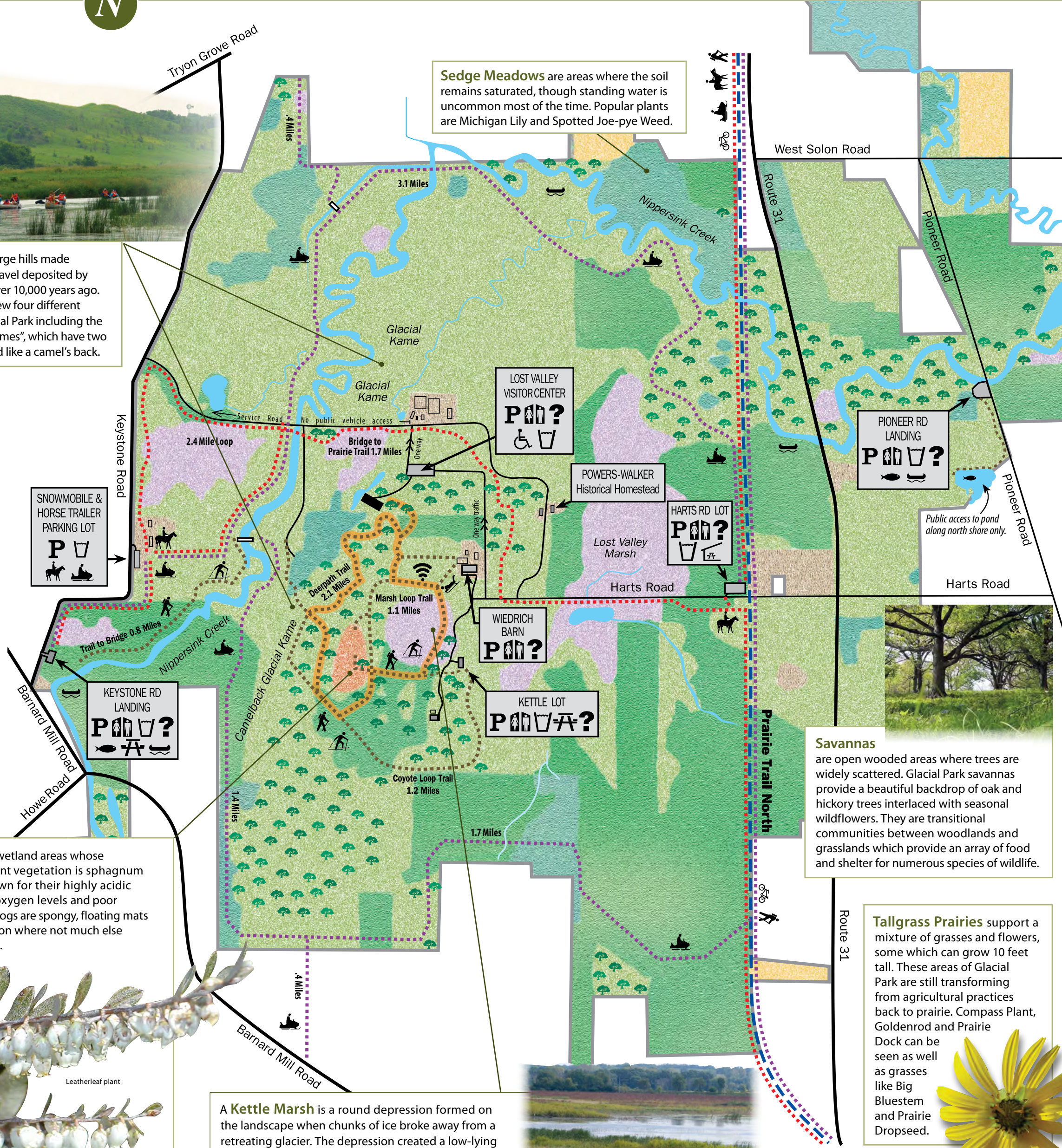
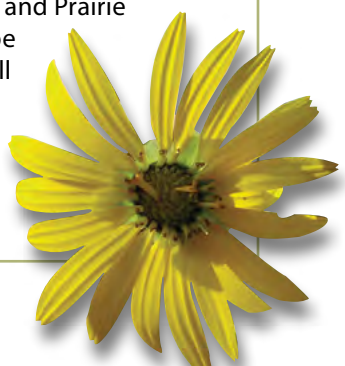
A **Kettle Marsh** is a round depression formed on the landscape when chunks of ice broke away from a retreating glacier. The depression created a low-lying wetland where plants like cattails and bulrushes grow with their roots in the muck and their stems rising over four feet high.

**Savannas** are open wooded areas where trees are widely scattered. Glacial Park savannas provide a beautiful backdrop of oak and hickory trees interlaced with seasonal wildflowers. They are transitional communities between woodlands and grasslands which provide an array of food and shelter for numerous species of wildlife.

**Tallgrass Prairies** support a mixture of grasses and flowers, some which can grow 10 feet tall. These areas of Glacial Park are still transforming from agricultural practices back to prairie. Compass Plant, Goldenrod and Prairie Dock can be seen as well as grasses like Big Bluestem and Prairie Dropseed.



Leatherleaf plant



SYMBOLS KEY	
	Amphitheater
	Bike Trail
	Camping
	Canoeing
	Cross Country Skiing
	Drinking Water
	Fishing
	Handicap Accessible
	Hiking
	Interpretive Trail
	Horse Trail
	Information
	Parking
	Parking - Early Morning
	Picnic Area
	Picnic Shelter
	Restrooms
	Sledding
	Snowmobile Trail

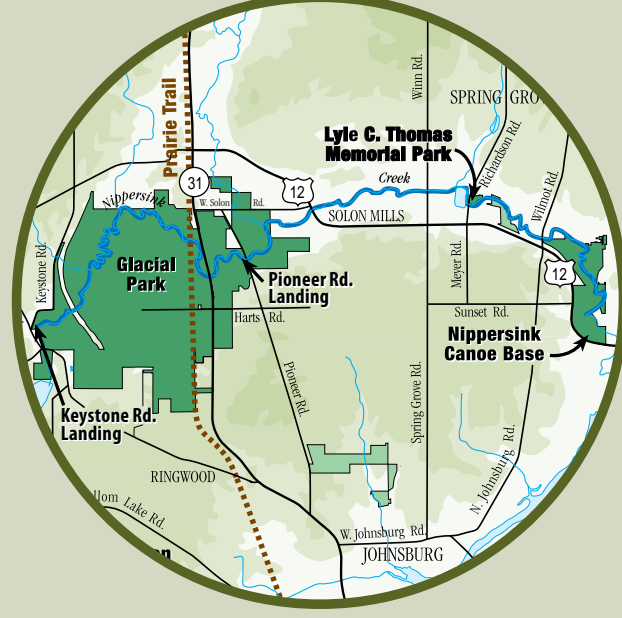
  

TEXTURES KEY	
	Bog
	Agriculture
	Developed
	Grasses and Forbs
	Marsh
	Restored Prairie
	Sedge Meadow
	Water Resource

## Nippersink Canoe Trail

**Keystone Road Landing/Nippersink Canoe Base/Pioneer Road Landing** — These sites provide put-in/take-out points for canoes or kayaks coming down Nippersink Creek or continuing on to the Fox River or the Chain of Lakes. Paddlers can meander from two to six hours along the creek.

**Lyle C. Thomas Memorial Park & Landing**, Spring Grove (13 acres) Owned by the Village of Spring Grove, this site is managed by the Conservation District and serves as an excellent put-in/take-out location for trips along Nippersink Creek.



# Preservation

**Glacial Park** — At 3,410 acres in size, Glacial Park features a diverse array of prairie, wetlands, savannas and delta kames. With the gradual addition of parcels over the years, land restoration has been vital to making Glacial Park a cohesive natural community.

District staff and volunteers have restored hundreds of acres of native communities by removing invasive plant species, conducting prescription burns, and re-creating wetlands. In 2000, the Nippersink Creek was remeandered to restore its natural path, preventing erosion, and improving the wetland habitat.



Blanding's Turtle

The effects of land restoration on the wildlife and plant communities are evident at Glacial Park. Four hundred acres of state-designated nature preserve exist within its central core, providing habitat for over 41 species of state endangered and threatened plants and animals, like Northern Harriers, Blanding's turtles and Forster's tern. In 1993, 13 wild turkeys were reintroduced to Glacial Park and today, flocks of 20-30 can be seen. In addition, muskrats, badger, woodchuck, 13-lined ground squirrels, green frogs and American toads are commonly spotted. It is also not unusual to see hundreds of migrating birds during a fall sunset.

Savannas provide a beautiful backdrop of oaks and hickory trees interlaced with seasonal wildflowers like shooting stars, columbine, may apples and prairie smoke. The wide open space at Glacial Park provides a sanctuary for numerous plants and animal communities.



Red-tailed Hawk

# History

## Wiedrich Barn

Peter Wiedrich purchased roughly 560 acres from Samuel Walker in 1875 in what today is known as Glacial Park. He was the father of seven children and grandfather to the Wiedrich sisters Ethel, Laura, and Marian. Peter's son, Frank, built the barn in 1902. He and his wife gathered the stones for the foundation from the fields and bought the lumber from a friend in McHenry. Electricity wasn't installed on the farm until 1953. Each day the family would hand-milk up to 25 cows in the barn. They planted acres of oats, corn, hay and wheat. The farm was also home to 15 heifers, four horses, hogs, chickens, guineas, ducks, geese and turkeys. In 1975, the Wiedrich sisters sold the 120 acres that remained of the family farm to the Conservation District.



Wiedrich barn



## Lost Valley

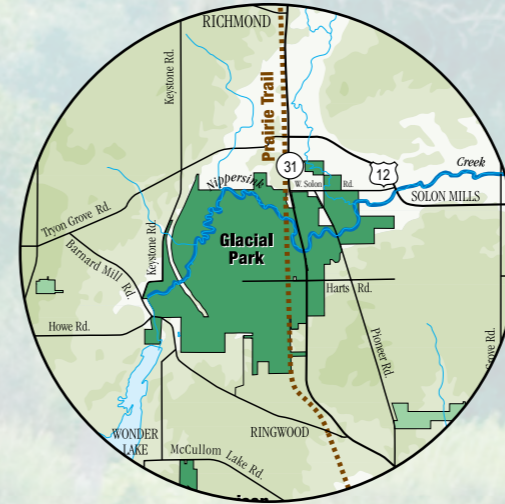
### Visitor Center

The original building was a home built by Frank Howard as part of the Hickory Creek Farms operation in the

late 1950's. From the late 1960's until 1986 the property was a private residence. In 1986, the parcel, along with 1,100 acres north of Glacial Park was purchased by Comdisco Corporation and opened as Tamarack Hunt Club and Lodge. During this period, the grounds and structures were renovated and expanded by Comdisco. They operated it as a company retreat center, which included 20 bedrooms, a kitchen, dining area, meeting rooms, lounge, sauna, and swimming pool. In 2001, the corporation added a large conference room to the east end with additional bedrooms on the second floor.

During an economic downturn in the early 2000's the hunt club and the lodge were sold to a development corporation. In 2006, the Conservation District acquired the former lodge and retreat center from the developer. Its location as a 34-acre inholding within Glacial Park, as well as the interconnected hydrologic systems and oak savannas, made it a long sought after acquisition.

# Glacial Park



## Glacial Park Conservation Area

6316 Harts Road, Ringwood, IL

Main Entrance GPS Coordinates:  
N 42°25.318, W 88°18.067, WGS84

## Lost Valley Visitor Center

April–Oct.: Daily, 8 a.m.–6 p.m.  
Nov.–March: Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m.  
Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.–4 p.m.  
815.678.4532

## Wiedrich Barn

Open for special events and educational programs.



McHenry County  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

815.338.6223 • MCCDistrict.org



Done with the map? Recycle it by placing it back in the brochure holder for the next visitor.

# Glacial Park Conservation Area



McHenry County  
Conservation District

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# Recreation



**Canoing/Kayaking** Spend a day paddling the clear, tranquil waters of Nippersink Creek, a high-quality stream characterized by the numerous species of plant life, fish, frogs and other aquatic creatures that live within its waters. Canoers and kayakers can enjoy the meandering water trail and scenic views by putting in at Keystone Road Landing or Pioneer Road Landing.

**Fishing** Nippersink Creek is home to bass, bluegill, channel catfish, walleye, carp, bullhead, green sunfish and many others. Anglers can fish at Keystone Road Landing or Pioneer Road Landing.



**Trails** Glacial Park has over eight miles of trails designated for hiking, horseback riding, snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. The 26-mile Prairie Trail also runs north/south along the park's eastern boundary. Trail users can park at the Harts Road parking lot and bicycle from one end of the county to the other, as well as ride the seven mile westbound Hebron Trail link.

**Interpretive Nature Trail** A two-mile interpretive trail follows the Deerpath Trail loop. Guide books, located at the trail head in front of the Lost Valley Visitor Center, interpret four different topics: "Plant Communities", "Wildlife", "History of the Land", and "Geology".

**Picnic Areas and Shelters** Visitors can enjoy a picnic lunch at the Kettle parking lot, Keystone Landing or Harts Road Shelter. The Kettle Parking Lot and Harts Road Shelter can also be reserved for large group gatherings by calling (815) 338-6223.

# Facilities



**The Lost Valley Visitor Center** To enhance the existing natural attractions at Glacial Park, the Conservation District opened the doors to the Lost Valley Visitor Center in the summer of 2010 to immerse guests in an even greater experience while on site. Nestled in the geographic center of the park, the visitor center is the gateway to a day's adventure where guests can connect, learn, and discover the importance of preserving nature.

The Lost Valley Visitor Center includes classrooms for environmental education programs and workshops, a large conference room, exhibit area, and library with wireless internet access. Visitors can enjoy self-guided visits through the exhibits, or sign up for a variety of staff-led educational programs offered throughout the year. The visitor center also hosts field trips for local school children, summer day camps, and weekend workshops for adults on a variety of environmentally-significant topics as part of the People and Nature Certificate Program. A myriad of hikes and other public programs can be found within the District's quarterly magazine, *Landscapes* and on the website.

**Green Technologies** Another significant feature of the Lost Valley Visitor Center is its green technologies. When renovating the building, the District did its best to reduce the use of traditional energy sources, to preserve and protect the area's clean water supply, and to reduce the use of the earth's resources. From energy efficient lighting and geothermal heating and cooling to daylight harvesting and the installation of rain gardens, the District took every measure to achieve LEED® Gold certification. Throughout the building, interpretive signs point out these features as well as provide ideas on how they might be incorporated in the home.



The "LEED® Certification Mark" is a registered trademark owned by the U.S. Green Building Council® and is used with permission.

## Powers-Walker House

The Powers-Walker House is a rich educational and historical resource that is open for special events and programs throughout the year. By participating in these events, visitors gain insight to the early settlers' connection to the land. Annual events include the *Ice Cream Social of 1858*, *Archeological Awareness* and the *Harvest Gathering of 1858*.

The Powers family first built their frame house, a Greek-Revival style home, in 1854. After the Powers family moved on, Samuel Walker, a prominent local citizen, purchased the farm. In the late 1990's, the District and McHenry County Historic Preservation Commission determined that the house still contained a significant portion of architectural integrity, unaltered over 140 years of use. An active volunteer group is working to restore and refurbish the home's interior and exterior historic appearance.



Powers-Walker Homestead

**Research Library** The focus of the collections is on the geology, soils, flora, and fauna of the area, as well as the history, practice, and science of ecological restoration. The collections include historical maps, a database of ecological surveys conducted in McHenry County, periodicals, books, and soil and wetland maps. The intended audience includes college students and land-management professionals. Scanning of documents is permissible; however, there is no scanner or copier available for visitor use. Access is by appointment only with use of materials on-site; contact Tom Simpson (815) 678-4532 ext. 8218.

# Education



**The Research Field Station** hosts a large college intern program each summer, in which interns get experience in ecological restoration land management, educational exhibit construction, wildlife surveys, plant surveys, and research. In addition, the Research Field Station conducts studies related to restoration and issues permits to coordinate research by scientists who work in collaboration with regional institutions. The Research Field Station also coordinates the People and Nature Certificate Program, a series of more than 15 adult continuing education workshops on a variety of environmental topics.

## Self-Guided Family Exploration Packs

Create your own adventure with the Conservation District's exploration packs. These are backpacks your family or small group can borrow for use on the trails at Glacial Park.

The packs contain seasonal activities in which your entire group can participate. Adult supervision is required. A driver's license is required as a deposit and must be left during use. (For groups over 16, an educational permit is needed. For information call Prairieview Education Center at (815) 479-5779.)

