



Friends of the Sangamon Valley

Our Mission: To preserve our natural heritage by acquiring, restoring, and protecting ecologically significant lands in the Sangamon River watershed. Many of the counties in the watershed do not have a local conservation district or other land trust organization dedicated to preserving land or restoring and maintaining natural areas. The *Friends* fills this niche. Initially formed to address a potential threat to a nature preserve in Springfield, the *Friends* has expanded its mission to encompass the broader watershed, including work in four counties.

Our Accomplishments:

- Purchased a rare 50-acre sand forest, **Boyle Woods**, in Cass County in January 2008
- Acquired the **Wolf Preserve**, a 68-acre woodland near Lincoln's New Salem in November 2005
- Dedicated the 9-acre **Knuppel Wildlife Sanctuary** near Petersburg, IL in May 2005
- The Friends were named the **2004 Prairie and the People award winner** for best conservation group and best volunteer (Vern LaGesse, Friends president) by the Springfield State Journal-Register newspaper
- Completed the *Inventory of Sangamon County Natural Areas* (June 2004)
- Hold two conservation easements with Sangamon County for protection and management of the county's first two parks, the **South Fork Nature Reserve and Carver Yocum Homestead Park**
- Conduct annual **Sangamon River Cleanup**; now in our seventh year
- Provide **stewardship assistance to private landowners in Menard County**, including the Old Salem Chautauqua Homeowner's Association for their wetland restoration, Baugher's Savanna and Hill Prairie, and Witter's Hill Prairie Nature Preserve
- Conduct ongoing stewardship at **Revis Hill Prairie** Nature Preserve (Mason County), **Carpenter Park** Nature Preserve (Sangamon County), **Washington Park** (Springfield), and other natural areas
- Provide membership with informative quarterly newsletter, membership events, tours, outings, and workshops

The Future:

- Develop the Wolf Preserve as a demonstration site for exotic species control in forests, forest management for diversity, and prairie restoration.
- Become a resource for technical assistance and guidance in local protection and restoration