



River Bend

NATURE CENTER

Summer 2023, Volume 45, Issue 3
JULY . AUGUST . SEPTEMBER

Helping people discover, enjoy, understand, and preserve
the incredible natural world that surrounds us

Upcoming Nature Programs



JULY

- July 6 - Yoga on the Prairie (session 3)
- July 10/11 - Summer Camp: Survival
- July 11 - Stewardship Day: Landscaping
- July 12 - Recycling/Compost Ambassadors
- July 12/13 - Summer Camp: Treasure Hunters
- July 15 - Stewardship Day: Kiosk Repair
- July 17/18 - Summer Camp: Nature Engineers
- July 19 - Recycling/Compost Ambassadors
- July 19/20 - Summer Camp: Fins & Feathers
- July 24/25 - Summer Camp: Outdoor Sports
- July 26/27 - Summer Camp: Ology Camp
- July 31/Aug 1 - Summer Camp: Splish, Splash!

AUGUST

- Aug 8 - Little Sprouts What's in the Water
- Aug 8 - Northfield Community Ed Orienteering
- Aug 14 - Northfield Community Ed Geocaching
- Aug 15 - Stewardship Day: Kiosk Repair
- Aug 17 - Northfield Community Ed Canoe/Kayak
- Aug 17 - Paint and Sip with Julie Fakler
- Aug 19 - Stewardship Day: Kiosk Repair
- Aug 25 - Ramble Fundraiser

SEPTEMBER

- Sept 11 - Little Sprouts: Flowers & Pollinators
- Sept 11 - Homeschool: Prairie Pollinators
- Sept 16 - Archery for Beginners / Archery II
- Sept 20 - Lunch & Learn: Sodexo
- Sept 23 - Little Sprouts: Terrific Turtles & Fabulous Frogs
- Sept 23 - National Public Lands Day
- Sept 25 - Little Sprouts: Terrific Turtles & Fabulous Frogs

SAVE THE DATE

JULY 20

Annual Meeting & Pancake Dinner

AUGUST 25

45th Anniversary Ramble Dinner

OCTOBER 28

Bats, Bones & Bonfires



River Bend Nature Center

1000 Rustad Rd - PO Box 186
Faribault, MN 55021

Trail Hours: 6am - 10pm

Building Hours: Fridays 10am - 4pm
1st and 3rd Saturdays 10am - 2pm

Board of Directors

Dustin Dienst, *President*

Patrick Mader, *Vice-President*

Karen Zeller, *Treasurer*

Tom DeMatteo, *Secretary*

Tom Spooner, *City Council Liaison*

Cindy DeSormeau, Derek Haars, Sarah Hammer,
Erica Jakes, Nort Johnson, Erin Liu, Abby Malmanger,
Patrick Schaefer, Greg Simons

Staff

Executive Director

Brad Bourn

Associate Directors

Brittany Smith, Environmental Stewardship
Molly Olson, Programs & Engagement
Katy Anderegg, Administration

Program Coordinators

Erin Tone & Matt Johnson

Naturalists

Kate Ford, Leah Inman, Sydney Monge,
& Mary Lu Kavanagh-Beltman

AmeriCorps Members

Zach McCarty & Randall McMeekin

SUMMER CAMP

ADVENTURES WAITING TO HAPPEN...

FULL DAY CAMPS FOR CHILDREN GRADES K-9

Happy summer!

This season brings warmth and plenty of sun along with the sound of summer campers returning to River Bend Nature Center for days filled with activities, time exploring nature, and lots of fun! Below are a couple of highlights from the summer camp season so far!



- Playing "camouflage" and building shelters in Kids in the Wild
- Learning how to do archery and trying to score points by hitting playing cards
- Conducting experiments to test browning in bananas
- Exploring the trails of River Bend and seeing turtles at Turtle Pond
- Using nets to find what "creepy crawlies" live in the pond and prairie
- Making homemade ice cream
- Learning how to build a fire
- Painting and cracking open "dinosaur eggs"
- Books, crafts, games.... and so much more!

We still have space in a couple of our camps! Head over to rbnc.org/summer-camp to register. Space is limited.

- Survival Camp (3rd-5th Grade) July 10 & 11
- Treasure Hunters Camp (3rd -5th Grade) July 12 & 13
- Ology Camp (5th-8th Grade) July 26 & 27

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Happy Anniversary River Bend!

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the formation of River Bend Nature Center. **Our work to build an inclusive community focused around the preservation of our precious natural resources has taken many shapes over the last 45 years.** From acquiring our original lands, to developing trails, to constructing the interpretive center and creating field trip programs for students, our first 45 years have been filled with stories of building the foundation of one of the most important environmental stewardship organizations in Minnesota. We're excited to use this issue of our newsletter to share a history and fun photos of River Bend's timeline.

There's more history out there. Over the years, many people have passed through the trails, volunteered, been employed as staff, directors or served on the board of directors and we want to share your memories and experiences of why River Bend is so special so for our 45th anniversary, we're holding a 2024 Photo Calendar Contest. You can submit up to three photos that represent your favorite memories at River Bend whether you took the picture 45 years or 45 minutes ago. Entries will have a chance to win a

cash prize, and be featured in the calendar. Visit our website for details: www.rbnc.org/2024-photo-contest.

In addition to the calendar, we will share them on our website gallery, at the annual meeting July 20, 2023, and at our annual fundraising event, Ramble, August 25, 2023. You can submit your photos or stories at rbncinfo@rbnc.org or mail to: 1000 Rustad Road or drop them off at the interpretive center.

Please join us in celebration on July 20, from 6:00-7:30 pm at River Bend Nature Center for a membership social and annual meeting with pancake dinner. FREE to attend, suggested donation of \$10 for pancake dinner.

Celebrate with us: We invite you to attend Ramble, 45th Anniversary of Building Community through Nature, is Friday, August 25, 2023 beginning at 5:15 pm. Your purchase of dinner tickets, \$75.00, helps support River Bend Nature Center in helping people discover, enjoy, understand and preserve the incredible natural world that surrounds us all. The evening will be filled with great food, entertainment, auctions and celebration at The Inn at Shattuck, 1000 Shumway Ave, Faribault, MN. You may also have your first sneak peek at photo entries in the contest! To register for dinner tickets or to donate to River Bend, visit our website at www.rbnc.org/ramble. We thank you for your continued support.

Yours in Service, Brad Bourn and Katy Anderegg



River Bend
NATURE CENTER

RAMBLE

45th Anniversary of Building Community through Nature

August 25, 2023 . 5:15 pm @ The Inn at Shattuck

Dinner tickets \$75.00, visit www.rbnc.org/ramble to purchase tickets or donate



Ramble Sponsors



Dr. Richard & Nancie Huston
Dr. William & Wendy Wustenberg
Dr. Karen & Simon Zeller
The Putrah Foundation



Community Corner



Northfield Historical Society Annual Fundraiser

Outlaw Run 5k/15k, September 10, 2023 . Register at <https://runsignup.com/Race/MN/Northfield/DJJDOutlawRun>



Round Up for River Bend Nature Center

Family owned business, B & L Pizza, rounds up for River Bend Nature Center to kick-off their give back to the community program. During the month of July, the 1st-31st, round up your order! B & L will donate the proceeds to River Bend. Walkup or Phone Orders only.



Thursday, August 17, 2023
5:30-7:30 pm

@ River Bend Nature Center

Paint & Sip (a portrait of your pet) on the prairie with artist Julie Fakler. Julie will teach you step by step on how to paint a portrait of your pet. In class you'll learn about under painting, form, shape and color. Email your pet or animal reference photo to juliefakler@gmail.com (at least 48 hours prior to class) and she will print it for you. Wear clothes that can get paint on them. Each participant can have up to two glasses of wine. *All participants must be 21+.*



Scan QR Code to Register

Ballin' in the 'Bault Thursdays!

July 6, 13, 20 & 27, 6:00-8:00 pm

North Alexander Park w/FBO Police Department

6-8 Graders & 9-12 Graders, 5-on-5 Basketball



Special Thank you to Knecht's Nurseries & Landscaping for donating arborvitae and dogwood shrubs to upgrade the landscaping in front of the interpretive center.



2024 PHOTO CALENDAR CONTEST

Is open and accepting entries now through August 31, 2023 in celebration of River Bend's 45th Anniversary.

For Contest rules and details visit, <https://rbnc.org/2024-photo-contest>

RAMBLE

If you're able, please donate bottles of wine or bottles of beer to our fundraiser for the beer/wine toss game! Donations can be dropped off at the interpretive center.

Thank you!

Community Corner

River Bend Board nomination

By Brad Bourn, Dusty Dienst, and Packy Mader

The nominating committee of River Bend Nature Center is proud to nominate Tom DeMatteo to serve another term as a member of River Bend's board of directors to be elected at the annual meeting on July 20th at 6pm at River Bend Nature Center.



Tom DeMatteo is Chief Legal Officer, General Counsel and Secretary for ABC Bus Companies, Inc. He is responsible for all legal affairs for the company. Tom spends all his free time hiking and has hiked in every state park in Minnesota. He has served admirably as a River Bend director since his election in 2021 and is hoping to serve another term. Tom has been instrumental in helping River Bend modernize policies and procedures and has played a key role in helping negotiate an agreement with the City of Faribault that we're hopeful will result in River Bend receiving much needed capital improvements. Tom and his partner, Lisa, are also frequent volunteers and you've seen him help organize snow shoe walks, estate planning workshops, and handing out treats at Bats Bones and Bonfires. It's with great pleasure that the nominating committee put

forward Tom DeMatteo to serve another term.

River Bend is continuously recruiting board members to help us govern the organization. If you are interested in learning more about serving on the River Bend board, please contact Brad Bourn at bourn@rbnc.org



August is national Make a Will Month. It's an annual reminder of how important it is to update your wills and estate plans to make sure that your final wishes and values are

honored as you intend. River Bend Nature Center is honored to be the beneficiary of estate and memorial gifts each year. It's a testament to the impact that we have on people when folks choose to leave a gift to River Bend Nature Center.

If you haven't already done so, we'd be honored if you would like to include River Bend Nature Center in your final wishes. To that end, River Bend will continue to offer free estate planning workshops with local attorneys in the summer and again in the winter. Keep an eye on our website for future details. If you'd like to discuss making an estate gift to River Bend, please contact Brad Bourn or Katy Anderegg at bourn@rbnc.org, anderegg@rbnc.org or 507-332-7151.

Annual Meeting & Pancake Dinner

Thursday, July 20, 2023 from 6:00-7:30 p.m.
@ River Bend Nature Center.

River Bend will release its 2022 Annual Report, members will elect candidates to the Board of Directors, and learn about the state of River Bend Nature Center.

A Pancake Dinner will be provided.
Suggested \$10.00 donation.



Molly Dulka, Associate Director Programs and Engagement

Expanded Programming Engages Audiences of All Ages

Programs are bustling at River Bend!

River Bend has been growing rapidly over the past year or so in programming and we're proud of the work we're doing to make sure that there's relevant programming for everyone at River Bend. These are just some highlights of the work we're doing with support of great partners. If you'd like to learn more about any of these programs, drop me note at Dulka@rbnc.org

STEAM education and Out of School Time: We've expanded our traditional science standards based programming through 8th grade and are starting to build a larger portfolio of science field trips to offer high schools. This means that using the nature center as an outdoor classroom will have more opportunities to engage their students. This work is paying off and we're seeing school groups travel further than ever before this year (from Blue Earth County) and have larger groups visiting us. Beyond the school year, Faribault Public Schools and River Bend are a recipient of a "No Child Left Inside" grant to expand summer programming this and next year.

Early-childhood: Thanks to a grant from the Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation, we're able to expand our successful pilot of the adult/child program called Little Sprouts started by former Intern Naturalist, Leah Inman. This is for children from birth through age five and an adult caregiver in their life. Each program is focused on play to get children exposed to and interested in the natural world.

Access, Inclusion, and Interpretive planning: We're in the early stages of planning to make River Bend a more inclusive environment for everyone. We've had the unique opportunity to partner with two local colleges, the State of Minnesota, and others on various projects. This past year, St. Olaf students researched best practices of inclusive design for nature centers and researched possible improvements River Bend can make to be more inclusive of all people. We were also one of a handful of organizations to receive a grant from the Department of Human Services' Age Friendly Minnesota Council to help plan work to keep Minnesotans more connected to the outdoors as they age and face physical barriers. The work of St. Olaf students and our Age Friendly team will be instrumental in securing funding to make some of these improvements.

Carleton College students worked on two projects this past school year to help capture the history of River Bend. Students from journalism and history classes did work including designing a historical display for inside the interpretive center and capturing the history of the land, from the Dakota to the start of River Bend as a nature center. They created a historical timeline and interviewed people instrumental in helping to restore and preserve the nature center land. This information will be used in a variety of ways for the nature center, including interpretive displays. We are really excited to continue to partner with the colleges.

Environmental Stewardship: River Bend offers adult programming as well. In partnership with Carleton College and the City of Northfield we offer an adult program called Community Recycling Ambassadors focused on reducing, reusing, recycling, as well as diverting waste from landfills, slowing human consumption of natural resources, and practicing sustainable use of resources. This is a great way to learn how the recycling systems have changed, and learn how we can be better stewards of the planet. We also have other various evening and weekend programs for adults, so make sure to check our website frequently!

Career Readiness: Not only is River Bend teaching programs to all age levels, but we are also creating a diversity focused Natural Resource career pathway for teens and young adults. Through a Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Grant, River Bend in partnership with Somali Community Resettlement Services is offering BIPOC youth paid work experiences in natural resource management. The objectives of this program are to strengthen their knowledge of the natural world while giving them real world experience with tools used in many natural resource careers. We are excited to say that we had a great response in interest for this program, and we hope to continue it next summer!

There are many more exciting projects and initiatives that River Bend is working on, and we will continue to update you on those throughout the year. You can always visit our website at rbnc.org or follow us on social media-facebook and Instagram.



Naturalist Notebook

Matt Johnson, Environmental Stewardship Coordinator

Animals in Unusual Places

The natural world is something that has always fascinated humans. It's hard not to spend time outdoors and be filled with wonder. Though we try our best to understand the perceived oddities we see, often we are left still searching for answers. A great example of this can be found in animals ending up in unusual places. Sightings of animals outside of their expected range often goes unnoticed, but occasionally in this digital age, a photo or video sends us into a frenzy. So why do we see these unexpected surprises? The answer lies in seeing the world from an animal's perspective.

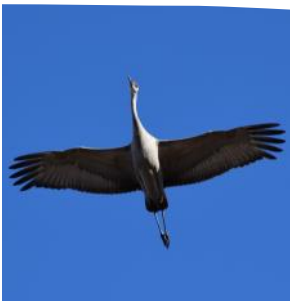
One of the great things about getting out into nature is the fact that you never know what you might see.

The first thing that must be acknowledged is that humans have significantly altered the natural world. We have drastically changed the landscape so much that it almost certainly leaves many animals feeling out of place. While some animals such as coyotes and raccoons have adapted very well to our presence, other more specialized species find themselves with dwindling critical habitats. Few true "natural" places remain, so these spaces often act as a magnet to wildlife. River valleys, often left untouched due to steep terrain and flooding concerns, provide much needed wildlife highways. When an animal such as black bear finds its way to our part of the state, it almost surely followed this familiar path.

It's not just humans that change the way animals behave. Seasonal changes and naturally occurring events can greatly change an animal's plans. Food is often a driving force for animal movement. A season of drought will often limit available food, forcing animals to travel further. Conversely, when food is abundant, species may do exceedingly well, resulting in high survival rates. A rapid population growth is called an irruption. This quick growth can create more competition, resulting in a need to expand range to prevent overcrowding. This movement based on food availability is most easily seen in birds and is called irruptive migration. A year in which Snowy Owl sightings this far south become frequent, is proof of this phenomenon. The uncertainty of what you might see in a given year, is part of the reason why birding has become such a popular hobby.

While there is often a logical reason why we see animals in strange places, sometimes it appears to be completely random. It is simply in the DNA of some animals to stray from the norm. Every once in a while, a tropical bird might seemingly make a wrong turn somewhere and delight birders. Or a mountain lion with a tracking collar might be found to have traveled thousands of miles from where it was first tagged. The truth is no matter how much we study this behavior, we might never know why these animals choose to wander.

One of the great things about getting out into nature is the fact that you never know what you might see. If we didn't encounter these natural mysteries, it could be argued we would have much less to enjoy in our time spent outdoors. So if you can, go out and explore somewhere new and keep your eyes open. You never know what you might see.



Nature Center Formation 1974-1980

The lands we now enjoy as River Bend Nature Center have had a complex natural, social, cultural, and political history prior to us. We're learning to better tell those histories. You can learn more about our interpretive planning work in Molly Dulka's article on page 6.



1974 In the fall, Orwin A. Rustad shares his dream of a nature center with Kay Janky.

1975 The Horizons Subcommittee moved to recommend "development of a nature center...as an everlasting monument to the Bicentennial."

The Faribault City Council passed resolution 75-137 asking the State Legislature to deed unused lands of the Faribault State Hospital to the City of Faribault for development of a "nature and agricultural interpretive center."

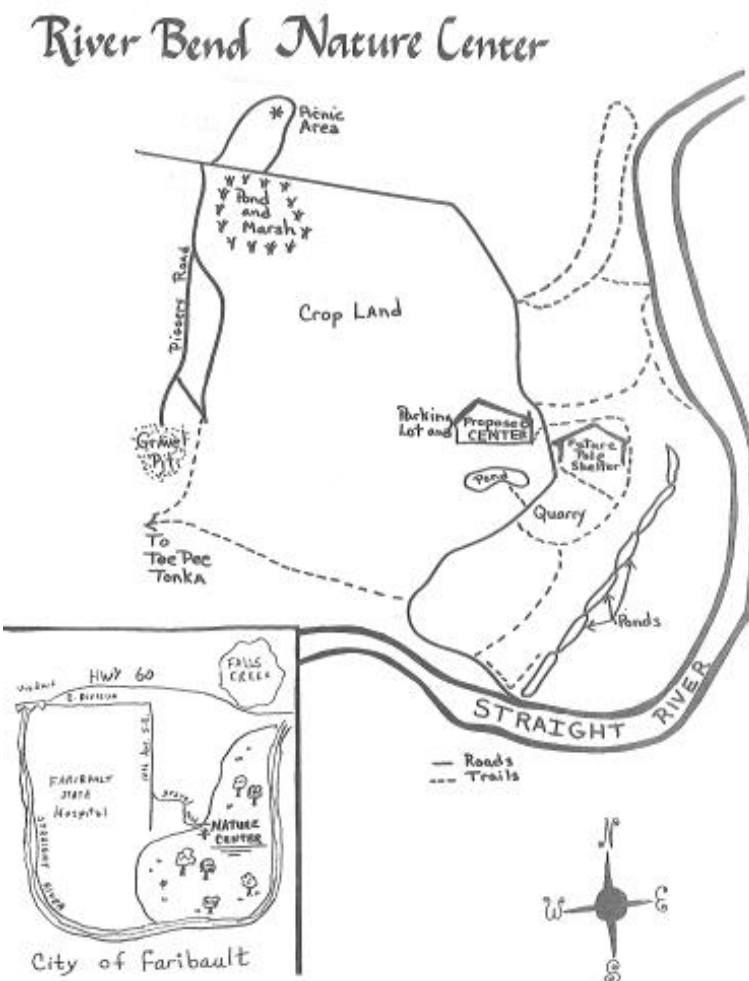
1977 Governor Perpich signed a bill authorizing 536 acres to be leased to the City of Faribault for a "nature interpretive center."



1978 Faribault Area Nature Interpretive Center, Inc. is officially incorporated as a nonprofit organization.

1978 First trails are staked by Orwin Rustad, Steve Griesert, and Bob Yochum.

1979 Name changed to River Bend Nature Center. Below is the first map drawn and issued in the first newsletter in the summer.



1980 Entrance sign completed by Ivan Whillock and installed in September shortly followed by the Grand Opening and Dedication of River Bend Nature Center.



1981-2005

1984 A \$200,000 building grant was approved by the Minnesota State Legislature contingent upon a match.

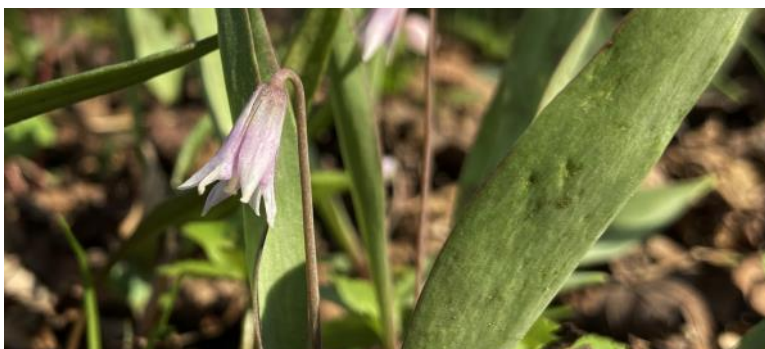
The floating bridge and south-side trails were completed.

Students visit River Bend and learn how maple syrup is made. Many volunteers help make these programs possible.



1987 Received a \$28,359 grant from the Southeastern Minnesota Initiative Fund to hire an additional naturalist and expand programming to surrounding communities.

1988 Ron Osterbauer, Tim Cook, and Mark Oestreich discovered new colonies of Minnesota dwarf trout lilies on 5.7 acres of private property subsequently purchased by The Nature Conservancy for lease to RBNC .



1991 First day of business in the new interpretive center began December 2nd.



1995 Replaced the "Enchanted Trails" with the "Enchanted Forest" as River Bend's annual Halloween event, held in cooperation with Faribault Early Childhood Family Education.



1999 First stage of a cooperative trail enhancement project with City of Faribault adds paved trail from entrance to upper parking lot, resurfaces Raccoon Trail with crushed rock, and extends pavement from NE corner of parking lot to east into woods.



2003 Big Woods Amphitheater designed and constructed by John Blackmer and volunteers. Funded by a grant from the Schmidt Foundation. Later Dedicated in memory of Kay Janky.

2005 Kids in the Wild Outdoor Play Area constructed. Funded by the State Bank of Faribault and Mike/Kathy Sandberg.

Trout Lily trail re-routed at river overlook to deal with erosion issues. Funded by the Schmidt Foundation.

After school science club begun with Lincoln Elementary. Funded by Dave and Missy Donkers.

2006-2023

2006 Honor Point developed along Oak Trail. Funded by the Schmidt Foundation and the Carlander family.



2010 There was serious flooding in September after 2 days of 6+ inches of rain on 9/22 and 9/23. Water was over the top of the railing of the bridge by the Sandstone.



2013 Garrett Genereux headed the new programming initiative called the Outdoor Adventures Program which promotes recreational activities as a way to connect people with the outdoors. Initial program offerings included slacklining, archery, rock climbing, camping, and fly fishing.

2018 Intern Program came to an end, restructured staff to four full-time naturalists, a full-time operations manager and executive director



2019 Programs expanded, began visiting senior living centers and group homes for presentations and crafts. During their visits to River Bend, gave golf cart tours and pond dipping programs.

2020 Programs and services interrupted by the covid pandemic. Staff modified programs, traveled to schools and incorporated online programs.

2021 In the fall, began new programs, Little Sprouts and High School Biology Internship program with Faribault High School.



2021 New front entrance sign installed. Original sign to be part of historical display inside interpretive center.



2023 July 25, 2023, River Bend Nature Center celebrates 45 amazing years.

Business Members

Star Members

Faribault Rotary Youth Services, Inc.
The Putrah Foundation



Founder Members

Faribault Flyers Bike & Ski Club



Wellness Members



Patron Members

Erickson Furniture . Faribault Area Retired Educators
Mercury Minnesota . Schroder Concessions
Sertoma Club of Faribault . Townsquare Media



Advocate Members

Anderka Construction . Community Co-op . Comprehensive Wealth Solutions, LLC . Country School Financial
Donahue's Greenhouse . Faribault Animal Center . Faribault Rental Equipment, Inc.

Faribault Transportation Co. . Faribo Sno-Go Club . Frandsen Bank & Trust . Glenn's Service & Towing .
HomeTown Credit Union . Krause Feeds & Supplies . Mill Town Cycles . Quality Appliance . Tom's Lock & Key

Thank you business members for your support!

Enroll in River Bend's Business Wellness Membership

River Bend Nature Center's wellness program can be an essential part of helping your employees live a healthy life. When you join our wellness program today, your employees will receive membership perks and more! Contact Brad Bourn (bourn@rbnc.org) or Katy Anderegg (anderegg@rbnc.org) to discuss perks and enrollment.

	Bluebird	Heron	Owl
Small Employer (0-10 employees)	\$500	\$1000	\$2000
Medium Employer (11-49 employees)	\$1500	\$2500	\$3500
Large Employer (50-99 employees)	\$3000	\$4000	\$5000
Regional Employer (100+ employees or franchises, etc.)	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits	Contact us to discuss pricing and benefits



River Bend NATURE CENTER

PO Box 186
1000 Rustad Rd
Faribault, MN
55021
507.332.7151
www.rbnc.org

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Conservation Corner

Brittany Smith, Associate Director of Environmental Stewardship

Another Year Wraps Up - FHS Field Biology Internship at River Bend Nature Center

This past school year, River Bend hosted three seniors from Faribault High School in a year long internship program where students would meet at River Bend each morning for an hour long class. They learned about invasive species, such as buckthorn, and how to best manage them. A good portion of this year was spent exploring aquatic habitats. With all the snow this past winter the ponds at River Bend were full and fun to explore. In the fall of 2022, students began surveying the diversity of life in the Straight River and compared their findings to what they found during the spring months. This study was expanded to include three different ponds and wetlands, finding that different species visit each area with the most diverse area being upper prairie pond. Other areas of study included fungus, whitetail deer, bird migration, and ecology of all the habitats at River Bend. Thank you to the faculty and staff at Faribault High School for partnering with us and

helping to make this school year fun with hands-on experiences the students can use to begin their pathways into a natural resource career.

National Public Lands Day: Saturday, September 23

River will be hosting a National Public Lands Day event this year. Project and times to be determined. Visit <https://rbnc.org/npld> for details and updates!

Land and Trail Volunteer Opportunities

Are you interested in helping with natural resources or trail work at River Bend Nature Center but the pre-scheduled opportunities don't work with your schedule? No worries, I would be more than happy to provide information and training on things River Bend could use your help on and can do on your own time, from picking up trash to removing invasive plants. Volunteers are needed for seasonal items like ski trail grooming, making maple syrup, and mowing. Please email smith@rbnc.org for more information.