

**2021**  
**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**FORESTRY & PARKS DEPARTMENT**





2021

**CLARK COUNTY FORESTRY & PARKS COMMITTEE**

Tom Wilcox, Chairperson

Al Bower, Joe Waichulis, Dean Zank, Allen Krause Jr.

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**Forestry & Parks Department Full Time Employees**

Curtiss Lindner – Administrator	John Wendorski – Assistant Forest Administrator
Nathan Beaver – Parks & Programs Manager	Daryn Horn – Facilities Supervisor
Mary Olson-Back – Office Business Manager	Luke Nigon – Forester
Matt Sladich – Maintenance Specialist	Sebastian Neisius – Forester
Kim Ziegler – Maintenance Technician	Jake Woodley – Forestry Technician
Kelly Kirn – Heavy Equipment Operator	Eric Flickinger – Carpenter
Jodi Krukowski – Office Assistant	Tim Hagen – Parks Worker/Equipment Op.

Part-Time Parks Maintenance – 6 employees

Seasonal & Temporary Personnel – 30 employees

Black River Correctional Inmate Crew – The inmate crew was available during most of 2021. There were a few occasions where they were kept at the facility due to exposure to Covid-19. We were able to complete projects such as Timber Stand Improvement, campground clean up, fair preparation, and Sherwood disc golf course rehab with the assistance of the Inmate Crews.

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**DNR Personnel assigned to Clark County**

Einar Fransen, Liaison Forester	Tim Mayer, Forestry Technician
Matt Gross, Wildlife Biologist	Justin Kapusta, Forester
Chris Schmitz, Forester	Adam Hanna, Conservation Warden
Kevin Christorf, Conservation Warden	

## TIMBER SALES

After many years of accelerated timber harvests to salvage over mature and dying aspen, Clark County Forest harvest levels became regulated (in 2005) by means of an annual allowable harvest. Annual allowable harvest decreased from 3,237 acres in 2020 to 3,162 acres in 2021. During 2021, a variety of tree species and products were offered to the market place with no particular focus; however, the Covid-19 pandemic and idling of the Verso paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids continue to have significant impacts on the timber industry.

Total gross wood product revenue received in 2021 was \$3,391,334.70. This is an increase of \$1,013,677.52 from 2020. An additional \$735.00 was received from the sale of firewood. See the attached graph on the following page showing annual county forest timber revenues over the past 20 years.

The total volume harvested by 33 different logging contractors from 77 active timber sale contracts in 2021 was 54,077 cord equivalents. Based on the DNR's formula of 28.5 cord equivalents equals one job, 1,897 jobs were generated. Markets during this period were poor for pulpwood and excellent for pine and hardwood saw logs.

In July 2020, the Verso paper mill in Wisconsin Rapids was idled indefinitely. This closure put a severe strain on the pulpwood markets for Clark County and the entire State of Wisconsin. Verso consumed 25% of all pulpwood volume produced in the State of Wisconsin. In Clark County, 54% of all mixed hardwood pulp and 26% of aspen pulp harvested from county forest timber sales was delivered to the Verso paper mill. This volume accounted for 27% of all revenue generated from pulpwood sales on the Clark County Forest. The loss of this market forced producers to bid on and harvest sales that had limited mixed hardwood and aspen pulp volumes. Unless new pulpwood markets are developed or the Verso mill resumes operations, stumpage prices for pulpwood products are expected to remain very low and contractors will likely be reluctant to bid on sales with high pulpwood ratios for the foreseeable future.

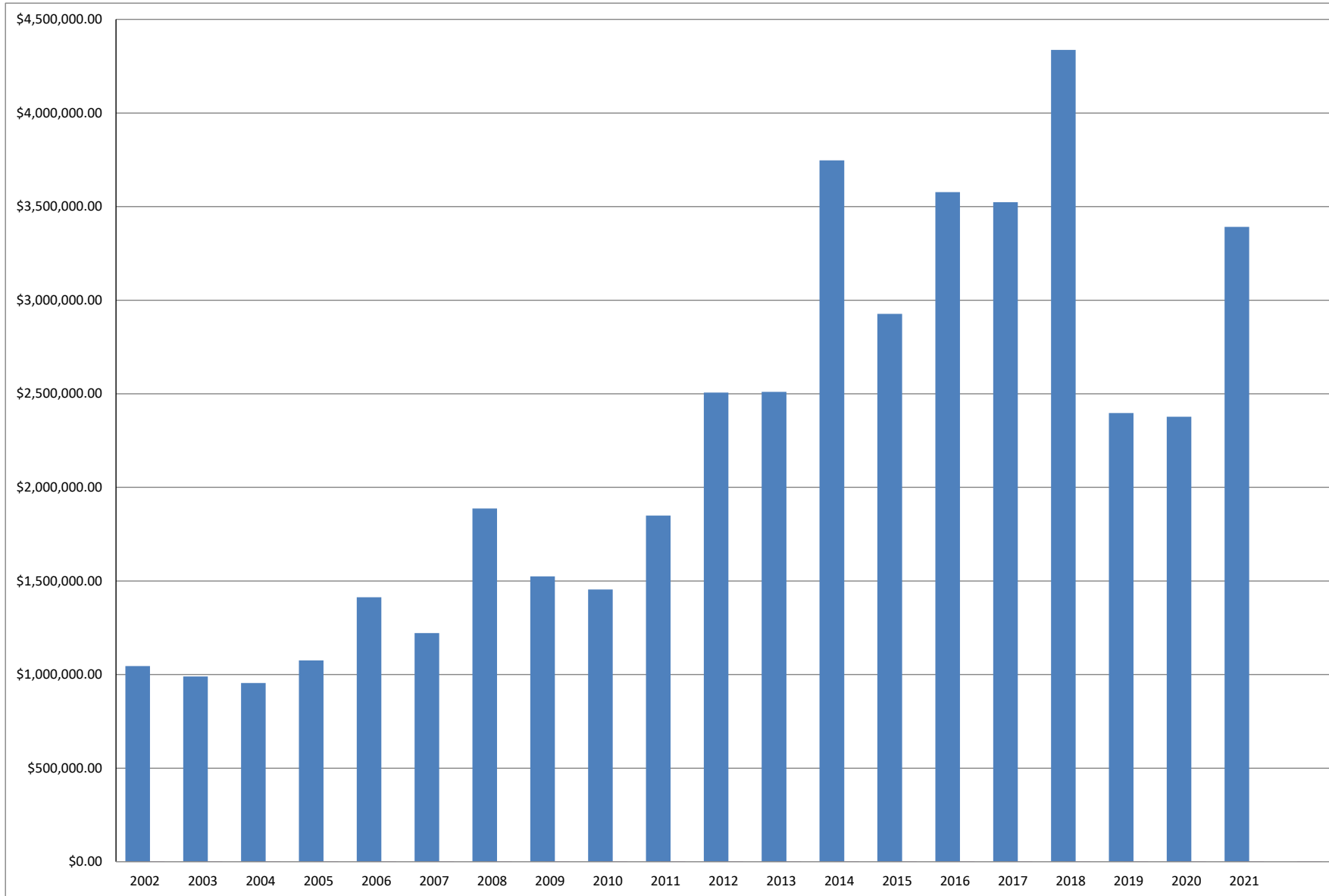
Hardwood log mill prices and markets started and finished the year strong as the economy continued to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic. Red pine log

markets remained above average throughout the year as building supply inventories were at low levels nationwide.

Weather conditions were decent for most of the year and were very good during the fall months with below average rainfall. On December 15, 2021 severe thunderstorms with imbedded tornadoes ripped through Clark County. The results of that storm included over 550 acres of damaged and down timber on the Clark County Forest in the townships of Dewhurst, Hewett, and Seif. Salvage sales and operations will commence in 2022.

A total of 49 county forest timber sales with an estimated 93,315 tons and 2,601,040 board feet on 2,737 acres were established 2021. Of the total acreage established, 1,408 acres are thinning and 1,329 acres regeneration harvests. The total contract value of these sales is \$1,868,174.00. (Not all sales established in 2021 were sold and not all sales sold in 2021 were established in the same calendar year.)

## CLARK COUNTY FOREST 2002-2021 GROSS TIMBER REVENUES



Having paid off all outstanding variable acreage loans in 1994, the county now retains 90% of timber revenue generated. The remaining 10% is distributed to townships with county forest land. The table below shows how much revenue was distributed to each township in 2022 based on calendar year 2021 timber revenues:

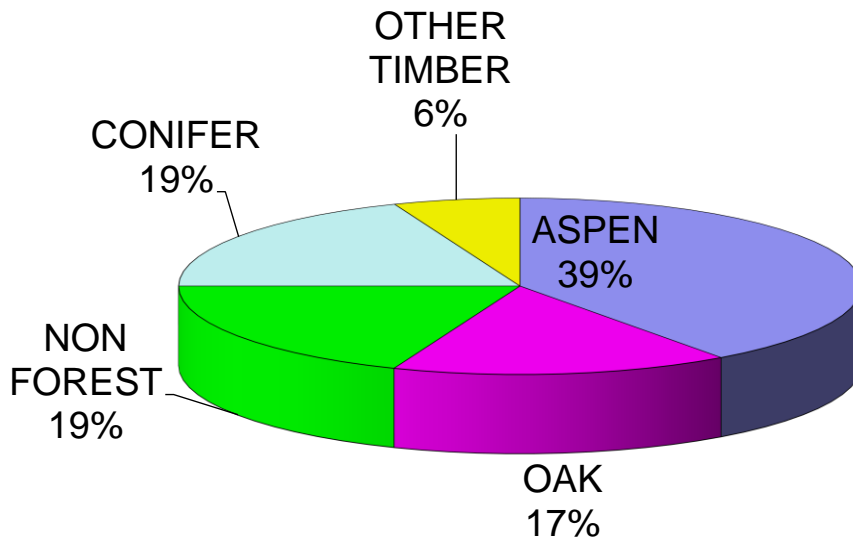
Severance Payments to Townships w/County Forest Land Based on Calendar Year 2020 Timber Revenue			
<i>Township</i>	<i>Amount</i>	<i>Township</i>	<i>Amount</i>
Foster	\$108,320.35	Sherwood	\$18,998.61
Hewett	\$42,129.23	Mead	\$12,029.41
Butler	\$35,135.96	Levis	\$11,609.23
Dewhurst	\$34,480.41	Hixon	\$669.79
Seif	\$29,487.00	Hoard	\$405.94
Washburn	\$23,039.73	Warner	\$49.17
Mentor	\$22,778.94		
<b>Total Distributed to Townships: \$339,133.79</b>			

### FOREST INVENTORY

The reconnaissance geodatabase was updated in mid-2011 to improve monitoring and reporting functionality. In addition to the stand information, the stand boundaries are now housed on a statewide server and are viewable to anyone with internet access. Data security is in place to ensure only authorized individuals can edit this database. This system can instantaneously provide up-to-date annual allowable harvest figures and accomplishments as they occur.

This geodatabase is the backbone of our land management program. It provides valuable planning information and will guide many future management decisions. Keeping data current is vital for making sound management decisions. In 2021, stand reconnaissance updates were completed on 16,887 acres or 15% of the forested cover types. The following graph shows current county forest cover types.

# CLARK COUNTY FOREST TIMBER TYPES - 2021 134,742 acres



## REFORESTATION

The vast majority of county forest harvested acres regenerates naturally through seed, root suckers, and stump sprouts. Tree planting occurs in areas where natural regeneration fails or is insufficient to fully stock the site and where conversion to an alternate species will yield substantial increases in productivity.

Mechanical site preparation was completed for spring 2023 tree planting during the summer of 2021. Eight sites, covering 237 acres was disk trenched by a contractor.

There was a very good acorn crop across the entire county forest in 2021. Conditions were relatively dry during the fall months compared to previous years. County equipment operators scarified 8 oak sites covering 190 acres. Scarification sites were located in Sherwood, Seif, South Foster, and Butler Townships. Anchor chain scarification techniques were used. Additionally,



DNR dozer operators root sprung 3 oak sites covering 96 acres. Root sprung sites were located in Sherwood, Seif, and Mead Townships. The management objective for these stands is to regenerate oak by removing undesirable competition and preparing the seedbed for improved acorn germination. After advanced oak seedlings are established, the over story will be harvested.



*Anchor Chains Used For Understory Oak Scarification*

## **PRESCRIBED BURNS**

Prescribed burns are used to rejuvenate native grass openings, prepare for natural tree regeneration and assist species, which struggle to naturally regenerate on their own, benefiting both wildlife and silviculture. When used in conjunction with other forest management strategies, forest managers can mimic conditions in the forest understory that allow shade intolerant species, such as oak, to outcompete shade tolerant tree species. Fire also helps

control unwanted tree and shrub competition allowing seedlings to sprout back in their place and exposes bare mineral soil where acorns and other seeds are able to germinate successfully. Without fire, some ecosystems naturally succeed to closed canopy conditions and shade tolerant species, such as red maple, gain a competitive edge over those other important species. During the spring of 2021, two oak regeneration burns covering 53 acres were completed in Seif and North Foster Townships.

## **TIMBER STAND IMPROVEMENT**

Six timber stand improvement projects involving 107 acres were completed in 2021. Oak release was the primary focus in 2021. Private contractors, county employees, and inmate labor crews completed the following projects:

- ❑ Cutting undesirable competition to release oak seedlings and saplings on five sites covering 91 acres.
- ❑ Cutting undesirable competition to release pine seedlings on one site covering 16 acres.

## **FOREST PROTECTION**

Over the last few years, several threats to the overall forest health have emerged. Oak wilt, Emerald ash borer, spongy moth, and exotic invasive plants have all been identified on the county forest. The impact of these threats has so far been minor.

Damage to the forest resource is minimized through active forest management. Activities such as harvesting mature trees and thinning young stands help promote a vigorous and healthy forest. The trees within these healthy stands are better able to resist attacks from forest pests and pathogens.

**Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** was first found in Wisconsin in 2008. EAB was positively identified in Clark County at Snyder Park in the fall of 2018. Additional EAB sites were identified in North Foster, South Foster, and Seif Townships during the year. This department has been actively preparing for its arrival. When found, EAB devastates the ash resource. Ash timber type is not abundant on the county forest; therefore, EAB impact on county forest resources will be minimal.

**Oak Wilt** is a lethal fungal disease affecting primarily the Red Oak family. Oak Wilt was first identified on the county forest and in Snyder Park in 2000. Since then, a total of 62 sites have been identified. Oak Wilt spreads through root grafts between infected and healthy trees and overland by sap-feeding beetles. Oak wilt is found throughout the county forest. To date approximately 25 acres of oak timber type have been lost to Oak Wilt.

Aerial surveys are conducted to detect new Oak Wilt infections and check previously treated sites. Active sites are treated by various methods during the fall and winter months. Our efforts to contain the spread of Oak Wilt appear to be working. The number of new infections has remained stable or has declined each of the last several years.

The Forestry and Parks Department will continue Oak Wilt control efforts that were first initiated in 2000. With approximately 22,800 acres of oak timber type in the county forest, there is much at stake. If Oak Wilt becomes firmly established on the county forest, any hope for control will be lost.

**Red Pine Pocket Mortality** was first identified on the Clark County Forest in 2001. Since then more than 40 sites have been identified. Sites vary from a handful of trees to two acres in size. Pocket Mortality is caused by an interaction between a complex of insects and a root fungus, causing red pine deterioration then mortality. There is no known control although progression is slowed by harvesting infected trees. Little else is known about this syndrome. This department will continue to cooperate with DNR researchers by providing site data and research opportunities.

**Heterobasidion Root Disease (HRD)** (Formerly known as Annosum Root Rot) prevention measures were implemented in 2011 for timber harvests occurring in red pine plantations. Similar to pocket mortality, HRD causes decay in the roots and butt of infected trees, ultimately leading to mortality. Unlike pocket mortality, HRD can survive in the soil for decades, prohibiting productive conifer growth on the site. HRD has been detected in surrounding Marathon, Wood, and Taylor Counties; however, there currently are no known sites within Clark County. The best method of control is prevention. A simple stump fungicide application during harvest will prevent infection from occurring.

**Spongy Moth** (Formerly known as Gypsy Moth) has slowly and methodically spread west from the east coast of the United States since the early 1900's. Currently, the eastern 2/3 of Wisconsin, including neighboring Jackson,

Marathon and Wood Counties, are considered generally infested and under a Spongy Moth quarantine. Clark County became quarantined in 2012.

At this time, the leading edge of the spongy moth wave is beyond Clark County. Large outbreaks are still possible and will likely continue within the county even as the wave pushes further west. The DNR no longer sprays property within the county as part of the “Slow the Spread” program and will shift its focus further west into neighboring counties.

**Exotic Invasive Plants** native to Europe and Asia are beginning to show up within the County Forest. Following introduction, these aggressive perennial weeds become established quickly. Once established, they out compete and displace native flora using a variety of survival strategies. They often lack natural predators and diseases, which serve to control their populations in native environments. These plants can reduce forest productivity, damage wildlife habitat, degrade ecosystems, and impede natural and artificial regeneration.

Since 2003, Clark County has surveyed high-risk areas of the county forest for invasive plants. By the end of the 2021 growing season, 254 occurrences had been documented. Eight new sites were discovered in 2021. Nearly every documented invasive occurrence is associated with human vectors and are concentrated in high use recreational areas and along ATV trails.

Herbicide treatments to control Spotted Knapweed, Leafy Spurge, Japanese Honeysuckle, and Purple Loosestrife began in 2004 and continued through 2021. These treatments have helped contain the spread of invasive species and reduced their intensity in the treated areas. Japanese Knotweed was identified on a site in Dewhurst Township in 2013, and was mowed and treated with herbicide in 2014. The site has also been treated with herbicide beginning in 2015 and through 2021. Garlic mustard was identified on the county forest for the first time in 2014. In 2021, a total of 53 different patches were treated along various sections of the ATV trail and where yard waste was illegally dumped. Garlic mustard is highly invasive and extremely difficult to control. Garlic mustard exudes antifungal chemicals into the soil that disrupt associations between mycorrhizal fungi and native plants, suppressing native plant growth. The Department will be monitoring these locations closely.

Swift, deliberate action is necessary to prevent the spread and further colonization of the County Forest by exotic invasive plants. By acting now, we

reduce the cost of treatment, reduce the size of the area impacted by herbicide, and increase the likelihood of success.



*Garlic Mustard in Town of Mead*

## **WILDLIFE HABITAT ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

Continued support by the WINX Club, National Wild Turkey Federation, UW-Stevens Point, and the Department of Natural Resources has provided significant accomplishments for the benefit of wildlife on the Clark County Forest. Habitat reclamation and maintenance remain of primary concern.

Wildlife accomplishments for 2021 include:

- ◆ Vegetation control on the earthen embankment at the Winx Flowage Migratory Bird Refuge. The Winx Club, a non-profit organization, dedicated to the conservation of local waterfowl, mowed the top and east side of the embankment. This impoundment creates a 42 acre reservoir, and is critical habitat to over 4,000 waterfowl during their

annual migration.

- ◆ Collaborated with UW-Stevens Point to establish a DMAP demonstration area on the Clark County Forest. This site was developed to show how forest management techniques can improve deer habitat over time. The site includes two deer exclosures to show the visual impacts of browse on forest vegetation.
- ◆ Maintenance of aspen timber type through the harvest of mature and over mature aspen timber.
- ◆ Construction of timber sale access roads to facilitate harvest of scheduled forest stands.
- ◆ Enhanced, maintained, and promoted oak regeneration on 377 acres.
- ◆ Wildlife opening and trail maintenance.
- ◆ Inventory of more than 7,147 acres for the benefit of endangered or threatened resources.
- ◆ Continued implementation of an Ecological Management Plan that will further integrate wildlife management into forest management.
- ◆ Waterfowl flowage maintenance.
- ◆ Invasive plant surveys and control.
- ◆ Prioritized, planned and established other wildlife management projects.

## **FOREST ROADS**

The department maintains 45.98 miles of roads in the county forest that meet minimum town road standards. The 2021 state maintenance funding received was \$16,116.05. State road aids decreased \$22.93 compared to 2020. This \$350.50/mile annual payment does not provide sufficient funding to maintain the long-term integrity of the County Forest Road system.

Action by the Forestry & Parks and Finance Committees in 2009 established an unrestricted/assigned forest account for road maintenance fund. Five percent (5%) of annual gross county forest timber revenues are to be placed in this fund for future forest road maintenance. Beginning in 2021 the fund is capped at \$250,000. Sections of the Butler Forest Lanes and Timber Lane Forest Road were resurfaced in 2021 using this money.

## **FAIRGROUNDS**

A number of improvements to fairgrounds buildings and infrastructure were

started or completed again in 2021. Significant improvement projects included: Remodeling of the open class dairy barn to the new horse barn, and remodeling the old hog barn into the new open class dairy barn. We also completed phase one of the Fairgrounds Revitalization Project by finishing and holding our first fair in the new multipurpose livestock barn.

Public storage was offered again in 2021 with many individuals taking advantage of this opportunity to store 89 units during the winter months. Storage generated \$15,500 in revenue for the fairgrounds budget, an increase of \$5,050 from 2020. All available storage space was utilized in 2021.

Spurred by aging facilities and lack of barn space, a strategic planning process was initiated and completed in 2017. The strategic plan is a culmination of several years and many planning sessions and was led by UW-Extension staff. The process involved many Fairgrounds stakeholders. The plan goals include revitalization of substandard Fairgrounds facilities in order to meet the needs of the next generation of Clark County residents and beyond. The Forestry and Parks Committee has committed to implementing the strategic plan through a private/public partnership.

Implementation of the strategic plan began early in 2018 with the formation of a working group tasked with raising donations to construct a Multipurpose Livestock Building and Multipurpose Event Center. This group, referred to as the Clark County Fairgrounds Revitalization Project Fundraising Committee is comprised of a diverse group of stakeholders. The fundraising committee members are:

- ◆ Curtiss Lindner, Forestry and Parks Administrator
- ◆ Natalie Erpenbach, Treasurer, Clark County Community Foundation
- ◆ Sheila Nyberg, Clark County Economic Development and Tourism
- ◆ Wayne Hendrickson, Chairperson, Clark County Board of Supervisors and Treasurer, Clark County Fairboard
- ◆ Tom Wilcox, Clark County Board of Supervisors and Chair of the Forestry and Parks Committee
- ◆ Brittney Lowry, 4-H Leader
- ◆ Cindy Kolzow, Treasurer, Clark County Livestock Committee and 4H Leader
- ◆ Wendel Attoe, Livestock Committee – Beef
- ◆ Dan Clough, Clark County Board of Supervisors and Alderman, City of

Neillsville

- ◆ Diane Murphy, Mayor, City of Neillsville
- ◆ Richard Witte and Gary Weirauch, Community Leaders

Fundraising efforts began during the 2018 county fair and nearly \$100,000.00 was received or pledged by year-end 2018. By year-end 2019, the fundraising Committee had nearly met the initial \$465,000.00 fundraising goal. The fundraising goal in 2020 was set to \$521,155.00 after the Multipurpose Livestock barn was bid out and came in higher than the estimated cost. With the Covid-19 Pandemic the fundraising was put on hold in early 2020 but pledges still trickled in through the year. By the end of 2021 \$516,731.24 was raised with only \$4,423.76 remaining to raise. The Clark County Community Foundation has been designated as the fiscal sponsor of the Fairgrounds Revitalization Project. Fundraising will continue into the foreseeable future.

Recent financial history for fairgrounds operating costs are as follows:

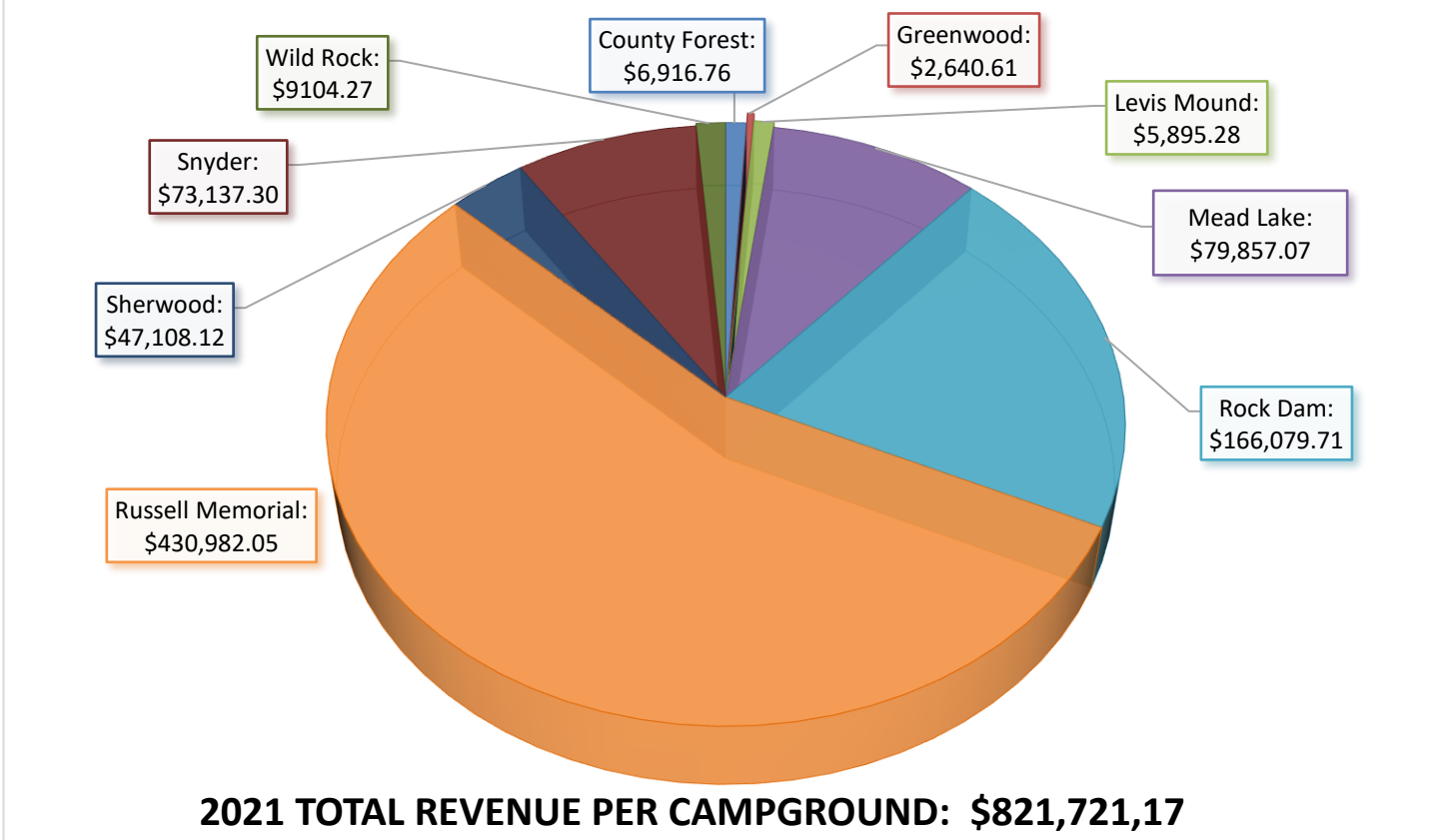
Year	Expenditures	Revenue	Net Cost of Fairgrounds
2010	\$152,390	\$23,672	(\$128,718)
2011	\$95,965	\$21,874	(\$74,091)
2012	\$98,668	\$24,796	(\$73,872)
2013	\$83,775	\$24,927	(\$58,848)
2014	\$98,044	\$25,136	(\$72,908)
2015	\$236,542	\$25,871	(\$210,671)
2016	\$202,281	\$28,553	(\$173,728)
2017	\$199,285	\$42,117	(\$157,168)
2018	\$228,577	\$35,633	(\$192,944)
2019	\$231,710	\$44,332	(\$187,378)
2020	\$823,662	\$579,934	(\$243,728)
2021	\$1,436,325	\$1,049,364	(\$368,961)

### **CAMPGROUNDS AND PARKS**

Revenue from camping fees totaled \$734,689 in 2021, an increase of \$31,791 from 2020. 5 out of 8 campgrounds again saw again record increased revenues in 2021 looking back through 2005. Other park related revenues totaled \$94,000 in 2021. Other revenues are generated from the sale of firewood, ice and convenience store items, along with laundromat,



shower and boat launch parking fees, house and shelter rentals, and park leases. All annual campground related revenues showed an increase in 2021 due to the reintroduction of services such as campground stores and laundry.



Maintenance of existing park grounds and facilities continues to be a priority. Maintenance items in 2021 included hazard tree removal, Oak Wilt mitigation at Russell Memorial, Sherwood, and Snyder Parks and ADA access to the beach at Rock Dam. Emerald Ash Borer infected trees were also removed from Rock Dam Park. Sherwood Park saw the majority of repairs and upgrades starting with repairing the disk golf course, enhancing the beach, repairing the basketball court, and repairing the walking path to the fishing pier. Signage improvements continued throughout the campgrounds and parks along with kiosk maintenance and upgrades.

2021 started to emerge from the Covid-19 restrictions with the re-opening of campground stores and laundry. As the summer proceeded the department did see a significant increase in recreation activity including camping, hiking,

biking, and ATV'ing. The department finished the year strong with record breaking revenues in most campgrounds.

This department currently maintains 11 county parks, including 8 campgrounds. There are currently 570 campsites available for public use. Fifteen park day-use locations are provided, together with 9 designated boat landings. Other park amenities include 17 shelter buildings, 27 vault toilet buildings, 7 shower/flush toilet buildings, 5 flush toilet buildings, 3 beaches, 2 convenience stores, 1 laundromat, parking lots, dump stations, trail access points, fishing access points, and much more.

## **TRAILS**

Rehabilitation and maintenance projects were conducted on an extensive system of motorized and non-motorized recreational trails and associated support facilities in 2021.

ATV and snowmobile grant programs provided \$187,522 for rehabilitation and maintenance of trails and support facilities. The primary source of this grant funding is ATV/snowmobile registration fees and gas tax on ATV/snowmobile fuel consumption.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources continued the use of the SNARS (Snowmobile Automated Reporting System) while constantly working to improve efficiency of reporting and data collection from local Snowmobile clubs.

Vital annual maintenance was conducted through the trail systems including ongoing culvert replacements, addition of gravel in troublesome areas, and continual shaping and grading of trails to insure user safety and enjoyment.

The Clark County ATV trail system consists of approximately 88.1 miles of funded summer trails and routes and 171.52 miles of winter trails. The Thorp, Greenwood, Loyal, Dorchester, Colby, Curtiss, Neillsville, Spencer and Riplinger snowmobile clubs assist on 94.72 miles of winter ATV trail maintenance.

Snowmobile trail funded maintenance mileage is approximately 369.9 miles. Of the total mileage, nine cooperating clubs maintain 309.3 miles of trail in Clark County.

**Knobby Ridge Motorcycle Trail:** Located in Hewett and Seif Townships, Knobby Ridge currently consists of 16 miles of off road motorcycle trail with four interconnecting loops and a youth loop.

Trail system maintenance is primarily accomplished through the efforts of Mid-West Off-Road Trail Riders with assistance from this department. The department was approved for a federal grant for trail rehab. A requirement of the grant is that the department will not collect trail fees while utilizing the grant. Since no fees were collected in compliance with the federal grant, trail user fees totaled \$0.00 in 2021.

Rehabilitation work continued on the West Loop, west of Bachelor's Avenue in 2021. Maintenance efforts are focusing on making the West Loop sustainable and exploring reroute/expansion opportunities where higher ground exists.

**Horse Trails:** Wild Rock Campground and Park is the main trailhead for the Wild Rock Horse Trail system located in Seif and South Foster Townships. Wild Rock offers 40 miles of trail with seven interconnecting loops. Trail user fees in 2021 totaled \$1,639.83 which is a slight increase over 2020.

A new section of trail completing a shorter loop closer to the campground was approved by committee in 2021. This trail is approximately 1.25 miles in length and will connect the "Easy Rider" trail with Bald Peak Road. The construction of the trail was started by Circle T Horse Club in 2021 and is anticipated to be finished in 2022.

The Circle T Horse Club is the main sponsor of this trail system.

**Levis/Trow Mound Recreation Area:** Located in the Town of Dewhurst, this trail system offers hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. There are 17 miles of cross-country ski trails and 24 miles of single-track mountain bike trails available.

The popularity of fat tire biking continues grow. Chalet improvements along with enhanced access for year-round fat-tire biking has increased the number of users at Levis/Trow Mound Recreation Area. Trail user fees from this facility totaled \$28,943.29 in 2021.



Levis/Trow Mound Recreation Area

**Recreational Patrol Officer / Enforcement:** The Recreation Officer position started trail enforcement efforts in Clark County during the summer of 2001. The position is a valuable link within Clark County for the protection and enhancement of trail systems and natural resources.

The Recreation Officer contributes to the enforcement, education and safety of all trail systems in Clark County. The Recreation Officer helps protect township infrastructure and reduces conflict between residents and recreational enthusiasts. The Recreation Officer is also involved in enforcement of forest and park ordinances.

**Trail Partners:** The Clark County Forestry and Parks Department recognizes and appreciates the concerted efforts of our partners for the continued success of the Clark County trail systems:

- Boomtown Sno Chasers
- GWR (Greenwood-Willard-Rock Dam) Riders
- Loyal Sno Angels
- Colby Trailblazers
- Thorp Sno Raiders
- Riplinger Rip Riders
- Spencer Swampstompers
- Dorchester Midnight Riders
- Neillsville/Granton Trail Busters
- Hatfield ATV Riders
- Quad County ATV Club
- Rock Dam ATV Riders
- Northern Clark County ATV Riders
- Neillsville Area Trail Association
- Neillsville Saddle Tramps
- Circle T Horse Club
- Mid-West Off Road Trail Riders
- Clark County Sheriff's Department
- Volunteers for the Snowmobile Council

## **BRUCE MOUND WINTER SPORTS AREA**

Bruce Mound serves as an affordably priced public facility that provides outdoor alpine opportunities to both residents of Clark County and neighboring counties. Bruce Mound may not be the largest or best-known facility in the state, but it does have a very passionate local and regional customer base. Bruce Mound provides significant benefit to Clark County's winter tourism industry.

The mission of Bruce Mound is: "To consistently provide enjoyable and affordable alpine recreational opportunities that will enrich and enhance quality of life for our guests and Clark County in a cost-effective manner."

### **2021 Season:**

January-March – In accordance with the 2020-2021 Bruce Mound Plan of Operations, only the tube hill was opened with no skiing available.

Additionally, tubing was limited to only one school-group reservation per day due to COVID-19 concerns. Bruce Mound closed on March 7th, one week earlier than planned, after snow conditions deteriorated.

December – In accordance with the 2021-2022 Bruce Mound Plan of Operation, Bruce mound opened at full capacity with tubing and skiing, but maintained the one school-group per day facility reservation. The opening of Bruce Mound was approximately two weeks later than scheduled. Snow was made in early December but due to un-seasonably warm temperatures and rain events the hill was not able to make enough snow to open on schedule. The department did gain back all of the regular nonprofit and school groups that historically reserved the facility pre-COVID. Seven group reservations had to be turned away because the facility was fully booked, this policy will be re-addressed for the 2022-2023 season.

The Mocha Mouse leased the Bruce Mound restaurant again for both the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 seasons. The restaurant operated during all open public hours and as requested for school groups and large events. Mocha Mouse continued with the expanded menu which included a Friday Fish Fry special on Friday nights. Restaurant sales were strong in comparison to the season prior.

People continued to enjoy the colored lights and music that were added to the tubing runs in 2019.

**Calendar Year 2021:** Net (after sales tax) revenues for the year totaled \$97,500 a decrease of \$84,832 from 2020. This decrease was directly related to COVID restrictions from the 2020-2021 season, not opening the ski hill, early season closure, and late start in December 2021 at Bruce Mound. Historic Bruce Mound revenues and operating costs are as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Revenue</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Difference</u>
2021	\$97,500.98	\$161,788.369	(-\$64,287.38)
2020	\$182,333.31	\$231,675.30	(-\$49,341.99)
2019	\$249,008.62	\$269,678.99	(-\$20,670.37)
2018	\$201,139.00	\$235,067.00	(-\$33,928.00)
2017	\$161,116.00	\$240,868.00	(-\$79,751.00)
2016	\$211,933.00	\$255,135.00	(-\$43,201.00)
2015	\$174,249.00	\$221,234.00	(-\$46,984.00)
2014	\$204,140.00	\$263,304.00	(-\$59,163.00)
2013	\$196,126.00	\$249,836.00	(-\$53,710.00)

**Bruce Mound Future:** The Forestry and Parks Department and Committee continue to analyze challenges and opportunities at Bruce Mound with a goal of no net annual operating cost to the county. Improved expenditure and revenue reporting was implemented in 2011 and also the addition of Munis in 2018 also improved transparency and supported the decision making process. The department completed an Operations Review and Analysis in 2019 to help develop a clear vision and sustainable future for this facility.

The Committee will continue to assess long term operating costs at Bruce Mound. Maintenance and upgrades to existing infrastructure and equipment remains a priority. Outdated and inefficient snow making equipment will need to be updated in coming years to take the next step in increasing revenues by increasing days open to the public.



Neillsville Middle School

## COUNTY DAMS AND WILDLIFE FLOWAGES

This department is responsible for four large dams and numerous small wildlife flowages. In a county with no natural lakes, these dams provide significant water based recreational opportunities for local residents and provide considerable economic output. Large dams are located at Mead Lake, Rock Dam Lake, Sherwood Lake, and Snyder Lake. No significant repair projects were completed in 2021, only ongoing maintenance, monitoring and operation. Mead Lake Dam's inspection scheduled for 2020 was completed with no immediate needs for repair. Maintenance and repair recommendations were given for a 5 year plan to complete.

Repair directives have been issued on several county forest flowage dams. Per DNR Dam Safety orders, these dams will need to be repaired or abandoned in the near future. The Forestry and Parks Department continues to prioritize needs and associated costs, in an effort to determine which dams will be abandoned and which will receive functional repairs. Dam 12 was identified as a structure for removal in 2020. Ayres Associates Inc. was contracted to assist with plans, bidding, and oversight of the removal process of Dam 12. Dam 12 was successfully removed in 2021 and a grant provided by the WI DNR for dam removals was awarded to the County to pay for the project. Dam 2 was identified as a structure for inspection and repair in 2022. Collins Engineers Inc. was contracted to assist with inspection, plans, bidding, and oversight of the repair project.

## OTHER DEPARTMENT NEWS/ACTIVITIES

**Revenue/Expense Alternatives:** The Forestry and Parks Committee continues to study ways and means of increasing departmental revenues and reducing long-range expenses. A comprehensive expenditure and revenue tracking structure was implemented beginning January 1, 2011.

Additional revenue and expenditure accounts and subaccounts have been added and continue to be added to the department financial statement to improve functionality and increase transparency. This will help create a clearer financial picture moving forward and help inform future decisions.

The implementation of Munis in 2018 and our new reservation system RecTrack in 2019 also improved our tracking, accuracy and program transparency.



## January 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021 Financial Summary

### **Fund 330 – Forestry and Parks General Account:**

- Total revenues, including budgeted fund balance: \$5,501,092.00
  - Year-end revenues were under budget by: \$ 210,588.00
- Total expenditures, including fund transfers: \$5,549,150.00
  - Year-end expenditures were under budget by: \$ 370,352.00
- Fund transfers include:
  - \$850,000.00 from Forestry to the General Fund for levy reduction.
  - \$830,533.10 to the Fairgrounds budget for the construction of the new building.
- Including transfers, expenses exceeded revenues by: \$ 48,058.00
- Excluding transfers, revenues exceeded expenses by: \$1,631,942.00
- 2021 fund balance was budgeted at \$402,647.00. Actual fund balance applied was \$0.00. This resulted in a net positive of \$176,293.81 for the 2021 budget.

### **Fund 330 Fund Balance Summary:**

• Year-end 2006 Balance	\$1,598,547.84
• Year-end 2007 Balance	\$1,071,661.32
• Year-end 2008 Balance	\$1,306,043.75
• Year-end 2009 Balance	\$1,098,524.44
• Year-end 2010 Balance	\$ 856,948.38
• Year-end 2011 Balance	\$ 794,160.52
• Year-end 2012 Balance	\$1,616,267.86
• Year-end 2013 Balance	\$2,331,387.36
• Year-end 2014 Balance	\$3,672,389.03
• Year-end 2015 Balance	\$4,544,341.89
• Year-end 2016 Balance	\$4,209,302.66
• Year-end 2017 Balance	\$5,105,976.99
• Year-end 2018 Balance	\$6,999,551.39
• Year-end 2019 Balance	\$6,778,407.82
• Year-end 2020 Balance	\$6,375,072.52
• Year-end 2021 Balance	\$6,713,974.64

\*Year-end 2021 unreserved/non-earmarked portion of the fund balance is estimated to be \$3,962,243.17. This estimate is based solely on 2021 budgeted revenues and expenses.

**Year End 2021 Unrestricted/Assigned Fund Balances:**

• Dam Improvement	\$ 576,925.00
• Capital Equipment	\$ 150,000.00
• Forest Road Maintenance	\$ 250,000.00
• Forest Regeneration	\$ 200,000.00
• Land Acquisition	\$ 48,586.20
• Capital Infrastructure	<u>\$1,526,220.27</u>
	\$2,751,731.47

**Fairgrounds:**

- 2021 Fairgrounds expenditures exceed revenues by \$386,961.00.
- Fairgrounds budget is a general fund budget and supported by levy dollars.
- In 2021 \$830,533.10 was transferred from 330 Fund to the Fairgrounds for the Construction of the Multipurpose Livestock Barn. This dollar amount did not come from the levy.
- 2021 donations to the Fairgrounds was \$177,976.38, reducing the need for levy dollars.