

2019-2020 Duke Energy-Powerful Communities Grant Summary

The Town of Edwardsport has received a grant from the Duke Energy Foundation in the amount of \$27,500. This grant was awarded through the Powerful Communities, Nature Grant cycle that is offered by the corporation.

The grant dollars will be used to improve the walking trail that is located at the Edwardsport, town park. Town board members will oversee the upgrades and improvements of the existing, antiquated trail to a fitness trail and nature walk. These upgrades will appeal to a broader range of visitors and would create a greater utilization of the park grounds. The long-term vision for the park is to improve and extend the walking trail and install trees, bushes, native plant species, benches and signage. The end result would be to promote fitness in the community and to engage residents in exercise to become healthier and to learn about the natural elements within the park.

The current walking trail is in desperate need of repairs. Due the age and condition of the walking trail, the uneven surfaces make it difficult to walk safely. By modernizing the walking trail and upgrading it to incorporate natural components, the hope is to attract more visitors to the park. These upgrades will allow visitors to walk safely and farther, which will contribute to a healthier community, while at the same time enjoying and learning about nature. Signage will be placed throughout the distance of the trail where walkers can learn about the native plant species, the importance of protecting the environment, distance walked and physical fitness tips.

*The Nature Conservancy installing new trails and signage
with support from Duke Energy Foundation*

[SPENCER, INDIANA] — Reports of documented pollinator population declines around the globe are grim. The news is especially disturbing for Indiana, as pollinators help fuel the agriculture industry, which contributes an estimated \$31.2 billion to our state's economy.

How can we help pollinators rebound? One answer is more habitat, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is answering the call by creating pollinator-friendly habitat at its Green's Bluff nature preserve in Owen County.

"These days you can't open up a newspaper without reading about the plight of pollinators," said Larry Clemens, TNC's state director for Indiana. "Whether it's birds, bats or bees, we need pollinators to maintain healthy, functioning landscapes, and that definitely includes agricultural landscapes."

Green's Bluff is an 865-acre nature preserve open to the public. Visitors will find a trail that winds through an upland forest and leads to a steep cliff overlooking Raccoon Creek. The trail then switchbacks down the bluff through a hemlock grove and into a floodplain forest lush with wildflowers in spring. The preserve also features an old grist mill whose remnants can be found in a bend of Raccoon Creek.

TNC first acquired land at Green's Bluff back in 1985 and recently added to the preserve. TNC is converting 10 acres of this newly-acquired land into pollinator habitat by first removing invasive species and then planting with native wildflowers and grasses.

In addition, TNC is improving the existing trail at Green's Bluff and adding interpretive signage to enhance visitor enjoyment. Insofar as the preserve has grown in size, TNC is also creating a second trail at the site.

The new trail and pollinator habitat were made possible due to a \$27,465 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation. Duke has been a long-time supporter of TNC and conservation projects in Indiana. Earlier this year, Duke supported TNC's efforts to repopulate important mussel species into tributaries of the Wabash River, which will mean healthier water for Hoosiers and wildlife.

“The Nature Conservancy has a long history of creating and protecting environmental habitats in Indiana that not only are important for nature, but they become areas for the public to enjoy,” said Rick Burger, Duke Energy community relations manager. “We’re glad to support them in that endeavor.”

Work has already begun to improve the existing trail at Green’s Bluff. Weather depending, installation of the new trail will begin in late 2019. TNC staff have also started prepping the 10 acres of pollinator habitat and plan to seed the area in early 2020. TNC expects the new signage to be in place by summer of 2020.

###

The Nature Conservancy is a global conservation organization dedicated to conserving the lands and waters on which all life depends. To learn more about our work in Indiana, visit nature.org/indiana, find [@TNCIndiana](https://www.facebook.com/TNCIndiana) on Facebook or follow [@Nature Indiana](https://twitter.com/NatureIndiana) on Twitter.

Melissa Molenda, APR

Associate Marketing

Director

mmolenda@tnc.org

(517) 316-2268 (Desk)

(517) 230-0818 (Cell)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mark Davis, Parke Trails Alliance, President
765-592-7279 or parketrailsalliance.org

**PARKE TRAILS ALLIANCE RECEIVES GRANT
FROM THE DUKE ENERGY FOUNDATION FOR \$10,000.00**

Rockville, Indiana - October 30, 2019 - Parke Trails Alliance is pleased to announce it has received a \$10,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation. These funds will support the Rosedale Phase III project that extends our trail network, the Parke Community Rail Trail (PCRT) another mile north of Rosedale built on the abandoned Pennsylvania Railroad Right-of-Way donated to Parke Trails Alliance by the Department of Natural Resources and Parke County Commissioners in January of 2013.

"This grant helps us fulfill our mission of developing, building, and maintaining recreational trails in Parke County. We continue to make great progress on our trail with the help of organizations like the Duke Energy Foundation", said Mark Davis, President of the Parke Trails Alliance.

The Parke Community Rail Trail (PCRT) is part of Indiana's Visionary Trail System. Once completed this 20-plus-mile trail will provide a critical link connecting the National Road Heritage Trail with the B&O Trail in West Central Indiana.

Rosedale Phase III is a section of the PCRT that will take the trail from Rosedale to Big Raccoon Creek.

This Duke-Energy grant will provide assistance with the construction costs of the trail. This section of trail is part of a larger project that includes a 12-mile trail connecting Vigo County with Rockville, Indiana. The larger project is being submitted to the Indiana Department of Natural Resources for a Next Level Trails (NLT) grant of \$5M. The total project submitted is \$6.45M and includes 8 bridges, 8.5 miles of paved trail, a 3-mile

equestrian trail and 2 new trailheads. All the money spent on construction of the trail is eligible to be part of our 20% match for the NLT grant.

The PCRT is a recreational trail that will help conserve the land for future generations providing public access to parts of rural Parke County for conservation, education and health benefits.

The Duke Energy Foundation awards annual grants through a competitive application and review process. Insert more here with specific language from Duke Energy Foundation regarding their process and any other information about supporting great projects like this rails-to-trails project.

###

About Parke Trails Alliance - Parke Trails Alliance, aka The Covered Bridge Gateway Trails Association, is a non-profit organization promoting recreational trails in Parke County and West Central Indiana as they relate to tourism, economic development and public health. The focus is on the Covered Bridge Gateway Trail plan from Terre Haute to Turkey Run and linking the National Road Heritage Trail to the B&O Trail. For more information, visit our website at parketrailandalliance.org. You can also follow us on Facebook at [@ParkeTrailsAlliance](https://www.facebook.com/ParkeTrailsAlliance).

2019-2020 Duke Energy-Powerful Communities Grant Summary

Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District has received the Powerful Communities: Nature Grant in the amount of \$18,000. The grant runs from October 2019 to September 2020. This grant is for programs that support:

- Water quality, quantity, conservation and access
- Habitat restoration, forestry and conservation
- Species conservation

This grant has three different goals:

1) A **Clay County Indiana Native Tree Trail** will be created at the Clay County 4-H Fairgrounds. Educational signage will be installed about the trees, invasive species plant and animals and more. Trees will be purchased that are native to Clay County, Indiana that do not already exist on the trail. It has the potential to include future educational add-ons, such as water quality BMP's, forestry BMP's land use BMP's, wildlife BMP's and soil BMP's. The trail has the potential to bring education about nature, our natural resources and conservation to the residents of Clay County. This trail could have many opportunities such as added recreational opportunities, health and wellness opportunities, photography opportunities, studies by students and clubs, possible increased financial opportunities and possible field trip opportunities.

2) There will be a **Native Prairie/Pollinator Planting**. Educational signage will also be installed. This would increase educational opportunities as well as increase species and habitat conservation. This would also give photo and project opportunities to the residents of Clay County and other visitors to the county.

3) A **Clay County Recycling Day** will take place at the Clay County 4-H Fairgrounds. The date for this event is set for: Saturday, April 4, 2020 from 10AM-2PM. This event is open to Clay County residents only. Examples of possible waste streams to be included are: tires, oil, paper shredding, paint, chemicals, batteries, large appliances, electronics and medicine. This event is to keep these waste streams out of our local waterways. This event would help promote education on protecting our environment and water quality. **WE ALL LIVE DOWNSTREAM.** What we do upstream affects people downstream. This will help with general awareness and being good stewards of the land not just in 2020 but for future generations.

Partners already involved in this project include: Duke Energy, local citizens, Clay County 4-H Council, Clay County Commissioners, Stearley Farms & Excavating, Persinger Dozer Service INC., Clay County NRCS, Clay County ISDA, Southwest Indiana Pheasants Forever, INC and Quail Forever, IDNR-Division of Fish and Wildlife, IDNR-Forestry and IDEM-Office of Water Quality.

Other potential partners could include but are not limited to: local waste recyclers, local contractors, Sycamore Trails RC&D Forestry and Invasive Committee, Clay County Purdue Extension, Ruffed Grouse Society, local co-ops, local nurseries, local schools, local banks, Clay County Council, Clay County Highway Department, Clay County Fire Departments, Clay County Sheriff's Department, local tree service providers, local gas stations, Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts, local gas stations, local home improvement stores such as Menards and Lowe's, local department/farm stores such as Walmart and Rural King, local area Master Gardeners/Master Naturalists, local automotive stores and interested Clay County residents.

If you are interested in partnering on this project or have additional questions or comments please contact Clay County Soil & Water Conservation District located at 551 E US Hwy 40 Suite B, Brazil, IN 47834. Call the office at 812-446-8986 ext 3. Email inquiries can be sent to

jennifer.creager@in.nacdnet.net.