

STORY CITY HERALD

Public input opportunity Monday for conservation, watershed planning

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An open house and public input opportunity will take place Monday, March 12, in the Lakeview Cabin at Little Wall Lake Park, located at 3540 Little Wall Lake Road in Jewell. Prairie Rivers of Iowa and Hamilton County Conservation Board are co-hosting this event.

Residents of Story City and Roland, along with those in Hamilton County, are encouraged to stop by any time between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m. to see the cabin, view information about ongoing conservation projects, and voice their ideas and concerns regarding a watershed plan for the South Skunk River and Keigley Branch.

HCCB Director Brian Lammers will be on hand during the event to answer questions, along with Prairie Rivers of Iowa Board President and HCCB member Jim Richardson and Mike Brandrup, a fellow HCCB member and the Prairie Rivers of Iowa forestry and land management specialist.

“The Lakeview Cabin was built in 2014 through a partnership between Hamilton County Conservation and Prairie Rivers of Iowa” said Richardson. “This makes the cabin the perfect setting to discuss new opportunities to jointly promote soil and water conservation and outdoor recreation in Hamilton County along the South Skunk River and Little Wall Lake.”

Prairie Rivers of Iowa has held four previous events to get input from residents of Story and Hamilton counties on a watershed management plan for the Keigley Branch-South Skunk River Watershed. Conservation practices in the area draining to the upper part of the South Skunk River, Keigley Branch, Bear Creek and Long Dick Creek can help meet Iowa’s Nutrient Reduction Strategy while also improving soil health, reducing flooding, benefiting pollinators and wildlife, and improve fishing and boating opportunities along the Skunk River Greenbelt.

The goal of the community meetings is to hear stakeholders' concerns about local waterways and their ideas on how to encourage good stewardship of both urban and rural land in the watershed to address those concerns. The planning team hopes to learn more about what farmers, community groups and local government are already doing for conservation and discuss opportunities for collaboration.