

Explore Fayette County!



The Fayette County Conservation Board Program is divided into four interconnected programs: a county park system, an environmental education program, a wildlife management program, and a roadside management program.

The parks system involves the maintenance, management, and development of parks, the Turkey River Water Trail, and multiple wildlife areas. These areas provide facilities for outdoor recreation for the residents of Fayette County and its visitors.

Wildwood Center and Gilbertson Nature Center serve as headquarters for Fayette County's environmental education program. Through school programs, general public programs, and other programs with youth, civic groups, and organizations, the county naturalists work to educate the citizens of Fayette County about the natural world around them.

Restoring wildlife habitat is the focus of Fayette County's wildlife management program. Fayette County Conservation works regularly with private landowners and Pheasants Forever to restore and improve wildlife habitat.

All 1,135 miles of secondary roads and ditches are under management of the roadside program. This program is responsible for the eradication of noxious weeds, reestablishment of native prairie species where possible, and the removal of brush where needed.

The Fayette County Conservation Board invites all questions and comments and urges everyone to visit its facilities! Enjoy exploring Fayette County!

Contact Us

Wildwood Center

18673 Lane Road
Fayette, Iowa 52142
563-422-5146

Gilbertson Nature Center

22580 A Avenue
Elgin, Iowa 52141
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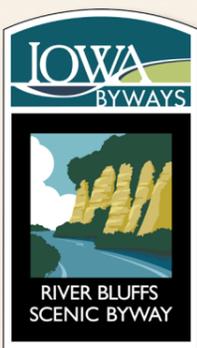
Turkey River Recreational Corridor

The Turkey River Recreational Corridor is an Iowa Great Place made up of the communities of Clermont, Elgin, and Elkader and historic Motor Mill in Fayette and Clayton Counties. These locations are linked by the special, scenic beauty of the Turkey River. Visitors relish in the abundance of wooded hills and rich rolling plains, streams and rivers, diverse wildlife, and recreational opportunities.



River Bluffs Scenic Byway

The byway provides 109 miles of scenic views in Fayette and Clayton Counties. The byway passes by the Turkey, Volga, and Mississippi Rivers, making it a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. The byway's corridor is dotted with parks, caves, nature centers, fishing hotspots, campgrounds, trails, and water



access points. Travelers will pass through 13 towns on the journey through what is sometimes called Iowa's "Little Switzerland." The byway journey isn't complete without stopping at one of the many historic sites along the way and stopping into one of the many authentic local restaurants. Discover more about Iowa's Byways at www.iowabyways.org.

Turkey River Water Trail

The Turkey River Water Trail is a 98-mile stretch of the Little Turkey and Turkey Rivers in Fayette and Clayton Counties connected through signs, maps, and river access points that provides an enjoyable, scenic, and educational experience for recreational users. The Water Trail features beautiful scenery, diverse wildlife species, and historic landmarks. A water trail map can be found at area tourism offices and at turkeyrivercorridor.com.



Fishing Opportunities

A total of 74 species of fish have been documented in the Turkey River watershed. Primary game fish include smallmouth bass, rock bass, and walleye; with channel catfish only present downstream of the dam at Elkader. Trout fishing in Fayette County is abundant with 10 spring-fed creeks that comprise over 13 miles of fishable water.

Area Attractions

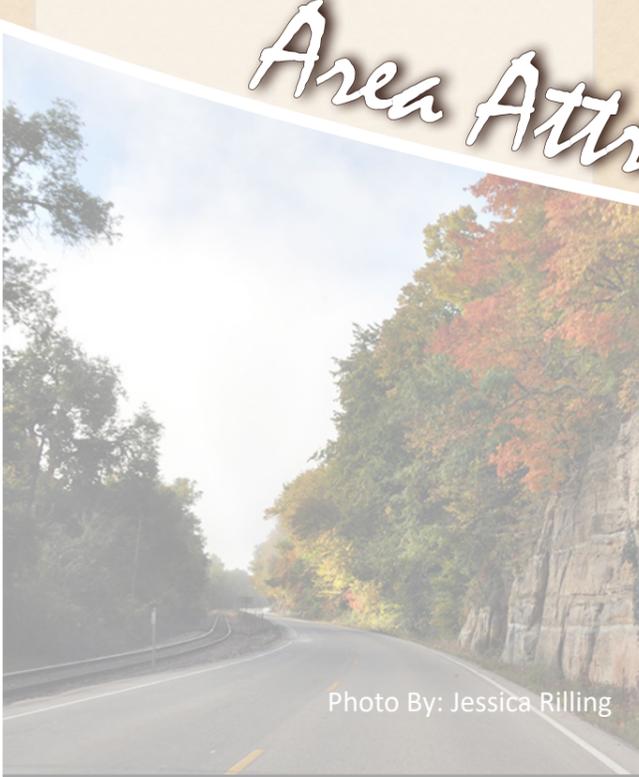
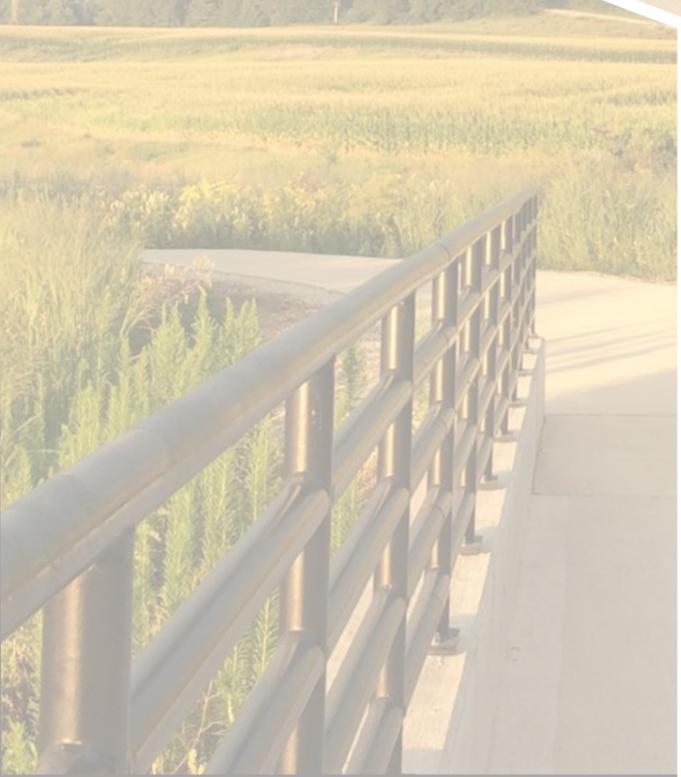
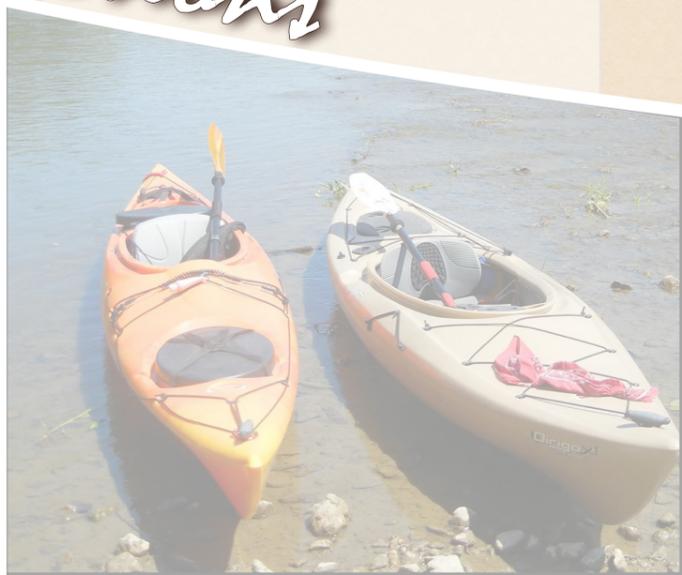


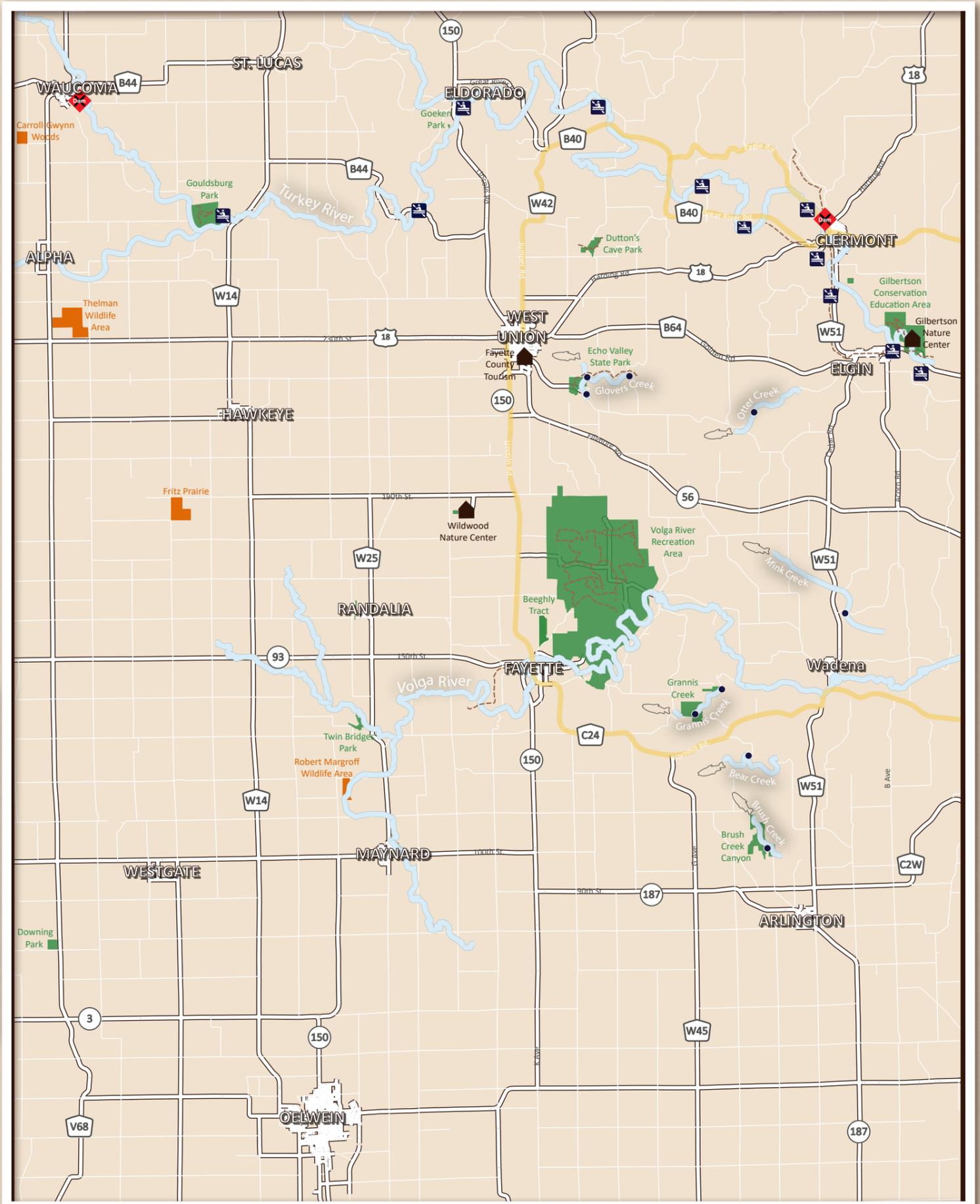
Photo By: Jessica Rilling



Public Areas

LEGEND

-  Park & Recreation Areas
-  Wildlife Management Areas/Public Hunting
-  Visitor Information
-  River Bluffs Scenic Byway
-  State & County Roads
-  Multi-Use Trails
-  Trout Streams
-  Trout Stream Access Points
-  Water Trail Access Points
-  Dam



Downing Park

Downing Park is a quiet picnic area consisting of 40 acres of Burr Oak timber. The park offers a shelter house and pit toilets and offers great bird watching opportunities.

Dutton's Cave Park

The park contains 46 acres and has a heavily timbered, deep ravine ending in a 50 foot vertical limestone wall directly above the cave opening. The cave was discovered in 1848 by Lorenzo Dutton and was explored for several hundred feet. The explorable portion of the cave has been reduced over the years due to the siltation of the cave floor. The park also contains 2 electrical hook up camping sites and several primitive sites, a shelter house, a hiking trail, water, and pit toilets.

Echo Valley State Park Glovers Creek Fish & Wildlife Area

Echo Valley is a 100-acre natural area that was built by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the 1930s. The park contains many hand-built historical structures such as a dam, keystone archway, lime kiln, and shelter house. The EVENT Trail and other hiking trails lead through this historical park. The park provides visitors with picnicking areas, primitive camping, and trout fishing in 2 separate streams. Glovers Creek Fish and Wildlife Area is a 187-acre parcel of land lying next to Echo Valley State Park and is open for public fishing and hunting.

Gilbertson Conservation Education Area

The Gilbertson Conservation Education Area consists of approximately 1,000 public acres located along the banks of the Turkey River near Elgin. This beautiful area is lined with streams and bottomlands surrounded by palisading limestone bluffs. The late Millard Gilbertson of Elgin donated the original 327-acre area to the Fayette County Conservation Board in 1986.

This unique area offers Turkey River canoe accesses, a playground, shelter house, modern campground with dump station, sinks, showers, flush toilets, and 28 electrical hook up sites. Over 5 miles of trails are available for hikers, non-motorized bikes, horseback riders, and cross-country skiers. The complex offers hundreds of acres of public hunting. The park also connects to the Turkey River Recreational Corridor trail.

The petting zoo offers an opportunity to meet friendly farm animals and is open from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day Wed. through Sun. 11am-7pm, or by appointment.

The Gilbertson Nature Center features interpretive and educational displays about northeast Iowa, the Mavis and Conner Dummermuth Historical Building contains farm and home antiques, and the Hart Dummermuth Historical Home depicts a farm home from the 1890s-1920s. The buildings are open from Memorial Day to Labor Day Wed. through Sun. 11am-7pm, or by appointment.



Iowa DNR Areas

The Iowa DNR manages Brush Creek Canyon State Park, Grannis Creek Wildlife Management Area, and the Volga River Recreation Area.

Goeken Park

The attractable feature of the park is the beautiful panoramic view of many miles of the Turkey River Valley. Four towns, in addition to the picturesque view of the village of Eldorado, can be seen from this point. This area contains one electrical hook up camping area and many primitive sites. The park also has two shelter houses, a playground, pit toilets, and water.

Gouldsburg Park

This park consists of 64 acres at the confluence of the Little Turkey River and Crane Creek. These streams provide good fishing, tubing, and canoeing. The topography is rolling to hilly with desirable picnicking places and a modern campground with a dump station, showers, flush toilets, and 26 electrical hook up sites. The park also contains pit toilets, primitive camp sites, a playground, shelter house, and hiking trails.

Twin Bridges Park

This 17.5-acre park is located at the confluence of the South and West branches of the Volga River. The stream is shallow with bed rock bottom, ideal for fishing. This area also contains a shelter house, playground, primitive camping area, pit toilets, and some electrical hook up sites.

Wildlife Management Areas & Public Hunting

Fayette County Conservation manages the Thelman Wildlife Area, Carroll Gwynn Woods, Fritz Prairie, and the Robert Margroff Wildlife Area that are open for public hunting.