



## Operations Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director  
FROM: Jeremy Jensen, Director of Operations  
RE: August 2025 Department Monthly Report

### OPERATIONS

#### Trail Maintenance Projects

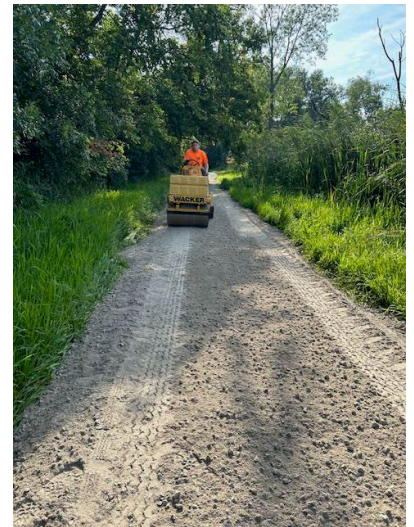
One of the most heavily used amenities on District property is the linear trail system. These trails connect preserves and municipalities throughout Kane County, providing exercise, entertainment and environmentally-friendly transportation. Properly maintaining these trails requires extensive time and resources. While mowing and trimming are the first things that come to mind, there are many other activities that need to be done to keep the trails open and safe. Some of these activities include storm damage clean-up, bridge repairs, culvert cleaning, sign installation, graffiti removal, surface repairs and inspections.

This season has seen multiple trail surface repair projects were completed in-house by staff. Most recently, the limestone Riverbend Trail in South Elgin was suffering from multiple flooding events eroding trail material and encroaching vegetation continually trying to shrink the surface width. To battle this vegetation, staff utilize a heavy-duty rake implement to break up vegetation roots and level out uneven surfaces. Once the surface is the correct width and free of ruts, they can apply gravel to build up the level and limestone screenings to provide a smooth riding surface. With all the materials in place, they then roll the trail to hard pack the surface and lock it into place.

Maintenance on limestone trails is a year-round effort, and depending on the time of year will see a different phase underway. Midsummer storms producing downpours cause wash outs and rivulets on hills and in corners on our trail systems. Staff has been in the field making repairs to these section to both improve the appearance as well as keep the trails safe for patrons. Along with the repairs on the surface, herbicide application takes place at various locations throughout the district. One of the challenges presented with the use of crushed limestone is that weeds and grasses can grow into the material. Herbicide applications kill the organic material and weaken the root structure, reducing the damage to the trail surface. Tractors set up with grader blades and flail mowers work together to address surface issues as well as push back vegetation to keep the surfaces smooth and clear for patrons to enjoy.



*Ranger Martin raking vegetation out of the trail surface.*



*A roller is used to hard-pack the limestone.*



*The horticulturalist spruced up the gardens outside of Creek Bend Nature Center.*

### Horticulturalist

The horticulturist and crew continued our rose arbor adventure. The Illinois Roses are now taller than I am and have been successfully trained up the first support along the base. Some canes for the separate species are being trained to begin their climb (reference pictures). We also weeded the Centennial Gardens Sun and Shade beds.

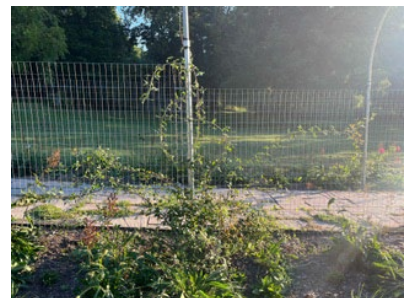
In the Japanese Garden we cleared the island walkway by cutting back any Iris that was getting too droopy, along with weeding out any invasive species. We aided the volunteers in our beginning process to restore the replica of Mt. Fuji to its former glory. This involves removing the existing and aggressive Lily of the Valley. This will not only allow us to grade sections of this replica but to also create a more habitable environment for the desired species (Vinca Vine). Watering, weeding, mowing, weed whipping and filling the Japanese Garden pond are done weekly.

At Creek Bend we replaced 3 containers with mums, I typically do this every year. We also removed any limbs that were in the roadway, or touching the building. Along the back beds we removed a good amount of golden rod to give the building a more polished look. To replace the plants we pulled out, I added Northern Sea Oats and Nodding Wild Onion.

### Fleet

With Regular vehicle and equipment services and repairs continued in August. These repairs included brake replacements, diagnostic of the electrical systems, hub replacements, exhaust repairs, trailer diagnostics, steering assembly repairs, and tire replacements.

Fleet took delivery of the Districts new budgeted Coats Maxx 80 tire changer. This new tire changer will increase our efficiency and capabilities by allowing us to complete larger diameter and width tire setups that we see over the Districts wide variety of vehicles and equipment. This machine has added user aids that will make dismounting and mounting of higher ply tires for our equipment a breeze allowing Fleet to tackle these tire repairs in house now. In addition to the operational aids, this machine came with a wheel lift helping the Mechanic to safely handle large and heavy tire and wheel setups while avoiding injuries associated with picking up these assemblies. Some of the vehicle and equipment wheel/tire combinations can weigh 120lbs and up making them difficult to maneuver safely. Since receiving this new machine Fleet was able to change 6 10ply (extremely stiff) UTV tires that the old machine would have been in capable of handling.



*The Illinois Roses are coming in nicely at the Centennial Gardens.*



*Coats Maxx 80 tire changer.*

**Operations Department Memorandum**August Report

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Facilities

The Trades Department was busy anticipating the arrival of the new Assistant Executive Director. A facelift was done in the new office, updating lighting to new LED fixtures, touch up painting and new locks for her door. A new County Map on a 4x8 board was printed for the new Executive Director's office to help acquaint her with the District. The old furniture was removed and new furniture was delivered.