



Operations Department Memorandum

TO: Benjamin Haberthur, Executive Director
FROM: Jeremy Jensen, Director of Operations
RE: June 2026 Department Monthly Report

OPERATIONS

June Storms

Much of the work conducted by Operations in the past month centered around dealing with the challenges presented by summer storms. After a dry mild May, June came in with heavy heat and periods of rain. These violent fluctuations of weather cause stress on trees and plants that create challenges throughout operations. Strong winds have been affecting trees along the linear and internal trails periodically during the month, creating trail closures while staff quickly work to reopen the trails and maintain recreation opportunities. Inconveniently, some of these trees did fall into power lines, which then required staff to hire a tree service with certified line-clearance arborists to safely remove the trees without causing damage. Teams were dispatched throughout the month to deal with unplanned projects like tree removals from trails and limestone repairs from washouts following heavy down pours. Along with this, trails within preserves are swept for downed trees or increased mowing. Tall prairie grasses, for example, midsummer will fall into foot trails when they become highly saturated with summer rain and they are too tall to remain upright.

An isolated storm event in late June resulted in Voyageur Landing Forest Preserve being closed to public access for two days while crews worked to open the roadways and clear twisted and down trees from picnic areas. With more than a dozen trees affected by the damaging winds, most of this small preserve was inaccessible after the storm. The shelter also suffered minor damage to the roof. More work remains to be done at this site to finish the clean-up. As we turned the corner into the holiday weekend, multiple storm events dropped several inches of rain in two days, leading to flooding and debris in multiple preserves. One of the most heavily affected was Paul Wolff Campground within Burnidge Forest Preserve,



Large Oak Tree Knocked Down at Voyageurs Landing FP.



Ranger Martin clearing trees from the Fox River Trail.



Floodwater flowing through Paul Wolff Campground.

where heavy rain in a short timeframe caused occupied campsites to flood and water to overflow the pond dam and flow across the roadway. The entrance to the preserve had to be closed until water could drain away after the rain stopped. Fortunately, the flooding didn't cause major damage to District infrastructure. Much of the work created by the flooding just involved removal of mud and debris and minor repairs to the floating dock.

Trades

The new archery range opened at the beginning of the month which kept the sign department busy with all the regular monthly signs completed. The archery range signs included the new entrance sign, a banner to advertise the grand opening, a QR code registration sign, 16 distance signs, 3 range signs, 7 danger signs, 31 miscellaneous range sign and a new Kiosk sign. Graphics were also created and the decals were applied to 3 new police squads and one 5-yd. dump truck. A new Schweitzer Woods FP sign was designed, produced and installed for the Environmental Education Center. Three adoptive trail signs were also made and installed at various locations.

Horticulture

This past month we have been very busy with planting, weeding and watering. The Fabyan Villa beds and porch planters are all redesigned with trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, and are establishing well. Each bed has a new design.

The Centennial Garden is in the process of significant weeding in all large beds, and the climbing roses in the arbor and coneflowers are all in bloom in a variety of shades of pink. There is a new bed on the west side of the arbors that is growing in with whimsical looking flowers, Gomphrena 'Fireworks' and 'Truffula' varieties, and Cosmos seeds are starting to fill in to add additional color by August.

The Japanese Garden is staying engaging with its ever-changing monthly blooms, and paths have been cut back for access and re-graveled to repair washout from the heavy rains.



Trees downed during the storms fell onto utility lines along the Fox River Trail.



Fabyan Villa garden beds being planted after a much-needed redesign.

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The bed on the north side of Creek Bend has been heavily weeded and replanted with a variety of perennials. The planters around the building are planted getting established for summer visitors and event guests.

Fleet

Regular vehicle and equipment services and repairs continued in June. These repairs included full tune ups, fuel injector replacements, diagnostic of the electrical systems, hub replacements, full brake replacements including brake lines, fuel line repairs, and A/C system repairs.

Fleet also fabricated and welded brackets in order to mount tool/storage boxes to three Operations Ford F-450 dump trucks. These boxes allow for additional secure storage for tools and equipment. The boxes are of aluminum construction which will resist corrosion keeping them looking and functioning like new for the majority of the truck's life.

Fleet took delivery of three new trucks in the month of June. Two 2026 Ford F-150 Police Responders for Public Safety. Both these trucks came fully upfitted and ready for patrol after Fleet installed laptop docking stations and chargers. We also took delivery of Natural Resources 2026 Ford F-550 dump truck. Our in-house Sign Shop installed liveries on all three vehicles making them complete and ready for work.

Arrowwood Point Archery Complex

On June 6, 2026, the District officially opened it's first archery range. The grand opening event was well attended and the certified staff instructors were engaging guests to "try archery". The event capped a lengthy process of taking this project from a concept to a reality. Opening the range to the public is just the beginning; instructional courses will be available starting July this year and District events will be following soon to bolster offerings to current and future archers.



The garden bed at Creek Bend Nature Center was weeded and a variety of perennials were planted.



The District received a delivery of three new trucks, including this Ford F-550 dump truck for Natural Resource Management.



Certified instructor Wheeler instructing a young archer at Arrowwood Point Archery Complex opening day.