

Voas Nature Area Trail Map

Welcome to Voas Nature Area, owned and managed by the Dallas County Conservation Board. The 705 acres includes about 110 acres of woodlands with the rest as restored prairies and wetlands. The land has 3 major areas:

- 272 acres as wildlife refuge
- 333 acres open to public hunting
- 100 acres for youth-only hunting, permit from DCCB required.

The marked trails show the general location of maintained paths. There are no trails in the public hunting area.

Hike safely. Weather conditions can cause slick trails, downed trees and other hazards.

These trails are designed solely for foot traffic. Hoofed animals and OPDMDs are not permitted.

All the boundaries are marked with signs. Please respect the neighbors and stay within the boundaries.

Public restrooms and drinking water are available in season at the main entrance.

For more information about the hunting areas and the youth area permit, call (515) 465-3577 or visit the DCCB website at www.conservaation.co.dallas.ia.us.



More About Voas

In 1989, the trust of siblings Lyle and Mae Voas approached the Dallas County Conservation Board about assuming ownership and management of the 245 acre Voas family farm. With no heirs, Lyle and Mae left instructions for the area to be restored to its pre-farming condition as a mix of wetlands, prairies and woodlands and then used as a wildlife refuge and educational center. To fulfill their wishes, the DCCB staff has spent considerable time and effort breaking or plugging field tiles, deepening wetland basins, controlling invasive plant species and reseeding managed areas.

In addition to the land, the trust turned over the Voas residences, the museum built to house their extensive rock and mineral collection and all it contained, and an assortment of other items. As improvements were made to the land, bathrooms were added to the museum as well as exhibits about wetlands, soils, mining, and evidence of local prehistoric First Nations.

Fast forward to today. Through targeted expansion based on the success in restoring former wetlands, Voas Nature Area has become a magnet for wetland mitigation initiatives. This has allowed Voas to nearly triple in size! These additions have allowed DCCB to add seasonal hunting to the mix of permitted activities in designated areas.

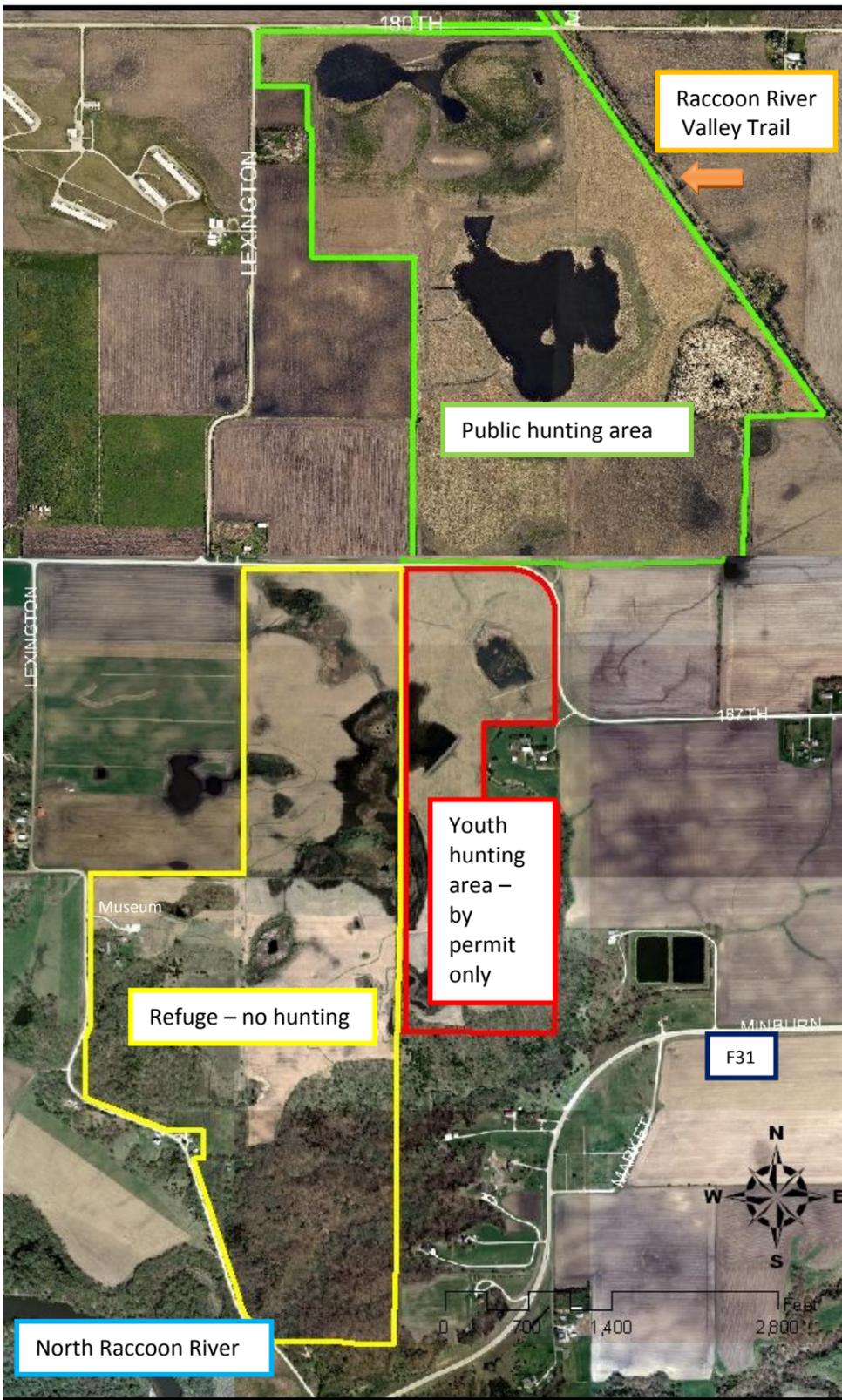
With the land additions, restoration and habitat projects, and building improvements, Voas Nature Area reaches an ever growing number of people and wildlife species. The mowed trails in the refuge and youth hunting areas are popular with walkers and cross-country skiers. Area schools visit for geology, monarch butterfly tagging and map and compass programs. One quirky program that garners a lot of attention is the fall tiger salamander crawl as a growing number of these amphibians head to our wetlands to overwinter.

Voas Nature Area Hours

May 1 – October 31 The entry gate is open from ½ hour before sunrise to 10:00 p.m. Modern bathrooms and running water are available outside the museum. The museum is open subject to staff and volunteer availability or by appointment.

November 1 - April 30 The gate remains open, weather and road conditions permitting. No bathrooms are open. Hunting is allowed in designated areas during seasons determined by the Iowa DNR.

19286 Lexington Road, Minburn Iowa



Wetlands

are areas where water can reliably be found either near the soil surface or covering the land for at least part of the growing season during most years. Wetlands include marshes, swamps, river oxbows, sloughs, and prairie potholes like those found at Voas.



Potholes were created when the glaciers retreated from the area. These bowl-like areas fill with snowmelt and rainwater, holding the water and reducing threats from flooding. In turn, these long-standing pools of water support water-based plants and the wildlife these attract, including ducks, geese, songbirds, frogs, toads and salamanders.



Over 90% of Iowa's historic wetlands have been drained to increase the ease of farming and other developments. Realizing that wetland loss was

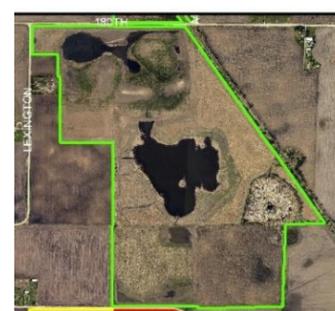
increasing the frequency and severity of floods and decreasing habitat and wildlife, in 2002 the U.S. EPA instituted a program with the goal being no net loss of wetlands.

Wetland restoration has been a major emphasis at Voas. Success can be seen by looking at the public hunting area maps below; hiking, wildlife watching or hunting. Learn more by viewing the wetland exhibit in the museum which compares the wildlife found in tiled fields to those found in a restored wetland.

Before wetland restoration



After wetland restoration



Geology Museum

Lyle and Mae Voas were avid collectors of fossils, minerals and other geologic treasures and traded for specimens from around the world. Their legacy is shared through exhibits, school classes, public programs and special events.



Dallas County Conservation Board areas within 3 miles:

- **Raccoon River Valley Trail** – an 89 mile paved loop recreation trail. Closest easy access is Minburn, 2 miles east of Voas.
- **Raccoon River Snyder Access** – Paved boat ramp and gravel parking area on east side of North Raccoon River off County Road F31, south of Voas.
- **North Raccoon River Wildlife Area Snyder Tract** - 115 acres of public hunting and fishing plus 30 acres of wildlife refuge. Gravel parking area on west side of North Raccoon River off County Road F31, south of Voas.
- **Crellin Wildlife Refuge** - 16 acres of riparian forest along the North Raccoon River. Located on Lexington Road, south of County Road F31.

For more information about these or other DCCB areas, visit our website at www.conservation.co.dallas.ia.us or call (515)465-3577.