

HOMER LAKE INTERPRETIVE CENTER

NATURE CENTER CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

FOREST PRESERVE FRIENDS
FOUNDATION 
CHAMPAIGN COUNTY

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Campaign Goal: \$500,000

The Forest Preserve Friends Foundation is a nonprofit that supports the Champaign County Forest Preserve District's mission of conservation, education, and recreation. The Foundation has set the goal of raising half a million dollars to assist in the renovation and construction of the Nature Center at Homer Lake.

Why This Project Matters

The Homer Lake Interpretive Center (HLIC) already provides an essential space for connection to nature, where people of all ages learn about local wildlife and explore the region's history. As our programs grow and needs evolve, we have a unique opportunity to create something even more impactful—a vibrant, accessible, and enriching environment that inspires connections and creates memories across generations.

This project isn't just about adding square footage. It's about:

- Enhancing our ability to deliver high-quality programs by creating a dedicated indoor space near key outdoor ecosystems.
- Improving accessibility and adaptability to reach more people with diverse learning needs and backgrounds.
- Providing a high standard of care and enrichment for our resident animals.
- Supporting our staff with dedicated workspaces that encourage creativity and productivity.
- Building a culture of conservation through immersive exhibits and educational experiences.

The Need

The Homer Lake Interpretive Center has always been a place where wonder begins—where children spot a painted turtle for the first time, families share stories around a touch-and-feel exhibit, and students learn how their choices impact the ecosystems around them. But as our programs grow and our community's needs evolve, the limitations of our current space have become more apparent.

- Community input from the 2022 Needs Assessment showed that **45% of respondents** prioritized educational opportunities, exhibits, and programs.
- **42% of respondents** favored renovating or adding to the existing Interpretive Center rather than building a new facility, demonstrating strong support for enhancing current resources.
- Current space limitations (approx. 600 sq ft of public space) prevents optimal program delivery and visitor engagement with overcrowding.

This project is about creating a space that says: everyone belongs in nature, learning should be joyful, and our wild neighbors deserve to be seen, understood, and protected. The desired outcome will be:

- A nature center that functions as a **gateway to discovery** for first-time visitors and returning community members.
- **Hands-on learning opportunities** for all ages and abilities, in a flexible, comfortable, and welcoming environment.
- A space that strengthens the connection between people, wildlife, and cultural history.
- **Expanded program capacity** that supports seasonal demand, bad-weather contingencies, and off-hours offerings.
- Greater reach through **inclusive infrastructure** and **increased availability**, with extended hours and flexible programming.

LEAVING A LEGACY

Donor Investment Opportunities

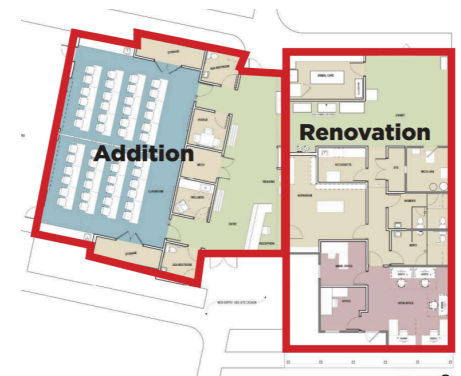
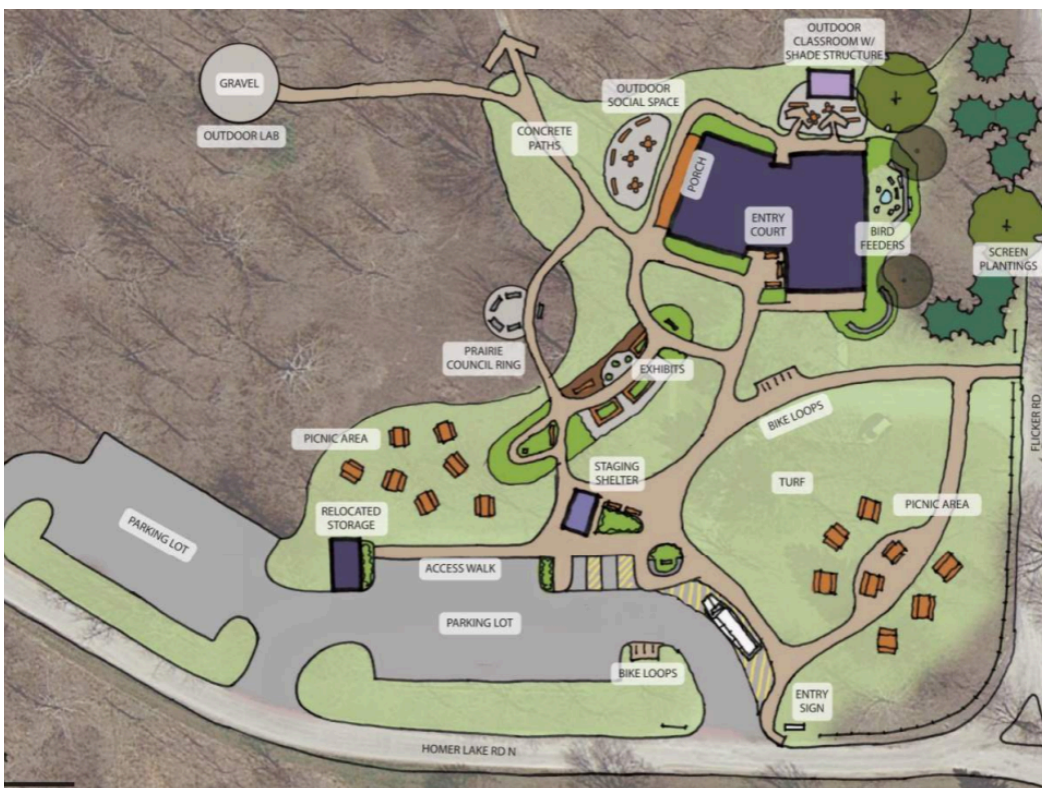
We are honored to offer lasting naming opportunities for donors who wish to be part of this project in a permanent, meaningful way. These gifts leave a legacy of stewardship and celebrate a personal connection to nature.

Why Your Gift Matters

- Transforming Lives Through Nature – Inspire thousands of children and families each year.
- A Legacy of Conservation & Education – Leave a lasting impact as a partner in building future stewards of the environment.
- Expanding Access & Inclusion – Reach more underserved schools, communities, and working families with flexible, accessible programs.
- Protecting Wildlife & Ecosystems – Enhanced care and meaningful exhibits highlight native species and promote stewardship, all while be situated in a variety of prairie, forest, and aquatic ecosystems.
- Creating a Community Hub for Nature – Provide a place for reflection, discovery, and lifelong learning. Live animal exhibits connect visitors to the species they share this landscape with.
- Benefits of Naming Recognition
 - Prominent signage at the named location or feature.
 - Recognition in campaign materials and digital communications.
 - Invitation to special donor events and behind-the-scenes previews.
 - A meaningful legacy tied to nature, education, and community impact.

Naming Opportunities

All naming gifts will be acknowledged with respect, care, and in line with the mission and values of the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation and the Champaign County Forest Preserve District.





WAYS TO GIVE

Your gift to the Nature Center isn't just about supporting a building; it's about inspiring awe, curiosity, and care for the natural world in every visitor who walks through our doors. Give a gift online by scanning the QR code or visiting bit.ly/fpffoundation. Checks may be mailed to the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation. Give us a call for other ways to make a gift.



One-Time Gift
Make a direct donation online, by check, or in person.



Monthly Giving
Set up a recurring gift that provides steady support.



Make a Pledge
Make a commitment to give over the course of 1-5 years.



Tribute Gift
Give in honor or memory of a loved one or special occasion.



DAF, IRA, and Stock
Contact us about giving through your donor-advised fund, IRA, or gifting stock.



Forest Preserve Friends Foundation, P.O. Box 1040, Mahomet, IL 61853
Phone: 217.586.3360 • Email: foundation@ccfpd.org • Website: bit.ly/fpffoundation

LEAVING A LEGACY

Inspire Discovery for Generations to Come

The expansion of the Homer Lake Interpretive Center is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future of nature education, conservation, and community well-being in Champaign County. As a campaign supporter, you have the chance to leave a lasting mark on this beloved place through a naming opportunity that reflects your passion, values, or honors someone special.

Whether you're inspired by the vibrant learning taking place in our classrooms, the quiet wonder of our animal exhibits, or the energy of a bustling community hub, your gift can be recognized in a way that tells your story—and continues to inspire others for years to come.

Visionary Steward • \$100,000+

Exhibit Gallery \$100,000

Highlighting local ecosystems and biodiversity through rotating and permanent displays. A great match for a donor passionate about interpretation and storytelling.

Discovery Advocate • \$50,000+

Nature Education Hub (Classroom) \$85,000

Support the core of all educational programs, serving thousands annually from Pre-K to lifelong learners by funding the new classroom space. 2 opportunities available.

Animal Care Suite \$50,000

Dedicated to the health and enrichment of the animal ambassadors that make education come alive.

Conservation Champion • \$25,000+

Nature Discovery Pavilion (Outdoor Learning Space) \$40,000

A premier outdoor learning and exhibit zone at the heart of the visitor experience. Ideal for donors with a passion for immersive, hands-on education in nature. 3 opportunities available.

Wellness & Huddle Rooms \$30,000

Quiet retreat rooms supporting nursing mothers, children in need of a calm down space, and collaborative work amongst staff. Sponsor both rooms at \$30,000 or just one of your choice at \$15,000.

Reception Nook \$25,000

Where visitors connect with resources and staff. A personal and welcoming way to show your support.

Community Roots Circle • \$10,000+

Amenities & Visitor Experience \$10,000

From shaded benches to birdwatching areas, outdoor exhibit features, and garden elements, these gifts support the spaces that enhance comfort, spark curiosity, and invite quiet moments of connection with nature.

All named spaces will include thoughtful recognition with signage that reflects the importance of your contribution and your connection to the mission.

If you're interested in exploring available naming opportunities or would like help identifying a space that aligns with your giving goals, we'd be honored to talk with you. Your gift to this campaign isn't just about supporting a building; it's about inspiring awe, curiosity, and care for the natural world in every visitor who walks through our doors. Please contact the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation by email at foundation@ccfpd.org or by calling **217.586.3360**.

JOIN THE CIRCLE

Be Part of the Nature Center's Story

Not every gift comes with a name on a wall, but every gift builds the future. As a member of our giving community, your support of the Nature Center helps us open doors, build curiosity, and welcome thousands of people each year into a deeper relationship with the natural world.

Whether you're giving in honor of a loved one, supporting a cause close to your heart, or simply paying it forward, your contribution makes a lasting difference. Together, we are growing something remarkable.

Community Giving Levels

Legacy Circle **\$7,500+**

Benefits Include: Name Listed on CCFPD website and on signage in the Nature Center. Plus, exclusive invitations to donor preview events and the opportunity for customized tribute signage or naming rights, depending on giving level.

Stewardship Circle **\$5,000+**

Benefits Include: Name Listed on CCFPD website and on signage in the Nature Center. Plus, exclusive invitations to donor preview events and naming rights based on availability.

Community Circle **\$2,500+**

Benefits Include: Name Listed on CCFPD website and on signage in the Nature Center. Plus, exclusive invitations to donor preview events.

Discovery Circle **\$1,000+**

Benefits Include: Name Listed on CCFPD website and on signage in the Nature Center.

Friends of the Forest **\$500+**

Benefits Include: Name Listed on CCFPD website.

How to Give

We're committed to making your giving experience easy, flexible, and meaningful. Whether you'd like to give once, spread your gift over time, or honor someone special, we offer several options to help you support the new nature center in a way that works for you.

- **One-Time Gift:** Make a direct donation online, by check, or in person.
- **Monthly Giving:** Set up a recurring gift that provides steady support and adds up to a powerful impact over time.
- **Pledges:** Commit to a gift now and fulfill it in installments over the course of 1-5 years
- **Tribute Gifts:** Give in honor or memory of a loved one and receive optional recognition.
- **Donor-Advised Funds, IRAs, and Stock Gifts:** We're happy to work with you and/or your financial advisor to accept gifts through these various methods.

To get started, visit our donation page at www.ccfpd.org, complete a pledge form, or contact us directly. We're here to help you find the best way to make your mark.

If you're interested in exploring available naming opportunities or would like help identifying a space that aligns with your giving goals, we'd be honored to talk with you. Your gift to this campaign isn't just about supporting a building; it's about inspiring awe, curiosity, and care for the natural world in every visitor who walks through our doors. Please contact the Forest Preserve Friends Foundation by email at foundation@ccfpd.org or by calling **217.586.3360**.