

Welcome to Conrad Station Savanna, owned and managed by the Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. The 380 acres of Conrad Station contribute to the conservation of Kankakee Sands, a large prairie-savanna complex in northwest Indiana and northeast Illinois that encompasses more than 30,000 acres of land protected by the Conservancy and its conservation partners.

Hiking Conrad Station Savanna

The Conrad Station Savanna Trail is a 1.5 mile loop trail over moderate terrain that gently winds through black oak savanna, a native prairie restoration, and the former town of Conrad. The trail is mowed and marked with orange circular trail markers mounted on posts and trees.

Conrad Station Savanna consists of rolling sand dunes sculpted by the wind after the last glaciation. Today the dry dunes and low openings are vegetated with oak communities, consisting of a native assemblage of trees, grasses, and sedges. The preserve name of Conrad Station Savanna refers to the town's train station, once present along the railroad tracks along the west side of the preserve.

The Conrad Station Savanna Trail begins at the parking area on the corner of CR 250 W and CR 725 N, just past the boot brush station and preserve sign. Please be sure to wipe the soles of your shoes at the boot brush stations before hiking to prevent the accidental spread of non-native plant seeds that could germinate at Conrad.

As you take the trail clock-wise (west) through the trees, the trail wanders through the savanna and foundations of buildings of the former town of Conrad, which was platted in 1905. An informational sign about the town of Conrad and its founder, Jennie Conrad, is next to the foundation of the old hotel. Many years of stewardship work here at this opening have allowed the sunlight to penetrate to the ground and restore the plant diversity of black oak savanna.

The northern most part of the trail takes you briefly out of the savanna, and into a tallgrass prairie restoration. The depression along the north side of the trail is a small ephemeral wetland, which holds water seasonally. A second sign located further along the trail in the shade of the savanna trees describes how The Nature Conservancy manages the savanna at Conrad Station Savanna as well as the unique plants and animals that live here.

The southeastern part of the trail skirts the edge of a 75 acre prairie restoration completed in 1997. It was one of the first restorations planted at Kankakee Sands. This restoration has dry sand blows to low wetlands and every gradient in between. There is no mowed or maintained path through the prairie restoration, but you are welcome to wander and explore.

Across US 41, the Indiana DNR's Division of Nature Preserves owns and manages another 450 acres of oak habitat called Conrad Savanna, which is also open to the public, but without maintained walking trails.

Trail Rules and Safety Tips

Pack out your litter and leave the plants and wildflowers for others to enjoy.

No ATVs, dirt bikes, camping or horseback riding. Pets must be leashed and under control at all times. Please remove all pet wastes.

Be mindful of hunting seasons and notices of prescribed burning when visiting the Kankakee Sands area.



Glass lizard

What to look for at Conrad Station Savanna

The plant and animal species in Conrad Station Savanna are abundant and diverse. They are uniquely adapted to the dry sandy soils and occasional fires that keep savannas open and sunny. Some of the commonly seen or heard species are listed below. Let us know if you find something of interest!

Birds: Orchard oriole, barred owl, blue grosbeak, brown thrasher, vesper sparrow, field sparrow, lark sparrow, bobwhite quail, red-headed woodpecker, rose-breasted grosbeak, scarlet tanager, rufous sided towhee, wild turkey.

Reptiles and Amphibians: Blue racer, bull snake, Fowler's toad, grey tree frog, hognose snake, glass lizard, chorus frog, milk snake.

Plants: Lead plant (*Amorpha canescens*), smooth blue aster (*Symphyotrichum laeve*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*), New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*), woodland sunflower (*Helianthus divaricatus*), rough blazing star (*Liatris aspera*), wild blue lupine (*Lupinus perennis*), downy phlox (*Phlox pilosa*), purple milkwort (*Polygama polygama v. obtusata*), bracken fern (*Pteridium aquilinum latiusculum*), Carolina rose (*Rosa carolina*), sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*), lanceleaf figwort (*Scrophularia lanceolata*), goat's rue (*Tephrosia virginiana*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), black oak (*Quercus velutina*), lance leaved violet (*Viola lanceolata*).

Insects: Common green darter and ruby meadow hawk dragonflies, tiger swallowtail butterflies, great spangled fritillary butterflies, and the solitary wasps called cicada killers!



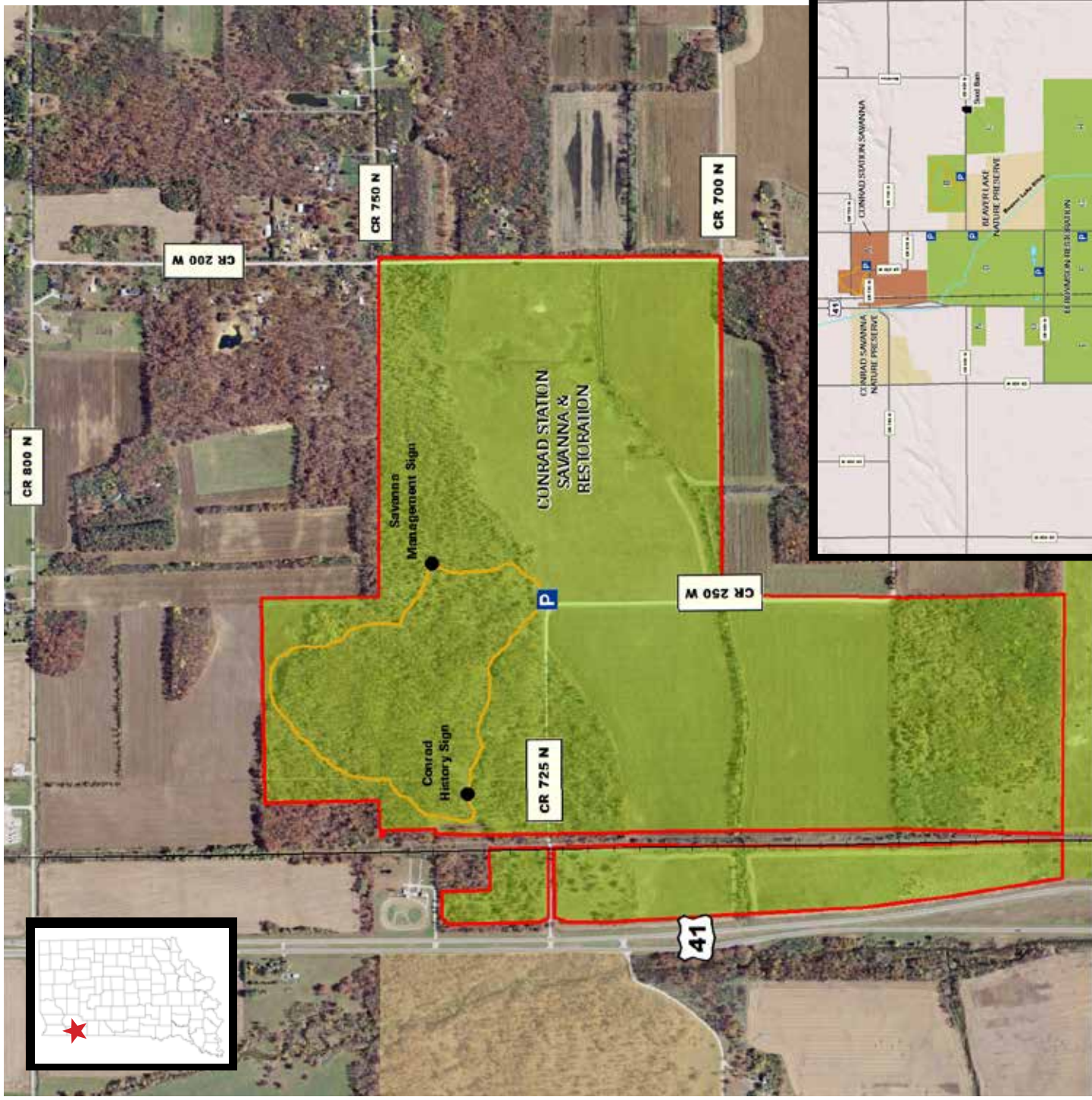
The Nature Conservancy is an international, non-profit organization working around the world. Our mission is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends. For more information visit [nature.org](https://www.nature.org).

TRAIL GUIDE

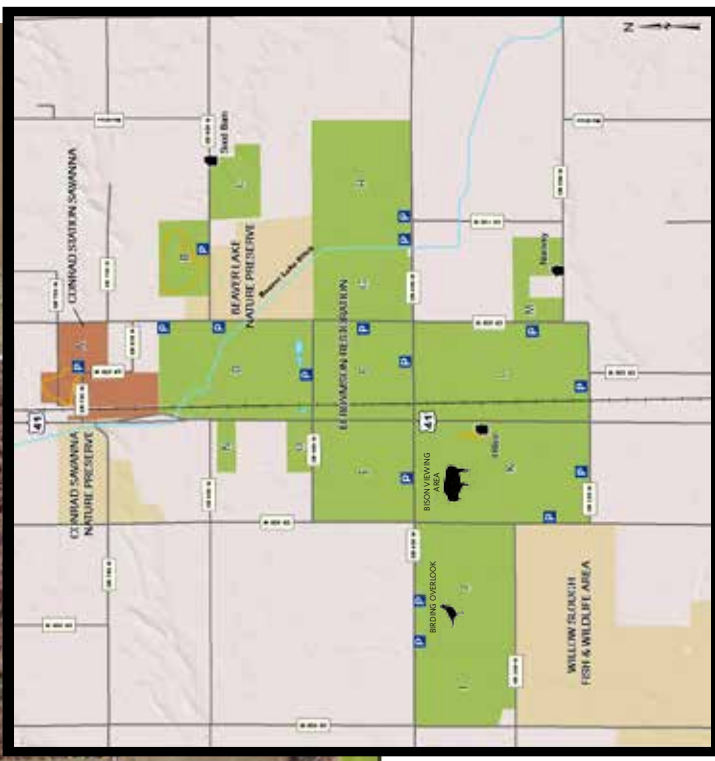
Conrad Station Savanna at Kankakee Sands

The Nature
Conservancy 
Protecting nature. Preserving life.

Welcome to Conrad Station Savanna



Red-headed woodpecker



Conrad Station Savanna is at the northern end of the Eroyomson Restoration at Kankakee Sands.