

Bellevue State Park Interpretive Plan

Bellevue State Park, Iowa

Located in eastern Iowa atop a limestone bluff that overlooks the Mississippi River, Bellevue State Park is a place rich in resources. Views of Iowa and Illinois for nearly 40 miles, Native American mounds, a limestone kiln, a butterfly garden, and remnant prairie offer significant opportunities for interpretation. In 2008, the 106 Group began an interpretive planning process in conjunction with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for the park. This was the first interpretive plan the IDNR had undertaken for any park in the state, thus the planning process generated excitement among local, regional, and state park staff.

We involved community stakeholders in the planning process by facilitating workshops and meetings, as well as soliciting written comments.

This process ensured the design of interpretive experiences met the needs of the local community, which has

taken great pride in the park. Based on this input, we developed interpretive themes for the park and presented a clear path for their expression using existing interpretive media and new forms of interpretation.

We developed our plan for interpretation of the park's resources with an understanding that interpretation should "lay lightly on the land," thereby subtly enhancing the visitor's experience and understanding in an effort to spark a sense of stewardship and discovery.

