

Governor Dodge State Park Equestrian Campground and Trailhead Project

Who We Are: The Friends of Governor Dodge State Park is a 501 (c) 3 organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing the programs and facilities at Governor Dodge State Park in Dodgeville, Wisconsin. Located in Southwest Wisconsin's unique Driftless Area, the park's 5,000-plus rolling acres have expansive vistas, large rock outcroppings, prairies, 2 lakes and approximately 40 miles of trails.

What We Do: Since forming in 1996, our group has worked to support recreation, education, and environmental stewardship at Governor Dodge State Park. Some past projects include developing and installing interpretive displays, rebuilding the boat storage area at the Cox Hollow Concession, building a kayak/canoe launch, installing improved trail signage, and building a picnic stop along the Driftless Trail. The Friends fund the summer naturalist program, maintain the park's entrance prairie, and engage in ongoing efforts to control invasive species.

Horseback Riding at Governor Dodge State Park: Horseback riding has long been a popular activity at Governor Dodge. The 25 miles of scenic and well-maintained trails are some of Wisconsin's finest. With more trails than can be explored in a single day, the only current option for horseback riders from outside the immediate area is to camp in a small "temporary" campground with little privacy and few amenities.

Why a New Campground? An equestrian campground on the park's north side was identified in the 1984 Master Plan. Water and electric service were installed, but due to competing funding priorities, the actual campground was never built. The Friends of Governor Dodge State Park are now working to build the campground envisioned in the Master Plan. The new campground will increase use of the park's excellent but currently underutilized horse trail system by adding capacity (21 sites vs. 11) and by offering an inviting ambience for individuals, families and groups.

As part of the project, the multi-user group trailhead adjoining the new campground will be redesigned to improve traffic flow and minimize parking conflicts. A permanent vault toilet, new water fountain, horse hitching rails, and picnic tables will make this a true trailhead "comfort station."

Please help! The Friends of Governor Dodge invite those who recognize the benefits of outdoor recreation as a way to improve mental and physical health to donate generously to this project. Individuals, groups, and businesses can make a difference now and for future generations. Project and donation information can be found at www.GovDodgeEquestrians.com

"Great things are done by a series of small things brought together." Vincent VanGogh