



**Woodlands, Wetlands, Waterways... "Saving a place for wildlife"**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **GROUNDBREAKING OF EDUCATION CENTER AT HOWELL WETLANDS**

**Evansville, Indiana** - The Wesselman Nature Society will break ground Friday, April 11<sup>th</sup> at 3 p.m. on a new Education Center at the Howell Wetlands. The planned building will provide restrooms, shelter, and storage at the Howell Wetlands, a 35-acre urban wetland on the Evansville's Westside. This new Education Center is the culmination of years of research and planning to provide a classroom in order to expand educational opportunities at the Wetlands.

City Councilman John Friend and Evansville Board of Parks Commissioners President Steve Bohleber will join both the Wesselman Nature Society and major donors to the project in turning the first shovel of dirt and unveiling the plans for the new building. The Howell Wetlands Education Center will begin as a basic structure that will provide a large classroom sheltered from the elements, sufficient restrooms, and storage for educational and property maintenance supplies. The 2,400 square foot building will be constructed with durable, low-maintenance, and sustainable materials that are of recycled content. Solar energy will power minor energy needs to make the building self-sustaining.

"The community in its entirety will benefit from the enhanced capabilities of the Wetlands to provide educational, recreational, and outdoor exercise opportunities," said Vic Chamness, president of Wesselman Nature Society board of directors. "The construction of this facility will allow Wesselman Nature Society to serve a larger populous with more environmental education programs and outdoor activities, and encourage more visitors to use the property."

The groundbreaking ceremony will also kick off Earth Day at Howell Wetlands, a free community event to be celebrated on April 19<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This celebration includes a number of guided hikes and activities such as a live raptor show, water bug fishing, and more.

**Howell Wetlands** is a 35-acre urban wetland showcasing a diversity of wetland habitats including a marsh, a cypress slough, an oxbow channel, as well as the surrounding prairie and bottomland hardwood forest. Howell Wetlands provides habitat for beaver, waterfowl and the rare green tree frog, among many others. Howell Wetlands is owned by the City of Evansville and managed by the Wesselman Nature Society. [www.WesselmanNatureSociety.org/wetlands/](http://www.WesselmanNatureSociety.org/wetlands/)

**Wesselman Nature Society** utilizes area woodlands, wetlands, and waterways as educational resources, outdoor classrooms, and learning laboratories for educators and students of Southwest Indiana and beyond. Through these opportunities, visitors and program participants may find a greater understanding and enjoyment of natural and cultural resources both inside and outside the boundaries of protected sites. The Wesselman Nature Society was founded in 1973 for the purpose of protecting the nearly 200 acre tract in Evansville, Indiana now known as Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve. Today this 501c (3) not-for-profit organization is responsible for the preservation, management, and daily operations of Wesselman Woods Nature Preserve, Howell Wetlands, and Canoe Evansville. [www.WesselmanNatureSociety.org](http://www.WesselmanNatureSociety.org)

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