

# Volunteer Matters Help Guide

## Navigating the Project Catalog

In our volunteer portal, Volunteer Matters, the “Project Catalog” is where you can see each currently available volunteer opportunity listed. These volunteer opportunities include signups for one-time public volunteer events, longer-term volunteer roles such as wildlife and water quality monitoring positions, and more.

To sign up for a volunteer event or position, all volunteers must first make an account on our volunteer database, Volunteer Matters. Once an account is made, volunteers will be able to sign up for opportunities found in the project catalog. To learn how to make an account, please refer to our help guide document “Creating an Account.”

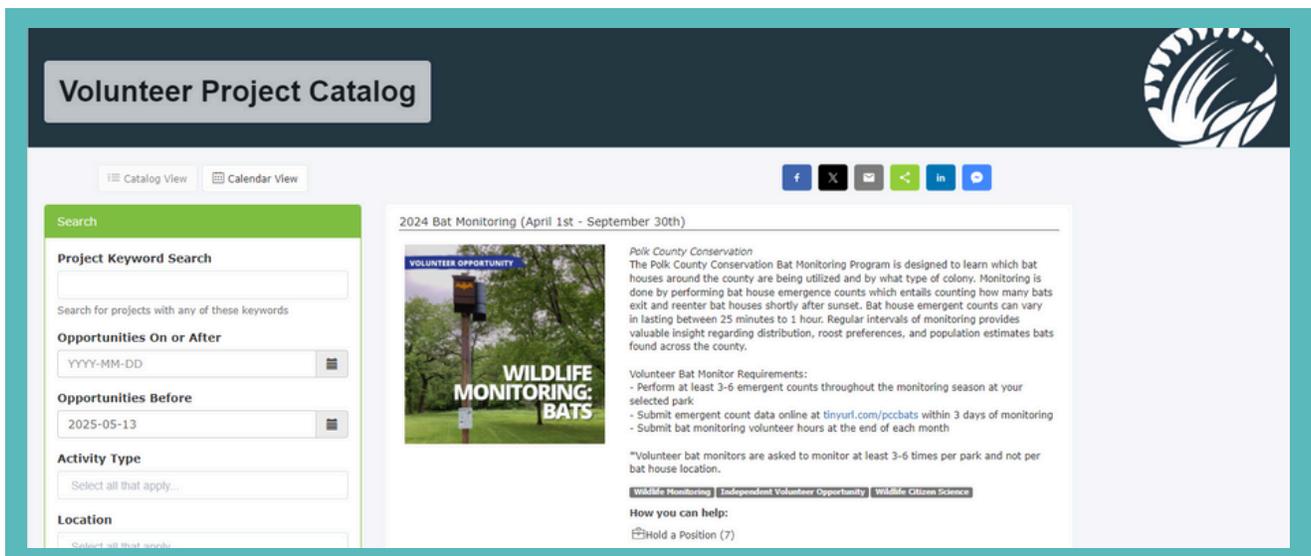
If you have difficulty or questions about navigating Volunteer Matters, please never hesitate to reach out to our volunteer coordinators who will happily assist you. For assistance, please email: [conservationvolunteers@polkcountyiowa.gov](mailto:conservationvolunteers@polkcountyiowa.gov)



To view available volunteer opportunities go to the Project Catalog

In your internet browser type:  
<https://polkcountyiowa.volunteermatters.org/project-catalog>

Alternatively, most volunteer events are posted on the Polk County Conservation website on our events calendar. Signup links on the website will direct you to the Project Catalog. View our website here:  
<https://www.polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/events/>



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## Searching for Volunteer Opportunities

### Using the Search Box Feature

Using the search box feature, you can search for volunteer opportunities based on date ranges, the type of activity, location, month, time, and program.

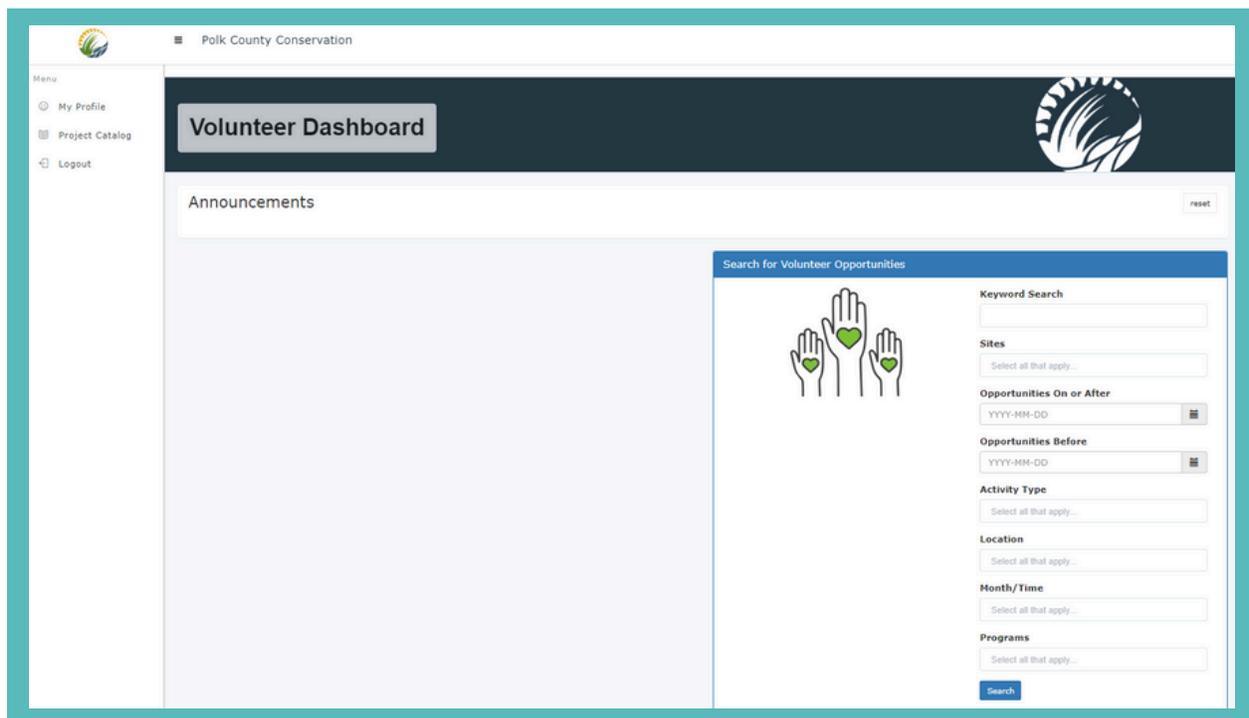
This feature is found in 2 places:

1. On Project Catalog main page :

**<https://polkcountyiowa.volunteermatters.org/project-catalog>**

2. On your home screen "Volunteer Dashboard" after you have logged into your personal Volunteer Matters account. **<https://polkcountyiowa.volunteermatters.org/login>**

On your home screen volunteer dashboard, the search box will look like the image below. You can search for volunteer opportunities from the search box on your home screen or by navigating to the project catalog. The tab for the project catalog is located on the left side bar.



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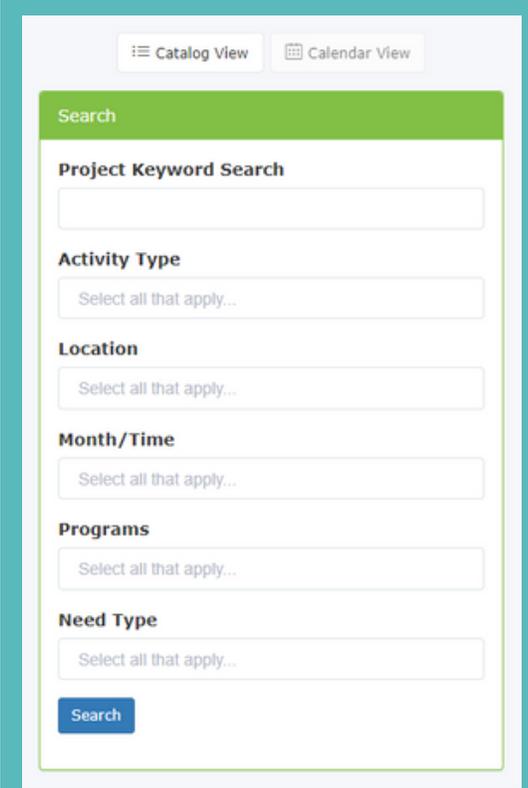
Once you have navigated to the project catalog page, you have a number of ways you can search for volunteer opportunities.

#### Using the Search Box Feature

Using the search box feature, you to search for volunteer opportunities based on date ranges, the type of activity, location, month, time, and program.

Select the criteria box you want to search by and a list of options will appear. Select the option(s) you are interested in and then click the “search” button. A list of opportunities that meet your search criteria will then appear.

**Example:** If you want to find opportunities at a particular park or trail, click inside the location box and a list of parks and trails will appear. Select your location(s) of choice and click “search.” If a park or trail is not listed as an option that means no opportunities are currently listed for that location.



The screenshot shows a search interface with two tabs at the top: 'Catalog View' (selected) and 'Calendar View'. Below the tabs is a green header with the word 'Search'. The main content area contains several filter sections, each with a dropdown menu:

- Project Keyword Search:** A text input field.
- Activity Type:** A dropdown menu with the text 'Select all that apply...'.
- Location:** A dropdown menu with the text 'Select all that apply...'.
- Month/Time:** A dropdown menu with the text 'Select all that apply...'.
- Programs:** A dropdown menu with the text 'Select all that apply...'.
- Need Type:** A dropdown menu with the text 'Select all that apply...'.

At the bottom left of the search area is a blue button labeled 'Search'.

#### Examples of Search Options

##### *Project Keyword Search*

- Search using your own search term such as trails, garden, Jester Park, etc.

##### *Activity Type*

- Gardening with Native Plants
- Wildlife Citizen Science
- Nature Center Volunteer

##### *Location*

- Specific park and trail names
- Jester Park Equestrian Center
- Jester Park Nature Center
- Virtual Opportunity

##### *Month/Time*

- Specific months
- Weekday or weekend
- Seasonal or year-round

##### *Programs*

- Water quality & wildlife monitoring
- Public volunteer events
- Independent volunteer opportunity
- Horses Helping Heroes

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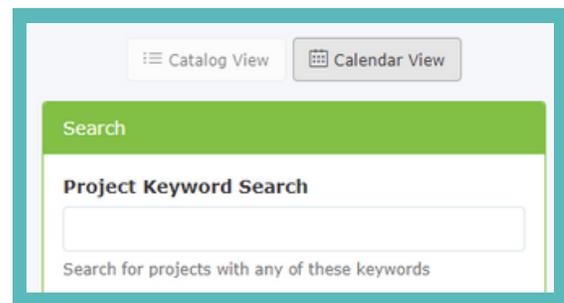
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#### List vs. Calendar View

You have two options of how to view listed opportunities on your screen

- View opportunities as a catalog list
- View opportunities in a calendar view

To change your view look for the “Catalog View” and “Calendar View” buttons above the search box feature on your screen.



To change from catalog view to calendar view, click the button of the view you prefer.

When in calendar view, you can select to view by the month, week, or specific day. Opportunities that are **blue** have openings, opportunities in **gray** do not have openings.

To view details and to sign up for opportunities while in calendar view, click the listing on the calendar that interest you and you will be directed to that opportunity’s project page.

