

Iowa Outdoors

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

www.iowadnr.gov

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TROUT STOCKING SEASON UNDERWAY

The popular trout stocking season is here and will continue through the end of October.

After another long Iowa winter, many anglers are anxious to get started trout fishing and most streams are stocked with catchable size rainbow and brook trout on a weekly basis. Some stream stockings are announced on the stocking information line and other stream stockings are not announced.

Another attraction for young anglers is a “kids only” trout fishing pond located at Big Spring Hatchery, which will be open for fishing beginning May 1st.

Due to the wet spring and existing conditions from last years flooding, certain stream sections will only be stocked as vehicle access permits.

“We should be able to get into most of them once things dry up a little,” said Gary Siegwarth of Big Spring Trout Hatchery. “We usually don’t see too many anglers out in the early part of the season, so there should be an abundance of trout to catch.” In addition, many streams support abundant brown trout populations established from fingerling stockings or from natural reproduction.

One of the most essential items to get you started other than a fishing license and trout privilege is the Iowa Trout Guide. These guides are free and contain useful information about trout fishing and the trout program as well as a colored map of how to get to each stream. Trout Guides can be picked up from any of the three hatcheries in Manchester, Elkader, or Decorah.

In addition, trout stocking schedules can be obtained from the DNR Web site at www.iowadnr.gov Trout stocking calendars are a great way for beginning anglers to find

out when particular streams are being stocked. Anglers can also call the stocking information line at 563-927-5736. Additional information can be obtained by calling the Northeast District Office at 563-927-5736.

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1,500 TROUT HEADED TO BACON CREEK APRIL 9

SIOUX CITY – Bacon Creek Lake will receive 1,500 catchable sized rainbow trout around 2 p.m., on April 9. Bacon Creek Lake is one of a handful of Iowa lakes outside of trout country that receive trout during the late fall, winter and early spring as part of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources cool weather trout stocking program.

Bacon Creek is a 34-acre lake on the east side of Sioux City and the only trout fishery in northwest Iowa.

Anglers are required to purchase a trout fee, in addition to a 2009 fishing license, to fish for trout in Iowa. The fee is \$11 for Iowa residents and \$13.50 for non-residents. There is a five fish daily bag limit and a 10 fish possession limit for trout.

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PLANT SOME SHADE TREE DISTRIBUTION PLANNED FOR SPRING

DES MOINES - Residential customers of MidAmerican Energy who live in Iowa can reduce future energy use and at the same time landscape their homes and green up their communities this spring through *Plant some shade*[®], an expanded residential tree-planting program.

Plant some shade is a partnership initiative to aid long-term energy and natural resources conservation. The program is being funded by MidAmerican and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Bureau of Forestry with eight local partners, including the City of Cedar Rapids, Mahaska County Conservation Board, City of Parkersburg, Polk County Conservation, Pottawattamie County Conservation Board, Scott County Conservation Board, Warren County Conservation Board and Webster County Conservation Board.

Plant some shade enables MidAmerican’s residential customers to purchase up to two, three- to eight-foot landscaping trees for just \$25 each. Each project has a variety of trees available and typically includes two or three shade trees, a low-growing ornamental and a conifer.

“Encouraging residents to plant trees in their yard is an effective way to reduce energy costs and promote a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment,” said Rick Leuthauser, MidAmerican’s manager, energy efficiency. “We’re pleased to be funding *Plant some shade* and we hope many customers participate.”

Spring projects will take place in Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Indianola, Oskaloosa and Parkersburg. Advanced orders for *Plant some shade* are required. Order forms can be obtained by visiting www.midamericanenergy.com/plantsomeshade. Orders will be accepted until all trees have been sold.

“This is a wonderful opportunity for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price,” said Matt Brewer, forestry volunteer coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Bureau of Forestry. “Spring is an ideal time to plant and establish new trees, too. The season’s warm days and cool nights are excellent for root growth.”

For more information, contact Brewer at 515-242-6892.

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NEW BIRDING TRAIL ANNOUNCED FOR CENTRAL IOWA

Looking for something new in outdoor recreation within a short drive of Des Moines? With the annual northbound bird migration just about to move into full swing, unveiling of central Iowa’s new *Makoke Birding Trail* could not be more timely.

Birding trails have exploded across the United States in recent years, now approaching some 400 nationwide. These are not always “trails” in the traditional sense. Instead, most feature a map or guidebook to several birdwatching hotspots within a defined area. Birders then drive (or walk, if the trail is short) to highlighted stops along the route. Stops feature a habitat, such as a marsh or woodland, particularly attractive to a large variety of birds. Birders might find interesting species more easily at these sites than if just randomly searching for birds.

“*Makoke Birding Trail* is the first of its kind in central Iowa and features 22 sites selected for their birdlife,” said Doug Harr, DNR Wildlife Diversity Program Coordinator. “Saylorville Lake, Red Rock Lake, and Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge serve as large anchor sites for the entire birding trail. All 22 sites are generally within an easy 30-40 minute drive from Des Moines, some within the city itself.”

Makoke means “bird” in the Ioway tribal language and was chosen to honor the native people once inhabiting much of central Iowa. Each stop on the *Makoke Trail* will be identified by a special sign depicting a bobolink, one of Iowa’s most recognizable and beloved grassland songbirds, and the *Makoke* name. A 32-page guidebook will lead birders to each site with aerial photo maps. Maps are accompanied by a description of habitats at each site, best time of year for seeing the most species, a brief list of some of the birds that might be seen, details about local nature centers, hiking trails, facilities available and other notes useful for visitors. Guidebooks will be available at many federal, state, and county conservation offices and nature centers featured in the *Makoke Trail*. They will also be available from Iowa DNR, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034. While trail guides are available now, signs identifying each site may not be erected until later this spring.

Publication of the trail guide culminates more than two years' effort by a number of conservation agency partners. The trail's development team was comprised of local representatives of The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Polk County Conservation Board. Additional partners helping with publication costs include the Jasper, Warren and Madison County Conservation Boards, Iowa Audubon, Des Moines Audubon Society, Sierra Club and Pheasants Forever. The Iowa Ornithologists Union will soon host an online version of the trail guide at its website, www.iowabirds.org.

Harr encourages everyone to get outdoors and enjoy central Iowa's amazing birdlife. "Our announcement of the Makoke Birding Trail, with its Native American name, uniquely coincides with this year's International Migratory Bird Day on May 9," he said. "The 2009 IMBD theme is *Celebrating Birds in Culture* and features a logo, posters and educational materials depicting birds in traditional Native American impressionistic design."

For more information about the *Makoke Birding Trail*, contact any central Iowa office of the partner agencies mentioned above.

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Alliant Energy customers invited to purchase trees for \$25

EIGHT OPERATION RELEAF EVENTS PLANNED IN IOWA FOR SPRING 2009

DES MOINES – Iowans looking for a cost-effective, yet eye-pleasing way to reduce home heating and cooling costs are encouraged to participate in Operation ReLeaf, a residential tree planting program that promotes long-term energy and natural resource conservation.

Operation ReLeaf is a partnership initiative funded by Alliant Energy and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources with assistance from local partners, which include county conservation boards and county extension offices.

Through the program, 3,000 high quality landscaping trees will be offered to Alliant Energy residential customers for just \$25 each this spring. The trees typically retail for \$65 or more and will be sold on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Alliant Energy will sponsor eight Operation ReLeaf events this spring in the following communities: Carroll on April 16, Donnellson on April 18, Iowa Falls on April 23, Marion and Dubuque on April 25, Perry on May 2, Thompson on May 7, and Newton on May 16. Tree species offered will vary at each event and include shade trees, ornamentals and conifers.

Operation ReLeaf participants must be Alliant Energy residential customers. Advanced order is recommended and advance purchase is limited to two trees per household. In the event there are extra trees available on distribution day, those trees will be released for purchase at that time. Order forms are available online at www.alliantenergy.com/releaf

“All trees are purchased through a bidding process to promote local nurseries,” said Paul Tauke, chief of the Iowa DNR’s Forestry Bureau and State Forester. “This is a great way for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price.”

For more information, contact Emma Bruemmer with the Iowa DNR at 515-281-6749.

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NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION TO MEET APRIL 9 IN STORY COUNTY

AMES – The Natural Resource Commission of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will meet at 8:30 a.m., April 9, at McFarland Park, 56461 180th Street, in Ames.

Commission and DNR staff will meet at 10 a.m., April 8, at the State Forest Nursery, 2404 South Duff Ave., in Ames, for an informational session and a local tour.

Members of the commission are Kim Francisco, Elizabeth Garst, Carol Kramer, Gregory Drees, Janelle Rettig, William Bird and Tammi Kircher. The Director of the DNR is Richard Leopold.

The following is the agenda for the April meeting.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes of March 12 Meeting
- Director’s Remarks
- Construction Projects
 - Palisades-Kepler State Park, Linn County – FEMA Related Silt Removal and Cleanup
- Land Acquisition Projects
 - Peterson Wildlife Management Area, Dickinson County – Edwin Tindall
 - Muskrat Slough Wildlife Management Area, Jones County – Matthew McQuillen
- Land Management Agreement, Olin Recreation Area, Jones County – Jones County Conservation Board
- HUSH Agreement with the Food Bank of Iowa
- Contract with Northeast Iowa RC&D for Gypsy Moth Trapping and Monitoring
- Brass Bluegill Award
- Special Events Online Registration System
- Contract with Iowa State University for 2009 Iowa Lakes Monitoring
- Petition for Rulemaking to Repeal the Commercial Harvesting of Turtles
- Fiscal Year 2010 Water Trail Grants
- Project Agreement with Lyon and Sioux Rural Water System for Project Development at Klondike Dam
- Starr’s Cave State Preserve – Appeal of Denial for Trail Construction
- Sustainable Funding for Natural Resources – NRC Resolution

- General Discussion
- Items for Next Meeting, May 14, in Davis County

For more information, contact Melissa Speed, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, at 515-281-8650.

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