



IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION | WWW.IOWADNR.GOV/NEWS/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 10, 2009

1. For Iowa's Archery Deer Hunters – The Best of the Best Has Arrived – by Lowell Washburn
2. Trout are Heading to Sioux City on Nov. 17
3. Grant Will Protect 1,700 Acres of Loess Hills Forest
4. DNR Now Managing Banner Shooting Range
5. Gather Your Family This Thanksgiving at Honey Creek Resort State Park

[Electronic photos available upon request]

FOR IOWA'S ARCHERY DEER HUNTERS ---- THE BEST OF THE BEST HAS ARRIVED

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

For Iowa's 56,000 archery deer hunters, there is no mystery to why November is called the Hunter's Moon. With the annual rut in full swing, the best days of the entire season are currently at hand.

It's a time like no other. Restless and itching for a scrap, mature monster whitetails are on the prowl 24/7. Wide beamed nocturnal stags that have remained invisible all summer have suddenly changed their ways. Brazen and full of attitude, these bruisers now swagger through mid-day stubble. Locked into perpetual search mode, bucks of all shapes and sizes relentlessly cruise ridge tops, river bottoms, and brushy fence lines in search of does. Sometimes, these wandering bucks find rival males instead. When that happens, the Iowa timbers resound with the sharp clash of dueling antlers.

With the scales suddenly tipped in their favor, archery deer hunters employ every trick in the book in hopes of arousing the curiosity [or anger] of mature bucks. Vigorously rattling a set of antlers to create the sound of mock battle is the bow hunter's staple. Other tactics include doe [bleat] calls, grunt tube calls, and decoys.

There's good reason for all the fuss. Whether you judge them in terms of body weight or in total inches of antlers, there is no disputing that Iowa bucks achieve heart stopping

proportions. Legends of the Fall, Iowa's behemoth stags have gained global notoriety. There are, in fact, few places on the entire continent where deer grow bigger or better than they do right here at home. To date, Iowa has produced 19 of the all time top bucks ever recorded. That's more top deer than is currently listed by any other state or any Canadian province.

But even in November, Iowa's big bucks do not come easy. Tagging one still requires ample amounts stealth, woodsman-ship, and above all --- patience. Putting a monster in the freezer usually means passing on numerous six or eight pointers. That can be tough. For many hunters the temptation of seeing those lesser bucks becomes just too great.

When [if?] the Big Buck finally does arrive, many archers simply crack under the strain. After the drilling the bulls-eye on backyard deer targets all summer, a hunter may easily miss the entire animal when the moment of truth arrives. It's called Buck Fever, and is the best explanation as to why so many new broadheads end up imbedded in tree stumps rather than deer.

Of course, not all shots at monster bucks result in misses. Who knows? When it finally comes time to capture that photo of a lifetime, it might even be your face that grins from behind the massive antlers of Iowa's newest state record white-tail.

###

Des Moines, Mason City Up Next

TROUT ARE HEADING TO SIOUX CITY ON NOV. 17

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources has moved the Bacon Creek Lake trout stocking, in Sioux City, from Nov. 19 to Nov. 17. The DNR will stock about 1,500 rainbow trout around 2 p.m., on Tuesday, Nov. 17. The trout will be coming from the Decorah Trout Hatchery.

The DNR will also be stocking Lake Patoka, in Bondurant, on Nov. 24, and Blue Pit, in Mason City, on Nov. 25. Lake Patoka will receive trout this year while the DMACC lake is undergoing a lake improvement project. Trout will return to DMACC in the fall of 2010.

Anglers who want to fish for the trout are required to purchase a trout stamp (\$11) in addition to an Iowa fishing license. The daily bag limit for trout is five and the possession limit is 10.

###

GRANT WILL PROTECT 1,700 ACRES OF LOESS HILLS FOREST

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will acquire a conservation easement on nearly 1,700 acres of forested land along the western edge of the Loess Hills State Forest in Monona County.

The easement, which will permanently protect the Little Sioux Scout Ranch Camp, was made possible through a \$1.3 million grant from the U.S. Forest Service Forest Legacy Program and a \$437,000 in-kind donation by the Mid-American Boy Scout Council.

The Little Sioux Scout Ranch Camp easement was the top rated forest legacy project in the state, as rated by the Iowa State Forest Stewardship Committee, for the past four years, said Jeff Goerndt, state forests section chief for the Iowa DNR.

“This is an excellent easement acquisition that will protect the camp and its 1,700 acres from potential development and allow us to work with the scouts to improve the habitat for some rare and threatened species,” he said. Threatened species on or near the site include regal fritillary butterfly and the ornate box turtle.

Also protected is the Loess Hills unique land form. The extreme thickness of the soils and intricately carved terrain make the Loess Hills a rare geologic feature. Shaanxi, China, is the only other location in the world where the loess soil layers are as deep and extensive.

The camp is about 30 miles north of the Omaha-Council Bluffs area, along the 220 mile Loess Hills National Scenic Byway. The easement will protect the fragile loess soils from erosion and protect the land from any further development.

Public access will be allowed by permission to fish, hike, camp and canoe. The scouts will remain owners of the property.

Media Contact: Jeff Goerndt, state forests section chief for the Iowa DNR, 515-281-5441.

###

DNR NOW MANAGING BANNER SHOOTING RANGE

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has taken over the daily operation of the Banner Shooting Range in Summerset State Park, north of Indianola, after a contract with a private vendor expired in October.

Banner Shooting Range is a popular, multi-use shooting facility that offers a safe, clean, family friendly shooting environment for handguns, rifles and shotguns. Range safety officers are on-site during all hours of operation to provide safety instruction to customers and are available for any firearms or DNR related program questions or information. In 2010 the DNR plans to add a variety of educational and firearms safety related programs for the public to attend at the range.

“Having the range management under our department will provide the public additional services, and fit with our education, and outreach effort as we work to recruit and

retain hunters and shooters in the hunter education and the shooting sports programs," said Megan Wisecup, recreational safety programs supervisor for the Iowa DNR.

The shooting range underwent a renovation a few years ago and now provides updated facilities including sheltered shooting benches, hard service parking lot, and on-site staff. A concession building on site offers a variety of ammunition, targets, miscellaneous shooting supplies, hunting and fishing licenses, snacks, and beverages for purchase by range users, park visitors and bicyclists.

"As the range program expands, additional staffed facilities like the Banner Shooting Range will be built throughout the state," said Wisecup. "And additional stand alone unstaffed ranges on public land will also see improvements and be expanded."

All proceeds from the range will go towards daily operation, range supply inventory, and facility improvements at the range.

Banner Shooting Range Hours:

11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday

9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday

Closed on Wednesday

Winter hours January 1 through March 31

11 a.m. to sunset Monday and Friday,

9 a.m. to sunset Saturday and Sunday

Closed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Call 515-961-6408 for potential weather related closings.

The shooting range is located at 13796 Elkhorn Street between Des Moines and Indianola on US Hwy. 65/69 in Warren County.

For more information on Banner Shooting Range contact Megan Wisecup, recreational safety programs supervisor with the Iowa DNR, at 515-238-4968.

###

**GATHER YOUR FAMILY THIS THANKSGIVING AT HONEY CREEK
RESORT STATE PARK**

MORAVIA, Iowa – This Thanksgiving, enjoy a relaxing escape from the busy holiday season at Honey Creek Resort State Park. Whether you come for Thanksgiving dinner at the restaurant, bring your own fixings for an overnight cabin getaway, or stay in the lodge to take

advantage of the long weekend with your family, Honey Creek is the perfect Thanksgiving destination.

If you love Thanksgiving turkey but want to avoid the kitchen, the Rathbun Lakeshore Grille is offering a full dinner with all the traditional fixings from 10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, Nov. 26. Executive Chef Patrick Koffman is featuring roasted turkey, smoked cherrywood ham and pork loin in apple cider madeira sauce served with sweet potato gratin, apple-pecan sage dressing, mashed potatoes, and classic green bean casserole. The dinner will also include a children's knee-high buffet.

The meal is just \$18.99 per person, \$7.99 for children ages 5-12 years and free for children under five. Seniors pay just \$16.99 per person. For reservations, call (641) 724-1435.

Stay for the Thanksgiving weekend in a traditional guestroom for just \$99 per night. The resort's activity director and on-site nature interpreter have several free programs planned, including a family scavenger hunt, outdoor adventure hike, decorate gingerbread cookies, GPS scavenger hunt, cooking classes by Chef Patrick and carriage rides. Honey Creek Resort will also be lighting the lodge for the holidays.

Beautiful, comfortable cabins are also available, from one to four bedrooms and with plenty of room for the whole family. Featuring fully stocked kitchens, fireplaces and flat-screen televisions, Honey Creek cabins are the perfect gathering spot for your Thanksgiving family reunion.

For more information or to see a complete list of activities during Thanksgiving week, visit www.honeycreekresort.com