

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Natural Resource Commission**

---

**ITEM**

**9**

**INFORMATION**

**TOPIC      Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps**

---

AmeriCorps is the national service program that provides thousands of Americans of all ages and backgrounds with education awards in exchange for three months to one year of community engagement. Building on the earlier existing Civilian Conservation Corps, the AmeriCorps Program started in 1994 with 20,000 members serving nationwide. Now more than 500,000 members have served in this national service program.

Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps members have been assisting the Iowa DNR since 1997. Last year alone, 50 members made a significant impact generating volunteers, providing environmental education, conducting wildlife surveys, enhancing land and water trails, implementing conservation practices, and restoring wildlife habitat. These members organized natural resource projects that engaged 1,002 volunteers for a total of 5,037 hours. Of these volunteers, one-quarter were first-time volunteers to natural resources.

Fall 2006-Fall 2007 Accomplishments:

- Collaborated with 262 landowners
- Enrolled 1,297 acres of private land in conservation programs
- Designed, built, and repaired over 96 miles of recreational trails
- Completed flood disaster relief at two state parks securing safe access for 507,796 annual visitors
- Conducted 134 wildlife population and ecosystem diversity surveys
- Maintained over 7, 634 acres of public land habitat
- Designed and built 11 canoe accesses
- Maintained 26 existing canoe accesses
- Enhanced over 264 miles waterways
- Provided environmental education programs to 23,537 Iowans and visitors

The DNR Keepers of the Land AmeriCorps Program is the largest of the 14 AmeriCorps programs in Iowa. Our program is unique with 58 members this year serving at sites throughout the state contributing to the DNR's statewide community empowerment efforts. Iowa's environmental needs are being addressed through AmeriCorps' cooperative work with federal, state, and local governments, private landowners, conservation organizations, and community groups.

Linda Hanson, Administrator  
Management Services Division  
February 14, 2008