

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION
DECEMBER 2009 – MEETING AGENDA**

Thursday		December 10, 2009	NRC MEETING AGENDA	
			Meeting convenes at 10:00 am Public Comment Period begins at approximately 10:30am	
Meeting Location: Wallace Bldg – 5 th Floor Conference Rooms 502 E. 9 th Street, Des Moines, IA				
1	Approve Agenda			
2	Approve Minutes of 11/05/09			
3	Director's Remarks			
4	Honey Creek Update			
5	Construction Projects			
	5.1	Otter Creek WMA, Tama County – Pump Station & Dike Repair	Decision	Carried
	5.2	Green Valley Lake, Union County – Silt Removal	Decision	Carried
	5.3	Missouri River Fisheries, Monona County – Storage Building	Decision	Carried
	5.4	Lake Macbride State Park, Johnson County – FEMA Repair	Decision	Carried
	5.5	Center Lake, Dickinson County – Handicapped Access Fishing Pier	Decision	Carried
6	Small Construction Projects Contracts		Information	N/A
7	Land Acquisition Projects			
	7.1	Stone State Park – Woodbury County – INHF	Decision	Carried
	7.2	Conservation Easement – Winneshiek County – Wenmark	Decision	Carried
	7.3	Bays Branch WMA – Guthrie County – Motsick, William	Decision	Carried
8	Conservation and Recreation Division General Fund Bureaus Update		Information	N/A
9	Agreement between IA DNR and Ducks Unlimited, Inc.		Decision	Carried
10	Award: 2008 Sport Fishery Development and Management Outstanding Sport Fish Restoration Project of the Year		Information	N/A
11	Contract with City of Des Moines, IA for Urban Fishing Program		Decision	Carried
12	Contract with Southwick Associates for Data Analysis of Iowa License Buyers		Decision	Carried
13	Petition For Removal Of The Closed Season On Walleye In The Iowa Great Lakes		Decision	Carried
14	Chapter 15, General License Regulations – Final		Decision	Carried

15	Chapter 113, Restitution for Pollution Causing Injury to Wild Animals – Final	Decision	Carried
16	Starr's Cave State Preserve – appeal of denial for trail construction, 2 nd hearing	Decision	Failed
17	Water Trails Crew Contract With Minnesota Conservation Corps	Decision	Carried
18	FY2010 Water Trails Program Grants	Decision	Carried
19	Donations	Decision	Carried
20	Chapter 12, Conservation Education – Notice of Intended Action	Decision	Carried
21	Chapter 44, Special Events – Notice of Intended Action	Decision	Carried
22	Construction Project - Lewis & Clark State Park, Monona County – Visitor Center Completion	Decision	Tabled
23	Natural Resource Based Business Opportunities Grant Program	Decision	Carried
24	Palo Alto County Gaming Development Corporation Grant	Decision	Carried
25	General Discussion * CRD Legislative Initiatives		
26	Items for Next Meeting		
	Next Meetings: 01/14/10, Thursday-Polk County 02/11/10, Thursday-Polk County 03/11/10, Thursday-Polk County		

MINUTES
OF THE
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING
DECEMBER 10, 2009

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
HENRY WALLACE OFFICE BUILDING
502 E. 9TH STREET
DES MOINES, IA 50319

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MEETING MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the Natural Resource Commission was called to order by the NRC Commission Chairperson, Gregory Drees on December 10, 2009 at 10:02 a.m. He welcomed the public to the meeting and reviewed the public speaking forum guidelines.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Gregory Drees, Chairperson
Richard (Kim) Francisco, Secretary
Elizabeth Garst
Tammi Kircher, Vice-Chairperson
Dennis Schemmel

Via Conference Call:

Janelle Rettig
Margo Underwood

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Moved – Commissioner Francisco

Seconded - Commissioner Garst

Changes:

- Move item #16 up to correspond with the arrival of the Des Moines County Conservation Board members.
- Delete item #10 as presenter & presentee's are unable to attend meeting due to weather/road conditions.
- Move item#22 to follow other construction items 5.1-5.5
- Honey Creek Resort Consultant's report will be at 1:00 p.m. today via conference call.

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM 11/05/2009

Moved – Commissioner Kircher

Seconded - Commissioner Francisco

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

3. DIRECTORS REMARKS

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

- In the interest of time and due to weather conditions Deputy Director Boddy opted not make Director's comments to allow commissioners to leave at a reasonable time to get home safely.

4. HONEY CREEK RESORT STATE PARK UPDATE

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

- Honey Creek State Park Resort operating company Central Group Companies, Inc. representatives were not able to attend the December NRC meeting due to weather. They will be at the January NRC meeting to review the updated Pro Forma and financials.

Consultant Report:

- Via conference call consultant Bill Koegler reviewed his report of Honey Creek State Park Resort after visiting the facility October 29-30, 2009.
 - Recommendations
 - View first year as a 'start-up' year
 - Produce an updated 5-year Pro-Forma (already done by operating company)
 - Work with road officials to improve signage to resort from all major market areas.
 - Change name of 'cabins' to 'cottages'
 - Contract sales efforts to an outside company
 - Produce and market bundled specialty event packages
 - Examples: meeting/conference/seminar groups, wedding parties, etc.
 - Website needs to be improved for easier navigation
 - Review possible addition of a spa area be added at the resort
 - Add shelter structure near the clubhouse area to support golf club outings
 - Design shoulder season golf packages
 - Review possible addition of a covered and heated practice tee area near the current golf driving range

Discussion:

- Commissioner Garst – Expressed her appreciation for the detailed report. She would like to see the recommendations tracked and followed through on.
- Commissioner Kircher – Liked the idea of outsourcing the sales area.
- Commissioner Underwood – Asked about the sales/marketing recommendation, she wanted to know if there would be individual marketing plans per type of package.

Financials:

- Via conference call Central Group Companies, Inc. reviewed the financial numbers
- Lodge
 - Occupancy rate was 35.4%, which is close to last year's October occupancy rate.
 - Daily average room rate increased to \$95.62 up from last October's rate of \$90.88. This equals room revenue of \$110,754.00.
- Cabins
 - Occupancy was 25.6%; with an average daily rate of \$240.00
- Food & Beverage
 - The Rathbun Grille handled 7,488 guests
 - Banquet area handled 2,920 additional guests
 - Food costs are coming in line with the budget
- Sales for October were not where they would have liked to have them due to many contributing factors such as weather, economy, etc.

Discussion:

- Commissioner Kircher – Asked about the consultant's recommendation of contracting an outside company for sales efforts. Liz Jordan, Director of Sales explained that they are currently working with; Rita Myer from Minnesota who has sales experience in that area, and some third party meeting planners in the Omaha, Kansas City and Chicago areas.
- Commissioner Rettig – Asked what percent the net income before taxes average was off. Bob Pace explained that he did not have that information readily available but referenced the daily average room rates in comparison to competitor's rates.
- Linda Caird explained other initiatives they are undertaking to reduce excess spending. They are reviewing every line item in the budget and evaluating ways to decrease spending.

Other Questions/Discussion:

- Commissioner Rettig asked about the increases on line items: Marine Fuel Tax (MFT), Parks & Institutional Roads (P&I), REAP '09 & '10 and questioned by how much it had been increased. Michelle Wilson explained that a portion of the REAP open spaces funding will be used to help pay a portion of the bond payment in June and the MFT were to cover the dock changes which are in process now with the architect. Commissioner Rettig wanted it noted that the State's expenditures was not voted on by any commission and has increased on this project over \$2.2M in the last month. Deputy Director Boddy explained that the department was obligated to figure out a way to pay the bond payment. Commissioner Garst commented that it had been in the budget for awhile now. Commissioner Rettig noted that these items were not on the budget 60 days ago. Deputy Director Boddy stated that what had previously not been on the budget was the obligation to pay the December and June bond payments.

5. CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

5.1 OTTER CREEK WMA, TAMA COUNTY – PUMP STATION & DIKE REPAIR

This project consists of removal of silt in several locations, repairs to dikes at several sites and incidental work as required by the Plans and the DNR Construction Inspector. The design includes repairs to the #4 dike and pump station ditch to protect the site from future flood damage, as well as silt removal at several sites and repair of an existing parking area site to pre-flood conditions.

This project was designed by Ken Jackson and will be inspected by Jason Kruse, District Inspector. DNR/FEMA estimate is \$160,000. Funding source is FEMA and FY 2009 Supplemental (FY 2010 Capital Link #26). 12 sets of plans were issued. 15 bids were received.

Dostal Construction	Toledo, IA	\$59,785.13
Dolan Excavating LLC	Manchester, IA	\$69,167.98
Peterson Contractors Inc.	Reinbeck, IA	\$70,824.80
Cole Excavating	Greene, IA	\$79,582.69
Con-Struct Inc.	Ames, IA	\$81,552.00
James Waterhouse Construction	Keota, IA	\$87,903.30
JB Holland Construction	Decorah, IA	\$87,965.50
Connolly Construction	Peosta, IA	\$89,618.00
Young Industries Inc.	Blairstown, IA	\$99,963.35
Borst Brothers Construction Inc.	Marion, IA	\$101,230.84
TK Concrete	Pella, IA	\$112,139.00
Tschigffrie Excavating Co.	Dubuque, IA	\$132,157.81
Merrell Bros., Inc.	North Kokomo, IN	\$147,675.88
Barnhart's Custom Services	West Branch, IA	\$152,499.06
Cole Construction Company Inc.	Keosauqua, IA	\$213,250.55

Staff recommends the acceptance of the low bidder, Dostal Construction.

Moved – Commissioner Garst
Seconded - Commissioner Francisco
Discussion - None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

5.2 GREEN VALLEY LAKE, UNION COUNTY – SILT REMOVAL

This project consists of mechanical removal of silt in several locations within the lake bed, placement of silt in an upland disposal site and incidental work as required by the Plans and the DNR Construction Inspector. This project consists of the mechanical removal of silt at several sites within Green Valley Lake, which will return the capacity of the lake to the original intended volume and improve water quality for development of an excellent fisheries re-stocking program, as well as improve angler access to the lake.

This project was designed by Ken Jackson and will be inspected by Mark Johnson, District Inspector. DNR estimate is \$1,750,000. Funding source is Lake Restoration (FY 2010 Capital Link #106). 5 sets of plans were issued. 8 bids were received. The low bidder, JB Holland withdrew their bid due to mistakes made in their bidding.

JB Holland Construction	Decorah, IA	\$967,950.00
Taylor Excavating of Nebraska	Omaha, NE	\$1,100,950.00
Peterson Contractors Inc.	Reinbeck, IA	\$1,249,900.00
C J Moyna & Sons Inc	Elkader, IA	\$1,690,200.00
Kevin Kent Construction	Lucas, IA	\$2,050,825.00
DeLong Construction Inc.	Washington, IA	\$2,709,000.00
DRC Emergency Services LLC	Mobile, AL	\$2,841,915.00
Yost Excavating	Nebraska City, NE	\$3,049,000.00

Staff recommends the acceptance of the second lowest bidder, Taylor Excavating of Nebraska.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – Commissioner Garst asked why there was no mention of watershed work being done on this project. Mike McGhee, Fisheries Bureau, assured the commission that work was being done with NRCS on watershed in the area. Commissioner Garst suggested that an assessment form be created to accompany projects like this summarizing topics such as: what percentage of a watershed project is perennial covered, what percent is cropped no till, what percent of the landscape has been treated with waterways, etc. Commissioner Schemmel asked what would happen if a contractor were to breach a contract agreement by either quitting, going bankrupt, etc.; i.e. are projects protected by bonding? Don Labate, Engineering Bureau Chief and Tamara Mullen, DNR Legal Counsel explained that there are performance bonds in place on every project to protect the state. Don Labate also added that it is a very rare occurrence; in the seven years he has been with the DNR there have only been approximately six projects out of hundreds that had to go to the bonding company.

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

5.3 MISSOURI RIVER FISHERIES, MONONA COUNTY – STORAGE BUILDING

This project consists of the construction of a 40' x 80' pole-type, metal-skinned, storage building with concrete floor attached to an existing 40' x 40' shop and lab building as shown on the drawings.

This project was designed by Thierry Amice and will be inspected by Jeff Felts, DNR Inspector. DNR estimate is \$110,000. Funding source is Fish and Wildlife Trust and Fisheries Non-Habitat Stamp (FY10 Capital Link #15). 10 sets of plans were issued. 7 bids were received.

L&L Builders Co.	Sioux City, IA	\$91,391.92
Wiese Construction	Cushing, IA	\$102,300.80
H&H Builders Inc.	Kingsley, IA	\$115,000.18
HCI Construction	South Sioux City, IA	\$122,292.80
Scherrin, INC.	Cherokee, IA	\$124,876.00

KP Construction	Sergeant Bluff, IA	\$132,981.20
IROC Builders	Fort Madison, IA	\$137,765.60

Staff recommends the acceptance of the low bidder, L&L Builders Inc.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher
Seconded – Commissioner Schemmel
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

5.4 LAKE MACBRIDE STATE PARK, JOHNSON COUNTY – FEMA REPAIR

The purpose of this project is to replace riprap in Lake Macbride that was affected by the 2008 flood. This project includes repairing 11 habitat islands, 4 fishing jetties and 1,600 feet of shoreline. Because shoreline access to damaged areas is very poor, lake will be drawn down approximately 5’ starting November 18, 2009. This should expose a sufficient amount of lakebed for the contractor to use without negatively affecting the aquatic life. This is the last time the lake is expected to be lowered in the near future. Future shoreline repairs will require a barge to place the riprap.

Riprap prevents wave action from eroding the banks.

This project was designed by Heath Delzell and will be inspected by Heath Delzell, District Inspector. DNR estimate is \$87,000. Funding source is FEMA and FY 2009 Supplemental (FY 2010 Capital Link #26). 10 sets of plans were issued. 10 bids were received.

TK Concrete	Pella, IA	\$61,915.00
Connolly Construction	Peosta, IA	\$64,960.00
Hatch Grading & Contracting	Dysart, IA	\$68,005.00
Borst Bros Construction Co.	Marion, IA	\$72,790.00
Jay Proffitt Construction	Solon, IA	\$77,952.00
EXCO Inc.	Solon, IA	\$78,735.00
Iowa City Excavating & Grading	Coralville, IA	\$79,448.40
Peterson Contractors Inc.	Reinbeck, IA	\$86,710.00
Evergreen Lawn Care & Landscaping	Dyersville, IA	\$86,971.00
CAJ Enterprises	West Branch, IA	\$94,859.00

Staff recommends the acceptance of the low bidder, TK Concrete.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher
Seconded – Commissioner Garst
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

5.5 CENTER LAKE, DICKINSON COUNTY – HANDICAPPED ACCESS FISHING PIER

This project consists of the construction of a handicapped access fishing pier that will improve shore angler access by enabling them to fish more productive waters. The pier features a steel frame with wood decking and railings with 8 handicapped accessible stations.

This project was designed by Andy Case and Ken Jackson, DNR Engineer, and will be inspected by Jeff Felts, District Inspector. DNR estimate is \$62,600. Funding source is Federal Dingle Johnson and Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund - Fisheries (FY 2010 Capital Link #18). 5 sets of plans were issued. 2 bids were received.

Christensen Construction & Design Co.	Estherville, IA	\$72,088.16
Graves Construction	Spencer, IA	\$99,752.50

Staff recommends the acceptance of the low bidder, Christensen Construction & Design Co.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Garst
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

6. SMALL CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS CONTRACTS

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

The following projects have been let utilizing the Competitive Quotation process for projects \$100,000 or less:

BID DATE	PROJECT	COUNTY	AREA	DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATE	BIDS
10/29/09	10-02-95-01	Winnebago	Anderson WRP	Wetland Restoration	\$20,102.00	\$16,007.26
						\$21,857.50
						\$27,288.80
						\$30,951.00
11/5/09	10-02-77-03	Polk	Big Creek State Park	Replace Concession Building Roof	\$15,000.00	\$12,250.00
						\$13,417.00
11/19/09	10-05-86-02	Tama	Iowa River WMA	Flood Damage Repairs	\$50,000.00	\$28,973.00
						\$35,975.00
						\$39,942.21
						\$45,813.23

7. LAND ACQUISITION PROJECTS

7.1 STONE STATE PARK – WOODBURY COUNTY – INHF

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the acquisition of a tract of land located within the city limits of Sioux City adjacent to the south side of Stone State Park. The parcel has been approved for a REAP-Public/Private Grant. The 58-acre tract is offered by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation for the REAP award of \$143,625.00. The land was appraised for \$191,500.00.

Licensed appraiser, Robert A. Rosno of Associated Appraisers of Siouxland, Inc., Sioux City, Iowa submitted the appraisal. The negotiator/closing agent is Jerry Gibson.

The 58-acre tract is adjacent to the southern boundary of Stone State Park with access on the north via Malloy Road (privately owned road). The tract consists of mostly grassland on the east with wooded ridges to the west. The surrounding area is in the process of being developed with residential acreages.

Acquisition funding will be REAP Public/Private cost share (Capital Link #185). Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department. Real estate acquired by the DNR with REAP funding is eligible to remain on county property tax rolls.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher

Seconded – Commissioner Francisco

Discussion – Commissioner Garst asked how the gift would be acknowledged. Travis Baker, Reality Services Supervisor explained that it would be included in the annual recognition day.

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

7.2 CONSERVATION EASEMENT – WINNESHIEK COUNTY – WENMARK

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to accept the donation of a conservation easement on 63 acres in Winneshiek County. This easement shall serve to protect wooded land that is adjacent to DNR land that is part of the Coldwater Creek WMA. Aaron and Sheila Wemark of Cresco, IA offer the donation of this easement.

Dan Kinsinger negotiated this easement.

The property is located northwest of Decorah and northeast of Cresco, IA and adjoins the north edge of the Coldwater Creek Wildlife Management Area. The land is a mix of steep rolling timber and tillable land that is currently all enrolled in CRP.

The Wemarks are conservation minded and want to protect their land for future generations. Harvesting of timber will be consistent with a Forest Stewardship Plan that is developed by a DNR forester or by a professional forester that is approved by the DNR. Agricultural cropping on designated tillable land will be allowed subject to USDA compliance and so long as it does not negatively impact the conservation intent of the easement. The owners will continue to receive CRP payments on the land under CRP contract. The tillable acreage cannot be increased

once the easement is in place. The easement will restrict construction of any buildings and will not allow for any splitting or subdivision of the property.

The conservation easement will be monitored by Wildlife Bureau personnel.

No survey costs are anticipated. The cost of a certified real estate appraisal to serve as a basis for the value of the development rights given up by the encumbrance of the conservation easement along with incidental closing costs will also be the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the easement acquisition.

Moved – Commissioner Garst
Seconded – Commissioner Francisco
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

7.3 BAYS BRANCH WMA – GUTHRIE COUNTY – MOTSICK, WILLIAM

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the acquisition of a tract of land located in Guthrie County. This 180.1-acre tract is offered by William Motsick for the appraised price of \$747,415.00.

Licensed appraiser, Donald P. Kearns, Smith Land Service Co., Atlantic, Iowa submitted the appraisal. The purchase agreement was negotiated by Jerry Gibson.

The property is located approximately three miles north and two miles east of Panorama, and is adjacent to DNR and Fish & Wildlife Service land on all sides. The tract is bisected by 190th Street, and is accessible by local gravel road on the west. The property consists of 134.2 acres of tillable land; 22 acres of permanent pasture; and 23.9 acres of road right-of-way and waste. DNR management of the land will result in approximately 20 acres of cropland; 29 acres of pasture; 120 acres seeded to native prairie species; and 10 acres of restored wetland. This will provide nesting habitat for waterfowl and upland wildlife.

The property will managed by the Wildlife Bureau. No fencing or surveying costs are anticipated.

Acquisition funding will be 75% Pittman-Robertson, and 25% Wildlife Habitat Stamp (capital link #65). The property will remain on the property tax roll. Incidental closing costs are the responsibility of the Department.

Staff recommends approval of the land acquisition.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Garst
Discussion – Commissioner Garst asked if the right of first refusal would be included in the agreement. Travis Baker responded that it could be requested but it was not currently part of the agreement. He would check into the possibility.
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

8. CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION GENERAL FUND BUREAUS UPDATE

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

Staff will provide a presentation on the current status of the bureaus funded with General Funds, including the expected impact for FY2011.

Moved – N/A
Seconded – N/A
Discussion – Commissioner Garst stated that parks are seasonal in nature and the current budget problems are not going away anytime soon and therefore suggested that the department consider reducing the number of full-time employees in parks and replacing them with seasonal employees.
Motion – N/A

9. AGREEMENT BETWEEN IA DNR AND DUCKS UNLIMITED, INC.

The Commission is asked to approve an agreement between the Department and Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) for support of waterfowl and wetland habitat restoration activities in Saskatchewan, Canada. The agreement is in the amount of \$36,000 which represents 15% of annual revenue generated from the Iowa migratory bird fee (i.e., State Duck Stamp) which is required in order to hunt waterfowl in Iowa. This agreement has been in place nearly every year since the duck stamp fee was established.

Moved – Commissioner Garst
Seconded – Commissioner Francisco
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

**10. AWARD: 2008 SPORT FISHERY DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT
OUTSTANDING SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROJECT OF THE YEAR**

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

**** NOTE ****

Item not presented due to weather. Presenter & presentee’s were unable to attend meeting due to road conditions.

The annual Sport Fish Restoration outstanding project awards given by the Fisheries Administration Section of the American Fisheries Society are intended to both highlight the importance and effectiveness of the Sport Fish Restoration program and recognize excellence in fisheries management, research, and education.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Bureau project; Restoration of Four Southwest Iowa Constructed Lakes was selected to receive the 2008 Sport Fish Restoration Award in Sport Fisheries Management and Development.

This Southwest Iowa Lakes Restoration Project addressed lake-basin and watershed problems and was critical to Iowa Department of Natural Resources' efforts to build partnerships and improve water quality, fish habitat and lake access in four important Southwest Iowa lakes. Partnerships (County Conservation Boards, Soil & Water Conservation Districts, Cities, NRCS, IDALS, and cooperating landowners) established during the lake restoration efforts were invaluable for moving forward to address problems at other related lakes and watersheds. Information learned from their study has widespread applicability for numerous lakes throughout Iowa and other surrounding states that suffer from similar problems.

The project is expected to result in significant positive economic impact to Southwest Iowa. According to recent studies by Iowa State University's Center for Agriculture and Rural Development, during the 2002-2005 period, the four Southwest Iowa project lakes averaged 199,625 visitors annually. They spent an average \$14.42 million annually, which in turn supported jobs and labor income to the region.

The project will also result in improved long-term fishery habitat improvement and access for anglers. Success of this project has generated interest and public support for Iowa's Lake Restoration Program, which will lay the foundation for future projects.

Moved – N/A

Seconded – N/A

Discussion – N/A

Motion – N/A

11. CONTRACT WITH CITY OF DES MOINES, IA FOR URBAN FISHING PROGRAM

Commission approval is requested for a two-year year-service contract with the Parks and Recreation Department of Des Moines, IA. The contract will begin on December 1, 2009, and terminate on January 31, 2012. The total amount of this contract shall not exceed \$65,000. DNR shall have the option to renew this contract long as this contract and any extensions do not exceed a six-year period. This contract will be funded through the Aquatic Education Program using Federal Aid to Sportfish Restoration Funds.

This project was initiated by the DNR's Aquatic Education Program in 2008 to develop a partnership with the city of Des Moines Parks and Recreation Department to increase fishing education efforts in the City. It soon became clear that there was a huge demand for fishing education and ready access to quality fisheries that were easily accessible in order for youth and other novice anglers to participate. While there are many small waterbodies in the City, most do not currently support quality fisheries. Partnering with the City of Des Moines to improve fisheries and fishing access and to provide programming for youth/novice anglers with a focus on families will help fulfill a major goal of the DNR's aquatic Education Program to assist youth and novice anglers and the mission of the Department to conserve/enhance natural resources in cooperation with individuals and organizations. This partnership will result in management plans for City of Des Moines fisheries and associated watersheds. It will provide necessary information to submit applications and secure funding to improve and sustain fisheries and water quality and increase youth/family participation in the sport of fishing on City of Des Moines properties. Additionally, the City of Des Moines is interested in studying the watershed areas directly impacting the City property including but not limited to, detention basins, ponds, streams and park properties. The results of this effort will allow the City, through its Park and Recreation Board's Urban Conservation Committee to prioritize capital improvement funds and grant opportunities to improve the urban watersheds specifically addressing flora, fauna and water quality enhancements.

The parties propose to enter into this Contract for the purpose of retaining the Contractor to provide: fishing opportunities for families, novice anglers, and youth to better meet needs of the state's most populous urban area as well as to develop a comprehensive watershed management plan to improve Des Moines' flora, fauna and water quality within its' detention basins, ponds, streams, and park properties.

The City of Des Moines was chosen because most of the public water that can be accessed for fishing in the City is under their purview. They have been actively engaged with the Departments' Aquatic Education Program for the past two years to increase fishing education efforts, and are committed to cost-sharing staff to expand efforts to include fishery improvements (including watershed improvements) for families and youth. The City of Des Moines was the sole source solicited for this agreement because of the City controls the waterbodies of interest.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – None

Motion – Carried by Consent

12. CONTRACT WITH SOUTHWICK ASSOCIATES FOR DATA ANALYSIS OF IOWA LICENSE BUYERS

Commission approval is requested to approve contracting service with Southwick Associates to perform ongoing data analysis and data mining services related to the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) electronic licensing databases to better understand trends, demographics, purchasing behaviors, etc. of DNR customers. The overall goal is to increase recruitment and retention of license buyers and their participation in outdoor recreation in Iowa.

For several years the Iowa DNR has undertaken marketing efforts to increase recruitment and retention of license buyers. Data analysis of license buyer information and trends is critical to creating effective customer service and marketing strategies, so that the DNR can make informed decisions, understand its customers better, and track program effectiveness.

The DNR sells licenses through an electric licensing system, collecting data that includes: name, address, zip code, age, gender and license types being purchased, for every license year since 2002. Additionally, the DNR has other databases with customer data on camping reservations, boat/ATV/snowmobile registrations and magazine subscriptions. Southwick Associates will perform data analysis, data mining and market research, especially related to natural resources/outdoor recreation, to provide the data evaluation function of several major marketing and customer analysis projects.

Analysis projects for this contract period include:

- Analyzing customers with specific license purchase types to determine opportunities for developing new license types (i.e. combination licenses),
- Merge hunting/fishing license databases with others managed by the DNR and analyze customers to determine new opportunities for customer service, communication, education and marketing.

Examples of other analysis projects could include, but are not limited to:

- Creating marketing customer lists based on demographics, geographic location and/or past purchase behaviors and then tracking results of marketing programs,
- Incorporating outside list analysis sources such as ESRI's Tapestry™ to create more effective customer profiles,
- Analysis of survey data compiled by the DNR.

This is a one year contract based on a per-hour cost and not to exceed \$50,000. The DNR has the sole option to renew and extend this Contract for subsequent periods, adding up to no more than 6 years total. The number of projects per year will be determined on an ongoing basis dependent on priorities and funding.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher

Seconded – Commissioner Francisco

Discussion – None

Motion – Carried 6-Yes 1-No (Rettig)

13. PETITION FOR REMOVAL OF THE CLOSED SEASON ON WALLEYE IN THE IOWA GREAT LAKES

On October 21, 2009, John Tonsfeldt of Spirit Lake petitioned the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to consider removing the closed season on walleye in the Iowa Great Lakes (West Okoboji, East Okoboji, & Spirit Lakes).

Staff has reviewed this petition and has these comments:

1. Currently the closed season for walleye on the Iowa Great Lakes (IGL) runs from February 15 to May 1, 2010. The lakes that are closed include: West Okoboji Lake, East Okoboji Lake, and Spirit Lake. These are the only inland lakes, with the exception of some Iowa-Minnesota boundary lakes, that have a closed season.
2. There has been a long standing tradition in the IGL of a closed walleye season. The closed season has been in place since 1876 or 133 years. That tradition has meant a walleye opener that attracts a large number of anglers to the IGL annually for the “Great Walleye Weekend.” The reason for the opener has not been maintained solely because of a “tagged fishing contest.” That event could occur at any time during the fishing season. This event coincides with the walleye opener to maximize participation and fund-raising for the Easter Seals of Iowa.
3. The IGL is the largest source of walleye eggs for the Iowa DNR walleye hatchery production (Rathbun and Storm Lake are the other two sources). Broodstock collection typically occurs sometime during the month of April on these lakes. The closed season allows DNR staff to collect broodstock with little interference from anglers. Angler interference could create substantial issues for DNR crews. Currently a total of 7 two person crews from all over the state come to assist in this effort. Entanglement of boats in these nets at night causes interference with netting and a potential hazard for boaters. If interference is great enough, it could result in additional financial resources spent (increased number of nights netted) or a reduction in the number of walleye stocked (inadequate number of eggs collected).
4. In the past the DNR has utilized anesthetics to ease the handling of broodstock fish. Some of these drugs have a withdrawal period before the fish is safe for human consumption. The closed season allows the use of these drugs without the need for a consumption advisory. Currently the DNR does not use any anesthetics when handling walleye; however a continuous season would prevent their use in the future.
5. Closed seasons are occasionally utilized by fish managers to protect adult stocks from overharvest. Concentrations of walleye on near-shore areas make them vulnerable to anglers during this time, however most fish caught are males (which don’t need protection). Large females are vulnerable to ice anglers during the late winter (February and March); and although the number harvested may not have a significant impact on the current population we have no data to confirm this.

6. The sociological aspect of the existing regulation is worthy of consideration. In the IGL there is a perception that anglers are protecting walleye broodstock with the closed season - making more fish available to the DNR for walleye hatchery production.

The closed walleye season at the IGL has a long tradition, is socially accepted, and perceived by anglers to benefit walleye fishing in Iowa. While there is no biological evidence that the closed season protects walleye populations from overharvest, there is considerable value in maintaining the closed season to eliminate angler interference with DNR walleye netting crews. In addition, the closed season would allow the use of anesthetics or other therapeutics to reduce handling stress and protect broodstock fish health if deemed appropriate in the future.

The NRC is requested to approve the recommendation to deny the petition to remove the closed season on walleye in the IGL. Fisheries Bureau staff believe there must be wide public support and evidence of economic benefit from a change in the regulation before we can fully consider this request.

<p>Moved – Commissioner Kircher Seconded – Commissioner Francisco Discussion – None Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote</p>

14. CHAPTER 15, GENERAL LICENSE REGULATIONS – FINAL

Natural Resource Commission approval is requested to amend Chapter 15 “General License Regulation.” Chapter 15 provides the general requirements for various licenses of the Department.

The proposed amendments redefine severe mental disability and severe physical disability; establishes a means to verify low income persons; substitutes a free lifetime fishing license with a free annual fishing license; clarifies procedure in administering a free fishing or hunting license; permits enforcement capability in revoking licenses issued in violation of this rule; and provides a mechanism through which the department may modify, suspend or revoke licenses of persons who owe the State of Iowa money pursuant to Iowa Code chapter 272D. These changes will conform the department’s licensing requirements to existing and new state laws and programs.

No letter or verbal comments were received during the public comment period and no comments were received to letters sent to four organizations that provide guided hunting trips to people with disabilities and to the Iowa Division of Persons with Disabilities. No one attended the public meeting.

<p>Moved – Commissioner Francisco Seconded – Commissioner Kircher Discussion – None Motion – Carried by Consent</p>
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15. CHAPTER 113, RESTITUTION FOR POLLUTION CAUSING INJURY TO WILD ANIMALS – FINAL

The Department requests Commission approval to amend Chapter 113, Restitution for Pollution Causing Injury to Wild Animals.

Chapter 113 provides for compensation to the state and public for damages to wildlife resulting from water pollution. For fish loss specifically, the rule authorizes the use of the American Fisheries Society's special publication on fish counting methods and restitution valuation. The following changes are to be made: (1) update the definition of "AFS" in the rule to state the American Fisheries Society special Publication 30 shall be used and (2) revise the fish species to be valued at \$15 a fish unless the AFS publication requires a higher value, in which case the higher value shall be applied.

No letter or verbal comments were received during the public comment. No one attended the October 6, 2009 public hearing.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Kircher
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

16. STARR'S CAVE STATE PRESERVE – APPEAL OF DENIAL FOR TRAIL CONSTRUCTION, 2ND HEARING

At its April 9, 2009 meeting, the Natural Resource Commission heard an appeal from the Des Moines County Conservation Board regarding decisions by the State Preserves Advisory Board and the DNR Director to deny a Sovereign Lands Construction Permit for development of the Flint River Recreation Trail through Starr's Cave State Preserve and to permit bicycle use. After discussion, the Commission remanded the issue to the State Preserves Advisory Board. At their meeting on October 28, 2009, the Preserves Board reconsidered the trail issue in light of a field tour, evaluation of alternative routes, and discussion of measures for reducing environmental impacts. The Board entertained a motion to approve construction of the bike trail through the Preserve with several conditions, but this motion failed on a 3-3 vote. Assenting members agreed that while an off-preserve route would have been preferred, modifications to the original plan were reasonable, but dissenting members cited the fundamental mission of preserves to areas in their natural condition.

The issue now returns to the Commission for decision. If the Commission votes to approve the trail, thus disagreeing with the Preserves Board, the issue will go to arbitration at the Governor's Office. If the Commission agrees with the Preserves Board and votes to disapprove the trail, the Des Moines County Conservation Board can seek redress via judicial review in district court, having exhausted their administrative remedies.

Moved (1) – Commissioner Francisco

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – Commissioner Francisco asked how much of the land outside of the active recreation area had been mined. John Pearson responded approximately 5 acres. Commissioner Garst asked when the bridge to the cave had been built. Kim Perlstein, Des Moines County Conservation Board (DMCCB) responded that it had been built in 2005. Commissioner Schemmel asked if the trail went over the bridge. John Pearson responded that it did not. John Pearson then summarized the concerns of the State Preserves Board (SPAB) in reference to the proposed trail. Commissioner Garst commented that she had recently toured the preserve and expressed how disturbed she was at the condition of the land; noting that in her opinion it had not been managed well. However, she was pleased to see that some efforts were being made to remove invasive honeysuckle. She agreed that the trails should be relocated to minimize land disturbance, and therefore cannot be in favor of the proposed trail change as it would allow traffic through the center of the property; this would not accomplish the goal of minimizing the footprint and would not be very sustainable. She then asked about the option to decommission the preserve and wanted to know what would be involved in the process. John Pearson explained that it would require approval from NRC, SPAB, the Governor, and the majority vote from the State Legislature. Commissioner Garst then asked about substitute lands in the surrounding area. Kim Perlstein, DMCCB advised that they manage 18 parks and substitution was something that could be reviewed, but had not previously been discussed as an option. Diane Ford, DNR Conservation & Recreation Division explained that the main purpose of a state preserve is to give the highest level of protection to areas deemed as ‘gems’ for perpetuity purposes. John Pearson gave further history of why Starr’s Cave Preserve is such an important geological treasure to Iowa. Director Leopold commented about the input he had received both for and against the proposed trail change. He stressed the importance of the definition of a “preserve.” John Pearson then reviewed the reasonable conditions in which SPAB had set forth in the approved Resource Inventory and Ecological Management Plan. Deputy Director Boddy explained that the SPAB understanding was that if the proposed trail had been voted in favor of, the language in the management plan would clearly delineate that it was not to set any kind of precedence about bicycle use in any other state preserve. Commissioner Francisco commented that the NRC did not operate on precedence, and as such they have never went back to review previous NRC decisions before taking a new action on an item before them.

Moved (2) – Commissioner Francisco moved to amend motion to include the reasonable conditions set forth by SPAB in the approved Management Plan.

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – Commissioner Drees asked about the easements that had been obtained on both sides of the proposed trail and wanted to know when that process of obtaining those had begun. DMCCB responded that it started in the summer of 2006, and while going to SPAB they had actively pursued the easements. Commissioner Drees then asked if those initial easements had been obtained with or without the knowledge of the DNR or SPAB. The representative speaking for the DMCCB responded that it was unknown if communications with the DNR and SPAB had taken place about the easements of surrounding lands. Commissioner Drees expressed concern of the lack of communications. Kim Perlstein, DMCCB further explained the history behind the easements. The Commission addressed concerns of environmental impacts the proposed trail would have on the land. Tamara Mullen, DNR Legal Council gave a summary of the procedural

history of the item before the commission for the benefit of the new commissioners. Commissioner Garst suggested a future agenda item in the future in reference to the budget available to SPAB for the maintenance of this preserve.

Roll Call Vote:

Commissioner Drees - No
 Commissioner Francisco - Yes
 Commissioner Garst - No
 Commissioner Kircher - Yes
 Commissioner Schemmel – No
 Commissioner Rettig - Yes
 Commissioner Underwood - No

Motion – Failed - 3-Yes 4-No

17. WATER TRAILS CREW CONTRACT WITH MINNESOTA CONSERVATION CORPS

The Commission is requested to approve a 3-year-service contract not to exceed \$210,000 with Minnesota Conservation Corps, Inc., Minneapolis, MN, dba Conservation Corps Iowa, to implement water trails through site design and trained work crews. The funding source for this appropriation will be the General Assembly's FY2010 water trails/low-head dams implementation appropriation (RIIF special appropriation under HF822).

Minnesota Conservation Corps has been a 501(c)3 non-profit entity contracting for hire primarily with public agencies since 2003. It currently operates with grant assistance from AmeriCorps. In 2009, they expanded work into Iowa under the name Conservation Corps Iowa.

Minnesota DNR's Water Trails program has been using an MCC water trails crew since MCC's inception. The Iowa Water Trails crew will benefit from a well-established system of training for this crew, which will include swiftwater rescue, basic and advance chain-saw, shoreline restoration BMPs, mapping/GPS, canoeing skills, first aid, interacting with public, and master planning. The party proposes to provide a turn-key service that includes a fully-equipped 4-person seasonal work-crew crew (70 ten-hour days per year), a site designer / work crew planner who will assist year-round in project development and a ¾ ton pick-up truck with trailer.

The program is open to 18-24 year olds. It will provide transitional work and conservation experience in difficult economic times for young adults.

Project work will be prioritized in two ways:

- 1) Departmental priorities on state lands, including portage improvements and signage upgrades/maintenance at dams, launches and landings, remote campsites, and other water trails amenities.
- 2) A competitive process will be available to designated water trail developers (consisting primarily of county conservation boards) and entities with open grants developing water trails.

This contract will provide needed services and lead to consistent implementation of the water trails and low-head dam statewide plan mandated under HF822.

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Kircher
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

18. FY2010 WATER TRAILS PROGRAM GRANTS

The Commission is requested to approve the FY2010 Water Trails program grants. From the General Assembly's FY2010 water trails/low-head dams implementation appropriation (RIIF special appropriation under HF822), the Department has prioritized \$80,000 in funding for water trails project implementation funds.

Six projects submitted on or before Oct. 31, 2009 have been screened by our scoring committee for viability, proper expenditure of public funds, and likelihood of success. Scorers for this round of applications include John Pearson (DNR), Diane Lowry (citizen), Mark Wise (citizen), Bernie Hoyer (DNR), and Nate Hoogeveen (DNR). The recommended state fiscal year 2010 awards include:

Project	Applicant	Amount requested	AWARD RECOMMENDED	Score
Middle River Water Trail	Madison CCB	\$20,402	\$20,402	94
Raccoon River Water Trail (Polk County)	City of Des Moines Parks & Recreation	\$11,362	\$11,362	92
Red Rock Lake Water Trail	Red Rock Lake Association	\$33,224	\$33,224	89
Iowa River Water Trail	City of Iowa City	\$6,776	\$6,776	84
Dubuque Water Trail	City of Dubuque	\$6,000	\$6,000	82
Quad Cities Water Trails	River Action, Inc	\$10,000	\$2,236	81

The Department recommends entering into cost-share agreements with the above-mentioned parties to accomplish the projects identified in their respective applications. If any applicants decline funds or are unable to meet their obligations under an agreement developed, the grant that did not receive full funding will receive funding.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher
Seconded – Commissioner Francisco
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

19. DONATIONS

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve the following donations:

Donation to:	Amount	Description	Donation Provided by (Name/Org):
Iowa DNR	\$50.00	Five duck calls for use at the Becoming and Outdoors Women Workshop	Buck Gardner Calls Warehouse
Law Enforcement - Hunter Education Program	\$96.00	Six small duck decoy bags for use in youth education programs	Hunter's Specialties
Wapsipinicon State Park	\$880.73	The concrete preparation base for a playground restoration project after flood damage	BARD Concrete
Elk Rock State Park	\$1,000.00	Funds to support the work to transform a service road into an all-weather public use trail	Friends of Elk Rock
Wapsipinicon State Park	\$5,668.78	The concrete preparation base for a playground restoration project after flood damage	Anamosa Charities
Elk Rock State Park	\$7,025.00	Use of a road maintainer, skid loader with roller, fuel, and labor to level and rock a portion of service road to transform it into an all-weather public use trail	Lois Vermeer Vermeer Foundation

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Kircher
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Consent

20. CHAPTER 12, CONSERVATION EDUCATION – NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

The Commission is requested to approve this Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 12, Conservation Education

Presently, the administrative rules that pertain to the Law Enforcement Bureau’s education programs are contained in 571 I.A.C. 15.9. These rules were initially written for the hunter education program but have been modified over the years to incorporate additional education programs on boating, snowmobiling, all-terrain vehicles, snow groomer operation, fur harvesters, and bow hunting.

The Bureau has rewritten these rules to clarify the requirements of each program, and to further delineate instructor certification criteria.

It is also proposed that these rules be moved from 571 I.A.C. 15, “General License Regulations,” to 571 I.A.C. 12, “Conservation Education.”

Moved – Commissioner Francisco
Seconded – Commissioner Garst
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

21. CHAPTER 44, SPECIAL EVENTS – NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

The Commission is requested to approve this Notice of Intended Action to amend Chapter 44, Special Events.

At the present time, the statutory requirements regarding rules for snowmobile and all-terrain vehicle special events are not met; 571 I.A.C. Chapter 44 only contains special event permit requirements for boating.

The Law Enforcement Bureau is amending Chapter 44 to establish special event permit requirements for ATVs and snowmobiles, while also updating the boating requirements. The proposed rules also address and support the Department's new centralized special events application system.

These rules do not apply to special events that are governed by the Department's fisheries bureau, Parks bureau, or Wildlife bureau.

Moved – Commissioner Kircher
Seconded – Commissioner Francisco
Discussion – None
Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

22. CONSTRUCTION PROJECT - LEWIS & CLARK STATE PARK, MONONA COUNTY – VISITOR CENTER COMPLETION

This project consists of the construction activities required to complete the Visitor Center as shown on the Drawings and as specified in the project manual. The building construction was started in 2003 and most of the structural and exterior work has been completed as well as the building envelope. The building was initially designed in FY 2002 and initially let in 2003. The design of this project, as always, was accomplished with particular attention to sustainability, handicapped accessibility and vandal resistance. Every effort was made to design with sustainable materials and equipment. The roof is of low maintenance metal. The windows are double glazed with low energy glass. The facility is designed to be handicapped accessible in accordance with requirements of the state building code and the American Disability Act.

This project was designed by Thierry Amice and Don Labate and will be inspected by Jeff Felts, District Inspector. DNR Estimate is \$675,000. Funding source is Federal Grants and REAP Open Spaces Acquisition and Development (FY 2010 Capital Link #150). 20 sets of plans were issued. 8 bids were received. The two lowest bidders have requested to be dropped from consideration due to errors in their bids.

HW Design Build of Iowa LLC	Sioux City, IA	\$700,977.00
H&H Builders Inc.	Kingsley, IA	\$818,738.15
L&L Builders Co.	Sioux City, IA	\$877,818.00
Fauss Construction Inc.	Hooper, NE	\$914,460.00
Vieco Development & Construction Co.	Saint Joseph, MO	\$979,031.00
Holtz Construction Co.	Sioux City, IA	\$1,019,013.00
HCI Construction	South Sioux City, NE	\$1,069,461.00
Cornerstone Commercial Contractors	Corning, IA	\$1,080,356.00

Staff recommends the acceptance of the next low bidder, L&L Builders Co.

Moved (1) – Commissioner Garst

Seconded – Commissioner Francisco

Discussion – Commissioner Schemmel asked how many years the project had been in progress. Don Labate explained the project had originally been contracted in 2003 through a 28E Agreement between the DNR and Monona County with the Friends of Discovery group heading the fundraising efforts. Unfortunately, the Friends group ran into fundraising issues, causing building construction to be at a standstill for approximately six years. The Commission expressed concerns about: ownership of the building, the funding history, future cost to the state to complete construction, and the future operation and maintenance costs. Tamara Mullen, DNR Legal Counsel advised that the current 28E Agreement could be amended to address the ownership and co-occupancy issues. The Commission agreed that they would like to see the agreement amended so that ownership of the facility would go to the department upon construction completion.

Moved (2) – Commissioner Rettig moved to table the item until further information (28E Agreement) could be supplied to the commission for review.

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – Commissioner Garst suggested to delaying any decision on this item for one month. Kevin Szcodronski explained that the 28E Agreement could be supplied to the Commission today for review.

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote to table the item

Moved (3) – Commissioner Francisco moved to bring item#22 off the table.

Seconded – Commissioner Kircher

Discussion – Kevin Szcodronski supplied the Commissioners with a copy of the current 28E Agreement, as well as a project summary sheet outlining the agreement history and financing by the DNR, Monona County and Friends of Discovery. He noted that this project is already incorporated into the department's FY10 Capital Projects Plan budget. He also advised the Commission that he would reopen discussions with Monona County to inquire if they are now willing to amend the 28E Agreement to address the Commission's concerns so that the facility may be completed. Commissioner Francisco asked where the lease savings would go if the fisheries/wildlife field staff in the area were to move into this facility. Kevin Szcodronski responded that the savings would stay in the Fish & Wildlife Trust Fund. Tamara Mullen explained that she had yet to see the terms of the DOT grants and she is concerned of possible completion terms. She will research further. The Commission would like to know the restrictions there may be on the funding sources.

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote

Moved (4) – Commissioner Kircher moved to retable item again until further information could be presented to address the commission’s concerns of occupancy and grant monies and clarification of 28E Agreement after new discussions with Monona County have taken place.

Seconded – Commissioner Rettig

Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote to retable the item

23. NATURAL RESOURCE BASED BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES GRANT PROGRAM

Commission approval is requested for the committee recommendations for the Natural Resource Based Business Opportunities Grant (NRBBOG) Program. A total of \$237,500 was appropriated from the DNR Environment First Fund for the development of projects related to natural resource-based business opportunities; an additional \$12,500 was made available to the Department to administer the program, for a total appropriation of \$250,000. Local Resource Conservation and Development boards (RC&D) sponsored by county governments or Soil and Water conservation Districts were eligible to receive funding on a competitive basis that the application identified a dollar for dollar or in-kind match.

The Natural Resource Based Business Opportunities Grant Program Review Committee consisting of Jim Frederick (Vice President Iowa League of RC&Ds), Dennis Schwab (Secretary Iowa League of RC&Ds), Duane McFadden, (Treasurer Iowa League of RC&Ds), Mike Brandrup of Webster City, and Warren Johnson (Executive Director Iowa League of RC&Ds) convened on November 9, 2009, to review 22 RC&D projects requesting \$458,858 in funding. Based upon a competitive scoring system that create or enhance natural resource-based businesses for local economic development by using natural resources in a sustainable way, the Department requests approval of the grants listed below (see attached summary description for each project):

The Department recommends fully funding the top ranked projects and using the newly allocated funds of \$237,500, along with an additional \$112,000 of undistributed funds from previous grant cycles. Undistributed funds declined by the RC&D are due to incompleteness of their project within the two-year project period.

Applicant	Project	Grant Request
Prairie Partners RC&D	North Central Iowa Mitigation bank	\$25,000
IA Heartland RC&D	Expanding Hoksey Native Seeds	\$25,000
NE Iowa RC&D	Emilea's Enterprises	\$25,000
IA Heartland RC&D	Building Capacity of Year Round Markets for Local Food	\$25,000
Golden Hills RC&D	Western Skies Resource Inventory	\$14,850
Southern Iowa RC&D	Southern Iowa Fresh Food and Farm Initiative	\$25,000
Prairie Winds RC&D	Outdoor Adventures, Inc.	\$9,350
Prairie Partners RC&D	NR Based Tourism Trail	\$12,650
Pathfinders RC&D	Development of Iowa's 1st Folk School	\$25,000
Cedar Valley RC&D	Upper Wapsi WILDS Promotion	\$19,600
Golden Hills RC&D	Honey Creek Creamery Goat Dairy	\$25,000
Pathfinders RC&D	Sowing the Seeds for Local Food Enterprises	\$19,500

Prairie Rivers of Iowa RC&D	Brushy Creek Stables	\$25,000
Limestone Bluffs RC&D	Mississippi River Boat Building Initiative	\$25,000
Iowa Lakes RC&D	Stimulating Iowa Economic through the Wildlife Action Plan	\$17,500
Cedar Valley RC&D	Building Natural Resource Based Business Capacity inn Iowa	\$16,500
Total		\$334,950

The projects described in the table below represent the unsuccessful grant applicants. They are provided for the Commission's information but are not recommended for funding at this time.

Unsuccessful Projects		Grant Request
NE Iowa RC&D	River Bluffs Campground	\$25,000
NE Iowa RC&D	Grass Run Farm, Inc	\$25,000
NE Iowa RC&D	The Pepperfield Project	\$25,000
Prairie Rivers of Iowa RC&D	Natural Resource Building Center	\$24,948
Golden Hills RC&D	Interpreting Watchable Wildlife	\$22,430
		\$122,378

Natural Resource Based Business Opportunities Grant Program FY 2010 Summaries of Recommended Projects

North Central Iowa Mitigation Bank – Prairie Partners RC&D will develop a business that will implement and coordinate a wetland mitigation bank designed to serve farmland and public needs within local watershed management projects. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$49,000.

Expanding Hoksey Native Seeds – Iowa Heartland RC&D will partner with Hoksey Native seeds to expand their native prairie seed business with a value-added component of Iowa certified local eco-type prairie plugs. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$50,000

Emilea's Enterprises – Northeast Iowa RC&D will work to establish two businesses: Honey Creek Creamery, Inc. will create a value added goat cheese dairy and adjunct business will be created to provide goat vegetation management for Hitchcock Nature Centers with goats culled from the dairy herd. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$89,000.

Western Skies Resource Inventory – Golden Hills RC&D will work as project lead for the Western Skies Scenic Byway to complete a natural resource based study and inventory of the Byway Geographic Information Systems. This project will utilize \$14,850 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$15,000.

Southern Iowa Fresh Food and Farm Initiative – Southern Iowa RC&D will develop a “Buy Fresh Buy Local” regional food system that creates local food associated jobs, sustains natural resource, and enhances economic development. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$25,000.

Outdoor Adventures, Inc. – Prairie Winds RC&D will provide working capital critical to the operations of Outdoor Adventures, Inc. which provides canoe, kayak, paddle boat, tube rentals, and transportation to patrons who desire to recreate on rivers, streams, and lakes in North Central Iowa. This project will utilize \$9,350 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$10,300.

Natural Resource Based Tourism Trail – Prairie Partners RC&D will partner with River Valley Orchards and Winery to develop and interpretive trail through various plantings at the orchard, marketing and promotion through signage and information development, developing partnerships, and enhancing the amenities at the orchard. This project will utilize \$12,650 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match \$12,950.

Development of Iowa's 1st Folk School – Pathfinders RC&D will partner with Villages Folk School in Van Buren County to hire a part-time coordinator, develop weekend classes, and market the school to residents within a 200 mile radius. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$25,040.

Upper Wapsi WILDS Promotion – Cedar Valley RC&D will work to promote natural resources and outdoor recreation in the Upper Wapsipinicon River Watershed while connecting businesses and opportunities in a cooperative tourism effort. This project will utilize \$19,600 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$19,600.

Honey Creek Creamery Goat Dairy – Golden Hills RC&D will work to establish two businesses: Honey Creek Creamery, Inc. will create a value added goat cheese dairy and adjunct business will be created to provide goat vegetation management for Hitchcock Nature Centers with goats culled from the dairy herd. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$93,000.

Sowing the Seeds for Local Food Enterprises – Pathfinders RC&D will partner with the Hometown Harvest Local Food Initiative to hire a Local Foods Coordinator who will help foster the development of new local food enterprises and the expansion of existing enterprises. This project will utilize \$19,500 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$25,500.

Brushy Creek Stables – Prairie Rivers RC&D will partner with Gary and Jenice Hammitt to install the necessary infrastructure to begin boarding horses and develop a marketing and advertising plan for catering to equestrian clientele. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$25,000.

Mississippi River Boat Building Initiative – Limestone Bluffs RC&D will help start a new business “Mississippi River Boat Building Initiative” on the waterfront at the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque, Iowa. The business’ mission will be to engage, mentor, and instruct your and adults in the construction and enjoyment of small wooden boats, while accentuating the sustainability and importance of Iowa’s water systems and forest resources. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$40,090.

Stimulating Iowa Economic through the Wildlife Action Plan – Iowa Lakes RC&D will create a template to implement Iowa’s Wildlife Action Plan and create new opportunities for economic growth by marketing existing local county and state natural resource public areas. This project will utilize \$17,500 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$17,500.

Building Natural Resource Based Business Capacity in Iowa – Cedar Valley RC&D will provide “Train the Trainer” programming to individual RC&Ds. This project will also include an evaluation and summary of grants funded during the history of this grant program. This project will utilize \$16,500 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$582,000.

Building Capacity of Year Round Markets for local food – Iowa Heartland RC&D will partner with Drake University’s Agricultural Law Center, IDALS’ Agricultural Marketing Program, the Iowa Food Cooperative, and other to increase the capacity of local fruit, vegetable, and specialty crop farmers to sustainably grow and sell their products directly to consumers. This project will utilize \$25,000 in NRBBOG funds and in-kind match of \$56,000.

<p>Moved – Commissioner Francisco Seconded – Commissioner Kircher Discussion – None Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote</p>

24. PALO ALTO COUNTY GAMING DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION GRANT

The Department requests Commission approval to submit a \$26,000 grant application to the Palo Alto County Gaming Development Corporation to request funds to purchase two 6X6 utility vehicles and a trailer. This equipment would be used in prescribed burning and other management activities. The equipment will improve the efficiency of operations and help ensure the safety of staff performing these activities. With reduced budget abilities, this grant opportunity will provide a way for the Wildlife Bureau to acquire funds for this purchase. A 25% match (\$6,500) is required for the grant, which will be provided from the Wildlife Bureau budget. The grant application is due on or before December 31, 2009, and as part of the application, governmental agencies must provide a resolution from their governing board (i.e. NRC) authorizing the application for grant funds.

<p>Moved – Commissioner Francisco Seconded – Commissioner Kircher Discussion – None Motion – Carried by Consent</p>
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25. GENERAL DISCUSSION

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

- CRD Legislative Initiatives –
 - Diane Ford reviewed with the Commission the priority topics for the upcoming Legislative session of 2010.
 - Commissioner Garst would like to see any sex out of state deer hunting license sales increased and asked that this be added to the priority list.
- Commissioner Garst
 - Would like information about how background checks are conducted for education instructors, volunteers in the hunter education area, parks, etc.
 - Asked why the new ELSI2 had not been implemented yet.
 - Noted that she had the privilege of doing some work recently with her local private lands staff and found them to be very knowledgeable and enjoyed working with them.
- Commissioner Rettig
 - Gave an update to the commission about her status on NRC. She is currently seeking a seat on the Johnson County Board of Supervisors Board. There will be a special election held on January 19th and if she is elected she will more than likely need to resign from the NRC.
- Deputy Director Boddy noted that the contingency items utilized to help pay for the December and June bond payments for Honey Creek State Park Resort had been included on the Capital Projects Plan budget that the NRC Commission approved at the June 11th, 2009 Commission meeting.

26. NEXT MEETING DATES

- 01/14/10, Thursday-Polk County, Henry Wallace Bldg. 4th Floor Conference Rooms
- 02/11/10, Thursday-Polk County, Henry Wallace Bldg. 4th Floor Conference Rooms
- 03/11/10, Thursday-Polk County, Henry Wallace Bldg. 4th Floor Conference Rooms

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to come before the Natural Resources Commission, Chairperson Gregory Drees adjourned the meeting at 3:28 p.m., on December 10, 2009.

<p>Moved – Commissioner Kircher Seconded – Commissioner Francisco Discussion – None Motion – Carried by Unanimous Vote</p>

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