



# Trees for Kids Tree & Youth Education Grant 2022 Annual Report



## INTRODUCTION

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The Trees for Kids program is a tree education and planting program for students of all ages across Iowa. The mission of the program is to promote the value of trees to Iowa's youth by providing educational materials and opportunities for tree planting and care.

## HISTORY

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The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) established Trees for Kids/Trees for Teens in 1990 as a way to assist Iowa schools in celebrating and promoting Earth Day and Arbor Day. The program offers trees for planting on school grounds or in public areas; students must plant these trees and there must be an educational component with every event. Additionally, Trees for Kids partners with the national environmental education program Project Learning Tree to provide environmental educator training and curriculum materials to all grant participant schools.

## GOALS

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The goals of the Trees for Kids program include:

- Providing opportunities to learn about the value of trees.
- Providing environmental education training to K-12 educators
- Providing opportunities for tree planting experiences.
- Increasing contact with nature for youth
- Maintaining and enhancing broad-based private and public partnerships.
- Making effective use of the generous contributions of our sponsors\



## PARTNERS

The Trees for Kids program is a cooperative partnership between the following public and private organizations:

- Iowa Department of Natural Resources
- Trees Forever
- Iowa Woodland Owners Association
- Iowa Tree Farm Committee
- Iowa Bankers Association



## PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The program is coordinated and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and is funded through partnerships with public and private organizations. One hundred percent of donations are used to fund grant projects and to train educators.

### Grant process

Grant applications are sent to Iowa principals and superintendents at least twice per year. Applicants can apply for spring or fall events, or both. Awards of up to \$2,500 are provided to cover the cost of trees and mulch.

Applications are due late winter for spring events and late summer for fall events; projects for spring take place in late April and May and fall projects are held in late September and October.

Before applications are due, DNR staff typically conduct site visits with applicants to make species and placement suggestions, to discuss energy efficiency goals, and to address any questions applicants may have about the application process and program timeline. Staff also attend planting events, where they provide planting demonstrations and supervision. In instances where no DNR employee is able to make it to a particular event, a staff member will inspect the planting at a later date to ensure that program requirements are met.

### Highlights and Accomplishments for 2022

Grants were awarded in spring 2022. A total of 19 applications were received, all applications were reviewed and scored by a team of 3 DNR Staff. Fourteen different projects were selected for the spring 2022 season. No grants were awarded in fall 2022 due to lack of program funding.

Fourteen grants totaling \$26,372.85 were awarded in 2022. This funding provided hands-on experience for 498 students throughout Iowa and planted 197 trees. The schools, communities, and organizations who received grants are listed below:

Organization	City	Cost	Trees	Youth
City of Auburn	Auburn	2346.00	10	42
Polk County Conservation Board	Des Moines	2500.00	27	11
Bondurant-Farrar Community School District	Bondurant	2478.50	16	12
City of Riverdale	Riverdale	2500.00	23	92
Wilder Elementary PTO – Indianola	Indianola	577.80	6	0
North Polk SEPC	Alleman	797.50	5	7
Ames Town & County Kiwanis	Ames	809.50	7	26
City of Mason City	Mason City	2500.00	20	92

Organization	City	Cost	Trees	Youth
Irving Elementary PTO – Indianola	Indianola	428.90	3	0
Howe Elementary – Des Moines Public Schools	Des Moines	2092.00	10	37
Winneshiek County Conservation	Cresco	2000.00	19	19
Pottawattamie County Conservation Board	Council Bluffs	2405.00	15	35
City of Denison	Denison	2500.00	15	25
Dubuque Arboretum & Gardens	Dubuque	2437.60	21	100
Totals		\$26,372.85	197	498



## PROJECT IMPACTS

“Fifty-seven people, including forty-two 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from the local school district participated in this workshop - 10 trees in total were planted on City of Auburn property with 5 of those trees planted by the children who had hands on training on the proper care and watering for trees. This project has raised the awareness of the critical importance of trees to our lives and our property. It makes the care and planting of trees ‘personal’”

-City of Auburn

“It was a pleasurable and educational experience for 46 people ranging from 10 years old to a couple over 80. We are appreciative to the Department of Natural Resources for this opportunity to plant trees that will enhance the lives of Ames citizens for years to come. We will continue to build on the excitement of the youth to continue to learn about trees and environmental issues.”

-Ames Town & Country Kiwanis

“Quercus Land Stewardship, LLC, Riverdale Heights Elementary School, and the City of Riverdale, Iowa, partnered to incorporate this event into the elementary curriculum and to teach kids about the importance of trees and the benefits they provide. The kids learned first-hand how to plant and maintain trees, assisting in planting their own trees on the school grounds and at home.”

-City of Riverdale

“Students enjoyed the hands-on service project and are interested in planting more trees next year on a different school property. Several students have been employed (or will be employed) by Polk County Conservation over the summer, so

this project gives them additional experience in the science field to know if environmental science/conservation is a potential career choice for them.”

-North Polk Students for Environmental Protection and Conservation (SEPC) Club

