Minutes of the
Natural Resource Commission
Meeting

July 9, 2026

DNR Headquarters
6200 Park Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50321 and
Teleconference

Approved by the Commission on August 13, 2026.

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Meeting Minutes

Call To Order
The meeting of the Natural Resource Commission (Commission or NRC) was called to order by Chairperson Tom Prickett at 9:30 am on July 9, 2026.

Commissioners Present
Laura Kudej (Virtual)
Bill Moritz
Tammi Kircher (virtual)
Collin Brecher (virtual)
Uriah Hansen
KR Buck
Tom Prickett

Commissioners Absent
None

Public Comment
None

Approval of Agenda and Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Uriah Hansen to approve the agenda and consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the June 2026 meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Laura Kudej.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Director's Remarks
- Director Lyon summarized the Governor's recent camping tour throughout the state, highlighting visits to locations such as Green Valley, Prairie Rose, Loess Hills, Ambrose A. Call, Yellow River, Pikes Peak and Maquoketa Caves State Park. The tour showcased diverse departmental initiatives, encompassing lake restoration, fire management protocols, enhanced accessibility in campgrounds, and water quality projects at Yellow River. The tour ended at the Honey Creek Resort.
- The Director expressed her appreciation for the professionalism exhibited by staff members and the effectiveness of collaborations with local entities. It was a really great way to showcase the department.

Division Administrator's Remarks
- Division Administrator (DA) Pete Hildreth echoed Director Lyon's appreciation for our staff during the Governor's camping tour and the busy holiday season.

- DA Pete Hildreth summarized the 92nd annual Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies conference, which took place at the Iowa Great Lakes from June 18-21. The Administrator recognized Sergeant Steve Griebel, Alan Johnson, and Megan Wisecup for receiving regional accolades.
- Regarding REAP assemblies, it was reported that eleven out of nineteen sessions are now finished.
- The Administrator introduced the Department's new Parks, Forests and Preserves Bureau Chief, Mike Cox. Mike shared a little bit about himself.

Oral Arguments and final submission, Appeal of Proposed Decision, Custom Tree Care, LLC. V. Iowa Department of Natural Resources

This matter comes before the Iowa Natural Resource Commission [NRC] on the Notice of Appeal filed by Appellant Custom Tree Care, LLC, on May 2, 2026, seeking further review of the Proposed Decision entered in this docket on April 17, 2026. The NRC entered a scheduling order on June 15, 2026, governing the conduct of these appeal proceedings. At today's meeting, the NRC provided the parties with an opportunity to present oral arguments. Upon the conclusion of oral arguments, the Commission entered closed session pursuant to Iowa Code section 21.5(1)(f) to conduct deliberations on the Appellant's appeal.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Uriah Hansen to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz. Commissioner KR Buck recused himself from the closed session discussion and vote.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Proposed County Antlerless Quota Changes for the 2026-27 Seasons

Chris Ensminger requested Commission approval for the proposed county antlerless quota changes for the 2026-27 seasons.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Collin Brecher.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

approved as Presented

Small Construction Projects: Paint Creek Streambank Improvements at Yellow River State Forest, Accessibility Improvements at Springbrook State Park, Wetland Restoration at Hodge WPA, Sheet Pile WCS Replacement at Dunbar Slough WMA, Accessibility Improvements at: Lake of Three Fires, Prairie Rose, Viking Lake and Lake Anita.

Travis Baker presented eight small construction projects to the Commission as information items.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Information

Large Construction Project-Lake Anita State Park, Sewer Improvements–Cass County

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for a construction project to improve the park's sewer system.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Large Construction Project-Lake Wapello State Park, Wastewater Improvements–Davis County

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for a construction project at Lake Wapello State Park to improve the current Wastewater treatment system.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Collin Brecher.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Large Construction Project-Green Island and Princeton Wildlife Management Areas, Floor Repair–Jackson & Scott Counties

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for the following construction project to repair over six miles of dikes and infrastructure, including culverts and water control structures damaged by flooding. Additionally, FEMA has approved mitigation measures to armor nearly a mile of the main levee in Green Island WMA with a grid-tied concrete block mat. These improvements are designed to protect against future flooding and breaches.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Bill Mortiz to approve the item as presented. Seconded by KR Buck.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Large Construction Project-Springbrook, Education Center Demolition–Guthrie County

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for the following construction project to remove public hazards and return the site to its natural state. Work will include demolishing the Education Center buildings, as well as four auxiliary dilapidated/functionally obsolete sheds.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. Commissioner KR Buck voted nay.

Approved as Presented

Large Construction Project-Various State Parks and Wildlife Areas–Dickinson County

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for the following construction project: Locations are the Iowa Great Lakes region, including Pikes Point, Emerson Bay, Lower Gar, Templar, Trappers Bay, and Gull Point, as well as the Lower Gar and Silver Lake Wildlife Management Areas. While these locations remain vital for public recreation, the existing roadways have significantly deteriorated and need maintenance. Current asphalt conditions include pavement oxidation (reaction in asphalt over time that makes it stiffer, more brittle, and less flexible), rutting, and thermal cracking of surfaces. Additionally, rock roadways have rutting.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Laura Kudej to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Large Construction Project-Pammel State Park, Harmon Tunnel–Madison County

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for the following construction project: Harmon Tunnel is a main feature of the Pammel State Park. The tunnel goes through the base of a limestone ridge and provides access to the park's facilities. Harmon Tunnel has been closed since February 26, 2026, due to safety concerns regarding falling rocks and large boulders at both ends of the tunnel. We are initiating a project to stabilize and clean up the rockface. The goal of this work is to mitigate these hazards and ensure the tunnel can be safely reopened.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Tammi Kircher.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Large Acquisition Project–West Salt Creek WMA, Tama County–James Wauters Trust

Travis Baker requested Commission approval to accept the donation of a tract of land located adjacent to West Salt Creek WMA in Tama County.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Uriah Hansen to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Contract with Insight Public Sector Inc–Law Enforcement Bureau-Body Cameras

Craig Cutts requested Commission approval for a contract with Insight Public Sector Inc for body cameras.

Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Mortiz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

Contract with Aquatic Control, Inc. – Floating and Emergent Aquatic Plant Management, Elkhart, Iowa.

Jason Euchner requested Commission approval for a contract with Aquatic Control, Inc. for applying herbicides targeting floating and emergent aquatic vegetation across 20 key lake systems, totaling approximately 480 acres.

Written Comments-None
Public Comments-None

Motion was made by Bill Mortiz to approve the item as presented. Seconded by KR Buck.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

Approved as Presented

General Discussion

- Each commissioner thanked the DNR staff for their work at the parks especially during the busy holiday season.
- It has been a busy and fun summer so far, with commissioners actively enjoying the outdoors through family camping trips, purchasing a kayak to do more fishing, and participating in county fairs.

Adjourn

Chairperson Tom Prickett adjourned the Natural Resources Commission meeting at 11:30 am on July 9, 2026.

Adjourned