Agenda

Natural Resource Commission
Thursday, October 8, 2026
Teleconference: 361-245-0121 PIN: 803 292 109#
Video Conference: meet.google.com/smw-cnju-drz
Shenandoah Public Library
201 S Elm St, Shenandoah IA, 51601

Wednesday, October 7, 2026-Fremont County Tour
Commissioners will be touring Waubonsie State Park and Riverton Wildlife Management Area. Members of the public interested in attending the tour should contact Alicia Plathe at Alicia.Plathe@dnr.iowa.gov or 515-313-8909 for tour details before 4:30pm on October 6th.

Thursday, October 8, 2026-10:00 AM – NRC Business Meeting
Public participation begins at approximately 10:30am. If you are unable to attend the business meeting, comments regarding agenda items may be submitted for public record to Alicia Plathe at Alicia.Plathe@dnr.iowa.gov or 6200 Park Ave Ste 200, Des Moines IA 50321 up to 24 hours prior to the business meeting.

1.		Approval of Agenda Consent Agenda (*within agenda indicates proposed consent agenda item) *7. Contract Amendment-2 with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC-Fishing Regulations *11. Land Management Project – Chapter 17 lease – Tama County – Pamela Schulze -115-N *12. Contract Amendment-1, TNT Tuckpointing & Building Restoration, LLC-Cedar Rock *15. Contract with the Poweshiek County Conservation Board (Diamond Lake Park) *16. Contract with the Benton County Conservation Board (Hannen Lake Park)	Decision	Commission
2.		Approval of the Minutes	Decision	Commission
3.		Director's Remarks	Information	Kayla Lyon
4.		Division Administrator's Remarks	Information	Pete Hildreth
5.		FY 2028 Budget Request	Information	Jennifer Nelson
6.		Contract with Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)-Outdoor Recreation Survey	Decision	George Scholten
*7.		Contract Amendment-2 with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC-Fishing Regulations	Decision	George Scholten
8.		Small Constructions Projects at Prairie Lakes Wildlife Unit, Wapsipinicon State Park, and Lake Darling State Park	Information	Travis Baker
9.		Large Construction Projects	Decision	Travis Baker
	9.1	Rock Creek State Park, Boat Ramp Parking Improvements - Jasper County		
	9.2	Big Creek State Park, Beach Stormwater Improvements – Polk County		
	9.3	Ledges State Park, Bridge Railings and Walkway – Boone County		
	9.4	Marshall County, ATV Storage Building – Marshall County		
	9.5	State Forest Nursery, Seed Building Addition – Story County		
10.		Land Acquisition Project- Syracuse WMA, Clinton County – Matthew and Elizabeth McQuillen	Decision	Travis Baker
*11.		Land Management Project – Chapter 17 lease – Tama County – Pamela Schulze -115-N	Decision	Travis Baker
*12.		Contract Amendment-1, TNT Tuckpointing & Building Restoration, LLC-Cedar Rock	Decision	Travis Baker
13.		Contract with the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (Casey Lake, Hickory Hills Park)-Casey Lake Alum Application	Decision	Travis Baker
14.		Contract with SOLitude Lake Management, LLC. -Casey Lake Alum Application	Decision	Travis Baker

*15.	Contract with the Poweshiek County Conservation Board (Diamond Lake Park)	Decision	Travis Baker
*16.	Contract with the Benton County Conservation Board (Hannen Lake Park)	Decision	Travis Baker
17.	Chapter 96, “Small Game Hunting” – Adopted and Filed	Decision	Todd Bishop
18.	Subrecipient Grant Agreement with Wildlife Management Institute-Urban CWD Readiness	Decision	Todd Bishop
19.	Contract Amendment- 2 with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.-Contract Extension	Decision	Todd Bishop
20.	Contract with Iowa State University-CWD Sample Testing	Decision	Todd Bishop
	General Discussion		
Upcoming NRC Meeting Dates ● Thursday, November 12, Des Moines ● Thursday, December 10, Des Moines			

For details on the NRC meeting schedule, visit:
http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/BoardsCommissions/NaturalResourceCommission.aspx

Comments during the public participation period regarding proposed rules or notices of intended action are not included in the official comments for that rule package unless they are submitted as required in the Notice of Intended Action.

Any person attending the public meeting and has special requirements such as those related to mobility or hearing impairments should contact the DNR or ADA Coordinator at 515-725-8200, Relay Iowa TTY Service 800-735-7942, or Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov, and advise of specific needs.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, English-language proficiency, disability, or age in the administration of its programs or activities in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. DNR will not tolerate discrimination, intimidation, threats, coercion, or retaliation against any individual or group because they have exercised their rights protected by federal or state law.

MINUTES OF THE
NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION
MEETING

September 10 2026

6200 Park Ave, Des Moines, IA and
Teleconference

Approved by the Commission TBD

DRAFT

RECORD COPY	
File Name	Admin 01-05
Sender's Initials	ap

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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 9:30 am on September 10, 2026 via video/teleconference attendees.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Laura Kudej
Bill Moritz
Tammi Kircher
Collin Brecher
Uriah Hansen
Tom Prickett
KR Buck

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paul Folkers, Blair, NE-Nonresident Small Game Hunting License Rule

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher to approve the agenda and consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Collin Brecher.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

APPROVED AS PRESENTED

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: AUGUST 2026, REVISED MINUTES FROM JULY 9, 2026, AND REVISED MINUTES FROM SEPTEMBER 17, 2024

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the above meeting minutes as presented. Seconded by Uriah Hansen.
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 started off her remarks by providing a summary of the Iowa State Fair activity in the DNR building, highlighting the 100th year anniversary celebration for the fish aquarium. Director Lyon also took the time to thank DNR staff for their planning efforts and hard work during the 2026 Iowa State Fair.
- Director Lyon gave an overview of the REAP assemblies that took place in the summer throughout the state of Iowa and provided details about the upcoming REAP Congress.
- Director Lyon announced the retirement of Fisheries Bureau Chief, Joe Larscheid, congratulating him on his successful career and wishing him well in his future endeavors.

CONTRACT WITH TREES FOREVER, INC.

Jeff Goerndt requested Commission approval for a contract with Trees Forever, Inc.
Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Uriah Hansen 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

CONTRACT AMENDMENT 5 WITH SPEE DEE DELIVERY SERVICE, INC.

Jeff Goerndt requested Commission approval to extend a contract with Spee Dee Delivery Service, Inc. for shipping services for the State Forest Nursery

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

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

APPROVED AS PRESENTED

CONTRACT WITH IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY (ISU)

Jeff Goerndt requested Commissioner approval for a contract with Iowa State University for student assistance at the State Forest Nursery. Mr. Goerndt mentioned that work will start in October and likely last through the end of the calendar year. Mr. Goerndt responded to questions regarding recruitment possibilities through the partnership with ISU.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Bill Moritz 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-LEDGES STATE PARK, WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for a construction project involving wastewater improvements at Ledges State Park. Mr. Baker noted that the design life for these projects is a minimum of 50 years; however changing regulations and permit conditions could require earlier upgrades.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Uriah Hansen.
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-VOLGA RIVER STATE RECREATION AREA, WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for a wastewater improvement project at Volga River State Recreational Area.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Uriah Hansen 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-GYPSUM CITY OHV PARK BRIDGE

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for a large construction project involving the installation of a bridge at the Gypsum City OHV Park.

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 CONSTRUCTION PROJECT-LAKE DARLING AND GEODE STATE PARKS, ACCESSIBILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Travis Baker requested Commission approval for accessibility improvements at Lake Darling State Park and Geode State Park.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Bill Moritz 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

LAND ACQUISITION-BIG SIOUX WMA-SIOUX COUNTY CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

Travis Baker requested Commission approval to acquire 79.92 acres near the Big Sioux WMA in Sioux County.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by KR Buck to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Moritz.

The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes.

APPROVED AS PRESENTED

CONTRACT WITH HOUSTON ENGINEERING, INC.

Michelle Balmer requested Commission approval for a contract with Houston Engineering, Inc., to complete engineering design for the silt dike structures at Three Mile Lake.

Public Comments – None

Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher 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

CONTRACT WITH KOSSUTH COUNTY, IOWA

Kelly Smith requested Commission approval for a contract with Kossuth County for restoration efforts related to the

Wetland Production Area in Kossuth County.
Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Laura Kudej to approve the item as presented. Seconded by Bill Moritz.
The Chairperson asked for the Commissioners to approve the agenda item by saying aye. There were no nay votes. Commissioner Kircher abstained from the vote due to her current position on the Ducks Unlimited Board.

APPROVED AS PRESENTED

CHAPTER 2 AND CHAPTER 2505 " FAIR INFORMATION PRACTICES"—NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION; CHAPTER 2506 "CONTESTED CASES"—NOTICE OF INTENDED ACTION

Kelli Book requested Commission approval for the Notices of Intended Action for Chapter 2 and Chapter 2505, and Chapter 2506.
Public Comments – None
Written Comments-None

Motion was made by Tammi Kircher 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

GENERAL DISCUSSION

- Commissioners shared about their recent outdoor activities and their plans for the Fall.

ADJOURN

Chairperson Tom Prickett adjourned the Natural Resources Commission meeting at 10:25 am on September 10, 2026.

ADJOURNED

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resources Commission

Information Item

5. FY 2028 Budget Request

The Department is required to submit an annual budget request by October 1, 2026. According to guidance from the Department of Management, Executive Branch departments and agencies are instructed to submit a status quo budget request for Fiscal Year 2028.

APPROPRIATION NAME	FY 27 Appropriation	FY 28 Department Request	Increase/ (Decrease)
GENERAL FUND			
Department Operations	$12,816,738	$12,816,738	$0
State Park Operations	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$0
State Park Maintenance	$300,000	$300,000	$0
Floodplain Management	$1,510,000	$1,510,000	$0
Forestry Health Management	$525,000	$525,000	$0
Total General Fund	**$16,151,738**	**$16,151,738**	**$0**
ENVIRONMENT FIRST			
Resource Enhancement and Protection	$12,000,000	$12,000,000	$0
Ambient Air Quality Monitoring	$425,000	$425,000	$0
Water Quality Monitoring	$2,955,000	$2,955,000	$0
GIS Data for Watershed Managers	$195,000	$195,000	$0
Park Operations and Maintenance	$6,235,000	$6,235,000	$0
Floodplain Management	$375,000	$375,000	$0
Animal Feeding Operations	$1,320,000	$1,320,000	$0
Water Supply Appropriation	$500,000	$500,000	$0
Total Environment First Fund	**$24,005,000**	**$24,005,000**	**$0**
NON-GENERAL FUND			
Fish and Wildlife Operations	$53,901,798	$53,901,798	$0
Groundwater Fund	$3,455,850	$3,455,850	$0
GW Fund Interest: Water Quality Monitoring	$300,000	$0	($300,000)
GW Fund Interest: State GW Protection	$176,150	$0	($176,150)
WQ Fin Assistance: Water Quality Monitoring	$500,000	$500,000	$0
Snowmobile Transfer to Fish and Wildlife	$100,000	$100,000	$0
Total Non-General Funds	**$58,433,798**	**$57,957,648**	**$(476,150)**
INFRASTRUCTURE			
Lake Water Quality Improvements	$9,600,000	$9,600,000	$0
Water Trails/Lowhead Dams	$1,500,000	$1,500,000	$0
Derelict Buildings	$1,000,000	$1,000,000	$0
Park Infrastructure Improvements	$5,000,000	$5,000,000	$0
Total Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund	**$17,100,000**	**$17,100,000**	**$0**
TOTAL DEPARTMENT REQUEST	**$115,690,536**	**$115,214,386**	**$(476,150)**

Jennifer Nelson, Chief Financial Officer
October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

6. Contract with Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA)

Commission approval is requested for a contract with AFWA, **of** Washington, D.C.

Contract Terms

Amount: Not to exceed $104,400.00
Dates: November 13, 2026 to March 1, 2029
Funding Source(s): Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund.

Contract Purpose:

The CRD section of the DNR is repeatedly asked to provide testimony regarding the importance and economic value of outdoor recreation in Iowa, specifically in-state spending by participants in fishing, hunting and wildlife observation activities. This information is collected at a national scale by the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation (National Survey) every five years, but reliable state-specific estimates of participation and spending by sub groups within states has been constrained by small sample sizes and decreased response rates. Iowa last obtained state specific estimates from the National Survey in 2011 and did not to invest in additional Iowa specific interviews during 2022 to update the past estimates, now 15 years old.

Using old National Survey data (Scuderi et al. 2024) estimated that sportfishing in Iowa supports 5,880 jobs, and generates $859 million in economic activity, while hunting and target shooting supports 7,740 jobs and generates $977 million in economic activity. Additionally, Wildlife watchers were estimated to annually spend $2,188 per person on the activity; however, the accuracy and utility of these estimates were limited by the low sample sizes for Iowa from the National survey upon which the study depended. Though such state-level estimates are impressive, estimates of participation and spending are criticized as not “local enough” (i.e. statewide vs congressional district), nor targeted enough (i.e. Deer hunting vs Upland hunting). Stratified oversampling from within Iowa will increase the precision and utility of participation and spending estimates from the 2027 National Survey to Iowa.

This agreement provides funding to the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) to task their contractor, NORC at the University of Chicago, with conducting supplemental survey sampling in Iowa as part of the 2027 National Survey. The base national survey will provide approximately 805 Iowa interviews at no cost. This sole source procurement purchases an oversample tailored to Iowa's needs, including targeting 625 additional probability interviews, 270 additional nonprobability interviews, 300 interviews with hunting/fishing licensees, and the administration of 4 state-specific questions. Deliverables include a final weighted dataset, a non-technical summary report, and access to analytic support.

Contract tasks include:

- Survey design and management, stratified sampling, data collection, data cleaning, processing, weighting, reporting and data support
- Base national survey participation will provide 805 Iowa interviews at no cost.
- Oversample tailored to Iowa’s needs including:
    - 625 additional probability interviews
    - 270 additional nonprobability interviews
    - 300 interviews with hunting/fishing licensees
- Administration of 4 state-specific questions
- Deliverables of:
    - Final weighted dataset
    - Non-technical summary report that details findings by sub-groups and regional strata
    - Access to analytic technical support

Selection Process Summary: This is a Sole Source agreement with AFWA to task their contractor National Opinion Research Center (NORC) at the University of Chicago with additional sampling and questions specific to Iowa such that data is representative and sufficient to make statements about anglers, hunters, and wildlife watchers at four regional levels. AFWA manages the $9.1M national survey contract with NORC. They are the only entity that can integrate Iowa's sample into the national instrument, ensuring exact comparability via TrueNorth calibration. Replicating this large periodic survey independently is cost-prohibitive.

Criteria Reviewed: Criteria reviewed for this work included past history and performance conducting large national scale surveys of opinion and economic including the National Survey of FHWAR during 2022.

# of Proposals Received: Sole Source
Recommendation: Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA).

George Scholten, Fisheries Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item (*indicates proposed consent item)

*7. Contract Amendment-2 with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC

Commission approval is requested for a service contract amendment with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC of Richardson, TX.

Contract Terms:

Amendment Amount: $22,500

Dates: 10/20/2026 to 10/19/2027

DNR shall have the option to extend this Contract for up to six years from the beginning date of the original contract by executing a signed amendment prior to the expiration of this contract.

Funding Source(s): Fish and Wildlife Trust Fund

Contract Purpose: Renew the contract with Kalkomey Enterprises, LLC to print 75,000 copies of the annual Iowa Fishing Regulations booklet and distribute it to approximately 800 locations (i.e. license sales vendors, natural resource agencies, and DNR locations) in and around Iowa. An eRegulations copy is included in the amendment cost. The Department produces this rules and regulations booklet annually.

Selection Process Summary: The Department solicited proposals from targeted small businesses and published a Request for Proposal (RFP) on the Department of Administrative Services website

- Proposal Due Date: Aug. 7, 2024
- Proposals Received: 3
- Recommendation: Kalkomey

Vendor	City, State	Amount
Mitera	Urbandale, IA	$46,198
Sigler	Ames. IA	$38,000
Kalkomey	Richardson, TX	$25,500

Contract History:

Original Contract: $25,500 + $18,661.24 shipping; Time frame: 10/20/24-10/19/25; Purpose: print/ distribute 150,000 regulations booklets

Amendment-1: $25,500 + $20,091.90 shipping; Time frame: 10/20/25-10/19/26; Purpose: print/ distribute 150,000 regulations booklets

Amendment-2: $22,500 + shipping; Time frame: 10/20/26-10/19/27; Purpose: print/distribute 75,000 regulations booklets

George Scholten, Fisheries Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Information Item

8. Construction - Small Projects

The following Engineering managed projects:

Bid Date	Project No.	Location	County	Summary	Cost Estimate	Bids
9/10/2026	26-01-74-01	PRAIRIE LAKES WILDLIFE UNIT	PALO ALTO	PERKINS MARSH TILE OUTLET This project is designed to install an intake structure with a channel inlet and tile outlet for water level control. Work includes excavation (inlet channel), installation of a concrete water control structure, and 1,400 LF of 12" tile.	$58,000	**$45,779.00** $71,109.00 $77,237.00 $92,625.38 $159,865.36
9/10/2026	25-06-53-02	WAPSIPINICON STATE PARK	JONES	SEPTIC MOUND SYSTEM (REBID) Project includes demolition of an existing septic system and replacement with a septic mound system.	$40,000	**$64,000.00** $79,540.79 $120,238.00 $142,700.00 $277,000.00
8/27/2026	23-06-92-04	LAKE DARLING STATE PARK	WASHINGTON	STONE ENTRY PORTAL Project includes removing the existing entrance portal (sign) at Lake Darling State Park and replacing it with a standard Iowa DNR Design Guide sign.	$90,000	**$78,895.00**

Travis Baker, Land and Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

Construction Item

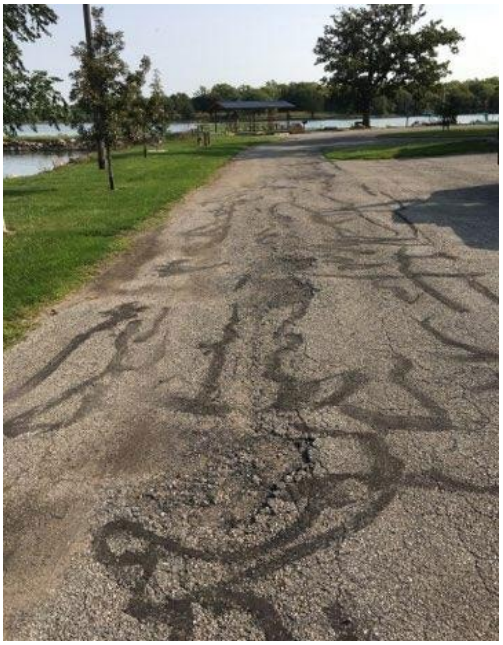
9.1 Rock Creek State Park, Boat Ramp Parking Improvements - Jasper County

The Department requests Commission approval of the following construction project:

Project Background: Rock Creek State Park, located in Central Iowa, is a premier camping destination offering a variety of outdoor activities, including boating and paddling, year-round fishing and horseback riding. The park provides access to a 600-acre lake via four boat ramps; two on the west side and two on the east side. DNR staff determined that the current facilities need repair and maintenance. Additionally, this project will also better serve the users of the lake by expanding parking.

Design Summary: This project consists of resurfacing the large southeast boat ramp parking lot and adding a rigging lane. Additionally, boat trailer parking and rigging lanes will be added at the two ramps on the west side of the lake and an old pit latrine foundation will be removed.





Engineering Project #: 26-05-50-01
Cost Estimate: $525,000
Operating Bureau: Fisheries
Funding Source: 50% Marine Fuel Tax and 50% Federal Boat Safety (Coast Guard)
Bid Letting Date: 09/17/26
Construction Completion Date: 04/30/27
Number of Bids Received: 9

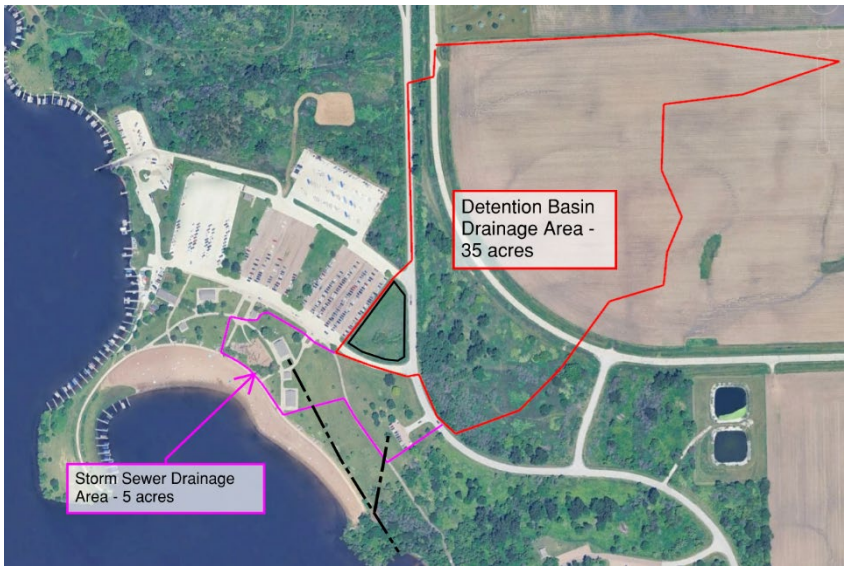
Bidders

Home Boy Enterprises LTD	Bondurant IA	$479,915.97
Con-Struct Inc	Marshalltown IA	$496,785.80
Reilly Construction Co Inc	Ossian IA	$509,581.50
James Construction LLC	Des Moines IA	$509,977.00
Steele Excavating Inc	Montezuma IA	$524,200.79
Central Iowa Excavation dba Annee Construction	Kellogg IA	$534,918.50
A & A Concrete Iowa LLC	Marshalltown IA	$537,575.50
Boomerang Corp	Anamosa IA	$556,558.00
Jensen Builders LTD	Des Moines IA	$567,093.94

Upon Engineering's review of bids, DNR recommends awarding the contract to Home Boy Enterprises LTD.

9.2 Big Creek State Park, Beach Stormwater Improvements – Polk County

The Department requests Commission approval of the following construction project:



Project Background: Big Creek State Park is located just north of Des Moines, and was opened to the public in the 1970's. The park encompasses 3,550 acres, including an 866-acre lake. Other amenities include a beach with a concession building, numerous picnic shelters and restrooms, six boat ramps, fishing jetties, rentable boat slips, boat storage, a disc golf course, and a bike trail.

Design Summary: The overall goal is to improve water quality by addressing stormwater runoff. The first part of this project consists of constructing a 1.4-acre stormwater detention basin on the east end of the beach parking lot to treat surface runoff before it is discharged into the lake. The second part of the project consists of grading and storm sewer construction to capture and direct surface runoff away from the beach. This will reduce the E. coli bacteria concentrations at the beach and will reduce beach sand erosion.



Engineering Project #: 26-02-77-02
Cost Estimate: $672,000
Operating Bureau: Parks, Forests, and Preserves / Lake Restoration
Funding Source: 100% Lake Restoration Program
Bid Letting Date: 9/17/2026
Construction Completion Date: 5/15/2027
Number of Bids Received: 9

Bidders

Southeast Constructors, Inc.	Des Moines, IA	$480,239.00
Pirc-Tobin Construction, Inc.	Alburnett, IA	$516,690.00
RW Excavating Solutions, LC	Prairie City, IA	$562,507.00
Iowa Earth Works	Huxley, IA	$621,277.00
Con-Struct, Inc.	Ames, IA	$624,223.00
Steele Excavating, Inc.	Montezuma, IA	$624,658.00
On Track Construction, LLC	Nevada, IA	$626,658.00
TK Concrete, Inc.	Pella, IA	$630,982.00
Reilly Construction Co, Inc.	Ossian, IA	$634,738.00

Upon Engineering's review of bids, DNR recommends awarding the contract to Southeast Constructors, Inc.

9.3 Ledges State Park, Bridge Railings and Walkway – Boone County

The Department requests Commission approval of the following construction project:

Project Background: Ledges State Park is one of Iowa's most historic and unique nature destinations, especially for hikers and outdoor enthusiasts. A four-mile trail system winds through steep slopes and scenic overviews, with sandstone ledges towering 100 feet above the Des Moines River. Numerous 1930s CCC structures can be viewed throughout the park including an iconic stone bridge spanning Peas Creek.



Design Summary: This project addresses deteriorated conditions at two CCC Bridges within the park by replacing their wooden rails and walkways.

Engineering Project #: 23-02-08-06
Cost Estimate: $212,000.00
Operating Bureau: Parks, Forests, and Preserves
Funding Source: 100% Parks and Institutional Roads Fund
Bid Letting Date: 9/17/2026
Construction Completion Date: 5/21/2027
Number of Bids Received: 6

Bidders

Holman Construction LLC	Indianola IA	$149,000.00
N.B. Koch General Contractors	Cedar Falls IA	$154,184.00
Southeast Constructors Inc	Des Moines IA	$197,800.00
Minturn Inc	Brooklyn IA	$198,630.00
Woodruff Construction Inc	Fort Dodge IA	$206,983.60
Herberger Construction Company Inc	Indianola IA	$317,460.00

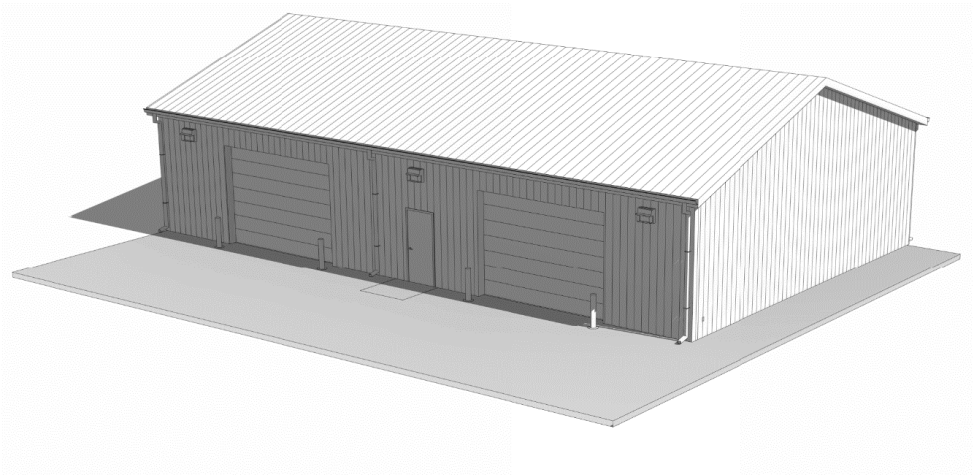
Upon Engineering's review of bids, DNR recommends awarding the contract to Holman Construction LLC.

9.4 Marshall County, ATV Storage Building – Marshall County

The Department requests Commission approval of the following construction project:

Project Background: The Marshall County ATV Park is in the Northeastern corner of the City of Marshalltown. The facility does not currently have a permanent storage building. This new building will be used to store and maintain equipment needed to maintain park trails and grounds.

Design Summary: The proposed project consists of an engineered, 64' x 40' post-frame structure designed to provide a cost-effective, long-term storage solution for park operations. To ensure optimal energy efficiency, the heated building will feature expanding closed-cell spray foam insulation, an insulated concrete slab, and insulated commercial doors (two overhead, one pedestrian). The structure will be finished with durable metal panels on the roof and all wall surfaces. Exterior infrastructure includes a new concrete apron and an energy-efficient LED lighting system designed for comprehensive site illumination. Ultimately, this facility secures valuable equipment investments while supporting the operational capacity of park personnel.



Engineering Project #: 20-05-64-01
Cost Estimate: $400,000
Operating Bureau: Parks, Forests, and Preserves / ATV Program
Funding Source: 100% ATV Fund
Bid Letting Date: 09/17/2026
Construction Completion Date: 03/31/2027
Number of Bids Received: 5

Bidders

Ciro Diiorio Masonry and Landscaping	Marshalltown IA	$272,349.00
GTG Construction LLC	Des Moines IA	$339,150.00
Tri-State Construction Group, Inc.	Waterloo IA	$389,400.00
N.B. Koch General Contractors	Cedar Falls IA	$390,000.00
Ball Team, LLC	Urbandale IA	$576,600.00

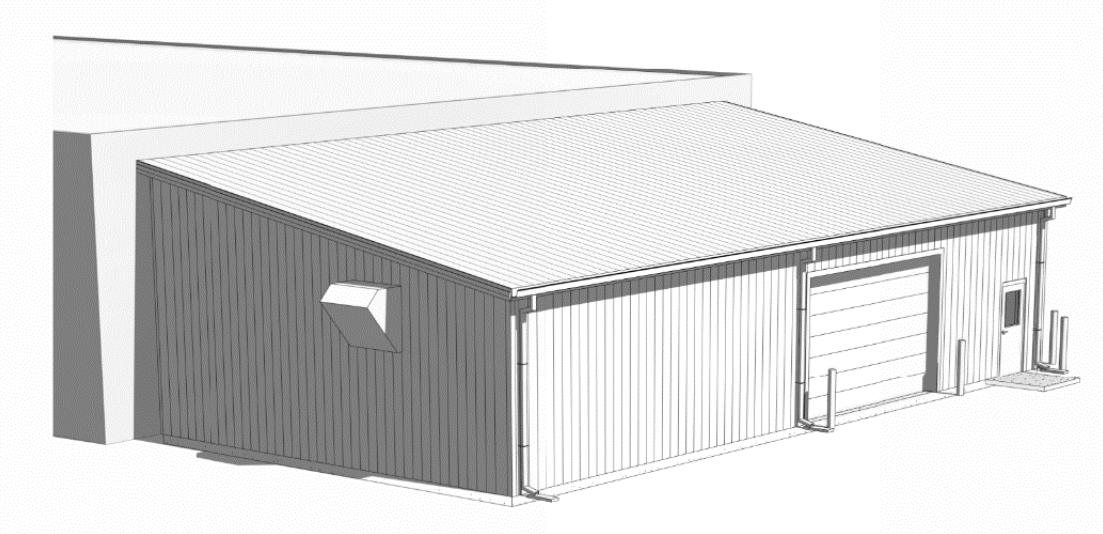
Upon Engineering's review of bids, DNR recommends awarding the contract to Ciro Diiorio Masonry and Landscaping.

9.5 State Forest Nursery, Seed Building Addition – Story County

The Department requests Commission approval of the following construction project:

Project Background: The State Forest Nursery in Ames needs a dedicated building to conduct their seed drying processes. The building will also house a relocated 6'x10' cooler unit and will have water service provided by a newly installed water hydrant.

Design Summary: The proposed building is a 30'x65' post-framed wood structure with metal panel clad roof and walls. The new building abuts a freezer wall in the existing building. The interior of the building is lined with easily cleaned and durable prefinished metal panels on walls and ceiling. A large in-wall fan unit is mounted on the South wall of the facility above the location of the seed dryer equipment. This will significantly reduce the amount of dust created inside the building during seed drying. The building is insulated using expanding spray foam insulation in walls and ceiling. The two sectional overhead doors are also insulated. The concrete floor has 4 feet of perimeter insulation. The building has two efficient overhead electric heaters, new LED lighting, and multiple outlets to accommodate many equipment staging arrangements.

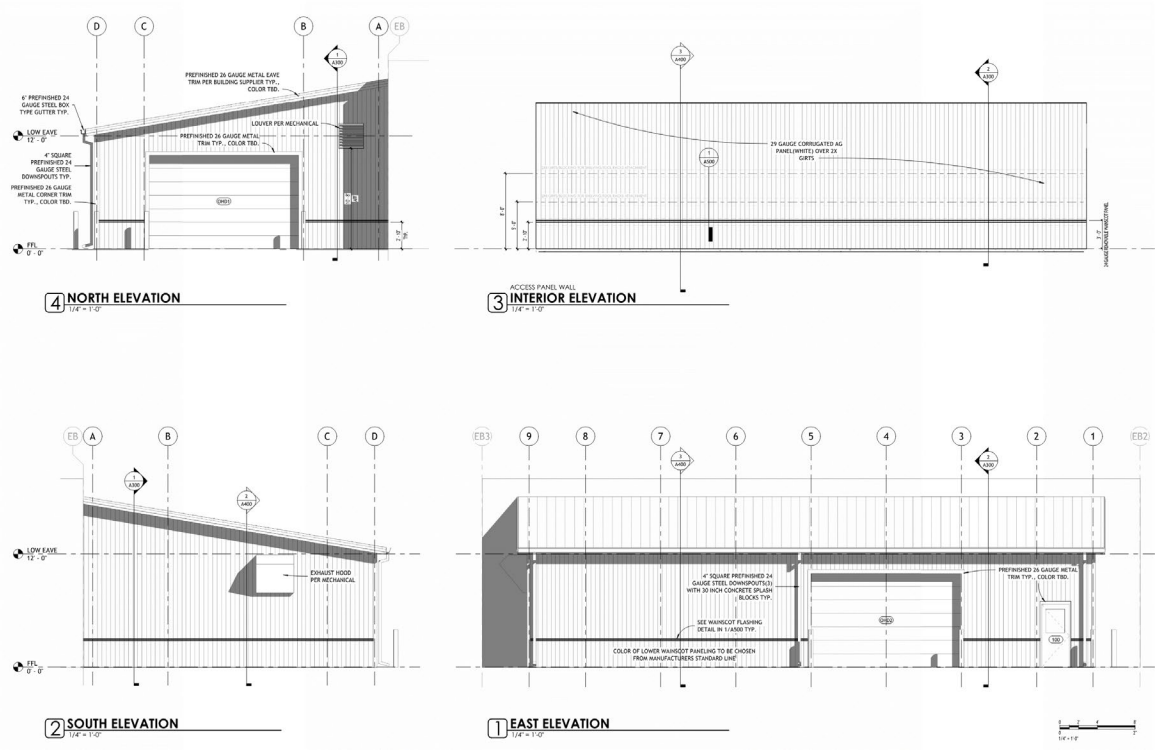


Engineering Project #: 24-02-85-01
Cost Estimate: $290,000
Operating Bureau: Parks, Forests, and Preserves
Funding Source: 60% Federal / 40% REAP OS
Bid Letting Date: 9/17/2026
Construction Completion Date: 3/31/2027
Number of Bids Received: 5

Bidders

GTG Construction LLC	Johnston IA	$387,185.00
R.H. Grabau Construction Inc	Boone IA	$400,000.00
Rise Construction, LLC	Des Moines IA	$459,800.00
Keystone Construction Services	Waukee IA	$514,730.00
Kolacia Construction Inc	Fort Dodge IA	$549,250.00

Upon Engineering's review of bids, DNR recommends awarding the contract to GTG Construction LLC.



Travis Baker, Land & Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

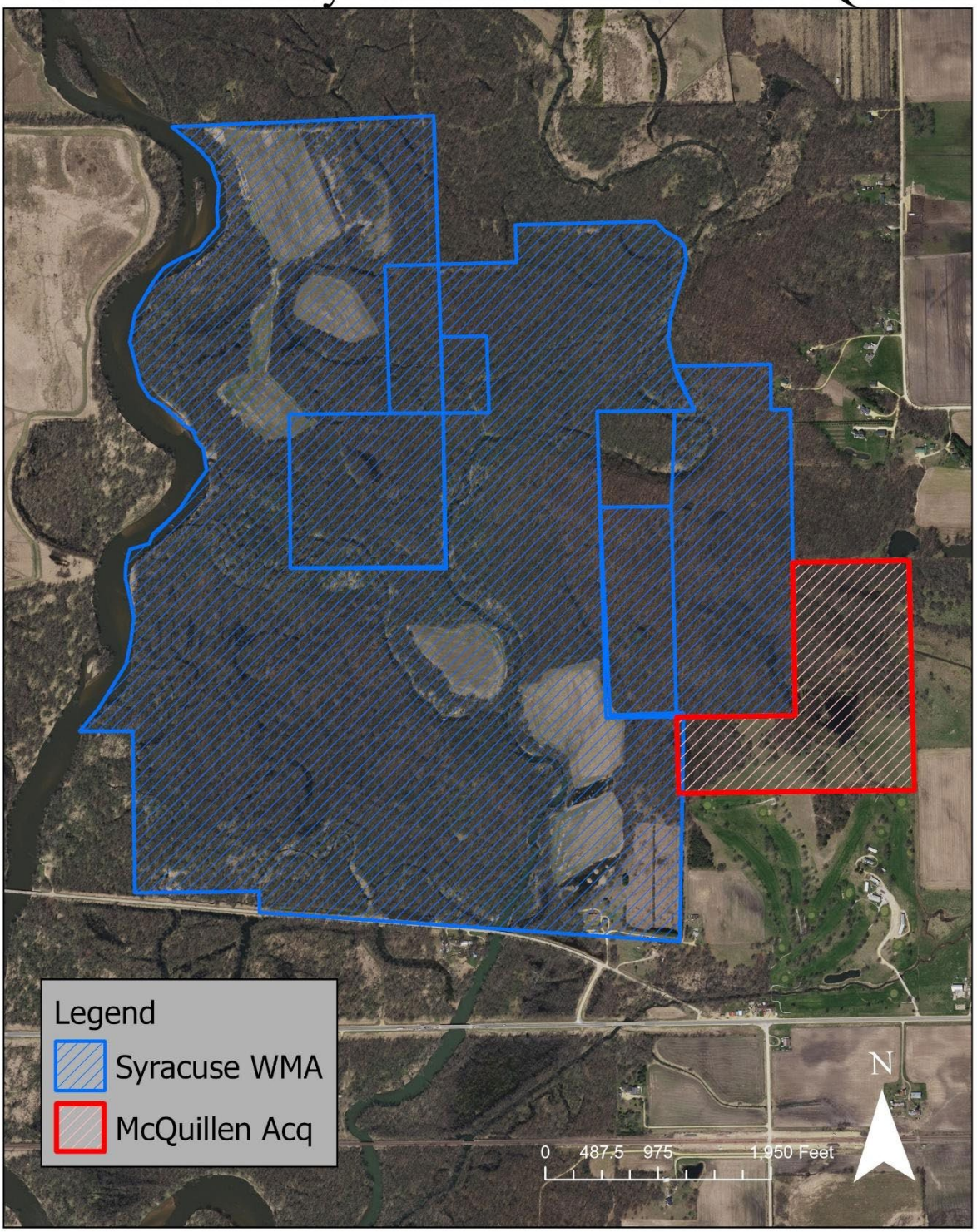
10. Public Land Acquisition Project

Syracuse WMA, Clinton County – Matthew and Elizabeth McQuillen
The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested to purchase a tract of land located in Clinton County adjacent to Syracuse WMA.

Seller: Matthew and Elizabeth McQuillen
Acreage: 60 acres m/l
DNR Purchase Price: $110,200
Appraised Value: $461,000
Property Description:
This landlocked property is located about one-mile northwest of Calamus in southwest Clinton County. The property features a forested area along the northern and western boundaries that gradually transitions into pasture toward the southeast corner. A five-acre natural wetland sits in the center of the tract. Notably, the wooded area has a high likelihood of being a savanna remnant. No buildings are present on this tract and this parcel is landlocked with no access except through existing state-owned land.
Purpose:
This acquisition will protect habitat for two federally endangered species. Restoration of the savanna remnant and forest will improve habitat for the federally endangered Northern Long-Eared bat and Indiana Bat, both of which have been found on Syracuse WMA. This tract will provide for public access to outdoor recreation and hunting opportunities. This property will remain on the Clinton County Tax Rolls.

DNR Property Manager: Wildlife Bureau
Funding Source(s): $110,200 Wildlife habitat Stamp
Incidental Costs: Incidental closing costs will be the responsibility of the Department.

Realty Services/ Syracuse WMA
Clinton County/ Matt and Elizabeth McQuillen



Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item *(* indicates proposed consent item)*

***Public Land Management Project**

*11. Land Management Project – Chapter 17 lease – Tama County – Pamela Schulze -115-N

The Natural Resource Commission is requested to approve a new Chapter 17 lease (lease for the use of State-owned land) 115-N with Pamela Schulze as Executor of the Estate of Lee A. Schulze.

Location: A portion of state-owned land approximately 50 feet in frontage and approximately 100 feet in depth parallel to the northwest line of Lot 67A, Block 3, Auditor's Plat of Section 33 and the E ½ of Section 32, Township 85 North, Range 16 West of the 5th P.M., Tama County, Iowa. This lease is on Union Grove State Park.

Site Purpose: The area has a portion of Pamela Schulze's garage and driveways encroaching on Union Grove State Park.

Lease History: The location has been under a lease since 2010. The previous lease expired in 2020. Two five-year leases will be established to cover the time elapsed since that lease. The lease was not renewed at the time of expiration due to ownership issues; with this resolved we are rectifying the lapse and current lease period.

Lease Fee and Term: The first lease will be retroactive to cover the five-year period of 2020 – 2025 with a total fee of $1,500.00. The second lease will cover the five-year period of 2025 -2030 with an annual fee of $318.60.

Travis Baker, Land & Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item (*indicates proposed consent item)

*12. Contract Amendment-1, TNT Tuckpointing & Building Restoration, LLC

Commission approval is requested for a service contract amendment with TNT Tuckpointing & Building Restoration, LLC, of Stockton, Iowa.

Amendment #1 Terms:

Engineering Project #: 25-03-10-01
Amendment Amount: $59,521.12
Funding Source: Cedar Rock Walter Trust Fund

Original Project Summary:
The current project focuses on repairing the historically significant Lowell and Agnes Walter Residence's retaining walls through masonry tuckpointing and structural stabilization. A minor roof repair is also included.

Amendment Purpose:
The retaining wall repairs included a pin repair (i.e. inserting bricks or specific mortar mix into gaps to lock the face bricks tightly into place) for a length of the retaining wall that was bulging and at risk of failure. Construction planning for existing brick retaining walls assumed that the wall included brick ties and mortar joint reinforcement. Once demolition of the existing brick commenced, it was determined that no ties or mortar reinforcement had been previously installed. Without existing brick ties or horizontal reinforcement, the ability to effectively pin the brick back to the concrete is not achievable. DNR engineering staff determined that the best option to stop this progressive failure is to remove the existing brick and reinstall using typical construction methods, including tiebacks and mortar reinforcement.





Original Selection Process Summary: The DNR used a formal competitive bid process. TNT Tuckpointing & Building Restoration, LLC was awarded the contract as the low bidder.

Contract History:

Original Contract Amount: $368,035.10
Construction Completion Date: 11/30/2026

Travis Baker, Land and Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

13. Contract with the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (Casey Lake, Hickory Hills Park)

Commission approval is requested for a contract with Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB) of Waterloo, IA.

Contract Terms:

Amount: Not to exceed $198,193.50
Dates: October 8, 2026 to July 31, 2027
Funding Source(s): Lake Restoration Program

Contract Background: Casey Lake is a 38-acre lake in a 748-acre watershed, with most of the watershed located within the 723-acre Hickory Hills Park. The lake was constructed in 1970, coinciding with the overall development of the park. Hickory Hills Park provides recreational opportunities to the public including: camping, cabins, fishing, electric only boating, hunting, scenic grass trails, animal exhibits, and shelters. The park is located in Tama County, but is owned and managed by the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB).

Frequent and pervasive algal blooms, low water transparency, noxious odors, depletion of oxygen, and fish kills have been observed and are even common in Iowa lake systems during the open water season. The Lake Restoration Program (LRP) has been working to develop new tools for managing phosphorus in lakes, particularly those that are effective at treating internal phosphorus recycling. In 2021, DNR and BHCCB hired Shive Hattery to evaluate existing watershed BMPs within the park and develop a lake restoration plan, including a dredging feasibility study and modelling effort to show how different restoration practices (including an alum application) would reduce phosphorus concentrations in the lake. In 2026, watershed BMPs and in-lake restoration practices were completed and the lake refilled ($2.92 Million), including removal of 140,000 CY of excess sediment, 3,400 LF of shoreline stabilization, new access amenities including a stone terrace and fishing nodes, and restoration/construction of seven nutrient retention ponds in the park. Shive Hattery was also tasked with incorporating post-dredging sediment coring and analysis into technical specifications and an alum dosing plan (chemical inactivation of phosphorus) for the lake and three forebays. Following the lake's refill in 2025, additional sediment cores were collected and analyzed to calculate an alum dose and show how this treatment would help minimize internal loading in the lake. This is the final step in the ongoing lake restoration project at Casey Lake. An alum application is needed to help reduce internal nutrient recycling in the lake and limit algae blooms in the lake - ultimately improving water quality and recreational opportunities.

Contract Purpose: The purpose of this project is to cooperatively fund an alum application at Casey Lake, located within Hickory Hills Park. The application will be completed in the fall of 2026 to inactivate sediment phosphorus and improve water quality.

Budget:

DNR Lake Restoration (75%)	$198,193.50
Black Hawk CCB (25%)	$66,064.50
Total:	$264,258.00

Selection Process Summary: Intergovernmental contracting with the TCCB is authorized under 11 IAC 118.4.

Travis Baker, Engineering, Land and Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

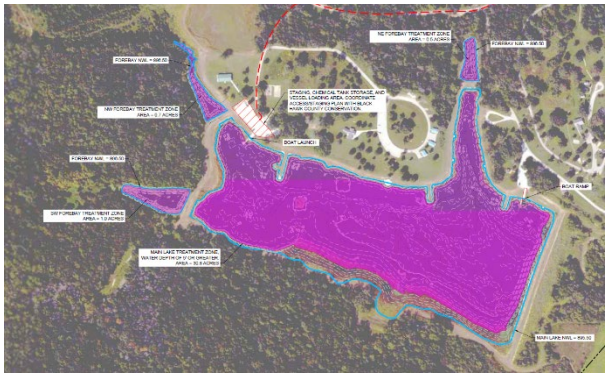
Decision Item

14. Contract with SOLitude Lake Management, LLC.

Commission approval is requested for a contract with SOLitude Lake Management, LLC out of Shrewsbury, MA.

Contract Terms:

Amount: Not to exceed $264,257.94
Dates: October 8, 2026 to August 31, 2027
Funding Source(s): Lake Restoration Program and Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB)



Contract Background: Casey Lake is a 38-acre lake in a 748-acre watershed, with most of the watershed located within the 723-acre Hickory Hills Park. The lake was constructed in 1970, coinciding with the overall development of the park. Hickory Hills Park provides recreational opportunities to the public including: camping, cabins, fishing, electric only boating, hunting, scenic grass trails, animal exhibits, and shelters. The park is located in Tama County, but is owned and managed by the Black Hawk County Conservation Board (BHCCB).

Frequent and pervasive algal blooms, low water transparency, noxious odors, depletion of oxygen, and fish kills have been observed and are even common in Iowa lake systems during the open water season. The Lake Restoration Program (LRP) has been working to develop new tools for managing phosphorus in lakes, particularly those that are effective at treating internal phosphorus recycling. In 2021, DNR and BHCCB hired Shive Hattery to evaluate existing watershed BMPs within the park and develop a lake restoration plan, including a dredging feasibility study and modelling effort to show how different restoration practices (including an alum application) would reduce phosphorus concentrations in the lake. In 2026, watershed BMPs and in-lake restoration practices were completed and the lake refilled. Shive Hattery was also tasked with incorporating post-dredging sediment coring and analysis into technical specifications and an alum dosing plan (chemical inactivation of phosphorus) for the lake and three forebays. This is the final step in the ongoing lake restoration project at this lake. An alum application is needed to help reduce internal nutrient recycling in the lake and limit algae blooms in the lake - ultimately improving water quality and recreational opportunities.

Contract Purpose: The purpose of this project is to hire a qualified firm to complete an alum application at Casey Lake, located within Hickory Hills Park. The application will be completed in the fall of 2026 to inactivate sediment phosphorus and improve water quality.

Selection Process Summary: The department solicited proposals from targeted small businesses and published a Request for quotes (RFQ) on the Department of Administrative Services website.

Proposal Due Date: 9/4/2026
Scoring Criteria: Proposals were scored based on the criteria as described in the RFQ and costs.
Proposals Received: 2
Recommendation: SOLitude Lake Management, LLC

Consultant's Estimate:	$199,796.00
Aquatic Control (Bid was disqualified/incomplete)	$198,278.00
SOLitude Lake Management, LLC	$264,257.94

Travis Baker, Engineering, Land and Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item (*indicates proposed consent item)

*15. Contract with the Poweshiek County Conservation Board (Diamond Lake Park)

Commission approval is requested for a contract with the Poweshiek County Conservation Board (PCCB), of Montezuma, Iowa.

Contract Terms:
Amount: Not to exceed $77,100.00
Dates: October 8, 2026 to September 30, 2028
Funding Source(s): Lake Restoration Program

Background: Constructed in the 1950s, Diamond Lake is a 98.7-acre lake with a 2,672 acre watershed which is comprised of a mix of public and privately owned lands. The lake is located in Diamond Lake County Park in Poweshiek County and is managed by Poweshiek County Conservation and serves as the primary drinking water source for the City of Montezuma. With a 27: 1 watershed to lake area ratio, the lake is an excellent candidate for restoration. The watershed has a mix of forested land, crop land, and grassland. Water quality is considered average for the State of Iowa, but the lake suffers periodically from algae blooms that lead to poor water clarity. The maximum depth of Diamond Lake is about 20' with the mean depth being 7.2' although the depths in the norther portion of the lake are fairly shallow and there has been some sediment deposition in the arms of the lake since it was constructed.

Both landowners within the watershed and the park staff have worked to reduce sediment and nutrient inputs to the lake by installing a variety of best management practices on the landscape. DNR and PCCB completed an assessment of the watershed in 2022 and began construction on several watershed practices within the park to address nutrient and sediment runoff in 2024. The rehabilitation of two existing watershed ponds, as well as the construction of a new watershed pond will help protect the lake. Construction was completed in 2025 ($454k; $341k LRP, $113k PCCB) and project partners shifted focus to address sedimentation in the lake and large campground marsh.

DNR previously worked with the PCCB in 2015 to repair and modify the spillway at the lake outlet. The spillway needed repair, and upgrading the lakes infrastructure allowed project partners to modify the outlet structure and eliminate migration of undesirable fish species into the lake from downstream Moon Creek. Modification of the outlet was an important step in the long-term water quality improvement plan for Diamond Lake and was able to be completed with the lake at full pool. The spillway modification was completed in 2015 for a total cost of $160k, with the PCCB contributing $32k to the project.

A critical step needed to move forward with a larger restoration project in the lake was to construct an alternative drinking water supply for the City, as Diamond Lake was their only water source. The local community also contributed over $5 Million developing and installing an alternative water source (Jordan aquifer well) for the City of Montezuma that was installed in 2025. This contribution represents a significant investment in the project by the community and is their primary cost share for the overall restoration project, as this project could not move forward without an alternative water supply.

PCCB and DNR began developing a larger in-lake restoration project in 2025 with the goal completing some targeting dredging, shoreline stabilization, jetty construction, fish habitat improvements, and a new boat ramp in 2027-2029. A contractor is preparing to notch the dam and drain the lake in the fall 2026 to provide dry conditions for the restoration work, and to install a drawdown pipe and valve, which will facilitate future drawdowns ($753k: $702,888.63 DNR, $50k PCCB).

Contract Purpose: The purpose of this agreement is to work with Poweshiek County Conservation Board (PCCB) to hire a qualified consultant to build upon previously completed work and provide construction services during the in-lake restoration project. The consultant will provide final design for a dredge spoil site that will serve as a base for a new boat ramp and parking area, additional geotechnical investigation for the spoil site, and construction services during the drawdown, dredging, and fish habitat installation phases of the project.

Budget:

DNR Contribution	$ 77,100.00
Poweshiek County Conservation Board Contribution (Cash Match)	$ 25,700.00
Total budget	$ 102,800.00

Anticipated Future Work: Future work will include targeted dredging, shoreline restoration, fish habitat improvements, and new recreational opportunities to be completed starting in 2027. The current cost estimate for remaining work is $3.5 Million.

Selection Process Summary: Intergovernmental contracting with the PCCB is authorized under 11 IAC 118.4.

Travis Baker, Land & Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item *(*indicates proposed consent item)*

*16. Contract with the Benton County Conservation Board (Hannen Lake Park)

Commission approval is requested for a contract with the Benton County Conservation Board, Vinton, IA.

Contract Terms:

Amount: Not to exceed $112,500.00
Dates: October 12, 2026 – February 28, 2029
Funding Source(s): Lake Restoration Program

Contract Background: Hannen Lake is a 37-acre lake constructed in the late 1950's. The lake is surrounded by a 218-acre park, which offers, camping, fishing, paddling, picnicking, swimming and hiking. Hannen Lake supports a quality sportfish population, consisting of Bluegill, Black crappie, Channel catfish, Redear sunfish and Largemouth bass, and it remains a locally important destination for recreation, drawing over 22,000 visitors annually.

Hannen Lake has a 581-acre watershed and the lake to watershed ratio is 16:1. Watershed land use primarily consists of pasture and row crop agriculture (70% combined). The lake is currently listed on Iowa's Impaired Waters List due to poor water quality attributed to elevated levels of algal growth (chlorophyll-α) and needs further investigation due to cyanobacteria. A TMDL was completed for algae and pH (>9) in 2013, but the lake continues to struggle with poor water quality, which impacts recreation and the quality of the fishery.

The lake has a maximum depth of 20.5 feet and a mean depth of 7.5 feet, but 12% (37 ac ft) of the lake's volume was lost over the course of 12 years (2012 to 2024), due to sedimentation. Managers suspect that the lake periodically mixes during intense rain or wind events, releasing phosphorus from the hypolimnion and causing subsequent algae blooms following brief periods of stratification, particularly in the hot summer months.

The lake restoration program began meeting with the Benton County Conservation Board (BCCB) in 2024 in hopes of developing a larger scale restoration project. Since the group first started meeting, the team has been acquiring water quality data, and working to develop a list of desired outcomes for the project, but they additional engineering resources are needed to help build a comprehensive restoration plan for the lake and park.

Contract Purpose: The purpose of this agreement is to work with the BCCB to hire a qualified consultant for assessing potential watershed and in-lake enhancements to improve water quality, infrastructure, habitat, and recreational opportunities associated with the restoration of Hannen Lake. The hired consultant will complete an assessment of current conditions in the lake and watershed, a cost-benefit analysis, and conceptual design for restoration practices.

Budget:

DNR Contribution (75%)	$ 112,500.00
Benton County Conservation Board Contribution (25%)	$ 37,500.00
Total budget	$ 150,000.00

Anticipated Future Work: The DNR and CCB intend to partner on a comprehensive restoration plan to improve water quality and recreational opportunities at Hannen Lake Park. Total anticipated costs for restoration construction is around $3-4 million, and will likely include a combination of targeted dredging, shoreline restoration, dam and outlet upgrades, stormwater management, grade control structures, and fish habitat enhancements.

Selection Process Summary: Intergovernmental contracting with the BCCB is authorized under 11 IAC 118.4.

Travis Baker, Land & Waters Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

17. Chapter 96, "Small Game Hunting" – Adopted and Filed

The Commission is requested to approve the Adopted and Filed rule to implement Chapter 96, "Small Game Hunting."

Chapter 96 governs small game hunting by residents and nonresidents in Iowa. Specifically, this chapter regulates small game hunting and sets forth season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, areas open to hunting, and transportation requirements.

The adopted rule defines annual nonresident small game hunting license parameters and designates resident-only hunting periods on public lands. In more detail, the proposed rule designates a few blocks of time as resident-only for public lands, namely the opening week of the pheasant season and a four-week block in late fall for rabbit, squirrel, and grouse. Importantly, nonresidents visiting Iowa to hunt small game on private land by themselves or with family or friends will not be impacted by this proposed change. The adopted resident-only portions of the rule will only apply on public lands.

The adopted rule will more evenly distribute small game hunting pressure on public land providing for a safer and more enjoyable experience for resident and nonresident hunters alike. Additionally, a typical nonresident hunter spends five days or fewer hunting small game in Iowa annually. The adopted rule provides for up to 14 days of hunting on an annual nonresident license, with the option to purchase multiple annual licenses. In other words, this proposed change allows nonresident small game hunters to visit and hunt in Iowa for more days than they have historically chosen to. Finally, and importantly, the adopted rule does not change the fees for small game hunting licenses for either residents or nonresidents.

Todd Bishop, Wildlife Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation
Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Attached: Chapter 96, "Small Game Hunting" – Final rule

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to small game hunting

The Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby amends Chapter 96, "Small Game Hunting," Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39 and 481A.48.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code sections 481A.38, 481A.39 and 481A.48.

Purpose and Summary

Chapter 96 governs small game hunting by residents and nonresidents in Iowa. Specifically, this chapter regulates small game hunting and sets forth season dates, bag limits, possession limits, shooting hours, areas open to hunting, and transportation requirements.

The adopted rule defines annual nonresident small game hunting license parameters and designates resident-only hunting periods on public lands. In more detail, the proposed rule designates a few blocks of time as resident-only for

public lands, namely the opening week of the pheasant season and a four-week block in late fall for rabbit, squirrel, and grouse. Importantly, nonresidents visiting Iowa to hunt small game on private land by themselves or with family or friends will not be impacted by this proposed change. The adopted resident-only portions of the rule will only apply on public lands.

The adopted rule will more evenly distribute small game hunting pressure on public land providing for a safer and more enjoyable experience for resident and nonresident hunters alike. Additionally, a typical nonresident hunter spends five days or fewer hunting small game in Iowa annually. The adopted rule provides for up to 14 days of hunting on an annual nonresident license, with the option to purchase multiple annual licenses. In other words, this proposed change allows nonresident small game hunters to visit and hunt in Iowa for more days than they have historically chosen to. Finally, and importantly, the adopted rule does not change the fees for small game hunting licenses for either residents or nonresidents.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on September 2, 2026, as **ARC 0548D**. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- September 22, 2026

Two people attended the public hearing. Two hundred thirty-seven public comments were received. Of the comments received, 131 supported the amendments, 75 opposed, and 31 supported varying parts, but not all, of the proposed changes. Nearly all of the 75 comments opposing the changes came from nonresidents who live a short distance from one of Iowa's borders. These hunters regularly make day trips to hunt in Iowa and are frustrated by a perceived loss of flexibility in the proposed changes. Many of these are the same hunters who residents believe are dominating the use of Iowa public lands. Adopting the proposed changes will temporally spread out the hunters that choose not to purchase additional licenses.

No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the Commission on October 8, 2026.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any, pursuant to 7—Chapter 2504.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its regular monthly meeting or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on January 1, 2027.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Adopt the following **new** rule 571—96.10(481A):

571—96.10(481A) Small game hunting by nonresidents.

96.10(1) Small game species for nonresident hunting include pheasant, quail, partridge, grouse, dove, rabbit, and squirrel.

96.10(2) Nonresident small game hunters purchasing a nonresident annual hunting license shall be limited to two 7-day periods totaling not more than 14 days per annual license purchased. Multiple nonresident annual hunting licenses may be purchased.

96.10(3) The two seven-day periods must be designated at the time the annual license is purchased and may be consecutive. The seven-day periods must fall within the season dates defined in rules 571—96.1(481A) through 571—96.4(481A) and this rule, except:

a. Small game hunting by nonresidents is not allowed on public land during the first seven days of the pheasant season as defined in subrule 96.1(1).

b. Rabbit, squirrel, and grouse hunting by nonresidents is not allowed on public land from the third Saturday in October through the third Saturday in November.

96.10(4) A designated period may be changed prior to the beginning date of the period by contacting the department.

96.10(5) The nonresident five-day hunting license may be purchased independently or in conjunction with a nonresident annual hunting license.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

18. Subrecipient Grant Agreement with Wildlife Management Institute

Commission approval is requested for a Subrecipient Agreement with Wildlife Management Institute, of Colchester, Vermont.

Agreement Terms

Amount: Not to exceed $131,978
Dates: October 8, 2026 to September 27, 2027
Funding Source(s): USDA APHIS Wildlife Services Cooperative Agreement

Agreement Purpose: In the past three years, the Iowa DNR has seen an acceleration in CWD invasion across the state, including first detections in 24 new counties since the 2023/24 surveillance season (>60% of all county detections to date). With this expanding disease front, we are also seeing continued encroachment into urban areas which can become refugia for CWD-infected animals due to lower or inconsistent hunting pressure and ready access to natural and artificial food and water resources. As such, the Iowa DNR has been working toward urban CWD readiness in several key areas: education, resource allocation, and response.

Education. The Chronic Wasting Disease Ambassadors (CWDA) program began in 2021 as a cooperative partnership between Iowa State University Extension and Outreach and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to develop an educational curriculum delivered over three weeks. The vision for this program is to create an informed community of hunters, landowners, deer managers, and environmental stewards to champion CWD best management practices across the state by serving as local change agents. We have delivered 19 offerings of this program, 10 geared toward natural resource professions and nine open to members of the public.

Resource allocation. In 2025, the Iowa DNR its first Urban Wildlife Biologist to work with cities and city councils to address urban wildlife issues including human-wildlife conflict. With CWD already detected within the city limits of Sioux City and abutting Dubuque, in the same county as Ames, and in an adjacent county for Cedar Falls-Waterloo, Greater Des Moines, and Iowa City, urban CWD management is an issue that spans deer management and human-deer conflict in Iowa.

Response. In 2025, the Iowa DNR published an updated CWD Response Plan to guide surveillance and management activities for the next five years. Since then, the CWD Management Team has drafted an Urban CWD Response Plan. This companion document is meant to assist city officials and local DNR staff navigating a CWD future. This project will help us to identify current barriers to CWD management within partner cities and find scalable solutions. We will then develop a series of urban CWD roadmaps calling upon the specific partners, stakeholder attitudes, and capacity of each city to build CWD resiliency into urban deer management.

The purpose of this Agreement with Wildlife Management Institute is to hire an Urban CWD Specialist that will work alongside the DNR Urban Wildlife Biologist to help cities facing CWD incursion develop a framework for deer management that includes CWD resiliency. Specifically, the Urban CWD Specialist will survey urban partners and review educational materials related to deer management to identify gaps in CWD readiness, partner with city officials and other stakeholders to develop city-specific CWD response plans, increase CWD testing within partner cities, and deliver CWD Ambassadors courses in partner cities and organize a CWD Ambassadors 5-year Anniversary Summit.

Summary: DNR has received a grant from USDA APHIS Wildlife Services to support this project.

Recommendation: Approval of this Agreement to pass through funding is recommended in order to facilitate urban CWD readiness in Iowa.

Todd Bishop, Wildlife Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

19. Contract Amendment- 2 with Ducks Unlimited, Inc.

Commission approval is requested for a service contract amendment with Ducks Unlimited, Inc., of Ann Arbor, MI.

Amendment--# 2
Terms:
Amendment Amount: $ 250,000
Amendment Dates: October 8, 2026 to September 1, 2030
Funding Source(s): Iowa Migratory Bird Fees (50%), Lakes Restoration Program (50%)

Amendment Purpose: The purpose of this amendment is to extend the contract to the full allowable 6 years and add funds to cover the costs of this extension. Multiple grants have been secured to fund construction of major wetland restorations and enhancements over the next 3 years including work at Riverton, Green Island, Elk Marsh, Twelve Mile, and Muskrat Slough. The extension of this contract will allow for the survey, design, and engineering needed to accomplish these projects.

Original Contract Purpose: To partner with Ducks Unlimited, Inc. (DU) to perform engineering and feasibility assessments on shallow lakes and large marshes in the 35 County Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (PPJV) Region of Iowa. This contract continues our partnership with DU under the Living Lakes Initiative Conservation Partnership initiated in 2006.

The primary purpose of the agreement is to improve water quality in large marshes and shallow lakes where monitoring data show poor water quality and a corresponding reduction in wildlife habitat, native fish populations, and associated recreational use. Projects conducted under this agreement focus on renovation of degraded wetland habitats by removing and excluding carp and other rough fish species, establishing functional water control structures, and reestablishing healthy emergent and submerged aquatic plant communities.

Original Selection Process: Non-governmental contracting with Ducks Unlimited, Inc. is authorized under 11 IAC 117.5(5) and 118.7.

Contract History:
Original Contract Terms: Amount $ 250,000; Timeframe: September 1, 2024 to December 31, 2027

Amendment- #1; **Terms**: Amount: $0; Timeframe: February 15, 2025 to December 31, 2027; Purpose: The purpose of this amendment was to add Task 5 which was to allow DU to subcontract additional engineering needs beyond their normal scope of expertise to specialized firms.

Todd Bishop, Wildlife Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: September 29, 2026

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission

Decision Item

20. Contract with Iowa State University

Commission approval is requested for a contract with Iowa State University, of Ames, IA.

Contract Terms

Amount: Not to exceed $900,000.
Dates: 10/15/2026 to 8/1/2032
Funding Source(s): The source of funding for this contract is the State of Iowa's Fish and Game Protection Fund and US Fish and Wildlife Service grant funds.

Contract Purpose: Iowa State University, Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory is certified to test tissue samples (retropharyngeal lymph nodes from White-tailed deer) collected for chronic wasting disease (CWD) surveillance. The DNR may submit up to 35,000 samples for testing over the six-year contract period. Iowa State has proven to be competitive on cost and logistically more efficient than other labs across the country. As CWD testing will likely be an ongoing need for the foreseeable future, the DNR views a multiple year contract as beneficial from cost control and paperwork reduction standpoints.

Selection Process Summary: Intergovernmental contracting with Iowa State University is authorized under 11 IAC 106.4.

Todd Bishop, Wildlife Bureau Chief
Conservation and Recreation Division
NRC Meeting Date: October 8, 2026