

Polk County



Resource Enhancement and Protection Plan

2008-2012

Approved by the Polk County REAP Committee

January 24, 2008 (Amended July 28, 2010)

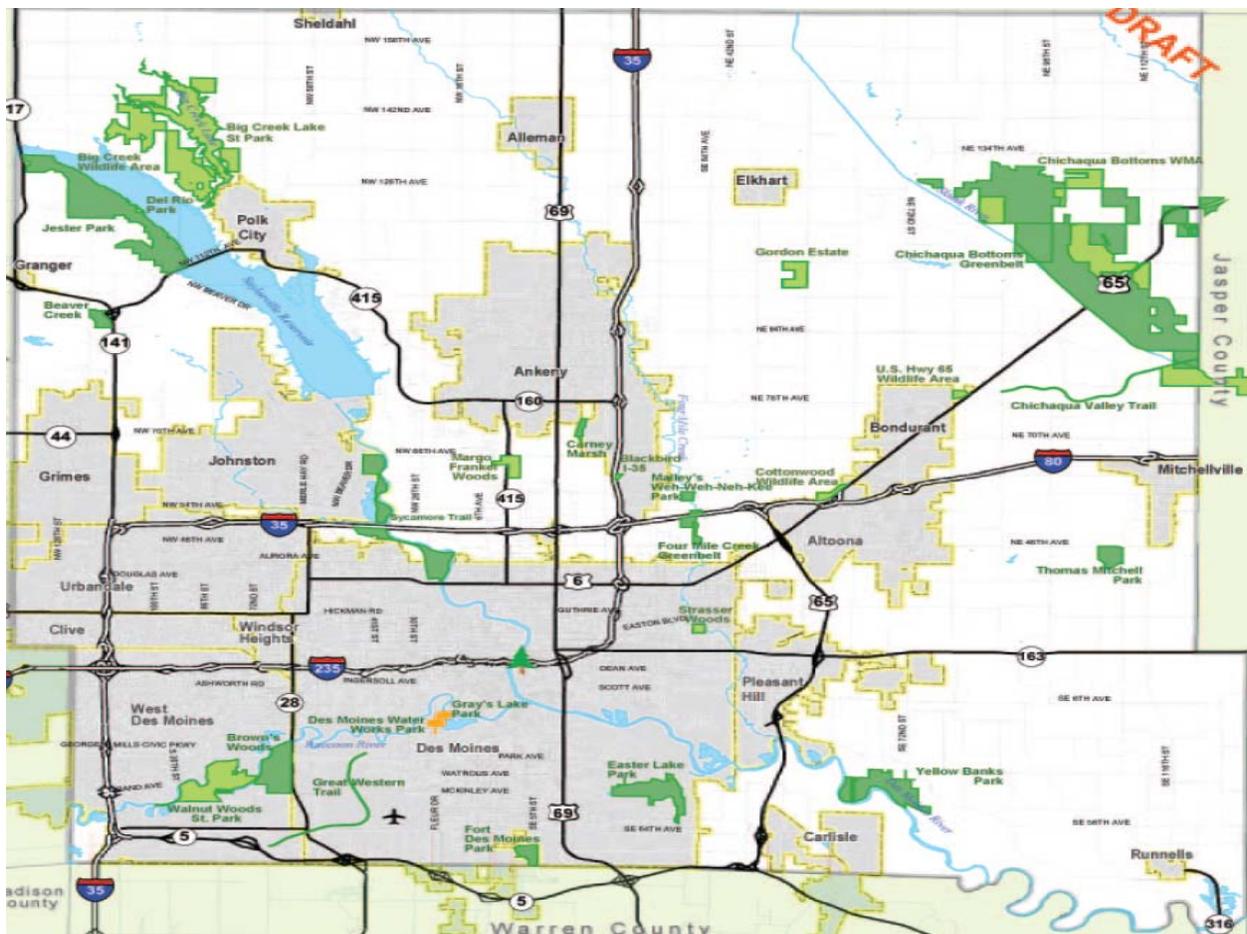


Introduction

In 1989, the State of Iowa established the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Act. Since its inception, \$194,102,762 has been allocated towards REAP programs including open space preservation, land conservation, land management, historical preservation, open space acquisition and development, native roadside vegetation maintenance, and soil and water enhancement.

In the early years of the REAP program various members of local organizations in the county joined together to create the Polk County REAP Committee. After a period of time during which interest in the REAP committee waned, a revitalization effort began in 2007. The membership of the new committee charged forward to develop an improved county-wide system to coordinate efforts and to achieve the goals set forth in the REAP act of 1989.

Polk County is located near the center of the state of Iowa. The estimated population for 2006 was 408,888, making it one of the most populated areas of the state. The land mass is 592 square miles with 23 square miles of that area being water. The population density is approximately 700 people per square mile. Land and water reserved for nature and outdoor recreation totals nearly 70 square miles.



(Map of Polk County supplied by the Polk County Conservation Board)

Goals for Polk County

To maintain a high quality natural environment, it is essential that we identify and protect the existing natural areas, enhance those already under protection and seek to acquire additional natural areas, otherwise once they are gone, generations of lowans will lose an opportunity to enjoy the natural beauty of our county and this great state.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Polk County Resource, Enhancement and Protection Committee is to bring the county, cities, and other organizations together to enhance the quality of life for current and future residents and visitors. This will be done by conscientiously managing resources of the area including our natural resources, providing education and stewardship programs, recreation and leisure opportunities, along with protecting historic resources in the cities and the entire county. Fulfillment of the mission may include aiding local entities in the acquisition of REAP grants.

To accomplish this mission, the Committee has developed certain areas of focus including:

- A. Protection and Preservation**
- B. Enhancement and Development**
- C. Education and Stewardship**

Before a focused mission for future goals can begin, it's important to look at where we have been, and what has been accomplished to date. To begin to look at where we have been it's important to understand the past efforts and the vital role that the REAP program has had in those efforts to protect the natural resources throughout the county and the role all of the REAP programs have played in making Polk County such a great part of our state. The Polk County REAP committee wishes to acknowledge and thank all of those individuals whose efforts have made a difference in our county. In all, projects in Polk County have received \$6,276,452 in REAP funding since the first application for funding was approved in 1990. All of the projects that have received funding in Polk County are listed on the following pages.

REAP Funded Projects in Polk County

Altoona – Environmental corridor: \$99,177

Ankeny – Crestbruck Park Development: \$120,950

Big Creek State Park: \$330,552

Blumenthal Family Foundation: \$1,500

Bruce Pierce – 17th Street Building Preservation: \$6,750

Clive – 114th Street Property Acquisition: \$122,822

Craig P. Grenz: \$16,652

Projects (cont.)

Des Moines: \$1,059,000

Des Moines Art Center: \$11,683

Des Moines Community Schools: \$20,618

Des Moines Independent School District: \$26,475

Des Moines Parks and Recreation: \$41,235

Des Moines Playhouse: \$5,450

Grandview College: \$5,600

Growing Green Communities – Green Infrastructure Strategy Model: \$35,000

Iowa DNR – CCC Oral History: \$2,405

Iowa Gold Star Museum, Camp Dodge – Von Ripper Artwork: \$850

Iowa Library Association: \$8,500

Iowa Quilters Guild: \$1,100

Iowa State Education Association: \$4,195

Jeffery L. Campbell – Malin Grocery: \$10,500

Johnston Community Schools – “K Kids”: \$4,500

Living History Farms: \$97,167

Michael T. Donovan: \$19,158

Native Roadside Vegetation:

Ankeny: \$3,194

Grimes: \$1,440

Polk County: \$7,167

West Des Moines: \$528

Patrice Kay Beam: \$6,285

Patrick Fox: \$14,857

Paul Errington Marsh: \$150,323

Polk County Conservation Board: \$471,273

Polk County Conservation – Per County Allocations: \$96,576/ Per Population Allocations: \$1,187,207

Projects (cont.)

Polk County Department of General Services: \$85,525

Polk County Treasurer – Local Property Tax Reimbursement: \$61,974

Ray Fund of Greater DSM Community Foundation – Arrangement & Description, Ray Coll. Phase 1: \$15,500

River Bend Association, Inc. – Rachel Ruan House: \$22,100

Salisbury House: \$54,722

Saylorville Bike Trail – Trail Repair: \$ 504

Sheldahl – Trail Project Sheldahl Mile: \$35,192

State Fairground Building – Replace Roof: \$12,422

Soil and Water Conservation District: \$54,596

Central Iowa Urban WQP: \$4,877

Allocations for Practices: \$63,230

Forestry and Native Vegetation: \$18,977

Tai Studies Center – Preserving Tai Dam Manuscript: \$7,250/ Translation Tai Dam Manuscript: \$6,000

Teri Toye: \$17,143

Terrace Hill: \$8,500

Time Frame Productions, Inc. – Documentary People/Alaska-Canadian Highway: \$15,503

Trinity United Methodist Church: \$2,700

Urban Resources and Borderland Alliance: \$43,500

Urbandale – Walnut Creek Park: \$290,192

Wallace House Foundation – Phase II rehab, Uncle Henry Wallace House: \$30,000

Walnut Woods State Park: \$104,733

West Des Moines – Trail Development: \$1,026,365

West Des Moines – Raccoon River Park, land acquisition: \$133,365

West Des Moines Community Schools: \$19,738

West Des Moines Historical Society: \$9,500

Windsor Heights – Trail Development: \$275,000

Inventory of Natural Resources in Polk County

Note: Includes only the categories eligible for REAP funding

Many resources exist that add to the quality of life of Polk County residents. These resources include waterways such as the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers, lakes, and other state, county, and municipal parks. Some of these have received assistance from REAP programs; others have received funding and contributions through other sources. Together they make up a plethora of opportunities for the residents and visitors of the County.

The following information has been submitted by each entity as an overview of key areas of their particular agency or organization. This information should be viewed as a sampling of resource opportunities rather than an all-inclusive list. The Polk County REAP committee also recognizes that many schools and school districts also provide areas for natural and some historic areas. Unfortunately in a sampling such as this, it's impossible to contact and list each and every resource.

Corps of Engineers:

The 26,000 acre Saylorville Lake project includes the natural resources of the reservoir, woodland, wetland and prairie habitats with camping, boating, fishing, hiking, and biking facilities.

Iowa Department of Natural Resources, State Parks:

Big Creek State Park resources include facilities for swimming, boating, fishing, picnic shelters and 26 miles of recreational trails. Walnut Woods State Park features an outstanding 1930s limestone lodge for picnicking and other gatherings, and 23 campsites with fishing along the Raccoon River.

Polk County Conservation (PCC):

Eighteen parks in Polk County feature natural areas that amass 11,000 acres, including wildlife areas, restored prairies and wetlands, and nearly 52 miles of recreational trails.

City of Altoona:

Altoona has eight parks. City trails connect to the Gay Lea Wilson Trail.

City of Ankeny:

Ankeny now boasts forty developed parks with 12 different ponds, four natural areas, 33 miles of trail and an outdoor education area.

City of Bondurant:

Bondurant features the 35-acre Petoca Lake Park and walking trails. An additional 40 acres of land have been reserved for future parks.

Inventory of Resources (cont.)

City of Clive:

Fifteen parks are available in Clive including the 296-acre Greenbelt Park and trail with a restored 10-acre prairie and over 9 miles of recreational trails that connect neighborhoods with nature.

City of Des Moines:

Seventy-two parks including natural areas, 34 miles of trails, amphitheaters, picnic shelters and arboretums.

City of Grimes:

The City of Grimes currently has more than 3 miles of trails, five greenspace parks and two larger fully developed parks featuring picnic shelters.

City of Johnston:

Fifteen parks totaling 410 acres are available in Johnston including the 156 acre Beaver Creek Natural Resource Area, and approximately 30 miles of recreational trails.

City of Mitchellville:

The City of Mitchellville includes three parks and has picnic shelters available.

City of Pleasant Hill:

Eight parks include 169 acres of natural beauty with a 40-acre lake and 3 miles of recreational trails.

City of Polk City:

The City of Polk City has three parks, recreational and interpretive trails that feature exercise stations available for parks users. An additional 20 acres has been reserved for future parks.

City of Runnells:

The City of Runnells features a 22 acre park.

City of Urbandale:

Urbandale parks include 675 acres of developed parks and 225 undeveloped acres including 36 miles of trails and 48 park areas.

Inventory of Resources (cont.)

City of West Des Moines:

Thirty-eight park areas total 1,274 acres including the 630-acre Raccoon River Park, and 43 miles of trails wind through the city.

City of Windsor Heights:

Three miles of trails and two recently renovated parks are key facilities in Windsor Heights.

Historical Resources in Polk County

Living History Farms:

Travel through 300 years of Iowa's agricultural heritage with an example of how Native Americans grew crops in 1700, an early pioneer farm of 1850, and look at the beginning of the machine age at the 1900 farm.

Salisbury House Foundation:

Visit an American castle in this 42-room mansion modeled after the King's House in Salisbury England.

Terrace Hill Foundation:

Visit the "The Palace of the Prairie" better known today as Terrace Hill, home to the Governor.

Iowa Gold Star Museum:

Dedicated to honor and depict the military experience of Iowa's citizens in all wars.

Wallace House Foundation:

Preserving the heritage of the Wallace Family, Wallace House, and building community through conservation about contemporary issues.

Iowa State Fairgrounds:

Since 1886, the fairgrounds have remained in the current location just two miles east of downtown Des Moines.

Five-year Plan

To focus on the goals as noted in the mission statement, it is important to identify and develop a five-year plan for the implementation of projects to meet the mission. The following list of projects is categorized by the three areas of focus as listed in the mission statement.

A. Protection and Preservation: Many opportunities to protect and preserve fragile natural areas of our County still exist. Once lost, those opportunities will be gone. Acquisition by either ownership or long-term easement of these areas remains as a key focal point for our residents.

- ***A 1. Protect and enhance riparian greenbelt areas throughout the county.***

2011-2012—PCC, \$50,000, Yellow Banks Park In-Fill Land Acquisition

*2011 – West Des Moines, \$200,000, Raccoon River Property Acquisition (IDNR partnership)

- ***A 2. Protect and enhance natural areas, including prairies, wetlands woodlands, savannahs, and existing parks.***

2009—Des Moines, \$250,000, Grays Lake Lakeshore Restoration

2009—Johnston, \$10,000, Management Plan: Beaver Creek Natural Resource Area

2011 – PCC, \$250,000, Chichaqua Bottoms Acquisition

2011-2012 – PCC, \$250,000, Fort Des Moines Park Acquisition

*2012 – West Des Moines, \$150,000, Raccoon River Property Development (IDNR partnership)

2012 – West Des Moines, \$50,000, Raccoon River Greenway Acquisition

2012 – West Des Moines, \$90,000, Raccoon River Park Habitat Restoration

- ***A 3. Complete a comprehensive inventory of natural resources, trails, hunting and non-hunting areas, endangered species, prairies, wetlands, woodlands, savannahs and historic resources.***

*2011—Polk County Conservation, \$200,000, Natural Areas Inventory

*Multi-jurisdictional project

B. Enhancement and Development: Residents and visitors of the County and Cities enjoy excellent amenities although improvements are always needed. Highlights and focus areas for this area of our state include an excellent recreation trail network, several areas of restored prairie and woodlands along with great parks and facilities. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the current system and would benefit from additional trail improvements, enhancements to our natural areas and further development of our parks and other facilities.

- ***B 1. Assist landowners and land managers in protecting and enhancing soil and water quality and watershed protection.***

2008 – PCC, \$75,000, Thomas Mitchell Pond Restoration

2012 – PCC, \$150,000, Easter Lake Restoration

- ***B 2. Protect and enhance recreation opportunities along waterways, right-of-ways, and existing transportation corridors. Recreational trails and greenways are an important component that links important natural areas, especially those that are isolated.***

2008 – Ankeny, \$150,000, Neal Smith Trail Connector 2008

2009 – PCC, \$60,956, Trail Equipment Sharing Program

†2009 – Ankeny, \$150,000, Gay Lea Wilson Trail (Ankeny section)

†2009 – PCC, \$300,000, Gay Lea Wilson Trail (Carney Marsh to Des Moines)

†2010 – Ankeny, \$150,000, Gay Lea Wilson Trail

2010 – Clive, \$125,000, Aquatic Center Bridge & Trail Connection

2010 – PCC, \$75,000, Jester Park Wetland Development, Two Dam Pond Accessible Trail and Fishing Pier

2011—Ankeny, \$150,000, Prairie Trail, Promenade Park and Trail Improvements

2011 – Des Moines, \$250,000, John Pat Dorrian Trail (renovation)

2011 - 2012 – Des Moines, \$250,000, Waveland Trail

2011- 2012 – Des Moines, \$200,000, Additional Waveland Trail Connections Phases

2011- 2012 – Des Moines, \$250,000, Des Moines Trails Phases

2011-2012 – Des Moines, \$300,000 Cownie Soccer Park to Easter Lake Park Trails Phases

2011 – Johnston, \$20,000, Beaver Creek Nature Trail

2011 – PCC, \$500,000, Easter Lake Trail Improvements

*2011 – PCC, \$50,000, High Trestle Trail (greenway restoration)

2012 – Ankeny, \$150,000, Prairie Trail Chautauqua Park Improvements

2012 – Clive, \$125,000, Microware Bridge & Trail

*Multi-jurisdictional project

†Agencies are working together to ensure trail alignment

- **B 3. Park and Natural Area Enhancement and Developments.**

2011 – West Des Moines, \$240,000, Southwoods Park Shelter

2012 – West Des Moines, \$110,000, Raccoon River Park Canoe Access

2012 – Johnston, \$125,000, Terra Lake Park Improvements

2012 – PCC, \$250,000, Easter Lake Enclosed Facility

C. Education and Stewardship: Residents and visitors of all ages should have the opportunity to enjoy and to learn about the natural and historical resources in our county, and to develop their own sense of stewardship.

- ***C 1. Expand environmental education opportunities for all age groups.***

2008 – PCC, \$125,000, Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt Welcome Package

2011 – PCC, \$75,000, Jester Park, Bison/Elk exhibit improvements

2011 – PCC, \$150,000, Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt Field Research Station

- ***C 2. Protect and enhance historical resources throughout the county.***

2008 – Johnston Historical Society, \$3,000, Exhibit Outreach

2009 – Johnston Historical Society, \$3,000, Story Recording

REAP Committee Duties and Timeline

The Polk County REAP Committee has determined that in order to continue meeting the requirements stated in the Iowa Code as related to the REAP program; it is important to continue meeting throughout the year and actively take part in the grant proposal process.

This includes holding a minimum of three meetings each year with one in May/June (following the Legislative Session) to review any changes as related to REAP and the five year plan, and submit a current "One Year Expenditure Plan" for that year. The next meeting would be the third or fourth week in July to review REAP proposals, provide assistance in developing proposals and provide comments for inclusion in proposals. Another meeting would be needed during the first week of August to review proposals, provide comments and sign completed proposals (*may need an additional 'Final Grant Proposal Signing'--prior to August 15th REAP Grant deadline).

In order to maintain a current five year plan, the committee will begin to develop a subsequent five year plan near the end of 'year four' of the current plan period.

2009 Tentative Meeting Schedule:

Tuesday, June 2nd: Review REAP changes, One Year Expenditure Plan

Wednesday, July 29th: Review One Year Expenditure Plan, REAP proposals and provide comments

Tuesday, August 11th: Sign completed proposals

*Saturday, August 15th deadline. Note: Grants must be received before this date

2010 Tentative Meeting Schedule:

Wednesday, June 30th: Review REAP changes, Five Year Plan Review, One Year Expenditure Plan Draft

Wednesday, July 28th: Approve One Year Expenditure Plan, REAP proposals and provide comments

Tuesday, August 10th: Sign completed proposals

Polk County REAP Committee Members:

Marlene Anderson, City of Des Moines Parks

Mindy Moore, City of Des Moines Parks

Mark Ackelson, Pleasant Hill

Mark Arentsen, City of Bondurant

Kelly Canfield, Clive Parks and Recreation

Jane Clark, Des Moines Audubon

Paul Dekker, City of Urbandale

Mike Delaney, Raccoon River Watershed Association (Co-chair)

Jo Hudson, Des Moines

Loren Lown, Polk County Conservation

Ted Ohmart, City of West Des Moines (Chair)

Marketa Oliver, City of Windsor Heights

Sally Ortgies, City of West Des Moines

Dennis Parker, Director Polk County Conservation

Virginia Soelberg, Sierra Club

Pat Spain, Polk County Conservation (Secretary)

Carol Taylor, Des Moines

JoAn VanBalen, Des Moines

Ron Ward, City of Johnston

Gary Scott, City of West Des Moines

Sub-Committee Members: (attended additional meetings and developed the Five Year Plan)

Kelly Canfield, Jane Clark, Mike Delaney, Justin McAdams, Virginia Soelberg and Pat Spain

2010 Proposed Expenditure Plan

Submitted by:

Polk County REAP Committee

The Polk County REAP Committee has emphasized A. Protection and Preservation, B. Enhancement and Development and C. Education and Stewardship as being main focus areas within Polk County. Proposed projects for FY2010 as pertaining to these focus areas are:

A. Protection and Preservation: Many opportunities to protect and preserve fragile natural areas of our County still exist. Once lost, those opportunities will be gone. Acquisition by either ownership or long-term easement of these areas remains as a key focal point for our residents.

- ***A 1. Protect and enhance riparian greenbelt areas throughout the county.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

- ***A 2. Protect and enhance natural areas, including prairies, wetlands woodlands, savannahs, and existing parks.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

- ***A 3. Complete a comprehensive inventory of natural resources, trails, hunting and non-hunting areas, endangered species, prairies, wetlands, woodlands, savannahs and historic resources.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

B. Enhancement and Development: Residents and visitors of the County and Cities enjoy excellent amenities although improvements are always needed. Highlights and focus areas for this area of our state include an excellent recreation trail network, several areas of restored prairie and woodlands along with great parks and facilities. Residents and visitors alike enjoy

the current system and would benefit from additional trail improvements, enhancements to our natural areas and further development of our parks and other facilities.

- ***B 1. Assist landowners and land managers in protecting and enhancing soil and water quality and watershed protection.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

- ***B 2. Protect and enhance recreation opportunities along waterways, right-of-ways, and existing transportation corridors. Recreational trails and greenways are an important component that links important natural areas, especially those that are isolated.***

†2010 – Ankeny, \$150,000, Gay Lea Wilson Trail

2010 – Clive, \$125,000, Aquatic Center Bridge & Trail Connection

2010 – PCC, \$75,000, Jester Park Wetland Development, Two Dam Pond Accessible Trail and Fishing Pier

†Agencies are working together to ensure trail alignment

- ***B 3. Park and Natural Area Enhancement and Developments.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

C. Education and Stewardship: Residents and visitors of all ages should have the opportunity to enjoy and to learn about the natural and historical resources in our county, and to develop their own sense of stewardship.

- ***C 1. Expand environmental education opportunities for all age groups.***

(No proposals reported for this section)

- ***C 2. Protect and enhance historical resources throughout the county.***

(No proposals reported for this section)