

## 2010 Mid-year Summary of Natural Resource Plate Sales

January- June 2010

NEW PLATES DEBUTED: April 1, 2010

Total DNR Plates:	19392 (1.07% of Total Vehicles)
Goldfinch Plates:	14132 (73% of Total DNR Plates)
Pheasant Plates:	2524 (13% of Total DNR Plates)
Eagle Plates:	2150 (11% of Total DNR Plates)
Deer Plate (April-June):	425 (2% of Total DNR Plates)
Trout Plate (April-June):	161 (0.8% of Total DNR Plates)
Renewals:	17532
New Sales:	1860
% of New Sales were New Plates:	30% (if you limit to April-June = 45%)
% Change in Renewals*:	0.22%
% Change in New Sales*:	39.8%
% Change in overall plates*:	3.02%
Number of switches:	163 (82 were from Goldfinch to one of 4 newer, ~78 were from Pheasant or Eagle to Deer or Trout)

\* From 2009 sales January-June

The Eagle and Pheasant Natural Resource plate (NR Plate) designs were introduced in September of 2005 and plate sales showed an immediate 8.3% increase. 2006 was a high mark of sales but since that time we have been losing ground at about a 1-2 % rate each year. This is primarily due to falling new sales which have decreased by 10% or greater each of the last three years. NR plate renewals have also declined but not as sharply suggesting that NR plate owners are loyal.

On April 1st of 2010 two additional new plate designs, a deer and trout, were introduced. The initial data for the first half of 2010, including 3 months with the new plates available, indicates that the new designs have helped initial sales which are almost 40% higher than during the same period last year. From April to June purchases of the new plates accounted for 45% of all new sales and the deer plate was the most popular buy (at 401) during this time period. Interestingly the most popular new sale over the first 6 months of the year (and the second favorite from April-June) was the Goldfinch with 565 sales. Renewals also stayed even from 2009 to 2010.

A total of 19,392 NR plates were renewed or purchased between January and June which represents 1.07% of all eligible registered vehicles. Of this total, 14,132 (73% of total) are the original Goldfinch, 2524 (13% of total) are pheasant plates and 2150 (11 % of total) are eagle plates. The new deer plate went on 425 vehicles and the trout on 161 in their first 3 months of availability.

A total of 163 vehicles switched the type of NR plate on their car. 50% of these switches were from the original Goldfinch plate to one of the 4 newer designs. Another 48% (or 78 switches) were from an eagle or pheasant plate to a deer or trout.

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### County Level Data

*Tables 1 and 2: County rankings for all DNR plates combined*

Table1. Per capita DNR Sales

Top 20 counties

County	Per capita DNR Sales
Story	2.12%
Mills	1.87%
Dickinson	1.78%
Audubon	1.70%
Johnson	1.66%
Winneshiek	1.60%
Mitchell	1.60%
Harrison	1.54%
Pottawattamie	1.51%
Cerro Gordo	1.48%
Worth	1.46%
Bremer	1.37%
Franklin	1.36%
Hardin	1.33%
Dallas	1.32%
Fayette	1.28%
Wright	1.28%
Monona	1.27%
Hamilton	1.26%
Poweshiek	1.26%

Table2. County share of total DNR Plate Sales

Top 20 Counties

County	County Share of DNR Plate Sales
Polk	10.77%
Linn	6.66%
Johnson	4.77%
Story	4.21%
Pottawattamie	3.96%
Black Hawk	3.90%
Scott	3.25%
Dubuque	2.42%
Woodbury	2.40%
Dallas	2.31%
Cerro Gordo	2.13%
Warren	1.75%
Marshall	1.46%
Sioux	1.39%
Jasper	1.34%
Dickinson	1.22%
Bremer	1.17%
Webster	1.16%
Winneshiek	1.14%
Boone	1.13%

*Tables 3 and 4: Top 10 counties with the greatest amount of interest in the new plate designs. Represents the percentage of DNR plates in the county that are the new design.*

Table 3. Deer

County	% of DNR Plates in County that are Deer Plates
Wayne	19.23%
Van Buren	11.36%
Davis	9.09%
Iowa	8.13%
Taylor	7.69%
Washington	7.32%
Keokuk	7.27%
Louisa	6.52%
Monroe	6.25%
Monona	5.62%

Table 4. Trout

County	% of DNR Plates in County that are Trout Plates
Clarke	6.06%
Delaware	4.03%
Poweshiek	3.95%
Butler	3.85%
Winneshiek	3.62%
Lucas	2.78%
Clay	2.63%
Howard	2.44%
Benton	2.40%
Allamakee	2.38%

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Table 2 above highlights which counties have the most DNR plates on the road. This mostly represents the counties with the highest population with Polk County always accounting for 10-12% of the vehicles with DNR Plates. However, this is not always representative of interest. For example Scott County, which is ranked 7 in the % of statewide plates it has, is near the bottom in DNR plates per capita – Scott is ranked 85<sup>th</sup> with only 0.73% of eligible vehicles in the county sporting a DNR plate.

Table 1 is as close as we can get to being representative of a county's level of support and interest in the DNR Plates. The percentage list here indicates what percentage of eligible vehicle in a county display a DNR plate. Story County has been in the lead spot for the last few years. Only a few counties from this top 20 list overlap with Table 2's Top 20.

Table 3 and 4 display in which counties the new plate designs were the most popular. This is represented as the percentage of DNR plates in the county that were a deer or trout design. This was calculated using figures from January-June and was not limited to April-June. The deer and trout plates obviously appeal to different demographics. Many of the top 10 counties for deer are very rural, low population counties. While the top 10 trout counties are more difficult to lump together, though Allamakee, Delaware, and Winneshiek counties, northeastern counties with trout fishing opportunities, appear. On the other end of the spectrum, there were 8 counties which had not sold a single deer plate and 43 counties which had sold no trout plates.

### **Conclusion**

The introduction of the new designs has given plate sales a boost when compared with 2009, however plate sales are actually still lower than they were in 2008. This may be a result of the new designs only being available for 3 months of the last 6. Hopefully in future months, with additional marketing, we will see a larger boost with the new plates.

One area that could be improved would be sales of the trout plate which appears pretty sluggish. Almost half of the counties in the state had no sales of this plate and only an average of 54 plates were sold per month. If this held we would be on par to sell only 648 plates in a 12 month period. With the number fishing licenses sold in the state this seems very low.

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### 2009 Data

Total DNR Plates:	37799 (1.23% of Total Vehicles)
Goldfinch Plates:	28940
Pheasant Plates:	4887
Eagle Plates:	3972
Renewals:	35073
New Sales:	2726
% Change in Renewals*:	-5.63%
% Change in New Sales*:	-17.44%
% Change in overall plates*:	-6.60%
Number of switches:	103 (89 was from old plate to new)
Estimated Income to REAP:	\$446,140.00
Estimated income to WDP:	\$553,355.00

\*From 2008 Sales.

The new Natural Resource plate (NR Plate) designs were introduced in September of 2005 and plate sales showed an immediate 8.3% increase. 2006 was a high mark of sales but since that time we have been losing ground at about a 1-2 % rate each year (Fig. 1).

## 2010 Mid-year Summary of Natural Resource Plate Sales

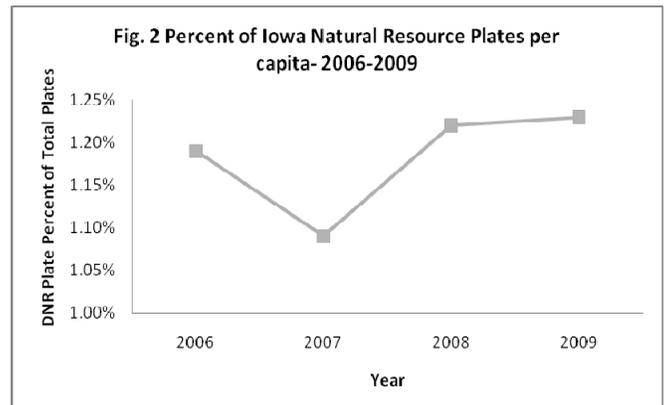
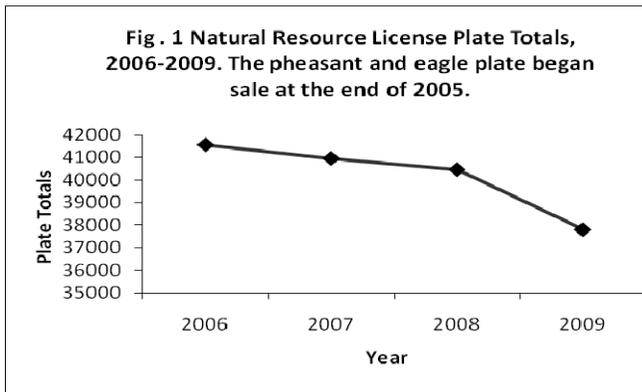
January- June 2010

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This is primarily due to falling new sales which have decreased by 10% or greater each of the last three years. NR plate renewals have also declined but not as sharply suggesting that NR plate owners are loyal. On a positive note the percent of all eligible vehicles that have a NR plate has stayed basically the same indicating that some of the loss in plate totals is likely related to a decrease in the number of eligible vehicles on the road. In addition two new plate designs became available as of April 1, 2010. The state of NR plate sales as of 2009 is summarized above and narrated below.

A total of 37,799 NR plates are on vehicles in the state which represents 1.23% of all eligible registered vehicles. Of this total, 35,073 (77% of total) are the original Goldfinch, 4,887 (13% of total) are pheasant plates and 3,972 (10 % of total) are eagle plates. The percentage of eagle and pheasant plates continued to grow by about 5.6% since last year, indicating there is still interest in those designs. It should also be noted that the pheasant plate has outsold the eagle plate which suggests that game wildlife designs are popular.

A total of 103 vehicles switched the type of NR plate on their car. 86% of these switches were from the old Goldfinch plate to either a pheasant or eagle plate indicating that interest in new designs is still active; however the number of switches continues to go down.



**Table 1.** Percent of plates per capita

**Table 2.** % of Total State NR Plates per county

County	% of statewide DNR plates
Polk	11.21%
Linn	6.81%
Johnson	4.50%
Story	4.14%
Pottawattamie	4.05%
Black Hawk	4.02%
Scott	3.21%
Woodbury	2.44%
Dubuque	2.37%
Dallas	2.32%

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by county

County	%of total plates
Story	2.39%
Dickinson	2.20%
Mills	1.96%
Audubon	1.93%
Winneshiek	1.80%
Johnson	1.79%
Pottawattamie	1.73%
Harrison	1.72%
Cerro Gordo	1.71%
Worth	1.65%
Mitchell	1.62%
Wright	1.59%
Bremer	1.58%
Kossuth	1.55%
Dallas	1.53%
Sioux	1.50%
Montgomery	1.47%
Hardin	1.46%
Greene	1.45%
Poweshiek	1.45%

Cerro Gordo	2.15%
Warren	1.68%
Marshall	1.42%
Sioux	1.35%
Jasper	1.30%
Dickinson	1.30%
Des Moines	1.17%
Bremer	1.17%
Boone	1.13%
Winneshiek	1.08%