



Thomas Hazelton <countyparksioda@gmail.com>

Jan. 14 Iowa Outdoors

1 message

Press Releases from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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<DNR.Media@dnr.iowa.gov>

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Reply-To: DNR.Media@dnr.iowa.gov

To: Iowa Association of County Conservation Boards <IACCB@mycountyparks.com>



IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JANUARY 14, 2014

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IOWA CITIZENS HELP TRACK IMPERILED WILDLIFE

It's 10 o'clock on a summer night along a gravel road anywhere in Iowa. In the farm pond next to the road a raucous chorus of male frogs are making themselves heard as they vie for mates. A volunteer stands

clipboard in hand, ear cocked, mentally sorting out each of the calling species and the number of individuals using this seemingly ordinary pond.

Skip to a Saturday morning by the river where another volunteer has binoculars trained on the tallest tree in the area. In this tree is a one ton nest, home to two bald eagles and their young. Are there two or three young in that nest? Hard to tell and a follow up visit will be needed; in the meantime, notes are taken and a peaceful hour is spent watching one of the most spectacular birds in North America.

These volunteers collecting data were trained through Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Volunteer Wildlife Monitoring Program.

"We don't have enough staff in the DNR to adequately monitor all the vulnerable species that we need to," said program coordinator Stephanie Shepherd. "This is where citizen scientists play a crucial role."

Volunteers must register for and attend a training workshop in order to participate.

Each March and April, Shepherd holds workshops to prepare volunteers to collect data on some of Iowa's critical wildlife. Bird workshops will be held on March 8th in Algona and March 15th in Elgin. The frog and toad survey workshop will be held on April 15th in Peterson. For more information go to www.iowadnr.com/volunteerwildlifemonitoring/ or send an e-mail to vwmp@dnr.iowa.gov.

So what are these critical wildlife species?

The bird workshop focuses on some of Iowa's more spectacular bird species such as bald eagles, osprey, peregrine falcons and colonially nesting water birds like herons and egrets.

Volunteers are taught how to collect data on specific nesting sites around the state and submit pertinent data such as how many young birds fledge. "This data collection requires lots of patience and some good optics in order to watch the nest from a distance and not disturb the birds," Shepherd said.

The frog and toad survey is more aural than visual.

Volunteers are trained to listen to and recognize the 16 species of frogs and toads in Iowa based on their breeding calls. Volunteers drive back country roads at night along a specified route stopping occasionally to get out and listen and record the different species heard.

"The Volunteer Wildlife Monitoring Program provides an opportunity for adults who love the outdoors and wildlife to be directly involved with the conservation and monitoring of Iowa's resources. The work done is crucial to the well-being of these species," Shepherd said.

MEDIA CONTACT: Stephanie Sheppard, Wildlife Diversity Biologist, Wildlife Diversity Program, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, [515-432-2823](tel:515-432-2823).

MEMBERS SOUGHT FOR BRUSHY CREEK BOARD

Hikers, bikers and horseback riders interested in protecting, preserving and enhancing the trail system at Brushy Creek State Recreation Area are being encouraged to serve on the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Brushy Creek Trail Advisory Board.

The 10-member Trail Advisory Board is responsible for advising the DNR on issues and recommendations regarding the development and maintenance of 45 miles of trails at Brushy Creek, a popular equestrian and multi-use recreation area in Webster County.

The DNR is looking for qualified applicants who actively participate in recreational trail activities, from hiking, bicycling and horseback riding to snowmobiling and cross-country skiing. There are two board positions open, each serving a three-year term.

For more information about the board or becoming a member of the board, go to www.iowadnr.gov/bcreek. The form for serving on the board can be found in the middle of the page. Deadline for applications is 4:30 p.m., Jan. 20.

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WINTER TROUT STOCKING SCHEDULE

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will release trout in seven locations this winter in areas that would not support them during warmer months.

The popular program is supported by the sales of the trout fee. Anglers are required to have a valid fishing license and the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Jan. 18, Blue Pit, Mason City, 11 a.m., 2,000 trout

Jan. 18, Bacon Creek, Sioux City, 1 p.m., 1,500 trout

Jan. 25, Petoka, Altoona, Noon, 1,500 trout

Jan. 25, Scharnberg Pond, Spencer, 1 p.m., 1,500 trout

Feb. 8, Ada Hayden Pond, Ames, Noon, 2,200 trout

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NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION TO MEET JANUARY 23 IN DES MOINES

DES MOINES – The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will meet 8:30 a.m., Jan. 23, in the fourth floor conference room, Wallace State Office Building, in Des Moines.

The meeting is open to the public.

Members of the NRC are Kim Francisco, Dennis Schemmel, Margo Underwood, Conrad Clement, Dr. Sally Prickett, Marcus Branstad and Phyllis Reimer. The Director of the DNR is Chuck Gipp.

The following is the agenda for the January meeting.

- Approve Agenda
 - *Consent Agenda
 - Contract with Pheasants Forever
 - Big Creek State Park, Polk County - Knapp
- Approve Minutes of Dec. 12 Meeting
- Director Remarks
- *Contract with Pheasants Forever
- Cooperative Agreement with Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship
- Construction – Lake Icaria Riprap
- Public Land Acquisition Projects
 - Preparation Canyon Unit, Loess Hills State Forest, Monona County – Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF)
 - Preparation Canyon Unit, Loess Hills State Forest, Monona County –INHF
 - West Okoboji Wildlife Management Area (WMA), Dickinson County – INHF
 - Buffalo Creek WMA, Delaware County - Zumbach
 - *Big Creek State Park, Polk County - Knapp
- Construction – Odessa WMA Headquarters Building
- Construction – Coon Creek WMA Stream Bank Stabilization
- Department of Transportation Parks and Institutional Roads Program Five Year Plan
- Engineering Professional Services Contract – Lake Keomah State Park Roadway Reconstruction and Resurfacing Project
 - Construction – Small Projects
 - Donations
 - Rulemaking Petition: Restricting deer donated to HUSH to be taken with nontoxic ammunition or archery equipment
 - Division Administrator Comments
 - General Discussion

- Upcoming NRC Dates
 - Feb. 13, Wallace Building, Des Moines

For a complete agenda, go to <http://www.iowadnr.gov/InsideDNR/BoardsCommissions/NaturalResourceCommission.aspx>

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MICK KLEMESRUD Information Specialist

Iowa Department of Natural Resources



P 515.281.8653 | F 515.281.6794 | mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov

Wallace Building | 502 East Ninth Street | Des Moines, IA 50319

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