



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 19, 2019

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Man thrown from snowmobile in Webster County crash

LEHIGH, Iowa – Iowa Department of Natural Resources conservation officers responded to a snowmobile crash on Friday, February 15, 2019 at 1:45 p.m., approximately four miles south of Lehigh on the Des Moines River.

Officers believe Timothy Gerdes, 50, of Story City, was traveling 60 to 65 mph when he hit an ice heave, more than three-foot tall, that was hidden by the recent snowfall, causing Gerdes' snowmobile to go airborne and him to be ejected.

Gerdes was transported to a Fort Dodge hospital and then to a Des Moines hospital for spinal injuries—no update on his current condition. Gerdes was wearing a helmet at the time of the crash.

The DNR reminds snowmobilers and others out on Iowa waterways of the dangers of ice heaves caused by the fluctuating water levels due to the freezing, thawing and re-freezing of the snow and ice.

The Webster County Sheriff's Office, Webster County Emergency Management, Dayton Fire Department, Leigh Fire and Rescue, Stratford Fire and Rescue and Fort Dodge Fire and Rescue assisted the Iowa DNR with the crash.

Media Contact: Bill Spece, DNR Conservation Officer, (515) 571-0127, William.Spece@dnr.iowa.gov.

Memorial Day weekend campsites available soon for reservation

For people interested in camping during Memorial Day weekend, the three-month window to reserve a campsite at an Iowa state park opens Sunday, Feb. 24.

Memorial Day weekend begins Friday, May 24 through Monday, May 27. Campsite reservations can be made three months prior to visiting, making it a good time to start planning a trip to a state park.

Information on Iowa's state parks is available at www.iowadnr.gov including the link to make reservations. Campers can also log on directly to <https://iowastateparks.reserveamerica.com/welcome.do>.

Due to renovations to campgrounds and poor weather conditions, the following parks will not be available for camping reservations: Geode State Park, Marble Beach State Recreation Area, and Wilson Island State Recreation Area. Geode is expected to open in July 2019, and Marble Beach is expected to open in August 2019. Additionally, Lacey-Keosauqua State Park will reopen its newly renovated park May 15. Traffic is welcome to enter and leave the campground; however, there could be delays due to a campground roadway resurfacing project occurring Monday-Thursday through June 30, 2019.

Closure information can be found at www.iowadnr.gov/parkclosures and on individual park web pages.

Weather forces cancellation of Beeds Lake State Park public meeting

HAMPTON, Iowa -- The Beeds Lake State Park public meeting scheduled for tonight, February 19, at 6:30pm at Mayne's Grove Lodge, has been cancelled due to the impending snowstorm.

The meeting will be rescheduled at a later date.

Sport the plates that support the resources

Iowans can put their support for conservation on cruise control by purchasing a natural resources license plate when it's time to renew their vehicle registration.

The sale of Iowa's natural resources license plates provides financial support for the Wildlife Diversity Program in the Iowa Department of Natural Resources and the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP).

After the initial \$45 fee, the \$25 renewal fee will be added to the annual registration bill. Each year when the registration is renewed, \$15 goes to the Wildlife Diversity Program and \$10 goes to REAP.

Proceeds from the license plates are one of the few means of support for the Wildlife Diversity Program, responsible for protecting more than 1,000 fish and wildlife species in the state. Money from the license plates helps improve wildlife habitat, restore native wildlife, helps support grassland and forest songbirds, rare amphibians and reptiles and provide opportunities for citizens to learn about our natural resources and much more.

REAP, the popular program that began in 1989, supports Iowa's city, county and state parks, water quality improvements, wildlife habitat, and prairie and woodland restoration.

REAP provides grants to county conservation boards, cities, the Iowa DNR, and for historical resources, soil and water enhancements and more.

Iowa has five license plate designs from which to choose: the American goldfinch and wild rose (state bird and flower); a pheasant; a bald eagle; a buck; and a brook trout. To make the switch, simply take the current license plates along with the registration to your county treasurer's office and ask to buy the natural resources plates. Personalized plates are also available.