



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

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Iowa Launches ‘20 Artists, 20 Parks’ to Commemorate State Park Centennial

DES MOINES – In anticipation of the 100th anniversary of Iowa state parks in 2020, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources; the Iowa Arts Council, a division of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs; and Iowa State University are bringing 20 artists to 20 state parks this summer.

From April through August 2019, faculty and graduate student artists from three of Iowa State University’s colleges — Design, Agriculture and Life Sciences, and Liberal Arts and Sciences — will each be matched with a state park, creating artwork that reflects their time as artists-in-residence.

“The 20 Artists, 20 Parks program highlights two important contributors to quality of life in Iowa -- arts and the outdoors,” said Todd Coffelt, chief of the State Parks Bureau at the DNR. “By focusing on the unique natural and cultural aspects of our state parks, we are able to tell their story in a new and inspirational way.”

Paintings, sculpture, textiles and other art forms inspired by the park will be organized into an exhibit that will travel to at least three art venues in 2020. Additionally, each artist will return to his or her park to share a program about the artist-in-residence experience.

“We can’t wait to see what these 20 Iowa artists create through this unique collaboration to mark the state parks’ centennial,” said Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs Director Chris Kramer, who oversees both the Iowa Arts Council and the State Historical Society of Iowa. “The 20 Artists, 20 Parks program is such a creative and authentic way to celebrate our state’s art, history and natural beauty.”

“No other state better understands the intimate relationship between humans and the natural environment,” said Luis Rico-Gutierrez, dean of the ISU College of Design. “As we look to the future of that symbiotic relationship, Iowa State University artists and designers will invite the public to engage, enjoy and admire our state parks, and in the

process pose insightful questions, imagine alternative futures and, of course, create beauty.”

Iowa’s park system began 100 years ago when Backbone State Park was dedicated on May 28, 1920, and has grown to encompass more than 70 parks and forests across the state. The DNR is planning a yearlong celebration highlighting the importance of state parks to the quality of life in Iowa, including outdoor recreation, historic preservation, arts and culture, and natural resources.

Parks selected for the arts project represent diverse ecological, geological and cultural experiences that make Iowa unique.

“We are thrilled to partner with ISU and the Department of Cultural Affairs to showcase Iowa state parks in such an impactful format,” said Coffelt. “We hope to engage Iowans and inspire new visitors to parks for the next 100 years.”

The 20 parks that are included in the new project are featured on the [Iowa Culture](#) mobile app, a free and interactive tool to discover arts, history and cultural destinations across Iowa. More information about how to visit the parks is on the app, which the public can download for free from Google Play and the App Store. Visitors can also find state park information on the [DNR website](#).

Featured State Parks and Iowa Artists

Backbone State Park, Dundee - Kimberly Moss

Brushy Creek State Park, Lehigh - Austin Stewart and Omar De Kok-Mercado

Gull Point State Park, Okoboji - Paula Streeter

Lacey-Keosauqua State Park, Keosauqua - Nancy Thompson

Lake Darling State Park, Mt. Pleasant - Rob Wallace

Lake Macbride State Park, Solon - Firat Erdim

Lake of Three Fires State Park, Bedord - Amy Harris

Maquoketa Caves State Park, Maquoketa - Brent Holland

Mines of Spain State Park, Dubuque - Joe Muench

Palisades-Kepler State Park, Mt. Vernon - Celinda Stamy

Pilot Knob State Park, Forest City - Christopher Yanulis

Pikes Peak State Park, McGregor - Barbara Walton

Pine Lake State Park, Eldora - Jennifer Drinkwater

Rock Creek State Park, Kellogg - Anna Segner

Stephens State Forest, Chariton - Clark Colby

Stone State Park, Sioux City - Carol Faber

Viking Lake State Park, Stanton - Olivia Valentine

Walnut Woods State Park, West Des Moines - Deborah Pappenheimer

Wildcat Den State Park, Muscatine - Kristen Greteman

Yellow River State Forest, Harpers Ferry - Nathan Edwards

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The Iowa Department of Natural Resources provides recreational opportunities in Iowa's state parks, manages fish and wildlife resources, and ensures the health of Iowa's forests and prairies. Just as importantly, the DNR protects air, land and water through technical assistance, permitting and compliance programs. The DNR also encourages the enjoyment and stewardship of natural resources through outreach and education. The mission of the DNR is to conserve and enhance natural resources in cooperation with individuals and organizations to improve the quality of life in Iowa and ensure a legacy for future generations. iowadnr.gov

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS

IOWA ARTS COUNCIL PRODUCE IOWA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF IOWA

The Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs and its divisions – the Iowa Arts Council, Produce Iowa-State Office of Media Production, the State Historical Society of Iowa and the State Historic Preservation Office – empower Iowa to build and sustain culturally vibrant communities by connecting Iowans to the people, places and points of pride that define our state. The department's work enables Iowa to be recognized as a state that fosters creativity and serves as a catalyst for innovation where the stories of Iowa are preserved and communicated to connect past, present and future generations. iowaculture.gov

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

Iowa State University is Iowa's largest university and one of the nation's leading public research universities. Iowa State faculty, staff and students are dedicated to improving lives in Iowa, the nation and the world. The university focuses on the total student experience and prepares students to apply their knowledge to solve 21st-century challenges. In the 2018-19 academic year, Iowa State enrolled nearly 35,000 students from all 50 states and 126 countries. As Iowa's land-grant university, Iowa State advances its mission of putting science, technology and human creativity to work through teaching, scholarship, research and outreach. iastate.edu