



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa DNR News

## Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 2, 2019

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## DNR Conservation Officers on the lookout for intoxicated boat operators

**DES MOINES** - State, federal and local law enforcement agencies will be focusing on the boating while intoxicated law as part of the national Operation Dry Water campaign to draw public attention to the hazards of boating under the influence.

Iowa DNR Conservation Officers will be heavily patrolling Iowa waterways over the Fourth of July holiday and during the Operation Dry Water campaign, July 5 – 7. The DNR will be conducting heightened awareness and enforcement of boating under the influence laws in hopes to decrease the number of crashes, causing injuries and deaths and remove any impaired boat operators, providing a safe and enjoyable experience for boaters this season.

“The effects of alcohol can be intensified when combined with wind and wave action and an extended time spent in the sun. Operators may not think they are under the influence, but their judgment, reaction time, balance and vision indicate that they are,” said Susan Stocker, boating law administrator and education coordinator for the Iowa DNR.

Tips to staying safe on the water this summer:

- **Boat sober.**Alcohol use is the leading contributing factor in recreational boater deaths\*. Alcohol and drug use impairs a boater’s judgment, balance, vision and reaction time.
- **Wear your life jacket.**
- **Take a boating safety education course.**

Operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal on all navigable waters of the State and can lead to serious injuries and consequences. In Iowa, it is illegal to operate a vessel with a BAC level of .08 or higher - the same as it is to operate a vehicle. If you are found to be impaired and operating a boat you will face the consequences.

#### **2018 top areas for BWI arrests**

Saylorville Lake: 9  
Okoboji: 6  
Coralville: 5  
Lake Manawa: 5  
Total BWI: 38

#### **2017 top areas for BWI arrests**

Saylorville Lake: 10  
Mississippi River: 5  
Okoboji: 5  
Lake Manawa: 3  
Total BWI: 39

#### **2016 top areas for BWI arrests**

Saylorville Lake: 17  
Coralville: 7  
Mississippi River: 6  
Wapsipinicon River: 4  
Total BWI: 46

#### **2015 top areas for BWI arrests**

Mississippi River: 16  
Saylorville Lake: 13  
Coralville: 6  
Okoboji: 6  
Total BWI: 54

#### **2014 top areas for BWI arrests**

Mississippi River: 12  
Coralville: 8  
Clear Lake: 5  
Des Moines River: 4  
Total BWI: 41

**Media Contact:** Susan Stocker, Boating Law Administrator and Education Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-725-8477 or 515-313-6439.

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## **Stay safe paddling this 4th of July holiday and weekend**

Some Iowa streams are still swollen and swift after a rainy end of June. While some rivers remain dangerously high, others have dropped to safe levels for paddlers.

“High rivers are super powerful and have unpredictable current along with numerous deadly river hazards,” said Todd Robertson, paddling instructor and Outreach Coordinator for Rivers Programs at the Iowa DNR. “Piles of trees and branches can suck a paddler in and under with little chance of escape.”

The Iowa DNR learned of a kayaking fatality on the South Skunk River last weekend. Stay safe this holiday weekend and each time you paddle with these simple safety tips.

- Always wear your life jacket. Kids 12 and under must wear a life jacket at all times when underway on a recreational vessel on any Iowa water. It’s also law that those 13 and over, if not wearing their life jacket, must have a life jacket on board their vessel. “It’s best to wear your life jacket, not just store it on board,” encourages Robertson. “If you are not wearing your life jacket, it probably won’t be there when you really need it.”
- Tell a friend or loved one where you will be paddling, including what access to what access, and when you are expected to return. It will be easier to find you if you need help.
- Always know your rivers conditions before you go paddling. For the latest river conditions, visit the USGS site for Iowa streamflow readings at <https://waterdata.usgs.gov/ia/nwis/current/?type=flow>. You can also call the local county conservation board where the river flows through and ask for an update.
- Check the Iowa DNR’s interactive paddlers map for updates on real-time hazards like downed trees and log jams, strainers and bridge construction: <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Canoeing-Kayaking/Where-to-Paddle>

**Media Contact:** Todd Robertson, Iowa DNR River Programs Outreach Coordinator, 515-243-3714, [Todd.Robertson@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Todd.Robertson@dnr.iowa.gov).

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## DNR and licensing agents begin selling Federal Electronic Duck Stamp

**DES MOINES, Iowa** – As of July 1, 2019, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources is now a part of the growing number of states natural resource agencies that is selling the Federal Electronic Duck Stamp, also known as the “E-Stamp”.

Waterfowl hunters are able to purchase the E-Stamp for \$28.50 at any of the statewide vendors that sell hunting and fishing licenses, as well as through the DNR’s new GoOutdoorsIowa app.

“We are excited to offer this new option for waterfowl hunters in our state,” said Alex Cross, DNR licensing supervisor. “This means one less stop for them on their way to the field.”

All waterfowl hunters 16 years of age or older are required to purchase and carry a current Federal Duck Stamp in addition to their state Migratory Bird Fee, hunting license

and habitat fee. Federal Duck Stamps are valid July 1 through the following June 30 of each year.

When waterfowl hunters purchase the E-Stamp, they'll receive a temporary stamp that serves as a valid Federal Duck Stamp for up to 45 days from the date of purchase. Within that 45-day period, a physical Federal Duck Stamp will be mailed to the hunter's address, and at that time the temporary E-Stamp is no longer valid.

The E-Stamp receipt or the electronic version of the E-Stamp on the GoOutdoorsIowa app is valid proof while hunting before the physical copy arrives in the mail. Hunters should remember to sign the physical stamp when it arrives in the mail and carry it along while waterfowl hunting.

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## Habitat rich Cardinal Marsh offers visitors year round outdoor fun



*Part of the attraction to Cardinal Marsh is the ease of access to different parts of the area. Factor in the varied habitats that offer users different types of experiences and Cardinal Marsh is one cool place. Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR.*

Cardinal Marsh Wildlife Area checks a lot of the outdoor recreation boxes in its nearly 1,200 acres. With its mix of hardwood timber, native prairie, network of marshes and a winding river, this public area on the west edge of Winneshiek County offers a high quality natural getaway away from the crowds.

Cardinal Marsh a favorite destination for the Decorah Audubon club and, along with nearby Hayden Prairie, has served as an outdoor classroom for local eighth grade

classes. It was established in the 1950s and has been developed over time as different segments were acquired.

In more recent years, the infrastructure has been upgraded to include water control structures which gives management staff flexibility to manipulate water levels mimicking naturally occurring fluctuations and keeping the marsh in a high quality state.

“We manage the water levels in the marshes to create a dynamic environment to benefit waterfowl production in the spring, and then drop the water level to expose the mudflats which attracts shorebirds while in the summer encouraging vegetation growth for the fall migration,” said Terry Haindfield.

And based on the results, that schedule is working nicely.

“It’s great food source – bringing in dabblers and divers during the spring migration,” he said. When the mudflats are exposed, black crowned night herons, phalaropes and terns have shown up.

On this rainy June morning, a handful of broods of Canada geese leave the berm for the safety of water, evidence of Cardinal Marsh’s reputation as a strong goose production area. One large trumpeter swan stands firm on a mudflat. A pair of sandhill cranes works the vegetation edge of a pool with a colt following close by.

“I thought she had to have one (colt), just the way she was acting,” Haindfield said while watching the young crane through binoculars.

The success of the sandhill’s is welcome news, as is the news that trumpeter swans successfully hatched a nest here this spring for the first time ever.

Juvenile trumpeter swans had been released at Cardinal Marsh over the years with the hope that, as adults, they would return to nest. That commitment was finally rewarded in late June when an adult pair was spotted out for a swim with four young. “We’re really hoping that this was the year that the trumpeters would finally have success here,” he said. “This is absolutely great news.”

### **Getting around the marsh**

Parking lots nearly ring the area providing a number access points. The main marsh features a newly installed concrete boat ramp on the northwest corner. At the smaller water control structures, access is by walk in, meaning paddlers and hunters will need to carry the crafts a few hundred yards.

That ease of access and unique walk in marsh hunting experience makes Cardinal Marsh a user friendly wildlife area.

“The lack of a large population center means fewer visitors, except, of course, on season opening weekends,” Haindfield said. “After that, if a guy comes out during the week he could be here all alone.”

Cardinal Marsh is building a reputation as a high quality dove hunting area due to the number of sunflower fields that doves want to use. It offers deer, turkey and pheasant hunting, is an excellent place to hunt waterfowl and is a productive trapping area.

Simply put, there’s a lot going on.

## **Diverse paddling experiences**

At full pool, the main marsh is a nice place to kayak and view marsh wildlife. Just over the marsh berm to the north is the Turkey River that offers excellent paddling and fishing, especially for walleye. There is a canoe access upstream at a stream crossing.

## **Hands-on management**

The wildlife staff is working to enhance the prairies and is using different techniques to encourage the natives. A neighboring farmer is partnering on a habitat lease that includes planting and managing food plots in different locations. There's an active forest wildlife stewardship plan in place for the timber and savanna areas.

## **Don't skip on pheasants**

"Cardinal Marsh is absolutely a good pheasant area that gets better as the winter goes on," said Haindfield. "The cattails and willow batts offer good winter habitat and the corn food plots provide a food source."

## **The legend of Cardinal Marsh**

The call came in 15-20 years ago. A boyfriend and girlfriend were hunting raccoons in the forest section of Cardinal Marsh one night when they reported seeing a dark figure go by that was unmistakable - it was, they said, Bigfoot.

The sighting, however, has not been verified.

**Media Contact:** Terry Haindfield, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-546-7960.

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## **Iowa shooting sports championship events conclude**

Gage O'Connor from the Ankeny Hawks Shooting Sports Team hit 200 straight clay targets at the State Trap Shoot the first week of June, besting all other shooters. But in the end his effort was not enough to hold off the varsity squad from North Scott who had the high squad score, hitting 985 out of 1,000 targets by their five person team.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources serves as the state advisor for the Scholastic Clay Target Program in Iowa, and hosts the Iowa State Championship Clay Target Events.

In 2019, there were more than 4,200 student athletes on over 150 teams registered with the Iowa Scholastic Clay Target Program. These youth shotgun teams completed a three week tour of Iowa last weekend to attend the Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) Championship events. Iowa athletes competed in Singles Trap, Doubles Trap, Handicap Trap, Sporting Clays, and Skeet. All results can be found at <http://sssfonline.org>.

- More than 2,700 athletes from fourth grade through high school competed at the SCTP Trap Championships June 5-9, at the Iowa State Trapshooting Association

Homegrounds north of Cedar Falls. The number of entries into the three disciplines increased by more than 500 versus 2018. During the five day period, competitors shot nearly 670,000 clay targets.

- The Mahaska County Izaak Walton League hosted 250 competitors from 25 teams at the 2019 Sporting Clays Championship June 15-16. Participants in sporting clays shoot 200 targets from 15 stations simulating hunting scenarios. Attendance in 2019 was up 15 percent.
- Championship events concluded with a record number of participants – 254 - competing at the New Pioneer Gun Club in Waukee for the SCTP Skeet Championships June 21-23. In the Men's Varsity Division, Maclane Heinen, from Pella Christian, and Thomas Keeshan, from North Scott, both ended competition with a score of 149 out of 150. Keeshan won in a shoot-off.

Overall, during the championship events, nearly 744,000 clay targets were shot by 2,800 athletes. Athletes who compete at the State Championships are eligible to attend the SCTP National Championships on July 13-20 at the Cardinal Shooting Center in Marengo, Ohio.

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## **USDA reopens continuous CRP signup, extensions also available to expiring general and continuous contracts**

WASHINGTON – USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is accepting applications for certain practices under the continuous Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) signup and will offer extensions for expiring CRP contracts. The 2018 Farm Bill reauthorized CRP, one of the country's largest conservation programs.

Since passage of the 2018 Farm Bill last December, FSA has determined that a limited signup prioritizing water-quality practices furthers conservation goals and makes sense for producers as FSA works to fully implement the program.

### **Continuous CRP Signup**

This year's signup will include such practices as grassed waterways, filter strips, riparian buffers, wetland restoration and others. A full list of practices approved for this program is available at <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/programs-and-services/conservation-programs/conservation-reserve-program/crp-continuous-enrollment/index>

Continuous signup enrollment contracts are 10 to 15 years in duration. Soil rental rates will be set at 90 percent of the existing rates. Incentive payments will not be offered for these contracts.

### **Other CRP Signup Options**

FSA plans to open a CRP general signup in December 2019 and a CRP Grasslands signup later.

### **CRP Contract Extensions**

A one-year extension will be offered to existing CRP participants who have expiring CRP contracts of 14 years or less. Producers eligible for an extension will receive a letter describing their options.

Producers interested in applying for continuous CRP practices, or who need an extension, should contact their USDA service center before Aug. 23. To locate your local FSA office, visit [www.farmers.gov](http://www.farmers.gov). More information on CRP can be found at [www.fsa.usda.gov/crp](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/crp).

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## Natural Resource Commission to meet July 11 at Boone Research Station, near Ledges State Park

Boone – The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will meet at 1 p.m., July 11, at Boone Research Station, 1436 255<sup>th</sup> Street, near Boone.

Commissioners and Iowa DNR staff will meet the Boone Research Station at 8:15 a.m. on June 11 for presentations and a tour of the area. The presentations, tour and meeting is open to the public.

Members of the NRC are Kim Francisco, Dennis Schemmel, Margo Underwood, Marcus Branstad, Laura Hommel, Tom Prickett and Laura Foell. The director of the DNR is Kayla Lyon.

Any person attending the public meeting and has special requirements such as those related to mobility or hearing impairments should contact the DNR or ADA Coordinator at 515-725-8200, Relay Iowa TTY Service 800-735-7942, or [Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov), and advise of specific needs.

The following is the agenda for the July 11 meeting.

- Approve Agenda
- Consent Agenda\*
  - Contract Amendment #2 with Forum Communications Company
  - Public Land Management Project: Chapter 18 Lease Renewal – Betty Gingerich, Clayton County
- Approve Minutes of June 13 Meeting
- Director's Remarks
- Division Administrator's Remarks
- Petition for Iowa City Urban Deer Management Zone – Special Harvest Request
- Donations
- \*Contract Amendment #2 with Forum Communications Company
- \*Public Land Management Project: Chapter 18 Lease Renewal – Betty Gingerich, Clayton County
- Public Land Acquisition Projects



- Copeland Bend Wildlife Management Area, Fremont County – Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Lansing Wildlife Management Area, Allamakee County – Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation
- Small Construction Projects
- Contract Amendment #1 with Quail Construction, LLC
- General Discussion
- Commissioner Briefing Topics:
  - DNR Organization Chart
  - Roles: DNR, Natural Resource Commission
  - Communication/External Contact Form
- Next Meeting, Aug. 8, in Des Moines

For a complete agenda, go to [www.iowadnr.gov/nrc](http://www.iowadnr.gov/nrc)