



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

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DNR provides critical assistance during historic Iowa flooding

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WESTERN IOWA -- DNR conservation officers and park rangers have responded in droves providing crucial equipment and fulfilling extraordinary public safety rescue missions.

Since Thursday, March 14, more than 34 DNR conservation officers and two DNR park rangers from across the state have responded to western and southwestern Iowa, working collaboratively in two-officer teams per boat from dawn to dusk. Those officers have performed rescue missions via DNR boats saving 31 people, 17 dogs, 9 cats, and one iguana.

"Our officers are going door-to-door in boats to make entry into the flood ravaged homes to rescue the families and pets and bring them to safety throughout the flooded towns," said Jeff Swearngin, Chief of the DNR Law Enforcement Bureau. "There's no doubt the work they are doing and have done is the difference between life and death."

Notable stories from the field:

- On March 14, DNR conservation officer and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services refuge officer responded by boat to rescue two non-ambulatory people trapped in their home by the floodwaters in Missouri Valley. Working with other emergency personnel, the officers broke out the window to the room where the victims were located to find both victims suffering from severe hypothermia and going in and out of consciousness. During the rescue mission, the officers were faced with high winds and dangerous whitecaps making the rescue much more difficult. Both people were rescued and taken to a local hospital and survived.
- On March 16, DNR conservation officers responded to Riverton to rescue two people trapped by the floodwaters after they drove around road closed barriers and their vehicle took on flood waters. One man had climbed a tree to escape the water and was clinging to it when officers arrived to rescued him. He was suffering from severe hypothermia and was transported to a hospital for treatment and survived. While trying to rescue the other man, officers held his head above the

34-degree water for nearly 40 minutes. The man received emergency medical attention but died on the way to the hospital.

Other critical public safety missions provided so far by the DNR officers include transporting Mid-American Energy officials around towns and areas inundated by flood waters to shut down electricity, transporting other officials with assessing damage to public facilities and water treatment plants, assisting emergency management officials with assessing damage to levees and other infrastructure, as well as DOT with assessing structural integrity of I-680 bridges.

The DNR will continue to assist officials with equipment and public safety critical missions as well as provide expertise and resources as the focus eventually turns to clean-up and rebuilding.







