



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Iowa DNR News

## Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 24, 2019

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## DNR investigating two hunting incidents

**WARREN COUNTY** – On December 22, 2019, around 10:30am, Austin Pontier of St. Charles was shot by a member of his hunting party while participating in a deer drive south of St. Charles.

Pontier was taken to a local hospital and treated and released. His wound was non-life threatening.

**MARION COUNTY** – On December 21, 2019, around 9:00am, Andrew Strahl of Des Moines shot at deer as they crossed a road. While shooting, he hit a house north of Pleasantville in rural Marion County.

DNR conservation officers are continuing to investigate both hunting incidents at this time.

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## Lodge at Palisades Kepler State Park vandalized

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Jim Hansen, DNR Park Ranger, (319) 895-6039, [Jim.Hansen@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jim.Hansen@dnr.iowa.gov).

**LINN COUNTY** -- DNR staff discovered the Palisades Kepler State Park lodge was vandalized sometime in the overnight hours of Sunday, December 23, 2019.

When staff discovered the vandalism, they found several windows, doors and the indoor furniture damaged. Parks staff is still evaluating and determining estimates of the damage done.

“We are very saddened to discover this vandalism and this is unacceptable,” said Todd Coffelt, DNR State Parks, Preserves and Forests Bureau Chief. “Our staff and department takes great pride in all of our state parks, and it is extremely unfortunate that someone or several decided to do this. However, we will rebound quickly in time to celebrate our 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our state parks—Parks 2020!”

Repairs will begin immediately and anyone with information is asked to call (319) 895-6039.

To learn more about the Parks 2020 centennial celebration, visit <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Places-to-Go/Parks-2020>.









## Ring in the New Year with a First Day Hike celebrating the Iowa State Park Centennial

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Todd Coffelt, DNR State Parks, Preserves and Forests Bureau Chief, (515) 725-8485, [Todd.Coffelt@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Todd.Coffelt@dnr.iowa.gov).

**DES MOINES** – To start off the New Year, 49 state parks are hosting First Day Hikes on Jan. 1, 2020. The outdoor hikes launch the Iowa state park centennial in 2020.

“We are excited for this opportunity for park visitors to help us celebrate the centennial by getting outdoors with friends and family,” said Todd Coffelt, Parks, Forests and Preserves bureau chief at the DNR. “These hikes are for everyone, even those who have never visited a state park or been on winter hikes. We invite you to join us in kicking off the New Year and enjoying nature.”

Last year, more than 1,400 people participated in hikes on New Year’s Day across Iowa, hiking more than 1,100 total miles at dozens of state parks. Hikers can expect to be surrounded by the quiet beauty of nature in winter, and experience spectacular views, beautiful settings and the cultural treasures offered by Iowa’s state parks. Many parks will also provide hot beverages and snacks after the hike. Participants should dress for the weather, including warm, sturdy boots for winter conditions.

The 49 state parks participating are the most since the DNR started hosting the hikes nine years ago. For a complete listing of First Day Hikes in Iowa’s State Parks, including meeting locations and start times for each park, visit [www.iowadnr.gov/firstdayhikes](http://www.iowadnr.gov/firstdayhikes).

The DNR is planning numerous special events to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of state parks throughout 2020 with the goal of celebrating, connecting and inspiring Iowans to visit and care for parks now and in the future. Backbone State Park near Dundee in northeast Iowa, was dedicated in May 1920 and marks the beginning of the Iowa state park system. Look for more information on centennial celebration opportunities at [www.iowadnr.gov/parks2020](http://www.iowadnr.gov/parks2020).

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## **DNR to host public meeting on timber harvest at McIntosh Woods**

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tammy Domonoske, DNR Park Manager, (641) 829-3847, [Tammy.Domonoske@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Tammy.Domonoske@dnr.iowa.gov).**

**VENTURA, Iowa** – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will hold a public meeting on Monday, January 6, 2020 at 6:30pm at the Ventura Community Center, 4 N. Weimer Street, to discuss salvage timber harvest at McIntosh Woods State Park.

For the safety of the park users, DNR staff will be harvesting trees that are dead or dying of bur oak, ash or elm. These trees are located within high recreational use area and are considered hazard trees. The harvest is part of the McIntosh Woods State Park Forest Management Plan and once harvest is complete, park staff will implement the reforestation plan.

More details will be provided at the meeting.