



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 2, 2020

Record-breaking attendance at First Day Hikes in Iowa state parks

DES MOINES – At least 4,358 hikers took part in First Day Hikes yesterday in 49 Iowa state parks, the highest attendance since the annual event began in 2012. The New Year's Day hikes launched the Iowa state park centennial in 2020.

"We couldn't be more excited to have so many people enjoy state parks on New Year's Day," said Todd Coffelt, Parks, Forests and Preserves bureau chief at the DNR. "We heard many reports of first-time park visitors from Iowa and other states, and we were glad to see long-time park users among the thousands enjoying hikes yesterday."

Of the 49 state parks, Walnut Woods State Park, West Des Moines, had the highest attendance with 410 hikers. Beautiful weather and comfortable temperatures helped spark participation numbers, according to Coffelt. "This is just the first of many outdoor events being planned to celebrate the state park centennial in 2020, so get ready for a fun year."

Look for more information on centennial celebration opportunities at www.iowadnr.gov/parks2020

This was the 9th year of First Day Hikes in Iowa, with 1,400 hikers in 2019. First Day Hikes are part of a national effort by the National Association of State Park Directors to increase visitation to state parks in the United States. For more information visit: <https://www.stateparks.org/initiatives-special-programs/first-day-hikes/>

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Mines of Spain State Recreation Area, Dubuque, IA on January 1, 2020.



Preparation Canyon State Park, Loess Hills in western Iowa on January 1, 2020.



McIntosh Woods State Park, Ventura, IA on January 1, 2020.



Gull Point State Park, Okoboji, IA on January 1, 2020.



Pine Lake State Park, Eldora, IA on January 1, 2020.



Big Creek State Park, Polk City, IA on January 1, 2020.