

THE LOESS HILLS

The Loess Hills are an outstanding example of the strong influence of wind deposition as well as erosional sculpture of the land. This high relief area supports a mosaic of unique plant and animal communities.

The thickness of the loess and differences between the soils formed from loess are related to the distance from its source. Loess is the thickest in the bluffs on the east edge of the Missouri River flood plain. It is more than 200 feet deep in some areas.

Soil erosion is a major problem. Loess is easily eroded by running water. Some of the highest soil erosion rates in the nation, averaging about 40 tons per acre per year, have been documented in this region.

THE FOREST'S HISTORY

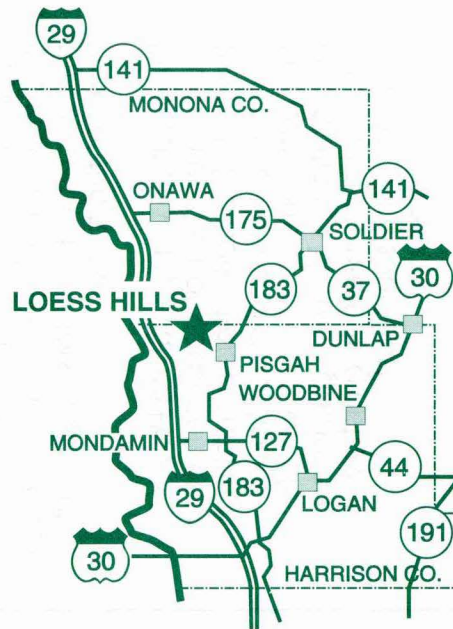
Prior to the start of acquisition, the area was a mixture of private ownerships. Average size of acquisitions through June 1996 was 155 acres and ranged from 3 to 1,037 acres.

Land is acquired only from willing sellers. An average of 800 acres was purchased each year from 1987 through 1996. The largest acquisition was the Rice property, 1,037 acres, purchased in May 1993, now part of the Preparation Canyon Unit.

Three of the units, Mondamin, Pisgah and Little Sioux are named for towns in the vicinity. The Preparation Canyon Unit is named after a small settlement, no longer in existence, of Mormon travelers who split off of the Salt Lake City migration.

In September 1989, the city of Pisgah donated a three acre lot to be used as the forest headquarters site.

A combination office/equipment storage building was completed in July 1993.



The Loess Hills State Forest is administered by the Bureau of State Forest Management, Division of Forestry, DNR. An area forester is responsible for administration and management of the area.

The Loess Hills State Forest is managed on a sustainable basis in accordance with the DNR Forest Ecosystem Management Guide for several uses, including production of wood products, wildlife, improved water quality, recreation, and protection of plant and animal communities.

Please stop by the Loess Hills Forest Headquarters at 219 Front Street in Pisgah for additional maps and information, or look us up on the World Wide Web at:

<http://www.state.ia.us/forestry/lhsf.htm>.

Federal regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire further information, please write to: Director, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 900 E. Grand Ave., Des Moines, IA 50319-0034 or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Washington, D.C. 20240



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LOESS HILLS

State Forest



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RECREATION ON THE FOREST

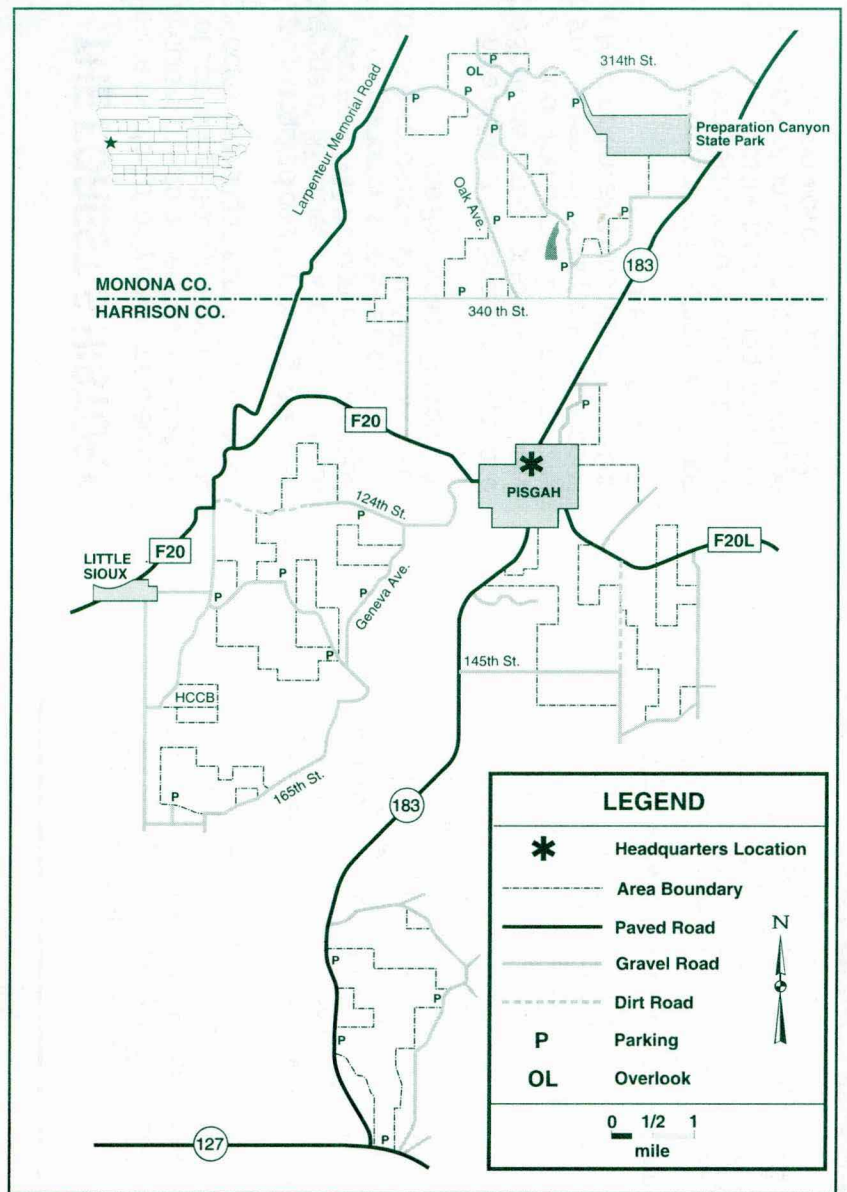
Much of the forest is served by good, all-weather roads making it easily accessible for a variety of recreation activities. Hunting, fishing, hiking, cross country skiing, picnicking and watching wildlife make the forest a pleasant place to visit any time of the year.

The forest is open to hunting, except for areas within 200 yards of residences and the headquarters area.

The forest is also open to hiking and cross-country skiing.

The Preparation Canyon Unit has a small lake with good fishing. An overlook located on the north edge of the unit, provides visitors spectacular views of the forest.

Preparation Canyon State Park is located on the northeast corner of this unit. The park offers picnicking and hiking trails and a backpack trail with campsites. The town of Preparation, a Mormon gathering place with an interesting history, is located in the southeast corner of the park.



LOESS HILLS STATE FOREST

Iowa's newest State Forest, Loess Hills State Forest, is located in western Iowa in Harrison and Monona Counties. The forest is currently 9,080 acres in size. When acquisition is complete, it will be approximately 20,000 acres.

The forest is named after the geological formation that reaches its fullest development only in western Iowa and in China. The Loess Hills are a unique formation. Their existence and the fact that they have become vegetated with forest species only recently played a major role in the decision to develop this state forest.

The Loess Hills were formed 10,000 to 20,000 years ago and are comprised of finely ground, wind-blown silt from glacial deposits. As glaciers melted, the Missouri Valley became a major channel for enormous quantities of water. Each winter, as the glacial melt waters froze, large areas of flood-deposited sediments were left exposed to the wind. Silt, clay and fine sand from these areas were lifted and blown to the east and deposited in the dune-like hills we see today.