

RECREATION ON THE STATE FOREST

Most of the state forest is accessible by all-weather roads making the area available to various recreation activities, including: hunting, fishing, hiking, nature studying, bird watching, cross country skiing, and driving for the scenic views. Come and experience the Loess Hills magnificent vistas and unique ecosystems: it's the only place like it in the Western Hemisphere. Use the map on the inside to navigate the parking areas around the forest units. Please do not bring firewood in to the area, find dead limbs for your campfires around the state forest.



The entire state forest is open to hunting, except for areas within 200 yards of residences. The Preparation Canyon Unit has two picnic shelters and a lake with good fishing. The unit also has an elevated platform deck providing spectacular views of the forest, savanna,



prairies and the Missouri River Valley. The Little Sioux Unit has several stocked fishing ponds and picnic shelter off of 138th Trail.

PREPARATION CANYON STATE PARK

The 340 acre Preparation Canyon State Park is connected to the northeast portion of the state forest. The park has hiking trails, picnic shelters, and eight backpacking camp sites but is closed to hunting. Be aware that a state park is different than a state forest, please understand the rules of each. The state forest staff manages the state park; maps are available at the visitor center.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Loess Hills Forest Overlook
Jones Creek Pond
Preparation Canyon State Park
Mondamin Apple Orchards
Moorhead LHHA Visitor Center and Gift Shop
Moorhead Culture Center
Murray Hill Overlook

NEARBY CAMPING AND CABINS

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Pisgah City Park Campground | 712-456-2301 |
| Harrison Co Conservation Board | 712-647-2785 |
| Loess Hills Hideaway Cabins | 712-996-5003 |
| Preparation Canyon State Park | 712-456-2924 |
| Monona Co. Conservation Board | 712-433-2400 |

OTHER INFORMATION

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|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Wildlife Biologist | 712-420-2437 |
| DNR Game Warden- Harrison Co. | 712-249-2015 |
| DNR Game Warden Monona Co. | 712-420-1486 |

Federal regulations prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, 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, DNR, Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines Iowa 50319-0034.



The Loess Hills State Forest is administered by
The Bureau of Forestry, Division of Conservation and Recreation,
Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

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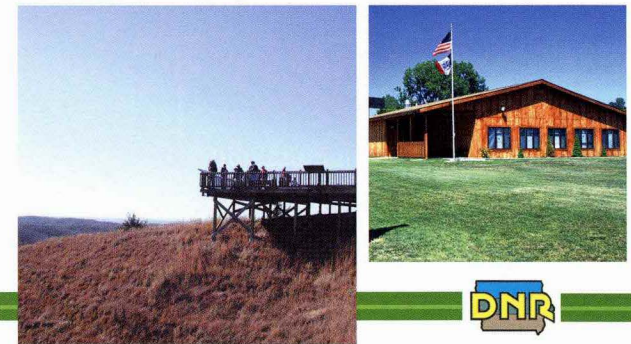


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www.iowadnr.gov/forestry/loesshills.html

Loess Hills

STATE FOREST



FOR INFORMATION CONTACT OUR VISITOR CENTER.

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EMAIL: LoessHills_Forest@dnr.state.ia.us

PHONE: 712 - 456 - 2924

LOESS HILLS

The Loess Hills State Forest is named after the dominant geological formation of the area. The Loess Hills (pronounced Luss) formation runs for 200 miles through 7 western Iowa counties (see map inset). The Loess Hills are wind blown soil deposits with depths over 200 feet. It took thousands of years for these depths to accumulate in great rolling drifts of hills and for the water to carve the striking land formations, leaving a landscape that can be found only in a few other places in the world. The uniqueness of these hills and the mixture of native forest, savanna, and prairie vegetation were the reasons Iowa has developed the beautiful Loess Hills State Forest.

MANAGEMENT OF THE STATE FOREST

The Loess Hills State Forest originated in 1986 with purchases from willing sellers by utilizing REAP funding. With this funding the DNR continues to pay property taxes on the purchased properties.

The Iowa DNR takes pride in managing the diverse habitat in the Loess Hills by maintaining a healthy forest, savanna, and prairie. The state forest now comprises 11,600 acres of the 20,000 acre goal. The four management units are:

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|--------------------|-------------|
| Mondamin | 1,096 acres |
| Pisgah | 2,564 acres |
| Little Sioux | 3,835 acres |
| Preparation Canyon | 4,105 acres |

One million trees of native species have been planted, and over 300 acres of native ecotype prairie have been seeded. Annually over 2,000 acres of prairie, savanna and woodlands are burned for vegetation and invasive species management. The burning allows the prairie to renew itself, resulting in a healthier ecosystem. Some land remains in crop production to aid wildlife. This land is rented to local farmers and annually 20% of the crop is retained over winter for wildlife food and cover.



The native prairies have declined in acres and have been confined to the narrow ridges and south facing slopes, due to the advance of agriculture and forest over time. Active management is now expanding those prairies by clearing trees and burning.

Not only has the white-tail deer, raccoon, quail, swans, opossum, pheasant, wild turkey, diverse bird species, and bobcats flourished on the forest due to its vegetation management, but so has the rare plains pocket mouse, regal fruitillary, and ottoe skipper.

The predominant plant communities on the state forest are forests and prairies. Forests range from bur oak to mixtures of oaks, hickories, basswood, elms, ashes, kentucky coffee tree,



black walnut, cottonwood, ironwood and red cedar. Prairies are a mix of short and tall grass species, including unique plants like compass plant, prairie moonwort, locoweed, ground plum, cone-flowers, paintbrush, pasque flower, yucca, and skeleton weed.

VISITOR CENTER

The Loess Hills State Forest Headquarters and Visitor Center at 206 Polk St. in Pisgah has hiking maps and other visitor information available. The headquarters and maintenance shops are located on a 3-acre lot donated to the DNR by the town of Pisgah in 1989, which is located two blocks west of Highway 183.

The Visitor Center has a variety of interesting facts about the state forest and area attractions such as: artwork from the Fragile Giants display, a hills diorama, topographic display, soil discovery display, tree identification wheel, wildlife tracks display, forest management information, physical features of the hills, bobcat displays, and a video about the Loess Hills.



Loess Hills State Forest

DNR IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

