

RECREATION ON THE STATE FOREST

Most of the state forest is accessible by all-weather roads thereby making the area available to a variety of recreation activities. Hunting, fishing, hiking, bird watching, cross country skiing and driving for the scenic views are enjoyed by visitors. Come and experience the Loess Hills' magnificent vistas and unique ecosystems; its the only place like it in the western hemisphere. Use the map on the reverse side to navigate the areas.

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



ROGER HILL



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, so please familiarize yourself with the rules of each.

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 and
Murray Hill Overlook

NEARBY CAMPING AND CABINS

Pisgah City Park	712-456-2301
Willow Lake, Harrison Co. Conservation Board	712-647-2785
Loess Hills Hide Away	712-996-5003
Preparation Canyon State Park	712-423-2829

State Library Of Iowa
Miller Building
Des Moines, Iowa

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 Ninth Street, Des Moines, IA 50319-0034.



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

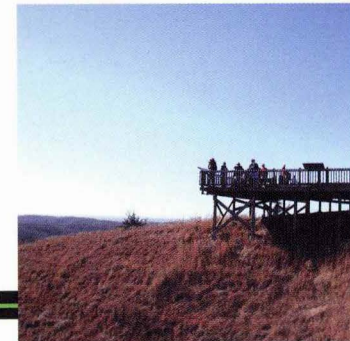
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Loess Hills

STATE FOREST



FOR INFORMATION CONTACT OUR VISITOR CENTER.
206 Polk Street, PO Box 158, Pisgah, Iowa 51564
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 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 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. The DNR continues to pay property taxes for lands purchased with REAP funding.

The Iowa DNR takes pride in managing the diverse habitat in the Loess Hills by maintaining a healthy forest and prairie. The state forest now comprises 10,600 acres of the 20,000 acre goal. The four management units are:

Mondamin	1,065 acres
Pisgah	2,848 acres
Little Sioux	3,017 acres
Preparation Canyon	3,674 acres

One half million trees of native species have been planted and over one hundred acres of native ecotype prairie have been seeded. Annually over 1,000 acres of prairie and woodlands are burned for vegetation 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 20-40% of the crop is retained over winter for wildlife food and cover.



The predominant plant communities on the state forest are both forests and prairies. Forests range from pure 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 and include unique plants like tumblegrass, prairie moonwort, locoweed, coneflowers, yellow Indian paintbrush, pasque flower, yucca, and skeleton weed.

With the advance of forests and agriculture over time, the native prairie communities have declined and been confined to the narrow ridges and steep south facing exposures. Active management is now expanding the prairies.



Wildlife species including white-tail deer, raccoon, quail, pheasant, wild turkey and bobcat have flourished. But the hills also contain the rare plains pocket mouse and ottoe skipper butterfly.

VISITOR CENTER

The Loess Hills State Forest Headquarters and Visitor Center at 206 Polk Street in Pisgah have additional maps and information. The headquarters is located on a three-acre lot donated to the DNR by the Town of Pisgah in 1989. The building is located two blocks west of Highway 183.

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



Loess Hills State Forest



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

