



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 10, 2022

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National Safe Boating Week is May 21-27: Three tips to make boating safer this season

The nation's largest recreational boating safety event of the year, National Safe Boating Week, is May 21–27, serves as a reminder to boaters to keep safety front and center all season long. The BoatUS Foundation for Boating Safety and Clean Water offers three tips for boaters to be safety heroes on the water.

1. The best life jacket is the one you will wear, meaning one that's comfortable. There are many lightweight inflatable life jackets that fit the bill. Check the jacket's label to ensure it's approved for your type of boating. If the kids are visiting, don't be tempted to put a child in an ill-fitting adult life jacket.
2. Boating safety reports indicate that operator inattention, improper lookout, operator inexperience, excessive speed, and alcohol rank as the top five primary contributing factors in accidents. Focus on eliminating these factors by putting down the cellphone, practicing using S.C.A.N. procedures to avoid distracted boating, taking a free boating safety course, slowing down, and driving more defensively, especially in congested boating areas. Alcohol use is the leading known contributing factor in fatal boating accidents, so save the celebration for after the boat is safely tied up for the night. Boat operators also need to recognize they are responsible for the safety of their guests, including inebriated ones.
3. Remember to wear an engine cutoff switch if your boat is less than 26-feet, traveling on plane or above displacement speed. Engine cutoff switches can prevent boat strike injuries after an operator has been ejected from the vessel or displaced from the helm.

What Is SCAN?

SCAN: Search, Concentrate, Analyze, and Negotiate. This is something every attentive skipper does continually, and probably without thinking about it, while underway. Simply put, "scanning" is looking from side to side - and behind you - for boats, people, and objects on the water that may pose a risk of collision. Repeat whenever you're underway.

Search the area all around your craft. This is a 360-degree examination of everything around your boat. Distances away will close or open depending on your speed or the speed of the observed boat or object. The faster you're operating, the farther out you'll need to search.

Concentrate on what you're seeing. Is it a boat? What type? What is it doing? What is its relative speed? Is it a stationary object? Drifting or anchored? Things can happen fast out there, so these are questions you must consider while you look at the various observed boats or objects.

Analyze what you're watching. Is it closing in on your position or going away from you? Remember, if the object you're observing is getting closer to you and its relative position to you is not changing, it is on a collision course. Never assume you're seen by other boat operators, who may or may not be distracted. Determine this by the way and direction they're operating. Analyze how far away the boat or object is and how fast it is closing the distance between you and it.

Negotiate. What are you going to do? Slow down, turn away from the boat or object, and head in a different direction? Remember the Navigation Rules. Learn the proper action to take while meeting head on, crossing, or overtaking another boat.

Media Contact: Susan Stocker, Boating Law Administrator and Education Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-313-6439.

Popular central Iowa paddling destination closed

This week's warm weather is perfect for paddlers to get out on rivers. Water recreationists should be aware of bridge construction projects across Iowa.

The water trail from Walnut Woods State Park to Water Works Park in Des Moines is closed due to a construction project on Hwy. 28 over the Raccoon River. Signs are posted at Walnut Woods State Park and upstream of the construction site.

Check the Iowa DNR's interactive paddling map at www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Canoeing-Kayaking/Where-to-Paddle to help plan paddling trips and avoid bridge construction areas.

"Air temperatures are starting to warm, but the water is still cold," said Todd Robertson, River Programs Water Trails coordinator with the Iowa DNR. "We have not had enough consistently warm days to raise water temperatures. Cold water shock and hypothermia can set in quickly."

Stay away from strainers and sweepers—wood or branch piles—deadly hazards that can pull a paddler under or pin them underwater. These are usually found on outside river bends where currents are strongest, but can be found anywhere on rivers including at the base of bridge piers.

Review these simple safety tips before heading out on the water.

- Wear a properly-fitted life jacket at all times while on the water, regardless of swimming ability. Life jackets help keep your head above water and maintain warmth.
- Dress for the water temperature, not the air temperature. Plan as if you were to be in the water at some point. Do not wear cotton clothing—it fails to insulate when wet. Choose synthetics or wool. Dress in layers so you can peel a layer off if overheated.
- Always bring a dry bag with a complete set of extra clothes to change into if you get wet, a first-aid kit and a protected cell phone or weather radio. Get out of wet, cold clothing as soon as possible. Pack plenty of water to stay hydrated.
- Let someone know where you're going and when you're expected to return. It will be easier to find you if you need help.
- Explore the Iowa DNR's water trail map library at iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Canoeing-Kayaking/Water-Trail-Maps-Brochures for individual water trail maps, including access points and some history information.

Media Contact: Todd Robertson, Iowa DNR River Programs Outreach Coordinator, 515-205-6845.

Learn to Hunt program opens registration for Field to Fork archery deer hunting program

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a six-month workshop to teach skills needed to hunt, field dress and cook white-tailed deer to individuals who have little to no archery hunting experience.

This workshop consists of archery practices in the summer, a fall workshop and hunting opportunities throughout Iowa's archery season. All sessions are led by instructors that possess the experience to teach skills necessary to become efficient archers and bowhunters.

"For those interested in the challenge of bow hunting as a means of sourcing their own protein, this program provides the opportunity to learn the skills and knowledge it takes to do it all yourself," said Jamie Cook, Hunter Education coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Participants will spend the summer becoming proficient with compound bows provided by the Iowa DNR. As summer progresses, they'll also learn basic strategies for hunting deer such as proper equipment, where to hunt, safe shooting practices, and tree stand placement.

During the fall, the focus shifts to how to field dress, clean and cook deer from professional butchers and local chefs.

The course will be hosted in Ames, Altoona, Council Bluffs and Iowa City and is geared for participants 21 and older. Applications will be accepted beginning May 10 for all locations. Once accepted, participants will be invited to register for the course. The course cost is \$150 which includes essential course supplies and archery loaner equipment. Applications will be accepted through July 8.

For more information and to begin the application process, go to 2022 Field to Fork Application: <https://forms.gle/fz2mpSLCz9zHdQpC9>. Early registration is encouraged as space is limited.

The program is provided through a partnership with Raised at Full Draw, The Iowa Bowhunters Association, Turkeyfoot Folks School and other various local partners and archery retailers. It is part of a national effort to recruit, retain and reactivate hunters due to the overall decline in hunting and outdoor recreation.

Media Contact: Jamie Cook, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-350-8091.

Improve your paddling skills with canoe and kayak schools

DES MOINES —Naturalists, youth group leaders and others who bring people out on the water in canoes or kayaks and want to learn how to teach others about paddling efficiently and safely are encouraged to attend one of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) paddling schools scheduled June through September.

Each two-day course will cover skills, hazard and river feature identification, teaching to different learning styles, and risk management. The focus will be one-third classroom and two-thirds on-water in both lake and river environments, solo and tandem. Paddling schools are set up for either canoeing or kayaking instruction. Make sure you sign up for your preferred instruction.

All courses will be taught at Briggs Woods, along the Boone River in Hamilton County. The canoe school is limited to 12 participants and the kayak school is limited to 8 participants. Participants have the options to camp, rent a cabin, or stay in Webster City at a motel while participating in the two-day school. Overnight accommodations are not included in the class fee.

Registration is required; the fee is \$65. This is not a beginner level course; participants should have previous paddling experience.

The schedule for DNR's paddling school is:

- June 1-2, Canoe School
- June 28-29, Kayak School
- July 27-28, Canoe School
- 16-17, Kayak School

- 6-7, Canoe School

To register or for more information, go to www.iowadnr.gov/Things-to-Do/Canoeing-Kayaking/How-to-Paddle/Canoe-Kayak-Schools. Get your registration in quickly, the paddling schools fill up fast.

Media Contact: Todd Robertson, Iowa DNR River Programs Outreach Coordinator, 515-205-6845.

Iowa conifers struggling with winter burn

Iowa Department of Natural Resource (DNR) foresters are receiving reports of moderate to severe winter burn damage to arborvitae and white pine trees across Iowa.

“The ground remained frozen for a long time at the start of this year and the ambient temperatures were above freezing,” explains Tivon Feeley, DNR forest health forester. “The tree is forced to use their water reserves in the needles, but can’t absorb new water from the frozen soil. The lack of water causes the trees to dry out.”

Winter burn is common on conifers planted in open, unprotected locations exposed to severe winter weather. Symptoms include browning or bleaching of the needles, trees losing needles, and tree death. These symptoms become more apparent as the day becomes warmer and tend to be worse on the side of the tree exposed to sunlight or wind during the winter months.

If needles on the tree are dead but buds are alive, new plant foliage will regrow to replace the winter burned foliage. If both the buds and needles are dead, the tree will not recover. The tree will need to be removed.

There is no way to prevent winter burn. You can reduce the risks by properly mulching around your conifers and making sure the tree is well-hydrated before it goes dormant in the fall. Watering is especially important in drought years.

The DNR cautions planting conifers in newly planted windbreaks. Deciduous trees generally grow faster, have fewer disease and insect problems, and provide faster protection. Contact your local district forester for further assistance.

Media Contact: Tivon Feeley, Forest Health Forester, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-669-1402.

Fishing regulations to be relaxed at Martens Lake in Sweet Marsh in Bremer County

TRIPOLI - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will relax the fishing regulations at Martens Lake in Sweet Marsh Wildlife Management Area (WMA) beginning May 15 to allow anglers to more freely harvest fish as the lake is drained to prepare for a project that will repair the Martens’ Lake dike.

Fisheries crews with the Iowa DNR have been removing some adult largemouth bass from the lake and are temporarily relocating them into Cell A of Sweet Marsh WMA. The water level will be lowered early summer and is scheduled to continue for about one year.

Anglers with a valid sport fishing license may harvest all sizes and unlimited quantities of any species of fish from Martens Lake by any means except by use of dynamite, poison, electroshocking devices, or any stupefying substances. Relaxed fishing regulations will apply only to Martens Lake in Sweet Marsh, and not to other areas of the WMA including, but not limited to, "The Reservoir," "Cell A," or "Plum Creek."

Liberalized fishing regulations for Martens Lake will be in effect through June 15. It is illegal to sell fish or stock captured fish into public waters.

The restoration project on Martens Lake will also dredge deeper water channels to improve boating access and repair the Martens Lake water control outlet structure.

The DNR will restock the lake after restoration efforts are completed and the lake has refilled.

Media Contact: Dan Kirby, Fisheries Management Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-920-3456.

Natural Resource Commission to meet May 12 via teleconference

Des Moines – The Natural Resource Commission (NRC) of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will hold its monthly meeting via teleconference at 9:30 a.m., on May 12. The meeting is open to the public.

The public may participate either by video conference at <https://meet.google.com/sco-mbns-qva> or phone by dialing 442-242-3609 a few minutes before the meeting begins. When prompted, enter the pin 883 789 392 followed by the # key.

Members of the NRC are Margo Underwood, Marcus Branstad, Laura Hommel, Tom Prickett, Laura Foell, Uriah Hansen and Tammi Kircher. The director of the DNR is Kayla Lyon.

Any person participating in the public meeting and has special requirements such as those related to mobility or hearing impairments should contact the DNR or ADA Coordinator at 515-725-8200, Relay Iowa TTY Service 800-735-7942, or Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov, and advise of specific needs.

The following is the agenda for the May 12 meeting.

- Approval of Agenda
- Consent Agenda (*within agenda indicates proposed consent agenda item)
 - *Timber Sale Contract with Bruggeman Lumber, Inc. – Fayette County (Volga State Recreation Area)

- *Timber Sale Contract with John Flanagan – Fayette County (Volga State Recreation Area)
 - *Publicly Owned Lakes Program Watershed Eligibility – Fiscal Year 23
- Annual Election of Natural Resource Commission Officers
- Approve Minutes of April 14 Meeting
- Director’s Remarks
- Division Administrator’s Remarks
- Donations
- *Timber Sale Contract with Bruggeman Lumber, Inc. – Fayette County (Volga State Recreation Area)
- *Timber Sale Contract with John Flanagan – Fayette County (Volga State Recreation Area)
- Contract Amendment-3 with Liberty Press, LLC
- Chapter 52, “Wildlife Refuges”, Chapter 91, “Waterfowl and Coot Hunting Seasons”, and Chapter 92, “Migratory Game Birds” – Final Rule
- Chapter 94, “Nonresident Deer Hunting,” and Chapter 106, “Deer Hunting by Residents” – Final Rule
- *Publicly Owned Lakes Program Watershed Eligibility – Fiscal Year 23
- Contract with Black Hawk County Conservation Board (Casey Lake)
- Contract with Shive-Hattery (Green Valley Lake)
- Construction – Small Projects
- Construction – Large Projects
 - Nine Eagles State Park, Pavement Preservation – Decatur County
 - Hawkeye Wildlife Unit, North Road and Babcock Access Road Maintenance- Johnson County
 - Green Valley State Park, Campground Pavement Maintenance – Union County
 - Rathbun Fish Hatchery, Inlet Supply Tee Replacement – Appanoose County
- General Discussion
 - NRC Discussion of Administrative Law Judge Case(s)
 - June 2022 Meeting and Field Tour
- Next meeting, June 8, in Black Hawk County

For a complete agenda, go to www.iowadnr.gov/nrc