



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# EcoNewsWire

## Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Nov. 3, 2022

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## Restoration efforts bring life back to Mill Creek



*Since starting restoration efforts on Mill Creek about three years ago, the area has undergone significant change and improvement.*

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Daniel Kirby, DNR, at 563-920-3456 or [daniel.kirby@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:daniel.kirby@dnr.iowa.gov).

DES MOINES — Once squeezed between two tall embankments, Mill Creek inside of the Big Mill Creek Wildlife Management Area now has room to meander and expand — and more space to fish.

A collaboration between the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Bureaus of Fisheries and Wildlife, the restoration of 1,200 feet of Mill Creek and 12 acres of land was funded in part by the DNR's State Land Grant. The grant was awarded by the DNR Water Quality Improvement Section with funds from the Environmental Protection Agency and Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, which provides grants for nonpoint source projects.

The renewed stretch of Mill Creek in Jackson County is frequented by anglers looking for trout and other fish. The segment is considered a priority trout stream and is the site of about 11,000 trout fishing trips each year, according to the DNR's Bureau of Fisheries.

Nonpoint source coordinator Steve Hopkins was part of a team who awarded the grant to Iowa DNR fisheries biologist Dan Kirby in 2019. He said since the project has been completed, staff have been able to document a significant reduction in sediment going into the creek.

"This segment of Mill Creek is stunningly beautiful, but like many Iowa creeks, it was experiencing severe streambank erosion," Hopkins said.

Before work began in late 2019, fishing access was impaired by steep banks. The water was harmed by excess nutrients leaking into the creek. Due to the straight and narrow channel, an increase in rainfall or a flood event would result in high stream power that would then cause accelerated erosion and bank slumping.

"A healthy stream will flood out of banks about two out of three years," Kirby said. "If we have a floodplain that's higher than the water level, the stream can't flood out of its banks. When that happens, you put more and more water through a constricted stream channel and put more strain on the streambanks."

The grant enabled Kirby and other DNR staff to reconnect the creek to the floodplain, planting prairie vegetation and sloping banks that were previously steep and vertical - all without negatively affecting the quality of the water. Those efforts have made the creek easier to access for fishermen.

Kirby used techniques included in [Iowa's River Restoration Toolbox](#) to determine best practices for stream stabilization, including seeding and planting shrubs and other vegetation.

Three years after the project began, the restoration of the improved portion of Mill Creek was so effective it was cited as a success story by the [Association of Clean Water Administrators](#) during its celebration of 50 years of the Clean Water Act.

Silt fences have been removed and the stream is now able to flood over vegetation rather than be funneled through a small channel that could increase the risk of erosion.

"We identified a problem in an area that needed improvement for environmental reasons and allowed people to enjoy and use the creek more," Kirby said.

The DNR plans to install an educational sign describing the project near the creek adjacent to a parking area in the next year.

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## 2022 Statewide Materials Characterization Study now available

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Anderson, DNR, at 515-340-6059 or [tom.anderson@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:tom.anderson@dnr.iowa.gov).**

DES MOINES — The 2022 Statewide Materials Characterization Study identifying and quantifying materials being landfilled in Iowa is now available. The study will be the basis for

implementing new and updated programs and policies and enhancing existing efforts to further reduce and recycle end of life materials.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources contracted with consulting firm SCS Engineers to conduct the study.

Early data analysis shows that overall paper, organics and plastics were the most landfilled material categories, by weight. Food waste was, by far, the most landfilled material component followed by plastic film (including plastic shopping bags), cardboard, textiles, and compostable paper. Over 70 percent of the landfilled materials are considered reusable, recyclable or compostable.

The department and local governments will use the data to make program and policy decisions, to expand waste diversion initiatives, improve existing program efficiencies, and identify public awareness needs.

The study will also help the DNR measure progress in obtaining waste reduction and recycling goals.

Data was gathered from hand sorting and categorizing nearly 54 tons of municipal solid waste at ten landfills across Iowa. In addition, dedicated construction and demolition loads received at the landfills were visually sorted for the first time to gain an understanding of construction and demolition debris generation.

The data is supportive of circular economy concepts designed to keep materials, products and services in circulation for as long as possible. Information also supports the Sustainable Materials Management initiative, currently underway, which establishes materials management programs and policy decisions based on environmental impacts throughout the material's life cycle – from resource extraction to processing, manufacturing, transportation, use and end-of-life disposal.

The 2022 Statewide Materials Characterization Study final report is posted at [iowadnr.gov](http://iowadnr.gov) under the waste planning and recycling tab.

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## Iowa DNR proposes changes to Groundwater Hazard Documentation

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Noah Poppelreiter, DNR, at [noah.poppelreiter@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:noah.poppelreiter@dnr.iowa.gov).

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is proposing updates to the Iowa Administrative Code to align groundwater hazard statements with current legislation.

New legislation, House File 2343, was signed into law in April 2022. The legislation removes the requirement to record a groundwater hazard statement if no relevant conditions are present and allows county recorders to submit statements to the DNR through a web browser provided by the county.

The DNR's proposed changes include removing language that is now in conflict with the new Iowa Code, referencing a new statement form, and providing the procedure by which county recorders can submit statements to the DNR.

The proposed updated form, which can be found on the [Iowa DNR's website](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/forms/5420960%20Proposed.pdf) ([www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/forms/5420960%20Proposed.pdf](http://www.iowadnr.gov/Portals/idnr/uploads/forms/5420960%20Proposed.pdf)), makes it

clear when a condition is present and provides instruction on when to submit the form and when to include statutory language.

The full Notice of Intended Action, including the proposed amendments to the rules, can be found on page 963 of the November 2, 2022, Iowa Administrative Bulletin, and is available digitally here: <https://www.legis.iowa.gov/docs/aco/arc/6629C.pdf>.

Public comment for the proposed amendments is open until November 22nd at 4:30 p.m.

Comments should be directed to:

Noah Poppelreiter  
Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Wallace State Office Building  
502 East Ninth Street  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319  
Email: [GWHS@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:GWHS@dnr.iowa.gov)

The DNR will hold a digital public hearing on November 22, 2022, via Zoom. Persons who wish to attend the Zoom public hearing should contact Noah Poppelreiter at [noah.poppelreiter@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:noah.poppelreiter@dnr.iowa.gov). A meeting registration link will be provided prior to the hearing. Persons who wish to make oral comments at the public hearing must submit a request to Noah Poppelreiter prior to the hearing to facilitate an orderly hearing.

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## Air Quality permits under review

**MEDIA CONTACT: Marnie Stein, DNR, at 515-725-9525 or [Marnie.Stein@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Marnie.Stein@dnr.iowa.gov) for Title V permits; or Peter Zayudis, DNR, at 515-201-4596 or [Peter.Zayudis@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Peter.Zayudis@dnr.iowa.gov) for Construction permits.**

DES MOINES — The DNR Air Quality Bureau has the following draft permits up for review. The permits help protect Iowans' health and air quality. DNR's permitting staff review each permit application to ensure facilities comply with state and federal air quality requirements. We encourage public comments on draft permits, providing help on how to make effective comments. Submit written comments to the assigned permit writer before 4:30 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. DNR considers public comments before finalizing the permits.

### Title V Operating Permits

Title V Operating permits are reviewed and re-issued every five years. Facilities with a Title V permit have the potential to emit large amounts of air pollutants compared to other facilities. The five-year reviews are a federal requirement and ensure adequate monitoring is included in the permit. The DNR plans to issue Title V Operating Permits for the following facilities. Find permit details at [www.iowadnr.gov/titlev-draft](http://www.iowadnr.gov/titlev-draft).

#### Lee County

Silgan Containers Mfg. Corp., 2326 263<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Fort Madison  
The application was submitted to operate their existing metal cans facility. The public comment period ends Dec. 3.

### Construction Permits

DNR engineers review and issue construction permits to facilities before they build new or modify existing sources of air pollution. The public may review the following air quality

construction permits available online at [www.iowadnr.gov/airpermitsearch](http://www.iowadnr.gov/airpermitsearch) OR through the [EASY Air Public Inquiry Portal](#) and then click the Public Notice tab.

**Scott County**

Linwood Mining & Minerals Corp., 401 E Front St., Davenport

Project No. 22-153. Linwood Mining & Minerals Corp requested modification of existing air construction permits to update PM<sub>10</sub> emission limits, operating hours, throughput, and moisture content of material storage piles. The public comment period ends Dec. 3.