



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Feb. 7, 2023**

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## **DNR finalizes public meeting locations to recap hunting, trapping seasons, discuss possible rule changes**

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is hosting a series of town hall-style meetings where local staff will provide updates on recently completed hunting and trapping seasons, discuss possible changes, and address other topics as requested.

“We want people to come out to these meetings, listen to the seasons reviews, ask questions and hear directly from our staff,” said Todd Bishop, chief of the Iowa DNR’s Wildlife Bureau. “Part of the meeting will be devoted to discussing potential rule changes and collecting feedback as we work through the rules process.”

The meetings are open to the public. Comments collected from these public meetings will be considered along with other related comments received by the Iowa DNR prior to proposing changes to hunting rules and regulations. Proposed rules will be presented to the Natural Resource Commission during a regular public meeting for consideration and additional public comment.

### **Meeting date, time and location**

- DeWitt, Feb. 20, 7 p.m., DeWitt Community Library, 917 Fifth Avenue
- Waverly, Feb. 20, 6 p.m., Waverly Public Library, 1500 W Bremer Avenue
- Bloomfield, Feb. 21, 6 p.m., Wapello County Conservation Board Pioneer Ridge Nature Center, 1339 Hwy. 63
- Creston, Feb. 21, 6 p.m., Multi-Purpose Room, Southern Prairie YMCA, 1201 West Townline Street
- Des Moines, Feb. 21, 6:45 p.m., Des Moines Izaak Walton League, 4343 George Flagg Parkway

- Lake View, Feb 21, 6:30 p.m., Speaker Park Shelter House, 418 North Blossom Street
- Perry, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., Forest Park Museum Building, 14581 K Avenue
- Toledo, Feb. 21, 7 p.m., Otter Creek Lake & Park Nature Center, 2283 Park Road
- Algona, Feb. 22, 6:30 p.m., Waters Edge Nature Center, 1010 250th Street
- Okoboji, Feb. 22, 6 p.m., Maser Monarch Lodge, 22785 Nature Center Road
- Onawa, Feb. 22, 6 p.m., Lewis and Clark State Park visitor center, 21914 Park Loop
- Ventura, Feb. 22, 7 p.m., Iowa DNR Wildlife Office, 15326 Balsam Avenue
- Chariton, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m., Chariton Community Center Rooms A & B, 502 North Main Street
- Council Bluffs, Feb. 23, 6:30 p.m., Council Bluffs Fish and Game Club, 531 Comanche St.
- Decorah, Feb. 23, 7 p.m., Franklin W. Olin Building, Room 102, Luther College, 700 College Drive, next to the Prues Library
- Dubuque, Feb. 23, 7 p.m., EB Lyons Nature Center at Mines of Spain, 8991 Bellevue Heights Road
- Iowa City, Feb. 23, 7 p.m., Johnson County ISU Extension Office, 3109 Old Hwy. 218 South
- Wapello, Feb. 23, 6 p.m., Langwood Education Center, 14019 H Ave.

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

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## Hunters harvest nearly 110,000 deer during 2022-23 season

Iowa's 2022 deer harvest increased seven percent over the 2021 season, due, in part to the new Excess Tag January Antlerless Season approved by the Iowa Legislature last spring.

"A lot of hunters chose to participate in the new season, and the harvest was on par or a little above the other firearms seasons," said Jace Elliott, state deer biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. "Hunters reported more than 2,500 deer taken during the Excess Tag January Antlerless Season, thanks, in part, to favorable weather across the state."

Overall, hunters tagged deer at a rate of 30-35 percent which is similar to previous years, for a total reported harvest of more than 109,600 deer.

Deer harvest varied regionally, with the north central and southeast regions seeing an increase over 2021. "The north central deer population is recovering over the past decade and is trending in the right direction," Elliott said.

The far western counties and southwest region saw a decline in harvest, likely due to the recent outbreaks from EHD and from floods in the Missouri River valley. "The deer herd has shown that, given time, it can recover from EHD outbreaks," he said. "And 2022 was a mild year with respect to EHD in that area."

The deer population model indicates the herd size is stable to slightly increasing and is within the goal of the Iowa deer study advisory committee.

The Iowa DNR has deer harvest information by county by year dating back to 2006 online at <https://gooutdoorsiowa.com/RealTimeHarvestReport.aspx>.

**Media Contact:** Jace Elliott, State Deer Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-249-7056.

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## Grant funds available for communities impacted by the 2020 derecho

The Iowa Legislature appropriated state infrastructure funds to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to be used for a community-based tree planting program for derecho recovery tree planting in 27 impacted counties.

Additionally, through the USDA Forest Service & National Association of State Foresters 2022 State Urban Forest Resilience Grant Program, the DNR received Emerald Ash Borer Reforestation funds.

The Community Forestry Grant Program provides reimbursable grants to be used to purchase and plant trees suitable to Iowa in counties impacted by both the August 2020 Derecho and Emerald Ash Borer. A total of \$125,220 in funds are available to state and local governments, schools and volunteer organizations, and service organizations in the 27 impacted counties.

Award recipients will be reimbursed \$1,000 to \$10,000 for the purchase of trees and materials from Iowa businesses. Qualifying public planting lands include, but are not limited to, street rights-of-way, parks, school grounds, courthouse lawns, public buildings, fairgrounds, cemeteries, libraries, and trails (DNR lands are not eligible).

The spring application and rules are available online at [www.iowadnr.gov/urbanforestry](http://www.iowadnr.gov/urbanforestry). Applications are due by 4 p.m. on Friday, March 3, 2023.

**Media Contact:** Janessa Hollmaier, Community Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Trees Forever, 319-826-0814.

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## Trees for Kids grant applications due March 3

DES MOINES – The popular Trees for Kids grant program is accepting applications through March 3.

Grantees can be awarded up to \$2,500 to cover the cost of trees and mulch. All trees for this program must be planted on school grounds or public property. Youth are required to be engaged in the process, most often helping plant the trees on site.

“Planting trees is a fun way to connect kids to nature, build on their sense of wonder and explore the benefits trees provide at their school and in their community,” said Emma Hanigan, urban forestry coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Studies show trees planted around schools and in neighborhoods give youth increased levels of concentration, lower levels of aggression, lower levels of obesity and fewer symptoms of ADHD.

To apply for the grant, visit: [www.iowadnr.gov/UrbanForestry](http://www.iowadnr.gov/UrbanForestry).

**Media Contact:** Emma Hanigan, Urban Forestry Coordinator, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-249-1732.

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## Spring is only six weeks away (we hope) – Now's the time for a midwinter boat checkup

A midwinter visit to check on the boat – no matter if stored ashore in a backyard or a marina parking lot – is a wise thing to do. Boat Owners Association of The United States (BoatUS) has four tips to ensure there are no surprises at spring commissioning.

**Water is bad.** The number-one concern for any boat in long-term winter storage is water. It can't be allowed in, but if it does, the water needs a way out. Check the boat's winter cover to ensure it still allows rain and heavy snow loads to easily shed away from the boat. Small boats should have the drain plug removed. A tight-fitting winter cover will also help keep out the critters, including raccoons, feral cats and muskrats, whose damage boat insurance policies generally do not cover.

**Take it home.** If you forgot to bring home life jackets when you put the boat away in the fall, it's best to do it now. That includes throwable devices you keep near the helm. Lifejackets will last longer and stay cleaner. Store in a dry location at home. Signal flares can be kept aboard if they are in location not affected by moisture. Some handheld air horns can leave a not-easy-to-remove rust ring when stored in their upright position. Both signal devices can be put into zip top freezer bags. Other common items left on the boat during winter storage are liquid cleaners that can burst open during the freeze/thaw cycle and food, which draw vermin.

**Air it out.** Try to ventilate the boat, which will help keep mold and mildew at bay. If the boat is closed tightly and doesn't have ventilation, use desiccants – often sold in bucket type containers – in cuddy cabins or living space below. Follow the manufacturer instructions and you should be able keep a fairly dry boat making spring cleanup easier and preserving the boat's value.

**Be safe.** There may be ice and snow this time of year. If you need to use a ladder, ensure its firmly planted, always tie it off at the top, and have a friend hold it while ascending/descending. Never move or adjust a jack stand – call the yard for assistance. Tying off a winter cover to jack stands is also a bad idea as the stands could be yanked out from under the boat during high winds.

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## 2022 hunting, fishing license sales

In 2022, Iowa residents purchased...

### Fishing

195,263 annual licenses

8,620 lifetime fishing licenses

14,592 three-year licenses

1,013 seven-day licenses

2,769 one-day licenses

42,728 trout fees

232 paddlefish licenses

17,945 third line licenses (resident and nonresident combined)

40,387 fishing, hunting and habitat combination licenses

## **Hunting**

39,414 annual licenses

56,398 hunting and habitat annual combination licenses

3,243 lifetime hunting licenses

4,368 hunting and habitat three-year licenses

1,274 apprentice (hunting and habitat) licenses

24,498 migratory game bird licenses

39,307 habitat fees

13,688 furharvester annual licenses age 16 and older

544 furharvester annual licenses age 15 and younger

513 furharvester and habitat annual combination licenses

354 lifetime furharvester licenses

## **Large Game**

### **Deer**

12,551 youth general deer, 1,050 antlerless deer licenses

267 disabled hunter general deer, 31 antlerless deer licenses

54,285 archery general deer, 21,829 antlerless deer licenses

6,796 early muzzleloader general deer, 1,463 antlerless deer licenses

44,492 first shotgun general deer, 17,278 antlerless deer licenses

47,420 second shotgun general deer, 18,602 antlerless deer licenses

19,642 late muzzleloader general deer, 9,995 antlerless deer licenses

### **Turkey**

5,507 spring bow licenses

16,209 spring gun/bow licenses seasons 1-3

17,792 spring gun/bow licenses season 4

5,841 spring youth gun/bow licenses

2,320 fall gun/bow

1,776 fall bow

## **Landowner-Tenant**

### **Deer**

61 youth general deer licenses, 52 antlerless deer licenses

5,132 archery general deer licenses, 5,044 antlerless deer licenses

1,099 early muzzleloader general deer licenses, 939 antlerless deer licenses

22,888 first and second shotgun season general deer licenses, 19,341 antlerless deer licenses

2,216 late muzzleloader general deer licenses, 3,678 antlerless deer licenses

### **Turkey**

2,022 spring gun/bow season 1-3

2,345 spring gun/bow season 4

815 bow licenses

41 youth licenses

2,535 fall gun/bow

993 fall bow

## **In 2022, nonresidents purchased...**

### **Fishing**

25,244 annual licenses

2,618 seven-day licenses

11,154 three-day licenses

13,619 one-day licenses

6,942 trout fees

46 paddlefish licenses

### **Hunting**

6,344 annual licenses age 18 and older

13,249 hunting and habitat annual combination licenses age 18 and older

4,451 five-day licenses  
1,896 five-day hunting and habitat combination  
13,149 habitat fees  
3,878 migratory game bird fees  
767 apprentice (hunting and habitat) licenses  
78 furharvester annual licenses  
35 furharvester and habitat annual combination licenses

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## Ice fishing shelters must be removed by Feb. 20

DES MOINES – Ice fishing shelters, left unattended, must be removed from all state-owned lands and waters by Feb. 20. Ice shelter owners are encouraged not to wait until the last minute to get their shelter off the ice. If a shelter falls through the ice, the owner is responsible for getting it out of the lake.

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## Walleye season closes Feb. 15 on Iowa Great Lakes

SPIRIT LAKE – The walleye fishing season on Spirit, East and West Okoboji lakes is open through Feb. 14. It will close after that date and reopens on May 6. These are the only Iowa lakes that have a closed season for walleye.

For more information on fishing regulations, go to [www.iowadnr.gov/fishing](http://www.iowadnr.gov/fishing).

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## Harsh winter across North Iowa is reminder habitat is critical for wildlife survival

State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) is a nationwide Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) practice within the continuous sign-up administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). The SAFE initiative allows public and private organizations and state and federal agencies to propose areas where new CRP acreage is essential to benefit endangered, threatened or high priority fish and wildlife species.

The continuous sign-up is ongoing year-round and is targeted at priority soil, water and wildlife issues. There are five SAFE CRP projects in Iowa:

- Pheasant Recovery SAFE is for Iowa landowners who want to return pheasants to their property, and is eligible to landowners in northern two-thirds of Iowa.
- Early Successional Quail Habitat SAFE is for landowners who want to return bobwhite quail to their property, and is eligible to landowners in the southern one-third of Iowa.
- Gaining Ground for Wildlife SAFE is for landowners who want to bring back grassland songbirds to restore native grasslands, and is eligible to landowners around the state.
- Early Successional Forest and Neotropical Migratory Bird SAFE is for landowners who want to develop high-density, hardwood tree plantings for ruffed grouse, and is eligible to

landowners mainly in northeastern Iowa.

- Grand River Grassland SAFE is for landowners in Ringgold and Decatur counties to increase populations of the greater prairie chicken, and other grassland dependent songbirds.

Each SAFE program has different habitat requirements and counties eligible. Staff with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources private lands program or with Pheasants Forever can assist landowners with enrolling qualifying land into CRP. Visit the Iowa DNR's website for more information at [www.iowadnr.gov/crp](http://www.iowadnr.gov/crp)

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