



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 7, 2023

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Land donors honored during reception in Des Moines

DES MOINES, Iowa – More than 5,900 acres of Iowa land in 22 counties with an estimated value of more than \$21.1 million was permanently protected through donations for conservation.

The donors associated with 25 donations of land or land value will be recognized during a ceremony on March 22, from 10:40 to 11:40 a.m., in the first-floor rotunda, at the State Capitol, in Des Moines.

Landowners who are in attendance will be honored individually for their donation. For more information about individual donations, visit the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/landdonors.

Media Contact: Whitney Schuhardt, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-250-3617.

Time to stop pruning oak trees

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) suggests finishing pruning oak trees by the end of the second week in March to prevent the spread of oak wilt.

“The best way to prevent the spread of oak wilt is to not prune any oak tree between the start of November and the end of March,” said Tivon Feeley, forest health program leader with the Iowa DNR. “However, the warm weather conditions indicate that spring might be a bit early this year and for that reason, we recommend finishing your oak pruning by the end of the second week in March.”

Oak wilt, caused by a fungus, has been present in Iowa for many years. Iowa’s red, black, and pin oak are more susceptible to oak wilt, but it can also infect white and bur oak. Black, pin, or red oak usually die within the same summer they are infected. White oak and bur oak can often take a number of years before they succumb to this disease.

Oak wilt can spread from infected trees to healthy trees in two ways: a small beetle that carries spores of the fungus from a diseased tree to a healthy tree with an open wound during the growing season, and through root grafts connecting nearby oaks. For example, if a red oak is infected and there is another red oak within 50 to 100 feet, there is a good chance that the roots of these trees are grafted and the fungus can move from the diseased tree to the healthy tree.

Feeley says symptoms to look for on infected trees usually include leaves turning a bronzed brown along the outer margins of the leaves. These leaves can often still have some green on them as they fall from the tree. The defoliation tends to start at the top of the tree.

The best way to prevent the spread of oak wilt is to prevent any wounding to oak trees during the growing season. If a tree is wounded from storm damage or pruning is required during the growing season, treat the wounds immediately with a wound dressing such as acrylic paint. Do not purchase pruning paints/sealants. Those products slow the tree's ability to seal over the wound.

Learn more about oak wilt prevention and control at www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Forest-Health/Oak-Wilt.

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

Spring community trout stocking starts March 23

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources fisheries staff will release between 1,000 and 2,000 rainbow trout in 13 lakes across Iowa in March and April as part of its cool weather trout program.

The spring community trout stockings are a great place to take kids to catch their first fish. A small hook with a nightcrawler or corn under a small bobber to casting small simple spinners such as a Panther Martin or Mepps is all you need to get in on the fun.

Bringing trout to cities and towns offers a "close to home" option for Iowans who might not travel to northeast Iowa to experience trout fishing. Most locations also host a family-friendly event to help anglers have success and fun while fishing.

The popular program is supported by the sales of the trout fee. Anglers need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. The daily limit is five trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of 10.

Children age 15 or younger can fish for trout with a properly licensed adult, but they must limit their catch to one daily limit. The child can buy a trout fee which will allow them to catch their own limit.

Once you buy your trout fee, you can fish for trout all year long at any of the community trout lakes and trout streams in northeast Iowa. Find more information about Iowa trout streams on the DNR website at www.iowadnr.gov/trout.

2023 Spring Community Trout Stocking Schedule

March 23

- [Discovery Park Pond](#), Muscatine, at 9:30 a.m.
- [Jefferson County Park Pond](#), Fairfield, at 10 a.m.
- [Wilson Lake](#), Fort Madison, at Noon

March 24

- [Prairie Park Fishery](#), Cedar Rapids, at 9 a.m.
- [Liberty Centre Pond](#), North Liberty, at 9:30 a.m.

March 25

- [Ottumwa Park Pond](#), Ottumwa, at 10:30 a.m.

April 1

- [Triumph Park Lake](#), Waukee, at Noon
- [Ada Hayden Heritage Park Lake](#), Ames, at Noon

April 8

- [Lake Petocka](#), Bondurant, at Noon

April 14

- [Sand Lake](#), Marshalltown, at Noon

April 15

- [North Prairie Lake](#), Cedar Falls, at 10 a.m.
- [Terra Lake](#), Johnston, at Noon

April 22

- [Heritage Pond](#), Dubuque, at 10 a.m.

Media Contact: Mike Steuck, regional fisheries supervisor, northeast Iowa, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 563-927-3276.

Volunteer Clean-up event planned for Red Haw State Park on March 12

CHARITON – Red Haw State Park is hosting a volunteer clean-up event on March 12, from 2 to 4 p.m. Volunteers should meet at the Stone Shelter at the south end of the park.

Volunteers are asked to dress for the weather and to bring work gloves. Work will include trail and branch clean-up.

Volunteers are asked to RSVP by contacting the park office at 641-774-5632.

DNR to host open house to discuss Boone Forks Wildlife Area forest wildlife stewardship plan

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will hold a public open house on March 23, beginning at 6 p.m., at the Hamilton County Conservation Board, 2490 Briggs Woods Trail, south of Webster City, to discuss a proposed forest wildlife stewardship plan at the Boone Forks Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

The Boone Forks forest wildlife stewardship plan is a guide for future management of the wildlife area which will focus on creating and maintaining wildlife habitat along with promoting long-term sustainability of the forest resource at Boone Forks WMA. The plan is available online at <https://www.iowadnr.gov/hunting/places-to-hunt-shoot/wildlife-management-areas/forest-stewardship-plans>.

This will be an informal open house where DNR representatives will be on hand from the Wildlife Bureau and Forestry Section to answer questions and discuss future plans at Boone Forks WMA with the public.

Media Contact: Joe Herring, District Forester, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 641-648-6304 or Josh Gansen, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 712-330-6685.