



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Conservation and Recreation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Aug. 1, 2023

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Iowa DNR sending firefighters to Montana and Texas

AMES – As wildfires continue to rage in parts of the west, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Fire Program has started to dispatch wildland firefighters to Montana and Texas.

The fire program recently sent seven Iowa wildland firefighters to Montana to the Bowles Creek Fire. Seven wildland firefighters along with 13 others from Missouri are headed to the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest.

“The hand crew is headed to the Bowles Creek Fire, just east of Hamilton, Montana,” said Ryan Schlater, contract fire specialist, with the Iowa DNR’s Fire Program. “The fire is located in some very rugged, steep country partially in a wilderness area of the forest, which presents more access issues.”

Three wildland firefighters along with the DNR type 6 fire engine are in Texas fighting wildfires.

Iowa DNR fire staff watch the daily fire behavior and monitor new fire starts. Current hotspots include the southwest United States, with new fires in New Mexico, Arizona and southwest Colorado.

“We have more firefighters available and ready to go once resource orders come in,” explains Schlater.

The fire program has been sending wildland firefighters to national incidents since 2006. The Iowa DNR fire program has sent resources to most of the lower 48 states and Alaska in the past.

For more information, contact Gail Kantak at 515-689-0083.

Chronic wasting disease found in Marshall County deer

A tissue sample collected in mid-June from a road killed adult buck deer in Marshall County has tested positive for chronic wasting disease. With the addition of

Marshall County, 260 deer have tested positive in 16 Iowa counties since 2013.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has scheduled two meetings to update the public on chronic wasting disease surveillance and management efforts in Jasper, Marshall and Grundy counties.

Meetings are scheduled for:

- Baxter, Aug. 29, 7 p.m., Baxter Public Library, 202 E State Street
- Wellsburg, Oct. 10, 7 p.m., Wellsburg Memorial Building, 501 N Adams Street

“Hunters and landowners play vital roles in the successful management of this disease in Iowa,” said Tyler Harms, biometrician for the Iowa DNR. “These meetings are an opportunity for local hunters, landowners, and citizens to learn more about chronic wasting disease, what the DNR is doing to monitor and manage the disease in Iowa, and, most importantly, to ask questions.”

At a minimum, Harms said the tissue collection goal will be increased in Marshall County from the current 15-20 deer samples to 100 or more in the coming year.

“Our hunters are an important partner in managing and monitoring for this disease,” said Steve Woodruff, wildlife biologist with the Iowa DNR’s Iowa River Wildlife Unit. “Hunters provide the tissue samples we need to determine to what extent the disease is on the landscape in Marshall County and elsewhere in Iowa.”

Local DNR staff will be reaching out to hunters to arrange for sample collection as the seasons get underway, Woodruff said.

Chronic wasting disease is a neurological disease belonging to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs) or prion diseases. It attacks the brain of infected deer causing the animal to lose weight, display abnormal behavior, lose body functions and die. It is always fatal to the infected animal.

To learn more about chronic wasting disease, including the DNR surveillance and management efforts, visit <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Hunting/Deer-Hunting/Deer-Health/Chronic-Wasting-Disease>

Any person attending 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.

MEDIA CONTACT: Tyler Harms, Biometrician, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, (515) 777-5378, or Steve Woodruff, Wildlife Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 319-330-7013.

Learn to Hunt program opens registration for women-only waterfowl workshop

Polk City, Iowa - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering a program to teach skills needed to hunt, field dress and cook waterfowl to women who have little to no waterfowl hunting experience.

The program will be held on Sept 10, from 2-7 p.m., at the Olofson Shooting Range, near Polk City. The cost is \$35, and the course is designed for women age 16 and older.

The workshop will feature knowledge and skills building sessions with instructors that will provide hands-on learning as well as a live- fire wingshooting that will teach the basics.

“For those interested in the challenge of waterfowl 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, program coordinator with the Iowa DNR.

Participants will learn basic strategies for hunting waterfowl such as proper equipment, where to hunt, safe shooting practices, and how to field dress, butcher and cook them. The wingshooting session will provide lessons on shooting techniques and range time for those looking to improve their shooting skills.

Space is limited so early registration is encouraged. For more information and to begin the registration process please visit: <https://tinyurl.com/mvx95325>

The program is provided through a partnership with the Iowa DNR and Delta Waterfowl. 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

Late summer underwater aquatic plant control for ponds

A healthy pond needs aquatic plants, but too many can upset a fishing pond's balance and become a nuisance. Many pond owners struggle with how to control the amount of aquatic plants, without completely removing all of them, so they can enjoy their pond.

Pond owners can use herbicides to reduce aquatic plants, but their growing season is almost over by August.

Pond rakes or cutters, although more labor intensive, are perfect this time of year to control aquatic plants in small areas to create fishing lanes, swimming areas and dock access.

Pond rakes cut plants from the bottom and let you remove them from near shore or around docks. Attach a float to the rake to let it skim and remove plants and moss or algae from the surface.

A cutter will sink to the bottom and cut the plant stems as it is dragged back, allowing the plants to float to the top. The pond plants are often carried away by the wind or you can pick them up with a floating rake.

Use a rope attached to a long-handled rake or cutter that you can throw and pull back. You can use these handy tools for many years, and they cost less than a gallon of some aquatic herbicides. Local hardware or pool stores may carry these, or try an online search for “pond rake or cutter.”

A few tips to remember:

- Many plants spread by fragmentation, so if growth is not throughout the pond, do not use these methods.
- Once out of the water, let the plants dry out before moving them too far. This will greatly lighten your load.
- Obey State Law. Don't haul the plants off your property; you cannot transport aquatic vegetation in Iowa. Once out of the water, leave the plants onshore to dry and compost or move dried plants to your garden where they make excellent mulch.
- Lakeshore property owners on a public lake can physically remove a 15 foot wide path of vegetation for navigation to the main lake without a permit; you cannot use herbicides to remove the aquatic plants in a publicly-owned lake. Contact the DNR fisheries office in your area if you have questions.

Learn more about aquatic plants in ponds at www.iowadnr.gov/pondplants.

Media Contact: Jason Euchner, Fisheries Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 515-230-4789.

State Preserves Advisory Board to meet via teleconference August 10

The State Preserves Advisory Board of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will meet via teleconference at 10 a.m, August 10.

The public can listen to the meeting via Google Meet at meet.google.com/xgz-vfka-jjg or by calling 573-667-3283 and entering the PIN of 225506898, followed by the pound (#) sign.

Any person attending 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.

Members of the State Preserves Advisory Board are Steve Gustafson, Rick Cerwick, Amy Crouch, Perry Thostenson and Rhonda Kendrick. The Deputy Director of the DNR is Alex Moon.

The following is the August 10 agenda.

- Approve Agenda
- Approve Minutes of Past Meeting
- Hartman Bluff State Preserve stream restoration improvement plan
- Pilot Knob tree salvage plan
- Crossman Prairie and Hoffman Prairie state preserves - request from the Iowa Chapter of the Nature Conservancy to transfer ownership and management to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

A more detailed agenda is available on the Iowa DNR's website at www.iowadnr.gov/spab.

For more information, contact John Pearson at 515-669-7614.

