

Iowa Forestry Today

CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



Iowa woodlands, wildlands and waterways draw hundreds of thousands of tourists and recreational users each year. Much of the spread of invasive species comes from people simply enjoying nature. Uninvited guests can hitch a ride on outdoor gear, shoes and clothes, travelling hundreds of miles in a single day.

Take these easy steps to stop the spread of invasive species in your community.

1. Verify that the plants you buy for your yard or garden are not invasive. Many non-native plants can become invasive. The [Forest Invasive Species Guide](#) includes quick ID photos and common management techniques to control 19 invasive trees, shrubs and plants.
2. Look for spongy [moth egg masses](#) on all outdoor equipment when traveling from a spongy moth [quarantined area](#).
3. Clean your boots before and after you hike in a new area to avoid spreading seeds. This is a common way garlic mustard and other plants are spread.
4. Do not buy or sell firewood from outside your county. Firewood can contain emerald ash borer, Sirex woodwasp, Asian longhorned beetle, oak wilt and many more pests. Plenty of firewood is available locally near state and county parks. Make sure to burn all of the firewood at the campsite and not leave it or transport to a new area.
5. Work with your [Private Lands Forester](#) for plans to make your forests more resilient to invasive species.



Volunteer groups along with city staff helped plant 100 diverse tree species in West Des Moines. These new trees help to restore trees lost from the impact of emerald

ash borer and increase tree diversity.

West Des Moines is one of 22 communities in the 97 emerald ash borer impacted counties awarded a Community Forestry Grant to buy and plant trees suitable to Iowa. Funding is provided through a grant with the USDA Forest Service and National Association of State Foresters.

[Spring 2024 reimbursable grants](#) for communities in the 27 counties impacted by the 2020 derecho are currently closed. The remaining funds from the Derecho CFGP, as well as the Trees for Kids and IRA CFGP additional grant opportunities will be available in Fall 2024.

Get Outside this Summer

When children spend time outside, it can improve their creativity, imagination, and overall physical and mental health, among many other positive things.

Keep the whole family active with fun [family-friendly outdoor learning activities](#). Not only will they provide a fun break from screen time, kids can continue to develop their observational skills and connect with nature.



Enjoy the buzz - support local pollinators

[National Pollinator Week](#) is June 17-23. Follow these simple tips to help pollinators in your backyard.

- Reduce the amount of lawn that you have.
- Don't use pesticide or insecticides.
- Plant lots of flowers for nectar and pollen.
- Plant native flowers and grasses.
- Give pollinators a safe place to overwinter.