

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.

Keep your trees healthy and hydrated this summer

Is your newly planted tree thirsty? You may need to water trees planted in the spring or summer one to three times a week in the first few months after planting. Water early in the morning or evening so the tree roots have a chance to absorb most of the water and the sun can't evaporate it away.

Check the moisture level in the soil near the tree's trunk (four to six inches below the surface) at least once a week, and more often during hot, dry weather. If the soil feels moist or damp you can hold off on watering, if it is dry you need to water your tree. The soil should be moist, but not saturated after watering.

Newly planted trees need regular and consistent watering for optimal growth and health. A gallon of water is equal to about one inch of rainfall.

- **Immediately after planting and mulching – 5-15 gallons**, depending on container size
- **Week 1** – 2 gallons of water per diameter inch of trunk **daily**
- **Week 2** – 2 gallons per diameter inch **4-5 days per week**
- **Week 3** – 2 gallons per diameter inch **2-3 days per week**
- **Week 4 and thereafter** – 2 gallons per diameter inch **once per week**

Trees for Kids grant applications due August 22

The popular [Trees for Kids grant program](#) is accepting applications through **August 22** to plant trees in public areas of communities (park, community center, public school, etc.) this fall.

Grantees can be awarded up to \$2,500 to purchase trees and mulch. Youth are required to be engaged in the process, most often helping to plant the trees on site.

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.

[**Apply online today!**](#)



Take It Outside State Park Camps are 5-day immersive adventures where campers explore what makes each state park unique and amazing, from its habitats to its history, plants and animals, and the interconnectedness of it all.

The camps are for students entering 3rd-6th grade. Activities incorporate STREAM (science, technology, research, engineering, the arts and math) concepts through exciting adventures focused on forestry, fisheries, wildlife and ecology.

- **Walnut Woods State Park** (West Des Moines): June 23-27
- **Maquoketa Caves State Park** (Maquoketa): July 14-18
- **Ledges State Park** (Madrid): July 21-25

Register online today! Enrollment is limited to 30 students per camp.