



Revised Request for Proposals (RFP)

Mowing Des Moines County Parks & Recreation Areas

Bids Due

Wednesday, December 19, 2025

by 3:00 PM

Contact:

Chris Lee, Executive Director
Des Moines County Conservation
11627 Starr's Cave Rd.
Burlington, IA 52601
(319) 753-8260
conservation@dmcounty.com

Revised November 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Conservation Department of Des Moines County, acting through the Des Moines County Conservation Board (hereinafter “County”) invites qualified lawn care/landscaping contractors to submit bids for mowing services at a number of the county’s parks, recreation areas and trails.

Included in this RFP are descriptions of areas to be mowed, a bid sheet and a sample contract. Des Moines County Conservation intends to enter into an initial one-year contract with the selected bidder(s) for mowing services for the 2026 mowing season with the option of renewing the contract(s) for up to five years (through the 2030 mowing season) thereafter at the County’s sole discretion.

BACKGROUND

Des Moines County Conservation seeks one or more contractors for mowing, line trimming and related services at the locations described in Appendix A. Bids are to be based on a 10-14 day cycle, generally beginning on or about April 1 and running through the end of October.

Bidders are welcome to submit bids for any of the locations listed and are not required to submit bids for all sites. Contracts will be awarded per-site. The same contractor may be awarded contracts for multiple sites and may or may not be awarded contracts for all sites for which bids were submitted.

Bidders must submit prices for, and be willing and able to complete work as outlined in the Scope of Services in the Sample Contract included in Appendix C on all desired locations described in Appendix A. Bids should be submitted by filling out the Bid Sheet in Appendix B.

The Contractor, its agents and employees are to be considered by the Des Moines County Conservation Board as independent contractors. No employer or employee relationship between the Conservation Board and the Contractor is to be created by this agreement.

Bidders may contact DMCC Executive Director, Chris Lee, at (319) 753-8260 for additional information regarding this RFP.

Maps attached are for reference only. Bidders are encouraged to make an on-site visit to each area to verify mowing locations prior to submitting a bid. For guidance on field locations, contact DMCC Operations Supervisor, Tanner Grimm, at (319) 572-8057.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

See Appendix C for a sample contract with a full description of the services required.

PAYMENT

Bids shall be priced per cycle on the form in Appendix B. Invoicing shall be monthly, based on the number of cycles completed in that month.

INFORMATION TO ACCOMPANY PROPOSAL

Bids will be accepted in hard copy via US mail or digitally via email (PDF format preferred). Bids must be received in the Conservation office by 3:00 PM on Friday, December 19, 2025. Bid documents should include the following:

1. Contractor's contact information including company name, address, phone number and name of contractor's main point of contact.
2. Qualifications, including a description of available staff and equipment, relevant experience in lawn care and at least three references.
3. Cost: Fill out the attached proposal sheet in Appendix B.
4. Proof of insurance as outlined in the sample contract in Appendix C.

EVALUATION AND TIMELINE

Bidders shall be reviewed according to the following criteria:

1. Qualification and experience in landscape maintenance.
2. Comments from references.
3. Cost.
4. Meeting insurance requirements.

Selection of the Contractor will be based on the proposal that, in the opinion of Des Moines County Conservation, serves the best overall interests of the County. **Contracts will be awarded on a per-site basis.**

All proposals in response to this RFP are due to the Conservation Office no later than 3:00 pm on December 19, 2025.

The selection decision for the winning bidder will be made at the Des Moines County Conservation Board regular monthly meeting on January 7, 2026 at Starr's Cave Nature Center beginning at 5:30 PM.

Des Moines County Conservation reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

Appendix A – Mowing Locations

All areas currently being mowed are to be included in the bid unless otherwise specified.

Area	Location	Special Instructions
4th Pumping Station Campground	End of Pumping Station Rd. off Hwy 99, 17 miles north of Burlington.	No spraying of camp pads required.
Big Hollow Recreation Area	18853 152 nd Ave. Sperry, IA 10 miles north of Burlington on Hwy 61, 3 miles west on Pleasant Grove Rd., 1 mile south on 152 nd Ave.	Multiple areas to mow including road shoulders. Maps of primary locations included. All other mowing on 10-14 day cycle, including trails. Also include annual cost of spraying gravel camp pads.
Starr's Cave Park and Preserve	11627 Starr's Cave Rd. Burlington, IA	Map included. This area is a nature preserve; the use of chemicals is prohibited at this site.
Hunt Woods Recreation Area	12412 65 th St. Burlington, IA	Lawn area to be mowed on 10-14 day cycle; trails to be mowed monthly; trail map included.
Welter Recreation Area	Sycamore Loop: 16839 Skunk River Rd. Burlington, IA 3.5 miles west of Hwy 61 on Skunk River Rd. Cottonwood Loop: 18671 Skunk River Road Wever, IA 52658	Two separate loops: Sycamore & Cottonwood. Also include annual cost of spraying gravel camp pads.
Luckenbill Woods	8295 Hawkeye Rd. Mediapolis, IA	Parking area and some trails. Trail map included.
Flint River Trail	Multiple segments from Dodgeville Rd. just south of Big Hollow to junction of Flint Bottom Rd. and N. Prairie Grove Rd.	Monthly mowing of trail shoulders (min. 2' wide), and parking areas at south restroom and Zion School. Trimming/spraying around gates required. Also include annual cost of spraying graveled surface to keep vegetation off actual trail. Maps included.

Appendix B – Contract Mowing, Spraying and Trimming Bid Sheets

10-14 day cycle areas

Area	Cost per cycle (10-14 day)
4 th Pumping Station Campground	\$
Big Hollow Recreation Area (including trails)	\$
Starr's Cave Park and Preserve	\$
Hunt Woods (lawn area; not trails)	\$
Welter Recreation Area	
Sycamore Loop	\$
Cottonwood Loop	\$
Total Per Cycle	\$

Contractors are encouraged to contact DMCC to verify all areas to be mowed.

Monthly cycle areas

See included maps for trail routes and locations. All trail widths are to be mowed as they currently exist, or a minimum of 10' wide if current width is uncertain. Contractors are encouraged to contact DMCC and to make on-site visits to verify all areas to be mowed.

Area	Cost per cycle (monthly)
Hunt Woods Trails	\$
Luckenbill Woods Trails	\$
Flint River Trail	\$
Total for monthly cycle areas	\$

Annual spraying (may require multiple applications)

Area	Cost per year
Flint River Trail (granular surfaces)	\$
Big Hollow RV Campground camp pads	\$
Welter Recreation Area (Sycamore Loop) camp pads	\$
Total	\$

Appendix C – Sample Mowing Contract

PARTIES

This agreement is made between the Conservation Department of Des Moines County, acting through the Des Moines County Conservation Board (County) and _____ (Contractor), for grounds maintenance services to the facilities described herein.

INTENTION OF CONTRACT

The sole purpose of this contract is to establish standards that maintain Des Moines County Conservation's parks, trails and recreation areas in a clean and attractive manner that portrays well kept, professional facilities.

The Contractor shall coordinate all grounds maintenance services activities with the County's designated representatives, which shall be Des Moines County Conservation's Operations Supervisor, and the Executive Director or their designee.

The Contractor, its agents and employees are to be considered by the County as independent Contractors. No employer or employee relationship between the County and the Contractor is to be created by this agreement.

TERMS OF AGREEMENT

This agreement is effective on the date it is last signed below and continues in full force and effect to and including October 31, 2026.

SCOPE OF SERVICES

1. The Contractor shall furnish all materials, labor, equipment and insurance to complete the work detailed in these specifications, or reasonably therein, to the satisfaction of the Department Director.
2. The Contractor shall, without additional expense to the County, be responsible for obtaining and providing to the County copies of any necessary licenses and permits including relevant Iowa Pesticide Applicators License(s) and for complying with any applicable federal, state and municipal laws, codes, and regulations in connection with the performance of the services herein provided.
3. All grass areas as outlined in Appendix A shall be mowed by a hand-pushed, self-propelled walk behind or riding lawn mower on a 10-14 day cycle for lawn areas and trails at Big Hollow, and on a monthly cycle for other trails. If inclement weather does not allow completion of scheduled mowing activities, these cycles may be shifted in consultation with the Operations Supervisor. All areas will be mowed the weeks preceding Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day Weekends.
4. If, after mowing, cut grass accumulates on the mown area, raking, removal or mowing a second time to spread out the dried clippings shall be done prior to leaving the site.

However, no mown grass of unsightly nature shall be left at any time during the term of this contract.

5. All leaves, limbs, litter, and other such debris of an unsightly nature shall be removed from the mowed areas prior to mowing.
6. During the completion of duties specified herein, any contact with the general public shall be conducted courteously.
7. Mowing and maintenance shall be done in order to not interfere with park activities. Mowing shall be accomplished on Monday through Thursday between the hours of 7 a.m. and 8 p.m. or Fridays between the hours of 7 a.m. and 3 p.m. with no mowing permitted on Saturdays, Sundays and Des Moines County holidays without the approval of the DMCC Operations Supervisor.
8. Mowing and trimming equipment will be selected and adjusted in such a way as to prevent scalping/tearing of the turf.
9. All parks shall be line trimmed at the same time the mowing is done. Generally line trimming is required wherever turf meets a vertical surface. Care should be taken to avoid damaging trees or other materials from line trimming. All pavement in and adjacent to the parks shall be left clear of grass clippings after mowing.
10. Prior to commencing any chemical application work under this contract, the Contractor shall submit sample labels and MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) for each chemical that is to be utilized in this contract. The County's designated representative and the Contractor shall agree on each chemical to be utilized, the application rates and application dates prior to applications. The Contractor is to supply a list of chemicals to the County and have it approved by the County's designated representative prior to commencing work. Any substitutions of chemicals will require that they be reviewed by the County prior to being utilized. (NOTE: These submittals do not alleviate the Contractor from any chemical application regulations or procedures as defined by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship or other relevant governing agencies).
11. Leaves shall be mulched with mower blades in the fall. Any excessive leaf build-up not able to be mulched must be removed.
12. The personnel that are performing maintenance activities at any site shall come under the direct responsibility of the Contractor. The personnel shall be competent, experienced and skilled lawn and plant maintenance-oriented people.
13. The Contractor shall at all times enforce strict discipline and good order among Contractor's representative(s). The Contractor shall utilize only personnel who are, in the opinion of the County, satisfactorily and sufficiently skilled to perform the tasks specified in this agreement.

14. The Contractor shall be responsible for initiating, maintaining and supervising safety precautions and programs in connection with the agreement. The Contractor shall take all reasonable action to prevent damage, injury or loss to: (1) all employees on the project and other persons who may be affected thereby, (2) the project and all materials to be incorporated therein; and (3) other property at the site or adjacent thereto.
15. All materials and equipment brought to the site are the responsibility and liability of the Contractor.
16. The Contractor will be responsible for the immediate notification to the Operations Supervisor all damages to property that is caused by the Contractor, Contractor's employees and/or subcontractors.
17. The Contractor shall immediately report to the Operations Supervisor any unusual and/or potentially hazardous conditions which are observed during the performance of work. These reports shall include the specific location and nature of the problem.
18. The Contractor will notify the Operations Supervisor of facilities that require maintenance beyond the scope of the contract, i.e. electrical, plumbing repairs, etc. These reports shall include the specific nature and location of the problem.
19. Contractor will report all violations of state and local regulations to the Operations Supervisor as soon as possible. Reports shall include all obtainable information, i.e. incident, time, names, vehicle description, license plate numbers, etc.

INDEMNITY

The Contractor agrees to indemnify, hold harmless and defend the County, County's officers, agents and employees, from and against all liability for any and all claims, liens, suits, demands, and/or actions for damages, injuries to persons (including death), property damage (including loss of use), and expenses, including court costs and attorney's fees and other reasonable costs occasioned by the Contractor's occupancy or activities conducted in connection with or incidental to this agreement and arising out of or resulting from the intentional acts or negligence of the Contractor, Contractor's officers, agents or employees, including all such causes of action based on common, constitutional, or statutory law, or based upon the negligent or intentional acts or omissions of the Contractor, its officers, agents, employees, or visitors. Nothing herein shall be construed as requiring Contractor to indemnify County for actions or damages caused by the negligence or intentional acts of County.

The Contractor further agrees that it shall at all times exercise reasonable precautions on behalf of, and be solely responsible for, the safety of its officers, agents, employees, visitors, and other persons, as well as their property, while in or on the premises.

It is expressly understood and agreed that the County shall not be liable or responsible for the negligence of the Contractor, its agents, servants, employees and visitors.

INSURANCE

The Contractor will provide and maintain, at its own expense, a current copy of the Contractor's Certificate of Insurance, including liability, worker's compensation, and vehicle insurance. Upon execution of a contract for services, the Contractor further agrees that with respect to the required insurance, the County shall:

1. Be named as an additional insured/or an insured, as its interest may appear; AND
2. Be provided with a waiver of subrogation; AND
3. Be provided with 30 days advance notice, in writing, of cancellation or material change.

OTHER CONDITIONS, RULES AND GUIDELINES

PAYMENT

1. **Call back for improper service.** Unsatisfactory services will be subject to call back for reworking between during hours specified in Scope of Work #7 at no extra charge to County.
2. **Supplementary service.** Unsatisfactory services not corrected to the satisfaction of the County will be subject to correction by calling in another landscaping service selected by the County. The cost of this corrective service will be deducted from the next payment made to the Contractor.
3. **Availability of supervisory personnel.** Contractor will have supervisory personnel available by telephone during regular working hours as outlined above to return calls within two (2) hours from time placed.
4. Unless there is a good faith dispute regarding payment, the Contractor shall submit monthly invoices for work completed, as follows:
 - a. The Contractor shall be paid monthly for the regular services required and only on the months that regular service is performed.
 - b. Monthly billing will reflect the number of cycles completed in that month, multiplied by the price per cycle as reflected on the attached bid form.

CONTACT

For the purposes of this contract, the points of contact for each party shall be as follows.

Contractor's
contact
person:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

County: Chris Lee, Executive Director
(319) 572-1564
leec@dmcounty.com

Tanner Grimm, Operations Supervisor
(319) 572-8057
grimmt@dmcounty.com

Address: Des Moines County Conservation
11627 Starr's Cave Rd.
Burlington, IA 52601

TERMINATION

TERMINATION WITH CAUSE

The contract may be terminated by giving five (5) days written notice to the Contractor.

Reasons for termination include:

1. Failure of the Contractor's employees to appear at work during any period required by the contract.
2. Breach of contract provisions by the Contractor's employees.
3. Failure to compensate promptly for theft or property damage by the Contractor's employees.

TERMINATION WITHOUT CAUSE

Either party to this contract may terminate this contract by giving thirty (30) days written notice to the other party prior to termination.

EXECUTION

CONTRACTOR

This agreement is entered into this _____ day of _____, 2025.

BY: _____
Signature of Contractor

Contractor:

Address: _____

DES MOINES COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD

This agreement is entered into under the authority of a resolution adopted at the regular meeting of the **Des Moines County Conservation Board** on January 7, 2026, as shown in the minutes thereof.

BY: _____