



Des Moines County Conservation

FY22/23 Annual Report

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*Des Moines County Conservation is dedicated
to the sustainability of natural resources through
land stewardship, conservation education, and by
providing quality outdoor recreation opportunities.*

FY22/23 Highlights

Annual Report Highlights

DMCC Celebrates 60 Years of Parks and Conservation

In 2022, we celebrated our 60th year as a county conservation department. In cooperation with the Partners for Conservation Foundation, we celebrated with a banquet at Parkside Brewing Co. in October. There, we drew the winners of the “60 for 60 Raffle” where we gave away 60 items in celebration of the six-decade milestone. The proceeds from the raffle went to support department operations.

So Many New Things...

This fiscal year saw lots of new things for us including a new county website, the new raffle and banquet noted above, new staff at the nature center, and a new fiscal situation on account of a significant budget reduction.

Additionally...

In an effort to secure additional revenue, we proposed a **new lease program for our FEMA Buyout Areas** along the Tama Road corridor. However, after a significant amount of public input against it, the Conservation Board chose to scrap the idea.



CLAY BIRD THROWERS



SCAN THE CODE TO
LEARN ABOUT THIS
FEATURE



WWW.DMCCONSERVATION.COM



We added **a new feature at the shooting range at Big Hollow**. Range members can now shoot at clay birds with shotguns on the 50-yard range using permanently mounted throwers on either side of the range. The ability to shoot shotguns at moving targets was a much-demanded feature that we're thrilled to finally be able to offer.

In a **new development for water quality on Big Hollow Lake**, the Des Moines County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) hired a full-time watershed coordinator after a multi-year effort to get the proper plans and funding in place. Filling the position is Frank Boyer who previously worked for Wapello County Conservation. Frank's job will be to work with landowners in the lake's 4,400-acre watershed and connect them with programs and funding to implement conservation practices that will reduce the amount of nutrients reaching the lake.

And finally, we secured **new funding for continued development at Big Hollow Recreation Area** including donations from Ideal Ready Mix, Witte Foundation, Murray Foundation, Wilson Family Foundation, USG Foundation and several other community donors. These funds were used to leverage grants from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and Fish Habitat program. All told, nearly \$400,000 has been secured to add campsites, build two new sediment ponds, and improve accessibility in the park. We anticipate the projects taking place in the fall of 2023.

Staff Update

In August of 2022, Kelly Rundell left the department to take her passion for outdoor education back to her home area in northern Minnesota. In September, then-Naturalist Marcus Nack was promoted into the Environmental Education Manager position vacated by Kelly's departure. The Naturalist position was left vacant for a while before Jacklyn Goodman was selected for the role, first as part-time, then as full-time Naturalist. Prior to her promotion, Jacklyn had been serving as the department's Americorps/4-H Program Naturalist.

Two field interns joined the team for the summer of 2023. Trenton Gebhardt returned for his third summer with the crew and Grant Swanson joined the team for his first summer at Des Moines County Conservation. He had served previously as a seasonal with Henry County Conservation. Both interns are students at Iowa State University.

Jacklyn Goodman



Trenton Gebhardt



Grant Swanson



Total Number of People Camping by Area



TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE CAMPING IN DES MOINES COUNTY



INCLUDES ALL CAMPGROUNDS PLUS THE OFF-GRID CABIN

Outdoor Recreation

Annual Report July 2022 to June 2023

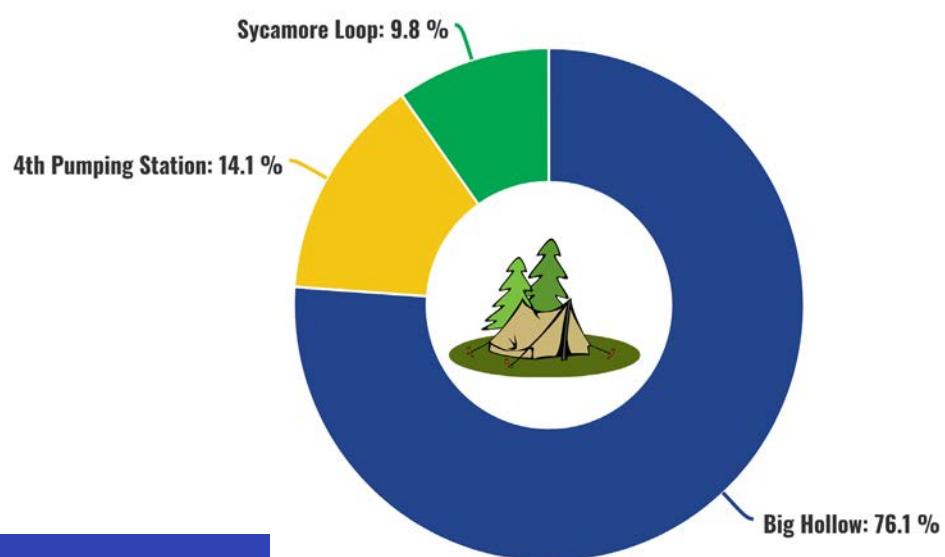
John H. Witte, Jr. Observatory Complex

- Open 44 times for 628 public visitors, 628 hours of Volunteer time.
- Open 62 times: Members viewing and telescope training
- Preparation for Public Viewing: 100 hours of Volunteer time.
- Maintenance on Witte Observatory Complex: 110 Volunteer hours.

Total Volunteer Hours for the John H. Witte Observatory Complex = 826 Hours.

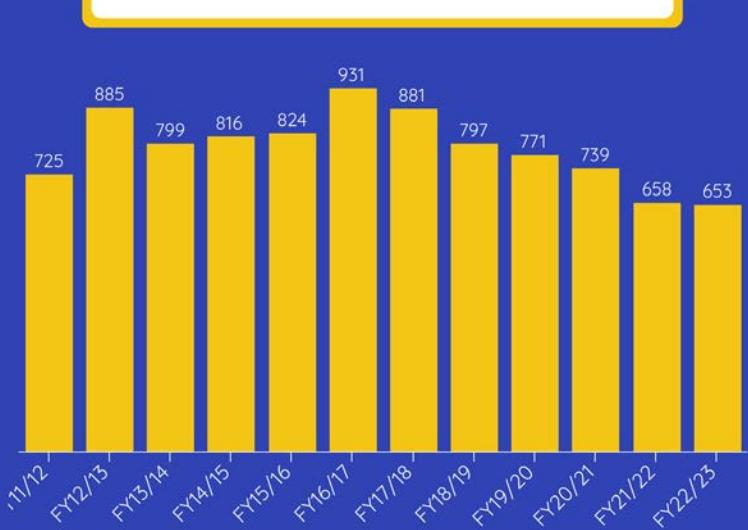
Annual Report July 2022 to June 2023 Flint River Bow Club

- Number of events held: 6
- Number of people that visited the range: 219
- Number of volunteers: 16
- Number of hours volunteered: 218



Shooting Range Membership

*Based on paid renewals



Trails	
Park / Area	Miles of off-road Trails
Big Hollow	10.3
Flint River Trail	8.2
Hunt Woods	2.3
Luckenbill Woods	2.2
North Gorge Trail	1.5
Starr's Cave	3.7
Total: 28.2 miles	

Big Hollow Recreation Area

18853 152nd Ave, Sperry

798 acres



Leopold Recreation Area

11816 Mill Dam Rd, Burlington

235 Acres



Starr's Cave

Nature Center & Preserve

11627 Starr's Cave Rd, Burlington

184 acres



Hickory Bend Conservation Area

16256 155th Ave, Sperry

240 acres



Welter Recreation Area

16839 Skunk River Rd, Burlington

79 acres



Luckenbill Woods

8795 Hawkeye Rd, Mediapolis

76 acres



Hunt Woods

12412 65th St, Burlington

58 acres



Kevin J Gahn Memorial Recreation Area

13724 Washington Rd, Burlington

56 acres, Public access is limited



FEMA Buyout Properties

57 Parcels, No public Access

102 acres

Sullivan Slough River Access

3175 Sullivan Slough Rd, Burlington

22 acres



4th Pumping Plant Recreation Area

2073 Pumping Station Rd, Oakville

17 acres



Chautauqua Roadside Park

10530 Mediapolis Rd, Mediapolis

10 acres

Hawkeye Dolbee River Access

4629 Lake Rd, Oakville

10 acres



Tama Beach River Access

13518 Tama Rd, Burlington

3 acres



Casey Barrow River Access

1867 180th St, Burlington

2 acres



Edgewater Beach River Access

13290 Tama Rd, Burlington

1 acre



Zion School

16495 155th Ave, Sperry

1 acre



North Gorge Trail

9668 Golf Course Rd, Burlington

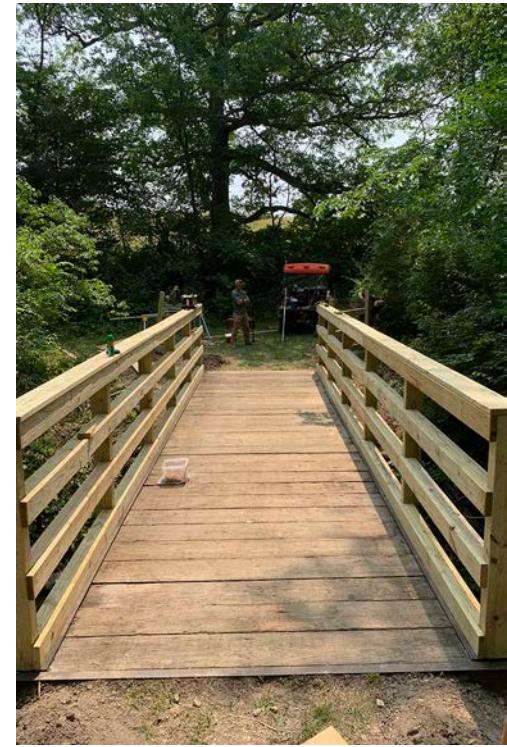
36 acres



Harold and Mildred Linder Conservation Area

3807 170th St, Sperry

105 acres



Legend

- Camping
- Hunting
- Mississippi River Access
- Swimming
- Boat Access
- Picnic Area
- Shelter Houses
- Dump Station
- Restrooms
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Bike Trails
- Electrical Hook-Ups
- Water

Land Stewardship

LAND STEWARDSHIP

More than ever before, Des Moines County Conservation has been striving to manage its forested acres, specifically at Big Hollow but in other parks also. This year, staff and volunteers applied more prescribed fire to forested lands throughout the park system. The goal with these fires is to reduce the prevalence of invasive species, manage for native species such as oaks and hickories, and improve habitat for many species, including the endangered Indiana bat.

Private Land

- 130.8 acres of native grasses / pollinators planted
- 41.6 acres of prairie burned

Public Land

- 12.4 acres of food plots planted
- 17.4 acres of timber stand improvement (TSI)
- 53 acres of prairie burned
- 78.35 acres of timber burned



Big Hollow Water Quality Project:

Big Hollow Lake suffers from excess nutrient loading, specifically phosphorous, resulting in large algae blooms and increased pH. The water is still safe — we test it all summer long to be sure of that. The algae and floating plants just make things like boating, fishing, and swimming a bit less appealing at times. Therefore, the lake has been designated as an “impaired” water body in the state of Iowa.

Frank Boyer, the new Big Hollow Watershed Coordinator was officially hired through the NRCS on March 6, 2023. Since then, Frank has been laying the groundwork for a full roll-out and implementation of actions during FY23/24. Much of the early work included specific education on the watershed, including Watershed Academy training, pond design training and conservation planning and application of practices.

Frank has scheduled and met with several landowner / stakeholders within the watershed to discuss options for best practices to reduce nutrient and sediment introduction into the Big Hollow lake. Thus far, landowner's / stakeholder's have committed to 443 acres of cover crops for Fall planting, with another 80 acres signed up but not yet approved, plus an additional 78 acres interested in strip-tilling.



ENVIRONMENTAL/CONSERVATION EDUCATION PROGRAM

Activities of the EE Program Staff

JULY 2022 – JUNE 2023

Programs, Events, and Services

The Environmental Education department had a productive year, successfully delivering a wide range of public programs and initiatives while fostering valuable partnerships with various organizations. Throughout the year, the department organized several annual public programs, including Eagle Watch, Owl Prowls, Outdoor Youth Jamboree, Summer Celebration, Monarch Watch, Hike a Park series, Earth Day Clean Up, Youth Summer Camps, and hosting Hunters Education. These programs provided educational opportunities, outdoor experiences, and community engagement, promoting environmental awareness and conservation.

In addition to the annual programs, the department also implemented non-annual public programs such as Bike a Trail, Hook N Paddle, and Bat programs. Bike a Trail encouraged community members to explore local trails through guided biking events, while Hook N Paddle engaged participants in fishing and kayaking activities, promoting outdoor recreation and environmental awareness. The Bat programs aimed to dispel misconceptions and educate the public about the importance of bats in ecosystems.

A significant development for the department was the hiring of Jacklyn Goodman as a full-time Naturalist, adding valuable expertise and resources to the team. With her contribution, the department was able to enhance its program offerings and provide more comprehensive environmental education to the community.



The Environmental Education staff also played an active role in delivering in-school programming and organizing field trips, providing students with interactive learning experiences and fostering environmental literacy. Furthermore, the department made education kit rentals available to local schools, enabling teachers to incorporate hands-on environmental education into their classrooms and enhance the learning experience for students.

The department's commitment to building strong relationships with partners at PIECES, Kiwanis, Burlington City Parks, and surrounding conservation groups was evident. These partnerships were fostered and strengthened throughout the year, enhancing collaborative efforts in environmental education and conservation initiatives. By working together, the department and its partners were able to leverage their resources and expertise to create a more significant impact on the community.

Overall, the Environmental Education department's annual summary reflects a successful year of engaging the public, educating youth, and fostering environmental awareness. Through their diverse program offerings, dedicated staff, and collaborative partnerships, the department has made a positive impact on the community's understanding and appreciation of the natural world while promoting a sense of environmental stewardship.

Conservation Education



Group	# Of Programs	Field Trips	School Visits	# Of Students Reached	# Of Animal Ambassador Lessons
Pre-K	18	3	7	296	8
K	6	3	0	126	0
1	25	3	8	431	8
2	37	5	7	701	0
3	22	3	5	510	0
4	11	3	1	203	0
5	16	1	3	246	0
6	5	0	1	58	5
7	1	0	1	10	0
9	1	0	1	16	0
10	5	4	0	52	0
11	3	3	0	28	0
12	1	1	0	7	0
Adult Care	1	0	1	25	0
Afterschool	69	1	68	969	6
Home School	9	9	0	143	1
Public program	39	0	0	851	0
SCNC Camps	54	0	0	162	6
Youth Organizations	7	6	0	124	0
Professional	1	0	1	35	0
Totals	331	45	104	4993	34



Starr's Cave Nature Center Visitation

Type of visitation	FY 11-12	FY 12-13	FY 13-14	FY 14-15	FY 15-16	FY 16-17	FY 17-18	FY 19-20	FY 20-21	FY 22-23
Attending a Program	3,580	3,252	5,706	6,116	5,116	5,000	5,121	1,423	214	4,993
Renting the Building	1,635	1,465	1,850	2,263	2,000	2,000	2,500	1,000	200	
Casual Visitation	2,315	2,532	3,067	5,263	4,263	9,595	8,743	8,344	7,001	8,851
Totals	7,530	7,249	10,623	13,642	11,379	16,595	16,364	10,767	7,415	13,844

Volunteer Recognition

CHEERS TO OUR GREAT VOLUNTEERS!

Every year, we take a little time out of our summer to recognize the volunteers that help us with so many things. We do this at an annual volunteer recognition dinner which we have at Starr's Cave. During the event, we always give awards out to volunteers that went above and beyond. Here are this year's winners.

Volunteer of the Year: Zach and Denissa Cornick

The 2022 Volunteers of the Year are Zach and Denissa Cornick for their work at building and running a robust youth archery program in our community. Starting out as a local club, they recently started the state's first S3DA program and already have athletes that have secured full-ride scholarships to college to shoot competitive archery.



Volunteer Group of the Year: Big Holloween Committee

The 2022 Volunteer Group of the Year award was given to the "Big Holloween" committee led by camp host Collette Groenewald for their work at creating the Big Holloween Event which has become one of the department's largest events of the year.

Environmental Educators of the Year: Aron Kehoe & the BHS Summer School Program



The 2022 Environmental Educator of the Year is Aron Kehoe and the Burlington High School Summer School program. Aron has been instrumental the last couple of years in connecting the BHS Summer School Program students to the outdoors. Regularly, he will contact Chris and invite him along to speak on various outdoor or conservation related topics. Some of the activities have included guided hikes, and trail bicycle riding, among others. It is worth mentioning, many of these students would not have access to these activities without Aron.

Outstanding Service Award: Lisa Louck, Iowa DNR District Forester

The 2022 Outstanding Service Award goes to Lisa Louck, Iowa DNR District Forester and long-time volunteer with many DMCC events and programs including the annual Outdoor Youth Jamboree. Her service to our department goes way beyond her professional capacity as a forester so we wanted to recognize her for that.



Volunteers really are critical to our operations. They help with everything from field work, to youth programs, to department administration. Des Moines County Conservation appreciates all the volunteers that help us throughout the year, and we look forward to being able to recognize everyone in person at next year's volunteer recognition event. You can watch the presentation videos on our YouTube Channel.

Scan this code to watch the videos!



Financial Statement

REAP Fund - Revenue

Account	Revenues
0023-2-22-6110-846067 REAP GRANTS-CONTR-EQUAL SHARE	7,168.00
0023-2-22-6110-846067 REAP GRANTS-PER CAPITA	8,658.00
0023-4-22-6110-600000 INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	160.55
Total - REAP Revenues	15,986.55

Conservation Reserve Fund - Revenue

Account	Revenues
0027-0-22-0300-900000 TRANSFER FROM GENERAL BASIC FUND	454,361.00
0027-1-22-6110-412000 BOAT TITLES	1,515.00
0027-1-22-6110-441021 SHOOTING RANGE CERT-NEW	4,580.00
0027-1-22-6110-441022 SHOOTING RANGE CERT-RENEWALS	15,904.00
0027-1-22-6110-520000 CABIN RENTALS	3,540.00
0027-1-22-6110-520031 CAMP FEES-SYCAMORE LOOP	7,452.00
0027-1-22-6110-520038 CAMP FEES-BIG HOLLOW CREEK	70,901.00
0027-1-22-6110-520039 CAMP FEES-4TH PUMPING STATION	13,135.00
0027-1-22-6110-520041 CAMP FEES-MISC RELATED TO CAMP	14,173.00
0027-1-22-6110-523047 REC FACILITY RENT-SHELTERS	265.00
0027-1-22-6110-847000 MISC REIMB	32,849.78
0027-1-22-6110-847064 MISC REIMB-PLANTING SERVICES	33,326.99
0027-1-22-6120-529000 PROGRAM FEES	12,638.51
0027-1-22-6120-810000 DONATION	11,395.00
Total - Conservation Reserve Fund Revenues	664,641.28

General Supplemental - Expense

Account	Adjusted Appropriation	Expenditures	% Rem.	\$ Balance
0002-22-6100-000-11000 FICA	9,504.00	9,385.48	1.25	118.52
0002-22-6100-000-11100 IPERS	11,728.00	11,747.72	-0.17	-19.72
0002-22-6100-000-11300 GROUP INSURANCE	26,648.64	26,648.64	-1.26	-332.64
0002-22-6110-000-11000 FICA	20,442.00	20,713.93	-1.33	-271.93
0002-22-6110-000-11100 IPERS	24,448.00	24,231.91	.88	216.09
0002-22-6110-000-11300 GROUP INSURANCE	52,632.00	49,399.94	6.14	3,232.06
0002-22-6120-000-11000 FICA	7,643.00	5,644.74	26.14	1,998.26
0002-22-6120-000-11100 IPERS	9,431.00	6,947.24	26.34	2,483.76
0002-22-6120-000-11300 GROUP INSURANCE	26,316	20,172.18	23.35	6,143.82
Total - General Supplemental	188,460.00	174,891.78	7.20	13,568.22

Conservation Reserve Fund - Expense

Account	Adjusted Appropriation	Expenditures	% Rem.	\$ Balance
0027-22-0210-000-42360 CONSULTATIONS & SURVEYS	4,000.00	2,542.50	36.44	1,457.50
0027-22-0220-000-60150 WILDLIFE DIVERSITY GRANT	2,500.00	0.00	100.00	2,500.00
0027-22-0220-000-62010 PARKS/PERM. IMPROVEMENTS	4,320.00	4,320.00	0.00	0.00
0027-22-0220-000-62810 BHCRA/PERM. IMPROVEMENTS	3,600.00	3,100.00	13.89	500.00
0027-22-0300-000-81400 OTHER BUDGETARY FUNDS	0.00	1,400.28	0.00	-1,400.28
0027-22-6100-000-10010 ADMINISTRATORS/EXEC DIRECTOR	73,825.00	73,544.09	0.38	280.91
0027-22-6100-000-10050 CORR OFF/P RNGR/OFC MGR/CIV ATTY	46,832.00	47,321.86	-1.05	-489.86
0027-22-6100-000-10200 LONGEVITY	3,580.00	3,580.00	0.00	0.00
0027-22-6100-000-26000 OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,000.00	625.00	37.50	375.00
0027-22-6100-000-26200 DATA PROCESSING SUPPLIES	1,500.00	2,739.72	-82.65	-1,239.72
0027-22-6100-000-29400 WEARING APPAREL & UNIFORMS	1,600.00	1,389.52	13.16	210.48
0027-22-6100-000-40000 OFC PUBLICATIONS & LEGAL NOTICES	600.00	181.98	69.67	418.02
0027-22-6100-000-41200 POSTAGE & MAILING	200.00	28.64	85.68	171.36
0027-22-6100-000-41400 TELECOMMUNICATIONS SRVS	9,000.00	9,010.15	-0.11	-10.15
0027-22-6100-000-42210 SCHOOL OF INSTRUCTION	6,000.00	6,996.12	-16.60	-996.12
0027-22-6100-000-44400 OFC & DATA P EQUIP REPR/MAINT	500.00	0.00	100.00	500.00
0027-22-6100-000-48000 DUES & MEMBERSHIPS	2,000.00	4,477.06	-123.85	-2,477.06
0027-22-6110-000-10020 DEPUTIES/ASSTS/INVESTI/FOREMAN	62,151.00	62,491.65	-0.55	-340.65
0027-22-6110-000-10030 NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGER	43,041.00	42,775.28	0.62	265.72
0027-22-6110-000-10050 CORR OFF/P RNGR/CIV ATTY	48,243.00	48,005.87	0.49	237.13
0027-22-6110-000-10070 PARK TECHNICIANS	48,245.00	49,993.53	-3.62	-1,748.53
0027-22-6110-000-10100 TEMPORARY & PART TIME	64,232.00	60,685.50	5.52	3,546.50
0027-22-6110-000-10200 LONGEVITY	5,810.00	6,012.60	-3.49	-202.60
0027-22-6110-000-20200 CHEMICALS & GASES/HERBICIDES	200.00	950.22	-375.11	-750.22
0027-22-6110-000-20300 FERTILIZER & SEED	200.00	337.55	-68.78	-137.55
0027-22-6110-000-21210 PARKS - ROCK & SAND	4,000.00	5,682.80	-42.07	-1,682.80
0027-22-6110-000-21400 TRAFFIC & ST SIGN MATERIALS	800.00	468.13	39.23	313.87
0027-22-6110-000-21910 PARKS - ALL OTHER EXPENSES	35,576.00	36,906.94	-3.74	-1,330.94
0027-22-6110-000-23210 PARKS - CUSTODIAL	2,500.00	3,226.15	-29.05	-726.15
0027-22-6110-000-25000 FUELS	15,000.00	18,092.42	-20.62	-3,092.42
0027-22-6110-000-25100 LUBRICANTS	1,000.00	656.30	34.37	343.70
0027-22-6110-000-29000 MINOR EQUIPMENT & HAND TOOLS	200.00	1,859.60	-1,659.60	-829.80
0027-22-6110-000-29300 SAFETY & PROTECTIVE SUPPLIES	1,000.00	917.68	8.23	82.32
0027-22-6110-000-29302 LAW ENFORCEMENT SUPPLIES	500.00	49.22	90.16	450.78
0027-22-6110-000-42212 LAW ENFORCEMENT SCHOOL OF INST	250.00	70.00	72.00	180.00
0027-22-6110-000-43000 NATURAL & LP GAS	7,200.00	4,672.07	35.11	2,527.93
0027-22-6110-000-43110 PARKS - ELECTRICITY	24,200.00	23,521.56	2.80	678.44

Conservation Reserve Fund - Expense - Continued

Account	Adjusted Appropriation	Expenditures	% Rem.	\$ Balance
0027-22-6110-000-43200 WATER USE	4,290.00	3,962.74	7.63	327.26
0027-22-6110-000-44000 MOTOR VEH EQUIP REPAIR/MAINT	6,500.00	3,603.06	44.57	2,896.94
0027-22-6110-000-44300 OPER & CONSTR EQUIP REPAIR/MAINT	10,500.00	13,430.70	-27.91	-2,930.70
0027-22-6110-000-63700 SHOP EQUIPMENT	0.00	7,322.60	0	-7,322.60
0027-22-6120-000-10070 NATURALIST/PARK TECH/RD BIOLGIS	51,394.00	58,062.06	-12.97	-6,668.06
0027-22-6120-000-10090 OTHER/LT	46,832.00	23,302.32	50.24	23,529.68
0027-22-6120-000-10100 TEMPORARY & PART TIME	8,042.00	8,042.00	0.00	0.00
0027-22-6120-000-10200 LONGEVITY	1,680.00	840.00	50.00	840.00
0027-22-6120-000-29700 EE PROGRAM SUPPLIES	6,000.00	2,904.32	51.59	3,095.68
0027-22-6120-000-42940 MARKETING SERVICES	1,500.00	2,158.33	-43.89	-658.33
Total - CONSERVATION RESERVE FUND EXPENSE	685,463.00	668,911.07	2.44	16,731.93



Staff Directory

Administration



Chris Lee
Executive Director

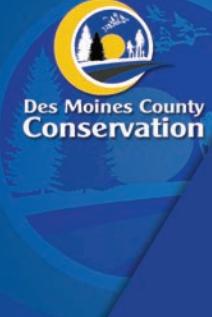
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Jacklyn Goodman
Naturalist

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Board Member Directory

Board Member Directory

Position	Name	Term Expires
Chair	Matthew Haas	12/31/2023
Vice-Chair	Cathy Ziglar	12/31/2024
Secretary / Treasurer	James Garnjobst	12/31/2026
Member	Ron Helling	12/31/2027
Member	Julie Solinski	12/31/2025

Conservation Board Meetings

- July 6, 2022 RM
- August 4, 2022 RM
- August 12, 2022 SM
- September 1, 2021 RM
- October 6, 2022 RM
- November 1, 2022 WS
- November 2, 2022 RM
- December 7, 2022 RM
- January 4, 2023 RM
- January 17, 2023 WS
- February 1, 2023 RM
- March 1, 2023 RM
- March 22, 2023 WS
- April 5, 2023 RM
- May 3, 2022 RM
- June 7, 2023 RM

RM - Regular Meeting

SM - Special Meeting

WS - Work Session





Des Moines County Conservation