

IOWA'S COUNTY CONSERVATION SYSTEM JANUARY

NEWSLETTER 2024

VOLUME 65. ISSUE 7.

WINTERFEST 2024

IACCBCE continues to push boundaries with Winterfest 2024. An Ice storm Monday night had the Winterfest committee members worried the turnout might be low, but as the temperatures rose, people kept pouring in for the 52nd Winterfest in our history.

It seems like every year, we are talking about record numbers of participants, and this year was no different. Registrations for the event have continued to grow each year since the move from Waterloo to the Coralville location. This year, the number of participants finally required the committee to move the colligate session and open up more room for the main banquet hall.

Next year, the committee is looking at moving the keynote presentations and dining into the larger exhibit hall to better accommodate the ever-growing crowd. This would also allow several of the rooms currently being used for concurrent sessions to expand their capacity. Many of the most popular sessions were standing-room only this year.

You would think eventually, this event would stop growing, but why should it? With 40 + presentations, high-quality keynote speakers, excellent facilities, great food, unlimited networking with peers, vendors, and partners, along with two nights of free entertainment, why would you miss it?

This is the best training event for conservation employees in the state, and we owe a big thanks to the IACCBCE Winterfest planning committee, President Matt Morris, Vice President Curt Cable, and Secretary Treasure Annette Whittrock for all the extra time they volunteer to help make this thing happen. Also, thanks to all the sponsors, this event could not have happened without your support. Thanks to JEO Engineering for spoiling us by hosting a social at Back Pocket on Tuesday night!

DATES

February 7th
District 2 Meeting &
Fall Conf. Planning
Chickasaw County

February 14th
ICCS Board Meeting
Zoom

March 7th
District 5 Meeting
Appanoose County

March 13th County
Day at the Capitol

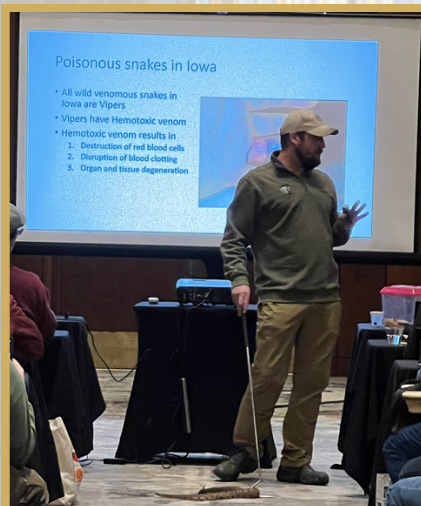
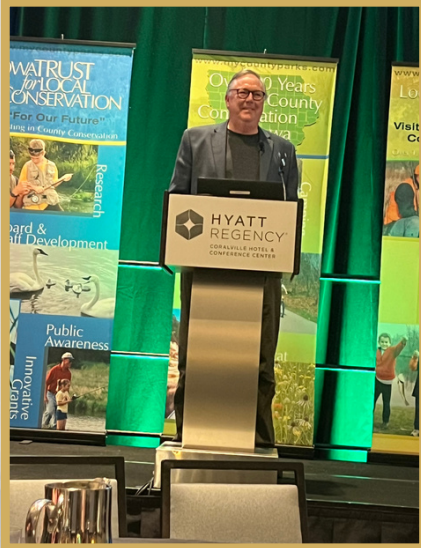
March 13th-15th
ISAC Spring
Conference

April 3rd-5th
IAN Council Bluffs

September 17th-19th
ICCS Fall Conference
Pivo Brewery, Kalmar



WINTERFEST 2024



WINTERFEST 2024
January 23-25 - Coralville
mycountyparks.com

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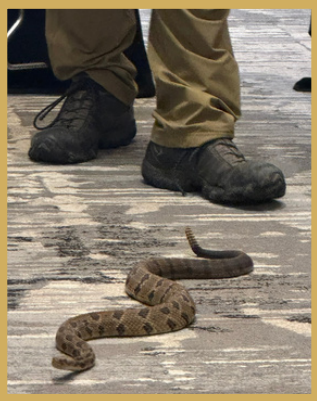
SNYDER & ASSOCIATES **SHIVEHATTERY ARCHITECTURE+ENGINEERING**

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RED LION **ISG** **MGA** **MARTIN GARDNER ARCHITECTURE** **FELSBERG HOLT & ULLEVIG** **EOB** **LT LEON** **MSA**



Final Registrations
17 Sponsors
98 College Students
32 Vendors
367 Employees
514 Total Attendees



REAP CONGRESS

Winter weather hit hard on the week of January 12th, causing the Congress to postpone until the following week. The Congress persisted with just 55 of the original 90 Delegates representing 431 Iowans that attended this year's assemblies. Nonetheless, the delegates did their job of making recommendations to the Governor and Iowa legislature and thanking them for their ongoing support of the REAP program.

Several important motions were approved by the Congress that were critical to the REAP program's future success. The first motion was to eliminate the Sunset Date and make REAP a permanent program. Next, several motions were made to fully fund REAP at 20 million and even to increase the authorization to 40 or 50 million to adjust for inflation. The Congress also recommended fully funding REAP from the 1.8 billion dollar state surplus this year. There is no good reason for the legislature not to fully fund this program to the original amount. The most crucial motion was to fund the Natural Resource and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, which would fully fund REAP and many other conservation programs in perpetuity!

A great showing of County Conservation staff and board members were present; thanks to everyone who participated in REAP Assemblies and Congress this year and Rod Marlatt of Fayette CCB for serving as Chairman of the Congress. We hope your efforts and the recommendations of the Congress will inform the Governor and legislature and that REAP will receive the full funding that is available.



DISTRICT I MEETING

Polk County Conservation hosted District 1 on January 18th at the Sleepy Hollow Sports Park in Des Moines. Director Rich Leopold and Deputy Director Kami Rankin gave updates on what is going on in Polk and, specifically, the future of the sports park. Eventually, the park will have a new lodge and one-of-a-kind winter sports facilities. The big attraction will be an all-season surface called Snow Flex, which will allow users to tube, ski, and snowboard year-round! Not to mention, this is the world's largest surface of its kind!

Representatives from Shive Hattery gave a presentation about the renovation of Easter Lake Park and detailed the process of making it one of the most inclusive parks in the Country. The park is undoubtedly one of a kind and offers an incredible number of accessible features for all to enjoy. After the presentation and lunch from Smokey D's BBQ, the attendees were able to tour the sports park as well as the Athene North Shore Recreation Area. Thanks for hosting PCCB!



Photo courtesy of Snowflex.

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**IOWA COUNTY CONSERVATION
SYSTEM FALL CONFERENCE**

Hotel Booking Information

The 2024 ICCS conference will be
hosted at PIVO Brewery in
Calmar, IA by District II

SEPTEMBER 17TH - 19TH 2024

Our Wild Lodging Options:

Country Inn and Suites

2042 IA-9, Decorah, IA 52101
Call 563-387-9011 to book
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using group name ICCS2024
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<https://tinyurl.com/yr36njzs>
\$129 King, \$139 Dbl Queen

Hotel Winneshiek

104 E Water St, Decorah, IA 52101
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Iowa's County Conservation System



GIFT TO IOWA RECOGNITION EVENT

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now accepting names of individuals to be recognized at the 16th Annual Gift to Iowa recognition event. The event will be held at the Capitol Building in Des Moines to honor landowners who have generously donated land, land value, or a conservation easement in 2023 in order to place permanent conservation protections on their natural land. Do you know any landowners that would fit this description that you would like to recognize at this year's event?

Nominated landowners will be invited to attend a reception at the Capitol on **March 14th**. Landowners will have the opportunity to meet the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Director of the Iowa DNR and receive a certificate of appreciation from the Governor. If you are interested in nominating a landowner, please return the registry form(s) by **Friday, February 7th**, to make sure your landowner(s) are invited to the recognition ceremony and included in publicity. We encourage you to attend the reception as well to support your landowner(s). If you have any questions about this process or the event, please feel free to contact Whitney Schuhardt. whitney.schuhardt@dnr.iowa.gov

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2024 Iowa Weed Commissioners' Association New Weed Commissioners' Meeting- March 13th, 4-5 pm Invasive Species Conference March 14th & 15th Prairie Meadows Event Center; Altoona, IA

- Register now and take advantage of an excellent opportunity to network and refresh your knowledge with other natural resource personnel and weed commissioners!
- New Weed Commissioner's Meeting Wednesday, March 13th at 4:00 P.M., understand what is expected of a county weed commissioner and the handling of day-to-day operations.
- There will be lots of great information presented on topics such as weed ID, weed control, weed law, herbicide application, PPE, and herbicide storage.
- Hotel Reservations must be made by February 12th, 2024, at Prairie Meadows.
- Alternative lodging- Super 8, Comfort Inn, My Place Hotel, LaQuinta, Best Western, Motel 6 and Quality Inn & Suites.
- Registration and Payment must be received by February 25th. After this date, the price will increase.
- We are going paperless this year, so please visit <http://iowaweedcommissioners.org/>

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LWCF CHANGES FOR 2024

Due to Governor Reynold's Executive Order 10, the Iowa DNR is working through an administrative rule review of the chapter that governs the administration of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The proposed changes include removing scoring criteria from the rule, removing assistance caps based on population, and increasing the maximum award amount to \$250,000 per project. Due to these expected changes that would greatly benefit our applicants, the Iowa DNR is modifying the 2024 LWCF local grant cycle.

LWCF grant applications are normally due annually on March 15. LWCF applications for the 2024 cycle will be due to the DNR by June 15, 2024. Application materials will be posted on the DNR's LWCF website in March.

<https://www.iowadnr.gov/about-dnr/grants-other-funding/land-water-conservation-fund>

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Iowa County - Executive Director | 8. Wapello County - Museum Staff |
| 2. Louisa County - Executive Director | 9. Van Buren - Office/Building Manager |
| 3. Woodbury County - Resource Technician | 10. Emmet County- Executive Director |
| 4. Jasper County - Tech/ Park Officer | 11. Decatur County - Conservation Technician |
| 5. Howard County- Park Ranger | 12. Dallas County - Naturalist |
| 6. Crawford County-Nature Center Assistant | 13. Clinton County - Park Ranger |
| 7. Polk County - Park Officer | |

65 + SEASONAL POSITIONS ON WEBSITE!!

<https://www.mycountyparks.com/Jobs/Default.aspx>