

## CHAPTER 455A

### DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Referred to in §455H.303

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### SUBCHAPTER I

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### 455A.1 Definitions.

As used in [this chapter](#) unless the context otherwise requires:

1. “*Department*” means the department of natural resources created under [section 455A.2](#).
2. “*Director*” means the director of the department of natural resources.
3. “*Environmental protection commission*” means the environmental protection commission created under [section 455A.6](#).
4. “*Fund*” means the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund created under [section 455A.18](#).
5. “*Natural resource commission*” means the natural resource commission created under [section 455A.5](#).

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1801; 89 Acts, ch 236, §1; 2015 Acts, ch 103, §42](#)

#### 455A.2 Department of natural resources.

A department of natural resources is created, which has the primary responsibility for state parks and forests, protecting the environment, and managing fish, wildlife, and land and water resources in this state.

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1802; 2009 Acts, ch 108, §17, 41](#)

Referred to in [§7E.5, 16.131A, 455A.1, 455B.101, 455C.1, 455D.1, 455E.2, 455H.103, 455I.2, 455K.2, 456A.1, 456B.1, 458A.2, 459.102, 461A.1, 464A.1A, 465C.1, 483A.1A, 484C.1](#)

**455A.3 Director — qualifications.**

The chief administrative officer of the department is the director who shall be appointed by the governor, subject to confirmation of the senate, and serve at the governor's pleasure. The governor shall make the appointment based on the appointee's training, experience, and capabilities. The director shall be knowledgeable in the general field of natural resource management and environmental protection. The salary of the director shall be fixed by the governor.

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1803; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §2801, 2802](#)

Referred to in [§455H.103](#)

Confirmation, see [§2.32](#)

Section amended

**455A.4 General powers and duties of the director.**

1. Except as otherwise provided by law and subject to rules adopted by the natural resource commission and the environmental protection commission, the director shall:

- a. Plan, direct, coordinate, and execute the functions vested in the department.
- b. Provide overall supervision, direction, and coordination of functions to be administered by the administrators under [chapters 321G, 321I, 455B, 455C, 456A, 456B, 457A, 458A, 459, 459A, 459B, 461A, 462A, 462B, 464A, 465C, 473, 481A, 481B, 483A, 484A, and 484B](#).
- c. Annually compile a comprehensive program budget which reflects all fiscal matters related to the operation of the department and each program, subprogram, and activity in the department in accordance with [section 8.23](#).
- d. Submit a biennial or an annual report to the governor and the general assembly, in accordance with [chapter 7A](#).
- e. Employ personnel as necessary to carry out the functions vested in the department consistent with [chapter 8A, subchapter IV](#), unless the positions are exempt from that subchapter.
- f. Devote full time to the duties of the director's office.
- g. Not be a candidate for nor hold any other public office or trust, nor be a member of a political committee.
- h. Maintain an office at the state capitol complex, which is open at all reasonable times for the conduct of public business.
- i. Adopt rules in accordance with [chapter 17A](#) as necessary or desirable for the organization or reorganization of the department.
- j. In the administration of programs relating to water quality improvement and watershed improvements, cooperate with the department of agriculture and land stewardship in order to maximize the receipt of federal funds.

2. All powers and duties vested in the director may be delegated by the director to an employee of the department, but the director retains the responsibility for an employee's acts within the scope of the delegation.

3. The director and other officers and employees of the department are entitled to receive, in addition to salary, their actual and necessary travel and related expenses incurred in the performance of official business.

4. The director shall obtain an adequate public employees fidelity bond to cover those officers and employees of the department accountable for property or funds of this state.

5. The department may accept payment of any fees, interest, penalties, subscriptions, or other payments due or collected by the department, or any portion of such payments, by credit card. The department may adjust the amount of the payment to reflect the costs of processing the payment as determined by the treasurer of state and the payment by credit card shall include, in addition to all other charges, any discount charged by the credit card issuer.

6. The department is, except as otherwise provided by law, empowered to make and execute agreements, contracts, grants, and other instruments necessary to carry out the department's obligations. The department's obligations shall not be expanded or enlarged by this authority beyond the powers specifically delegated to or conferred upon the department.

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1804; 90 Acts, ch 1105, §1; 90 Acts, ch 1108, §2; 91 Acts, ch 154, §1; 92 Acts, ch 1160, §22; 2003 Acts, ch 145, §262; 2004 Acts, ch 1132, §89; 2005 Acts, ch 137, §1;](#)

2006 Acts, ch 1010, §117; 2007 Acts, ch 211, §37; 2009 Acts, ch 155, §19, 34; 2018 Acts, ch 1023, §1; 2018 Acts, ch 1044, §1

Referred to in §455B.298, 455E.11, 465A.4

For requirement to maintain an inventory of all land owned or managed by the department of natural resources, see 2022 Acts, ch 1074/2022 Acts, ch 1074

For requirements related to conducting a deer population study every three years, see 2022 Acts, ch 1137, §10

#### **455A.5 Natural resource commission — appointment and duties.**

1. A natural resource commission is created, which consists of seven members appointed by the governor for staggered terms of six years beginning and ending as provided in [section 69.19](#). The appointees are subject to senate confirmation. The members shall be citizens of the state who have a substantial knowledge of the subjects embraced by [chapter 456A](#). The appointments shall be based upon the training, experience, and capacity of the appointees, and not based upon political considerations, other than as provided in [section 69.16](#). A member of the commission shall not hold any other state or federal office.

2. A vacancy on the commission shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

3. The members of the commission shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel and related expenses incurred in the discharge of official duties. Each member of the commission may also be eligible to receive compensation as provided in [section 7E.6](#).

4. The commission shall hold an organizational meeting within thirty days of the beginning of a new regular term for one or more of its members. The commission shall organize by electing a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and any other officers deemed necessary or desirable. The commission shall meet at least quarterly throughout the year.

5. A majority of the members of the commission is a quorum, and a majority of a quorum may act in any matter within the jurisdiction of the commission, unless a more restrictive rule is adopted by the commission.

6. Except as otherwise provided by law, the commission shall:

a. Establish policy and adopt rules, pursuant to [chapter 17A](#), necessary to provide for the effective administration of [chapter 321G](#), [321I](#), [456A](#), [456B](#), [457A](#), [461A](#), [462A](#), [462B](#), [464A](#), [465C](#), [481A](#), [481B](#), [483A](#), [484A](#), or [484B](#).

b. Hear appeals in contested cases pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) on matters relating to actions taken by the director under [chapter 321G](#), [321I](#), [456A](#), [456B](#), [457A](#), [461A](#), [462A](#), [462B](#), [464A](#), [465C](#), [481A](#), [481B](#), [483A](#), [484A](#), or [484B](#).

c. Approve or disapprove proposals for the acquisition or disposal of state lands and waters relating to state parks, recreational facilities, and wildlife programs, submitted by the director.

d. Approve the budget request prepared by the director for the programs authorized by [chapters 321G](#), [321I](#), [456A](#), [456B](#), [457A](#), [461A](#), [462A](#), [462B](#), [464A](#), [481A](#), [481B](#), [483A](#), [484A](#), and [484B](#). The commission may increase, decrease, or strike any item within the department budget request for the specified programs before granting approval.

e. Adopt, by rule, a schedule of fees for permits, including conditional permits, and a schedule of fees for administration of the permits. The fees shall be collected by the department and used to offset costs incurred in administering a program for which the issuance of the permit is made or under which enforcement is carried out. In determining the fee schedule, the commission shall consider all of the following:

(1) The reasonable costs associated with reviewing applications, issuing permits, and monitoring compliance with the terms of issued permits.

(2) The relative benefits to the applicant and to the public of a permit review, permit issuance, and monitoring compliance with the terms of the permit.

(3) The typical costs associated with a type of project or activity for which a permit is required. However, a fee shall not exceed the actual costs incurred by the department.

f. Approve or disapprove proposals involving the dredging or renovation of lakes; the acquisition, development, and maintenance of boating facilities; and the acquisition, development, and maintenance of recreational facilities associated with recreational boating.

7. For purposes of adopting rules, the commission shall define and categorize firearms

in a manner fully consistent with the definitions established in 18 U.S.C. §921 and 27 C.F.R. §478.11.

86 Acts, ch 1245, §1805; 89 Acts, ch 72, §1; 91 Acts, ch 268, §230; 92 Acts, ch 1160, §23; 92 Acts, ch 1239, §42; 2004 Acts, ch 1132, §90; 2020 Acts, ch 1071, §1

Referred to in §455A.1, 461.11, 461A.1, 483A.1A  
Confirmation, see §2.32

#### **455A.6 Environmental protection commission — appointment and duties.**

1. An environmental protection commission is created, which consists of nine members appointed by the governor for staggered terms of four years beginning and ending as provided in [section 69.19](#). Commission appointees are subject to senate confirmation. The members shall be electors of the state and have knowledge of the subjects embraced in [chapters 455B](#) and [459, subchapters II and III](#). The appointments shall be based upon the training, experience, and capacity of the appointees, and not based upon political considerations, other than as provided in [section 69.16](#). The membership of the commission shall be as follows:

- a. Three members actively engaged in livestock and grain farming.
- b. A member actively engaged in the business of finance or commerce.
- c. A member actively engaged in the management of a manufacturing company.
- d. Four members who are electors of the state.

2. A vacancy on the commission shall be filled for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment was made.

3. The members of the commission shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary travel and related expenses incurred in the discharge of official duties. Each member of the commission may also be eligible to receive compensation as provided in [section 7E.6](#).

4. The commission shall hold an organizational meeting within thirty days of the beginning of a new regular term for one or more of its members. The commission shall organize by electing a chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, and any other officers deemed necessary or desirable. The commission shall meet at least quarterly throughout the year.

5. A majority of the members of the commission is a quorum, and a majority of a quorum may act in any matter within the jurisdiction of the commission, unless a more restrictive rule is adopted by the commission.

6. Except as otherwise provided by law, the commission shall:

a. Establish policy for the department and adopt rules, pursuant to [chapter 17A](#), necessary to provide for the effective administration of [chapter 455B](#), [455C](#), or [459](#).

b. Hear appeals in contested cases pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) on matters relating to actions taken by the director under [chapter 455C](#), [458A](#), [464B](#), or [473](#).

c. Approve or disapprove the issuance of hazardous waste disposal site licenses under [chapter 455B](#).

d. Approve the budget request prepared by the director for the programs authorized by [chapters 455B](#), [455C](#), [455E](#), [455F](#), [455H](#), and [459, subchapters II and III](#). The commission shall approve the budget request prepared by the director for programs subject to the rulemaking authority of the commission. The commission may increase, decrease, or strike any item within the department budget request for the specified programs before granting approval.

86 Acts, ch 1245, §1806; 87 Acts, ch 115, §59; 89 Acts, ch 72, §2; 89 Acts, ch 296, §69; 90 Acts, ch 1108, §3; 91 Acts, ch 268, §231; 92 Acts, ch 1239, §43; 2002 Acts, ch 1162, §41

Referred to in §16.131A, 307.21, 455A.1, 455B.101, 455B.103, 455E.2, 455H.103, 459.102, 459A.102, 484C.1  
Confirmation, see §2.32

#### **455A.7 Creation of divisions, bureaus, and other administrative entities — deputy director — administrators.**

1. The director may establish administrative divisions, bureaus, or other administrative entities within the department in order to most efficiently and effectively carry out the department's responsibilities. The creation or modification of departmental divisions, bureaus, or other administrative entities shall be implemented only after consultation with the natural resource commission or the environmental protection commission as applicable.

2. The director shall appoint a deputy director who shall be in charge of the department

in the absence of the director. The appointment shall be based on the appointee's training, experience, and capabilities.

3. The director shall appoint an administrator for each division created under [subsection 1](#). The director shall make the appointment based on the appointee's training, experience, and capabilities. Each administrator has the responsibility of administering the programs assigned the division under [subsection 1](#) and other programs assigned by the director. Each administrator shall carry out the duties and responsibilities of office under the general direction and supervision of the director.

[86 Acts, ch 1245, §1807; 91 Acts, ch 268, §233; 92 Acts, ch 1239, §21, 44, 45; 2000 Acts, ch 1160, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 7, §3; 2002 Acts, ch 1162, §42](#)

**455A.8 and 455A.8A** Repealed by 2018 Acts, ch 1044, §3.

**455A.9 Fees — publications.**

1. The department may establish a schedule of fees for subscriptions to publications produced by the department, including periodicals. However, [this section](#) does not apply to application forms and materials intended for general distribution which explain departmental programs or duties.

2. Fees shall be based on the amount required to recover the reasonable costs of producing a publication, including costs relating to preparing, printing, publishing, and distributing the publication.

[91 Acts, ch 268, §235; 2018 Acts, ch 1026, §141](#)

**455A.10 State fish and game protection fund — capital projects and contingencies.**

Funds remaining in the state fish and game protection fund during a fiscal year which are not specifically appropriated by the general assembly are appropriated and may be used for capital projects and contingencies under the jurisdiction of the department relating to fish and wildlife arising during the fiscal year. A contingency shall not include any purpose or project which was presented to the general assembly by way of a bill or a proposed bill and which failed to be enacted into law. For the purpose of [this section](#), a necessity of additional operating funds may be construed as a contingency. Before any of the funds authorized to be expended by [this section](#) are allocated for contingencies, it shall be determined by the executive council that a contingency exists and that the contingency was not existent while the general assembly was in session and that the proposed allocation shall be for the best interests of the state. If a contingency arises or could reasonably be foreseen during the time the general assembly is in session, expenditures for the contingency must be authorized by the general assembly.

[91 Acts, ch 268, §610; 2002 Acts, ch 1162, §44](#)

**455A.11 Preferences in temporary employment.**

In its employment of persons in temporary positions in conservation and outdoor recreation, the department of natural resources shall give preference to persons meeting eligibility requirements for the green thumb program and to persons working toward an advanced education in natural resources and conservation.

[96 Acts, ch 1214, §32; 98 Acts, ch 1100, §64](#)

**455A.12 Gift certificates for special privilege fees at state parks and recreation areas.** Repealed by 2018 Acts, ch 1129, §2.

**455A.13 State nurseries.**

1. The department of natural resources shall annually review market conditions and the expenditures and revenues of the state forest nurseries, and establish minimum ordering quantities and a range of prices for plant material grown at the state forest nurseries to cover all expenses related to the growing of the plants. The department is authorized to sell plant material in other states. The department is authorized to sell barerooted plants to private nurseries for resale.

2. The department shall develop programs to encourage the wise management and preservation of existing woodlands and shall continue its efforts to encourage forestation and reforestation on private and public lands in the state.

3. The department shall encourage a cooperative relationship between the state forest nurseries and private nurseries in the state in order to achieve these goals.

97 Acts, ch 213, §27; 2010 Acts, ch 1193, §126; 2017 Acts, ch 55, §1

#### **455A.14 Camping and rental facilities and other privileges — fees.**

1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the department is authorized to establish fees for camping and use of rental facilities and other special privileges at state parks and recreation areas under the jurisdiction of the department.

2. The fees established by the department pursuant to [this section](#) shall be in such amounts as may be determined by the department to be reasonably competitive with fees established in other public parks or recreation areas that provide the same or similar privileges and are located within sixty miles of the perimeter of the state park or recreation area for which the department is establishing fees. Such fees may be increased, reduced, or waived by the department on a statewide basis or on the basis of an individual state park or recreation area for special promotional events or efforts or on the basis of special seasonal or holiday rates.

3. Fees established pursuant to [this section](#) shall be considered a specification of prices to be charged for goods or services as provided in [section 17A.2, subsection 11](#), paragraph “g”.

4. The department shall adopt rules pursuant to [chapter 17A](#) for the purpose of setting forth the methodology to be used in establishing fees pursuant to [this section](#).

5. The department shall prepare an annual report reviewing the fees established pursuant to [this section](#). The report shall include information about fees and occupancy rates at each camping and rental facility in the state under the jurisdiction of the department, special promotional events or holiday rates for which fees were increased, reduced, or waived at those camping and rental facilities, and any recommendations for changes in fees or rules adopted pursuant to [this section](#). The report shall be submitted to the senate standing committee on natural resources and environment and the house standing committee on natural resources by December 31 of each year.

2018 Acts, ch 1129, §1; 2019 Acts, ch 24, §58

#### **455A.14A Lake Manawa state park user fee pilot program.**

1. A lake Manawa state park user fee pilot program is established within the department. Notwithstanding [section 461A.35A](#), the department shall develop and administer the pilot program at lake Manawa state park as follows:

a. The department shall charge an entrance fee of five dollars per vehicle if the vehicle is operated by a nonresident of the state, which the nonresident operator shall pay.

b. A nonresident may pay a fee of forty dollars for a pass that grants daily entrance into the state park for the entire calendar year during which the pass was purchased. The nonresident may purchase a second pass for use for a different vehicle for the calendar year for fifteen dollars.

c. The department has the authority to charge separate fees to a resident and nonresident for park amenities. The department may also identify situations in which a reservation fee or other access fee will be accepted in lieu of the entrance fee established by [this section](#) or when the entrance fee established by [this section](#) will not be charged.

d. The department shall determine the most effective and efficient way to collect fees and provide proof of payment.

2. [This section](#) is repealed December 31, 2025.

2019 Acts, ch 95, §1; 2020 Acts, ch 1074, §55, 93; 2022 Acts, ch 1101, §1, 2, 6, 7

Referred to in [§456A.14](#), [805.8C\(14\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8C, subsection 14](#)

#### **455A.14B Waubonsie state park user fee pilot program.**

1. A Waubonsie state park user fee pilot program is established within the department. Notwithstanding [section 461A.35A](#), the department shall develop and administer the pilot program at Waubonsie state park as follows:

a. The department shall charge an entrance fee of five dollars per vehicle if the vehicle is operated by a nonresident of the state, which the nonresident operator shall pay.

b. A nonresident may pay a fee of forty dollars for a pass that grants daily entrance into the state park for the entire calendar year during which the pass was purchased. The nonresident may purchase a second pass for use for a different vehicle for the calendar year for fifteen dollars.

c. The department has the authority to charge separate fees to a resident and nonresident for park amenities. The department may also identify situations in which a reservation fee or other access fee will be accepted in lieu of the entrance fee established by [this section](#) or when the entrance fee established by [this section](#) will not be charged.

d. The department shall determine the most effective and efficient way to collect fees and provide proof of payment.

2. [This section](#) is repealed December 31, 2025.

[2019 Acts, ch 95, §2; 2020 Acts, ch 1074, §56, 93; 2022 Acts, ch 1101, §3, 4, 6, 7](#)

Referred to in [§456A.14, 805.8C\(14\)](#)

For applicable scheduled fine, see [§805.8C, subsection 14](#)

## SUBCHAPTER II

### RESOURCES ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION

#### **455A.15 Legislative findings.**

The general assembly finds that:

1. The citizens of Iowa have built and sustained their society on Iowa's air, soils, waters, and rich diversity of life. The well-being and future of Iowa depend on these natural resources.

2. Many human activities have endangered Iowa's natural resources. The state of Iowa has lost ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of its prairies, ninety-eight percent of its wetlands, eighty percent of its woodlands, fifty percent of its topsoils, and more than one hundred species of wildlife since settlement in the early 1800's. There has been a significant deterioration in the quality of Iowa's surface waters and groundwaters.

3. The long-term effects of Iowa's natural resource losses are not completely known or understood, but detrimental effects are already apparent. Prevention of further loss is therefore imperative.

4. The air, waters, soils, and biota of Iowa are interdependent and form a complex ecosystem. Iowans have the right to inherit this ecosystem in a sustainable condition, without severe or irreparable damage caused by human activities.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §2](#)

#### **455A.16 State resource enhancement policy.**

It is the policy of the state of Iowa to protect its natural resource heritage of air, soils, waters, and wildlife for the benefit of present and future citizens with the establishment of a resource enhancement program. The program shall be a long-term integrated effort to wisely use and protect Iowa's natural resources through the acquisition and management of public lands; the upgrading of public park and preserve facilities; environmental education, monitoring, and research; and other environmentally sound means. The resource enhancement program shall strongly encourage Iowans to develop a conservation ethic, and to make necessary changes in our activities to develop and preserve a rich and diverse natural environment.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §3](#)

#### **455A.17 Iowa congress on resources enhancement and protection.**

1. Biennially, during even-numbered years, the director shall schedule and make the necessary arrangements for an Iowa congress on resources enhancement and protection. The congress shall be held within the state capitol complex.

2. Prior to each congress, the director shall make arrangements to hold an assembly in each council of governments area of persons having an interest in resources enhancement

and protection. The department shall promote attendance of interested persons at each assembly. The director shall call each assembly and serve as temporary chairperson. The department shall provide those attending with information regarding resource enhancement and protection expenditures. The assemblies shall identify opportunities for regional resource enhancement and protection and review and recommend changes in resource enhancement and protection policies, programs, and funding. The persons meeting at each assembly shall elect five persons as delegates to the congress on resources enhancement and protection.

3. The delegates to the congress on resources enhancement and protection shall organize, discuss, and make recommendations to the governor, the general assembly, and the natural resource commission regarding issues concerning resources enhancement and protection. The director shall call the congress and serve as temporary chairperson. The delegates are entitled to a per diem as specified in [section 7E.6](#) for expenses of office while attending the congress.

4. The expenses of the department in making the arrangements for and the conducting of the council of governments area assemblies and the congress on resources enhancement and protection and the per diem for expenses of the delegates at the congress shall be paid from the funds appropriated for this purpose.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §4; 91 Acts, ch 258, §53; 2007 Acts, ch 28, §1](#)

**455A.17A Review of allocation of REAP moneys — congress on resources enhancement and protection.** Repealed by 95 Acts, ch 216, §41.

**455A.18 Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund — audits.**

1. An Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund is created in the office of the treasurer of state. The fund consists of all revenues and all other moneys lawfully credited or transferred to the fund. The director shall certify monthly the portions of the fund that are allocated to the various accounts as provided under [section 455A.19](#). The director shall certify before the twentieth of each month the portions of the fund resulting from the previous month's receipts to be allocated to the various accounts.

2. The auditor of state or a certified public accountant firm appointed by the auditor of state shall conduct annual audits of all accounts and transactions of the fund.

3. *a.* For each fiscal year of the fiscal period beginning July 1, 1997, and ending June 30, 2026, there is appropriated from the general fund, to the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund, the amount of twenty million dollars, to be used as provided in [this chapter](#). However, in any fiscal year of the fiscal period, if moneys from the lottery are appropriated by the state to the fund, the amount appropriated under [this subsection](#) shall be reduced by the amount appropriated from the lottery.

*b.* [Section 8.33](#) does not apply to moneys appropriated under [this subsection](#).

4. Notwithstanding [section 12C.7](#), interest or earnings on investments or time deposits of the moneys in the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund or any of its accounts shall be credited to the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §5; 89 Acts, ch 311, §9; 90 Acts, ch 1255, §22; 91 Acts, ch 260, §1232, 1233; 94 Acts, ch 1198, §46; 96 Acts, ch 1214, §31; 2011 Acts, ch 25, §143; 2020 Acts, ch 1121, §80; 2021 Acts, ch 143, §39](#)

Referred to in [§12.61, 321.34, 455A.1, 455A.19, 461.35](#)

Special fees from natural resources vehicle registration plates; see [§321.34](#)

See Iowa Acts for special provisions relating to appropriation of funds in a given fiscal year

**455A.19 Allocation of fund proceeds.**

1. Upon receipt of any revenue, the director shall deposit the moneys in the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund created pursuant to [section 455A.18](#). The first three hundred fifty thousand dollars of the funds received for deposit in the fund annually shall be allocated to the conservation education program board for the purposes specified in [section 455A.21](#). One percent of the revenue receipts shall be deducted and transferred to the administration fund provided for in [section 456A.17](#). All of the remaining receipts shall be allocated to the following accounts:



a. (1) Twenty-eight percent shall be allocated to the open spaces account. At least ten percent of the allocations to the account shall be made available to match private funds for open space projects on the cost-share basis of not less than twenty-five percent private funds pursuant to the rules adopted by the natural resource commission. Five percent of the funds allocated to the open spaces account shall be used to fund the protected waters program. This account shall be used by the department to implement the statewide open space acquisition, protection, and development programs.

(2) The department shall give priority to acquisition and control of open spaces of statewide significance. The department shall also use these funds for developments on state property. The total cost of an open spaces project funded under this paragraph "a" shall not exceed two million dollars unless a public hearing is held on the project in the area of the state affected by the project. However, on and after July 1, 1994, the following shall apply:

(a) If the total amount appropriated by the general assembly to the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund, in any fiscal year as defined in [section 8.36](#), is seven million dollars or more, not more than seventy-five percent of moneys in the open spaces account shall be allocated or obligated during that fiscal year to support a single project.

(b) If the total amount appropriated by the general assembly to the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund, in any fiscal year as defined in [section 8.36](#), is less than seven million dollars, not more than fifty percent of moneys in the open spaces account shall be allocated or obligated during that fiscal year to support a single project.

(3) Political subdivisions of the state shall be reimbursed for property tax dollars lost to open space acquisitions based on the reimbursement formula provided for in [section 465A.4](#). There is appropriated from the open spaces account to the department the amount in that account, or so much thereof as is necessary, to carry out the open spaces program as specified in this paragraph "a". An appropriation made under this paragraph "a" shall continue in force for two fiscal years after the fiscal year in which the appropriation was made or until completion of the project. All unencumbered or unobligated funds remaining at the close of the fiscal year in which the project is completed or at the close of the final fiscal year, whichever date is earlier, shall revert to the open spaces account.

b. Twenty percent shall be allocated to the county conservation account.

(1) Thirty percent of the allocation to the county conservation account annually shall be allocated to each county equally.

(2) Thirty percent of the allocation to the county conservation account annually shall be allocated to each county on a per capita basis.

(3) Forty percent of the allocation to the county conservation account annually shall be held in an account in the state treasury for the natural resource commission to award to counties on a competitive grant basis by a project selection committee established in this subparagraph. Local matching funds are not required for grants awarded under this subparagraph. The project planning and review committee shall be composed of two staff members of the department and two county conservation board directors appointed by the director and a fifth member selected by a majority vote of the director's appointees. The natural resource commission, by rule, shall establish procedures for application, review, and selection of county projects submitted for funding. Upon recommendation of the project planning and review committee, the director shall award the grants.

(4) Funds allocated to the counties under subparagraphs (1), (2), and (3) may be used for land easements or acquisitions, capital improvements, stabilization and protection of resources, repair and upgrading of facilities, environmental education, and equipment. However, expenditures are not allowed for single or multipurpose athletic fields, baseball or softball diamonds, tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pools, and other group or organized sport facilities. Funds may be used for county projects located within the boundaries of a city.

(5) Funds allocated pursuant to subparagraphs (2) and (3) shall only be allocated to counties dedicating property tax revenue at least equal to twenty-two cents per thousand dollars of the assessed value of taxable property in the county to county conservation purposes. State funds received under this paragraph shall not reduce or replace county tax revenues appropriated for county conservation purposes. The county auditor shall submit documentation annually of the dedication of property tax revenue for county conservation

purposes. The annual audit of the financial transactions and condition of a county shall certify compliance with requirements of this subparagraph. Funds not allocated to counties not qualifying for the allocations under subparagraph (2) as a result of this subparagraph shall be held in reserve for each county for two years. Counties qualifying within two years may receive the funds held in reserve. Funds not spent by a county within two years shall revert to the general pool of county funds for reallocation to other counties where needed.

(6) Each board of supervisors shall create a special resource enhancement account in the office of county treasurer and the county treasurer shall credit all resource enhancement funds received from the state in that account. Notwithstanding [section 12C.7](#), all interest earned on funds in the county resource enhancement account shall be credited to that account and used for the purposes authorized for that account.

(7) There is appropriated from the county conservation account to the department the amount in that account, or so much thereof as is necessary, to fund the provisions of this paragraph. An appropriation made under this paragraph shall continue in force for two fiscal years after the fiscal year in which the appropriation was made or until completion of the project for which the appropriation was made, whichever date is earlier. All unencumbered or unobligated funds remaining at the close of the fiscal year in which a project funded pursuant to subparagraph (3) is completed or at the close of the third fiscal year, whichever date is earlier, shall revert to the county conservation account.

(8) Any funds received by a county under this paragraph may be used to match other state or federal funds, and multicounty or multiagency projects may be funded under this paragraph.

c. Twenty percent shall be allocated to the soil and water enhancement account. The moneys shall be used to carry out soil and water enhancement programs including but not limited to reforestation, woodland protection and enhancement, wildlife habitat preservation and enhancement, protection of highly erodible soils, and clean water programs. The division of soil conservation and water quality within the department of agriculture and land stewardship, by rule, shall establish procedures for eligibility, application, review, and selection of projects and practices to implement the requirements of this paragraph. There is appropriated from the soil and water enhancement account to the division of soil conservation and water quality the amount in that account, or so much thereof as is necessary, to carry out the programs as specified in this paragraph. Remaining funds of the soil and water enhancement account shall be allocated to the accounts of the water protection fund authorized in [section 161C.4](#). Annually, fifty percent of the soil and water enhancement account funds shall be allocated to the water quality protection projects account. The balance of the funds shall be allocated to the water protection practices account. An appropriation made under this paragraph shall continue in force for two fiscal years after the fiscal year in which the appropriation was made or until completion of the project for which the appropriation was made, whichever date is earlier. All unencumbered or unobligated funds remaining at the close of the fiscal year in which the project is completed or at the close of the third fiscal year, whichever date is earlier, shall revert to the soil and water enhancement account.

d. Fifteen percent shall be allocated to a cities' parks and open space account. The moneys allocated in this paragraph may be used to fund competitive grants to cities to acquire, establish, and maintain natural parks, preserves, and open spaces. The grants may include expenditures for multipurpose trails, restroom facilities, shelter houses, and picnic facilities, but expenditures for single or multipurpose athletic fields, baseball or softball diamonds, tennis courts, golf courses, swimming pools, and other group or organized sport facilities requiring specialized equipment are excluded. The grants may be used for city projects located outside of a city's boundaries. The natural resource commission, by rule, shall establish procedures for application, review, and selection of city projects on a competitive basis. The rules shall provide for three categories of cities based on population within which the cities shall compete for grants. There is appropriated from the cities' parks and open space account to the department the amount in that account, or so much thereof as is necessary, to carry out the competitive grant program as provided in this paragraph.

e. Nine percent shall be allocated to the state land management account. The department

shall use the moneys allocated to this account for maintenance and expansion of state lands and related facilities under its jurisdiction. The authority to expand state lands and facilities under this paragraph is limited to expansion of the state lands and facilities already owned by the state. There is appropriated from the state land management account to the department the moneys in that account, or so much thereof as is necessary, to implement a maintenance and expansion program for state lands and related facilities under the jurisdiction of the department.

f. Five percent shall be allocated to the historical resource grant and loan fund established pursuant to [section 8A.712](#). The department of administrative services shall use the moneys allocated to this fund to implement historical resource development programs as provided under [section 8A.712](#).

g. Three percent shall be allocated to the living roadway account for distribution to the living roadway trust fund created under [section 314.21](#) for the development and implementation of integrated roadside vegetation plans.

2. a. The moneys appropriated under [this section](#) shall remain in the appropriate account of the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund until such time as the agency, board, commission, or overseer of the fund to which moneys are appropriated has made a request to the treasurer for use of moneys appropriated to it and the amount needed for that use. Notwithstanding [section 8.33](#), moneys remaining of the appropriations made for a fiscal year from any of the accounts within the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund on June 30 of that fiscal year, shall not revert to any fund but shall remain in that account to be used for the purposes for which they were appropriated and the moneys remaining in that account shall not be considered in making the allotments for the next fiscal year.

b. However, any moneys in excess of five hundred thousand dollars, remaining in the living roadway account under [subsection 1](#), paragraph “g”, on June 30 shall revert to the Iowa resources enhancement and protection fund under [this section](#) for distribution pursuant to the formula under [this section](#) except for [subsection 1](#), paragraph “g”. That proportion of moneys that would have been reallocated to [subsection 1](#), paragraph “g”, shall be distributed to the open spaces account under [subsection 1](#), paragraph “a”.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §6; 91 Acts, ch 146, §4 – 6; 91 Acts, ch 191, §120; 93 Acts, ch 176, §43; 95 Acts, ch 220, §29, 30; 2000 Acts, ch 1128, §1; 2001 Acts, ch 24, §53; 2002 Acts, ch 1140, §38; 2011 Acts, ch 25, §143; 2015 Acts, ch 103, §43; 2023 Acts, ch 19, §1421](#)

Referred to in [§8A.712, 161A.73, 350.12, 455A.18, 455A.20, 455A.21, 461.35](#)  
 Subsection 1, paragraph f amended

#### **455A.20 County resource enhancement committee.**

1. A county resource enhancement committee is created in each county. The membership of the committee shall be as follows:

a. The chairpersons of the board of supervisors, county conservation board, commissioners of the soil and water district, and board of directors of each school district in the county. A chairperson may appoint a designee to serve on the committee. The chairperson or designee of a school district shall be a member of the county committee of the county in which a majority or the largest plurality of the district’s students reside.

b. The mayor or the mayor’s designee of each city in a county. If a city is located in more than one county, the membership shall be on the county committee of the county in which the largest population of the city resides.

c. The titular head or the head’s designee of each recognized farm organization having a county organization in the county. The designee shall be a member of the organization represented. The recognized farm organizations are the following:

- (1) The Iowa farm bureau federation.
- (2) The Iowa farmers union.
- (3) The Iowa grange.
- (4) The national farmers organization.
- (5) The Iowa farm unity coalition.
- (6) Any other recognized farm or farm commodity group.

d. (1) The chairperson or the chairperson's designee of each of the following wildlife or conservation organizations having a recognized county organization:

- (a) Iowa Audubon council.
- (b) Iowa sportsmens federation.
- (c) Ducks unlimited.
- (d) Sierra club.
- (e) Pheasants forever.
- (f) The nature conservancy.
- (g) Iowa association of naturalists.
- (h) Izaak Walton league of America.

(i) Other recognized wildlife, conservation, environmental, recreation, conservation education, or historical-cultural preservation groups, or a nonpartisan governmental research or study group limited to the league of women voters.

(2) The designee shall be a member of the county chapter or organization in the county.

e. (1) A representative of each of the following entities:

(a) A historic preservation commission or similar entity established by a county or city in the county.

(b) A private organization that provides recognition and protection for the historic buildings, structures, sites, and districts in a county or a city in the county.

(c) A historic museum or organization that maintains a collection of documents relating to the history of a county or a city in the county.

(2) A representative shall be appointed by the county's board of supervisors. If the board appoints a person representing an entity established by a city in the county, the board shall consult with the city authority that established the entity.

f. If a question arises as to whether a recognized county organization exists under paragraph "c" or "d", the question shall be decided by a majority vote of the members selected under paragraphs "a" and "b", excluding the representative of the county conservation board. [Sections 69.16 and 69.16A](#) do not apply to appointments made pursuant to [this subsection](#).

2. The duties of the county resource enhancement committee are to coordinate the resource enhancement program, plans, and proposed projects developed by cities, county conservation board, and soil and water conservation district commissioners for funding under this subchapter. The county committee shall review and comment upon all projects before they are submitted for funding under [section 455A.19](#). Each county committee shall propose a five-year program plan which includes a one-year proposed expenditure plan and submit it to the department.

3. The initial meeting of the committee shall be called by the chairperson of the board of supervisors. The chairperson shall give written notice of the date, time, and location of the first meeting. The county committee shall meet at least annually to organize by selecting a chairperson, vice chairperson, and other officers as necessary. The committee shall adopt rules governing the conduct of its meetings, subject to [chapter 21](#).

4. The board of supervisors shall provide a meeting room and the necessary secretarial and clerical assistance for the committee. The expenses shall be paid from the county general fund.

5. The members of the committee are not entitled to compensation or expenses related to their duties of office, except as may otherwise be provided by the boards, commissions, or organizations which the members represent.

[89 Acts, ch 236, §7](#); [91 Acts, ch 146, §7 - 9](#); [2008 Acts, ch 1161, §1, 2](#); [2014 Acts, ch 1092, §97](#)

#### **455A.21 Conservation education program board.**

1. A conservation education program board is created in the department. The board shall have five members appointed as follows:

- a. One member appointed by the director of the department of education.
- b. One member appointed by the director of the department of natural resources.
- c. One member appointed by the president of the Iowa association of county conservation boards.
- d. One member appointed by the president of the Iowa association of naturalists.

- e. One member appointed by the president of the Iowa conservation education council.
2. [Section 69.16](#) does not apply to appointments made pursuant to [this section](#).
3. The duties of the board are to revise and produce conservation education materials and to specify stipends to Iowa educators who participate in innovative conservation education programs approved by the board. The board shall allocate the funds provided for under [section 455A.19, subsection 1](#), for the educational materials and stipends.
4. The department shall administer the funds allocated to the conservation education program as provided in [this section](#).

[2002 Acts, ch 1140, §39](#)

Referred to in [§455A.19](#)