

State Preserves Advisory Board

Dedicated to Preserving Iowa's Natural, Archaeological, Historical, Geological and Scenic Areas



January 2, 2009

To: The Honorable Chet Culver, Governor of Iowa; Patty Judge, Lt. Governor of Iowa; and Members of the 83rd General Assembly

From: The State Preserves Advisory Board

Dear Governor Culver, Lt. Governor Judge, and Legislators:

The State Preserves Advisory Board ("the Board") is pleased to present its biennial report, prepared by personnel of the Division of Conservation and Recreation, Department of Natural Resources. This report summarizes the activities of the State Preserves Advisory Board for the 2007–2008 biennium.

During this biennium, we continue to implement the strategic plan outlined in the 1999–2000 Biennial Report. Highlights of the 2007–2008 period include:

- * Organization and hosting of the First (2007) and Second (2008) Annual Land Manager Professional Development Conferences, respectively in Sioux City and Waterloo.
 - o These conferences attracted public and private preserve managers from across the state.
 - o A wide variety of topics, directly related to the daily and long-term management of preserves, were addressed. Feedback from attendees was very positive and the Board is planning another conference.
 - o DNR Deputy Director Liz Christiansen and Secretary Lisa Nissen spearheaded these conferences. The Board greatly appreciates their efforts.
- * Governor Culver signed the articles of dedication for induction of one new preserve into the State Preserve system. Vincent Bluff is a 36.5-acre scenic preserve in the Loess Hills, Pottawattamie County. This property contains both prairies and woodland. The City of Council Bluffs Parks and Recreation Department owns and manages the property.
- * Articles of dedication have been prepared for a second new preserve and are being circulated for approval. These articles will be forwarded to the Governor as soon as possible: Perkins Prairie is a privately owned and managed, 30-acre native prairie remnant in Jefferson County, nominated as a biological preserve. The owners, the Perkins family, have shown remarkable efforts toward the long-term preservation of this ecological gem.
- * Continued vigilance in maintaining the quality of our existing State Preserves, by providing guidance to local managers and assisting in problem resolution.

Iowa's 95 existing state preserves enhance our state's reputation as a great place to live because they identify and protect the best examples of our heritage—be it a natural (biological), archaeological, historical, geological or scenic preserve. Examples of Iowa State Preserves include Fort Atkinson (Winneshek County) in northeast Iowa, with its impressive standing buildings and newly reconstructed palisade; Gitchie Manitou (Lyon County) in the northwest, with its prehistoric burial mounds, native prairies that preserve over 300 plant species, and its 1.6-billion-year-old outcrops of pink Sioux Quartzite; Mount Pisgah Cemetery (Union County) in Iowa's southwest, an 1840s Mormon burial ground that reminds us of the fortitude and sacrifices of early pioneers; Lamson Woods (Jefferson County) in the southeast, where a carpet of wildflowers erupt in the forest understory each spring; and Doolittle Prairie (Story County) in central Iowa, a small parcel of unplowed prairie that is dotted with shallow pothole lakes, once characteristic of the state, and now nearly absent. These, along with the other preserves, are each a pleasure to share with Iowa's residents and visitors.

Scientists and their students from across the state and country have utilized Iowa's preserves in research endeavors, including the topics of soil erosion, climate change, best management practices, invasive species, endangered species, plant and animal species inventories, hydrology, and prehistoric Native American lifeways at archaeological sites. Several of these studies have been supported by legislative funding. Synopses of the studies, listed in the biennial report, demonstrate we have accomplished much with frugality and efficiency.

Current data, such as species inventories, are, however, lacking for many of the preserves. The Board is called upon several times each year to make decisions regarding the management of existing preserves. The best decisions can only be made if we have adequate knowledge about each preserve. Only continued funding allows for the studies necessary to make informed management decisions. The Board deeply appreciates the small amount of funding we receive to conduct scientific investigations of potential preserves and to assess the quality and needs of existing ones. Without this funding, the functioning of our Board would be greatly slowed or even halted.

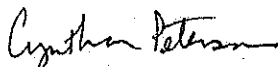
DNR staff members and advisors to the Board perform their jobs with remarkable dedication and enthusiasm. They are asked to deal with many issues regarding the preserves, including plants, animals, conservation, archaeology, geology, and history. There are many more tasks than the staff has time to carry out. Many promising initiatives are tabled due to lack of staff time. Reviewing past Board biennial report cover letters, the recurrence of this insufficient staffing woe is undeniable. Additional DNR staff dedicated to the preserves would allow much more to be accomplished with regard to the preservation, protection and study of existing preserves, and the induction of new preserves into the State Preserves system.

In addition to the Preserve system's understaffing, additional funding would allow the Board to thoroughly analyze several candidates for preserve status, including ones in Hardin, Mills, and Wapello counties. In addition to these known preserve candidates, a list of additional areas from across the state that might be of preserve quality exists, but we cannot even take the first step of investigating these sites without additional resources.

The Board is continually impressed and delighted by the professionalism and expertise of DNR staff members John Pearson and Daryl Howell, who handle their diverse responsibilities with enthusiasm and diplomacy. We appreciate their dedication to the state preserves system, as well as their guidance and assistance to our board. Other invaluable assistance was received from Liz Christiansen, Lisa Nissen, Diane Ford-Shivers, and Inga Foster, all of the DNR; advisor Shirley Schermer of the Office of the State Archaeologist; and advisor Robert McKay of the Geological Survey Bureau. During this biennium, Scott Moats and Laura Jackson finished their second terms on the Board. We are grateful for their many contributions. Replacing them are Gail Brown and Stephen Dinsmore.

On behalf of the State Preserves Board, thank you for your past support. We will continue to seek out the best candidates for Preserve status and take good care of the ones in our keeping, while helping citizens to appreciate these resources for education and enjoyment. We look forward to your continued support of Iowa's preserves.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Peterson, Chairperson
State Preserves Advisory Board

IOWA STATE PRESERVES AS OF DECEMBER 2008

NAME OF PRESERVE	PRESERVE TYPE	ACRES	OWNER	MANAGER	COUNTY
A.F. Miller/North Woods	Natural	10	Bremer County	Bremer CCB	Bremer
Ames High Prairie/Pohl Preserve	Natural	22	Ames Unified School District	TNC	Story
Anderson Prairie	Natural, Geological	200	State of Iowa	DNR	Emmet
Behrens Ponds and Woodland	Natural	30	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Linn
Berry Woods	Natural, Geological	42	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Warren
Bird Hill	Geological	1	Cerro Gordo County	Cerro Gordo CCB	Cerro Gordo
Bixby	Natural, Geological	183	State of Iowa	DNR	Clayton
Bluffton Fir Stand	Natural, Geological	94	State of Iowa	DNR	Winneshiak
Brush Creek Canyon	Natural, Geological	217	State of Iowa	DNR	Fayette
Brushy Creek	Geological, Natural	260	State of Iowa	DNR	Webster
Cameron Woods	Natural	36	State of Iowa	Scott CCB	Scott
Casey's Paha	Geological	175	State of Iowa	Black Hawk CCB	Tama
Catfish Creek	Geological, Archaeological	600	State of Iowa	DNR	Dubuque
Cayler Prairie	Natural	160	State of Iowa	DNR	Dickinson
Cedar Bluffs Natural Area	Natural, Geological, Scenic	223	Mahaska County	Mahaska CCB	Mahaska
Cedar Hills Sand Prairie	Natural	35	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Black Hawk
Cheever Lake	Natural	366	State of Iowa	DNR	Emmet
Clay Prairie	Natural	3	University of Northern Iowa	UNI	Butler
Claybank Forest	Geological, Natural	56	Cerro Gordo County	Cerro Gordo CCB	Cerro Gordo
Coldwater Cave	Geological, Natural	60	State of Iowa	DNR	Winneshiak
Crossman Prairie	Natural	10	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Howard
Decorah Ice Cave	Geological, Natural	3	City of Decorah	City of Decorah	Winneshiak
Derald Dinesen Prairie	Natural	20	U.S. Government	Shelby CCB	Shelby
Doolittle Prairie	Natural	25	State of Iowa	Story CCB	Story
Eureka Woods	Natural	90	Private	Private	Greene
Fallen Rock	Natural, Geological	122	State of Iowa	Hardin CCB	Hardin
Fish Farm Mounds	Archaeological	3	State of Iowa	DNR	Allamakee
Five Ridge Prairie	Natural, Geological	789	The Nature Conservancy	Plymouth CCB	Plymouth
Fleming Woods	Natural	38	Poweshiek County	Poweshiek CCB	Poweshiek
Fort Atkinson	Archaeological	5	State of Iowa	DNR	Winneshiak
Fossil and Prairie Park	Natural, Geological	292	Floyd County	Floyd CCB	Floyd
Pellet Memorial Woods	Natural	19	State of Iowa	Cass CCB	Cass
Freda Haffner	Natural, Geological	110	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Dickinson
Gitchie Manitou	Natural	91	State of Iowa	DNR	Lyon
Hanging Bog	Natural	16	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Linn
Hardin City Woodland	Natural	25	State of Iowa	Hardin CCB	Hardin

IOWA STATE PRESERVES AS OF DECEMBER 2008

NAME OF PRESERVE	PRESERVE TYPE	ACRES	OWNER	MANAGER	COUNTY
Hartley Fort	Archaeological	2	Private	Private	Allamakee
Hartman Bluff	Natural	48	Black Hawk County	Black Hawk CCB	Black Hawk
Hayden Prairie	Natural	239	State of Iowa	DNR	Howard
Hoffman Prairie	Natural	36	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Cerro Gordo
Indian Bluffs Primitive Area	Archaeological, Natural	845	Private	Private	Jones
Indian Fish Trap	Archaeological	1	State of Iowa	Amana Society	Iowa
Kalsow Prairie	Natural	160	State of Iowa	DNR	Pocahontas
Kish-Ke-Kosh Prairie	Natural	17	State of Iowa	Jasper CCB	Jasper
Lamson Woods	Natural	20	City of Fairfield	City of Fairfield	Jefferson
Liska-Stanek Prairie	Natural	20	Webster County	Webster CCB	Webster
Little Maquoketa River Mounds	Archaeological	42	State of Iowa	Dubuque CCB	Dubuque
Maianaphy Springs	Geological, Natural	64	State of Iowa	DNR	Winneshieik
Maichow Mounds	Archaeological	6	State of Iowa	DNR	Des Moines
Manikowski Prairie	Natural, Geological	40	Clinton County	Clinton CCB	Clinton
Mann Wilderness Area	Natural	103	Hardin County	Hardin CCB	Hardin
Marietta Sand Prairie	Natural	20	Marshall County	Marshall CCB	Marshall
Mericle Woods	Natural	132	State of Iowa	DNR	Tama
Merrill A. Stainbrook	Geological	33	U.S. Government	Corps of Engineers	Johnson
Merritt Forest	Natural	20	State of Iowa	DNR	Clayton
Montauk	Historical, Natural	46	State of Iowa	DCA	Fayette
Mossy Glen	Natural, Geological	80	State of Iowa	DNR	Clayton
Mount Pisgah Cemetery	Historical	1	Church	Union CCB	Union
Mount Talbot	Natural	90	State of Iowa	DNR	Plymouth
Nestor Stiles Prairie	Natural	10	State of Iowa	Cherokee CCB	Cherokee
Ocheyedan Mound	Geological, Natural	24	Osceola CCB	Osceola CCB	Osceola
Old State Quarry	Geological	8	U.S. Government	Corps of Engineers	Johnson
Palisades-Dows	Natural, Geological	330	State of Iowa	Linn CCB	Linn
Pecan Grove	Natural	17	State of Iowa	DNR	Muscatine
Perkins Prairie	Natural	30	Private	Private	Greene
Pilot Grove Historical	Historical, Natural	7	State of Iowa	Iowa CCB	Iowa
Pilot Knob State Park	Natural, Geological	369	State of Iowa	DNR	Hancock
Retz Memorial Woods	Natural, Geological	49	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Clayton
Roberts Creek	Natural, Geological	13	State of Iowa	DNR	Cedar
Rock Creek Island	Geological	60	State of Iowa	Cedar CCB	Cedar
Rock Island Area	Natural	17	Linn County	Linn CCB	Linn
Roggman Boreal Slopes	Natural	20	The Nature Conservancy	TNC	Clayton

