



Director's 2008 Priority List (listed in no order)

- **State Water Plan**

Iowa needs a comprehensive and dynamic state water plan, and as the state agency primarily responsible, the Iowa DNR should coordinate and implement this plan. It is our role to coordinate stakeholders and achieve a plan that takes "the long view", projecting clean and sustainable use of our water resources well into the future. Elements of this plan will include water quantity, water quality, anti-degradation policies, prioritization of watershed clean-up, contingency planning for floods and droughts, etc.

- **State Air Plan**

Iowa needs a comprehensive and dynamic state air plan, and as the state agency primarily responsible, the Iowa DNR should coordinate and implement this plan. It is our role to coordinate stakeholders and achieve a plan that takes "the long view", projecting clean and sustainable use of our air resources well into the future. Elements of plan will include Clean Air Act non-attainment scenarios, greenhouse gas reductions, industrial and livestock emission controls, etc.

- **Natural Resources Interpretation and Environmental Education**

The Iowa DNR should vastly expand our natural resources interpretation and environmental education program. We have 85 state parks, manage over 400,000 acres of land, and have nearly 1,200 natural resource professionals. With millions of annual visitor and public contacts, we need to be one of the top "go to" sources for natural resources information and sharing the conservation message. We already have some very successful programs, such as the Iowa Outdoors magazine, the hunter education program, Fish IOWA, Springbrook Conservation Education Center, and others, but a renewed focus on educating Iowa's public on natural resources is vital to our future success.

- **Global Warming**

As our climate continues to change, the Iowa DNR needs to a) prepare for adaptation to these changes and b) co-lead with the Office of Energy Independence to strategize how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The first will be coordinated by a new addition within the Conservation and Recreation Division to prepare a strategy for dealing with ecological climate change effects on water, soils, forest and prairies, fisheries, and wildlife. The second will be addressed by an addition within the Air Quality Bureau to focus on Iowa's participation in the National Climate Registry and coordinate the DNR's role within the Iowa Climate Change Advisory Council.

- **New Iowa DNR Facility Decisions**
 There have been ongoing discussion and planning concerning regional DNR centers at Lake Anita State Park, the Spirit Lake area, and the northeast Iowa area. There is also much discussion around expanding our activities and area at the Iowa State Fair. We will deliberately make decisions on if and when to pursue these proposals.
- **Sustainable Funding for Natural Resources**
 In the spring of 2006, Iowa law established an advisory committee to study opportunities for sustainable natural resource funding. For this task, the advisory committee has defined and categorized natural resources into three groups: 1) fish, wildlife, natural areas, 2) soil and water, and 3) parks and trails. They have also identified a \$150 million annual need to help support the inadequate current funding. An interim legislative committee continues to consider the recommendations, and it is likely that a "movement" will begin in 2008 to create a funding mechanism that would be constitutionally protected. The Iowa DNR will strongly support any such movement.
- **Taking Odor Mitigation to the Next Level: A Priority for Iowa Agriculture**
 A proposal was developed by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship and Iowa State University that outlined a five-year, \$22.8 million project of applied odor mitigation research on livestock operations statewide. Last November, an Iowa Legislature Livestock Odor Study Committee recommended that the state legislature enact the proposal. This proposal which would initiate hundreds of applied research projects, would involve farmer-cooperators who devote their time and facilities to actively be apart of efforts to expand odor mitigation strategies across many different operations and situations.
- **Evaluation of an Iowa Hunting Access Program**
 Land values in Iowa have escalated at an alarming rate due to rising commodity prices, which severely impair the Iowa DNR's ability to acquire land. We are also losing too many Conservation Reserve Program acres and other natural areas. There has been considerable interest from our Natural Resources Commission in conservation easements. Although our first choice has been acquisition, we need to consider the overall impacts of these trends on wildlife and opportunities for public hunting and will do a comprehensive evaluation of an Iowa hunting access program similar to what is being done in many other states.
- **Best Environmental Practices on Iowa DNR Projects**
 When it comes to sustainable design and low-impact development, the Iowa DNR should exemplify the best. We will establish a policy of evaluating all projects, including roads, buildings, vehicles, etc, for the most eco-friendly and sustainable choices.
- **Public Relations Plan**
 Iowa DNR personnel are professional, passionate, and well-qualified to lead our state on natural resources issues. Yet there remains a tainted opinion of our work and a difficulty in getting "our story" communicated to the press and the public. We will begin a more strategized and deliberate public relations and communications plan, being pro-active in our major policy and program areas instead of reacting to the fallout and miscommunication.