

# IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

LEADING IOWANS IN CARING FOR OUR NATURAL RESOURCES

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## Iowa's Public Lands (does not include federal or county lands)

### What are Iowa's PUBLIC lands?

Iowa's public lands include lakes, streams, forests, prairies, preserves, hatcheries, wildlife areas, and parks. Eminent domain is NOT used by the DNR.

### Did you know?

- The DNR is one of the only state agencies that pays property taxes on Iowa's public lands. In FY18, the DNR paid a total of \$1,009,469.15 in property taxes.
- Iowa has 36 million acres
- 109,208 – total number acres for which the DNR pays property taxes
- 380,507 – total number of acres publicly available for use including state parks, wildlife management areas, public hunting areas, trails and lakes.
- 1% - total percentage of public lands available for use by Iowans in the entire state.
- 137,543 -- total number of acres of public land acquired since 1990 when the DNR tax code—which requires DNR to pay property taxes on land acquired with REAP and Wildlife Habitat Stamp—was enacted.
- 32 – average Corn Suitability Rating (CSR) of public lands
- \$2,258 – FY17 average purchase price per acre for public lands
- \$7,326 – 2017 statewide average farmland value per acre
- 37% of public lands are classified as Highly Erodible Soils (HEL)
- 17% of public lands are Hydric Soils
- 40% of public lands are forested
- 14% of public lands are water
- 919,405 – number of acres of public lands in Iowa's Road Right-of-way
- Iowa ranks 47th in the nation for fewest acres for public use, according to the U.S. Census, Statistical Abstract of the United States

### How it works:

The vast majority of sellers make initial contact the DNR about land they are wishing to sell to the Department. Often, landowners want their land permanently protected and available for Iowans to enjoy. The DNR does not automatically accept; however, the land must meet the following criteria:

- There must be a large benefit for conservation, recreation or the environment. Functional habitats, water quality, etc.

- It must provide a public benefit and access.
- DNR staff must be able to efficiently manage the land.

The Department does turn down land purchase offers and donations often due to not meeting the above objectives.

### Funding Sources

REAP Open Spaces funding is used, in part, to purchase **public** land for outdoor recreation. Land purchased is ONLY acquired from willing sellers and at appraised market value. These lands remain on county property tax rolls.

Primary funding sources for these activities include:

- REAP Open Spaces
- Wildlife Habitat Stamp

Federal:

- Duck Stamp
- Federal Receipts
- North America Wetland Conservation Act
- State Wildlife Grant
- Pittman/Robertson Act
- Federal Endangered Species
- Federal Mitigation Funds
- Federal Highway Administration (Scenic By-Way)

Other:

- Private/Partner Organizations