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Story County Conservation Board - McFarland Park 56461 180<sup>th</sup> St. - Ames, Iowa 50010-9451  
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Memorandum

To: Story County Conservation Board

Through: Michael D. Cox, Director

From: Brandon Clough, Natural Resources Specialist

Date: March 9, 2026

Re: Consideration of Contract with Finch Livestock for Management Grazing in SCC Areas.

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The attached contract is with Finch Livestock for management grazing using goats. The goats will be utilized as a tool for follow-up maintenance in areas where staff conducted timber stand improvement. They will be focused on setting back ruderal plant species, giving native plants a chance to grow. Goats are preferred in areas with poor access, steep topography, or where a light footprint is desired.

Two herds will be utilized between Hickory Grove Park, McFarland Park, Christiansen Forest Preserve, and/or Dakins Lake. Grazing in these areas will assist with water quality efforts by setting back invasive shrub species for native plant regeneration. The anticipated cost will be paid for out of the FY27 Conservation Budget. The exact amount may vary and is dependent on delivery charges, animal care from the owner, and possible loss of livestock.

Staff urges your approval.

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Approval

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Disapproval

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Date

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Date

# 2026 Grazing Lease Agreement

Between Owner of Goats: Eric and Deb Finch/Finch Livestock  
73860 280th St  
State Center, IA 50247  
[debfinch1977@gmail.com](mailto:debfinch1977@gmail.com)  
641-485-1378

And Entering Agreement with: Story County Conservation  
56461 180th St  
Ames, IA 50010

Any death loss will be valued at \$350 per goat (based on replacement cost) and will be payable to owners. Owners may choose to decrease said value based on age, sex, breed, etc. Any medical costs associated with the goats being in this location will be at the expense of the entity entering into agreement with Finch Livestock. This may include items such as treatment costs related to a broken leg, open sores, lameness issues, lacerations, etc. In addition, a lease fee of \$2.00 PER GOAT per month (nearest 30 days) will be charged. Routine worming may be done as often as every 2 weeks at the expense of Finch Livestock. Managing entity/person of location may or may not be notified of these visits. A corral of some fashion will either be provided at the location by the managing entity OR Finch Livestock may set up their own corral or use a trailer in an area of their choosing. Mileage will not be charged for owner's visits to worm or voluntarily check the goats. ANY and ALL health concerns must be reported to Finch Livestock immediately. This includes, but is not limited to: lameness, nasal discharge, general unthriftiness, or being "off" from the rest of the herd. Mileage will be paid at \$4.00 per loaded mile for any hauling of the goats to/from any site (evacuation, pick up, delivery). Mileage will be paid at \$0.725 per mile (based on IRS mileage rates for grazing year) for any trip where either owner is requested for any reason. This agreement can be terminated or modified by owner at any time and without warning.

OWNER SIGN/DATE:  02/26/2026

SCC SIGN/DATE: \_\_\_\_\_