

**Joint Meeting of the
Headwaters of the South Skunk River Watershed Management Authority
and
Ioway Creek Watershed Management Authority
November 17, 2025 - 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM
Gilbert City Hall, 105 SE 2nd St, Gilbert, IA 50105
Also available via Zoom**

Attendees: *= Both Headwaters and Ioway WMA Member

Headwaters:

Voting Members (Quorum=6): *Dustin Albrecht (City of Ames), Kurtis Bower (City of Roland), *Linda Murken (Story County), *Sam Ose (Hamilton County SWCD), Mark Tjelmeland (Story County SWCD), Linda Wild (City of Randall), and *Rick Young via Zoom (Hamilton County)

Alternate Members: *Sara Carmichael (Story County Conservation), *Brian Lammers (Hamilton County), and *Noel Steckelberg (City of Ames)

Ioway:

Voting Members (Quorum=7): *Dustin Albrecht (City of Ames), Austin Hayek via Zoom (Webster County), *Linda Murken (Story County), *Sam Ose (Hamilton County SWCD), Seldon Spencer (Story County SWCD), Diana Wright via Zoom (Boone County SWCD), and *Rick Young via Zoom (Hamilton County)

Alternate Members: *Sara Carmichael (Story County Conservation), *Brian Lammers (Hamilton County), and *Noel Steckelberg (City of Ames)

Technical Team Members: Catherine DeLong via Zoom (ISU Extension)-Zoom, Cynthia Farmer (Center for Rural Affairs), Dan Haug (Prairie Rivers of Iowa), and Laura Johnston via Zoom (Story County Environmental Health).

1. Meeting is available for public viewing via Zoom. [Link](#), Passcode: 3?f.y2tr
2. **Call To Order** – by Murken at 10:03 AM. Mark Tjelmeland arrived 10:04 AM. Seldon Spencer left at 11:24am
3. **Roll Call/Introductions/Members Update** – Quorum for Headwaters and Ioway check-in.
4. **Approval Of Agenda**
 - 4.I. Headwaters Agenda – MOTION by Tjelmeland, SECOND by Bower. MCU.
 - 4.II. Ioway Agenda – MOTION by Spencer, SECOND by Hayek. MCU.
5. **Approval Of Prior Meeting Minutes – September 15, 2025**
 - 5.I. Headwaters Minutes – MOTION by Tjelmeland, SECOND by Sam Ose. MCU.
 - 5.II. Ioway Minutes – MOTION by Spencer, SECOND by Albrecht. MCU.
6. **Discussion Of [Headwaters](#) And [Ioway](#) Logos – Sara Carmichael**

A Headwaters logo was created by an Outreach intern with Story County Conservation. Discussed making changes to the new Headwaters logo and updating the Ioway’s logo. Possibility of putting an “R” in it. Haug suggested that the color pallets be the same for both logos. The final logos would be added to the watershed brochure and any future marketing/outreach materials either online or printed.

Headwaters: A motion was made by Wild to accept the logo as shown and Carmichael takes into consideration some of the comments and remarks, seconded by Bower. MCU.

Ioway: A motion to change the current logo to coordinate with the Headwaters color scheme. Spencer moved, seconded by Albrecht. MCU.
7. **Review Draft Watershed Advocacy Summary – Sara Carmichael**

A [brochure](#) was created by an Outreach intern with Story County Conservation. Brochure phone number won’t change,

websites are linkable, and cost-share resource QR codes that will take you to IAWA and Cleanwater Iowa websites. Discussed who the brochure will target (farmers, voters, town residents, etc) and this could change the message. The brochure will be finalized by Carmichael and resent out for one last look. Printed brochures can be distributed in city/town halls, libraries, and county SWCD offices. Next meeting: talk about Stage 2 (how to get this into publications and having “talking points”). Wild joined Story County Outdoor Alliance and they can help fund projects. We can acknowledge whomever (Outdoor Alliance, Story County, City of Ames, etc) for funding the print run on the brochure.

Discussion on adding additional or changing brochure items:

- **On Front:** Bold “How Can I Improve Water Quality” and add “Soil Health”. Underneath change to “Educational Tools for Urban and Rural Residents and Landowners”
- **2nd Panel “We all care about the quality of our water.”:** Take out “But how do we achieve these goals?” and replace/bold with “We all have a part to play!”
- **3rd Panel “AGRICULTURAL”:** Change sentence by Cover Crops “Plant cover crops to reduce nutrient runoff and erosion, lower nitrates in streams and improve soil health.” Add links under the QR Codes. Murken will change to all action verbs throughout the brochure.
- **4th Panel “URBAN”:** For Chemical Disposal, add a resource link (IDALS (Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship) or ISWEP (Iowa Stormwater Education Partnership))
- **5th Panel “RESOURCES”:** Put “contact County Environmental Health” for the private well program Remove “Story County”. Put “n-fact” section lower. Talk about Midwest Cover Crops Council.
- **6th Panel Blank:** Add Headwaters and Ioway logos. Add contact information (Headwaters generic email headwaterswma@storycountyiowa.gov). Add a small date of publication.

8. **Report On November 12, 2025 Statewide WMA Meeting**

This was held in the eastern part of the state. 57 people attended (40 people last year) with about 18 out of the 20 WMAs represented. “What’s one word you would use to describe the day?” Answers: networking, informative, engaging, insightful, social, relaxing, collaborative, productive, refreshing. “What will you take back to use for your WMA?” Answers: communicating results of water monitoring to the public, needing coordinators, member works can fund WMAs, taking flow and sampling tile outlets, volunteer programs, planning ideas, data communication, funding available from big companies (seek them out), celebrate the little wins.

Carmichael, Haug, and Delong were on a panel to provide information on water monitoring and presenting the results to the public. Then a presentation was given on ecosystem services (using big companies to provide funding for nature-based solutions by demonstrating environmental outcomes). Afternoon, table conversations about what people were accomplishing within WMA work and how they engage legislators.

Environmental outcome workshop: Leadership for Midwestern Watersheds online event focused on performance-based conservation -- Nov 25, 11am-12:30pm.

Moved to different topic: discussed drinking water and well water. 75% of Iowans drink well water. Biggest issues with private wells from 2020 numbers are bacteria (30%), arsenic (14%), and nitrates (10%). Private well testing for free can be done by Environmental Health. There is no enforcement if you have negative results and grants are available for improvement.

9. **Do We Want To Apply For IDNR Funds To Update The Ioway Creek WMA Plan?**

Last done in 2013 and it was called Squaw Creek. Discussed the pros and cons. Is there a piece in the study that is weaker/outdated? Case studies could be added to the plan. Could use the funding for projects.

Request would be for \$50,000 to update the plan and need 5% cash match (\$2,500). Application due date is January 16th. Contract has to end in June 2028.

Assignment: look for useful information from previous study, get thoughts, and get back to Carmichael by December 1st. Murken and Carmichael can start on the application.

10. **Legislative Update – Cynthia Farmer, Center for Rural Affairs**

Sign up for Farmer’s emails (cynthiaf@cfra.org). There is a rural grocery legislation to provide grant program that would fund updates to their infrastructure and energy efficiency measures, refrigeration, etc. 2nd part- local processing component. Up the ability for producers (3 or more) growing table food in Iowa to compile together to sell to a storefront/grocery store. Through the House last year and getting it through the Senate might be easier. Then it will go to the Governor’s desk. Part of the Grow Iowa Value fund that isn’t being claimed by anyone at this point and time.

11. Plan For Next Meeting

In Hamilton County, Young gave update on an opportunity to buy 40 acres of low productive farmland of land in a drainage district. Work is being done by Bolton & Menk with funding help coming through Great Outdoors Foundation and IDALS. Area would be turned into a nutrient reduction wetland.

Delong gave update on working with researchers in Michigan State on a conservation drainage tool. Type of drainage where you manage the water in the fields instead of draining off. Benefits for nitrate reduction and for yields. Created an online tool for saturated buffers. Looking for twelve Iowa farmers to be part of a focus group on January 27th and 28th for 3-4 hours in central Iowa (paid \$200 and given a meal). Please reach out to Delong if you or some farmers are interested or need more information.

12. Public Comments – None. No public members.

13. Next Meeting – _____, 2025

Thursday, January 8th 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM. Gilbert City Hall. Hybrid or virtual (weather dependent).

Ioway Creek WMA study plan update, brochure, talking points for interviews, last minute legislative items.

14. Adjournment – Adjourned at 12:04 PM.