



# PRAIRIE HORIZONS

STORY COUNTY CONSERVATION | NATURE PROGRAMS AND NEWS

November 2025 to January 2026

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*Banded Garden Spider*  
Photo by Teresa Testroet

# THE LATEST

Timely & brief updates on ongoing projects

## CELEBRATING THE HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL

We celebrated completion of 21 miles of continuous pavement on the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (HOINT) on Saturday, Aug. 9 with a bike ride and ribbon cutting ceremony. All Story County communities along the trail - Slater, Huxley, Cambridge, Maxwell and Collins - are now connected by paved trail!



Roughly 250 cyclists braved rain for the bike ride in celebration. Local businesses set out along the trail, eagerly welcoming riders into their communities and showcasing local amenities.

SCC staff and board were joined by Story County Board of Supervisors,

mayors and other elected officials, bike enthusiasts and more for remarks. Thanks again to the City of Collins for offering flexible accommodations when rain caused a change in location.

We would like to thank Iowa Bicycle Coalition, Kori Heuss, Heuss Printing and Rick Dietz for helping organize such a great event.

## Partners Update: Cambridge Land Acquisition Goal

We are only a few months into fiscal year 2026, but our *Partners* have made progress by raising over \$4,000 towards the purchase of 242 acres along the South Skunk River near Cambridge, IA. This land is currently owned by Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. Our campaign will continue through fiscal year 2027, with the goal of raising \$100,000. The Story County Water and Land Legacy Bond will provide additional support for this acquisition.

Imagine a floodplain corridor along the South Skunk River, stretching from Story City to Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge. This corridor would provide critical wildlife habitat, enhance water quality, reduce flooding and offer opportunities for outdoor recreation. This vision is achievable, but your support is a vital part of the effort.

If you aren't already a *Partner*, please consider joining us today. Clean water and quality habitat are in everyone's best interest.

### BIKE TRAIL T-SHIRTS STILL AVAILABLE

Heart of Iowa Nature Trail t-shirts are still available for purchase!

- \$20 each, cash/check only
- Available at Conservation Center and Administration Building (Nevada), 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Mon-Fri.
- Adult sizes S - XL remaining.
- Willing to ship IF payment mailed in advance, with extra fee to cover shipping cost.
- Call with questions (515) 232-2516



### SUPPORT THIS PROJECT

Scan QR code or visit link below to donate. Your gift provides a 10% discount on all program and facility rentals, and supports permanent land protection.



[www.bit.ly/sccdonaions](http://www.bit.ly/sccdonaions)

# Story County Community Foundation celebrates 20th Anniversary with Conservation

To celebrate the Story County Community Foundation's (Foundation) 20th anniversary, the Foundation has awarded Story County Conservation (SCC) a \$100,000 Impact Grant. The funds will assist with development of the Deppe Family Conservation Area as well as Hickory Grove Park beach improvements.

"We are thrilled to be selected to partner with the Foundation to improve the opportunities Story County residents have to enjoy the outdoors," SCC Director Mike Cox said.

Funding will be paired with Story County Water and Land Legacy bond funds to increase the community benefit from both projects. The Impact Grant was officially presented at the Foundation's 20th Anniversary Celebration on Thursday, Oct. 2 at Reiman Gardens.

The Deppe Family Conservation Area, acquired in 2023, is a 124-acre property immediately south of McFarland Park that will include



Story County Community Foundation Executive Director Karin Sevde presents a \$100,000 Impact Grant check to Story County Conservation Director Mike Cox.

restored prairie, upland timber and creek corridors. Development plans will keep a light footprint and include trail development, a picnic shelter, parking area & wayfinding signs. The park is expected to open to the public in 2027.

Design is also underway for Hickory Grove Park beach improvements, anticipated to preserve water quality

through a tiered overlook and water runoff treatment area. The Iowa DNR Lakes Program is a large partner on this project.

*The Story County Community Foundation connects people and philanthropy, and supports a wide range of organizations and communities within Story County.*

## Additional Bond Updates

### R38 TRAIL ALTERNATIVE-

We heard your requests for a better trail between Ames, the High Trestle Trail and the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail. Through development of the recent Story County Trails Plan, the R38 bike lanes were identified as the highest priority for trail users and prospective trail users. Preliminary route analysis will soon be underway! *Read more on Page 7.*



**OXBOW CONSTRUCTION** - We are currently soliciting quotes for oxbow construction at Wicks Wildlife Area and Carroll Prairie.

**DESIGN UNDERWAY** - Design is also currently underway for the following SCWLL Bond projects:

Dakins Lake rental cabin, Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor trailhead and shelter, CJ Schreck Water trail access improvements, Deppe Family Conservation Area development and Hickory Grove Park beach improvements.

Visit [www.storycountyconservation.org](http://www.storycountyconservation.org) for periodic updates and more information on SCWLL Bond projects.

# HONORING EXTIRPATED SPECIES

at Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor

## WOLVES ROAM AGAIN

It started with an elk sculpture at Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor, and an interpretive panel about extirpated species. (**Extirpated species:** animals that no longer live in the wild in Story County but still exist in other parts of the United States.) With the help of an anonymous donor, we added a Plains bison sculpture last spring. The same donor later approached us about adding some wolves to the “pack” since the wolves are also mentioned on the park’s interpretive panel that discusses extirpated species. Thanks to their support, we now have all three extirpated species for you to enjoy.

Prior to European settlement, gray wolves (*Canus lupus*) once had extensive ranges in North America,

from Alaska and Canada south through Mexico, and inhabiting both prairie and wooded regions of Iowa.

Wolves posed threat to domestic animals and were often feared by settlers, leading to aggressive hunting. By the early 1900s, wolves had disappeared from much of their original range, including Iowa. Although extirpated from much of the United States, a small wolf population persisted in northern Minnesota and was able to grow and expand in range thanks to protection from the Endangered Species Act beginning in 1974.

According to the Iowa DNR, no breeding population exists in Iowa today, given lack of suitable habitat. Today’s reports from surrounding states, however, indicate wolves are traveling through the Hawkeye State, and while rare, occasional

wolf sightings are reported in Iowa. On the contrary, we have heard conflicting reports from recent visitors at Tedesco Environmental Learning Corridor - you’ll have to make a visit and see for yourself!

The collection’s sculptures were crafted by artist Jeff Best in Clare, MI. They are made from reclaimed barbed wire, using multiple miles per creature - the Plains bison, is made from nearly four miles of wire!

Sources for this article include the Iowa DNR and “A Country So Full of Game: The Story of Wildlife in Iowa” by James J. Dinsmore who taught wildlife ecology at ISU for nearly 30 years. We highly recommend this book!



# Electronics Recycling Drive sets bar high

Story County Go Green Team's public Electronics Recycling Drive on September 13 had fantastic turn out. Community members discarded unwanted televisions, computers, printers and much more, filling 19 bins similar to that shown. This totaled over 12,000 lbs of electronics to be recycled. Cars were lined up at the location nearly a half hour before the event was set to open!

Go Green Team has confirmed a similar event will take place again next fall. Stay tuned!



Nevada City Administrator Jordan Cook adds to the nearly full bin of computer equipment at the Electronics Recycling Drive.

## MORE WAYS TO GIVE

Support us by purchasing items directly from our Amazon Wish List. Big or small, your contribution is appreciated!



[www.bit.ly/SCCAmazonlist](http://www.bit.ly/SCCAmazonlist)



## Reservable Hunting Blind at Sleepy Hollow

- ✓ Free hunting opportunity for youth (15 & under) mentored hunts & disabled hunts
- ✓ Archery deer hunting only (including crossbow)
- ✓ Slots available in specific windows from Sept. to Jan.
- ✓ Sleepy Hollow Access located north of Ames



More info/Make reservation:

Scan QR code or visit [www.bit.ly/huntsleepy](http://www.bit.ly/huntsleepy)



From the Diary of a....

# BLUEBIRD NEST MONITOR

By Steve Lekwa, retired director from Story County Conservation

It was rare to see a bluebird when I was growing up. We finally attracted a pair to a bluebird house on a post in our pasture - I've been making bird houses ever since. In the 1970s and 1980s, as a ranger-naturalist, I sought out good habitat and placed bluebird houses in the Skunk River Greenbelt. Bluebirds took to the houses quite readily, and bluebird numbers increased in the valley. Nest competitors like house sparrows, starlings and house wrens were also attracted to the new sites. We learned bluebirds needed human help to compete for nest sites, and thus was born volunteer monitoring of nest boxes at various parks countywide.

Nest box volunteers ensure boxes are cleaned and in good repair before nesting begins in early spring. Bluebirds often start looking for nest sites in mid-March. The first nest start at Hickory Grove Park, where I monitor, was in late March this year, but eggs didn't appear for several weeks. The 17 boxes along Hickory Grove Park's nest box trail were checked every week until the last baby bluebirds fledged on September 1.

Interesting notes from the 2025 nesting season include persistent House sparrows at Box 16 at the far east end of the park. Their nesting material was thrown out (one of the volunteer duties) weekly for five weeks until they gave up and bluebirds finally moved in. Box 3, east of the beach parking lot, produced three bluebird families - a first for Hickory Grove Park. Twelve fledged. Box 6 was highly contested in May, as bluebirds and tree swallows were both determined to use that box. The male bluebird and tree swallow actually fought in the air and even rolled around on the grass! The bluebirds eventually won and raised two families there.

Finding eggs in a box does not ensure that babies will eventually fledge. I found four dead, nearly-grown baby bluebirds starved in Box 11 in June, just west of the dam, after their parents disappeared. Meanwhile, whole clutches disappeared elsewhere. Raccoons and cats often learn that nest boxes can also be lunch boxes. Coons are amazing climbers and cats can

## COUNTYWIDE NESTING DATA - 2025

70 nesting boxes  
361 eggs  
240 fledged young

jump to surprising heights. Wrens sometimes pierce bluebird eggs, throw them out and fill the box with twigs for their own nests. Cone-shaped predator guards have been installed on some of the bird box posts to reduce predator losses.

In 2025 at Hickory Grove Park, 101 bluebird eggs were laid, 90 hatched and 76 fledged. Countywide, about 70 boxes produced 240 fledged bluebirds from 361 eggs.

Monitoring is pleasant outdoor work. Seeing and hearing birds is always fun; especially if you get to witness a baby's first flight. Some mother birds are so intent on incubating their eggs, they refuse to leave when the box is opened. Others leave as soon as they hear anything nearby. Some defensive parents fly and scold to try and drive you away, while others calmly sit nearby when their boxes are checked. The 2025 nesting season didn't produce as many young as 2024, but this nest box monitor is already looking forward to 2026!

Reminder: Bluebird monitors are trained volunteers. Please do not tamper with or open bluebird boxes within Story County Conservation parks and natural areas, as it can disturb active nests.



PHOTO BY TERESA TESTROET

A young fledgling learns to hunt near Soper's Mill.

## Dietz recognized as Citizen of the Year



RICK DIETZ

Rick Dietz was recognized by the Story County Board of Supervisors in July as the 2025 Citizen of the Year for outstanding commitment to serving the community in various ways.

Dietz has volunteered with Story County Conservation and Skunk River Paddlers since 2001, and serves on the board for Prairie Rivers of Iowa. Over the years, he has taken the lead role in updating online trail maps using GPS data. He regularly shares his time through volunteering, including invasive species removal, drone photography and environmental education programs.

He is also an integral volunteer member of the Story County Sheriff's Office Dive Team. With vast knowledge of all things ropes, water and mapping, he's helped guide the team through all types of calls out over the years.

Dietz's diverse interests, willingness and ability to jump in and serve where most needed led to his nomination and selection as the 2025 recipient. Thanks, Rick!

# STORY COUNTY TRAILS MASTER PLAN

By Ryan Wiemold, Parks Superintendent



PHOTO BY RICK DIETZ

Cyclists enjoy the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail near Huxley's Trailridge Park.

Story County has many parks, natural areas and trails throughout the county that greatly enhance quality of life, wellness and recreational opportunities. Recent successes in land acquisition, funding and the extension and paving of miles of trails led Story County Conservation (SCC) to seek an updated trails plan for future trail priorities and improvements.

This new Story County Trails Master Plan (2025) builds upon previous trail planning efforts and is written with actionable steps. The plan includes user priorities shared with us at various public input meetings, and identifies opportunities for new trail connections within Story County and regionally. The community outreach process had an impact in every step of the creation of the Story County Trails Master Plan, including identifying missing links, desired amenities and criteria used to prioritize upcoming projects.

SCC and local communities are already celebrating one of the top priorities of the plan, paving the

Heart of Iowa Nature Trail. SCC, its partners, communities and users recently celebrated a ribbon cutting and trail celebration event which had about 300 registered riders! The trail has recently been paved over 21 miles across the county and SCC is actively paving through Collins and working towards the Story-Marshall County line in the near future.

A second priority project starting off is R38 Trail Alternative analysis. On-road bike lanes currently connect Ames to Slater along County Road R38, although this stretch is of great concern to users due to the speed and volume of vehicle traffic. The public identified seeking an improved solution as a high priority during the public input process. SCC is now working with consultants to explore alternative routes and path options to better connect this route with an off-road trail.



View full Trails Plan:  
Scan QR code or visit  
[www.bit.ly/SCCtrailsplan](http://www.bit.ly/SCCtrailsplan)

# PUBLIC PROGRAMS & EVENTS

Nov. 2025 - Jan. 2026



Register online at [www.mycountyparks.com](http://www.mycountyparks.com)

## NOVEMBER

### O.W.L.S. - OUTDOOR JAPAN

Thursday, Nov. 6, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Conservation Center - McFarland Park



Japan offers far more than neon-lit cities—its outdoor experiences are rich and varied. Explore pilgrim routes, alpine treks or stroll through gardens, shrines, temples grounds. Explore rural areas on rental bikes, and relax at an onsen after a day outside. Join longtime volunteer Mike Schmidt, who has visited many times, as he shares insights into Japan's natural and cultural treasures.

### LANTERNS AND LIGHT

Saturday, Nov. 8, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Add light to our shorter days and embrace the changing season by making an easy mason jar lantern. We will light our lanterns and take a short walk together to explore at dusk (optional). Register online by October 26.

### SPICE OF LIFE WORKSHOP

Thursday, Nov. 13, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Herbs and spices have been used by different cultures for centuries for food, healing, preservation and more. Explore some familiar and not so familiar herbs and spices! Mamta Israni, Master Gardner and educator, will share her knowledge about various plants, herbs and spices. Register online by November 5.

### HERBAL REMEDIES WORKSHOP

Saturday, Nov. 15, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Dive into the world of natural wellness and traditional herbal remedies. Connect with the healing power of plants, including elderberry, ginger, garlic and more. Chop, boil, jar and sip your way into better health with two immune-boosting tinctures to take home. Register online by November 12.

### SUNSET HIKE

Monday, Nov. 17, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Celebrate National Take a Hike Day with crisp fall air at golden hour. Naturalist Amber will lead a scenic group hike as we

explore a moderate trail, perfect for most fitness levels (1 to 1.5 miles), while soaking in sights and sounds of nature. Register online by November 16.

### STRING ART

Friday, Nov. 21, 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Turn a plank of wood into a work of art! Great for all craft experience levels. We will create a feather design with step-by-step instructions. Register online by November 9.

## DECEMBER

### O.W.L.S. - THE 40-HORSE HITCH

Thursday, Dec. 4, 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Conservation Center - McFarland Park



In 1901 Jake Posey put the first 40 horse hitch together. Later, Dick Sparrow of Zearing, IA drove a 40-horse team. Bill Couser from Nevada will share a visual presentation of the history of the 40-horse hitch and stories of his time helping with the team. No registration needed.

### LUMINARY WALK

Saturday, Dec. 6, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

McFarland Park

Let the glow of luminaries light your way on a special walk to welcome winter. Walk is self-guided; complete loop is about one mile on a paved trail around the lake. Dress in layered clothing appropriate for the weather. Registration with \$5 fee required by November 30.

### PUZZLE TUESDAYS

1st and 3rd Tuesdays, starting in December

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Cozy up with a warm drink and enjoy birdwatching while building jigsaw puzzles. Coffee and hot chocolate provided. Available on first and third Tuesdays, December thru February. Just show up, come and go as you please.

## WILD TOTS: NATURE AT NIGHT

Sunday, Dec. 14, 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Get outdoors this winter! We'll learn about animals that wake up when the sun goes down. Program includes story, craft, short hike and nature activities. Intended for tots ages 18 months to not yet in kindergarten. Register online by December 7.

## HOLIDAY CREATIONS

Saturday, Dec. 20, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Oh what fun it is to... create handmade crafts! Workshop includes: wood burning tree cookie ornament, pinecone gnome ornament and hand-painted welcome board. All skill levels welcome. Enjoy cozy vibes, creative company and hot cocoa. Register online by December 7.

## HIDDEN CANDY CANE HIKE

Monday, Dec. 22, 12:00 - 4:00 p.m.

McFarland Park

Bring the family out on the trails in search of hidden candy canes. This is a self-guided hike, so come and go as you please. Check-in inside and receive a map and instructions. How many candy canes will you find?! Fun for all ages. Just show up.

## JANUARY

### O.W.L.S. - HANDS-ON ASTRONOMY LEARNING

Thursday, Jan. 8, 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Conservation Center - McFarland Park

Astronomers claim to know a lot about the universe: How far away planets, stars and galaxies are; what those objects are made of; how hot or cold they are, We'll learn from Ed Engel how astronomers calculate these things. Includes hands-on activities with telescope types and uses, using star charts and finding distance to nearby stars and more.

### PINE NEEDLE WEAVING

Saturday, Jan. 10 at 9:00 a.m. OR Noon

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Turn pine needles into a beautiful little basket using a technique as old as time, led by naturalist Clair Pfantz. Spots are limited. Register online by Dec. 28.

### NATURE PLAY DATES: SNOW/ICE PLAY

Tuesday, Jan. 13 at 10:00 a.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

This is a casual opportunity to meet other families and play outside. Naturalist Bekah will read children's book "Winter Walk!", followed by a self-guided snow/ice exploration activity - it's up to you to play! No registration required.



## PRIMITIVE FIRE WORKSHOP

Saturday, Jan. 24, 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

McFarland Park

Discover the magic of bringing forth fire using only materials sourced from nature. This workshop will provide a demonstration and opportunities to practice making fire using a primitive bow-drill fire set. Give it a try or just come to watch and learn. Register online by January 16.

## COCOA PICASSO

Saturday, Jan. 24 at 1:00 p.m.

Conservation Center at McFarland Park

Join Naturalist Amber for step-by-step gouache painting session, perfect for all skill levels. She'll provide clear instructions and helpful tips as you paint a nature-inspired scene - and leave with a work of art you're proud of. Not intended for children. All materials are provided, including hot cocoa. Register online by January 22.

## Need Financial Assistance?

Ask about **NATURE CONNECT** to receive **75% off** the cost of program registrations, facility rentals, camping and more.

Contact us at [conservation@storycountyiowa.gov](mailto:conservation@storycountyiowa.gov) or (515) 232.2516 to obtain coupon code.

## HONEYSUCKLE IN THE HOT SEAT

Saturday, Jan. 17, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.

Christiansen Forest Preserve

**VOLUNTEER WITH US!** It may be cold out, but the honeysuckle is in trouble! Join us for a volunteer day at Christiansen Forest Preserve near Huxley. We'll teach you about this invasive plant and the role removal plays in the ongoing oak savanna restoration at this property. Then, we'll cut and remove this shrub as a team, and end with a toast to hard work with warm drinks and sweet snacks. Register in advance by January 15 at [www.storycountyiowa.gov/566/volunteering](http://www.storycountyiowa.gov/566/volunteering).



# DON'T BE SALTY THIS WINTER!

We add small amounts of salt to pasta water, water softeners and perhaps even a DIY weed killer. But did you know that in heavy applications, like on icy sidewalks and roadways, salt can have major impacts on streams, wildlife and drinking water?

Run off from salty roads can contaminate freshwater streams and wetlands, impacting fish and amphibians. Once chloride enters lakes and streams, there is no way to remove it. Water treatment facilities are not designed to remove large amounts of chlorides either, so it can end up in tap water and even corrode pipes.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Be a smart salter! The Izaak Walton League's "Salt Watch" initiative raises awareness about salt pollution and tracks salt levels in local water bodies through citizen science. Consider following tips in the graphic below. Want to get involved? Request your free Salt Watch Kit to test salt levels in local waters and report findings to a national database.

More info at [www.iwla.org/salt-watch/](http://www.iwla.org/salt-watch/)

## BE A SMART SALTER SHOVEL | SCATTER | SWEEP



### SHOVEL

Shovel driveways before snow can turn into ice.



### SCATTER

A 12 oz cup of salt can treat 20 ft of driveway, 10 sidewalk squares, or 2 parking spaces.



### SWEEP

Sweep excess salt that doesn't melt and reuse it.

*While it's important to use salt for safety, excess use can pose a threat to fish, wildlife, human health, and even cars. So be a SMART SALTER this year.*



# Winter Walks Series with Outdoor Alliance



Enjoy a series of winter walks as we explore our local public parks. These walks are free and do not require registration. Bring a light snack to share with the group as the walk concludes if you would like.

For more information, contact [info@oasco.org](mailto:info@oasco.org) or visit [www.oasco.org](http://www.oasco.org).

- **Thursday, Jan. 1, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Carr Pool**  
1610 Meadowlane Ave., Ames
- **Thursday, Jan. 8, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**Robison Wildlife Acres**  
29490 632nd Ave., Maxwell  
Trail includes steps and slopes, so walking stick or poles may be appropriate.
- **Thursday, Jan. 15, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. at**  
**East Peterson Park**  
55756 180th Street, Ames
- **Thursday, Jan. 22, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m. at**  
**Ronald "Dick Jordan Family Wildlife Area**  
56091 265th St, Ames  
Meet on NE side of South Skunk River Bridge
- **Thursday, Jan. 29, 1:30 - 3:00 p.m.**  
**McFarland Park**  
56461 180th Ave., Ames  
Meet at west end of parking lot at 1:30 p.m.

## THANK YOU

### THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FOR THEIR GENEROSITY:

All Partners & Volunteers	Contributors in memory of
Outdoor Alliance of Story County	Charles Mortvedt
Robert Brown	Contributors in memory of Bob
Gerald & Sally Deters	Deppe
Pet Supplies Plus	Iowa Chapter of Backcountry
Michelle Ward & Kimball Olson	Hunters and Anglers

## BOARD & STAFF

*The Story County Conservation Board typically meets the second Monday of each month at the Story County Conservation Center at McFarland Park (56461 180th St.). Meetings are open to the public.*

### Conservation Board

Craig Meyers, Vice Chair  
Christine Laumer, Vice Chair  
Erica Place, Secretary  
Dr. Jim Pease, Member  
Dr. Judy Levings, Member  
Linda Murken, Ex-Officio Member

### Conservation Center Staff, Ames

Michael Cox, Director  
Ryan Wiemold, Parks Superintendent  
Pat Shehan, Special Projects Ranger  
Marianne Harrelson, Financial Data Mgr.  
Jess Paulin, Administrative Assistant  
Jerry Keys, Environmental Education Coord.  
Rebekah Beall, Naturalist  
Bobbi Donovan, Naturalist  
Amber Carpenter, Naturalist  
Clair Pfantz, Naturalist  
Madi Nolte, Community Engagement Coord.

### McFarland Park Shop, Ames

Russ DeWall, Operations Supervisor  
Logan Heissel, Park Ranger  
Dillon Schmidt, Conservation Technician II  
Kallie Judson, Conservation Technician I  
Derek Seward, Trails/Natural Resources Tech.

### Hickory Grove Park Shop, Colo

Jake Smith, Operations Supervisor  
Olivia VanderHart, Park Ranger  
Hunter Simmons, Conservation Technician II  
Bailey Walters, Conservation Technician I  
Brandon Clough, Natural Resources Specialist

### IRVM Office & Shop, Nevada

Ty Hamiel, Vegetation Mgmt. Biologist  
Nathan Schmitt, Veg. Mgmt. Specialist

### Administration Bldg., Nevada

Sara Carmichael, Watershed Coordinator



STORY COUNTY  
CONSERVATION  
56461 180th Street  
Ames, Iowa 50010-9451

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Ames, Iowa  
Permit 301

## BE WISE WITH YARD WASTE

Keep it out of the landfill!  
Check with your local  
municipality about yard  
waste disposal options  
this fall. Better yet, "leave  
the leaves" as a source  
of food and shelter for  
overwintering insects!



ILLUSTRATION BY MADELYNN DAKE