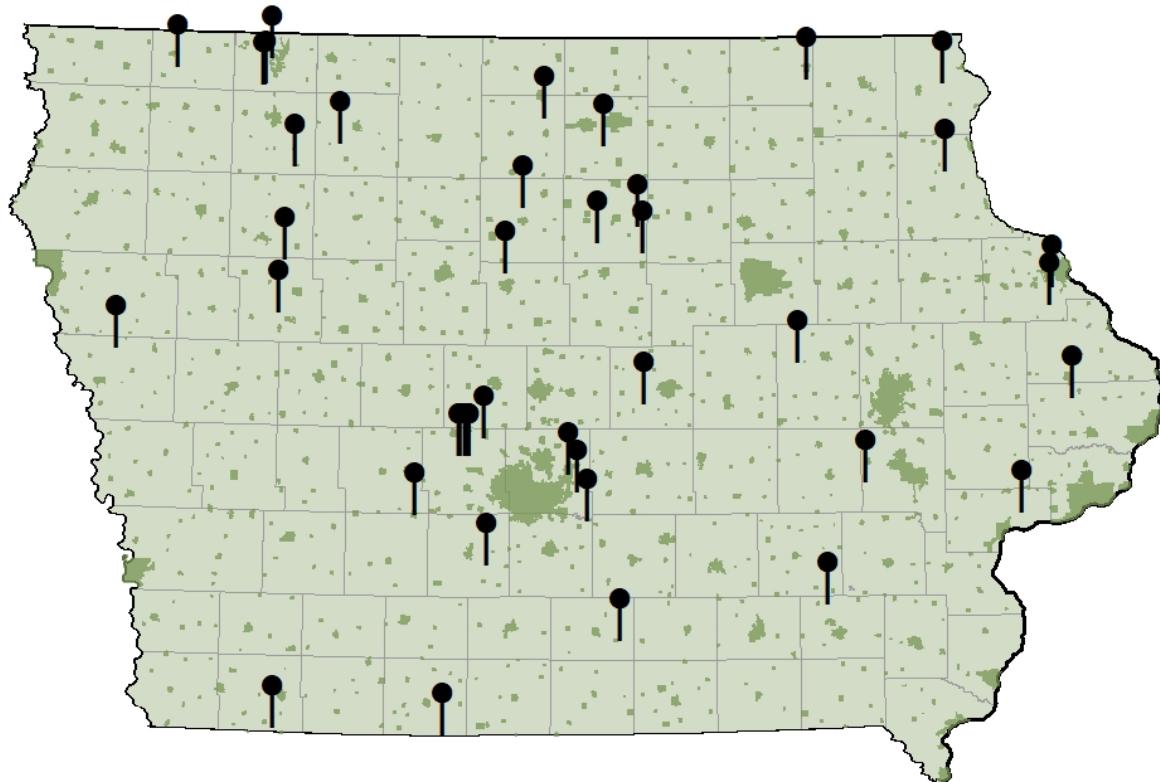




Iowa  
Natural Heritage  
Foundation

# 2019 Land Protection Projects



In 2019, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation protected 5,683 acres through new land protection projects. Some of those were places purchased by or donated to INHF, reflected in the map above. Others were permanent conservation easements done with landowners on private land.

INHF also transferred 30 properties to partner organizations all across Iowa, opening up special places to the public for hiking, hunting, biking, fishing, paddling, bird-watching and other forms of outdoor recreation. INHF — a statewide private, nonprofit conservation organization — accomplished this with the help of passionate supporters, partners, volunteers, staff and board members.

What follows is a summary of land protection and trail projects completed by INHF broken down by quarter.

# 2019: Q1

INHF protection projects and land transferred between in the first quarter of 2019

## Newly protected areas

### Buffalo Creek WMA addition

8 acres in Delaware County will be restored to native vegetation to provide runoff filtration and increased water storage. (*Will be owned and managed by the Delaware County Conservation Board*)

### Loess Hills WMA addition

162 acres of the in Monona County protects classic Loess Hills topography, scenic vistas, native prairie and reconstructed prairie. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### South Skunk River Greenbelt addition

55 acres in Story County protects historical oxbows and a river buffer along the South Skunk River. (*Will be owned and managed by the Story County Conservation Board*)

### Tuttle Lake WMA addition

179 acres in Emmet County protects upland grassland and an additional wetland near the Tuttle Lake Wetland Complex. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Spring Run WMA addition

110 acres in the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture priority area in Dickinson County will be restored to wetland and prairie. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Leo Grau Wildlife Area additions

40 acres in Buena Vista County will build a wetland under the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), and create more suitable wildlife habitat and benefit water quality. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Warren County

374 acres in Warren County will provide public hunting and recreation land to central Iowa along the North River. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Pilot Knob WMA addition

156 acres of Winnebago County will be restored to wetland basins and native vegetation for migratory birds seeking nesting and breeding habitat. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Polk County

27.5-acre conservation easement in Polk County provides habitat protection along the Raccoon River and maintains a scenic woodland buffer. (*Protected by Fred and Emily Weitz*)

### Allamakee County

20-acre conservation easement in Allamakee County protects the viewshed and water quality of the Upper Iowa River just two miles from INHF's Heritage Valley. (*Protected by Michael and Linda Rickert*)

### Mahaska County

479-acre reserve life estate in Mahaska County will remain as woodland and grassland, with long-term stewardship benefitting wildlife. (*Protected by Pleasant Grove Land Preservation, Inc.*)

## Land transfers to partners

### Winneshiek County

108 acres in Winneshiek County helps protect the Upper Iowa River viewshed, water quality, a natural spring and woodlands for wildlife habitat. (*Owned by private landowner with conservation protections*)

### Clarke County

17 acres in the City of Osceola provides access to a trail from Osceola Elementary to East Lake Park. (*Owned and managed by the City of Osceola*)



**Comprised of 43 acres** of restored prairie and wetlands, Reed's Run Wildlife Area lies just off the eastern shore of Big Spirit Lake and along the Dickinson County trail system. The property was bequeathed to the Spirit Lake United Methodist Church and through the help of the Spirit Lake Protective Association (SLPA) and INHF, the property was protected and has been transferred to Dickinson County Conservation (DCCB) for public use.

## Woodbury County

90 acres in Woodbury County boast the world's second deepest deposition of Loess soil and also contains Native American geoglyphs. (*Owned and managed by the Woodbury County Conservation Board*)

### Big Marsh WMA addition

139 acres near Boylan Creek in Butler County will be restored to native grasses and wetlands, providing flood control during frequent high water events. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Heritage Hills addition

152 acres of grasslands and native woodland in Clarke County will create critical habitat for state threatened species, such as the Henslow's Sparrow. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Legacy Wildlife Area

273 acres of Hardin County's prairie pothole region were protected through the Wetland Reserve Easement program. (*Owned and managed by the Hardin County Conservation Board*)

### Reeds Run Wildlife Area

43 acres of restored wetland and grassland located along Big Spirit Lake's eastern shore in Dickinson County. (*Owned and managed by the Dickinson County Conservation Board*)



# 2019: Q2

INHF protection projects and land transferred between in the second quarter of 2019

## Newly protected areas

### Dubuque County

68-acre conservation easement within Dubuque city limits protecting prairie, open space and scenic beauty. (*Donated by the Sisters of St. Francis*).

### Fen Valley WMA addition

160 acres in southeast Clay County near Elk Creek, including remnant prairie pasture and a tributary of the Little Sioux River, one of Iowa's five Protected Water Areas. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Kellerton WMA addition

80 acres of pasture in Ringgold County within the Kellerton Bird Conservation Area, a Globally Important Bird Area. Protects critical habitat for grassland birds. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Page County

301-acre conservation easement along the West Nodaway River near Clarinda. Protects grassland for conservation-minded farming, water quality and wildlife habitat. (*Protected by Seth and Christy Watkins*).

### Winneshiek County

76 acres in Winneshiek County along a heavily-protected corridor of the Upper Iowa River. Protects scenic beauty, wildlife habitat and water quality. (*Previously owned by INHF, sold with conservation easement*).

## Land transfers to partners

### Cayler Prairie Complex addition

22 acres of remnant prairie pasture along the Little Sioux River in Dickinson County. Expands access to and acreage of Cayler Prairie Complex. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Whitetail Flats WMA addition

90 acres of riparian woodland habitat along the Iowa River in Franklin County. Protects wildlife habitat and water quality. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Heritage Hills additions

583 acres of mixed habitat in Clarke and Warren counties south of the Des Moines metro. Provides high quality wildlife habitat and expands public access. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Big Grove - Schwab / Burford Acquisition

99 acres of woodland in Johnson County. Protects wildlife habitat and expands access to outdoor recreation opportunities. (*Owned and managed by Johnson County Conservation Board*).

### Lenze McCoy Wildlife Area addition

163 acres in Winnebago County that will be restored to wetlands and native vegetation, providing quality nesting habitat for migratory birds and pheasants. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Rubio Access addition

52 acres near the Skunk River in Keokuk County providing excellent wildlife habitat, water quality benefits and outdoor recreation opportunities. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Sedan Bottoms addition

451 acres of wetland and riparian woodland habitat in Appanoose County. Expands public access and provides high quality wildlife habitat. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Sleepy Hollow addition

15 acres of predominately riparian woodland habitat along the South Skunk River across the road from Ada Hayden Heritage Park in Ames. Protects wildlife habitat and expands public access. (*Owned and managed by the Story County Conservation Board*).



The Sisters of St. Francis celebrated a special liturgy as they signed the conservation easement that permanently protects their 68 acres of prairie and scenic open space within the Dubuque city limits. The community's action reflects their land ethic, rooted in their faith.

### Spring Run Complex WMA addition

80 acres in Dickinson County adjacent to Pleasant Lake that will be restored to prairie and wetland. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Fox Hills WMA addition

116 acres of oak/hickory woodland habitat along the Des Moines River southeast of Ottumwa. Provides excellent wildlife habitat, particularly for Federally Endangered Indiana bats and Northern long-eared bats. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*).

### Worth County

144 acres of wetland, grassland and oak savanna in Worth County near Silver Lake. Provides wildlife habitat for upland birds and migratory waterfowl. (*Owned and managed by Worth County Conservation Board*).



# 2019: Q3

INHF protection projects and land transferred between in the third quarter of 2019

## Newly protected areas

### Becker Conservation Easement

150-acre conservation easement adjacent to Sac City. Protects stream corridor, pasture and woodland, providing positive water quality benefits. (*Donated by Bruce and Tancy Becker*)

### Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt Addition

76 acres northeast of Bondurant in Polk County. Once restored, this land will benefit Buffalo Creek, increasing water filtration and reducing sediment runoff. Will provide wildlife habitat for many grassland and wetland bird species. (*Will be owned and managed by Polk County Conservation Board*)

### Eisentrager Wildlife Area

116 acres south of Dumont in Butler County. Protects grassland and wetland along Coon Creek. Uncommon native species such as White turtlehead, marsh marigolds, smooth green snakes and otter pups have been seen here. (*Will be owned and managed by Butler County Conservation Board*)

### Hart Family Wetland

160 acres in Benton County near the Cedar River that protects 34 acres of pasture and fen as part of the Middle Cedar River Watershed Project. This project will restore native prairie and wetland vegetation, which will improve water filtration and retention and reduce soil runoff. (*Will be owned and managed by Benton County Conservation Board*)

### Madison County

684 acres of woodland along the North River. Provides habitat for a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Preserving the property will improve floodplain storage and help maintain soil integrity. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Middle Raccoon River WMA

154 acres of woodland along the Middle Raccoon River. Protects oak, hickory and walnut trees and provides habitat for whitetail deer, turkeys, bobcats and other small mammals and reptiles. (*Will be owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge Addition

74 acres in Jasper County that will protect scenic beauty, restore native tallgrass prairie that increase wildlife habitat. Will expand grassland bird habitat for species such as Henslow's sparrows, bobolinks and dickcissels. (*Will be owned and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*)

### Oak Ridge Conservation Area Addition

83 acres of cool season meadow and mixed oak woodlands in Woodbury County that will provide opportunities for hunting, hiking and bird watching. (*Will be owned and managed by Woodbury County Conservation Board*)

### Raccoon River Valley Trail and High Trestle Trail Link

Three properties in Dallas County that will help link the Raccoon River Valley Trail and the High Trestle Trail. (*Owned and managed by Dallas County Conservation Board*)

### Wright County

90-acre conservation easement along White Fox Creek. Protects wildlife habitat and enhances the water quality of the creek. (*Conservation easement held by INHF*)

## Land transfers to partners

### Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt Addition

74 acres adjacent to Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt. Protects wildlife habitat, reduces soil erosion and increases rainfall retention. (*Owned and managed by Polk County Conservation Board*)



INHF transferred 120 acres in Winneshiek County to the Iowa DNR that will be added to the Falcon Springs Wildlife Management Area. The new public area is approximately 2 miles northwest of Decorah.

### Falcon Springs WMA Addition

120 acres of woodland and agricultural land northwest of Decorah in Winneshiek County. Provides outdoor recreation opportunities for birders and upland game hunters. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Heritage Hills WMA Addition 1

140 acres of woodland and remnant prairie in Madison County. Provides numerous outdoor recreation opportunities. This is the second tract transferred in this complex. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Heritage Hills WMA Addition 2

Two properties totaling 200 acres of mostly grassland with high quality oak, hickory and walnut woodland in Clarke County. Protects vital habitat and expands the nearby, but unconnected, Heritage Hills WMA. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Magnetic Park

51 acres in Cherokee County that will link to a city trail. The trail will create a loop around the city and the remaining land will be seeded to restore native prairie. (*Owned and managed by the City of Cherokee*)

### Pilot Knob WMA Addition

156 acres of restored wetlands and rolling hills east of Forest City that will provide significant wildlife habitat once restored to native vegetation. The land will provide nesting habitat for waterfowl such as Bluewing teal and Mallards and benefit water quality. (*Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR*)

### Robin's Nest Wildlife Area

79 acres along the Cedar River. Provides quality wildlife habitat for species such as Whitetail deer, turkeys, common yellowthroats and Barred owls. Consists of native vegetation, pasture and woodland. (*Owned and managed by Mitchell County Conservation Board*)

### Raccoon River Valley Trail and High Trestle Trail Link

Six properties in Dallas County that will help link the Raccoon River Valley Trail and the High Trestle Trail. (*Owned and managed by Dallas County Conservation Board*)



# 2019: Q4

INHF protection projects and land transferred between in the fourth quarter of 2019

## Newly protected areas

### Brooks Golf Course

225-acre conservation easement on Brooks Golf course. Situated within Okoboji city limits, protection of the course will preserve green space and present expanded outdoor recreation opportunities in an otherwise densely populated area of the Iowa Great Lakes. Dickinson County Conservation Board (DCCB) purchased the property with funds from an anonymous donor with the understanding that DCCB would place a conservation easement on the land to protect it from future residential development in perpetuity. (Conservation easement held by INHF).

### Codfish Hollow Hill Prairie

60-acre conservation easement east of Maquoketa. Includes remnant and restored hilltop prairies and wooded valleys that are home to an outstanding diversity of species. Protects native habitat, open space and scenic beauty. (Donated by Ray and Patti Hamilton) \*Read more about this project on page 12.

### Dickinson County

20 acres of wetland near the Kenu Art Center and Dickinson County Nature Center. Protects water quality, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation opportunities, and expands protected land in the heart of the Iowa Great Lakes. (Portion of land value donated by the Okoboji Foundation. Will be owned and managed by Dickinson County Conservation Board)

### Jasper County

156 acres along the Skunk River adjacent to Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt in Jasper County. Lies within the Chichaqua-Neal Smith Bird Conservation Area and protects habitat for species including trumpeter swans, wood ducks and sedge wrens. (Will be owned and managed by Jasper County Conservation Board)

### Kent Park Addition

20 acres near the headwaters of the Kent Park Lake near Coralville in Johnson County. Restoration of this property supports a recent 2-year multimillion-dollar renovation of the lake to address water quality issues. This property's key position in the watershed will help protect water quality. (Will be owned and managed by Johnson County Conservation Board)

### Raccoon River Valley Trail and High Trestle Trail Link

Quarter mile of corridor near Woodward that will help link the Raccoon River Valley Trail and the High Trestle Trail. (Will be owned and managed by Dallas County Conservation)

### Wright County

132 acres of woodland along the west branch of the Iowa River near Belmond. Protects the river corridor and provides wildlife habitat in an area with very little woodland. (Will be owned and managed by Wright County Conservation Board)

### Butler County

38 acres along Boylan Creek in the northwest corner of Butler County. Protection will provide high quality habitat for neotropical migratory birds, deer, pheasant and mink. Will also provide water quality benefits and greater infiltration during flooding events. (Will be owned and managed by Butler County Conservation Board)

### Raccoon River Valley Trail extension

Secures approximately 1 mile of right of way for the planned extension of the Raccoon River Valley Trail between Herndon and Coon Rapids. This is a key link in what will eventually be part of the Great American Rail Trail. (Will be owned and managed by the City of Coon Rapids)

### Central Iowa 4-H Camp

1,011-acre former 4-H camp, also known as Clover Woods, situated along the Des Moines River in Boone County. Contains high quality oak-hickory woodlands, more than a dozen miles of hiking trails and ancient Native American burial mounds.



**The former 4-H camp** near Madrid stretches 1,011 acres along the Des Moines River valley, offering a sense of wildness in the heart of central Iowa unlike any other. The camp, first known as the Iowa 4-H Center and more recently as Clover Woods Camp and Retreat Center, was split into 12 parcels and offered for sale by the Iowa 4-H Foundation in late September, citing declining attendance and a desire to support other 4-H programs around the state. INHF made an offer on the entire camp. The offer was accepted by the Iowa 4-H Foundation, and INHF took possession of the property at the beginning of 2020.

## Land transfers to partners

### Copeland Bend WMA

100 acres of wetland and grassland along the Missouri River in Fremont County. Helps create a complex of protected land along the river corridor and enhances waterfowl migration habitat in the floodplain. (Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR)

### Heritage Hills WMA Addition 1

86 acres of grassland, wooded ridges and valleys in Clarke County. Protects wildlife habitat and expands outdoor recreation opportunities. This is the fifth tract transferred in this 598-acre unit of Heritage Hills WMA. (Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR)

### Heritage Hills WMA Addition 2

120 acres along Squaw Creek in Warren County. Once restored, the land will provide excellent wildlife habitat and numerous outdoor recreation opportunities. This is the third tract transferred in this 704-acre unit of Heritage Hills WMA. (Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR)

### Lansing WMA Addition

197 acres of wooded bluffed land overlooking the Mississippi River in Allamakee County. Protects scenic beauty, open space and wildlife habitat, and expands protection along the river corridor. (Owned and managed by the Iowa DNR)

