

SUMMER 2019

# IOWA NATURAL HERITAGE

Protecting and restoring Iowa's land, water and wildlife.



## **40 YEARS OF PROTECTION**

A look at what INHF and its partners have accomplished since 1979 **16**

## ***Through generations***

INHF has been lucky to know families through multiple generations **12**

## ***Nature knows best***

Seth Watkins and his family let nature lead the way on Pinhook Farm **9**

Est. 1979

**40  
YEARS**





12

FEATURES

**8 Bird's eye view**  
Two new additions to a natural area along the Mississippi River add to a northeast Iowa treasure.

**9 Nature knows best**  
Seth Watkins feels a responsibility to pay it forward, and protecting his farm was one part of that process.

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

**12 Generations strong**  
Many families have a multi-generational connection to INHF, passing along a culture of conservation.

**16 40 years of protection**  
A snapshot of land protection over the last 40 years with INHF.

**18 Vital refuge**  
Success stories of species that have made a comeback in Iowa in recent decades.

**20 For those who lead**  
Help INHF chart the next 40 years by addressing the changing environment around conservation in Iowa.

**21 In land we trust**  
INHF helped to establish what is now the Land Trust Alliance, creating a culture of shared knowledge.

**24 Learning today, leading tomorrow**  
INHF has more than 300 alumni of its internship program, many of them leaders in conservation today.

DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Opening Thoughts
- 4 Through Your Lens
- 6 Field Notes
- 26 Looking Out for Iowa
- 27 Get Outdoors



**ON THE COVER**  
A monarch lands on Whorled milkweed during its summer journey north. *Photo by Deb Shoning*



Protecting and restoring Iowa's land, water and wildlife.

505 Fifth Ave., Suite 444 Des Moines, Iowa 50309  
www.inhf.org | 515-288-1846 | info@inhf.org

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- Ross Baxter** Land Projects Director
- Andrea Boulton** Trails and Greenways Director
- Jered Bourquin** Blufflands Associate
- Jessica Riebkes Clough** Land Projects Assistant
- Kevin Cutsforth** Database Administrator
- Brian Fankhauser** Blufflands Director
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**Joe Jayjack** Editor/Publisher  
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OPENING THOUGHTS

# Looking out for the future

**W**hen Iowa Natural Heritage



JOE MCGOVERN  
President

Foundation was founded on the summer solstice in 1979, there was a simple goal in mind: protect more land, water and wildlife in Iowa. As we celebrate our 40th anniversary, we recognize that our mission hasn't changed much since those early days, even if the ways in which we fulfill our mission have evolved.

It is impossible to think about all that has been accomplished without acknowledging all of the people that have made it possible. The heroes, sung and unsung, that dedicate their lives to making a difference. The public and private partners that stood side by side with us during rough times. And the countless people that have supported the work of INHF.

We would not have protected 175,000 acres without these people. We are blessed to have relationships with many families that span generations, creating a legacy of conservation through INHF. More than 300 former interns continue to make an impact on the natural

world in their professional lives. We have witnessed some wildlife species make a big comeback in Iowa that now have more habitat to call home, and we played a part in creating a national network of land trusts that make each other better.

While it is important to take a moment to celebrate what we have been able to do together, INHF is keeping a sharp eye on the future to meet the challenges ahead. As we imagine what our next 40 years will look like, I invite you to help us shape that vision.

Our work is more important than ever as our state continues to change. Iowa's population is becoming more urban and more diverse, and we want to make sure nature has a place in everybody's lives. Dwindling rural communities could be revitalized by an investment in outdoor recreation. Our state is seeing more extreme weather events, and we know that wise planning and good conservation are part of the solution.

Future generations are counting on us, and they deserve our best effort. Thank you for support, whether past, present or future. We simply couldn't do it without you!

**Bruce Ehresman**, who recently retired after a 41-year career with the Iowa DNR, speaks with Riggs Wilson, a statewide land stewardship intern, at INHF's 40th Anniversary celebration at Jester Park Lodge in Polk County  
*Photo by Madison Kelly, INHF*

## “Mighty oaks from little acorns grow.”

– English Proverb

It's a bit embarrassing to admit, working for an organization whose logo is an acorn, but I never used to pay much attention to oak trees. At least not any more than I did any other tree.

In fact, if I'm being honest, until somewhat recently I was often largely unaware of their presence until the arrival of fall, when acorns carpet the sidewalks of my neighborhood, my favorite trails and the forest floor, rolling and crunching under foot and bike tire.

Even the most novice of arborists immediately become aware of the oaks during mast years when they announce their presence by dropping acorns by the literal thousands. Occurring every 2-5 years with few acorns in-between, no one knows what causes these irregular cycles of boom and bust – it remains one of nature's mysteries.

Many people assume INHF's logo is an acorn because of the inherent symbolism – from little things big things grow. Those people would be correct. However, the inverse is also true: from mighty oaks come little acorns.

INHF has experienced its fair share of mast years in the last four decades, scattering acorns far and wide in the form of people, projects and ideas – many which are highlighted in this special anniversary issue. In turn, those acorns-turned-oaks have gone on to spur new growth of their own. Together they stand tall, always present, ready to release a rain of possibilities.

— **KATY HEGGEN**,  
*Communications specialist*



Oak trees look out over the prairie at Snyder Heritage Farm in Elkhart. The farm was donated to INHF in 1991 by A.C. and Gladys Snyder. Restoration of the Oak savanna began in 2000. Photo by Kristy Hall



**The Great American Rail-Trail will wind through the heart of Iowa**

May 10, 1869 marked the completion of the transcontinental railroad, a 1,912-mile continuous railroad line linking the United States from east to west. Nearly 150 years later to the day, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy announced the preferred path of another cross-country route, one that will span 12 states and the District of Columbia, and run right through the heart of Iowa.

When finished, the Great American Rail-Trail will stretch more than 3,700 miles connecting people, places and trails from Washington, D.C. to Washington State – including Iowa. 246.6 miles of the 465.3-mile trail from Davenport to Council Bluffs have already been completed, with 218.7 miles still in various phases of development. Many segments along the route, including the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, the High Trestle Trail, the T-Bone Trail and the Raccoon River Valley Trail among others, run along rail-trails INHF helped create.

Once complete, the Great American Rail-Trail will stretch more than 3,700 miles, connecting people, places and trails from Washington, D.C. to Washington State. Image provided courtesy of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.



INHF and local communities are also working on yet-to-be-completed segments, including the Iowa River Trail, a 34-mile former railroad corridor stretching from Marshalltown to Steamboat Rock along the Iowa River Greenbelt. Once complete, the trail will connect with the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail and the Highway 330 Trail. To learn more about how you can support the Iowa River Trail and consequently the Great American Rail-Trail visit [inhf.org](http://inhf.org)

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**AUG 15**  
Nature Walk at Kothenbeutel Prairie  
*Kothenbeutel Prairie, Franklin Co.*  
Throw on your boots and join INHF for an evening hike at Kothenbeutel Prairie. We'll guide attendees through this stunning 40-acre native prairie featuring over 200 plant species and a diverse array of wildlife. **RSVP at [inhf.org](http://inhf.org)**

**AUG 28**  
INHF's 40th Anniversary: Eastern Iowa Celebration  
*Burke Farm, Central City*  
Celebrate INHF's 40th anniversary. Enjoy a delicious en plein air dinner followed by hay rides out to the horizon that inspired Grant Wood's Fall Plowing. **Purchase tickets at [INHF.org](http://INHF.org)**

**SEPT 29**  
Linn Landowner Forum  
*Clearwater Farm, Marion*  
This forum brings together land owners and experts, along with vendors who can help with habitat projects. **RSVP at [inhf.org](http://inhf.org)**

**For more information, and more upcoming events, visit [www.inhf.org](http://www.inhf.org)**

**QUARTERLY PROTECTION REPORT**

An quick look at new INHF protection projects and land transferred between **March – June 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 public 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).*

**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).*

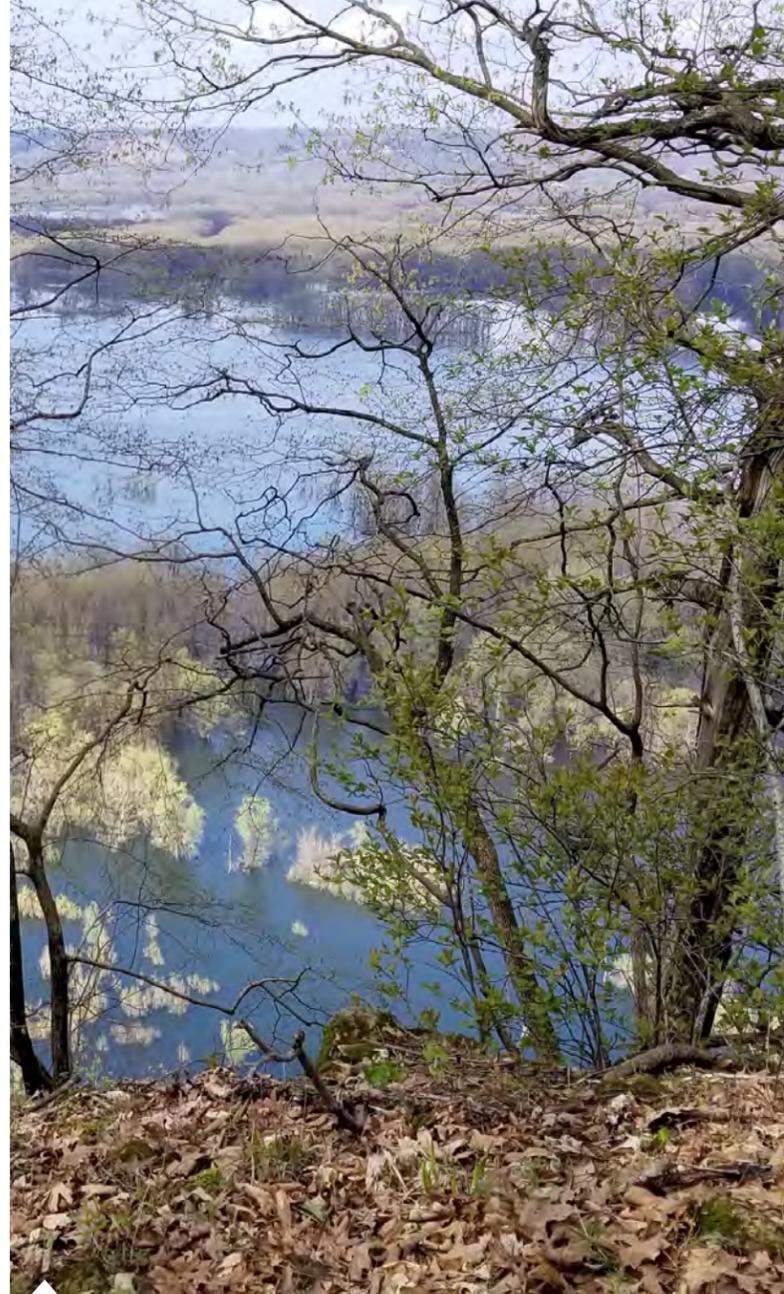
**Worth County**  
144 acres of wetland, grassland and oak savanna in Worth County near Silver Lake. Provides wildlife habitat for upland birds and migratory waterfowl. *(Owned and managed by Worth County Conservation Board).*

**CONSERVATION FEATURES**

- Woodlands
- Prairies/Grassland
- Wetlands
- Trail
- Park
- Streams/Rivers
- Agricultural land

**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.





**Rising more than 300 feet** overlooking the Mississippi River, two recently acquired additions to Lansing WMA permanently protect one of Iowa's most stunning views. *Photo by Brian Fankhauser*

"These uses help build an appreciation for Iowa's outdoors," said Fankhauser. "These additions also protect the scenic qualities that benefit local tourism, especially for fall foliage viewers."

Both additions provide important habitat for nesting and migratory birds, game and non-game species including some of Iowa's Species of Greatest Conservation Need. The large blocks of woodland are especially important for area-sensitive Neotropical migratory bird species like the Acadian flycatcher, Cerulean warbler and Veery. 🌿

### Lansing Wildlife Management Area

Allamakee County



**LAND:** 317 acres of quality woodland and wildlife habitat

**SPECIAL FEATURES:** View of Mississippi River, low-impact recreation, diverse bird populations

**PARTNERS:** Iowa DNR and INHF

# Bird's Eye View

BY ROWAN McMULLEN CHENG  
Communications Intern | [comminternrowan@inhf.com](mailto:comminternrowan@inhf.com)

**I**NHF is partnering with the Iowa DNR on two additions to Lansing Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Allamakee County to create a larger protected wildlife complex in northeast Iowa.

Adjacent to Fish Farm Mounds State Preserve, Black Hawk Point WMA, the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, the Great River Road National Scenic Byway and the Mississippi River Bike Trail, these additions protect 317 acres of quality woodland and wildlife habitat. Rising more than 300 feet overlooking the Mississippi River, they'll also permanently protect one of Iowa's most stunning views.

"The bluffs provide a significant natural viewshed that is limited in distribution and in a relatively unaltered state," said INHF Blufflands Director Brian Fankhauser. "They're a visually appealing resource due to their often steep topography, rock outcroppings, natural woodland and hill prairie habitats."

Low-impact recreational opportunities abound in both additions with ample space for wilderness hikes, photography, hunting and wildlife observation in the properties' rugged valleys and ridges of deciduous woodland.



# Nature Knows Best

## BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FARM

BY JESSICA RIEBKES CLOUGH  
Land Projects Assistant | [jclough@inhf.com](mailto:jclough@inhf.com)

**A**sk Seth Watkins to take you to his favorite spot on his cattle farm, and you'll end up at a small, unnamed creek among old oaks. The banks of the creek slope softly and sweeping grass holds the soil in place. It's here that Seth has turned over arrowheads and reflected on stories about his great-grandfather, who started the farm with a land grant after serving in the War of 1812.

"It weighs heavily on me to know that people lived here before, in harmony with the land," Watkins said. "The creek is my responsibility to pay it forward."

Pay it forward, he does. Since taking over fulltime management of the 301-acre farm in the 1990s, Watkins has implemented one conservation practice after another: cover crops, flash grazing, no-till, a diversified crop rotation, tree and native prairie plantings, and a major reduction in the farm's fuel, fertilizer and herbicide usage.

One particularly tough winter early in his tenure on the land, Watkins planned his largest shift in management: next year, his cows would calve later in the spring. It

was a risky move for the farm and an even bigger shift in mindset, but now it's the norm for Pinhook Farm.

"We began working with nature, not against it," Watkins said. "I started focusing on making the system work, not on managing the costs. When our farms are ecologically sound, that's where we'll have sustained profitability."

Keeping the farm a viable, eco-and-economically sound operation hinges on much of the property staying in perennial grass. Now, that grass is here to stay forever. The Watkins family, in partnership with INHF and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), worked together to protect Pinhook Farm through an Agricultural Land Easement (ALE). The ALE program, formerly The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), permanently protects agricultural lands, particularly those that implement conservation practices and elements of sustainability.

The NRCS provides both partial funding and oversight to this USDA program,

**"I started focusing on making the system work, not on managing the costs. When our farms are ecologically sound, that's where we'll have sustained profitability."**

— SETH WATKINS, OWNER OF PINHOOK FARM



making their partnership critical for using ALE in Iowa, and around the country.

“The ALE program allows NRCS to partner with local land trusts, like INHF, on a common mission: protecting more of the landscape,” said Sindra Jensen, NRCS easement programs coordinator.

INHF contributes a quarter of the funding for the project, while the landowner contributes the other quarter through the donated easement value. For Watkins, the ALE’s partnerships provide additional accountability.

“The easement keeps us from asking too much out of the land.”

The conservation practices Watkins has implemented over the years, as well as the permanent protection of the grassland, also benefits Watkins’ neighbors downstream, all the way to the Gulf of Mexico.

Pinhook Farm is one of over twenty farms INHF has helped protect through the ALE/FRPP programs, and the first in Page County.

“Seth’s innovative, holistic approach is good for his cows and good for the environment,” said INHF Conservation Easement Director Erin Van Waus. “It’s also a priority for INHF to keep grass as grass, whether on a working farms, wildlife area or buffer along a creek, so this project was a win-win.”

Land protected by an ALE will remain viable agricultural land forever. The Watkins ALE preserves Pinhook Farm as grassland, ensuring that Watkins’ successors will be able to continue raising cows. 🐄

**Land protected by an ALE** will remain viable agricultural land forever. The Watkins ALE preserves Pinhook Farm as grassland, ensuring Watkins’ successors will be able to continue raising cows. *Photos courtesy of Seth Watkins*

**Pinhook Farm**  
Page County



**LAND:** 301 acres

**SPECIAL FEATURES:**  
Cover crops, diversified crop rotation, tree and native prairie plantings

**PARTNERS:** Seth and Christy Watkins, INHF and NRCS

# CELEBRATING 40 YEARS



Since 1979, INHF has been protecting and restoring Iowa's land, water and wildlife. Here's a look at our growth over the past 40 years.

40TH ANNIVERSARY ILLUSTRATION BY MADISON KELLY

# GENERATIONS STRONG

INHF families instill a love of the land,  
inspire continued commitment to protection.

BY ANITA O'GARA  
Vice President | [aogara@inhf.com](mailto:aogara@inhf.com)



**I**n 1993, four generations of the Petersen family gathered for the dedication of Vern and Wilmer Petersen Wildlife Management Area in Shelby County. Wilmer Petersen had donated an expanse of grassland and ponds in western Iowa to the state for wildlife and people to enjoy. His son, H. Rand Petersen, had encouraged Wilmer and assisted the donation. One of Wilmer's youngest great-grandchildren handed the deed to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

"Some seeds were planted that day," Rand's daughter Katherine "KAP" Linder reflected.

This family and hundreds of others have led and supported INHF and its projects across generations — as a family affair.

"Lots of people really care about this work — about the land itself, or about the future of the state," Mary Louise Petersen said. "The future of the state and the land are connected."

Rand and Mary Louise joined and promoted INHF in its earliest days. The Petersens were especially interested in restoration to improve water quality at the Iowa Great Lakes. Mary Louise has loved this area since her childhood, spending time in nature with extended

**A deeply held love of Iowa's outdoors** has taken root in the next generation of the Petersen family. Photo courtesy of KAP Linder



**"My life has totally changed through my experiences with INHF and through my parents sharing their interest."**

— KATHERINE (KAP) LINDER

family at the lake home her grandmother established in 1917. After decades of loyal support, Mary Louise and Rand recently made a gift to the INHF Endowment so that their annual support will continue even beyond their lifetimes.

KAP and her husband, David, made their home at Twin Lakes. They envisioned the opportunity to create a trail and prairie at a spot that had been eroding into the lake. KAP's parents said, 'Call the folks at INHF and see if they can help.' That was KAP's first introduction to INHF. After the Linders and their neighbors had established Gutz Park and the nature trail with INHF, KAP joined the board of directors.

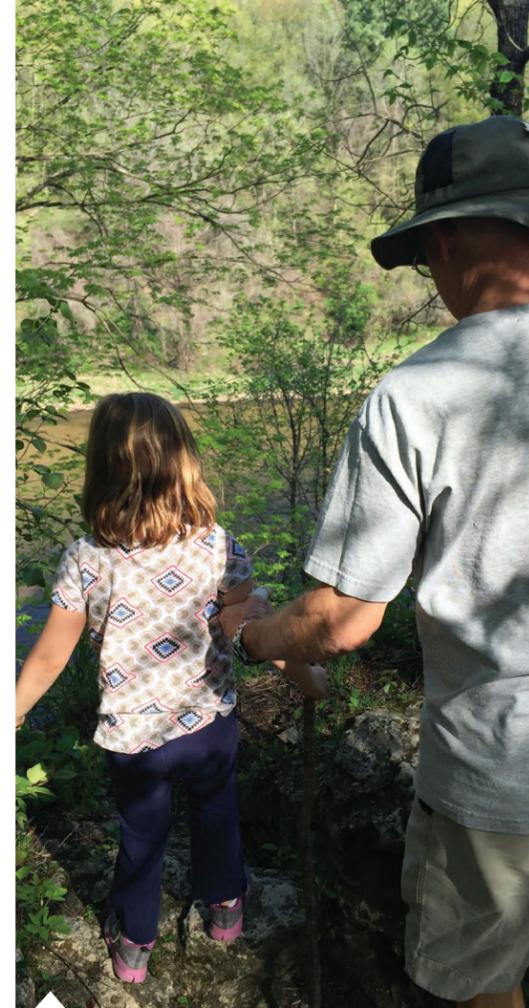
Now KAP embraces the role of Nature Grammy. Her oldest grandchild Siena, age 6, is especially eager for their nature walks. They watch for Today's Best Thing, and are collaborating on a children's book about enjoying nature together. KAP also loves to observe local eagles and frogs, sharing information with state and national databanks.

"My life has totally changed through my experiences with INHF and through my parents sharing their interest," KAP said.

## A LOOK BACK

at major events and projects since INHF's founding in 1979.

- **1979**  
INHF is established.
- **1980**  
Daisy Iowa Whitham donates 130 acres near Fairfield, now known as Whitham Woods.  
  
INHF completes its first major land protection project, Mines of Spain, permanently protecting 1,260 acres of wooded bluffs overlooking Dubuque.
- **1981**  
Work on INHF's first rail-trail, the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, begins.
- **1982**  
Inaugural issue of *Iowa Natural Heritage* magazine.  
  
Work on the Heritage Trail, a 26-mile rail-trail, begins.  
  
First edition of *Iowa Landowner Options*, a resource for Iowa landowners interested in permanently protecting their land, is published.



family liked to look for interesting flora and fauna along the trail. I knew my father and grandfather had worked to create the trail.”

In fact, in the early 1980s, Dick and Rick Young of Waterloo helped bring to Iowa the concept of converting former rail corridors into multi-purpose recreation trails. Iowa had just one, the Cinder Path between Chariton and Humeston. Dick felt trails would be good for the people and communities in Iowa. Rick and their friend Carl Bluedorn shared that vision.

They learned that the rail route between Cedar Rapids and Waterloo was ceasing operations, just as their friend Bob Buckmaster became the first board chair for a brand new conservation organization: Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation. Bob introduced the trio to INHF’s president Gerry Schnepf and newly-hired program director Mark Ackelson. All were enthused about how rail-trail conversions might benefit people, communities and nature. They met with Cedar Rapids volunteers

**Top: Father and son Rick Young (far right) and Dick Young (far left)** celebrate the dedication of a bridge on the Cedar Valley Nature Trail with two other trail leaders, Carl Bluedorn and Marvin Diemer. This photo has hung on Rick’s office wall for 35 years. Photo provided courtesy of Rick Young

**Left: Travis Young, shown with his father Rick Young,** has provided INHF leadership on our board for more than a decade. Photo provided by Travis Young

**“Our whole family liked to look for interesting flora and fauna along the trail.”**

— TRAVIS YOUNG

who were also mobilizing to create trails on that end of the corridor.

Very shortly, efforts were launched to create the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. The Youngs, Bluedorns and Buckmasters committed major funds to begin the corridor purchase and the Gilbertville depot restoration. Rick led local promotion, fundraising and construction.

“We spoke to lots of Rotaries and other groups. They’d ask, ‘What’s a bicycle trail?’ It was difficult for Iowans to imagine,” he said.

The concept was controversial. At public meetings, Rick and INHF took a lot of heat from skeptical neighboring landowners and communities. In time, many began to come around. Today, early supporters and skeptics alike enjoy the trail.

“INHF really got the ball rolling on multi-use trails and other things, too,” Rick recalled. “The more I learned about INHF, the more I liked it.”

Twenty years later, Travis began to volunteer on the INHF board of directors, contributing time and wisdom to diverse projects.

“My own kids don’t bike, but they do breathe

**Center: Mary Louise Petersen** collects wild grapes via canoe along the shores of Lake Okoboji.

**Right: David Linder** accompanies granddaughter Siena, age 6, on a nature walk.

Iowa’s air and want clean water in our great state. That provides me with strong incentive to continue to support the work INHF is doing each and every day. I’ve been blessed to follow my grandfather and father’s involvement with INHF, and I look forward to future Iowans benefiting from the work INHF is doing today.”

#### ALL IN THE FAMILY

During INHF’s 40th anniversary, we’re celebrating people like the Petersens, Youngs and many others. INHF was created to help Iowans take action for our land, water and wildlife. INHF’s work has been supported by these visionaries who have accomplished amazing, lasting things for their lands and communities. By passing their love of the land to the next generation, the effect grows, with boundless potential. 🌱

• **1983**  
Original 17-acre site of the now 229-acre Marietta Sand Prairie Preserve in Marshall County is protected.

• **1984**  
Big Bend Conservation Area, a 320-acre mix of woodland and wetland in Iowa County, is permanently protected.

• **1985**  
INHF’s first nature calendar, featuring stunning shots of Iowa’s land, water and wildlife, is released.

• **1986**  
INHF hires its first intern.

• **1988**  
Chimney Rock, an iconic bluff along the Upper Iowa River, is permanently protected by a conservation easement, INHF’s first.

INHF helps create the Resource Enhancement and Protection program (REAP).

# 40 YEARS of PROTECTION

Since 1979, INHF has partnered to protect incredible places across Iowa. Here's a look at some major milestones.

BY KATY HEGGEN  
Communications Specialist | [kheggen@inhf.com](mailto:kheggen@inhf.com)

With special thanks to Jessica Riebkes Clough

## PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

Not quite 40: the number of additions (32 to date) INHF has helped Polk County Conservation and the Iowa DNR acquire to expand Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt, making it one of INHF's largest and longest ongoing projects. Throughout Iowa, INHF and our partners have completed 839 public land protection projects now owned by 112 city, county, state and federal public agencies.



### SETTING THE STANDARD

Daisy Iowa Whitham donates 130 acres near Fairfield to INHF in 1980, permanently protecting the former family nursery-turned-nature area. Her donation marked INHF's first land protection project. Owned by INHF and managed by the Jefferson County Conservation Board as a public park, Whitham Woods features a diverse mix of plants, excellent wildlife habitat and ample opportunities for outdoor recreation.



### DIPPING DEEP

Featuring both stunning natural features and historically significant landmarks, Mines of Spain near Dubuque was INHF's second land protection project. The landowners of this wooded bluff chose to work with INHF to protect their land for conservation. Today, it is a state recreation area featuring more than 15 miles of hiking trails, the Julien Dubuque Monument and breathtaking views of the Mississippi River.

*Photo by Digital Dubuque*



### HAPPY TRAILS

INHF began focusing on trails across the state in the early 1980s. Its first trail projects – the Heritage Trail and the Cedar Valley Nature Trail – used former railroad corridors and converted them into multi-use trails and linear parks. This approach has helped make Iowa a trails destination. To date, INHF has helped create more than 65% of Iowa's rail-trails, including INHF's 40th protection project, the Fort Dodge Nature Trail.



### A TOWERING MILESTONE

Marked by its striking limestone bluffs, Chimney Rock towers over the Upper Iowa River in northeast Iowa. Protected in 1988, Chimney Rock was INHF's first conservation easement (CE). In 2001, the current owners of the Chimney Rock CE, brothers Bill and David Heine, decided to expand the protection area, donating a new CE – INHF's 40th. 190 INHF-held CEs now protect 22,910 acres across the state.



### PROTECTING CULTURAL HERITAGE

When 1,045 acres of woodland along the Yellow River near Effigy Mounds National Monument became available in the 1980s, INHF began working to protect it. Completed in 2000 after 20 years of ongoing conversations and negotiations, the Heritage Addition nearly doubled the size of Effigy Mounds to 2,526 acres, and linked it to a unit of the Yellow River State Forest. *Photo by Clint Farlinger*



### EVEN GREATER GREAT LAKES

For 130 years, nearly two-thirds of a mile of shoreline in the northwest corner of Big Spirit Lake remained undeveloped, supporting a massive bed of bulrushes. When the owners were considering developing the land, a move that would have put the lake shore in jeopardy, INHF entered the conversation. After an ambitious fundraising campaign that included a generous gift from the owners who chose to sell the land to INHF for far less than its appraised value, Angler's Bay was permanently protected.



### MORE LOESS

In 2008, INHF protected its 100,000th acre with the purchase of 40 acres of prairie and woodland connecting two parts of Stone State Park in the Loess Hills. To celebrate, INHF donated the property to the Iowa DNR to expand the park. INHF has completed more than 100 projects protecting more than 17,000 acres in the Loess Hills alone, and more than 170,000 acres statewide.



### INTO THE WILD

Folded into the far-reaches of northeast Iowa, Heritage Valley encompasses more than three miles of the Upper Iowa River and includes a diverse mix of woodland, prairie and floodplain, all managed primarily for wildness. When INHF purchased the 1,200-acre property in 2007, it didn't anticipate how large of an impact this place would have on its work. After much consideration, INHF made the decision to retain ownership and care for Heritage Valley long-term.



### CREATING AN ICON

One of Iowa's most beloved trails, the 25-mile High Trestle Trail stretches through five towns and four counties in central Iowa. Completed in 2011, the trail features an iconic 1/2-mile bridge across the Des Moines River Valley, making it one of the largest trail bridges in the world, and a symbol of Iowa's commitment to trails.

## 1989

The Clean Water Alliance, an Iowa Great Lakes region alliance, is formed.

The Heart of Iowa Trail, part of the American Discovery Trail and Great American Rail-Trail, opens.

The first 34 miles of the now 89-mile Raccoon River Valley Trail opens.

## 1990

INHF helps protect fossils from the Devonian period (365 mya) found around prairies in the Rockford Fossil and Prairie Park.

## 1991

Hitchcock Nature Center opens in the heart of the Loess Hills, which harbors some of the largest remaining prairie remnants in Iowa.

A.C. and Gladys Snyder donate their 154-acre farm, now known as Snyder Heritage Farm, to INHF.

## 1992

The first 927 acres of the now 1,356-acre Aldo Leopold Wildlife Area is established in Bremer County.



# VITAL REFUGE

Native wildlife once lost to Iowa have returned thanks to reintroduction efforts.

BY ROWAN McMULLEN CHENG  
Communications Intern | [comminternrowan@inhf.com](mailto:comminternrowan@inhf.com)

Iowa has experienced tremendous landscape changes. Elk and bison herds once thundered through seas of grass, but habitat loss and overhunting extirpated these and other native species in Iowa. However, thanks to concerted efforts to protect, restore and re-establish wildlife populations previously threatened or lost to the state, several native species have made a comeback. INHF is proud to have played a part in the protection and restoration of habitat for many of these species.

## Take flight

One of the most iconic species on Iowa's landscape, the Trumpeter swan was extirpated from Iowa due to overhunting and habitat

loss. Trumpeter swans are now considered a success in Iowa thanks to an active Iowa DNR reintroduction program and more habitat with support from private landowners and partners.

"The pair bonds are very strong and the idea is to raise them in an area that they will recognize then return to since they have what's called site fidelity, or the inclination to come back to the same place year after year after year," said Iowa State University Natural Resource and Ecology Management Professor Emeritus Jim Pease.

For the first time since near extinction over a century ago, Trumpeter swans are now producing healthy cygnets in Iowa each year.

## Fawned of whitetails

Though it may seem hard to believe now, in the early 1900s, white-tailed deer had largely been eliminated in Iowa due to overhunting. Deer season was legally closed in 1898. Over the next half decade, the population slowly but steadily stabilized, buoyed by deer that immigrated, were relocated from herds from surrounding states and deer that escaped or were released from captive herds. By the early 1950s, the population had reached a level that eventually led the state to reinstate the first modern deer season in 1953.

Since then, careful, localized population management has been key. With varying population sizes, habitat carrying capacities and human cultural differences, the Iowa DNR

**Top, left: Trumpeter cygnets**, or young swans, splash around. Since DNR reintroduction efforts, many more healthy cygnets have been born in Iowa. *Photo by Deb Shoning*

**Top, right: White-tailed deer** watch from a lush forest — the doe making sure her fawn can safely feast on nearby foliage. *Photo by Ron Huelse*

**“What’s so successful about white-tailed deer is that they’re probably the most visible megafauna we have in the state.”**

- JIM COFFEY,  
DNR WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

**“We shouldn’t work against nature, we should work with nature.”**

- VINCE EVELSIZER,  
DNR WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST

manages white-tailed deer populations on small, local scales that fit deer, human and habitat needs.

"What's so successful about the white-tailed deer is that they're probably the most visible megafauna that we have in the state," said DNR Wildlife Biologist Jim Coffey.

Although high deer populations can sometimes have negative impacts, their rebound is a sign of abundant habitat.

## River otter rebound

Other than in northeast Iowa, which maintained a small remnant population, river otters all but disappeared from Iowa in the late 1800s due to trapping pressure, habitat loss and food scarcity as wetlands and marshes were drained for agriculture.

"We shouldn't work against nature, we should work with nature," said DNR Wildlife Biologist Vince Evelsizer.

The Iowa DNR's Wildlife Diversity Program was key to reintroduction efforts, as was the river otter's relatable playfulness, which helped garner broad support for reintroduction. After a creative arrangement between Iowa, Kentucky and an otter farmer



in Louisiana that traded two wild turkeys for every river otter (Iowa State law would not allow for the direct purchase of the otters and Kentucky was in need of wild turkeys), the first sixteen river otters were released at Red Rock in 1985. Over the years, more than 300 river otters were released at 25 different sites across the state. With steady community support, river otter populations naturally increased to the point that DNR could safely introduce a trapping season in 2006.

## Butterfly abundance

The Regal fritillary was once found statewide, but now resides primarily in southern Iowa. Listed as a species of Special Concern by the Iowa DNR, these velvety butterflies depend on prairie violets, an uncommon species even in high-quality reconstructed prairies, as its larval host plant. Prairie restoration and reconstruction efforts have been key to their recovery, as well as that of Monarchs.

"It's really important to find the remnants and protect them," said Xerces Society Farm Bill Pollinator Conservation Planner Sarah Nizzi. "That's most likely where you'll find the violets and that's the best opportunity for them." 🦋

**Top: Regal fritillary** rests on a wildflower. Found only in prairies, the regal fritillary is a relatively large butterfly species that relies on prairie violets as a larval host plant. *Photo by Ray Moran*

**Left: River Otter** release at Lake Red Rock in 1985. Reintroduction efforts included releasing over 300 river otters to help the species rebound to sustainable population levels. *Photo courtesy of the Iowa DNR*

## 1993

First INHF addition to Chichaqua Bottoms Greenbelt is completed.

## 1994

The Upper Mississippi River Blufflands Alliance, a multi-state protection partnership, is formed.

## 1995

INHF helps create the Horseshoe Bend Refuge, expanding the Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge, providing natural drainage during flood events and habitat for wildlife.

## 1996

INHF purchases the first segment for the 19.6-mile T-Bone Trail, which was dedicated in 2009.

## 1997

The first 2,575 acres of the now 6,741-acre Sedan Bottoms Wildlife Management Area is established in Appanoose County.

## 1998

The Wabash Trace Nature Trail, a 63-mile trail through southwest Iowa, opens.

# For those who lead

You can help INHF shape the vision for our next 40 years of work.

BY JOE JAYJACK & KATY HEGGEN  
jjayjack@inhf.com | kheggen@inhf.com

As Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF) reflects on the last 40 years, it's easy to get nostalgic, recalling all of the incredible places INHF has helped protect and restore, and all of the people and partners that have made that work possible. After all, there's a lot to celebrate.

However, as an organization that was created to ensure Iowa's wild places will remain for years and generations to come, it is just as important — if not more — to look ahead. To take inventory of where we, and conservation as a whole, are headed.

INHF is currently in the midst of creating its next strategic plan. Once complete, this living document will serve as a guide for our work for the next five years. As we look to the horizon, here are some of the things we're thinking about:

## Inclusive Outdoors

Iowa's outdoors should be available to everyone. However, not everyone has access to or feels comfortable or welcome in outdoor spaces. As we strive to protect, restore and create opportunities for Iowans to get outdoors, what can INHF do to reach new audiences, build relationships and forge new partnerships, particularly with people that are underserved by nature and outdoor recreation opportunities in their communities?

"As we do our work, we continually have to ask ourselves why, and for whom," said INHF President Joe McGovern. "Sometimes we want people to enjoy nature the same way we do, and that wouldn't be fair. We all come from different backgrounds, we all have different points of view. Making sure that it's available — while protecting the resource — and that



As INHF plans for its next 40 years, instilling an appreciation for nature in the next generation is one of the goals. Photo by Joe Jayjack/INHF

people can experience it their own way that has meaning for them and their families — that's the most important part."

## Resilient Lands

Iowa is already experiencing the effects of climate change. Increased precipitation and higher temperatures have contributed to extreme weather events affecting Iowa communities statewide, as have changes to our natural landscape. As we look to the future, how can the work of INHF address climate change in Iowa, and how can we make our land, water and communities more resilient to those changes?

## Innovation

Attitudes and approaches to conservation are changing. Some of these changes present opportunities, others challenges. All call for creativity, collaboration and ingenuity. As such, how can INHF accomplish conservation in new ways and with new partners, taking into account an ever-evolving political landscape, unprecedented shifts in land ownership, public and private resources for conservation, among other trends. 🌱

## LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

At the heart of INHF's mission are people who are passionate about protecting Iowa's land, water and wildlife. We invite you to be part of INHF's strategic planning process. Below are a few examples of the type of questions we're posing to those new and familiar to INHF. To view a full list of questions and take a short survey, visit [inhf.org/strategicplan](http://inhf.org/strategicplan).

- Thinking about Iowa, what is your personal vision?
- Who is being left out? How might we use conservation as a means to be more inclusive?
- What do you see as INHF's most important work?



INHF was one of four founders of the Land Trust Alliance. From left to right Mark Ackelson (INHF), Joan Vilms (Land Trust of Napa County), Bill Sellers (Brandywine Conservancy), and Jay Espy (Maine Coast Heritage Trust). Photo courtesy of the Alliance

# IN LAND WE TRUST

Connecting conservation lands and communities.

BY KATY HEGGEN  
Communications Specialist | kheggen@inhf.com

Iowa may not be the first state to come up in conversations about national conservation. There are no mountains here. No coastlines. No towering redwoods, everglades or yawning canyons. But as those that have spent time exploring the state's outdoors know, there's much beauty to be found here. But even those with a deep love and appreciation for Iowa's outdoors may not realize the role Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation's protection of these wild places has played in the protection of other natural areas far beyond Iowa's borders.

## A strong foundation

In October of 1981, INHF's Gerry Schnepf and Mark Ackelson made their way to Cambridge, Mass. for the National Consultation on Local Land Conservation. Schnepf was the first president of INHF, which was founded just two years earlier in 1979, and Ackelson was one of the first three staffers. Ackelson would later serve as president from 1994-2013.

"A guy named Kingsbury Browne took a sabbatical from his law firm because he kept hearing about these land trusts. He went across the country and discovered land trusts that might be in the river valley adjacent to another one, and didn't know that the other one existed. He found that all across the country. So he brought us together," Ackelson said. "Out of that meeting, virtually spontaneously, grew this need to create some kind of national association."

Though they didn't know it at the time, Schnepf and Ackelson were among those in attendance at what would later come to be known as the "founding" meeting of the Land Trust Exchange, now known as the Land Trust Alliance (the Alliance). INHF was one of the four initial incorporators of the Alliance, joining the Brandywine Conservancy (Pennsylvania), Land Trust of Napa County (California) and Maine Coast Heritage Trust. Ackelson served as the second board chair for the Alliance.

Today, the Alliance serves as the collective voice of the land trust community, representing land trusts — including INHF — supported by 5 million members nationwide.

"INHF has been and continues to be a leader in the land trust community," said Tammara Van Ryn, founding executive director of the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (the

- **2000**  
Land stewardship department grows to include a crew of interns.  
  
Heritage Addition to Effigy Mounds National Monument is completed.
- **2003**  
INHF permanently protects Wildin Heritage Prairie, an 80-acre remnant and restored prairie with 16 small prairie potholes.
- **2004**  
INHF helps permanently protect Whiterock Conservancy, Iowa's largest private land preserve.
- **2005**  
Judy Felder, Mary Brown and Sandy Rhodes permanently protect Indiangrass Hills, a 640-acre prairie preserve in Iowa County.
- **2006**  
Angler's Bay bulrushes and lake shore on Big Spirit Lake are permanently protected.
- **2007**  
INHF purchases Heritage Valley.



Commission), an independent program created by the Alliance. “The entire history of INHF, save for those first two years, is intertwined with the collective history of land trusts across the country. INHF has been pulling together the land trust community since its beginnings.”

### Building community

Since those early days, INHF has remained a leader within the Alliance, the Commission and the land trust community on the whole.

“Beyond its impressive legacy of conservation in Iowa, I most appreciate INHF’s commitment to contributing time and talents to the broader land trust community,” said the Alliance President Andrew Bowman. “Perhaps because of this, INHF is one of the land trusts that everyone in our community knows, and there are good reasons for that. INHF exemplifies leadership qualities.”

Several INHF staff serve in appointed positions within the land trust community, including on the Land Trust Alliance Leadership Council and the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, shaping national standards, policies and strategies. They also represent INHF and land trusts in leadership positions within other facets of the conservation community ranging from sporting groups to trail advocates to volunteer wildfire crews.

“We cannot afford to operate in a vacuum,”

said INHF President Joe McGovern. “We’re all in this together, from local conservation to national, even international conservation.”

### Connecting lands

Just as habitats differ from region-to-region, so do approaches to protecting those lands. As such, opportunities to learn about what land trusts are doing elsewhere — and to share what INHF is doing in Iowa — are invaluable.

INHF staff routinely attend and present on a range of topics at national conferences, including Rally, the Alliance’s annual National Land Conservation Conference which draws more than 1,800 land trust professionals each year, as well as other conferences throughout Iowa and the Midwest.

Conservation can be lonely work,” said Bowman. “Being able to tap into the lessons learned, expertise and even resources of others from across the country makes us all stronger.”

### From the Golden Dome to D.C.

Early on, INHF and others in the land trust community recognized the importance of advocating for federal policies and programs that support conservation through a land trust lens.

**“When I think of INHF, the term ‘full-court press’ comes to mind. It is deploying every tactic and strategy it can to advance its mission: engaging the public, working with landowners to protect essential lands, advocating for local, state and federal funding and policy, responding quickly and effectively to emerging threats and more.”**

- ANDREW BOWMAN,  
LTA PRESIDENT

With the founding of the Alliance, local efforts to influence federal legislation converged. While the Alliance acts as the land trust community’s voice on Capitol Hill, individual land trusts continue to play an integral role in shaping the policies that shape our lands.

From a series of proposed reforms in the early 2000s that helped keep land trusts and key federal tax incentives for conservation intact, to weighing in on the 2018 farm bill — the single largest source of federal funding for land conservation, to continuing to work on ending federal tax incentive abuses, INHF has always maintained a presence in D.C. and at home.

“Policies can take conservation in different directions – for better or for worse,” said INHF Public Policy Director Anna Gray. “We look at policy as a conservation tool, one that we can use to protect and restore the land, just as we use prescribed fire or prairie reconstruction.”

While INHF communicates with its colleagues at the Alliance about national issues on an ongoing basis and is a regular fixture at the Alliance’s Advocacy Days, an annual lobbying event, it’s perhaps the relationships INHF has been able to establish with key policymakers that have had the greatest impact.

**Above: INHF and LTA have advocated** for programs and policies to advance conservation since the early 80s.

**Left: Setting aside time to learn** from one another at conferences, retreats and the like has long been a priority in the land trust community. *Photos courtesy of the Alliance*

“You guys have a really good relationship with your delegation,” said the Alliance Government Relations Director Lori Faeth. “It’s such a great land trust and it’s in a really important part of the country policy-wise. You have key members of Congress and you have access to them.”

### Bound by the land

Just as nature knows no borders, neither does the nature of conservation. While INHF’s contributions to conservation on the national scale have evolved over the years, the guiding philosophy for this work – for all of INHF’s work – that together, we do more, remains unchanged.

“What I find remarkable is that over multiple decades, different organizational challenges and transitions in staff, INHF has always made the commitment to participate in and contribute its strength to the larger land trust community, and the community is better for it,” said Van Ryn. 🌿

## 2008

An addition to Stone State Park in Woodbury County marks INHF’s 100,000th protected acre.

First Gift to Iowa’s Future Day.

## 2010

The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund is created (and remains unfunded today).

In partnership with the Swanson family, INHF protects Bernau Prairie, 125 acres of one of the largest known and previously unprotected black soil prairies in Iowa.

Pleasant Grove Land Preservation, Inc. permanently protects 479 acres of woodland, prairie and grassland in Mahaska County.

## 2011

The High Trestle Trail is completed.

The DeCook family permanently protects nearly 2,000 acres of grassland in southern Iowa.

## 2013

Volunteer program launches.

Mark C. Ackelson Fellowship is established.

# LEARNING TODAY, LEADING TOMORROW

INHF interns are shaping Iowa's landscape.

BY ROWAN MCMULLEN CHENG  
Communications Intern | [comminternrowan@inhf.com](mailto:comminternrowan@inhf.com)

From land stewardship to project support, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation interns have left an undeniable impact on INHF and conservation in Iowa since the program first began 33 years ago.

These interns don't go for coffee runs; they take out cedars three times their size, write grants for future land protection and craft inspiring conservation stories. As respected members of the INHF team, these internships have served as career launch pads for many past interns.

"One of the things I appreciated most about my internship was getting to network with conservation professionals," said Amy Andrews, a 2015 statewide land stewardship intern. "I loved feeling plugged into the conservation community in Iowa. I think that was the first time I could really envision myself in a conservation career."

Andrews is now a private lands wildlife specialist serving Clay, Dickinson, Emmet and Palo Alto counties. The position is a collaboration between the Iowa Department of Natural Resources private lands program, Iowa Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Conservation Districts of Iowa.

"Many of the initial contacts made during that summer became professional and personal contacts over the years as I worked in environmental policy and watershed management," echoed Rebecca Kauten, a 1998 communications intern.

Kauten is now a PhD candidate in the University of Iowa's Department of

Geographical and Sustainability Sciences, researching whether salting roads in cities contributes to increased metal concentrations in urban streams.

INHF's interns are privately funded by individual INHF members, the R.J. McElroy Trust, the Richard "Sandy" Rhodes Internship fund and the endowment funds from the Svare and Stravers families.

"Our long-term goals for any type of experience for young people, especially interns, is that they are better equipped to enter the workforce in this area, that they have an insight into how the world works, to really see productive members of society, that it supports them in developing the skills they need to go out into the world and that you have a real impact," said R.J. McElroy Trust Executive Director Megan McKenzie.

By the end of this summer, more than 350 interns will have joined the workforce as



**"I was constantly inspired by the land owners we met while working. I realized the joy of conservation through them."**

— ABBY ZABRODSKY,  
ISU STUDENT AND PAST  
LAND STEWARDSHIP  
INTERNS

**Jeremiah Bergstrom,**  
a 1994 program intern  
specializing in landscape  
architecture, now  
teaches that subject  
at South Dakota State  
University. *Photo courtesy  
of Jeremiah Bergstrom*



conservation-minded professionals, applying the skills they learned while at INHF across Iowa and beyond in a diversity of professions.

"The internship is a great way to try out and apply classroom knowledge in a very safe environment," said Jeremiah Bergstrom, a 1994 program intern specializing in landscape architecture, a subject he now teaches at South Dakota State University. "I took those skills, knowledge and my passion and was able to start really seeing how that could begin to transform and shape decisions and communities and really begin to interpret the landscape in a way which is meaningful but also informative for long-term management of the resources we have. For me it was just the ability to step out of the classroom in a professional environment, be welcomed and be able to really begin to make a difference."

INHF interns can contribute to INHF's work in meaningful ways that best utilize or further develop their skills and passions. The internship program does more than provide guidance; it establishes life-long conservation advocates.

"Any good cause needs to have advocates

**INHF land stewardship interns** spend their summers learning about, caring for and exploring Iowa's landscapes. *Photo by INHF*

who steadily speak up for it. Not everybody gets to be an expert on every issue, so it's really important that there are people who are willing and able to speak up and be an advocate for certain causes in an informed way," said former statewide land stewardship intern and State Representative Chris Hall, who has served Iowa's 13th District in the Iowa House of Representative since 2011.

For the interns, many of these hands-on experiences have helped them gain a greater appreciation for Iowa's natural places and been personally transformative.

"My work with INHF made me into the conservationist I am today," said Abby Zabrodsky, an Iowa State University student and 2017 land stewardship intern. "I was constantly inspired by the land owners we met while working. I realized the joy of conservation through them." 📸

INHF invites contributions to help support the intern program. If you are interested in learning more, please contact Abby Hade Terpstra at [aterpstra@inhf.org](mailto:aterpstra@inhf.org) or 515-288-1846, ext. 15.

## 2014

Iowa by Trail App launch.

INHF protects a 235-acre addition to Fen Valley, the second largest fen complex.

## 2016

INHF launches [iowalandoptions.org](http://iowalandoptions.org), an online compliment to *Iowa Landowner's Options*.

INHF protects Heritage Hills, 1,021 acres of woodlands and remnant prairie.

Turin Prairie, a 467-acre addition to Turin Wildlife Management Area, opens.

## 2017

The Jewell family permanently protects its 700-acre farm, making it one of Iowa's largest Agriculture Land Easements.

INHF partners with The Nature Conservancy in Iowa to protect Green Hill Ranch, over 500 acres of classic Loess Hills topography in Pottawattamie and Mills counties.

## 2018

Two families protect Wallace & Bowers Nature Area, 160 acres near the northeast shore of Big Spirit Lake.

## 2019

INHF celebrates 40 years of protecting and restoring Iowa's land, water and wildlife.

## LEAVING A LEGACY

LaVonne and Dale Foote were longtime Spirit Lake residents who left an incredible legacy gift toward “achieving the goals of Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in Dickinson County.”

LaVonne passed away in 2011 and left a meaningful bequest to INHF. With the help of her close friends, INHF staff developed guidelines for using the generous bequest that would best reflect her interests. The funds may be used for:

- Permanent land protection that benefits birds
- Leveraging additional project support, and
- Projects with partnership potential.

LaVonne and Dale’s gift has already protected many natural areas in the place they loved calling home.

You can experience the Foote’s legacy by visiting the 79-acre Judd Wildlife Management Area (WMA) addition protecting remnant prairie, the 60-acre Little Sioux Savanna filled with a blend

of oaks and grassland, and the 18-acre Little Foote Forest near Milford where LaVonne loved to go birding.

The Foote Fund has also supported Reeds Run Wildlife Area, Garlock Slough WMA, West Okoboji Lake WMA, Pioneer Park Nature Preserve, an addition to the Christopherson Slough complex, the expansion of the Northern Tallgrass Prairie National Wildlife Refuge and the Wallace & Bowers Nature Area.

Future Dickinson County projects yet undreamed are already a step closer to reality thanks to their remarkable generosity.

— ABBY HADE TERPSTRA,  
Donor relations director



Among other uses, the Foote Fund helps protect land that benefits birds. Photo by Bruce Morrison

### Leave a legacy of clean water, healthy soil and beautiful outdoor places for future generations.

To see how including INHF in your will or trust can help make your vision for Iowa a reality, contact Abby Hade Terpstra at [aterpstra@inhf.org](mailto:aterpstra@inhf.org) or 515-288-1846.

## Wild Harvest

BY ROWAN McMULLEN CHENG  
Communications intern | [comminternrowan@inhf.org](mailto:comminternrowan@inhf.org)

Leaf through fresh forest litter to uncover a different kind of crop. From hazelnuts to morel mushrooms, you can forage for a variety of delicious, healthy regionally historic foods in Iowa year-round.

Discover young stinging nettles, golden chanterelle mushrooms, purslane, lamb’s quarters and winter cress. Each plant produces a unique flavor to lead you down a path of new culinary opportunities.

Take note of the time of year to ensure your food is ripe enough to consume. It’s also a good idea to look for edible plants in the off-season — sometimes the plant will reveal itself after the edible season with showy flowers or a distinct smell. Also remember to check your environment before consuming raw foods. Plants near large farm fields, roads and even treated lawns may contain chemicals.

“Edible plants are a great place to begin seeing the integral value of our landscape,” said Drake University Professor of Biology Dr. Nanci Ross. “When looking for edibles, you can’t help but begin to notice the shape of the flowers, the timing of ripening fruits, the other species growing and living in the same areas. It’s a great way to see how we are part of our landscape.”

With groups like Edible Outdoors, Prairie States Mushroom Club, the annual Wild Food Summit and the Midwest Wild Edibles and Foragers Society, you can easily find a community of support and shared knowledge to start your foraging season, allowing you to see new places in Iowa without sacrificing your dinner schedule. 🍄



PHOTO BY DON POGGENSEE

1



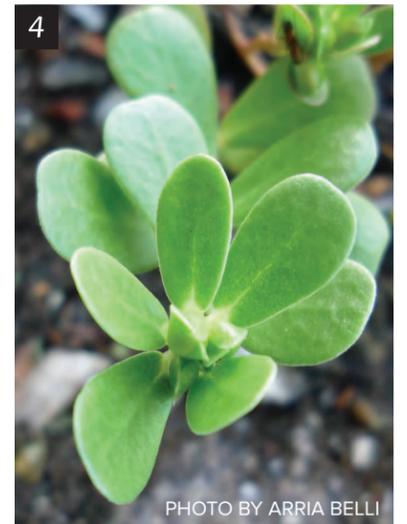
PHOTO BY JENNIFER MEYER

2



3

PHOTO BY JENNIFER MEYER



4

PHOTO BY ARRIA BELLI

1

### MORELS

**Harvest season:** Early spring.

**Find them:** in and on the edge of forested areas.

2

### LAMB’S QUARTERS

**Harvest season:** summer - early fall.

**Find them:** In sunny, open areas.

*\*Not native to Iowa*

3

### NETTLES

**Harvest season:** Early spring.

**Find them:** In moist fields and open woods.

4

### PURSLANE

**Harvest season:** Summer - early fall.

**Find them:** In open areas, yards and cracks in the sidewalk.

*\*Not native to Iowa*

### \* PLEASE NOTE

If your foraged food smells like fresh almonds, it may have toxic cyanide in it and should not be consumed.

## TRIBUTE GIFTS

### IN MEMORY OF

Stephen Atherton  
James Bodensteiner  
Norris John Boehm  
Richard Brown  
Lamoyne Burmeister  
Donald Eugene Callender II  
Mary Ellen Caroll Cavanagh  
Charlie Cutler  
William D. Daugherty  
Stephen DeVries  
Patricia Dinsmore  
Eloise Ricklefs  
Doris Feuerbach  
Bob Fisher  
Hoddy Gates  
Gordon Gilbertson  
Carol Griffith  
John J. Halvacek

### Eleanor “Pudd” Handorf

Willard Hawker  
Donald L. Hitt  
Arnold Klemme  
Brad Kollars  
Norbert Kruckenberg  
Roberta Kruckberg  
George and Marlys Ladd  
Dan J. Leary  
Ben Lewman  
Leland Sagstuen Long  
Darlene Lorenz  
Merritt “Junior” McCardle  
Kathleen Milewsky  
Darwin Miler  
Wendy Sue Mitchell  
Doug Mounce  
Morris Neighbor  
Aaron M. Nelson

### Becky Nelson

Jack Nordyke  
Roger Osborn  
Raymond Possehl  
Isabelle & Earl Salterberg  
David Schnell  
Kent Sheeley  
Truman Slitor  
Norman G. Snuttjer  
Agnes Steinfeldt  
Ann Steinfeldt  
Bill Stowe  
John Strain  
Mary Sytsma  
Murry and Lizzie Sytsma  
Keith Westercamp  
Fred Willenborg

### IN HONOR OF

Bruce Ecker  
Isaac Rueben Fish  
Spencer Hunter  
Roslea and Robert Johnson  
Daryl Kothenbeutel  
Colleen Looker  
Jan Lovell  
Paul Morf  
Anita O’Gara  
David Michael Smith  
Paul Stober and Willard Bucklen  
44th Wedding Anniversary



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**INHF interns form a line at Snyder Heritage Farm** in Polk County to begin their transect walk, a land management team strategy that carefully combs across properties to find and remove invasive plant species. To their backs, a recently reconstructed prairie pothole wetland holds back water from another round of summer storms. *Photo by Emily Martin*

