

NATURAL RESOURCES

IOWA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

END OF SESSION, 2010

CONSTITUTIONALLY PROTECT FUNDING FOR NATURAL RESOURCES

On the November 2, 2010, election ballot there will be a question on whether Iowa should constitutionally protect a Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, for the purpose of protecting and enhancing water quality and natural areas in Iowa. It is left to the Legislature to establish the parameters for distribution of the funds. At this time, no revenue will be deposited into the fund until a future Legislature increases the state sales tax. At that time, 3/8th of 1¢ would go into this fund if the amendment is ratified by the voters in November. SF 2310 establishes the distribution of where this future revenue would be used. It is based upon recommendations of the Sustainable Funding for Natural Resource Advisory Committee. The bill is only implemented if the constitutional amendment is ratified and the sales tax is later increased. The revenue would be allocated as follows:

- 23% for the establishment, restoration, or enhancement of state parks, state forests, state preserves, wildlife areas, wildlife habitats, native prairies, and wetlands.
- 20% for soil conservation and watershed protection.
- 14% for watershed protection.
- 13% to Iowa's Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Fund.
- 13% to local communities for the maintenance and improvements of parks, preserves, wildlife areas, wildlife habitats, native prairies, and wetlands.
- 10% for land and water trails.
- 7% for lakes restoration.

(SF 2310 Sent to Governor, effective Jan. 1, 2011, if amendment ratified)

STATE NURSERY

The State Nursery in Ames is authorized to sell bare-root tree seedlings and plant material out of state. Selling to other states opens up a market to our conservation seedlings that could increase sales and keep the cost to Iowa farmers lower. (HF 2531 Sent to Governor, effective 7/1/10)

LOADED DETACHED MAGAZINES

Allow hunters to keep the detachable magazine on their shotgun or rifle (clips) loaded in their vehicle, as long as the gun is taken down (disassembled) or totally encased. Attached magazines have to be unloaded. This bill only pertains to long-guns, not hand-guns.

(HF 2200 Signed by Governor, effective 7/1/10)

BIRD SHOTS ON HUNTING PRESERVES

Current law allows shooting birds on a hunting preserve with a minimum shooting range of 50 yards from the hunter. This bill clarifies that the birds are "game" birds, meaning pen-reared birds such as wild turkeys, grouse, pheasants, quail, and mallard ducks. It also reduces from 50 yards to 25 yards the minimum shooting range.

(SF 2216 Sent to Governor, effective 7/1/10)

PEN-REARED PHEASANTS	Allows the release of pen-reared pheasants in Iowa on a person's farm. The birds have to come from a hatchery approved by the Department of Natural Resources. (HF 2310 Sent to Governor, effective 7/1/10)
PHEASANT HABITAT - RESTRICTIONS ON MOWING DITCHES	Updates Iowa's ditch mowing regulations (both state and county roads). The purpose of the bill is improving habitat to help protect nesting pheasant populations. The bill prohibits mowing within the ditch prior to July 15, except within 200 yards of an inhabited dwelling (this 200 yards is the same regulation that says you cannot shoot a gun within 200 yards of an inhabited dwelling); within one mile of city limits; to promote native species of vegetation or other long-lived and adaptable vegetation; to establish control of damaging insect populations, noxious weeds, and invasive plant species; for visibility and safety reasons; within rest areas, weigh stations, and wayside parks; within 50 feet of a drainage tile or tile intake; for access to a mailbox or for other accessibility purposes; and on rights-of-way adjacent to agricultural demonstration or research plots. After July 15th, they can mow as much of the ditch as they like. There are no penalties attached to this law. (HF 2458 and HF 2531 Sent to Governor, effective 7/1/10)
ELLIS HARBOR IN CEDAR RAPIDS	Exempts houseboat owners at Ellis Harbor, located on the Cedar River in Cedar Rapids, from all DNR dock requirements if the dock is in compliance with local city regulations. Allows current houseboat owners to continue to use their dock floatation devices that currently do not meet DNR requirements; however, at the time that they are replaced, they have to comply with DNR rules, and new owners are given six months from the date of transfer to get their floatation devices into compliance with DNR rules. (HF 2484 Sent to Governor, effective upon signing)