



## 2010 Legislative Agenda

Iowa Rivers Revival is the statewide river advocacy group committed to protecting one of our most precious natural resources – our rivers and streams. IRR is working to engage individuals, organizations, communities and our government leaders in river awareness, responsibility and enjoyment in an effort to improve and enhance the condition of Iowa's rivers and streams. Most life depends on the water provided by our rivers; therefore, it is everyone's responsibility to respect and protect Iowa's water quality for use by present and future generations.

### 1. SF-263 River Discharge Awareness Bill

*Iowa Rivers Revival is committed to efforts that reduce bacteria, nutrients, sediment and other harmful pollutants in Iowa's rivers and streams by raising awareness about local water quality and conditions.*

- Propose legislation in the Iowa House that would require each facility with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which allows the discharge of treated wastewater to a stream or river, to post a sign at the discharge point. Signage would identify the permit holder, the NPDES permit number, contact information for the DNR and, where needed, a strong and visible warning that the effluent contains possible pathogens due to a lack of disinfection. Similar legislation passed in the 2009 Iowa Senate.

### 2. River Funding

- Maintain state budget allocation for the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program - REAP provides essential funding for soil and water conservation, habitat protection and recreation resources – further cuts to REAP and other environmental appropriations will affect the condition and contribute to the degradation of the quality of Iowa's natural resources including, rivers and streams. 2009 state budget allocations for REAP were \$18M, 2010 budget cuts estimate REAP allocations of \$12M. REAP is authorized to be fully funded at \$20M annually.
- Maintain the River Enhancement Community Attraction and Tourism fund (RECAT) – In 2009 this fund received a \$52 million appropriation over five years and is being managed by the Iowa Department of Economic Development. RECAT projects include the promotion and enhancement of community attractions and tourism and recreational opportunities on and near rivers or lakes located within city limits.
- 2010 budget concerns have resulted in the Governor calling for the elimination of various river-related natural resources programs. Any program eliminated will be hard to replace or refund in the future. The following programs are at risk for elimination:
  - Low-Head Dam Public Hazard Program received a one-million dollar appropriation for fiscal year 2009 and is at risk for elimination in 2010. These funds are available to all owners of dams on navigable streams through cost-sharing at a minimum of 50 percent cost to the project sponsor to mitigate hazards at low-head dams through warning signage, portage trail construction, and modifications to or removals of low-head dams.
  - Statewide Water Trails program received a \$250,000 annual appropriation for the establishment and administration of a water trails and low head dam public hazard statewide plan and is at risk for elimination in 2010.

### 3. Flood Prevention and Mitigation

*Iowa Rivers Revival further supports flood prevention techniques that include re-meandering of rivers and streams, 500 year flood plain management practices, restoring native wetlands and prairie grasses – allowing water to slowly percolate into the ground and by preventing and removing unnecessary dams.*

- Monitor and support flood mitigation legislation that restores greenbelts and protects rivers while reducing future flood damages and improving water quality.
  - SSB 3098-Flood Plain Management Policy would require using the 500-year flood plain as the regulatory flood plain; promote multi-purpose wetlands; implement a watershed flood reduction demonstration project; provide minimum state-wide storm water management standards and require mitigation of soil compaction.
  - HSB608-a bill to restrict development within a 500 year flood plain.
  - SSB 3096-establishes a smart planning taskforce to establish guidelines for the adoption of certain comprehensive plans and land development regulations to address, but not limited to, flood plain management concerns and issues to reduce damage and erosion and enhance preservation and citizen safety.
- Advocate for the highest priority placed on updating floodway and floodplain maps and developing a comprehensive floodplain management plan (with the potential for removing structures, designating permanent open space and wetlands and habitat mitigation and restoration).

### 4. Sustainable Funding for Iowa's Natural Resources

*Iowa Rivers Revival is working in coalition with Iowa's Water and Land Legacy to pass a constitutional amendment to establish the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund. Iowa voters will have a historic opportunity on November 2, 2010 to vote for the Iowa's Water and Land Legacy constitutional amendment. The amendment would establish a constitutionally protected trust fund to preserve Iowa's natural resources and outdoor recreational opportunities.*

- The Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund will provide a permanent, dedicated and consistent funding source to improve water quality and natural areas in Iowa, including fish and wildlife habitat, parks and trails, and in addition to aiding in conservation of agricultural soils and restoring wetlands to protect against future flooding.
- If approved by Iowa voters, the Trust Fund would provide an estimated additional \$150 million per year for these vital needs that sustain our quality of life, our health, and our environment.

For more information: [www.iowarivers.org](http://www.iowarivers.org)

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