

IOWA RIVERS REVIVAL

2023 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES



Iowa Rivers Revival (IRR) is a statewide leader in river advocacy and education. IRR is committed to protecting some of our most precious natural resources – our rivers and streams. We are a statewide nonprofit leading Iowans to protect, restore and enjoy our rivers.

We support passage of permanent funding for recreation opportunities, conservation projects, and water quality improvements.

We must work together to fund the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund (IWILL). It has been over 10 years since Iowans voted to increase our state sales tax by 3/8th of a cent to protect Iowa's natural resources and enhance recreational opportunities. Honoring the will of the voters and funding the trust will support a strong economy and improved quality of life for all Iowans now and in the future.

Preserve the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program and other natural resource programs. IRR supports a \$20 million appropriation to fully fund REAP as well as removing the sunset clause. REAP provides essential funding for soil and water conservation, habitat protection, recreation resources, and so much more.

We support increased funding for river-related natural resources programs.

We advocate for an appropriation of three million dollars through the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF) to support the IDNR Low-Head Dam Mitigation and Water Trails program. This program provides funding for a range of projects around the state, which support rural economic development and revitalization as well as workforce attraction for communities across the state. There is currently a backlog of projects in need of funding.

For a holistic watershed-based approach, we support the establishment of a statewide Stream and River Restoration Program for Iowa.

To protect our natural resources, we must collaborate and fund sustainable statewide solutions. This program would build resilient communities, provide safe recreational opportunities, mitigate floods, provide critical habitat, reduce soil erosion, and improve water quality.

Due to the surge in water trail usage, we support an increase in recreational fees to boost river safety measures and improve emergency access.

We endorse funding river safety measures and increasing educational tools to protect all Iowans. Iowans are recreating on and near our rivers and streams more than ever before. Increasing registration fees from \$12 to \$20 every three years, and removing the boat length requirement of 13ft, would increase revenue for IDNR by more than 45% for programs that enhance safety, support boater education, and improve access for recreation and emergency response, especially in rural counties. This is a partnership effort with the County Conservation Officers who support this to help reduce red tape and paperwork chase in the permitting process.

IRR supports policies and legislative efforts to ensure all Iowans have equitable access to our waterways and other natural resources.