



Why preserving our native communities and native species is important

Over a hundred years ago, 83% of Iowa's land was covered with prairie vegetation while forests and wetlands occupied the remainder of the land. In Johnson County, early historic landscape was dominated by prairie prior to European settlement and forests were present along most valleys where rivers or extensive wet areas protected them from fire. Wetlands and lakes were small and concentrated along valleys.

In a span of about 70 years, ending in about 1900, 97% of our state was converted to farmland. Because of this dramatic and rapid transformation very little of the original ecosystem exists, and what remnants have survived are unique and valuable resources to our community. The City's reconstructed prairies and wetlands are now habitats that contain species of plants, animals and insects that are native to Iowa's landscape.



To become involved:

Citizens can enjoy nature walks on our trail system, join the local bird club, or participate in the state's frog & toad survey. Several volunteer events to remove invasive species, collect prairie seeds, and pick up garbage occur during the year. Residents who are interested in volunteering should email or call for more information. And remember; please do not remove any plant or other materials from the City's natural areas on your own unless you have permission from City staff.

For more information contact:

Mike Moran, Parks and Recreation Director
mike-moran@iowa-city.org
319-356-5104

Zac Hall, Superintendent of Parks
zac-hall@iowa-city.org
319-356-5093

Related links:

Iowa City Parks and Trails: www.icgov.org/default/?id=1000

Iowa Bird Checklist:

www.iowabirds.org/Checklists

Iowa City Bird Club: www.icbirds.org

Dragonflies and Damselflies of Iowa: www.iowaodes.org

Butterflies of Iowa:

www.poweshiekskipper.org/Iowa%20checklist.pdf

Butterfly Forecast:

www.poweshiekskipper.org

Insects:

bugguide.net/node/view/15740

Key to the Trees of Iowa:

www.iowadnr.gov/education/backinfo/treekey.pdf

Reptiles and Amphibians of Iowa:

www.herpnet.net/Iowa-Herpetology

Iowa DNR Frog & Toad Call Survey:

www.iowadnr.gov/Environment/WildlifeStewardship/Non-GameWildlife/VolunteerWildlifeSurveys/FrogToadCallSurvey.aspx

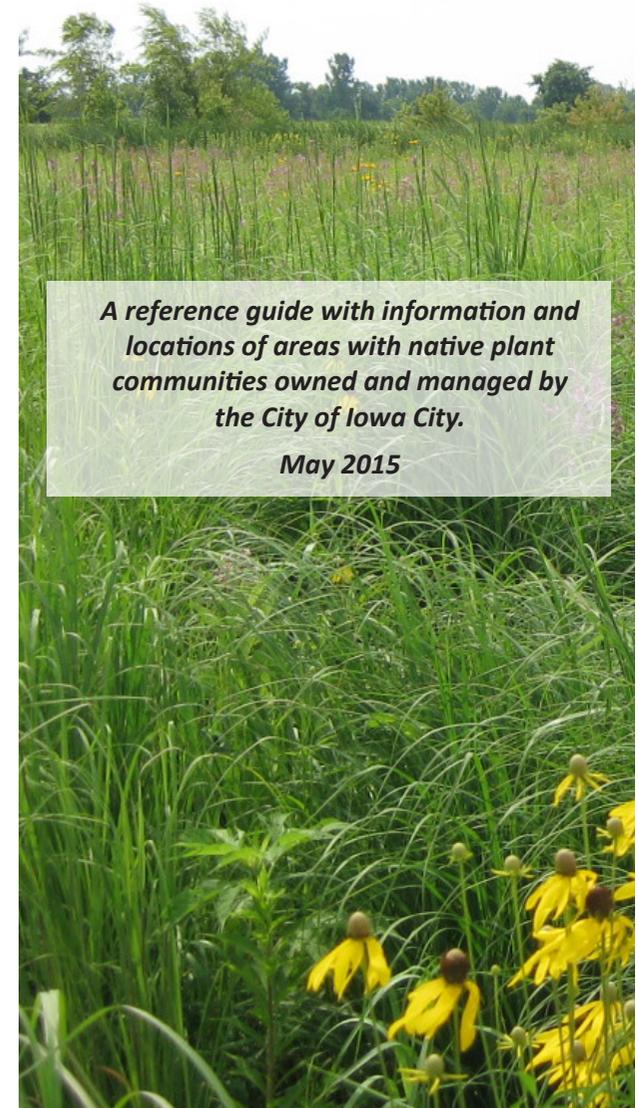
Iowa Mammals:

www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/ian601.pdf



CITY OF IOWA CITY

Natural Areas of Iowa City



A reference guide with information and locations of areas with native plant communities owned and managed by the City of Iowa City.

May 2015

Natural Areas in Iowa City

The City owns almost 1,000 acres of prairie, wetlands, and forested areas within several different properties. Some of these areas are located geographically within city parks, while others are non-park natural areas. Among these properties are a native prairie, constructed prairies, and constructed wetlands that host plants and animals native to Iowa. Listed in this brochure is a summary of the areas that are accessible to the public at this time.

Of the City owned natural areas, some of the acreage was acquired for storm water management, well-head protection or wetland mitigation projects. Other areas were designed for public enjoyment and natural habitat for native species. The Waterworks Park at the water treatment plant consists of 230 acres of constructed prairie and wetlands which contains a variety of native plant species that can be viewed from the trails that loop through the park. The 185 acres at Hickory Hill Park contain woodland vegetation that is excellent for bird watching. See the table below for a list of the areas and the vegetation types they contain.

Iowa City Owned Public Natural Areas: Acres & Vegetation Types

Location	Acres	Vegetation type(s)		
		Prairie	Wetland	Forest or Riparian
1. Waterworks Park	230	X	X	X
2. Peninsula Parkland	140			X
3. Hickory Hill Park	185	X	X	X
4. Longfellow Trail Prairie	<1	X		
5. Rohret Road Prairie	1.3	X		
6. Sand Prairie (native)	38	X		
7. Whispering Meadows Wetland Park	18	X	X	
8. Terry Trueblood Recreational Area	207	X	X	X
9. Ryerson Woods Park	49			X
10. Sycamore Greenspace	106	X	X	
11. Oxeye Prairie	22	X		
Total Natural Area Acreage:		997		



Environmental Value of Natural Areas

Natural areas provide many essential functions including:

- Increasing opportunities for a wide variety of outdoor activities for residents of Iowa City
- Providing species diversity and protecting endangered or threatened species
- Reducing floods and flood impacts
- Educational opportunities
- Protection of water quality and areas around well heads
- Decreasing soil loss and erosion
- Improving soil quality and fertility
- Providing high-quality habitat for a variety of organisms
- Carbon sequestration



Terry Trueblood Recreation Area



Terry Trueblood, Director of the Iowa City Parks and Recreation Department from 1986 to 2009, had a dream: to turn a former sand and gravel quarry south of Iowa City into a recreational area that would become a destination point for people who love the outdoors. In 2006, the quarry was purchased by the City, with plans underway for the "Sand Lake Recreation Area." Sadly, just three years later, Trueblood lost his battle with pancreatic cancer, before his dream of the new recreation area was fully realized.

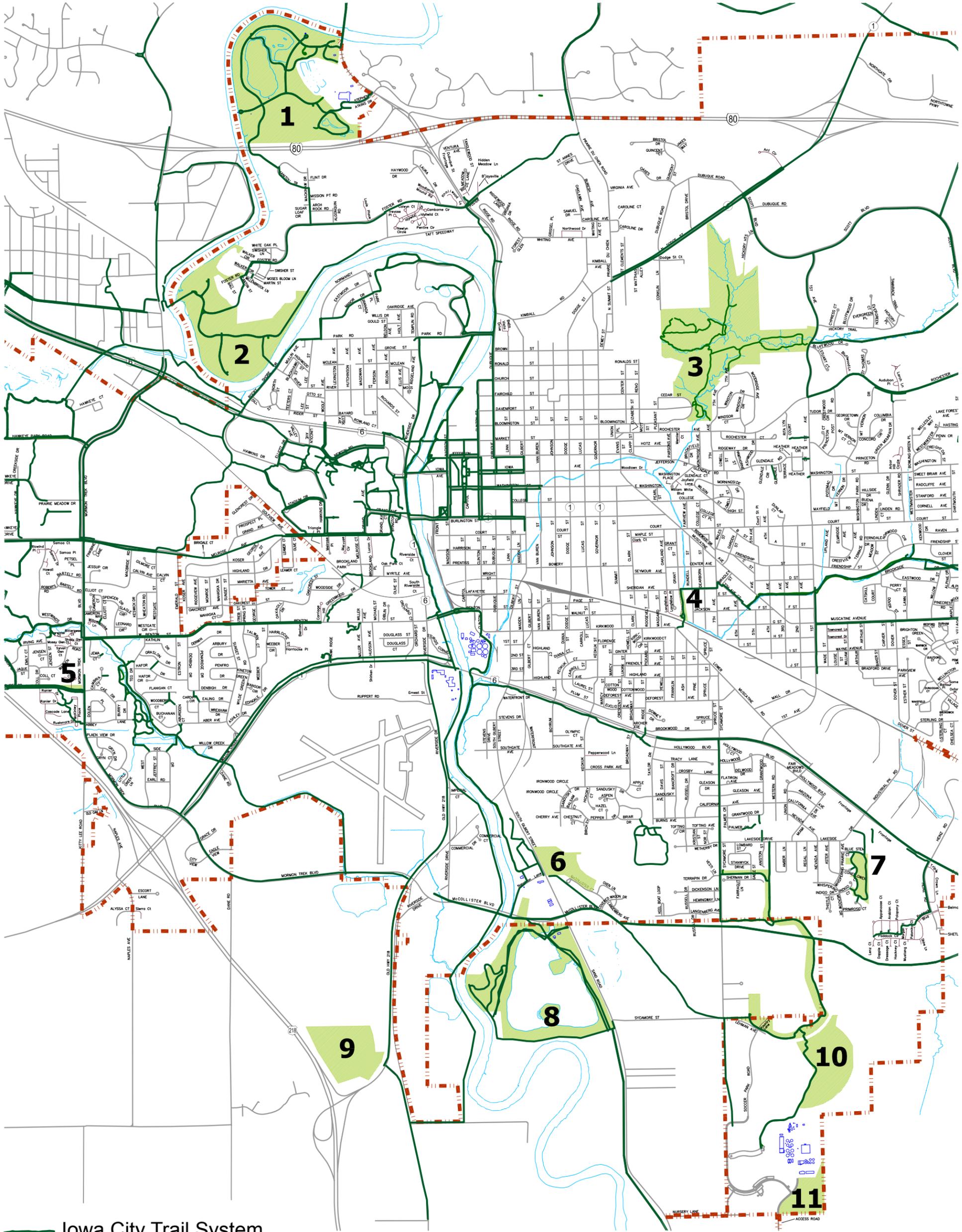
But Trueblood's vision proved to be right on target. Dedicated in August 2013, the City's newest and largest park is located south of Iowa City at 579 McCollister Boulevard, near the intersection of McCollister and Sand Road. Renamed the "Terry Trueblood Recreation Area" in his honor, the park has gained an active following from outdoor enthusiasts who regularly visit the 207-acre park to enjoy its riverfront, prairie, and timber, as well as its 98-acre lake.

The park's amenities include a paved trail around the lake that connects to the area's popular Iowa River Trail, as well as picnic shelters, fishing piers and jetties, and a small marina that provides canoes, kayaks and other outdoor equipment for short-term rental. A beautifully designed wood-and-copper lodge, built adjacent to the lake with a patio and deck that overlook the water and provide a panoramic view of the park and acres of native plantings, is available for special events rental, such as weddings, reunions, and conferences.

The park provides a multitude of outdoor recreational experiences: hiking, biking, bird-watching, fishing, and canoeing, to name a few. It's also a beautiful spot to just sit, enjoy the view, and take a little down-time.

For more information, contact the Parks and Recreation Office at 319/356-5100.

Natural Areas of Iowa City



 Iowa City Trail System

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|-----------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Waterworks Park | 5. Rohret Road Prairie | 8. Terry Trueblood Recreation Area |
| 2. Peninsula Parkland | 6. Sand Prairie | 9. Ryerson Woods |
| 3. Hickory Hill Park | 7. Whispering Meadows Wetland Park | 10. Sycamore Greenspace |
| 4. Longfellow Prairie | | 11. Oxeye Prairie |



NOT TO SCALE