



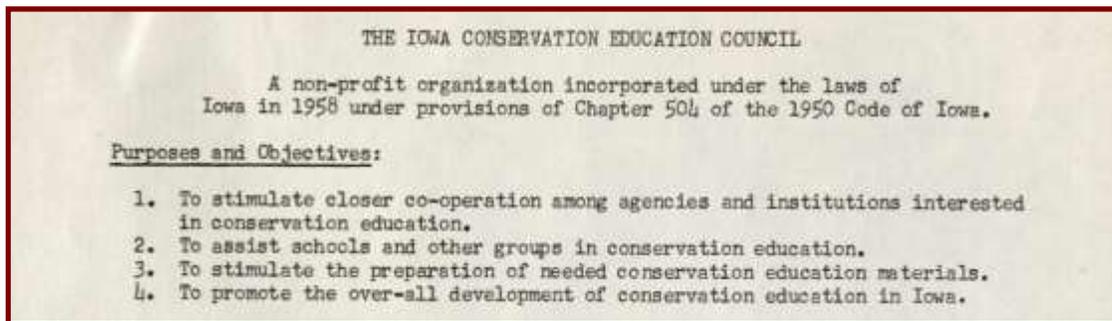
ICEEC
IOWA CONSERVATION
EDUCATION COALITION

Annual Report 2017-2018

An Overview of Activities and Accomplishments of ICEEC April 1, 2017 – March 31, 2018

The Iowa Conservation Education Coalition at 60

As ICEEC reaches 60 years of age, operational changes continue as we seek to grow and enhance our impact on conservation education here in Iowa. However, we are still proudly committed to the original purpose of ICEEC, as laid out in 1963 strategic planning documents:



This year, ICEEC leadership wrote a more concise mission statement:

To provide ways for Iowa's environmental educators to learn, build relationships, and creatively collaborate.

We believe this succinctly sums up our efforts to strengthen and connect the conservation education community in Iowa to each other. As we move forward with a clear-eyed view of our purpose, we also strive to be financially stable and viable. This past year was a year of change and adjustment, but we are now positioned better than ever to make those goals a reality.

As we continue our efforts to grow our membership and expand our services and programs, we invite you to consider joining our Executive Committee. This is a great time to join our dynamic organization! ICEEC's ExCom sets the strategic vision for ICEEC and works toward our mission as a team. All ICEEC members are eligible for nomination. Nomination applications for the 2019-2021 term are due October 25, 2018. We also have openings on our Finance and Fundraising Committees. Visit our website at www.iowaee.org or email Alicia at exec@iowaee.org for more information.

Iowa Conservation Education Coalition
P.O. Box 3616
Urbandale, IA 50323
www.iowaee.org

ICEEC provides ways for Iowa's environmental educators to learn, build relationships, and creatively collaborate.

Winter Workshop 2018

This year's workshop showcased new and exciting programs to enhance conservation education work across the state. The workshop was held February 2, 2018 at Jester Park Lodge in Granger, IA. The workshop engaged approximately 40 participants. Collectively, these conservation educators impact thousands of Iowans by fostering curiosity and scientific thinking through improved education.

The workshop included presentations from a variety of presenters on conservation education projects and tools that help educators. Presenters included: Barb Gigar from the DNR on connections between Project WILD and STEM; Judy Martinson from NRCS and Craig Edmondson from Heartland AEA on Soil Health Kits aligned with Iowa Core Science Standards; Tiffany Morgan from IPTV presented on their variety of educator resources including the new Land & Sky series; and Eve Halligan from the Iowa Academy of Science GLOBE program.

Keynote speaker Jennifer Kurth presented on the amazing world of mussels. She explained how mussels are indicators of aquatic ecosystem health and nature's water filtration system. Attendees learned about the unique life cycles of mussels, fascinating reproduction adaptations, and the incredible variety of mussels we have here in Iowa.



Jennifer Kurth presents at the Winter Workshop.

The next Winter Workshop will be held February 22-23, 2019. The location is TBD. Stay tuned for more information. We hope to see you there!

Thank you to our Winter Workshop 2018 sponsors!



ICEC Supports REAP and REAP CEP

The State of Iowa Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) program invests in, as its name implies, the enhancement and protection of Iowa's natural and cultural resources. Iowa is blessed with a diverse array of natural and cultural resources, and REAP is likewise diverse and far reaching. REAP funds go into eight different programs based upon a percentages that are specified in the law.

The first \$350,000 each year goes to the Conservation Education Program (CEP)!



ICEC Hosts First Outdoor Photography Workshop

In partnership with Friends of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, ICEC hosted an Outdoor Photography Workshop on March 24, 2018. Professional photographer Brenna Norman led participants in camera setting basics and key pointers for shooting outdoors. Despite the icy weather, we had a good turnout and great time!



Capturing the icy beauty of Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge.

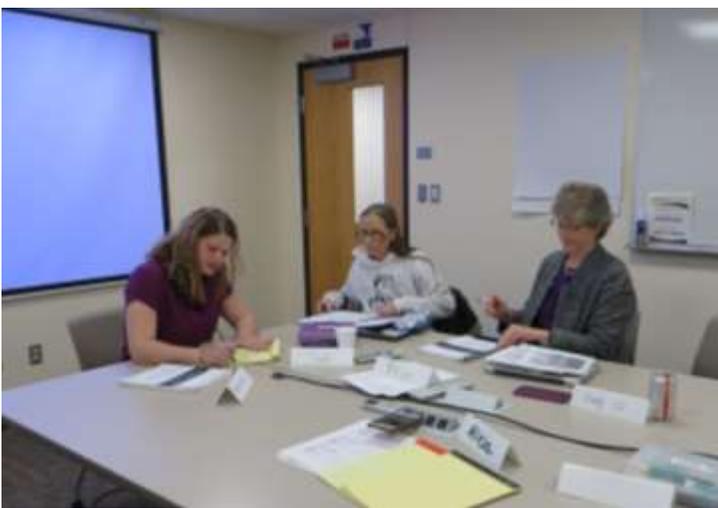


Participants at the March 20th authentic data project focus group.

ICEC Awarded REAP CEP Grant for Authentic Data Project

ICEC was awarded a REAP CEP grant in November 2017 to support a new project entitled "Connecting to Iowa Core: Authentic Iowa Wildlife and Natural Resources Data for the Classroom." The goal of this project is to provide authentic Iowa data for the classroom, enhancing teachers' ability to address Iowa Core Science Standards and connecting students to real-world conservation science and research.

ICEC hosted pre-project focus groups in March with teachers and naturalists to identify needs and target standards. We are now in the process of finalizing lessons and materials, which will be available for public viewing and use by the end of 2018. Look out for announcements coming soon about how you can access the materials! Future goals for this project include creating more lessons, incorporating new sources of data, and providing trainings in how to use the new materials. We look forward to sharing our progress with you as we continue to grow this innovative project.



ICEC Executive Director Alicia Vasto (left) takes notes during a focus group discussion with Iowa teachers.

2017 IAN/ICEC Environmental Education

Awards

The Iowa Conservation Education Coalition (ICEC) and the Iowa Association of Naturalists (IAN) are proud to announce this year's recipients of the Conservation and Environmental Education Excellence Awards Program!

Aldo Leopold Environmental Education Award *-For Lifetime Achievement in EE Excellence and Leadership-*

Darrell Batterson

Darrell Batterson is no stranger in Jasper County. He has been a regular volunteer for Jasper County Conservation for over 12 years, and was a Conservation Officer for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in Jasper, Marshall, and Grundy Counties for 30 years. In 2017 alone, he volunteered for over a dozen Jasper County Conservation programs. Darrell assists with programs such as their huge 240 kid field trips, fishing derbies, hunter safety education, youth mentored hunts, Halloween hikes, and their three kilometer trail race, often running and winning it and jumping in to help calculate the race results. He has been a presenter for the Older, Wiser, Livelier Seniors program, and he even helped install two playground sets at Jasper County Conservation Parks. Thank you Darrell for all your years of hard work protecting the land and wildlife and educating so many people.

Bohumil Shimek Environmental Educator Award *-For Outstanding Efforts by an Environmental Educator-*

Jenny Koska

For two years Jenny Koska has been talking trash. And lots of it too! Well, that is to be expected when you are the Education and Outreach Coordinator for a landfill. Jenny has expanded the Metro Waste Authority's (MWA) programs and

they now have programs targeted at high schoolers, something new for MWA. She has also increased the rate of landfill tours by 163 percent! Jenny incorporates Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS), Iowa Core English Language Arts (ICELA), and the Iowa Core Social Studies Essential Concepts into her programs. If a teacher wants a program that is not currently offered, Jenny even custom designs programs for teachers! Speaking of teachers, Jenny has also expanded their professional development course to reach new school districts and has even added another professional development course. Thanks Jenny for expanding the reach of MWA to better educate Iowans.

Chris Holt Youth Environmental Education Award *-For an Outstanding EE Program for Youth or Conducted by Youth (Preschool-Grade 12)-*

Jones County Conservation

Twelve kids ages 12 to 19 were crew members of the Youth Conservation Crew for Jones County Conservation. They met every Thursday in June from 8:00 am until noon. Youth participated in a variety of activities from looking for monarch butterflies to clearing shrubs and trees in a prairie. Central Park's dry lakebed even received some help as the kids scavenged the area for trash. Kids found things like shoes, antique bottles, and even a tackle box! Great way to help out with the lake's restoration project. Michele Olson led the crew and said, "It's about teaching the kids leadership skills, working with their peers, experience in the field, and cooperation." Thanks Michele for getting the Jones County youth outdoors and actively involved in projects.

Outstanding Volunteer

Dave Stedwell

Dave Stedwell has been a common name for Clinton County Conservation over the past five years. He is currently the President of the Clinton County Conservation Foundation and an Officer for the Friends of Rock Creek. What makes Dave special you ask? His willingness to jump into a Naturalist position and lead sessions all day. Clinton County Conservation had one of their Naturalists sustain an injury and they had a busy fall schedule approaching. Not wanting to turn groups away, Dave jumped right in and volunteered to teach things from pond studies to how to paddle a 29 foot long, 14 passenger voyager canoe! He arrived early every day to set up and stayed until every last piece of equipment was put away, and he even took out the garbage! Over a critical six week stretch in September and early October, Dave worked 13 field trips for 745 students and their teachers! Thank you Dave for your dedication to environmental education.

Ding Darling Environmental Education Award

-For Outstanding EE Program or Event which Informs and Educates the General Public-

Bob and Connie Van Ersvelde

The Bob and Connie Van Ersvelde are a beak above the rest in Jasper County. They purchased some degraded farm ground south of Grinnell and have been working to restore the prairie, oak savanna, and woodland areas. Turning it into their own small nature sanctuary over the years. Since Bob is a licensed bird bander, Bob and Connie host bird banding programs on their property throughout the spring and fall migrations and even all summer

long to monitor nesting species. They band hundreds of birds every year with the help of preschool students all the way up to college students and adults. Just in 2017, they had about 125 participants assisting with bird banding. Bob has worked a great deal with Grinnell College and is getting started with a banding program at Lake Red Rock Jasper County Conservation even takes their camp kids to Bob and Connie's property to band birds and learn about their restoration efforts. Bird banding is a camp favorite! Bob and Connie even help Jasper County Conservation with an after-school program for fifth grade students to formax birds. That programs has 20 -30 participants each year and has been going on for ten years. Bob and Connie also help Jasper County with formaxing public programs and they have even presented formaxing birds at the annual IACCBE Winterfest Workshop. Thanks Bob and Connie for sharing your knowledge and expertise.

Frederic Leopold Environmental Education Award
-For Outstanding EE Efforts by Business, Industry, or Labor-

Adopt a Stream Program

Since 2013, the Metro Waste Authority has been lending a helping hand to local streams in central Iowa through their Adopt a Stream Program. People in the metro area form teams and choose a section of a stream they want to adopt. There are currently 26 teams, which range from families, to Boy Scout Troops, to teams of distillery employees. Volunteer teams choose a section of a stream from the Metro Waste Authority's updated, interactive map that shows stretches of streams around the metro area that are in need of help. That map makes it easy for groups to choose a location that is both convenient for them and also impactful on the community. The Metro Waste Authority also has a 21 page Stream Cleanup Guide, which helps

with the logistics of a stream cleanup from notifying the media to liability waivers. Besides the Stream Cleanup Guide, Metro Waste Authority also provides all the necessary supplies to complete a stream cleanup, from trash grabbers to trash bags. They even help connect the volunteer group with the local city staff, so the garbage can be disposed of properly. Through this program, Metro Waste Authority gives all residents the opportunity to interact with a local government agency and gives them the tools and motivation to take their passion for water quality a step further.

Outstanding Interpretative Print Media Award Water Quality Trading Cards

Similar to Pokémon or baseball trading cards, Des Moines County Conservation created water quality trading cards featuring 22 benthic macroinvertebrates they commonly use for evaluating water quality. Every year at the Starr's Cave Nature Center Park and Preserve, they hold a public event called Critter Catch. It is essentially a bio blitz where families come to find and catch any organisms they see in the creek. A large part of this program is educating the public about the types of life found in their local water as well as teaching them about water quality. The water quality trading cards engage children and adults, getting them excited about organisms which otherwise might not be exciting to them, and connects the dots between diversity and water quality. The cards were a smash at their annual Critter Catch public program, which had more than 200 individuals in attendance. Quite a few families went home with entire decks they loved the cards so much! After receiving a grant from the Resource Enhancement and Protection Conservation Education Program (REAP CEP), the Starr's Cave Nature Center Staff are developing innovative programs and educational totes teachers can use in their classrooms. These cards will be included in these educational totes available for free check-out for all the schools in Des Moines County, which serves nine elementary

school. Thanks Des Moines County Conservation for creating these nifty cards to educate the public.

Ada Hayden Conservation Education Award -For Outstanding Efforts to Educate About Preservation, Land Management, or Natural Resource Conservation -

Kent Park Bird Banders

Both birds and people have been flocking to F.W. Kent Park! Johnson County Conservation Naturalist, Sydney Algreen-Hunter, has teamed up with bird banders, Robert Bradley and Mark Bowman, to have a phenomenal program. They have been banding passerines at F.W. Kent Park since 2014 and have identified over 70 bird species. Facilitating almost weekly banding events from January through October 2016, volunteers spent 585.5 hours banding birds, training and educating new volunteers, and presenting educational programs. During this same time, 21 individuals volunteered to aid in bird banding efforts and education. All of these volunteers helped to reach a total of 940 students, parents, and members of the public during different banding events. Now that is something to tweet about!

Outstanding Environmental Education Program (2 or less full-time equivalent naturalists -For Excellence in EE Programming by an Agency or Institution-

Floyd County Conservation

One might say Heidi Reams is a "jack of all trades" in her role as a Naturalist for Floyd County Conservation. She does her normal programs, but also assists with fall/spring prairie burns, cabin/lodge usage at the Tosanak Recreation Area, and grant writing. In 2017, she also became a certified drone pilot! She can now take videos of the conservation areas from a unique view to highlight features and entice new visitors. Heidi is also responsible for the Floyd County Conservation website, social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram), and the Fossil & Prairie Center

website. During the 2016-17 school year, 122 programs will be presented to classes in preschool/transitional kindergarten through fifth grade at the three public schools in Floyd County. Class sizes range from 16-25 students per class with some grade levels having up to five sections. As of December 1, for the 2017-18 school year, Heidi has presented 104 programs with contacts of 2995 individuals. Outside of the schools, Heidi presents public programs, workshops, monthly nursing home programs, monthly newspaper articles, bi-yearly newsletter, and day camps. Thank you Heidi for your hard work and dedication.

Outstanding Environmental Education Program (3 or more full-time equivalent naturalists)

-For Excellence in EE Programming by an Agency or Institution-

Story County Conservation

With a six team member crew, Story County Conservation boasts over 75 years' worth of experience! Their expertise has attracted 34,398 people last year in their 1,116 programs they offered. They visit eight preschools, all 15 elementary schools in the county, four middle schools, and two high schools. Story County Conservation offers 31 different classroom programs and 18 outdoor experiences (fieldtrips). They do the normal stuff, but they also do unique programs like electricity, inventions, digestion, survival, and circulation. Not only that, but they have overnight river trips for camp and a yearly backpacking trip! Recently, one of their team members, Heather Hucka, was named as the National Association for Interpretation 2017 Master Front Line Interpreter! Congratulations and thank you Story County Conservation, for your dedication to interpretation and providing unique opportunities and programs to so many people.



Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.
-Margaret Mead

Congratulations to our 2017-2018 Conservation Teachers of the Year!

With the co-sponsorship of the Iowa State Soil Conservation Committee and the Conservation Districts of Iowa, ICEC annually awards two outstanding teachers who are creating awareness of soil conservation and water quality in their classrooms. The awards are presented during the Annual Conference for Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioners.

Blake Anderson— Nodaway Valley Community Schools

Blake began teaching in 2013 and hit the ground running, teaching classes at both the high school and middle school levels. Under his leadership, participation in high school agriculture classes has increased from approximately 80 students to 130 students today! Soil and water conservation is a topic of discussion in each of his classes. Additionally, Blake serves on the Adair and Adams County Farm Bureau Boards, is involved with the 4H Youth Action Committee, FFA Chair for Creed Speaking annual contest, and is the FFA Grandstand Usher Supervisor for the Iowa State Fair. Blake's goal for his students is to not only educate them, but enable them to serve the community in the future.

Tom Boeck— Central Lee Community Schools

Tom Boeck has used his 32 years of teaching experience to show his students all aspects of agriculture. He uses many resources including the local NRCS and SWCD office, as well as local farmers, to help students see the real world benefits of agricultural conservation practices. Mr. Boeck utilizes the Central Lee FFA's 48-acre hands-on educational lab to incorporate conservation practices into his curriculum. These practices include the construction of terraces and placing 12.5 acres into CRP. He and the chapter have incorporated the use of cover crops utilizing various methods of application. Mr. Boeck strives to connect his students with the many areas of agriculture – not just farming.

ICEC Executive Committee

Emily Klein, Chair
Poweshiek County Conservation

Mary Bulger, Vice Chair
Iowa County Conservation

Barb Gigar, Secretary
Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Lisa Ralls, Treasurer
Winnebago County Conservation

Lilly Jenkins
Winneshiek County Conservation

Karess Knudtson
Environmental Educator, Dickinson County

Beth Martin
Jefferson Elementary School

Craig Edmondson, Ex Officio
Heartland Area Education Agency

Jerry Neppel,
Ex Officio
Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship

Budget April 1, 2017— March 31, 2018

General Income

Donations	\$5,687.80
Membership Dues	\$1,920.00
Misc Income	\$95.27
Winter Workshop 2018	\$3,485.00

Restricted Income

Big Trees Innovation Fund	\$300.00
REAP CEP 18-19 Grant	\$9,877.50
WILD Resources	\$7,700.00
Scholarship Fund	\$191.00

Total Income **\$25,781.11**

General Expense

Administration	\$42,010.13
Winter Workshop 2018	\$1,869.27

Program/Grant Expense

Scholarship	\$200.00
REAP-CEP 17-10 Grant	\$4,290.00
REAP CEP 18-19 Grant	\$512.50
WILD Resources	\$4,151.76

Total Expense **\$53,033.66**

Net FY18 **\$(27,252.55)**