

Winnebago County, Iowa

*Iowa Rivers
revival* 

2016 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR ACCOM

“Taking legislators out to paddle on their home rivers is one of the most creative yet simple ideas to come out of our organization in that it combines things we already love — a sunny day in nature chatting about the pride we hold in our communities — and it amplifies it using partnerships and shared resources to create a memorable learning experience for our elected officials. The River Roadshow changed the way we communicate about water trails and low-head dams in Iowa and it has helped me continue exploring and enjoying our 70,000 miles of rivers and streams.”

— MOLLY HANSON,
Executive Director

ADVOCACY

- **Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund.** Even with the threat of funding being zeroed out in the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF), Iowa Rivers Revival (IRR), with the help of our supporters, was still able to secure a \$1 million appropriation for Iowa's Low-Head Dam Mitigation and Water Trails Program.
- **Iowa's Water and Land Legacy.** An overwhelming majority of Iowa voters created the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund in 2010. Along with a diverse group of organizations, agencies and individuals, IRR, as a part of the IWILL Coalition, continues to advocate for this trust to be funded. It will provide a much-needed permanent and constitutionally-protected funding source for conserving and enhancing water quality and natural areas in Iowa.
- **Turtle Legislation.** 2016 was a great year for Iowa's wild turtles. We had a major victory in getting a bill passed to protect Iowa's turtles by limiting wild turtles that can be commercially harvested and when. IRR was proud to be part of a strong coalition of new partners helping push these rules. We still have work to do in 2017 as the DNR promulgates the rules, but we can call this a success!
- **Environmental Messaging Group.** In an effort to streamline communication and build a bigger base for environmental voices, IRR, along with Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Trees Forever, Iowa Environmental Council, GPS Impact, and Environmental Law and Policy Center participated together in an environmental messaging group. The priority of this group was to work together to improve support for environmental and water quality issues and provide clear and consistent messaging to our supporters
- **A statewide, watershed-based river restoration program** remains a top priority for Iowa Rivers Revival.

our mission

to help Iowans restore, protect, and enjoy our rivers

our vision

clean, free-flowing Iowa rivers teeming with life, surrounded by diverse landscapes, and connecting vibrant communities

our philosophy

Iowa Rivers Revival is a non-profit statewide leader in river education and advocacy and is committed to protecting some of our most precious natural resources—our rivers and streams. IRR works to engage individuals, organizations, communities, and government leaders in river awareness, responsibility, and enjoyment to improve and enhance the condition of Iowa waterways—ensuring a quality, safe, and lasting resource for future generations.

our history

In March 2006, a coalition of individuals, state agencies, and nonprofit organizations organized the inaugural “Iowa Rivers Revival” conference. There, the need for a statewide organization committed to river advocacy, conservation, and education was affirmed. Following the conference, a dedicated core group of volunteers continued to meet monthly to develop the mission and vision for a new statewide river organization, including an agenda of programs and priorities to protect and enhance Iowa's rivers. Iowa Rivers Revival was officially incorporated by the state of Iowa as a non-profit organization in November 2006 and received federal nonprofit status in March 2009.

PLISHMENTS

OUTREACH

- **Dam Safety Outreach.** Not only do dams block the movement of fish and other aquatic life up and down rivers and harm the health and biodiversity of Iowa's rivers, dams often are deceptively dangerous "drowning machines." Since 1900, at least 163 people have been killed in the deadly recirculating currents that form below these Iowa dams — 31 since 1998.

Iowa Rivers Revival distributed the "Iowa Low-head Dam Modification Success Stories" booklet to over 800 recipients in Iowa — focusing on communities, public officials, and private owners related to the 177 low-head dams remaining in the state. IRR also participated in both The Dam Debate and The Dam Discussion in partnership with the Des Moines Metropolitan Planning Organization and Des Moines Register, reaching over 100 Iowans.

- **River Rascals.** This year was the 8th year for our "River Rascals" program. Once again, we provided a fun and unique river experience for 10 kids in partnership with Children and Family Urban Movement. The children had a chance to learn about basic paddling skills, water safety, river biology/ wildlife, and water quality. For our participants, this program is their first experience on a river. River Rascals is run primarily on volunteer time and in-kind contributions!
- **Speaking.** 2016 brought many opportunities for IRR to get our word out! We participated in radio, video, Internet, and print news interviews. We reached out to various community groups through public presentations.

CAPACITY BUILDING

- **Supporters.** We are so thankful for all of our supporters — we could not continue to grow without them. IRR celebrated 89 River Champions, our program that recognizes donors who contribute \$250 or more annually. And, this year, we recognized a total of 188 individual donors helping IRR reach our goals!
- **The Service Squad.** The Service Squad is a volunteer corps partnership between IRR and the Iowa Environmental Council. This is a group that wants to DO SOMETHING. Events include anything from Adopt a Stream Clean-ups to potluck picnics to training opportunities to tabling at events to beers with sponsors to hikes to prairie burns and BEYOND!
- **New Board Member.** IRR was pleased to have Darren Fife join our board in 2016. Darren brings a unique set of skills to the board with his background in environmental services. His company, Ecosource LLC, does work around the state focusing on environmental compliance, underground storage tank closure, water quality assessments, instructional design and more.

financial summary

IRR's funds have been used carefully and efficiently and are essential to our growing effectiveness and impact.

Carryover from 2015:	\$36,448.97
Total Income:	\$128,466.82
Total Expense:	\$111,309.70
Balance End of 2016:	\$53,606.09



River Rascals learn paddling skills before going out on the water



River restoration field day near Elkader



Volunteers with River Rascals pull a freezer out of the river

RIVER RESTORATION TRAINING



IRR offered four technical training sessions and four citizen science workshops on river restoration in 2016. In addition to these, IRR presented at seventeen community meetings, reaching area landowners, professionals, and concerned citizens.

River Restoration is still a relatively new concept in Iowa, and IRR is proud to be a leader in training professionals and defining what a vision of river restoration is for the state. Collaboration opportunities and partnerships in the field have allowed for progress and inclusion of new education opportunities and restoration techniques that will continue to improve water quality – both statewide and nationally.

These opportunities have been made possible by generous support from the McKnight Foundation and their Mississippi River program goal “To restore the water quality and resilience of the Mississippi River.” Program strategies include restoring functional hydrology in the Mississippi River corridor and reducing agricultural pollution in four states along the northern half of the river (Minnesota, Wisconsin, Iowa and Illinois).

“ These workshops not only give us a chance to teach people the techniques and benefits of river restoration in terms of improving water quality, reducing nutrient/sediment delivery, improving fish/wildlife habitat and reducing flood impacts, but provided a great opportunity to meet, converse and partner with the many natural resource professionals and organizations in our region. ”

— MIKE STEUCK, Fisheries Supervisor, Iowa DNR

RIVER RESTORATION TOOLBOX

IRR is a partner in the development of a statewide River Restoration Toolbox. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently working with its partners to coordinate and improve river restoration efforts. To date, the DNR has developed a strategy, proposed a draft method for evaluating stream mitigation plans, and begun to assemble tools and techniques supporting river restoration.

November 2016 marked one year of project development on the toolbox. Upon completion, the goal of the finished product will be to identify best practices, provide tools and trained professionals, and a system of prioritization for watershed work around the state. All of this will be made available through an online interactive database embedded within the DNR’s existing website.

“ While some initiatives begin as major legislative and appropriation efforts, many of the most effective solutions in government come from blending listening and conscientious problem-solving by people who are passionate in their professions. But sometimes, what is heard in the trenches is different from what’s heard at the leadership level within an agency. For that, policy advocates can play a critical role. Had Iowa Rivers Revival not developed relationships and communicated regularly with DNR at multiple levels about the concerns of consultants, watershed advocates, floodplain professionals, and river enthusiasts, I’m almost positive I would not presently be working as lead technical reviewer for Iowa’s River Restoration Toolbox, presently under a \$399,000 Iowa DNR contract with Stantech for development. In other words, solutions might not have been applied to the frustrations a number of interested parties expressed about the cost, limited tools available, and relative harm that current solutions cause to the river system and its ability to trap nutrients. ”

— NATE HOOGEVEEN, Director of River Programs, Iowa DNR

RIVER TOWN OF THE YEAR: CLINTON

This year, IRR recognized the city of Clinton, Iowa, for tackling difficult water quality challenges. At the same time the community promoted river recreation, boating and fishing, recreational trails, wildlife watching, river history sites, and other river-centered activities.

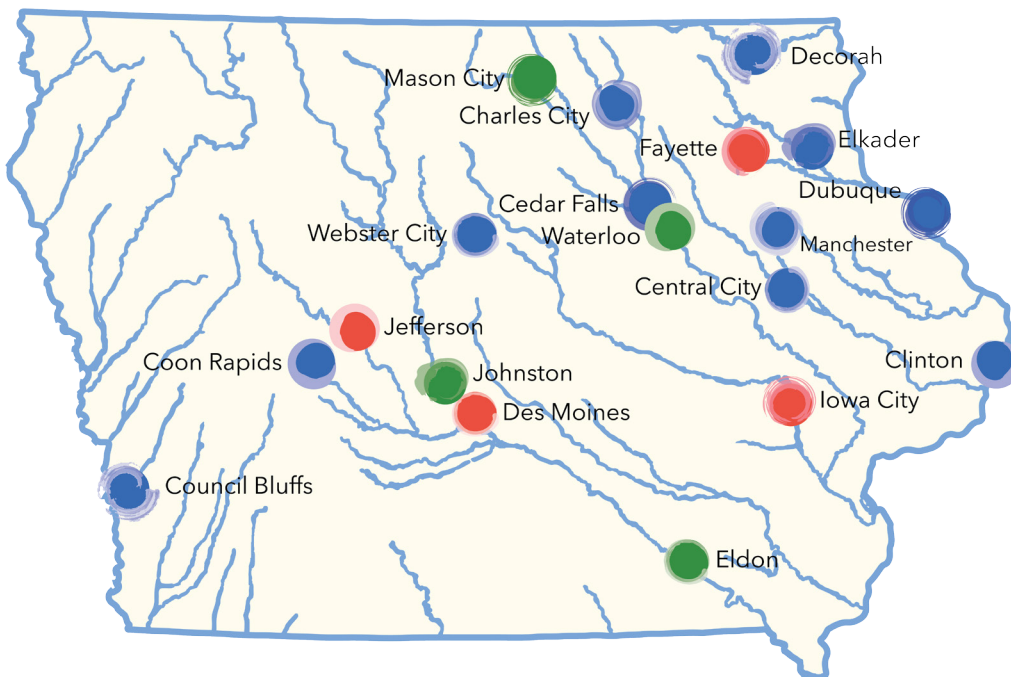
The city of Clinton has been a leader in the effort to reduce adverse impacts to water quality in the Mississippi River. They developed a multi-year program to separate their sanitary and storm water systems; build a new regional waste water treatment plant that manages sanitary waste from the cities of Clinton, Camanche, and Low Moor (all of which had lingering water quality issues associated with their treatment facilities); and proactively incorporated biological nutrient removal technology into the plant. The Main Avenue Green Infrastructure Project included permeable brick parking areas, rain gardens and barrels, bio-retention cells, a bio-swale, tree plantings, and soil-quality restoration. Half the funding for the Project was provided by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR director Chuck Gipp notes that Clinton is a “poster child,” showing what a river town can do to incorporate changes into its sanitary and storm water systems to greatly improve water quality.

“We are especially impressed with Clinton’s forward-looking efforts to protect the environment, improve waste water going into the Mississippi, and reduce storm water and pollutants discharging to the river,” said Jerry Peckumn, board chair of Iowa Rivers Revival.

“The Mississippi River and all the waters that flow into it are a fantastic natural resource. As we do more to address water quality issues, we increase the value of the resource and makes our communities better places to live. Thanks goes to Clinton officials for their proactive decisions and to Iowa Rivers Revival for recognizing those who are stepping up to do good things.”



Mississippi River in Clinton, Iowa



● Locations of IRR board members

● Locations of River Roadshows

● Locations of River Town and River City of the Year award recipients since 2007

“ I am thrilled that Clinton has been recognized as River Town of the Year. This recognition for Clinton’s city leadership by Iowa Rivers Revival is a sign to our community and our region that Clinton is making a difference. ”

— RITA HART,
Iowa Senator and
Clinton resident



IRR board member Dr. Mary Skopec teaches water testing during Master River Stewards training class



Master River Stewards check the clarity of the river



Executive Director Molly Hanson speaks before a River Roadshow paddle



Canoes lined up and ready to leave for the Project AWARE day River Roadshow

MASTER RIVER STEWARDS PROGRAM

In 2016, IRR rolled out a new “Train the Trainer” component to our Master River Stewards Program, thanks to funding received from Des Moines Water Works, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and Metro Waste Authority. The Master River Stewards Program (MRSP) is an eight-week adult education program that teaches watershed awareness, paddling and navigating skills, river and stream dynamics, aquatic habitat, water quality and water monitoring, and education policies related to floodplains, river protection and restoration. MRSP builds a network of river advocates and experts in organizations, agencies and communities across the state to protect and improve Iowa’s rivers to ensure a lasting resource for future generations. IRR contracted with advisor Dr. James Pease to write a trainer curriculum and conduct the initial training. Fifteen trainers from 12 counties graduated from the class and will start programs across the state in 2017, giving us the opportunity to reach out with multiple classes per year instead of just one.

RIVER ROADSHOW

IRR developed a new program in 2016 as part of ongoing efforts to support dam mitigation and water trail improvement projects around the state and gain further support and recognition for economic development that will result for Iowa communities. The “River Roadshow” brings together local partners (county conservation boards, RC&D offices and paddling groups) along with the Iowa DNR, for a ‘working lunch’ and paddle with community leaders and elected officials. The afternoon offers a new perspective that highlights existing and future projects that could improve recreational opportunities and experiences for their constituents and offers conversations about funding mechanisms and the multiple benefits involving our natural resources.

2016 River Roadshow stops:

- Eldon, IA - Lower Des Moines River 7/11/16 (Project Aware)
- Waterloo, IA – Cedar River 8/30/16
- Mason City, IA – Winnebago River 8/31/16
- Johnston, IA – Beaver Creek 9/1/16

RIVER CHAMPIONS

River Champions are supporters who contribute \$250 a year or more to IRR, or raise \$250 from others. Being a "River Champion" means that you strongly support IRR efforts to mobilize Iowans to defend, protect, restore, and celebrate our rivers and streams. It's a strong commitment to very important work.

\$10,000 +

The McKnight
Foundation
REAP CEP

\$5,000 +

Charlotte and Fred
Hubbell

\$2,500 +

Dennis Woodruff
Des Moines
Intentional
Eucharistic
Community
Iowa Foundation
for Education
Environment and
the Arts

\$1,000 +

Metro Waste
Authority
Des Moines Water
Works
Iowa DNR, Water Trails
Whole Foods Market
Sue Rutledge Brenton
and J.C. Brenton
Beth Clayton
Barbara Farrow
Robert and Susan
Fleming
Elizabeth Garst and
Darwin Pierce
Harvey Harrison
Trudy Hurd
Sharon and Kyle Krause
James and Cindy Pease
Alan Rausch
Lynette Seigley
Mike Smith and Susan
Seitz
Dennis Woodruff

\$500 +

Mark and Susan
Ackelson
Linda Appelgate
John and Jane Baty
Central Iowa Paddlers
Jacqueline Comito

David and Kathy Dorff
Mark Engelbrecht
James and Cheryl Erb
Diane Ford and Chris
Rinner
Kate Garst
Lori Hanson and Ralph
Stowell

Susan and Richard
Heathcote
Nate and Wendy
Hoogeveen
Michael and Debbie
Hubbell
Locally Grown Clothing
John and Naomi
McCormick
Terri and Chuck
McNeley
Robert and Kay Riley
Mary Skopce
Steve and Martha
Stephenson
UPS
Wheatsfield Cooperative
Michael and Marne
Woods

\$250 +

Steve and Rachel
Ballenger
Harry Bookey and
Pamela Bass Bookey
Robert Brammer and
Marti Anderson
CanoeSport Outfitters
Confluence Brewing
Company
James and Patricia
Cownie
Phillip Delafield
Jennifer and Gregory
Dreier
Dr. Kathy Elsner and Dr.
Steve Adelman
James and Martha
Fifield
James and Allison
Fleming
Robin Fortney
Tom and Tina Hadden

Kevin Hansen and Laura
Palmer
Molly Hanson
Muffy and Henry
Harmon

Jack Hatch and Sonya
Roberts
Fred Heinz and Cheryl
Ross

John and Marilyn Jordan
Gary Kaufman
Cliff Kessler

Larry Kirsner and Joan
Burke

Diane Krell
William and Kristi Lozier
Jack and Marlene Lytle
Kay Meyer and Rusty
Martin

Thomas and Lorraine
May
Nicholas McNeley
Ned and Marcie
McPartland

Peter Moore and Lisa
Schulte Moore
Connie and Robert
Mutel

Martha James and
Michael Myszewski
David Oliver
Hank Ostwald
Jerry Peckum
John and Janis Ruan
Leland Searles
Gary Siegwarth
Richard and Diana
Sloan

Virginia Soelberg
Brian and Ann Soenen
Al Sturgeon
James Todd
Steve Veysey
Donald Wall
John and Sandy Wenck
Patti Williamson
David Witke
Karen and Gary
Youngberg
Dean Zimmerman

\$100 +

Michael Alowitz
Randy and Karly
Beavers
Blank Park Zoo
Margo and Don
Blumenthal
Joseph Bolkcom
Arden and Margaret
Borgen
Pam Burmeister
Sue Caley
James and Karen
Colbert
Frank Cownie
Nancy Crowfoot
and John (L.J.)
Pollak
Mike Delaney and
Dell Radcliffe
Richard Dietz and
Carol Hansell
Charles and Marilyn
Farr
Vern Fish
John Forbes
John and Vicki
Gallagher
Calvin and Kathleen
Hansen
Hank Hanson
David and Judith
Hoffman
Amy and DeWayne
Johnson
Susan Judkins
Josten
Art Kern
John and Lynn
Koester
Teresa Lamair-
Jenson and Bart
Jenson
Mark and Amy
Langgin
David Rasey and
Marilyn Lantz
William and Lois
Jim and Carol
Liechty
Sandy Lint

Alan and Regina
Macrae
David Osterberg
Jim Autry and Sally
Pederson
Judy Porter and
Gary Cromer
William and Carole
Reichardt
Ann Y Robinson
Steve and Lindi Roe
Melvin and Barbara
Schlachter
Robert Baker and
Charlotte Shivers
Martin St Clair
James Throgmorton
Tim and Toni Urban
Gregory Vitale
Anne and Ivan
Webber
Don Wente
Daniel F.
Wiechmann Jr.
and Judith
Wiechmann
David and Corrine
Williams

Up to \$100

Roy Adolphson and
Joy Harrey
Cecilia Arnold
Erica Blair
Don Brazelton and
Sandra Taylor
Francine Brown
Thomas Caligiuri
Mike Carberry
Amy Clark
Dan Cohen and
Micki Sand-
Cohen
Rob Davis
Mark Dunagan
Randy Duncan
Patti Jo Edwardson
and George
Naylor
Troyce Fisher and
Deb Groath

Judson and Dixie
Frisk
Richard and Mary
Susan Gibson
John and Beverly
Gilbert
Doug Hoffman and
Dagny Fidler
Erin Hummel
Ellen King and
Curtis Sytsma
Pat Knueven
Kathleen Kopatich
Mike and Jane
LaMair
Sarah and Roger
Lande
Nathan Lein
Richard and
Kathleen Leopold
Caroline Levine
Randy Lippert
Michael Lundby
Ryan Maas
Judith McClure
Kent Newman
Charles Nixon
Brandon Paulson
KJ and Dan
Rebarcak

Gerry Rowland and
MC Scott
Mark and Barb
Schmidt
Spencer
Schoonover
Bernard Schroeder
Lindsey Seitz
Thomas Skadow
Skunk River
Paddlers
Larry and Margaret
Stone
Megan Thul
Terry Tikovitsch
James Urban
Jon and Margaret
Vernon
Richard and Jane
Worm

The generous contributions of our supporters have provided the foundation for Iowa Rivers Revival to develop priorities and programs to address problems and solutions concerning Iowa's rivers and streams. The funds have been used carefully and efficiently, and are essential to our growing effectiveness and impact.

Thank you!

You can make unrestricted gifts or gifts for a specific purpose to IRR. Gifts are tax-deductible. Go to iowarivers.org or contact us at 515.724.4093 or info@iowarivers.org.

Iowa Rivers Revival
PO Box 72
Des Moines, Iowa 50301

BOARD

Jerry Peckumn, Chair
Chuck McNeley, Vice Chair
Robin Fortney, Secretary
Mike Smith, Treasurer
Mark Ackelson
Linda Appelgate
Robert Brammer
Susan Heathcote
Kata McCarville
Mary Skopec
Art Kern
Darren Fife

ADVISORS

Pat Boddy
Kate Garst
Mark Langgin
Jim Pease
Steve Veysey
Mimi Wagner
David Williamson

STAFF

Molly Hanson, Executive Director
Jenn Dreier, Assistant Director

Cover Photo by Cole Swartz
Annual Report designed by Erica Blair



The growth and success of Iowa Rivers Revival is a direct result of the commitment and dedication of its supporters and volunteers. Together we can ensure healthier rivers for future generations.

Iowa Rivers Revival
PO Box 72
Des Moines, Iowa 50301

515.724.4093
info@iowarivers.org

For more information about Iowa Rivers Revival,
visit us at www.iowarivers.org