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Water and Land Stewardship 2021 Legislative Priorities

The Iowa Environmental Council supports widespread land-use change across Iowa to improve and protect Iowa's water and land, and to strengthen Iowa's resiliency, economy, public health, and quality of life.

Reduce and mitigate agricultural pollution

- Support mandatory vegetative buffers along public waters and public drainage systems.
- Support policies and programs that reduce pollution from conventional row-crop and industrial-scale livestock production.
- Support monitoring, measurement, and accountability provisions for publicly supported water quality projects.
- Support strengthening the Nutrient Reduction Strategy with timelines/benchmarks for achieving goals, including accountability measures when goals are unmet.
- Strongly oppose any efforts to weaken water quality standards or public health protections.
- Oppose expansion and new construction of concentrated animal feeding operations until more stringent regulations are passed that protect sensitive watersheds, and until such time the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) is adequately resourced to provide oversight and enforcement of permit compliance.

Invest in a diverse, inclusive, and multi-functional Iowa landscape

- Support funding the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund, with an emphasis on maintaining the integrity of the original formula.
- Support full funding at \$20 million for the Resource Enhancement and Protection Program (REAP) as well as eliminating the scheduled REAP sunset.
- Support policies and programs that incentivize and/or require conservation practices and infrastructure that have multiple benefits such as protecting soil health, diversifying agricultural crops, developing renewable energy, creating recreation opportunities, and/or providing critical wildlife habitat.
- Support policies and regulations that protect the quality of both public and private drinking water sources, including monitoring and testing.
- Support dedicated funding for local watershed planning, coordination efforts, and on-the-ground services to implement conservation practices and projects, including sustainable salary and benefits for watershed coordinators.
- Support funding for state agencies and other entities necessary to ensure protection of our environment and public health, including: IDNR, soil and water conservation efforts of the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship (IDALS), and entities that advance land-use change to protect Iowa's water and land.
- Support additional sources of water quality and environmental protection funding consistent with Council goals and priorities.



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- Oppose policies related to Iowa's water and land that perpetuate systemic racism and inequality and/or result in disproportionate negative impacts on marginalized communities due to water pollution, flooding, public lands management, or other outcomes under the purview of the Water and Land Stewardship Program's focus and priorities.

Flood mitigation and climate resiliency

- Support funding for flood mitigation policies and programs that incorporate natural infrastructure solutions to reduce flood impacts and protect communities, such as floodplain reconnection and wetland restoration.
- Support funding for policies and programs that support community and watershed climate and flood mitigation planning.
- Support funding for policies and programs that increase climate resiliency through land-use change, greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and carbon sequestration.