

Conservation Groups Work Together to Protect Local Natural Resources

By Curt Kemmerer, Iowa DNR Wildlife Biologist

The Dubuque County Conservation Society and the Iowa Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) have joined forces to assist the Iowa DNR with permanently protecting forest land in Dubuque County. The Conservation Society led the way on the project by acquiring 20 acres of woodland that adjoins the Ram Hollow Wildlife Management Area in the northwest corner of Dubuque County. The family that sold the land preferred to see it permanently conserved and available for the enjoyment of future generations, an ideal that is commendable and often the impetus to a great conservation success story. The Dubuque County Conservation Society has long been a leader and partner in the protection of the unique landscape and natural resources in that locale, which includes one of their most notable project areas, White Pine Hollow State Preserve. The Society's members knew that this was a great opportunity to continue to build upon that gem of a public resource which so many Iowans enjoy. With that in mind, the Conservation Society sold the parcel to the DNR, after making a generous donation on the selling price. Under DNR ownership, the site will be managed for wildlife and open to public recreation.

The NWTF is also a champion for conservation, not only across the country, but right here in our backyard. Through an annual grant award process, the NWTF was a major contributor to a wildlife habitat enhancement project on this particular public land complex just last year. When this year's grant cycle rolled around, their board of directors did not hesitate to again answer the call of conservation on this special wildlife area. The NWTF has contributed funds toward the purchase of the 20 acre addition, making the project feasible for the DNR to complete. This project fit in perfectly with the NWTF's mission to conserve wildlife habitat and promote public access to land where families and friends can share in and pass on our hunting traditions. This NWTF grant award process funds multiple projects of importance across the state of Iowa every year.

The conservation ethic and partnership demonstrated by these two groups made this great project possible. Thanks to them, more of our fragile natural landscape will be forever protected and available for the enjoyment of current and future generations of Iowans. Please join me in thanking them and supporting them in the future!