

Restore Iowa! Grant Program

In 2011, INPS initiated a grant program to *help restore native Iowa plant communities, while simultaneously introducing Iowa's students and youth to ecological restoration concepts and techniques*. The grant is intended to introduce a new group of Iowans, who are newly engaged with the land, to concrete hands-on ecological restoration activities. Novel approaches, projects, and programs for getting Iowans involved with restoring nature are highly encouraged. This grant will fund up to two projects a year, at a maximum of \$1,000 per project.

The grant's emphasis is on *stimulating novel ways of engaging Iowans in ecological restoration*, with a stress on participant education and getting people out onto the land. Thus creative approaches for executing restoration projects are encouraged. Established restoration programs may be considered *if* they incorporate novel approaches for integrating Iowans into restoration projects.

Premise: Returning healthy ecological structure and function to Iowa's landscape will require novel approaches for getting citizens involved, creative techniques for maximizing the positive effects of restoration efforts, and a dedicated populace. This grant provides seed funds for efforts to engage Iowa's youth and students in ecological restoration, while accomplishing at least partial restoration of an Iowa natural area. We hope that the program will provide innovative paradigms to stimulate and guide additional restoration efforts in coming years.

Guidelines: Projects may be of any size and duration, as long as they meet the following criteria.

- Projects must work with restoration of an Iowa native prairie remnant or oak woodland with proven good restoration potential. Prairie reconstructions will not be considered.
- Solid restoration techniques should be employed. Research proposals that look at restoration techniques (rather than ways to get Iowans involved) would fit better into INPS's "Small Grants" program.
- Projects should primarily be field efforts, but they must include some restoration-focused educational component, either in the field or in the classroom.
- Projects must work on public or private Iowa land where restoration efforts have a high probability of continuation with other sources of funding.
- Projects must be completed with Iowa students or youth (high school or university students, Scout groups, etc.) Project leaders need not be experts in ecological restoration, but they should have some experience or knowledge about the field, or bring in someone to provide this experience or knowledge to the participants.
- Grant funds may cover minimum wages for students (up to \$8/hour), transportation to the work site, and up to 50% of limited equipment. No salary is provided for the instructor or project leader.
- Once completed, the project leader should submit a short report to INPS describing what was accomplished at the restoration site, and what educational objectives were achieved. If older students are involved, they are encouraged to participate in the report writing.
- Applications should be submitted by January 15. Early applications are encouraged.

Application process: Proposals include writing a letter of intent to INPS grant chair Connie Mutel (connie-mutel@uiowa.edu). State whom you would work with, where, what you propose to do, and the project's objectives and budget. We will respond with questions for more information, and attempt to work out details with you. The proposal process is thus interactive, and INPS welcomes your suggestions on the most effective manner of using Restore Iowa! funds.

Disclaimer: Restoration efforts and field work can include physically challenging activities. INPS accepts no liability for the safety of participants or for damage to property during activities funded by this grant. Project leaders should ensure that participants take proper safety precautions, and that liability issues are addressed and waivers are signed as necessary.

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