



# PRAIRIE *of Iowa* RIVERS



2015  
Annual Report

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## Our Core Values

We respect and elevate the integrity of the natural, historical and cultural resources in Iowa and advocate sustainability for present and future generations.

**Advocating:** We support ecological and natural resource integrity by advancing sustainable stewardship practices.

**Partnering:** We engage and empower people and organizations with a diversity of skills and expertise to accomplish together more than we can do separately.

**Educating:** We foster the environment by learning, and educating Iowans to activate and engage in cultivating an environment of conservation.

**Assessment:** We support a consistency of actions and methods through ongoing assessment of our programs.

Prairie Rivers of Iowa is an innovative and creative organization that acts and thinks proactively to address natural resources issues as they arise. Using good science and common sense, we continually focus on goals that will maximize results in support of our mission.

Prairie Rivers of Iowa is a federally authorized nonprofit organization dedicated to creating a better environment for the citizens of Iowa.

We provide educational services for Iowans that create awareness and understanding, which leads to better conservation of our natural and historical resources.

Our organization builds partnerships with and utilizes local experts; this empowers people to understand, create, and support a healthy, natural environment.

Iowans profit from our organization because we improve the local economy, create a strong sense of community, and invest resources back into the state. We remain focused on our mission to help Iowa communities.

## Letter to our Supporters

*Penny Brown Huber, Executive Director  
Reed Riskedahl, Board President*

Prairie Rivers of Iowa met and surpassed many goals in 2015! Strategic plans have helped us focus on our overall direction improving our natural resources in Iowa.

Our goals and strategies create direction for our staff who then take off with unbelievable energy and creativity! Our reward is satisfaction in hard work, meeting or rewarding more of our stakeholder's expectations, and continuing to grow our knowledge, staff, and reputation throughout our state.

As you review this report, you will see vibrant programs that are serving the Iowa environment while engaging many individuals, businesses, not-for-profits, and government in the work. The staff is always asking the question -- are we making a difference and creating real change for the good of Iowa's natural and historical resources? We feel as you review this report we can definitely answer that question with a YES; we are making a difference.

While 2015 was a year to be proud of, 2016 and beyond hold challenges and new directions for us. Our staff, board, and leadership is up to that task! We remain dedicated to our mission and vision to create a better environment for Iowans while keeping the ecological integrity of our natural resources.

Thank you.



Reed Riskedahl, Board President



Penny Brown Huber, Executive Director





# Prairie Rivers

## of Iowa

### Program Overview

At Prairie Rivers of Iowa, we manage a range of programs in support of our mission to improve the quality of life for citizens while strengthening the health of Iowa's environment and communities.

Explore our programs to learn more at: [www.prrcd.org](http://www.prrcd.org)



#### Mission

To promote community-based stewardship that will improve the quality of life of our citizens, preserve the ecological integrity of the land, and meet the economic aspirations of landowners and communities.



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#### CENTRAL IOWA LOCAL FOODS

Building a dynamic local food system involves encouraging healthy living, teaching responsible farming, and partnering with others to strengthen our communities. The Central Iowa Garden Project facilitates the development of garden committees in various schools, workplaces, and cities in Story, Boone, and Hardin counties. Other projects are in development to keep our local foods system engaged in research-based practices.



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#### LINCOLN HIGHWAY HERITAGE BYWAY

The Lincoln Highway was the first improved transcontinental road and is Iowa's longest and most historic byway. It continues to be a strong economic development engine for local economies and an enduring symbol of civic pride in the thirteen counties and forty-three communities it travels through in Iowa. We are focused on community-driven projects to "tell the story of the places and people of the Lincoln Highway."



## Watersheds and Waterways

Interest in water quality and soil health brings together a diverse group of city residents, farmers and landowners who collaborate to build healthy watersheds for improved natural habitats, outdoor recreation, and clean water. One of our partners is the Squaw Creek Management Authority. This board is representative of the whole watershed: Story, Boone and Hamilton counties, soil and water conservation districts, and the cities of Ames, Gilbert and Stanhope.



## OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN IOWA

This is a project that supports outdoor educators and funders of outdoor learning and outdoor classrooms. This program builds capacity for outdoor education in Iowa and provides an opportunity for sharing best practices in outdoor space design and use. These outdoor environments also provide intentional space for exploration, inquiry, and learning to empower environmental literacy and education in any discipline.

## Our Vision

As a nonprofit organization, we are dedicated to creating a better environment for the citizens of Iowa.



## LOG PRODUCTS

This program specializes in providing Iowa grown, Iowa manufactured, white oak logs that do not require any chemical or preservative treatment and are naturally decay resistant. Prairie Rivers continues to partner with Iowa County Conservation Boards to build unique log cabins in county parks around Iowa that are environmentally sustainable and have the durability to last generations.





## Prairie Rivers of Iowa Marketing

*Jessica Johnson, Marketing Coordinator  
Paul Erhsam, Iowa Lincoln Highway Association Marketing Intern  
Meredith Ponder, Marketing Assistant*



Marketing involves many activities and strategies to tell the message of Prairie Rivers of Iowa, along with raising our profile in the communities where we work today. In 2015 we:

### Prairie Rivers of Iowa

- Continued updates on website
- Continued a tri-annual newsletter
- Created an organizational PowerPoint
- Developed the 2014 Annual Report
- Hired a Technology Intern
- Created print and design request forms
- Created a Technology Support plan for our office
- Sent holiday/fundraising cards out to our database
- Oversaw all social media accounts
- Researched and bought a new camera and prepared guidelines on how to use
- Ordered Prairie Rivers of Iowa apparel for board & staff
- Created an office “Funmittee”
- Wrapped up Drake University project

### Central Iowa Local Foods

- Created Local Food Cycle materials
- Created Local Food Cycle ad for The Iowan magazine
- Wrote a TV commercial for our ad played on Mediacom
- Sent out numerous press releases
- Put together e-mail campaigns
- Secured a TV interview on KCWI for the Local Food Cycle
- Was interviewed on KASI radio for the Local Food Cycle
- Had an article in the Iowan magazine about the Local Food Cycle
- Created a Garden 101 Flyer
- Put together a Compost Flyer

### Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway

- Sent out various press releases
- Listened to a webinar on Tagwhat mobile app
- Oversaw social media accounts
- Researched information for the Corridor Management Plan
- Created Interpretive Panels placed in Grand Junction & Ogden
- Contacted individuals for photos from their location for the Travel Iowa website
- Submitted photos and facts for the Central Iowa Tourism Regional guide

### Log Products

- Updated Look Book
- Researched other cabins

### Watersheds and Waterways

- Wrote and submitted numerous press releases
- Scheduled speaking opportunities about the 20 year Squaw Creek Watershed plan to various groups
- Created an area on our website for the plan
- Created a Frequently Asked Questionnaire
- Assisted on a Partnership Day poster for an event at the capitol
- Created banners, cost share sheet and brochure, site visit facts, Farmer Conservation Form, Practice Inquiry form, and Water Quality Initiative Workshop flyer
- Created Field Day materials and media information
- Took photos and video on a cover crop site visit
- Created online form for conservation practices request
- Designed banners and yard signs for field day use



Prairie Rivers of Iowa holds various marketing contracts with other similar organizations to help further our mission and theirs.

### **Lincoln Highway Association (ILHA)**

- Hired a new intern
- Created a new website and continued to do updates of content
- Created the 2017 National Conference logo to be held in Denison, Iowa
- Designed a brochure for Greene County
- Continued to produce the quarterly newsletters and proofread
- Helped with the Buy-Way Yard Sale and creation of its materials
- Oversee their social media accounts
- Wrote a website manual
- Gathered information for a Jefferson Herald reporter to do a story on an old tire company along the Lincoln

### **Hamilton County Conservation Board**

- Sent out e-mail blast to previous renters on activities happening in the park
- Distributed over 500 rack cards to various locations locally and up to 40 miles away
- Placed a special offer for cabin winter rental on Central Iowa Tourism Region site
- Updated MyCountyParks.com
- Presented updates to the Hamilton County Conservation Board
- Wrote and received a grant to create a TV commercial with ICAN that was shown on major television channels
- Updated the cabin demographics
- Created a wedding/cabin brochure
- Handed out rack cards at Iowa State University orientation
- Brought the University of Iowa bus tour to see the cabins
- Created website analytics for Hamilton County's portion on MyCountyParks.com
- Submitted photos and facts for the Central Iowa Tourism Region guide
- Designed the 2016 "No Boundaries" conference logo
- Oversaw social media account
- Contacted websites to correct outdated/missing information

### **Legacy Learning Center (Chautauqua event)**

- Secured Iowa Public Radio Ads
- Created a TV Commercial with ICAN
- Secured newspaper ads for 8 area newspapers
- Researched and advertised in towns within 50 miles

### **Iowa Agricultural Mitigation Bank**

- Created a Frequently Asked Questionnaire
- Brought a new color palette forward for use in materials
- Launched a new website
- Created brochure
- Conducted a customer survey
- Created website manual

### **Iowa Choice Harvest**

- Created a mission banner
- Updated a brochure
- Created apple pie labels
- Put together recipe cards for the Iowa State Fair
- Made point-of-sale fliers

### **Events Attended**

- Central Iowa Tourism Meetings
- DNR Social Media Workshop
- Drake University Project Meetings
- Minnesota Nonprofit Technology Conference
- Eco Alliant Fair
- ISU Earth Day
- Parks to People Meetings
- H.O.G. Rally
- Leadership Training Classes
- Silos and Smokestacks booth, Iowa State Fair
- Staff Retreat
- Lincoln Highway Days in Nevada
- University of Iowa Leadership Training
- Public Relations Advertising Marketing (P.R.A.M.) meetings
- Iowa Lincoln Highway Association Meeting in Denison
- Sustainability Day at Iowa State University
- Ogden City Council Meeting
- Ames Convention and Visitors Bureau Cycles event

# Website Analytics

**Page Views** (One person browsing on page. If they reload, it counts as another page view. If they click away and come back it counts as another view.): **24,842**

**Average Session Duration** (The length of time between when a visitor browses to their first page on your site and when they browse to their last page on your site.): **1 minute 43 seconds**

**Bounce Rate** (Percentage of people who arrived at your site, browsed one page and left the site without browsing any other pages. Avg. is 70% and below.): **69.2%**

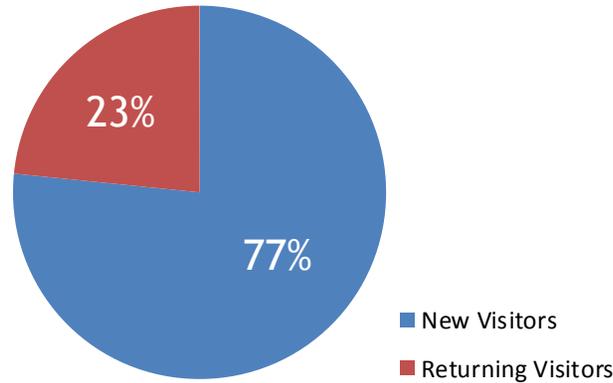
**Most Popular Landing Page: Local Food Cycle**  
**Page Views: 1,510**  
**Average Time on Page: 1 minute 51 seconds**

**Top Referral Site** (Someone refers your site from theirs.):  
**Social buttons**  
*(social media site/social share button/etc)*

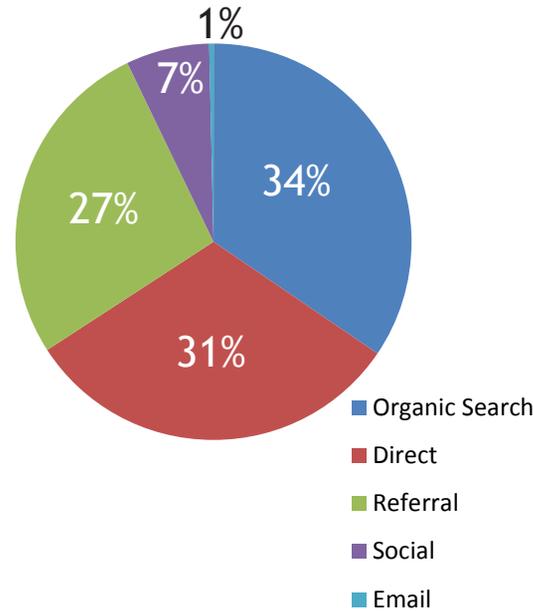
**Organic:** User searched for our site or happened upon us.  
**Direct:** User knows our URL and goes directly to our site.  
**Social:** Our social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest.  
**E-mail:** The link that employees have in their e-mail footer to lead people to our page.  
**Referral:** When a user is directed to your site from another site that is linked to you.



## New vs Returning Visitors



## Channels of Arrival



# Social Media 2015

## Facebook

Prairie Rivers of Iowa

Increased 32.9%

2015 ended at 389 total followers

Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway

Increased 15.5%

2015 ended at 620 total followers

## Twitter

@PrairieRiversIA

Increased 307.7%

2015 ended at 52 total followers

@PRIwatershed

Increased 233%

This account was started in 2015



## Prairie Rivers of Technology

*Dalton Petersen, Technology Assistant*

As Prairie Rivers of Iowa has grown, so have our technology needs. Prairie Rivers of Iowa took steps in the fall to help fill that void by hiring a Technology Assistant to continue our efforts to make the office technology run as smoothly as possible for our staff. Hiring a student not only helps us in fulfilling this need but also gives a student valuable experience to take into their technology career.

- Wiped and installed new operating system on donated laptop
- Set up new employees' server and e-mail accounts
- Looked into buying a few new computers
- Backed up and deleted previous employee e-mail account
- Work to continue upgrading the server
- Changed faulty Ethernet cables
- Organized and created files relating to technology
- Looked into Square - mobile payment
- Worked on Carbonite backup space issue
- Looked into Google Drive versus a server
- Organized and labeled tech closet
- Helped move things to the storage space
- Set up new computers
- Purchased and installed new computer monitors
- Took inventory and organized computer components
- Migrated the tech@prrcd emails from John to intern
- Tried to troubleshoot old color printer
- Set up and connected every computer to new colored printer
- Troubleshot Google Chrome Issue
- Helped with technology at the field day
- Activated GIS on computers
- Researched how to make server/network more reliable
- Decided to upgrade RAM on computer
- Ordered items for new digital camera
- Set up Neat scanner in Penny's office
- Set up keyboard/mouse for Carmen
- Looked into a problem with various computers
- Started research on how to encourage people to use server
- Started a plan on how to phase out Carbonite
- Added Natural Resource folder to shared folders on server
- Spoke to John Mazzello about ways to save files to server
- Read through a manual on our server to find a good way to set people's "Documents" to save to the server
- Set up new color printer
- Looked into problem with Wi-Fi
- Added switch and connected two computers via Ethernet



## Central Iowa Local Foods

*Kellie Engelman, Local Foods Coordinator  
Emma Schmoll, Garden Coordinator*



### **Central Iowa Garden Project**

The focus of the Central Iowa Garden Project is improving community health through the practice of gardening. The overall goal is to start a gardening movement at schools, workplaces, and cities in Story, Boone, and Hardin counties. The plan is to start seven workplace gardens and three school gardens across the counties.

This was the second year of the grant project supported by Wellmark Foundation and ISU Extension and Outreach for Story, Boone, and Hardin counties. Eight Gardens were implemented in 2015 with three workshops/events:

- Nevada Central Elementary preschool serves approximately 100 students. During the school year the garden was the responsibility of the preschool teachers, students and community. In the summer it was supported by the Summer Reading and Feeding Programs. This program served 170 students, ages 3-18 in 2015. The garden boasts four raised beds and eight tire beds, and a drip irrigation system.
- Rock Run Elementary School, located in Iowa Falls, serves approximately 300 students. The 4th grade team takes care of the garden. The students started seeds in their classrooms and used all the seedlings for their five raised beds. They also have an area for pollinator attracting plants.
- Story County Medical Center, located in Nevada, implemented a large garden through a team of staff and a master gardener. The garden has ten raised beds, several repurposed pieces of farm equipment, and perennials to give it a farm-feel in the middle of town. Produce was delivered to staff throughout both campuses of Story County Medical. A canning class taught employees and community residents how to make their produce last longer.
- CDS Global, located in Boone, started “The Global Garden” late in the 2015 planting season. Lessons on watering were learned throughout the season.
- Story County Administration, led by the Story County GIS Coordinator, implemented a four-plot garden late in the 2015 planting season. Seasoned gardeners, along with amateurs, planted peppers, tomatoes, and different greens that fared well. The team consisted of five Story County employees.
- Eastwood Apartments, a low-income housing community in Ames, joined forces with us to assure that fresh vegetables were on the tables of tenants. With the help of some volunteers, produce was bountiful this season for the residents. The kids came out at each work session to help weed, water, and harvest.
- City of Madrid has plans for fencing and water lines to be ready for 2016 planting. Several individuals have already signed up to get one of the 25 plots available.
- Woodward Academy reached out to Prairie Rivers of Iowa in the fall of 2015 to start the planning of a garden for 2016. The Local Foods Coordinator worked with the garden champion to write a grant for startup funding for the garden through the Whole Kids Foundation. The boys at Woodward are also planning on assisting with building the beds for the City of Madrid garden in the spring.

### **2nd Annual Local Food Cycle**

August 30, 2015, was another dreamy day for the 2nd Annual Local Food Cycle. The bike ride continues to celebrate healthy sustainable food systems in Central Iowa. This year we toured the eastern Story County area, around Nevada and Colo.

- Over 75 riders participated in the event.
- The route was thirty miles long, starting at the Story County Extension Office and ending at Niland’s Café with live music from Britches and Hose.
- Chefs and farms that participated included: ISU Student Organic Farm providing cantaloupe, Sweet Magnolia offered burritos (a big hit from 2014), Trinity Farms boasted their own pork sliders, Flame and Skewer provided vegetable kabobs, Gatton Farms served local popcorn, ISU Dining went all local with produce from Lee’s Greens creating a tomato mousse, and ending the day, Niland’s Café provided local root beer and ice cream.
- The sites on the route included Walkabout Gardens, Trinity Farms, a wind turbine site, Story County Medical’s community garden, Central Elementary School’s community garden, Lounsberry’s Farm, Lee’s Greens, and Niland’s Café, a historic site along the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway.

I just wanted to let you know how much my husband and I loved the Local Food Cycle bike ride! The ride was challenging, the food was amazing, we learned a lot, and everyone was so friendly!

- Elizabeth, Local Food Cycle Participant -



Major Sponsors for Central Iowa Local Foods

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Extension and Outreach



The Wellmark Foundation





## Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway

*Jan Gammon, Byway Coordinator  
Kelsi Wolever, Lincoln Highway Intern*



### **Major Accomplishments**

- Jan Gammon was hired as the new Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway Coordinator, starting January 5, 2015.
- Manned a booth at the Travel Federation's Legislative Showcase in Des Moines, the State Capitol Rotunda for Transportation Day, Motorcycle Forum in Des Moines at a H.O.G. Rally (Harley Owner Group), and for Silos and Smokestacks.
- Gave presentations about the Lincoln Highway, its history, and the Corridor Management Plan to the Sarah Harding Assisted Living Center in Clinton, the Friends Church in New Providence, and the Marshalltown Kiwanis.
- Wrote history pages on each of the 13 counties the Highway travels through for the Lincoln Highway Association's website. Also wrote an article about Portage Tires and had it published for the Lincoln Highway Association's Forum magazine. A building in Greene County was discovered to have a painted advertisement for Portage Tires in mint condition after coverings were removed from the side of the building.
- Organized the Iowa Byways' training in March in State Center and invited Ted Grevestad-Nordbrock, Iowa State University professor in the College of Design, to speak about Historic Preservation. The group toured Main Street projects in State Center along their Historic Row.
- Met with 3 sisters recreating their aunt, Anita King's, ride from San Francisco to New York on the Lincoln Highway and took their photo in front of the Palace Theater in Ames, just as their aunt did 100 years ago.
- Created two interpretive panels under the Conservation Innovation Grant. One panel is placed in the Lions Tree Club Park outside of Grand Junction and the other is in the Lincoln Prairie Park in Ogden.
- Received an Iowa Tourism Grant to create a new 52-page brochure with a foldout map.
- Attended the National Scenic Byway Training in Millersburg, Ohio and made connections with other states' Lincoln Highway Byway managers. The group formed an alliance, The Lincoln Highway National Byway Alliance (LHNBA), and will formally announce the group at the Lincoln Highway Association's Conference in Gettysburg in June 2016.
- Continued building our partnership with the Lincoln Highway Association; Prairie Rivers of Iowa serves as the secretary and newsletter editor to the organization.

### **Corridor Management Plan**

The Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway is in year two of a three-year process to write a new Corridor Management Plan. The first year was spent researching best practices and other plans. This year, 2015, was filled with more specific research of the six intrinsic qualities (Archaeological, Cultural, Historical, Natural, Recreational, and Scenic). Fifteen "Community Input" meetings were held in various locations along the Byway (about 1 per county) to solicit community members' ideas on what the Lincoln Highway has meant to them, what is important along the road, and what their vision is for the future of the road. These ideas were shared online with all attendees. In addition, city and county plans were reviewed for approved infrastructure projects.

An Economic Impact Study was done by giving out surveys both in paper form and on-line to residents and visitors. The information collected was inputted into Survey Monkey and the results tabulated into graphs and charts. The information will be plugged into an Economic Impact Tool developed by the National Scenic Byway Foundation and used as a baseline.

“ If we didn't have the Lincoln Highway we wouldn't have a business.  
And our best selling red wine is the Lincoln Highway Red. ”

-Erica Metz, John Ernest Vineyard & Winery, Tama, Iowa -



Major Sponsors for the Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway



Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway



Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway - Iowa





## Prairie Rivers of Iowa Log Products

*Mike Brandrup, Log Products Coordinator*

### **Log Cabin Construction**

A new and larger cabin was constructed with the Hamilton Conservation Board (HCCB), bringing the total cabins constructed for the HCCB to six. The new cabin was the largest of the HCCB cabins constructed and features amenities that enhance meeting and group gatherings. The cabin will handle a meeting of up to 25 people, have a full kitchen, two bathrooms, and will still sleep 10 to 12 people.

### **School Gardens Projects**

The white oak raised beds for schools continued to show their ability to be re-used, re-purposed and recycled. Some of the logs that were originally utilized in the Kate Mitchell Elementary School Garden project were relocated and re-purposed for the Sawyer Elementary School Garden project. In the spring of 2015, with the expansion of Sawyer Elementary School, the raised beds were once more relocated. This time the logs were recycled and moved to the Nevada Elementary School and Rock Run Middle School in Iowa Falls.

### **Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway (LHHB)**

Assistance was provided to the LHHB project in helping to identify some of the lands with significant intrinsic recreational and natural resource values. In the ten-mile wide LHHB corridor, 41,000 acres of public land and public recreational lands were identified and cataloged. In addition, 13 species of Federally Identified Threatened and Endangered species were listed and their habitat requirements were identified and habitat management recommendations were made for inclusion into the Corridor Management Plan.

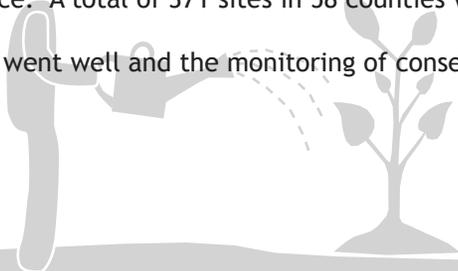
### **Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and Emergency Wetland Reserve Program Monitoring (EWRP)**

Prairie Rivers of Iowa contracted with Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to do Conservation Easement Compliance Monitoring. The monitoring consisted of on-site monitoring (on the ground monitoring) and on off-site monitoring (aerial photo interpretation monitoring).

The on-site monitoring inspections began in April of 2015. A total of 6,054 acres were monitored and inspected at 28 sites in Hamilton, Jasper, Polk, and Story Counties. The monitoring consisted of landowner verification, proper signage and identification of the property site, inspections for releases of hazardous substances, unauthorized illegal use/encroachment of agricultural, building, mining or timber harvest, presences of Threatened and Endangered species, completion of water retention facilities, planting of appropriate plant materials, presence of noxious weeds and re-establishment of historical photo points on each property.

The off-site monitoring consisted of using aerial photography provided from NRCS and confirming ownership by cross-referencing local County Assessor records. Each site/photo site was subsequently inspected for potential boundary issues, encroachment, timber harvesting, mining, hazardous chemical spills, and general easement compliance. A total of 371 sites in 58 counties were inspected.

The overall project went well and the monitoring of conservation easements was well received and seems to give good insight as to what is taking place on the ground.





Working with Prairie Rivers of Iowa for our log cabins in Hamilton County was quick and easy. Prairie Rivers of Iowa staff estimated the exact quantity, followed up with the milling process, and the orders were completed in a timely manner. This made our construction of the cabins stay within our expected time frame.

*- Brian Lammers, Hamilton County Conservation Director -*

Major Sponsors for the Log Products Program





# Natural Resource Education

Annie Fangman, Natural Resources Educator

The Outdoor Learning Environments program has continued to expand with the new Natural Resource Educator position at Prairie Rivers of Iowa. Annie Fangman was hired as the new Natural Resources Educator October 13, 2015.

## Natural Resource Education Program

The Natural Resource Education Program is a new endeavor to provide education on the sustainable management of precious resources such as soil and water. The Natural Resource Educator has begun to develop this program with the goal of reaching out to all types of community members to raise awareness and understanding of natural resource issues and to initiate action steps towards a more healthy and plentiful ecosystem.

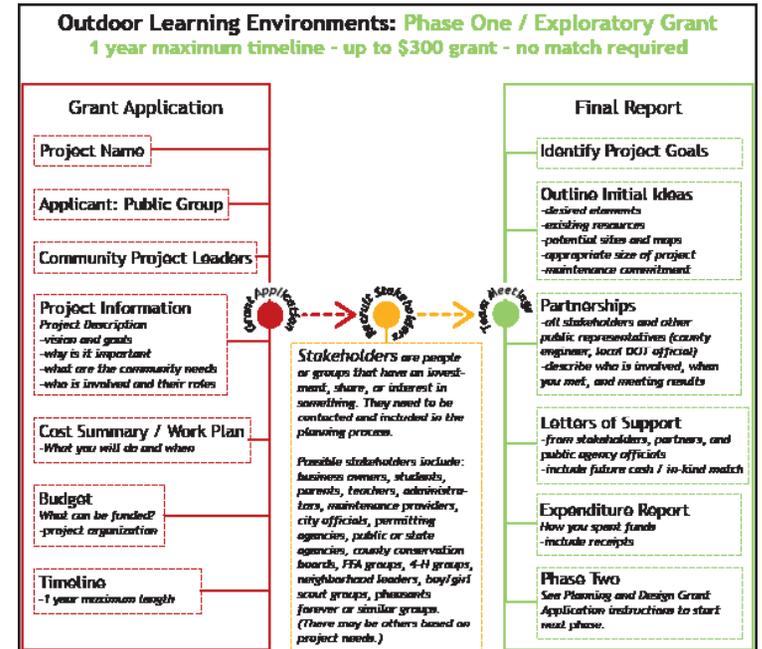
## Outdoor Learning Environments

We have continued working closely with the Iowa DOT Living Roadway Trust Fund to launch a new grant initiative for the planning and development of Outdoor Learning Environments across Iowa. After completing the first two research phases of this project in previous years, we have moved forward with developing the grant program, which not only provides funding for these projects, but support through engagement with applicants and resource development. The grant program is now available for application on our website, [www.prrcd.org/olegrant](http://www.prrcd.org/olegrant).

## Water and Climate Change

This project is in partnership with a group of scientists, engineers, and communication specialists from Iowa State University's Water and Climate Change Science and Communication Project. We worked with them on developing a process in which community members would participate in an iterative participatory modeling (IPM) process with ISU scientists. This modeling comes from the idea that sustainable use of water requires community involvement to reach a workable outcome in the face of numerous tensions that can develop because of conflicting needs and values. By involving a diverse group of watershed stakeholders, including: city residents, city officials, farmers, business owners, and environmental groups we can facilitate co-development of knowledge and possible unique solutions to watershed issues in an environment that promotes co-exploration of the social and natural science processes involved.

For more information visit: [www.wacc.las.iastate.edu](http://www.wacc.las.iastate.edu)



The Outdoor Learning Environments program aims to provide opportunities to educate Iowans of all ages through the use of creative multifaceted curricula in outdoor settings. We see this as fundamental to raising awareness and educating all about the many environmental issues we face today.

- Troy Siefert, Living Roadway Trust Fund Coordinator -



Major Sponsors for the Outdoor Learning Environments

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Water & Climate Change Project





## Watersheds & Waterways

*Hanna Bates, Watersheds & Waterways Coordinator  
Kayla Hasper, Watersheds & Waterways Intern*



The Watersheds and Waterways Program was developed to deliver innovative water education and foster strong partnerships that will advance healthier rivers, streams, and soils across Iowa's landscapes. Initiatives by this program are under the direction of the Squaw Creek Watershed Management Authority, Prairie Rivers of Iowa, and the input from the local community.

April 2015 marked the one-year anniversary for this program. In that time, we have focused our efforts in the Squaw Creek Watershed, which is located in Boone, Story, Hamilton, and Webster County. With funding from the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, we are providing educational opportunities for watershed residents as well as coordinating technical and financial assistance for farmers and landowners to implement conservation practices on their land.

### **Major Accomplishments**

- Hired a Watershed Coordinator and Natural Resources Educator to engage farmers, landowners, and community members on soil health and water quality issues
- Hosted a tour of the watershed for Iowa legislators
- Hosted a field day titled, "Prairie Rivers of Iowa Field Day & Conservation Celebration: Cover Crops and Perennials." Over 40 people were in attendance
- Hosted a workshop series titled, "Nutrients in November" that featured land use planning tools, conservation practices, and water quality monitoring tools for residents in the watershed
- Partnered with local Soil and Water Conservation Districts in outreach efforts to farmers and landowners in the watershed
- Partnered with local agricultural businesses in the watershed to provide conservation services and cost-share for conservation practices to local farmers and landowners

### **Conservation Projects In-Progress in the Watershed**

- Approximately 800 acres of cover crops
- 1 bioreactor
- 10.5 acres of extended rotations with alfalfa
- Approximately 300 acres of strip-till

### **Future**

- We will host two field days in 2016. One will be located in the Squaw Creek Watershed and one in East Indian Creek Watershed
- We will host our second annual "Nutrients in November" workshop series in November 2016
- We will continue working with local partners in the watershed and conducting outreach to the community
- We will continue engaging farmers and landowners in the watershed to implement conservation practices



“As a farmer, I know that adding something new to the farm operation can be challenging. By partnering with Prairie Rivers of Iowa on conservation initiatives, it is our goal to make the incorporation of practices, such as cover crops, to be as easy as possible.”

- Jeremy Gustafson,  
Chairman for the Boone County Soil and Water Conservation District  
and winner of the Iowa Farm Environmental Leadership Award -



Major Sponsors for the Squaw Creek Watershed Management Authority





## Letter from our Treasurer

*Jim Richardson*

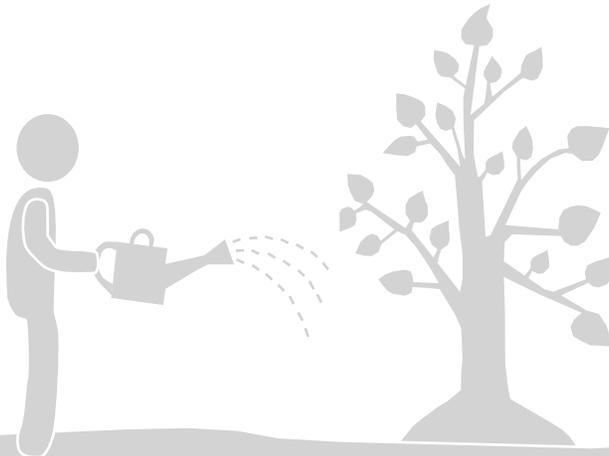
Prairie Rivers of Iowa in 2015 continued to utilize our bookkeeping and accounting practices to better follow our program funding and closely monitor our expenses.

The Finance Committee continues to meet quarterly with our Administrator and Bookkeeper to maintain a good understanding of our billing challenges and any cash flow problems those challenges may create. The Treasurer reports monthly to the board to update them on budget issues of strength and of concern.

In looking for more funding streams, Prairie Rivers of Iowa will initiate a Membership Program in 2016 which will allow our partners and supporters an opportunity to help us continue to make Prairie Rivers a great place to work, as well as a great place to get work done.

Respectfully,

Jim Richardson, Treasurer

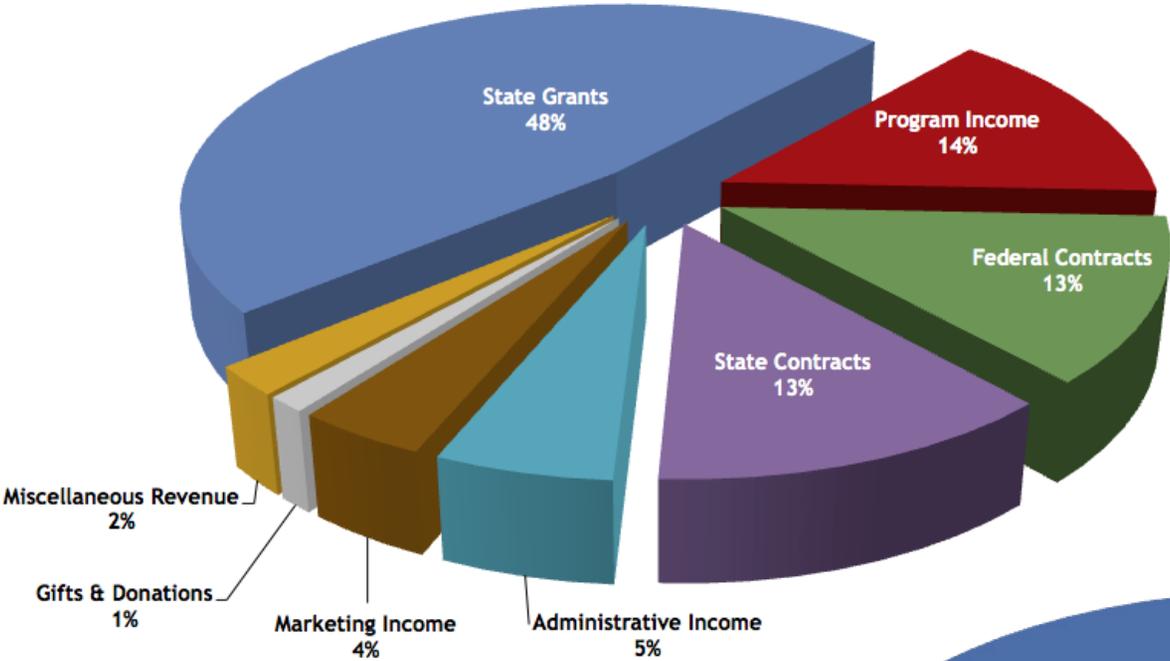


## Profit and Loss Statement

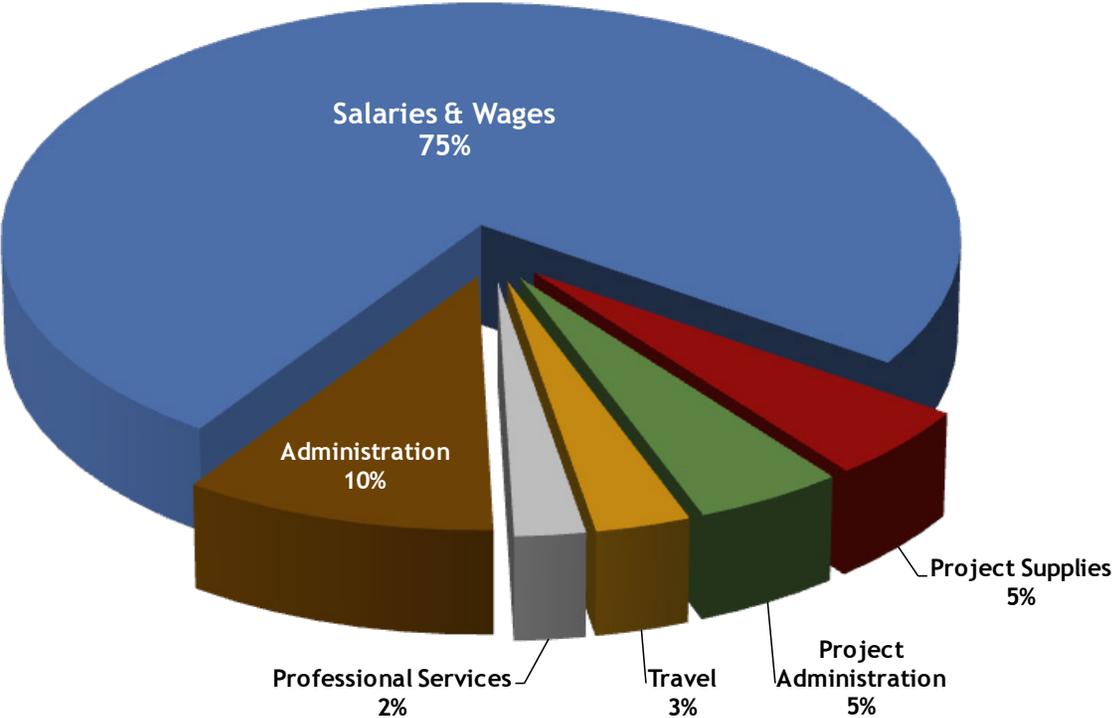
*January - December 2015*

	<u>Jan - Dec 2015</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
Federal Contracts	57,750.00
44450 • State Contracts	57,494.64
44540 • State Grants	217,661.85
44800 • Gifts and Donations	7,710.58
46430 • Miscellaneous Revenue	8,220.05
46431 • Administrative Income	25,017.60
46750 • Marketing Income	18,483.13
47200 • Program Income	64,645.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<u>456,982.85</u>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<u>456,982.85</u>
<b>Expense</b>	
62110 • Administrative Fees	40,730.58
65039 • Project Supplies	20,637.14
65180 • Professional services	9,501.50
65185 • Project Administration	19,990.94
66000 • Salaries & Wages	317,683.68
68320 • Travel	12,763.56
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>421,307.40</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	35,675.45
<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
Other Income	
45020 • Interest Income on Bank Account	13.89
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<u>13.89</u>
<b>Net Other Income</b>	13.89
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>35,689.34</u></u>

**Income**



**Expenses**



## 2015 Sponsors and Collaborating Partners

One of the distinguishing elements about the vast programs making up Prairie Rivers of Iowa is our ability to collaborate with other organizations and sponsors. We bring the right people, ideas, and experience to the table and move projects and initiatives forward. Either through our Lincoln Highway Heritage Byway, Central Iowa Local Food Systems, Log Products, or Watersheds and Waterways, we are honored to have collaborated with these organizations and are grateful for our distinguished sponsors and their financial support.

- ◆ Agriculture's Clean Water Alliance
- ◆ Alliant Energy Foundation
- ◆ Ames Convention and Visitors Bureau
- ◆ Ames Izaak Walton League
- ◆ Ames Main Street Cultural District
- ◆ Ames Middle School
- ◆ Batey Ltd.
- ◆ Boards of Supervisors of Boone, Hamilton, Hardin, Marshall, Story and Webster Counties
- ◆ Bob and Joyce Ausberger
- ◆ Boone County Cattlemen
- ◆ Boone County Extension
- ◆ Boone County Historical Society
- ◆ Britches and Hose
- ◆ Buena Vista County Conservation Board
- ◆ Byways of Iowa Coalition
- ◆ Byways of Iowa Foundation
- ◆ Central Elementary School Garden
- ◆ Central Iowa Tourism
- ◆ Cities of Ames, Ankeny, Gilbert, Stanhope & Waukee
- ◆ Community citizens and volunteers
- ◆ Conley's Trucking, Inc
- ◆ County Conservation Boards of Boone, Hamilton, Story, Marshall and Webster
- ◆ Danfoss Power Solutions
- ◆ Dave Scott Construction
- ◆ Diversity Farms
- ◆ Door and Fence Store
- ◆ Dutch Oven Bakery, Inc.
- ◆ Elizabeth Wade
- ◆ Emmons & Olivier Engineering
- ◆ Flame and Skewer
- ◆ Gatton Popcorn
- ◆ Greater Iowa Credit Union
- ◆ Hamilton, Boone and Story Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- ◆ Hardin County Extension
- ◆ Heartland Cooperative
- ◆ Iowa Agriculture Water Alliance
- ◆ Iowa Corn Growers Association
- ◆ Iowa Soybean Association
- ◆ Iowa State University: Water and Climate Change: Dr. William Gutowski and Dr. Jean Goodwin
- ◆ ISU Dining's Chef Scott Bruhn and Sous Chef Nolan Green
- ◆ ISU Extension and Outreach
- ◆ Jamie Benning
- ◆ Jax Outdoor Gear Store
- ◆ Jim McHugh
- ◆ Key Cooperative
- ◆ Klatt and Associates
- ◆ Ledges State Park
- ◆ Lee's Greens
- ◆ Lincoln Highway Advisory Board:  
Kathy Dirks, Missouri Valley Welcome Center  
Matt Parbs, Sawmill Museum  
Mitch Malcolm, Belle Plaine Area Museum  
Allan Robinson, Jefferson
- ◆ Lounsberry Farm
- ◆ Lowe's Companies Inc.
- ◆ Mark Johnson
- ◆ Mark Tomer

- ◆ Mediacom
- ◆ Meg Dobson, State Farm
- ◆ Mike Prior, Executive Director of Iowa Wind Energy Association
- ◆ Ogden and Lion's Tree Club Park
- ◆ Pioneer Hi-Bred International
- ◆ Practical Farmers of Iowa
- ◆ Program of the National Institute of Food & Agriculture
- ◆ Reed-Niland's Corner
- ◆ Reichert's Dairy Air
- ◆ Squaw Creek Watershed Coalition
- ◆ Squaw Creek Watershed Management Authority
- ◆ Story County Extension
- ◆ Story County Locker
- ◆ Story County Medical
- ◆ Story County Sun/Ames Tribune
- ◆ Sustainable Agriculture Student Association from Iowa State University
- ◆ Sweet Magnolias
- ◆ Technical Service Provider Network
- ◆ The State Historical Museum of Iowa
- ◆ TJ Farm
- ◆ Tom Randall Real Estate
- ◆ Trinity Farms
- ◆ United Way of Story County
- ◆ Upper Iowa University Environmental Issues Instruction
- ◆ US Bank
- ◆ USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- ◆ USDA Rural Development
- ◆ Van Wall Equipment
- ◆ Wabi Sabi Farm
- ◆ Walkabout Gardens
- ◆ Wellmark Foundation
- ◆ Wells Fargo Bank
- ◆ Wheatsfield Cooperative
- ◆ Women Food and Agricultural Network
- ◆ Woodruff Companies

Prairie Rivers of Iowa is a great partner who has deep concern for our natural resources and our community. We value their expertise and experience in establishing and building our local foods system. Our partnership is built around our common goals and based in trust.

-Rich Wrage,  
Iowa State University  
Extension and Outreach

## 2015 Board of Directors



Reed Riskedahl  
*President  
Marshall*



Erwin Klaas  
*Vice President  
Story*



Jim Richardson  
*Treasurer  
Hamilton*



Mike Cox  
*Secretary  
Story*



Kevin Griggs  
*Boone*



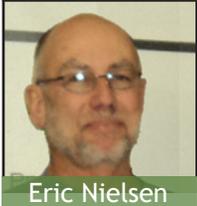
Gary Hammitt  
*Webster*



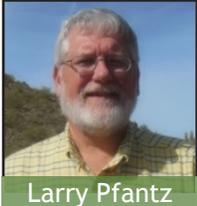
Linda Johnson  
*Story*



Tonia McCarley  
*Story*



Eric Nielsen  
*Hardin*



Larry Pfantz  
*Marshall*



Maureen Seamonds  
*Webster*



Jan Sherwood  
*Story*



Tim Smith  
*Wright*

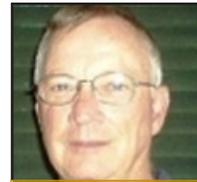
## 2015 Finance Committee Members



Erwin Klaas



Tonia McCarley



Jim Richardson  
*Committee Chair*



Reed Riskedahl

# Prairie Rivers of Iowa Staff



**Hanna Bates**  
Watersheds &  
Waterways  
Coordinator



**Penny Brown Huber**  
Executive Director



**Mike Brandrup**  
Log Products  
Coordinator



**Shane Donegan**  
Urban Forestry  
Specialist



**Kellie Engelman**  
Local Foods  
Coordinator



**Paul Erhsam**  
Iowa LH Association  
Marketing Intern



**Annie Fangman**  
Natural Resource  
Educator



**Jan Gammon**  
Byway  
Coordinator



**Kayla Hasper**  
Watersheds &  
Waterways Intern



**Jessica Johnson**  
Marketing  
Coordinator



**Abby Lundquist**  
Office Assistant



**Dalton Petersen**  
Technology  
Assistant



**Meredith Ponder**  
Marketing Assistant



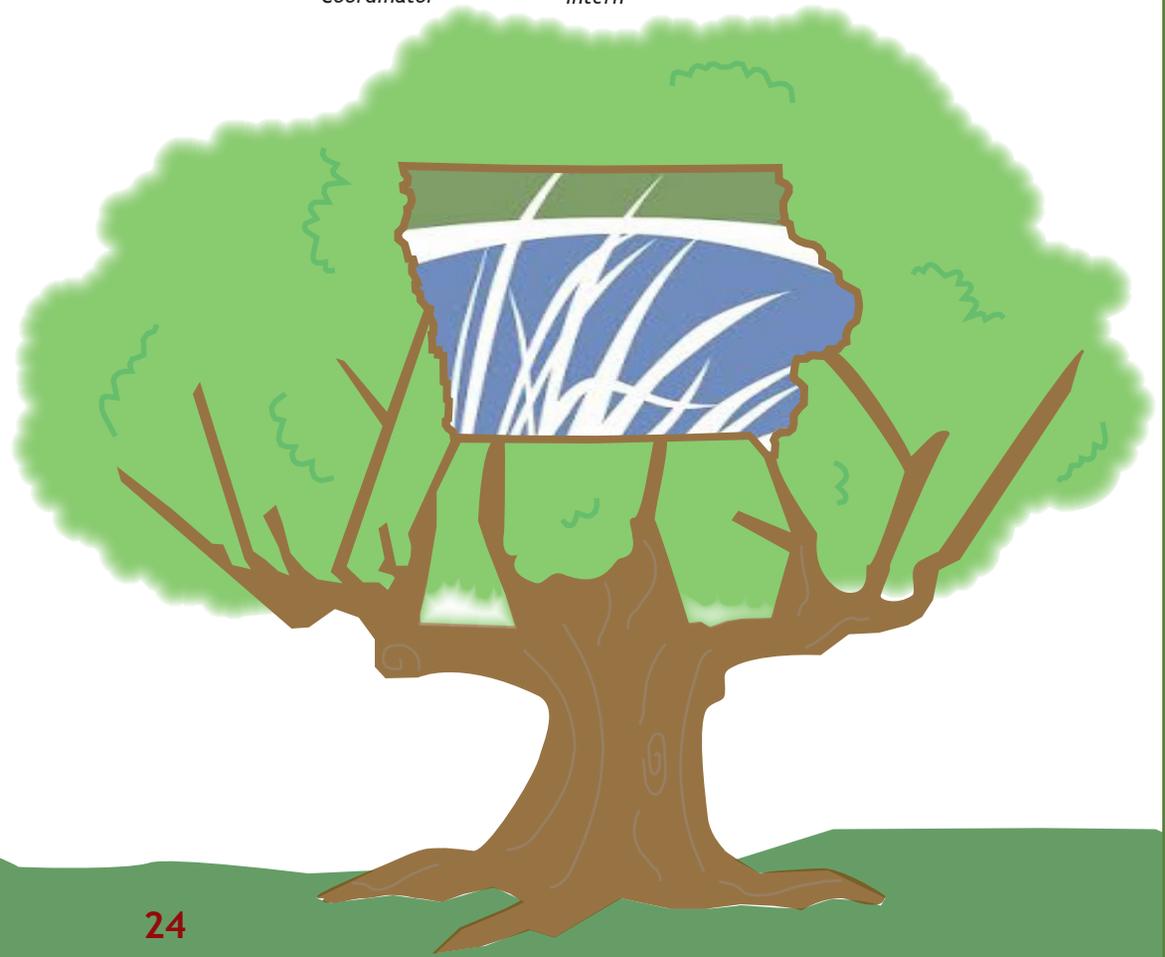
**Carman Rosburg**  
Office Manager



**Emma Schmoll**  
Garden  
Coordinator



**Kelsi Wolever**  
Lincoln Highway  
Intern





2402 South Duff Avenue ♦ Ames, IA 50010  
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