

## A Decade of Impact—and Creativity: Thank You, Dan Haug

After nearly a decade with Prairie Rivers of Iowa, Dan Haug is moving on to serve as Story County's Watershed Coordinator.

Dan joined Prairie Rivers in 2017 as a Watershed Educator, at a time when the organization's watershed work was largely focused on outreach—field days, mailings, and encouraging the adoption of conservation practices. His title was later changed to Water Quality Specialist, but more importantly, his work helped redefine what watershed work could look like.

At that time, many in our organization and community were involved in volunteer water monitoring through the IOWATER program and local “snapshot” events. These efforts were valuable for education, engagement, and building a community around water quality, but there was a lingering question about how the data would ultimately be used. It was often described as “baseline data,” with the expectation that it might prove useful someday, but the path from collection to action was not always clear—and that was discouraging to some.

Dan changed that.

He brought a rare combination of technical skill, practical curiosity, and creativity. He compiled, analyzed, and interpreted data from volunteer efforts, municipal programs, and long-term datasets—and made that information accessible. Through reports, presentations, videos, and regular updates, Dan helped Prairie Rivers become a trusted source for clear, credible insights into local water quality.

As noted in support of his 2022 award nomination, Dan's work “has gone way beyond monitoring... [he] played an essential role in getting a wide spectrum of stakeholders to collaborate.” That spirit of collaboration has been central to his impact.

One of his most significant contributions was his leadership in developing the Story County Water Monitoring Plan. This effort brought together partners including Story County and the City of Ames to create a coordinated, long-term approach to monitoring.

Dan also helped sustain and grow volunteer monitoring efforts following the conclusion of the IOWATER program, and contributed to broader statewide conversations about water quality. His work has been recognized with honors including being named a [New Voice in Water Quality in Iowa](#) in 2022 and the Iowa Izaak Walton League's *Save Our Streams Award* in 2025.

That work wasn't just analytical—it showed up in the field as well, from monitoring events to stream cleanups, including one on Ioway Creek where low water meant walking the channel and carrying out more than 2,500 pounds of trash.

And he did all of this with a sense of creativity and humor that made the work engaging and memorable.



Many will remember his video series “*The Clean Water Act: 50 Years, 50 Facts*,” including one memorable installment featuring Prairie Rivers staff dancing their way through a lesson: <https://youtu.be/stzKiGOLONU>



More recently, he brought that same clarity and creativity to a series on the nitrogen cycle: <https://youtu.be/rAjhs6WFvFM>

We are deeply grateful for Dan's leadership, dedication, and vision. We wish him all the best in this next chapter and look forward to continued collaboration in his new role.

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## Explore Dan's Work

- Prairie Rivers blog: <https://www.prrcd.org/conservation-connection-blog/>
- Prairie Rivers YouTube Page: [PrairieRiversOfIowa - YouTube](#)

[Clean Water Act video series](#)

[Our Nitrogen Moment - YouTube](#)

[Ioway Creek cleanup](#) (Ames River Town of the Year event)