



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

# CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

IOWA NRCS

# NRCS

SPRING 2025



# YEARS

HELPING PEOPLE HELP THE LAND

— Since 1935 —



USDA-NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

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## A NOTE FROM THE STATE CONSERVATIONIST

Happy spring, everyone! I hope you were able to participate in one of our 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations. We had a nice gathering and turnout at the State Office on May 2<sup>nd</sup>. As we go through changes in our agency, the 90<sup>th</sup> celebrations come at a good time - to help remind us why the agency exists and, at the core, how we can help farmers treat their resource concerns.

Don't forget our guiding principles: to provide science-based, voluntary, incentive-driven conservation on privately owned land.

More than 70 staff members decided to take one of the two Deferred Resignation Programs offered recently by OPM and USDA (see full report in Personnel Changes). Since it seems unlikely we will be able to quickly replace those valuable members of our team, it is very important for us to prioritize our work.

In April, I sent out my priorities for Fiscal Year 2025.

- » Focus on quality customer service with a "Farmer First" approach in dealing with natural resource concerns.
- » Develop, support, and retain NRCS employees and partner staff.
- » Engage partners to help deliver conservation where our mission and goals align.

Refer to my April 16 email for more details about each of the FY25 priorities.

These are interesting and uncertain times for our agency and the federal government, as a whole. Please stay positive and focused on our mission. It's easy to get distracted with everything that is going on.

On that note, last week was Public Service Recognition Week. I realize our staff have been on a roller coaster ride in recent months with major workforce reductions creating stress. Despite everything that has been going on, my respect and gratitude for all of you is unchanged. We continue to accomplish a lot here in Iowa, doing everything asked of us - and more. Keep up the good work, and know that it is appreciated.

Since May is National Mental Health Awareness Month, I will close by encouraging you to stay well, physically and mentally. If you're struggling, talk to someone for support; no person should face challenges alone. Likewise, if you feel a staff member or partner is struggling, reach out and offer help. Nothing we do is more important than your health.

Sincerely,

Jon Hubbert, State Conservationist

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Personnel Changes



## Current Developments

Current Developments is a product of USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service in Des Moines, Iowa, published quarterly by the Iowa NRCS Public Affairs Staff in cooperation with NRCS and partner agency employees from across the state.

## Stories and Photos

Please submit your Current Developments story ideas and photos to State Public Affairs Specialist Jason Johnson at [jason.r.johnson@usda.gov](mailto:jason.r.johnson@usda.gov). Past issues can be found at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/conservation-by-state/iowa/current-developments>.

## Iowa NRCS State Office

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## 90<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF NRCS IN APRIL

The Natural Resources Conservation Service marked its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 27. NRCS was established in 1935 as the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).

The new USDA agency represented the culmination of the efforts of Hugh Hammond Bennett, who has been called the “father of Soil Conservation” and was the first Chief of SCS. Bennett had worked for years prior to 1935 to awaken public concern for the problem of soil erosion.

At the height of the Dust Bowl – a catastrophic agricultural disaster – Congress passed Public Law 74-46, recognizing “the wastage of soil and moisture resources on farm, grazing, and forest lands...is a menace to the national welfare” and establishing the Soil Conservation Service (SCS) as a permanent agency in the USDA on April 27, 1935.

In 1994, Congress changed SCS’s name to the Natural Resources Conservation Service to better reflect the broadened scope of the agency’s conservation work.

Today and into the future, we at NRCS are continuing Hugh Hammond Bennett’s legacy – helping people help the land – by implementing conservation practices to conserve air, water, soil, and habitat.

Many of the conservation activities the agency studied and refined in the days of Bennett such as terracing, cover and strip cropping, contour planting, grassed waterways and crop rotation, are practices that we still use today.



While many things have changed in the past 90 years, Bennett’s vision of a scientifically and technically rigorous, interdisciplinary agency that works with local partners to tailor conservation solutions to the land for the benefit of all Americans remains at the heart of this agency’s mission.

We continue to work with agricultural producers to conserve the nation’s air, soil, water and habitat resources using many of the same practices established 90 years ago.



*A Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) terrace project in Iowa during the 1930s.*



## STATE OFFICE CELEBRATES NRCS ANNIVERSARY

About 40 Iowa NRCS retirees, conservation partners and congressional staff joined State Office staff on May 2, 2025, to celebrate NRCS' 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

The informal gathering included a cake and ice cream, along with other appetizers provided by State Conservationist Jon Hubbert and the State Office Employees Association (SOEA).

The event included a slideshow of photos from Iowa NRCS' staff and conservation practices across the land from over the past several decades.



State Conservationist Jon Hubbert had this cake made for the NRCS 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration in the State Office, May 2, 2025. (Photo by Casey Gathje)



Several Iowa NRCS retirees and current staff take time to enjoy the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary gathering on May 2 in Des Moines.



Former NRCS Public Affairs Specialist Lynn Betts talks to current Public Affairs Specialist Jason Johnson at the NRCS 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary party on May 2 in Des Moines. (Photo by Jolene Bopp)

# NCBA FEATURES NRCS, IOWA GRAZIERS

The National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) recently featured western Iowa farmers Steven and Michelle Sprague in its Cattlemen to Cattlemen program.

The [Nov. 12, 2024, episode](#) highlighted the work Iowa NRCS staff are doing to assist the Spragues as they expand and diversify their operation, and transition cropland to pasture on their Audubon County ground.

"Steve looked into some of the programs that NRCS offers to help improve our farms and pasture ground," said Michelle Sprague. "We have implemented watering and rotational grazing systems to help improve the land and cattle, and improve the lifestyle for us in running cattle on pasture."

Audubon County NRCS District Conservationist Steve Lewis says the Spragues have made good land use decisions on their hilly ground. "By seeding it to pastures, they are finding the most profit potential," he said. "What's the most profit potential? It's cows. So, they are using the right system for their land."

Although they didn't intend to move cattle daily from paddock to paddock, the Spragues have gone that route, helping to improve forage and



*NRCS designed a watering system that Sprague's cattle can access from all four paddocks. (Photo courtesy of NCBA video.)*

animal health. "They have improved their overall forage production, improved their soil health, and their overall herd health," said Kayla Creek, NRCS Southwest Area Grazing Specialist.

Lewis says as livestock producers move into rotational grazing, they can either extend their grazing period so they have less hay to feed or increase their cow herd. "Steve is doing a combination of both," he said.

The Spragues replaced their winter hay needs with swath grazing. "It's a little unique to this area," said NRCS Soil Conservationist Brady Fredericks. "They plant a very diverse mix of summer annuals in mid to late summer, mow that down in December or January and then swath into windrows for livestock to graze the rest of the winter. It's great for soil health, providing diversity to the soil, helps reduce compaction. It's great to have livestock out their spreading nutrients."



# DECORAH WINS 2025 IOWA ENVIROTHON

Decorah continued their rich history in the Iowa Envirothon this year, winning with the team “Load of Carp” at the April 28 competition at the Jester Park Nature Center in Granger.

Emphasizing hands-on learning and real-world application of concepts, the State Envirothon event features 15 high school teams that qualified from local district competition held earlier in the year.

In the Envirothon, each team travels through stations: soils and land use, aquatic ecology, forestry and prairie, and wildlife. Plus, each team developed and presented an oral presentation on the 2025 current issue topic, “Roots and Resiliency: Fostering Forest Stewardship in a Canopy of Change.”

Fourteen Iowa NRCS employees helped run the State Envirothon, which is hosted annually by the Conservation Districts of Iowa (CDI).

Behind Decorah Load of Carp, the Marshalltown Wolf Trees placed second, followed by Decorah Duff and Duffer and North Fayette Valley EcoThrive.

Nashua-Plainfield and Forest City were the top placing FFA teams.



Decorah Load of Carp takes the wildlife exam during the Iowa Envirothon on April 28 at Jester Park. Load of Carp won the overall competition. (Photo by Jason Johnson, NRCS)



Members of the Nashua-Plainfield Envirothon team take the forestry exam during the state competition. The group finished first among FFA teams. (Photo by Jason Johnson, NRCS)



Wil VanderLinde, Rubyana Neely, and Patrick Chase helped at the State Envirothon on April 28. (Photo by Jason Johnson, NRCS)



North Fayette competes in the soils competition at the 2025 State Envirothon. (Photo by Jason Johnson, NRCS)



## 2ND SWISH CONFERENCE HELD IN ATLANTIC

Despite a 20-day postponement due to weather, the second annual Southwest Iowa Soil Health (SWISH) Conference was a success, taking place at the Cass County Community Center in Atlantic on March 25.

The all-day conference featured soil health experts and farmers from across Iowa, who shared their “boots in the field” experience on how to make conservation practices work on their farms.

Iowa NRCS State Soil Health Specialist Hillary Olson presented information about soil health principles, diving into soil health testing and how the tests can measure differences in soils due to management.

Other presentations included:

- » Warren County farmer Aaron White discussed practices he’s implemented to improve efficiency and soil health in his corn, soybean and cattle operation, and his goal of building a resilient farm for future generations.
- » Keynote speaker Brian Dougherty with Understanding Ag focused his session on using a systems approach to building soil biology and improving farm resiliency and profitability.
- » A farmer panel shared their experiences in making conservation practices work on their farms.

The SWISH group includes farmers, ISU Extension and Outreach, NRCS, IDALS, and industry partners who are passionate about soil health and committed to increasing soil health awareness and adoption across southwest Iowa.



*About 50 people attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual SWISH conference in Atlantic on March 25.*



*West Pottawattamie District Conservationist Laura Ferguson speaks at the SWISH Conference in Atlantic on March 25.*





## SPRING TIME CELEBRATIONS ACROSS IOWA

# OUTREACH

Iowa NRCS outreach staff attended, exhibited, or presented at various events throughout late winter and early spring. Below are some highlights:



**Outreach staff attended Iowa Outdoor Day at the Iowa Capitol on April 1.**



**Iowa Honey Bee Day 2025 at the State Capitol on March 26.**





## NRCS STAFF HELP WITH STUDENT EARTH DAY EVENT IN MISSOURI VALLEY

NRCS staff led two of the four rotations at the Student Earth Day Celebration at Sawmill Hollow Organic Farm in rural Missouri Valley in western Iowa's Loess Hills on April 22.



*NRCS Natural Resource Specialist Tabitha Panas helps a West Harrison Elementary School fifth grader catch insects in his net. (Photo by Jason Johnson)*

Natural Resource Specialist Tabitha Panas (Oakland RT) and Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist Kayla Chan led students on a nature prairie remnant hike to identify plants, pollinators, and trees. They discussed how to establish prairie habitat, how to manage plants, and control brush.



They also gave students nets to see if they could catch any insects or other bugs.

In another section of the farm, Harrison County District Conservationist Luke Zaiger helped lead information about managing soil health in the Loess Hills region.

Southwest Area Soil Health Specialist Ruth Blomquist and Area Resource Soil Scientist Dan Pulido also presented information about soils and soil health.

The Earth Day event also included rotational presentations on kites and frogs. Kathy Fisher, Fontanelle Forest Raptor Recovery Leader, gave a lunch and learn presentation for the students.



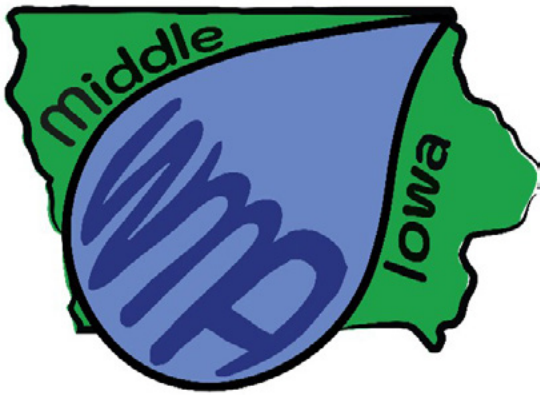
*SW Area Soil Health Specialist Ruth Blomquist talks soils with students during an Earth Day event in Harrison County. (Photo by Jason Johnson)*



*Harrison County District Conservationist Luke Zaiger talks about the benefits of no-till and cover crops for water infiltration to students during the Earth Day event on April 22. (Photo by Jason Johnson)*



## EAST MARSHALL STUDENT DESIGNS NEW WMA LOGO



The Middle Iowa Watershed Management Authority (WMA) has selected Wyatt Andresen, 11<sup>th</sup> grade student at East Marshall High School in Le Grand, as the winning artist of the Middle Iowa WMA logo design contest.

The Middle Iowa WMA announced the contest in November 2024 and opened participation to all students in Pre-K through 12 schools located in the Middle Iowa River watershed. The winning logo will be used by the Middle Iowa WMA for organizational branding, and it will appear on the group's website and promotional items, as well as educational and outreach materials.

The Middle Iowa Watershed covers portions of Benton, Grundy, Iowa, Jasper, Johnson, Linn, Marshall, Poweshiek, Story, and Tama Counties, extending from the Coralville Dam in Coralville to just north of Marshalltown. It is comprised of twelve members representing counties, cities, and Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the watershed. The Middle Iowa WMA is also partnering with stakeholders, state and federal agencies, and non-profit organizations in developing a Comprehensive Water Quality

Management Plan with funds awarded from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The Middle Iowa WMA presented Wyatt with a Certificate of Award and a \$100 prize for his winning entry during a quarterly meeting held on April 3rd at the Tama County Conservation Nature Center. The Middle Iowa WMA is grateful to Wyatt for the logo design that it will use to increase exposure and awareness of the group as it builds a coalition of partners and collaborators across the watershed to reduce soil erosion and improve surface water quality.



East Marshall Community School District teacher Hallie Crouse with Wyatt Andresen, winner of the Middle WMA logo design contest.



## MADISON COUNTY FIELD OFFICE OFFERS COMPLIMENTARY COOKIES AND COFFEE

In celebration of the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of NRCS, Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Week, and National Stewardship Week, the Madison Soil and Water Conservation District offered free coffee and cookies to the public outside their Service Center in Winterset on April 29, from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.

IDALS Conservation Assistant Anna Golightly said about ? drove by the office for coffee and cookies.



Anna Golightly, Conservation Assistant in Madison County, took a selfie at Cookies and Coffee for Stewardship Week with (L-R) Kendra Daniels, North Thompson River Water Quality Project Coordinator; Triston Davidson, District Technician; Clay Rogers, District Conservationist; and Joe Moore, State Technician.



The Madison County NRCS, SWCD, and IDALS staff offered free cookies and coffee on April 29th to celebrate Stewardship Week and the NRCS 90th Anniversary.



# FABULOUS FIELD PHOTOS!



## Field Photos



1. Jason Murphy seeds rye as a cover crop on corn stubble for a producer in Grundy County on Sept. 26, 2024. Grundy County produces close to 20,000 acres of seed corn every year, which tends to leave the soil bare. The earlier harvest window for seed corn provides a good opportunity for fall establishment. (*Jolene Bopp, Des Moines*)
2. Hayes Durbin (facing), state office civil engineer technician and Chris Priest, a civil engineer technician in Montgomery County, use a drill rig to collect soil samples for a Standard Penetration Test on April 7, 2025. The team drilled down 30 feet to reach the creek bed level to help determine soil density and bearing capacity. (*Jolene Bopp, Des Moines*)
3. Warren County DC Jason Hart examines a pipe at a pond on Joe Dunn's farm. Dunn and his son-in-law Aaron White were no-till planting into cereal rye. (*Jason Johnson, Des Moines*)

Thank you to those who submitted photos. For the next Current Developments, submit images at: [https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/nrcs\\_iowa/PA/Shared%20Documents/Photo%20Submission?csf=1&web=1&e=aKV9q](https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/nrcs_iowa/PA/Shared%20Documents/Photo%20Submission?csf=1&web=1&e=aKV9q).

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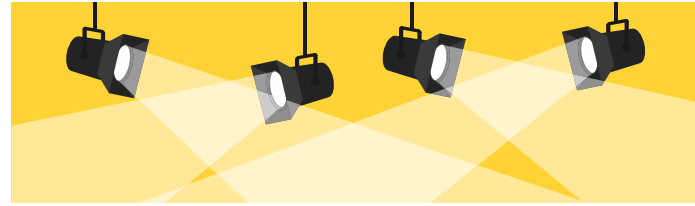
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3



## NORTHWEST AREA SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE



# CALEB SANTIAGO-VAZQUEZ



**Title:** Resource Conservationist, Sioux City  
(April 2024 to present)

**College:** University of Puerto Rico. Degree: MS  
in Crop Protection

**Previous Role:**

I was a Soil Conservationist in Storm Lake from July 2020 to April 2024.

**A Passion for Conservation:**

I did not choose conservation, conservation chose me. Transitioning from perennial tropical crops with no winters to mechanized row crop systems like corn and soybeans has been a profound learning experience. The process never stops, and the more I learn, the less I realize I know.

**What I Love Most About My Job:**

Working with producers and landowners to implement conservation practices is incredibly rewarding. Seeing communities come together with a shared interest in protecting natural resources keeps me motivated every day.

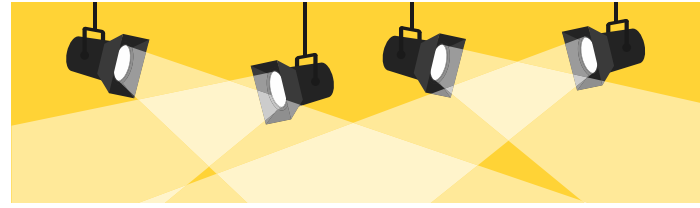
**Hobbies and Family:**

Outside of work, I enjoy spending time with my family, fishing, camping, grilling, and playing video games.

I am happily married to Caroline, and together we are raising two wonderful boys, Sebastian (7) and Isaías (1).



## SOUTHWEST AREA SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE



# CALEB NORDYKE



**Title:** Soil Conservationist,  
Red Oak Resource Team

**College:** Iowa State  
University, BA in Agronomy,  
2019-2022

**Where did you grow up?**  
Clarinda

**What other positions have  
you had?**  
Precision Ag Specialist with  
John Deere and Project  
Coordinator with Page  
County SWCD

### **How did you get interested in conservation?**

Being on the farm with my grandfather and uncle and seeing their passion to not only conserve the ground they farmed and the pastures that their cattle grazed, but to make the ground better for the next generation.

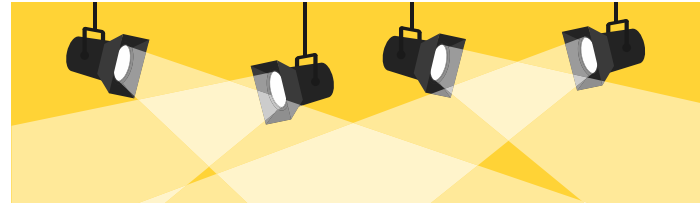
### **What do you like most about your job?**

Going out into the field to meet with the farmers to learn what their conservation goals are. Turn those goals into a plan and then make those goals a reality.

### **What do you enjoy away from work?**

Beekeeping, playing guitar, and building or fixing all sorts of things.

## NORTHEAST AREA SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE



# MICHELE CRUMRINE



**Title:** Soil Conservationist, Toledo Field Office

**College:**

- » University of Montana and Montana State University- 1988-1993 Forestry/Soil Science Degree
- » University of Phoenix- 2005-2007 Masters of Arts in Education

**Where did you grow up?**

I grew up in Des Moines and spent a lot of summers camping in Montana. This sealed the deal for college. I was in love with the mountains. My major at U of M was Forestry but decided to emphasis in soils. I would get teased in my soils class because I didn't know anything about agriculture but grew up in Iowa. Thanks to a lot of patient co-workers and producers, I have learned a few things since joining the NRCS.

**What other positions have you held?**

Prior to the NRCS, I had a wide variety of jobs: Peter Pan Seafood (an Alaskan fish processor), Dana Designs Backpack Company, bank teller, full-time

mom (my favorite), and Marshalltown High School math teacher.

I was hired by the NRCS in 2020 as a Soil Conservationist and stationed in Toledo. I recently served a 120-day detail in Story County as Acting District Conservationist.

**How did you get interested in conservation?**

Initially, I just wanted an outdoor job. I chose Forestry because of my passion for being outside and the class line-up was amazing. Ecology Lab was wandering around in the woods with a very passionate professor helping you figure out how everything was connected. Doesn't get any better than that! Studying soils was like being an undercover historian. You could dig a hole and tell a story. I was able to work for a riparian researcher, the Forest Service and the Soil Conservation Service during college which exposed me to a wide variety of job opportunities. All of those experiences increased my desire to work in the conservation field.

**What do you like most about your job?**

I love being part of a small community, working with great people and constantly learning and sharing ideas. Whether that is in the office, on a farm or at an event.

**What are your hobbies?**

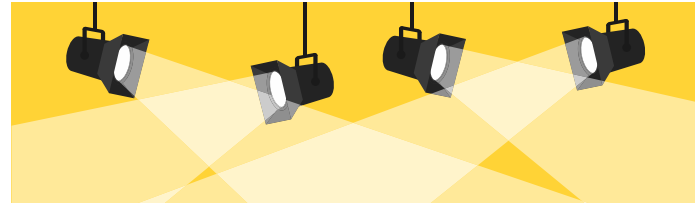
I like to merge hiking, biking, and running with good coffee locations. Thankfully, Central Iowa has lots of great options to choose from.

**Any family?**

My husband, Harris, and I are blessed to have 5 children and 3.5 grandchildren. A couple of kiddos have escaped to the mountains, but I am hopeful they will return to Iowa, like their mom.



## SOUTHEAST AREA SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE



# WYATT WESTFALL



**Title:** Soil Conservationist, Washington Field Office

**College:** Iowa State University (Fall 2017- Fall 2020);  
Majors: Agronomy, Seed Science

### Where did you grow up?

I grew up in rural Lone Tree with my parents, older brother, and younger sister. We have a family farm, primarily raising corn and soybeans, while also feeding out a few open-lot pigs and cattle. Growing up on the farm was the greatest, I just loved to be outside. Whether I was working on the farm or taking it easy fishing in the summer, it just couldn't be beat!

Possibly my favorite aspect of being on the farm was watching a crop grow. It just fascinated me and still does to this day. There's a lot of pride in the hard work, planning, and faith it takes to get to that moment. This is where I got my passion for production agriculture, and I knew I wanted a career in the agricultural industry in some capacity.

### How did you get interested in conservation?

Much of our farming operation is situated near the Iowa River, so growing up we did a lot of hunting and fishing in the area. I spent a lot of invaluable time in the outdoors with my grandpa, learning about animals, the things they did, what they needed to survive, and their yearly cycles. It wasn't just about harvesting an animal for us; it was about respecting and caring for them. This is where I got a passion for wildlife conservation, and just being in the wilderness in general. I believe in a balance between production agriculture and wildlife conservation. I think it's something that can be done, and I want to strive for this within our own operation. Being a steward of the land, I feel personally responsible for it. Conservation is all about leaving things in a better place than you found them for future generations, which is something near and dear to me, whether in be in the crop fields, or the woods and streams.

### What other positions and locations have you worked prior to this?

I started my NRCS career in January 2022 as a Soil Conservationist on the Epworth Team, in Epworth. Due to limited office space, I soon transferred to Anamosa that spring (still on the Epworth Team). To get closer to home and our family farming operation, I was fortunate to be transferred to Washington County in August of 2023, to continue working as a Soil Conservationist.

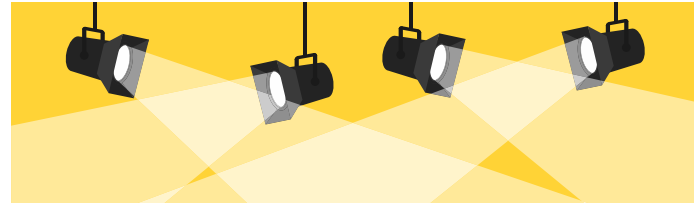
### What do you like to do in your free time?

My hobbies include working on the family farm, spending time with family and friends, hunting, fishing, and hiking. I also enjoy watching sports, specifically cheering on the Iowa Hawkeyes (even though I went to ISU) and the St. Louis Cardinals.

### Any family?

I've been married to my wife Greta for 2 years this August. We have home in Riverside, IA, and we just got a black lab puppy named Koda a few months ago.

## STATE OFFICE SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE



# HAYES DURBIN



**Title:** Civil Engineering Technician (Technology), based in Newton Field Office

**College:** I graduated in 2018 from Luther College in Decorah with a B.A. degree in Environmental Science and a focus in Geology.

**Where did you grow up?** I grew up on an acreage approximately five miles southwest of Grinnell. I played a lot outdoors and vividly remember working with my toy bulldozer in the sandbox, swimming in the nearby pond, and damming up a stream on a family vacation.

**What do you like most about your job?**

Running the drill rig, pipe camera, bathymetric boat, and GPS survey equipment takes me to all parts of Iowa, and I get to work in the field alongside many of you wonderful NRCSers (and partners).

**What other positions have you held?**

In the fall of 2018, I started out as an SWCD Conservation Aide/IDALS 780 hr. Technician in Poweshiek County. Later that same year, I became a full-time IDALS Soil Conservation Technician in Marion County. In the summer of 2020, I became an NRCS Soil Conservation Technician in Jasper County on the Newton Resource Team. I started my current role when I joined the State Office Engineering team in November 2022.

**How did you get interested in conservation?** For as long as I can remember, my favorite subject in school has always been Science. As I got older, I gravitated to the Earth Sciences. After high school, I worked five summers for a “major multinational agrochemical and agricultural biotechnology corporation” and that really spurred my interest in agriculture. The combination of geology and agriculture led me down the soils route, where I found some great professors that encouraged me to lean into education and advocacy. When I graduated, I decided I felt more comfortable working with farmers rather than kids, and the rest is history.

**What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

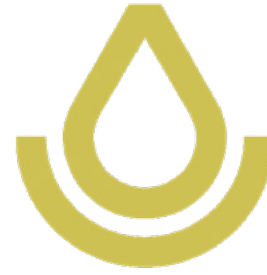
I attend lots of free Poweshiek County Naturalist programs such as hiking, kayaking, snow shoeing, etc. My wife Amy and I have a big vegetable garden, six chickens, and are beginning to incorporate native plants into our landscaping. We also love to road trip and explore all the neat things the Midwest has to offer.

**Any family?**

Amy and I live in Grinnell with our two dogs, Timber and Tupelo. We are expecting our first child in September.



# IOWA NRCS PERSONNEL CHANGES



Name	Title	Nature of Action	Effective Date	Location
Walker, Dylan	Soil Conservation Technician	Resignation	12/13/2024	Sgt. Bluff RT
Kestel, Jacob	Soil Conservationist	Promotion	12/15/2024	Indianola RT
Kleinmeyer, Levi	Soil Conservationist	Promotion	12/15/2024	Webster City RT
Crosby, Lynn	Resource Conservationist	Retirement	12/28/2024	Ottumwa RT
Gleaves, Terry	District Conservationist	Retirement	12/28/2004	Oakland
Stevens, Larry	District Conservationist	Retirement	12/28/2024	Sigourney
Hines, Riley	Soil Conservation Technician	Promotion	12/29/2024	Indianola RT
McCurdy, Mark	Civil Engineer	Retirement	1/11/2025	Des Moines
Steffens, Teresa	Admin. Support Specialist	Retirement	1/11/2025	West Union Area
Billick, Brian	Civil Engineering Technician	Promotion	1/12/2025	Spencer RT
Schuster, Barbara	Program Assistant	Retirement	1/25/2025	Epworth RT
Doepke, William	Soil Conservationist	Promotion	1/26/2025	Waterloo RT
Gilles, Tristin	Soil Conservation Technician	Promotion	3/9/2025	Decorah RT
Kline, Jessica	Soil Conservationist	Promotion	3/9/2025	Tipton RT
Keninger, Chelsea	Natural Resource Specialist	Name Change	4/23/2025	Webster City RT

RT = Resource Team

## Staff who accepted the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) 1.0

*Staff listed below are on extended administrative leave.*

Name	Title	Location
Adams, Doug	Civil Engineering Technician	Fort Dodge
Altheide, Lori	Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations	Atlantic Area
Appleby, Evan	Soil Conservationist	Spencer
Beckman, Benjamin	Soil Conservation Technician	Decorah
Blair, Jessica	Soil Conservationist	Independence
Bruene, John	Resource Team Leader	Vinton
Clark, Adam	GIS Specialist	Des Moines
Davison, Hannah	Soil Conservationist	Maquoketa
Edmiston, Brooke	Realty Specialist	Des Moines

### Staff who accepted the Deferred Resignation Program 1.0

Name	Title	Location
Faust, Troy	Soil Conservation Technician	Garner
Geib, Connor	Soil Conservation Technician	Creston
Gibbs, Michael	Soil Conservation Technician	Chariton
Holmes, Brian	Resource Team Leader	Red Oak
Houseman, Kristine	Natural Resource Specialist	Indianola
LaGrange, Olivia	Biologist	Des Moines
Jensen, John	Soil Conservationist	Guthrie Center
Maxwell, Tony	District Conservationist	Washington
Mellick, David	Engineering Technician	Decorah
Mellinger, Scott	Soil Conservation Technician	Wapello
Moore, Jason	District Conservationist	Garner
Phillips, Sandy	Soil Conservation Technician	Red Oak
Slagle, Cindy	Secretary	Des Moines
Sletten, Priscilla	Soil Conservationist	Indianola
Thomas, Sue	Resource Conservationist	Des Moines
Wegmann, Zachary	Soil Conservationist	Decorah

### Staff who accepted the Deferred Resignation Program (DRP) 2.0

*Staff listed below are on extended administrative leave.*

Name	Title	Location
Austin, Robert	Soil Conservationist	Ankeny
Bedford, Tresa	Program Assistant	Algona
Burke, Grant	Area Business Tools Specialist	West Union Area
Burkhart, Jessica	Soil Conservationist	Osage
Byrd, Eric	Area Business Tools Specialist	Atlantic Area
Doepke, William	Soil Conservationist	Allison
Earl, Allison	Natural Resource Specialist	West Union
Ewoldt, Brianna	District Conservationist	Allison
Fleming, Leah	Soil Conservationist	Centerville
Flowers, Jaliyah	Soil Conservationist	Tipton
Gerber, Melissa	Soil Conservationist	Jefferson
Giddings, Spencer	Soil Conservationist	Boone
Green, Lawrence	Resource Team Leader	Garner
Green, Talitha	Admin. Support Specialist	Des Moines
Harman, Shelly	Office Assistant	Sgt. Bluff
Henderson, Mike	State Resource Conservationist	Des Moines



**Staff who accepted the Deferred Resignation Program 2.0**

Name	Title	Location
Hirsch, Luke	Soil Conservation Technician	Epworth
Lemke, Angela	Soil Conservationist	Manchester
Lidtka, Bryce	Biologist	Albia
Livermore, Jon	Soil Conservationist	Nevada
Lohafer, Andrea	Biologist	Sgt. Bluff
Ludwig, Alison	Natural Resource Specialist	Sioux City
McGlinn, Marianne	Archeologist	Des Moines
Messerole, Megan	Archeologist	Des Moines
Miller, Lorne	District Conservationist	Denison
Myers, LuAnn	Program Assistant	Audubon
Panas, Tabitha	Natural Resource Specialist	Oakland
Paulin, John	Resource Conservationist	Des Moines
Peters, Joshua	Soil Conservationist	Albia
Petty, Adam	Soil Conservationist	Chariton
Prichard, Randi	Resource Conservationist	Sioux City
Rollefson, Jordan	Soil Conservationist	Thompson
Rottinghaus, Kolton	Admin. Support Assistant	Des Moines
Schwartz, Carolyn	Civil Engineering Technician	Audubon
Shoop, Matthew	Asst. to Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations	Atlantic
Smith, Jennifer	Program Assistant	Indianola
Snyder, Tammy	Program Assistant	Ottumwa
Steffes Clayton, Graham	Soil Conservation Technician	Wapello
Sundall, Michael	Soil Conservationist	Emmetsburg
Thompson, Eric	Soil Conservationist	Tipton
Watson, Cameron	Natural Resource Specialist	Mt. Pleasant
Weets, Stacy	Natural Resource Specialist	Epworth
Weiskopf-DeSmet, Drew	Soil Conservationist	Vinton
Whited, Tyler	Soil Conservationist	Cherokee
Willenbring, Alycia	Resource Conservationist	Epworth
Wilson, Benjamin	Soil Conservationist	Fort Dodge

# IDALS-DSCWQ

## PERSONNEL CHANGES



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF  
**AGRICULTURE &  
LAND STEWARDSHIP**

Name	Title	Nature of Action	Effective Date	Location
Bohnenkamp, Lynn	Conservation Assistant	Retirement	Jan 2025	Plymouth SWCD
Burris, Ashley	Conservation Assistant	New Hire	Jan 2025	Warren SWCD
Ledger, Nicolle	Conservation Assistant	New Hire	Jan 2025	Marion SWCD
Phillips, Brittany	Conservation Assistant	New Hire	Jan 2025	Mahaska SWCD
Wise, Chanise	Conservation Assistant	Resigned	Jan 2025	Scott SWCD
Kuechenmeister, Rowen	Conservation Assistant	Transfer	Feb 2025	Johnson SWCD to Scott SWCD
Manhart, Jill	State Technician	New Hire	Feb 2025	East Pott/Shelby SWCD
Marrs, Maggie	Conservation Assistant	Resigned	Feb 2025	Iowa SWCD
Myers, Franny	Admin Assistant II	Transfer	Feb 2025	Union SWCD
Slagle, Konda	Conservation Assistant	Retirement	Feb 2025	Sac SWCD
Thomas, Kelly	Conservation Assistant	Retirement	Feb 2025	Dallas SWCD
Thomas, Rachel	Conservation Assistant	Resigned	Feb 2025	Louisa SWCD
Wearmouth, Debbra	Conservation Assistant	Retirement	Feb 2025	Jasper SWCD
Kinyon, Kelsey	Conservation Assistant	Transfer	March 2025	Adams SWCD to Union SWCD
Sheeder, Cathy	Conservation Assistant	Retirement	March 2025	Guthrie SWCD
Sloan, Barbara	Conservation Assistant	New Hire	March 2025	Webster SWCD