

**Iowa's Water & Land Legacy – February 2011**  
**Sample Letters To The Editor**

**SAMPLE #1**

On Nov. 2, 2010, Iowa voters overwhelmingly (63 percent) voted to pass Iowa's Water and Land Legacy Amendment. Republicans, Democrats, and Independents in 79 of Iowa's 99 counties voted YES to support clean water, soil conservation, and fish/wildlife habitat.

Despite this call for quality waters, and the establishment of more public land for outdoor recreation, funds for agricultural and natural resources programs in the 2012 budget make up only ½ of 1% of the budget. Agriculture accounts for 86% of Iowa's acres and yet we are unwilling to invest in soil conservation and other programs that could improve water quality and create quality habitat for wildlife.

"The people have spoken" and they overwhelmingly support increased support for these programs. I hope the Iowa legislature listens and increases funding in the 2012 budget for Iowa's Resource Enhancement & Protection program and other voluntary conservation measures.

**SAMPLE #2**

I'm a pheasant hunter and I have been since I was a kid going out with my father & grandfather on cool (and sometimes very cold) weekends in October with our dogs. It was about more than shooting birds; it was about family coming together with a shared passion for the outdoors.

So, I was very excited when I had the opportunity to vote "yes" on Iowa's Water & Land Legacy amendment this past November – to protect quality habitat for pheasants, improve water quality, and invest in our state's agricultural soils.

Now, I'm left with the feeling that our elected officials are ignoring that message.

2012 budget targets show agriculture & natural resources programs making up only ½ of 1% of the state's general fund budget. This is woefully inadequate in a state where agriculture accounts for over 85% of our acres. Pheasant populations have cratered since the mid 90's and we need to invest in habitat and public areas to hunt.

If we don't, we'll see fewer and fewer opportunities to head into the fields on cold fall mornings with our kids and grandkids.

**SAMPLE #3**

I'm a mother with kids ranging in age from 5 to 15. As a single income family we are always looking for inexpensive ways to entertain our family. With a trip to the movie theater costing over \$20, after popcorn, we find getting outdoors in our parks and great outdoor places to be a great way to come together as a family...without blowing a hole in our family budget.

Yet, over the past year we've found the condition of our state parks and other outdoor recreation areas to be deteriorating. Areas are left unmowed. Trash is overflowing in cans. Park benches are broken. These areas are rapidly becoming unwelcoming to families all over the area.

That's why I find the state budget goals the legislature has set to be so inadequate. Funds for agricultural and natural resources programs in the 2012 budget make up only ½ of 1% of the budget. People attack the Iowa DNR, but many of these programs actually provide funds for our county conservation boards and city parks departments that help maintain these outdoor areas.

Please, in a state that voted with 63% of the vote in November to protect these very programs – don't underfund these critical areas.