

The Iowa River Wildlife Area consists of 485 acres, 2/3 forested and 1/3 grassland, along the Iowa River Greenbelt.

With assistance from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, the Marshall County Conservation Board (MCCB) was able to purchase 330 acres. The adjacent 155 acres is an IDOT wetland mitigation site and was transferred to the MCCB for management. It was important to conserve the land as one unit to ensure it did not become broken up for development. The land opened to the public in Sept. 2008.

The site has been well managed since 1951. Upland soils were understood to be too fragile and susceptible to erosion if conventional crops were to be grown. It has been kept as pastureland. The MCCB plans to restore it to native prairie.

The grasslands are habitat for several ground nesting birds such as Dickcissel, Meadowlark, Bobolink, Pheasant, Wild Turkey, and more. The forest areas along the river need to be inspected for possible Bald Eagle nests, the nests of the Red-shouldered hawk, and Great-blue Herons.

The floodplain forest makes up about 75 percent of all the trees. The trees provide good habitat for deer, wild turkey, squirrel, and raccoon plus numerous migrating birds each spring and fall. River Otter use the river and predators like coyotes live there as well.

The area has many deer, and deer herd management will always be needed here. It is the largest contiguous area in Marshall County available for public outdoor use.

The upland oak forest, which makes up about 25 percent of the total forest habitat, is one of the best examples of this habitat type to be found in Marshall County. It is, for the most part, a very healthy forest. However, like any forest anywhere in Iowa, a bit of professional, natural resource TLC can be applied to enhance its health.

This forest occupies the bluff lands that overlook the floodplain of the northwest portion of the area.

The soils of the bluff lands have a large wind-blown sand component.

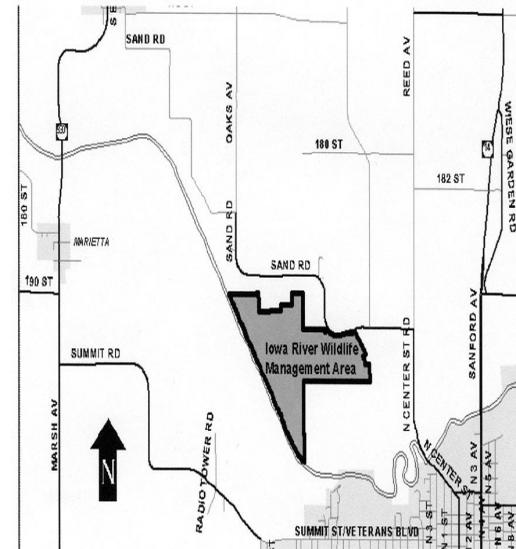
The origin of the sand is from exposed, water sorted sands and gravels of the Iowa River and/or Minerva Creek floodplains. This happened when they were exposed to powerful winds blowing off the retreating Wisconsin glacier of 14,000 years ago. The sand overlays older soil surfaces of glacial till and wind blown loess.

The bluff land soil works like a big sponge to hold water and allow it to seep slowly out of the bluff base. There are several springs that run continually from the bluff land water table. One of the features at the site, known as Spring Pond, has the water table as its source.

Although the Iowa River was channeled past this portion of the area in late 1920 or early 1921, old river channels exist within the floodplain forest. These periodically fill with water during extra high water flooding events. No harm is done to the forest because this is an entirely natural cycle.

This is a designated Game Management Area:

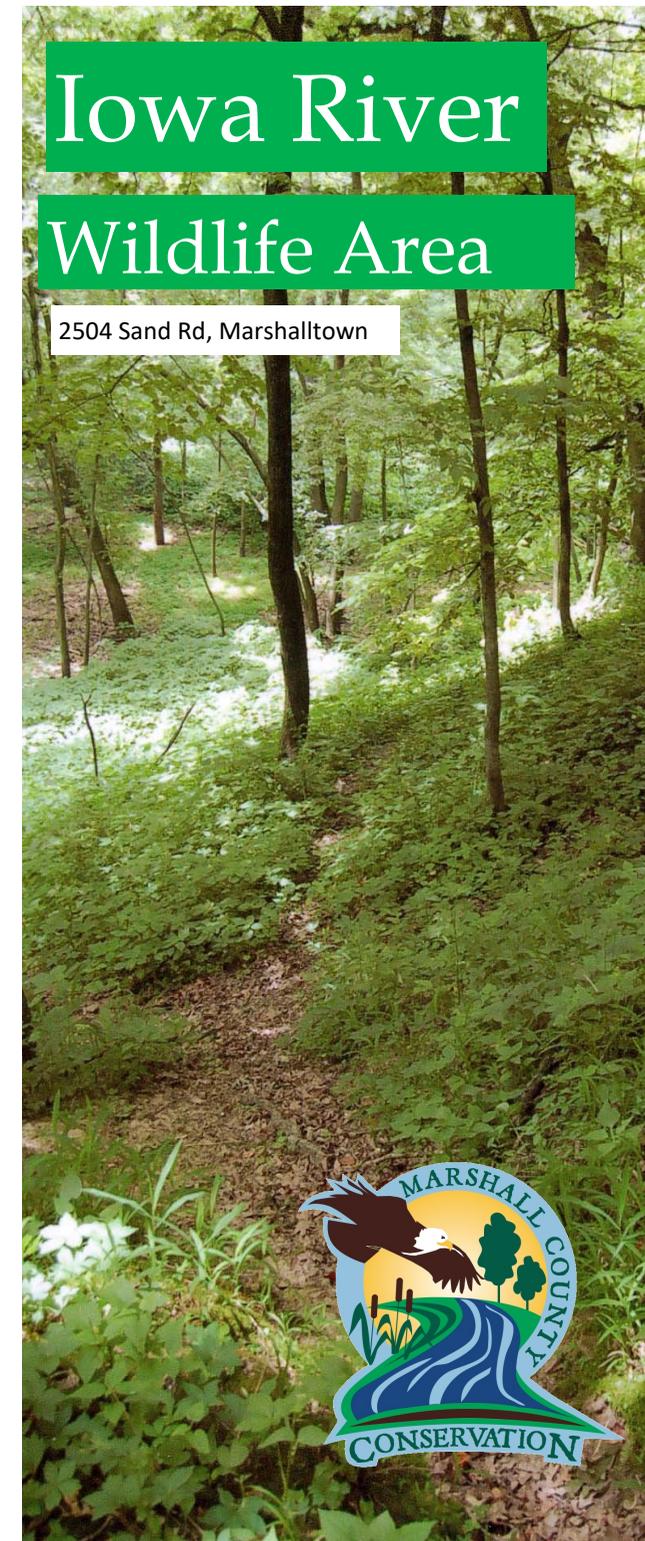
- State Hunting rules & regulations apply
- No motorized vehicles, horses, camping
- Dogs not permitted March 15 – June 15



**Marshall County Conservation Board**  
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Marshalltown, IA 50158  
641/752-5490  
Email: [mccb@co.marshall.ia.us](mailto:mccb@co.marshall.ia.us)

# Iowa River Wildlife Area

2504 Sand Rd, Marshalltown





# Iowa River Wildlife Management Area

2615 Sand Rd  
Marshalltown, Ia 50158

Operating Hours  
5:30 a.m. - 10:30 p.m.

-  Hunting
-  Wildlife Observation

-  485 Acres
-  Parking

