



Iowa Environmental Council

505 Fifth Ave., Suite 850
Des Moines, Iowa 50309-2317

515.244.1194

iecmail@iaenvironment.org

iaenvironment.org

WE ARE THE IOWA ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

For nearly 30 years, the Iowa Environmental Council (IEC) has been a trusted voice on policy to address the pressing environmental and conservation issues facing Iowans.

We envision a state that is a leader in clean water, clean energy, and environmental justice and in creating resilient communities that embody Iowans' shared values of respect for all people and our natural resources.

Our areas of expertise are water, land, and energy policy. We support policies that will benefit all Iowans, especially those who have historically been left behind.



IEC takes community leaders on a farm tour in Polk County

IEC'S 2024 LEGISLATIVE AGENDA



Expand the tools Iowa counties can use to mitigate flood damage by adding natural infrastructure options, such as floodplain reconnection and wetland restoration.

Amend Section 331.441, subsection 2, paragraph b, subparagraph (20) to include "reconnection of floodplains, wetland and oxbow lake restoration" as part of the definition of "essential county purpose" related to protection of property from floodwaters.



Fund the Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Trust Fund.

The Trust Fund would provide approximately \$200 million annually to improve water quality and protect Iowa's landscape.



Conduct a 10-year review and update of the Iowa Nutrient Reduction Strategy.



Maintain local stormwater management tools to prevent erosion, reduce flash flooding, and protect community stormwater infrastructure.



Give Ratepayers a Voice in the Clean Energy Transition



Support Reasonable Statewide Standards for Renewable Energy Siting



Advance Updated Building Codes to Bring Investment to Iowa

PRIORITY ISSUES

GIVE RATEPAYERS A VOICE IN THE CLEAN ENERGY TRANSITION



Iowans pay 100% of a utility's operational costs with their monthly bills, and Iowans have no choice in their electricity provider. That means the legislature and the Iowa Utilities Board have a critical responsibility to keep energy affordable and reliable. As utilities in Iowa accelerate investments in renewable energy, Iowans paying electric bills deserve to know the plans for ensuring rates are affordable and utilities are thinking ahead. To that end, we support an open and transparent Integrated Resource Planning process. This must include consideration of all resources, including least-cost options like Energy Efficiency. Furthermore, we oppose any efforts that would allow the largest energy users in Iowa to cut special deals, circumventing their fair share of contributions to keeping Iowa's electricity grid reliable and affordable at the expense of individual ratepayers and small businesses.



SUPPORT REASONABLE STATEWIDE STANDARDS FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY SITING

Local governments in Iowa should have the ability to protect community resources and balance the interests of landowners, but should not have the authority to ban specific types of development that present no risk of harm to the community. We support the adoption of statewide siting parameters that will balance these interests while allowing continued expansion of wind and solar in Iowa.



ADVANCE UPDATED BUILDING CODES TO BRING INVESTMENT TO IOWA

Middle-class and rural Iowans have a significant opportunity to receive rebates and tax credits for energy-saving updates to their homes and businesses through recent federal legislation. Updating Iowa's building code from the current 2012 code to the 2021 or 2024 code would simplify access for Iowans to take advantage of these rebates and credits. This update could take advantage of federal funds to cover the cost of implementation in Iowa and even offset the cost of updating to the new code, reducing both short- and long-term housing costs in Iowa.



ENSURE AFFORDABLE, CLEAN WATER FOR ALL IOWANS

Iowa needs clean, safe water for a strong economy. Pollution limits opportunities for boating, fishing, and swimming at Iowa's lakes and beaches, threatening tourism dollars that flow into local communities throughout our state. Iowans continue to face increasing costs to treat drinking water. Iowa needs to adopt practical policies that will systematically and strategically deploy conservation practices to prevent pollution, lower the financial burden of water clean-up for Iowans, and support a strong economy.



PRIORITIZE A RESILIENT LANDSCAPE

Extreme weather events, driven by changing climate patterns, are increasingly threatening Iowa's farms, communities, economy, and public health. Iowa ranks 4th in the nation for states most impacted by natural disasters. In the past five years, we have faced two dozen extreme weather events with damages over \$1 billion. Diversifying land use and investing in natural infrastructure on public and private lands will protect Iowan lives and property, boost economic stability and development opportunities, and increase our ability to weather and recover from natural disasters.

1 Iowa Conservative Energy Forum 2022 Report Iowa, a Renewable Energy Juggernaut: Wind and Solar Economic Impacts 1992-2025.

2 2021 Home Energy Affordability Gap Analysis. Fisher, Sheehan & Colton, Iowa data sheet, http://www.homeenergyaffordabilitygap.com/03a_affordabilityData.html

3 <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-most-impacted-by-natural-disasters/111223>

