

## It's Flint Creek Recreational Trail

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The Hawk Eye

The Des Moines County **Trail** Project has taken another step down the path of completion by acquiring a name: the **Flint Creek Recreation Trail**.

The winning name was submitted by Ron Stigge of Burlington in the "Name Your **Trail** Contest."

The local sponsors — the Burlington Bees, the chamber of commerce, Bickel's Bicycle Shop and the Des Moines County Conservation Board — offered prizes totaling \$300 to garner entries for a unique **trail** name.

Stigge donated his prize to the **Trail** Communications Committee for a raffle.

"I'd rather see the **trail** built than receive my prize," Stigge said.

Stigge is a regular **trail** user.

"I've been on **trails** across the Midwest and the problems people imagine with **trails**, such as vandalism and trespassing, are unfounded," Stigge said.

The **recreation trail**, which is planned to reach from Burlington to Big Hollow **Recreation** Area, grew by three-quarters of a mile in March when two more property owners agreed to sell easements on their property.

To develop the **trail**, Des Moines County is buying easements from property owners to link Burlington, Starr's Cave Nature Preserve, Thye Woods and Big Hollow. With the two new agreements, eight property owners are now on board and 60 percent of the **trail** route is secured.

A rules committee completed its recommendations for the **trail** in March. If approved by the Board of Supervisors, the rules will govern use of the **trail** and allowable activities. One issue the committee addressed was hunting, since the **trail** will pass through hunting areas, including Thye Woods **Recreation** Area. Hunting will continue to be allowed in adjacent areas, but not from the **trail** itself.

To prevent trespassing and vandalism, the committee will recommend to the county board that the **trail** and Big Hollow be monitored by a full-time law enforcement deputy, according to Jeff Bergman, director of the conservation board. Also, users will be encouraged to report suspicious activities by cell phone or incident report forms available at **trail** heads.

On the funding front, the technical advisory committee recommended seeking a \$300,000 federal grant, which Kristopher Ackerson of Southeast Iowa Regional Planning Commission said is "almost always followed by an award." If received, the total funds acquired for the **trail** to date would be \$1.5 million, about half of the funds needed to complete the project.

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