

# Natural Resource Ecology and Management

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The department addresses a broad spectrum of natural resource and environmental issues in a holistic approach to learning, discovery and engagement. Our vision of natural resources is that informed protection and management of natural resources involves an integration of biological, economic, and social considerations. Such an integrated and comprehensive approach to the education of future generations of natural resource managers and scientists is needed in order to sustain viable landscapes, facilitate strong communities, and produce desired goods, services, and functions from our natural resources.

Our educational mission for the undergraduate and graduate programs is to provide those learning experiences and opportunities that will ensure students can learn to function effectively in their chosen fields.

Central to that effective functioning are the abilities to:

- Identify, explain and critically evaluate their own beliefs, values and actions in relation to professional and societal standards of ethics.
- Anticipate, analyze and evaluate natural resource issues and opportunities, explaining the ecological, economic, and social consequences of natural resource actions at various scales and over time.
- Actively seek the input and perspectives of diverse stakeholders regarding natural resource problems and issues.
- Assess, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information fairly and objectively.
- Work effectively, both individually and with others, on complex, value-laden natural resource problems that require holistic problem solving approaches.
- Formulate and evaluate alternative solutions to complex problems and recommend and defend best alternatives.
- Communicate clearly and effectively with all audiences using appropriate oral, visual, electronic, and written techniques.
- Recognize and interpret resource problems and opportunities across spatial scales from local to global.
- Appreciate cultural diversity and understand the impact of the global distribution of people and wealth on natural resource use and valuation.
- Exercise leadership skills as professionals and engaged citizens.
- Demonstrate creativity and innovation in identifying and pursuing opportunities that produce environmental, social, or economic value.
- Exercise life-long learning skills developed before graduation.

## Undergraduate Study

The Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management offers work for the Bachelor of Science degree with majors in animal ecology or forestry. The department participates in interdisciplinary programs in biology, environmental studies, international studies, and pest management. By proper selection of free and restricted elective courses, students can obtain a minor or a second major in these programs or other disciplines.

The Department provides numerous scholarships; application information is available in the departmental Student Services Center.

## Graduate Study

The Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management offers work for the degrees Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy with majors in fisheries biology, forestry, and wildlife ecology. A non-thesis masters degree is available for students desiring a general degree program without thesis research. Students may also major in interdepartmental graduate majors in biorenewable resources technology, ecology and evolutionary biology, environmental science, genetics, plant physiology, sustainable agriculture, or toxicology (see Index ). All students are required to teach and conduct research as part of their training for the Ph.D. degree.

### Fisheries Biology and Wildlife Ecology

Graduates have a broad understanding of the basic principles of animal biology, ecology and management, and relevant aspects of basic mathematics and natural sciences, computing applications, and personal and professional development. They are able to execute rigorous independent research, have developed

problem-solving and critical-thinking skills, and can communicate effectively with scientific colleagues and the general public in both formal and informal settings.

Personnel of the U.S. Geological Survey's Iowa Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit contribute significantly to the graduate program of the department through teaching and research. Governmental agencies such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, and non-governmental agencies such as The Nature Conservancy and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation also contribute to the graduate program by funding research, providing in-kind support, and providing numerous formal and informal mentoring relationships.

No more than two dual-listed animal ecology courses may be applied for major graduate credit. Additional work is expected of students taking a dual-listed course for credit at the 500 level.

### Forestry

The department offers programs leading to the degrees of Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy with a major in forestry and minor work to students taking major work in other departments.

Graduates are skilled at defining a research problem in forestry, applying scientific principles and appropriate methods, and analyzing the results. They are capable of understanding the many facets of forest and wood science and are very knowledgeable in specific areas in forestry. They are able to deal with complex forestry problems, and where appropriate, they are capable of blending ecological, social, ethical, legal, and economic factors in the research process. They are very skilled at communicating, both in written and oral form, research results to professional and lay audiences. They are sensitive to cultural diversity and work effectively with peers, natural resource professionals, and the public.

The graduate program is open to, and suitable for, students who have majored in forestry or related natural resource fields. A non-thesis master's option is available.

The department participates in the Masters in Business Administration (M.B.A.), with specialization in the agriculture program administered by the College of Business, providing an opportunity to obtain an M.B.A. degree while taking advanced courses in forestry and maintaining contact with the profession of forestry.