We want all Iowans, including corporations, service clubs, schools, churches, families and individuals, to celebrate Iowa’s State Parks Centennial. The following list is meant to serve as inspiration. Whether it’s something on the list or your own idea, just find a way to join in and enjoy the celebration!

The objectives of Iowa’s State Park Centennial Celebration are simple.

- Ensure all Iowans know 2020 is the 100th anniversary of Iowa’s State Parks
- Increase public awareness and value of state parks
- Encourage use of state parks for good physical and mental health
- Create state park events and stewardship opportunities prior to 2020
- Propel Iowa State Parks into the next 100 years with 2020 celebrations
100 Ways to Celebrate

**Arts**
- State Park Centennial print
- Coloring books for children and adults
- Coffee table book
- Performances at various state parks by major entertainers and local talent
- Impersonators playing the roles of early state park leaders such as Louis Pammel, Ding Darling, Margo Frankel, etc.
- Artist-in-residence program at state parks including theater, poetry, storytelling, painting, music
- Poster, photo, selfie, video, art, writing and storytelling contests with parks as the subject; award major prizes; option to display winners at the State Fair

**Beautification/Environmental**
- Sponsor cleanup crew similar to AmeriCorps to clean up state parks in 2019
- Supply paint for picnic tables, signs, buildings, etc.
- State parks paint day including picnic tables and buildings
- Provide or plant trees, shrubs, flowers and do landscaping
- Organize park cleanup projects
- Adopt a state park

**Capital Improvements**
- Lodges
- Cabins
- Shower buildings
- Shelter buildings
- Restrooms
- Playgrounds
- Kiosks including campground registration kiosks
- Repair and enhance trails in parks
- Gravel camping pads
- Boat docks

**Challenges**
- Prizes for the people with the highest number of visits, number of parks visited or number of camping nights
- Prizes for everyone who visits every state park in Iowa during 2020
- Private sponsor to hide very high value item (or a symbol of that item) in a state park for visitors to find
- Daily, weekly and monthly drawing for park visitor of the day at each park
- Passports with brief description of each park; stamps to mark which parks have been visited

**Events in State Parks**
- Food events and/or cook-offs
- Organize and lead tours in the park
- State park birthday parties with birthday cake
- Something on New Year’s Eve Day 2020 to conclude the yearlong celebration
- Every park has a special event sometime during 2020; type of event depends on the park and resources in the park, friends group, relationship with nearby communities

**Faith and Local Communities**
- Explore the spiritual nature of state parks, churches in the woods
- At least one church service in each state park
- Floats in community celebrations, parades
- Booths at county fairs

**Fishing**
- Multi-generational fishing contests
- Cops and Bobbers: Law enforcement officers take youth fishing, especially high-risk youth
- Other civic clubs take youth fishing for a day: Lions, Rotary, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited, etc.

**Historical/Restoration**
- Documentary on state parks:
  - Recognizing history of state parks
  - 1st National Conference on state parks held in Des Moines
  - Recognize Iowa’s leadership role in the state parks movement nationally in the early 1900s
  - CCC - Civilian Conservation Corps story. Perhaps set up a replica of a CCC camp
  - Highlights of today’s state parks
  - Collect each park’s history including photos, stories, memorabilia, etc.

**Inter-generational Projects**
- Bring together a youth congress to get their opinions of what parks should be in the future
- Mentoring program for elders bringing youth to the state parks
- State Parks Scholarship Program
- Get schools involved
- Classroom in the park. Schools have class in a park
- Get private clubs and organizations of all types involved including auto clubs, RV travel clubs, flying clubs, geocache, earth-cache, gardening, hiking, birding, fishing, scouts, 4-H, etc.
- Involve local and state dignitaries
- Get youth involved in tree planting and other hands-on projects

**Other Items of Interest**
- Fireworks, perhaps on New Year’s Eve 2020 at a major state park
- Create a logo and slogan
- Make a commemorative coin or other collectable
- State Fair booth/display in 2020 and the years leading up to the centennial
- Recognize celebration on a food and/or beverage container: Local beers, American Popcorn, Palmer Candy in Sioux City, Candy Company in Creston

- Nursing homes and adult day care park tours, picnics, fishing tournaments
- History project for high school students researching state park history
- Define a program to bring youth to the parks
- Volunteer interpreters for youth, adults and seniors
Recognition
- Iowa State Park Hero’s Program with the introduction of the first “Major John F. Lacy” Award
- Identify and recognize the longest standing family reunion located in a state park
- Feature volunteer projects and outstanding individual or group volunteers throughout the year
- Volunteer of the week
- New project ceremonies and ribbon cuttings
- Help provide prizes for contests and challenges

Technology
- Website for all events going on in parks and websites for local parks
- Photo contest using Pinterest or Facebook
- Geocaching
- Park video competition
- Online map of all state parks in Iowa

Tours
- Traveling exhibit of state park history
- Feature a state park tour by commercial bus line
- Winnebago and/or RV dealer to sponsor a “wrapped” RV that travels throughout the state during the year
- Vintage car tours of selected state parks
- Fly-overs of state parks by flying clubs
- Bike, horseback or motorcycle tours

Wellness/Health
- Bike ride to several state parks using Angela’s maps
- Runs, triathlons and walks
- First Day Hikes in state parks on January 1, 2020
- Bike rides in parks
- Kayak and canoe races

Setting a Course for the Next 100 Years
- Creation of a new state park -- Blood Run State Park
  ♦ Native American site inhabited for about 300 years between 1300 to 1600 A.D.
  ♦ Proposed to be a joint state park with South Dakota which has already its side as a state park
  ♦ South Dakota has named their side Good Earth State Park.
- Iowa to host national parks and state parks symposium - “Future of Parks in the Nation”
- Iowa to host worldwide parks symposium - “Future of Parks in the World”

State Agencies
- Iowa Outdoors magazine series of articles throughout 2020
- DNR staff presentations mention State Parks Centennial
- State Park Centennial on DNR stationery (possible all state government stationery) and email formats, including DNR letterhead featuring State Parks Centennial
- Collect stories from park employees, past and present
- Fisheries partner with fishing contests
- Wildlife partner with bird watching
- Cabin and campsite giveaways throughout the year
- Governor makes a declaration with resolutions
- Proclamations with a pledge for cities, counties and state governments
- Legislative efforts and special recognitions
- State Parks 2020 day or week at the Capitol. Set up area at the Capitol to display photos, videos, handouts, etc. Find a sponsor for each day to provide food and drinks
- Picnics in the parks. Schedule visits to parks by public officials. Governor, Lt. Governor, legislators and local officials
- Picnic at the Capitol grounds
- Iowa 2020 license plate design and state highway map
- Postage stamp

How will you celebrate?