



# THE LAND USE BULLETIN

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## *Overlooked Solution: Carbon Sinks*

*by LaVon Griffieon*

**P**resident Obama's announcement of the historic agreement between the U.S. and China to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is a step forward.

It is indisputable; atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels continue to rise at an accelerating pace. Almost immediately after the agreement was struck, we heard political rumbling about the great collective cost of reducing green house gases this agreement would place on the U.S.

One simple, proven way to remove excess CO<sub>2</sub> is continually overlooked – soil. Soil can accumulate and store carbon for an indefinite period – a natural reservoir is known as a carbon sink. The process by which carbon sinks remove CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere, known as carbon sequestration, could be rapidly implemented at virtually no cost and generate economic and environmental benefits.

Nearly every action we've taken on our lands over the last 200 years – deforestation, tillage, annihilation of large grazing herds like buffalo, fencing, converting prairie to farms – has caused massive carbon losses in soils of all types. Some of the worst degradation has occurred on our forests and grasslands.

Forests and grasslands both use photosynthesis to store carbon. Photosynthesis is the natural process of plants taking in carbon, water and sunlight and making

more plant mass.

Forests, with shallower, lateral root systems, mostly store carbon above ground in woody tissue. When a fire occurs, forests release their stored carbon to the atmosphere.

Grasslands, with very dense, deep horizontal root systems, store carbon in the soil as organic matter and humus to depths of 15 feet and more. In grassland fires, soil sequestered carbon remains untouched, which makes these soils a very stable carbon sink.

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## Economic Development—At What Cost to Iowa's *Natural* Capital?

A Texas company is proposing a 343-mile underground pipeline to cut diagonally across 17 Iowa counties on its path from North Dakota to Illinois.

Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners has proposed the pipeline will span four states for a total length of 1,134 miles carrying 570,000 barrels of crude oil each day from the Bakken oil fields in North Dakota to Patoka, IL where the crude will be redistributed across the U.S.

The Des Moines Register reported an economic analysis was released in mid-November prepared by West Des Moines' Strategic Economics Group. According to the Register, the analysis states the project's construction would keep 7,600 workers employed for a year with an impact of \$390 million during construction. Energy Transfer has promised to hire at least half the workers from within the state with an average annual income of \$57,000. Estimates of \$1.1 billion could be brought to Iowa.

Energy Transfer Partners has asked the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) for permission to build the underground pipeline in Iowa. Board approval would give the company access to eminent domain powers which would force landowners to sell their property if a sale agreement is not reached. A group opposing the project asked Governor Branstad to block the proposal; a request the Governor declined.

*For the IUB meeting dates, locations and how to submit objections to the proposed pipeline, visit:*  
<http://www.state.ia.us/iub/energy/HLP-2014->

ISU scientist in the economics department, Dave Swenson, questioned the study's projections of \$628.4 million circulating through the Iowa economy, \$386.8 million in additional indirect growth in production and sales, 7,623 jobs during the two-year construction period, \$33.1 million during the construction period for the state government, plus \$2.2 million for local governments in additional taxes, and an additional \$14.6 million in individual income taxes. "It's not worthless, but it's an industry-sponsored promotion piece designed to get the public to support it," Swenson said. "Policymaker beware."

Harvey Siegelman, Strategic Economics principal and a former state economist, compared the project's economic impact to Microsoft's \$1 billion data center in Altoona or Orascom's \$2 billion fertilizer plant project in Lee County. The projects have large capital investments with comparatively small job creation afterward. "Once they are past the construction phase, they need very few people to operate them," Siegelman stated.

1000 Friends of Iowa questions the value of a data center that uses vast amounts of Iowa's affordable electric energy but employs very few Iowa citizens.

We ponder the true economics of a fertilizer plant that has the potential to receive a total of \$550 million in taxpayer subsidies from federal, state and local governments to locate in Iowa. This means that 165 permanent jobs created will cost taxpayers approximately \$3.3 million per job given to a foreign multi-national company. Now, we again ponder the value of two years worth of construction jobs and one-time easement sales to invite an underground pipeline scarring the face of our prime farmlands.

In all those calculations it seems we place very little value our natural capital—our prime farmland threatened by a potential for leaking crude oil, the mighty Mississippi flowing miles away from a fertilizer plant, the need for more fertilizer on our cropland with over 600 impaired bodies of water in the state, the use of our electricity with all three entities owned by out-of-state companies.

Economic development projects should be analyzed on what we have to lose in the long run as well as short-term, one time gains. One has to ask, who is benefitting most from those gains? Are Iowans?

The Bakken Pipeline Resistance Coalition will hold an informational meeting—free and open to the public—to discuss the proposed pipeline's impact on Saturday, December 6th, 2-3:30 p.m., at Ames City Hall, 515 Clark Ave., Ames, IA. Presentations will be given by Erwin Klaas, of Citizens Climate Lobby and Dave Swenson, Iowa State University Extension Economist.

Plan to attend this meeting and join the discussion!



# 2014 Annual Meeting Summary

On November 7, 2014, members and supporters of 1000 Friends of Iowa gathered at the Griffieon Family Farm in Ankeny for our annual meeting. The Griffieon Family has graciously hosted numerous events at the farm over the years. The delightful aroma of a farm fresh meal and the Griffieon welcoming committee – Comet, the family’s black lab – greeted attendees as they stepped into the shop where the meeting was held.

John Morrissey, Board President, welcomed attendees and proceeded with the business portion of the meeting. He presented the 2013 financial report, then announced that LaVon Griffieon will be resigning as volunteer Interim Executive Director effective December 31, 2014. LaVon has given four years fulfilling that role, and 1000 Friends of Iowa is grateful for her extraordinary donation of time, talent, and knowledge.

Morrissey told attendees the board has not yet finalized the job description for Executive Director or begun to advertise the position, but applications for Executive Director will be accepted. He described it as “an opportunity for young and old to use the organization as a platform for passionate advocacy of smart planning and responsible land use”. He invited attendees to share the open position with friends, family and contacts and stressed all applications will be considered.

Jenny Olson, candidate for board of directors, was introduced and officially elected to the board.

Doug Adamson presented a slideshow of the 2013 Best Development Award recipients showcasing the wonderful projects. Siobhan Spain, Best Development Awards coordinator, talked about her efforts in promoting the 2014 Best Development Awards, and reminded attendees the organization is accepting nominations through November 30th.

Lively discussion & a farm fresh meal followed the business portion of the annual meeting. Attendees slid their tables together creating one large table to share their meal, and continue the discussion. It set the tone for a true “dinner and discussion” and reminded all involved how valued and integral member input is.

Thank you to all who attended the meeting, and to those who worked to pull it all together.



## Seeking Applicants to Board of Directors

1000 Friends of Iowa is looking for talented people to join our Board of Directors. If you, or someone you know, would like to apply visit [www.1000friendsofiowa.org](http://www.1000friendsofiowa.org) to learn more about serving on our board of directors, download the Board of Directors Application Packet and instructions on how to apply. We welcome your application, and look forward to hearing from you!

## 2013-2014 Activity Report

### Issue Focus/Citizen Empowerment:

1000 Friends worked to educate and advise citizens on land use issues in their communities and the best way to advocate for responsible land use. We sent out Action Alerts about proposed transportation planning, public meetings and advocacy issues in line with our mission. We provided Public Policy Updates during the legislative session on issues concerning land use. We continued to promote alternative transportation options and encourage greater citizen input into transportation planning

**Farma-Save Signs:** Popular as ever—our Farma-Save signs continue to get people thinking about one or more aspects of land use, and inspire action. Board president, John Morrissey, delivered and, with the property owners, installed a set on Newport Road just west of Highway 1 in Iowa City. Email [kfoi@1000friendsofiowa.org](mailto:kfoi@1000friendsofiowa.org) for more information about hosting a set!

**Outreach:** 1000 Friends takes advantage of monthly news stories in print and radio through the Iowa News Service. We participated in conventions and meetings throughout the state, and when possible—set up exhibits. We provided latest news, events, updates, publications and resources through our website, emails, newsletter, printed material and social media. Find us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/1000FriendsOfIowa>

The Griffieon Family Farm continued to welcome students of all ages and provide them with hands on experience of a working farm. 1000 Friends board members and volunteers formed a committee to develop a land use curriculum for use in conjunction with farm tours.

**Buy Local:** 1000 Friends staff and volunteers distributed Buy Local posters as they traveled throughout the state. While the impact of our specific Buy Local poster is unknown, the Buy Local movement continues to gain momentum and strength. Email [kfoi@1000friendsofiowa.org](mailto:kfoi@1000friendsofiowa.org) to request Buy Local posters and we'll drop them in the mail, or if we're going to be in your area, a representative will deliver them personally!

**Best Development Awards:** The awards showcased many worthy projects highlighting successes in redevelopment, historic preservation, smart planning and sustainable practices. We encourage you to nominate local projects for a 2014 Best Development Award! Email [awards@1000friendsofiowa.org](mailto:awards@1000friendsofiowa.org) with any questions and to submit your nomination.

## Financial Report

*As of December 31, 2013*

### ASSETS

#### Current Assets

Checking/Savings	
1000 • MetaBank	\$58,227.06
Total Checking/Savings	\$58,227.06

#### Other Current Assets

1200 • Undeposited Funds	\$ 250.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 250.00

Total Current Assets \$58,447.06

### TOTAL ASSETS

\$58,447.06

### LIABILITIES & EQUITY

#### Current Liabilities

2400 • Payroll Liabilities	\$ 360.28
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 360.28

Total Liabilities \$ 360.28

#### Equity

3000 • Opening Bal Equity	
\$36,015.68	
3200 • Unrestricted Net Assets	\$ 8,720.59
Net Income	
\$13,380.51	

Total Equity \$58,116.78

**TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY** \$58,447.06

## Thank You!

**Members, Donors and Volunteers:** 1000 Friends of Iowa is member supported and could not operate without the financial generosity of our members. The financial contributions of our donors makes our work possible. The passion of our volunteers is exhibited in their willingness to donate their time, talent and energy to the mission. We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to our mission.

**Acknowledgements:** 1000 Friends of Iowa appreciates the generous contribution of office space from the Merle Hay Mall Corporation, arranged by 1000 Friends of Iowa Board Member Elizabeth Holland.



# *1000 Friends of Iowa*

Experience is the Best Teacher!



Do you see all the smiles and the engagement? Nothing creates connections and true understanding like hands-on experience. It's our belief that Iowans know more about the tropical rain forests than we do about the things surrounding us daily; fertile Iowa soils, farmland, agriculture and where our food comes from - not because they don't care about Iowa - but because we forget to talk about their value to Iowa and the world.

Partners like you make it possible for 1000 Friends of Iowa to educate all Iowans, young and young at heart, with activities that encourage thought & discussion, promote responsible land use, and provide meaningful experiences for people of all ages. At 1000 Friends we have big plans to continue educating all Iowans about responsible land use in the coming year.

Our members keep us strong and vibrant. Please renew your commitment, as generously as you can, and consider a gift membership this holiday season! Your contributions help sustain our efforts on behalf of future generations who will benefit from our work to educate Iowans about preserving farmland and natural areas, revitalizing our cities and towns, and improving quality of life for all Iowans.



Clip and mail with your tax deductible contribution to: 1000 Friends of Iowa/3850 Merle Hay Road, Suite 605/Des Moines, IA 50310

## Membership/Gift Membership

Please Check a Membership Category:

Student/Senior      \$20  
Individual          \$35  
Family              \$50-\$99  
Founding Friend    \$100-\$499  
Supporting Friend   \$500-\$999  
Sustaining Friend   \$1,000+

Enclosed is my tax deductible check for: \$ \_\_\_\_\_.00

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### GIFT MEMBERSHIPS:

Gift Recipient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City,/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



## Give the Gift of Responsible Land Use!

If your gift-list includes someone who “has everything” but who cares about preservation of our land, our natural resources, or our historic places, give the gift of membership to 1000 Friends of Iowa!

Simply complete the form above with information about your friend and send it to us along with your tax-deductible check and your name. Or if you prefer, visit our website at <http://1000friendsofiowa.org/> and complete the online form.

We will send you an acknowledgement letter and notify your friend of your tax deductible gift.

### *Did You Know? Your Gift Will Grow!*

*If 1000 Friends of Iowa had 1000 \$100 donors annually, an operating budget of \$100,000 per year would give us a solid position to continue to promote responsible land use across Iowa.*

#### **Matching Gifts**

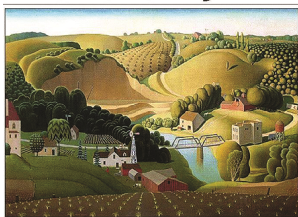
For every new member who joins at the \$100 level, the Iowa Foundation for Education, Environment and the Arts will give \$50.

#### **So, a donation of \$100 will result in \$150!**

For every member who donates \$2,000, the Cole-Belin Education Foundation will donate \$1,000 and the Iowa Foundation for Education, Environment and the Arts will donate an additional \$1,000.

#### **So, a gift of \$2,000 will result in \$4,000!**

**Please help us realize the total extent of these generous gifts so our good work can continue in Iowa!**



Stone City, Iowa 1930 Grant Wood, 1891-1942

Citizens United for Responsible Land Use

3850 Merle Hay Road, Suite 605  
Des Moines, IA 50310-1600

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Non-profit  
Organization  
U.S. Postage

**PAID**

Des Moines, IA  
Permit No. 4996



# Fall Harvest:

Land Use Victories  
Main Street Revitalization  
Sustainable Communities  
Historic Preservation

We want YOUR inspirational stories and pictures of land use victories on your farm or in your community, neighborhood, town, or city. Please share your land use victory with us, and we'll share it with the rest of Iowa!