

Press Release

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Iowa Chapter

For Immediate Release:

Iowa Conservation Team Goes Bananas For RAGBRAI

For the 16th year, the Iowa Conservation Team is hosting tents July 23-27 along the RAGBRAI route. Since 2002, the team has provided 50,000 pounds of free bananas to thousands of RAGBRAI riders, who have sent about 75,000 free conservation postcards to their friends and loved ones across the country and around the world.

The Iowa Conservation Team includes the Iowa Chapter of the Soil & Water Conservation Society, the Iowa Department of Agriculture & Land Stewardship, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Iowa Living Roadway Trust, Conservation Districts of Iowa and local Iowa Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

These groups work together every day to enhance the state's soil, water, and other natural resources. During RAGBRAI, the team provides riders a place to take a break in the shade and recharge with free water and bananas. Find this year's sites at www.iaswcs.org/ragbrai

Riders also learn about local conservation efforts while sending conservation-themed postcards to friends and family. Last year the team and its 50 volunteers provided more than 9,600 bananas (3,360 pounds), mailed 7,500 postcards, and distributed hundreds of gallons of water.

The Iowa Conservation Team is excited to bring new conservation learning opportunities to riders this year.

On Tuesday, July 24, the Boone Soil and Water Conservation District's Soil Health Trailer will teach riders about soil health improving technologies and practices. The mobile outreach lab includes a large television monitor to show soil health videos, a testing area for infiltration and other demonstrations, a blown-up view of living soil, and lists 5 major keys to improving soil health.

Milkweed Matters joins the Conservation Team on Thursday and Friday. Milkweed Matters' mission is to increase the breeding and feeding habitat of pollinators (like Monarch butterflies) in roadsides across the country. They do this by holding seed ball making events with a variety of audiences, and then tossing those seed balls into roadsides during large-scale bike rides like RAGBRAI. Riders who visit the tent Thursday and Friday will have the opportunity to pick up some seed balls to toss out along the ride and have a lasting impact on conservation in Iowa.