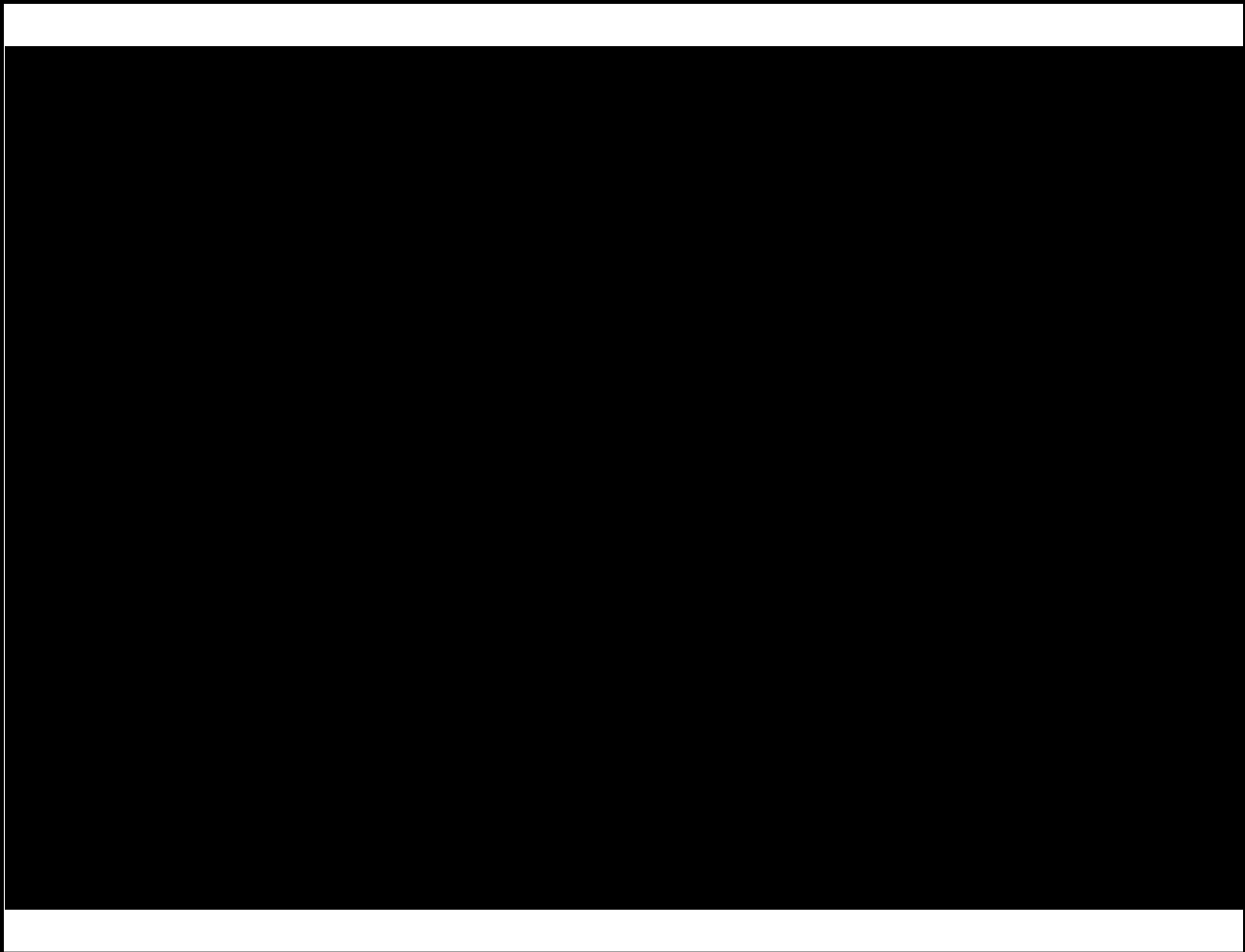










Preserve Locations



Legend



-  ... (450 ...)
-  J ... K ... (450 ...)
-  ... C ... (1,697 ...)
-  ... C ... A (254 ...)
-  ... C ... (444 ...)
-  C ... E ... A (365 ...)
-  ... C ... A ... (49 ...)
- 

Preserves Guide Area



This guide introduces five natural areas within 15 miles of Grinnell that are open to the public. All are west of town in Jasper County. Rock Creek State Park and the Reichelt Unit of Rock Creek State Park are owned by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources. Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA) is owned by Grinnell College. Sugar Creek Audubon Nature Sanctuary is owned by the Tallgrass Prairie Audubon Society, the local Audubon chapter, and Jacob Krumm Nature Preserve is owned by the Jasper County Conservation Board. Together these five preserves provide a good representation of the nature of “natural areas” in this part of Iowa.

types of public areas, including parks, preserves, playgrounds, recreation centers, forests, and wildlife areas.”² Although the land trust movement has not become well established in Iowa, two private organizations have played a recent role in natural area preservation. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (www.inhf.org) and the Nature Conservancy of Iowa (www.nature).

Background

Because the land that became Iowa was surveyed and sold by the federal government in the mid- and late-19th century, no public preserves were established from land in the public domain. No features of Iowa’s landscape inspired a movement such as that which saved Yellowstone from disposal. The single focus was to get land into private hands. Thus, all of Iowa’s parks and other protected natural areas have been established by acquiring private land. There is only a tiny amount of federally owned land in Iowa. The largest piece, Neal Smith National Wildlife Refuge, is a several-thousand-acre prairie reconstruction in southwest Jasper County, about 35 miles from Grinnell as the crow flies.

While many other state governments were establishing public land preserves in the 19th and early 20th centuries, Iowa did not pass a law authorizing state parks until 1917. The first such park, Backbone State Park along the Maquoketa River, was not established until 1920.¹ County-owned natural areas, such as Krumm Preserve, were not possible until much later. In 1955, the state legislature authorized counties to vote on whether to “levy taxes for park funds and to create county conservation boards with authority to acquire, control, and manage several

¹ Rebecca Conard, *Places of Quiet Beauty: Parks, Preserves, and Environmentalism*. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1997, 36, 54.

Woodland

L

Thicket

A

