

Hoover Nature Trail takes action on flood damages

Hoover Nature Trail is initiating trail improvements as a result of flood damages from recent heavy rainfall events in Johnson and Cedar Counties. Silt-laden runoff from recent downpours carried silt from adjacent farm fields onto the trail right-of-way, filling drainage ditches and covering the trail in several locations. As the ditches have filled, runoff has caused erosion of the crushed limestone surface. If improvements are not initiated soon, the impacts to the trail will intensify.

Bikers and hikers who frequently use the trail have expressed a concern for immediate action. The washboard effect on the trail surface jeopardizes trail use and enjoyment.

Trail improvements will involve reconstructing ditches to drain storm water to nearby streams. Silt and plant materials that are clogging the ditches will be removed and graded onto adjacent embankments. Cuts and washes on the right-of-way will

be filled and contoured.

Steinmaus Environmental Services, Inc., of Muscatine, Iowa has been contracted to identify drainage problems and recommend remedial actions. Mike Steinmaus, environmental planner with the firm, sees the drainage improvements as vital in maintaining a safe, enjoyable recreational experience. According to Steinmaus, without immedi-

ate action on drainage improvements, trail damages will increase significantly with additional heavy rains.

In addition to drainage improvements, Hoover Nature Trail will be replacing fences adjacent to pastures along two sections of the trail right-of-way. The new fences will allow livestock growers to resume use of the pastures.