**Project Title:** Ecological Survey or Environmental Observation Exercise

**Description:** Pick a park or wildlife area near Iowa City and make observations about the presence of animal and plant species, geological features, water quality, soil, etc. From your observations, come up with recommendations for habitat restoration, water quality improvement, invasive species removal, or perform other relevant environmental analysis of your choice.

**Background:** What environmental topics interest you most? Whether it’s biodiversity, prairie/woodland/aquatic/riparian ecology, air or water quality, geology, soil erosion/soil health, or climate, there are many opportunities to apply your interest out in the field in Iowa.

There are many possible places that could lend themselves well to your study. Hickory Hill Park, Water Works Prairie, Bur Oak Land Trust lands, Sugar Bottom, Lake Macbride, Palisades-Kepler State Park, Hawkeye Wildlife Management Area, Ryerson Woods.

Ideas of potential projects: monitoring the presence of pollinators in prairie, water quality testing comparisons, presence of invasive species and avenues of its spread, species observations for biodiversity.

**Helpful Resources:** County Parks, Johnson County: <https://www.mycountyparks.com/county/Johnson.aspx>

**Potential Collaborators/Stakeholders:**

Office of Sustainability and the Environment

**Desired Outcomes:** Field experience and project/experiment design skills in an ecology or environmental topic of the students choosing. A written report summarizing the topic, motivation, research questions, results, recommendations/conclusions, analysis of methods, etc.

**Evaluation:** Varies by project. Generally, is experimental design sound? Does the report include an abstract, background, methods, results, discussion, and conclusion section? Is each component addressed clearly? Are limitations acknowledged?

**Relevant Courses/Course Areas:**

* Environmental Sciences, Intro to Environmental Science (ENVS 1080), Fundamentals of Environmental Science (ENVS 1085)