Palo Alto County IRVM Plan

May 2017

Preface

This is an updated plan for Palo Alto County's Integrated Vegetation Management Department Replaces Version 1 dated 5/30/13

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1) Contributors to plan

Kent Malm – Palo Alto County Roadside Manager

Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors

Walter Davis Oeth - Engineer

2) Goals

- Control invasive weeds, brush, and trees in the county right of ways.
- Establish native grasses and forbs.
- Reduce water and wind erosion, enhance water runoff filtration resulting in the improvement and protection of groundwater quality.
- Create a user friendly corridor for pollinators and wildlife.

3) Program history

When Palo Alto County's IRVM program was first established in 2001 it was operated under the Conservation Department. In 2008, for a number of reasons, it was moved to its own building next to a secondary roads shed. At that time it became an entity of its own completely separate from Conservation and secondary roads.

4) IRVM Decision making process

Since Palo Alto's program is independently managed, the department head is also the roadside manager as well as weed commissioner. The department head answers directly to board of supervisors. The person in this position is responsible for most decision making with direction and input from the engineer and the board of supervisors.

5) Executive summary

Palo Alto County IRVM recognizes the importance of utilizing our roadsides to their fullest potential. We strive to accomplish this in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Working with secondary road department and engineers office to follow up on ditch cleanouts and new road projects on erosion control and getting new seeding established upon completion of their portion of the right of way.

- Establish in these areas native plants, thereby enhancing water quality, wildlife benefits, erosion, control of snow drifting, and overall safer and attractive roadways within our county.
- Control invasive plants with judicial use of chemicals, manual cutting and spot mowing.
- Educating land owners and the general public on advantages of native plantings in our county right of ways.

6) Program type

The Palo Alto County IRVM is operated as an independent department.

7) Jurisdictional Recognition and Approval

Management

Roadside Manager / Weed Commissioner administers the roadside program regarding seeding, weed and brush control, equipment needs, budgeting.

Board of Supervisors

The Board of Supervisors plays an active role in program budgeting, equipment purchases and ongoing changes in operating practices. IRVM dept. head answers directly to board.

No permits are issued through this department. Any required permits are issued through the county engineers office.

Iowa laws are adopted by county

Program Organizational Structure

8) Program Organizational Structure

- a. Staff Organizational Chart
- Roadside manager / Weed Commissioner
- Seasonal staff includes one 6 month full time temporary and two short term (2-3 months) part/full time temps.

The Roadside Manager / Weed Commissioner is considered the Department Head and answers directly to the Board of Supervisors. The program works closely with the Engineer's office, secondary roads, conservation and landowners on projects in the ROW.

b. Staffing Needs / TrainingAll sprayer operators are certified in Category 6

At least 18 years old with valid Iowa driver's license

Annual safety program includes attending flagger training thru Engineer's office as well as in house training on all equipment, sprayers, and proper use of personal protective equipment.

Public involvement is crucial for public support of our IRVM program. We encourage input from landowners and citizens in general regarding the use of natives in our county.

Palo Alto County Conservation Board

- Work together on controlled burns, seeding projects, share equipment when needed.

Palo Alto County Engineers Office

- Communicate on summer hires, coordination of seeding and erosion control on right of way reconstruction projects and ditch cleanouts.

Palo Alto County Extension

- Continuing education for spray certifications.
- Our local Extension displays our free IRVM literature from UNI Tallgrass Prairie Center for public information.

Palo Alto County Garden Club

 We do occasional presentations to the garden club promoting native plantings. This has brought about numerous projects converting previously mowed or brome ditches to natives.

9) Inventory and Analysis

Paper records and before and after photos regarding seeding, spraying and erosion control are kept on file.

10) Equipment Inventory

- Condition rating included on each item (Excellent, good, fair, poor) based on age and need of repair

Ford F250 2WD (2000) 178,000 miles poor

Ford F250 4WD (2006) 122,000 mi good

Ford F350 4WD (2001) 51,000 mi good

-Flatbed spray rig with cab controlled ditch boom head and 300 gal tank.

Massey Ferguson 4610 FWD tractor (2014) 365 hrs excellent

John Deere 302 tractor (1970?) fair

Shultz FX1200 10' batwing mower (2014) excellent

Polaris Ranger XP 900 (2015) excellent

Finn T-60 Hydroseeder (2002) fair

Dewdrop ATV drill (2012) good

Truax 5'native seed drills (2) one in good condition

one in poor condition used for parts

Aluma 7816 trailer (2012) good

H & H flatbed gooseneck trailer 20' excellent

2000 gal water tank with pump on tandem axle trailer good

Minnesota Wanner 300 gal skid sprayer good

Heiman 60 gal UTV skid sprayer w/foam tank, Honda engine (2016) used for controlled burning excellent

Old John Deere 12' disc fair

Stihl power tools

- 3 Chainsaws, 2 trimmers, 1 pole saw good

UTV end gate seeder good

Misc shop tools

2014 Dell laptop and HP Officejet Pro 8600 copy/print/scan good

11) Program Operations

January – March: Prepare and submit annual Weed Commissioners Report to Supervisors and State Weed Commissioner, annual budget, equipment maintenance, cut trees/brush and pick up tires etc. from ROW as weather allows. LRTF grant

March – April: Continued ROW cleanup and cutting, prepare LRTF Grants, Seed and chemical inventory and ordering, prescribed burning, spring seeding as needed, advertise for seasonal help.

April – October: Manage seasonal help, cutting brush/trees, weed control, seeding, mowing, work with landowners on weed issues and complaints.

October – December: Fall seeding, equipment cleanup and prep for winter storage.

12) Work area types

The majority of our activities are obviously in rural area as this is a county program. We do however from time to time work with towns within our county on projects in need of seeding, erosion control, etc.

In the nonresidential ROW natives are used.

We communicate with landowners on areas that will be mowed and or hayed and a

Waterway type grass will be used in these areas.

All shoulders are mowed therefor are seeded with waterway mix regardless at least one mower width.

13) Methods

For most of our program operations we refer to the IRVM Technical manual. We have hard copies of this on hand and also refer to it online at http://www.uni.edu/~irvm/techmanual/IRVM-Technical-Manual.pdf. We try to follow these guidelines as closely as possible.

Most of our seeding is done following ditch cleanouts and resurfacing projects.

TAP seed cleanout mix with cover crop of oats or rye is typically used.

Shoulders are seeded with a mowable waterway mix.

In ROWs adjoining a residence where landowner wishes to mow, we work with them to reestablish a mowable grass to blend with the lawn.

In areas where we are trying to replace existing vegatation (usually brome) we start by spraying with glysophate. Once a good kill has been accomplished we seed with site appropriate equipment.

Truaxx drill is used as much as possible as this is quickest as well as most economical. Hydroseeding with mulch is used on steeper slopes, wet areas, etc.

On the slopes, tacifier is added to mulch and erosion mats are used when necessary. UTV drill is used on smaller areas including narrow shoulders and in front of residentials.

Following seeding IRVM maintains sites by spot reseeding, spot spraying and spot mowing. We also perform prescribed burning and silt fence removal at appropriate times.

14) Material and equipment procurement

Each year we receive TAP seed (natives) from Tallgrass Prairie Center.

IRVM purchases the waterway mix seed, cover crop, mulching supplies, and herbicides with budgeted funds. Seed and chemicals are stored in the IRVM building in a climate controlled environment. Supplies are purchased as local as possible.

lowa Living Roadway Trust Fund grants are used whenever possible for equipment purchases and upgrades.

15) Appendices

Iowa Code and Administrative Rules

Section 314.22 Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management

Section 314.17 Mowing Law – No mowing before July 15th

Section 314.11 Weeds on Roads – Harvesting of Grass

Section 318.3 Obstruction in ROW / Destruction of plants placed ROW / Crops in ROW

Chapter 317 Iowa Weed Law – Noxious Weeds and Enforcement Procedures

PALO ALTO COUNTY ORDINANCE NO. 8

AN ORDINANCE TO ENACT HOME RULE LEGISLATION UNDER CHAPTER 331.301 (1) OF THE IOWA CODE, AND ARTICLE III OF THE IOWA CONSTITUTION, AND IOWA CODE CHAPTER 657.2 (5)

BE IT ORDAINED
BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF PALO ALTO COUNTY, IOWA

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is for the Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors, after consulting with the County Engineer, and appropriate parties for maintaining the safe and efficient use of the roadways and ditches in the County Road System under the lowa Code Chapter 319.1.

SECTION 2 - DEFINITIONS

The creation by any person of an obstruction upon a roadway or within the area of a road right of way in Palo Alto County shall be and is hereby declared to be a nuisance and is prohibited. For use in this ordinance, certain terms and words used herein shall be interpreted or defined as follows:

- "Obstructions" Means anything that is placed in a secondary road right of way by persons other than persons authorized to do so by the Palo Alto Board of Supervisors.
 - The <u>term shall include property such as</u>: Fences, growing crops, rocks, thrashed corn cobs, piles of brush, abandoned vehicles or machinery, billboards, advertising signs or devices, open ditches, water breaks and shall also include the cultivation of crops or the grazing of animals within the right of way.
- "Board" Means the Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors or it's designee.
- 3. "Engineer" Means the Palo Alto County Engineer or his designee.
- 4. "Attorney" Means the Palo Alto County Attorney or his assistant or County Attorney's designee; all other terms shall be interpreted and constructed in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 4, Code of lowa and generally as an implementation of or in harmony with Chapter 319, of the lowa Code.

SECTION 3 - POWERS OF THE BOARD

The Palo Alto County Board of Supervisors desire to enforce the obligation against the responsible parties to remove obstructions placed on the road or within the road right of way within Palo Alto County: and

SECTION 7 - ATTORNEY

Upon request of the Board, or in the prosecutorial discretion, the Attorney may bring action to enjoin or abate an obstruction, to collect damages caused by an obstruction, including the costs of removal, and to pursue any other appropriate remedy, including criminal prosecution under Section (5) of this ordinance or Chapter 716, Code of Iowa. This ordinance shall be considered and voted on for passage at two (2) meetings of the Board prior to the meeting at which it is to be finally passed, as required by Iowa Chapter 331.302 (5) of the 1996 Iowa Code, unless this requirement is waived.

DATE:	9/18/96

Passed and approved this _

day of September

1996

PALO ALTO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Chairman

Lang Haing

Leo E. Soeden

RECOMMENDED:

Palo Alto County Engineer

ATTEST:

Palo Alto County Auditor

First Reading: 10:15 A.M. on September 11, 1996

Second Reading: 10:15 A.M. on September 18, 1996

Approved: 10:15 A.M. on September 25, 1996

Published: August 29, 1996 and September 5, 1996

PALO ALTO COUNTY SECONDARY ROAD DEPARTMENT GENERAL PERMIT TO WORK WITHIN COUNTY ROAD RIGHT OF WAY

		ounty, State of Iowa and
(herei	natter	referred to as property owner) do hereby enter into the following permit and agreement:
1.	Palo Cour	Alto County hereby consents to and grants permission to the property owner to work within nty Right-of-Way for the following purpose (See plat for location and description)
2.	In co	nsideration of Palo Alto County granting said permission and consent, the property owner hereby isses and agrees to the following:
•	A	The property owner, at his own expense, and with the approval of the County Secondary Road Department, will provide all safety measures, warning devices, and advance signing necessary to protect the traveling public during construction.
	B	. If dosing of the County Road is required, the contractor or property owner shall notify the Secondary Road Department at least two (2) working days prior to any dosing. The road will be closed only as long as necessary. No crossing will be left open at night without approval from the Secondary Road Department.
		 No permanent roadway surface or pavement will be cut or disturbed in any manner without written approval from the County Engineer. The contractor or property owner will restore, at his own expense, the roadway surface to its original condition, or condition designated by the County Engineer.
2	E	It shall be the responsibility of the property owner, authorized representative, or his contractor to notify Iowa One-Call (1-800-292-8989) and utility companies at least two (2) working days in advance of any excavation.
4.	, F.	PROPERTY OWNER HEREBY AGREES TO SAVE HARMLESS AND INDEMNIFY PALO ALTO COUNTY AGAINST ANY AND ALL CLAIMS FOR DAMAGES FOR PERSONAL INJURY OR PROPERTY DAMAGE ARISING OUT OF WORK PERFORMED OR ACTIONS TAKEN BY PROPERTY OWNER OR AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE PURSUANT TO THIS AGREEMENT.
	G.	NOT CONFORMING TO OR ACQUIRING THIS PERMIT IS A VIOLATION OF SECTION 319.14 1991 CODE OF IOWA.
	H.	Additional Provisions:
	L.	Work not conforming to the expectation of the County Engineer will be completed at owner's expense. If completed by Palo Alto County for land owner, cost will be billed.

PALO ALTO COUNTY RIGHT-OF-WAY PERMIT PLAT

Sec No	
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TOWNSHIP	
SECTION(S)	
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SCHEDULE OF COSTS

Palo Alto County will stock the material and furnish the labor and equipment to construct the driveway or field entrance. The person requesting the driveway or field entrance will pay for the material at the following rate:

\$400.00 Plus Cost of Pipe 24' Wide Top Single

\$400.00 Without Culvert Pipe 24' Wide Top Single

\$150.00 Per Side up to 10' for Widening (Plus Cost of Pipe)

\$ 50.00 Delivery Charge – always charge for this service.

15" Metal pipe \$12.75 per ft, connecting band \$25.50 each.

18" Metal pipe \$14.50 per ft, connecting band \$29.00 each.

24" Metal pipe \$19.25 per ft, connecting band \$38.50 each.

* Pipes longer than 60' must be a minimum of 18" to minimize plugging with debris.

<u>PAYMENT OF ENTRANCES</u>: Payment will be made <u>before</u> construction begins or when pipe is picked up.

MOVING OF FIELD ENTRANCES AND DRIVEWAYS: Will be done at same cost as new driveway.

Driveways and field entrances shall not be placed by the landowners or tenant on any road without the consent of the Engineer, even though the owner or tenant does the work. Driveways placed without such consent shall be subject to removal at owner's expense. Driveways requiring pipe shall have the minimum diameter of 15" and shall be 16 gauge corrugated metal.

CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS

New construction or expansion of existing drives will conform to county standards.

Top width, Single – 24'

Top width, Double (shared) – 34'

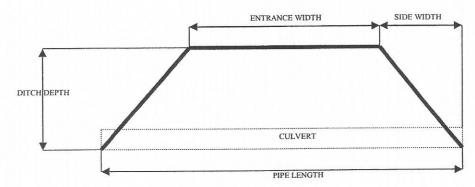
Side width, Gravel road - 3' width for every 1' ditch depth

Side width, Paved road (with pipe) - 6' width for every 1' ditch depth

Side width, Paved road (without pipe) – 8' width for every 1' ditch depth

Location restrictions:

- Placed no closer than 150' from near edge of intersecting road.
- <u>Field Entrances on gravel roads</u> may be placed no closer than 60' from nearest edge of intersecting roads. However, the goal is to have at least 150' separation from the edge of the intersecting road for better snow removal and safety.



PALO ALTO COUNTY SECONDARY ROAD DEPARTMENT

Section C.5 Maintenance

Policy and Procedure Memorandum 94-5

TO: Palo Alto County Residents

FROM: Billy G. Conner

SUBJECT: Tile and Water Lines within R.O.W.

EFFECTIVE DATE: April 1, 1994

The purpose of this document is to provide a fair and uniform procedure for the placement of the tile lines, water lines, etc. within Palo Alto County right of way. Additionally, this policy attempts to address laws addressed by the Code of Iowa and liability caused by such actions.

A PRIVATE TILE CROSSINGS

The Code of Iowa requires that the County pay for tile crossings that require the crossing of county road to obtain an adequate outlet.

- Adequate outlet is defined as a tile that is capable of handling the new tile or an open ditch that is sufficiently deep enough to allow water to flow naturally along the surface. If the tile is private, permission must be obtained from the property owner to hook into it. The County Engineer will decide if the outlet is adequate.
- 2. A permit is required for all work in the right of way. This permit form is available in the County Engineer's Office. It will be completed along with plat and returned to County Engineer's Office. The County will review permit and make determination for approval.
- 3. Property owner will contact their own contractor and make arrangements for the work to be done. The contractor will contact County Engineer prior to start of work, and the contractor and Engineer will meet at site to determine what is to be done. Determinations will also be made as to what the County and Property Owner will pay for. The Contractor will bill the County directly for the portion located on public property.
- 4. Repairs to tile crossings will follow the same procedures as defined above. However, a permit will not be required.

B. OTHER PRIVATE TILE LINES AND WATER LINES IN COUNTY RIGHT OF WAY

Palo Alto County assumes no responsibility or assumes no ownership of other tile lines or water lines within County right of way without prior written agreement.

- A permit is required for all work in the right of way. This permit form
 is available in the County Engineer's Office. It will be completed
 along with plat and returned to the County Engineer's Office. The
 County will review permit and make determination for approval.
- 2. Upon approval the property owner will contact their own contractor and make arrangements for the work to be done. The contractor will contact the County Engineer prior to start of work.
- All costs for said work will be done by the property owner.
 The County will not have any responsibility or liability for these lines.
- 4. Repair to these lines will follow the same procedures as defined above.

C. RISERS ON PRIVATE TILE LINES

- Palo Alto County is responsible for the installation and maintenance
 of risers hooked into private tile if that tile provides drainage to the
 Secondary Road System. Request for same will be made to County
 Engineer's Office. The Palo Alto County Engineer will make a determination as to the benefits of installation. If work is to be done by
 private contractor, no payment will be made without prior approval.
- D. Attached is a copy of permit. See permit for additional conditions.

PALO ALTO COUNTY SECONDARY ROAD DEPARTMENT

Section C.6 Maintenance

Policy and Procedure Memorandum 94-7

SUBJECT: Use of Palo Alto County Right of Way by Others

EFFECTIVE DATE: June 1, 1994

AUTHORITY: Chapter 108, 309, and 319, Code of Iowa, 1993

The code of lowa makes it illegal to obstruct or damage the Right of Way, or leave animals unattended on the public Right of Way. Additionally, the persons responsible for them are subjecting themselves to possible liability for these actions.

A. Permits for New Construction

- 1. All excavation, fill, or any physical change to Palo Alto County R.O.W. requires a permit from the Palo Alto County Engineer.
- 2. All work performed by others will conform to specifications of the Palo Alto County Secondary Road Department.
- 3. All non-complying work will be given due notice for corrective action.

B. Farming in the Right of Way

- Farming operations within R.O.W. will not be allowed. These
 practices are detrimental to sight distances and many times
 interfere with drainage adjacent to the road.
- 2. As locations are brought to our attention, Palo Alto County will survey the area involved, and make an attempt to check the surrounding area to insure that all other locations in the vicinity are marked at the same time.
- 3. The grazing of tethered animals will be allowed without permit if they meet the following conditions.
 - (a) They are secured so that they will not be a hazard to the traveling public.
 - (b) The grazing does not cause damage to the Right of Way.

C. Fences

- Existing fences that are currently in their proper location are exempt from any actions. Fences that may be within existing R.O.W., but not constitute an immediate or dangerous hazard, will not require removal except for roadway or Right of Way improvement.
- New fences may be set on, but not inside of, a county Right of Way. Palo Alto County will provide Right of Way staking with reasonable notice.

D. Fieldstone

- This is a very particular problem in certain parts of the county. We cannot allow this to be piled on a county Right of Way and we request that existing piles be moved.
- 2. While Palo Alto County has no general use for field stone, there are times when we could use some. If a landowner wishes to have fieldstone removed from his/her property, contact the County Engineer. If the stockpile is convenient and accessible, we will make arrangements to pick up the material as we need it.

E. Other Obstructions

No billboards, advertising signs, debris, abandoned wheels, or fences other than Right of Way boundary fences, shall be placed or erected up on the Right of Way of the Palo Alto County Secondary Road System.

F. Procedures

1. General

- (a) Palo Alto County will attempt to contact the offending party, in person, and obtain an agreement to correct misuse of County Right of Way.
- (b) If the problem has not been corrected by the agreed time schedule, the responsible party will be given a written notice to take corrective action.
- (c) After 20 days, if the work is still not completed, Palo Alto County will solve the problem and submit a bill the responsible party.
 - (d) If there is no payment after 10 days, Palo Alto County will institute proceedings in District Court.

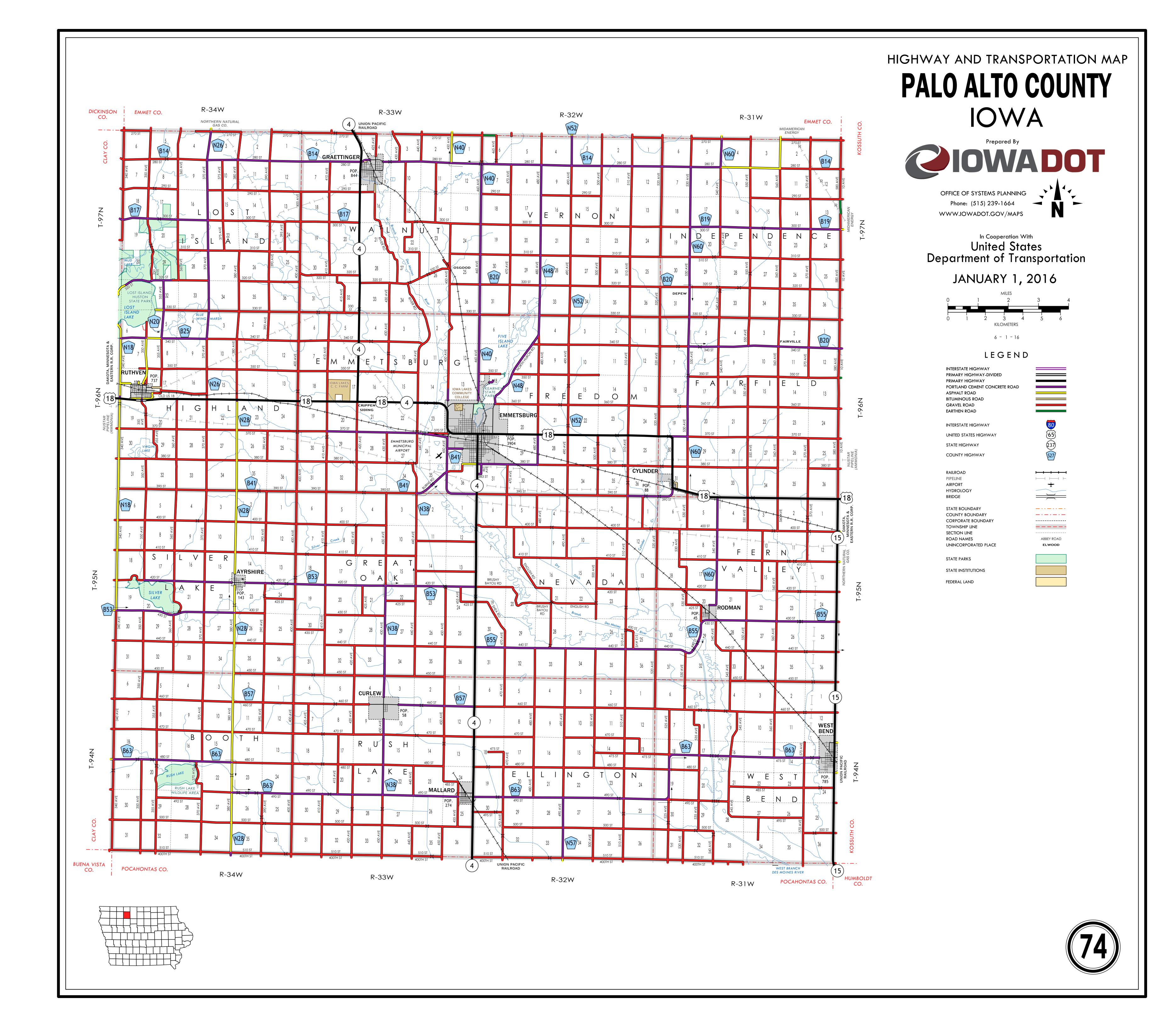
2. Hazards

- (a) If the obstruction constitutes an immediate or dangerous hazard in the Palo Alto County Right of Way, the problem will be removed without notice or liability to Palo Alto County. The costs will be assessed against the appropriate party.
- (b) Failure to pay will cause Palo Alto County to institute proceedings in District Court.

Palo Alto County LRTF Funding History through FY 2017

DOT Project Number	Applicant	Award		FiscalYear Description	Туре
90-74-LRTF-101	Palo Alto County	\$	10,000.00	2001 Equipment - Drill	County
90-74-LRTF-102	Palo Alto County	\$	4,500.00	2001 Inventory	County
90-74-LRTF-201	Palo Alto County	\$	19,500.00	2002 Equipment - Hydro seeder and inventory	County
90-74-LRTF-501	Palo Alto County	\$	10,000.00	2005 Equipment - Storage shed	County
90-74-LRTF-601	Palo Alto County	\$	4,500.00	2006 Equipment - GPS/GIS	County
90-74-LRTF-801	Palo Alto County	\$	6,061.62	2008 Equipment - Water supply tank	County
90-74-LRTF-901	Palo Alto Conservation Board	\$	3,500.00	2009 Equipment - ATV	County
90-74-LRTF-001	Palo Alto County	\$	4,183.34	2010 Equipment - Fire	County
90-74-LRTF-101	Palo Alto County	\$	1,087.06	2011 Equipment - Brush control	County
90-74-LRTF-301	Palo Alto County	\$	7,065.00	2013 Equipment - ATV drill	County
90-74-LR14-(320)	Palo Alto County IRVM	\$	12,960.00	2014 Equipment - Mower	County
90-74-LR15-(328)	Palo Alto County IRVM	\$	6,380.00	2015 Equipment - UTV	County

Total LRTF Funding Awarded FY1990 - FY2017 \$



Job Description

Palo Alto County Roadside Manager

The purpose of this position is the implementation of the Integrated Roadside Vegetation Management (IRVM) program of Palo Alto County. The person in this position also acts as Weed Commissioner as well as department head.

Responsibilities and duties include:

Establish and manage natives in the county's ROW, control invasive weeds, brush, and trees.

Communicate with landowners regarding weed, tree, and brush issues as well as seeding projects.

Manage seasonal employees.

Manage purchases and budgeting.

Equipment maintenance

Grant applications to LRTF.