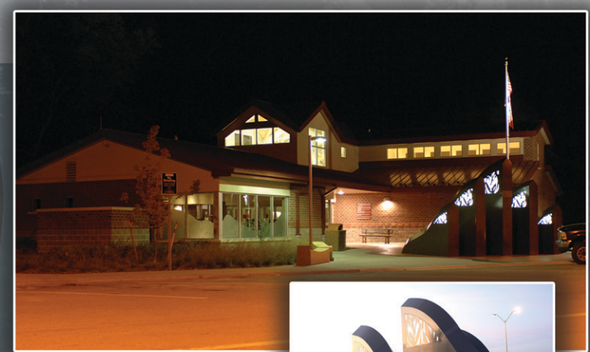
Iowa REST AREAS

Loess Hills
Underwood



Pottawattamie County
I-80 eastbound at milepost 19
Emphasis: Loess Hills
Artist: David Dahlquist
Completed: November 2007

- The Loess Hills are the inspiration for this rest area. The hills are considered a world-class geologic formation created by deposition of great clouds of silt blown across the Missouri River floodplain. They are a unique landform with the only other similar formation (depths of up to 200 feet) in Shaanxi, China.
- Loess soil allows for rapid movement of water, resulting in dry conditions suitable for arid plants. The Loess Hills region supports a wide and abundant variety of plants and animals uniquely suited to these arid conditions.
- Pottawattamie County has played a significant role in many interesting historical events, including:
  - Home to an early and extensive Native American culture.
  - On the route of the Corps of Discovery's Lewis and Clark Expedition.
  - Part of the Mormon Trail.
  - One of the oldest archeological human burial sites where the remains of four humans, now called the "Turin Man," were buried 5,500 year ago.
- The Native Americans that once lived throughout the Loess Hills considered the hills to be a "sacred" place, so special that no tribe or group could control it.