



Card of Thanks

Miller Marsh Purchase

Thanks to the Cutler, Frampton, Schell and Salmon families for purchasing the 110-acre site from Jean Miller and family. The property lies just off the south shore of Clear Lake, near Dodge's Point and along the south side of South Shore Drive. According to Cutler, "Our main purpose for purchasing this property was to prevent development and see that the land is put into conservation programs and managed in a way that will improve the lake's watershed." Buyer George Frampton added, "I think this is really one of the more significant acquisitions in the Clear Lake area, with its double impact of scenic beauty and direct impact on water quality."

DNR Budget Proposals Are Important Issues For Clear Lake Supporters

Recent state budget cuts have hit environmental efforts harder than almost anywhere else. This is due largely because legislators see environmental efforts as an easy target. They generally receive little backlash from the public when environmental programs are cut. Arguably the biggest loser has been Iowa's lakes.

These state budget cuts result in there being no money available for large lake restoration projects like those proposed locally for Clear Lake.

Funding to restore two very significant environmental programs is proposed for this year's DNR budget:

***Lake Restoration Program** – Historically, this program had received funding of up to \$4 million dollars per year and was used primarily for lake dredging activities. Last year, funding was cut to \$350,000. DNR staff is proposing that \$5,000,000 be appropriated in this year's budget to fund a variety of lake restoration activities.

***Resource Enhancement And Protection** - The DNR staff is proposing that this program be restored at a funding level of \$15 million. These funds are primarily generated from state gambling and tobacco dollars which are outside of the general fund of the State. This program

provides funding to parks and open spaces, soil and water conservation, and land protection and stewardship. When REAP was originally established in 1989, funding of \$20 million annually was authorized. To date, REAP has never been fully funded at the authorized level.

Funding for both of these programs is an important step in helping to protect and enhance our state's natural resources. Without funding at the state level, restoration plans for Clear Lake, as well as other Iowa waterways, will be severely restricted.

"It is rather frustrating that we can go through extensive planning, have an intensive study done on the lake, develop a restoration plan, and then have no money to implement it. All the other lake associations in the state are facing the same problems, so various lake groups need to unite and collectively lobby the state to restore funding for lake improvement projects," explained Tom Ebeling of the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake.

All local residents who are concerned about enhancing Clear Lake's water quality are urged to contact their local legislators to request that funding be restored to both the REAP program and the Lake Restoration Program.

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Support the New No Phosphorus Lawn Fertilizer Bill

Lobbying state legislators for funding is not the only way that local residents can enhance the protection of our lake. Support is also needed in promoting a bill to help improve Iowa's waterways.

The bill (House File 297), as proposed by an Okoboji legislator, would allow local governments which are located in the watershed of a lake to place restrictions on phosphorus fertilizers being used on lawns and soils within the watershed.

The citizens of Clear Lake have known for years the negative impact phosphorus in lawn fertilizers has on our lake. "Residents have been encouraged to use no phosphorus fertilizers on their lawns and the voluntary program has been relatively successful with many people making the switch to

zero phosphorus fertilizers. The reality though is that we will never be able to convince everyone on the importance of using a zero phosphorus fertilizer," said David Knoll.

If the bill is adopted, the Cities of Clear Lake and Ventura, as well as Cerro Gordo County, would be allowed to develop local ordinances to provide regulations on the application, use, sale and distribution of fertilizers or soil conditioners for properties within the Clear Lake watershed. The bill exempts both agricultural uses and commercial applicators from the phosphorus restrictions.

Members of the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake urge property owners to contact their local legislators to encourage passage of this bill.

New Statewide Lakes Association Formed

Representatives from various lake associations in the State of Iowa have joined together to form the Iowa Lakes Association.

The coalition began meeting in the fall of 2002 and is dedicated to protecting and improving Iowa's lakes. Iowa has 35 natural lakes and 200 constructed lakes totaling 86,000 acres. These lakes enhance the quality of life for Iowans who fish, boat, swim and otherwise enjoy visiting these beautiful attractions. The mission of the Iowa Lakes Association is to promote stewardship of Iowa's waters and to influence and support public policy for water resources management.

To date, the group has met twice and discussion

has centered on legislative and state budget proposals that impact water quality issues, lake restoration activities, boating issues, and ongoing lake management concerns.

The next meeting of this coalition is scheduled for March 6, 2003, in Clear Lake.



Fishing at Lake Okoboji



Sailing on Clear Lake

Phosphorus Management Demonstration Plots Yield Good Results

This past spring the CLEAR Project and ISU Extension installed research plots to determine if additional phosphorus (P) fertilizer was beneficial to crop yields depending on soil test P levels.

Two local farmers were paid a small incentive to install the 10 acre plots. The plots were divided into strips and the soil was tested in each strip to determine levels of available soil P. The strips were then each given the same rate of nitrogen application but the P application was varied. Some strips received none, some received 50 lbs. and some received 100 lbs. These three applications were replicated in the plot. The plot was harvested this fall and yields of each strip were recorded.

It was found that for the strips with low or optimum level of available soil P, there was a yield increase when additional P fertilizer was applied.

This was hypothesized because soils lacking P or at an optimum level of P need additional fertilizer for adequate crop growth. However, there was very little to no increase in yield when additional P was applied on the strips which already had high or very high levels of available soil P. This again was hypothesized, as soils testing in the high or very high range generally have sufficient phosphorus available for crop growth.



The plot at the second farm was tested for any yield increase from applying a starter P fertilizer versus no starter P fertilizer to soils in the high and very high range. No yield response was found. A farmer meeting will be held this winter by ISU Extension to explain the results. Testing of the plots will continue for the next 3 years.