



Washington DC Trip Planned

For a second consecutive year, a group from Clear Lake will be making a trip to Washington DC to meet with elected officials regarding local issues. Funding for lake water quality will be emphasized by the group this year. Two members of the Association will be going on this trip. If you would like to provide input on topics you would like discussed, please contact the CLEAR Project at: (641) 357-2532.

Corps of Engineers Unveils Ventura Marsh Restoration Plan

This month, the Corps of Engineers unveiled their restoration plans for Ventura Marsh. The plans were the result of a \$10,000 investigation completed in 2003. The Corps relied heavily on information from the ISU and IDNR Clear Lake Diagnostic and Feasibility Study

The highlights of the plan include constructing a fish barrier, installing a pump station, widening the road at the grade and constructing a dike to separate the marsh into two basins. Each of these proposals will be reviewed in the next (feasibility) phase of the project.

The fish barrier would prohibit movement of adult carp from the marsh into the lake. The barrier would replace an existing ineffective barrier that was installed in 1948. A pump station would be installed to control water levels within Ventura Marsh in order to dewater the marsh in the fall to enable a winter freeze and fish kill. The road berm would be widened to accommodate the pump station and fish barrier. A dike would be constructed to separate the marsh into an eastern unit and western unit. The eastern unit would be drawn down in the fall while the western unit would be maintained in a more stable hydrological condition.

The current schedule the Corps has proposed for the project is as follows. The fea-

sibility phase will begin in 2005 and last through 2006. Completion of plans and specifications for the project will occur in 2007, with construction starting and finishing in 2008. This time-frame is longer than expected, so all attempts will be made to speed up the project for an earlier completion date.

A \$50,000 allocation for the first year of engineering work was initiated by Congressman Latham in November, 2003. A \$100,000 grant from the EPA will also be utilized to help fund portions of the feasibility investigation.

Although all lake supporters would like to see the project accomplished sooner, there are currently few other options for completing the work due to the State's budget issues. The Corps of Engineers will pay for 65% of the restoration project and State and locals are responsible for the other 35%. A total project cost estimate has not yet been finalized by the Corps.



Aerial photo of Ventura Marsh and Clear Lake

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2004 Water Quality Iowa Legislative Issues

The 2004 Iowa legislative session began in January. This year, three main issues will be supported by the Iowa Lakes Association and the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake, and all three have implications for Clear Lake.

HF 405, SF 337 PHOSPHORUS FERTILIZER

Gives authority to local governments to regulate application, sale and distribution of fertilizers and soil conditioners in lake watersheds. This bill is very important to Clear Lake as it would allow the local governments to restrict the use of residential lawn fertilizers containing phosphorus. Agricultural lands and commercial applicators are exempt. This bill has not passed the last three years. We need strong support to push it through this year.

HF 618, AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES.



Eurasian water milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

Defines an "invasive species" as a species that is not native to an ecosystem and whose introduction causes or is likely to cause environmental harm. The bill requires a long-term management plan be prepared which addresses the detection and prevention of accidental introduc-

tions of invasive species, a public awareness campaign, the control and eradication of invasive species in public waters, and containment strategies. Requires rules that restrict the introduction and spread of invasive species, and identify bodies of water with infestations of invasive species. Requires bodies of water that are infested be posted. Provides that a person shall not transport an invasive species on a public road, place a trailer or launch a watercraft that contains an invasive species in public waters, or operate a watercraft in an area that is marked as an invasive species infestation area. HNR subcom-Frevert, Baudler, Freeman.

HF 2064, SF 2048 BOAT FEES

Increases boat registration fees for all size categories by between \$3 and \$15. Creates a new power and sailboat category for boats 26 feet or more but less than 40 feet for registration purposes. Imposes a registration fee of \$40 on 26 to 40 foot boats, \$75 for boats over 40 feet and \$25 on personal watercraft. Provides that fees shall be placed in the fish and game protection fund solely for the administration and enforcement of programs to control invasive aquatic species and for programs to improve the water quality of the State's natural lakes and inland waters. HNR subcom-Freeman, Bell, Rasmussen. SNR subcom-Johnson, Black, Kettering.

Iowa's Aquatic Invasive Species:

Eurasian Water Milfoil (above)
Zebra Mussels (near right)
Purple Loosestrife (far right)



Water Quality Funding Update

Governor Tom Vilsack has proposed revenues for water quality funding in fiscal year 2005. All of the proposals must be approved by both the House and the Senate. The primary source of funds for lake improvement projects is the Lake Restoration Fund. The Governor has proposed \$1 million for the fund, the same as in 2004. New funding for lake restoration efforts has also been proposed. Five million dollars would go towards research and monitoring of Iowa's impaired waters. This funding has little impact on im-

plementing restoration proposals for Clear Lake, but does indicate an effort is being made to improve Iowa's water quality. Of possible significant importance is the Governor's proposal to allow lake restoration projects to apply for \$150 million dollars in Vision Iowa funding. If this proposal is approved, it would provide a new potential source of funds for lake restoration efforts. Lake restoration projects have been very difficult to implement due to the high cost (often exceeding \$10 million) and lack of State funds.