



Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

SPRING 2006

FEATURE PROJECTS

CITY OF CLEAR LAKE RECEIVES NEW VACUUM SWEEPER

The City received its new Johnston Street Sweeper in October just in time for fall cleanup. This new sweeper, with its vacuum action, will help with the lake clean-up efforts by collecting fine dirt and silt which phosphorus attaches to and makes its way to the lake through the storm sewers.



NO FURTHER ZEBRA MUSSELS IDENTIFIED

Despite numerous mussel specimens brought to the DNR for identification, no further zebra mussels have been discovered at Clear Lake. This does not guarantee that no more exist in the lake, but would indicate population levels are currently quite low if existent.



State and Local Funds Sought for Dredging

A major effort is underway to secure funding for dredging the west end of Clear Lake, known as the "Little Lake" area, and your help is needed. Deepening this portion of the lake from its current depth of about 6 feet to its original depth of 28 feet was a major component of the lake restoration plan outlined by Iowa State University in 2001 to significantly improve the water quality of Clear Lake.

The dredging project took a major leap forward in November of 2005 when a meeting with IDNR Director Jeff Vonk, local legislators, and a small group of local leaders took place. Director Vonk endorsed a dredging plan that would call for the State to contribute \$9 million in funding, along with \$4 million in non-state matching funds for a total cost of \$13 million.

The area to be dredged is roughly 250 acres in size and would entail the removal of 2.3 million cubic yards of sediment. As a result of the dredging, ISU

estimated that 64% of the phosphorus entering the dredged portion of the lake would be removed, leading to significant water quality improvements.

Of the \$13 million dollar cost, over \$3 million in funding from local governments has been committed. This includes commitments by the City of Clear



www.friendsofclearlake.com

Lake of \$2 million, Cerro Gordo County of \$1 million, and the City of Ventura of \$200,000. The remaining funds, \$9 million, are being requested from the Iowa legislature this session.

Your help is needed in securing these funds. Now is the time to get involved and make sure this vital project for our community and the State of Iowa is funded.

You can become an active player in the lake restoration efforts by taking the actions listed below. We thank you for your support.

1. Sign up on the Friends of Clear Lake web site:

www.friendsofclearlake.com. Friends of Clear Lake members will be contacted when legislative visits are scheduled and when contacts with specific legislators need to be made.

2. Contact your legislators, especially if you have a home outside of Clear Lake.

The \$9 million lake restoration funding request will require support from legislators all across the State. You don't have to know all the details, just a simple email or phone call to voice your support of Clear Lake's \$9 million lake improvement request is all that is needed. You can find out who your legislator is by visiting this site: <http://www.legis.state.ia.us/FindLeg/>

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WIRB Grant Funding Received

The CLEAR Project received a \$225,000 Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) grant for storm water improvements at Clear Lake. The funds will be utilized to investigate ten new locations for installation of Best Management Practices (BMPs) at a minimum of 5 of the sites.

WIRB is a new program initiated in 2005 by the State legislature to

provide funding for implementing practices that will improve water quality in the State. A total of \$5 million dollars was available in this program. Forty-seven applications were made for the WIRB funds and only 17 projects were approved for funding.

The City of Clear Lake and Cerro Gordo County have committed to providing \$70,000 and \$50,000, respectively, in cost

share funding for these improvements. The 10 sites will be investigated this spring and summer to determine the most cost effective treatment method at each site. Installation of the BMP chosen will then take place in 2007.

With four more storm water improvement projects set to be installed this spring and summer,

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FEATURE PROJECTS

IDNR TO MOVE FORWARD WITH VENTURA GRADE PROJECT

- **Project scheduled for construction in spring '06.**
- **A shelter, new fishing dock, educational kiosk, restroom, and 16 space parking area will be constructed.**
- **Two storm water improvement projects will be installed as part of the project.**
- **Project will provide safe access to existing fishing jetty.**
- **The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation has assisted with funding of this project.**

L A K E

IDNR to Investigate Bacteria at Sate Park Beach

An investigation into high bacteria levels at Clear Lake State Park is set to begin this spring. Clear Lake State Park beach has had high readings of bacteria on several occasions during the summer months. Determining the source of the high bacteria levels has not been easy due to the vast array of potential sources in the area. Any warm-blooded organism can contribute to high bacteria levels. Because the beach's drainage area contains residential areas, agricultural areas, and park land, there are many potential contributors.

This spring will mark the first time the DNR has decided to perform a monitoring plan to help narrow down what the potential sources may be. This has been done on other beaches throughout the State with some success. The DNR will first be testing for primarily human contamination sources and then expand the investigation if needed.

Clear Lake is certainly not alone in its battle to maintain low bacteria levels to ensure safe recreation. Of the 37 beaches moni-

tored in 2005, 25 (68%) had a high reading on at least one occasion. However, beach bacteria levels fluctuated greatly during the year and overall, beaches had low levels 92% of the time state-



2005 Clear Lake 7th Grade class lakeshore clean-up project at State Park beach

Funds Sought For Dredging (cont. from page 1)

or by calling the Senate switch board at (515) 281-3371 or House switch board at (515) 281- 3221.

3. Donate to the \$1 million private fundraising campaign for dredging. Please send donations to the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake, PO Box 54, Clear Lake, IA 50428 (tax deductible contribution)

4. Donate to the Friends of Clear Lake to assist with lobbying costs. \$10,000 in funds need to be raised. Gifts can be sent to: Friends of Clear Lake, PO Box 221, Clear Lake, IA 50428 (NOT a tax deductible donation).

WIRB Grant (from page 1)

the total number of improvements installed will be 15. About \$1,000,000 in local and State funding has been invested in these projects. Significant donations by the Hanson Foundation and other grants have allowed 2/3 of the project expenses to be paid for outside of local government funds.