



Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

Winter 2016/2017

APCL Update - Deb Tesar

2016 was a big year for the APCL, as we and many other partners worked through changes in the CLEAR Project. We are grateful to the City of Clear Lake for stepping up to manage this position, and the important contributions of time and money from many other cooperating groups and individuals.

We were thrilled to begin working with Jim Sholly in April. Jim has brought loads of expertise, energy, and organization to the role of CLEAR Project Coordinator. He has shepherded several shoreline stabilization projects, as well as the exciting paving project at the Veterans Memorial Golf Course (see related article in this newsletter). In 2017, we in the APCL look forward to exploring additional ways we can partner with the CLEAR Project to help improve the lake and its watershed.

The APCL is committed to continuing its financial support of the Clear Project Coordinator position, so another focus for us in 2017 will be expanding our own membership. Because you already understand the importance of the APCL, we hope that as opportunities arise, you can help spread the word about this invaluable organization among your family, friends, and colleagues. As a reminder, the APCL is a 501(c)(3) organization; additional information can be found at www.clearproject.net/apcl.

We appreciate your support of the APCL!

Targeted Goat Grazing at McIntosh Woods State Park

Tammy Domonoske—Iowa DNR State Parks

First of all, I'd like to thank you for your support on this project without you this would not have happened.

48 Goats arrived Sept. 5 at 3pm in 85 degree weather with one thing on their mind; foraging on woody green vegetation throughout the park. They came hot, and hungry was an understatement! Within 48 hours the impact was already clearly evident with more sunlight penetrating onto the forest floor.

Over the course of the six week contract, they devoured 30 acres in 17 paddock rotations strategically laid out through the park's invasive vegetation. The original vision was to complete 7 paddock rotations with 10 acres grazed. In order to accomplish the technical side of this project, park staff as well as community volunteers assisted daily in goat herding.

From the moment the trailer door swung open the goats with KIDS were a BIG HIT!! There were traffic jam of cars along Lake Street to catch a glimpse of them, park visitation skyrocketed, the media could not get enough of the goats. Local newspapers, TV, multiple Farm Bureau Spokesman articles, Grinnell college newspaper, WHO, NPR & DNR website and Facebook page, Clear Lake Chamber Facebook page & local presentations all covered this event, a very newsworthy project. The on-site roving interpretation education increased dramatically, as park visitation more than tripled, everyone anxious to HEAR our STORY about the details of this project & these amazing vegetation eating machines! As state park manager & project coordinator, I witnessed 3-90 year olds, daycares, care centers, tour buses, campers, farmers, bikers, birders, businessman, locals & out of staters' all arriving just to view the goats in action. Not only did project succeed in its original intent the added tourism benefit was not projected.

The next step this year, which has already been initiated, mowing, cutting the taller out of goat reach invasive shrubs in priority oak savanna restoration areas along with prescribed fire.

Hazardous tree removal in campground area will continue. The next grazing season is also being planned with a look at a shorter and earlier term. Again, I want to thank you for your support in this year's grazing season. I look forward to working with you in early 2017, as I put together funding for the 2017 grazing season.



Paving for Water Quality By: Jim Sholly - CLEAR Project

The City of Clear Lake recently broke ground on a parking lot improvement for Veterans Memorial Golf Course along the north shore of Clear Lake. While the primary goal of this project is to provide better access, parking, and a new sidewalk around the club house, it also provided an opportunity to make a positive impact on water quality for our lake. Included in this project is a large area of PavDrain pervious pavers that will intercept and infiltrate stormwater coming from both the parking lot and club house buildings. These non-traditional pavers are significantly larger than any that have been used in Clear Lake in the past, and thus do not cause some of the issues seen in other areas. These pavers are designed to allow water to infiltrate while maintaining a very stable base and surface. The ¼ inch gap between each paver lets water flow down while the underlying construction and design is ADA approved and eliminates any weight limitation for traffic. This project site will be used as a demonstration site for innovative urban stormwater management for our community and everyone visiting north Iowa. The water quality benefits from projects like this will ensure Clear Lake remains a destination community and a safe place to play on the water for years to come. To find out more information about this project and ways you can help protect and enhance our lake, please visit www.clearproject.net.

Increased Vegetation with Better Water Quality

By: Brianna Sholly—Lime Creek Nature Center

It's not uncommon to hear complaints of too much vegetation or 'weeds' in the lake. Luckily for Clear Lake, those 'weeds' are almost all native. They are supposed to be here! In fact, if we didn't have the vegetation, we also wouldn't have many of the wildlife species we enjoy so much – bluegill, crappie, ducks, turtles, and many others. Not only does it provide a food source, it acts as habitat and cover from predators. Aquatic vegetation also provides water quality benefits and a healthy plant community will be able to better resist invasion from non-native noxious aquatic plants that cause major

problems, like Eurasian water milfoil! While it can be a bit of a bother to have plants close to shore, they help protect the shoreline from eroding, acting as both a wind break and silt fence in one.

As water quality in Clear Lake increases, the presence of plants will also increase. This is because the increased water clarity allows sunlight to reach deeper into the lake, germinating seeds that haven't seen sunlight in the previous years. More vegetation may even mean fewer algae, as the plants will absorb some of the nutrients coming into the lake. This helps to create a healthier habitat for fish and other organisms by increasing the amount of oxygen in

the water and providing more (and different!) habitat. Algae will still be present at times, however. Abundant nutrient loads coming into the lake from nearby streets, lawns, agricultural fields and other sources attribute to algae growth.

If plant growth around your dock or swim area does get too dense, you can manually remove it. Although a lot of people use rakes, the best way to remove it is by wading out and uprooting the plants. You will need to do this regularly though, as the seed bank will continually allow new growth to occur. It is illegal to use chemicals to control aquatic vegetation in public waters without a permit.

Clean—Drain—Dry

Make sure to know all the new invasive species laws in Iowa. Check to make sure your boat's drain plugs are



removed and all loose vegetation is cleaned from your trailer before leaving the boat ramp. The spread of invasive species hurts everyone and once they are established cannot be undone.



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