



Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

Winter 2017/2018

A History of Cooperation

Jim Sholly — CLEAR Project

One of the greatest strengths of any organization is its ability to leverage their resources to expand the efforts of others with a similar mission. It is the APCL's cooperation with its many partners that has led to such great strides in cleaning up Clear Lake, and in 2017 they partnered with four different groups working to protect Clear Lake.

- The lake association has always been a key partner to the CLEAR Project by assisting with the costs of having a project coordinator on staff to administer the many grants and clean water projects around the lake.
- With the help of a Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa grant, the association helped the City of Clear Lake to purchase a new piece of equipment necessary for cleaning and maintaining the permeable pavement areas in downtown and spread out around the lake.
- The APCL was again a sponsor that helped bring in Goats on the Go to assist with the habitat restoration project underway at McIntosh Woods State Park. A project that will improve the park and significantly reduce soil erosion headed to the lake.
- Finally, the APCL worked with DNR Lakes Restoration to fund water sampling costs for the bi-weekly sampling done April-September.

It is with your continued support that we can leverage our funds to expand on projects that our partners are heading up. We look forward to 2018 and how the APCL can be a leader in clean water by supporting the many efforts to protect and enhance Clear Lake.

Tips on Winter Salt and Water Quality: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency

Snow removal is not one-size-fits-all. You can do it better, cheaper and pollution-free. Do you shovel your own sidewalks or hire a snow removal service? Does your business shovel snow at the entrance? Do you provide snow removal services for hire? If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, keep reading and learn about ways to keep sidewalks, entryways, parking lots and driveways safe in winter while saving money and reducing water pollution.

Water pollution from salt (or chlorides) is widespread in the Midwest and the vast majority comes from de-icers used in winter maintenance. As little as a single teaspoon of salt pollutes five gallons of water, the equivalent of a 50-pound bag of salt polluting 10,000 gallons of water. Salt becomes invisible shortly after it is applied because it dissolves and becomes difficult and costly to remove. This is significant because prevention is the only feasible way to protect our clean water.

Whether you do it yourself or hire a snow removal service, pollution-free winter maintenance is a skill. And it doesn't take long to find out what you need to know.

- **Shovel.** The more snow and ice you remove manually, the less salt you will have to use and the more effective it can be. Whether you use a shovel, snow blower, snow plow, or ice scraper, get out there as early as you can and keep up with the storm. You may even decide that salt isn't needed.
- **15°F is too cold for salt.** Most salts stop working at this temperature. Use sand instead for traction, but remember that sand does not melt ice.
- **Slow down.** Drive for the conditions and make sure to give plow drivers plenty of space to do their work.
- **Be patient.** Just because you don't see salt on the road doesn't mean it hasn't been applied. These products take time to work.
- **More salt does not mean more melting.** Use less than 4 pounds of salt per 1,000 square feet (an average parking space is about 150 square feet). One pound of salt is approximately a heaping 12-ounce coffee mug. Consider purchasing a hand-held spreader to help you apply a consistent amount.
- **Sweep up extra.** If salt or sand is visible on dry pavement it is no longer doing any work and will be washed away. Use this salt or sand somewhere else or throw it away.



Upcoming Events

March 13 — APCL Executive Board Meeting — Margo Underwood (mlunderwood@cltel.net)

April 19 — Green Expo @ The Surf — Find out what you can do to make your home and life more sustainable

April 21 — Earth Day Outdoorfest — "It's in Our Backyard" — visit earthdayclearlake.org

For over 70 years, the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake has been dedicated solely to the protection and enhancement of Clear Lake.

Hard Water Season: Winter Lake Safety Jim Sholly — CLEAR Project

The CLEAR Project would like to remind everyone venturing out onto the ice this winter to always remember SAFETY FIRST. The general rule of thumb is to stay off the

lake until there is at least 4" of ice, at that point is reasonably safe for foot travel. It will take at least 8" before ATV's and snow machines should start venturing out and greater than 12" before light vehicles should attempt to travel on the lake. Remember that ice is weakest near rocky points and around the bull rush beds near shore. For Clear Lake, it is never advisable to travel by ice between the main lake and the little lake as the ice in that zone is constantly changing and often much weaker than any of the surrounding area.

The best ice forms when temperatures stay below 20 degrees with little to no snow on the ice. Once the first big snow storm of the year hits, ice conditions are often not visible and the lake will build ice at a much slower rate. One of the best safety tips to keep in mind is to always travel in pairs, the buddy system could allow for a rescue or to alert trained professionals of an emergency situation. The CLEAR Project wants everyone to be safe when venturing out onto the lake this season. To find out more tips for winter ice safety and what you can do to improve our lake, visit www.clearproject.net.



Clear Lake Outlet Repaired Scott Grummer — Iowa DNR Fisheries Biologist

In October the Iowa DNR repaired a broken concrete area on the lake's outlet. Over the last few years, the concrete had deteriorated to a point where several large sections had broken away. The timing of repair needed to wait for lake levels to go to allow patching to take place, thankfully the lake level was down nearly 6 inches this fall, allowing for the necessary repairs. Maintaining the lake at its proper elevation is critical for lake and shoreline health. Too high of water levels and significant erosion takes place, too low and many shoreline property owners have difficulty reaching water deep enough to launch watercrafts. Having a stable outlet again will help protect our lake and its recreational values.



Before



After

Draining the Marsh for Clean Water Jim Sholly — CLEAR Project

During the first week of December, Iowa DNR started up the pumps near the outlet of Ventura Marsh. The goal was to lower the water level in the marsh to the point where it will freeze solid to the ground this winter. This follows a management plan of removing unwanted fish from the marsh that are negatively impacting the vegetation and subsequent water quality. A renovation like this has not happened since the final fish barrier upgrades were made to the outlet structure several years ago. In the deepest portion of the marsh near the

pump, a fish toxicant will be pumped in under the ice. This will ensure a complete and controlled fish kill this winter. The advantage of managing the fish this time of year is that most of the dead fish will be gone before the ice goes out in the spring. This will limit the smell and cleanup efforts needed after ice out. As water levels return in the spring, so to will a greater diversity of vegetation. This rejuvenation of the marsh will help it to serve its function of removing pollution headed towards Clear Lake and ensuring it will continue to protect the lake.

