



Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

Spring 2022

APCL Update

I'd like to invite our APCL members and partners to participate in Clear Lake's Earth Week's activities scheduled during April and highlighted in our newsletter calendar. Two activities that I'd like to highlight that APCL is participating in are the Green Expo and Trash Bash Community Clean-up. Please join us for these events.

April 21, APCL will have an informational exhibit at the Green Expo, 4-7 pm at the Surf Ballroom. Stop by our booth and learn more about the projects APCL has completed and the new projects planned for this year.

Earth Day, April 22, APCL members and friends are invited to help pick-up trash along the shoreline, starting at 4 pm. Meet at Farmer's Beach/Clausen's Cove, 14998 Cedar Ave., Ventura. Trash bags will be provided.

This year the Clear Lake Earth Day Committee is celebrating 25 years of Earth Day activities in Clear Lake and we congratulate them for all the past community educational programs and clean-up events that have made a difference in our community! Working together, let's continue to make a difference every day for the next 25 years. Imagine what we can accomplish!

Happy Earth Month!
Margo Underwood, President

Lawn Care Considerations — Tips from Minnesota DNR

Phosphorus is one of the most troublesome pollutants in storm water runoff. Phosphorus comes from many sources, and it is the primary cause of water quality problems in our lakes and streams. Everything that is or was living contains phosphorus. It is in leaves. It is in lawn clippings. It is in animal wastes. It is an ingredient in most lawn fertilizers. It is even attached to soil. When leaves, lawn clippings, animal wastes, fertilizers, and soil are picked up by storm water runoff and are carried directly to our local lakes and streams, they provide the lakes with excess phosphorus. This excess phosphorus causes increased algae growth.

Algae are small green plants that live in lakes and streams. Increased algae growth is observed as green algae blooms or "scums" on lakes. Too much algae is harmful to a lake system. It blocks sunlight and prevents other plants from growing. When it dies and decays, it also takes much needed oxygen away from fish. Limiting phosphorus reduces algae blooms.

You can reduce the amount of phosphorus entering a lake or stream by:

1. Keeping your leaves and lawn clippings out of the streets and gutters. Leaves and lawn clippings are a major source of phosphorus. When they are swept or washed into the nearest street or storm sewer, they end up in your local lake or stream.
2. Applying only the amount of fertilizer your lawn needs. A soil test will tell you how much-if any-fertilizer your lawn needs. Excess fertilizer may harm your lawn or pollute our lake.
3. Fertilizers containing phosphorus may be used on lawns if a soil test indicates that it is needed or if you are establishing a new lawn. A soil test will inform you of the amount of phosphorus in your soil and the appropriate application rate.

Project Spotlight — Jim Sholly: CLEAR Project

In the fall of 2021, work finally began along the shoreline of the Outing Club. This nearly 200 feet of shoreline was shedding almost 55 tons of sediment into Clear Lake every year. Thanks to a federal grant through the EPA Section 319 program administered by the CLEAR Project, that area is now protected into perpetuity and no longer a source of harmful sediment and phosphorous to the lake. This project was 5 years in the making and only the start for homeowners there who want the next 400 feet protected as well.



Earth Week Events — For more information visit earthdayclearlake.org

April 18-23 — TrashBash Community Cleanup

April/May — Community Seed Library at Clear Lake Public Library

April 19 — House Plant Cutting/Swap Program at Clear Lake Public Library (6:30 pm)

April 21 — Green Expo at the Surf — Be sure to check out the CLEAR Project and APCL booth!

April 23 — Outdoorfest: 5K/10K, Family Fun Activities, Special Program on Iowa's Turtles @ 11 am in City Park

May 5 — APCL Executive Board Meeting — 5 pm @ Clear Lake City Hall

June 2 — APCL Executive Board Meeting— 5 pm @ Clear Lake City Hall

June 7 — Chamber Business After Hours Hosted by APCL, Clear Lake Yacht Club and Sailing School - 4:30-6 pm @ Yacht Club

August 14 — APCL Annual Picnic — 5 pm @ PM Park

For over 80 years, the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake has been dedicated solely to the protection and enhancement of Clear Lake.

CLEAR Project Recap: Deb Tesar — APCL

Our CLEAR Project Coordinator for the last six years, Jim Sholly, will be leaving his position toward the end of May this year, for a position as the GIS Coordinator for Cerro Gordo County. Although we on the APCL board will miss working with Jim, we are pleased for the career growth opportunity afforded to him in his new role, *and* that he and his family will remain in the area. We are also especially pleased that the City of Clear Lake is moving forward with filling the vacant position, and plan to continue supporting the CLEAR Project along with the other partners.

APCL very much appreciates the tremendous amount of work Jim has done over the last six years for the benefit of Clear Lake and its watershed. Some highlights of Jim's vast and varied work have included:

Shoreline stabilization projects across private and public landscapes that have protected more than 1500 feet of shoreline.

Several permeable paver projects on private and public lands, notably the parking lots at Clear Lake City Hall, Veterans Memorial Golf Club, and the former Clear Lake Senior Center, among others.

Rain gardens and/or bio-retention cells on private and public land, including one adjacent to the Ventura Fire Department, the Clear Lake Yacht Club, and several near downtown Clear Lake as well as several other sites.

Over 100 acres of wetland/prairie restoration and habitat improvements, including assisting with the acquisition of a key piece of property to expand the protections around Ventura Marsh. Also instrumental in the addition of the fish barrier at Lekwa Marsh.

Active participation with the Iowa DNR on bi-weekly water quality monitoring work (in-season) and annual commercial fish harvest activities, assistance with acquisition of 3 boat cleaning stations placed around the lake, and efforts to acquire equipment used in water quality testing or in maintaining permeable pavers for maximum effectiveness.

Oodles of public education every year, including newsletters, displays and/or talks with visitors at expos and events or with civic groups, field days and work days with students, farmers and many others.

And of course, the not-so fun but necessary task of writing for grants to help support all this work, and providing proper documentation at the completion of each project.



All of this work has helped improve water quality in Clear Lake through the reduction of nutrient runoff into the lake. Key measures for a healthy lake such as total Phosphorus, Nitrogen, and total suspended solids have continued their generally positive trend over the last 20-some years. The result is the return of desirable aquatic vegetation, greater diversity of native plants & animals, reduction of rough fish population and an increase in diversity and population of desirable or game fish.

Jim is working to expedite the completion of several projects currently under way before his departure. In the future, APCL and Jim's successor may be able to work with Jim in his new role to obtain GIS data to help with project planning and prioritization.

We thank Jim for his great work toward improved water quality in Clear Lake, and wish him the best in his future role!

Is a Rain Garden Right for You? Jim Sholly — CLEAR Project

Most people living in a residential area assume that the vast majority of rainwater that lands on their lots soaks into the ground. Unfortunately, in many cases, this is not true. Urban lots contain many impervious areas such as roofs, driveways, and sidewalks. Even lawns are often compacted, which severely limits their ability to infiltrate rainwater. The result is rainwater runs off the lot and enters the nearest storm drain leading to a river or lake. This runoff contains contaminants that degrades water quality. One solution to this problem is to install a rain garden. A rain garden is a planted depression that allows runoff from impervious areas to be absorbed. Rain gardens also add beauty and wildlife habitat to your landscape while helping manage storm water more sustainably. The popularity of rain gardens is growing rapidly as over 700 have been installed in Iowa over the past couple years. Native plants are recommended for rain gardens because they don't require fertilizer and are more tolerant to Iowa's climate. Homeowners can install a rain garden themselves, or many landscaping companies also have experience installing them. The Iowa Rain Garden Manual provides detailed information on how to install a rain garden and it can be downloaded from the CLEAR Project web site: www.clearproject.net

