



Lake Association News

Newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

LATE SUMMER 2013

ENJOY THE OUTDOORS

With the passing of the 4th of July holiday, people start thinking that summer is nearing an end. This is far from being true. The North Iowa area has so much to offer and it seems like Clear Lake has something going on everyday. The campgrounds are in fantastic shape as well as the beaches and parks. A must see this summer is Clausen's Cove. The trail thru the area uncovers some unseen gems in the way of wildflowers. If you sit quietly and gaze out over the land and lake you will hear the sounds of nature. Nowhere else around the lake can you feel so connected with our natural resources. Continuing the on the trail along the lakeshore, you will find yourself nearing a point that was home to one of the most iconic landmarks around Clear Lake-Lone Tree. Even though the tree no longer stands at the point, it is an area that few have really taken the time to explore. The marsh area behind the point leading into the small lake, is home to many birds and mammals as well as other critters. There is no actual cost to appreciating these beautiful areas, but please keep them clean and respect the land while remembering that generous families allowed the public to explore this land. It is a natural beauty of the area. Enjoy it but respect it.

Don't Miss Out on a Great Opportunity to Stay Informed!

Come out to Clear Lake State Park Lodge on Friday August 9, 2013 at 6pm for our annual membership picnic and program. We will have great food and speakers featuring Mike McGhee from the Iowa DNR Lakes and others. Clear Lake is continuing to make a great comeback but only with your help and support. See the enclosed flyer for tickets and information.

NEW BEACH CLEANER AT MCINTOSH WOODS STATE PARK



On Thursday June 6, 2013 the new Barber Beach Cleaner arrived for a demonstration and stayed. The ability for this machine to run on wet sand makes a big difference in removing reeds and garbage.



Aquatic Plants ID: **CATTAILS**

Aquatic vegetation is considered to be one of the most important natural habitats for fish with the amount of plants, as well as species diversity, influencing fish populations. Negative perceptions of aquatic vegetation are even more prevalent in Iowa due to its highly altered landscape, rural and urban, that contributes excess nutrients that often results in increased plant growth. In contrast, the importance of aquatic vegetation to the health of lakes and ponds has been documented by numerous studies; complete eradication of aquatic plants can lead to decreased fish production. The pumping of some of the water from Ventura Marsh allows for the aquatic plants to root. This is a good thing for water quality and habitat. Cattails are the one plant that everyone associates with a marsh. They provide many benefits such as filter runoff as the water flows into the lake. This helps reduce nutrients as well as mud which enters the lake from surrounding land. They also help prevent shoreline erosion from waves created by wind and boats. A healthy plant community along the shoreline can work wonders in keeping lakefront property intact. In addition, cattails provide important habitat for many species of wildlife and birds. Redwing blackbirds and many ducks and geese nest in them, and some animals such as muskrats, eat them. Even upland songbirds will use fluff from the flowers to line their nests.



It's that time of year and with the excitement of summer and spending time on our beautiful CLEAR LAKE, we need to make a reminder to ourselves that when we are done enjoying the water that we remember to clean our boats and motors. The invasive plants may look cool to some but they pose a threat to our lake and the species of fish and plants in it. Please, if you are coming from a different body of water, clean your boat before you launch it into Clear Lake and always rinse your boat off after you are done for the day on the lake. We can stop the transfer of invasive plants but only with everyone's help.

CLEAR LAKE ENHANCEMENT AND RESTORATION PROJECT(CLEAR)

BMP FOCUS: RAIN GARDENS

Homeowners would be surprised to learn that hundreds of thousands of gallons of rain falls on an urban lot in a year. In Iowa, rainfall averages anywhere from 28-36 inches per year. That means an acre of land in Iowa will receive anywhere from 760,000 to 977,500 gallons of rain in a typical year. The owner of a half acre urban lot in central Iowa would receive approximately 434,500 gallons of rain each year (a little less in western Iowa; a little more in eastern Iowa). It is hard to visualize how much water 434,500 gallons actually is. Imagine capturing all that rainfall in 50 gallon barrels. You'd need a row of barrels more than 4 miles long to hold all the rain a typical lot receives. With cost share money available at a 75%/25% match, it is the perfect time to look at making your landscape beautiful and functional.

RAIN GARDENS ARE FUNCTIONAL AND BEAUTIFUL

A rain garden is a shallow, constructed depression that is planted with deep-rooted native plants & grasses. It is located in your landscape to receive runoff from hard surfaces such as a roof, a sidewalk and a driveway. Rain gardens slow down the rush of water from these hard surfaces, holds the water for a short period of time and allows it to naturally infiltrate into the ground. A rain garden can be thought of as a personal water quality system because it filters the runoff from your roof and lawn and recharges the groundwater. A rain garden also conserves municipal water resources by reducing the need for irrigation. Rain gardens are a beautiful and colorful way for homeowners, businesses and municipalities to help ease stormwater problems. There is a growing trend by municipalities and homeowners to incorporate natural processes to help relieve flooding and pollution.

A rain garden can mimic the natural absorption and pollutant removal activities of a forest, or a meadow or a prairie and can absorb runoff more efficiently, sometimes as much as 30% - 40% more than a standard lawn. Capturing rainwater in a rain garden, holding the water for a short time and then slowly releasing it into the soil can reduce the rush of a large storm – quickly, neatly and naturally. Because rain gardens are dug 4" to 8" deep, and in some cases 1' - 2' deep, they hold larger quantities of rainwater making their overall construction more cost efficient than other green alternatives. Rain

gardens also need less technical experience to install and can be installed without permits or heavy equipment. Rain gardens are one very good option that helps to lower the impact of impervious surfaces and polluted runoff because they are low-tech, inexpensive, sustainable and esthetically beautiful.



Don't forget— if you are looking for a program for your organization or group, please consider the CLEAR Project for a presentation. There is so much information to keep current on and different cost share monies to help with specific projects around the lake as well as for properties and land in the Clear Lake Watershed. If you are interested in joining The Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake or for comments, questions and information please call or email MaryJo at 641-832-7246 or maryjo@osage.net

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