



# Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

Fall/Winter 2019

## APCL Update

The APCL has been moonlighting as a Butterball Turkey Hotline representative for nearly 80 years. “What a bunch of turkeys” says organizer Tom McGobbles.

## Schooling Fish: Scott Grummer—Iowa DNR Fisheries Biologist

Each late summer thru fall the Iowa DNR conducts fishery surveys on Clear Lake to evaluate the success of spring walleye stockings. Surveys also look at natural reproduction of panfish and forage fish populations.

The first survey starts in August using a 50 foot bag seine on 7 sandy beach areas at night. This survey is repeated at the same sample sites in September. This seining survey has been conducted each season since 1972. This survey work provides a large data set to make comparisons year to year and allows for calculated averages over the survey history.

The 2019 results are promising, if you are an angler. Walleye were above long term averages and the individual fish size was excellent (over 7 inch average for fish stocked in early May). Most of the other lake species also did well. Crappie, Bluegill, Yellow Bass, Largemouth Bass, and Spottail Shiners exhibited excellent spawns this season. Yellow Perch was another species with above average numbers for this survey. These young fish are the future fishery and the current forage base for the larger predator fish in the lake.

The August and September seining is followed by a nighttime electrofishing survey the first week of October, primarily looking at Clear Lake’s walleye population. Residents along Clear Lake’s south and east shores likely have seen or heard the survey boat pass by. The power for electrofishing is supplied by a generator mounted in the boat. The boat is well lit up in front to allow workers with dip nets to collect the fish. Fish are only temporarily immobilized, netted, and then placed into a holding tank for data collection.

The 2019 electrofishing survey confirmed excellent survival of the 2019 spring walleye stocking. Walleye from older age groups were sampled in good to excellent numbers as well. The current and future walleye fishery looks as good as it ever has on Clear Lake.

Clear Lake receives stockings of Walleye (fry and fingerlings) and Northern Pike on an annual basis. Channel Catfish are stocked on even numbered years and Muskellunge odd numbered years. This along with the natural reproduction observed for panfish populations, the angling opportunities have a bright future on Clear Lake.



## APCL Supports Timber Stand Improvement Project Along Shoreline



Conservation can take on many different forms. For some it is planting native prairie, others it is stopping an eroding shoreline, and in some cases it is setting a team of workers loose with chainsaws and herbicide to cut, kill, and remove anything that stands in their way. During the fall of 2019, five Iowa Conservation Corps members completed timber stand improvement work along steep lakeshore terrain in McIntosh Woods State Park. The ICC crew removed overgrowth and invasive species by manually cutting standing trees with shallow chainsaw cuts in a circle around the trunk, a common practice referred to as girdling. During their time along Clear Lake's shores, they were able to clear away 1 ½ miles of shoreline plus an additional three acres. "I would like to express my gratitude to the APCL for their continued financial support of this project. Without APCL's support for this work, my resource management efforts would be very difficult to accomplish," stated Tammy Domonoske, McIntosh Woods State Park Manager. This work is the next step in a management plan that began with goat grazing and will result in a healthier forest, and more stable shoreline to Clear Lake.

## Project spotlight: Jim Sholly — CLEAR Project

The City of Clear Lake recently completed a parking lot improvement project for four parking lots in the downtown area. Two of those lots included something special, permeable pavers to keep pollution from reaching our lake. A series of grants through the CLEAR Project allowed the City to offset the cost of this project significantly. Nearly \$120,000 was awarded through a Water Quality Initiative grant by the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, an EPA Section 319 grant, and support from the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake. These two parking lots working together will capture over 500,000 gallons of storm water every year. The pollution that water carries would be enough to create over 1000 pounds of algae in Clear Lake. Projects like this helps to protect our lake against harmful algae blooms and ensure it remains a premier destination for residents and visitors alike. To find out what you can do to help protect our lake, please visit [www.clearproject.net](http://www.clearproject.net) and learn what might work for your home or business.



## APCL Awarded Community Foundation Grant to Support High School FFA Program



Outreach and education are fundamental goals of both the APCL and the CLEAR Project. So when an opportunity to work together to support the new Ag/FFA program in Clear Lake presented itself, we jumped at the opportunity. This year the APCL was awarded \$7,200 from the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa to assist with the purchase of six LabQuest sampling units and attachments for the new Ag Education Department of Clear Lake High School. These tools will be used to teach students important lessons about agriculture, conservation, and water quality. "It has been fantastic, the level of community support for a new program and teacher has made such a difference as we work to build this new program" says Elisa Russ, the new Ag/FFA teacher for Clear Lake High School.

## Paddlefest Donation Presented to APCL

Jake Kopriva, Director of Paddlefest, presented a check for \$250 to the APCL Board of Directors to recognize and thank the Association for their continued efforts to restore and enhance the water quality in Clear Lake for all to enjoy. This year Paddlefest had 50 participants come out and enjoy the 3 mile or 5 mile course. There were people of all ages using kayaks, paddleboards and canoes and the weather was perfect.

