



Lake Association News

A newsletter for the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake

Fall 2020

APCL Update

Although 2020 is the Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake's 80 Anniversary, the COVID – 19 pandemic impacted most of our planned activities this year. We hope to host many of these events in 2021 and celebrate this special anniversary with you all!

This newsletter spotlights two major projects that were completed with financial support from APCL. Permeable Pavers were installed in two city parking lots this summer to keep pollutants from reaching the lake. Six LabQuest water sampling units were purchased and are now being used by students in Clear Lake High School's FFA Program.

Included with this newsletter is a 2021 membership renewal letter and form. Many members renew their memberships at the Annual Picnic, but since we were not able to host the picnic this year, we've included the form with this mailing. If you've already renewed your membership for 2021, thank you. If you have not renewed, we invite you to complete the form and return it to APCL. You may also purchase an APCL flag on the membership form.

The Aquatic Plants enclosure is an educational brief about the importance of aquatic plants in keeping our lake's water clean and clear and it will also help you identify some of the plants you are seeing under the water. We plan to distribute this information to a larger audience next spring.

We're looking forward to 2021 and the important work planned with our members and partners for a clean, clear and healthy Clear Lake for all to enjoy!

Margo Underwood, APCL President

Ventura Marsh Update Scott Grummer — Iowa DNR Fisheries

Ventura Marsh, a 400 acre wetland, intercepts runoff from the Clear Lake watershed before entering Clear Lake. In a degraded state, the marsh has been shown to export more phosphorus than it receives from the watershed. To correct this nutrient export issue, a drawdown is needed to increase vegetation and remove Common Carp in the marsh.

In 2011, the Iowa DNR and the Army Corps of Engineers started the Section 206 Ventura Marsh Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration project. The main feature of this project was the installation of a 40,000 gallon per minute pump station in the northeastern corner of Ventura Marsh.

During 2012 and 2013, the marsh was drawn down for vegetation establishment and fish removal. Vegetation thrived and fish numbers were reduced. Over the following five seasons the marsh was in a healthier state, but it slowly started to open up and carp were again present.

During 2018 and 2019 attempts were made to restore the marsh, but these years were very wet from a precipitation standpoint. The attempts did not result in the success seen in 2013. The marsh continued to open up in the east basin and Common Carp numbers continued to rise.

2020 has been a drier season, so plans are in place to initiate the restoration process following the fall waterfowl seasons. In December the pumps will be turned on to start the needed restoration of Ventura Marsh. If conditions allow, the water level of the marsh will be kept low for a good portion of 2021.

The main goal is to maximize the years Ventura Marsh is a healthy functioning ecosystem and minimize the seasons it is not. The marsh should be an asset to Clear Lake filtering watershed inputs, providing quality wildlife habitat, and providing diverse recreational opportunities.



CLEAR Project Partners with DNR for a 3rd Boat Cleaning Station



Boaters heading to Clear Lake during the 2021 season will see a new addition to another major boat ramp to the lake. Thanks to a grant written in cooperation with the CLEAR Project, McIntosh Woods State Park will see several projects happening in the next couple years. First of those will be another boat cleaning station similar to those that were constructed this year at Tourist Park in Clear Lake and Lynn Lorenzen Park in Ventura. This additional station will be another line of defense against moving aquatic invasive species into our out of Clear Lake. After some engineering and archeological investigation, nearly 400 feet of shoreline along the Park's western shore will also be stabilized and restored to a more native oak savannah setting. Both of these projects will be made possible thanks to the support of the community and an EPA Section 319 water quality grant.

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 financial 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 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. 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. In the 2020/2021 school year, the program has grown to over 75 students from the high school.



APCL Boat Parade Picture and Story

Despite the difficulties forced upon us all by the corona virus, Clear Lake played host to a boat parade on July 4th. The Association for the Preservation of Clear Lake participated with a celebratory "float" highlighting our 80 years of activism protecting the Lake. A special large vinyl banner in the form of the APCL flag was created and mounted on a boat for the parade and was easily visible from the shoreline.

A special thank you to Dennis and Cerise Sissel for the use of their pontoon boat and assistance in securing the banner to the vessel. Also a on board to help hold the sign and represent the Association were Beth Benesh and Kirk Kraft. The parade and banner were a success and hopefully we can participate again in the future.

The banner is available for APCL use at events in and around Clear Lake.

