



OUTDOOR CONNECTION

STORIES, ADVICE, AND INFORMATION FOR OUTDOOR LOVERS

NOVEMBER 2022
ESTHERVILLE NEWS

SPIRIT LAKE NORTH PROJECT TO BECOME REALITY



After a relatively dry spring, this flooding is the result of a three-inch rainfall in July of 2022.

Photo submitted

Conservation and clean water groups worked diligently to securing this land

By STEVE WEISMAN
OUTDOOR EDITOR

For many years, as I have traveled east of the Mini-Wakan State Park entrance (north side of Big Spirit Lake) on the Grade road or Stateline road, I've noticed on the north side of the road (Minnesota side) a parcel of cropland that during wet weather turns into a huge temporary wetland. Unless it is dry weather, it seems to always flood. If it is around long enough, lots of shore birds and waterfowl take up residence. Perhaps you have observed this, too, in your travels. My concern has always been that this temporary nutrient

rich water drained across the road into McClelland Slough and then into Big Spirit Lake. However, since it has always been private land, not much could be done. For several years, several conservation and clean water groups worked to secure this 195.5-acre parcel of land. It was especially important for clean water groups and lake home owners in the Iowa Great Lakes Watershed. The owners of the farmland were willing to sell, but there are always a lot of hoops to go through when working with non-profit conservation groups.

Pheasants Forever Minnesota purchases land

Finally, in May of 2022, Pheasants Forever Minnesota worked out an agreement with the owners to purchase this 195.5 acres of farmland using their internal land loan fund and additional partner funding. Eran Sandquist, Minnesota state coordinator for Pheasants Forever, is excited that the property has been secured. "Although Pheasants Forever purchased the property, there are so many other groups that have come together with this project. Even though the land is in Minnesota, it is in the

Iowa Great Lakes Watershed and directly affects Big Spirit Lake and all of the lakes in the Okoboji chain. We have partners in both Minnesota and Iowa that have worked to make this happen. It truly is an example of conservation without borders."

John Smeltzer, Vice President of the Spirit Lake Protective Association (SLPA), shares the excitement that the SLPA has for this project. Since a major mission of the SLPA is working towards clean water, Smeltzer notes the purchase of this farmland is crucial in continuing to improve water quality of not only Big Spirit Lake

but the entire Iowa Great Lakes Watershed.

With this purchase, the project itself will now be called the Spirit Lake North Project. According to Sandquist, "This will become a multi-year project. It is common for a project like this to take 3-5 years to complete." Upon completion, this land will become a Waterfowl Production Area owned and managed by the USFWS and open to public recreation. An estimated 90-100 acres will become a restored wetland with the rest becoming a mix of tall grass prairie and forbes.

SLPA board member Joe

Ulman says, "The Spirit Lake North Project will provide an estimated 85 percent reduction in phosphorus and nitrogen annually from entering Big Spirit Lake. Plus, there will be a reduction of 30 tons of sediment per two-inch rainfall to Big Spirit Lake."

All I can say is...Wow! That's incredible! This effort also shows that individuals and groups can work together across state lines and without political boundaries. Certainly, I'd like to see this all happen with a snap of the fingers, but it takes time to get the land ready for the change from cropland

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This photo shows flooding occurring on the current cropland of the Spirit Lake North project. Part of the plan is to turn this often flooded parcel of land into a restored wetland.

Photo submitted

EMMET COUNTY DUCKS UNLIMITED BANQUET SET FOR NOV. 5

By STEVE WEISMAN
OUTDOOR EDITOR

We are right in the middle of the waterfowl season, and what better way to support our waterfowl than to participate in a local fundraiser! The local Emmet County Ducks Unlimited chapter will be holding its annual Ducks Unlimited banquet on Saturday, November 5 at the VFW in Estherville. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. with supper at 6 p.m., followed by the auction.

Ticket options include a single adult ticket for \$50; a couple's ticket for \$65; youth ticket for \$20. Tickets can be purchased at the door.

Those who attend can expect a great supper, followed by a fun night including raffles and auctions, all going to support waterfowl.

Here's a little background

about the Ducks Unlimited national organization. Since 1937, Ducks Unlimited has conserved almost 15,000,000 acres of waterfowl habitat across north America. Ducks Unlimited works in all 50 states and focuses its efforts and resources on the habitat most beneficial to waterfowl.

According to the Ducks Unlimited website, the Prairie Pothole Region of which northern Iowa is a part of, is the core of what was once the largest expanse of grassland in the world, the great plains of North America. Millions of ducks and geese pass through the Prairie Pothole Region each spring and fall.

In Iowa, Ducks Unlimited works through the Living Lakes initiative to restore shallow water lakes and its habitat, one lake at a time.

IGLFC DNR Night set for Nov. 10

By STEVE WEISMAN
OUTDOOR EDITOR

The Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club (IGLFC) will be hosting its annual fall DNR night at Oak Hill Outdoor located at the north edge of Milford (across the road to the north of Perkins) on Thursday, November 10. Doors open at 5:30 p.m., with pizza at 6 p.m., followed by the DNR presentations at 7 p.m.

According to IGLFC president Terry Thomsen, "This is always a great event with excellent information provided by our DNR personnel. The evening, including the food and beverage, is free for club members. Cost will be \$10 for non-members to cover the cost of the pizza."

A variety of prizes will be awarded in an end of the evening raffle. In addition to the normal raffle items, a special raffle will honor our veterans (Veteran's Day is the next

day-November 11) with each veteran getting a free raffle ticket for the Veteran's-only raffle and raffle items.

The evening will also include an opportunity to renew memberships and for non-members to become members. Cost of membership is \$25, which covers the cost of an entire family. "Our memberships help the IGLFC achieve its mission and vision statements: to recruit youth to the sport, encouraging connection to the outdoors and fishing as a lifelong passion; to contribute to the environment and our communities by improving the quality of local fisheries and promoting involvement through educational and recreational activities."

With the number of memberships continuing to increase, the IGLFC board hopes to continue expanding fishing opportunities for more individuals in all area communities.

Pre-ice fishing shows set for November

By STEVE WEISMAN
OUTDOOR EDITOR

How can an outdoor person get bored here in northwest Iowa? I mean right now we have hunting seasons going like crazy; the fall fishing is only getting better as the lake water temperatures fall! Oh, but that's not all. Nope! Because the "pre-ice fishing craze" is just around the corner.

It always comes in November and into December across the Midwest...ice fishing shows such as the Dakota Angler Ice Institute in Sioux Falls (Nov. 11-13) and the St. Paul Ice Show (Dec. 2-4). They are always fun to attend.

However, right here in north-

west Iowa, we have three outstanding ice fishing open houses coming up: Saturday, November 5th at Stan's Bait and Tackle; Saturday, November 12th at Kabele's; Saturday, November 26 at Oak Hill Outdoors.

First up, Stan's Bait and Tackle. Before we get into Stan's Ice Kickoff, I'd like to offer a big welcome to Mason Wharton, the new owner of Stan's! Wharton took over the business on July 15.

Wharton notes, "It was a busy summer, and I am really looking forward to the ice fishing season." It's a perfect fit, because as Wharton says, "I've

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always loved to fish. I've been fishing since I was old enough to hold a fishing pole."

Those who frequent Stan's know that although it is a small-town bait shop, it has a big store selection with basically everything you need for panfish, walleye and bass fishing, along with catfish and musky tackle.



If you're looking for electronics for the upcoming fishing season, Stan's Bait and Tackle has a wide range of options. See them all at the Ice Kickoff on Saturday, November 5. Don't forget the IGLFC fishy fry!

Stan's Ice Kickoff

Now, back to ice fishing...Wharton is excited that Stan's can kick off the ice fishing season in the Iowa Great Lakes with its sixth annual Ice Kickoff and Fish Fry that will run from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. "We are just putting on the finishing touches for this year's event. Our goal is to offer ice fishermen with the equipment they need, from those just getting started to the veteran fisherman. So, we will have product for the entry level fisherman and the fisherman that wants to most high end equipment."

For the Ice Kickoff, Wharton plans to have extensive products from a wide range of manufacturers. "We do plan on having several pro staffers here to give fishermen information about the product lines they represent, including Clam pro staffers, a representative from P3 Plastics, Vexilar and a rod maker out of Spencer."

Several specials will be offered: buy a Clam ice house and get a free hooded sweatshirt; buy an Ice Armor suit and get a free Kanga Cooler; Buy \$50 of Clam product and get a free bucket.

One final special includes purchasing a 4-quart minnow bucket and getting 10 percent off anything that fits in the bucket with the lid closed.

A highly anticipated event at Stan's Ice Kickoff is the annual fish fry hosted by the Iowa Great Lakes Fishing Club (IGLFC). Wharton says, "The IGLFC always puts on a great fish fry. The plan is for the fish fry to start about 11 a.m., and it will last until the fish is gone!"

So, if you need something to do on a Saturday in early November, check out the Stan's Ice Kickoff and Fish Fry. Whether you are a regular or a newcomer, Wharton invites you to stop in on Saturday, November 5.

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Lots of fishing and hunting equipment and special deals at Kabele's Shop With the Pros on Saturday, November 12. Don't forget the \$1,000 Kabele's Shopping Spree!

Kabele's - Shop With the Pros

Next on the list is Shop With the Pros. For the past 10 years, Kabele's Trading Post, which is located on the north end of Hill Avenue in Spirit Lake, has hosted its annual "Shop With the Pros" on the second Saturday of November. This year the event will take place on Saturday, November 12 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

To celebrate their 10th annual event, owners Thane and Tanya Johnson are making this "the biggest and best" yet! For 2022, Shop With the Pros will be the Fish and Hunt Edition.

Tanya says, "We have always worked to have specials and discounts, but this year we are really sweetening the deals on coupons for both fishing and hunting equipment." For instance, if a customer spends \$200-500 on a single item, there will be \$50 off. Spending \$501-\$1000 for a single item will mean a \$100 off coupon, while any single item costing \$1001 or more will mean \$200 off.

Throughout the day, customers can sign up for thousands of dollars in prizes to be awarded beginning at 3:15 p.m. The special \$1,000 Kabele's Shopping Spree winner will be announced. Tanya notes, "This is our way of saying thanks to all of our customers. We'll have product demos, booth specials and huge deals. We'll have some customers who come with a special purchase in mind. Others will come and look around, leave for a while, and then come back later. It's always exciting when we draw for the Kabele's Shopping Spree."

A major attraction for "Shop With the Pros" is the lineup of pro staffers in attendance. "One of the things Thane and I like to do is bring in husband and wife teams. This year we will have the team of Shantel and Jared Wittstruck with us. Shantel will be representing Vexilar, while Jared will be representing Clam Outdoors. We will also have Lindsey and A. J. Young, pro staffers for 13 Fishing."

Other pro staffers will include Troy Peterson representing Marcum and Dave Koonce with In-depth Outdoors representing StrikeMaster. In addition, local guide John Grosvenor will be on hand representing Otter, while local guide Darrin Jones will be representing VMC Rapala and StrikeMaster. Several other product representatives will also be on hand.

A major draw each year is the portable ice fishing shacks assembled by Thane and his team of employees. This year in excess of 100 portables have been assembled and are ready for their new home!

Lunch will be served on site by Taco Torres from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. "We will have a heated tent outside for customers to relax and enjoy their meal or to just sit and visit," says Tanya.

So, mark Saturday, November 12 on your calendar for the 10th annual "Shop With the Pros" day at Kabele's Trading Post - everything fishing and hunting under one roof!



Just a sample of ice fishing equipment at the Hook Up's Iowa Ice Show on Saturday, November 26. Lots of equipment and lots of room!

The Hook Up (Oak Hill Outdoor)

If you need a little exercise, are looking for some great ice fishing deals and fishing talk after the big Thanksgiving get together, this should be right up your alley. The Hook Up is excited to offer its third annual 2021 Iowa Ice Show from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, November 26 (located across the road to the north of Perkins at the north end of Milford).

According to Ryan Hale, Tackle Manager at the Hook Up, "This is right before early ice, so it will be a great opportunity to check out the latest ice fishing products from all of the top manufacturers in the ice fishing world!"

"We will have a number of reps on hand to answer questions and provide demos on their products." The venue will allow for manufacturer representatives to spread out and give plenty of room to display the latest in ice fishing products.

Pro staffers include Darrin Jones with Ice Force and Rapala VMC; Chad Loreth with JT Rods; Eric Tutt with RBM and Lake Effect; Tobin Janssen with Cold Snap; Scott Sturman with Clam Outdoors; Keith McCormick with Otter; Ryan Gubrud with Freedom Baits; Scott Reed with 13 Fishing.

This will be the perfect time for customers to visit with Hook-Up staff, area guides and ice fishing experts!

Hale also adds, "We will have special in-store specials just for the day of the Iowa Ice Show." This will be the perfect time to walk off a little of that Thanksgiving Turkey and find some great deals on ice fishing equipment!

Iowa's furharvest season starts on Nov. 5

Des Moines - Iowa trappers can expect to find good numbers of furbearers available statewide when the season begins on Nov. 5.

"Our furbearer population is stable or trending up for most species, except for muskrats and gray fox," said Vince Evlaiser, furbearer biologist with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR). "Our muskrat population is good here and there in the marshes with ideal habitat and have water, but overall the population has been in a gradual decline overall over the past thirty years."

Evlaiser said conditions are dry across most of the state and streams, rivers, ponds and wetlands are low or completely dry which can change how and where trappers make their sets.

He said red fox numbers are slightly higher but varies by region. Beaver is stable to increasing in several regions, and river otters and bobcats are stable to increasing as well. Muskrats had for generations been the species that beginning trappers targeted as they gained experience, but with fewer muskrats in the marshes, novice trappers have shifted to raccoons.

"Raccoons are a really good entry level species for novice trappers, they are abundant statewide and it's a species that would benefit from a reduction in its overall numbers," he said.

Of note, youth can accompany a licensed adult trapper or fur hunter in the field without being licensed as long as they don't participate, he said. "If the youth would like to participate, they can simply purchase a youth furharvester license for \$7.50."

Iowa's bobcat harvest is divided into three zones - a three bobcat bag limit zone (southern Iowa), a one bobcat bag limit zone, and a zone closed to bobcat harvest. Only one bobcat may come from the one bobcat zone regardless of the county in that zone it was taken from, the remaining cats must come from the three cat zone. No more than three bobcats total can be legally harvested by a furharvester this season.

Furharvesters are reminded of the requirement to contact a conservation officer within seven days of taking an otter or bobcat to receive a CITES tag. The CITES tag must remain with the animal until it is processed or sold. The DNR will not be collecting bobcat and otter skulls and lower jaws this year for tooth aging purposes.

Overall, the wild fur market is weak again this year, which is similar to the last few years, but regardless of fur prices, Evlaiser encouraged trappers to take a beginner along to share the experience. Beavers, striped skunk, and bobcats may trend upward in fur markets this year.

"It's a great way to get outdoors, spend some time with a beginner, enjoy trapping and pass along our knowledge," he said.

Nearly 15,300 Iowans purchased a furharvester license in 2021, and that number has been fairly stable over the past six years.

The Iowa DNR is offering one more 'learn to furharvest' workshop for beginners this fall on Nov. 19, in St. Charles. Participants will learn basic strategies for trapping such as trapping ethics, best management practices, proper equipment, trap placement, trapping regulations and steps for preparing hides for trade. Sessions will cover history of trapping in North America, wildlife identification, regulations and several demonstration stations. To register, go to www.iowadnr.gov/learnthout.

Fall is a great time to plant shade trees

DES MOINES - It's not too late to plant some varieties of shade trees before winter sets in. Fall is an ideal time to plant new trees with mild temperatures and adequate ground moisture.

"Properly planted trees will have a better opportunity for a long healthy life," said Iowa DNR district forester Mark Vitosh. "Improperly planted trees can become stressed more easily or may look otherwise healthy, but then suddenly die in the first 10 to 20 years after planting."

Properly planted trees should have a long, healthy life. The keys to a successful shade tree planting include selecting a species that matches your site's growing conditions (i.e. soil type, soil drainage, available growing space, full sun or shade, etc.), proper planting, and quality tree care and maintenance throughout the tree's life. Always call Iowa One Call-811 before you start digging to locate any underground utilities.

A five-minute video produced by the Iowa DNR provides tips on how to properly plant a tree from a container and avoid very common mistakes. Go to www.iowadnr.gov/Conservation/Forestry/Urban



Forestry to view the video.

Key tips from the video include the following:

Before digging the planting hole, pull any additional soil away from the top of the root ball to identify the first main

lateral root.

Measure the distance just above the first lateral root to the bottom of the root ball; that is the depth that you should dig the planting hole. Proper planting depth is key to long-term tree survival. If the hole is dug

too deep the tree can settle over time which can cause long-term health issues.

Once you remove the root ball from the container, look for roots that seem to be growing around the root ball. Remove these roots to improve

the long-term health of the tree.

Use a hand saw to sever those encircling roots a half inch to an inch deep into the root ball. Shave off the encircling roots on all sides of the root ball. Also remove any encircling roots on the bottom of the root

ball.

Attempt to dig the planting hole at least twice the width of the root ball. If the sides of the planting hole are smooth, use the sharp end of the shovel to add texture to the sides of the hole to allow the new tree roots to penetrate the soil profile.

Avoid any kind of soil amendments in the planting hole; instead use the soil from the original hole to refill around the roots of the tree. The final soil level should cover the first main lateral root. As you refill the hole gently pack the soil around the root ball with your hands.

Once the tree is planted, slowly water the planting hole (focus water in the location of the root ball) to settle the soil.

As the tree grows be sure to water the expanding root system further away from the initial root ball.

In the first year or two after planting, timely watering, mulching, and in some cases staking can be critical for success. Once a tree is well established, structural pruning can help maintain a quality tree into the future. Learn more about proper tree care after planting at <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/product/5096>.

Federal Clean Water Act celebrates 50 year anniversary

DES MOINES - The Clean Water Act, created and passed in response to a nationwide movement advocating for the improvement and restoration of the country's waters, celebrated 50 years October 18, 2022.

Passed in 1972, the Clean Water Act made it a priority to prevent water pollution and clean up industrial and municipal sewage. The act regulated the disposal of wastes and provided funding for communities to build sewage treatment plants with grants.

Through the Clean Water Act, wastewater standards were established and other pollution

control programs were implemented that, along with the dedication of states, communities and industries to improve the quality of water sources, have made a significant difference in the health of communities and waterways.

Before the Act, some waters in Iowa were so hazardous that they were deadly to fish. The Cedar River had levels of E. Coli and other bacteria hundreds of times the modern limit. Polluted waters that caused eye and skin infections made fishing and recreation dangerous.

Today, Iowa's wastewater

treatment facilities are continually improving to meet modern standards. Since 2011, more than 115 Iowa communities have constructed wastewater treatment technologies that now remove more than 1 million pounds of ammonia annually from more than 41 billion gallons of wastewater. Additionally, 191 communities constructed technology that disinfects 86 billion gallons of effluent annually to reduce bacteria in waterways. That means a cleaner environment for fish and a safer experience for Iowans to swim, fish and boat in rivers and lakes.

The wastewater infrastructure in Iowa and across the country is impressive, and expensive to build and maintain. One way the Iowa Department of Resources, in partnership with the Iowa Finance Authority, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, and local communities, supports these significant community investments is with the Clean Water State Revolving Fund. The fund supports wastewater treatment, sewer rehabilitation and stormwater quality improvements, as well as several other water quality improvement projects. Loans are available

for publicly owned treatment facilities for construction projects, planning and design costs.

The Clean Water State Revolving Fund program also offers public and private entities and landowners affordable financing for a variety of water quality projects. Since 1990, the Iowa CWSRF has provided over \$3 billion in cumulative assistance to meet Iowa's wastewater, stormwater and sewer needs.

The DNR's Watershed Improvement Program, focused on how drainage from land affects water sources, has funded nearly 630 local, re-

gional and statewide clean water projects since 1990. Local staff work with landowners and officials to track improvements in water quality, and its projects in Iowa have totaled \$113 million through implementation of Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

To learn more about Iowa water quality programs go to: www.iowadnr.gov/waterquality. To learn more of national Clean Water Act success stories, visit the Association of Clean Water Operators website at <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/>.

Outdoor Connection



Mike Frisch with a swim jig bass.

Photo by Bob Jensen, Fishing the Midwest Fishing Team

Open water fishing 2022

By Bob Jensen
FISHING THE MIDWEST FISHING TEAM

The 2022 open water fishing season is over for this angler. Unless something very unusual comes up on the open water scene, I'm waiting for ice. It wasn't that many years ago that there were usually only a couple of days between my last open water trip and my first foray of the season onto the ice. Priorities and experiences change, but one thing that hasn't changed for me is the enjoyment that I get in looking back at previous open water fishing seasons. I'm guessing that most anglers enjoy reviewing past open water fishing seasons also. Following are a couple things that I'm remembering about recent and not so recent open water fishing seasons.

How fishing techniques evolve constantly surprise me,

but it shouldn't. Change is one of the only constant things in life. I remember several decades ago when my Dad and I would work shallow water cover in the spring for largemouth bass. Almost always we were casting spinnerbaits, and almost always we were either pretty successful or very successful.

At the time, I couldn't imagine a more effective technique. Flash ahead 40 years. I'm sharing a boat with Mike Frisch. We're throwing to shallow water cover for largemouth bass. The only difference is, Mike and I don't have spinnerbaits tied on.

The hot set-up in recent years has been a jig! A jig! It used to be jigs were used for slow presentations, and they still work when used slowly. But Tour Grade Swimming Jigs tipped with a Rage Menace

plastic and worked almost like a spinnerbait are so productive that we're using them more and more every year. I wonder what we'll be using in 10 years in place of the swim jig? Maybe back to spinnerbaits?

I remember all the time that I used to spend chasing walleyes at night in the fall. Sometimes I fished from shore in my waders; other times I trolled. The shore fishing was often predictable. If there were baitfish in the area during the day, the walleyes would be there at night. If there was a light breeze blowing into the area, action was better. The walleyes would almost always show up at about the same time every night. We caught lots of walleyes from shore at night then and continue to do so.

I remember another time when I was fishing alone at night trolling on Leech Lake in north central Minnesota. It was

I remember all the time that I used to spend chasing walleyes at night in the fall. Sometimes I fished from shore in my waders; other times I trolled. The shore fishing was often predictable. If there were baitfish in the area during the day, the walleyes would be there at night.

—Bob Jensen

very windy. I should not have been out there, and I certainly should not have been out there by myself. But the walleyes were biting, and there were a good number of big ones. I was pulling crankbaits. I hooked what was at the time the biggest walleye I had ever tangled

with. I got it to the boat, but when it came time to net it, there was no way to do so.

The rolling waves made it hard for me to stand up, and the up and down of the boat in the rolling waves made netting the fish impossible. When it finally came unhooked, it just

laid there a minute, giving me a very good look at it. It made the eight pounder that I hooked and landed shortly after look not so big.

The thing that we need to keep in mind is that fishing seasons are never really over as long as we can remember them. My fishing friends and I have relived so many fishing trips and fishing seasons from years past while sitting around a table inside or a campfire outside. My friends remember their catches being bigger than they were and my catches being smaller than they were, and that's okay.

The stories change every time they're told. I would strongly suggest that we all cherish our fishing or whatever other activity you enjoy as it's happening, and then enjoy those experiences in your memory on a regular basis.

PROJECT THIS FALL WILL REPAIR A PORTION OF INGHAM NORTH SHORELINE

FROM THE IOWA DNR

Work will begin this fall on a section of Ingham Lake's north shoreline that, once completed, will reduce the amount of siltation entering the lake and provide protection to the road surface of the adjacent Ingham Lake Road. Drivers who use Ingham Lake Road may experience occasional disruptions at County Road A34 while the work is underway.

Contractors will be working on a quarter mile long section where wind and wave action has damaged the shoreline and road surface and exposed the roots systems of many of the large oak trees. Natural field stones will be placed in the eroded area. The field stone will absorb the wind and waves, protecting the shoreline, the road and the oaks.

The project will require a number of trees to be removed to access certain areas of the damaged shoreline. Many native trees will remain that will become part of a healthy oak savanna ecosystem along the lake. Once completed, the project will help with the long-term maintenance of Ingham Lake Road and provide improved fishing access along the road.

Work is expected to be completed by March.

Check docks and equipment for invasive species before storing

DES MOINES - The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) reminds lake property owners to check their boat and trailers, and docks and lifts, for aquatic invasive species before storing them for the winter.

Aquatic invasive species, everything from zebra mussels to Eurasian watermilfoil, move from one waterbody to another by hitchhiking on boats, in bait buckets and on other equipment used in the water. They can create serious problems for Iowa waters and negatively impact the quality of outdoor recreation experiences.

"Fall is a great time for lake property owners to check their boats, docks and lifts for new infestations of aquatic invasive species like zebra mussels," said Kim Bogenschutz, aquatic invasive species coordinator for the Iowa DNR. "As you bring each item out of the water, visually inspect areas that have been submerged for months. Touch smooth surfaces to check for juvenile zebra mussels that feel like sandpaper when you run your hand over a surface they've attached themselves to and are often invisible to the human eye."

Aquatic invasive species often grow quickly and spread fast when brought to a new lake or stream due to lack of natural controls.

It is illegal to possess or transport prohibited aquatic invasive species or to transport any aquatic plants on water-related equipment in Iowa. Signs posted at public accesses remind boaters to stop aquatic hitchhikers and identify infested waters.

Iowa law also requires boaters to drain all water from boats and equipment before they leave a water access and to keep drain plugs removed or opened during transport. It is also illegal to introduce any live fish, except for hooked bait, into public waters.

Learn more about aquatic invasive species, including a list of infested waters in the current Iowa Fishing Regulations or at www.iowadnr.gov/ais.

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to a restored wetland/prairie complex. Thus, the 3-5 year timeline.

Next steps

Right now Minnesota Pheasants Forever is working through the planning process. Meanwhile, SLPA, as a partner in this acquisition, has agreed to fundraise for the project. According to Smeltzer, "As a board, the SLPA has agreed to give \$10,000 each year for two years. We hope that the SLPA members and our friends in the community will help with our fundraising efforts. Over many years, people in the Iowa Great Lakes area and beyond have stepped up to help complete clean water projects. We hope that this will happen with the Spirit Lake North Project."

To learn more about the fundraising options or to make a donation, contact President Kirk Huisenga at SpiritLakeProtective@gmail.com. Mailing address is P. O. Box 51,

Spirit Lake, IA. 51360. Also, check out the SLPA website at theslpa.org for more information.

As an added incentive to donors, when this project is completed, a marker will be placed at the land to show the names of donors who donated a minimum of \$1000.

Ullman adds, "This project provides an exemplary example demonstrating how clean

water and wildlife habitat interests can work together with willing sellers and private land owners to improve our Quality of Water and our Quality of Life in the Iowa Great Lakes region."

Listed below are the benefits of the Big Spirit Lake North Project:

The original wetland area will be reclaimed and water will be slowed and allowed to drop its contaminants prior to entering the Iowa Great Lakes system.

Additional benefits of this acquisition include the following: the restoration of a large habitat complex critical to resident and migrant wildlife species; a premier public recreation/education area that will be used by citizens from many states; and demonstration of the dramatic effects that can be realized when new and diverse groups of partners address common conservation needs without regards to political boundaries.

Wetland restoration (estimated 90-100-acres) and tall grass prairie restoration for the rest. This will provide an estimated 85 percent reduction in phosphorus and nitrogen annually and a reduction of 30 tons of sediment per two-inch rainfall to Big Spirit Lake.

New wetland and grassland habitats for wildlife, reduced soil erosion, improved water quality, reduced runoff, reduced flooding and sequestration of carbon.



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Fall community trout stocking underway

DES MOINES — Eighteen lakes across Iowa are gearing up to receive trout this fall. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will release between 1,000 to 2,000 rainbow trout at each location as part of its cool weather trout program that brings trout to areas that cannot support them during the summer months.

In northwest Iowa, the first of these stockings was at Bacon Creek in Sioux City on Monday, October 24 at 1:30 p.m. The second stocking will take place at Scharnberg Pond southeast of Everyly on Saturday, November 5 at 12:30 p.m.

"Grab your neighbors, friends and kids and try trout

fishing this fall," said Joe Larscheid, chief of the Iowa DNR Fisheries Bureau. "It's time well spent. The fish are here, easy to catch and good to eat."

The fall community trout stockings are a great place to take kids to catch their first fish. A small hook with a night crawler or corn under a small

bobber or small simple spinners such as a Panther Martin or Mepps is all you need to get in on the fun.

Bringing trout to cities and towns offers a "close to home" option for Iowans who might not travel to northeast Iowa to discover trout fishing. A family friendly event is often paired with the stocking to

help anglers have success and fun while fishing.

The popular program is supported by the sales of the trout fee. Anglers need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. The daily limit is five trout per licensed angler with a possession limit of 10.

Children age 15 or younger

can fish for trout with a properly licensed adult, but they must limit their catch to one daily limit. The child can purchase a trout fee which will allow them to catch their own limit.

Find more information about trout fishing in community lakes on the DNR trout fishing webpage.

Outdoor Connection



Immature Sandpiper at Elinor Bedell State Park

WILDLIFE PHOTOS



Juvenile Bald Eagle at Little Swan Lake

PHOTOS BY
MIKE
FREDRICKSON



Common Yellowthroat at North Joe Hoyer Park



Bald Eagle at Little Swan Lake

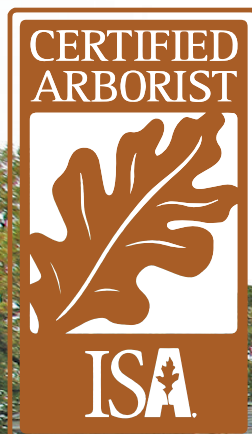


Great Blue Heron at Elinor Bedell State Park



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