

# CONSERVATIONIST

MARCH/APRIL 2002

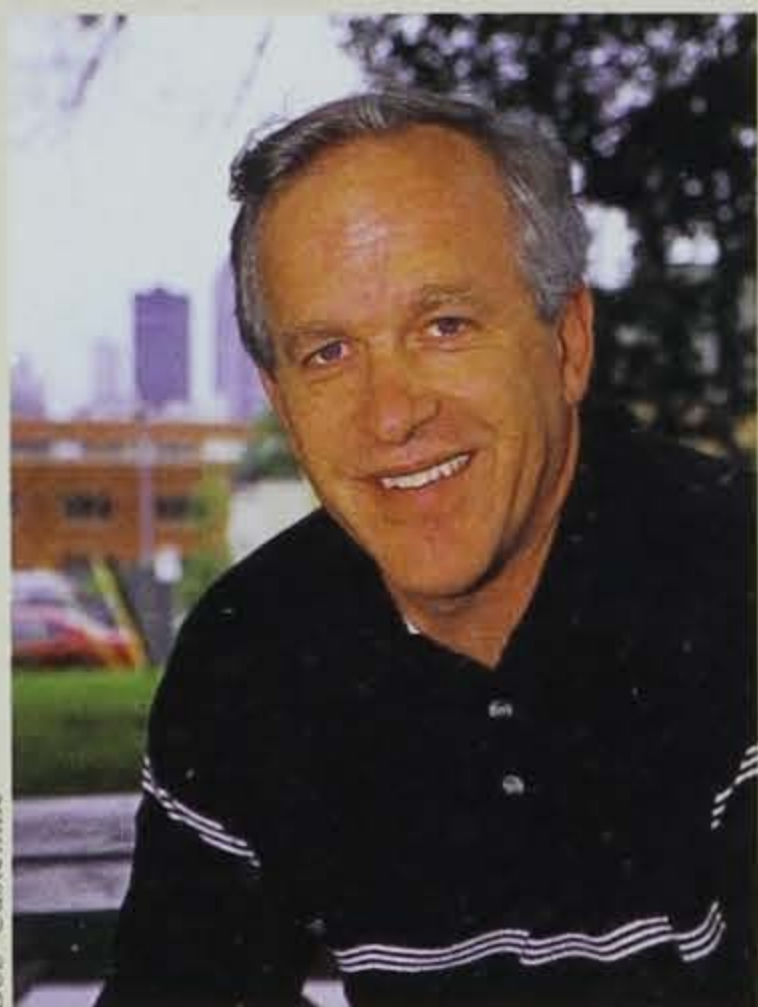
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES





# FROM THE DIRECTOR

## Good Fishing and Water Quality Go Hand in Hand



Bob Castelline

This issue of the *Conservationist* is the one that Iowa anglers look forward to most . . . the annual fishing forecast. With good reason. Even after a mild winter, anticipation is building for ice-out channel cats and that first big crappie run.

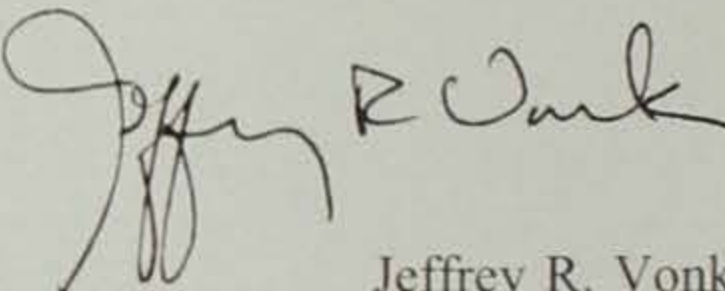
In many respects, you could also call this an environmental edition of the *Conservationist*. DNR fisheries biologists have chanted for years that the key to good fishing is water quality. Fish habitat, like a drop-off where walleyes concentrate or a brush pile that attracts crappies, is vital to help us locate fish. But if the aquatic ecosystem is thrown out of balance, then fishing success will suffer, regardless of the habitat structure.

Fishing is a perfect example of how all environmental issues are connected. Water quality can be degraded by air pollution that "rains" too much phosphorus into our lakes. Soil erosion – still our

number one source of pollutants – smothers fish eggs and blinds the sight-feeding predator fish.

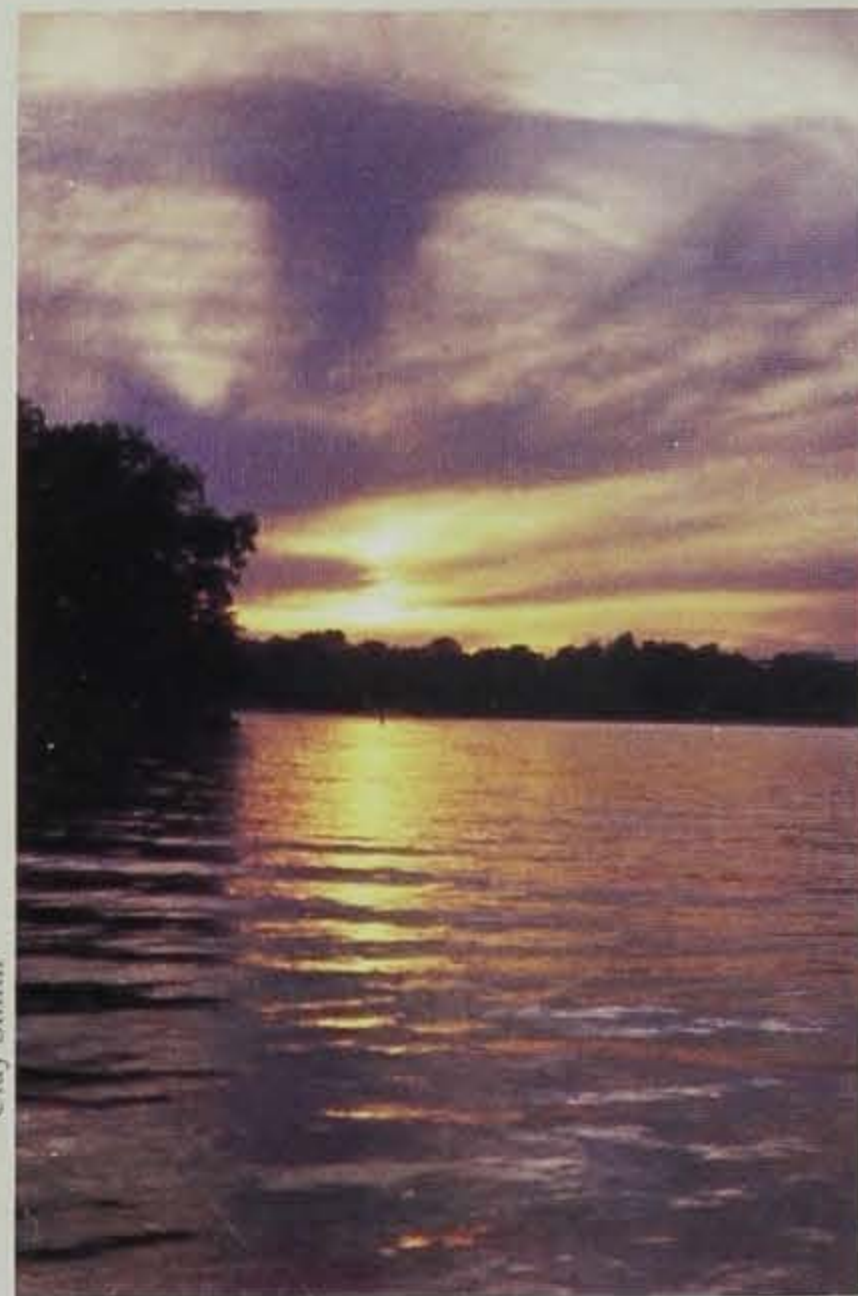
Iowa anglers should be among the leaders of the state in calling for better water quality. Your help for better laws and better personal stewardship of the land will pay big dividends down the road in terms of fishing success, and consequently, quality of experience.

That said, get out there and enjoy the coming spring run. Your season is at hand. When you do, take a moment and look up through the watershed of your favorite fishing hole, and identify for yourself what you think could be improved for better water quality and a healthier stringer for the frying pan.

  
Jeffrey R. Vonk



Lowell Washburn



Clay Smith



FRONT COVER: AMERICAN AVOCET BY  
TY SMEDES.

BACK COVER: EARLY SEASON FISHING  
AT BRUSHY CREEK BY ROGER A. HILL.



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by Mike McGhee

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by Bob Casteline

Eighteen organizations, businesses and individuals were honored in 2001 for projects that benefit, enhance or protect the environment. Find out who they were.



# LETTERS

Faithful subscribers of the *Iowa Conservationist* will surely notice a change in this issue — the addition of commercial advertising.

In these days of tight budgets, it is more important than ever to find alternative sources of revenue. Advertising is now one of those alternatives. Advertising income will allow us to keep subscription prices from rising, while still providing the periodical you have asked for. Thank you for accepting this change.

— Editors

## Nonresident Fee Increase For the Birds

I see you raised the nonresident hunting license from \$61 to \$80.50. That's a 30 percent increase.

Why would anyone come to Iowa to hunt? I suppose most people come to Iowa to hunt pheasants. In most of Iowa pheasant populations are almost nonexistent. Or maybe they come to Iowa to hunt waterfowl. Chances are, they have better waterfowl hunting in their own

state than what they will find in Iowa.

I'm sure one thing the Iowa DNR never thought of when they raised nonresident hunting license (sic) is a lot of states will reciprocate back to Iowa hunters buying a license on other states with those same increase. Or maybe they just don't care.

David C. Deike  
Wellsburg



Take me fishing.  
Because I get the giggles  
when the boat bounces.

Take me fishing.  
You can think about  
work later.

Take me fishing.  
Because my wedding will  
be sooner than you think.

*Water works wonders*  
FOR FISHING, BOATING, AND  
THE ENVIRONMENT



## Writer Agrees With Importance of Habitat

Just read the excellent article by Lowell Washburn in the January/February 2002 *Iowa Conservationist*, "Learning the Hard Way," concerning the loss of pheasants due to government policies regarding set-aside (CRP) acres. I, too, shot my first pheasant in the late 50s not far from my home of Fort Dodge in Webster County. Like the author remembers, those were halcyon days of not having to work too hard to bag two or three roosters not far from home. With the loss of cover, the birds simply cannot make it through the harsh northern Iowa winters.

Interestingly, a letter to the editor in that same issue, written by an Iowa farmer, blames predators for the loss of pheasants throughout the state.

One thing I think that both of these self-admitted "old-timers" seem to have forgotten is how much farming practices have changed since I hunted those "Fields of Dreams" as a boy. Things like: leaving standing corn through the winter. Spring plowing. (When the corn WAS harvested in the fall most of the cornstalks were left standing, plus, the occasional ear of corn was left for wildlife).

Grass (horrors!) in the corn rows, along with the more-than-occasional weed. Leaving the grass grow in the road ditches and railroad right-of-ways.

I remember most of these things because as a lad I had to fight my way through them in the fall to bag a rooster, which almost inevitably was flushed at the end of a field.

I feel the question today's farmers have to ask themselves is this: how much more actual profit is generated per high-yield acre after subtracting the overhead of fuel costs, fertilizer, herbicides and extra seed corn compared with the low-tech, lower-maintenance methods of a generation ago? If the old methods of farming were kinder and gentler to the environment, as I suspect they were, what kind of extra value do Iowans get from cleaner groundwater, cleaner streams, and a lot more pheasants in exchange for a few less bushels of low-priced corn per acre?

Respectfully,  
Dr. Jim Nordquist  
Rock Island, Ill.

The *Iowa Conservationist* welcomes letters from readers. Printed letters reflect the opinions of the author. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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### STAFF

Ross Harrison, Bureau Chief  
Julie Sparks, Editor  
Alan Foster, Managing Editor  
Lowell Washburn, Writer/Photographer  
Clay Smith, Photographer  
Larry Pool, Graphic Artist  
Circulation, 515/281-3359 or 281-3887

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Turn-In-Poachers (TIP), (800) 532-2020  
TTD (515) 242-5967

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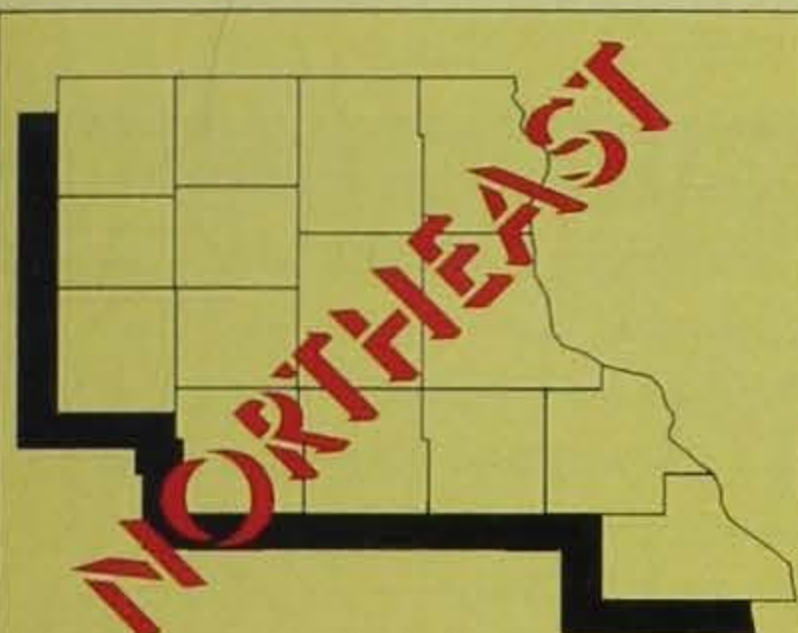


The Best of the Best

2002

**Fishing  
Forecast**

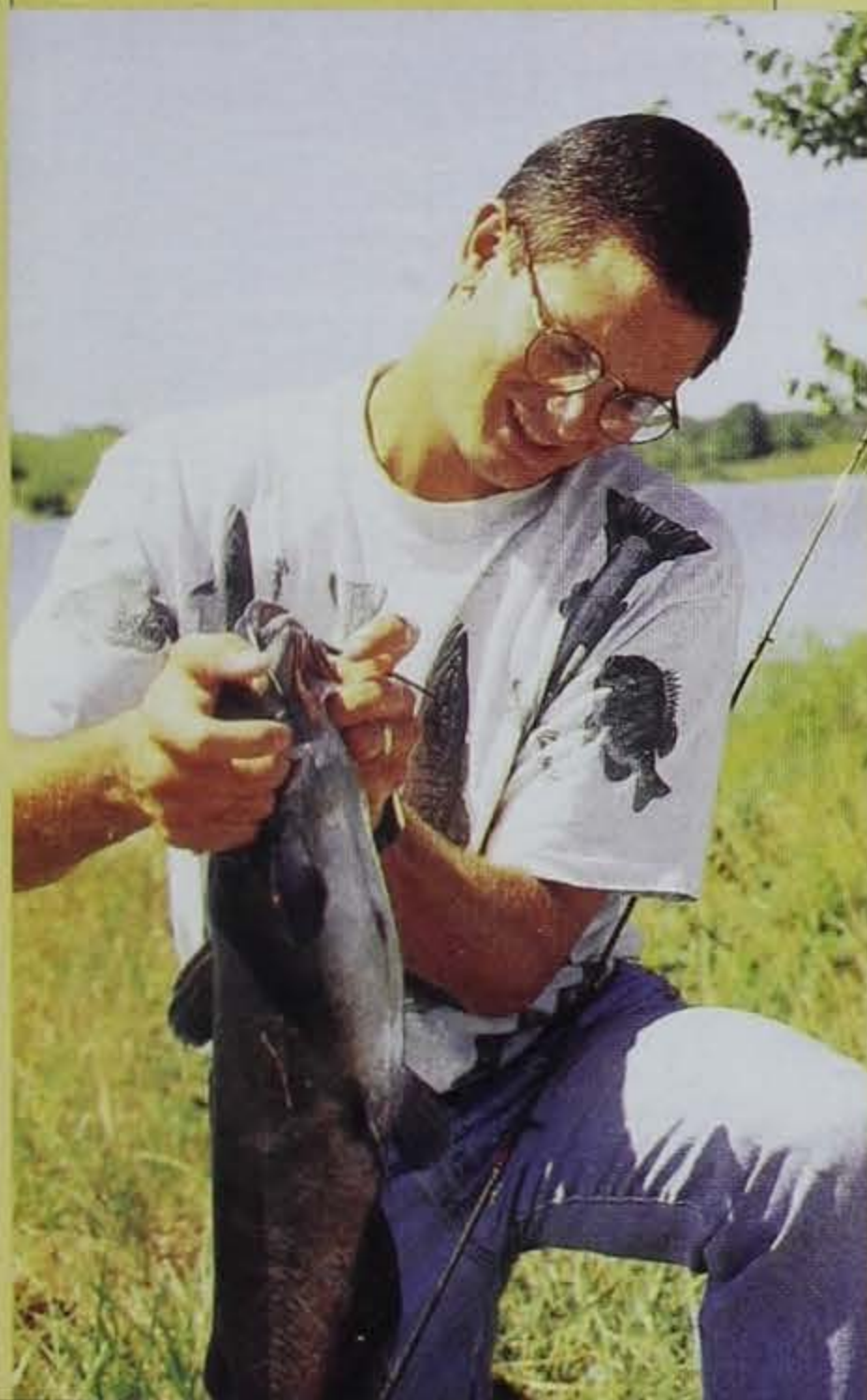




By Dave Moeller  
Regional Fisheries  
Supervisor

The gentle sounds of crystal-clear water flowing over a rock and gravel riffle in a coldwater stream. The Mississippi River, with its tremendous diversity of quiet backwaters, flowing side channels and bustling main channel. A myriad of interior rivers and streams where, just around the bend, you are in a world all your own. A scattering of artificial lakes where you can leisurely enjoy the serenity of quiet water from either the shore or a boat.

Northeast Iowa is indeed



Ken Formanek

## BLUEGILLS

LAKE /STREAM/COUNTY	COMMENTS
Casey Lake <i>Tama</i>	Abundant 7- to 8-inch bluegills. Fish shallow waters in spring and brush piles in summer.
Koutny Pond <i>Buchanan</i>	Good numbers of 7-inch fish. Fish around structure in May and June.
Lake Delhi, <i>Delaware</i>	Fish up to 7 inches. Fish early spring and late fall.
Lake Hendricks <i>Howard</i>	Abundant 6- to 8-inch fish. Fish upper bays during the spawn and deeper weed beds in late summer.
Lake Meyer <i>Winneshiek</i>	Many 6- to 7-inch fish. Boat anglers should look for vegetation in the summer.
Mississippi River <i>Pools 9-15</i>	Populations have rebounded somewhat due to good vegetation. Fish up to 7 inches.
South Prairie Lake <i>Black Hawk</i>	Fish up to 8 inches. Fish shallow areas along west side of the lake in May and June.
Sweet Marsh Segment B <i>Bremer</i>	Abundant 6- to 7-inchers. Concentrate along the shoreline in May and June.
Volga Lake <i>Fayette</i>	A reliable producer of 6- to 8-inch-plus fish. Try brush piles along the dam in the spring.

## CHANNEL CATFISH

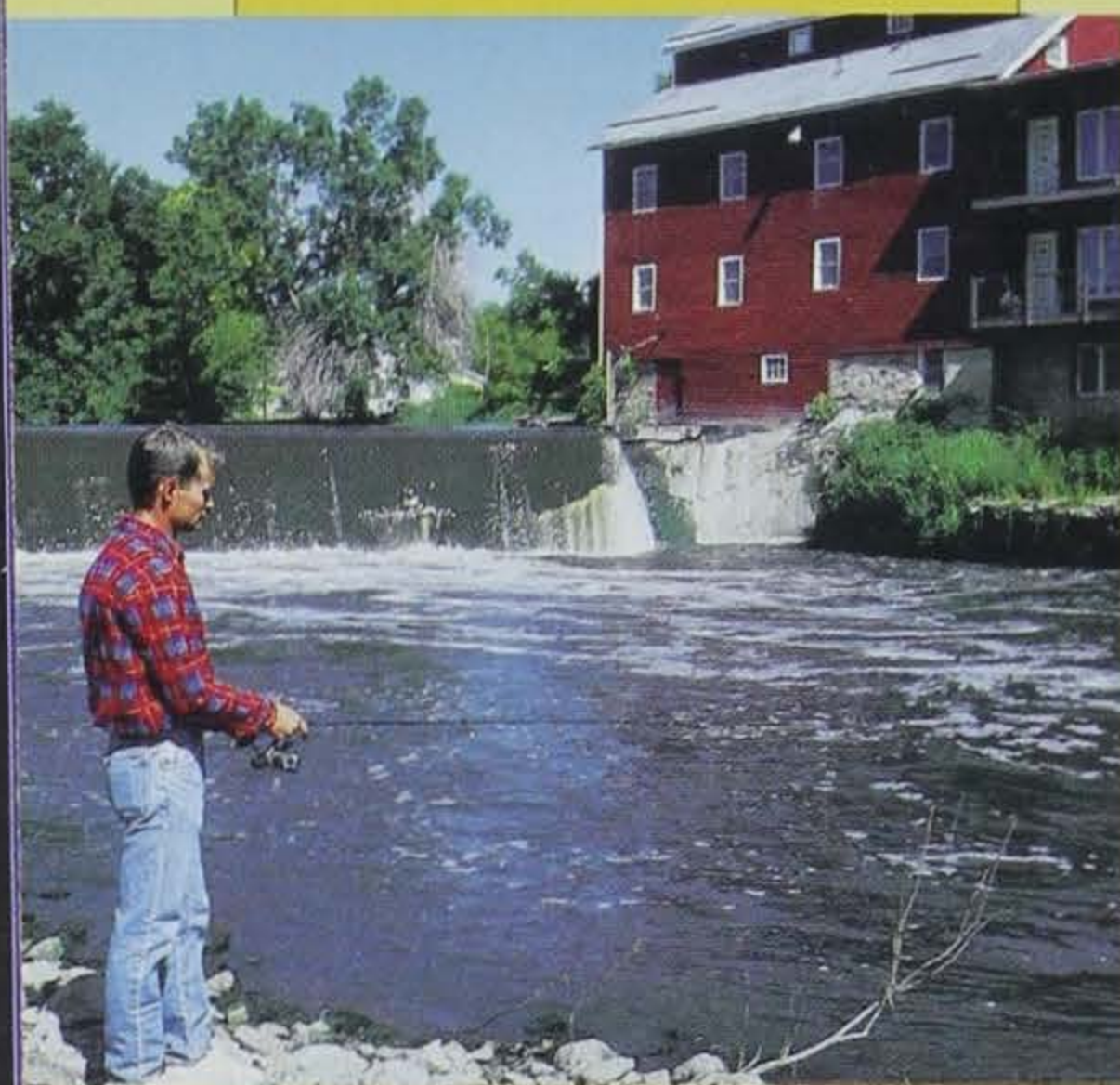
Lake Delhi <i>Delaware</i>	Good population of all size fish. Fish early morning or late evening to avoid heavy boat traffic.
Cedar River, <i>Bremer</i> <i>Black Hawk, Floyd</i> <i>and Chickasaw</i>	Abundant 1- to 2-pound fish from St. Ansgar downstream. Fish the shallow riffle areas in late summer and fall.
Maquoketa River <i>Delaware, Jones</i> <i>and Jackson</i>	Good populations from Manchester downstream to its confluence with the Mississippi River. Fish the brush piles and snags in July and August.
Mississippi River <i>Pools 9 through 15</i>	Population and average size very good. Drift shad baits along main channel border riprap in spring. In summer, try prepared baits and chicken liver near wing dam and side channels.
Shell Rock River <i>Butler</i>	Good numbers of 14- to 20-inch fish throughout county. Try the shallow riffle areas in the fall.
Saints Lake, <i>Bremer</i>	Two- to 3-pounders abundant in this 30-acre lake.
South Prairie Lake, <i>Black Hawk</i>	Abundant 15- to 18-inch cats.
Turkey River <i>Clayton</i>	Good population of all sizes of catfish downstream from Elkader. A few flatheads present.
Upper Iowa River <i>Allamakee</i>	Good abundance from the mouth upstream to the Lower Dam.
Volga Lake <i>Fayette</i>	Good numbers of fish up to 9 pounds. Fishing very good during July and August along the dam.
Wapsipinicon River <i>Buchanan</i>	Good population of large catfish below Littleton. Fish the shallow backwaters after ice-out, and tree and brush piles on the main river during the summer.



blessed with a vast diversity of water resources, and an equally diverse array of quality fish populations. Together, they provide more than enough reason to get out and enjoy these beautiful areas.

A great fishing experience will definitely enhance your enjoyment of spending time "on the water." To improve your chances of having a great fishing experience, the DNR's northeast Iowa fisheries biologists have compiled the accompanying list of waters where you should have good angling success for the more popular species. The following paragraphs also identify additional areas that may provide fishing opportunities for other, often overlooked, species.

Very early in the spring, just after ice-out, is a prime time for sauger fishing on the Mississippi River. This close cousin of the walleye congregates in late March and early April in the tailwater areas immediately below the navigation dams. The tailwaters of dams 9 near Harpers Ferry, 10 at Guttenberg, 11 at Dubuque and 12



Lowell Washburn

## CRAPPIES

Casey Lake,  
*Tama*

George Wyth Lake, *Black Hawk*

Koutny Pond  
*Buchanan*

South Prairie Lake  
*Black Hawk*

Lake Delhi  
*Delaware*

Lake Meyer  
*Winneshiek*

Mississippi River  
*Pools 9 through 15*

Sweet Marsh Segment B,  
Marten's Lake, *Bremer*

Volga Lake,  
*Fayette*

Wapsipinicon River  
*Buchanan*

Mostly 8-inch fish. Fish shallow areas during the May spawning season.

Good numbers of 7- to 8-inch.

Some 10- and 11-inch black crappies sampled during fall 2001 electrofishing survey.

Fair numbers of 7- to 8-inchers, with a few exceeding 9. Fishing starts early at this lake.

Average size fish abundant. Fish fallen trees or woody structure in spring and fall.

High numbers of 8- to 9-inchers. Fish the edges of shoreline brush piles.

Black crappie populations are strong. Lots of 8- to 9-inch fish, up to 15. Excellent spawn in 2000, especially for white crappies. Move often to find active school. Fish minnows and small jigs under a bobber around brush and woody structure.

Good numbers of 8- to 9-inchers, with some up to 10.

Fish from shore on the dam in May and June for 9- to 11-inchers.

All sizes present. Fish around brush piles in the backwaters spring through fall.

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Casey Lake  
*Tama*

George Wyth Lake  
*Black Hawk*

Greenbelt Lake, *Black Hawk*  
Koutny Pond  
*Buchanan*

Lake Delhi  
*Delaware*

Lake Hendricks  
*Howard*

Lake Meyer, *Winneshiek*  
Mississippi River  
*Pools 9 through 15*

Eighteen-inch minimum length limit has resulted in numerous 2- to 4-pound bass. Fish along the dam, around woody structure and stake beds.

Largemouths concentrate on the abundant sunken tree piles, pallet-bed structures, rocky areas and around the new jetties.

Good numbers of quality-size fish.

Good numbers of 11- to 13-inch fish available. Adjacent marsh also holds some bass.

Good population along the undeveloped rocky shorelines and woody structure. Fish mornings and evenings to avoid heavy boat traffic.

High numbers of fish under the 18-inch minimum length limit.

Good numbers of all sizes of bass.

The Big River still supports the largest bass population in the state, due in part to the 14-inch length limit and increasing catch-and-release fishing. Excellent numbers, but most are under 5 pounds. Fish along weed edges in the backwater lakes and running sloughs near woody structure. As water levels drop during the summer, move



at Bellevue are hotspots.

There is no minimum length limit on saugers; however there is a 15-inch minimum on the similar-looking walleye. The combined daily bag limit is 10; however, no more than six can be walleye. To distinguish between the two, saugers do not have a white tip on the lower tail fin. Like walleyes, saugers are excellent tablefare.

Also very early in the spring, suckers and redhorse begin their annual spawning run in several interior rivers. Action usually begins in late March and continues through April. The three species most commonly caught are the white sucker (also commonly known as black sucker), shorthead redhorse and golden redhorse. The Upper

Mitchell Lake

*Black Hawk*

South Prairie Lake

*Black Hawk*

Sweet Marsh Segment B

*Bremer*

out to the mouths of the backwater lakes or find slack water along the main channel border. Also try the inside portion of the wing dams during the summer. On the lower, big lake portion of the pools with abundant vegetation, fish the small pockets (openings) in the dense vegetation using a spinnerbait or plastic worm.

Good numbers of quality-size fish. A new boat access scheduled for construction this year. Abundant 12- to 17-inch bass; 18-inch minimum length limit. Be sure to check your boat and trailer for Eurasian watermilfoil.

High numbers of quality-size bass. Be sure to check your boat and trailer for Eurasian watermilfoil.

## SMALLMOUTH BASS

Cedar River, *Bremer*

*and Black Hawk*

Cedar River, *Mitchell*

*and Floyd*

Maquoketa River

*Delaware*

Best habitat and bass numbers are downstream from Waverly and Waterloo.

Good numbers of largemouth bass throughout both counties.

The catch-and-release area below the Lake Delhi dam supports one of the best populations around. Best success in September and October.

Maquoketa River

*Jones and Jackson*

Fish rocky areas with crawdad-colored crankbaits during late summer and early fall. Fifteen- to 16-inch fish common.

Mississippi River

*Pools 9 through 15*

This species is responding to increases in riverine habitats. Fish rock structure in the current with either live or artificial baits. Fair numbers in the 15- to 18-inch range. Many 10- to 12-inches coming on.

Shell Rock River

*Butler and Bremer*

Good populations from Greene downstream to the confluence with the Cedar River.

Shell Rock River, *Floyd*

Good numbers, but few trophy fish.

Turkey River, *Clayton,*

*Fayette, Winneshiek and Howard*

Good populations wherever gravel and rock stream bottom is found.

Upper Iowa River

*Allamakee, Howard and Winneshiek*

Excellent scenery and smallmouth populations. Concentrate on areas away from the heavy canoe traffic.

Volga River,

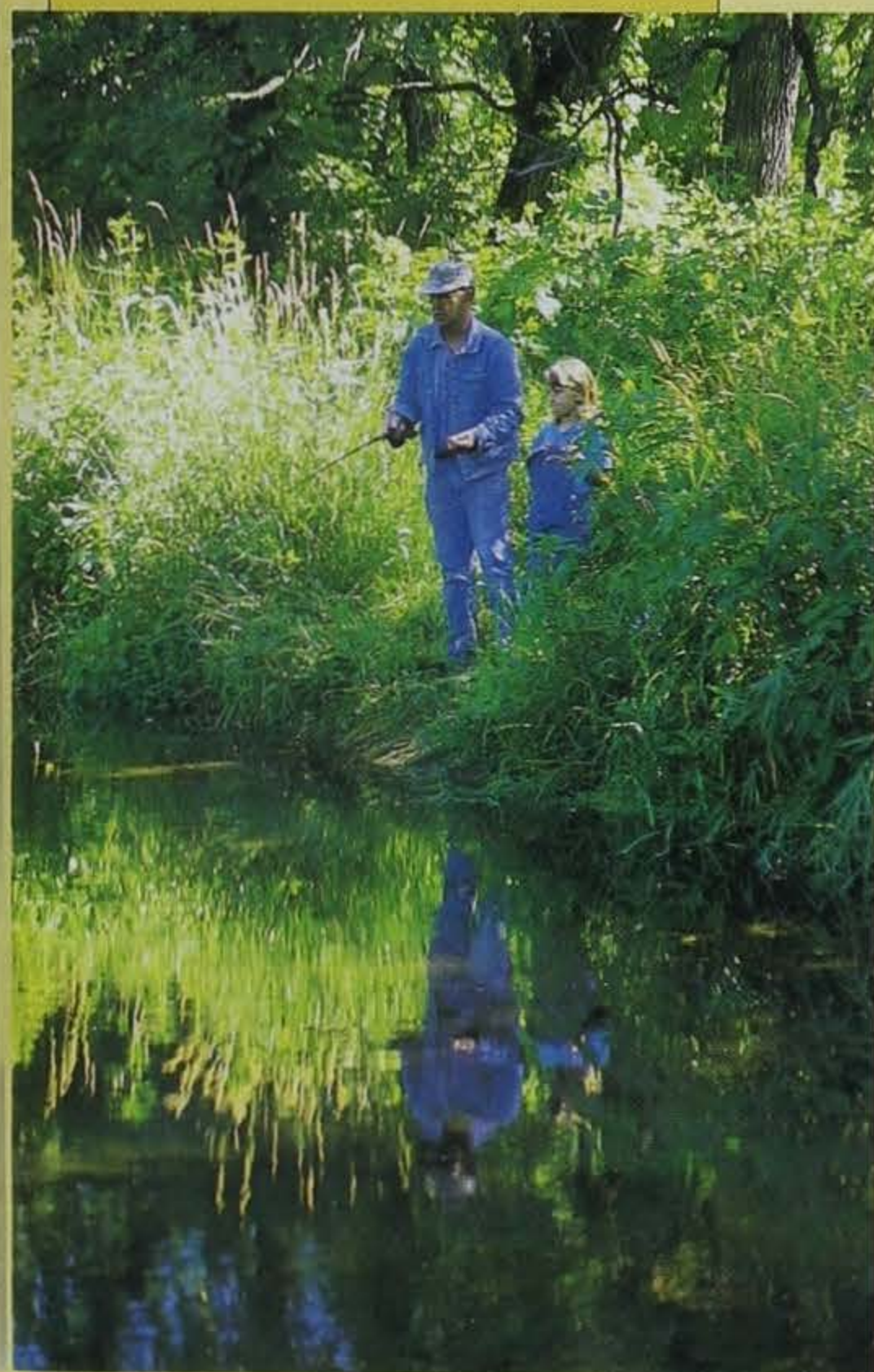
*Fayette*

Public-owned stream in Volga River Recreation Area. Wadeable stream.

Wapsipinicon River,

*Buchanan*

Littleton to Quasqueton has the best habitat. Good numbers of smallmouth exceeding 12 inches with a few topping 18 inches.



Clay Smith



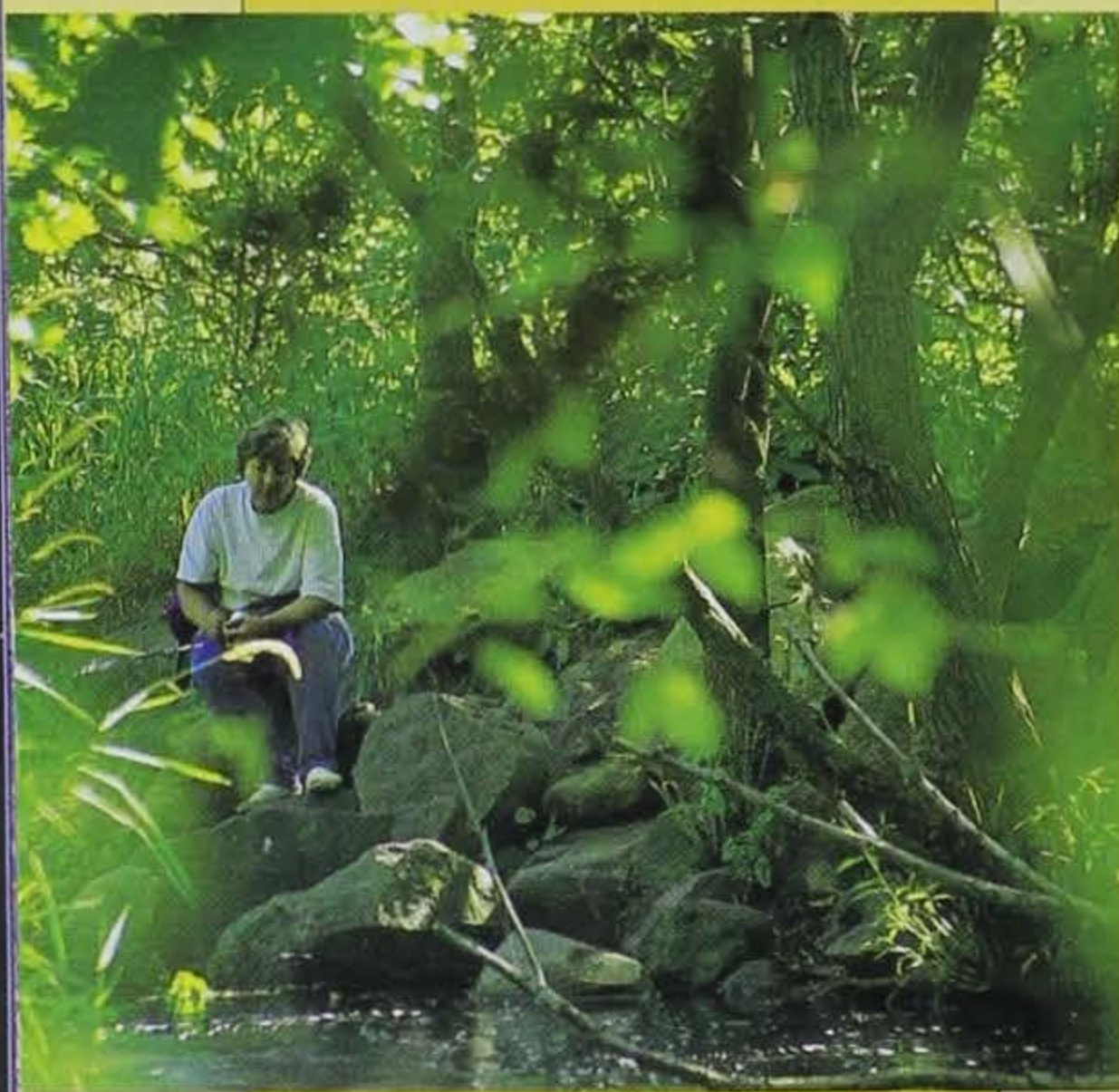
Iowa, Yellow, Turkey, Volga and Maquoketa rivers are prime sucker streams.

Sucker fishing tackle is simple — a long-shank hook baited with worms or night crawlers and just enough weight to hold it on the bottom. The action is often furious. Sucker meat is delicious, but very bony, so most anglers either pickle them or grind the meat and deep-fry it as thin patties. Either way, you're in for a real treat.

Another species that provides a lot of enjoyment for Mississippi River anglers is the freshwater drum, also known as sheepshead. This fish is so plentiful it supports a substantial commercial fishery.

The serious action usually begins in June and continues through the warm summer months. Drum love current, so look for them along the borders of the main channel, side channels and especially near wing dams. They love night crawlers and crayfish tails.

Drum fillets are boneless;



Clay Smith

## NORTHERN PIKE

Cedar River, *Bremer*

*Black Hawk*

Lake Meyer

*Winneshiek*

Maquoketa River,

*Delaware*

Mississippi River,

*Pools 9 through 15*

Sweet Marsh Segment B

(Marten's Lake), *Bremer*

Wapsipinicon River,

*Buchanan*

*Black Hawk*

*and Floyd*

Moderate population of all sizes of pike can be found in the shallow backwater habitats.

Fish in the 4- to 5-pound range with some exceeding 30 inches.

Fingerling stockings have resulted in a quality pike population, with an occasional fish exceeding 10 pounds. Recent surveys indicate good numbers of quality pike. A 23-pounder was caught in 2001.

Most fish from 3 to 5 pounds. After ice-out on pool 9 and 10, cast the shorelines in the backwaters. In the summer and fall, fish large, live baitfish in the backwaters; fish near the mouths of coldwater tributary streams during the hottest summer periods. Inside portions of wingdams can produce some good pike. Use large spinnerbaits or spoons. When fish are finicky, try a small white twistertail.

Good population of all sizes. Check your boat trailer for Eurasian watermilfoil.

Best fishing from Independence upstream. Fish the abundant deadfalls and connected shallow backwaters. Excellent numbers of all sizes resulting solely from natural reproduction.

## TROUT

Bailey's Ford,

*Delaware*

Bloody Run,

Coldwater Creek,

*Winneshiek*

Ensign Hollow,

*Clayton*

Fountain Springs,

*Delaware*

French Creek,

*Allamakee*

Little Paint Creek,

*Allamakee*

Maquoketa River,

*Clayton and*

Stocked three times weekly with catchable rainbow and brook trout. One of the most popular catchable trout streams. Easy access to new bankhides.

A four-mile segment above Bloody Run Park has a 14-inch minimum size limit for brown trout; stocked yearly with fingerlings. The remaining six miles is stocked weekly with brooks, browns and rainbows. Stocked weekly with rainbow, brown and brook trout. Sporadic natural reproduction of rainbow trout has been documented.

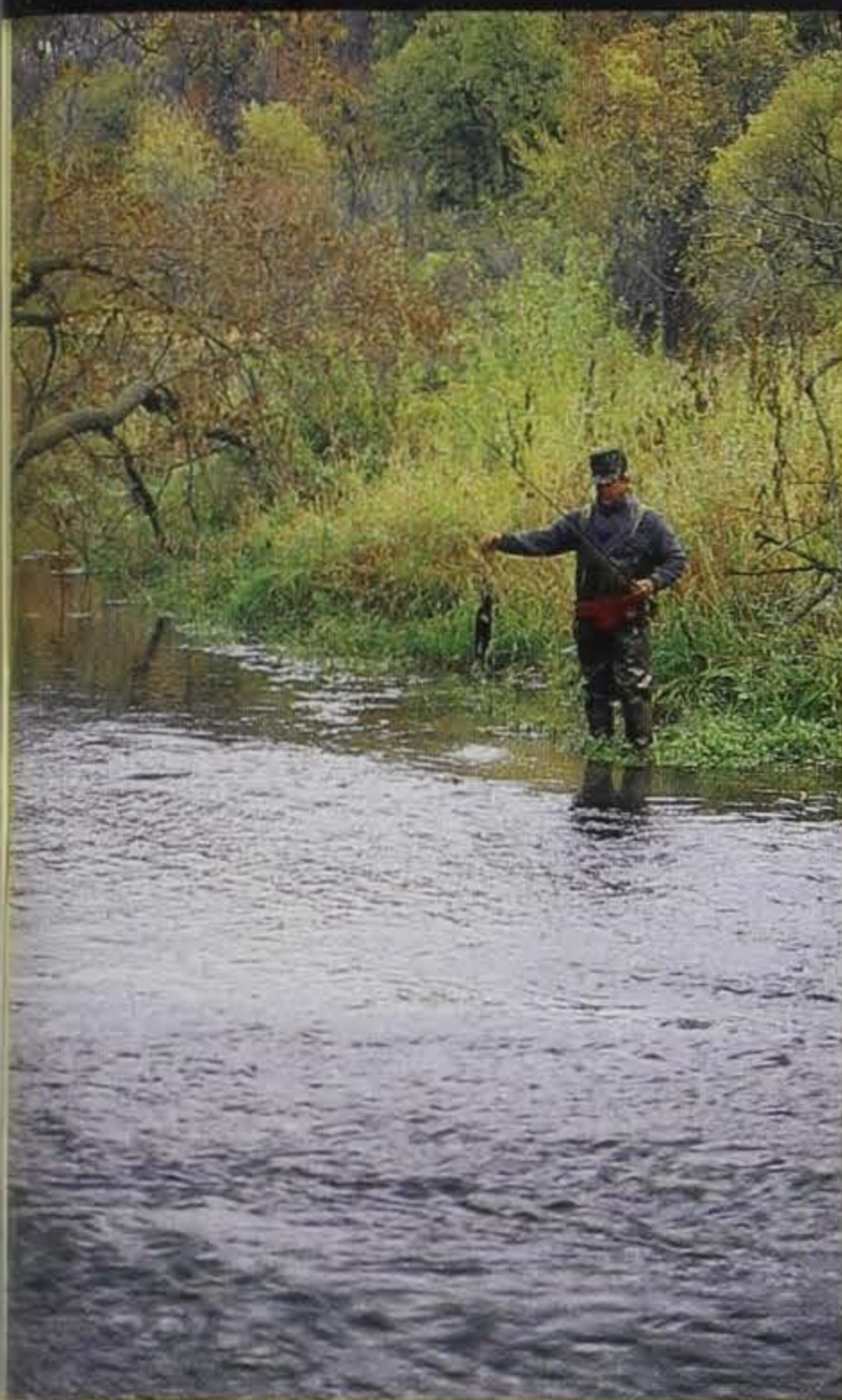
Good brown trout population; larger fish present. Catch-and-release and artificial lure-only.

Stocked with catchable rainbow and brook trout twice per week from April through August, once per week in September and October. Easy access.

Wild brown trout regulated by catch-and-release and artificial lure-only. Rainbow and brook trout present.

A major habitat improvement project completed in 2001. Stocked weekly with rainbow trout. Good brown trout population through natural reproduction. Catchable brown and brook trout stocked as well as fingerling browns and rainbows. A larger, more open





Ken Formanek

however, those weighing less than 2 pounds are the best for eating. They are also better when eaten fresh and not frozen.

One of my personal favorites is the white bass, or striper. This speedster loves to hit lures, and like the drum, will test your equipment. Look for stripers primarily in the Mississippi River; however, Lake Delhi also supports a good striper population. Stripers like a combination of current and rock, which makes the Mississippi's wing dams a favored haunt. Baitfish jumping out of the water or seagulls actively diving and feeding are good indicators that a school of white bass are actively feeding. Approach that area quickly and use about any lure that resembles an injured baitfish.

It is up to you to get out and enjoy these beautiful resources and their angling opportunities. Here's hoping your fishing outings are numerous, enjoyable and full of action through all of 2002.

## TROUT (cont)

*Delaware*  
Pine Creek,  
*Allamakee*  
South Bear,  
*Winneshiek*

South Fork Big Mill,  
*Jackson*  
South Pine,  
*Winneshiek*

Spring Branch,  
*Delaware*

Waterloo Creek,  
*Allamakee*

trout stream. Fish the in-stream woody structure. Walk-in area located in a beautiful wooded valley. Habitat project completed in 2001.

Very high quality with five stream miles open to public fishing. Stocked with catchable-size brook, brown and rainbow trout weekly. Also stocked with fingerling browns.

A small stream with a lot of habitat. Brown trout population has been on the rise since 1999. Iowa's premier brook trout stream. Supported entirely through natural reproduction. Abundant brookies up to 12 inches with a few larger fish. Catch-and-release and artificial lures-only.

Fourteen-inch size limit on brown, rainbow and brook trout and artificial lures-only. Excellent insect hatches. A high-quality trout stream with both easy and walk-in access.

One of Iowa's largest trout streams. Stocked with catchable brook and rainbow trout upstream (west) of Dorchester. Excellent naturally reproducing brown trout population downstream of Dorchester. Below the Highway 76 bridge, a 1.4 mile segment is catch-and-release, artificial lure-only.

## WALLEYES

Cedar River, *Bremer, Black Hawk, Chickasaw, Floyd and Mitchell*

Maquoketa River,  
*Delaware*

Mississippi River,  
*Pools 9 through 15*

Shell Rock River, *Butler*  
Wapsipinicon River,  
*Buchanan*

Fingerling stockings have produced good populations of quality fish throughout this major river system.

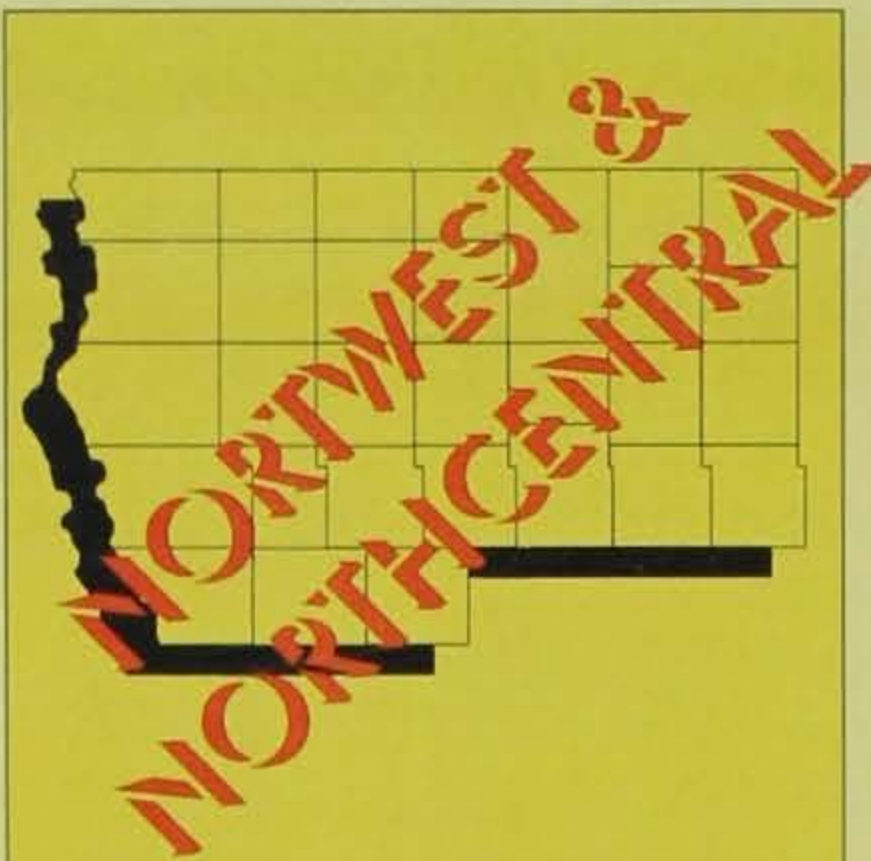
Good population of 14- to 20-inch walleyes below Manchester and the Lake Delhi dam.

Overall the catch is down from previous years, however it is still the major producer of walleyes in Iowa. Spawns in 2000 and 2001 were very good so expect improved success in coming years. Key on tailwaters in the pre-spawn period of March and April and again late fall. Work the wing dams in post-spawn and summer/early fall periods with crawlers and crankbaits. Try crankbaits during the summer in the deeper, flowing sloughs such as Lansing Big Slough (Pool 9), Harpers and Wyalusing sloughs (Pool 10) and Cassville Slough (Pool 11).

Good numbers of quality-size fish.

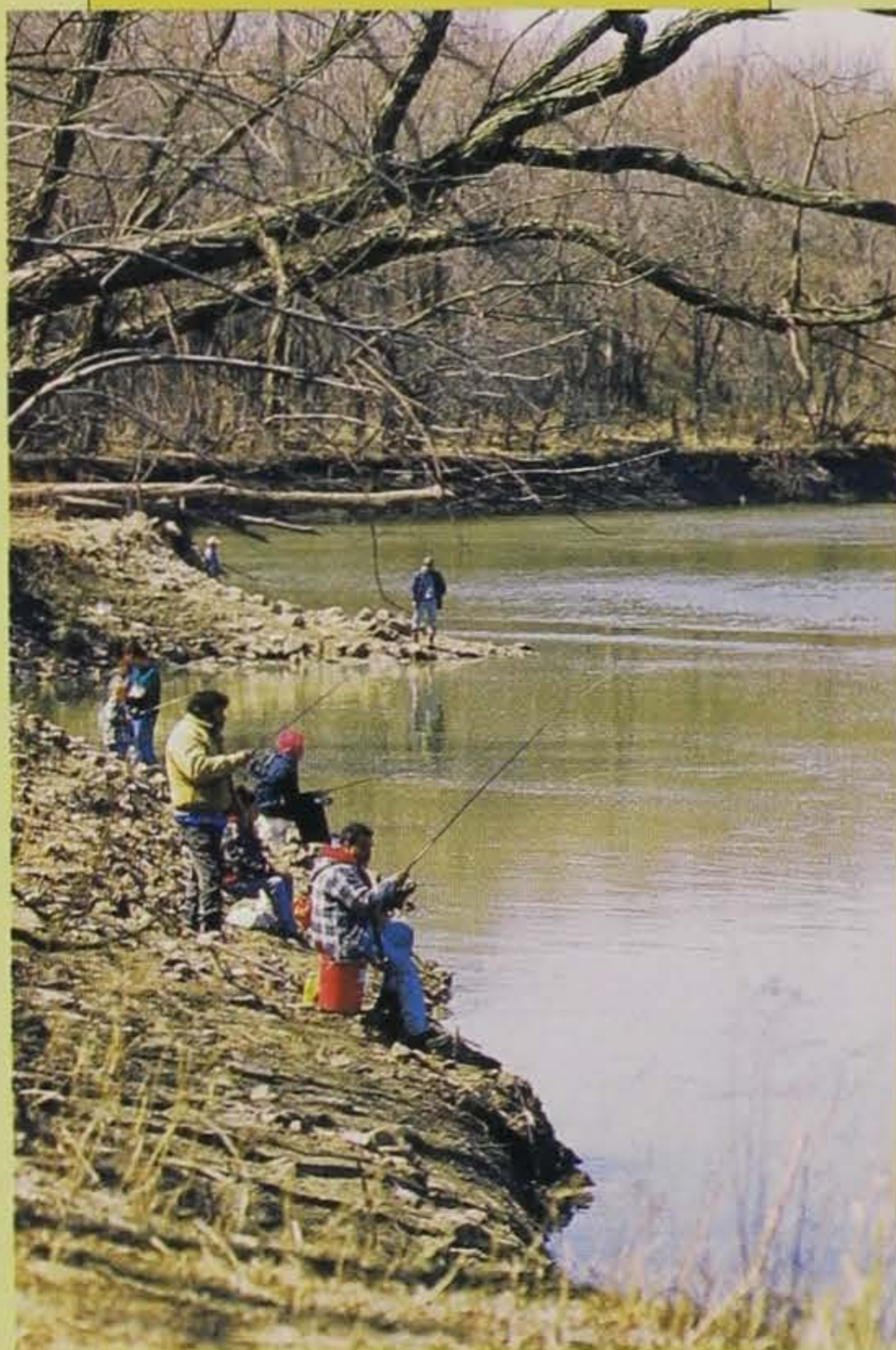
Good numbers from Littleton downstream. Walleyes exceeding 10 pounds caught every year. Fish the deeper pools in late fall and winter using a jig tipped with a minnow or a night crawler.





By Thomas W. Gengerke  
Regional Fisheries  
Supervisor

Natural lakes, rich prairie streams, small impoundments and great border rivers offer diverse opportunities for anglers in northwest and north-central Iowa. Our fisheries are equally diverse



Ken Formanek

## WALLEYES

Silver Lake  
*Dickinson*

Five Island  
*Palo Alto*

West Okoboji  
*Dickinson*

Clear Lake  
*Cerro Gordo*

West Fork Des Moines River  
*Humboldt*  
Storm Lake  
*Buena Vista*

Consistent producer of quality walleye. In spring, wading anglers should concentrate on points of rocky shorelines casting twisters or minnow-like lures. Good numbers of 13- to 18-inch fish; good chance for a trophy. Boaters will do well using live bait and artificials. Later, trolling crankbaits will be successful, with the "hot bite" occurring into July. Boaters don't forget submerged vegetation; walleyes like the security and food it provides. Anglers will enjoy continued success. Survey results show good numbers of large fish. The south end of the lake will offer the best action early, with 15- to 20-inch walleye typical. As water clarity decreases, try trolling live bait or artificial lures. If the action is slow on the south end, try the area north of the railroad bridge.

Consistent producer of walleyes long line trolling stick baits in the spring, fishing weedlines with live bait in the summer and wading with lures and leadheads in the fall. Most fish will be in the 13- to 15-inch range as the population rebuilds, with some 18- to 20-inchers.

Excellent fishing in 2001 with more than 8,000 walleyes harvested averaging 17 inches. Surveys indicate good numbers of 14- to 20-inch fish remain.

Survey conducted last year showed good numbers of 1- to 3-pound walleye from Rutland to Gotch Park south of Humboldt.

Walleye numbers remain constant, which means lots of fish. Excellent growth rates last summer with lots of fish above the 15-inch minimum length limit. Best fishing is in May and June. Troll Shad Raps or wade the shoreline casting twisters. Stoney Point, the north shore and the big island are hotspots, depending on the wind. Drifting live bait can also be effective during early summer. Only one walleye per day can exceed 22 inches.

## YELLOW PERCH

Trumbull Lake  
*Clay*

Spirit Lake  
*Dickinson*

Silver Lake  
*Worth*  
Crystal Lake  
*Hancock*

Persistence and patience will pay off with good catches of 8- to 10-inch fish. Most anglers fish from the boat ramp dock using minnows and a bobber.

Improvement is the prediction for 2002. Most fish caught last year were too small to keep. Assuming continued good growth throughout the summer, there should be excellent numbers approaching 10 inches by fall.

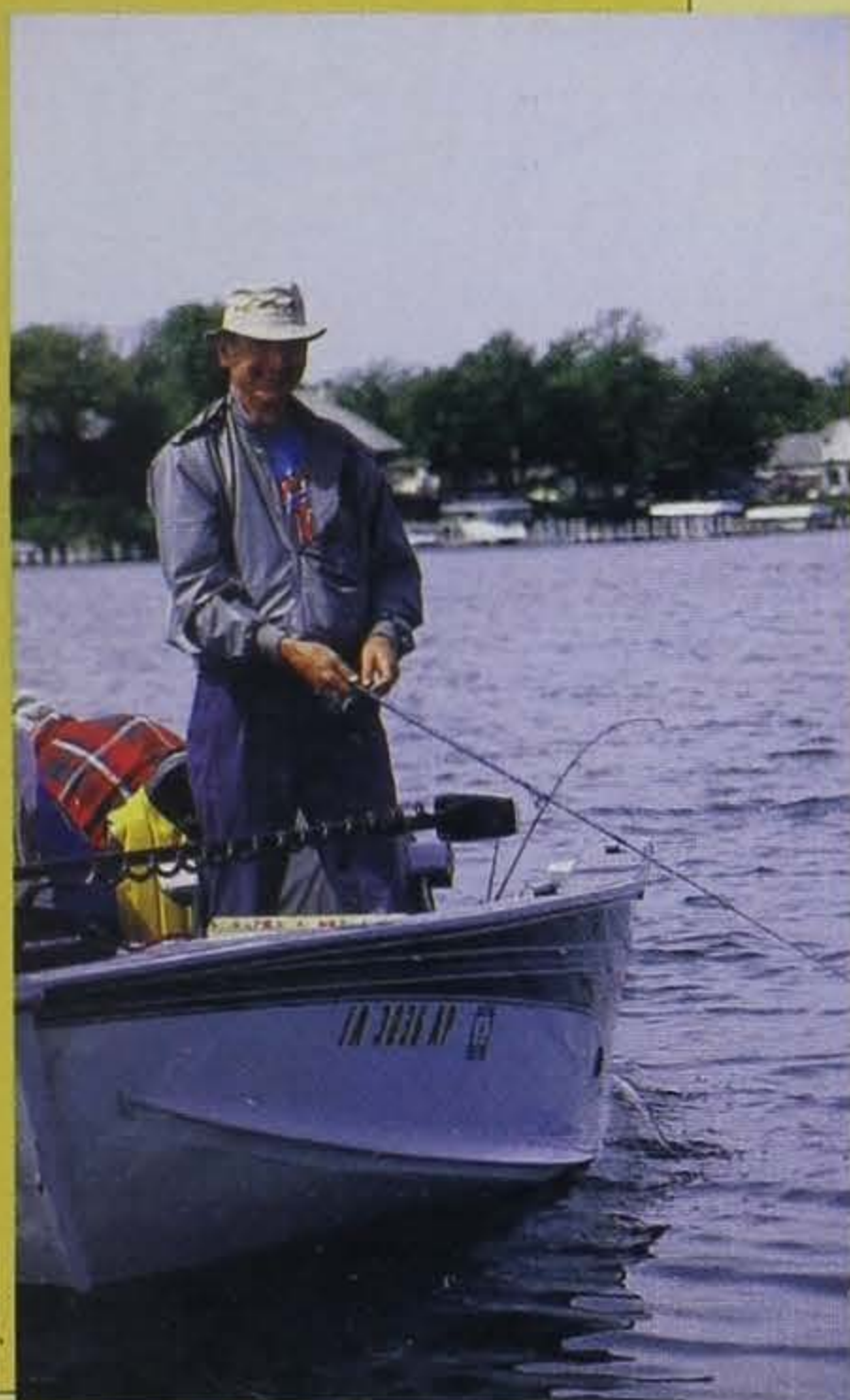
Dense population of perch, however sorting will be required. Small minnows provide the best results. Most fish are 1/4-pound and provide good action during the early spring and late fall.



in their community structure as are the "special events," which center around these angling opportunities.

From the Big Sioux River Days in Haywarden to Octoberfest at Clear Lake, from the Lake View Summer Water Carnival to the Great Walleye Weekend at Spirit Lake and the Okobojis — the opportunities are numerous, diverse and entertaining for individuals and families alike.

While our fishery habitats and their respective sport fisheries are all special, it is the natural lakes of the region which make the area unique. Their basins were formed by the Wisconsin glacier, which covered this portion of Iowa 20,000 years ago.



Clay Smith

## BULLHEADS

Dog Creek  
*O'Brien*

Recent survey showed numerous large bullheads with some approaching 13 inches. Fish the shallow water areas on the north and west ends of the lake for early season action.

Ingham Lake  
*Emmet*

Excellent numbers of large fish approaching 10 inches. This lake has the potential to provide fast and furious action during the peak spring period.

Silver Lake  
*Palo Alto*

Good numbers of large bullheads approaching 10 inches. Added bonus will be yellow bullheads, found in significant numbers during the 2001 lake survey.

Center Lake  
*Dickinson*

Often overlooked by the bullhead angler, this lake has the potential to provide quality angling. Surveys indicate large bullheads, averaging 10 to 13 inches.

East Okoboji  
*Dickinson*

Constant producer of large bullheads and this year will be no exception. The north end has ample public areas. Traditional producer will yield fish approaching 9 inches. This will be a banner year for bullheads, with a huge population of 8- to 10-inch fish. They have been in the lake for three years but have grown slow. However, 2001 saw a growth spurt of 2 to 3 inches, which should make the fish more desirable.

Lost Island, *Palo Alto*  
Black Hawk  
*Sac*

Abundant population. April through June produce the best catches.

Rice Lake  
*Winnebago*  
Lake Cornelia  
*Wright*  
Clear Lake  
*Cerro Gordo*

Last year's survey showed most fish are between 9 and 10 inches and weigh 1/2-pound.

Average size caught in 2001 was 9-1/4 inches and weighed nearly 1/2-pound.

## CHANNEL CATFISH

Lake Pahoja  
*Lyon*

Consistent producer. Surveys reflect good numbers of 18- to 21-inchers and larger catfish up to 12 pounds. Fish in the evening using traditional baits.

Center Lake  
*Dickinson*

Anglers will notice the influx of pan-sized fish nearing 16 inches, reflective of excellent growth of fish stocked in 1999. Little fishing pressure, and thus has the potential to produce trophy fish in the future.

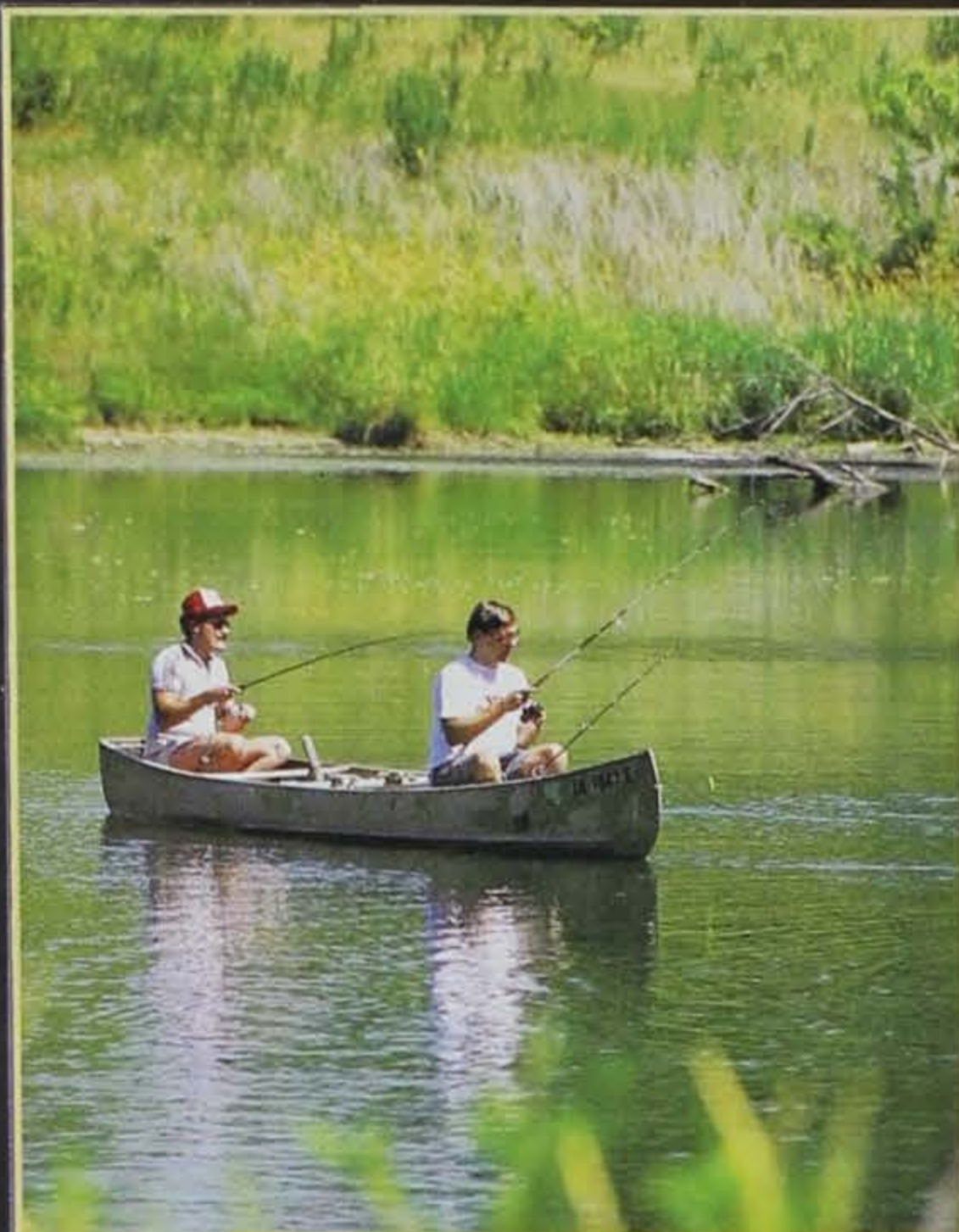
Silver Lake  
*Dickinson*

Untapped fishery ready to provide superb fishing in 2002. First stocked in 1998, fish have showed excellent growth with 2- to 3-pound fish possible. Excellent water clarity might dictate night angling. Live bait, such as chubs or crawlers, may provide a bonus walleye.

Five Island  
*Palo Alto*

Fish stocked in 1999 will reach 15 to 18 inches. Shore access abundant. Traditional baits are in order; however don't overlook live bait such as night crawlers for potential multi-species catches.

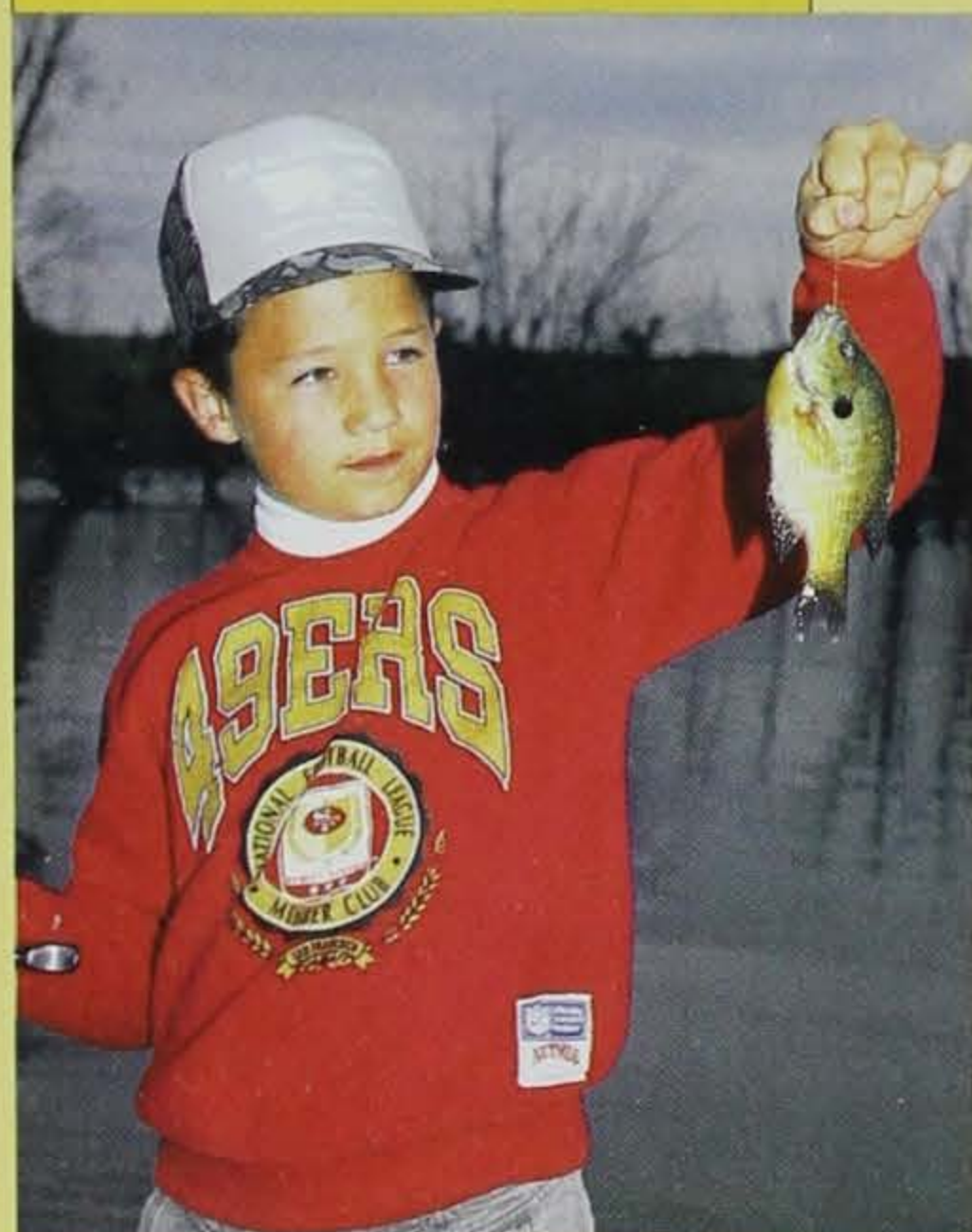




Ron Johnson

As the glacier melted and retreated, the basins filled with water.

There are 31 major natural lakes within the region, containing nearly 30,000 acres of water. They are important to Iowa and valued by anglers. Walleyes are certainly one of the most popular fish in this region, but the large diversity of species makes the



Lowell Washburn

## CHANNEL CATFISH (cont)

Clear Lake  
Cerro Gordo  
West Fork Des Moines River  
Humboldt  
Iowa River  
Hardin  
Black Hawk  
Sac

Average size creel in 2001 was 16 inches with best results occurring from June through August.

A 2001 fishery survey between Rutland and Humboldt revealed excellent numbers of fish between 14 and 20 inches.

Fish up to 7 pounds were collected during 2001 survey between Steamboat Rock and Eldora.

Following a partial summer kill in 1999, aggressive stocking programs have resulted in lots of 15- to 18-inch fish, as well as some 5- to 10-pound fish. Shad entrails, chicken liver, stink bait, dead chubs and cut bait are favorites

Stocking program and an abundance of forage have led to a tremendous population of 2- to 5-pound fish. Try as soon as the ice goes out with shad entrails, shad sides or dead chubs. Always fish into the wind. June and July are also super months for catfish in Storm Lake.

Storm Lake  
Buena Vista

## BLUEGILLS

East Okoboji  
Dickinson

Nice-size fish available. Early action begins right after ice-out in the upper end of the lake. On sunny days look for bluegills near wooden docks. Use a slow presentation because fish are still fairly inactive. As the water warms look for submerged timber and docks near deeper water. Live and artificial baits will work.

Excellent "gill" fishing the past two years, which will continue this year. Numbers will be down, but the fish will be larger (8- to 9-inch range). Action starts early after ice-out in the canals. As the season progresses, fish rock piles and weeds on the main lake.

Abundant 6-1/2- to 7-1/2-inch fish found in fall 2001 fish survey.

Recorded the highest catch rate in a 10-county region of north-central Iowa. Six- to 7-inch fish common.

May and June proved to be the best months to catch nice bluegills in Brushy Creek Lake last year. Bigger fish, some up to 10 inches, will be available in 2002, with lots of smaller fish coming on. Fish near shore in standing timber with small jigs or tear drops tipped with wax worms. As the water warms, head to the timber in deeper water to find big bluegills.

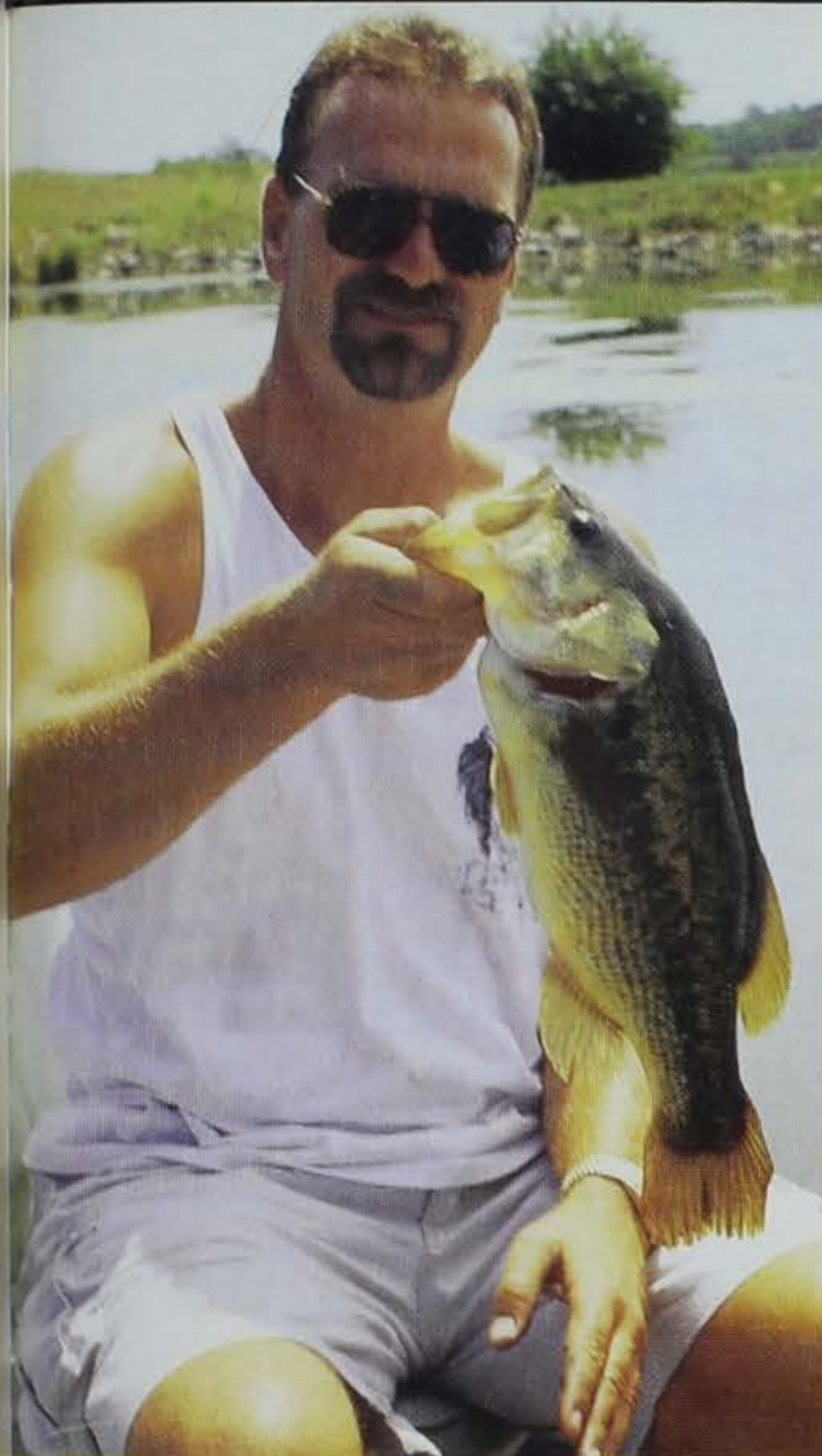
Fishing for 9- to 10-inch bluegills in the summer of 2001 was phenomenal and 2002 should be just as good. Most of these plate-sized bluegills were caught in 10 feet of open water. Tear drop jigs and wax worms or wigglers worked best.

West Okoboji  
Dickinson

Upper Pine,  
Hardin  
Beeds Lake  
Franklin  
Brushy Creek  
Webster

Yellow Smoke  
Crawford





Ken Formanek

natural lakes particularly attractive to a variety of anglers. No other resources, with the exception of the Mississippi River, supports such a wide diversity of sport-fish. In many of these lakes more than a dozen different sport-fish species are harvested throughout the year. These fish represent top predators like walleye, northern pike, muskie, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass and white bass, or panfish such as yellow perch, bluegill, crappie and bullheads. Other species such as yellow bass, channel catfish, flathead catfish and freshwater drum are equally prevalent.

Resources which support a multi-species fish community offer fishing opportunities year-round. No matter what time of

## MUSKELLUNGE

West Okoboji  
*Dickinson*

The most consistent producer of muskie excitement in the past will only improve in 2002. Annual muskie tournament produced many sub-legal (under 40 inches) fish, which is an indication of good things to come.

Spirit Lake  
*Dickinson*

Springtime gill netting resulted in the highest catch-rate of 25- to 35-inch muskies since a population was established in the lake.

Clear Lake  
*Cerro Gordo*

Population continues to increase. Most fish collected during 2001 gill netting were between 25 and 35 inches.

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Upper and Lower  
Pine, *Hardin*

A 2001 survey revealed excellent numbers and quality bass (up to 7 pounds) in both lakes.

Little Wall  
*Hamilton*

Minimum length limit (18 inches) has produced many 15- to 18-inch bass.

Briggs Woods,  
*Hamilton*

Fish the weed edges to catch largemouth bass in a variety of sizes.

Brushy Creek  
*Webster*

Numbers and growth phenomenal. Lots of fish in the 14- to 18-inch range. Try spinnerbaits, plastic worms and topwater lures. Numerous jetties provide ample shoreline fishing. Catch-and-release will help this new lake.

Mill Creek  
*O'Brien*

Surveys in 2001 indicated large bass present with a good population of sub-legal fish. Good numbers of 10- to 18-inch fish; persistence and patience will be rewarded with larger fish approaching 20 inches. Concentrate on submerged brush and logs, as well as rocky shorelines. Anglers are encouraged to practice catch-and-release. Bass approaching 21 inches are present in this small lake. Anglers will notice a decrease in catch rates; however, those with persistence will not be disappointed. Fish weedless baits like plastic worms, surface lures and jig and pigs around the numerous submerged brush piles. This traditional producer yielded plenty of excitement for catch-and-release fishing last year. However, a strong 12- to 14-inch year class should yield many legal bass.

Dog Creek  
*O'Brien*

West Okoboji  
*Dickinson*

## CRAPPIES

Silver Lake  
*Palo Alto*

Fish the submerged shallow water timber from April through mid-June for nice catches of 9-inch fish. Early in the season, concentrate on areas exposed to sunshine with calm conditions. As the water warms, try submerged rocks and timber. Mid- to late-May is best. Excellent fishing the past two seasons. Should be good again in 2002, with most fish running 8 inches. White crappies run 9 to 13 inches and most black crappie are 8 inches.

Beeds Lake  
*Franklin*  
Lower Pine  
*Hardin*



the year, there are usually active fish willing to bite. Early spring provides opportunities for northern pike and crappies. May and June are excellent months for bullheads, walleye and bass. July and August means warmer water temperatures and increased activity for bluegill and channel catfish. As water temperatures cool, perch may dominate the catch. Perch and bluegill will continue to bite through the ice-fishing season, and walleye will provide anglers with the opportunity for a larger — possibly trophy-size — fish.

There are so many opportunities for so many different fish. If you have never experienced fishing the natural lakes region of northwest and north-central Iowa, give it a try. For those who live in the region, appreciate the treasures you have “sitting in your own back yard.”

## CRAPPIES (cont)

Crystal Lake

*Hancock*

Badger Lake

*Webster*

Storm Lake

*Buena Vista*

Fall 2001 survey revealed good numbers of white crappie between 9 and 10 inches.

Anglers barely put a dent in the crappie population last year. Although not huge, quantity more than makes up for quality. Lots of fish in the 8-inch range. Fish live minnows under a small bobber near shore early. Look for crappies suspended in the water column in summer. Lots of 10- to 14-inchers present, especially in the marina in early spring. Fish live minnows and a bobber around the docks on a warm, spring day. A small jig fished slowly under a small bobber will also produce.

## NORTHERN PIKE

Trumbull Lake

*Clay*

Little Swan

*Dickinson*

Silver Lake

*Worth*

This lake is a good bet to produce nice-size fish (greater than 25 inches), with the occasional trophy, during the early spring and late fall. Best time to fish is early spring, until water temps reach 70 degrees, using cut bait fished on the bottom. Action picks up again in the fall as the fish feed heavily to get ready for winter. Incidental catches by commercial anglers indicate good numbers of 4- to 7-pound pike. Fish early spring and late fall. The early ice fishing season is also good. Three- to 5-pound fish collected during 2001 surveys. Most are caught from the county park on the north shore or the fishing jetty on the south shore.

## SMALLMOUTH BASS

Spirit Lake

*Dickinson*

West Okoboji

*Dickinson*

Iowa River

*Hardin*

Nice population of “smallies.” Last year’s excellent angling will continue in 2002. Action begins shortly after ice-out, fishing minnows and jigs on shallow rock piles on sunny calm days. As the water warms, try deeper rock piles and emerging weeds using live bait or surface lure. The action peaks when the fish are on their beds. Fishing was inconsistent in 2001, but the fish are there. Both legal (15 inches and above) and sub-legal bass present. Excellent numbers of legal-size fish (12 inches and above) collected below Iowa Falls in 2001 survey.

## YELLOW/WHITE BASS

Clear Lake

*Cerro Gordo*

Storm Lake

*Buena Vista*

Yellow bass reached angler-acceptable size this past fall should provide good fishing in 2002.

Lots of nice white bass harvested in 2001 and surveys show a great population of 10- to 17-inch fish. Most are caught trolling Shad Raps in open water. Live minnows fished near the bottom in late summer or early fall is also productive. Many are caught from shore on twisters.



Lowell Washburn





Ken Formanek



By Joe Schwartz  
Regional Fisheries  
Supervisor

This is the 26th year I've written this fishing forecast for southwest Iowa, and many of those articles ended with the admonition that fishing will be good "IF" the weather cooperates. Last year it didn't and fishing success showed it.

May is the absolute best month to fish the small lakes dotted across southwest Iowa,

## BLUEGILLS

Ahquabi,  
*Warren*  
Badger Creek, *Madison*  
Beaver, *Dallas*  
Big Creek,  
*Polk*  
Fogle, *Ringgold*  
Greenfield, *Adair*  
Hickory Grove,  
*Story*  
Hooper, *Warren*  
Littlefield, *Audubon*  
Little River, *Decatur*  
Meadow, *Adair*  
Nine Eagles,  
*Decatur*  
Nodaway, *Adair*  
Three Mile,  
*Union*

Twelve Mile, *Union*  
Viking, *Montgomery*

West Lake Osceola  
*Clarke*

Good for 8- to 12-inch redear sunfish. Challenge to catch. Good for 7- to 8-inch bluegills.  
Good for 7- to 8-inch fish.  
Good for 7- to 8-inch fish.  
Good numbers of 6- and 7-inch fish. Fish size has really improved since the shad winterkill.  
Seven- to 8-1/2-inch fish common; redear up to 10.  
Lots of 6- to 8-inch fish.  
Seven- to 9-inch fish. Try pallets and woody shoreline structure.  
Redear fishing good. Bluegill 6-1/2 to 8 inches.  
Lots of 6- to 8-inch fish.  
Seven- to 8-inch fish common. Good fishing.  
Good 6- to 8-inch fish. Redears are dandies.  
Good redear population present. Little fishing pressure. Bluegills 7 to 8 inches.  
Good for 7-inch fish.  
Tremendous population of 7- to 8-1/2-inch fish with some up to 9. Redears up to 11 inches.  
Fish 7 to 8 inches common. Try the flooded trees.  
Six- to 8-inches common. Work shoreline in late May and early June.  
Fish average 7-1/2 to 8-1/2 inches. Fish flooded timber edges.

## CRAPPIES

Ahquabi, *Warren*  
Badger Creek, *Madison*  
Beaver, *Dallas*  
Big Creek, *Polk*  
Carter, *Pottawattamie*  
DeSoto Bend,  
*Harrison*  
Easter, *Polk*  
Fogle, *Ringgold*  
Fulsom, *Mills*  
Green Valley, *Union*  
Greenfield, *Adair*  
Icaria, *Adams*  
Littlefield, *Audubon*

Little River, *Decatur*  
Manawa, *Pottawattamie*  
Mariposa, *Jasper*  
Missouri River  
*Pottawattamie*

Nice 8- to 9-inch fish, with some up to 12.  
Nice 8- to 9-inch fish.  
Dandy 9- to 11-inch fish.  
Most fish will be 8 to 10 inches this year.  
Good numbers of 9- to 12-inch fish.  
Good fishing for 8- to 13-inch crappie. Best in early spring along the structure.  
Seven- to 9-inch fish common, a few up to 11.  
Good for 7-1/2- to 9-inch fish in flooded timber.  
Lots of 10-inch-plus fish, in the spring.  
Average size 7-1/2 to 9 inches, with some up to 13.  
Eight- to 10-inch fish common.  
Fish riprapped areas. Lots of 8- to 8-1/2-inches.  
Nice 8- to 10-inch fish. Should be good this spring. Try the face of the dam.  
Fish flooded trees. Lots of 8- to 9-inches, up to 12.  
Good early fishing in lagoons and near the pier.  
Lots of 7-inch-plus crappies.  
Isolated areas behind wing dikes can produce huge crappies, exceeding 14 inches, especially in the fall.





Clay Smith

but weather in May 2001 proved uncooperative. It started out hot with temperatures in the 90s. Catches were good until a series of cold fronts produced temperatures that didn't make it into the 70s. Water temperatures dropped from 76 degrees to 62. Crappies went deep and bluegills abandoned their nests. Catfishing never started and bass fishing was mediocre.

One of the reasons May is such a good fishing month is because the fish are shallow, near the shoreline and more vulnerable to

## CRAPPIES (cont)

Orient  
Adair  
Prairie Rose  
Shelby  
Red Rock  
Marion  
Rock Creek  
Jasper  
Saylorville  
Polk  
Slip Bluff, Decatur  
Three Mile  
Union  
Twelve Mile, Union  
Viking  
Montgomery  
West Lake Osceola, Clarke

Always turbid water, but still good crappie fishing average 8 to 9 inches.  
Fish are 6 to 8 inches. Good all summer but best in spring. Fish the structure.  
Fish when water is clear; try feeder stream bays. Good numbers of 7- to 10-inch fish.  
Seven- to 8-1/2-inch crappie. Try in bays and around points.  
Moderate population of 8- to 11-inch fish; try around Marina and Mile Long Bridge areas.  
Eight- to 10-inch fish. Few people fish this lake.  
Good numbers of 8-1/2- to 10-1/2-inch crappies with fair numbers of 11- to 13-inch fish.  
Lots of 7- to 9-1/2-inch fish with an occasional 11.  
Good numbers of 8- to 10-inch crappie. Size has improved last couple of years.  
Nine- to 10-1/2-inch fish with some up to 12.

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Ahquabi, Warren  
Badger Creek, Madison  
Beaver, Dallas  
Big Creek, Polk  
Don Williams, Boone  
  
Easter, Polk  
  
Green Valley, Union  
  
Greenfield, Adair  
Hooper, Warren  
  
Hickory Grove, Story  
  
Little River, Decatur  
  
Mariposa, Jasper  
Meadow, Adair  
Nine Eagles, Decatur  
Prairie Rose, Shelby  
Red Rock, Marion  
Saylorville, Polk

Excellent catch-and-release fishing. Minimum 18-inch length limit on bass.  
Lots of 12- to 15-inchers with occasional lunker.  
Good catch-and-release lake; most under 15 inches.  
Eighteen-inch minimum length limit on bass.  
Most fish are 13 to 17 inches, with some lunkers.  
Try points and woody structure in coves and northern portion of lake.  
Fish up to 5 pounds. Most are 10 to 14 inches. Favorite areas are along dam face and around island.  
With a 22-inch minimum length limit, any keeper will be a real trophy.  
Not overly large fish, but numbers are good.  
Excellent catch-and-release fishery. Minimum 18-inch length limit.  
Good catch-and-release fishery. Some fish up to 18 inches.  
Try fishing submerged brush and trees. Good numbers of 2- to 3-1/2-pounders.  
Good catch-and-release fishery.  
Good bass lake, 40 percent exceed 15 inches.  
Good numbers of small fish; occasional large one.  
Large fish. Fish the stake beds and brush piles.  
Best from mid-May to mid-July.  
Lots of 10- to 13-inch fish, with an occasional lunker. Fish face of dam, Big Creek outlet or any rocky area.



## — LARGEMOUTH BASS (cont) —

Three Mile, <i>Union</i>	Tremendous fishing for 11- to 15-inch fish with good numbers of 16- to 19-inch fish.
Twelve Mile, <i>Union</i>	Good for 12- to 18-inch fish.
Viking, <i>Montgomery</i>	Good population of 12- to 15-inch fish.
West Lake Osceola, <i>Clarke</i>	Good summer time bass fishing.

## — WALLEYES —

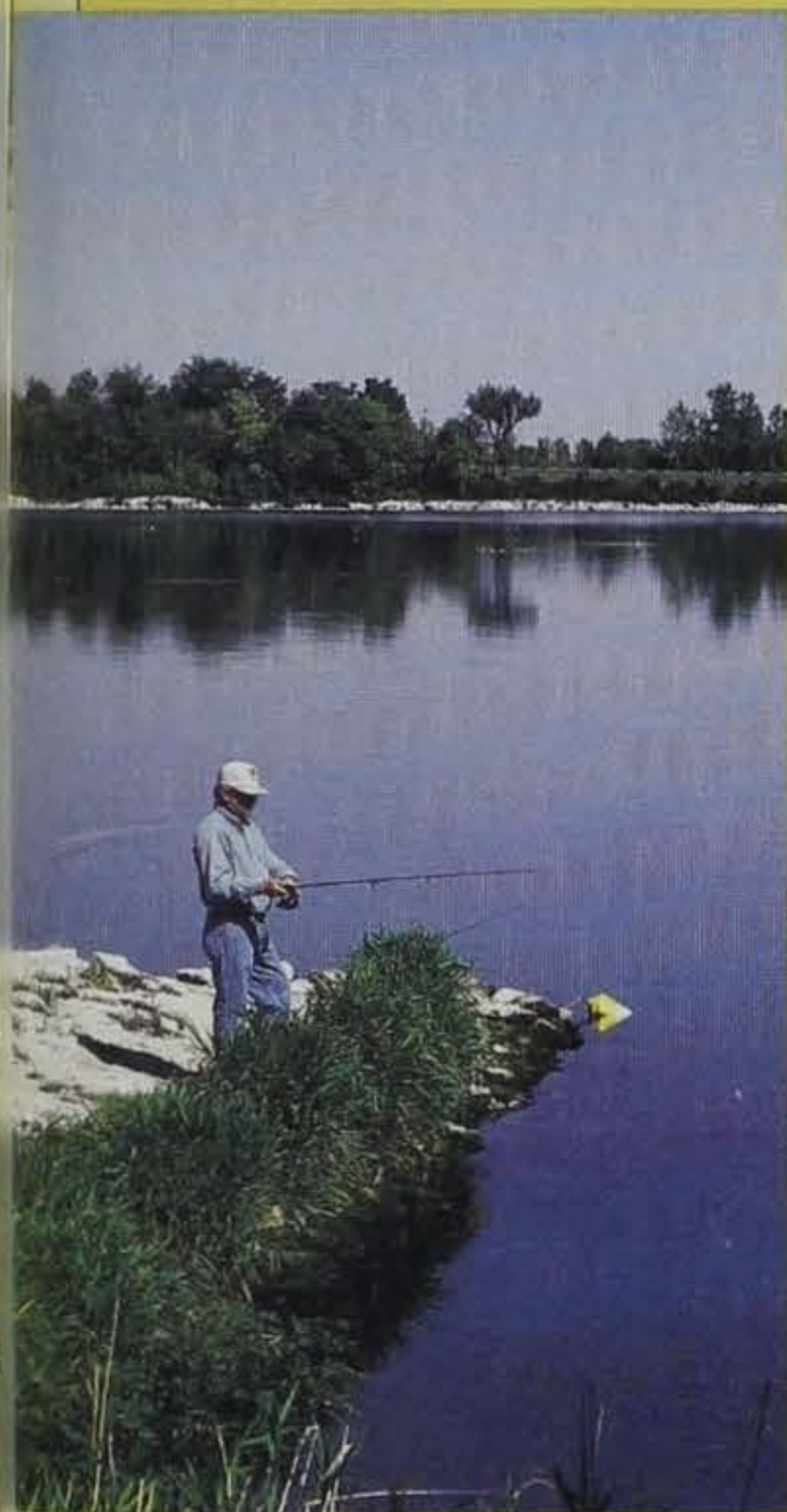
Big Creek, <i>Polk</i>	Fifteen-inch minimum length limit, with one fish over 20 inches daily. Bag limit of three fish.
Des Moines River, <i>Polk and Boone</i>	Fish below Corps dams, low head dams and gravel riffles. Scott Street dam is good in spring.
DeSoto, <i>Harrison</i>	Best in spring. Fair numbers of 14- to 17-inchers.
Little River, <i>Decatur</i>	Average fish are 14 to 18 inches. Excellent population. Fish up to 12 pounds present.
Manawa, <i>Pottawattamie</i>	Should be good in 2002. Mostly 14- to 16-inch fish.
Saylorville, <i>Polk</i>	Fish up to 8 pounds have been caught.
Three Mile, <i>Union</i>	Fish sandy points, old river channel, old roadbeds, outlet from Big Creek Lake and tailwaters.
Twelve Mile, <i>Union</i>	Try flooded roadbeds and humps; 15- to 18-inch fish.
	Fish roadbeds and creek channel edges. Fish are 13 to 24 inches, up to 10 pounds. Best walleye lake for numbers in southwest Iowa.

## — BULLHEADS —

Beaver, <i>Dallas</i>	Eleven-inch-plus fish; numbers down.
Big Creek, <i>Polk</i>	Eight- to 10-inch fish, with a few up to 12.
Manawa, <i>Pottawattamie</i>	Nice-size fish. Average 1 pound.
Rock Creek, <i>Jasper</i>	Fish are definitely keepers but not as many.
Springbrook, <i>Guthrie</i>	Medium-size fish, not as many as in past years.

## — CHANNEL CATFISH —

Ahquabi, <i>Warren</i>	Nice fish, average 18 to 20 inches, up to 30.
Big Creek, <i>Polk</i>	Lots of really nice fish, and not much pressure.
Carter, <i>Pottawattamie</i>	Good numbers of 1- to 4-pound fish.
Cedar, <i>Madison</i>	Four- to 6-pounders common, sorting required.
Easter, <i>Polk</i>	Excellent for fish 12 to 20 inches.
Fogle, <i>Ringgold</i>	Great numbers of 2- to 4-pound fish.
Green Valley, <i>Union</i>	Good numbers of 14- to 18-inch fish, with some up to 8 pounds.
Icaria, <i>Adams</i>	All sizes up to 5 pounds. May have to sort out smaller fish.
Little River, <i>Decatur</i>	Fish small bays in mid-summer. Many 2- to 8-pounders.
Littlefield, <i>Audubon</i>	Fish north shore on strong south wind. Usually a turbid lake. Fish from 3 to 6 pounds.



Ken Formanek



Roger Hill





Clay Smith

anglers. May tends to set the tone for fishing success the rest of the season, and when it's poor like last year, it never seems to recover. The summer didn't prove to be any better with very hot and humid weather keeping many anglers away from the lakes and streams. The cooler mornings and evenings were the only exceptions.

So what's the fishing going to be like this year? It should be good, again "if" the weather cooperates. Dry conditions, with no muddy runoff, made for good fish growth last year. Fishing pressure and harvest were down, but fish stocking continued so the fish are there. In addition, the mild winter produced no weather-related fish kills. All of this could mean more fish for anglers this year.

Use the accompanying tables to find the best place to go, be mobile and pray for good weather!

## — CHANNEL CATFISH (cont) —

Manawa, <i>Pottawattamie</i> Marion County Board Lake, <i>Marion</i> Meadow, <i>Adair</i> Mormon Trail, <i>Adair</i> Nine Eagles, <i>Decatur</i> Nodaway, <i>Adair</i> Orient, <i>Adair</i>	Good numbers, mostly 2 to 6 pounds. Some fish up to 12 pounds. Good numbers in the 1- to 3-pound range.  Fish average 2 to 6 pounds. Very good numbers. Abundant 1- to 4-pound fish; little pressure. Best fishing early. Fair during summer months. Stocked every year. Fish the camping area on strong south wind.
Prairie Rose, <i>Shelby</i>	Good numbers of 2- to 6-pounders. Some flatheads.
Red Rock, <i>Marion</i>	Average 12 to 20 inches. Best fishing from Mil Long bridge and towards dam.
Rock Creek, <i>Jasper</i>	Shallow, fertile lake with good numbers of large catfish.
Saylorville, <i>Polk</i> Summit, <i>Union</i>	Excellent fishing. Lots of 2 to 4 pound fish. One-to 3-pounders common.
Southwest Iowa Rivers Three Mile, <i>Union</i> Twelve Mile, <i>Union</i>	Catfish are abundant in all of our rivers. Good numbers of 2- to 6-pound fish. Cats 2 to 6 pounds common, a few up to 10. Good early on cut shad.
Viking, <i>Montgomery</i> West Lake Osceola, <i>Clarke</i>	All sizes up to 6 pounds. A few big ones. Two- to 4-pounders common, with a up to 12.

## — YELLOW BASS —

Carter, <i>Pottawattamie</i> Icaria, <i>Adams</i>	Lots of small fish. Hard hitters, good eating, lots of 6- to 9-inch fish.
Manawa, <i>Pottawattamie</i> Twelve Mile, <i>Union</i> Viking, <i>Montgomery</i>	Lots of small fish, with an occasional pounder. Large number of 7- to 9-inch fish. Moderate number of 8- to 12-inch fish. Best in early spring and late fall.

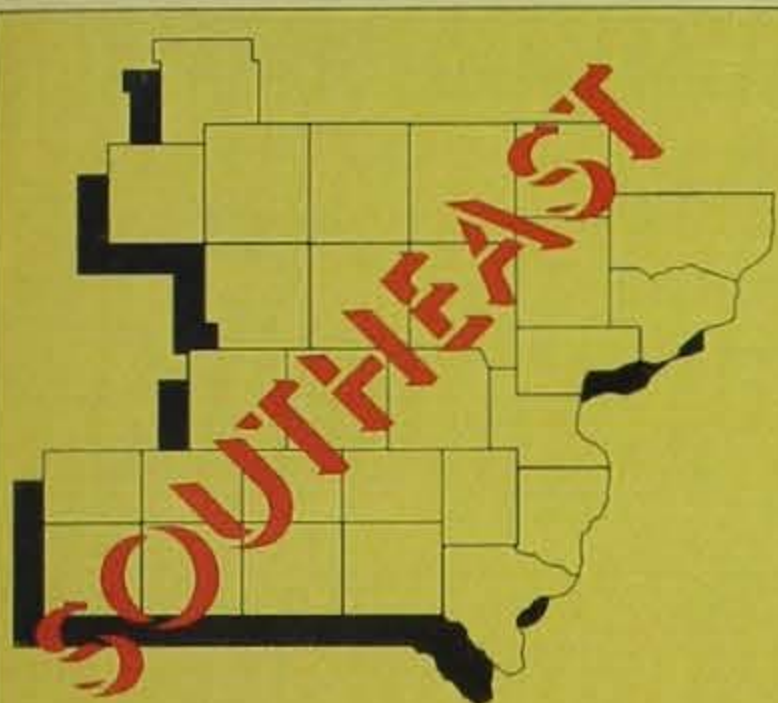
## — WHITE BASS/WIPERS —

Red Rock, <i>Marion</i>	Fish mid-summer, off the dam towards the beach or marina. Good to excellent fishing in tailwater area below dam.
Saylorville, <i>Polk</i>	Good in reservoir and below dam. Try below spillway from Big Creek Lake. White bass average 8 to 13 inches.

## — MUSKELLUNGE —

Three Mile, <i>Union</i>	Fish up to 44 inches (20-pounds-plus) and growing rapidly.
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**By Stephen J. Waters  
Regional Fisheries  
Supervisor**

This year's fishing forecast features favorite fishing getaways of the southeast region's four unit managers. Let's see where Bernie Schonhoff (Mississippi River Unit), Don Kline (Lake Darling Unit), Paul Sleeper (Lake Macbride Unit) and Mark Flammang (Rathbun Unit) will take us.

The Mississippi River is known for catfish. For flatheads, the area below the dam at Keokuk or any of the flowing side channels in the lower half of pool 16 are favorites. Channel catfish can be found in all pools, and numbers are high.

The tailwater and wingdams below lock and dam 18 or the Sylvan Slough area below lock and dam 15 are favorites for walleye and sauger. The wingdams along Credit Island, as well as tailwaters of any other dam, can also be productive.

For largemouth bass, bluegill and crappie, the nod goes to Big Timber (pool 17) and the chutes and cuts around Burlington Island (pool 18).

Within the Lake Darling Unit, the best crappie lakes are Darling and Geode, for bluegill try Geode and Odessa and for bass head to Geode, Odessa or Darling. The

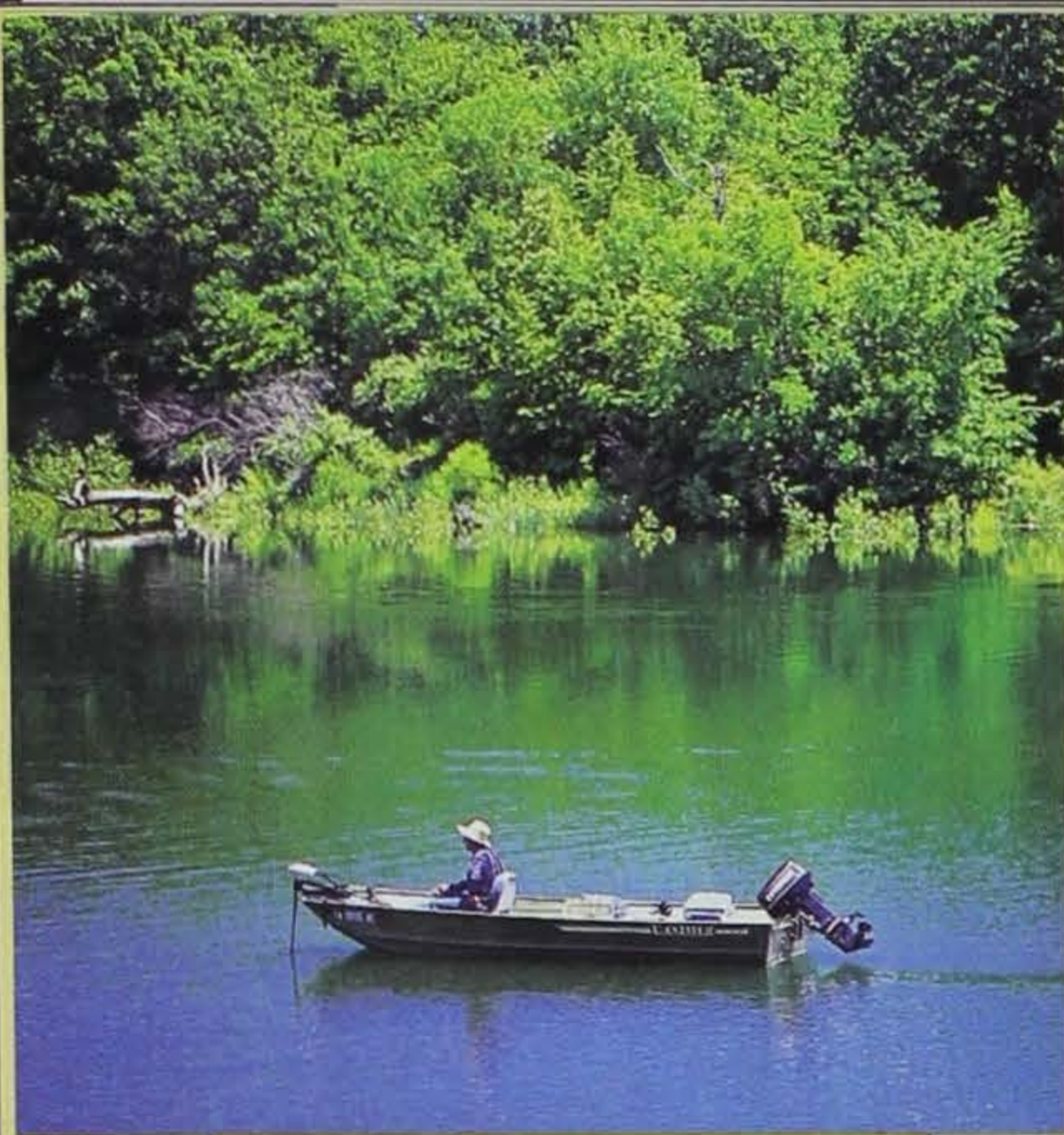
## BLUEGILLS

- |                             |         |   |
|-----------------------------|---------|---|
| Mississippi River           | Pool 16 | Try Andalusia backwaters, Credit Island Slough and Wyoming Island Slough.   |
|                             | Pool 17 | Try Big Timber, Cleveland Slough, Hidden Acres, Bogus Island, Blanchard Slough and Eagle Fill.  |
|                             | Pool 18 | Try Huron Island, Burnt Pocket, Johnson Slough and Dasher Chute.  |
|                             | Pool 19 | Try Burlington Island, Turkey Chute, Blackhawk Bottoms, Lead Island Chute, Niota weedbeds, Rabbit Island riprap, Devils Creek weedbed and Gray's Bay. Exceptional angling — best chance for a trophy. Good quality, many 7- to 9-inch fish available. Average size 7 to 8 inches-plus. Trophy fish present. Good numbers, 6 to 8 inches, with 10-inchers present. Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. All sizes, easy shoreline access. Good numbers of 6- to 8-inch fish. Good numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish. Excellent numbers of 8- to 10-inch and larger fish. Look for partly submerged timber and rock piles. Good numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish. Average harvest size 6 to 8 inches. Tremendous numbers of 7- to 8-inch fish. Dense population; excellent numbers of 8- and 9-inch fish. |
| Farm Ponds                  |         |   |
| Pleasant Creek, <i>Linn</i> |         |   |
| Geode, <i>Henry</i>         |         |   |
| Hannen, <i>Benton</i>       |         |   |
| Hawthorn, <i>Mahaska</i>    |         |   |
| Iowa, <i>Iowa</i>           |         |   |
| Kent, <i>Johnson</i>        |         |   |
| Keomah, <i>Mahaska</i>      |         |   |
| Miami, <i>Monroe</i>        |         |   |
| Wapello, <i>Davis</i>       |         |   |
| White Oak, <i>Mahaska</i>   |         |   |
| Diamond, <i>Poweshiek</i>   |         |   |
| Sugema, <i>Van Buren</i>    |         |   |
| Indian, <i>Van Buren</i>    |         |   |

## CRAPPIES

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Rathbun, <i>Appanoose</i>   | Excellent numbers; average size 9 to 11 inches; trophy fish available.  |
| Mississippi River           | See comments in bluegill section.                                       |
| Coralville, <i>Johnson</i>  | Excellent numbers of 8- to 12-inch fish.                                |
| Odessa, <i>Louisa</i>       | Average harvest size 8 to 10 inches; good numbers.                      |
| Iowa, <i>Iowa</i>           | Good numbers from 8 to 10 inches.                                       |
| Darling, <i>Washington</i>  | Two sizes of fish available; 7 to 8 inches and 10 to 12. Good numbers.  |
| Hawthorn, <i>Mahaska</i>    | Excellent numbers of 8- to 11-inch fish available.                      |
| Miami, <i>Monroe</i>        | Excellent numbers of 8- to 11-inch fish; trophy fish available.         |
| Diamond, <i>Poweshiek</i>   | Good numbers of 8- to 10-inch fish.                                     |
| Macbride, <i>Johnson</i>    | Excellent for 7- to 9-inch fish.  |
| Sugema, <i>Van Buren</i>    | Good angling; 8- to 10-inch fish most common.                           |
| Pleasant Creek, <i>Linn</i> | Good in spring for 9- to 11-inch fish.                                  |
| Keomah, <i>Mahaska</i>      | Abundant numbers of 9- to 10-inch fish. Check out the new fishing pier. |
| Indian, <i>Van Buren</i>    | Dense population with lots of 9- to 11-inch fish.                       |
| Union Grove, <i>Tama</i>    | High numbers of 8- to 9-inch fish.                                      |





Roger Hill

Wapsipinicon, Iowa, Cedar and Skunk rivers offer excellent catfishing. Most of the unit's lakes also have good populations of channel catfish.

Within the Lake Macbride Unit, Lake Macbride may be THE place to fish now and in upcoming years. The \$2.5 million lake renovation is complete; which included a tremendous amount of habitat improvements. Crappie fishing should be excellent and channel catfish of all sizes are routinely caught. The new reefs and rock piles will provide great places for walleye fishing.

Pleasant Creek is hard to beat for largemouth fishing. Top water action for white bass is becoming increasingly popular during the hot summer months, and bluegill and crappie fishing should be good this spring. The lake also boasts a healthy muskie population.

Diamond Lake and Lake Iowa are consistent producers of nice bluegills, crappie, channel catfish and largemouth bass. Hannen, Central and Kent Park lakes also produce excellent bluegill catches.

Lake Keomah is one of the best

## LARGEMOUTH BASS

Mississippi	See bluegill section.
Farm ponds	Best chance for a trophy. Great fishing.
Miami, <i>Monroe</i>	Excellent numbers, various sizes.
Pleasant Creek, <i>Linn</i>	Excellent catch-and-release with 18-inch minimum length limit. Fish up to 8 pounds.
Iowa, <i>Iowa</i>	Good numbers, various sizes.
Geode, <i>Henry</i>	Good catch-and-release fishery. Some trophy fish.
Macbride, <i>Johnson</i>	Good numbers of 2- to 4-pounders; fish of all sizes.
Sugema, <i>Van Buren</i>	New 12- to 18-inch slot length limit. Excellent catch-and-release fishery for 12- to 17-inch fish.
Diamond, <i>Poweshiek</i>	Good numbers of 2- to 4-pound fish; trophies present.
Wapello, <i>Davis</i>	No-kill regulation. Great numbers of 12- to 17-inchers.
Hawthorn, <i>Mahaska</i>	Tremendous numbers of 12- to 16-inch fish for catch-and-release angling. Excellent numbers of 16- to 22-inch fish.
Keomah, <i>Mahaska</i>	Excellent numbers of 13- to 18-inch fish.
Darling, <i>Washington</i>	Good numbers of 2- to 4 pound fish.

## CHANNEL CATFISH

Mississippi	All pools excellent; recruitment remains good.
Inland Rivers	Good to excellent; catfish factories!
Corydon, <i>Wayne</i>	Good numbers with a variety of sizes. Fish up to 29 inches collected in surveys.
Rathbun, <i>Appanoose</i>	Excellent fishery, all sizes. Post ice-out exceptional.
Coralville, <i>Johnson</i>	Exceptional fishery, all sizes. Post ice-out excellent.
Kent, <i>Johnson</i>	Excellent fishery, 12 to 16 inches average.
Miami, <i>Monroe</i>	Excellent number of all sizes of fish.
Macbride, <i>Johnson</i>	Good for all sizes.
Darling, <i>Washington</i>	Good for a variety of sizes.
Geode, <i>Henry</i>	Good for a variety of sizes.
Keomah, <i>Mahaska</i>	Good for a variety of sizes.
Hawthorn, <i>Mahaska</i>	Excellent fishery; fish up to 25 inches.
Bob White, <i>Wayne</i>	Excellent fishery; all sizes available.
Wapello, <i>Davis</i>	Good numbers of fish; most less than 22 inches.

## FLATHEAD CATFISH

Mississippi	Best below locks and dams, wingdams and side channels.
Skunk, lower Iowa, Des Moines, Cedar and Wapsipinicon rivers	Big fish in deep holes during summer; also try bridge pilings and drift piles. Good numbers of 5- to 30-pound fish.
Coralville, <i>Johnson</i>	Good numbers of 10- to 20-pound fish.
Rathbun	Fair numbers of 2- to 20-pound fish available.
<i>Appanoose</i>	Concentrate on riprap in Bridgeview area in late spring to early summer.

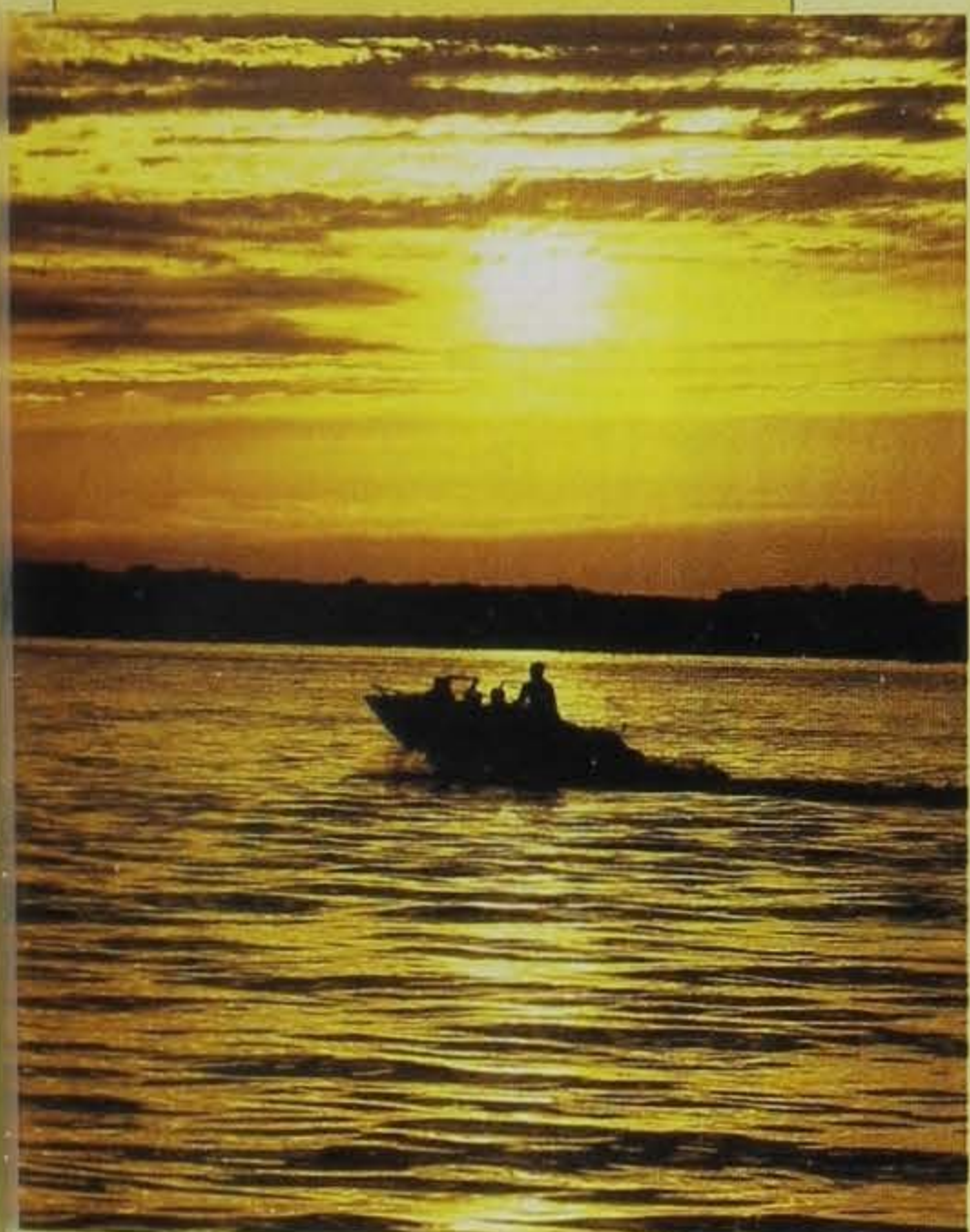


largemouth bass fisheries in the Rathbun Unit. Last year, anglers caught thousands of bass in the 16- to 19-inch range. At Hawthorn Lake, look for a tremendous number of 12- to 18-inch bass.

Lake Wapello is a bluegill hotspot based on quantity and quality. Bluegills will be smaller at Lake Sugema, but the numbers are thought provoking. Lake Miami is a consistent producer of crappie.

Lake Rathbun supports an excellent population of walleye. And after years of trying to establish a walleye population at Lake Sugema, efforts have finally paid off. Look for excellent densities of keeper fish.

We hope you give our favorite fishing holes a try, but keep in mind, southeast Iowa has plentiful and varied resources. Just because your favorite get-away spot wasn't mentioned doesn't mean you should give up on it. Maybe we will see you there as well.



Ken Formanek

## BULLHEADS

Wapello, *Davis*  
Keomah, *Mahaska*  
Macbride, *Johnson*

Ten- to 14-inch fish available.  
Ten- to 12-inch fish available.  
Best east of causeway in May for 8- to 10-inch fish.  
Ten- to 12-inch fish available.

Hawthorn, *Mahaska*

## WALLEYES

Mississippi River

Seek locks and dams and wingdams. Excellent for sauger, too.

Rathbun,  
*Appanoose*

Excellent fishery! Large numbers of 15- to 21-inch fish available.

Macbride,  
*Johnson*  
Des Moines River  
*Wapello*

Good numbers of 14- to 20- inch fish; tons of new habitat.

Quality angling below the Ottumwa hydropower dam; trophy fish available. Late winter and early spring is the best time to fish.

Coralville,  
*Johnson*  
Sugema,  
*Van Buren*

Good in spring and late fall in upper end and around I-380 bridge.  
Most fish 15- to 19-inches; good numbers of 24 inches.

## SAUGEYES

Iowa River,  
*Johnson*  
Coralville,  
*Johnson*  
Union Grove,  
*Tama*

Exceptional fishery; lots of 2- to 4-pound fish with 10 pound fish available.  
Best in early spring and late fall around I-380 bridge; good numbers of 2- to 3-pound fish.  
High numbers of 14- to 18-inch fish with some up to 6 pounds.

## WHITE BASS

Mississippi River  
Rathbun,  
*Appanoose*  
Coralville,  
*Johnson*  
Macbride,  
*Johnson*  
Pleasant Creek,  
*Linn*

Seek locks and dams and wingdams.  
Excellent numbers of 10- to 15-inch fish; target humps and points.  
Lots of 12- to 14-inch fish. Best in late summer on shad-colored crankbaits.  
Fair numbers of 12- to 14-inch fish; best angling in late summer  
White bass provide excellent summer topwater action.

## REDEAR SUNFISH

Geode, *Henry*  
Wapello, *Davis*  
Lake Iowa, *Iowa*

Good numbers of 8- to 11-inch fish.  
Good numbers of 8- to 12-inch fish.  
Tremendous year class of 6- to 7-inch fish.



# Building a Lake by Committee

by Mike McGhee

Planning on building a new lake in Iowa? If the answer is yes, the final price tag for constructing a 500 to 900 surface-acre lake would be close to \$10 million, and who has that much money available for a lake project?

Residents of southwest Iowa faced that same dilemma a few years ago when they tried to develop Three Mile Lake near Creston. Their answer? Build the lake by committee.

During the early 1950s, a group of residents in Union and Adair counties developed a plan to create a water supply for the town of Afton, reduce downstream flooding along Three Mile Creek, provide erosion control and expand recreational opportunities. As a result, planning and funding for the Three Mile Creek watershed project was officially authorized by the USDA Soil Conservation Service in 1965. The plan received federal funding and by 1978, 30 small flood control structures and grade stabilizations were in place.

The real catalyst for a large lake did not come for another 10 years when the state suffered through a drought and the need for water was a concern. The Three Mile Reservoir Agency (TMRA) was formed in 1988 to move a lake project forward. The TMRA included representatives of the Southern Iowa Rural Water Association,



Photo by Lynn Betts, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

Three Mile Lake in Union County is a lake built as part of the Three Mile Watershed project. The dam provides recreation, water supply, and flood control, and boosts the local economy.



City of Afton, Union County Conservation Board, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Union and Adair county soil and water conservation districts and the Union and Adair county boards of supervisors. The new committee ultimately decided one large, 880-acre lake was necessary to help meet water demands in a seven-county area in southern Iowa.

The committee was the perfect venue to offer funding solutions, track project progress and solve misunderstandings. The local media was kept informed, and politicians and government agencies were regularly updated. Because of the multiple sponsors and their many needs, a wide variety of funding sources were needed to complete the project.

Individual sponsors of the TMRA looked within their constituent base for funding. For example, the Southern Iowa Rural Water Association (SIRWA) planned to provide 950 million gallons of water annually to nearly 25,000 residents in seven southern Iowa counties. The SIRWA obtained a loan from the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) to help with the project. The SIRWA then sold the water rights to the board of supervisors in the seven counties (Union, Ringgold, Taylor, Adair, Clarke, Adams and Decatur counties) who obligated \$2.4 million to pay off the loan. A \$700,900 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) from the state went towards the project. The Soil Conservation Service (SCS) provided \$2.9 million in federal funds for land acquisition, dam design and

construction. In addition, the DNR and the Union County Conservation Board contributed more than \$1.5 million to install boat ramps, build access roads, create fish habitat, riprap shoreline, develop campgrounds and picnic areas, construct cabins and purchase additional land.

With lake construction underway, the TMRA realized maintaining good water quality was beneficial to everyone involved. Soil conserva-

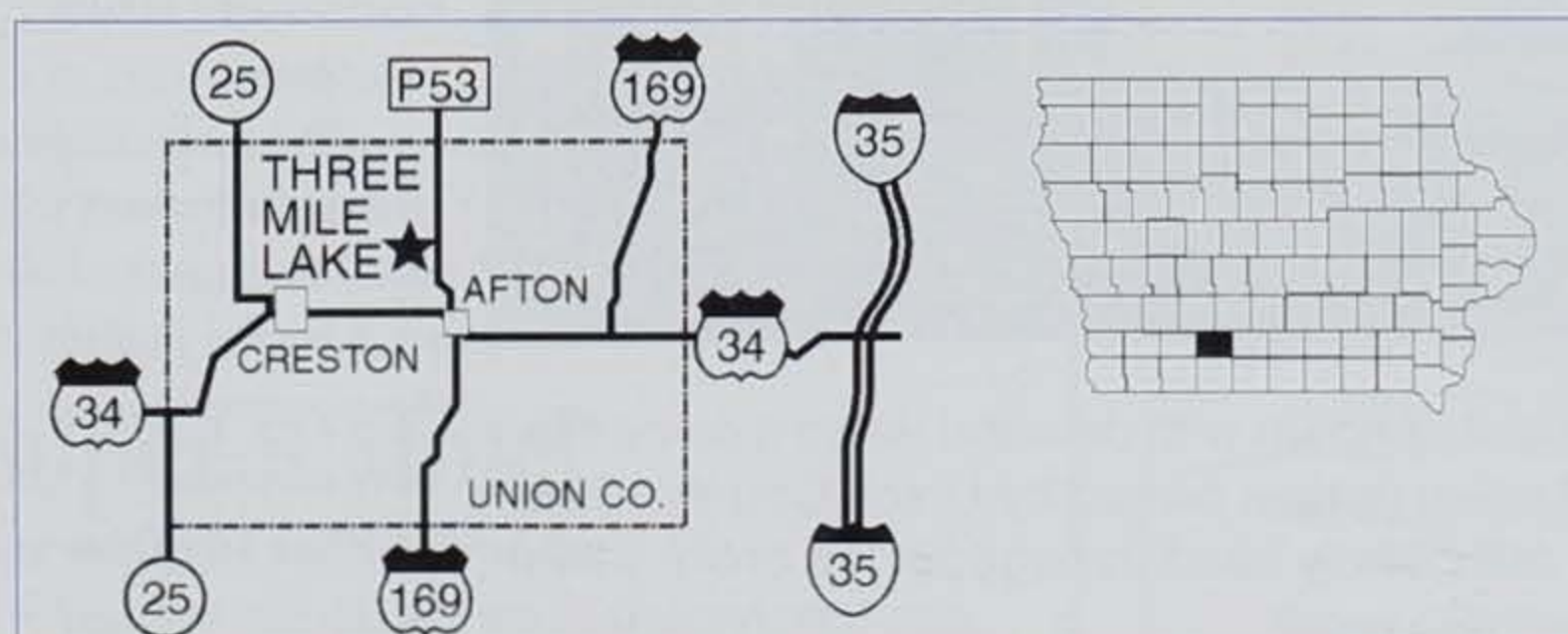
tion work completed between 1965 and 1985 was a start, but more was needed. The committee wanted to take a proactive approach in preventing sediments from entering the new lake. Significant soil conservation work was accomplished through state and federal funding, initiating a wide variety of soil-saving practices, pasture management and fertilizer monitoring to improve water quality.

The end result was 85 percent of

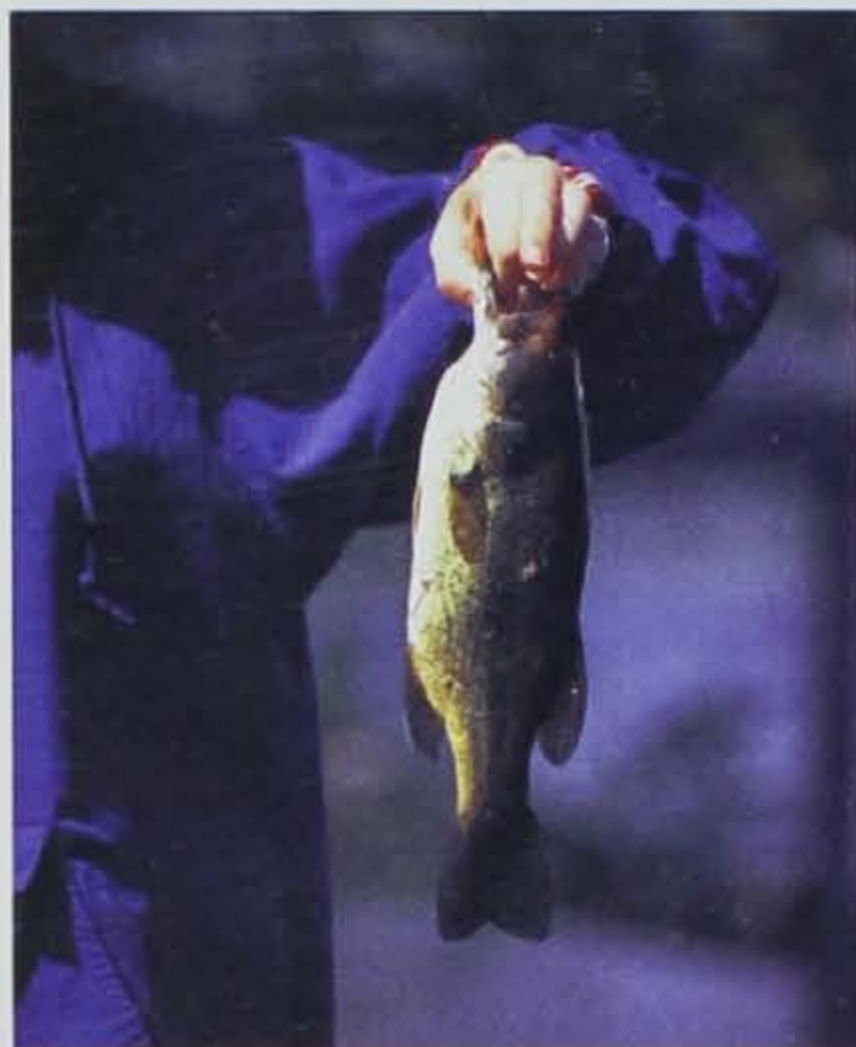
Mike McGhee



The DNR and Union County Conservation Board spent more than \$1.5 million on development of picnic areas, boat ramps, access roads, fish habitat, campgrounds, construction of cabins and purchase of additional land.







Clay Smith

the 22,300 acres of land in the watershed was at or below tolerable soil erosion levels. The concerted effort to improve water quality has helped foster a land ethic among most of the landowners in the watershed.

Maintaining water quality has been an ongoing process, with local soil conservation districts and landowners in the watershed continually seeking soil-saving measures.

So far, water quality in Three Mile Lake has been fantastic. Sediments entering the lake have been minimal. Three Mile Lake is now the

standard for future lake projects.

The "drought of 1988" brought different interest groups together with a similar goal. They formed a committee, pooled their resources and seven years later a lake was filling with water. The entire project cost nearly \$10 million, impossible to accomplish as individual groups, but doable as a committee.

*Mike McGhee is a fisheries biologist for the department in Mt. Ayr.*

## People Come Here Because the Water is Cleaner

by Kevin Baskins



Supply can't keep up with demand when it comes to the eight cabin rentals owned by Union County. The cabins are heavily used throughout the entire year.

John Tapken has come to memorize the telephone numbers of local motels.

"I had to," said Tapken, director of the Union County Conservation Board.

"Our cabins keep renting out so quickly that I have to be able to refer people somewhere," Tapken explains.

Three Mile Lake was constructed with the idea of providing an economic boost in the form of tourism in addition to providing a source of drinking water to residents of southern Iowa.

The very earliest numbers would signal success. In just its first year of operation, camping revenue from the

Union County operated campground has grossed the county \$60,000 in revenue, double the \$30,000 lost from the property tax rolls due to land acquisition from the lake.

In fact, a night's stay in one of the eight cabins owned by Union County at Three Mile Lake has become one tough ticket to get.

"The cabins are just as busy in January as in July because the ice fishing is so good," Tapken said.

Throw in outstanding waterfowl hunting, some first-class turkey hunting and diversified upland game hunting and the ingredients are all there for year-round no-vacancy signs on the simple, one-room log cabins.

Tapken said he has been amazed at Three Mile Lake's ability to draw from substantial distances.

"We've had campers who have been going to Minnesota for 15 years who cancelled their reservations

*continued on page 28*



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## A Conservation Milestone

"People come here because  
the water is cleaner"



Three Mile Lake in Southern Iowa is a triumph of modern conservation. Ponds, water control basins and progressive farming practices ensure clean water from Three Mile Lake's 22,700 acre watershed. Three mile lake in conjunction with nearby Twelve Mile Lake provides water for seven southern Iowa counties.

Hunting, fishing, camping and all types of recreation abound on the lake and the surrounding woodlands and prairie.

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**A & W Restaurant**

**McDonalds**

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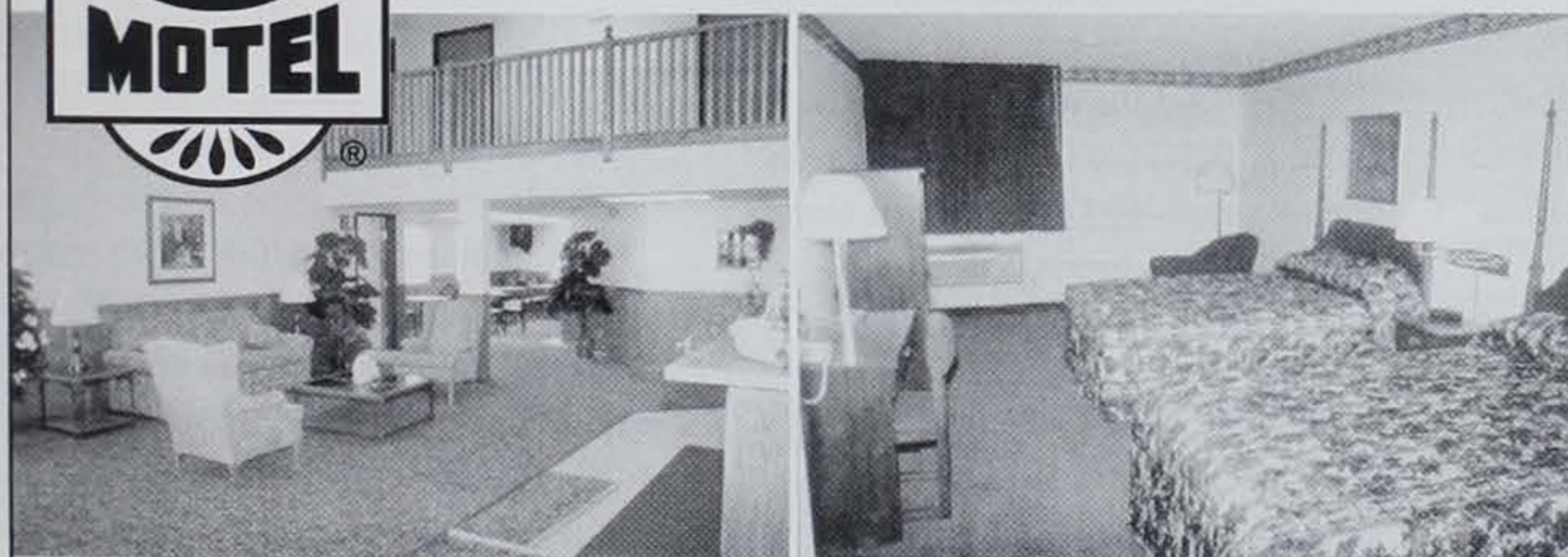
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The 880 acres of water and 2,500 acres of land provide excellent fishing, boating, camping and hunting opportunities. Campground development continues at the lake and a lodge that will provide meeting, reunion and wedding options is under construction.



there after being here. People are coming here because the water's cleaner," Tapken said.

Tapken said Three Mile Lake is a substantial draw for anglers from surrounding states like Missouri, Illinois and particularly Nebraska. Meanwhile, he has had cabins reserved by hunters from places like Michigan and Arkansas. He's even had inquiries from as far away as New Jersey.

DNR Wildlife Biologist Mel Moe



said rabbit hunters from states like Illinois, Kentucky and Tennessee have come to Three Mile Lake to run beagles.

Moe said the more than 2,200 acres of public area surrounding the lake is comprised of one-third woodlands and two-thirds prairie.

Three Mile's diverse upland habitat attracts more than hunters and game species, according to Moe.

"We have some nice prairie areas that we hope to make even better. The prairie areas already attract a variety of non-game species including the somewhat rare Henslow sparrow and



upland sandpipers," Moe said.

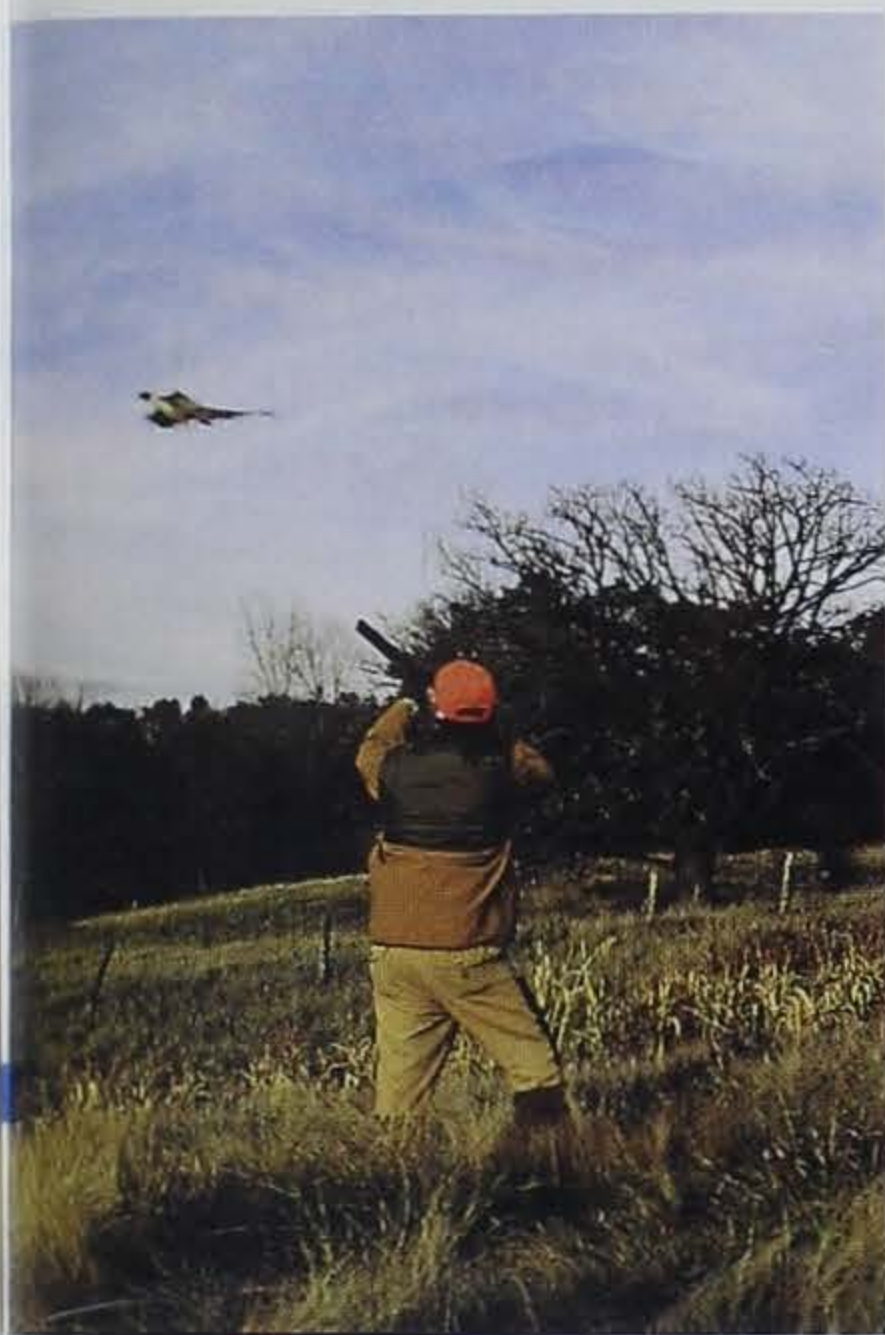
DNR Fisheries Biologist Mike McGhee is anticipating an extended honeymoon of good fishing for anglers.

While new lakes like Three Mile are often hotspots for a time after being constructed, action eventually fades. Because of the efforts made to protect the watershed and design the lake, McGhee is expecting Three Mile to remain a top quality fishing lake much longer than many other newly constructed lakes.

Three Mile Lake is one of the first lakes in Iowa where a major effort was made to develop underwater fish structures and habitat prior to being filled.

"When the lake is dry, you have





the opportunity to do things you ordinarily wouldn't have a chance to do. That's exactly what we did on Three Mile and with all the structure that is there, I look for it to get better and better in upcoming years," McGhee said.

McGhee said the effort within the watershed to reduce erosion will also pay important dividends in maintaining a top-notch fishery.

"Farmers in this watershed have made the extra effort on soil conservation. That means Three Mile is going to have more consistently good water which means better growth rate for fish and better opportunities for anglers," McGhee said.

*Kevin Baskins is a non-point source pollution information specialist for the department in Des Moines.*

## A Quality Water Supply

About the time anglers began anticipating the first hot fishing of the spring, Three Mile Lake began being used for its real purpose — providing a safe, reliable drinking supply to southern Iowa residents.

Drinking water was drawn from Three Mile Lake for the first time on April 1, 1999 and it is an important supply in conjunction with nearby Twelve Mile Lake. Between the two lakes, the Southern Iowa Rural Water Association delivers more than 950 million gallons of safe drinking water annually to approximately 25,000 residents in seven southern Iowa counties.

The efforts of farmers to protect the watershed of the lakes is key to protecting the supply of drinking water, according to Steve Green, water superintendent for Creston.

The combination of having clean water coming into the plant and state-of-the-art equipment to treat it once it gets there means residents in



southern Iowa are consistently delivered some of the highest quality drinking water in the state, Green said.

"We have a generation of farmers now that are increasingly aware of the pollution potential their farming practices generate. If there ever was a time when producers believed one pound of fertilizer or pesticides was good and two was better, that time is past. It's expensive and too many people inside and out of agriculture are concerned about the environment," Green said.

Using less agricultural chemicals also produces economic savings beyond the farm gate.

"The cleaner the water is coming into the plant, the less cost there is for treating it," Green said.

— KB





Eighth in a series

# RESTORING IOWA'S WILDLIFE

## Part 3 — For Our Grandchildren — Restoring Wildlife Habitats

### A Brief History of Wildlife Conservation in Iowa

by Terry W. Little

It didn't seem like a particularly unusual day, that hot July morning in 1986. But DNR wildlife biologist Ron Howing knew in his heart that something historic was about to happen.

Howing, and DNR wildlife technicians Dave White and Mike Olson, were going to recreate a prairie pothole wetland on the land of Clay County farmer Richard Ruhn. For 150 years Iowa farmers, including Ruhn's father and grandfather, had been ditching, draining and tiling wetlands to get at the fertile soils that lay beneath. Now a private landowner was going to do the unthinkable and put a wetland back into its natural state.



Ken Formanek

Funds from state waterfowl and habitat stamps have been instrumental in providing breeding, feeding and wintering habitat such as the Green Island Wildlife Management Area near Jackson.



Ruhn had just enrolled his entire farm in the USDA's newly announced Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Instead of raising crops he would let the government pay him for seeding down his rolling farmland for 10 years. Wanting to do something for wildlife, he accepted a \$5-per-acre subsidy from a local Pheasants Forever chapter and planted switchgrass rather than the cheaper brome-alfalfa mixtures more commonly used on CRP lands. He fondly remembered hunting ducks with his father on sloughs they had long since drained, and wanted to recapture that experience now that it would not interfere with his cropping program.

The task was not particularly difficult. Howing, White and Olson surveyed three low basins and used the farmer's tractor and front-end loader to push up low dikes across potential drainageways. Then a local tiling contractor was hired to dig a ditch across each basin (more than a little irony there). The sub-surface tile lines that were funneling water to a nearby creek were intercepted and cut. A non-perforated drain tile was placed in

the downstream end of the freshly cut tile and its free end was brought to the elevation of the dike and held upright. This permitted water to escape the upstream drainage tile and fill the wetland while still permitting excess water to pass through the system to the creek.

All three basins (15, 3 and 1 acre) reached capacity by the next spring. Ducks and geese began using the new wetlands for loafing as soon as they held water. Within two years, shoreline cattails and willows appeared, dense stands of switchgrass provided nesting cover on the uplands and muskrats and a variety of nongame birds had colonized the basins from nearby Fallow Marsh Wildlife Management Area. The wetlands could not revert to a truly native state that quickly, but they were far more valuable to wildlife than the corn and soybean fields that had existed there for more than 40 years.

Howing, White and Olson could not know what they had started. In the next 15 years DNR biologists would restore more than 1,000 wetland basins and reverse a century-long trend of continual wetland destruction!

### Habitat in Critical Condition

One undeniable truth, demonstrated and reconfirmed repeatedly in the 70 years since it was first expounded by Aldo Leopold, serves as the foundation for all successful wildlife management programs. Without suitable habitat — the shifting combinations of food and shelter from weather and predators that a species needs in all stages of its life — viable wildlife populations

cannot exist. No amount of predator control, regulation of hunting or trapping seasons or re-stocking with either wild or game farm animals will work if habitat is deficient.

During its first 70 years of European settlement, Iowa suffered the greatest loss of its native flora and fauna of any state — 99 percent of its prairies, 90 percent of its wetlands and two-thirds of its forests fell to the plow, the dragline and the crossbuck saw. The soils underlying the state were some of the richest in the world and were simply too valuable to leave untilled.

This monumental change in the landscape was accompanied by a calamitous loss of native wildlife. The herds of big game animals, the large predators that fed on them and valuable furbearers were the first to go. But as habitats for smaller game and nongame animals disappeared or were shrunk to uninhabitable proportions, the animals too began to disappear. Eventually many native populations were supplanted by species that could adapt to a landscape dominated by small, diversified farms.

Iowa today remains an intensively agricultural state. More than 90 percent of the land base is in some form of agricultural production. As a result, Iowa has the smallest percentage of natural vegetation on the landscape (8 percent) of any state in the country, one of the smallest forest acreages (just 5 percent of the state) and the second smallest amount of undeveloped land available for public recreation.

Economic forces of the past half-century have continued to degrade wildlife habitat. Farms are pressured to become larger in order to survive



instrument in providing quality management Area in Jackson County.



financially. Government subsidies that guarantee a fixed price for commodity crops regardless of the market price have driven up rental rates for farmland and encourage farmers to plant ever more acres to row crops. The math is simple. The more corn and soybeans a farmer plants, the larger the USDA payment he or she receives.

More acres to till leads to reliance on ever larger farm equipment and the simplifying of cropping patterns. Monocultures of corn and soybean fields dominate the Iowa landscape, leading to a huge loss of habitat and wildlife diversity. Fields have become larger, fence rows are nonexistent on many farms, nearly all the few small wetlands possible to drain have disappeared, farm shelterbelts and hedgerows have been bulldozed to squeeze out a few more rows of crop and the list goes on. The result is ever-increasing pressure on wildlife habitat on farms as the 21st century begins.

The DNR's recent programs to restore white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, river otters, bald eagles and other native species have been successful only because sufficient habitat for them still exists. With the ultimate fate of wildlife habitat on private lands anything but certain, the DNR has been involved in a variety of aggressive land acquisition programs for the last 30 years.

### Hunters and Anglers Foot the Bill

The pioneer conservationists of the early 20th century did the nation's fish and wildlife a great favor when they conceived a "user pays" system to fund fish and wildlife programs. By requiring hunters and anglers to

purchase licenses and pay excise taxes on hunting and fishing equipment, they provided long-term, consistent, predictable funding to state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. Most successful wildlife habitat and restoration programs of the past 50



Ken Formanek

years would not have been possible if wildlife agencies had to rely on the highly variable and frequently politically motivated annual appropriations process.

But this process has too often relieved the rest of the public from responsibility for fish and wildlife conservation. For decades, on numerous public opinion surveys, a majority of Iowans have consistently said that fish and wildlife are important to them and that funds should be allocated for their protection and management. Yet, until recently, the legislature has not channeled that support into funding from other revenue sources. For most of the past century the one-quarter of Iowans who fish and hunt have shouldered the financial load for everyone.

### Acquiring Public Lands for Wildlife

By and large Iowans have had to go it alone to protect wildlife habitat. There are no national forests or grasslands in Iowa and just four national wildlife refuges. Of these, only the Upper Mississippi River NWR is more than a few thousand acres. Four state-owned forests (Yellow River Recreation Area in northeast Iowa, Shimek State Forest in the southeast, Stephen's State Forest in south-central Iowa and the Loess Hills State Forest along the western border) comprise less than 3 percent of Iowa's remnant forest lands. Wildlife habitat areas managed by the DNR's wildlife bureau and by individual county conservation boards provide invaluable habitat for many species but account for less than 2 percent of the non-urban lands in Iowa.

For most of its first 40 years, the Iowa Conservation Commission (forerunner of today's Department of Natural Resources) had little funding available for acquisition of public lands for wildlife management. Habitat for farm game was still available on private lands. Pheasants, quail, and rabbits were popular and readily available. License fees were mostly committed to ongoing operations costs - fielding a staff of conservation officers and wildlife and fisheries biologists, managing public hunting areas, stocking fish in streams and lakes, providing public education and hunter safety programs, assisting landowners with wildlife problems on private lands, and other conservation efforts.

With the advent of highly



Weight/Length	Date	Angler, Hometown	Location/County
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9 lbs 10 oz	4/12	Kenneth L Fry, Delhi	Fountain Springs, Delaware
9 lbs	10/12	Marvin Boehme, Gowrie	Wexford, Allamakee

#### Released

18"	6/25	Brian Langel, Oelwein	Wexford, Allamakee
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## Walleye (minimum 8 lbs. or 28")

14lbs 8oz	9/86	Gloria Eoriatti, Ankeny	Des Moines River, Polk
13lbs	3/30	Kyle Klaren, Earlville	Mississippi, Clayton
12lbs	10/16	Ron Norris, Waterloo	Shell Rock River, Butler
11 lbs 11 oz	3/21	Thomas L Brown, Clinton	Mississippi, Clinton
11 lbs 8 oz	3/23	Cory Swearngin, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
10 lbs 6 oz	9/27	Jeff Secora, Mason City	Mississippi, Clayton
10 lbs 4 oz	11/10	Bob Behnkendorf, Algona	Des Moines, Palo Alto
10 lbs 4 oz	11/3	Tim Hatting, Hospers	East Okoboji, Dickinson
10 lbs 3 oz	1/18	John Nichols, Clear Lake	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo
10lbs	8/15	Travas Herman, Centerville	Rathbun, Appanoose
10lbs	10/28	Don Herker, Clear Lake	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo

#### Released

31.9"	11/4	Robert Jankovitz Jr, Des Moines	Sand Pit, Polk
30"	3/29	Eric P Carman, Charles City	Cedar River, Chickasaw

Weight/Length	Date	Angler, Hometown	Location/County
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29"	5/5	Tom Crawford, Sioux City	West Okoboji, Dickinson
28.5"	1/10	John Maris, Spirit Lake	West Okoboji, Dickinson
28.5"	10/15	Ryan Kayle, Charles City	Mississippi, Clayton
28.5"	6/19	Cathy E Smith, Omaha	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
28.5"	5/26	Jennifer Behr, Swaledale	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo
28.5"	10/6	Richard Twedt, Marion	Wapsipinicon, Buchanan
28"	9/8	Roger Hough, Algona	Spirit Lake, Dickinson
28"	5/28	Brittany Rydstrom, Marathon	Storm Lake, Buena Vista

## White amur (minimum 25 lbs.)

61lbs 8oz	5/98	Tyler Warner, Greenfield	Lake Greenfield, Adair
53 lbs 4 oz	6/3	Mark K Hadland, Omaha	Viking Lake, Montgomery
49 lbs	5/22	Gordon Allen, Council Bluffs,	Pony Creek, Mills
48 lbs 4 oz	6/10	Mathew Ritz, Bronson	Snyders Bend, Woodbury
48 lbs	4/14	Dave Snyder, Lake View	Arrowhead, Sac
46 lbs 10 oz	4/22	Jim Terry, Essex	Windmill Lake, Taylor
43 lbs 2 oz	7/8	Tyler Weltz, Colo	Hickory Lake Park, Story
42 lbs 3 oz	7/4	Mike Augustin, Colo	Hickory Grove Lake, Story
40 lbs	6/16	Jeff Powell, Casey	Lake Greenfield, Adair
38 lbs 6 oz	7/14	Red Petersen, Sergeant Bluff	Blue Lake, Monona
37 lbs	10/20	Mitch Hoeck, Atlantic	Lake Anita, Cass



# fish awards 2001

*The following list includes the top 10 entries by weight and released of each species taken in 2001. Current state records are in bold type. An (\*) indicates a new record this year.*

Weight/Length Date Angler, Hometown Location/County

## Bass, largemouth (minimum 7 lbs. or 22")

10lbs 12oz	5/84	Patricia Zaerr, Davenport	Lake Fisher, Davis
10 lbs 3 oz	9/15	Adam Card, Ankeny	Farm Pond, Dallas
9 lbs 4 oz	6/17	Jake Stokely, Sloan	Correctionville Lake, Woodbury
9 lbs	5/2	Mike Dieter, Des Moines	Little River, Decatur
8 lbs 12 oz	5/16	Timothy Hollopeter, Ladora	Farm Pond, Iowa
8 lbs 8 oz	5/1	Larry L Smith, Elkport	Farm Pond, Clayton
8 lbs 6 oz	5/11	Richard McClelland, Council Bluffs	Farm Pond, Pottawattamie
8 lbs 6 oz	5/24	Charles Williamson, Omaha	Farm Pond, Cass
8 lbs	5/5	Drake Kubat, Council Bluffs	Farm Pond, Shelby
8 lbs	9/15	Jim Julich, Nichols	Farm Pond, Muscatine
7 lbs 8 oz	4/28	Jeffrey L Foote, Council Bluffs	Pinkey's Glen, Mills

### Released

24"	8/11	Albert Otto, Sioux Falls	Little Sioux, Woodbury
23.6"	8/2	Robert Jankovitz Sr., Des Moines	Maffit Reservoir, Polk
23.5"	9/2	Troy Canny, Waterloo	Farm Pond, Keokuk

Weight/Length Date Angler, Hometown Location/County

4 lbs 2 oz	6/7	Mattie Lane, Sioux City	West Okoboji, Dickinson
4 lbs 2 oz	7/22	Dr. Mark Intlekofer, Maquoketa	Maquoketa River, Jones

### Released

23"	5/26	Gordon McAlpin, Villisca	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22"	7/26	Coy Wiegmann, Parkersburg	Mississippi, Allamakee
22"	7/14	James E Outtrim, Denton	West Okoboji, Dickinson
22"	7/8	Gabe Martinez, Tucson	West Okoboji, Dickinson
21.5"	5/11	Scott R Knudson, Churdan	Big Spirit, Dickinson
21.25"	5/31	Kendall Mead, Spencer	West Okoboji, Dickinson
21"	10/21	Joan Miller, West Union	Turkey River, Fayette
21"	9/5	Steve Faber, Inwood	Okoboji, Dickinson
20.75"	10/20	Tammy McDonald, Council Bluffs	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20.5"	7/11	Ken Fuhrman, Bettendorf	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20.5"	6/5	Jason Babel, Lincoln	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20.1"	5/26	Tedd Knobloch, Durant	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	8/7	Adam Kraavenbrink, Sioux Center	Okoboji, Dickinson



7 lbs 8 oz	4/28	Jeffrey L. Foote, Council Bluffs	Pinkey S. Glen, Mills	20.75"	10/20	Tammy McDonald, Council Bluffs	West Okoboji, Dickinson
<b>Released</b>				20.5"	7/11	Ken Fuhrman, Bettendorf	West Okoboji, Dickinson

23.6"	8/2	Robert Jankovitz Sr, Des Moines	Maffit Reservoir, Polk
23.5"	9/2	Troy Canny, Waterloo	Farm Pond, Keokuk
23.25"	9/8	Troy Champ, Mt. Pleasant	Lake Sugema, Van Buren
23"	5/26	Gordon McAlpin, Villisca	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22.75"	6/24	Steve Philby, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Adams
22.75"	7/12	Brian Franson, Grant	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22.6"	7/2	Dennis Carbaugh, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Page
22.5"	9/22	Steve Faber, Inwood	Pooters Pond, Lyon
22.25"	7/5	Richard McDonald, Nashua	Farm Pond, Chickasaw
22.25"	4/15	Harold Penney, Newton	Farm Pond, Wayne
22.25"	7/1	Kyle Franson, Grant	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22.5"	4/25	Andrew Nowasell, Iowa Falls	Farm Pond, Hardin
22.1"	5/26	Robert Jankovitz Jr, Des Moines	Farm Pond, Polk
22"	11/17	John McDonald, Council Bluffs	East Okoboji, Dickinson
22"	6/13	Casey Walker, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22"	4/1	Steve Walker, Red Oak	Farm Pond, Montgomery
22"	10/31	Bob Haskin, Norwalk	Lake Ahquabi, Warren
22"	4/21	Ryan Davis, Omaha	Farm Pond, Mills

### Bass, smallmouth (minimum 4 lbs. or 20")

7lbs 12oz	9/90	Rick Gray, Dickinson	West Okoboji, Dickinson
6 lbs 7 oz	6/2	Charlie Hinrichs, Mason City	Big Blue, Cerro Gordo
6 lbs 3 oz	9/3	Curt Dreier, Pipestone	Mississippi, Allamakee
5 lbs 12 oz	9/11	Robert Ferrie, Plainfield	Gravel Pit, Black Hawk
5 lbs 10 oz	11/10	John Hora, Ankeny	Des Moines River, Polk
5 lbs 7 oz	8/19	Frank Wickham Jr, Ionia	East Okoboji, Dickinson
5 lbs 3 oz	5/8	John Grosvenor, Spirit Lake	West Okoboji, Dickinson
4 lbs 12 oz	10/11	Rick Olson, Indianola	Des Moines River, Polk
4 lbs 8 oz	10/23	Bill Linderwell, Guttenberg	Mississippi, Clayton
4 lbs 7 oz	7/3	Dana Dowd, New Hampton	Upper Iowa River, Howard
4 lbs 2 oz	2/15	Catland Landegent, Alvord	West Okoboji, Dickinson

20.1"	5/26	Tedd Knobloch, Durant	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	8/7	Adam Kraayenbrink, Sioux Center	Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	5/28	Steve Little, Augusta	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	6/17	Derrick Dowd, Waterloo	Upper Iowa, Howard
20"	8/10	Adam Ryan, Omaha	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	5/31	Ronald Wasmund, Arnolds Park	West Okoboji, Dickinson
20"	8/5	Rhonda Draisey, Toledo	Volga River, Clayton

### Bass, white (minimum 2.5 lbs.)

3lbs 14oz	5/72	Bill Born, Milford	West Okoboji, Dickinson
3 lbs 9 oz	12/29	David Holtz, Everly	East Okoboji, Dickinson
3 lbs 7 oz	11/14	Robert Kase, Manly	Clear Lake, Cerro Gordo
3 lbs 3 oz	11/3	Ken Schmidt, Barnum	Lake Cornelia, Wright
2 lbs 15 oz	6/21	Frank Wickham Jr, Ionia	Mississippi, Allamakee
2 lbs 14 oz	9/3	Dick Hawes, Spirit Lake	West Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 13 oz	12/27	Barry Andersen, Arnolds Park	East Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 12 oz	12/29	Bill Ferns, Spirit Lake	East Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 11 oz	10/28	Darrell Frerichs, Ruthven	West Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 11 oz	4/23	Tosten Langholz, Spencer	East Okoboji, Dickinson
2 lbs 10 oz	4/18	Jamie Wilson, Storm Lake	East Okoboji, Dickinson

### Bass, wiper (minimum 4 lbs.)

18lbs 15oz	9/97	Don Ostergaard, Des Moines	Des Moines River, Polk
14 lbs 4 oz	5/13	Jerry Paullin, Dayton	Des Moines River, Webster
11 lbs 3 oz	4/29	Michael Stone, Iowa City	Iowa River, Johnson
10 lbs 9 oz	9/30	Larry Saltzgaver, Montrose	Mississippi, Lee
10 lbs 8 oz	7/1	Mark Klepper, Waterloo	Cedar River, Black Hawk
9 lbs 14 oz	5/13	Jared McGrath, Waterloo	Cedar River, Black Hawk
9 lbs 12 oz	5/13	Ben Stapella, Waterloo	Cedar River, Black Hawk
9 lbs 7 oz	8/17	Randall Brady, Des Moines	Saylorville Dam, Polk
6 lbs 2 oz	5/17	Jay Ohm, Ankeny	Des Moines River, Polk



# fish awards 2002

•If you catch a fish eligible for submission for a big fish award, please fill out this entry blank. For many of the predator species, you may release the fish and still receive the big fish award by meeting the listed length limitations. One witness must attest to the weight of the fish to the nearest ounce on scales legal for trade, or to the length, which is measured from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail (total length). If there is some doubt in species identification, the angler should contact the nearest DNR personnel in the area for verification.

**--New all time record fish must be examined and verified by DNR personnel.**

•The entry blank should be filled out and mailed with a photo or color slide of the angler and fish to: Fish Records, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines IA 50319-0034. Photo will be returned to angler. Large fish will be recognized for each year as well as all-time records over a period of years. An angling award certificate and shoulder patch will be sent to the angler for each qualifying entry. The top 10 record fish by weight and released of each species are listed each year in the *Iowa Conservationist*.

## ENTRY BLANK FOR IOWA RECORD FISH (One entry per species, per year. Please print.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street/RFD \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Species \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Lake/Stream \_\_\_\_\_

County where caught \_\_\_\_\_

Length \_\_\_\_\_

Weight \_\_\_\_\_

Bait or lure used \_\_\_\_\_

Was this fish released? (circle one)      Yes      No

Witness \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Entries of fish caught during the current year must be sent to  
the Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
by January 15 of the following year.)



mechanized agriculture after mid-century, however, the need became apparent for a more aggressive program to permanently protect wildlife habitat. The Iowa Legislature did appropriate \$1 million in each of three years in the late 1960s and 1970s for a short-lived Open Spaces program.

The acquisition of several stretches along trout streams in northeast Iowa and the purchase of 1,400 acres of oak forest and uplands at the Sand Creek Wildlife Area in Decatur, Union and Ringgold counties were made with open spaces moneys. But the heavy burden of funding land acquisition would fall mostly on the shoulders of hunters and anglers.

#### **Dedicated stamps and fees.**

The first predictable funds specifically for habitat projects were made available in the 1970s. In 1972, all waterfowl hunters age 16 or older were required to purchase an Iowa waterfowl stamp, and in 1979, a habitat stamp was required for nearly all types of hunters age 16 through 65. Since then, Iowans have purchased more than 1.1 million waterfowl stamps and 5.7 million habitat stamps, generating more than \$30 million for wildlife habitat acquisition and management.

Funds from these two stamps have been instrumental in providing wildlife habitat across Iowa. Waterfowl stamp funds have been used primarily to acquire and restore wetlands and upland nesting habitat in

the prairie pothole region of north-central and northwest Iowa. Funds have been used on more than 40 projects, including Blue-wing Marsh in Palo Alto County, Dunbar Slough in Greene County, Otter Creek Wildlife Area in Tama County, Meredith Marsh in Hancock County and the Green Island Wildlife Area in Jackson County.

Habitat stamp funds have been used for nearly 100 projects that benefit a great diversity of wildlife. A partial list of areas that have been acquired by the DNR wholly or in part using wildlife habitat stamp funds includes forested lands at the Tyrone Wildlife Area in Monroe County,



SCS Photo by Lynn Betts

**TOP:** Since 1990, 41,000 acres costing \$26 million have been purchased with REAP funds, all of which provide significant wildlife habitat. The DNR has purchased 17,000 acres, including projects in the Loess Hills State Forest in Harrison and Monona counties.

**ABOVE:** Upland and small game management areas like those at Lake Sugema in Van Buren County have been purchased wholly or in part by wildlife habitat stamp money.

Ty Sneddes





BELOW: Story County used a habitat stamp grant for the Praeri Rail Trail project.

BOTTOM: The North American Waterfowl Management Plan, with a goal of protecting 24 million acres of waterfowl habitat, emerged from the drought of the mid-1980s.



Roger A. Hill

Boone Forks Wildlife Area in Hamilton and Webster counties, Lansing Wildlife Area in Allamakee County and Fox Hills Wildlife Area in Wapello County. Wetlands have been acquired at the Cardinal Marsh in Winneshiek County, Sweet Marsh in Bremer County, Tomahawk Marsh in Sac County and Center Lake in

Dickinson County. Upland and small game management areas like the Hazelbrush Wildlife Area in Carroll County, Hull Wildlife Area in Mahaska County, Ringgold Wildlife Area in Ringgold County and Lake Sugema in Van Buren County, have been purchased.

Not all of these stamp funds have stayed within the DNR. Fifteen percent of the waterfowl stamp fees, amounting to \$900,000 over 28 years, have been sent to Ducks Unlimited for habitat improvements in the prairie wetlands of Canada. Half of the habitat stamp fees are, by law, shared with county conservation boards for wildlife habitat projects. Counties submit project proposals to an evaluation board and the top projects are funded up to the limit of available funds. Counties have to contribute 25 percent of the cost of a project in order to receive habitat stamp grants.

All but 25 counties have obtained at least one habitat stamp grant and have collectively purchased more than 250 parcels of land. This amounts to more than 28,000 acres at a cost of \$13 million, and includes areas like the Peterson Prairie Wildlife Area in Lyon County, the Rock Creek Timber in Cedar County and the Cairo Wildlife Area in Louisa County.

Habitat stamp funds have also been used to encourage the development of wildlife habitat on private lands. In the early years up to \$100,000 was available annually to cost share the establishment of native grasses on private pastures in southern Iowa to improve nesting habitat. Since the mid-1980s this amount has been used to cost share the planting of shelterbelts for winter cover in northern Iowa and for the establishment of winter food plots.



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**North American Waterfowl Management Plan.** Droughts occur frequently on the prairies of North America, nearly one a decade. Two exceptionally severe droughts of the past century each temporarily decimated waterfowl populations, but produced unexpected long-term benefits for wildlife. The Dust Bowl era of the 1930s energized conservationists to develop permanent funding sources for wildlife conservation, develop education programs to train wildlife biologists and pass legislation to create professionally run fish and wildlife agencies. A second major drought in the 1980s plummeted waterfowl populations to all-time lows, but this time there was a corps of trained and experienced state and federal wildlife professionals on hand to take advantage of the public's concern about the fate of waterfowl.

From this drought, the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (NAWMP) emerged in 1986, an international agreement involving state and federal governments of three nations, private conservation organizations, industry and private citizens. Arguably the most important continent-wide habitat initiative ever, its goal is to protect 24 million acres of breeding, migration and wintering habitat for waterfowl to insure a fall flight of 100 million ducks.

Thirty-five counties in northcentral and northwest Iowa lie within the NAWMP's Prairie Pothole Joint Venture. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the states of Iowa, Minnesota, Montana and the Dakotas cooperate in the PPJV to protect 2.6 million acres of wetlands and associated nesting habitat in the five states. Iowa's commitment to the PPJV is to protect, restore and

enhance 100,000 acres of wetlands and grasslands.

Funds for this program have come from a variety of sources. The sale of federal waterfowl stamps provided the initial seed money for the joint venture. In 1989, Congress, recognizing the value of wetlands to the nation's water resources, passed the North American Wetlands Conservation Act to provide \$15 million annually for habitat (raised to \$44 million in the past four years). Both federal sources of money require an equal match from the state.

In Iowa matching funds have come from the sale of hunting licenses, Iowa waterfowl stamps, state and county shares of habitat stamp revenue, acquisitions by county conservation boards, contributions from private conservation organizations like Pheasants Forever and Ducks Unlimited and donations from private individuals and foundations.

Since 1987, \$46 million in contributions from all sources has led to the acquisition of 50,600 acres of public land in Iowa's prairie pothole region. These projects protected or restored 12,500 acres of wetlands, 1,080 wetland basins and added 38,100 acres of nesting habitat.

Lands purchased by the Fish and Wildlife Service remain in federal ownership as Federal Waterfowl Production Areas, but are managed by the DNR. Areas purchased with state or cooperator funds generally are owned and managed by the DNR, or occasionally by a county conservation board. Management emphasis is placed on establishing native grasslands for waterfowl nesting habitat, but these areas are quickly colonized by a variety of game and nongame

animals, many of which are year-long residents.

The list of PPJV projects is long, but include additions to existing wildlife areas like Spring Run in Dickinson County, Cheever Lake in Emmet County, Elk Creek Marsh in Worth County and Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge in Kossuth County. New wildlife areas have sprung up where only corn and soybean fields once sprouted at projects like Union Hills in Cerro Gordo County, Harrier Marsh in Boone County and Meredith Marsh in Hancock County.

**USDA wetland programs.** The Natural Resources Conservation Service has been authorized by Congress to administer two programs specifically to conserve wetlands. The 1990 Farm Bill created the Wetland Reserve Program to restore and protect 975,000 acres of the nation's wetlands. The Emergency Wetlands Reserve Program (EWRP) was created in response to the floods of 1993 to reduce the intrusion of agriculture into flood prone areas. In Iowa the WRP has been targeted at restoring farmed wetlands in the prairie pothole region and the EWRP has been targeted to flood prone areas along the Des Moines, Skunk, Iowa, Cedar, Wapsipinnicon and Thompson rivers.

WRP and EWRP have proven very popular and to date nearly 1,000 areas totaling 100,000 acres have been enrolled. WRP and EWRP pay the landowner the appraised value of their land for an easement to withdraw it from agricultural production and protect wetlands. The NRCS pays most of the cost of restoring wetlands on these areas and establishing vegetation on surrounding



RIGHT: REAP Public Open Space funds helped pay for Errington Wildlife Area in Polk County.

Without suitable habitat — the shifting combinations of food and shelter from weather and predators that a species needs in all stages of its life — viable wildlife populations cannot exist.



uplands to buffer them. In many cases the DNR, Fish and Wildlife Service or conservation groups have paid the landowners the residual value for their land and have acquired ownership of substantial tracts that have been developed into wildlife habitat. Three of the most impressive projects are the Iowa River Corridor Wildlife Area in Tama, Benton and Iowa counties, Hanlontown Slough in Worth County and the Sedan Bottoms Wildlife Area in Appanoose County.

**Resource Enhancement and Protection.** In 1989, the Iowa Legislature passed the Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Act to fund natural resource protection, outdoor recreation and cultural heritage programs. Funds for REAP come from the Environment First fund, derived from state gaming receipts. REAP was authorized for \$20 million a year for 20 years, but actual appropriations have averaged about half that amount. Another \$1 million is received each year from REAP license plates.

REAP funds are dedicated to a variety of conservation, educational

and cultural purposes, but two of its programs have contributed significantly to protection of wildlife habitat. REAP Public Open Space funds for land acquisition by the DNR receive about 14 percent of REAP funds and are subdivided among three programs — DNR land acquisition (shared by the DNR's Fish and Wildlife, and Forests and Prairie divisions), the Protected Waters Area program, and a public/private cost share program that requires a nongovernmental entity to contribute 25 percent of the purchase price of a property. About 20 percent of REAP funding goes to county conservation boards, and a portion of that is dedicated to purchasing high quality natural areas.

Since 1990, 41,000 acres costing \$26 million have been purchased with REAP funds, all of which provide significant wildlife habitat.

The DNR has purchased 17,000 acres, including projects at the Bluffton Fir Stand in Winneshiek County, Riverton Wildlife Area in Fremont County, Errington Marsh in Story County, Waterman Creek Prairie in



O'Brien County, creation of the Loess Hills State Forest in Harrison and Monona counties and additions to Shimek, Stephens and Yellow River state forests.

The Protected Water Areas program has acquired 3,000 acres, including significant stretches of the Boone River in Hamilton County, the Middle Raccoon River in Guthrie County, the Wapsipinnicon River in Jones and Buchanan counties, the Little Sioux River in Clay County and the Upper Iowa River in Winneshiek County.

Public/private cooperative projects have purchased 7,000 acres, including parcels of Kiowa Marsh in Sac County (with private contributions from Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever), Loess Hills Woodlands/Prairie in Monona County (Iowa Wild Turkey Federation), Five Ridge Prairie State Preserve in Plymouth County (Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation), Waterman Creek in O'Brien County (O'Brien County Sportsman's Club) and the Lindstrom-Simmons Fen in Clay County (The Nature Conservancy).

County conservation boards have purchased 13,000 acres, including projects on the Iowa River Greenbelt in Hardin County, Belva Deer Recreation Area in Keokuk County, Rahel's Westridge Wildlife Preserve in Pottawattamie County and the Buzzard Ridge Wildlife Area in Jackson County.

**Trading turkeys for habitat.** In the 1980s the wild turkey restoration program had become so successful that turkeys were traded to other state fish and wildlife agencies to obtain native wildlife for restoration here, notably ruffed grouse, prairie chickens and river otters. By 1988, however,

opportunities for trades had dried up even though the demand for Iowa turkeys remained strong.

Unwilling to let a golden opportunity slip away, the DNR agreed to participate in the National Wild Turkey Federation's "Project 2000," a coordinated effort to restore turkeys to their former range all across the nation by the turn of the century. From 1988 through 2000, the DNR captured and shipped 5,400 turkeys to states as far



Roger A. Hill

flung as Kentucky, Texas, Louisiana and Washington. In return the DNR was reimbursed \$500 for each bird, amounting to \$3.2 million, all of which was dedicated to purchasing turkey habitat in Iowa.

Since 1988, 6,180 acres of forest lands have been purchased with turkey trade dollars. Stephens State Forest in Monroe County, Bloody Run in Clayton County, the Eldon Wildlife Area in Davis County and the Wapsi Wildlife Area in Chickasaw County are just a few of the areas that have had significant additions using funds derived from turkey trades.

**Fisheries programs aid wildlife habitat.** Wildlife habitat has also benefited from DNR programs to increase fishing opportunities. In 1984, the excise tax on fishing equipment was expanded to include boats and a wider variety of fishing equipment, significantly increasing federal aid revenue for fisheries programs.

Using a combination of fisheries federal aid, habitat stamp funds and private donations, the DNR has purchased land along Pine Creek in Allamakee County, South Bear Creek in Winneshiek County and Little Mill Creek in Jackson County, among others, to improve fish habitat and provide public access for trout fishing. Fisheries federal aid and license funds have been used to purchase land for six new fishing lakes – Beaver Lake in Dallas County, Brushy Creek in Webster County, Shawtee Lake in Fremont County, Deer Creek Lake in Plymouth County, Lost Grove Lake in Scott County and Whitewater Lake in Dubuque County.

Protecting the watersheds around these fisheries projects is essential in order to improve water quality and maintain good fishing opportunities. To accomplish this, thousands of acres of uplands have been withdrawn from agriculture, planted to wildlife habitat and opened to public hunting.

**Partnerships make the difference.** Few of these important habitat acquisitions would have been possible without close cooperation between many governmental and nongovernmental conservation organizations. Few projects were acquired with funds from just one source or with personnel from just one group





Roger A. Hill

Without the close cooperation of conservation organizations, such as Pheasants Forever, few habitat acquisition projects are possible. Private conservation groups contribute millions of dollars at both the state and federal levels.

contributing the legwork. The Iowa DNR, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service and many county conservation boards were major players contributing millions of dollars and tens of thousands of hours of professional staff time. Private conservation groups like the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited and the National Wild Turkey Federation collectively contributed millions of dollars of their own funds and the political support to see that these valuable programs continued at both the state and federal level. And dozens of private individuals, school groups and local conservation clubs have contributed time, money or both.

The accomplishments that have resulted from these cooperative efforts have been truly impressive. The variety of government programs that provide the administrative and

financial framework for these habitat restoration initiatives (NAWMP, NAWCA, REAP, WRP and EWRP) all came about in the last decade and a half, about the same time the private conservation groups began raising significant funds to support them.

Today the DNR's wildlife and forestry bureaus manage 450 wildlife areas and four state forests that encompass 371,000 acres. County conservation boards manage thousands of acres of wildlife habitat. In all, a little more than 100,000 acres have been added from all programs since 1990.

**Dissenting voices.** While most Iowans that enjoy the outdoors approve of acquiring land for outdoor recreation, there have always been a few dissenters. Voices are occasionally raised against the state condemning land, driving up the price of land, and taking land off the property tax rolls.

To offset these criticisms, the DNR and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have for more than 30 years bought land only from willing sellers. Sellers are always paid fair market value based on comparable land sales in the vicinity as determined by professional land appraisers. Property taxes are paid to county governments on all lands purchased with REAP, habitat stamp, waterfowl production area and wildlife refuge funds. The U.S. Corps of Engineers also pays property taxes on lands withdrawn from private ownership within the boundaries of its flood control reservoirs. In 2000, property tax payments from all sources amounted to \$732,000 on public lands managed primarily for wildlife habitat.

Iowa has a long history of private enterprise on privately owned farm land. These public land acquisition programs are clearly no threat to that tradition. Predicting what the future might hold is risky, at best, but it is unlikely that anything but a small portion of Iowa will ever be removed from agricultural production. With the future of wildlife on those privately-held lands anything but certain, however, these hunter- and angler-sponsored programs provide at least some opportunities for permanent wildlife habitat protection and management. If they can continue, they will assure that part of our natural heritage will remain. For our grandchildren.

*Terry W. Little is the wildlife research supervisor for the department in Des Moines.*



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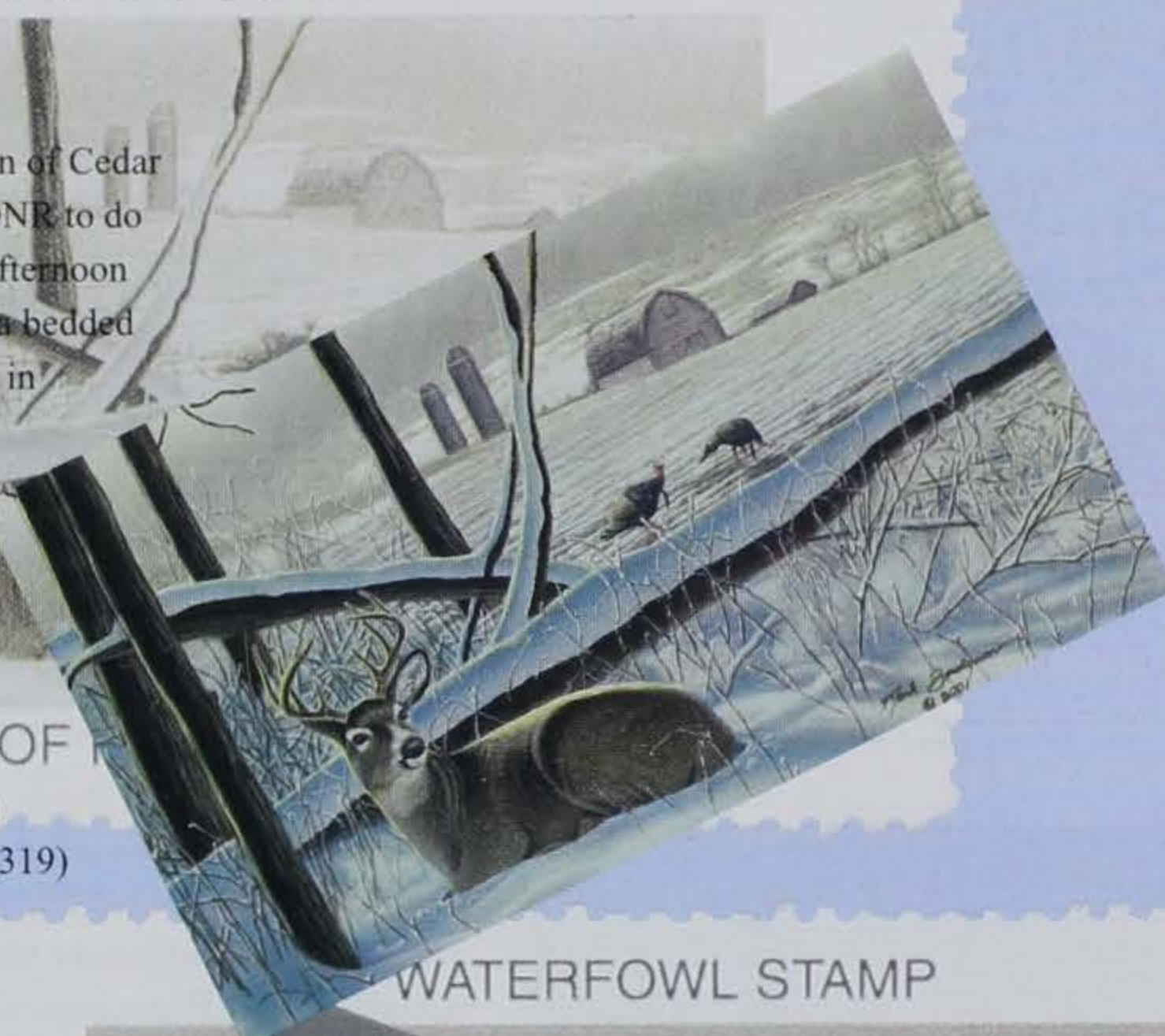
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# 2002 Stamp

## HABITAT STAMP

Iowa wildlife artist Mark Bordignon of Cedar Rapids was commissioned by the DNR to do the 2002 Habitat Stamp design. "Afternoon Visitors" depicts a winter scene of a bedded buck. Bordignon tied for 5th place in the Federal Duck Stamp Competition last November and was named Iowa Pheasants Forever Artist of the Year for 2002. The image size is 6 1/2 by 11 inches and retails for \$75. A limited edition of 250 prints are available from Bordignon, ink, 630 Grand Court, Robins, Iowa 52328; (319) 743-0874.



## WATERFOWL STAMP

The 2002 Waterfowl Stamp design of a pair of northern shovelers was designed by Darren Maurer of Sioux City. This is the second year in a row Maurer has captured first place in Ducks Unlimited's stamp contest. Some of his earlier prints have appeared in several national magazines and currently his work can be seen in more than a dozen galleries across the country. Artist editions of the print are available from Maurer's studio. Call (712) 277-3343 for more information.



2002

## TROUT STAMP

The 2002 Trout Stamp design, "Sunset on McCloud Run," was designed by Iowa industrial wildlife artist J.D. Speltz. The scene depicts a brown trout in the foreground of McCloud Run in Cedar Rapids, an area known for its biking/walking trail. Speltz is a 10-time state stamp winner and a four-time national award winner. The image size is 6 1/2 by 11 inches and retails for \$39.95. The print is available from Speltz Studio of Wildlife, PO Box 110, Armstrong, Iowa 50514; (712) 868-3001.



IOWA DEPT. OF NATURAL RESOURCES



The Second Annual Governor's Environmental Excellence Awards recognizes Iowa businesses, organizations and citizens who have excelled in environmental sustainability, demonstrating leadership, innovation and a comprehensive environmental ethic in managing natural resources. In a special ceremony Jan. 22, Gov. Tom Vilsack honored the following 20 award winners.

# governor's env exc



## Adams County Backyard Conservation Team

The Adams County Backyard Conservation Team, organized in May 1999, has more than just practiced environmental stewardship. In the true spirit of this award, they have made the extra effort to educate others and promote conservation.

Team volunteers use the USDA's *Backyard Conservation* campaign to educate non-agricultural

audiences on conservation practices. The team's 54 volunteers have worked tirelessly to promote conservation, hosting public information programs, public outings to gardens and farms, garden tours, composting education programs and public plantings. In addition, the group reaches thousands of Iowans by publishing a weekly column in the *Adams County Free Press*, "how-to" articles on a number of environmentally friendly activities, and appearing in newspapers, television shows and radio talk shows around the state.

## Architects Wells Kastner Schipper (West Des Moines)

When Story County supervisors needed an architect to replace the county's Human Services building, which had been destroyed in the 1993 floods, they turned to Wells



TOP: Designed by Wells Kastner Schipper, the Story County Human Services Building, truly is a "green" building. ABOVE: The Adams County Backyard Conservation Team has not only practiced conservation, but promoted it as well. RIGHT: Each year, more than 50,000 visitors are introduced to concepts in energy efficiency, ecological restoration, waste management and land protection at the Indian Creek Nature Center in Cedar Rapids.





or's environmental

# xcellence

## awards

Kastner Schipper of West Des Moines. This firm, long known for implementing sustainable design techniques, was a strong choice for both the people of Story County and the environment.

Balancing the principles of customer needs, budget, sustainable design, ease of maintenance, occupant comfort and energy efficiency, the firm has developed a building that sets an outstanding example for stewardship of both public funds and the environment. Thus far, the building's energy consumption is 44 percent, lower than a comparable building, saving \$20,000 annually in energy costs. Over 50 years, that equates to 1.6 million fewer pounds of pollutants being introduced to the environment.

### Indian Creek Nature Center (Cedar Rapids)

Since the 1970s, the Indian Creek Nature

Center has set the standard for combining a comprehensive approach to environmental stewardship with education. More than 50,000 visitors each year are introduced to concepts in energy efficiency, ecological restoration, waste management and land protection. The center



has restored many acres of prairie, wetland and savanna; purchased and restored a 67-acre farm; introduced a population of otters, pipe vine swallowtails and grass pickerel; reduced its electricity consumption by 44 percent through the implementation of solar energy; and achieved countless other victories for the environment.



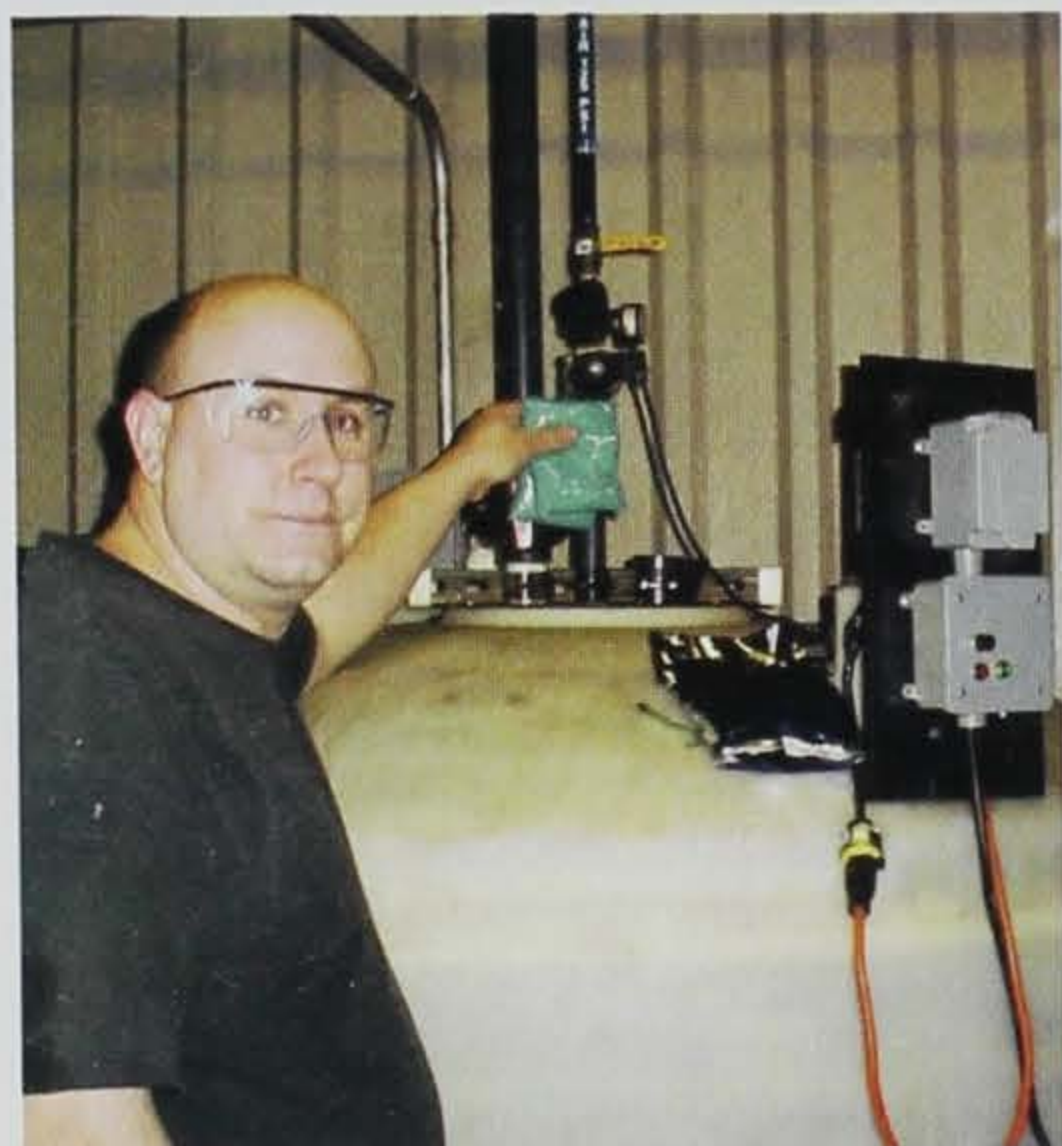
LEFT: Practical Farmers of Iowa in Ames, leaders in sustainable agriculture, are dedicated to environmental stewardship.

ABOVE: Rockwell Automation in Sumner is working hard to achieve its goal of number one in the world in environmental management.



RIGHT: Iowa Department of General Services recycled or reused 98 percent of the building materials from two demolitions on the State Capitol Complex.

BELOW and BOTTOM: Dayco Products LLC, from Eldora, earned special recognition in both waste management and water quality.



#### Practical Farmers of Iowa (Ames)

Who can forget the farm crisis of the mid-1980s? The negative ecological effects of modern farming practices were becoming evident at the same time that commodity prices were falling. During this crisis, Practical Farmers of Iowa was founded; since then, this organization has become a leader in sustainable agriculture through its commitment to environmental stewardship.

PFI has partnered with Iowa State University to take the concept of sustainable agriculture out of the school's research department and onto the farm. The company has used the latest farm technology to reduce fertilizer and pesticide inputs, and has employed no-till and ridge-till methods to improve water quality through reduced topsoil runoff. PFI has also improved air quality through reduced energy consumption, and has developed the Food Systems Program, an alternative marketing project aimed at increasing farmers' profits. More than 19,000 visitors have attended 400 PFI-sponsored farm field days.

#### Rockwell Automation (Sumner)

Rockwell Automation's stated vision is to be "Number one in the world in environmental management." The company's Sumner plant, which builds AC/DC drives used to control motors that serve customers in various business fields, certainly has contributed toward Rockwell's goal through a comprehensive approach to environmental improvement.

The company's most significant achievement has been in the area of waste management. Since 1997, Rockwell has diverted more than 90 percent of its waste from the landfill through a drastic reduction in packaging material, as well as the reuse and recycling of waste. In addition, a recently installed automatic lighting control system has reduced energy consumption by 11 percent. The company also promotes car-pooling, energy efficient measures and recycling at home among its employees.



## Special Recognition in Waste Management

### Dayco Products LLC (Eldora)

Dayco Products, in Eldora, producer of 15 million hydraulic hose couplings annually, has made tremendous strides in reducing grease and oil in effluent wastewater. Installation of a special water treatment system has allowed Dayco to reduce effluent oil and grease concentration by 91 percent, from 1,100 parts per million (ppm) to about 100 ppm. In addition, much of the water can be reused in the manufacturing process, significantly reducing the volume of wastewater going to the City of Eldora's treatment plant. Dayco has also won a special recognition award for water quality.

### Iowa Department of General Services (Des Moines)

When it's time for an old building to come down, the normal approach is to use either dynamite or a wrecking ball. In the demolition of two buildings on the State Capitol Complex, the Iowa Department of General Services (DGS) had a better idea.

DGS turned away from traditional methods by reusing or recycling about 98 percent — nearly 700 tons — of building materials. Some of those materials will be used to start a new, useful lifecycle in the construction of a dairy barn. The department's efforts have diverted a significant amount of solid waste from Iowa's landfills and helped protect the world's natural forest resources.

### Iowa Department of Transportation (Des Moines)

It takes a special kind of vision to make new use of old technology. But that's exactly what the Iowa Department of Transportation (DOT) has done, and they've helped protect Iowa's environment as a result.

Glasphalt, a special hot asphalt mix that uses crushed glass as one of its aggregate sources, was first developed in the 1970s. Until recently, its use has been limited because of the amount of glass needed for large construction projects. However, Mike Heitzman, a DOT engineer, saw use for glasphalt in smaller paving projects and worked to design a suitable mix at the DOT's Central Laboratory. He then worked to oversee four Iowa paving projects in Mason City, Cedar Falls, Des Moines and Ames. Thanks to the DOT's efforts, more than 300 tons of waste glass were diverted from Iowa's landfills.

### Target Corporation/Target Stores of Iowa

Large, bright red concentric circles make Target's logo highly recognizable in the retail industry. But the company's corporate color could just as easily be green.

During the past decade, Target has established itself as a retail leader in waste reduction. Through an extensive recycling program that sets its goals as a comparison to sales for each store, the company has diverted more than 270,000 tons of waste from the nation's

BELOW: Iowa's 19 Target stores have recycled more than 4,000 tons of corrugated shipping cardboard, the retailer's largest source of waste.



ABOVE: Glasphalt, a special hot asphalt mix that uses crushed glass as one of its aggregate sources, is being used by the Iowa DOT on some of its smaller paving projects.



RIGHT: Alliant Energy's "combustion initiative" has reduced nitrogen oxide emissions by 50 percent. MIDDLE RIGHT: The Story County Human Services building, designed by architects Wells Kastner Schipper wins in the area of energy efficiency. FAR RIGHT: Mirenc Inc. of Radcliffe has made huge strides in making diesel engines more fuel-efficient and less harmful to the environment.

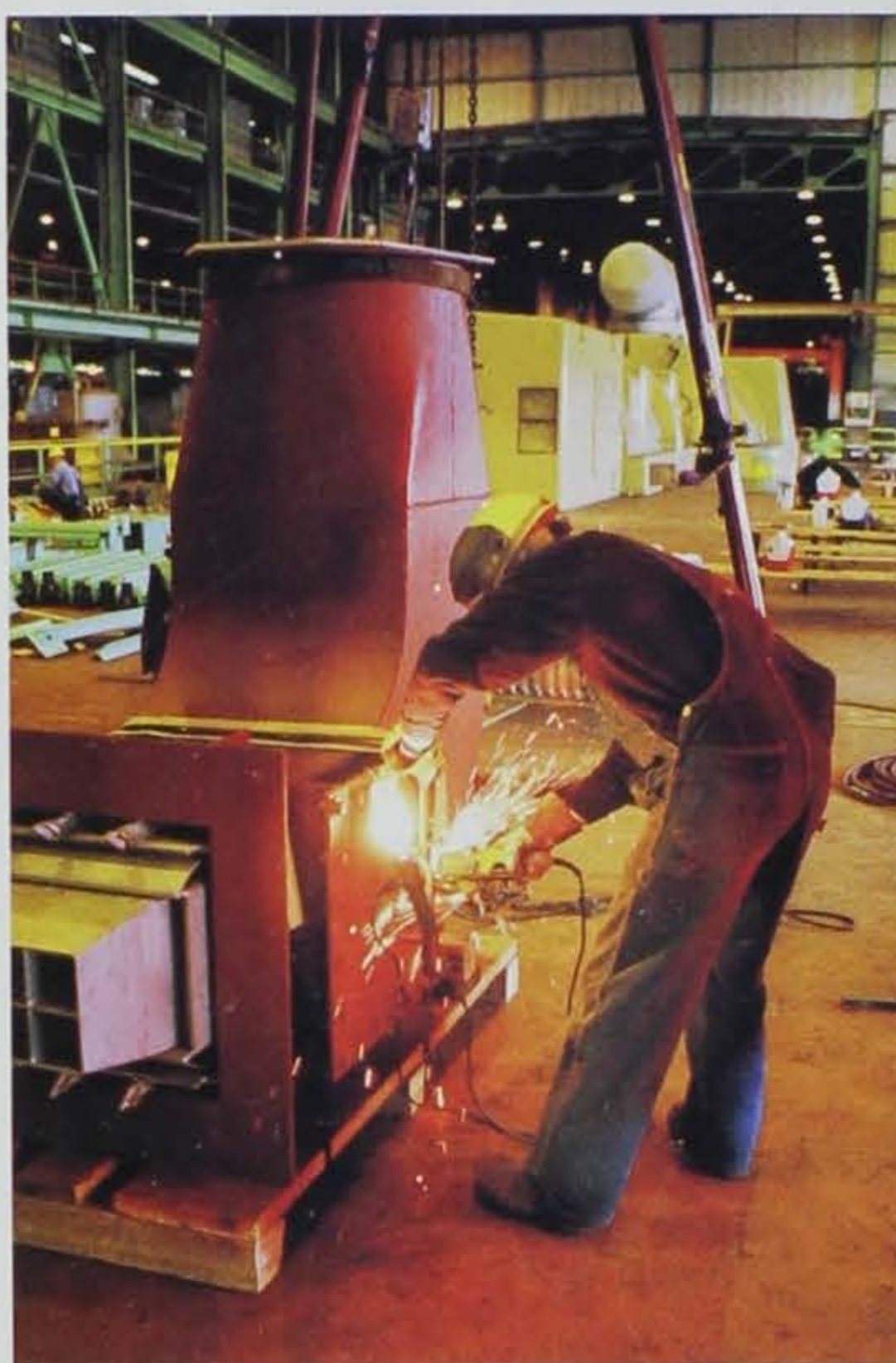
landfills. Iowa's 19 Target stores have recycled more than 4,000 tons of corrugated shipping cardboard, the retailer's largest source of waste, which has resulted in more than 69,000 trees being saved. The retailer also has reduced waste by selling environmentally friendly products and by minimizing packaging through the recycling of such items as clothes hangers, packing materials and plastic bags.

## Special Recognition in Water Quality

### Dayco Products LLC (Eldora)

Dayco Products, located in Eldora along the Iowa River, is a production facility whose 191 employees produce 15 million hydraulic couplings annually. Dayco employees are committed to maintaining the environmental quality of their community.

The production of hydraulic hose couplings introduces a large amount of oil and grease into the plant's effluent



wastewater. But thanks to the installation of a special wastewater treatment system, Dayco has reduced the effluent oil and grease concentration from 1,100 parts per million (ppm) to about 100 ppm, a 91 percent decrease. In addition, much of the water can be reused in the manufacturing process, significantly reducing the volume of wastewater going to the City of Eldora's treatment plant.

## Special Recognition in Air Quality

### Alliant Energy (Cedar Rapids)

In the world of power plants using fossil fuels, keeping the air clean poses a huge challenge. Alliant Energy has met the challenge head-on, and Iowans can breathe easier as a result.



To reduce nitrogen oxide (NOx) emissions, the general industry solution has been to extract NOx emissions after combustion through an expensive, inefficient catalytic process. But Alliant took a science-and-technology approach, conducting an extensive study that resulted in developing a way to reduce NOx during the combustion process. As a result, the company's "Combustion Initiative" has reduced NOx emission by 900 tons per year — more than 50 percent — and has improved thermal efficiency, which means less fuel is needed to produce the energy.

### Mirenc Inc. (Radcliffe)

Energy conservation and good environmental stewardship can come from unexpected places, and one Iowa company has focused on a common but under-studied source of waste and pollution — emissions from heavy diesel engines.

Mirenc Inc. of Radcliffe has made huge strides in making diesel engines more fuel-efficient and less harmful to the environment. Mirenc's DriverMax<sup>®</sup> technology automatically controls throttle position based on





fuel burning has been cut by more than 5,000 tons per year, greatly increasing the quality of the air Iowans breathe. Instrumental in this endeavor has been WLP's Iowa Energy Tagsä Program, through which companies and individuals can purchase tax-deductible tags that

continuous analysis of vehicle exhaust. The technology has allowed one U.S. city to save more than 43,000 gallons of diesel fuel and reduce emissions by more than 11,000 pounds from its fleet of 130 public transit buses. Another new product, called "EconoCruiseä," incorporates a global positioning satellite that reads the topography ahead of the vehicle, allowing the cruise control to take a proactive approach to the terrain ahead.

help pay for wind generation equipment and development.

### Special Recognition in Energy Efficiency/ Renewable Energy

**Architects Wells Kastner Schipper (West Des Moines)**

Wells Kastner Schipper of West Des Moines, also a winner for

environmental excellence for the design and construction of the Story County Human Services building, has made its mark in the area of energy efficiency as well.

The building's energy efficiency is the most easily measurable aspect of a truly "green" building. Thus far, the building's energy consumption is down 44 percent, or 320,400 kWh. Over 50 years, that equates to 1.6 million fewer pounds of pollutants being introduced into the environment. This environmentally friendly building will save the county's taxpayers at least \$20,000 per year in reduced energy costs, and it has had a profound effect on worker efficiency thanks to its people-friendly design.

### Waverly Light & Power (Waverly)

As the world's supply of fossil fuel continues to dwindle, Waverly Light & Power has turned to a power source as old as the earth and as abundant as the air itself — the wind.

The company's efforts to promote and build wind turbines have resulted in the company providing an astounding 4 percent of Waverly's electrical power from wind generation. In addition, carbon dioxide output from fossil



ABOVE: The Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities building in Ankeny serves as a model of energy efficiency.

LEFT: Waverly Light and Power's promotion of wind energy has provided a residual benefit — cleaner air.



BELOW: National By-Products, in Des Moines, not only cut air emissions but saved fuel costs by burning animal fat in their boilers.

RIGHT and BELOW RIGHT: DeWitt Central FFA were recognized for their efforts in habitat restoration and development.



### Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities

When the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities began the process of constructing a new building, energy efficiency was a top priority. But this Ankeny-based organization took that goal to new heights.

Thanks to the proven principles of environmental sustainability and energy efficiency, the association's new 12,500 square-foot training and office building has shown a savings of 6 million kilowatt hours, or about half the energy required by Iowa's energy code for similar-sized buildings. In addition, the association has installed a septic wetland for energy-efficient wastewater treatment, using native prairie plantings on 11 acres of the site. This reduces the need for mowing, watering and chemical use. The building serves as a model to hundreds of visitors each year.



### National By-Products (Des Moines)

Natural gas prices during the last year have underscored the importance of making use of alternative energy sources. National By-Products has jumped ahead in meeting that need.

National By-Products renders farm mortalities from livestock producers into useful byproducts. One of those by-products is the burning of animal fats and vegetable oils as fuel in boilers, cutting air emissions in half, compared to petroleum-based fuels. The technology is not new, but few boiler facilities have made the commitment to design and set up the burners and controls for this fuel. National By-Products conducted stack emission tests at its Des Moines and Clinton facilities and shared the information

with state environmental regulatory agencies. Cost savings are also a benefit; National By-Products saved more than \$36,000 in fuel costs for a single month.

### Special Recognition in Habitat Restoration/Development

#### DeWitt Central FFA (DeWitt)

Young people go to high school to learn. But sometimes those same young people can teach an entire state some valuable lessons.

DeWitt Central won a grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation to turn 4.2 acres of agricultural land into a native grass plot. In addition to transforming the area into habitat for local wildlife, the project also will provide native grass seed for distribution to landowners. FFA members also built more than 120 wood duck houses and 15 goose nests, helping to provide habitat for these waterfowl.

#### Fremont County Soil and Water Conservation District (Fremont County)

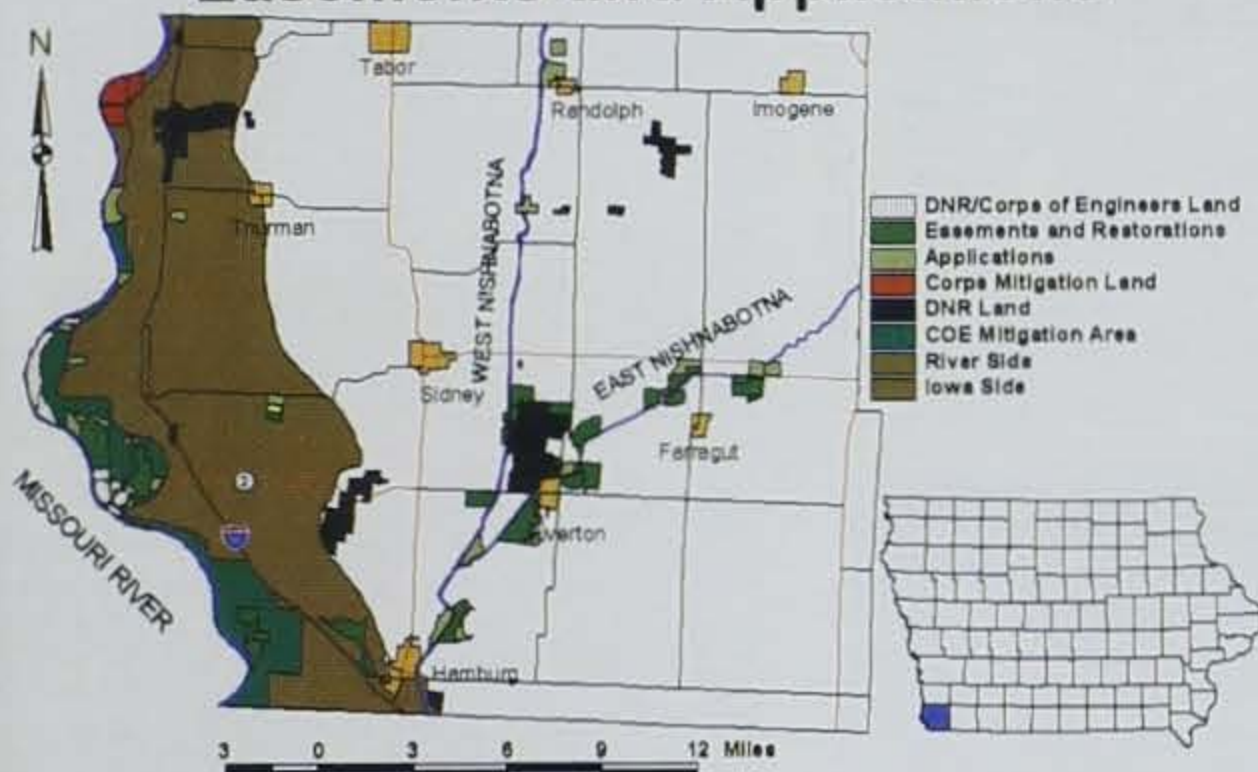
Since landowners along Iowa rivers are often challenged by floods, local wetland programs are a key element in successful farm management. The Fremont County Soil and Water Conservation District has coordinated restoration efforts including 83,842 acres of historically flooded farmland along the Nishnabotna and Missouri rivers.

The district's "Two Rivers Wetland Restoration" project has given local



BELOW: Fremont County Soil and Water Conservation District's Two Rivers Project has two-fold benefits — restoring farm productivity and wetland habitat.

### Two River's Project Easements and Applications



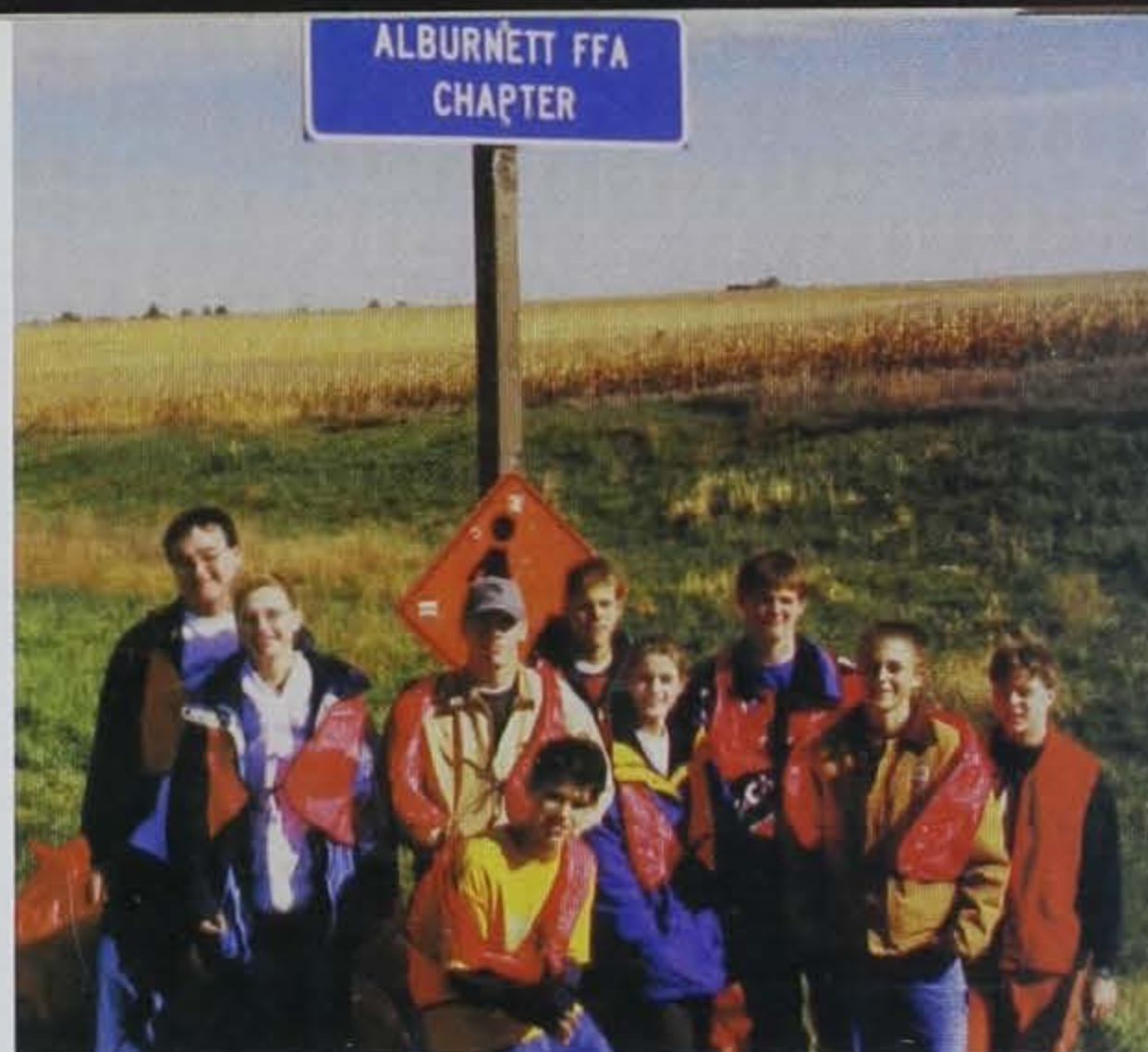
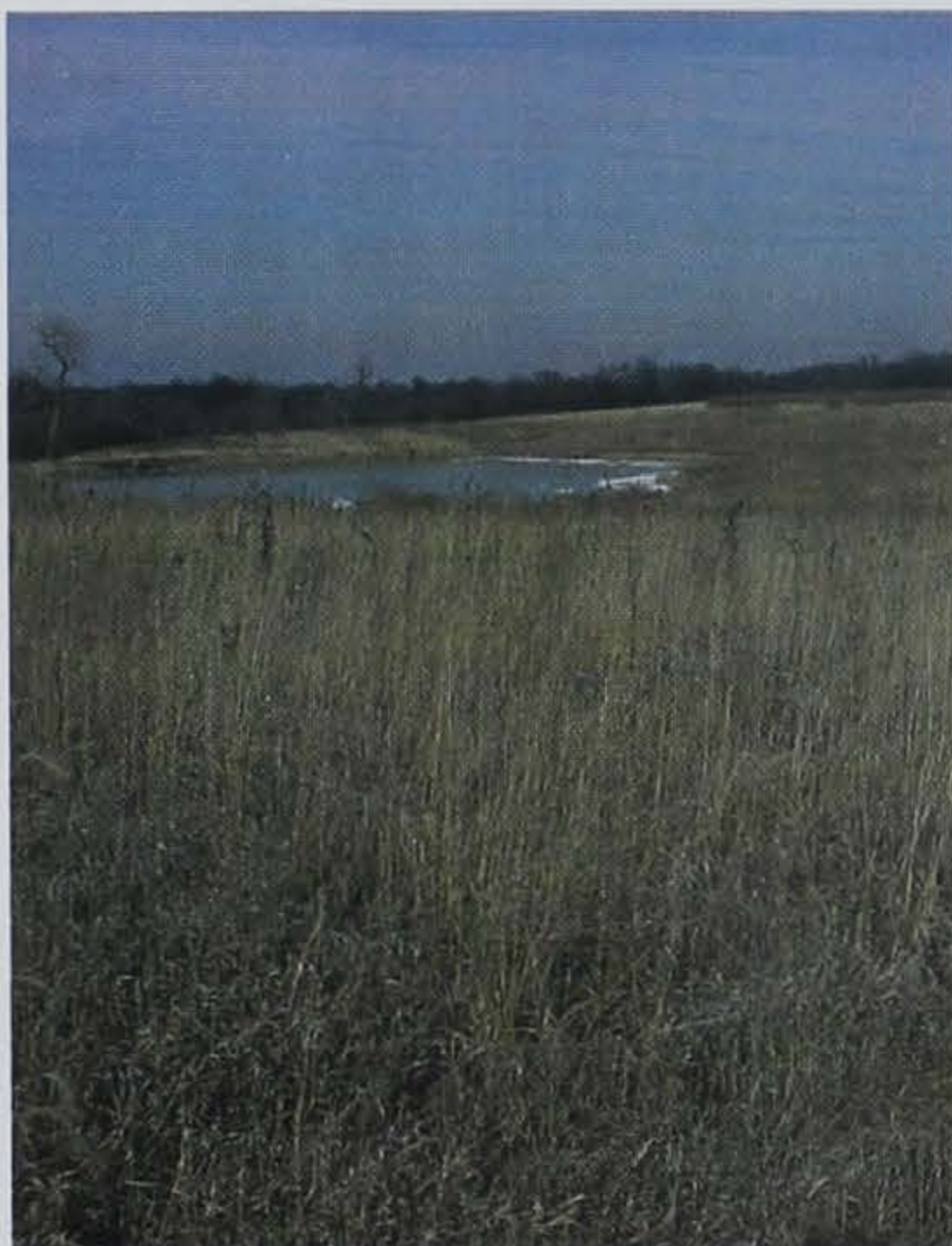
farmers the ability to farm productive lands and turn the remainder into protective wetlands. Thanks to the district's efforts, the county ranks number one in the state in wetland areas with more than 6,800 converted to date. These wetlands not only provide flood control, but also offer habitat for wildlife, some of which are on the endangered species list.

#### Pheasants Forever Inc.

Pheasants Forever, a non-profit conservation organization, has been recognized for two decades as a leader in habitat preservation. Since its inception in 1982, the organization's 20,000 members have established more than 500,000 acres in winter cover, nesting cover, public wildlife areas and conservation buffers.

Through its Private Lands Initiative, Pheasants Forever has worked with

state and national partners to create a habitat guidebook and purchase two self-propelled combines used in the harvesting of prairie seed. This seed, enough for 4,300 acres, will be used to plant high quality prairie on private lands, as well as in state and federal wildlife areas.



ABOVE: This year's Youth Environmental Citizenship Award was given to the Alburnett FFA Chapter for their Project "OXYGEN."

### Youth Environmental Citizenship Award

#### Alburnett FFA Chapter (Alburnett)

There is little more gratifying than watching young people learn about their environment. Even more gratifying is watching young people teach children. This is what sets the Alburnett FFA Chapter in a class by itself.

With its Project "OXYGEN" (Our Expanding Youth Grows Environmentally Noble), Alburnett FFA spearheaded several community tree-planting projects, raising more than \$5,000 and working with local and state partners to improve the environment. In addition, the Alburnett FFA chapter has developed elementary school projects that revolve around the environment. Most notable is the "EnvironMentors" program, where FFA members help 67 local fifth-graders understand the world by conducting monthly hands-on activities such as building wind turbines and working with the soil.

LEFT: During its two decades of existence, Pheasants Forever has established more than 500,000 acres of vital wildlife habitat.



## PARKS PROFILE

# Lake Manawa State Park

### *A Place of Peace and Comfort*

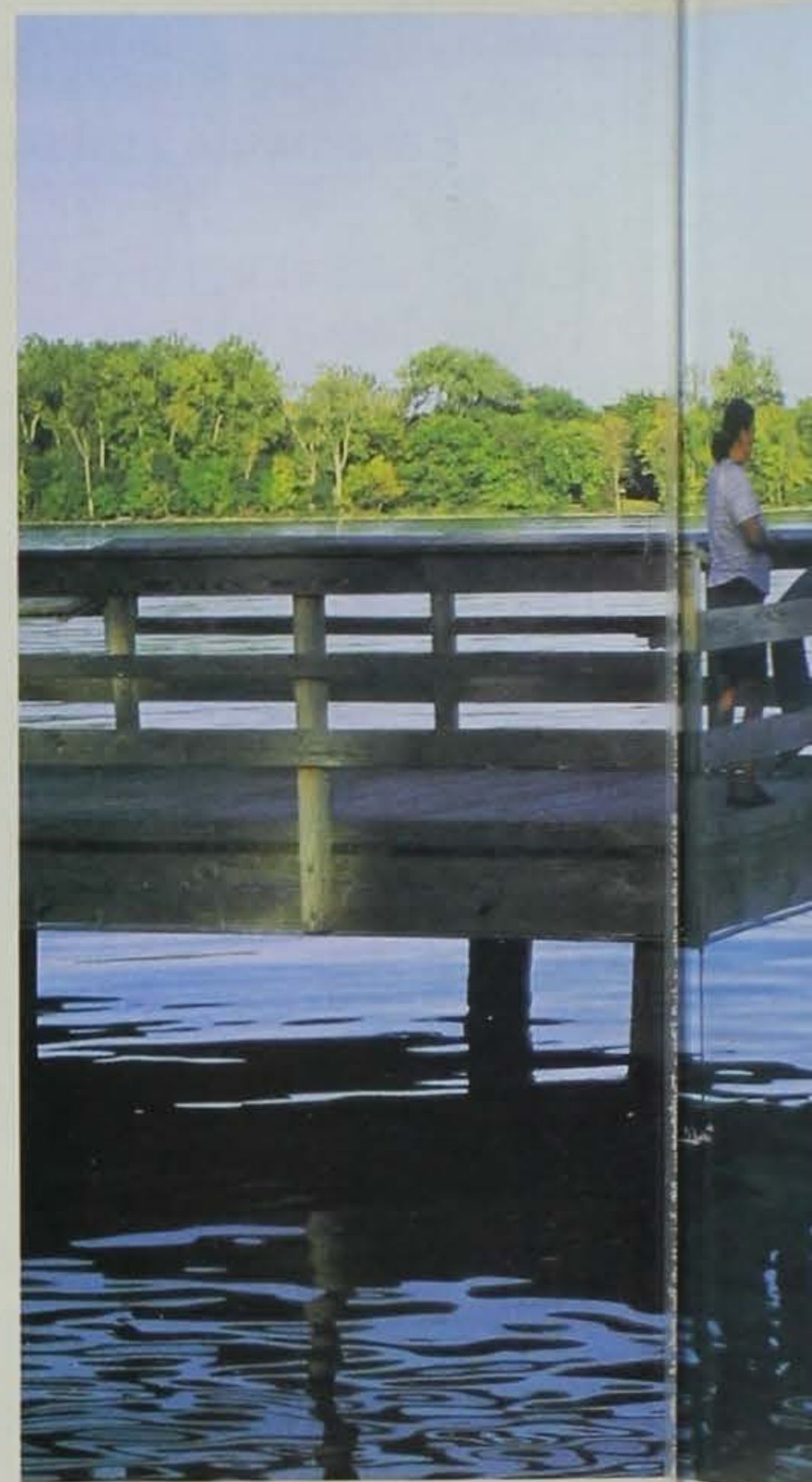
Article by Doug Coziah

Photos by Clay Smith



Lake Manawa State Park is known for the many recreational opportunities it offers, from fishing and boating to swimming and camping. But it hasn't always been that way. Since its creation, Lake Manawa has undergone several changes.

It all started with the name. In 1881, the Missouri River flooded and altered its direction of flow. A portion of the river channel was cut off by the meandering of the Missouri River, creating an oxbow lake. Residents called the oxbow "Cut Off Lake."



The name didn't stick. When prominent Council Bluffs resident Julia Officer visited the lake, upon her return she penned a letter to a friend.

"I inquired of some of those farmers and fisherman (sic) what the lake was called, and they stated 'Cut-off Lake,'" she wrote. "I was horrified by the name and the farmers and fisherman (sic) asked me to christen it with a new name. I stated the Indian name 'manawa,' meaning peace and comfort."

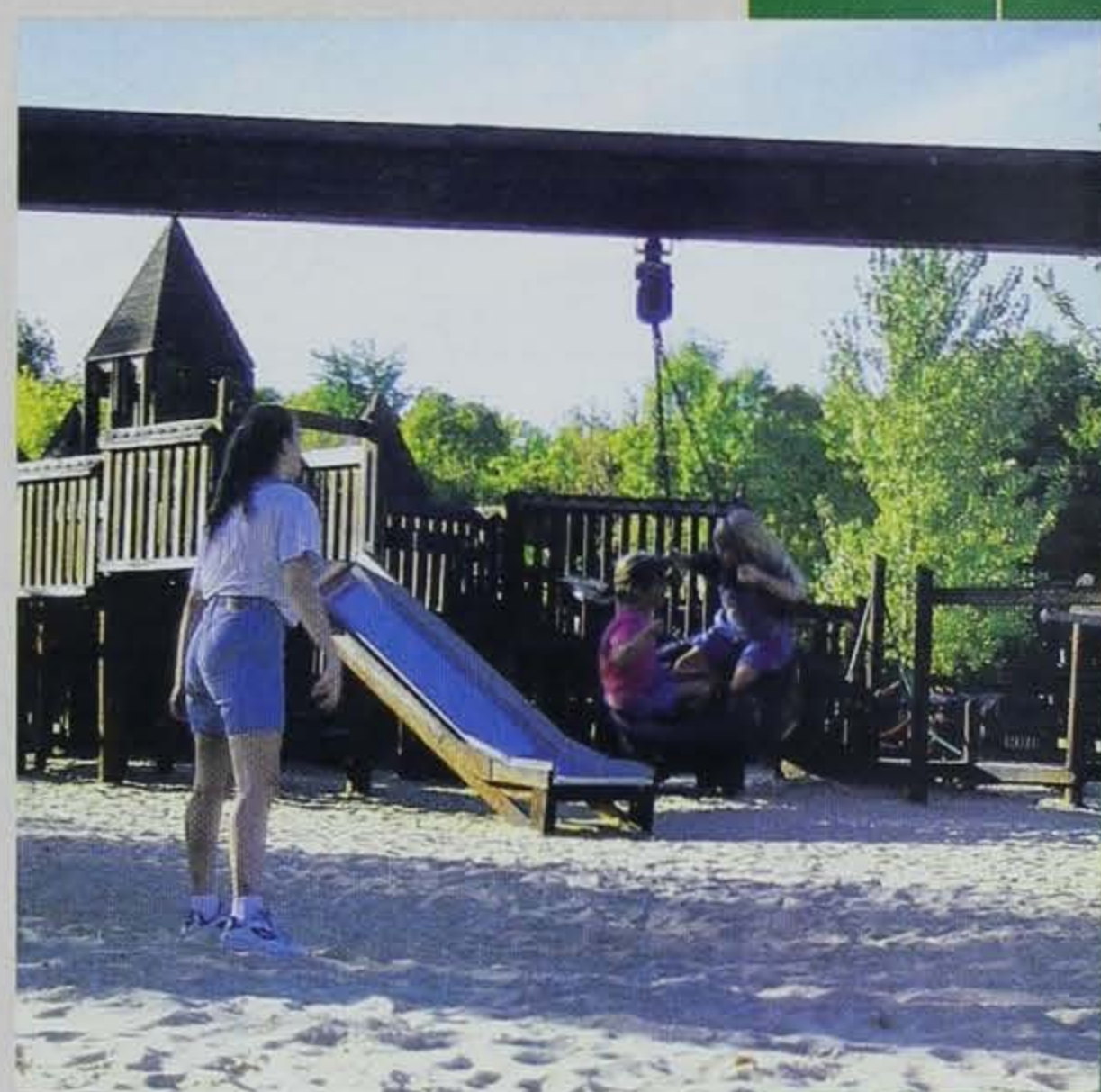
This time, the name stuck.





FAR LEFT and LEFT: The fishing pier offers a comfortable and easily accessible setting for an afternoon of fishing.

BELOW: The Dream Playground was made possible through a substantial community volunteer effort.



In the early 1900s water levels in the lake dropped several feet. To combat the problem, a private company was hired in 1949 to install tubes through the river levees to supply the lake with water. However, because the tubes created siltation, they were only used for a short time.

In 1956 the Iowa Conservation Commission, the predecessor to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, installed a low dam with a 48-inch diversion tube, running 8,000 feet from Mosquito Creek to the lake. The tube could

produce 800,000 gallons of water per hour in times of low water levels.

In 1981 the Iowa Conservation Commission determined the lake needed to be dredged due to years of siltation. To protect the lake from future siltation, in 1988 the DNR installed two pumps from the river to the lake. The pumps directed water from the river into a basin, which allowed the silt to settle to the bottom before the water entered into the lake. With all the resources installed over the years, Lake

Manawa has been able to maintain a water level suitable for recreational use.

In the early 1900s the area offered a vast array of recreational opportunities. Bowling alleys, dance pavilions, a ball park with a 5,000 seat grandstand, a roller coaster, vaudeville house, small zoo, merry-go-round and penny arcade where just a few of the attractions. The diversity of activities prompted Frank Smetana, in his book *History of Lake Manawa 1881-1981*, to coin Lake Manawa as the

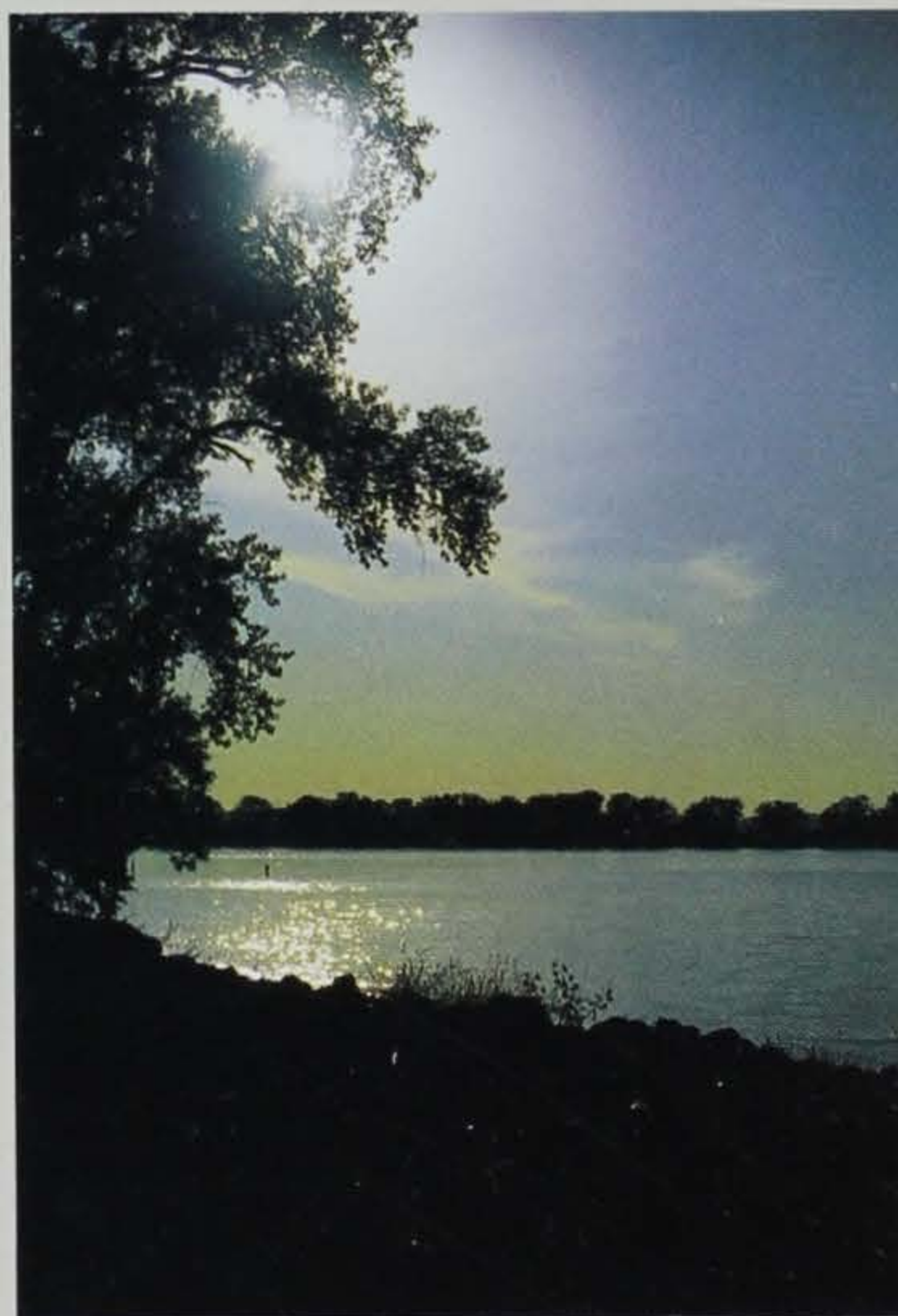


# PARKS PROFILE



ABOVE: The playground is one of the largest in the area.

RIGHT: Several locations around the park offer a picturesque peek of the lake.



“Coney Island of the Midwest.” Visitors came from all over just to experience the excitement.

Unfortunately, during the Great Depression the park saw little maintenance and adjacent property owners sold their land to pay taxes. Tornadoes, floods and fires also helped destroy the once popular and thriving recreational area.

In 1931, the park and lake spanned approximately 400 acres. However, when owners began selling their land during the Depression, the state was able to purchase the remainder of the park land.

Today, Lake Manawa State Park features 1,529 acres of land and 660 acres of water, offering a variety of recreational activities.

The park’s beach, complete with lifeguards and picnic areas, is a popular attraction for families and teenagers. The concession stand, open during normal beach operating hours, offers not only the traditional amenities, but also caters for private picnics. The area is often used for family reunions and corporate picnics.

There are nine open shelters throughout the park. The newest shelter was built in 2001 and paid for by a grant given to the Lake Manawa Friends Group from the Iowa West Foundation. It is an open shelter, however it has a kitchenette and rest room on site.

All shelters are within walking distance to The Dream Playground, one of the largest playgrounds in the area. The Dream Playground is a Bob Leathers playground and was built in 1993. The playground project was also made possible



through help from the Friends group. The playground design was created by area youth, and the structure was built with the help of more than 2,500 volunteers.

The ark has five boat ramps, one of which opened in 2001. The new ramp allows smoother access to the Missouri River from the south side of the park. Boat and bike rentals are also available.

The park offers several miles of paved bike trails, which connect to trails that run throughout Council Bluffs. Riders may also connect to the Wabash Trace Trail from the park.

All of the attractions offered at Lake Manawa State Park are surrounded by breath taking views and a wonderful atmosphere. Although Lake Manawa

State Park has been through many different stages of development over the decades, it is still a place of peace and comfort which draws thousands of visitors each year.

*Doug Coziahr is the park manager at Lake Manawa State Park.*

## LAKE MANAWA STATE PARK AT A GLANCE

**GENERAL INFORMATION:** A 660-acre lake encompassed by 1,529 acres of land. One of the most popular outdoor recreation facilities in the Omaha/Council Bluffs area.

**LOCATION:** Located 2 1/2 miles south of Interstate 80 (exit 3) in Council Bluffs.

**FISHING:** Lake contains largemouth bass, bluegills, crappie, channel catfish, yellow bass and bullheads.

**CAMPING:** Modern shower and rest room facilities; 73 camp sites, 37 of which are electric. Trailer dump station available.

**TRAILS:** Paved nature trail accessible to the mobility-impaired. Paved bike trail connects to the Western Trails Center, Council Bluffs trail system and the Wabash Trace Trail.

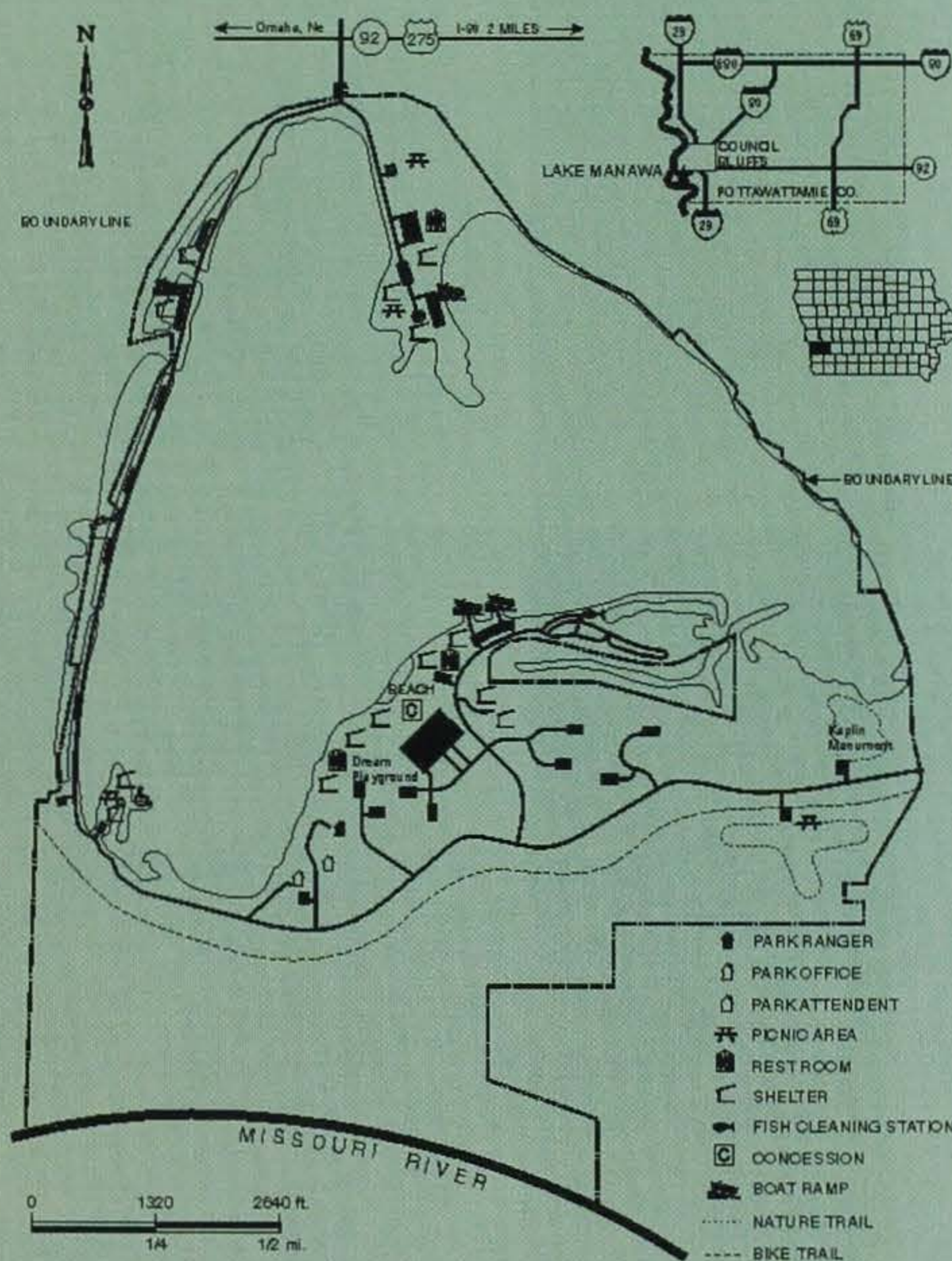
**PICNICKING:** Several open picnic shelters located around lake may be reserved for a fee through park manager. New shelter with fireplace and kitchen facilities now available.

**SWIMMING:** Popular beach with lifeguards.

**BOATING:** Premier boating spot in Omaha/Council Bluffs area. Boat motors of any size allowed.

**CONCESSIONS:** Concession stand located near beach area.

**CONTACT:** 712-366-0220; or by email at [Lake\\_Manawa@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:Lake_Manawa@dnr.state.ia.us).





# CONSERVATION 101

## Turkey Tales

Article by A. Jay Winter  
Photos by Clay Smith

An estimated 47,000 hunters pursued turkeys in Iowa last spring, a number that has grown steadily in recent years.

Roughly four out of every 10 Iowa spring hunters harvest a turkey. If you are one of the lucky ones, how do you preserve the memory? The easiest way,

short of taking your bird to a professional taxidermist, is to preserve the tail, beard and spurs yourself.

The key to a quality mount begins in the field, immediately after the bird is harvested. Try to keep dirt, mud and blood off the bird, and be careful not to bend, break or dislodge the feathers. Damage can be minimized or prevented by making a clean, quick harvest and collecting the bird as quickly as possible after the shot. It's best not to carry the bird out in a game bag, if you can do so safely.

The next step is removing the tail. Wrap your fingers around the base where the tail feathers attach to the body and carefully cut above your hand. Leave some of the smaller, back feathers to cover the base of the tail feathers. Remember, you can always trim excess tissue and feathers later, but if you cut it too short, you will be left with loose feathers.

Next, remove the beard. Grab around the base and gently pull toward the head or feet to remove. Finally, remove the feet at the first joint above the spurs. The pieces can be preserved immediately, or frozen in a plastic bag for later.



The first steps to preserving turkey feathers is to remove the tail section, apply a generous amount of borax to the base and pin to a piece of cardboard.





RIGHT: Stretching the feathers out too far will make the fan look unnatural.

BELOW: Borax should be applied to the beard, feet and spurs.

When you are ready to preserve the tail, carefully remove the muscle and fat that remains, making sure not to damage the base of the tail feathers. Liberally rub borax into all exposed tissue. The same should be done with the beard.

Spread the tail feathers on a piece of cardboard, laying the back feathers flat over the base of the tail feathers. Pin the outside feathers on each side using common pins, small nails or staples, making sure not to damage them. Repeat the steps with each feather until the fan looks natural. Securing a 1-inch side strip of cardboard across the spread will help hold it flat and secure.

Store the fan in a dry place and check on it every couple weeks. When it looks and feels dry, leave it for a couple more weeks before removing.



The feet can be preserved whole, or the spurs can be removed with a saw by cutting through the leg bone on each side of the spur. Locking tendons in the feet should keep the legs standing upright. If not, secure them with nails or duct tape crisscrossed over the toes.

There are several ways to display your mount. Commercial kits are available to mount all pieces together. Or, each can be displayed separately. Popular methods include sanding the bone

connected to the spur and threading it on a lanyard, polishing the spur in a rock tumbling machine and displaying the beard in the spent shotgun shell.

How you display your trophy is up to you. There is no wrong way. In the end, you'll have a keepsake to be proud of.

*A. Jay Winter is a training officer for the department at the Springbrook Education Center in Guthrie Center.*





# KIDS' CORNER

## Keeping A Watchful Eye

by V Pierce

In Iowa, spring means new signs of life: trees budding, birds returning and people working outside. The woodlands, dull in color from the winter months, once again fill with many colors. If you look closely, what's actually creating the color is the budding of the dormant leaves.

Leaves play an important role for trees and animals. Leaves not only provide cover for the woodlands but also food for herbivores, (plant eaters).

A place that contains adequate food and shelter will attract some animals. However, food and shelter aren't the only requirements. Ample water and space are also needed.

A place that provides enough

food, water, shelter and space is called a habitat. Not all habitats are the same, however. Some habitats contain only certain animals and plants. For example, a tropical rain forest habitat contains many different kinds of trees: the straggler fig tree, Brazil nut tree and cocoa tree. It also contains monkeys, tarantulas, poison tree frogs and leafcutter ants.

What type of trees and animals are found in your local habitat? If you want to see a certain animal, you need to know what type of habitat it lives in. For example, you will never find a wild polar bear in Iowa. Where do they live?

Now that you know where to look for a certain animal, the next step is knowing how to look for them. If you are into birdwatching, try to use your ears first. Use the bird's sounds to pinpoint its location. Make the least amount of noise as possible to prevent them from fleeing. Once you have spotted

them with your eyes, you can use binoculars to observe them closer. However, never walk while looking through binoculars; you could trip on something right under your nose.

Binoculars come in different shapes, sizes, and powers. A 7 X 35 binocular, for example, has a magnification power of 7 and a 35 mm field of view. The larger the power, the closer the object appears. However, it is harder to look through large power binoculars without them shaking. The large field of view provides a better image because more light is allowed in. For a birdwatcher, binoculars with a power of 7 to 10 will suffice.

*V Pierce is an AmeriCorps volunteer at the DNR Conservation Education Center near Guthrie Center.*

## Building Binoculars From Toilet Paper Tubes

Binoculars can be expensive tools, sometimes too expensive to allow children to use without supervision. However, children can make their own pair of "binoculars" and have fun in the process. Here is how to build a pair. You will need the following materials:

3 toilet paper tubes  
40-60 cm string  
scissors  
glue or tape

- Cut a 3 cm ring strip from a tube and cut through the ring strip
- Glue the sides of the two remaining tubes together.
- Open the 3 cm strip and glue it across the two tubes.
- After the glue has dried, decorate your binoculars anyway you want to.
- Tie the string to the ring strip for a carrying strap.



Bob Casteline

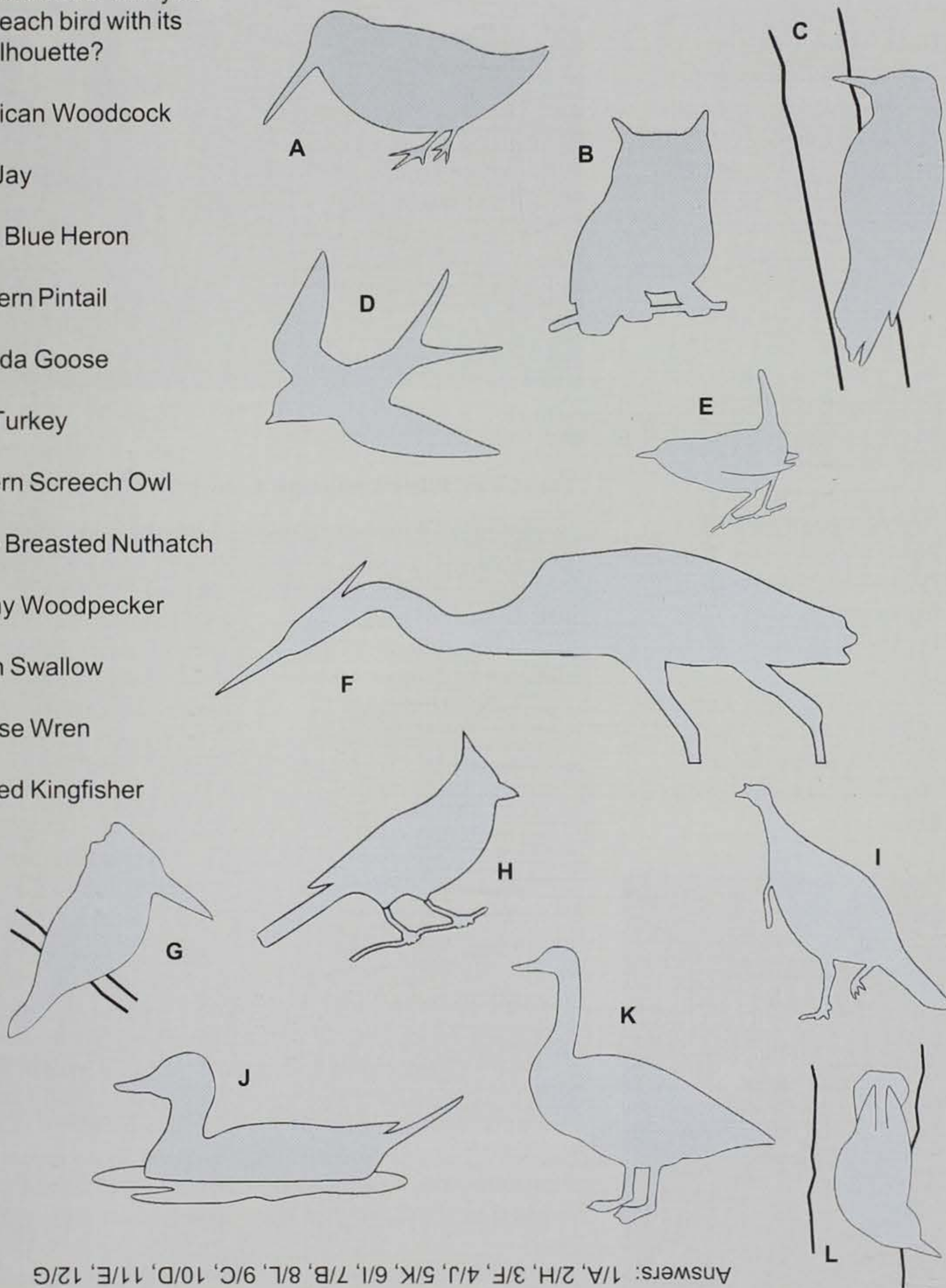
Decorate the finished product using paint, markers or stickers.



Birds come in different shapes and sizes. Can you connect each bird with its proper silhouette?

1. American Woodcock
2. Blue Jay
3. Great Blue Heron
4. Northern Pintail
5. Canada Goose
6. Wild Turkey
7. Eastern Screech Owl
8. White Breasted Nuthatch
9. Downy Woodpecker
10. Barn Swallow
11. House Wren
12. Belted Kingfisher

### Silhouettes of North American Birds



Answers: 1/A, 2/H, 3/C, 4/J, 5/E, 6/F, 7/B, 8/L, 9/I, 10/D, 11/K, 12/G



# CONSERVATION UPDATE

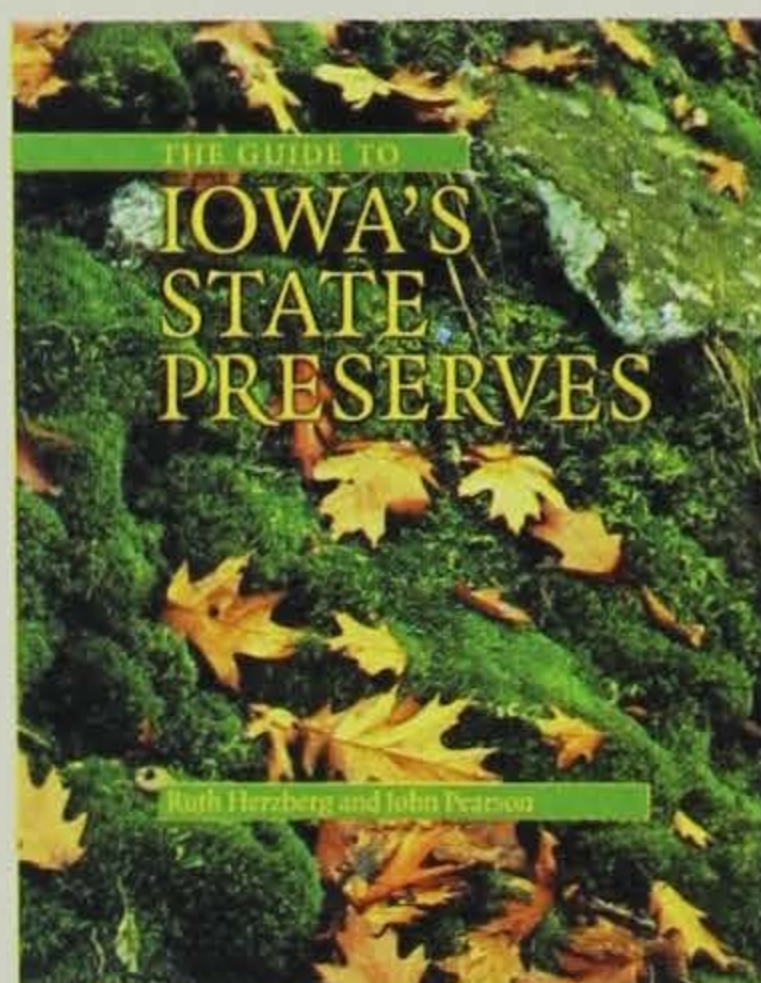
## Iowa State Preserves Guide Now Available

The most comprehensive guide to Iowa's state preserves is now available to the public.

*The Guide To Iowa's State Preserves* provides an overview and history of all 90 state preserves. The 214-page book details the biological, geological, archaeological, historical and scenic importance of each preserve. Each entry includes location maps, a description of each preserve's features and a list of nearby or similar preserves, parks, natural areas and other attractions.

The book was written by John Pearson of the DNR's Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division, and Ruth Herzberg, former staff member of the DNR's Forest and Prairies Division.

To order a copy, contact the University of Iowa Press at 773-568-1550, or by email at [uiupress@uiowa.edu](mailto:uiupress@uiowa.edu). The cost is \$14.95.



Ken Formanek

Iowa youths learn the value of trees through the Trees for Kids and Trees for Teens programs.

## Trees For Kids Program Continues To Grow

The Trees For Kids program, in its 12th year, continues to grow and mature in its effort to promote the value of trees to Iowa's youth by combining educational information with opportunities for tree planting and care.

During 2001, statewide participation in the Trees for Kids program and its sister program, Trees for Teens, continued its growth trend. There were 9,414 program packets distributed to school teachers. Working in collaboration with the Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association and the Iowa Bankers Association, students planted 70,283 trees. This year's totals bring the yearly average to almost 63,000 tree plantings, with more than 700,000 plantings to date. These totals place the program on track to plant its millionth tree by 2005.

While the 2001 materials

focused on fire management and natural landscape, preparations are already underway for 2002 program materials. The educational emphasis this year will focus on invasive species and their effects on Iowa's environment. Program materials contain background information for teachers, an array of classroom activities and a full-color poster.

The program is made possible through contributions from Mid-American Energy, People's Natural Gas, Alliant Energy, Iowa Nursery and Landscape Association, Iowa Tree Farm Committee, Trees Forever and Iowa State University Extension Forestry.

For additional information or to request program materials, contact Trees For Kids coordinator Ruth Hitchcock at 515-281-4915; Urban Forester John Walkowiak at 515-242-5966; or by email at [tfkids@dnr.state.ia.us](mailto:tfkids@dnr.state.ia.us).



## Annual Wings & Wetland Weekend May 11-12

In conjunction with National Wetlands Month, the 8th annual Wings & Wetlands Weekend will be held May 11 and 12.

The event, coordinated over a six county region in northwest Iowa (Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, O'Brien and Palo Alto) will offer a wide selection of programs and activities for all ages and interests. Events are held simultaneously in all counties so the public can select the programs that interest them most or are closer at hand.

Highlights include bird and nature hikes, bird banding, live birds of prey, canoeing and

kayaking, pond study, trumpeter swan releases, insect study, tropical foods, IOWATER volunteer water monitoring program, music events and food.

Sponsors of the event are the Clay, Dickinson, Emmet, Kossuth, O'Brien and Palo Alto county conservation boards; Emmet and Palo Alto soil and water conservation districts, Prairie Lakes Audubon Society, Palo Alto Ducks Unlimited, Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge and the Nature Conservancy.

For more information, contact the Lost Island Prairie Wetland Nature Center at 712-837-4866.

## Turkey Hunters In For Another Banner Year

Iowa turkey hunters should be in for another banner season despite a slight decrease in production last year.

The 2001 summer brood survey showed the number of hens with broods was down 11.5 percent and the number of poults per hen was down 6 percent, compared to the last five years. However, the number of turkeys per flock remained essentially unchanged, indicating the statewide turkey population remains strong, according to Todd Gosselink, the DNR's new wild turkey biologist.

The slight decrease in production is most likely due to less than ideal conditions during last year's spring nesting period.

Gosselink also pointed to the 2000 survey, since those turkeys would be adults now. Statewide in 2000, the number of hens with broods was up 11 percent and the number of poults per hen was up 6 percent.

"So the number of adult gobblers should be very promising, especially since this past winter has been very mild thus far, which will increase survival rates," Gosselink said.

All turkey hunting licenses can be purchased over the counter at any of the nearly 900 license agents statewide, or by calling 1-800-367-1188. Licenses are sold through the end of the season or until quotas are reached, if there are any. However, hunters are encouraged to purchase licenses early to avoid the late season rush.

## National Fishing Week

### Free Fishing Days June 7-9

In an effort to promote fishing, the Iowa DNR will be joining other agencies and organizations across the country in sponsoring National Fishing Week June 3-11.

As part of the celebration, the DNR has designated June 7-9 as Free Fishing Days in Iowa. During those days only, Iowa residents may fish and possess fish without purchasing a license or paying the new fish habitat fee. Payment of the trout fee, normally required when possessing trout, has also been waived. All other fishing regulations, including size and possession limits, apply.



Clay Smith

**Check out the DNR's website or watch your local media in April for information on Free Camping Weekend May 10-12!**



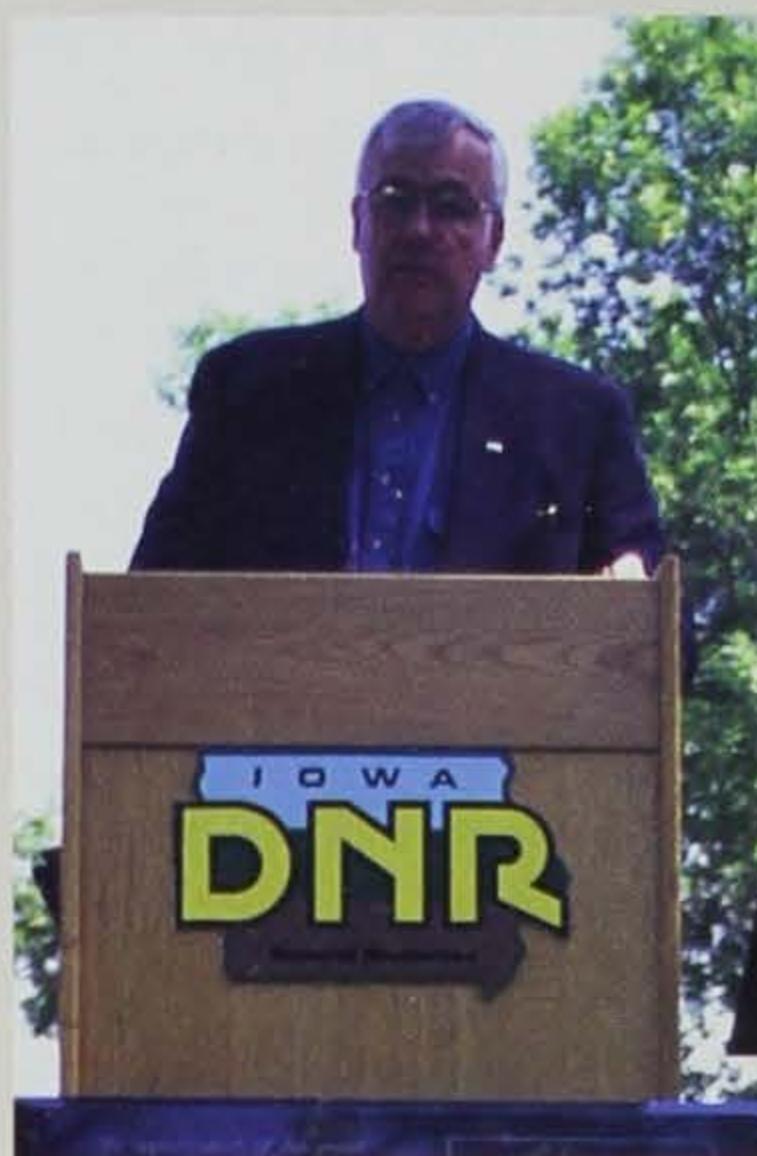
# CONSERVATION UPDATE

## Longtime DNR Leader Retires After 20 Years

Larry Wilson, former director of the Iowa Conservation Commission and the Department of Natural Resources, recently retired after 20 years with the agency.

Wilson served as director of the Iowa Conservation Commission from 1981 until it merged with three other agencies to form the DNR in 1986. Wilson was then appointed DNR director and served in that capacity until 1999 when Paul Johnson was appointed. Since then, he has been the agency's deputy director. Wilson worked in Utah for 17 years before coming to Iowa.

Wilson left the DNR under the state's early retirement program, which was offered to qualifying state employees to help offset state government's current budget shortfalls. Other top DNR officials who also retired under the program include: Allen Farris,



Larry Wilson

administrator of the Fish and Wildlife Division and interim administrator of the Parks, Recreation and Preserves Division, 30 years; Larry Bean, administrator of the Energy and Geological Resources Division, 20 years; Don Koch, chief of the Geological Survey Bureau, 42 years; and Pete Hamlin, chief of the Air Quality Bureau, 30 years.

## Maquoketa RiverFest Scheduled For March 22

Monticello is the site, March 22 the date, of Maquoketa RiverFest, a one-day celebration of the Maquoketa River watershed.

The event, scheduled for 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., will be held at the Berndes Center on the Jones County Fairgrounds, 766 North Street. The event is free and open to the public.

The Maquoketa Riverfest will feature presentations, displays and information on a variety of

topics related to water quality and the Maquoketa River watershed.

Featured topics include how to get involved in a watershed, fishing and canoeing the Maquoketa River, water quality protection projects and nutrient management. In addition, the Mobile Outreach for Pollution Prevention will display equipment and answer questions on how business impacts water quality.

For more information, contact Rick Lawrence at 563-652-5104.

## Manure Plans Required For New Confinement Feeding Operations

New confinement feeding operations that are required to have a manure management plan (MMP), but not a construction permit, will also be required to file that plan with the DNR and with their county board of supervisors.

The plan must be on file with the DNR and the county at least 30 days before construction begins.

Owners must use the DNR's form and must show they submitted a copy of the form to the county. The MMP must meet all current requirements, and include information (e.g. maps or aerial photos) that clearly shows the proposed location of any structures.

Owners must also provide information about existing confinement feeding operations they manage or have an ownership interest in if they are located within 2,500 feet of the proposed confinement.

The DNR will date the forms when they are received and notify the producer. The DNR then has 60 days to review complete plans. Producers will be asked to provide additional information, if an incomplete plan is submitted, before the DNR starts the review process.

Existing facilities that are expanding at the same location should submit an updated MMP and the additional indemnity fee to the DNR, but not to the county.

A copy of the rule and the MMP form can be found on the DNR website at [www.state.ia.us/dnr/organiza/epd/under animal feeding operations in the wastewater section](http://www.state.ia.us/dnr/organiza/epd/under%20animal%20feeding%20operations%20in%20the%20wastewater%20section).



## ***Volunteering Today For A Better Iowa Tomorrow***

### **Communicating In A Different Way**

Starmont High School in Arlington is home to a unique educational program drawing students out of the classroom and into the community. Part of the coursework for Todd Tharp's sophomore communications class requires volunteerism, and Backbone State Park has become a partner in this non-traditional educational experience.

Tharp was contacted by Don Clevenger, a member of Backbone State Park's Friends group. The result has been a continuing relationship between student volunteers, the park and the friends group. During two work days in April 2001 the students learned about the history, geology and ecology of the park while planting 950 hardwood saplings and 50 landscape-sized trees.

According to Clevenger, a 1998 tornado devastated a large portion of the park. The plantings were an effort to help restore the park's ecosystem and replace a portion of the \$80,000 in trees lost in the storm. The Friends group received grants in 2000 and 2001 for the reforestation efforts and recruited the students as an additional volunteer workforce.

Motivated and educated by their experience at Backbone, the students extended their community service and forestry skills into the urban setting by planting 30 landscape-sized trees at a local retirement home. Starmont High School's experience is proof that collaborative partnerships between parks, park supporters and community groups can benefit everyone involved.



Starmont High School students get a quick lesson on how to plant tree saplings during two days of volunteer work at Backbone State Park.

### **Upcoming NRC and EPC Meetings**

The dates and locations have been set for the following meetings of the Natural Resource Commission and Environmental Protection Commission of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

Agendas are set approximately 10 days prior to the scheduled meeting date. For additional information, contact the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 502 E. 9th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0034.

#### **Natural Resource Commission:**

- April  
No meeting
- May 9  
Creston
- June 13  
Sioux City
- July  
No meeting
- August 8  
Clear Lake
- September 12  
Maquoketa

#### **Environmental Protection Commission:**

- April 15  
Des Moines
- May 20  
Des Moines
- June 17  
Des Moines
- July 15  
Des Moines
- August 19  
Des Moines
- September 16  
Des Moines



# WARDEN'S DIARY



by Chuck Humeston

It was the Sunday before Thanksgiving. It was slow for a November day, but with pheasant numbers down, that was expected.

Considering the previous winter and the general lack of cover, it really wasn't surprising to see fewer birds. I look at it this way. Stand outside in subzero temperature, have someone tear down your house and drop 42 inches of snow on your head, and see how well you survive.

Still, it was unusual to have so few people out in the field.

It was late afternoon, and I turned toward home. That's when the call came in from state radio.

"Please call the police department," the operator said.

"What have you got?" I asked the dispatcher.

"Would you respond to a man caught in a snare?" she answered.

"You mean FOUND a snare don't you?"

"Well that too," she said. "He's also caught in it."

For those unfamiliar with snares, simply put they are loops of thin cable, suspended over an animal trail and typically secured to the ground with a stake. Being creatures of habit, the animal walks down the trail and walks into the loop, which

tightens around its body. There are a host of regulations pertaining to snares, including those that prevent certain animals, like deer and pets, from being unintentionally caught.

Still, it sometimes happens. Before the days of required cable locks, I occasionally saw deer caught in snares. But people? That was a new one on me.

I got a second radio call telling me the complainant was out of the snare and at home. I drove to the address and knocked on the door, which a man answered. I really didn't know any delicate way to ask.

"Did you get caught in a snare?"

"Yes I did," he answered.

We drove to the head of a recreational trail at the edge of town. He lead me to the site where the incident took place.

"I was walking along this trail with my wife, and I decided to walk over and look at the water," he recalled. "I took a few steps, and the next thing I knew I was flat on the ground. I tried to stand up, and I fell down again. I looked down and something had me by the foot. I tried to kick my foot out of it, but I couldn't get out. My wife asked me what the heck was wrong with me, and I told her something had me by the foot. We looked down, and saw this wire around my foot. She got it loose some how."

"Are you hurt?" I asked.

"I have a bad knee, and this

wrenched it again, but I'm OK."

I followed him to where the footpath left the trail toward the creek. There was the snare. It was missing the required tag and locking device. I walked a few yards further. Two more snares. One with a tag but no lock, and another with a lock but no tag. All had the same construction and stake.

This guy must have been using phone poles for stakes. He could have caught a Humvee in it, and it wouldn't have gone anywhere. With considerable effort, I pulled the stakes out of the ground. Walking further along the recreation trail, I stopped where I noticed a raccoon trail. Another snare, with a tag displaying the same name as the other.

I explained to the complainant that, except for the tag and lock problems, the snares were legal. Legal, but not a good idea next to a recreation trail. (I later caught up with the owner who admitted ownership and paid some fines.)

We walked back to my truck with the snares in hand. The man stopped, looked up and shook his head. "I don't believe it," he said laughing.

"What?" I asked.

"You know," he said, "I made it all the way through Korea. Never stepped on a land mine. Never walked into a booby-trap. I walk down a trail in the middle of Iowa, and look what happens!"

I looked at him. What could I say? "Come on, I'll take you home," I said.



# PARTING SHOT



## Simpler Times

This photo was sent in by Jane Osmanson of Cumming. The photo, taken in 1952, is of her husband Mark Osmanson at a farm pond near Denison.



