



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

EcoNewsWire

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lake Meyer has a bright future thanks to local watershed improvement efforts

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CALMAR – Lake Meyer, a popular area for boating and fishing in Winneshiek County, has a cleaner and clearer future thanks to a community-led effort.

The northeast Iowa lake had been placed on Iowa’s impaired waters list in 1998 due to declines in water quality from sediment runoff and increased phosphorus levels. These were affecting both the aesthetic conditions in the lake as well as impacting fish and other aquatic life through decreased visibility due to algae blooms and cloudy water.

“Sometimes the water would be really green and murky, it looked kind of like pea soup,” says Barb Schroeder, executive director of the Winneshiek County Conservation Board.

In 2013, farmers, landowners and government agencies joined together to launch the Lake Meyer Watershed Project, aiming to reduce sediment and nutrients reaching the lake by strategically placing conservation practices on the land and increasing the culture of conservation in the community.

A rock chute wetland added at the inlet of Lake Meyer helps filter runoff, and an additional grade stabilization structure upslope of the wetland area works to reduce sediment runoff from adjacent cropland areas. In addition, partners removed more than 700 dump truck loads of sediment from the lake bottom during wetland construction.

Landowners around the area installed 66 acres of filter strips, 5 manure storage systems, over 35,000 feet of terraces, 8 grade stabilization structures, 5 sediment and water control structures, over 4,000 feet of grassed waterways, 3 bio-swales, and 4 wetlands. These combined efforts prevented more than 3,300 tons of

sediment and more than 2.15 tons of phosphorous from reaching the lake every year.

“The credit for the success really needs to go to the farmers who implemented conservation practices in the Lake Meyer watershed,” says Schroeder. “Thanks to them and the cooperative efforts of local and state agencies, we have clear water with great fishing. With those improvements, lake use has increased, adding to the local economy.”

DNR Fisheries staff also installed fish habitat structures, such as gravel spawning beds, fish cribs, and tree/brush piles, at various depths and locations in the lake. These structures can offer fish critical shelter during hot summer months, and structures placed in the deepest areas can provide excellent cover for winter panfish.

The watershed project has led to improved biological monitoring scores in the lake, showing increased water clarity and better habitat conditions for the lake’s fish and other aquatic species. The lake was removed from the impaired waters list in 2000.

"This really is a success story about how it takes an entire community to make things happen," says Jennifer Kurth, DNR aquatic biologist.

The Lake Meyer Watershed Project was funded and supported by the Iowa DNR, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund and local landowners and farmers. Other partners include the Winneshiek County Conservation Board, the Winneshiek Soil and Water Conservation District, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

To learn more about the Lake Meyer success story, go to:

<https://www.epa.gov/nps/success-stories-addressing-sediment-and-nutrient-sources-restores-Lake-Meyer>

You can also find more Iowa success stories on the EPA's website at:

<https://www.epa.gov/nps/success-stories-about-restoring-water-bodies-impaired-nonpoint-source-pollution#ia> and clicking on the Iowa map.

Iowa companies partner with DNR P2 intern program to enhance environmental performance

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DES MOINES – Ten Iowa businesses have teamed with DNR’s Pollution Prevention (P2) Intern Program this summer to increase the efficiency of their operations and reduce associated costs.

Upper-level engineering students work on-site at their assigned company to conduct in-depth assessments, analyze data, research pollution prevention strategies, and provide calculated recommendations. Companies utilize the data to make informed decisions and implement process improvements that will help position them to meet environmental performance goals.

“P2 is the process of going back up the pipe to identify the root cause of an inefficiency and applying source-reduction strategies to reduce or eliminate waste in a process or system,” says Jeff Fiagle, Team Lead for the P2 Services team. Technical Advisers with the P2 Intern Program provide training and oversight to the interns who seek to provide long-term solutions for the host companies.

Since 2001, more than 200 Iowa companies, hospitals, universities and government agencies have participated in this innovative program, accumulating more than \$116.6 million in savings as a result of using resources more efficiently and improving environmental performance.

Environmental benefits achieved include the reduction of:

- 6.06 billion gallons of water;
- 274,855 tons of solid waste;
- 10,242 tons of hazardous waste;
- 513 million kilowatt hours of electricity;
- 23.7 million therms of energy.

Companies participating in the 2024 P2 Intern Program include (listed alphabetically by town):

Des Moines: Anderson Erickson Dairy – 2 projects

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Eddyville: Ajinomoto Health & Nutrition North America, Inc. – 28 week project

Marshalltown: JBS USA, LLC

Nevada: Burke Marketing Corporation – Hormel Foods

Ottumwa: JBS Swift Pork

Sergeant Bluff: CF Industries

Sergeant Bluff: Gelita USA

Woodward: Woodward Resource Center

Funding for the P2 Intern Program includes federal grants, portions of solid waste tonnage fees and cost share contributed by the host companies.

Pollution Prevention Services also provides confidential, non-regulatory, environmental technical assistance in the form of assessments, development assistance for Environmental Management Systems, workshops, an equipment

loan program, and access to an electronic library of technical resources. These services are offered at no-cost to help companies reduce expenses through source-reduction strategies to improve process efficiency and reduce or eliminate waste.

For more information on the Pollution Prevention Intern Program and a list of 2024 projects, visit: www.iowap2interns.com. Case summaries of the 2024 projects will be posted to this website in the fall.

Air quality permits under review

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DES MOINES – The DNR Air Quality Bureau has the following draft permits up for review. The permits help protect Iowans' health and the air where we live. DNR's permitting staff review the applications to ensure facilities comply with state and federal air quality standards. The public has the right and is encouraged to comment on draft permits. DNR considers [public comments](#) before finalizing the permits. Submit comments in writing to the assigned permit writer before 4:30 p.m. on the last day of the comment period.

Title V Operating Permits

Title V Operating permits are reviewed and re-issued every five years. Facilities with a Title V permit have the potential to emit large amounts of air pollutants compared to other facilities. The five-year reviews are a federal requirement and ensure adequate monitoring is included in the permit. The DNR plans to issue Title V Operating Permits for the following facilities. Find permit details at www.iowadnr.gov/titlev-draft or through the [Iowa EASY Air Public Inquiry Portal](#) and then click on the Public Notice tab.

Fayette County

Ashley Industrial Molding, Inc. located at [951 2nd Avenue SE, Oelwein](#)

The application was submitted to operate their existing Plastics Products, NEC facility. The public comment period ends April 20.

Floyd County

CDI, LLC - Charles City located at [715 E Corporate Dr, Charles City](#)

The application was submitted to operate their existing Top, Body, and Upholstery Repair Shops and Paint Shops facility. The public comment period ends April 24.