



Iowa Highlights



A Diamond in the Rough No More! Diamond Lake (Dickinson Co.) is a 166 acre shallow natural lake in northwest Iowa. Historical records indicate this lake once had a thriving and diverse aquatic plant community, clear water, and a healthy aquatic ecosystem. For the past 80-100 years, however, the lake has exhibited poor water quality, excessive blue-green algal growth, and extremely limited fisheries and wildlife habitat. Conservation efforts focused on improving water quality by shifting the lake to a clear water state using water-level management to consolidate bottom sediments, re-establish aquatic plants, and control common carp populations. The construction and water level management phase was completed between 2006-09, and fish were restocked in 2009-10. (yellow perch '09, reproduced in '10, northern pike fingerling stocked '10). To date, there has not been a re-infestation of rough fish (common carp) and lake water level has returned to normal. In spite of heavy summer rains, water quality is still great, with minor algae blooms. A diverse aquatic plant community remains and public use continues to increase. This project was highlighted on the National Fish Habitat Action Plan's "2010 Ten Waters to Watch" list.



Photo: Aerial view of Diamond Lake, northwestern Iowa. IA

A Comprehensive Plan for Restoration Lizard Lake (Pocahontas Co.) is a 272 acre natural lake that was selected as a shallow lakes project. Iowa State University completed a study that highlighted restoration alternatives and suggested shallow lakes management rather than dredging the lake bottom. Utilizing four public meetings and also forming a technical workgroup, a strategy was developed that will temporarily lower the lake to solidify the lake bottom, permit reconstruction of an adjustable outlet/fish barrier, eliminate the problem of a carp dominated fishery and allow for aquatic plant re-growth. Following two years of a drawdown the lake will be refilled to its current, long established water level and restocked with yellow perch and northern pike. Work also continues in the watershed to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to improve lake water quality.

Return of a Lake Lost Island Lake (Palo Alto Co.) is a 1,200 acre natural lake with an associated watershed that contains 1,000 acres of wetlands (25% of the watershed is in public ownership). Partners are under contract to significantly improve the system function, water quality, fish habitat and fish community. Phosphorus reduction goals have been established; wetland restoration and rough fish exclusion measures are under construction; subsidized roughfish removal is on-going; aggressive fish predator stocking continues. Lake homes are hooked up to a sanitary sewer system and additional agricultural BMPs have been identified and will be implemented. A contract for \$785,000 was approved for the construction of five combination fish barrier/water level control structures.

An additional 10 glacial lakes/wetland projects are in design and development phase.