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October 29 Iowa Outdoors

1 message

Press Releases from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

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1. Plan to Improve Twin Lakes Topic of November 5 Meeting
2. Ankeny Man Wins Adventure Ready Gift Card Giveaway
3. Preserve on Rathbun Lake Receives Environmental Designation

PLAN TO IMPROVE TWIN LAKES TOPIC OF NOVEMBER 5 MEETING

MANSON, Iowa - Improving the water quality in North and South Twin lakes in Calhoun County will be discussed at a public meeting on Nov. 5, at the Twin Lakes Bible Camp, on the west side of North Twin Lake, 7718 Twin Lakes Road, Manson.

The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. and is open to the public.

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources and Iowa State University in cooperation with the Twin Lakes Restoration Association will outline the process. Iowa State University will conduct a multi-year study to determine the causes of the poor water quality and develop a plan to make long-term improvements to the water quality in both lakes.

The meeting will cover the purpose of the study, what information will be collected and how it can be used to develop a long term management and improvement plan for the Twin Lakes.

North and South Twin lakes are listed on the state's List of Impaired Waters. The overall goal is to remove the Twin Lakes from the impaired waters list and improve the recreational opportunities at both lakes.

MEDIA CONTACT: Ben Wallace, Fisheries Biologist, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, [712-657-2638](tel:712-657-2638).

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ANKENY MAN WINS ADVENTURE READY GIFT CARD GIVEAWAY

Kevin Marso, from Ankeny, is this week's winner of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Adventure Ready Gift Card Giveaway. Marso won a \$50 gift card generously donated by Theisen's Home Farm Auto, in Dubuque.

Hunters and anglers who purchase one of four new licenses in 2013 will be automatically entered into a weekly drawing for a \$50 gift card.

To participate in the drawing, Iowans can simply purchase one of the four qualifying licenses at any license retailer or on the DNR's website at www.iowadnr.gov. The four qualifying licenses are:

- **Bonus Line License** – resident and nonresident anglers can fish with one additional line (with the purchase of the annual fishing license, which allows two lines), for \$12.
- **Outdoor Combo License** – annual resident hunting/fishing/habitat combo license for \$47.
- **Angler's Special** – a three-year resident fishing license for \$53.
- **Hunter's Special** – a three-year resident hunting license with habitat included for \$86.

The DNR will draw every Monday at noon and announce the weekly winner on its website and through Twitter on Tuesday afternoon. The promotion will run through December 23, 2013.

Mills Fleet Farm is sponsoring the Nov. 4 gift card drawing. Weekly winner announcements, gift card sponsors and complete drawing details can be found at www.iowadnr.gov/giveaway.

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PRESERVE ON RATHBUN LAKE RECEIVES ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGNATION

The Preserve on Rathbun Lake golf course at Honey Creek Resort State Park was designated a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary for its efforts to reduce its impact on the environment. It is one of only six Iowa courses to receive the designation.

“It adds to the prestige of the golf course,” says Darin Fisher, director of golf operations. “It lets people know we work with the environment.”

To acquire the designation, the golf course had to meet Audubon’s criteria of Environmental Planning, Wildlife and Habitat Management, Outreach and Education, Chemical Use Reduction and Safety, Water Conservation and Water Quality Management.

“It shows that we’re going beyond what most other courses are doing, that we do understand the environment and we’re trying to enhance what we have,” says Erik Hanson, course superintendent.

Over the last four years, the Preserve has added areas of native grasses and buffer strips. To attract birds, 15 nest boxes were installed around the course with plans for more. Brush piles were added to create habitat for small animals.

“Our bluebird houses have been extremely successful,” says Hanson. “Every one has either been filled with bluebirds or tree swallows.”

Signs were placed around the course as part of the education and outreach effort to explain areas planted with native grasses. A naturalist gives tours of the course highlighting the environmental initiatives and practices undertaken.

The grounds crew has reduced its use of pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides. It uses practices such as aerification to reduce the need for fertilizers. When chemical use is necessary, applications are used in small doses in concentrated areas to reduce runoff.

Another way the course reduces herbicide use is by pulling weeds.

“We will manually pull weeds instead of spraying,” says Hanson. And the weeds are added to the brush piles.

The course reduces its water use by using untreated runoff to irrigate the grass and targets that use only on areas that need water.

Buffer strips were also set up around each body of water to absorb runoff fertilizer, herbicide and pesticide, keeping it out of the water. In addition, the water on the course is tested once every year to ensure water quality remains constant.

“(The designation) doesn’t go back to the number of rounds played,” says Fisher. “It goes back to giving back to the environment and what our mission statement is for the resort and the Iowa DNR.”

- 30 -

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