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April 15 Iowa Outdoors

1 message

Press Releases from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources

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Tue, Apr 15, 2014 at 11:43 AM



IOWA OUTDOORS

IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES | CONSERVATION AND RECREATION DIVISION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 15, 2014

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[Photos for the REAP story are available upon request by sending an email to mick.klemesrud@dnr.iowa.gov]

REAP: 25 Years of Enhancing and Protecting Iowa's Resources

REAP RESTORES BLACK HAWK LAKE STONE PIERS TO ORIGINAL GLORY

LAKE VIEW - Black Hawk Lake in Lake View attracts more than a quarter million visitors every year. Made possible through REAP funding, restoration of its depression-era stone piers and historic shelter house, plus development of campgrounds and the Ice House Point trail make it a popular destination.

Two stone piers are the focal points of a three-acre municipal shoreline park that was developed during the Great Depression in 1934, under President Roosevelt's Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). The piers have remained among the most popular spots on Black Hawk Lake for fishing and special events. They have also acquired importance as community-defining visual features that are used for promotional materials for the Black Hawk Lake area. They are widely known as Lake View's unique landmark.

Using REAP funding, each pier was coffer-dammed and pumped dry to allow reconstruction of mooring platforms that were given enhanced support. The piers received new concrete decking as missing pier stone was reset and cracks in existing mortar were tuck-pointed. The west pier's tipped wing wall was stabilized and wood benches were constructed on the main deck, while the north pier's stone benches were also restored.

The paved hiking/biking Ice House Trail is the beginning of a multi-phased project that will ultimately encompass the entire lake.

"The Ice House Trail is very well used and people really like it — it provides a lot of access to some underutilized areas of the park, so it has been really good for us," said Lake View city administrator Scott Peterson.

A result of recent lake restoration efforts, dredging has allowed for some of Black Hawk Lake's deepest fishing holes to be found off Ice House Point, where fishermen now have easy access. Peterson said the Ice House Point Trail had approximately 4,700 users between May and October, 2012.

In 1991, Black Hawk State Park received \$185,912 for renovation of its historic CCC shelter house, originally constructed using native fieldstone. The park also received funds in 2002, 2006, and 2012 for campground restroom facilities, upgraded electricity and playground equipment.

According an economic study by Dr. John Downing in 2010, the average annual spending, \$19.05 million, and the number of jobs supported, 379, is higher for Black Hawk Lake than other nearby lakes.

"These historic structures have been around since the 30s, so we wanted to refurbish them and make sure they're here for another 50 years," Peterson said.

In its 25 years, REAP has benefited every county in Iowa by supporting 14,535 projects. REAP has funded these projects with \$264 million in state investments, leveraging two to three times the amount in private, local and federal dollars.

Collectively, these projects have improved the quality of life for all Iowans with better soil and water quality; added outdoor recreation opportunities; sustained economic development; enhanced knowledge and understanding of our ecological and environmental assets, and preservation of our cultural and historic treasures.

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PLANT SOME SHADE TREE DISTRIBUTION EVENTS PLANNED FOR SPRING

DES MOINES – MidAmerican Energy Company residential customers who live in Iowa can participate in the *Plant Some Shade*[®] program this spring. The program offers customers discount-priced trees to reduce future energy use and green up their neighborhoods.

Strategically placed deciduous trees provide shade on hot summer days, easing the cooling load on air conditioners or heat pumps. Trees planted on the west side of a house provide the most benefit. Additionally, conifer trees planted as windbreaks help protect the home from blustery Iowa winter winds thus reducing the energy needed for heating.

Plant Some Shade is a partnership initiative to aid long-term energy and natural resource conservation. The program is funded by MidAmerican Energy and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Bureau of Forestry, with eight local partners: City of Cedar Rapids, Johnson County Extension, Polk County Conservation, Pottawattamie County Conservation Board, Scott County Conservation Board, Warren County Conservation Board, City of Waterloo and Webster County Conservation Board.

Plant Some Shade offers MidAmerican Energy's residential customers the ability to purchase up to two, 3- to 4-foot conifers and 5- to 8-foot landscaping trees for \$30 each. A variety of trees are available, including two or three varieties of shade trees, a low-growing ornamental tree and a conifer.

"Encouraging residents to plant trees in their yard is an effective way to promote energy efficiency and environmental beautification," said Tina Yoder, MidAmerican Energy's manager, energy efficiency. "Strategically planted trees provide year-round protection of homes from the elements and that means energy savings. *Plant Some Shade* helps our customers save energy."

Plant Some Shade events will be held in Cedar Rapids, Council Bluffs, Davenport, Des Moines, Fort Dodge, Indianola, Iowa City and Waterloo. Prepayment and advance orders are required. Order forms can be obtained at www.midamericanenergy.com/iowa_plantsomeshade. Orders will be accepted until all trees have been sold. Tree recipients are given instructions on how to plant and care for their trees, including safety information regarding the need to call 811 before digging to check for underground power lines. In addition, it is important to choose a tree that fits the site characteristics so that it will not grow into overhead power lines or buildings.

"This is a wonderful opportunity for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price," said Matt Brewer, partnership coordinator for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources – Bureau of Forestry. "Spring is an ideal time to plant new trees. The season's warm days and cool nights are excellent for root growth."

For more information, contact Matt Brewer at [515-242-6892](tel:515-242-6892).

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MIDAMERICAN ENERGY GRANT BENEFITS BIG CREEK STATE PARK

Big Creek State Park has been awarded a grant from MidAmerican Energy's Trees Please program for the third year in a row to purchase trees and materials needed to plant the trees in the park.

"We are using the grant funds to go to local growers to purchase larger stock to replace damaged trees in the park," said Chad Kelchen, manager at Big Creek State Park.

Kelchen said prior grants have gone to planting 20, 8 to 12 foot native hardwoods, and another 20 will be added this year.

"The Trees Please program allows us to use larger stock and that will make a huge difference in the park," Kelchen said.

The trees will be added this spring.

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PEREGRINE FALCON EVENT IN HARPERS FERRY MAY 2

The Harpers Ferry Community Center is hosting a peregrine falcon event on May 2, beginning with a fish fry from 4:30 – 7 p.m., followed by a falcon program at 7:15 p.m. The community center is at 133 S. 4th St., in Harpers Ferry. Admission is a free will offering.

This provides a wonderful opportunity to celebrate this rejuvenation and to learn more about peregrine falcons.

There will be no river trip this year as the Maiden Voyage that has provided tours is being replaced. Watch for the return of this popular program next year. For further details contact pat.schlarbaum@dnr.iowa.gov or [712-330-0526](tel:712-330-0526)

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ROAD RESURFACING CLOSES STATE FOREST CAMPGROUNDS

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is closing the campgrounds in the White Breast and Lucas units of Stephens State Forest beginning June 9 due to a resurfacing project on Hwy. 65. The resurfacing project is expected to last 40 days, weather permitting.

Campgrounds in Stephens State Forest host about 5,200 camping nights each year.

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AWARD-WINNING FISHING CURRICULUM AVAILABLE IN NEW ELECTRONIC FORMAT

The award winning *Fish Iowa!* basic spincasting curriculum is now available on CD.

Major revisions include new teaching tips and tricks that address education reforms and best practices, as well as links to a host of online resources including instructional videos and websites. Topics covered include: History of Fishing; Regulations, Safety, and Ethics; Iowa Waters (Where to Fish); Fish Identification; Spincasting Equipment and Techniques; Baits and Lures; and Landing and Caring for the Catch.

The *Fish Iowa!* module is available through several training options including teacher workshops that provide re-certification credit, seminars, and even individual sessions. For information on how to get trained, or if already trained and would like the new *Fish Iowa!* spincasting module, contact the Aquatic Education Program at EdInfo@dnr.iowa.gov or 641-747-2200.

About *Fish Iowa!*

Fish Iowa! is a comprehensive program focused on engaging youth and novice anglers, and promoting stewardship of Iowa's aquatic resources. More than 3,400 partners including educators, youth leaders, and

naturalists across Iowa have been trained to use the basic spincasting module since its inception of in the fall of 1990. Educational resources are supplemented with over 3,000 free loan rods and reels at more than 100 locations. *Fish Iowa!* is used in physical education classes, after school programs, camps, clinics, and events. It has been recognized nationally with several awards including the Aquatic Resource Education Association's highest honor of Outstanding Aquatic Education Program in 2012.

MEDIA CONTACT: Shannon Hafner, DNR, at (641) 747-2200 or shannon.hafner@dnr.iowa.gov

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