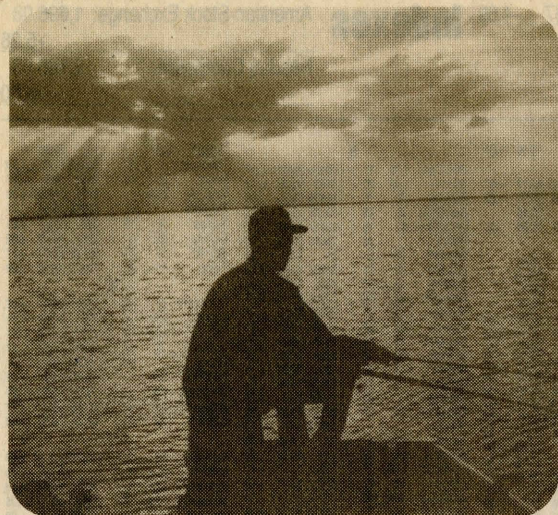




OUTDOOR LIVING



Keeping Brushy clean

Meeting to be held on Sept. 19 to discuss problems

The 690-acre Brushy Creek Lake and the 57,000-acre drainage area that flows into it are the focus of a three-year Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 319 grant that was recently awarded to the Webster County Soil and Water Conservation District.

The lake, located 15 miles southeast of Fort Dodge, was completed in 1998 and is currently considered one of the cleanest lakes in Iowa due to its recent construction, which has not allowed enough time for significant sediment, nutrient, and pesticide build-up.

Given the size and relative flatness of the watershed, along with the extensive tile systems and intensive farming practices, it is only a matter of time before these contaminants begin to build up in the lake.

A portion of the funds provided through the grant will be used as cost share incentives for landowners and residents of the watershed to establish and use conservation practices on the land that will help to control pollutants from reaching the lake.

With over 85 percent of the watershed being cropland, a major focus of the project will be working with landowners and residents to identify and address any potential problem areas that could direct pollutants into the lake.

Cost share incentives provided through the grant, along with state and federally funded cost share programs, will be used in the establishment of conservation practices, including buffers, wetlands, stream bank stabilization, conservation tillage practices, nutrient and pest management, animal waste facilities, and many others.

Another portion of the funds will be used to

establish an educational program, including workshops and tours focusing on the conservation practices that have been installed, along with other conservation efforts that will help to preserve the integrity of the lake.

The educational programs will involve landowners, homeowners, and developers on the planning, design, and implementation of best management practices and sound land use that will reduce sediment and other pollutant delivery.

The workshops held over the course of the three year project will cover a range of topics, including septic systems placement in rural areas and water quality monitoring. There will be demonstration areas established on selected areas in the watershed that will be used for tours to show good land stewardship.

With the help of the project partners, including Brushy Creek DNR staff, local conservation groups, and local businesses, the Webster County Soil and Water Conservation District hopes to take measures that will protect the lake from pollution and allow it to continue as a popular recreation area for everyone to enjoy.

There is an informational meeting open to the landowners, operators, and residents of the watershed scheduled for Monday, September 19, at the St. Joseph's Parish Hall in Duncombe.

The meeting will begin at 7 a.m. with breakfast being served and should conclude by 8:30 a.m.

All landowners, operators, and residents should be receiving a letter reminding them of the meeting. If you do have any questions please contact T.J. Lynn at (515) 573-4411.



—Submitted photo

CHAD KELCHEN, T.J. LYNN AND Doug Seltz talk about issues at Brushy Creek. Kelchen is the area manager at Brushy, Lynn is the 319 Project Coordinator, and Seltz is chairman for the Webster County Soil and Water Conservation District.