

INFORMATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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Potential here for recreational development

A recently completed survey has found the potential is high for development of recreational areas within Davis County.

Making the study were representatives of the Davis County Historical Society, Davis County Conservation Board, State Conservation Commission, and members of the local Rural Development Committee which is comprised of personnel from the Farmers Home Administration, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, the Soil Conservation Service, and the Extension Service.

The recreation appraisal was developed to serve as a guide to stimulating county wide growth in the recreational area. The study considered the county as a whole, and no attempt was made to appraise individual sites.

Explained Sam Botts Jr., chairman of the Soil Conservation District, in the introduction to the 17 page report, "Appraising the potentials for outdoor

recreation is an essential step in planning to meet recreational needs. This appraisal involved consideration of more than natural resources, since development potential also depends upon people and facilities necessary for development."

The survey made the following conclusions on the development potential for several types of recreational activities:

—Vacation cabins, cottages, and home sites have a high potential for Davis County. There is a definite place in future developments to meet the growing recreational needs of vacationers in the region.

—Fishing waters, applying only to warm water fishing, shows a high potential for the county.

—Picnicking and field sports areas were broken down into three categories, with the first, game, play and target areas, receiving a medium potential score for Davis County. Second was bicycling with a medium potential; and third was picnicking which received a high medium

potential appraisal.

—Camping grounds, which includes vacation sites, canoe trips and transient type camping, have a medium potential.

—Golf courses, the standard and par three type courses have medium potential, with the demand largely met already. Miniature courses and driving ranges have a medium potential, also.

—Hunting areas were subdivided into three categories, with the small game (quail, rabbits, squirrels) and large game (deer) having high potential, while waterfowl received a medium potential.

—Development of natural, scenic and historical areas rated a medium potential.

—Riding stables received a medium score, largely because of the smallness of the population.

—Vacation farms have a medium development potential in Davis County.

—Water sports areas for recreational uses received a medium

potential rating.

—Development of winter sports areas was given a low potential.

According to Botts, the findings of the survey group can be used in planning the long range program of the Davis County Soil Conservation District. Also, he said, the information obtained in the report is useful for planning by county and township governments, planning commissions, civic groups, and to publicize and promote outdoor recreation in the county.

Specific project proposals for public recreation areas may also grow out of the survey, said Botts.

The high potential given vacation cabins, cottages, and home sites was attributed by the survey to Davis County's close proximity to urban areas, the above average family income for these urban areas, plus the rawing power of the county's natural areas, scenery and climate.

Included in the development possibilities in this category are rental

cabins, vacation homes for sale, in addition to organized group camps using permanent buildings. The report notes that these facilities, while being in rural areas, should be close to various recreation activities.

With the present artificial impoundments of water, plus potential future impoundment sites, the rating by the survey for warm water fishing is high, with a score of 80 out of a possible 100.

The report noted that with Lake Wapello, Lake Fisher, and some 2,000 farm ponds, the existing areas for fishing are high. "The potential could be increased," the report stated, "by proper management to see that species are harvested proportionately to keep the population in balance."

Davis County's favorable location on Highways 2 and 63, plus the climate, scenery and natural areas are favorable factors for camp ground development. The study also indicated the possible development of bicycle paths or trails in conjunction with

picnic areas.

Also, while noting the present Bloomfield Country Club course is adequate for the resident population, there is some potential for a driving range and miniature golf facility here.

The availability of rural areas in the county offers a high potential for hunting such small game as quail, rabbits, squirrel and racoon. This, too, contributes to the potential for larger game animals, such as deer.

Although the survey found only a medium potential for waterfowl hunting, it noted this will increase as additional large water areas are created.

The many natural and scenic areas and woodlands adjacent to streams and creeks have some development potential. Good access roads and a growing number of tourists are favorable to increased use of these areas, the report said.

The report also mentioned Gen. James B. Weaver's home, the Southern Iowa Normal, Morman Trail, and some Indian camping grounds as historical sites of merit for developing.