

The Otter's Tale

Newsletter of the Friends of Pool 9

August, 2020

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President's View

What a year this has been! Who would have thought we'd get wrapped up in such a situation created by a simple virus? An organism unseen by the naked eye has brought one of the greatest nations in the world to its knees. It has impacted so many families, and created so much discontent and lost trust in one another. I'm truly saddened by it all.

But as a result, we've seen a major weekend migration to the river, by the thousands. Folks like you and me wanting to have a "family" experience in the protected area of nature. And so they boat to the beaches and fish the backwater and enjoy the beauty of it all. I would hope they don't join others and form groups of larger than ten, but I suspect some have. Masks on the river shouldn't be necessary, unless you're in a group where you could infect someone or be infected by them. Stay separated, spend time with your family unit, do some fishing in the quiet and solitude of the backwater. Let the river become your "refuge".

We continue to move forward with some activities, but will have few events this year. Volunteers have continued to clean the fire rings on area beaches, poison ivy patches have been treated, and some downed trees have been removed. The eagles were counted and recorded and are doing well in Pool 9. Scholarships were awarded five area seniors from De Soto and Lansing. But the MRAD activity for Kee and De Soto 7th graders this fall has been cancelled. The Pat Sandry Memorial Fishing Tournament in August headlined FOP9 as the benefit organization for part of their profits, and we appreciate that. The Corps is reconstructing a long lost island at the head of the Bay, in the area of Bisel Lake, as well as some deeper enhanced winter fish areas between Shore Slough and the Catfish Lake. We have also applied to the Iowa DNR for a "reduced wake zone" along the channel at Lansing, to lessen the impact of erosion and damage along the shoreline as well as the safety of other boaters. And while we're not having an Annual Meeting this year we are offering a Cash Back

Raffle and ask your help in supporting our programs by buying a ticket. Contact any Board member for tickets, Jerry Boardman is the Chairman of the event (563-419-7968). You'll also find a Donation envelop enclosed with this issue of the Otter's Tale for your use for an end of the year gift to FOP9 if you feel so inclined. So in spite of the current restrictions caused by the virus we are well as an organization, still doing what we can for the benefit of Pool 9, thanks to all of you.

Stay safe, enjoy the Mississippi, and we'll see you next year.

John Verdon

FOP9 Seeks IDNR Approval to Place Reduced Wake Buoys Along Channel

The Friends of Pool 9 Board of Directors have asked the Iowa DNR to approve the placement of wake control buoys along the channel in Lansing. The area would include that portion of the navigation channel running from the Lansing Marina dike downstream past S&S Rentals. The slow, no wake zone would extend out 300 feet from shore in the above designated area.

Board members, as well as Lansing citizens that use the river front have been concerned for years with the excessive wave action created by high speed larger vessels and the destruction and danger they cause. Blake Schoh, FOP9 Board member has agreed to Chair the committee. A presentation was made to the Lansing City Council and an application has been submitted to the Iowa DNR. The affected area extends from the shoreline at Lansing outward 300 feet, running the length of the channel from the Marina to S&S Rentals. Commercial traffic is not impacted by the restriction.

If approved by the Iowa DNR, Friends of Pool 9 would be responsible for buoy placement (and fall removal) along the designated course as well as accompanying signage to inform boaters of the restricted area. Boat traffic beyond the restricted area of the channel, along the eastern half of the channel would not be impacted by the ruling.

Conway Lake Area Restoration Project

Lansing area boaters and refuge users have been impressed with the activity at the head of Lansing Bay. An island chain has emerged on the west shore of Bisel Lake, named after John Bisel early home owner prior to impoundment in 1937 created by Lock & Dam 9. Earth movers, barges, and dredge sand piped from “the dune” at the USACOE storage basin were used to create the island.



The nearly empty US Army Corp of Engineers sand deposition site (the dune) where a sand/slurry mix is being pumped two miles away across the river valley to the Conway Area Restoration Project along Shore Slough. Our pontoon is located in the center of the ‘dune lake’ with the bulldozer and pumping station located at the east end. This empty dune area will now be refilled with sand as dredging in the navigation channel takes place.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Paul District, awarded a \$5.2 million contract to Kaiyuh Services, LLC, of Anchorage, Alaska, to begin constructing a habitat restoration project known as the Conway Lake Project. However, the area of restoration is downstream of Conway Lake, in the vicinity of Shore Slough, Bisel Lake, and lower Catfish Lake. The completed project will restore lost and diminished fish and wildlife habitat in middle Pool 9. A majority of the construction will include creating floodplain forests and rock-lined berms to restore and improve habitat within the river corridor. Dredging will also create deeper holes for fish species to survive over-wintering stress, with deeper oxygen rich waters. Construction was initially expected to be completed by the end of fall, 2020 with final plantings completed by fall of 2021, according to the Corps. But that will likely extend to final plantings in 2022.

This project, funded under authority of the Upper Mississippi River Restoration Environmental Management Program (UMRREMP), is intended to ensure the coordinated development and enhancement of the Upper Mississippi River system with primary emphasis on habitat restoration and resource monitoring, and is mandated by the U.S. Congress. The Corps’



View of the Conway Lake Area Restoration Project in the vicinity of Bisel Lake. The photo was taken from Highway 26 looking toward Lansing Big Lake. Photo courtesy Bob Modersohn.

partners on projects of this design include the Iowa and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources, as well as the U.S. Upper Mississippi River Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey. In the 29-year history of the program, more than 55 habitat projects benefiting approximately 100,000 acres on the Upper Mississippi River, from Minneapolis to St. Louis, have been completed. This includes the recently completed Capoli Slough Project in lower Pool 9, creating wildlife and fish habitat, as well as island protection and restoration.



View from the Iowa bluffs showing the length of the Conway Lake Area Restoration Project in Pool 9. Photo courtesy Jared Landt, IDNR.

“This is a win/win/win situation for Lansing and Pool 9, fish and wildlife populations, and hunters and fisherman that will enjoy the newly created areas. And what better place to spend our U.S. dollars than in Pool 9,” said local Friends of Pool 9 Board member Bob Henkel. Jared Landt, IDNR conservation officer stationed in the area stated, “With the new floodplain forests and a better off-channel backwater fisheries habitat, hunters and anglers will see a conservation and recreational benefit for years to come. Duck hunting opportunities will eventually get better with this healthier habitat, and introduction of native seedlings will help fight off invasive tree types and maintain a desirable selection of tree species.”

Friends of Pool 9/Tim Loose Scholarship Recipients

The academic school year finished for both De Soto and Eastern Allamakee Community Schools, although not the way many had planned. The schools awarded the Friends of Pool 9/Tim Loose Memorial Scholarships to five students at private ceremonies in May.

De Soto High School awarded Alex Boardman a \$500 scholarship for him to pursue a Pre-pharmacy degree at Viterbo University. De Soto also selected Hunter Pedretti to receive a \$500 scholarship to attend Western Technical College in La Crosse in Computer Science. Marcus Connolly received the \$250 Volunteer Award and is entering the world of work.



Alex Boardman, De Soto High School, Pre-pharmacy degree.

Hunter Pedretti, De Soto High School, Computer Science degree

Marcus Connolly, De Soto High School, Volunteer Award.

Eastern Allamakee High School selected Kristi Dibert as recipient of the \$500 scholarship for the 4 year program and Kinley Schobert a \$500 scholarship for the two year program. In her 'Thank You' card Kinley wrote, "I'm so excited to begin my future and achieve my goals, with your help. Thank you for making the cost of my schooling more affordable. Every penny helps, thanks again."



Kristi Dibert, Eastern Allamakee Community Schools, Science degree.



Kinley Schobert, Eastern Allamakee Community Schools, Science degree.

Special thanks to the counselors in both schools, Jeannine Hisel at EACS High School and Jeni Rapraeger at De Soto High School for helping select these five students as scholarship winners. Members of Friends of Pool 9 and the family of Tim Loose congratulate these fine young men and women from De Soto High School and Eastern Allamakee Community Schools and wish them well in their science endeavors.

Support FOP9 by Buying a Raffle Ticket

The Board of Directors have made the decision to cancel the Annual Meeting of Friends of Pool 9, Upper Miss Refuge, Inc. The health issues caused by the corona virus covid-19 are something we have all learned to deal with in the past few months. It will probably persist well into the winter months and even into 2021. As fund raiser Raffle Chairman, Jerry Boardman has again agreed to take the responsibility of organizing the sale of the raffle tickets.

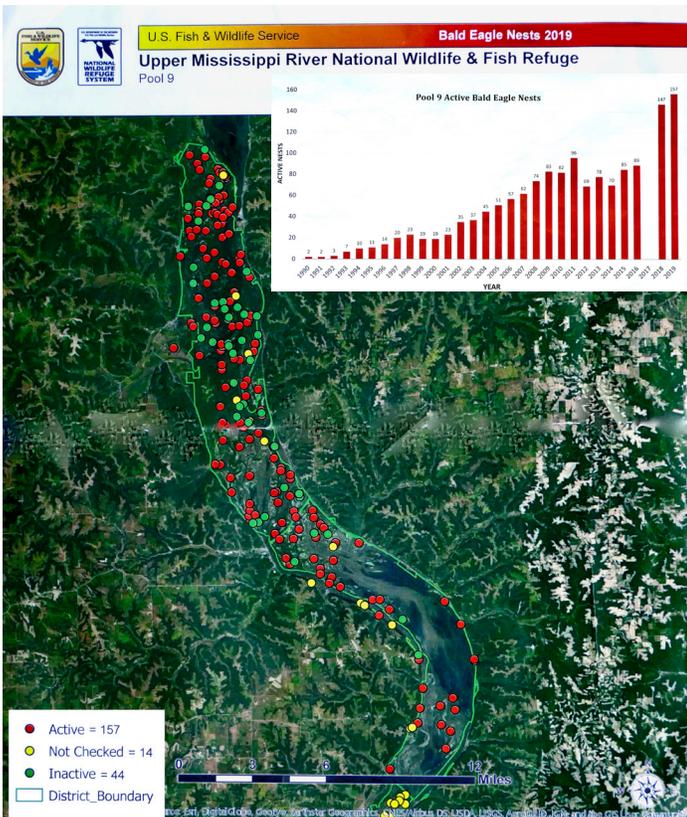
The drawing is planned for October 29, 2020 at a site yet to be determined. Tickets sell for: 1 ticket \$10, 3 tickets \$20, and 8 tickets for \$50. The Cash Back place winners are: 1st place \$500, 2nd place \$300, and 3rd place \$200.

If you'd rather not be involved in the raffle but still want to donate to Friends of Pool 9 please place your end of the year tax deductible donation in the envelope provided.

2020 Friends of Pool 9 Raffle		Name _____
\$10 Each 3 for \$20 8 for \$50		Telephone _____
1st prize: \$500 2nd Prize: \$300 3rd Prize: \$200		Address _____
To Be Drawn October 29, 2020		Email _____
Need Not Be Present to Win		
0847		0847

Raffle tickets are available from all FOP9 Board members or can be purchased from Jerry at 563-419-7968.

We cannot survive without your volunteer efforts and your continued financial support. At this time of year we often receive memorials in memory of loved ones as well. If your check is a Memorial please indicate who it is in memory of in the memo space. We thank you in advance for your generosity and have included a donation envelope in this newsletter for your convenience. FOP9 is a 501 (c) 3 organization and your donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law. We thank you for your continued support and involvement in the mission and work of Friends of Pool 9.



Calendar of Events & Chairman For 2020-2021

- EACS/De Soto MRAD September cancelled
- FOP9 Annual Meeting September cancelled
- Mussel cage repair- Genoa NFH..... March, 2021
- Clean UpApril, 2021
- Eagle Survey - Jerry B.....April/May
- FOP9/Tim L. Student Awards May, 2021
- Beach Work Summer 2021
- Clean Fire Rings Monthly by Volunteers
- Lansing Fish Days August, 2021
- Sturgeon Tagging - GNFHAug. - Sept., 2021
- EACS/De Soto MRAD September, 2021

The Friends of Pool 9, Upper Miss Refuge, Inc. is a grassroots citizen action group, whose sole purpose is the protection, restoration, and preservation of our natural resources. The 800 member organization has no dues requirements, and pays for its activities through donations and grants. It is a 501c3 federally tax exempt organization, all donations are tax deductible. The communities that border Pool 9 are its primary contributors and supporters.