

BLACK HAWK LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION

LAKE LEGACY

ISSUE 1 | JULY 2026 | VOLUME 1

PROMOTING THE LONG-TERM PRESERVATION AND HEALTH OF OUR LAKE



A rare sighting of two adult **American Avocets** taking a short rest on Black Hawk Lake's Sac City Beach (photo taken by Lake View resident Jean Mohrhauser). Breeding adults have a buffy-orange wash on the head and neck. These birds pass through Iowa primarily as part of their spring and fall migrations. **Keeping our lakeshores clean and healthy encourages visitors like these!**

OUR LAKE, OUR LEGACY

Black Hawk Lake is more than a beautiful place—it is a treasured natural resource and the heart of our community. Its sparkling waters, scenic shorelines, and peaceful wetlands provide a place for boating, fishing, picnicking, hiking, and creating lasting memories. From wildlife along the shore to quiet reflections on the water, the lake connects us to nature and to one another.

Beyond its beauty, Black Hawk Lake is a complex ecosystem that supports fish, birds, native plants, wetlands, and countless forms of wildlife. The health of the lake depends on the choices we

make as visitors and stewards. Simple actions—such as properly disposing of trash, cleaning boats to prevent invasive species, picking up after pets, staying on designated trails, reducing fertilizer use, respecting wildlife habitat, and practicing responsible fishing—can make a lasting difference. By caring for the lake today, we help protect it as a living legacy for generations to come.

Together, our choices today keep Black Hawk Lake healthy, beautiful, and thriving for tomorrow.

— Black Hawk Lake Protective Association Board of Directors

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A top priority for families visiting Black Hawk Lake: water quality.

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How public input and matching dollars continue to deliver premium amenities for all lake users.

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Do you love Black Hawk Lake? Renew or become a BHLPA member today. Ask friends and relatives to join us!

GREETINGS FROM THE FISHERIES BUREAU OF THE IOWA DNR!

~ By Ben Wallace, Fisheries Biologist

We are now in the heart of summer, and recreation on Black Hawk Lake is in full swing.

The DNR and the Black Hawk Lake Protective Association (LPA) work hard every day to develop and protect the beautiful natural resource that draws so many people to Lake View each year. The full campgrounds and bustling weekend events are wonderful evidence of our lake's popularity. Once visitors arrive, we want to ensure they have the best possible experience.

"Two priorities always rise to the top when families choose which lake to visit: water quality and amenities."

PRIORITIZING WATER QUALITY AND AMENITIES

The Iowa DNR has studied lake visitation trends and surveyed residents regarding lake usage for a couple of decades. Two priorities always rise to the top when families choose which lake to visit: water quality and amenities.

In 2012, we launched a watershed and lake improvement project with the sole focus of improving water quality. While we have a long list of achievements to be proud of, our work is not done. We continue to keep a close eye on the current state of our water and look for other areas of improvement.

WEEKLY SUMMER WATER MONITORING

Summertime heat and rainfall can introduce nutrients and other contaminants into the lake, which can drive

WHAT ARE THE SOURCES OF BACTERIA AND PATHOGENS?

Fecal bacteria, and sometimes pathogens, are present in the intestines of warm-blooded animals, including humans. They are carried into the water with fecal material. Fecal contamination can occur due to improperly constructed and operated septic systems and sewage treatment plants, manure spills, storm water runoff from lands with wildlife and pet droppings, or direct contamination from waterfowl, livestock, or small children in the water.

~Iowa DNR Beach Monitoring Website

algae blooms. To keep the public safe, the Iowa DNR monitors water quality at all state park beaches on a weekly basis from Memorial Day to Labor Day. This testing focuses on the two major concerns for human contact:

- ❖ **E. coli:** An indicator bacteria used to predict the presence of harmful fecal coliforms and other pathogens.
- ❖ **Microcystin:** A common toxin produced by cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) that serves as a strong predictor for other algal toxins.

Water samples are collected every Monday or Tuesday, and results are posted by Friday—the fastest turnaround time possible for these tests. If either analyte tests above specific safety thresholds, a swimming advisory is posted for that beach.

Please note that we do not close the beaches; we simply post advisories to provide a snapshot of current conditions and help you make informed decisions. You can view the interactive map, obtain context for the results, and find safety tips on the **Iowa DNR Beach Monitoring Website**.

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INVESTING IN OUR AMENITIES

While water quality remains our top priority, high-quality amenities are critical to supporting the user experience. Surveys show that lake access and restrooms are among the most requested amenities. We use this data to maximize limited public funds and focus on what you want most.

- ❖ **The Fishing Pier and Fish House:** Built several years ago with funding support from the Black Hawk LPA, this unique facility allows anglers of all mobility levels to fish "indoors." Past creel surveys show that 15% of our shore anglers use this single location—a stunning number for a lake that boasts over 50% publicly accessible shoreline.
- ❖ **Town Bay Floating Fishing Dock:** This heavily used dock was recently replaced after 31 years of service. While its replacement was in our long-term budget, the Black Hawk LPA used their funds and membership to provide local match dollars, significantly accelerating the project.
- ❖ **Restroom Modernization:** Black Hawk Lake has great public restroom options, but many are outdated. We are excited to announce major upgrades coming down the pipeline:
 - The two pit latrines at Ice House Point will be replaced with modernized flush bathrooms.
 - The State Marina building will undergo a complete renovation, including its two restrooms.



While these projects were scheduled for Fiscal Year 2027 (starting July 1, 2026), they will likely take place later in 2027 due to temporary internal engineering staffing shortages. The good news is that funding is completely secured.

Once completed, every public restroom around the lake will be a modernized facility with water, sewer, and electricity. The only exceptions are the historic, CCC-built pit latrines at 30 Acres and the game reserve entrance, which will be preserved for their historic value.

"The Black Hawk Lake Protective Association continues to be an incredible partner and a strong voice for our lake community."

A POWERFUL PARTNERSHIP

Many of these project ideas come directly from our discussions with the Black Hawk LPA. Incorporating public input ensures we work on the projects you care about most.

Furthermore, when a local community is willing to raise match dollars, it helps Black Hawk Lake successfully compete for limited state funds. The Black Hawk LPA continues to be an incredible partner and a strong voice for our lake community. We can accomplish so much more when we work together toward a common goal!

Ben Wallace is a Fisheries Management Biologist for the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, based at the Black Hawk Fisheries Management office in Lake View, Iowa. He manages public fishing waters and aquatic habitats across 10 counties: Buena Vista, Calhoun, Carroll, Cherokee, Crawford, Greene, Ida, Monona, Pocahontas, and Sac.



Ben can be reached at the Black Hawk Fisheries Management Office, 228 S Blossom St. in Lake View, Iowa, or via email at ben.wallace@dnr.iowa.gov.

BLACK HAWK LAKE PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION



PO Box 821, Lake View, IA 51450

BlackHawkLake.org

BLACK HAWK LAKE FRIENDS,

The benefits of BHLPA membership remain clear as we consider just some of the accomplishments shown here. Your membership dues are critical and will allow us to continue this momentum with projects that will **IMPROVE YOUR LAKE EXPERIENCE.**

2 WAYS TO RENEW OR BECOME A MEMBER:

1. Use the mail-in form below
2. Online at blackhawklake.org (Click Membership)

BHLPA is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your dues may be tax deductible.

Please **RENEW** or **BECOME** a BHLPA member and ask friends and relatives who love this lake to join us.

Watch for and join in the fun at our Annual Meeting coming this summer.

Regards,

The BHLPA Board:

Matt Bierl - Pres., Jim Dowling - V.P., Jessica Meredith, Sec., Scott Onstot, Treas., Sam Cogdill, John Snyder, Nick Mabe, Gretchen Bromley, Linda Olson

OUR PARTNERS:

We work closely with many organizations that are active in improving the water quality and recreational benefits of Black Hawk Lake.

- Iowa DNR
- SpArC (Sac County Economic Development)
- City of Lake View
- Sac County Board of Supervisors
- USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Sac County Soil & Water Conservation District
- Black Hawk Lake Watershed Project

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

*Black Hawk Lake Protective Association is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt charitable organization. We still have so much to do, so please support our efforts by becoming a member today! **Renew or become a member using this form or join online at BlackHawkLake.org/membership.***

Name

Address

Email

Please complete and return with check to:

Black Hawk Lake Protective Association

PO Box 821, Lake View, Iowa 51450

INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- ☐ \$35+ Crew
- ☐ \$50+ First Mate
- ☐ \$100+ Captain
- ☐ \$250+ Admiral

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

- ☐ \$250
- ☐ \$500
- ☐ \$750
- ☐ \$1,000

