



SOUTH PARK LAKES

Community ...

The **Civilian Conservation Corps** built Humboldt's South Park Lakes in the Depression years of the 1930s. The lakes have been popular for picnicking, fishing and camping for many decades since. West and East lakes cover two and one surface acres, respectively. Other park features include playground equipment, baseball diamonds, tennis and basketball courts, horseshoe pits, an outdoor heated swimming pool, restrooms, picnic tables and shelters, and 12 camper sites with electrical hookups.

Challenges ...

Before 1999 the lakes were only three to five feet deep with four to six feet of sediment having accumulated over the years. Shorelines were in poor condition and surrounding areas needed landscaping to prevent more sediment runoff into the lake. Sediments had also turned the water turbid, with clarity of only seven to 10 inches.

Solutions ...

In 1999 Humboldt received funding from the Nebraska Environmental Trust Fund (NETF) to dredge the West Lake and in 2000 received a grant from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ)/U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for further renovations to the lakes. Phase 1, to remove sediment from the bottom of West Lake, was completed in 1999. Depths increased from three to five feet, to seven to 11 feet over at least 25 percent of the lake. The lake was also re-contoured and

re-graded. An attempt was made to reuse existing riprap and shoreline stabilization techniques, but there were still 200 feet of unprotected shoreline that had already started eroding. Grant funds provided new riprap for improved stabilization of these areas. A handicap fishing pier was added and a 90-foot pedestrian bridge was built across the lake using community funds.

Results ...

Lake dredging improved water clarity from seven to 10 inches to more than 24 inches. With shorelines stabilized, future sedimentation should be minimized. Improvements to South Park Lakes restored aquatic habitat for a viable fishery, which consists of largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. The total cost of this project was \$67,664 with \$37,000 provided by the NETF, NDEQ and EPA, and \$30,387 provided by the community. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service and Southeast Nebraska Development District provided technical expertise for the project.

