



The Nebraska “CLEAR” Program

*Helping Restore
Community Lakes
and Ponds*



The **CLEAR** program was *instrumental in the rehabilitation* of an under-utilized piece of City property. **Because of the funds** provided, a neglected storm water retention cell was modified to allow for proper stormwater drainage, erosion control measures were taken and the **area was transformed into a City Park**. The area now includes playground equipment, a picnic area, a hike/bike trail and a lake that provides an excellent fishery for the citizens of Grand Island. Many now *consider this area a real jewel* in our Park system.

Steve Paustian
Parks and Recreation Director
Grand Island





WELCOME

The Community Lakes Program represents a very successful effort that the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ) has undertaken to reach and to positively impact Nebraska citizens. The program has helped communities renovate their park ponds and stimulate the upgrade of other park amenities. The restoration efforts at these aging and under-utilized facilities have returned these areas to being appealing gathering locations within their communities.

I visited many of these projects after the renovations were completed. It's gratifying to see how these restoration efforts draw families back to these parks, and how the restored lake areas are once again important and appreciated community resources. From conversations I have had with individuals and community leaders, it is clear that the efforts of the Community Lakes Program have provided many tangible benefits in communities all across the state.

The program has been an excellent example of the results that can be achieved from local and state collaborative efforts. The Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension, through the CLEAR Team, provided their expertise and worked cooperatively with participating communities. The Nebraska Environmental Trust provided generous financial support to these local efforts, as well.

The results of these local and state efforts will benefit participating communities for many years to come.



Michael J. Linder, Director
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality





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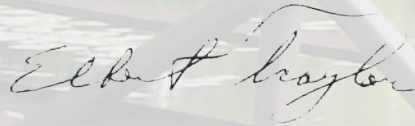


INTRODUCTION

The most rewarding experience in public service is to see your efforts directly and positively impact the citizens you serve. The community lakes program has given my CLEAR Team colleagues and me that gift.

We were fortunate to find a niche in our separate programs that allowed us to collaborate in a joint effort to assist Nebraska communities in renovating their park ponds and in the process restoring the luster of the parks themselves. Community leaders report that citizens are returning again to their parks for reunions, ceremonies and recreation. Children again ride their bicycles to the parks for an afternoon of fishing, frog chasing and tadpole catching. The program produced environmental, social and cultural rewards beyond our dreams.

This book is a celebration of the spirit of the communities that participated in the community lakes program. We thank their community leaders who had the vision to work with us to bring these projects to fruition. It is our hope that the citizens of these communities will enjoy many years of gathering with family and friends in these restored parks.



Elbert Traylor
Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality

