



USDA-CSREES 2007 National Water Quality Conference

Community Lakes Enhancement and Restoration (CLEAR)

Numerous community lakes throughout Nebraska were suffering from water quality degradation. Historically these lakes were focal points within the community park system, however cultural and natural eutrophication has reduced water clarity, and diminished aesthetic and recreational benefits. The Community Lakes Enhancement and Restoration (CLEAR) program was created in 2000 to combine the resources and technical expertise of three partner agencies, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, University of Nebraska and Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, to improve water quality, fisheries and education in select communities. Funding totaling \$4.97 million from the Nebraska Environmental Trust, the Environmental Protection Agency and local community partners has improved water quality and increased recreational opportunities. To date, CLEAR has assisted 21 communities. Pre- and post-project water quality measurements have revealed significant decreases in total phosphorus (60%), total nitrogen (63%), turbidity (93%) and chlorophyll a (95%), yielding significant increases in water clarity (88%), as measured by secchi disk.

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