

Diagnostic/Feasibility Restoration Study – Lower Chain

Principal Investigator: John Downing

Student Investigator: n/a

Collaborators: Michael McGhee, Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Duration: September 2007 to October 2009

Funding Source(s): Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Lake Restoration

Goals and Objectives:

- To provide the Iowa Department of Natural Resources with a diagnostic and feasibility study of Upper Gar, Minnewashta, and Lower Gar lakes (referred to in this document as the Lower Chain), Dickinson County, Iowa for planning a lake restoration program on the lakes and associated watershed.
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Progress:

The Lower Chain Diagnostic Feasibility Study continues with the routine collection of water quality samples from the outflow of the Upper Gar, Minnewashta, and Lower Chain lakes, in tributaries and storm drains. These samples are being analyzed in the ISU Limnology chemistry and biology laboratories. In addition to monitoring the lakes and associated watershed, social data has been collected through a series of interviews with stakeholders (e.g. watershed residents), which is important to this planning project. Expectations for the outcome of the lake restoration and feasibility study include technical understanding of existing water quality conditions and the willingness of stakeholders to participate in potential changes necessary for successful lake restoration.

Future Plans:

Iowa State University and the Iowa Department of Natural Resources will provide a project overview and progress report of the study at a public meeting in early 2009. The results of stakeholder surveys will be used to characterize the various competing interests relative to lake restoration alternatives, to determine their scope of influence in decision making and acceptance, and to review their ability to influence the ecological outcomes of restoration activities. ISU will complete the diagnostic portion of this study and develop alternatives for restoring these lakes and the watershed. The project is scheduled to conclude October 2009.