



# Lyon County Conservation Newsletter

LYON COUNTY CONSERVATION BOARD  
WWW.LYONCOUNTYIOWA.COM

Winter/Spring 2011  
Edition

Funded by Lyon County  
Conservation  
Foundation

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## “Ice Fishing, Give it a Try”

By: Emily Van't Hul (LCCB Naturalist)

Don't stay cooped up this winter dreaming of the days when you can get out on the open water to try out your luck fishing. Bundle up, go outside, and try fishing in a whole new way. Ice fishing can be just as fast and furious as during the warmer months. Also there is no mosquitoes or flies around to bug you while you're waiting for a bite.



Ice fishing has come a long ways over the last few years. Ice fishing does not require all fancy equipment, a beginner can get started on a reasonable budget. The rod and jigs or live bait can be very inexpensive. The most expensive necessity would be an auger to get through the ice to make the holes. A basic non-electric ice auger can start at around \$50 and can vary depending on the diameter of the hole that needs to be drilled. Also borrowing an auger from a friend can cut back on costs.

The art of ice fishing is different than your open water fishing. It is a vertical motion of your bait more than a horizontal. The method used widely in ice fishing is called jigging. In which the rod is shaken to create an up and down motion called jigging, which makes the bait come alive to the fish below. Minnow heads, wax worms, and wigglers are names of various baits used during this season.

Ice fishing is a great way for people to enjoy solitude or a way to get together with friends in family. Why not start the year with a new hobby.

Come on out to Lake Pahoja on Saturday, February 5th from 10-12pm, and try out ice fishing along with snowshoeing. No pole or bait needed. Just dress warm and bring something to sit on. Check page 3 for more details.

# Director's Den

by Craig Van Otterloo



Another summer has come and gone. And what a great summer and fall season, with several projects at the conservation board getting finished or started.

As many of you know, the trail around Lake Pahoja has been completed. That's right, the trail is done. All four miles of concrete 10ft wide. This project was started back in 2002 with the trail being graded and graveled to get a good sub base to the project. This trail will be enjoyed by park users for years to come.

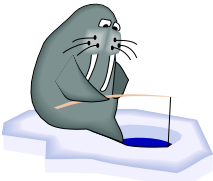
Another project that has been started and will be complete by next spring is a new bathroom at Prairie view campground. The cement is poured and we are waiting for the contractors to put up the building for us. There is a new concept for bathroom at this site. We are making 6 family baths in this building. Each room is 10X12 and will have a sink/countertop, toilet, and shower. When you get into the bathroom, lock the door and it is yours until you are done. You don't have to worry about the kids running around bothering other people. We hope this new concept will work well on that end of the park.

A wetland structure was built at George Central Wildlife area. We broke a field tile and the wetland filled up in 2 days. This will enhance the area with waterfowl using this wetland a day after it filled. This has been a good fall season for projects and we hope to have everything completed by next May to begin another good recreational summer season at Lake Pahoja. Happy Holidays, and enjoy Lyon County parks and wildlife areas.



# WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMS CALENDAR

## Family Nature Programs



### "Ice Fishing Derby "

Saturday, January 15th from  
9:30-11:30am

Lake Pahoja (West Shelter)

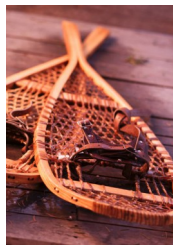
Come out for Lake Pahoja and have a great time ice fishing for prizes. Registrations start at the West Shelter at 9am (16 & older/\$2 and 15 & under/\$1). Registration fees go to purchasing prizes for all participants.. Special prizes for largest and most fish caught (over 7") categories for youth and adult. . Participants 16 and older license required.

### "Moonlight Snowshoe Hike"

Thursday, February 17th 6-7pm

Lake Pahoja (west Shelter)

Learn about the basics of snowshoeing and take a short hike by the lake. Hot chocolate to follow. Some snowshoes available for use. Free to public.



### "Making Maple Syrup"

Saturday, March 19th

at 11:00-12pm

Island Park

Join us a Island Park, as LCCB shows how to make maple syrup. Stick around and sample the finished product.



### "Geocache Cleanup"

Saturday, April 9th

10am-12pm

Lake Pahoja (west shelter)

Help clean up the parks while you search for treasure with a GPS. Bring your own GPS or borrow one from us. (There will be new geocaches for this event) Never used a GPS before, come early for a quick how-to at 9:30am.

**Programs are free unless stated and great activities to do with your family or friends.**

**Preregistration is required in case of weather changes and supply needs.**

## NATURE TALES

Nature Tales is a fun, hands-on program for all ages. Join us for an wildlife story and activity to learn about critters. Check the library near you for times and dates.

Larchwood Public Library (10am): January 11, February 8, March 8, & April 12

Coming Soon to a library near your! Check Little Rock, George, and Rock Rapids for dates.



## FAMILY SNOW DAY

Saturday, February 5th

10am-12pm

Always wanted to try ice fishing or snowshoeing, well now is your chance to give it a try. Come on out to Lake Pahoja on February 5th to try a new winter activity. Ice fishing poles/bait and snowshoes will be available for use from 10-12pm at the Lake Pahoja West shelter. Instructors will be on hand to teach basics. All ages are welcome.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THESE PROGRAMS, PLEASE CONTACT EMILY AT (712)472-2217 or [lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net](mailto:lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net)

Hi, my name is Emily Van't Hul and I am the new Lyon County Naturalist. I have been on the job since mid October and am excited to work closer to home. I am originally from Rock Valley, so the transition to Lyon County has been a very easy one. I graduated from Dordt College, in the spring of 2006 with degrees in Environmental Studies and Recreation. I have always loved the outdoors and kids, so a job as a naturalist was a perfect fit. Right after college I moved to Madison County (famous for its bridges) Iowa to work as their county naturalist for close to five years.



In my spare time I enjoy playing sports, swimming, camping, bow hunting, and about anything outdoors. I am excited about what Lyon County has to offer and will be trying some public programs where everyone is welcome to come. So whether it is something you haven't tried before or something you have done a few times before, come on out for the different programs. These programs are great activities to do with your families or with friends. If you have any questions call me at (712)472-2217 or email [lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net](mailto:lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net) Now scheduling Spring programs/fieldtrips for schools, clubs, 4H, scouts, church groups, day-cares, and other groups.



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### Operational Supervisor's Section

**By: Kyle Ciesielski**

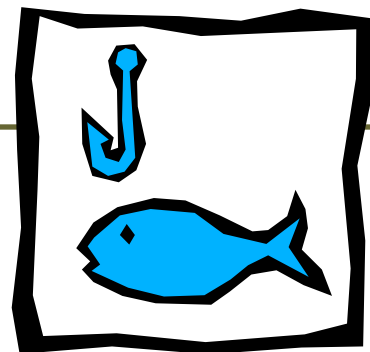
This summer, a trailer was donated from Demco. The primary function of this trailer is to give rides on the newly completed concrete trail around the lake at Lake Pahoja. The trailer was painted and modified, complete with side hand rails and a back loading ramp to make it handicap accessible. The trailer can hold up to 6 wheel chairs at a time or it can hold two six foot picnic tables to accommodate 12-16 riders at a time. Areas to securely strap down the picnic tables and the wheel chairs were also added to the trailer to keep everyone safe and secure during the ride.

The trail around the lake was finally completed this fall. The last section by the boat ramp going to the east was concreted over leaving no old cracked asphalt. The completed trail is now 10 foot wide and nearly four miles long. The trailer is a great addition to Lake Pahoja and will be a safe and comfortable ride for visitors during our Oktober-Fest celebration in the fall and as needed for other special events. The trailer will also be put to use during the summer when our new naturalist, Emily Van't Hul, has groups from local nursing homes out to Lake Pahoja. The groups always enjoy fishing and can now enjoy a peaceful and relaxing ride around the lake. We would like to sincerely thank Demco of Boyden, Iowa, for their generous donation. Also, thank you to Joel Heidebrink, current Lyon County Conservation Board member, whose help made this donation possible.

## Ranger's Report: What's Biting?

By: Justin Smith

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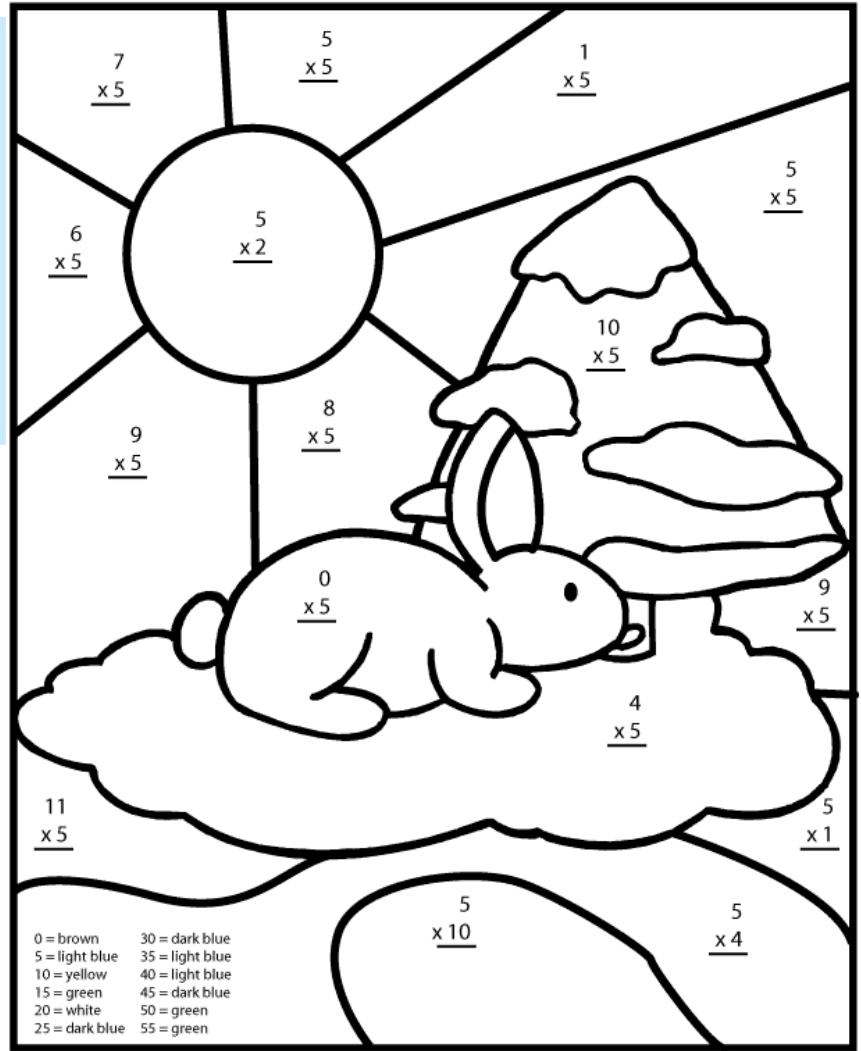
With the cold weather finally setting in, the ice is now stable enough for fishing out here at the lake. I am beginning to see more and more trucks in the parking lot indicating that the fish are biting.

According to some of the regular fisherman the ice on the lake is between 4 to 6 inches thick in most spots with some 2 inch ice in other spots. Straight off the Iowa DNR website here is the ice thicknesses for the Iowa Great Lakes region. Big Spirit Lake ice report: Marble Beach boat ramp 7 inches, Crandalls Beach 6.5 inches, The Grade 6 inches, North end of Angler's Bay 8 inches, and Hale Slough boat ramp 6 inches. East Okoboji Lake Ice report: Hattie Alston boat ramp 4 inches. Minnewashta Lake Ice report: North boat ramp 6.5". West Okoboji Lake Ice report: Emerson Bay boat ramp 5 inches, Spencer Beach 1 inch, Canals 5 inches, South shore of Millers Bay 3 inches, Lazy Lagoon (Triboji) Beach 3.5 inches. There is no report on ice conditions at Silver Lake.

The fishing here at Lake Pahoja this winter has been fair. One guy will tell you he caught his limit of crappie and bluegill in 2 to 3 hours, and another guy will tell you he fished all day and caught 3 fish. According to most fisherman, fish are being caught on the East end of the lake around brush piles. There was also a report of perch being caught along the old road bed. I haven't heard anything about the West side of the lake yet or what is working best for catching fish. The fishing reports for the Iowa Great Lakes are as follows:

Big Spirit Lake: Yellow Perch; Fair, Fish are being caught on the main lake tipping jigging spoons with a minnow head or a slip bobber with a live minnow. Walleye; Good, Fish rock bars or weed lines at sunrise or sunset with jigging lures tipped with a minnow head and dead sticking with a minnow on a small hook below a split shot. Crappie; Fair, Look for open holes in the weed beds on the north end of Angler's Bay or fish in Templar Lagoon around the docks. Use small ice jigs tipped with wax worms or plastics. Bluegill; Fair, Look for open holes in the weed beds on the north end of Angler's Bay use small ice jigs tipped with wax worms in 6' -8' of water. East Okoboji: No report on fishing. Minnewashta Lake: Yellow Perch; Fair, Fish with small ice jigs tipped with wigglers. Anglers are reporting fish up to 8 inches. White Bass; Fair, Use small jigs tipped with wax worms/wigglers. Silver Lake: Yellow Perch; Slow, A few fish are being caught while walleye fishing. Walleye; Fair, Use jigging lures tipped with a minnow head at sunrise or sunset. West Lake Okoboji: Crappie; Fair, Fish in the canals with small ice jigs tipped with plastics. Bluegill; Fair, Fish in the canals with small ice jigs tipped with wax worms/wigglers or plastics. (For more ice conditions and fishing reports you can visit the Iowa DNR website.)

Hopefully now that things are beginning to slow down out here I will be able to get out on the ice and find out for myself how the fishing really is. Good luck fishing this winter. Stay warm and safe.



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Winter Word Search

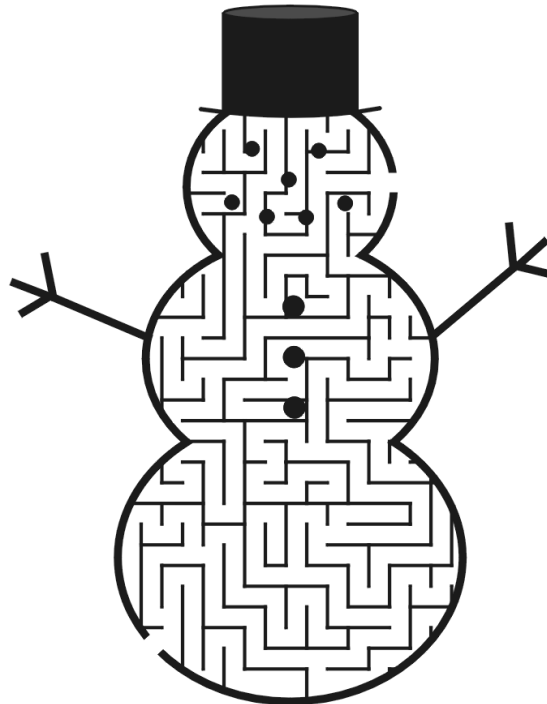
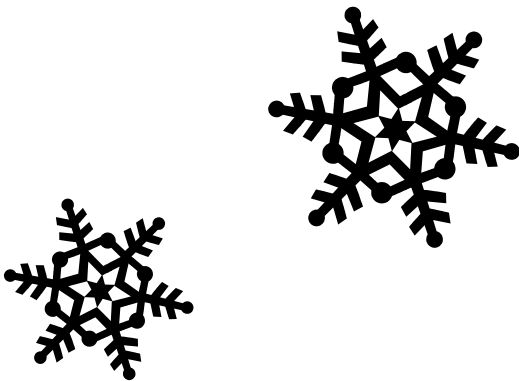


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boots                  mittens  
 coat                   scarf  
 cold                   sled  
 hat                     snow  
 ice                      winter

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Lake Pahoja  
Recreation Area Fees 2011

Entrance Fee:

- Daily fee \$5.00
- Weekend fee \$10.00
- Annual fee \$20.00

Camping Fee:

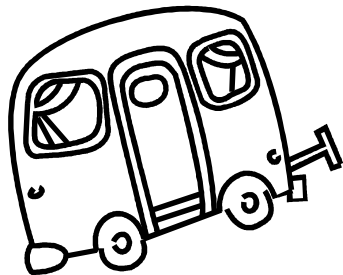
- Tent sites \$13.00/night \$78.00/week

Electric sites

- \$16.00/night
- \$96.00/week

Electric & Water sites

- \$18.00/night
- \$108.00/week



Enclosed Shelter: \$ 25/half day

Cabins: \$55.00/night with a two consecutive nights minimum. Holiday rentals require a minimum reservation of three consecutive nights. \$300 per week. A \$100 security deposit is due with the reservation request. There is one camping pad available with each cabin for \$23 per night.



This newsletter is funded by the Lyon County Conservation Foundation. To become a member, simply fill out the form below and send it along with your \$10.00 membership fee payable to Lyon County Conservation Foundation to: 311 1st Ave. East, Rock Rapids, Iowa, 51246.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

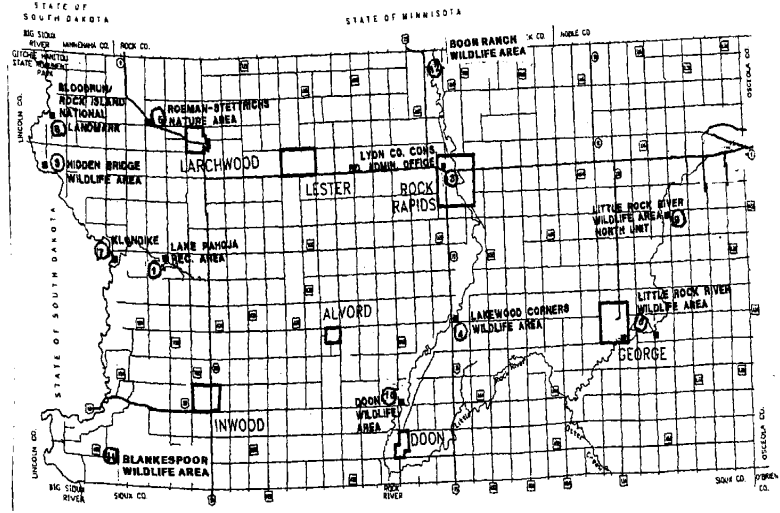
Phone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

NEED A GIFT IDEA?  
TRY A GIFT CERTIFICATE FOR AN  
ANNUAL PASS, CAMPING, OR CABINS  
AT PAHOJA.



Would you like a bimonthly reminder of upcoming programs and events via email. If so, send an email to Emily at [lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net](mailto:lyoncountynaturalist@hickorytech.net). Include your name and email information, if different than email used.

Visit a LCCB  
Rec. Area!



**Board Members**

Paul Blotz, Vice Chair	Larchwood
Todd Reinke, Sec. /Treasurer	Inwood
Jeff Schram, Chairman	Rock Rapids
Joel Heidebrink	Little Rock
Mike Hoing	George

**Staff**

Craig Van Otterloo	Director
Kyle Ciesielski	Operations Supervisor
Justin Smith	Park Ranger
Pam Tille	Office Manager
Emily Van't Hul	Naturalist

**Phone Numbers to Remember**

LCCB Administrative Office	(712) 472-2217
Lake Pahoja Recreation Area	(712) 753-2313

Lyon County  
Conservation Foundation  
311 1st Ave. East  
Rock Rapids, IA 51246



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Lyon County's programs and facilities are consistent with federal and state laws and regulations on non-discrimination regarding race, color, national origin, religion, age, and handicap. If anyone believes he or she has been subjected to discrimination, he or she may file a complaint alleging discrimination with either the Lyon County Conservation Board or the Office of Equal Opportunity, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 29240.