

## **Field Day Checklist and Event Promotion Materials**

Most successful field days begin with good advance planning. The field day checklist is one that was developed over several years by the Iowa Learning Farms. We encourage you to use it and adapt it for your event needs.

We also include an example of a press release and flyer. These materials were used to promote the first Big Creek Lake watershed appreciation event, held Saturday, June 2, 2012, at Big Creek Park near Polk City, Iowa. The event included a free lunch, a pontoon ride around the lake to see areas in need of improvement, a fishing clinic and fish identification seminar and the Conservation Station. The event was successful due to scheduled activities that were appropriate for all ages and wide-range promotion including newspaper, radio, flyers and word-of-mouth. The examples are included here to use as guides for promoting your watershed event.



# FIELD DAY CHECKLIST

## ORGANIZATION

- Date of field day: \_\_\_\_\_
- Time of event: \_\_\_\_\_
- Location/911 address of field day site: \_\_\_\_\_  
Directions to site: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Topic/theme of field day: \_\_\_\_\_
- Program agenda/speakers at the event (name and title/affiliation):
  1. \_\_\_\_\_
  2. \_\_\_\_\_
  3. \_\_\_\_\_Other(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- Special attractions at the field day (e.g. Conservation Station, prairie tour) if applicable:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Necessary Items

- Water or beverage coolers, provided by: \_\_\_\_\_
- Tables and chairs from: \_\_\_\_\_
- Portable toilets rented from: \_\_\_\_\_  
Delivery location and time: \_\_\_\_\_

## Special Attractions (Conservation Station, pasture walk, implement dealer)

- Part of the formal program OR  walk-through only  
Presenter(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Food

- Caterer or main meal provider confirmed (e.g. Pork Producers) \_\_\_\_\_
- Additional meal provider contacted (e.g. Hy-Vee, Dahl's) \_\_\_\_\_
- Drinks \_\_\_\_\_
- Dessert \_\_\_\_\_

## PUBLICITY

- Invitation mailing list created (including legislators) Number of invitees: \_\_\_\_\_
- Invitations/postcards printed
- Invitations in the mail Date mailed: \_\_\_\_\_
- Flyer needed
  - Sent to: \_\_\_\_\_

- Press release written
- Press release (sent two weeks from event date) to:
  - Local media\*
  - Ag media (e.g. Iowa Farmer Today, Agri-News, Farm News)
  - Local Extension, NRCS or other offices
  - Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Posted on website

## FOLLOW UP

- Press release and/or photo of event to local media\*

\*List media who received the press release(s):

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**"Building a Culture of Conservation ~ Farmer to Farmer: Iowan to Iowan"**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Carol L. Brown, communications specialist, 515-294-8912  
Sean McCoy, Big Creek Lake Watershed coordinator, 515-432-2316 ext. 114  
Zach DeYoung, Big Creek Lake Watershed coordinator, 515-964-1883 ext. 3

### **Celebrate Big Creek Lake on June 2**

AMES, IOWA— Big Creek Lake, located near Polk City, was created in 1972 and this year celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. A celebration of the lake, Big Creek State Park and the wildlife management area, will be held Saturday, June 2 beginning at 10:00 a.m. near the beach. The celebration is open to the public and includes learning stations, a complimentary lunch and the Conservation Station.

The watershed appreciation event will have several stations for attendees to visit, which include: a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fisheries biologist who will talk about the status of the fishery at the lake and how the fish survive, or die, in poor water conditions. There will also be a representative from the DNR wildlife bureau to discuss grassland and prairie management that has been taking place within the watershed over the last three years and a DNR parks and recreation representative to answer questions. Tentative events include a boat tour of the lake and a fishing clinic. Lunch is provided by the Iowa Pork Producers Association and Iowa Learning Farms.

The Conservation Station will also be at the event. The Conservation Station is a mobile learning center that travels across the state teaching all Iowans how they can help to improve water quality and keep Iowa's soils in place—building a Culture of Conservation. Visitors to the Conservation Station can learn why Iowa's water and soils are precious and how to help preserve these natural resources for future generations. The Conservation Station's rainfall simulator demonstrates the effects of rainfall on different land surfaces. Water runoff and subsurface drainage are collected in clear jars to show what is coming off the various soil scenarios including heavily tilled soil, minimum tillage and pervious pavement.

Also, the Big Creek Ducks Unlimited (DU) Green Wing Party will be held at the lake on June 2, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. This event will be at the Cadet Shelter in Big Creek State Park and is open to the public. Green Wings of DU are kids age 0-17 who are interested in hunting and maintaining the duck population in Iowa and the U.S. For more information about this event, contact Chad Sparks, 515-707-2565.

The Big Creek Lake Watershed Project is underway with the goal of improving water quality going into the lake and surrounding areas. The lake has experienced high bacteria levels, algae blooms and high sedimentation. The long-term project includes 20 years of improvement within the watershed. Big Creek Lake is an Iowa attraction, bringing an average of over 740,000 visitors each year to the lake. But it cannot sustain good water quality; in 2004 alone, there were 11 separate beach warnings of high bacteria levels. The project works with all who live within the watershed including home and landowners, farmers, beach-goers and lake users.

Big Creek State Park is located at 8794 NW 125th Ave., Polk City. The celebration will be near the beach area. For more information about the event or the Big Creek Lake Watershed, contact Sean McCoy, 515-432-2316 ext. 114, or Zach DeYoung, 515-964-1883 ext 3. McCoy and DeYoung are the coordinators of the watershed project. Visit the Big Creek Lake Watershed project website: <http://www.bigcreeklake.org>.

Iowa Learning Farms takes a grassroots approach offering innovative ways to help all Iowans have an active role in keeping our state's natural resources healthy and not take them for granted. A goal of Iowa Learning Farms is to build a Culture of Conservation, encouraging the adoption of residue management and conservation practices. Farmers, researchers and ILF team members are working together to identify and implement the best in-field management practices that increase water and soil quality while remaining profitable. Visit the Iowa Learning Farms website for more information: <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf>.

Iowa Learning Farms is a partnership between the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa Natural Resources Conservation Service and Iowa Department of Natural Resources (USEPA section 319); in cooperation with Conservation Districts of Iowa, the Iowa Farm Bureau and the Iowa Water Center.

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# Celebrate Big Creek Lake!

**Saturday, June 2**  
**10:00 AM-2:00 PM**  
**Big Creek Lake**  
**Beach area**



Visit stations near the beach to learn about:

- Big Creek Lake fish and their survival in the lake
- Grassland and prairie management within the watershed
- Boat tour of the lake
- Kids' fishing clinic
- Booths and exhibits from area organizations about animal habitat and lake usage  
*(events subject to change)*



**Visit the Conservation Station and learn about watersheds and their importance to us all!**



For more information:  
[www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf](http://www.extension.iastate.edu/ilf)  
[www.bigcreeklake.org](http://www.bigcreeklake.org)

Watershed Project Coordinators  
Sean McCoy: 515-432-2316  
Zach DeYoung: 515-964-1883

Field Day Cooperating Partners:

Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship ♦ Iowa Department of Natural Resources  
Boone and Polk Soil and Water Conservation Districts