

Iowa Outdoors
Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.com

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April 27, 2004

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**APPLICATION PERIOD FOR NONRESIDENTS HUNTING DEER
IN IOWA BEGINS MAY 1**

DES MOINES – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) will be accepting nonresident deer hunting applications from 6 a.m. May 1 through June 6. Applications are only accepted by calling the phone sales center at 1-800-367-1188 or by going on-line at www.iowadnr.com and clicking on the Purchase License Here icon.

The nonresident deer license application and information is available on the Iowa DNR's website at www.iowadnr.com/wildlife. There are 6,000 nonresident any deer licenses available that are divided among 10 zones and 2,500 nonresident antlerless deer only licenses.

If applicants outnumber the licenses available, a drawing will be held to award licenses. The DNR will post the names of the nonresidents who receive licenses after June 26. Drawing status will not be provided over the phone. Please do not call the DNR of the telephone ordering number to check on the drawing status.

Any licenses remaining will be sold on a first come, first served basis beginning on July 3 by calling the telephone ordering number or on the Iowa DNR's website.

The cost of a nonresident any deer license is \$220.50. A nonresident antlerless deer only license costs \$150.50. Hunters are required to purchase a hunting license and pay the habitat fee in addition to the deer license. A hunting license for nonresidents 18

years old and older is \$80.50. A hunting license for nonresidents younger than 18 costs \$30.50. The habitat fee is \$8.50.

2004-2005 Nonresident Iowa Deer Hunting Season Dates

Regular Gun Season

Season 1: December 4 - 8, and Season 2: December 11 - 19, 2004

Bow Season

October 1 - December 3, and December 20 - January 10, 2005

Muzzleloader Season

December 20 - January 10, 2005

Nonresident Holiday Muzzleloader Antlerless-only

December 24 - January 2, 2005

Disabled Hunter Season

September 18 - October 3, 2004

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CAMPING AND CONSTRUCTION SEASONS BEGIN IN STATE PARKS

DES MOINES – Campers across Iowa have been assembling their gear and heading to the out of doors to take advantage of early season camping opportunities in Iowa state parks. The same weather that draws campers to the state parks also marks the beginning of construction projects.

“When visiting parks where there is construction, be respectful of those zones, for your safety and that of the contractor’s,” said Heather Cline with the DNR state parks bureau. “As with any construction, work is dependent upon the weather.”

Cline said that campers and park users can check for up-to-date state park construction information and park closures on the state park website at www.exploreiowaparks.com.

Construction projects are scheduled for many state parks this season including road resurfacing and other construction at Nine Eagles, Pine Lake, Springbrook, Mines of Spain and Lake Darling. Campground renovation and campground electrical upgrades are taking place at Beeds Lake, Pine Lake and Lake Ahquabi. The spillway is being renovated at Lake Wapello. There is a detour into Brushy Creek due to bridge construction. Lake of Three Fires is being dredged. Marble Beach is getting a new shower building and a new interpretive center is being built at Lewis and Clark.

The following parks have closings: Nine Eagles closed April 12 and will open prior to the Memorial Day weekend, Springbrook closed on April 26 and will re-open in mid-May, and Lake Darling will re-open prior to Memorial Day.

The Pine Lake campground will be closed through May 5, when half of the campground will re-open until the construction project is completed on June 1. The Lake Ahquabi campground will be closed from May 10 to June 1.

Other parks will remain open, but some facilities will be affected.

“We recommend that you call the park prior to your visit to find out how the construction project will impact recreation activities in that specific park,” Cline said.

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TURKEYS WIN ROUND ONE

By Joe Wilkinson

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

All I could do was watch. One 25-pound tom turkey crashed through the branches on a downhill flight. The other one made like a helicopter; rising straight up, before putting distance between him and the gunshot that sent pellets whizzing past that bright red and blue head.

I picked up my decoys to head home. There would be no more chances today. I've scared turkeys away before with a slight movement or a call that just didn't ring true. This was the first time, though, in a dozen years of spring gobbler hunting that I just plain missed.

The scenario was promising, up to that point. I had worked two other corners of the steep 120-acre timbered pasture. Now, it was nearing midday. My decoys were perched on an old logging trail. I had an oak tree at my back, as I looked down on them. Then an insistent gobble echoed *up* the hill. I had been expecting company from the other direction.

A half-hour before, a known tom kept gobbling back at yelps I scratched out on a slate call. He shut up, though, as he closed in; perhaps afraid the big boss tom would drive him away from the foam hen he was checking out. As I raised my single shot 12-gauge, I switched to a mouth call. The new sound wasn't convincing. He pivoted right, picked up two bearded buddies that had hung back a few yards and they walked away. Now, I was a couple hundred yards away, hoping I could lure them in again. With my back to an oak tree and the decoys across a small ravine, I had a clear shot at anything coming down or across the hill. But not below. And, of course, that is where the new gobblers originated.

I convinced myself to hunt more aggressively this spring, rather than waiting to move for a couple hours after a gobbler loses interest. When this one answered my calls, I decided to move halfway to him. Actually, *them*, as I discovered a minute later. I used the ravine to cover my movement, until a couple telltale ‘puts’ preceded the pair of red and blue heads poking over the slope. I was crouched below with nothing but a budding multiflora bush and my camo clothing to hide me.

Actually, they were walking in the ruts of an old logging road. The hill beyond gave me a safe 25-yard shot. Crouched as I was, though, it was obviously not a steady one. Surveying it after the shot, from the turkey’s vantagepoint, I realized I had been pretty well hidden. The two toms were fixated on my decoy set. Had I waited for a couple minutes—without flinching—they easily would have walked past me at twelve paces.

Lesson learned. Returning a couple days later, the air was electric with gobblers. I counted at least five different toms, in three directions from my set up spot. I heard a couple fly down, but the gobblers grew faint, as they chased after the real hen they could see, instead of checking out the sounds I was scratching out. A curious gobbler came calling at mid morning, but veered away, too. Walking out later, I figured he had been walking back and forth, stymied by a fence. On that one, I should have moved closer. I thought it was only a rise in the bluff that separated us. That’s what I get for walking in, in the dark.

Not even a close call on the second day, despite all the noise. This year, I’ll be using my second license as my mulligan, to make up for the one that got away. And the gun barrel will be rock solid steady before I squeeze the trigger again.

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TREE AND SHRUB SEEDLINGS STILL AVAILABLE

AMES - Although spring is progressing quickly, there is still time to order trees and shrubs for reforestation, wildlife habitat or to control soil erosion on your acreage or farm. The recent rains are creating favorable planting conditions. Trees and shrubs survive best if the plantings are completed by mid to late May.

“We have excellent supplies at the State Forest Nursery of native red, white, bur and swamp oak, walnut, silver maple, dogwood, wild plum and many other species for this spring’s planting season,” said John Walkowiak, chief of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources forestry bureau. These native trees and shrubs are adapted to Iowa’s extremes in weather, soils and provide superior wildlife habitat.

Planting seedlings for conservation purposes need not be expensive. State Forest Nursery conservation trees and shrubs are for sale at the cost of production. Prices range

from \$25 per 100 plants for evergreen species, such as white pine, to \$45 per 100 plants for hardwood trees and shrubs, like the oaks and redosier dogwood. The minimum order is 500 plants.

“If you are new at conservation plantings, consider planting one of the several specialty packets designed in cooperation with the Iowa Chapters of the National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever and Audubon Iowa,” Walkowiak said. “These specialty packets contain 20 to 200 seedlings and sell from \$20 to \$90. They are great for improving wildlife and songbird habitat on your acreage.”

For more information or to order conservation trees and shrubs, call 1-800-865-2477 or www.iowatreeplanting.com

For more information, contact Walkowiak at 515-242-5966.

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DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FOR LOST GROVE LAKE IS AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

DES MOINES - Commencing immediately, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR), in cooperation with the U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS), is seeking public comments on the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for the future construction of Lost Grove Lake, in Scott County.

The DNR's "Proposed Action" alternative includes constructing a dam that will impound 350 surface acres of water. With this alternative the elevation of county road 220th Avenue will be raised to allow through vehicular traffic. Shoulders will be added to the raised portion for safe parking and to permit shore fishing. A large culvert under the road will provide boats access to the upper end of the lake.

Six locations will be developed for public access to the lake. Boat ramps will be constructed at three of these areas and restrooms present at two. Roads, parking areas and shoreline fishing areas will be developed at all six locations. The construction of fish habitat and shoreline riprap is also part of the "Proposed Action" alternative.

The DNR believes that the "Proposed Action" alternative has minimal vegetative, biological and floodplain impacts while having the most benefits to anglers and other site users and to the area's economy. This alternative best meets the DNR's plan to create fishing opportunities in an area now lacking in lake fishing opportunities. Two other alternatives are also considered in the draft Environmental Assessment including the "No Action" alternative required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The EA is available for review at the FWS website (<http://midwest.fws.gov/NEPA>) and at the Davenport Public Library at 321 Main Street. No verbal comments will be accepted. Please submit written comments to Martin Konrad by traditional mail to: Department of Natural Resources, 502 East 9th Street, Wallace State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319; or via fax (515/281-6794); or e-mail at Martin.Konrad@dnr.state.ia.us. Comments are due by the close of business on June 7, 2004.

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IOWA FISHING REPORT

For the week of April 27, 2004

www.iowadnr.com

For current information on fishing conditions for your lake or area, contact the office in that district. Phone numbers are listed with each district report.

Southeast

Mississippi River Pools 16 to 19: Fishing has been slow but should improve with warmer weather. The water temperature at Muscatine is 57 degrees and the river stage is 5.9 and is expected to remain stable over the next week. White bass fishing has been fair in the tailwaters and the mouths of creeks on spinners. Bluegill and crappie fishing continues to be slow to fair and should pick up with warmer water temperatures. Anglers continue to catch catfish on shad.

Lake Odessa (Louisa): Bluegill and crappie fishing is fair. Concentrate in the shallow areas of the complex. The best presentation seems to be using a minnow or worm under a bobber.

Lake Darling (Washington): Cooler weather has slowed crappie fishing. Anglers are still catching some nice bass while working slow moving crankbaits. Contractors will be moving in April 29, to begin working on the road in the park. Next week parts of the park will be closed due to this roadwork.

Lake Geode (Henry): Anglers are catching a few bluegills and bass. Concentrate in the shallow bays adjacent to the deeper drop-offs. The fish will be moving into the shallows to feed during the afternoon on warm days.

Lake Belva Deer (Keokuk): The lake is still about three and a half feet low, but water is still running in from the marsh. Anglers are catching a few of the 10 to 12-inch bass. Try fishing plastic worms around the flooded timber.

Lake Rathbun (Appanoose): Channel catfish have been hitting on night crawlers or cut bait. Crappies have begun biting in some of the warmer coves around the lake.

Lake Sugema (Van Buren): Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures. Bluegills have been biting on small jigs tipped with a chunk of night crawler.

Lake Wapello (Davis): Bluegills have been hitting on small jigs fished around shoreline structures, although fishing has slowed with the recent rains. Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures fished around structure.

Lake Miami (Monroe): Bluegills and crappies have been biting on small jigs. Largemouth bass have been hitting on artificial lures.

Lake Macbride (Johnson): Crappie fishing is picking up throughout the lake on jigs and minnows. Anglers continue to catch largemouth bass.

Iowa River (Johnson): Anglers continue to catch white bass and an occasional walleye below Coralville and Burlington St. dams on jigs and minnows.

Wapsipinicon River (Jones and Linn): Fishing continues to be good for smallmouth bass and an occasional walleye on jigs and minnows. White bass fishing has been fair.

Skunk River (Washington and Henry): Carp fishing is excellent below the dam at Oakland Mills. Anglers are still picking up a few white bass below the dam.

English River (Washington): Catfishing is fair to good on night crawlers and minnows.

Farm Ponds: Fishing has been fair to good on farm ponds for bluegill, crappie, and bass on live and artificial baits.

For more information on fishing in southeast Iowa, call the regional office in Brighton at 319-694-2430.

Northeast

Mississippi River Pools 9 to 15: Water levels on the Mississippi River are on a slow rise. Water clarity is very good and the temperature is staying near 55 degrees. Several species of fish have been biting, but fishing pressure has been somewhat light. Nice-sized white bass are being caught in the tailwaters of both **Lock and Dams 9 and 10**. Most of these fish are being taken on small spinners and jigs. Bluegills and yellow perch have been biting in the tailwater and backwater areas of both dams. Small jigs or even a worm on a plain hook will work for these fish. On the Wisconsin side of the Mississippi, some good backwater areas to fish include Black Hawk Bottoms (**Pool 9**), Bagley's or Jay's Lake (**Pool 10**), and the Bertom Lake complex (**Pool 11**). On the Iowa side, try Minnesota Slough near New Albin (**Pool 9**), Harpers Slough and Mudhen Lake near Harpers Ferry (**Pool 10**), and Swift Slough and Big Pond near Guttenberg (**Pool 11**). While fishing in the Dubuque area, check out the ongoing habitat rehabilitation project being built on the Wisconsin side of the river just upstream of **Dam 11**. This massive fish and wildlife habitat project will provide much needed improvements to fishing in the area known as Sunfish Lake. Catfish, walleye and freshwater drum are all being taken in decent numbers in stronger current areas and wing dams in **Pools 9-11**. Concentrate fishing efforts on the front side (upstream side) of the wing dam. If you have not fished the Mississippi River before, wing dams are rocks piled up perpendicular to the main channel. They are used to divert water to the navigational channel. They generally start on shore and end near buoys in the main river channel. Wing dams can be a dangerous boating hazard—if you are not familiar with river navigation, talk to local bait shops or DNR officials on how to navigate around these dams. The best fishing areas are generally upstream of wing dams as these are the areas where fish do the most feeding.

A simple sliding sinker and night crawler can provide fantastic angling. In addition to your fishing gear, a good anchor is needed to hold your boat in the current. Fishing is picking up for bluegill and crappie in **Pools 12-15**—fish backwater areas around structure and fish varying depths (both deep and shallow). The crappies are hitting small jigs and minnows and bluegills are biting on night crawlers or small jigs tipped with a wax worm or piece of night crawler. Largemouth bass in the backwater areas in **Pools 12-15** are hitting spinner baits and jig-n-pigs fished around woody structure. **Pools 12-15** are good for channel catfish using night crawlers or cheese baits fished in the side channels and backwater sloughs. Freshwater drum are being caught with night crawlers fished below the dams and along the wing dams in **Pools 12-15**.

Upper Iowa River (Howard, Winneshiek and Allamakee): This scenic river is clear and in excellent shape for fishing and canoeing. Smallmouth bass are biting on black and white jigs.

Cedar River (Mitchell and Floyd): Fishing is currently slow with some smallmouth bass being picked up on jigs and crankbaits.

Turkey River (Fayette and Clayton): Smallmouth bass are hitting jigs with twister tails and crankbaits.

Cedar (Bremer and Black Hawk) and **Wapsipinicon rivers** (Buchanan): Fishing is fair for channel catfish using dead baits. An occasional northern pike and walleye are also being caught on jigs tipped with a minnow.

Maquoketa River (Delaware): Walleye fishing is fair on jigs tipped with a minnow or night crawler.

Lake Delhi (Delaware): Crappie fishing is fair to good on jigs tipped with a small minnow or minnows fished under a slip bobber, with pockets of feeding fish being found on sunny days. Some channel catfish are also being caught.

Lake Hendricks (Howard): Largemouth bass are good on tube jigs, spinner baits and crankbaits. Crappie fishing is good on tube jigs.

Volga Lake (Fayette): Crappie fishing is good on tube jigs. Perch are biting along the north side of the lake on night crawlers fished close to the bottom.

Lake Meyer (Winneshiek): Crappie and bluegills are hitting tube jigs.

Big Woods, Brinker (East Lake) and South Prairie (Black Hawk): Crappie fishing is good along the shoreline on sunny bright days using minnows fished under a slip bobber.

Casey Lake (Tama) in Hickory Hills Park is good for bluegill using hooks or small jigs tipped with a piece of night crawler.

Trout fishing is excellent. **Clear Creek** is our featured trout stream this week. This stream is located in Allamakee County on the west side of Lansing. Clear Creek is stocked on an unannounced basis twice per month with rainbow and brook trout and has a naturally reproducing population of brown trout. One of the main stretches to fish is located in the county park on the west edge of Lansing. This area has some excellent habitat with deep holes as well as a universally accessible fishing pier. Other areas along the stream open to public fishing include the segment which flows through the town of Lansing, the stretch of stream along the marsh behind *Lansing Homes*, the stretch behind the Red Barn Restaurant and the pasture above the Red Barn. Note: If you fish behind the Red Barn and are not camping there, be sure to stop in and let them know that you are driving down to fish. Lansing is a beautiful town located on the Mississippi River and

offers anglers quaint shops, scenic parks and enjoyable restaurants. **Paint Creek** in Allamakee County offers excellent angling opportunities with long stretches of stream open to public fishing. Located upstream of Yellow River State Forest near the town of Waterville, Paint Creek had a pre-stocking season trout population of more than 500 fish per mile. Sections of this stream have recently been posted with white public fishing signs identifying the privately owned areas open to public fishing. For current trout stocking information on these and other northeast Iowa trout streams, call the trout stocking hotline at 563-927-5736. You can also access the trout stocking calendar through the internet at www.iowadnr.com and go to the fish and fishing web pages.

For information on fishing in northeast Iowa, call the regional office in Manchester at 563-927-3276.

Northwest

Walleye, northern pike and muskie seasons are closed on Spirit Lake, East Okoboji and West Okoboji lakes in Dickinson County.

Spirit Lake (Dickinson): Crappie fishing continues to be good and is best on warm, sunny days. Action at Templar Park has improved. The shallow water areas at the North Grade and in Angler's Bay are also producing excellent catches of crappies. Smallmouth bass fishing continues to be excellent. Fish the traditional rocky areas with a jig and minnow combination. Expect the best smallmouth action on calm, sunny days. The bullhead action has begun. Fish the North Grade and Templar Park for good catches of large fish. Traditionally, the North grade will produce the best action for shore anglers, but don't overlook the Little Spirit Lake inlet.

Silver Lake (Dickinson): Anglers continue to catch 13 to 18-inch walleyes. Fish from shore early in the morning or evening using a twister or a minnow and lighted bobber for the best results. Bullhead fishing is good.

Lake Pahoja (Lyon): An excellent lake to catch large channel catfish. Lake Pahoja is shore angler friendly with easy access to all the traditional catfish holes.

Five Island (Palo Alto): Walleye fishing continues to be good. Shore anglers fishing during the evening hours will produce the best catches.

Silver Lake (Palo Alto): Bullhead fishing is good. Crappie fishing is slow, but expect the action to improve in the next few weeks.

Linn Grove Dam (Buena Vista): Walleye fishing has slowed, but persistence and patience will be rewarded.

Black Hawk Lake (Sac): Crappie fishing is good in Town Bay using mini-jigs and a bobber. Yellow bass fishing is good along the east shore or wherever the wind is blowing in. Bullhead fishing is excellent all over the lake. Channel catfish are good on shad entrails.

Storm Lake (Buena Vista): Walleye fishing is good using twisters along the south shoreline. White bass fishing is fair and are being caught incidental to walleye.

Brushy Creek (Webster): Bass are hitting on minnows. A few walleyes have been taken along the fishing jetties. Use minnows at the north end of the lake for crappies.

Clear Lake (Cerro Gordo): Yellow bass are being caught along the north shore using small jigs and minnows. Walleye fishing is fair using jigs and minnows. Fish the

east shore, Billy's Reef, Dodge's Point or the Island. The water temperature is in the middle to upper 50s. Bullhead fishing is good. Use night crawlers on the bottom at sunset and into the early evening hours.

Beeds Lake (Franklin): Crappies are biting along the causeway and north shore jetties. Use mall jigs and minnows. Most of the crappies are 7 to 9 inches.

For more information on fishing in northwest Iowa, call the regional office in Spirit Lake at 712-336-1840.

Southwest

Three Mile (Union): Channel catfish are being caught at the upper end and in shallow bays. Walleye fishing is good over rocky areas using shallow running crankbaits. Crappie and bluegill fishing is better and fish are moving into the shallow rocky areas in the early morning and late evening. Largemouth bass fishing is good all over the lake. Some muskie can be caught using crankbaits and spinners off the points and deeper shoreline during mid-day, or in the shallow bays early or late.

Twelve Mile (Union): Channel catfish fishing is good in the upper ends of the lake using liver or night crawlers.

Icaria (Adams): Fishing is good for catfish at the east end using night crawlers and liver. Some walleye are being caught trolling the dam.

Binder (Adams): Largemouth bass fishing is good along the dam.

Green Valley (Union): Crappies are starting to bite early and late in the day over the rocks.

Little River (Decatur): Crappies are starting to move into the shallows in the early morning and late afternoon. Walleye are being caught while trolling the dam and large points in the lower portion of the lake. Catfish can be caught in the bays using liver or night crawlers.

Slip Bluff (Decatur): Some bluegills and crappies are being caught around the tree piles. Largemouth bass can be caught off the west shoreline structure.

Fogle Lake (Ringgold): Crappies can be caught early in the morning and late evening in the rocks off the dam and off the jetties.

Binder (Adams): Largemouth bass fishing is good along the dam.

Big Creek (Polk): Crappie fishing has been fair using jigs with or without a minnow. Best fishing seems to be along the east side of the Lost Lake area. Walleye fishing has been good using live bait rigs with minnows or night crawlers, although most of the walleye are below the 15-inch minimum length limit.

Lake Ahquabi (Warren): Bluegill fishing has been good using jigs and worms, with some anglers doing well using twister tails. Largemouth bass fishing has been picking up, with a few fish caught with top-water lures. Crappie fishing has been slow, with the best fishing early morning and late afternoon.

Don Williams (Boone): Channel catfish fishing is good using night crawlers and cut baits toward the north end of the lake. Largemouth bass fishing is good using plugs. Crappie fishing is light, but are starting to bite along the east side of the lake using minnows.

Rock Creek Lake (Jasper): Crappie fishing is fair to good using jigs. Most crappies are 6 to 8-inches.

Red Rock (Marion): Crappie and white bass have been hitting on jigs and minnows in the bays and coves, and other places where the water is warming. Channel catfish have also been reported hitting in the bay and cove areas using night crawlers and worms.

Red Rock tailwater (Marion): Crappie and white bass fishing has been good in the tailwater using jigs and minnows. Some walleye and have also been reported.

Easter Lake (Polk): Crappie fishing has been good on jigs and minnows. A few walleye has also been reported.

Des Moines River (Polk): Anglers are catching white bass and some walleye using jigs below the Scott Street Dam in Des Moines.

Saylorville Tailwater (Polk): Walleye and white bass fishing has been good using twister tails, white and chartreuse glitter, and sonar. Channel catfish fishing has been good using cut baits (shad).

Viking (Montgomery): Crappie fishing is fair using tube jigs around structure. Catfish fishing is fair.

Cold Springs (Cass): Fishing is good for 7 to 8-inch crappies using jigs and minnows around structure near shore.

Manawa (Pottawattamie): Fishing is good for channel catfish. A few crappies are being caught in the lagoon.

Orient (Adair): Fishing is excellent for 7-inch crappies using jigs and/or minnows along the dam and southeast shore near the water pump house.

Mormon Trail (Adair): Walleye fishing is fair. Anglers are catching a few crappies.

Prairie Rose (Shelby): Fishing is good for 7-inch crappies on jigs and minnows around rocks and woody structure.

DeSoto Bend (Harrison): Walleye and crappie fishing is excellent. Walleyes being harvested are 15 to 16 inches. Crappies being caught are 8 to 12 inches. Anglers also are catching good numbers of largemouth bass. Carp are being caught near shore.

Farm Ponds: Crappies, bass and bluegills are being caught in shallow bays that warm quickly.

For more information on fishing in southwest Iowa, call the regional office in Lewis at 712-769-2587.

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