



HOOPER

HOOPER MEMORIAL PARK

Community ...

Hooper's Memorial Park includes a shallow muddy segment of an old river oxbow south of the Elkhorn River. It was built in the 1960s when a levee was constructed around the north side of Hooper that isolated an approximately 3,600-foot-long segment of the oxbow within the city. The "Old Lake Restoration Project" presented the city with an opportunity to enhance its recreational facilities and expand an important community asset for residents and visitors.

Challenges ...

The oxbow collects stormwater from the area between the levee and railroad tracks to the south. The city had dredged the oxbow in the past, but a steady accumulation of sediment continually reduced lake depths to two feet. Shallow depths made the water unsuitable for fish survival and nutrients from the stormwater promoted algae growth and unpleasant odors. The city treated the lake with copper sulfate to kill vegetation and algae but treatments were unsuccessful.

Solutions ...

In 2007, Hooper was approved for funding through the CLEAR program. Hooper's Old Lake Restoration project started after the lake was pumped to allow for more efficient excavation of sediments. Suitable side slopes and shallow areas between three jetties were established along the north side of the lake to accommodate plant introduction and enhance wetlands. The lake was excavated to a depth of 12 feet over an area constituting

approximately 25 percent of the surface area, to a depth of eight to 10 feet across another 25 percent of the lake, and to a depth of eight feet or less across the remaining 50 percent of the lake. Handicap access was provided and the lake was stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill and channel catfish. The local University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension office demonstrated water testing and lake maintenance to local students.

Results ...

Once the restoration work was completed in September 2008, the water level raised about 1.5 feet above pre-restoration levels due to closed springs being re-opened. Residents remain supportive of the work. The city has held a clean-up day to remove glass and other debris from the area. Total project cost was \$252,980 with \$211,140 coming through the CLEAR program and local funding provided \$41,740. Engineering Services were provided by Kirkham Michael Consultants.

