Background

Storm Lake is a natural glacial lake in northwest Iowa (Buena Vista Co.) is the fourth largest natural lake in the state.1 Storm Lake is adjacent to the city of Storm Lake, which is home to Buena Vista University, and the city of Lakeside.

City of Storm Lake2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Median Income</th>
<th>Median Property Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10,672</td>
<td>$49,044</td>
<td>$120,600</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Buena Vista County received $30.88 million in tourism-related expenditures in 2019. This resulted in:

- $4.01 million in payroll.
- $1.9 million in state tax receipts.
- 200 jobs.
- $280,000 in local tax receipts.3

Water Quality Efforts

Storm Lake has been listed as impaired for indicator bacteria (E. coli) since 2010 and for turbidity since 2002.4 Efforts to improve and protect water quality resulted in the Storm Lake Dredging Project, with initial dredging in 2002.5 The Lake Preservation Association, City of Storm Lake, and county partners then formed the Lake Improvement Commission in 2003 to operate the Storm Lake Dredging Project and implement other water quality projects.6 Since 2002, more than $17 million in state and local funds were spent on dredging and other water quality efforts.7, 8 In the fiscal year 2020, the Lake Improvement Commission spent $13,941.84.9

The City of Storm Lake has been awarded funding through the Water Quality Initiative totaling $180,000 to implement urban stormwater mitigation projects, such as permeable pavers and stormwater wetlands.10, 11 The city has also been awarded $25 million in federal grants for flooding and water quality issues.12

Iowa Lake Survey (2014)13, 14

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Storm Lake</th>
<th>State Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Predicted Annual Visits</td>
<td>195,000</td>
<td>65,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of visits with travel distance 10-30 miles</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portion of visits with travel distance 90+ miles</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Water Quality (out of 10)</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Spending</td>
<td>$28,505,912</td>
<td>$7,075,421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Spending</td>
<td>$45,124,859</td>
<td>$11,200,391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Income Impact</td>
<td>$7,118,852</td>
<td>$1,766,963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Job Impact</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The water quality of Storm Lake is recognized as a vital limited resource for economic development and quality of life. Water quality is a top priority for the citizens of Storm Lake and the surrounding communities.13

- Lake Preservation Association, Storm Lake

The health of Storm Lake is vitally important to our community members and continued growth as a city. The work that has been done has aided in the clarity and sustainability of the lake.

- Keri Navratil, Storm Lake City Manager14
Endnotes


2 DATA USA, https://datausa.io/profile/geo/storm-lake-ia


