

## Historical Events at Lake Odessa

This chronological list of occurrences at Lake Odessa is approximate. It is meant to be used to determine the order of events and not necessarily exact dates. Apply the word "around" to each date, please. A lot of this information was taken from MTNWR (Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge) document and referred to as MTNWR Complex below.

- 1871 Army COE (Corp of Engineers) navigation improvements (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 26)
- 1879 Dredging begun by COE (Corps of Engineers) for 4 ft channel on upper Mississippi (above the Ohio River). (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 26)
- 1910 Congress approve Coe to pursue 6 ft channel (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 26)
- 1914 - First levees to protect farm land and lake were formed.**
- 1930 - Pumping station at lower end to drain lake to farm the ground. Higher levee system began for 9 foot channel.**
- 1930-1945 Congress approved 9 ft. channel and 26 lock and dams were constructed on the Mississippi River.**
- 1936 - 1<sup>st</sup> Cooperative Agreements: Sec. of Army (Now COE) and Sec. of Agriculture (becomes USFW) (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 27)
- 1937 - Lock and Dam 17 started and higher levees put in.
- 1939 - Lock and Dam 17 finished
- 1940 - Lake Odessa Land purchases competed by COE (Corps of Engineers. COE bought 6185 acres for \$246,000**
- 1941-45- Negotiations between FWS and COE without states
- 1945 - First state agreements All lands under COE even though management transferred. (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 28)
- 1945-46 - Ten men from CJ, Washington, Wapello bought 20 acres now called the Lake Side Club and built cabins there. A few cabins were built at Schafers and Sand run. Most were built by duck hunters and fishermen. A group of interested Lake people, including, Bill Orr's dad, were concerned that the COE more or less ignored Lake Odessa, thus petitioned the Fed and State to give responsibility to the state (then the state game commission or something like that, the predecessor of DNR). It was then a document was written which "loosely" stated the purpose was to "promote water fowl". Dan Nichols was game warden and pretty much left Lake levels alone. In recent years DNR has treated the document as though it was delivered by Moses and gives them license to claim missions necessitating draw downs annually to (1) promote water fowl (2) encourage all forms of wildlife such as song birds, hardwood trees, etc. (3) improve fishing, etc. (This paragraph donated by Bill Orr) 1946 Cooperative Agreement between COE and USFW for Lake Odessa
- 1946 - 1982 Great Fishing, boating, picnicking, hunting occurred at the Lake. A Thriving lake and thriving City of Wapello.**
- 1953 - General Plan with states developed. The Dept of Army (COE) reserved the rights to change surface elevations, dredge, lease for public use, no refuge use interferes with Navigation. (MTNWR Complex Ch. 3 p. 29)
- 1954 - Inlet and outlet tubes put in the levee.**
- 1958 - Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge designated
- 1983 - Bill Ohde takes over the DNR Wildlife Management Area (South end of Lake Odessa)
- 1993 - Flood of 1993 wipes out tubes
- 1998 - Straight line winds destroy a lot of trees at Lake Odessa
- 2007 - Gauge at Schafer's at 2.3' during June, 2007 observed by Louisa County Supervisor Ken Purdy. Water by dock 6 inches deep, no picnic tables at Schafer's access, no restrooms. Hunting not as good, fishing not as good, basically no boats (unless airboat or mud buddies) can move on Lake during July and August, and not the best in June.