1989 – Clean Lakes Program – initiated communication with Senators Harkin & Grassley to get Little Wall Lake on the federal list of dredging projects. This lake has had four pumping systems since 1960 because it has extremely low watershed and requires an external water source.

1990s – Clean Lakes Program was cut and projects turned over to states for completion. Little Wall Lake was next on list. A feasibility study was conducted with 30% of costs raised locally indicating local support for the dredge project.

2002 – Dredging project was conducted in the summer and cost Iowa tax payers $1.2 million. Due to problems encountered during this process, an alternative water source was not secured. The lake water levels were left dangerously low and unsafe.

2003 – Local citizens collaborated with the Hamilton County Conversation Board and the Iowa DNR to pump water back into the lake. The spoil containment site constructed for the dredging project was used as a natural filtering system for water quality and to prevent unwanted species of fish from entering the lake. This project was successful in that the lake was refilled within three years and it was paid for through community donations and volunteer labor.

2012 - Due to drought conditions, this lake is facing a similar situation with low, unsafe water levels. Surrounding communities would like to utilize the same system to refill the lake now.

Spring 2012:

* Secured the $75 water use registration to pump as was done previously
* Was informed for the first time that a Sovereign Lands permit was also needed
* Applied and was denied for Sovereign Lands permit
* Visited with Director Gipp and other DNR staff about the denial. We were told that we could pump spring 2013 and lake staff would provide a written verification that pumping could occur.

Summer & Fall 2012:

* Did not receive the written verification promised and contacted several staff to inquire about it
* Used legislative connections to inquire about the verification – no results

Winter 2013:

* March 1, 2013 Scott Grummers (DNR staff) asked us to reapply for the Sovereign Lands permit
* Permit was submitted Monday, March 4 with no response to our request of receipt
* Bert Dalmer (Ombudsman’s office) was contacted and cc-ed in yet another receipt request and Kelly Poole (DNR) replied that it would take 4-6 weeks to make this determination
* 8 weeks later we received a letter stating they would not consider our application

Local citizens are interested in and financially supportive of this project. As private citizens, we know we need the expertise of the DNR to manage this project. We ***are not*** asking for funding; we are for asking assistance and direction to get this project up and running. For example, we were told to reapply for a permit because we needed an approved application on file. We did so and were told it wouldn’t be considered because we didn’t appeal the first time. We didn’t appeal the first time because we were told we could pump the next spring (2013). We need help from the Governor’s office to oversee this situation, provide guidance and remain in contact with us and DNR officials.