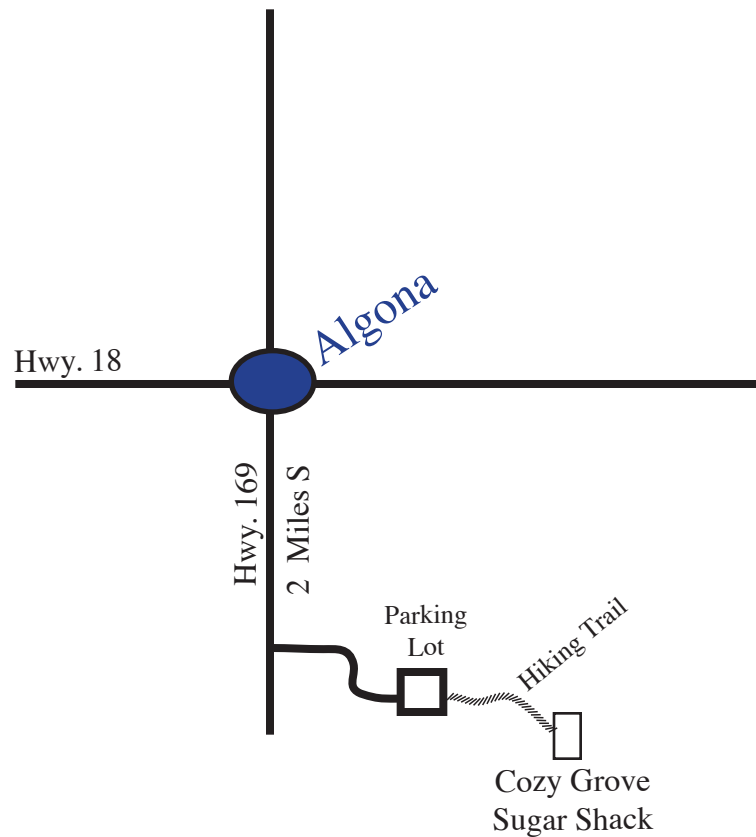


COME VISIT US!

Smith Wildlife Area is approximately 2 miles south of Algona on Hwy. 169. When you see the Smith Wildlife Area sign, turn east and follow the access lane to the parking area. (During syrup season, visitors are allowed to drive through the gates to the parking area.) From there it is a short hike down the hillside to see the maple syruping process.

Call the Water's Edge Nature Center for cooking dates and times.
515-295-2138.



Brochure made by: Nancy Gourley
KCCB Office Manager

Welcome to the Cozy Grove Sugar Shack



Water's Edge Nature Center
Kossuth County Conservation Board
1010 250th Street
Algona, Iowa 50511
Phone: 515-295-2138
E-mail: kccb@awcmail.com
Fax: 515-295-6833



Right Front-Eva and Slim Smith
 Right Rear-Dutch and Twila Lorenz
 Left Rear-Wen and (spouse) French

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HISTORY

- land belonged to the Smith family (Eva & Slim) since the early 1930's.
- woods were a popular area for picnics, BBQ's and family gatherings.
- syrup operation began in the late 40's with Slim and his buddies Dutch Laurens and Wen French.
- first few years of syruping was outside on a wood fueled fire pit.
- buckets were ordered from Vermont, pans obtained from a bakery owner in Algona.
- sugar shack constructed in 1949 with timber from the area.
- sugar shack first used in 1950 syrup season.
- operation started with family and friends and carried on by them and volunteers over the years.
- only tenants on farm were Mr. and Mrs. Bert Olson and later Dennis Olson.
- Kossuth County Conservation Board purchased 144 acres in 1995 from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation.
- 75% of acquisition dollars were from an Iowa Wildlife Habitat Stamp Grant.
- area open year around for public recreation including hunting.

TAPPING INFORMATION

- tap hard maples at 14" (diameter-breast high)
- 14" dbh you can put in one tap, every additional 6" dbh can add tap.
- new taps should stay 6" horizontal and 1' vertical from last years tap.
- tap on the east and south exposure for maximum sap production.
- taps are drilled with an 7/16" drill bit, approximately 2 1/2" into tree at a upward angle.
- clean out hole after drilling and before placing tap.
- good crown space increases sap production.
- takes approximately 40 buckets of sap for 1 bucket of syrup (2-3% sugar content).
- KCCB has 175 buckets on around 100 trees.
- freeze/thawing conditions cause sap flow, sunny days increase sap flow.
- root pressure causes sap to flow upward.
- good sap flow would fill 1 bucket on a good day.
- remove taps at the end of the season and trees will heal.

INSIDE SUGAR SHACK

- the sugar shack was constructed in 1949 with timber on the area.
- cooking-is the process of boiling off water content in the sap until left with syrup.
- raw sap is stored outside in water tanks and fed by gravity flow to evaporator pan.
- evaporator pan is shallow with a large surface area to promote boiling.
- float at one end keeps level at approximately 4" of sap.
- concentrated sap flows from one end of pan to the other due to specific gravity and sugar content.
- sap drawn from large evaporator pan to the finish pan for final cooking.
- finishing pan holds 20 gallons of sap, however a batch is 4-6 gallons.
- syrup is finished when the temperature reaches 219° F, water boils at 212° F.
- when syrup reaches 219° F, a batch is poured through a wool strainer which is inside a converted beer keg with a spigot.
- wool strainer filters out any impurities (sugar sand) which may be in the syrup.
- syrup is quickly poured into jars and sealed for future use.