



Lake Henry - CD 58 Petition: Modification and Use of Drainage System as Outlet For Lake Management

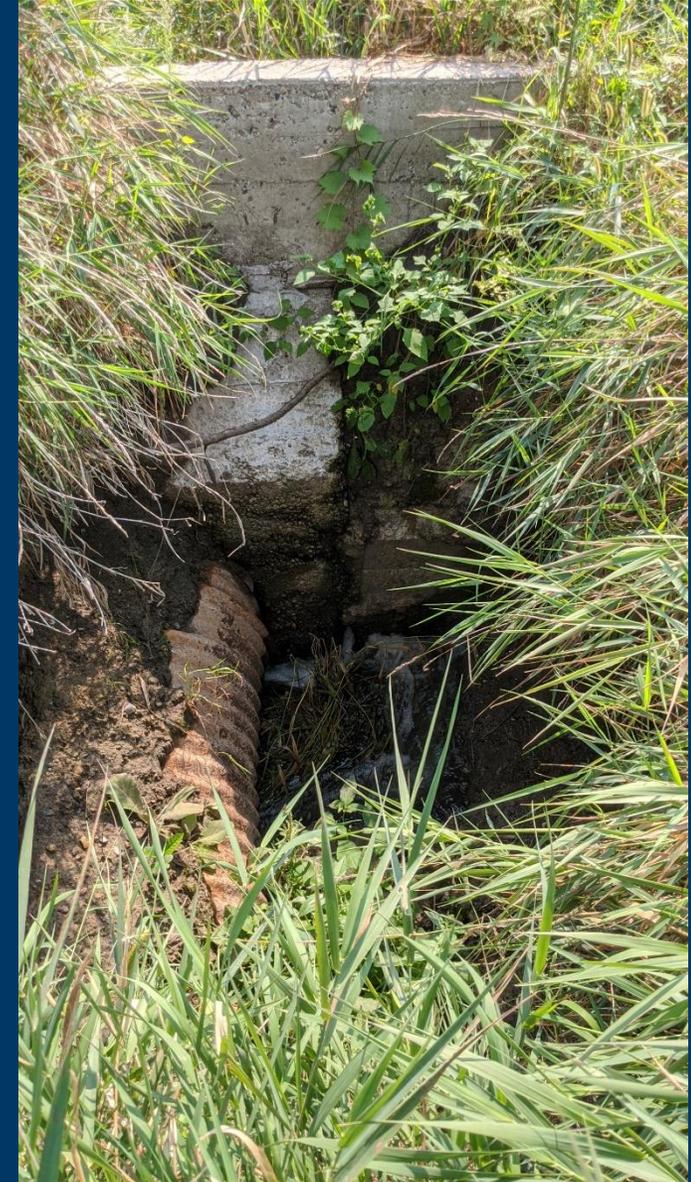
Lake Henry Management Plan Overview

Goal: Improve water quality by reducing undesirable fish populations and stimulating the growth of aquatic vegetation – resulting in a healthy shallow lake system providing quality fish and wildlife habitat.

- **Objective 1**: Provide the ability to manage water levels to enhance lake habitat and water quality
 - Action 1a: Secure legal authority for water level management through Wildlife Lake Designation, M.S. 97A.101
 - Action 1b: Finalize the Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) with Le Sueur County/CD #58, petition for modified outlet per County request
 - Action 1b (cont.): Complete the outlet work which includes channel excavation and addition of a catwalk/handrail to manage the water control structure
- **Objective 2**: Implement initial temporary water level drawdown
- **Objective 3**: Conduct additional drawdowns as necessary according to the approved lake management plan to promote the clear water condition
 - Monitoring: vegetation, water quality, fish community
 - Threshold triggers set in management plan
 - Set to trigger partial drawdown first (vs. full drawdown) - less time consuming, cheaper, less invasive
- **Objective 4**: Continue to promote conservation efforts and watershed health

Lake Henry Project Overview

- CD 58 constructed 1955, serves as lake outlet
- Existing outlet assigned to CD 58 as part of ditch system
- Le Sueur County replaced the failed outlet structure in 2020; there was coordination with DNR Fish and Wildlife to modify the existing design to include a stop log bay for future water level management.
- New outlet constructed Dec. 2020
- Drafted JPA to transfer management and maintenance responsibilities to DNR
- Submitted ditch petition to the Ditch Authority for a modified outlet



Lake Henry – 2020 Outlet Replacement



Joint Powers Agreement:

State's Responsibilities:

- All costs associated with completing the project - project bidding, management, and construction management will be carried out by Ducks Unlimited under a separate contract. Completion of the project will include 1) channel excavation from the open water portion of Lake Henry to the new water control structure, and 2) addition of a catwalk with handrail to manage and access stop-logs from the new water control structure.
- Provide as-builts to the County's Authorized Representative within one year of project completion.
- Operation and routine maintenance associated with water level management and drawdowns, including cleaning vegetation and debris from the outlet structure and inlet channel cleanout to facilitate drawdown.
- Provide the County with 5 days' written notice prior to any drawdown activities.
- Operate the Project in accordance with the most current approved Lake Henry Management Plan.

County's Responsibilities:

- Continue to own the outlet structure as part of CD 58.
- Provide capital maintenance including major repairs or replacement of the structure as needed to maintain the full-service runout elevation.
- Provide access through the CD 58 right-of-way beginning at County Rd 15 to operate and maintain the structure.
- Maintain CD 58 immediately downstream of the structure.

Joint Responsibilities:

- Both the State and County shall have the right of free access to inspect the structure at any time.
- Both the State and County shall inspect the structure annually and/or after major storms or unusual occurrences or conditions. The inspections are to ensure proper functioning and check for possible damage or deterioration. Inspections may be performed separately or jointly.
- Only an authorized agent or employee of the State or an authorized agent or employee of the County may make any alterations to the structure. Both the State and the County must agree to any such alterations.

Petition to Ditch Authority:

- Review DNR's proposed use of CD 58 as an outlet for lake management purposes.
 - Use not previously considered with the establishment of CD 58
 - Alters function as established, including fixed outlet elevation control of 1024.87'
- 103E.227 (modification of a public drainage system): Seeking authorization to modify CD 58 by periodically removing stop logs in the new outlet structure pursuant to the management plan.
- 103E.401 (use of a public drainage system as outlet): Seeking authorization to use CD 58 for lake management purposes (i.e., drawdown).

Lake Henry Enhancement Project

-Next Steps/Long Term Management-

- If formally approved:
 - Pursue initial drawdown in 2026
 - Pending:
 - County JPA
 - Ditch Petition
 - Public Water Work Permit and other state, federal, and local permits as necessary to complete the project
 - Project bidding/construction contract
- Coordinate with DNR Fisheries to re-stock/rear predator fish into Lake Henry (walleye).
- Maintain desired conditions through monitoring and periodic management (following triggers in management plan).
- Management plan re-evaluated every ~10 years. Landowners/stakeholders included and notified of future management actions.

Thank You

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