

# Volney, Gorman, and Village of Cordova Septic System Inventory Project

Saturday, December 3, 2022

10:00am-11:00am



# Project Team

- Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
- Le Sueur County
  - SSTS Authority: Patty Lynard, Michelle Mettler, and Amy Beatty
  - Grant Manager: Holly Bushman
- Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
  - Eric Blasing, Project Manager/Inspector
  - Peter Miller, Advanced Inspector



# Meeting Etiquette

- The Meeting Host will mute your lines to minimize background noise.
- If you have a question or comment, use the Chat function or wait until the Q & A portion.
- Reminder: This meeting is to present the findings of the septic inventory. If you have questions or comments not pertaining to the septic inventory or on your individual property, call or email the Environmental Services Department.

• 507-357-8538



• [environmentalservices@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:environmentalservices@co.le-sueur.mn.us)



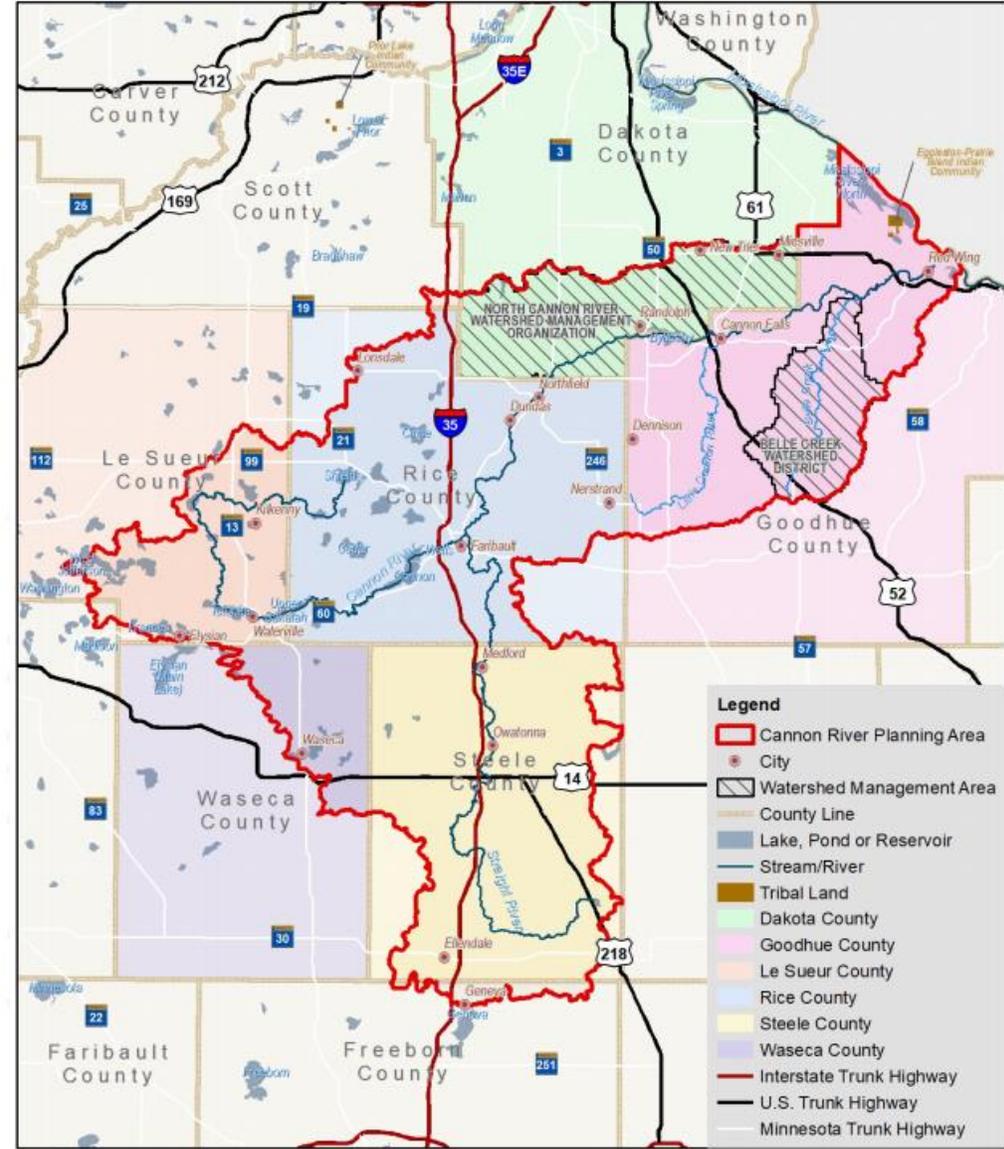
# Watershed Based Implementation Funding

- Different funding stream
  - Traditionally competitive process that was very project focused for one area
- Allows for collaboration among LGUs to implement projects and practices for the highest priorities within a watershed
  - A comprehensive plan-One Watershed One Plan is required in order to utilize funding



# Cannon River One Watershed One Plan

- 10 year plan that is for the Cannon River Watershed
  - The goal is to combine local water planning efforts across a major watershed scale
  - Prioritize and target areas throughout the watershed to improve and protect resources
  - Septic Inventories are listed as an activity
    - 4 total lake systems



**Goal 2:** Partner with cities and individual landowners to retrofit voluntary stormwater practices and improve maintenance activities in developed areas (i.e. older neighborhoods).

#### Justification for Goals

Communities in the Planning Area regulate stormwater in a variety of ways; some communities have extensive stormwater ordinances while others regulate stormwater through general development standards (e.g. as part of the subdivision ordinance). The Planning Partners recognize that communities should consider a separate stormwater ordinance to meet the community's (and the Planning Area's) goals for water resource protection. Needs expressed by the communities during the plan development process indicate that this is a reasonable goal for the timeframe of the Plan.

#### Implementation Activities

Implementation for Stormwater Management will be focused in all non-MS4 communities in the Cannon River Planning Area.

- **3.2.2-C-1:** Encourage Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) Adoption by all non-MS4 communities in the Cannon River Planning Area by hosting joint workshops for city council and town board members. These workshops would cover Stormwater 101 (the problems we face from mistakes of the past and the impacts to receiving waters), integrating stormwater management practices to policy through effective stormwater ordinances, adapting the MIDS Community Assistance ordinance package to meet local needs and developing the structure (program) to effectively implement the policy including: administration, plan review, inspections and enforcement).
- **3.2.2-C-2:** Utilize the Long-Term Flood Evaluation Study to determine the level of protection required in all of the communities (including MS4 communities) for the infrastructure system, public safety, and resource management needs.
- **3.2.2-C-3:** Utilize existing cost-share programs to assist citizens, businesses and local units of government with the design and implementation of stormwater retrofit projects to improve water quality treatment and reduce the volume of water being delivered to downstream waterbodies.

#### Pace of Progress

Each of the non-MS4 communities will adopt a stormwater ordinance in the next 10 years.

### 3.2.2-D: SUBSURFACE SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS (SSTS) T1

#### Issue Statement

Non-compliant or failing septic systems pose a threat to public health and natural resources. The WRAPS, produced by the MPCA, indicates that 21 percent of the SSTS systems in Goodhue, Rice, Steele and Waseca counties are Failing to Protect Groundwater (FTPGW) and 21 percent are posing an Imminent Threat to Public Health and Safety (ITPHS). Replacement of a failing septic system can be costly and an unexpected expense for residents.

#### Desired Future Condition

Risk to public health and safety is minimized because all septic systems are in compliance with current state standards.

#### 10-Year Measurable Goals

- Goal 1:** To protect high quality lakes in the Groundwater Pollution Sensitivity Area and the Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area, identify and address water quality problems stemming from inadequate wastewater treatment systems in four lake systems.
- Goal 2:** Work to create uniformity within existing SSTS programs across the Cannon River Planning Area to ensure consistency in implementation and enforcement.

#### Justification for the Goals

During the plan development process, it was clear that some counties were playing a more active role in SSTS management than others. For example, Le Sueur County has taken an active role in determining the compliance status of septic systems in many of its lake systems having recently completed the Jefferson-German Septic Inventory Project as well as the Frances, Rays, Sakatah, and Tetonka Septic Inventory Project. The need to create more uniformity within existing septic programs was identified as a gap that needs to be addressed by the Planning Partners moving forward.

On a related note, there is a need to conduct SSTS inventories and address non-compliance issues on many of the shoreland areas of the lakes in the Cannon River Planning Area. Planning Partners chose not to identify the specific lakes beyond Volney-Gorman because they recognize that conducting septic inventories depends on a majority of shore owner participation and municipal and county support. Prioritization of the lake systems for inventories will be determined through the annual work planning process.

#### Implementation Activities

Implementation for SSTS will be focused in the Groundwater Priority Areas: Pollution Sensitivity and Groundwater Dominated Lakes.

- **3.2.2-D-1:** Conduct SSTS inventory and address non-compliance issues on four lake systems located in the Groundwater Pollution Sensitivity Area and Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area, starting with Volney-Gorman.
- **3.2.2-D-2:** Inventory existing programs to identify programmatic gaps across the Cannon River Planning Area and develop solutions to fill the gaps.

#### Pace of Progress

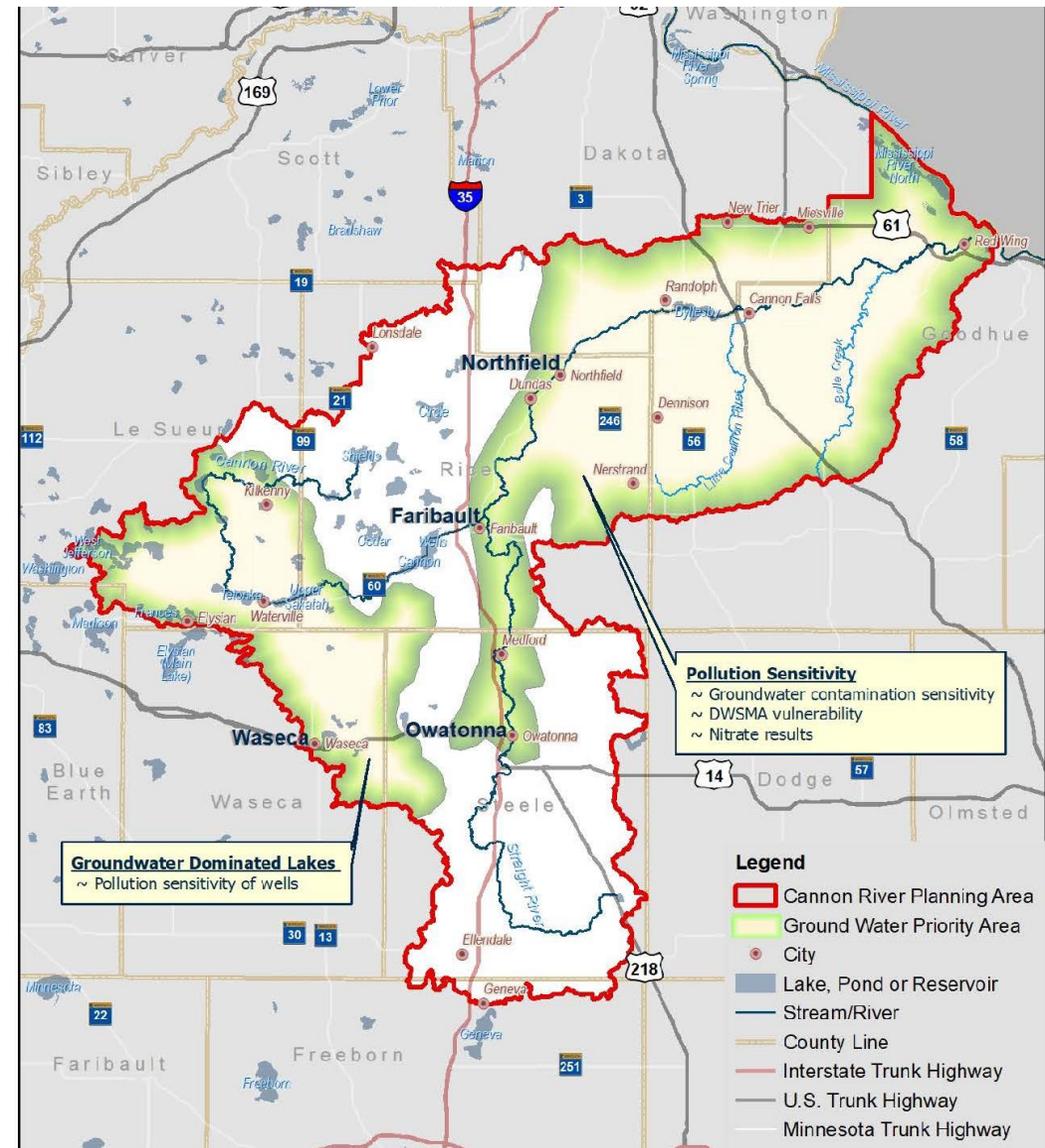
Conducting the programmatic gap analysis within the first three years of the Plan, conducting the four SSTS inventories and plan for addressing non-complaint systems.



LANDSCAPE ALTERATIONS TARGETED IMPLEMENTATION TABLE (2020-2029)																										
Priority Concern	ID	Implementation Activity	Related Concern	10-Year Measurable Goals	Targeted Implementation Area	Schedule for the Next 10 Years (2020-2029)										Local Project Lead								Project Partners	Activity Outcome Measurability	
						2020 \$	2021 \$	2022 \$	2023 \$	2024 \$	2025 \$	2026 \$	2027 \$	2028 \$	2029 \$	10-Yr Project Cost	Le Sueur	Rice	Steele	Dakota	Goodhue	Waseca	BCWD			NCWMO
Stormwater Management	3.2.2-C-1	Encourage Minimal Impact Design Standards (MIDS) Adoption by all non-MS4 communities in the Cannon River Planning Area	--	Address the effects of altered hydrology in the watershed,	Non-MS4 communities	-	-	-	-	50,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	75,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			MPCA, cities, townships	MIDS workshops with all non-MS4 communities
Stormwater Management	3.2.2-C-2	Utilize the Long-Term Flood Evaluation Study to determine the level of protection required in all of the communities (including MS4 communities) for the infrastructure system, public safety, and resource management needs.	Flooding of Communities	promote the adoption of ordinances in all of the communities (including MS4 communities)	Large Communities	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	20,000	100,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			Cities, TWPs, SWCDs	Recommendations for flood protection practices for 10 communities (2 per year)
Stormwater Management	3.2.2-C-3	Utilize existing cost-share programs to assist citizens, businesses and local units of government with the design and implementation of stormwater retrofit projects and maintenance activities to improve water quality treatment and reduce the volume of water being delivered to downstream waterbodies.	Lakes, Streams and Rivers, Flooding of Communities	Partner with cities and individual landowners to retrofit voluntary stormwater practices and improve maintenance activities in developed areas (i.e. older neighborhoods).	Large Communities and Non-MS4 communities	-	250,000	-	250,000	-	250,000	-	250,000	-	250,000	1,250,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			Cities, SWCDs	Implement 3 projects/year or 30 projects over 10 years
Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems	3.2.2-D-1	Conduct SSTS inventory on Volney and Gorman, and two other lakes in the Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area.	Groundwater Dependent Protection Lakes	Protect high quality lakes in the Groundwater Pollution Sensitivity Area and the Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area	Groundwater Pollution Sensitivity Area and the Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area (Figure 2-11)	200,000	-	-	-	200,000	-	-	-	200,000	-	600,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			SWCDs, Counties, Lake Associations, CRWP	SSTS on four lake systems
Subsurface Sewage Treatment Systems	3.2.2-D-2	Inventory existing programs to identify programmatic gaps across the Cannon River Planning Area and develop solutions to fill the gaps	Lakes, Streams, and Rivers			-	-	-	20,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	20,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			SWCDs, Counties, CRWP	4 workshops; Existing program inventory and solutions to fill gap
Drainage System Management	3.2.3-A-1	Define the needs of and conduct an inventory to better define the drainage system and facilitate the development of a hydrologic & hydraulic (H & H) model in the future	Flooding of Communities	To address the effects of altered hydrology in the watershed (flooding and resource water quality and hydrology	Straight River Tributaries Area Lakes Area (Figure 2-10)	25,000	25,000	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	75,000	X	X	X	X	X	X			BWSR, County Drainage Authorities, CRWP	Inventory of drainage systems in the Planning Area

# Priority Areas within the Plan

- Where we are going to target our efforts
- Volney, Gorman, and Cordova located within the Groundwater Dominated Lakes Area



Cannon River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

Ground Water Priority Areas



0 Miles 5



Figure 2-11. Cannon River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan criteria used to select groundwater priority areas.



# Stantec Qualifications

- Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) licensed Subsurface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) firm
  - Advanced Designers
  - Advanced Inspectors
- Licensed Professional Engineers
- Licensed Professional Soil Scientists
- Completed numerous assessments throughout MN



# Scope of Work

- Project service area includes 70 properties
- Determine ISTS (septic system) compliance status
  - Conducted in June and July 2022
- Determine future ISTS to serve each property
- Organize and review data
- Conduct alternatives analysis
- Opinion of probable cost estimates
- Present findings





# ISTS Compliance

- Compliant:
  - Watertight tanks
  - 36-inch vertical separation to seasonal groundwater or bedrock
    - Note: Le Sueur County SSTS Ordinance allows a 15% separation reduction, therefore a 31-inch vertical separation is required
  - No safety or operational issues
- Noncompliant:
  - Failure to protect groundwater (FTPG): leaky tank, cesspool, drywell, lack of vertical separation
  - Imminent threat to public health or safety (ITPHS): unsafe condition, sewage discharge to surface water or groundwater, sewage backup in dwelling



# Summary of Existing Conditions



# ISTS Type

<b>ISTS Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Trenches	18	26%
Mound	33	47%
CP/DW	15	21%
Holding Tank	4	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

*CP/DW= = cesspool/drywell*



# ISTS Age

<b>System Age* (years)</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
≥ 30	31	44%
10 – 29	34	49%
< 10	5	7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

*As of 2022*



# ISTS Compliance Status

Status	Number	Percentage
Compliant	31	44%
Noncompliant FTPG	29	41%
Noncompliant ITPHS	10	15%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Note: as of November 2022, four of the 10 ITPHS have been replaced, one has been abandoned, and one is being redesigned*



# Existing Conditions Summary

- Overall, compliance is poor as 39 of the 70 (56%) ISTS are noncompliant
- 31 of the 70 (44%) ISTS are compliant
- 15 of the 70 (21%) ISTS are cesspools/drywells



# Wastewater Treatment Options

- Private ISTS
- Community cluster system(s)
- Regionalization to an existing, nearby wastewater treatment facility
  - Not feasible



# Alternative 1: Private ISTS



# Future ISTS for All Properties

<b>ISTS Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Type 1	34	49%
Type 2	12	17%
Type 3/Type 4	24	34%
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Opinion of Probable Cost Estimate Private ISTS Replacement

<b>New ISTS Type</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Estimated Cost per ISTS</b>
Type 1 Mound	20	\$20,000 – \$25,000
Type 2 Holding Tank	12	\$5,000 – \$7,500
Type 3/Type 4	24	\$25,000 – \$30,000



# Alternative 2: Community Cluster System



# Community Cluster System

- Multiple dwellings connected to a common collection system
- Collection system conveys wastewater to a centralized wastewater treatment site
- Could be owned and operated as a public utility (Le Sueur County) by a subordinate service district (District)
  - District would provide and finance wastewater services
- Typically requires more design and treatment than ISTS



# Community Cluster System

- Le Sueur County SSTS permit
- Existing ISTS abandonment
- Grinder pump pressure sewer collection system
- Septic and dose tanks at treatment site
- Above-grade mound soil dispersal system
- Permanent private property utility easements

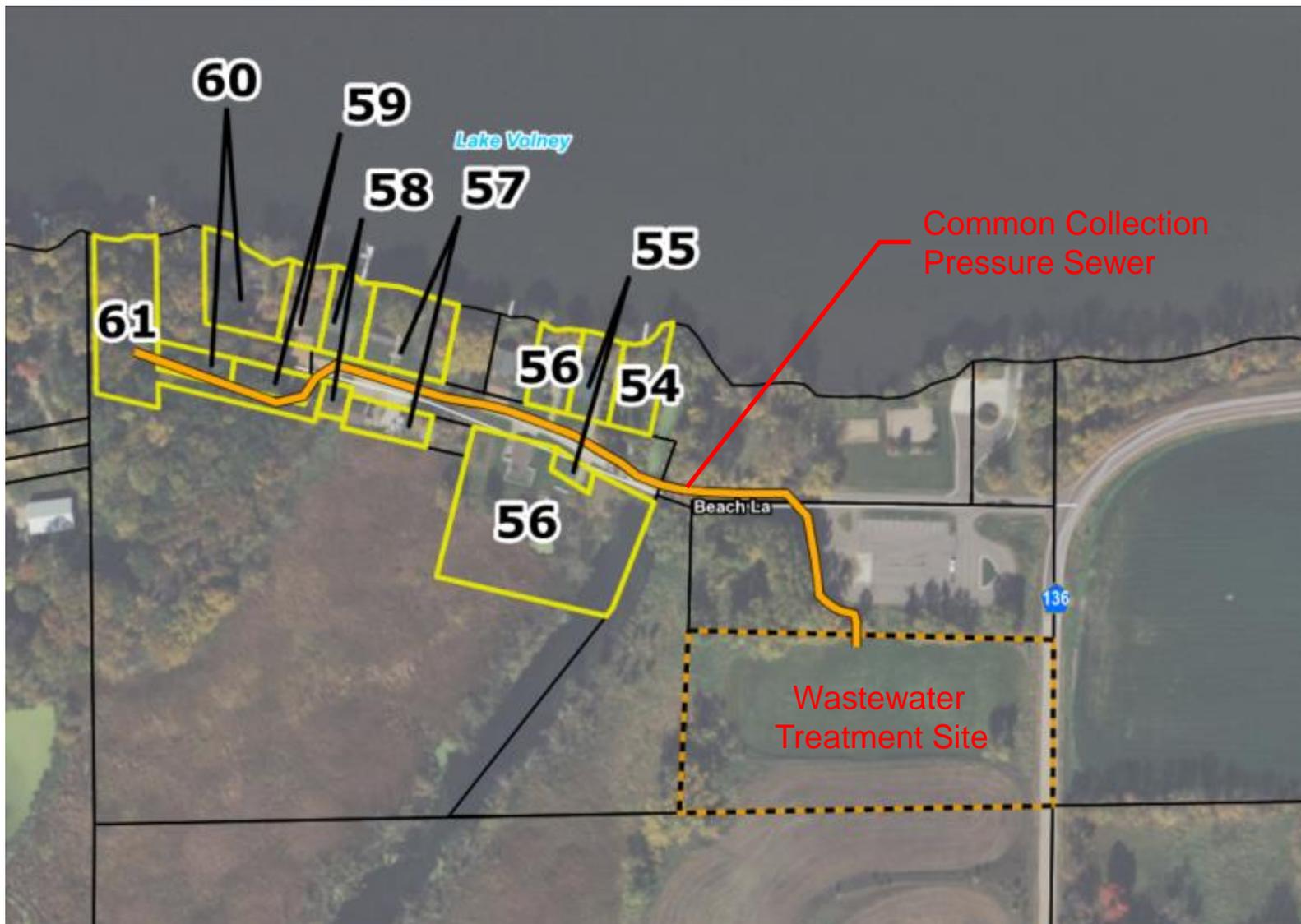


# Community Cluster System

- Two separate community cluster systems were selected based on poor ISTS compliance status and properties that cannot support a future Type 1
  - Beach Lane: eight properties
  - Lake Volney Lane & 400<sup>th</sup> Street: 16 properties



# Community Cluster System – Beach Lane





# Community Cluster System – Lake Volney Lane & 400<sup>th</sup> Street













# Community Cluster Systems Opinion of Probable Construction Costs

## Beach Lane

Wastewater Component	Estimated Construction Cost
Alternative 2A: Collection System	\$286,000
Alternative 2A: Treatment System	\$474,000
<b>Construction Cost Subtotal</b>	
	\$760,000
<b>Contingency</b>	\$114,000
<b>Engineering Services</b>	\$137,000
<b>Legal &amp; Admin.</b>	\$23,000
<b>Total Estimated Construction Cost</b>	\$1,034,000
<b>Estimated Construction Cost per Property</b>	\$129,300

## Lake Volney Lane & 400<sup>th</sup> Street

Wastewater Component	Estimated Construction Cost
Alternative 2B: Collection System	\$581,000
Alternative 2B: Treatment System	\$679,000
<b>Construction Cost Subtotal</b>	
	\$1,260,000
<b>Contingency</b>	\$189,000
<b>Engineering Services</b>	\$227,000
<b>Legal &amp; Admin.</b>	\$38,000
<b>Total Estimated Construction Cost</b>	\$1,714,000
<b>Estimated Construction Cost per Property</b>	\$107,200



# Community Cluster System Financing

- Eligible for funding through the Public Facilities Authority
- 80% of capital costs could be covered by grant through the Small Community Wastewater Treatment Program
- Remainder of costs covered by low-interest loan
- Connected properties would be responsible for paying:
  - Debt service over 20-year term
  - Annual O&M and replacement costs
  - Note: debt can be paid off in one lump sum payment



# Community Cluster Systems Opinion of Probable Construction Costs with Funding

	<b>Beach Lane Community Cluster</b>	<b>Lake Volney Lane &amp; 400<sup>th</sup> Street Community Cluster</b>
<b>Total Estimated Probable Construction Cost</b>	\$1,034,000	\$1,714,000
<b>Grant Funding Reduction</b>	\$827,200	\$1,371,200
<b>Final Total Estimated Probable Construction Cost</b>	\$206,800	\$342,800
<b>Estimated Construction Cost per Property</b>	\$25,900	\$21,500



# Alternative 2: Pros & Cons

- Pros:
  - Funding programs available to cover design and construction costs
  - More usable land area on each property
  - Eliminates the use of holding tanks
  - Routine O&M activities completed by a third-party service provider
  - Potential to increase property value
- Cons:
  - Higher capital costs than private ISTS
  - Land acquisition needed
  - Requires a coordinated effort of all involved



# Summary

- Compliance is poor as the majority of ISTS are noncompliant
- Could pursue grant and low-interest loan funding for community cluster system projects
- Community Cluster System Next Steps:
  - Determine the desire to construct a community cluster system(s)
  - Explore the creation of a subordinate service district
  - Investigate the opportunity of land acquisition

# What if My System is Found to be Non-Compliant?

- **System must be upgraded:**
  - Failure to Protect Groundwater (FTPG) non-compliance must be upgraded by December 31, 2027
    - The state and county standard is 1 year grace period for an upgrade. The Ordinance grants a grace period of 5 years instead.
  - Imminent Threat to Public Health and Safety (ITPHS) non-compliance must be upgraded within 10 months of the date of the inspection
    - This is the same as current county standard. No grace period for ITPHS systems.

# How To Find a Septic Contractor

To locate a licensed, certified septic contractor, go to the MN Pollution Control Agency's (MPCA) SSTS Search at:

- <https://webapp.pca.state.mn.us/ssts/business-search>
- Or type into your internet browser – **SSTS Search**

MPCA maintains the list of licensed and certified septic individuals and businesses.

To narrow down your search of a designer and/or installer, select by

- County and/or
- Specialty Area



## SSTS Search

SSTS Program Home

### Subsurface Sewage Treatment System Licensed Business and Certified Individual Search

Licensed Business   Certified Individual

The SSTS Licensed Business Search is meant to be used by Local Program Administrators in order to verify licensure. If you are a system owner, recognize that licensed businesses may work anywhere in Minnesota and are not restricted to the city or county in which they are located. The results provided by this search are not intended to be used as advertising.

Advanced Designers and/or Inspectors are authorized to conduct Intermediate and Basic Designer/Inspector duties. Intermediate Designers and/or Inspectors are authorized to conduct Basic Designer/Inspector duties. For more information: [The Design and Inspection Spectrum and Specialty Areas for SSTS Professionals](#).

License Number	<input type="text"/>
Business Name	<input type="text"/>
City	<input type="text"/>
County	<input type="text" value="Select County"/>
Specialty Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Installer <input type="checkbox"/> Maintainer <input type="checkbox"/> Service Provider <input type="checkbox"/> Designer <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate Designer <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Designer <input type="checkbox"/> Inspector <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate Inspector <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced Inspector

# Septic Design Process

Once you have selected septic designer, he or she will design a replacement system.



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The design process includes

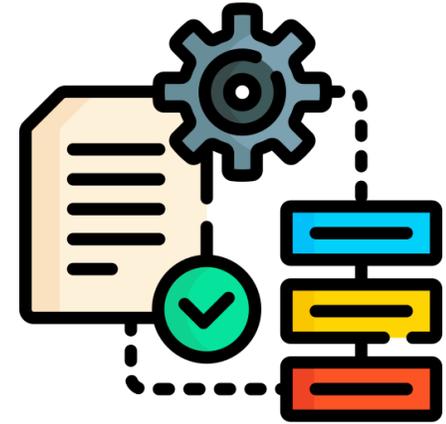
- If there will be a soil treatment area (mound, at-grade, trenches), the designer sets-up a soils verification with County Septic Staff.
- The designer submits a design to the County Septic Staff for review.
  - If it is a small lot, may require a variance.
- After the design has been approved, the property owner or contractor purchases the permit for installation.
- After the permit is purchased, the installer schedules an installation inspection with County Septic Staff.
- A Certificate of Compliance will be issued by County Septic Staff once installation paperwork is received from the installer.

# Septic Design Process

Suggestion: Don't wait until the last minute to update your non-compliant system.

Reasons:

- Septic contractors work load.
- May require a variance
  - Requires a survey
  - Approximately 2 months from application with the County to Board of Adjustment meeting date.
- Weather and site conditions – soil treatment area cannot be installed when soil is frozen or very wet soil conditions.



# Certificates of Compliance

For an existing septic system that was inspected by an MPCA licensed Inspector, a Certificate of Compliance is valid for three (3) years from the date of issuance.

For a new or replacement septic system that was inspected by an MPCA certified individual employed by the County, a Certificate of Compliance is valid for five (5) years from the date of issuance.

In Le Sueur County, a Compliance Inspection is required

- Prior to issuance of any zoning permit
- Upon receipt of a variance and/or conditional use permit application
- When a zoning permit is required to repair, modify, or upgrade an existing system
- Any time there is a change in use of the property and/or expansion of the structure being served by an existing SSTS, which may impact the performance of the system
- Prior to property sale or transfer, including the division of land with existing development
- Prior to a property split when there is an SSTS servicing the property
- At any time as required by Section 17 of the Zoning Ordinance or the Department deems appropriate such as upon receipt of a complaint or other notice of a system malfunction



# Fees - Septic

## SEPTIC - Current 2022 Fees

Type I = \$300.00

Type II (holding tank) = \$200.00

Type II (floodplain area) = \$400.00

Type III (fill or disturbed soil) = \$300.00

Type III (flow equalization or reduced size) = \$400.00

Type IV (pretreatment) = \$500.00

Type V (existing) = \$400.00

Tank Replacement = \$200.00

Shared System = Double the required fee

Cluster is 3 or more single family dwellings

- Cluster 0 to 2,500 gallons per day = \$1,500.00 + \$200.00 per household
- Cluster 2,500 to 5,000 gallons per day = \$3,000.00 + \$200.00 per household
- Cluster 5,001 to 10,000 gallons per day = \$6,000.00 + \$200.00 per household

After the Fact Permits = Double the required fee



# Fees - Variance

Current 2022 Fees

## HEARINGS

Board of Adjustment

Variance/ Appeal = \$600.00

Cluster = \$600.00 + \$200.00 per household

Special meeting = \$1,200.00

Penalty for Continued Item (*Landowner Request or Site Not Properly Staked*) = \$400.00

Penalty for Tabled Item (*Landowner Request*) = \$500.00

Time Extension = \$400.00

Filing fee = \$46.00

After the Fact Permit = Double the required fee + penalty

**AFTER THE FACT PENALTY \$1500.00 OR 10% OF FINISHED VALUE OF IMPROVEMENT-WHICHEVER IS GREATER.**



# Loans Available To Update Your Septic System

3 loan programs

- Septic Upgrade Loan Program (SULP)
- Ag Best-Management Practices Program (AgBMP)
- Minnesota Valley Action Council Fix-Up-Loan Program



# Septic Upgrade Loan Program (SULP)



## Septic Upgrade Loan Program (SULP)

- Administered by the County.
- Eligibility: An existing non-compliant septic system located in Le Sueur County and current on your property taxes.
- Up to \$15,000, at 4% interest rate, with a term length of 5 to 10 years, to cover the cost of the design and installation of a replacement system.
- Administrative Fee of \$200 for recording fees, processing fees, and mortgage registry tax.
- The loan is paid back through your property taxes.
- For more information about the loan, contact Environmental Services at 507-357-8538.

# Ag Best Management Practices Program (AgBMP)

AgBMP Loan Program  
EXAMPLE PRACTICES



## Septic Systems

Mound Septic Systems  
At-Grade Systems  
Septic Repair or Replacement  
New Septic Systems  
Cluster Systems  
Central Sewer Connections



## Ag Best Management Practices Program (AgBMP)

- Administered by the County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).
- Works with multiple lenders in the County.
- Low interest loan funds with 3.5 to 4% interest are available for projects that prevent or mitigate non-point source pollution.
- A total of 100% of your project may be funded through this program.
- For more information, contact the Le Sueur County SWCD at 507-419-0365.



# MN Valley Action Council Fix-It-Loan Program



## MN Valley Action Council Fix-It-Loan Program

- Administered by the Minnesota Valley Action Council (MVAC) through its Home Improvement Loan Program funded by Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) with loans originated by MVAC.
- You must own **and** occupy the property be improved as your principle residence.
- Income, affordability, equity, and credit will be used to determine which program will work for the household.
- Eligible improvements are those that improve the basic livability or energy efficiency of the borrower's home.
- For more information about the loan, contact MVAC staff at 507-345-6822.

# Where Can I Find More Information about the SSTS Inventory?

- Contact the Le Sueur County Environmental Services Department
- Le Sueur County Website
  - Search: Septic Inventory, Click on Lake Volney, Lake Gorman, & the Village of Cordova Septic Inventory Project
  - Environmental Services Department->Septic Program-> Projects & Sewer Districts-> Lake Volney, Lake Gorman, & the Village of Cordova Septic Inventory Project
- <https://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/640/Lake-Volney-Lake-Gorman-the-Village-of-C>

# QUESTIONS?

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