

# Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## Annual Report

01/01/2024 – 12/31/2024



## 2024 Summary

2024 was another busy and successful year for the Le Sueur County Environmental Services Department. The Environmental Services manages many different programs for the County including Planning and Zoning, Septics, Feedlots, Solid Waste, Shoreland, Water Management (Surface Water and Groundwater), and Aquatic Invasive Species. In 2024, staff completed approximately 900 site visits related to the programs mentioned above. In addition to site visits, staff have issued 239 permits (zoning and septic) for 2024. To help our department keep up with all of our busy work, the Environmental Services Department has increased our team with two additional staff members, including creating a drainage and stormwater compliance role.

The Department was also involved with numerous larger scale projects in 2024 which include: beginning to update our Comprehensive Land Use Management Plan, approving a final draft of the Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Comprehensive Plan, beginning to develop the Upper Cannon River Flood Study, participating in the Waterville Flood Debris Collection site, and completing a new data/aerial imagery program called LiDAR.

In 2024, the Environmental Services Department hosted or partnered with a variety of different events that are targeted towards education and outreach and providing services to residents. In total, the County participated in 15 events that ranged from Solid Waste Collection, Water Testing Clinics, Contractor Trainings, Watershed Comprehensive Plan Public Meetings, Lake Group Events, and Comprehensive Land Use Plan Engagement Meetings.



**Figure 1. Site visit from County Staff for Wetland and Drainage Concerns.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

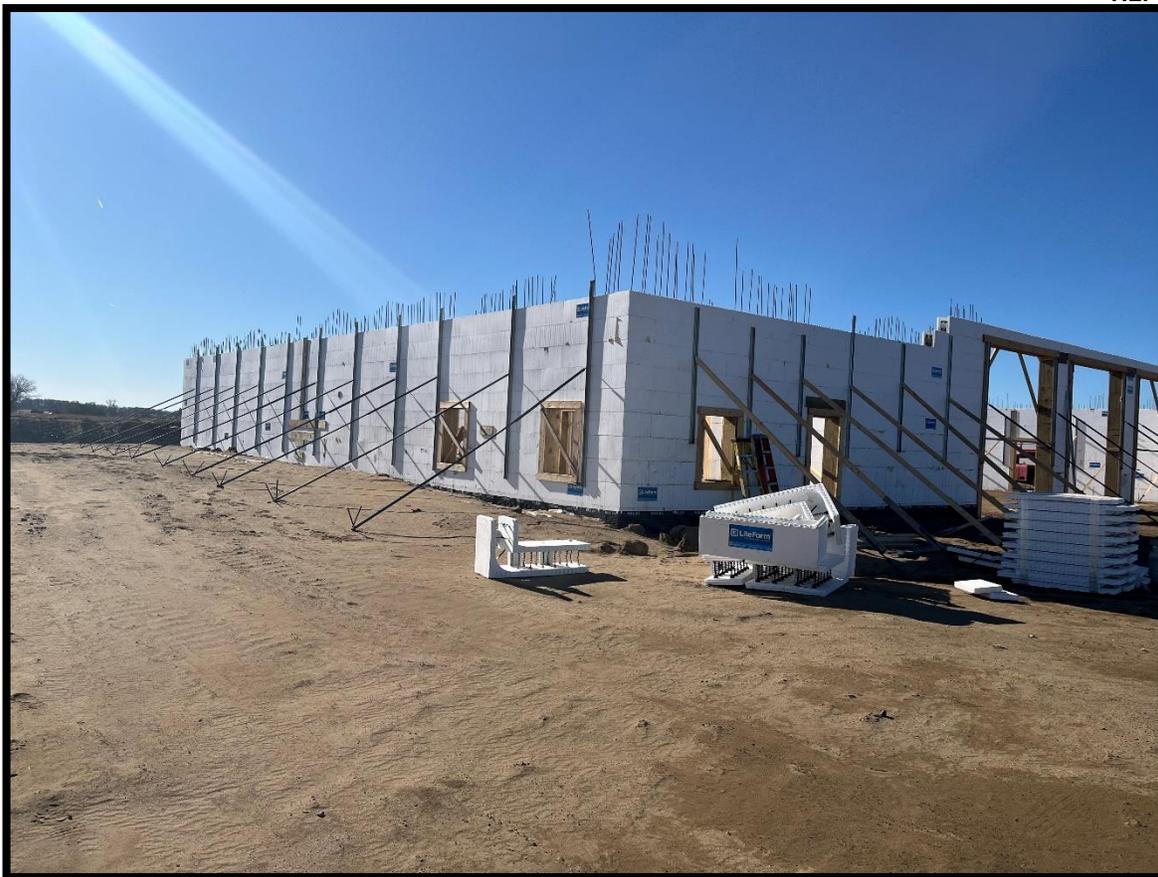


Figure 2. Site Visit from staff to check on progress of existing permit for a dwelling. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services*

## Planning and Zoning

In 2024, Le Sueur County increased its Planning and Zoning Department by 2 staff members. There were a significant amount of new programs and processes administered this year for the department which includes increasing the amount of site inspections, working with a new permitting program, and requiring erosion prevention and sediment control to be completed prior to project construction. In addition to all the permits that were issued this year, the County also worked on 3 different Zoning Ordinance Updates.

***Did you know that the State of Minnesota first adopted Land Use Ordinances in 1965?***

## Zoning

The Le Sueur County Planning and Zoning Department had an extremely busy year in 2024. The Planning and Zoning Department issues zoning permits, variances, interim use permits, conditional use permits, administrative special use permits, and land alteration permits. In addition, the department assists with rezone and replat applications. Lastly, the department also assists local decision makers with any zoning ordinance amendments.



Figure 3. Another site visit from staff to check on progress of existing permit for a dwelling. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

In total 155 zoning permits were issued.

- 2 911 addresses
- 6 Administrative Special Use
- 35 Additions
- 111 New Construction
- 2 Relocation
- 7 Repairs
- 38 Land Alteration Permits

43 Variances were applied for

- 40 were approved and issued
- 2 were tabled
- 1 was denied

26 Interim Use Permits applied for

- 21 approved and issued
- 4 tabled

6 Conditional Use Permits were applied for, and all were approved and issued

3 rezone applications were approved

1 replat application was approved

## Site Visits

As part of the permit application process, there are required site visits to inspect erosion control measures, construction activities, close out projects, and address any potential violations. In total, staff completed 228 inspections for 2024.

## Enforcement

There was a total of 25 new code enforcement cases that were issued and enforced by the department. 31 code enforcement cases were closed out and resolved.

## Ordinance Updates

Lastly the Planning and Zoning Department had multiple Zoning Ordinance Updates due to statutory and local changes in programs that we administer. The three major amendments that were made include: a Cannabis Section, Updating the Floodplain Ordinance, and Updating the Solid Waste Ordinance.



**Figure 4. Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control Site Visit of existing permit.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## Vision 2050: Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code Updates

The Environmental Services Department initiated the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code Update in 2024. The last update to Le Sueur County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan was in 2007. Bolton and Menk were hired as the consultant to work on this initiative.

Efforts that were completed in 2024 include:

- Developing a Comprehensive Land Use and Zoning Code Update Committees. Each committee had one in person meeting.
- Collecting any background information, data, existing studies/plans that the County already has.
- Creating a project website and text my gov platform.
- Created a Community Profile of Le Sueur County (using data).
- Developed a current land use map.
- Developed a Vision Statement.
- Develop a public survey that allows the community to provide input about the plan and state community needs and priorities.
  - X Individuals participated in the survey
- Hosted Pop Up Events in the Community to engage the public and inform about the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code Update.
  - X Events
- Completed Phase 1 of the Project which was entirely focused on Public Engagement.



# VISION 2050

Le Sueur County



Figure 5. Installation of a Type 1 Septic System on a residential property in Le Sueur County. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services*

## Septic

Le Sueur County continued to be active with our Septic Program in 2024. A total of 92 septic systems were installed. Additionally, we continued to work on two of our existing septic inventories around recreational lakes to upgrade noncompliant systems.

***Did you know that Le Sueur County has 7847 Septic Systems that serve full time dwellings and 1320 Septic Systems that serve seasonal dwellings?***

## Septic Permits Issued

- 80 septic construction permits for residential areas
  - 65 permits issued for Type 1 Mound System
  - 2 permits issued for Type 1 At Grade System
  - 6 permits issued for Type 2 Systems (privies, holding tanks, floodplain)
  - 7 permits issued for Type 3 systems
  - 3 Septic Permits issued for other establishments
    - 3 permits issued for Type 2 (privies, holding tanks, floodplain)
- Septic Systems within Le Sueur County
  - 7,847 for full time dwellings
  - 1,320 for seasonal dwellings
  - 30 for other establishments
  - 14 Cluster Systems
    - 169 structures served by clusters
- In 2024, there were a total of 144 existing system compliance inspections conducted and a total of 222 site visits that were septic system related.
  - 4 properties had noncompliant systems and no longer require a septic system
  - 92 septic tanks installed



**Figure 6. Residential holding tank and pump tank uncovered.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## Septic System Inventories

- Francis, Rays, Sakatah, Tetonka Inventory
  - 78 noncompliant systems
    - 11 systems still need to be updated
- Volney, Gorman, and Cordova Inventory
  - 49 noncompliant systems
    - 22 systems still need to be updated

## Septic System Financial Programs in Le Sueur County

- 1 system updated through the SSTS Low Income Grant
  - Pollutant reductions include: 74 lbs of BOD/yr, 41 lbs TSS/yr, 4 lbs of TP/yr, 17lbs N/yr, 2.53 E<sup>13</sup> CFU (bacteria)
- 1 applicant to utilize County Sulp Program

## Hosted Annual Septic Contractor Training in March

- 20 contractors in attendance



Figure 7. Septic tank uncovered adjacent to a wetland. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services



Figure 8. Cattle located in a pasture.

## Feedlot

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In 2024, Le Sueur County continued to be active in its Feedlot program. The Feedlot program for Le Sueur County consists of 144 registered sites and 47 nonregistered sites. Furthermore staff conducted 17 site visits for this program that involved land application, manure storage, and facility compliance.

***Did you know that there are about 18,000 registered feedlots in Minnesota?***

## Feedlot Facility Information

- Of the 144 sites required to be registered animal feedlot sites, there are:
  - 11 NPDES sites
    - 1 beef, 1 dairy, and 9 swine
  - 38 sites with greater than 300 animal units
    - Primary Stock = 8 beef, 2 dairy, 25 swine, and 3 turkey
  - 83 sites with 50 to 299 animal units
    - Primary Stock = 51 Beef, 14 Dairy, 15 Swine, 1 Turkey, 1 Goat, and 1 Chicken
  - 12 sites with 10 to 49 animal units located in shoreland
    - Primary Stock = 10 Beef, 1 Horse, and 1 Sheep
  - In addition, there are 47 animal feedlot sites that are registered with less than 50 animal units in a non-shoreland zoning district (primarily beef cattle operations).



Figure 9. Donkeys located in a pen.

## Inspections conducted in 2024

- Conducted
  - 9 facility compliance inspections
    - Less than 50 animal units = 1 (prior to inspection was 51.6 animal units – registration was updated at time of the inspection)
    - 50 to 299 animal units = 4 (1 in shoreland)
    - >300 animal units = 4 (3 in shoreland)
  - 6 in-field land application inspections
    - 50 to 299 animal units = 2
    - >300 animal units = 4
  - 2 liquid manure storage closure inspections
- As it relates to the County’s Watersheds
  - Cannon River = 4 inspections (4 facility)
  - Minnesota River – Mankato = 3 inspections (2 facility & 1 closure)
  - Lower Minnesota River = 10 inspections (3 facility, 6 land application, & 1 closure)

## Additional feedlot work done in 2024

- Completed 19.5 continuing education training hours (required to complete 18 hours).
- Communicated with potential and current property owners and realtors if livestock would be allowed on a parcel.
- Assisted an NPDES permit holder with annual report.
- Updated the registration at 24 animal feedlot facilities.



Figure 10. Swine being off loaded from a truck.



**Figure 11.** Solid waste collection at the Waterville Flood Debris Site. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services*

## Solid Waste

Le Sueur County had an eventful year with our Solid Waste Program. The County participated in three different reoccurring Solid Waste and Recycling Events, provided 2 recycling drop off sites, updated the Solid Waste Ordinance, and held a special debris collection site for residents that were impact by the June Flooding Events.

***Did you know that in Minnesota nearly two-thirds of what ends up in landfills and garbage incinerators could have been reused, composted, or recycled?***

## Solid Waste Collection Events

### Household Hazardous Waste Collection-May 9, 2024

- Hosted at Montgomery Highway Shop
- 166 Residents Utilized the Collection

### Annual Tire, Appliance, and Electronic Collection-June 8, 2024

- 305 Residents Utilized the Collection
- 64.48 tons of tires collected
- 393 appliances collected
- 49,299 pounds of electronics collected

### Tri-County Tire, Appliance, and Electronic Collection

- 351 residents from Le Sueur, Nicollet, and Sibley Counties attended
- 76 Residents from Le Sueur County attended

In addition to the collection events that are hosted annually, Le Sueur County also partners with Scott and Blue Earth Counties to allow Le Sueur County residents to dispose there Household Hazardous Waste Materials. 82 County Residents utilized these facilities this year.

Le Sueur County also provides two recycling drop off sites in Cleveland and Le Center that are emptied weekly. The County also provides a container at Ag Partners in Le Center for ag plastic materials to be disposed of.



Figure 12. Environmental Services Staff Group Photo at Tire, Appliance, and Electronic Day in Le Center. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## Waterville Debris Collection Site

Le Sueur County experienced record flooding in June of 2024. The impacts from this event to local communities, public health, and the environment were severe.

The Collection Site was open from June 29<sup>th</sup>-August 3<sup>rd</sup> for a total of 17 days and was in operation for 116 hours. 1,678 individuals signed into the collection site to dispose of their debris.

The collection event would not have been possible without County Staff and Volunteers. Staff from the Environmental Services, Human Resources, Highway, Human Services, GIS, Administration, and the Sheriff Department were in attendance. Additionally we had numerous volunteers from the community help out.

Amount of Materials collected during this event include:

- 9.12 Tons of tires
- 5,292.67 Tons of Debris that were delivered to sanitary landfills
- 1,587.67 Tons of Deployed Sandbags delivered to demolition landfills
- 23.98 Tons of demolition debris delivered to demolition landfills
- 738 appliances
- 131,241 pounds of appliances
- 4.53 tons of hazardous waste



**Figure 13. County Staff and Volunteers removing flood debris from a trailer.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services



**Figure 14. County Staff and Volunteers loading a payloader with flood debris from a trailer.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services



**Figure 15.** Riprap project that was installed in 2024 with a Land Alteration Permit from the County. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services*

## Shoreland

Shoreland Management in Le Sueur County involves a variety of different activities such as issuing permits, completing site visits, installing best management practices, and enforcing zoning ordinances. The Shoreland District involves both Lakes and Streams. With Le Sueur County having so many water resources, the Shoreland District is one of the most active areas that staff spend time.

***Did you know that Shoreland Management in Minnesota dates back to 1969?***

## Permits Issued

- 11 Lot Splits
- Variances within the Shoreland District
  - 1 Building Height
  - 6 Septic System Setback
  - 11 Impervious Surface Coverage
  - 3 Bluff Setback
  - 9 OHWL Setback
    - 6 involved SIZ, BIZ, Steep Slopes
- 52 permits total in Shoreland District
  - 33 were land alteration permits (permitted uses)
    - 18 were issued for best management practices (riprap, native vegetation, restoration of hillside)
    - 20 were issued for Grading, Excavating, and Filling activities
    - 10 were issued for tree removal and/or replacement
    - 3 were issued for stairs
    - 5 were issued for impervious surface
    - 4 were issued for removing ice heaves
  - 19 were zoning permits

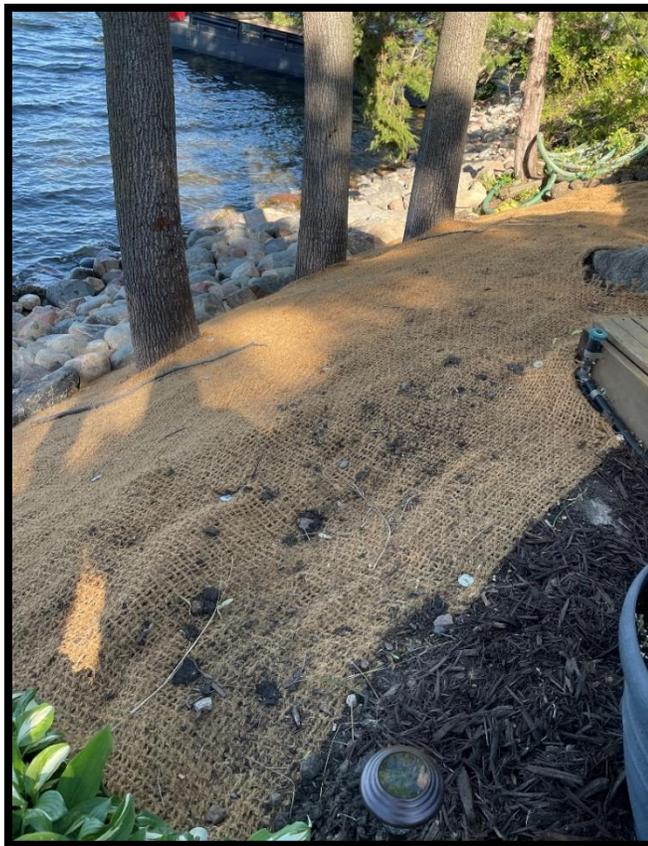


Figure 15. Erosion Prevention and Sediment Control installed on a steep slope within the Shoreland District.  
Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.

## Cannon River Watershed Native Vegetation Cost-Share

- 2 people signed up for cost-share in 2024
- 1 Pocket Prairie and 1 Rain Garden



Figure 16. Pocket Prairie Native Planting Project Installed on Lake Tetonka. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## Education and Outreach Efforts

Le Sueur County staff attended 4 lake association meetings last year. Shoreland Management and Native Vegetation and two important topics that staff continue to share at these meetings. In addition, Le Sueur County staff hosted a Shoreland Workshop for contractors, surveyors, local board members, consulting firms, and other shoreland related businesses. In total, we had 25 individuals attend this event.



Figure 18. View of a Shoreline in Le Sueur County. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.

## Surface Water Management

In 2024, Le Sueur County continued to be active in managing surface water resources. The County is involved with efforts in 3 Comprehensive Water Management Plans, sampled water resources within the Middle Minnesota River Mankato Watershed, Created a Le Sueur County Lakes Water Sampling Program, continued to work on the Upper Cannon River Flood Study, and worked on or partnered with multiple water grants and programs. Lastly, Le Sueur County was able to add another staff member to the Water Management Team!

***Did you know that the State of Minnesota has been active in Water Management Plans since 1985?***

## Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans

In 2015, the state of Minnesota shifted its efforts towards a watershed wide approach when working with watershed management priorities, goals, and implementation activities instead of during this on a local scale. These efforts are focused on a major watershed scale. Le Sueur County has 4 major watersheds: Cannon River, Lower Minnesota River, Middle Minnesota River-Mankato, and Le Sueur River.

Le Sueur County has 3 Completed and Approved Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans. All of these plans are considered the first version.

- Cannon River
- Lower Minnesota River East
- Le Sueur River

*The Middle Minnesota River Mankato Watershed is currently in planning efforts for its Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. The anticipated completed date is in 2026.*

The Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Comprehensive Management Plan was approved in 2024. The planning effort took a total of 4 years to complete. Historically Le Sueur County has not had a ton of funding opportunities within this watershed (other than Sand Creek). A new partnership was formed as a result of the plan being completed; Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Partnership (LoMRE).

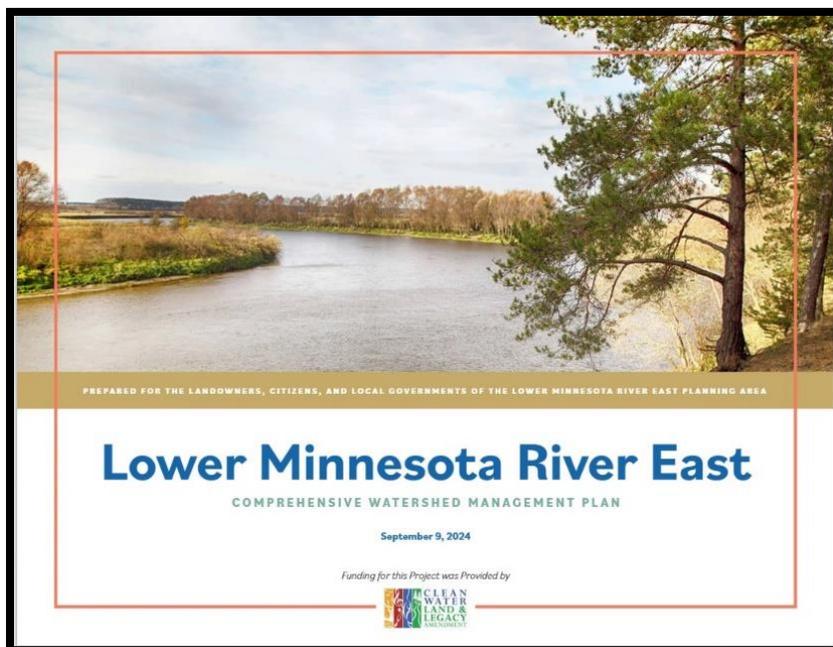


Figure 19. Cover Page of Lower Minnesota River East Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. Photo Credit: ISG Inc.



## Middle Minnesota River Mankato-Watershed Sampling

Le Sueur SWCD and Le Sueur County have partnered for monitoring efforts in the Middle Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed. These monitoring efforts are due to the State of Minnesota entering into its second round of developing the Watershed Restoration and Protection Strategies Report. This report assesses conditions within a watershed and provides recommendations on how to protect and improve. As part of developing this report, water resources, both lakes and streams, are monitored and sampled for different water quality parameters.

The resources that were selected for Le Sueur County within this watershed are:

- Lake Washington
- Lake Emily
- Scotch Lake
- Shanaska Creek

*Lake Washington and Scotch Lake will be sampled only in 2024. Lake Emily and Shanaska Creek will be both sampled in 2024 and 2025.*

Lakes that were

sampled were assessed

for: Total Phosphorus, Chlorophyll A, and Water Clarity. These parameters help indicate impairment status for each water resource. Lake Emily was the only lake that did not have Blue Green Algae present during the sampling season. Blue Green Algae is a direct result of excess nutrients entering into a lake.

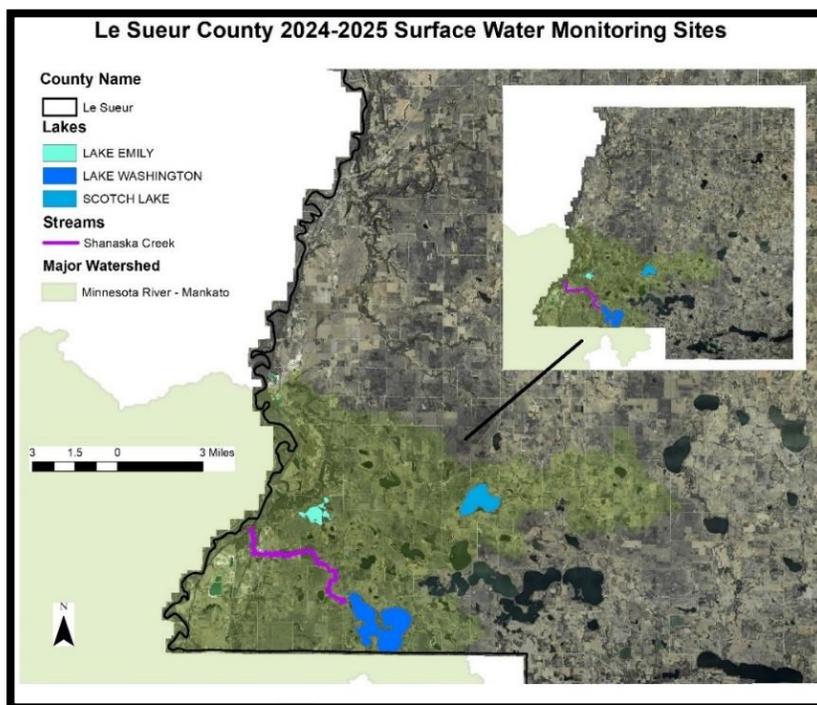
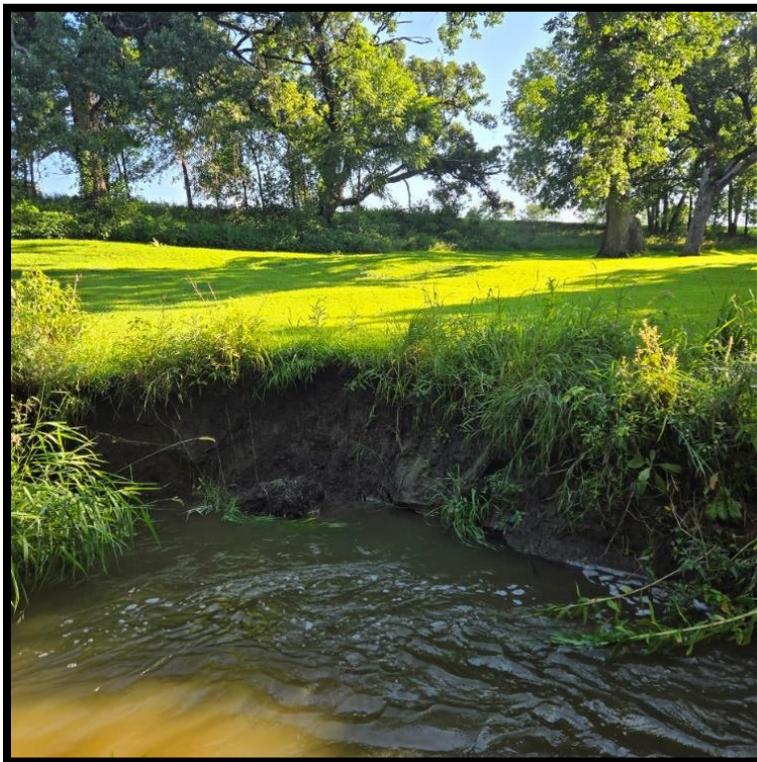


Figure 20. Map of Water Resources that are being monitored in Le Sueur County for the Middle Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.

Streams are sampled to assess Total Phosphorus, Dissolved Oxygen, Total Suspended Solids (Sediment), Bacteria, Water Clarity, Flow, and pH. Throughout the season, Shanaska Creek water levels fluctuated. Staff noticed that streambank erosion had increased due to high water flows



**Figure 21. Blue Green Algae** observed on Lake Washington during sampling efforts in 2024.  
*Photo Credit: Le Sueur SWCD*



**Figure 22. Shanaska Creek Bank Erosion.** *Photo Credit: Le Sueur SWCD*

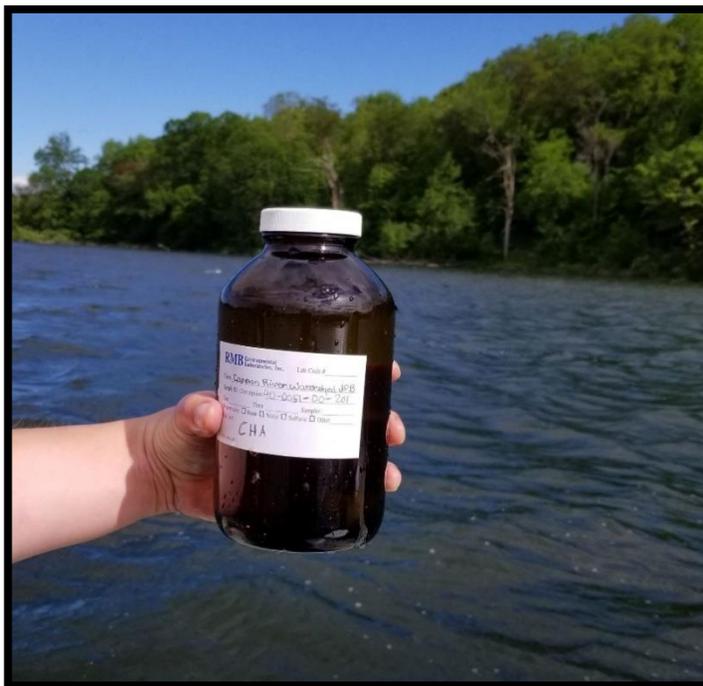
## Le Sueur County Lakes Monitoring Program

The sampling methods that occur on a watershed scale are funded by the MPCA. However, these sampling efforts only occur every 2 years within a 10 year time period. In order to accurately identify water quality trends for a water resources, monitoring/sampling efforts should occur annually.

Le Sueur County Environmental Services, gauged interest among Lake Association for annual lake sampling.

A total of five lakes signed up and participated in 2024:

- East Jefferson
- Frances
- German
- Tetonka
- Volney



**Figure 23. Lake Water Sample for Chlorophyll-A.** Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.

Le Sueur County partnered with RMB Environmental Laboratories to process the samples and provide water quality data for each resource. All lakes were sampled for the following parameters: Total Phosphorus, Chlorophyll-A, and Water Clarity. Total Phosphorus and Chlorophyll-A require tests from a certified lab. Water clarity of each lake, can be determined using a Secchi disk,

Using this data we can determine the average Trophic Scale Index (TSI) for each lake. The TSI of a lake indicates how much bio productivity there is. This helps provide the necessary information to determine impairment status for each lake.

The intended full season for sampling is May to September. Now that the program has been established, Le Sueur County is hoping to complete a full season of sampling, along with potentially adding more lakes to the program. There are roughly 5 additional lakes looking to sample next year, giving a total number of 10.

## Upper Cannon River Flood Study

Le Sueur County has actively been working on the Upper Cannon River Flood Study. Due to June Flooding Events this year, the anticipated completion date shifted a bit but is still expected to be completed well before the grant expiration date.

Milestones that Le Sueur County achieved in 2024 for the Study Includes:

- Complete Existing Conditions Hydrologic Modeling for Upper Cannon River Watershed
- Collect additional Flood Data and Drone Flights of June 2024 Flooding Events
- Installed a Permanent Flood Gauge south of Sabre Lake in July 2024
- Started to Draft a List of Issues and Concerns for Flooding and Potential Project Areas/Sites for Storage Opportunities and Flood Reduction
- Acquiring 94.3% of Match for Federal Grant



Figure 24. Cannon River Drone Footage between Lake Dora and Gorman Lake. Photo Credit: Bolton & Menk.



Figure 25. Flooding in Waterville near Lagoons. Photo Credit: Bolton & Menk Inc.



**Figure 26.** Private well located in a residential area. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.*

## Groundwater

In 2024, Le Sueur County took on a much more active role with protecting and improving groundwater resources. There were a few different large scale projects and programs that were a groundwater focus which included well sealing projects, water testing clinics, and beginning to develop a Geologic Atlas. The Environmental Services Department, Public Health Department, and the Soil and Water Conservation District all played a role in protecting Le Sueur County's drinking water supplies.

***Did you know that Le Sueur County's drinking water is predominately groundwater dependent?***

## Well Sealings

There has been an increased interest in well sealing within the County. Well Sealings are critical practice in protecting drinking and groundwater resources. Abandoned wells that are not sealed are a public health and environmental risk. Any opening into the aquifer provides an opportunity for different types of pollutants and contaminants to enter into groundwater resources.

- In total, Le Sueur County completed 6 residential well sealing projects and 1 Municipal well sealing project.
- All residential well sealing projects were located within the Cannon River Watershed.
- The municipal well sealing project was located in the City of Le Center which is in the Lower Minnesota River Watershed.



Figure 27. Thein Well Company working on Municipal Well Sealing Project. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.



Figure 28. Municipal well located under the sidewalk adjacent to the City of Le Center's City Hall. Photo Credit: City of Le Center Public Works.

## Water Testing Clinics

Le Sueur County in partnership with Le Sueur SWCD and the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization hosted 3 different water testing clinics in 2024. A total of 146 water tests were collected and 89 residents participated.

**January 31, 2024 Clinic** we offered Arsenic Tests. We had a total of 31 participants for this clinic. This clinic was sponsored by the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization.

- 31 Arsenic Tests
  - 9 of the 31 tests exceed the drinking water standard

**May 9, 2024 Clinic** we offered Coliform Bacteria and Nitrate Tests. We had a total of 41 participants for this clinic.

- 41 Coliform Bacteria Tests
  - 4 of the 41 samples had a presence of Coliform Bacteria
- 29 Nitrates Tests
  - 28 of the 29 samples tested at or below 0.05mg/L
  - 1 of the 29 samples tested between 5-10mg/L

**October 30, 2024 Clinic** we offered Arsenic, Lead, Coliform Bacteria, and Nitrate Tests. We had a total of 17 participants for this clinic.

- 15 Arsenic Tests
  - 2 of the 15 tests exceed the drinking water standard
- 15 Lead Tests
  - All tests were the drinking water standard
- 17 Coliform Bacteria Tests
  - 3 of the 15 samples had a presence of Coliform Bacteria
- 17 Nitrates Tests
  - 14 of the 15 tests below 5mg/L
  - 1 of the 15 samples tested between 5-10mg/L

### MINNESOTA DRINKING WATER STANDARDS

**Arsenic  
Drinking  
Water  
Standard is  
10ug/L**

**Nitrate  
Drinking  
Water  
Standard is  
10mg/L**

**Lead Drinking  
Water  
Standards is  
0.015mg/L**

**Coliform  
Bacteria does  
not have a  
drinking  
water standard  
(Presence or  
Absence test).  
If coliform  
bacteria is  
present, it is a  
good indicator  
that there are  
other  
contaminants  
in your  
drinking  
water.**

*MDH sets  
drinking water  
standards.*





Figure 30. Carp that were netted from electroshocking in Le Sueur County. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County Environmental Services.

## Aquatic Invasive Species

In 2024, Le Sueur County continued efforts to prevent and limit the spread of aquatic invasive species. Partnerships with other organizations continue to be an extremely important part of Le Sueur County's AIS prevention and management efforts. In total, Le Sueur County was actively engaged or conducted AIS work with 14 different organizations consisting of nonprofits, businesses, and local government units. Funds spent in 2024 were used for watercraft inspections, education & outreach, printing, publishing, advertising, administration, mileage, and Invasive Aquatic Plant Management efforts.

***Did you know in 2024, 99.5% of watercraft that visited Le Sueur County Lakes were recorded as arriving with their drain plug out?***

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## Watercraft Inspections

Le Sueur County has two different watercraft inspection programs. One program is administered through the Environmental Services Department. The department hires a contract, WaterGuards LLC, to complete inspections for the county. The other program is administered through the Sheriff's Department. Local law enforcement completes inspectors for the county as well. The watercraft inspection season was impacted due to flooding events in June; however, inspections did continue throughout the season.

In total, the County had a total of 3,289 hours of inspections and 13,508 inspections were performed from May-September 2024. 24 accesses and 20 water bodies were covered by inspectors. 19 part time or seasonal staff were dedicated to AIS work; specifically watercraft inspections.

## Education and Outreach

Education and Outreach efforts for AIS prevention and management continue to be important for Le Sueur County. In total, 9 events (ex: take a kid fishing day, Fishing Tournaments) were held about AIS or included AIS topics. Approximately 475 residents and 165 children were engaged in aquatic invasive species. Different ways that the community was engaged and informed about aquatic invasive species prevention include: radio ads, tv ads, newsletters, and the Le Sueur County Fair.

## AIS Control and Management Efforts

Lake Associations and the University of Minnesota played a huge role managing and controlling aquatic invasive species. \$28,773 of additional funds were leverage from partners towards these efforts. In total, 8 waterbodies had invasive aquatic plant management activities occur in 2024. The species that were managed include Curly Leaf Pondweed, Eurasian Watermilfoil, and Nonnative Phragmites.

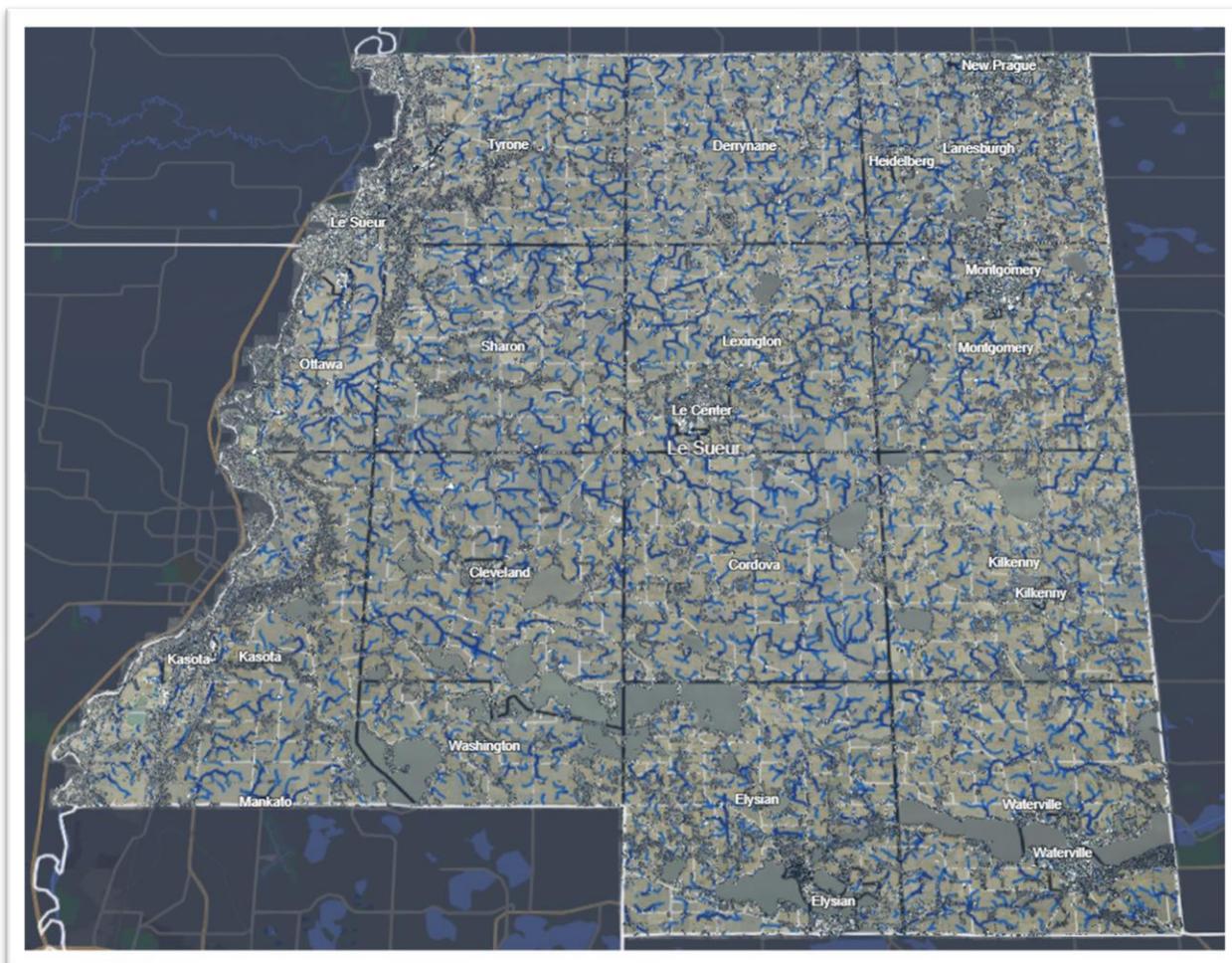


Figure 31. LiDAR Image of Le Sueur County from the Online Viewer. *Photo Credit: Le Sueur County GIS.*

## Global Information Systems (GIS)

GIS and Mapping in Le Sueur County provide valuable resources for staff and residents. Currently, the GIS department is temporarily assigned with the Environmental Services Department. There was quite a bit of large scale projects that the GIS department worked on this year including: Upgrading the County to ArcGIS Pro, Initiate new aerial imagery for 2025, updating various GIS layers, and completing the County LiDAR.

***Did you know that the first version of GIS was created in 1963?***

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## 911 Address

The GIS department is responsible for creating 911 addresses for the County. The department in total issued 30 new 911 addresses for 2024.

## Beacon

Beacon is a web based GIS and data reporting tool that includes property information such as Assessments, Taxes, Land Use, etc. This tool that is used to relay information about the to the public as well as assist numerous departments with their programs. In total, 628 new Beacon subscriptions were added in 2024.

## Permitting

GIS does work in conjunction with the Planning and Zoning Department, Assessors Office, and Records Office to create property splits, lot combinations, and plats. The County had a total of 83 property splits/lot combinations/plats in 2024.

## ArcGIS

ArcGIS is a Geographic information System tool that helps many departments collect, manage, and analyze data for the County's land use and earth surface. It also gives us the ability to create maps that are used for informative purposes. The County was able to update our license to ArcGIS Pro, which is the newest software available for GIS.

Other GIS layers that the County was able to modify and improve include Zoning, Floodplain, and Overlays (ex: mineral resources, airports). The updated GIS layers were a result of changes in State and Local regulations as well as our department's work in updating our Comprehensive Land Use Management Plan.

## LiDAR

Is a type of technology (remote sensing) that uses lasers to shoot points on the earth's surface and that information is sent back up to satellites to help create an image and provide spatial reference. The detail and information that is provided with LiDAR is extremely accurate and can help many departments with their daily tasks.