

Le Sueur County Environmental Services

NEWSLETTER

July 1, 2025

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Le Sueur County
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

2025 Le Sueur County Lakes Water Sampling

Le Sueur County Environmental Services will continue to partner with area lakes to test lake water conditions and assess water quality issues. Water sampling season runs from May to September. You can still sign up for sampling efforts throughout the sampling season, even if you missed a month or two!

The process for sampling is relatively streamlined. In the spring, the County contacts RMB Environmental Laboratories and requests a set of coolers with the sampling bottles. Once the County receives these bottles, we reach out to our samplers to come pick up their coolers. On a scheduled day of the month, the samplers go out and collect water in the two provided sample bottles. The cooler is brought into our office, we give you your cooler for the next month, and we complete the rest for you! We drive the coolers up to the lab in Burnsville and get restocked so everything is ready for next month.

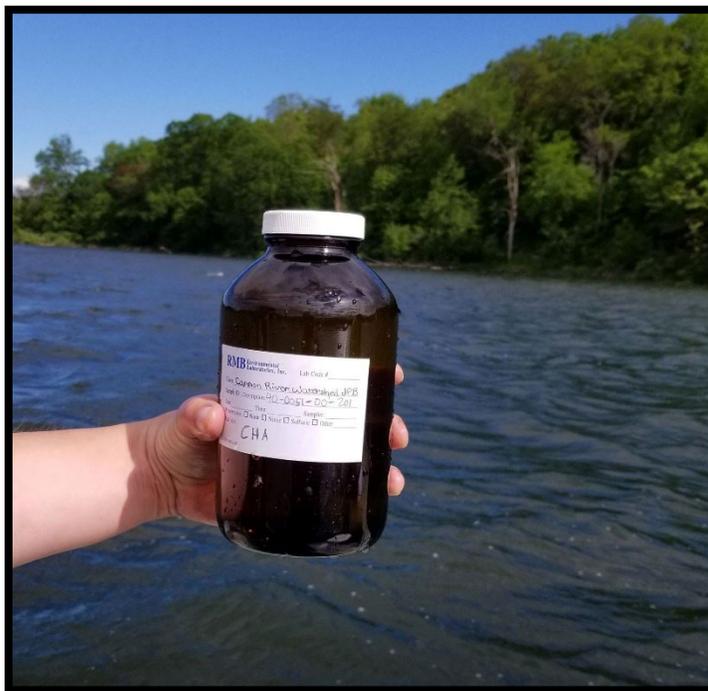


Figure 1. Lake Water Sample. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County

RMB Labs keeps a database on their own website, and also reports the results to Minnesota Pollution Control Agency at the end of the season. Data can be viewed at <https://lakes.rmbel.com/>.

The lakes that have signed up this year already include: Frances, Volney, Tetonka, East Jefferson, German, Middle Jefferson, Gorman, and Upper Sakatah Lakes. We have increased participation in the program from last year from 5 to 8 lakes!

Le Sueur County is hoping to continue to sign up more lakes! If you or someone you know lives on a lake and is willing to sample in the summer, feel free to contact **Trevor Rudenick** at trevor.rudenick@lesueurcounty.gov or 507-357-8556 to get set up for next year.

Blue Green Algae and Cyanobacteria

As temperatures are continuing to rise in the summer, it creates ideal conditions for lakes within Minnesota to produce harmful algae blooms. These blooms are often referred to as blue-green algae. They are caused by cyanobacteria that thrive in warm, nutrient rich water.

Cyanobacteria can produce toxins that are harmful to both humans and pets. Contact through skin, airborne droplets, or consumption can be direct pathways for exposure to these toxins. If humans become sick from cyanobacteria, they can experience the following symptoms: vomiting, diarrhea, rash, eye irritation, cough, sore throat, or a headache. For pets, they can also experience similar symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea. However, some of their symptoms are more severe and can lead to difficulty breathing, seizures, and even death (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, Blue-green algae and harmful algal blooms, 2025).

Risk to exposure does vary based on how you come into contact with the cyanobacteria. Below is chart that the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency put together to classify risk of exposure. Please be aware that any exposure to cyanobacteria is a risk to your health.

Activities	Level of exposure to algae toxins
Drinking (incidental or intentional)	Highest
Swimming, diving, water skiing, windsurfing, tubing, paddle boarding	High
Canoeing, kayaking, sailing, personal watercraft	Moderate
Fishing, boating, fish consumption	Low

Figure 2. Activity Risk of Exposure to Algae Toxins. Photo Credit: Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)

The following page provides a handout that shows different types of algae. Not all algae are harmful and can often be confused with blue-green algae. If the algae resembles green paint, pea soup, or has a blue tinge to it, they are tell-tale signs of blue-green algae. If you are not sure whether the algae are harmful, we recommend not recreating in or on the water.

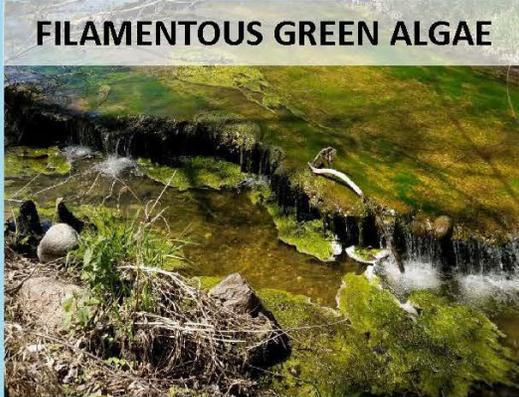
If you are interested in learning more about blue-green algae, please visit the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s webpage: <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/blue-green-algae-and-harmful-algal-blooms>.

NOT HARMFUL

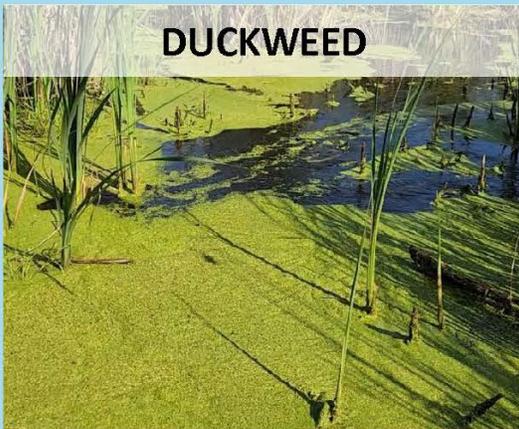
POLLEN



FILAMENTOUS GREEN ALGAE



DUCKWEED



HARMFUL

BLUE-GREEN ALGAE



BLUE-GREEN ALGAE



BLUE-GREEN ALGAE



Le Sueur County Environmental Services



Figure 3. Nonharmful vs. Harmful Algae. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County

Middle Minnesota River-Mankato Draft Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

The Middle Minnesota River-Mankato Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan is near completion! We have a full rough draft of the Plan that is currently being reviewed internally before it goes out publicly for a 60 day review period! During the 60 day review period, the plan will be made publicly available for review. Details on where the Draft Plan will be posted will be made available at a later date. This is our last Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan that needs to be completed for Le Sueur County.

We anticipate that an approved plan will be completed by the End of 2025-Early 2026. The hope is we will be able to begin implementation efforts for this watershed next year. There will be a dedicated website for the watershed once the plan is completed.

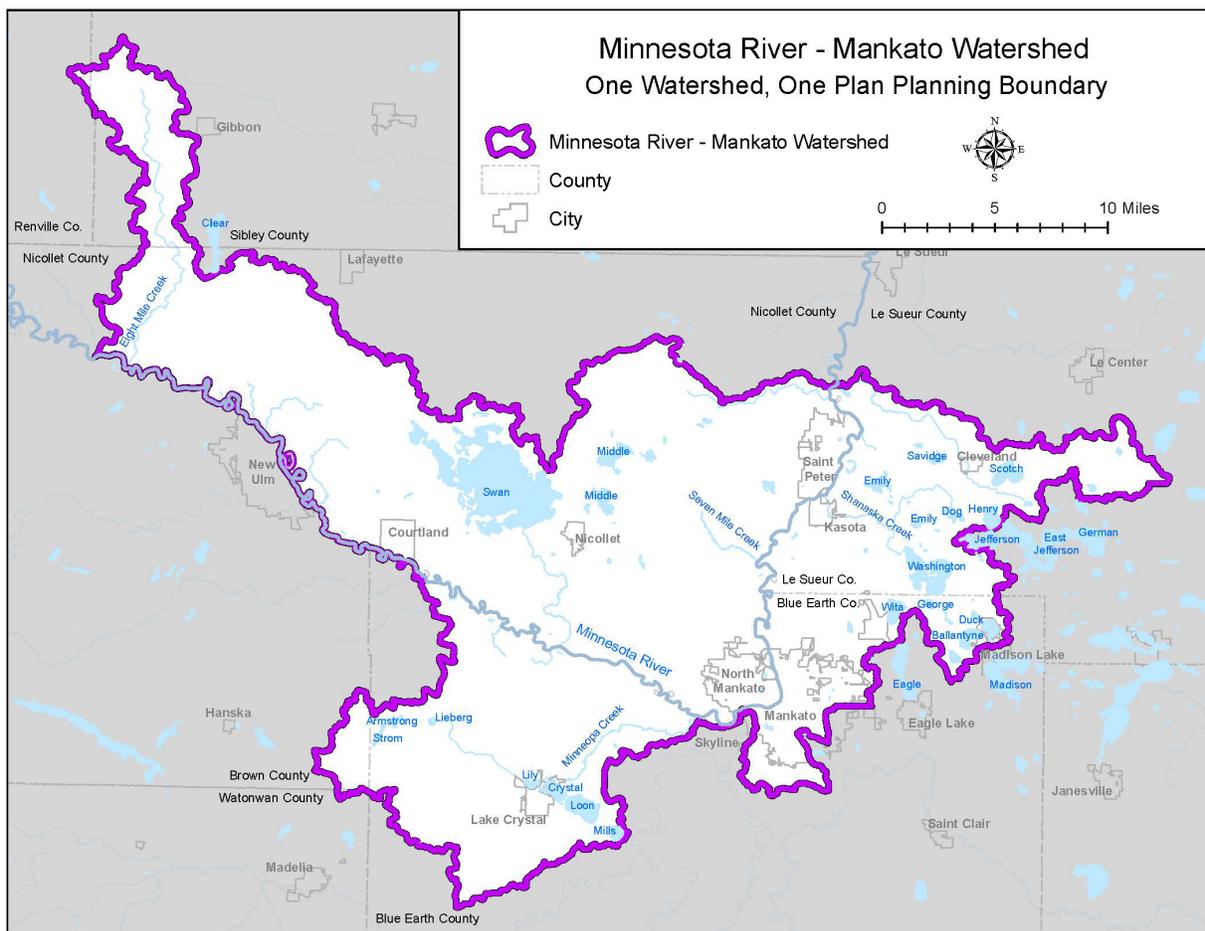


Figure 4. Minnesota River-Mankato Watershed, One Watershed One Plan Planning Boundary. Photo Credit: Nicollet County

Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization Native Planting Cost-Share

As a friendly reminder, the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization is offering cost-share for Native Plantings for Shoreland Owners.

Project Requirements: The project must be located within the Cannon River Watershed and within 300 feet of a Lake.

Cost-Share Available: \$500 is available for each parcel for a planting project that is a minimum of 150 square feet.

If you would like to learn more, please visit the Cannon River Watershed Joint Powers Organization webpage: <https://www.cannonriverwatershedmn.gov/costshareincentives>.

If you would like to speak to a local staff member, please contact Trevor Rudenick at trevor.rudenick@lesueurcounty.gov



Figure 5. Native Shoreland Planting Cost-Share Flyer. Photo Credit: CRWJPO

Le Sueur County Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update

COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE & ZONING CODE UPDATE

Le Sueur County, MN



WHAT IS VISION 2050?

The Le Sueur County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan is undergoing an update in order to better serve and guide the county's growth. As one of the oldest counties in Minnesota, Le Sueur County aims to create a plan that balances its rich historical past and resources, while growing its tax-base with forward-looking strategies. This plan will serve as a physical guide and policy framework for county staff and decision-makers, shaping land use and development in Le Sueur County over the next 25 years. In parallel to the Land Use update, the County is also updating its zoning code.

These two documents work well to be updated together because:

- Land use policy and zoning regulation alignment
- Cohesive framework for development
- Regulations that support the overall vision for the county

Together, the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code Update for the foundation of VISION 2050.



PROJECT GOALS

-  **GUIDE GROWTH**
-  **ALIGN REGULATIONS**
-  **REPRESENTATIVE ENGAGEMENT**

TIMELINE

- PHASE 1: FALL 2024**
This phase will engage the community! The project team will gather input on existing conditions and identify issues and opportunities in the area.
- PHASE 2: SPRING 2025**
This phase will present the draft plan and seek public feedback.
- PHASE 3: SPRING 2025**
This phase will update the plan based on feedback heard in the second phase. It will also support the approval process.

LEARN MORE & STAY INFORMED!

Learn more about the project and sign up for updates by scanning the QR code or visiting: bit.ly/LSVision2050
Sign up for text updates by texting "VISION 2050" to 507-357-5557



Figure 6. Comprehensive Land Use Plan & Zoning Code Update Flyer. Photo Credit: Bolton & Menk Inc.

Minnesota Native Plant

Canada Anemone (*Anemone canadensis*)

Canada Anemone, is a perennial, that is a part of the Ranunculaceae (Buttercup) family.

This species grows anywhere from 1 to 2 feet in height. The leaves are consider basal and have very large teeth that grow up to 6 inches long. Furthermore, the leaves are dark green in color and have distinguished veins and fine hairs.

The inflorescence (flower head) is comprised of a singular white flower that resembles a cup. There are five petals on the flower, and it has a ring of yellow tipped stamens in the center. Canada Anemone blooms from May to June.

This species can tolerate many different types of soil (clay, loam, or sand). Also, it prefers soil moisture that is considered medium to moist (commonly referred to a mesic species).

Canada Anemone spreads rapidly as their roots are considered rhizomes which makes them spread easily underground. It is recommended to spread these plants out when planting as they are an excellent option for low growing/ground cover species. You'll find this species thriving in moist fields, thickets, shorelines, ditches, and roadsides.



Figure 7. Canada Anemone Basal Leaves. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman



Figure 8. Canada Anemone Flower Head-Petals and Stamens. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman



Figure 9. Canada Anemone Groundcover. *Photo Credit: Holly Bushman*

This species is an important for pollinators during the early blooming season! Canada Anemone is considered an irritant to both deer and rabbits, which makes them very resistant to browsing.

Non-Native Plant

Dame's Rocket (*Hesperis matronalis*)

Dame's Rocket, also referred to as Dame's Violet, Mother-of-the-evening, or Sweet Rocket, is a biennial plant that is a part of the Brassicaceae (Mustard) family. This species is native to Europe and was brought into the United States in the 1600s.

Dame's Rocket grows anywhere from 2 to 4 feet tall. The leaves on this species are lanced shaped (wider on the bottom than top), and have finely toothed leaf edges. Additionally, the leaves are arranged alternate on the stem.

The inflorescence (flower head) has 4 petals that are rounded. Each flower does have a sweet fragrance to it. The flower ranges in color from white, pink, and purple and blooms from May-August.

Dame's Rocket prefers partial shade to full shade areas and wet to mesic soil conditions. You'll find Dame's Rocket thriving within wetlands, ditches, woodland edges, and disturbed sites.

While this species is pretty and fragrant, it can be harmful to native plant communities. It can thrive in most environments, has no natural predators/pests, and is prolific in producing seeds which makes them very competitive with native species.

Please note that Dame's Rocket can be easily confused with native Phlox species! A few tricks to tell Dame's Rocket and Phlox Species apart: Dame's Rocket Flowers have 4 petals while



Figure 10. Dame's Rocket Plant near Woodland Edge. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman

Native Phlox Species Flowers have 5 petals. Dame's Rocket leaves are arranged alternate on the stem while Native Phlox Species leaves are arranged opposite on the stem.



Figure 11. Dame's Rocket Inflorescence. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman

Interesting Fact:

Dame's Rocket are often found in "wildflower" seed packets that you purchase!

Before you purchase native wildflower seed, ensure that the vendor is supplying mixes that are truly native.

Minnesota has numerous local native seed vendors that will supply mixes that are native to our region.



Contact Information

Environmental Services Department

Planning & Zoning, Feedlots, Solid Waste, & Septics

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To see which DNR staff is the Area Hydrologist for your region, please click on the following link:
https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/area_hydros.pdf

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