

Le Sueur County Environmental Services



NEWSLETTER
October 6, 2025

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Le Sueur County
**ENVIRONMENTAL
SERVICES**

2025 Fall Water Testing Clinic

Le Sueur County Environmental Services Department has partnered with the Le Sueur County Soil and Water Conservation District to host a Fall Water Testing Clinic on **Wednesday, October 29th** from **9:00am-5:30pm**.

There will be five different tests available:

- Nitrates
- Coliform Bacteria
- Lead
- Arsenic
- Manganese

What paperwork is required?

There is a water test order form that must be filled out prior to receiving your bottles. Information that is collected on this form includes but is not limited to:

name, contact information, well address, why you are testing your water, and pollutants you would like to test for.

Is there a fee to test my water?

Yes, all water tests do have a fee associated with them in order for a certified lab to run results. Coliform Bacteria is \$15.60, Nitrates is \$16.00, Lead, Arsenic, and Manganese are \$15.20/pollutant.

Are there currently any grant funds available to pay for water tests?

Yes, Le Sueur County does have limited grant funding available through Watershed Based Implementation Funding to pay for the water tests listed above for residents. *Funding availability is on a first come first serve basis.* Please note that if you have received grant funding in the past to pay for water tests you may not be eligible for free water tests.

At this time, we only have grant funding available to cover water tests for the Cannon River and Lower Minnesota River Watershed's see map on Page 3. If you want to sample your water and you are located outside of these watersheds, you would still be able to test your water; however, the costs of the tests would not be covered by grant funding.

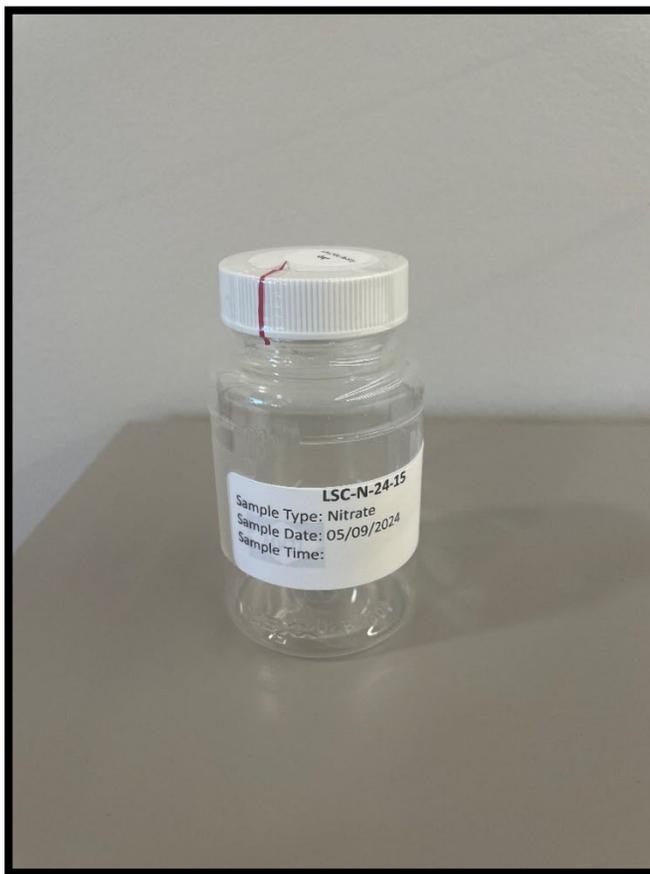


Figure 1. Water Test Bottle. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County

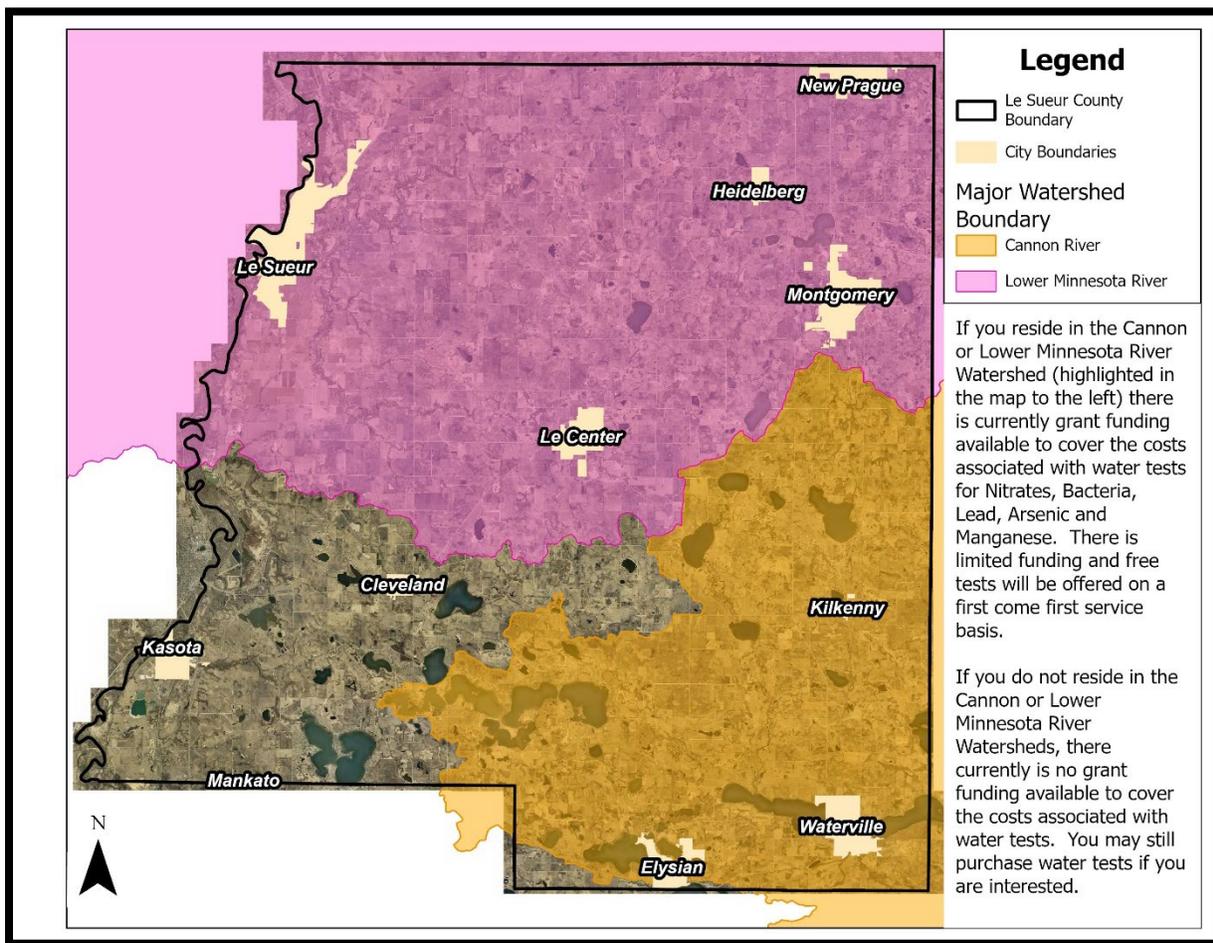


Figure 2. Le Sueur County Watersheds eligible for Grant Funding to Pay for Water Tests. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County

What are the next steps if I would like to test my water?

- 1) Please contact our office first **prior** to filling out a water test order form and sending payment to see if you would be eligible for grant funding.
- 2) Completely fill out the water test order form and submit payment (if applicable). If you are not eligible for grant funding for your water tests, the form and payment must be submitted prior to receiving your bottles.
- 3) Water tests may be picked up any time, but an **appointment is required**. During this time staff will provide instructions on how to take your water samples, provide education/outreach materials, and lastly will provide instructions on when to take your samples and where to drop them off.

If you would like to print off a copy of the water test order form, or learn more about the clinic, please visit the following website: <https://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/684/Water-Testing>.

You may also contact Holly Bushman at holly.bushman@lesueurcounty.gov or 507-357-8540.

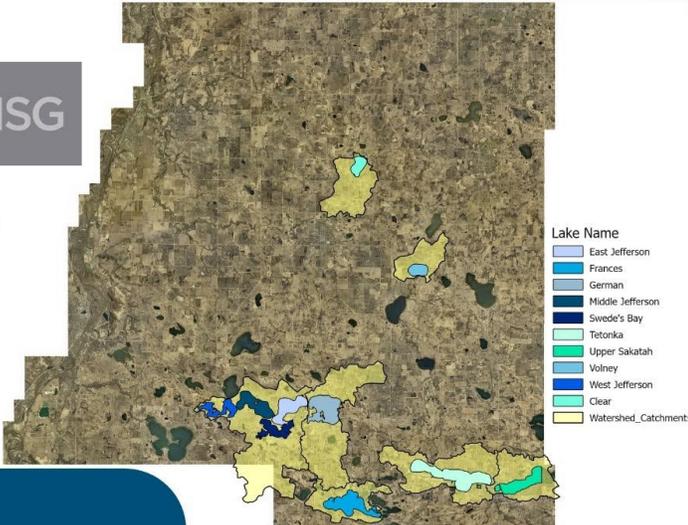
Le Sueur County Lakes Subwatershed Assessments

Le Sueur County Lakes Subwatershed Assessments











What Is a Subwatershed Assessment?

- ✓
Further target and prioritize where to implement conservation projects and practices for each lakeshed
- ✓
Prioritize Projects and Practices that will be most cost-effective in reducing pollutants
 Total Phosphorus, Total Nitrogen, and Sediment primary focus.
- ✓
Accelerates Implementation Efforts
 Sites and reduction numbers identified in list form.
- ✓
Allows opportunity to be more competitive for Grant Funding
 Projects, Pollutant Reductions, and Costs all identified ahead of time. Demonstrates need and project readiness.

What Lakes Are Included?

- ➔
Lake Volney
 Anticipated Completion Date: November-December 2025
- ➔
Clear Lake & Francis Lake
 Anticipated Completion Date: January-February 2026
- ➔
German/Jefferson Chain of Lakes
 Anticipated Complete Date: March-April 2026
- ➔
Lake Tetonka & Upper Sakatah Lake
 Anticipated Complete Date: June-July 2026

✉ holly.bushman@lesueurcounty.gov

🌐 <https://www.lesueurcounty.gov/523/8211/Current-Projects>

QUESTIONS?

Contact Holly Bushman

Figure 3. Le Sueur County Lakes Subwatershed Assessment Flyer. Photo Credit: Le Sueur County

Cannon River Watershed Well Sealing Cost-Share

RESIDENTIAL WELL SEALING PROGRAM



Do you have an old, abandoned well on your property? Looking into getting it sealed? Cost-share funds are available for eligible areas in the Cannon River Watershed.

Unused wells can threaten the quality of drinking water for many. They can act as a drain and allow runoff and waste to enter into drinking water sources.

Eligible properties can receive up to \$3,000 to help seal their well if their contract is approved. Contracts must be in place before any work is started.

Reach out to your local Soil & Water Conservation District or County to see if your property is eligible.



Scan the QR code to find your local contact

Photo credit: Le Sueur County

**FUNDS
AVAILABLE**



Cannon River Watershed
Joint Powers Organization



cannonriverwatershedmn.gov



[crwjpo](https://www.youtube.com/crwjpo)



Cannon River
Watershed
Joint Powers
Organization



CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT
YOUR Clean Water
Fund at work

Figure 4. Residential Well Sealing Cost-Share Flyer. Photo Credit: CRWJPO

Cannon River Watershed 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. Cannon River Watershed Native Shoreland Planting Cost-Share Flyer. Photo Credit: CRWJPO

Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Native Planting Cost-Share

THE LOWER MINNESOTA RIVER EAST WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP

NATIVE PLANTINGS COST-SHARE

ELIGIBILITY FOR COST SHARE

SITE LOCATION

- Projects must be located in Shoreland or Riparian Areas
- Projects must be located within 300 feet of one of the following Priority Water Resources:
 - Clear Lake
 - Le Sueur Creek
 - Forest Prairie Creek
 - Sand Creek
 - Unnamed Creek (near Henderson)

PROJECT DETAILS

- Only 1 project per parcel
- Must have a diversity of at least 5 native species planted or seeded
- All plant species must be native to Minnesota
- Minimum project size is 150 square feet
- Project cannot be within an already existing native planting

BENEFITS OF PLANTING NATIVE SPECIES

- Low maintenance
- Prevent erosion
- Improve soil health
- Resiliency to local pests and diseases
- Provide food for birds, bees, butterflies and other wildlife
- Provide habitat for native species of pollinators
- Cost effective in the long run
 - Once established, plants seldom need to be mulched, watered or mowed

\$500 per parcel

 **Lower Minnesota River East Watershed**

 www.lowermnrivereast.org

 Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Partnership

Reach out to local staff if you are interested about what you would be eligible for on your property.

Figure 6. Lower Minnesota River East Watershed Native Shoreland Planting Cost-Share Flyer. Photo Credit: LoMRE Partnership

Le Sueur County Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update

Le Sueur County is moving forward with Vision 2050, the next major step in updating its Comprehensive Land Use Plan and Zoning Code. This long-range planning effort will guide development, land use, and community growth over the next 25 years by balancing respect for the county's rich history and agriculture production with a commitment to thoughtful, future-oriented strategies.

As part of Phase 2 of the project, the draft Future Land Use Map is now available for public comment. The Future Land Use Map was created with input from public

comment, agriculture, business, and city focus groups, and the project steering committee. Community input is essential to shaping a plan that truly reflects the values and priorities of Le Sueur County's residents. The purpose of a future land use map is to provide land use flexibility after adoption of the comprehensive plan. This map does not change current zoning or take away current entitlements. The draft Future Land Use Map concentrates changes to land use around cities, guiding the majority of agriculturally-zoned land to remain agriculture in use into the future.

You can review the draft future land use map and leave feedback by visiting the project website at bit.ly/LSVision2050. For those who prefer to comment in person, please stop by the Le Sueur County Environmental Services Department.

Your comments play a key role in shaping policies that influence how land is used and developed across the county. Don't miss this opportunity to have your voice heard! Offer your feedback and help shape the future of Le Sueur County. Comments are open until Thursday, October 9th 2025.

To sign up for text updates, text "LESUEURVISION2050" to 91896. Email updates are also available on the project website.



Figure 7. Comprehensive Land Use Plan & Zoning Code Update Flyer.
Photo Credit: Bolton & Menk Inc.

Minnesota Native Plant

Blue False Indigo (*Baptisia australis*)

Blue False Indigo also known as Blue Wild Indigo, is a perennial, that is a part of the Fabaceae (Pea) family.

This species grows anywhere from 3 to 5 feet in height. False Blue Indigo is bushy in appearance and has individual stalks that contain flowers and leaves. The leaves are blue-green in color and are arranged alternate on the stem. The leaves are considered trifoliate (compound with three leaves). This species is hairless and has a waxy appearance.

The inflorescence (flower head) is comprised of a clusters of flowers at the end of each stalk that are light to deep purple in the color. The shape of each flower resembles pealike flowers. False Blue Indigo blooms from May to July and once the plant flowers it is short lived for only a few weeks. This species also contains a fruit pod that is oval in shape



Figure 8. Blue False Indigo Plant. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman



Figure 9. Blue False Indigo Inflorescence.
Photo Credit: Holly Bushman

Interesting Facts:

This species is considered a legume.

Legumes are known to be able to fix nitrogen.

Blue Wild Indigo was historically used to make blue dye.

Additionally, it was used for medicinal purposes such as eye wash and to treat nausea and vomiting.

and is about 3 inches long and 1 inch wide. The seeds within the pod are loose and stay on the plant for quite some time before breaking and spreading.

This species can tolerate many different types of soil (clay, loam, or sand). Blue False Indigo does prefer soil moisture that is considered medium to dry; however, it is drought tolerant.

False Blue Indigo prefers full sunlight conditions, but can also tolerate partial shade.

False Blue Indigo spreads rapidly as their roots are considered rhizomes which makes them spread easily underground.

You'll find this species thriving along tree lines, borders of forested areas, open prairies, and meadows.



Figure 10. Blue False Indigo Trifoliate Leaves. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman

Non-Native Plant

Timothy Grass (*Phleum pratense*)



Figure 11. Timothy Grass distinguished ligule. Photo Credit: UMN Extension Forage.

Timothy Grass, is a perennial cool season grass, that is a part of the Poaceae (Grass) family. This species is native to Europe and was introduced into the United States for forage for livestock. Timothy Grass still continues to be used for forage for livestock today.

Timothy Grass grows anywhere from 1 to 3 feet tall. This species grows in clumps and is blue/grey in appearance. There are typically 5-6 leaves that are arranged alternately on each stem. If you pull the leaf away from the stem, you can see a tall membrane that stands up which is defining characteristic for this species. This membrane is also referred as a ligule and is shown in the picture to the left.

The inflorescence (flower head) consists of a 2-6 inch spikelet with 2 glumes at the base of each which resembles a husk. Within each glume, there are numerous tiny seeds. The flowering season for this species is typically May through August and produces tiny white petals on the flower head.

Did You Know?

Timothy grass is often used in seed mixes for road construction and erosion control projects?

Timothy Grass has a fibrous root system that is considered shallow. Timothy Grass prefers partial shade to full sun areas and mesic soil conditions. This species does not do well in drought or in the heat.

You'll find this species thriving within ditches, roadsides, fields, edges of ponds and streambanks, embankments, and any disturbed sites.

Management to remove this species includes frequent hand pulling, cutting or mowing. Mowing and cutting the grass less than 3 inches continuously, is an effective treatment method.



Figure 12. Timothy Grass inflorescence. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman



Figure 13. Timothy Grass flowering. Photo Credit: Holly Bushman

Contact Information

Environmental Services Department

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Water Resources Planner-Trevor Rudenick

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Email: trevor.rudenick@lesueurcounty.gov

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Karl Schmidtke-Resource Technician

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Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

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Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

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Todd Piepho-Area Hydrologist

Phone: 507-421-1991

Email: todd.piepho@state.mn.us

Jeff Flory-Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist

Email: Jeffrey.Flory@state.mn.us Phone: 507-910-9801



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