

# Le Sueur County Environmental Services

## NEWSLETTER

April 3, 2023

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# Aquatic Invasive Species-Take the Pledge

As we prepare to move into the summer, efforts to prevent and limit the spread of aquatic invasive species will begin to ramp up! The State of Minnesota and Le Sueur County is asking you take the Pledge to Protect Minnesota Waters this summer and beyond!

Take the pledge on the following website: <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/data/ais-pledge>.

*It only takes a few minutes to sign up. You must be 18 years old.*

I will always take these required steps to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS)



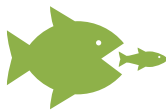
Clean my boat and gear to remove plants and prohibited invasive species.



Drain all water and leave plugs out during transport.



Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.



Never release bait, plants, or aquarium pets into Minnesota waters.



Dry docks, lifts, and rafts for 21 days before moving them from one water body to another.

**Figure 1. Aquatic Invasive Species-Pledge to Protect Minnesota Waters**

*Photo Credit: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.*

# Aquatic Invasive Species-Take the Pledge

I will take these additional steps to reduce the risk of spreading AIS whenever possible:



Decontaminate my equipment.



Spray my equipment with high pressure water or rinse it with very hot water (120 degrees for 2+ minutes or 140 degrees for 10+ seconds)

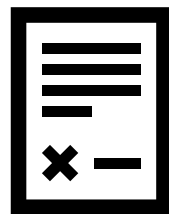


Dry my boat and gear for 5 days before using in another water body.

**Figure 2. Aquatic Invasive Species-Pledge to Protect Minnesota Waters**

*Photo Credit: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.*

Are you committed to preventing and limiting the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species?



# Purple Loosestrife Management and Control

Managing Purple Loosestrife species has been around for quite awhile and efforts have been quite effective and successful in Minnesota. Unfortunately, Minnesota has seen an increase in Purple Loosestrife presence recently, and would like to ramp up management and control efforts again!

Biocontrol is the primary method that is used to manage Purple Loosestrife. It has been extremely effective and successful. The two loosestrife beetles that are utilized to control Purple Loosestrife include: Golden Loosestrife Beetle (*Galerucella pusilla*) and Black-Margined Loosestrife Beetle (*Galerucella californiensis*). These beetles effect growth and reproduction of purple loosestrife plants by devouring the leaves and new shoot growth. Both are similar in their life history and ecology. Adult beetles can travel long distances from where they are released (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, 2023).

Le Sueur County does have some existing Purple Loosestrife populations and would like to be proactive in managing these species! The County and DNR are working together to develop a plan on how to manage Purple Loosestrife populations in Le Sueur County. We are hoping control efforts can take place this year yet!

To see where existing populations of Purple Loosestrife exists within Le Sueur County, please visit EDDMapS (website). To stay up to date with Le Sueur County's management efforts please visit the following website: <https://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/499/Research-and-Studies>.



**Figure 3. Black-margined Loosestrife Beetles**

Photo Credit: iNaturalist-Janet Graham.



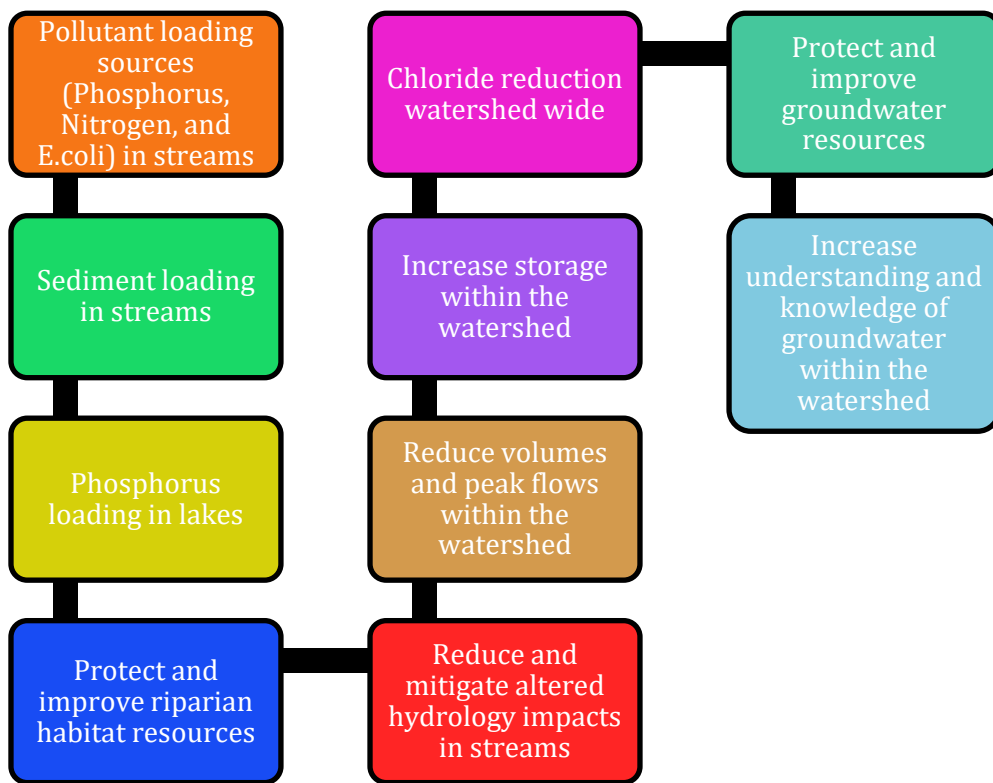
**Figure 4. Golden Loosestrife Beetles**

Photo Credit: iNaturalist-Jason Crockwell.

# Lower Minnesota River East 1W1P Update

Planning efforts for the Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan are starting to take off! The Policy Committee, Advisory Committee, and Steering Team have worked diligently to develop priority areas and resources to work on within the next ten years. We are now in the process of developing goals and activities for our different priorities.

## Priorities to Address within the Watershed:



*If you would like to stay up to date with planning efforts for the Lower Minnesota River East One Watershed One Plan, please visit the following website:*

<https://www.lowermnrivereast.org/>.

# City of Le Center Municipal Well Sealing Project

## Le Sueur County in Partnership with the City of Le Center receives \$45,275 Clean Water Fund Grant from BWSR

*Le Center, Minnesota* – The Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) approved \$11.6 million in Clean Water Fund grants on December 15<sup>th</sup> to improve water quality in lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater across the state. Le Sueur County in partnership with the City of Le Center received a \$45,275 Clean Water Fund Grant to seal an abandoned municipal well within the city limits of Le Center. This grant is one of 34 BWSR allocated this year to fund voluntary conservation projects, including those focused specifically on improving and protecting drinking water.

The Clean Water Fund receives 33% of the sales tax revenue generated by the Legacy Amendment. Minnesota voters approved the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment in 2008 to protect, enhance, and restore wetlands, prairies, forests, and fish, game, and wildlife habitat; to preserve arts and cultural heritage; to support parks and trails; and to protect, enhance, and restore lakes, rivers, streams, and groundwater.



**Figure 5. Old Municipal Well #1**

*Photo Credit: City of Le Center*

The City of Le Center was awarded two Source Water Protection Competitive Grants from the Minnesota Department of Health in 2021. The Source Water Protection Competitive Grants were able to locate and identify old municipal wells; one of which is now able to be sealed with this Clean Water Fund grant. This project is building off of existing efforts that the City of Le Center has undertaken for groundwater and drinking water protection.

Le Sueur County plans to use the grant funding primarily for sealing the municipal well. Expenses related to the well sealing include: permit fee, mobilization, labor, equipment, and supplies. Additionally grant funding will also be utilized for education and outreach efforts to inform county residents about the project and how it will protect groundwater resources.

Le Sueur County and the City of Le Center will begin work in the summer of 2023. Applicants wanting to learn more should contact: Holly Bushman, Environmental Resources Specialist, 507-357-8540, [hbushman@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:hbushman@co.le-sueur.mn.us) or visit the following website: <https://www.co.le-sueur.mn.us/523/Current-Projects>.





# Water Resource Spotlight

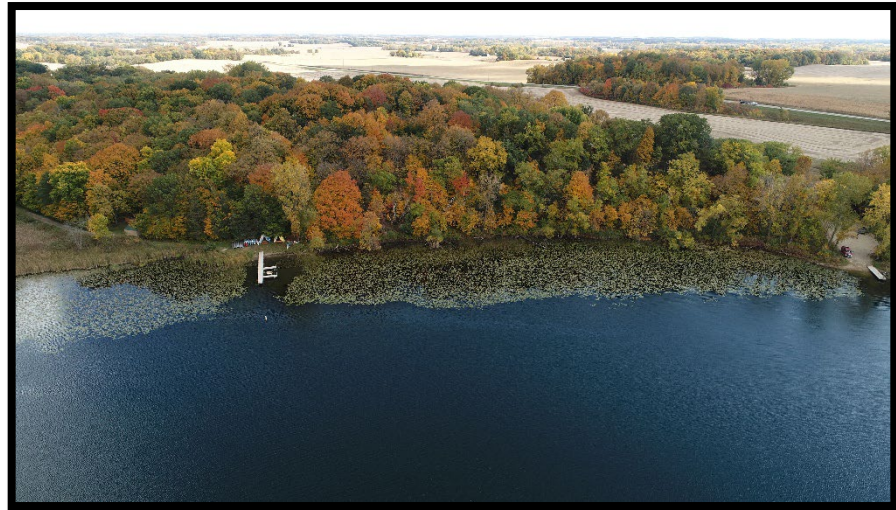


## This issue we are spotlighting Fish Lake!

Fish Lake is located roughly 0.6 miles north of the City of Elysian. The lake has a surface area of roughly 77 acres and its' watershed is very small. Fish Lake has a maximum depth of approximately 55 feet. The landscape around the lake is predominately

wetlands, woods, and agriculture and has very little development.

Fish Lake does have a Girl Scout Camp and a DNR access that is located on the east side of the lake.



**Figure 6. Fish Lake Access**

*Photo Credit: Goodhue SWCD*



**Figure 7. Northeast Side of Fish Lake**

*Photo Credit: Goodhue SWCD*

Fish Lake is located within the Cannon River Watershed. According to the Cannon River WRAPS, Fish Lake is meeting state water quality standards. Since Fish Lake has excellent water quality, the main management goal should be protection, and continue to maintain/improve water quality standards.

Practices that can help protect and maintain good water quality within Fish Lake include: protect or restore native riparian vegetation, maintain or increase perennial vegetation, and avoid or mitigate future proposed agricultural drainage improvement projects.



# Minnesota Native Plant

## Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*)

Prairie Smoke, is a perennial that is a part of the Rosaceae (Rose) family. It grows 6 to 18 inches tall. The root structure is comprised of rhizomes. The leaves are basal and resemble ferns. The inflorescence (flower head) is feathery and wispy and the flowering stem is bell-shaped and is pink in color. The flower blooms from April to June, and is one of the earliest blooming native prairie forbs. Prairie Smoke is a hardy plant that prefers mesic to well drained soils; it specifically does well in dry and rocky soils. This species prefers full or partial sunny areas. You'll find this plant thriving in prairies, fields, and other well drained areas. Prairie Smoke attracts hummingbirds, butterflies, and other pollinators.



**Figure 8. Prairie Smoke Flowering Stem**

*Photo Credit: Holly Bushman*



**Figure 9. Prairie Smoke Basal Leaves**

*Photo Credit: Holly Bushman*

**Figure 10.  
Prairie Smoke  
Inflorescence**

*Photo Credit:  
Prairie Nursey*



# Non-Native Plant

## Purple Loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria* & *Lythrum virgatum*)

Purple Loosestrife is a perennial s that is a part of the Lythraceae (Loosestrife) family. Purple Loosestrife is native to Europe and Asia, and was accidentally introduced into the Great Lakes region through contaminated ballasts and/or deliberately introduced through importation of seeds.

Purple Loosestrife can grow 4-6 feet tall. The leaves are lance-shaped, has smooth edges, and have an opposite arrangement along the stems. stems of Purple Loosestrife are square in shape and woody. The inflorescence (flower head) blooms from July-August and is shaped as a tall spike. Flowers can range from purple to pink in color, typically have six petals, and contain a yellow center. The root structure of Purple Loosestrife is a thick and woody taproot which can



**Figure 11. Leaf Arrangement of Purple Loosestrife**

*Photo Credit: Minnesota Department of Agriculture*



**Figure 12. Flowers of Purple Loosestrife**

*Photo Credit: Minnesota Department of Agriculture*

contain shoots that can spread out up to 30-50 feet! Additionally, new plants can grow from fragments of existing roots and stems.

Purple Loosestrife is found in aquatic habitats such as wetlands, shorelines, streambanks, and ditches. Purple Loosestrife is extremely aggressive, can outcompete native species, can alter ecosystem functions, and reduce biodiversity.

In Minnesota, Purple Loosestrife has been around for quite some time. However, biocontrol efforts using loosestrife beetles has been extremely successful!

If you would like to learn more about Minnesota's efforts to manage Purple Loosestrife please visit the following website:

[https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/purpleloosestrife/control.html#:~:text=Purple%20loosestrife%20can%20be%20cut,two%20years\)%20or%20in%20sand.](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/invasives/aquaticplants/purpleloosestrife/control.html#:~:text=Purple%20loosestrife%20can%20be%20cut,two%20years)%20or%20in%20sand.)

To see where the species is distributed throughout the State, please visit the EDDMaps website: <https://www.eddmaps.org/>. EDDMaps is a very good resource to see the distribution of invasive species, report sightings, and learn more about invasive species throughout the US.



**Figure 13. Purple Loosestrife Plant**

*Photo Credit: Minnesota Department of Agriculture*

# Environmental Services Department Changes



**A P R I L 5 , 2 0 2 3**

**WE ARE**

**MOVING**

New Location::  
**3rd Floor of the  
County Government Center**

88 S. Park Avenue  
Le Center, MN 56057

For More Info  
Please contact our office

Phone:  
**507-357-8538**

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



# Contact Information

## Environmental Services Department

Planning & Zoning, Feedlots, Solid Waste, & Septics

Phone: 507-357-8538

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

Environmental Resources Specialist/Water Planner-Holly Bushman

Phone: 507-357-8540

Email: [hbushman@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:hbushman@co.le-sueur.mn.us)

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Karl Schmidtke-Resource Technician

Email: [kschmidtke@co.le-sueur.mn.us](mailto:kschmidtke@co.le-sueur.mn.us)

## Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)

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[steve.breaker@mn.usda.gov](mailto:steve.breaker@mn.usda.gov)

## Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Vacant-Area Hydrologist

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Email: N/A

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Email: [Carli.Wagner@state.mn.us](mailto:Carli.Wagner@state.mn.us)

Todd Piepho-Area Hydrologist

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Email: [todd.piepho@state.mn.us](mailto:todd.piepho@state.mn.us)

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](https://files.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/area_hydros.pdf)