Interstate Valley Creek
2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

The Interstate Valley Creek watershed is located in the cities of Mendota Heights, West St Paul, and Sunfish Lake within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). Land use within the watershed is primarily low density residential, with pockets of commercial, institutional, and parkland. Interstate Valley Creek was placed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters in 2014 for impacts to aquatic life due to excess *E. coli* bacteria.

Stream Details

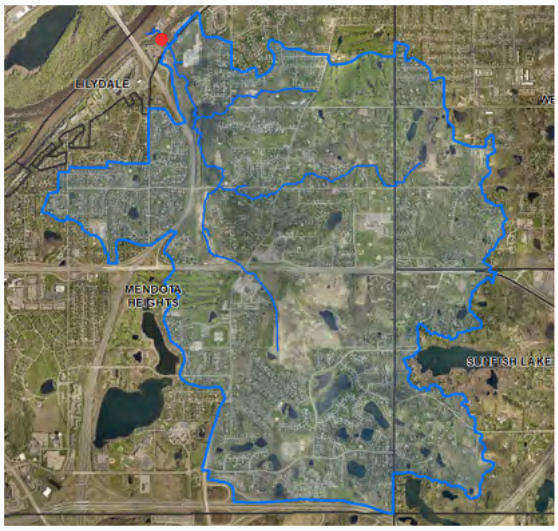
Mainstem Length: 2.5 miles

Watershed Size (shown): 3,272 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

Impairment: *E. coli* (Miss. River) (2014)

Years Monitored: 6



Monitoring

A volunteer monitor takes water samples from one location (red dot above) from Interstate Valley Creek for lab analysis. The purpose is to identify stream reaches that contribute pollutants and establish baseline stream water quality conditions. Monitoring also helps track the impact of future watershed projects that stabilize banks or treat stormwater in the watershed to reduce the in-stream pollutant load (sediment and phosphorus).

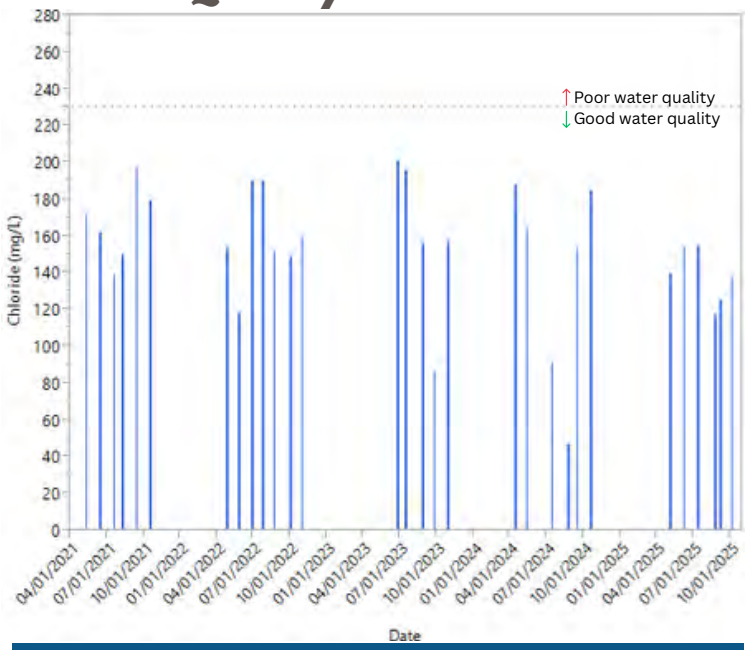
Interstate Valley Creek was monitored six times in 2025 - monthly April through October. The water was tested for the following pollutants: chloride (salt), phosphorus (nutrients), total suspended solids (sediment), *E. coli* (*bacteria*), nitrates, and chlorophyll-a. Field measurements for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and water transparency were also collected for each effort.

Water Quality

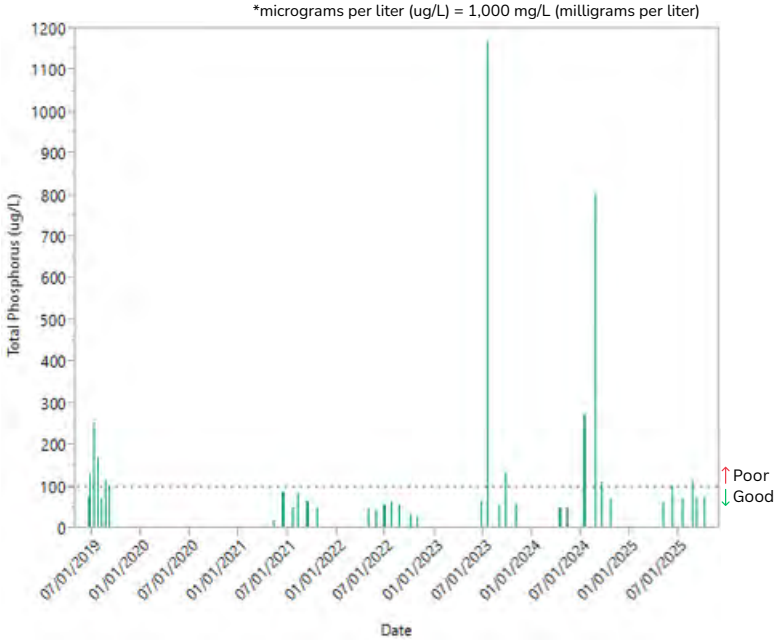
Interstate Valley Creek shows low levels of chloride, below the state standard. Phosphorus levels have averaged below the standard since 2020, though individual exceedance do occur throughout the monitoring season. Total suspended solids are consistently below the standard. *E. coli* levels are generally within the state MPCA standard for individual samples though more data is needed in the future.

Water temperature is below 71 degrees Fahrenheit all season and transparency is high during baseflow (low flow) conditions. Chlorophyll-a and nitrate levels continue to be below applicable standards.

Water Quality Data 2019 - 2025



*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)

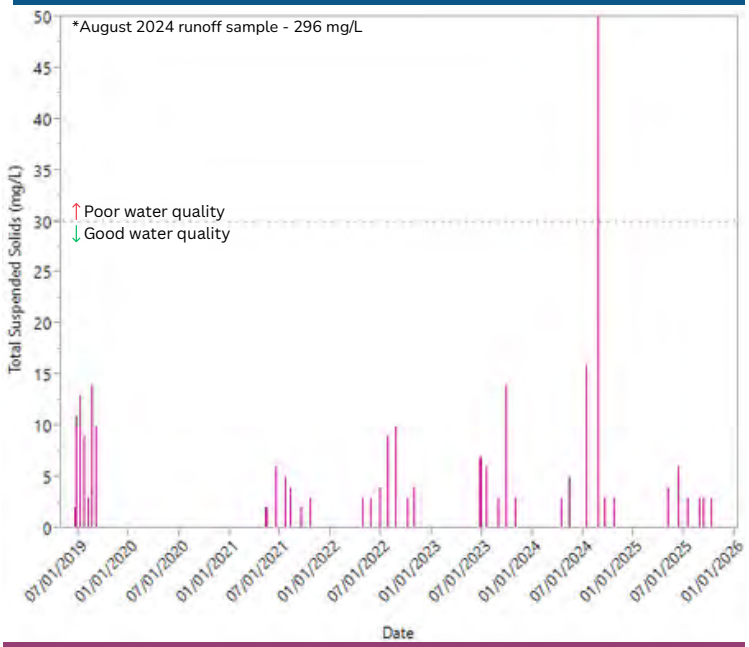


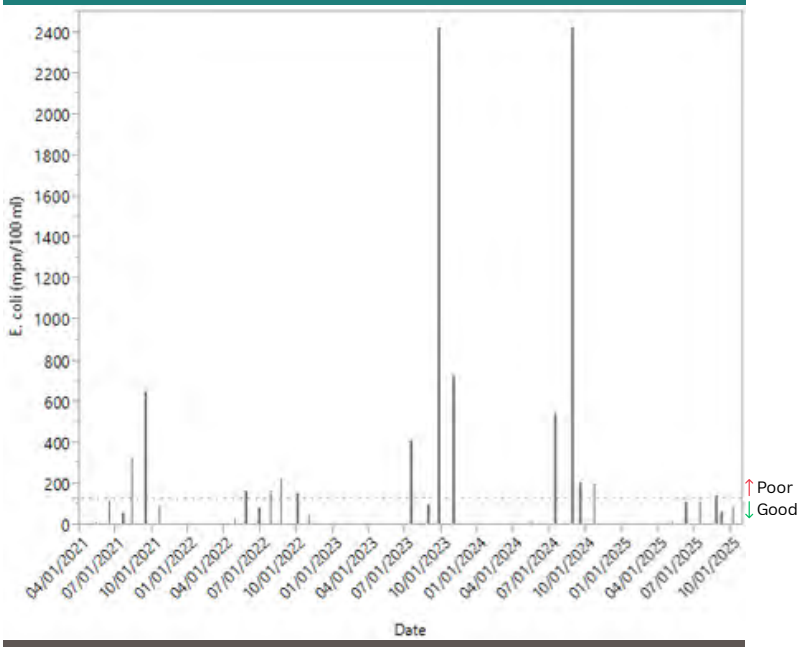
Chloride

Elevated chloride concentrations can be toxic to some aquatic life – altering community composition, as well as affecting mortality and reproduction capabilities. State standard for chronic toxicity is ≤ 230 ug/L (dashed line).

Phosphorus*

Phosphorus is a nutrient required for plant growth. High phosphorus levels can lead to algae blooms, turning water green. Low phosphorus levels indicate good water quality. State standard is ≤ 100 ug/L (dashed line).





Total Suspended Solids

A measurement of all suspended particles in the water. Potential sources include field and streambank erosion and stormwater runoff. Excessive levels can impair water quality and usability. State standard is ≤ 30 ug/L (dashed line).

E. coli

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) bacteria is a good indicator that disease-causing pathogens may be present in water. A standard of ≤ 1,260 MPN/100mL (dashed line) has been established (MPN = most probable number of organisms).

How can you get involved?

Anyone can help improve water quality! Installing a raingarden increases water infiltration and reduces pollution runoff that can negatively impact local water quality. The LMRWMO offers grants to residents to install raingardens, native gardens, and native shoreline plantings as part of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District's **Landscaping for Clean Water** program.

Additional Information: MN Impaired Waters Map: https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/impaired-waters-viewer-iwav
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DAKOTA COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Ivy Falls Creek

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

The Ivy Falls Creek watershed is in the cities of Mendota Heights and West St. Paul within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). The watershed consists of the mainstem of Ivy Falls Creek and a small tributary that joins just above the falls. Land use within the watershed is primarily residential with some parkland golf course property.

Stream Details

Mainstem Length: 1.2 miles

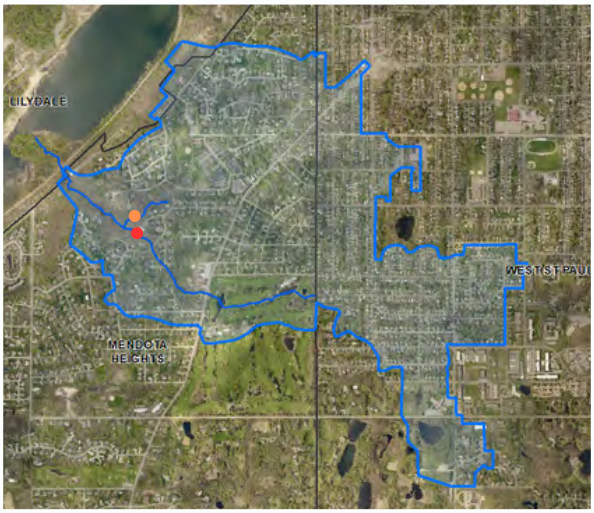
Unnamed Tributary Length: 0.2 miles

Watershed Size (shown): 746 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

Impairment: None

Years Monitored: 5



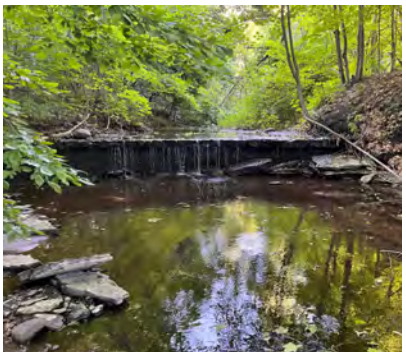
Monitoring

A volunteer water monitor takes water samples from Ivy Falls Creek (red dot) and an unnamed tributary (orange dot) for lab analysis. The purpose is to identify stream reaches that contribute pollutants and establish baseline stream water quality conditions. Monitoring also helps track the impact of future watershed projects that stabilize banks or treat stormwater in the watershed to reduce the in-stream pollutant load (sediment and phosphorus). Runoff monitoring is not currently occurring.

Ivy Falls Creek and the tributary were monitored six times in 2025 - monthly April through October. The water was tested for the following pollutants: chloride (salt), phosphorus (nutrients), total suspended solids (sediment), E. coli (bacteria), nitrates, and chlorophyll-a. Field measurements for temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH, and water transparency were also collected for each visit.

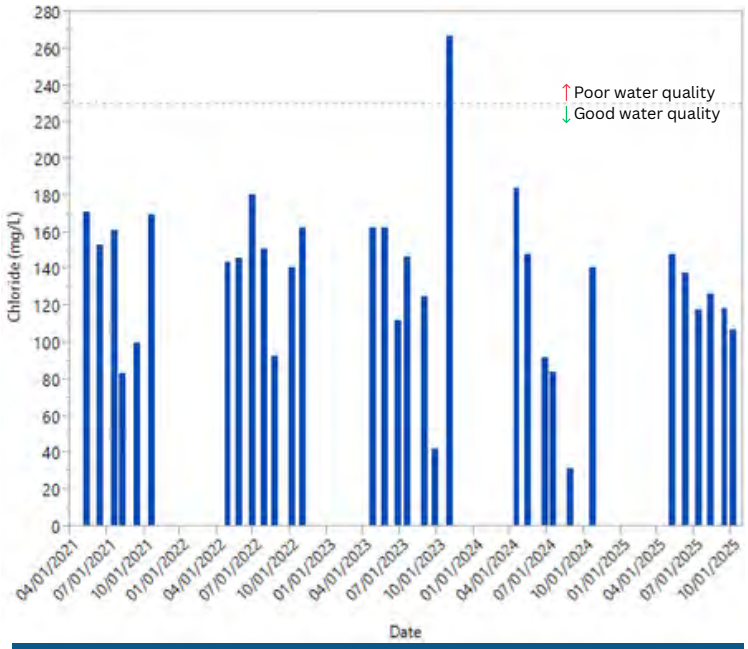
Water Quality

Ivy Falls Creek and the unnamed tributary show low levels of chloride. Phosphorus levels continue to exceed the standard with some seasonal variability. Total suspended solids are consistently below the standard, though like phosphorus, individual samples exceed it. *E. coli* levels are generally above the standard with the highest levels occurring in the mid-summer to early autumn months.



Water temperature is below 73 degrees Fahrenheit all season and transparency is high during baseflow (low flow) conditions. Chlorophyll-a and nitrate levels are consistently below applicable standards.

Ivy Falls Creek Mainstem Water Quality Data 2021 - 2025



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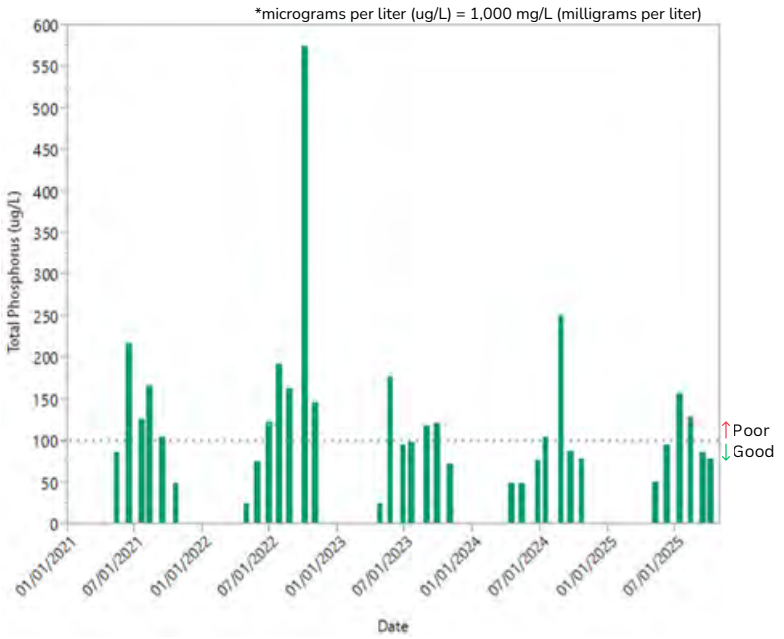

Chloride

Elevated chloride concentrations can be toxic to some aquatic life – altering community composition, as well as affecting mortality and reproduction capabilities. State standard for acute toxicity is ≤ 230 ug/L (dashed line).

Phosphorus*

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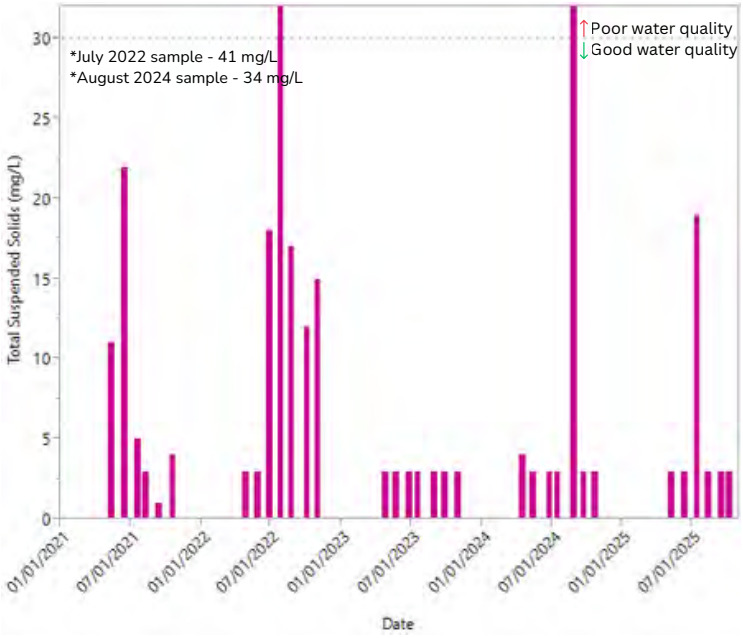

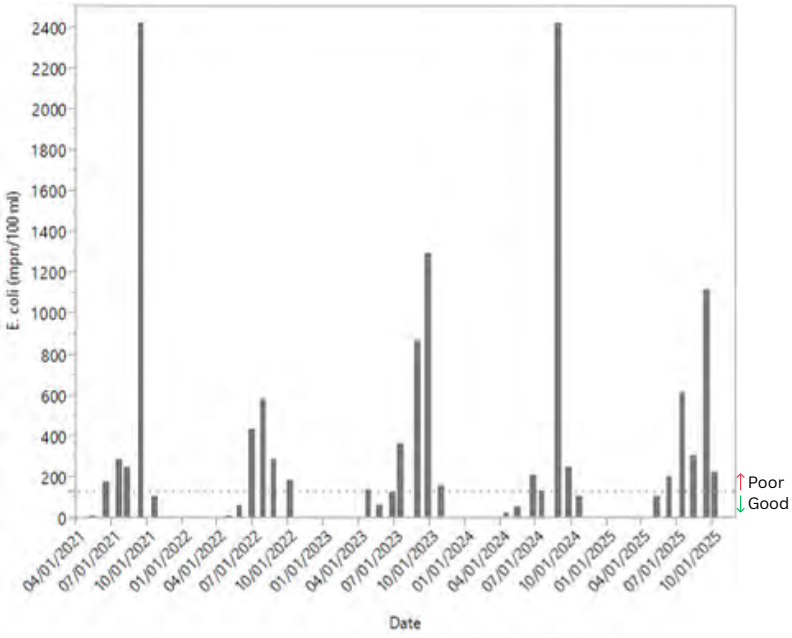

Total Suspended Solids

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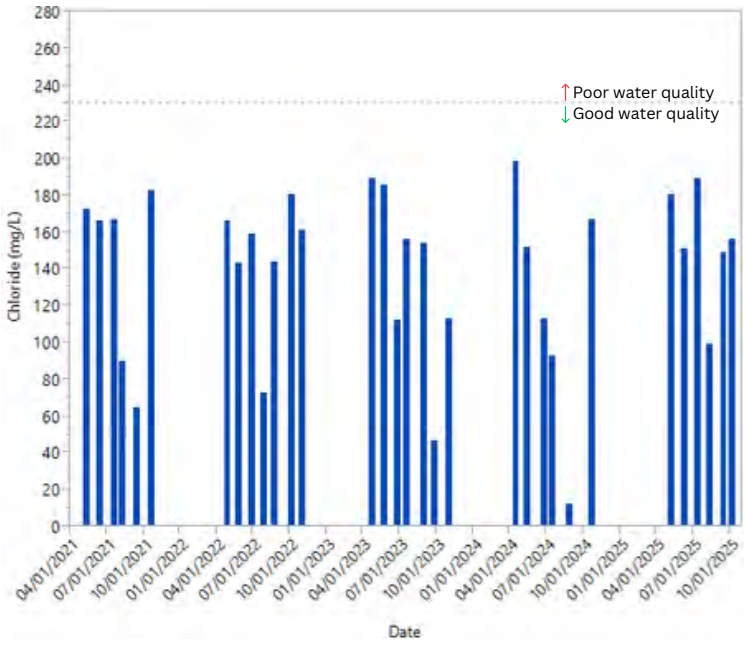
E. coli

Escherichia coli (*E. coli*) bacteria is a good indicator that disease-causing pathogens may be present in water. A standard of ≤ 1,260 MPN/100mL (dashed line) has been established (MPN = most probable number of organisms).

How can you get involved?

You don't have to live on a lake to help improve water quality, **anyone can be part of the solution**! **Installing a raingarden increases water infiltration**, **decreases lawn maintenance**, and **reduces pollution runoff** that can negatively impact local water quality. The LMRWMO offers grants to residents to install raingardens, native gardens, and native shoreline plantings as part of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District's **Landscaping for Clean Water** program.

Unnamed Tributary Water Quality Data 2021 - 2025



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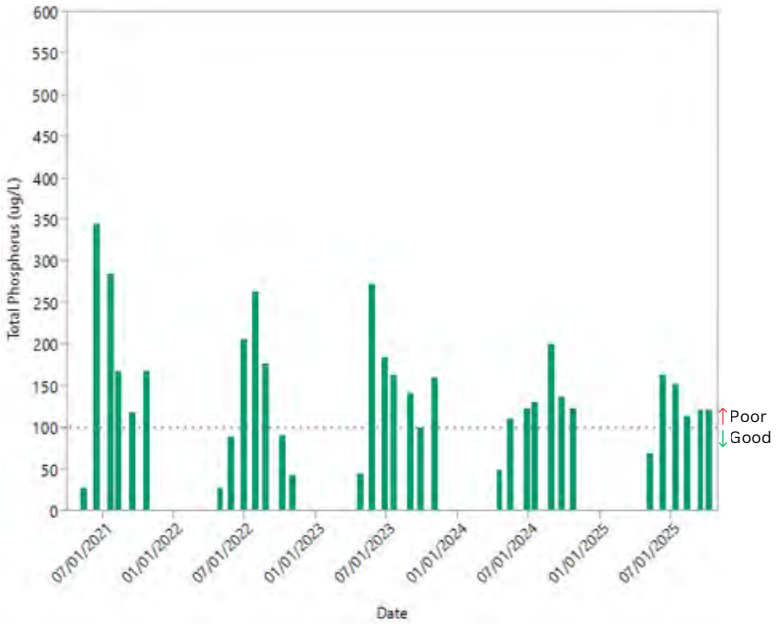

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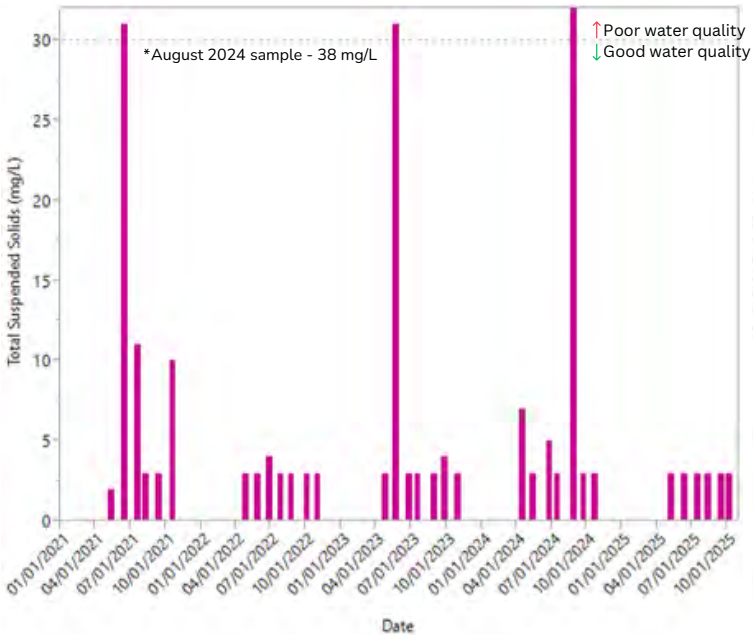
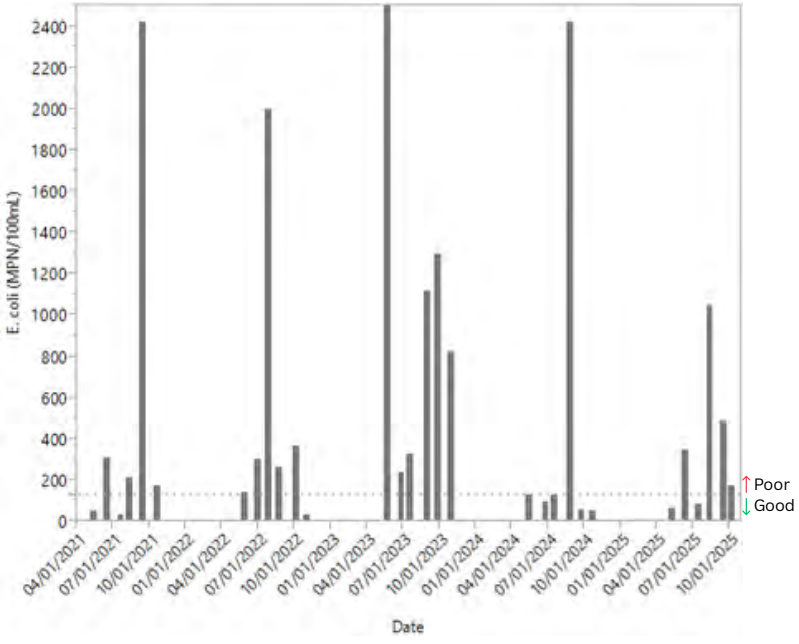


*May 2023 sample - 410600 MPN/100mL



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DAKOTA COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Sunfish Lake

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

Sunfish Lake is located in the City of Sunfish Lake, within the LMRWMO. Land use within the watershed is primarily low density residential. Sunfish Lake was placed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters in 2010 for aquatic recreation due to excess nutrients (phosphorus) but removed from the impaired waters list in 2022.

Lake Details

Max Depth: 32 feet

Watershed Size (shown): 235 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

MPCA Lake Classification: Deep

Met Council Lake Grade (2024): **A**

Monitoring

Sunfish Lake is monitored on an annual basis as part of the City of Sunfish Lake's participation in the Metropolitan Council's Community Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP) volunteer water monitoring program. The lake has been meeting the deep lake water quality criteria set forth by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency since 2017 when an aluminum sulfate treatment was implemented by the LMRWMO in partnership with Sunfish Lake residents.

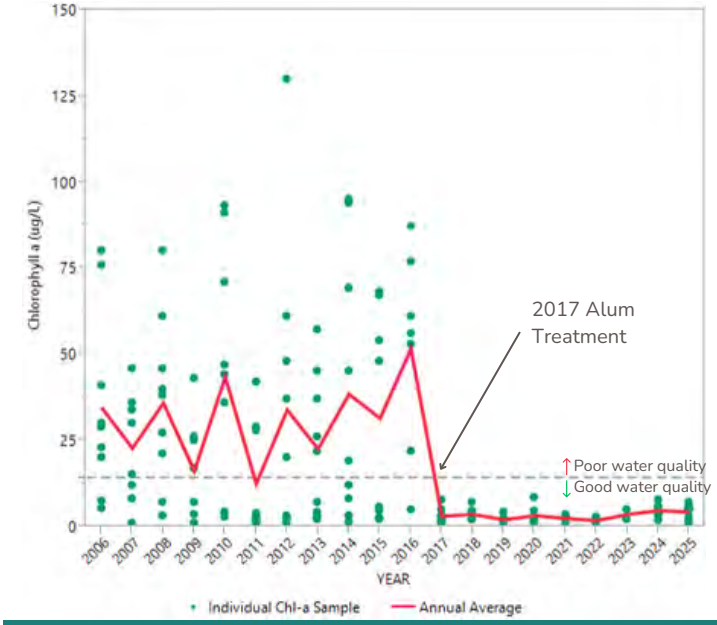
Water Quality

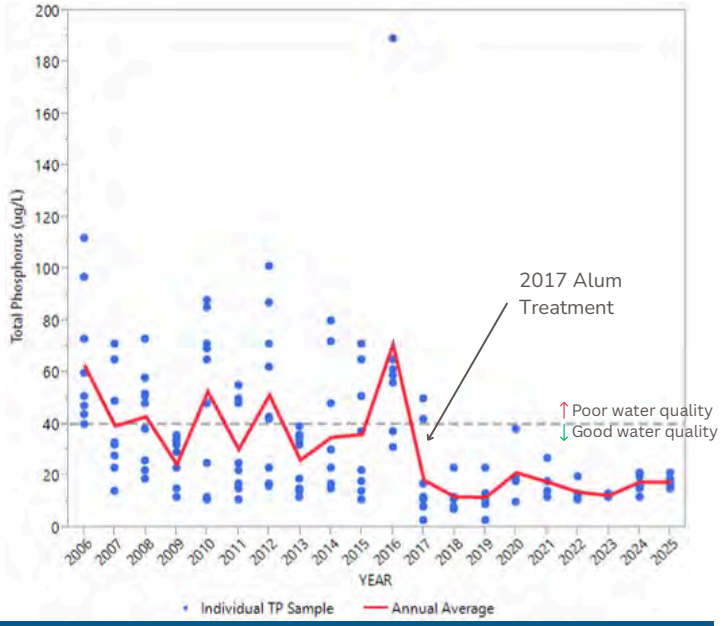
Following the 2017 alum treatment, there were improvements for all three eutrophication parameters when compared to data collected pre-treatment. Lake water quality remains stable when considering the total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a levels in comparison to historical levels. The secchi readings show improvement from past years, with the maximum value improving relative to the last few years. The below table shows the 2025 data.

Water Quality Parameters	MPCA Standard	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Chlorophyll-a (ug/L)	14	1.1	7.2	4.3
Total Phosphorus (ug/L)	40	15	21	17.67
Secchi Depth (m)	1.4	2.3	5.3	3.32

Water Quality Data 2006 - 2025

*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)





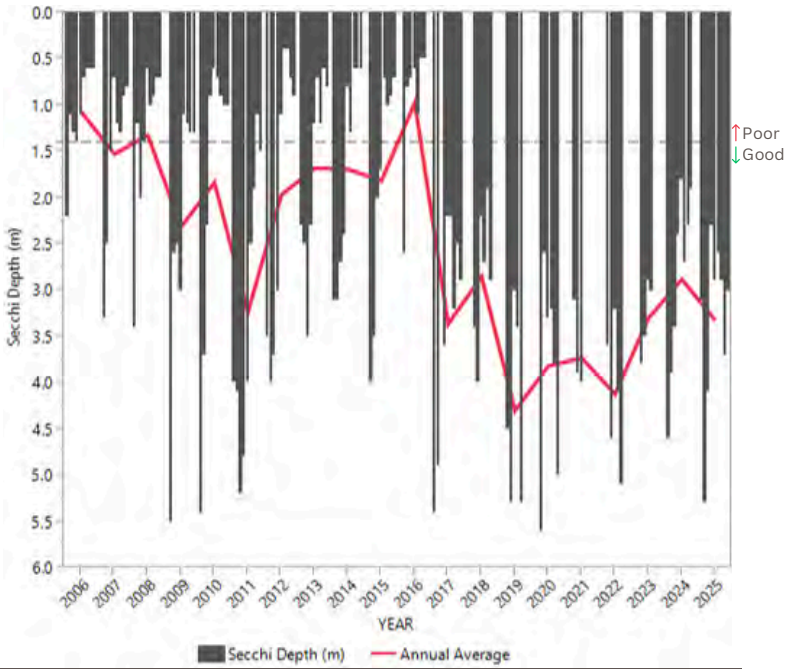
Chlorophyll-a*
Chlorophyll-a is the pigment that gives plants their green color. High levels indicate excessive algae from high nutrient levels in the lake. Low chlorophyll-a levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 14 ug/L (dashed line).

Phosphorus*
Phosphorus is a nutrient required for plant growth. High phosphorus levels can lead to algae blooms, turning water green. Low phosphorus levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 40 ug/L (dashed line).

Watershed Projects

A 2012 study conducted by the LMRWMO identified internal phosphorus from the lake bottom as the primary source of phosphorus in Sunfish Lake.

In 2017, the LMRWMO implemented an aluminum sulfate (alum) treatment to improve water quality. Upon application, the alum binds with phosphorus and settles to the lake bottom. A significant improvement in water quality has been shown from this treatment, with the lake removed from the impaired waters list in 2022.



Secchi Depth
A black and white secchi disc is lowered into the water until no longer visible and measures water clarity. High secchi disc depths indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 1.4 m (dashed line).

How can you get involved?

Anyone can help improve water quality! Installing a raingarden increases water infiltration and reduces pollution runoff that can negatively impact local water quality. The LMRWMO offers grants to residents to install raingardens, native gardens, and native shoreline plantings as part of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District's **Landscaping for Clean Water** program.

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DAKOTA COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Seidls Lake

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

Seidls Lake is located in the Cities of Inver Grove Heights and South Saint Paul, within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). Land use within the watershed is primarily residential with a portion of the west watershed covered by a golf course and a portion of Highway 52. The lake is currently not listed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters.

Lake Details

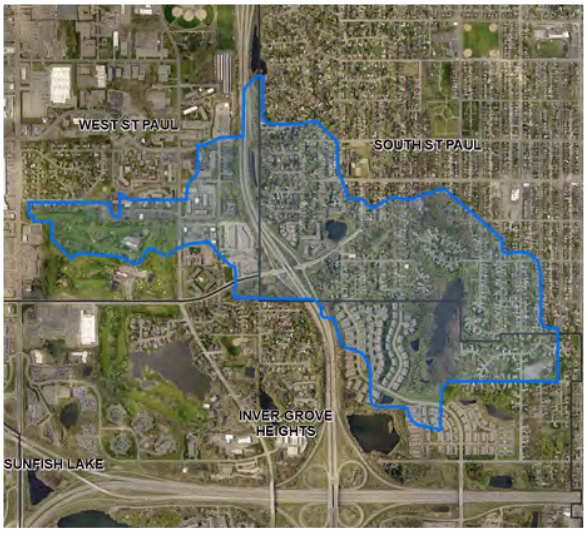
Max Depth: 17 feet

Watershed Size (shown): 420 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

MPCA Lake Classification: Shallow

Met Council Lake Grade (2024): D



Monitoring

The LMRWMO supports Seidls Lake monitoring through the Metropolitan Council's Community Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP) volunteer lake monitoring program. The lake is surrounded by parkland and is as a priority waterbody for the Cities and LMRWMO. Due to the lack of a natural outlet, high lake water levels have been observed in the last 15 years compared to historic levels.

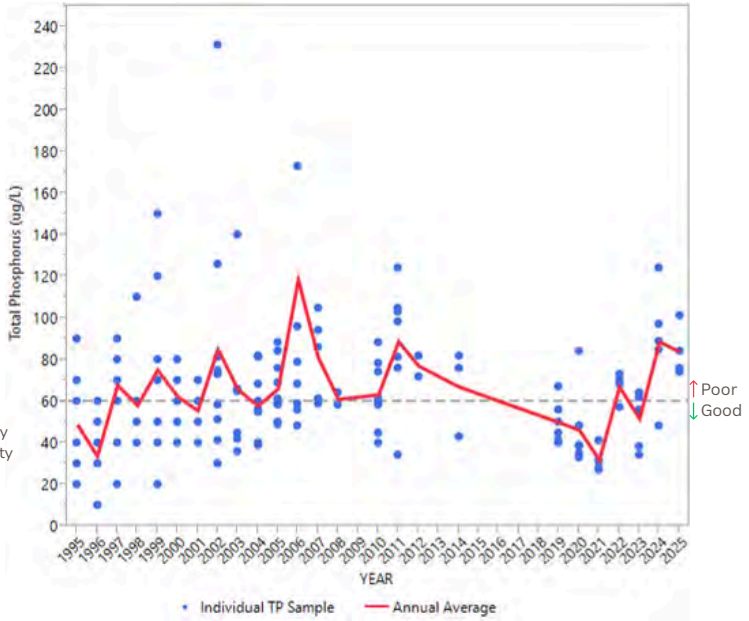
Water Quality

Water quality in Seidls Lake continues to be lower than desired. Sampling data collected throughout the assessment period provide a more holistic view of water quality conditions than in previous years. All parameters exceed the state standard - chlorophyll-a average levels were worse whereas total phosphorus and secchi depth averages improved relative to 2024. The below table shows the 2025 data.

Water Quality Parameters	MPCA Standard	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Chlorophyll-a (ug/L)	20	6.9	120	65.23
Total Phosphorus (ug/L)	60	74	101	83.75
Secchi Depth (m)	1	0.6	1.2	0.87

Water Quality Data 1995 - 2025

*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)



Chlorophyll-a*

Chlorophyll-a is the pigment that gives plants their green color. High levels indicate excessive algae from high nutrient levels in the lake. Low chlorophyll-a levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 14 ug/L (dashed line).

Phosphorus*

Phosphorus is a nutrient required for plant growth. High phosphorus levels can lead to algae blooms, turning water green. Low phosphorus levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 40 ug/L (dashed line).

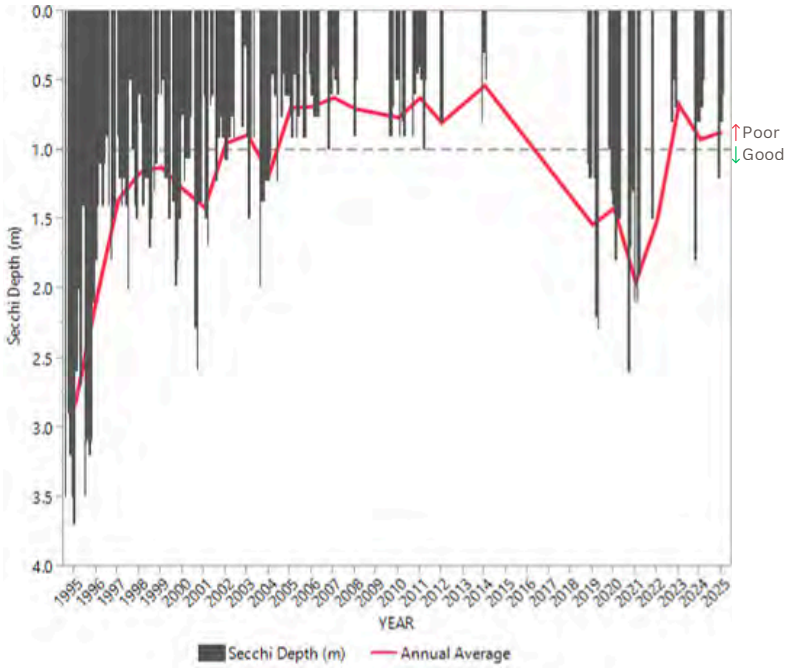
Watershed Projects

Multiple stormwater management projects have been implemented since 2010 to treat stormwater before entering Seidls Lake.

A lake outlet project to maintain consistent water levels was completed in 2022 and a natural shoreline restoration project was installed in 2024 along with trail improvements.

Native shoreline and trail improvement project

The lake will continue to be monitored to track changes in water quality. Investigation into the impacts of carp populations on poor water quality may be implemented in the future.



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CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Thompson Lake

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

Thompson Lake is located in the City of West Saint Paul within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). Land use within the watershed is primarily commercial, institutional, low density residential, and parkland. Thompson Lake was placed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters in 2014 for aquatic recreation due to excess nutrients (phosphorus) and aquatic life due to chloride.

Lake Details

Max Depth: 8 feet

Watershed Size (shown): 180 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

MPCA Lake Classification: Shallow

Met Council Lake Grade (2024): C

Monitoring

Thompson Lake is monitored through the Metropolitan Council's Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program volunteer water monitoring program, sponsored by the LMRWMO. The lake is the center of Dakota County's highly used Thompson Lake Regional Park and is considered a high value resource by both the LMRWMO and Dakota County Parks.

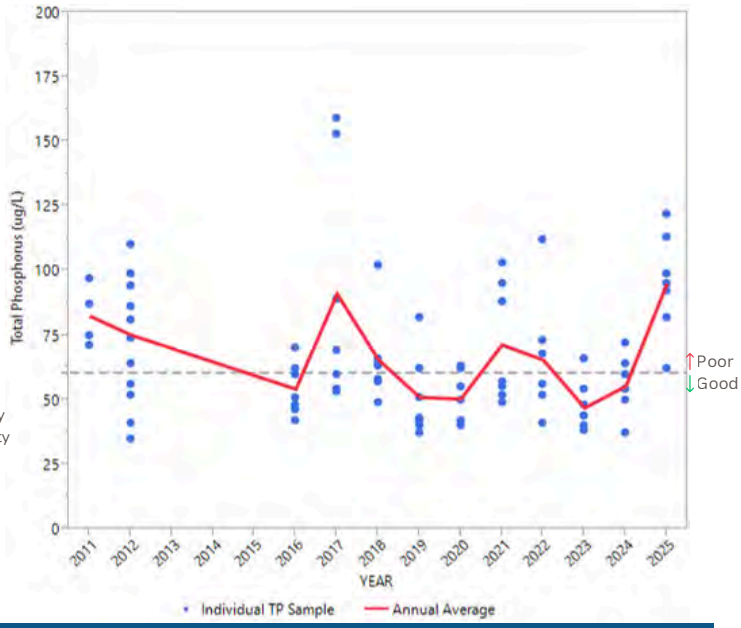
Water Quality

Sampling data has been collected since 2011 and water quality in 2025 was worse compared to to previous years. Chlorophyll-a levels exceeded the state standard. Individual samples were higher than in 2024 and continued to show high variability, as in past years. The minimum total phosphorus reading was above the state standard with a maximum reading twice the standard. The seasonal average for secchi disc did not meet the state standard, with the highest readings meeting it. The table below shows data for 2025.

Water Quality Parameters	MPCA Standard	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Chlorophyll-a (ug/L)	20	15	80	57.57
Total Phosphorus (ug/L)	60	62	122	95
Secchi Depth (m)	1	0.8	1	0.92

Water Quality Data 2011 - 2025

*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)



Chlorophyll-a*

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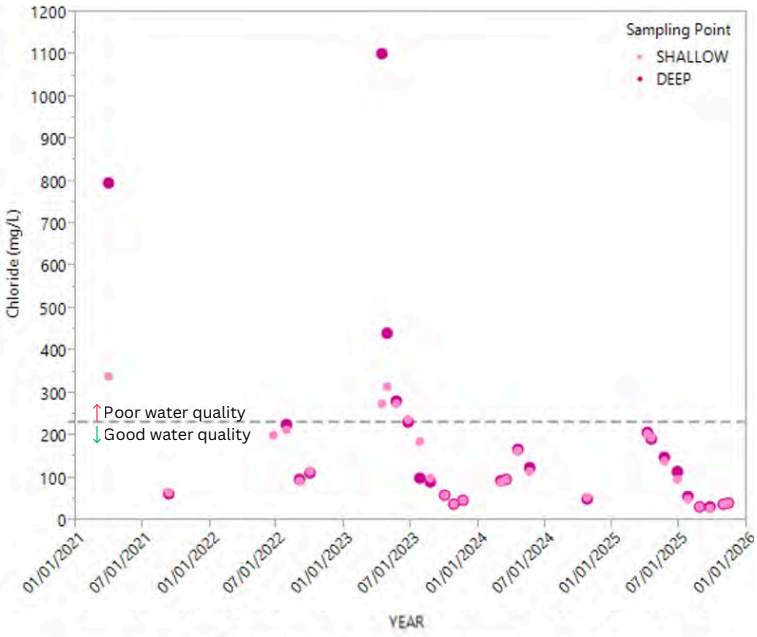
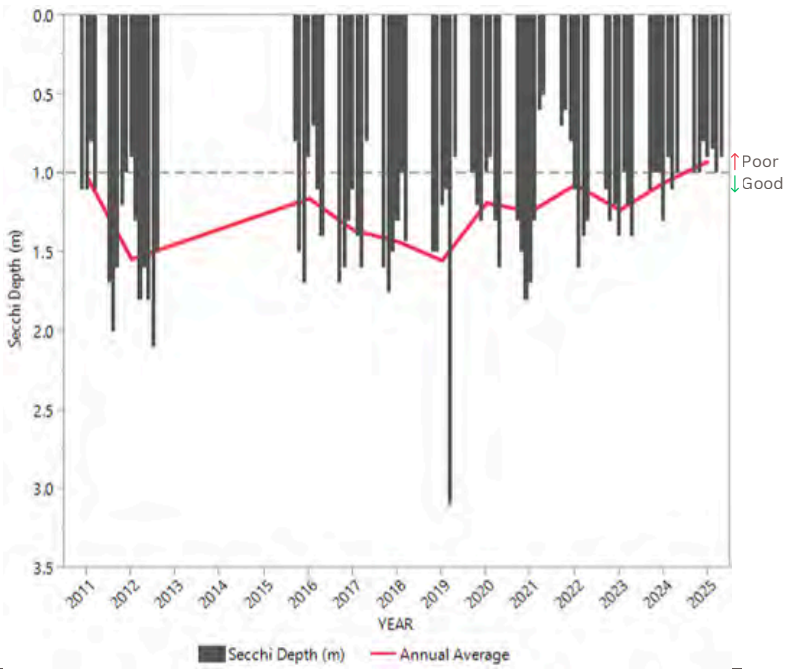




Chloride

Elevated chloride concentrations can be toxic to some aquatic life – altering community composition, as well as affecting mortality and reproduction capabilities. MPCA standard for chronic toxicity is 230 ug/L (dashed line).

Secchi Depth

A black and white secchi disc is lowered into the water until no longer visible and measures water clarity. High secchi disc depths indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 1.4 m (dashed line).

How can you get involved?

Anyone can help improve water quality! Installing a raingarden increases water infiltration and reduces pollution runoff that can negatively impact local water quality. The LMRWMO offers grants to residents to install raingardens, native gardens, and native shoreline plantings as part of the Dakota County Soil and Water Conservation District's **Landscaping for Clean Water** program.

Additional Information: MN Impaired Waters Map: https://www.pca.state.mn.us/water/impaired-waters-viewer-iwav
DNR Lake Finder: https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/lakefind/index.html
LMRWMO Contact: Joe Barten, Administrator - joe.barten@co.dakota.mn.us - 651-480-7784
LMRWMO Website: www.LMRWMO.org

DAKOTA COUNTY
SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Lake Augusta

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

Lake Augusta is located in the City of Mendota Heights, within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). Land use within the watershed is primarily institutional (cemetery), commercial, and residential (low and high density). Lake Augusta was placed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters in 2010 for aquatic recreation due to excess nutrients (phosphorus).

Lake Details

Max Depth: 33 feet

Watershed Size (shown): 420 acres

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

MPCA Lake Classification: Deep

Met Council Lake Grade (2025): F

Monitoring

Lake Augusta continues to not meet the MPCA's deep lake water quality criteria. Since 2016, the LMRWMO has monitored the lake through the Metropolitan Council's CAMP program. In 2022, more intensive water quality monitoring was undertaken by an engineering consulting firm in order to collect a broader set of monitoring parameters (chloride, pH, specific conductance, temperature, total suspended solids, and turbidity) at various depths in the water column.

Water Quality

Monitoring data from 2025 found that none of the water quality standards were met. Total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a average and minimum increased from 2024. Secchi readings remain very poor which is consistent with previous monitoring efforts. The below table shows data collected in 2025.

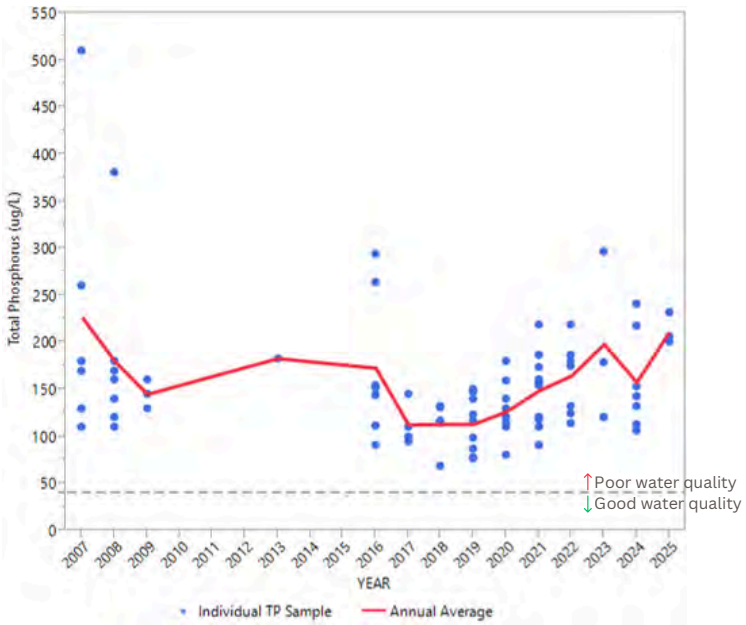
Water Quality Parameters	MPCA Standard	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Chlorophyll-a (ug/L)	14	77	250	183.4
Total Phosphorus (ug/L)	40	200	232	211
Secchi Depth (m)	1.4	0.1	0.15	0.11

Water Quality Data 2007 - 2025

*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)

Chlorophyll-a*

Chlorophyll-a is the pigment that gives plants their green color. High levels indicate excessive algae from high nutrient levels in the lake. Low chlorophyll-a levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 14 ug/L (dashed line).



Phosphorus*

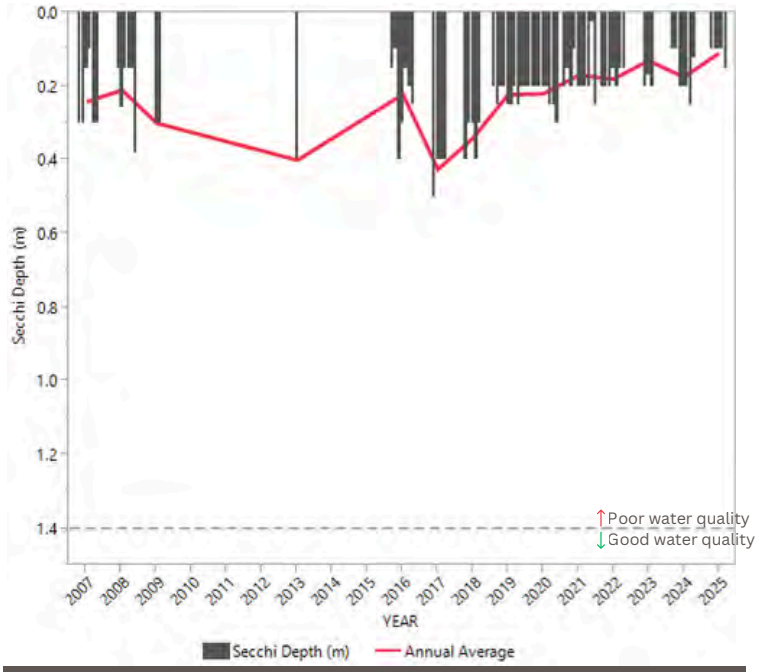
Phosphorus is a nutrient required for plant growth. High phosphorus levels can lead to algae blooms, turning water green. Low phosphorus levels indicate good water quality. MPCA standard is 40 ug/L (dashed line).

Watershed Projects

In 2017, the LMRWMO implemented an aluminum sulfate treatment to improve water quality which provided slight phosphorus reductions but not enough to improve water quality.

The LMRWMO and City of Mendota Heights lead a study of the lake to identify long term implementation actions to improve lake water quality. The study has shown that Double Crested Cormorants feces have a large impact on the lakes poor water quality.

The City of Mendota Heights and LMRWMO are considering potential projects or initiatives from the study for future implementation.



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SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Schmitt Lake

2025 Water Monitoring Report

LMRWMO
LOWER MISSISSIPPI RIVER
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION

Watershed

Schmitt Lake is located in the City of Inver Grove Heights within the Lower Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (LMRWMO). Land use within the watershed is primarily commercial, institutional, low density residential, and parkland. The lake is not currently listed on Minnesota's 303(d) List of Impaired Waters.

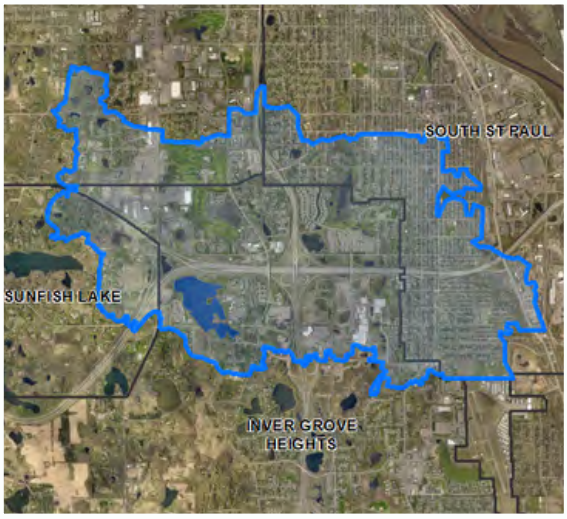
Lake Details

Max Depth: 8 feet

Major Watershed: Mississippi River

MPCA Lake Classification: Shallow

Met Council Lake Grade (2024): C



Monitoring

Schmitt Lake is monitored as part of the LMRWMO's participation in the Metropolitan Council's Community Assisted Monitoring Program volunteer water monitoring program. The volunteer monitors the deepest spot in the lake at two-week intervals from early June through the beginning of September. Field measurements include temperature, water clarity measured with a Secchi disk, and surface water samples collected for lab analyses (total phosphorus and chlorophyll-a).

Water Quality

Water quality in Schmitt Lake continues to be lower than desired, though continues to be closer to the state standards relative to other lakes in the watershed. Sampling data collected throughout the assessment period provides a holistic view of water quality conditions over time. All parameters exceed the state standard and have averages that are worse than samples collected in 2024. The below table shows the 2025 data.

Water Quality Parameters	MPCA Standard	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Chlorophyll-a (ug/L)	20	14	51	26
Total Phosphorus (ug/L)	60	46	114	74.86
Secchi Depth (m)	1	0.7	1.2	1

Water Quality Data 2011 - 2025

*micrograms per liter (ug/L) = 1,000 mg/L (milligrams per liter)

Chlorophyll-a*

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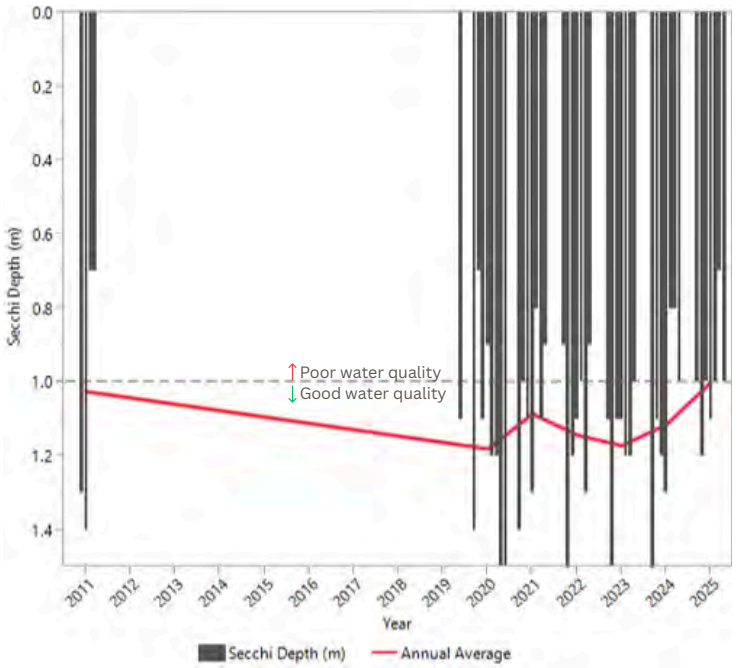

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