

June, 2024

NEWSLETTER

Red Lake Watershed District



Stream Water Quality Monitoring

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District staff sampled through the month of June at 75 stream sites throughout the Thief River, Red Lake River, Clearwater River, Upper/Lower Red Lakes, and Grand Marais Creek Watersheds for the district's long-term monitoring program. Though the month began with some exceptionally low (<1 mg/L) total suspended solids (TSS) at both ends of the watershed—even in Grand Marais Creek, heavy precipitation events throughout the month generated runoff that resulted high levels of TSS, *E. coli*, and phosphorous. District staff will collect another round of district--wide stream samples again in August.



One Watershed One Plan (1W1P), Stream Bank Stabilization

One Watershed One Plan initiatives integrate watershed management activities within major watersheds across Minnesota, ensuring coordinated efforts to protect and enhance water quality and water resource management. The District is a partner in the implementation phase of three 1W1P planning areas (Red Lake River, Thief River, and Clearwater River) and is a partner in the planning phase of a fourth: the Upper/Lower Red Lakes Watershed.

In 2024, three eroding sections of streambank along the Thief River will be stabilized as part of the Thief River Watershed 1W1P. The projects have been designed and bids were opened on June 28, 2024. The District awarded the project to ACM LLC (Alderink Construction Masters) from Princeton, MN, who had submitted the low bid of \$259,776.94. The RLWD Board of Managers also approved a request for 2024 RRWMB Base Water Quality Funding to help fund

Polk County, Polk County SWCD, and RLWD took steps toward planning a feasibility study for stabilization of the outlet of Judicial Ditch 60. This eroding drainage outlet is a highly visible ravine near the intersection of CSAH and CSAH 13, east of Crookston. District staff collected water quality samples above and below the eroding area and found the water quality changes dramatically as it flows through the eroding area. Water was clear at CSAH 11 (2.9 mg/L) in the June 7th sample and became muddy (40.8 mg/L) after traveling just one third of a mile downhill to the floodplain of the Red Lake River.

The District is planning a large channel and streambank stabilization project along the Clearwater River at the upstream end of the channelized reach. Another round of surveying is planned for July.

For more information on the RLWD's ongoing projects and environmental initiatives, our their official website or contact the office directly.

Upcoming Events

Date: August 8, 2024

9:00 am,

**RLWD District Office
Board Meeting**

Open to the public. For more information call (218) 681 5800

Riverwatch

Recently, the Red River Watershed District hosted its annual River Watch Leadership Retreat, spanning from June 11 to June 12. This event brought together enthusiastic students from various schools, aiming to educate and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards. The retreat featured an engaging lineup of activities, including an educational presentation and a kayaking excursion. Participants also had the opportunity to explore practical aspects of water management, such as visiting the East Grand Forks Water Treatment Plant. This hands-on experience provided invaluable insights into the processes involved in transforming river water into clean, drinkable water.

Looking ahead, we are optimistic about increasing participation in future retreats, building on the success of this year's event. The River Watch Leadership Retreat not only fosters environmental awareness but also encourages active participation in conservation efforts within the Red River basin.

Check us out on [Facebook](#) for more information!



Lake Sampling

The RLWD relies on volunteers and the East Polk SWCD to collect lake water quality data throughout the district but also has a plan to fill in data gaps by sampling 2-3 additional lakes each year (lakes are sampled for two years to meet minimum data requirements). Initial, June, sampling results from the 3 lakes that are being sampled in 2024-25 (Lindberg Lake, First Lake, and Second Lake) all met [water quality standards](#).

Volunteer sampling of Bartlett Lake (near Northome) has indicated improved water quality compared to previous years, though it still exceeded the applicable standard for total phosphorus. This improvement could be attributed to continued [burial of nutrient-rich legacy sediment](#).

The Red Lake Watershed District will continue to monitor these lakes through September. Future updates on water quality assessments and ongoing initiatives can be found on the district's official website or by contacting their office directly.

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