



It Starts with Partnership: Conservation in Le Sueur County Lakes Region

February 2017 Snapshots



For the residents of Le Sueur County, Lake Volney is a unique jewel. Located in the east-central portion of the county, Lake Volney is a deep lake (22.7 feet on average; 65 feet maximum), in an area of shallow lakes. It covers a total of 277 acres and represents one of the smaller lake systems within the Cannon River watershed, a major tributary to the Mississippi River.

In 2002, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) listed Lake Volney as impaired for aquatic recreation because of excess nutrients. Since then, Le Sueur County, Le Sueur County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), Lake Volney Association, Cordova and Lexington Townships, Minnesota State University, Mankato-Water Resources Center, and the Cannon River Watershed Partnership have worked tirelessly helping the lake and its resources. In 2014 the US EPA approved the Lake Volney Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) for excess nutrients.

Implementation of that TMDL became a reality in 2015 when Le Sueur County in partnership with Le Sueur SWCD was awarded a Clean Water Fund grant for the 'Lake Volney Targeted Restoration Project'. The grant's main objective was to address eight targeted priority areas around the lake contributing the most direct runoff.

The focus of 2016 was finalizing design and projects; four of the eight project areas were completed. The Le Sueur SWCD worked with South Central Technical Service Area 6 Engineers to design and install the projects. Currently, three water and sediment control basins have been installed on highly prioritized upper watershed farmland, two storm water catch basins were re-designed and rebuilt to better suit the current land uses, a drainage outlet was redesigned to handle the increased watershed runoff with a low flow sediment catch area, and a rock outlet was installed on a DNR Aquatic Management Area and a Township right of way to protect pollutants from entering the lake.



Drainage outlet before



Drainage outlet after

Landowners Dean and Dorreen Peterson worked with Le Sueur SWCD on the drainage outlet redesign project. "We are very thankful for the project, not only the monetary help but for the hope that the water quality of the lake will improve. There was so much runoff going into the lake from the farm field by our property. With the new sediment basins in the field, to the fixing of the storm water basins, to the drainage outlet project, we now have hope that the water quality will improve. And we have hope that we will not be flooded every time it rains! None of this would have been accomplished without the Clean Water Funds, and Le Sueur County and the SWCD!"