

# Construction underway for the Wilkinson Lake deep water wetland restoration

By Dawn Tanner

Contributing Writer.

In August, the North Oaks News provided an update that the bid process was underway for this important wetland restoration and regional project. The project is a partnership effort working toward improvement of Wilkinson Lake, and it has been in design phases for the past few years. Since the previous update, the bid process was completed in August and the bids received were favorable. Because the bids came in below the project estimate, an upgrade was immediately initiated by partners, and an enhanced, expanded design was created by Houston Engineering. The contracting company accepted the expanded design and, with approval from Houston, began work on the ground in early September.

You may have seen construction vehicles and earthwork mobilization underway south of Wilkinson Lake and be curious how this area will eventually look. The final project will include a network of deeper pools and shallow areas, native wetland vegetation, and higher ground islands. A high-quality native seed mix with species adapted to our part of the state and selected to support pollinators is being used in the shallow-water areas.

The expanded project design is included in this update. More project information is available on the VLAWMO website at [vlawmo.org/](http://vlawmo.org/) projects.

Improving water quality in



Excavation is being used to create wetland contours for water treatment and habitat improvements.

Wilkinson Lake is a priority for the VLAWMO and local and state partners as part of our participation in the small, priority watershed grant program that is administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) with funds from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Main project partners with

VLAWMO include North Oaks Company/North Oaks Farms (NOC), Houston Engineering Inc., the Minnesota Land Trust, Barr Engineering, St. Paul Regional Water Services, SEH and Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division. Figure Legend: The figure shows the expanded design with a slightly



PHOTOS CONTRIBUTED  
A pre-project remote camera monitored by VLAWMO shows a sandhill crane with an enhanced habitat.

larger pool and buffer area on the southwest side of the project area.

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