

LAKE DATA & PROGRAMS

VLAWMO's primary source of income is Storm Sewer Utility (SSU) fees. The average single family homeowner in VLAWMO pays \$62.04/year (\$5.17/month) to support projects and programs that improve the watershed.

Additional funding for projects comes from grants from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency 319 Grant, and the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources.

2023 Quick Stats:

16

Cost-share grants

7

Workshops facilitated

6

Service projects

14

WCA* permits approved

VLAWMO has seven lakes impaired for nutrients, and Lambert Creek is impaired for bacteria during storm events. Excess nutrient pollution in the form of Total Phosphorus (TP) is one of the most common pollutants that threaten our local waterbodies.

PROJECTS

Projects that improve the watershed are fueled by planning and studies. Check out our full 2023 Annual Report for more on the year's major projects:

- Wilkinson Deep-Water Wetland Restoration
- Westfield Park Bioswale
- Smart Irrigation Pilot Program

REGULATIONS

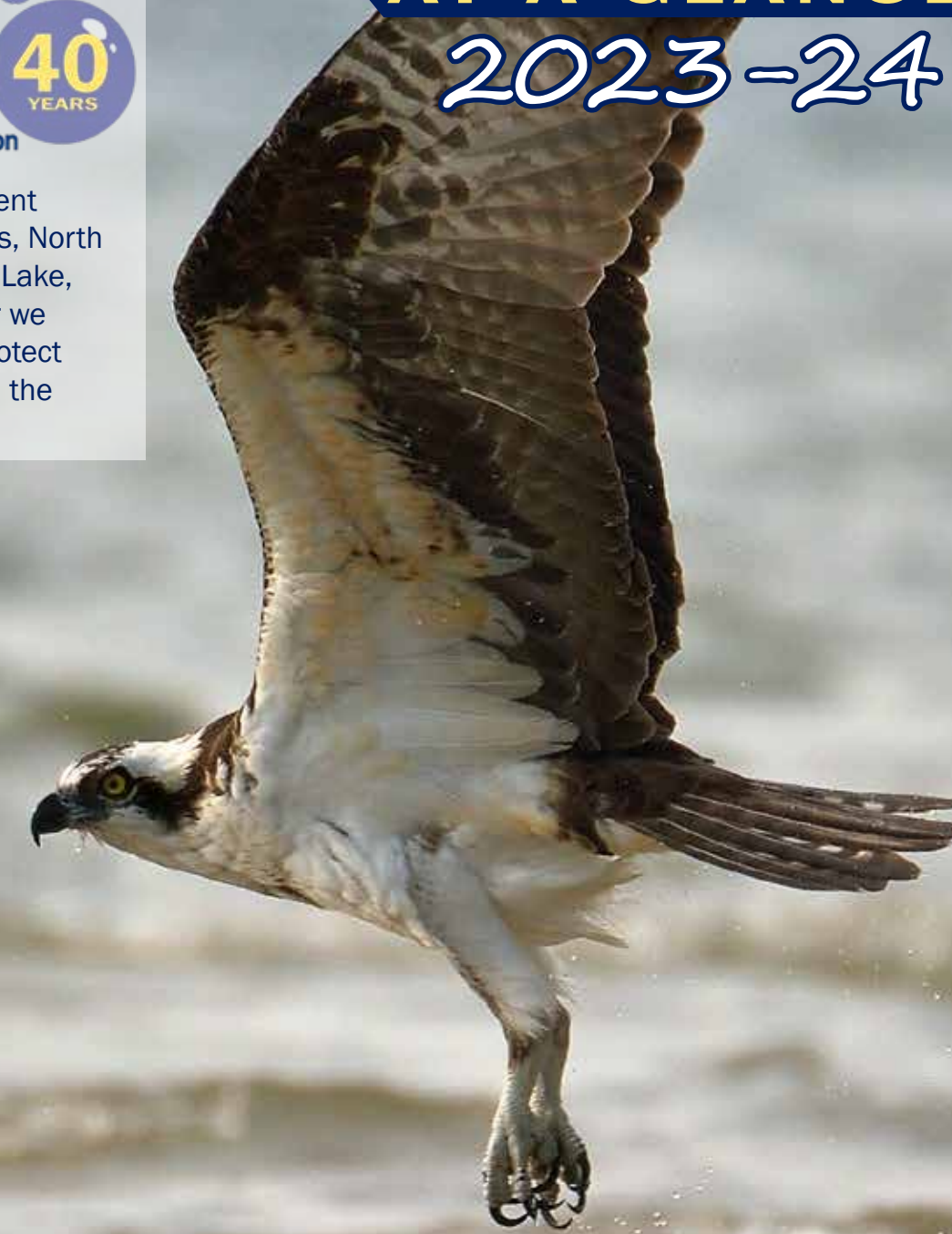
As a local governing unit, VLAWMO administers the MN Wetland Conservation Act (WCA). WCA oversees new development and banking credits as they pertain to wetland conservation.

WATERSHED AT A GLANCE

2023-24



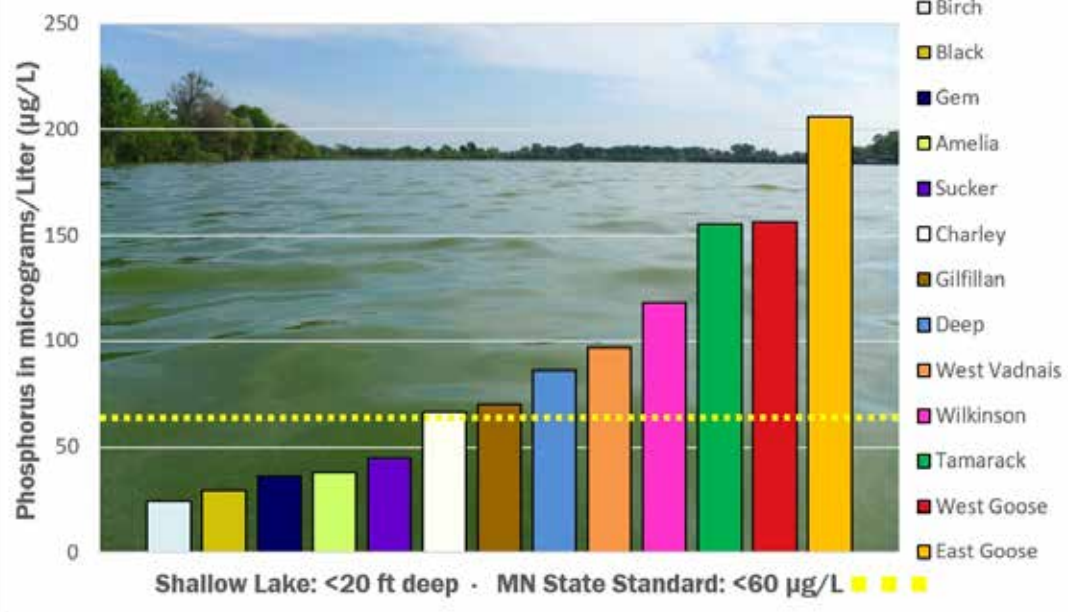
VLAWMO is a unit of local government co-created by Gem Lake, Lino Lakes, North Oaks, Vadnais Heights, White Bear Lake, and White Bear Township. Together we use science and partnerships to protect and improve the water resources in the watershed.



STATE OF THE LAKES

See the full water monitoring report for more on VLAWMO lake impairments and their causes.

Average Total Phosphorus of VLAWMO Shallow Lakes: 2010-2023



GRANT PROGRAMS

VLAWMO completed 16 grants in 2023. Highlights included 2 new bee lawns, 3 shoreline restorations, 3 raingardens, and 2 smart irrigation controllers that will help to greatly reduce groundwater irrigation use.



A new WBL bee lawn supports pollinators and soil health. Bee lawns have more root material than conventional turf, require less watering and inputs, and hold moisture longer.

The 2023 impact of all the projects combined is estimated to reduce sedimentation into waterbodies by 24,848 lbs/yr, reduce total phosphorus by 15.5 lbs yr, and infiltrate into the ground about 968,166 gallons/yr.

What can you do?

ADOPT-A-DRAIN

Cleaning a nearby stormdrain is a convenient way to support clean water, and it keeps the stormdrain system working smoothly. Visit adopt-a-drain.org to find your drain, give it a name, and get started as a local water leader.



Adopt-a-Drain volunteers help out close to home and on their own time. Clean drains lead to cleaner water!

WATER CONSERVATION

One of the easiest ways to conserve water actually doesn't involve water directly. Keeping a mowing height of 3" or more helps reduce the need for lawn irrigation, especially in dry times.

For water-friendly lawn care tips, smart deciding, and more tips: vlawmo.org/residents

Volunteers play a major role for the watershed, and a team effort makes it fun! The Watershed Action Volunteers (WAV) is a group of local residents who desire to learn more about the watershed while building community and making a difference. Short-term, long-term, and citizen advisory roles are available.

www.vlawmo.org/get-involved



Greetings,

We're pleased to present our annual update with a glimpse of what's new and exciting here in the watershed.

It was a year of celebrating milestones, with 2023 marking VLAWMO's 40th Anniversary. Our team and fabulous volunteer community held a series of events throughout the summer including project tours and educational workshops. The series culminated in a celebration picnic with our friends at Ramsey County Soil and Watershed Division (RCSWCD), who were celebrating their 50th anniversary.

We're thrilled about the new construction of the Wilkinson Lake Deep-Water Wetland Restoration. This effort improves water storage and reduces nutrient pollution in one of our most upstream waterbodies that drains into East Vadnais Lake. The effort is supported by MPCA 319 grant funds (see page 2).

Check out the snapshots found here in our summary report, or find more detail in the full 2023 Annual Report at VLawMO.org. We look forward to collaborating more with our community in 2024!



Phil Belfiori
651-204-6073
Phil.Belfiori@vlawmo.org

Board of Directors:

Jim Lindner
Gem Lake

Andrea West
White Bear Lake

Katherine Doll
Kanne
Vadnais Heights

Ed Prudhon
White Bear Township

John Schuman
North Oaks

Rob Rafferty
Lino Lakes

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN 2023-24?

WILKINSON LAKE

DEEP-WATER WETLAND RESTORATION

VLAWMO worked with North Oaks Company (NOC) to convert a former private ditch junction area into a deep-water wetland. Construction was completed in 2023. The completed wetland provides removal of nutrients, increased storage, and improved ecological function before water flows into Wilkinson Lake, which is impaired for nutrients. Grant funds for this project were provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/319 funds, administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), with a local cash match shared equally between VLAWMO and NOC.



SMART IRRIGATION PILOT PROGRAM

VLAWMO teamed up with Vadnais Heights and White Bear Township to install 2 new smart irrigation systems on several public properties. The systems are expected to save thousands of gallons of water in irrigation each year as they adapt and accommodate for natural precipitation.



CARP REMOVAL

During the second spring carp removal effort in 2023, 384 carp were removed from a double barrier system between Deep and Wilkinson Lakes. Surveys indicate that total carp biomass is now below the 100 kg/ha management threshold. Because approximately 2/3 of the carp population that approached the barrier moved back into Deep Lake instead of re-approaching the barrier during 2023, a new double barrier system was placed between Pleasant and Deep Lakes for the spring removal effort in 2024.



VADNAIS-SUCKER HABITAT RESTORATION

A wetland and forest restoration began in the Vadnais-Sucker Lakes Regional Park in 2023. The effort is a partnership with Ramsey County, Saint Paul Regional Water Services, Great River Greening, and VLAWMO.



WESTFIELD PARK BIOSWALE

A new bioswale in the City of Vadnais Heights will help to slow runoff and improve upland water storage in the Lambert Creek drainage system. The bioswale is located at a former wetland site where the soil is still a wetland soil.



RICE LAKE PURPLE LOOSESTRIFE BIO-CONTROL

Minnesota Water Steward Megan Sigmon-Olsen conducted a purple loosestrife beetle rearing and release effort at Rice Lake. The boost to the loosestrife beetle population will help to contain the presence of invasive purple loosestrife in the Rice Lake wetland. Reducing the plant's impact helps to preserve ecological function and water storage capacity in the wetland.



- Volunteer and public booth events
- Water monitoring sites
- Workshops and planning efforts
- Projects

