



**CLEAN
WATER
LAND &
LEGACY
AMENDMENT**



St. Louis River Watershed Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

2023 - 2032

What is a Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan?

- Voluntary plan
- Aligns water planning along watershed boundaries
- Enhances the existing county water plans
- Aligns local priorities with state agencies and is locally driven
- Uses existing authorities (county boards, SWCD boards, Fond du Lac government)
- Based on current available information and data
- Progress is monitored and tracked for achieving measurable goals
- Once the plan is approved & adopted, implementation funding follows a non-competitive process

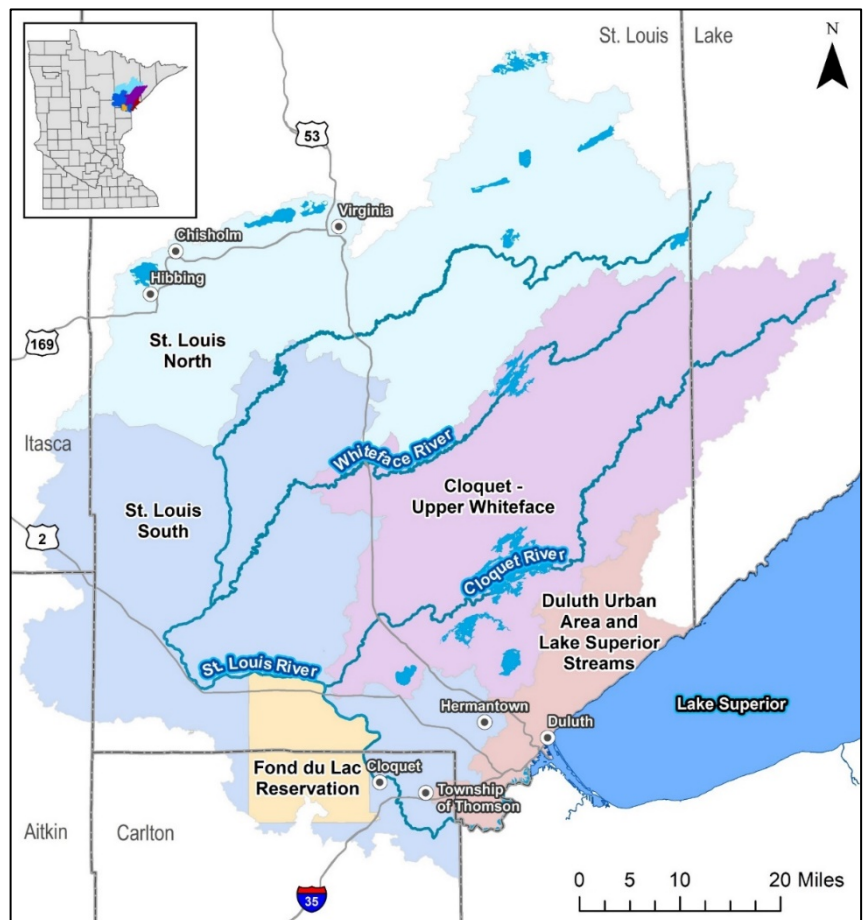
The St. Louis River Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan

- Formed a Memorandum of Understanding between six entities: St. Louis County, North St. Louis SWCD, South St. Louis SWCD, Carlton County, Carlton SWCD and Fond du Lac Reservation
- Drew from a multitude of previous plans and studies throughout the watershed
- The plan is divided into five distinct planning areas, recognizing the unique resource, concerns and partners.

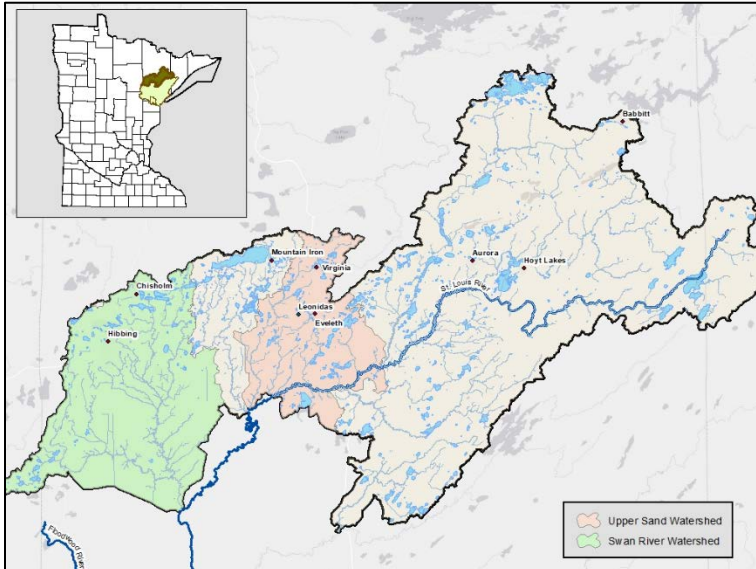
St. Louis River

Watershed Highlights

- Includes St. Louis River, Cloquet River and the southwestern portion of the Lake Superior South watersheds
- Spans St. Louis, Lake, Carlton, Aitkin and Itasca Counties and the Fond du Lac Reservation
- Five distinct planning areas with unique resources and concerns
- Most of the watershed has natural land cover (forest, wetlands) with healthy waters
- Concentrated areas where historical and current land use impacts are affecting lakes and streams



St. Louis River North Planning Area



Main Actions:

- Work with municipalities and landowners to restore streams, lakes and drinking water
- Protect lakes, streams, and ground water by maintaining forest cover on the landscape
- Manage salt use and maintain watershed storage

Main Planning Area Issues

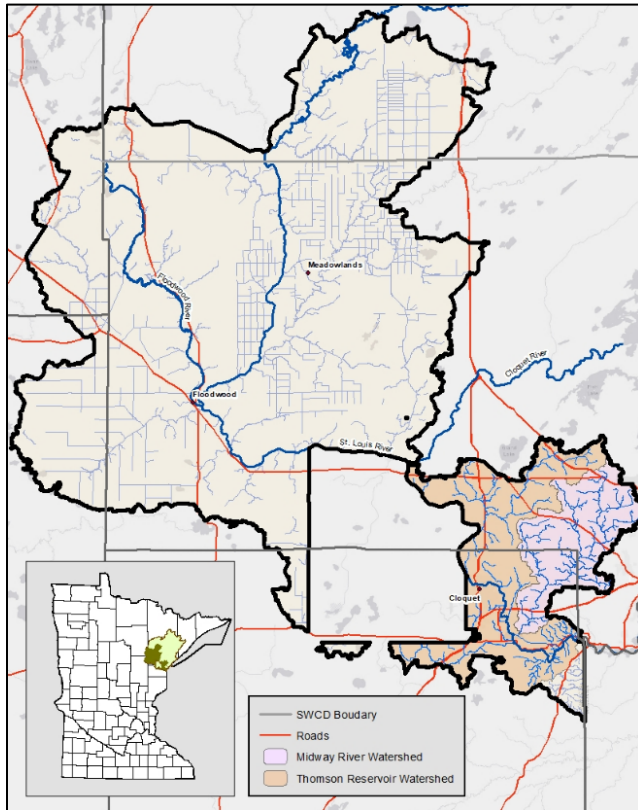
- Bacteria impaired streams impact water recreation
- Drinking water from surface and ground water sources needs to be protected
- Development in the watershed impacts lakes and streams



Desired Future Condition (Long-Term Goal):

- Drinking water quality is protected
- Developed land is well managed to protect lakes and streams
- Streams are safe for aquatic recreation

St. Louis River South Planning Area



Main Actions

- Work with rural landowners to restore stream health
- Protect valuable groundwater and cold-water resources by maintaining forest cover and shoreline habitats
- Manage salt use and stormwater to keep streams healthy and cold

Main Planning Area Issues

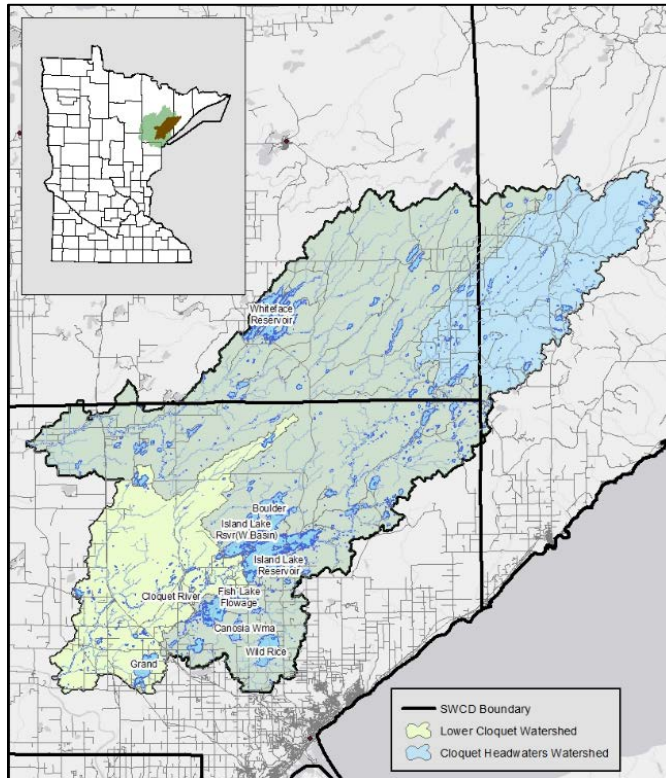
- Five bacteria impairments impact aquatic recreation
- Development in the lower watershed threatens high quality resources
- Groundwater resources need to be protected for drinking water and stream health



Desired Future Condition (Long-Term Goal):

- Streams are safe for aquatic recreation
- Brook trout continue to thrive
- Groundwater supplies are safe and continue to provide cold water to streams

Cloquet River Planning Area



Main Actions

- Work with recreational land users to increase stewardship
- Manage septic systems, salt use and gravel mining to protect streams and lakes
- Reconnect and restore streams to improve trout stream habitat

Main Planning Area Issues

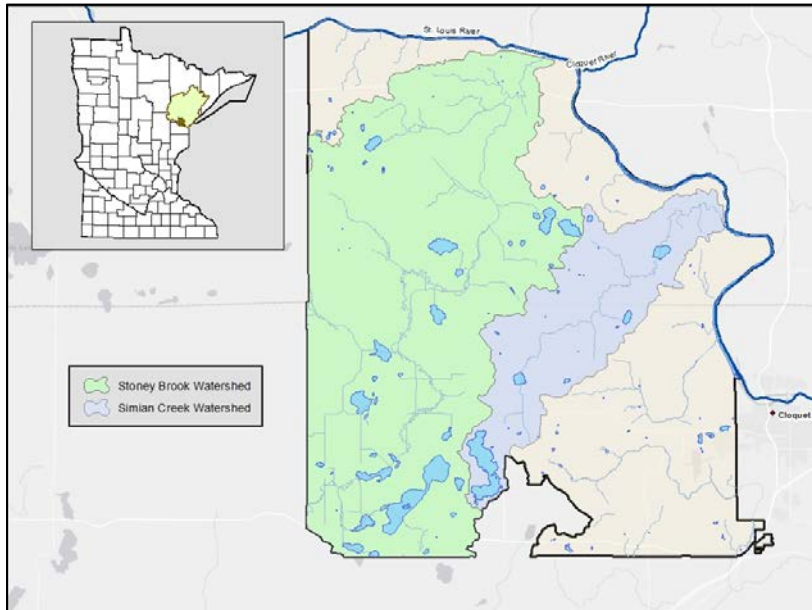
- Recreational land users play a vital role in protecting this pristine watershed
- High quality rivers, streams and lakes need restoration and protection from development pressure and connectivity issues
- Forests cover must be maintained to enhance habitat and protect high quality rivers, streams and lakes



Desired Future Condition (Long-Term Goal):

- Recreational land uses are good stewards of the watershed
- Pristine lakes and streams are protected for future generations
- Forests continue to provide vital habitat and protect lakes, streams and rivers

Fond du Lac Reservation Planning Area



Main Actions

- Construct projects that help manage and protect wild rice
- Complete stream restorations to improve trout habitat
- Protect sensitive shoreline areas

Main Planning Area Issues

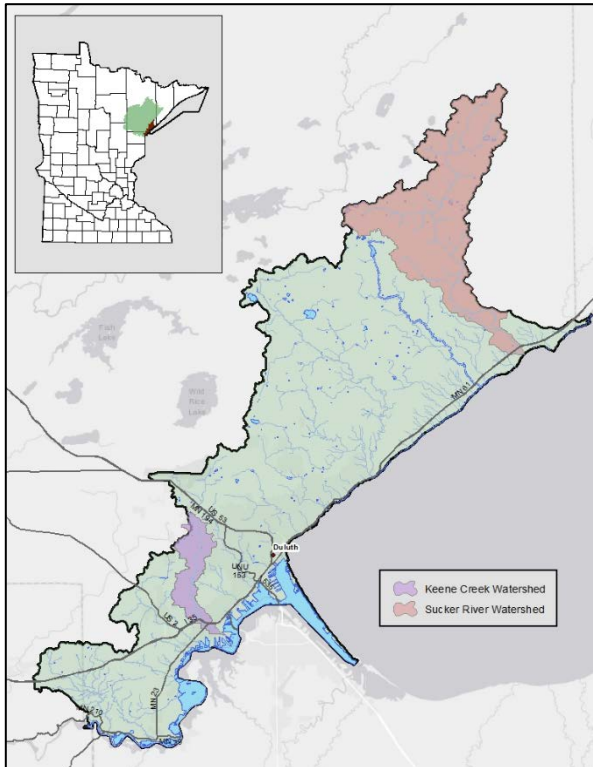
- Septic system management to protect water quality in Big Lake
- Protecting and managing wild rice so Band members can continue traditional harvesting practices
- Enhancing and restoring hydrologic functions in systems heavily impacted by ditching
- Mercury impairments that prevent fish harvesting at subsistence levels.



Desired Future Condition (Long-Term Goal):

- Safe septic system management at Big Lake
- Waters support diverse aquatic life and maintain traditional practices such as fishing and harvesting wild rice
- Brook trout continue to thrive

Duluth Urban Planning Area



Main Actions

- Complete stormwater plans and construct stormwater projects
- Construct stream restorations
- Replace undersized culverts and remove barriers to fish passage
- Protect high priority undeveloped lands and forests

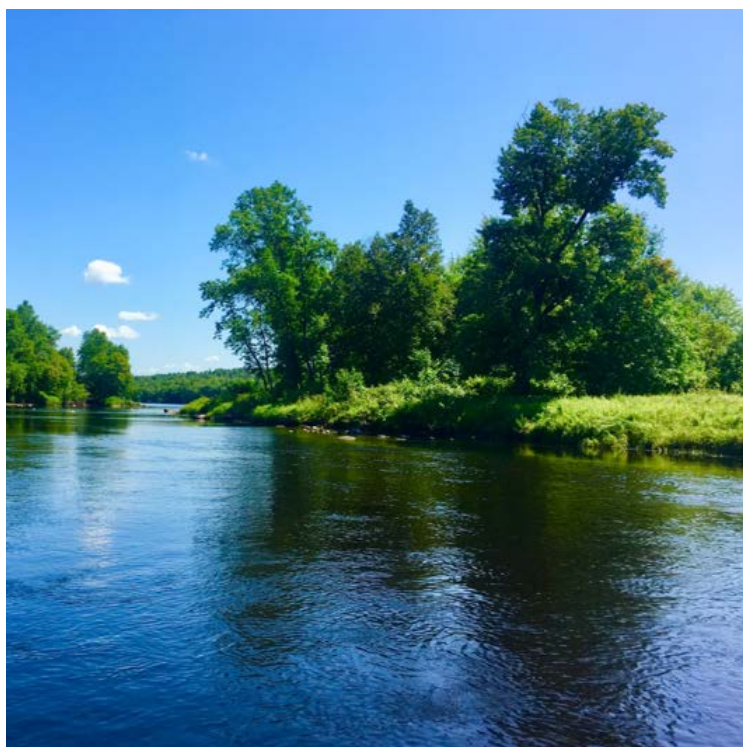
Main Planning Area Issues

- Urban stressors including bacteria, salt and stormwater are impacting stream health
- Habitat for trout and other aquatic species is in need of restoration



Desired Future Condition (Long-Term Goal):

- Urban streams provide safe fishing and recreation for all people
- Streams provide good habitat for trout and other aquatic species



Vision:

A watershed where the natural and human communities are sustainable and resilient and economic opportunity is in harmony with ecosystem health

Why does it matter?

Healthy rivers, lakes and drinking water are a major reason why the St. Louis River Watershed is such a special place. With its wild forests, cold trout streams, lakes for fishing, ricing and recreation, the watershed is both a destination and home for many Minnesotans. The land within this watershed holds great ecological, aesthetic, and monetary value.

Our Minnesota way of life depends on the quality of our waters.



For a full copy of this plan, visit: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WqzK9Rv2Buc13qfa9tTiAKfxZu-WxEh4?usp=sharing>

Please contact the South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District with questions.

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Website: <https://www.southstlouisswcd.org/>