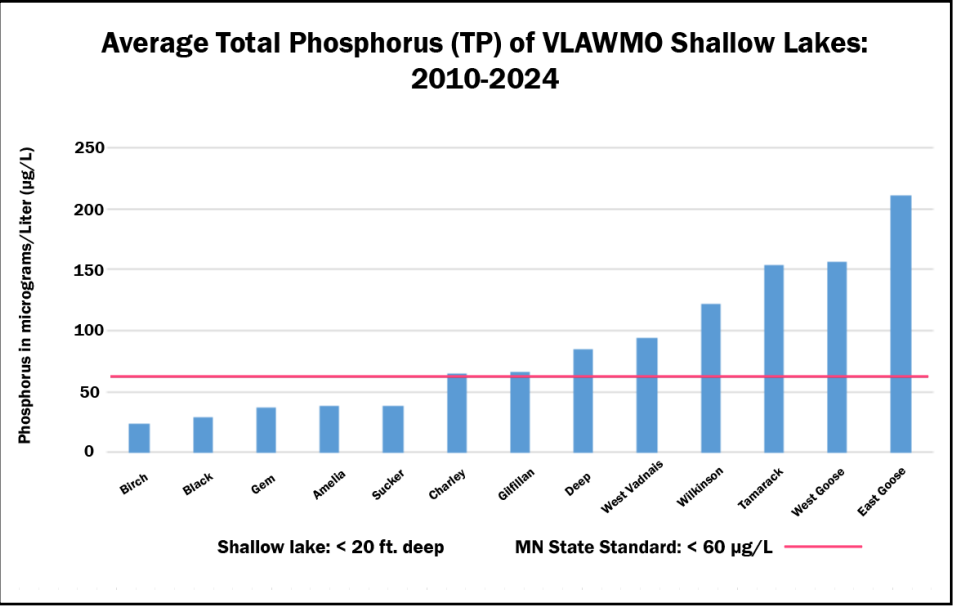


WATER DATA & PROGRAMS

STATE OF THE WATER

The VLAWMO watershed is home to 17 lakes, Lambert Creek, and over 500 wetlands. Currently, VLAWMO has 7 lakes impaired for nutrients, and Lambert Creek is impaired for bacteria during storm events. Total Phosphorus (TP) from excess nutrients is one of the most common pollutants threatening our local waterbodies.



See the full water monitoring report for more information on the health of the watershed, including impairment details.



PROJECTS

Watershed improvement projects are fueled by planning and studies. Check out our full 2024 Annual Report for more on the year’s major projects, including:

- » City of White Bear Lake Street Rehabilitation
- » Elmwood Park Curb Cut Raingarden
- » Wilkinson Lake Deep-Water Wetland
- » Deep Lake Shoreline Restoration
- » Groundwater conservation projects

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.

GRANT PROGRAMS

VLAWMO awarded 23 grants in 2024. These grants helped fund:

- » 5 rain barrels
- » 7 native plant restorations/pollinator gardens
- » 2 no-mow/low-mow turf replacements
- » 1 vegetated swale
- » 6 curb cut raingardens
- » 6 smart irrigation controllers to reduce groundwater use

2024 Watershed AT A GLANCE



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.



Greetings,

I am pleased to share an annual update from VLAWMO. This year as in the past, collaboration with our partners remained a critical component of our work to protect and improve the water resources in our watershed.

2024 saw progress on numerous capital projects with our partners, several of which are highlighted on the following pages. Installation of multiple curb cut raingardens coincided with street reconstruction projects in the City of White Bear Lake and the City of Vadnais Heights. Partnership with the North Oaks Home Owners’ Association was vital to continued restoration efforts on wetland habitats around Deep Lake’s shoreline. Wetland enhancement at the Wilkinson Lake deep-water wetland also continued in the past year. We invite you to learn more in the snapshots found on the following pages, or visit vlawmo.org to review our full 2024 Annual Report.

It is an honor to work with VLAWMO’s outstanding partners, leadership, staff, and watershed residents. We look forward to more community collaboration in 2025!



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

FINANCE

VLAWMO’s primary income source is Storm Sewer Utility (SSU) fees. In 2024, the average single family homeowner in the watershed paid \$64.89 over the course of the year (\$5.41 per month) to support watershed projects and programs. Additional project funding came from grants from the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR), and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA).



Planting for clean water brightens up yards and provides critical habitat for pollinators and wildlife. Long-rooted native plants boost water quality by reducing runoff and helping water soak into the ground. VLAWMO grants fund a variety of these projects each year.

What can you do?

ADOPT-A-DRAIN

Keeping a local stormdrain free from debris is a convenient way to protect water, as our stormdrains send water directly to local lakes, rivers, and wetlands. Remember the phrase, “only rain down the drain!” Visit adopt-a-drain.org to find your drain, give it a name, and get started as a local water leader.

CONSERVE WATER

One of the easiest ways to conserve water is to stick to a lawn mowing height of 3” or more. This simple step reduces the need for irrigation, especially in dry times. Find water-friendly lawn care advice, smart de-icing strategies, and more tips at vlawmo.org/

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers play a major role in keeping our watershed healthy. The Watershed Action Volunteers (WAV) group is made up of local residents learning more about the watershed while building community and making a difference. Interested in joining this wave of action? Short-term, long-term, and citizen advisory roles are available.



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

Photo: Clean Water MN

www.vlawmo.org/get-involved



2024 Board of Directors:

Jim Lindner

Gem Lake

Andrea West

White Bear Lake

Katherine Doll
Kanne

Vadnais Heights

Ed Prudhon

White Bear Township

John Schuman,
Grover Sayre

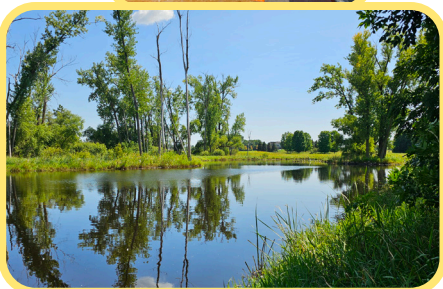
North Oaks

Rob Rafferty

Lino Lakes

WILKINSON LAKE
DEEP-WATER WETLAND RESTORATION

In 2024, VLAWMO and North Oaks Company (NOC) continued restoration efforts on this deep-water wetland, which removes nutrients from water before it flows into Wilkinson Lake. 2024 brought buckthorn removal, native seed establishment, and wetland enhancement plantings to stabilize and protect shorelines, prevent erosion, and benefit pollinators. The project is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) 319 grant funds administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA), with a local cash match shared equally between VLAWMO and NOC.



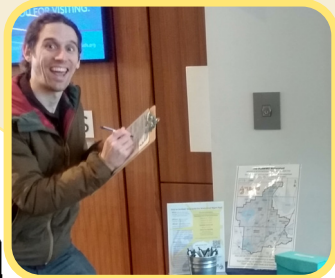
DEEP LAKE
SHORELINE
RESTORATION

Invasive buckthorn chokes out native plants that improve water quality and provide aquatic habitat. Throughout 2022 and 2023, NOHOA and VLAWMO collaborated to fund restoration work completed by contractors. 2024 brought the addition of work in NOC-owned areas. VLAWMO's partnership funding focused on wetland shoreline areas.



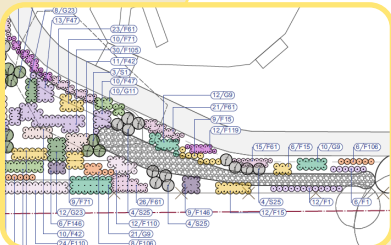
COMMUNITY INPUT
ON WATERSHED
MANAGEMENT PLAN

VLAWMO is developing its fifth Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, a guide to watershed projects and programs from 2027-2036. In 2024, VLAWMO sought input from people who live in, work in, and visit the watershed. Online and hard copy surveys gathered feedback on various water topics. Staff held virtual coffee chats, in-person workshops, and presentations to allow for public input and learning about the watershed. These findings will inform further Plan development.



GROUNDWATER
CONSERVATION

In 2024, VLAWMO partnered with 4 HOAs and 2 communities to install smart irrigation controllers covering over 170 acres. These devices provide real-time information on water usage, saving users water and money. VLAWMO also partnered with the City of Vadnais Heights to pair their water efficiency rebate program with VLAWMO grant opportunities.



ELMWOOD PARK
CURB CUT RAINGARDEN

VLAWMO partnered with the City of Vadnais Heights to install a 1200-square foot curb cut rain garden at Elmwood Park. Rain garden installation coincided with a City street reconstruction project adding a new path and parking spaces at the park. The rain garden will reduce the area's stormwater volume. After spring 2025 planting, the rain garden will contain over 1000 plants to create pollinator habitat.

WHITE BEAR LAKE
STREET REHABILITATION

VLAWMO partnered with the City of White Bear Lake and Ramsey County Soil and Water Conservation Division to construct five curb cut rain gardens alongside the City's street rehabilitation project. These rain gardens will treat stormwater runoff before it reaches Lambert Creek. Native plants will filter pollutants and provide pollinator habitat.

