

WATERSHED WEEKLY

MARCH 27, 2026

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BOARD MEETING

The Shell Rock River Watershed District Board of Managers will host their monthly board meeting on April 14, 2026, at 8:30 AM. There will be a public hearing for the Sanderson Wetland Restoration. The meeting will be recorded and uploaded to the District's website: www.shellrock.org. Check out previous agendas and minutes there too.



DREDGING TO START THIS SPRING

The Shell Rock River Watershed District received a final permit from the MN DNR yesterday! In addition, the Board of Managers approved motions that will commence final dredging of Fountain Lake, culminating the multi-year effort to improve water quality in Fountain Lake.

This final phase includes the removal of approximately 600,000 cubic yards of accumulated sediment from the Main Bay (East Basin), Bancroft Creek, and portions of Bancroft Bay. Active dredging will begin this spring, and to take approximately two years to complete.

Upon completion, the Fountain Lake Restoration Project is expected to have removed between 1.7 and 1.8 million cubic yards of sediment from Fountain Lake. The sediment removal is a major step toward improving water quality and moving the Lake closer to delisting it from Minnesota's Impaired Waters List. The project also advances the goals outlined in the One Watershed, One Plan Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan, developed with support from local and state partners.

The Watershed District began active dredging in 2018, utilizing \$7.5 million in state funding and \$9.5 million in local option sales tax funds. Leveraged funding allowed the District to complete the first two phases of dredging between 2018 and 2021, removing approximately 1.2 million cubic yards of accumulated sediment from West Main Bay, Edgewater Bay, and Dane's Bay.

"The District staff and Board of Managers are proud to be a part of this monumental project and excited for the community, who has provided overwhelming support throughout the project, to benefit from the positive impact it has and will continue to have for generations" said District Administrator Andy Henschel.

Additional details about project timelines and construction activities will be shared as they become available.



SOUTH INDUSTRIAL PROJECT

Natural Resource Technician, Mike Wacholz, reported conducting maintenance at the South Industrial Project site. This project was originally completed in 2008 and involved construction of a stormwater pond and treatment wetland that receives stormwater from an industrial area in Albert Lea. It was designed to resolve flooding issues on Highway 65, as well as provide water quality treatment to runoff prior to being discharged to Albert Lea Lake.



GOOSE LAKE FISH BARRIER

Natural Resource Technician, Mike Wacholz, assisted with retrofitting equipment at the Goose Lake Fish Barrier.

History: As part of the Goose Lake Reclamation, a fish barrier was installed on Goose Creek during the winter of 2014-15 and is located on Green Lea Golf Course. This barrier will control carp in Goose Lake by preventing the upstream migration. Carp like to spawn in warm, shallow lakes like Goose Lake, so preventing their movement from Fountain Lake to Goose Lake will eliminate this breeding ground.

Carp and other bottom-feeding fish uproot and consume rooted aquatic vegetation and disturb and re-suspend phosphorus rich sediments. The resulting increase in turbidity reduces light penetration, which discourages new native aquatic vegetation growth. The direct result of the project will be improved aquatic habitat, waterfowl nesting, breeding and feeding habitat, and improved water quality and clarity in Goose Lake and Fountain Lake.

ADOPT A STORM DRAIN  **Protect local waterways** [Sign up!](#)

ADOPT-A-DRAIN

SRRWD staff, Leah Stadheim, reminds residents to clean off your storm drain before April showers! The Adopt-a-Drain program is a fun and important way for people to help keep their community clean and protect local lakes and rivers. When it rains, water flows into storm drains on streets and in neighborhoods. Unlike water from sinks and toilets, stormwater does not go to a treatment plant—it flows directly into nearby streams, rivers, and lakes. If trash, leaves, or pet waste are left near drains, they can wash into the water and cause pollution.

The City of Albert Lea is offering an incentive for everyone who signs up and commits to keeping their drain clean. After signing up, please visit the Shell Rock River Watershed District office to pick up your 2026 compost permit!

Sign up at www.shellrock.org.

LAKE CLEANUP DAY

Saturday, April 25th

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Lake Shoreline Cleanup Day
Garbage Bags & Gloves Provided
at Frank Hall Park

