



Capital Improvement Project



Lakeville: South Creek Stabilization and Habitat Improvement

Stabilizing South Creek with native plants

Two properties owned by the City of Lakeville were seeded with native grasses that stabilize stream banks and provide wildlife habitat.

Completed cooperatively by:

- City of Lakeville
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization
- Dakota Soil and Water Conservation District

The City of Lakeville owns a combined 9.3 acres of property along South Creek and its tributaries. Both properties are close to agricultural areas, and the Dakota Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) informed the City that farming was taking place on those properties. The City worked with farmers to stop them from planting crops on City land and marked property boundaries.

The City applied for cost-share from the VRWJPO to remove invasive species and re-seed the areas with native grasses, which work well to stabilize stream banks, filter runoff, and improve habitat for fish and wildlife.

The existing vegetation was treated with herbicide to remove any invasive species and prepare the soil for re-seeding. The soil was then tilled and raked to create a smooth surface for the seeds.

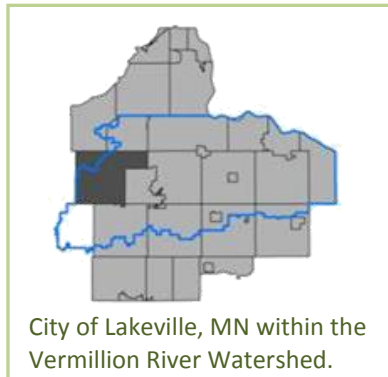
Cover crops were sown along with native grasses to control erosion while the seeds were taking hold. Grasses included Big bluestem, Little bluestem, Indian grass, Side oats grama, Canada wild rye, Switch grass, Kalm's brome, June grass, and Sand dropseed. Seeding took place before July 1, 2011, and the grasses should be growing well by spring 2012.

Two City of Lakeville properties roughly indicated by red outlines were seeded with native grasses.





Canada wild rye was one of several native grasses planted on the 9.3 acres.



Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization

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The Vermillion River is a vital natural resource that is important to public health and recreation, as well as preserving unique wildlife habitats. It flows from New Market Township in Scott County, through residential and agricultural areas in central Dakota County, and cascades into a 100-foot ravine before it enters the Mississippi River near the Cities of Hastings and Red Wing, Minnesota. Throughout its journey, the river reflects urban and rural life within its 335-square mile watershed.

Problem:

- Dakota SWCD informed the City of Lakeville that two city-owned properties were being farmed close to South Creek and its tributaries.
- Property boundaries were not clearly marked.
- The areas did not have sufficient native plants to stabilize stream banks, filter runoff, or provide habitat for fish and wildlife.

Actions:

- Work with landowners to stop farming practices on city property.
- Install steel fence posts to mark the property boundaries of the city land.
- Apply herbicide to remove existing invasive vegetation.
- Till the soil to a depth of four inches and rake the soil to create a smooth, firm seedbed.
- Sow native grasses and other cover.

Benefits:

- Improves water quality by providing native grasses to filter stormwater runoff coming from nearby farm fields and urban areas.
- Clarifies the limits of public land to prevent future farming close to the stream.
- Provides stream bank stabilization through deep-rooted native grasses.
- Provides native habitat for fish and wildlife.
- Allows for education, outreach, and stewardship.

Costs and contributions:

- City of Lakeville: \$3,260 – planning, contracting, site preparation, seeding
- Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization: \$2,800 – cost share
- Dakota SWCD: technical assistance

Project completed October 2011