

# FOUNTAIN LAKE RESTORATION

## 2023 Bonding Request



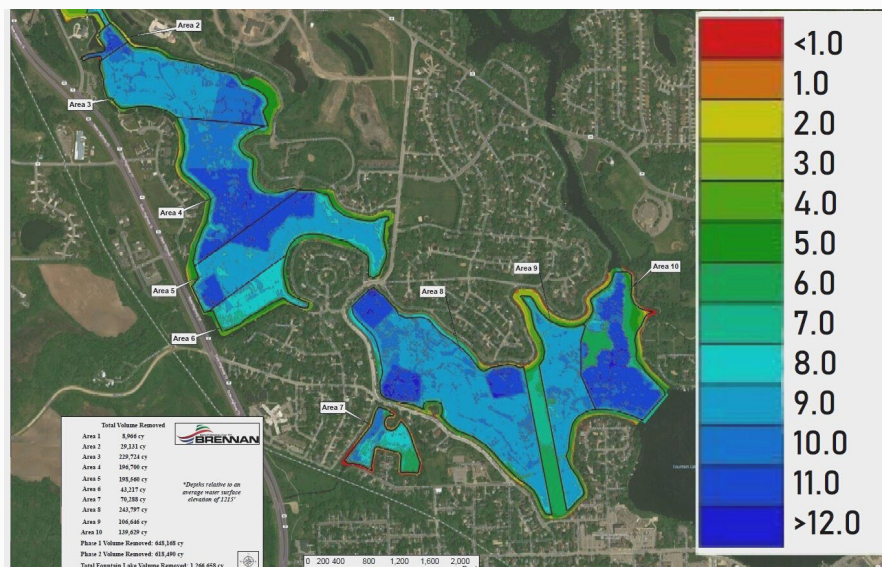
The Shell Rock River Watershed District (SRRWD) is requesting \$9 million from the Minnesota Legislature in 2023 to complete the third and final phase of the Fountain Lake Restoration Project. In 2023, SF172 (Sen. Gene Dornink) and HF277 (Rep. Peggy Bennett) introduced bills to provide funding for the project, Phase 3 - Main Bay (East Basin), Bancroft Creek and parts of Bancroft Bay. It is critical for the success of the project to complete Phase 3, in the heart of Albert Lea.

## The Top-Down Approach

After Fountain Lake was added to Minnesota's Impaired Waters List in 2008, the SRRWD and its partners focused their efforts to improve water quality in Fountain Lake by implementing upstream projects. Projects, totaling over 15 million dollars, included managing rough fish populations, installing fish barriers, checking septic system compliance, restoring lakes and streambanks, and promoting agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs). While these recent measures helped improve water quality, overall phosphorus levels still needed to be reduced. Internal phosphorus loading can be challenging to control; however, success has been seen with hydraulic dredging.

*"Working together, we can achieve our goal of fishable, swimmable, and drinkable water." Andy Henschel, SRRWD Administrator*

The restoration of Fountain Lake is a multi-phased project. The District began active dredging in 2018, utilizing \$7.5 million in state funds and \$9.5 million in local option sales tax funds. Leveraged funding provided dredging and disposal of the first two phases of the project through 2021 and the removal of approximately 1.2 million cubic yards of accumulated sediment. The figure below shows the results of Phase I (Edgewater Bay) and Phase II (Main Bay, West Basin)



# Clean Water



# Habitat



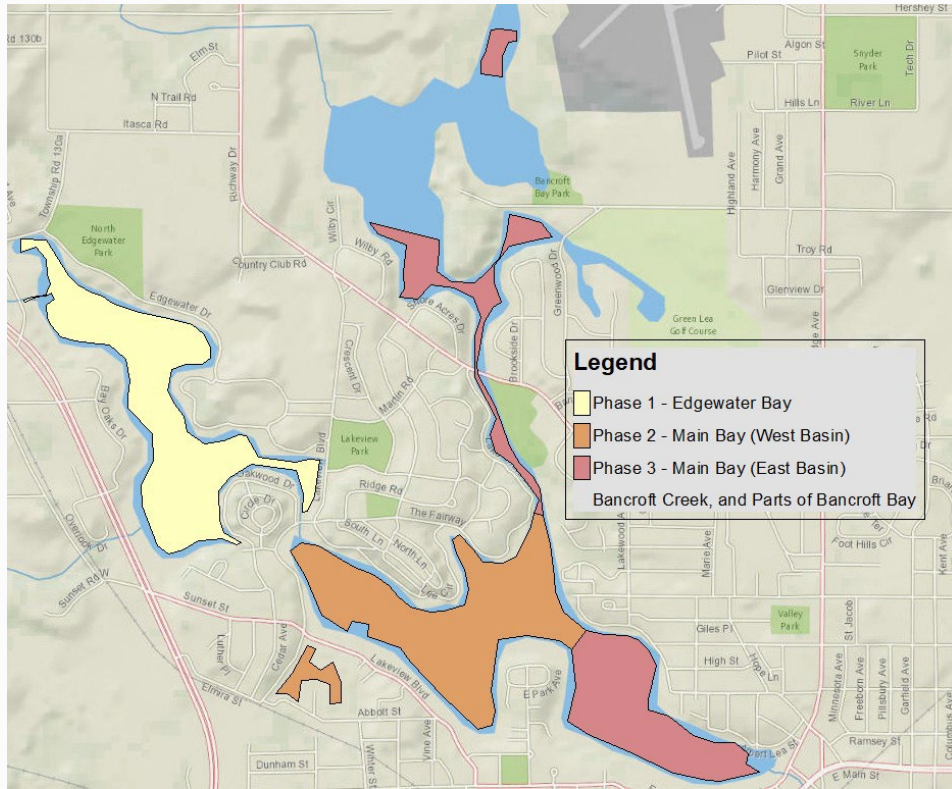
# Recreation



Fountain Lake is located in the heart of Albert Lea and is a crucial component to the financial, physical, and social fabric of southern Minnesota. Fountain Lake affects not only the quality of life for over 20,000 local residents, but also has regional economic implications. As the city of Albert Lea continues to revitalize the downtown area, a healthy lake adds value, opportunity, and recreation.

## THE FINAL PHASE

The Shell Rock River Watershed District is requesting \$9 million from the Minnesota Legislature to complete the third and final phase of the Fountain Lake Restoration Project which includes the removal of an additional 600,000 cubic yards of accumulated sediment from the Main Bay (East Basin), Bancroft Creek, and parts of Bancroft Bay. Once complete, between 1.7 and 1.8 million cubic yards are expected to have been removed from the lake, making it one step closer to being delisted from Minnesota's Impaired Waters List and achieving the goals of the One Watershed, One Plan Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan developed by local and state supporters.



## LOCAL SUPPORT

