

# A Minnesota lake side paradise

## Deer Lake



Minnesota's lakes are the best! For generations we have looked to our lakes for relaxation, recreation, and family memories. The thought of a weekend at the lake stirs up emotions many of us can't put into words. Whether you are a regular at a resort, own a cabin or permanently reside lake side, you know the value of our lakes.

**"Lakes are the center of attention in northern Minnesota."**

Lakes drive much of our economy in the north. We have not only some of the cleanest lakes in the state, but in the entire country! Our lakes and rivers are also the source of clean drinking water for many larger cities downstream.

### Threats to our lakes

Unfortunately, many of our waters are in danger to a host of threats. Some property owners are replacing more and more of the natural lakeshore habitat with fertilized lawns, larger buildings, and paved surfaces. These hard or "impervious surfaces" increase the rate of runoff. Our lakes are becoming inundated with stormwater runoff filled with contaminants like phosphorus and nitrates that cause changes to the water quality and throw off the lake's natural balance.

**Phosphorus** is a nutrient found in manure, leaves, soil, and fertilizer. Under natural conditions phosphorus is typically scarce in water. Human activities, however, have resulted in excessive phosphorus loading into our lakes. Phosphorus triggers harmful algae blooms.

1 pound of  
phosphorus



= 500 pound  
of algae

### Land is connected by water

Lakeshore property owners are firsthand witnesses when imbalances occur within the watershed. All the land surrounding and within a watershed contributes to the overall health or deterioration of water quality. Your local SWCD continually works with all types of landowners to protect the natural resources and water quality within our watersheds. We assist landowners of all kinds in conservation practices that will achieve the best outcome for the watershed and our many lakes.



*Thinking about a shoreline project?*

*We're here to help!*

Itasca Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD) is your local resource for expert advice and support when it comes to protecting and improving your land and water. Whether you're planning a shoreline restoration, native planting, erosion control, or habitat project, our team is here to provide **free site visits and technical guidance** to help you get started and stay on track.

*Funding support available!*

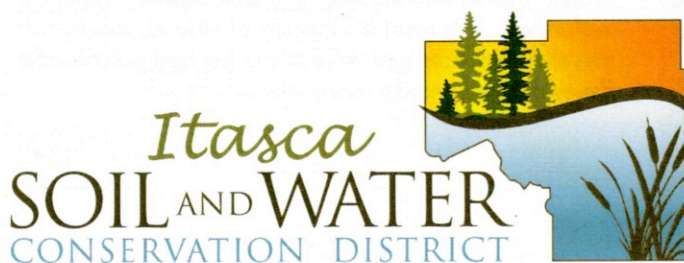
Itasca SWCD also offers cost share opportunities to help offset the expense of conservation projects. These funds can make a big difference in getting your project off the ground. Let us know what you're working on—we'd love to partner with you!

*Local solutions that make a difference*

Every project, big or small, contributes to healthier soil, cleaner water, and more resilient landscapes in our community. By working together, we can protect the natural resources that make Itasca County such a special place to live, work, and play.

*Got Questions? We've got answers.*

From site visits to plant recommendations, habitat questions, or just figuring out what's possible on your property—we're happy to help! Even if you're just looking for a little inspiration, we can share examples of successful local projects to spark ideas. Get in touch with us anytime!



Itasca SWCD  
Austin Steere- Projects Coordinator  
austin.steere@ItascaSWCD.org  
218-999-4434

1895 W. US Hwy 2 - Grand Rapids, MN 55744 - [www.ItascaSWCD.org](http://www.ItascaSWCD.org)