

### General information

**Public comment period begins: June 30, 2025**

**Public comment period ends: July 14, 2025**

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) Commissioner has made a preliminary determination to certify the referenced project, with conditions, and has preliminarily determined that the project will satisfy the antidegradation standards in Minn. R. 7050.0265.

**Name and address of applicant:**

Tim Beaster  
Conservation Specialist  
South St. Louis Soil and Water  
Conservation District  
4215 Enterprise Circle  
Duluth, MN 55811

**Project name and location (county):**

Unnamed Creek to Railroad Creek  
Culvert Replacement Witte Road  
Project, St. Louis County

**MPCA contact person:**

Bill Wilde, MPCA Project Manager  
Resource Management and Assistance Division  
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency  
520 Lafayette Road North  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155  
Phone: 651-757-2825  
Email: William.wilde@state.mn.us

**Federal Permitting Agency:**

Thomas Sowinski  
Project Manager  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
St. Paul District, North Branch  
Duluth Regulatory Office  
600 South Lake Avenue,  
Suite 211  
Duluth, Minnesota 55802

A draft Section 401 Water Quality Certification with antidegradation determination is available for review on the MPCA Public Notices webpage at <http://www.pca.state.mn.us/publicnotices> or at the MPCA office address listed under the MPCA contact person. The MPCA will mail or email a copy of the draft certification upon request. Comments, petitions, and other requests must be received at the MPCA in writing on or before the public comment period end date and time identified above.

### Major Watershed: St. Louis River

### Description of Issuance for 401 Water Quality Certification for Unnamed Creek to Railroad Creek Culvert Replacement, Witte Road Project #2025-00264-TMS

South St. Louis Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) proposes a culvert replacement project under Witte Road. The existing culvert is a steel metal corrugated pipe that is corroded and undersized at 18-inch diameter and 26-feet long. The replacement culvert is 49-inch by 33-inch aluminum pipe arch culvert, 28-feet long. The unnamed and unmapped tributary to Railroad Creek has a bankfull width of 4 feet. The proposed project will excavate 50 cubic yards (0.02-acres) and fill 50-cubic yards (0.02-acres) of substrate to install the new culvert. However, no wetlands will be permanently impacted, and mitigation is not required. In addition, there is temporary wetland impacts for a total period of approximately 3-days. The replaced culvert will improve fish and aquatic organism passage, accommodate larger storm events/continued flows, improve stream connectivity, and maintain or increase stream function.

### Procedure for public participation

As stated in Minn. R. chs. 7000 and 7001, there are three formal procedures for public participation in the MPCA's consideration of this matter. Interested persons may:

- (1) Submit written comments on the draft certification and antidegradation determination.
- (2) Petition the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting.
- (3) Petition the MPCA to hold a contested case hearing.

## Submitting written comments

To submit comments or petitions to the MPCA through the mail or online you must state:

- (1) Your interest in the request for 401 water quality certification or the draft 401 water quality certification.
- (2) The action you wish the MPCA to take, including specific references to the section of the draft 401 water quality certification you believe should be changed.
- (3) The reasons supporting your position, stated with sufficient specificity as to allow the MPCA to investigate the merits of the position.

## Public informational meeting

A public informational meeting is an informal meeting during which interested persons can ask questions concerning the proposed facility. MPCA staff will be present to provide information. If an interested person would like the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting, the person should include all information identified above and in addition include a statement of the reasons the person desires the MPCA to hold a public informational meeting and the issues that the person would like the agency to address at the public informational meeting.

## Contested case hearing

A contested case hearing is a formal proceeding before an administrative law judge empowered to advise the MPCA regarding issues of fact. As described in Minn. R. 7000.1800, persons who submit petitions for a contested case hearing must also state the issues they propose to address in a contested case hearing, the specific relief requested or resolution of the matter, and the reasons (which may be in the form of proposed findings) supporting an MPCA decision to hold a contested case hearing. Failure to comply with these rules exactly may result in a denial of the request. To the extent known, the petitioner may also submit a list of prospective witnesses to be called at a hearing, a proposed list of publications, references, or studies to be introduced at a hearing and the approximate time required for the petitioner to present the matter at a hearing. The decision whether to hold a contested case hearing will be made under Minn. R. 7000.1900.