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The goal of achieving clean water for all Minnesotans requires reductions of 42% of phosphorus on average in lakes and rivers and 40% of nitrates in rivers and vulnerable groundwaters by 2040 (based on recent conditions). High levels of nitrates is one of the worst problems impacting human and ecosystem health in Minnesota. At the root of the nitrate pollution problem are cropland acres dominated by corn which is the primary crop that utilizes synthetic nitrogen fertilizers.

According to MPCA 89% to 95% of the nitrate in waters in Southern and Central Minnesota is coming from cropped fields. While crop diversification will lead to reduced application over time, reductions in the amount of N fertilizers being applied are needed now to mitigate the negative impacts of nitrate pollution.

LSP is asking MPCA to:

- * Strengthen data collection and reporting requirements for fertilizer retailers by MDA and documentation of nitrogen fertilizer application rates by responsible parties (e.g. crop retailers to MDA).
- * Build a Small Grain Initiative and a safety net for farmers who want to reduce their N fertilizer application.
- * Grow farmer power, farmer networks and locally led, flexible and outcome-based approaches like Olmstead County Soil Health Program'