

Project Background and Goals:

Minnesota DNR and the Minnesota Land Trust are working together to restore fish and wildlife habitat at Perch Lake. This work is part of a greater effort to mitigate historic impacts to habitat in the St. Louis River under the Great Lakes Area of Concern Program. Perch Lake was once a bay of the St. Louis River Estuary. The construction of the railroad and U.S. Hwy 23 embankments greatly reduced this connection. As a result, Perch Lake has low oxygen levels, shallow depths, and limited access for fish and wildlife. To address these impairments, the project's goals include:

- Remove accumulated sediment
- Increase circulation between the estuary and Perch Lake
- Improve fish and wildlife passage
- Restore and enhance coastal marsh wetland habitat



Left Photo: An aerial photograph of Perch Lake after dredging and hemi-marsh construction. The Highway 23 causeway and City-owned trail causeway are adjacent to each other and to the right of this photograph. **Right Photo:** The installation of the culvert under Highway 23.

Project Description:

In consultation with the City of Duluth and Minnesota Department of Transportation, we developed a design to improve habitats within Perch Lake and increase the connection between Perch Lake and the main river channel. To improve habitat, we excavated approximately 72,000 cubic yards of sediment creating the following habitats: deep water (8-10 ft), coastal marsh, hemi-marsh, and spawning areas. We have also installed a new 12-foot by 16-foot culvert underneath Highway 23 and a bridge on the Marten Trail, 400 ft east of the existing 4-foot culvert to increase the circulation of water flow and fish passage between Perch Lake and the River.

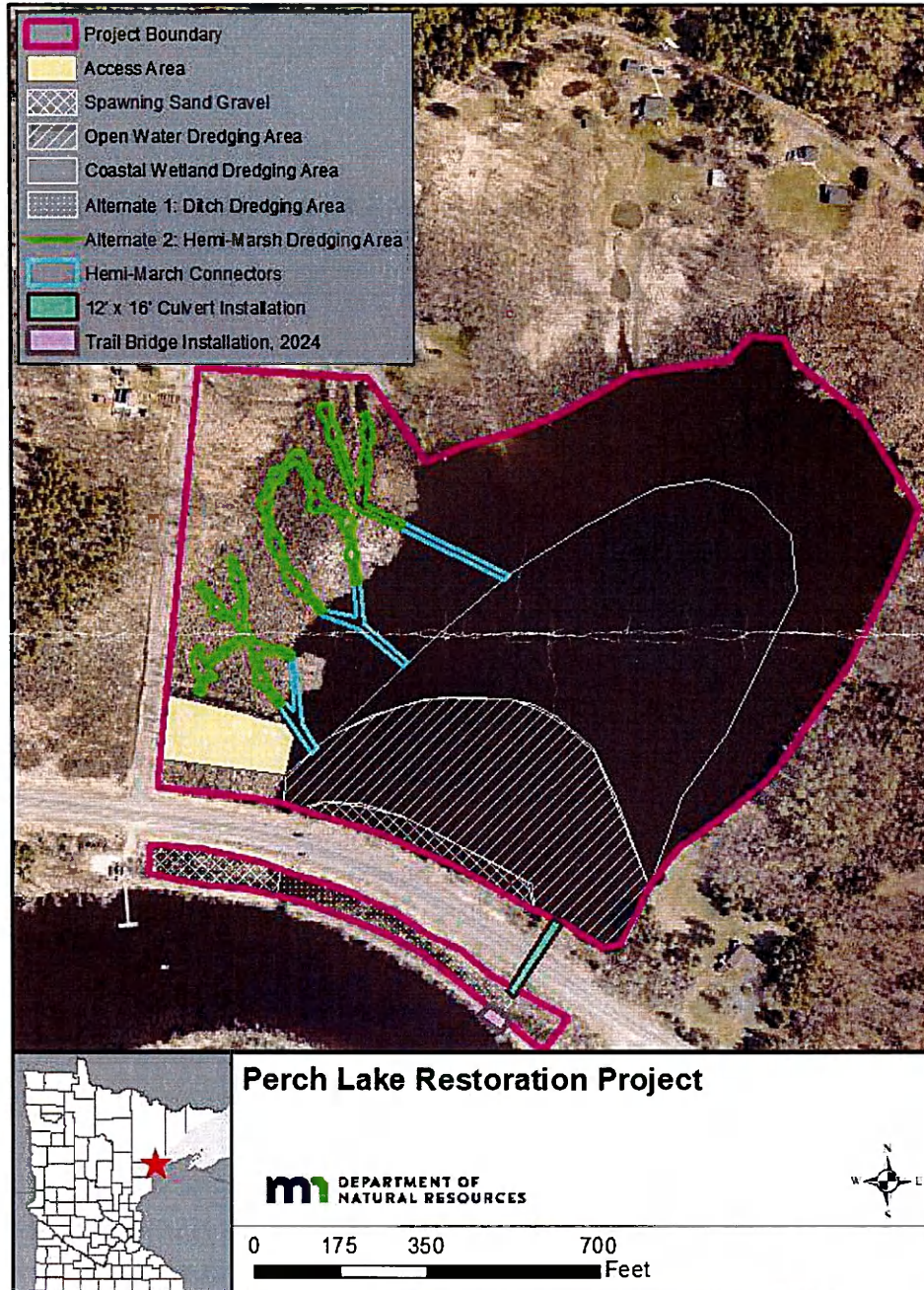
Timeline:

- June 2022-July 2023:** Phase 1: dredging and associated site restoration (J.F. Brennan)
- September 2023-July 2024:** Phase 2: HWY 23 culvert installation (Landwehr Construction)
- Fall 2024:** Phase 3: Trail Crossing bridge installation (Northland Constructors of Duluth)

This project is estimated to cost \$9,100,000 is being funded by the USEPA Great Lake Restoration Initiative and the Outdoor Heritage Fund

This project includes the following partners:





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