

WATER QUALITY PROJECT FACT SHEET

PEXA DRIVE PRAIRIE RESTORATION



Why did SWMO choose this Project?

SWMO partnered with Scott County Parks to restore a 15 acre area of organic farmland to prairie and two wetlands. The project is part of an expansion to the Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park. See Figure 1 on the back for a diagram of future plans for this piece of the park.

Unfortunately, farming in row crops leaves soil bare for most of the year. Bare soil is much more likely to erode and be carried downstream into Cedar Lake. Pesticides and fertilizers used on crops are attached to the soil and can pollute the lake. Restoring the area to prairie and wetlands helps water quality, provides invaluable wildlife habitat, and creates recreation opportunities.

Native prairie and wetland plants contribute to water quality improvement in several ways:

1. Once they are established, they require less care than that of turf grass or crops. Management of these ecosystems eliminates the use of chemicals, except for spot treatment of weeds.
2. They lock soils into place with their deep root systems (15 feet deep in some cases).
3. They soak up and filter polluted run-off from residential or farmlands, before it enters lakes and streams.
4. Because they are like sponges, they even provide some protection from floods. Floods lower water quality because a variety of pollutants are picked up and spread by flood waters. Floods create both public health and environmental concerns.



Pexa Drive Prairie during seeding

QUICK FACTS

Major River Basin: Minnesota River

Water Bodies Affected: Cedar Lake

Project Goals:

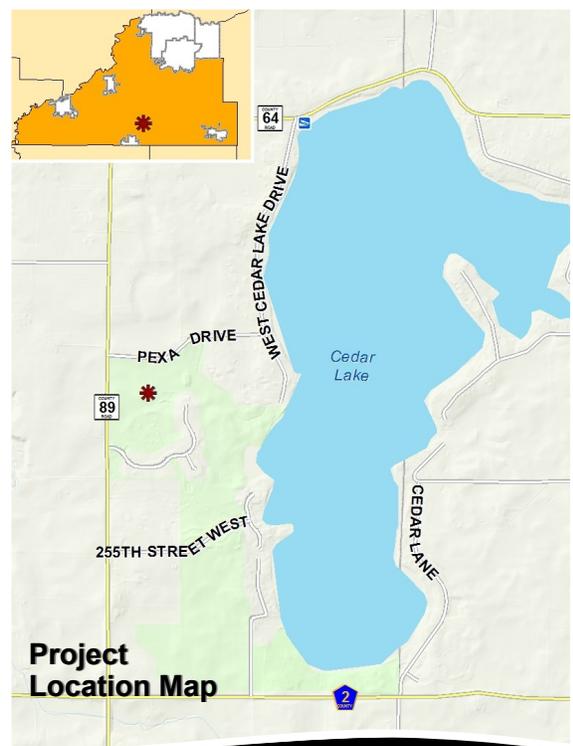
1. Buffer the lake from human activities.
2. Increase public awareness
3. Improve water quality
4. Improve wildlife habitat

Timeline: Fall 2015 to 2025

Costs: up to \$32,000 in restoration and maintenance costs

Project Implementation by: Stantec

Management by: Scott County Parks



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Pexa Drive Prairie in July 2016 (first year of establishment)



Common Milkweed at the restoration, which is essential for the survival of the Monarch Butterfly and other endangered species.



MAJOR OUTCOMES

- 15 acres of organic farmland was restored to prairie and wetlands.
- The restoration passed SWMO's first inspection, and was mowed shortly afterwards to control weeds.
- Plant establishment will require a few more years of weed control.
- Future plans for the area include the addition of a dog park with a parking area, walking trails, and an expansion of the Maplewood Basswood forest.



Figure 1: Taken from the [Cedar Lake Farm Regional Park Master Plan](#): Pexa Drive Prairie is the light green forest enclosed area located in the orange circled area.

WANT TO LEARN MORE OR HELP?

- ⇒ Visit our [website](#) for more information on projects, volunteer opportunities, and more.
- ⇒ Contact Scott WMO to learn more about how we work with townships, cities, and other agencies to improve the quality of living in Scott County.
- ⇒ Coming Soon: Scott WMO [Story Maps!](#)

