

PIGS EYE LAKE



US Army Corps of Engineers
St. Paul District



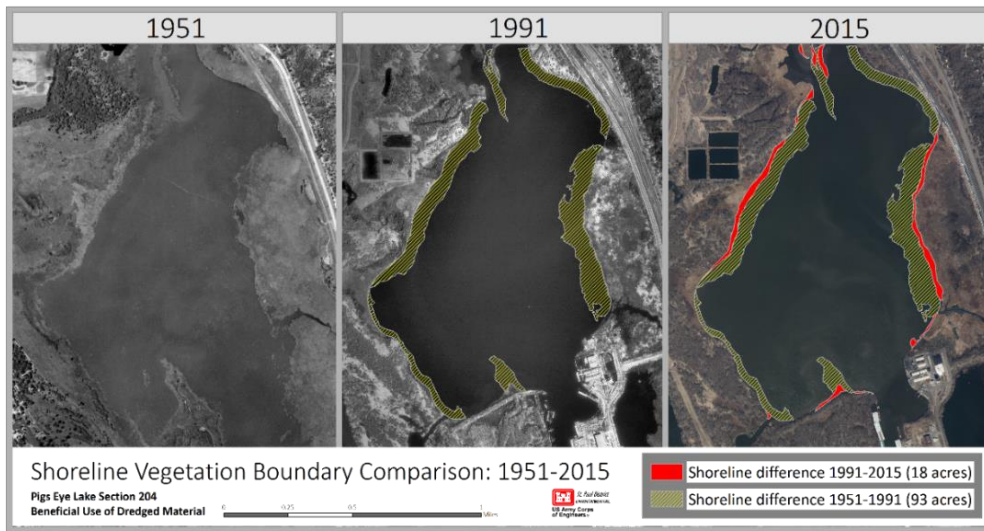
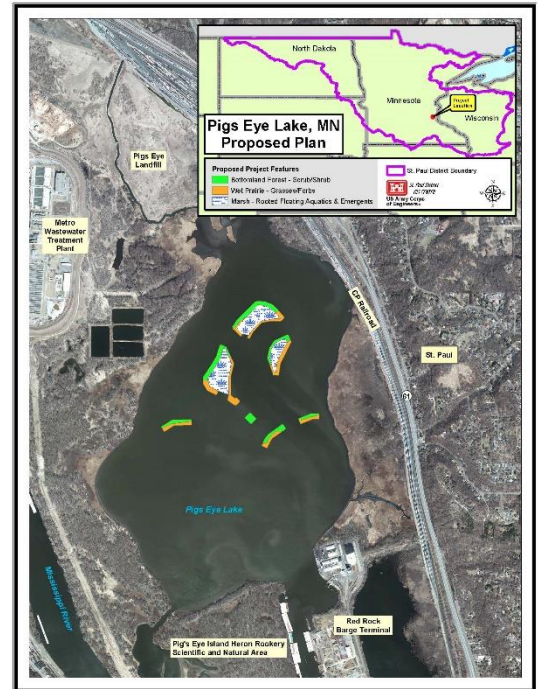
RAMSEY COUNTY
Parks & Recreation

Project Summary

The Army Corps of Engineers and Ramsey County Parks have finalized a feasibility study to construct habitat enhancement features in Pigs Eye Lake using material dredged during maintenance of the of the Mississippi River navigation channel, under the authority of Section 204 of the Corps' Continuing Authorities Program. The project Sponsor is Ramsey County Parks Department.

Current Problems and Opportunities for Habitat Restoration

- **Lack of Depth Diversity:** The lake is uniformly 3-4 feet deep with little bathymetric diversity.
- **Lack of Species Diversity:** Aquatic organisms observed in the lake are generally common species that tolerate low-quality habitats.
- **Lack of Aquatic Vegetation:** Sediments are easily and frequently re-suspended in the water column due to wind/wave action and rough fish leading to very turbid conditions. The high turbidity and unconsolidated sediments prevent growth of aquatic vegetation.
- **Loss of Shoreline Habitat:** The wind fetch across the lake has led to consistent and significant shoreline erosion, especially on the northwest and southeast sides of the lake, for at least the last 70 years.



The juxtaposition of the low-quality habitat available within Pigs Eye Lake with the relatively abundant wildlife documented nearby suggests that an improvement of habitat within the lake could be of significant value to the local ecosystem. The Pigs Eye Heron Rookery Scientific and Natural Area to the south of the lake is one of the largest nesting sites for colonial waterbirds within Minnesota and one of four places in the state where yellow-crowned night herons are known to nest. An environmental restoration project would increase recreational opportunities, and improve aquatic habitat.

Project Status

Project features include 7-islands, sand benches, marsh habitat, and terrestrial plantings. Such features have the objective of improving aquatic and terrestrial habitat as well as maintaining the shoreline of Pigs Eye Lake. The total estimated cost for constructing the project would be \$15.6 million. The Corps' Operation and Maintenance budget would provide \$3.2 million toward the project. The remaining \$12.4 million would be cost-shared by the Section 204 program (\$8.1 million) and the local sponsor, Ramsey County (\$4.3 million).