

Pine Creek Stream Restoration Project Overview



Growing from River to Ridge

History of Pine Creek

Pine Creek is DNR-designated public water and a coldwater trout stream. It is located on city-owned property within the La Crescent City Golf Course. In the 1950s, the section of Pine Creek along County Road 6 was straightened for a road realignment project. The difference can be seen between the two images below, one from 1952 and one from 2022. Approximately 700 feet of the stream was lost during that project. Remnants of the previous stream channel are still visible to the south of County Road 6. Today, the stream is lined with box elder trees, which are highly susceptible to damage during windstorms. When trees fall into the stream, they cause log jams and patches of open tree canopy, leading to areas of still, warm water, poor conditions for trout populations. This project will restore up to 2,625 linear feet of the existing stream, while also increasing stream length by 50 feet.



Aerial imagery of Pine Creek restoration site from 1952 (left) and 2022 (right). Blue lines represent the stream's path, highlighting the difference in stream flow following the realignment of County Road 6. The orange circle notes an area in which relics of Pine Creek's previous flow path can be seen.

Project Timeline (subject to change due to weather, availability of equipment, and other factors).

In **Summer 2025**, construction will begin on Pine Creek. The creek and streambanks will be reshaped and stabilized with root wads and toe wood made of existing fallen trees. Reshaping the creek will increase its length by 50 feet. The root wads and toe wood will stabilize the stream channel and prevent further streambank erosion. They will also provide habitat and cover for fish, including trout. Similarly, wetland scrapes along the creek corridor will provide habitat for amphibians, insects, birds, and small mammals. Paths along the creek will be created to allow easy access for recreation.

In **Fall 2025**, the streambanks will be seeded with native seed mixes and native trees will be planted. As the plants become established, their roots will prevent further streambank erosion. Wildlife will benefit from the restoration in the creek and in the surrounding area.

On **Arbor Day 2026**, the city will host a native tree planting event, inviting members of the community to join in the restoration efforts. These trees will provide canopy cover to the creek, increase food for wildlife, and provide additional soil stabilization benefits.

On **Arbor Day 2027**, the city will host another native tree planting event, once again inviting members of the community to join in the restoration efforts. These trees will provide canopy cover to the creek, increase food for wildlife, and provide additional soil stabilization benefits.

The photos below show the process of reshaping and seeding a stream:



Want to get involved? Volunteers may be needed for tree planting. If you're interested in learning more about how you can help, please contact Jason Ludwigson at jludwigson@cityoflacscent-mn.gov.

This project is made possible through the MN DNR Conservation Partners Legacy Grant, WinLaC, The Nature Conservancy, and the Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation. The practices above are best practices chosen after consultation with DNR Fish and Wildlife Division Stream Habitat Specialist Dustan Hoffman, Minnesota Trout Unlimited Executive Director John Lenczewski, and The Nature Conservancy Associate Director of Water Steven Herrington.



Bank erosion along Pine Creek.



Log jam in Pine Creek.



Straightened section of Pine Creek along County Road 6.



Groundwater fed wetland near Pine Creek.



Image 1: Example of root wads along the side of a stream (NRCS).



Image 2: Example of toe wood along stream (Wildland Hydrology).