

NEWS | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | September 22, 2026

Environmental Quality provides update on Goose River discoloration

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality has reviewed water sample results and field measurements collected after red discoloration was reported in the Goose River near Caledonia.

The department worked with the U.S. Geological Survey to obtain information on conditions in the river and collect water samples that were sent to the North Dakota State Laboratory for testing.

Several environmental factors likely contributed to the discoloration, including low water flow, high temperatures, groundwater entering the river and a buildup of organic matter in the Goose River. These conditions collectively depleted oxygen levels, contributing to the river's red color. Results show no indication that a permitted wastewater facility between Mayville and the Red River directly caused the discoloration.

The public should continue to avoid drinking or recreating in the affected portion of the Goose River. Precipitation is needed to help conditions improve. Environmental Quality will continue to monitor the condition of the river and downstream segments of the Red River of the North.

"We appreciate the people who reported the discoloration," said Marty Haroldson, director of the Water Quality Division. "Timely reports help us investigate concerns, identify possible causes and protect North Dakota's water resources."

Water quality concerns can be reported to the Department of Environmental Quality. Fish kills should be reported to the North Dakota Game and Fish Department.

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