2023 MN Watersheds Project & Program of the Year

Preliminary Nomination Form

The Awards Committee is now accepting **Preliminary Nominations for Program or Project of the Year**. This simple, one-page **Preliminary Nomination Form** must be submitted by Sept 8, 2023. When determining the finalists, the Awards Committee will consider: clearly defined need, creative partnerships, innovative financing, resourceful solutions, success at meeting goal, and public value. Finalists, in each category will be asked to complete a full nomination form. The Preliminary Nomination form only requires a project/program description up to 250 words.

Award Category (check one)

☑ Project ☐ Program

MN Watersheds Region:

☐ One ☐ Two ☑ Three

Watershed District or Watershed Management Organization:

South Washington Watershed District

Project/program name:

Trout Brook Stream Restoration

Nominator (if different from above)

Project/Program Summary (Up to 250 words).

Trout Brook is a cold stream in southern Washington County tributary to Lake St. Croix and fed by a 5,500-acre watershed of primarily forested and agricultural land. Heavily impacted by 1800's logging and mass erosion, lower Trout Brook had been buried in 15 feet of sand. The stream has been working to reestablish itself ever since, cutting down through the legacy sand deposits. Today, lower Trout Brook flows through Afton State Park and the Afton Alps Ski Area. Prior to this project, Trout Brook suffered from excessive bank erosion and poor habitat value, dumping sediment and nutrients into Lake St. Croix.

SWWD and its partners (MnDNR, Vail Corp, Great River Greening) have nearly completed the final restoration phase of lower Trout Brook. In-stream structures, channel re-meandering, and replacement of perched culverts have stabilized eroding banks, improved habitat and opened the stream to fish migration. Local funding partners have leveraged Lessard Sams and Lower St. Croix 1W1P grants. Vail Corp's conservation easement through Afton Alps provides public access to the stream and floodplain. Great River Greening's volunteer plantings and a salvaged box culvert have reduced project costs.

Project/Program Contact:

Name: John Loomis
Phone: 651-714-3714
Email: john.loomis@woodburymn.gov

Photos (Optional)

You may include up to four (4) photos of your project or program.

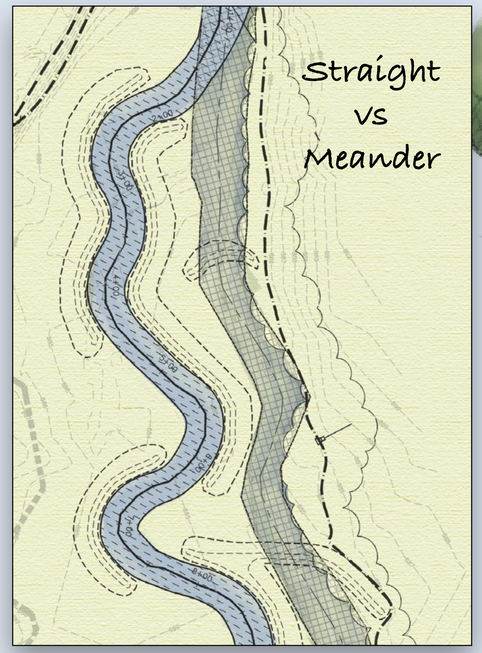
Submit nomination materials to Karen Kill, kkill@mnwcd.org by Sept 8, 2023.

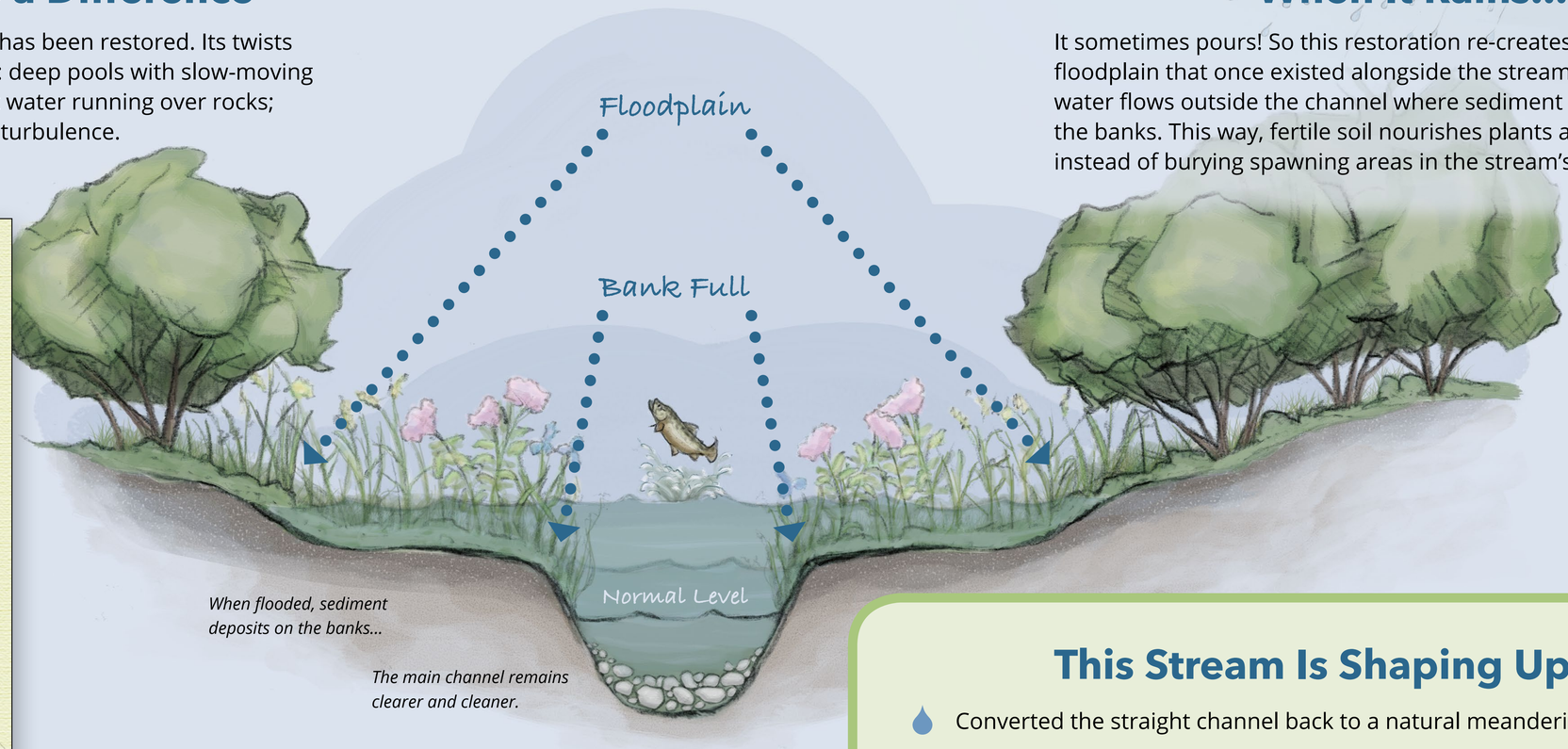
Streams Like to Color Outside the Lines

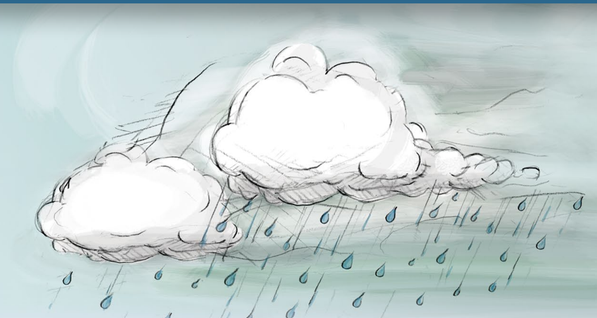
Natural streams have bends and curves and may even change course over time. In other words, they tend to meander. However, years ago Trout Brook was artificially straightened during the construction of Afton Alps. In 2019, the South Washington Watershed District worked with Great River Greening and Vail Resorts to restore Trout Brook to good health.

A Meander Makes a Difference

Trout Brook's natural, meandering path has been restored. Its twists and turns create habitat that trout need: deep pools with slow-moving water; shallow riffles with fast, turbulent water running over rocks; and runs with deep, fast water and little turbulence.







When It Rains...

It sometimes pours! So this restoration re-creates the natural floodplain that once existed alongside the stream. When it floods, water flows outside the channel where sediment can settle along the banks. This way, fertile soil nourishes plants at the stream's edge instead of burying spawning areas in the stream's center.

This Stream Is Shaping Up!

- Converted the straight channel back to a natural meandering stream
- Formed a floodplain to accommodate "100-year storm" events
- Created pools, riffles and runs—habitat needed by cold-stream fish
- Replaced culverts under the parking entrance so water flows continuously
- Anchored banks with logs and deep-rooted plants to reduce erosion

VAIL RESORTS EXPERIENCE OF A LIFETIME · South Washington Watershed District · Clean Water Land & Legacy Amendment · Great River Greening

Partners in Restoring Trout Brook

Artwork & Design by DogTooth Design