BROWN'S CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT / SPRING 2022

WATERSHED NEWS

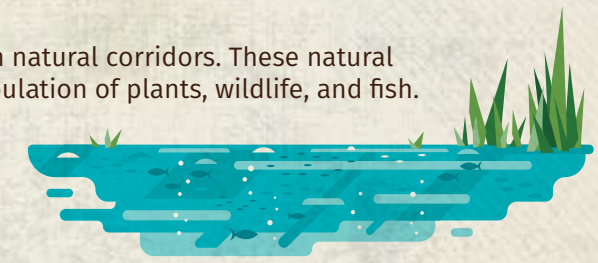
What is a watershed?

A watershed district is a unit of government that is based on the natural boundary of a watershed. The Minnesota Watershed District Act was implemented in 1955. It allowed for the establishment of local units of government, such as watershed districts or water management organizations, to protect and manage water resources based on hydrologic boundaries rather than political boundaries. Because it relies on the natural boundary of the watershed, a watershed district could include all or part of a number of cities, townships and counties. Watershed Districts address many water resource issues such as: water quality protection, erosions control, and flood control by supporting land use practices that protect and preserve water resources in the district.

Our Board of Managers
Klay Eckles, President
Celia Wirth, Vice-President
Chuck LeRoux, Secretary
Jerry Johnson, Treasurer
Rob McKim, 2nd Vice President

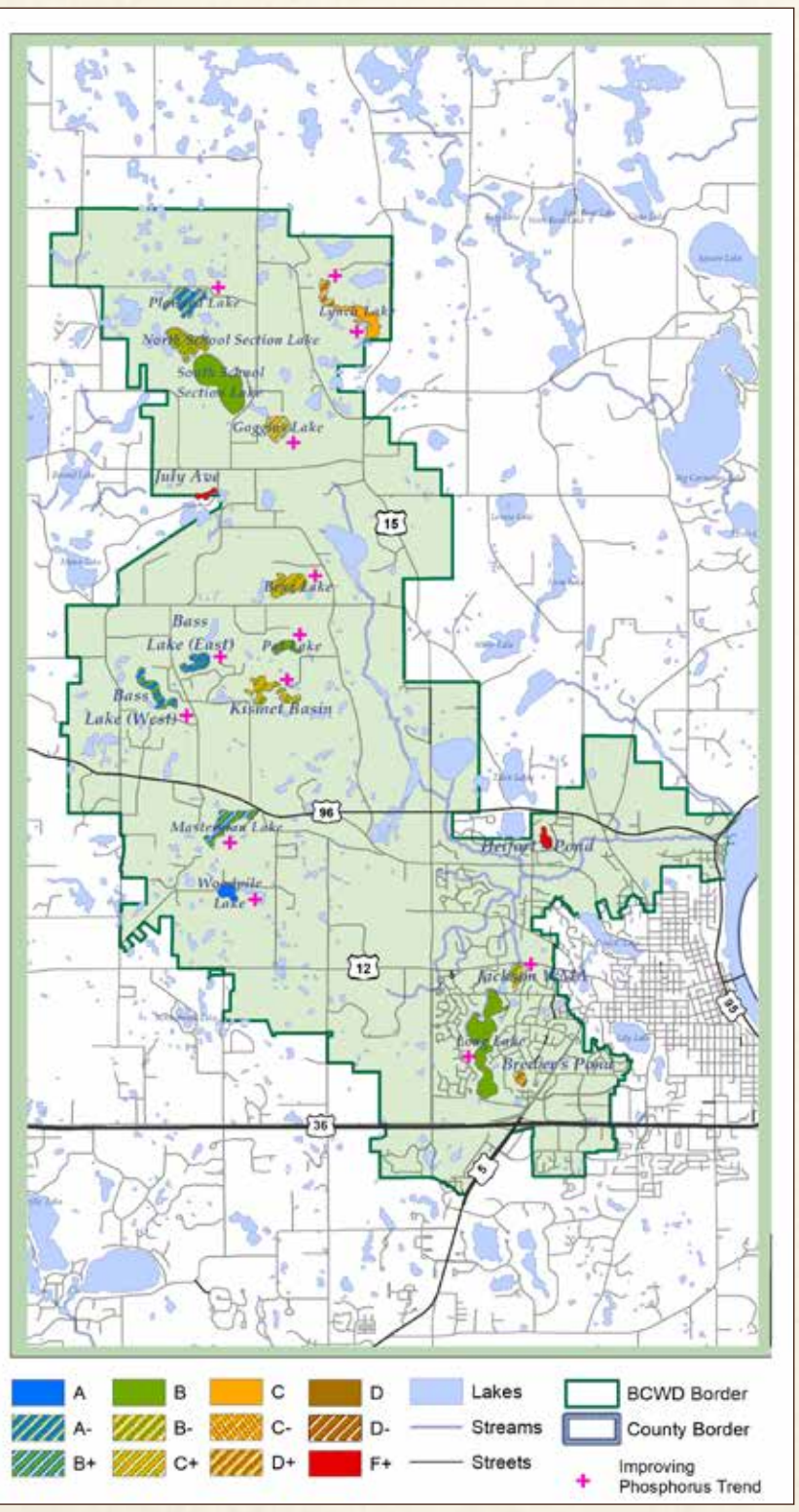
Regular board meetings are held at 6:30p.m. on the second Wednesday of each month at Family Means in Stillwater, MN. Virtual meetings that are accessible by the public may be held in response to COVID-19 restrictions.

VISION STATEMENT: The Brown's Creek Watershed District is made up of communities interlaced with natural corridors. These natural corridors improve the function and value of the District's water resources and support a diverse population of plants, wildlife, and fish. The District brings people and the environment together to accommodate development that preserves the connection between surface water and groundwater and enhances the quality of these resources.



WATER QUALITY REPORT CARD

The Brown's Creek Watershed District uses information gathered by the water resource scientists, who regularly test the water. Continued monitoring of the District's lakes provides us with a clearer picture of how to best restore and protect our resources for the future. The lake grades for 2021 are below:



For more information on BCWD water quality, visit https://tinyurl.com/8fud7afn

BUCKTHORN & HABITAT RESTORATION

Common, or European, buckthorn, and glossy buckthorn are the two non-native, invasive buckthorn species found in Minnesota. These buckthorn species were first brought here from Europe as a popular hedging material. They became a nuisance plant, forming dense thickets in forests, yards, parks and roadsides. They crowd out native plants and displace the native shrubs and small trees in the mid-layer of the forest where many species of birds nest. Buckthorn also contributes to erosion by out-competing plants on the forest floor that help hold soil in place. Because of this, buckthorn negatively affects water quality, as the soil washes into water resources contributing excess phosphorus that causes algal blooms. This is especially impactful with steeper slopes or along shorelines.

Removing buckthorn takes time. Buckthorn seeds can remain viable in the soil for up to five years. Follow-up control of seedlings that emerge after initial control efforts is important on all sites. With no follow-up control, buckthorn will come back.

After removal, restoration of the buckthorn infested area involves taking a longer term perspective. Replant desirable tree, shrub, and herbaceous species if native species do not return from the seed bank. Check with a local nursery, extension service, Soil and Water Conservation District, or the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, for assistance on species recommended for your area.

If you want to learn more about buckthorn treatment and restoration activities consider attending our 2022 Open Yard Events, led by our Citizen Advisory Committee. We have two fall buckthorn removal events and two different restoration focused events this summer.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Join the Citizens Advisory Committee:
Meetings are held on the 2nd Monday of even months at 6:30pm virtually or at the Stillwater Public Library.

Request a site visit:
mnwcd.org/site-visit-signup-form

Follow environmentally friendly yard care tips all throughout the year.

Adopt-a-Drain
mn.adopt-a-drain.org

Preserving the Integrity of the Watershed for Future Generations

455 Hayward Avenue North, Oakdale, MN 55128 / 651-330-8220 x26 / bcwd.org
facebook.com/brownscreekwatersheddistrict

SHORELINE RESTORATION

Shorelines have been altered by humans to varying extents; and these alterations almost always involve the removal of the native vegetation. Altered shorelines result in negative effects to water quality and loss of habitat. The good news is shorelines can be restored! There are many benefits of shoreline restoration:

- Improves water quality.
- Reduces erosion by planting stabilizing plants.
- Creates a more natural shoreline that attracts aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals.
- Reduces the amount of lawn to manage.
- Reduces the invasion of nuisance animals and birds such as Canadian Geese.
- Creates a more natural environment.
- Reduces the need to use chemicals and pesticides to control unwanted plants and animals.

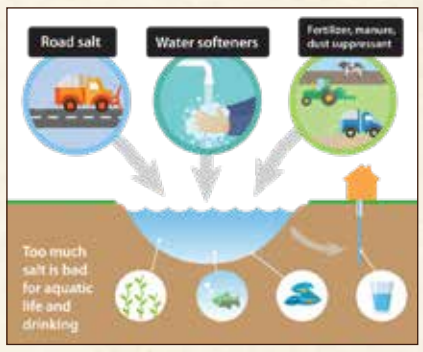
Restoration involves re-establishing the native plant community and natural slope.

Remove seawalls, riprap, and other hardened shorelines. Shorelines should have gentle slopes and may be armored through the use of local boulders, with logs, rootwads, and live plants.

CHLORIDE & THE LONG LAKE LISTING

Chloride pollution is a growing concern in freshwater resources. Road salt is a commonly recognized source of chloride pollutions and other lesser known sources are water softeners, fertilizers, and dust suppressants.

Unfortunately Long Lake was listed by the MPCA in 2021 for chloride impairment. This new listing means Long Lake is officially impaired for chloride pollution.



What does this mean? Chloride is considered a “permanent pollution”. There is not a feasible technique to remove chloride from water. If the source of chloride is cut off, eventually the concentration can drop as new water enters the system over time. The Brown’s Creek Watershed District will begin chloride monitoring in district lakes in 2022 and planning efforts to determine a management approach.

BROWN’S CREEK OPEN YARDS SERIES

Birding
April 9, 9am, *Long Lake trail, parking end of 62nd*
(Alt. Date, April 23)

Wildflower Walk
May 18, 6pm, *BC Trail*

Habitat Restoration
June 15, 6pm, *BC Park (IESF, diversion drainage, Millbrook)*

Post-buckthorn removal weeding/planting workshop
July 20, 6pm, *Long Lake trail, parking end of 62nd*

Stormwater Tour
August 13, 10am, *TBD, Settlers Glen?*

Community Event
September 10, 10am, *Brown’s Creek Park*

Buckthorn Brigade
September 24, 10am, *Long Lake trail, parking end of 62nd*

Buckthorn Brigade
October 1, 10am, *Long Lake trail, parking end of 62nd*

To RSVP, please contact Cameron Blake cblake@mnwcd.org or 651-330-8220 x34

BROWN’S CREEK WATERSHED DISTRICT
455 Hayward Avenue North / Oakdale, MN 55128

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
STILLWATER, MN
PERMIT NO. 255

2022 Gateway Brown’s Creek Trail Bird Walks

Gateway Trail Bird Walk
Gateway Trail/Hwy 96 Crossing
Saturday May 7, 2022—7:30-8:30 a.m.
(Backup: Sunday, May 8)

Dawn Chorus—A Bird Listening Event
Brown’s Creek Nature Preserve
Saturday May 14, 2022—5:15-6:15 a.m.
(Backup: Sunday, May 15)

Brown’s Creek Trail Bird Walk
Brown’s Creek Nature Preserve
Saturday May 14, 2022—8:30-9:30 a.m.
(Backup: Sunday, May 15)

NEW SMALL GRANT PROGRAM

Everyone can improve water quality through their personal behaviors, choices, and commitments. The Brown’s Creek Watershed District (BCWD) is introducing a new cost-share program for landowners to identify and implement water quality projects and native plantings. The BCWD Mini Grant program provides eligible applicants with small grants (up to $500) to implement projects in the watershed. Grantees must install the project and submit a cover letter, photos, and invoices to receive the grant reimbursement.

What Projects are Eligible?

- Native Plants (including pollinator gardens)
- Small buffer strips
- Turf alternatives
- Waterspout gardens
- Rain barrels
- Targeted water education, information, or outreach activities

Preserving the Integrity of the Watershed for Future Generations

455 Hayward Avenue North, Oakdale, MN 55128 / 651-330-8220 x26 / bcwd.org
facebook.com/brownscreekwatersheddistrict