

1.4.2 Central or Middle Brown's Creek

The topography in the Central Area is characterized by a gently rolling to level landscape with numerous depressions with the near wetland margins and Brown's Creek topography being somewhat steeper. Much of the area is currently residential development with some wetlands bordering Brown's Creek. Oak Glen golf course occurs in this reach downstream of Neal Avenue. The geographic scope for the Central Area is defined by the Brown's Creek Reach spanning from Manning Avenue to Norrell Avenue.

Native Plant Community Description

Similar to the Headwaters Area the Central Area contains scattered forested communities with the most prevalent being oak-dominated. Other wooded communities include conifer plantations, maple-basswood and aspen dominated forests. No native plant communities along this reach were identified for surveys in 2015. The recent creek restoration project through Oak Glen golf course does provide an excellent example of how natural resource restoration projects can be incorporated into a developed landscape.

Bird Habitat Description

The wetland and shrub-carr communities within the Central region provide important breeding and foraging habitats for many resident and migratory species of birds. Open water habitat is also an important component utilized by waterfowl and shorebirds. Although no specific bird surveys were conducted in this area, Ring-necked duck (*Aythya collaris*), Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*), Broad-winged hawk (*Buteo platypterus*), Killdeer (*Charadrius vociferous*), Pileated woodpecker (*Hylatomus pileatus*), Chimney swift (*Chaetura pelagica*), Alder flycatcher (*Empidonax alnorum*), Great-crested flycatcher (*Myiarchus crinitus*), and Barn swallow (*Hirundo rustica*) have been observed in this area.

Macroinvertebrate Habitat Description

Macroinvertebrates were sampled from several habitat types downstream of Highway 96. Of the three sites sampled for the Unique Species Inventory (Headwaters, Central, and Gorge), the Central site contained the second highest taxon richness (33 taxa represented). The Central site contained Glossosomatid caddisflies and a large number of Limnephilidae caddisflies. These taxa have a low pollution tolerance and are indicative of good water quality and sufficient dissolved oxygen.

Fish and Fresh Water Mussel Habitat Description

No fish or mussel assessment was completed for this area in 2015. The Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) from 2001 identified Brook stickleback, Central mudminnow, Fathead minnow, Creek chub, and several warm water species including Black bullhead (*Ictalurus melas*), Pumpkinseed (*Lepomis gibbosus*) and hybrid sunfish (*Lepomis sp.*). The presence of warm water species reflects the sluggish characteristics of Brown's Creek within this reach. Fingernail clams have been observed in riffle habitat downstream of Highway 96 and within the Oak Glen golf course.

Amphibian and Reptile Habitat Description

Common herpetile species such as Common garter snakes, Green frogs, Western chorus frogs, and Northern leopard frogs are most likely to be prevalent within this somewhat developed reach of Brown's Creek.



Northern Leopard Frog – Washington County