



Brown's Creek Central

Washington County Priority Conservation Area

Land Area

- **Total Area:** 1,623 acres
- **Forest/Woodland:** 231 acres
- **Grassland:** 208 acres
- **Wetland:** 684 acres

Primary Threats

- Land use alterations
- Oak wilt
- Invasive species
- Sedimentation

Species of Concern

- Red-Shouldered Hawk
- Hooded Warbler
- Common Snapping Turtle
- Blanding's Turtle
- Brown Trout



Land and Water Legacy Program

In 2006, a \$20 million bond referendum passed, initiating the creation of the county's Land and Water Legacy Program, which purchases land or land interests to preserve its natural condition. The program is ongoing and has used collaborative partnerships to invest over \$40 million in protection, conserving over 1,300 acres of high-quality natural lands.

Washington County "Top 10" Priority Conservation Areas

The Washington County "Top 10" Priority Conservation Areas represent the county's highest priority areas for land protection. They were identified using a ranking system based upon the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System and other available nature-related datasets. These areas serve as a guide for county land protection projects, however land outside of these areas may still be considered.

Priority Area Description

The Brown's Creek Central Priority Conservation Area is located in Grant, within the Brown's Creek Watershed District. Most of the area is owned by private landowners. Land acquisition could provide additional access to the creek for trout fishing.

The the lanscape is blanketed with high quality wetlands thanks to minimal human disturbance and intact natural processes. Unique habitats in the area include maple-basswood forest, dry oak forest, and a mixed hardwood swamp. A number of oak species are present including bur, red, pin, and white oak.

This area contains part of the headwaters to Brown's Creek, a trout stream protected by the Department of Natural Resources with a naturally reproducing trout population. The area has groundwater exiting the ground from seeps and also areas where water infiltrates to help recharge supplies. Maintaining groundwater flow to the creek is vital to this cold-water fishery as well as the health of the natural communities dependent on groundwater seepage.

Conservation Objectives and Benefits

Protecting Water Quality

Preserving wetlands and undeveloped uplands through management, acquisition, or other means will help prevent surface water quality degradation by filtering runoff before it drains into Brown's Creek, maintaining and improving the creek's hydrologic and ecological health.

Protecting the land from alteration also promotes clean groundwater infiltration to recharge supplies.



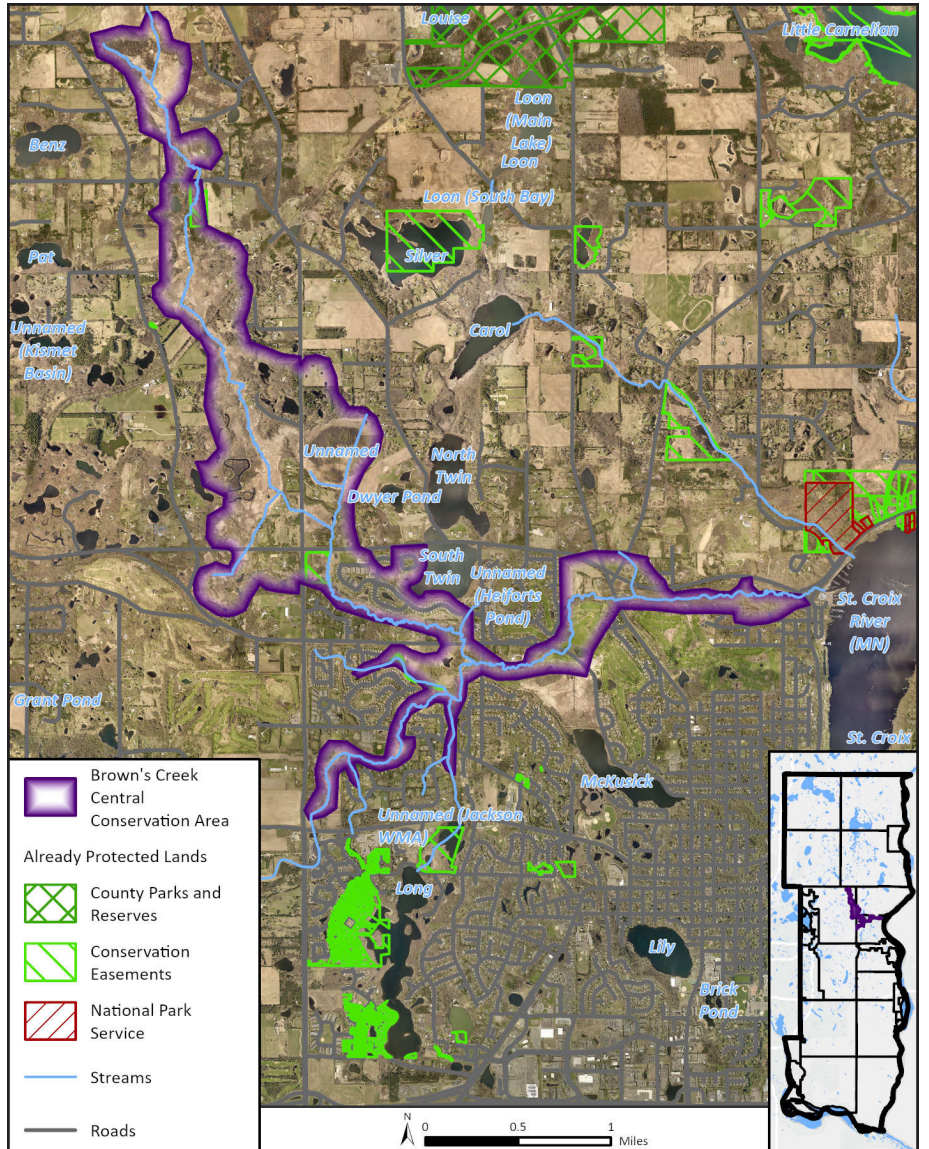
Protecting Habitats

Protecting the area from future development and reaching the goals of Brown's Creek's biota total maximum daily load (TMDL) study will help maintain an intact wildlife corridor that supports numerous plants and animals, some of which are rare species. Notably, it will help maintain conditions that support trout populations in Brown's Creek.

Targeting Invasives

Removing the increased abundance of invasive species, including buckthorn, will help combat bare soils on creek slopes and decrease sedimentation.

Additionally, addressing diseases like oak wilt that have been known to occur nearby will reduce the threat of having to remove large trees.



For More Information:

Washington County
Land and Water Legacy Program
www.co.washington.mn.us/LWLP

