

**Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund
2018 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

Project Title:

ENRTF ID: 204-G

Browns Creek 40 Acre Acquisition

Category: G. Land Acquisition, Habitat and Recreation

Total Project Budget: \$ 350,000

Proposed Project Time Period for the Funding Requested: 2 years, July 2018 to June 2020

Summary:

Fee title acquisition for open space project protecting up to 34 acres of high-quality natural area including 1,400 feet of Brown's Creek, a designated trout stream, in Grant, Washington County.

Name: Karen Kill

Sponsoring Organization: Browns Creek Watershed District

Address: 455 Hayward Ave N
Oakdale MN 55128

Telephone Number: (651) 330-8220 x26

Email KKill@mnwcd.org

Web Address www.bcwd.org

Location

Region: Metro

County Name: Washington

City / Township: City of Grant

Alternate Text for Visual:

Map of parcel proposed for acquisition on Browns Creek and two nearby conserved parcels

_____ Funding Priorities	_____ Multiple Benefits	_____ Outcomes	_____ Knowledge Base
_____ Extent of Impact	_____ Innovation	_____ Scientific/Tech Basis	_____ Urgency
_____ Capacity Readiness	_____ Leverage	_____ TOTAL	_____ %



Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund (ENRTF)

2018 Main Proposal

Project Title: Brown's Creek 40 Acre Acquisition

PROJECT TITLE: Brown's Creek 40 Acre Acquisition

I. PROJECT STATEMENT

NEED: Funding is needed for fee title acquisition of open space to protect 34 acres of natural area in a Washington County and Brown's Creek Watershed District high priority conservation area in the City of Grant. The parcel contains over 1,400 feet of Brown's Creek, numerous groundwater seeps and springs, approximately 23 acres of adjacent wetlands and high quality upland, and unique glacial formation upland islands. Brown's Creek is a tributary to the St. Croix River and one of few metro designated trout streams.

OPPORTUNITY: We have a willing seller and Brown's Creek Watershed District is willing to own and manage the parcel to prevent future development, subdivision and access road expansion that would negatively impact the parcel and creek. Washington County is willing to assist with funding for the acquisition from its Land and Water Legacy program.

CONTEXT: This project expands upon prior efforts to protect the Brown's Creek Corridor complex, move the creek out of exclusive private access and provide open space and scenic views for the community. Brown's Creek weaves for 9 miles through continuous and high quality wildlife habitat and more than 600 acres of high quality wetlands. This project will add another 0.27 miles of stream corridor protection to the already 2.14 miles permanently protected by BCWD, the City of Stillwater, MN DNR and MN DOT. The parcel is located just south of a parcel recently protected by BCWD and the County and located less than a mile from the state's Gateway Trail. The unique species and characteristics potentially protected through these efforts include: Blandings Turtle, Mixed Hardwood Swamp-Black Ash, Yellow Birch, Red Maple, Alder and Dry Sand-Gravel Prairie.

GOALS: The goals of this project are to acquire 34 acres of property and complete a restoration and management plan for the purposes of protecting water quality, facilitating restoration to improve trout fishery and wildlife habitat, preventing disruption and fragmentation caused by new development, maintaining open space and scenic views and providing public access to the creek.

COST: The fee acquisition cost is anticipated to be \$700,000 (pending appraisal) and this proposal seeks a fifty-fifty State-County split of \$350,000 each.

II. PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Budget: \$350,000

Activity 1: Fee Title Acquisition for Open Space

Washington County and Brown's Creek Watershed District will acquire 34 acres on Brown's Creek.

CRITERIA USED. This parcel is located in one of the Washington County Land and Water Legacy Program's Top Ten High Priority Areas due to its potential for improving water quality of a stream, protecting drinking water, preserving wetlands and woodlands, and protecting land along bodies of water from development. BCWD's criteria for land acquisition priorities includes: conservation of natural, undeveloped lands; conservation and restoration of lands tributary to ground-water dependent natural resources; creation of new and expanded natural-resources education opportunities; interconnectivity of habitat and natural resources corridors; conservation and enhancement of vegetative diversity and habitat connectivity in the watershed; and an opportunity for BCWD to leverage its resources and capacities through partnership.



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Outcome	Completion Date
1. Acquisition of up to 34 acres of land to be owned by Brown's Creek Watershed District (Parcel PID: 1203021240001)	December 15, 2019

Activity 2: Complete a Restoration and Management Plan

Brown's Creek Watershed District will complete a restoration and management plan for the property within 18 months after closing.

Outcome	Completion Date
1. Completion of a restoration and management plan	June 30, 2020

III. PROJECT STRATEGY

A. Project Team/Partners

Brown's Creek Watershed District: BCWD considers this a high priority project and its board has approved taking on the long-term ownership and management of the property. BCWD has been serving as the formal and primary steward of Brown's Creek and surrounding wetland complex since it was formed in 1997. The recently approved 2017-2026 Watershed Management Plan was developed with extensive public input and places a high priority in land conservation as a tool to protect and restore natural resources. BCWD completed its first land acquisition project in January 2017 when it became owner of a 13-acre parcel hosting 1,300 feet of Brown's Creek located adjacent north of this proposal's parcel. Though BCWD does not have funding remaining to contribute toward the acquisition due to recent acquisition of this north parcel, it has the ability to obtain funding for management activities and potential restoration projects.

Washington County: Washington County has been in close partnership with BCWD on this project and is a willing financial partner through its Land and Water Legacy Program fund. It will also hold a conservation easement on the parcel. Washington County residents passed a \$20 million referendum in 2006 for purposes of land acquisitions and easements to protect water quality, grow the parks system, and protect open space and habitat. Washington County's completed and underway conservation projects now total over \$12 million.

B. Project Impact and Long-Term Strategy

PREVENTION FOCUSED AND COST EFFECTIVE. The impact of this project is that it efficiently forestalls ecological disruption and potential costs of remediation due to new development on an already impaired Brown's Creek and its wetlands. It also offers the bonus of preventing expansion of a one mile one lane city road to the property to a two lane road through a pond and wetland area. This effort will contribute to the reversal of the Creek's health in a positive direction, rather than allowing more development projects to add to its decline.

PROTECTION AND PUBLIC OPEN SPACE ACCESS. The long-term strategy is to purchase this parcel on Brown's Creek to assure its optimal level of protection, restoration and connection to a larger conservation complex and to make an additional area along the creek accessible to the public in perpetuity.

C. Timeline Requirements

HIGH URGENCY. The landowner is providing an opportunity to protect the property before pursuing other sale options. There is willingness to subdivide the 39 acre property as needed to exclude the existing home with 5 or 10 acres to make the project affordable for conservation efforts. They are also willing to provide BCWD with maintenance access across the home site; public access will occur through the adjacent north parcel owned by BCWD. The landowner, however, is expressing urgency to downsize and move out and on to a new life phase.

2018 Detailed Project Budget

Project Title: Brown's Creek 40 Acre Acquisition

IV. TOTAL ENRTF REQUEST BUDGET two years

<u>BUDGET ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
Acquisition <i>Fee title acquisition for open space of a 34 acre parcel to be owned by Brown's Creek Watershed District</i>	\$ 350,000
TOTAL ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND \$ REQUEST =	\$ 350,000

V. OTHER FUNDS

<u>SOURCE OF FUNDS</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>Status</u>
Other Non-State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period --Washington County Acquisition Contribution: \$350,000 --Washington County Appraisal: \$6,000 --Management Plan and Natural Resource Inventory (to be completed by Emmons and Olivier Resources, Inc., BCWD's in house engineer) \$10,000 --Management Plan Public Input Process: \$5,000 --Survey (a minimum of 2 quotes to be obtained per state statute): \$5,000	\$ 376,000	<i>Pending Approval of State Funds</i>
Other State \$ To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	NA	NA
In-kind Services To Be Applied To Project During Project Period:	NA	NA
Past and Current ENRTF Appropriations to Washington County: --Aiple Property, Stillwater, MN: \$1.25M Zephyr/Brown's Creek State Trail: \$2.15M	\$ 3,400,000	Completed
Other Funding History:	NA	NA

Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund

2018 Proposed Acquisition/Restoration List

Project Title: Brown's Creek 40 Acre Acquisition

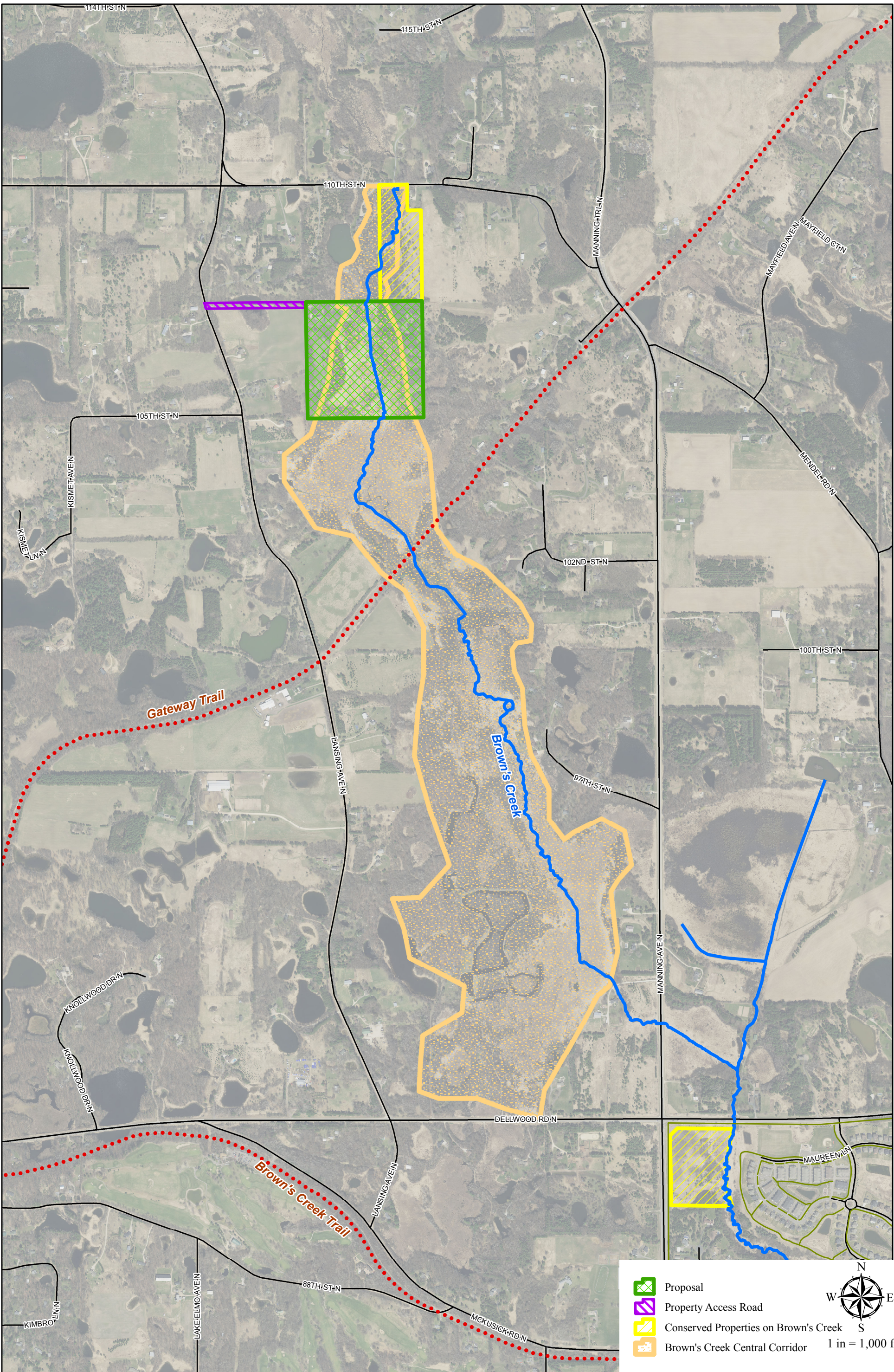
Project Manager Name: Karen Kill

Organization: Brown's Creek Watershed District

ENRTF \$ Request: \$350,000

#	Acquisition or Restoration Parcel Name	Geographic Coordinates		Estimated Cost	County	Ecological Significance	Activity Description	# of Acres	# of Shoreline Miles	Type of Landowner	Proposed Fee Title Holder
		Latitude	Longitude								
1	West Parcel	45° 6' 10.6092"N	92° 52' 33.9888"W	\$350,000	Washington	Creek, Wetlands, Prairie	Fee Title Acquisition	34	1,400 feet	Private	Brown's Creek Watershed District

Brown's Creek 34 Acre Acquisition



Project Manager Qualifications & Organization Description

Project Manager Qualifications

Karen Kill, Administrator
Brown's Creek Watershed District
455 Hayward Avenue N.
Oakdale, MN 55128

Karen Kill has been Administrator of Brown's Creek Watershed District since December 2002. Since 2010, she has successfully applied for and received over \$1.25 million in grant funding to leverage District local levy funds and implement capital improvement projects benefiting Brown's Creek, Long Lake, Lake McKusick (one of the few lakes to be delisted in the entire state), and the St. Croix River.

Organization Description

Brown's Creek Watershed District, Washington County MN

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.

The Brown's Creek Watershed District works with the community to:

- Preserve and improve the quality of the District's water and natural resources;
- Educate residents about the value of this ecosystem and advise residents of their potential impacts on the functions and values of the District's water and natural resources.
- Find and implement acceptable solutions to water-related issues.
- Assure that the integrity of the watershed is preserved for future generations.

Brown's Creek Watershed District Land Acquisition History

Brown's Creek Watershed District recently completed a two-year planning process to develop their state and locally approved ten-year watershed management plan for 2017-2026. BCWD residents felt strongly about adding land conservation to the watershed's tools for management of our resources. BCWD completed its first land acquisition project with financial assistance from Washington County in January 2017 when it became owner of a 13-acre parcel hosting 1,300 feet of Brown's creek and located immediately to the north of the this proposal's parcel. The Management Plan for the acquired property has already been completed including two public meetings and implementation of restoration efforts will begin this summer.

