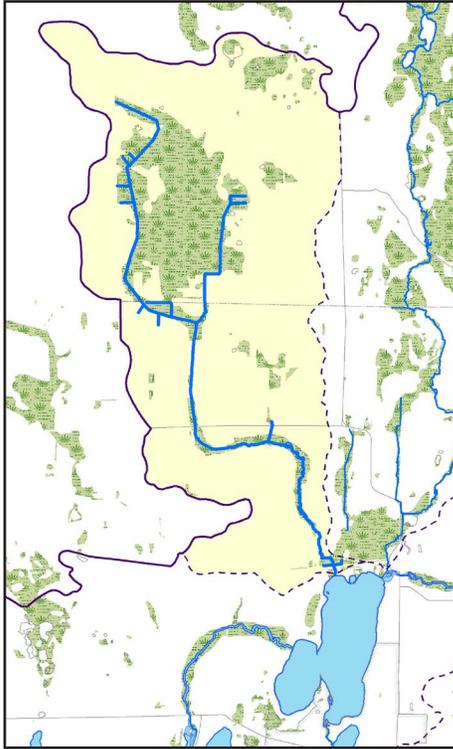


## Mason Creek Watershed Protection Plan



**Project Description:** The Southwest Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC), along with the North Lake Management District, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR), Tall Pines Conservancy, Carroll University, Trout Unlimited, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Waukesha County, Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program (OWPP), and Washington County, are working together as partners in the Mason Creek Watershed Protection Plan planning program.

The ultimate goal of this project is to identify issues/problems within Mason Creek and develop recommendations to address those issues in order to ensure clean water for the families that reside within this basin as well as protect wildlife for the future. This planning process and subsequent report was completed in 2016.

The plan will study riparian uses, widths of stream buffers, in-flow, drainage, erosion, continuity of flow between the habit and tributaries, and will also include a physical inventory of the Creek. This information will be used to design management strategies for remediation of potential causes of the sediment build-up.

**Why:** Mason Creek has been designated an impaired stream by the DNR. The creek is being negatively impacted by a number of pollutants and impairments. These include low DO, elevated water temperature, degraded habitat, sediment/total suspended solids and total phosphorus levels. Another concern is the water quality of North Lake, which is seriously affected by the impaired conditions of Mason Creek.

It should also be noted that Mason Creek has been under significant anthropogenic pressures in recent years. Issues such as increasing urban development within the tributary area, accelerating demands for groundwater for human use, and increasing numbers of non-native species have created risks that could potentially affect the hydrological and ecological integrity of these water resources.

**Where:** Mason Creek flows through the town of Erin in Washington County and through the town of Merton in Waukesha County before it discharges into North Lake. North Lake is connected by various feeder streams to Pine, Fowler, Oconomowoc, La Belle, Beaver, Keesus, Moose, Okauchee and Silver lakes.

**How:** The group secured a DNR River Management Grant, which will enable additional research and development of strategies to protect this critical area.

