

FROM THE HEADWATERS OF  
**VALLEY CREEK**  
TO THE  
**ST. CROIX RIVER,**  
**CLEAN WATER**  
**MAKES WAVES**



*Hooded  
Warbler*



*White  
Wild Indigo*



*Rainbow  
Trout*



*Blanding's  
Turtle*

## YOUR HOME IS THEIR HABITAT

A hooded warbler alights across the surface of Valley Creek. White wild indigo borders its banks, and trout rise in pursuit of caddis flies. Valley Creek is a special place, and as a landowner along the creek, you are a critical part of the creek's ecosystem.

As one of Minnesota's best trout-producing streams, Valley Creek is worth protecting. You can help to ensure clean water and a healthy habitat for the fish, plants, and wildlife that call Valley Creek home by participating in one of many restoration projects.



Valley Branch  
Watershed District



## Valley Creek's ecosystem . . .

*contains more than 20 endangered, threatened, and special-concern species, including the American brook lamprey, the hooded warbler, and Blanding's turtle.*



## RESTORATION IS IN THE BANK

Erosion along Valley Creek's bank is the primary culprit of changes to the creek's health. Sand, silt, and sediment are all enemies of clean water because they carry harmful contaminants and pollutants that affect the creek's ecosystem. Right now, an estimated 1,400 tons of sediment enter the creek each year—that's the equivalent weight of nearly 30 semi-trailer trucks.

Stream bank restoration is critical to the long-term health of Valley Creek. So critical, in fact, that the Valley Branch Watershed District has received a federal grant to repair some of Valley Creek's bank erosion. The goal of the restoration is to transform an ecologically sensitive area that has been degraded and eroded into an environmentally sound, beautiful landscape. Potential projects will use restoration techniques that are either invisible at the surface or are designed to blend with the creek bed and its natural surroundings.

Imagine the beauty of native plants, flowering perennials, and new trees and shrubs. Perhaps you'd like to install a garden or creek buffer designed to capture runoff and sediment before it enters Valley Creek? You don't have to sacrifice your view of the creek or the neat appearance of your lawn. Valley Creek Watershed District wants to work with you to design a solution that protects the creek and achieves your vision for your property.

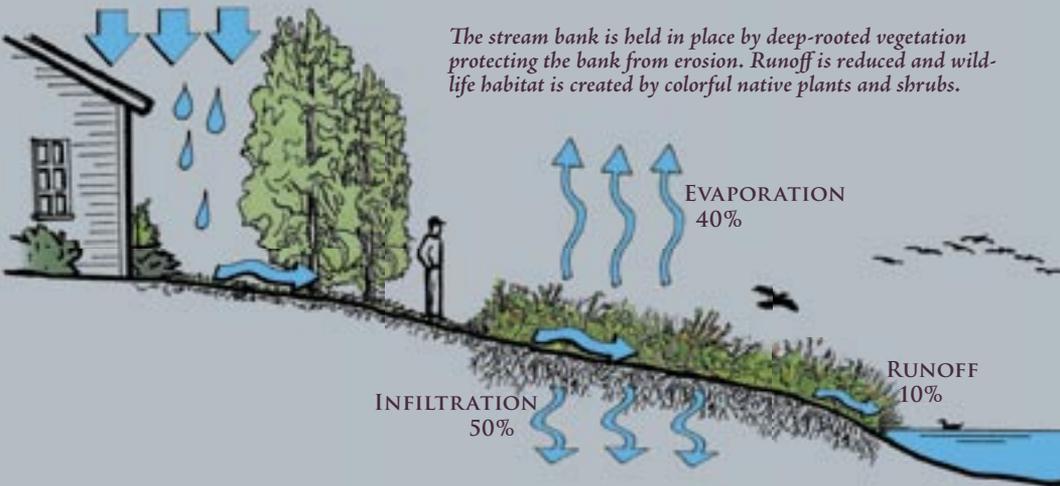
## TAKE THE BAIT—BEGIN PRACTICING WATER PROTECTION TODAY

Money is available to assist landowners along the creek who are willing to participate in Valley Creek's restoration. The benefits are many. Not only will you protect Valley Creek, but you'll also increase the beauty and value of your property.

There are also many simple stewardship practices you can implement around your home.

- ♦ Maintain a vigorous and environmentally sound lawn
- ♦ Manage invasive nonnative species
- ♦ Rake leaves
- ♦ Direct rain gutters into the lawn
- ♦ Avoid detergents with phosphorus, or use them conservatively
- ♦ Maintain your septic system
- ♦ Cleanup after pets
- ♦ Enhance creek habitat

More specific information on these practices and the funding available for restoration projects is available by visiting the Valley Branch Watershed District's website.



### 3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

1. **PARTICIPATE IN A RESTORATION PROJECT**  
Money is available to restore Valley Creek on your property.
2. **MANAGE YOUR LAND TO PROTECT WATER**  
Simple stewardship practices are significant to Valley Creek's health and habitat.
3. **INSTALL A CREEK BUFFER OR RAIN GARDEN**  
A creek buffer, such as the one depicted above, will clean water and reduce erosion. These features can be installed through available funds for restoration.

### FEEDBACK AND FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like to learn more about water protection or the funding available to assist landowners with restoration along Valley Creek, please visit the Valley Branch Watershed District's website at [www.vbwd.org](http://www.vbwd.org), or call the district engineer at 952-832-2622.



*Stillwater Area High School biology students collect samples at Belwin.*

Valley Branch Watershed District  
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## Valley Creek's Trout—

*Valley Creek is one of the best trout-producing streams in Minnesota and is believed to be in the top 10 percent of trout-producing streams in the world. The creek is home to brook, brown, and rainbow trout.*

## DO YOU LIVE ON VALLEY CREEK?

You can participate in Valley Creek's restoration. Funding is available through the Valley Branch Watershed District to restore eroded sections of the creek.

To learn more, please visit the Valley Branch Watershed District's website at [www.vbwd.org](http://www.vbwd.org), or call the district engineer at 952-832-2622.

