

Problem – Ike’s Creek, the only Stream in Hennepin County with Trout is at risk.

Ike’s Creek a groundwater/spring fed stream with its headwaters in Bloomington’s Forest Glen Park across the street from the Mall of America is a hidden, little-known jewel. Downstream of the Park, it flows through the private property of Kelly Farm and then through MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge into Long Meadow Lake. The spring supplies Ike’s Creek with a consistent, high-volume supply of cold water (See Figure #1). But, in personal communications with both Linda Loomis from Lower MN River Watershed District and Vicki Sherry from MN Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MVNWR), both awareness and support of this fragile ecosystem is needed before water quality deteriorates to the point that it no longer supports the resident Brook Trout.



Figure #1 Ike’s Creek and surrounding properties. Source: Screen capture from Vicki Sherry’s presentation delivered Nov 2023 to City of Bloomington’s Sustainability Commission.

Good News:

- The MVNWR released an Environmental Assessment (EA), [MVNWR EA document](#), last month (October 2024). The MVNWR is proposing to initiate a 2025 project to enhance the habitat for existing brook trout and improve the water quality for their portion of Ike’s Creek.
- Buckthorn removal in Forest Glen Park has begun by volunteers in coordination with the City and the non-profit, Bloomington Neighbors Nurturing Nature (BNNN). And a plan for complete restoration has been proposed (See Figure 2):
 - Plant &/or seed native grasses & forbs in Phase 1 area that will thrive on a south facing slope.
 - Remove invasives in Phase 2 & 3 areas, and plant/seed natives good for the north slope area.
 - Restore, as possible, the area to 1800’s biome of Oak Openings & Barrens (See Figure#3).
 - Ensure appropriate maintenance of the entire area, ensuring Ike’s Creek has correct vegetation nearby to help shade and keep water temperature below 70F.

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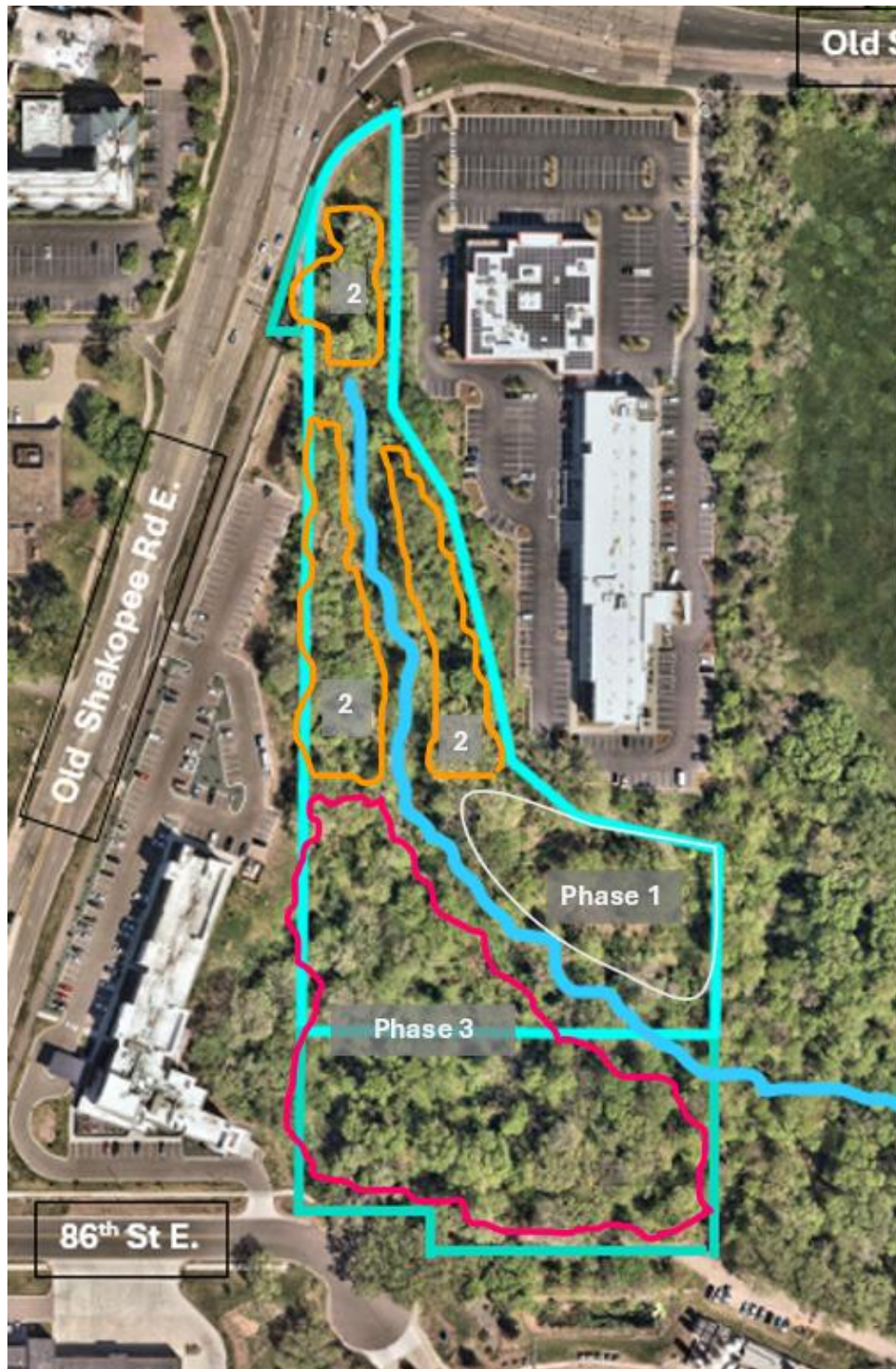


Figure #2. Detailed map of a 3-phase effort to restore a natural biome to Forest Glen Park.

Bad News:

- MVNWR proposed 2025 project for Ike’s Creek only addresses US Fish and Wildlife Service property.
- The City of Bloomington has no funding nor staff to complete the 3-phase plan in Forest Glen Park.
- The work being done in the MVNWR is at risk of being degraded if attention is not given to Forest Glen Park.

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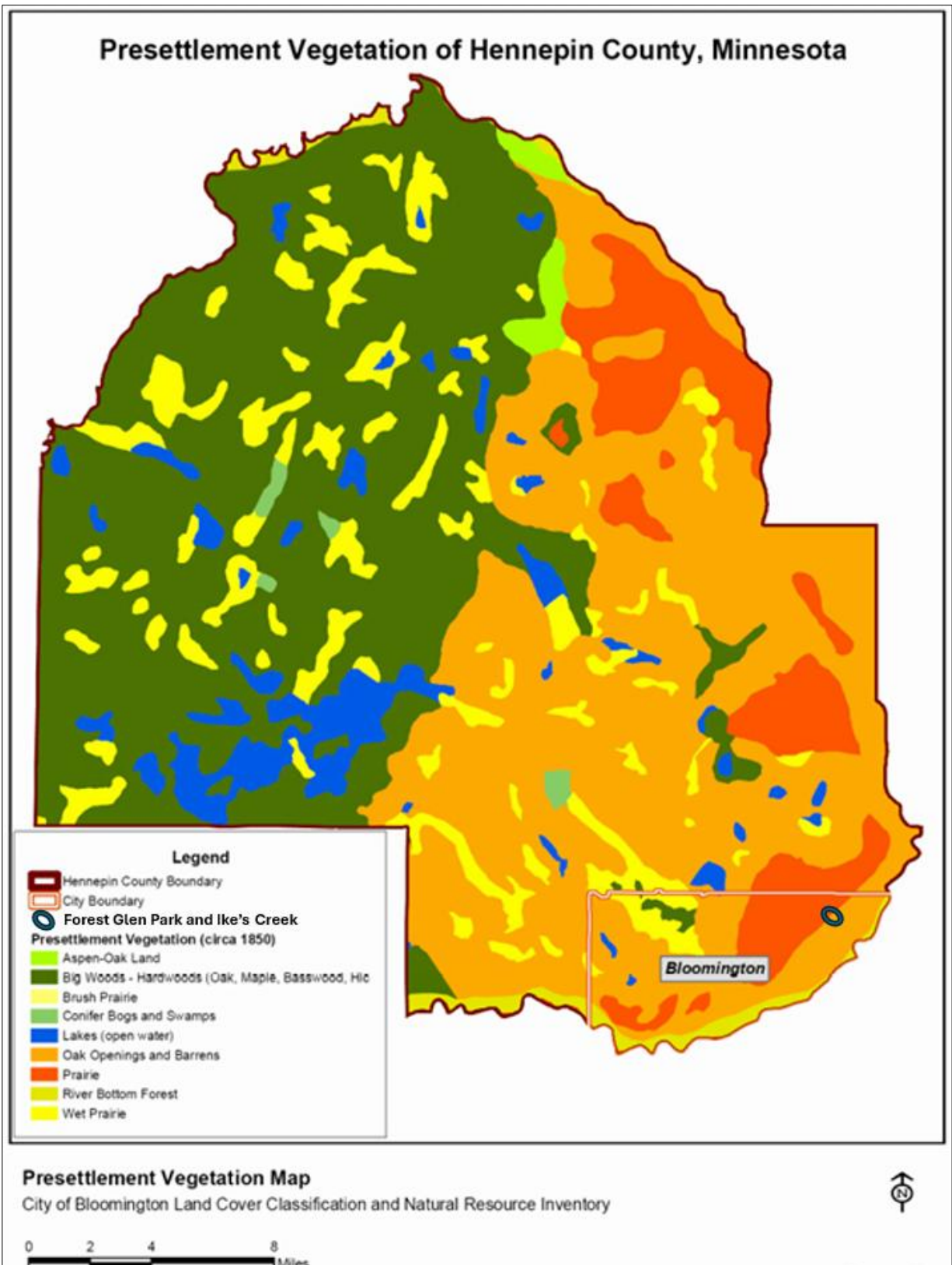


Figure #3. Pre-settlement Vegetation of Hennepin Co. with Forest Glen Park and Ike's Creek located.
Source: *Natural Resources Inventory of the City of Bloomington, Minnesota - 2007.*

Solution – Address the entire extent of Ike’s Creek restoration

- Ensure the MVNWR proposed 2025 project for Ike’s Creek on US Fish and Wildlife Service property is implemented.
- Support the 3-phase plan in Forest Glen Park with a funding solution.

Outcome – The degradation risk of Ike’s Creek water quality will be greatly reduced.

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