

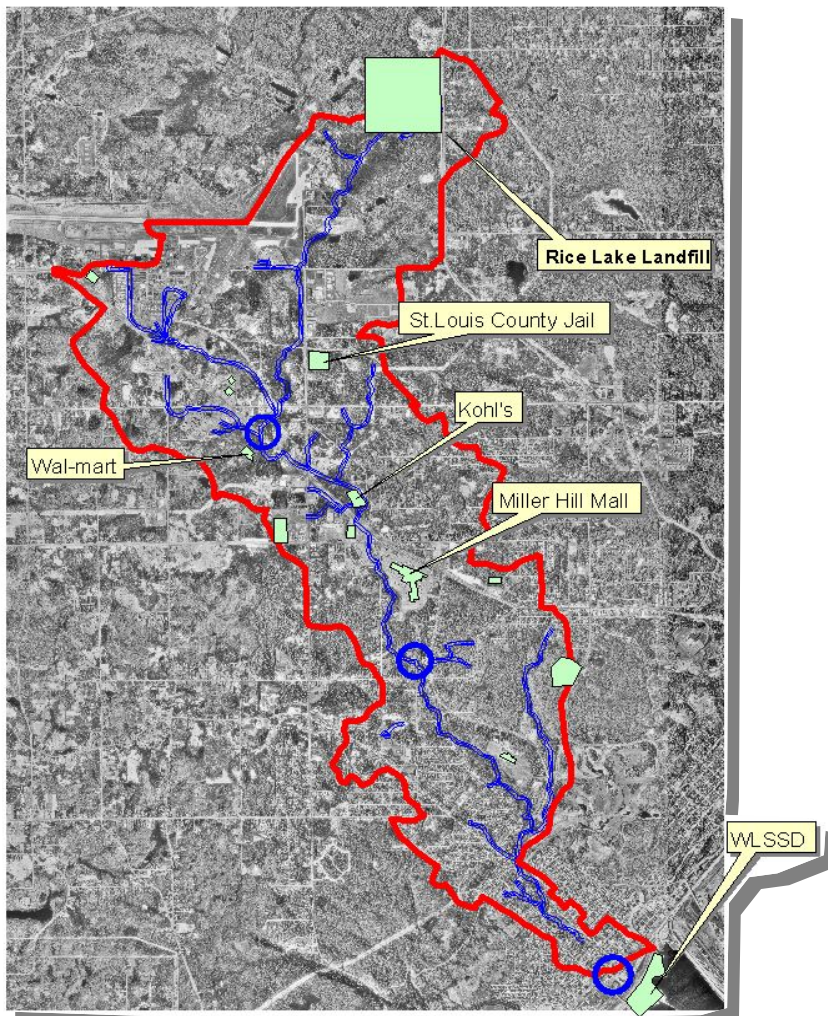


# Miller Mail

Updates on the Development of the Miller Creek Total Maximum Daily Load Plan

## What is a TMDL again?

A TMDL is a scientifically determined value of how much of a certain pollutant a body of water can handle before its "beneficial uses," such as swimming or fishing, are harmed by the pollutant. One of Miller Creek's "beneficial uses" is supporting a population of brook trout. Many human activities have threatened the health of Miller Creek's trout, especially development up in the mall area. Despite this, the brook trout population has found ways to survive. In fact, there are enough trout in the stream that the DNR hasn't stocked it since 1973. The pollutant that is harming the trout is high water temperature. Trout like cold water, so when the temperature of the creek rises from stormwater runoff or from increased sunlight due to cleared riparian areas, they can become stressed and even die. The Miller Creek TMDL will determine what specific factors are causing high temps in the creek. TMDLs are being completed across the nation for waters impacted by many different pollutants including suspended sediment, pH and mercury. Unlike a point source pollutant, where the pollution is coming from a defined point, increased temperature can be caused by many activities at many different locations within the watershed, making pollution reduction even more challenging. Temperature TMDLs for other streams have found lack of shade and low flow to be contributing to increased stream temps. Communities in those watersheds will need to do things such as increase shade along designated parts of the stream and find ways to retain water in the stream in order to keep from going above the total maximum daily load for temperature. Miller Creek has been studied over many years by many motivated individuals, groups and agencies. TMDL plans provide sound scientific data for taking action to protect the Creek. They can also open doorways to federal funding for creek restoration activities. Come join us at our next public meeting to share your stories about Miller Creek and to learn more about the TMDL process.



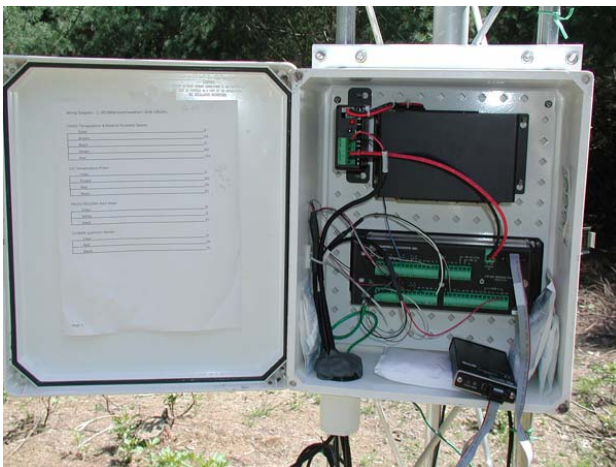
Above: A map of the Miller Creek Watershed.

## When is the next Public Meeting?

Tuesday, October 16th, 7:00 pm,  
SWCD office, Rm. 301  
Old Central High School  
Refreshments; TMDL Summer  
Monitoring Updates.  
call Kate @ 723-4867 to RSVP.

## What progress has been made on the Miller Creek TMDL?

This summer, staff at the SWCD have been monitoring Miller Creek for several indicators of pollution including temperature, discharge (how much water flows through a certain pt.—usually measured in cubic meters per sec.), sediment, pH, dissolved oxygen (what fish use to breathe) and conductivity (the ability of the water to pass an electrical current—this can be affected by certain pollutants). Staff used instruments such as data loggers, which look like a small utility box next to the stream (see below), to gather the data throughout this summer. Monitoring will continue throughout the fall and again in the spring, summer and fall of '08. Some data has been collected on Miller Creek in the past, which will be combined with the SWCD's recent data and data from DNR fisheries, to determine different factors and conditions that could be contributing to increased temperatures in Miller Creek. In addition to collecting actual data, a Technical Advisory Group has been formed, consisting of representatives from the various agencies, groups, cities, etc. that have an interest in the development of this plan. Input from the public is also very important in the development of this plan. The first public meeting for the plan was held in June. At that meeting folks shared stories about the history of the creek and Kate and Nate talked about what a TMDL plan is and how citizens can help. The SWCD website has also been updated with the most current information about the plan.



*Photo: a data logger such as the ones located on Miller Creek.*

## Besides providing input on the TMDL Plan, what else can I do to help Miller Creek?

1. Promote the importance of leaving a vegetative buffer along the Creek.
2. Direct rain runoff from your house into a vegetated area
3. Install a rain barrel.
4. Don't dump leaves or yard debris into storm culverts or ditches.
5. Dispose of household hazardous waste properly - call the WLSSD Waste Hotline: 218.722.0761
6. Plant native trees and grasses on your property.
7. **Help us find other interested, motivated and concerned citizens of Miller Creek to provide input into this plan.** We want this to be a project that incorporates everyone's thoughts and interests. Invite them to the upcoming meeting, share this newsletter with them, or invite them to call Kate or Nate at the Soil and Water Conservation District (723-4867) for more information.

