

**FINAL REPORT****2003 Project Abstract**

For the Period Ending June 30, 2006

SEP 09 2006

**TITLE:** *Metro Area Wildlife Corridors/Trott Brook Greenway***PROJECT MANAGER:** *Mark D. Riverblood.***ORGANIZATION:** *City of Ramsey***ADDRESS:** 15153 Nowthen Blvd. NW**WEB SITE ADDRESS:** *www.ci.ramsey.mn.us***FUND:** *Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund through the LCMR***LEGAL CITATION:** ML 2003, Chap. 128, art., Sec. 9, Subd. 5(b).**APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$500,000**Overall Project Outcome and Results

The primary objective of this project was to conserve land along the 7 mile Trott Brook in Ramsey due to the significance of its intact ecosystems - through conservation and trail easements. This corridor is also the 'Missing Link' in a 108 mile loop of existing and proposed trails encircling the entire north metro. A second goal was to promote land conservation in key ecological areas and to encourage an awareness of mechanisms to accomplish this - in an area with increasing development pressures and resultant opportunities.

The conservation goals of the work plan were exceeded by the following acquisitions:

- Conservation Easements secured on three parcels, one 2.1 acres, another 2 acres at the mouth of Trott Brook at the confluence of the Rum River, and the other .74 acres in the eastern part of the City, upstream of Ford Brook's confluence with Trott.
- Conservation *and* Trail Easements acquired over two parcels; one approximately 22 acres, another 3.3 acres. The larger is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile in length west of Nowthen Boulevard, the other spans both sides of the brook (and includes a spring), with a Trail Easement specific to the north side.
- The largest tract is a 35 acre Fee Simple purchase, including oak uplands and is key to Ramsey's Park and Trail Plan implementation.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

The discussion of the Trott Brook Greenway at the policy-making level led to a discussion of greenways in Ramsey and their benefits to the community. This dialog about local environmental protection indirectly resulted in the Environmental Policy Task Force receiving Council approval to promulgate a Wetland Buffering Ordinance. Ramsey's 29 square miles is about 17% wetlands. With buffering areas up to 50' feet beyond the protection afforded by the Wetland Conservation Act, the additional land and habitat that will be protected is significant.

Since adoption of the Wetland Buffering Ordinance, one subdivision has received plat approval. In this plat alone, 3.5 acres of upland immediately adjacent to wetlands will be permanently protected from any development because of the Ordinance. Ramsey's population of 22,000 is expected to double in the next one to two decades due to additional subdivisions and redevelopment. Given the amount of wetlands in the City (including those associated with Trott Brook), the ancillary, as well as intended land conservation gained by the LCMR investment in Ramsey is considerable.

# FINAL REPORT

SEP 09 2006

**Date of Report:** June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006  
**LCMR Final Work Program Report**

## **I. PROJECT TITLE: Metro Area Wildlife Corridors/Trott Brook Greenway**

**Project Manager:** *Mark D. Riverblood.*

**Affiliation:** City of Ramsey

**Mailing Address:** 15153 Nowthen Blvd. NW

**City / State / Zip :** Ramsey MN 55303

**Telephone Number:** 763 238 1733

**E-mail Address:** mriverblood@ci.ramsey.mn.us

**FAX Number:** 763 427 2199

**Web Page address:** *www.ci.ramsey.mn.us*

**Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget: LCMR Appropriation: \$500,000.00**  
**Final Balance: \$0**

**Legal Citation:** ML 2003, Chap. 128, art., Sec. 9, Subd. 5(b).

**Appropriation Language:** (b) Metropolitan Area Wildlife Corridors

\$2,450,000 the first year and \$2,450,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources. \$3,550,000 of this appropriation is for acceleration of agency programs and cooperative agreements with the Trust for Public Land, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Friends of the Mississippi River, Great River Greening, Minnesota Land Trust, and Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge Trust, Inc., for the purposes of planning, improving, and protecting important natural areas in the metropolitan region, as defined by Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2, through grants, contracted services, conservation easements, and fee acquisition. \$500,000 of this appropriation is for an agreement with the city of Ramsey for the Trott Brook Corridor acquisition. \$800,000 of this appropriation is for an agreement with the Rice Creek Watershed District for Hardwood Creek acquisition and restoration. Land acquired with this appropriation must be sufficiently improved to meet at least minimum management standards as determined by the commissioner of natural resources. As part of the required work program, criteria and priorities for planned acquisition and restoration activities must be submitted to the legislative commission on Minnesota resources for review and approval before expenditure. Expenditures are limited to the identified project areas as defined in the work program. This appropriation may not be used for the purchase of residential structures unless expressly approved in the work program. Any land acquired in fee title by the commissioner of natural resources with money from this appropriation must be designated: (1) as an outdoor recreation unit under Minnesota Statutes, section 86A.07; or (2) as provided in Minnesota Statutes, sections 89.018, subdivision 2, paragraph (a); 97A.101; 97A.125; 97C.001; and 97C.011. The commissioner may so designate any lands acquired in less than fee

182 4919  
title. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2006, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier date is specified in the work program.

## **II and III. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY:**

### Overall Project Outcome and Results

The primary objective of this project was to conserve land along the 7 mile Trott Brook in Ramsey due to the significance of its intact ecosystems - through conservation and trail easements. This corridor is also the 'Missing Link' in a 108 mile loop of existing and proposed trails encircling the entire north metro. A second goal was to promote land conservation in key ecological areas and to encourage an awareness of mechanisms to accomplish this – in an area with increasing development pressures and resultant opportunities.

The conservation goals of the work plan were exceeded by the following acquisitions:

- Conservation Easements secured on three parcels, one 2.1 acres, another 2 acres at the mouth of Trott Brook at the confluence of the Rum River, and the other .74 acres in the eastern part of the City, upstream of Ford Brook's confluence with Trott.
- Conservation *and* Trail Easements acquired on two parcels; one approximately 22 acres, another 3.3 acres. The larger is  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile in length west of Nowthen Boulevard, the other spans both sides of the brook (and includes a spring), with a Trail Easement specific to the north side.
- The largest tract is a 35 acre Fee Simple purchase, including oak uplands and is key to Ramsey's Park and Trail Plan implementation.

### Project Results Use and Dissemination

The discussion of the Trott Brook Greenway at the policy-making level led to a discussion of greenways in Ramsey and their benefits to the community. This dialog about local environmental protection indirectly resulted in the Environmental Policy Task Force receiving Council approval to promulgate a Wetland Buffering Ordinance. Ramsey's 29 square miles is about 17% wetlands. With buffering areas up to 50' feet beyond the protection afforded by the Wetland Conservation Act, the additional land and habitat that will be protected is significant.

Since adoption of the Wetland Buffering Ordinance, one subdivision has received plat approval. In this plat alone, 3.5 acres of upland immediately adjacent to wetlands will be permanently protected from any development because of the Ordinance. Ramsey's population of 22,000 is expected to double in the next one to two decades due to additional subdivisions and redevelopment. Given the amount of wetlands in the City (including those associated with Trott Brook), the ancillary, as

well as intended land conservation gained by the LCMR investment in Ramsey is considerable.

#### IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS

##### Results 1: Disseminate information to landowners

##### Description:

The City of Ramsey will contact 30 plus local landowners along Trott Brook. The landowners will be informed of the goals of the proposed project and be invited to participate in the protection of the natural areas and habitats within the corridor. Those interested in the objectives identified in Result #2 below, (acquisition of conservation and trail easements) will proceed to that level of negotiation. Landowners that may not be interested in selling (or donating) easements will be referred to the Anoka Conservation District to learn more about land management options.

<b>Summary Budget Information for Result 1: LCMR Budget</b>	<b>\$ 500.00</b>
<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>\$ 500.00</b>
<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

**Completion Date:** (Dissemination of information to landowners and residents is an ongoing commitment by the City.) The direct mailing(s) identified in Result 1 was completed in the fall of 2005.

##### Final Results:

All of the total landowners along Trott Brook have been invited to discuss Trail and Conservation easements by a special mailing. This resulted in many individual inquiries – some of which proceeded as far as obtaining appraisals for easements. However, several of these landowners, including one 38-acre tract choose not to 'ink the deal'. Another mailing followed about a year later that advised that the opportunity for voluntary land protection through the LCMR program was coming to a close. This generated more contacts – which ultimately led to exceeding the goals of land acquisition.

The original Project Summary and Result contained the following sentence:

*'An ancillary benefit will be an increased awareness for the goals of land protection in this area and thus, an even higher probability for success in the next phase of land protection along Trott Brook.'*

This referenced increased land protection goal has indeed seen progress. The discussion of the Trott Brook Greenway has led to a general discussion of greenways in Ramsey and their benefits to the community and environment. This dialog about local environmental protection resulted in the Environmental Policy

Task Force receiving City Council approval to promulgate a Wetland Buffering Ordinance. Ramsey is almost 29 square miles, of which about 17% is wetlands. With buffering areas up to 50' feet beyond the protection afforded by the Wetland Conservation Act, the additional land and habitat that will be protected is significant.

Since the August 2005 report, a Wetland Buffering Ordinance has been placed in effect, and the Task Force has been made an official advisory board to Council. The Environmental Policy Board continues to work on local environmental issues and has a representative from the Planning Commission and Park Commission, as well as a City Council liaison – providing for effective communication and coordination throughout the organization. Since the adoption of the abovementioned ordinance, one subdivision has received plat approval. In this plat alone, 3.5 acres of upland immediately adjacent to wetlands will be permanently protected from any development because of the Wetland Buffering Ordinance. The City of Ramsey's population is expected to double in the next one to two decades due to additional subdivisions and redevelopment. Given the amount of wetlands present in the City, the indirect land protection encouraged by the LCMR investment in Ramsey is also considerable.

## **Result 2: Land Acquisition**

### **Description:**

Upon contact with landowners along Trott Brook that are interested in land protection, the City of Ramsey and any other project cooperators will discuss the easement options and concerns of the property owners.

At the time of tentative agreement, language specific to that parcel will be crafted and an appraisal will be performed. In some cases, a land survey may be necessary preparatory to the appraisal. A purchase agreement will be formulated that addresses all the elements of the land transaction, which will be reviewed by the appropriate legal professionals.

Land acquisition procedures will be conducted in accordance with the Mn DNR Reimbursement Manual for 2003 LCMR Pass Through Appropriations and will meet minimum DNR land standards. The following summarizes the procedures:

#### Landowner information

Upon expressing interest in the conveyance of property to the City or another agency, the City will provide the property owner with;

- The description of the real property to be purchased along with a description of this project.
- The intended use of the property.
- The appraisal process and a statement documenting that the landowner will receive a summary or the actual appraisal.
- The purchase procedure.

- The contact person for each element if it is different than the program manager.

### Environmental Review

The City will conduct an appropriate environmental review.

### Appraisals

In the event that purchased interest in real property is intended to be conveyed to the DNR, an appraisal shall be performed then reviewed and certified by a DNR review appraiser.

For purchases less than \$20,000, and not intended to be conveyed to the DNR, appraisals will be developed substantiating the purchase price.

### Survey/Legal Descriptions

If the City determines that a survey is required, a survey will be ordered by a licensed surveyor, who shall also prepare a legal description matching the interest in the real property that is intended to be purchased.

### Title

The appropriate evidence shall be obtained to ensure the real property to be obtained is marketable. This shall include one of the following; an abstract of title, registered property abstract, an attorney's title opinion or title commitment for an owner's policy of title insurance.

### Minimum Standards

If appropriate, certain property 'improvements', such as signage or the removal of debris, may be required and therefore considered as part of the property acquisition.

After the individual conditions outlined in the reimbursement manual have been met for the acquisition of land, reimbursement will be sought by the City.

In the case of the actual transaction for purchase of the interest in real property, the purchase agreement may require the State to issue a check in both the landowner(s) and the City names for the release of funds.

All eligible funds incurred in the purchase of an interest in real property will be accompanied by the appropriate documentation summarized below:

- Copy of the letter containing landowner information, signed by the seller(s).
- Environmental review document.
- Appraisal information.
- Legal description and survey if required.
- Evidence of title.
- Evidence of all costs associated with the property acquisitions, including itemized timesheets of personnel for which invoices are not typically generated.

The activity detailed in Result #2 is anticipated to secure approximately 40 to 60 acres of ecologically sensitive areas by conservation and trail easements using the \$500,000 LCMR investment.

<b>Summary Budget Information for Result 2:</b>	<b>LCMR Budget</b>	<b>\$499,500.00</b>
	<b>Amount Spent</b>	<b>\$499,500.00</b>
	<b>Balance</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>

*Approved  
June 22 2006*

**Completion Date: June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Final Report Summary:**

The stated goals of the work plan have been exceeded. Conservation Easements and/or Conservation and Trail Easements were secured on five (5) parcels, equating to thirty (30) acres of land. Additionally, thirty-five (35) acres of land have been acquired Fee Simple.

Conservation Easements have been secured on three parcels, one approximately 2.1 acres, another 2 acres at the mouth of Trott Brook at the confluence of the Rum River, and the other approximately 0.74 acres. The larger of the three is located on the north side of Trott Brook near the central part of the City and the remaining one is located on the south side of the brook in the eastern part of the City, upstream of Ford Brook's confluence with Trott.

Conservation and Trail Easements have been secured on two parcels as well; one approximately 22 acres and the other approximately 3.3 acres. The larger parcel is ¾ mile in length and located in the central part of the City along the southern bank of the brook. The smaller site has a Conservation Easement spanning both sides of the brook (which includes a spring), and a Trail Easement specific to the north side. Both of these are key to implement Ramsey's Park and Trail Plan.

The 35 acre Fee Simple acquisition spans both sides of the brook and includes oak uplands and valuable wildlife habitat. This parcel is also a previously identified critical trail link along the Trott Brook Greenway and proposed trail route; and connects to existing City park land.

**V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:**

<b>All Results: Personnel:</b>	<b>\$ 3,298.60</b>
<b>All Results: Equipment:</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>All Results: Development:</b>	<b>\$ 7,659 (clean up, signage)</b>
<b>All Results: Acquisition:</b>	<b>\$ 456,565.25</b>
<b>All Results: Other:</b>	<b>\$ 32,477.15</b>

**TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET: \$ 500,000.00**

**VI. PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE SPENDING:** In addition to the items listed below, the City has a significant investment in the 251 acres of park space already existing in the Trott Brook Corridor.

**A. Past Spending:**

2002 Metro Greenways Planning Grant \$35,000

2002-03 Master Trail Plan \$16,200

Natural resource component of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan process \$6,000

**B. Current Spending:**

In excess of \$30,000 in indirect costs and program manager salary is estimated to have been invested in this project that was not intended to be reimbursable.

**C. Required Match (if applicable):**

Matching dollars or hours were not required – however, many thousands of hours of volunteer and paid staff time have been invested in Greenway discussions and the Wetland Buffering Ordinance.

**D. Future Spending:**

Future expenditures may include LCMR investment in additional land protection (\$1.5 to 3.5 million) and various partnerships in trail corridor acquisition and development, including; Mn DNR, City of Ramsey, Anoka County Parks, Metropolitan Council, Sherburne County, and the City of Elk River - each at levels to be determined.

**VII. Project Partners:**

**Partners Receiving LCMR Funds**

City of Ramsey

**Project Cooperators**

Anoka Conservation District

Minnesota Land Trust (consultations, potential future co-easement partners)

**VIII. DISSEMINATION:**

Information was disseminated by direct mail to landowners in the corridor. In addition, all public meetings relating to this project were cable cast, and included special spots about this project. In addition, facts of this project may be acknowledged in the Master Trail Plan.

Information on project will be posted on the LCMR website.

**IX. LOCATION:** Trott Brook corridor within Ramsey City limits, Metro Wildlife Partners Focus Area #1

**X. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:**



Periodic work program progress reports were submitted on the LCMR schedule with one work plan amendment submitted on June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

ATTACHMENT A

Proposal Title: Metro Wildlife Corridors/Trott Brook Greenway Corridor

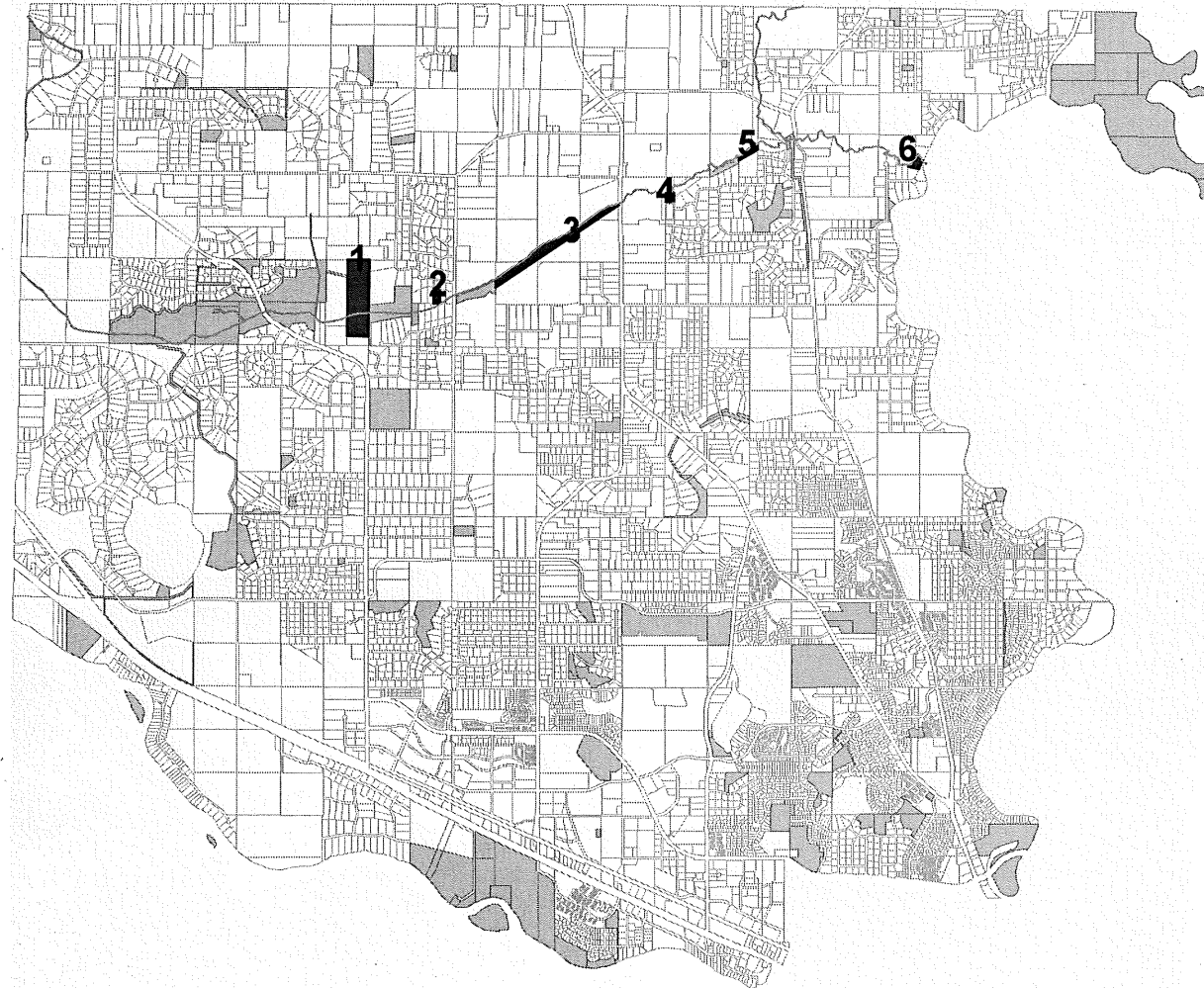
Project Manager Name: Mark D. Riverblood

Project Title: Section 9 Subdivision 5b  
 Legal Citation: Laws of Minnesota 2003 Chapter 128

2003 LCMR Proposal Budget	Result 1 Budget: Disseminate information to landowners				Result 2 Budget: Land Acquisition					Total revised budget	Balance Total
	Beginning Budget	Amount Spent	Current Invoice	Ending Balance	Beginning Budget	Approved Revised Budget 6/22/06	Amount Spent	Current Invoice	Ending Balance		
BUDGET ITEM				\$ -					\$ -		
PERSONNEL: Staff Expenses ( Administrative, Community Development and Engineering Staff expenses relating to Land Acquisition)				\$ -	20,000.00	3,298.60	3,298.60		\$ -	\$3,298.60	\$ -
Contracts									\$ -		
Real Estate transaction expenses including: Survey work and preparing legal descriptions, Title and title insurance, and Appraisals				\$ -	70,000.00	38,869.26	38,869.26		\$ -	\$38,869.26	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
Printing, Postage, Communications and misc. expenses relating to land acquisition	500.00	301.28	198.72	\$ -	750.00	3.85	3.85		\$ -	\$503.85	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
Travel expenses in Minnesota (Milage to meet with landowners and inspect property)				\$ -	100.00	61.76	61.76		\$ -	\$61.76	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
Land acquisition (Purchase cost of Conservation and Trail Easements)				\$ -	403,150.00	456,565.25	399,000.00	57,565.25	\$ -	\$456,565.25	\$ -
Staff or Contract Employee Expenses related to land acquisition				\$ -	100.00				\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
									\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
Other land improvement (signs and other 'improvements' to mt min. standards)				\$ -	5,000.00				\$ -	\$0.00	\$ -
Legal fees (Recording Fees etc.)				\$ -	400.00	400.00	400.00		\$ -	\$400.00	\$ -
COLUMN TOTAL	\$500.00	\$301.28	\$198.72	\$0.00	\$499,500.00	\$499,198.72	\$441,633.47	\$57,565.25	\$0.00	\$500,000.00	\$ -

# Metro Area Wildlife Corridors/Trott Brook Greenway

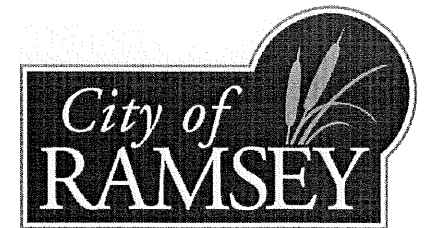
## Conservation and Trail Easement Location Map



1	35 acres
2	2.1 acres
3	22 acres
4	3.3 acres
5	.74 acres
6	2 acres
<b>Total</b>	<b>65.14 acres</b>

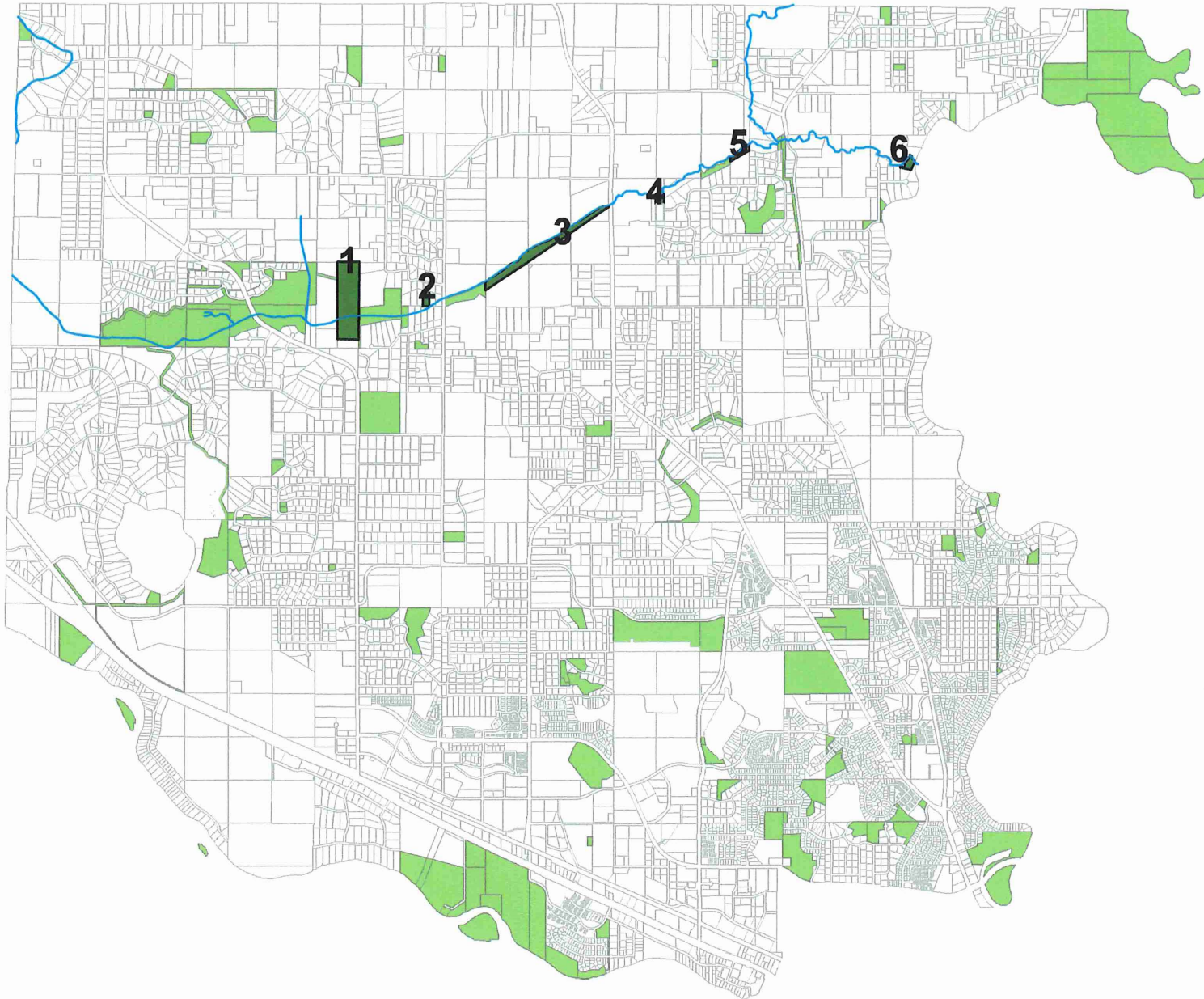
 Existing Public/Park Land

 Successfully Acquired Properties and Easements



# Metro Area Wildlife Corridors/Trott Brook Greenway

## Conservation and Trail Easement Location Map



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