

Communities & Stakeholders of the Black Earth Creek Watershed,

On behalf of the Steering Committee for the [Black Earth Creek Green Infrastructure Plan](#), and the closely affiliated group of funding supporters for the existing **USGS Monitoring Program on Black Earth Creek and Brewery Creek** (Program), we are sharing this update on the Program's future amid funding constraints. We are sharing with all municipalities, current/past funding partners, and other stakeholders within the watershed. Attached is a general flyer describing the benefits of water quality monitoring on our shared surface waters in Dane County if you'd like to learn more.

Background:

After a long history of monitoring on Black Earth Creek, this Program was expanded in 2024 in response to heightened interest after recent events of concern and available contributions from stakeholders in the watershed, but is now in jeopardy due to loss of funding. For reference, the [USGS National Water Dashboard](#) contains a wealth of information, including current and historical monitoring data for all stations. The specific locations of each site in this program are linked below in the table.

Program Update:

As many of you may be aware, **budget shortfalls of \$61-67k** are now anticipated for each of the next two years (CY 2027 and 2028). The **total program cost per year is approximately \$94-105k** (depending on lab costs). At our May Steering Committee meeting, Nic Buer (USGS) shared alternatives for reducing the monitoring scope if additional funding is not found. Based on that discussion, **the preferred alternative includes reducing the scope of work to only include data collection for key parameters of discharge, temperature, and dissolved oxygen (all options), as well as potentially scaling down from 4 to 3 monitoring stations (options 2 & 3)**. These options bring the costs down closer to the **\$38,500 in current commitments** for each year.

See table below for costs of alternatives for **CY 2027/2028** -- the per-year cost will vary depending on if, and which, monitoring station is removed. If an additional approximately **\$15,000 could be committed by local cooperators (plus the \$6,500 match from USGS, for a total \$21,500 in additional funding)**, this would allow all 4 stations to remain operable (option 1). **To keep even 3 stations up and running (options 2 and 3), an additional \$3,500 in local funding is needed.** Again, this would be purely a data collection effort of a smaller set of parameters, with no interpretation of data.

<i>Option</i>	<i>Brewery Road (ID 05406457)</i>	<i>Treatment Plant (ID 05406479)</i>	<i>Brewery Creek (ID 05406469)</i>	<i>Black Earth (ID 05406503)</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>USGS Match</i>	<i>Cooper</i>
1	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 60,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 42,000
2		\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 12,600	\$ 29,400
3	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000		\$ 6,000	\$ 42,000	\$ 12,600	\$ 29,400

The Ask:

1. If the entity you represent is interested and able to provide a new contribution or increase the amount of an existing contribution, please contact CARPC staff.
2. Assuming Option 1 (finding an additional **\$15,000 in local funding**) is not viable, please let us know if you have any objections to Options 2 or 3.

Thanks for your time and contributions in this shared pursuit of monitoring these valuable water resources.

Let us know if questions,
Nick

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