

# **RICE CREEK WATERSHED STREAM HEALTH EVALUATION PROGRAM**

2025-2026  
STREAM MONITORING REPORT

April 30, 2026

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## Acknowledgements

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### Local Government

The Rice Creek Watershed District

### Organizations

Bolton & Menk, Inc.

### Special Recognition

The Rice Creek Watershed Stream Health Evaluation Program wishes to thank the following partners, without whom this program would not be possible:

Katie Farber, Water Resources Scientist Project Manager – Bolton & Menk, Inc.

Tere O’Connell & Laura Dobbins Lyle – SHEP Team Co-Leaders

Joy Gerdes & Adam Wegren – SHEP Team Co-Leaders

Katherine Majkrzak & Darrell Majkrzak – SHEP Team Co-Leaders

### 2025 Rice Creek SHEP Volunteers

The 2025 Rice Creek Watershed Stream Health Evaluation Program extends our most sincere appreciation to all the SHEP volunteers who donated their time in the stream and laboratory last summer. Together, these volunteers contributed over 556 hours of service to monitor the health of our water resources. Thank you!

Team 1: Tere O’Connell\*, Laura Dobbins Lyle\*, Gary Averbeck, Marty Asleson, Barbara Bor, Linda Grundtner, Wayne LeBlanc, Ah-li Monahan, Lauren Peck, John Sullivan, Kim Sullivan

Team 2: Joy Gerdes\*, Adam Wegren\*, Bob Bartlett, Davlat Baydullo, William Bockenkamp, Jim B., Ralph Butkowski, Gary Ellis, Julia Grabow, Jo Ann Morse, Joe Yoch

Team 3: Katherine Majkrzak\*, Darrell Majkrzak\*, Rachel Beise, Rich Femling, Elan Majkrzak, Jennifer Olson, Abigail Peters, Sarah Podzorski, Eleanor Ruszczyk, Rick Walsh, Susan Young

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## **Rice Creek Watershed Stream Health Evaluation Program 2025 Field Monitoring Report**

1.0	BACKGROUND	4
2.0	RICE CREEK WATERSHED SHEP	5
2.1	Northern Sites: Hardwood Creek and Clearwater Creek	8
2.2	Middle Sites: Rice Creek	10
2.3	Southern Sites: Locke Lake	11
3.0	SHEP OPERATIONS	13
3.1	Volunteer Recruitment	13
3.2	Team Assignments	13
3.3	Training	14
3.4	Field Sampling	14
3.5	Lab Identification	15
3.6	Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC)	15
4.0	MACROINVERTEBRATE RESULTS	16
4.1	Hardwood Creek Above was monitored by Team #1 – 9/06/2025	17
4.2	Hardwood Creek Below was monitored by Team #1 – 09/06/2025	21
4.3	Clearwater Creek was monitored by Team #1 – 09/06/2025	25
4.4	Rice Creek Above was sampled by Team #2 – 08/30/2025	29
4.5	Rice Creek Below was sampled by Team #2 – 08/30/2025	34
4.6	Rice Creek Irondale was sampled by Team #2 – 8/30/2025	39
4.7	Locke Lake Above was sampled by Team #3 – 9/07/2025	43
4.8	Locke Lake Below was monitored by Team #3, 9/07/2025	48
4.9	Locke Lake Park was sampled by Team #3 – 09/07/2025	53
5.0	SUMMARY OF RESULTS	58
5.1	FBI trends: Improving	59
5.2	FBI trends: Stable	59
5.3	FBI Trends: Worsening	59
5.4	Status in 2025	60

*For more information on the Rice Creek Watershed Stream Health Evaluation Program or for a copy of this report, please contact Friends of the Mississippi River or visit*

[www.fmr.org](http://www.fmr.org)

## 1.0 BACKGROUND

In an effort to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the health of our water resources, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and other agencies have developed protocols and indices for the biological assessment of streams. Because aquatic organisms express a range of tolerances to environmental conditions, biological assessment can be a powerful quantitative tool in understanding the health of water resources and provides a more complete picture of the ecological health of our waters. The National River Watch Network states that five years of data should be collected in order to perform a biological characterization of a sample site.

In the early 1990's, Riverwatch, a national volunteer river monitoring program, was brought to Minnesota to engage schools in river monitoring. The program was started by the Mississippi Headwaters Board and taken over by Hennepin County and eventually spread across the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

In 1997, a citizen wetland monitoring program was formed by local partners and the MPCA to evaluate wetland health. Sampling methods and evaluation metrics were developed by MPCA scientists to measure the health of the local wetlands. This Wetland Health Evaluation Program (WHEP) is now an award-winning and nationally recognized program that uses citizen volunteers to monitor the biological health of local wetlands. Multiple layers of quality control, volunteer training and the use of rigorous protocols assure scientifically-valid monitoring results. Volunteers enjoy the program and, after participating, often become more engaged in wetland and watershed issues and stewardship within their communities.

The Stream Health Evaluation Program (SHEP) is a model for volunteer stream monitoring modeled after WHEP and Riverwatch. SHEP uses trained adult volunteers to evaluate the biological health of streams using advanced bioassessment protocols and indices specifically developed for this region. The program thoroughly monitors volunteer data collection and lab identification techniques to ensure compatibility with established protocols. Complete data cross-checks and programmatic evaluation ensure accurate and timely data that are quality certified.

SHEP provides local communities and watershed organizations with a premier volunteer benthic macroinvertebrate monitoring program that produces reliable data and actively engages citizens in the work of the watershed.

### SHEP

- Monitors the health of valuable water resources,
- Uses research-based multiple index metrics,
- Professionally trains adult volunteers,
- Utilizes multiple levels of quality control to ensure quality results,
- Provides relevant, reliable data to local decision makers and researchers,
- Engages citizens in water resource management and assessment,

- Promotes water resource health to community members, and
- Promotes partnership between local governments, state agencies and community residents.

## 2.0 RICE CREEK WATERSHED SHEP

Watershed districts are special purpose units of local government whose boundaries follow those of a natural watershed. The Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD) was established in 1972 to conserve and restore the water resources of the district for the beneficial use of current and future generations. It is a governmental organization managed by a Board of Managers appointed by the county commissions of Anoka, Ramsey and Washington Counties. About 10 percent of the watershed's surface area is occupied by lakes, the largest of which are White Bear Lake and Bald Eagle Lake. About 13 percent of the watershed consists of wetland areas.

RCWD provides most of the funds for SHEP, which is coordinated by Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR), and supported through partnership with Bolton & Menk Inc.. Local program partners have included the MPCA, University of Minnesota Water Resource Center, Anoka County Parks and local landowners. Additional resources for SHEP are provided by FMR.

In 2006, RCWD staff selected SHEP monitoring sites, which were chosen to gauge the effects of recent watershed restoration and stewardship activities by being upstream or downstream of such activities. SHEP was first implemented in a pilot phase in the summer and fall of 2006 with Rice Creek Above and Below and Locke Lake Above and Below (Figure 1).

Rice Creek Above and Below sites (both of which are within the boundaries of the restoration) were selected at the beginning and end of the restoration in part to gauge the long-term stream health changes that result from this restoration activity. A third site, Rice Creek Irondale, was introduced to the program in 2012 further downstream of the restoration area, before the Rice Creek discharges into Long Lake.

Locke Lake Above and Below sites are just upstream of Rice Creek's outflow to the Mississippi River. RCWD restoration activities involved installing shoreland restoration and shoreland stabilization measures on properties adjacent to Locke Lake.

In summer 2006, as part of a grant from the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources, restoration was performed at three locations along Hardwood Creek that had been identified as having severe bank erosion. Banks were stabilized and in-stream habitat improvement techniques were implemented.

In 2007, Hardwood Creek Above and Clearwater Creek were added. In 2010, Hardwood Creek Below was added, and Locke Lake Park was added in 2012.

Currently, SHEP sites include

- Northern three sites: Hardwood Creek Above, Hardwood Creek Below and Clearwater Creek
- Middle three sites: Rice Creek Above, Rice Creek Below and Rice Creek Irondale, and
- Southern three sites: Locke Lake Park, Locke Lake Above and Locke Lake Below.

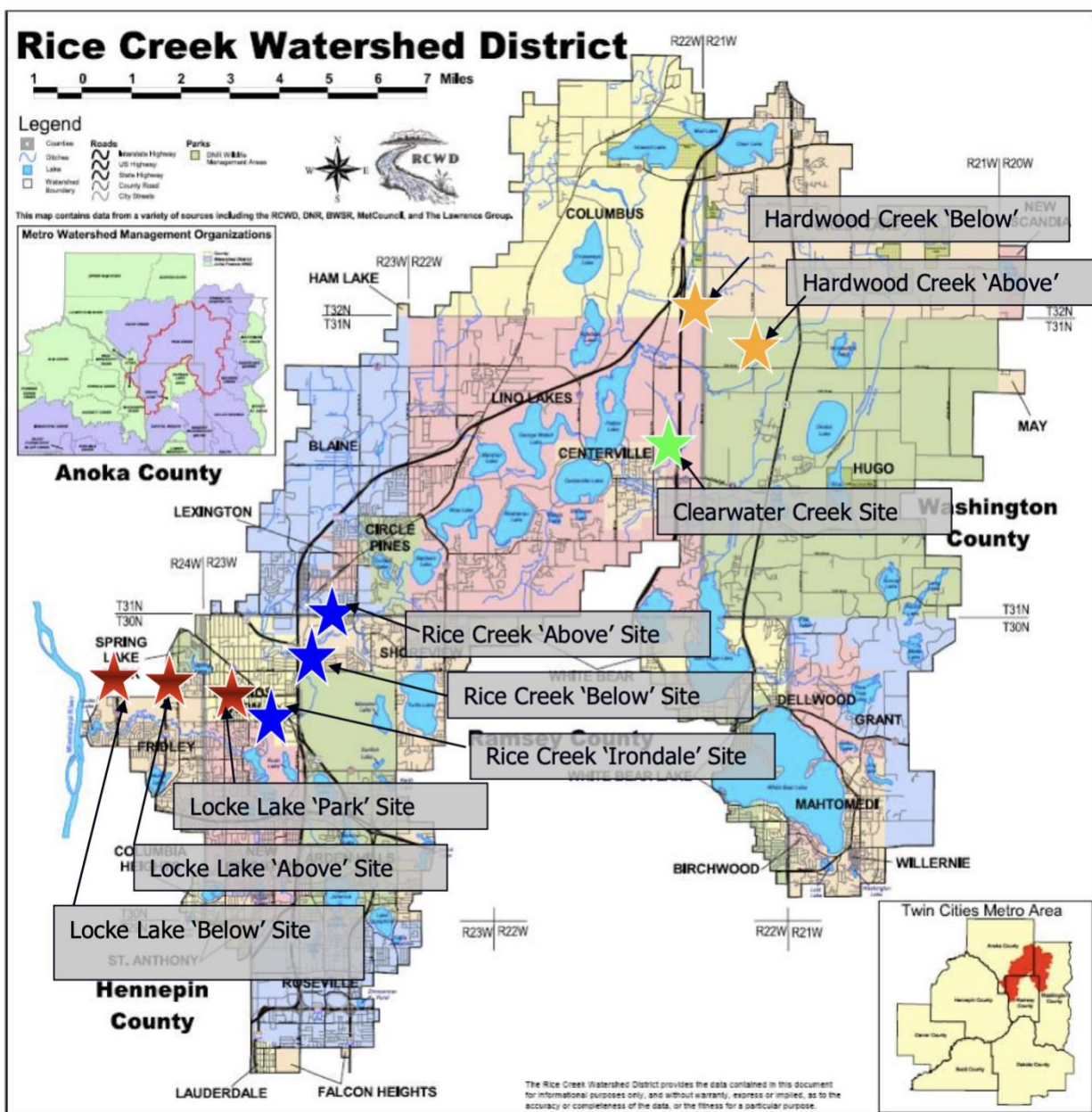


Figure 1: SHEP sampling sites in the Rice Creek Watershed District. Map shows Rice Creek Watershed District and counties. SHEP sites are shown with colored stars.

The RWCD provides a variety of useful information on their Water Quality Reports and Plans page<sup>1</sup> that provides a picture of stream health and planning in the district. Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) documents are listed and referenced as well as a carp management program, information on aquatic plants and water quality, land use impacts on water quality in RCWD, details on RCWD's volunteer monitoring programs including SHEP and their lake monitoring program, Citizen Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP). The RWDC also provides their 2022 Rice Creek Watershed Lake Water Quality Monitoring Summary and 2022 Lake Report Card.

The Stream Monitoring Report<sup>2</sup> documents dissolved oxygen data, transparency, total suspended solids, phosphorus loads and chloride levels for Rice Creek, Hardwood Creek and Clearwater Creek in 2009. Data suggested that, while some impairments existed in the streams, most of the time, water quality standards were not violated, and chloride levels were not problematic.

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<sup>1</sup> *Water quality*. Rice Creek Watershed District, May 13 2024. <https://www.ricecreek.org/the-watershed/water-quality/>. Accessed 16 February 2026.

<sup>2</sup> 2009 Stream Monitoring Report, [https://fmr.org/files/rcwd\\_streammonitoringreport\\_2009\\_1.pdf](https://fmr.org/files/rcwd_streammonitoringreport_2009_1.pdf) Accessed 22 April 2026.

## 2.1 Northern Sites: Hardwood Creek and Clearwater Creek

In 2002, Hardwood Creek was included on Minnesota's list of impaired waters because the amount, condition and diversity of aquatic life such as fish were too low. Furthermore, there was not enough oxygen in the water to support fish and aquatic insects. A TMDL collaborative study between the MPCA and RCWD began in 2004 to address the impairments on Hardwood Creek. The TMDL was approved by the MPCA in 2009.<sup>3</sup> In 2014, Hardwood Creek was listed as impaired for aquatic life.<sup>4</sup>

Midpoint sampling locations of Hardwood Creek Above and Below can be seen in Figures 2 and 3, respectively. SHEP sampling began in 2007 for Hardwood Creek Above and in 2010 at Hardwood Creek Below.

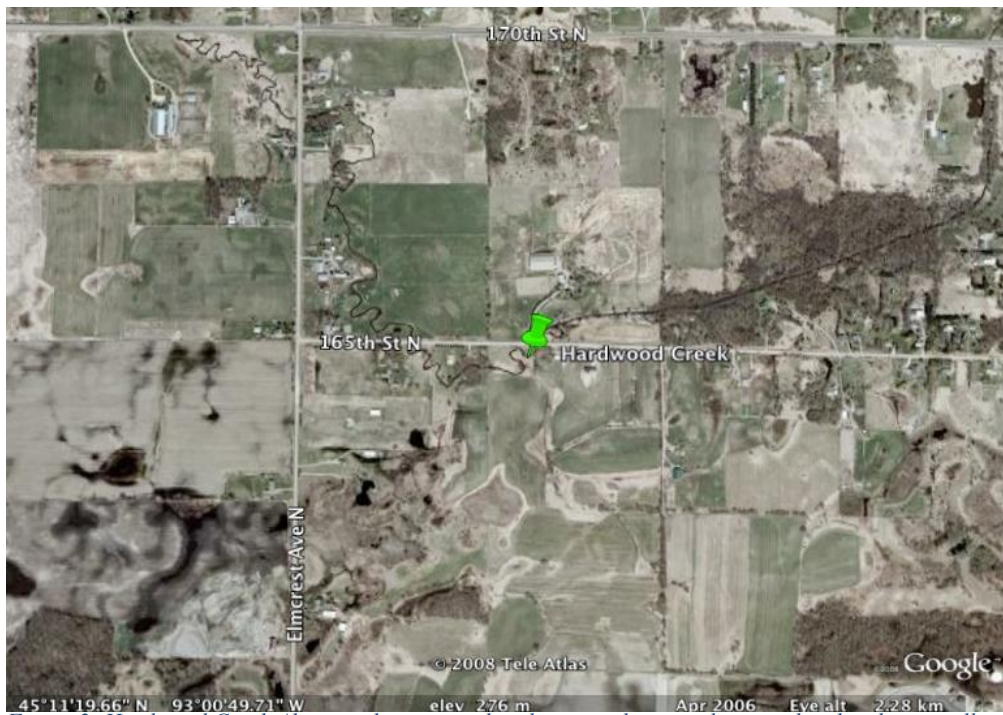


Figure 2: Hardwood Creek Above midpoint sampling location shown with green thumbtack on satellite view map.

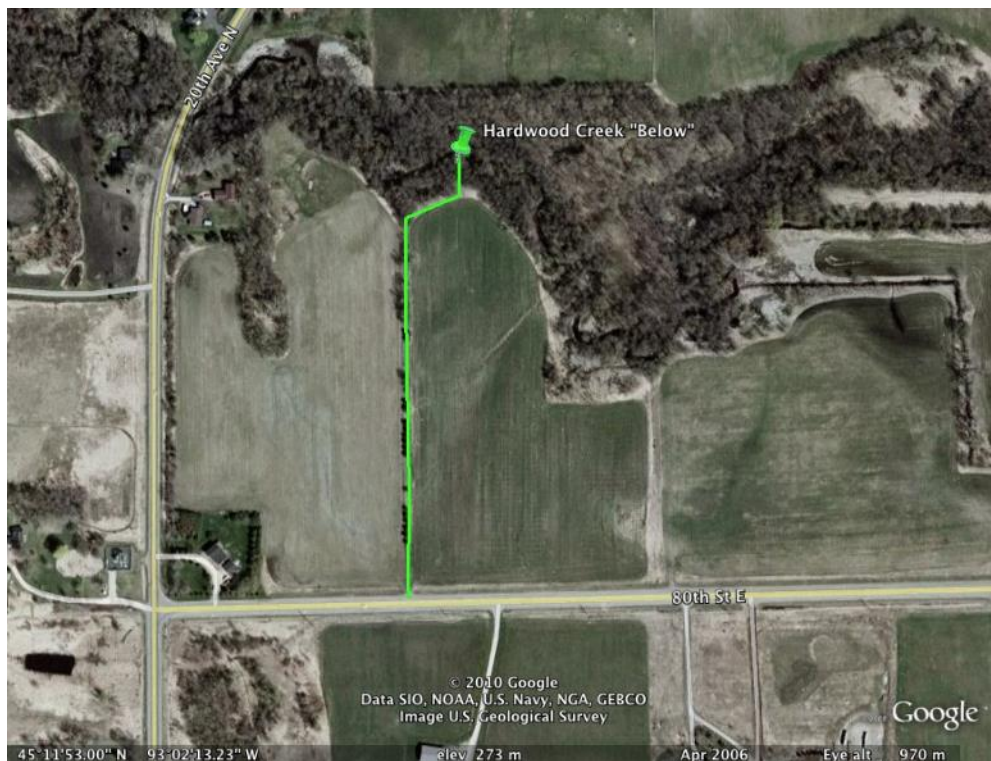


Figure 3: Hardwood Creek Below midpoint sampling location shown with green thumbtack on satellite view map.

In 2014, Clearwater Creek was also listed as impaired for aquatic life. SHEP sampling began in 2007. The midpoint sampling location of Clearwater Creek can be seen in Figure 4.

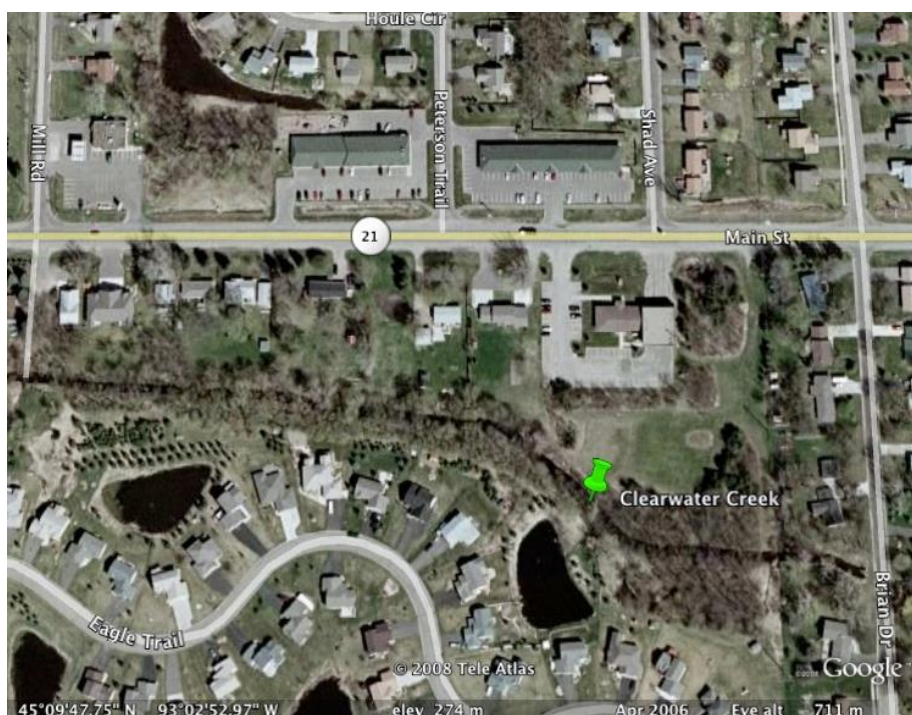


Figure 4: Clearwater Creek midpoint sampling location shown with green thumbtack on satellite view map.

## 2.2 Middle Sites: Rice Creek

In 2014, Rice Creek was listed as impaired for aquatic life. In 2015, RCWD and Emmons and Olivier Resources Inc. completed a re-meander and restoration of a significant reach of Rice Creek.<sup>5</sup> The project was entirely within Rice Creek North Regional Park and includes a stretch of Rice Creek located between County Road J, Lexington Avenue and County Road I. The goal of the project was to restore the historical winding flow path and surrounding wetland hydrology for this reach of stream, which was originally straightened in the early 1900's. Many benefits of this project, such as habitat enhancement, water quality improvement and enriched recreation opportunities, have begun to be realized. While two of the SHEP sampling sites are titled Above and Below for descriptive purposes, both sites are within the boundaries of the restoration.

SHEP sampling began in 2006 for Rice Creek Above and Below and in 2012 for Rice Creek Irondale. Midpoints of the sampling locations for Rice Creek Above and Below can be seen in Figure 5, and the midpoint sampling location for Rice Creek Irondale is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 5: Rice Creek Above and Below midpoint sampling locations shown with yellow thumbtack on satellite view map.

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<sup>5</sup> McCormick, Tori J. "Project to restore Rice Creek's meandering path already shows positives for water, wildlife." Special to the Star Tribune, Sept 5, 2019. <https://www.startribune.com/project-to-restore-rice-creek-s-meandering-path-already-shows-positives-for-water-wildlife/559485082> Accessed 27 Jan 2025.

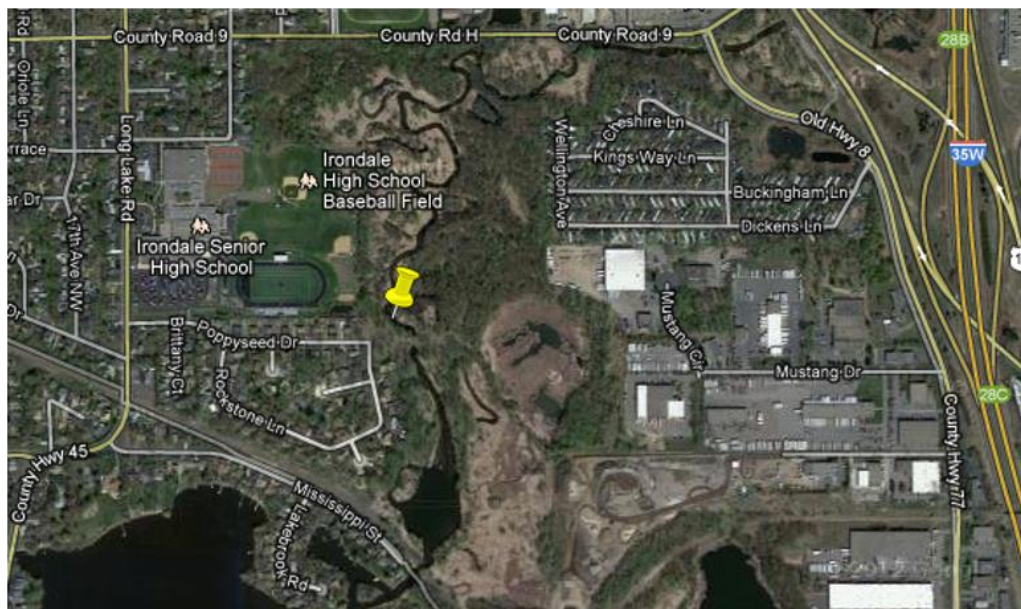


Figure 6: Rice Creek Irondale midpoint sampling location shown with yellow thumbtack on satellite view map.

### 2.3 Southern Sites: Locke Lake

In 2014, Rice Creek near Locke Lake was listed as impaired for aquatic recreation and aquatic life. Restoration activities by the Rice Creek Watershed District have focused on installing shoreland restoration and shoreland stabilization measures on properties adjacent to Locke Lake. SHEP sampling began in 2006 at Locke Lake Above and Below and in 2012 at Locke Lake Park. Midpoints of the sampling locations for Locke Lake Above and Below can be seen in Figure 7, and the midpoint sampling location for Locke Lake Park is shown in Figure 8.



Figure 7: Locke Lake Above and Below midpoint sampling locations shown with yellow thumbtacks on satellite view.

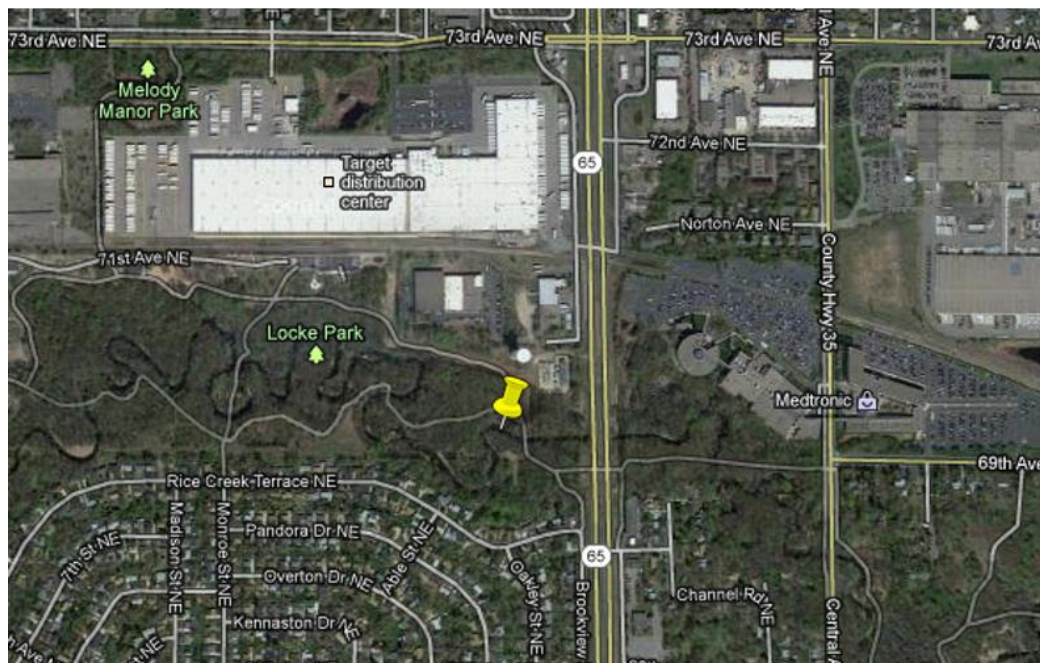


Figure 8: Locke Lake Park midpoint sampling location shown with yellow thumbtack on satellite view map.

## **3.0 SHEP OPERATIONS**

### **3.1 Volunteer Recruitment**

FMR recruits volunteers who preferably live in the Rice Creek watershed to fill spots as SHEP volunteers when needed. In 2025, our volunteer return rate was approximately 94%. FMR recruited two new volunteers, to fill the available positions. Both new volunteers were Rice Creek watershed residents; all the other thirty-two participants were returning volunteers.

Thirty-three volunteers actively participated in the full SHEP season in 2025. The SHEP Coordinator organized the programming and coordinated with all volunteers. Volunteers were divided into three teams to monitor the nine total sites. Each team was led by team leaders, who are an integral part of SHEP and were selected by program staff in conversation with returning volunteers and/or previous team leads. Team leaders received a small stipend (unless they had matching funds requirements associated with their volunteer time or chose to decline it) and were responsible for coordinating and safely managing monitoring activities and lab days for their team, as well as communicating with SHEP program staff, primarily the SHEP Coordinator.

### **3.2 Team Assignments**

Team leaders, team members, and monitoring location assignments are listed below.

#### Team 1

Monitoring Locations: Hardwood Creek and Clearwater Creek

Site Names: Hardwood Creek Above, Hardwood Creek Below, Clearwater Creek

Team Leaders: Tere O'Connell and Laura Dobbins Lyle,

Team Members: Gary Averbeck, Marty Asleson, Barbara Bor, Linda Grundtner, Wayne LeBlanc, Ah-li Monahan, Lauren Peck, John Sullivan, Kim Sullivan,

#### Team 2

Monitoring Location: Rice Creek Area

Site Names: Rice Creek Above, Rice Creek Below, Rice Creek Irondale

Team Leaders: Joy Gerdes and Adam Wegren,

Team Members: Bob Bartlett, Davlat Baydullo, William Bockenkamp, Jim B., Ralph Butkowski, Gary Ellis, Julia Grabow, Jo Ann Morse, Joe Yoch,

#### Team 3

Monitoring Location: Locke Lake Area

Site Names: Locke Lake Above, Locke Lake Below, Rice Creek Park

Team Leaders: Katherine and Darrell Majkrzak

Team Members: Rachel Beise, Rich Femling, Elan Majkrzak, Jennifer Olson, Abby Peters, Sarah Podzorski, Eleanor Ruszczuk, Rick Walsh, Susan Young

### 3.3 Training

Advanced volunteer training is essential to the success of SHEP. In 2025, volunteers and FMR and Bolton & Menk staff met in person to review sampling methodology, learn macroinvertebrate identification procedures, and give new volunteers time in a stream and laboratory to practice using the equipment.

Volunteers participated in a report review and kickoff event, as well as two training sessions: a field training in August and a lab training in September of 2025, covering safety while sampling in the field, macroinvertebrate sampling protocols set by the MPCA<sup>6</sup>, macroinvertebrate identification, and proper laboratory equipment usage. The kickoff event and both training sessions are organized by the FMR SHEP Coordinator, when needed with additional staffing assistance of other FMR staff.

Katie Farber from Bolton & Menk led the trainings and reviewed the SHEP monitoring protocol, which includes a biological assessment (collection of benthic macroinvertebrates) and a physical habitat assessment. Farber noted where to sample for macroinvertebrates, the target number of jabs and the best method of transferring samples to plastic jars. The habitat assessment review included how to measure stream flow, stream depth and stream width as well as noting water odor, temperature and appearance. Volunteers were also reminded to note general weather information from that day and from the recent past as well as when not to sample (high rainfall previous day).

After the respective training, sampling equipment or laboratory equipment for each team was organized and distributed by the SHEP Coordinator to each team leader.

### 3.4 Field Sampling

SHEP volunteer teams monitored their sites in mid-August to late-September 2025 using the MPCA's multi-habitat monitoring protocol. This approach samples major habitats in proportional representation within each sampling reach. Benthic macroinvertebrates were collected systematically from all available in-stream habitats by jabbing with a D-frame dip net. At least 20 samples or jabs were taken from across all major habitat types (snags and woody debris, vegetated banks, cobble and sand/fine sediment bottom areas) in the reach.

The physical habitat was assessed by measuring stream width, stream depth across three transects, water velocity, water temperature and appearance.

Each team often monitors all their three sites on one day.

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<sup>6</sup> Macroinvertebrate Data Collection Protocols for Lotic Waters in Minnesota, <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/sites/default/files/wq-bsm3-12a.pdf>. Accessed 22 April 2026.

### 3.5 Lab Identification

In the fall of 2025, volunteers sorted and identified macroinvertebrates. Each team receives laboratory supplies from FMR. Team leads coordinated the sharing of FMR's microscopes and reserved a community space at a local building. The volunteers identified the taxonomic classification of benthic macroinvertebrate samples from each sampling site down to family.

Each macroinvertebrate family is assigned a pollution tolerance number between zero and 10 depending on its sensitivity to pollution. A score of zero indicates very sensitive to organic pollution. A 10 indicates very tolerant of organic pollution.

Once macroinvertebrates were identified, site reaches were scored according to the family level biotic index (FBI). FBI is the weighted average of the biotic indices for all the invertebrates in the sample. Pollution intolerant families such as stoneflies (FBI of 0 – 2) can only survive in excellent water quality (Table 1). Pollution tolerant organisms such as leeches and aquatic earthworms can live in clean water or poor-quality water. They have high FBI values (8 – 10).

FBI	Stream Health	Degree of Organic Pollution
0.00-3.75	Excellent	Organic pollution unlikely
3.76-4.25	Very good	Possible slight organic pollution
4.26-5.00	Good	Some organic pollution probable
5.01-5.75	Fair	Fairly substantial pollution likely
5.76-6.50	Fairly poor	Substantial pollution likely
6.51-7.25	Poor	Very substantial pollution likely
7.26-10.0	Very poor	Severe organic pollution likely

Table 1: Water quality evaluation using FBI scores<sup>7</sup> showing FBI score and corresponding stream health and degree of organic pollution.

FBI summarizes the various pollution tolerance values of all families in a sample. The score for a particular monitoring site corresponds to a likely degree of organic pollution present at that location (Table 1). As such, the FBI score is a useful tool for evaluating the general status of organic pollution in streams within a watershed.

### 3.6 Quality Assurance/Quality Control (QA/QC)

When volunteers identify macroinvertebrates, Katie Farber conducts QA/QC on 33% of the identified macroinvertebrates. In recent years, she has reported close to 100% accuracy rates. Because of its history of recruiting and retaining dedicated volunteers, SHEP has become a reliable source of high-quality data.

<sup>7</sup> Hilsenhoff, William L. "Rapid Field Assessment of Organic Pollution with a Family-Level Biotic Index." *Journal of the North American Benthological Society*, vol. 7, no. 1, 1988, pp. 65–68. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/1467832](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1467832). Accessed 7 Mar 2.

## **4.0 MACROINVERTEBRATE RESULTS**

First, sample size is looked at because a large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.

Second, the number of different macroinvertebrate families found at the site (also known as family richness) is a measure of diversity. In general, more diversity is better. Therefore, a larger number of families may reflect a healthier community than a smaller number.

The dominant family is a record of what macroinvertebrate was most abundant. Its percentage of the total invertebrate sample indicates how dominant a single family is at a site. A high percent dominance is suboptimal; it indicates a less diverse community of macroinvertebrates.

Volunteers also recorded the number of mayfly (Ephemeroptera), stonefly (Plecoptera) and caddisfly (Trichoptera) families in the sample. These families (referred to as EPT families) represent the pollution intolerant insects. A higher EPT score reflects better water quality than a lower one.

As mentioned before, the FBI score is a useful tool for evaluating the general status of organic pollution in streams within a watershed.

## 4.1 Hardwood Creek Above was monitored by Team #1 – 9/06/2025

Identification Accuracy: 98.4%

### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 121 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Gammaridae (Scud)

Gammaridae have a tolerance value of 4 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). Gammaridae are crustaceans and related to Hyalellidae. The differentiation between the two families is a tiny flagellum found on the antennae of the Gammaridae. They can be extremely abundant in water bodies without fish and are important in the breakdown of organic matter. They generally live in shallow regions of most waterbodies and are found in snags and vegetation. They are an important food source for fish and other invertebrate predators. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.)

### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Gammaridae	38	Hydropsychidae	26
2024	Gammaridae	63	Hyalellidae	17
2023	NA	NA	NA	NA
2022	Culicidae	37	Belostomatidae	13
2021	Gammaridae	34	Chironomidae	14
2020	Gammaridae	29	Heptageniidae	21
2019	Simuliidae	29	Baetidae	26
2018	Simuliidae	42	Baetidae	26
2017	Baetidae	33	Simuliidae	30
2016	Baetidae	56	Simuliidae	15
2015	Baetidae	40	Simuliidae	35
2014	Simuliidae	35	Baetidae	24
2013	Hyalellidae	35	Heptageniidae	27
2012	Heptageniidae	40	Chironomidae	19
2011	Gammaridae	44	Simuliidae	19
2010	Gammaridae	30	Chironomidae	28
2009	Chironomidae	38	NA	NA
2008	Decapoda	25	NA	NA
2007	Hyalellidae	40	NA	NA

*Table 2: Hardwood Creek Above data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2007, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

Note: After dominating in 2010 and 2011, Gammaridae made up only 0.5% of the sample in 2012 and were absent in the sample collections from 2013 to 2016. In 2017, they reappeared in the samples, and Gammaridae dominate again in 2020, 2021, and 2024. They made up 9% of the sample in 2022.

### Number of Families (identified in a sample):

*The higher the diversity the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	8	2015	12
2024	8	2014	13
2023	NA	2013	12
2022	20	2012	18
2021	16	2011	13
2020	8	2010	18
2019	15	2009	18
2018	12	2008	19
2017	17	2007	22
2016	13		

Table 3: Hardwood Creek Above families from 2025 to 2007.

### Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):

*EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three Orders of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	3	40	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2024	2	4	Baetidae, Corydalidae
2023	NA	NA	NA
2022	1	1	Phryganeidae
2021	3	22	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2020	3	50	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2019	4	50	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae,
2018	3	45	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	3	38	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2016	5	70	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Phryganeidae
2015	4	46	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2014	4	51	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	3	31	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Siphonuridae
2012	5	55	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydrophilidae
2011	3	9	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2010	3	17	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2009	4	NA	NA
2008	5	NA	NA
2007	3	NA	NA

Table 4: Hardwood Creek Above EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2007, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

Year	FBI Score	Score Description
2025	4.6	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2024	5.3	Fair – Fairly substantial organic pollution likely
2023	NA	NA
2022	7.1	Poor – very substantial organic pollution likely
2021	4.8	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2020	4.3	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2019	5.2	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2018	5.0	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2017	4.9	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2016	4.8	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2015	5.2	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2014	5.2	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2013	6.2	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2012	5.0	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2011	5.0	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2010	6.0	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2009	6.6	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2008	6.3	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2007	7.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely

Table 5: Hardwood Creek Above FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2007, showing year, FBI score, and score description.

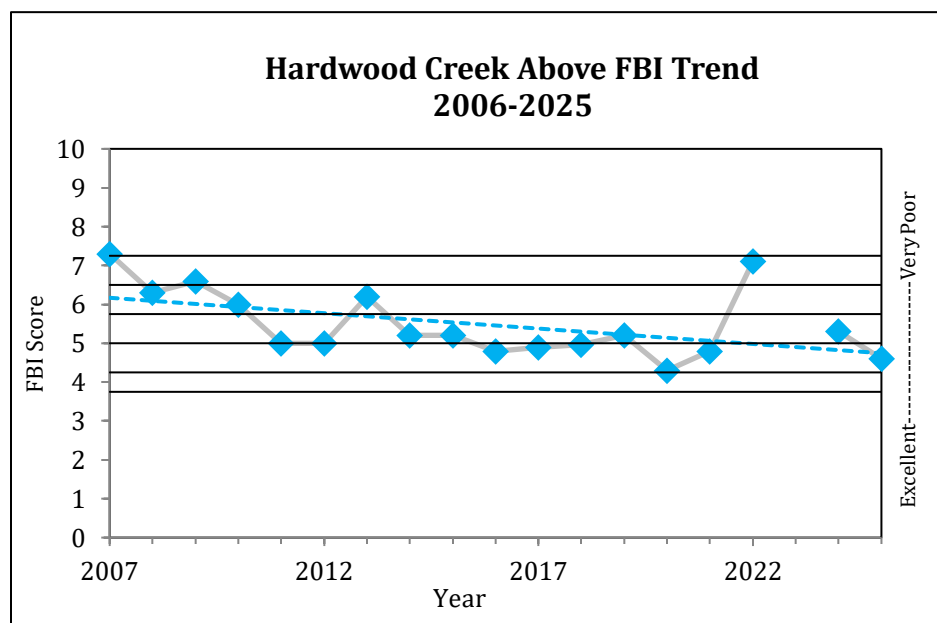


Figure 9. The graph is entitled “Hardwood Creek Above FBI Trend 2007-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2007 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph  $y = -0.0792x + 6.1693$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

**Summary:**

Hardwood Creek Above has been sampled for 18 consecutive years since 2007. In 2025, the FBI score indicates “Good” health, which is a typical rating of for this site. The health trend is stable. For many years, the FBI score, the dominating families, the family diversity, and the EPT family representatives have been consistent. In 2025, Gammaridae (scuds) heavily dominated the sample. A high abundance of sensitive species, specifically Hydropsychidae (caddisfly) were also present. The overall diversity is low and, as usual, other families present are represented in smaller proportions. Variability in family representation and percent make-up may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Hardwood Creek Above**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023 NA	2022	2021	2020	2019
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	8	18			2		1
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	7	4			10	29	39
Belostomatidae (true bug)	10				15			3
Caenidae (mayfly)	7							1
Calopterygidae (damsel fly)	5		1			1		
Ceratopogonidae (true fly)	6				1			1
Chironomidae (true fly)	6	16	2		1	17	10	15
Chrysomelidae (beetle)	6				2			
Coengrionidae (damsel fly)	9				1			2
Collembola (springtail)	8				3			
Corixidae (true bug)	9				3	1		
Culicidae (true fly)	8				43	3		
Curculionidae (beetle)	6				4			
Decapoda (crustacean)	6	1	1		1	7		1
Dytiscidae (beetle)	5				3			
Elmidae (beetle)	4				10	12		
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	46	82		10	40	47	3
Gastropoda (snail)	7	2			8	3		
Gerridae (true bug)	na						1	
Haliplidae (beetle)	7				1			
Heptageniidae (mayfly)	4	10				15	33	21
Hirundinea (leech)	10							4
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8		22					
Hydrophilidae (beetle)	5				3			
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	31				1	19	14
Hydroptilidae (caddisfly)	4		1					
Notonectidae (true bug)	na				5		2	1
Pelecypoda (clam)	7					3		
Phryganeidae (caddisfly)	4				1			
Sialidae (alder fly)	4					1		
Simuliidae (true fly)	6				1		20	43
Tabanidae (true fly)	6					2		
Tipulidae (true fly)	3				1			3
Veliidae (true bug)	na					1		

Table 6: Hardwood Creek Above family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.2 Hardwood Creek Below was monitored by Team #1 – 09/06/2025

### Number of individuals:

A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.

- 256 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Asellidae (Aquatic Sowbug)

Asellidae have a tolerance value of 8 on a scale of 0-10. (The lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). They are generally found in snags, overhanging vegetation, root mats, and around cobble. Isopods are an important food source for fish and invertebrate predators. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.)

### Percent Dominance:

It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Asellidae	45	Gammaridae	21
2024	Gammaridae	92.5	Asellidae	2.8
2023	NA	NA	NA	NA
2022	Culicidae	54	Elmidae	9
2021	Gammaridae	29	Culicidae	18
2020	Bivalvia	61	Chironomidae	19
2019	Gammaridae	49	Baetidae	16
2018	Baetidae	19	Chironomidae	18
2017	Gammaridae	49	Chironomidae	10
2016	Gammaridae	86	Chironomidae/Coengrionidae/Baetidae	3 (each)
2015	Gammaridae	65	Baetidae	10
2014	Gammaridae	63	Hydropsychidae	14
2013	Gammaridae	24	Heptageniidae	22
2012	Gammaridae	51	Chironomidae	19
2011	Gammaridae	60	Baetidae	12
2010	Gammaridae	38	Chironomidae	15

Table 7: Hardwood Creek Below data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2010, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.

Note: Gammaridae dominates most years, but make-up a small proportion of the sample when not dominant.

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):**

*The higher the diversity, the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	12	2017	17
2024	7	2016	9
2023	NA	2015	13
2022	14	2014	10
2021	19	2013	15
2020	9	2012	20
2019	14	2011	11
2018	17	2010	16

Table 8: Hardwood Creek Below number of families each year from 2025 to 2010.

**Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):**

*EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three Orders of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	0	0	NA
2024	1	1	Baetidae
2023	NA	NA	NA
2022	2	2	Ephemeridae, Lepidostomatidae
2021	1	6	Heptageniidae
2020	4	11	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Potamanthidae
2019	3	24	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2018	5	37	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Polymitarcyidae
2017	3	20	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2016	2	4	Baetidae, Heptageniidae
2015	4	22	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae
2014	3	29	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	4	34	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2012	4	17	Baetidae, Ephemeridae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2011	3	27	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2010	3	17	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae

Table 9: Hardwood Creek Below EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2010, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.

Year	FBI Score	Score Description
2025	7.1	Poor – very substantial organic pollution likely
2024	4.2	Very good – possible slight organic pollution
2023	NA	NA
2022	7.1	Poor – very substantial organic pollution likely
2021	5.8	Fairly Poor – Substantial organic pollution likely
2020	6.2	Fairly Poor – Substantial organic pollution likely
2019	4.8	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2018	5.1	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2017	4.5	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2016	4.3	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2015	4.4	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2014	4.2	Very good – possible slight organic pollution
2013	4.9	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2012	4.6	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2011	4.4	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2010	5.1	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely

Table 10: Hardwood Creek Below FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2010, showing year, FBI score, and score description

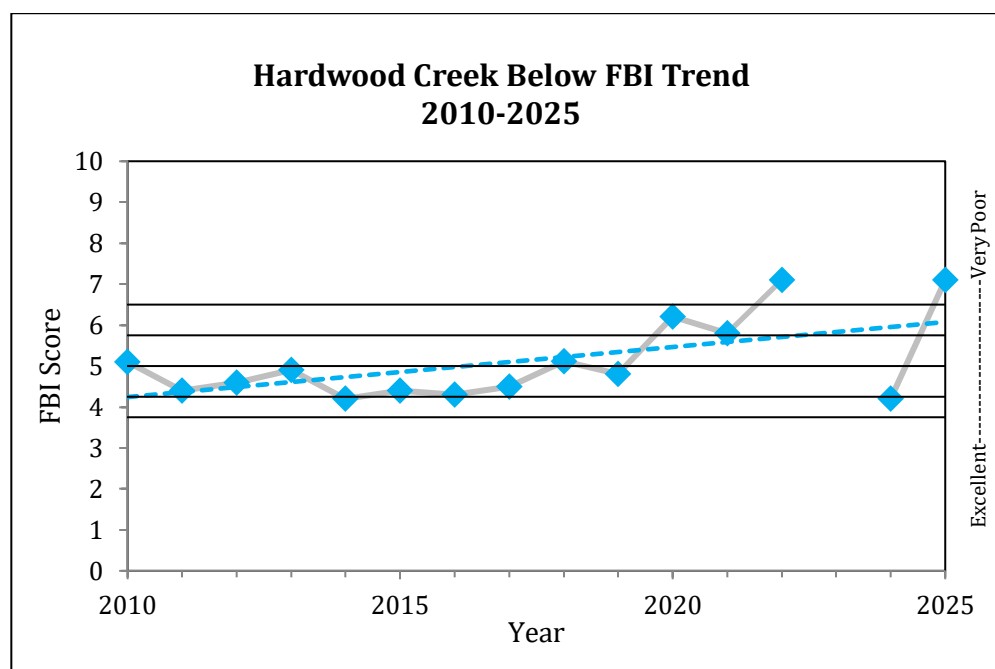


Figure 10. The graph is entitled “Hardwood Creek Below FBI Trend 2010-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2010 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = 0.1222x + 4.2433$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

**Summary:**

Hardwood Creek Below has been sampled 16 times since 2006. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Poor” health which is a reversal of 2024 improved stream health. The health trend indicates decline in the last decade. Asellidae (aquatic sowbugs), Gammaridae (scuds), and Gastropoda (snails) over dominated the sample in 2025. More snails than have been recorded before were collected in 2025. The overall diversity is low and other families present are represented in smaller proportions. No sensitive species were collected in 2025. Variability in family representation and percent make-up may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Hardwood Creek Below**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023 NA	2022	2021	2020	2019
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	115	8			2		
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	26	3				4	19
Belostomatidae (true bug)	10				7	1		5
Caenidae (mayfly)	7						1	
Calopterygidae	5	1				2		
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	8	3		5	8	21	5
Coenagrionidae (damselfly)	9				2	8		1
Corixidae (true bug)	9	1				10		1
Corydalidae (alderfly)	0				1			
Culcidae (truefly)	8				57	25		
Dolichopodidae (truefly)	4					1		
Elmidae (beetle)	4				9	19		
Empididae (truefly)	4	1			1			
Ephemeraeidae (mayfly)	4				1			
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	54	260		8	40	9	58
Gastropoda (snail)	7	45	3		4			
Gerridae (true bug)	na					7	1	1
Heptageniidae (mayfly)	4					8	6	8
Hirundinea (leech)	10	2						
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	1	1		2			
Hydrophilidae (beetle)	5						1	
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4							1
Lepidostomatidae (caddisfly)	1				1			
Nepidae (water scorpion)	8	1						
Oligochaeta (aquatic worm)	8					1		
Pelecypoda (clam)	7	1			6		69	9
Potamanthidae (mayfly)	4						1	
Pyralidae (aquatic moth)	5					1		
Sialidae (alderfly)	4		3			2		1
Simuliidae (truefly)	6						9	9
Stratiomyidae (truefly)	8					2		
Tipulidae (truefly)	3				1			
Veliidae (true bug)	6					1		

Table 11: Hardwood Creek Below family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2024 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

### 4.3 Clearwater Creek was monitored by Team #1 – 09/06/2025

#### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 160 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

#### Dominant Family:

- Hydropsychidae (Common net-spinner caddisfly)

Hydropsychidae have a tolerance value of 4 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). Hydropsychidae are collectors/filterers. They are restricted to flowing waters, and are most commonly collected from areas with cobble or bedrock substrate where solid structures are available on which to attach their nets. They glean material that is collected in their nets. In some situations, such as below pond outflows and downstream of sewage treatment plants, they can reach large densities. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.)

#### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Hydropsychidae	45	Gammaridae	40
2024	Hydropsychidae	62	Gammaridae	25
2023	Gammaridae	37	Chironomidae	28
2022	Chironomidae	33	Gastropoda	18
2021	Gammaridae	27	Elmidae	20
2020	Chironomidae	29	Hydropsychidae	23
2019	Hydropsychidae	45	Simuliidae	30
2018	Gammaridae	34	Hydropsychidae	22
2017	Gammaridae	37	Hydropsychidae	31
2016	Gammaridae	51	Chironomidae	19
2015	Gammaridae	67	Veliidae	12
2014	Simuliidae	32	Gammaridae	23
2013	Gammaridae	58	Chironomidae	17
2012	Gammaridae	56	Heptageniidae	19
2011	Gammaridae	43	Hydropsychidae	20
2010	Gammaridae	76	Hydropsychidae	8
2009	Hydropsychidae	17	Hyalellidae	14
2008	Chironomidae	26	NA	NA
2007	Heptageniidae	19	NA	NA

*Table 12: Clearwater Creek data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2007, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):***The higher the diversity, the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	8	2015	10
2024	9	2014	11
2023	15	2013	12
2022	14	2012	16
2021	17	2011	19
2020	8	2010	10
2019	7	2009	18
2018	12	2008	18
2017	15	2007	19
2016	5		

*Table 13: Clearwater Creek number of families each year from 2025 to 2007.***Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):***EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three Orders of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	2	47	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2024	1	62	Hydropsychidae
2023	1	1	Phrygaenidae
2022	0	0	None
2021	1	2	Hydropsychidae
2020	1	23	Hydropsychidae
2019	2	51	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2018	1	34	Hydropsychidae
2017	1	31	Hydropsychidae
2016	1	17	Hydropsychidae
2015	3	8	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae
2014	2	13	Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	3	4.5	Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae
2012	2	20	Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2011	4	28	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae
2010	2	9	Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2009	5	36	Baetidae, Caenidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Phrygaenidae
2008	4	NA	NA
2007	4	NA	NA

*Table 14: Clearwater Creek EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2007, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.*

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

Year	FBI Score	Score Description
2025	4.4	Good – Some organic pollution probably
2024	4.2	Very Good – possible slight organic pollution
2023	5.8	Fairly Poor – Substantial organic pollution likely
2022	6.2	Fairly Poor – Substantial pollution likely
2021	5.0	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2020	4.8	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2019	4.8	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2018	4.7	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2017	4.5	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2016	4.6	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2015	4.4	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2014	5.6	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2013	4.9	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2012	4.6	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2011	4.7	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2010	4.5	Good – some organic pollution probably
2009	6.3	Fairly Poor – Substantial organic pollution likely
2008	5.7	Fair – Fairly substantial organic pollution likely
2007	5.9	Fairly Poor – Substantial organic pollution likely

Table 15: Clearwater Creek FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2007, showing year, FBI score, and score description.

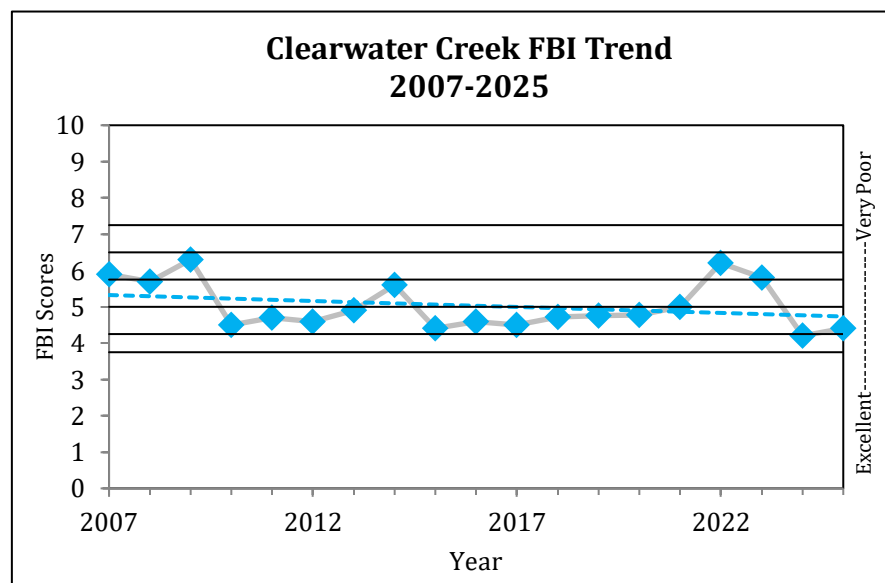


Figure 11. The graph is entitled “ Clearwater Creek FBI Trend 2007-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Scores” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2007 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0328x + 5.3241$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

**Summary:**

Clearwater Creek has been monitored for 19 consecutive years since 2007, and the health trend appears stable. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Good” health, which is similar to many other years recorded. Hydropsychidae (caddisfly) heavily dominates the 2025 sample. Gammaridae has regularly over-dominated the samples at this site. The FBI score in 2025 reflects the tolerance value of Hydropsychidae and Gammaridae (same as 2024). Few other families were represented in low numbers. The number of families represented each year varies. Variability in family representation and percent make-up may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Clearwater Creek**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	3	2	22	2	2		
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	2					10	10
Belostomatidae (true bug)	10			2		1		
Calopterygidae (damselfly)	5	5	3	1	2		3	4
Chaoboridae (truefly)	8				1			
Chironomidae (truefly)	6		13	42	35	7	31	10
Coengrionidae (damselfly)	9	1		3				
Collembola (springtail)	10					1		
Corixidae (truebug)	9				6			
Corydalidae (dobsonfly)	0			1				
Decapoda (crustacean)	6					18		2
Dytiscidae (beetle)	5			1		1		
Elmidae (beetle)	4		1	5	4	26	17	
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	64	45	56	10	35	24	19
Gastropoda (snails)	7		1	6	19	14	2	
Gerridae (true bug)	na				1	5		
Hirudinea (leech)	10			4		3		
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	11		4		1		
Hydracarina (spider)	4		2					
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	73	113			3	25	82
Oligochaeta (worm)	8			3	3		1	
Pelecypoda (clams)	7	1		1				
Phrygaenidae (caddisfly)	4			1				
Sciomyzidae (truefly)	6				2			
Simuliidae (truefly)	6		2		7	1	4	54
Stratiomyidae	8				3	1		
Tipuliidae (truefly)	3					2		
Veliidae (true bug)	6				11	9		

Table 16: Clearwater Creek family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

#### 4.4 Rice Creek Above was sampled by Team #2 – 08/30/2025

Identification Accuracy: 99.5%

##### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 102 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample

##### Dominant Family:

- Nematoda (Roundworms)

Nematoda have a tolerance of 5 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution.) Nematodes are found in and on the substrate in most aquatic habitat. Roundworms are extremely abundant, however due to their small size they are rarely collected. Some are free living, but many are parasites and can be seen curled up inside some aquatic invertebrates. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr).

##### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Nematoda	27	Hyaellidae	17
2024	Chironomidae	45	Hyaellidae	21
2023	Corixidae	30	Hyaellidae	27
2022	Hyaellidae	22	Gammaridae	20
2021	Hyaellidae	35	Chironomidae	30
2020	Chironomidae	53	Simuliidae	29
2019	Corixidae	52	Hyaellidae	19
2018	Chironomidae	59	Hydropsychidae	15
2017	Chironomidae	41	Hyaellidae	29
2016	Chironomidae	65	Hyaellidae	15
2015	Chironomidae	62	Coenagrionidae	22
2014	Chironomidae	61	Gammaridae	15
2013	Chironomidae	81.5	Pleidae	7
2012	Coenagrionidae	53	Hyaellidae	34
2011	Hyaellidae	70	Coenagrionidae	9
2010	Hyaellidae	66	Caenidae	14
2009	Chironomidae	51	Coenagrionidae	28
2008	Hyaellidae	38	NA	NA
2007	Coenagrionidae	55	NA	NA
2006	Coenagrionidae	87	NA	NA

Table 17: Rice Creek Above data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2006, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):**

*The higher the diversity, the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	16	2015	8
2024	11	2014	11
2023	11	2013	13
2022	20	2012	10
2021	6	2011	15
2020	12	2010	11
2019	7	2009	11
2018	11	2008	14
2017	14	2007	5
2016	6	2006	11

Table 18: Rice Creek Above number of families each year from 2006 to 2025.

**Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):**

*EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three Orders of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	0	0	NA
2024	0	0	NA
2023	1	1	Baetidae
2022	2	10	Caenidae, Phryganeidae
2021	0	0	NA
2020	4	14	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae, Phrygaenidae
2019	0	0	NA
2018	2	17	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	1	0.8	Baetidae
2016	1	2.5	Hydropsychidae
2015	2	1	Baetidae, Caenidae
2014	1	3	Caenidae
2013	1	0.2	Leptoceridae
2012	4	8	Baetidae, Caenidae, Branchycentridae, Hydropsychidae
2011	3	8	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2010	6	28	Caenidae, Leptohiphidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae, Limnephilidae, Polycentropodidae
2009	3	7	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Oligonueriidae
2008	2	NA	NA
2007	0	0	NA
2006	2	NA	NA

Table 19: Rice Creek Above EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2010, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>FBI Score</b>	<b>Score Description</b>
2025	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2024	6.4	Fairly Poor – substantial organic pollution likely
2023	7.8	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2022	7.0	Poor – very substantial organic pollution likely
2021	7.1	Poor – very substantial organic pollution likely
2020	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2019	7.9	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2018	6.0	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2017	7.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2016	6.7	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2015	6.9	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2014	5.9	Fairly poor – substantial pollution likely
2013	6.1	Fairly poor – substantial pollution likely
2012	8.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2011	7.8	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2010	7.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2009	7.0	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2008	7.0	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2007	7.9	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2006	8.8	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely

*Table 20: Rice Creek Above FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2006, showing year, FBI score, and score description.*

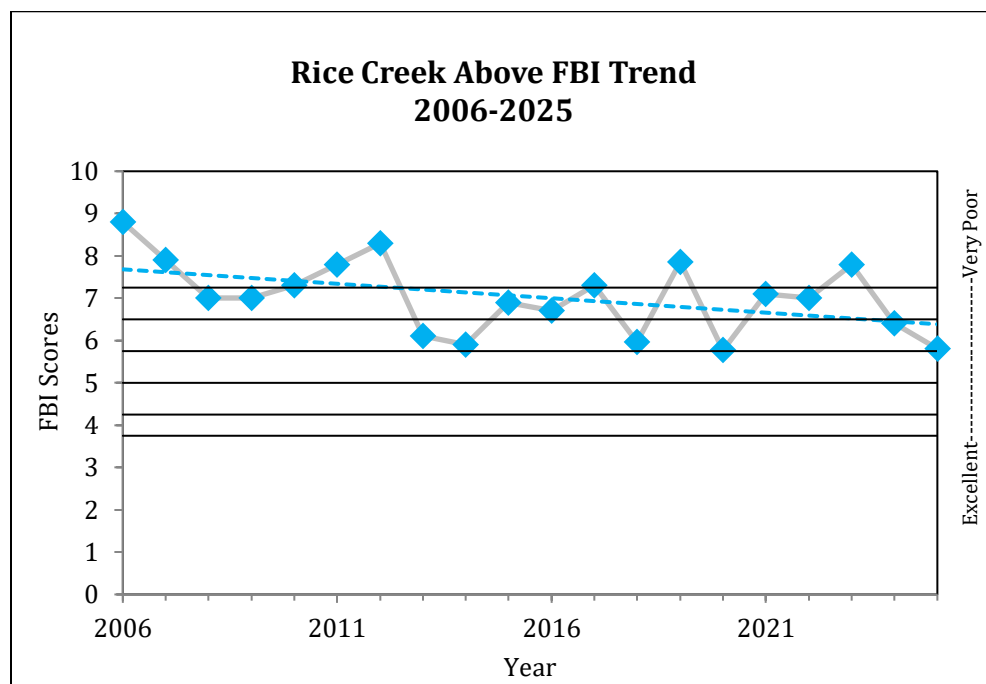


Figure 12. The graph is entitled “Rice Creek Above FBI Trend 2006-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Scores” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2006 to 2025, in increments of 5. A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0683x + 7.6827$ . Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Rice Creek Above has been sampled for 20 consecutive years since 2006. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Fairly Poor” health. FBI scores have regularly ranged between “Fairly Poor” to “Very Poor” since 2006 and undulates. The health trend is stable. The number of families varies. Nematodes and Hyalellidae (scuds) dominate the sample while other families are represented in low proportions. Midges, damselflies, and scuds are commonly present. There were no sensitive species collected in 2025. Pollution-sensitive (EPT) families have usually made-up a very minor proportion of the sample collection every year. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Rice Creek Above**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Aeshnidae (dragonfly)	3	1		1				
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	5	4		1		1	
Baetidae (mayfly)	4			1			1	
Belostomatidae (truebug)	10	2						
Caenidae (mayfly)	7				23		1	
Calopterygidae (damselfly)	5					1		
Ceratopogonidae (truefly)	6	1						
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	11	57		5	34	269	26
Coengrionidae (damselfly)	9	5	9	2	7	25	4	6
Corixidae (true bug)	9	7		34	28			94
Dytiscidae (beetle)	5	1	5	5				
Elmidae (beetle)	4		1		1		1	
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	10	18		47	12	2	18
Gastropoda (snail)	7	1	3	2	35		3	
Gerridae (truebug)	na			3				
Haliplidae (beetle)	7			3	1			1
Hirudinea (leech)	10				3			
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	17	27	31	52	40	8	34
Hydrophilidae (caddisfly)	5	1	1					
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4						69	
Libellulidae (dragonfly)	9	1						
Nematoda (roundworm)	5	27						
Oligonueriidae (mayfly)	2				10			
Pelecypoda (clam)	7			20	23			
Phryganeidae (caddisfly)	4				1		1	
Pleidae (truebug)	na	11		11	1			
Scirtidae (beetle)	7	1						
Scyomyzidae (truefly)	6				1			
Simuliidae (true fly)	6						146	1
Tipuliidae (true fly)	3					1		

Table 21: Rice Creek Above family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.5 Rice Creek Below was sampled by Team #2 – 08/30/2025

### Number of individuals:

A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.

- 205 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Nematoda (roundworm)

Nematoda have a tolerance of 5 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution.) Nematodes are found in and on the substrate in most aquatic habitat. Roundworms are extremely abundant, however due to their small size they are rarely collected. Some are free living, but many are parasites and can be seen curled up inside some aquatic invertebrates. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr).

### Percent Dominance:

It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Nematoda	38	Chironomidae	23
2024	Chironomidae	68	Coenagrionidae	10
2023	Hyaellidae	73	Pleidae	6
2022	Gammaridae	94	Coenagrionidae	2
2021	Coenagrionidae	33	Hyaellidae	23
2020	Chironomidae	53	Simuliidae	12
2019	Chironomidae	34	Simuliidae	29
2018	Chironomidae	75	Gammaridae	14
2017	Chironomidae	61	Hyaellidae	31
2016	Chironomidae	53	Coenagrionidae, Hyaellidae	17 (each)
2015	Chironomidae	54	Coenagrionidae	21
2014	Chironomidae	67	Hyaellidae	13
2013	Chironomidae	72	Gastropoda	8
2012	Hyaellidae	40	Chironomidae	12
2011	Hyaellidae	75	Simuliidae	10
2010	Hyaellidae	80	Coenagrionidae	9
2009	Simuliidae	64	Chironomidae	19
2008	Corixidae	34	NA	NA
2007	Chironomidae	63	NA	NA
2006	Coenagrionidae	65	NA	NA

Table 22: Rice Creek Below data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2006, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):***The higher the diversity, the better*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	11	2015	9
2024	14	2014	9
2023	13	2013	16
2022	8	2012	17
2021	12	2011	15
2020	10	2010	15
2019	11	2009	8
2018	9	2008	7
2017	5	2007	10
2016	8	2006	12

*Table 23: Rice Creek Below number of families each year from 2025 to 2006***Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):***EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three classes of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	1	1	Baetidae
2024	0	0	NA
2023	2	2	Baetidae, Caenidae
2022	1	0.5	Baetidae
2021	2	4	Baetidae, Hydroptilidae
2020	2	13	Hydropsychidae, Phryganeidae
2019	3	14	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Phryganeidae
2018	2	3	Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	0	0	NA
2016	2	10	Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2015	3	3	Caenidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae
2014	2	7	Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	0	0	NA
2012	0	0	NA
2011	3	3	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2010	4	7	Caenidae, Tricorythidae, Leptoceridae, Sericostomatidae
2009	2	4	Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae
2008	7	NA	NA
2007	10	NA	NA
2006	12	NA	NA

*Table 24: Rice Creek Below EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2006, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families*

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>FBI Score</b>	<b>Score Description</b>
2025	6.3	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2024	6.3	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2023	7.5	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2022	4.2	Good – Some organic pollution probable
2021	7.7	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2020	5.7	Fair – Fairly substantial pollution likely
2019	5.9	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2018	5.9	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2017	6.7	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2016	6.7	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2015	6.8	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2014	6.2	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2013	6.4	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2012	7.4	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2011	7.8	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2010	7.8	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2009	6.3	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2008	7.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2007	6.9	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely
2006	8.3	Very Poor – severe organic pollution likely

*Table 25: Rice Creek Below FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2006, showing year, FBI score, and score description.*

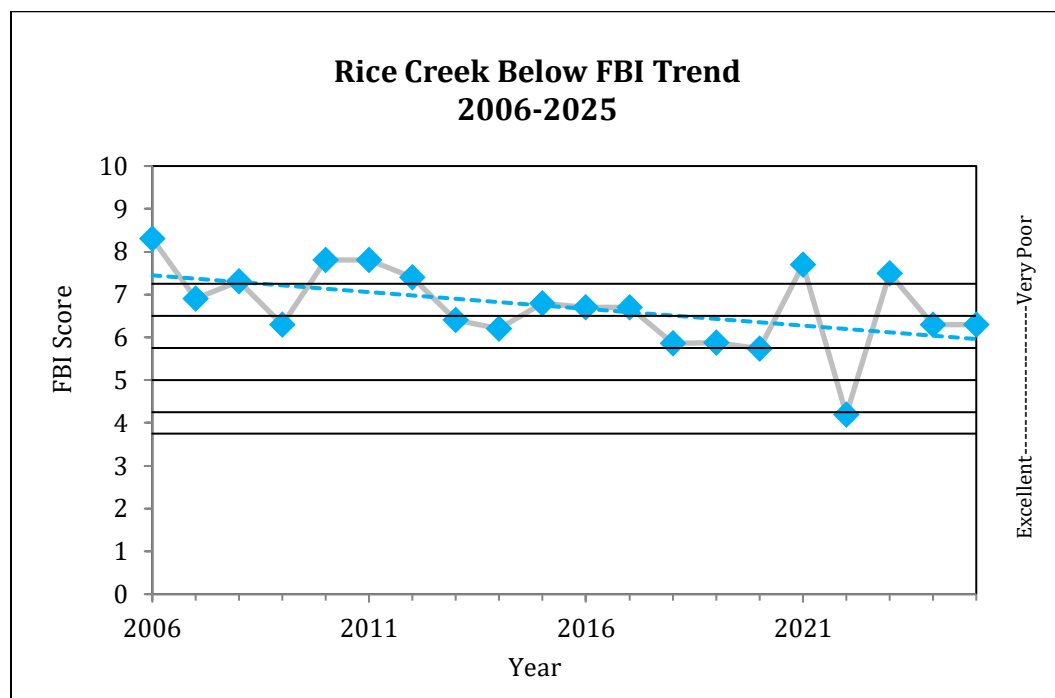


Figure 13. The graph is entitled “Rice Creek Below FBI Trend 2006-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Scores” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2006 to 2025, in increments of 5. A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0783x + 7.4474$ . Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Rice Creek Below has been sampled for 20 consecutive years since 2006. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Fairly Poor” health, which is typical of this site. FBI scores usually range between “Fairly Poor” to “Very Poor” since 2006. The family make-up varies year-to-year, and the families are unevenly distributed. Midges, damselflies, and scuds are regularly present and abundant. In 2025, nematodes (roundworms), Chironomidae (midges), and Asellidae (sowbugs) over dominated the sample. All other families identified were represented in low proportion. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Rice Creek Below**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Aeshnidae (dragonfly)	3		2					
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	42	8		2			
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	2		3	1	4		2
Belostomatidae (true bug)	10	11						3
Caenidae (mayfly)	7			1				
Ceratopogonidae (truefly)	6		1				1	
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	47	114	8	2	19	73	69
Coengrionidae (damselfly)	9	8	17	3	3	42	3	9
Corixidae (true bug)	9	1	1	1	2	4		
Culicidae (truefly)	8					9		
Dytiscidae (beetle)	5		7	1				
Decapoda (crayfish)	6	1						
Elmidae (beetle)	4		1					
Empididae (truefly)	6							1
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	10	3	10	176	6	10	20
Gastropoda (snail)	7	1	1	3	1	1		
Gerridae (true bug)	na			1		5		
Haliplidae (beetle)	7		4					
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	5		140		29	5	16
Hydrophilidae (beetle)	5		2					
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4						17	27
Hydroptilidae (caddisfly)	4					1		
Nematoda (round worms)	5	77					1	
Nepidae (true bug)	8						1	
Pelecypoda (clam)	7		2	3	1			
Phrygaenidae (caddisfly)	4						1	1
Pleidae (true bug)	na			11		8		
Pyralide (aquatic moth)	5			6		1		
Scirtidae (beetle)	7							1
Simuliidae (truefly)	6		4				27	71

Table 26: Rice Creek Below family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.6 Rice Creek Irondale was sampled by Team #2 – 8/30/2025

### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 113 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Chironomidae (Non-biting midge)

Chironomidae have a tolerance value of 6 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). They are a very abundant and diverse group of aquatic insects, and it is common for them to dominate samples (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr).

### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Chironomidae	34	Gammaridae	20
2024	Gammaridae	33	Chironomidae	29
2023	Hyaellidae	28	Coenagrionidae	19
2022	Coenagrionidae	32	Gammaridae	21
2021	Chironomidae	31	Hyaellidae	24
2020	Chironomidae	69	Hydropsychidae	22
2019	Hyaellidae	51	Chironomidae	17
2018	Chironomidae	82	Hyaellidae	9
2017	Chironomidae	44	Coenagrionidae	16
2016	Chironomidae	47	Hyaellidae, Corixidae	14 (each)
2015	Hyaellidae	39	Chironomidae	38
2014	Chironomidae	60	Hyaellidae	13
2013	Chironomidae	46	Hyaellidae/Oligochaeta	16 (each)
2012	Chironomidae	61	Coenagrionidae	21

*Table 27: Rice Creek Irondale data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2012, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

### Number of Families (identified in a sample):

*The higher the diversity, the better*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025		2018	9
2024	14	2017	11
2023	15	2016	7
2022	19	2015	8
2021	17	2014	13
2020	10	2013	13
2019	11	2012	13

*Table 28: Rice Creek Irondale number of families each year from 2025 to 2012.*

**Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):**

*EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three classes of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	4	4	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae
2024	1	3	Hydropsychidae
2023	3	2	Baetidae, Caenidae, Leptoceridae
2022	1	1	Sericostomatidae
2021	3	5	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydroptilidae
2020	3	23	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Phryganeidae
2019	1	10	Hydropsychidae
2018	3	6	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	3	14	Baetidae, Ephemeridae, Hydropsychidae
2016	2	20	Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2015	2	16	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2014	3	3	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	1	1	Hydropsychidae
2012	2	2	Baetidae, Heptageniidae

Table 29: Rice Creek Irondale EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2012, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

Year	FBI Score	Score Description
2025	6.3	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2024	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial organic pollution likely
2023	7.2	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2022	7.0	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2021	7.2	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2020	5.4	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2019	7.2	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2018	6.1	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2017	6.4	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2016	6.7	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2015	6.7	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2014	6.0	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2013	6.8	Poor – very substantial pollution likely
2012	6.8	Poor – very substantial pollution likely

Table 30: Rice Creek Irondale FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2012, showing year, FBI score, and score description.

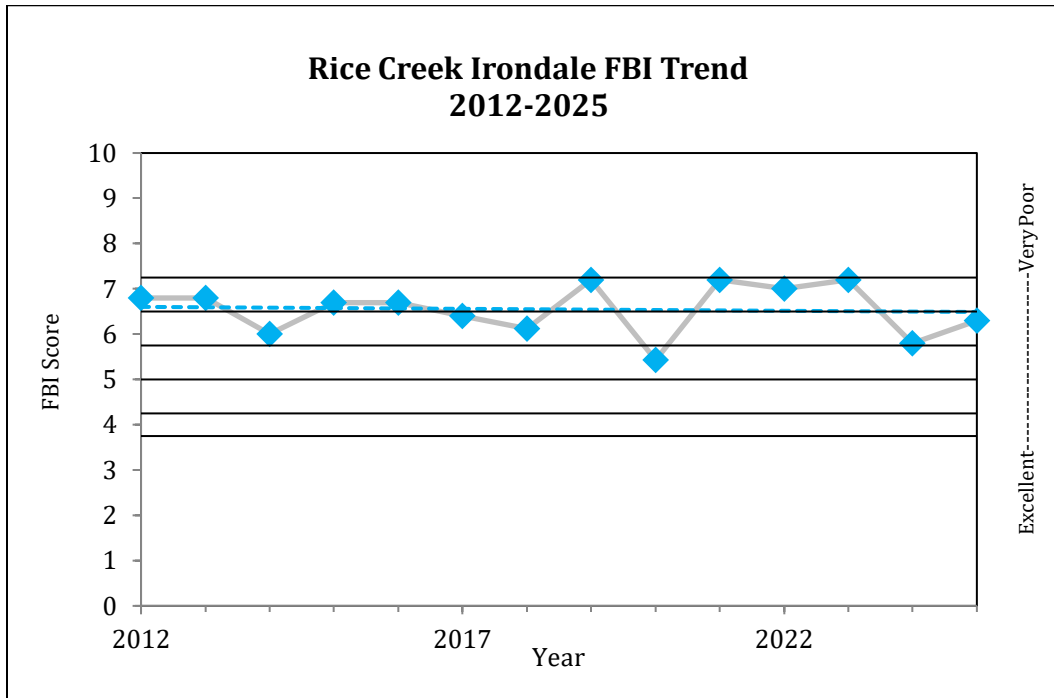


Figure 14. The graph is entitled “Rice Creek Irondale FBI Trend 2012-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2012 to 2025, in increments of 5. A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0086x + 6.6544$ . Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Rice Creek Irondale has been sampled for 14 consecutive years since 2012. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Fairly Poor” health. Chironomidae (midge), Gammaridae (scud) and Hyalellidae (scud) over dominated the sample in 2025. The family diversity is often unevenly distributed with pollution tolerant families over-dominating the samples. The FBI trend shows stable health. The data is typical of this site. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Rice Creek Irondale**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Aeshnidae	3		1		1			
Asellidae (crustacean)	8	3	2	1	3		4	
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	1		1		5	2	
Belostomatidae (true bug)	10		2			2	1	2
Caenidae (mayfly)	7			1		1		
Ceratopogonidae (truefly)	6			5			1	1
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	38	30	11	12	48	156	25
Coengrionidae (damselfly)	9	12	1	27	33	36		4
Collembola (springtail)	10	1			1			
Corixidae (true bug)	9			1	3	3		1
Culicidae (truefly)	8				2	2		
Dytiscidae (beetle)	5		1			1		
Elmidae (beetle)	4	1		1	2			
Empididae (truefly)	6		4					
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	23	34	14	22	7	5	11
Gastropoda (snail)	7	4	1	8	6	2		
Gerridae (truebug)	na				2			
Gyrinidae (beetle)	9				1			
Haliplidae (beetle)	7				1	2		
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	20	16	40	7	37	2	75
Hydrophilidae (beetle)	5					1		
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	2	3				50	14
Hydroptilidae (caddisfly)	4	1				1		
Leptoceridae (caddisfly)	4			1				
Lestidae (damselfly)	9				1			
Nematoda (roundworm)	5	1						
Nepidae (truebug)	8				1			
Notonectidae (true bug)	na					1		
Oligochaeta (aquatic worm)	8		3					1
Pelecypoda (clams)	7	3	1	14	4	2		
Phryganeidae (caddisfly)	4	1					1	
Pleidae (true bug)	na			16	1	2		
Scirtidae (beetle)	7	2						1
Sericostomatidae (caddisfly)	3				1			
Simuliidae (truefly)	6		5				1	11
Turbellaria (flatworm)	4						5	

Table 31: Rice Creek Irondale family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.7 Locke Lake Above was sampled by Team #3 – 9/07/2025

Identification Accuracy: 99.5%

### **Number of individuals:**

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 165 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### **Dominant Family:**

- Chironomidae (non-biting midge)

Chironomidae have a tolerance value of 6 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). They are a very abundant and diverse group of aquatic insects, and it is common for them to dominate samples (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.)

### **Percent Dominance:**

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Chironomidae	24	Baetidae	18
2024	Hydropsychidae	22	Simuliidae	20
2023	Chironomidae	25	Pelecypoda	18
2022	Oligochaeta	24	Baetidae	22
2021	Chironomidae	27	Baetidae	18
2020	Baetidae	76	Hydropsychidae	13
2019	Simuliidae	40	Baetidae	31
2018	Chironomidae	56	Baetidae	17
2017	Simuliidae	79	Baetidae	7
2016	Simuliidae	62	Baetidae	17
2015	Hydropsychidae	53	Chironomidae	16
2014	Hydropsychidae	67	Chironomidae	14
2013	Hydropsychidae	42	Nematoda	25
2012	Chironomidae	29	Baetiscidae	23
2011	Simuliidae	63	Baetidae	17
2010	Chironomidae	46	Hyalellidae	15
2009	Chironomidae	35	Hydropsychidae	11
2008	Chironomidae	30	NA	NA
2007	Baetidae	22	NA	NA
2006	Hydropsychidae	58	NA	NA

*Table 32: Locke Lake Above data. able on percent dominance from 2025 to 2006, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):***The higher the diversity, the better*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	19	2015	9
2024	15	2014	9
2023	14	2013	9
2022	11	2012	18
2021	16	2011	12
2020	9	2010	13
2019	11	2009	18
2018	14	2008	14
2017	9	2007	12
2016	9	2006	12

*Table 33: Locke Lake Above number of families each year from 2025 to 2010.***Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):***EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three classes of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	6	40	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae, Leptoceridae, Philopotamidae
2024	5	45	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptoceridae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae
2023	3	18	Heptageniidae, Helicopsychidae, Leptoceridae
2022	3	33	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philoptamidae
2021	4	34	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae
2020	3	89	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotomidae
2019	2	33	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2018	2	18	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	1	7	Baetidae
2016	3	24	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotomidae
2015	2	55	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2014	2	69	Hydropsychidae, Psychomyiidae
2013	2	44	Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae
2012	6	45	Baetiscidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae, Philoptamidae, Psychomyiidae
2011	3	28	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philoptamidae
2010	4	15	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Philoptamidae
2009	3	20	Baetiscidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae
2008	4	NA	NA
2007	3	NA	NA
2006	2	NA	NA

*Table 34: Locke Lake Above EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2010, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.*

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>FBI Score</b>	<b>Score Description</b>
2025	4.9	Good – some organic pollution likely
2024	5.0	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2023	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial organic pollution likely
2022	5.4	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2021	5.1	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2020	4.1	Very Good – possible slight organic pollution
2019	5.6	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2018	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2017	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2016	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2015	4.5	Good – some organic pollution probable
2014	4.4	Good – some organic pollution probable
2013	4.9	Good – some organic pollution probable
2012	5.2	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2011	5.4	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2010	5.9	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2009	6.1	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2008	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2007	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2006	5.0	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely

*Table 35: Locke Lake Above FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2006, showing year, FBI score, and score description.*

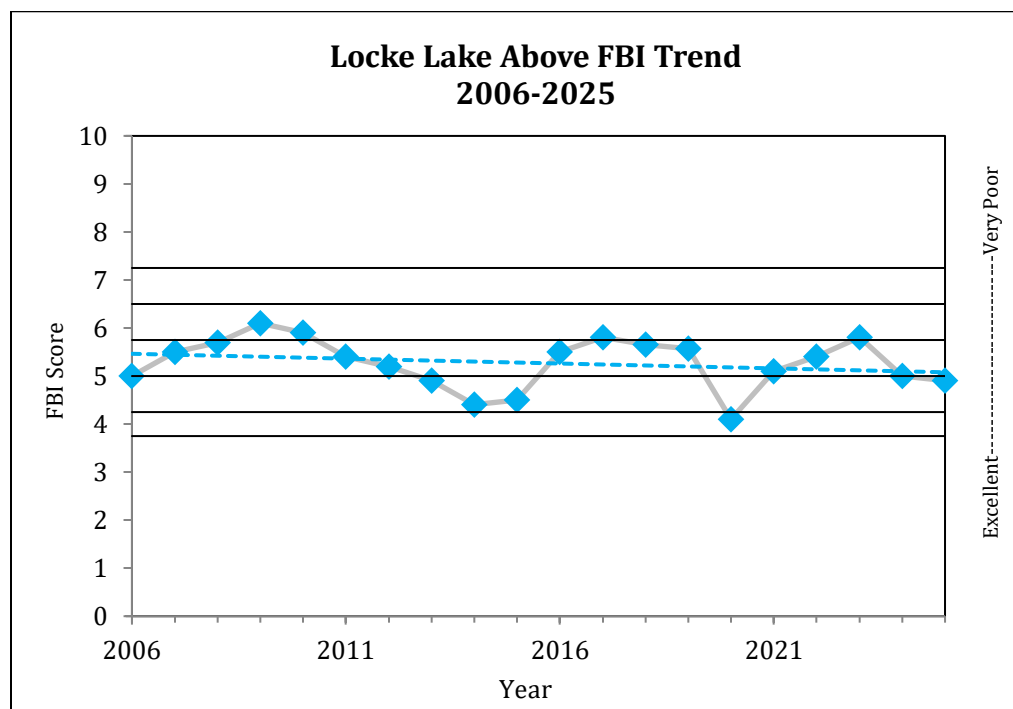


Figure 15. The graph is entitled “Locke Lake Above FBI Trend 2006-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2006 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0203x + 5.4636$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Locke Lake Above has been sampled 20 consecutive years since 2006. In 2025, the FBI score indicates “Good” health. The FBI trend is stable, but the FBI scores appear to be undulating. Stream health scores have ranged between “Fairly Poor” to “Very Good”. Over the years of monitoring, the distribution of families has been uneven; however, Baetidae (mayfly), Chironomidae (midge), Elmidae (beetle), Hydropsychidae (caddisfly), Oligochaeta (aquatic worm), and Simuliidae (truefly) are consistently in samples. In 2025, Chironomidae, Baetidae, Simuliidae, and Hydropsychidae made up nearly 75 percent of the sample. Six sensitive species were represented. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Locke Lake Above**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Asellidae (crustacean)	8			3	1	1		
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	51	3		42	38	111	55
Calopterygidae (damselfly)	5	1	1	5				
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	68	15	3	30	55	4	18
Coenagrionidae (damselfly)	9			1				1
Collembola (spring tail)	10	1						
Corixidae (truebug)	9		1	1		1		
Decapoda (crustacean)	6			6		17		2
Dryopidae (beetle)	5	1						
Elmidae (beetle)	4	27	5	17	36	34	6	
Empididae (truefly)	6	3						
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	3	12		4			1
Gastropoda (snail)	7			6				
Gerridae (true bug)	na					1		
Helicopsychidae (caddisfly)	3			2				
Heptageniidae (mayfly)	4	6		5		5		
Hirundinea (leech)	10		1	1	1			3
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8	2				3		11
Hydracarina (aquatic spider)	na					1		
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	41	37		15	27	19	4
Hydroptilidae (caddisfly)	4	1	2			1		
Leptoceridae	4	5	1	15				
Nematoda (round worm)	5	12	2				1	6
Oligochaeta (aquatic worm)	8	2	18	7	45	3	1	6
Pelecypoda (clams)	7	1	3	22	5	18		
Philopotamidae (caddisfly)	3	8	31		6		1	
Pyralidae (aquatic moth)	5	1				1		
Simuliidae (truefly)	6	46	33		4	1	3	71
Turbellaria (flat worm)	4	1					1	

Table 36: Locke Lake Above family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.8 Locke Lake Below was monitored by Team #3, 9/07/2025

### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 114 invertebrates were identified in the sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Baetidae (Small minnow mayfly)

Baetidae have a tolerance value of 4 on a scale of 0-10. (The lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). Small minnow mayflies are small, and may be very abundant in ideal conditions. They are good swimmers, and are found in streams with moderate currents or slack water. Some species are common in polluted streams. (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.)

### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Baetidae	26	Simuliidae	25
2024	Hydropsychidae	43	Baetidae	22
2023	Chironomidae	30	Oligochaeta	18
2022	Chironomidae	35	Hydropsychidae	23
2021	Hydropsychidae	53	Baetidae	32
2020	Hydropsychidae	66	Chironomidae	25
2019	Chironomidae	38	Simuliidae	25
2018	Chironomidae	64	Hydropsychidae	9
2017	Simuliidae	54	Chironomidae	26
2016	Simuliidae	73	Hydropsychidae	13
2015	Chironomidae	72	Hydropsychidae	13
2014	Hydropsychidae	49	Chironomidae, Simuliidae	18 (each)
2013	Chironomidae	57	Hydropsychidae	57
2012	Chironomidae	61	Hydropsychidae	61
2011	Simuliidae	80	Chironomidae	80
2010	Chironomidae	42	Philopotomidae	42
2009	Hydropsychidae	47	Chironomidae	28
2008	Hydropsychidae	42	NA	NA
2007	Chironomidae	37	NA	NA
2006	Chironomidae	43	NA	NA

*Table 37: Locke Lake Below data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2006, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

**Number of Families (identified in a sample):***The higher the diversity, the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	10	2015	10
2024	8	2014	9
2023	13	2013	14
2022	12	2012	15
2021	10	2011	13
2020	9	2010	11
2019	13	2009	12
2018	15	2008	10
2017	11	2007	9
2016	7	2006	8

*Table 38: Locke Lake Below number of families each year from 2025 to 2006.***Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):***EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three Orders of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	3	55	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2024	3	74	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2023	3	27	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2022	5	42	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Leptophlebiidae, Philopotamidae, Polycentropodidae
2021	3	86	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2020	3	81	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2019	3	24	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2018	2	14	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	2	10	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2016	2	17	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2015	1	13	Hydropsychidae
2014	2	56	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	2	25	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2012	3	23	Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2011	3	11	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2010	5	41	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae, Philopotamidae, Polycentropodidae
2009	2	53	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2008	3	NA	NA
2007	2	NA	NA
2006	3	NA	NA

*Table 39: Locke Lake Below EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2006, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.*

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>FBI Score</b>	<b>Score Description</b>
2025	4.7	Good – some organic pollution likely
2024	4.4	Good – some organic pollution likely
2023	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2022	5.1	Good – some organic pollution probable
2021	4.2	Very Good – possible slight organic pollution
2020	4.0	Very Good – possible slight organic pollution
2019	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2018	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2017	5.8	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2016	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2015	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2014	4.8	Good – some organic pollution probable
2013	5.6	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2012	5.6	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2011	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2010	5.0	Good – some organic pollution probable
2009	5.0	Good – some organic pollution probable
2008	5.1	Good – some organic pollution probable
2007	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2006	5.3	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely

*Table 40: Locke Lake Below FBI score. Table on Family Biotic Index (FBI) from years 2025 to 2006, showing year, FBI score, and score description.*

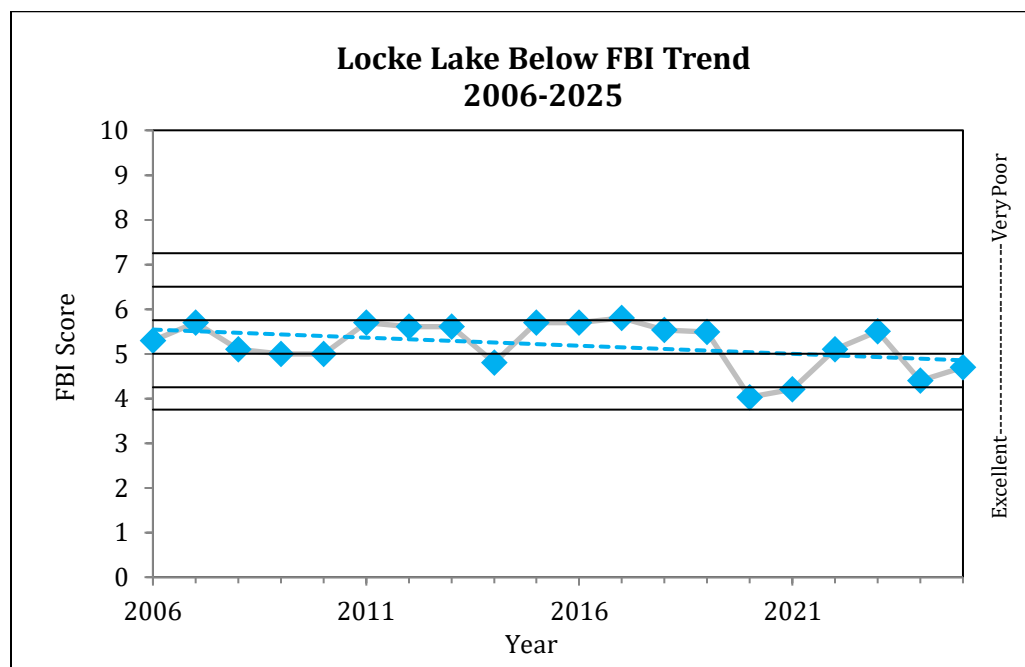


Figure 16. The graph is entitled “Locke Lake Below FBI Trend 2006-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2006 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0362x + 5.5414$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Locke Lake Below has been sampled for 20 consecutive years since 2006. In 2025, the FBI score indicated “Good” health. The FBI trend appears stable and commonly ranges between Good and Fair. The EPT families represented are similar throughout the years; however, the proportion of their make-up in the samples has fluctuated. The number of families represented is variable each year; but families including Baetidae (mayfly), Chironomidae (midge), Hydropsychidae (caddisfly), and Simuliidae (truefly) are consistently present. Baetidae and Simuliidae made up 50 percent of the sample. The dominant family has shifted from year to year; however, tolerance values for the families present are similar, and therefore only slightly impact changes in FBI score. Though the FBI scores are healthy and sensitive species dominate the sample, the disproportion of families is not ideal. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Locke Lake Below**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	30	32	17	36	65	10	71
Blephariceridae	0			1				
Chironomidae (truefly)	6	10	5	60	92	13	12	139
Decapoda (crustacean)	6	1				4		3
Elmidae (beetle)	4	6	2	2	1	6	1	
Empididae (truefly)	6			4	1	1	1	
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	1	1					4
Gastropoda (snails)	7				1			1
Gerridae (true bug)	na					2		
Hirundinea (leech)	10	1	1					1
Hyalellidae (crustacean)	8			1				8
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	14	62	35	61	108	100	15
Leptophlebiidae (mayfly)	2				1			
Nematoda (round worm)	5	2			6			24
Oligochaeta (aquatic worm)	8	1		37				
Pelecypoda (clams)	7			1	1			7
Philopotamidae (caddisfly)	3	19	14	3	10	2	12	1
Polycentropodidae (caddisfly)	6				1			
Scirtidae (beetle)	7			1			1	
Simuliidae (truefly)	6	28	29	32	50	2	6	90
Tabanidae (truefly)	6					1		
Tipulidae (truefly)	3						3	3
Turbellaria (flatworms)	4	1		9			6	

Table 41: Locke Lake Below family list. Table shows the number of individuals per year from 2025 to 2019, showing family name, tolerance value of family, and number of individuals of that family found that year.

## 4.9 Locke Lake Park was sampled by Team #3 – 09/07/2025

### Number of individuals:

*A large sample offers more confidence for a more reliable data set. SHEP protocol requires a minimum of 100 individual invertebrates to be picked and identified per sample.*

- 291 invertebrates were identified in this sample. This is an adequate sample size.

### Dominant Family:

- Simuliidae (black fly)

Simuliidae have a tolerance value of 6 (moderate) on a scale of 0-10 (the lower the tolerance value, the lower their tolerance to pollution). Black flies filter fine organic matter from the water. They are common in streams of the Upper Midwest and in some situations can reach huge numbers (Guide to Aquatic Invertebrates of the Upper Midwest, R.W. Bouchard, Jr.

### Percent Dominance:

*It is assumed that families are more evenly distributed among the sample if the dominant family makes up a lower percentage of the sample.*

Year	Dominant Family	% Dominance	Dominant Family (2 <sup>nd</sup> )	% Dominance
2025	Simuliidae	43	Chironomidae	19
2024	Hydropsychidae	29	Oligochaeta	16
2023	Baetidae	45	Chironomidae	22
2022	Hydropsychidae	37	Baetidae	17
2021	Chironomidae	44	Baetidae	13
2020	Baetidae	47	Hydropsychidae	41
2019	Simuliidae	57	Chironomidae	15
2018	Chironomidae	45	Simuliidae	32
2017	Simuliidae	66	Oligochaeta	10
2016	Simuliidae	71	Baetidae	15
2015	Hydropsychidae	63	Chironomidae	23
2014	Hydropsychidae	48	Chironomidae	27
2013	Nematoda	56	Hydropsychidae, Oligochaeta	10 (each)
2012	Chironomidae	32	Hydropsychidae	20

*Table 42: Locke Lake Park data. Table on percent dominance from 2025 to 2012, showing year, dominant family and percent dominance, and second most dominant family and percent dominance.*

**Number of Families (identified in a sample)***The higher the diversity, the better.*

Year	# Families	Year	# Families
2025	12	2018	15
2024	12	2017	7
2023	17	2016	6
2022	12	2015	10
2021	17	2014	11
2020	8	2013	11
2019	11	2012	14

*Table 43: Locke Lake Park number of families each year from 2025 to 2012.***Number of EPT Families (pollution sensitive):***EPT (Ephemeroptera-Plecoptera-Trichoptera or Mayfly-Stonefly-Caddisfly) are three classes of invertebrates with low tolerance to pollution. The more of these families in a sample, the better. More than 10-12 families is good.*

Year	Number of EPT Families	Percent make-up of EPT Families	EPT Families
2025	3	25	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotomidae
2024	3	57	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2023	5	10	Baetidae, Heptageniidae, Hydropsychidae, Hydroptilidae, Leptoceridae
2022	3	55	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae
2021	6	29	Baetidae, Hydrosychidae, Philopotomidae, Polycentropodidae, Brachycentridae, Capniidae
2020	2	87	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2019	3	14	Baetidae, Caenidae, Hydropsychidae
2018	2	14	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2017	1	10	Baetidae
2016	2	23	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2015	2	70	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2014	2	48	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae
2013	1	10	Hydropsychidae
2012	3	28	Baetidae, Hydropsychidae, Philopotamidae

*Table 44: Locke Lake Park EPT families. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2006, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families*

**Family Biotic Index (FBI):**

*This program identifies macroinvertebrates to the family level. Each family is assigned a tolerance value rating from 0-10. The lower the number, the more sensitive to pollution. The FBI score is the average pollution tolerance of all of the macroinvertebrates identified in a sample.*

<b>Year</b>	<b>FBI Score</b>	<b>Score Description</b>
2025	5.4	Good – some organic pollution probable
2024	4.9	Good – some organic pollution probable
2023	4.8	Good – some organic pollution probable
2022	4.8	Good – some organic pollution probable
2021	5.2	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2020	4.2	Very Good – possible slight organic pollution
2019	5.9	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2018	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2017	5.7	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2016	5.5	Fair – fairly substantial pollution likely
2015	4.6	Good – some organic pollution probable
2014	4.9	Good – some organic pollution probable
2013	5.5	Fairly Poor – substantial pollution likely
2012	4.7	Good – some organic pollution probable

*Table 45: Locke Lake Park FBI score. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2012, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families.*

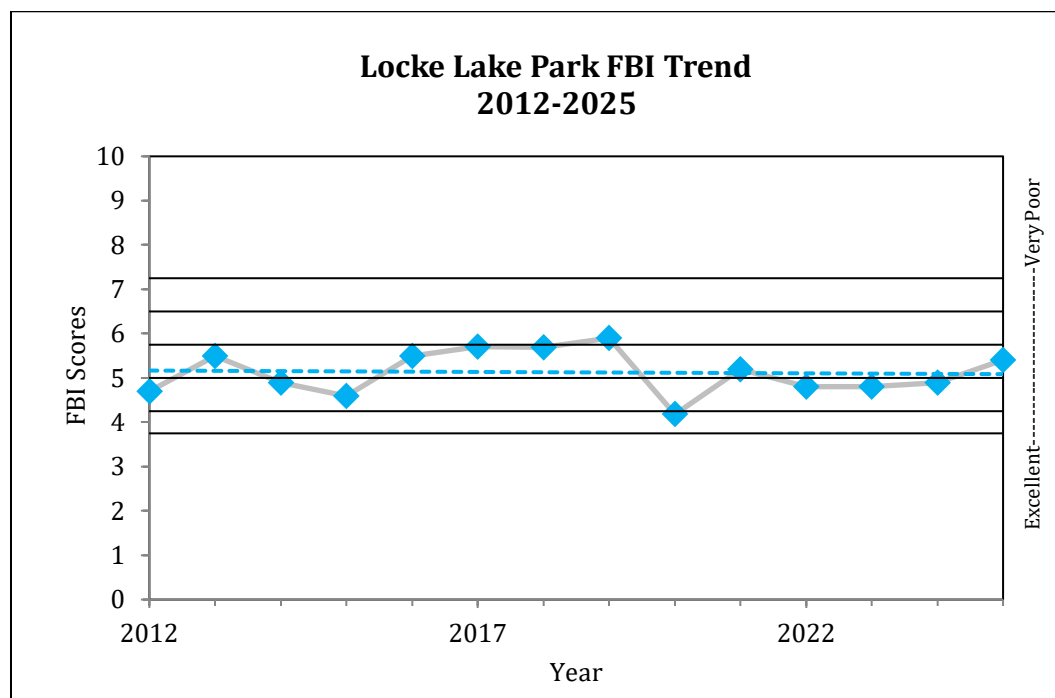


Figure 17. The graph is entitled “Locke Lake Park FBI Trend 2012-2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Scores” beginning with zero and ending at ten, in increments of 2. The vertical axis, right side, is labeled “Excellent” on the lower end of the graph, and “very poor” at the higher end. The horizontal axis marks years from 2012 to 2025, in increments of 5. The trendline equation for this graph is  $y = -0.0063x + 5.1671$ . A stream health trend was created using scores calculated for family biotic index (FBI). Contrary to common sense, a descending trendline indicates improvement in the stream health since organisms with sensitivity to water pollution score lower on the family biotic index.

### Summary:

Locke Lake Park has been sampled 14 consecutive years since 2012. The FBI score has indicated “Good” health since 2022. The FBI health trend is stable. Simuliidae (truefly) dominated the sample in 2025. The dominant family and the number of families are variable each year; however, Baetidae (mayfly), Chironomidae (truefly), Elmidae (beetle), Hydropsychidae (caddisfly), Oligochaeta (aquatic worms), and Simuliidae are consistently present. In addition, sensitive species including Baetidae, and Hydropsychidae are frequently in high abundance in the samples. As typical to many sites, the family representations are disproportionate. Variability in family representation may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability, collection location, or other sources of disturbance in the area.

**Family List (Number of Individuals per year) – Locke Lake Park**

Family Name	Tolerance Value	2025	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
Aeshnidae (dragonfly)	3			1				
Asellidae (crustacean)	8			1				
Baetidae (mayfly)	4	21	27	90	33	21	86	12
Blephariceridae (true fly)	0					1		
Brachycentridae (caddisfly)	1					1		
Caenidae (mayfly)	7							1
Calopterygidae	5		2	1		1		
Capniidae (stonefly)	1					1		
Chironomidae (true fly)	6	56	12	44	30	70	17	31
Coengrionidae (damselfly)	9	1						
Decapoda (crayfish)	6					7		
Dryopidae (beetle)	5					1		
Elmidae (beetle)	4	7	5	20	27	17	1	
Empididae (true fly)	6		3			3		4
Gammaridae (crustacean)	4	12	4	3				
Gastropoda (snail)	7			1				
Gerridae (true bug)	na					1		
Heptageniidae (mayfly)	4			3				
Hirundinea (leech)	10	1			1			2
Hyalellidae (Talitridae)	8							16
Hydracarina (aquatic spider)	4				1	1		
Hydropsychidae (caddisfly)	4	45	58	10	71	21	75	16
Hydroptilidae (caddisfly)	4			3				
Leptoceridae (caddisfly)	4			3				
Muscidae (truefly)	6			1				
Nematoda (round worm)	5	3			5		1	12
Oligochaeta (aquatic worm)	8	8	32	5	17	4		2
Pelecypoda (clam)	7	4		10	3	7	1	
Philopotomidae (caddisfly)	3	7	27		2	1		
Polycentropodidae (caddisfly)	1					1		
Scirtidae (beetle)	7							1
Simuliidae (true fly)	6	126	25		1		2	120
Tabanidae (true fly)	6		1					
Tipuliidae (true fly)	3		2	1				
Turbellaria (flat worm)	4						2	
Veliidae (truebug)	6			2	2			

Table 46: Locke Lake Park family list. Table on EPT Families from 2025 to 2012, showing year, number of EPT families, percent make-up of EPT Families, and names of EPT families

## 5.0 SUMMARY OF RESULTS

### Site Specific FBI Trends, From Their First Year Monitored Until 2025

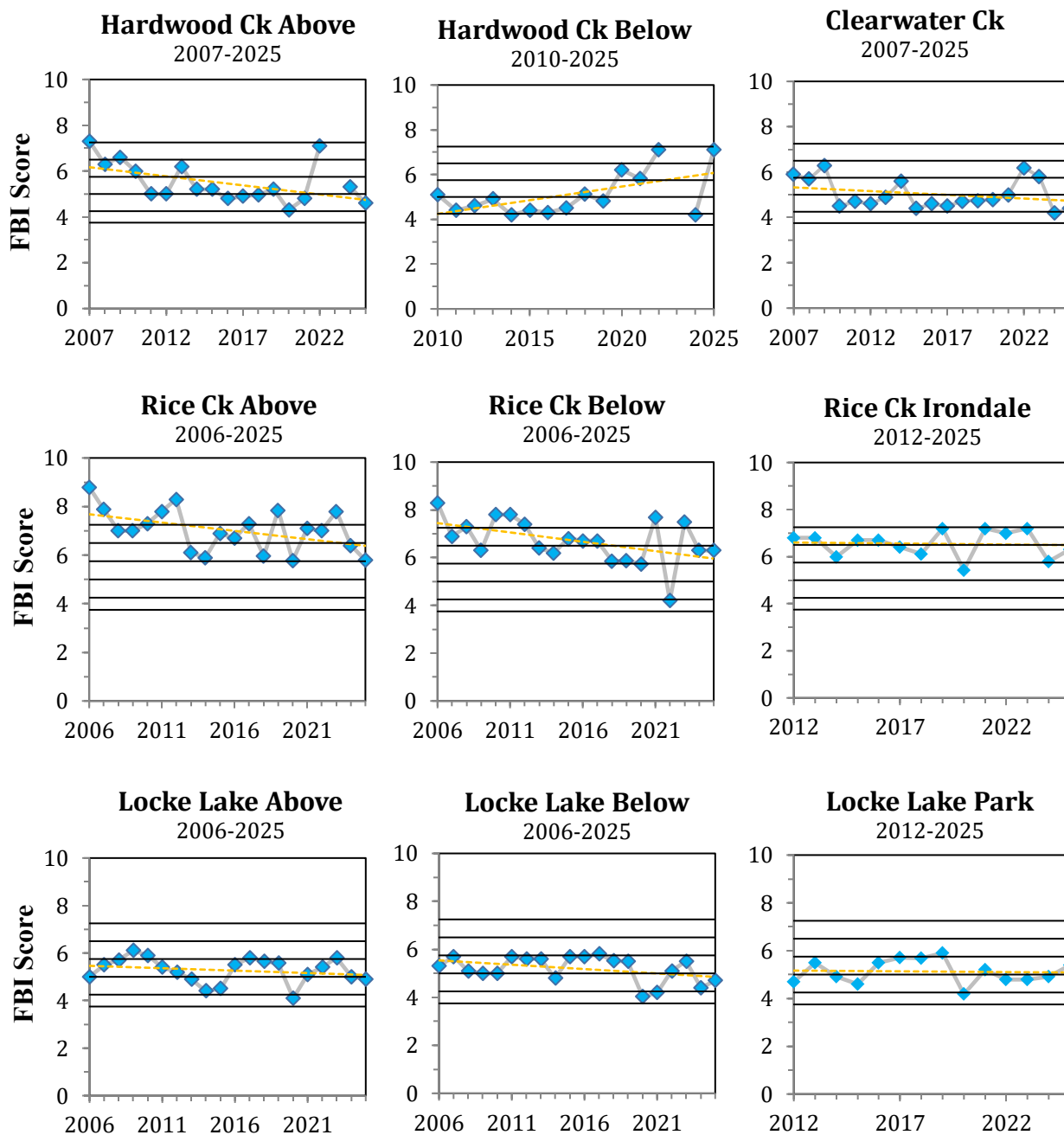


Figure 18: A collection of graphs titled “Specific FBI Trends, From Their First Year Monitored Until 2025”. The vertical axis, left side, is labeled “FBI Score” from 0 to 10. The horizontal axis marks years from first collection year to 2025. Note: “Excellent” water quality is an FBI score below 3.75 and “Very poor” is at highest end above 7.25. A negative slope signifies FBI scores of improved water quality. Lower FBI numbers indicate healthier streams.

Notes and reminder: Contrary to intuition, lower FBI numbers indicate healthier streams, and higher FBI numbers indicate poorer water quality. A negative/downward slope signifies FBI scores of improving water quality. A positive/upward slope signifies FBI scores of worsening water quality. Hardwood Creek Above and Clearwater Creek were monitored starting in 2007, Hardwood Creek Below in 2010, and Rice Creek Irondale and Locke Lake Park sites were monitored starting in 2012.

### **5.1 FBI trends: Improving**

Based on their trendline of FBI scores, Hardwood Creek Above, Rice Creek Above and Rice Creek Below each are showing overall improving health trends through the years that SHEP has sampled at those sites. Hardwood Creek Above could not be sampled most recently in 2023 (SHEP season 2023-2024) due to dry creek beds. Rice Creek Above and Rice Creek Below show overall improving health trends; however, the data is variable year after year (Figure 12 and Figure 13).

### **5.2 FBI trends: Stable**

Based on their trendline of FBI scores, Clearwater Creek, Rice Creek Irondale, Locke Lake Above, Locke Lake Below and Locke Lake Park each are showing overall relatively stable health trends through the years that SHEP has sampled at those sites (Figure 18). For many of these sites, the data is variable year after year. Locke Lake Park is overall stable based on FBI score around “fair”. Rice Creek Irondale is stable based on FBI score with an average score around “poor”. With a slightly steeper negative slope but still relatively stable based on FBI score, were Clearwater Creek, Locke Lake Above and Locke Lake Below, with an average score around “fair”.

### **5.3 FBI Trends: Worsening**

Based on their trendline of FBI Scores, Hardwood Creek Below is showing an overall declining health trend (Figure 18); however, data is variable. FBI trend showed improvement in 2024 of a score of “very good”, and then a score of “poor” 2025 (Figure 10; Table 10). The overall 20 year FBI trend (with 16 years of monitoring data) may be a result of drought and low water flow (especially in 2021 and 2022) impacting the habitat and the organisms present during times of low water and low water flow. It should also be noted that Hardwood Creek Below could not be sampled most recently in 2023 (SHEP season 2023-2024) due to dry creek beds.

## 5.4 Status in 2025

Figure 19 shows each sampling location’s FBI score and stream health rating for 2025. Variability may be caused by environmental factors including water levels, habitat availability or other sources of disturbance in the area.

While SHEP volunteers collect data on the physical habitat, SHEP limits their analysis of physical stream data, as it can be subjective in description and placement of data collection – not only from team to team but from year to year depending on who is collecting the data. Thus, SHEP only provides macroinvertebrate data to provide a picture of stream health and changes throughout time.

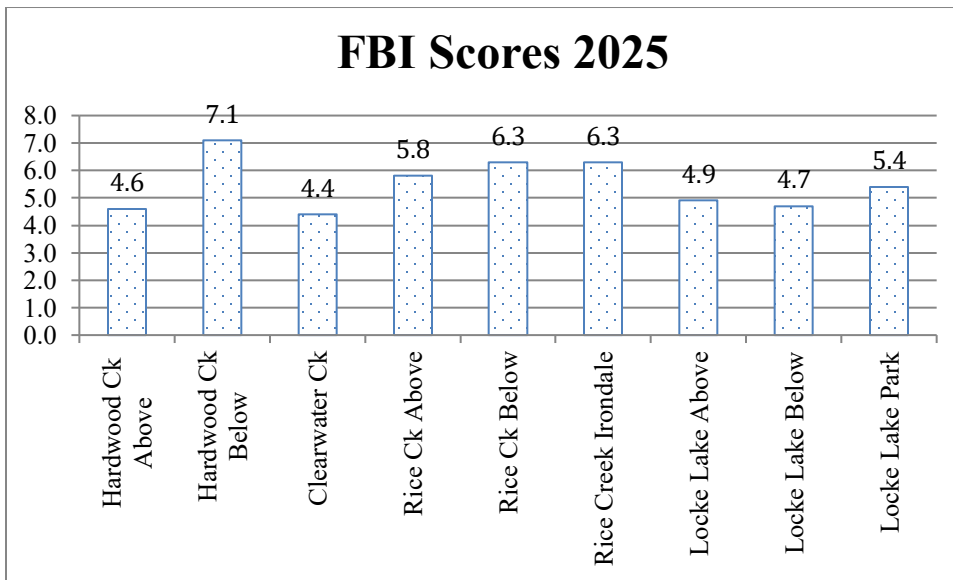


Figure 19: The bar graph is entitled “FBI Scores 2025” and shows the stream health rating based on FBI scores for SHEP sampling sites in 2025. The vertical axis lists FBI Scores from 0.0 to 8.0 in increments of 1. The horizontal axis lists the creeks. Listed from chart left to right: Hardwood Creek Above 4.6, Hardwood Creek Below 7.1, Clearwater Creek 4.4, Rice Creek Above 5.8, Rice Creek Below, 6.3, Rice Creek Irondale 6.3, Locke Lake Above 4.9, Locke Lake Below 4.7, Locke Lake Park 5.4.

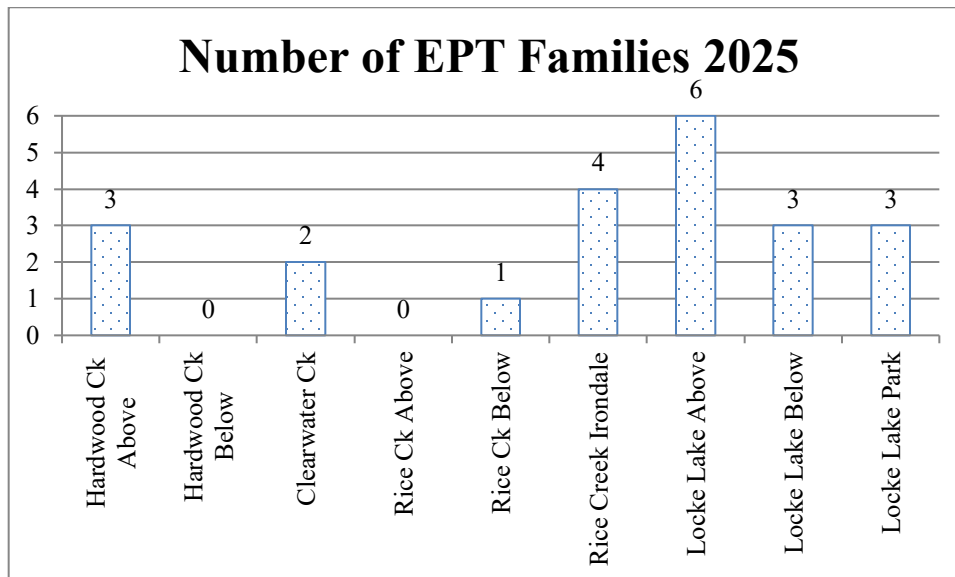


Figure 20: The bar graph is entitled “Number of EPT Families 2025” and shows the Number of EPT Families for each SHEP sampling site in 2025. The vertical axis lists the number of EPT Families from 0 to 6 in increments of 1. The horizontal axis lists the creeks. Listed from chart left to right: Hardwood Creek Above 3, Hardwood Creek Below 0, Clearwater Creek 2, Rice Creek Above 0, Rice Creek Below 1, Rice Creek Irondale 4, Locke Lake Above 6, Locke Lake Below 3, Locke Lake Park 3.

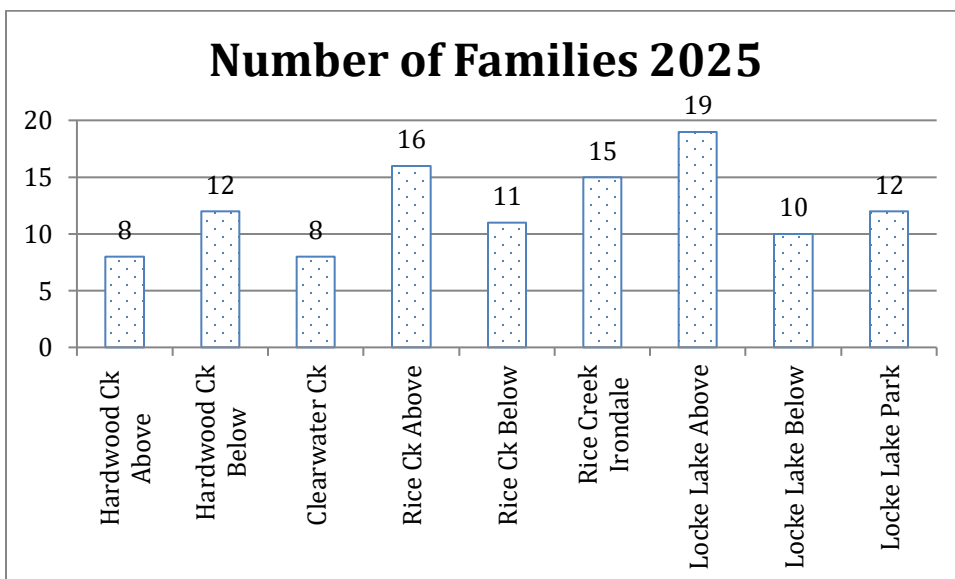


Figure 21: The bar graph is entitled “Number of Families 2025” and shows the Number of Families for each SHEP sampling site in 2025. The vertical axis lists the number of Families from 0 to 20 in increments of 5. The horizontal axis lists the creeks. Number of families present for SHEP sampling sites in 2025. Listed from chart left to right: Hardwood Creek Above 8, Hardwood Creek Below 12, Clearwater Creek 8, Rice Creek Above 16, Rice Creek Below 11, Rice Creek Irondale 15, Locke Lake Above 19, Locke Lake Below 10, Locke Lake Park 12.