

Mississippi River

Bee Branch Pond

Lower Bee Branch Creek

Bee Branch Creek Restoration Dubuque, IA

Dubuque's North End Neighborhood is hit the hardest during rain events, prone to devastating flooding catastrophes. Six Presidential Disaster Declarations were issued between 1999 and 2011 because of flash flooding that resulted in an estimated \$69.8 million in damage.

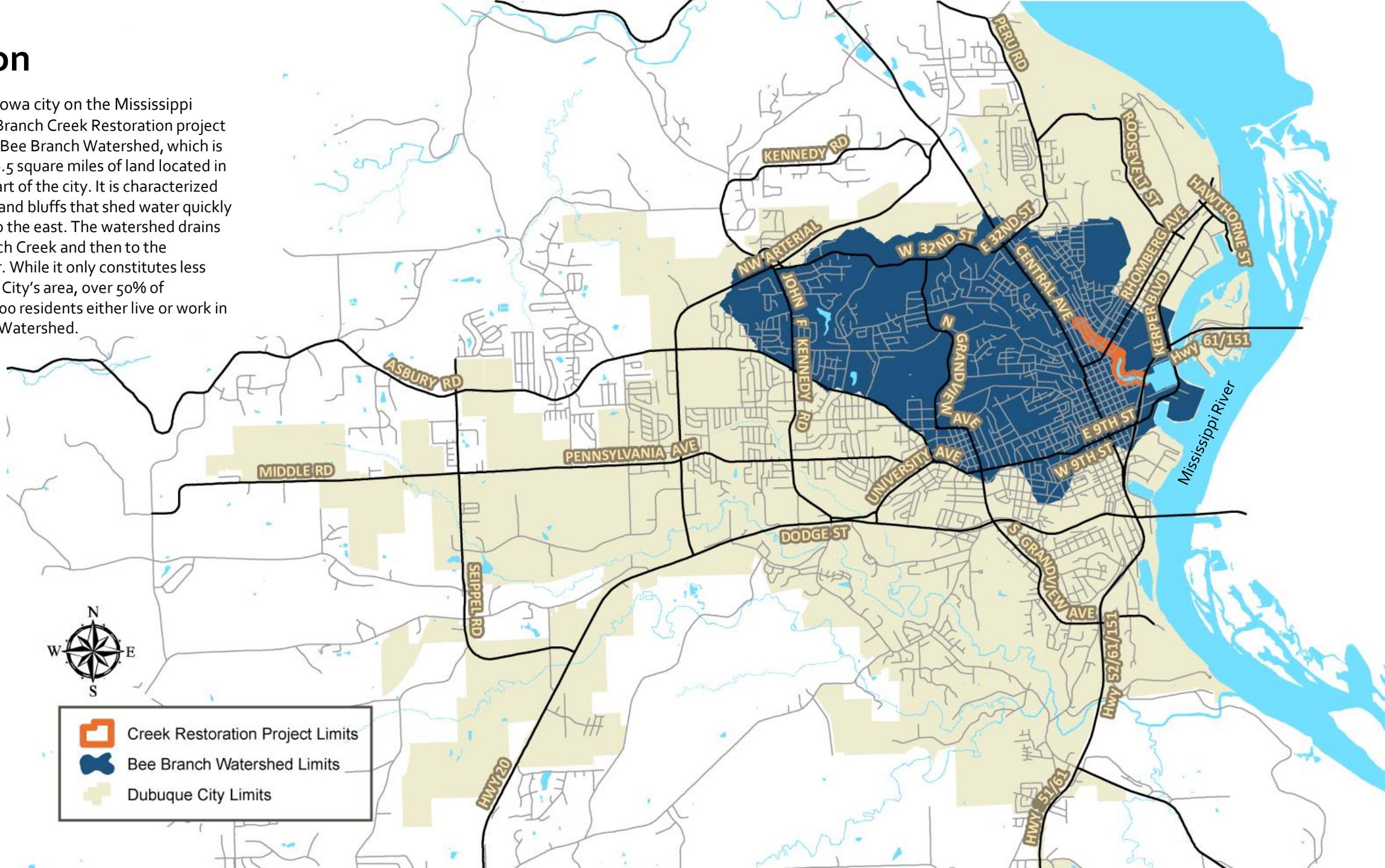
The Bee Branch Creek Restoration involved replacing almost one-mile of storm sewer with a creek and floodplain that resembles the one that traversed the area more than 100 years ago.

This daylighting of the buried creek allows large volumes of stormwater to safely move through the area without flooding adjacent properties. The restored creek also serves as a stunning, community-centric linear park with a multi-use trail, scenic overlooks, playground, amphitheater, educational areas, benches, lighting, and more than 4,000 plantings, including a community orchard.

Upper Bee Branch Creek

Location

Dubuque is an Iowa city on the Mississippi River. The Bee Branch Creek Restoration project is located in the Bee Branch Watershed, which is approximately 6.5 square miles of land located in the northeast part of the city. It is characterized by steep slopes and bluffs that shed water quickly from the west to the east. The watershed drains to the Bee Branch Creek and then to the Mississippi River. While it only constitutes less than 25% of the City's area, over 50% of Dubuque's 58,400 residents either live or work in the Bee Branch Watershed.



Site Plan

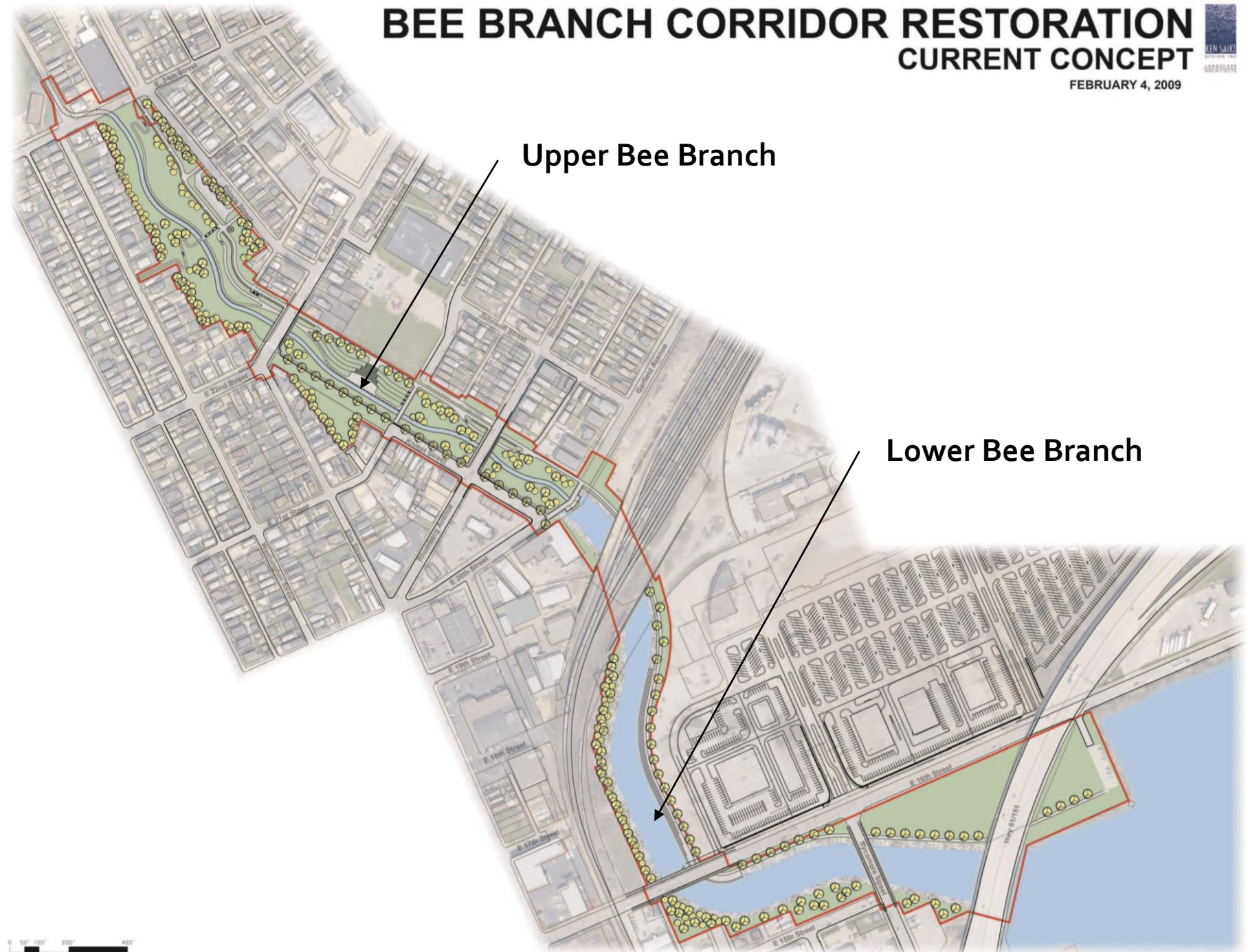
In August 2003, the Dubuque City Council formed a sixteen-member citizen advisory committee to work with engineering consultants on an alignment study to determine the location and preliminary design of a means to channel water out of Dubuque's North End neighborhoods to the Mississippi River.

After several committee, public, and neighborhood meetings, the committee's alignment study concluded in November of 2004. The City Council adopted the alignment and recommendation by the citizen advisory committee to create an open channel by "daylighting" the Bee Branch Creek.

In the fall of 2008, the City hired a consulting team to develop the final Bee Branch Creek Restoration design. In order to develop the community's vision for the project, the design team held a series of three public workshops. Based on citizen input, the design team developed a creek corridor concept and presented it in February of 2009.

BEE BRANCH CORRIDOR RESTORATION CURRENT CONCEPT

FEBRUARY 4, 2009



Lower Bee Branch

The Bee Branch Creek Restoration is split into two distinct sections each with different characteristics.

The Lower Bee Branch design includes a large expanse of open water that wraps around a former industrial pack site which is set to be privately redeveloped as a retail center. A multiuse trail, lighting and benches line the waterway on the northeast side of the creek.

This area also includes the 16th St. Detention Basin, also known as the Bee Branch Pond. Located along the Mississippi Flyway, the pond is an excellent spot for bird watching. The stream also provides opportunities for kayaking, canoeing, and urban fishing.



Lower Bee Branch

View to the East toward the Mississippi River.



Before



After

Lower Bee Branch

View to the West toward the City of Dubuque.



Before



After

Lower Bee Branch

Scenic Overlook at the Bee Branch Pond



Before



After

Lower Bee Branch

Family Fishing Day

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources conducted a fish assessment in the Lower Bee Branch Creek. The stream segment contained 14 species of native fish providing modest fishing opportunities in the Dubuque metro area.



Lower Bee Branch

Creek Clean Up Events



Lower Bee Branch

Eagles Fishing



Upper Bee Branch

The Upper Bee Branch Creek Restoration involved replacing 2,000 feet of buried storm sewer devoid of aquatic life and wildlife with a creek and floodplain that resembles the one that traversed the area approximately 100 years ago.

During heavy rains, storm water rises out of the creek and fills the greenspace instead of flooding streets and homes. It also provides greenspace in an area where low- to moderate-income and minority populations call home.

The restored creek and greenway includes a multi-use trail system, benches, lighting, an outdoor classroom, a play area with slides, community garden, bioswales, and over 1,000 trees and shrubs. Construction started in June 2015 and was completed in July 2017.



Upper Bee Branch

The restored creek can accommodate a range of hydrologic conditions while also providing biological integrity. It is designed to take on storm water during rain events and move it safely through the area without flooding adjacent properties. It also serves as a linear parkway connecting Dubuque's historic riverfront to its urban core.



Before



After

Upper Bee Branch

Ribbon Cutting Event in July 2017



Upper Bee Branch

Play Area with Slides



Upper Bee Branch

Bee Branch Urban Orchard

The restored floodplain area includes an urban orchard with a collection of apple, pear and cherry trees. Due to the densely-spaced houses, most who live near the Bee Branch Creek do not have enough space to grow their own food. The orchard is a public space where residents can harvest local varieties of fruit and a variety of edibles incorporated into the landscape such as currants, chives, asparagus, strawberries, oregano, rhubarb, and thyme.



Upper Bee Branch

One-Mile Fun Run



Upper Bee Branch

Residents Enjoying the New Greenway



Upper Bee Branch

Scenic View from the 24th St. Overlook



Upper & Lower Bee Branch

Nine interpretive signs are placed along the Upper and Lower sections of the restored Bee Branch Creek.



Upper Bee Branch

