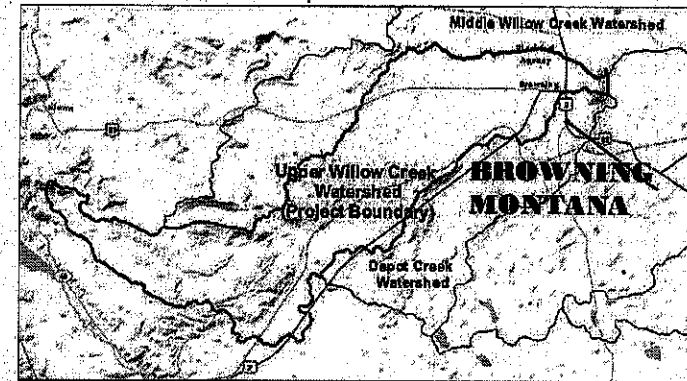


Tribe, NRCS to evaluate Willow Creek flooding and solutions

The Blackfeet Tribe is pleased to announce a partnership with the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) to develop a plan to prevent or reduce damages caused by Willow Creek floodwater in Browning. The NRCS has contracted with Northern Engineering Consultants and DOWL Engineering to evaluate alternatives proposed and supported by the community.

Major flooding occurred in Browning in 1920, 1948, 1958 and 1964. In 1975, the NRCS helped the City of Browning, the Blackfeet Tribe and the Glacier County Conservation District prepare a Watershed Work Plan and an Environmental Impact Statement to reduce flooding in Browning. Proposed measures included Willow Creek channel improvements, a floodwater detention dam approximately four miles southwest of Browning, and two channel diversions along the west edge of Browning. However, the final design was suspended in 1976 possibly because the necessary land could not be acquired. Since that time,



numerous developments have encroached upon the channel diversion routes, making the 1975 plan no longer feasible.

The Blackfeet Tribe received funding for this planning study from the NRCS Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Program. Over the next 18 months, Northern Engineering Consultants and DOWL Engineering will work closely with the community to develop a new Watershed Project Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (Plan-EIS). The Plan-EIS will be a physical, environmentally, socially and economically sound plan

to reduce flood damages in Browning. It will generate flood inundation mapping for Browning as well as identify and analyze potential flood control improvements.

Public and interagency participation and support will be the key to a good plan. As stated by Councilman Terry Tatsey, "This is an opportunity for the stakeholders to dream about to the magnitude of this project. The economics behind this project could be very major and benefit this area."

The public is encouraged to attend the initial scoping meeting in Browning at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2019, in the Tribal Council

Chambers. A draft Preliminary Investigation Report will be available at the initial scoping meeting to provide more information on the environmental evaluation, flood mapping and potential flood protection alternatives. Additional public meetings will be held throughout the development of the Plan-EIS. The Tribe will also post project news to their website (<http://blackfeetnation.com>) and the Blackfeet Nation Facebook page.

To further discuss the project or obtain additional information, please contact the following: Tribal Sponsor Terry Tatsey Blackfeet Tribal Business Council 338-7522, ttatsey@blackfeetnation.com; Responsible Federal Official Steve Becker, PE, COR NRCS State Conservation Engineer 587-6811, steve.becker@mt.usda.gov; Consulting Engineer Amy Darlinton, PE, Northern Engineering and Consulting Inc. (NECI), (406) 206-5248, amylarlinton@neciusa.com.

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