



## Illinois Clean Lakes Program



A historic milestone for Illinois lakes was achieved in June 1995 when the state legislature passed the **Conservation 2000** program, thereby authorizing funding to implement the **Illinois Lake Management Program Act (ILMPA)**. Originally passed by the state legislature in November 1989, ILMPA established four comprehensive objectives for an expanded Illinois lakes program: 1) public education, 2) technical assistance, 3) monitoring and research, and 4) financial incentives for local lake management implementation.

The Conservation 2000 program itself is a six-year, \$100 million initiative aimed at generating a coordinated natural resource protection program between the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Illinois Department of Agriculture, and Illinois Department of Natural Resources. It includes provisions for soil erosion and sediment control, large ecosystem preservation, natural resource monitoring, a comprehensive review and rewrite of existing water law, as well as initiation of the programs contained within ILMPA.

With the passage of Conservation 2000, \$500,000 was appropriated in fiscal year 1996 for the Illinois Lake Management Program Act (since re-named the

### **Illinois Clean Lakes Program or ICLP).**

For the five subsequent fiscal years (1997 through 2001), ICLP funding authorizations exceed \$1 million annually.



The Illinois Clean Lakes Program includes a financial incentives grant program administered through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) to provide assistance in diagnosing, restoring, and protecting Illinois lakes. The program will provide three different types of grants to lake owners:

- ◆ Diagnostic/Feasibility Studies (Phase I)
- ◆ Long-Term Restoration and Protection Projects (Phase II)
- ◆ Lake Quality Maintenance Programs (LQMP).

Any lake owner in Illinois is eligible to apply for a Phase I, Phase II, or LQMP grant if the following criteria are met:

- ◆ The lake owner has legal authority to enter into contracts or agreements with local, state, and federal agencies and private organizations.
- ◆ The lake is an Illinois inland lake (i.e., not Lake Michigan) that experiences, or is threatened by, identifiable and quantifiable chemical, physical, or biological problems that impair lake uses.
- ◆ The lake's primary uses include public water supply, general recreation, and/or aquatic life.
- ◆ The lake owner has the authority and ability to adopt, implement, and enforce official controls.
- ◆ The lake owner has the authority and ability to generate revenue and in-kind contributions, and agrees to pay the local share of project costs.

Lakes that generally will not be considered eligible for assistance through ICLP include:

- ◆ Lakes whose primary function is stormwater detention.
- ◆ Impoundments mechanically filled with water that cannot be naturally recharged by surface water runoff or groundwater inflow.
- ◆ Lakes smaller than six acres.
- ◆ Ponds owned by a single private landowner.





## Diagnostic/Feasibility Studies

A Diagnostic/Feasibility Study (Phase I) diagnoses the current conditions of a lake and its watershed, and then develops feasible action plans for future lake protection and restoration. These studies typically are conducted over a two-year period.

The state, through Illinois EPA, provides up to 60 percent of the Phase I study cost, with the lake owner and/or other sources providing the remaining portion. The maximum amount of state funds is \$75,000 for any Phase I project. Grant availability in any given year will depend on the level of ICLP funding appropriated by the state legislature. Project costs eligible for reimbursement under a Phase I grant can include:

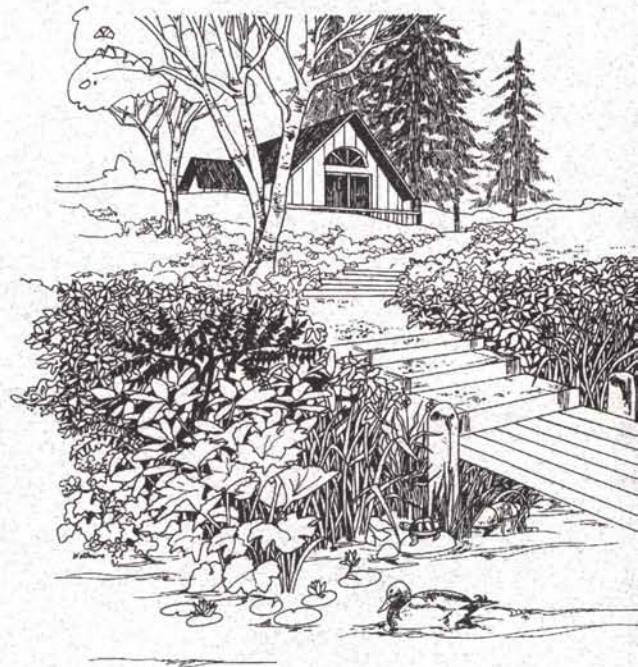
- ◆ Development and compilation of lake and watershed information/data.
- ◆ Lake and watershed monitoring activities (physical, chemical, and biological).
- ◆ Project management and administration.
- ◆ Development of reports, public information materials, etc.
- ◆ Purchase of equipment necessary to conduct the study (subject to Illinois EPA approval).

Phase I project costs that are not eligible for reimbursement include:

- ◆ Costs incurred prior to or after the authorized grant period.
- ◆ Operation and maintenance of in-lake or watershed-related practices and equipment.
- ◆ Installation of pollution controls for wastewater treatment facilities.
- ◆ Purchase or long-term leasing of land to provide public access to the lake.
- ◆ Activities regulated by state solid waste, toxic waste, or hazardous waste permits or rules and regulations.
- ◆ Construction of buildings, utilities, highways, or roads.
- ◆ Activities implemented for flood control purposes.

The Phase I grant application process involves two parts. First, a relatively simple pre-application must be filed with Illinois EPA by August 31. The purpose of the pre-application is to provide the agency with an overall assessment of the financial resources required to conduct the ICLP each year. A final Phase I grant application must be submitted to Illinois EPA by October 31. The final application includes the following information:

- ◆ A basic description of the lake as well as its watershed including size, general land use, and topography.
- ◆ Lake uses impaired by degraded water quality.
- ◆ Current lake and watershed management practices that are being implemented.
- ◆ A summary of any available historical and current lake/watershed data.
- ◆ An estimate of major point and nonpoint sources of pollution in the watershed.
- ◆ A narrative description of the procedures to be used in conducting the project, including public participation methods.
- ◆ A description of the proposed lake/watershed monitoring program.
- ◆ A milestone schedule of project activities.
- ◆ An itemized estimate of costs including justification of costs.
- ◆ A description of public benefits of protecting and restoring the lake, including the level of public access.
- ◆ A discussion of local interest and resource commitment to lake restoration.

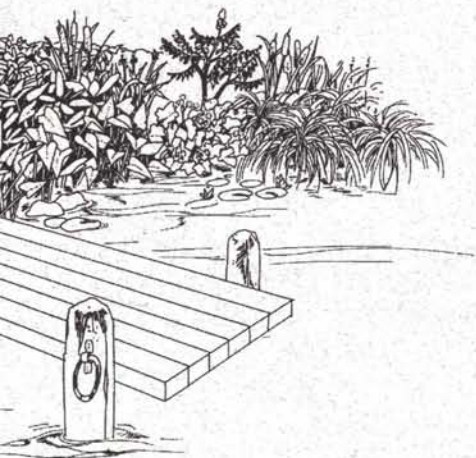




A final Phase I report is due by the end of the grant period. This report has three main sections: a Diagnostic Study, a Feasibility Study, and an Environmental Evaluation. Specific requirements may differ from lake to lake, but a typical Diagnostic Study would include:

- ◆ A summary of historical lake uses and how these uses have changed due to water quality degradation.
- ◆ A detailed description of land use in the watershed and an estimate of the amount of nonpoint source pollution contributed to the lake by each land use category.
- ◆ An analysis of historical limnological data and one year of current limnological data; this includes morphology and bathymetry, trophic status, sediment analysis, temperature and dissolved oxygen profiles, Secchi depth, water chemistry, alkalinity, chlorophyll *a*, algal biomass, and aquatic plants.
- ◆ A discussion of biological resources in the lake and their ecological relationships.

The Feasibility Study evaluates options for restoration of degraded lake functions as well as future lake protection. It identifies and discusses in detail alternative approaches for pollution control and/or lake restoration that may be appropriate for the particular lake. From the alternatives presented, the report recommends a specific plan for future implementation. A milestone schedule and monitoring program, including in-lake water quality sampling for at least one year after project implementation, must be specified. The Feasibility Study also provides a detailed description of the sources of non-state funds necessary to implement the project, and a summary of comments from public meetings during the project.



The last part of the Phase I report is an Environmental Evaluation. This evaluation answers a number of specific questions about the potential impacts of the proposed project. These include impacts to people and property, land use changes, as well as environmental impacts. A description of steps that will be taken to minimize any adverse impacts also is required.

## Long-Term Restoration and Protection Implementation Projects

A Long-Term Restoration and Protection Implementation Project (Phase II) implements lake and watershed management plans for restoration and long-term protection of lake water quality and associated lake uses. These projects have a maximum time span of four years.

The final restoration/protection plan developed under the Phase I study is the plan implemented in the Phase II project. Phase II grants are available to inland lake owners who have completed an ICLP Phase I study or its equivalent. The ICLP is designed to be very similar to U.S. EPA's federal Clean Lakes Program, so a federal Phase I report can qualify when applying for ICLP Phase II grants. Similarly, a privately-funded study can qualify so long as it meets the requirements for a Phase I report.

The state, through Illinois EPA, provides up to 50 percent of the cost of a Phase II project, with the remaining portion provided by the lake owner and/or other sources. The maximum amount of state funds is \$300,000 for any Phase II project. Grant availability in any given year will depend on the level of ICLP funding appropriated by the state legislature.

Similar to the Phase I application procedure, a Phase II pre-application is due at Illinois EPA by August 31; the final application is due by October 31. The Phase II application is essentially the Phase I final report, with a few presentation format changes.

Each Phase II project conducts post-implementation monitoring, including in-lake water quality sampling, for one year following project implementation. A final Phase II report must be submitted at the completion of the project's budget period.



## Lake Quality Maintenance Programs

The Lake Quality Maintenance Program (LQMP) provides grants to implement management plans that provide short-term relief from nuisance aquatic vegetation and algae growth. The equivalent of a Phase I study report that meets the requirements of a Phase II application must already have been completed.


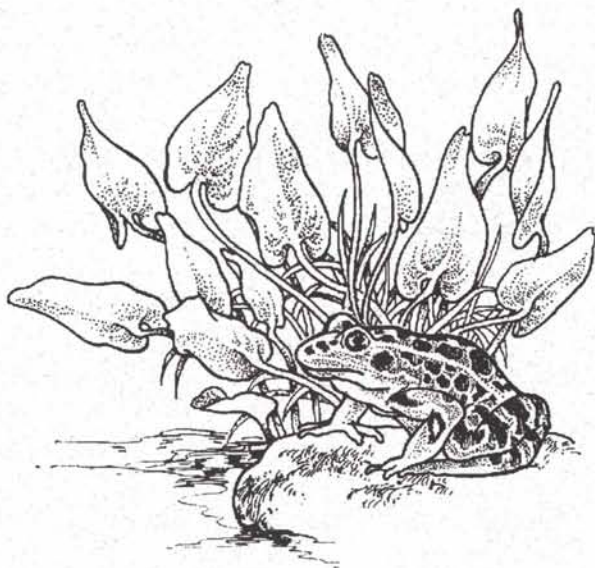
LQMP grants are for a one-year period with no time extensions. The state, through Illinois EPA, provides up to 50 percent of the cost of a LQMP, with the remaining portion provided by the lake owner and/or other sources. The maximum amount of state funds is \$10,000 for any LQMP project. LQMP pre-applications are due to Illinois EPA by August 31, with final applications due by October 31.

Each LQMP application must show that: 1) the proposed aquatic vegetation maintenance activities will result in the attainment or significant improvement of recreational or other beneficial lake uses (e.g., swimming, fishing, or boating), and 2) watershed management plans are being implemented to control and reduce incoming nutrients, sediments, and other pollutants.

## For more information...

The Illinois Clean Lakes Program will emphasize the funding of Phase I studies during its initial years in order to build a base for future Phase II and LQMP projects. The number of ICLP grants in any given year will depend on the level of annual funding appropriated by the state legislature for that year. This publication is a summary of current Illinois EPA application guidelines and policy, which may be subject to change over time. An ICLP application packet containing current application guidelines and other related information can be obtained from:

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency  
Division of Water Pollution Control  
Lake and Watershed Unit  
P.O. Box 19276  
Springfield, IL 62794-9276  
telephone: 217/782-3362



**Lake Notes . . .** is a series of publications produced by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency about issues confronting Illinois' lake resources. The objective of these publications is to provide lake and watershed residents with a greater understanding of environmental cause-and-effect relationships, and actions we all can take to protect our lakes.

This *Lake Notes* publication was prepared by Bob Kirschner, Holly Hudson and Michael Murphy of the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, Chicago, Illinois; and Gregg Good, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, Springfield, Illinois.

For more information about other publications in this series and to request copies, please contact: Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, DWPC-Lake and Watershed Unit, P.O. Box 19276, Springfield, Illinois, 62794-9276; 217/782-3362.

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