ILLINOIS NUTRIENT LOSS REDUCTION STRATEGY

2025

PARTNER PROGRAM AND PROJECT UPDATES

Urban Stormwater

Illinois Department of Agriculture

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency

Illinois Extension
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Water Quality Management

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, CMAP, is a regional government planning agency that works on behalf of the seven counties, 284 municipalities, and 8.6 million residents of northeastern Illinois. CMAP is the state-authorized regional planning agency and area-wide water quality management planning agency, and the federally designated metropolitan planning organization, for northeastern Illinois.

Water Quality Management Planning

CMAP has a long history of water quality management planning, dating back to the mid-1970s when CMAP's predecessor agency, the Northeastern Illinois Planning Commission, was designated as an area-wide water quality management planning agency by the governor.

CMAP supports state and areawide water quality management plans as well as the region's comprehensive plan, ON TO 2050. Its goals include improving water quality and protecting and enhancing the integrity of aquatic systems.

CMAP's water quality management planning services include regional coordination, watershed-based planning, and technical assistance.

Regional coordination: CMAP serves in a regional coordination role with county and municipal governments and local organizations, sharing and advancing best practices for water quality management and watershed-based planning.

Technical assistance: CMAP provides technical assistance for a wide range of water-quality related activities, including:

- Watershed-based planning or implementing plan recommendations
- Developing preliminary designs for best management practices to improve water quality
- Sharing public information, education, and outreach about the impacts and importance of water pollution control
- Participating in water pollution reduction, stormwater management, and green infrastructure initiatives
- Incorporating water-quality practices in comprehensive, subarea, and corridor plans

Watershed-based planning: In collaboration with local partners, CMAP develops watershed-based plans across the region. These plans assess water quality challenges and propose strategies for the improvement of water quality and protection of overall watershed health.

Visit cmap.is/water to learn more about the Illinois and Areawide Water Quality Management plans, watershed-based planning, and water quality technical assistance.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Water Technical Assistance Program

CMAP's Technical Assistance Program supports communities in northeastern Illinois and aligns with the region's current long-range plan, ON TO 2050, and its principles of regional resilience, inclusive growth, and prioritized investment. Since 2012, the program has assisted communities in developing more than 400 projects with local governments, nonprofits, and intergovernmental organizations to address local issues at the intersection of transportation, land use, and housing, including the natural environment, economic growth, and community development. The program helps communities with planning projects that build local capacity, engage community members, and connect local partners with implementing agencies and capital funding for infrastructure investments, including water quality, and stormwater management.

During 2025, the following Technical Assistance Program projects were completed:

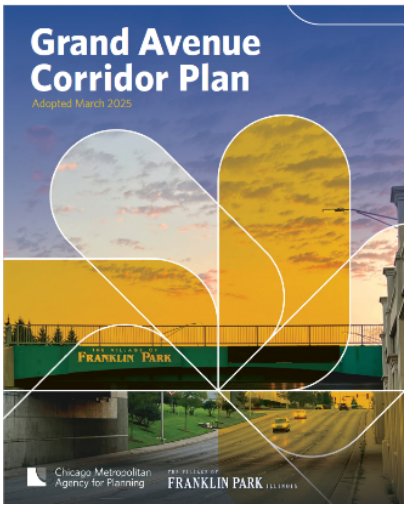
City of Harvey Comprehensive Plan (adopted February 2025)



This is the City of Harvey's first comprehensive plan and establishes a vision and land use strategy. The infrastructure chapter includes recommendations regarding the stormwater system including incorporation of green infrastructure solutions to address environmental concerns and promote sustainability and developing and implementing a stormwater management plan.

See engage.cmap.illinois.gov/harvey-comprehensive-plan for more information about the planning process and a link to the adopted comprehensive plan.

Franklin Park Grand Avenue Corridor Plan (adopted March 2025)



The Franklin Park Grand Avenue Corridor Plan serves as a framework for elected officials, village staff, and community members to make informed decisions regarding land use, transportation, economic development, and other infrastructure improvements along Grand Avenue in Franklin Park. Goals reflect the village's desires for promoting pedestrian activity, marketing the corridor, improving transportation options and safety for all users, diversifying housing options, incorporating climate resilience, and ensuring quality of and access to natural assets.

Environmental sustainability was a priority for Franklin Park, especially given Grand Avenue's location within the Silver Creek watershed and its large extent of impervious surfaces. Building on

recent village sustainability efforts, the plan identified opportunities to enhance green infrastructure, tree canopy coverage, and stormwater management along the corridor.

See engage.cmap.illinois.gov/franklin-park-grand-avenue-corridor-plan for more information on the planning process and a link to the adopted plan.

Grant Readiness

CMAP's Grant Readiness program partners CMAP staff with communities to help connect that community's priority transportation projects with funding and assist with navigating transportation investment programs, as well as to identify adjunct opportunities.

For the **City of Marengo** in McHenry County, CMAP staff developed a grant life cycle toolkit, identified funding opportunities to improve transportation access to natural areas and recreational assets, helped develop a CDBG grant application, and identified green stormwater infrastructure opportunity areas in the city along with resources for design and funding assistance.

For the **Village of Dixmoor** in Cook County, CMAP staff worked with the village to develop a grant toolkit, grant management tracker, and project management tracker; identified priority projects including stormwater and sewer infrastructure improvements and potential funding sources; and explored opportunities for partnerships including a south suburban GIS services consortium and project collaborations with neighboring municipalities.

For more information on CMAP's Technical Assistance Program, visit cmap.is/TechnicalAssistance.

Conservation@Home

Originally developed by the Conservation Foundation, Conservation@Home encourages homeowners to create environmentally friendly landscapes that reduce pollution, conserve natural resources, and provide high-quality habitat for native plants and wildlife. University of Illinois Extension administers the program throughout Cook County and has certified 210 properties since the program began in 2016 in partnership with the Forest Preserves of Cook County.

In addition to conducting landscape certifications, the program engages residents through community events, educational outreach, and volunteer opportunities that promote sustainable landscaping practices. Program volunteers also support local restoration efforts by processing native seed collections for local distribution, helping expand the impact of conservation work across Cook County. Find more information at extension.illinois.edu/cook/conservationhome.

Conservation@Home Residential Membership Breakdown 2025

	Applicants	Certified
2025	47	27
2024	52	30
Total to Date	378	210

Relevant Data for 2025:

- 113 volunteers
- 65 evaluators
- 13 special events
- 16 partnerships

DuPage County Water Quality Improvement Program Grant

DuPage County Stormwater Management recognizes the financial burden a property owner may face undertaking a project that improves regional water quality. Stormwater Management's Water Quality Improvement Program, WQIP, is a competitive grant that provides financial assistance to projects that provide a regional water quality benefit to local waterways. The grant funds up to 25% of eligible construction costs for water quality improvement projects. DuPage County initiated the grant program in 2000. Since then, nearly $6.9 million has been awarded to 120 projects such as permeable paver parking lots, green roofs, and stormwater basin retrofits, with a current annual budget of $300,000 awarded yearly. DuPage County government agencies, organizations and individuals are eligible to receive funds under the WQIP grant. In 2025, there were eight projects funded across DuPage County.

A Water Quality Improvement Program Grant Story Map has also been created. The story map provides information on the grant and application process as well as gives examples of eligible projects. Animated infographics, photos, and descriptions of projects are shown. Examples include rain gardens, green roofs, permeable pavers, and streambank stabilization. The Story Map also includes an interactive map showing previously awarded projects along with photos and details on each.





The Winfield Creek Stream Restoration Project provides a total pollutant reduction benefit of 86 lbs/year of phosphorus, 171 lbs/year of nitrogen, 66,736 lbs/year of total suspended solids, and 46.2 tons/year of sediment from Winfield Creek while providing increased local interest in stream health, water quality, and pollution prevention.

Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance

The Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance, facilitated by Friends of the Chicago River, is a 55-member coalition of public agencies, nonprofits, and private sector partners working to advance nature-based stormwater solutions for a climate-resilient Chicago-Calumet River watershed. Since its formation in 2020, the alliance has secured $8.5 million in grants to advance programs and projects by pursuing joint funding opportunities and leveraging the Natural Solutions Tool.

In 2025, Friends of the Chicago River officially took over as administrative lead of the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative, which was previously administered by the Metropolitan Planning Council. This transition will integrate the Calumet sub-watershed group into the alliance, strengthening our regional stormwater management efforts.

2025 Accomplishments:

- Expanded membership from 35 to 55 organizations.
- Integrated the Calumet Stormwater Collaborative by taking ownership of coordination responsibilities, hosting one site visit to the Robbins Stormwater Park and one presentation on the Deer Creek-Third Creek Reservoir feasibility study underway with Metropolitan Water Reclamation District and Forest Preserves of Cook County.
- Completed a grant-ready project package for a Coastal Zone resilience concept in the community of Riverdale.
- Submitted the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal 319 watershed planning grant.
- Launched the expanded Natural Solutions Tool covering all of Lake County with updated data and refinements.
- Coordinated input on the City of Chicago's Green Stormwater Infrastructure Strategy Update.
- Conducted 22 one-on-one partner meetings, strengthening relationships, identifying partner needs, and shaping 2026 priorities.

Illinois Groundwork

In many Illinois communities, urbanization and larger storms have led to increased flooding. Green stormwater infrastructure, such as rain gardens and permeable pavement, can help reduce this flooding, but its effectiveness isn't always fully realized. Green infrastructure designs that integrate multidisciplinary research on native soil properties, water movement, and other factors can significantly improve impact and cost-effectiveness. Incorporating these research results into educational efforts can better support Illinois communities in managing flooding.

University of Illinois Extension and Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant continue to support communities addressing increased flooding associated with urbanization and larger storm events through Illinois Groundwork, a web-based resource grounded in multidisciplinary green infrastructure research and Extension programming. The website provides stormwater professionals, local leaders, and residents

with tools, research, and resources to support local decision-making and improve the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of green infrastructure practices such as rain gardens and permeable pavement. Resources include a green infrastructure sizing tool, an extensive resource library, and the Plant Finder tool, which helps users select appropriate native plants based on site conditions including soil, moisture, and light requirements.

Updates in 2025 focused on expanding the website's educational value. The Illinois Groundwork Plant Finder tool has now been incorporated into the Rainscaping Education program and is undergoing expansion to include an additional 60 filterable plant species suitable for green stormwater infrastructure projects. These additions will further strengthen the tool's ability to support plant selection for a wide range of site conditions across Illinois and Indiana. Additional resources have also been added to the Illinois Groundwork resource library to further enhance access to technical guidance, research, and educational materials for practitioners and community members. In addition, the green infrastructure Sizing Tool is undergoing an update and is expected to launch soon with improved usability and a more user-friendly interface to better support planning and design efforts.

Explore the website at illinoisgroundwork.org.

Partners of this project include University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Village of Midlothian, City of Calumet City, Illinois State Geological Survey, Illinois Department of Transportation, Metropolitan Planning Council, Illinois Coastal Management Program, Calumet Collaborative, Geosyntec Consultants, Smithgroup, The Openlands Project, and Friends of the Chicago River.

Illinois-Indiana Master Watershed Steward Program

ILLINOIS—INDIANA
Master Watershed Steward Program

The Illinois-Indiana Master Watershed Steward Program engages participants as stewards of natural ecosystems and water resources through science-based education in their communities. Watershed Stewards promote healthy watersheds by increasing their understanding of water resource issues and gaining the knowledge and tools needed to identify, prevent, or address water quality concerns, including causes of degradation. The curriculum focuses on topics such as water quality science and the impacts of climate change, invasive species, and agriculture on urban and rural water bodies. The Illinois-Indiana Master Watershed Steward Program Toolkit provides materials necessary to guide trained program hosts and future stewards through eight interactive sessions. Upon completion of the training, participants are prepared to engage in restoration science, community science, and community education efforts with local partners.

In conjunction with this project is the Watershed Game, where participants learn about practices, plans, and policies that improve and protect the quality of streams, lakes, rivers, and coastal regions while making land-use management decisions in a collaborative and low-stress environment. Through the simulation, participants use limited financial resources to reduce nonpoint source pollution and achieve clean water goals while learning the importance of cooperation and watershed-wide planning.

The program is offered in Illinois and Indiana as a collaboration between Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant, University of Illinois Extension, and Purdue University Extension. The program may be delivered in person or virtually and includes eight sessions covering approximately 20 hours of participant education. The flexible structure allows Extension educators and partners to teach and engage participants at county or regional scales while adapting content to fit local needs and interests.

In 2025, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant trained and certified 21 new Master Watershed Stewards across both states, helping build a network of knowledgeable volunteers prepared to support watershed education, conservation, and outreach efforts. Fifteen stewards were trained in McLean County, Illinois, while six were trained in Lake and Porter counties, Indiana. Post-program surveys indicated that participants strengthened their commitment to improving water quality and identified ways they planned to apply their new knowledge and skills in their communities.

Volunteer stewardship efforts also continued to expand in 2025. Five new Indiana stewards completed their program stewardship requirements by contributing at least 35 volunteer hours each, while six continuing stewards collectively contributed 144 additional volunteer hours. Altogether, Master Watershed Stewards contributed 319 volunteer hours in 2025 supporting watershed education, conservation projects, and community outreach activities. Based on the estimated value of volunteer time in Indiana, these efforts contributed more than $9,900 in value to local communities while strengthening regional capacity for watershed protection and management.

Additionally, Extension and Sea Grant partners continue to support educator capacity through train-the-trainer programming and collaborative implementation efforts across both states.

For more information, see go.illinois.edu/WatershedStewards.

Additional partners of this project include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Westchester Bird Sanctuary, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Indiana Dunes National Park, Valparaiso Chain of Lakes Watershed Group, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Hoosier Riverwatch, Save the Dunes, Gabis Arboretum, City of Gary, and Gibson Woods.

Rainscaping Education Program

University of Illinois Extension provides training to communities interested in building rain gardens, using the Rainscaping Education curriculum developed by Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant and Purdue University Extension. Landscape practices such as rain gardens, that direct stormwater to be absorbed by plants and soils, are of continued interest among Extension clientele and conservation partners. Through workshops, Master Gardener and Master Naturalist volunteers, and other community members learn about rain gardens and additional residential-scale green infrastructure techniques, which have many co-benefits, including nutrient loss reduction. Sessions cover an introduction to rainscaping and rain gardens with specific modules for rain garden site selection and plant selection as well as garden design, installation, maintenance, and community engagement.

The program includes 15 hours of in-person and virtual training featuring interactive activities, discussions, and field trips to community examples of green infrastructure to deepen participant learning. Participants also gain hands-on experience through the installation of demonstration rain gardens with community partners, typically in public spaces. Customized interpretive signage is available for installation alongside each demonstration project to support ongoing public education efforts. Participants are encouraged to attend as community teams to help implement local education programs and provide technical assistance for homeowners and small-scale public projects following completion of the training. University of Illinois Extension offers the program collaboratively with Purdue University Extension, coordinated by Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant. This partnership began in 2021.

From 2024–25, the Rainscaping Education program was temporarily paused to allow for substantial curriculum redevelopment and expansion. During this period, the project team met monthly to revise existing curriculum content, develop new educational and promotional materials, and improve overall presentation quality, accessibility, and participant experience.

For more information, see iiseagrant.org/work/sustainable-community-planning/programs-initiatives/purdue-rainscaping-education.

Red Oak Rain Garden

The Red Oak Rain Garden is a demonstration landscape on the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign campus that absorbs stormwater, prevents flooding, improves water quality, provides wildlife habitat, and promotes well-being for visitors. The garden also increases green infrastructure literacy and serves as a model for how to design, build, and maintain rain gardens. University of Illinois Extension and Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant staff manage the site and its associated programs with assistance from student and community volunteers.

At 13,000 square feet and home to 63 plant species, many native to the region, the Red Oak Rain Garden demonstrates the benefits of green infrastructure in highly visible and educational ways. In 2025, educational opportunities continued to expand for students, volunteers, and community members through tours, presentations, stewardship activities, and outreach events focused on stormwater management, native plants, and green infrastructure. Four interns contributed to educational programming and garden management efforts throughout the year.

Education and outreach remain key components of the initiative. In 2025, the team hosted 17 educational tours reaching 211 participants, including students, educators, community groups, and university classes such as Engineering 177 and Landscape Architecture 250. Team members also delivered five presentations reaching 185 people and participated in nine educational tabling events that engaged 1,356 attendees in conversations about rain gardens, stormwater management, and native plants. The garden's digital outreach also remained active, with 21 blogs and newsletters reaching 5,664 readers.

Service-learning and volunteer engagement continue to support long-term stewardship of the site. In 2025, 44 volunteer workdays were held alongside 11 hands-on volunteer trainings focused on native

plants and rain garden management. Six larger volunteer events brought 51 campus and community members into the garden for stewardship activities including plant replacement efforts and the addition of three new plant species. The rain garden's design continues to emphasize "designing with maintenance in mind," helping make stewardship manageable and accessible for volunteers while serving as a model for demonstration rain gardens installed through the Rainscaping Education program.

In 2025, the team also expanded educational accessibility through the installation of a new interpretive sign featuring the first outdoor Braille included on-campus signage. The sign helps visitors learn about the rain garden's stormwater functions, water quality benefits, and ecological value. In partnership with the University of Illinois Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering and the Prairie Research Institute, monitoring equipment, including soil probes and a weather station, were installed to support future research-informed maintenance and management efforts.

The rain garden also hosted its second annual "Illuminating Art in Nature" event in 2025, which drew approximately 700 attendees. The event highlighted student creativity while helping visitors learn about native plants, stormwater management, and the ecological functions of the rain garden through art and interactive engagement.

For more information, see go.illinois.edu/RORG.

Additional partners includedChampaign County Design and Conservation Foundation, Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation, Allerton Park & Retreat Center, University of Illinois Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment, University of Illinois Student Sustainability Committee, University of Illinois Facilities and Services, University of Illinois Housing, University of Illinois College of Agriculture, Consumer, and Environmental Studies, Illinois Extension serving Champaign, Ford, Iroquois and Vermilion counties, University of Illinois Department of Crop Sciences, University of Illinois Landscape Architecture, University of Illinois Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, and the Prairie Research Institute.

Space to Grow Program

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago, MWRDGC, continues to be a proud partner in the Space to Grow program, a nationally recognized initiative that transforms underutilized schoolyards into vibrant, multi-benefit community assets. Through collaboration with Openlands, Healthy Schools Campaign, Chicago Public Schools, and local communities, Space to Grow advances three interconnected goals: promoting health and wellness, expanding outdoor learning opportunities, and managing stormwater through green infrastructure.

A hallmark of the program is its community-centered design process. Students, educators, families, neighbors, and community organizations help shape each schoolyard's features based on local priorities and needs. Designs may include outdoor classrooms, play areas, rain gardens, edible gardens, permeable pavement, athletic facilities, shade structures, and gathering spaces. While every site is unique, stormwater management remains a foundational component, helping address flooding challenges while creating inviting spaces for recreation and learning.

As a longtime funding and technical partner, MWRDGC values the program's ability to deliver measurable water management benefits while strengthening communities. Since the first Space to Grow schoolyards were completed in 2014, MWRD-supported projects have created more than 8 million gallons of stormwater retention capacity across Chicago neighborhoods. Through over $22 million in district investment, leveraged with partner contributions, these projects represent $64 million in total green infrastructure investment in schoolyards that serve students, educators, and surrounding communities. These green infrastructure improvements help reduce pressure on local sewer systems while demonstrating practical, neighborhood-scale solutions to urban stormwater challenges.

The program's impact extends well beyond infrastructure. Research conducted by Loyola University has found that Space to Grow schoolyards contribute to increased physical activity, reduced bullying, and stronger community connections. Many sites serve as neighborhood gathering spaces outside school hours, particularly in areas with limited access to parks and open space.

Education remains a critical component of the partnership. Space to Grow's teacher toolkit supports outdoor learning, physical activity, and stormwater education, helping educators integrate schoolyard features into classroom instruction. Program partners are currently updating the toolkit to improve accessibility while expanding content related to environmental justice, food justice, and educator-developed resources.

MWRDGC has also contributed to educational efforts through collaboration on interpretive signage and student engagement initiatives. A recent example involved high school students working with MWRD staff to learn about combined sewer systems and green infrastructure practices. Students then translated those concepts into signage and educational messaging for their peers and community members, creating a powerful opportunity for youth leadership and public education.

Looking ahead, MWRDGC is excited about the continued evolution of Space to Grow, including the development of its first high school site, expanded use of student-designed educational materials, and ongoing collaboration with partner organizations. By integrating stormwater management, environmental education, recreation, and community engagement, Space to Grow demonstrates how green infrastructure investments can deliver lasting benefits for neighborhoods across Chicago.

Watershed-Based Planning

Watershed-based plans outline current conditions, identify recommended practices, and provide an integrated, holistic framework to protect and improve water quality in a geographic region. They address recommended practices in all three NLRS sectors: agriculture, point sources, and stormwater. Plans are typically developed in partnership with local government agencies, businesses, nonprofits, and residents. plans are tracked in the Resource Management Mapping Service at www.rmms.illinois.edu.

The following projects showcase watershed-based plans that feature stormwater management best management practices. These plans strive to identify the causes and sources of impairment and propose solutions, such as streambank stabilization, green infrastructure, and educational programs to reduce nutrient and other pollutant loading.

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning Watershed-based Planning

In collaboration with local partners, the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, CMAP, develops watershed-based plans as well as participates in watershed-based planning and implementation activities led by others across CMAP's seven-county region.

During 2025, CMAP served on the advisory committees for the development of two watershed-based plans: the Woods Creek Watershed-Based Plan Update, led by the Village of Algonquin, and the Upper West Branch DuPage River Watershed-Based Plan, led by DuPage County Stormwater Management. Staff also participated in the meetings of and provided technical assistance to several watershed groups including the Association for the Wolf Lake Initiative, DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup, Fox River Ecosystem Partnership, Fox River Study Group, Greater Chicago Watershed Alliance, Kishwaukee River Ecosystem Partnership, Silver Creek Watershed Committee, and Tyler Creek Watershed Coalition. Learn more at cmap.is/water.

DuPage County Watershed-Based Planning

Upper West Branch DuPage River Watershed Plan

Since 2015, DuPage County has been working to create water quality-based watershed plans to include the nine key elements published in the Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters (EPA 841-B-08-002). Seven Watershed Plans for Impaired Waterways were successfully completed and approved in recent years, including Klein Creek, Kress Creek, St. Joseph Creek, Sawmill Creek, Winfield Creek, the East Branch DuPage River, and the Lower Salt Creek Watershed Plan, in partnership with Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning. DuPage County's goal is to create, implement, and maintain current water quality-based watershed plans for all its impaired waterways.

The Upper West Branch DuPage River Watershed-Based Plan was completed in December 2025. The two-year project utilized $125,600 in funding from a 604(b) grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The plan was developed in collaboration with local government agencies, businesses, non-profits, and residents. The Upper West Branch DuPage River is over 30,040 acres, about 47 square miles, and is located in western DuPage County with the headwaters extending into Cook County. The West Branch DuPage River has been classified as an impaired waterway by Illinois EPA for several nutrient-related pollutants including total phosphorus, nitrogen, total suspended solids, and dissolved oxygen. This plan identifies the causes and sources of impairment and proposes solutions such as streambank stabilization, green infrastructure, and educational programs to improve loadings of nutrients as well as other pollutants into the West Branch DuPage River.

In 2024, DuPage County staff collected field data on the streams, lakes, and basins within the watershed. The data was compiled into accessible tables and maps. A Steering Committee, which includes representatives form municipalities, townships, nonprofits, school districts and other organizations such as the Illinois Tollway and the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, provided input throughout the planning process. In late 2024, the county mailed information to 4000 stakeholders within the watershed, describing the watershed planning process and requesting input on conditions of the Upper West Branch.

In 2025, DuPage County staff worked with the Steering Committee and stakeholders to identify critical areas and projects to reduce pollutant loads and improve the water quality of the Upper West Branch. Proposed projects include retrofitting stormwater basins to provide increased pollutant removal capabilities, stabilizing streambanks to prevent further erosion, and implementation of best management practices such as green roofs, bioswales, permeable pavers, and rain gardens to promote infiltration. Additional programs for education and outreach are proposed throughout the watershed.

Winfield Creek Stream Restoration Project

In fall 2025, DuPage County Stormwater Management completed the Winfield Creek Stream Restoration Project. Funded in part by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's 319 Grant, the project restored and stabilized a segment of Winfield Creek running through DuPage County's campus in Winfield.



Winfield Creek is identified as impaired in both the 2018 Illinois Integrated Water Quality Report and the Section 303(d) List for causes including low dissolved oxygen, and alteration in stream-side or littoral vegetative covers. Sources include channelization, loss of riparian habitat, dam or impoundment, and urban runoff/storm sewers. The goal of the project is to restore Winfield Creek where it runs through the DuPage County government campus and provide best management practices adjacent to the creek to improve water quality, reduce pollutant loadings, and provide a demonstration project with a long-term goal of removing Winfield Creek from the 303(d) list.

The project consisted of 3,850 linear feet of streambank stabilization with rock toe, bank shaping, and native plantings, and stream channel restoration with the installation of four riffles to aerate the stream and increase dissolved oxygen. Eight acres of stream-adjacent wetland were enhanced with native vegetation. A 1.5-acre filter strip and two bioswales totaling 75 feet to remove nutrients, total suspended solids, chlorides, and other pollutants from stormwater runoff from surrounding areas prior to entering Winfield Creek were also installed in the project area. Native vegetation was planted throughout the site to further provide sediment stabilization and nutrient uptake benefits and to improve habitat for wildlife. Five permanent educational signs were constructed in accessible locations through the project area to educate the public on water quality topics.