

Cook – DuPage Watershed Initiative

A Watershed Protection Partnership

I. Purpose of the Agreement

DuPage County Stormwater Management (SWM), the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC), the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC), and the DuPage River Salt Creek Work Group (DRSCW), hereinafter referred to as the “Partnership Agencies”, are involved in the protection of the watershed based resources in our region. Each entity has a stake in the improvement of watershed health and its capacity to store flood waters and has valuable expertise in the areas of flood relief, water quality and resource restoration and protection. The purpose of this Partnership Agreement is to facilitate the sharing of resources and responsibilities to better protect our watersheds in a responsible manner.

II. Partnership Need

The region served by this partnership consists of highly urbanized areas that create significant challenges in mitigating excess precipitation runoff and wastewater dominance while providing watershed resource protection. The Partnership Agencies are leaders in the reduction of flooding, improved water quality in our water resources, natural area protection and enhancement, and protection of our wildlife. Despite the achievements made by each organization, it is the belief of the signatory parties that we can advance the overall protection of our watersheds through a shared and interactive process. This Partnership brings our considerable skills and abilities together to further efficiently protect and enhance our watersheds.

III. Area of Focus

This Agreement will cover all of the resources, responsibilities and activities under the jurisdiction of the SWM, MWRDGC, FPDDC and DRSCW within the watersheds of the West Branch DuPage River, East Branch DuPage River and Salt Creek, located in DuPage and Cook Counties. This is an area of small and large streams, associated tributaries, and significant subsequent natural resources. All of these resources are impacted to some degree by a heavily urbanized landscape.

IV. Our Vision

Our vision is to restore, manage and protect our valuable urban watersheds through the collaborative efforts of the Partnership Agencies. Watershed boundaries do not conform to political jurisdictions and we are all responsible for the impacts of our land use decisions.. This Partnership is a model for creating healthy, resilient watersheds through responsible ecosystem management for the benefit of people, vegetation and wildlife. By sharing knowledge and resources, the Partnership Agencies can work together more efficiently to meet joint objectives including the protection of property and the goals of the Clean Water Act.

V. Our Mission

Our Mission is to protect and restore our urban watersheds through collaborative efforts, strategic planning and by utilizing all available expertise in order to promote cost efficient resource allocations by the Partnership Agencies.

VI. Our Partnership Organizations

DuPage County Stormwater Management (SWM)

Since 1988, DuPage County Stormwater Management has been at the forefront of regional stormwater planning. Led by the Stormwater Management Planning Committee, which is comprised of both County and municipal representatives, the program strives to reduce overbank flooding and protect local waterways. Stormwater Management provides watershed planning, water quality programs, protection of natural resources, floodplain mapping, regulatory services, and operation and maintenance of flood control facilities throughout DuPage County.

Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRDGC)

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago was originally organized as the Sanitary District of Chicago in 1889. The mission of District is to protect the health and safety of the public in its service area encompassing approximately 91 percent of the land area of Cook County, protect the quality of the water supply source (Lake Michigan), improve the quality of water in the watercourses in its service area, protect businesses and homes from flooding damages, and manage water as a vital resource for its service area. The District collects wastewater from municipalities in its service area, conveys it to wastewater reclamation plants, provides full secondary treatment, and discharges clean water to local waterways. The District is also responsible for stormwater management for all Cook County.

The Forest Preserve District of DuPage County (FPDDC)

Since 1915, the FPDDC has served as a responsible steward of the financial and natural resources that have been entrusted to it by the citizens of DuPage County. As the largest

landowner in DuPage County, and guided by the knowledge that FPDDC properties have a significant influence on the health and sustainability of the watersheds, the FPDDC serves as a model for what can be accomplished through preservation and restoration.

The FPDDC is responsible for evaluating, assessing, inventorying, conserving and restoring the FPDDC's natural resources including plant and animal communities in terrestrial and aquatic resources. Programs and policies involve biological research and monitoring, ecological restoration, resource management, and plant and animal propagation and reintroductions. The FPDDC is committed to the responsible and sustainable preservation and use of the natural lands and waterways under its protection for current and future generations.

The DuPage River Salt Creek Work Group (DRSCW)

The DRSCW is an Illinois not-for-profit corporation, (§501(c)(4)), formed in 2005 as a local stakeholders group with the purpose of studying and improving the West Branch DuPage River, East Branch DuPage River and Salt Creek to meet the goals and regulations of the Clean Water Act. Members include the municipalities, wastewater authorities, environmental advocacy groups, professional firms, and private companies and individuals located in those watersheds. The DRSCW has built a comprehensive stream resource data set and conducted extensive analyses to understand the impairments in specific reaches of each waterway and to identify priority projects to improve biotic indexes. In 2015, the DRSCW negotiated a member Agency wastewater NPDES permit condition with state and federal regulatory agencies which includes a schedule and funding mechanism to implement the aforementioned priority projects.

VII. Partner Responsibilities

- 1) Work cooperatively with all Partnership Agencies to identify, protect, restore, and manage lands and waters within the watersheds of the West Branch DuPage River, East Branch DuPage River and Salt Creek, located in DuPage and Cook Counties.
- 2) Work cooperatively to develop plans and tools that help facilitate natural resource decision-making.
- 3) Participate in regular conference calls and in-person meetings to review opportunities for conservation planning and development of shared implementation strategies on issues of mutual concern.

- 4) Enter into subsequent agreements as needed to accomplish specific projects, to secure outside funding sources such as grants, or to provide available resources for the benefit and fulfillment of Partnership priorities.
- 5) When possible, assist in the development of external communications and outreach materials to improve awareness of our efforts among the conservation community and the public.
- 6) Work cooperatively to share GIS, infrastructure, ecosystem, stream, basin, and water quality data with respect to project goals and funding source deadlines.
- 7) The regional stormwater authority or landowner will be responsible for administration of projects, funding, and partnership initiatives on their property and/or within their respective jurisdictions.
- 8) Projects may be funded from sources outside the jurisdictional boundaries in which they are conducted.
- 9) Each agency may choose to provide technical expertise and services to support projects as needed and determined by the governing agency responsible for the project.

VIII. Decision Making and Resource Sharing

Entering into this Partnership Agreement does not in any way preclude or supersede the autonomy and/or priorities of any Partnership Agency. Decisions that affect the entire partnership including, but not limited to, work planning, external outreach and communications, and the amendment of partnership documents must be made by consensus of all Partnership Agencies. Each Partnership Agency shall designate a representative who will exercise the final decision of the Partnership Agency as to such consensus but only to the extent such decisions do not require any action by the Partnership Agency's governing body under Illinois law, or the Partnership Agency's governing ordinances or charter.

This document does not legally obligate in any way any Partnership Agency to contribute financial resources, materials, or personnel to this initiative. As the group begins to implement collaborative conservation projects, subsequent agreements between involved parties may be necessary.

IX. Incorporating Other Plans and Initiatives

The East Branch DuPage River, West Branch DuPage River, and Salt Creek have been the subject of study for several decades, and there is a wealth of information and institutional knowledge that exists. The Partnership Agencies have no interest in duplicating past efforts, although we wish to fill a necessary gap in the implementation of watershed protection and avoid duplication in future efforts. The partnership will actively work to incorporate information and resources from past and current plans and conservation initiatives.

X. Partnership Acknowledgement

Projects generated from this Watershed Protection Partnership will be identified through signage displayed at the project site as appropriate. This signage, as well as all promotional and educational materials such as brochures, displays, and presentations, shall identify all funding sources and partners.

XI. Revision of Partnership Agreement

The Partnership Agencies may choose to revisit and amend the Partnership Agreement at any time to include new information and additional partner organizations and intend to revisit the Agreement at five year intervals to ensure relevance. Participation in the partnership is voluntary and a Partner Agency has the right to revoke its participation at any time.

XII. Partner Contact Information and Authorized Representative

<p>DuPage County Stormwater Management 421 N. County Farm Rd Wheaton, Illinois 60187 Attn: Anthony Charlton, P.E., Director</p>	<p>Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago 100 E. Erie St. Chicago, Illinois 60611 Attn: Sergio Serafino, Assistant Director of Maintenance and Operations</p>
<p>Forest Preserve District of DuPage County 3S580 Naperville, Rd Wheaton, IL 60189 Attn: Erik Neidy, Director of Natural Resources</p>	<p>DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup c/o The Conservation Foundation 10S404 Knoch Knolls Road Naperville, IL 60565 Attn: Stephen McCracken, Watershed Director</p>

XIII. Signatures

COUNTY OF DUPAGE

By: _____
County Board Chairman

Attest

By: _____
County Clerk

**METROPOLITAN WATER RECLAMATION
DISTRICT OF GREATER CHICAGO**

By: _____
President

**FOREST PRESERVE DISTRICT OF DUPAGE
COUNTY**

By: _____
President

Attest

By: _____
Secretary

**DUPAGE RIVER /SALT CREEK
WORKGROUP**

By: _____
President