

Planning, Building, Zoning and Environment Committee  
May 28, 2025



**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION**

## **Annual Update**

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## Stormwater Management Commission

Kurt Woolford, P.E., CFM, LEED AP  
Executive Director

# FY25 Budget and Staff

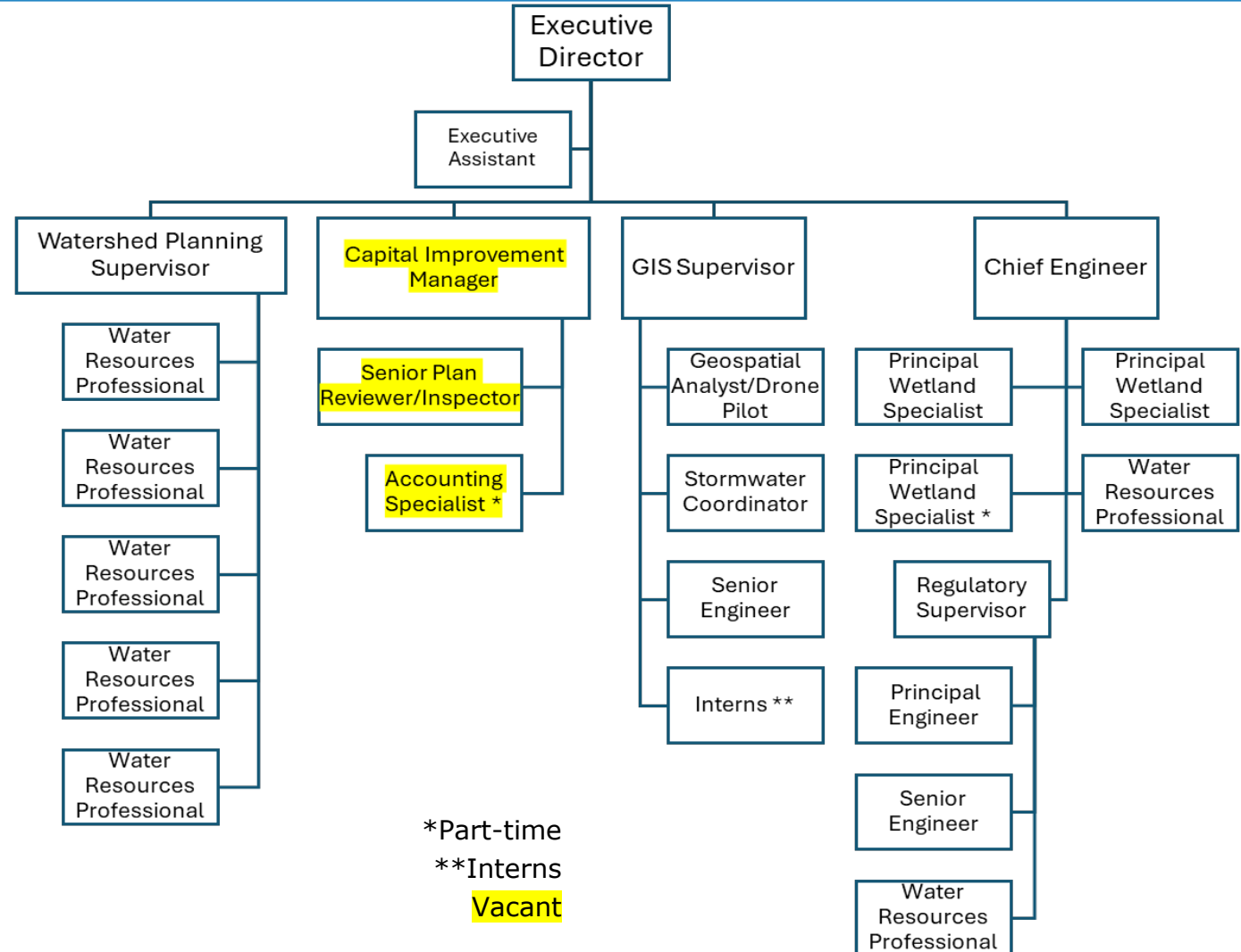


STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

- **Personnel approved in FY25 Budget**

- **22 Full-time**
  - **2 Vacant**
- **2 Part-time**
  - **1 Vacant**

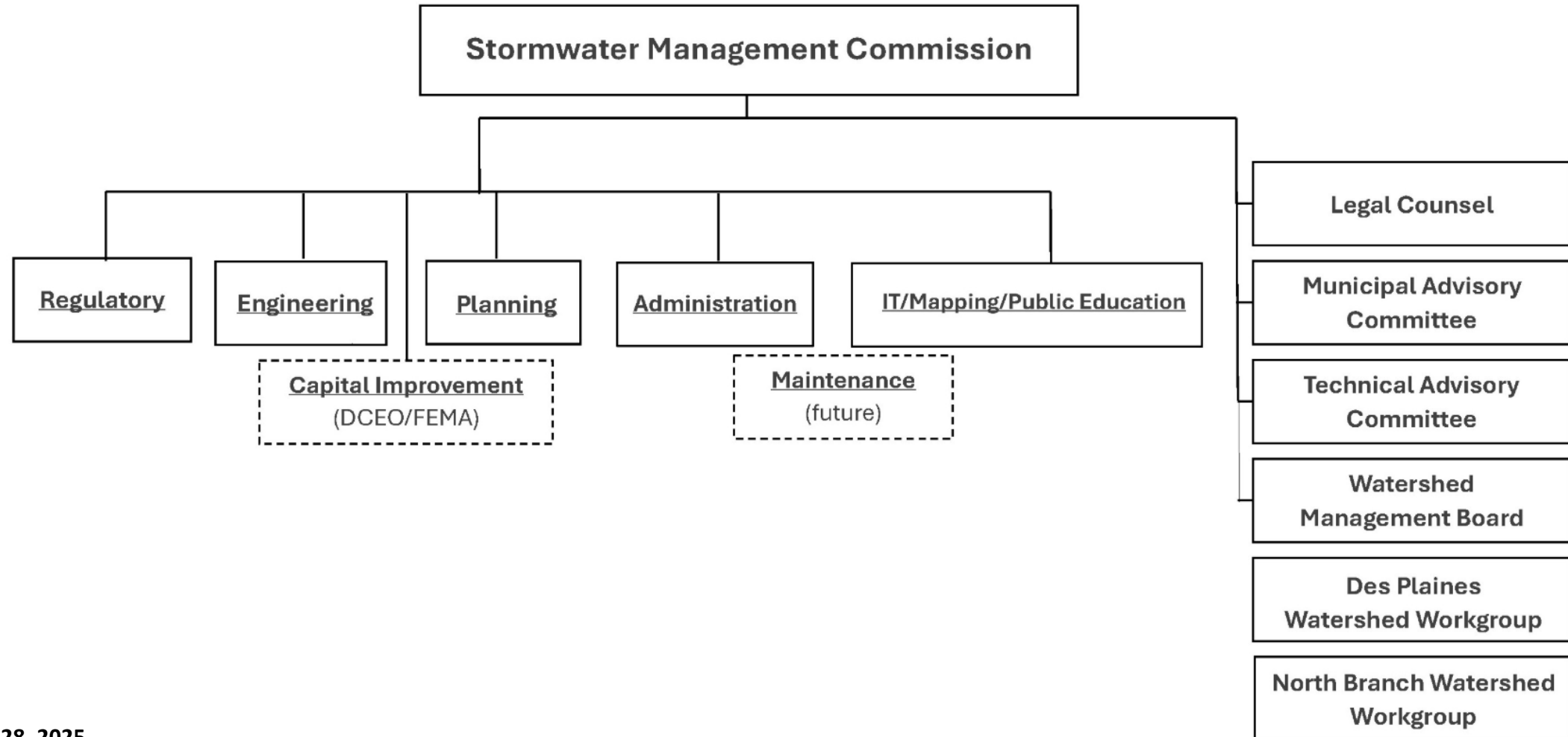
- **FY25 Budget = \$4,169,452**
  - **-8% from FY24 Budget**



# SMC Functional Org Chart



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



# SMC Commissioners



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

- **Donny Schmit, Chair**  
SMC District 4 Representative  
Mayor, Village of Fox Lake
- **Linda Pedersen, Vice Chair**  
SMC District 3 Commissioner  
Alternate: John Wasik
- **Leon Rockingham, Secretary**  
SMC District 1 Representative  
Mayor, North Chicago
- **Ann Maine, Treasurer**  
SMC District 6 Commissioner  
Alternate: Marah Altenberg
- **Thomas Hood**  
SMC District 3 Representative  
Mayor, Village of Gurnee
- **Jeffrey Sode**  
SMC District 5 Representative  
Mayor, Village of Wauconda
- **John Hucker**  
SMC District 2 Representative  
Mayor, Village of Beach Park  
Alternate: Richard Gust  
Trustee, Village of Beach Park
- **Kevin Hunter**  
SMC District 4 Commissioner  
Alternate: Esiah Campos
- **Eric Smith**  
SMC District 6 Representative  
President, Village of Buffalo Grove  
Alternate: David Weidenfeld  
Trustee, Village of Buffalo Grove
- **Paul Frank**  
SMC Commissioner District 1  
Alternate: Paras Parekh
- **Diane Hewitt**  
SMC District 2 Commissioner  
Alternate: Angelo Kyle

- **Adam Schlick**  
SMC District 5 Commissioner  
Alternate: Carissa Casbon



^^^ Donny Schmit speaking at the DCEO Wildwood Area Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements Groundbreaking Event



<<< Ann Maine speaking at the DCEO Oak Spring Lane Storm Sewer Bypass Groundbreaking Event

# Project Funding



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

## Major External Sources of Funding (Grants)



**Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity**

**\$62.6 Million**



**FEMA**

**\$30 Million**



**Illinois  
Department of  
Natural  
Resources**

**\$11.7 Million**



**\$10.1 Million**

## Internal Sources of Funding (County Levy)



**Stormwater  
Infrastructure Repair  
Fund (SIRF)**

**\$1.7 Million**

**\$11 Million in Projects**



**FY25 Watershed  
Management Board  
(WMB)**

**\$189,610**

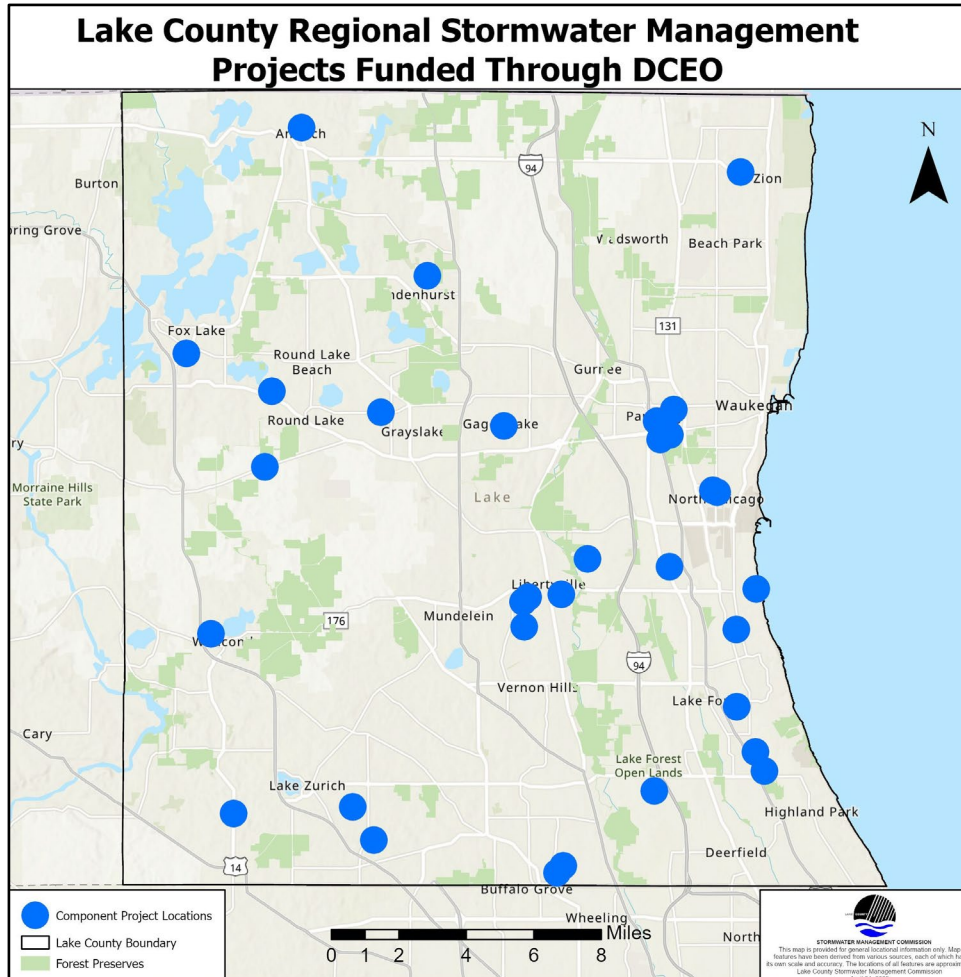
**\$4.3 Million in Projects**



# State of Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity - Funded Projects with Local Sponsors



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION



## DCEO Round 1

- **\$30** million grant
- **13** county-wide projects with local sponsors
- Completed in **2024**
- Benefiting over **2,300** properties and **25** roads

## DCEO Round PC

- **\$2.6** million grant
- **3** projects with Park City
- Completion **9/2023 - 8/2026**
- Expected to benefit over **378** properties and **3** roads

## DCEO Round 2

- **\$30** million grant
- **16** county-wide projects with local sponsors
- Completion **11/2024 - 10/2026**
- Expected to benefit over **2,000** properties and **100** roads

# Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan Update



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

- Initially adopted 1990, updated 2002
- Required per 55 ILCS 5/5-1062 (provides for County stormwater authority)
- **PURPOSE** of the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan update:
  - Gage input from stakeholders on priorities/concerns
    - Public meetings (4 locations around Lake County)
    - Online survey (142 responses)
  - Update SMC's programs & responsibilities
  - Identify future stormwater management needs
- Lake County Strategic Priorities "Adaptive Infrastructure" & "Sustainable Environment"
  - Performance measures include 2025 Stormwater Management Plan update

FOR MORE  
INFO



# Project Timeline



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

1990

## 1990 Plan

SMC completed the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan and it was approved in 1990. The plan served as the initial guidance and framework for the Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) to develop and implement its stormwater management program.

2002

## 2002 Plan

SMC updated and received approval on the Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan in 2002.

2024

## August

SMC hired Baxter & Woodman, with subconsultant Gewalt Hamilton, to complete sections of Lake County Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan Update.

2025

## February to April Public Meetings

## July to August

Baxter & Woodman will present their draft sections of the Plan Update.

## October

SMC completes a draft version of the Plan Update and will seek approval from the Stormwater Management Commission to open a public comment period for the plan.

## October to November

30-day public comment period for the Plan Update and revisions to draft plan.

## November to December

SMC will seek Commission final plan approval, host a public hearing and seek Lake County Board approval.

### PUBLIC MEETINGS:

**Thursday, Feb. 20 (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.)**

Lake Michigan Watershed: Zion Public Library,  
2400 Gabriel Ave. Zion, IL 60099

**Tuesday, Feb. 25 (5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.)**

Fox Watershed: Lakefront Park Building (Main Gym),  
10 Riverview Ave., Fox Lake, IL 60020

**Wednesday, April 9 (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.)**

North Branch Chicago River Watershed: Heller Nature Center,  
2821 Ridge Rd, Highland Park, IL 60035

**Thursday, April 17 (5 p.m. to 7 p.m.)**

Des Plaines River Watershed: Grayslake Area Public Library District, 100  
Library Lane, Grayslake, IL 60030



May 28, 2025



# Watershed Development Ordinance

Adopted October 1992, updated July 2023



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

## WHY CREATE A WDO?

- Gives SMC the authority to enforce minimum regulatory standards throughout Lake County
- A "one-stop" system integrating federal and state permitting requirements:
  - Consolidates flood control, site drainage, soil erosion and sedimentation, water quality, best management practices, wetlands, and other natural water resources protection and mitigation provisions.
  - Enables uniform enforcement across Lake County by all agencies and certified communities.
  - Require development to account for increased rainfall and undersized infrastructure.
  - Mitigates stormwater impacts of development.
  - Seeks balanced input from Governmental agencies, Municipalities, Environmental sector, and Property owners and developers.



## BENEFITS OF THE WDO



Stormwater detention provided for substantial new development.



Floodplain development must compensate for lost natural storage



Natural approaches to green infrastructure for developments.



Regulates impacts to all waters and wetlands in Lake County



Provide communities technical assistance for their regulatory needs.



Pertinent regulations in a single well-organized document to help ensure regulatory compliance.

# Post-2002 Mandate Changes



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

## WETLANDS & WATERS IN LAKE COUNTY: Federal Jurisdiction vs. SMC Jurisdiction Since 2001

### BEFORE 2001

Until 2001, the federal government regulated **100%** of wetlands and waters as *Waters of the United States* (WOTUS).

**Waters of the United States (WOTUS)**

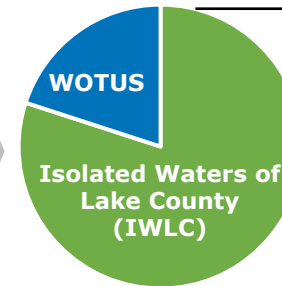
### FEDERAL CHANGES

**January 2001:** Supreme Court ruling removed “isolated” wetlands and waters from federal regulation.

**August 2001:** These isolated waters became subject to regulation by SMC in Lake County under the WDO.

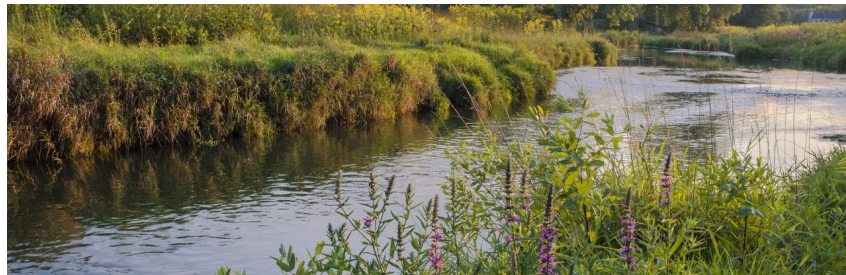
**2023:** A Supreme Court ruling on the definition of WOTUS meant more isolated wetlands and waters shifted to SMC’s jurisdiction.

### NOW



Lake County SMC covers all of Lake County wetlands (unincorporated and incorporated) for wetland permitting. The shift in how WOTUS is interpreted has significantly increased the acreage of IWLC along with SMC’s permitting authority and wetlands program.

### DEFINITIONS:



**Waters of the U.S. (WOTUS)** generally include navigable waters and their tributaries, adjacent wetlands, and other waters included under the current federal definition in 33 CFR Part 328.3.(a).



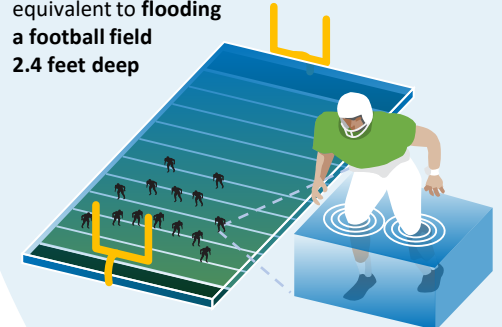
**Isolated Waters of Lake County (IWLC)** All waters such as lakes, ponds, streams, farmed wetlands, and wetlands that are not under U.S. Army Corps of Engineers’ (Corps) jurisdiction. The limits of the Isolated Waters of Lake County extend to the ordinary high-water mark or the delineated wetland boundary.

### SMC Isolated Wetland Permit Summary 2001-2024

- **540 developments** reviewed – **174 acres** of IWLC impacts
- **236 acres** of mitigation required for impacts = net gain of **62 acres** of wetlands in Lake County
- **863 acres** of preserved IWLC on development sites

- **Estimated 925 million gallons** of flood water storage provided by the mitigation and preserved IWLC

**How much is an acre?** Each acre of wetland can store **~1 million gallons** (Source: U.S. EPA), equivalent to **flooding a football field 2.4 feet deep**

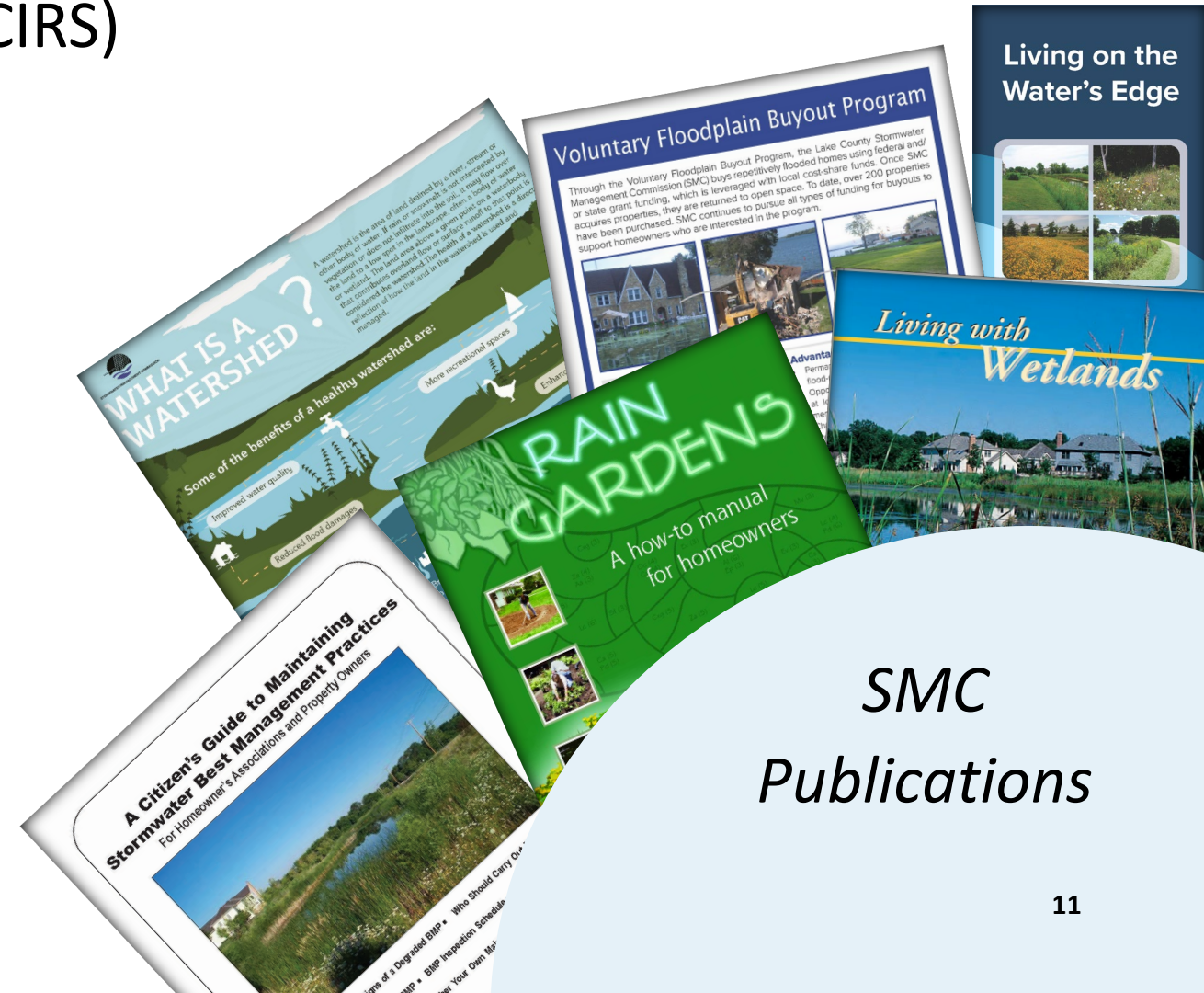


# Public Information & Mapping



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- Citizen Inquiry Response System (CIRS)
- Public meetings
- SMC website and social media
- INFLOW centralized digital framework
- Workshops & trainings
- Mapping services



*SMC  
Publications*



# Post-2002 Programs



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**MS4 Program (NPDES Permits):** SMC serves as the Qualifying Local Program (QLP) (**2003 Year 1**) to assist Lake County MS4s in developing and implementing efficient and effective stormwater management programs as the Illinois EPA implemented Phase II of its NPDES Stormwater Program.

- **(2002):** SMC formed the Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC) to provide a forum for local MS4s to discuss how to meet the Illinois EPA's NPDES Stormwater Program needs.

**Wetland Restoration Fund (2005):** SMC has a role administering and implementing the WRF for impacts to Isolated Waters of Lake County (IWLC) that exceed the mitigation threshold in watersheds where mitigation bank credits are unavailable.

**Designated Erosion Control Inspector (DECI) Program (2006):** Provides education, compliance and ultimately improved water quality in Lake County. The goals are to increase awareness and monitoring of soil erosion and sediment control (SE/SC), improve communication between regulatory agencies and developers, reduce suspended sediment levels in receiving waters and improve water quality.

**SIRF Program (2008):** The Stormwater Infrastructure Repair Fund's primary role is to assist in resolving interjurisdictional drainage and flooding related problems discovered through the Citizen Inquiry Response System and Flood Hazard Inventory process.

**Drone Program (2017):** SMC currently has two licensed drone pilots and four drones to capture videos/photos for:

- Stormwater projects (before, during & after implementation)
- Flood damage assessments
- Educational content for workshops and events
- Capturing elevation data to support designs for capital improvement projects

**Temporary Capital Funding Source (2020):** Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) funding; Initial \$122 Million appropriated through Rebuild Illinois Program



# Post-2002 Work Initiatives



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

**Watershed-Based Plans:** SMC has been developing and updating Illinois EPA approved watershed-based plans in Lake County (and portions of adjacent counties) on a subwatershed and watershed scale since 2008. SMC has also performed stream, detention basin, lake shoreline and ravine field assessments within those subwatersheds and watersheds.



**Watershed Workgroups:** The Des Plaines River watershed and North Branch Chicago River watershed stakeholders have initiated efforts to form their own watershed workgroups (2014 and 2018 respectively); voluntary, dues paying, membership organizations that monitor water quality and strategize to improve water quality based on scientific data, and making decisions at the local level. SMC has been the administrative and technical services contractor for both workgroups since their formation.



**Wetland Restoration & Preservation Plan (WRAPP):** Completed in 2020, this plan identifies and assesses functional significance of existing and potentially restorable wetlands in Lake County, Illinois. The WRAPP represents one of the 2002 Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plan's goals accomplished from the "Future SMC Stormwater Management Program Needs" section.



**Homeowners Association (HOA) Workshops:** Since 2003, SMC has hosted a series of educational HOA workshops held for associations and property owners who are responsible for maintaining detention ponds, wetlands, natural areas, and other drainage infrastructure.



**Winter Best Practices (Deicing) Workshops:** Since 2009, SMC, Lake County Health Department, Division of Transportation and Public Works have partnered to host annual workshops for public agencies and private contractors to show how to wisely use road salt that will reduce the environmental impacts and help them save money.



# Partnerships



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

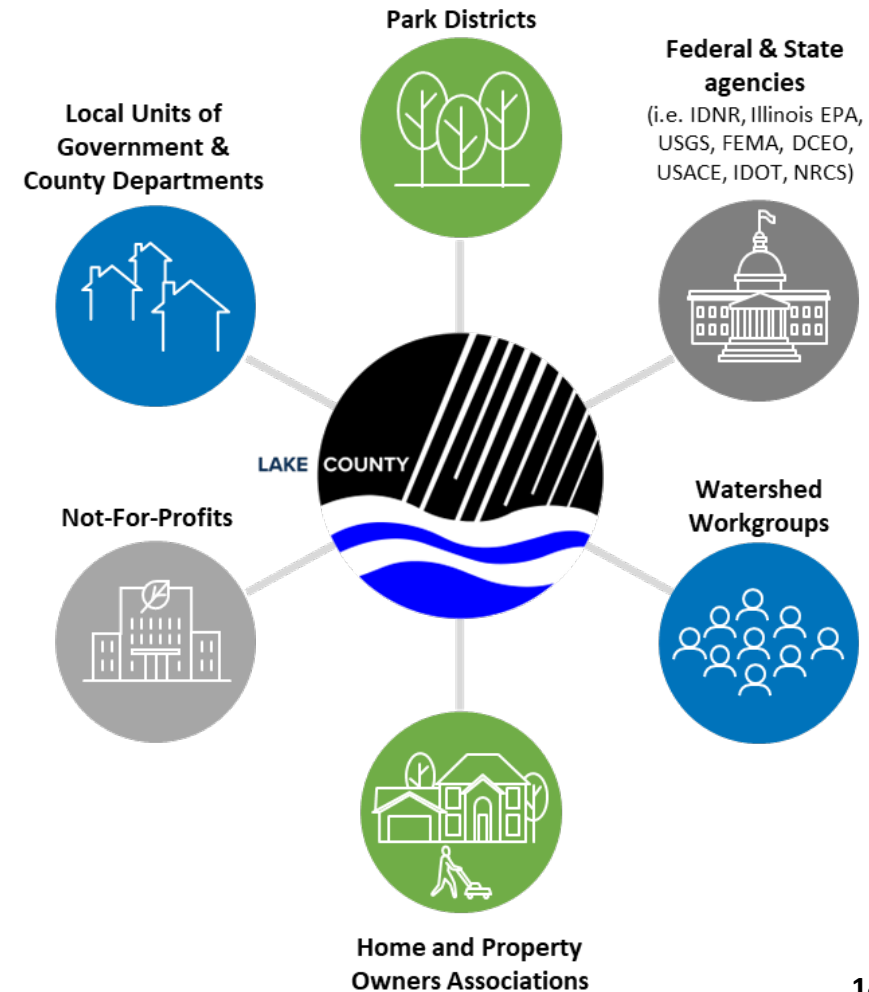
Since 1990, SMC has been able to implement its mission through strong partnerships. SMC has worked with partners on numerous projects and programs and has provided collaboration between Lake County and adjacent counties.

## STRENGTH IN PARTNERSHIPS

- Help local partners see how their individual vision can fit into a shared vision for Lake County.
- Mobilize public and private resources to achieve common goals. Be good stewards of Lake County's values and resources.
- Build policies and services from the local level. Respect local uniqueness.
- Advance regional infrastructure solutions and services with the support of federal, state, and local agencies.
- Apply an environmental lens on policy and decision-making across all county departments, and engage Federal, State, and local partners to do the same, through utilization of nature-based solutions, climate adaptation initiatives, open space strategies and environmental harm-reduction practices.

**251**  
**PROJECT PARTNERS:**  
**23** Townships  
**66** Municipalities  
**5** Federal  
**39** Local  
**109** Private  
**9** State

## TYPES OF PARTNERS:





# Progress Toward 2002 Goals

KEY TO COMPLETION  
STATUS OF OBJECTIVES

Completed/ Ongoing	In progress	Not completed
■	■	■

STATUS FOR EACH OBJECTIVE UNDER THE GOAL:

## Goal 1 1.1 1.2 1.3 1.4 1.5 1.6 1.7

**Protect existing and new development** by minimizing the increase of stormwater runoff volume beyond that experienced under predevelopment conditions and by reducing peak stormwater flows, and by remedying, to the extent possible, existing drainage problems.

## Goal 2 2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4 2.5 2.6 2.7

**Protect existing water resources**, including lakes, streams, floodplains, and wetlands, from detrimental and unnecessary modification so that their beneficial functions are maintained and public expenditures and damages are minimized.

## Goal 3 3.1 3.2 3.3

**Reduce or mitigate the environmentally detrimental effects of existing and future runoff** in order to improve and maintain water quality and protect water related environments.

## Goal 4 4.1 4.2

**Establish comprehensive basin plans within each watershed**, which quantify, plan for and manage stormwater flows within and among the jurisdictions in those watersheds.

## Goal 5 5.1

**Provide for the short and long-term maintenance** of natural and man-made drainageways and storage facilities in new and existing developments.



## Goal 6 6.1 6.2 6.3 6.4

**Develop a comprehensive hydrologic, hydraulic, demographic and cartographic database** using the best available and most appropriate technology to manage the stormwater, flood, and water quality data needs of the program.

## Goal 7 7.1 7.2 7.3 7.4

**Establish a consistent, equitable and dedicated source of revenue** in order to maintain the existing stormwater management system and undertake comprehensive watershed planning, stormwater regulations, and construction of stormwater facilities.

## Goal 8 8.1 8.2

**Manage and operate the county program** in an effective, equitable and cost-efficient manner.

## Goal 9 9.1 9.2 9.3 9.4 9.5

**Establish uniform, minimum, countywide stormwater management regulations** while recognizing and coordinating with those stormwater programs effectively operating within the County.

## Goal 10 10.1 10.2 10.3 10.4

**Promote the awareness and understanding of stormwater management issues** by the practitioner and the layperson through an ongoing public information program.

## Goal 11 11.1 11.2

**Coordinate with surrounding counties** to ensure minimal negative impacts of inter-county stormwater runoff flows.

## Goal 12 12





**Be in compliance** with all applicable state and federal laws.

# Stormwater Program Priorities

## Top 10 Priorities for the next 10 years



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT COMMISSION

-  1. Establish reliable funding source(s) for capital improvement and maintenance programs
-  2. Reduce the number of flood damaged and flood-prone structures
-  3. Keep the Watershed Development Ordinance up to date on the cutting edge of stormwater management.
-  4. Evaluate and address urban flooding (55 ILCS 5/5-1062)
-  5. Improve Floodplain and Wetland permit requirements to find a balance between protecting these valuable natural resources, improving water quality and promoting positive economic development that can enhance the outdoor experiences of Lake County residents and visitors.
-  6. Increase wetland mitigation in Lake County.
-  7. Continue to provide expert-level public information to a wide audience of stakeholders as resources allow.
-  8. Complete and update plans for all watersheds in Lake County
-  9. Continue to assist communities with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit compliance and Qualifying Local Program (QLP) services.
-  10. Centralize and consolidate the existing digital stormwater management framework into a united countywide structure in accordance with the previous Comprehensive Stormwater Management Plans and 55 ILCS 5/5-1062(a).(1).



Priority aligns with Lake County Strategic Priorities of Sustainable Environment and/or Adaptive Infrastructure Performance Measures.



**Questions**