

# STABLE ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

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## GOAL 1

Facilitate regional collaboration regarding ground water supply for the future of McHenry County

OBJECTIVE A 	
Raise public awareness of groundwater issues	
Tasks	Accomplishments
1) Promote low use water industries and conservation practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Planning &amp; Development has completed 3 of 13 scheduled stakeholder meetings for the update of the Water Resources Action Plan (WRAP). Over ninety persons have participated in the stakeholder meetings with approximately 50 persons attending each meeting and more than 40 persons attending two or more meetings. Participants have received presentations from the Illinois State Geological Survey, the McHenry County Conservation District, the Illinois State Water Survey, and Wetlands Research, Inc. The updated WRAP is scheduled to be adopted by the County Board in mid-2020 and will be a comprehensive guide designed to educate municipalities, businesses and individuals about water resources, the potential threats to those resources, and best management practices that can protect or restore them.</li> <li>✓ McHenry County has initiated a year-long process to update the County's WRAP. The first edition of the WRAP was prepared in 2009 and resulted in the completion of numerous scientific studies and actions that helped protect the county's water supplies. The updated WRAP will be a comprehensive guide designed to educate decision-makers from the county, municipalities, businesses and individuals about water resources, the potential threats to those resources, and Best Management Practices that can help protect or restore them. The WRAP Task Force held their Kick-Off meeting on March 13, 2019 and the first monthly meeting was held on April 10, 2019. The meetings were extremely successful with approximately 50 people attending each. The goal is to have the</li> </ul>

	<p>completed WRAP ready for approval by the County Board in the spring of 2020.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ During October of 2018, the McHenry County Division of Transportation and the Department of Planning &amp; Development, with assistance from the City of Crystal Lake and the Village of Algonquin, held the Tenth Annual McHenry County Sensible Salting Workshop to promote Sensible Salting Best Management Practices and to preserve safe drinking water from the County's waterways and ground water aquifers.</li> <li>✓ Planning &amp; Development held McHenry County Water Day on September 12, 2018. Water Day provided residents, businesses, elected officials and municipal staff with an opportunity to learn what makes our local water supplies unique and what we can do to ensure that clean and sustainable water resources are available in the future. Water Day included a Groundwater Field Trip, with 45 participants and the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Water Forum, which was attended by approximately 90 people. On the field trip, Dr. Jason Thomason, a noted geologist from the Illinois State Geological Survey, provided a first-hand view of how geologic events of the past shape our land and water today. James Patchett, Founder and President of the Conservation Design Forum gave the keynote address.</li> <li>✓ See Goal 2, Objective A</li> <li>✓ The County educated the public using groundwater model demonstrations at the McHenry County Fair, Woodstock Farmers Market, and the Crystal Lake Johnny Appleseed Day.</li> </ul>
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**OBJECTIVE B**

Facilitate regional collaboration of ground water and water resources 

Tasks	Accomplishments
1) Monitor and plan for effective drainage ways and storm water management to promote healthy communities and provide essential systems for economic growth and a sustainable quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ See Objective A(1).</li> <li>✓ The Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) amendments were adopted by the County Board in March of 2018. The UDO includes the updated SARA maps as well as additional protection to groundwater recharge areas.</li> <li>✓ The SARA Map has been updated based on the 3-Dimensional Geologic mapping that</li> </ul>

	<p>the Illinois State Geologic Survey developed for McHenry County.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ McHenry County has moved from a Class 8 to a Class 7 community within the FEMA Community Rating System. The Class 7 rating qualifies flood insurance policy holders a savings up to 15 percent on flood insurance premiums. In total, the upgrade in class rating level accounts for a total savings of \$112,713 annually for citizens of unincorporated McHenry County. For the typical homeowners, the average estimated savings for a flood insurance policy will go from \$138 to \$205.</li> <li>✓ In fulfillment of a contract with McHenry County, the U.S. Geologic Survey completed an analysis of hydrogeology and quality of the McHenry County aquifer and provided findings.</li> <li>✓ Water resource staff participated in planning meetings with multi-county and citizen group water resource organizations such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Northwest Water Planning Alliance</li> <li>• Northern Regional Protection Planning Committee</li> <li>• Environmental Defenders of McHenry County</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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**GOAL 2**

Balance growth with environmental protection

<p><b>OBJECTIVE A</b> </p> <p>Promote sustainable development that is balanced with preservation of the County's open space, agricultural land, and water supply</p>	
<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Accomplishments</b>
<p>1) Remain committed to the careful use of water resources in and across the County; monitor developments at the community, County, regional and state level to determine impacts on groundwater, surface water and water supply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The Future Energy Jobs Bill (SB 2814) was enacted into law on December 7, 2016. The law calls for updates to Illinois' renewable portfolio standards, including the establishment of a community solar program. Of the 25 community solar farm sites approved by McHenry County, five were selected by the Illinois Power Agency, through a lottery, to participate in the first allocation of the state Adjustable Block Program. The selected site are located in Hartland, Greenwood, Riley, Marengo, and Coral townships.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ McHenry County was selected by the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning to receive Local Technical Assistance to continue planning for the Fox River Corridor between Burtons Bridge and Dutch Creek. The comprehensive plan to utilize the Fox River as a hub for recreation and commerce while protecting water quality and environmental resources will be developed with community input and participation by the City of McHenry, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the McHenry County Conservation District, and Fox Waterway Agency. The plan will build on previous planning efforts from Carpentersville to Algonquin and from Algonquin to the Burtons Bridge area.</li> <li>✓ The County Board adopted the Fox River Corridor Plan, which aims to improve water quality, multi-modal transportation access, recreation and open space and river-related commerce.</li> <li>✓ County staff submits the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit and the Stormwater Management Program Plan (SMPP) annually and meets the minimum standards required by the USEPA under the NPDES program.</li> <li>✓ McHenry County and the Crystal Lake Park District entered into an Intergovernmental Agreement for the Stern's Fen Restoration – Phase II Project.</li> <li>✓ Staff has created a comprehensive 30-minute overview presentation of McHenry County Water Resources Challenges and Opportunities, which is available for presentation to community groups.</li> </ul>
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**OBJECTIVE B**

Increase open space conservation efforts 

Tasks	Accomplishments
1) Balance growth with environmental protection and conservation of the County's open spaces and fundamental land-based/production agriculture and agri-businesses in a vital corridor of the state's northern tier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Planning &amp; Development received authorization from the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to proceed with the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) project. This project will utilize \$1.1 million in state and federal funding to acquire and demolish at least 8 flood -prone houses and related structures along the Nippersink Creek near Spring Grove. The first two purchases will</li> </ul>

	<p>be completed and the demolition contracts will be signed immediately upon County Board approval on May 21, 2019. All properties will be transferred to the McHenry County Conservation District to be maintained as permanent open space.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Demolition of 7503 Carlton Drive, Spring Grove has been completed using funding provided by the State of Illinois Housing Development Authority (IDHA). The property has been transferred to the McHenry County Conservation District to be maintained as permanent open space as it is located in the Nippersink Creek floodplain.</li> <li>✓ Environmental Health partnered with the Division of Transportation to provide a tire recycling event for County residents in June of 2018. In all, 17 tons of tires were collected and recycled.</li> <li>✓ The newly adopted Unified Development Ordinance supports agriculture and agribusiness by reducing regulations as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widening the definition of agriculture to include retail sale of products grown on site, including farm stands, u-pick operations, and community supported agriculture</li> <li>• Establishing limited agritourism as a permitted use in agricultural and business zoning districts</li> <li>• Creating an expanded Intensive Agritourism use category that is allowed as a conditional use in the agricultural, B-1, and B-2 zoning districts and by-right in the B-3 zoning district</li> <li>• Expanding farm stand use to allow the sale of: fresh fruits and vegetables without limitations as to the source; nursery stock, eggs, meat, and dairy products produced on property owned by the farm stand owner; and agricultural crafts</li> <li>• Exempting farm stands from building codes</li> <li>• Expanding home occupations to include food processing such as the preparation, processing, canning, and packaging of food products</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reducing limits on the use of agricultural exempt structures to allow up to 50% of the floor area to be used for non-agricultural purposes</li><li>• Granting home occupations the ability to use accessory structures and up to 50% of an agricultural exempt structure</li><li>• Allowing landscape businesses without outdoor storage to be a permitted use in A-1, office, and industrial zoning</li><li>✓ Planning and Water Resources staff will be assisting MCCD with a study documenting the impact of various agricultural practices on their agricultural land holdings. The study will allow the district to have a continually updated picture of the implementation of its conservation plans with local operators. The study will also help the District identify where specialty farming such as organics and grazing operations might fit best into its agricultural lands.</li></ul>
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