

**DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup
General Membership Meeting
Village of Lombard
August 27, 2025
Minutes**

Please note the meeting is in-person but will also be broadcast remotely. If you need the virtual option here is the Registration Link:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_yTrnRwhkRPyDQhaUf1R3Sw

President Underwood called the meeting to order at 9:06 am.

1. Welcome and Introductions

2. Approval of the June 25, 2025 General Membership Meeting Minutes (Attachment 1).

S. Zehner made a motion to approve the June 25, 2025 General Membership Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by M. Streicher. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Presentation Abstract: Environmental DNA metabarcoding for whole community inventories of vertebrates in rivers of the midwestern United States

Presenter: Sophie Picq, eDNA Research Scientist / Head of the Biomolecular Clean Laboratory, Field Museum of Natural History

Developing effective and rapid monitoring techniques that can identify trends in ecological communities is key to ensuring the future of biodiversity. Environmental DNA (eDNA) metabarcoding is one such promising tool that provides a standardized and non-invasive approach to inventory biodiversity. Through the capture, amplification, and sequencing of the genetic material shed by all organisms in the environment, eDNA provides biologists with an additional indicator for detecting and monitoring organisms. In this talk, I will first review the background, methods, and main uses of environmental DNA (eDNA) as a tool for assessing and monitoring biodiversity in freshwater ecosystems. I will also cover main sampling and lab methodologies to detect the presence of single or multiple species. Finally, I will give a summary of our recent study that used eDNA metabarcoding for whole community inventories of vertebrates in the Kankakee River. In this study, we identified 147 different taxa including 77 fishes, 38 birds, 24 mammals, five amphibians and three reptiles at 11 locations in the watershed, including tributaries and mainstem stretches within and upstream of the Kankakee River State Park protected area. We also found that vertebrate communities among the different habitats significantly varied in taxonomic composition, showing an upstream-downstream shift along the mainstem river as well as tributary-specific assemblages. Our study demonstrates the ability of single-marker eDNA metabarcoding to simultaneously document aquatic and terrestrial communities across large temperate lotic ecosystems and to monitor diversity patterns across protected areas.

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The new MS4 permit, the 2004 Chloride TMDLs, and the DRSCW special conditions all call for the application of best management practices in winter deicing, and reductions in the discharges of chloride into area waterways. The Salt Smart Collaborative of which DRSCW is a part, has developed outreach materials, volunteer programs, and trainings for . These resources are available to all workgroup members to support education and outreach efforts this winter and provide annual training opportunities for your staff and outreach materials to residents .

These presentations has been approved by the IEPA as CEUs for the Wastewater Operator and Drinking Water Operator Certifications. The IEPA course number will be provided to all attendees via email following the meeting.

SPECIAL CONDITIONS PERMIT ACTIVITIES

4. Special Conditions Permit Administration

- **2020/2025 Permit Negotiations** –Draft Special Condition (SC) Language incorporating the NIP recommendations for the Wood Dale North and Elmhurst WWTP was received from the IEPA in early February 2025. It was reviewed and comments were submitted to IEPA. The draft Naperville permit (Lower DuPage Conditions) will follow once these are issued. See Section 7 (NIP) of the Agenda for more information on this item.
- **Additional NIP and Permit Materials** – See items in agenda 6 and 7 (Project Matrix and NIP materials)
 - PFAS Monitoring/PFAS Reduction Program Language – The draft Wood Dale North, Elmhurst, and Naperville permits also includes quarterly monitoring of the influent and effluent, and semi-annually monitoring of biosolids for 40 PFAS compounds using draft test method 1633. In addition, the draft permits contain language for a PFAS Reduction Program that requires an Inventory and a PFAS Reduction Initiative for all facilities (based on listed SIC codes) that have the potential to discharge PFAS into the sanitary sewer.
- **Additional Permit Items**
 - MWRD – Under DRSCW/MWRD’s current Agreement, MWRD is (as well as bidding and managing the construction of the Master Plan for Salt Creek) providing \$6,010,012 in funding for the project. DRSCW is committed to reimburse MWRD for construction costs above MWRD’s funding total.
- **Annual Report** – The 2024-25 Annual Report was submitted to the IEPA on March 26, 2025 on behalf of all SC members. The report can be found at https://drscw.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/2024-25_drscw-ldwrc_annualreport_03262025_compressed.pdf .
A copy of the email sent with the submission of the report has been forwarded to all SC holders. To date, the IEPA has not provided written confirmation of the report; however, return receipts have been marked as received and read.

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5. Physical Projects (Ongoing)

Fawell Dam Modification

- **MOU** – The MOU for implementing the project was signed in October 2023 by the DC SWM, FPDDC and DRSCW,.
- **Extension Letter** - A letter requesting the completion date be moved to December 31, 2025 has been sent to Permits Section. On November 18, 2024, Brant Fleming with the IEPA provided written acceptance via email of the revised interim completion date for the

project to December 31, 2025. A copy of B. Fleming's email was provided to all Special Condition holders.

- **Design and Fabrication** – We have a design fabrication contract with BK Riverfish and have been hosting weekly calls between BK Riverfish, the fabricator, V3 and the DRSCW to discuss ongoing design issues. The first of these was held on March 25, 2025. An updated cost for fabrication has been received from BK Riverfish which is in excess of the original cost proposal. The current quote is for \$211,000 for fabrication and \$15,000 for the shop drawing for a total cost of \$226,000. Some of these increases are associated with design changes in the ladder and the time since the original quote (2022). Staff is negotiating the final pricing with BK Riverfish to bring it more in line with the original cost proposal (\$200,000).
- **QA/QC on Ladder Fabrication 1** – Fehr-Graham was selected to complete a review of the shop drawings for the proposed Kynard Alternating Baffle Fish Passage to be installed at Fawell Dam. The review is complete and Fehr-Graham has issued several recommendations which have resulted in the increase in gauge of materials used in construction, use of sheer studs instead of tabs, a review of the top grate connection and design. Other recommendations including materials (Stainless Steel V hot dipped galvanized and replacing the steel "box" with concrete) were not adopted. The Project Team is continuing to resolve all of Fehr-Graham's recommendations with the designer and fabricator during the Friday Project calls.
- **QA/QC on Ladder Fabrication 2** – The designer (BK Riverfish) is now recommending that the upstream (removable and wing wall sections) be eliminated. V3 and DRSCW have collecting data (flow and depth at the culvert upstream lip) and more closely examining the gate operation to verify if this is viable. One visit has been completed and it was determined that a second site visit is not needed at this time. The final design of the upper most section of the ladder including the fish net attachment is on-going.
- **July 9, 2025 Projects Committee Meeting** – A Projects Committee Meeting was held on July 9, 2025 to present an update on the Fawell dam fish passage project and discuss next steps.
- **Coordination with DC SWM** – A meeting is scheduled with DC SWM for Thursday, August 21, 2025 to discuss the final design of the fish ladder system and the bid process for ladder installation.
- **Project Permits**

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- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (US ACOE) Nationwide Permit (LRC-2024-169) – The application was submittal in March 2024 and the permit was received on September 25, 2024.
 - SHPO Review– SHPO have issued a signoff letter stating that the project does not rise to the level of an adverse impact on either the dam or the adjacent Preserve.
 - ◆ U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Section 7 Consultation – No Effect Determination received January 16, 2024
 - ◆ KDSCWD – Signoff on the SESC plan by the KDSWCD is a requirement of the

US ACOE Nationwide Permit. A permit application and fee covering the SESC review was submitted to the KDSWCD by V3 in mid-September 2024. Signoff on the ESC Plans from KDSWCD was received on October 9, 2024.
- DuPage County Stormwater Management Certification and Building Permit – The permit application was submitted in December 2024. The DC submittal will combine the components of the Corps submittal and IDNR-OWR dam modifications submittal. It also incorporated the MOU with DuPage County.
- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
 - ◆ EcoCAT Request – Signoff received January 16, 2024
 - ◆ Major Modification of Existing Dam Permit – Application pending submission (Based on past discussions and the revised design, this permit may be combined with the Floodway Construction Permit). Plans were submitted to IDNR in December 2024 but confirmation has been received that they view the project as a Dam Modification as opposed to a Floodway Construction project
 - ◆ Floodway Construction Permit – A separate Floodway Construction Permit is not anticipated to be required based on IDNR feedback.
- IEPA - As the project is under one acre of disturbance an IEPA ILR10 this item is not required.
- **Next Steps**
 - Finalize IDNR permit
 - Meeting with DC SWM to present design changes to ladder/installation (scheduled for August 21, 2025)
 - Finalize Review of Shop Drawings and Final Design of Ladder/Project
 - Authorize material purchase and fabrication
 - DC issues bid for ladder placement contract
 - Review needs for V3 contract covering installation assistance/oversight.
 - Fabrication of ladder is completed; sections are dry fitted and delivered onsite
 - Installation supervised by County with assistance from BK Riverfish
- **Project Monitoring – Pre-implementation survey** – The FPD carried out a survey of a 300 ft section downstream of the dam (riffle area). The survey found 14 total species, made up of 102 total individuals. This is meant to catalog fish species present at the ladder's first stage entrance/staging area below the dam.

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- **Presentation to the FPDDC Board** – The FPDDC has requested a presentation to update the Board on the status of the project. E. Neidy recommended the presentation be added to a Fall 2025 FPPDC Board meeting agenda.

Graue Mill Dam

- **Project Schedule**
 - Construction – Substantial completion was met in December 2025. Vegetation and M&M ongoing.
 - Punch List – V3 and their subconsultants are working through punch list items. The motor on the waterwheel is being replaced by V3/FM due to the constant noise that the motor makes while running. V3 is drafting as-builts for the project and needs to complete additional field survey work before the as-builts can be completed.
 - Plantings – Perennial plant installation for the Spring 2025 season is complete. Watering is on-going as needed.
 - Permit Related Activities—The final dam safety inspection was completed by the FPDDC on April 8, 2025 and accepted by IDNR-OWR Dam Safety on April 9, 2025. As-built plans for the site in the vicinity for the former dam will need to be submitted to IDNR once they are completed by V3 to close out the IDNR OWR dam removal permit. Education signs that were required under the ACOE Section 106 MOA have been installed. Three signs have been installed in the vicinity of the Graue Mill and include 1) The Men of Company V1668 – Recognizes the CCC Company that worked at Fullersburg Woods, 2) Going with the Flow – Remembers the former CCC dam and highlights the ecological benefits of the dam removal, and 3) Remaking the Mill – Highlights the CCC's work on the restoration of the Graue Mill and the listing of the Mill on the National Register of Historic Places. The signs have been approved by both the ACOE and SHPO and this requirement from the MOA has been satisfactorily met.
 - Related FPDDC at the site – The Nature Center Parking lot, trails and entrance road were re-paved on May 12, 2025.
- Grand Opening – A grand opening ceremony coordinated with MWRDGC, FPDDC, and V3. It is scheduled was held on Tuesday, August 19, 2025 at 11:00 am. D. Streicher will be spoke on behalf of the DRSCW.
- MWRD/DRSCW Agreement – The DRSCW and MWRD Agreement that outlines MWRD's commitment to bid and manage the construction of the Master Plan for Salt Creek.
- Payments – Total Billed by V3 to date (08/06/2025): \$8,364,149.97 which includes
 - Pay Estimate 1 (11/08/2023): \$464,224.75
 - Pay Estimate 2 (12/04/2023): \$263,500.00
 - Pay Estimate 3 (01/09/2024): \$633,495.35
 - Pay Estimate 4 (02/09/2024): \$226,000.00
 - Pay Estimate 5 (03/08/2024): \$542,470.67

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Pay Estimate 6 (04/10/2024): \$647,003.15
Pay Estimate 7 (05/09/2024): \$288,884.25
Pay Estimate 8 (06/10/2024): \$246,724.55
Pay Estimate 9 (07/09/2024): \$1,022,570.72
Pay Estimate 10 (08/08/2024): \$1,140,281.39
Pay Estimate 11 (09/10/2024): \$1,738,065.01
Pay Estimate 12 (10/10/2024): \$355,431.19
Pay Estimate 13 (11/05/2024): \$144,775.00

Pay Estimate 14 (12/03/2024): \$145,264.72
Pay Estimate 15 (01/08/2025): \$0.00
Pay Estimate 16 (07/07/2025): \$505,459.22

Total paid by MWRD to date (08/06/2025) is \$7,945,942.45 (\$8,364,149.97 (billed)-418,207.52(retainage)).

▪ Project Cost Summary (as of 06/07/2025)

Original Construction Budget:	\$ 9,375,745.00
Original Contingency	\$ 468,797.25
Approved Construction Budget Changes:	\$ 101,101.72
Approved Contingency Changes	\$ (314,878.30)
Current Approved Budget	\$ 9,476,846.72
Current Contingency	\$ 153,908.95
Pending Change Orders	\$ 0.00

♦ Potential Future Change Orders

- COR-7/RFP-4: Due to field conditions, certain pools were eliminated, quantities estimated in the Cost Proposal for Unit Price items required updating, and additional plant plugs were added to the project. COR-7/RFP-4 includes the following items:
 - Reduce the quantity of Cost Proposal H (Installation of additional CA-1 Aggregate) by 267 tons (\$130/ton).
 - Reduce the quantity of Cost Proposal I (Installation of additional FA-2 Aggregate) by 133 tons (\$130/ton).
 - Increase the quantity of Cost Proposal J (Installation of additional 6"-8" cobble) by 355 tons (\$230/ton).
 - Increase the quantity of Cost Proposal K (Installation of additional 8" - 16" Boulders) by 355 tons (\$230/ton).
 - Reduce the quantity of Cost Proposal L (Installation of additional 24" - 36" Boulders) by 400 tons (\$280/ton).
 - Eliminate Pools #2, #3, and #5. Deleted scope includes soil erosion and sediment control during pool excavation, excavation, hauling, and offsite disposal.

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- Increase the quantity of Cost Proposal F (Installation of plant plugs for riparian wetland conversion and riparian wetland enhancement) by 15,600 plant plugs (\$8.40/plug).

It is estimated that the change order will result in a credit to the contract of \$156,995.93. This COR/RFP is still in the MWRD review process and should be completed soon.

- **National Register of Historic Places Nomination** – A contract with McGuire Igleski and Associates (MIA), for a not-to-exceed cost of \$13,400, was signed on December 3, 2023.
- Field work for the nomination was conducted by MIA on December 11, 2023. A draft of the nomination was received on August 1, 2025. MIA hopes to present the nomination to the October IHSAC meeting. This process should be completed by December 2025.
- **Chicago Wilderness Force of Nature Award** – TCF submitted a nomination to nominate the DRSCW and the Fullersburg Woods Dam Removal and Stream Restoration Project to the CW for the Force of Nature Award. The FPDDC and MWRDGC were recognized as project partners.
- **Post-Project Monitoring**
 - **2025 Post-Post Project Monitoring** – Year 1 of Post-Project Monitoring will be coordinated with the Salt Creek Bioassessment. The first pass of fish sampling was conducted on July 28, 2025. Eight species only previously located below the dam were found with the project footprint (and above the dam's former location); northern pike, honeyhead chub, emerald shiner, blackside darter, smallmouth bass, log perch, central stoneroller, and rosyface shiner. Additionally, large populations of spotted suckers were found. A second pass of fish sampling will be completed later this summer/fall and macroinvertebrate sampling will be scheduled soon.
 - **Press Releases**
 - The FPDDC released a press release and video on the fish sampling results.
https://www.dupageforest.org/what-we-do/news/news-releases/salt-creek-fish-survey?fbclid=IwY2xjawMJxFBleHRuA2FlbQlXMAbIcmIkETFPY0dBdEpHSVn4cGU1MW9SAR6z5J-hJTdm6BmbypX8WGCotz8HmLjE3QlsrfM_kziM0HEYAGV2eZewl50rlw_aem_qSZqvPmYd-Dn5-i4nhjaEQ and
<https://www.facebook.com/DuPageForest/videos/2031658340919446>
 - MWRD has also released a press release on the fish sampling results:
https://mwrld.org/news/fish-return-salt-creek-after-graue-mill-dam-removal-forest-preserve-district-dupage-county?fbclid=IwY2xjawMQV1xleHRuA2FlbQlXMAbIcmIkETFiR21rWEIdmlrTUxkMk5OAR7AF-9643WN9WgxVRrqMpfHxKX96wXCMm_NQOtHyFXZs-J_rfB56QURdPBYOQ_aem_h6XU4Y3QnvMitDETL-L-qQ
 - **Flow Sampling of Riffles and Pools** – Staff collected transects (flow and depth) of the completed riffles. In addition, transects of the proposed pool locations have also been

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collected. The transects of the proposed pool locations have shown that pools already exist at Pools 3, 4, and 8.

- **Aileron** – At the prompting of the Board, Staff will reach out to Aileron to seek input on the options and timing for Post-Project survey options to see if public opinion on the project has changed now that the project has been constructed. Proposed timeline for this survey work is late 2025.
- **RestoreSaltCreek.org** – As substantial completion has been met, the DRSCW maintained project website at RestoreSaltCreek.org has been removed and archived.

Spring Brook Phase II

- **2025 Post-Project Monitoring** -- 2025 will be Year 5 of the Post-Project monitoring for Spring Brook Phase 2. A contract with MBI not to exceed \$14,280 for the post-project monitoring has been signed. The majority of the fish sampling was conducted on August 1, 2025. Two of the sites could not be sampled due to a gas leak caused by the construction at Phase 3. Macroinvertebrate sampling has yet to be scheduled.
- **Springbrook Phase 3 (FPDDC)** – The FPDDC has received the ACOE 404 permit for the Phase 3 of the Springbrook Restoration (from the downstream end of Phase II to the confluence of the West Branch of the DuPage River). The project includes the replacement of the bridge and riparian, instream and streambank enhancement. Construction on the project started in late July 2025. The DRSCW will investigate a future post-project monitoring strategy for Phase 3.

Lower East Branch Stream Enhancement Project

- **Conceptual Design Report** - The Final Conceptual Design Report, for the Lower East Branch DuPage River Stream Restoration Project, has been delivered by Interfluve. The report has been forwarded to the stakeholder group and the Projects Committee.
 - ComEd – Staff and Interfluve presented the Conceptual Design virtually to Com-Ed's Realty Department on September 26, 2023. Feedback from the Realty Department was positive but additional input was required from other ComEd departments before they could commit to the project. Staff made additional contacts with ComEd staff at the WWM conference in May 2025 and will follow up with them to see if they can help facilitate communications within ComEd on the project. Staff had a meeting on July 28, 2025 with A. Flansburg with Stantec who works with ComEd to discuss the project and see how Stantec can assist the DRSCW with communication with ComEd. A second follow-up meeting with A. Flansburg, DRSCW staff and ComEd's Realty and Environmental Divisions staff to discuss the project was held on August 7, 2025. Staff was given some guidance on ComEd's requirements in regards to the high voltage power lines and other ComEd structures located within the potential project site such as no grading underneath high voltage power lines and no grading within 15 feet of any ComEd structure (towers, poles, etc.). While ComEd cannot provide official approve to the project without final engineering, once the Transmission Engineer has an

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opportunity to review the concept plans, they hope to issue a letter of no objection to the general project concept at which point staff would feel comfortable proceeding with the final project design.

- ComEd Environmental Due Diligence Form – In October 2023 ComEd requested additional information on the project via their Environmental Due Diligence Form which staff provided in November. It was supplied again in mid-January, following a request from our ComEd contact. It has now been sent to additional staff at ComEd for their feedback and input on the project.
- **Funding under ACOE Section 206** – The Lower East Branch Stream Restoration Project was submitted to the ACOE for consideration for funding under the Section 206 Aquatic Restoration Program. Per email communications with Frank Veraldi of the ACOE, Reaches 2-4 of the project have been included in the list of projects to be funded. The 206 program provides the following funding: up to \$10,000 for the preparation of a Federal Interest Determination Document, up to \$400,000 for a Project Feasibility Study, and up to \$15 million for Design and Implementation. All monies require a 35% match; cash, land costs, and in-kind services can be used as match. It is not expected that any Federal monies for the project will be available in the next few years so staff will proceed with project design using the existing DRSCW budget.
 - **Letters of Support** – At the suggestion of staff at the ACOE, a letter of support for funding the project by Section 206 has been obtained from US Representative Bill Foster and forwarded to the ACOE. A second letter from Representative Foster has also been forwarded to David Bucaro, Chief of the Planning Branch at the Chicago District ACOE supporting the funding of the project (sent along with conceptual plan at beginning of this week). Thanks to FPDDC President Dan Hebreard for assisting with this item.
- **Schedule Update** – Staff met with Interfluve on August 15, 2025 to re-start the design work on the project. Interfluve is reviewing their existing scope of work and fees and will be submitting a revised proposal to the DRSCW to continue the work.
- **2024 and 2025 Pre-Project Monitoring** – No pre-project monitoring at the Lower East Branch Stream Enhancement Project was conducted in 2024 nor is scheduled for 2025.

Klein Creek Streambank Stabilization Project (Southern West Branch in permit)

- **Construction Progress Update** – Construction of the DRSCW section is complete. Weed control/vegetation management is ongoing. Supplemental plug planting was completed. An Eagle Scout is building a pergola near the trail the Carol Stream WWTP within the project footprint.
 - **Payment** – Payments totaling \$1,100,000 have been made to Carol Stream for the Project (Total of Grant).
- **2025 Post-Project Monitoring** – A contract for \$14,270 for the 2025 post-project biological and habitat sampling at the Klein Creek Streambank Stabilization Project has been signed.

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Fish sampling is scheduled for second pass fish sampling and macroinvertebrate sampling will be schedule soon.

6. Physical Project Update (Not Yet Started)

- **West Branch Floating Project** – West Branch Restoration Project completion date in the permit is December 31, 2028. Short term objective is to improve aquatic habitat (QHEI) and reduce inputs of nutrients and sediment. Long term objective is to raise mIBI and fIBI.
- **Project Matrix** – This matrix has been developed for ranking future projects for possible funding via the Special Condition or NIP funds. The draft Matrix was presented to the Projects Committee at their July 9, 2025 virtual meeting. After some minor updates to the database, the database will be shared with the Projects Committee via email. After a review period, an in-person Projects Committee meeting will be scheduled to select projects to be included in the NIP Implementation Plan.
 - Monies for studies – In addition to the funding of the physical projects, monies generated from the Special Conditions assessments will also be allocated to fund future studies. Potential future studies may include: a fish propagation feasibility analysis, water quality standards review/TALU for aquatic life, additional modeling runs to help with TP effluent limit implementation at the WWTPs (“trading”), and a NIP update.
 - ◆ **Tiered Aquatic Life Uses (TALU)** – In recommendation D of the DRSCW/LDRWC NIP, the workgroups propose to explore the refinement of biological endpoints (mIBIs and fIBIs) for Illinois urban areas. It further states that the DRSCW and LDRWC would work with IEPA and stakeholders to review if the current General Use standards are suitable for use in urban watersheds. Staff will begin drafting a scope of work for this study when permit negotiations are complete and the NIP recommendations are included WWTP permits.
- **Other projects** – The Illinois Tollway and Brookfield Zoo has contacted staff for data on potential projects. Contacts are ongoing.

7. Nutrient Implementation Plan

- **NIP** – The NIP was submitted to the IEPA on December 29, 2023 and has been posted to the DRSCW website at <https://drscw.org/activities/project-identification-and-prioritization-system/> and the LDRWC at <https://ldpwatersheds.org/about-us/lower-dupage-river-watershed-coalition/our-work/narp/>
- **Ongoing Discussions on the NIP**
 - IEPA has released pre-public permits for four NARPS, including the DRSCW and LDRWC NIP.

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- To date the Sierra Club (SC), Prairie Rivers Network (PRN), Environmental Law and Policy Center (ELPC), and Mississippi River Collaborative (MRC) have issued three sets of comments on the NIP. The first were general comments on all NARPs, the second were NIP specific (ostensibly a reply to our response to their general letter) and the last were specific to our proposed NIP permit language (see bullet below). A response to all three sets of comments has been submitted.

NIP Permit specific comments - the DRSCW has obtained comments submitted by the SC, PRN, ELPC, and MRC to the IEPA dated April 4, 2025. Once obtained, both documents were forwarded to the DRSCW/LDRWC Negotiations Team. These comments were in two documents (back ground and comments). In these

comments, the EAGs advocate for IEPA to issue a Time Limited water quality standard (TLWQS) (aka a variance) for dissolved oxygen (DO) and that each workgroup be given additional time to identify a TP limit that will prevent TP from causing violations of the DO standard and limit nuisance algae growth. Staff has drafted comments to both the December 2024 and April 2025 EAG comment letters and submitted the response via email to the IEPA on June 10, 2025. On June 23, 2025, staff submitted a response letter to the third set of comments (dated April 4, 2025) submitted by the EAGs to the IEPA which focused on the draft permit language.

The IEPA had a meeting with A. Ettinger on 06/24/2025 to discuss a path forward with the DRSCW permits (along with the other 3 draft permits). Staff has reiterated with the IEPA that the DRSCW does not want to negotiate on the language included in the draft permit.

S. McCracken communicated with A. Ettinger via email and a phone call in late July 2025. There is no change in A. Ettinger's stance on how the IEPA should proceed in future permit conditions and he is advocating for the IEPA to issue a TLWQS for DO.

Staff drafted a letter template that was sent via email on August 7, 2025 to nine Special Condition holders whose current permit will not expire before they would need to start taking measures to meet a 1 mg/L TP limit. The letter template can be used to send a letter to the IEPA asking for the member's permit to be reopened and include the NIP recommendations.

Staff will calculate an estimate of the WTPP design costs to reach a TP effluent limit of 1 mg/L that are estimated to be spent in 2025-26. This number along with the total of 2026 project assessments dollars will be shared with the IEPA to demonstrate the amount of dollars that will be spent and/or not spent on in-stream

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improvements if the NIP language is not integrated into DRSCW permits in the immediate future.

Staff is working on a non-technical article on additional costs of NIP implementation such as those associated with chemical treatment (mining, transportation, sludge disposal, energy costs, etc.).

- **F. Andes** – The DRSCW had a \$3,000 contract with F. Andes in 2024 that was paid out in November 2024 at \$3,757.50. F. Andes continued to work for the DRSCW including reviewing the EAG response letter. The Executive Board has approved a contract

extension not to exceed \$6,000 to cover the additional review work performed by F. Andes.

- **Acknowledgment of NIP Submittal by DRSCW Members** – All DRSCW agencies signed onto the NIP and were included in the submittal to the IEPA on December 29, 2023.
- **QUAL Model Update** – This item has been incorporated into the NIP.
 - **Final Reports** – The final reports including the watershed specific model setup/calibration/validation reports and the scenario report have been provided to staff for final review.
 - LDRWC has agreed to reimburse the DRSCW for one quarter (\$2,690) of the most recent contract extension with TetraTech as the scope of services (completion of the modeling reports and assistance with the NIP response letters) was beneficial to LDRWC special condition permit holders and related to the LDWRC work.
- **IPS Tool Update**
 - Final Report – The final report is complete and has been posted on the website at: <https://drscw.org/activities/stressors-analysis/>
 - Power BI Training – Staff has received an updated cost proposal for Power BI training from MBI and the training is tentatively scheduled for early 2026. Staff will look into other potential vendors to develop and finalize the Power BI database once MBI QA/QCs the data.
 - Level of Rigor Analysis – No update at this time.
- **Additional NIP Tasks**
 - Development of Relationships and Thresholds for Continuous DO variables, nutrients, and biological Attributes in NE Illinois IPS – Report has been finalized and placed on website.

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- **Trading Analysis**
 - Point Source (PS) to PS Trading – No update.
 - Stream Crediting Trading – No update.
 - USEPA National Water Quality Trading Policy – No update.
- **Related to Nutrient Trading** – As they are completed, please submit PDOPs and FSs to DRSCW staff.
- **NSAC Update** – The NSAC recommendations are not foreseen as being on the IPCB agenda for rulemaking in 2022.
- **Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy (NLRS)** – The 2025 NLRS Conference is scheduled for November 5, 2025 in *Champaign, Illinois at the I-Hotel*.
 - The DRSCW submitted their update for IL NLRS Biennial Report.
- **Other NARPs (NIPS)** – Per the IEPA, 27 NARPs were submitted by 12/31/2023 representing 22 individual facilities and 5 watershed groups. Eight (8) facilities failed to submit their NARPs by their required deadline (12/31/2023). An additional 41 NARPs were submitted at the end of 2024. Eleven (11) additional NARPs were due in 2024 but not submitted. In addition to the DRSCW permits, the IEPA is working on issuing updating permits that incorporate NARP language into the permits of one other watershed group and 2 individual facilities.
 - **IEPA NIP Website** – All of the submitted NARPs including FRIPs, NIPs, and PARPs have been placed by the IEPA on the following website: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/water-quality/watershed-management/narps.html>
 - EAG or Other Comments on NARPs – Staff have asked that if the IEPA receives any comments on the DRSCW/LDRWC NIP, that the comments be provided directly to the DRSCW/LDRWC.
 - **Other Permits with NARP Language** – IAWA has received the IEPA draft NARP/NIP permit language for the DRSCW, Fox River Study Group and two individual WWTPs – Kishwaukee and Kankakee. Based on discussions at IAWA, Kankakee will be asking the IEPA for the NARP language to be removed from their future permits because the downstream instream TP concentration is already below the recommended NSAC target for TP; and there is no listed impairment. Kishwaukee will also be asking for the NARP language to be removed from their future permits. IAWA has provided written comments on this draft language to the IEPA (5/28/2025). The comments will also be shared with the EAGs. The IAWA comment letter dated 5/28/2025 has been shared

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with the Negotiations Team and staff forwarded the IAWA comment letter to the Executive Board. IAWA met with IEPA in early July, and IEPA indicated that they expect to issue pre-public notice drafts to the permittees soon.

- ♦ Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup (DRWW) – The DRWW and their consultant, Geosyntec, are working on a response to comments received from the EAGs on their NARP.

7. Springfield Regulatory and Legislative Updates – Communication with the IEPA staff has been ongoing via email and phone regarding the incorporation of the NIP recommendations into NPDES permits. See Section 6 for more details.

NON-SPECIAL CONDITION PERMIT ACTIVITIES

- **East Branch Bioassessment**
 - 2019 Bioassessment – Report is finalized.
 - 2023 Bioassessment – All field data for the 2023 bioassessment has been completed. MBI is working on preparing the necessary data for the 2023 East Branch bioassessment that is included in the DRSCW's 2023-24 MS4 Activities report. Requests for discharge data from 2020-2023 have been sent to all East Branch DuPage River POTWs. Thank you to all who have submitted data.
- **West Branch Bioassessment** – The final 2020 West Branch Bioassessment Report has been received from MBI and posted to website.
- **Salt Creek Bioassessment** – 2021 Draft report is under review by staff.
 - 2025 Bioassessment – Water chemistry sampling for the 2025 Salt Creek bioassessment has started. Fish sampling started in early July 2025 and the majority of the first pass of fish sampling has been completed. Macroinvertebrate sampling will be scheduled soon. Expanded DO sampling is on-going. Fecal coliform sampling has been completed.
- **Other Monitoring**
 - **Mixing Zones/Mussel Surveys** – If a POTW is utilizing a mixing zone, they will likely be asked to conduct a mussel survey at the time of their next permit renewal. This is because the IEPA is re-evaluating all mixing zones under the 302.102 (a) and 302.102 (b) 1-12 criteria. Criteria 302.102 (b) 4 states "Mixing is not allowed in waters containing mussel beds; endangered species habitat; fish spawning areas; areas of important aquatic life habitat; or any other natural features vital to the well-being of aquatic life in a manner that maintaining aquatic life in the body of water as a whole would be adversely affected." The IEPA does not currently have a definition for mussel beds but S. Twait noted that the US FWS does. He did state that the IEPA will decide on a case-by-case basis once a survey is conducted and the presence of mussels alone does not mean that a mixing zone will not be allowed.

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- **Mixing Zone Survey** – A. Underwood had a discussion with S. Twait (IEPA Standards) about how prevalent the mussel survey requirement will be during permit renewals and he indicated that it may not be needed for many permit renewals. In order to get a better idea on how many DRSCW permittees need to conduct a mussel survey, staff will be working to verify ammonia permit limits in all Member permits to determine if any members do not have a 1.0/4.0 mg/L Ammonia limit. Additionally, staff will ask the IEPA for the ammonia water quality at each of the IEPA monitoring stations within DRSCW/LDRWC stations. With these two pieces of information, staff will be able to generate a list of permittees that may need to conduct a mussel survey at the time of their permit renewal. Staff will also investigate the feasibility of conducting a watershed-wide mussel survey. Both site specific compliance surveys for mixing zones and a more comprehensive watershed survey (similar to our bioassessment for macros and fish) will be considered.
- **New Sonde Purchase** - A team made up of County Stormwater, MWRD, MBI and DRSCW staff have selected to purchase the new sondes from Eureka. An order for the new sondes has been placed with Eureka and the sondes are expected to arrive in August 2025. MBI is also ordering two sondes as part of the packet.

8. Chlorides

- **Workshops** – Registration information will be sent out in August for the Fall 2025 workshops. Public Roads – In-Person: Sept. 16, Sept. 23 and Sept. 30; Public Roads – Virtual: Sept. 25, Oct. 7, Nov. 12. Parking Lots & Sidewalks - All Virtual: Oct. 2, Oct. 14, and Nov. 13. In addition, the Calibration Workshops for Force America equipment will be held on Nov. 4 (Lake County), Nov. 5 (Cook County DOTH), and Nov. 6 (DuPage DOT).
- **Get a Grip Workshop** was held on 5/29/2025 and attended by 6 DRSCW members. Workshop was with NIRA Dynamics on their friction mapping software. Thanks to ACDC Addison for hosting.
- **Salt Management Questionnaire** – The questionnaire has been updated based on feedback from the Chloride Committee and has gone back out for final review.
- **BMP and Loading analysis** – The final report is under review.
- **SB2138 (liability for contractors)** – No update.
- **Salt Smart Collaborative**– J. Hammer and S. McCracken are members of the Salt Smart Collaborative Steering Committee. All Salt Smart Collaborative information can be found at SaltSmart.org
 - FY24 319 Grant – The Salt Smart Collaborative/TCF applied for a Section 319 Grant to expand training, technical and education/outreach resources for communities, agencies and private contractors to further chloride reduction efforts across NE Illinois.

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- **Winter Chloride Watchers** – Through the RiverWatch, SaltSmart Collaborative, CAWS, McHenry County, and DC SWM, TCF is coordinating the Winter Chloride Watchers which is a volunteer monitoring effort for chloride monitoring.
- **Time Limited Water Quality Standard (TLWQS) for Chlorides for the Chicago Area Waterway System (CAWS) and portion of the Lower Des Plaines** – No update.
- **ILR00 and Chlorides** – No update.
- **Street Sweeping data** – Data has been collected at Itasca, Wood Dale and Carol Stream. The data suggests that these villages are capturing 126 – 720 lbs per year of road salt. Analysis will have to be done to discern if this is significant or not in terms of season (spring/summer) and annual mass.

9. Other Activities

- **MS4 Permit Update** – On July 8, 2025, the IEPA released the updated the MS4 permit which became effective on August 1, 2025. The new permit can be found at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/forms/water-permits/storm-water/ms4.html>. *DC SWM is scheduled to host a workshop on the new MS4 permit on October 2, 2025. The DRSCW will forward registration and information on the DC SWM workshop when it's available.*
- **DRSCW MS4 Activities Report** – A new DRSCW 2024-25 MS4 Activities report was emailed to all DRSCW members who hold a MS4 permit on May 9, 2025.
- **Newsletter** – Based on progress on the NIPs the new newsletter will be available summer 2025 and will report on the NIP permits and implementation.
- **Bacteria on Salt Creek** – No colonies were observed during summer 2025.
- **Hydrilla on Ginger Creek (Salt Creek watersheds)** – To date, four treatments of Sonar One have been applied in the watershed – April 23/24, 2025, May 20/21, 2025, June 23, 2025 and July 14, 2025. The fifth and final application is scheduled for August 20, 2025. Additionally, the DRSCW has collected four fastEST to document the concentrations of SonarOne in the watershed on May 9, 2025, June 6, 2025, July 11, 2025 and August 12, 2025. The sampling plan includes the collection of 6 locations (3 composite samples (Ginger and Briarwood Lakes and Lake Ed/Lake Ed) and 3 grab samples). The majority of the Sonar One has been purchased by IDNR using funds from the Hydrilla Task Force and applied by IDNR, IEPA, and FPDDC staff. However, an additional 80 lbs of SonarOne was purchased by the DRSCW in July 2025 (for a cost of \$3,086.60). McCloud Aquatics is also doing application on Oak Brook Park District property and being paid for by the DRSCW. To date the DRSCW has spent \$7,864.20 (of the \$10,000 approved budget). A plant survey of the Ginger Creek watershed is being planned for August 28, 2025.

10. Business Items (new business)

Invoice Summary for Review – June 1, 2025 to July 31, 2025

Vendor/Project	Invoice Number	Amount (\$)	Status
Barnes & Thornburg - NIP Legal Advice	3428032	5,340.00	Paid

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Baxter & Woodman - 2025 CL Reduction	271059	1,258.00	Pending
Baxter & Woodman - 2025 CL Reduction	273203	286.00	Pending
ETP Labs - Salt Creek Fecal Coliform Sampling	4 invoices	1,225.00	Pending
Fehr Graham - Fawell	130952	1,503.50	Paid
Fehr Graham - Fawell	132352	1,895.75	Pending
Fehr Graham - Fawell	133132	8,885.25	Pending
First Environmental Labs - Salt Creek Chemistry	7 invoices	17,685.50	Paid
First Environmental Labs - Salt Creek Chemistry	8 invoices	11,847.50	Approved
Hey & Assoc - Fullersburg Dam	20036	1,066.88	Paid
Hey & Assoc - Fullersburg Dam	20257	324.71	Paid
Lauterbach & Amen - Audit (Final billing)	106787	2,000.00	Paid
McCloud Aquatics - Hydrilla treatment	108357-1&2	900.00	Paid
McCloud Aquatics - Hydrilla treatment	108357-3	450.00	Approved
MBI - Klein Creek	2340	7,264.59	Pending
MBI - Spring Brook	2341	8,428.26	Pending
MBI - NARP Support	2353	7,130.62	Pending
Murray and Trettel - Snowfall data - 6 locations	0525-304	3,000.00	Paid
Ragas Media – Website Programming & Staging	July 2025 Invoice	480.00	Pending
TetraTech - QUAL2kw & NIP Support	52437512	16744.00	Paid
The Conservation Foundation	13606	4530.33	Pending

- **YTD Financial Reports (through July 31, 2025)** (Attachment 2)
 - Audit has been completed and posted on the DRSCW.org website.
 - Tax Return has been extended.
- **Membership Dues Payment Update (through August 20, 2025)** (Attachment 3).

11. Presentation and Workshops

- June 3, 2025– Tour of Fullersburg Woods Dam Removal and Stream Restoration Project, La Grange League of Women Voters and Salt Creek Watershed Network.
- June 13, 2025 – Tour of Fullersburg Woods Dam Removal and Stream Restoration Project, The Conservation Foundation Staff and Board Retreat.
- October 8, 2025 – Fox River Ecosystem Partnership (FREP) Noon Network– field tour of Fullersburg Dam removal in Oakbrook, DuPage County. Hosts Erik Neidy, DuPage County Forest Preserve District, Deanna Doohaluk, Stephen McCracken, DuPage River/Salt Creek Work Group, Tim Pollowy, Hey and Associates, Inc.
- February 22-25, 2025 –Partnership for River Restoration and Science in the Upper Midwest (PRRSUM), Plenary Session, from. Stephen McCracken, DuPage River/Salt Creek Work Group

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- Date Pending – Fullersburg Woods Dam Removal, presentation to the Village of Burr Ridge Board, Stephen McCracken, The Conservation Foundation.

12. Other Business

- *September 17, 2025 – West Branch Watershed-Based Plan Stakeholder Meeting*

13. Future Meeting Schedule (location to be determined)

August 27, 2025 from 9AM-11AM
October 29, 2025 from 9AM-11AM
December 3, 2025 from 9AM-12PM
February 25, 2026 from 9AM-11AM
April 29, 2026 from 9AM-11AM
June 24, 2026 from 9AM-11AM
August 26, 2026 from 9AM-11AM

J. Lomax made a motion to adjourn at 10:54 am. The motion was seconded by D. Streicher.