

# 2021 Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup (DRWW) Annual Accomplishments

The DRWW continues to fulfill the monitoring requirements of its members. According to the Illinois EPA (IEPA), almost all the waterways within the Des Plaines River Watershed are impaired. To remove the watershed from the Illinois EPA's list of impaired waters, the Midwest Biodiversity Institute has developed a tool to identify water quality improvement. The DRWW continues to address the NPDES regulatory requirements of its constituents, and provide professional development opportunities to members, stakeholders and constituents. DRWW welcomed two new members in 2021.

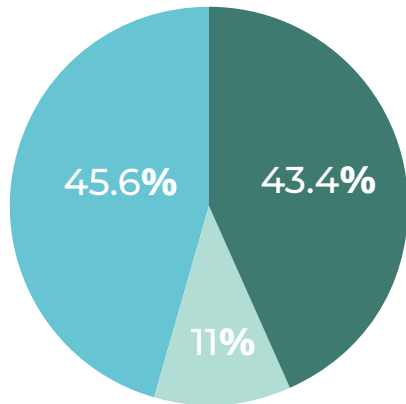
## 2021 Executive Board

- Al Giertych, President, LCDOT
- Dave Miller, Vice-President, NSWRD
- Michael Talbett, Treasurer, Village of Kildeer
- Paul Kendzior, Secretary, Village of Libertyville
- Steve Waters, Monitoring Committee Chair, NSWRD
- Mike Adam, Lakes Committee Chair, LCHD
- Jim Anderson, Member at Large, LCFPD

## 2021 Monitoring Committee

- Steve Waters, Chair, NSWRD
- Mike Adam, LCHD
- Al Giertych, LCDOT
- Austin McFarlane, LCPW
- Nick Huber, LCFPD
- Brian Kuebker, Village of Libertyville
- Rosemary Heilemann, Illinois Sierra Club

## 2021 DRWW Expenses



- Biological & Water Quality Monitoring (45.6%)
- Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) (43.4%)
- Administration/Technical Services (11%)

## DRWW Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan

The Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup (DRWW) is undertaking the development of the NARP for the Upper Des Plaines River watershed to meet the special conditions in the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits for eight major Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTWs). The objective of the DRWW NARP is to identify phosphorus reductions (from both point and non-point sources) and other measures to eliminate the phosphorus-related water quality impairments in the watershed. DRWW hired a team of consultants led by Geosyntec Consultants (Geosyntec) to develop the NARP over a period of three years to meet the permit deadline of December 2023.



## Major Accomplishments

**2015:** The DRWW was officially formed and gained 18 members in the first year!

**2016-2018:** Illinois EPA awarded a Section 319 grant to develop a watershed-based plan. DRWW monitoring costs of \$279,000 were utilized as grant matching funds. The watershed plan was developed and completed with DRWW's input in June 2018 and approved by the Illinois EPA.

**2019:** The DRWW contracted with Geosyntec to develop a Preliminary NARP Workplan with a multi-year plan to complete the NARP in 2023, satisfying the POTW NPDES Special Condition permit requirements.

**2020-2021:** DRWW updated the bylaws and membership dues structure. The DRWW started a three-year monitoring program based on the preliminary NARP Workplan recommendations. DRWW contracted with Geosyntec to complete the NARP by December 31, 2023.

# Committee Reports:

## Executive Board:

- The DRWW Executive Board awarded Geosyntec Consultants a 3-year contract to complete DRWW Membership the DRWW Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) for the workgroup by December 31, 2023. The DRWW continues discussions on membership dues and structure adjustments to budget for the NARP-related expenses.
- The DRWW approved a new public comment policy that offers members of the public time to comment on agenda items but provides structure to the meeting that allows DRWW business to be conducted. The Public Comment Policy can be found here: [www.drww.org/upcoming-and-recent-meetings](http://www.drww.org/upcoming-and-recent-meetings).
- The DRWW welcomed two new members (Village of Old Mill Creek and Deuchler Engineering) to the membership.

## Lakes Committee:

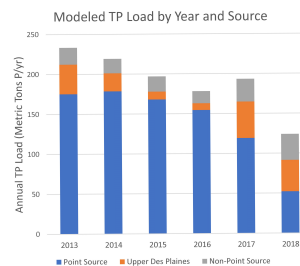
Hydrilla was found in the Des Plaines River Watershed in a stormwater pond in Libertyville in 2019. The Hydrilla rapid response plan was implemented to treat this pond and after initial treatments, no hydrilla has been observed during aquatic plant sampling. Monitoring in the stormwater pond and nearby ponds will continue to take place yearly and this will be a long-term treatment and monitoring strategy that will likely occur for 5-7 years.

## Monitoring/Water Quality Improvement Committee

The DRWW continues to conduct water quality and bioassessment monitoring. Data from this monitoring is the foundation of the Integrated Prioritization System (IPS) and NARP models that will be used to prioritize and implement water quality improvement projects.

## Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan

As part of Year 1 of NARP development, Geosyntec completed a review of recent water quality data collected by the DRWW. The review indicates the phosphorus impairments in the Des Plaines River may be strongly influenced by upstream loading from Wisconsin. Preliminary findings from Geosyntec, considering water quality data and watershed modeling, indicate that point source pollution in the watershed decreased from 2013 to 2018. Geosyntec is also currently developing a watershed model that will be used to estimate the phosphorus loading to the mainstem Des Plaines River from its tributaries.



## Illinois EPA Section 319 Grants

In 2018, the DRWW began partnering on three 319 grant applications in the watershed. All three 319 grant applications received funding, 2 of the projects are still in progress.

- **Lake County Health Department: Removal of Carp to Reduce Nutrient Enrichment in Impaired Lakes in Lake County** - Carp removal has occurred at eight project lakes in the Des Plaines River Watershed which include: Hastings, Crooked, McDonald 2, Slough, Des Plaines, St. Mary's, Big Bear and Little Bear lakes. The removal of carp will help reduce internal nutrient cycling and increase likelihood of successful aquatic plant establishment in the project lakes. As of 2021, a total of 6,829 carp have been removed and increases in aquatic plant density and water clarity are being observed. Monitoring and carp removal will continue through 2022.
- **Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD): Van Patten Woods Hydrologic Restoration and Enhancement Project** - In Spring 2021, LCFPD completed their 96 acre retirement of row crop farm field into a native plant restoration at the Van Patten Woods Forest Preserve. This project included 20 acres of wetland creation and enhancement, 716 native tree and shrub plantings (36 acres), 11,150' of drain tile disabled, one trail berm to restore natural flow path and wetland hydrology and 13 rock check dams.

# DRWW Membership

## 29 Agency Members

- City of Lake Forest
- City of Park City
- City of Zion
- Ela Township
- Fremont Township
- Lake County
- Lake County Division of Transportation
- Lake County Forest Preserve District
- Lake County Public Works
- Libertyville Township
- North Shore Water Reclamation District
- Vernon Township
- Village of Buffalo Grove
- Village of Deer Park
- Village of Deerfield
- Village of Grayslake
- Village of Gurnee
- Village of Hawthorn Woods
- Village of Kildeer
- Village of Lake Zurich
- Village of Libertyville
- Village of Lincolnshire
- Village of Lindenhurst
- Village of Long Grove
- Village of Riverwoods
- Village of Round Lake Beach
- Village of Round Lake Park
- Village of Third Lake
- Village of Vernon Hills

## 9 Associate Members

- Applied Technologies, Inc.
- Christopher B. Burke Engineering
- Deuchler Engineering Corp.
- Geosyntec
- Hey & Associates
- Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
- Sierra Club
- Vernon Hills Park District
- Village of Old Mill Creek

For additional information on the DRWW, visit [www.drww.org](http://www.drww.org) or call us at 847-377-7700.

