

## DES PLAINES RIVER WATERSHED WORKGROUP SCORECARD

**Year Assessed: 2025**

The following strategy tables are specific program activities that can be included as measurable goals to meet the minimum control measures (MCM) of the NPDES ILR40 permit requirements. “Corresponding MS4 MCM” column should be reflected as measurable goals in the [Storm Water Management Program \(SWMP\)](#) as well as annual facility inspection report. “Water Quality (WQ) Requirement” supports Part 5 of the NPDES ILR40 Permit.

### Strategy 1: Monitoring and Water Quality Assessment

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Annually review the monitoring program to assess site locations, data parameters and budget	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Completed as part of the current DRWW Monitoring Strategy Document; last approved 9/11/2025 and updated 10/07/2025 for 2026 monitoring.
1	Consult with outside experts to ensure the most efficient use of resources in data collection, and that appropriate parameters are being monitored to achieve the goals of the DRWW	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Continue to consult with MBI, Geosyntec, Illinois EPA, & other local workgroups about monitoring strategies.
1	Make data available for watershed planning and to Workgroup members.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Tenth year of monitoring data (2024) was compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2025. Monitoring reports and data are available on the DRWW website: <a href="https://www.drww.org/reports-and-data/">https://www.drww.org/reports-and-data/</a>
1	Use monitoring results to identify and prioritize impaired waters.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	The DRWW NARP was submitted to the Illinois EPA in December 2023. As the workgroup continues to await feedback, staff reviewed a NARP Implementation Table for project prioritization from September – November 2025. DRWW also utilized the updated Illinois EPA 303(d) list to update the map in the DRWW Monitoring Strategy Document.
1	Analyze monitoring results to pinpoint the sources of pollution.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	
1	Use the monitoring results to evaluate effectiveness of watershed projects and initiatives.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Monitoring results are reviewed at each DRWW meeting.

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2	Determine data needs of Workgroup members.	N/A	Data needs are discussed at 2025 DRWW meetings; Executive Board, Monitoring Committee and General Membership.
2	Identify other databases and evaluate the ease of interfacing with them, cost to create and maintain them, and the frequency that members query the database.	N/A	In 2025, DRWW staff compiled phosphorous education materials and intends to publish an Educational Library webpage on the DRWW website in 2026.

### Strategy 2: Regulatory Relationships and Requirements

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Meet one-on-one with regulators.	B.7	DRWW staff (and hired consultants) have continued to coordinate with the Illinois EPA and local watershed workgroup staff on NPDES permit requirements and upcoming regulatory deadlines.
1	Attend other workgroup meetings or trainings to stay informed about what other groups are doing and proposed regulatory changes.	B.3	Many DRWW Board members as well as Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) staff attend the North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup (NBWW) meetings on a regular basis.
1	Create an annual report to satisfy the NPDES water quality monitoring component of the annual permit reporting requirement.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Tenth year of monitoring data (2024) was compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2025. Eleventh year of monitoring data (2025) will be compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA March 2026.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Create a single Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) that can be used by member Permittees for submittal to IL EPA for approval of renewal applications.	B.6	DRWW submitted its NARP to the Illinois EPA December 29, 2023.
2	Identify MS4s who are leaders in the field.	B.6	Continued to support and engage with MS4s and other watershed entities that are active with the DRWW and/or are implementing BMPs in their communities.
2	Organize annual tour/training event of BMP and green infrastructure projects/sites.	A.4	DRWW was unable to host an annual site tour this year but did have educational speakers for phosphorous-focused projects and research highlights, and regulatory updates at two general membership meetings (Feb. and Aug. 2025)
2	Provide support and attendance at Municipal meetings as requested, for technical support.	B.4	DRWW provided workgroup documentation to several municipalities and workgroup members to bring to their Boards and Committees. DRWW continues to offer technical support as requested.
2	Identify MS4 permit requirements that the DRWW can provide supplemental services to address.	N/A	DRWW provided an overview of permit requirements and shared updates on the MS4 permit at the August 2025 general membership meeting. DRWW also shared MS4 resources and training events.

### Strategy 3: Water Quality Improvement Projects, Planning, and Implementation

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Provide monitoring data and the monitoring report to help identify Water Quality Improvement Projects and recommendations for the Watershed Action Plan	B.7	The DRWW NARP Report was submitted to the Illinois EPA on December 29, 2023, and is posted to the <a href="#">DRWW Reports and Data webpage</a> . DRWW annual water quality data is shared via the same webpage and is submitted directly to Illinois EPA. The most recent monitoring data was posted and submitted on March 28, 2024.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Identify other Watershed Projects or Initiatives that will collectively improve water quality.	B.2	DRWW staff reviewed a NARP Implementation Table for project prioritization from September – November 2025.
2	Develop a list of high-priority watershed improvement projects based on the action plan recommendations from the Des Plaines River Watershed-Based Plan.	B.7	SMC (with the support of DRWW) completed the Des Plaines River Watershed-Based Plan in 2018 that identifies prioritized site-specific and programmatic action plan recommendations for the watershed. This plan was used in the development of the DRWW NARP to prioritize phosphorus-reducing projects.
2	Investigate and identify all possible sources of funding, including grants, in-kind services, and local sponsor contributions to implement watershed improvement projects.	B.7	DRWW staff reviewed a NARP Implementation Table for project prioritization, which included identification of funding sources, from September – November 2025.
2	Inquire how other groups are funding watershed projects.	B.7	DRWW members and staff have continued to coordinate with local watershed workgroups about funding opportunities for watershed projects.
2	Assist in identifying and coordinating multi-jurisdictional implementation projects.	B.6	DRWW staff reviewed a NARP Implementation Table for project prioritization from September – November 2025.
2	Prepare a strategy to accumulate and sustain enough resources to meet the project budget, including operation and maintenance.	N/A	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
2	Enlist watershed experts to review funding proposals for projects and offer advice to applicants, helping them to develop better, more competitive proposals.	B.7	<i>Not completed.</i>
2	Manage and administer the funding sources.	N/A	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
2	Develop educational/outreach materials or other support services for the project.	A.1	The 2025 annual newsletter will be distributed to the watershed members and stakeholders in February 2026 with information on DRWW's accomplishments and monitoring activities.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
3	Identify potential grants and funding sources on behalf of sponsor.	B.7	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
3	Coordinate with project partners and prepare any necessary agreements.	N/A	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
3	Preparation of design plans and specifications, if necessary, to implement the project.	N/A	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
3	Prepare Requests for Proposals and put the project out for bid.	B.7	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
3	Select a contractor.	N/A	<i>Will be done once project implementation begins and POTWs receive updated NPDES permits.</i>
3	Provide oversight of contractors' work, as time permits.	N/A	

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### Strategy 4: Leadership and Engagement

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
1	Allow every member to express and employ their talents, ideas, experiences, skills and expertise.	B.7	Every DRWW meeting is open to the public and attendees are encouraged to participate.
1	Sponsor <b>biannual</b> guest speaker series to educate about pressing watershed issues and to identify collaborative opportunities to address them.	B.3	February 20, 2025, and August 21, 2025
1	Collaborate with existing groups to sponsor a variety of Watershed awareness events (i.e. stream/lake clean ups, canoe trips, Earth Day events, De-icing events, etc.) with an education component.	B.7, F.1	<p>DRWW sponsored a regional Winter Best Practices Workshop that consisted of 9 in-person and online events and one in-person Lake County Calibration Day that targeted Northeastern Illinois stakeholders. This effort was a large partnership with local watershed workgroups, winter maintenance vendors, local counties, and the Salt Smart Collaborative.</p> <p>Lakes Committee members partnered with Illinois Lakes Management Association (ILMA) to host point of discussion events within the watershed.</p> <p>DRWW also sponsored the Lake-McHenry MS4 Pollution Prevention Workshop on May 21, 2025, with 72 in-person attendees. The workshop provided important information about pollution control and the MS4 Permit Program.</p>
2	The DRWW Executive Board will nominate individuals or organizations who are making a substantial contribution to the DRWW's mission and goals.	B.7	<i>Ongoing.</i>
2	The DRWW Executive Board will agree on how and when recognition will be conferred.	B.7	<i>Ongoing.</i>
3	Maintain an informative and useful web site.	A.6	<a href="https://www.drww.org/">https://www.drww.org/</a>
3	Publish an e-newsletter to members quarterly that includes work progress updates and timely information on watershed programs.	B.6	The 2025 annual newsletter will be distributed to the watershed members and stakeholders in February 2026 with information on DRWW's accomplishments and work progress.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	DRWW Status
3	Host events and speaking engagements with public officials to update them on crucial watershed issues and identify partnership opportunities.	B.7	DRWW and SMC engaged all watershed stakeholders (including public officials) throughout the process of updating the Des Plaines River Watershed-Based Plan. Public officials also attend general membership meetings.
3	Reach out to additional public-sector stakeholders – townships, park districts, drainage districts, school districts etc. – to inform them of the Workgroup’s activities and invite them to become Workgroup members.	B.7	Ongoing (meeting announcements, SMC social media outreach, DRWW.org website, word-of-mouth through members).
3	Reach out to private sector stakeholders – developers, consultants, homeowner and lake owner associations, large property owners, farmers, churches – to inform them of the Workgroup’s activities and invite them to partner with us.	B.7	
4	Develop, adopt and disseminate an annual work plan, annual budget, and annual report for the DRWW.	B.7	The current workplan was developed in 2017, with a goal to update it in 2026. The budget is reviewed at each DRWW meeting. The annual budget is shared before the February general membership meeting. An annual newsletter (2025) will be distributed in Feb. 2026.
4	Review member dues annually and send out notices for dues payment.	N/A	Reviewed and approved from September -November 2025; Draft dues shared to general membership in December 2025.
4	Review DRWW by-laws.	B.7	Bylaws are reviewed annually and updated as needed.
4	Organize and facilitate 2 general member meetings each year.	B.3	DRWW hosted two general membership meetings in 2025 (2/20/2025 and 8/21/2025). DRWW voted to reduce the number of general membership meetings to 2 annually.