

TO: Honorable Mayor, Julie Moore Wolfe
FROM: Natalie Misner, Watershed Specialist, Macon County SWCD
DATE: January 22, 2020
SUBJECT: 4th Quarter Report
PERIOD: October 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

**CITY OF DECATUR
LAKE DECATUR WATERSHED PROGRAM**



Better Reflections through Soil Conservation

**4th Quarter Report on the Lake Decatur Watershed Program
October 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019
Macon County SWCD**

CC: Councilman Bill Faber
Councilman David Horn
Councilman Chuck Kuhle
Councilwoman Lisa Gregory
Councilman Pat McDaniel
Councilman Rodney Walker
Mr. Scot Wrighton, City Manager
Mr. Matt Newell, Public Works Director
Mr. Keith Alexander, Water Production Manager

Conservation Cost-Share Programs

Lake Decatur Watershed Program

The Lake Decatur Watershed Program (LDWP) provided \$25,000 of funding to the SWCD to administer toward conservation practices that reduce soil erosion and sedimentation within the Lake Decatur Watershed. Applications for the program are taken year-round and then ranked each March to determine the cost effectiveness of the practice. This fiscal year, 4 projects were funded through the LDWP. The program offers 60% cost-share while landowners pay for the remaining 40% of the cost. The table below provides details regarding the projects that were funded through the LDWP.

| Practice | County | Township | Sediment Saved (Tons/Yr) | Located in Lake Decatur Watershed? |
|----------------|--------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Sediment Basin | Piatt | Goose Creek East | 521 | Yes |
| Sediment Basin | Macon | Whitmore | 91 | Yes |
| Sediment Basin | Macon | Whitmore | 132 | Yes |
| Terrace | Macon | South Wheatland | 11 | Yes |

Partners for Conservation Program

Funding for the Partners for Conservation Program (PFC) comes from the Illinois Department of Agriculture. In FY19, there was an unusually large funding pool available from the IDOA while decisions regarding other programs were being made. With the opportunity to request significantly more than in previous years, the SWCD requested and received \$34,000 in cost-share dollars to implement soil conservation practices. This program offers 60-75% cost-share while landowners pay for the remaining project expense. Landowners within Macon County (both within and outside of the Lake Decatur Watershed) are eligible to apply for these funds.

| Practice | County | Township | Sediment Saved (Tons/Yr) | Located in Lake Decatur Watershed? |
|------------------------|--------|-----------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Critical Area Planting | Macon | South Wheatland | 17 | No |
| Grassed Waterway | Piatt | Monticello | 77 | Yes |
| Grassed Waterway | Macon | Long Creek | 28 | Yes |
| Grassed Waterway | Macon | Harristown | 47 | No |
| Grassed Waterway | Macon | Hickory Point | 14 | No |

Streambank Stabilization & Restoration Program

Funding for the SSRP comes from the Illinois Department of Agriculture. One streambank stabilization project was funded through SSRP this fiscal year by transferring \$6,000 of PFC cost-share dollars into the SSRP. Approximately 200 feet of streambank within Friends Creek was stabilized through this project.

| Practice | County | Township | Sediment Saved (Tons/Yr) | Located in Lake Decatur Watershed? |
|--------------------------|--------|---------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Streambank Stabilization | Macon | Friends Creek | 15 | Yes |

Watershed Activities

MS4 Agreement:

Since 2009, the MS4 communities of the City of Decatur, the Villages of Forsyth and Mt. Zion have worked in partnership with the SWCD to implement stormwater management on behalf of the MS4s. This allows for a consistently applied set of standards regarding BMPs, construction site inspections for the Land Disturbance Permit program, and inspection of detention basins. This quarter, 10 land disturbance permits were issued bringing the year-to-date total up to 46 permits. Of these permits, 28 are located within the Lake Decatur Watershed. In addition to performing construction site inspections, each year the SWCD inspects 25% of a municipality's detention basins to monitor long-term stormwater management infrastructure.

Saving Tomorrow's Agricultural Resources (STAR):

The SWCD entered into a license agreement with the Champaign County SWCD to offer the STAR Program within Macon County near the end of FY19. The STAR Program is a free tool to assist farm operators and land owners in evaluating their nutrient and soil loss management practices on individual fields by assigning points for each cropping, tillage, nutrient application and soil conservation activity used on that field. The total points are used in a scale to determine a rating of 1 to 5 stars for each individual field.

Technical Assistance:

The Watershed Staff are available to answer erosion and flooding complaints in the City of Decatur and the watershed. In the past quarter, staff received 8 requests for assistance pertaining to the next round of lakeshore erosion, cost-share programs, inlet protection and plant identification.

Grants

USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program:

The SWCD submitted a request to renew the project to the NRCS, however that request was not approved for FY20. NRCS received over 90 applications with over \$300 million requested. Available funding allowed NRCS to fund 20% of the renewal requests. None of these approved

requests were from Illinois. The project is currently waiting in a one year “no-cost, no-work” agreement with the NRCS with another opportunity to submit a renewal request later in 2020.

RCPG Grant Proposals can be submitted on annual basis and with strong partnerships, careful planning and adequate landowner interest, Macon County could be positioned to submit a fresh, new proposal in the near future.

IEPA 319 Grant Planning & Implementation Grants

The larger Sangamon River Watershed has been designated a priority watershed for 319 Implementation Grant funding in 2022 by the IEPA, with grant applications due in August 2021. Both the Friends Creek Watershed and Big/Long Creek Watershed are positioned to pursue 319 Implementation Grant funding with recently completed watershed plans.

Public Education Programs

Education is provided to the general public, including adults and children, on soil and water conservation issues, careers in conservation, stormwater management, and erosion and sediment control. SWCD staff and board members provide time and energy in these efforts. This year, the following education programs were hosted or participated in as educators:

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Name of Event</i> | <i>Program Presented</i> | <i>People in Attendance</i> |
|--------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|
| 1/10/19 | Lady Landowners | Women in Agriculture | 35 |
| 2/4/19 | Contractor Pipeline Safety | Pipeline Safety | 13 |
| 2/21/19 | Contractors Meeting | ILR10 update, BMPs, Site inspections | 51 |
| 3/1/19 | Women Changing the Face of Agriculture | Careers in Agriculture | 300 |
| 3/7/19 | Annual SWCD Meeting | IDOT's Roadside Mowing Program for Pollinators | 21 |
| 3/14/19 | Lady Landowners | Women in Agriculture | 33 |
| 3/25/19 | Friends Creek Stakeholder Meeting | Watershed Plan | 4 |
| 4/11/19 | Land Use Council Envirothon | Wildlife, Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, Environmental issues | 50 |
| 4/27/19 | Festival of Spring | Friend Creek Watershed Plan, MS4 Basics | 325 |
| 5/1/19 | Agucation | Ag Conservation | 500 |
| 5/9/19 | Lady Landowners | Women in Agriculture | 36 |
| 5/16/19 | Conservation Day w/ Mclean Co. | Conservation Bingo | 420 |
| 5/23/19 | Friends Creek Stakeholder Meeting | Watershed Plan | 5 |
| 7/11/19 | Lady Landowners | Women in Agriculture | 35 |
| 7/12/19 | MS4 Stormwater Workshop, Champaign & Macon County | ILR10 Permit updates, BMPs | 50 |

| | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------|
| | MS4s | | |
| 8/27-28/19 | Farm Progress Show | Past, Present & Future of Ag | 500 |
| 9/4/19 | Watershed Tour w/ Bloomington | SWCD/City Agreement, BMPs | 9 |
| 9/12/19 | Lady Landowners Annual Bus Trip | KSI soil testing, USACE, SCCS Greenhouse, wine making | 30 |
| 10/10/19 | Fish Sale | Fish Sale | 16 |
| 11/14/19 | Lady Landowners | Women in Agriculture | 39 |
| Total Reached in FY19 | | | 2,472 |

Aside from these educational programs, the SWCD staff serve in the following capacity to enhance educational outreach throughout the county and the watershed:

- Assist Macon County Lady Landowners by maintaining their membership list and assisting with meeting notification and presenting at meetings
- Participate in and perform secretarial duties for the Heart of the Sangamon River Ecosystem Partnership meetings
- Update and maintain the SWCD website and Facebook pages with information that is pertinent to the mission of the District.

Closing Comments

We have included the financial report for the quarter ending December 31, 2019 with this report. If you would like more detailed financial information, you may request a copy of our CPA completed annual audit which we submit to the Illinois Department of Agriculture.

The staff and Board of Directors of the District thank the City for its continued support of our conservation efforts within the Lake Decatur Watershed. We truly could not accomplish what we do without your support, both financial and institutional. We would like to invite members of the City Council to visit us at the USDA Service Center at 3342 N. President Howard Brown Blvd., Decatur, Illinois 62521. We also can arrange personal tours of our watershed projects. If you have any questions, please call us at 217-877-5670, extension 3.

Board of Directors

David Carr, Chairman
Eric Veech, Vice Chairman
Katie Sellmeyer, Secretary / Treasurer
Chase Brown, Director
Ross Ferrill, Director

Staff

Manny Wei, Watershed Technician
Natalie Misner, Watershed Specialist
Angela Daily, Administrative Coordinator