

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

**CITY OF DECATUR
LAKE DECATUR WATERSHED PROGRAM**



Better Reflections through Soil Conservation

**Year End Report on the Lake Decatur Watershed Program
January 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

Introduction

This report summarizes the activities of the Macon County Soil and Water District during Fiscal Year 2019. The cost-share programs described in the next section are the foundation on which the SWCD operates and make possible the opportunity to pursue and secure grant funding from described in the subsequent sections. In addition to the Lake Decatur Watershed and Partners for Conservation funds, the SWCD receives \$126,969 through an agreement with the City of Decatur to perform outreach, education, and project design and implementation throughout the Lake Decatur Watershed. Through the reliable funding of these programs, the SWCD is able to look ahead and plan larger scale/multi-year projects as well as leverage these funds to generate more funding for work to be completed in Macon County and the Lake Decatur Watershed.

In FY19, the SWCD used the City's investment of \$151,969 to generate approximately another \$198,000 for work within the county. Much of this work was performed within the Lake Decatur Watershed through the completion of a watershed plan for the Friends Creek Watershed and through the Regional Conservation Partnership Program focusing on BMP implementation for nutrient and sediment loss. These programs are described later in the report.

The Macon County Soil and Water District staff and board of directors appreciate the continued support of the City of Decatur and its partners!

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 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. A total of 46 Land Disturbance Permits were issued in FY19. 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.

Other accomplishments in the MS4 program during FY19 included:

- Planning and executing a successful Stormwater Conference in February for contractors, planners, engineers, and city officials.

- Partnering with the Champaign County MS4 to provide a second stormwater conference in July.
- The creation of a new MS4 website (www.maconcleanwater.com) with a more user-friendly web hosting platform and mobile-friendly viewing. The transfer was completed by the SWCD and included significant content updates.
- Updates to the MS4 and detention basin inspection forms to simplify communication between the SWCD and contractors.

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. 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 practices selected and the point values assigned are determined by a group of scientists and researchers, including some farmers who are involved in research. That "Science Committee" base their analysis of recommended practices on the potential contribution to the goals of the NLRs. The total points are used in a scale to determine a rating of 1 to 5 Stars for each individual field.

The potential benefits and value of using this program include:

- decreased nutrient loss
- increased net farm income
- gain new farms to lease as land owners can evaluate tenants' contributions to conservation
- assist in securing local conservation cost share (when available)
- reduce crop insurance premiums
- assist producers in obtaining documentation to support potential water quality issues
- assist producers to obtain potential market incentives for sustainable cropping practices

Technical Assistance:

The Watershed Staff are available to answer erosion and flooding complaints in the City of Decatur and the watershed. SWCD staff received 21 requests for assistance over the course of FY19. Many of these were pertaining to the cost-share programs, fish sales, fish kills, drainage districts, plant identification, sediment basin installation, lake shore erosion and the cover crop insurance incentive program released by IDOA.

Grants

USDA's Regional Conservation Partnership Program:

The 2014-2019 RCPP Grant Agreement awarded to the Macon County SWCD for "BMP Implementation for Nutrient and Sediment Loss Reduction in Macon County, Illinois," for conservation in the Sangamon River Watershed concluded on September 30, 2019. This grant provided \$521,027 in federal grant assistance and through match provided by the many

partners involved in the project, another \$691,255 in nutrient and sediment loss reduction work was achieved throughout the county.

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.

RCPP 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 Watershed Planning & Implementation Grants:

During FY19, the Friends Creek Watershed Plan was completed and approved by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA). The SWCD was able use funding from cost-share programs to secure approximately \$120,000 in funding from the IEPA to complete this planning effort with approximately \$70,000 in match coming from the efforts of the SWCD and its many partners. The planning effort was completed under budget and on time, despite several challenges along the way.

While 319 Grants Applications can be submitted at any time, 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 of all ages 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 MS4s	ILR10 Permit updates, BMPs	50
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 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

FINANCIAL STATEMENT						
Lake Decatur Watershed Protection Program						
	City Allocation for MCSWCD Vendor # 796					
	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.	12/31/2019	
	January 1 - March 31, 2019	April 1 - June 30, 2019	July 1 - September 30, 2019	October 1 - December 31, 2019	Total Invoiced to City	
Operational Expenses	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.	FY ending 12/31/2019	Percent of Contract \$
Salary Watershed Technician	13,022.50	\$ 13,337.50	\$ 14,050.00	\$ 8,425.00	\$ 48,835.00	32%
Salary Watershed Specialist	7,247.28	\$ 6,049.40	\$ 9,892.99	\$ 11,307.66	\$ 34,497.33	23%
1/3 Salary Administrative Coordinator	2,700.00	\$ 3,126.00	\$ 4,144.00	\$ 4,144.00	\$ 14,114.00	9%
Payroll taxes	3,821.16	\$ 2,014.08	\$ 2,338.88	\$ 2,480.71	\$ 10,654.83	7%
Benefits	800.00	\$ 1,284.16	\$ 1,330.18	\$ 1,600.00	\$ 5,014.34	3%
BMP Implementation				\$ 25,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	16%
Meetings and Training	64.79	\$ 235.00	\$ 93.49	\$ 813.06	\$ 1,206.34	0.8%
Professional fees	140.85	\$ 263.38	\$ 252.71	\$ 467.49	\$ 1,124.43	0.7%
Insurance		\$ 3,454.94	\$ 716.60		\$ 4,171.54	2.7%
Outreach	804.43		\$ 632.25	\$ 1,964.00	\$ 3,400.68	2.2%
Education	16.65		\$ 1,001.00	\$ 25.73	\$ 1,043.38	0.7%
Internet		\$ 25.31	\$ 37.95	\$ 37.95	\$ 101.21	0.1%
Truck/ Insurance	18.50	\$ 42.45	\$ 69.48	\$ 51.28	\$ 181.71	0.1%
Office Equipment					\$ -	0.0%
Office Expenses	538.99	\$ 76.24	\$ 638.78	\$ 429.63	\$ 1,683.64	1.1%
Postage	18.14	\$ 18.14	\$ 132.34	\$ 52.60	\$ 221.22	0.1%
Total Expenses	29,193.29	29,926.60	35,330.65	\$ 56,799.11	\$ 151,249.65	100%
	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.	YTD 2019	
	1st Qtr.	2nd Qtr.	3rd Qtr.	4th Qtr.		Percentage Complete
Agreement Amount	\$ 151,969.00	\$ 122,775.71	92,849.11	\$ 57,518.46		
Total Invoiced to City	\$ 29,193.29	\$ 29,926.60	\$ 35,330.65	\$ 56,799.11		100%
Agreement Balance	\$ 122,775.71	\$ 92,849.11	\$ 57,518.46	\$ 719.35		