

Chapter 2.0 Goals and Objectives

2.1 East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) Watershed Steering Committee Goals

The East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) Watershed Steering Committee Steering Committee (Watershed Steering Committee) is a consortium of municipalities in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) watershed, resource agency professionals, environmental advocates, and local residents dedicated to the development of strategies to protect and restore East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River and its tributaries. The Watershed Steering Committee's primary goal is to work effectively to improve water quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution inputs in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) watershed, reduce flooding and improve stream habitat, while engaging a wide range of audiences in the Steering Committee's efforts.

2.2 Watershed Goals and Objectives

One of the Watershed Steering Committee's first tasks was the discussion and establishment of goals for the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River watershed. Stakeholders included in the goal setting process included the members of the Watershed Steering Committee and watershed residents that attended the watershed public meetings.

At the February 13, 2013, March 13, 2013, September 8, 2013, and October 9, 2013, East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) Watershed Steering Committee meetings, committee members dedicated a significant portion of the committee meeting to the identification of watershed concerns and setting of watershed goals. See Appendix A for the minutes of Watershed Steering Committee meetings. Additionally, at the public meeting held on March 7, 2013 and April 10, 2013, attendees that included more than 100 watershed residents and representatives from various local and state agencies were asked to express their watershed concerns and vision for the watershed. As part of the public meeting, attendees were split into four breakout groups and asked to provide input on general and specific water quality and flooding concerns. The information provided by the attendees was utilized by Watershed Steering Committee in preparing the goals and objectives for the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed-Based Plan.

As discussed above, prior to setting goals, stakeholders were asked to communicate their concerns and vision for the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) watershed. Stakeholder concerns included:

- Non-point source runoff
 - Agricultural runoff (silt, pesticides, fertilizers, etc)
 - Industrial runoff (oils, grease, etc)
 - Fecal coliform/e. coli

- The ecological condition of the stream channels including lack of fish and wildlife habit
- Hydrologic modification (erosion, channelization, lack of riparian habitat, etc)
- Development in the floodplain/Potential sources of non-point source pollution (oils, grease, etc)
- Problem hydraulic structures (undersized culverts, bridges, etc)
- Overbank flooding
- Stormwater management and drainage issues
- Uncompleted FEMA maps, especially the need for establishing base flow elevations in all Zone A areas
- Regulatory/enforcement differences between the ACOE Chicago District and the ACOE Rock Island District
- Funding challenges for large scale water quality/flood remediation projects

A detailed list of concerns including specific problem locations is included in Appendix B.

Goals were drafted directly from the concerns expressed by the Watershed Steering Committee members and watershed stakeholders. The final goals were adopted on October 9, 2013 meeting and capture the desired outcomes and vision for East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River (including Union Ditch and Virgil Ditch) watershed. Objectives assigned to each goal are intended to be measurable so that the Watershed Steering Committee can assess future progress made towards each goal. The goals are not listed by order of importance.

A. Protect and enhance overall surface and groundwater quality in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed

Objectives

- 1) Implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs) throughout the watershed to improve water quality by reducing nonpoint source pollution.
- 2) Restore riparian buffers along East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River and its tributaries.
- 3) Promote conservation tillage practices to reduce soil erosion and sedimentation
- 4) Promote nutrient management both in the rural and urban setting to alleviate the over application of nutrients
- 5) Encourage decision makers to undergo a groundwater study that includes detailed analysis of groundwater use and development of regulatory programs/recommendations aimed at protecting and improving groundwater quality.

B. Reduce existing flood damage in the watershed and prevent flooding from worsening

Objectives

- 1) Encourage decision makers to undertake a detailed hydraulic and hydrology study of the watershed.

- 2) Mitigate for existing flood damage by identifying parcels suitable for flood mitigation projects.
- 3) Reconnect channelized stream segments to the floodplain where feasible.
- 4) Implement stormwater best management practices (BMPs) throughout the watershed designed to reduce runoff and encourage infiltration.
- 5) Protect undeveloped floodplain from development.

C. Improve aquatic and wildlife habitat in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River watershed

Objectives

- 1) Identify opportunities for improving habitat along degraded stream channels using a natural channel design.
- 2) Identify opportunities for wetland restoration, creation and preservation within the watershed.
- 3) Restore riparian buffers along East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River and its tributaries.
- 4) Encourage local residents to utilize native species in their landscapes.
- 5) Identify opportunities for habitat improvements at parks and natural areas.

D. Develop open space in the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River watershed and provide recreational opportunities

Objectives

- 1) Identify open space along the waterways that would provide access to the waterway.
- 2) Identify open space aimed at protecting and preserving natural resources
- 3) Identify areas that can be used for multiple uses (trails, passive recreations)
- 4) Support DeKalb and Kane Counties' Future Land Use Plan which promotes conservation and open space corridors
- 5) Encourage private landowners to install filter strips or riparian buffers along stream corridors

E. Increase coordination between decision makers and other stakeholders in the watershed.

Objectives

- 1) Ensure communities adopt the East Branch South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed-Based Plan.
- 2) Encourage the adoption and/or revision of comprehensive plans and ordinances that support the watershed plan's goals and objectives.
- 3) Encourage communities to continue to be an active member of the Watershed Steering Committee following plan development.

- F. Raise stakeholder awareness (residents, public officials, etc) about the importance of best management practices of watershed stewardship

Objectives

- 1) Provide watershed stakeholders with an outreach plan that gives them the skills needed to implement the watershed plan.
- 2) Develop an urban outreach program for communities that will focus on stormwater management. This may include rain gardens, bioswales, and rainwater capturing.
- 3) Promote conservation programs for the agricultural community including providing meetings and tours to showcase BMPs.
- 4) Introduce new concepts into agriculture such as “nutrient farming” or as sometime referred to as “pay for environmental services” programs.