



Coming to a Stream Near You: Distribution of sample sites throughout the DRSCW program area.

Bioassessment sampling in 2007 will focus on 37 sites in the East Branch watershed and 56 sites in the Salt Creek watershed. Sampling will begin in July and run through to October.

DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup Members & Executive Board

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Stephen McCracken—Workgroup Coordinator *The Conservation Foundation*



DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup

Letter from the President

Dear Members,
 Welcome to this edition of the DuPage River/Salt Creek Workgroup (DRSCW) newsletter. The Workgroup has had a very active 12 months and has made some giant advances in a number of different arenas, much of it due to the work of our very active and dedicated members. The Workgroup is investigating a proposed project on the East Branch of the DuPage River involving the removal of a single low head dam in order to increase dissolved oxygen within that segment of river. Recently the USEPA has noticed our efforts and interviewed DRSCW officers and Conservation Foundation staff on what went into forming the Workgroup and what we hope to achieve over the next several years. That guidance might be valuable for folks in other states who are considering watershed approaches to water quality problems.

I'd like to welcome some new members, Bensenville, West Chicago and Woodridge as full agency members and CDM Engineering, RJN Group and Kabbes Engineering as associate members. Welcome all of you and we look forward to working with you. The Workgroup has completed its first year as a registered tax exempt organization and is now organizing to move a step further as a 501(c)(3) registered organization, which would allow for tax-deductible donations to be made to the organization. If we can garner donations, they may help significantly in future expenses. While on the subject of finances, 319 grant funding for the DRSCW is now approaching \$1,000,000, all leveraged using the annual dues of our members.

Once again, I'd like to thank all of the members for making the commitment to achieving the Clean Water Act goals for the East and West Branches of the DuPage River and for Salt Creek. By acting together, we can achieve those goals at the best cost for the agencies and for all of DuPage County.

Dennis Streicher

Bioassessment moves onto East Branch and Salt Creek for 2007

During the summer of 2006, the Midwest Biodiversity Institute (MBI) sampled macro-invertebrates, fish and habitat quality at 41 locations on the West Branch of the DuPage River and 12 of its tributaries. The results are summarized below:

- A total of 63 fish species, 3 hybrids and an average of 540 fish per site were collected. The most common species were green sunfish (14%), bluegill (10%), bluntnose minnow (10%), sand shiner (9%), white sucker (8%), and creek chub (5%).
- Fish Index of Biotic Integrity (IBI) values, a scale for measuring health of the aquatic community used by Illinois EPA, running from A to E in descending quality, indicated that the stream was a class D (limited) and E resource (restricted). The quality of the fish community improved as sampling moved downstream.
- Macroinvertebrate Index of Biotic Integrity (MIBI) values indicated poor quality in the upper one-half of the West Branch improving to fair quality downstream.
- The habitat assessment indicated that West Branch is suitable for supporting a balanced, warmwater assemblage of aquatic organisms consistent with the IEPA General Use designation.

- Some of the smallest stream sites (draining less than 5 square miles) harbored reproducing fish communities, one site with 14 species. Only three sites had fewer than 3 fish species. All this biological data is supported by water chemistry data collected for each site. This summer it's East Branch and Salt Creek's turn. For an area wide map of the program activities please see the back page.



Staff from MBI sample fish on the East Branch of the DuPage River

DO Feasibility Project

The Workgroup has approached the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County with a proposal to remove the dam and restore the stream at the Churchill Woods Forest Preserve in Glen Ellyn. The dam, which impounds approximately 70 acre feet of water, has been identified as the principle contributing factor to low levels of dissolved oxygen (DO) on the East Branch of the DuPage River. The water quality model for the East Branch predicts that under present



Churchill Woods Dam, Churchill Woods Forest Preserve, Glen Ellyn conditions, average daily

DO levels would fall to 1mg/L during periods of high temperatures and low water flows. Under the same weather conditions but following dam removal, the model predicts DO levels as rebounding to an average daily value of 6 mg/l. The Workgroup's preference would be to restore a meandering stream and wetlands in the areas of the current impoundment.

While the results for DO are very promising, there would be other benefits from such a project: the upstream habitat would improve as may the phosphorus levels in the impoundment, a second pollutant for which it is listed. Forest Preserve staff have also noted recreational benefits with the project creating a more pleasant environment for visitors during the summer months. The Forest Preserve Commissioners have signaled that the Workgroup should proceed to talk to residents adjacent to the reserve and other stakeholders in order to develop the project vision and cost estimates.

DO Monitoring Update

Following the opening of new locations in Hanover Park on the west Branch and the Churchill Woods impoundment (see above article), the DRSCW DO monitoring network is now made up of eleven sites. The recent purchase of four new HACH DS5X LDO probes will greatly enhance the ability of the Workgroup to look at the DO profile of other stream sections not currently covered by the monitoring program.



Larry Stahl and Lance Winterland of Hanover Park Public Works recovering a DO sonde from the West Branch

Chloride Reduction Study

The Workgroup's Chloride Usage Education and Reduction Program Study is being conducted to evaluate methods for reducing the quantity of chloride in Salt Creek and the East and West Branches of DuPage River watersheds. The study was motivated by recent limitations to the allocated total maximum daily load (TMDL) of chloride in the respective watersheds. In October of 2004, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) approved chloride TMDLs for Salt Creek and the East and West Branches of DuPage River. The TMDLs call for reductions in chloride loading, specifically from winter road salt application in the watersheds. The Workgroup appointed a Chloride Subcommittee to lead the study to evaluate current road salting practices and recommend alternative practices for the reduction of chloride loading to the watersheds. Maintaining roadway safety while reducing chloride contributions from deicing activities is the goal. CDM is providing consulting services for this study.

The study began with data collection from local public agency deicing programs to form a baseline of current practices, products used, quantities consumed and storage practices. Research was conducted to reveal and develop a variety of potential measures that could reduce chloride loading to the watersheds. The measures were evaluated for feasibility and potential effectiveness in reducing chloride use and discussed with local public agency deicing program managers for consideration and feedback on implementation issues. The study has benefited from active participation and information from the deicing program managers. Similar operational information was also obtained from a sample of private deicing businesses that typically service large parking areas.

Alternative practices and alternative products have been identified that show promise for reducing chlorides in the watersheds from roadway deicing practices. Compared to conventional rock salt use, alternatives are available that provide the desired level of roadway safety while reducing chloride usage. The feasibility and costs of the alternatives will now be considered by the subcommittee and deicing program managers before it is sent back to the Workgroup for approval.

The study will result in formal recommendations and a preliminary implementation plan for alternative deicing practices, including:

- Improving deicing program staff training and education
- Improving salt storage and handling practices
- Watershed-wide implementation of alternative deicing methods, such as pre-wetting and anti-icing
- Use of alternative non-chloride products, such as acetate deicers or organic derivatives.



An Anti Icing Team in Action. Courtesy of Village of Hanover Park

