

## Illinois American Water Announces Over \$25,000 in Environmental Grants for Water Source Protection

**Belleville, Ill. (May 19, 2020)** – Illinois American Water is announcing environmental grants for eight watershed initiatives across the state. The environmental grant recipients will receive a share of funds totaling \$25,672 for community projects that improve, restore or protect watersheds.

According to Justin Ladner, Illinois American Water President, including the 2020 commitment more than \$247,000 in environmental grants will have been contributed to 74 projects since 2009. He said, “At Illinois American Water we know how important it is to protect our water resources. Our efforts include implementing green technology in our operations as well as partnering with local environmental stewards. The environmental grant program connects us with our environmental heroes and their innovative projects to improve watersheds, parks, prairies and environmental education. We are proud to contribute to their efforts.”

Due to the impact from COVID-19, grantees will have an extended timeframe to complete their projects. Projects should be completed by March 31, 2021. Illinois American Water’s 2020 Environmental Grant recipients and projects are described below.

**Bolingbrook Park District** will receive a \$3,500 grant for the Phase IV DuPage River and Hidden Lakes Bank Stabilization and Habitat Enhancement Project. Funds will be used to purchase native plant plugs and coconut logs which will be installed along the eroding shoreline to absorb water flow and sediment. Bolingbrook Park District will partner with The Conservation Foundation, Starbucks Corp, Illinois Smallmouth Bass Alliance and Ulta Corp. The project will help improve water quality and local ecosystems which are home to hundreds of species.

**Champaign County Environmental Stewards (CCES)** will receive their grant request in full. A \$1,067 grant will be used to expand the limited battery collection options available to residents. The CCES will provide information about recycling rechargeable batteries and hold collection events to collect old batteries. This effort will assist in providing safe and convenient collection locations and prevent these materials from entering water sources. The group will partner with Champaign County and Call2Recycle.

**Conservation Foundation in Naperville** will receive a \$5,000 grant to work with the DuPage and Will County Forest Preserves, local communities and park districts to strategically place signs, pet waste bags and trash cans. These additions will help prevent waste from going into local water ways. Both pet owners and park patrons will benefit for years to come from this innovate approach to water source protection. Forest Preserve District of Will County, Forest Preserve District of DuPage County, Lower DuPage River Watershed Coalition, and Lower Des Plaines Watershed Group are project partners.

**Friends of Fox River (FOFR)** will receive a \$2,500 grant to support expanding a water quality education and story mapping project. Funds will be used to create and print FOFR stream guides. The guides will be used during an in-stream experience. The FOFR educator team engages more than 5,000 teachers and students each year.

**Nature at the Confluence in South Beloit** will receive a \$3,700 grant for environmental improvement efforts in the Rock River watershed. Funds will be used to clean the river and creek banks. Signage explaining the significance of the Kelly Creek watershed will also be created and installed. A new public use trail will be constructed. Nature at the Confluence partners with City of South Beloit, Friends of the Fox River, Rock River Trail Visitor Center and Welty Environmental Center.

**Peoria Park District** will receive their grant request in full. An \$860 grant will support the Illinois River Sweep. Funds will help supply gloves, trash bags, dumpsters and tire recycling. Illinois American Water has supported these efforts for many years.

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Peoria** will receive a \$5,000 grant to support efforts to decrease storm water runoff. The funds will be used to build a rain garden and create a butterfly sanctuary. St. Paul's Episcopal Church will partner with U of I Extension Master Gardeners to ensure successful planning. When social distancing measures are lifted, volunteers from the Dream Center and local Boy Scout Troops will be engaged.

**Urbana Park District** will receive a \$4,000 grant to support the Meadowbrook Park Habitat Enhancement and Floodplain Prairie Expansion Project. Funds would be used to plant native prairie seeds and expand the established prairie. Meadowbrook Park is one of the largest parks in Champaign County. The project will support water quality, stormwater infiltration and habitat enhancement.

**Customers can make a difference every day by using water wisely. Wise water use tips, including how to detect leaks, can be found at [www.illinoisamwater.com](http://www.illinoisamwater.com).**

**About Illinois American Water** - Illinois American Water, a subsidiary of American Water (NYSE: AWK), is the largest investor-owned water utility in the state, providing high-quality and reliable water and/or wastewater services to approximately 1.3 million people. American Water also operates a customer service center in Alton and a quality control and research laboratory in Belleville. With a history dating back to 1886, American Water is the largest and most geographically diverse U.S. publicly traded water and wastewater utility company. The company employs more than 6,800 dedicated professionals who provide regulated and market-based drinking water, wastewater and other related services to 15 million people in 46 states. American Water provides safe, clean, affordable and reliable water services to our customers to make sure we keep their lives flowing. For more information, visit [amwater.com](http://amwater.com) and follow American Water on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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