

NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 18, 2021

CONTACT:

Kim Biggs, Illinois EPA – 217-558-1536

kim.biggs@illinois.gov

Shelly Seman, Executive Director

Sangamon County SWCD – 217-241-6635 x3

michelle.seman@il.nacdnet.net

Illinois EPA Awards \$420,000 to Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District

Water Quality Improvements Continue in Lake Springfield Watershed

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) recently awarded a \$420,000 Section 319 Clean Water Act grant to the Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) for the “Lake Springfield Watershed-based Plan Implementation-Phase 3 Project.” Implementation of this grant will be a cooperative effort between many partners including Illinois EPA, City of Springfield’s City Water, Light and Power (CWLP), Sangamon County SWCD, the Lake Springfield Watershed Resource Planning Committee, and the agricultural and urban watershed stakeholders.

“Stakeholders in the Lake Springfield Watershed have been working together with federal and State partners since the 1980s to protect and improve Lake Springfield’s water quality,” said Illinois EPA Director John J. Kim. “The implementation of the past and these future Best Management Practices (BMPs), plus the local landowners and producers’ commitment to operate and maintain the BMPs as designed for 10 years or longer, is a testament to just how important water quality is to everyone.”

This Illinois EPA Section 319 grant continues efforts to implement the 2017 Lake Springfield Watershed-based Management Plan, which was developed by local watershed stakeholders and State and federal partners and provides a guide for the watershed’s stakeholders to follow for many years. It incorporates the nutrient loss reduction goals and milestones for phosphorus and nitrogen, and BMPs recommended for implementation as outlined in the 2015 Illinois Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy and the 2016 Total Maximum Daily Load Report for the Lake Springfield and the Sugar Creek Watershed.

“City Water, Light & Power is eager to work with our partners Sangamon County Soil and Water Conservation District and Illinois EPA to continue to improve Lake Springfield’s watershed. Through the Illinois EPA Section 319 grant, we can increase the use of Best Management Practices and expand outreach and education to improve the water quality of Lake Springfield, our City’s only source for drinking water. Through our combined efforts working with the farming and urban communities, we can keep sediment and nutrients from entering our Lake,” said CWLP’s Chief Utility Engineer Doug Brown.

Lake Springfield Watershed/2

“As a stakeholder in this watershed, please do your part to improve the water quality of Lake Springfield. The BMPs you implement will provide many environmental benefits for everyone,” stated Chris Waters, Chairman of the Sangamon County SWCD.

The Sangamon County SWCD, on behalf of the group, applied for a Section 319 grant from Illinois EPA. The total project budget is \$700,000, with Illinois EPA providing 60 percent, or \$420,000 in grant funds, CWLP contributing up to \$280,000 (40 percent cash match), along with additional in-kind services and match from the SWCD and its project partners.

Information and outreach efforts over the next two years will focus on providing the latest in water quality improvement information to this watershed’s rural and urban stakeholders and the general public. These efforts will be accomplished through informational meetings, field days, watershed tours, demonstration site meetings, special “machine shed-type” rural and urban meetings, printed fact sheets, newspaper articles, newsletters provided through mailings, websites, TV, radio, and social media sources. **Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Center for Disease Control guidelines will be followed during all person-to-person meetings and watershed events.**

The grant project manager, Barb Mendenhall, looks forward to working with watershed stakeholders over the two-year lifespan of the grant. She can be reached at abmende@sbcglobal.net. Contact the Sangamon County SWCD at (217) 241-6635 ext. 3 or email Shelly Seman at michelle.seman@il.nacdnet.net or Jake Vancil at jake.vancil@il.nacdnet.net with additional questions about this grant or the Lake Springfield Watershed Project.

###