Peoria Lakes Basin Alliance

"A Unified Voice for the Restoration and Preservation of the Peoria Lakes"

For further information regarding the Alliance, please contact the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission 309-673-9330

Heartland Water Resources Council of Central Illinois
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(309) 637-5253

Representatives
Executive Director:
Tom Tincher

Board Members:
Wayne Ingram

The Nature Conservancy
Protecting nature. Preserving life.™

301 S.W. Adams St.
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Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 673-6689

Representatives
State Director:
Michelle Carr

Board Members:
Chris Ryan
Ken Katch

Tri-County Regional Planning Commission
456 Fulton St., Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602
(309) 673-9330

Representatives
Executive Director:
Eric Miller

Board Members:
Russ Crawford
Michael Phelan
Roy Bockler (Alternate)

PEORIA LAKES BASIN ALLIANCE

AGENDA

Wednesday, January 08, 2020 at 1:30 pm
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, Illinois 61602

1. Call to Order
2. Public Comment
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for 13 November 2019
4. Project Development Recap
5. Prioritize Location
   a. Reach (Lower, Middle, Upper)
   b. Specific Location (Tributary, In-Lake, Adjacent, Etc.)
6. Prioritize Measures
7. Other
   a. Next scheduled meeting
      i. 12 February 2020
8. Adjournment

PEORIA LAKES BASIN ALLIANCE
Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 3:00 pm
456 Fulton Street, Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order**
   Ingram called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

Attendees:

The Nature Conservancy:	Jason Beverlin, Doug Blodgett (phone)
Heartland Water Resources Council:	Tom Tincher, Wayne Ingram
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission:	Eric Miller, Reema Abi-Akar, Russ Crawford (phone), Ray Lees, Roy Bockler

2. **Public Comment**
   No public comment.

3. **Approval od Meeting Minutes for October 9, 2019**
   Miller moved to approve the October 9, 2019 minutes and Beverlin seconded. Motion passed.

4. **Old Business**
   a. **PLBA Dashboard**
   Ingram asked for a reminder about what the floating islands are and how they'd fit into the river ecology. Miller and Abi-Akar discussed this topic, saying that Chuck Theiling had considered these as a potential option in the past, but others at the US Army Corps of Engineers were unsure if they would be viable in such shallow water as the Illinois River. Hence, the "floating islands" topic is still listed as "ongoing" status and will be until further notice.

   Bockler asked about the PLCCP and if certain projects have been prioritized. Miller said that the group has been looking into this issue to identify different options. Blodgett mentioned that the USACE Rock Island District has begun accepting factsheets for UMRR projects. He said that there are no projects that the IDNR is the non-federal sponsor. Therefore, the Illinois River is likely to lose out on this program until the IDNR is further engaged. He said that the Quincy Bay stakeholder group formed a nonprofit to submit their project. Blodgett is doubtful that the USACE will accept this recently created group. If so, this could open the doors to Peoria Lakes future project. Blodgett said he will speak further with IDNR about collaboration. Miller said that they are working to get on a call with Director Colleen Callahan. Bockler said we should be willing to work around her schedule and move the PLBA meeting time if necessary.

Blodgett said that there are eight UMRR projects being considered, all on a portion of the Mississippi River and none on the Illinois. He said he participated on the Illinois Rivers Coordinating Council meeting, and the Lieutenant Governor seemed interested. Miller asked if the Brandon Road project near Chicago is part of this effort. Blodgett said that the State of Illinois included it in the capital bill.

Tincher and Bockler said that we shouldn't wait to prioritize projects. They suggested a half day workshop to conduct the prioritization process. Miller said we should find a way to select projects with the highest benefits, lowest-hanging fruit, etc. Abi-Akar mentioned that staff had reached out to Laura Keefer with the Illinois State Water Survey to ask about help with recommended studies listed in the PLCCP; these were not fully resolved. Ingram said that even if we do get a chance to conduct the studies in the future, we should have an idea of what projects are of highest priority.

Blodgett said that other states are just deciding not to be non-federal cost share partners, and it looks like Illinois is getting ready to do the same. He said we can identify projects that don't necessarily need maintenance. For example, opening up the side channels would mean the water will be allowed to do what it wants, even if it dries up in those side channels. Someone then mentioned that projects without any operations and maintenance should be funded. But, Beverlin said, that might mean we unintentionally throw out the best projects. He said that we should prioritize projects that we know we can do. The group agreed to hold the meeting on December 11 earlier in the day, at 1:00, 1:30, or 2:00 p.m. to give time to prioritize.

5. New Business

a. Peoria Heights Illinois Valley Mayors Meeting Debrief
AND

b. Spring Bay Development Debrief

Bockler discussed this mayor's meeting. Its purpose was to collaborate with stakeholders on both sides of the river. A meeting on December 16 will take place in Chillicothe.

The Riverview Economic Development Coalition is a new group being created in the region. Bockler said it will ideally include eight government bodies, including but not limited to Peoria Heights, Henry, Sparland, and Spring Bay. Its purpose would be to promote upper river scenic byways and identify the assets. Bockler said he is working with Kim Blickinstaff's marketing person to create a website and identify events in the region.

Bockler said that the Sankoty Resort will be a Spring Bay-based hunting location, and Kim Blickinstaff will bring back Alfresco Park. He is interested in knowing where all the empty buildings are and asked if there is a list. Bockler said ideally the process will

promote multiple communities and projects at a time. Miller said that Ray Lees was also present at that meeting and said that it was a positive collaboration. Bockler said that this initiative was privately funded.

6. Member Reports

a. Tri-County Regional Planning Commission.

Miller brought up the topic of ADM/ARTCO dredging and sand placement. He said that the parties are working to move forward and trying to make a deal between Paul Rosenbohm and ADM/ARTCO, although Rosenbohm has just gone through a hip replacement surgery.

Miller said he spoke with Todd Hubmer of Minnesota, who wanted to conduct a plan for the whole Illinois River. Miller said this collaboration could be a possibility, but the scope would have to be decreased significantly. Miller said that once the group prioritizes projects, it may be worth contacting Hubmer once more to see if his collaboration can fit in.

Bockler asked about the status of the Beneficial Use project. Miller said that there are studies being conducted at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and the ICT contract has yet to begin since it is still being developed. Miller also mentioned that the Illinois Pollution Control Board is the entity that decides if material is considered solid waste or not (referring to quality).

Finally, Miller said that the City of Peoria has a new public works director, and staff is meeting with him to discuss potential projects that the city and TCRPC can collaborate on.

b. The Nature Conservancy

Beverlin said that tens of thousands of birds have been at Emiquon recently. The public waterfowl hunting program opened on a positive note, and thousands of people have come to Emiquon for tours. Beverlin said that they were not able to dewater like they'd hoped to this year, but they plan to begin next year. They are working with Ducks Unlimited to fix a levee, which is part of a levee district. AmeriCorps representatives, in a partnership with local municipalities, have helped with invasive species removal.

Blodgett mentioned a meeting tomorrow night regarding nutrient credits from wetland restoration relating to Kickapoo Creek (focusing on Horseshoe Bottoms). This could potentially relate back to the Peoria Lakes projects in the future.

c. Heartland Water Resources Council

Tincher focused on RiverTowns USA. He said he wants to continue working with municipalities and other stakeholders (such as the Spirit of Peoria) in the region to

reinforce Peoria as a regional hub. Tincher said that Heartland will focus its energy on the Lower Peoria Lake. They are confirming a Lower Lake riverfront plan with a focus on improvements. He said that everything will revolve around the transportation entities: the Spirit of Peoria, Peoria Charter Coach, and others that reach outside the region.

Tincher mentioned the possibility of collaborating with Bockler, Blickinstaff, and others. he said the next step is to set up meetings with the City of Peoria and others. Tincher also emphasized the importance of collaborating with property owners.

7. Other

a. Next scheduled meeting: December 11, 2019

This will likely be at 1:00, 1:30, or 2:00 p.m. to ensure more time for the project prioritization.

8. Adjournment

Ingram adjourned the meeting at 4:29 p.m.

RECAP OF PEORIA LAKES COMPREHENSIVE CONSERVATION PLAN **PRIORITIZATION** PROCESS

WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN THE PAST

TO DETERMINE

WHAT WE WILL DO TODAY

OVERALL PROCESS COMPONENTS

1. SORTED MEASURES INTO **ESSENTIAL ECOSYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS** (EECs)
2. SORTED MEASURES INTO PROJECT **OBJECTIVES**
3. SORTED MEASURES INTO **WATERSHED AREAS** (SOURCES, PATHWAYS, SINKS)
4. **PRIORITIZED** CONSERVATION MEASURES
   a. OPEN HOUSE PARTICIPANTS (PUBLIC)
   b. PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE (PRC) PARTICIPANTS

ESSENTIAL ECOSYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS (EECs)

- Hydrology
- Geomorphology
- Water Quality
- Habitat
- Biota
- BONUS: Social & Economic

MEASURES CATEGORIZED INTO EECs

EECs*	Measures
Geomorphology	Agricultural Water BMPs Erosion Control BMPs Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Nutrient Farming Sediment Detention Basins
Water Quality, Habitat, Biota	Drawdowns Submersed Aquatic Vegetation
Water Quality	Agricultural Water BMPs Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Nutrient Farming
Hydrology, Geomorphology, Habitat, Biota	Floodplain Recapture Nutrient Farming
Geomorphology, Habitat	Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management
Habitat, Biota	Beneficial Use of Sediment Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging, and Sediment Placement Invasive Fish Species Secondary Channel
Social & Economic	Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors Invasive Fish Species Secondary Channel

* Essential Ecosystem Characteristics

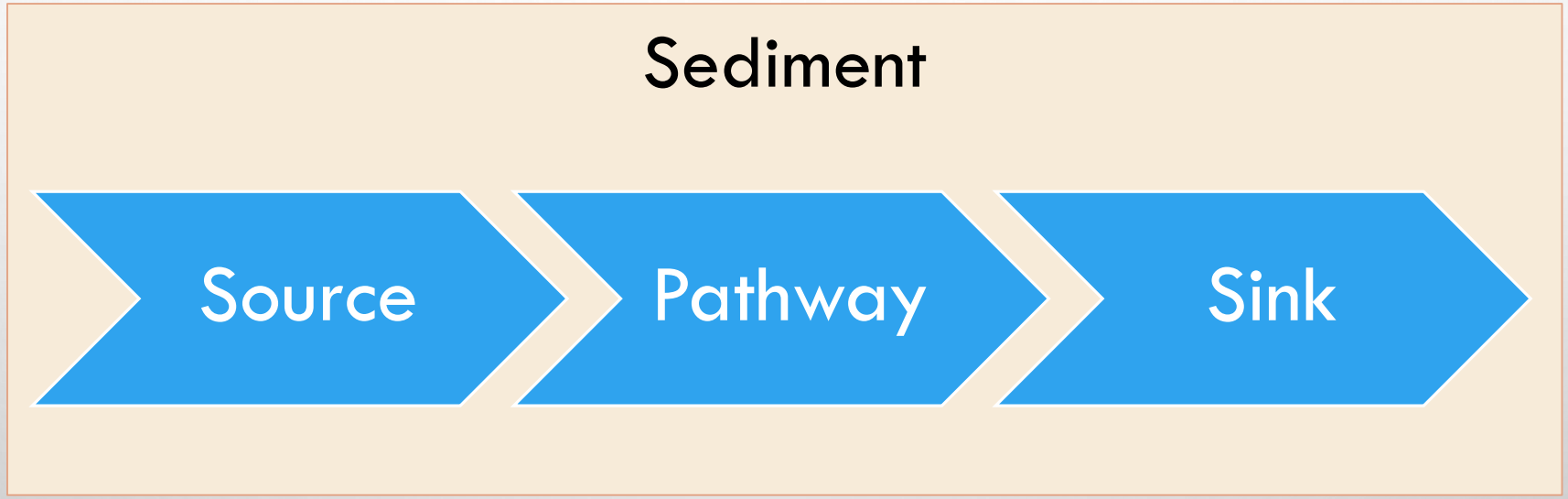
PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- **OBJECTIVE 1:** REDUCE TOTAL SEDIMENT DELIVERY TO THE PEORIA LAKES.
- **OBJECTIVE 2:** INCREASE THE ACREAGE OF AQUATIC VEGETATION IN THE PEORIA LAKES.
- **OBJECTIVE 3:** IMPROVE PEORIA LAKES WATER QUALITY.
- **OBJECTIVE 4:** IMPROVE AND PROTECT WETLAND ACRES, FLOODPLAIN ACRES, AND STREAMBANK MILES IN THE PEORIA LAKES.
- **OBJECTIVE 5:** IMPROVE AND PROTECT RIVER BLUFF AND STEEP SLOPE AREAS ALONG PEORIA LAKES.
- **OBJECTIVE 6:** IMPROVE AND DIVERSIFY DEEPWATER HABITAT AND INCREASING NUMBER OF NATIVE FISHES IN PEORIA LAKES.

MEASURES CATEGORIZED INTO OBJECTIVES

	Objectives	Measures
1	Reduce total sediment delivery to the Peoria Lakes (measured by reduction of annual tonnage of sediment entering the Peoria Lakes).	Agricultural Water BMPs Erosion Control BMPs Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Nutrient Farming Sediment Detention Basins
2	Increase the acreage of aquatic vegetation in the Peoria Lakes.	Drawdowns Submersed Aquatic Vegetation
3	Improve Peoria Lakes water quality.	Agricultural Water BMPs Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Nutrient Farming
4	Improve and protect wetland acres, floodplain acres, and streambank miles in the Peoria Lakes.	Floodplain Recapture Nutrient Farming
5	Improve and protect river bluff and steep slope areas along Peoria Lakes	Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management
6	Improve and diversify deep-water habitat and increase number of native fish in Peoria Lakes.	Beneficial Use of Sediment Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging, and Sediment Placement Invasive Fish Species Secondary Channel
7	Improve quality of life in the region.	Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors Invasive Fish Species Secondary Channel

WATERSHED AREAS



MEASURES CATEGORIZED INTO WATERSHED AREAS

Measures	Source/Pathway/Sink
Agricultural Water BMPs	Source
Erosion Control BMPs	Source
Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management	Source
Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs	Source
Nutrient Farming	Pathway
Sediment Detention Basins	Pathway
Drawdowns	Sink
Submersed Aquatic Vegetation	Sink
Agricultural Water BMPs	Source
Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs	Source
Nutrient Farming	Pathway
Floodplain Recapture	Pathway
Nutrient Farming	Pathway
Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management	Source
Beneficial Use of Sediment	Sink
Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging, and Sediment Placement	Sink
Invasive Fish Species	Sink
Secondary Channel	Sink
Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs	Source
Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors	Pathway
Invasive Fish Species	Sink
Secondary Channel	Sink

PRIORITIZATION PROCESS: STICKER EXERCISE

1. USING STICKERS, **OPEN HOUSE** PARTICIPANTS PRIORITIZED MEASURES BASED ON:
   a. **ENVIRONMENT**
   b. **QUALITY OF LIFE**
   c. **FEASIBILITY/SUSTAINABILITY**
2. **PROJECT REVIEW COMMITTEE** DID THE SAME

RESULTS OF PRIORITIZATION

1. Agricultural Water BMPs
2. Beneficial Use of Sediment
3. Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors
4. Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging, & Sediment Placement
5. Drawdowns
6. Erosion Control BMPs
7. Floodplain Recapture
8. Invasive Fish Species
9. Nutrient Farming
10. Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management

TOP 3 PRIORITIZED MEASURES

Top Measures	EECs	Objective(s)	Watershed Area
Agricultural Water BMPs	Geomorphology Water Quality	1. Reduce sediment 3. Improve water quality	Source
Beneficial Use of Sediment	Habitat Biota	6. Diversify deepwater habitat	Sink
Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors	Social & Economic	7. Improve quality of life	Pathway

Not covered:

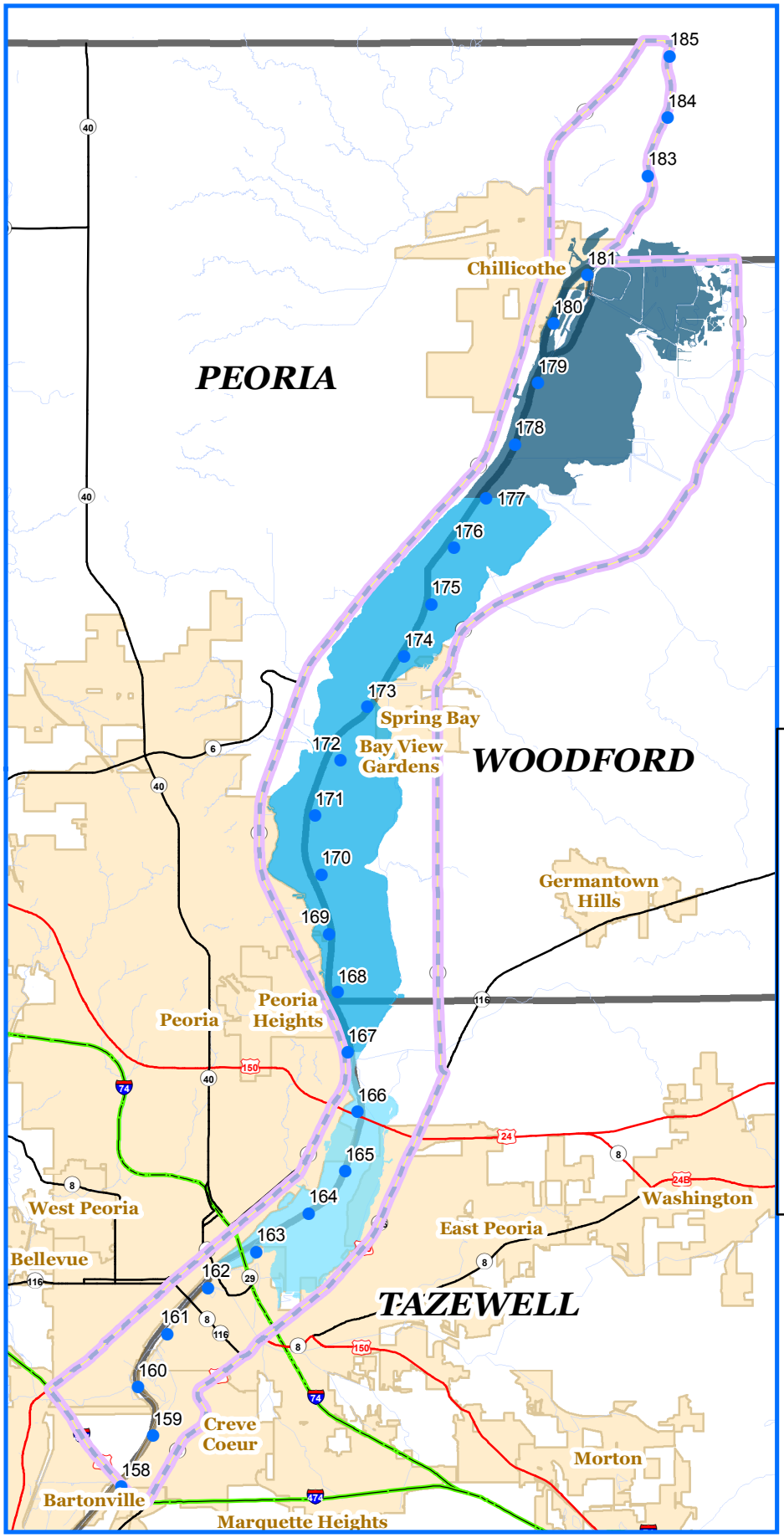
Hydrology

2. Increase aquatic vegetation
4. Protect wetlands
5. Protect steep slopes

PLCCP Prioritized Measures, Categorized

	All Prioritized Measures	EECs	Objective(s)	Watershed Area
1	Agricultural Water BMPs	Geomorphology Water Quality	1. Reduce sediment 3. Improve water quality	Source
2	Beneficial Use of Sediment	Habitat Biota	6. Diversify deepwater habitat	Sink
3	Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors	Social & Economic	7. Improve quality of life	Pathway
4	Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging, and Sediment Placement	Habitat Biota	6. Diversify deepwater habitat	Sink
5	Drawdowns	Water Quality Habitat Biota	2. Increase aquatic vegetation	Sink
6	Erosion Control BMPs	Geomorphology	1. Reduce sediment	Source
7	Floodplain Recapture	Hydrology Geomorphology Habitat Biota	4. Protect wetlands	Pathway
8	Invasive Fish Species	Habitat Biota Social & Economic	6. Diversify deepwater habitat 7. Improve quality of life	Sink
9	Nutrient Farming	Geomorphology Water Quality Habitat Biota Hydrology	1. Reduce sediment 3. Improve water quality 4. Protect wetlands	Pathway
10	Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management	Geomorphology Habitat	5. Protect steep slopes	Source
11	Secondary Channel	Habitat Biota Social & Economic	6. Diversify deepwater habitat 7. Improve quality of life	Sink
12	Sediment Dention Basins	Geomorphology	1. Reduce sediment	Pathway
13	Submersed Aquatic Vegetation	Water Quality Habitat Biota	2. Increase aquatic vegetation	Sink
14	Urban Stormwater Modification BMPs	Geomorphology Water Quality Social & Economic	1. Reduce sediment 3. Improve water quality 7. Improve quality of life	Source

Peoria Lakes

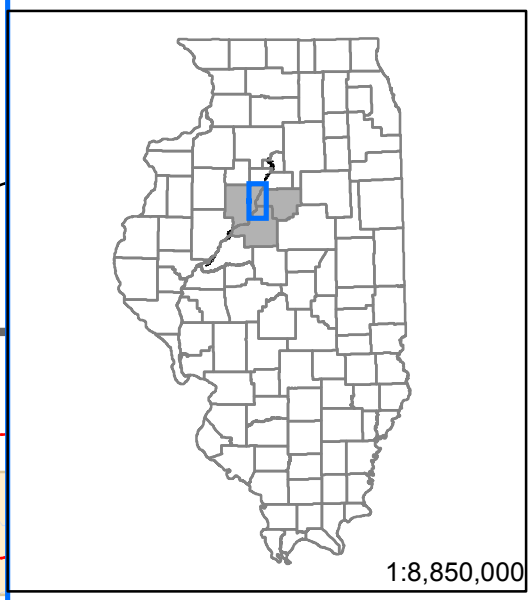


Peoria Lakes

- Lower Peoria Lake
- Middle Peoria Lake
- Upper Peoria Lake
- PLBA Boundary
- River Mile
- Tributary

Major Roads

- Interstate
- State Highway
- U.S. Highway
- Municipalities
- County Boundaries



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TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

0 1 2 4 Miles

Definition of Measures

Agricultural Water BMPs: Practices that consist of an extensive subset of best management practices (BMPs) related to water flow and erosion management in farm and rural areas.

Backwater Restoration: Enhancing existing aquatic habitats that are connected to the main channel, sometimes seasonally or periodically, characterized by slow currents, shallow water, and silt substrates.

Beneficial Use of Sediment: Exploring an innovative model to turn dredged material (fine sediment and sand) initially categorized as "waste" into engineered topsoil that is "manufactured" in the region and commercially valuable to a number of regional markets.

Conservation & Recreation Corridor Anchors: Using lakefront property to develop and connect conservation areas, lakefront parks, recreation facilities, and hiking/biking trails within the Peoria Lakes corridor.

Deepwater Area Creation, Dredging & Sediment Placement: Dredging involves removing sand and silt from the river bottom. This in turn creates deepwater areas in the Peoria Lakes, which can create more habitat for living things. Sand and silt from the river bottom, which make up the dredged material, can be used beneficially to create islands or manufacture soil, for example.

Drawdowns: Lowering water level in backwater lakes with the aid of Barrier Island Management Areas (BIMAs). Drawdowns allow for the compaction and management of sediment while providing a valuable habitat resource.

Education Component: Incorporate environmental educational lessons for both school-age children and the public at large to ensure that the community is aware of, understand them, and see human's role in local environmental issues.

Erosion Control BMPs: Practices that consist of an extensive subset of best management practices (BMPs) that manages stormwater impacts by stabilizing eroding ravines and gullies.

Floodplain Recapture: Generally, refers to levee alterations in areas within the floodplain that are not currently flooded and could be made more ecologically productive if connected with the river and restored with native plant and bottomland forest species. In Peoria Lakes, floodplain ecosystems can also be re-created in permanently flooded areas of the Peoria Lakes using BIMAs.

Invasive Fish Species: Non-indigenous species that adversely affect the habitats they invade. Common carp and the four Asian carp species (bighead, silver, black, and grass) are invasive fish species present in the Upper Mississippi River Basin, including the Peoria Lakes area.

Island Creation: Using dredged material, made up of sand and silt from the river bottom, to construct island features in the Lakes.

Nutrient Farming: A market-based strategy that creates a financial engine that restores or creates wetlands for the purpose of managing nutrients and trapping sediment. The nutrients removed from the waterway can be measured, counted as credits, and sold to communities and industries to meet water quality standards.

Prairie & Bluff Restoration & Management: Vegetation management of flat and steep slope wooded areas to reduce erosion and stormwater runoff and to restore the area to what it previously was. The ridgeline bordering Peoria Lakes was once a diverse habitat of open forest interspersed with areas of prairie.

Secondary Channel: Dredging and island construction to create multiple channels to create flow diversity in the Peoria Lakes. In addition to linking lakefront marinas and activity centers, this could also create deepwater habitat areas.

Sediment Detention Basins: Excavated areas installed on, or adjacent to, tributaries of rivers and streams to allow for the entrapment of sediment to prevent it from flowing into the Peoria Lakes.

Submersed Aquatic Vegetation: Restoring dense strands of aquatic plants, generally including rooted vascular plants that grow up to the water surface. These live-in shallow waters, where sunlight penetrates to the bottom.

Tributary Stream Stabilization: Vegetative, structural or combination treatments designed to stabilize and reduce erosion in streams.

Urban Stormwater BMPs: Practices that consist of an extensive subset of best management practices (BMPs) that address urban stormwater quantity and quality. These practices are also known as green infrastructure and low impact development.