



MITIGATION PROJECT

SPRING BROOK CREEK AND WETLAND RESTORATION PROJECT, PHASE ONE

The Illinois Tollway partnered with the Forest Preserve District of DuPage County to improve a half-mile section of the Spring Brook No. 1 Creek that runs through the St. James Farm Forest Preserve, reconfiguring the creek to replicate a more natural, meandering stream, including shoreline improvements and habitat creation.

Construction started in 2014, was completed in 2015 and then monitored and maintained for five years.

PROJECT SUMMARY

Originally excavated in the early 1900s as a drainage ditch, Spring Brook No. 1 Creek flows south and west from Wheaton to the West Branch of the DuPage River within the St. James Farm Forest Preserve in Warrenville. The creek was degraded, and a dam downstream prevented fish from migrating upstream.

Phase 1 of the project focused on a portion of the creek upstream of the dam. The goal was to functionally uplift, or improve the biological, chemical, and physical features of the creek. Initial construction created a new, meandering path and filled the old straight channel. The new creek channel was engineered with a special mix of sand and gravel for the channel bed substrate and purposely placed artificial snags and root wad lunger structures as a habitat for native fish such as the hornyhead chub, central stoneroller and fathead minnow, as well as mussels and other macroinvertebrates.

The \$2 million restoration work also included the removal of non-native species and woodland improvements as well as a bridge over the creek to connect to adjacent trails. The project was part of a broader effort by the Forest Preserve District to restore the creek to free-flowing conditions the approximately 1.5-mile section of creek that runs through the St. James Farm and Blackwell forest preserves and restore the corridor's wetlands and prairies. Phase 2 of the project will remove the dam and fish barrier downstream that will allow the final (biological) component of the functional lift to allow more diverse species of mussels and fish to access this new improved segment of stream.

The Forest Preserve District then assisted the Tollway with monitoring the site for five years which confirmed the improved conditions. The project was coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The Corps concurred that the goals of the mitigation site were achieved and provided regulatory sign-off in 2020.

PURPOSE

The improvements and restoration work helped mitigate construction impacts associated with construction of the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

The Illinois Tollway is committed to ensuring "Building Green" initiatives that minimize the environmental impact of construction by reducing, recycling and reusing materials are part of its construction projects. As part of the construction of the Illinois Route 390 Tollway, the Tollway included the mitigation efforts that increase the quality and quantity of the state's wetland resources through restoration, enhancement and protection of wetlands.

