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STORMWATER DAMAGE RELIEF DRAFT PLAN RELEASED

Chicago - As the regional authority for stormwater management, the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (District) recently released the "Draft Report of the Detailed Watershed Plan for the Calumet-Sag Channel Watershed" (DWP) to municipalities within that watershed for review. The DWP includes development of stormwater improvement projects to address regional problems along intercommunity waterways.

The Cal-Sag Watershed is 151 square miles which includes 27 communities. It is modestly diamond shape, essentially runs southeast of the I-55 from Summit to Lemont, along Cook/Will County lines following northeast along Tinley Creek, west along the Calumet-Sag Channel toward Blue Island and Calumet Park where going northeast it encompasses Merrionette Park, Evergreen Park, and most of Bedford Park.

The plan is being developed in coordinated efforts with Watershed Planning Councils (WPC). Each municipality and township of the watershed is represented either by the chief elected official or their designees. WPC members participated by providing input on possible solutions and sites for new stormwater infrastructure.

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“Detail” is the operative description of the document. Extensive research, analysis, and recommendations are systematically identified in the well-organized, data rich, presentation. Recommendation for enacting projects will be based on factors that include their ability to reduce stormwater damages within a benefit-to-cost ratio and other non-economic criteria such as water-quality impact, land availability and location of structures relative to stream channels. Within this matrix, the projects that model the most effective results are prioritized.

Municipalities within the watershed have received the document in printed form and on DVD. They have until June 1st to review it and return comments to the District.

“The cooperation across communities and with the District in this effort is very heartening,” said District Executive Director Richard Lanyon. “The professional dedication to the taxpayers and the environment will undoubtedly provide the results we hope to achieve with this process and ultimately the projects themselves,” he concluded.

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The District is the 120 year old autonomous government agency responsible for storm water and wastewater management, in an 883 square mile area, including Chicago and 125 suburban municipalities. It monitors and sustains 76 miles of the Chicago Area Waterways System and 1,300 small streams. Per day, its seven facilities clean an average flow of 1.5 billion gallons of wastewater. Its service population is the combined equivalent of ten million residents and industrial users. For additional information: www.mwr.org.