

## Protecting Our Water Environment

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### Heritage Park Stormwater Facility Closer to Reality

Chicago -- Flood relief for residents of the northern suburbs of Cook County will become a reality sooner rather than later. After several years of negotiations between the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), the Village of Wheeling and the Wheeling Park District, a final agreement has been reached to construct a floodwater storage facility in Heritage Park in Wheeling. The park is located in the Upper Des Plaines Watershed near the intersection of Dundee and Wolf roads, east of the Metra railroad tracks.

The Board of Commissioners and representatives from the Village of Wheeling and the Wheeling Park District this past Thursday signed an Intergovernmental Agreement (IGA) for the construction of the reservoirs and related additional improvements to Heritage Park.

Formally named the Heritage Park Concept Plan, the complex includes six stormwater storage facilities that will have the capacity to store more than 49 million gallons of rain water. Additional improvements to the park include new walkways, a band shell, a baseball area, a soccer field and other under drained athletic fields in the storage areas.

The Heritage Park complex will provide floodwater storage upstream of Levee 37 in Mount Prospect and Prospect Heights, a flood control structure that is being built along the Des Plaines River by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Last month the MWRD's board of commissioners awarded a \$3 million contract to AECOM Engineering to begin the design of the facility. Actual construction is estimated to begin in 2012.

At the IGA signing ceremony MWRD President Terrence J. O'Brien, stated that there were many issues ranging from storage capacity to wetland mitigation that needed to be resolved before a final agreement was reached. "We've worked diligently with village and park district officials to iron out an agreement that best reflects the interests of all parties and amenable to Wheeling and the MWRD. Today, we are delighted to sign the formal agreement. We begin the first significant step to ensure flood relief is in the near future and attainable to the residents of Wheeling and northern Cook County, he concluded.

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