

# County gets \$1.27M for watersheds

## NEWS SUN STAFF REPORT

A \$1.27 million congressional appropriation awarded to the Lake County Stormwater Management Commission will be used for sub-watershed activities in the Fox River and Lake Michigan watersheds.

Through the efforts of U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., U.S. Reps. Philip Crane, R-Wauconda, and Mark Kirk, R-Highland Park, the funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service watershed program will enhance current watershed planning efforts in the Fish Lake Drain, Eagle Creek and Round Lake Drain.

In the Fish Lake Drain and Eagle Creek sub-watersheds, the majority of funding will go toward updating floodplain mapping to complement the recently completed floodplain study.

Comprehensive watershed plans are earmarked for the Kellogg Creek and the Dead River/Bull Creek sub-watersheds in the Lake Michigan watershed.

"As Lake County continues to grow, there is a need to predict and manage how land-use changes will affect the natural drainage systems, such as wetlands and streams in the 26 sub-watersheds. Through the efforts of our elected officials, we can begin assessing our

needs through those living in the watershed and come up with management plans that are citizen based and citizen acceptable," said Ward Miller, SMC executive director.

Watershed planning efforts include stakeholder outreach, a floodplain study and remapping, flood damage assessment, stream inventory, water quality and natural areas assessment, and formulation of actions plans for watershed management.

All four sub-watersheds are considered "high priority" areas for SMC because of their development potential and their existing and potential flooding

and water quality problems. A watershed plan will become the blueprint for improving water quality, reducing flood damage, and protecting natural resources in a watershed — and for preventing existing watershed problems from worsening as a result of future land development. Additionally, watershed planning offers an opportunity for multiple jurisdictions with varying priorities to coordinate efforts and accept responsibility for the impact of their actions.

## On the Net:

■ SMC: [www.co.lake.il.us/smc](http://www.co.lake.il.us/smc).