

Champaign County Soil & Water Conservation District
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Salt Fork Watershed Plan

Within the last year, the plan for the Salt Fork Watershed was completed and approved by the Illinois EPA. Now a core group of 20 volunteers are working with the Champaign County SWCD to implement the watershed plan. The Implementation group is divided into 5 sub-categories.

These very dedicated volunteers represent a wide range of interests from the Champaign-Urbana Sanitary District (CUSD), municipalities, Farm Bureau, USGS, University of Illinois, Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources (IDNR), Champaign County Forest Preserve, Drainage District Commissioners, to many grassroot organizations and individuals with an interest in the Salt Fork watershed.

Sub-committee Updates

Channel Stewardship – A large portion of the Salt Fork Watershed is not within any drainage districts, which creates many questions and concerns on maintenance. The committee recently approved a detailed plan of action outlining the procedure for major log jams and other concerns, and identified a potential source of funds for maintenance issues.

Water Quality Monitoring – Funding for a USGS stream gage was cut; therefore the group is working to find funds to keep the station functioning and to add another gaging station. These stations will provide water quantity and quality data useful in determining if our efforts are improving the health of the stream. In addition, the CUSD and U of I are sampling and testing water on a regular basis. Visit <http://saltfork.nres.uiuc.edu/> for more information, including quarterly data.

Channel Dynamics – This sub-committee is collecting data and information with the overall goal to reduce flooding and improve water quality by reducing streambank erosion. Last winter a seminar was held on ways to maintain stream banks with nearly 40 people attending.

Nutrient Management – A pamphlet is being developed for home owners on the proper use of home fertilizers. Concentrated efforts promoting nutrient management plans and strip-till to area farmers are also planned.

Homer Lake/Educator – The Champaign County Forest Preserve has hired an environmental educator. Seminars for Homer Lake residents on lawn care and the use of native plants and rain gardens are underway.

For more information, including minutes of the Salt Fork Implementation Committee, please visit our website at www.ccsxcd.com

