

[View this email in your browser](#)



GET INVOLVED!

- Sign up for newsletter.
- Attend one of the scheduled pop-up events (check upcoming events).
- Go to the [Engage R1](#) webpage to see project updates and provide feedback.
- **Volunteer to participate in planting days here** [VOLUNTEER SIGN UP FORM](#)

IMPROVING WATER QUALITY IN THE REGION



Exciting Update: Native Plug Planting Underway at Ken Rock Park Bioretention! 🌱

We're thrilled to kickstart native plug planting in our bioretention project at Ken Rock Park, a vital step towards enhancing water quality. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, we have made remarkable progress, planting approximately 75% of the plugs despite unpredictable weather. Stay tuned for updates on when we'll tackle the remaining 25%. In the meantime, seize the opportunity to join us at Park Er Woods and contribute to this impactful initiative! Together, let's make a difference for our community, our watershed and the environment at large!



Our dedicated volunteers diligently planting native plant plugs at the Ken Rock Bioretention basin, supporting efforts to improve water quality in surrounding creeks and the Greater Rock River. Their hard work enhances biodiversity and mitigates pollution, contributing to a healthier ecosystem for all.

If you missed out on this exercise you're in luck because, there is still an opportunity to get involved. More info in the Upcoming Events section!

[UPCOMING EVENTS](#)

[QUESTIONS? CONTACT](#)

Eric Tison

Project Coordinator

etison@r1planning.org

**TBD: New date coming!****Ken Rock Planting Installation**

Planting native vegetation at Ken Rock Park project site. Sign up to volunteer for this planting event using the volunteer sign up link above!

**Saturday August 24 - Tuesday August 27, 2024****Park-Er-Woods Planting Installation**

Planting native vegetation at Park-Er-Woods project site. The rain date is Wednesday August 28, 2024. Sign up to volunteer for this planting event using the volunteer sign up link above!

WHAT IS NEXT AFTER PLANTS FIND THEIR PLACE?

EXPLORING THE STAGES OF SLEEP, CREEP, AND LEAP AFTER PLANTING PLUGS

THE FIRST YEAR THEY SLEEP



At Ken Rock Park, plants are currently in the sleep stage, characterized by decreased metabolic activity. This phase allows them to conserve energy and prepare for daylight. As night falls, they enter a state of dormancy, vital for resource

park's ecosystem. Stay tuned for future site tours to witness the beauty of these plants in their various stages of growth and development.

THE SECOND YEAR THEY CREEP



The creep stage of plants is characterized by slow, gradual growth. Roots extend deeper into the soil while stems and leaves elongate incrementally. This phase allows plants to establish a strong foundation for future development. Without haste, they adapt to their environment, steadily expanding their presence.

THE THIRD YEAR THEY LEAP



During the leap stage, plants experience rapid growth and expansion. Stem elongation accelerates, leaves unfurl, and flowers may bloom. This phase marks a period of significant development, as plants strive to maximize their potential. It is fueled by ample sunlight, nutrients, and water, driving vigorous growth. The leap stage is crucial for establishing canopy cover, attracting pollinators, and competing for resources. Plants seize the opportunity to reach towards the sky, asserting their presence in the ecosystem.

Do you want to contribute to something this beautiful? Do not miss the planting dates at the Park-Er Woods location! Details below.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Help Save the Watershed!

HELP R1 PLANT NATIVE
VEGETATION PLUGS!



What is the 319 Watershed Education Grant?

Region 1 Planning Council (R1) has received Section 319 Grant funding from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) to conduct research and activities to educate and encourage local watershed stakeholders to adopt non-point source (NPS) pollution control best management practices (BMPs). The grant includes the construction of two demonstration BMP projects; a bioretention basin in the Buckbee Creek watershed, and a bioswale in the South Fork Kent Creek watershed.

Project Site Location Information

Park-er-Woods Park address is 6700 Claremont Street, Rockford IL (61102). The improvement site is at the northwest corner of Parker Woods Drive and Lakewood Drive.

Planting Days

Park-er-Woods:
Saturday, August 24
Tuesday, August 27

Park-er-Woods Rain Day:
Wednesday August 28

All planting days are 10:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Volunteers should be available for at least 1 two-hour block between 10:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Volunteers are encouraged to bring soil knives or hand trowels, a pair of gloves, and comfortable working shoes that you don't mind getting dirty.

Free volunteer t-shirt available on the day(s) of the event while supplies last.



To sign up scan the QR code
or bit.ly/Volunteer4Planting

Project Partners



This flyer was prepared using United States Environmental Protection Agency funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act distributed through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The findings and recommendations contained herein are not necessarily those of the funding agencies.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VOLUNTEER FOR PLANTING AT PARK-ER WOODS

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



As a partner on R1's Watershed Education and Outreach project, Olson Ecological Solutions (OES) is providing our ecological expertise in collaboration with other project partners to ensure the successful implementation of bioswales at Park-er Woods and Ken Rock parks. Bioswales are shallow ditches planted with perennial native plants that stormwater passes through. The bioswales at these two parks will receive stormwater runoff containing sediment and pollutants, which will get caught in the bioswales before they empty the cleaner water into nearby creeks. These best management practices (BMPs) will reduce nonpoint source (NPS) pollution and increase the climate resiliency, biodiversity, and scenic value of their respective communities. The main goal of these BMPs is to reduce NPS pollution flowing into local lakes, streams, and rivers. NPS pollution doesn't come from a single location, or "point source"; it is scattered throughout the landscape and is carried into our

they can cause serious harm if present in disproportionate and overwhelming quantities. BMPs, such as bioswales, often utilize native vegetation to slow stormwater, increase infiltration of stormwater into the ground, and filter NPS pollutants carried by stormwater.

OES will be creating the planting and management specifications for Park-er Woods, including the selection of the plant species, and OES will be leading the volunteer planting days at both Park-er Woods and Ken Rock. Before choosing the plant species for BMPs, OES surveys the existing conditions of sites, including the existing soil, hydrology, and vegetation; works with an engineer to understand how existing conditions will change after grading and installation of any features like small rock check dams; and considers the goals of the project. For example, do we need a variety of flowers blooming throughout the year, are resilient and stabilizing grass-like plants more important, or can both of these needs be fulfilled? For these BMPs, we hope to realize both needs in order to effectively treat NPS pollution and provide other benefits, like pollinator habitat. In addition to these services for the project, OES will also be providing technical assistance to stakeholders within these communities who are interested in implementing similar BMPs on their own land. Such BMPs could include bioswales, rain gardens, detention basins, water conservation, filter strips, conservation tillage, and more. If a stakeholder is interested, OES will be excited to provide a consultation to assess the stakeholder's questions, goals, and options.

Since 2006, OES has been working on these types of projects and others that are focused on improving the water quality of streams, lakes, and rivers in Illinois. Some of these projects include the Levings Lake Stormwater Treatment Train at Levings Park in Rockford, Illinois, and a variety of BMPs located at Candlewick Lake, near Poplar Grove, Illinois. The Levings project included a series of BMPs, like bioswales and constructed stormwater wetlands, designed to work together to reduce NPS pollution from flowing into Levings Lake and downstream bodies of water. The projects at Candlewick Lake, including the same kinds of BMPs and others, had the same focus. These lakes, and rivers downstream of them, are valued resources of their communities, for the recreation they offer and the aquatic wildlife they support. Protecting them from NPS pollution is a critical step in helping them thrive.

Subscribe

Past Issues

Translate ▼

This newsletter was prepared using United States Environmental Protection Agency funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act distributed through the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency. The findings and recommendations contained herein are not necessarily those of the funding agencies.



Copyright © 2024 R1 Planning Council, All rights reserved.

<https://engager1.mysocialpinpoint.com/watershed-education-outreach>

Our mailing address is:

127 N. Wyman St., Ste 100, Rockford, IL 61101

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).