



### GET INVOLVED!

- Sign up for newsletter.
- Contact us for consulting assistance.
- Go to the [Engage R1](#) webpage to see project updates and provide feedback.
- **Volunteer opportunities to plant at Park-er-Woods will be made available in the Spring of 2025**

## EXCITING NEWS: CONSTRUCTION HAS OFFICIALLY BEGUN AT PARK-ER-WOODS!

Construction activities for a bioswale are currently underway at Park-er-Woods. The project aims to enhance stormwater management and improve water quality by utilizing natural filtration methods. Excavation work has begun to create the necessary channels and planting areas. Native vegetation will be incorporated to promote biodiversity and stabilize the soil. The bioswale will also provide aesthetic benefits and enhance the overall landscape. Community involvement is highly encouraged, particularly during plug planting (date to be determined).



Ongoing Construction work at Park-er-Woods

## UPCOMING EVENTS



**Dates TBD**

### **Park-Er-Woods Planting Installation**

Planting native vegetation at Park-Er-Woods project site. New dates coming soon. Sign up to volunteer for this planting event using the volunteer sign up link above!

**START YOUR RAIN  
GARDEN TODAY - WE ARE  
HERE TO HELP!**



Image Source: Alliance for the Cheapeake Bay

A number of people have reached out for consulting assistance to install rain gardens! Do you have a property and require additional help with evaluating potential BMP improvements? Technical assistance is available from staff of Olson Ecological Solutions. For more information, or to schedule a consultation, please contact Program Outreach Coordinator Estelle Adiaba ([eadiabab@r1planning.org](mailto:eadiabab@r1planning.org)) so that she can assist with determining eligibility. For more information, visit the [Engage R1 Page](#)

## UNLOCK THE EXPERIENCE: JOIN OUR SITE TOUR



Join R1 and partners on a tour and information session of the best management practice (bioretention basin) installed at Ken Rock Park. Come see how the plant plugs will, in time, bloom to beautify the location, sleeping in the first year, creeping in the next year, and leaping to full bloom within the next three years. Contact Program Outreach Coordinator Estelle Adiaba ([eadiabab@r1planning.org](mailto:eadiabab@r1planning.org)) for more information and to schedule a tour.

# KEN ROCK PARK BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (BMP) PROJECT RECAP

How It Started, How It's Going and Expected Outcome

## The Area Before BMP Construction



Before the construction of the BMP, the park featured a flat, lush expanse of green grass, providing a serene and open landscape with limited water quality improvement.

## CONSTRUCTION AND SEEDING STAGE



**Picture 1 (Left)**

The initial construction phase of a bioretention basin involved clearing the site of vegetation and debris, followed by dirt removal to excavate the required depth. Grading was performed to shape the basin with appropriate slopes for effective stormwater drainage. Finally, the subgrade was compacted for stability, and underdrains installed to prevent waterlogging.



**Picture 2 (Right)**

The seeding process of a bioretention basin involved selecting native plant species and evenly distributing the seeds over the prepared soil. Light raking or rolling was then done to ensure good seed-to-soil contact, promoting successful germination.

## PLANTING STAGE AND PRESENT STATE OF THE BIORETENTION BASIN



### **Picture 1 (Left)**

The planting process of a bioretention basin involved selection and installation of native plants in designated areas, ensuring proper spacing for growth and water absorption. Each plant is placed in pre-dug holes, with the surrounding soil compacted to secure the roots and promote stability.

### **Picture 2 (Right)**

After planting, native plants in a bioretention basin appear sparse as they establish their root systems. During this waiting period, they focus on root growth, gradually developing foliage before blooming and contributing to the basin's ecological function.

## **EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE KEN ROCK BIORETENTION BASIN**



In the next few years, this bioretention basin will flourish, displaying colorful

blooms that enhances its beauty while effectively managing stormwater, filtering pollutants, supporting local ecosystems within Ken Rock Park and improving ground water quality.

## PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



The Rockford Park District (District) is happy to partner with Region 1 Planning Council in this Education and Outreach project. District's role in the overall project includes:

- Providing the sites for the two demonstration projects
- A financial contribution towards the grant match
- Technical assistance with planning the demonstration projects
- Long term maintenance activities needed for the demonstration projects

District is pleased to host these new projects which will improve stormwater quality in two watersheds within RPD's service area: South Fork Kent Creek (Park-er-Woods) and Buckbee Creek (Ken Rock).

Watershed planning and stormwater quality improvements are District priorities, which led to the District applying for and receiving an EPA-319 grant to develop the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-approved watershed-based plan for South Fork Kent Creek in 2019.

District's recent water quality efforts have centered on Levings Lake, which is within the South Fork Kent Creek watershed. Water quality improvements must prevent phosphorous and sediment from entering Levings Lake from upstream sources and treat phosphorous and sediment already circulating within the

lake. If nothing is done, nuisance algae blooms become a problem, sediment builds up, fish habitat suffers, and the recreation experience diminishes in value.

Water quality improvements at Levings Lake include:

- Installing BioHaven® Floating Islands which act as floating wetlands to clean the lake water of excessive nutrients, and provide fish habitat in an area of the lake where very little exists
- Planting vegetated filter strips along the shoreline to filter stormwater runoff that sheet over parklands into the lake, control erosion, and deter resident geese
- Establishing wildflower and wetland areas in two areas within the park: immediately south (upstream) of the lake, and on the east side of the park where stormwater enters from the adjacent neighborhood. These areas help with filtration as the water passes into the lake and help slow flood waters.

District has plans to begin construction of an additional wetland area at Levings Park to improve water quality this fall. This additional wetland will be located on the west side of Pierpont Avenue, immediately north of Kent Creek. This project was also made possible by EPA section 319 grant funds

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