



Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

Press Release

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Groundbreaking carves path to resiliency at MWRD reservoir

Addison Creek projects to protect 2,200 structures, remove 1,700 from flood plain



To watch the Addison Creek Reservoir groundbreaking ceremony visit <https://youtu.be/OaJPOLcEJcw>

The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) and its partners have broken ground on the first of two major projects that will provide flood control benefits for communities along Addison Creek, including Bellwood, Northlake, Stone Park, Melrose Park, Westchester and Broadview. The 600-acre-foot Addison Creek Reservoir in Bellwood will hold close to 200 million gallons of storage capacity and connect with the Addison Creek Channel, where additional improvements will reduce overbank flooding to approximately 2,200 structures, including an estimated 1,700 structures that will be removed from the flood plain.

“This is an exciting day for our community partners along Addison Creek searching for an answer to overbank flooding,” said MWRD President Kari K. Steele. “Thanks to the continued collaboration between the MWRD and these six communities, we are standing above a future reservoir that will capture excess stormwater and mitigate flooding for our partners in these municipalities. We hope this investment leads to savings on future insurance bills, improves local

quality of life and fosters new peace of mind the next time it rains.”

The \$63.3 million reservoir at 2795 Washington Blvd. in Bellwood will provide \$116 million in flood benefits. Construction includes a control structure, inlet structure, spillway and pumping station. The channel improvement project will include a mix of natural design, gabion baskets, soldier pile walls, concrete, riprap, articulated concrete blocks, vegetation clearing and removal of three bridges. This project is partially funded through a \$5 million grant from Cook County’s Community Development Block Grant - Disaster Recovery Program (CDBG-DR), a federally funded initiative through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

“Cook County’s investment in this vital project will improve the lives of thousands of residents,” Cook County Board President Toni Preckwinkle said. “I am proud to collaborate with the MWRD and our local municipal partners as we work to build smart, vibrant and sustainable communities where people want to live, learn, work and play.” *(continued)*

Groundbreaking carves path to resiliency at MWRD reservoir, *cont.*

In addition to providing flood control benefits, the reservoir will serve as compensatory storage for the channel improvement project. The MWRD will operate and maintain the control and inlet structures, spillway, piping and pump station, while Bellwood will maintain the grounds including landscaping, fencing, and access roadways.

“I am excited for the homeowners along Addison Creek who will finally garner relief from flooding,” said Illinois Senate Majority Leader Kimberly A. Lightford. “In 2004, I passed a measure that established the Addison Creek Restoration Committee and provided \$400,000 in funding for environmental work, engineering, planning and community outreach. It is wonderful to see this project, that alleviates public health and safety concerns, so close to reality. Thank you to the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago for their work and commitment to Bellwood, Broadview, Melrose Park, North Lake, Stone Park, and Westchester homeowners.”

The project will create 633 construction jobs and operate in compliance with the MWRD’s Affirmative Action Ordinance, ensuring representation of minority business enterprises (MBE), women business enterprises (WBEs) and small business enterprise (SBEs). The project also calls for a multi-project labor agreement (MPLA) that provides working opportunities for carpenters, iron workers, laborers, operating engineers, electricians, and truck drivers.

The two projects will improve quality of life further by enhancing green space, including new walking paths and other recreation improvements the MWRD is coordinating with the local communities.

“We are delighted to help facilitate this project through the assistance of vital Community Development Block Grant funds through HUD to protect our residents,” said Cook County Commissioner Brandon Johnson (1st Dist.). “Having this reservoir in place will provide these residents with added security the next time it rains and prove our community resiliency.”



“This is a monumental event not only for Bellwood but for all of the communities that it will benefit,” said Bellwood Mayor Andre F. Harvey. “The improved quality of life for our residents is immeasurable. This flood mitigation project is a great example of government at work; it would not be possible without MWRD, Cook County, and the villages of Bellwood, Broadview, Melrose Park, North Lake, Stone Park and Westchester all working together.”

“The communities of Bellwood, Broadview, Melrose Park, Northlake, Stone Park, and Westchester have a long history of flooding,” said Illinois Department of Natural Resources Director Colleen Callahan. “Currently over 1,550 residents carry flood insurance policies and pay an average annual premium of nearly \$1,266 per year. In addition to improving our state’s resiliency to flood events, this project will allow many of the flood prone residents of these six communities to qualify for flood insurance premiums which are up to 80% cheaper once their properties are removed from the floodplain.”

The MWRD first identified the Addison Creek stormwater management projects in 2011 in the agency’s Lower Des Plaines River Detailed Watershed Plan, which sought solutions to regional flooding issues.

Construction on the Addison Creek Reservoir is expected to be completed by early 2022. Addison Creek Channel Improvements work is expected to begin in 2020.

Recovering Resources, Transforming Water

Established in 1889, the MWRD (www.mwr.org) is an award winning, special purpose government agency responsible for wastewater treatment and stormwater management in Cook County, Illinois.