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 municipalities, 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.”

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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 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.