



Thursday, April 2, 2020

Greetings from FREP

Please visit our [Website](#) for additional information and updates on activities shared in this newsletter

President's Message



The coronavirus pandemic has upended our lives. Just a week or so ago, we were all going to bars, seeing movies with friends, and just going about our business as usual. Now, all that has changed in a short span of time. Amid the COVID-19 outbreak, health experts and government officials are recommending and requiring that we practice social distancing to flatten the curve of the outbreak, preventing a surge of infected patients that overwhelm our hospitals and health care system. That means most of us stay at home and limit nearly all in-person social interactions. But as we exercise our individual and collective responsibility to reduce viral transmissions to preserve human health and life, we can still exercise our responsibility to act for environmental health. We can use this solitary time to reassess our current habits and develop new ones that are better for the planet. We must not allow this human health crisis to cause us to lose sight of the environmental health crisis we face.

And as we are all hunkered down "sheltering in place" and working from home, the Fox River still flows, and spring is still happening. Can we take actions while we're facing down this novel virus that will help restore our watershed and make it more resilient in the face of climate change? Can we all take actions that make our own households more sustainable? What about the fact that we can't go out as groups to have our annual river clean up days?

As our colleagues at Friends of the Fox River have suggested, maybe we just need to use a different approach. What if we all picked up plastic and other trash while out in our small family groups walking the trails along the river? I've often wondered how all that plastic escapes and finds its way into our oceans and waters. Look around and see all that plastic laying around and even in the trees and shrubs in our neighborhoods after a winter season. What if we all took the time to pick it up?

And what if we use our social-distance time to evaluate our own habits, our water usage, our energy usage, our carbon footprint? And then explore what changes we can all make. Fix leaky faucets, switch to LED light bulbs, use more reusable food storage containers. What actions can we take collectively, or encourage others to take? How do we take that energy and buzz at our showing of the Need to Grow at the beginning of March and make something good happen from it?

And I personally have been getting out and working in my yard. Remember it is good for all of us to be outdoors, albeit in small groups or solo for now. So, with spring approaching, can you plant some trees, or some prairie natives in your yard? Create a pollinator haven, and grow plants that will help absorb carbon?

I urge you all to be safe, stay healthy, seek the truth, and think of ways to take advantage of this time to help our planet. It does seem a bit interesting that greenhouse gas emissions are measurably way down during the COVID-19 crisis – perhaps a silver lining.

**Jeff Mengler, Hey and Associates, FREP President**

Watershed Partners/Links

Illinois: [Friends of the Fox River](#) [Fox River Study Group](#) [Fox Valley Sustainability Network](#)  
[The Conservation Foundation Fox River Initiative](#)

Wisconsin: [Southeast Fox River Partnership](#) [Southeastern Wisc Fox River Commission](#) [Illinois Fox River Group](#)

Spring is upon us - here is something to look forward to: [Wildflowers in Bloom](#)

photos by Jeff Mengler

Top right: *Viola sororia*

Bottom right: *Sanguinaria canadensis*

Below: *Mertensia virginica*

Do you know their common names?  
Scroll down for the answers





## Our Next Activity

FREP will not be holding gatherings for Noon Networks or Meetings until it is safe to do so. We have listed below under **Future Activities** what has been planned, if we can resume meeting. For now -- here is a virtual activity for you:

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

1 - 2:30 PM

### FREE WEBINAR

#### Lessons from the COP25 Madrid Climate Change Meeting

Via GoToMeeting <https://www.gotomeet.me/SevenGenerationsAhead>

The UN Climate Change Conference was held in Madrid, Spain in December 2019. This webinar will be presented by Gary Cuneen-Seven Generations Ahead Executive Director, student Roz Beile and teacher Laura Stamp, who attended COP25.



**What was the UN Climate Change conference all about?** The conference was designed to take the next crucial steps in the UN climate change process. Following agreement on the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement at COP 24 in Poland last year, a key objective was to complete several matters with respect to the full operationalization of the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The conference furthermore served to build ambition ahead of 2020, the year in which countries have committed to submit new and updated national climate action plans. Crucial climate action work was taken forward in areas including finance, the transparency of climate action, forests and agriculture, technology, capacity building, loss and damage, indigenous peoples, cities, oceans and gender.

The conference included the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 25), the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 15), and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA 2). The fifty-first sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 51) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI 51) took place 2 - 9 December 2019.

#### Wildflower answers:

**Viola sororia - Common blue violet** - has historically been used for food and for medicine  
The flowers and leaves are edible

**Sanguinaria canadensis - bloodroot** - blooms in early spring in rich woods and along streams

**Mertensia virginica - Virginia Bluebells** - The flower can be pollinated by bumblebees but, due to its funnel shape bumblebees must hover, making them a rare pollinator. Butterflies are the most common pollinators because they can easily perch on the edges and still enjoy the nectar.

information from Wikipedia

## Future Activities

If and when FREP is able to start gathering again - here is what we have planned:

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

FREP NOON NETWORK

Noon to 1:30 PM

**Little Rock Creek Preserve Meremech Addition**  
Little Rock Creek Forest Preserve, Kendall County

**Presenters:** Dave Guritz, Brook McDonald

*A program we had scheduled in 2018, but needed to cancel.*



Join us for a tour of the recently acquired 134-acre Little Rock Creek Forest Preserve. The acquisition and conservation of the Little Rock Creek Forest Preserve's natural areas has been an exercise in patience for the past 40-years. Third time's the charm, and in 2017, the District was again awarded a Land and Water Conservation Fund grant through the IDNR-OSLAD program, with the required 50% match donated by [The Conservation Foundation](#) with support from the [Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation](#) and [Forest Foundation of Kendall County](#).

Wednesday, July 8, 2020

Annual FREP Picnic

Time & Location TBA

Wednesday, August 12, 2020

FREP NOON NETWORK

Noon to 1:30 PM

#### Winchester Glen and The Conservation Foundation Assurance Program

Winchester Glen, Carpentersville, IL

**Presenters:** Dan Lobbes, Jennifer Hammer, and Trish Beckjord of The Conservation Program

Check our [Website News Page](#) for information and updates about upcoming Noon Networks & Meeting Programs

All FREP Membership Meetings & Programs, and FREP Noon Networks are free and open to the public. Reservations are not required. Most Noon Networks accommodate us bringing our lunch to eat during the program.

Many of our past **Noon Network & Membership Meeting presentations** are available in pdf form [HERE](#)

FREP is happy to offer Professional Development Hour (PDH) certificates for our Noon Networks and Membership programs. There is a place on our sign-in sheet to request one, or, just ask!

Thanks to all who participated  
Monday, March 9, 2020  
at the screening of **THE NEED TO GROW** at  
Waubensee Community College Aurora Downtown Campus

**ONE EARTH  
FILM FESTIVAL**

**Details about the film can be found on our** [film webpage HERE](#)

There are links to information about the persons featured in the film.

We obtained two copies of the film to make available for people who missed it, or, for any who would like to show it to a group in the future. If you are interested, please contact Becky Hoag at [foxriverinfo@comcast.net](mailto:foxriverinfo@comcast.net)



*Wisconsin  
and Illinois  
partners  
working with  
the National Park  
Service  
to create the:*



#### WI-IL Fox River Water Trail Initiative

FREP has joined with the Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Partnership and the Village of Waterford, Wisconsin, to pursue the designation of all or portions of the Fox River in Wisconsin and Illinois as a National Water Trail through the National Park Services' National Water Trail System. Technical assistance from the NPS Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program has been awarded and planning is now proceeding.

#### **Core Development Team** (CDT)

**Co-Chairs:** Karen Miller, FREP, for Illinois

Barb Messick, Village of Waterford, WI, for Wisconsin

Angie Tornes, National Park Service; Greg Farnham, Rock River Trail Initiative; Brian Daly, CMAP; Tom Slawski, Southeast Wisconsin Fox River Partnership; Rick Kania, SEWRPC; Jaki Berggren, Visit McHenry Convention & Visitors Bureau; and Dave Blank, Real Racine Convention & Visitors Bureau. Sigrid Pilgrim and Jodie Auliff, Illinois Paddling Council, ad hoc members.

**For more information contact Karen Ann Miller** at [millerkaren@co.kane.il.us](mailto:millerkaren@co.kane.il.us).

Visit our **Water Trail Initiative page** [HERE](#) **Trail Website:** [fabulousfoxwatertrail.org](http://fabulousfoxwatertrail.org)

**FREP Membership Roll 2019-20**

**Thank you all -- we met our goal!**

**You are helping to keep FREP strong**

*(showing dues received as of 4/2/2020)*

#### **TO PAY YOUR ANNUAL DUES/TO JOIN FREP:**

Use the online membership form and link to make your payment through PayPal [HERE](#)

A printable/available form [HERE](#)

Michael Ander, Friend, Sleepy Hollow	Kane Co. Development & Community Services Dept.
Paul Anderson, Friend, Geneva	Kane County Farm Bureau
Applied Ecological Services	Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
Barrington Area Council of Governments	Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District
Batavia Park District	June Keibler, Friend, Dundee
Thomas Berres, Friend, DeKalb	Gloria Klimek, Friend, St. Charles
Bluestem Ecological Services	Lake County Forest Preserve District
Campton Historic Agricultural, Inc./Garfield Farm Museum	Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
Campton Township	Rob Linke, Friend, St. Charles
Christopher B. Burke Engineering, LTD	Living Waters Consultants
City of Aurora	Julie Long, Friend, St. Charles
City of Batavia	Edith McDonald, Friend, Oswego
City of Elgin	McHenry County
City of Geneva	McHenry County Conservation District
City of St. Charles	McHenry County Conservation Foundation
John Church, Friend, Oswego	Gary Mechanic, Friend, St. Charles
Linda Cole, Friend, Aurora	Katie Meyer, Friend, Elgin
Nancy Cox, Friend, St. Charles	North Cook County Soil & Water Conservation Dist
Crystal Lake Park District	Oswegoland Park District
DeKalb County Forest Preserve District	Jason Pettit, Friend, Aurora
Deuchler Engineering Corporation	Pizzo Native Plant Nursery
Bill Donnell, Friend, Aurora	Quentin Podraza, Friend, Fox Lake
Dundee Township	Larry Rakunus, Friend, St. Charles
Sarah Duple, Friend, East Dundee	St. Charles Park District
Edgewater by Del Webb Community Assoc., Elgin	Jack Schaefer, Friend, Barrington
Engineering Enterprises, Inc. - EEI	Jack Shouba, Friend, St. Charles
Environmental Defenders of McHenry County	Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter & Valley of the Fox
Forest Preserve District of Kane County	Cindy Skrukud, Friend, Richmond
Forest Preserve District of Kendall County	Faye Sinnott, Friend, Barrington
Fox Metro Water Reclamation District, Oswego	The Conservation Foundation
Fox River Water Reclamation District, South Elgin	Tyler Creek Watershed Coalition
Fox Valley Park District	United City of Yorkville
Friends of the Fox River	V3 Companies
Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge	Village of Algonquin
Geneva Park District	Village of Fox River Grove
Geosyntec Consultants	Village of Lake Barrington
Kathleen Hamill & Teece Bowman, Friends, Elgin	Village of Millbrook
Ed & Sue Harney, Friends, Sleepy Hollow	Village of Oakwood Hills
Hey and Associates	Village of Port Barrington
Holly Hudson, Friend, Elgin	Village of Round Lake
ILM Environments	Village of Sleepy Hollow
Illinois Paddling Council	Nancy Williamson & Steve Byers, Friends, Lakewood

The membership roll is also posted on our website [HERE](#).  
Links are provided for those members who have websites

We share this list in each issue so that readers of Downstream can easily find links to our members,  
to promote communication and collaboration on Fox River watershed issues.

## Watershed Planning

A number of Fox River subwatershed groups are in various stages of developing, completing, and implementing plans for their watersheds. They are listed below, with links to their webpages/websites.

FREP continues to be a central source of information for these activities and will post meeting dates and information, and news of new planning here in the **Downstream** and on our website [HERE](#).

### Watershed Planning

#### Indian Creek Watershed-based Planning

The Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP) recently received a Clean Water Act grant from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop a watershed-based plan for the Indian Creek watershed in collaboration with local stakeholders. Located on the east side of the Fox River, the approximately 14 square mile watershed straddles southeastern Kane and southwestern DuPage Counties and includes portions of two municipalities (Aurora and Batavia) and four townships (Aurora, Batavia, Naperville, and Winfield).

The purpose of this plan is to work with local stakeholders to develop planning, policy, outreach and education, and on-the-ground project recommendations that upon implementation will help improve and protect the water quality in Indian Creek, its tributaries, the numerous wetlands, lakes and ponds within the watershed, and the downstream Fox River. The plan must follow U.S. EPA and Illinois EPA guidelines, including meeting the

"9 minimum elements" of a watershed-based plan, and is scheduled for completion in December 2021.

CMAP is currently working with planning partners Kane and DuPage Counties, the Cities of Aurora and Batavia, and Fermilab to fine tune the Indian Creek watershed boundary based on local topographic and drainage data and information. The boundary will define the area for which existing conditions will be mapped and analyzed and best practice recommendations identified. A steering committee is being formed, and the public will have several opportunities to participate in the planning process.

An Indian Creek Watershed Planning webpage will soon be up on the FREP website, and updates will be provided monthly through FREP's Downstream e-newsletter. If you would like to be added to the contact list for Indian Creek Watershed-based Planning news and events, or have any questions about the project, please contact Holly Hudson.

#### Indian Creek Contact:

Holly Hudson, CMAP Project Manager, [hudson@cmapp.illinois.gov](mailto:hudson@cmapp.illinois.gov), 312-836-8700

## Subwatershed Links

**9 Lakes Watershed Plan** [Webpage](#)

**Blackberry Creek Watershed** [Webpage](#)

**Boone-Dutch Creek Watershed** [Webpage](#)  
Contact Holly Hudson at CMAP: 312-386-8700,  
[hudson@cmmap.illinois.gov](mailto:hudson@cmmap.illinois.gov)

**Ferson-Otter Creek Watershed** [Webpage](#)

**Flint Creek Spring Creek Watershed Partnership**  
The group was recently notified that:  
2018 Flint Creek Watershed Plan Update – 2018 meets the threshold  
of the required USEPA minimum requirements for the development of  
a watershed-based plan.  
[Website](#)

**Jelkes Creek-Fox River Watershed Coalition** [Webpage](#)  
[Newsletter](#)

Next meeting: **TBA**  
Schweitzer Environmental Center (SEC), the brick house on the top of the  
hill located at Schweitzer Woods Forest Preserve, 16N690 Sleepy Hollow  
Road in West Dundee.

**Mill Creek Watershed** [Webpage](#)  
Contact Holly Hudson, CMAP Project Manager, [hudson@cmmap.illinois.gov](mailto:hudson@cmmap.illinois.gov),  
312-836-8700

**Nippersink Creek Watershed** [Website](#)

**Silver & Sleepy Hollow Creeks Watershed Coalition** [Webpage](#)

**Tyler Creek Watershed** [Webpages](#)

**Woods Creek Watershed Study Stakeholders** [Website](#)

## Other Activities & News of Interest

**If you have an activity or event you'd like FREP to share on our Website or in the Downstream, please email the information to Becky at:**  
[foxriverinfo@comcast.net](mailto:foxriverinfo@comcast.net)

The **Fox River Study Group** suggests community members visit their website at [foxriverstudygroup.org](http://foxriverstudygroup.org) to take  
a 5-minute community survey. The survey is open to anyone and the data will help the study group and its partners understand how to build public  
support for a cleaner Fox River.

The group's 2019 annual report is also posted at the website for review by the public.

**Tips on how to properly recycle:** [Video](#) prepared by the Illinois Task Force for Recycling Contamination, shared by Kane County Recycling.  
**NEW:** Kane now offers clothes/textile recycling [Details](#)

**Prairie Rivers Network:** [RiverWeb News](#)

FREP members -- please remember the Downstream when you wish to share information about an activity, job listing, or achievement. Email your  
information to Becky Hoag, generally by the 20th of the month, to make the next issue that comes out at the end of the month.

**Becky Hoag, Communications Manager, Fox River Ecosystem Partnership** 630-482-9157 [foxriverinfo@comcast.net](mailto:foxriverinfo@comcast.net)

Please email me if you have an email to add to our mailing list.

**FREP WEBSITE:** [foxriverecosystem.org](http://foxriverecosystem.org)

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