

June 1, 2020



FREP DOWNSTREAM E-NEWSLETTER

Dear Friends of FREP:

We hope you are all healthy and have been managing the past few months. We will proceed with caution with our group activities and hope this first Noon Network will be accessible for some of you. See below for details. Stay connected with FREP as we continue to work together for the health of our watershed.

FREP Noon Network

Wednesday, June 10

Noon-1:30 PM

Little Rock Creek Preserve Meremech Addition

Little Rock Creek Forest Preserve
Kendall County

Presenters: Dave Guritz, Brook McDonald



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](#).

Meet at Little Rock Creek Preserve, entrance on Burr Oak Road just west of the intersection with Millhurst Road near Plano
[Direction Map](#) [Area Map](#)

[Kendall County Core Oak Woodland Corridor Map](#)

Little Rock Creek Forest Preserve shares a boundary with the 94-acre Maramech Forest Preserve, a unique flatwoods area and dedicated nature preserve. Little Rock Creek is a high-quality stream home to 26 native fish species (Index of Biotic Integrity Score of 52/60) as documented by IDNR Regional Fisheries Biologists Steve Pescitelli and the late Bob Rung.

The new preserve boundary, located near the Big Rock Creek – Little Rock Creek confluence with the Fox River, encompasses 1.25-miles of the stream's riparian floodplain bordered on either side by steep oak-woodland bluffs. The preserve is located centrally within the recently defined priority oak-woodland recovery corridor in Kendall County.

During the walking tour, Brook and Dave will share insights into the acquisition process, initial wildlife observations, previous site development history, and challenges ahead with opening the preserve to the public.

This section of Little Rock Creek is an IDNR "Class B" stream (scored within the top 5% for stream quality in Illinois)" and within the priority Lower Fox River system for conservation in Kendall County.

The Index of biotic integrity is 42/50 with 26 fish species known to occur from ongoing IDNR monitoring efforts: LRC is contiguous with the 92-acre Maramech Forest Preserve, an Illinois Dedicated Nature Preserve with northern flatwoods habitat containing one of the highest floristic diversity indices score and habitat quality of the Kendall County forest preserve system, including several documented State threatened and endangered species.

We are going to conduct this Noon Network in small groups. Each person needs to wear a mask and stay 6 feet apart. We will limit each walking group to 10 people.

To assist in the planning, we are asking for an RSVP, so we we know our count and plan accordingly.

Please email your name and cell phone #, **by Monday, June 8**, if you are planning to attend. Email Becky Hoag at: foxriverinfo@comcast.net. Or call 630-482-9157. You will receive a confirmation back.



Photo left, by Ken Gortowski

Photo above by
Brook McDonald



President's Message

As we enter the summer months, still in the grips of a global pandemic that is affecting all our lives, we wonder when things will return to “normal.” But of course, as our nation faces other significant crises, many are realizing getting back to the old normal might not be where we want to go. So, without getting into other issues and politics, how can we address climate change, invasive species, and other factors affecting our watershed? How can we make it a better world, a better normal? It is going to take significant change by everyone to address climate change.

If you missed our May webinar on the Madrid global summit on climate change, I strongly encourage you to view it [HERE](#). Any story on climate change is both depressing and inspiring. You'll particularly want to catch the inspiring story of Roz Beile, then a high school student who attended the summit.

And the encouraging stories are out there. A woman I know went out and picked up over 30 bags full of trash within two weeks along the trail near where she lives. And then went back later to get more. We've learned of a proposal to retrofit a small local detention basin with things that will improve the water quality and the habitat. They're also proposing to involve the local school in an educational program to measure the water quality and wanted FREP's advice. The Village of River Forest (not in our watershed, I know) voted for a 100% renewable energy aggregation program (maybe some in our watershed have too?). Many people are getting outside and rediscovering the outdoors and some good things are happening. We'd love to hear your stories.

One issue that is somehow both COVID19 and environmentally related is so-called flushable wipes. I've been hearing about this for some time now – they're not actually flushable and cause problems for our friends at the wastewater treatment facilities. I wanted to share a video that addresses this issue – it is from MWRD, but still applicable.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2CbnYdRetD4&feature=youtu.be>

Enough of my rambling. Let's get outdoors. Please plan to join us for our June 10th Noon Network.

Jeff Mengler
FREP President

Did you miss our Webinar on May 13 on **Lessons from the COP25 Madrid Climate Change Conference**? It has been posted on YouTube and you can still catch it at this [WEBINAR LINK](#).

Future Activities

We will be evaluating what group programs we can hold in future months. We will keep you updated in our next monthly Downstream Newsletters.

Wednesday, July 8 we will be working on an outdoor social-distancing gathering. This is the month we hold our annual FREP Picnic. It might be a BYO meal, be we still hope to gather. We'll let you know.

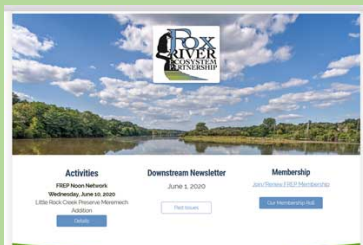
Wednesday, August 10, we are scheduled to meet at Winchester Glen in Carpentersville to learn about The Conservation Foundation Assurance Program, presented by Dan Lobbes and Jennifer Hammer of The Conservation Program.

We'll keep you posted about final plans.

FREP Membership & Annual Dues

The FREP fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30 and we usually send out dues statements in June. Given the current situation and with some not being in offices on a regular basis, we will wait until July to mail these out. We truly appreciate your support and thank all who were members for 2019-20. You should all be listed at this link:

[FREP Membership Roll](#)



FREP Digital Updates

You will notice that this issue of the Downstream is done in a new format which should be easier to read with various devices. We hope it is an improvement for the way you read our messages. The FREP website is currently under redesign to update pages and also improve use with various devices.

We look forward to announcing the launch of the new website in the near future. The link to the home page will continue to work, though we are adding the https security. Please note the other page urls will be changing with the update, if you have bookmarked to any of our current pages.