

DES PLAINES RIVER WETLANDS DEMONSTRATION PROJECT¹

by

Georganna B. Collins²

Text. This project has been conducting research on constructed wetlands and rehabilitating riverine wetlands and associated floodplain landscape components of prairie and forest since 1983. The site comprises 550 acres and 3-mile stretch of the Des Plaines River 35 miles north of Chicago, Illinois.

Research has been conducted on hydrology, water quality, invertebrate community composition and persistence, effectiveness improving habitat quality, ecosystem modeling, sediment deposition, fate and transport of atrazine and nitrogen, use of residence time distribution in wetland systems, wet meadow vegetation establishment techniques, and the dynamics of critical soil processes and indicators of hydric soils in created wetlands.

Rehabilitated landscape involves 50 acres of wetland marsh, 50 acres of tall-grass prairie, and 25 acres of oak savanna. Rehabilitation plans include three sand and gravel quarries to provide endangered species habitat.

This project is unique as a joint-venture between the public, governmental agencies, corporations, private individuals, not-for-profit organizations, and academia. Future direction now involves expansion to other sites within the state of Illinois.

¹ Preliminary Abstract for Poster Presentation 10th National Meeting of the American Society of Surface Mining and Reclamation.

² Georganna B. Collins, Landscape Architect. Wetlands Research, Inc. 53 W Jackson, Suite 1015, Chicago, Illinois, 60604; 312-922-0777; fax 312-922-1823.