

# Before the Wells Run Dry: Ensuring Sustainable Water Supplies for Illinois

## Summary of Draft Recommendations

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# MPC and Openlands' collaborative work on water issues

- ***Changing Course (2003)***
  - Promoted watershed planning and cooperative stormwater management
- ***Troubled Waters (2005)***
  - Led to 2006 Executive Order creating pilot regional water supply planning groups
  - Led to Public Act 096-0222, which requires high-volume users in all parts of the state to report water usage to ISWS



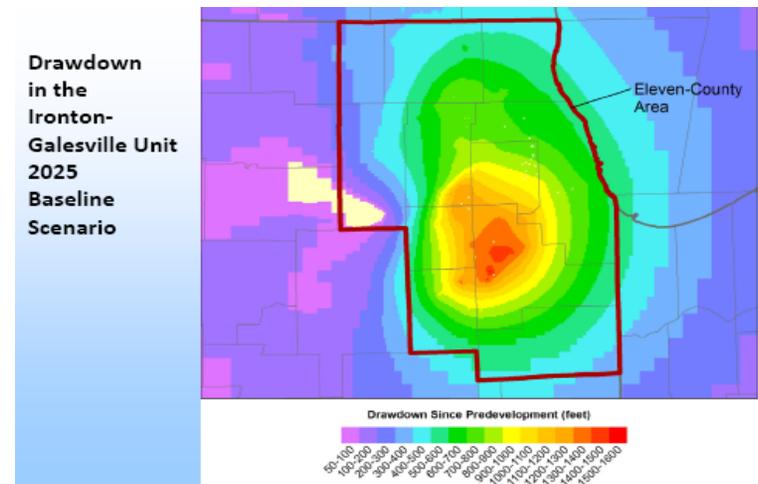
# MPC and Openlands' collaborative work on water issues

- **Why water supply planning?**
  - Growing demand outpacing finite supply
  - Aging, inefficient infrastructure
  - Drawdown of aquifers and Lake Michigan has negative impacts on habitats and wildlife
  - Above all else, dependable water supplies are essential to ensure an equitable, competitive, and sustainable region.



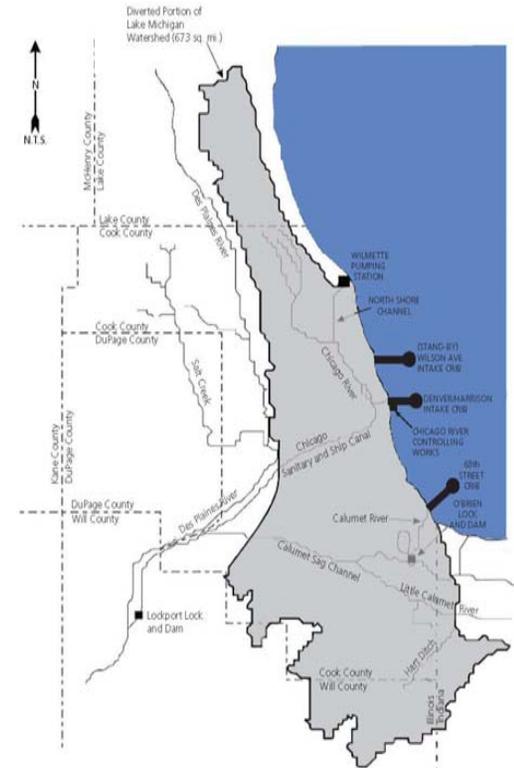
# Lessons from the pilot planning groups

- **Our demand for water is growing, but our supply is not.**
  - In east central Illinois, manmade reservoirs are strained by increased demand and sedimentation.
  - Groundwater sources in both regions are under considerable pressure, with projected shortages and potentially irreversible depletion of deep aquifers within the next 15-30 years.



# Lessons from the pilot planning groups

- **Lake Michigan is Illinois' most precious water resource. Our region's future economic competitiveness and quality of life hinge on how well we use it.**
  - Our diversion is unlikely to grow.
  - Population and business growth will increase demand and stress existing infrastructure.
  - Strong possibility that more communities will need to supplement groundwater with lake water.
  - As of 2005, Illinois lost 28% of its Lake Michigan diversion as stormwater. At an average of 588 million gallons a day, that's roughly twice as much as the region's daily withdrawals of groundwater.



Illinois' Diverted Portion of the Lake Michigan Watershed

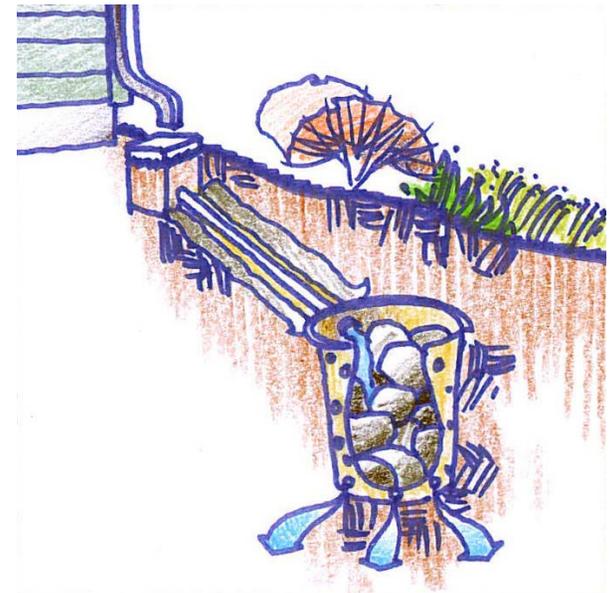
# Lessons from the pilot planning groups

- **Water waste is a problem we can solve; water scarcity is a crisis we must avert.**
- **Water supply managers, both public and private, need the right tools to encourage implementation of the consensus-driven regional plans.**
- **We need to invest in staff and technology to ensure the most timely, comprehensive, and nuanced data possible.**



# Ensuring sustainable water supplies

- **Today, our biggest challenge is inefficient use of existing resources... fortunately, we know how to solve these problems.**
  - Chicago's plans to replace water mains and install meters could save enough water to serve 700,000 more people.
  - Algonquin's daytime irrigation regulations have held pumping volumes steady despite 25% population growth.
  - The Calumet River Corridor's *Green River Pattern Book* outlines water conservation and green stormwater management practices for new development.



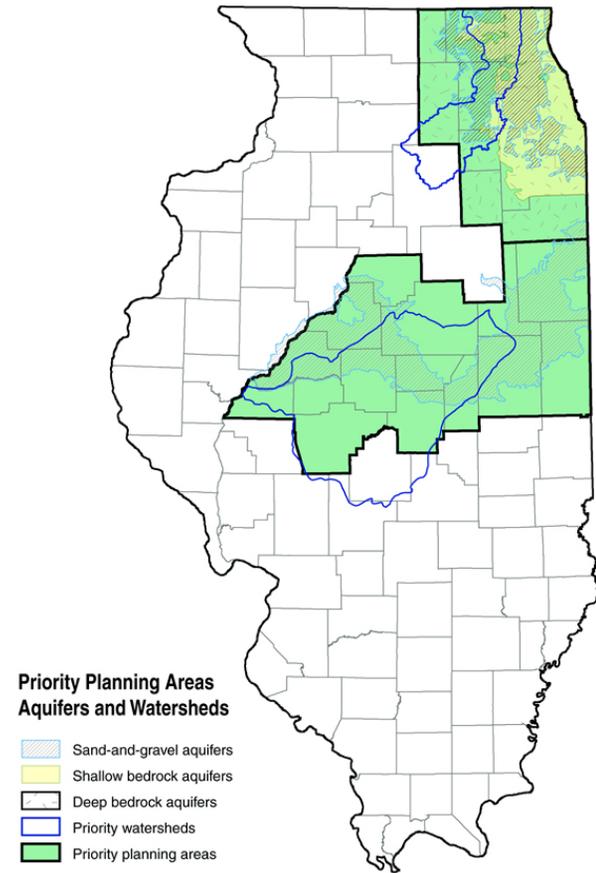
# Ensuring sustainable water supplies

- **All water policies and investment must account for two things:**
  - Water supply management is primarily local.
  - Water supplies are inherently regional.
- **Conservation, efficiency, education, innovation, and coordination will be the keys to sustainability.**



# Ensuring sustainable water supplies

- **The State of Illinois must:**
  - Enable existing regional groups to move into implementation
  - Establish additional regional planning groups to cover remainder of state
  - Create means for local and regional input on state policy and investment that impacts water supply
  - Provide adequate funding for research, planning, and implementation



# Ensuring sustainable water supplies

- **We need increased state support.**
  - \$3 million a year for regional planning, capacity at IDNR, ISWS, and ISGS
  - \$20 million a year for conservation and efficiency purposes
- **General Revenue Funds would clearly signal state support for sustainability.**
- **New revenues should encourage efficient use, and be used to ensure sustainable, safe water supplies.**
  - For example, a 1 cent/500 gallon surcharge on monthly water bills would raise approx. \$12 million a year, but cost consumers only pennies a week.



# *Before the Wells Run Dry*

- Reinventing infrastructure investment
- Linking land use planning and water supply analysis
- Spurring demand management solutions to water supply
- Optimizing Illinois' Lake Michigan diversion



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