

## The need for water supply planning

Northeastern Illinois' water resources are finite and constantly under stress from population growth, aging and inefficient infrastructure, and climate change. Illinois' withdrawals from Lake Michigan are limited by U.S. law, while our underground water stores are being drained faster than they can recharge.

Given that our water supply is not growing, but demand is, it is essential that we conserve existing resources and use them as efficiently as possible. MPC and Openlands research, advocate for and work to implement water supply policy and investment that respects the regional nature of water supplies and the local nature of water management.

In 2010, this partnership will advocate for increased state support for regional water supply planning, a rethinking of federal and state infrastructure investment policies, better coordination between state agencies, and more flexible tools for local conservation and efficiency upgrades.



## MPC and Openlands' goals

- Increased — and consistent — state support for regional water supply planning and plan implementation
- Incentives for local governments seeking to integrate of water quality and water supply planning, and to build stronger links between land use planning and water availability
- A rethinking of water infrastructure, prioritizing reinvestment in aging systems, efficiency upgrades, and innovative green solutions
- Improved use of Illinois' diversion of Lake Michigan water, particularly reduction of the immense stormwater runoff that counts against our available water supply
- Better demand management and alternative supply strategies, which will reduce stress on such traditional water resources as surface rivers and subsurface aquifers



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These efforts are generously supported by the Field Foundation of Illinois and the Seabury Foundation, and Illinois American Water.

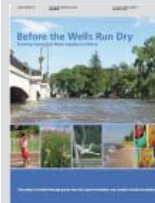
## MPC and Openlands' initiatives

- A public education campaign – “What Our Water’s Worth” — on the value of water and the importance of consumer and citizen participation in sustainable water supply management.
- Advocacy, pilot projects, and success modeling for such legislative initiatives as Ill. Senate Bill 2549, which would enable rainwater harvesting for non-potable uses such as flushing toilets. Policy shifts like this give individuals and communities innovative tools for conserving water supplies, while also putting the free market to work solving environmental issues.
- Policy development and advocacy in support of the Ill. Dept. of Natural Resources’ strategic plan to create additional regional water supply planning groups and the Ill. Environmental Protection Administration’s review of its green infrastructure policies and revolving loan funds.



## Water supply planning resources from MPC and Openlands

Since 2003, MPC and Openlands’ have issued three influential reports on water resource planning in Illinois. Armed with these reports, our partnership has garnered many notable victories, including the creation of Illinois’ first-ever regional water supply planning groups and the passage of key legislation on stormwater management, water use reporting, and local comprehensive planning.



### Before the Wells Run Dry

(2009) Presents a series of recommendations for how Illinois can support and continue the existing regional water supply planning groups, reform state policies and programs to support regional water supply planning throughout Illinois, increase the efficiency of investment in water-related infrastructure, and ultimately reward local management that conserves shared water resources.



### Troubled Waters

(2005) Urged the State of Illinois to establish a statewide framework for regional supply planning, based on data, integrated management of surface water and groundwater, and inclusion of water demand analysis in land use planning.



### Changing Course

(2003) Examined the relationship between development practices and water quality and quantity in a 12-county northeastern Illinois region.