



Executive Board

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Alternate: Joe Robinson

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Alternate: Joe Kenney

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Steve Saunders, Winnetka
Alternate: James Bernahl

Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee

Committee Chair

Rob Flood, NSWRD
Alternate: Joe Robinson

Members-At-Large

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Alternate: Becky Collings

Kate Amoruso, Wilmette
Alternate: Dan Manis

Damon Cederberg, Libertyville Twp.
Alternate: Kathleen O'Connor

Larry Bridges, ESDD
Alternate: Bill Schrimpf

Wally Dittrich, Lincolnshire
Alternate: Marc Facchini

Jeff Nehila, Deerfield Park District
Alternate: Jay Zahn

2019 North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup Annual Newsletter

WHO/ WHAT?

The North Branch Chicago River Watershed Workgroup (NBWW) is a voluntary, dues-paying organization. The workgroup is governed by bylaws, an elected Executive Board, and voting dues-paying members. Membership dues are used to implement the water quality program, which includes: data collection, analysis and identification of potential water quality impairments based on collected water quality data.

WHERE/ WHEN?

The NBWW was officially formed on January 17, 2018 at the Kickoff Meeting. The NBWW monitors water quality in the North Branch Chicago River Watershed planning area, which includes the three subwatersheds: West Fork, Middle Fork and Skokie River. The North Branch Chicago River watershed boundaries are located in Lake and Cook County, starting at Route 132 in Waukegan to the north and extending south to Dempster Street in Morton Grove (where combined sewer systems begin). See Figure 1, page 3.

WHY?

In addition to meeting members' Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit requirements, the NBWW can prevent duplicated monitoring efforts and will accomplish more with less! For most NBWW members, the member dues will be less than current monitoring costs for an individual community or agency, and NBWW monitoring will provide a more complete picture of the problem so that remediation can be targeted to where it is needed most.

Check out what the workgroup has accomplished in 2019 →

2019 Accomplishments

- NBWW gained 5 additional watershed workgroup members, bringing the total number of NBWW members to 42!
 - New members: Village of Morton Grove, Union One Middle Fork Drainage District, Illinois Sierra Club, West Deerfield Township, Integrated Lakes Management (ILM)
- Coordinated with the Illinois EPA to get approval of NBWW's Bioassessment 2-year Monitoring Strategy for the North Branch Chicago River watershed (approved 4/1/19), and the Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP): Water Quality and Sediment Chemistry, and Bioassessment Monitoring of the North Branch Chicago River Watershed (approved 4/3/19). Both reports can be found on NBWW's [website](#).
- Updated the NBWW Workplan for 2018-2023 milestone scorecard to evaluate the workgroup's progress.
 - *This scorecard can be used by watershed workgroup members as support for Part 5 of the NPDES ILR40 Permit requirements and measurable goals in Stormwater Management Program Plans.*
- Created an annual report to satisfy the NPDES water quality monitoring component of the annual permit reporting requirements of its members.
- Updated the Membership By-laws.
- Completed Year 2 water quality monitoring efforts. This completes one full cycle (2018 & 2019) of water quality data. See page 4 for more detailed information.
- Coordinated with the DuPage River Salt Creek Workgroup and the Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup for the completion of the Project Identification and Prioritization Model (IPS Model). NBWW contributed funds to complete the IPS Model that will be utilized in FY2020.
- Continued support of the North Branch Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan update by utilizing NBWW's monitoring program as local match towards an Illinois EPA 319 grant. See page 5.
- Maintained NBWW website; www.nbwwil.org, for posting information on the workgroup and distributing updates to NBWW members and the public.
- Continued outreach to public-sector stakeholders – townships, park districts, drainage districts, school districts etc. to inform them of the Workgroup's activities and invite them to become members.
- NBWW held 12 meetings; 6 executive board, 4 general membership and 2 monitoring & water quality impairment abatement committee meetings.

Workgroup Mission

To bring together a diverse coalition of stakeholders to preserve and improve water quality in the North Branch Chicago River and its tributaries through long term monitoring and gaining a better understanding of the stressors to the aquatic system.

NBWW Monitoring Sites

25 Monitoring Sites

- 8 sites on the Skokie River
- 11 sites on the Middle Fork
- 6 sites along the West Fork

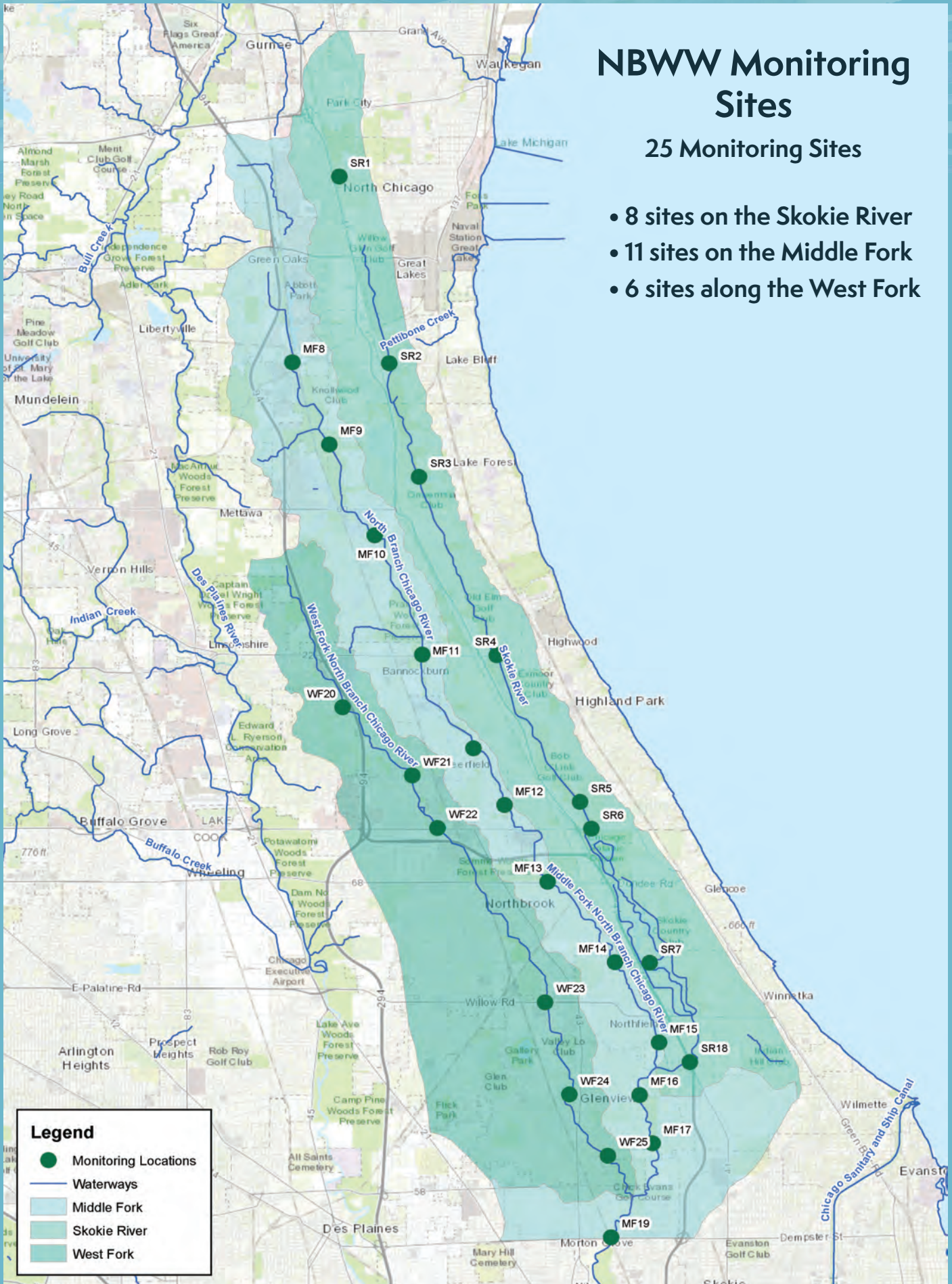


Figure 1: North Branch Chicago River Watershed Planning Area & Monitoring Locations

Monitoring Activities 2019 Expenditures

Midwest Biodiversity Institute

Midwest Biodiversity Institute (MBI) was contracted with the NBWW to perform Bioassessment monitoring and sediment collection in the watershed. MBI sampled 14 out of 25 monitoring sites for fish, habitat and sediment chemistry sampling, as well as macroinvertebrate sampling. A datasonde was deployed at 7 out of the 25 monitoring sites in the West and Middle Forks of the North Branch Chicago River for collection of dissolved oxygen (D.O.), pH, temperature and specific conductance. Benthic chlorophyll a was also collected and analyzed. This monitoring effort was completed and one full cycle (2018 and 2019 monitoring efforts) of monitoring data has been collected in the watershed. See more information about what's next in the NBWW 2020 Goals section.

North Shore Water Reclamation District

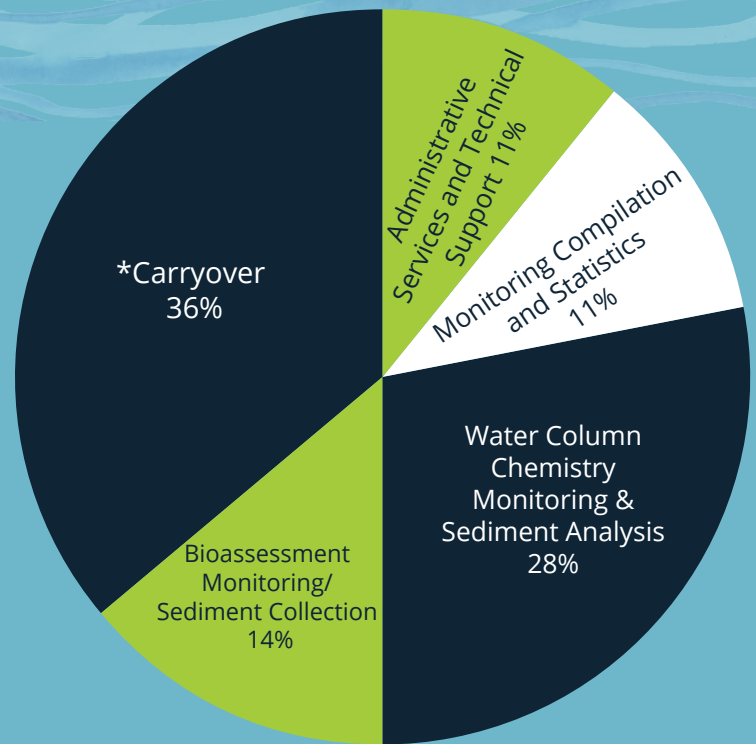
North Shore Water Reclamation District (NSWRD) was contracted to conduct water column chemistry and sediment chemistry analysis with the watershed. NSWRD sampled water column chemistry in February, May, July, August, September and October 2019. This monitoring data will be combined with MBI's data to create a full monitoring report of the watershed findings. NSWRD will begin their Year 3 monitoring in February 2020.

Data collected from these monitoring efforts is submitted annually to the Illinois EPA to fulfill the NPDES water quality monitoring permit reporting requirements of its Workgroup members

NBWW Administrative & Technical Services

The Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) provides administrative and technical services to the NBWW, these services include:

- Meeting Coordination
- Developing & maintaining bylaws, contracts, workplans, monitoring strategy, etc.
- Educational Presentations
- NBWW financials



**Carryover funds are designated for future modeling and water quality analysis*



NBWW 2020 Goals

- Analyze second-year monitoring results and coordinate with MBI to compile a comprehensive report detailing the data and the conclusions based on the analyses of Year 1 & 2 monitoring data.
- Compile the monitoring data in a format to be included in an annual report prepared to satisfy the NPDES water quality monitoring permit reporting requirements.
 - Integrate Year 1 & 2 monitoring data into the IPS Model.
- Continue to support SMC with the update to the North Branch of the Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan through in-kind match through the monitoring program.
 - The NBWW offers continued support in update of the 2008 update to the North Branch Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan. The update will maintain the plan's status as an Illinois EPA approved watershed-based plan and allow watershed stakeholders to apply for grant opportunities.
- Continue to host meetings that provide education and outreach targeted towards achieving attainment of water quality standards and designated uses for the watershed.
 - Support the North Branch Watershed Planning Committee and the North Branch Watershed Consortium through fostering general membership forums.
- Continue to develop a database of monitoring data including fish, macroinvertebrates, habitat, and water and sediment chemistry.
- Refine the monitoring program based on first-year and second-year implementation and advice from industry experts.
- Support and sponsorship local deicing education and outreach efforts meeting NBWW bylaw goals and objectives.

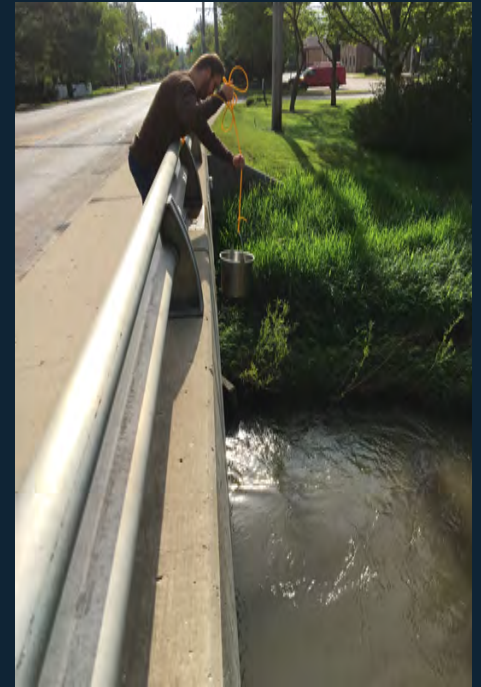


Figure 3: NSWRD 2019 water column chemistry sampling

Next Steps

MBI has been contracted to integrate the 2018-19 monitoring data (years 1 & 2) into the Northeastern Illinois Integrated Prioritization System (IPS Model). The IPS Model is a framework that merges high resolution monitoring data and assessment results with water quality management goals and objectives in order to better guide decision-making at regional and local watershed scales. NBWW (along with other regional watershed workgroups) is choosing to implement an IPS Model to provide guidance about prioritizing short term and long-term projects based on a detailed assessment of the restorability of impaired watersheds, reaches, and sites to meeting their water quality standard.

2019 NBWW Members and Meetings

NBWW Agency Members:

Any public agency holding an NPDES permit for a discharge into the North Branch Chicago River and its tributaries, either from a publicly owned treatment works or from a public municipal separate storm sewer system.

- City of Highland Park
- City of Lake Forest
- City of North Chicago
- City of Park City
- Cook County
- Cook County Division of Transportation and Highways
- East Skokie Drainage District
- Forest Preserve District of Cook County
- Lake County
- Lake County Division of Transportation
- Libertyville Township
- North Shore Water Reclamation District
- Union One Middle Fork Drainage District
- Union One West Fork Drainage District
- Vernon Township



**2019
Summary**

- **\$127,806.00 Annual Dues**
- **5 Additional Members**
- **42 Total Members**

- Village of Bannockburn
- Village of Deerfield
- Village of Glencoe
- Village of Glenview
- Village of Green Oaks
- Village of Lincolnshire
- Village of Morton Grove
- Village of Niles
- Village of Northbrook
- Village of Northfield
- Village of Riverwoods
- Village of Skokie
- Village of Wilmette
- Village of Winnetka
- West Deerfield Township

NBWW Associate Members:

An agency, organization or company interested in the mission and objectives of the Workgroup that is not eligible for membership as an Agency member.

- Christopher Burke Engineering
- Deerfield Park District
- Deigan & Associates
- Friends of the Chicago River
- Gewalt-Hamilton Associates
- Hey & Associates
- Illinois Sierra Club
- Integrated Lakes Management
- Lake County Forest Preserve District
- Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
- Lake Forest Open Lands
- Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago

The NBWW is now accepting new members. If you're interested in making a difference in the North Branch Chicago River Watershed, join the watershed workgroup. Contact Ashley Strelcheck at astrelcheck@lakecountyil.gov for more information.

What are the Membership Benefits for My Community?

By being an NBWW member your dues provide significant cost savings to the watershed and individual communities. If an MS4 community performed monitoring individually, costs would be based on a number of factors but the minimum requirement would at least be two monitoring sites. What does the cost comparison look like?

- MS4 Communities managing their own monitoring program typically is estimated at upwards of \$10,000 for upstream and downstream monitoring sites (*General NPDES Permit No. ILR40, Part V, Item A, Section 2b*), bidding, contract management, reporting and data formatting for permitting and monitoring requirements.
- NBWW contracted costs of water column chemistry and biological assessments at \$87,500 for the entire watershed, which equates to roughly \$ 3,500 per monitoring site and includes 25 sites in the monitoring program. Our membership includes 24 IEPA permit holders, which if performed independently, would cost approximately \$240,000. Collectively, the economy of scale provided by the workgroup and its membership save the watershed upwards of \$150,000 in yearly monitoring.

Other quantifiable advantages of your membership includes the following:

- MS4 permit compliance for water quality monitoring is met
- Monitoring data formatted to meet Illinois EPA annual submittal requirements
- Monitoring data analyzed and summarized into comprehensive report
- MS4 permit compliance for chlorides is met – If the permittee performs any deicing activities that can cause or contribute to a violation of an applicable State chloride water quality standard, the permittee must participate in any watershed group(s) organized to implement control measures which will reduce the chloride concentration in any receiving stream in the watershed. (*General NPDES Permit No. ILR40, Part III, Item D*)

2020 Meetings

Executive Board and Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee Meetings

All of these meetings will be held at the Northbrook Village Hall, Terrace Room, 1225 Cedar Ln, Northbrook, IL 60062

- January 8, 2020
- March 11, 2020
- April 8, 2020
- June 10, 2020
- July 8, 2020
- September 9, 2020
- October 14 2020
- December 9, 2020

Monitoring & Water Quality Impairment Abatement Committee:

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM (as needed)

Executive Board: 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM

General Membership Meetings

General membership meetings are held quarterly and replace Executive Board and Monitoring Committee meetings. The meeting locations change each meeting and are held from 1 PM – 3 PM.

- February 12, 2020
Location: Heller Nature Center
- May 13, 2020
Location: Heller Nature Center
- August 12, 2020
Location: Lake Forest Municipal Center Training Room
- November 18, 2020 (*date was adjusted to avoid a holiday*)
Location: Lake Forest Municipal Center Training Room

NBWW Support Staff and Contact Information

Administrative Services: Lake County Stormwater Management Commission

Mike Warner (Executive Director) & Ashley Strelcheck (Water Resource Professional)

To subscribe to our meetings or get more information, please visit our website or email Ashley Strelcheck.

Website: www.nbwwil.org; **Contact Person:** Ashley Strelcheck, astrelcheck@lakecountyl.gov

NBWW Sampling Locations & Photos



Upstream photo of Skokie River monitoring location SR1



Collection of Datasonde continuous data and benthic chlorophyll a



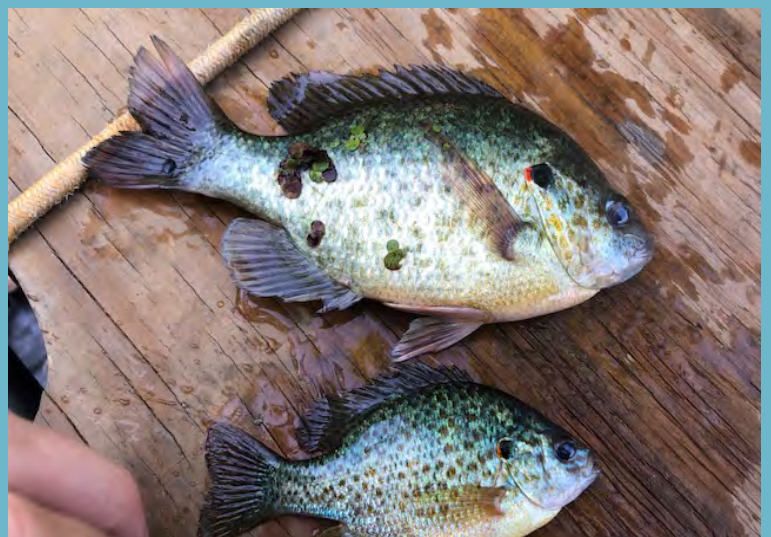
The West Fork Monitoring Location WF25



Middle Fork Monitoring Location MF14



Stream shot at West Fork Monitoring Location WF23



Redear and Pumpkinseed Sunfish