

**APPENDIX A: NORTH BRANCH CHICAGO RIVER WATERSHED WORKGROUP SCORECARD**

**Calendar Year Assessed: 2025**

**MS4 Permit Year Assessed: 23**

The following strategy tables are specific program activities that can be included as measurable goals to meet the minimum control measures (MCM) of the NPDES ILR40 permit requirements. “Corresponding MS4 MCM” column should be reflected as measurable goals in the [Storm Water Management Program \(SWMP\)](#) as well as annual facility inspection report. “Water Quality (WQ) Requirement” supports Part 5 of the NPDES ILR40 Permit.

**Strategy 1: Monitoring and Water Quality Assessment**

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Review monitoring program to assess site locations, data parameters and budget.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Completed as part of the current NBWW Monitoring Strategy Document; <i>last revised 12/20/2023 and approved 01/10/2024</i>
1	Consult with outside experts to ensure the most efficient use of resources in data collection, and that appropriate parameters are being monitored to achieve the goals of the NBWW.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Consulted with Chris Yoder (MBI) during development of the Monitoring Strategy and QAPP Document. Continue to consult with MBI, Geosyntec, Illinois EPA, NSWRD & other local workgroups about monitoring strategies.
1	Make data available for watershed planning and to Workgroup members.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Monitoring reports and data are available on the NBWW website: <a href="https://www.nbwwil.org/plans-and-reports/">https://www.nbwwil.org/plans-and-reports/</a>
1	Use monitoring results to identify the extent of the impaired waterbodies and utilize water quality models to prioritize remediation efforts.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	In 2025, NBWW staff and members were unable to be trained to utilize the IPS model which included NBWW monitoring data from 2022. NBWW continued development of a Nutrient Assessment Reduction Plan (NARP) with Geosyntec and the Illinois EPA. The NBWW submitted the NARP to Illinois EPA by the December 31, 2025 deadline.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Analyse monitoring results to pinpoint the sources of pollution.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	<p>January 2025, Geosyntec Consultants completed a NBWW Water Quality Data Summary Report for the workgroup summarizing NBWW's 2018-2023 water quality data to assess water quality trends.</p> <p>The NBWW spearheaded a pilot program targeting five NBWW monitoring sites with the highest E. coli levels (2023-2024) to conduct microbial source tracking in 2025. These five sites were tested for 3 markers: human, dog and gull). The NBWW Monitoring Committee will review the 2025 monitoring results and determine next steps in January 2026.</p>
1	Compile the data in a format to be included in an annual report prepared to satisfy the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) water quality monitoring permit reporting requirements of its Workgroup members.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Seventh year of monitoring data (2024) was compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2025. Eighth year of monitoring data (2025) will be compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2026.

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1	Use the monitoring results to evaluate effectiveness of watershed projects and initiatives.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	<p>September 2025, NBWW sent letters to the five monitoring sites in the watershed with the highest chloride levels based on the February 2025 monitoring results. These letters were targeted at entities tributary to these monitoring locations in an effort to share responsible winter maintenance resources and awareness.</p> <p>January 2025, Geosyntec Consultants completed a NBWW Water Quality Data Summary Report for the workgroup summarizing NBWW's 2018-2023 water quality data to assess water quality trends.</p> <p>The NBWW spearheaded a pilot program targeting five NBWW monitoring sites with the highest E. coli levels (2023-2024) to conduct microbial source tracking in 2025. These five sites were tested for 3 markers: human, dog and gull). The NBWW Monitoring Committee will review the 2025 monitoring results and determine next steps in January 2026.</p>
1	Develop and maintain appropriate water quality models of the watershed to assess attainment of the Workgroup's long-term goals.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	<p>In 2025, NBWW staff and members were unable to be trained to utilize the IPS model which included NBWW monitoring data from 2022. The goal is for NBWW Committee members to be trained on the IPS model in Spring 2026.</p>
2	Determine data needs of Workgroup members.	N/A	<p>Data needs were discussed throughout 2025 NBWW meetings: Executive Board, Monitoring Committee and General Membership meetings.</p>

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2	Identify other databases and evaluate the ease of interfacing with them, cost to create and maintain them, and the frequency that members query the database.	N/A	NBWW has a <a href="#">Notice of Intent (NOI) Spreadsheet</a> posted for NBWW members to use for their NPDES permitting. This spreadsheet allows NBWW members to search for their appropriate monitoring location and sort by parameter. All of the NBWW stream monitoring program is on this NOI spreadsheet.

**Strategy 2: Regulatory Relationships and Requirements**

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Meet one-on-one with regulators.	B.7	NBWW and hired consultants have continued to coordinate with the Illinois EPA and local watershed workgroup staff on NPDES permit requirements and upcoming regulatory deadlines.
1	Develop a chloride reduction strategy that includes a training component.	C.10	<p><i>Chloride reduction strategy not completed.</i></p> <p>NBWW sponsored a Northeastern Illinois (Regional) Winter Best Practices Workshop that consisted of 9 in-person and virtual webinars, and one in-person Lake County Calibration Day that targeted Northeastern Illinois stakeholders. This effort was a large partnership with local watershed workgroups, winter maintenance professionals, local counties, and the Salt Smart Collaborative.</p> <p>September 2025, NBWW sent letters to the five monitoring sites in the watershed with the highest chloride levels based on the February 2025 monitoring results. These letters were targeted at entities tributary to these monitoring locations in an effort to share responsible winter maintenance resources and awareness.</p>

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Attend other workgroup meetings or trainings to stay informed about what other groups are doing and proposed regulatory changes.	B.3	Many NBWW Board members as well as Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) staff attend the Des Plaines River Watershed Workgroup (DRWW) meetings on a regular basis.
1	Create an annual report to satisfy the NPDES water quality monitoring component of the annual permit reporting requirement.	WQ Monitoring Requirement	Seventh year of monitoring data (2024) was compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA in March 2025. This scorecard is an additional resource for NBWW members to utilize as part of their annual reporting requirements. Eighth year of monitoring data (2025) will be compiled and submitted to the Illinois EPA March 2026.
2	Identify MS4s who are leaders in the field.	B.6	Continued to support and engage with MS4s and other watershed entities that are active with the NBWW and/or are implementing BMPs in their communities.
2	Organize annual tour/training event of BMP and green infrastructure projects/sites.	A.4	NBWW was unable to host an annual site tour this year but did have educational speakers with project implementation highlights at two general membership meetings (February and August 2025).
2	Provide support and attendance at Municipal meetings as requested, for technical support.	B.4	NBWW provided workgroup documentation to several municipalities and workgroup members to bring to their Boards and Committees. NBWW and hired consultants continue to offer technical support as requested.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
2	Identify MS4 permit requirements that the NBWW can provide supplemental services to address.	N/A	<p>NBWW maintains a workplan and corresponding scorecard with specific program activities that can be included as measurable goals to meet the minimum control measures (MCM) of the NPDES ILR40 permit requirements. "Corresponding MS4 MCM" column should be reflected as measurable goals in the Storm Water Management Program (SWMP) as well as annual facility inspection report. "Water Quality (WQ) Requirement" supports Part 5 of the NPDES ILR40 Permit.</p> <p>NBWW provided an overview of permit requirements and shared updates on the MS4 permit. NBWW also shared MS4 resources and training events.</p>

**Strategy 3: Water Quality Improvement Initiatives**

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Create a list of potential water quality improvement initiatives.	B.7	SMC (with the support of NBWW) completed the North Branch Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan Update that identifies site-specific and programmatic action plan recommendations for the watershed. The watershed-based plan update is completed and has been adopted. NBWW NARP provides recommended actions for water quality improvement initiatives (Section 4).
1	Provide education about the benefits of these initiatives.	A.6	NBWW hosted two general membership meetings in 2025 (02/19/25 & 08/13/25) that included presentations on water quality improvement initiatives such as watershed education and outreach, water quality monitoring efforts, BMP implementation stories, nutrient assessment reduction plan, etc.

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Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Encourage municipalities to adopt at least one initiative.	B.7	<i>Not completed.</i>
1	Attend board meetings when these initiatives are discussed.	B.4	<i>Not completed.</i>
1	Provide input on funding sources and strategies, education and marketing materials.	A.6	NBWW continues to provide a forum for the North Branch Planning Committee (email database invited) at General Membership meetings with educational presentations and watershed updates.
2	Develop a list of high-priority watershed improvement projects based on the action plan recommendations from the North Branch Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan.	B.7	SMC (with the support of NBWW) completed the North Branch Chicago River Watershed-Based Plan Update (2022) that identifies prioritized site-specific and programmatic action plan recommendations for the watershed. NBWW is pursuing an IPS Model training (ongoing) and completed development of a NARP (Dec. 2025).
2	Investigate and list all possible sources of funding, including in-kind services and local sponsor contributions to implement watershed improvement projects.	B.7	NBWW completed the NARP in December 2025. This report identified “Budgeting and Funding” in Section 4 of the report. See <a href="#">NBWW Reports &amp; Data webpage</a> for the NBWW NARP.
2	Inquire how other groups are funding watershed projects.	B.7	NBWW members and staff have continued to coordinate with local watershed workgroups about funding opportunities for watershed projects.
2	Assist in identifying and coordinating multi-jurisdictional implementation projects.	B.6	NBWW is pursuing an IPS Model training (ongoing) and completed development of a NARP (Dec. 2025). These tools help determine high-priority watershed improvement projects.
2	Enlist watershed experts to review funding proposals for projects and offer advice to applicants, helping them to develop better, more competitive proposals.	B.7	<i>Not completed.</i>

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2	Request funding and/or in-kind services and/or draft permit language.	B.7	September 2025, SMC sent MS4 Workgroup members updated NPDES permit language from the new permit released August 1, 2025.
2	Manage and administer the funding sources.	N/A	Providing in-kind support (letters of support) for water quality improvement projects (as requested).
2	Develop educational/outreach materials or other support services for the project.	A.1	The 2025 annual newsletter will be distributed to the watershed members and stakeholders in February 2026 with information on NBWW's accomplishments and monitoring activities.
2	Implement the Chloride Reduction Strategy.	C.10	<i>Not completed. See Strategy 2, Objective 1.</i>

**Strategy 4: Leadership and Engagement**

Work Plan Objective	Action Steps	Corresponding MS4 MCM	NBWW Status
1	Allow every member to express and employ their talents, ideas, experiences, skills and expertise.	B.7	Every NBWW meeting is open to the public and attendees are encouraged to participate (and present/network at general membership meetings).

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1	Sponsor <del>quarterly</del> <b>biannual</b> guest speaker series to educate about pressing watershed issues and to identify collaborative opportunities to address them.	B.3	See Strategy 3, Objective 1: General Membership Meetings.
1	Collaborate with existing groups to sponsor a variety of Watershed awareness events (i.e. stream/lake clean ups, canoe trips, Earth Day events, De-icing events, etc.) with an education component.	B.7	<p>NBWW sponsored a Northeastern Illinois (Regional) Winter Best Practices Workshop that consisted of 9 in-person and virtual webinars, and one in-person Lake County Calibration Day that targeted Northeastern Illinois stakeholders. This effort was a large partnership with local watershed workgroups, winter maintenance professionals, local counties, and the Salt Smart Collaborative.</p> <p>NBWW sponsored the Lake-McHenry MS4 Pollution Prevention Workshop on May 21, 2025, with 72 in-person attendees. Virtual attendance was offered through Zoom. The workshop provided important information about pollution control and the MS4 Permit Program.</p>
2	Maintain an informative and useful web site.	A.6	<a href="https://www.nbwwil.org/">https://www.nbwwil.org/</a>
2	Host events and speaking engagements with public officials in order to update them on crucial watershed issues and identify partnership opportunities.	B.7	NBWW and SMC continue engaging all watershed stakeholders (including public officials) throughout the watershed.
2	Reach out to additional public-sector stakeholders – townships, park districts, drainage districts, school districts etc. – to inform them of the Workgroup’s activities and invite them to become Workgroup members.	B.7	Ongoing (meeting announcements, SMC social media outreach, nbwwil.org website, word-of-mouth through members).
2	Reach out to private sector stakeholders – developers, consultants, homeowner and lake owner associations, large property owners, farmers, churches – to inform them of the Workgroup’s activities and invite them to partner with us.	B.7	

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2	Recognize individuals and groups who are making substantial contributions to the Workgroup’s Vision.	B.7	At the (2) 2025 NBWW General Membership meetings, the agenda includes a “Watershed Project Updates or Other Announcements/Discussion” section which recognizes individuals and groups implementing projects in the watershed and discussion items for the members.
3	Develop, adopt, and disseminate an annual work plan, annual budget and annual report on Workgroup accomplishments.	B.7	A workplan covering 2018-2023 was developed in 2018. The budget is reviewed at each NBWW meeting. An annual newsletter (2025) will be distributed in February 2026.
3	Review member dues annually, and send out notices for dues payment.	N/A	Review completed: September - December 2025. FY2026 Membership dues are approved in February 2026 and distributed to members immediately after approval.
3	Review Workgroup Bylaws.	B.7	Bylaws are reviewed annually and updated as needed.
3	Organize and facilitate <del>four</del> <b>two</b> quarterly general member meetings each year.	B.3	NBWW hosted two general membership meetings in 2025 (02/15 & 08/13). NBWW voted to reduce the number of general membership meetings to 2 annually; starting 2023.
3	Review scorecard.	B.7	Updated – December 2025.