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Kankakee River Basin Partnership

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KANKAKEE RIVER BASIN PARTNERSHIP

The Kankakee River Basin Partnership is in the process of obtaining a non for profit status with the IRS. This will aid in increasing our opportunities to obtain future grants from organizations that require a 501-C3 status. This process has required a name change since the IRS does not recognize a Partnership as being qualified for this exemption. The Partnership name stemmed from our original sanction from the State of Illinois as a partner in the protection and enhancement of the natural resources of this State. If and when we are accepted, the word partnership will be replaced by the word Commission. Some of our members are already using the new title and this is information is simply to inform you that we are one in the same organization.

2005 was certainly a more productive year for the KRBP. Last year, no grants were provided by the State of Illinois due to severe budget cuts. Our projects that were submitted for grant funding were tweaked and re-submitted for funding again in 2005 for 2006 funding. We were recently notified that we received funding for two projects that totaled \$165,980.00 in funding. The sponsors of these two grant requests were the City of Kankakee for the second phase of work on Soldier Creek and the Kankakee River Valley Forest Reserve District for acquisition of property adjacent to the Waldron Road Arboretum. The City of Kankakee will receive \$56,335.00 to address the second phase of work including the planting of trees, stabilizing banks, wildflower plugs, erosion control mats, and slope improvements on Soldier Creek. The Kankakee River Valley Forest Reserve will receive \$109,645.00 to aid in the purchase of the 36 acre plot that was formally the Kankakee Nursery. This will protect open space and will be seeded with prairie grass. The KRBP congratulates these sponsors and thank them for their interest in working with our organization to protect, restore, and enhance the natural resources of the Kankakee Watershed.

The State Line Project that we have been working with the Rock Island Corps to develop on the 67 acres and in the channel at the Indiana / Illinois State Line is nearing the phase of public hearings. Our Partnership has gone on record as being disappointed in the draft noting that two of our priorities were eliminated from the project. The draft excludes addressing the sediment and sand-bed load that enters Illinois from Indiana based on the cost benefit ratio. They also eliminated the deep-water habitat for the same reason. We believe both of these objectives need to be addressed and are hopeful that the Corps will enhance the project to include these in the final draft.

This years river clean up by the Northern Illinois Anglers Association was credited as being one of the best in recent years. A portion of this success can be attributed to the Adopt A River program that was developed with a C-2000 grant through our Partnership. There are approximately 30 adopters that were out in force on that day to aid in the overall effort by the NIAA. The one day clean up netted

approximately 90 tons of debris through out the Kanakake River Basin and an additional 300 tires that had been discarded into the river system. Our thanks to all that aided in this successful event that helps to keep our river system healthy.

We have congratulated Iroquois County for building on our original grants to remove serious logjams in the Iroquois River, a tributary to the Kanakake River. They were able to obtain funding to address additional logjams that will improve the flow and prevent the river from overflowing the bank. The scouring of new channels increase the sediment load in the system. We have noted that during the removal, that some logs escaped and have entered the lower Iroquois within Kanakake County. Our Partnership has asked for their cooperation in addressing this problem.

Finally, our Partnership strongly supported the continuance of the CRFP program for the State of Illinois. Illinois was one of the first to embrace the program, being one of its' developers and planners. We certainly didn't want to see the program go away, nor did we want to lose our priority position to other States. This program has aided in protecting more than 8000 acres within our Kanakake Watershed.