



## MITIGATION PROJECT

# ORLAND GRASSLANDS SOUTH

The Illinois Tollway completed a \$7.1 million wetland restoration project on the 162-acre Orland Grassland South in 2018. The four-year project converted the site, which is located between 179th Street and 183rd Street at 104th Avenue in Orland Park, from farmland back into wetlands.

Vegetative and hydrological maintenance and monitoring is ongoing through February 2020.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Restoration work included planting more than 100 species of wildflowers and prairie grasses, controlling invasive plant species, removing farm drainage tiles, as well as restoring a section of a tributary to Marley Creek.

The Tollway also constructed a new entrance road, parking lot, and trail system to provide public access to the site.

The Tollway will maintain and monitor the site for five years from the completion of mitigation construction and improvements. The Forest Preserves will assume maintenance responsibilities afterward.

### PURPOSE

The site connects with the adjacent 960-acre Orland Grassland Preserve that serves as an important breeding area for various grassland birds such as bobolinks, dickcissels, eastern meadowlarks and Henslow's sparrows.

Prior to the completion of the Orland Grassland South restoration, the adjacent Orland Grassland Preserve underwent a \$12.4 million ecological restoration by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, that restored native prairie, wetlands, savanna and shrub lands and returned the preserve to pre-settlement conditions.

The project was coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Illinois Environmental Protection Agency, as well as local municipalities and utilities.

The project met state and federal requirements to mitigate a portion of the construction impacts associated with the \$2.2 billion Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) Rebuilding and Widening Project. The site was chosen because it offered optimal conditions for wetland restoration on a large scale and the environmental work provided more than 58 acres of mitigation.

