



MITIGATION PROJECT

FOX RIVER COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL FORESTED FEN

The Illinois Tollway contributed \$2.6 million to the purchase and protection of a 53-acre nature preserve site in Elgin located at Illinois Route 25 just north of the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90).

In 2013, the site, formerly housing the Fox River Country Day School, was acquired by the City of Elgin in partnership with the neighboring Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, a more than 50-year-old conservation and research foundation.

The 23-acre forested fen portion was donated to the Kane County Forest Preserve District.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Tollway helped to protect and restore the site formerly known as the Fox River Country Day School, a 53-acre site in Elgin that contains architecturally significant buildings and a rare forested fen, one of only two forested fen wetlands in Illinois.

The fen was restored by the Forest Preserve District of Kane County as part of the Tollway's wetland mitigation efforts for the I-90 corridor. Ongoing maintenance of the site by the Forest Preserve has included treatment to keep invasive species and undesirable plant species from growing in the fen.

PURPOSE

The site is one of only two forested fen wetlands in Illinois and is listed in the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory maintained by the Illinois Natural History Survey.

The fen supports a rich diversity of plants and animals including bog arrow grass, marsh marigold, swamp thistle, skunk cabbage and the rare white cedar, as well as seven species of caddisflies found nowhere else in the entire state.

The effort was coordinated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission, the Kane County Forest Preserve, City of Elgin and local school districts.

The Tollway's efforts will ensure limited future development, as well as the dedication of the forested fen as an Illinois Nature Preserve, the highest level of protection for land in Illinois.

The project provided the agency with more than double mitigation credit needed to compensate for the impact of the portion of the I-90 Rebuilding and Widening Project from Elgin to I-39 in Rockford.

