



MITIGATION PROJECT

HADLEY VALLEY PRESERVE

In 2007, the Illinois Tollway helped fund the restoration and preservation of more than 180 acres of wetlands, prairies and savannas, as well as the development of three public access sites and nearly 5 miles of multi-use trails along Spring Creek in the Hadley Valley Preserve in Joliet.

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Tollway supported efforts to restore native habitats in the Hadley Valley Preserve, which is located in Joliet near the interchange that connects the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355) to I-80.

Prior to restoration, most of Spring Creek had been channelized – deepened and straightened – to drain land for agricultural purposes. Work to restore the water system and wetlands included reshaping and stabilizing more than one mile of stream bank to restore Spring Creek to its original meandering course, complete with riffle and pools – a system of grade control structures to prevent stream bed and bank erosion which consists of rock cross-veins areas with faster current in the straightaways and deeper slower moving pools at the bends. This work required moving over 64,000 cubic yards of earth.

Restoration work also included removing more than 22,000 linear feet of clay drain tiles, which had been used to artificially drain topsoil for agriculture use. Invasive vegetation removal included herbicide treatments and prescribed burning of species such as reed canary grass and box elder tree. Once the invasive species were cleared, nearly 12,000 trees and shrubs of carefully selected species native to Illinois were planted throughout the preserve, as well as nearly 150,000 native wetland plants.

PURPOSE

The mitigation project increased water quality and infiltration and restored natural hydrology, mitigating negative effects to streams and wetlands and restoring habitat for a wide variety of animal and plant species. It also provided access and trail facilities for the public.

This mitigation project was coordinated with Forest Preserve District of Will County, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, City of Chicago, City of Joliet, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Openlands.

The work provided the required water mitigation for construction impacts associated with the south extension of the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355).

