

Pond, River and Shoreline Improvements at the Naperville Park District

Naperville Park District manages over 2,400 acres of parkland which includes 33 ponds and access to several streams, including the DuPage River. The District is committed to environmental stewardship as one of its core values, and a key focus of caring for the environment is improving and protecting water quality in ponds and streams.

In a large suburban city like Naperville, one of the main challenges to the health of our ponds and streams is pollution, including lawn chemicals, oil and gasoline from automobiles, animal waste and sediment. All of these materials are swept into storm drains or washed over land and carried to our waterways during heavy rains. Another is the increase in hard surfaces, such as buildings and roads that allow rainwater to run easily off the surface and into storm drains, carrying the pollutants to our ponds and streams.

There are several ways to prevent water pollution and to improve the quality of ponds and streams that have been degraded over the years. Two strategies currently practiced by the Naperville Park District are: 1) to restore pond and river shorelines with native plants and bank stabilization products such as coir rolls, and 2) to restore healthy pond depth by dredging excess silt from retention ponds. The Park District is investing annually in these practices and has a maintenance plan that covers its ponds and streams over several decades.

Shoreline restoration projects include removal of invasive plant material, shoreline stabilization with coir rolls and/or regrading as needed, and installation of native plants. Native plants have a deep network of roots that help clean stormwater and hold soil in place to prevent erosion. Other benefits include discouraging the presence of Canada geese, reducing maintenance costs, enhancing habitat for wildlife and adding the beauty of wildflowers. A more detailed explanation of the Naperville Park District's shoreline projects can be found [here](#).

Pond dredging projects include location-specific dredging to remove silt from the bottom of retention ponds. The silt is collected and stored in sediment drainage bags to dry on site. The leftover material can then be used wherever needed in Naperville Park District parks to build berms or fill in low areas.

For more background information about shoreline projects, check these references provided by the [Lower DuPage River Watershed Coalition](#):

[Detention Basin Basics](#)

[Benefits of Native Shoreline Buffers](#)

[Invasive Species](#)