

## **Early Notice and Public Review of a Proposed Activity in a Federal Flood Risk Management Standard Designated Floodplain and Wetlands**

To: All interested Agencies, Groups and Individuals

This is to give notice that Responsible Entity (Kane County) under 24 CFR Part 58 has determined that the following proposed action under Community Project Funding, HUD Grant Number B-23-CP-IL-0548 is located in the Federal Flood Risk Management Standard (FFRMS) floodplain and wetlands, and Kane County will be identifying and evaluating practicable alternatives to locating the action within the floodplain and wetlands and the potential impacts on the floodplain and wetlands from the proposed action, as required by Executive Order 11988, as amended by Executive Order 13690 and Executive Order 11990, in accordance with HUD regulations at 24 CFR 55.20 in Subpart C Procedures for Making Determinations on Floodplain Management and Protection of Wetlands.

The proposed project location is at Fox Valley Park District's (FVPD) The Wilds at Red Oak in the Village of North Aurora and the Forest Preserve District of Kane County's (FPDKC) Les Arends Forest Preserve in unincorporated Kane County, Kane County. The extent of the FFRMS floodplain was determined using FEMA's FIS profile data. The Fox Valley Park District proposes to construct a bike and pedestrian bridge over the Fox River. The crossing would span approximately 900 feet over the Fox River connecting the east and west sides of Fox River's 48-mile trail system. The bridge will touch FVPD's The Wilds at Red Oak on the east side and FPDKC Les Arends Forest Preserve on the west side.

The purpose of the project is to provide bike and pedestrian connectivity between the east and west sides of the Fox River's trail system, the Village of North Aurora, and unincorporated Kane County. The purpose of the crossing is to connect The Wilds at Red Oak (east of the Fox River) and the Les Arends Forest Preserve (west of the Fox River).

The bicycle and pedestrian bridge will be funded with \$4,000,000 in U.S. Department of Housing (HUD) Community Project Funding (CPF).

The proposed project falls within the floodway and FFRMS floodplain and palustrine, lacustrine, riverine wetlands within and adjacent to the Fox River. No more than 0.50 acres of wetlands will be permanently disturbed for the project. Approximately 1.3 acres of floodway will be temporarily impacted for the construction access and staging of the proposed bridge. The proposed grading for the bridge will result in fill being placed above existing grade within the floodplain; however, the appropriate cutting/excavation (i.e., removal of soil within the floodplain to compensate for the fill) within the floodplain will be met, in accordance with local/governmental ordinance. Temporary impacts will be restored with native vegetation.

The Fox River offers kayaking and bird watching, as well as biking and walking along its many trails. In addition, the Red Oak Nature Center (which includes The Wilds at Red Oak) is a facility for nature and conservation education. It is surrounded by 80+ acres of forest and wildlife habitat. There are six hiking trails, an observation deck, picnic shelter, wetlands boardwalk, playground and access to the Red Oak Cave. Across the Fox River is Les Arends Forest Preserve, a small, wooded preserve of 60 acres that offers fishing in the Fox River, an interpretive overlook, picnic areas and four trails for hiking and biking.

There are three primary purposes for this notice. First, people who may be affected by activities in the floodplain and wetlands and those who have an interest in the protection of the natural environment should be given an opportunity to express their concerns and provide information about these areas. Commenters are encouraged to offer alternative sites outside of the floodplain and wetlands, alternative methods to serve the same project purpose, and methods to minimize and mitigate project impacts on the floodplain/wetland. Second, an adequate public notice program can be an important public educational tool. The dissemination of information and request for public comment about floodplain and wetlands can facilitate and enhance Federal efforts to reduce the risks and impacts associated with the occupancy and modification of these special areas. Third, as a matter of fairness, when the Federal government determines it will participate in actions taking place in the floodplain and wetlands, it must inform those who may be put at greater or continued risk.

Written comments must be received by Kane County at the following address on or before September 30th, 2025: Kane County, 719 S. Batavia Avenue, Building A, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Geneva, IL 60134 and 630.208.5347 Attention: Julia Thavong, Kane County Development & Community Services Department. Comments may also be submitted via email at [thavongjulia@kanecountyil.gov](mailto:thavongjulia@kanecountyil.gov).

Date: September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025