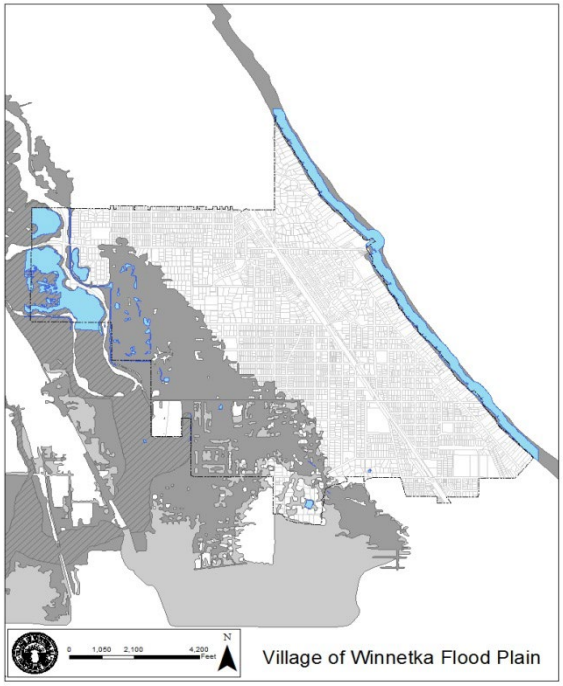
Protecting the Flood Plain

- Do not dump or throw anything into ditches, swales, streams, storm inlets or any other body of water or storm water conveyance system.
- If you notice non-storm water discharge into any stream, lake, pond, storm inlet, due to erosion or other deleterious substance, please contact the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568.
- If you notice that a public storm drain appears to be blocked or has an accumulation of debris over the grate that is inhibiting its function, please contact the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568.
- If you see any dumping or debris in ditches, swales or streams, or any filling within the flood plain, please contact the Public Works Department at 847-716-3568.
- If you see any building or filling without a permit posted, or notice any damaged or broken silt fencing on construction sites, please contact the Community Development Department and/or the Public Works Department at 847-716-3520 or 847-716-3568, respectively.
- Remember, if you are calling to report an incident, it is best to call while the activity is in progress. Otherwise, it can be very difficult to assess the situation.

If you are a recipient of this letter, then your property is either located within the 100-year flood plain; is immediately adjacent to the flood plain, and/or may be subject to flooding.



Flood plain inquiries can be directed to the Engineering Department of the Village of Winnetka, and can be made in person, by telephone, or by e-mail. The Engineering Department is located at the Village Yards, 1390 Willow Road, Winnetka. While any of our Engineering Staff can answer your questions, our Flood Plain Managers are Obaid Khalid, Assistant Village Engineer, who can be reached at 847-716-3532 or okhalid@winnetka.org; and James Bernahl, Director of Engineering, who can be reached at 847-716-3261 or jbernahl@winnetka.org. For flood plain inquiries, please provide the Village with the street address of the property in question.

For general questions or concerns regarding local flooding, drainage issues or sewer back-ups, contact 847-716-3568, and your call can be directed to the appropriate Public Works staff.

Village of Winnetka

Protect Natural Flood Plain Functions

Public Works Engineering Department

Phone: 847.716.3568

Winnetka Flood Plains

In Winnetka, there are two sources of flood plain, the Skokie Ditch, which is a diversion ditch to the Skokie River and Lake Michigan. The flood plain that is tributary to the Skokie Ditch/River covers a large area of residential and Winnetka Park District property, affecting in excess of 600 properties. Construction of the Skokie Ditch initially began during the late 1800's and into the early 1900's in an attempt to drain the Skokie Marsh into Lake Michigan. However, due to legal issues and lack of funding, the ditch construction was abandoned. It wasn't until the early 1930's that approval was obtained to create the Skokie Lagoons as of a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) project, under the presidency of Franklin Roosevelt. Presently, the remainder of this ditch system that is north of Hill Road, flows to the north into a pump station, which then pumps the storm water into the drainage system which conveys the water back to the Skokie River.

The Flood Plain's Natural and Beneficial Functions

The original function of the flood plain and waterway served to provide for a variety of needs. Rivers provided for transportation, water supply, a source of energy, and even a source of waste disposal. However, after hundreds of years, the character of the rivers and flood plains has changed and the natural function of the riparian ecosystems (the vegetated areas adjacent to the streams) has been significantly altered by human action.

While the Skokie Lagoons and River system offer an abundance of recreational and environmental benefits, flood plain resources, including wetlands, have experienced increased pressure from development, as well as the encroachment of invasive plant species. Expanding development of our watershed delivers increased amounts of surface water runoff into the receiving water bodies. The straightening and channelization of streams allow for increased water velocities, which with the increase in storm water runoff from past developments have created increased bank erosion, loss of wildlife habitat and detrimental changes in water quality.

However, over the past several years, the Village of Winnetka has taken significant steps toward minimizing storm water runoff from developments, as well as requiring that storm water quality management techniques be implemented for each development. Every permit issued in the Village of Winnetka that results in an alteration of the existing drainage pattern or increases in impermeable lot coverage requires that some form of storm water management and water quality control be implemented as part of the design.

In addition, all permits issued in the flood plain are required to offset any fill that has been placed in the flood plain with the provision of 110% of the volume provided as compensatory storage. This ensures the maintenance and enhancement the existing capacity of our flood plain storage without having to increase its boundaries.

Flood Plain's Natural Resources

There are three classifications of a flood plain's natural resources: water resources; biological resources; and cultural resources. Water resources includes maintaining both the natural flood storage and erosion control characteristics, as well as the maintenance of water quality, which benefits the reduction of flood velocities, reduction of erosion, and filtering out nutrients and impurities from storm water prior to entering the stream or lake. Biological resources include the support and diversification of flora and providing a habitat for fish and wildlife. Cultural resources include the provision of recreational opportunities, scientific study and outdoor education, and improving the economic base for the community by improving property values and stimulating natural resource activities and businesses.