

Statement from Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker on Storm water Detention Basins on the Northeast Quadrant of the County Grounds

Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker announces his support for the use of land on the northeast quadrant of the Milwaukee County Grounds for the purpose of detention basins that will help prevent flooding along the Menomonee River in Wauwatosa and Milwaukee. His support is conditional on the review and approval of such plans by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and by the management of the basins by the DNR.

State Forest

The designation of a state forest in the northeast quadrant is key to the support of the floodwater management project. As a member of the State Assembly, Walker successfully lobbied the DNR board and the full State Legislature to approve funding for the planning of a forestry demonstration project. While funds for a state forest from the state Forestry Fund were not included in the Governor's 2003/2005 state budget plan, Walker is working with the DNR and members of the Legislature to approve state Stewardship Funds for the state forest.

Independent Review

Last fall, Walker asked for an independent review of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewerage District (MMSD) plans for a storm water detention basin. The staff of the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) studied the details of the plan and concluded that the information was accurate and that the proposal for the detention basins is the preferred alternative. Removing the residential and commercial properties from the flood plain or completely starting the review process over were the other two options given by SEWRPC staff.

Cost Benefit

Clearing the 175 residential and commercial properties from the flood plain will bring about the loss of \$70.7 million in assessed value in the City of Wauwatosa and the City of Milwaukee. Combined, those properties generate \$1.47 million in property tax revenue each year. The loss of \$70.7 million in assessed property value (2002 figures) is the real cost of not allowing the detention basins to go forward.

Conditions of Support

- **Purchase:** Milwaukee County will negotiate a reasonable purchase price for the use of the property.
- **Review:** Milwaukee County asks the DNR to conduct an Environmental Impact Study that will review details of plan and will examine additional floodwater management actions such as the incorporation of upstream restoration options on Underwood Creek. In addition, we ask the DNR to mitigate discharges upstream from the basins.
- **Management:** The DNR must be responsible for the management of the detention basins. In written statements regarding the state forest, staff from the DNR expressed support for the management of the detention basins by the DNR.

The following organizations express their support for approval of the detention basins:

Wauwatosa City Council
Intergovernmental Cooperation Council of Milwaukee County
West Suburban Chamber of Commerce
Wauwatosa Economic Development Corporation
The Village of Wauwatosa Business Development Corporation
The Valley Park Civic Association
Menomonee Valley Partners
16th Street Community Health Clinic
Wauwatosa Board of Parks and Forestry Commissioners