



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 3, 2022

CONTACT:
Shawna Flavell, Executive Director
815.354.1374

McHenry County Conservation Foundation Receives ComEd Green Regions Grant

McHenry County Conservation Foundation was awarded a \$7,500 ComEd Green Regions grant to support an engineering study for hydrologic restoration of a rare graminoid fen at Boger Bog Conservation Area in Bull Valley, IL.

According to the Illinois Natural Areas Inventory (INAI) only 358.84 acres of high quality fens remain in Illinois. As groundwater discharge areas, fens are good indicators of shallow aquifer health. For McHenry County residents, where 100% of drinking water comes from aquifers, protecting and restoring our wetlands is also ensuring the long-term integrity of our water supply. The restoration and protection of wetlands in Illinois is also a critical opportunity to make some of the greatest impact on water quality throughout the Mississippi River Basin.

Boger Bog Conservation Area is an intimate 38-acre site managed by the McHenry County Conservation District. The site supports numerous natural communities including a wetland that is not truly a bog (an acidic wetland community) but a rare graminoid fen (a grass-dominated ground water sustained alkaline wetland).

Over the years, alterations to the Boger Bog Conservation Area landscape and pervasive woody invasives, such as buckthorn, altered the fen's hydrology. Additionally, changing land use patterns outside the preserve boundaries contributed to more than a century of down cutting and erosion at the site, which negatively impacts the fen's ability to hold groundwater. Fens like Boger Bog are peat-forming wetlands that rely on continual groundwater input to maintain their unique assemblage of plants and animals, which is currently in jeopardy at this site. They require thousands of years to develop and cannot easily be restored once destroyed.

Once engineering is complete, the Foundation and the Conservation District will continue with their commitment to fund additional phases of the project, ultimately leading to the complete restoration of this once high quality wetland community.

The ComEd Green Region Grant began in 2013 and awards grants up to \$10,000 for conservation projects based in Northern Illinois. To learn more, please visit: <https://openlands.org/get-involved/greenregion/>

The McHenry County Conservation Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. To learn more about the McHenry County Conservation Foundation or the projects it supports, visit <http://www.mchenryconservation.org> or call (815) 678-4532 ext 8204.

#