

Natural Resource Inventory



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Informational Brochure for NRI Reports

Purpose and Intent

The purpose of the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI) is to provide the applicant, officials of the local governing body and other decision-makers with natural resource information regarding the parcel in question. This information may be useful when undertaking land use decisions concerning variations, amendments or relief of local zoning ordinances, proposed subdivision of vacant or agricultural lands and the subsequent development of these lands. The NRI is a requirement under Section 22.02a of the Illinois Soil and Water Conservation District's Act.

The intent of the NRI is to present the most current natural resource information available in a readily understandable manner. It contains a description of present site conditions, present resources, and potential impacts that the proposed change may have on the site and its resources. The natural resource information is gathered from standardized data, on-site investigations, and information furnished by the petitioner.

The NRI, when used properly, will provide the basis for proper land use change decisions and development while protecting the natural resource base of the county. It should not be used in place of detailed environmental and/or engineering studies that are warranted under most circumstances, but in conjunction with those studies.

The conclusions of the NRI in no way indicate that a certain land use is not possible, but it should alert the reader to possible problems that may occur if the capabilities of the land are ignored.

For more information go to: www.kankakeeswcd.org/NRI_INFO.htm

Information Included in the NRI Report

Land Evaluation & Site Assessment (LESA)

The LESA system is a tool developed by the USDA-NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) in order to evaluate the viability of agricultural lands where changes in land-use are proposed. The LESA system was designed as a decision-making tool to help make unbiased decisions by taking into consideration local conditions such as physical characteristics of the land, compatibility of surrounding land-use, urban growth factor, and land-use policies determined by the local government.

Soils Information

The soils information is taken from the NRCS Soils Map and Descriptions of Kankakee County. This information is important to all parties involved in determining the suitability of the proposed land-use change. It is important to remember soils do not function independently of each other. The behavior of soils depends upon the physical properties of adjacent soil types, the presence of artificial drainage, soil compaction, and its position in the local landscape. In this section, a GIS map and table is

present containing all soils present in area, with description, slope, acreage, and percent of parcel.

The **Soil Interpretation Explanation** section contains definitions for building site limitations found in soils. These include frost action, septic systems, shallow excavations, dwellings with basements, dwellings without basements, small commercial buildings, and local roads/streets.

Prime Farmland Soils

Prime farmland is a valuable resource requiring protection from unsuitable or premature conversion from agricultural use. Included in this section is the identification of such soils, along with a GIS map showing their location within the parcel.

Hydric Soils

Hydric soils have been identified by the NRCS as soils that have seasonal high waters at or near the surface and/or have potential flooding or ponding problems.

It is also important to add the possibility of hydric inclusions (i.e. soil polygons that are too small to appear on these maps). Agriculturally these inclusions are insignificant; however, they become more important to more intense uses such as residential areas.

Drainage Districts

Drainage Districts were formed to help farmers increase their productivity by improving drainage. This improved drainage was done by a system of open ditches and underground tiles, in which landowners may

also benefit (drainage of basements and lawns). Drainage Districts have easements that allow them access to areas that need maintenance or repair. If the parcel is included in a Drainage District, contact information will be provided for the drainage commissioners & their attorney.

Wetland Information

KSWCD believes in the protection and enhancement of our valuable wetland resources when possible. It has been estimated that 85% of wetlands in Illinois have been destroyed. Only recently has the true environmental significance of wetlands been fully recognized. Wetlands act as water filtration systems, flood controls, sediment and pollution filters, and wildlife habitats. Included in this section is a GIS map of the NRCS Wetland Inventory, which is the most comprehensive inventory to date.

Flood Information

Floodplains are defined as land adjoining a watercourse (riverine) or an inland depression (non-riverine) that is subject to periodic inundation by high water. Floodplains are important areas demanding protection since they have water storage and conveyance functions which effect upstream and downstream flows, water quality and quantity, and suitability of the land for human activity. The GIS map information included is provided by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for 100-yr flooding.

Wetland and Floodplain Regulations

This section provides valuable information if any work will be conducted near a stream (including small unnamed streams), lakes, wetlands, or floodways. The laws of the United States and the State of Illinois assign certain agencies specific and different regulatory roles to protect the waters within the State's boundaries. These regulatory agencies are listed along with their contact information.

Woodlands Area/Natural Resource Features

These sections include important information about the preservation of sensitive areas. Woodlands provide many benefits such as erosion control, water and air quality improvements, wildlife habitat, and aesthetic values. Natural resource features provide many of these same benefits and included but not limited to features such as filter strips, fence rows, grassed waterways, terraces, wetlands, and windbreaks. A GIS map is included with features in the parcel marked.

Other Information

Other information provided within the NRI includes non-site specific information on watersheds, soil erosion & sediment control, archaeological & cultural resources, and threatened & endangered species.