

20. Sleepy Hollow Park (Map Q)

Site number: Q-1

Overall size: 8.22 acres

Ownership: Public-Glenview Park District

Subwatershed: West Fork of North Branch of Chicago River

Mapped Land Cover on Site:

Turf (2.07 acres): Multiuse turf grass ball fields on the central and eastern portions of park.

Oak Woodland/Unassociated Woody Growth (0.69 acre): North of the eastern turf grass area is wooded areas with a mix of native oak woodland trees and unassociated woody trees.

Wet/Wet-Mesic Forest (3.57 acres): Degraded woodland along the riverbanks, dominated by overgrown native and non-native trees and shrubs.

Unassociated Woody Growth (0.61 acre): A buckthorn buffer dominates the west side of the West Fork.

Stream/River/Ditch (0.68 acre): West Fork of the North Branch of the Chicago River borders west edge.

Developed (0.60 acre): Playground equipment is on the eastern edge of the park.

Existing Ecological Conditions: Multiuse turf grass fields and playground equipment are located on the central and eastern portion of the park. On the northern perimeter of the turf fields to the southeast is a combination of oak woodland and unassociated woody growth vegetation. Some native trees such as buckeyes, maples, and oaks are mixed with ornamental varieties planted in mulched planting beds. Some oak regeneration was observed in this community.

Approximately 2,000 linear feet of the West Fork borders the western edge of the site. Along the river, the wet/wet-mesic forest is highly degraded and contains weedy native trees, such as cottonwood, elm, and ash. Non-native invasive honeysuckle dominated the sub-canopy layer. Buckthorn was also observed. Garlic mustard was common on the ground layer. Numerous walking trails (some mulched,



others bare soil) meander through the forest. Many of the trails seem to have been made by visitors making their own new paths. The vegetation on these “visitor-made” paths is trampled and or absent. A narrow buffer of unassociated woody growth, dominated by buckthorn, lines the west side of the West Fork. Bank erosion along the river is moderate to severe, and evidence of prior erosion control (erosion matting) attempts along the creek was observed.

Restoration and Management Recommendations:

This site is an ideal candidate for streambank restoration, an in-line sedimentation basin, or off-line stormwater storage to improve water quality. Stream bank restoration would involve pulling back banks, removing trees and shrubs, creating a floodplain shelf, and seeding and planting with native species. Creating in-line or off-line detention would require similar work.



Less intensive restoration at the park could include restoration of the woodlands in the oak woodlands and/or the wet/wet-mesic forest. Tasks would include brushing and thinning of non-native and weedy native trees and shrubs, invasive species control (*e.g.* garlic mustard), and installation of native species, as needed.

The “visitor-made” trails should be blocked from continued use and re-vegetated with native vegetation. The park designated trails should be clearly marked. Installation of signs instructing visitors to stay on the park trails is recommended.

Restoration activities would offer the public educational and outdoor opportunities through volunteer restoration work parties. The public could learn about non-native invasive species while helping clear honeysuckle and buckthorn, pulling garlic mustard, or planting native species in the park.