

# PRIORITY FUTURE GREENWAYS

## Chapter 4

Priority future greenways are defined as proposed greenways that exhibit at least one of the following beneficial features:

- 1. Benefits Multiple Communities** - Directly benefits multiple communities or a large segment of the population. It must serve more than one community or neighborhood.
- 2. Completes Existing Greenway** - Segment completes an existing greenway or trail.
- 3. Creates New Connections** - Creates a new connection between greenways or trails.
- 4. Assists Wildlife** - Provides wildlife habitat and migration paths for threatened, endangered or regionally rare species and is large enough to possess high quality plant & animal communities in areas such as Funks Grove, Mackinaw River corridor, Moraine View State Park.
- 5. Preserves Water Quality** - Has an ecological function, i.e. flood plain (water storage/recharge); streamside forests and filter strips which improve water quality by trapping pollutants and sediment in waterways such as Kickapoo Creek, Sugar Creek, Six Mile Creek, etc.
- 6. Prevents Flood Damage** - Protects residential and commercial areas threatened by flood damage.
- 7. Buffers Existing Preserves** - Provides habitat, or potentially connects or buffers

natural areas from development. Also provides for environmental education, research or casual nature observation or photography.

- 8. Scenic and Historic Areas** - Protects important scenic vistas and historic areas from development.
- 9. Provides Trail Opportunity** - Suitable for trail development which could result in improved access to trails, open space or recreational facilities.
- 10. Implementation Potential** - No major use conflicts, ownership issues or major design problems were identified.

Seventy-eight priority greenways were selected from the inventory of potential greenway resources discussed in Chapter 3 and summarized in Appendix A. Although all of these are considered to be priority greenways, the number of beneficial features of each affects its relative priority in relation to the other priority greenways. In general, the greater the number of beneficial features, the higher the relative priority. It should be recognized, however, that changing circumstances can affect the number of beneficial features and corresponding priority levels.

This chapter presents the priority greenways identified within McLean County. Each priority greenway is listed on Exhibit 4-A, along with its corresponding beneficial features and map number. The locations of priority greenways within the County are graphically illustrated on Figure 3. The text

**Exhibit 4-A  
BENEFICIAL FEATURES OF PRIORITY FUTURE GREENWAYS  
McLean County, Illinois**

Greenway Name		Benefits										No. of Beneficial Features
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
<b>Bloomington-Normal Urban Area</b>												
North Normal	101	●		●						●	●	4
Illinois State University	102	●	●	●						●	●	5
Northtown Road	103			●						●		2
Raab Road East	104			●						●		2
Towanda Avenue	105									●		1
Sugar Creek Tributaries	106	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	7
Northeast Normal	107	●								●	●	3
West of Hedgewood Subdivision	108			●						●	●	3
College Avenue	109									●		1
East of Hedgewood Subdivision	110			●						●		2
Eastport Road Trail	111			●						●		2
Towanda-Barnes Road	112			●						●	●	3
Ireland Grove Road	113			●						●	●	3
Hamilton/Fox Creek Road	114	●	●	●						●	●	5
U.S. Route 150	115	●								●	●	3
I-74 Right of Way	116	●										1
Old ICG Railroad Right of Way	117	●	●	●						●	●	5
Bunn Street	118			●						●	●	3
Lincoln Street	119	●	●	●						●		4
I-55 Right of Way	120	●										1
Southern Pacific Railroad Right of Way	121	●			●				●	●		4
Southwest Bloomington	122	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	8
Mitsubishi Motorway South	123	●								●	●	3
Mitsubishi Motorway North	124	●								●		2
White Oak Road	125			●						●		2
Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way	126	●			●					●		3
Parkside Drive	127									●		1
Gregory Avenue	128									●		1
Raab Road West	129									●	●	2
Northwest Normal	130	●								●	●	3
I-39 Right of Way	131	●										1
<b>Northern McLean County</b>												
Mackinaw River	201	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	9
Turkey Creek	202	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		7
Patton Creek	203	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		7
2250 N-E (Colfax to Lexington)	204	●			●					●		3
Henline Creek	205	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		7
Rooks Creek	206	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		7
Money Creek	207	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		8
2275 N/1900 E (Lexington to Towanda)	208	●		●	●					●		4

Exhibit 4-A (Continued)

Greenway Name	Map #	Benefits										No. of Beneficial Features
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
U.S. Route 66 (Northern McLean County)	209	●		●	●				●	●	●	6
Abandoned ICG Railroad Right of Way	210	●	●	●	●					●		5
Six Mile Creek	211	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●		8
2500 N-W (Lake Bloom. to COMLARA Park)	212	●		●					●	●	●	5
2500 N-E (Lexington to Lake Bloom.)	213	●		●					●	●	●	5
Buck Creek	214	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
AT&SF Railroad Right of Way	215	●								●		2
<b>Eastern McLean County</b>												
Crooked Creek	301	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
ICG Railroad Right of Way (Bloomer Line)	302	●			●					●		3
3300 E (Arrowsmith to Colfax)	303	●								●		2
1100 N (Arrowsmith to Saybrook)	304	●								●		2
Sangamon River	305	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		8
950 N (Moraine View to Arrowsmith)	306	●							●	●	●	4
Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way	307	●								●		2
<b>Southern McLean Co</b>												
2850 E (LeRoy to 950 N)	401	●								●		2
ICG Railroad Right of Way	402	●								●		2
N&S RR ROW/Southeast McLean County	403	●								●		2
Blue Ridge Special Creek	404	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
Salt Creek	405	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
400 N (Hey worth to LeRoy)	406	●								●		2
Mud Creek	407	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
Old U.S. Route 51/ICG Railroad Right of Way	408	●	●	●	●					●		5
Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way	409	●	●	●	●				●		●	7
Kickapoo Creek	410	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			8
<b>Western McLean Co</b>												
Danvers Abandoned Railroad Right of Way	501	●	●	●	●					●		5
Covell Abandoned Railroad Right of Way	502	●	●	●	●					●		5
Kings Mill Creek	503	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
Timber Creek	504	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			8
U.S. Route 66 (Southwestern McLean County)	505	●		●	●				●	●	●	7
Sugar Creek	506	●	●	●	●	●	●		●		●	8
50 N (McLean to Hey worth)	507	●								●		2
Prairie Creek	508	●	●	●	●	●	●		●			7
500 E (McLean to Urban Area)	509	●		●	●				●	●	●	6
300 E (Stanford to McLean)	510	●		●						●		3
150 E (Spin Lake to Stanford)	511	●		●					●	●	●	5
1800 N (Spin Lake to Urban Area)	512	●		●					●	●	●	5
Rock Creek	513	●	●	●	●	●	●					7
2050 N (Carlock to Spin Lake)	514	●							●	●	●	4
2250 N-W (COMLARA Park to Carlock)	515	●							●	●	●	4

of this chapter describes the twenty-five priority greenways that were determined to have at least six beneficial features. The characteristics of each are summarized, along with an indication of probable strategies for implementation. See Chapter 5 for more information on specific implementation methods and funding.

In order to facilitate analysis, the County was divided into five planning areas. These are: (1) Bloomington-Normal Metro Area; (2) Northern McLean County; (3) Eastern McLean County; (4) Southeastern McLean County; and (5) Western McLean County. Figures 4 through 8 show locations of priority greenways within each of these five planning areas. The following discussion is presented by planning area.

**BLOOMINGTON-NORMAL METRO AREA**

Of the thirty-one priority greenways identified within the Bloomington-Normal planning area, two were determined to provide at least six beneficial features. (See Exhibit 4-A.) These are Southwest Bloomington and the Sugar Creek Tributaries, both of which contain fairly extensive systems of greenway segments. Each of these is described below.

**Sugar Creek Tributaries**

Sugar Creek and its system of tributaries extend from east of Veterans Parkway in northeastern Bloomington and Towanda Avenue in northeastern Normal to West Washington Street near I-55 in western Bloomington. (See #106 on Figure 4.) This proposed greenway system follows flood plains and offers a number of potential linkages with the Constitution Trail and a number of other proposed greenways, including the CONRAIL extension to the west. The Sugar Creek greenway also offers opportunities for trail development and is already under public ownership by the Bloomington-Normal Water Reclamation District.

Intergovernmental agreements between Bloomington, Normal and the Water Reclamation District would be the primary implementation strategy. Potential funding sources include participating local governments and IDNR. ISTEPA may also offer

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-B. Sugar Creek Waterway.

[Figure 3-  
Regional Greenways Plan]

[Figure 4-  
Regional Greenways Plan: Section 1]

some funding potential in the near future. Development issues include neighborhood privacy in certain areas (if trails are developed), potential flooding, some steep slopes, and bridges and other barriers. The Sugar Creek greenway would preserve open space and provide many ecological benefits to a large number of residents throughout a large portion of the metro area.

### **Southwest Bloomington**

The Southwest Bloomington system of greenways extends the Sugar Creek greenway to the southwest, preserves open space and provides important connections between proposed community facilities in an area that is experiencing dramatic growth. Essentially, the Southwest Bloomington greenways would serve this quadrant of the metro area from Illinois Route 9 southward and from I-55 westward. (See #122 on Figure 4.) In addition to connecting with the Sugar Creek greenway system, it also offers potential connections with the Fox Creek golf course (under construction), the Constitution Trail, the Mitsubishi Motorway bikeway, the Covell abandonment, Historic U.S. Route 66 and a system of trails proposed by residential land developers in this area. It also provides numerous trail opportunities.

A combination of unique implementation opportunities exists for the proposed Southwest Bloomington greenway system. The large scale development underway and planned for the area includes plans for park and trail development as well as stormwater detention and retention facilities. These plans are being coordinated with the Regional Greenways Plan and a number of land dedication possibilities exist. Public acquisition of some of the needed land is also a possibility, as is the development of

greenways and trails in conjunction with proposed major roadway improvements.

### **NORTHERN MCLEAN COUNTY**

Northern McLean County has many important priority greenways. While predominantly rural, it does contain the four small communities of Hudson, Gridley, Lexington and Chenoa. Nine of the fifteen identified priority greenways in Northern McLean County exhibit six or more beneficial features. (See Exhibit 4-A.) These include the Mackinaw River and its tributaries, as well as Historic U.S. Route 66.

#### **Mackinaw River**

The Mackinaw River is considered one of the finest waterways in the State of Illinois. From its origin near Sibley in Ford County to the east, the Mackinaw traverses northern McLean County on its 130 mile journey westward to the Illinois River near Pekin. (See #201 on Figure 5.) With its rural character and scenic views (see Exhibit 4-C), the Mackinaw is renowned for its high quality plant and animal habitats, which include threatened and endangered species identified by the State. Significant tree cover and valuable wetlands are other positive features associated with this greenway. While a tremendous benefit to wildlife along its course, the Mackinaw also scenically and aesthetically benefits the communities along its path of Anchor, Colfax, and Lexington.

The Mackinaw offers greenway linkages to its many tributaries as well as the Lake Bloomington area and the COMLARA Park/Evergreen Lake area near Hudson. The ParkLands Foundation owns several tracts along the Mackinaw, which provide scenic and natural buffers along the river.

Efforts to preserve, or revive, the Mackinaw are underway through the creation and implementation of a watershed management plan formed by a partnership between the Nature Conservancy and landowners along the Mackinaw. The natural state of the Mackinaw has contributed to maintaining water quality and preventing flooding in the upper river areas. Unfortunately, farming practices along the river have had a negative effect downstream, resulting in habitat loss and poor water quality due to erosion. Consequently, the watershed management plan is needed to protect wildlife habitat, including several threatened or endangered species, and to negate erosion and poor water quality along the lower segments of the river.

The preservation of the Mackinaw River greenway will require cooperative efforts between public and private interests. The Nature Conservancy has adopted a positive approach in this direction by educating the adjacent landowners and fostering land stewardship.

Participation by landowners in the Mackinaw River watershed will be essential for change to come about, since the land along the river is owned by private individuals whose rights must be respected. Participation should therefore be voluntary.

The primary implementation strategy expected for use on the Mackinaw River greenway

is to encourage the voluntary enrollment of private landowners in the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). As described in Chapter 5 in somewhat greater detail, landowners receive rental payments for land that is enrolled in the program. In addition, there is a 50% cost-share available for landowners in which to establish protective cover of grasses and, in special cases, trees and shrubs. The Nature Conservancy is also expected to play an important role through its a watershed management plan for the Mackinaw. The ParkLands Foundation can be another active participant in the Mackinaw River greenway. ParkLands has acquired land along the Mackinaw through purchase and private donation and has preserved the land in a natural state.

Regardless of the avenue that is taken, there needs to be a concerted effort to recruit landowners into the process and provide an incentive for their continued participation if the Mackinaw River greenway is to flourish.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-C. Mackinaw River.

**[Figure 5-  
Regional Greenways Plan: Section 2]**

### **Turkey Creek**

Turkey Creek is a scenic waterway that originates northwest of the Village of Lexington and flows into the Mackinaw River west of the Village. (See #202 on Figure 5.) Turkey Creek also connects to other Mackinaw River tributaries in the Lexington area. The proposed Turkey Creek greenway would continue to provide valuable wildlife habitat and migration routes to the Mackinaw River. The Turkey Creek greenway would also assist in maintaining favorable water quality and in preventing flood damage to adjoining land and property through conservation efforts.

A likely implementation strategy for the Turkey Creek greenway is use of the Conservation Reserve Program to encourage individual landowners to initiate proper conservation techniques. Dedications of land through land trusts could also be an important implementation method. Conservation easements and public acquisition are also possible methods. Funding for the Conservation Reserve Program is through the USDA. Funding for conservation easements could come from IDNR, participating local governments and private donations.

### **Patton Creek**

Patton Creek is a proposed greenway that originates southeast of Lexington and flows into the nearby Mackinaw River. (See #203 on Figure 5.) An important attribute of this greenway is its aesthetic benefits to communities such as Lexington and Pleasant Hill. It would also complete an existing greenway and connect to the Mackinaw and its other tributaries. Assisting wildlife by providing natural habitats and migration pathways is another important benefit of the creek. Furthermore, conservation efforts

along Patton Creek would enhance water quality in the Mackinaw River. Another beneficial quality of the Patton Creek greenway is its potential to protect important scenic vistas of the waterway from development.

The Conservation Reserve Program could be an important implementation strategy here. Other methods of implementation include possible public acquisition of land and conservation easements. Possible funding sources for these strategies include the IDNR, the USDA, participating local governments and private donations.

### **Henline Creek**

The proposed Henline Creek greenway is a scenic waterway stretching from northwest of Anchor to the point of intersection with the Mackinaw River, about halfway between Villages of Lexington and Colfax. (See #205 on Figure 5.) A potential benefit of preserving the land along its banks as a greenway is the environmental connections it would provide to the Mackinaw River and its other tributaries. It would preserve habitats and migration paths for many species of wildlife. The proposed Henline Creek greenway would also serve to protect scenic vistas from development.

Voluntary enrollment in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program by landowners represents a potentially important implementation strategy. Another strategy could involve the use of conservation easements that might be funded through a variety of sources including IDNR, donations and participating local governments.

### **Rooks Creek**

The scenic waterway and flood plain known as Rooks Creek is a proposed

greenway that extends from southeast of Chenoa to the Livingston County Line. (See #206 on Figure 5.) An important benefit of this proposed greenway is its link to Chenoa and the scenic and recreational benefits it would provide to area residents. It would also serve several environmental functions such as providing wildlife habitats and enhance water quality through preserving natural vegetation along the stream. This could also help prevent flooding to nearby areas. Here the Conservation Reserve Program appears to be a likely implementation and funding strategy, supplemented by a variety of other methods.

### Money Creek

This important waterway begins approximately two miles north of Ellsworth and flows northwest passing just east of the Village of Towanda and into Lake Bloomington. From Lake Bloomington, the creek continues northwest for one and one-half miles until it intersects with the Mackinaw River. (See #207 on Figure 5.) An important feature of the Money Creek is its linkages to natural resources such as Lake Bloomington and the Mackinaw River. Besides connecting to the Mackinaw River greenway, the Money Creek offers many benefits to the Village of Towanda,

the Lake Bloomington community and the many landowners who live and farm near this waterway. These benefits include assisting wildlife along the creek, enhancing the water quality and preventing flood damage to adjoining land. Currently, the water quality of the creek is rated poor, according to the Biological Stream Classification, and action should be taken to overcome this deficiency. The proposed Money Creek greenway would enhance the water quality of the creek and combat potential problems such as erosion. Improvements to the Money Creek will ultimately improve the Mackinaw River downstream.

Preservation of the Money Creek and adjoining land as a greenway would likely involve the participation of landowners in various conservation practices including USDA's Conservation Reserve Program and conservation easements funded through a variety of sources. Dedications of land

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-D. Money Creek.

through donations or land trusts are also possibilities here as in other areas.

### **U.S. Route 66 (Northern McLean County)**

U.S. Route 66 has a long and popular history as a pioneer roadway stretching from Chicago to Los Angeles. This once heavily traveled, two lane then four lane highway lost its reputation as a cross-country route once the Interstate system was constructed. Today, Route 66 provides two lane traffic from Normal northeastwardly through the Villages of Towanda, Lexington, and Chenoa. (See #209 on Figure 5.) Next to Route 66 are segments of abandoned two lane paved right of way that is in deteriorating condition and could be developed for use as greenways and trails. An important feature of Route 66 is its connectivity to multiple communities. Another is the abandoned right of way and pavement adjacent to the roadway. The wide pavement would make an excellent base for a multipurpose trail. Also, the abandoned right of way is separated by landscaping from the existing roadway thus providing a buffer from traffic and providing an aesthetic value to the greenway.

Implementation of the Route 66 greenway would likely occur through inter-governmental agreements and possibly through improvements to the existing roadway when needed. The Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) owns and maintains the right of way along Route 66. A possible approach would be the creation of an intergovernmental agreement for the use of the right of way for a greenway and trail. Funding to develop this greenway might be derived from IDNR, IDOT and from participating local governments. A Route 66 greenway would esthetically enhance the existing and abandoned roadway, provide a

recreational element to many communities in northern McLean County, and could promote tourism by taking advantage of the historical legend associated with Route 66. Establishing a greenway along Route 66 is an opportunity that should not be missed, especially since the right of way is already in government ownership and since a Route 66 greenway would have important tourism benefits.

### **Six Mile Creek**

Six Mile Creek is an important waterway that originates approximately one mile north of the Town of Normal and flows northwest into Evergreen Lake within COMLARA Park near Hudson. Its terminus with Evergreen Lake creates a greenway linkage with the Mackinaw River. (See #211 on Figure 5.) Primary ownership of this proposed greenway is among private individuals. Like many other waterways and their floodplains within McLean County, Six Mile Creek provides valuable wildlife habitat while providing necessary hydrologic functions. The Six Mile Creek is an especially important greenway to preserve due to its linkages to the Mackinaw River and Evergreen Lake, which is a source of drinking water for the City of Bloomington.

Voluntary actions by landowners through the Conservation Reserve Program, conservation easements or similar method will be needed for the success of the proposed Six Mile Creek Greenway. Currently, the water quality of the Mackinaw River at its terminus with Six Mile Creek is not as good as it is upstream due to pollutants and erosion. Therefore, efforts to improve the water quality of Six Mile Creek through responsible land practices are needed to have a positive effect on the Mackinaw as well.

### **Buck Creek**

Originating south of the Village of Gridley, Buck Creek flows south into the Mackinaw River near Clarksville. (See #214 on Figure 5.) Besides the connection to the Mackinaw, the Buck Creek has the potential for a greenway linkage to the Village of Gridley because of its proximity to that community. Like other waterways in the region, the Buck Creek and adjacent land provide a number of environmental benefits such as wildlife habitat, enhanced water quality and flood prevention. These benefits are particularly important due to its outflow into the Mackinaw west of the Village of Lexington.

Like other greenways proposed along waterways, implementation of the proposed Buck Creek greenway could involve participation in the Conservation Reserve Program, conservation easements, transfer of development rights or similar approach.

### **EASTERN MCLEAN COUNTY**

Eastern McLean County is primarily an agricultural area that includes the six small rural communities of Anchor, Arrowsmith, Cooksville, Colfax, Ellsworth, and Saybrook. Of the seven priority future greenways proposed in Eastern McLean County, two have been identified as having six or more beneficial attributes. (See Exhibit 4-A.) These are Crooked Creek and the Sangamon River.

### **Crooked Creek**

Crooked Creek is a waterway that originates near the Village of Cooksville and extends to the Mackinaw River. (See #301 on Figure 6.) Ownership of this greenway is primarily by private individuals. One of the

important benefits of this creek and proposed greenway is its natural scenic beauty. Another important feature is that it provides a linkage to the Mackinaw River for species migration. Crooked Creek also serves other valuable ecological functions because it possesses plant and animal communities of high quality. Its natural vegetation enhances water quality by filtering pollutants. The natural vegetation also serves to limit flood damage to nearby areas by reducing runoff.

As with most proposed greenways, a number of implementation methods may be appropriate for the Crooked Creek greenway. One possibility is the Conservation Reserve Program. Another is the use of conservation easements or the transfer of development rights. Funding for this greenway could come from a variety of sources including the USDA, private donations, the IDNR and local governments, depending upon the actual methods employed.

### **Sangamon River**

The Sangamon River is a greenway in Eastern McLean County of major importance. (See #305 on Figure 6.) Flowing from one mile east of Moraine View State Park to the county line separating Ford and Champaign Counties, this scenic waterway is lined with timber and provides numerous benefits to a number of communities in Central Illinois, including the Village of Saybrook and surrounding areas. In addition to the aesthetic quality of the river, it also provides many environmental benefits. The Sangamon River provides important wildlife habitats while creating potential linkages to the Village of Saybrook, other potential greenways in Central Illinois, and other points to the east and south. Watershed protection of the Sangamon River would

[Figure 6-  
Regional Greenways Plan: Section 3]

benefit the animal and plant communities of the river, which would help in maintaining water quality and preventing erosion and flooding of nearby land. Of importance to note is that the Sangamon River is one of the region's largest waterways and offers numerous potential interregional greenway connections. Ownership of the surrounding land is primarily by private individuals.

The USDA Conservation Reserve Program could be an important implementation strategy for the Sangamon River greenway. Conservation easements and transfers of development rights represent other possible strategies for implementation. Possible funding sources in addition to USDA include the IDNR, local governments and private donations. The use of public acquisition is also a possibility in certain instances.

#### **SOUTHERN MCLEAN COUNTY**

Southern McLean County includes the rural communities of Heyworth, LeRoy, Bellflower and Downs, and contains a number of priority future greenways. (See Figure 7.) Of the ten priority greenways identified in this region, five are determined to have at least six beneficial features. These include the Norfolk & Southern Railroad right of way and four waterways. The waterways are the Blue Ridge

Special Creek, Salt Creek, Mud Creek, and Kickapoo Creek.

#### **Blue Ridge Special Creek**

Originating at the DeWitt and Piatt County line, the Blue Ridge Special Creek extends to approximately three miles south of Bellflower and one mile southeast of State Highway 54. (See #404 on Figure 7.) While limited in length and lacking connections to the north, this proposed greenway provides many important functions. It creates new connections to potential greenways in Piatt County and also provides environmental benefits such as the protection of natural habitats. It can also help in the preservation of water quality through natural filter strips. In addition, it serves as a buffer for natural areas against development.

Implementation methods would most likely include the use of the Conservation Reserve Program, conservation easements,

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-E. Sangamon River.

and possibly other techniques such as transfer of development rights. Public acquisition and dedications may also offer some potential. The principal funding source for this greenway is likely to be the USDA, although IDNR, local governments and donations are also possible funding sources.

### **Salt Creek**

Salt Creek is another waterway in southern McLean County identified as a priority future greenway. This proposed greenway extends from the DeWitt county line northward to the source of Salt Creek, approximately two miles west of Bellflower, crossing U.S. Highway 136 in the process. (See #405 on Figure 7.) One of the most important aspects of this waterway is that its tributaries flow into the Clinton Lake. Other linkages include the Weldon Springs State Park. This greenway would help preserve the water quality of Clinton Lake as well as provide wildlife habitat and reduce flooding. It would also protect scenic vistas from development.

Here too, the acquisition of conservation easements and participation in the USDA Conservation Reserve Program appear to be likely implementation strategies.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-F. Salt Creek.

### **Mud Creek**

Mud Creek is a tributary of the Kickapoo Creek and reaches the northwest portions of Heyworth. (See #407 on Figure 7.) Although limited in length, this creek is valuable because it offers linkages with not only Kickapoo Creek but other proposed greenways as well. Like many other important waterways in McLean County, the Mud Creek assists wildlife in that it provides high quality habitats for plant and animal communities. The filter strips that trap pollutants and sediments serve an important ecological function, especially since Mud Creek connects to the Kickapoo Creek and other waterways. The natural vegetation also serves as a water detention corridor to help prevent flooding.

Like other waterways in McLean County, participation by landowners in conservation programs is a likely implementation strategy. The IDNR along with local

[Figure 7-  
Regional Greenways Plan: Section 4]

governments should also be considered as possible sources of funding for other possible strategies, such as the use of conservation easements.

**Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way**

(Photograph)

The Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way is a semi-active line that begins in southern Bloomington and extends southeast into DeWitt County,

Exhibit 4-G. Norfolk & Southern Railroad Right of Way in Downs.

Champaign-Urbana and beyond. (See #409 on Figure 7.) This high priority greenway would benefit not just the Bloomington-Normal area but also the Village of Downs and the City of LeRoy as well as rural subdivisions in between these communities and rural residents as well. The Norfolk & Southern right of way could create new trail opportunities and connections to Downs and LeRoy. It also has the potential for creating interregional connections with other regions of Central Illinois, including Champaign-Urbana.

Implementation of this right of way as a greenway will require intergovernmental agreements to jointly acquire, develop and manage the greenway. Due to the considerable length of the right of way and the multiple jurisdictions affected, a cooperative approach will be necessary. Principal funding sources for this greenway would likely be the IDNR, participating local

governments and possibly IDOT, since it does offer potential as an alternative mode of transportation. Issues that need to be resolved include availability from Norfolk-Southern and the execution of an intergovernmental agreement. Considerable interest has been expressed by local governments for the acquisition of the right of way if and when it becomes available.

**Kickapoo Creek**

In McLean County, the Kickapoo Creek extends from near the DeWitt county line to its source just northwest of the Village of Downs. (See #410 on Figure 7.) This proposed greenway is a tributary of the Sugar Creek and includes a considerable amount of timber along its banks. The Mud Creek greenway is one of several proposed that would provide possible linkages to the Kickapoo Creek greenway. In addition, this proposed greenway provides a natural

connection to the community of Heyworth. Preservation of this stream and floodplain as a greenway would help buffer natural areas from development. In addition, it would assist the process of groundwater recharge and would provide plant and animal habitat.

Implementation strategies for this greenway are similar to those of other waterways in the County. Participation of landowners in conservation practices through the USDA Conservation Reserve Program appears to be a likely approach. Once again, conservation easements or the transfer of development rights may also be appropriate in some cases. In addition to the USDA, IDNR may be a possible funding source. Likewise, local government and private donations of land are other funding possibilities.

## WESTERN MCLEAN COUNTY

Western McLean County is primarily agricultural and contains the small communities of Carlock, Danvers, Stanford and McLean. In addition, this area features the unique Funks Grove natural timber and wetlands. Of the fifteen priority future greenways identified in this region seven were rated as having at least six beneficial greenway features. These are Kings Mill Creek, Timber Creek, U.S. Route 66 (Southwestern McLean County), Sugar Creek, Prairie Creek, County Route 500E (McLean to Metro Area) and Rock Creek.

### Kings Mill Creek

Kings Mill Creek is a scenic waterway that stretches from approximately two miles northeast of Stanford and ends in northwest Normal. (See #503 on Figure 8.) Important features of the Creek are its potential link with Sugar Creek as well as other

proposed greenways. This creek as a protected greenway would benefit multiple metro neighborhoods and rural residents as well. The Kings Mill Creek greenway would benefit several rural subdivisions along Illinois Route 9 west of Bloomington-Normal. Establishing Kings Mill Creek as a greenway could expand wildlife populations by providing suitable habitat and migration pathways for species. Furthermore, this greenway would serve additional ecological functions such as preserving forests, improving water quality, and protecting residential areas from flood damage. In addition, the Kings Mill Creek greenway would protect scenic and natural areas from development.

The leading implementation strategy here again appears to be the USDA Conservation Reserve Program, along with a number of other possible strategies including conservation easements or transfer of development rights funded by IDNR, local governments or donations. Land dedications also represent a possibility here as in other areas.

### Timber Creek

Timber Creek is a scenic waterway beginning at an intersection with Sugar Creek two miles north of McLean and ending in southwest Bloomington. (See #504 on Figure 8.) A significant feature of this waterway is the abundance of tree cover. Its flood plain is a rare wetland and should be preserved. The creek also intersects with Funks Grove on its far east corner. Two primary benefits of Timber Creek are that it would complete the existing greenway of Sugar Creek and create new connections to the proposed U.S. Route 66 South greenway. As well, the greenway would protect wildlife habitat, improve water quality and reduce flood damage. Finally,

**[Figure 8-  
Regional Greenways Plan: Section 5]**

the Timber Creek greenway would buffer existing wildlife habitat and protect scenic areas from development.

Like most other greenways proposed along area waterways, a likely implementation strategy would be the use of the Conservation Reserve Program, along with conservation easements and similar methods that would most likely be funded by IDNR, local governments and private donations.

#### **U.S. Route 66 (Southwestern McLean County)**

The segment of Route 66 that traverses southwestern McLean County offers similar benefits as its counterpart to the north. This section of Route 66 originates in southwest Bloomington and continues through the communities of Shirley and McLean into Logan County. (See #505 on Figure 8.) The abandoned pavement could serve as a basis for a multipurpose trail

providing linkage to the Bloomington-Normal metro area as well as points south and other points north. Route 66 is a national historic highway that also passes by the Funks Grove natural area and therefore represents an important link in the County's proposed greenway system.

Like the northern segment of Route 66, implementation would likely occur through intergovernmental agreements and road improvements. IDOT owns and maintains the right of way. A likely approach would be the creation of an intergovernmental agreement for use of the right of way along Route 66 for a greenway and trail. The greenway would probably be funded through IDNR, IDOT and participating local governments. A Route 66 greenway would promote tourism and expand recreational opportunities, as well as enhance the historic appeal of Route 66. As with its counterpart to the north, the opportunity to establish a greenway along Route 66 should be actively pursued.

#### **Sugar Creek**

The Sugar Creek begins in northeast Normal and flows into Logan County to the southwest. (See #506 on Figure 8.) The Sugar Creek and its tributaries represent an important hydrologic resource for McLean County. Besides the actual creek itself, the Sugar Creek

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-H. Kings Mill Creek.

drainage system encompasses wide areas of floodplain along the waterway. The proposed Sugar Creek greenway also provides linkages to Timber Creek near the Funks Grove site. It also assists wildlife by providing habitat and migration routes. In addition, the proposed Sugar Creek greenway helps preserve water quality and prevent flood damage by preserving natural vegetation.

As with other area waterways, the Conservation Reserve Program appears to be the leading implementation strategy, supplemented by a variety of other methods.

### **Prairie Creek**

Prairie Creek flows south of Funks Grove to the DeWitt county line. (See #508 on Figure 8.) Although limited in length in McLean County, this proposed greenway has the potential of linking to Kickapoo Creek and other greenways between McLean and Heyworth. This proposed greenway, through watershed protection and conservation practices, would provide wildlife habitat, preserve water quality, and limit flood damage. Preservation of Prairie Creek as a greenway would also protect scenic vistas from development.

Once again, a combination of approaches including the

Conservation Reserve Program appears to be a logical implementation strategy for this type of greenway.

### **500 E (McLean to Metro Area)**

This proposed greenway follows County Route 500E from the Village of McLean to southwest Bloomington. (See #509 on Figure 8.) A significant feature is its proximity to Funks Grove and Timber Creek, as it would provide linkages with these as well as the U.S. Route 66, 50N, 300E, and Sugar Creek proposed greenways. An attribute of this greenway is that it provides for a proposed trail, though right of way space is limited. Another benefit of this greenway is that it serves multiple communities including McLean and Bloomington. It would also create new connections between the communities of McLean, Funks Grove and Shirley and other proposed greenways, such as the Timber Creek greenway and U.S.

(Photograph)

Exhibit 4-I. U.S. Route 66 in Southwestern McLean County.

Route 66. This particular greenway, through its right of way, could assist wildlife near the Funks Grove area by providing a migration path and additional habitat. This greenway may also help in buffering the neighboring Funks Grove area from development.

This greenway would most likely be implemented through roadway improvements using IDOT and IDNR funds.

### **Rock Creek**

The McLean County portion of the scenic waterway of Rock Creek begins in Carlock and extends westerly to the Woodford and Tazewell County lines near Spin Lake. (See #513 on Figure 8.) This proposed greenway would link with the Mackinaw River, the community of Carlock, and other proposed greenways such as 1800N (Spin Lake to metro area) and 2050N (Carlock to Spin Lake). One significant feature of this waterway is that it is forested along its shores. Conservation efforts and watershed protection would provide several valuable benefits, including erosion and flood control and improved water quality. This proposed greenway would also provide wildlife habitat and important migrations paths to the Mackinaw River.

The Conservation Reserve Program appears to be one of a number of possible implementation strategies for consideration here as well.