

Collaboration is an Antidote for Uncertainty

Stewarding the Future of Water,
Together

Danielle Gallet | 2025 Indiana Water Summit

waterwell





**UNCERTAINTY
AHEAD**

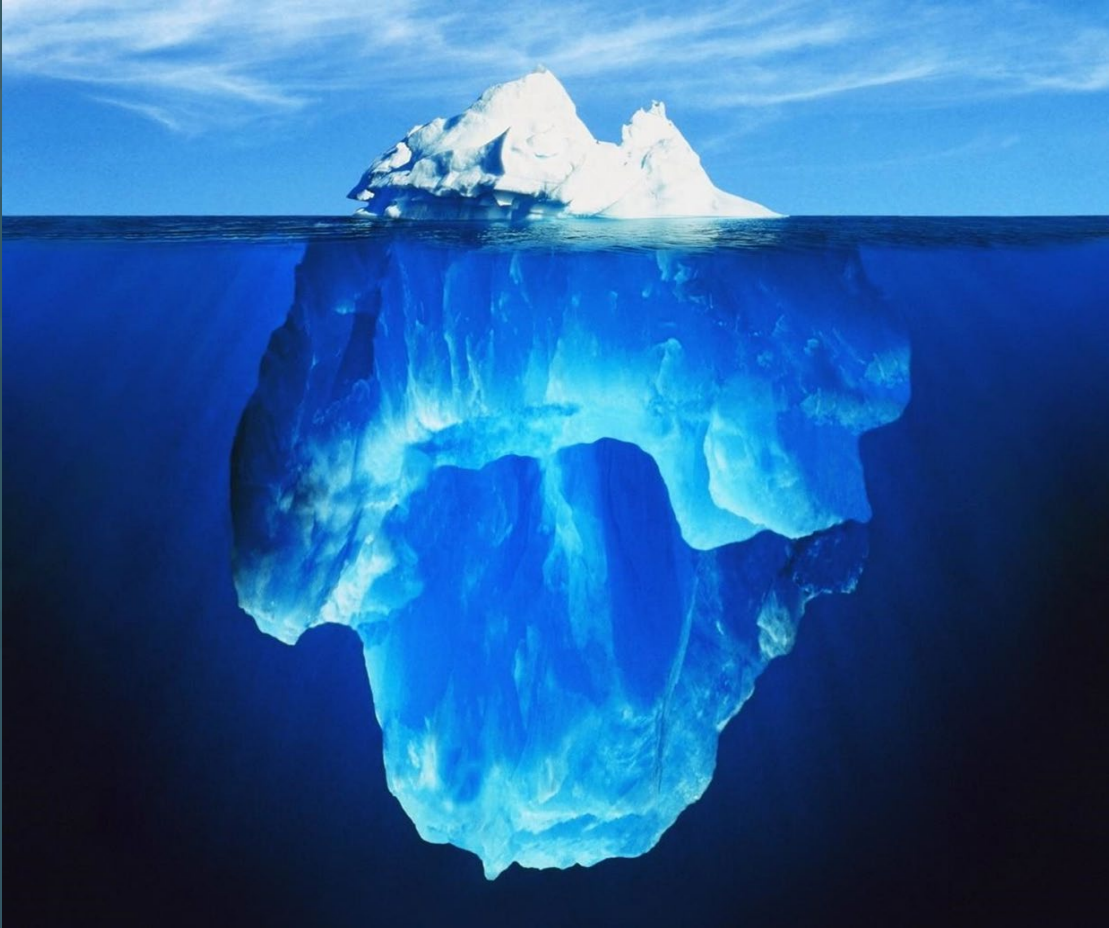
Existing & Emerging Contaminants



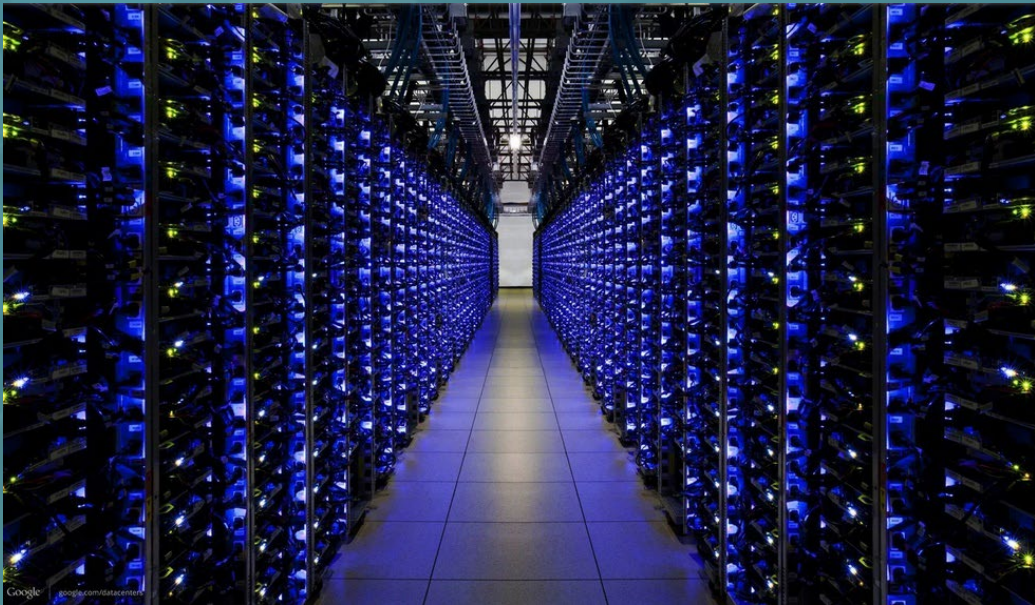
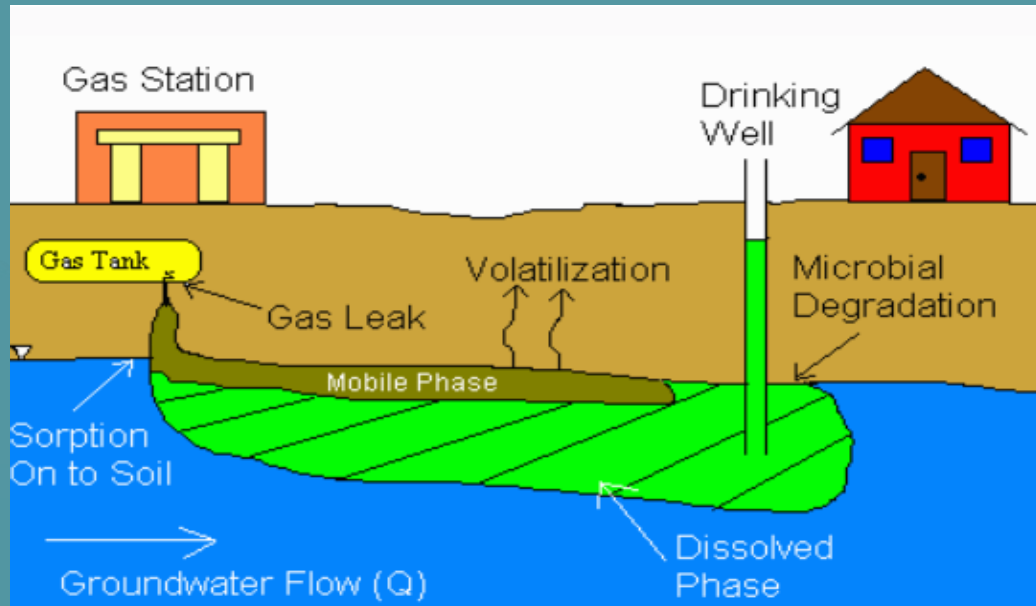
Poor Infrastructure Conditions



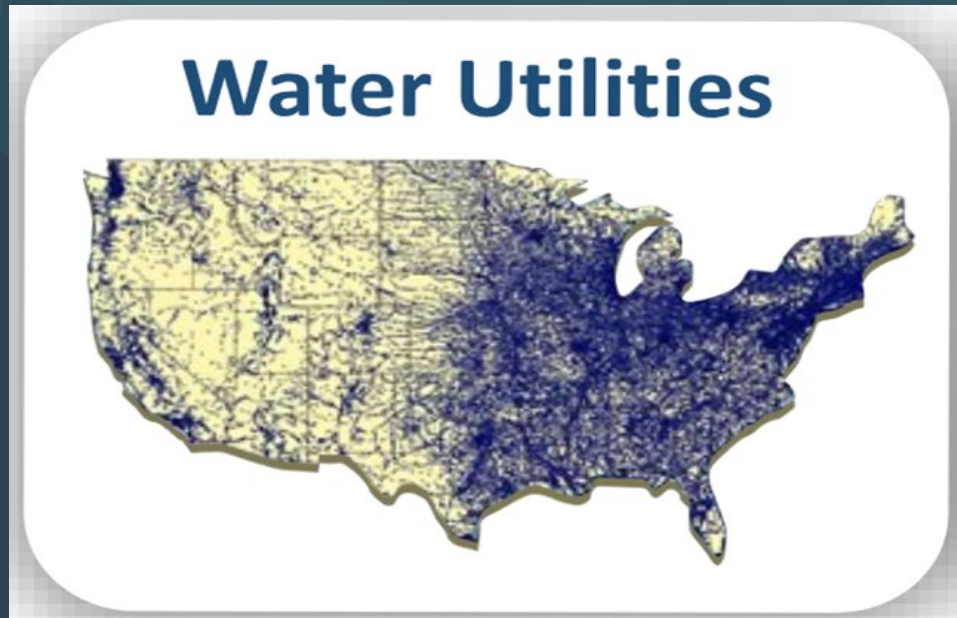
Lack of Data & Asset Mgmt. Systems



Incompatible Land & Water Uses



Fragmentation & Uncertain Regulatory Environment

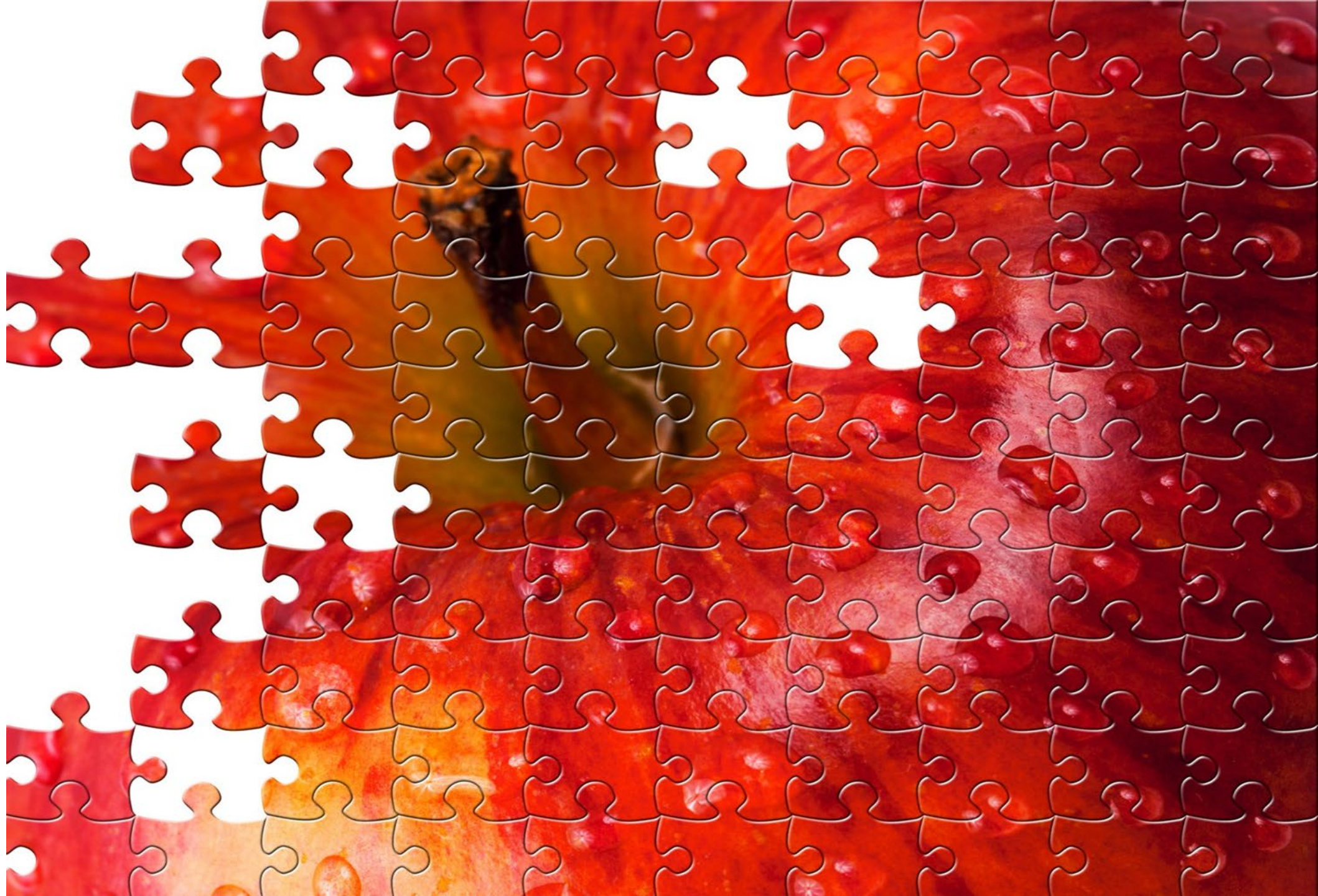


Climate Change





All Hands
ON
Deck



Key Ingredients for Successful Collaborations

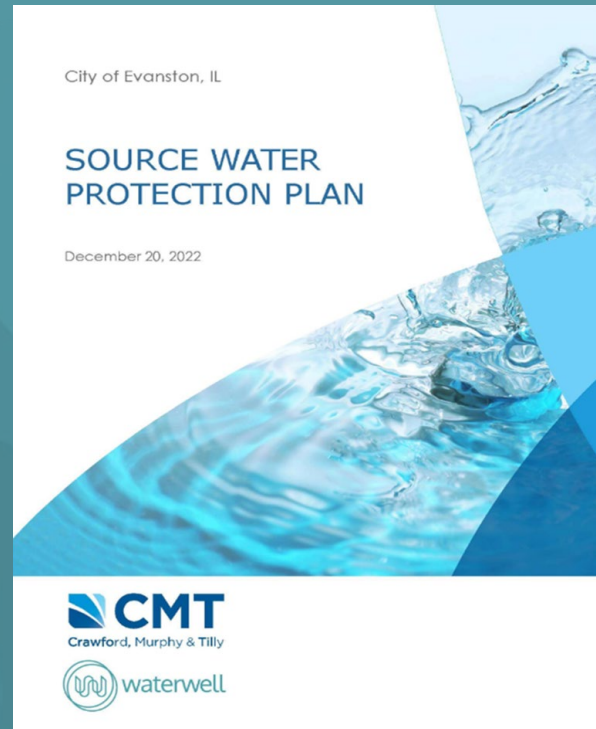
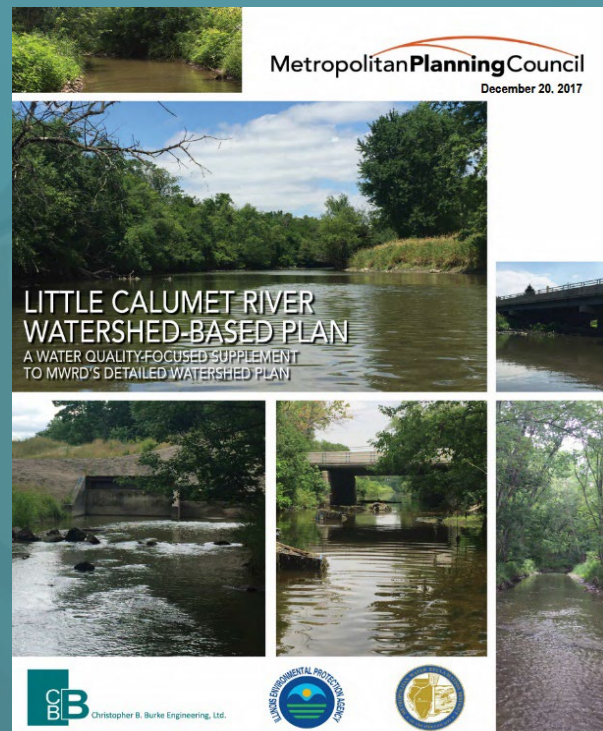




Partner, Partner, Partner

Holistic + innovative solutions won't happen in a vacuum.

- Source water protection and watershed protection = two different sides of the same coin
- Pull in local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), agricultural groups, municipal & county planners, etc.
- Ensure local and regional water resource information and needs are included in community comprehensive plans (climate plans, sustainability plans, etc.)





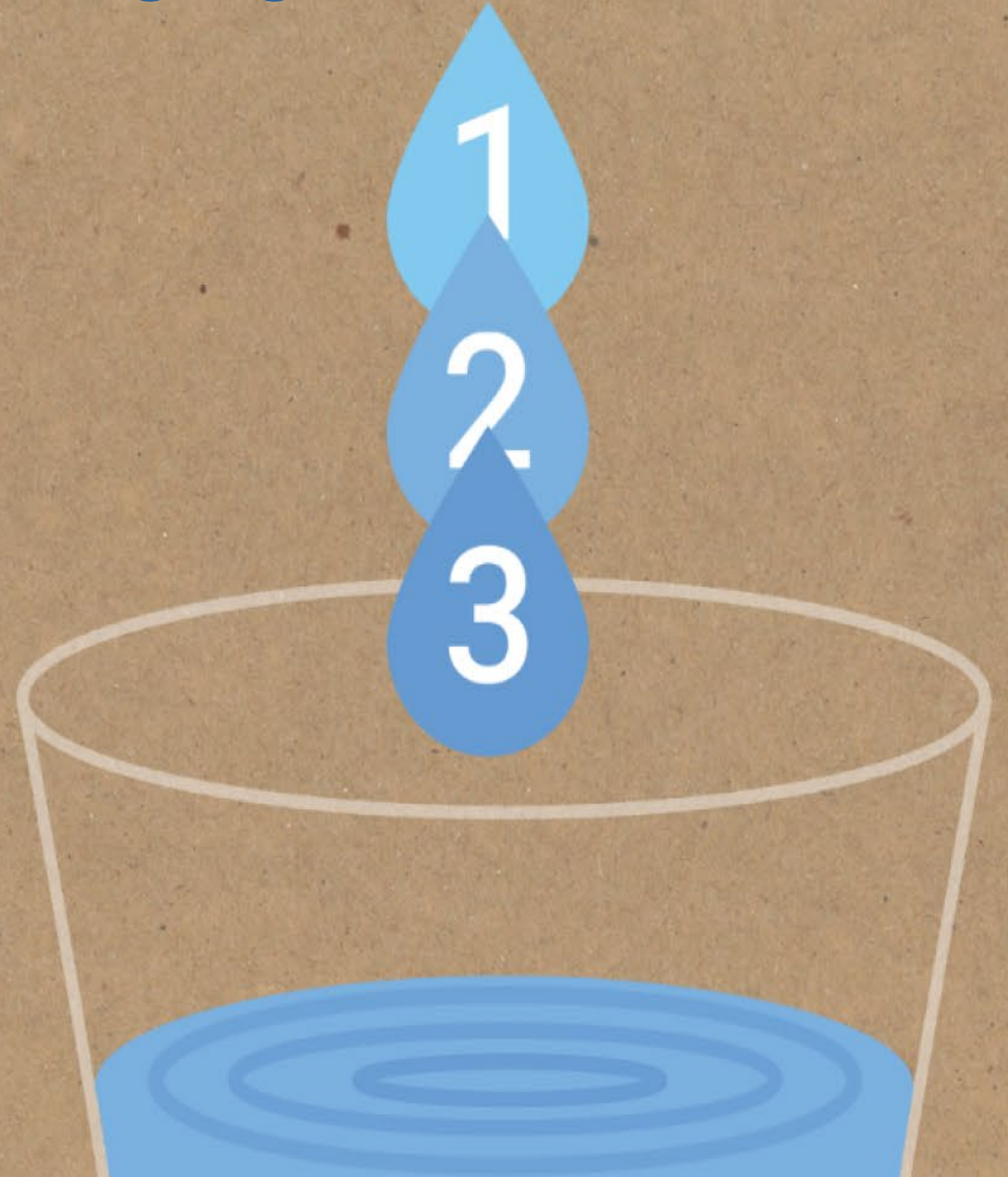
Engage Leadership + Community

Local champions are a strong catalyst for progress.

<https://drinkingwater123.metroplanning.org>

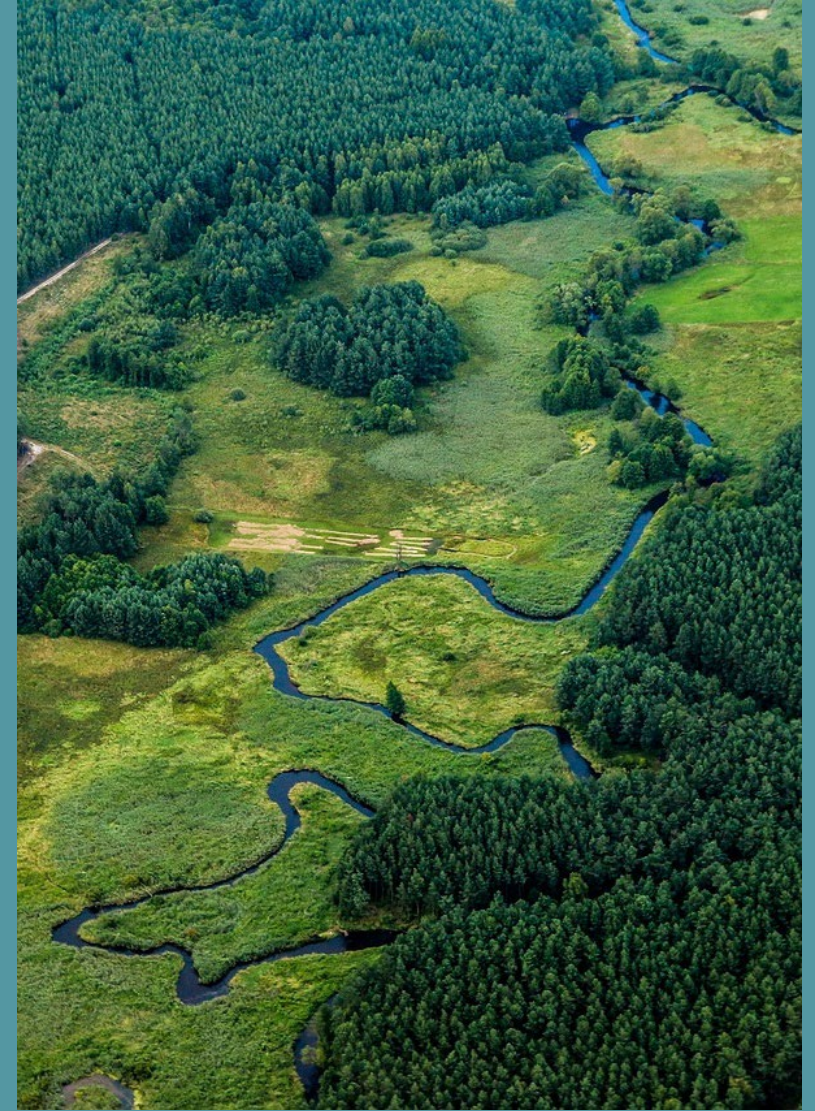
Drinking Water 1-2-3

A guide for local officials and
community leaders.





Attached
vs.
Committed



A photograph of three women sitting at a wooden table in a cafe or office setting, laughing and smiling. The woman on the left has curly hair and is wearing a light-colored blazer. The woman in the middle has blonde hair and glasses, also wearing a light-colored blazer. The woman on the right is partially visible, wearing a dark blazer. On the table are two smartphones, a notebook, a pen, and a cup of coffee. A semi-transparent dark box with white text is overlaid on the center of the image.

Go Slow to Move Fast

Take the time to build relationships + consensus.

A multi-department effort to create a long-term maintenance program for green infrastructure (GI) on public property in Chicago



Committee Participants:

- Chicago Department of Environment (DOE)
- Chicago Department of Fleet + Facility Management (2FM)
- Chicago Department of Transportation (CDOT)
- Chicago Department of Water Management (DWM)
- Chicago Department of Streets + Sanitation (DSS) – Dept. of Forestry
- Chicago Department of Planning + Development (DPD)
- Chicago Department of Buildings (DOB)





Have Fun!

Creativity + collaboration run on play, not stress.



Build intergovernmental
and cross-sector
partnerships to increase the
effectiveness of stormwater
management initiatives in
the Calumet Region

Government Agencies

Cook County
Cook County Land Bank Authority
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant
Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago
South Suburban Mayors and Managers Association
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Illinois & U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Planning, Land Managers + Academics

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
Chicago Park District
Forest Preserves of Cook County

Private Companies

Baxter & Woodman
CH2M/Stantec
Christopher B. Burke Engineering
Environmental Design International
Geosyntec Consultants
Robinson Engineering

NGOs

Center for Neighborhood Technology
Chicago Wilderness
Delta Institute
Elevate
Faith in Place
Foresight Design Initiative
Friends of the Chicago River
Historic Chicago Bungalow Association
Metropolitan Planning Council
Morton Arboretum
OAI Chicago Southland/Highbridge
Openlands

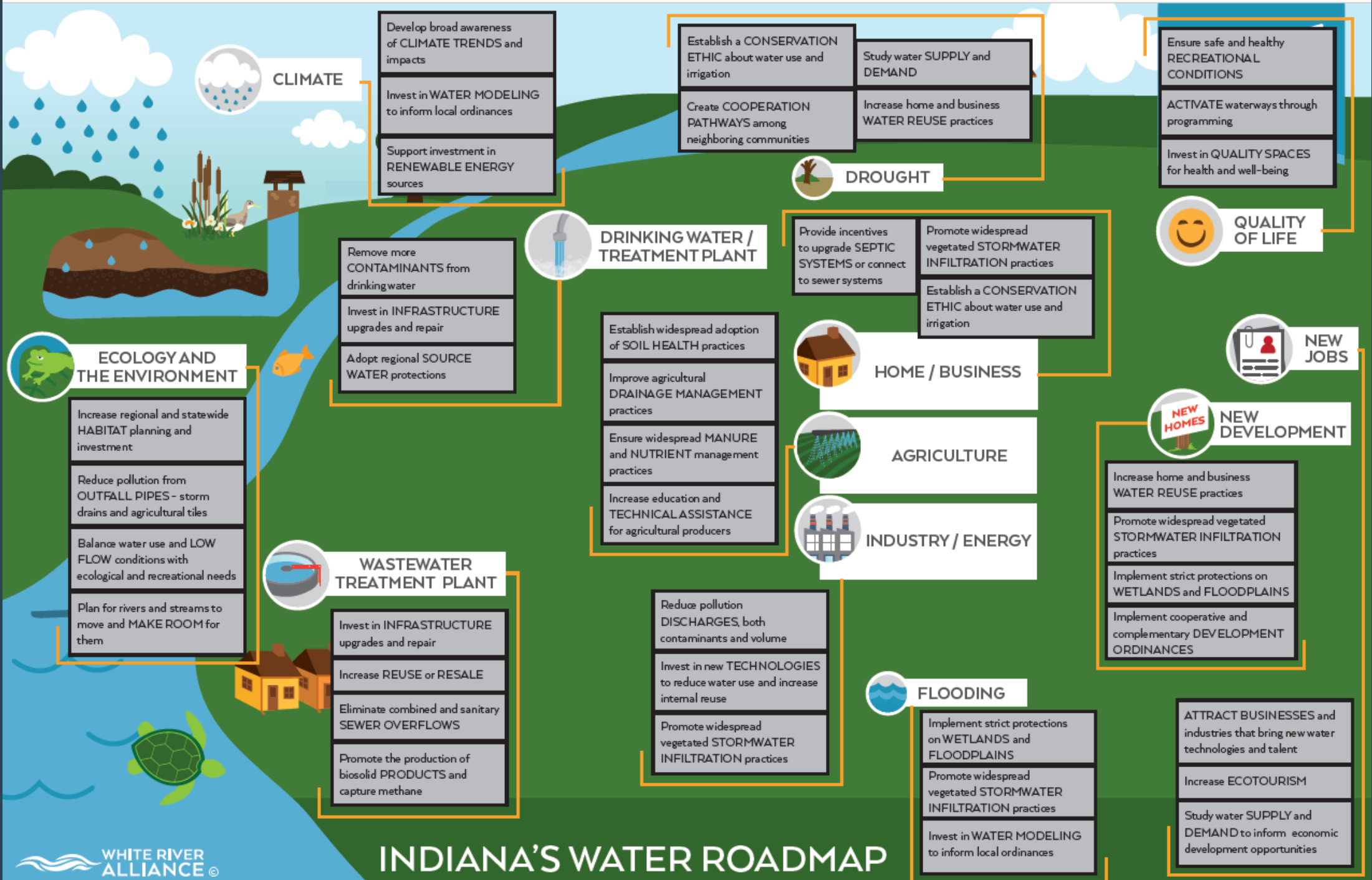
Communities

Calumet City
City of Blue Island
City of Chicago
Village of Homewood
Village of Midlothian
Village of Park Forest
Village of Steger

Accomplishments:

- Urban flooding baseline data
- Inventory of existing GI sites
- Regional mapping viewer + data extents layers
- GI design guidelines
- Four Section 319 Watershed Plans completed
- Creation of a regional program that funds GI sites
- Expert review of member projects





INDIANA'S WATER ROADMAP





A.I. = Authentic Interactions

The people part matters.

Collaborations
are
transformational,
not
transactional



Thank you!

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