

Cecily Cunz, AICP

Watershed Planner



EDUCATION

M.A., Urban Planning & Policy,
University of IL - Chicago
B.S., Business Administration,
University of IL – Urbana-
Champaign

Joined Firm in 2023

Years of Experience: 13

TRAINING/CERTIFICATION

Latino Management
Accelerator: Adaptability &
Resilience (Dec 2022); Problem
Solving (Feb 2023); Strategy
(March 2023)
AICP Certification #029193
APA, ILAPA
Geospatial Analysis &
Visualization Certificate,
University of IL, Chicago

Cecily is a seasoned professional who brings a wealth of expertise in planning and policy development. She has become a recognized expert in watershed and green infrastructure planning, helping communities navigate complex environmental challenges and achieve meaningful restoration outcomes. As an AICP-certified senior environmental planner, Cecily's track record of success is underscored by her ability to lead diverse stakeholder groups in driving impactful environmental improvements within their localities. Her dedication to sustainable solutions has resulted in significant contributions to various projects that have left a positive mark on the communities with which she has worked.

Cecily has partnered with communities to develop over a dozen watershed plans across the Midwest. She served as Project Manager for the Pike River Watershed Plan, the first USEPA-approved watershed plan in Wisconsin, the Fredonia-Newburg Watershed Plan in Fredonia, WI, the Catfish Creek Watershed Management plan in Iowa, Keith Creek Watershed-Based Plan, and the Upper South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed Improvement Plan in Illinois. She also helped develop the Keith Creek, Little Rock Creek, Mahoney Creek, Long Run Creek, Wind Point, Spring Creek, Flint Creek, and Woods Creek watershed plans across Illinois and Wisconsin. In addition, Cecily led a planning and visioning process to develop a trail and greenway network in Coles County, Illinois, and another to develop the Sugar Creek Greenway Vision Plan in McLean County, Illinois.

REPRESENTATIVE PROJECTS

DeKalb County Soil & Water Conservation District

Central South Brank Kishwaukee Watershed-Based Plan

Cecily and her team are working closely with the District and stakeholders to develop an IEPA-approved Watershed-Based Plan for the Central South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed. This watershed includes the City of Genoa, Villages of Kirkland and Kingston, and unincorporated communities of Wilkinson, Five Points, and Colvin Park. The watershed boasts uncommon ecosystems in need of protection, including floodplain forests, a fen, grassland birds, fish, and mussels.

ZION Development Corporation, IL

Keith Creek Watershed-Based Plan*

Project Manager/Author of watershed-based plan prepared for ZION Developed Corporation. The plan focused on improving water quality by controlling nonpoint source pollution in Rockford, Illinois, including an Environmental Justice community. Keith Creek is a heavily urbanized stream facing moderate impairment and degradation. The plan focuses on improving water quality by protecting green infrastructure, creating protection policies, implementing ecological restoration, educating the public and improving the quality of life for people in the watershed for current and future generations.

DeKalb County Soil and Water Conservation District, IL

Upper South Branch Kishwaukee River Watershed Improvement Plan*

Project Manager/Author of the development of an IEPA-approved comprehensive Watershed-Based Plan. This plan served as a guiding document to facilitate the achievement of water quality standards by controlling nonpoint source pollution and restoring the impaired waters within the USBKR watershed.

Throughout the planning process, Cecily worked alongside diverse stakeholders, fostering voluntary collaboration, and emphasizing the importance of protecting green infrastructure, implementing ecological restoration, and public education. The process culminated in the creation of the Watershed Improvement Plan, which integrated input from stakeholders, steering committee meetings, and the expertise of AES's ecologists, GIS specialists, and environmental engineers. This innovative plan not only aimed to enhance water quality but also sought to improve the quality of life for current and future generations in the USBKR watershed. Cecily's role encompassed strategic planning, collaboration facilitation, and a commitment to adaptive management principles, ensuring the plan's long-term effectiveness and flexibility while recognizing that all recommendations were provided as guidance rather than mandatory directives.

Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, WI
Fredonia-Newburg Watershed Plan*

Cecily served as the Project Manager/Author in the development and execution of the Fredonia-Newburg Area Watershed-Based Plan, with a primary focus on the creation of the Action Plan. The communities of the Fredonia-Newburg Area watersheds are dedicated to the protection, preservation, and improvement of their area watersheds through planning, implementation, education and stewardship for shared health and area wellbeing. The Plan provided programmatic recommendations, encompassing general watershed-wide remedial, preventive, and regulatory actions, and was designed to work in concert with the Milwaukee River Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Study targets for phosphorus, total suspended solids, and fecal coliform. Additionally, the Plan focused on specific project locations to improve water quality, promote green infrastructure, and enhance aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Dubuque County, IA
Catfish Creek Watershed Management Plan*

Project Manager for the watershed planning effort and developing a comprehensive "Watershed Management Plan" for the Catfish Creek watershed that meets requirements as defined by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The intent of the planning effort was to develop and implement a Watershed Management Plan designed to achieve water quality standards for a watershed that harbored high-quality, cold-water trout streams and karst topography while facing water quality impairments for nutrients, sediment, and *E.coli*. The goal of the plan is to reduce the risks of flooding and its effects, improve water quality and promote a healthier existence for all living things that call the Catfish Creek Watershed home.

Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, WI
Pike River Watershed Plan*

Project Manager/Author of the first watershed-based plan approved in WI for Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network. The group's primary goal is to educate while building partnerships for projects to improve water quality, reduce flooding, and enhancing ecosystem benefits by preserving and restoring wetlands, prairies, and other natural features for future generations. The watershed harbors high-quality forests, wildflowers, ferns, ravines, hillside springs, remnant prairies, and state-designated endangered species, while facing urban and agricultural challenges, including loss of wetlands, brownfields, eroding ravines, and land management.