

# Severson Dells Education Foundation

In August 2024, Apex Clean Energy awarded a \$250,000 conservation grant on behalf of Prosperity Wind and Lotus Wind to Severson Dells Education Foundation. The grant will be distributed in three installments throughout 2025 to support the Elliot Golf Course Restoration Project.

## About the Elliot Golf Course Restoration

The project's goal is to transform a 168-acre decommissioned golf course in Rockford, Illinois, into a biodiverse natural habitat while enhancing public access and providing environmental education opportunities. Apex's grant will help Severson Dells Education Foundation acquire the land from the Rockford Park District and revitalize the site by establishing native habitats and restoring Manning Creek, a vital waterway that runs through the property, into a functioning riparian system.

Key conservation goals include:

- **Habitat Restoration:** Convert the former golf course into native prairie, oak woodland, and riparian habitats that will support diverse native flora and fauna
- **Water Quality Improvement:** Restore Manning Creek and associated wetlands to reduce sedimentation and improve water quality before it reaches the biologically significant Kishwaukee River
- **Climate Resilience:** Promote carbon sequestration through prairie and woodland restoration and enhance stormwater management practices
- **Wildlife Connectivity:** Establish a crucial link in the regional greenway, connecting existing natural areas and expanding wildlife corridors



The project will also bring numerous community and outdoor benefits, providing guided tours, school programs, and public workshops focused on restoration efforts and ecosystem services. Additionally, a network of trails will be developed, and the golf course clubhouse will be renovated into a nature center for educational programs, community events, and recreation. This initiative will create accessible natural spaces for the surrounding community, including students from the nearby Boys and Girls Club.

## About the Apex Conservation Grant Program

As a company with a core value of sustainability, Apex Clean Energy endeavors to not only minimize our projects' impacts, but also promote an ecological balance. Through the Apex Conservation Grant Program, each renewable energy project commercialized by Apex will contribute a sum of money, proportional to the size of the project, to support local or regional wildlife conservation, reforestation and flora restoration, protection of sensitive habitats such as grassland or wetlands, and other environmental conservation initiatives in or near project communities.