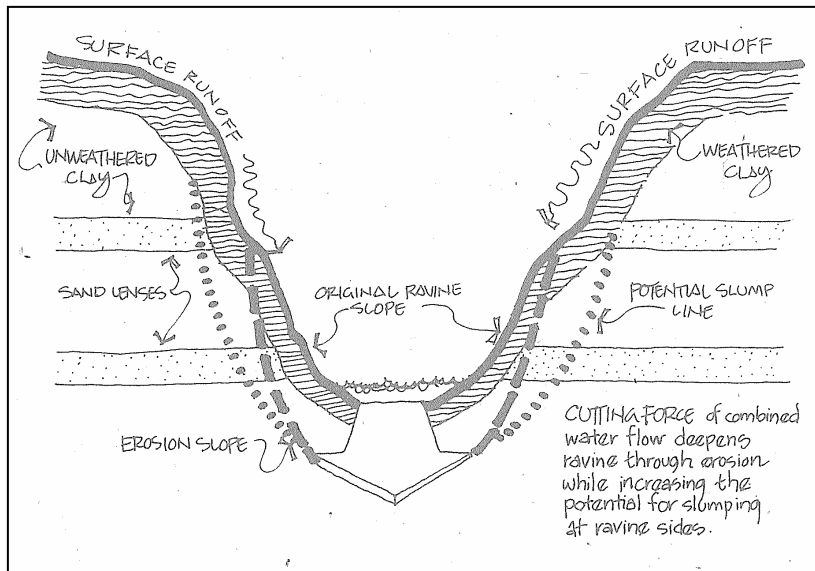


City of Highland Park Select Recommendations for Protecting Your Ravine-Bluff Property

Many of Highland Park's homes are situated on properties featuring ravine or bluff slopes. The ravine-bluff ecosystem is unique and picturesque, but it is also fragile and requires routine maintenance to ensure its longevity. Steep slopes are susceptible to erosion and slippage, particularly in periods of above-average rainfall.

According to the Illinois State Water Survey, 2009 has been the 5th wettest year on record in Illinois. Recent storm events have been more frequent and more severe which has contributed to slope movements and failures along the North Shore, including in Highland Park.

What Causes Slope Disturbance?



During major storm events, an increased volume of water directly and indirectly travels over slopes at a high velocity. The higher rate of flow can accelerate slope erosion and over-saturate the soil which results in slumping—the sliding of soil and surface material which exposes unvegetated ground that is vulnerable to further erosion.

The easiest way to prevent the cycle of erosion is to routinely check drainage to ensure that it is properly functioning and adequate. Over-saturation of the soil is the single biggest catalyst of slope disturbance. Controlled burns and fluctuations in the water table **do not** cause slope failure.

What Can I Do to Protect My Property?

Because slopes are inherently unstable and erosive in a natural state, it is imperative that precautions are taken to eliminate factors which aggravate instability or exacerbate erosion. The tips in this handout are provided to help you protect your ravine-bluff property. Before pursuing any of these recommendations, please consult the Department of Public Works at 847-432-0807 or the Department of Community Development at 847-432-0867 to discuss how these actions might apply to your individual property. **It is important to note that all land use and development on and around ravine and bluff**

slopes is regulated by Article XIX of the Zoning Code, available online at: <http://www.cityhpil.com/pdf/ordinances/article19.pdf>

DO:

- ✓ Regularly inspect and maintain existing drainage
- ✓ Regularly inspect slopes and remove debris jams that may be blocking the ravine channel
- ✓ Regularly inspect swimming pools for possible leaks
- ✓ Identify, protect and reintroduce existing native species of trees, shrubs, grasses and flowering plants and remove non-native species
- ✓ Cover exposed soil on or near slopes with erosion control fabric and replant with native species as soon as possible
- ✓ Plant a vegetative buffer of native grasses along the top edge of slopes in place of turf grass

DO NOT:

- ✗ Locate lawn sprinklers next to slopes, use them when the ground is saturated or leave them on for long periods of time
- ✗ Deposit yard waste, landscape clippings or leaves on slopes or in storm sewers
- ✗ Drain pools near slopes or directly into ravines or bluffs
- ✗ Direct stormwater runoff to the top of slopes
- ✗ Locate impervious surfaces next to slopes
- ✗ Use heavy machinery near slopes
- ✗ Begin any project without first consulting the City and obtaining required permits

If I Observe Slope Disturbance on My Property, What Should I Do?

- ✓ Consult a trained professional and consider having soil borings done on your property to assess existing soil conditions and determine the potential for future slope movement
- ✓ Advise adjacent property owners to inspect their own slopes for disturbance
- ✓ Contact the Department of Public Works at 847-432-0807 to report abnormal channel erosion or slope conditions