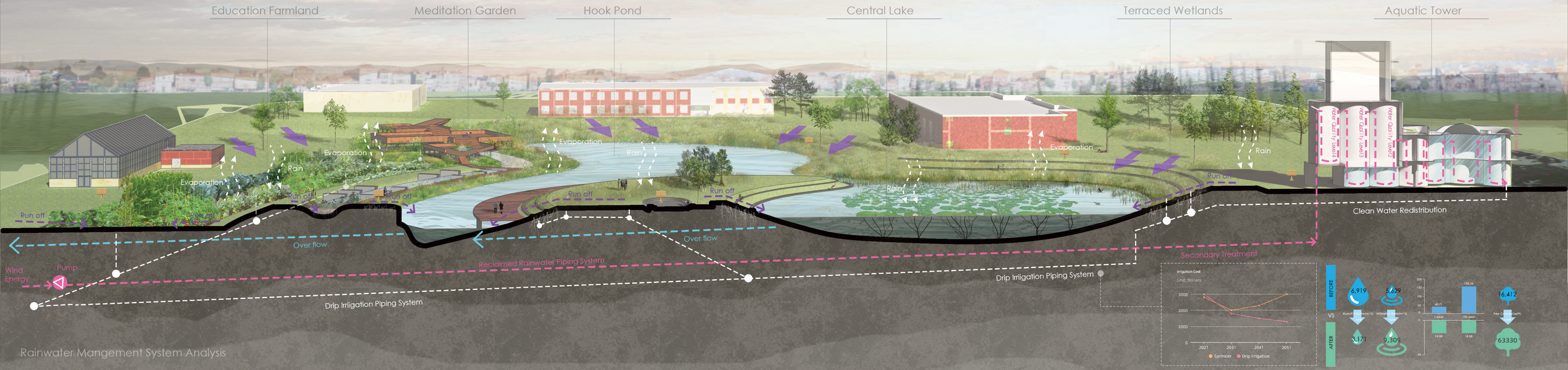


CELEBRATION OF RAINDROPS

An Innovative and Interactive Approach to Rainwater Mangement



Located at the south-western area of University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the site is part of the UIUC Research Park. Despite its noticeable location near the State Farm Center arena and the iHotel (the university's official hotel), the area remains an unappealing space because of lack of canopy shade and plant diversity as well as an discontinuous pathway. The runoff from unutilized fields and impervious parking lots is discharged directly to the existing retention pond that is connected to the Embarras River, a waterway beginning in Urbana-Champaign. This runoff has high concentrations of phosphorus, nitrogen, and suspended solids, and eventually leads to the Gulf of Mexico where these contaminants harm its rich ecosystem and create a large deadzone where dissolved oxygen is minimal.

"Celebration of Raindrops: An Innovative, Interactive Approach to Rainwater Management" is designed to remedy those problems and to provide a space where students, staff and visitors all can enjoy the interaction with nature and learn more about green infrastructure. The design proposal consists of a constructed wetland, several retention/recreation ponds, a rain garden, experimental farmland, and the transformation of an abandoned silo into a water center. Tying these features together are a rainwater treatment and purification system, a clean water recycling and redistribution system, as well as a greenway system. Furthermore, our project can assist in achieving the University's Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) goal of achieving long-term carbon neutrality by providing an infill design example at underutilized open space.

