



Millennium Reserve/Calumet “Atlas” Project Frequently Asked Questions

What is this project about? What is the “Atlas”?

With funding from the Illinois Coastal Management Program’s educational grants program, we are researching, writing and designing a compelling educational guide to the natural and cultural assets of the Calumet region. Designed for a public audience of residents, visitors wanting to explore the area, restoration volunteers, students, and others, this guide will celebrate the fantastic work that has been accomplished so far as well as ongoing projects in the region.

The project is currently being called an “Atlas”, but it will be so much more than a collection of maps. It will have photos, text, graphics, lists and charts, along with maps. Through a survey and at meetings, we are seeking recommendations from the Task Force for a better, more accurate name for the final deliverable.

How is this product different from other work already done on the Calumet region?

Organizations and individuals have been doing incredible restoration and community building work in the Calumet region for decades. This is a new opportunity to compile those successes into one compelling piece, to share the region’s collective story to new and established audiences. It will be another microphone for organizations and advocates of the region.

While it is inspired by the *Chicago Wilderness Atlas of Biodiversity*, it will not replicate that work. The Chicago Wilderness Atlas was written for an academic audience of restoration experts and scientists. This Calumet piece will highlight biodiversity, and then go a step further to show and tell people how to enjoy that biodiversity throughout the region.

Who is working on this project? What is the Task Force?

Bluestem Communications (formerly Biodiversity Project) received a grant to coordinate this project. Bluestem is an environmental communications nonprofit organization with expertise in coalition management, facilitation and writing. Bluestem’s role is to coordinate this project team, timeline and deliverables; the goals, content, design and distribution of the product will be entirely informed by members of the project Task Force.

As experienced experts in the region, Task Force members are the heart of this project. They commit to contributing time to this project by attending planning meetings and contributing resources and content wherever possible. Task Force members were invited to be part of this project because of their on-the-ground expertise and knowledge of the history of the region,

Millennium Reserve, scientific issues and biodiversity and because of their connection to the people who will use and enjoy this tool.

What is the timeline for this project?

The grant period for this project is October 1, 2013 through September 30, 2014. To produce a final, high quality deliverable in this tight time frame, we've divided the project into several overlapping phases:

1. Planning and organizing a Task Force
2. Researching and developing an outline of the product
3. Interviewing potential audience groups
4. Writing and compiling photos, graphics, maps, etc.
5. Editing and reviewing content
6. Designing
7. Printing
8. Distribution and outreach

Who is the intended audience for the final product?

Written in a compelling way, with accessible maps and images, the document is intended for non-academic public audiences, like: teachers, students, museums and nature center programmers, restoration site stewards, volunteers, residents, chambers of commerce, tourism boards, leaders at places of worship, environmental organizations and funders.

To be sure that we create a piece that is actually useful to these audiences, we will be conducting several focus groups where we interview members of the intended audiences. Task Force members will help recruit focus group participants.

How do I get more information?

Contact Meg Kelly, the program manager, at mkelly@bluestemcommunications.org, or 312-754-0406.