CHI–CAL RIVERS FUND
Green Stormwater Infrastructure
Strategy & Priorities
MISSION

Restore the health, vitality and accessibility of the waterways in the Chicago and Calumet region

Goals

• Enhance fish and wildlife habitat
• Reduce stormwater runoff with green stormwater infrastructure
• Improve public-use opportunities
PUBLIC–PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

- ArcelorMittal
- BNSF Railway
- The Chicago Community Trust
- Crown Family Philanthropies
- Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
- The Joyce Foundation
- National Fish & Wildlife Foundation
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
• Hybrid of watershed and political boundaries reflecting partner interests and jurisdictions

• Focus on major system waterways
  – Chicago River and IL tributaries
  – North Shore Channel
  – Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal
  – Bubbly Creek
  – Calumet Sag Channel
  – Calumet River
  – Grand Calumet River
  – Little Calumet River
  – Burns Ditch
  – Salt Creek
  – Lake Calumet
  – Wolf Lake
FOCAL ISSUES

• Habitat degradation
  ✔ 60% riverbanks are riprap or vertical walls
  ✔ Canopy cover <12% in 9 of 10 waterways
  ✔ Mean dissolved O$_2$ too low for early fish life stages

• Water quality, flooding
  ✔ 285 combined sewer overflow events since 2010
  ✔ 7 releases of untreated stormwater/wastewater to Lake Michigan since 2010 (43 billion gallons)

• Public-use limitations
  ✔ Waterways historically dominated by manufacturing
  ✔ Health and safety concerns (water quality, access)
FUNDING CATEGORIES

1. Green Stormwater Infrastructure
2. Habitat Enhancement
3. Public-Use Improvement

- Summaries of previously funded projects can be viewed at: [www.nfwf.org/chi-cal](http://www.nfwf.org/chi-cal)
ACCOMPLISHMENTS: 2013–2016

22 grants: $4.8 million
Grantee match: $11.3 million
Total investment: $16.1 million

- 4.5 million gallons stormwater storage
- 1,453 acres of habitat restoration
- 71 acres of new public green space added or improved

Locations of projects funded 2013–2016

[Map of project locations]
GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

This category directs funding to green infrastructure projects that increase on-site stormwater capture and storage

- Install green stormwater infrastructure
  - Rain gardens, bioswales
  - Green roofs
  - Pervious surfaces
  - Other GSI solutions
- Create and enhance urban wetlands
  - Construction or improvement of wetlands in urban areas
  - Increased storage and filtration
- Restore urban forests
  - Plant diverse native tree species to:
    - Retain runoff
    - Moderate water temperature
    - Improve habitat
    - Increase ecosystem resiliency
GREEN STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

- Competitive projects:
  - ✓ Occur in close proximity and/or demonstrate direct benefits to the major waterways of the system
  - ✓ Connect to a larger green infrastructure plan
  - ✓ Be of sufficient size and scope
  - ✓ Projects must add a minimum 50,000 gallons of stormwater storage capacity annually to be competitive

- EPA Stormwater Calculator
- i-Tree
- National Tree Benefit Calculator
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENTS

11 green infrastructure projects funded totaling $2.6 million in grants

Project Outcomes:

- 4.5 million gallons stormwater storage capacity added
- 401,940 square feet of green infrastructure installed
- 26,590 square feet impervious surface removed
- 71 acres of new public green space added or improved
Interest & Need:

- **Observation:** Half of the 2017 Chi-Cal Rivers Fund applications were for GSI projects
  - Increase from previous years
  - Consistent with SOGL program basin-wide
- What barriers exist to designing and implementing GSI projects?
  - Project design support?
  - Municipal or public buy-in (making the case for GSI)?
  - Funding? For which project elements?
  - Technical assistance?
  - Long-term maintenance?
Where are the gaps?

- **Observation: Decline in priority-aligned shovel-ready projects since 2013**
  - **Consistent with SOGL program basin-wide**

- How can the funding community help address these needs/fill the gaps?

- When developing and revising funding strategies, what would you like the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund to consider?
CONTACT INFORMATION

Aislinn Gauchay
Director, Central Region
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
612-564-7284
aislinn.gauchay@nfwf.org

Traci Giefer
Great Lakes Program Manager
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
612-564-7296
traci.giefer@nfwf.org

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