

Friends of the Chicago River



2013 Annual Report

INTRODUCTION

Friends of the Chicago River is very proud that we finished FY2013 successfully with a positive balance, a 10% increase in Big Fish Ball sponsorship, a 33% increase in individual contributions, and a record 16,000 visitors to our Bridgehouse Museum. In addition, Friends launched a new state of the art organizational website, released a landmark, joint report with Openlands, “Our Liquid Asset: the Economic Benefits of a Clean Chicago River” and completed an ambitious new five year strategic plan. A hard working staff, deeply committed board of directors, and thousands of members, advocates, volunteers, and contributors made this work possible.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Our Liquid Asset: The Economic Benefits of a Clean Chicago River

In partnership with Openlands, Friends conducted a comprehensive economic analysis of the benefits of a clean, healthy, and accessible Chicago River system. The project goal was to substantiate the economic impact of what an improved Chicago River would do for Chicago and the region, including direct and indirect benefits such as new jobs, reduced flooding, increased property values and proximity to natural areas, trails, and open space.

The study’s findings clearly demonstrate that investing in the Chicago River provides a 70% return on investment and creates 52,400 construction jobs and 846 permanent ones. Specific recommendations include:

- Speeding up the completion of TARP
- Advocating for improved water quality standards and disinfection at Stickney
- Increasing public access and improving the river edge with a focus on sustainable development
- Encouraging green infrastructure and stormwater management



Chicagoans enjoy an afternoon break along the Chicago River.

The full study was completed in spring 2013 and the results were released at Friends’ annual Chicago River Summit. Citing specific financial impacts, this report provides officials and decision makers with a tool to push forward policy changes that further improve water quality, address stormwater management, and increase public access to the river.



A beautiful summer night on the Chicago River.



A student getting to know a crayfish from the Chicago River.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Chicago River Schools Network

The Chicago River Schools Network (CRSN) impacted over 17,400 students through field trip assistance, classroom presentations, and service learning projects as well as through training workshops, curricula and lesson plans, and customized assistance for teachers. Our emphasis on stewardship, even for the youngest students, demonstrates that even one person's action can make a difference in the river's health. In partnership with over 296 teachers from 191 schools, Friends is pleased to have exceeded our FY2013 goals for engaging students in local environmental issues and activities that solve everyday problems facing the river. Online data collection continues to be an essential component of the program, providing another resource for teachers and students to document and share their data with other schools.



Students get up close and personal with the river on a CRSN field trip.



Mark Hauser, Friends' education manager, presents Lincoln Park High School with Educators of the Year award at Friends' Student Congress.

McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum

Friends' Bridgehouse Museum celebrates the Chicago River and its world-famous movable bridges, and offers visitors a one-of-a-kind opportunity to explore a historic landmark bridgehouse. The museum's prominent location, intriguing physical space, and engaging exhibits help strengthen Friends' visibility and financial base as well as broaden the impact of river education. Additionally, the museum serves as a gateway to Friends' other resources and programs, which include take-home informational materials, river-based curricula, and river trips for thousands of school children, educational paddling trips, volunteer opportunities for hands-on river clean-up, riverbank restoration, and much more.



View from inside the Bridgehouse Museum.

Open every spring through fall in the southwest tower of the Michigan Avenue Bridge, the museum attracted a record number of 16,000 visitors during the FY2013 season! Programs such as our lunchtime lecture series or our partnership with the Chicago Architecture Foundation's Open House Chicago festival helped thousands of visitors gain a new perspective on the Chicago River. This year we also organized the Bridgehouse Museum Committee to raise additional awareness and funds for the museum. On June 20 the committee hosted its inaugural event, *Eve of the Solstice Boat Cruise*, which raised over \$13,000 for the museum.



Guests enjoy the inaugural Eve of the Solstice Boat Cruise.

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Urban Canoe Adventures

Thirty dedicated and experienced volunteer canoe guides provided on the water, educational experiences for over 1,200 paddlers, including individuals and families as well as school, civic, and corporate groups. This year marked the 20th anniversary of our paddling trips which take place throughout the watershed. Some of our most popular trips include: Moonlight Paddle in Skokie Lagoons, Downtown Canyons, and the Ecology Paddle with the Chicago Park District.



Young paddlers launch from Ping Tom Memorial Park on their first ever canoe adventure!



Long time volunteer and river guide, Chris Parson paddles the river.

Chicago River Eco-Warriors

Chicago River Eco-Warriors (CREW) is Friends' volunteer program designed to engage volunteers to help us achieve our mission. CREW tracks volunteer participation across all Friends' programs and activities, rewarding volunteers for their service and commitment to the river, as they become "multipliers" of our mission. Eco-Warriors participate in restoration, assist at Friends sponsored events, take action on river issues, serve on committees, lead paddling trips as well as engage in many other critical activities. Friends' volunteers include school groups, corporate teams, families, and neighborhood associations.



CREW volunteers pose after working hard for the Chicago River.



School group from Schurz High School removing invasive plants from the Chicago River floodplain.

PUBLIC POLICY AND PLANNING

Clean Water Advocacy

Friends' staff and partners continued to meet with Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD) leadership to negotiate improved water quality standards for aquatic life in the Chicago River. We finalized an agreement with the MWRD legal team in December 2012 which clears the way for completing the Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB) process. This agreement makes it possible to achieve substantial water quality improvements that go beyond disinfection and include increasing levels of dissolved oxygen in the river. The MWRD has also agreed to work in conjunction with a task force including Friends, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Shedd Aquarium, and Openlands to implement in-stream habitat improvement projects that will be at least partially funded by the MWRD. These actions set in motion the final phase of upgrading the water quality and habitat conditions of the Chicago River.

In the last year Friends was also successful in laying the groundwork for the passage of a Cook County Watershed Management Ordinance (WMO). Friends' staff, along with our partners, coordinated the submission of public comments in response to the WMO that was released on June 24, 2013, and approved by the MWRD's board on October 3, 2013.



A coyote in its native habitat at LaBagh Woods near the Chicago River.

Aquatic Invasive Species

Faced with the threat of 29 identified aquatic invasive species from both the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins, Friends continues to work with our coalition partners (Alliance for the Great Lakes, Prairie Rivers Network, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Sierra Club of Illinois) to identify and promote a solution to the issues of aquatic invasive species, with a focus on Asian carp. Friends also serves as a member of the federal Technical and Policy Working Group headed by John Goss, who was appointed by President Barack Obama. This allows us to stay informed and advocate for solutions that protect and improve the Chicago River's water quality, viability, and habitat.



Marvin Fournier, Friends' canoe guide, cleans debris along the North Branch of the Chicago River.

Land Use Analysis

The MWRD currently owns 11,125 acres of land throughout the Chicago metropolitan area of which a majority are in the Chicago River watershed. During FY2013, Friends, in partnership with Openlands, evaluated GIS data layers, to determine the recreation, conservation, and stormwater value of their holdings in northeastern Illinois. The project team selected 27 data layers as objective criteria to evaluate the relevant values of District land. Once the task of evaluating each parcel is complete, the team will objectively tally the data sets for each parcel and identify priority lands. The team will then review the MWRD's land use criteria in context of the findings and make recommendations to help the district make land management decisions that meet their mission and ours.

ON THE GROUND PROJECTS

Chicago River Day

Thousands of volunteers at over 65 city and suburban locations participated in Friends' 21st annual Chicago River Day. Participants included corporate teams, community organizations, school groups, families, and individuals of various ability and age levels from throughout the 673-square mile Chicago River watershed. Through over 12,000 hours of volunteer action, Chicago River Day resulted in both immediate and long-term improvements to the ecological health of the river.



Wendella volunteers scooping trash and debris out of the river.



A young volunteer pitches in on Chicago River Day.



Team Leinenkugel celebrates on Chicago River Day.

River Volunteer Stewardship Program

The River Volunteer Stewardship Program (RVSP) forms the backbone of Friends' restoration efforts and serves as an important part of CREW as a vehicle to cultivate stewardship across the watershed. RVSP emphasizes restoration and engagement - complementary in nature these two ideals enable us to better restore and improve natural lands along the Chicago River, promote Best Management Practices (BMPs) both at and beyond the river's edge, and increase public support of the Chicago River and open space in general.

In FY2013, Friends continued to utilize Edgebrook Woods, parts of the Forest Preserves of Cook County, as a hands-on, year round restoration demonstration site where Friends' staff and volunteers work together to implement environmental BMPs that directly benefit the Chicago River. This program utilizes volunteers to restore river-edge forest preserves to show what is possible along the river's banks. In addition, participants learn about what they can do to help the river and mitigate climate change impacts. Site activities also focus on educating and empowering local stewards to maintain improvements for long-term impact.



McDermott Will & Emery volunteers prepare to plant shrubs in front of the Bridgehouse Museum.

Friends' staff facilitated seven corporate workdays and four volunteer workdays with a total of 547 volunteers participating at our Edgebrook Woods and Kickapoo Woods demonstration sites. Projects ranged from invasive plant removal to stream bank restoration to rain garden installation. These events are designed to introduce people to the river and build a sense of ownership and connection while meeting our mission. In conjunction with our restoration work at Kickapoo Woods, Friends' staff also conducted 13 workshops in the Calumet region and southern suburbs to train, inform, and empower future river advocates.

ON THE GROUND PROJECTS

Gullywalkers

Friends launched Gullywalkers in 2012 to train and empower volunteers to identify, document, and assess gullies along the Chicago River within the Forest Preserves of Cook County (FPCC). To date, we have trained over 100 gullywalkers who have surveyed 89% of the riverbank owned by FPCC with the remaining 11% deemed inaccessible. In addition to addressing the destructive properties of gullies, this project also empowers citizen scientists and engages more volunteers in restoration and conservation practices throughout the watershed. The initial two-year phase involves gully identification and monitoring. Once gully data is collected and aggregated, Friends and FPCC staff will use this information to create a priority ranking of existing gullies to drive future gully fixing restoration projects and land management decisions.



John Quail, Friends' director of watershed planning, trains volunteers in gully identification.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Big Fish Ball

On June 5, 2013, Friends had its most successful Big Fish Ball to date raising over \$220,000 with a 10% increase from sponsorships. Many of Chicago's leaders in the civic and corporate communities were among the record 450 guests, including Illinois Governor Pat Quinn.

The festivities included elegant outdoor dining outside along the river, Blue Ribbon Awards for excellence in sustainable design, river-inspired performances, and an after-party fireworks boat cruise. The downtown city skyline, Chicago's iconic bridgehouses, and Chicago River views provided a breathtaking backdrop to a spectacular evening along, on, and for the river.



Illinois Governor Pat Quinn greets a wild guest at the Big Fish Ball.



Paul Friedman and Sonia Urbain mingle with fellow Big Fish Ball guests.

FISCAL YEAR 2013 SUPPORTERS

The board of directors, staff, and volunteers of Friends of the Chicago River are grateful to all the people, partners, foundations, and companies who supported our work between July 1, 2012, and June 30, 2013.

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James R. Larson, Jr.
Patrick Lehnerer
Pete Leki and Debbie Albano
Heidi D. Levin
Daniel M. Loewenstein
Garry Low and Elizabeth Karier
John Macdonald, Jr.
Gregg Malicki
Daniel and Maureen Malinowski
Daniel R. Maloney
Chris Maly
Hal and Patricia Mann
Brande Martin
Kathleen May
Michael Mccoy
Margaret McCurry
Holly McDonald

Sherry McFall
Kim McShea
Kiran Mehta
Roger K. Metz
Jeffrey Mitchum
Kyle Moore
Rick Mroczkowski
Marty and Colleen Mulroe
Brittany Newbold
Erik Newman
Constantine Nicolopoulos
Sharon A. O'Donnell
Stephanie Orbon
Amreek Singh Paintal
Henry and Margaret Palmer
Don Pitzen
Randall Pollock
Terry and Chris Porter
Donald and Babette Powell
Bill and Sue Quinlan
Anastasia Reeves
Pamela J. Reimann
Aaron Rohrer
Katie Rooney
Marcia Ross
Seth Sanders
David Schmid
Virginia Schulte
Elizabeth Schwartz
Ryan Segal
Bruce and Margaret Sents
William and Sheryl Sharp
William and Theodora Shepherd
Greta H. Sims
Mike Sinner
Ronnie Jo Sokol
Blake Spielvogel
Hal Sprague
Seth Stein
Jennifer T. Sterling
Laura Stoyhoff
Robert and Catherine Sullivan
John T. Sullivan
Brian Sullivan
Simone Suri
Brad Suster and Hector Hernandez
Mark Swaya
Edward Tenner
Mary M. Tierney
Michelle Uting and Miguel Vallejo
Norman Victorson
Charles Wathen
Matthew Weaton
Lawrence E. Weaver
Laura J. West

Philip Wisniewski
Josie Yanguas and Carl Rosen
Margot Yondorf
Lisa Youngberg

Foundations, Corporations, and Other Organizations

\$50,000 and above

Alphawood Foundation
The Crown Family
GMR Marketing
Wrigley Company Foundation

\$30,000 to \$49,999

The Boeing Company
Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
Grand Victoria Foundation
Polk Bros. Foundation
REI

\$15,000 to \$29,999

AON Foundation
Dixon Enterprise
The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
Exelon Corporation
Hines
MillerCoors
Prince Charitable Trusts
The Walton Family Foundation
WRD Environmental

\$7,000 to \$14,999

Allied Metal Company
BMO Harris Bank
Earth Share of Illinois
The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust
Harold M. & Adeline S. Morrison Family Foundation
HERE, a Nokia company
Kirkland & Ellis LLP
Ozinga Ready Mix Concrete, Inc.
Patagonia, Inc.
Peoples Gas
Shoreline Sightseeing
Skender Foundation
The Siragusa Foundation
STS Foundation

\$3,000 to \$6,999

ARCADIS
Avison Young
Burke, Warren, MacKay & Serritella, P.C.

Chicago Botanic Garden
Colliers International
Equity Group Investments, L.L.C.
Firestone Complete Auto Care
Fletcher Jones Automotive Enterprises
Jack Ringer Family Foundation
John G. Shedd Aquarium
Midwest Generation EME, LLC
Motorola Mobility Foundation
Nottage and Ward
Ogden Avenue Materials
The Oppenheimer Family Foundation
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP
Regenstein School of the Chicago Botanic Garden
Dr. Scholl Foundation
Wight & Company
William Blair & Company

\$1,000 to \$2,999

Eddie Bauer
Francis Beidler Foundation
The Boston Consulting Group, Inc.
Myron M. Cherry & Associates LLC
Chicago Sun-Times, Splash Publications, LLC
Chicago Yacht Yard
Clune Construction Company
Continental Paper Grading
Cornerstone Home Inspection Services
Crain's Chicago Business
Divane Bros. Electric Co.
DOT Graphics, Inc.
GOLUB
Green America
Groupon
The Hechtman Group LTD
Innovative Technology Advisors, LLC
Lakeshore Foundation, Inc.
Lakeside Bank
Law Office of John E. Lovstrand PC
Loyola Academy
McDermott, Will & Emery LLP
James McHugh Construction Co.
Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.
Nuveen Investments
Prestige Construction Services INC.
Robert G. Friedman Foundation
Skidmore, Owings & Merrill LLP
U.S. Equities Realty
Weglarz Company
Wendela Boats & Chicago Water Taxi

\$300 to \$999

The Alter Group

Bryan Cave LLP
Chicago History Museum
DMK Restaurants Fish Bar
Environmental Design
International, Inc.
Fitzgerald Associates Architects
Francis W. Parker School
Hotel 71
IIT Boeing Scholars Academy
Lake County Stormwater Management
Commission
The Lakota Group, Inc.
Lawrence's Fisheries
Leopardo Construction
Lindblom Math & Science Academy
McMaster Painting & Decorating
Mead Witter Foundation, Inc.
Mesirow Financial
Nathan Kipnis Architects Inc.
Solomon Cordwell Buenz
Terra Consulting Group, LTD.
Thomas Ward Agency, Inc.
Weaver Boos Consultants

\$25 to \$299

37signals
Alliant Insurance Services, Inc.
Allstate
Altamanu
Beethoven Festival
Bulley & Andrews, LLC
Chiropractic for Life
City of Chicago/Alderman Solis,
Chicago's 25th Ward
Competitor Group, Inc.
dbHMS
Figure Skate Chicago
Graphic Advantage, Inc.
Innogive Foundation
Jewish Council for Youth Services
Kurman Communications, Inc.
Lake Forest Open Lands Association
Lohan Anderson LLC
Loyola University Chicago
Marwedel, Minichello & Reeb, P.C.
mc2communications
Michelle Durpetti Events
The Nature Conservancy
New Trier Democratic Organization
Norwood Park Historical Society
Old St. Mary's School
Polaris Charter Academy
Prassas Landscape Studio LLC
Roosevelt University
Ross Barney Architects

Smith, Hemmesch, Burke,
Brannigan & Guerin
SPACECO, Inc.
Timeless Creations
United Way of Massachusetts Bay
and Merrimack Vall
USG Foundation
Wine and Spirits Distributors of Illinois
Wolff Landscape Architecture, Inc.

Government Agencies

Associated Colleges of Illinois
Chicago Park District
Chicago Public Schools
Forest Preserve District of
Cook County
Illinois Department of Natural
Resources
Illinois Environmental Protection
Agency
Illinois State University
Honors College of the University
of Illinois - Chicago
Metropolitan Water Reclamation
District of Greater Chicago
NOAA
Public Building Commission of Chicago
University of Illinois at Chicago

Endowment Gifts

Andrew Arenberg
Kenneth Arenber and Susanne Swisher
Lindsey Arenberg
Sergio Botero
Kent Brown and Jane Jacobsen-Brown
Kate Chappell
Jeffrey and Keiko Kernagis
Michael Sheehy
Laurene von Klan and Sarah Kilpatrick
Glenn Weinstein

In-Kind Donations

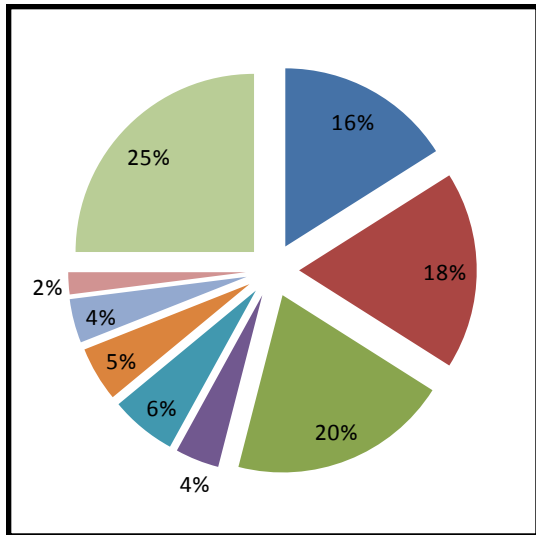
@properties
Barnaby's Restaurant
Blue Satellite Productions
Boom Entertainment
Burke, Warren, MacKay & Serritella, P.C.
Harry Caray's Restaurant Group
Chicago Children's Museum

Chicago Electric Boat Company
Chicago History Museum
Chicago Trolley Co. & Chicago
Double Decker Co.
The Competence Group, Inc.
Corner Bakery Café
Design Concepts 1, LLC
Dick's Last Resort
Dirtt Environmental Solutions Inc.
East Bank Club
Margaret Frisbie
Goodman Theatre
Goose Island Catering
The House Theatre of Chicago
Anne and Howard Gottlieb Family
Foundation
Hale Solutions, Inc.
Elzie Higginbottom
Hines
Holiday Inn Chicago Mart Plaza
Il Giardino Del Dolce
Darlene Jackson
Kingston Mines
Bob Long, Jr. "The Fishin' Guy"
Chicago Park District
mc2 Communications Consortium
Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.
MillerCoors
National Museum of Mexican Art
Neoteric Design, Inc.
Phil Stefani Signature Events
PTM Werks Inc./ Hatch Werks LLC
The Redhead Piano Bar
Revolution Brewing
Rivers Restaurant
Rosebud Restaurants
Second City
Shoreline Sightseeing
SkinnyPop Popcorn
Smith & Wollensky
South Branch
Thodos Dance Chicago
Uncommon Ground
Urban Kayaks
Urban Oasis
Victory Gardens Theater
Wendela Sightseeing Company, Inc.
Bryan Whitehead

We apologize if any names have been omitted, misspelled, or otherwise incorrectly listed. Please contact us at (312) 939-0490, ext. 10, or friends@chicagoriver.org so that we can correct our records.

FISCAL YEAR 2013 FINANCIAL REPORT

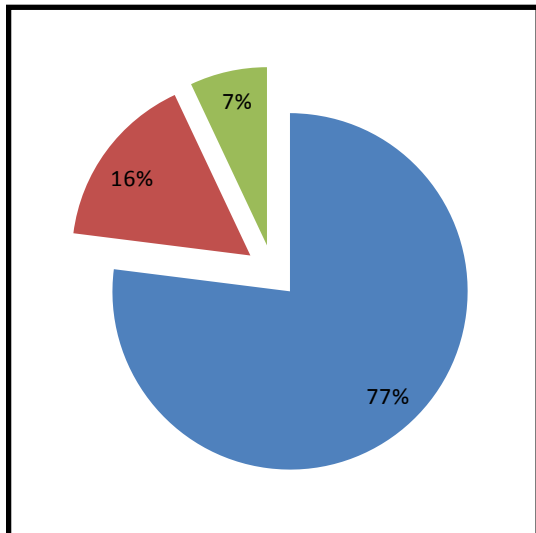
Audited Statements of Revenues and Expenses for the 12 months ending June 30, 2013.



REVENUES

Corporations	16%	\$204,768
Foundations	18%	\$229,767
Individuals	20%	\$260,486
Government	4%	\$47,250
Special Events	6%	\$75,114
Program Services	5%	\$64,858
In-Kind	4%	\$53,995
Miscellaneous	2%	\$21,600
Net Assets Released From Restriction	25%	\$318,762

Total **\$1,276,600**



EXPENSES

Program	77%	\$972,649
Fundraising & Development	16%	\$207,390
Administration	7%	\$81,926

Total **\$1,261,965**

Net Assets Beginning of the Year **\$631,751**

Change in Assets **\$73,421**

Net Assets at the End of the Year **\$705,172**



Paddlers take a break under the Wells Street Bridge near the Merchandise Mart.



Wood ducks keeping warm.

Friends of the Chicago River is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporation and is eligible to receive tax-deductible contributions. The governing body of Friends is the board of directors, which sets the organization's policies and procedures, controls its fiscal affairs, manages its assets, and oversees the executive director. The executive director is an *ex officio* member of the board of directors and is the principal executive officer of the organization.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Officers

President

Craig Coit
Deputy CFO
Aon Risk Services

Vice President

Cy H. Griffith
Marketing Director
Burke, Warren, MacKay & Serritella, P.C.

Treasurer

Stacey Hasenbalg
Associate General Counsel and Vice President
BMO Financial Group

Secretary

Jacqueline J. Loewe
Founding Partner
Sheridan Park Consulting

Directors

Karen Alber
Chief Information Officer
MillerCoors

Judith Bassoul

Aaron Block
Chief Operating Officer
BayRu

Kent Brown
Consultant
Kraft Foods

Kate Chappell
Director of Planned Giving
NorthShore University Health System

Grant Crowley
President
Crowley's Yacht Yard

Sally Fletcher
Vice President
Fletcher Chicago, Inc.

Kevin E.A. Hartman
Head of Industry
Google

Lawrence M. Kaplan
Chief Executive Officer
Eudora Global

James Mark, Jr.
Vice President, Director of Chicago Office
Wight & Company

Barbara Morse-Quinn
Chicago Office Administrator
McDermott Will & Emery

David Wong
Vice President
Certare Ventures

John D. Ziesmer
Principal
Arison Young

STAFF

Margaret Frisbie
Executive Director

Kristin Avery
Development Manager

Ozana Balan King
Museum Director and Program Manager,
McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago
River Museum

Alexa Edinburgh
Development Associate

Cynthia Fox
Director of Operations

Besty Hands
Director of Outreach and Community
Relations

Mark Hauser
Education Manager

Austin Kellogg
Volunteer and Stewardship Specialist

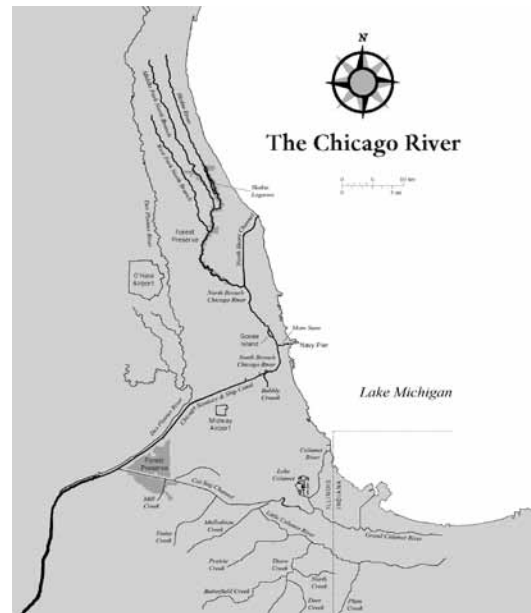
Madeleine Mahan
Policy and Planning Specialist

John Quail
Director of Watershed Planning

Archita Singh
Development Assistant

Claire Snyder
Outdoor Education Coordinator

Mary Beth Sova
Director of Development



MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Friends of the Chicago River is to improve and protect the Chicago River system for people, plants, and animals. Friends achieves our mission through: education programs that foster awareness, involvement, and a stewardship ethic; public policy and planning efforts that result in systemic river improvements; and on-the-ground projects that physically improve the Chicago River.

ABOUT THE CHICAGO RIVER

Extending from northern Lake to southern Cook County, the 156-mile Chicago River system is an interesting and complex series of waterways, which are inextricably linked to Chicago's history and the development of the region. Flowing through dozens of communities, the river winds its way past forest preserves, parks, industrial zones, and downtown Chicago where it provides a breathtaking natural vista that compliments one of the world's most famous skylines.

While the Chicago River was once a prairie stream that flowed towards Lake Michigan, over the last 200 years it has been subject to many human modifications including channelization and flow reversal, yet it still maintains its natural character and is an essential asset to the almost 70 species of fish, 60 species of birds as well as many other species including beavers, muskrats, snapping turtles, occasional river otters, and many more.

Once considered a community detriment, the Chicago River is now a symbol of ingenuity and progress, and is becoming a treasured natural resource that is shared and valued by business leaders, government officials, and the residents of our watershed.

Friends of the Chicago River

411 South Wells Street, Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60607
T: (312) 939-0490
F: (312) 939-0931
www.chicagoriver.org
www.bridgehousemuseum.org