A Phosphorus Recovery

Celebrating the latest major advancement in water quality improvements for the Chicago River system, in January 2017 Friends of the Chicago River, Environmental Law & Policy Center, Gulf Restoration Network, Natural Resources Defense Council, Prairie Rivers Network, and the Sierra Club of Illinois announced a collaborative agreement with the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) to address nutrient pollution. The agreement will significantly reduce the amount of phosphorus discharged into the river system from MWRD sewage treatment plants. This will benefit humans, fish, and other aquatic life from Cook County all the way down to the Gulf of Mexico.

In the right amount, phosphorus is an essential and naturally-occurring element within the environment. It feeds algae and aquatic plants in lakes and rivers, which in turn provide food and habitat for fish, shellfish, and other underwater organisms.

But too much phosphorus alters the natural balance, causing excessive plant and algae growth. This robs the water of oxygen, which can harm and kill aquatic life, block sunlight, and promote the growth of pathogenic and toxin-producing microorganisms. “Phosphorus can take a terrible toll on the environment,” explained John Quail, Friends’ director of watershed planning. “In excess, it pollutes our waters, threatens the health of humans and wildlife, causes unsightly and unsafe algal blooms, and in some places imposes significant costs on drinking water suppliers who must treat the impacted water.”

In 2014, phosphorus and other nutrients poisoned drinking water from Lake Erie. Nutrients from our sewage plants are an ongoing contributor to the dead zone in the right amount, phosphorus nourishes plants, which in turn feed fish like this sunfish.

Too much phosphorus alters the natural balance. Algae and duckweed grow in excess at the Skokie Lagoons and can be seen as lighter patches located near the shoreline.

See page eleven for membership opportunities, or visit our website, www.chicagoriver.org for more information on getting involved.
Much has been written about the likely impact of the new administration in Washington, D.C., on environmental rules and regulations. Planned cutbacks to USEPA; the elimination of Great Lakes Recovery Initiative funds; and the lack of experience in and commitment to clean air, clean water, public lands, and the Endangered Species Act would be devastating and impact people and wildlife in every state of the union. Those of us who work on the frontline are preparing to resist and fight back.

We know that the Chicago River system has benefited greatly from the environmental movement that roared to life in the 1970s. Americans overwhelmingly questioned the toll development and industry was taking on our health and natural resources, and the resulting laws and regulations have had a profound effect. In fact, much of Friends’ success can be attributed to our ability to use these laws, goals, and aspirations. Key among them was the Clean Water Act which established a goal to eliminate pollution discharged into our rivers and lakes. It also gave the USEPA authority to implement pollution control programs, required all dischargers to obtain permits, provided funding for more sewage treatments plants, and set us on a path to clean up a legacy of industrial pollution.

As a result, the Chicago River and our region are better off. Every time it rains, the federal financial support we received to build the Tunnel and Reservoir Plan (TARP, aka Deep Tunnel) greatly reduces basement back-ups and the amount of sewage released into the river. We secured new water quality standards that protect people and wildlife by securing permit requirements for sewage effluent disinfection, reduced chemical releases, and increased dissolved oxygen levels—which aquatic life needs to breathe. We now have a phosphorus agreement (see page 1) that increases economic opportunity; healthy natural open space; and habitat for more than 70 species of fish, hundreds of species of birds, turtles, muskrats, beavers and many other creatures.

At Friends, we think it is essential to defend these critical advancements in environmental protection and support the people who implement them. We still have a long way to go and need leadership and support at all levels of government to win. So please tell everyone you know that you support clean air and water, wildlife, rivers and lakes and the people whose job it is to protect it all. We must all stand together.

*Margaret Frisbie*
Executive Director
April is Overflow Action Month

Friends has declared April 2017 to be Overflow Action Month, initiating a 30-day campaign to engage people in water conservation activities that help the Chicago River. Activities include taking the Overflow Action Day pledge, sharing tips for water conservation at home, and joining a virtual happy hour with water-friendly beverages.

“The Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago (MWRD) says that just 0.3” of rain can cause a combined sewer overflow that is harmful to people and wildlife,” said Margaret Frisbie, Friends’ executive director, “and stormwater pollution can be just as bad. Our goal with Overflow Action Days is to educate people about that impact and to teach them how they can help reduce the possibility. Overflow Action Days, like Ozone Action Days, are a great reminder that there is action you can take.”

Campaign partners include the MWRD, Shedd Aquarium, and the Chicago Center for Neighborhood Technology. Join the hundreds of people who have taken the Overflow Action Day pledge.

How to Get Involved
1. Take the Overflow Action Day Pledge
2. Sign up for Overflow Action Alerts
3. Follow the tips in “A Simple Guide to Water Conservation”


Student Experts Share Their River Knowledge

In February, students from across the city and suburbs gathered at Taft High School to share their knowledge, experiences, and enthusiasm for the river at the 20th annual Chicago River Student Congress. “The Congress is organized by Friends of the Chicago River,” explained Friends’ ecology outreach manager Mark Hauser, “but the content is researched, developed, and presented by students.”

The students leading the workshops are extremely knowledgeable and “represent the bow of a ship cutting through the water,” according to Hauser. “They are the next generation of leaders and will be solving problems regarding water quality that we haven’t even recognized yet.”

A major highlight of this year’s event was a gathering of teachers honored by Friends’ Educator of the Year award, which has been awarded every year since 1997. The current honoree, Darrin Collins from Kenwood Academy High School shared the stage with nine past winners.

Friends is grateful for all of our special partners and volunteers. This year we collaborated with the Forest Preserves of Cook County, the Brookfield Zoo, the Chicago Park District, Northeastern Illinois University and the Metropolitan Water Reclamation District (MWRD), all of whom taught a workshop or featured an educational display. We were especially pleased to have MWRD Commissioners Marty Durkin and Josina Morita in attendance.

Congress attendees also had the chance to observe and enjoy three birds of prey that rely on the river: a barred owl (pictured), a horned owl, and a Swainson’s hawk. Observing these magnificent birds up-close is one more way for students to connect with the river and the life it supports.
Urban Swimming, Coming to a River Near You

On March 9, 2017, Friends united water quality experts, policy advocates, and urban swimming champions to explore the possibility of swimming in the Chicago River system. Hosted by MillerCoors, the Chicago River Summit featured David Barra (New York Open Water), Jessica Dexter (Environmental Law & Policy Center), Willie Levenson (Human Access Project), David St. Pierre (Metropolitan Water Reclamation District of Greater Chicago), and John Quail (Friends of the Chicago River).

Entitled “Swimming the Distance: How Do We Get from Here to There?” the sold-out event welcomed over 100 attendees running the gamut from local environmental organizations to engineering and design firms and governmental agencies, including several elected officials. Speakers offered an inspiring and optimistic vision about the future of urban swimming and water recreation, as well as insight into challenges and legal precedents.

As Dexter pointed out, 1972’s Clean Water Act established the “fishable and swimmable” goal, requiring not only clean habitat for wildlife, but also human recreation (including swimming) by 1983. Forty-five years later, hurdles and resistance remain. But, as our speakers from other cities illuminated, urban swimming in rivers just like ours is going strong. Barra regularly leads organized swim events in the Hudson River in New York City, while Levenson organizes “The Big Float,” a gathering of river enthusiasts in inner tubes on the Willamette River, with the goal of challenging the public perception that the river isn’t safe for them.

“The psychological battle is just as important as the scientific battle,” Levenson explained.

Litter Free Launch on Earth Day

To improve the river’s appearance and make it healthier for wildlife, Friends’ Litter Free North Shore Channel campaign kicks off on April 22, with our volunteer canoe guides clearing litter from the river in places that are inaccessible by foot.

So far the City of Evanston, Loyola University, Evanston Township High School, Evanston Treekeepers, and the Evanston Ecology Center have signed on. Loyola is studying trash in local waterways and their preliminary results show that all 73 species of minnows in Lake Michigan tributaries studied had plastics in their stomachs. The effects of plastics on fish are still unknown, but this data shows us the extent of plastic waste and its close relationship to fish.

A Possibilities Panel (pictured above) discussed the various factors affecting swimming in the Chicago Area Water System including the pronounced cultural barrier. Yet, as Wilson noted, the very idea of swimming has “turned from an ‘if’ to a ‘how-and-now’ conversation.”

The summit’s impact reverberated well into the next week, when the Mayoral Forum on Urban Waterways addressed the gains in water quality and recreational access. “Those times where the dead fish just rolled in are over,” Mayor Rahm Emanuel told the Chicago Sun-Times, adding that “…we’re even having a discussion about swimming in a river that used to be dying and has now been reborn.”
What’s Up with the North Shore Channel?

The eight mile long North Shore Channel was recently described as one of the best opportunities for new fish habitat in the lower part of the Chicago River system by Steve Pescitelli, IDNR stream biologist. Over the past few years Friends has been working on plans to improve it for fish and other wildlife.

In 2014 and 2015 Friends installed 250 channel catfish nesting cavities in this stretch of the river. This complemented the release of tens of thousands of channel catfish at the same location. In 2016 Friends and IDNR released 8,000 northern pike there as well. Now in 2017 Friends will start two new programs involving the North Shore Channel. The first, to increase biodiversity and add more fish habitat by planting water-willow and lizard’s tail, both native aquatic plants; and the other to make the channel litter free. On deck is reconnecting the upper north branch through modification of the dam at River Park, which we have been working on for years.

In other regions, agriculture is the largest source of phosphorus pollution, but in the greater Chicago metropolitan area, it’s the sewage treatment plants. The plants concentrate phosphorus from various sources across the watershed. Any nutrients that are not removed at the treatment plant are discharged into the river.

In 2015, the MWRD began removing phosphorus from Stickney, their largest treatment plant. It is now sold as Ostara, an environmentally-friendly fertilizer. With the new agreement, the MWRD will install nutrient control technology at all of their wastewater plants by 2030. In addition, the MWRD will work with the Illinois EPA, Friends, and our partners to complete a study to determine the feasibility of a tenfold reduction in the MWRD’s phosphorus discharge limit, in line with more stringent limits set elsewhere in the country that meet the needs of fish and other aquatic life.

“This settlement is the natural next step in advancing the health of the Chicago River system and essential to the impacted water bodies downstream,” said Margaret Frisbie, Friends’ executive director. “In recent years the river has improved dramatically. If we reduce the amount of phosphorus in the river, we will be taking an additional step to protect our fish and other aquatic life. All this, while making the river system more appealing to the people who live, work, and recreate in, on, and along it.”

...Story continued from page 1

the Gulf of Mexico which is the size of Connecticut and causing great harm to fish, dolphins, turtles, birds, and other sea life.

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You are Invited to Friends of the Chicago River’s

25th Annual
Chicago River Day

Saturday, May 13, 2017
9 a.m. to 12 noon

25th Anniversary Highlights:

• 2,000 volunteers clearing 20 tons of trash at over 60 geographically diverse sites.

• Litter-clearing canoes along the North Shore Channel, kicking off Friends’ Litter Free campaign.

• Gullyfixing restoration activities at the Cook County Forest Preserves. #GotGullies

• Ticket give-aways for musician Jack Johnson’s summer concert. #AllAtOnce

• #ShareYourRiverStory on social media. Tell us what Chicago River Day means to you.

Join the annual tradition to restore and improve the Chicago River by registering for our biggest community-wide clean-up event of the year. Please contact Maggie Jones at (312) 939-0490, ext. 18, with any questions.

Friends wants to thank our sponsors for making Chicago River Day 2017 possible.

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Eastern massasauga rattlesnake
Sistrurus catenatus

Illustration by Jen Pagnini, www.spinystudio.com
When Friends organized the first Chicago River “Rescue” Day in 1992, the river was sorely neglected. That year, 25 dedicated volunteers worked a single site and cleared one ton of garbage. Since then, the river has evolved into a vibrant resource supporting wildlife, recreationists, and, in the years to come, even urban swimming. We owe this success to all of you—our knowledgeable site captains, generous sponsors, enthusiastic partners, motivated volunteers, and tireless advocates. As we look back on a quarter century of meaningful action and ahead to a slate of anniversary festivities, we’re honored to share this Chicago River Day retrospective with you.

Friends’ former executive director, Laurene von Klan, transformed Chicago River Day into an annual affair and recalls the “desire for a real event that would stitch together different parts of the watershed,” as “people didn’t really think of the Chicago River as a complete system. We wanted something hands-on that allowed people to get down to the river to do something and see how amazing it was.” Citing Chicago’s roots in volunteer ecological restoration, she describes the desire to connect with this movement of “nature healing itself with the hands of people.”

Since 1980, John and Jane Balaban have served as volunteer stewards for the Forest Preserves of Cook County. On River Day, John usually lends a hand at Harms Woods near Glenview, along with fellow retired teacher Frank Bellucci. This 250-acre site blooms with spring wildflowers, which flourish due to the Balabans’ leadership of habitat restoration efforts. John shares our commitment to improving the river “for flora and fauna and people, while at the same time caring about, educating, and supporting the efforts of our youth, encouraging them to be better caretakers of our environment.”

In the Calumet region, site steward Mary DeBacker shares this calling to educate others. She first got involved with River Day in the late 1990s and currently leads restoration work at Whistler Woods with co-steward Ron Rodriguez. Surrounded by industry, this unique oak savannah is one more example of the river system’s diversity. DeBacker was drawn there after spotting a deer along the Major Taylor Trail. By working with the Centennial Volunteers, she realized the area needed help and decided, “This is where I can make a difference.” DeBacker enthused, “[River Day] is really valuable… a way to introduce children to nature. Lots of kids wouldn’t learn it otherwise.”

Chicago River Day 2017 Honorary Committee

Gregg Goslin
Cook County Commissioner, 14th District

Josina Morita
Commissioner, MWRD

Mike Quigley
Congressman, 5th Congressional District of Illinois

Brendan Reilly
42nd Ward Alderman
City of Chicago

Nancy Rotering
Mayor, City of Highland Park

Susan Sadlowski-Garza
10th Ward Alderwoman
City of Chicago

Donald Schoenheider
Mayor, City of Lake Forest

Debra Shore
Commissioner, MWRD

Mike Warner
Executive Director, Lake County Stormwater Management Commission

“The Wrigley Company has been a sponsor of Chicago River Day for over 10 years and it’s been incredible to experience the change and growth of River Day. Over the years, we’ve planted native gardens, built fish habitats, bird houses and bat houses, created seed balls and bagged more litter than we thought possible. Every year it’s been a little different, fun and educational.”

– Anne Vela-Wagner, Manager, Wrigley Company Foundation & Corporate Citizenship, Global Corporate Affairs
Many hard-working people are out in the Chicago River watershed removing invasive species and planting native ones. Our volunteers, including Centennial Volunteers and gully fixers, do this to increase biodiversity among our native plant communities. This, in turn, will improve water quality and provide better wildlife habitat.

How do we know if these programs are successful?

To find out, Friends surveyed 16 sites along the Chicago River within the Forest Preserves of Cook County and Chicago Park District in 2016. A Floristic Quality Assessment (FQA) was used to determine the quality of the plant communities present at each site. Data collected in 2016 will serve as a management and evaluation tool as restoration efforts proceed during 2017.

Quite simply, an FQA is a vegetation-based tool for measuring an area’s ecological quality. It is based on the Coefficient of Conservatism (C), which is a numerical rating (0 – 10). Plants with narrow habitat requirements and/or little tolerance to disturbance have high C-values. All non-natives automatically get a “0.”

You can get a rough idea of the quality of a site by averaging the C-values of all plants present (Mean C). If you divide Mean C by the square root of the number of native plants, you get a Floristic Quality Index (FQI). The FQI is a good measure of the “naturalness” of an area, which is great for measuring the benefits of restoration activities at a specific location or among various sites.

Restoration activities have commenced at each of the 16 sites. Most have involved non-native species removal, seed dispersal, and erosion control. If possible, sites were surveyed where future restoration efforts would take place in 2017.

Some sites are clearly healthier than others (i.e. a higher Mean C or FQI). All sites would benefit from the removal of invasive species. Even LaBagh, Ronan, and Edgebrook (all greater than 70% native), could still be improved. The three highest quality sites were Watersmeet, Somme, and Chipilly, with an FQI ≥21; while the poorest quality site was East River Park, with an FQI ≤9.

If we chart FQI vs. % Native Cover on a scatter plot and divide it into quadrants, some interesting observations can be made. Sites in the upper right can be seen as the most native and highest quality.

Those in the left half are in need of non-native species removal. FQI Those in the lower half are in need of native species planting. Those in the lower left are of the poorest quality and need both.

Despite restoration and the removal of buckthorn, there is little diversity at Ronan Park. Only 20 total species were found on site, and eight of those were non-native. Nine of 12 native species had C ≤4.

During sampling much of the Skokie Lagoons site was either non-native (43%) or bare soil (32%). The high FQI score is due to a surprising diversity at the top of the quality scale. Seven of the 11 native species had C ≥7.
The 2017 Chicago River Day T-shirt mascot is the eastern massasauga rattlesnake. In this small way, we honor this elusive creature which has been extirpated from our local landscape but shouldn’t have been. Often maligned, snakes are just doing their best to survive in a world of habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, and persecution by humans. Most are harmless and many are even highly beneficial to mankind. There are a few poisonous species of snakes—four within Illinois—but encountering one in Chicago is highly unlikely.

The eastern massasauga rattlesnake, one of our state’s few poisonous snakes, is known as the “swamp rattler.” Though its venom is highly toxic, this snake is very timid and more likely to slither away than bite. In the United States, less than three people have been bitten annually, and no one has died from a massasauga bite in over 40 years.

While poisonous snakes have venomous fangs, they are not out to get you. Their venom makes it easier to catch food and defend themselves if attacked—two things that all living creatures want and need.

The massasauga grows to about two feet in length and prefers wet prairies, marshes and lowland areas near rivers. These snakes were once found in and along the Chicago River, but have long since been driven out. As wetlands are drained for urban development, their habitat is greatly reduced and fragmented. To encounter one these days, you would need to travel 300 miles south of Chicago, where the last wild population exists in Illinois, or visit the Lincoln Park Zoo—which has two.

In 2016, the eastern massasauga was elevated to threatened species level under the federal Endangered Species Act and the population plummeted by 40%, proving that it has much more to fear from us than we do from it.
From membership to River Action Days to the rental of the McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum, your contribution supports the Chicago River system. Friends is grateful for your generous support. Thank you to all those listed below who made contributions of $250 and above from November 19, 2016, to March 13, 2017.

**THE OTTER SOCIETY**
The Otter Society is Friends’ giving society and recognizes individuals, businesses, and foundations that contribute $1,500 annually to the General Operating Fund of the Voice for the River Endowment. Chicago River Legacy members, who are thoughtfully providing for friends in their estate plans, are also recognized as Otter Society members.

Anonymous
Mike Alber
Ken Arenoeg and Susanne Swisher
Cinda Axley
Judith Bassoul
Kent Brown and Jane Jacobsen-Brown
Craig and Kate Coit
Entertainment Cruises
Sally Fletcher
Flood Brothers Disposal
Ginny and Peter Foreman
Margaret Frisbie
Larry and Denise Kaplan
Stephen and Lydia Kelley
Lakeshore Foundation, Inc.
Jonathan Lehman and Zachary Huelsing
Dave Loew
Louis and Nellie Sieg Fund
David Wong
The Wrigley Building

**Chicaggo River Legacy Society**
Kent Brown and Jane Jacobsen-Brown
Sally Fletcher
Margaret Frisbie
David Wong

**Voice for the River Endowment**
Ken Arenoeg and Susanne Swisher
Kent Brown and Jane Jacobsen-Brown
David Wong and We-Sinn Chan

**INDIVIDUALS**

- $5,000 and above
- Anonymous
- Judith Bassoul
- The Crown Family
- $3,500-$4,999
- Sally Fletcher
- The Fletcher Family
- Thomas and Barbara Horn
- Daniel Kilduff and Ellen Fryda
- Daniel Loeweinstein
- Richard Wilson
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- Anonymous
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- Ken Arenoeg and Susanne Swisher
- Cinda Axley
- Kent Brown and Jane Jacobsen-Brown
- Marjorie Brownstein
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- Victor and Barbara Zaveduk
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- Suelen Burns and Weston Morris
- John and Toni Burt
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- Laurene von Klar and Sarah Kilpatrick
- Jeff Wasil
- **ESTATE GIFTS**
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- Friends of the Forest Preserve - Centennial Volunteers
- Gaylord and Dorothy Donnely Foundation
- Grand Victoria Foundation
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
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- Alphawood Foundation
- The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
- $10,000-$24,999
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- Adrian Smith + Gordon Gill Architecture
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- Chicago Electric Boat Company
- Chicago Park District
- Dr. Scholl Foundation
- Executive Construction
- Leo Burnett
- Ogden Avenue Materials
- Wight & Company
- William Blair
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- Cynthia Weglarz Rountree Fund
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- Chicago Electric Boat Company
- Chicago Electric Boat Company/ Chicago Duffy
- Chicago Pizza Tours
- Chicago White Sox
- Chicago's First Lady Cruises
- ComedySportz
- Crain's Chicago Business
- The Field Museum
- Goodman Theatre
- Hotel Boulderado
- The IO Theater
- Jeffrey Ballet
- KOVAL Distillery
- Lettuce Entertain You Enterprises, Inc.
- Lookingglass Theatre Company
- Mercury, Chicago's Skyline Cruiseline
- Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
- The Radler
- Rishi Tea
- Shedd Aquarium
- Southwest Airlines Co.
- Theater Wit

**Friends of the Chicago River** is a proud member of

**EarthShare Illinois**
Spring / Summer Calendar of Events

25th Anniversary of Chicago River Day
Saturday, May 13, 9 a.m. to 12 noon
Roll up your sleeves and celebrate at the 25th anniversary of Chicago River Day. You can register now at www.chicagoriver.org/chicago-river-day. More information can be found on pages 6 and 7.

Bridgehouse Museum Opens for the Season
Saturday, May 13, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Paddle with Us
Spring means canoe season, and we want you on our team! Canoe trips available for all ages and skill levels. Check out our website or email Claire Snyder for more information at csnyder@chicagoriver.org.

Big Fish Ball
Tuesday, June 13, 5:30 to 10 p.m.
Get hooked on our annual fundraising gala celebrating the Chicago River. The evening includes a ceremony honoring the winners of Friends’ annual awards for excellence in river-sensitive design and development, the Chicago River Blue Awards. Contact Kim Olsen-Clark at (312) 939-0490, ext. 19, or kolsenclark@chicagoriver.org to reserve tickets or a table. Visit www.chicagoriver.org/big-fish-ball for details.

Bridgehouse Museum Boat Cruise
Wednesday, June 28, 6 to 8 p.m.
Cruise the north branch of the Chicago River and enjoy exciting musical interludes in the Goose Island basin. Join us as we celebrate the future vision of the Chicago River. This event benefits Friends of the Chicago River’s McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum. Board at Wendella Dock near Trump Tower; $85 for individual tickets, $150 for a pair. Contact Joanne So Young Dill to reserve tickets (312) 939-0490, ext. 23, or jdill@chicagoriver.org.

By becoming a member, you are making a strong statement that you want a healthier river for people, plants, and animals. We encourage you to participate in our many activities and to invite others to join. Gift memberships are also available.

- $1,500+ The Otter Society - $100 Blanding’s Turtle / Business
- $1,000 Wild Mink - $75 Tiger Salamander / Family
- $500 Great Horned Owl - $35 Chorus Frog / Individual
- $250 Yellow-headed Blackbird - $10 Prairie Dropseed / Volunteer, Teacher, or Student
- $156 Black-crowned Night Heron - $75 Tiger Salamander / Family
- $600 Bridgehouse - $125 Juvenile River Otter
- $1,000 Wild Mink - $250 Blanding’s Turtle
- $1,500+ The Otter Society - $100 Blanding’s Turtle / Business
- $1,000 Wild Mink - $75 Tiger Salamander / Family
- $500 Great Horned Owl - $35 Chorus Frog / Individual
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- $156 Black-crowned Night Heron - $75 Tiger Salamander / Family
- $600 Bridgehouse - $125 Juvenile River Otter
- $1,000 Wild Mink - $250 Blanding’s Turtle

Many employers will match your membership and annual donations. Contact your employer’s Human Resources department today to find out if they have a matching gift program.

Company (if applicable)

For recognition purposes, please list my name or company as ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip _________________________________________________________________________

Preferred phone _____________________________ Email _____________________________________

Cardholder’s name and billing address (if different than above) ______________________________

Exp. Date _____________________________ Security code _______________________

Card # ____________________________________________________________________________

I/we wish to only make a donation at this time.

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Company (if applicable)

For recognition purposes, please list my name or company as ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________________________

City, State, Zip _________________________________________________________________________

Preferred phone _____________________________ Email _____________________________________

Cardholder’s name and billing address (if different than above) ______________________________

Exp. Date _____________________________ Security code _______________________

Card # ____________________________________________________________________________

I/we wish to only make a donation at this time.

Your generous support directly impacts Friends’ efforts to improve the Chicago River’s health and vitality in three important ways: education and outreach; on-the-ground programs; and public policy and planning.

Members at the $35 level and above receive:

- Free general admission plus discounts on bridge lift, four tickets, and merchandise at our McCormick Bridgehouse & Chicago River Museum,
- Discounts on our canoe trips,
- A subscription to The River Reporter newsletter,
- Volunteer bulletins, email alerts, and other opportunities for hands-on involvement,
- Invitations to special events such as Chicago River Day, Big Fish Ball, and Summer Cruise, and
- Listing in Friends’ Annual Report.

Business members of $100 and above, as well as individual/household members of $250 and above, receive additional benefits.

Otter Society members represent Friends’ most important philanthropic partnership. In appreciation of their generous support, they enjoy unique benefits at three levels of giving. To learn more about how you can participate as an individual, household, or business, please contact kolsenclark@chicagoriver.org or call (312) 939-0490, ext. 19.

Interested in joining our monthly giving club? Support Friends year-round through automatic monthly contributions as small as $10 per month. Contact membership at friends@chicagoriver.org or call (312) 939-0490, ext. 10.

Friends of the Chicago River is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. Please send this form and payment to: Friends of the Chicago River at 411 South Wells Street, Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60607, or join online at www.chicagoriver.org/get-involved/membership.
New Ways to Befriend the River

Help us evaluate restored habitat for ospreys, bats, and turtles as a Volunteer Wildlife Monitor. No experience necessary!

The next two training sessions are April 27 or 29. RSVP is required. Please email mhauser@chicagoriver.org to register or for more details.

Be a big fish at Friends’ annual gala, The Big Fish Ball, on Tuesday, June 13, at the Westin Chicago River North.

With cocktails on the river, tasty food, wild guests and river cruise after party, the Big Fish Ball stands out as a lot of fun.

Visit www.chicagoriver.org/big-fish-ball for details.