

Chicago Wilderness

Resources

Publications

Available at <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/resources.php>



The Atlas of Biodiversity: From the Ice Age to our present Chicago Wilderness, this book tells the tale of how geologic forces and humans have shaped our region's rare and diverse landscape.



The Biodiversity Recovery Plan: An ambitious blueprint for saving and restoring the rare natural communities of the Chicago region. Developed over more than three years by hundreds of people — scientists, land managers, conservation advocates, planners, and caring citizens — the *Recovery Plan* outlines the steps necessary to achieve the mission of Chicago Wilderness.



Chicago Wilderness Climate Action Plan for Nature: The Climate Action Plan for Nature is the first plan to address issues of biodiversity conservation and climate change at a regional scale.

Statements of Best Practices

Available at: www.cwmemberhub.org/tools-resources

- ◆ Position Statement: White-Tailed Deer Management
- ◆ Model Policy: Conservation of Wooded Lands in the Chicago Wilderness Region
- ◆ Model Policy: Natural Fire and Controlled Burning in the Chicago Wilderness Region
- ◆ Position Statement on Feral and Unattended Domestic Cats Outdoors

Green Infrastructure and Sustainability Resources

Chicago Wilderness Green Infrastructure Vision (GIV)

The GIV identifies 1.8 million acres of prospective protection and restoration areas in the Chicago Wilderness region — spanning from southeast Wisconsin, through northeast Illinois into northwest Indiana and southwest Michigan.

<http://www.chicagowilderness.org/GIV.php>

The Ecological Planning and Design Directory: Resources for Developers, Local Officials and Stakeholders

A wealth of tools and techniques for achieving sustainable development that is both environmentally sensitive and cost-effective. The Directory presents a set of best practices that individuals, businesses, governments, and other organizations can implement to the benefit of their communities.

http://www.chicagowilderness.org/sustainable/directory_documents.php

Connecting Children and Nature



Enjoying Chicago Wilderness with Your Family: An Activity Guide

The Family Activity Guide is intended offers 24 kid-tested activities for families to enjoy in their yards or in nearby nature throughout the year. Available at

<http://www.chicagowilderness.org/resources/activity-guide/>



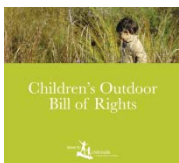
Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

The Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights communicates at one glance the vision of the Chicago Wilderness Leave No Child Inside initiative.

[http://www.chicagowilderness.org/files/4513/3035/6957/Childrens Outdoor Bill of Rights.pdf](http://www.chicagowilderness.org/files/4513/3035/6957/Childrens_Outdoor_Bill_of_Rights.pdf)

An accompanying piece is the 20 Ideas for Fun and Easy Family Activities, available at

http://www.chicagowilderness.org/files/6713/3027/2151/activity_suggestions.pdf



Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights: Benefits of Children's Access to the Outdoors

This small booklet summarizes the science and peer-reviewed studies behind each of the items in the Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights. Perfect for communicating the research behind the Leave No Child Inside initiative!

View the PDF at

[http://www.chicagowilderness.org/files/6713/3035/6955/Benefits of Access to Outdoors.pdf](http://www.chicagowilderness.org/files/6713/3035/6955/Benefits_of_Access_to_Outdoors.pdf)



People: Nurture & Nature

Childhood has changed. This report examines the importance of our connection to nature from a young age - for the health of our children, and the health of local nature. View the PDF of People: Nurture & Nature. View the PDF at http://www.chicagowilderness.org/index.php/download_file/view/435/92/

Citizen Scientists and Volunteer Opportunities

Chicago Wilderness members offer a variety of opportunities for residents to train to become 'citizen scientists' and help monitor species, or to simply volunteer time at restoration work days. Descriptions of these opportunities are available at <http://www.chicagowilderness.org/what-you-can-do/volunteer/>



NEXT CENTURY CONSERVATION PLAN

for the Forest Preserves of Cook County

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our Preserves, Our Future

One hundred years ago, civic leaders had the foresight to leave us an extraordinary gift—the Forest Preserves of Cook County. Today, as we face the challenges of urban sprawl and climate change, we need our preserves more than ever.

Healthy natural land invites children and adults to discover nature and enjoy outdoor recreation. It reduces flooding, naturally cleans our air and water, increases adjacent property values and creates opportunities for investment.

But decades of neglect have allowed our diverse woodlands and grasslands to lose their wildflowers and become impenetrable thorn thickets. Eroding mud silts our streams, ponds and wetlands. Native plants and animals are threatened, community economic benefits are declining and people are losing endless opportunities to learn, explore and have fun.

It's time for a renewed vision. In the 20th century, we preserved the land. In the 21st, we must restore our preserves to health.

OUR VISION

The people of Cook County will celebrate and nurture our thriving woodlands, prairies and waters as world-class treasures that sustain our great metropolis.

OUR GOALS & PRIORITIES



GOAL 1 / NATURE

Native landscapes will thrive for generations.

- Invest in restoration and stewardship.
- Mobilize people to heal and nurture the land.
- Connect the preserves to a wider wilderness.
- Learn from and adapt to a changing environment.



GOAL 2 / PEOPLE

Everyone in Cook County will feel welcome at the forest preserves—and will seek them out for discovery, renewal and fun.

- Invite, excite and engage diverse visitors from all walks of life.
- Make the preserves accessible to all.
- Educate visitors and the community about the forest preserves' natural treasures.
- Provide programs in the preserves that emphasize health benefits.



GOAL 3 / ECONOMY

Communities will value the economic benefits of protected lands.

- Build the economic case for nature.
- Encourage nature-compatible business development.
- Market the forest preserves as an iconic element of metropolitan Chicago.



GOAL 4 / LEADERSHIP

Visionary conservation leaders will safeguard, expand and bring increased resources to the Forest Preserves.

- Manage with excellence, transparency and sound financial practice.
- Provide enduring, focused conservation leadership and increased accountability.
- Maximize public and private resources and use them wisely to achieve the vision for future growth and restoration.

Benefits of implementing the Next Century Conservation Plan:



- A healthy, beautiful and safe natural environment where diverse plants and animals thrive
- Reduced flooding
- Cleaner air and water
- Opportunities for nature-related businesses, jobs and tourism
- Economic gains from increased property values
- People who are healthier thanks to outdoor exercise
- Educational enrichment for children and research opportunities for scientists
- Enhanced quality of life for everyone in Cook County

What will it take?



This Plan calls for transforming the forest preserves to places that foster diversity of plants, animals and habitats and welcome diverse people. It will require expert conservation leadership and a major infusion of new resources to:

- Restore 30,000 acres to good ecological health.
- Expand the preserves to 90,000 acres (from 69,000 today).
- Dramatically increase the number of volunteer stewards.
- Create a permanent conservation corps to train a restoration workforce.
- Make the preserves inviting and accessible to everyone.

What does success look like?



In 25 years, the people of Cook County will celebrate thousands of acres of healthy woodlands, wetlands and prairies, filled with thriving native trees, grasses, flowers, birds and other animals. Millions of children and adults who reflect the diversity of Cook County will enjoy hiking, biking, bird watching, walking, camping, fishing and otherwise discovering nature.

The Board of Commissioners will have the continued support and advice of conservation experts to advance restoration of the thriving preserves. And people from throughout the region will champion the preserves as a source of beauty, inspiration, economic vitality and health.

THE NEXT CENTURY CONSERVATION PLAN COMMISSION

appointed by Forest Preserves Board President Toni Preckwinkle

CO-CHAIRS

JOHN MCCARTER, President Emeritus, Field Museum
WENDY PAULSON, Board Member, Openlands
ARTHUR R. VELASQUEZ, Chairman, Azteca Foods
ERIC E. WHITAKER, M.D., CEO, TWG Partners, LLC

COMMISSION MEMBERS

LEE BEY, Former Executive Director, Chicago Central Area Committee
KATHLEEN BROWN, Former Chairman of Investment Banking for the Midwest Region, Goldman Sachs & Co.
FRANK M. CLARK III, Founder and Managing Partner, Clark Enterprises Group, LLC
JAMES GAY, Ed.D., Superintendent, Consolidated High School District 230
JOSEPH A. GREGOIRE, Former State Chairman for Illinois Banking, PNC Bank
TERRY GUEN, FASLA, Principal Landscape Architect, Terry Guen Design Associates, Inc.
LORI HEALEY, CEO, Tur Partners, LLC
TROY HENIKOFF, Managing Director, TechStars Chicago
SYLVIA M. JENKINS, Ph.D., President, Moraine Valley Community College
LUIS P. NIETO, President, Nieto Advisory, LLC
LISA THORNTON, M.D., Medical Director of Pediatric and Adolescent Rehabilitation, Schwab Rehabilitation Hospital and LaRabida Children's Hospital
DON A. TURNER, President Emeritus, Chicago Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO

EX OFFICIO MEMBERS

ARNOLD RANDALL, General Superintendent, Forest Preserves of Cook County
SOPHIA SISKEL, President and CEO, Chicago Botanic Garden
STUART D. STRAHL, Ph.D., President and CEO, Chicago Zoological Society

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FOREST PRESERVES OF COOK COUNTY
PNC
THE RICHARD H. DRIEHAUS FOUNDATION

SENIOR ADVISORS

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MARY A. LARAIA, Deputy Superintendent, Forest Preserves of Cook County
GEORGE RANNEY, President and CEO, Metropolis Strategies
VICTORIA RANNEY, Chairman, Liberty Prairie Foundation

Metropolis Strategies and Openlands provided staff leadership with direction from:

EMILY HARRIS, Vice President, Metropolis Strategies
LENORE BEYER-CLOW, Policy Director, Openlands
CATHY GERAGHTY, Director of Strategic Initiatives, Forest Preserves of Cook County

ADVISORS GROUP

Openlands and Metropolis Strategies convened the following expert advisors to provide guidance for the Plan:

STEVEN BYERS, Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
LOUISE CLEMENCY, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chicago Office
BENJAMIN COX, Friends of the Forest Preserves
JACK DARIN, Sierra Club-Illinois Chapter
MARGARET FRISBIE, Friends of the Chicago River
BROOKE HECHT, Ph.D., Center for Humans and Nature
DEBORAH LAHEY, The Chicago Academy of Sciences and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
STACY MEYERS, Openlands
STEPHEN PACKARD, National Audubon Society, Audubon-Chicago Region
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