2020 CHICAGO WILDERNESS CONGRESS

Building Advocacy Networks to Support Your Cause, Big or Small
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Openlands

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Associate Director of Government Relations,  
The Nature Conservancy – Illinois

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Communications Director,  
Illinois Environmental Council

Sean Ruane  
Executive Director  
Advocates for Urban Agriculture
Advocacy Works!

- **Federal**: Land & Water Conservation Fund
- **Illinois**: Clean Energy Jobs Act
- **Chicago**: Urban Forestry Advisory Board
- Many, many more
Survey Question 1: What experience do you have with advocacy? (Choose one)

None: I don’t publicly speak my mind on much.
A little: I share media posts and talk with friends & family
Some: I fill out petitions and online appeals.
A lot: I am always active online and organize friends & neighbors around my causes.
Pro: I do this for a living.

Survey Question 2: What have you done to advocate for a cause? (Choose all that apply)

- Nothing
- Signed a petition
- Written or called elected officials or public agencies
- In-person lobbied elected officials or agency staff
- Protested in-person
- Organized groups of people or organizations
Ashley Maybanks
Associate Director of Government Relations

Email: amaybanks@tnc.org
More voters consider themselves a conservationist than label themselves an environmentalist.

Would you consider yourself an...

- Environmentalist: 48%
- Conservationist: 63%

Total Yes
We see identification with the environmental community waning over the last 14 years.
But there has been a marked increase in the view that various conservation issues are very serious problems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pollution of rivers, lakes, and streams</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kids not spending enough time outdoors and in nature</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Warming</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of habitat for fish and wildlife</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poorly planned growth and development</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More storms and extreme weather</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Almost two-thirds of all voters want their Member of Congress to do more when it comes to conservation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>All Voters</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Needs to do more to help conserve land, water, and wildlife habitat</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is doing enough to help conserve land, water, and wildlife habitat</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has done too much to conserve land, water, and wildlife habitat</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Advocacy Tools:
- Site Tours
- Office Visits
- Advocacy Days
Communication Tools

- Polling Data
- Factsheets
- Digital Media
Partnerships and Coalitions
Survey Question 3: What are the biggest barriers or hardest things about advocacy for you, your organization, or your company? (Choose all that apply)

- Connecting with elected officials/Access to D.C., Springfield, City Hall(s)
- Staff capacity &/or expertise
- Financial constraints
- Concerns about lobbying rules and legal requirements
- Knowledge about the political process
- Other/Share in chat

Survey Question 4: Which area of communications have you, your organization, or your company struggled most to adapt since the COVID-19 pandemic changed the way we gather and communicate? (Select One)

- email program
- social media
- online fundraising
- event promotion and turnout
- virtual event planning and logistics
- traditional press outreach and coverage
- driving targeted actions and/or petitions
Digital Tools for Long-term Sustainability

Tucker Barry | Communications Director
Illinois Environmental Council
About IEC

IEC works to safeguard Illinois—its people, its plants and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends.

Since our founding in 1975 by a group of dedicated grassroots environmentalists, IEC has led issue advocacy campaigns by allowing environmental organizations to pool their resources and create a higher profile for environmental issues.

Today, IEC represents over 100 environmental and community organizations and nearly 400 individual members from throughout Illinois!

Become member of IEC at ilenviro.org/donate!
Our Vision & Mission

An Illinois where informed decision makers successfully champion the environment.

- Maximize environmental protection
- Hold decision makers accountable for their votes
- Ensure favorable legislative and rulemaking decisions

*We advance public policies that create healthy environments across Illinois.*
COVID-19: Now is the time to up your digital advocacy game.
Tools to help you work smarter, not harder.

- What can a digital advocacy tool like Salsa help you do?
  - Email program management
  - Action pages: direct messages and petitions to all levels of government, even custom targets
  - Ticketed event info and registration
  - Fundraising pages and forms
  - Social Media (Facebook and Twitter)
  - Texting programs: Peer to peer and Broadcast

- It’s 2020. Mobile optimization is required!
Tools to help you work smarter, not harder.

- Alternative options:
  - Salesforce
  - Phone 2 Action
  - Action Network
  - Google Forms & Sheets

- Priorities USA Digital Ads Training
Connect with us!

Tucker Barry
► tucker@ilenviro.org

ilenviro.org
► 
► 
► 
► 
► Sign up for our email list!
Our Mission

Advocates for Urban Agriculture (AUA) is a coalition of urban farms, community and school gardens, individuals and businesses working to support and expand sustainable agriculture in the Chicago region.

AUA’s mission is to empower urban growers to foster thriving communities through sustainable agriculture and equitable food systems.

Photo Credit: Ed Menacho
Advocacy

- Water Access for Farms and Gardens
- Zoning Policy
- Land Access for Urban Farms
- Livestock Ordinance
- Weed Ordinance
- Right to Garden

Photo Credit: Ed Menacho
Ward Ambassador Program

- Representation in every ward
- AUA provides quarterly trainings
- Connect ambassadors in the same ward
- Equip ambassadors with the skills/resources to build effective relationship with their Alder
  - Relationship building strategies
  - Talking points
  - Meeting materials
  - Follow up communications
Water Access

- Department of Water Management (DWM) made significant changes to Chicago’s water policy in February 2020
- Changes have kept growers from having access to water
- Mobilized our Ward Ambassadors on this issue – the City has now created an updated policy, making water more affordable and accessible for growers
Ward Ambassador Program

Work with AUA to ensure that Alder in every ward support policies that advance sustainable urban agriculture in Chicagoland.

To become a ward ambassador or learn more about the program, contact AUA’s Director of Programs, Viviana Gentry Fernandez Pellon, at viviana@auachicago.org

Photo Credit: Mark Busch
Survey Question 5:
Based on your experience, which of the following is the most effective communication strategy when engaging with government officials on policy issues? (Select One.)

• Be Kind (Complement them)
• Be Direct
• Know your facts
• Connect facts to stories
• Appeal to their self interest

Survey Question 6:
Are you interested in getting involved with our Ward Ambassador program? (Select one.)

▪ Yes
▪ No
▪ Maybe