



ANNUAL REPORT 2014

Chicago Wilderness



WHO WE ARE

Chicago Wilderness is a regional alliance of organizations working together to restore nature and improve the quality of life for all who live here, by protecting the lands and waters on which we all depend.

10 million people

545,000 acres of protected lands and waters

1.4 million additional acres that can potentially be connected, restored, or protected

318 organizations

4 initiatives

1 goal: A future in which people and nature live to one another's benefit, and a culture of sustainability prevails.

Chicago Wilderness takes action through four key initiatives:

Restoring Nature: Members of Chicago Wilderness restore the health of the region's natural areas and engage residents as stewards of our lands and waters.

Climate Action: We develop strategies to conserve land, water, and wildlife in the face of a changing climate.

Leave No Child Inside: We provide places and programs for generations of families to connect with nature.

Greening Infrastructure: We are creating a network of lands and waters that can be protected, restored, or connected to support the people and nature in our region for generations to come.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHICAGO WILDERNESS LEADERS

This past year was an exciting one for Chicago Wilderness. In 2013 we launched the Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program, a first-of-its-kind accreditation recognizing high-quality restoration sites and the organizations that manage them. Developed with the support of ArcelorMittal, the program uses rigorous, professional standards of excellence, based on the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan, to recognize best practices in natural resource management.

Last fall we brought together more than 275 conservation, corporate and civic leaders at a benefit to celebrate the first seven recipients of the Excellence in Ecological Restoration accreditation. At that event we also presented 12 organizations and their partners with the Chicago Wilderness Conservation and Native Landscaping Award, in recognition of their exemplary use of native landscaping, habitat protection, and conservation design.

During Leave No Child Inside Month, more than 70 Chicago Wilderness members presented exciting, diverse programs—from nature crafts, to canoeing, hikes, and stewardship work, engaging over 15,000 children and their families in outdoor play and exploration. Those numbers are telling; they demonstrate both the power—and as yet untapped full potential—of our collective action.

In addition, recognizing our continued role as a national model for collaborative conservation, members of Chicago Wilderness organized and hosted the highly successful 2013 Natural Areas Conference.

The 2014 biennial Congress was another great success, attracting more than 700 professionals, business leaders, volunteers, and students. The theme, “Natural Allies: Partners in Conservation,” spoke to our roots in collaborative conservation while emphasizing our continued need to expand and diversify our partnerships.

Operationally, we said farewell to Melinda Pruett-Jones, our Executive Director for the past seven and a half years. Melinda led us through an amazing period of growth; during her tenure Chicago Wilderness diversified and nearly doubled its membership; diversified its revenues; and expanded its influence. Under her leadership we developed the Climate Action Plan for Nature and launched the Leave No Child Inside initiative—our most effective public and partner engagement campaign to date. She also worked to establish the Metropolitan Greenspaces Alliance, a network of regional conservation coalitions leading the national dialogue on urban conservation. Melinda made tremendous contributions to our collaborative work, and we thank her for her outstanding service.

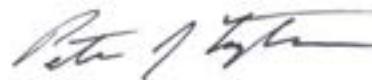
We are happy to have recruited Suzanne Malec-McKenna as the new Executive Director of Chicago Wilderness. Suzanne—who has been active as a member of Chicago Wilderness since its launch—brings 25 years of private industry, nonprofit and government experience to this new role. Suzanne is now working with Chicago Wilderness members to chart our future course, with an emphasis on demonstrating our alliance’s relevance to, and impact on, the quality of life for all who live in our region. That means there are exciting developments still ahead as we think collectively and creatively about our shared priorities and programs.

So stay tuned—and stay connected—as we broaden and deepen our efforts to ensure a thriving Chicago Wilderness for all.

Sincerely,



Arnold Randall
General Superintendent of the
Forest Preserves of Cook County
Chair, Chicago Wilderness



Peter J. Layton
CEO, Tallgrass Group, LLC
President of the Board,
Chicago Wilderness Trust

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Advancing Regional Conservation

Chicago Wilderness brings together representatives of more than 300 organizations to develop and implement regional conservation strategies. The members of Chicago Wilderness include conservation organizations, cultural and educational institutions, volunteer groups, local, state and federal agencies, municipalities, corporations, and faith-based groups. The alliance’s staff facilitates these groups’ collaborative conservation action.

The Chicago Wilderness Congress

The Chicago Wilderness Congress is the premiere venue for conservation professionals, the corporate community, volunteers, students, and others interested in conservation in our region to come together to share emerging knowledge and forge new partnerships. The 2014 Congress was a tremendous success:

BIENNIAL CONGRESS

Sessions	20
Total Participants	700+
Students	100

Key Initiatives

Our four key initiatives—to restore the health of local nature, to promote green infrastructure, to take climate action, and to leave no child inside—reflect our commitment to using science and emerging knowledge, a collaborative approach to conservation, and a caring for both people and nature, to benefit all the region’s residents. Our achievements in the last fiscal year include:

BURN TRAINING

197 professionals & volunteers trained through four classes.

SUSTAINABLE WATERSHED ACTION TEAM (SWAT)

100 community leaders & planners participated in three workshops to identify ways to protect their communities’ natural resources and promote sustainable growth.

CLIMATE CLINICS

434 natural resource managers, educators, and community members gathered in 14 climate clinics to identify strategies to reduce the impact of climate change on our region, and make our communities more resilient in the face of a changing climate.

LEAVE NO CHILD INSIDE

70 Chicago Wilderness members and partners engaged over 15,000 children and adults in outdoor exploration during Leave No Child Inside Month.

More than 700 people gathered in April 2014 for the biennial Chicago Wilderness Congress.

ADVANCING REGIONAL CONSERVATION

In 2013 we launched the Excellence in Ecological Restoration Program (EERP) to recognize high-quality restoration sites and the organizations that manage them. The EERP, which was developed with support from ArcelorMittal, accredits sites at four levels: Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze.

2013 EXCELLENCE IN ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ACCREDITATIONS

PLATINUM ACCREDITATION



Forest Preserve District of Will County
Braidwood Dunes and Savanna
Nature Preserve



Lake County Forest Preserves
Spring Bluff Forest Preserve



McHenry County Conservation District
Nippersink North Branch Conservation Area



The Nature Conservancy
Indian Boundary Prairies

ADVANCING REGIONAL CONSERVATION

2013 EXCELLENCE IN ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ACCREDITATIONS

GOLD ACCREDITATION



Chicago Botanic Garden
McDonald Woods



Forest Preserve District of Kane County
Dick Young Forest Preserve



Forest Preserves of Cook County
Powderhorn Marsh and Prairie Nature Preserve

CONSERVATION AND NATIVE LANDSCAPING

The Chicago Wilderness Conservation and Native Landscaping Awards recognize sites and organizations that demonstrate exemplary use of native landscaping, habitat protection, and/or conservation design to benefit both people and nature.

2013 CONSERVATION & NATIVE LANDSCAPING AWARDS

Advocate Sherman Hospital

Advocate Sherman Hospital Campus

Ball Horticultural Company

Corporate Campus Landscape

Chicago Botanic Garden

North Lake Shoreline Restoration Program

Chicago Park District

Bobolink Meadow

The Conservation Foundation

McDonald Farm Conservation Demonstration Projects

Forest Preserves of Cook County

Edgebrook Woods Demonstration Site

Forest Preserves of Cook County

Nate's Prairie/Savanna

Forest Preserves of Cook County

Theodore Stone Preserve

Lake Forest Country Day School

Lake Forest Country Day School Preserve

Lindenhurst Park District

John Janega Memorial Park

Midwin National Tallgrass Prairie

USDA Forest Service

South Patrol Road Wetland Restoration

Village of Glenview

Reach 1 River Naturalization



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

MAY 1, 2013 TO APRIL 30, 2014

Thanks go to the organizations, foundations, and individuals that supported the efforts of Chicago Wilderness and its members through financial contributions and in-kind support.

The Chicago Wilderness Alliance Revenues to the Chicago Wilderness Trust

Corporate Council Members	\$ 108,788
Non-Profit Members	\$ 74,655
Contributions	\$ 180,621
Corporate and Foundation Grants	\$ 332,513
Government Grants	\$ 496,286
Combined Revenue	\$1,192,863

Chicago Wilderness operates efficiently and leverages the capacity of our member organizations. This year, 84% of our expenses went directly into the collaborative projects and programs of the alliance.

How the Alliance Invested Its Revenue During the 2013-2014 Fiscal Year

4% Fundraising	\$ 36,583
12% Management & General	\$ 121,805
84% Programs	\$ 840,369
Total Expenses	\$ 998,757



DONORS

We are deeply grateful to the individuals and organizations that support the collaborative work of Chicago Wilderness.

Corporations, Foundations, Organizations and Government Agencies

Alliance for the Great Lakes
ArcelorMittal
Benedictine University*
Bobolink Foundation
Boeing Corporation
Chicago Area Combined Federal
Campaign
Chicago Botanic Garden*
Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo*
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Christy Webber Landscapes
Clarke
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ComEd
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Forest Preserve District of Kane County
Forest Preserves of Cook County
Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation
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Illinois Conservation Foundation
Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Lake Bluff Open Lands
Lake County Forest Preserves
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Patagonia, Inc.
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Terracom Public Relations, Inc.
US Fish and Wildlife Service
USDA Forest Service
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Village of Riverside*
West Monroe Partners
WRD Environmental

Individuals

BIODIVERSITY GUILD

Deborah Lahey
Jack Pizzo
Dr. George Rabb
Louis F. Schauer
Nancy Tuchman

WILDERNESS LEAGUE

Harry and Beth Drucker
Mrs. Charles D. Haffner III
Dennis and Connie Keller
Edward Lyons and Jean Sussman
Henry M. Paulson, Jr.

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Tom Beck
Barbara Birmingham
Lynn Donaldson and Cameron Avery
Duane Ehresman
Elizabeth Kessler
Andy Kimmel
Holly Ost
Nancy Wallace and David Shiner

* *CW Staff Host*

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MAY 1, 2013 – APRIL 30, 2014

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Michelle Carr, The Nature Conservancy

Dale Engquist, Shirley Heinze Land Trust (President through December 2013)

Craig Hubert, CDH Corporation

Deborah Lahey, The Chicago Academy of Sciences and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

Natalie LaPorta, Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP

Peter J. Layton, The Tallgrass Group, LLC (Assistant Secretary/President as of January 2014)

Dick Little, Illinois Conservation Foundation

Melinda Pruett-Jones, American Ornithologists Union (ex officio member)

Laurel Ross, The Field Museum (Secretary)

Arnold Randall, Superintendant, Forest Preserves of Cook County

Dave Thomas, Illinois Natural History Survey (emeritus)



CHICAGO WILDERNESS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

MAY 1, 2013 TO APRIL 30, 2014

Thanks go to the individuals and organizations who give of their time to share strategic leadership of the alliance through service on our Executive Council.

Audubon – Chicago Region

Rebecca Sanders, Judy Pollock

Bluestem Communications

Jennifer Browning

Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods

Sophia Twichell

Cardno JFNew, Inc.

Anngie Richter

Center for Humans and Nature

Brooke Hecht, Anja Claus, Gavin Van Horn

Center for Neighborhood Technology

Harriet Festing, Bill Eyring

The Chicago Academy of Sciences and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum

Deborah Lahey, Rafael Rosa

Chicago Botanic Garden

Greg Mueller, Bob Kirschner

Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning

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Peggy Stewart, Zhanna Yermakov

Chicago Wilderness Corporate Council

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Chicago Wilderness Trust

Dale Engquist, Peter Layton

Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo

Stuart Strahl, Jo-Elle Mogeran

City of Chicago

Karen Weigert, Aaron Joseph

Conserve Lake County

Jim McConoughey

The Davey Tree Expert Company

Todd Degner

DePaul University, Environmental Science Program

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Dunes Learning Center

Geof Benson

The Field Museum

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Arnold Randall (Chair, Chicago Wilderness), Cathy Geraghty

Forest Preserve District of DuPage County

Dave Guritz

Forest Preserve District of Kane County

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Forest Preserve District of Will County

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Friends of the Chicago River

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Geosyntec

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Illinois Natural History Survey

Brian Anderson, Geoff Levin

Illinois Nature Preserves Commission

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John G. Shedd Aquarium

Michelle Parker

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Jason Pettit, Megan Andrews

Lake County Forest Preserves (IL)

Alex Ty Kovach, Andrew Kimmel, Jim Anderson

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (CONT'D)

MAY 1, 2013 TO APRIL 30, 2014



Liberty Prairie Foundation

Brad Leibov

Lincoln Park Zoo

Lisa Faust, Marybeth Johnson

Loyola University Chicago, Institute of Environmental Sustainability

Aaron Durnbaugh, Nancy Tuchman, Gina Lettiere

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Elizabeth S. Kessler (Vice Chair, Chicago Wilderness),
Kevin Ivers

McHenry County Conservation Foundation

Yvonne Semel, Nancy Williamson

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Lydia Scott

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Openlands

Gerald Adelman, Lenore Beyer-Clow

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Village of Lincolnshire

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Susie Schreiber, Sharon Thiesen

The Wetlands Initiative

Paul Botts

Honorary Member

George Rabb, President Emeritus, Chicago
Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo

MEMBERS

AS OF APRIL 30, 2014



AddATree
 Alliance for the Great Lakes
 Animalia Project
 Associated Colleges of Illinois
 Association for the Wolf Lake Initiative
 Audubon – Chicago Region
 BackYard Nature Center
 Barrington Area Conservation Trust
 Barrington Area Council of Governments
 Batavia Plain Dirt Gardeners
 BBJ Group
 Benedictine University
 Bird Conservation Network
 Blacks in Green (BiG)
 Bluestem Communications
 Bolingbrook Park District
 Boone Creek Watershed Alliance
 Bronzeville/Black Chicagoan Historical Society
 Brushwood Center at Ryerson Woods
 Buffalo Grove Park District
 Butterfield Creek Steering Committee
 Calumet Ecological Park Association
 Calumet Environmental Resource Center
 at Chicago State University
 Campton Historic Agricultural Lands, Inc.
 Campton Township
 Canal Corridor Association
 Caretakers of the Environment International/USA
 Cary Park District
 Center for Humans and Nature
 Center for Neighborhood Technology
 Channahon Park District
 The Chicago Academy of Sciences
 and its Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum
 Chicago Audubon Society
 Chicago Botanic Garden
 Chicago Cultural Alliance
 Chicago Herpetological Society
 Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning
 Chicago Ornithological Society
 Chicago Park District
 Chicago Wilderness Corporate Council
 Chicago Wilderness Trust
 Chicago Zoological Society/Brookfield Zoo
 Chicagoland Bird Observatory
 Chicagoland Councils of the Boy Scouts of America
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 City of Elgin Parks & Recreation Department
 City of Park Ridge
 City of Rolling Meadows
 Clarendon Hills Park District
 Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy
 College of DuPage
 The Conservation Foundation
 The Conservation Fund
 Conservation Research Institute
 Conserve Lake County
 Cooperative Wildlife Research Laboratory
 at Southern Illinois University Carbondale
 Covenant Nursery School
 Crystal Lake Park District

MEMBERS (CONT'D)

AS OF APRIL 30, 2014

Deerfield High School
 Deerpath Farm Homeowners' Association
 Delta Institute
 DePaul University, Environmental Science Program
 Downers Grove Park District
 Ducks Unlimited – Great Lakes/Atlantic Regional Office
 Dundee-Crown High School
 Dunes Learning Center
 DuPage Birding Club
 DuPage County Stormwater Management Division
 EcoMyths Alliance
 Eden Place Nature Center
 Elmhurst Park District
 Emily Oaks Nature Center
 Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
 Environmental Law and Policy Center of the Midwest
 Environmental and Water Resources Institute
 of the Illinois Section of the American Society
 of Civil Engineers
 Environmentally Conscious Oswego
 (ECO) Commission
 Evanston Environmental Association
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 FamilyFarmed.org
 Fermilab Natural Areas
 Fernwood Botanical Garden and Nature Preserve
 The Field Museum
 The Field Station Cooperative
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 Forest Preserve District of DuPage County
 Forest Preserve District of Kane County
 Forest Preserve District of Will County
 Frankfort Square Park District
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 Friends of Spring Creek Forest Preserves
 Friends of the Chicago River
 Friends of the Forest Preserves
 Friends of the Fox River
 Friends of the Kankakee
 Friends of the Morton Grove Forest Preserves
 Friends of the Oak Park Conservatory
 Friends of the Parks
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 Illinois Audubon Society
 Illinois Audubon Society, Fort Dearborn Chapter
 Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network
 Illinois Coalition for Responsible Outdoor Lighting
 Illinois Department of Natural Resources
 Illinois Endangered Species Protection Board
 Illinois Environmental Council & IEC
 Education Fund
 Illinois Humane
 Illinois Natural History Survey
 Illinois Nature Preserves Commission
 Illinois Ornithological Society
 Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant College Program
 Indian Creek Watershed Project
 Indiana Department of Natural Resources
 Indiana University Northwest
 Inverness Park District
 Irons Oaks Environmental Learning Center
 Izaak Walton League of America – Illinois Division
 Izaak Walton League of America – Indiana Division
 John G. Shedd Aquarium
 Jurica-Suchy Nature Museum
 Kane-DuPage Soil & Water Conservation District
 Kendall County Forest Preserve District
 Kendall County Soil & Water Conservation District
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 Kent Fuller Air Station Prairie
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 Kishwaukétoe Nature Conservancy
 Lake Bluff Open Lands Association
 Lake County Forest Preserves (IL)
 Lake County Health Department,
 Environmental Health Services (IL)
 Lake County Parks & Recreation Department (IN)
 Lake County Solid Waste Management District (IN)
 Lake County Stormwater Management Commission
 (IL)
 Lake Forest College
 Lake Forest Open Lands Association
 Lake Katherine Nature Center and Botanic Gardens

MEMBERS (CONT'D)

AS OF APRIL 30, 2014

Land Conservancy of Lake County
 The Land Conservancy of McHenry County (TLC)
 Land Conservancy of Will County
 Land Trust Alliance
 LaPorte County Conservation Trust, Inc.
 Liberty Prairie Foundation
 Lincoln Park Conservancy
 Lincoln Park Zoo
 Lincoln-Way Community High School
 Lindenhurst Park District
 Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
 Long Grove Park District
 Loyola University Chicago,
 Institute of Environmental Sustainability
 Lurie Garden: Millennium Park
 Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation
 McHenry - Lake County Soil & Water
 Conservation District
 McHenry County Conservation District
 McHenry County Conservation Foundation
 Metropolitan Water Reclamation District
 of Greater Chicago
 Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance
 The Morton Arboretum
 Naperville Park District
 National Association for Interpretation – Region 5
 National Parks Conservation Association
 Natural Land Institute
 The Nature Conservancy – Illinois
 North Branch Restoration Project
 Northbrook Park District
 Northeastern Illinois University
 Northminster Presbyterian Church
 Northwest Indiana Forum Foundation, Inc.
 Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
 Northwestern University Environmental Policy
 & Culture Program
 Oak Brook Park District, Dorothy and Sam Dean
 Nature Sanctuary
 Oakbrook Terrace Park District
 Openlands
 Palos Park Tree Foundation
 Palos-Orland Conservation Committee
 Park District of Franklin Park
 Park District of Highland Park
 Pierce Downer's Heritage Alliance
 Portage Park and Recreation Department
 Porter County Plan Commission
 The Prairie Club



Prairie Crossing Charter School
 Prairie Crossing Homeowners Association
 Prairie School of DuPage
 Prairie Woods Audubon Society
 Prairies Forever
 Pringle Nature Center
 Protestants for the Common Good
 Purdue University Calumet
 Red Oak Nature Center
 Richardson Wildlife Sanctuary
 Ridgeville Park District
 Riding Club of Barrington Hills
 River Forest Park District
 Riverwoods Preservation Council
 Roots & Shoots Great Lakes
 Safer Pest Control Project
 Salt Creek Greenway Association
 Save the Dunes
 Save the Prairie Society
 Scenic Illinois
 Schaumburg Park District
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 Riverside Brookfield High School
 Seeding the Snow
 Shirley Heinze Land Trust
 Sierra Club, Illinois Chapter
 Southeast Environmental Task Force
 Seven Generations Ahead
 Springbrook Nature Center

MEMBERS (CONT'D)

AS OF APRIL 30, 2014

St. Charles Park District
 Student Conservation Association
 Taltree Arboretum and Gardens
 Team Green Environmental Network
 Thorn Creek Audubon Society
 Town Square Condominium Association
 Triton College Sustainability Center
 Trout Valley Homeowners' Association
 The Trust for Public Lands
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 Laboratory
 US Department of Energy,
 Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory
 US Environmental Protection Agency,
 Great Lakes National Program Office
 US Environmental Protection Agency, Region 5
 US Fish & Wildlife Service
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 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
 USDI National Park Service/
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Valley Lakes Community Association
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 Environmental Commission
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 Village of Lake Barrington
 Village of Lincolnshire
 Village of North Barrington
 Village of Oak Park
 Village of Orland Park
 Village of Riverside
 Village of Schaumburg
 Warrenville Environmental Advisory Commission
 Washington Park Conservancy
 Waukegan Harbor Citizen's Advisory Group
 Waukegan Park District
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 West Chicago Park District
 The Wetlands Initiative
 Wheaton Park District
 Wilderness Inquiry
 Wild Flower Preservation Society, Illinois Chapter
 Wild Ones Natural Landscapers, Ltd.
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 Committee of McHenry County (The WPPC)
 The Wildlife Discovery Center at Elawa Farm
 Wildwood Nature Center
 Woodland Savanna Land Conservancy



CHICAGO WILDERNESS CORPORATE COUNCIL

AS OF APRIL 30, 2014

Legacy

ComEd

Platinum

ArcelorMittal
BP America, Inc.

Gold

Ball Horticultural Co.
Bartlett Tree Experts
Christopher B. Burke Engineering, Ltd.
Gewalt Hamilton Associates, Inc.
Nicor Gas
West Monroe Partners, LLC
WRD Environmental

Silver

AECOM Technical Services, Inc.
Applied Ecological Services (AES)
Burns & McDonnell Engineering Company, Inc.
Cardno JFNew
Chicago Fire Soccer Club
The Davey Tree Expert Company
Environmental Design International, Inc.
Geosyntec Consultants
McGinty Brothers, Inc.
Midwest Groundcovers, LLC/Midwest Trading, Inc.
New South Access & Environmental Solutions
Sterling Lumber Company
Stantec, Inc.
Tallgrass Restoration, LLC
V3 Companies

Sustaining

ARCADIS
Atrium
Clarke
Conservation Design Forum
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- Pg 9: Kids Nature Fun Fest Greenbelt [Emilian-Geczi]
- Pg 11: McDonald Woods Bloodroot [Chicago Botanic Garden]
- Pg 13: Gompers Park [Laura Brown]
- Pg 14: Learning About Aquatic Life [Dick Todd]
- Pg 16: Braidwood Dunes and Savanna Variegated Fritillary [Paul Dacko]
- Pg 17: Explore the Forest at Crabtree Nature Center [Laura Brown]
- Pg 18: Bald Eagle [US Fish and Wildlife Service]
- Back Cover: Edgebrook Demonstration Project [Forest Preserves Cook County]

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Corporate Council

USDA Forest Service

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Wildlife Service

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