

# URBANWATERS

FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

*Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities*

## PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION





# THE URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership is an innovative union of thirteen federal agencies that is improving coordination among federal agencies and collaborating with local community-led revitalization efforts. The Partnership is improving our nation’s waters and promoting the economic, environmental and social benefits of communities near them. The Partnership was launched on June 24, 2011 with local partnerships at seven pilot locations across the nation. As Partnership locations grow, actions will continue and expand to assist projects and collaborative actions that reconnect communities with their urban waterways. This work has a particular emphasis on communities that are overburdened or economically distressed. Information on the public launch of the Partnership, the Partnership’s Vision, Mission and Principles, and a description of each of the initial pilot locations can be found in this report and at [www.urbanwaters.gov](http://www.urbanwaters.gov).

This Partnership is committed to the revitalization of America’s urban centers, which serve as the drivers of our overall national economic recovery. America’s cities serve as centers for innovation and engines for economic growth. A key component of this effort is the President’s America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative that calls for the Federal government to be a better partner by focusing on community-driven and science-based projects that align efforts and prioritize funding across Federal, state, local, and tribal governments, nonprofit organizations, and the private sector. The Urban Waters Federal Partnership has successfully embodied this approach while working toward AGO’s goals to connect Americans and expand access to the outdoors, enhance our rivers and waters, and establish great urban parks and community green spaces. The Partnership is also complementary to the Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative and the Sustainable Communities Partnership, which together with our other place-based strategies are redefining how the federal government works with its local partners.



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# PARTICIPATING PARTNERS ABBREVIATIONS

**ACDE** – American Council for Drug Education

**ATSDR** – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry

**CDC** – HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**CNCS** – Corporation for National and Community Service

**DHS** – U.S. Department of Homeland Security

**DOC** – U.S. Department of Commerce

**DOD** – U.S. Department of Defense

**DOE** – U.S. Department of Energy

**DOI** – U.S. Department of the Interior

**DOT** – U.S. Department of Transportation

**ED** – U.S. Department of Education

**EDA** – DOC Economic Development Administration

**EPA** – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

**FEMA** – DHS Federal Emergency Management Agency

**FWS** – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service

**HHS** – U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

**HUD** – U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

**NASA** – National Aeronautics and Space Administration

**NIH** – HHS National Institutes for Health

**NOAA** – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**NPS** – DOI National Park Service

**NRCS** – USDA National Resources Conservation Service

**NWS** – DOC National Weather Service

**USACE** – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**USBR** – DOI U.S. Bureau of Reclamation

**USDA** – U.S. Department of Agriculture

**USGS** – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## *The Purpose of the Partnership*

Many of our nation's urban rivers, streams, lakes, forests and wetlands are polluted, degraded or inaccessible. The surrounding communities often underestimate the environmental, economic, and social benefits of living near a water body. Research demonstrates that a clean, safe, accessible, urban environment – including urban forests, gardens, parks, lakes, aquifers, and rivers – directly links to improved public health, stronger local economies, and lower crime rates.

Urban waters impact large populations in adjacent upstream and downstream communities. They receive large amounts of pollution from a variety of sources, including polluted runoff from urban landscapes, which creates public and environmental health hazards. Urban waters have the potential to be treasured centerpieces of urban revival and offer visibility for innovative approaches that can be adapted in surrounding areas. However, urban patterns of development often make waterways inaccessible to adjacent neighborhoods. This lack of access limits a community's ability to reap the benefits of living so close to the water.

Reconnecting people with urban waterways results in both environmental and community benefits. Healthy and accessible urban waters can help grow local businesses and enhance educational, recreational, and social opportunities in nearby communities. Many urban waters are sources of drinking water for nearby communities.

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership maintains that a deeper connection to local water bodies can bring a new cycle of community hope and energy that will lead to healthier urban waters, improved public health, strengthened local businesses, new jobs, as well as expanded educational, recreational, housing, and social opportunities.

*On June 24, 2011, the Partnership formally announced its “Vision, Mission and Principles.” The Mission is as follows: “The Urban Waters Federal Partnership will help urban and metropolitan areas, particularly those that are underserved or economically distressed, connect with their waterways and work to improve them. This Federal Partnership will put communities first. We will work to break down government program silos to ensure that our collective efforts will reverse past neglect, energize existing programs, and engage new partners. We will listen to, engage and serve the communities where we work, ensuring they are full partners in restoring and protecting the water that surrounds them. We will establish strong partnerships with effective community-based organizations and local government officials to make the most effective use of economic incentives and other beneficial actions. With the right set of federal, state, and local tools along with the local commitment of political will, the partnership will leverage existing neighborhood assets. These actions will be geared to promote early and visible victories to fuel long-term action. Success will advance the missions of our partnership, our agencies, and the federal government as a whole.” **View the full Vision, Mission, & Principles in Appendix A.***

*The Principles for the Urban Waters Federal Partnership are, in brief:*

- *Promote clean urban waters.*
- *Reconnect people to their waters.*
- *Promote water conservation.*
- *Use urban water systems as a way to promote economic revitalization and prosperity.*
- *Encourage community improvements through active partnerships.*
- *Be open and honest, and listen to the communities, knowing this is the best way to engage and learn from them.*
- *Focus on measuring results and evaluation will fuel future success.*

### **The Urban Waters Federal Partnership Pilots**

In order to advance these principles, the Partnership has worked in seven pilot locations throughout the country. Both Federal Partners and Non-Federal Entities work together to restore and reconnect these waterways and their surrounding communities:

- **Anacostia River Watershed**
- **Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds**
- **Lake Pontchartrain Area Watersheds**
- **Los Angeles River Watershed**
- **Northwest Indiana Area**
- **Patapsco River & Baltimore Watersheds**
- **South Platte River**

## ***The Structure of the Partnership***

The Partnership was originally announced with 11 participating federal agencies. Currently, there are 13 member agencies that are formal participants and additional agencies which participate in particular locations. Senior officials who have signed the Vision, Mission and Principles form a “Signatories” group which provides high-level direction. Planning and execution occurs in two distinct groups that have participated over the course of the last year in bi-weekly conference calls and meetings, joint planning, knowledge sharing, and stakeholder engagement through two primary venues:

### **Executive Workgroup**

Each signatory has appointed a representative to participate with this headquarters federal workgroup that meets bi-weekly (conference calls and once-a-month face-to-face). These meetings ensure this Workgroup steers the overall Partnership through shared learning about agency actions to assist the pilot locations and about the authorities and programs of the different agencies. This executive workgroup also engages in strategic planning for legislative, budgeting, and program development purposes.

### **Pilot Leads**

This bi-weekly conference call among the seven Pilot locations allows for peer-to-peer exchange of ideas among the field-level pilot lead representatives and provides a forum to learn about available resources for those locations. Also, these pilot lead representatives share their plans and experiences from their local meetings and actions by federal agencies and stakeholders for the benefit of all seven pilots.

In addition to participating in these critical information exchange sessions, the signatory agencies have supported the national efforts in the following ways:

- Collaborating to support community efforts and creating opportunities for shared learning from communities;
- Partnering in pilot locations by participating in local meetings and projects;
- Beginning to break down barriers and opportunities for programmatic and policy changes that benefit communities;
- Leveraging the authorities of various agencies to streamline processes for local projects; and
- Capitalizing and focusing on utilizing existing federal resources

### ***The Partnership in Action Report***

This report focuses on first year achievements in stakeholder engagement, collaboration, mission-focused activities, and locally driven projects that succeed in meeting Partnership goals. Highlights of different projects and approaches are included, as well as resource contributions and in-kind services that enabled success. The Partnership recognizes the importance of sharing our lessons learned and successes and the value this information brings to all of our stakeholders and partners including pilots, NGOs, state agencies, local governments, and urban waters communities, including those beyond the pilot locations.

In the following sections, the individual pilot locations and partner agencies report on featured activities they have been able to lead, enhance, or contribute to during the first year of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. In addition, an outline of how the Partnership will begin the process of expanding from pilot locations to a national program and other strategies for action in the upcoming year are discussed in *Moving Forward: The Partnership’s Second Year Strategy*, page 55 of this report.

We hope you find this informative as we continue to collaborate and build a new legacy for federal partnership.

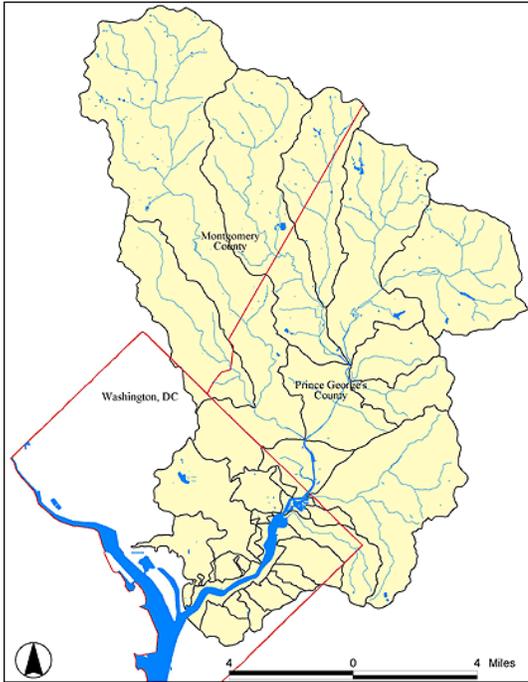
# PILOT LOCATION ACTIVITY REPORTS





# ANACOSTIA RIVER WATERSHED

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA / MARYLAND



The Anacostia River watershed Urban Waters Partnership is led by DOI and EPA. Home to 43 species of fish, some 200 species of birds, and more than 800,000 people, the river flows through Montgomery and Prince George's Counties in Maryland and past the Capital in the District. At 176 square miles, the watershed is one of the most urbanized in the United States. It has lost over 70% of forestland and 6,500 acres of wetlands. Impervious surfaces now cover 25% of the watershed. But the river and its watershed hold enormous potential for natural beauty, wildlife habitat and recreational amenities.

The Anacostia Urban Waters Partnership has been working with local stakeholder groups to understand their organizations and discuss with them how the federal agencies can support local goals and objectives.

Federal agencies have been very active in the Anacostia for a long time, often working closely with the community and local jurisdictions. The Partnership has facilitated continuation of the activity, with greater emphasis and success in collaboration and coordination benefiting the local community as well as the federal agencies in helping each other support ongoing projects and looking at potential new efforts.

## Anacostia Mapping Tool

U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) led the development of an Anacostia mapping tool (Mapping Application Partnership Tool, or MAPT). The USGS invested \$50,000 in technical assistance and continues to provide support staff and resources to refine the viewer and has continued to provide support staff and resources to refine the viewer and add spatial data from Partners. The viewer currently contains the following data: USGS stream gages and water-quality stations, USGS well sites, sites where U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) has measured contaminants, FWS Coastal-Program restoration sites, FWS School Yard Habitat, NPS project sites, surface elevation tables, NPS trails including the Anacostia River Walk, other area trails and restoration projects in the area, NPS park land, county and regional park land, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) superfund sites, EPA NPDES discharges, EPA brownfields, EPA Toxic Release Inventory, EPA Sewer Overflow Outfalls, EPA RCRA Sites, EPA 303(d) impaired waters, USGS National Land Cover Database, socio-economic data, population density, Washington, D.C. political boundaries, and Anacostia River watersheds, stream reaches, and subwatersheds. Recently, data points from the Anacostia Restoration Partnership (ARP) were added to represent the location of 3018 candidate restoration projects developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, their potential for pollution reduction, scores of specific project attributes, overall project scores, tiers, clustering, and ranks of associated cluster. The MAPT tool for the Anacostia River Watershed can be accessed at <http://lcat.usgs.gov/anacostia/>. Federal Partners have used the application to identify areas to focus their attention as well as a visual reference during partnership meetings and conference calls. A Mapping Tools Workgroup continues to work on development and deployment of comparable maps for all the Urban Waters Federal Partnership pilot locations. In the future, the mapping tool will allow the public to enter information about projects.

## Participating Partners

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CNCS – Corporation for National and Community Service  
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DOE – U.S. Department of Energy  
DOT – U.S. Department of Transportation  
ED – U.S. Department of Education  
EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NIH – HHS National Institutes for Health  
NOAA – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NPS – DOI National Park Service  
USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture  
USDA Forest Service  
USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

### *Non-Federal Entities*

Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership  
Anacostia Riverkeeper  
Anacostia Watershed Society  
DC Appleseed  
DC Department of the Environment  
Earth Conservation Corps  
Groundwork Anacostia  
Living Classrooms  
Sierra Club  
Smithsonian's Anacostia Community Museum  
Washington Parks and People

## Anacostia Pilot Launch and Riverwalk Ribbon Cutting

On November 4, 2011 Secretary Salazar formally announced the Anacostia pilot to a crowd of 300 along the banks of the river. He was joined by Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin, DC Mayor Vincent Grey, Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood, and EPA Deputy Administrator Bob Perciasepe.

The Anacostia Riverwalk is a planned multi-use trail along the east and west banks of the Anacostia River in the Washington, DC area. The trail will provide a safe and convenient means for users to access the Anacostia Waterfront and enjoy Anacostia Park. The Riverwalk is a joint effort of America's Great Outdoors and the Urban Waters Federal Partnership project. Both initiatives seek to reconnect Americans to the great outdoors and revitalize urban waterways in underserved communities. Access points are being linked to neighborhoods and points of interest along the length of the trail. This will provide river access to underserved communities where it did not previously exist.

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership participated in a ribbon cutting ceremony marking the recent completion of 1.5 miles of the trail in Maryland. The event exemplified the strong ongoing local, state, and federal collaboration to provide additional opportunities for residents and visitors to access and enjoy Anacostia Park and the Anacostia River. During the ribbon cutting, Governor O'Malley announced \$1 million in additional state funding to develop a trail link that will connect Maryland and the District of Columbia's Anacostia Riverwalk Trail Network. Once complete, the Anacostia Riverwalk Trail Network will offer nearly 60 miles of contiguous trails – including 39 miles in Maryland and 20 miles in the District of Columbia.

In addition to increasing public access through the development of trails, the District of Columbia and Maryland are working with the Department of the Interior, the Department of Transportation and the Environmental Protection Agency on several river cleanup and restoration projects. The Federal Partners have also brought a variety of resources and technical support to the table, as well as in-kind services. Showcasing the benefits of partnership is the Watts Branch Project, an innovative urban stream restoration project implemented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Coastal Program, in collaboration with District Dept. of the Environment, EPA, NRCS, and NPS. This project will prevent 1,500 tons of erosion from entering the Anacostia and the Chesapeake Bay. Federal Partners are also developing conservation tools, such as bank erosion rate curves developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which will let conservation practitioners more accurately predict bank erosion and assess channel stability.

## Release of Restoration Plan

The partnership yielded an early success when community partners rallied in support of clearing the long-awaited U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Anacostia River Watershed Restoration Plan for action by community leaders and others involved in activities identified by the plan. As a key priority of the partnership, this study is one that will help build support for Urban Waters among local citizens.

### PILOT CO-LEAD CONTACTS

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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Anacostia Mapping Application  
Partnership Tool (MAPT)

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Community and Local Jurisdiction  
Outreach

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Participation in Sustainable DC Initiative

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Historic Anacostia Community-Led  
Comprehensive Revitalization Plan

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Youth Paddling Programs

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Access Strategy Planning

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Green Jobs Training Programs

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Anacostia Riverwalk

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Increased collaboration among  
government agencies

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EPA Regulatory Actions

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Increasing awareness of grant  
opportunities

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Initial inventory of projects, stewardships,  
and resources in the Anacostia area

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NFWF Anacostia Revitalization Fund

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Water Quality Monitoring Stations

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Groundwater well network

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Pilot Launch of Anacostia Urban Waters  
Initiative

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Connecting HUD with DC Department of  
the Environment River Smart Homes  
Project

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Smithsonian Urban Waterways Project

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Anacostia Watershed Protection and  
Restoration

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Anacostia River Angling Study

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One Yard of Garden

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Aquaponics Learning Session

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USDA Forest Service State and Private  
Forestry Programs (USFS SPF)

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Forest Health Protection

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## COMMUNITY “HANDS-ON” PROJECTS

*The Green Jobs Training Program* serves an economically distressed community, providing training and a pathway to jobs. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the National Park Service are working closely with GroundWork Anacostia on the project to provide fast-track green jobs basic training to Potomac Job Corps Center (PJCC) trainees. The areas in which training is provided include cement masonry, carpentry, bricklaying and plumbing trades that incorporate Green Infrastructure Best Management Practices. The goals of the program include developing basic literacy about environmental technologies and issues related to the core training curricula elements of the Potomac Job Corps Center. Federal Partners are also providing training opportunities through their restoration work. For example, Watts Branch project was an outdoor classroom for the Green Job Corps organized by the Washington Parks and People.

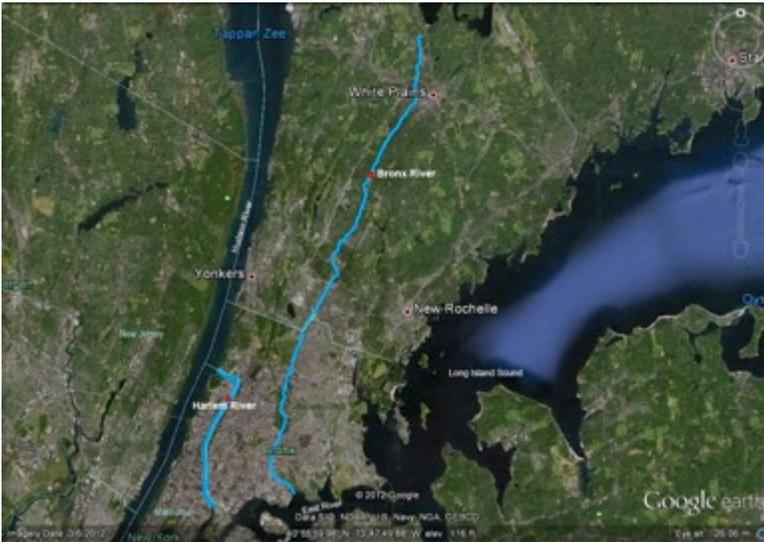
*One Yard of Garden* is a project organized to convert grass-based lawns into environmentally friendly, flowering and edible landscapes one square “yard” at a time. One Yard of Garden provides information to gardeners and others on how to create environmentally friendly yard environments that abandon traditional “Industrial Lawns,” with their enormous chemical and water dependencies. The One Yard of Garden project is a three-year project funded by the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Anacostia Partner USDA through its Specialty Crop Block Grant Program-Farm Bill. Gardens will be created in communities east of the Anacostia River. Outreach for participants includes residents, community groups, garden clubs, and schools.

*Youth Paddling Programs* are playing a role in getting local residents out to the river. Several youth gained access to the Anacostia River for the first time in October 2011 as part of the Youth Paddling Program sponsored by the National Park Service, which hosted the event. Many federal and local partners participated. The NPS, Anacostia Watershed Society and Wilderness Inquiry collaborated to conduct a series of canoe trips and events on the Anacostia River for a full week. 1,000 kids from DC area schools were served through this program. In addition to enjoying paddling on the river and learning about recreational opportunities affiliated with the water, the program included watershed education.



# BRONX AND HARLEM RIVER WATERSHEDS

## NEW YORK



The Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds were once varied ecosystems covered by forests, meadows, marshes, and swamps. Today, much of the natural habitat in the area has been displaced by urban development, which has contributed to pollution and contaminated the watersheds.

The South Bronx hosts four major environmental justice neighborhoods including Soundview, Crotona Park, Morrisania, and Hunts Point, all abutting the Bronx River. With 39% of the population living below the poverty level, the South Bronx is also one of the most impoverished communities in the country.

The Harlem River Watershed is very densely populated and highly built-up, with very little green

or open space. The neighborhood is cut off from the Harlem River by a network of highways, streets, and truck routes with the only access points being difficult to find, noisy, and unsafe. The nearby community suffers very poor health due to lack of access to parks, limited recreational opportunities, a poor food environment, dilapidated housing, and proximity to pollution sources (including highways and industrial sites).

This pilot, led by DOI, faces the challenge of reconnecting communities to their waterways and enabling them to improve health conditions and benefit recreationally and economically. The Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds hold enormous potential to provide natural beauty, wildlife habitat, and recreational amenities, all of which improve the quality of life of local residents.

## Multi-Agency Rapid Assessment of the Harlem River Corridor

Representatives from eight federal agencies, four city and state agencies, community board representatives, and members of the Harlem River Working Group boarded EPA's vessel, the *Clean Waters*, to conduct the first ever multi-agency "Rapid Assessment" of the Harlem River corridor.

This initiative of the Bronx/Harlem River urban waters pilot location was sponsored by EPA in partnership with the National Park Service and supports and promotes implementation of the 2010 Watershed Management Plan. The effort resulted in several new inter-agency lines of communication as well as partnering with local organizations and agencies to explore future site investigations, planning efforts and potential projects.



### ***Roberto Clemente State Park Anchors Efforts for Improvement***

DOI Secretary Salazar, National Park Service Director Jarvis, EPA Deputy Regional Administrator Pavlou, New York State Parks Commissioner Harvey and elected officials including Congressman Serrano, state senators and assembly members kicked off urban waters improvement efforts at a press event on the banks of the Harlem River in Roberto Clemente State Park, pledging to work together to revitalize the Bronx and Harlem River corridors.

Roberto Clemente Park is situated in the middle of a developing greenway along the Harlem River. The state-run park serves an economically challenged community and hosts more than one million visitors annually. Unfortunately, there is no public access to the Bronx side of the Harlem River because the only historic access to the river is closed. Many park facilities—fields, docks, boat launches, and trails—need significant

upgrades. Specific capital needs at the park include acquiring access to the riverfront, developing and improving park facilities, and building trail connections to the New York City greenway system.

The Urban Waters Partnership helped to raise the profile of the Harlem River waterfront and the Roberto Clemente State Park. The goal of this America’s Great Outdoors project is to enhance existing greenspace, create a waterfront greenway and provide recreational access to the river, which is now thwarted by a 12-foot, locked gate.

Through AGO and the Urban Waters Partnership, the National Park Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency are working closely with New York City and community groups to create a new waterfront greenway along the Bronx side of the Harlem River, connecting the river to neighborhoods. The Trust for Public Land and Pratt Institute have shared goals that align with the Partnership. These organizations are leading a visioning project with the goal for a “Green Print” for the waterfront.

## **Participating Partners**

CDC – HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention  
CNCS – Corporation for National and Community Service  
EDA – DOC Economic Development Administration  
NPS – DOI National Park Service  
DOT – U.S. Department of Transportation  
EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NIH – HHS National Institutes for Health  
NOAA – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USBR – DOI U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
USDA – U.S. Department of Agriculture

### ***Non-Federal Entities***

The Bronx River Alliance and the Harlem River Working Group serve as portals for non-federal agencies to be involved in the partnership, coordinating activities and initiatives of a multitude of organizations and agencies working on the respective rivers, including NGOs, local governments and other agencies.

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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Bronx River Greenway mediation to resolve funding issue for segment connecting parks

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Roberto Clemente State Park Secretary of DOI visit

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Multi-Agency "Rapid Assessment" of the Harlem River corridor

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Raising the profile of the Harlem River waterfront

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Redevelopment of parcels along the Harlem River

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Planning and coordination for development of "greenprint" for waterfront.

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Partnership formed with the Institute for Family Health and Bronx Health REACH coalition

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Harlem River Festival participation

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Secured funding to support stakeholder engagement

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Federal Collaboration to support Bronx River Sediment Quality study

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## PARTNERING TO ACHIEVE RESULTS

### *USDA Forest Service Provides Funding to Support Community Engagement*

The USDA Forest Service's Competitive Civil Rights Special Projects Fund provided \$10,000 to support planning and stakeholder engagement. Funds will be used to hire a local Bronx student to do outreach work and support community meetings to be held in 2012. Partners include the Trust for Public Land, Pratt Institute, and the Harlem River Working Group.

### *Connecting Parks to People*

At the request of Congressman Serrano, DOI reconvened the State and Amtrak to continue discussions on a pedestrian bridge project in the Bronx that had been stalled since 2009. Both Amtrak and the State have committed, despite ongoing legal concerns about land ownership, to working with the city to find a way to build the bridge—which will connect thousands of lower income Bronx residents to two, beautiful new parks.

### *New Public Health Partnership Aligns with Pilot Goals*

A new partnership has been formed with the Institute for Family Health and Bronx Health REACH coalition to find opportunities to bring health and wellness related programming to parks along the Harlem River. With the goal of connecting people to parks for physical activity, the project targets zip codes on the lower Harlem River, engaging the constituency in both indoor and outdoor activities while building advocates for greenways and river access. This partnership is reaching out to new audiences, including faith based groups. Bilingual flyers and outreach materials are also utilized to expand the conversation.

### **PILOT LEAD CONTACT**

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# LAKE PONTCHARTRAIN AREA WATERSHEDS LOUISIANA



At over 40 miles wide, Lake Pontchartrain is the second largest inland saltwater body in the United States. It covers 630 square miles, serves 16 Louisiana parishes and 1.5 million people. Though classified as a lake, Lake Pontchartrain is technically an estuary that connects to the Gulf of Mexico. Because of its link, Lake Pontchartrain has suffered devastating hurricane effects and more recently has been adversely affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Spill.

While the community continues to recover, Lake Pontchartrain remains a vital resource for economic development, recreation and sustainability. The lakeshore has historically been utilized by a wide range of New Orleans' diverse community members, and the Urban Waters Partnership seeks to reconnect citizens to the lake by revitalizing

abandoned lakeshore areas, restoring damaged structures and educating citizens about the environment.

EPA is the federal lead agency for the Lake Pontchartrain area pilot. EPA is funding a full time Ambassador to support the efforts of the local partnership. The Ambassador will be hired in January 2013 and will be hosted by the City of New Orleans for a 1-2 year term of service.

## Enhancements for Lafitte Corridor and Bayou St. John Greenbelt

The Lafitte Corridor is a largely underdeveloped area along Lafitte Street from the French Quarter area to the end of Bayou St. John and then along Conti Street to Canal Blvd. The corridor area is city property and was once the site of the Carondelet Canal, which provided access from Bayou St. John to the French Quarter area. The city has obtained substantial HUD funding to design and construct a greenbelt area in the Corridor, and design work is underway. HUD is also providing a staff support to the partnership's Lafitte Corridor Projects for 90 days.

The HUD representative is working with NPS on the above project and with NOAA who is working on the other end with Sea Grant funding awarded to dismantle an outdated, and out of service water control structure just steps off Robert E. Lee Boulevard. The structure is a non-functional plug in the bayou that is keeping the small fish and in some cases other crustaceans from going up the bayou and populating other regions of Bayou St. John. Demolition will start at the end of June, and residents should be able to enjoy an enhanced Bayou St. John by the end of the summer.

## Reconstruction of New Canal Lighthouse Moves Forward

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) is leading an effort to rebuild the New Canal Lighthouse, which was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

Effects from the hurricane included severe damage to the marina and Yacht Club and the total destruction of the fishing pier and the New Canal Lighthouse. The Urban Waters Pilot prioritized reconstruction of the lighthouse and the pier as cornerstone projects for the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. The project will restore an important community asset and provide a new education center serving children throughout the state of Louisiana. The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) salvaged remaining pieces of the lighthouse structure and has raised over \$1 million in private funds to rebuild the lighthouse on the same site and developed plans to use it as an educational center on water quality and water resources. LPBF hosted a ground-breaking event for the lighthouse reconstruction on February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2012. A relighting of the lighthouse was held on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012, and reconstruction is nearly completed. This project was prioritized by the Partnership because:

- The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation has a history of conducting water quality monitoring and related community education to engage the public in efforts to restore this important lake.
- The foundation has raised \$1 million in private funds to help restore and transform this landmark into a public environmental education center focused on water resources and water quality in Lake Pontchartrain and New Orleans.
- The land was previously owned by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) which recently returned ownership to the state. This is an excellent example of the state leasing the land to a local non-governmental organization that will transform it into a community asset to promote citizen stewardship on water quality.
- This new education center will serve tourists, adults, and children throughout the state of Louisiana. Once rebuilt, the lighthouse will be known as the New Canal Lighthouse Education Center and will feature interactive displays depicting the history of the lighthouse and the New Basin Canal, the ecology of Lake Pontchartrain, and the impacts of Katrina to the area. The center will also house the staff of the LPBF. A Spring 2013 opening is anticipated.



### Participating Partners

EDA – DOC Economic Development Administration  
EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
FEMA – DHS Federal Emergency Management Agency  
FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NOAA – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NPS – DOI National Park Service  
NRCS - USDA National Resources Conservation Service  
USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

#### *Non-Federal Entities*

Bayou Land Resource Conservation & Development Council  
City of New Orleans  
City Planning Commission  
Friends of Lafitte Corridor  
Groundwork NOLA  
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation  
Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development  
Municipal Yacht Harbor Management Corporation  
New Orleans City Council District A  
New Orleans City Council District D  
Pontchartrain Institute for Environmental Sciences UNO  
Regional Planning Commission  
Sewerage and Water Board of New Orleans  
Sierra Club  
South Louisiana Flood Protection Authority East Coastal Advisory Committee  
Waggoner and Ball  
Woodlands Conservancy

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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### Initial Areas of Focus

- University of New Orleans (UNO) Coastal Education Center
- Reconstruction of West End Pier and Lighthouse project
- Lafitte Corridor/Bayou St. John greenbelt
- Katrina Debris Cleanup
- Twins Pier Bridge Demolition
- East End Fishing Pier Relocation and construction
- Pontchartrain Beach refurbishing

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### Additional Areas being Considered

- Increased access to Lincoln Beach and use of historic beach and natural area
  - Cleanup of area south of GIWW bridge at Paris Road
  - Improved access and use of natural area on West Bank – Lower Coast Algiers/Woodland Trails
  - Restoration of wetland areas and cypress swam at Central Wetlands/Bayou Bienvenue area
- 

### *Expanded Use of Coastal Education and Research Center*

DOI, through the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) are partnering with the University of New Orleans to expand use of the Shea Penland Coastal Education and Research Facility (CERF) as an educational resource for the area. CERF, located on Chef Pass in New Orleans East, first opened in 2010. The facility is well positioned to access Lake Pontchartrain, Lake Borgne, and the extensive wetlands on the east side of New Orleans. The facility has three vessels to access these areas and it is adjacent to the Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge. The Partnership has prioritized two projects related to CERF. Phase I involves USGS taking the lead to produce a wetland education video featuring the facility with assistance from FWS. Phase II involves developing a Visioning Plan with assistance from the National Park Service (NPS).

### *FEMA Helps with Pontchartrain Pier*

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) announced approximately \$1.3 million in public assistance funding to support the repair of Pontchartrain Pier, which is located at the southern end of Lake Pontchartrain.

The pier was damaged during Hurricane Katrina. The 600 foot long pier is located at the University of New Orleans (UNO) Research Park and maintenance of the Pontchartrain Pier and adjacent beach is the legal responsibility of the university. The pier will serve as a very visible example of recovery once fully repaired.

Work will include replacing the pier's steel support piling, steel side railing, backfill and the concrete deck end. In addition, FEMA funds will provide for mitigation measures to upgrade the pier's existing galvanized railing to an aluminum material in an effort to prevent corrosion damage in future storms.

Once Pontchartrain Pier repairs are completed, the pier will be open to the general public and will support activities such as boating and fishing.

#### **PILOT LEAD CONTACT**

Adele Cardenas Malott, P.E.,  
EPA Region 6  
214-665-7210

#### **OTHER KEY CONTACT**

Danny Wiegand, Urban Waters  
Ambassador  
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# LOS ANGELES RIVER WATERSHED CALIFORNIA



The Urban Waters Federal Partnership for the Los Angeles River Watershed is led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and includes the 51-mile Los Angeles River (with its headwaters in the Angeles National Forest and its discharge in the Pacific Ocean at Long Beach) and over 870 square miles of watershed.

In addition to supporting the mission and vision of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, the Los Angeles Partners have also identified goals specific to the LA River Watershed, which include: 1) restore ecosystem functions 2) balance revitalization with flood avoidance to ensure public safety 3) reduce reliance on imported water supply and 4) foster sustainable stewardship.

These local goals and ongoing Partnership activities were first articulated in the December 2011 *Los Angeles River Watershed Work Plan*; an updated version will be prepared in 2013. Much of the initial focus of this work plan is within the City of Los Angeles, a function of the blueprint provided in the City's LA River Revitalization Master Plan. The Partnership has engaged with cities downstream of the City of Los Angeles particularly the underserved areas within the Gateway Cities and the terminus of the Los Angeles River in the City of Long Beach. Increased open space, public health, and safe access to bikeways are expressed priorities for these communities, and the Partnership intends to lend support to projects addressing these issues.

## LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study

The LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study (also known as the Area with Restoration Benefits and Opportunities for Revitalization or ARBOR Study) by the Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) was started in 2006 with a 50 percent to 50 percent cost sharing partnership between USACE and the City of LA. The study is investigating the feasibility of restoring a more natural riparian ecosystem along a 10-mile stretch of the river from near Griffith Park to downtown LA. The range of alternatives for ecosystem restoration include plans that incorporate a suite of habitat types along and within the Los Angeles River, such as wetlands, riparian areas, pool/riffle complexes, and riparian buffers, as well as appropriate recreation features (e.g., trails, signage). Completion of the Corps' LA River study is the highest priority of the Partnership and its implementation is critical to the success of overall revitalization goals. There are numerous proposed projects along the LA River to create pocket parks, improve habitat, increase recreation trails, retain stormwater runoff, etc, but without implementation of the Corps restoration study these efforts will have difficulty linking up and fully realizing their restoration and revitalization potential. Completion of the Study was uncertain due to a sizeable shortfall in funding – a gap that was addressed in September 2012 by a generous gift by a local business through one of the organizations in the Partnership. Progress is moving quickly and the first release of the study is anticipated in 2013.



## Participating Partners

EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service  
DOI – U.S. Department of the Interior  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NPS – DOI National Parks Service  
NWS – DOC National Weather Service  
USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USBR – DOI U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
USDA Forest Service  
USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

### *Non-Federal Entities*

Arroyo Seco Foundation  
City of Glendale  
City of Long Beach  
City of Los Angeles  
City of Signal Hill  
Council for Watershed Health  
Friends of the LA River  
Gateway Cities Council of Governments  
LA Conservation Corps  
LA River Expeditions  
LA River Revitalization Corp  
Los Angeles County Flood Control District  
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board  
Los Angeles Unified School District  
Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority  
San Gabriel and Lower Los Angeles Rivers and  
Mountains Conservancy State Coastal Conservancy  
The River Project  
TreePeople  
Trust for Public Land  
Urban Rivers Institute  
Urban Semillas

## Enhancing Recreational Opportunities

Los Angeles has the lowest per capita public open space and parkland of any major urban area in the nation. Many of the ongoing Partnership activities include expanding on the opportunities for recreational activities for the approximately 9 million residents of the LA River Watershed. One means for facilitating recreation in this watershed is via the America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative. In November 2011, DOI released its "America's Great Outdoors: Fifty State Report" which identified the combined Los Angeles and San Gabriel River Trail systems as one of only two priorities in the State of California. The National Park Service (NPS) is the lead federal agency for facilitating this AGO priority, and is proud to be supporting several high profile projects associated with these trails. NPS, the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority, the River Project, LA River Expeditions, Friends of the LA River and Urban Semillas, and other Partners worked with the LA Conservation Corps in the second successful year of the "Paddle the LA River" program. Over 2,000 people, including groups of urban school children, have now kayaked or canoed the 2-mile stretch of the river within the Sepulveda Basin Recreation Area and Flood Control Basin through the program that only operates for a few summer months. Tickets sold out within minutes of sale, and the public buzz has brought significant visibility to the restoration of the River. The organizers and USACE are considering the many calls to expand the program in 2013 – part of a growing grassroots awareness of the natural and recreational resources the LA River has the potential to offer. In support of the LA Conservation Corps' efforts to enhance river access and the Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) initiative to connect nearby schools to the river, the NPS is developing a "Safe Routes to the River" demonstration project targeting the LA River and the region's underserved urban communities. This project is intended to enhance public access to the river via gateways, signage, and educational/interpretive facilities. The "Safe Routes" project will develop a plan to connect LAUSD school sites to proposed river gateways via enhanced routing and targeted trail planning efforts.

### **PILOT LEAD CONTACT**

John Kemmerer, U.S., EPA Region 9  
213-244-1832  
[Kemmerer.john@epa.gov](mailto:Kemmerer.john@epa.gov)

### **OTHER KEY CONTACT**

Pauline Louie, Urban Waters Ambassador  
202-489-1056

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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Hansen Dam Campground

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LA County Municipal Stormwater Permit

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Tujunga Wash Greenway

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North Atwater Creek Restoration and  
Park Expansion and North Atwater Bridge

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Pacoima Wash Greenway

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Parque Dos Rios/South Gate Park  
Development

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River Forecast Site along the LA River

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Station Fire Restoration and Research

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South LA Wetlands Park

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Transportation Infrastructure  
Engagement (High Speed Rail and  
I-710 Expansion)

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Education/Outreach/Research

- Indicators of Watershed Health Project
  - LA River Corps
- 

Feasibility Studies

- Arroyo Seco Watershed Feasibility Study
  - East San Pedro Bay Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study
  - Headworks Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study
  - LA Basin Stormwater Conservation Study
  - LA River Demonstration Project at the Bowtie Parcel
  - LA River Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study
  - Sepulveda Basin Concrete Removal and Biotechnical Bank Stabilization
  - Sun Valley Watershed Feasibility Study
- 

Multi-faceted Opportunities for  
Revitalization

- Northeast LA Collaborative
  - Taylor Yard Area
- 

## LEVERAGING RESOURCES AND TOOLS

### *Los Angeles Urban Waters Ambassador*

The Los Angeles River Partnership of 40 government and community Partner organizations welcomed their Urban Waters Ambassador in summer, 2012. The Los Angeles River Ambassador comes from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and whose full time position is funded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for a one or two year term, and is hosted by the Council for Watershed Health. The Ambassador has been serving as coordinator, facilitator and reporter of local watershed revitalization efforts - providing support in strategic planning and project/program execution.

### *Indicators of Watershed Health Project*

Understanding and communicating about watershed condition over the long-term is a critical aspect of watershed management. Assessment of progress in environmental management founded on investigation and reporting of watershed status is crucial because activities and programs impacting the watershed occur in numerous agencies and organizations. The goals of this project are to describe status and trends in ecological, social, and economic aspects of sustainability for the LA River Watershed and produce an annual report card. Investigators will develop indicators and metrics that respond to broad goals shared by resource managers and the public. The report card will be a tool communicated widely to agencies, corporations, elected officials, the public, and others to stimulate discussion and promote improvement in conditions. Partners involved with this project include the Council for Watershed Health and the EPA. This work would follow on the Council for Watershed Health's pilot investigation of the health of the Arroyo Seco Watershed.

### *South LA Wetlands Park*

In February 2012, the City of LA held its grand opening for the new South LA Wetlands Park, built on a former railcar and bus maintenance yard in a densely populated neighborhood sorely in need of green space. In this neighborhood, residential streets contain warehouses, mechanic shops and scrap yards. The new park replaces one of these industrial areas. The park includes constructed wetlands to naturally treat stormwater prior to its discharge into the LA River. This is an example of the City of LA's leadership in the use of green infrastructure to manage urban runoff and protect LA River water quality. City funding for stormwater management used Supplemental Environmental Project funds originating from a Clean Water Act settlement agreement involving EPA and the LA Regional Water Quality Control Board. EPA Brownfields grant funds assisted the cleanup of the site.

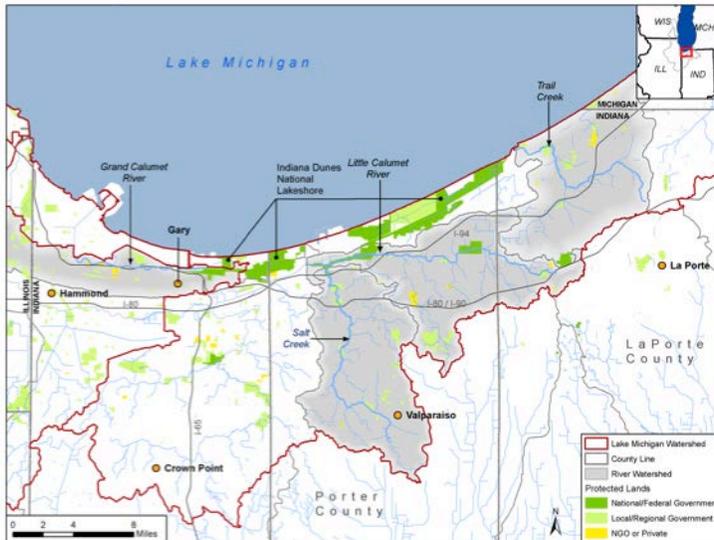
### *La Kretz Crossing*

The LA River Revitalization Corporation, with the support of a private donor, is building a new bridge across the River linking pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians from North Atwater Park and nearby residential neighborhoods to Griffith Park. The Army Corps of Engineers is reviewing construction drawings. Ground breaking is anticipated by mid-2013.



# NORTHWEST INDIANA AREA

## INDIANA



Northwest Indiana is an urban area heavily affected by industrial development. In the 20th century, Indiana's extraordinary natural shoreline of dunes, marshes, and rivers was extensively modified for human use. Rivers were dredged and channelized, marshes were drained and filled, and sand dunes were mined for glass production to make room for industry. Today a remarkable number of natural features remain, but the waterways continue to show the effects of industrial, agricultural, and urban use. Committed local residents, NGOs, and local government have worked tirelessly on behalf of local waterways to the benefit of local residents.

The Urban Waters Partnership is bringing together parties from multiple sectors and diminishing federal

silos in order to best assist local efforts. The Partnership has kept at the forefront a desire to focus on local communities' priorities and lend assistance with federal coordination rather than trying to drive the local agenda.

The Urban Waters pilot project includes the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and adjacent areas. The National Lakeshore extends across three counties in Northwest Indiana and encompasses 15 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, one-third of Indiana's shoreline. The location of the National Lakeshore in and near 15 cities and towns across the region makes it a logical nexus for Urban Waters projects.

## Collaborative Work Groups Lead High Priority Projects

*Initial efforts of the Partnership are focused on three key waterways with wide ranging regional impacts:*

1. Trail Creek
2. The East Branch of the Little Calumet River and Salt Creek
3. The Grand Calumet River Area of Concern

### **Formation of Trail Creek Work Group**

Trail Creek is a key waterway for Northwest Indiana because of E. coli contamination that flows from the Creek into Lake Michigan. Historic channelizing of the Creek has degraded water and habitat quality. Sedimentation expanded the width of the Creek and agricultural runoff is a contamination issue. Formation of this working group grew out of concurrence about the importance of the waterway and the potential for improvement with coordinated local efforts. There was early agreement that the Trail Creek work group will focus on the entire watershed since the contamination sources go beyond the Creek's banks and riparian zone. Planned activities include advancing a project to highlight Cheney Run, a 6-mile stretch of Trail Creek that has been directed into a culvert and has water quality impaired by E. coli. The group will also coordinate with the LaPorte County Soil and Water Conservation District regarding its Indiana Department of Environmental Management Section 319 grant for the Trail Creek and Galena River Watershed and plans for those funds.

## Participating Partners

DOT – U.S. Department of Transportation  
EDA – DOC Economic Development Administration  
EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NOAA – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NPS – DOI National Park Service  
NWS – DOC National Weather Service  
USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
USBR – DOI U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
USDA Forest Service  
USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

### **Non-Federal Entities**

Alliance for the Great Lakes  
Chesterton Storm Water Utility  
Chicago Wilderness  
City of Gary  
City of Hammond  
Conservation Connections  
Department of Environmental Affairs  
Dunes Learning Center  
Environmental Management  
Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation  
Illinois Indiana Sea Grant  
Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant/University of Illinois  
Indiana Dept. of Environmental Management  
Indiana Dept. of National Resources  
Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore  
Michigan Rim Project  
National Parks Conservation Association  
Northwest Indiana Paddling Association  
Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission  
Northwest Indiana Steelheaders  
Purdue University at Calumet  
Purdue University  
Save the Dunes  
Shedd Aquarium  
Shirley Heinze Land Trust  
The Nature Conservancy  
Valparaiso City Utilities/City of Valparaiso  
Wilderness Inquiry  
Wildlife Habitat Council

### **Formation of East Branch Little Calumet River/Salt Creek Work Group**

The East Branch of the Little Calumet River, including the Salt Creek tributary, flows through many Northwest Indiana communities and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore. Both waterways have underused recreation potential in communities where water recreation has historically been limited by access issues and a lack of coordination among riverbank landowners. Save the Dunes recently obtained grant funding to coordinate development of a watershed management plan for the East Branch of the Little Calumet River, in partnership with dozens of stakeholder groups including the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. Also with the aid of the partnership, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has been able to move forward with partner Shirley Heinze Land Trust on a project to restore natural habitat and eliminate pockets of invasive plant species that would otherwise threaten the Little Calumet Wetlands. Construction is scheduled to begin in November of 2012. This river flows across numerous properties, including land managed by the National Park Service. There are many issues to be addressed, ranging from studying the impact of woody debris removal, to the impact of the emerald ash borer along the waterway. Completion of an Environmental Assessment will make possible future projects.

### **Formation of Grand Calumet River Area of Concern (AOC) Work Group**

The Grand Calumet River AOC is of particular interest in Northwest Indiana as it includes the Grand Calumet River from the headwater lagoons all the way to the Indiana/Illinois state line and other near shore areas of Lake Michigan. The AOC is a focus area for Urban Waters due to its location to people, industry and habitat, legacy contamination, potential as a recreational waterway, and connection to Lake Michigan. While the AOC is still widely impaired, progress by federal, state, and local partners has been made that includes but is not limited to, extensive river dredging, habitat restoration, and the removal of 2 of the original 14 beneficial use impairments listed in the Remedial Action Plan (RAP). Even with this extensive work there is still a continued need for education and cooperation between groups in order to accomplish the goals of the RAP. Also while the RAP as developed by the Citizen's Advisory for Remediation of the Environment (CARE) Committee is the primary document for steering the work of the AOC, a plan for the Grand Calumet area was also developed 15-20 years ago by local citizens. This plan—"The Grand Calumet River/Indiana Harbor Ship Canal Corridor Vision"—laid out a long-term vision for the waterway. It is with renewed hope and activism that Urban Waters intends to revive the vision document and work together with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management's CARE committee to help reengage the community in planning for the river.

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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Launch/Official announcement and outreach about the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership at a December 2, 2011 meeting of the Quality of Life Council

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Formation of East Branch Little Calumet River/Salt Creek work group:

- Environmental Assessment for the portion of the river that flows through Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore
  - Planning for reforestation of the predominantly Ash riparian forest (emerald ash borer is wide spread here, nearly ensuring the death of these trees in the near term)
  - Implementation of Salt Creek watershed plan
- 

Formation of Grand Calumet River Area of Concern (AOC) work group:

- Vision document from 15 years ago needs updating as dredging and de-listing move forward
  - Urban Waters can help re-energize local efforts and reconnect with the IDEM committee tasked with de-listing the BUIs
- 

Formation of Trail Creek work group:

- Implementation of existing watershed plan and several local projects
  - Support and technical assistance from the federal agencies to activate coalition of local partners
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Formation of Northwest Indiana Mapping work group and development of mapping tools

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Using USDA Forest Service funding via the State of Indiana, supporting green jobs for restoration within the area of concern, with implementation beginning in spring 2012.

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Hiring an Ambassador to support the Partnership using USDA Forest Service funding. Save the Dunes will host the 2-year temporary position.

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## LEVERAGING RESOURCES AND TOOLS

### *Two-Year Term Urban Waters Ambassador*

USDA Forest Service provided funding to staff an Urban Waters Ambassador to support the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Pilot for two years. The Ambassador will be hired and managed by the community partner, Save the Dunes. This activity will provide a direct resource for convening, reporting, and assisting the Partnership in many other ways including project coordination and federal collaboration.

### *USDA Forest Service Funds Green Jobs for Restoration*

USDA Forest Service provided \$75,000 to the State of Indiana to support green jobs for restoration within the area of concern, to be implemented beginning in spring 2012. The individual projects are all geared towards meeting Urban Waters Partnership goals, and all funds will go to Urban Waters partners. These are the first federal funds directed to this pilot location to fund on-the-ground work.

### *Formation of Northwest Indiana Mapping Work Group*

Many Northwest Indiana organizations and municipalities do not have the capacity or funding to create their own mapping tool but would benefit from having access to a mapping tool and a range of data layers. There is no current resource like the user-friendly, widely useful USGS tool in Northwest Indiana and upon reviewing a demonstration of the USGS tool provided for the Anacostia pilot program, the Northwest Indiana Partners identified many ways that such a tool could be useful for local municipalities, residents, and NGOs. The work group was therefore formed and will provide input to USGS on development of a mapping tool for Northwest Indiana, provide data layers to add to the map when possible, identify and solicit data from agencies and organizations not currently involved in the Partnership, promote use of the tool among their contacts and use the tool themselves when appropriate to create custom, user-generated maps for presentations, outreach, and study.

#### **PILOT LEAD CONTACT**

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Forest Service  
847-866-9311  
[LWestphal@fs.fed.us](mailto:LWestphal@fs.fed.us)

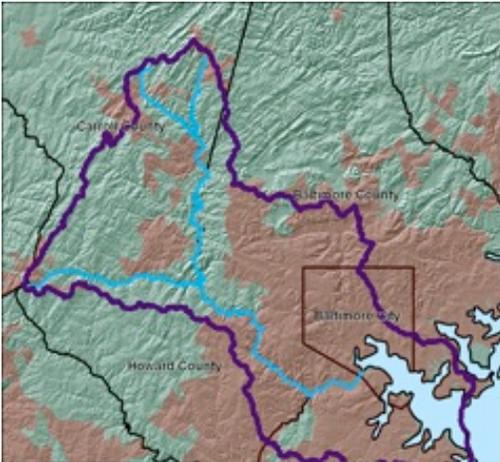
#### **OTHER KEY CONTACT**

Natalie Johnson, Urban Waters Ambassador  
219-879-3937



# PATAPSCO WATERSHED / BALTIMORE REGION

## MARYLAND



The Urban Waters Federal Partnership for the Baltimore region's watersheds is led by the USDA Forest Service's Baltimore Field Station. The Patapsco River moves within the Baltimore region and is an invaluable resource for recreation and economic development. The 375,000-acre Patapsco River Watershed alone spans four counties, flows to the Baltimore City Harbor, and ultimately into the Chesapeake Bay. In addition to the Patapsco River, the Patapsco River Watershed includes Gwynns Falls, Jones Falls, and Baltimore Harbor. The watershed consists of forested areas, rural areas, productive farms, as well as suburban, urban, and industrial areas.

Baltimore hosted the National Launch for the Urban Waters Initiative. Many of the local partners and government officials participated in the launch and have been active in monthly stakeholder meetings since. The Baltimore team has developed a business model for coordination and collaboration and identified four sub-teams to lead their collaborative efforts, each centered around local projects and led by local partners.

Federal Partners are also developing conservation tools, such as regional discharge curves developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which will help conservation practitioners design more successful stream restoration projects. With an increase in urban development, the Baltimore Watersheds face new challenges such as stormwater run-off and higher sediment loads that must be addressed in order to sustain the Chesapeake Bay. The Baltimore Urban Waters Partnership is leading to increased collaboration within and between federal, state, and local levels, with a focus on integrating the 3 P's of sustainability – people, prosperity, and planet.

## Baltimore Urban Waters Green Pattern Book

The "Green Pattern Book" is in development and is intended to be used by Baltimore city agencies, NGOs, community groups, schools, businesses, and individual residents to promote the understanding and implementation of green infrastructure practices throughout the city. The Green Pattern Book will include visioning tools, guidelines, and site selection criteria for a full range of green infrastructure practices and techniques, including green stormwater infrastructure, community-managed open spaces and gardens, urban agriculture, public open spaces, and urban forestry.

The visioning component will include sample plans and images of various green infrastructure techniques to introduce unfamiliar concepts to a wider audience and help users envision how these practices could enhance their communities. The site selection component will provide a base level of technical guidance about the site factors to be considered in the selection and implementation of various green infrastructure practices. The guidelines component will provide guidance on the process of implementing green infrastructure practices, including best management practices for design and implementation, which city agencies need to be involved, what types of permits may be required, which local organizations can provide resources and support, and where groups and organizations can seek grants and other sources of funding to implement their projects.

The creation of the Green Pattern Book engages a diverse set of experts, city agencies, and community members of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, and will collect success stories of its use to be released in subsequent editions. The Green Pattern Book will be formally adopted by the Baltimore Planning Commission and will help guide Baltimore's Growing Green Initiative to green 10,000 vacant lots in Baltimore as part of a larger land management strategy.

With a clearer understanding of the benefits and options for green infrastructure improvements, more organizations and individuals in Baltimore will choose to adopt these practices, and with a better knowledge of how best to plan and implement them, the projects created will last longer and will have greater benefits for improving the quality of water draining into the Patapsco Watershed. The project's results will be shared with local, regional, and national partners and colleagues and will be freely available on the web and local assistance centers.

## Participating Partners

DOI – U.S. Department of the Interior, Office of the Secretary

DOT – U.S. Department of Transportation

EDA – DOC Economic Development Administration

EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service

HUD – Housing and Urban Development

NASA – National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NOAA – DOC National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NPS – DOI National Park Service

NRCS – USDA National Resources

Conservation Service

USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

USDA Forest Service

USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

### **Non-Federal Entities**

Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

American Rivers

Baltimore City Government

Baltimore Conservation Leadership Corps

Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management

Baltimore Development Corporation

Baltimore Stewardship Mapping

Blue Water Baltimore

Center for Watershed Protection

Chesapeake Bay Trust

Civic Works (Baltimore Service Corps)

Citizens Planning and Housing Association

Howard County Government (MD)

Maryland State Department of Natural Resources

Parks & People Foundation

University of Baltimore: Baltimore Neighborhood

Indicators Alliance—The Jacob France Institute

Waterfront Partnership of Baltimore, Inc.

Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC)

## USDA Forest Service Products Laboratory

In collaboration with Baltimore City's Office of Sustainability and Department of Public Works, the Forest Products Laboratory, the National Research Laboratory of the USDA Forest Service, is assisting the Baltimore Urban Waters Federal Partnership with a



unique building materials reclamation, reuse, and recycling project through the establishment of centers for "Stormwater Tools Outreach Resources & Materials" or STORM centers. These STORM

centers will be the nexus for implementation of green infrastructure projects by making available reclaimed materials from demolition properties for re-purposing in green building projects. The City of Baltimore is slated to demolish 20,000 buildings and the Partnership will work with them to determine how to reclaim and recycle as much of the demolitions as possible to be used as raw materials in green infrastructure projects.

The USDA Forest Service Forest Products Lab will provide consultation to help assist with the challenges associated with the demolition and building of housing and commercial districts within Baltimore. In a complimentary effort, the Forest Products Lab will also be leading a design competition for new and renovated buildings that are carbon and water neutral (zero carbon footprint). This Baltimore Green Building Competition is scheduled to begin in the fall of fiscal year 2013. The competition will incorporate designing and implementing green infrastructure as well as designing to incorporate re-purposed materials.

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## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

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National launch of Urban Waters Initiative

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Monthly stakeholder meetings

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Increase awareness and access to federal grants/funds/resources for local application

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Cost sharing and leveraging existing investments and future opportunities

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Initial inventory of projects, stewardships, and resources in the Baltimore area

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Development of business plan for future projects and initiatives

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Achieved concurrence on primary project efforts: Green pattern book, local projects, mapping and spatial analysis, models and monitoring programs

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Secured funding for Ambassador and Project Support positions

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Mapping and Spatial Analysis

- Stewardship map
  - Sustainable Neighborhood Indicators Working group
- 

Research and Regulatory Programs

- Baltimore Ecosystem Study
  - Watershed 263 data analysis and reporting
  - USGS Stream flow gage program
  - USGS/UMBC Urban Hydrology Study
  - Methods development for EAB impact assessment, detection and mapping pilot project for the Baltimore area in coordination with NASA
  - Urban Tree Canopy Assessments and Prioritization
- 

Green Pattern Book and Green Infrastructure

- Green Pattern Book
  - Baltimore Green Infrastructure designs & consulting
  - Scoping of Baltimore County and Baltimore City Green Infrastructure Initiative plans
  - Reduction, reuse and recycling of building materials
  - Reuse and recycling of plant biomass (urban forestry)
  - Design competition for new and renovated buildings that are carbon and water neutral (zero carbon footprint)
- 

Local Projects

- Watershed 263
  - Local project coordination and collaboration using a standardized template
  - Youth job training in environmental field for Gwynns Falls Trail Improvement
  - Baltimore's Second Harbor Project
- 

## COMMUNITY “HANDS-ON” PROJECTS

### *Prioritization Matrix*

The matrix is a tool developed to allow for an objective inventory of local and current programs and projects currently underway. This inventory will be used to identify synergistic and collaborative opportunities. The inventory may also help prioritize needs of local partners and the logical sequence of projects. The tool makes it possible for all the different partners to see where they have agreement and where to collaborate.

### *Ambassador*

USDA Forest Service S&PF provided \$175,000 to staff an Urban Waters Ambassador for 2 years and provide seed funding for priority projects including the Green Pattern Book and Mapping and Spatial Analysis. Local partners hosting these efforts include Parks and People Foundation, the Baltimore City Office of Sustainability, and Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance.

### *Gwynns Falls Job Training*

USDA Forest Service S&PF provided \$75,000 to the State of Maryland to support green jobs for restoration. This project provided 1 urban youth from Baltimore City with 6 weeks of paid arboriculture training and work experience, to improve the heavily urbanized Gwynns Falls Trail. Their work experience included career exploration and enrichment in arboriculture and natural resources management, as delivered by a partnership, including the MD DNR Forest Service, MD DNR Park Service Conservation Jobs Corps, MD Arborist Association, and Baltimore City Parks and Recreation. These were the first federal funds directed to this pilot location to fund direct, on-the-ground work.

### *Blue Water Baltimore: Project Ripple Effect*

This NGO partner has defined a project, supported as a priority of the partnership, that seeks to work in the Oliver neighborhood in East Baltimore. The project uses the concept of a neighborhood hub, such as an elementary school, and from there maps opportunities for cleaning, greening, and installation of BMP's that will add value to the community. By implementing different micro and macro projects, an integrated approach of “treatment trains” will maximize the benefits of each practice. Many, if not all, Federal Partners involved in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership may provide in-kind support, technical assistance, or funding support to help realize the comprehensive and holistic suite of activities that will enhance neighborhood livability and vitality, and connect citizens to the Baltimore Harbor and local streams. The project builds from existing community interest and assets, improves the aesthetics of the community, and builds a stewardship ethic among a diverse population.

#### **PILOT LEAD CONTACT**

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# SOUTH PLATTE RIVER IN DENVER

## COLORADO

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership for the South Platte River is co-led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the USDA Forest Service. The South Platte River, which runs through Denver, Colorado, is an invaluable resource for drinking water, recreation and economic development, both upstream and within Denver.



The Partnership has focused on creating visibility, synergy, enthusiasm and increased collaboration for this large and diverse partnership. Expanding and opening up communications within the existing social network has helped project partners identify, pursue, and secure funding opportunities. The South Platte River in Denver is primarily an industrial corridor with only three neighborhoods with direct access to the river, one of which is a Denver Housing Authority affordable housing complex. Because of the industrial character, many of the urban neighborhoods in proximity to the river are distressed. The headwaters area, which is in the mountains, has a completely different character and much of the land is managed by the USDA Forest Service.

## Building Capacity and Leveraging Resources

Networking and information sharing have been an initial focus for the Partnership.

The USDA Forest Service Urban and Community Forestry Program provided \$114,000 through a competitive matching grant process coordinated by the State of Colorado to support green jobs and restoration. Funded projects will be implemented by the Bluff Lake Nature Center; Denver Parks & Recreation; Institute for Environmental Solutions; and South Suburban Parks & Recreation. These projects will involve a range of activities including planting native tree species for storm water and flood control, removal of invasive species along waterways, and education about watersheds and water-quality issues. The projects will benefit high need neighborhoods in the Denver Urban Waters pilot area.

The USDA Forest Service leveraged resources to benefit continued implementation of headwaters restoration projects, anchored by two major efforts: the Hayman Restoration Partnership, and the USDA Forest Service and Denver Water's Forest to Faucet Partnership. The Hayman Restoration Partnership is led by the National Forest Foundation as part of its Treasured Landscapes conservation campaign. Along with key partners Vail Resorts, Aurora Water, and the Coalition for the Upper South Platte, this project is continuing with innovative stream and riparian restoration in critical watersheds as part of the Hayman fire recovery effort.

Through the Forest to Faucet partnership, the USDA Forest Service and Denver Water completed 3,400 acres of fuel treatments and reforestation to date, working towards a goal of treating over 23,000 acres by 2015. The goal is to reduce fire risk and protect water infrastructure in high priority watersheds in the South Platte that contribute to Denver's water supply.

The USDA Forest Service has provided funding to staff a two-year Urban Waters Ambassador to provide overall coordination for the Denver Urban Waters Pilot. Colorado State USDA Forest Service will serve as host and manage the selection of a candidate for the Ambassador position with input from the federal pilot co-leads.

## Participating Partners

ATSDR – Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry  
CNCS – Corporation for National and Community Service  
DOI – U.S. Department of the Interior  
EDA – DOC Economic Development Administration  
EPA – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
FWS – DOI Fish and Wildlife Service  
HUD – Housing and Urban Development  
NPS – DOI National Park Service  
NRCS – USDA National Resources Conservation Service  
USACE – DA U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Omaha District  
USBR – U.S. Bureau of Reclamation  
USDA Forest Service  
USGS – DOI U.S. Geological Survey

### **Non-Federal Entities**

Barr Lake Milton Watershed Association  
Bluff Lake Nature Center  
Buirgy Consulting, Inc  
CH2MHill  
City of Aurora  
Chatfield Area Network for Outreach and Education (CANOE)  
Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners  
City and County of Denver  
Coalition for the Upper South Platte  
Colorado Department of Natural Resources  
Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment  
Colorado State Forest Service  
Colorado State Parks  
Colorado Watershed Assembly  
Colorado Natural Heritage Program (CSU)  
Denver Water  
Earth Force  
Environmental Learning for Kids  
Greenway Foundation  
Groundwork Denver  
Jefferson Conservation District  
Metro One World One Water Center  
National Forest Foundation  
Sand Creek Regional Greenway Partnership  
South Platte CURE  
Trust for Public Lands  
Urban Drainage and Flood Control District  
Westerly Connection  
Western Hardrock Watershed VISTA Team

## Westerly Creek Restoration



Multiple Partnership members are involved in the Westerly Creek Restoration project which includes a stream restoration design for a new park. This project uniquely engaged the impacted multi-cultural community for input, and

featured a children's design component, during which children from the community were able to provide their input on uses and what the creek should look like. The park is in the East Colfax neighborhood in an environmental justice community rich with diversity. The area is home to recent immigrants that live in affordable housing sandwiched between two of the Greater Denver Area's premier sustainable living communities, Lowry and Stapleton. Language translation at the meetings ensured community-based input during the park design process. The first public meeting, held in March, focused on the stream restoration design for Westerly Creek. The design is being funded with EPA Brownfields Revitalization and Environmental Justice funding and is led by EPA Region 8's Urban Waters Team. Based on community input from both adults and the children, the draft design will explore: a low water creek crossing, small areas where park visitors can walk by the creek and an area where children can access and play in the creek. Other areas along the creek could be riparian. There will be limited use of turf with the use of native grasses in the upland areas, marshy areas along the creek, decking over the inlet to create a public space, areas where visitors can picnic, and new lighting.

In April, a second community input meeting was held on the stream restoration design for Westerly Creek. Results from the first meeting in March, where the community voted on different elements were shared. The project team took the voting results and came up with three preliminary design concepts and melded them into one. The team presented the design concept to the community, and the community agreed to the concept with one minor change. They decided to have a bridge instead of a low-water crossing.

This partnership project is being accomplished in conjunction with the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), City and County of Denver, Earth Force, Westerly Creek Connection and Urban Drainage and Flood Control District. TPL and the City provided funding to build the park, which will have an urban garden, a playground, and a ball field and is scheduled to open in May 2012. EPA funding supports the design work for the stream restoration. It is anticipated the restoration work should be implemented in the next few years.

## PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES

USDA urban forestry land restoration projects that support green jobs

Partnership Coordinator

Initial field implementation of Hayman Restoration Project

Children's Forest Corridor project for the urban working group of America's Great Outdoors

EPA Urban Waters Small Grants

UWFP partners participated in World Water Monitoring Day (9/2011) on the South Platte River

Colorado Water 2012

Creating visibility, credibility, enthusiasm, and increased collaboration for a large and diverse partnership

Urban Waters Youth Development Green Jobs Pilot, (River Rangers) Denver

Bear Creek Watershed Plan

Monitoring-South Platte River, Sand Creek, Westerly Creek for pharmaceuticals, personal care products, and pesticides

River Vision Coordination Committee-Support the restoration of the South Platte River, Denver, Colorado

South Platte Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Grant

Targeted Brownfields Assessment for Westerly Creek at Stapleton

Westerly Creek Stream Restoration Design

Protect our Urban River Environment (PURE) trash monitoring protocols, survey, and cleanup

Bear Creek Watershed Plan, Denver, Jefferson and Arapahoe Counties

EPA Region 8 LID/GI website

Curtis Basin Regional Stormwater Planning

Implementing Source Water Protection MOU between USFS Region 2 and CDPHE

Strengthening Colorado's Water and Forest Education Connections with Project Learning Tree

USGS NAWQA Program

Mapping Green Infrastructure

Groundwork Denver healthy living

Waters Sense partnership with Delta Faucet

Aurora Brownfields area-wide planning grant

Enforcement inspections

Emergency response to petroleum seepage in Sand Creek.

Urban Waters proposal to Mayor Hancock

EPA Green Infrastructure Initiative

America's Great Outdoors Rocky Mountain Greenway

National Forest Foundation's Treasured Landscapes

Project mapping, systems mapping

Source Water Protection

Reducing Fire Risk to Denver's water infrastructure through Forest to Faucet project implementation

## COMMUNITY "HANDS-ON" PROJECTS

### *Urban Waters River Rangers*

This urban waters green jobs pilot gives urban youth the opportunity to sample, analyze, and map water quality, complete green jobs internships, and apply for environmental education certification. Partners include EPA (under contract with Skeo Solutions and Buirgy Consulting), the Greenway Foundation, Earth Force, and Colorado Watershed Assembly River Watch. The Greenway Foundation of Denver plans to provide a permanent home for this program. Internships are confirmed with The Nature Conservancy, and USFS.

### *Children's Forest Corridor*

A Children's Forest Corridor in the Rocky Mountain Region is being implemented with \$47,000 in seed funding provided by the USDA Forest Service, for environmental education literacy, as well as EPA funding for green infrastructure design work at Johnson-Habitat Park. The goal is to create and link a network of natural places for kids to explore along the South Platte River with anchor sites on the Pike National Forest and Pawnee National Grassland, and to create a virtual online "base camp" to help connect youth to these outdoor recreation opportunities. Many additional urban waters partners are supporting the project in a variety of ways, and the project was also chosen as an America's Great Outdoors Project.

### *Protect our Urban River Environment (PURE) Trash Monitoring*

The Greenway Foundation is kicking off a large project to assess, monitor and clean up trash from the South Platte River with the first of 3 events taking place in April 2012. This project is funded through EPA's 319 nonpoint source grant to the state and is a part of our broader Urban Waters web of collaborative, complementary, and multi-agency activities focused on the South Platte. Over 120 volunteers and coordinators were involved along with 1200 volunteers to do trash cleanup, plantings, and painting in between survey areas. The Greenway Foundation, Denver Environmental Health, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Metro Wastewater Reclamation, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District and Confluence Kayaks were all involved. PURE received the grant of \$50,000 with a \$33,333 match.

### *Westerly Creek Stream Restoration Design*

The EPA provided Environmental Justice special projects funding (\$20,000) and Brownfields Revitalization funding (\$30,000) for Westerly Creek stream restoration design for New Freedom Park at 13<sup>th</sup> and Xenia. This was done in conjunction with Trust for Public Lands, the City and County of Denver, Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, Westerly Creek Greenway Master Plan, and Earth Force. This project is in an immigrant community and includes community and youth input activities.

#### **PILOT CO-LEAD CONTACTS**

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# FEDERAL PARTNER ACTIVITY REPORTS





# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, FOREST SERVICE

## Major Activities

*The mission of the USDA Forest Service is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations.*

The USDA Forest Service has taken the lead representing the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. Working with the Partnership helps further the USDA Forest Service's own mission, while also advancing the restoration of degraded urban waters and serving as a catalyst for economic revitalization of disadvantaged communities.

Staff from across the USDA Forest Service support work at all seven of the pilot locations. Executive staff also supports the partnership on national coordination efforts. In fiscal year 2011 and 2012, the USDA Forest Service offered more than \$800,000 in funding, technical assistance and critical analysis tools to advance the partnership's vision.

## Resource Commitments

### COMMITTING STAFF, PROVIDING LEADERSHIP

The USDA Forest Service serves as a Pilot Lead for three of the Urban Waters pilot projects – primary lead in Baltimore and Northwest Indiana, and co-lead for the Denver pilot. In addition to resource commitments to lead these pilots, the USDA Forest Service has made direct investments in related project work.

As an example, in Baltimore, the USDA Forest Service Forest Products Lab will provide \$40,000 worth of technical assistance to conduct a Baltimore Green Building Competition to be held in 2012. This competition will lend itself to the goals of the pilot to address much of demolition and revitalization scheduled to occur in Baltimore's watersheds with green projects that align with the goals of the Partnership. *Also see page 23 for more details.*

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of USDA Forest Service and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Promote all-lands conservation
- Connect America along the rural-urban gradient
- Conduct ecological and social science research on urban ecosystems
- Engage the public in urban natural resources stewardship – public education, job training, volunteer action
- Support green jobs
- Create public-private partnerships
- Implement watershed forestry projects
- Reconnect people to their waterways through science, management and technology transfer
- Work to revitalize and stabilize communities in economically distressed areas

## FUNDING PILOTS, BUILDING TEAMS

### ***\$260,000 to pilot communities for restoration, community engagement, and green jobs programs, including:***

- \$100,000 in USDA Forest Service community grants via the State of Colorado was awarded in spring 2012 to support restoration projects to benefit high need neighborhoods in Denver Urban Waters Pilot. Grantees: Bluff Lake Nature Center; Denver Parks & Recreation; Institute for Environmental Solutions; and South Suburban Parks & Recreation. ***Also see page 26 for more details.***
- \$75,000 in USDA Forest Service competitive grants was awarded via the State of Indiana to implement projects in Lake, LaPorte, and Porter Counties in Lake Michigan Tributaries of the Grand Calumet River, East Branch of the Little Calumet, and Salt and Trail Creek AOC. Awards went to Town of Merriville, Town of Munster, and City of Valparaiso. ***Also see page 21 for more details.***
- \$75,000 from the USDA Forest Service via the State of Maryland will provide green job training and employment for 14 youth during summer 2012, via the Maryland Park Service Conservation Jobs Corps Program. Youths will do restoration work in the highly urbanized Gwynns Falls Watershed in support of the Baltimore Urban Waters Pilot. ***Also see page 35 for more details.***
- \$10,000 from USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station's Civil Rights Special Projects Fund will allow the Bronx and Harlem River Pilot Partnership to hire a local Bronx student to do outreach work and support community meetings in spring 2012. ***Also see page 13 for more details.***

### ***\$525,000 of USDA Forest Service S&PF resources to help build local Urban Waters Pilot Partnership Teams:***

- \$150,000 to staff an Urban Waters Ambassador for 2 years to support Denver Urban Waters Pilot. Colorado State University – USDA Forest Service will manage and implement. ***Also see page 26 for more details.***
- \$145,000 to staff an Urban Waters Ambassador for 2 years to support Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Pilot. Save the Dunes is the implementing partner. ***Also see page 22 for more details.***
- \$150,000 to staff an Urban Waters Ambassador and local project support person to assist Baltimore Urban Waters Pilot, over 2 years. Partners: Parks and People Foundation & Baltimore City Office of Sustainability. ***Also see page 25 for more details.***
- \$80,000 of remaining funds for needs identified by the Urban Waters Pilots and National Partnership Team, such as support for any new USDA Forest Service led pilot sites selected in summer 2012.

## **BALTIMORE PILOT HIGHLIGHT:**

The USDA Forest Service is providing \$40,000 worth of technical assistance from Forest Products Lab to help conduct a Baltimore Green Building Competition in 2012.

## **Agency Toolbox**

While the USDA Forest Service is leading three of the pilots, USDA staff supports all seven pilots and offers the use of USDA Forest Service technologies, tools and research findings where appropriate – including:

- ***i-Tree Analysis Tool:*** Does urban forestry analysis and benefits assessment to help communities strengthen their forestry management and advocacy efforts.
- ***Urban Tree Canopy (UTC) Assessment:*** Decision makers can quantify current UTC coverage and create informed plans to increase it.
- ***Stewardship Mapping Assessment (STEW-MAP):*** identifies social and spatial interactions among civic groups who conserve, manage, monitor, advocate for, and educate the public about their local environments (including water, land, air, waste, toxics and energy issues). Stew-MAP is being leveraged now by the Bronx/Harlem River pilot and is in development in Northwest Indiana and Baltimore pilots. It is available for other pilots to use.



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

## Major Activities

*HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all.*

Urban communities, where much of HUD's efforts are focused, cannot become sustainable and inclusive if the economic, environmental, and social benefits of urban water systems are compromised. HUD's mission is better served through participation in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP).

HUD has made a staffing commitment to this partnership. HUD staff contributes to both the national UWFP working group and local working groups at UWFP pilot locations, with their primary role being to connect the dots between underserved communities and other stakeholders.

HUD has engaged staff from three of its offices to participate in the partnership: the Office of Sustainable Housing and Communities for the urban waters national working group, and the Office of Field Policy and Management and Office of Community Planning and Development at the field level to support pilot locations.

## HUD's Pilot Location Support

### *Los Angeles River Watershed*

HUD and the other federal and local partner organizations plan to leverage a \$2,250,000 grant awarded to the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles under the 2010 HUD Sustainable Communities Challenge Grant. This funding will aid the Urban Waters pilot effort in the Los Angeles River watershed.

The Northeast Los Angeles (NELA) Collaborative will convene the Community Redevelopment Agency of the City of Los Angeles, the Department of City Planning, and the Department of Transportation to create an implementation strategy for the redevelopment of 2,200 acres of the Glendale Narrows portion of the Los Angeles River, guided by the policy and vision of the 2007 LA River Revitalization Master Plan.

HUD field staff here serves a mission-focused role of helping to ensure that low and moderate-income residents' concerns remain at the forefront of the redevelopment plan as it emerges. They attend pilot meetings, provide information on relevant HUD programs and activities, and give feedback on the general direction of pilot activities.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT

The missions of HUD and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Leverage \$14M in sustainability grants via HUD's Sustainable Communities Planning and Challenge grant programs
- Integrate housing, land use, economic development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in ways that foster healthy communities and residents
- Partner to revitalize distressed lands along urban waterways
- Improve access and education for communities along waterways
- Connect low to moderate- income community stakeholders to projects that affect them

### ***New Orleans Lake Pontchartrain Area***

HUD is providing 90 days of on-site staff support to the Lake Pontchartrain Area pilot to assist in the Lafitte Corridor Project, being led by the National Park Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The project will help preserve an urban greenway for use by residents, and connect the French Quarter to the central business district. ***Also see pages 14-16 for more details.***

### ***Baltimore's Patapsco River and Watersheds***

HUD's Baltimore field office staff has been actively working to give a voice to the communities affected by the Urban Waters pilot, by bringing them to the table with the pilot working group. These stakeholder groups include Community Development Block Grant recipients and residents of public housing projects in the Patapsco Watershed. This participation has begun to enable improved communication between Federal Partnership agencies and local organizations, such as determining where HUD's technical assistance could be useful on the ground.

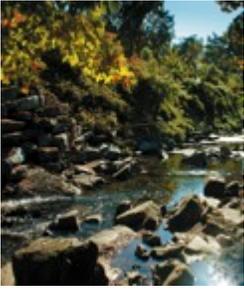
***Also see pages 14-16 for more details.***

### ***Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds***

HUD is playing a supporting role for the Bronx River pilot, with a goal of improving access and education for communities along the waterway and improving the ecological health of the river. There is a potential need at this pilot site for an increased local government connection, which HUD may be able to facilitate.

### ***Anacostia River Watershed***

HUD's role in the Anacostia River watershed pilot to date has been to connect pilot organizers with key stakeholders. HUD also continues to do existing work related to Urban Waters in the Anacostia watershed, such as public housing authority runoff mitigation projects.



## U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Major Activities

*DOI is playing a leadership role with the convening partners in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership. Secretary Salazar launched four of the seven pilots and Deputy Secretary David Hayes noted, “The Urban Waters Partnership aligns with the President’s America’s Great Outdoors initiative—these efforts strive to make government a better partner with communities.”*

#### Our Commitment

In addition to Secretary Salazar’s site visits and Deputy Secretary Hayes serving as DOI’s signatory to the partnership, DOI has provided two executive level representatives, two National Park Service staff leading the Bronx/Harlem and Anacostia Rivers pilot sites, and staff support from—

- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation
- National Park Service
- U.S. Geological Survey

Roughly twenty biologists, planners, scientists, and researchers across DOI are supporting work at all seven pilot project sites. Staff also supports the partnership on national coordination efforts.

### DOI Led Pilots and National Support

#### Bronx & Harlem Rivers Watersheds

The NPS is the lead for the Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds Pilot. In addition to those actions highlighted in the pilot reports, the NPS has directly invested in two projects that support local priorities:

- **Recreation on the Bronx River** — The Bronx River Alliance has received a \$25,000 NPS grant to support work on the Bronx River Water Trail, projects include improving public launches and access as well as training partner organizations to lead educational canoe and kayak programs with the goal of increasing participation in these programs to 7,000 individuals this year.

### MISSION ALIGNMENT

The goals of the America’s Great Outdoors initiative align with those of the Urban Waters Partnership in the following ways:

- Reconnect Americans, especially children, to America’s rivers and waterways, landscapes of national significance, ranches, farms and forests, great parks, and coasts and beaches by:
  - promoting community-based recreation and conservation, including local parks, greenways, beaches, and waterways
  - advancing job and volunteer opportunities related to conservation and outdoor recreation
  - supporting existing programs and projects that educate and engage Americans in our history, culture, and natural bounty
- Build upon State, local, private, and tribal priorities for the conservation of land, water, wildlife, historic, and cultural resources, creating corridors and connectivity across these outdoor spaces and determine how the Federal Government can best advance those priorities with public-private partnerships and locally supported strategies.
- Use science-based management practices to restore and protect our lands and waters for future generations.

- **Recreation on the Harlem River** — The Harlem River Working Group is partnering with the NPS for an intensive week of programming that will provide an on-water experience for 600 Bronx students and culminate in a day of community-wide celebration of the Harlem River Waterfront. NPS is providing \$15,000 in support of the program and many of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership agencies will be on hand to provide educational and water monitoring programs for the celebration.

### **Anacostia River Watershed**

The NPS and EPA are co-leads with FWS and USGS also participating. DOI contributed significantly to the Anacostia mapping project which is highlighted in the pilot section of this report. Additional DOI projects include:

- **River Angling Study** — In partnership with the Anacostia Riverkeeper, FWS, EPA, the District of Columbia Department of the Environment, NOAA, and NPS initiated a field study among anglers along the banks of the Anacostia River to determine the extent of fishing practices, fish consumption and sharing, and the awareness of health risks. Federal agencies and partners have contributed roughly \$100,00 for the study. A report of these findings was published in the fall of 2012. It is anticipated that a follow-up study will be conducted that will look at outreach efforts to educate anglers and their families of the health risks.
- **Assessing Water Quality and Quantity** — This year USGS will contribute \$80K (totaling \$800K over the last decade) to work with the District to install water monitoring wells in the Anacostia watershed and other parts of the city. This network of monitoring wells allows USGS and partners to track changes in groundwater levels, analyze water quality, and identify changes in the water quality over time.

### **SUPPORTING PILOTS, PARTNERS, AND BUILDING TEAMS**

DOI is also contributing to additional Urban Waters pilot programs in the following ways:

**Los Angeles** – DOI’s Bureau of Reclamation also awarded \$1M in funding for the Los Angeles Basin Stormwater Conservation Study—selected in part because Los Angeles is an Urban Waters and AGO pilot project. Stakeholders and the federal team were able to get U.S. Army Corps of Engineers funding for the LA River Feasibility Study into the President's budget. This was the highest priority for local stakeholders and due in large part to the Urban Waters partnership.

**Denver** — In May 2012, DOI Secretary Salazar pulled together an impressive gathering of federal, state, and local partners—including Urban Waters Partnership members—to both recognize the ongoing progress on developing a strong system of trails, parks, and open spaces along the South Platte and the greater Greenway, and to challenge everyone to work together to do more. Denver Mayor Hancock stated, "This federal, state and local partnership will have a significant impact on focusing resources to improve the ecological health and sustainability for our South Platte River Corridor." NPS is now working with the City, the Greenway Foundation, and a broad group of federal, state, and local partners to focus on improving the ability of underserved neighborhoods to access and use the greenway, trails, and other outdoor amenities within the South Platte corridor.

**Indiana** — The Northwest Indiana partnership has been the catalyst to make the East Branch of the Little Calumet River a destination for recreation and restoration. The National Park Service, along with several NGOs, had not had much success in the past developing a collaborative effort between governments, businesses, and private landowners to address issues common to a river in a community that has both heavy industry and agriculture. The Urban Waters program has proven to be key in bringing the stakeholders together to foster effective partnerships. *(Also see page 20 for more details.)*

**New Orleans** — Partners for the New Orleans Lake Pontchartrain Pilot Project are creating an informative video by USGS National Wetlands Research Center, the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act outreach team, and the University of New Orleans Coastal Education and Research Facility. The video will be released this summer 2012 and tie together education, coastal restoration, and urban waters in the Greater New Orleans Area.



# U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

## Major Activities

*The mission of the U.S. EPA is to protect human health and the environment. A core strategy in achieving this mission is protecting America's waters.*

EPA is one of the four convening agencies for the Urban Waters Federal Partnership and currently serves a primary facilitation role, supplying staff and resources to support and grow the Partnership's infrastructure, and its networking and communications framework.

In its coordination role, EPA:

- Convenes the headquarters level executive workgroup meetings of the federal partners, and provides conference call services and logistical support.
- Leads the Pilot Learning Network, hosting a bi-weekly conference call enabling peer-to-peer exchange of ideas and identification of available resources from government and private organizations.
- Facilitates compilation of information for various media purposes, the annual report, and other data calls.
- Manages a shared Web presence at [www.urbanwaters.gov](http://www.urbanwaters.gov), which EPA established on behalf of the Partnership.
- Sponsors an annual National Urban Waters Workshop, which provides learning opportunities and strategic planning for partnership members, pilot leads and stakeholder organizations.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of EPA and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Use all tools at our disposal to protect America's waters
- Work at community level to provide safe, healthy and accessible outdoor spaces
- Focus on economically distressed communities, and work to create jobs
- Create new and innovative partnerships
- Recognize and build on local efforts and leadership, by engaging and serving community partners
- Engage communities in activities that increase their stewardship of local urban waterways

## Cross-Country Support for Urban Waters Projects

**EPA's Urban Waters Small Grants** awarded \$2.7 million to 46 successful grant applicants who will receive \$40,000 - \$60,000 each for urban waters projects. Awardees were announced in June 2012 and represent 32 states and Puerto Rico.

**EPA's Targeted Watershed Grant Program** awarded \$600,000 in FY 2011 to manage an Urban Watershed Capacity Building Grant. A partnership was formed with Groundwork USA and River Network to establish and manage sub-awards for technical assistance and urban watershed capacity building projects.

**EPA's 10 Regional Offices are engaged** in all seven pilot programs and support urban waters related activities across the country, including more than 100 activities identified in EPA's 2012/2013 Urban Waters Action Plan.

### ***Leading and Bolstering Pilot Programs***

EPA is the Urban Waters Pilot Lead in Los Angeles and New Orleans, and co-Lead for the Denver pilot. EPA has made direct investments not only in these pilots, but in all seven pilot locations.

### ***Anacostia River Watershed***

In the Anacostia River Watershed, EPA is the lead partnership agency on a project working with the Anacostia Community Museum (ACM) on a newly opened exhibition, entitled: Reclaiming the Edge: Urban Waterways and Civic Engagement. As part of this project, the ACM, the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, and other partners, worked with a variety of stakeholders in the Anacostia watershed to investigate citizen engagement with urban waterways and design an exhibit to raise awareness about human-biosphere interaction. The Exhibit opened in September 2012.

### ***Bronx and Harlem River Watersheds***

EPA sponsored a Rapid Assessment boat tour of the Harlem River in partnership with the National Park Service. This effort supported implementation of the Bronx River Watershed Management Plan. EPA is also assisting with the Wading and Shore Birds Project, designed to highlight the importance of local bird species in the Bronx River. ***Also see page 11 for more details.***

### ***Lake Pontchartrain Area Watersheds***

EPA is funding a 1-2 year full time employee at the GS 12/13 level to staff the local partnership and assist with convening, strategic planning, reporting, and ensuring continuity of pilot projects. The City of New Orleans serves as the local host and implementing partner. ***Also see page 14 for more details.***

### ***Los Angeles River Watershed***

EPA is funding a 1-2 year full time employee at the GS 12/13 level to staff the local partnership and assist with convening, strategic planning, reporting, and ensuring continuity of pilot projects. The Council for Watershed Health will host the Ambassador and is the implementing partner. ***Also see page 17 for more details.***

### ***Northwest Indiana Area***

EPA is one of the lead agencies on a project achieving sediment cleanup and habitat restoration at several sites in Northwest Indiana. The projects are being implemented via Great Lakes Legacy Act and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative funds, and are led by USEPA, USACE, and NPS.

### ***Patapsco River and Baltimore Watersheds***

EPA's Assistant Administrator for Water participated with USDA-FS and local stakeholders in a media event and tour to draw attention to progress in greening Baltimore's blighted neighborhoods. The event revealed how green infrastructure projects are improving the City's water quality concerns.

### ***South Platte River***

EPA has awarded \$350,000 for green infrastructure, water quality, and area-wide planning projects on the South Platte River. These projects will increase access to a clean healthy river, and extend the vitality that is seen along the lower downtown riverfront to the neighborhoods still struggling with economic and environmental challenges.

***Also see page 27 for more details.***



# CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION, AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY (U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES)

## Major Activities

*CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH) plans, directs, and coordinates a national program to maintain and improve the health of the American people by promoting a healthy environment with particular emphasis on safeguarding the health of populations that are particularly vulnerable to certain environmental hazards. Through the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), CDC takes responsive public health actions, and provides trusted health information to prevent harmful exposures and diseases related to toxic substances.*

Addressing community health needs as part of the Urban Waters pilot effort is crucial to already distressed communities seeking to improve the health of their water bodies as well as that of the people living in their watersheds. The CDC National Center for Environmental Health has brought awareness and training on community based environmental health assessments to the Partnership.

CDC participated in the inaugural 2011 Urban Waters National Training Workshop moderating a panel on Community Health and offering domestic and international lessons learned regarding community involvement and community health assessments. CDC is an active participant in the Partnerships Executive Workgroup and has presented resource and engagement information to the pilots on a peer-to-peer exchange conference call.

In April 2012, CDC co-sponsored the Inaugural National Health Impact Assessment Meeting held in Washington D.C. and extended an invitation to pilot leads to participate. Attendees included HIA practitioners; public health and health policy professionals; community-based organizations; researchers; elected officials; and decision makers from non-health agencies who might use or rely on the results of an HIA, such as planning, transportation, housing, agriculture, energy, environment and education. Demand was overwhelming requiring a waitlist for overflow registrants. This will be an annual opportunity for pilots to pursue health assessment information in the future.

## Supporting the Partnership

### Denver Pilot Location

ATSDR Region 8 has actively participated in the South Platte River partnership in Denver. The South Platte is primarily an industrial corridor and is on Colorado's 303(d) list of impaired water bodies for E coli and nitrate. ATSDR has participated with EPA Region 8, Denver Department of Environmental Health and the Partnership to develop a surface water sampling plan for the Platte River Watershed. In addition, EPA will provide data to ATSDR for review under the partnership (ATSDR 8 and Regional Medical Officer will provide initial review). It is anticipated that ATSDR may need to provide some health education information about specific compounds at low concentrations in surface water (examples include caffeine, ibuprofen, estrogen, and other pharmaceuticals).

### MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of CDC and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Healthy and accessible urban waters
- Protecting public and environmental health
- Reconnecting people in underserved communities with their waterways
- Engaging and serving community partners

In addition, ATSDR has:

- Provided available ATSDR technical resources and brownfields pilot grants information;
- Accompanied the EPA sampling team at sampling events
- Provided the City of Denver Department of Environmental Health (Environmental Assessment and Policy Division) information on CDC technical resources (specifically risk communication) regarding e-coli in drinking and recreational water and information on CDC and ATSDR community development grants.

*Also see pages 26-28 for more details.*

## Lower Duwamish Waterway

ATSDR regions across the country have urban waters success stories to offer. An example is involvement in the Duwamish River in Seattle, Washington. The Lower Duwamish Waterway site has been a major industrial corridor for over a century. The intense industrial use and municipal wastewater has resulted in chemical contamination in the waterway. ATSDR has been involved through the Washington State Department of Health to address a number of community health concerns, many related to eating fish from the river. Health education and outreach activities have included educating local health clinic staff about the site, providing fish preparation demonstrations, participating in local festivals and neighborhood meetings, and posting fish advisory signs along the river.

## Tools and Resources Available to Pilots

Technical assistance is available to local health officials and community members in conducting community-based environmental health assessments:

### Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health (PACE EH)

- Guides communities and local health officials in conducting community-based environmental health assessments
- Draws on community collaboration and environmental justice principles to involve the public in:
  - Identifying local environmental health issues
  - Setting priorities for action
  - Targeting populations most at risk
  - Addressing identified issues

### Health Impact Assessment (HIA)

- Used to evaluate objectively the potential health effects of a project or policy before it is built or implemented
- Can provide recommendations to increase positive health outcomes and minimize adverse health outcomes
- Used to bring potential public health impacts and considerations to the decision-making process for plans, projects, and policies that fall outside of traditional public health arenas, such as transportation and land use

### Public Health Assessment (PHA) Petitions

- Anyone can petition ATSDR to request a public health consultation regarding a hazardous waste site or facility
- In response to a petition request, ATSDR may conduct a public health consultation
  - Evaluation of available environmental data to determine whether residents have been, or are currently, exposed to environmental contaminants released from a hazardous waste site or facility
    - If evaluation concludes that people are exposed to environmental contaminants released from the site, ATSDR then evaluates whether the exposure is harmful or potentially harmful, and whether steps should be taken to stop or reduce that exposure



# CORPORATION FOR NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

## Major Activities

*The mission of the Corporation for National and Community Service is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic engagement through service and volunteering. The mission of the AmeriCorps NCCC program of CNCS is to strengthen communities and develop leaders through direct, team-based national and community service.*

CNCS plays a vital role in supporting the American culture of citizenship, service and responsibility and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, United We Serve.

The mission and role of the Corporation align well with the Urban Waters Federal Partnership's goal of improving the quality of life for citizens across the county. CNCS programs such as AmeriCorps VISTA, RSVP and NCCC can be used to support urban waters projects.

CNCS actively participates in bi-weekly Partnership Executive Workgroup meetings and hosted a face-to-face meeting of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Executive Workgroup in December 2011. To facilitate communication between CNCS programs and Urban Waters teams, CNCS invited EPA and USDA-FS to present during their Deputy Directors monthly conference call. CNCS has also established points of contact at local, regional, and national levels for all of its programs to liaison to the Urban Waters pilots and allow for more direct and immediate dialogue between members of the Partnership's pilot teams. CNCS participated in the inaugural 2011 Urban Waters National Training Workshop presenting on the Environmental Justice and Community Engagement panel. In addition, CNCS highlighted Urban Waters in their January 2012 conference call with State Vista Directors, and made a presentation on available resources to the pilot leads on a peer to peer exchange conference call in February 2012.

## Making Connections, Identifying Resources

CNCS has extended multiple efforts to ensure that connections are made between the pilots and the various CNCS program leads. Of particular value to the pilots is the NCCC branch of AmeriCorps.

The NCCC is a special branch of AmeriCorps with crews of teams that are housed at "national campuses" and easily deployed to emergencies and special priority projects around the country. They are different from AmeriCorps units that are located permanently within cities. Boots on the ground teams of trained NCCC AmeriCorps volunteers come into communities for a limited time, to perform a pre-determined amount of work. The work is described in an application. AmeriCorps covers the cost of the salaries, housing, meals and all needs of the NCCC AmeriCorps volunteers. AmeriCorps supplies crew leaders who supervise the crews. The pilot would supply a field coordinator who understands the actual projects and can help to oversee the work, directing the crew leaders about how to execute the job.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of CNCS and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Engaging and serving economically distressed communities
- Strengthening communities and developing leaders
- Recognizing and building on local efforts and leadership by engaging and serving community partners

Connections have been made between the NCCC campuses and pilot leads to facilitate pilot applications for assistance. In addition, pilot locations were encouraged to invite the regional NCCC representative to attend a local pilot partnership meeting to address all stakeholder partners regarding the assistance NCCC AmeriCorps is prepared to contribute to the Urban Waters Partnership.

### ***What Kind of Work Can AmeriCorps NCCC Teams Do To Support Urban Waters?***

Because AmeriCorps is dedicated to anti-poverty work, its Partnership work should address the Urban Waters goal of serving economically distressed communities. Example activities include:

- Invasive species removal for forest or river restoration
- Tree planting for river restoration, or tree planting and landscaping for neighborhood beautification or public school campus improvements
- Painting murals, painting school buildings, fixing classroom desks and chairs, or other physical assistance to help at-need schools in high poverty neighborhoods
- Prepping community gardens, installing garden infrastructure or fencing, to support neighborhood food efforts in high poverty neighborhoods
- Building benches, improving neighborhood parks
- Data collection, door-to-door community canvassing



# NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH SCIENCES (NIEHS)

## Major Activities

*The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) is one of 27 Institutes and Centers of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), which is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The NIEHS is under the directorship of Dr. Linda Birnbaum and is located in Research Triangle Park (RTP), North Carolina. The NIEHS is also home to the National Toxicology Program (NTP), the nation's premier program for the testing and evaluation of agents in our environment. The mission of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences is to discover how the environment affects people in order to promote healthier lives.*

*The pioneering work of NIEHS researchers and grantees has shown the deadly effects of asbestos exposure, the developmental impairment of children exposed to lead, and the health effects of air pollution.*

## NIEHS Research and Programs directed towards preventing health problems caused by our environment:

**National Toxicology Program.** The NTP is a federal, interagency program, headquartered at the NIEHS, whose goal is to safeguard the public by identifying substances in the environment that may affect human health. <http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/>

**In-house laboratories.** Intramural research is done by scientists employed by the federal government who have laboratories at the NIEHS or the main NIH campus in Bethesda, MD. Research conducted at the NIEHS includes epidemiology, biostatistics, molecular genetics, signal transduction, reproductive and developmental toxicology, respiratory biology, molecular carcinogenesis, and other environmental research areas. Our in-house scientists collaborate extensively with partners in other institutes, agencies, and academia.

**Grants programs.** Extramural research is done across the United States by researchers who have been funded through the NIH grants program. The largest portion of the NIEHS budget goes to fund laboratory research, population-based studies, and training programs that are conducted at universities, hospitals, businesses and organizations around the country and in other lands.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

*In August 2012, NIEHS released its Strategic Plan for 2012-2017 after over a year of input from the Environmental Health Sciences community and other stakeholders. The NIEHS Strategic Plan reflects identified themes and goals from the Strategic Planning process to help NIEHS with efforts to support and move forward our mission and vision. Current goals from the NIEHS 2012-2017 Strategic Plan that align with the mission and strategies of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership include:*

- Evaluating the economic impact of policies, practices, and behaviors that reduce exposure to environmental toxicants, through prevention of disease and disabilities, and invest in research programs to test how prevention improves public health and minimizes economic burden;
- Promoting bidirectional communication and collaboration between researchers and stakeholders, e.g., policy-makers, clinicians, intervention and prevention practitioners, and the public, in order to advance research translation in the environmental health sciences; and
- Enhancing the teaching of Environmental Health Sciences at all levels of education and training — kindergarten through professional — to increase scientific literacy and generate awareness of the health consequences of environmental exposures.

**Environmental Health Perspectives.** NIEHS is also the publisher of Environmental Health Perspectives (EHP), a monthly journal of peer-reviewed research and news. All EHP content is free online at <http://ehp03.niehs.nih.gov>.

**Partnerships for Environmental Public Health (PEPH).** The NIEHS has been an innovator in promoting partnerships between community groups and researchers to address local, real-world environmental health concerns. It will continue its support of this effort through the new PEPH program (<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/peph>). PEPH is an umbrella program that reaches beyond traditional research models to more thoroughly integrate community needs and expertise into environmental health research, and to give communities the tools they need to promote health and reduce the risk of disease across populations at highest risk.

**Superfund.** NIEHS' Superfund Program provides scientific research, through the *Superfund Research Program (SRP)* <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/research/supported/srp/>, and worker training through the *Worker Education and Training Program (WETP)* [http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/about\\_wetp.cfm](http://www.niehs.nih.gov/careers/hazmat/about_wetp.cfm), to address and prevent diseases caused by environmental contamination. These programs are closing the gap between the application of science to real world situations, such as safety and health training, and the need by policy makers and regulators for up-to-date scientific information.

NIEHS has participated Urban Waters Federal Partnership from the inaugural National Training Workshop, where we presented as a panelist in the Community Health session. NIEHS continues to be engaged in Urban Waters Federal Partnership meetings and phone calls as a public health resource and collaborator. NIEHS is committed to help move forward the missions of Urban Waters and our Institute to protect public health, and prevent illnesses and disease.



# NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

(U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

## Major Activities

*From daily weather forecasts, severe storm warnings, and climate monitoring to fisheries management, coastal management and restoration, and marine commerce support, NOAA's products and services sustain economic vitality and affect more than one-third of America's gross domestic product.*

For NOAA, protecting and restoring urban waters offers substantial economic, environmental, and social benefits and can revitalize urban water communities. Additionally, the quality of the nation's rivers and watersheds is connected directly to the health of the oceans and coasts. NOAA's vision of achieving resilient coastal ecosystems, communities, and economies is better served through participation in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership and the organization has been involved since the onset as an executive steering group member. Through this role, NOAA helps develop a national program and provides direct support at several pilot locations.

The NOAA staffing commitment to the Partnership includes participation of the National Ocean Service Office of Response and Restoration (OR&R) in national working group activities, and active support by OR&R and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) staff at the field level. Through these efforts, NOAA provides information about ongoing NOAA projects in the pilot locations and helps plan for future priority projects. OR&R and NMFS also strive to improve coordination and planning efforts across all NOAA offices and external partners.

## Pilot Location Support

### *Patapsco River/Baltimore*

OR&R staff members have participated in pilot meetings. The current focus is improvement of stormwater and surface water quality, which includes addressing challenging regulatory provisions and significant urban housing issues. OR&R continues with efforts to identify and bring in NOAA resources and staff to help address non-point source pollution and community education. NOAA briefed the pilot on a coordinated effort with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the State of Maryland on the 68<sup>th</sup> Street Superfund Site in the Lower Herring Run watershed. These agencies are developing cleanup, restoration, and reuse plans to deal with hazardous substance contamination while also accelerating recovery and restoration in an urban community. These plans include actions: 1) to reduce human and ecological risks from contamination in Herring Run and the Back River, where fish consumption advisories are in place in part from contributions from the site; 2) to restore wetlands, riparian buffers, and forested areas that will improve habitat and water quality; 3) to provide access for public recreation to urban water areas; and 4) to reduce trash and marine debris.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of NOAA and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Coastal management and restoration
- Improving and sustaining economic vitality by revitalizing urban waters
- Achieving healthy oceans and coasts by protecting the quality of rivers and watersheds

### ***New Orleans/Lake Pontchartrain***

NMFS staff members are active participants in the New Orleans pilot projects, which are included in the New Orleans Urban Waters Initiative Partnership Project Portfolio. NOAA planned, designed, and constructed two large artificial reef projects in Lake Pontchartrain. NOAA staff also planned, designed and supported the construction of a new fishing pier on the St. Tammany Parish side of Lake Pontchartrain, which is serving as a template for another fishing pier planned for the Orleans Parish side. Funding from a NOAA grant supported the construction and opening of a new University of New Orleans wetlands education and research laboratory located at Chef Pass in Orleans Parish. NOAA researched and provided a set of historical maps and imagery and NOAA charting products to the planning and design group involved with the Bayou St. Johns restoration project. This effort, a priority Urban Waters Federal Partnership project, aims to restore a greatly impacted area within New Orleans to a more natural hydrologic condition. NMFS identified, with NOAA's National Weather Service, critical new water level and weather coastal observation stations needed in the project area to improve coastal restoration projects and enhance storm and storm-surge forecasting and warning resources. ***Also see pages 14-16 for more details.***

### ***Bronx River, New York***

NOAA NMFS staff have attended working group meetings and provided feedback and information on NOAA projects, which include creating and seeding oyster habitat at Soundview Park at the mouth of the Bronx River and restoring public access to and enhancing shoreline habitat at the lower Bronx River at Hunts Point Landing. NOAA also supported construction of structural and nature-like fish ways at three dams on the lower Bronx River to return access for diadromous fishes to upstream spawning and rearing habitats.

### ***Anacostia River/Washington D.C.***

NOAA's role in the Anacostia River watershed pilot has included connecting pilot organizers with key stakeholders, in addition to existing work with the District Department of the Environment to investigate contaminated sites along the river and assessing injuries to NOAA's trust resources. NOAA also had preliminary discussions with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and EPA on potential efforts to leverage Natural Resource Damage Assessment settlements with a newly established Anacostia Restoration Fund. This approach could serve as a model for reviving urban watersheds nationwide.

### ***Calumet River/Northwest Indiana***

NOAA is working with the State of Indiana and Indiana Department of Natural Resources in utilizing \$1.4 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds. This funding supported the final phase of restoring and reconnecting the Dunes Creek watershed with Lake Michigan. The Dunes Creek watershed is home to state and national park lands, including portions of the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

### ***Additional NOAA Activities***

NOAA, through OR&R and NMFS, serves as the lead federal coordinating agency for the America's Great Outdoors urban pilot site at Paradise Creek Nature Park in Portsmouth, Virginia. Paradise Creek is a tributary of the Southern Branch of the Elizabeth River.

NOAA OR&R is supporting public and private stakeholders in developing an Urban Waters Federal Partnership effort in Philadelphia along the Delaware River as part of the 2012 Partnership effort to take the pilot program to a national level. NOAA, with support from the USDA Forest Service, will be the lead federal agency coordinating this enterprise.



# U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY)

## Major Activities

*The United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) serves the Armed Forces and the Nation by providing vital engineering services and capabilities, as a public service, across the full spectrum of operations—from peace to war—in support of national interests.*

The Department of the Army U.S. Army Corps of Engineers contributed to formative efforts of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership by serving as a member of its National Working Group and working among agencies already engaged in the pursuit of integrated solutions to water resources challenges near the Partnership’s pilot locations. Among several instruments for advancing strategies, goals, and objectives of the America’s Great Outdoors Initiative, the Partnership’s Vision, Mission, and Principles are also embodied in the cross-cutting strategies, goals, and objectives of the United States Army Corps of Engineers’ Civil Works Strategic Plan, *Sustainable Solutions to America’s Water Resources Needs*. Likewise, the Partnership is viewed as a body through which innovative and environmentally sustainable solutions to water resources challenges may be facilitated, expedited, and made increasingly possible.

To facilitate communication, USACE established points of contact at local, regional, and national levels of its organization to allow for more direct and immediate dialogue between members of the Partnership’s pilot teams and USACE members. The Partner also contributed to the development of a framework for the annual assessment and reporting of the Partnership’s achievements to allow for continued improvements in the Partnership’s collective efforts to plan for and facilitate alignment of federal resources to meet the needs of its prioritized locations.

## Partnership Support

Due to their contributions to the advancement of the America’s Great Outdoors objectives and support of the Partnership’s pilot priorities, USACE elevated the priority for completion of ongoing watershed investigations in the Los Angeles River and Anacostia River Watersheds. ***(see page 17 for more details on USACE’s work in LA and page 8 for additional information about their work in the Anacostia)***. In addition, USACE provided \$50,000 in support of the South Platte pilot. As demonstrated, USACE considered priorities of the broader Partnership among those that weigh on decisions affecting the allocation of resources within their organization. Likewise, USACE views the Partnership as serving a continued role during the anticipation and coordination of opportunities to align authorities and resources of partnered agencies to more effectively address the water resources challenges of the nation.

### MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of USACE and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Establishing strong partnerships with community-based organizations and local governments
- Leveraging existing community assets as well as federal resources to serve local needs
- Protecting urban water resources that are valuable to the health and safety of communities.

In addition to having attended regular meetings of the National Working Group and each of the Partnership's pilots, USACE has been engaged by the Partnership to facilitate the exchange of study/investigation-related data and information relevant to the Partnership's pilots, efforts of other agencies within the Partnership, and efforts relevant to ongoing USACE investigations and activities.

USACE welcomes the Partnership as a catalyst for the stakeholder engagement and interagency coordination that will be required in the future to help plan, resource, and implement solutions to water resources challenges affecting urban communities and their associated watersheds.



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY (OFFICE OF ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY)

## Major Activities

*The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's (EERE) mission is to accelerate development and facilitate deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies and market-based solutions that strengthen U.S. energy security, environmental quality, and economic vitality.*

EERE is the premier institution for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development in the U.S. government. EERE works in three major areas: reducing our dependence on imported oil; finding ways to make cost-competitive electricity from renewable resources; and optimizing the efficiency of our homes, buildings and factories.

As the newest member of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, EERE will support clean energy deployment around urban waterways and will strengthen the relationship between the U.S. Department of Energy and local leaders in Partnership Communities.

Local governments continue to be critical leaders and partners in unlocking the enormous cost savings associated with energy efficiency and the economic opportunities posed by renewable energy.

EERE staff will provide tier one customer support to Urban Waters Federal Partnership Communities to help them navigate EERE's programs and more easily access resources that can help them achieve their city's clean energy objectives. Since joining in October 2012, EERE staff have participated in the 2012 Urban Waters Federal Partnership National Training Workshop and conducted introductory phone calls with Partnership Pilot Communities.

There are six primary mechanisms in which EERE engages with local officials that will bring value to the Partnerships efforts.

1. *The Solution Center:* The Solution Center is the home for U.S. Department of Energy Technical Assistance Program (TAP), which provides state, local, and tribal officials with resources to advance successful, high impact, and long lasting clean energy policies, programs, and projects. The goal of the Solution Center is to help communities develop and implement successful energy efficiency and renewable energy activities and, as necessary, meet the conditions and guidelines of the State Energy Program (SEP), Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, and Better Buildings Initiative. (For more information see: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/wip/solutioncenter/default.html>)

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of EERE and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Develop approaches that can accelerate economic growth and job creation while improving the environment by both reducing greenhouse gas emissions and improving air and water quality.
- Ensure diversity and choice in the way energy services are produced;
- Provide American businesses and households with low-cost energy services by creating low cost renewable supplies and energy efficient products and systems; and
- Insulate the U.S. economy from the price and supply uncertainties associated with petroleum;

Shared priorities also include:

- Interagency coordination and issue resolution

2. *Clean Cities*: Clean Cities advances the nation's economic, environmental, and energy security by supporting local actions to reduce petroleum consumption in transportation. A national network of nearly 100 Clean Cities coalitions brings together stakeholders in the public and private sectors to deploy alternative and renewable fuels, idle-reduction measures, fuel economy improvements, and emerging transportation technologies. (for more information see: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/cleancities/>)

3. *Solar Energy Resource Center*: SunShot, through the Solar Energy Resource Center, maintains a collection of resources on solar technologies and best practices to implement solar, both at the local level and with large-scale deployment. Resources include articles, case studies, fact sheets, how-to guides, model rules and ordinances, presentations, sample government documents, technical reports, tools, and webinars. (For more information see: [http://www4.eere.energy.gov/solar/sunshot/resource\\_center/](http://www4.eere.energy.gov/solar/sunshot/resource_center/))

4. *Wind Powering America*: Wind energy and government intersect at many levels, including regulations, policy, and developable public lands. Wind Powering America provides information about job creation and economic development which can inform policy decisions and incentive conversations. Similarly, Wind Powering America maintains links and summaries of activities at the local, state, and regional levels, as well as other objective information regarding the impacts of wind energy development. (for more information see: [http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/wpa\\_program\\_areas.asp](http://www.windpoweringamerica.gov/wpa_program_areas.asp))

5. *SEE Action*: The State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network (SEE Action) is a state- and local-led effort facilitated by the U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to take energy efficiency to scale and achieve all cost-effective energy efficiency by 2020. SEE Action offers information resources and technical assistance to state and local decision makers as they provide low-cost, reliable energy to their communities through energy efficiency. (for more information see: <http://www1.eere.energy.gov/seeaction/>)

6. *Better Buildings Challenge*: The Better Buildings Challenge supports commercial and industrial building owners by providing technical assistance and proven solutions to energy efficiency. The program also provides a forum for matching Partners and Allies to enhance collaboration and problem solving in energy efficiency. Both Partners and Allies are publically recognized for their leadership and innovation in energy efficiency. (For more information see: <http://www4.eere.energy.gov/challenge/partners/better-buildings>)



# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

## Major Activities

*US DOT's mission is to serve the United States by ensuring a fast, safe, efficient, accessible and convenient transportation system that meets our vital national interests and enhances the quality of life of the American people, today and into the future. One of six goals in achieving this mission is environmental sustainability.*

DOT staff has supported the Urban Waters Federal Partnership to promote federal cooperation at headquarters and in field offices. DOT hosted a face-to-face meeting of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Executive Workgroup, and also presented grant resource opportunities on a pilot leadership peer to peer exchange session.

In response to requests from several pilot programs, DOT has helped identify local representatives to be active in the pilots and facilitated navigation of the agency and its decentralized programs. In addition to facilitating local engagement, DOT has worked to ensure information about upcoming grant opportunities is being disseminated.

DOT has also resolved issues in several pilot locations, such as in Anacostia, where DOT provided funding to complete the Anacostia Riverwalk project. Throughout the lifespan of the Riverwalk project, DOT worked with other federal agencies and representatives from DC's local government to facilitate the environmental review process, and ensure that the project was completed in an environmentally sound manner. This trail will enhance public access to the Anacostia River and will also use stormwater management designs to improve the water quality.

*Also see page 9 for more details.*

## DOT Grants Support Urban Waters Partnership Goals

Several formula funding programs, including the *Surface Transportation Program* and the *Transportation Alternatives Program* can be used to fund habitat and wetland mitigation, stormwater management, vegetation management, erosion control, and connectivity among terrestrial or aquatic habitats. The *Transportation Alternatives Program* also funds activities designed to reduce the environmental impacts of transportation, such as construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation. Funds can be used to build sidewalks, bicycle infrastructure, pedestrian and bicycle signals, and other safety-related infrastructure.

In discretionary grant programs, DOT has developed selection criteria that actively support the goals of sustainability and community economic development. For example, through the *TIGER Grants*, DOT has provided over \$2.6 billion to plan and build new livable, sustainable infrastructure, including several in Partnership pilot locations.

### MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of DOT and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Integrate environmental sustainability into all work being done, including reducing water quality impacts of transportation infrastructure

Shared priorities also include:

- Interagency coordination and issue resolution
- Environmentally sensitive decision making  
Grant funding for safer, more sustainable infrastructure

Many of the pilot location TIGER grants enhance transit, biking, and walking options, which reduce the water-quality impacts of car travel. Other projects use innovations such as bioswales to minimize stormwater run-off into lakes and rivers. FY2012 TIGER grants continue to support environmentally sustainable infrastructure; for example, projects such as the *Anacostia Bicycle and Pedestrian Project*, will use innovative techniques for stormwater mitigation, which will reduce run-off into the highly-polluted Anacostia River.

#### ADVANCING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

In support of the Partnership, DOT staff helped review applications for the EPA Urban Waters Small Grants. Federal assistance on review panels enabled nearly 600 proposals to be reviewed and the selection of 46 projects that support improved water quality and community revitalization.

In addition to its involvement in the Urban Waters Federal Partnership, DOT is a member of the Partnership for Sustainable Communities. This initiative is fostering regional partnerships throughout the nation, which supports the shared goals of improving federal coordination and environmentally sensitive decision-making.

#### TIGER GRANTS IN PILOT LOCATIONS NOW

**In the Bronx:** The Fordham Transit Plaza project will increase public access to green space and use innovative stormwater management systems to improve water quality.

**In New Orleans:** Grants to the Port of New Orleans and the Streetcar will go to help reduce emissions associated with personal and freight travel.

**In Los Angeles:** The Crenshaw/LAX Transit Corridor will enhance transit access for economically disadvantaged communities.



# U.S. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION (U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE)

## Major Activities

*EDA's mission is to lead the federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness, preparing American regions for growth and success in the worldwide economy.*

As the economic development arm of the U.S. Department of Commerce, EDA actively supports the principles of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP). In particular, EDA strongly believes that healthy and accessible urban waterways enhance a community's economic competitiveness. Urban water systems are an important asset in many regional economic ecosystems, and can serve a catalytic role in local economic revitalization.

EDA makes a wide variety of grant-based investments in economic development projects. Support of and participation in the UWFP and its local pilot projects serves as a natural extension of the EDA's role, and plays to EDA's fundamental belief that those who work together to leverage resources will fare better economically.

A strong proponent of interagency coordination, EDA has a solid track record of collaborating with other federal agencies to foster locally-driven, regionally-focused economic revitalization. In 2011, for example, EDA led the \$37 million multi-agency Jobs and Innovation Accelerator Challenge (JIAC) to support cluster development and the cross-agency i6 Green Challenge to promote the commercialization of green technologies across the country. Combined, these competitions involved the financial participation of more than a dozen federal agencies.

## Partnership Support

### *Providing Collaboration and Coordination Support*

EDA has identified staff representation at each of the seven UWFP pilot project locations. Regional office representatives have participated in numerous locally driven coordination and collaboration activities, providing information and guidance on how to access EDA resources. At the national level, EDA representatives have supported the UWFP on national policy development and coordination efforts.

### *Recognizing Urban Waters as a Funding Priority*

Grant applicants interested in urban waters projects focused on economic development now automatically meet an initial evaluation requirement within EDA's application review process.

### *Leading Role to Establish Measurement Framework for Pilot Success*

Capitalizing on a key organizational strength, EDA took on a leadership role in an UWFP sub-group to help craft the framework for the Partnership agencies and pilots to report on the successes of their respective activities and efforts.

## MISSION ALIGNMENT:

The missions of EDA and the Partnership are strategically aligned based on the following goals:

- Foster healthy and accessible urban waterways to help catalyze local economic revitalization
- Collaborate regionally to leverage resources and work together to overcome economic challenges
- Support development of an urban waters-friendly national policy
- Make urban waters a funding priority
- Cultivate long-term jobs

## ADDITIONAL FEDERAL PARTICIPANTS

The Urban Waters Federal Partnership was launched with 11 original signatory agencies in June 2011. As noted, the Department of Education became the 12<sup>th</sup> signatory agency in April 2012, and participated in Partnership workgroup meetings prior to that time. In addition, the Department of Energy, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, became the 13<sup>th</sup> signatory agency in 2012. These agencies, as well as several others featured below, have shown continued commitment to the Urban Waters Federal Partnership and its goal of revitalizing communities through urban waterways.

### ***Department of Education***

The Department of Education has many initiatives that dovetail with the mission and principles of the Partnership to increase environmental protection, economic revitalization, and connecting people to their urban waters. One initiative, U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS), is an example of a perfect fit with the UWFP principals. Through this initiative, the Department of Education communicates best practices and resources in the areas of facilities, health and environment. All school communities can make use of the free resources on ED's page and its free, ongoing, multi-agency Green Strides Webinar Series.

Education activities with youth and school children are important elements of the ongoing work in all seven Urban Waters Federal Partnership pilot locations. Two examples include New Orleans and Denver.

- The New Orleans pilot has developed a program for educating school children at the water's edge, that is, in the wetland area adjacent to Lake Pontchartrain and Lake Borgne. Federal employees from EPA and DOI work with teachers at the nearby schools to execute a curriculum at a University of New Orleans education and research center near the lake. In the last 6 months over 200 school children have received lessons about the environmental condition, causes of that condition, and ways to solve the problems with the Lake and area wetlands. DOI and UNO will soon be filming an educational video about the center which will feature some of the children. ***Also see page 14 for more details.***
- EPA is also funding a place-based "Green Jobs Pilot" in Denver to help school-age youth move from educational activities and skills development to mentoring from potential employers to job placement in private, non-profit and government sector jobs. Department of Education also implements a green career pathways adult and vocational learning program and could help disseminate the best practices of this pilot to other areas of the country.

Other federal agencies have embraced the principles of the Partnership, and though not formal signatories at this time, have contributed greatly to the success of the pilot location efforts.

### ***FEMA***

The Federal Emergency Management Agency provided \$1.3 million in public assistance funding for work to repair Pontchartrain Pier, positioned at the southern end of Lake Pontchartrain in New Orleans. This highly prioritized Partnership project will help restore the pier to its pre-disaster function and be a very visible recovery accomplishment once fully repaired.

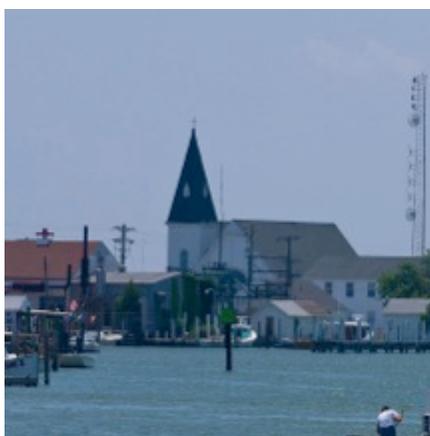
Work funded by FEMA includes replacing the pier's steel support piling, steel side railing, backfill and the concrete deck end. Additionally, the federal dollars will fund mitigation measures to upgrade the pier's existing galvanized railing to an aluminum material in order to prevent corrosion damage in future storms. ***Also see page 16 for more details.***

**NASA**

The Baltimore area pilot location is working with NASA, an active local partner, on a project where NASA and USDA are teaming up to test new remote sensing tools. These tools will be able to identify tree species and measure their health and productivity along the rural to urban gradient. Data from these tools are crucial for understanding vulnerability to tree stressors including invasive insects such as emerald ash borer and other environmental factors that affect tree productivity and diversity. These tools are crucial for land management that affects urban waters.

## MOVING FORWARD

### *The Partnership's Second Year Strategy*



In 2013, the Partnership will begin the process of moving from pilot locations to a national Program. The Partnership will begin by increasing the number of partnership locations and in the future institute a local application process that will provide an incentive for local partnerships among federal agencies and local stakeholders. The Partnership will establish a new implementing structure to ensure that all partnership locations are achieving actions consistent with local workplans. That is, we will increase efforts nationally to: create opportunities for shared learning across localities; move to maximize collaboration between federal agencies and state and local stakeholders; and enhance assistance from federal agencies at each location.

The Partnership established a strategic framework on June 12, 2012, through adoption of a “Strategy for the Future” at a meeting of the Signatories (and other designees) of the Partnership’s “Vision, Mission and Principles.” That framework reads as follows:

*As we continue to advance the Partnership, our thirteen participating agencies are collaborating to revitalize urban waters and the communities that surround them — particularly those areas facing economic, social, and public health challenges. Coordinated with the White House Domestic Policy Council and Council on Environmental Quality, the Partnership will align with America's Great Outdoors, the Partnership for Sustainable Communities, and the Strong Cities, Strong Communities Initiative. The Partnership will focus on moving from a pilot-based initiative to a national program while also better aligning the policies, programs and resources of the thirteen agencies.*

### **Creating a National Program**

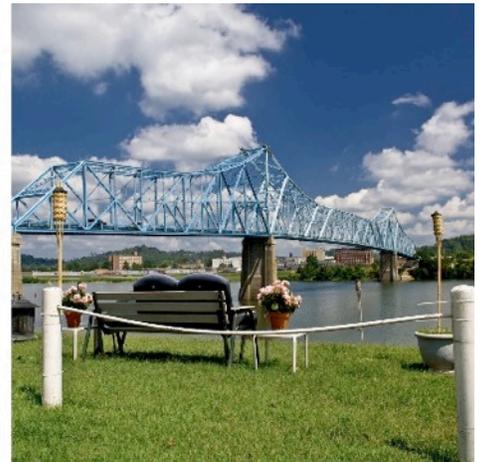
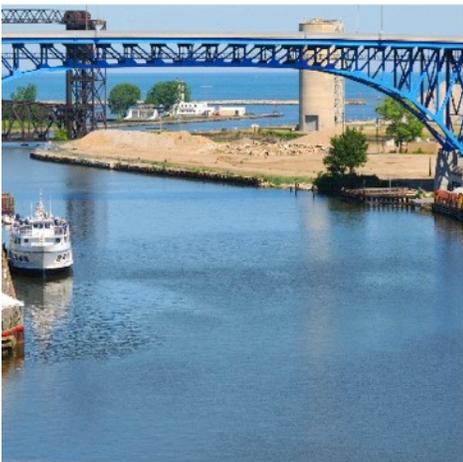
1. Add new locations to the Partnership beginning summer 2012 using the Partnership’s Workgroup processes and provide assistance from the partner agencies to these new locations.
2. Establish a cross-agency team to develop a comprehensive, sustainable national program that will enable communities to self-nominate and become recognized Partnership locations.
3. Establish a national private-public Partnership to finance a set of projects with the goal of restoring urban waters and the communities that surround them.

### **Aligning Agency Efforts**

1. Align national policies and programs (regulatory and non-regulatory) and leverage resources for urban waters plans and activities to achieve the Partnership’s principles.
2. Provide preference in federal funding efforts for locations and activities prioritized by the Partnership, or top projects advancing the Partnership’s goals, based on the authorities, regulations and policies of each participating agency.
3. Form two cross-agency teams to: (1) oversee implementation of all locations and (2) establish specific measures of success for the national Partnership program and locations.

*by Agency Signatories/Designees of the Final National Urban Waters Federal Partnership “Vision, Mission and Principles.”*

# APPENDIX A



# URBAN WATERS FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

## VISION, MISSION & PRINCIPLES



### OUR VISION

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*Through our partnership, we will revitalize urban waters and the communities that surround them, transforming overlooked assets into treasured centerpieces and drivers of urban revival.*



### THE NEED IS CLEAR

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*Many of our nation's urban rivers, streams, lakes, forests and wetlands are polluted, degraded or inaccessible. The surrounding communities often are not reaping the environmental, economic and social benefits that living near a water body can provide.*

*Research demonstrates that a clean, safe, accessible, urban environment – including urban forests, gardens, parks, lakes, aquifers, and rivers – is directly linked to improved public health, stronger local economies, and lower crime rates.*

*We believe a deeper connection to local water bodies can bring a new cycle of community hope and energy that will lead to healthier urban waters, improved public health, strengthened local businesses, and new jobs, as well as expanded educational, recreational, housing, and social opportunities.*



### OUR MISSION

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*The "Urban Waters Federal Partnership" will help urban and metropolitan areas, particularly those that are under-served or economically distressed, connect with their waterways and work to improve them. This federal partnership will put communities first. We will work to break down government program silos and to ensure that our collective efforts will reverse past neglect, energize existing programs, and engage new partners. We will listen to, engage and serve the communities where we work, ensuring they are full partners in restoring and protecting the water that surrounds them. We will establish strong partnerships with effective community-based organizations and local government officials to make the most effective use of economic incentives and other beneficial actions. With the right set of federal, state, and local tools and the local commitment of political will, the partnership will leverage existing neighborhood assets. These actions will be geared to promote early and visible victories to fuel long-term action. Success will advance the missions of our partnership, our agencies, and the federal government as a whole.*



## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### *To guide our work, we will:*

- **Promote clean urban waters.** We must enhance the value and health of urban waters, recognizing their rich history, spiritual value, natural beauty, and economic and recreational potential, as well as their role in basic services, such as water supplies. We know clean water is a foundation for sustainable communities and healthy ecosystems, and that the watershed is the fundamental planning unit for water quality protection. That means the Partnership will work with urban communities to connect them to upstream areas including rural parts of the watersheds, where the large majority of our country's water originates. In addition to addressing the direct challenges presented by physically, chemically and biologically degraded urban waters, we will engage these communities in the broader process of enhancing the value and quality of water resources supplying urban areas using approaches to protect, manage and restore the lands that surround those waters.
- **Reconnect people to their waterways.** Many communities do not have access to their urban waterways. This cuts them off from a valuable community asset. These assets can be used to spur commercial, recreational (such as parks, green spaces and cultural centers) and educational opportunities. Indeed, the reconnection of distressed communities to their waterways can act as a catalyst for greater economic revitalization and growth as well as improvement in resident well-being.
- **Water conservation.** We shall strive to meet urban water needs in a sustainable manner by increasing the efficiency of water use. The Partnership therefore will strive to educate and work with urban communities to conserve this precious resource. We will increase efforts to address infrastructure needs, especially in underserved urban areas where modernization of aging and inefficient infrastructure can lead to significant water savings. We believe conserving water and using it wisely will be fundamental to our success.
- **Use urban water systems as a way to promote economic revitalization and prosperity.** Healthy and accessible urban waters enhance any area's economic competitiveness. In urban communities, water-related environmental improvements will be integrated with other community priorities, such as revitalizing local businesses, creating jobs, and improving access to job training. Community revitalization through the promotion of clean urban waters must minimize displacement of existing residents, expand opportunities for current and new residents, and fully tap into the potential of the local and regional communities. To achieve these objectives when working locally, the Partnership will particularly focus on revitalizing communities that are, or have been, disproportionately impacted by pollution or economic burdens.
- **Encourage community improvements through active partnerships.** Strong multi-agency partnerships at the federal, state, local levels, and with the tribes, will integrate many of the services needed for community revitalization. Aligning federal policies and funding will break down traditional silos, remove barriers to collaboration, and increase the accountability and effectiveness to plan and act for future growth. These goals will also be achieved through innovative regional collaboration and approaches that connect policies and programs at every level of government and across multiple sectors.
- **Be open and honest, and listening to the communities is the best way to engage them.** We will work with urban populations, not act for them. This means, among other things, to recognize their values and seek to understand environmental issues through their eyes. We will work from the bottom up rather than taking a top down, one-size-fits-all approach.
- **Focus on measuring results and evaluation will fuel future success.** We need short-term improvements, but also an analytical view toward sustainable and systemic improvements we can measure using meaningful outcome measures. We will invest and focus our resources on what is working in targeted places and draw on the compounding effect of well-coordinated action. By evaluating conditions to design better solutions and monitoring progress to respond quickly when change is needed, we will learn what works to develop best practices.



## SIGNATURES

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As required by the Antideficiency Act, 31 U.S.C. 1341 and 1342, all commitments made by all agencies party to this Partnership agreement are subject to the availability of appropriated funds and budget priorities. Nothing in this agreement, in and of itself, obligates any agency to expend appropriations or to enter into any contract, assistance agreement, interagency agreement, or incur other financial obligations. Any transaction involving transfers of funds between the agencies will be handled in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and procedures under separate written agreements. Furthermore, this agreement does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity, by persons who are not party to this agreement, against any party to this agreement, its officers or employees, or any other person. Finally, this agreement does not impose legally binding requirements on any Federal agency, States or the regulated community, nor does it change or substitute for any existing legally binding requirements.